THE SELECTED PAPERS OF
Charles Willson Peale
AND HIS FAMILY

VOLUME 1 Charles Willson Peale: Artist in
Revolutionary America, 1735–1791

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NEW HAVEN AND LONDON
1. Sellers connects CWP's Whig politics and the award of money for his painting, stating that Ridout seems to have "engineered" it. Ridout, however, was a member of the Court party and not at all sympathetic to Whig radicalism, while Eden, beneath a conciliatory surface, was busily engaged in raising a paramilitary loyalist association. Unless Ridout and Governor Eden were using the acceptance of the painting as a smoke screen to cover up their own political machinations, it is more likely that such Whig members of the Assembly as William Paca "engineered" the payment. Sellers is undoubtedly correct, however, in assigning this episode to CWP's career as a politician. Charles Coleman Sellers, "Virginia's Great Allegory of William Pitt," WMQ, 3d ser. 9 (1952):65; CWP, p. 110; Ronald Hoffman, "The 'Disaffected' in the Revolutionary South," in The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism, ed. Alfred F. Young (DeKalb, Ill., 1976), p. 281.

69. CWP to Elie Valette

WILLIAMSBURG. MAY 28, 1774

Williamsburg 28 May 1774

Sir

Mrs. Peale is in want of money, if it is convenient you will oblige me very much in paying her the ballance, (or at least enough for me) which you will find stated at the bottom, or should it not be convenient to pay (the whole) to that amount ameditly, as much as will pay the House Rent, and the remainder at a more convenient Time, I hope you will not think this request unreasonable as necessity obliges the importunity of Sir your very

Humble Servant

C W Peale

The picture 36 (15) Guineas
Cash R:d £20 current Moy
To Mr. Ellie Vallette

ALS, 1p.
PAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—Letterbook 1

1. Elie Valette (1734–80) was register of the prerogative office of Maryland in 1765, and the following year, deputy commissioner of Anne Arundel County. Peale painted his portrait (private collection) soon after Valette's book, The Deputy Commissary's Guide within the Province of Maryland, was published in 1774. P&M, p. 213; Papenfuse Files.

2. Valette seems to have ignored this letter, for on September 8, 1774, Peale inserted a warning to "E.V." in the Maryland Gazette that unless his bill was paid, his name would be published in the next issue of the paper. Valette treated the threat coolly, for again, on September 15 and 22, CWP inserted a notice:

MR. ELLIE VALETTE, PAY ME FOR PAINTING YOUR
FAMILY PICTURE.

CHARLES PEALE

On September 22, the Gazette carried the following answer:

MR. CHARLES WILSON PEALE, ALIAS CHARLES
PEALE—YES, YOU SHALL BE PAID: BUT NOT
BEFORE YOU HAVE LEARNED TO BE LESS INSOLENT.

ELIE VALETTE
Not until October, 1775, did CWP finally collect the payment due him. Below, 80, entry for October 19, 1775.

70. CWP to John Beale Bordley

ANAPOLIS. JULY, 1774

Dear Sir

I know not how to make an apology for being so often troublesome (to you), I do not murmer at being obligated to you, but it hurts me to be continually adding to that heap of favours, and the necessities of my affairs not allowing me time to make you what little satisfaction might otherwise be in my power, pardon this preface, it was necessary. Mss. Brown and Johnson¹ was with me the other day with the threat of putting my bond in suit, without I could settle it amediatly. I desired them to wait for your coming to town, I will repay it you soon as I can have it in my power, but I want to leave this place this will greatly assist me in that skeme: (and) I cannot go away in debt to any other person. I have paid large sums within these 2 years and find my business will enable me after I am square with the world to lay by something for old age—if my request is too unreasonable, [or if it] is not convenient to you, pray let it pass from [ms. torn] (—as if it never been mention'd) as [if] it had never been and I must absent [myse]lf from my family a little time [long]e]r to answer that demand.² (but if the Request) [—] but should this or any of [ms. mutilated] Friendship I fondly flatt[er] [ms. mutilated] injoyned great will be the [ms. mutilated] Your very [ms. mutilated]

Cha:s W Peale

To the Honble Beale Bordly Esqr

ALS, 2pp., ms. mutilated
PPAmP: Peale-Sellers Papers—Letterbook 1

¹. Perhaps William Brown of the British firm of Perkins, Buchanan and Brown, which owned a store in Annapolis. Johnson may have been the merchant Joshua Johnson. Above, 41, note 1; Papenfuse, In Pursuit of Profit, pp. 142-43.

