



LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc. BULLETIN

VOLUME VII, NUMBER 3

WILMINGTON, N. C.

MAY, 1964

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Volume I, Number 1 of the *Bulletin* appeared in October, 1957. Miss Caroline Flanner was the editor, and she and Miss May Pendleton addressed and stamped all the copies by hand. The chief burden of the issue was the report on proposed changes in the bylaws, by Winston Broadfoot. Dr. B. Frank Hall was President, and his message to the membership began thus:

"Events of the past year have emphasized the importance of an Historical Society to the general well-being of a community. Since, under the able leadership of Hargrove Bellamy, its first president, and the invaluable labors of the directors and, indeed, the entire charter membership, the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society began its cultural ministry to this area, an embarrassing wealth of projects have become available. Before the organization was perfected, needs were pressing on the new Society; and now, less than two years after the initial meeting, an imposing record of achievement is taking shape."

Dr. Hall goes on to mention two chief projects of the year: preservation of Innes Park and planning for the preservation and restoration of Fort Fisher.

It seems to me that pressing needs and the answering energy and effectiveness of our Society have been the rule, year after year, since that strong beginning almost ten years ago. We have contributed active, informed leadership to such projects as the designation of an Historic Area, the relocation of the Museum, the exhibition of Early American Portraits, the ingathering and cataloguing of valuable gifts and records, the high standards of the *Bulletin* which have been maintained from the beginning, and many others. Truly "an imposing record of achievement."

As this year closes, we can look back once more with satisfaction at our accomplishments. The purchase of the Latimer House is undoubtedly the news item of the near-decade. Soon we will be moving into this headquarters building which we have needed for many years. By purchasing the Latimer House to be used as our headquarters, we have contributed greatly toward the betterment of our community and area.

I firmly believe that within the coming months and years there will be more and more restoration in the area surrounding the Latimer House. Friends of St. John's Art Gallery, located less than a block away, have purchased the property adjacent to the gallery with restoration anticipated.

This property includes the old General Lillington House. The Bellamy House at Second and Orange has been purchased by an interested citizen who will begin restoration sometime in the future. We are a long way from returning this area to its original charm, but a good start has been made.

This year many people have contributed their time, effort, know-how, and financial assistance to the society. Again let me thank the members for responding with their donations so that we might purchase the Latimer House. The Board of Directors and Officers have worked untiringly toward our objectives, and I greatly appreciate their help and confidence. The Latimer House Committee, with Henry MacMillan as Chairman, has done an excellent job toward bringing the house back to its original stateliness.

The Society is indebted to Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Rives for restoring the chandeliers as a gift to the House. Their generosity and skill have saved the Society a considerable amount of money.

Deeply appreciated is Mr. Herbert Latimer's gift of several pieces of furniture and statuary which have been in the Headquarters House for many years. Of particular interest is the gift of a pair of portraits. These were done by Pine in 1885 and are of Mr. and Mrs. Zebulon Latimer, builders of the house.

These gifts bring to mind needs of a homelier sort but nonetheless required. We need a refrigerator. The cooking range should be replaced, and a cabinet sink would greatly improve the kitchen. Dishes, especially cups and saucers, punch cups and bowl, silver, and trays are needed. Suitable fabrics such as velvet, brocade, satin, or tapestry, enough for covering small chairs or enough for making draperies, would be welcome. Floor coverings are badly needed.

Naturally, we want to see the restoration go forward as fast as possible, and to many of us this means furniture. It has been decided not to specify that furniture has to be of the 1850 period, but to consider any offering in the light of its own suitability. Anything donated must be passed on by the House Committee to determine whether it will be useful to the restoration.

I have truly enjoyed serving the Society this year as its president. Many thanks again for the help I have received.

