

# JAMES BOWDOIN

Patriot and Man of The Enlightenment



BOWDOIN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

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1976



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# JAMES BOWDOIN

## Patriot and Man of The Enlightenment

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**J**AMES BOWDOIN'S role in the American Revolution has never received proper public recognition. Bowdoin's friendship with Franklin, Washington, Revere and others put him in the midst of the struggle for Independence; at the same time his social position and family ties gave him entrée to British leaders and officials. In 1770, his own brother-in-law was Colonial Secretary for the Governor, yet Bowdoin wrote the tract on the Boston Massacre, which clearly blamed the British for the incident and sent Boston down the road toward Revolution.

This exhibition seeks not only to reveal Bowdoin's importance in the Revolution, but also his contributions in the field of finance, science, literature and the arts. He was as well educated as any American in the eighteenth century and subscribed to the principles of The Enlightenment, which encouraged investigation into the natural world and practice of the graces of life.

To accomplish these goals, the Museum commissioned the first major biography of Bowdoin in the form of a catalogue which will be published on July 4, 1976. We are most grateful to Professor Gordon E. Kershaw, author of *The Kennebeck Proprietors, 1749-1775*, and specialist on James Bowdoin, for writing the catalogue.

The Museum has also attempted to tell the Bowdoin story purely with objects of art. Like books, objects contain data and ideas. Their stories can be "read" if only one examines the object and asks certain questions such as: what kind of society is needed to produce such a work? What traditional or European motifs are used, which motifs are rejected and what new ones are introduced? What was the use or function of the object? Beyond this, the exhibition is intended to show that James Bowdoin expressed an interest in art not only in commissions for painting and silver but also in the execution of a bank note or scientific instrument. Thus, the exhibition indicates Bowdoin exercised his love of art in everything that touched his life.

*We wish to thank all the lenders who permitted their precious possessions to be brought together and allowed these objects, scattered in many parts of America, to be reunited for the first time. We also acknowledge the special contributions of the Maine State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission and The First National Bank of Boston, which have made this exhibition possible.*

R. PETER MOOZ  
*Director*

## CHECK LIST

1. Unknown Artist  
*James Bowdoin I* (1676-1747), ca. 1725  
Oil on canvas, 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  
Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.4  
The picture has been attributed to the Pollard Limner, the painter of Anne Pollard dated 1721.
2. Unknown Artist  
*William Bowdoin* (1713-1773) as a boy, ca. 1725  
Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 25"  
Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.3
3. John Bonner (act. 1722) and William Price (1684-1771)  
*A New Plan of ye Great Town of BOSTON in New England in America*, 1743  
Line engraving on paper, 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 18"  
Inscribed: To his Excellency Jonathan Belcher Esq. . . . William Price  
Lent by the Boston Public Library  
This view is based on the earlier Bonner view of 1722 and was issued to honor the dedication of Faneuil Hall.
- 4-9. John Miller  
*Bowdoin's Boston Revisited*  
"The Hindenburg" (The site of the school Bowdoin attended)  
"Joe Twiss Corner" (The site of Bowdoin's house)  
"Eat Til 1 A.M." (The site of the Brattle Street Church where Bowdoin was a parishioner)  
"Walsh Movers" (The site of the Boston Massacre and the State House where Bowdoin read the Declaration of Independence from the balcony)  
"Orpheum Theatre" (The site of the Manufactory House, first location for The Massachusetts Bank)  
"Police Taketh Notice" (The site of Bowdoin's grave)  
Black-and-white photographs, 14" x 18"  
Museum purchase. 1976.2.1.1-.6

## 10. John Read

*A Latin Grammar*

Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1736

Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections

This copy was used by James Bowdoin II at the South Grammar School under the direction of Master John Lovell. The copy is annotated by James Bowdoin II.

## 11. John Smibert (1688-1751)

*James Bowdoin II* (1726-1790) as a boy, 1736 (before March)Oil on canvas, 34 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 26 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.5

This picture is listed on p. 25 of John Smibert's notebook (see: Massachusetts Historical Society, *The Notebook of John Smibert*, Boston, 1969).