². It is difficult to understand why CWP was in such financial difficulty at this time, unless he was still burdened with debts from his pre-London days or was living beyond his income. He had a great many orders for portraits, owned a horse and sulky and a light carriage, and even some slaves or servants. Lucy and Scarborough, whose children’s names are recorded along with the Peales’ in Pilkington’s Dictionary of Painters. His painting room was filled with visitors and his home was well furnished. However, he did have to leave his family for long painting trips, and perhaps many planters and merchants who had their portraits painted, like Elie Valette, were not prompt with payment. From 1769 to 1776, CWP did not keep a diary, and there is therefore little evidence for ascertaining his financial situation. He does not cover these years in the Autobiography either, perhaps because he had no diary record from which to draw information, or perhaps because his memories of these years of arduous travel were too unpleasant. See, however, below, 77.
REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS

some quantities at 6 d pr Bushel. qut [question] whether good

(17) worked on Miss Keys miniature, Lent Mr. Fitzchew my hunting
shirt, mended the spring of Mr. Rook’s clock

(18) finished Miss Key head, got a note from Mr. Paca of leave for Mr.
Hide to sell (her) my mother what Tea she might reaily want. 8 Exercised
the afternoon, paid Mr. John Brewer9 his accot: in full £1.13s.9d. deli-
ered to Mr. John Brice 1ω lb [lb] of Gun Powder for the publick benefit.

(19) Mr. Daniel Dulany having assumed payment for Elie Vallette in
the [matter] of costs £1.9.6 I gave the Widow Johnson10 an order on
him for £27.17s.5d after which a Ballance was due of 5-2-1, Mr Dulany
having left a small sword with his Brother Grafton11 for Sale Valled at
4 Guineas, I gave Mr Grafton Dulany the Balance of 1.17:11 for the
Sword.12 Set up all the last night my mother being very ill. Finished Miss
Keys miniature, bought one Doz: Watch Glasses to form them into Ovals
for miniature pictures,

(20) spent in making Glasses for miniature pictures out of (cristals)
watch Glasses. paid John Wells13 accot 1· 18·5. Except 5s/ which is left
till Bobby Polk returns being doubtfull whether he had not paid it. paid
James for marketg 12/6. my mother’s fever still continues tho’ is Rather
lower to day than yesterday. Yesterday I left Mr Benn: Dulanyes mini-[a-
ture Picture with Mr. Farris14 to be Set also a Glass for him to polish for
it.

8. The Continental Association banned the consumption of tea imported by way of
Great Britain after March 1, 1775. Dutch tea, however, which was not subject to duties, was
available. Thomas Hyde was a merchant in Annapolis. Schlesinger, Colonial Merchants, pp.
581, 583–84; Edward C. Papenfuse, In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of

9. John Brewer (1738–88), Rachel Brewer Peale’s brother, kept a tavern in An­
apolis. Papenfuse Files; Brewer Family, Genealogical Files, MdHi; MdHR: Anne Arundel
County Wills, Liber JG, No. 1, Will of John Brewer, pp. 34–36.

10. Possibly Mrs. Johnson, who kept a lodging house and modest tavern in Annapolis
during these years. See Fred Shelley, ed., “Ebenezer Hazard’s Travels through Maryland

11. Grafton Dulany (d. 1778), like many members of the Dulany family, became a
loyalist. Aubrey C. Land, The Dulanys of Maryland (Baltimore, 1968), pp. 281, 300, 315,
324–25.

12. John Adams commented upon CWP’s sword in August, 1776. See Charles Francis
Adams, ed., Familiar Letters of John Adams and his Wife, Abigail Adams, During the Revolution
(New York, 1876), p. 216.

13. Probably Captain John Wells (died ca. 1803) of Annapolis, who had business deal­
ings with the tobacco merchant, Joshua Johnson. Papenfuse, In Pursuit of Profit, p. 117;
Papenfuse Files.

of William Faris (1728–1804): The Annapolis Silversmith,” MFM 37 (1942):423; Balti­
more Museum of Art, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Maryland Silver in the Collection of