

## Picture the Past

The Historic Odessa Foundation has two portraits of prominent Delawareans in its collection that are on display in the National Historic Landmark, Corbit-Sharp House. Lydia Irons was painted by James Claypoole in 1769 and her future husband Eleazer McComb was painted by Charles Willson Peale in 1782. Make note that each artist had a different style of painting. Eleazer was a merchant from Dover and Lydia the daughter of a Dover Judge. They had four children. (Ironically, both died in the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1798.)



The painting on the left shows Lydia Irons, while the painting on the right depicts her husband Eleazer McComb.

## The Assignment

Before photography and phone selfies individuals in early America had their likenesses preserved through drawings, silhouettes and portrait paintings. Document your family members as they look in 2020 by drawing a portrait of each one of them. The portraits could then be framed and displayed in a group on the wall. This activity is for all age groups and artistic abilities. Incorporating various art styles will make the portraits interesting. Use copy paper or any other types of drawing papers that you may have available in your house. Thicker papers will work better if you plan on creating a portrait painting.

- Think about how you can tell more about the individual by what they might be wearing, holding in their hands, or where they are seated.
- Use the HOF portraits as inspiration but don't let them limit your creativity.
- Draw an outline of the shape of the head and then add the facial features. Remember that the eyes will go in the center of the head and everything else will be in proportion thereafter.
- Add color using any materials that you may have around the house such as crayon, colored pencil, marker, watercolor, or tempera/acrylic paint.

## From Our Collection



### Portrait of Mary Pennell Corbit

**Origin:** Philadelphia, dated 1769

**Medium:** Oil on canvas wood strainers

Show us your masterpiece! Take a picture of you with your portrait and post it with the hashtag **#historyathome**.

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