Ambition:
Charles Willson Peale in Annapolis
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CHARLES WILLSON PEALE
in Annapolis

Hammond-Harwood House Museum
April 1, 2022-December 31, 2023

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Hester Baldwin Chase
by Charles Willson Peale, 1789.
Hammond-Harwood House Collection
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CHARLES WILLSON PEALE at the Hammond-Harwood House

Hammond-Harwood House, with its aspirational architectural design commissioned by an ambitious young patriot and carried out by an inspired architect, makes a perfect setting for this unique exhibition of paintings by Charles Willson Peale.

The connections between Peale and this house are intimate; in his portrait of colonial architect William Buckland, Peale painted Buckland’s drawings for Hammond-Harwood House on the table before him, with his pen in hand ready to work on the design. Peale began the painting in 1774, the same year construction on the house began. At this point, Peale had been painting portraits in Annapolis for twelve years and had inspired members of the local gentry to fund his two-year study in England with Benjamin West.

The portrait of Buckland remained unfinished after the architect’s death later in 1774, but the way it was completed and made its way back to Annapolis illustrates the interconnectedness of Annapolis families. Peale finished the painting in 1789 for Sarah Buckland Callahan, William Buckland’s daughter. Sarah was married to John Callahan, Peale’s cousin. On his frequent visits to Annapolis from Philadelphia, Peale also painted Sarah, John, and two of their children, Sally and Polly. The Callahans’ daughter Sally married Richard Harwood and their son William Harwood married Hester Loockerman, the eldest daughter of Richard and Frances Loockerman who lived in Hammond-Harwood House beginning in 1811. The three portraits thus came to hang on the Hammond-Harwood House walls for many years and remain there today.

Marvin Ross, a trustee of the Hammond-Harwood House Association in the late 1940s and early 1950s, acquired other Peale works for the museum. Ross was a former Monuments Man in World War II and served as curator at the Walters Art Museum. Over time works by Charles and members of the Peale family have been added to the museum’s collection, which now includes paintings by son Rembrandt Peale, brother James Peale, nephew Charles Peale Polk, and niece Margaretta Angelica Peale. The museum also acquired a silhouette by Moses Williams, an enslaved man at the Peale home in Philadelphia who learned the popular art form.

The exhibition Ambition: Charles Willson Peale in Annapolis features portraits from the Hammond-Harwood House collection as well as works on loan from other institutions, museums, and private owners. Members of prominent Annapolis families—the Bordleys, the Brices, the Lloyds, the Carrolls, and the Harwoods—are represented. These neighbors with their various occupations and interests served as subjects for Peale’s talent as well as his ambitious desire for recognition. We are happy to host them here at Hammond-Harwood House.

Barbara Goyette
Executive Director, Hammond-Harwood House
Annapolis, Maryland
CATALOGUE ESSAYS
“Where I spent my youthful days”: Charles Willson Peale’s Annapolis

By Rachel Lovett
Curator, Hammond-Harwood House Museum | Annapolis, Maryland

Introduction

The collection of portraits by the artist Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) featured in this exhibition presents the study of a neighborhood. His subjects were influential men and women who lived and worked in the city of Annapolis in the late 18th century. Most of Peale’s subjects knew one another through family ties, politics, or social clubs. Annapolis was a place already steeped in history. It had been laid out in an urban baroque plan in 1694 with Church and State Circles at the center. When the city of Baltimore eclipsed Annapolis in the early 19th century, Annapolis, while still capital of the state, lost the energy of economic success. As a result, development stalled, and many 18th-century structures remained largely intact—as Peale knew them growing up. A walk today around State Circle would lead him down familiar paths—looking east he immediately would recognize the view from the top of Church Street (now Main) where he started his apprenticeship in 1754 with saddle maker Nathan Waters. To the north he would see familiar houses like that of his friend John Beale Bordley, whose patronage allowed the artist to pursue opportunities beyond Maryland’s capital city.

Of the early American trendsetters, Charles Willson Peale stands apart as one of the most dynamic. Constantly reinventing himself, Peale cultivated an endless list of interests from the mechanical to the sublime. His occupations include artist, soldier, inventor, politician, and naturalist. A product of his environment, the talented artist lived in Annapolis, his “boyhood home,” from age 9 to 34. In many ways the life of Charles Willson Peale invokes the American dream. He was born into humble circumstances as the son of a schoolteacher; plagued by constant debt himself as a struggling saddle maker; but ultimately, he found success as one of America’s most in-demand artists. He used wit, skill, and ambition to create a better life for himself and his family. Annapolis played a pivotal role in the development of Peale’s early career—it was in Maryland’s capital city that he found affluent supporters who sent him to England to study painting with Benjamin West, in one of the earliest examples of American patronage of an artist.

Annapolis in the Mid-18th Century

Growing up in the bustling port city of mid-18th century Annapolis, Peale saw the city’s substantial expansion. The end of the French and Indian War in 1763 brought an influx of new wealth. The city became a political magnet for Maryland’s wealthy tobacco planters, who had a yearning for polished society, elegant architecture, and imported goods.1 Maryland’s wealthy planters wanted to be near the political hub of Governors Horatio Sharpe and his successor Robert Eden. Men like William Paca, Matthias Hammond, and Edward Lloyd IV commissioned large townhouses in the city, creating a building boom of 14 such houses between 1764 and 1774. The city’s elite were therefore primed for an artist who could capture success in their likenesses and fill up the walls of their large new homes.2

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The very geography of Annapolis reflected its wealth and class structure. Peale scholar Lilian Miller notes, “Through symbolic design and furnishings, Annapolis Mansions, built on streets radiating outward from the Statehouse like spokes of a wheel, represented gentility and refinement as well as rational principles fundamental to social order. Classically designed gardens and freshly washed sidewalks were considered signs of moral and social worth, and also reflected a social, political, and economic stratification of families.” This new construction necessitated skilled European craftsmen along with enslaved and indentured workers. Enslaved labor was also the backbone of Maryland’s economy; the wealth generated by the plantations enabled prosperous planters to build these fine townhomes and commission paintings.

Maryland’s white elite commonly accepted the practice of slavery in their country plantations and city homes. Peale’s livelihood depended on slavery throughout most of his life. His father’s schoolteacher salary was funded in part by taxes on the sale of enslaved African people. During his formative years as apprentice to saddle maker Nathan Waters, Peale signed a legal document witnessing the purchase of enslaved individuals for Waters. In the early stages of his career, Peale dealt with human lives as currency. After his return from his studies in England, Peale took on art students, including William Pearce of Williamsburg, Virginia, to whom he wrote in 1774: “[T]he Negro I make no doubt but will sell so that if you can bring the sum of 70 or 80£ as you mention, you will have enough after paying me for your board.” His Maryland clients made their money from tobacco planted and harvested by enslaved laborers, and Peale was even given an enslaved couple, John and Lucy Scarborough, as payment for portraits. John and Lucy’s son, Moses Williams, the most well-known enslaved person held by Peale, later made silhouettes for patrons at Peale’s Philadelphia Museum. Peale held at least five enslaved people during the course of his life. In 1787 he decided to free an enslaved woman named Phyllis but only if the money could be found for him to pay debts. He told Phyllis to go door to door to plead her case and request money for her freedom. Her fate is unknown, but census records indicate she may have been freed as there are no enslaved people listed in the household in 1800.

After his move to Philadelphia in 1776 Peale’s views began to change slowly. He did vote for the abolition of slavery in 1778 during his one-year term in the Pennsylvania Assembly. He started to see slavery as evil, not so much for the enslaved, but rather for the poor whites who were unable to find wage labor and for the enslavers who became indolent. However, by 1804 his views became more defined as shown by comments he made on a visit to the late George Washington’s estate Mount Vernon: “It is surely a miserable situation to be surrounded with a number of Slaves, however kindly they may be used, yet the very Idea of Slavery is horrible.” When examining Peale’s art it is important to keep in mind the stratified society in which it was made and the source of the money that enabled the lavish homes and clothing depicted in the paintings.

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The Peale family straddled between two worlds in Annapolis—their landed gentry friends and their tradesman colleagues. Despite Peale’s identification with the tradesman class, his friends among Maryland’s elite admired his talent and ambition to create a better life for his family through his art. Charles Willson Peale’s English-born father, Charles Peale Sr., was once a man of great promise and inherited fortune. However, he was involved in an embezzlement scheme in the London postal office in 1735 and was sentenced to “transportation to the colonies for life.” In America Peale Sr. attempted to continue his previous bourgeois lifestyle and made friendships with Maryland landowners. He even named one of these friends, William Tilghman, as godfather to Charles Willson Peale, born in 1741. Peale Sr. eventually took up teaching and became Master of the Free School in Chestertown, Maryland; however, he often lamented his meager wages. Peale’s father died in 1750 leaving the family in strained economic circumstances. Peale’s Annapolis-born mother, Margaret Triggs, moved her five children to Annapolis, where she took up dressmaking as a trade. John Beale Bordley, a former student of Peale Sr., helped the family relocate, and later became the primary supporter of Charles Willson Peale as he began showing artistic talent.

Peale first developed his aptitude for art while in Annapolis. From 1754 to 1761, he trained as a saddle maker but found drawing to be a welcome diversion. According to Peale’s autobiography, he “had a great fondness for pictures from his early youth, as he when a School Boy, used to draw patterns for the Ladies to work after;” made presumably for his mother and her colleagues. Peale expanded these efforts by copying prints and painting oil colors on glass. In his autobiography Peale recalls an early episode that left a lasting impression on him nearly seven decades later. In one of the only times Peale writes about his mother’s family, he tells the story of his maternal grandmother begging him for a picture of her deceased son, Peale’s uncle. In her grief she asked her grandson for even “the most distant … shadow of a likeness.” This small but impactful narrative demonstrates that from a young age Peale realized the intrinsic power of portraiture to capture a sitter’s essence.

The year 1762 proved pivotal in the life of Charles Willson Peale as he finished his apprenticeship with the ill-tempered saddle maker Nathan Waters Peale and opened his own shop with the financial help of James Tilghman, a powerful Eastern Shore landholder, and brother of his godfather William Tilghman. The same year he also married his longtime sweetheart Rachel, the sister of his wealthy friend John Brewer, whose family would prove instrumental in future patronage.

Developing a variety of interests, Peale began to diversify his occupations into watch repair, silversmithing, harness making, and painting—all of which incurred more debt. He fled north in the summer of 1765 with his sister Elizabeth’s husband Robert Polk, a mariner, where he met and briefly studied with the talented Boston artist John Singleton Copley (1738-1815). During his time away Peale sent paintings home to Annapolis, including one to Charles Carroll, the Barrister, a wealthy friend of his family who helped Peale manage his debts, working with his brother St. George Peale so that Peale could return home in the fall of 1766. Shortly after reuniting with his family, Peale sent a painting to John Beale Bordley, his father’s former student, who pledged that “something must and shall be done for Charles.” Bordley gathered the funds from wealthy Annapolis friends and sent Peale to England for two years. There he studied with Benjamin West (1735-1820) and met fellow American painters like West’s cousin by marriage Mathew Pratt (1734-1805).