## 12. Thomas Johnston (1708-1767)

*Map of Casco Bay* (Kennebeck), 1754Line engraving on copper. Cut, plate 31 $\frac{7}{16}$ " x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Inscribed l.r.: To his Excellency William Shirley Esq. Capt. General & Governour in Chief in & over his Majesty's Province of ye Massachusetts Bay in New England. This Plan of Kennebeck & Sagadahock Rivers and Country adjacent (whereon are delineated ye Boundaries several Ancient Grants) being taken from actual Survey made by Joseph Heath Esq. and Mr. Phineas Jones/John North Esq. & Mr. Ephraim Jones, is most humbly inscribed by ye Excellency's most obd<sup>t</sup> and humbl<sup>e</sup> serv<sup>t</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Johnston Boston Novemr: 20, 1754.

Lent by the Worcester Art Museum, Goodspeed Collection

## 13. Maker Unknown

*Funeral Ring*, 1747Gold, enamel, glass, diam. 1 $\frac{3}{16}$ ", w.  $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Inscribed: Hon/J. Bowdoin/Esq:OB:8/Sept:1747./AE:71

Lent by Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York.

Gift of John Devereux Kernan

14. Joseph Badger (1708-1765)  
*James Bowdoin I* (1676-1747), ca. 1747  
 Oil on canvas, 50¼" x 40¼"  
 Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.6  
 There is a replica of this picture in the Detroit Institute of Arts. The pictures may be posthumous. The format is taken from a mezzotint of 1726 of Sir Isaac Newton by Faber after Vanderbank.
15. William-James's Gravesande  
*Mathematical Elements of Natural Philosophy, Confirmed by Experiments: or, An Introduction to Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*, Vol. I  
 London: J. Senex, W. Innys, R. Manby, T. Longman, 1737  
 Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections  
 This text was used by James Bowdoin at Harvard as an undergraduate.
16. Robert Feke (1707-1752)  
*James Bowdoin II* (1726-1790), 1748  
 Oil on canvas, 50" x 40"  
 Signed and dated l. l.: R F Pinx/1748  
 Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.8  
 This portrait and its pendant are thought to be wedding pictures. The couple was married September 15, 1748.
17. Robert Feke (1707-1752)  
*Mrs. James Bowdoin II* née Elizabeth Erving (1731-1803),  
 1748  
 Oil on canvas, 50⅛" x 40⅛"  
 Signed and dated l.r.: R Feke Pinx/1748  
 Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.7
18. Joseph Blackburn (act. in America, 1754-1763)  
*Elizabeth* (1750-1809) and her brother *James Bowdoin III*  
 (1752-1811) as children, ca. 1760  
 Oil on canvas, 36⅞" x 58"  
 Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.11

## 19. Unknown Artist

*James Bowdoin III* (1752-1811) as a young man

Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.1

The painting is thought to have been painted during a trip James Bowdoin III made to Italy in 1774.

## 20. Samuel King (1749-1819)

*Elizabeth Bowdoin, Lady Temple* (1750-1809), probably ca. 1790

Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ "

Bequest of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1826.2

## 21. Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828)

*James Bowdoin III* (1752-1811)

Oil on canvas, 29 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Bequeathed to Bowdoin College in 1826 by Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn, with the proviso that her grandniece, Mrs. George Sullivan, be permitted to retain it during her lifetime. It came to the College after the death of Mrs. Sullivan's son, George Sullivan Bowdoin, in 1870. 1870.6

The picture may be posthumous, based on the miniature by Malbone (No. 23).

## 22. Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828)

*Elizabeth Bowdoin, Lady Temple* (1750-1809)

Oil on panel, 28" x 23"

Gift of Robert Winthrop. 1966.89

## 23. Edward Greene Malbone (1777-1807)

*Miniature of James Bowdoin III* (1752-1811), probably November-December, 1804

Watercolor on ivory, 3 $\frac{3}{16}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " oval

Signed l.r.: Malbone

Gift of Mrs. Dorothy Hupper. 1951.7



24. Edward Greene Malbone (1777-1807)  
*Miniature of Elizabeth Bowdoin, Lady Temple* (1750-1809),  
 probably November-December, 1804  
 Watercolor on ivory,  $3\frac{3}{16}$ " x  $2\frac{7}{16}$ " oval  
 Gift of Mrs. Dorothy Hupper. 1951.8
25. William Grundy  
*Pair of Mugs*, ca. 1748-1749  
 Silver, h. 5", diam.  $3\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop. 1943.3.1-2  
 These mugs are thought to have been made for Bowdoin's wedding.
26. Maker (T.CC)  
*Three Spoons*  
 Silver, engraved decoration, l.  $6\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Bequest of Frances Erving Weston. 1912.4.3-5  
 These spoons and the following silver belonged to James Bowdoin II.
27. Christopher Skinner (Irish) and Henry Miller (English)  
*Twelve Fruit Forks*, ca. 1754  
 Silver and silver gilt, chased ornamentation, l. 6"  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Mrs. Judson Falknor. 1974.49.1-12
28. Unknown Maker  
*Sugar Tongs*  
 Silver, engraved decoration, l.  $6\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Mrs. Mary Prentiss Ingraham Davies for the Daniel  
 Cony Memorial Collection. 1935.17
29. Ebenezer Moulton  
*Pair of Ladles*  
 Silver, l.  $6\frac{3}{4}$ "  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop. 1956.10.1-2

