1997

Pastoral Pleasures : the picnic in American art before 1870

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PASTORAL PLEASURES:
THE PICNIC IN AMERICAN ART BEFORE 1870

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Art and Design
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts

by
Norma A. Schlossman

May 1997

UMI Number: 1384719

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ABSTRACT

PASTORAL PLEASURES THE PICNIC IN AMERICAN ART BEFORE 1870

by Norma Schlossman

This thesis considers the depiction of picnics in American paintings and prints before 1870. It examines the attitudes and expectations of patrons and society at large which led to their creation. Endowed with symbolic meaning, picnic images are examined with respect to changing attitudes towards land ownership, technology, health, leisure and the family.

In the nineteenth century as the United States changed from a small agricultural country into an industrial nation, Americans began to lose their direct relationship with the land. Tensions and frustrations created by the rapid growth of the cities, resulted in nostalgia for the simplicity of country life and a return to the past. Picnic images changed in response to the needs of the community as it attempted to solve problems created by the process of urban development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to all those who over the years gave their time to make it possible.

I wish to express my gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Bruce Radde, for his continued guidance, encouragement and wise counsel during my Graduate years. His astute criticism and careful editing of my material was invaluable in the preparation of this thesis.

I am indebted to Dr. Marilyn Wyman who gave so generously of her time and knowledge. Her enthusiastic approach to American art combined with helpful research advice were essential to the completion of the manuscript.

I wish to thank Dr. Anne Simonson for reviewing the material in a thoughtful manner and providing constructive suggestions.

I would like to extend special thanks to Betty Antrim for her encouragement and gentle prodding in the face of my procrastination.

I owe a special debt to my husband, Charles, for his help and immeasurable patience throughout the writing of this thesis and to my children, David, Robert and Ann for their support and ever present good spirits.

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INTRODUCTION

America was founded on the availability of free and desirable land to be settled and cultivated. The immensity of the landscape and the sparseness of population resulted in a special attitude towards nature. When, in the nineteenth century, the United States changed from a small agricultural country into an industrial nation, Americans began to lose their direct relationship with the land. Tensions and frustrations created by the rapid growth of the cities, resulted in nostalgia for the simplicity of country life and a carefree return to the past. In the first half of the century, symbolic picnic images changed in response to the needs of communities as they attempted to solve problems created by the process of urban development. This study will examine paintings of picnics which give insight into the political, social and religious attitudes of the period.

The word picnic comes from the French "pique-nique", meaning a pleasure party with food, which is usually provided by members of the group and is eaten in the open air. Although the first written reference to the word occurred in the 1740's, in both France and Germany, the image appeared earlier as an entertainment in Halte de Chasse, a fashionable royal hunt painted by Carle Van Loo in 1737. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the word was used in English to refer to an indoor social gathering which stressed mutual cooperation and sharing. In London, a group of fashionable people formed the "Picnic Society" for the purpose of performing amateur theatricals, accompanied by an elaborate meal with each participant providing a portion of the food to be commonly shared.¹ In 1841, Charles

Dickens edited the *Pic-Nic Papers* in which the picnic meant the sharing of talents and ideas rather than food.²

In American painting the picnic can be described as a group of people sharing food and companionship in a rustic, pastoral setting. While this basic format remained the same, the emphasis varied according to the intended symbolic message of the artist. Although picnic scenes painted in the later part of the century, especially those of the American Impressionists, have been frequently discussed, there has been little consideration of picnic images created prior to 1870. Academic literature has rarely examined the subject as a separate topic in this early time period, preferring instead to treat the images, depending on the size of the figures, as either landscape or genre paintings. Yet the picnic is a unique subject because it combines elements from both groups while also demonstrating its own characteristics. The picnic represents a fusion, a coming to terms with the division between landscape and genre studies. Landscape painting in the nineteenth century usually depicted a solitary individual communicating with God through nature while anecdotal genre painting represented civilization. The picnic emphasized group participation in unspoiled nature with an implied moral of sharing and cooperation. Picnic images, like most paintings of the time usually have more than one interpretation. The group could be a depiction of real people on a country outing as well as an Arcadian image of man in Claudian idyllic nature.

Roxana Barry's catalog, *Land of Plenty*, is one of only two sources to address the subject.³ Her sixteen page pamphlet on nineteenth century American picnic and harvest scenes, focuses on the abundance of the land

and on contemporary attitudes towards it. Barry cites the urbanization of the Northeast as the motivation for picnics painted in mid-nineteenth century America. There was a change in the direct relationship between the people and the land as the region moved from an agrarian to an industrial economy. "Americans pursued the idea of the land having lost the reality of it...and the age of agriculture, having passed (in the Northeast) became elevated to an Augustan one."⁴ The second reference, an article by Mary Ellen Hern, examines the role of the picnic in American culture and society between 1840 and 1900.⁵ Although the emphasis is primarily on the second half of the century, some of the material could readily apply to earlier picnics. Using quotes from contemporary magazines as well as diaries, handbooks of manners, etiquette and customs, the author presents a vivid account of the picnic as it was experienced in American life. She documents the practical aspects of picnics giving examples of supplies, baskets and amounts of food consumed as well as the manners and customs of these social gatherings. Hern interprets picnic paintings as factual representations of real people participating in a popular pastime, reflecting the contemporary romantic preoccupation with nature. She quotes Washington Irving's description of family picnics on Croton Lake and Charles Baldwin's diary notation that "Biddle Grove was popular for its tall pines and tulip trees which could be reached by Staten Island Railroad or steamboat from lower Manhattan and Brooklyn."⁶

Sources for representations of picnics included the National Museum of American Art's Inventory of American Paintings Computer Subject Index, museum collection catalogs, individual artists' monographs and books on

American art. Microfilm copies of *Harpers Weekly*, *Graham's Magazine*, *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, *Sartain's Union Magazine*, *Godey's Ladies Magazine* and the *Catalogue Raisonne of Currier & Ives*, were also searched.⁷

I have found one hundred and twenty-one images of picnics created prior to 1870. Only eleven of these picnics are dated before 1845; then they increase steadily until 1870.⁸ I have been able to examine reproductions of approximately eighty of these pictures. The rest are listed in catalogs or indexes, but are either privately owned with restricted access or their present location is unknown.

There are fifty-five identified artists, nineteen of whom did two or more picnics. Of the thirty-eight anonymous pictures thirteen are oils, four are watercolors and the rest are engravings and lithographs made for the magazine industry. The characteristics of these artists were in all probability representative of the American art world of the period. Only about half of the identified artists were American born. The majority of them were considered landscape painters and over half worked directly or indirectly with engraving or lithography. Only eight known painters had no professional affiliation or formal academic training. Most of the artists had some exposure to European traditions, and were part of established art communities in New York, Boston or Philadelphia.

Picnic paintings were the product of these settled Northeastern cities, and their popularity increased as the surrounding landscape became domesticated. The wilderness now belonged to the West, a romantic illusion to be viewed from a comfortable distance. In picnic scenes the landscape was

a gentle Arcadia, a peaceable kingdom, where people were in harmony with nature.

Landscape views reflected America's special relationship with nature. When the United States became a nation there was a desire to define itself and unify the people. What was needed was an essentially American image. Although America had no monuments, it had an abundance of unspoiled nature that was uniquely different from the Old World where the land had long been domesticated and shaped by generations of people. Since the United States had a relatively brief history, landscape was equal to historical subject matter in the established painting hierarchy. Landscape painting portrayed nature as a pure, heroic wilderness. Mountains and flat plains stretching into a seemingly endless distance inspired a fresh promise for human potential.⁹ America would be the New World, the new Eden and its citizens, the new Adam and Eve. The picnic contrasted with the more common landscape view of the solitary individual in the wilderness. It might be said that if the lone figure in the wilderness represented the pursuit of happiness, the picnic was the possession of that happiness.

Picnics reflected cooperative group participation necessary for an orderly stable society. The romantic lone hero was replaced by the family man. Virtue, once the prerogative of the hero, was redefined in terms of the family and the common man. As early as 1830, the division between the solitary hero and the community was expressed in the play, *Niagara* by William Dunlap. The male character decries the coming of civilization. "This was paradise once...I had the mountains to myself," to which the female responds "It must have been a melancholy life...but now, see the

smoke rising from a thousand habitations and fields covered with grain and fruit, for a thousand happy families."¹⁰

Picnic scenes were not popular in magazines or prints catering to the rural areas of the country where the inhabitants depended on the land and saw it from a realistic economic perspective.¹¹ It was the urban dweller, removed from nature, that found enjoyment in the iconography of a picnic painting. The illusion of rural innocence and goodness as opposed to urban sophistication became widespread; the voice of truth came from the country, not the city.¹² The picnic scene represented a return to primal innocence from the reality of the crowded city. The *American Art Union Lottery Bulletin* in 1851 proclaimed

To the inhabitants of cities, as nearly all of the subscribers to the Art Union are, a painted landscape is almost essential to preserve a healthy tone to the spirits, lest they forget in the wilderness of bricks which surrounds them the pure delights of nature and a country life. Those who cannot afford a seat in the country to refresh their wearied spirits, may have at least a country seat in their parlors; a bit of landscape with a green tree, a distant hill, a low-roofed cottage;...some of these simple objects, which all men find so refreshing to their spirits after being pent up in dismal streets and the haunts of business.¹³

The quiet solitude of the pastoral picnic scene was a mental refuge from the crowding and urban deterioration caused by industrial expansion in the cities. It is estimated that by mid-century, fifteen thousand vehicles creating noise and waste on New York City streets each day.¹⁴ In 1844, two years before Thomas Cole painted his large picnic scene, *Pic-Nic*, William Cullen Bryant warned readers of the *New York Evening Post* that "Commerce is devouring inch by inch by inch the coast of the island, and if

we would rescue any part of it for health and recreation it must be done now."¹⁵

Picnic scenes reflected urban concerns for health, recreation and clean water. Water, an essential part of every picnic landscape, was not only economically symbolic but also represented physical and spiritual well being. By the first decade of the century, cities found it necessary to develop complex water distribution systems to replace wells contaminated by surface drainage and underground seepage from cesspools. Philadelphia built a pumphouse on the Schuylkill river to deliver fresh water to their residents, and in 1842, New Yorkers celebrated the opening of the Croton Reservoir System which brought water from Westchester County, through forty miles of pipes and aqueducts to the heart of the city. The use of water to promote health and cure disease also became popular in the 1840s with the establishment of the American Hydropathic Society and the publishing of its *Water-Cure Journal*. Health resorts sprang up in both the city and the country, practicing water cures, dietary reform and a new fashion called gymnastics.¹⁶ The picnic scene exemplified the clean air and fresh water necessary for a healthy life.

The unspoiled pastoral image implied a safe haven from disease. Those city dwellers who could afford to, sought refuge in the country during the epidemic seasons, which were annual occurrences in all major cities along the commerce routes. Although epidemics also affected rural areas, it was urban crowding, especially in Northeastern cities, that exacerbated the spread of cholera, small pox, scarlet fever and tuberculosis. In 1832, the *Cholera Gazette* published morbidity rates which numbered sixty to seventy deaths per day. That same year, William Dunlap recorded in his diary, that it

was necessary to close the annual exhibition of New York's National Academy of Art because of the great alarm caused by the Cholera epidemic. He later wrote that he would be unable to take subscriptions for his theater because of the morbidity rate of the disease.¹⁷

Progressive reformers recognized that urban crowding and lack of adequate sanitation was responsible for the spread of disease.¹⁸ Up until 1850, over five times as many people lived on farms as in towns and cities. However, when almost a million immigrants began entering the United States each year, almost eighty percent of whom stayed in urban areas, the population of the cities increased dramatically. Two thirds of the immigrants were unskilled laborers who settled in the shanty housing which surrounded centers of employment. The living conditions of the poor were described as "filthy rooms, damp, dirty, and moldy cellars where people lived...without ventilation or drainage, or receptacles for refuse or supply of water, or common comforts of life."¹⁹ These shanty houses became so numerous within the city that they could not be ignored.

Picnic paintings reflected the growing concern over the lack of natural open public space within the city as crowding and rising land values overtook the private gardens and orchards. Early parks were small formal squares not intended for recreation and were generally used exclusively by the residents of the surrounding houses. Those with limited time and funds, found open space in fields overlooking local rivers or in cemeteries.²⁰ Andrew Jackson Downing and William Cullen Bryant campaigned for urban park land as a civilized amenity, envisioning public spaces where people of all classes could meet together for enlightenment and enjoyment. In the 1850's Frederick Law

Olmsted and Calvert Vaux designed New York City's Central Park. They created a landscape of artificial hills, lakes and meadows interspersed with miles of equestrian paths and pedestrian walks. Green velvet lawns and gardens could also be enjoyed, at a distance, from along the seven miles of carriage road. The park included a zoological garden and a new reservoir to meet New York's ever increasing need for clean water.²¹ With efficient environmental planning Olmsted and Vaux transformed the squalid shanty town that had occupied the acreage into the ingeniously contrived landscape described by Matthew Hale Smith.

On a bare, unsightly, and disgusting spot, they have created and area of beauty, charming as the Garden of the Lord. Where not a tree or shrub was found, they have a forest spring up, and have planted three hundred and twenty thousand eight hundred and forty-six shrubs and trees.²²

Although the park was designed as open space for the recreation of the greater population, it was also meant to educate and elevate the public's appreciation for rural beauty. For the wealthy urbanite the park provided a pleasure garden, and like picnic paintings, it brought the country to the city.

