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Research and Analysis of a 19th Century Portrait of George Washington

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**RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF A 19TH CENTURY PORTRAIT
OF GEORGE WASHINGTON**

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An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Lindenwood College in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science, Valuation Science

1993

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Maurice B. Silverman, my boss for the past three years while I was employed by his gallery, Silverman Galleries, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia.

Mr. Silverman has been the owner of Silverman Galleries, Inc. since 1958. It is located at 110 North Saint Asaph Street in what is known as Old Town, Alexandria. Antique jewelry, silver, fine art, furniture and related items are sold at the gallery.

Mr. Silverman previously owned two other related businesses: Estate Gallery of Alexandria and Capitol Hill Antiquarians in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the International Society of Appraisers, and the Association of Alexandria Art Galleries. Mr. Silverman is a well respected business man known for his integrity and his understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of fine arts and antiques.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Mr. Maurice B. Silverman for allowing me to use his portrait of George Washington for my culminating project in Valuation Sciences. I appreciate, also, his help, advice, and the materials he lent to me for research.

I would also like to thank Angela Saunders, manager of Silverman Galleries, for her research previous to my taking on this project and for her encouragement along the way.

My family should also be highly commended for putting up with me for the length of time it took me to finally gather the courage to undertake and complete this research.

I also want to thank Floyd Harrison for his help and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

The subject of this research project is a half length portrait of George Washington, oil on canvas, 30" in length and 25" in width. The painting is owned by Mr. Maurice Silverman of Silverman Galleries, Alexandria, Virginia.

When Mr. Silverman acquired the painting in 1962, the canvas was damaged so a restorer cleaned it, relined it, and inpainted the bare spots. After the restoration, Mr. Silverman researched the painting to discover who painted the portrait. Mr. Silverman felt strongly that it might be an original painting by Gilbert Stuart as there was a painting very similar to his portrait of Washington which was painted by Stuart in 1822 in Boston. This portrait was on loan to the Library Congress when the Library burned on December 14, 1851. Mr. Silverman thought that perhaps the Washington painting was rescued (partially damaged) from the fire by someone who (unaware of the value of the painting) cut off the

damaged portion of the canvas, overpainted the bare spots and kept it in their possession. Mr. Silverman's hypothesis in regard to the Washington portrait was an intriguing idea and it was the impetus for this in-depth research into the provenance of the painting, the history of the Stuart canvas which it resembled and the fire in which it was supposedly destroyed, a complete physical examination of Mr. Silverman's Washington portrait, and a careful analysis of the portrait in comparison to other's by Stuart.

Much of the research proved difficult and frustrating as records kept in the 19th Century are often incomplete. Also, portraits by Gilbert Stuart, though popular, were not valued as highly as they are today, and records of the paintings were not always kept making some of the necessary information impossible to find. The results of this project, though not totally conclusive, tend to disprove the hypothesis that the Silverman portrait of Washington is the original painted in Boston by Gilbert Stuart.

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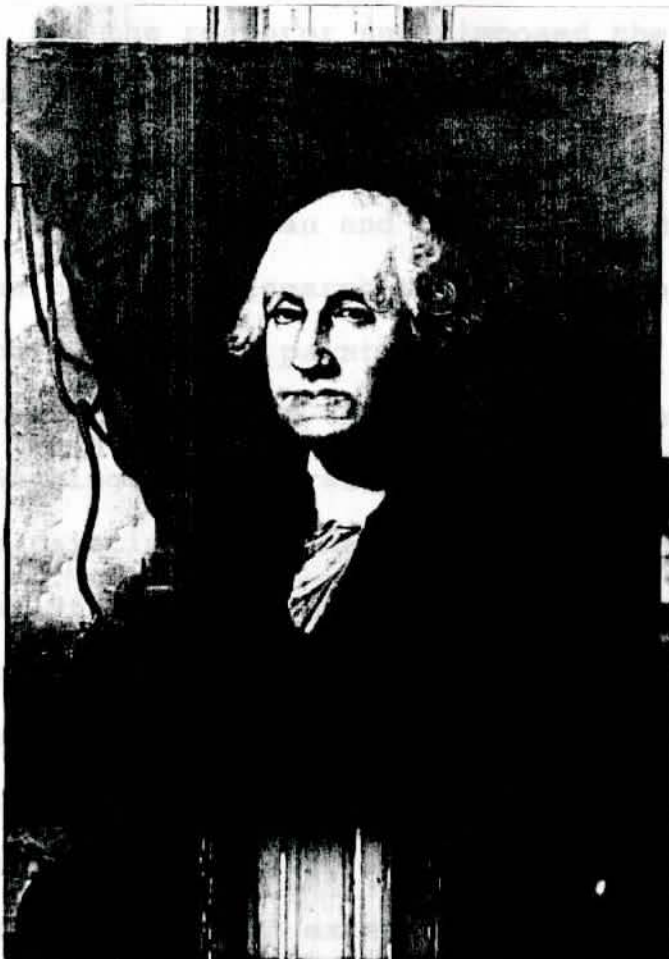
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A painting of George Washington was purchased in 1962 by Maurice Silverman, owner of Silverman Galleries, Alexandria, Virginia, from Mrs. Margaret E. Zea and her husband, Jessie Edward Zea of Takoma Park Maryland. The painting was a half length portrait, oil on canvas, 30" in length, 25" in width (Illustration 1). According to Mrs. Zea, the painting had been previously owned by Captain Edward Zea of the Washington Light Infantry which was the first militia in the District of Columbia (later to become the National Guard).

When Mr. Silverman acquired the painting, it was in an important circa 1870s type frame with tuft and ball decorations within a leafy outer frame. The canvas showed signs of sagging from top to bottom and at the bottom was rough and damaged. Mr. Silverman had the painting cleaned, the canvas relined, and the bare spots



(Illustration 1)

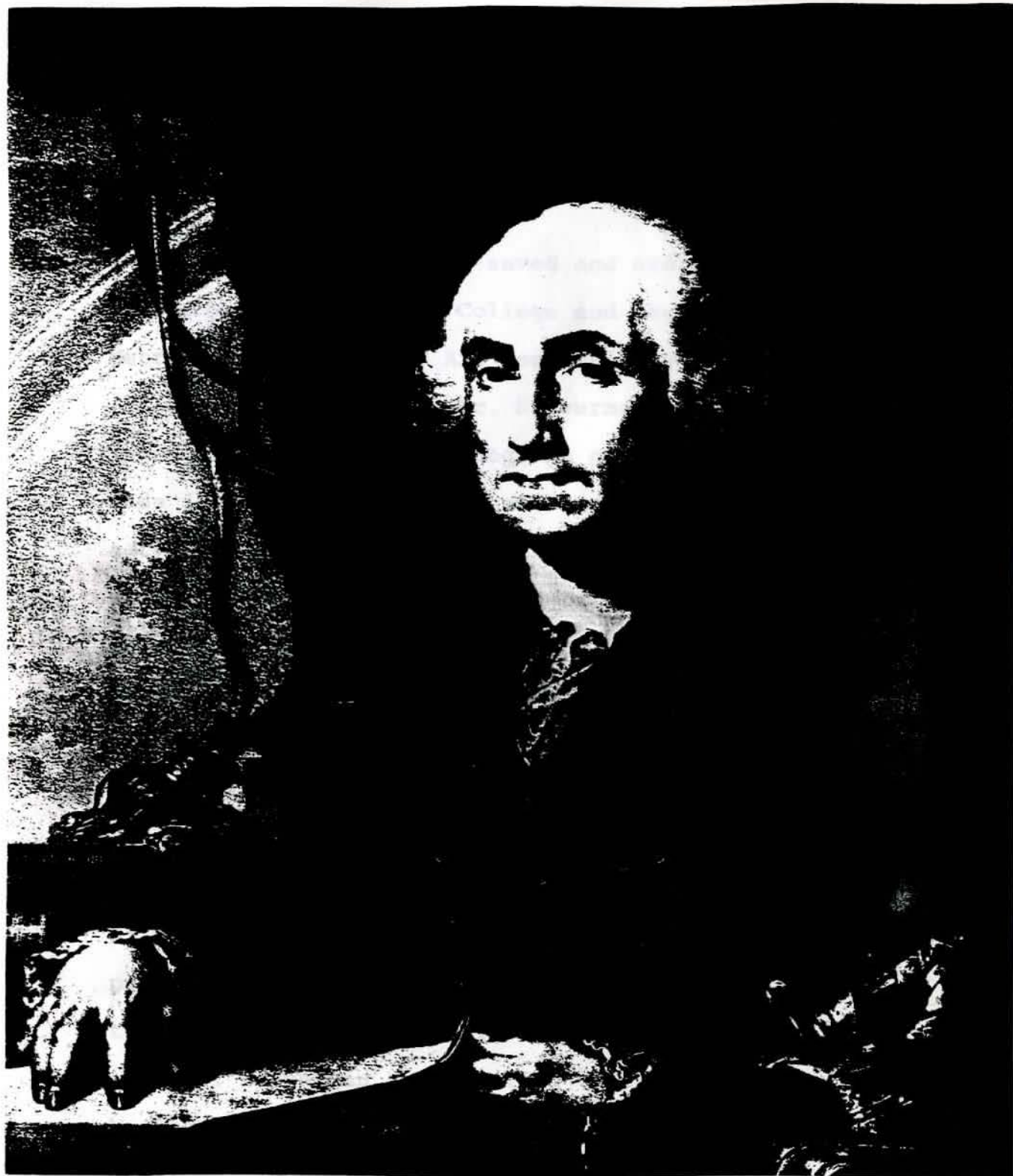
The Silverman Portrait

overpainted. The canvas had been previously relined, and the restorer superimposed the new lining over the old.

As the painting was unsigned, the artist was unknown to Mr. Silverman and his staff. Mr. Silverman began to research the portrait by comparing it to other paintings of George Washington. A photo of the painting was sent to a George Washington University historian who thought that the painting might have been a work by G.P.A. Healy, a 19th century portrait painter who was known to have copied paintings by Gilbert Stuart. A portrait of Washington by Healy had been loaned to the University by the Corcoran Gallery of Washington, D.C. in 1917, and called back by that institution because of extensive damage. Research revealed, however, that this painting had been sold to Knoedler's Gallery in New York City who, in turn sold it to a Mrs. Bellinger who still owns the painting.

