



N.C. Wyeth

Title

All day he hung round the cove, or upon the cliffs, with a brass telescope

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1911

Dimensions

47 1/4 × 38 1/4 in. (120 × 97.2 cm)

Catalogue Number

92.16.1

Credit Line

Bequest of Gertrude Haskell Britton, 1992

Web Description

In 1911, Scribner's art editor Joseph Chapin offered N.C. Wyeth the opportunity to illustrate a new edition of *Treasure Island*, Robert Louis Stevenson's classic adventure story. Within four months, Wyeth produced a set of 17 paintings that would ensure his reputation as one of the foremost illustrators of the period. Wyeth's genius partly lay in his ability to envision the characters he depicted. His Bill Bones, for example, looks to be of flesh and blood, truly capable of the piratical life Stevenson wrote for him. This figure, silhouetted above a rugged, misty seacoast, is haunting. Wyeth kept detail to a minimum, but he knew which details, such as the brass telescope, the cockaded hat, the swirling cloak, and gleaming buttons and shoe buckles, would be most effective when the image was reduced to 6 1/2 x 5 1/4 inches, the size of the book illustration. For generations of readers, this is the very image of Bill Bones that comes to mind when Stevenson's famous character is mentioned.