

Francis Blackwell Mayer Drawings
Baltimore Museum of Art
1936.154-675

June 2013

The Baltimore Museum of Art's collection of Frank B. Mayer material includes the majority of the artist's sketchbooks, one of his two known account books, and portfolios of loose sketches. All of these items were donated in 1936 by Mrs. John Sylvester of Augusta, Georgia. The most intriguing items photographed were 3 pages from Mayer's sketchbook #56 of a congregation gathering at the Methodist Episcopal Center on Light Street in Baltimore. The First Light Street Church occupied South of what is now Redwood and Light Streets in Baltimore from 1797-1872. It is hard to ignore the similarities between Mayer's sketch of the Old Senate Chamber and this church, especially when they were sketched just months apart. I have yet to identify this building and whether or not it is still standing.

After examining Mayer's work and reading his articles on the history of Maryland it is apparent that he was a proficient architectural draftsman and historian, adept at recognizing a variety of early American architectural styles, as well as Colonial manners, customs, and dress.

The Frank Mayer Collection at the Baltimore Museum of Art contains:

- Sketchbooks #1-98, 119.
 - Missing #11,13,25,54,63,71,75,76,81,87,93-95,97,101-118
 - Sketchbooks #40-45 of Minnesota Indians at Newberry Library, Chicago
 - Sketchbook #96, 100, and unnumbered sketchbook from 1845-50 at Maryland Law Library
 - Sketchbook #99 currently owned by Mayer's descendants in Atlanta, Georgia
- Account Book (1862-1898)
- 5 Unnumbered Large Sketchbooks:
 - 1844
 - 1844-45
 - 1862-1863
 - 1847-1849
 - 1850
- Loose Sketches (1842-1896, undated)

Sketchbooks Photographed:

Sketchbook #56 (1856), 1936.199

- notes on inside cover
- 3 sketches of Methodist Episcopal Center, Light Street

Sketchbook #59 (1856), 1936.202

- notes on "Capitol Basement"
- floorplan of building on Tilghman & Prince Streets between Spruce and Pine Streets

Sketchbook #90 (1873), 1936.227

- sketch of "Reading the Maryland Gazette at the Washington Window, Annapolis"
- sketch of street labeled, "Annapolis"
- window and shutter detail labeled, "1750 Baltimore"
- man sitting on window seat
- buildings labeled, "Annapolis"

Sketchbook #92 (1873), 1936.229

- notes on first page
- gable side of City Hotel labeled, "Annapolis"
- other gable side of City Hotel
- 2 sketches of figures in period dress
- "Treasury Annapolis"

Sketchbook #119 (1890), 1936.231

- Notes on first page
- "East Street, Annapolis"; State House dome in background
- profile of chair
- molding profile

Loose Sketches

- sketch of "The Washington Cockade"; window has stool
- "Commencement of the Civil War, 1862 or Same Chase & the Revolution"

Large Sketchbook

- "R.C. Long inst. 1844" (image missing, photographed of image imprint on reverse page); arch (possibly niche?)
- "Old Md Tavern--7 mile house--Reisterstown Road" 1936.603
- "'The Mayer's Nest' Annapolis Fe. 1882 Prince George Street" 1936.609
- sketch of "The Washington Cockade" 1936.670

"Finished Sketches":

- 5 pages of newspaper clippings
- man seated by mantel 1936.458
- "Hungers-Northampton C7.VA May 28, 1852. Built 1740." 1936.463
- "Hungers-Northampton C7.Va May 28, 1852. Built AD 1740" 1936.464
- "Kitchen Huger's" 1936.465