Another possibility, was that the painting might be an original portrait by Gilbert Stuart

(1775-1828). Mr. Silverman decided to explore that idea by comparing photographs of the painting to other portraits of Washington by Stuart. He found that it was quite different from most of the existing examples of Stuart's Washington portraits, however it did strongly resemble a lithograph of Washington which was after a portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart for John Doggett, of Boston in 1822 (illustration 2). This portrait was one of a set of portraits of the first five presidents of the United States (Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe) done by Stuart for Doggett who intended to have lithographs made from the portraits for sale. The original painting of Washington done for Doggett was supposedly burned in a fire while at the Library of Congress in 1851. The paintings were on exhibit at the Library of Congress in hopes that they would be sold to the government and hung in the White House. Newspaper reports of the fire, which broke out December 24, 1851, state that all first portrait was destroyed, however the Madison

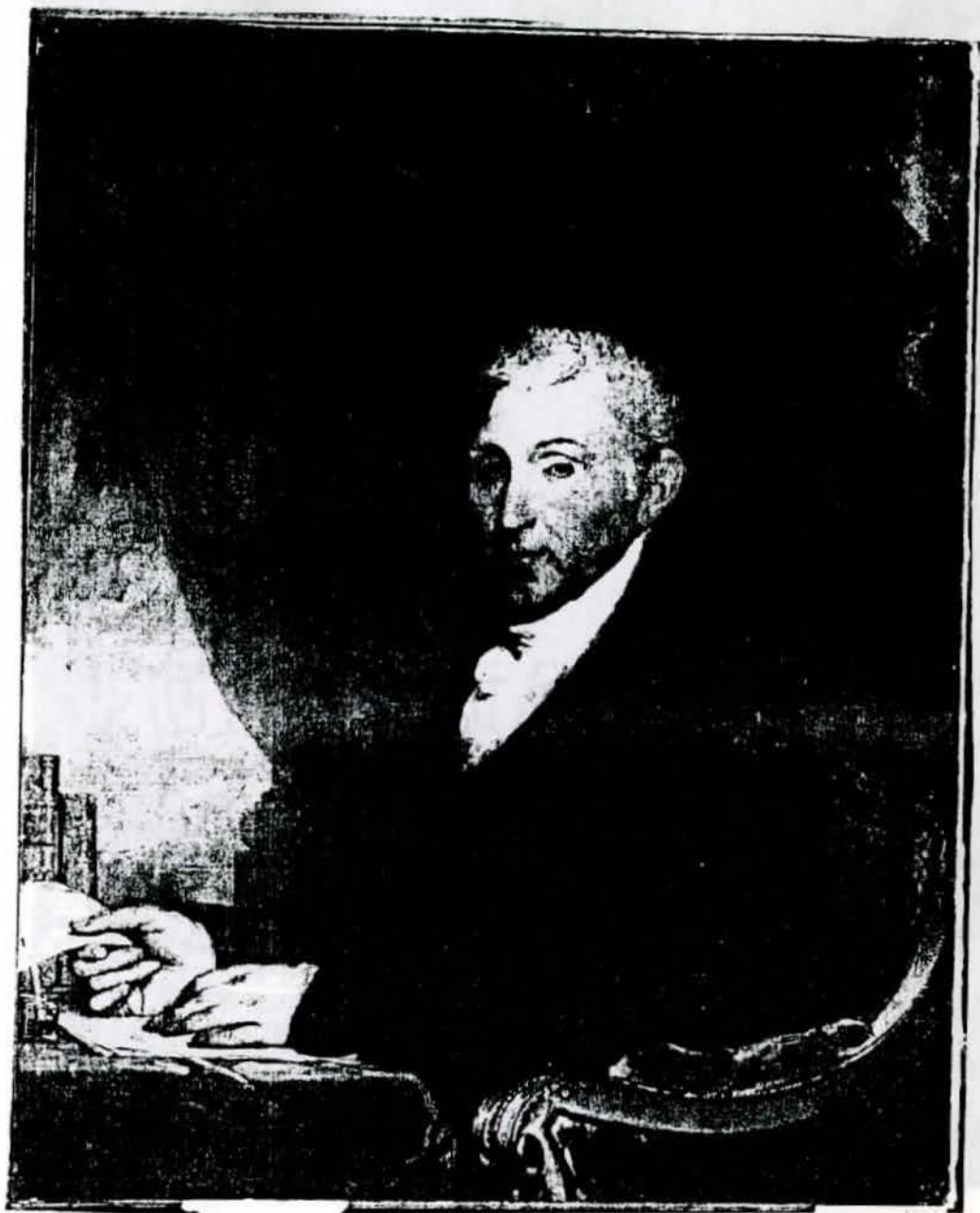


In 1851. Perhaps (Illustration 2) (partially

name) The Lithograph from the Doggett Portrait

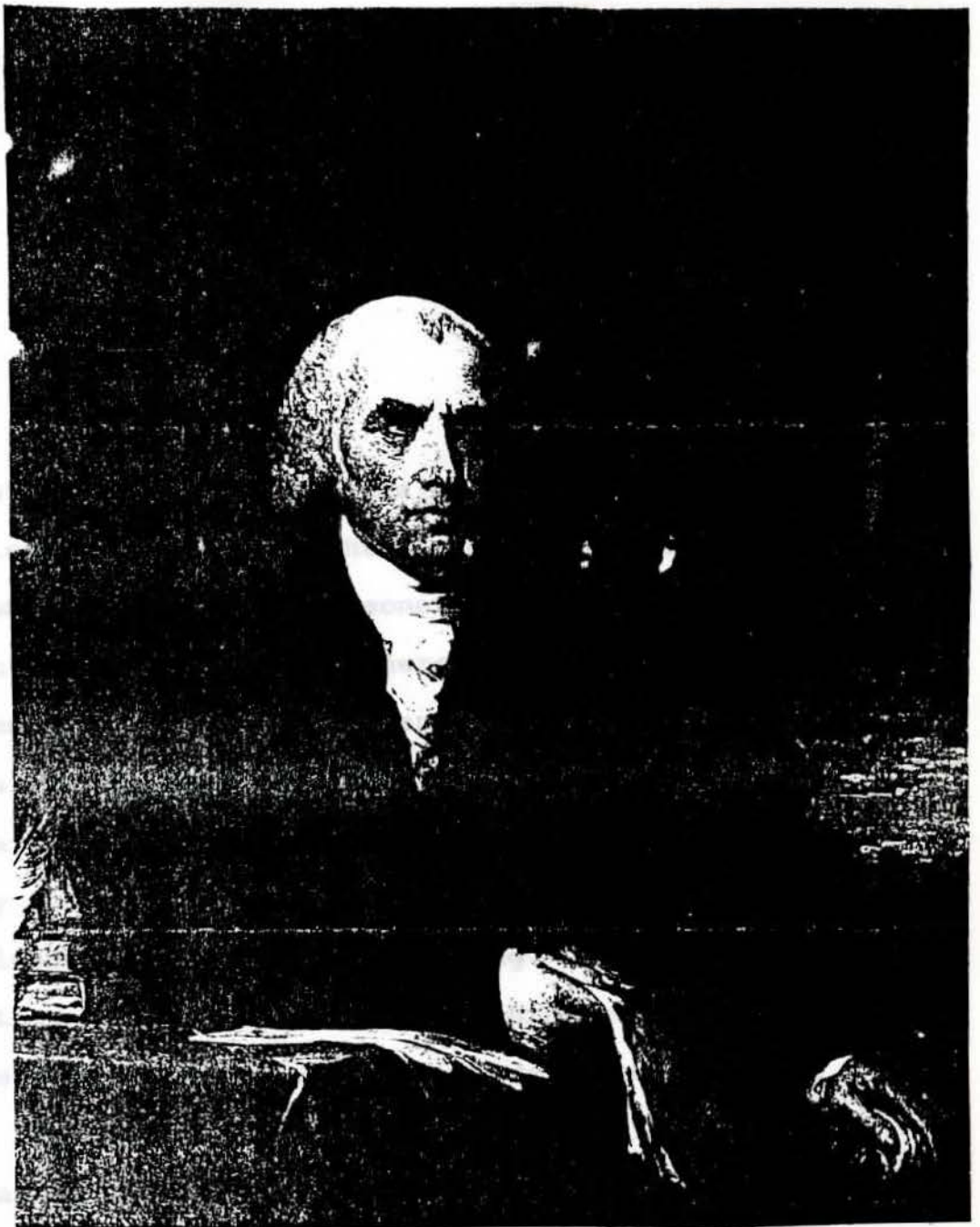
and Monroe paintings were saved and are presently the property of Amherst College and the Metropolitan Museum of Art respectively (illustrations 3,4). As Mr. Silverman's portrait resembles closely the lithograph of Washington made from the Doggett portrait and as it exhibits a type of damage which could be attributed to fire, Mr. Silverman decided to research the possibility that his painting could be the "lost" Doggett portrait. Photos of the Madison and Monroe portraits were obtained for comparison purposes. Each of the portraits, including the Washington, had been 40" x 32". The Silverman portrait is only 30" x 25". This would mean that if the Silverman portrait is the damaged Doggett portrait, canvas has been cut off and restretched to make it the present size.

Mr. Silverman hypothesized that the Washington portrait may not have been completely destroyed in the fire at the Library of Congress in 1851. Perhaps it was rescued (partially damaged) by a bystander or someone involved with



(Illustration 3)

The Doggett Portrait of James Monroe
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



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that they sought the services of a picture framer
to raise and realize the painting and fit it into
an important frame.

If the previous portrait was be
The Doggett Portrait of James Madison
in 1811, it could be the Silverman

(Illustration 4)
The Doggett Portrait of James Madison
Amherst College

fighting the fire. Militia units were often called upon to help fight fires in the District of Columbia and perhaps someone from the Washington Light Infantry, who was there that night of December 24, 1851 (maybe Captain Zea, himself) acquired the portrait because it was considered to be a total loss. They might have wiped the soot away to see if the face was still there and decided that it was worth keeping. One could further assume that they did nothing with it until after the Civil War when things returned to normal and the headquarters of the Washington Light Infantry needed "sprucing up". It is also likely that they sought the services of a picture framer to clean and reline the painting and fit it into an important frame.

If the provenance of the portrait can be traced back to the fire at the Library of Congress in 1851, it could prove that the Silverman