N. Winfield Sapp, Jr., *President*

DIRECTORS

N. Winfield Sapp, Jr.	President
Stanley A. South	Vice-President
Miss Leila Stack	Secretary
Ludlow P. Strong	Treasurer
Mrs. Ida. B. Kellam	Archivist
The Rev. Randolph L. Gregory	Immediate Past President
Miss Katherine Howell	Dr. William Wagoner
William E. Per dew	Frederick S. Burr
R. V. Asbury	

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Bulletin Chairman	Henry J. MacMillan
Bulletin Editor	Mrs. Henry B. Rehder
Exhibits	Mrs. Paul Jennwein
Finance	William E. Per dew
Historic Sites	Leslie N. Boney, Jr.
Historic Tours	R. V. Asbury
Program	Stanley A. South
Publicity	Miss Fannie de Rosset
Historic Education	Miss Katherine Howell
Dr. William Wagoner, Miss Fannie de Rosset	

NEW MEMBERS

Lewis deK. Belden, Apt. 702, 200 East 66 St., N. Y. City
 Wilbur E. Bryant, 1941 Shoreham Drive, Charlotte, N. C.
 Mrs. J. Archie Cannon, 108 North Union St., Concord, N. C.
 Mrs. John O. Dunn, 1107 Country Club Road, Wilmington
 Mrs. Rose G. Ficklen, 730 Princeton Drive, Wilmington
 S. W. Garrett, 102 South 3rd St., Wilmington
 Elmer G. Griese, Box 51, Richland, N. C.
 Mrs. Carol S. Hammond, 2018 Pender Ave., Wilmington
 Philip C. Hammond, Jr., 2018 Pender Ave., Wilmington
 Mrs. Inez Sidbury, 247 No. 26th St., Wilmington
 Mrs. E. R. Teachey, 247 No. 26th St., Wilmington
 Mrs. Edward L. Irvin, 471 Plymouth Ave., Winston-Salem,
 N. C.

GIFTS

While in California recently, Miss Fanny deRosset was given a copy of Wheeler's *History of North Carolina 1584 to 1851*. The donor was Mrs. Stuart Ingram of Pasadena. In turn, Miss deRosset has presented the book to the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society collection.

Other gifts are:

Mr. Frederick Munds: A copy of the catalogue of the Officers and Cadets of the Cape Fear Academy for 1868-69. The brochure contains the names of 76 local boys and their grades.

Mr. Julian H. Tusch: Smaw's *Wilmington Directory*, containing a directory of Colored Persons for the year 1867. Also a copy of *The Hill Directory of Wilmington, N. C.* for 1902.

Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Rives: Restoration of the chandeliers in the Latimer House. Mr. Herbert Latimer: Furniture and statuary for the Latimer House.

Gifts in memory of Mrs. Henry J. MacMillan have been received from Mrs. W. E. Sisson and Mrs. J. Archie Cannon.

MEETING

Time: Friday, May 29, 1964, 8:00 p.m.

Place: The Latimer House

Program: The Annual Business Meeting; Tour of the House.

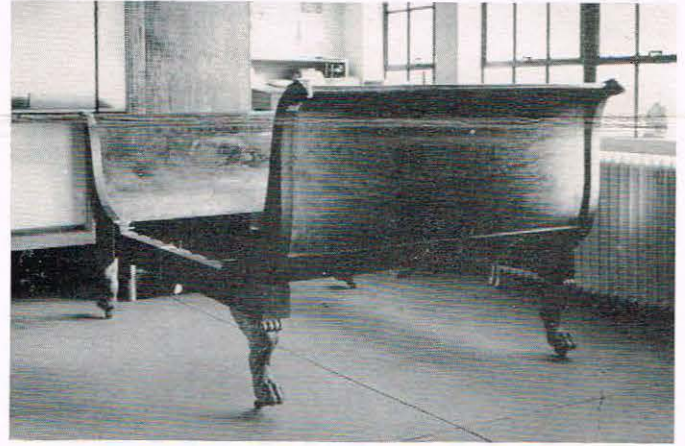
NEWS FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE

Mrs. William Echols and Mrs. Martha Bellamy Knight, Co-chairmen of the Housekeeping Subcommittee have taken charge of cleaning the interior of the Latimer House. They have polished the brass and steel fittings of the parlor floor chimney pieces.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rehder, Grounds Subcommittee Chairmen, have supervised cleaning and pruning of the yard and plants.