Over the next two years, according to Peale’s autobiography, he worked diligently without many diversions studying the works of West and noted painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, both of whom worked in the neoclassical style. Peale realized in England artists were held in an esteemed light, as opposed to the American view where painting was seen as a trade, like

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blacksmithing or watchmaking. This English perception of an enlightened artist as a society influencer led Peale to desire more public appreciation when he returned to America.  

In London Peale connected with Edmund Jennings, an American lawyer and younger half-brother of John Beale Bordley. Jennings, like Bordley, was very supportive of the young American artist and arranged for new commissions from him, including one of popular British politician William Pitt, who was an advocate for colonial rights. Peale painted two identical portraits of Pitt. One was intended for the gentlemen of Westmoreland County, Virginia (now at the Westmoreland County Museum & Library) and the other Peale sent to the Maryland State House where it still hangs on display in the Old Senate Chamber. This portrait later bore witness to important events like the December 23, 1783, resignation of George Washington. The portrait stood as an advertisement for Peale seen by those visiting the state House.

**The Second Annapolis Chapter: 1769-1776**

When Peale returned to Annapolis on June 8, 1769, the Chesapeake region finally had its own home-grown classically trained artist. One of the first paintings Peale began working on after his return was of his own family. He began *The Peale Family* in 1770 and finished many years later in 1809 after he had moved to Philadelphia. Peale arranged his family in a group around a table in his Annapolis home. Peale’s siblings were important to him in his early years and he developed meaningful relationships with all of them. His two sisters, Elizabeth and Margaret Jane “Jenny”, his brothers St. George and James, along with his mother, his cousin Peggy Durgan, and his wife Rachel and their two children are gathered in domestic bliss in this painting, with the children representing the continuation of the family. In this English-style conversation piece Peale drew images from Hogarth’s *Analysis of Beauty* and demonstrated for his siblings’ new skills he acquired in England. Typical of a conversation piece, it includes material culture that is of interest to the sitter; in this case the family is surrounded by art including classical busts demonstrating cultivated tastes. Throughout his life Peale kept his family at the center of his universe. They were the rock on which he built his foundation and through their triumphs and tribulations Peale found great joy and deep despair. His wife Rachel, his first love, was a central figure in his Annapolis home and this painting.

In addition to his brothers, Peale also took on art students including Edmund Brice (1751-1784), the 18-year-old nephew of his patron John Beale Bordley. At Peale’s recommendation Brice later studied painting in London with Benjamin West. The Brice family’s confidence in Peale and his craft is significant, as it shows the Maryland elite entrusted not only their likeness to him, but the future of their children.

An important Annapolis commission for Peale was from Edward Lloyd IV, known to his friends as “Edward the Magnificent” because of his wealth and status amongst the colonial elite. In 1771 Lloyd and his wife Elizabeth visited Mount Airy, Mrs. Lloyd’s childhood home, and saw a portrait of her mother and aunt as girls done by John Wollaston. After they returned to Annapolis, they asked Peale for a similar English style family group painting. The Lloyd grouping is one of Peale’s first successful attempts at group portraiture. The mansion in the background is from architect Isaac Ware’s *Complete Body of Architecture*. The painting captures a sense of domestic harmony. Mrs. Lloyd’s instrument alludes to the theme “virtuous love” from James Thomson’s *The Seasons* and shows a skilled woman who can play an

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Working for Lloyd solidified Peale’s reputation and paved the way for future commissions.

In January of 1772 Peale was accepted into the elite Homony Club. Peale’s admission to this club represented his acceptance into the upper echelons of Annapolis society, as only 17 men were admitted. Members of the club included Reverend Jonathan Boucher of St. Anne’s Church, who proved to be another powerful ally for Peale. Boucher ran a boarding school in Annapolis for young men, one of whom was Jacky Custis, stepson to George Washington. In the spring of 1772 Boucher strategically asked Peale to accompany young Jacky back to Mount Vernon, where Martha Washington asked George to sit for Peale. This would become the first of several sittings and the basis for a strong friendship between Washington and Peale.

Despite having a number of orders, a painting room full of visitors, a horse, sulky, and carriage, a well-furnished home, and holding two enslaved people—Peale’s debts were a recurring nightmare for him in Annapolis. His travel and Annapolis household expenses contributed to the strain. His clients also did not always pay on time. There is a great example of this struggle with the case of Elie Vallette. On May 28, 1774, Peale wrote a letter from Williamsburg, Virginia, to Elie Vallette, deputy commissioner of Anne Arundel County, requesting payment for his family portrait as Rachel was in want of money to pay the rent. Vallette ignored this request.

On September 8, 1774, Peale published a note in the *Maryland Gazette*:

Mr. Elie Vallette pay me for your family picture. Charles Peale

And did it again on September 15 and September 22.

On September 22, Valette replied in the paper:

Mr. Charles Wilson Peale, alias Charles Peale, and yes you shall be paid but not before you have learned to be less insolent.

Eli Vallette

Luckily Peale’s fears were alleviated after he made a trip to Virginia in the fall of 1775 and received enough money to settle his debts in Annapolis. He then was able to move his family to Philadelphia where he found success on a national scale as a politician, museum keeper, painter, and naturalist.

The Third Annapolis Chapter: 1788-1791

The majority of Peale’s extant Annapolis works come from what can be called his Third Annapolis Chapter when he made extended trips back to Maryland between 1788 and 1791, and this is reflected in the items selected for the exhibition.

Throughout his long life, Peale was endlessly dedicated to his family and by extension to his Annapolis ties. Peale married three times and had eleven surviving children, many of whom he taught to paint. In 1787 Peale’s favorite sister, Margaret Jane “Jenny” Ramsay, became ill and journeying to Annapolis afforded him the opportunity to see her frequently. She died in 1788 but Peale continued going back and forth between Annapolis, Baltimore, and the Eastern Shore for an impressive number of commissions.14

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In the spring of 1788 Peale was in Annapolis and very enthusiastic about the ratification of the Constitution. A celebration marked Maryland’s becoming the seventh state to ratify the Constitution on April 28, 1788. The event featured an illumination, a ball at the assembly room, and a 200-person dinner at Mann’s tavern. Peale made a banner for the occasion at his own expense.\(^\text{15}\)

In early June that year, in the spirit of patriotic vigor, Peale attempted to create a panoramic representation from the top of the Maryland State House’s newly built neoclassical dome. He used two homemade drawing aids—a camera obscura and a modified pantograph. This effort likely sparked many memories of his boyhood, as he could clearly see the landmarks from his youth still intact. As he worked on this project, he spent time with local cabinetmaker John Shaw and dined with him and his wife. John Shaw was caretaker of the State House; large collections of his furniture can be seen in the State House and Hammond-Harwood House Museum.

Out of the hundreds of portraits Peale completed during this time period, a story about the relationship with his cousin John Callahan (1754-1803) is especially charming. This relationship helped to fulfill Peale’s desire for affectionate familial connections. Callahan was the well-liked Register of Land Records for the Western Shore of Maryland. He had worked under Peale’s younger brother St. George Peale, and when “Saint” died John succeeded him as registrar. In his autobiography, Peale says John demonstrated “steadiness, diligence, obliging disposition” in his occupation.\(^\text{16}\)

When Peale reacquainted himself with his younger cousin in the late 1780s, Callahan was married to Sarah Buckland (1763-1831), daughter of the late architect William Buckland who designed the Hammond-Harwood House. The couple had three young daughters. Through Peale’s letters and accounts their relationship shows a clear affection and appreciation for each other’s talents. During Peale’s sporadic stays in Annapolis, he often lodged with the Callahans and got to know the family well. When John commissioned Peale to paint two portraits—one of himself and one of Sarah in 1788—Peale included the couple’s youngest daughter, Anna, and even the family’s tabby kitten as an addition to Sarah’s portrait. In 1789, as gift to the couple, Peale completed the portrait of Sarah’s late father, the architect William Buckland, which was begun from life in 1774 before Buckland’s untimely death the same year. In 1791, Peale completed a surprise painting for John Callahan of his two daughters, Sally and Polly Callahan. All these portraits are now in the collection of the Hammond-Harwood House Museum, as Sally Callahan married Richard Harwood and their son, William Harwood, married into the Loockerman family who lived in the house.

**The Fourth & Final Annapolis Chapter: 1823-1824**

The last thirty years of Charles Willson Peale’s long life were spent largely in Philadelphia focused on his museum and Belfield, a farm he purchased in 1810 and named after the Annapolis estate of his former art teacher John Hesselius. Many

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years later in 1823, Peale was back in Annapolis to arrange a deal with the city of Annapolis to exchange the portrait of Charles Calvert, Fifth Lord Baltimore, by Herman van der Mijn for six portraits Peale would paint of Maryland governors. In his youth Peale had marveled at the Calvert portrait and dearly wanted it for his own collection, as he may, according to Peale scholar Lillian Miller, have been attempting to “literally and physically recapture his artistic beginnings.” As the deal was brokered by Mayor James Boyle, friend of Peale and relative of his first wife Rachel, it was easy to persuade the city of the importance of beginning a state-owned collection of art by Peale. On September 17 the Annapolis Corporation formally agreed to the exchange, which would occur the following summer of 1824.

In October 1823, Peale wrote to his friend Joseph Brewer, brother of his first wife Rachel, “This will be the beginning of a very important collection, and I am anxious to make it as valuable as possible and I may hope to add some of my labors from living characters, as I now entertain the idea that my abilities in the art advance in the improvements with my age.”

In late June 1824, Peale finished with his task and visited Annapolis one last time to deliver the paintings. While in Annapolis he walked the streets of his youth and visited old friends like Jeremiah Townley Chase, who owned the Hammond-Harwood House.

He wrote to Annapolis mayor James Boyle,

“I am now leaving the city of Annapolis where I spent my youthful days, perhaps never to see it more! My partiality for the place is very great, and ought to embrace my love of and respect of its inhabitants.”

Conclusion

Peale has long been identified with the city of Philadelphia where he painted Revolutionary War figures and established his museum. However, it was his home city of Annapolis that fostered the start of his artistic career. In Maryland’s capital city Peale formed strong ties with family and friendships with members of the landed gentry. These men provided funds for him to study in London under Benjamin West in one of the earliest examples of art patronage in America, setting a precedent for future artists. Peale pioneered the road for future art patrons and created the identity of an artist in America thanks to the support he found in Annapolis. It is therefore especially appropriate to have an exhibition of his works in his hometown that honors his legacy in the development of early American art and culture.

