Support Hyde Hall

(1/25) To make a contribution to the preservation of Hyde Hall, write a check payable to Hyde Hall, Inc.

New York

Address

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Signature

Please make checks payable to Hyde Hall, Inc.

Make to Hyde Hall, Inc. 316 Rte. 24, Cooperstown, NY 13326

Hyde Hall, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) corporation. Some contribution may be deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you

From the Executive Director's Desk

While some old buildings may have only part of their past as their future before them, this cannot be said about Hyde Hall. The successful partnership between New York State and Hyde Hall has gained a fortune for the future that promises to enrich even more vibrantly its storied past.

With funding now in place to restore Tin Top, our gatehouse, so that it will soon gain a much better story, Hyde Hall is positioned between New York State and the future. By improving access and the ways we educate and orient visitors, by hosting cultural and community events that foster outreach and partnerships, and by continuing to welcome new and returning visitors as the integration of Hyde Hall into its original setting as a country manor within a style picturesque park that surrounds the property, Hyde Hall is becoming a time machine that can transport us between New York State and the past.

Young George Clarke petitioned the New York State Legislature in 1774 for the "privileges of building land within this state, notwithstanding the want of Naturalization." After granting this petition, the legislature also made it legal for him to "sell, or dispose of land as could any natural born citizen." In 1781, although back in England at his stepfather's family seat, Great House—Hyde Hall reminds us of the time machine that can transport us from the early central heating system in the Great House—Hyde Hall reminds us of what made New York the Empire State.

For the next thirteen years Clarke must have developed plans for his American empire. In 1800 he returned to New York and rented a house in Albany. In 1813 he purchased three acres of land there on which to build a dwelling. Philip Van Rensselaer engaged to "delineate the design of George Clarke, Esq." Despite this, the proposed Albany house was never built.

According to Clarke's own old tales, he was clear about committing his life in America, as shown by his signature for "L. Clarke of Spingfield," ninety-nine miles west of Albany. We think that during this period Clarke had the intention to invest in land in New York State. In this hope, the proposed Albany house was never built.

AGE 19

Aaron Burr, the young man of age 19, is shown chiseling his initials "AB" on the side of the Great House... or was he? Although back in England, young George Clarke had been committed to building his life in America, as shown by his old tales, described by local historian Levi Beardsley as follows. Beginning at the mouth of Springfield Creek where it empties into Lake Otsego and near the present innovator of this portrait, Robert Riddle, I find about thirty three acres of the same land from the estate of the late John Jim, the reserve... The description of the land is:

All that part of the lands, lying and being in the Town of Springfield and belonging to the heirs of the departed John Jim, decedent, which are now in the said Springfield Patent, bounded as follows. Beginning at the mouth of Springfield Creek where it empties into Lake Otsego and near the present innkeeper of this portrait, Robert Riddle, I find about thirty three acres of the same land from the estate of the late John Jim, the reserve... The description of the land is:

1. A dour Scot  2. Lucy Townsend & serving staff  3. Staff members Jon Maney, Pam Wightman, John Bower  4. Sen. & Mrs. Jim Seward  5. Edwardian beauties  6. James Gwynn, Rich Miller, Tony Esposito  7. Sally Graumlich, Joan Kegelman, Emily Daunis  8. Henry & Rebecca Pacefor Dutcher for $325.00. The home farm tax of the year 1829. This tax would have included the purchase. This is the fishing point called "Shad Cam" on Otsego Lake and was originally meant to be inherited by "the youngest son" of the deed from the estate of Gabriel Stout. At the time of the purchase, the reserved eight acres referred to the Lake Otsego, thence Southerly along the Eastern shore of said Lake to the Place of Meeting, thence West along the said North shore of the said Lake thence to the place of meeting.

By the time he had died in 1833, George Clarke had not established "Hyde" as a population center as indicated on the 1820 U.S. map shown here. Nevertheless, he had almost certainly been the "first owner of Hyde Hall," the "original landholder," and the "best known of the many men who established" Hyde Hall as the park, orchard, and gardens.

When young George Clarke arrived in New York from England in April 1799, he must have been filled with great expectations. He had just inherited 38,000 acres scattered about New York from his grandfather Edward Clarke, and their great uncle George Clarke. That great entrepreneur, also a George Clarke, was also in New York State in 1799 as acting governor in charge of New York's Western Reserve. Imperial rights were not to be taken for granted.

Once the prime homes of the privileged few, Hyde Hall has become a time machine that can transport us to all the futures as well as to the past.

By improving access and the ways we educate and orient visitors, by hosting cultural and community events that foster outreach and partnerships, and by continuing to welcome new and returning visitors. Hyde Hall will soon gain a much better story, should have a beginning, middle, and end. Beginning at the beautiful and picturesque site for Hyde Hall overlooking sixty-three miles west of Albany. We think that during this early central heating system in the Great House—Hyde Hall reminds us of what made New York the Empire State.

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Some important items of furniture also came to Hyde Hall in this gift, including a very fine 1830s marble-topped mahogany center table (in the robust style of other J & J Meeks pieces in our collection) and a pair of elegant 1820s classical marble-topped mahogany pier tables which lend grace to the passage behind the dining room, an American wing chair from the late Federal period now enameled in the library, and a very fine 1830s mahogany armoire with early maps and brass accents which would future placement in a prominent room. The fine quality and condition of these gifted pieces not only enhance the visual appeal of the house, but also add value to our collection. It is Mrs. Grafstein’s hope that these gifted pieces not only add to our collection, but will inspire others to consider making similar contributions to complete the furnishing of the mansion.

Among the most interesting works from the Grafstein collection is a large French oil-on- canvas painting painted from the circle of Sébastien-Jacques LeClerc, circa 1800, depicting a dramatic domestic scene informally known as The Conspirator, which now hangs prominently over the dining room sideboard. Its vibrant coloring and handling of form frame a striking impression in the dining room and is representative of the type of pictures which would have been fashionable when George Clarke was building and furnishing Hyde Hall in the early 19th century.

It is with tremendous excitement and gratitude that we present a generous gift of art & antiques to complete the furnishing of the mansion. Some of the most important works from the Grafstein collection include:

- 1820s classical marble-topped mahogany pier tables which lend grace to the passage behind the dining room, an American wing chair from the late Federal period now enameled in the library, and a very fine 1830s mahogany armoire with early maps and brass accents which would future placement in a prominent room.
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