In the decades leading up to the Civil War picnic paintings reflected the needs and values of society. Early picnics, drawn from prior English models and topographical documents, were scenes symbolizing the pride and power of land ownership. William Bartlett's engraving of a scenic picnic emphasized monumental themes which visually helped to establish a national identity in the American landscape, while Thomas Cole's allegorical painting was based on the premise that man could commune with God in the purity of nature. George Loring Brown introduced progress in the form of the railroad and suggested the passing of a pastoral way of life. As cities grew

more hectic, so grew the public's nostalgia for the calm of nature's garden and the imagined simplicity of the rural landscape. Jerome Thompson depicted the simple pleasures of Americans retreating to the an unspoiled island for their spiritual and physical well being. In 1864, Lilly Spencer, expressed the values and concerns of a settled domestic country in time of war. James Jackson Jarvis could easily have had her painting in mind when he wrote

Any art which bases itself upon the purer instincts of humanity at large, such as the healthful enjoyment of nature, domestic love and the sentiments and passions that dignify the human race, holding fast the great principle of elevating the entire people to the full stature of manhood, such an art, is in of its birthright, essentially democratic.²³

As pictures of picnics changed from small private parties to large public events, they became social commentaries of the era. America's traditional Fourth of July picnic was uniquely portrayed by Susan Merrett, as an idealized patriotic celebration. With the establishment of public parks, artists began to locate their picnic scenes in the city. Newspapers and magazines published illustrations of large organized picnics, sponsored by various social and ethnic groups. These documentary picnics, represented here by Winslow Homer's magazine engravings, exhibit a fundamental change in the iconography of the picnic. The picnic scene has evolved from an allegory to an everyday event.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 828-9. See also James Gilray's caricature Blowing up the Pic Nics of 1802 in Mary Dorothy George, *Hogarth To Cruikshank: Social Change In Graphic Satire*. (New York: Walker Press, 1967), p.106. The caricature shows the amateur Pic Nic Society being attacked by Sheridan because they gave public performances in a little theatre.
2. The book was a collection of forty short stories contributed by contemporary writers for the benefit of a deceased publisher's impoverished family. The publisher, John Macrone, left his wife and children destitute by his early death. Dickens "Lamplighter's Story" appears in the book. Some of the other authors included W.H. Maxwell, Thomas Moore, a Miss Strickland, Horace Smith, and Leitch Ritchie. George Cruikshank and Phiz contributed Illustrations. Charles Dickens. *Pic-nic Papers*, (London: Ward & Lock, 1841).
3. Roxana Barry, *Land of Plenty: Nineteenth Century American Picnic and Harvest Scenes*. Katonah Gallery Exhibition Catalog. (Katonah, N.Y.: Katonah Gallery, 1981). Only six pages of the text dealt with picnics.
4. *Ibid.* p. 5.
5. Mary Ellen W Hern, "Picnicking in the Northeastern United States, 1840-1900" *Winterthur Portfolio* 24 (Summer / Autumn 1989) pp. 139-1900.
6. *Ibid.* p. 143.
7. *Inventory of American Paintings* Computer Subject Index compiled in 1976 by the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C.
General books and articles which mention picnics include:
Hermann Warner Williams, Jr. *Mirror To The American Past. A survey of American Genre Painting: 1750-1900*, (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1973).
William H. Gerdts, "The American Painting Collection At The Brooklyn Museum", *American Art Review* 3 (September / October, 1976) pp. 82-100. Gerdts calls the picnic "a depiction of city people on a country outing, placed in a Claudian setting of great idyllicism, an updated Arcadian image of man at harmony with beneficent Nature." pp. 88-9.
Ferber, Linda S. "Themes in American Genre Painting: 1840-1880", *Apollo* 115 (April, 1982) pp. 250-259.

Author unknown, "Picnics Long Ago" *American Heritage*. 22, n.3 (June 1971) pp. 42-7.

8. There are sixty-two oil paintings, twenty-seven engravings, eight watercolors, six lithographs and eight works of unknown media. The majority of the oil paintings are of good size, with over half the pictures exceeding dimensions of 24 x 36 inches. Although Thomas Cole's Picnic of 1846, measuring 45 x 72 inches is the largest, other works by Durand, Spencer, Thompson, and Lang are also substantial, reflecting an increase in popularity of large canvases after 1850.
9. James Flexner, *That Wilder Image: The Painting of America's Native School From Thomas Cole to Winslow Homer*. (Baton: Little Brown, 1962) Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825-1875* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). There was a need for invented landscapes since, on the East coast, the historical landscape had become comfortable and domesticated, the wilderness was part of the past.
10. William Dunlap, *Niagara*. 1830 (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970)
11. The print firm of Currier & Ives published 7500 lithographs between 1838 and 1894 which were widely sold throughout the country as decorations for the family home. These images were nostalgic reminders of the past in the East and a fantasy of the future in the West. There were only five picnics scenes listed in their entire inventory, suggesting that the subject was clearly not a popular one across America. Source for all five: *Currier & Ives, A Catalogue Raisonne* Vol.1 and 2. (New York: Gale Research Co., 1984).
12. See Joshua C. Taylor, *America As Art*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), pp. 97-119.
13. Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *American Academy of Fine Arts and American Art Union*. (New York: New York Historical Society, 1953), p. 280.
14. Charles Lockwood, *Manhattan moves Uptown* (Boston: Houghton Mufflin, 1976), p. 129.
15. Quoted in Henry Hope Reed and Sophia Duckworth, *Central Park: A History and a Guide* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1972), p. 3.
16. Harvey Green, *Fit For America: Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.) pp. 64-66.

17. William Dunlap, *Diary of William Dunlap*. (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1969), pp. 602, 686 and 861. Also, Lilly Spencer's (The Fourth of July, plate 9) family originally planned to live in New York City but cholera epidemic of 1832 influenced their decision to move to the Ohio.

18. Garbage disposal was a private affair. The wealthy and middle class hired private firms or individuals to remove waste in garbage carts. The city, however, largely depended on scavenger pigs to dispose of unwanted street litter. These wild pigs became subject of newspaper illustration where police attempted to round up an overpopulation of roaming pigs rooting around the immigrant shanty housing. See *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 13, 1859.

19. *Report of the Sanitary Committee of the Board of Health of Philadelphia on the Subject of the Asiatic Cholera, Embracing Certain Sanitary Suggestions and Recommendations* Philadelphia Board of Health 1848 p. 7. cited in *Philadelphia-300 Year History*. edited by Russell F. Weigley, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1982), p. 318. "They breathe the pestiferous atmosphere of some degraded or illy ventilated purlieus where extremes of filth and misery and loathson disease met the eye, where horrid heaps of manure from hog and cow pens; putrifying garbage and refuse of every kind; decomposing carcasses, filthy rooms, damp, dirty, and moldy cellars where people lived...full and foul privies gave off noxious gases... in close proximity to badly contrived houses, crowded with occupants, filthy and poor, without ventilation or drainage, or receptacles for refuse or supply of water, or common comforts of life"

20. Early in the century Green-Wood cemetery in Brooklyn was a favorite picnic spot. Donald Simon "Green-Wood Cemetery and The American Park Movement." *Essays In the History of New York City; A Memorial to Sidney Pomerantz*. ed. Irwin Yellowitz. (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1978), pp. 61-77.

21. New York followed Philadelphia's pattern in developing a park around the Schuylkill Fairmount Water Works on the Schuylkill River in 1855.

22. Matthew Hale Smith, *Sunshine and Shadow*. (Hartford: J. B. Bure & Co., 1869), p. 361.

23. James Jackson Jarvis, *The Art Idea* .1864 (Cambridge Mass: Belknap Press, 1960), p. 182.

THE PICNIC AND THE LANDSCAPE

From the nation's earliest years the land has played an important role in establishing an American identity. In almost half of the picnic scenes painted before the Civil War, the landscape was the most essential component, with small figures included as symbolic witnesses to the larger view of nature.

In the eighteenth century the wilderness was seen as hostile, to be cleared for progress and economic development. Civilization was thought to be superior to the wilderness and should supplant it. Only later, after the land had been tamed, did colonists begin to appreciate the purity of the rural landscape. The landowners saw themselves as God's chosen people. Genesis 1:28 was often cited as a justification for clearing the land:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.¹

Early picnic paintings were topographical views of private property symbolizing the owner's pride in his personal wealth and status. In 1784, an anonymous artist illustrated D.R. Philipse Manor (plate 1). This large land grant was located on a triangular area at the junction of the Hudson, Bronx and Harlem Rivers in what is now called Yonkers. Like many topographical works painted during this period, it followed a European formula in documenting the physical details of the large private estate. The property included a mill and several large working buildings along the water's edge. Fertile fields and orchards surrounded the large manor house which still

stands on the site today.² The artist included a pastoral scene where picnickers enjoy music and friendship in a peaceful environment. These picnickers in the foreground resemble figures found in decorative cartouches on maps where they personified cities, rivers, and muses of abundance.³ The work is not strictly a picnic scene, since the participants are more emblematic than real, but it demonstrates the role they were to play in many of the later picnics. The happy group beside the river bank suggests a sense of harmony with nature while their picnic basket replaces the horn of plenty as an emblem of agricultural wealth and prosperity.

There is an irony in these simple happy people enjoying nature's bounty since Philipse Manor had been the site of the most serious land riots of 1765-66. Earlier in the century migration by farmers from the free hold states of New England had increased. Many settled on the vacant portions of large estates, farming the land unhindered for several decades. In 1760, the Philipse family attempted to repossess their land, evict the squatters, and collect rents from all the tenants on the estate. A year long rebellion followed, which ended only when the New York Courts sent British troops to capture the leaders.⁴ The American government subsequently confiscated the property in 1779 when the loyalist Philipse family fled to England. This topographical illustration possibly documents the Philipse land grant prior to its dissolution into smaller properties by the New York authorities.

In the nineteenth century land continued to play an important role in the establishment of an American ideology. As the country grew from a fledgling republic into a strong nation, a sense of pride developed in the native landscape. The United States was far removed from centuries of

European culture. There were no Gothic Cathedrals nor Greek ruins, but there was an abundance of majestic scenery. Political, religious and cultural beliefs became attached to these natural wonders of the American landscape.

As early as 1803, with the Louisiana Purchase, the country was committed to western expansion. By 1830 the landscape represented American power and liberty, supporting the belief in a geographical predestination which later became known as Manifest Destiny.⁵ The landscape was also tied to the transcendentalist movement, a religious belief that God revealed himself in his creations and that man could learn about Him from careful observation of the natural world. Thomas Cole wrote,

American associations are not so much of the past as of the present and the future...You see no ruined tower to tell of outrage-- no gorgeous temple to speak of ostentation; but freedom's offspring-- peace, security and happiness dwell there, the spirits of the scene... mighty deeds shall be done in the now pathless wilderness; and poets yet unborn shall sanctify the soil.⁶

The country's natural wonders helped to establish our identity and became important in creating the myth that America was the Promised Land whose character would be as grand as the landscape. The power of the water rushing over Niagara Falls became an icon for American power and liberty and its rainbow a sign of our destiny. Visiting these natural wonders was recommended as both a healthy activity and a religious pilgrimage.⁷ Horace Greeley, in a letter to the editor published in *Graham's Magazine*, wrote of his trip to Niagara

God and His handiwork here stand forth in lone sublimity ...Few can have visited Niagara and left it no humbler, no graver than they came...Niagara, like St. Peter's at Rome, enlarges on the vision.⁸

While it is true that the East coast had once been a dense, primordial wilderness, by 1830 the region was domesticated. Americans as well as Europeans, were taking grand tours of the natural wonders of the Eastern United States. Magazines were constantly publishing literary descriptions of famous sites to satisfy the widespread fascination with travel. From organized day excursions to extended trips by vacationers who stayed all season, tourism was becoming a part of American life.

American Scenery, a book designed to celebrate the romance and poetry of the American landscape, illustrated these national symbols of pride and moral values.⁹ Published in 1840, as a joint production between the American writer Nathaniel Parker Willis and the English illustrator William Henry Bartlett, the book gave the reader a unique topographical guide to popular American natural landmarks. It was also a rebuttal to the derogatory travel books written a few years earlier by Captain Basil Hall and Frances Trollope.¹⁰ Willis defended his country by describing New England's limitless potential and natural beauty.

In 1836, Bartlett accompanied Willis on a tour of America's famous landmarks, making detailed sketches to illustrate the text for their book. It was the largest and most diverse collection of American scenes yet published. The book became popular in both the United States and Europe with numerous subsequent printings and translations.

One engraving, View From Mount Holyoke, (plate 2) depicted one of the natural wonders of the eastern landscape.¹¹ Mount Holyoke is a 800 foot high peak located near Northampton, Massachusetts. It overlooks a portion of the Connecticut River called the Oxbow and commands a view with a

radius of about sixty miles in all directions. In 1821 Timothy Dwight's book, *Travels in New England and New York*, helped establish Mount Holyoke as a popular tourist attraction. He described the white church spires, small clusters of houses and neat squares of farmland along the Connecticut River as indicative of civilization, economic prosperity and social well being. A contemporary, Senator Charles Sumner, claimed the prospect from Mount Holyoke surpassed the highlands of Scotland and Mount Blanc.¹² As a young woman, Emily Dickinson, climbed at least once to this spot to enjoy the view and to sign the guest register of the Mountain House depicted at the extreme left of the print.¹³ The text that accompanies Bartlett's View From Mount Holyoke emphasized the domestication of the landscape.

The high cultivation of the farms, the evidences of wealth and taste in the architecture...innumerable church spires betokening the religious feelings of the people— these are all characteristic of the hardy, thriving, educated, and moral New Englander...no scene can be imagined more soothing and holy than that beheld by the traveler from the top of Mount Holyoke.¹⁴

William Bartlett created a tranquil, civilized landscape. The view descends to the right and opens onto the highly cultivated fertile valley with small orderly villages. The whole scene is in harmony with God and nature. The porch of the Prospect Mountain House is on the extreme left. The presence of small figures, both male and female, not only define the scale but also imply safety in a settled land. They look into the distance in anticipation of the future, bearing witness to the American vision of a country with natural boundaries from ocean to ocean. The great Oxbow represented a symbol of opening to the West. John Seelye wrote, "The river is a defining

agent in the metamorphosis of colonies to republic, serving as entrance or border but always as a symbol of what might be obtained beyond."¹⁵

Americans saw their future grandeur in the extension of their vast territory. Mythology and religion were combined in the celebration of the American land. For those who lived in the city and did not own property, these pictures suggested that as Americans they owned these vast landscapes.

Bartlett's images were immensely popular in Europe. Since there were no copyright laws, imitations began to appear almost immediately. Because Bartlett accurately depicted the tourist sites, his views were easy to imitate, creating difficult problems of attribution. In the 1840's numerous paintings were recognized as copies of the illustrations in *American Scenery* ; however, since most were unsigned, over the years they gradually were attributed to others.

In an anonymous painting copied from Bartlett's engraving of View From Mt. Holyoke, (plate 3) the view becomes a picnic.¹⁶ Although there is no similarity in style, this painting was once thought to be by Thomas Cole. Bartlett scholars now speculate that this version of the Oxbow was painted in France by Victor de Grailly for the European market. Victor de Grailly (1804-1889) is known to have lived most of his life in France, exhibiting annually at the Paris Salon. Even though he never visited the United States, he had a financially successful career painting American views copied from the engravings of others. He publicly stated that he used Bartlett's engravings as models for his paintings. Although it is a mystery just how these paintings came to this country, there are twelve known copies after Bartlett in American museums alone, and two of de Grailly's works are in the White

House Collection.¹⁷ Most attributions are based on de Grailly's particular style. He would imitate exactly the topographical and architectural features but would add civilizing touches to create a more picturesque landscape. In his version of View From Mt. Holyoke, de Grailly, with very few changes, shifted the emphasis to a human social gathering against nature's background. The artist moved the central party slightly back into the picture plane, focused light on them and added a male figure and a picnic basket. The picnickers are preoccupied with each other and scarcely notice the landscape. De Grailly reflected the European attitude towards nature where the landscape was a stage for human events.¹⁸ Bartlett's engraving expresses the uniquely American vision of the landscape as symbolic of the nation itself. Nature was paramount and the people were simply witnesses to the grandeur of the unspoiled land. It would be another decade before American artists concentrated on the human participants in their picnic scene.