On a personal note, I hope you enjoy this special exhibition which has been a culmination of my work the last several years. The life and works of Charles Willson Peale will continue to fascinate me and it has been a pleasure to get a glimpse of the man behind the canvas.

Rachel Lovett
December 15, 2021
Annapolis, Maryland

Peale’s Portraits: Purpose, Poise and Composition

By Lucinda Edinberg
Art Educator, The Mitchell Gallery at St. John’s College

In the early period of the American colonies, attention was dedicated to survival, but as the merchant class grew, these settlers began to consider cultural opportunities. Paintings for the home were, of course, limited to the wealthy merchant class, and these were almost exclusively portraits. With the arrival of artists from abroad, such as John Wollaston (1672-1749) and Joseph Blackburn (1730-1765), and new well-trained painters in the colonies, John Singleton Copley (1738-1815), John Hesselius (1728-1778), and Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), portrait painting reached a new phase. Americans were able to commission aristocratic portraits like those found in Europe. “The American Colonies were not a provincial backwater for artistic production, but rather an extension of the larger English culture abroad.”1 The job of the artist was not only to capture the likeness of the subject, but also provide information on their rank in society and, perhaps, their moral character.2 The early colonial landscape painters were not in demand during this time, but portrait artists often enjoyed substantial commissions and prominent social standing.3

The legacy of American artists is easily traceable. John Hesselius probably received his training from his father, Gustavus Hesselius (1682-1775), but he was also influenced by the portraits of John Wollaston. When Hesselius married a wealthy widow, Mary Young Woodward, in 1760, he became part of high society in Annapolis. It was here that saddle maker Charles Willson Peale met John Hesselius and bartered for painting lessons with a new saddle. Like Hesselius, he sought advice from other painters, traveling to Boston to visit with Copley and on to England to study in the studio of Benjamin West (1738-1820). Upon his return he began to paint the Maryland and Philadelphia gentry—those who understood the power of the portrait and the legacy it provided.

Peale’s portraits are on the edge of Neoclassical tradition which includes symbols of virtue, Arcadian settings, heroic scenes, and nude figures inspired by classical ideas. Rather than faithfully following those conventions, he used the landscapes of Maryland’s eastern and western shores and contemporary dress to create a more direct narrative of his subjects. References for social standing could include flowers, classical columns, sculptures, and buildings, but also objects that provide a reference to the subject’s profession or affiliation. Peale did not embrace the idealized grand manner of portraiture seen in England.

Although many of Peale’s portraits are dedicated to members of the Continental Congress, there are far more paintings of family and friends that demonstrate warmth and intimacy of the relationship. Even with the intimacy of Peale’s “domestic” paintings of wives, children, husbands, and friends, as opposed to “public” portraits of prominent persons, the position commanding the canvas and the properties of dress remain important. Peale knew most of his subjects, so there is an affection he demonstrates in his work, which is seen in the portrait of Daniel Delozier (1788).4 Delozier, the surveyor for the district of Baltimore and Inspector of the Revenue for the port of Baltimore, is seen sitting calmly in a Chippendale chair in a “hand-in-waistcoat pose.” “The ‘hands-in’ was one of the most popular of various stock poses portraitists offered their clients, and its prestige was buoyed by the commercial practices of London’s major portrait studios.”5

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This pose was, by no means, limited to British or American painters as they had adapted it from early French practices from the late 17th century. This stance conveyed messages of modesty and authority. Hesselius specialized in the standing pose with the right hand on a chair or some other important object and the other hand in the waistcoat. Public figures associated with public buildings or other notable events would be standing with an air of aristocracy and pride in what would be monumental portraits. Peale deliberately avoids that approach. His full-length portrait, *George Washington at Princeton* (1779), depicts Washington as a poised commander but there is an easiness, and maybe even a bit of congeniality in his demeanor as he stands with leg crossed, one hand on the cannon and the other hand on his hip.

American historian Charles Coleman Sellers, a well-respected authority on Peale, commented on Peale’s choice of poses for his clients. A formal standing portrait of a distinguished gentleman is much different than a portrait for the home that could “have that easy, intimate grace which fitted Peale’s temperament so well. He enjoyed painting that studied informal heroism—a gentleman, for instance, seated, at leisure, one arm thrown over the back of his chair, dressed in his best ...”6 The half-length portrait of Delozier wearing customary clothing of the day—a cotton or linen shirt, laced cravat, waistcoat, and wool coat, provides evidence of his place in society and fits the dress code for the portrait, as colonists were conscious of looking fashionable. The relaxed pose, the arm draped over the chair, the direct gaze to the viewer, flushed cheeks, and softened light, insinuates an honesty in his character, which is a quality Peale aims to achieve. As found in many of Peale’s portraits, the background is a muted olive-green/brown so that Delozier is the center of attention.

Peale’s portrait of William Goldsborough (1789) has a similar bearing to Delozier. Goldsborough, a wealthy landowner in Talbot County, served in Maryland’s Legislative Services.7 Peale positioned Callahan sitting turned three-quarters in the chair, with one arm over the chair, and the other holding a book, reinforcing his deportment as an educated man. His pose, like Delozier’s (although Delozier leans fully back in his chair), offers an air of familiarity and intimacy. He is wearing the customary attire with a white shirt, cravat, brown coat, and yellow double-buttoned waistcoat. Again, the background is a neutral color, with the light focused on the sitter.

Although Peale had a studio equipped with a chair, perhaps some clothing and other furnishings, many portraits were created in the sitter’s home. The fashionable portrait studios in London offered the customer picture books displaying samples of backgrounds, clothing, and ancillary items which could be painted in their choice of colors, so it is possible that Peale offered his clients some similar options. Note the similarity of the attire of John Callahan (1789) with that of Goldsborough. Fashion aside, Callahan’s white waistcoat is the exact cut of Goldsborough’s yellow one. The collar

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and position of the buttons are identical, as are the cravats. Like the portraits of Delozier and Goldsborough, Callahan is seen leaning back in his chair, books and pen in the background, testimony to his position as the Register of the Western Shore Land Office. Although these three gentlemen are painted about the same time (1788-1789), only Callahan, who is five years younger than Goldsborough and five years older than Delozier, has unpowdered hair. It was about this time that powdered wigs began to go out of fashion in the early part of the 19th century.

Women’s portraits often served different purposes than those of the men, and there is a “standard” for dress, pose and attributions. Women with children were domestic symbols of the happy home and it was often customary for a woman expecting a child, particularly her first, to have her portrait painted to hold her place secure in the family lineage, as so often women died in childbirth.

The painting Sarah Buckland Callahan (1763-1831) and daughter Anna (c. 1788-1833), provides a tender portrait of a mother and her young child. According to art historian Leslie Reinhardt, the garment that Sarah wears is an invention by Peale. He safeguards Sarah’s virtue by avoiding fashion, a common practice in England and America. Evidence of this practice is found in Copely’s contemporary portraits, but this practice dates centuries earlier. The slightly loose-fitting bodice with the bulky sleeves appears nowhere in the fashion of the 1780s-1790s and is in sharp contrast with the fitted bodices bolstered by stays and stomachers.

Peale used varied forms of the invented dress in several women’s portraits from about 1770 through 1790. Even though her dress is loose-fitting, “she retains an upright cone shape, created by stays, that signaled propriety, decency and elegance.” These features are found in other Peale paintings including that of Mrs. Christopher Hughes (Peggy Sanderson) and Daughter Louisa, 1789, held in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Art and the Portrait of Mrs. Thomas McKeen (Sarah Armitage) and Her Daughter, Maria Louisa, 1787 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Sarah Callahan’s hair is loosely arranged part up and part falling over her shoulders, which avoids the high style coiffures that required powder, hair grease, wigs, and the sort. She sits upright in the chair with her arm relaxed across her daughter’s lap. She and her daughter gaze out to the viewer, a standard in Peale’s works, “because it was considered proper that the eyes of the sitter should meet those of the spectator. It would have been considered embarrassing to be seen by strangers engrossed in one object, even if it’s one’s child.” Having her child on her lap defines her station, although Peale often used flowers, musical instruments, and books. The background is non-descript.

8 Sellers
9 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 Sellers
with the light glowing on the figures and silhouettes of light in the background, framing them as a Madonna and child.

Peale painted children without their parents and Sellers speculates that “Peale painted more children than any American before him, or many since.” He describes Peale’s portraits of children as “recognizable at a glance from all other children ... a wanton, wide-eyed, smiling thing.” However, the portrait Sally and Polly Callahan (c. 1791) does not completely fit Sellers’ description. Peale makes notes about the importance of speed in painting the portrait due to the time required to sit. Children obviously have difficulty in sitting for any length of time and it is likely that he had them pose separately and then merged the portraits on the canvas. Although they are engaged in holding fruit together, (Polly is looking out at the viewer and Sally appears distracted), there is an awkwardness in the composition. Their pose is not one of grandeur or authority, but rather that of sweetness and innocence.

The girls’ blue-print dresses are typical attire for their age. These are most likely frocks made of a soft cotton or linen that were free of stays in the bodice with a U-shaped neckline embellished with a small ribbon and light ruffle. The sleeves are just below the elbow, which is consistent with women’s garments. Frocks were much simpler than the dresses worn by women that included a gown, petticoat, and stomacher. The tone of their pink cheeked faces glows against the gray-green background which, like so many other Peale paintings, provides a neutral setting to focus on the young girls. The portrait is not without symbolism, as the pears convey the wish for longevity and abundance, something particularly important to women in a different way than men since women’s lives were at risk in childbirth and their abundance was dependent upon the financial support of their husbands.

Peale is careful in adapting fashionable or monumental European portraits to American sensibilities. His choice of subjects indicated his love for family, friends with whom he served in the Continental Army, and merchants with whom he did business. Peale writes in his autobiography that “the limner’s art must not be degraded by ministering to human vanity.” Sentiment had to be subtle. His finely attired subjects, often accompanied by material acquisitions, are shown to their best advantage without being idealized or ostentatious, features neither the artist nor sitter would have wanted. These portraits are without pretense and convey the self-confidence, pragmatism, and straightforwardness of those who formed a newly-defined nation.