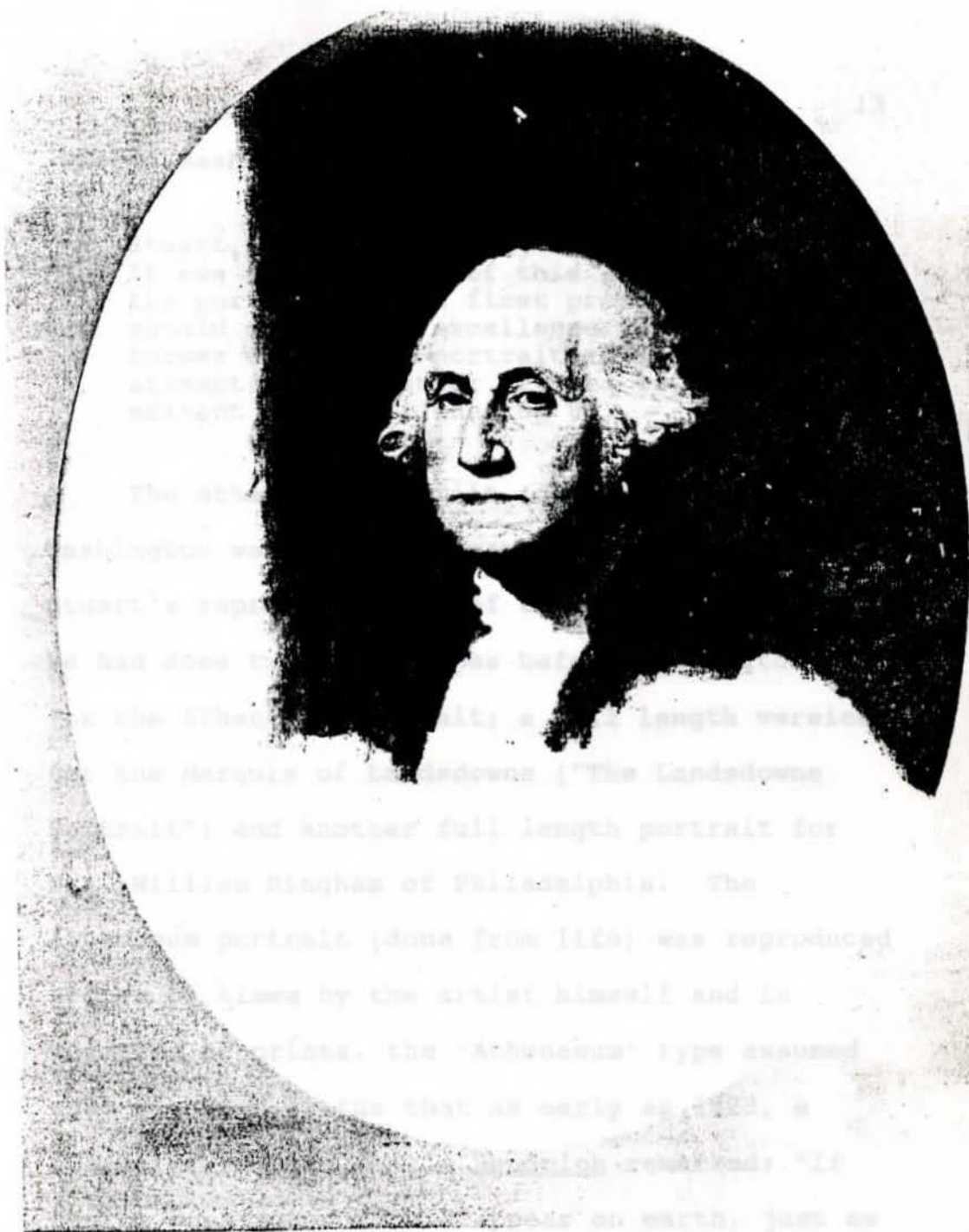
Chapter II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Identifying the authorship of a 19th century portrait of George Washington is complicated by the fact that numerous copies were made by many artists of varying degrees of skill. The original portrait is the original painting done by Stuart for John Doggett in 1851. If it is impossible to trace the provenance of the painting, then the painting must be carefully examined physically to discern the extent and type of damage to the canvas and the extent of surface overpainting, X-rayed to see what lies underneath the surface, and compared with works by Gilbert Stuart. This study will trace the provenance, of the Silverman painting, carefully examine it physically, and compare it with other paintings by Stuart of the same period in order to find out whether or not it is the original portrait of George Washington done for Doggett in 1851.

Chapter II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Identifying the authorship of a 19th century portrait of George Washington is complicated by the fact that numerous copies were made by many artist of varying competence. Images of George Washington in paintings and prints were extremely popular during the mid 19th century. Americans considered it almost a "sacred duty" to have a likeness of Washington in their houses. "An article in the American Magazine of March, 1836, proudly claimed that prints of Washington, dark with smoke are pasted over the hearths of so many American houses. And long may he be there!" (Thistlethwaite 4,5)

Of all the representations of Washington, the most familiar is, undoubtedly, Gilbert Stuart's Athenaeum' portrait of 1796 (illustration 5). Stuart, who was born December 3, 1775 in Rhode Island was an exceptionally talented portrait artist. He was taken to England at an early age to study under Benjamin West (1738-1820), but returned in 1794 to paint the portrait of



(Illustration 5)

The Original Athenaeum Portrait

Johnston

George Washington whom he greatly admired.

Stuart portrayed Washington as the President. It was the ambition of this artist to produce the portrait of the first president which should surpass in excellence and truth his former efforts in portraiture and the attempts of all other artists to depict the eminent subject (Johnston 80).

The Athenaeum portrait (of which the Doggett Washington was a type) became the most famous of Stuart's representations of the first president. He had done two other types before Washington sat for the Athenaeum portrait; a full length version for the Marquis of Lansdowne ("The Lansdowne Portrait") and another full length portrait for Mrs. William Bingham of Philadelphia. The Athenaeum portrait (done from life) was reproduced scores of times by the artist himself and in hundreds of prints, the 'Athenaeum' type assumed such elevated status that as early as 1823, a character in John Neal's Randolph remarked: "If George Washington should appear on earth, just as he sat to Stuart, I am sure that he would be treated as an impostor, when compared with Stuart's likeness of him, unless he produced his credentials" (Thistlethwaite 5).

The Athenaeum portrait is characterized by the face turned to the left and set eyes looking to the side. "The subject is greatly idealized, dignified, mysterious, and somewhat aloof.....a general sphinxlike air has made this portrait very popular, although it could have resembled Washington but little" (Eisen 12) Stuart, himself acknowledge the authorship of seventy replicas of the Athenaeum series. None of the portraits are exactly alike and therefore are not actually replicas of each other. "There is much controversy over the authorship of the replicas due to the lack of understanding on the part of restorers and to presumptuous overpainting in most of them from which very few are entirely free" (Eisen 12). The Athenaeum portrait was done as a companion portrait to one of Mrs. Washington (which faces to the right). The original was left unfinished as Stuart wished to retain it to make copies. He was hoping that these portraits would satisfy the public demand "for a more virile and heroic representation" (Eisen 136).

The Doggett Portrait

In 1822, John Doggett of Roxbury, an expert framemaker and also an art dealer, commissioned Gilbert Stuart to paint a series of portraits of the first five presidents of the United States; George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe (the "Virginia Dynasty") at a cost of \$50.00 each. They were all half lengths, oil on canvas, 40" in length and 32" in width.

It stated that Gilbert Stuart endeavored to make the backgrounds of the portraits emblematical of the character of the administration of each president.....In the picture of Washington.....a sheathed sword and a rainbow are represented, signifying that war and strife had ceased and the storms of the revolution passed away. In each of the pictures, tassels are introduced appended to the draperies; they were intended to illustrate the number of terms that each served. (Bowen 505)

This imagery was typical of memorial pictures which "attempted to represent, in symbolic terms, what Washington's death--and life--meant to America. Each one incorporated emblematic and

allegorical elements into the design of a Washington portrait in order to express a meaning beyond the familiar likeness." (Weaves 70).

Doggett intended to produce lithographs from these five portraits to sell as sets. The sets became known as the "American Kings" and also the "Doggett Presidents" (illustration 6). The sale of these sets would be a lucrative venture for John Doggett as it seemed almost everyone in the United States at that time desired "framing prints" of the presidents (especially those of George Washington). ".....many of Washington's countrymen, as well as curious Europeans dazzled by this peculiarly American hero, did not have access to these paintings and sculptures. Printed portraits for most people, were the only visual resource available to satisfy their curiosity" (Weaver 4).

In 1827, the Boston Athenaeum held an exhibition of portraits by Gilbert Stuart. Four of the Doggett portraits were shown in the exhibition without the one of Washington. In this early exhibition they received little attention and were not even hung together. "Numbers 94 and



Figs. 2 and 4 — GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JOHN ADAMS
 Drawn on stone in France by Monsieur Maurin and printed in Boston (1821-1828) by Penleton for John Doggett. Each lithograph, in addition to the name of the subject and his order in the list of presidents, carries the inscription, *From the Original Series painted by Stuart for the Messrs. Doggett of Boston*



Figs. 7 and 8 — THOMAS JEFFERSON AND JAMES MADISON
 From the lithographic series printed for Doggett. The Stuart originals for these prints apparently showed the figures, draperies, and symbolic accessories portrayed in the prints and to that extent were more elaborate than Colonel Gibbs' paintings



Fig. 6 — JAMES MONROE
 From the lithographic series published by Doggett

(Illustration 6)

"The American Kings"

Keyes

96 were labelled 'Ex President Madison' and 'The Late John Adams', while further along in the catalogue came numbers 115 and 116. 'Ex President Monroe' and 'The Late Thomas Jefferson' (Swan 69).

Shortly after Stuart's death (Gilbert Stuart died in July of 1828) there was a Stuart Benefit Exhibition at the Boston Athenaeum in which all five of the Doggett portraits were shown. The Washington portrait was number 27 in the catalog. which stated that "The above five comprise the only uniform series of the Presidents in existence, and were painted expressly for the Messrs. Doggett.....(They were not actually the only uniform series of presidents, for Stuart had painted another set, much smaller and on wood panels.....for another friend of his, Colonel George Gibbs of Newport)" (Swan 69).

On April 20, 1839, the five presidential portraits, while still in the store of Doggett, were sold by Charles Beaumont of Roxbury to Abel Phelps of Boston for \$2,851.50. (Bowen 505).

Apparently, Beaumont had been endeavoring to dispose of the portraits long before he closed this deal with Phillips (Phelps) for, as early as December, 1837, he had received from John Doggett, Jr. something in the

nature of a sales promotion letter in which is quoted Stuart's opinion that the Washington portrait is the "best he ever painted of that illustrious man" together with an interpretation of the somewhat naive symbolism of the paintings' background and accessories.....(Keyes 2).

The pictures were taken to Washington and an attempt was made to sell them to the government to be placed in the White House. \$4,500. was asked for one of the portraits and later \$6,000. for the lot. The first reference to the proposed sale of the portraits to the government was January 20, 1938. In the Congressional Register for that date it states that "The committee on the library be instructed to inquire into the expediency of purchasing a series of portraits of the five first presidents of the United States, painted by the late Gilbert Stuart, for the purpose of having the same suitably placed and preserved either in the capitol or in the executive mansion" (Niles 327)

On January 9, 1840, there is again reference to the Doggett portraits in the Congressional Register, "That permission be granted during pleasure for exhibiting in the library five portraits representing the first five presidents of the United States, painted by the late Gilbert

Stuart and owned by Mr. Phelps of Boston". On March 17, 1840, the records read, "A letter from Mr. Phelps of Boston respecting the five portraits painted by 'Steward' (Stuart) was read and ordered that Mr. Phelp's request to leave them in the Library for a time be granted at his pleasure" (Fairman 79).

February 20, 1858, a proposition was made, from
It may be that some who read these records of the Joint Committee on the Library may be curious to know why permission was given for the exhibition of five paintings by Gilbert Stuart in the Library of Congress and in explanation we must refer to the statement made in the discussion of the portraits of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI wherein it was stated that for many years after the completion of the central portion of the Capitol and up to the year 1868, it had been the custom for the Congress to grant permission for the exhibition of works of art in the Capitol to those who hoped by such exhibition to secure the interest of Congress to grant permission for the exhibition of works of art in the Capitol to those who hoped by such exhibition to secure the interest of Congress and the possible purchase on the part of Congress of the art works thus exhibited. With this explanation, we will proceed with the further explanation that the Joint Committee on the library, for some reason, probably on account of their experience and possibly on account of their willingness, were made the persons through whom works of art were expected to be sold for the adornment of the house of the President.....The portraits of the first five Presidents exhibited by Mr. Phelps of Boston, were placed on exhibition with the

hope that Congress might be induced to purchase them for the President's house, which at this time contained only the full length portrait of Washington by Gilbert Stuart which had escaped the fate of much of the furniture of the President's house through the foresight of Mrs. Madison in taking this picture from it's frame and having it conveyed with her when she made her rapid flight from the city in anticipation of the speedy occupation of the White House by the British (Fairman 79).

