

The Unveiling of the Eichholtz Tablet and Valuable Notes Concerning Some Portraits by the Distinguished Artist, Jacob Eichholtz

by

PROFESSOR HORACE R. BARNES

The unveiling of the Memorial tablet to Jacob Eichholtz, one of Lancaster County's most distinguished artists, marked another contribution by The Lancaster County Historical Society, not only to the city, but also to the county and to the state of Pennsylvania.

The exercises were held Sunday afternoon, October 13, 1935, on South Lime Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; and the tablet was placed on the property No. 46 South Lime Street, where Mr. Eichholtz lived during the last ten years of his life.

The Eichholtz Committee consisted of the following named persons interested in art and history: Mrs. Albert M. Herr, Chairman, Dr. Horace R. Barnes, Jacob Hill Byrne, William F. Worner, Judge B. C. Atlee, David B. Landis, Mrs. Judith Bauer, Dr. George F. Mull, Dr. H. H. Apple, Dr. Arthur P. Mylin, Judge William H. Keller, Mrs. Charles S. Foltz, Mrs. Charles Y. Tanager, William Shand, Col. James Hale Steinman, Col. John H. Wickersham, Mary Black Diller, Charles Demuth, Mrs. John E. Malone, James Leman, Dr. John A. Schaeffer, E. Grant Eichholtz, Martha Musser Bowman, Gertrude Hensel Haldy, Mrs. David B. Landis, Walter A. Heinitsh, Laura J. Falck, Mrs. Pierce Leshner, Mrs. Charles P. Abraham, Frances D. Calder, George F. K. Erisman, Adelia Leman, L. B. Herr, I. C. Arnold, M. Luther Heisey, Mrs. A. K. Hostetter, C. H. Martin, Alphaeus M. Angstadt, John W. Lippold, Rev. Martin W. Schweitzer, Mayor James H. Ross, Herbert H. Beck, President.

A sub-committee composed of Mrs. Albert M. Herr, chairman; Dr. Horace R. Barnes, Prof. Herbert H. Beck, and Mr. William Frederic Worner arranged a most appropriate and interesting program.

In writing of current events, it is not always easy to forecast what may be of interest to subsequent generations. With the feeling that, perchance, someone may read these lines a hundred years hence, the recorder of these events in writing to you about that which took place in 1935, calls your attention to the courtesy of the Lancaster city officials in diverting automobile traffic from South Lime Street between East King and East Vine Streets during the period of this program. Motorcycle traffic officers were on duty and the only noise to distract on a clear Sunday afternoon, near the center

of the city, and at a site less than one block distant from the heavily travelled Lincoln Highway, was that from an occasional trolley car which made the necessary trips north on South Lime Street. Notwithstanding the occasional rumble of this electrical means of transportation which developed so rapidly during the first quarter of the twentieth century and which was rapidly passing out of the picture during the third decade of the same century, the speakers at the unveiling ceremonies were not disturbed.

Following the bugle call by the Octet of American Legion Post 34, under the leadership of Mr. Ralph J. Wohlsen, the invocation was given by Dr. A. B. MacIntosh, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity. It is worthy of note that Jacob Eichholtz was a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Lancaster.

Professor Herbert H. Beck, as presiding officer and as president of the Lancaster County Historical Society, after a few appropriate remarks, introduced the Honorable James H. Ross, Mayor of the City of Lancaster. Mayor Ross especially emphasized the worth of such men as Jacob Eichholtz, who, although compelled to follow a trade in order to make a living, at the same time were able to contribute to the art and culture of the country.

Mrs. Albert M. Herr, chairman of the Eichholtz Committee, in the following well-chosen words, explained the purpose of these exercises.

"Each year the Lancaster County Historical Society places a tablet, either to perpetuate the memory of some distinguished citizen, or to mark an outstanding historic event or place.

"It has chosen this year to honor one whose name is familiar to most Lancastrians, Jacob Eichholtz, a distinguished artist, whose home during the last years of his life was this house.

"The Society, by placing here this Memorial tablet, proclaims to the citizenry of Lancaster, the deep regard felt for him and his work."

Immediately following the remarks by Mrs. Herr, the tablet was unveiled by Mr. E. Grant Eichholtz, grandson of the artist.

President Beck introduced Dr. Horace R. Barnes, Professor of Economics and Business Administration at Franklin & Marshall College and member of the Executive Committee of the Lancaster County Historical Society. Professor Barnes, in turn presented as the speaker of the day, Dr. Cornelius Weygandt, Professor of English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania, and an authority on the history and customs of the people of Eastern Pennsylvania. Professor Weygandt spoke eloquently upon Eichholtz and his contribution to art. He especially urged that the artists of Pennsylvania turn to their own localities for topics for their canvasses.

Among the many who attended were Mr. E. Grant Eichholtz, Miss Katherine Eichholtz, Mrs. Clara Eichholtz Albright, of Philadelphia, Mrs. Arndt of Collingswood, Mrs. Charles Watson and Mrs. Williams Wills of Merion, Mrs. John Clark of Pittsburgh, Miss Mary Wells of Downingtown, and Miss

Delia Leman, Mr. James Leman and Mr. David M. Baker of Lancaster, all descendants of the artist, Jacob Eichholtz.

EICHHOLTZ PAINTINGS

It occurred to the author of this paper, while engaged in recording the proceedings of the unveiling of the Eichholtz tablet, that it would be of interest and historical value to publish in the same paper as the "Proceedings," some further information concerning Jacob Eichholtz. The purpose has been to supplement, not duplicate, former publications, especially the "Partial List of the Portraits and Miscellaneous Works of Jacob Eichholtz," published in 1912.

