

"The J. Wilson Englar House Painting"

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By Jay A. Graybeal

One of my favorite fine arts objects in the Historical Society's collection is a painting of the home of J. Wilson and Elizabeth Englar near New Windsor. The painting was donated to the Historical Society by their granddaughter, Miss Elizabeth Englar, in 1959.

The oval watercolor on paper shows a stone house, frame barn and several other frame outbuildings, and a number of smaller details including a pump, several types of fences and plantings. In the foreground three men watch several dogs chase a fox while a fourth man, no doubt the artist, appears to be sketching the scene. The painting was executed on a separate piece of heavy paper which was then glued to larger sheet of paper decorated with hand drawn decorative borders. A small oval label at the lower right bears the name of the artist "A. B. McLaughlin". Andrew B. McLaughlin had once taught school in New Windsor but was probably teaching in Baltimore at the time he painted the picture. Professor McLaughlin sent Mr. Englar a interesting letter describing the painting and requesting payment:

"350 Mulberry Street
[Baltimore, Md. ?]
September 22d 1880

Mr. J. Wilson Englar
Dear Sir:

I have sent by Adams Express your picture for which I made a sketch during my last visit. I hope that you will be pleased with it. I have used the greatest pains in making it a truthful transcript of the place, at the same time making it a handsome drawing. I took the opportunity of painting it now as I should not have had time before next spring, as I will resume teaching very soon at the Institute. I did not put the fox chase in as I would rather let the colors tone down first. I will do that at some future time. I will make a trip to N. Windsor specially on account hereafter. I flatter myself that it is the best picture that I have painted for a long time as I spared neither time, talent nor pains in the execution of it, and I am sure it will give you entire satisfaction. Every one of my Artist friends pronounce it first rate. Now as regards my price. I will only charge you for the time I spent upon it. And if you will be kind enough to send me a postal order for Fifteen Dollars, we will consider it square. My prices now to strangers would be three times that, and which I can get readily, but for the sake of good memories and times I put it to you at nearly a minimal sum. I am sure when you see it you will be perfectly satisfied with it in every way. Have a moulded walnut frame with narrow, plain gilt bead and it will give it the proper effect. With many thanks for your kindness and Courtesy which you extended towards me during my last visit, and sending my regards to your very much respected family.

I remain

Truly Yours

Prof. A. B. McLaughlin

P.S. Write and let me know if arrived safe as soon as you receive it."

Artist McLaughlin eventually returned to New Windsor and painted in the "fox chase" in the foreground. Mr. Englar took the artist's advice as the painting is still in a "moulded walnut frame with a plain, narrow

gilt bead" as mentioned in the letter. The frame's original backboard carries a stenciled inscription that indicates that the framing was done at Thomas Seager's Picture Frame and Looking Glass Depot, 17 Sharp St. in Baltimore.

Unfortunately, little is known about Professor McLaughlin. His name does not appear on any list of Maryland artists and no other examples of his artwork are known. The painting of the Englar House, however, shows him to have been a artist of some talent and surely other examples of his work must exist.

Photo caption: The J. Wilson Englar House near New Windsor by Prof. Andrew B. McLaughlin of Philadelphia. Historical Society of Carroll County collection, gift of Miss Elizabeth Englar, 1959.