

John Winthrop (1587/88-1649), 1798

Samuel McIntire (1757-1811)

carved and painted wood

15 1/2 (h) (39.370)

inscribed on the base: "Winthrop"

Bequest of William Bentley, 1819

Weis 149

Hewes number: 155

Ex. Coll.: commissioned by the donor, 1798.

Exhibitions:

1804, Independence Day Celebration, Salem Meeting House.

1931, "American Folk Sculpture," Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey.

1957, "Samuel McIntire," Essex Institute, no. 8.

1977, "Landscape and Faction: Spatial Transformation in William Bentley's Salem," Essex Institute, no. 18.

Publications:

"Editor's Attic," The Magazine Antiques 21(January 1932): 8, 12.

"Editor's Attic," The Magazine Antiques 28(October 1935): 138-40.

Fiske Kimball, Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver, The Architect of Salem (Portland, Maine: Southworth-Anthoensen Press, 1940): 138, fig. 362.

Nina Fletcher Little, "Carved Figures by Samuel McIntire and his Contemporaries," Essex Institute Historical Collections 93(April-July 1957): 195-96, fig. 48.

Susan Geib, "Landscape and Faction: Spatial Transformation in William Bentley's Salem," Essex Institute Historical Collections 113(July 1977): 217.

This bust of John Winthrop was carved nearly one hundred and fifty years after the governor's death. It was commissioned by the Salem minister William Bentley (cat. #8) in 1798 as an addition to his "cabinet" of portraits of famous Massachusetts politicians and ministers. Bentley owned a painted miniature of the governor (cat. #154) that had been copied from a large seventeenth century canvas (cat. #153). Bentley loaned this miniature to the carver, Samuel McIntire, for the artist to use as reference for the carving.

Bentley was familiar with the carver and his work. Not only had he been ordering frames from McIntire since 1796, but the McIntire family was active in Salem's East Church where Bentley preached.¹

Bentley recorded the transactions relating to the bust of Winthrop in his diary, "Mr. MacIntire is engaged to make my bust of Winthrop & spent the day in examining my collections in this way."² Nine days later, the work was complete and McIntire delivered the carving to his patron, who noted, "Mr. MacIntire returned to me my Winthrop. I cannot say that he has expressed in the bust anything which agrees with the Governour."³ The minister paid McIntire \$8.00 for the work and, although he was unhappy with the likeness, Bentley continued to patronize McIntire for frames and woodworking and, in 1802, commissioned a bust of the writer Voltaire (cat. #137).⁴

¹ William Bentley Daybook Accounts, April 2, 1796, vol. 4, p. 8, William Bentley Papers 1666-1819, American Antiquarian Society Manuscript Collection. On this date, Bentley paid McIntire for fifteen picture frames. On October 19, 1802, he ordered a frame for the portrait of John Endecott (cat. #42), and in his 1806 daybook there are payments to McIntire for playing the bass at church concerts.

² William Bentley Diary, May 12, 1798, William Bentley Papers.

³ Ibid., May 21, 1798.

⁴ William Bentley Daybook Accounts, July 21, 1800, William Bentley Papers. The reason for the delay in payment is suggested by Bentley's note, "Paid MacIntire for a Bust, 8 dollars & receipt (money lost) 8.00."