This paper is not intended to be an exhaustive research, but with the assistance of several kind friends, who are interested in art and in history, it is possible to include certain additional data concerning the portraits by Jacob Eichholtz. As far as the author knows, most of this has not been published before.

Before turning our attention to the portraits painted by Jacob Eichholtz, it is of more than passing interest to Lancastrians to note that another type of work by this distinguished artist is now in Lancaster. The "Crucifixion," 33 x 47 inches, formerly in the possession of Jacob Eichholtz's grandson, Mr. William H. Miller of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, is now in St. James' Protestant Episcopal Church of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Mr. W. U. Hensel, writing in 1912, described the "Crucifixion" as "a beautiful and refined single figure of Christ on the cross. The background is a dark, almost black, sky, with the blood-red sun barely discernible through the clouds. A flash of lightning parts the clouds in a distance, and its glare reveals a temple and some city walls." *

Through the courtesy and the cooperation of Miss Mary Hunter Mayer, of Reading, Pa., the author has received valuable and interesting data, relative to portraits by Jacob Eichholtz. Miss Mayer is the owner of four portraits by Eichholtz. Those of Miss Mayer's great-grandparents, Christopher Bartholomew Mayer and his wife, Susannah Burkhart Mayer, were painted about 1814. Those of her grandparents; George Louis Mayer and his wife, Esther Cox Clarkson Mayer were painted, as far as we can ascertain, in the year 1819. Esther Cox Clarkson was the daughter of Rev. Joseph Clarkson, who for many years was the rector of St. James' Protestant Episcopal Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Other Eichholtz portraits now in Reading, Pa., are owned by Miss Marion Douglas Weidman. They consist of a portrait of Mrs. George May Keim, nee Juliana C. Mayer, a daughter of Christopher Bartholomew Mayer, and grandmother of Miss Marion D. Weidman; and a portrait of Jacob Barge Weidman,

* "Jacob Eichholtz, Painter," pp. 15 and 16, W. U. Hensel, 1912.

of Lebanon, Pa. Mr. Jacob B. Weidman was Miss Marion Weidman's paternal grandfather. In addition to these two portraits, Miss Weidman owns two three-quarter size portraits by Eichholtz, of Jacob Mayer and of John Mayer, sons of Christopher B. Mayer.

Miss Marion Weidman also owns the small Eichholtz portrait of her grandmother, Mrs. George May Keim, nee Julia C. Mayer.

To Miss Mary H. Mayer, the author is indebted for additional information concerning portraits by Jacob Eichholtz.

The painting of Maria Barbara Mayer, who married Colonel Thomas Beverly Randolph of Virginia, was for many years owned by the late Mrs. James A. Millholland of Cumberland, Maryland. Mrs. Millholland was a granddaughter of Maria Barbara Mayer Randolph. This portrait is now in the possession of Mrs. Van Leer Schriver, the daughter of Mrs. James A. Millholland.

Another Mayer portrait, by Jacob Eichholtz, is that of Margareta Sybilla Mayer, who married Charles Wetherill of Philadelphia, Pa. This portrait is owned by their grandchildren in Philadelphia.

The Eichholtz painting of Susannah Odelia Mayer, who married her cousin, Lewis Casper Zorn Mayer of Baltimore, Maryland, is now owned by their great-grandchildren. The three-quarter size portrait of Lewis Casper Zorn Mayer is now owned by his great-grandson, Frederick Van Kleeck of White Plains, New York.

Returning to Reading, Pa., we find four fine Eichholtz portraits, namely Mrs. Christopher Mayer, Mr. Christopher Mayer, Mrs. George May Keim, and "Portrait of a Lady," in The Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery. Through the courtesy of Mr. Earl L. Poole, assistant director of the Museum and Art Gallery, we learn that the first three paintings were formerly the property of Mrs. Thomas Lynch Montgomery. The Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery came into possession of the "Portrait of a Lady" in 1929.

One of the best of Eichholtz portraits is owned by Mr. Gustav Oberlaender of Wyomissing, Pa. In Mr. Oberlaender's own words, this is "an exquisite half-length portrait of an elderly lady wearing a lace bonnet, and dressed in the manner of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The expression of the face reveals a kind-hearted character. The coloring is pleasant and extremely harmonious. The technique shows Eichholtz as a pupil of Gilbert Stuart."

This portrait of Mrs. Campbell is painted on a canvas, 29½ x 25 inches and is marked:

"Portrait of Mrs. Campbell
nee Hand, by
Jacob Eichholtz, 1776-1842"

Mr. Oberlaender very generously gave us a photograph of this lovely

Eichholtz painting, and we are most fortunate in being able to include this photograph as part of this paper.

Lancaster is the home of many of Eichholtz portraits. Among others is the portrait of John George Hoff, the great-great-grandfather of the present owner of this portrait, Mrs. John Philipp Herr of Lancaster. On this portrait is the name "Eichholtz" and the date "1815." Other paintings by Eichholtz, which Mrs. Herr owns, are those of her great-grandparents, John Hoff and his wife, Mary Boyer Hoff. John Hoff was a well-known clockmaker in Lancaster.

Jacob Eichholtz lies buried in Woodward Hill cemetery, Lancaster, Pa. Close by, lie other famous contributors to the development of our state and nation. President Buchanan, Governor Shulze, Henry E. Muhlenberg, first president of Franklin College and pioneer botanist; Edgar Fahs Smith, beloved provost of the University of Pennsylvania and a renowned chemist; William Uhler Hensel, and Jacob Eichholtz, all of whom are buried in Woodward Hill, added lustre to the culture and the history of the United States.

