

THEOPHILUS CHANDLER (1732-1816), c. 1770
ELIZABETH FRINK CHANDLER (1740-71), c. 1770
Winthrop Chandler (1747-90)
oil on canvas
Theophilus: 33 1/2 x 29 3/4 (85.09 x 75.57)
Elizabeth: 33 3/4 x 29 7/8 (85.73 x 75.88)
Gift of Clarence W. Bowen, 1920
Weis 30, 27
Hewes Numbers: 25 & 26

Ex. Coll.: Sitters; to their son Winthrop Chandler (1764-1829); to his son Charles Chandler (1797-1881); possibly owned by Charles Newall Chandler (1854-1916); found by the donor in the 'Old Chandler House' in Thompson, Connecticut.

Exhibitions:

1947, 'Winthrop Chandler,' Worcester Art Museum.

Publications:

Bowen, History of Woodstock, 1: 133.

Nina Fletcher Little, 'Winthrop Chandler,' Art in America 35 (April 1947): 96-97.

After their marriage in 1732, Theophilus Chandler—surveyor and carpenter—and Elizabeth Frink—daughter of the Reverend Thomas and Isabel Frink—raised four children in Petersham, Massachusetts. Chandler represented Petersham at the General Court in 1769 but two years later, after Elizabeth's death, left town because 'there were so many Tories there.'¹

Theophilus Chandler remarried in 1773 and with his second wife, Abigail Ballard (d. 1816), moved back to Woodstock, Connecticut, his birthplace. Although he built a large house there, he also petitioned for and acquired land in Mindon (now Craftsbury), Vermont, in 1781.²

These portraits were painted by Theophilus's younger brother, Winthrop Chandler (cat. 27), whom Theophilus cared for during Winthrop's final illness in 1790.³ The portraits, which show Theophilus holding surveying tools and Elizabeth wearing a cap and lace shawl, remained in the family homestead in Thompson, Connecticut, until the early twentieth century. They were discovered by American Antiquarian Society member Clarence Bowen during research for his multi-volume History of Woodstock, Connecticut. After he acquired them in 1920, he wrote to the Society's director: 'Some years ago I had a talk with you on Chandler portraits when I was making a search for certain portraits to reproduce in the Woodstock History. I found three Chandler portraits in a very dilapidated state in Thompson. They had been in the old Chandler

House on Chandler Hill...for nearly 125 years.... [T]wo portraits are of...Theophilus [Chandler] and wife.' Bowen had the paintings restored and presented them to the Society in 1920.⁴

¹ Nina Fletcher Little, 'Winthrop Chandler,' Art in America 35 (April 1947): 97.

² Little, 'Winthrop Chandler,' 97. Theophilus's brother-in-law Ebenezer Crafts had moved to the Vermont territory with his family about 1781.

³ Little, 'Winthrop Chandler,' 97. A promissory note of Winthrop Chandler for £200 was listed in Theophilus Chandler's inventory.

⁴ Clarence Bowen to Clarence Brigham, March 8, 1920, AAS Archives.