30. David Mosely (1753-1812)  
*Punch Ladle*  
 Silver, repoussé ornamentation, l. 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ "  
 Bequest of Frances Erving Weston. 1912.4.2
31. Paul Revere (1735-1818)  
*Punch Ladle*  
 Silver and ebony, l. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Marked PR  
 Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop. 1943.3.3
32. Charles-Louis Spriman (French, act. ca. 1776-1783)  
*Covered Tureen with Liner, 1775*  
 Silver, l. 12", w. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", h. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop in the name of "The Children of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Winthrop, Jr." 1924.3.1  
 The cover, lid and liner are marked by Spriman.
33. Unknown Maker (French)  
*Oval Tray*  
 Silver, l. 18", w. 12"  
 Engraved with Bowdoin Crest  
 Gift of Miss Clara Bowdoin Winthrop in the name of "The Children of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Winthrop, Jr." 1924.3.2
34. *Silver Loving Cup*  
 Silver plate on copper, h. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 Lent by the Massachusetts Historical Society  
 This is said to have been used by George Washington when he visited Bowdoin in 1789.
35. Paul Revere (1735-1818)  
*The Bloody Massacre, 1770*  
 Line engraving on copper, colored, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ "  
 Inscribed: The Bloody Massacre perpetrated in King---i---

Street BOSTON on March 5th 1770 by a party of the 29th  
REG<sup>t</sup> Engrav'd Printed & Sold by Paul Revere BOSTON  
Lent by the Worcester Art Museum, Goodspeed Collection

36. James Bowdoin III (1726-1790)  
*A Short Narrative of the horrid Massacre in Boston, perpetrated  
in the Evening of the Fifth Day of March, 1770 by Soldiers  
of the XXIXth Regiment; which with the XIVth Regiment  
Were then Quartered there: with some Observations on the  
State of Things prior to that Catastrophe*  
Boston: Edes and Gill, and T. & J. Fleet, 1770  
Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections
37. Unknown Maker  
*Walking Stick*  
Malacca with gold head, l. 4' 8"  
Lent by the Massachusetts Historical Society  
This walking stick belonged to George Washington and was given to him  
by James Bowdoin II, presumably in 1789.
38. Unknown Maker  
*Bank Note*, Colony of New Hampshire, 1775  
#279. Signed: Nich<sup>s</sup> Gilman  
Lent by The First National Bank of Boston
39. Unknown Maker  
*Bank Note*, three dollars, State of Massachusetts-Bay, 1780  
#128024. Signed: R. Cranch  
Lent by The First National Bank of Boston
40. H. Sellers  
*Bank Note*, United States, 1780  
Inscribed: Exitus in Dubio est. Signed: Peter Boyer  
Lent by The First National Bank of Boston

41. Unknown Maker  
*Bank Note*, twenty dollars, State of Massachusetts-Bay, 1780  
 #8581. Signed: T. Henshaw  
 Lent by The First National Bank of Boston
42. H. Sellers  
*Bank Note*, United States, 1780  
 Inscribed: VI Concitatae. Signed: Peter Boyer  
 Lent by The First National Bank of Boston
43. Unknown Maker  
*Seal of The Massachusetts Bank*, 1784  
 Silver, diam.  $2\frac{1}{4}$ "  
 Lent by The First National Bank of Boston  
 James Bowdoin was elected President of The Massachusetts Bank in 1785.  
 The bank continues today as The First National Bank of Boston.
44. James Bowdoin  
*Autograph Letter*, signed to Thomas Fitz Simons Esq, Philadelphia  
 April 1, 1784  
 Ink on paper,  $8\frac{3}{4}$ "  
 Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections  
 The letter discusses the printing of bank notes in Philadelphia.
45. Unknown Maker  
*Desk* (Slant Top), before 1774  
 Walnut, with inlay, h. 46", w. 36", d. 20"  
 Lent by the American Antiquarian Society  
 The desk belonged to James Bowdoin. It is listed in his inventory of 1774.  
 The legs are later additions.
46. Unknown Artist, 18th century  
*Bust Portrait of Mirabeau*  
 Oil on canvas, 14" x 19½"  
 Bequest of the Honorable James Bowdoin III. 1813.16  
 The portrait was copied in the eighteenth century from a full-length picture in Aix, France, by Joseph Bose of the economist, Mirabeau.