13 Ibid.
14 Reinhardt
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Annapolis:
Charles Willson Peale’s
Touchstone in the Wider World

By Dr. Carol Eaton Soltis
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Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) was among the nation’s most prolific artists of the late Colonial and early national periods and the founder of America’s first successful museum designed to educate and entertain the public.¹ Philadelphia was the stage for his mature artistic and educational activities but it was in Annapolis and along Maryland’s Eastern Shore that personal connections were formed that supported his growth as an artist, shaped his political values, and offered him the financial and educational opportunities and connections that ignited and nurtured his long and ambitious career.²

The Schoolmaster’s Son

Charles Willson Peale’s British-born, university-educated father, Charles Peale (1709-1750), settled in Maryland after being deported from London following his conviction for forgery and embezzlement. Deemed high crimes in 18th-century England, which often triggered a death sentence, their commutation suggests his membership within a privileged family that was able to negotiate on his behalf.³ But once in the colonies, with all family connections severed, Charles Peale had only his education and social skills to keep himself afloat. Becoming master of King William’s School in Annapolis in 1739, by November 1740 he married Margaret Triggs (1709-1782) and moved on to became master of the Free School of Queen Anne’s County. There he met William Tilghman (1711-1782), one of the school’s founders, who five months later served as godfather to his firstborn child, Charles Willson Peale. In December 1742 he was appointed master of the Kent County School near Chestertown where he remained until his death.

The elder Peale advertised his impressive educational expertise in Jonas Green’s Annapolis based Maryland Gazette, as well as Benjamin Franklin’s Philadelphia-based Pennsylvania Gazette. Here he stated that he “taught the Greek and Latin Tongues, Writing, Arithmetic, Merchants Accounts, Surveying, Navigation, the Use of Globes, by the largest and most accurate pair in America: Also any other Part of the Mathematics.”⁴ Poorly paid and barred from gaining more

¹ The Museum was formally established in 1786 and was privately owned by Peale until it was incorporated in 1821. For the Museum see, Charles Coleman Sellers, Mr. Peale’s Museum: Charles Willson Peale and the First Popular Museum of Natural Science and Art, New York: W.W. Norton, 1980; Brigham, David, R. Public Culture in the Early Republic: Peale’s Museum and its Audience. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).
remunerative employment because of his earlier conviction, he nonetheless established a comfortable home and would routinely hunt and socialize with the local gentry. As Charles Willson Peale later stated in his autobiography, his father had been “used [to] much polite good company” and although he inherited little else from him, Charles inherited the good will of members of the Maryland elite, many of whose sons he had taught.  

Charles was nine when his father died, and he recalled that his mother was “in her excess of grief” unable “for some time to take any measure to assist herself and her children. But in Mr. John Bordley (who had received his Education in the family) she found a generous friend whose kindness to the family in this time of difficulty, was truly affectionate ….” John Beale Bordley (1727-1804) relocated Margaret Triggs Peale and her five children to Annapolis where she established herself as a dressmaker and “by her Industry maintained herself and her children.” Bordley’s interest in the family was directly related to the particular attention Charles Peale had shown him when he was an orphaned boy placed under the care of his uncle and a student at the Kent County Free School. With a 14-year age difference between them, Bordley took a fraternal interest in the orphaned Charles, becoming a close friend and increasingly influential on the course of his career in Maryland and Philadelphia.

Family Connections

Charles never received the sophisticated, systematic education his father provided the sons of the landed gentry but throughout his life he had an intense thirst for knowledge and achievement. His nearly seven-year apprenticeship to Annapolis saddler and tradesman Nathan Waters ended late in 1761 and, with a loan from James Tilghman, the brother of his godfather, he opened his own shop in 1762. It was a pursuit that led to success and was an outlet for his inventiveness and drive to master a variety of skills. But it also led to indebtedness. The same year Charles married beautiful, 17-year-old Rachel Brewer, one of nine children being raised by her widowed mother. Rachel had little to offer financially but, as Lance Humphries’s research has revealed, she had a sterling kinship network. Her mother was the first cousin of Nicholas MacCubbin, the husband of Mary Clare Carroll, the only sister of the wealthy, powerful, well-educated and refined Charles Carroll, the Barrister (1723-1783), who would become both patron and moral support to Charles Willson Peale in his pursuit of an artistic career. And, on the Brewer side, Rachel had family ties to Bordley through his first wife, Elizabeth Chew. Charles Willson Peale’s closeness to Bordley and Carroll shaped his political affiliations and by the time of the Maryland election of 1764 he had joined the Sons of Freedom, an anti-proprietorial political group they both supported. Their politics were a precursor to the American Revolution, which all three would whole-heartedly support.

It was in this time frame that Charles’s artistic aspirations came into focus and Bordley rallied support for Peale, who was being pursued by creditors and political enemies, to follow the more genteel profession of portrait painting. Between 1767-1769 Carroll and Bordley led ten wealthy Maryland subscribers in supporting Peale’s artistic training in London with American-born artist Benjamin West (1738-1820). Returning home, having mastered the art of watercolor on ivory portrait miniatures, engraving, and sculpture in plaster and wax, Peale was also prepared to satisfy the desire of the Maryland gentry for stylish, accomplished oil portraiture.

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7 Bordley’s father died before he was born. He was sent to live with his mother’s sister and her husband in Chestertown when his mother Ariana Vanderleyden (1690-1741) left for London with her third husband Edmund Jennings (1645-1756). She died in England. Editorial note, Selected Papers, v. 1, p. 48 n.1.
9 Carroll’s links to Rachel were strong since the Carrolls had lost both their children and Carroll’s heirs were the sons of Rachel’s mother’s first cousin, Nicholas Maccubbin. The boys changed their last name to Carroll as a condition of their inheritance. See Humphries, pp. 48-51.
11 The subscribers to Peale’s study in London were (in order of amount contributed) Charles Carroll Barrister; John Beale Bordley; Daniel Dulany, then on the governor’s council; Horatio Sharpe, colonial governor of Maryland, 1753-69; Robert Lloyd, a member of the Maryland Assembly and Speaker of the House, 1765-70; Benjamin Tasker, Sr.; Thomas Ringgold, Sr., member of the Maryland legislature in the 1760s; Benedict Calvert, then on the governor’s council; Thomas Sprigg; Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, held many public offices in the colonial and Revolutionary periods and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, later a delegate to the Continental Congress and a Signer of the Declaration of Independence. Selected Papers, v.1, pp. 57-58.
Bringing the Grand Manner Home

While in London Charles was watched over by Bordley’s wealthy half-brother, Edmund Jennings III (1731-1819), who supported the colonial cause and during the Revolution participated in diplomatic missions, winning the respect of Americans such as John Adams. It’s not surprising, therefore, that Jennings commissioned Peale to paint a politically motivated full-length portrait of the British statesman, William Pitt, the Elder (1708-1778), who had championed colonial rights. But he also commissioned portraits of his Maryland friends Mr. and Mrs. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, John Dickinson, who had been a fellow law student with him in London, and a portrait of Bordley. Jennings asked Charles to include representations of American flora and fauna in these pictures. However, Peale’s portrait of Bordley was no simple celebration of indigenous plants or rural life. Rather, its imagery directly challenged British actions harmful to the colonies and was as politically pointed as his monumental portrait of Pitt. Unlike Pitt, who Charles had depicted in historic Roman garb, surrounded with traditional symbols of Roman Republican virtue, Peale’s portrait of Bordley naturalized his political references. In London, Peale had learned that a dignified and important portrait conceived in the tradition of grand European portraiture should not only render a sitter’s physical attributes, it should also reflect the character, convictions, and accomplishments of that individual in its presentation and imagery. Meaningful content was as important as a fine likeness and in Bordley’s portrait he directly addressed his sitter’s political convictions. Although he is shown in a landscape modestly dressed in American homespun, Bordley was trained as a lawyer, active as a judge, and a member of the Governor’s council. Leaning on a book of English law, he points to a statue of British Liberty holding the scales of justice to remind viewers that colonists lived under this law and should, therefore, be entitled to the rights it guaranteed. That Britain had violated these rights is signified by the torn legal document at his feet. A peach tree and a packhorse represent the colonies’ agricultural abundance and potential self-sufficiency while the grazing sheep indicate their ability to be free from reliance on imported British woolens. The imagery calls for America’s fair treatment under British law, but it also contained a direct threat of rebellion in the form of the jimson weed at the base of the statue that Peale described to Jennings in a letter of April 1771 as a plant that “acts in the most violent manner and causes death.” It was, in fact, a prophetic portrait.

Large Estates and Social Ties

Prior to the American Revolution, Bordley began to focus on developing progressive agricultural methods on his landholdings in several Maryland counties. Despite being shown with a jimson weed in his portrait, he was a kind,
genial and respected man with family connections to many of the influential families of Maryland’s eastern and western shores. And it was these connections, as well as his interest in scientific agriculture that would introduce Charles to new opportunities.

During the late 1760s Bordley developed a particular friendship with the Philadelphia merchant, John Cadwalader (1742-1786), who, in 1768, married Elizabeth Lloyd (1742-1776), an heir to her late father, Col. Edward Lloyd’s plantations on the Sassafras River in Kent County and on the Wye River. Living first in Maryland, the couple planned to move to Philadelphia and in 1770 Cadwalader asked Peale to paint their portraits in miniature. Their relocation also led to a major commission for five large-scale family portraits for their newly renovated, luxuriously appointed Philadelphia townhouse. The stylish centerpiece of this group, completed in 1772, pictured John, Elizabeth, and their infant daughter.16 Their rendering of material affluence was balanced by Charles’s sensitive depiction of Cadwalader’s features as he gazes down at his tiny child, holding out a peach. The hands of the three figures meet as Elizabeth looks over and up at John. It is conceived as an intimate domestic vignette similar to those presented in contemporary British portraiture where the dominance of the male figure is modified to project an ideal of mutual sympathy, affection and harmony within a family group. It was also a picture designed to convey a contemporary ideal in which masculine domestic virtue was seen as indicative of responsible public conduct and accountability.18 Peale’s work masterfully projected this message about his patron’s character to his visitors. Extremely pleased with the portrait, Cadwalader encouraged Charles to relocate to Philadelphia and lent him the newly completed portrait for display in the small gallery Peale had established to showcase his abilities. John Beale Bordley and his first wife, Margaret Chew, who was related to Mrs. Cadwalader, frequently visited the Cadwaladers in Philadelphia during this time, but Peale would not permanently relocate his family to the city until July 1776.19

Throughout his career, Charles was adept at family portraiture and his family portrait groups and double portraits constitute a notable part of his oeuvre. A warm, personal example is the portrait of his mother, Mrs. Charles Peale

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16 Elizabeth Lloyd Cadwalader’s portrait miniature is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. John’s in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.
18 For a more detailed discussion of this picture see, The Art of the Peales, pp. 49-51.
19 The Bordley’s daughter Henrietta Maria was in school in Philadelphia in the early 1770s and they stayed with the Cadwaladers on their frequent visits to the city. After Mrs. Bordley died in November 1773, he made the trip to see his daughter more frequently and in October 1776 he married Mrs. John Mifflin, a widow in Philadelphia, with whom he had a daughter, Elizabeth Bordley (1777-1863). Biographical Sketches of the Bordley Family, 105. Bordley’s presence in Philadelphia, therefore, was well established.
surrounded by her grandchildren, Angelica, Raphaelle and Rembrandt. It was painted shortly after Rachel gave birth to their fourth surviving child, Titian Ramsay Peale, and Margaret Triggs Peale’s substantial domestic support was deeply appreciated. At first glance, the composition seems casual and natural. But a deeper dive connects it to the traditional image of Charity, defined as “selfless, unconditional, and voluntary loving-kindness.” The visual representation of Charity, as a woman surrounded by three children, had a long history and Peale’s portrait illustrates his exceptional ability to naturalize symbolic imagery. It provides early portraits of his eldest daughter, Angelica (1775-1853) and his eldest son, Raphaelle (1774-1825), who became a brilliant still life painter and who, along with his uncle, James Peale (1749-1831), launched the American still life tradition. The younger child is Rembrandt (1776-1860), who would excel as a portraitist and history painter.20

Washington: A Family Tradition

Another highly significant part of Charles Willson Peale’s artistic production, his Washington portraiture, was initiated through Annapolis connections. This early introduction to Washington facilitated ongoing opportunities to portray the man who became the colonies’ first military leader and then, president of the new nation. It also established an artistic legacy in Washington portraiture for Peale’s family.