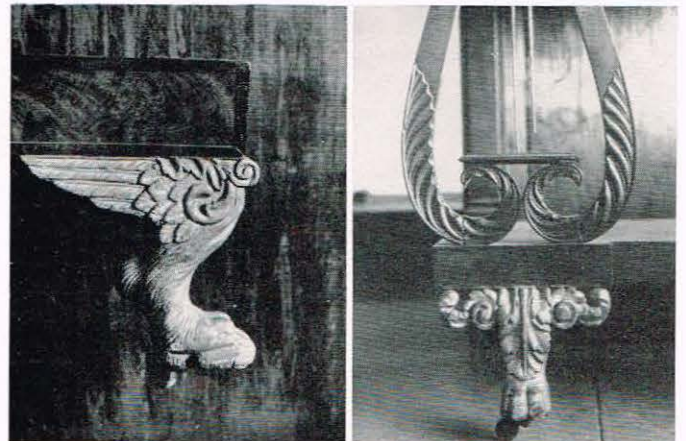
(Continued on page 4)

A Gift of Furnishings for the Headquarters of the Society



Bed of the Recamier type.

A splendid gift to The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., has been made by Miss Annette Arden Lewis of New York City. Miss Lewis, whose mother was Susan Smith Kidder before her marriage to James Ivers Lewis of New London has retained her interest in Wilmington. The gift consists of four pieces of furniture for a bedroom: a bed, two chests of drawers and a dressing table. The furniture was made for ancestors of Miss Lewis. They are Federal pieces of finest quality which would be welcome additions in any collection of great American furniture. The sophisticated design, the refinement of detail with the use of gilded gesso is remarkably similar to the work of Charles Honoré Lannuier (1779-1819) who was next to Duncan Phyfe the most famous of the early New York cabinet workers. The set will serve as nucleus for a handsome bedroom of the Federal era.



Details of the gilded gesso feet of the dressing table and the bed.

Two Portraits Ascribed to Claypoole

By BEN F. WILLIAMS



James Claypoole (attributed to)
Lydia Frons (Mrs. Eleazar McComb)
Collection of: Mr. H. Rodney Sharp, Odessa,
Delaware
Photograph courtesy Frick Art Reference Library,
New York



James Claypoole, (American 1720-1796)
George Claypoole, (half brother to James Claypoole)
Ca. 1750, Oil on Canvas — 26" x 22"
Former Collections: Brought from Philadelphia to
Wilmington, N. C., by the subject, George
Claypoole (sometimes, Claypole)
Private family collections to the present.
Exhibition: Carolina Charter Tercentenary.
Exhibition: N. C. Museum of Art, March 23 —
April 28, 1963, Reproduced in catalogue.
Collection: Miss Susan Claypole Lovering,
Wilmington, N. C.
Photograph Courtesy N. C. Museum of Art



James Claypoole (American 1720-1796)
Mrs. Hannah Claypoole — (wife of George Claypoole)
Ca. 1750, Oil on Canvas — 26" x 22"
Former Collections: Brought from Philadelphia to
Wilmington, N. C., by the subject, George
Claypoole (sometimes, Claypole)
Private family collections to the present.
Exhibition: Carolina Charter Tercentenary.
Exhibition: N. C. Museum of Art, March 23 —
April 28, 1963. Reproduced in catalogue.
Collection: Miss Susan Claypole Lovering,
Wilmington, N. C.
Photograph Courtesy N. C. Museum of Art.

In preparation for the Tercentenary Exhibition of Colonial American Art held in the North Carolina Museum of Art in 1963, those of us in charge of assembling the exhibition made a list of all possible artists of the colonial period. The name of James Claypoole appeared on the list, but we had no hope of finding a work by this obscure Eighteenth Century American artist who is known as the earliest native artist of Pennsylvania. More is known about his life than his known works would indicate.

When we heard from Mr. Henry MacMillan of Wilmington, N. C. that Miss Susan Claypole Lovering had two colonial portraits of members of her family, we were very interested, thinking that possibly they were by James Claypoole. It is not often that a supposition in the history of art results in more than superfluous investigation, but in this particular instance it was profitable.

When the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. George Claypoole arrived, it was obvious that they were of the period of James Claypoole (1720-1796) and that if they were indeed by Claypoole, as their quality indicated, they must have been painted at the height of his career.

During the Tercentenary Exhibition of March 23-April 28, 1963, we had the opportunity to study the portraits but had

no works with which to compare them. The Frick Art Reference Library of New York has provided us with sufficient comparative material for attribution of the paintings of George and Hannah Claypoole to George Claypoole's half-brother, James.

Illustrated here is a painting of Lydia Frons (Mrs. Eleazar McComb), now in the collection of Mr. H. Rodney Sharp of Odessa, Delaware, which stylistically is very close to Miss Lovering's portraits. Although the condition of all three works does not permit thorough examination, enough detail remains to indicate that they are by the same artist. Certainly the overall approach to portraiture is the same.