47. James and Elizabeth Bowdoin  
*Autograph Letter, Boston, 1788*  
 Ink on paper, 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
 Lent by Dr. and Mrs. R. Peter Mooz  
 The letter discusses family business affairs.
48. Unknown Artist  
*Silhouette of James Bowdoin II (1726-1790)*  
 Black paint on white plaster, 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (white surface only)  
 Lent by the Massachusetts Historical Society
49. Benjamin Martin (1704-1782)  
*Orrery with Clockwork Mechanism, 1765-1766*  
 Brass, silvered brass concentric rings, ivory earth  
 H. 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", diam. of drum 20 $\frac{7}{8}$ "  
 Inscribed: Made & Improved by B. Martin in Fleet Street London./The Gift of the Hon. James Bowdoin Esq. to the Apparatus of Harvard College N.E. May 1764  
 Lent by the Harvard University Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments
50. Unknown Maker  
*Telescope*  
 Brass, wood, glass, l. 54", h. 23"  
 Lent by the President's Office, Bowdoin College
51. Unknown Maker  
*Celestial Globe*  
 Wood, paper, iron, h. 27", diam. 26"  
 Inscribed: Smith Celestial Globe containing all the known Stars, Nebulae, etc. Complete from the works of Wollaston, Farnsted, de la Caille, Havelius, Mayer, Bradley, Herschel, Maskelyne. The Transactions of the Astronomical Society of London, etc., etc.  
 London sold by C. Smith and Son 172 Strand  
 Lent by the President's Office, Bowdoin College

52. Christian Gullager (1759-1826)

*James Bowdoin II* (1726-1790)

Version B, ca. 1791

Oil on panel, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

Received from the estate of Mrs. George Sullivan Bowdoin (whose husband changed his name to Bowdoin agreeable to the will of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn). He was a son of Mrs. George Sullivan in whose possession the picture was, subsequent to the death of Mrs. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn. 1894.2

The *Columbian Centinel* for November 16, 1791, printed the following notice: Portrait of Mr. Bowdoin. Mr. Gulliger, of this town, has lately executed a fine portrait of the late Hon. Mr. Bowdoin, which, we are told, is the only one ever taken of that distinguished, learned and virtuous character—and which from this circumstance alone, must be highly valuable. The industry, genius, and attention of Mr. G. point him out as worthy the highest encouragement of every class of citizens—on this effort of his, in creating, if we may be allowed the expression—a likeness of Mr. B. must to the friends of Philosophy, Science, and the liberal Arts.

53. Unknown Maker, possibly John Prince

*Air Pump*, ca. 1800

Brass and wood, 22" x 30" x 66"

Lent by the National Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution

54. James Bowdoin

*A Paraphrase on part of the Oeconomy of Human Life*

Inscribed to his excellency Thomas Pownall, Esq; Governor of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay

Boston: Green and Russell, 1759

Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections

This entire book is written in verse.

55. James Bowdoin III (1726-1790)

*A Philosophical Discourse Addressed to the American Academy*

*of Arts and Sciences in the Presence of a Respectable Audience  
Assembled at the Meeting-House in Brattle-Street, in Boston,  
on the Eighth of November, 1780 After the Inauguration of  
the President into Office*

Boston: Benjamin Edes and Sons, 1780

Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections

56. Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

*Autograph Letter*, Signed to James Bowdoin, Boston

January 1, 1786

Ink on paper, h. 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

Lent by the Bowdoin College Library, Special Collections

The letter discusses mutual scientific interests.

57. Jean Antoine Houdon (1741-1828)

*Benjamin Franklin* (1706-1790)

Plaster bust, h. 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Gift of Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. 1850.1

Presented by Dr. Franklin to Benjamin Vaughan, Esq., who donated it to  
the College.

58. *Gravestone Rubbing*

Wax crayon on rice paper, 42 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 32"

Lent by Richard W. Moll