Able Phelps died on October 30, 1848 and on February 20, 1850, a proposition was made, from the executors of his estate, to sell to Congress the portraits of the first five presidents of the United States painted by Gilbert Stuart at the price of \$1,000.00 each. "The subject was considered and laid over for later consideration" (Fairman 111).

The question of the purchase of the Doggett portraits was brought up again on January 22, 1851. "The recommendation was made by G.P.A. Healy, a portrait painter himself, who, for some reason not shown on the record, recommended at this time the purchase by Congress of these paintings" (Fairman 131).

On December 24, 1851, there was a fire at the

Library of Congress where the five presidential paintings were on display. The following are first hand accounts of the fire from bystanders and newspaper reporters:

Our citizens were startled yesterday morning by intelligence from Washington that a fire had broken out in the Capitol and that the valuable Library of Congress had been destroyed. The fire was discovered in the Library yesterday morning --and had probably been burning for some hours before it was seen. Some think that it caught from the furnace and others that it was purposely set on fire--but we hope the latter idea is not probable. The engines were not able to work at the fire, owing to the frozen condition of the hose until about 8 o'clock. Every exertion was made to arrest the progress of the flames, but it was found impossible to save the Library. That valuable collection of books, was entirely destroyed with the exception of the Law Library. The loss is incalculable, because many of the books and manuscripts cannot be replaced.

The whole country will deplore this calamity. It is a national loss which will be felt all over the land. In money, the value of books destroyed is set down at \$150,000.00 at least.

The western front of the Capitol is much defaced and the building otherwise damaged. The Rotunda and other parts of the Capitol were filled with water from the engines.

The fire was still burning yesterday afternoon, in the rafters of the ceiling beyond the Library Room, but it was supposed that no further material damage would ensue, as the fireman were active in their labors and the absence of wood work afforded no

materials for further conflagration.

The fire caused the greatest excitement in Washington. Nothing else was spoken of. (Alexandria Gazette Dec. 25, 1851, p.1).

In December of 1851, what was known as Baker's Hotel, 7th and D Streets, Northwest, kept by Thomas Baker, was destroyed. The weather during the day had been extremely cold and, as night came on the cold increased until it was hardly bearable. About 8 P.M. the alarm was received and the department responded promptly, and, notwithstanding the cold, stuck faithfully to their post; their clothes froze on them and their hands became so numb that they were hardly able to hold their pipes. At last the fire was subdued and they started to go home when news reached them that the Capitol was on fire.

They at once started for the scene of the new conflict and found, upon their arrival that the fire had started in the Library of Congress. The library of Jefferson, one of the most celebrated in the country, and which was the most prominent attraction in the room, shared in the general ruin, had gained great headway before it was discovered, and by the time the alarm had been given and the department had arrived, the flames were so fierce and the smoke so dense that the members who rushed in were unable to save anything except four or five portraits of the Presidents and the original Declaration of Independence (Fire Fighters Association 11).

Even though there are several accounts of the fire which indicate that all five portraits were destroyed (The National Intelligencer list of December 25, 1851, states that the paintings of first five presidents were destroyed), it is known for certain that the paintings of Presidents Madison and Monroe still exist. The

Madison is at Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts, and the Monroe hangs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. There is an account from the William and Mary Quarterly which states that "the portrait of Monroe was carried by a bystander with frame damaged, to a house on Capitol Hill" (Bolton 25).

George Mason, in his book *The Life and Works of Gilbert Stuart*, writes that "There was another set of the first five Presidents, three of them were destroyed by the fire in the Library building in Washington, and the other two, saved from the flames, but badly injured, are somewhere in Virginia" (207).

Provenance

If the Doggett portrait is the same as the one owned by Silverman Galleries, it must have been rescued from the fire the night of December 24, 1881. It seems possible, that a bystander or firefighter may have found the partially burned painting and thought that it was worth saving. If the Washington Light Infantry

helped to fight the fire, the painting could have ended up in their hands. Militia units were often called to fight fires in the District of Columbia during this period and Captain Zea, himself, may have been one of the fire fighters.

Records of the Washington Light Infantry are kept at the Washington Historical Society in Washington D.C. These records were carefully researched for any mention of a Washington portrait. The organization changed locations several times during it's history.

The Washington Light Infantry was organized in August of 1826 and continued to exist until the outbreak of the Civil War when it became a unit of the Union Army. On May 10, 1871, it was reorganized..... becoming part of the National Guard of the District of Columbia, but retaining it's individuality in matters of full dress, selection of members and title, being known as 'Washington Light Infantry, First Battalion, first Regiment, D.C.N.G.....It was first located in the Globe Building on Pennsylvania Avenue between Third and four and one-half Streets, then on Seventh Street next to the Odd Fellows building, next on Pennsylvania Avenue between Sixth and Seventh where the E.B. Adams building is located and finally in Poll's Theater on Pennsylvania Avenue near Fifteenth which was built by the corps as an investment and an armory, the drill hall being in the basement (Washington Post, April 18, 1926).

Along with the above article from the Washington

Post was a picture of Captain Zea in Full dress uniform, circa 1871.

Picture files of the Washington Light Infantry were consulted together with minutes of Infantry meetings. No image of the Washington portrait could be seen in the photos and the minutes were available only through June 16, 1851, as another book must have been purchased for this purpose and possibly destroyed during a fire at the armory in 1853.

There is very little recorded history available in regard to the National Guard of The District of Columbia. Mr. Chris Anderson in the chief historian of the National Guard Association in Washington, D.C. He was consulted regarding the possibility of the D.C. National Guard having owned a portrait of George Washington but his resources, mostly newspaper articles, produced no useful information.

If Captain Edward Zea (1827-1904) owned the portrait of George Washington until his death, perhaps he listed the painting among his personal effects in his will. Edward Zea was the son of Joseph Zea of Strasburg, Virginia. He and his wife Sarah also lived

in Strasburg and a visit to the Riverview cemetery at the Presbyterian Church, there, revealed that he had a large obelisk gravestone with his dates and Sarah's. Many other members of the Zea family were also buried there. It was hoped that some mention of Jessie Edward Zea, owner of the Washington portrait before Mr. Silverman, would be found, but no gravestone or mention of him is there.

Strasburg, Virginia is located in Shenandoah County and the county courthouse in Woodstock, Virginia has a death certificate on file for Captain Zea, but he did not leave a will and there was no record of the names of his children. His obituary could not be located by the local newspaper archives in Strasburg as much had been destroyed in a fire there earlier in this century. A copy of "Zea Family Genealogical Notes" was obtained from Philip Martin Zea of Norwich, Vermont which listed birth and death dates for Captain Zea but had no record of his children.

One would assume that Jessie Edward Zea was a descendant of Captain Edward Zea as they shared a name and also as the painting of Washington allegedly owned

originally by Captain Zea ended up in Jessie Edward's hands, but no records could be found to link them together genealogically. Jessie Edward Zea and his wife Margaret Zea were from Takoma Park, Maryland. They were married at Christchurch in Alexandria, Virginia, April 8, 1916, however it is not known if either is presently deceased and/or where they died. No records could be found in probate records for Montgomery County, Maryland or the District of Columbia for Jessie Edward Zea or Margaret Zea.

Finding it impossible to prove through records of the Washington Light Infantry that the George Washington Portrait actually hung in their headquarters and not being able to find proof that Captain Zea owned the Washington portrait, research into the provenance of the actual Doggett portrait was undertaken to link the Silverman portrait's alledged provenance with the actual provenance of the Doggett portrait.

If Able Phelps still owned the portraits of the first five presidents of the United States by Gilbert Stuart painted for John Doggett when fire raged through the capitol building it would seem likely that he would

claim damages from the government to recoup his financial loss.

Abel Phelps's will was obtained from Probate files in Suffolk County Massachusetts. In the will he lists "Pictures of the first five Presidents of the United States, now in the Capitol in Washington" with a value of \$500. Able Phelps died in October of 1848, however the paintings were still owned by his estate in 1850 as there was a proposition made, from the executors of his estate, to sell to Congress the portraits of the first five Presidents of the United States painted by Gilbert Stuart at the price of \$1,000. each. "The subject was considered (by Congress) but laid over for later consideration" (Fairman 111).

The last recorded recommendation to Congress that the five Doggett portraits be purchased by Congress was on January 22, 1851. "The recommendation was made by G.P.A. Healy, a portrait painter himself, who, for some reason not shown on the record, recommended at this time the purchase by Congress of these paintings" (Fairman 131).

It is not known whether, or not, Phelps's estate

owned the paintings at the time of the fire. Did someone else purchase the five paintings and attempt to sell them to Congress? The provenances of the Madison and Monroe portraits (the only known paintings of the five which survived the fire) may be easier to trace than that of the destroyed Washington as the records of the provenance of works of art are kept by museums from the time of acquisition.

Amherst College acquired the Doggett portrait of James Madison in 1945. Provenance of this painting is listed as: John Doggett, Boston; Charles Beaumont, Roxbury, Massachusetts; Abel Phelps, Boston, 1839; Col Peter Porter, Niagara Falls, New York and Washington D.C. until 1856; A.B. Douglas, New York 1856; Abbot Augustus Low, 1857; A.A. Low's brother Seth Low, until 1913 when it passed to Herbert L. Pratt who bequeathed it to Amherst in 1945. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York lists the same provenance for the Doggett portrait of James Monroe except that it was bequeathed to the museum in 1929 by Seth Low.

As Col. Peter Porter owned the paintings after Abel Phelps, his records were consulted to find out

whether he had already purchased them from the Phelps's estate when the Library burned. Colonel Porter was the son of General Peter Porter, secretary of state of New York in 1815. Col. Porter was a member of the Century Association which was a gentlemen's society, established in 1847, for the discussion of "letters---with Sculpture or Painting---with Progressive Science, or those Studies dear to the learned professions" (Century Association 41). Nothing was said in any of the biographical information on Peter Porter in reference to the Doggett painting.

Checking through the records of the United States Claim office to find a claim made by either Col. Porter or Able Phelps against the government for recovery of the financial loss of the five paintings came up with nothing for the years 1851, '52, or '53.

It was not possible, through the research presented thus far, to link the provenance of the Doggett portrait of Washington with that of the Silverman portrait.

The Lithograph

It is imperative to compare the Silverman portrait of Washington with the lithograph which was made from the Doggett portrait as it is the only known image, still in existence, copied directly from the original Doggett portrait of Washington (fig 1,2).

The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C and the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, have the original lithographs of the "American Kings" in their collections. Photocopies of these lithographs were obtained for comparison purposes. Under the images is written: "From the Original Series painted by Stuart for the Messrs. Doggett of Boston" (illustration 6).

There is some controversy as to who actually made the lithographs. In the Columbian Cantonal of November 16, 1825, was the following paragraph:

Messrs. Doggett of this city have received from France Lithographic Plates of the five Presidents of the United States from the pencil of Stuart and which adorned the residence of the Nation's Guest during his visit to this city. We learn that the plates are most excellent samples of the skill of the first of the French Artists and that with the plates Messrs. Doggett has received a press to

strike off the impressions and a French pressman to conduct the work (Antiques 279).

