

Hungarian) descent who spent winters in New Orleans between 1854 and 1867, and who was known to have resided for periods in Nashville between 1855 and 1857.<sup>43</sup> He also worked as an art dealer during his time in the United States, often traveling between Europe and America, and he may have served in such a capacity for the Acklens. Created in the wake of the twins' deaths, the work probably became a cherished family possession, and it was still hanging in the Central Parlor of the mansion in 1881.<sup>44</sup> The large, 5' x 7' painting was described in the *Nashville Union and American* as an "elaborate and expensive... family tableau." As its description reveals, it was one of the most involved portraits Acklen ever commissioned and intended "as a memorial" of the twins. According to the newspaper description the work represented:

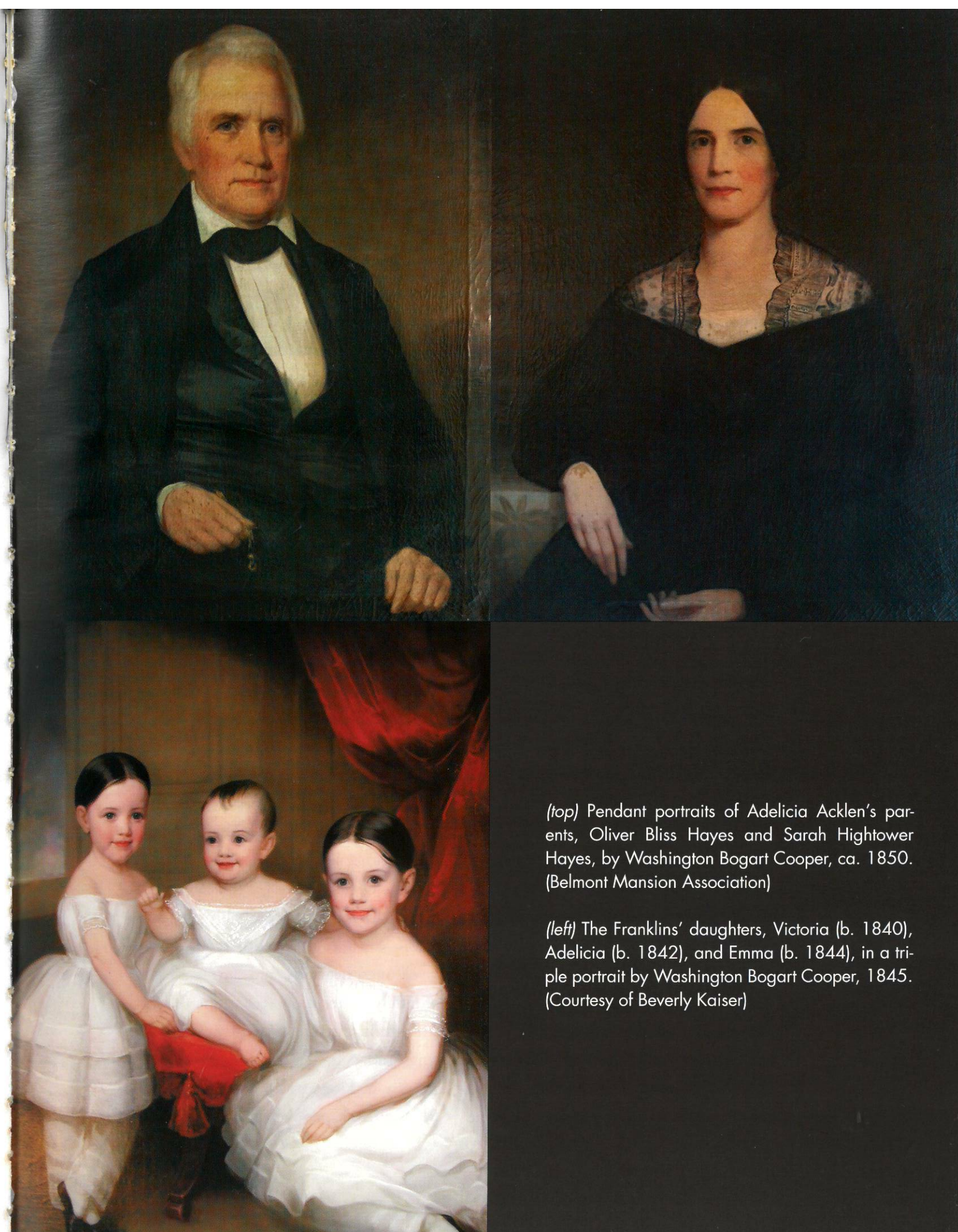
the four [Acklen] children and nurse... preparing for the celebration of their mother's birth-day... In the foreground the nurse is seated with one of the twins in her lap twining a wreath for its head, while the other stands beside reaching a rose she has gathered for her sister's crown; an elder sister brings a basket laden with floral treasures and a brother on the opposite side is half hidden by the foliage, from which he is culling the choicest specimens... The artist was forced to exercise his imagination in conveying the fact of the children's death,

and he has done it, thus poetically and delicately; they are first portrayed in life as described, then, in the clouds above we see the same images repeated but spiritualized, and accompanied by their guardian angels, who are guiding them to the upper world—higher still two cherubim await their coming with smiles of welcome."<sup>45</sup>

Perhaps to accompany *The Twins* painting, Gschwindt also created a romantic work entitled *Child's Dream* (also unlocated) in which Emma is now seen dreaming of her own death. According to description, the child appears in the work holding the hand of an angel whose other hand gestures toward heaven.

Although portraits of children were less common than those of their parents in the nineteenth century, Acklen commissioned many portraits of her children (both living and posthumous) over the years. Perhaps the most charming of all of the surviving Belmont portraits depicts Acklen's three Franklin children. This triple portrait of the three Franklin girls, Victoria, Adelia, and Emma, was completed in 1845 by Washington B. Cooper only nine months before the death of the two eldest girls.<sup>46</sup> The portrait depicts the three dark-haired sisters posing together in white dresses. After Emma's death in 1855, this portrait surely became an especially treasured memento.

Acklen's commissions also ranged beyond her immediate family. Although



(top) Pendant portraits of Adelia Acklen's parents, Oliver Bliss Hayes and Sarah Hightower Hayes, by Washington Bogart Cooper, ca. 1850. (Belmont Mansion Association)

(left) The Franklins' daughters, Victoria (b. 1840), Adelia (b. 1842), and Emma (b. 1844), in a triple portrait by Washington Bogart Cooper, 1845. (Courtesy of Beverly Kaiser)