NOTES ON THE PICNIC AND THE LANDSCAPE

1. *Holy Bible*, King James Version (London: Collin Clear-Type Press. 1948)
The biblical text was cited as early as 1630 by John Cotton and was read into the congressional record in 1846 by John Quincy Adams.
2. D.R. Philipse Manor. 1784. sepia wash in the collection of Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Tarrytown, N.Y. Illustrated in Marshall B. Davidson, *Five Hundred Years of Life in America*. (New York: Abrams, Inc. 1983), p. 41 and in John Zukowsky and Robbe Pierce Stimson, *Hudson River Villas* (New York:Rizzoli,1985), pp. 39-43.
3. Dale Roylance and Nancy Finlay, *Pride of Place: Early American Views From the Collection of Leonard L. N Milberg* 53 (Princeton: Princeton University Library,1983), p.ix. It is also similar to a Rococo pastoral reminiscent of earlier European works. For example see Boucher's Le Repos des Fermiers and other works illustrated in Robert C. Cafritz, Lawrence Gowing & David Rosand, *Places of Delight* (Washington D.C.:The Phillips Collection, National Gallery of Art, 1988), p. 168, p. 176.
4. Frederick Philipse came from Holland in 1650 and served as Peter Stuyvesant's carpenter. Before he died in 1702, he owned ninety thousand acres with a royal patent to the property. Marshall B. Davidson, *New York, A Pictorial History* (New York: Scribner's, 1977), p. 34-5
5. Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny* (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith Pub., 1958), p. 11. Joseph Chandler, in his fourth of July Oration in 1804, stated that the Louisiana Purchase was "the commencement of our anticipating hope envisions the day when our boundaries shall be those which nature has formed for a great, powerful and free state"
6. Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery" published in *The American Monthly Magazine, New Series* (January,1836) quoted in John W. McCoubrey, *American Art 1700-1960: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 106. Cole describes this Connecticut valley as still possessing "that gentle aspect; and the imagination can scarcely conceive Arcadian vales more lovely or more peaceful — its villages are rural places where trees overspread every dwelling, and the fields upon its margin have the richest verdure."

7. John F. Sears, *Sacred Places* (New York: Oxford university Press, 1989), p.5. Popular tourist manuals gave instructions on travel with a dash of drama added, focusing on the power of the elements over the landscape and the religious nature of the land.

8. ____ *Graham's Magazine* 21 (August 1842), pp. 107-8, Philippe Suchard also likened Niagara to St Peter's. Philippe Suchard *Un voyage aux Etats-Unis d' Amerique*, 1824 as reprinted in Joseph Jobe, *Romantic America* (Lausanne, Switzerland: Edita, 1966), p.45. See also Elizabeth McKinsey. "An American Icon" in *Niagara* (Washington D. C.: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1985), pp. 83-97.

9. N.P. Willis and William Bartlett, *American Scenery Subtitled Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Trans. Atlantic Nature*, 1840, Reprinted by (Barre Mass: Imprint Society, 1971) The book also included descriptions of American architecture and social institutions in order to display American culture. Bartlett made one hundred and twenty-two accurate detailed watercolor sketches for the engravings to illustrate the Willis' text. View From Mount Holyoke of 1836 measuring 5 x 7 inches, is illustrated on p. 15.

10. Two negative English travel books had been recently published in America. Captain Basil Hall's *Book of Forty Etchings Made From the Camera Lucida in North America* (1827-28), with its companion volume *Travels in America* and Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) caused an uproar in this country.

11. Thomas Cole also painted the natural wonder in 1836. His View From Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm, is a large oil on canvas, measuring 51 x 76 inches, which is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In order to make this painting more than a scenic landscape, he divided the panoramic view equally between wilderness and farmland, between the sublime and the picturesque. The dramatic, wilder image of an uninhabited mountain after a storm was balanced with an idyllic cultivated valley. By combining both aspects of nature in one painting he suggested time and change, a past, present and future.

12. Op. cit., Sears, pp. 52-56.

13. Polly Longworth, *The World of Emily Dickinson* (New York: Norton and Co., 1990), p. 33.

14. *Graham's Magazine* 29 (September 1846), p. 150. *Graham's Magazine* reproduced Bartlett's engraving mixing Willis' description with its own commentary on New England virtue. In true American spirit the article closes with a comment on the value of the land. A tract of nine hundred acres was worth over a million dollars.

15. John Seelye, *Prophetic Waters: The River in Early American Life and Literature*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 7 and p. 11.

16. The anonymous painting of View From Mt. Holyoke dated 1840, is a 16 x 21 inch oil on canvas, owned by the Cleveland Museum of Art.

17. Mary Ellen Earl, "William H. Bartlett and His Imitators" *Antiques* 92 (November 1967), pp. 722-25. Bartlett's images were immensely popular in England, France and Germany. Since they were not protected by copyright they were frequently appropriated by other artists and publishers. In America, artists such as James Burt, Thomas Chambers, John V. Cornell and numerous anonymous artists made paintings from the engravings while others made new engravings after the originals. It is now accepted that Bartlett worked only on the watercolor drawings from which the engravings were made and never worked in oil.

18. William Nathaniel Banks, "The French Painter Victor de Grailly and The Production of Nineteenth-Century American Views" *Antiques* 106 (July 1974), pp. 84-101. Victor de Grailly studied with Jean Victor Bertin and was influenced by seventeenth century Dutch Landscape painting. He also reflected a French attitude which may be seen in the pastoral works of Jean Watteau and the royal picnics painted by Carle Van Loo and Nicolus Lancret. It is not known when or how this copy of Bartlett eventually found its way to this country and it is doubtful that it had any influence on contemporary picnic iconography.

THE IDYLLIC PICNIC

Thomas Cole painted his Pic-Nic in 1846 (plate 4) as a celebration of the American land.¹ It is not simply a document of a geographical location but rather a symbolic image of an unspoiled land infused with a pantheistic spirit. This tranquil picnic scene depicts a man in nature surrounded by friends and family beside the river of life. This is an idyllic Claudian image of romantic innocence applied to the American landscape. It is the new Eden. In his 1835 *Essay on American Scenery*, Cole called America

a new Eden and our birthright...We are still in Eden; the wall that shuts us out of the garden is our own ignorance and folly. American nature is new to art,...There is in the human mind an almost inseparable connection between the beautiful and the good....in gazing on the pure creations of the Almighty, he feels a calm religious tone steal through his mind.²

Nature was cultivated, enriched, a finished dwelling place for man as the new Adam, secure in his world. William Gerdts wrote that Cole "invested his subject with a special reference to Nature as a manifestation of the deity...a new American Adam bringing order and cultivation to this New World Garden of Eden."³

This view of the garden was also a central theme in the contemporary literary Transcendental movement, exemplified by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson. Thoreau, in both *Walden* and the poem titled *Nature*, expressed the desire to recover innocence from the unspoiled woods while Emerson in his essay titled *Nature*, called it the symbol of the spirit.⁴ The landscape was evidence of the divine hand of God. The arcadian gentleness of the Garden of Eden implied innocence, morality and nobility in kinship

with nature. However the primal innocence of Cole's picnic was in contrast to the growing problems of the crowded city. It is a pastoral ideal rather than the reality of the industrialized landscape.⁵

The painting, originally called A Pic Nic Party, was commissioned by James Brown for one thousand dollars. Although the subject of a "Pic Nic" was Cole's, the composition was designed to please his patron. In a letter to the artist, his friend George Allen described Brown's tastes and stressed the size of the figures three times.

I would suggest that the figures be made large enough to be easily seen, and as a group to tell a story, and let the main features of the picture be such as to be easily seen...while there might be some collateral matter introduced which might be discerned in subsequent and successive examinations.⁶

Cole successfully blended a genre activity with the idyllic landscape which his biographer, Louis Noble described as "a sylvan scene, all American,...polished waters, manifold woods, quiet air, and everywhere the sense of beauty with wilderness"⁷ The painting may be seen as an American allegory as well as a real family gathering. The setting is thought to be in the Catskills where Cole lived. A pleasure party sits comfortably under the shade of a large old tree, listening contentedly to the music of a guitar while close by, three small children share their own picnic. Further off, on the bank of the river, a couple is lost in conversation. Ellwood Parry interprets the painting as an actual event representing the artist's favorite pastimes of hiking, picnicking and making music. He suggests that the musician standing with the guitar may be a self portrait but concedes that the figure is not a mirror likeness. Cole did include himself in other paintings so this may be a symbolic image of the artist's aesthetic immersion in nature.⁸ Parry identifies

the woman standing to the musician's right as Cole's wife Maria Bartow and the group of three children as Cole's own family. Maria is based on a pencil and white chalk drawing in reverse while Theddy age eight, Mary age six, and Emily age three resemble William Sidney Mount's drawings of the two older children sketched in 1843. The other picnickers may be friends or members of the Cole-Bartow family.⁹

William Gerdts describes the pleasure party in more symbolic terms referring to Nature as a manifestation of the deity. He notes that the youngest members of the picnicking group are also those most out in the open setting. The adults are under the protective tree "while older people wander further and further into the woods eventually to become absorbed, or reabsorbed, into the oneness of God's handiwork."¹⁰ Thus Cole used the picnic to describe the passage of time from childhood through adulthood to old age. Time and the stages of life were a recurrent themes in the artist's work. Six years earlier he created a series called The Voyage of Life and was currently working on a pilgrimage series titled The Cross and The World.

Although there is an aura of freshness in the picnic, it is an artificially constructed paradise isolating the group from a materialistic society. It is a depiction of city people placed in a landscape derived from Claude Lorrain, an updated arcadian image of man in harmony with beneficent Nature. Cole used traditional symbolic images from the historical Claudian landscape tradition. For example, the water on the right is a Biblical reference to the "river going out of Eden to water the earth and give sustenance to life".¹¹ Water was especially important to the American imagination representing openness, promise, and optimism for the future. In 1846, water was still the

most important means of transportation for both supplies and people. Thus lakes and rivers were both mystical and functional, giving direction to the human experience. Emerson wrote in his journal,

In the West, when the sun was sinking behind clouds, one pit of splendour lay as in a desert of space, a deposit of still light.... Then I beheld the river, like God's love, journeying out of the gray past on into the green future.¹²

The picnic is bathed by afternoon sunlight suggesting God's grace and favor. It is the end of the day as shadows creep into the forest and the figures around the blanket begin to pack the food in the basket. Here man, in harmony with nature, is sheltered by the forest. Emerson also wrote of being protected by the woods.

In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he will tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life, no disgrace, no calamity which nature cannot repair...I am part or particle of God.¹³

The picnickers sit under the shade a large old tree, perhaps representing the tree of life from Genesis 2: 9 "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life is also in the midst of the garden."¹⁴ To Americans the tree also meant the protection and permanence of nature that gives strength to the country. The new growth on the old withered tree in the right lower corner is a symbolic reference dating back to the early Renaissance of the rebirth of the tree of knowledge.

Cole has placed a large chopped tree stump in the center of the

foreground as a symbol of man's loss of innocence because of civilization's violence towards nature. Cole wrote in his *Essay on American Scenery* "the ravages of the axe are daily increasing, the most noble scenes are made desolate, and often times with a wantonness and barbarism scarcely credible in a civilized nation."¹⁵ Tree stumps were a common element in the landscape and many early environmentalists decried the destruction of patriarchal trees in the name of progress. In 1827 Basil Hall wrote

When the land is cleared for the purpose of cultivation, the stumps are left standing for many years, from its being easier, as well as more profitable in other respects to plough around them...within the immediate limits of the inhabited town itself, in streets, too, where shops were opened, that we had to drive first on one side, and then on the other, to avoid the stumps of an oak, or a hemlock, or a pine tree staring us full in the face.¹⁶

George Pope Morris, editor of the *New York Mirror* and other successful magazines wrote and published a poem called "Woodman, Spare That Tree". The poem written before 1840 was also published in *American Scenery*. by Nathaniel Parker Willis.¹⁷

When Thomas Cole painted the Pic-Nic in 1846 he was at the height of his career and a highly respected member of the New York art community. When the Pic-Nic was exhibited at the twenty-first annual exhibition of the National Academy on April 16, 1846, it influenced other artists to depict similar imagery.¹⁸ James McDougal Hart's Picnic On The Hudson (plate 5) painted in 1854, was clearly influenced by Cole. Jerome Thompson also imitated the musician under the tree in his 1857 painting called Recreation. (plate 8)¹⁹ Since the number of picnic scenes increased from this point onward, it can be said that Thomas Cole popularized the subject.

NOTES ON THE IDYLLIC PICNIC

1. Cole's oil painting, measuring 45 x72 inches, is in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.
2. Thomas Cole, "Essay on American Scenery", published in *The American Monthly Magazine, New Series* I (January 1836) see John W. McCoubrey, *American Art 1700-1960: Sources and Documents*. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 99-100.
3. William H. Gerdts, "The American Painting Collection At The Brooklyn Museum", *American Art Review*. 3 (September-October 1976), pp. 88-9.
4. Henry David Thoreau, *The Portable Thoreau*. (New York: Viking Press, 1947), p. 341 and p. 242. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays & Lectures* (New York: The Library of America, 1983), p. 20.
5. See Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825-1875* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 266.
6. Letter to Cole from George Allen, November 3, 1845 as cited in Howard S. Merritt, *Thomas Cole*, exhibition catalogue, Memorial Art Gallery (Rochester: University of Rochester, 1969), p. 41 n. 57.
7. Louis Legrand Noble, *The Life and Works of Thomas Cole*. 1853 Reprinted by (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 271.
8. Thomas Cole painted himself as the solitary figure in his View From Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm, in 1836, now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
9. Ellwood Parry, *The Art of Thomas Cole* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988), p. 37
10. Op. cit., Gerdts, pp. 88-9. and "American Landscape Painting: Critical Judgments, 1730- 1845." *The American Art Journal*. 17, (Winter 1985) p. 57
11. *Holy Bible*, King James Version. (London: Collin Clear-Type Press, n.d.) Genesis 2:10.

12. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson* Vol. 5, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1901-14), p. 47. September 16, 1838.
13. Op. cit., Emerson, *Essays & Lectures* , p. 10
14. Op. cit., *Bible* Genesis 2: 9.
15. Op. cit., Cole p. 100.
16. Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828*. reprinted in Joseph Jobe, *Romantic America* (Lausanne, Switzerland: Edita, 1966), p.45. See also Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. "The Ravages of the Axe: The Meaning of the Tree Stump in Nineteenth-Century American Art." *Art Bulletin* 61 (December 1979) n. 4. pp. 611-626.
17. N.P. Willis and William Bartlett *American Scenery* 1840, Subtitled "*Land, Lake, and River Illustrations of Trans. Atlantic Nature*" by (Reprinted by Barre Mass: Imprint Society, 1971), p. 237.