It was originally thought that the lithographs were drawn by John Pendleton who studied lithography in France under some of the best French artists of his day and who brought back with him a "good supply of lithographic stones, chalks and pencils." there is, however, an old diary and record book of Jonathan Cobb which reveals that Pendleton was unable to produce lithographs "according to the sample" (Swan 279). Cobb was invited to obtain subscriptions for the lithographs and spent much time and money on this venture, only to be disappointed by Mr. Pendleton's inability to produce what was promised.

In 1828, Pendleton again visited France, perhaps to obtain new equipment or, perhaps, the services of another French pressman. Jonathan Cobb kept a list of subscribers to this first series of lithographs and on the flyleaf of the book containing the list is a printed notice which discloses the fact that Monsieur Maurin, a French artist, and not John Pendleton, made the drawings on the lithographic stones:

Presidents of the U.S. Lithographic Portraits of

Washington, Adams and Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Adams are now in publication by Messrs. John Doggett & Co. Original pictures of five of these distinguished personages from the pencil of Stuart are now in the possession of John Doggett & Co. They have lately been returned from France where they were correctly copied on stone by Monsieur Maurin, an eminent lithographist of Paris. The Lithographic Press and Stones are imported and impressions are to be taken here for the subscribers only.....the plan of the publishers is to furnish a beautiful and correct Lithographic Portrait of each President of the U.S. produced by the united efforts of the best artists in Europe and America. The portrait of the present President will be furnished in the same style as those exhibited (Swan 281).

The Silverman portrait of Washington resembles closely the lithograph which was made from the Doggett portrait. The drapery in the background with column and tassel is handled almost identically in both portraits. The heads of both images are also very similarly drawn. The mouths are turned down and dark shadows appear under the lips and chin. The eyes (especially the left) droop and the eyebrows are heavy. the hair on both is drawn back quite far from the forehead and the hair bows are of the same type. The jabot's are also very much the same. The hands, sword and document which appear in the lithographic portrait are absent from the Silverman

portrait. This could be due to the "cutting down" of the Silverman Canvas due to it's being damaged.

The Madison and Monroe Portraits

A photograph of the portrait of James Monroe, painted for Doggett, was obtained from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a photocopy of the Doggett portrait of James Madison was obtained from Amherst College for comparison purposes (illustrations 3,4). Again, it can be assumed that the Silverman portrait was cut down which would explain the difference in size. Both the Madison and Monroe paintings are approximately 40" x 32" and the Silverman painting is 30" x 25" which (if the Silverman portrait is the original Doggett portrait of Washington) 10" would have been trimmed off the length (most likely at the bottom where damage is apparent) and 7" trimmed from the sides.

All five paintings done for Doggett were unsigned. In comparing quality of workmanship, one could say that the Madison and Monroe portraits are "finer" in that they seem to be handled with a "lighter touch" than the

Silverman Washington. The hair on both the Madison and Monroe portraits is painted more softly and subtly than the hair on Washington in the Silverman portrait. The jabots are also "fluffier" and softer looking. The eyes of Madison and Monroe look more fluid and reflect light in a way that cannot be found on the eyes of the Washington painting.

Some similarities exist between the portraits of Madison and Monroe and the Silverman Washington. They are all facing the same way and each with a three-quarter view of the face. The handling of the background drapery and tassel is also quite similar.

Laboratory Research

The canvas of the Silverman portrait was examined by Lester Cook, late curator of the National Portrait Gallery who maintained a collection of canvas samples. He declared this canvas to be of the distinctive type used by Gilbert Stuart.

When examined with ultraviolet light, the Silverman portrait showed evidence of overpainting,

especially at the bottom where it would be necessary to cover the damage if it had been in a fire. However, if the overpainting was done during the 19th century, just after the painting was damaged, it would not show up (fluoresce) as readily as newer paint applied by Mr. Silverman's restorer in the 1960s. (illustration 7).

On September 8, 1992, the Silverman portrait was X-rayed by Reliance Testing Labs in Chantilly, Virginia. This was done to see what was under the surface paint (illustration 8).

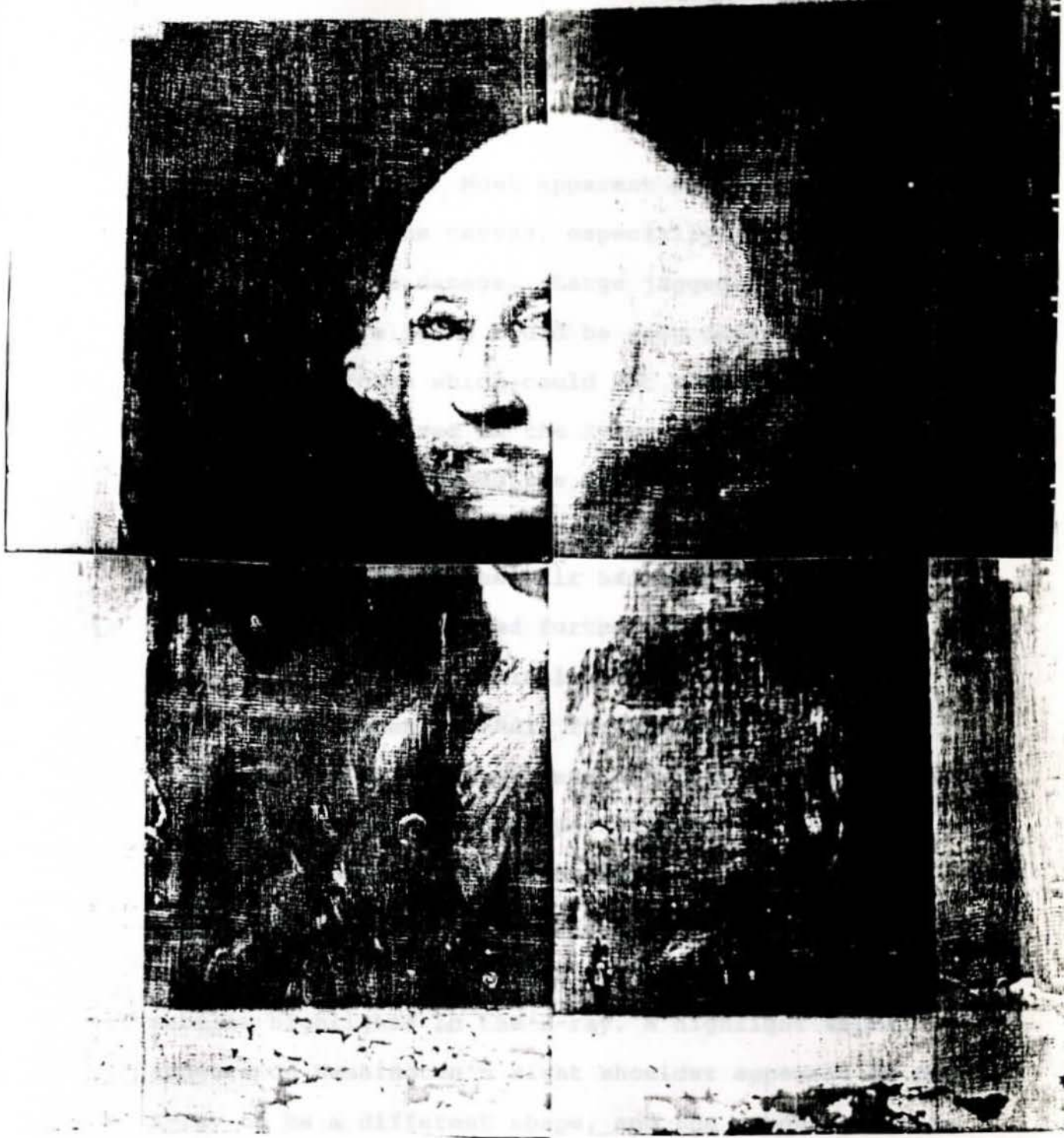
An original painting grows from a prepared foundation to a final paint surface, and in the process of growth there are usually changes in the basic design, corrections, even changes in the composition, before arriving at the finished state. The copyist's interest is the surface of that painting. He may recognize the painter's manner of painting, but the story of what lies under the surface is not his concern; he paints what he sees and what he sees, and what he sees is surface thin. Yet, evidence of the growth pains usually register on the surface, or will show in X-ray or infrared photography (Campbell, forward).

The X-rays of the Silverman portrait were examined carefully by the Staff of Silverman Galleries (Mr. Maurice Silverman, Angel Saunders, and myself). Many discrepancies were noticed between what could be seen on the surface of the canvas and what appeared to be



(Illustration 7)

The Silverman Portrait showing spots which fluoresced
under ultraviolet light.



(Illustration 8)

The Silverman Portrait X-rays

painted underneath. Most apparent were irregular shaped holes in the canvas, especially at the bottom, showing extensive damage. Large jagged holes appeared through which relining could be seen underneath.

Brush strokes which could not be seen on the surface also appeared in the X-ray. At the forehead, the brush strokes showed the hair as wisper and more delicately painted than what was seen on the surface. It also seemed as if the hair had been originally painted to appear brushed further away from the forehead (perhaps overpainting on the surface of the canvas had brought the hair further down on the forehead). Also, the hair at the sides of Washington's head appeared to have been painted more delicately originally, and the sideburns had been more distinct (presently they are mostly gray shadow on the canvas surface). The eyes, especially the irises, showed subtler highlights in the X-ray, a highlight which appears on Washington's right shoulder appeared in the X-ray to be a different shape, and the jabot seemed to have been originally more finely painted.

On October 8, 1992, the X-rays of the Silverman

portrait of Washington were examined by Ellen Miles, curator at the National Gallery, Washington, D.C. and Cathy Medsger, conservationist at the National Gallery, Washington D.C. Ms. Miles has spent many years studying the forty-five Stuart portraits at the National Portrait Gallery and both women are familiar with X-rays of Gilbert Stuart paintings at their respective institutions.

The Silverman portrait X-rays were first compared with an X-ray of a painting of John Adams by Gilbert Stuart done in 1826. It is the lead in the white paint which shows up most distinctly in an X-ray of this type and it was immediately noticed that there was much more white painting visible in the Silverman portrait X-rays than the one of the John Adams painting and that the Silverman portrait appeared to have been much more heavily painted than the one of John Adams (more brush strokes were used). Gilbert Stuart's paintings, (especially by the 1820s) were done with very little underpainting and comparatively few brush strokes. By this time (1822-26), he seemed to be able to visualize exactly what he wanted to put onto the canvas and

painted in a very deliberate manner.

Ms. Miles, in looking at the texture of the canvas as it appeared in the X-ray, thought the canvas a bit later than 1822, perhaps 1840-50. Scalloping (cusping) of the canvas was noticed at the bottom where it was stretched onto the wooden stretcher. According to Ms. Miles and Ms. Medsger, this would not occur if the canvas had been cut off and stretched after being painted as this only occurs when the canvas is originally stretched and before the paint is applied. The damage at the bottom of the canvas was thought to be water damage and not due to fire as was originally thought. Fire damage, according to Mr. Quentin Rankin, conservationist at the National Portrait Gallery, produces singed and bubbled paint which shows up like small volcanic craters on the surface of the canvas. The Silverman portrait shows "discreet flake losses" to the painted surface which is usually associated with water damage.

