

NIELS CARL MICHAEL FLINDT DAHL

FAABORG 1812 – FREDERIKSBERG 1865

Carl Dahl was born in the coastal town of Faaborg in Funen, training from 1830 as a house painter. Eager to become an artist, he moved to Copenhagen in 1835, where he entered the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. During his six years there, he was the pupil of landscape painter J. P. Møller (1783–1854) but learned the rules of perspective from G. F. Hetsch (1788–1864). Most important for his development and career, however, was the time he spent as a pupil of C. W. Eckersberg (1783–1833), who taught him marine painting as well as how to draw figures. Dahl quickly made a career as an artist. His first painting, exhibited at the Charlottenborg exhibition in 1837, inspired a landowner from Funen to give him a private bursary, and he was also supported by the king, Christian VIII, who eventually bought several of his marine paintings. Dahl had a special talent for perspective and became a teacher in this discipline at the Royal Academy from 1842 to 1848 while continuing to exhibit at Charlottenborg. From 1840 to 1852, he held a post as a teacher in drawing at the Danish Naval Academy. His intimate knowledge of ship construction and rigging details made him much admired as a marine painter, and he was of great help to Eckersberg, who lost much of his sight in his late years. In 1849, Dahl won the Neuhausen Prize with a painting of ships passing Kronborg Castle in Elsinore.

During the First Schleswig War (1848–50), Dahl sailed with the navy to the battlefields at sea, where he made sketches, later to be transformed into paintings. He did the same thing in 1864 during the Second Schleswig War. In 1852 he was awarded the traveling bursary of the academy and visited Germany, Holland, Belgium, Paris, and the south of France. Later he studied the North Atlantic waters on a trip in 1862 to the Faroe Islands aboard the steam frigate *Jylland*. Most of his work is marine art, but he also painted topographic motifs and a few of everyday life, such as *Two Peasants Visiting Thorvaldsen's Museum*.

Paintings by Dahl are in the Statens Museum for Kunst (*The Rhoads of Lisbon*, from 1843), the Thorvaldsen's Museum (*The Frigate Thetis and the Corvette Flora at the Teje River, Lisbon*, 1844) and the Museum of National History at Frederiksborg Castle. Drawings are at the Handels og Søfartsmuseet, Kronborg, Elsinore.

E.F.

LITERATURE: J. P. in *Illustreret Tidende*, 1864–65, pp. 241–43 (obituary); Philip Weilbach, *Konst og Æsthetik*, Copenhagen 1870, p. 190; Holger Drachmann in *Nyt dansk Maanedsskrift*, 1870, p. 447f.; Emil Hannover, *Eckersberg*, Copenhagen 1898, p. 302; F. Meldahl and P. Johansen, *Det kongelige Akademi for de skønne Kunster 1700-1904*, Copenhagen 1904, p. 244f.; Jørgen Paulsen, *Billeder fra Treaarskrigen*, Frederiksborg 1952, pp. 26, 28, 40, no. 9, 46, 159; Hanne Jönsson (ed.), *C. W. Eckersberg og hans elever*, Statens Museum for Kunst 1983, p. 93f, no. 101; Kasper Monrad in *De ukendte Guldaldermalere*, Kunstforeningen, Copenhagen 1982, p. 40, no. 34; Hanne Poulsen, *Danske skibsportrætmalere*, Copenhagen 1985, p. 117; Hanne Poulsen in Weilbach, vol. II, Copenhagen 1994.