

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Hyde Hall

and or common

2. Location

street & number Glimmerglass State Park _____ not for publication

city, town Springfield _____ vicinity of east of County Route 31

state New York _____ code _____ county _____ code _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name State of New York; State Parks and Recreation Department

street & number

city, town Albany _____ vicinity of _____ state New York

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Otsego County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Cooperstown _____ state New York

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic American Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1958 federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington _____ state DC

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Hyde Hall is one of the most thoroughly documented buildings in America. Family records reveal the history of its building. The architect's designs and detailed bills for materials ordered for the construction of this elegant country seat are extant. Roofing material was ordered from New York City and shipped, presumably via the Erie Canal to Fort Plain where it was then sent to the shore of Otsego Lake, where the house was built.

The impressive limestone mansion was built on a great terrace above the lake in three stages, the earliest about 1817. The inheritor of this land was George Hyde Clarke who commissioned the state's most distinguished architect, Phillip Hooker to design Hyde Hall named after the family seat at Hyde in Cheshire, England. Douglas Kent, Trustee of the Friends of Hyde Hall, has examined the Clarke family papers. He writes that Clarke bought the picturesque lake-shore site from William Gilchrist for \$6,600 in May 1817.

Building began almost at once. On July 30, John Woodhouse and Enoch Sill contracted to "erect, build and finish a Dwelling House according to a Plan or Diagram drawn by Mr. Hooker...." That original part of the house is represented by the existing south wing. This "cottage," as it was termed in an early reference, was to consist of a parlor and kitchen on the ground floor with three bedrooms overhead. The inner wall of the parlor was to have "a recess in the centre ... elevated two feet and deep enough so as to receive an urn stove." Stairs would rise in a hall in one corner, "the steps and risers...to be ash-Hand rail and Bannisters curled maple." A piazza was planned across the south front, its wooden Doric columns dashed with sand to imitate stone, and a smaller porch was to be partly enclosed by two wings projecting beyond the back of the house, which would contain a laundry and dairy rooms. The house was to be of stone faced with stucco, its lake-front corners finished with cut-stone quoins.

Detailed accounts show the building's progress from this rather unpretentious farmhouse to the formal mansion completed in 1834. The basic plan evolved during 1817. A bound volume of Hooker's drawing dated January 28, 1818, shows separate family, kitchen, and entertainment wings on three sides of an open court. These were joined by covered passages, but at ground level only. Servant's quarters were over the kitchen, family rooms over the south wing. The east wing "to be built at some future date" was to provide a billiard room and four bedchambers, presumably for guests, over the hall and the dining and drawing rooms.

Building proceeded rapidly. The south wing was largely finished by 1821. Stucco gave way to finely jointed ashlar, a warm gray-brown limestone from nearby quarries. Between 1818 and 1824 rooms and corridors were built across the back of the court, joining the family and kitchen wings. Domestic offices occupied the ground floor, bedrooms were above. At the same time the kitchen wing was redesigned and built on the present plan. The total length of the house would finally reach a hundred and ninety feet.¹

8. Significance

Period	National Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1817 **Builder/Architect** Phillip Hooker (1766–1836)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Hyde Hall is one of America's finest houses that combines the greatest architectural traditions of England and America and the solidity of a frontier dwelling with the grace and delicacy of high-style English country houses. It is also completely documented, contains a great deal of its original furnishings, and is one of the few surviving works of one of America's great 19th century architects, Phillip Hooker.

Hooker was responsible for many of the buildings in the developing parts of New York State -- both religious structures and large residences for wealthy merchants and landowners. Douglas Bucher, the authority on Phillip Hooker, details what is known about this important architect:

Hooker began his career in Albany, the rapidly growing capitol of a young, rich state. By 1830 virtually all of the important public buildings in the city were his. From the State Capitol and City Hall to the churches whose spires dominated the skyline, much of the architecture in early 19th century Albany was Mr. Hooker's creation.

Born in Rutland, Massachusetts, on October 28, 1766, Hooker moved to Albany with his parents in 1772. As a young man he and his brother John probably worked for their father, who was a carpenter and builder by trade. In 1797 the elder Hooker, his wife, and John moved to Utica, leaving Phillip, who by that time was married and well established, in Albany. Hooker and his father worked together over the years, and in 1803 they remodeled a house in Albany for the Secretary of State. The details of Hooker's education are unknown except for a statement he made in 1815 that he had had, "an experience of 25 years in building and a close application in the research of ancient and modern architecture."