The Silverman portrait was compared with several Stuart portraits in the National Portrait Gallery. The color tones of the Silverman portrait are quite

different than those of the Stuart portraits. Stuart used light gray and rose underpaint which shows through on the surface giving his paintings a certain glow which the Silverman portrait does not possess. The Silverman portrait has deeper, muddier tones of gray and the red background bleeds through to the surface.

Both the Doggett portrait of George Washington and **Hypothesis** portrait of Washington were (are) of the Athenaeum type which is the largest class of Stuart's

part. The original hypothesis which led to the research on the painting of George Washington, owned by Silverman Galleries, was that this work, oil on canvas, 30" x 25", is the original portrait of George Washington painted by Gilbert Stuart for John Doggett in 1822. In the following chapters, I will evaluate more thoroughly the research methods presented in this chapter and the results of this research and their effect on proving or disproving the hypothesis presented above. In their book *The Life Portraits of Washington and their Replicas*, The type A portraits were done between 1796-1798 (illustration 2).

Chapter III

SELECTIVE REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

The Athenaeum Portraits

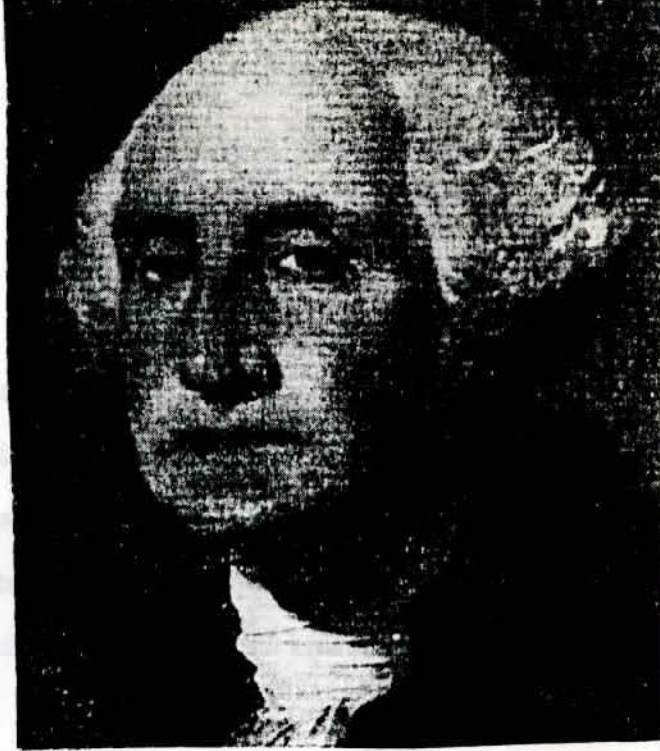
Both the Doggett portrait of George Washington and the Silverman portrait of Washington were (are) of the Athenaeum type which is the largest class of Stuarts' portraits. Mrs. Washington arranged for her husband to sit for Stuart in 1796 in order to procure a new portrait as a pendant to her own which faces right which meant that the one of her husband must face to the left. The original portrait was left unfinished so that it could be retained as a model for the replicas (illustration 5).

The Athenaeum portraits have been grouped into three separate types (A, B, and C), by John Hill Morgan and Mantle Fielding in their book *The Life Portraits of Washington and their Replicas*. The type A portraits were done between 1796-1798 (illustration 9).



From the DeFranca Canvas

1797



The Constable-Hamilton Canvas

1797

The left side of Washington's face which have been found in England are of this type (Morgan and Fielding 212).

The type B portraits of the Houson-Lewis type. The face and upper lip are Athenaeum portrait (illustrated in all of the standing Lansdowne type and is the most likely to be the

The Hope Canvas

(Fielding 215). The final canvases by his work there in 1802, are (illustration 11). The type



Variations of the Athenaeum Head, Type A

Morgan and Fielding

They are all characterized by a rounder face, longer nose and a slightly different expression than the original Athenaeum head and are all very "carefully and thoroughly painted" and have been traced to owners who purchased the portraits during Stuarts residence in Philadelphia and Germantown. Also all the paintings of the left side of Washington's face which have been found in England are of this type (Morgan, Fielding 242).

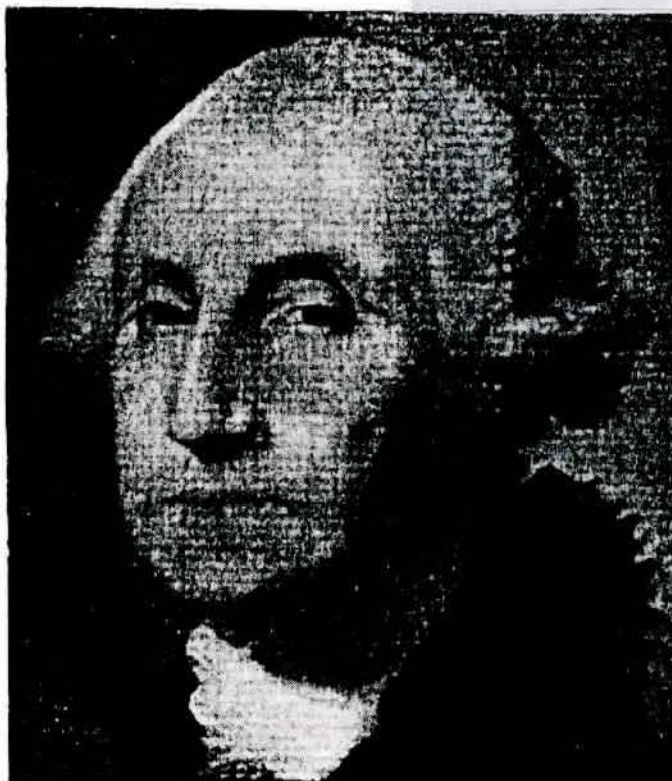
The type B portraits "all appear in the canvases of the Monroe-Lenox type". The eyes are smaller and the face and upper lip are longer than in the original Athenaeum portrait (illustration 10). The type B is used in all of the standing portraits except the Landsdowne type and in a few of the bust portraits. Most likely, they were all painted before 1801 (Morgan, Fielding 245),

The Boston canvases by Stuart, all painted after his move there in 1805, are part of type C (illustration 11). The Doggett portrait is of this type as is the Silverman portrait. The head of this type is characterized by smaller, darker eyes, a

The Athenaeum

1825-1828

The Athenaeum



(Illustration 10)

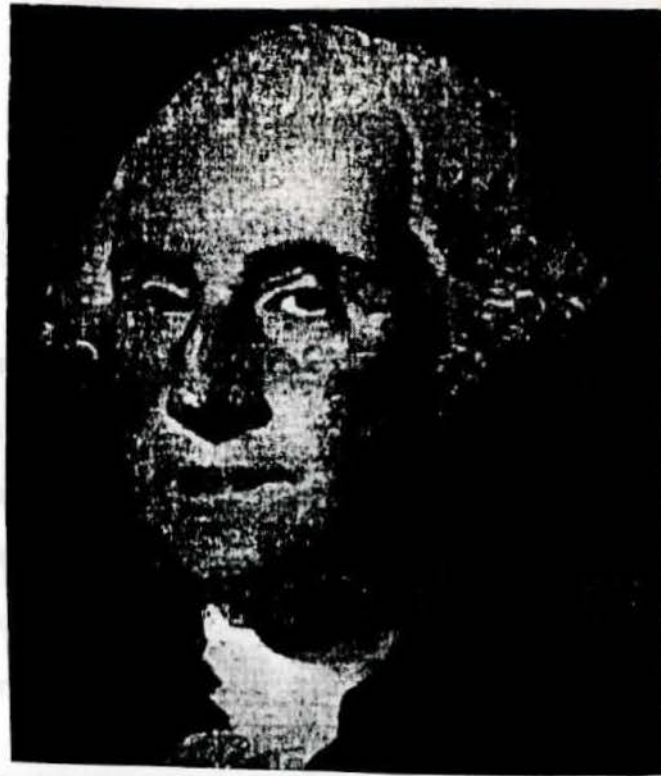
The Type B Athenaeum Head

Morgan and Fielding

The Boston Canvases

1805-1828

The Mason Canvas

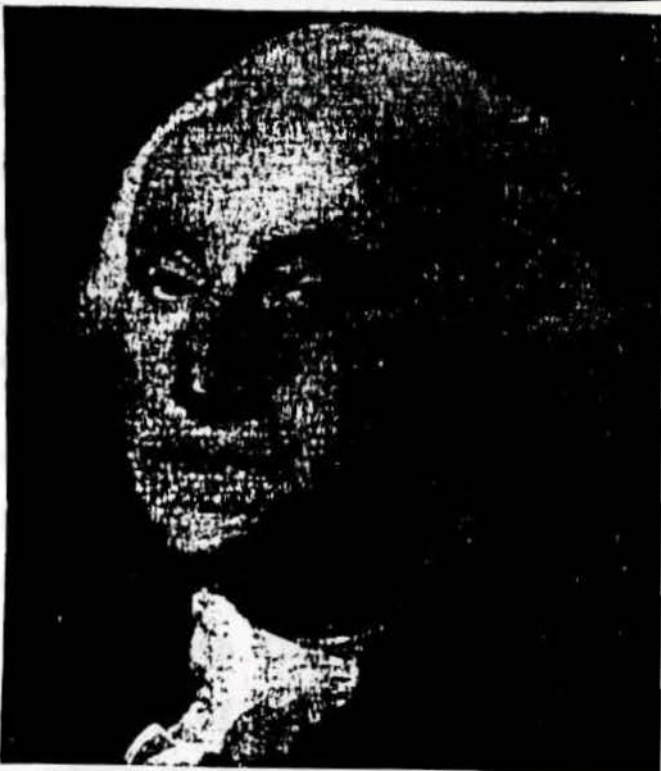


The eyes are an important
feature of the portrait. The eyes
are painted with a soft, delicate
touch, and they give the face
a lifelike appearance. (The
other portraits, the eyes are
painted with a more direct
method.)

The most important feature
of the portrait is the eyes.

The Taylor Canvas

It is always thought of
as a portrait of a man of
high social rank. It was
painted by Gilbert Stuart.
The portrait is a study in
contrast. The man's face
is pale, and his hair is dark.
The background is dark, and
the lighting is dramatic.



(Illustration 11)

Variations of the Athenaeum Head, Type C

Morgan and Fielding



shorter nose, and a more pointed chin than the original Athenaeum head (Morgan, Fielding 246).

The eyes are an important detail in comparing Stuart's portraits. The eyes in most are "partly closed, soft and dreamy, undoubtedly in accordance with their real appearance" (Eisen 12). In the Athenaeum bust portraits, the eyes are partly closed with vision directed sideways to the figure's left.

The next important feature in the comparison of Stuart's Washington portraits is the jabot.

It is always thought out with care, constructed on logical principles, and whether detailed or executed in a sketchy manner, it is never slurred. Consequently, if any Washington portraits have a slurred jabot, we can be certain that they were not painted by Gilbert Stuart (Eisen 13).