Charles was introduced to Martha Washington by the Rev. Jonathan Boucher (1738-1804), who, in 1770 became rector of St. Anne’s Parish in Annapolis. Boucher was also a member of the Homony Club; the social club Charles was invited to join after his return from London. Martha’s son by her first marriage, John Parke Custis, attended the parish school and Boucher asked Charles to accompany him home on his behalf. This led to his introduction to Martha and her commission in 1771 for miniature portraits of her son and her daughter, Martha (Patsy) Parke Custis. This was followed in 1772 by her commission for a large oil portrait of her husband, George, to accompany a portrait of herself painted in 1757 by John Wollaston.21 Charles’s portrait presented Washington in his colonel’s uniform from his service in the French and Indian War and it initiated a long and cordial relationship between Peale and Washington.22 Over the years Peale enjoyed the unique opportunity for six more life sittings, which yielded distinctly different portraits and represented Washington at critical moments in his illustrious career. Of the seven total portrait sittings, two were directly connected to miniatures and one existed only in miniature. They were painted in 1772, 1776, 1777, 1779, 1783, 1787, and finally 1795, as president.23 Throughout the war, Martha Washington ordered miniatures of her husband for their family and friends. Peale served as a captain in the Philadelphia Militia, fought under the command of John Cadwalader at the Battle of Princeton, and served at Valley Forge.

20 For a discussion of the Peale family of artists in the context of the extensive Peale Collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art see, Soltis, The Art of the Peales.
21 Wollaston (1710-1775) was a British portrait painter active in the colonies. Martha’s portrait and Peale’s 1772 portrait of Washington are in the Washington-Custis-Lee Collection of Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. Washington commanded the Virginia Regiment during the French and Indian War.
22 Martha also requested three miniatures based on this portrait—one for each of the children and one for herself.
Peale’s life portraits of Washington created an ongoing demand for copies from Washington’s admirers during and after the Revolution. Charles filled many of these requests but his association with Washington was proudly shared by his family of artists. His brother James (1749-1831) and his nephew Charles Peale Polk (1767-1822) each generated a significant body of Washington portraiture. And, at mid-career in the 1820s, Charles’s son Rembrandt (1778-1860) created a monumental, conceptualized portrait that he titled *Patriae Pater.* 24 This now hangs in the U.S. Senate along with one of Charles’s replicas of his own 1779 *Washington at Princeton.* 25 During the early 1840s Rembrandt painted smaller scale versions based on his *Patriae Pater* portrait. Their popularity led to a steady demand for copies by Rembrandt. Copies were also made by Rembrandt’s niece and pupil, Mary Jane Peale (1827-1902), and his second wife and pupil, Harriet Cany Peale (1800-1869). 26 Rembrandt’s work and the Peale family association with Washington also generated requests for variations of Washington imagery, as illustrated by his *Equestrian Washington,* now in the Hammond-Harwood House.

**Peale’s Museum**

Charles’ attempt to re-establish his portrait practice after the war led to his creation of a portrait gallery dedicated to individuals who were “distinguished by their Actions or office” during the Revolution and its aftermath. 27 Opened to the public in 1784, over the years it featured portraits of scientists, artists, authors, explorers, presidents, politicians, and other individuals, American and European, who Peale deemed notable. 28 In 1819 he added his remarkable portrait of the former slave *Yarrow Mamout* (Mamadou Yarrow). Painted in his naturalistic, late style, Charles brings the viewer into close contact with a savvy survivor who, as Peale detailed in his autobiography, had achieved financial security and asserted his personal identity through hard work, positive personal habits, perseverance, and his Muslim faith. 29

But Peale’s portrait collection of *homo sapiens* represented just one species within the more ambitious museum he founded in 1786 dedicated to all “the Wonderful Works of Nature.” 30 Although his role has never been directly acknowledged, it’s impossible to understand this new trajectory in Charles’s career without John Beale Bordley and his

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24 Peale made two exact replicas of this picture. One is in the collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the other is privately owned. senate.gov/art-artifacts/fine-art/paintings/31_00001.htm
25 The picture now in the Senate collection was copied by Charles in 1779 and was sent to France by 1781. See Sellers, “Portraits and Miniatures,” p. 228, no. 905. senate.gov/art-artifacts/fine-art/paintings/31_00002.htm
27 In a letter to Edmund Jennings, who urged him to “perpetuate everything” regarding the Revolution, Peale responded that he already had “between 30 and 40 portraits of principal Characters” and intended to expand the collection. Charles Willson Peale to Edmund Jennings, Dec. 10, 1783. Selected Papers, v. 1, pp. 402-3. Peale was hopeful this was a project that would help heal the lingering partisan political wounds.
28 James and Rembrandt Peale also painted portraits for the collection.
30 Peale often used this phrase in referring to his natural science collection in the museum and it was printed on the museum’s first admission ticket in 1788. Sellers, Mr. Peale’s Museum, 37 (ill.).
activities and connections in Philadelphia during this time. In 1783 Bordley was elected to the American Philosophical Society, the country’s oldest learned society, founded by Benjamin Franklin to “promote useful knowledge.” Bordley’s influential writings and activities in improving the land and its productivity dovetailed with the Society’s focus on the study of natural science to better understand and utilize America’s physical environment to the benefit of the new nation and a better understanding of its unique identity. During the winter of 1784-5, Bordley spent the winter in Philadelphia promoting the formation of the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, which emerged from his relationships within the Philosophical Society. Peale’s friendship with Bordley inevitably fostered his greater familiarity with Philadelphia’s intellectual, scientific community and in 1786, the same year he launched his museum, Peale also was elected a member of the Society. Europeans had long shipped specimens of American nature home to study and propagate and Peale’s commitment to the study and display American flora and fauna in his museum was in line with the Society’s pro-American scientific interests. By 1792, Peale had assembled a prestigious board to lend support and influential connections to the museum. Thomas Jefferson, who was then serving as Secretary of State in Washington’s administration, became the first board President and John Beale Bordley, who had permanently moved to Philadelphia in 1791, was also an active member. By the time John Beale Bordley died in Philadelphia in 1804, he had witnessed the success of the schoolmaster’s son from Annapolis, whose artistic skill, energy, entrepreneurial spirit and desire to learn and teach was making a major contribution to American society.

31 The Society was launched February 11, 1785 with 23 charter members and it still exists. Biographical Sketches of the Bordley Family, of Maryland, For Their Descendants, Part First, by Mrs. Elizabeth Bordley Gibson, edited by her niece Elizabeth Mifflin (Philadelphia: Printed by Henry B. Ashmead, 1865): 89.

32 For the American Philosophical Society, its past and present membership and projects see: amphilsoc.org/about/history

33 Sellers, Mr. Peale’s Museum, pp. 56, 57, 58, 61. As the collection grew, in the fall of 1794 Peale moved his family and the museum from his cramped spaces on Lombard Street into the newly completed building of the Philosophical Society. It was a prestigious location next to the State House; Bordley had ceded his Maryland lands to his son and namesake when he relocated although he maintained a large farm near Philadelphia in Chester County to continue his agricultural interests.
George III Mirror in the Chippendale Style, English, c. 1770
Makers: Unknown
Medium: Mahogany with Gilt Eagle

This collection of portraits by the artist Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827) constitutes a study of influential men and women who lived and worked in the city of Annapolis in the late 18th century. These carefully curated likenesses held an intrinsic value that translated the essence of a person’s character based on their very physiognomy and the iconography included in the piece.

Portraiture is a likeness reserved for the elite, frozen in time, in contrast to a mirror which is more fleeting intimate way to view one’s reflection. Today’s mirrors are the same as those used in the 18th century—a mirror reflected whatever it saw regardless of status whether gentry, craftsman, or enslaved servant. Unlike this mirror which shows things as they are, Peale’s portraits depict a calculated absence of the enslaved labor used to run an estate, and while omitted on canvas, this was always reflected in the mirror. Mirror glass was an imported luxury in this period and adorned the homes of Peale’s sitters, including this one formerly owned by Governor Benjamin Ogle (1749-1809) of Annapolis, who sat for Peale at least three times in the 1770s.
This painting presents an interesting study into ongoing research on Charles Willson Peale’s works. The portrait is unsigned and was misnamed for many years but recent research, led by the descendant lenders, an art conservator, and a textile historian, have discovered the subject to be Elizabeth Beale Dorsey. It is an early work of Peale’s completed prior to his studies in England. For many years it was thought to be Mary Dorsey (c. 1750-1816), the daughter of the now-known sitter, done during Peale’s third Annapolis chapter in the late 1780s. However, Elizabeth’s cap helped clarify the mystery—it dates to the mid-18th century, and because women always use the newest fashions in their portraits this painting was likely done about 1765, not in the 1780s.