Woodman, Spare That Tree!
 Touch not a single bough!
 In youth it sheltered me,
 And I'll protect it now.
 'Twas my forefather's hand
 That placed it near his cot;
 There, woodsman, let it stand,
 Thy axe shall harm it not!
18. Later the same year, he exhibited his Pic-Nic with two earlier Italian landscapes L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, placing his American pastoral in the company of two Claudian style paintings. The figures in L'Allegro were also engaged in gay pastimes or pleasant occupation. Thomas Cole's letter to Charles M. Parker, New York, 8 January 1846, *Cole Papers*, New York State Library.
19. Hart's painting, Picnic On The Hudson, an oval canvas measuring 33 x 56 inches is also in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE PICNIC

Cole's vision of the picnic within an arcadian garden was at odds with the growing public fascination with science and machines. In the 1840s a popular romantic attitude developed towards trains and bridges as engineering feats of wonder. The railroad especially captured the imagination of the country as a metaphor for progress and a new forceful power to extend human potential. When the steam powered train began operating in 1830, its speed and reliability radically changed land transportation. By 1853, the public was able to travel by rail to all the major cities on the East Coast and as far west as Chicago. Leo Marx described the railroad as the sound and vision of a new iconology for civilization and progress.¹ This new form of transportation provided mobility, expanded markets and standardized time, converting a society of self-contained communities into a centralized nation. Trains made communication possible between those who went to the west and those who stayed home. Letters traveling by mail lessened the isolation of the settlers and were a link to civilization. The railroad was described by Ralph Waldo Emerson as

a strong shuttle which shoots across the forest, swamp, river and arms of the sea, binding city to city. The Americans take to the little contrivance as if it were the cradle in which they were born.²

The railroad became one of the most common modes of transportation and was instrumental in providing easier access to quiet, remote areas of the countryside. However, while older types of transportation such as the sailing vessels that ferried picnic parties to their pleasure sites, were commonly

shown on the lakes and rivers, this new technology is absent from picnic scenes.³ For many American artists the image of the railroad expressed the promise and the danger of technology in modern industrial society. Picnics take place in a pastoral ideal, a gentle landscape, free of industrial reality. The railroad represented the busy city in contrast to the quiet pastoral picnic scene. Urban noise versus the silence of the country symbolized culture in opposition to nature.⁴

Only one artist, George Loring Brown, included a train prominently in his picnic scene. In 1850, he painted two versions of Hudson River At Bear Mountain.⁵ (plate 6) They are almost identical except for small details in the figures and landscape. On the left is a picturesque picnic scene beside a sailboat on the banks of the river. A train enters the landscape from a tunnel on the right capturing the attention of the pleasure party. The railroad track heads directly into the foreground space towards the viewer. Although for a brief time the two scenes, separated by the misty, tranquil Hudson, seem to coexist, they represent two different ways of life. The motionless sailboat is part of the past while the locomotive rushes toward the future. Perhaps Brown was attempting to balance the ideal pastoral with the modern world, reconciling nature and civilization. The painting illustrates Leo Marx's belief that

the pastoral idea of America...was a society of the middle landscape, a rural nation exhibiting a happy balance of art and nature...In this sentimental guise the pastoral ideal remained of service long after the machine's appearance in the landscape. It enabled the nation to continue defining its purpose as the pursuit of rural happiness while devoting itself to productivity, wealth and power.⁶

NOTES ON TECHNOLOGY AND THE PICNIC

1. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 180. This is the classic study of the railroad's effect on the pastoral vision of nineteenth-century America. The depiction of the railroad in American landscape painting was well researched for an exhibition called *The Railroad in the American Landscape: 1850-1950*, Wellesley College Museum, Wellesley, Mass. in 1981.
2. Jan. 7, 1843 *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. William H. Gilman (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1960), p. 330.
3. There are few depictions of any machines in the picnics. Asher Durand (Dover Plains 1848) and Andrew Melrose (Valley of The Hachensack From the Estate of L. Becker, Esq. Union City New Jersey n.d.) painted trains in the distance while Robert Walter Weir put ships and guns in his West Point picnic (View Of Hudson River 1864). George Inness was the first artist to prominently depict a train in his landscape painting (The Lackawanna Valley 1855). The work was commissioned by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad for commercial purposes. Susan Danly and Leo Marx *The Railroad in American Art*. (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1988), p. 80.
4. See Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 169.
5. Both works are oil paintings measuring 30"x48". One is owned by Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, and the other is listed in a private collection in Ardsley-on-the-Hudson, N.Y. George Loring. Brown (1814-1889) was originally a wood-engraver, etcher and lithographer as well as a portrait painter. Hudson River At Bear Mountain was painted before he went abroad in 1853 to study in Rome and Paris.
6. Op. cit., Marx, p. 226.

THE COURTSHIP PICNICS

As open space within the cities disappeared, the landscape became romanticized in the imagination of the rapidly growing middle class. Images of picnics appealed to city dwellers who had to deal with the tensions and frustrations of a crowded environment. The focus of the picnic scene changed as the East coast developed an interest in health, fresh air, recreation and leisure.¹

Nineteenth century Americans wished to be seen as an industrious people. In most leisure paintings, past or future work is implied, and the entertainment is a reward for labor. In subjects such as corn husking, sugaring off, and apple gathering, recreation is combined with labor and thus leisure is earned.² Since idleness was the devil's work, leisure was to be disguised as a healthy activity. Outdoor physical sports became an acceptable form of leisure, while new wealth made participation possible for many levels of society. The public came to view leisure and health as part of a harmonious style of life. A pilgrimage to the country became beneficial for one's physical, mental and moral soundness as well as one's soul.

Picnic images, which increased as active sports became popular, now focused on healthy people in the open air sharing food and friendship. Because the middle class preferred scenes with which they could identify, artists made the pastoral landscape more accessible by providing a narrative device.³ The idyllic garden became a symbolic background for a social activity. These picnics told several stories within the frame, as opposed to earlier paintings which tended to have one focal point.

William Croome's A Pic-Nic on the Wissahickon. (plate 7) is a picturesque middle class pleasure party. This engraving was first published in *Graham's Magazine* in October, 1844.⁴ A year later, an unknown folk artist copied the engraving in oil.⁵

The picnic is a simple romantic view of men and women enjoying themselves in the woods by a river bank. Lush foliage surrounds the scene and a stately manor house located on a distant hill is a reminder of earlier topographical picnics such as D.R. Philipse Manor. Croome designed this pastoral landscape using the same traditional picnic iconography that Thomas Cole would employ two years later in his idyllic painting, Pic-Nic. There is a large central tree representing the tree of life and in the left foreground, a withered trunk with new growth, suggesting the tree of knowledge. Although subtle moral references were often included in simple contexts, symbolic significance is questionable in this case since this engraving was intended as an entertaining diversion in a magazine.

Croome painted a variety of episodes to hold the viewer's attention, arranging three separate anecdotal groups in an inverted triangle around the dominant tree. Framed by a grove of trees on the left, a group of young women teasingly shower a young man with leaves, perhaps alluding to the realm of Flora in classical mythology. In the center foreground a couple sits in quiet conversation. The man devotes his complete attention to the woman while she braids a garland of flowers. On the river to the right, is a row boat with six adult passengers. A man in the bow plays a flute while wearing a woman's bonnet, much to the dismay of its owner. Humor is now used increasingly in painting to add human interest and create a diversion for the

audience. This gentle type of teasing caprice is new to visual picnic images although it is found earlier in magazine fiction. In the 1830's, *The Ladies Companion* and *Godey's Ladies Book* published unillustrated romantic accounts of picnics for the amusement of their readers.⁶

These scenes of courtship and flirtation by young people suggest a relaxed attitude towards behavior that was not permitted in other situations. An article which accompanied another of Croome's engravings described a similar picnic.

The romantic banks of the Wissahickon, the picturesque shores of the Schuylkill, are daily visited by picnic parties from the city. The day is spent in dancing, fishing, walking in the woods, or other amusements... A little love-making scene, behind a century old oak, has been happily introduced by the artist. It will be recognized as natural enough by not a few who look at the picture.⁷

These courtship picnics offered romance, freedom and expectation in the innocence of nature. The young woman could see her suitor as a hero of the wilderness, away from the constraints of the city.

They also reflect a more accurate image of women. Until the 1840s, artists portrayed women as delicate flowers, to be protected and rarely seen outdoors. Yet, American young women prior to marriage experienced fewer restrictions on their behavior and enjoyed more freedom than their counterparts in Europe. Young women were given a strong moral education and were less sheltered from the realities of the city. Foreign visitors commented that unsupervised American young women were allowed to be alone with a gentleman as well as carry on private correspondences.⁸

Catherine Beecher argued that the future of America was in the hands of the

women. She wrote that there was

a respect entertained for the moral freedom of the sex...In America, a young unmarried woman may, alone, and without fear, undertake a long journey... Let the women of a country be made virtuous and intelligent, and the men will certainly be the same.⁹

Men were made courteous because they were in the company of women. The women in the picnics represent the beginning of a pictorial type of American womanhood. This image of young, healthy American maidens with simple rustic innocence came to inspire the values of the nation.¹⁰

In 1857, Jerome Thompson also depicted healthy young Americans in his painting called Recreation.¹¹(plate 8) It is a more dignified picnic, balancing the narrative courtship scene with the landscape. The placement of the musician under the large tree on the left and the distant landscape across river on the right were clearly influenced by Thomas Cole's idyllic Pic-Nic. Thompson used the same imagery to suggest pastoral innocence and new life. He included the couple strolling together in the distance as well as new growth on the old tree. However, Thompson moves the picnic group into the foreground giving equal attention to the pleasure party and the landscape.

Unlike Cole, he gives importance to the picnic supplies, describing them with great accuracy, demonstrating his ability to paint multiple textures and materials for the entertainment of the viewer. The picnic basket placed prominently in front of the group, represents the cornucopia, emblematic of the richness and abundance of the land. The assortment of sandwiches, cakes and pies on white ground cloth is a clear sign of prosperity and a cultivated lifestyle. Porcelain dishes and a clear glass tumbler half full with wine can be seen on the blanket. There is a metal coffee pot on a small smoldering fire on

the rocks behind the tree while a clay pitcher and wine bottle cool in the brook. In the foreground there are clearly defined wildflowers, leaves, stalks, grass and trees. This minute observation of real objects may be traced to the writings of John Ruskin who espoused fidelity to the physical aspects of nature as seen in the works of the English Pre-Raphaelites. Thompson was most likely exposed to Ruskin's ideas during his stay in London in 1852 or perhaps through the New York art community after his return.¹²

Thompson approached the figures in the same descriptive manner giving attention to such details as facial hair and feathered hats. All the members of the group appear to be the same age and background. They give the appearance of affluence and refinement. The artist arranged the group consisting of four women and three men, in a triangle at the base of the tree. The three women are simply dressed in long sleeved coats and dresses. The fourth woman, who sits apart from the other couples and wears only a short sleeve blouse, is most likely a servant. There is a sense of formality in the poses of these young Americans; they do not seem relaxed at their leisure. Thompson had difficulty reconciling the idyllic landscape with a middle class picnic. The need to satisfy the public's desire for narrative depictions of every day life was at odds with the elevated idealized landscape. The painting itself becomes an example of the conflict between nature and civilization.

NOTES ON THE COURTSHIP PICNICS

1. For a complete discussion see Rhea Dulles Foster, *A History of Recreation* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1965).
2. See Jerome Thompson's Apple Gathering 1856 or The Haymakers 1859. Lee M Edwards, "The Life and Career of Jerome Thompson" *American Art Journal* 14 (Autumn 1982), pp. 4-30. and Sarah Burns, "The Poetry of Labor", *Pastoral Inventions*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), pp. 32-39.
3. There was pressure from both the public and the critics to have narrative content in paintings. As was noted in the letter to Cole from George Allen, November 3, 1845 as cited in Howard S. Merritt, *Thomas Cole*, Exhibition Catalogue Memorial Art Gallery (Rochester: University of Rochester, 1969), p.41 No. 57. See also Linda S. Ferber, "Themes in American Genre Painting: 1840-1880", *Apollo* 115 (April 1982), p. 256.
4. William Croome (1790-1860) A Pic-Nic on the Wissahickon is a drawing engraved by Rawdon, Wright & Hatch. Illustrated in *Graham's Magazine*, 25 (October 1844), opposite p.184. Croome, who originally came from the Boston area, was a partner in an engraving firm in Philadelphia. He was an important illustrator of books and bank note designs as well as a watercolorist. He also designed engraved wood blocks and is credited with the movement towards freer and more artistic treatment of engraving techniques in the 1840's. See Sinclair Hamilton, *Early American Book Illustrators and Wood Engravers, 1670-1870*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 191-6.
5. As was previously mentioned in the chapter on Bartlett's *American Scenery*, engravings were a rich source for the amateur painter. The painting is in the collection of the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn Michigan. It is reproduced in Robert Bishop, *Folk Painters of America*. (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979), p. 127.
6. "Preparation or Pleasure or A Pic-Nic" *Godeys' Ladies Book*. 10 (May 1835), pp. 211-219. John Neal, "Pic-Nics From T'other Side" *The Ladies Companion*. 6 (December 1836), pp.76-7. Henry F. Harrington, "A Day Out of the City" *The Ladies Companion* 10 (January 1839), pp. 127-9.
7. Another of Croome's steel engravings called The Pic-Nic Party was used as a frontispiece in *Godeys' Ladies Book*. 39 (July 1849). with an article "American Characteristics # 7 : The Pic-nic Party" by T.S. Arthur.

8. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. II (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 565-7.
9. Catherine Beecher, *A treatise on Domestic Economy* 1842. pp. 36-38 as cited in David Brion Davis, *Antibellum American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 16-7.
10. See Mattha Banta, *Imaging American Women, Idea and Ideals in Cultural History*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 380.
11. This oil painting, also called Pick Nick Near Mount Mansfield, measures 40 x 56 inches and is currently on view in the collection of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Jerome Thompson came from a family of painters. He painted portraits, landscapes and genre scenes in New York City before studying in Europe in 1852.
12. Although John Ruskin's influence in America was considered to begin in 1863 with the publication of the art magazine, *The New Path*, his books and articles were available in America by 1855. Linda S. Ferber & William H. Gerds, *The New Path, Ruskin And The American Pre-Raphaelites* (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1985), p. 14.

THE FAMILY PICNIC

At mid-century the picnic changed from an adult pleasure party to a celebration of domestic life. As cities struggled to deal with the growing problems of urbanization and the population explosion, the home became idealized as a physical and moral refuge from the outside world. The family became the center of ideal American life in what may be called the cult of domesticity. Society was able to balance conflicting ethical values by placing its moral principles in the home and industrial concepts in the world of commerce. This cult of domesticity helped to relieve the tensions that existed between the religious values of love and charity, and capitalist ideas based on competition and a recognition that only the fittest should survive.¹

As the husband's employment outside the home became a necessity, the structure of the family itself was redefined. Marriage was increasingly seen as a mutual relationship with more equality and responsibility for the wife. In the early part of the century women had been seen as inadequate and grouped with children, unable to sustain intellectual effort. Now the home became the special province of women as they assumed greater authority and control in the role of decision makers.² They were given superior status within the family and were responsible for forming and safeguarding the moral and religious character of those living in the home. The mother became a noble creature, morally more sensitive and superior to the men around her. An article by Edward D. Mansfield in *Godey's Ladies Book* expressed the popular romantic attitude towards women.

There is a beautiful parallel between the condition of woman in her domestic life, and the character of a nation. She is the mother of men, and the former of their minds. At that early age when every word distills upon the heart, like the dew drop upon tender grass...There is no beauty in character, nor glory in action, which has not been concentrated by her praise...It is thus that society is formed in its social and moral ideas.³

The growing magazine industry played an important part in defining the role of women in the home. Although the magazines were primarily directed towards the American born middle class, they also helped to illustrate proper values and establish a mode of American conduct for immigrant women.

