



Howard Pyle

Title

The Shell

Medium

Oil on canvas

Date

1908

Dimensions

30 1/4 × 20 in. (76.8 × 50.8 cm)

Catalogue Number

2007.11.38

Credit Line

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Howard P. Brokaw, 2007

Web Description

In his painting *The Shell*, Howard Pyle depicts the caves dug into a hillside as bomb shelters by families in

Vicksburg, Mississippi, during the city's Civil War siege. The great danger of these cave is described in detail in a first-hand account by William W. Lord, Jr. in "A Child at the Siege of Vicksburg," published in *Harper's Monthly* in December 1908. Despite the fact that the caves were shelters for non-combatants, errant shells caused collapses of the tunnels carved into the earth. In addition to this painting, the article was also illustrated with photographs, foreshadowing the demise of the use of illustrations in the popular media.