



Territorial Governor Lewis Cass

Alvah Bradish, Lewis Cass

Governor

Date

19th c.

Medium

oil paint

Dimensions

113 x 77 in. (287 x 195.6 cm)

Paintings

Object number

CA.2025.03.015

Heritage Hall (323 W. Ottawa St.), Conservation Lab, Back Room

This portrait of Michigan's second territorial governor, Lewis Cass, gives the impression that Cass is a scholarly, worldly individual. Cass stands with one hand on his hip

and the other pointing to a book on the table beside him. Cass's face and figure are painted naturalistically, and he is clothed in a tailcoat with a dark blue vest underneath. Several books are stacked on and below the table to his right, a telescope rests near his feet, and a globe sits on the chair beside him. These objects, together, provide viewers with the understanding that Cass is a man of the world and, one might assume, knowledgeable on many fronts. The curtain in the upper right corner, and the column behind it, bring a classical influence into the piece as well. While Alvah Bradish does not leave brushstrokes visible everywhere, certain areas of Cass's clothing and the background show where the artist has layered colors without blending them together. The checkered blue and red floor, visible in other portraits by Bradish, is a hallmark of the artist's style.