Advocates for women's rights also established the home as the specific sphere of women, with the responsibility to oversee the manners and morals of the family. Catherine Beecher in her 1842 *Treatise on Domestic Economy* wrote,

The success of democratic institutions, as is conceded by all, depends upon the intellectual and moral character of the mass of the people...It is equally conceded, that the formation of the moral and the intellectual character of the young is committed mainly to the female hand. The mother forms the character of the future man; the sister bends the fibers that are hereafter to be the forest tree; the wife sways the heart, whose energies may turn for good or evil the destinies of a nation. Let the women of a country be made virtuous and intelligent, and the men will certainly be the same.⁴

The family became an American democratic institution and family values the backbone of America's democracy. The picnic became an extension of the home reflecting domestic attachments and devotion to the family. These images were a celebration of the family as the foundation of America, validating the values of society.

In response, families with children became the most common subject depicted in the picnic after 1850. Although Thomas Cole was the first artist to include children in the picnic scene, his children reflected idealized innocence in harmony with their environment and were more symbolic than real. Subsequent family events depicted healthy children with tolerant and amused adults enjoying each other's company. The images of clean, happy, well cared for children appeared at a time when major cities began to recognize the growing problem of poor and homeless children roaming the streets. In the 1850's social reformers began to establish institutions to house and care for the increasing number of orphans and abandoned children.⁵

In rural areas, where farm work increased with the age and size of the child, there was a continuity, a gradual progression from childhood into adulthood. In the city, where middle and upper class children did not have to contribute to the family income, childhood became a separate stage of life, free of adult responsibilities.

Manuals and magazines began to provide models of behavior and instructed parents on the care, health and education of the child.⁶ Literature celebrating the innocence and freedom of childhood became popular. John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker abolitionist and humanitarian, wrote the sentimental poem "The Barefoot Boy" published in 1856 in the *The Panorama*.⁷

Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

As the role of the child within the family became more important, picnic scenes became domestic and nostalgic allegories of family life.

Lilly Spencer's painting called The Fourth of July, (plate 9) idealizes friends and family in an Independence Day celebration.⁸ Spencer used the established picnic iconography found in earlier paintings to create this large group portrait in an idyllic landscape. Twenty-six people of all ages, from infants to elderly, picnic in a grove of trees near a river bank. Most of the figures are thought to be related to Spencer's family. The artist herself has not been identified although she may be the woman directly under the large center tree.⁹ She is the only one to appear concerned over the mishap before her. One of the swing ropes has broken and Spencer's husband Benjamin, has fallen to the ground. He sits with a resigned expression on his face as family and friends laugh at his plight. A second humorous episode can be anticipated in the lower left foreground where a young couple sits, secluded in a growth of bushes, oblivious to the commotion caused by the other picnickers. Their tender courtship is about to be disrupted by a mischievous boy shooting off a pistol.¹⁰ To the left of the tree, a young woman wears the hat of the soldier beside her, suggesting a flirtation or perhaps a betrothal. Nearby, a small child sits high on her father's shoulder, patriotically waving the American flag over the group, while an infant rests against a faithful dog in the foreground. The children may suggest the Biblical reference to the peaceable kingdom. "The Wolf also shall dwell with the lamb...and a little child shall lead them."¹¹ Spencer uses these quaint and humorous narratives to draw the audience into the scene and vicariously participate in the picnic. Sentimental anecdotes combined with romantic details became

the hallmark of the family picnic painting.¹²

The Fourth of July, painted during the Civil War, became one of the artist's most popular works. It was reproduced as an engraving three times between 1864 and 1866.¹³ The nostalgic image ignores the catastrophic war taking place in the country. In order to show benevolent abolitionist sentiments, she places two African-American servants prominently in the right foreground. Although they are included in the celebration of Independence Day they are still separate from the group, playing the traditional supportive role of waiter and nurse maid. The picnic became symbolic of the Union itself with family members as states, living harmoniously together. Spencer presents a romanticized portrait of a family gathering, recapturing the enthusiasm and happiness of a more peaceful time. The patriotic family picnic represents a bygone era when the nation was the new Eden.

NOTES ON THE FAMILY PICNIC

1. Deborah Gorham, *The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 4.
2. An article in the *Advocate* in 1838, stated that "Instead of regarding his wife as help-mate for him, an equal sharer in his joys and sorrows, he looks upon her as a useful article of furniture, which is valuable only for the benefit derived from it" *Advocate*, Feb.4,1838 quoted in Carroll Smith Rosenberg, "Beauty, The Beast and Militant Woman" *American Quarterly* 23 #4 (October 1971), p. 581.
3. Edward D. Mansfield, "Woman" *Godey's Ladies Book* 44 (May 1852), p. 406.
4. Both Catherine Beecher and A. J. Graves sought to give status to women without challenging male authority, thus the importance of the women's domestic role in the home. Catherine Beecher, *A treatise on Domestic Economy* 1842, and Mrs. A. J. Graves, *Woman in America: Being an Examination into the Moral and Intellectual Conditions of American Female Society*. 1843, as cited in David Brion Davis, *Antebellum American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 16-20.
5. In 1853 Charles Loring Brace founded the New York Children's Aid Society and established a Newsboy's Lodging House where homeless street boys were given food and shelter in return for selling newspapers. Thus the "paper boy" came into existence. The practice of sending orphans and delinquents on the railroads to new homes in the Midwest helped the labor shortage on the western farms, and ostensibly gave the children a fresh start in clean country air away from the diseases of the slum. By 1860, over five thousand children had been "placed out" to farms in Illinois, Michigan & Iowa. Christine Stansell, "Juvenile Reform" *The Social Fabric, American Life From 1607- 1877* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1984), p. 208.
6. For example Catherine Sedgwick, *Home*. (Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1835); Bronson Alcott, *Observations on the Principles And Methods of Infant Instruction*, (Boston, 1830); and Lydia H. Sigourney, *Letters To Mothers*, (Hartford, 1838.) There were also periodicals published specifically for children. The earlier didactic story formulas of work and duty were replaced by adventures of young male heroes. For example *The Youth's Companion* 1827-1929; *Parley's Magazine*, 1833-41; and *Merry's Museum for Boys and*

Girls, 1841-72; See Daniel T. Rodgers, *Growing Up in America: Children in Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), Ch. 7, pp. 119-132 and p. 125.

7. John Greenleaf Whittier, "The Barefoot Boy" *The Panorama*, 1856. reproduced in Sarah Burns, "Barefoot Boys and Other Country Children: Sentiment and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century American Art." *American Art Journal*. 20 (Spring 1988), pp. 25-50.

8. Lilly Spencer's (1822-1902) oil painting called Picnic (or) The Fourth of July, dated 1864, measures 49 x 63 inches and is in the collection of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D. C.

9. The location is said to be the Passaic River near Newark, New Jersey where Spencer lived. The woman highlighted in the foreground does not resemble a self-portrait by Spencer in 1862. Robin Bolton-Smith, & William H. Truettner, *Lilly Martin Spencer 1822-1902, The Joys of Sentiment*. (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1973), p. 56-59.

10. It is doubtful that these pranks were actually tolerated. The mischievous child was probably more fictional than real and added as an exaggerated point of humor. Thus the fictionalized contemporary adventures of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett begin with precocious childhoods. See *A Narrative of the Life of Davy Crockett, 1834*, Edited by Richard M. Dorson; *Davy Crockett, American Comic Legend* (New York: Rockland Editors, 1939) and John Filson, *Biography of Daniel Boone, 1834*.

11. Holy Bible, King James Version. (London: Colin Clear-Type Press, n.d.) Isaiah: 11-6. In the first half of the century the peaceable kingdom was a popular motif in needlework. Edward Hicks also painted numerous versions of the biblical theme in Pennsylvania before 1849.

12. Op. cit. Bolton-Smith, & Truettner, p. 8. With few exceptions, women artists dealt with scenes of home and family, subjects which lent themselves to sentimentality. Spencer's position as a wife and mother helped to determine her direction towards nostalgic and homely anecdotal paintings. In his introduction, Joshua Taylor suggests that not only did Spencer use sentimental subject matter, but that she was herself an object of sentiment. She was "a female artist whose art was considered to be inseparable from her domestic life. The hand that rocked the cradle held the brush". He further wrote that "Sentiment grows out of the most intimate attachments and homely aspects of daily life...Its character changes with the times and the environment, and nothing seems so foolish and naive as popular sentiment

when its supporting ambience is gone...Another moment in history is not necessarily more sentimental than our own; it is only that our kind of sentiment is rarely perceivable to us...Thus the sentimental, so cohesive an element in its own society, becomes a barrier to understanding between successive cultures."

13. Op. cit., Bolton-Smith, & Truettner, p. 196. A 27 x 35 inch engraving of the work was published in 1864. In 1865, *Demorest's Monthly Magazine*. published it as a subscription premium under the title A Day To Be Remembered. A slightly different sized engraving was published by another company on 1866. Engravings and lithographs based on Spencer's work appeared in magazines and were distributed through art unions, yet she never received royalties from these prints. It was the common practice for magazines to purchase the original painting and then make the engravings so that the profits were theirs. The nursemaid and child in the right foreground appeared as a single painting called Dixie Land in 1862 and again in an unlocated work also called The Picnic.

THE PICNIC IN FOLK ART

In the nineteenth century, folk art played an important role in community life outside the major cities. Anonymous artists recorded the everyday lives and customs of their neighbors and commemorated important events in the history of their towns. Some were amateurs who painted for their own enjoyment while others earned their living providing art for the homes in the surrounding countryside. Usually self-taught, these artists learned to paint through experience and by copying from instruction books. Although they lacked cosmopolitan sophistication, they created paintings that were fresh and imaginative. Folk art tended to be straight-forward, revealing a scene's significance rather than its outward appearance.

An early, anonymous watercolor dated 1800 illustrates some of the inventive, naive qualities of folk art. Simply titled Picnic, (plate 10) the work depicts a pleasure party beside a body of water about to enjoy food and conversation.¹ The figures are dressed in clothing appropriate to the Federalist period. This charming work may have been produced in one of the female academies popular in the first half of the nineteenth century. Instruction in elegant accomplishments such as art and needlework was a popular pursuit in women's seminaries and academies. The picture bears a close resemblance to needlework designs which were based on prints published in America by 1800. The general source was probably an English scene depicting the seasons where large figures engaged in activities such as gathering flowers in spring, picnicking in summer or harvesting in fall. Since copying was a recommended practice in teaching painting, private schools for young ladies usually maintained libraries with volumes of French

and English drawings and engravings to be used as source material.² Art supply companies began to publish teaching manuals with such reproductions at this time. Watercolor was a favorite medium of the amateur because it came in cake form and was therefore portable and convenient for a young painter to use.

Eunice Pinney, who worked in a naive style similar to that of our example, created unique compositions to serve as models for her daughter's pupils. Another watercolor by Sarah Lawrence called Picture of a Young Girl (1810) used the same technique for the trees and ground shading.³

The artist showed inventiveness in combining borrowed images with American motifs to create an original picnic. The African-American servant in the boat on the left suggests an American location. His uniform is impeccable with waist coat and gold braid. He is a supportive character, establishing the wealth and class of the party. The whole group is fashionably attired to reflect their sophisticated social standing. The quaint inclusion of chairs for the women must surely be a personal touch. Nature has been subordinated in the interest of design, with care and attention given to details. The trees have the textural quality of embroidery and tapestry. As in much folk art, clear, bright colors dominate the composition. Although the figures lack modeling and are anatomically awkward, and the three dimensional space is not convincing, there is charm in the naivete of the work.

One of the most original picnic images is Susan Merrett's watercolor called Fourth of July At Weymouth Landing in 1845.⁴ (plate 11) The date is part of the title, thus implying a specific event. However there are political

and social attitudes reflected in the work which may demand a symbolic rather than a literal interpretation of the picture.

Very little is known about Susan Merrett. She lived, unmarried, in Weymouth, Massachusetts, a community some distance from the established academic art center in Boston. We do know that from 1867 to 1878 her artistic skills were mentioned in the local newspapers. She won awards for her artwork at the Weymouth Agricultural and Industrial Society's annual fairs.⁵

Merrett may have been self-taught, using one of the numerous instruction manuals published during this period, or she may have been educated in one of the seminaries dedicated to preparing young ladies for marriage where art was taught not only as a genteel craft but also as a practical skill for educating future children.⁶

Merrett painted an idealized Independence Day celebration, using Renaissance perspective. The countryside is framed by trees, organized to form a classical triangle with the American flag at the top. The composition recedes in space with shapes diminishing in size and detail. The viewer looks down on the picnickers and then gradually follows a progression of rolling hills to the horizon line. The trees on each side of the painting recede in step fashion towards the vanishing point. Weymouth harbor, surrounded by miniature houses, mills and factories, is to the right of the flag pole.

Onto this opaque watercolor landscape, Merrett painstakingly cut out and glued over one hundred and forty figures. With great care, she constructed two long white picnic tables, adding several layers of paint to the baskets and plates of food to create a three dimensional quality. Gold foil paper was used as an accent on the flower vases. A whole host of small

characters were placed around these tables and across the rolling hills. Individuals and groups of townspeople, ranging in size from two inches to one half inch, were first painted, then cut out and carefully arranged in scale to the landscape. The figures are presented from many views, and their detail is reduced as they recede in space. Merrett painted shadows behind the figures to suggest a light source. No two figures are identical. Merrett even put spectacles on the faces and fringes on the shawls. Because of the large number and variety of images, it is most likely that she drew and painted these cutouts herself, perhaps following illustrations found in newspapers or magazines. "Silhouettes" were popular at this time and professional silhouette makers such as Auguste Edouart did glue their black cut paper figures onto watercolor and lithographic backgrounds.⁷ Although a simple form of collage was occasionally used in folk art, nothing approaches the complex level of Merritt's design. One can only speculate why the artist chose such an elaborate method. Perhaps she was not sure of her ability to paint figures and arrange them in a balanced manner on so large a surface, or it may simply have been a craft person's love of detail. The work expresses her individual creativity and craftsmanship at a time when mass production was accelerating in the industrial revolution.

The anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on the fourth of July has always been celebrated with a mixture of pleasure and patriotism. When John Adams first proposed the anniversary as a festival of patriotism, he said, "It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to Almighty God."⁸ However, as the United States became sure of itself as a nation and Revolutionary Army veterans

died off, the holiday took on the atmosphere of an urban fair with formal speeches, parades, shooting cannon salutes and exploding fire crackers. The chaotic independence celebration of 1819 was described by *Paulson's American Daily Advertiser* as one of intemperance, dissipation and vice. In 1823, the Mayor of Philadelphia issued a proclamation denouncing the debauchery, gambling and drunkenness of the Centre Square festivities, threatening to ban the celebration altogether.⁹

Picnics were not originally a part of Declaration Day festivities. Celebrations took place in the cities, not the countryside. The holiday was largely a masculine affair of military drills and political banquets. These dinners, prepared by local tavern keepers, were only occasionally served out of doors if the facilities were not large enough to accommodate the group. The meal ended with numerous ritual toasts to the virtues of liberty and country. Drunkenness inevitably followed.¹⁰ As the populations of the towns increased, so did the hazards of fire and mayhem. The combination of crowding, alcohol and gun fire made the holiday neither safe nor sane. As cities increasingly sought to bring the celebrations under control, it became prudent to move the event to the countryside, lest the towns burn down. During the 1840s, using the Sunday school outing as a model, many communities in the Northeast began to hold picnics on the Fourth of July.