The jabot is either lace or linen and always painted with a delicate touch which characterizes all of Stuart's jabots. The jabot in the Silverman portrait can be characterized as closed with both flaps parallel so that the viewer sees the underside of the one nearest and the upper side or edges of the one below or beyond. It also appears to be of linen (illustration 12).

The hair band is also important for comparison



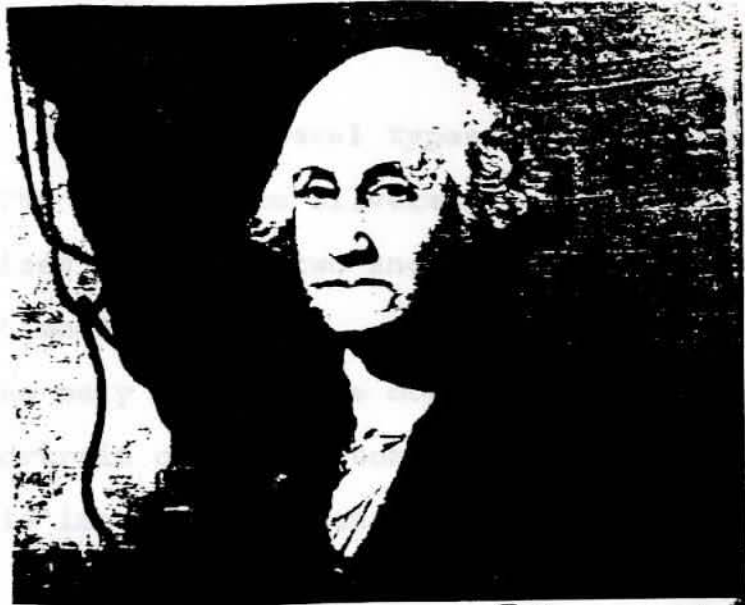


Figure 28.

The jabots and hair bands in Gilbert Stuart's Athenaeum series, Subseries II, Group 1, a and b; Group a: a—The McKim-Coles-Huntington; b—The Jonathan Mason-Rhode Island School of Design; c—The George Gibbs-Coolidge; d—The Mercer-Washington and Lee University; e—The Newton-Washington University portrait; Group b: The Shattuck-Rockefeller; f—The Campoell Steward.

(Illustration 12)

Comparison of the Silverman portrait jabot with those
of the Athenaeum series

(Eisen)

purposes. There are several types in the Athenaeum series. The band in the Silverman portrait is characterized by having two angular knees or waves. (illustration 13).

As the only known image copied directly from the Doggett portrait of Washington is the lithograph of the same, it is important to note that the jabots and the hairbands are of the same type in both the Silverman portrait and the lithograph.

Difficulty in authentication of Stuart paintings using a comparison method is made more difficult by the fact that he was very inconsistent in the quality of his workmanship. This is especially true of his Washington portraits from the period when the Doggett portraits were executed as there is a great deal of variety of quality in his paintings done after 1820.

Of these (Boston canvases) Mason said "some are very fine, but others quite indifferent.....When he (Stuart) wanted money, he turned one out, often quite rapidly". However, to quote the words of John Doggett, Jr. to Charles Beaumont (regarding the Doggett portrait of Washington), "In the picture of Washington, which I heard Stuart pronounce to my father as the best portrait he ever painted of that illustrious man" (Bowen 505).

This inconsistency of quality together with the

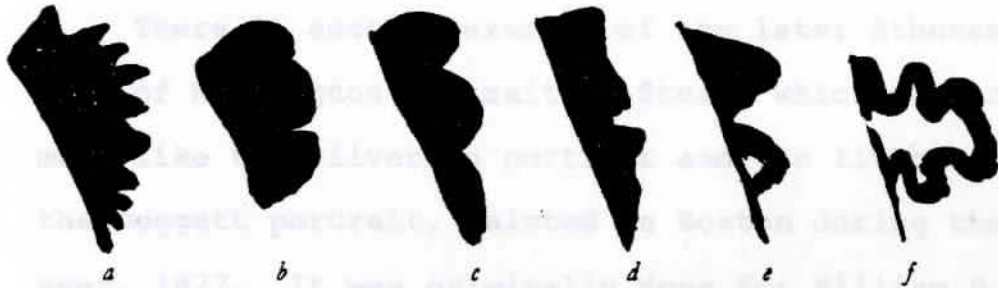


Figure 17.

Diagram of the hair bags and hair bands in the Athenaeum series: *a*—Serrated hair bag, II, 1; II, 3; II, 4; II, 7; *b*—Three petaled bow hair bag as in Lansdowne, II, 6; *c*—Three lobed hair bag, rather low and rounded waves, III, 2; III, 3; *d*—Hair bag with ridge and bay, II, 2; *e*—Hair band with one or two angular or rounded knees or waves. I, 1; II, 8; III, 3; III, 6; *f*—Hair band loop, III, 5.

(Illustration 13)

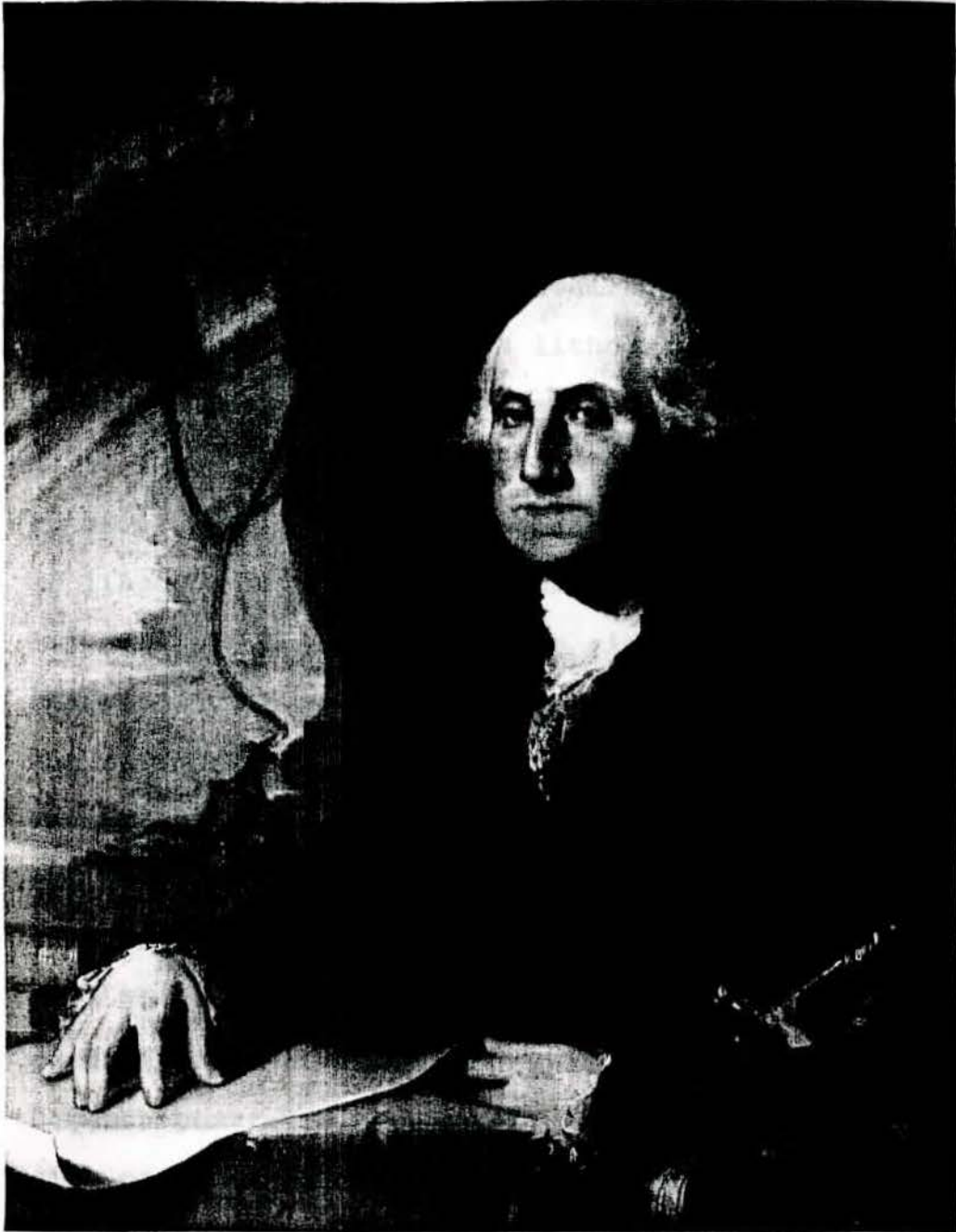
Hairbands in the Athenaeum Series

Eisen

fact that he did not sign his paintings makes authentication of Stuarts' portraits difficult. He also made many copies of his own paintings (he made at least 75 copies of the Athenaeum series).

There is another example of the later Athenaeum type of Washington portrait by Stuart which is very much like the Silverman portrait and the lithograph of the Doggett portrait, painted in Boston during the same year, 1822. It was originally done for William D. Lewis and later hung in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia (1881-1928). It then went to Howard Young Galleries in New York where it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred G. Wilson of Detroit who sold it at Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York, December 10, 1970 (illustration 14).

The Lewis canvas measures 44" x 34" (slightly larger than the original Doggett canvas which was 40" x 32". The handling of the drapery and column seen in the background of the portrait is similar to the Silverman portrait and the Doggett lithograph, however

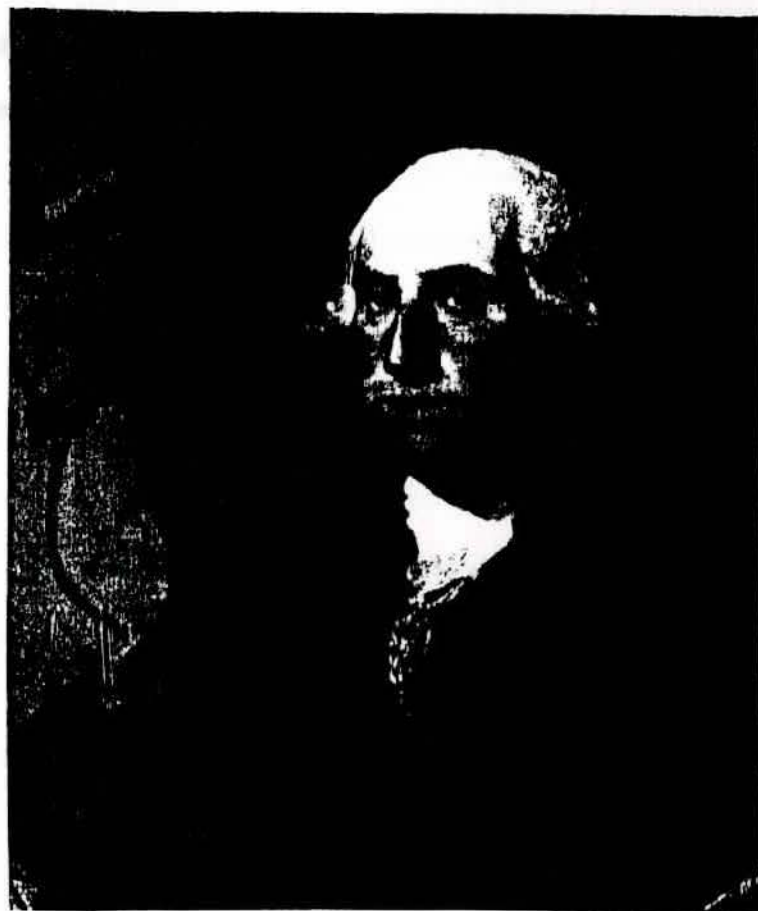


(Illustration 14)

The Lewis Portrait

the drapery cord is looped differently in this painting and there is a tassel hanging about one third of the way down on the portrait, whereas the handling of the drapery cord is almost identical when comparing the Silverman portrait with the lithograph. The hair ribbon is presented in very much the same way on all three images. The jabot on the Lewis portrait appears to be of lace and not linen, whereas it appears to be of linen on both the Silverman portrait and the lithograph. The face is drawn similarly in all three images, though the face seems narrower and longer in the Silverman portrait than either the lithograph or the Lewis portrait. The mouth on both the lithograph and the Silverman portrait is wider and the bottom lip thicker than the Lewis portrait.

