

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The National Gallery of Art announced today that two portraits by outstanding American artists have been presented to the Gallery and have been placed on exhibition. The first, a portrait of George Washington by Rembrandt Peale, was given by Mr. George W. Davison of New York City; and the second, a portrait of Captain Warren Delano by Charles Loring Elliott, was given by the Warren Delano Estate through Mr. Frederic A. Delano of Washington. Both paintings are not only distinguished in quality but also unusually interesting in subject matter. They will be noted additions to the Gallery's collection of American portraits.

Rembrandt Peale was born in 1778 and died in 1860. For many years he was known as the last surviving artist who had painted Washington from life. Peale interested himself in painting an ideal portrait of the country's first President, and after sixteen attempts created the type of the present picture, which he repeated many times with variations. The artist considered these later portraits far better than the only one he did from life, which he had painted in 1795. They combined, so he believed, the best features of his original portrait, of several portraits painted by his father, Charles Willson Peale, of the study for the statue by Houdon, as well as characteristics borrowed from other artists who had painted Washington from life. When Chief Justice Marshall, the friend and biographer of Washington, first

saw Peale's ideal portrait at the Capitol, he exclaimed: "I have never seen a portrait of that great man which exhibited so perfect a resemblance of him -- it is more Washington himself than any portrait I have ever seen."

The activity of Charles Loring Elliott, who was born in 1812 and died in 1868, falls almost within the span of Rembrandt Peale's long life, but his later portraits mark a change in style, a complete break with the tradition of the eighteenth century. Though Elliott began as an imitator of Gilbert Stuart, his characteristic work reveals a realism, derived in part from a careful study of the work of Inman. The portrait of Captain Warren Delano, painted in 1852, belongs to Elliott's best period when he was exhibiting regularly at the National Academy in New York. The sitter is the grandfather of the donor, Mr. Frederic A. Delano, and a great grandfather of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Captain Warren Delano was a direct descendant of Philippe de Lannoy who came to Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1621 in the ship "Fortune". During the war of 1812 Captain Delano was twice captured at sea by the British. He was a famous merchant captain, and played an important role in the merchant service and the shipbuilding and whaling industries of this country during the first half of the nineteenth century.