Other works thus far ascribed to Claypoole are as follows: Judge Thomas Frons (1708-1784), owned by the Delaware State Portrait Commission; Mrs. Thomas Frons (Jennett Jamison, 1713-1785), owned by Mr. H. Rodney Sharp of Odessa, Delaware. According to the Frick Art Reference Library, the portraits of Judge and Mrs. Frons "bear the monogram J. C. (the C superimposed on the J). Although there is no absolute proof that the monogram is the signature of James Claypoole the younger, these portraits are attributed to him by the Library, because Claypoole was the teacher of Charles Willson Peale and there is a suggestion of Peale about them."

James Claypoole, the artist, and George Claypoole, the subject of the male portrait belonging to Miss Lovering, had

Mr. Williams is General Curator of the North Carolina Museum of Art. His article, "Nineteenth Century Wall Painting in North Carolina" was published in the BULLETIN in February, 1962.

the same father, Joseph Claypoole. George Claypoole's mother, Rebecca Jannings, was the first wife of Joseph, while James' mother, Edith Ward, was the second wife. Joseph was the first Warden of Christ Church, Philadelphia, and was "concerned in the promoting and assisting of the building of Christ Church and contributed much toward it." Born in 1677, Joseph died before May 3, 1744. His father, James Claypoole, (referred to as the elder) was a friend of Penn, Patentee of Pennsylvania, and Register General of the Colony. The elder James Claypoole was a wealthy merchant. His son Joseph, father of the artist, was also a man of wealth, as he was a large property owner in Philadelphia.¹

Few paintings have been ascribed to James Claypoole, but he was well known in his day and was sought after as a teacher. His nephew, Matthew Pratt, was his pupil and apprentice around 1749. Claypoole gave up his art for a life in public service which Fielding describes as follows: "He was High Sheriff of Philadelphia during the American Revolution. His daughter, Elizabeth, married Timothy Matlock, the soldier and patriot of Philadelphia, whose portrait was painted by Charles Willson Peale. His daughter, Mary, married James Peale, the artist, brother of Charles Willson Peale and his cousin, John Claypoole, was the husband of the celebrated Betsy Ross."²

There is a portrait, inscribed on the back of the canvas "Margaret Allen drawn and colored by Claypoole, Philadelphia, 1746."³ Charles Willson Peale in a letter mentions "James Claypoole," whose paintings he examined at his home in Philadelphia in 1762.³

The two portraits now in the possession of Miss Lovering have doubtless been in Wilmington, North Carolina since the Eighteenth Century and were most likely brought there by Dr. William Claypoole (grandson of the sitters) who arrived there around 1770. The paintings were not more than

¹ Mantle Fielding, *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster Press, Inc.), page 68.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

thirty years old at that time. They are in relatively good condition considering the age of the canvas which has not yet been relined.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- DUNLAP, WILLIAM. *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (New Edition by Bayley and Goodspeed-Ed.) Boston: C. E. Goodspeed & Co., 1918, Volume I.
- FIELDING, MANTLE. *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Lancaster Press, Inc.
- GROCE, GEORGE C. and DAVID H. WALLACE. *Dictionary of Artists in America 1564-1860* (The New York Historical Society). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957.

NEWS FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE

(Continued from page 2)

Mrs. Paul Jennewein has repaired and refinished a chair for the House.

The overdoors in the southwest sitting room have been repainted by Mr. Henry MacMillan.

Mr. James Wynne supervised the installation of the chandeliers after they were repaired by Mr. and Mrs. Rives.

The portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Zebulon Latimer have been cleaned and varnished by Mrs. Helen MacMillan Lane.

FORM OF BEQUEST

The great need of the Association, in order to render broader and more effective service, is to have funds available for historical research, publications, and restoration of historic sites. For those purposes, it is hoped that interested persons will bequeath to the Association whatever sum or sums of money may be available. The following form is suggested:

To the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of North Carolina, I give and bequeath the sum of \$_____.

This bequest is unrestricted, and the Board of Directors or other governing body may use and expend the same for the benefit of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., in any manner it deems appropriate.

LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
WILMINGTON, N. C.
PERMIT No. 306