If the same percentage was trimmed from the Lewis portrait as that which had to be trimmed from the Doggett portrait (because of damage) to make it the size of the Silverman portrait (illustration 15). The remaining image would be very similar what appears in the Silverman portrait except that part of the sword on the right and part of the hand on the left would be



(Illustration 15)

The Lewis Portrait trimmed in a manner proportionate to
the Silverman portrait.

left in the picture. The Silverman portrait could have been overpainted in these two areas, however there was no indication of a hand or sword underneath the surface in the X-rays of the painting.

The provenance of the Silverman portrait of George Washington was carefully researched. Records of the Washington Light Infantry were consulted to find evidence that the organization owned the portrait at any time. Photo files of the Infantry were also checked to see if a portrait of Washington might have shown up on an interior photograph of the Army. Records of the District of Columbia National Guard were researched for mention of a portrait of Washington. No record of a painting of Washington was found in any of these sources.

The records of Captain Edward Lee were sought for mention of a Washington portrait, but this also brought no positive results.

The descendants of Edward Jussie Lee and his wife Margaret were sought as well as family genealogy linking Edward Jussie Lee to Captain Edward Lee. Their relationship is still in question.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

The provenance of the Silverman portrait of George Washington was carefully researched. Records of the Washington Light Infantry were consulted to find evidence that the organization owned the portrait at one time. Photo files of the Infantry were also checked to see if a portrait of Washington might have shown up on an interior photograph of the Armory. Records of the District of Columbia National Guard were researched for mention of a portrait of Washington. No record of a painting of Washington was found in any of these records.

The records of Captain Edward Zea were sought for mention of a Washington portrait, but this also brought no positive results.

The whereabouts of Edward Jessie Zea and his wife Margaret were sought as well as family genealogy linking Edward Jessie Zea to Captain Edward Zea. Their relationship is still in question.

The provenances of the Doggett portraits still in existence, that of the Madison and Monroe were carefully researched through the reading of early congressional records, accounts of the fire at the Library of Congress from which they were rescued, acquisition papers from Amherst College and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the wills and historical information in regard to the men that owned them. A link between the provenances of the two remaining Doggett portraits and the Silverman portrait was not found.

The portrait of George Washington, oil on canvas 30" x 25" was examined physically through the use of ultraviolet light and X-ray. Underpainting was discovered which was more delicate in the style of application than what could be seen on the surface of the canvas. Extensive damage was also revealed at the bottom of the canvas where large jagged holes appeared through which the relining appeared. X-rays of the painting were compared with X-rays of a painting of John Adams by Gilbert Stuart done in 1826. The John Adams X-rays showed very delicate, but deliberate

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An experienced conservationist at the National Portrait Gallery examined the damage to the canvas and observed that it was water damage and not fire damage as fire damage produces small craters on the paint surface and the Silverman canvas has "discreet flake losses".

It was also mentioned by the conservationist that if the Doggett portrait had been cut down because of damage to the canvas, it probably wouldn't have ended up to be a standard canvas size of 30" x 25".

The Silverman portrait was compared with the remaining canvases of the Doggett series, that of James Madison and James Monroe. They are all three quarter views with the face turned the same direction and the handling of the draperies, cords and tassels is quite similar, however they seem to be painted with a lighter and more delicate hand than the Silverman portrait and the highlights are more fluid on the faces and eyes.

The Silverman Washington was also compared with the lithograph from the original Doggett portrait. The drapery in the background is handled almost identically in both, the heads are similarly drawn with both mouths

wide and turned down with dark shadows under the lips and chin and the eyebrows heavily drawn. The jabots and hairbands are very similar in type and style.

Results of carefully researching the provenance of the Silverman portrait of George Washington through the Washington Light Infantry records, the personal histories of Captains Edward Lee, Jessie Edward Lee and Margaret Lee provided no concrete evidence of the portrait belonging to the Washington Light Infantry or any member of the Lee family. There is only the word of Margaret Lee who told Mr. Silverman that the portrait had belonged to Captain Edward Lee of the Washington Light Infantry and had hung in their headquarters. This does not mean that Captain Lee did not own the painting and that it never hung in the gallery of the Washington Light Infantry. Paintings of Washington were plentiful and works by Gilbert Stuart, though desirable, were not valued as highly as they are at present. When one reads the newspaper accounts of the fire at the Library of Congress in 1851 it is evident that the books were much more important at that time than the paintings. Even the records of Mr. Nelson who

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

Results of carefully researching the provenance of the Silverman portrait of George Washington through the Washington Light Infantry records, the personal histories of Captain Edward Zea, Jessie Edward Zea and Margaret Zea provided no concrete evidence of the portrait belonging to the Washington Light Infantry or any member of the Zea family. There is only the word of Margaret Zea who told Mr. Silverman that the portrait had belonged to Captain Edward Zea of the Washington Light Infantry and had hung in their headquarters. This does not mean that Captain Zea did not own the painting and that it never hung in the armory of the Washington Light Infantry. Paintings of Washington were plentiful and works by Gilbert Stuart, though desirable, were not valued as highly as they are at present. When one reads the newspaper accounts of the fire at the Library of Congress in 1851 it is evident that the books were much more important at that time than the paintings. Even the records of Mr. Mehan who

was librarian at the time of that fire hardly give mention to the Stuart portraits which were destroyed. and the U.S. Congress put off purchasing the five presidential portraits for years before the fire finally destroyed all but two of them. Gilbert Stuart, though highly thought of as a portrait painter, did not die a rich man. Perhaps the reason for not being able to find records of the ownership of the Washington portrait is that it was not thought of as an extremely important possession.

Research into the provenance of the Doggett Madison and Monroe portraits failed to provide a link to the Silverman portrait. Phelps's will did list the five paintings he still owned before the fire but it is not known when Peter Porter acquired the Madison and Monroe portraits. Was he the recipient of the two paintings when they were rescued by a bystander at the fire? Wouldn't he have to settle this with Phelps's estate before declaring ownership? Answers to these questions do not seem available through Phelps's papers or Porter's papers. Also, the government does not have a record of a claim for losses incurred from either of

these two men after the fire. Therefore, it is impossible, thus far, to prove that the Silverman portrait is the lost Doggett portrait through its provenance.

The Silverman portrait of Washington was physically examined by the use of ultraviolet light and X-ray in order to find a more Stuart-like portrait underneath the quite heavily painted surface and also to determine the extent and type of damage to the canvas. It did appear as if the original painting was more delicate than what is seen on the surface. There were differences in the underpainting and the surface painting, however, when comparing the X-rays of the Silverman portrait with that of one made of Gilbert Stuart's John Adams, even the underpainting seemed to be heavier and less delicate and deliberate than what could be seen in the John Adam's X-ray.

Cusping of the canvas which showed up in the X-ray lead the conservators at the National Portrait Gallery to the conclusion that the canvas had not been cut off and re-stretched (as was hypothesized by Mr. Silverman) because of damage to the bottom of the

painting. Also, the damage did not appear under X-ray to be fire damage, but caused by water.

When the Silverman painting was physically compared with Stuart portraits in the National Portrait Gallery, differences in the handling of the paint and the application of colors and highlights were very apparent.

The conservationists and conservators who examined the Silverman portrait thought that it is a later copy of a work by Gilbert Stuart by a lesser artist.

The Silverman portrait was compared with other Athenaeum portraits by Stuart. It is much like the Lewis portrait, though not as finely and delicately painted. It compares in the same way with the Madison and Monroe paintings by Stuart. Even though many of the elements are similar the handling of the paint is different.

The portrait was compared with the lithograph made from the original Doggett portrait of Washington. It is similar in many ways. Handling of the draperies and cord in the background is almost identical. The faces are done in very much the same way and the jabots and

hair bands are alike. There is no other portrait of Stuart which has been found, so far, which is more like the Silverman portrait than this lithograph.

Summary

It seems unlikely that the Silverman portrait of George Washington is not the portrait of Washington painted for John Doggett in 1822. As the provenance could not be traced back to the fire at the Library of Congress in 1851, it was necessary to prove by physical examination of the portrait and comparisons with other Stuart paintings that it was a Stuart portrait. Even though the X-rays of the Silverman portrait showed significant underpainting, it did not look like Gilbert Stuart's hand. The Silverman portrait does not have the definite brush strokes and soft colors of a Stuart painting. Though Stuart was not consistent in the quality of his work, there still is a certain delicacy in all his paintings which the Silverman portrait does not possess. Therefore, I feel that the original hypothesis of Mr. Silverman that his portrait is the

lost portrait of George Washington .painted by Gilbert Stuart for John Doggett in 1822 cannot be accepted.

Limitations

Even after the completion of this research and the opinions of the "experts" that the Silverman portrait is not the Doggett portrait of Washington there are still some who feel that the painting still may be the work of Stuart. Lester Cook, late conservator of the National Gallery declared the canvas of the Silverman portrait to be of the distinct type used by Gilbert Stuart, yet a present conservator at the National Portrait Gallery thought the canvas to be a least twenty years later than the date the Doggett portrait was completed. There are always differing opinions and even the "experts" can make mistakes in judgement.

The Silverman portrait is also the only Washington portrait I have seen which so closely resembles the lithograph taken directly from the Doggett portrait. If the Silverman portrait is not the Doggett portrait, what was it copied from? Did the artist see the

Doggett portrait and copy it without the hands table and sword? Or did he copy the lithograph? Why would he copy either the Doggett painting or the lithograph and leave off the bottom of the painting? These are questions which were not answered in the research presented.

Suggestions for Future Research

Perhaps the provenance of the Silverman portrait could have been researched more thoroughly. There may have been others present at the fire on December 24, 1851 who's papers were not consulted. Other famous members of the Washington Light Infantry may have papers on file somewhere which could be researched to find information regarding the Washington painting. John Phillip Sousa was a member of the Washington Light Infantry. Perhaps his papers would mention the portrait.

It would be interesting to know the artist of the Silverman portrait (if not by Stuart). Who would have had access to the Doggett portrait in order to copy it?

When was the Silverman portrait done? Did the artist use the same canvas used by Gilbert Stuart and was he (she) a contemporary of Stuarts or perhaps a pupil? These are questions which might be answered through further research.

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