

The Prints of J. N. Darling, by Amy N. Worthen. 2d ed. Ames: Iowa State University Press, for the Brunnier Gallery and Museum, Iowa State University, 1991. 126 pp. Illustrations, chart, notes, inventory. \$25.00 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

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Amy Worthen's second edition of *The Prints of J. N. Darling* returns to offer readers of another decade insight into this man and his private art. Originally issued as a catalog to the 1984 exhibition at the Brunnier Gallery and Museum, it continues to allow the public the opportunity to enjoy the etchings of J. N. Darling.

Darling is best known as the Pulitzer prize-winning syndicated political cartoonist, "Ding" Darling of the *Des Moines Register*. Worthen's discussion suggests that Darling's cartoons were public expressions while his etchings remained private. He lacked formal art training, but talent and the appreciation of the style and technique of artists such as Joseph Penell and Frank W. Benson encouraged him to express himself through etchings. Beginning with traditional methods, he soon began to experiment with photoetching, drypoint, aquatint, and acetate. Many of his later works were produced in collaboration with Gordon Meaney, Cornelius Bartels, or Bob Coleflesh as printers or assisting in reworking his plates.

Themes of sportsmen and wildlife predominate Darling's eighty-four known etchings, only a few of which were produced in cartoon format. Normally, the etchings were not marketed but were produced for his own pleasure and to share with friends. Records of numbers produced or the progression of reworking are lacking.

Worthen provides a visual inventory of Darling's known etchings and adds descriptive notes on techniques and image development. Her commentary helps the reader see changes in style, the use of successful traits in later works, and the inclusion of images in his public cartoons. Throughout the book the images are enjoyable and the text friendly. The only weakness is the lack of a glossary to assist those unfamiliar with production techniques.

The Prints of J. N. Darling will be a welcomed addition to the library of anyone interested in J. N. Darling. It allows insight into the private area of a man who stirred the nation's conscience on many issues.

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