Elizabeth grew up on a slaveholding estate in Annapolis known as Norwood’s Beale. She was the eldest child of John Beale (1673-1734), a well-known politician. In 1743, Elizabeth witnessed the lawsuit made against several prominent citizens in Anne Arundel County, including her parents. The lawsuit was led by a 32-year-old enslaved woman named Ann Fisher, who had been born the same year as Elizabeth and grew up at her father’s estate. The two may have been playmates, or at least familiar. Fisher stated that she and her seven siblings were the grandchildren of Molly Molloyd, a white indentured servant woman from Ireland, and according to Maryland law they were free, as freedom was based on the race of the mother. The eight Fisher siblings stated they had been “unjustly” held by the late John Beale, Elizabeth’s father, before being sold to powerful families like the Hammonds, Jennings, and Dorseys. Their petition was unsuccessful. However, Fisher’s daughter, Eleanor Toogood, later petitioned for her freedom in 1783, using the same reasoning, and was granted her freedom.
Elizabeth Bordley (1717-1789), Annapolis, Maryland, c. 1770

Artist: Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), American
Medium: Oil on Canvas
On Loan from Noel Bisson and Susan Bisson Lambert

Elizabeth was the elder half-sister of Charles Willson Peale’s primary friend and supporter in Annapolis, John Beale Bordley (1727-1804). Elizabeth lived at her family’s Annapolis estate, the Bordley-Randall House c. 1760, which is depicted in the background. The estate is still extant off State Circle. Elizabeth enjoyed fine clothing and jewelry as evident in her portrait. She left a small portion of her estate to her favorite clothier in London. When this portrait was painted in 1770 Peale also painted a portrait of Elizabeth’s companion Sarah Turner. Elizabeth never married and was known for her kindness; upon her death she bequeathed to St. Anne’s Church her pastureland, which is now their cemetery. During recent conservation of the portrait, an urn was revealed in the background. The same urn is also found in Peale’s portrait of Mrs. Ann Russell c. 1784, so the piece was likely a prop used in Peale’s studio.
This painting was a companion piece to Elizabeth Bordley painted shortly after Peale returned from his studies in England. A contemporary of Peale, Sarah likely knew Peale from his childhood, as she grew up as a ward of the Bordley family, close friends and neighbors of Peale. Sarah was the companion of Elizabeth, the elder half-sister of Peale’s primary patron, John Beale Bordley.

Sarah remained unmarried throughout her life and navigated a network of close friendships in Annapolis with other single women, including Elizabeth. Later she befriended Hester Ann Chase, the wealthiest women in Annapolis, who inherited this portrait from Sarah. Hester purchased the Chase-Lloyd House across the street in 1846. Hester’s niece, Hester Ann Chase Ridout, set up the home as Chase Home Inc., in 1886 to serve women in need.
American-born Benjamin West developed an interest in art at a young age and was encouraged by his parents. In 1760 at age 22 he became the first American to study painting in Rome; he then settled in London in 1763. West rose in popularity, becoming a court painter for King George III. He was one of the founders and later president of the Royal Academy. He was loyal to the Americans in spite of the King’s patronage. West ran a school where he kept an open-door policy for American painters, including Charles Willson Peale who studied with him from 1767 to 1769. West also trained Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828) and John Trumball (1756-1843), who returned to America and had prolific careers. West’s London studio can therefore be credited with aiding the development of early American art. Peale continued to correspond with West long after his return to America, and even sent his Annapolis student Edmund Brice (1751-1784) to learn from him.
The English-born Reverend Jonathan Boucher was rector of St. Anne’s Episcopal Church in Annapolis and ran a boarding school attended by George Washington’s wayward stepson, John Parke Custis. Boucher was a member of the Homony Club of Annapolis, as was Charles Willson Peale. Encouraging Peale’s artistic talents, Boucher had Peale escort Jacky home to Mount Vernon, where George and Martha Washington each sat for Peale to paint them. A staunch loyalist, Boucher later returned to England in 1775 before the American Revolution. He wrote about his time in America and this work was posthumously published by his grandson in 1925.
**Hot Water Urn, London, England, c. 1770/71**
Maker: Andrew Fogelberg (1732-1815), Swedish-British
Medium: Silver

This hot water urn once belonged to the fiery American patriot Samuel Chase (1741-1811) who was painted by Charles Willson Peale in 1773. Born two days apart in different towns on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, Chase and Peale led parallel lives, both completing their training and marrying in 1762.

During Maryland’s 1764 election Peale backed Chase, who supported the interests of tradesmen. This infuriated Peale’s creditors who favored Chase’s opponent George Steuart (1700-1784). The tension changed the trajectory of Peale’s life, as he was forced to flee Annapolis for several months in 1765 to avoid his creditors. During this time, he studied briefly in Boston with painter John Singleton Copley. Throughout his time away Peale sent paintings home to Annapolis, including one to Charles Carroll, the Barrister, who helped Peale manage his debts. Peale returned to Annapolis in the fall of 1766.
Published in 1753, *The Analysis of Beauty* by the artist William Hogarth describes his concepts of visual beauty and grace in a fashion accessible to his contemporaries. Charles Willson Peale used this book as a guide. In his group family portrait started after returning from England, he painted himself instructing his younger brothers St. George and James in the techniques from Hogarth’s book. James Peale (1749-1831) went on to also become an accomplished artist, and four of his daughters become the first female professional artists in America.

*The Analysis of Beauty, Plate 1, Print*

Artist: William Hogarth (1697-1764), British

Hammond-Harwood House Collection. Museum Purchase in 2022
In January of 1762, Charles Willson Peale finished his apprenticeship and set up his own shop on Church Street, now Main Street, and married his childhood sweetheart Rachel Brewer. The following year he made a fateful business trip to Norfolk, Virginia, where he saw fine art and thought he could do a better job. Shortly after he traveled to Philadelphia and bought The Handmaid to the Arts by Robert Dossie. He studied this book intensely before purchasing painting supplies and returning to Annapolis, where he began his new painting venture.
This early miniature by Charles Willson Peale depicts John Beale Bordley, who was his primary supporter in Annapolis and helped launch his career as an artist. Bordley was a student of Charles Willson Peale’s father, and after the death of Peale Sr., Bordley helped move the Peale family to Annapolis in 1750 when Peale was nine.

When Peale started to show artistic talent, Bordley gathered funds from wealthy Annapolis gentlemen to send Peale to study in London with Benjamin West. In the late 1770s Peale and Bordley both moved to Philadelphia and their friendship continued to flourish based on their shared interest in the natural sciences. Peale opened his museum in the 1780s while Bordley wrote books on agriculture and help found the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture.
Nicholas (MacCubbin) Carroll (1750-1812) was the nephew and heir of Charles Carroll, the Barrister, and an avid supporter of Charles Willson Peale. The Barrister had no heirs so he selected his sister’s sons Nicholas and James MacCubbin to inherit if they changed their last name to Carroll—which they did. Nicholas MacCubbin Carroll (1750-1812) was a first cousin, a generation apart, to Charles Willson Peale’s first wife Rachel Brewer Peale (1744-1790).

Created in 1774, this miniature bore witness to a land in turmoil. On October 19, 1774, Peale and Carroll were in Annapolis when the Peggy Stewart was burned in the harbor to protest the tea tax. The following year Peale moved with his family to Philadelphia and became actively involved as a Continental soldier. He fought alongside George Washington at the battles of Trenton and Princeton. Ever the ambitious entrepreneur, Peale used his time as a soldier to paint patriotic scenes accompanied by narrative details. These images continue to define American identity as we know it today.
One of Charles Willson Peale’s greatest financial supporters in Annapolis was Charles Carroll, the Barrister (1723-1783). This charming painting of Carroll’s niece, Mary Clare MacCubbin Brice, and her daughter, also named Mary Clare, was done in 1773 after Peale returned to Annapolis from his training in England, a venture partially funded by Carroll. Mary Clare and her daughter are depicted in the highest fashion of the day. Their elaborate pearls symbolized purity, beauty, and faith. The detail paid to the silk clothing is remarkable and conveys the luxury and wealth afforded to the sitter.

Having no heirs, Carroll gave his fortune to Mary Clare’s two MacCubbin brothers, James and Nicholas Jr, who changed their last name to Carroll in accordance with the stipulation surrounding the inheritance. In 1766 Mary Clare married John Brice (1738-1820), a first cousin of Matthias Hammond (1748-1786), who built the Hammond-Harwood House. Mary Clare and her husband would have known Peale because John’s younger brother, Edmund, was Peale’s pupil in the early 1770s.
The penetrating eyes of architect William Buckland reveal a confident and capable professional who is at ease in his surroundings. In front of him lie the plans for Hammond-Harwood House and behind him is St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, recognizing his British roots and admiration for architect James Gibbs (1682-1754). When Charles Willson Peale began painting in 1774, Buckland had begun the Hammond-Harwood House for his client Matthias Hammond (1748-1786). This house would be Buckland’s final work before his untimely death the same year. The painting remained unfinished for thirteen years until Charles Willson Peale completed it as a gift for Buckland’s daughter, Sarah Buckland Callahan, and her husband, John Callahan, a cousin of Peale’s. The original hangs at Yale University Art Gallery. This fine copy was made by Winifred Gordon, a gifted artist and one of the founders of the Hammond-Harwood House Association.
In composing William Buckland’s portrait, Charles Willson Peale took great care to depict St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church in London, a sketch of the Hammond-Harwood House, and his architecture tools. Buckland died unexpectedly in 1774, when Peale had only completed the portrait’s head. The painting was not finished until 1789 as a present for his daughter Sarah Callahan. It is unknown if Buckland told Peale what he wanted in his portrait, or if many years later Peale reflected on his deceased friend and included the items he thought were important to him.

These tools were owned by William Buckland when he designed the Hammond-Harwood House. The tools are consistent with Buckland’s station in life in 18th-century Annapolis as they are of fine quality but not the highest quality. The set is made with shark skin and brass while the finest quality was silver and stingray skin. The initials W.B. are carved into the ruler. The set descended through the family of Buckland’s apprentice John Randall.
This cast is of an interior carving at Hammond-Harwood House. Oxford, a highly skilled enslaved craftsman held by architect William Buckland, likely is responsible for some of the interior woodwork in the house. Charles Willson Peale, like Buckland, also held enslaved people, at least five known during his lifetime. Peale’s livelihood depended on slavery. His Maryland clients made their money from tobacco planted and harvested by enslaved laborers; in fact, Peale accepted a client’s business offer, the exchange of enslaved persons, as a payment for portraits.
The younger of architect William Buckland’s two daughters, Sarah, was born in 1763 on the Northern Neck of Virginia. In 1783 Sarah married John Callahan, a tailor’s son who had ascended to become the Register of Land Records for the Western Shore of Maryland during the American Revolution (a position previously held by St. George Peale, brother of artist Charles Willson Peale) and Lieutenant Colonel in the Maryland Militia 1794 to 1795. John was a cousin of the artist Charles Willson Peale, and Peale stayed with the family many times while visiting Annapolis. The couple lived in large brick home at the corner College Avenue and Bladen Street in Annapolis.

