

Foreword

Despite our well-meaning protestations that 'the American Antiquarian Society is a research library, not a museum,' any visitor to Antiquarian Hall need only take a look around our offices, meeting rooms, and public spaces—filled with fine antique furniture, interesting artifacts, and historic portraits, many by significant artists—to question that assertion. This catalogue of the Society's portrait collection affords us, then, the first opportunity in more than half a century to 'exhibit' the faces of those portraits—familiar to us at the Society, but too-little known by others—and to share the stories behind their creation and acquisition.

The last catalogue of the Society's portraits was compiled—*sans* illustrations—by the noted genealogist Frederick L. Weis. It appeared in the *Proceedings* for 1946, and since that date, a number of important pictures have been added to the Society's portrait collection. In constructing entries for this updated and expanded catalogue, art historian Lauren B. Hewes has improved upon Weis's descriptions by scouring the library's stacks for every newspaper and periodical, image, reference source, manuscript collection, and historic exhibition catalogue that might shed light on either a sitter or an artist, and by thoroughly exploring the Society's archives for information on those many portraits we commissioned over the years. To Weis and to Hewes, we give thanks for making the present catalogue possible.

We also note, with special gratitude, the contribution of Professor Linda J. Docherty of Bowdoin College, whose fine introduction sets the microcosm of AAS portraits in the larger context of American portraiture and helps us consider the role that institutions such as the Society have played in the establishment of portraits as a form of historical documentary. Thanks are also due to the many members of the AAS staff—past and present—who have helped in the compilation of this volume, most notably Georgia Barnhill, Caroline Sloat, Katherine

St. Germaine, and Anne Ziegler. Therasa Tremblay and Caroline Stoffel also helped in a significant way by mounting on-line a selection of Worcester images as part of the 2002 city-wide celebration of portraits promoted by the Worcester Cultural Coalition. Photographer Henry Peach, copy editor Roger Parks, and designer Paul Hoffmann have also earned our special thanks for their highly professional contributions to this endeavor.

The portraits project has had no greater champion, however, than AAS member Charles B. Barlow, who provided not only steadfast encouragement over the years but also generous underwriting for every phase of its development. AAS member James N. Heald and the other trustees of the Richard A. Heald Fund are also to be thanked for their support. Without the Barlow and Heald gifts, these wonderful portraits might have remained hidden from view within the Society, buried in what might well be called not a museum, but a mausoleum. For those of us who work daily under the watchful eye of these visages and know first-hand their lively historical presence, it is a special pleasure to introduce them to a wider world.

Ellen S. Dunlap

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