New political issues and attitudes affected the celebrations. The second quarter of the nineteenth century saw the rise of reform movements for temperance, abolition, and women's rights. Women began to play a more active role in the planning and supervision of the activities. Susan Merrett's watercolor tells us a good deal about her political views and perhaps those of

her community.

Susan Merrett's watercolor is an idealized view of a Fourth of July picnic, not a document of the lives and customs of the township of Weymouth. She portrayed a symbolic peaceable kingdom where all was unity and tranquility.¹¹ This is a sober picnic with no evidence of drunkenness; there are no bottles or barrels to be seen. The women are in control of the tables. There are no mischievous children with fire crackers, no platforms for political speeches and only four band members to represent the parade.

Merrett has placed two well dressed African-American men, shaking hands, in the center foreground while two clearly defined African-American women stand in the middle ground. The men are in a direct line with the American flag. There is a second flag above the trees on the left which has "LIBERTY" written in bold white letters. This depiction of African-Americans as integrated, and on an equal footing with their white counterparts, was very rare in the nineteenth century. African-Americans were either stereotyped in satire or shown in the respectful role of a servant within a white family scene. This latter view only served to reflect the status of the white patrons and their benevolent sentimentality. The artist, however, not only expresses her abolitionist views but also suggests equality of the races in this celebration of Independence.

In front of one of the tables a man stands holding a baby in his arms. Although this appears natural to us today, in mid-nineteenth century America, children were strictly the province of the wife. The willingness of a husband to care for a child showed equality within the marriage, which was

itself a controversial topic. Husbands pictured in public with a child became a source of humor. "Bloomer Girls" were also seen in caricature. Merrett has two women standing near the picnic tables, wearing "Bloomer Girl" outfits. This garment consisting of a short skirt worn with full trousers gathered at the ankles, was introduced as sensible dress by feminist social reformers. To Merrett and her contemporaries they represented women who were committed to women's rights and suffrage. However, since this costume did not come into fashion until 1851,¹² the date of the watercolor must be incorrect.

There are no uniformed soldiers or veterans present at the picnic, so the work must have been painted prior to 1860. Any later scenes would include references to the Civil War. Thus we must conclude that the painting is not a record of a specific picnic in 1845, as historians have thought, but rather it reflects the mind and personality of the artist. In the painting Susan Merrett has recaptured the innocence of a young country in a pastoral setting celebrating the hope of liberty and equality for all its citizens.

NOTES ON THE PICNIC IN FOLK ART

1. This 13 x17 inch watercolor and gouache on off-white woven paper is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Illustrated in *American Watercolors From The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. (New York: Abrams, Inc., 1991), p. 47.
2. For American etchings from English prototypes published by B. Plen in Philadelphia, see E. McSherry Fowble, *Two Centuries of Prints in America 1680-1880* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for Winterthur Museum, 1987), p.400. and Wendy A. Cooper, *Classical Taste in America 1800-1840* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1993), pp. 252-258.
3. Mira Bank, *Anonymous Was A Woman* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), p. 45.
4. Susan Merrett's creative watercolor is located in the print room of the Art Institute of Chicago. It is signed on lower edge of the right hand corner. The work is a most unusual collage containing over one hundred and forty small figures, cut out and glued onto a large 26 x 36 inch opaque watercolor landscape. The original background paper has been mounted on a heavy duty cardboard and appears to have a protective finish suggesting that it has undergone restoration. It is pictured in Jean Lipman, Elizabeth V. Warren and Robert Bishop, *Young America* (New York: Museum of American Folk Art, 1986), p. 168.
5. C. Kurt Dewhurst, Betty MacDowell and Marsha MacDowell, *Artists in Aprons*. (New York: Museum of American Folk Art, 1979), pp. 164.
6. Peter C. Marzio. *The Art Crusade*. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), p.12. *The Progressive Drawing Book* or J.T. Bowen's *The United States Drawing Book*. cited in Carl W. Drepperd, *American Pioneer Arts & Artists*. (Watkins Glen, New York: Century House, 1970), pp. 13-38.
7. The professional silhouette maker Auguste Edouart was in America in the 1840's and stimulated the practice of gluing black cut paper figures to watercolor and lithographic backgrounds. Helen and Nel Laughon, *Auguste Edouart, A Quaker Album* (Richmond, Va.: Cheswick Press, 1987).

8. At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, John Adams proposed a great anniversary festival. "It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, bells, bonfires, and illuminations." quoted by Walt Whitman in an editorial, "I Sit And Look Out", from the *Brooklyn Times*, July, 1857, p. 58.

9. An accurate depiction of the chaotic affair was depicted in John Louis Krimmel's View of Centre Square on the Fourth of July, 1819. Milo M. Naeve, *John Lewis Krimmel* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), pp. 101-102.

10. Diana Karter Appelbaum, *The Glorious Fourth: An American Holiday, An American History* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 1989)

11. The celebration described by Walt Whitman in a newspaper article in 1856 also gave quite a different view. "The Fourth of July starts several days in advance with fire crackers and lasts until the supply runs out. On the night of the third there is incessant noise from all manner of artillery, from cracker to cannon". Walt Whitman, "New York Amuses Itself- The Fourth of July" *Life Illustrated*, July 12, 1856. cited in *New York Dissected* edited by Emory Holloway and Ralph Adimari (New York: Rufus Rockwell Wilson, Inc. 1936).

12. Lee Hall. *Common Threads* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1992), pp. 78-80.

THE PICNIC AND THE POPULAR PRESS

Traditionally the average American was exposed to art through etchings, aquatints and, especially engravings. Public galleries were rare even in major cities, so paintings, both American and European, were known through black and white or hand-colored reproductions.¹ Prints were the art of the people, serving as a primer of manners, taste and costume. American prints were the messengers of moral and cultural values of the middle-class and were used to convey meaning and to express democratic ideas to a growing and often illiterate society. When the population of the United States doubled between 1830 and 1850, the country became increasingly multinational. This influx of unskilled labor caused a need to identify with a uniform national self image. American patriotic pride grew with the increase of immigration and "being an American" was identified with "the good life". Although literacy widened the differences between the new arrivals and the native born American, the prints helped to illustrate proper values and establish a mode of American conduct. The workers were

too engaged in toil or too indifferent to pour over books. They take in the lesson of a fine picture in a few minutes and the seed goes into their hearts and sprouts and grows to the perfect grain. There is no study of the mind, but the eye is charmed and fascinated and through that the heart is improved and men made better.²

In the beginning prints were bought individually or in folios from book dealers or print shops. By 1830, engraved reproductions of landscapes, sentimental genre scenes and portraits of literary subjects were inserted into magazines to add a touch of quality and refinement, yet picnic scenes were

rare until mid-century.³ Among these periodicals *Godey's Lady's Book* was the most successful, with the largest circulation over the longest period of time.⁴ The magazine was seen as a touch of civilization, delivered each month to their many rural subscribers. Each issue included twelve black and white prints and six colored engravings. Their most popular prints were uplifting classic literary subjects and reproductions of landscapes by recognized artists. Although *Godey's* was devoted to fashion, literature, and pleasant middle-class amusements, it published only three images of picnics before 1870.⁵ These independent prints, referred to as "embellishments," were designed to be separated from the publication and hung on walls or collected in portfolios especially designed for them. Many were accompanied by four lines of poetry printed below the image. It was felt that the inclusion of engravings in magazines would not only expose a larger segment of society to art, but also create and form a taste for art in the general public.

A good engraving of a good picture is, in its effect upon the mind, incomparably superior to a painting of ordinary merit...The prolific family of annuals... have enlivened with glimmers of art, the walls of many a humble dwelling.⁶

The introduction of new technologies had a profound effect on the production, content and patronage of art. In the 1820's lithography was added to the traditional methods of printing.⁷ Because it could imitate soft curved lines, it was an ideal medium for copying paintings and was a welcome addition to the craft. Early production of black and white lithographs was controlled by small individual print shops where lithographers did everything, from grinding and polishing of the stone, to the making and printing of the image. However, when Currier & Ives founded their print

company in 1835, they influenced the direction of art in America. By mass producing inexpensive images that appealed to a wide popular audience Currier & Ives turned art into a commercial venture. When assembly-line machine coloring, called chromolithography, was introduced in the 1850's, it merged art and commerce on an even larger scale. Subject matter and taste no longer came from the professional art community but rather were dictated by the market place.

For over fifty years Currier & Ives published hand colored lithographs in various sizes to be displayed in the home and office. These graphic renderings depicted historic and patriotic scenes, sporting events and cozy sentimental country pleasures. Oddly, *Currier & Ives* published very few scenes of picnics. Their catalogue raisonne lists only five picnics out of seventy-five hundred entries.⁸ One can only speculate that this omission was either a personal preference on the part of the firm or that pictures of picnics did not generate sufficient sales by the public.

The essential difference between the academic class and the popular class was the painter's need to add a philosophic underpinning to the painting while the commercial printmaker was more interested in telling a good story. Fine art valued the idyllic and spiritual contemplation of the image, while the popular classes inclined towards activity and homier sentiments in their prints.⁹ Art became divided into theoretical, intellectual, and cultural paintings for the wealthy and instructional, functional, emotional, commercial prints for the middle class. Commercial printmaking companies became the patrons and employers of the new generation artists. Painters who were subject to the demands of a crowded and unstable art

market, found it necessary to specialize in narrow categories designed for the print industry. Jerome Thompson and Lilly Spencer both earned a living by creating works which would be popular with the print industry.

In 1855, the invention of the steam powered press expanded printing production and made pictorial journalism possible. Until then, the ability to incorporate prints within the text pages was a difficult and laborious task. A new process in wood engraving was developed whereby freer, more natural lines could be achieved if a fine grade boxwood were coated with white paint and polished to a paper-like smoothness. The image was placed on the block and the spaces between the lines of the drawing were painstakingly cut away leaving a relief block similar to the letter type. It also became possible to make a metal plate by pouring molten metal into a clay or wax mold taken from the wood engraving. This metal block could sustain the pressure of the press and allow the image to be easily printed with the raised letter type and increase the number of mechanically produced images printed.¹⁰

Within two years, as a result of these developments, several illustrated weekly newspapers were published for both the city and suburban subscriber. *Harper's Weekly Magazine* founded in 1857, became the most successful magazine of the day. Its publisher, Fletcher Harper, was also a professional printer who actively managed the magazine, controlling much of the visual as well as written content.¹¹ Each week the magazine included two full page engravings, usually placed opposite one another in the centerfold. These pictures were cheerful depictions of seasonal pastimes, sporting events, charity fund raisers and other happenings in the city. These engravings related to the conventions of story telling where gestures, body expressions

and costumes were literally read by the audience just as if they were reading a book. *Harper's* published seven picnic images between 1857 and 1869 excluding the Civil War years.¹²

Two of these picnic engravings were designed by Winslow Homer, who began his career as a free lance illustrator. The artist would later make his reputation as *Harper's* graphic reporter during the Civil War. He was twenty-two years old when he illustrated A Picnic by Land (plate 12) for the June 5, 1858 issue of the magazine. The picture was published opposite another engraving titled Picnic By Water, by an anonymous artist. A few months later he created a second picnic called Picnicking In The Woods (plate 13) for the September 4, 1858 issue of *Harper's Weekly*.¹³ Fletcher Harper most likely assigned the topic but the design was Homer's original work. Both scenes are characteristic of his approach to the engraving medium and demonstrate his ample use of cross hatching and fine lines to create gray tones. These picnic scenes are humorously conceived in a documentary fashion that would become a recognized American form. The engraving had no accompanying text, so the story was fully told within the frame of the picture. Homer's prints are very different from the idealized picnics discussed in previous chapters. Cole's and Thompson's calm idyllic spot has become a very busy grove where the inhabitants are concerned with earthly pleasures. The central character, holding a bottle is far from Cole's figure of the "new Adam". The work suggests a contemporary story which might have been recognized by the viewer and follows a tradition of humor rooted in local color and the regional humorists. "A strong element of national unity in this period was a raucous, vital humor that Americans aimed at each other, at

regional types, at social experience, ...and national politics"¹⁴

The second work, Picnicking in the Woods more closely resembles the traditional picnic. However, there is no symbolism intended in the scene, only the desire to entertain. The central tree is only a token to suggest a wooded landscape. The location is left up to the imagination of the viewer. The landscape is neither sublime nor picturesque; it is only a backdrop for human activity. The hustle and bustle of the people convey a carefree enjoyment of life with humor replacing sentimentality. There are several separate vignettes to occupy the viewer's attention, including courtship, families, and mischievous children swinging from the tree. A young woman quickly moves along the path with her skirt billowing up to show a little of her ankle. Although it might be tempting to see the snake on the left side of the frame as a humorous reference to the Garden of Eden, it is doubtful that it is anything more than a light diversion. The engraving is a quintessential American scene, all in the spirit of good humor, to amuse a middle class readership.

While genre paintings produced for the print market, became increasingly sentimental and moralizing, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* began publishing more realistic and documentary illustrations emphasizing events taking place within the city. This New York newspaper, which averaged sixteen pages, contained four full page engravings each week. Between 1857 and 1869, *Leslie's* published nine picnics.¹⁵ They were quickly produced to meet deadlines and generally were not sentimental nor nostalgic. The anonymous artists did not have time to invent a landscape or rearrange the scenery. *Leslie's* also began to use photographs as a source for its

engravings. Seen through the eye of the camera, the picnics were cultural documents of the changing social climate. They were images of large, organized gatherings including the celebrations of German immigrant groups. The Monster Picnic At Schach's Park, in East Brooklyn, (plate 14) was a German charity event for a special hospital fund during the Civil War. The day began with a procession of five German American military companies marching to the park. The illustration not only records the large number of middle-class Germans living in New York but also recognizes their contribution to both the city and the war effort. These illustrations were factual and immediate reports of contemporary events which now provide historians with a visual record of the period.

NOTES ON THE PICNIC AND THE POPULAR PRESS

1. There existed a partnership between painting and prints, each respecting and dependent on the other. This relationship can be seen in New York's American Academy of Fine Arts which existed between 1800 and 1839. Thirty one percent of the members were listed as engravers. In its exhibitions, engravings and paintings were shown together. In 1815, when the Academy attempted to form a school of art, recommendations for faculty were made for three engravers, three painters, two sculptors and two architects. See Mary Bartlett Cowdrey, *American Academy of Fine Arts and American Art Union* (New York: New York Historical Society, 1953), p. 15.
2. "An Art Homely." *Milwaukee Daily* republished in *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, 1859. p. 232. *The Cosmopolitan Art Journal Papers*. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C. Microfilm Roll Number 1397 (second half) #310.
3. A survey of books devoted to early American prints, and an examination of popular magazines of the period, found few picnic scenes until mid-century. *Godey's Ladies Book* contained three images of picnics, two before 1850; *Graham's Magazine* contained three, only one before 1850; *Harpers Weekly Magazine* contained six, all after 1850, and *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* contained six picnic scenes, all after 1850. *The Ladies Companion* and *Sartain's Union Magazine* contained no illustrations of picnics.
4. In *Godey's* early years, it published articles by Emerson, Longfellow and Poe, but by mid-century it became increasingly sentimental and moralizing. In 1850, it reached 40,000 subscribers and its popularity influenced its non-gender competitors to include similar material.
5. The Picnic, an anonymous full page steel engraving, published in *Godey's Lady's Book* 18 (June 1844), p. 249, accompanied an article called "The Picnic" by Jane T. Fleming.
The Pic. Nic Party by William Croome, a steel engraving frontispiece, was published in Volume 39 (July 1849), p. 70, with an article by T.S. Arthur titled "American Characteristics # 7: The Pic Nic Party".
The Picnic, an anonymous full page steel engraving frontispiece in Volume 47 (August 1853) in no commentary or citation.