Sarah holds her infant daughter Anna, who sweetly smiles and holds a kitten. Cats have played a significant part in the evolution of human history. Cats were rarely depicted in portraits of nobility (unlike dogs); instead, they are shown in private quarters—in the kitchen or in the bedchamber in genre scenes of ordinary life. As the cat in this painting grew older it would not have been a pampered pet and most likely it would have been relegated to the servants’ quarters to hunt mice.
Out of the hundreds of portraits Peale completed during his third Annapolis chapter in the late 1780s, this painting of his cousin John Callahan (1754-1803) has an especially charming story behind it. The relationship helped to fulfill Peale’s desire for affectionate familial connections. Callahan was the well-liked Register of Land Records for the western shore of Maryland. He had worked under Peale’s younger brother St. George Peale, and when “Saint” died John succeeded him as registrar. In his autobiography, Peale says John demonstrated “steadiness, diligence, obliging disposition” in his occupation.

When Peale reacquainted himself with his younger cousin in the late 1780s, Callahan was married to Sarah Buckland (1763-1831), daughter of the late architect William Buckland. During Peale’s sporadic stays in Annapolis, he often lodged with the Callahans. When John commissioned Peale to paint two portraits—one of himself and one of Sarah in 1788—Peale included the couple’s youngest daughter, Anna, and even the family’s kitten as an addition to Sarah’s portrait. In 1789, as gift to the couple, Peale completed the portrait of Sarah’s late father, the architect William Buckland, which was begun from life in 1774 before Buckland’s untimely death. In 1791, Peale completed a surprise painting for the couple of their two daughters, Sally and Polly Callahan.
Painted as gift for the Callahan family in 1791, the piece shows the children in the essence of their youth. The pear they are holding was a common symbol for abundance and longevity.

Sally and Polly were the daughters of John Callahan, a first cousin and friend of Charles Willson Peale. Callahan’s wife, Sarah, was the daughter of Hammond-Harwood House’s architect William Buckland (1734-1774). After Peale moved to Philadelphia, he returned to visit family and obtain commissions, most notably in the late 1780s and early 1790s. During this time he frequently stayed with his cousin John Callahan and his family.

Sally Callahan (on right) married Richard Harwood, and their son William married into the Loockerman family who lived at the Hammond-Harwood House. So, by pure coincidence the great-grandson of the architect got to live in the house, and it was his children who were the last private owners until the death in 1924 of his daughter Hester Harwood.
Daniel Delozier (1760-1815) was the nephew of John Randall (1750-1826), apprentice to architect William Buckland. Randall completed the Hammond-Harwood House after Buckland’s untimely death in 1774. Randall trained his nephew Daniel Delozier, ten years his junior, in wood carving like William Buckland had taught him several years earlier. Delozier may have worked on Hammond-Harwood House in a small capacity or watched his uncle. After the Revolutionary War, Randall and Delozier opened a store together across from Middleton Tavern. Daniel married Ann Higginbotham, the daughter of the rector of St. Anne’s Church, and later became the collector of the Port of Baltimore.

This portrait was done in 1788, the same year his uncle and aunt John and Deborah Knapp Randall had their portraits painted. The Randalls paid Peale in goods instead of cash, a common practice for era among those who owned commercial enterprises.
Annapolis was laid out on an urban baroque plan in 1694 with two seats of power—located at Church and State circles. This layout survives today relatively intact as Charles Willson Peale would have known it during his childhood in Annapolis in the mid-18th century.

In addition to his work as a portraitist, naturalist, and museum founder, Charles Willson Peale produced several important engravings in the late 18th century. This engraving depicts the Maryland State House and the workshops of Scottish immigrant cabinetmakers John Shaw and Archibald Chisholm on the left, the octagonal outhouse built by Shaw known as “The Temple,” and the Old Treasury Building built in 1735. Note the alternative orientation to the State House which is now on the opposite side, and the dramatic use of color on the dome which is now white.

_A Front View of the State House in Annapolis, Annapolis, Maryland c. 1789_

Artist: Charles Willson Peale, (1741-1827), American
Medium: Engraving
Anne Sanders married into the influential Green family of printers. Her husband was Frederick Green, the son of Jonas and Anne Catherine Green, publishers of Annapolis’ *Maryland Gazette* newspaper. This important publication served as a repository of important information covering everything from international news to tradesmen’s ads and notices about runaway slaves. Charles Willson Peale first advertised his business venture as a saddlemaker and later as an artist in the *Maryland Gazette*.

Peale had a longstanding friendship with the Green family. Patriarch Jonas Green (c. 1712-1767) had been a friend of Peale’s parents and a witness at their November 1740 wedding. Upon Jonas Green’s death his Dutch-born wife Anne Catherine was left with several children and a large debt. However, she assumed her husband’s contract to print the newspaper and became one of the first women in the American colonies to do so. Anne Catherine was successful in her endeavors. She was able to get out of debt, buy their rented house on Charles Street, and raise her children. A generation apart, these two portraits—Anne Sanders Green and her mother-in-law Anne Catherine Green—are very different. While Anne Catherine’s portrait focuses on her profession, her daughter-in-law’s portrait focuses on her fashionable hair and clothes. A single book is the only indication of her family’s profession.
Anne Catherine Green (1720-1775), Annapolis, Maryland, 1769

Artist: Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), American
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Image Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

This unique portrait is the only one Peale painted of a woman who had a trade and supported her family with that income. In June 1769, when Charles Willson Peale arrived in Annapolis after his London studies, the printer of the *Maryland Gazette*, Anne Catherine Green (1720-1775), was one of his first clients. While a portrait of the widow Anne Catherine Green might seem an unlikely choice for a young painter to showcase his artistic abilities, she held great influence in town. She knew many Annapolitans from gentleman planters to aspiring craftsmen. The portrait itself, on display in Green’s house, served as an advertisement for Peale’s abilities to all those who visited for newspaper business.

At the time she sat for this portrait Anne Catherine was a 49-year-old mother who had given birth to 14 children. She is depicted as a professional; her clothes are elegant but not flashy. Clearly visible is a piece of the paper with the words “Annapolis printer to” referencing the contract she assumed from her late husband Jonas Green to print the *Gazette* for the Maryland legislature.
Hester Baldwin Chase looks downward from this portrait, commanding the viewer’s attention with her strikingly expressive eyes. Hester was one of the four Baldwin sisters who though not born into great wealth, made up for it in beauty. She descended from the earliest English settlers in Anne Arundel County. Samuel Chase, signer of the Declaration of Independence, married Hester’s older sister Anne “Nancy” in 1762. This marriage was seen as a love match as it did not enhance either’s position or fortune. In June 1779, in the midst of the American Revolution, Hester married Jeremiah Townley Chase, a cousin of Samuel Chase. In 1811 Chase bought the close-by Hammond-Harwood House for their eldest daughter Frances, her husband, Richard Loockerman, and their children to live in. Charles Willson Peale was a good friend of Jeremiah Townley Chase and noted this in his autobiography.
This portrait of William Whetcroft embodies the exhibition theme of ambition. Depicted in the bloom of prosperity in front of a country landscape, William Whetcroft appears to be a member of the landed gentry. In reality he was an urban immigrant craftsman. Charles Willson Peale and William Whetcroft both operated shops in Annapolis in the 1760s and 1770s. They knew each other for at least two decades before Whetcroft commissioned this painting. The piece presents an interesting case study into how the sitter’s desire for status factored into Peale’s final portrait.

William Whetcroft was originally from Cork, Ireland, and came to America in 1766. After a brief time in Baltimore, he set up shop in Annapolis in 1769 upon his marriage to Frances Knapp. Whetcroft’s stepdaughter was Deborah Knapp Randall, who married John Randall, the apprentice to William Buckland, architect of the Hammond-Harwood House. Whetcroft advertised himself as a jeweler, goldsmith, lapidary, clockmaker, cabinetmaker, and storekeeper. He lived on West Street in Annapolis and was a neighbor and friend of the famed Annapolis silversmith and diarist William Faris (1728-1804).
Sugar Nippers, c. 1770
Maker: William Whetcroft (1735-1799), Irish-American
Medium: Silver
On Loan from Lamb Silver: Early American Silver & Coins

These elegant sugar nippers were produced by Irish American silversmith William Whetcroft, who lived in Annapolis and was a patron of the Peale family. This delicate piece has wonderfully designed seashell bowls made in the rococo style that would have delighted the user. The rococo style reached England with the influx of Huguenot immigrants in the 17th century and then spread to the colonies with pattern books and immigrant craftsmen like Whetcroft. The word “rococo” comes from the French word “rocaille” meaning shell or rock. The motifs in this style tend to be from nature, especially marine and floral designs.
Salt Cellar, London, England, c. 1782/1783
Maker: William Plummer (1739-1791), English
Medium: Silver and Glass
Hammond-Harwood House Collection.
Gift of Mr. Addison H. Reese in memory of his mother, Mrs. Walter Hopkins (née Mabel Ford) in 1976, S.58.

London silversmith William Plummer was a skilled craftsman who specialized in pierced objects such as baskets, strainers, and salt cellars like this one. He did a high volume of work, and many of his pieces reached cities in the American colonies, including Annapolis. This salt cellar is original to the Hammond-Harwood House and was likely bought in downtown Annapolis.

Hallmarks are stamps put into silver to help identify the maker and origin. Although this piece does bear William Plummer’s W.P. hallmark, that wasn’t always the case for his pieces sold in Annapolis. On occasion, Charles Willson Peale’s client, the Annapolis silversmith William Whetroft, defaced William Plummer’s hallmarks and defiantly struck his own.
Annapolis silversmith William Whetcroft knew the Peale family from their days as craftsmen in mid-18th-century Annapolis. Whetcroft, a devoted self-promoter, knew the power of portraiture to convey wealth and taste. He commissioned a portrait from Charles Willson Peale around 1785 and a miniature from his brother James Peale in 1795.

**William Whetcroft (1735-1799), c. 1795**

Artist: James Peale (1749-1831), American

Medium: Watercolor on Ivory

On Loan from Stiles Tuttle Colwill
Charles Willson Peale noted in his journal that he finished the painting in one sitting. Peale’s nephew Charles Peale Polk (1767-1822) painted a portrait of Ann’s older sister Mary Proctor. This painting was donated to the museum in 1953 at the same time as Ann’s portrait. The doll (c. 1785) in the painting was passed down through the family and was donated along with the painting.

Parrots were not native to the Maryland colony. Traveling sailors frequently picked up exotic birds during their stops at the islands, Africa, and South America. The birds were brought to America and given to family and friends as gifts or sold to wealthy customers like the Proctors. The birds therefore are a symbol of wealth. This parrot is a Rose Ringed Parakeet native to sub-Saharan Africa. Typically, these birds live from 20 to 30 years, so if the bird was young in this painting, it certainly could have been in Ann’s household when she was an adult.
William Goldsborough (1750-1801),
Easton, Maryland, c. 1789

Artist: Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), American
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Hammond-Harwood House Collection.
Donated by Charlotte Fletcher in 2006, P79.

