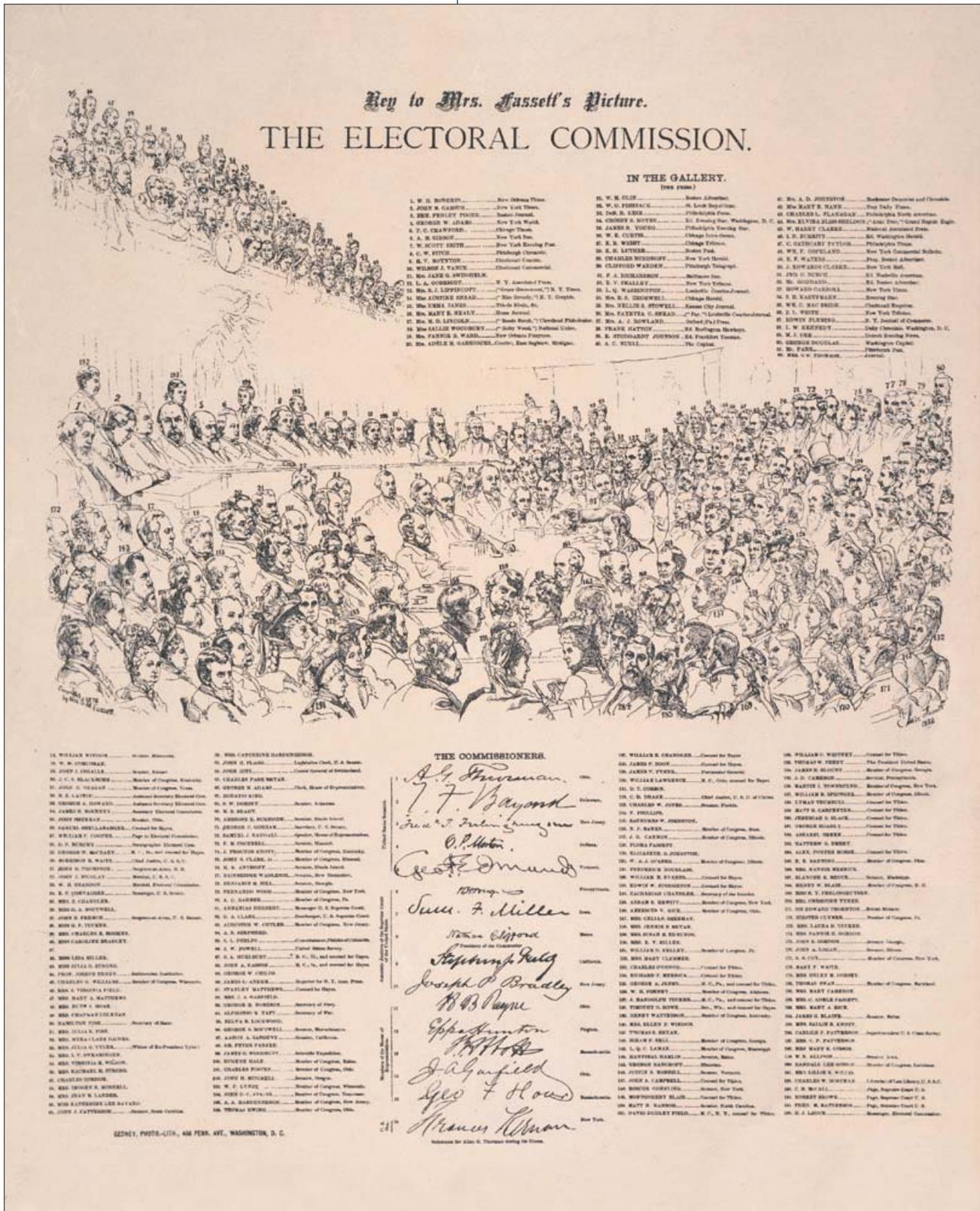


In the summers of 1877 and 1878, artist Cornelia Adèle Fassett set up a temporary studio in the U.S. Capitol's Supreme Court Chamber (now the Old Senate Chamber) to paint her monumental group portrait of the Electoral Commission meeting in the room over the disputed Hayes-Tilden election of 1876. The federal government did not commission the painting; Fassett created it independently, but was granted special access to record the historic event. While the architectural features are correct, Fassett took some artistic license—not all of the individuals depicted attended the hearings. She also interjected her own political concerns into the scene, such as including abolitionist Frederick Douglass



*The Florida Case before the Electoral Commission*  
by Cornelia Adèle Strong Fassett, 1879, oil on canvas.  
(U.S. Senate Collection)

(far right side, below center), champion of African American equality, and writer Mary Clemmer Ames (lower right corner), a vigorous advocate for women suffrage and equality. The artist depicted herself (bottom foreground, right of center) holding her sketchbook and drawing the head of William M. Evarts, counsel for Hayes. This detailed key was produced by the firm of J.F. Gedney the same year Fassett completed her group portrait. The painting was purchased by Congress in 1886. 🌀



Key to Mrs. Fassett's Picture. The Electoral Commission.

Gedney, Photo-Lith. after painting by Cornelia Adèle Strong Fassett  
 Unidentified, 1879  
 Wood engraving, black and white  
 14 3/8 x 11 1/4 inches (37.1 x 28.6 cm)  
 Cat. no. 38.00373.001