6. *Gentleman's Magazine* 7 (July 1840) quoted in Frank Luther Mott, *A history of American Magazines. Vol.1 1741-1850* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 436.
7. The first known American Lithograph was produced in Philadelphia in 1819. Ron Tyler, *The Image of America in Caricature and Cartoon* (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1975), p. 11.
8. The Pic-nic Party 1858; On The Juniata 1869; The Pic-nic Party undated; Two prints called The Children's Pic-nic undated. The source for all five is *Currier & Ives, A Catalogue Raisonne Vol.1 and 2.* compiled by Gale Research Company. (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1984).
9. Linda S. Ferber "Themes in American Genre Painting:1840-1880", *Apollo*. 115 (April 1982), pp. 250-258.
10. Barbara Gelman, *The Wood Engravings of Winslow Homer*. (New York: Crown, 1969), p. ix. and Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene* (New York: Dover Pub., 1938), p. 420.
11. Frank Luther Mott, *A history of American Magazines. Vol.2 1850-1865* (Cambridge Mass.:Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 470. It is interesting to note that illustrations for *The Harper Establishment; or, How the Story Books Are Made* (New York,1855) show women operating the presses and performing many other production tasks at the publishing firm. See Dale Roylance, *American Graphic Arts*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 155.
12. Picnic-The Fourth of July An anonymous engraving on half a page, published in *Harper's Weekly* July 4, 1857 p. 424, was related to an article on what to do on the Fourth of July.
Picnic by Land by Winslow Homer. A full page wood engraving, 9 x 14 inches, was published June 5, 1958. p. 360.
Picnic By Water An anonymous wood engraving, 9 x 14 inches, was published as full page companion piece opposite Homer's Picnic by Land June 5, 1858. p. 361.
Picnicking In The Woods by Winslow Homer. A full page wood engraving, 9 x 13 inches, published September 4, 1958.
A Day in The Country-The Picnic by Alfred Fredricks, is a full page wood engraving, 9 x 14 inches published August 6, 1859.
A Picnic in The Country by William Ludlow Sheppard. A full page wood engraving 9 x 13 inches, was published August 17, 1867.

Caught in a Storm by William Ludlow Sheppard. A full page wood engraving, 9 x 13 inches, was published October 2, 1869.

13. Picnicking In The Woods was accompanied by another of Homer's engravings called The Bathe at Newport. This innovative beach scene was drawn from a vantage point in the water looking back to the beach. Homer created a third picnic called The Picnic Excursion which appeared in *Appleton's Journal*, August 14, 1869.

14. Elizabeth Johns, " 'This New Man': National Identity in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Genre Painting of the United States" *World Art-Themes of Unity in Diversity Vol.III* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), p. 672.

15. The first issue of *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* was published December 15, 1855. It contained approximately sixteen large pages for the price of ten cents.

Seventh Annual Turner Festival, Held at Yorkville Park, August 31, 1857;

The Pfingst-Montag Festival, at Conrad's Park, Yorkville, N.Y. on Whit-Monday May 24, 1858;

A Picnic Overtaken by The Tide, 1859;

Monster Picnic At Schach's Park, East Brooklyn, June 13, 1864;

Picnic of the Tenth National Saengerfest at Engel and Wolf's Farm in Philadelphia, Wednesday, July 17, 1867.

The Seventh Annual Gathering of the Northamerican Turner-Bund in Chicago Il. Aug. 7, 1869;

Nutting Picnic of the Public School Children of Philadelphia at Fairmont park on Oct. 8, 1869.

The engravings were all anonymous except for Picnic at Put-In Bay, Lake Erie, in Celebration of Perry's Victory, September 10, 1858. which was based on a photograph by J. E. Ryder of Cleveland and The Grand Annual Picnic and Excursion of the New Jersey Farmers, and Their Families to Raritan Bay, Amboy, N.J. on August 12, 1865; from a sketched by F.H. Schell.

SUMMARY

In the nineteenth century picnic paintings were pastoral landscapes with healthy, well dressed Americans enjoying their leisure in nature. These gentle, romantic scenes took place in poetic settings, usually beside slow moving rivers whose shores stretched into the distant wilderness.

Early picnics scenes were topographical views of large orderly estates, which were based contemporary English models. Ignoring the surrounding wilderness, these images represented the owner's pride in land ownership and the country's progress towards civilization.

After 1825, picnics were included in dramatic panoramic paintings of America's natural wonders. Endowed with symbolic meaning, these landscapes which sought to create a national identity, also reflected the growing popularity of these sites as tourist attractions. The figures became proxies for the American viewer contemplating his birthright in the broad open expanses of the wilderness.

With the end of the Civil War, the Union was preserved and our national identity firmly established. Exploration of the West intensified, resulting in a rapid expansion of the railroad across the continent. Painters joined government surveys made up of botanists, zoologists, ethnologists, geologists, photographers and writers. As a result of these collaborative expeditions, artists began to approach the landscape with a documentary eye, tempering romanticism with science. The dramatic scenic picnic declined as the country expanded westward, and newly discovered marvels became endowed with symbolic messages. Yosemite replaced Niagara Falls as the

nation's cultural shrine when, in 1864, it became one of the country's first National Parks. The *Atlantic Monthly* stated that, "If reports were true, we were going to the original site of the Garden of Eden." However, these grand views, far from populated areas and inhabited by Indians, were not conducive to tourist picnic scenes.¹

In the idyllic picnic, the viewer contemplated the spiritual aspects of nature and the pantheistic spirit. The urban dweller returned to the simplicity of the country, to renew his soul in nature, and to discover again the new Eden. The figures were both actual people and the biblical family reborn in America. This picnic style did not survive the trauma of the Civil War as the country suffered a loss of innocence which severely challenged the philosophical concept of man's union with God through nature. Faced with photographs of battlefields strewn with bodies, Americans could not contemplate the romantic symbolism of the picnic in the secluded garden.

This interpretation of God in nature was also difficult to reconcile with the new scientific theories. When Charles Darwin published his theory of evolution in *On The Origin of The Species* in 1859, he brought into question the romantic visions of nature. Scientific curiosity about the physical world supplanted the contemplation of nature for spiritual and moral truths. The new generation of landscape painters sought more exotic subjects in the West and South America.² Their object was to astonish and amaze the public, not inspire identification with the divine. Paintings of local scenery were no longer given mystical interpretations, but began to be described in formal terms alone. Paintings were praised scientifically for their accurate delineation of geological features, their clearness of atmosphere and coolness

of tone.

As society's view of leisure and health changed in the 1840's the number of picnic images increased. They were idealized domestic themes of courtship and devotion to family. The images, although often touched with humor, were grounded in teaching society's attitudes and values. The picnic became a celebration of the family and an extension of the home and community. These entertaining narrative scenes shifted the focus from the landscape to social group interaction.

During the Civil War it was not proper, for obvious reasons, to paint leisure pleasure picnics. The exception was the patriotic family gathering which became symbolic not only of the individual soldier's family but the nation as a whole. The picnic was an extension of the home; its reassuring domestic peace gave the hope of national unity to a country threatening to break apart. These paintings depicted gentle yet strong women, devoted to the needs of the family, who were capable of managing the homefront in time of crisis. Lilly Spencer's The Fourth of July (plate 9) was popular because it combined patriotism, companionship and brotherhood in the security of family life. Nostalgic images of family picnics continued to be popular after the war becoming increasingly awash in Victorian sentimentality.

The majority of picnics painted before 1870 were produced in the two decades leading up to and including the Civil War as the East coast changed from an agricultural to an industrial society. With few exceptions, they were created for wealthy city dwellers as a response to the tensions and frustrations of living in a crowded urban environment. Rural people did not hold a romantic view of nature, preferring paintings that celebrated their farms and

the results of their labor. Families, living in the suburbs created by new commuter railroads, purchased scenes of virtue, morality and status for their new homes. They had their own enclosed gardens and were not interested in idealized picnic paintings.

The popularity of picnic images which coincided with the movement to establish open spaces and public parks, symbolized the longing to escape from the pressures of the busy city, to retreat to an idealized pastoral landscape. John W. McCoubrey calls this escape a nostalgic response to the sense of loss experienced by the fading of the imaginary American past. "We are given not just the country instead of the city, but also leisure in place of labor, passivity in place of action, still Sunday afternoons beyond the pressure of time".³

Subsequent to the Civil War, a change in American artistic patronage occurred. Both the traditional wealthy collectors and newly rich industrialists traveled to Europe for their sources of fashionable art. Artists also had to compete with contemporary European paintings and inexpensive prints sold by the international galleries opening in New York and other major Eastern cities.

With the development of chromolithography, a technically refined form of color lithography, artists increasingly came to rely on the commercial market for their income. Printing houses such as Prang Chromolithographic Co. (later to become Hallmark Cards) became major art patrons. By commissioning images that would appeal to the widest audience, these companies effected the content of paintings. The influence of the commercialism on art production is illustrated in an article titled "The Spirit

of Competition in Art" published in the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*

These wretched landscapes and frenzied sea-pieces should be banished to the garret or hired girl's domain, and in their stead we have either choice engravings or paintings which possess true merit. Art is becoming rapidly domesticated...a familiar of our home and fireside...A class of old fogies who strike for the necessity of art being above commerce, of laboring for itself alone... What have all their 'high art' ideas accomplished, after generations of 'lofty enthusiasm', after decades of 'soul devotion to the pencil'? Literally nothing! The spirit of competition which commerce in art engendered, to arouse the art talent of our country into adequate expression.⁴

The number of picnic paintings gradually decreased as industrious genre scenes, fostered by the consumer market, overshadowed the contemplation of the pastoral image of nature. It would not be until the end of the century when American Impressionists such as Maurice Prendergast and Edward Potthast, influenced by French art, revived the theme.

NOTES ON SUMMARY

1. Fitz-Hugh Ludlow, "Seven Weeks in the Great Yo-Semite" *Atlantic Monthly* 13 (June 1864), p. 740. Yosemite, located one hundred and eighty miles from San Francisco, was unknown to the Anglo-American public until 1850. Appreciation of the wilderness as Eden led to the concept of public land as a public trust and the establishment of Yosemite and Yellowstone National parks.
2. Cole's student Frederic Edwin Church and Martin Johnson Heade painted South American scenes while Albert Bierstadt depicted California and the Rocky Mountains. See Katherine Emma Manthorne, *Tropical Renaissance* (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989).
3. John W. Mc Coubrey, *American Tradition in Painting* (New York: Braziller, 1963), p. 33.
4. "The Spirit of Competition in Art" *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 4 (#1, 1860), P. 78 Microfilm Roll 1397, second section, #310. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C.

Plate 1 Unknown, D.R. Philipse Manor, Sepia wash, (19 x 26), 1784.
Collection of Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Tarrytown, New York.
Source: Marshall B. Davidson, *Five Hundred Years of Life in America*.
(New York: Abrams, Inc. 1983), p. 41.

Plate 2 William Bartlett, View From Mount Holyoke, engraving, (5 x 7), 1836. Source: N.P. Willis and William Bartlett, *American Scenery*, 1840. Reprinted by (Barre Mass: Imprint Society, 1971), p. 15.

Plate 3 Unknown, (possibly Victor de Grailly), View From Mt Holyoke, after Bartlett, oil on canvas, (16 x 21), 1840. Collection of Cleveland Museum of Art. Source: Frederick A. Sweet, *The Hudson River School and the Early American Landscape Tradition*, (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1945), plate 57.

Plate 4 Thomas Cole, Pic-Nic, oil on canvas, (45 x 72), 1846. Collection of Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. Source: Matthew Baigell, *Thomas Cole*, (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1981), p. 71.

Plate 5 James Mc Dougal Hart, Picnic On The Hudson, oil on canvas, (33 x 56), 1854. Collection of Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. Source: John Howat, *The Hudson River and its Painters*, (New York: American Legacy Press, 1983), plate 56.

Plate 6 George Loring Brown, Hudson River At Bear Mountain, oil on canvas, (30 x 48), 1850. Collection of Butler Institute of American Art. Youngstown Ohio. Source: *In Search of America: 19th Century Painters and Writers*. Catalog Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery October-November, 1971. A slightly different version reproduced in *American Heritage Magazine* 10, December, 1958, p. 19.

Plate 7 William Croome, A Pic-Nic on the Wissahickon, engraving, illustrated in *Graham's Magazine*, October 1844, p.184. Source: Carl Bode, *American life in The 1840's* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), reproduction 21.

Plate 8 Jerome Thompson, Recreation, formerly called Pick Nick Near Mount Mansfield, oil on canvas, (40 x 56), 1857. Collection of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Source: Mark Simpson, Sally Mills and Jennifer Saville, *The American Canvas*, (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1989), p. 83.

Plate 9 Lily Martin Spencer, Picnic (or) The Fourth of July, oil on canvas, (49 x 63), 1864. Collection of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C. Source: Robin Bolton-Smith and William H. Truettner, *Lilly Martin Spencer, The Joys of Sentiment*. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1973), p. 59 and p. 195.

Plate 10 Unknown, The Picnic, watercolor, (13 x 17), 1800.
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of New York. Source: Stephen
Rubin and Victor Koshkin-Youritzin, *American Watercolors From
The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. (New York: Abrams, Inc., 1991) p. 47.

Plate 11 Susan Merrett, Fourth of July At Weymouth Landing, watercolor and collage, (26 x 36), 1845. Collection of Art Institute of Chicago.
Source: Mary Black and Jean Lipman, *American Folk Painting*, (New York: Bramhall House, 1987), p. 133.

Plate 12 Winslow Homer, A Picnic by Land, wood engraving, (9 x 14), 1858.
Published in *Harpers Weekly*, June 5, 1958. p.360. Source: Philip C.
Beam, *Winslow Homer's Magazine Engravings*, (New York: Harper &
Row, 1979), p. 62.

Plate 13 Winslow Homer, Picnicking In The Woods, wood engraving, (9 x 13), 1858. Published in *Harpers Weekly*, September 4, 1958. Source: Philip C. Beam, *Winslow Homer's Magazine Engravings*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 63.

Plate 14. Unknown, Monster Picnic At Schach's Park, East Brooklyn, June 13, 1864, engraving, Published in *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 2, 1864, p. 236.

APPENDIX

PICTURES USING THE PICNIC THEME EXECUTED IN THE UNITED STATES BEFORE 1870

Works are listed alphabetically by artist and categorized by media. The images are underlined and written materials italicized. Dimensions are in inches.

PAINTINGS

Audubon, John Woodhouse (1812-1862)

Riverbank Picnic, 1850

28 x 40, Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont.

