

West Lake Art Conservation Center

PO Box 45
Skaneateles, NY 13152
(315) 685-8534

Invoice

No. 421
Date 10/30/2024

WLACC JOB#	12475
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Bill To

Town of Homer
Martin Sweeney
31 North Main Street
Homer, NY 13077

Telephone # 607-749-7120

Artist - Francis B. Carpenter
Title - Portrait of Electa Hobart
Type - painting
Size -
Framed -

P.O. #

Subtotal	\$375.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)	\$0.00
Total	\$375.00
Payments/Credits	-\$200.00
Balance Due	\$175.00

Owner acknowledges completion of conservation treatment invoiced above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Owner:

Town of Homer
Representative: Martin Sweeney
31 North Main St
Homer, NY 13077

Description:

Artist Name – Francis B. Carpenter
Title – Portrait of Electa Hobart
Type – Oil on canvas
Size – 32 ¼”h x 27 ½”w
Framed – 27”h x 22”w
Gallery ID – n/a



Standards of Practice: West Lake Art Conservation Center abides by the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) *Code of Ethics* and *Guidelines for Practice*. Treatment includes before and after photography (digital images) with other photos as considered necessary by conservator. A treatment record and photos will be provided with the completed project. Materials used are selected for their proven performance and reversible nature.

Description:

This portrait depicts Electa Hobart in half-length portrait. She wears a white bonnet and dark black or blue dress and she is seated in front of a green-brown toned background/backdrop.

Examination

Inscription: Wooden stretcher reverse, lower horizontal bar, graphite:
“F B Carpenter / 1861 – 2”

Support: The support is a medium-weight plain-wove canvas that appears to be linen. The support is generally in good, planar condition across the canvas with the exception some corner draw distortions at the top right, top left and bottom left corners, stretcher bar creases (distortions indicated in green in the condition diagram on page 5), and two small puncture tears, indicated in magenta on the condition diagram.

Auxiliary Support: The artwork’s auxiliary support is a four-member expandable wood stretcher. Five of the original eight expansion keys remain installed; one key is missing in the top left corner and two keys are missing from the top-right corner. A second set of tack holes is visible on the tacking margin, but it appears the artwork been installed on this stretcher for a significant amount of time, and the stretcher appears original to the artwork; the stretcher also appears to be the same construction and age as the accompanying *Portrait of Gideon Hobart*, also by Francis Carpenter.

Ground: The ground is thin, smooth textured and is likely artist applied. In general, the adhesion between the ground and the canvas and the ground and the paint both appear to be good and stable across the surface.

Paint: The paint appears to be oil-based and was applied generally in thin smooth applications with a low

amount of brush texture visible in portions of the hair and bonnet. There paint displays a fine craquelure network when viewed with transmitted illumination; this craquelure is much less visible in normal or raking illumination; in general, the paint remains well adhered to the ground and canvas across the surface, with the exception the paint at the edges surrounding the canvas tears, here the paint is lifting slightly.

Surface Coatings: Inspection with ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence suggests that there may be a light varnish on the surface, but this fluorescence also may be related more to the artist's medium. Testing with aqueous based cleaning mixtures shows that the majority of the discoloration is related to surface soiling from grime. Testing with organic solvent mixtures did not yield significant additional reduction of discoloration, this supports a suggestion that the fluorescence scene in ultraviolet-induced fluorescence is more paint-medium related. There is no evidence of previous restorations.

Frame: The frame is a gilt-wood frame with mostly flat gilt surfaces that have developed an aged patina; it is constructed with one wooden element on each side. Structurally, the frame remains in very good condition and provides very good support to the painting. The frame shows visible ageing and some patination/wear but the appearance generally is not distracting and it is not distracting. There are some minor abrasions at the outer edges of the frame that are moderately distracting. Other than these losses, the frame has retained a good amount of luster to the gilding and otherwise is in good aesthetic appearance, with the exception of a light dust layer.

Summary of Condition

The painting is generally good condition with the exception of two small tears in the canvas that are causing localized insecurity to the paint/ground layers. There is also a moderate amount of slackness, corner draws and moderately developed stretcher bar creases. The paint layer remains generally secure across the surface and aesthetically, testing shows that a majority of the discoloration is found in surface grime, which can be reduced with aqueous based cleaning mixtures.

The gilt wood frame is generally in very good, stable condition structurally. The frame finish has retained luster in the gilding but also shows a developed patina, but the finish remains stable. There are minor abrasions at the outer corners that is moderately distracting.

Proposed Treatment

Painting:

1. Create written and photographic documentation before during and after the conservation treatment.
2. Remove the painting from the frame.
3. Reduce grime layer across the surface with aqueous based cleaning mixture.
4. Apply localized humidification and dry under blotters and weights to reduce distortions relating to the tears.
5. Apply local consolidating adhesive to tear areas from the reverse.
6. Apply localized bridging fabric at tear areas to re-establish a cohesive support tension.
7. Apply a varnish overall by brush.
8. Fill areas of paint loss.
9. Retouch areas of loss and abrasion.
10. Apply varnish overall by spray.
11. Install a protective backingboard on the reverse of the stretcher; Coroplast proposed.
12. Install a materials data label describing the materials used in treatment.

Frame:

1. Vacuum the surface of the frame, overall.
2. Tone areas of frame abrasion and loss to match the original surface.
3. Install padding on the interior of the frame with 1/8" thick Volara foam to reduce abrasion between the painting and the frame.
4. Install the painting in the frame with new installation hardware; metal offset clips proposed.
5. Install new hanging hardware.
6. Wrap artwork for storage.

