

NEWS RELEASE

National Gallery of Art
Washington, D. C.

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WASHINGTON: March 19 : David E. Finley, Director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today the acquisition of a famous American portrait of Amos Lawrence, Boston philanthropist, who helped build the Bunker Hill Monument.

The portrait is by Chester Harding, an American artist of the Nineteenth century, who traveled widely in this country and abroad, painting many notables from Daniel Boone to General Sherman. His masterpiece was his picture of Amos Lawrence, he declared.

"The acquisition of this portrait by the National Gallery adds greatly to the Gallery's representation of the American school," according to John Walker, Chief Curator of the Gallery. "Harding's honest, realistic portraits have given us our conception of American leaders who followed the generation portrayed by Gilbert Stuart."

Amos Lawrence was a Boston merchant, whose published diaries and correspondence have preserved an extraordinary record of his times. Besides helping to build the Bunker Hill Monument, he also gave the library at Williams College. His son was the founder of Lawrence College, and the city of Lawrence, Kansas, was named for him.

Amos Lawrence, who was painted by Harding at about the age of sixty, died in 1852. This portrait, showing him in a rich lounging robe of Persian design, with tasseled velvet cap, is regarded as one of the most striking and sensitive characterizations in Nineteenth century American art.

The gift of the picture to the National Gallery of Art was made in memory of the Right Reverend William Lawrence, by his children. The donors are:

Mrs. Harold Peabody, Boston, Mass.
Mrs. Morton L. Fearey, Garden City, N. Y.
Mrs. Charles L. Slattery, Boston Mass.
Mrs. Lansing P. Reed, New York, N. Y.
Rt. Rev. W. Appleton Lawrence, Springfield, Mass.
Mrs. Lewis H. Mills, Portland, Oregon
Rev. Frederic Lawrence, Brookline, Mass.

The picture is now on display at the National Gallery.