Bailey, George Henry (1832-1905)

Clambake, Portland, Maine, 1851

15 x 21, Restricted owner.

Bingham, George Caleb (attributed) (1811-1879)

The Family Picnic, 1860

18 x 21, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

Picnic (attributed), n.d.

media and size unknown, Lee B. Anderson Collection,
35 Stuyvesant St. New York.

Black, Mary H. (dates unknown)

Hobo Watching Children Open Picnic Basket, 1860

5 x 6, Owner restricted.

Blunt, John S. (1798-1835)

Picnic on Long Island, 1823

15 x 19, Nina Fletcher Little Collection.

Bricher, Alfred Thompson (1837-1908)

Picnic on The Rocks, n.d.

11 x 21, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., 980 Madison Avenue, New York.

Brown, George Loring (1814-1889)

Hudson River At Bear Mountain, 1850

30 x 48, Maitland Lee Griggs Collection, Ardsley-on-the-Hudson, NY.

Hudson River At Bear Mountain, 1850
30 x 48, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.
A second slightly different version of above.

Picnic at Green Mountain Grove Near Spot Pond, 1862
14 x 20, Owner restricted.

Brown, John George (1831-1913)
The Picnic, 1861
14 x 12, Christie's, Manson & Woods Internat. Inc., New York.

Catlin, George (1796-1872)
Prairie Picnic Disturbed By Rushing Herd of Buffalo, 1854
19 x 26, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska.

Champney, Benjamin (1817-1907)
Autumn Landscape, n.d.
25 x 35, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., Los Angeles, California.

Autumn Picnic, New Hampshire, n.d.
26 x 36, Ira Spanierman, Inc., New York.

Cloudman, John Greenleaf (n.d.)
Picnic at Diamond Cove, 1865-1875
size unknown, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Maine.

Codman, Charles (1800-1842)
Picnic Scene, n.d.
14 x 19, Wm. A. Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine.

Cole, Thomas (1801-1848)
Pic-Nic, 1846
45 x 72, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

View of the Catskills, 1837
39 x 60, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Colman, Samuel (1832-1920)
Picnic in the White Mountains, 1855
26 x 36, Jeffrey W. Cooley Gallery, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

Dalbey, Albert Lauck (1828-1910)

Picnic Scene, n.d.

25 x 29, Mr. & Mrs. Philip J. Finkelppearl Collection, Shaker Village, Harvard, Massachusetts.

De Grailly, Victor (1804-1889)

View From Mt Holyoke, after Bartlett, W. H. 1840

16 x 21, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio.

Picnic at Mount Jefferson, 1845

21 x 29, Hood Museum of Art Dartmouth College, New Hampshire.

Duncanson, Robert (1821-1872)

Landscape With Picnickers, 1853

size unknown, Unlocated, noted in Exhibition Catalog *Robert S. Duncanson*, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1972.

Durand , Asher (1796-1886)

Dance of The Haymakers, 1851

35 x 54, Mr. Webster and Mr. Douglas Collin Collection.

Dover Plains, 1848

42 x 60, National Museum of American Art, Washington, D. C.

Durrie, George Henry (1820-1863)

Picnic, 1853

18 x 22, Restricted private collection.

Picnic (Day on The Hudson), 1856

35 x 51, Restricted collection.

Sylvan Landscape: The Picnic, (attributed) 1853

17 x 21, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Fisher, Flavius J. (1832-1905)

Picnic of The Hyena Club of Lynchburg, 1857

size unknown, Restricted collection.

Hog Island Picnic of The Hyena Club, 186

25 x 30, Mrs. E. S. Dingee Collection, Lynchburg, Virginia.

- Gerry, Samuel (1813-1891)
Mountain View, Figures Picnicking, 1856
 29 x 40, Restricted collection.
- Hamilton, James (1819-1878)
Landscape and Waterfall on Schuylkill- A Picnick, 1847
 29 x 30, Mr. & Mrs. John W. Merriam Collection, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania.
- Hart, James Mc Dougal (1828-1901)
Picnic Scene, 1850
 11 x 16, New York Historical Society, New York.
- Picnic On The Hudson, 1854
 33 x 56, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.
- Hart, William (1823- 1894)
Picnic Scene Near Albany, 1851
 26 x 20, Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, New York.
- Havell, Robert Jr. (1793-1878)
Niagara Falls, 1851
 30 x 40, Jim Finlinson-Antiques, Berkeley, California.
- Hollingsworth, George (1813-1882)
Family Picnic, 1835
 42 x 72, Montrose Galleries, Bethesda, Maryland.
- Kensett, John Frederick (1816-1872)
A Holiday in the Country or Picnic In The Glen, 1851
 21 x 30, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio.
- Summer Day on Conesus Lake, 1870
 24 x 36, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
- Holiday in The Woods, 1851
 46 x 51, Listed in American Art Union Exhibition, 1852.
- Lang, Louis (1824-1893)
Reminiscences of Lake Mahopee: Preparing for a boat Race, 1864
 44 x 61, Physicians Planning Service Corp., New York.

Leutze, Emanuel Gottlieb (1816-1868)

On The Banks of The Stream, 1860

18 X 24, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

Melrose, Andrew (1836-1901)

Anthony's Nose on The Hudson Highland, n.d.

30 x 50, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Picnic On The Hudson, n.d.

24 x 43, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York .

Valley of The Hachensack From the Estate of L. Becker, Esq. Union City New Jersey, n. d. 28 x 58, Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey.

Peale, James (1749-1831)

Pleasure Party By A Mill, 1790

26 x 40, Museum of Fine Arts. Houston, Texas.

Rondel, Frederick (1826-1892)

The Picnic, 1865

19 x 34, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.

Rossiter, Thomas Prichard (1817-1871)

Pic-nic On The Hudson, 1863

29 x 45, Butterfield Memorial Library, Cold Springs, New York.

A Pic-nic On The Hudson, 1870

20 x 26, Gesner Fine Art, P. O. Box 3, Largo, Florida.

Shegogue, James Hamilton (1806-1872)

The Zouave-'qui vive, 1860

51 x 38, Jay P. Altmayer Collection.

Spencer, Lily Martin (1822-1902)

Picnic (or) The Fourth of July, 1864

49 x 63, Private Collection.

Picnic (or) The Fourth of July, 1864

size unknown, Unlocated, cited in Catalog *Joys of Sentiment*.

Thompson, Jerome (1814-1886)

The Belated Party on Mount Mansfield, 1858

38 x 63, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Pic Nick, Camden, Maine, 1850

41 x 62, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts.

Recreation (formerly Pick Nick Near Mount Mansfield), 1857

40 x 56, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, California.

Titcomb, William Henry (1824-1888)

Hudson Valley, n.d.

22 x 30, Richard A Bourne Co. Inc., Hyannis, Massachusetts.

Vollmering, Joseph, (1810-1887)

Picnic In The Glen, n.d.

21 x 18, Kennedy Galleries, New York.

Weir, Robert Walter (1803-1889)

Lane Cottage, 1850

17 x 14, U.S. Military Academy Museum, West Point, New York.

View Of Hudson River, 1864

13 x 21, Putnam County Historical Society, Cold Spring, New York.

Wheeler, William Ruthuen (1832-1894)

View of Mt. Washington, n.d.

26 X 41, Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, Connecticut.

Williamson, John (1826-1885)

The Picnic Grounds, 1845-85

12 x 20, Lakeview Gallery, Lakeview, New York.

Winner, William E. (1815-1883)

Picnickers In Fairmont Park, 1860-70

9 x 8, Samuel James Collection, 222 Indian Lane, Media, Pennsylvania.

Artist unknown

Hudson, Near Beacon, N.Y., 1860

30 x 48, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Hudson River Picnic Scene, n.d.

22 x 30, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Old worchester Common in 1849, after 1849

4 x 40, Everett H. Chamberlain Collection, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Oxbow, Connecticut River (Primitive), n.d.
28 x 35, Joanna Klauber Collection, Ben Franklin Dr., Sarasota, Florida.

Picnic at Genesee Falls in New York, n.d. (18 century)
size unknown, New York Historical Society, New York.

Picnic at the Waterfall, 1850
21 x 25, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Picnic Day in The Connecticut River Valley, n.d.
16 x 21, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

Picnic in the Catskills, 1840
48 x 34, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.

Picnic on the River Bank (Primitive) n.d.
18 x 22, Alton E. & Marie Hughes Collection, Salisbury, Maryland.

Picnic On The Wissahickon (after William Croome), 1845
26 x 34, Greenfield Village Museum, Dearborn, Michigan.

Picnic Party, 1860
25 x 30, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut.

Picnic Scene 1840-1850
size unknown, Frick Reference Library, New York

View of Niagara Falls with Picnic Basket, 1831
19 x 25, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada.

WATERCOLORS

Bennett, William J. (1777-1844)

Niagara Falls. View of the British Falls from Goat Island, 1831
16 x 20, Aquatint engraving by John Hill after watercolor by Bennett,
New York Historical Society, New York, N.Y. Second copy measuring
20 x 24 in the Winterthur Museum, Delaware.

Calyo, Nicolino Viscomte de (1799-1884)

Harlem Estate of Dr. Edmondson, 1834
17x30, Henry Francis Du Pont Winterthur Museum, Delaware.

Champney, James Wells (1843-1903)

Picnic By A River, n.d.

12 x 9, Dr. George Humphreys Collection.

Gifford, Charles Henry (1839-1904)

The Picnic, n.d.

7x10, Mrs. Elton Gray Collection, Springfield, Massachusetts.

Johnston, David Claypool (1797-1865)

Family Picnic, before 1865

9 x 13, Kennedy Galleries, New York.

Joinville, Prince De.

Treetop Sentinel Guards a Picnic of Civilians, 1862-4

size unavailable, Henri, Comte De Paris Collection.

Merrett, Susan (Folk Art)

Fourth of July At Weymouth Landing, 1845 n.d.

26 x 36, plus collage, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois.

Artist unknown

D.R. Philipse Manor, 1784.

19 x 26, Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Tarrytown, New York.

Family Outing, 1860

24 x 30, Museum of Fine Arts of Boston, Massachusetts.

The Picnic, 1800

13 x 17, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Picnic, 1830

7 x 9, Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., New York.

LITHOGRAPHS

Currier & Ives (1838-1894)

Children's Pic-nic, n.d.

9 x 12, b/w, hand tinted, Museum of the City of New York.

Children's Pic-nic, n.d.

12.6 x 9.3, vertical, Peters Collection, Museum of the City of New York.

On The Juniata, 1869

11.1 x 17, b/w Peters Collection, Museum of the City of New York.

The Pic-nic Party, 1858.

16.1 x 19.8, b/w hand colored, Museum of the City of New York.

The Pic-nic Party, n.d.

medium size b/w, Peters Collection, Museum of the City of New York.

Gifford, Charles B. (1830-1880)

San Francisco, Mission Dolores, 1860

size unknown, Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, California.

ENGRAVINGS

Birch, William (1755-1834)

Prospect of City of New York, 1802

Museum of the city of New York.

Cockburn, James Pattison (unknown)

The Falls of Niagara: The View of the Horse Shoe Fall From Goat Island, 1833 -1857 restrike of original plate by C. Hunt.

20 x 28, color aquatint engraving, Corcoran Gallery, Washington D. C. and New York Historical Society, New York.

Croome, William (1790-1860)

A Pic-Nic on the Wissahickon, 1844drawing-engraved Published in *Graham's Magazine* 25, October 1844. (opposite p.184) Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.The Pic. Nic Party, 1849size unknown, Steel engraving frontispiece Published in *Godeys' Ladies Book*, July, 1849.

Fredericks, Alfred (unKnown)

A Day in The Country-The Picnic, 18599 x 14, Published in *Harpers Weekly*, August 6, 1859.

Homer, Winslow (1836-1910)

A Picnic by Land, 18589 x 14, Published in *Harpers Weekly*, June 5, 1858.

Picnicking In The Woods, 1858

9 x 13, Published in *Harpers Weekly*, September 4, 1958.

The Picnic Excursion, 1869

6.5 x 9.5, Published in *Appleton's Journal*, August 14, 1869.

Millar, William Rickerly (1818-1893)

The Narrows from Staten Island, New York. 1853.

7 x 9.5, Institute of Arts and Sciences, Staten Island, New York.

Revere, Joseph Warren (1812-1880)

Monterey, Capitol of California, 1849

size unknown, book illustration *A Tour of Duty in California*, (1849),
The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1986.

Schell, Frank (Francis) H. (1834-1909)

The Grand Annual Picnic and Excursion of the New Jersey Farmers
and their Families to Raritan Bay, Amboy, N.J. on August 12, 1865.

Full page, Published in *Leslies Magazine*, September 2, 1865.

Sheppard, William Ludlow (1833-1912)

A Picnic in The country, 1867

9 X 13, Published in *Harpers Weekly*, August 17, 1867.

Caught in a Storm, 1869

9 x 13, Published in *Harpers Weekly*, October 2, 1869.

Spencer, Lily Martin (1822-1902)

Picnic (or) The Fourth of July, 1864 and 1865

27 x35, Engraving of painting with same title.

Artist unknown

Godeys' Ladies Book

The Picnic, 1844

size unknown, Published June, 1844 p. 249.

The Picnic, 1853

size unknown, Published August, 1853 Frontispiece.

Graham's Magazine

A Pic-nic in Olden Time, 1848

Full page, Published October, 1848 opposite p. 229.

The Meeting of the waters, 1850
Full page, Published January, 1850 p. 55.

Perils of Pic-nics, 1852
Half page, Cartoon engraving Published November, 1852 p. 557.

Harpers Weekly Magazine

Picnic-The Fourth of July, 1857
4.5 x 7.5, Published July 4, 1857 p. 424.

Picnic By Water, 1858
9 x 14, Published June 5, 1858 p. 361.

Drawing Room Picnic or Rainy weather in Winter, 1858
3 x 5, cartoon engraving Published December 4, 1858 p. 784.

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.

The Seventh annual Turner Festival Held at Yorkville Park, August 31, 1857. Covered top half of two pages, Published Sept. 12, 1857 pp. 228-9.

The Pfingst-Montag Festival at Conrad's Park, Yorkville, N.Y. on Whit-Monday May 24, 1858. Full page, Published June 5, 1858 p. 5.

Picnic at Put-In Bay, Lake Erie, in Celebration of Perry's Victory, September 10, 1858. from a photograph by J. E. Ryder of Cleveland.
Full page, Published October 16, 1858 p. 306.

A Picnic Overtaken by The Tide. 1859
Cartoon, Published March 5, 1859 p. 222.

Monster Picnic At Schach's Park, East Brooklyn, June 13, 1864.
Full page, Published July 2, 1864 p. 236.

Picnic of the Tenth National Saengerfest at Engel and Wolf's Farm in Philaelpia, Wednesday, July 17, 1867. Full page, Published in Aug. 3, 1867 p. 321.

The Seventh Annual Gathering of the Northamerican Turner-Bund in Chicago Il. Aug. 7, 1869. Full page, Published August 28, 1869 front page.

Nutting Picnic of the Public School Children of Philadelphia at Fairmont park on Oct. 8, 1869. Partial page, Published on October 30, 1869 p. 115.

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