Anticipated Treatment/Results of Treatment and Recommendations

The goal of this treatment is to stabilize the artwork structurally and to return the appearance to the artist's intention. The painting is currently in a generally stable state structurally, with the exception of two small tears in the canvas. In these areas the paint has minor losses and is insecure in the surrounding paint. Applying localized humidification followed by drying with blotters and weights is proposed to return areas of distorted canvas to plane. Additional steps to increase tension by re-installing missing stretcher keys will further reduce corner draws as well as reduce stretcher-bar distortions. Aesthetically, testing shows that a pronounced grime layer is having the greatest impact on appreciating the paint tones. This grime can be reduced and doing so will return the appearance greatly to the artist's intention. Additional testing shows that there does not appear to be a varnish layer that is affecting the appearance, so after reducing grime, a new varnish will re-establish saturation and depth in the paint tones, then filling losses, and toning with restoration colors will return the composition to a cohesive appearance.

The gilt frame is generally in very good structural condition and provides good support to the painting. Aesthetically the frame has a visible patina but generally this is not distracting and complements the painting; there are a few small losses at the outer edges that are slightly abraded; toning these will bring the appearance back to a completely cohesive state. Addressing small areas of loss by toning to match the original finish, and then re-framing the painting with new installation and hanging hardware, along with installing a backingboard on the reverse of the stretcher will all serve to support the artwork's preservation.

The examination and proposal were created by Nathan Sutton.

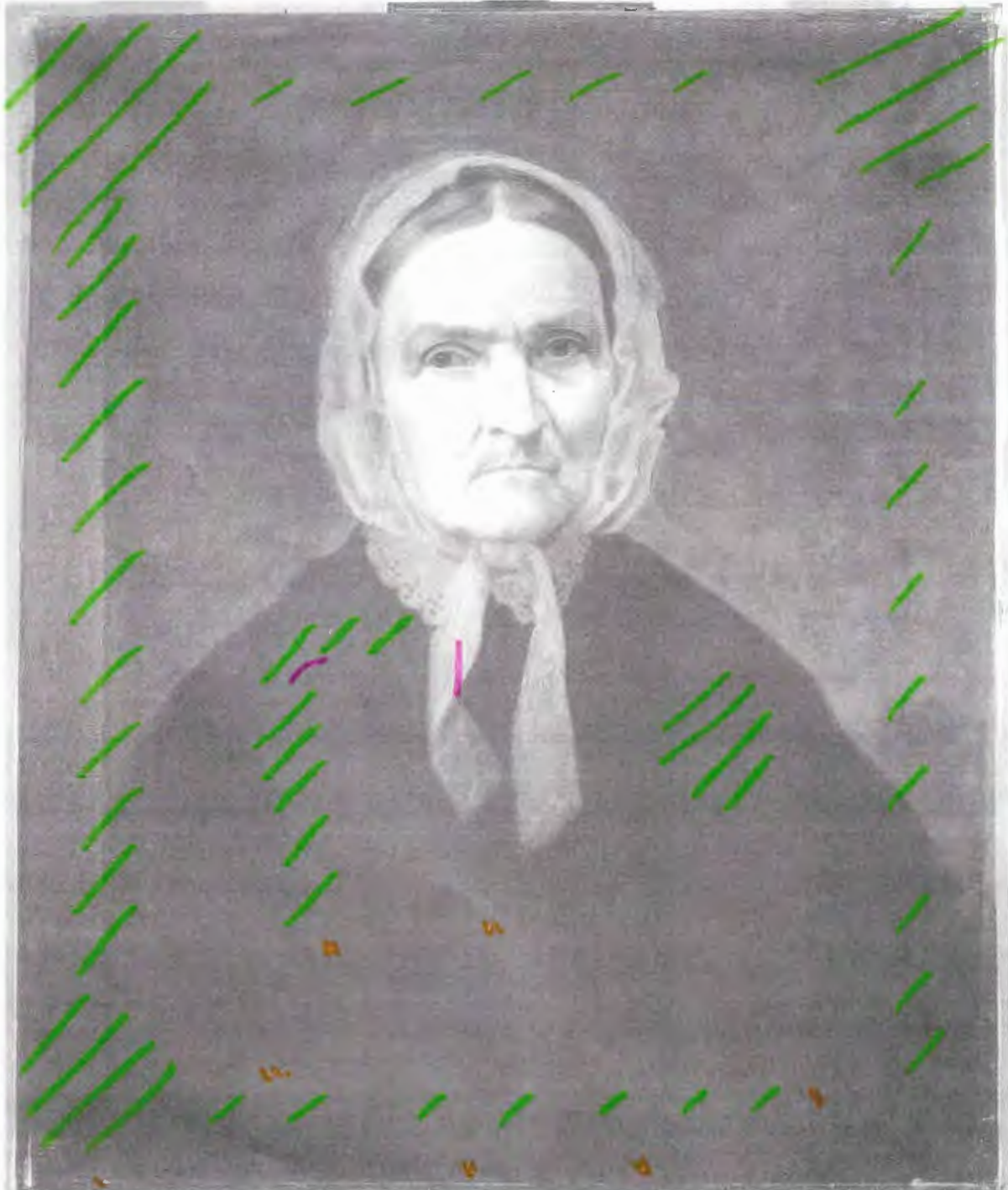


Fig. 1. Condition Diagram, front, normal illumination; Orange areas indicate areas of loss to the finish of the frame.