

GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR (1826-1904), 1899
William Willard (1819-1904)
oil on canvas over board
13 1/4 x 12 1/2 (34.9250 x 31.750) (framed)
signed in black ink on verso, 'Willard'
Gift of Charles Taylor Tatman, 1933
Weis 68
Hewes Number: 68

Ex. Coll.: Artist to his attorney, the donor.

69
GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR (1826-1904), 1905
Charles Akerman Jackson (1857-1939)
oil on canvas
30 x 25 1/4 (76.20 x 64.1350)
signed u.l.: "Chas. A. Jackson/1905"
Gift of Paul Revere O'Connell, 1941
Weis #69

Ex. Coll.: Artist, to the Worcester publisher Theodore Ellis (1867-1934), to an unnamed employee at his New England Fibre Blanket Company, sold by the employee to the donor.

George Frisbie Hoar, born in Concord, Massachusetts, was an 1846 graduate of Harvard College. After completing his studies at Harvard Law School in 1849, he moved to Worcester, where he worked as an attorney. Very active in Republican politics, he ran successfully for a seat in the House of Representatives in 1869 and was elected to the Senate in 1877, retaining the seat until his death. Hoar was considered a true 'committee-man,' often working behind closed doors to develop legislation ranging from bankruptcy procedures to the process of presidential succession. 'In his own opinion his most important service to the country was on the committee of claims, where he exercised great influence in determining the doctrines which guided the Senate's action on Civil War claims of individuals, corporate bodies, and states.'¹ Pamphlets illustrative of Hoar's many speeches given at political and ceremonial occasions including 'Candidates & Parties Contrasted,' and 'Women Suffrage Essential to the True Republic' may be found in the American Antiquarian Society's book collection.²

Hoar was also an overseer of Harvard College and a founder and trustee of both Clark University and the Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester. His interest in American history

and the preservation of historical materials led to action at the national level. As a member of the Senate, he helped develop and expand the Library of Congress. In 1897 Hoar arranged for the transfer of the original manuscript copy of Governor William Bradford's (1590-1657) History of Plymouth Plantation, completed in 1651, from the collection of the British government to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.³

Hoar was elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society in 1853, and became active in its governance shortly after his election to the United States Senate. He was elected vice-president of the Society in 1878 and was president from 1884 to 1887. In his President's Report for 1885, Hoar called for the establishment of a fund devoted to book purchases, so that the Society would no longer have to rely on gifts to expand the library. He also created the position of secretary of publication and research in order to promote publications based on the collection.⁴ The memorial written for the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society stated, 'He loved the Society and never forgot its works or its interests; and the broad national views which his life in Washington enabled him to take of the whole country gave him an opportunity to serve us in a thousand ways which were not open to other men...In truth, he loved what we call study, and though no man was more social or welcomed as a visitor more cordially, yet from one end of the year to another he would have been happy if he were alone with his books.'⁵

The artist William Willard (cat. #152) was a Worcester County resident, who was well-acquainted with the senator and his family. Willard completed this small study of Hoar from life in 1899 and used it as reference while painting a large-scale canvas for the senator's son, Rockwood Hoar (1855-1906). Praise for the artist and the circumstances leading to the production of the full-sized portrait, while generous, may have been misleading. 'Mr. Willard has probably never painted a more striking likeness nor a more satisfactory picture.... It is most remarkable in that Mr. Willard has had and required no formal sittings. A talk in his library, a ride by his side, a hasty sketch by the fireside is all that has been needed by the venerable artist in painting his life long friend, the venerable senator.'⁶ This report conflicts with the artist's own statement that the study, 'was painted by me from sittings given me by the Senator in 1899.'⁷ Willard also had the 'additional assistance of some photographic studies in grey made with

lighting arranged by Mr. Willard at the photographic studio of Mr. E. B. Luce in Worcester.’⁸
For additional information on Willard and his work, see the entry on his self-portrait (cat. #152).

The year after Hoar's death, this second portrait (cat. #69) was painted. Several photographs of the senator taken in profile were widely published after 1904, and it is likely that Jackson based his composition on one of these images.⁹ The artist, the son of Charles E. and Caroline E. Jackson, was born in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. He studied painting with John Knowlton Arnold (1834-1909) in Providence, Rhode Island. Jackson painted several portraits of Providence politicians, including images of Mayor Frank E. Olney and E. D. McGuinness (Rhode Island Statehouse Collection). Jackson returned to Boston shortly after his 1901 marriage and continued to paint portraits. To supplement his income, he also worked as a church organist in Boston.¹⁰

¹ Dictionary of American Biography, s.v. ‘Hoar, George Frisbie.’ For more complete biographical material on Hoar, see his Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903).

² ‘Candidates and Parties Contrasted: Speech of Hon. George F. Hoar, at Worcester, Mass., Aug. 13, 1872,’ (Washington, D.C.: Union Republican Congressional Committee, 1872); ‘Women Suffrage Essential to the True Republic,’ (Boston : America Woman Suffrage Association n.d.). A list of nearly two hundred of Hoar's speeches is included in ‘Memorial of Mr. Hoar,’ Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 17 (October 1905): 159-66. Hoar's personal papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

³ ‘Memorial of Mr. Hoar,’ 156.

⁴ Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 4 (October 1885): 3.

⁵ ‘Memorial to Mr. Hoar,’ Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 17 (October 1905): 153.

⁶ Newspaper clipping, November 15, 1899, unidentified newspaper, American Antiquarian Society Newsclipping File. Weis noted in 1947 that the full-size portrait was then owned by a Christopher LaFarge of New York. The current location is unknown.

⁷ Statement signed by Willard, October 17, 1904, William Willard Papers, 1899-1912, American Antiquarian Society Manuscript Collection.

⁸ Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 43 (October 1933): 223. These three photographs, marked on the reverse ‘by William Willard,’ are preserved in the Society's Graphic Arts Collection.

⁹ See photographs of Hoar in the Worcester Photographic Portrait Collection of the American Antiquarian Society's Graphic Arts Collection.

¹⁰ Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, Allgemeines Lexicon der Bildened Künstler (Leipzig: E.A. Seeman, 1912), 18:220; and Who's Who in America 1914-1915 (Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1915), 1224.