The portrait shows William William Goldsborough (1750-1801) in a relaxed position in Charles Willson Peale’s typical crisp realistic style. Peale often included attributes to reveal the character or interests of the sitter. Goldsborough had a public career in legislative services in Talbot County, Maryland. His family held vast landholdings including a plantation called Myrtle Grove that became manageable and successful due to enslaved labor. He served in the General Assembly from 1777-1779. He never married and the family referred to him as “Uncle Billy of Haylands.” Goldsborough kept a journal of activities at Myrtle Grove, mostly recording farming data, but also family births, deaths, and events. The Chippendale side chair he sits on was made in 1775 and was donated to the museum with the painting with the specification that they be kept together.
Charles Willson Peale painted these head-size portraits of Thomas Johnson and his wife Ann in the fall of 1788 at their home Pleasant Grove about nine miles west of Baltimore. Peale visited Pleasant Grove at the request of the couple’s eldest son Rinaldo Johnson, who had also commissioned a miniature of himself. Peale recorded his time with the Johnson family in a 1788 diary entry: “Mr. Johnson’s children collected their number ten. 4 girls and 6 boys all grow up almost to women and men—it was a pleasing sight to see them placed at the dinner table in the order they were born.”

In an October 1788 letter to his friend Christopher Richmond, Peale describes a funny scene with Mr. Johnson. He says that “a favorable anecdote for me a painter happened when I painted Mr. Johnson. I placed a looking glass in such a manner as the old gentleman might see the picture while I worked on it, when it was nearly finished, he put his hand on his cap, and exclaimed in some surprise that he felt his cap on head & yet that he could not see it, when in fact he only saw the portrait.”
This depiction of an earnest women in her final year of life is of Elizabeth Tasker Lowndes (c. 1726-1789). She was the widow of Christopher Lowndes (1713-1785), one of the largest and wealthiest slave traders in the Chesapeake region during the 18th century. Elizabeth and her husband Christopher Lowndes lived at Bostwick House, which still survives in Bladensburg, Maryland. Elizabeth was born the fourth surviving child of Anne Bladen Tasker (1696-1775) and Benjamin Tasker, Sr. (1690-1768), the President of the Upper House who also held numerous other offices. Her uncle Thomas Bladen was Governor of Maryland from 1742-1746 and began work on a governor’s mansion that became known as Bladen’s Folly due to its unfinished state. It is now McDowell Hall on the campus of St. John’s College.

In a twist of fate, exactly 30 years after this painting was completed, Peale painted Yarrow Mamout (1736-1823), an educated Muslim man who had been kidnapped in Africa and sold by Elizabeth’s husband in Annapolis in 1752. Mamout claimed his freedom at age 60 by self-purchase and became a successful businessman and homeowner in Georgetown, Washington, D.C.
During Charles Willson Peale’s visits to client’s homes, he would have seen objects that represented the wealth and status of the family. These delicate spoons made by Annapolis silversmith Charles Tinges (1765-1816) once graced the table of Richard Tasker Lowndes (1763-1840) and his wife Anne Lloyd (1769-1840) at their home Blenheim in Bladensburg, Maryland. The spoons date to the year of their marriage in 1785 and may have been a gift. Their marriage was a union of powerful families. Richard’s father, Christopher Lowndes, was one of the wealthiest men in Prince George’s County while Anne’s father, Edward Lloyd IV, was one of the wealthiest men in Annapolis. Richard’s mother Elizabeth Tasker Lowndes (1726-1789) and his Stoddert nieces and nephew were painted by Charles Willson Peale in 1789.

**Pair of Spoons, Annapolis, Maryland, c. 1785**

Maker: Charles Tinges (1765-1816), American
Medium: Silver
On Loan from the collection of Vincent and Caroline Cerniglia
After Charles Willson Peale returned to Annapolis from England in 1769, he taught his two younger brothers, St. George and James, how to paint. James initially trained as a cabinetmaker and made frames for his brother’s paintings. James served in the American Revolution retiring as a captain in 1779. He was able to make a living from art. He established a practice alongside his brother in Philadelphia specializing in miniatures, while Charles took the larger portraits and worked at establishing his museum. As James’s eyesight failed, he turned to the romantic British model of picturesque landscapes. This work, done at age 41, predates most of his landscapes.

Although titled The Mill, the piece depicts an ironworks in Bloomsbury, New Jersey. The painting is believed to have once been owned by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a Maryland Signer of the Declaration of Independence—and patron of the Peale family. This was an especially appropriate subject for Carroll, as his family had a one-fifth interest in the Baltimore Iron Works Company. Although the ironworks water wheel in the painting appears to be in working order, Peale likely took artistic license. By the end of the 18th century many American furnaces were non-operational. It wasn’t until the 1840s that another building boom of ironworks occurred.
When James Peale painted his miniature Benjamin Harwood likely asked to have his eyes painted crossed, as they were in real life. Benjamin was the great uncle of William Harwood who lived in the Hammond-Harwood House. He operated an import business with his brother, Thomas Harwood. He was treasurer of St. John’s College and one of the managers of a lottery to raise funds for St. Anne’s Church. In 1792 he was appointed treasurer of the western shore of Maryland by Thomas Jefferson and George Washington.

The story behind the discovery of the miniature is a curious one. Historian George Forbes believes the miniature was found in Harwood’s former office, the Old Treasury Building on State Circle in Annapolis, in a secret chamber. A box found in the chamber contained 50 thousand dollars in Maryland bonds, this miniature, and women’s jewelry. The story leaves a bit of mystery about the life of this interesting wealthy bachelor.
Edward Lloyd V (1779-1834), Annapolis, Maryland c. 1798
Maker: James Peale (1749-1831), American
Medium: Watercolor on Ivory

James Peale painted the miniature of future Maryland governor and state senator Edward Lloyd V when Lloyd was 19-years-old. Both men had strong ties to Annapolis. James Peale lived in Annapolis until he moved to Philadelphia at the age of 27 with his brother Charles Willson Peale.

Lloyd came from the Maryland landed gentry’s class. His family had a city house in Annapolis and a country estate known as Wye House on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Lloyd’s sister Mary married Francis Scott Key in 1802 at their city house. Abolitionist and author Frederick Douglass grew up on the Lloyd plantation until the age of seven and later recounted his experiences in his 1845 autobiography, where he described Lloyd as a “cruel master.”
The piece was painted by James Peale (1749-1831), younger brother of the artist Charles Willson Peale. James developed a niche in miniature portraiture while his older brother specialized in larger portraits. He created his own style that included long brushstrokes, gentle lines, and bright color, and he depicted sitters with a recognizable “Cupid’s bow” smile.

Harriet was born in 1785 in Annapolis to John Callahan, a cousin of the Peale brothers, and his wife, Sarah Buckland Callahan. Through her mother, Harriet was the granddaughter of architect William Buckland, who built the Hammond-Harwood House. Harriet married Dr. John Ridgely in 1812. Ridgely, a graduate of St. John’s College: he was appointed a naval surgeon in 1803. During the Barbary Wars he was captured on the frigate Philadelphia at Tripoli and commanded under pain of death to cure the daughter of the King of Tripoli. Luckily, he succeeded and was offered her hand in marriage. He graciously declined and instead was given many gifts, including a magnificent white stallion that he brought back to Annapolis. Portraits of Harriet’s parents, and three sisters by Charles Willson Peale are in the museum’s collection.
This painting of Governor Samuel Sprigg (1783-1755) was part of Charles Willson Peale’s last chapter of Annapolis works. In 1823, Charles Willson Peale arranged a deal with the Corporation of the City of Annapolis to acquire the portrait of Charles Calvert, Fifth Lord Baltimore, which he had admired as a child, in exchange for painting six portraits of Maryland governors since the American Revolution. Samuel Sprigg, the most recent governor of Maryland when Peale began the project in 1823, as he served from 1819-1822. For most of the governors’ portraits Peale worked from copies, as many of the men were then deceased. Sprigg was the only person Peale painted from life for the project.

Sprigg came from a large landholding family in Prince George’s County and inherited the plantation of Northampton from his uncle, Osborne Sprigg. Sprigg married Violetta Lansdale of nearby Hazelwood plantation, and the couple had two children. Sprigg fathered at least one child with an enslaved woman on his property, not uncommon in 19th-century Maryland. His grandson is believed to be the formerly enslaved Nathan Sprague (1841-1907), who escaped to freedom and married Rosetta, daughter of the famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass (c. 1818-1895). Sprague joined the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, the first military unit of Black soldiers to be raised during the Civil War.
This posthumous portrait of George Washington on a white horse was painted and signed by Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860), the second son of Charles Willson Peale. The painting was owned by Alexander Randall. His father, John Randall, was the apprentice to William Buckland, architect of the Hammond-Harwood House.

Growing up in the large Peale household Rembrandt was taught to paint and formed a strong relationship with his father as mentor. In 1814 Rembrandt moved to Baltimore and opened a new museum. The first purpose-built museum building in America, it still stands today on Holliday Street. In 1816 he installed carbureted hydrogen gas lighting in the museum and invested in a nascent hydrogen gas company, the precursor to Baltimore Gas and Electric.

Rembrandt was able to make sketches from life when George Washington sat for his father, and he later became obsessed with attempts to paint a perfect likeness of Washington, declaring it to be “my great work … an undertaking which no one else could or would attempt.” Rembrandt was very fond of copies. In 1828 he wrote that he was “an artist, long accustomed to the practice of copying, as well as producing originals … A correct copy is next in value to the original itself. No artist … can be sure that he can make a good original picture, if he is unable to make a good copy.”
This still life painting completed 73 years after Charles Willson Peale’s *Callahan Girls* also contains a group of pears. It was done by a member of the Peale family. Margaretta Angelica was Charles Willson Peale’s niece and one of James Peale’s four daughters to become professional painters. The still life genre perfected by their older cousin and son of Charles Willson Peale, Raphaëlle Peale (1774-1825), who is considered the first American professional painter of still life.

The demands of household work and caregiving on 19th-century women made still life paintings especially popular as a genre for them, as it allowed for more control over the subject than portraiture. This particular piece has an elegant composition with the striking colors of the voluptuous peaches and pear against the luxurious gold-rimmed plate. The grapes teeter dangerously close to the edge of table, with one appearing almost transparent, about to fade away. Likewise, the sumptuous plate appears almost lifted with the fruit in a precarious position of falling off the table. Created amid the height of the American Civil War, Margaretta Angelica’s still life may intentionally depict an idealized setting, yet with subtle hints of what is really occurring in Philadelphia in 1864 during a strained election year with more than 24 military hospitals covering the city.

**Peaches and a Pear on a Plate,**
Philadelphia, 1864
Artist: Margaretta Angelica Peale (1795-1882)
Medium: Oil on Canvas
Hammond-Harwood House Collection.
Museum Purchase in 2021, P106.