Stylistically, Hooker owed much to the work of Charles Bulfinch of Boston and John McComb of New York City, and to the pattern books of Asher Benjamin, whom he may have known through a mutual acquaintance, Henry W. Snyder, an Albany engraver. Hooker's designs were also influenced by his own keen observations from traveling to New York City, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. He wrote that the proposed city jail (1810) in Albany would be modeled after the new jail recently constructed in New York City. His buildings are characterized by strong and repeated patterns in masonry, symmetrical planning, and bold, sculptural detailing in stone, wood, and plaster....

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Continuation sheet Hyde Hall Item number 7 Page 2

Clark's income came from tenant farmer's rents and an interest in a nearby iron foundry. In 1824 he inherited English estates and a Jamaican plantation. With this fortune

It was now possible to get on with the east wing. Since bedrooms had been fitted out over the offices, those planned over the dining and drawing rooms could be dispensed with, and the wing given over entirely to rooms for formal entertaining. The great rooms took their present fine proportions, their deeply covered hanging ceilings rising to the stately height of seventeen and a half feet. The neoclassic facade, a distinct contrast to the rather unimaginative, many-windowed design of 1818, plainly reflects the new internal arrangements, and the portico, with its monumental treatment and coffered ceiling is particularly fine.

The house stands with one foot in the English Regency and the other in the American Greek revival. Clarke, with his close English ties, had much to do with the design, determining the layout around the open court, and it seems apparent that he turned to John Plaw's Rural Architecture (London, 1785, 1804) as a source for his plans. Many of the internal details as well as the Doric order of the portico are taken from Asher Benjamin's The American Builder's Companion (Boston, 3rd ed. 1816, 5th ed. 1826).

The furnishings, with the exception of some pieces by local craftsmen, were brought from Albany and New York, and the records provide a good deal of information about them and about their makers.²

The house was completed in 1834 and nothing more was done until some plasterwork was repaired in one wing (1893) by Stanford White. The house needs some restoration which is currently underway.

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Continuation sheet

Hyde Hall

Item number

8

Page 2

A list of Hooker's well known projects includes the North Dutch Church in Albany (1797-98), the New York State Capitol (1804-09), which was demolished in 1883, Albany Academy (1815-17), Hyde Hall in Otsego County (1817-35), Albany City Hall (1829-31), which burned in 1880, and the Rutger B. Miller House in Utica (1830). The study of these structures illustrates Hooker's development as a designer and the transformation of his style from the delicate refinement of the Federal style to the bold detailing of the Greek Revival.³

Hooker left much interior detailing to the craftsmen he hired and also depended often on the advice and active participation of client owners such as George Clarke in the design of their own estates.

This seemingly isolated "great house" situated at the north end of Otsego Lake is one of the few surviving early manorial estates left in this country. The enormous acreage which made the Hall possible is intact with tenant farm houses, a gate house, and covered bridge. The Clarke family originally owned large tracts of land in the Mohawk Valley in the 18th century. The patriarch, George Clarke, was Lieutenant Governor of the colony of New York from 1737 to 1744. His great-grandson, George Hyde Clarke, who claimed the New York properties after the Revolution upon becoming a citizen, was the builder of Hyde Hall. In 1789, Clarke came from his Jamaica sugar cane plantation to inspect his New York holdings and in 1813 he married Anne Cary Cooper, the widowed sister-in-law of James Fennimore Cooper.

Hyde Hall is completely documented, even with the bills for furniture, upholstery and drapery, carpets, lamps, and chimney pieces. New York and Albany city directories indicate that a great deal of the elegant material was purchased and shipped from the best supply houses in those cities and monies paid are all recorded on surviving bills and invoices. For instance, a bill exists from Baldwin Gardner furnishing warehouse at 149 Broadway for a number of items including a rich gilt clock with music (\$240) and \$500 for a porcelain dining and desert service with rich bouquet and yellow border. Some pieces of the set are still there.

This kind of documentation is invaluable. It tells us about the time and fortunes of Clarke. When he ordered surrounds for the fireplace from Labagh in New York City we find the following notations:

Two pieces with three-quarter columns were ordered for the ground-floor bedrooms. These are of lightly veined, gray, almost slatelike marble, materials, and carting was \$769.62-1/2. Labagh sent one of his men to set the pieces. Charges for this man were \$11 for the journey, \$7 for keep in Albany, and \$54 for twenty-seven days labor.⁴

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Continuation sheet Hyde Hall Item number 8 Page 3

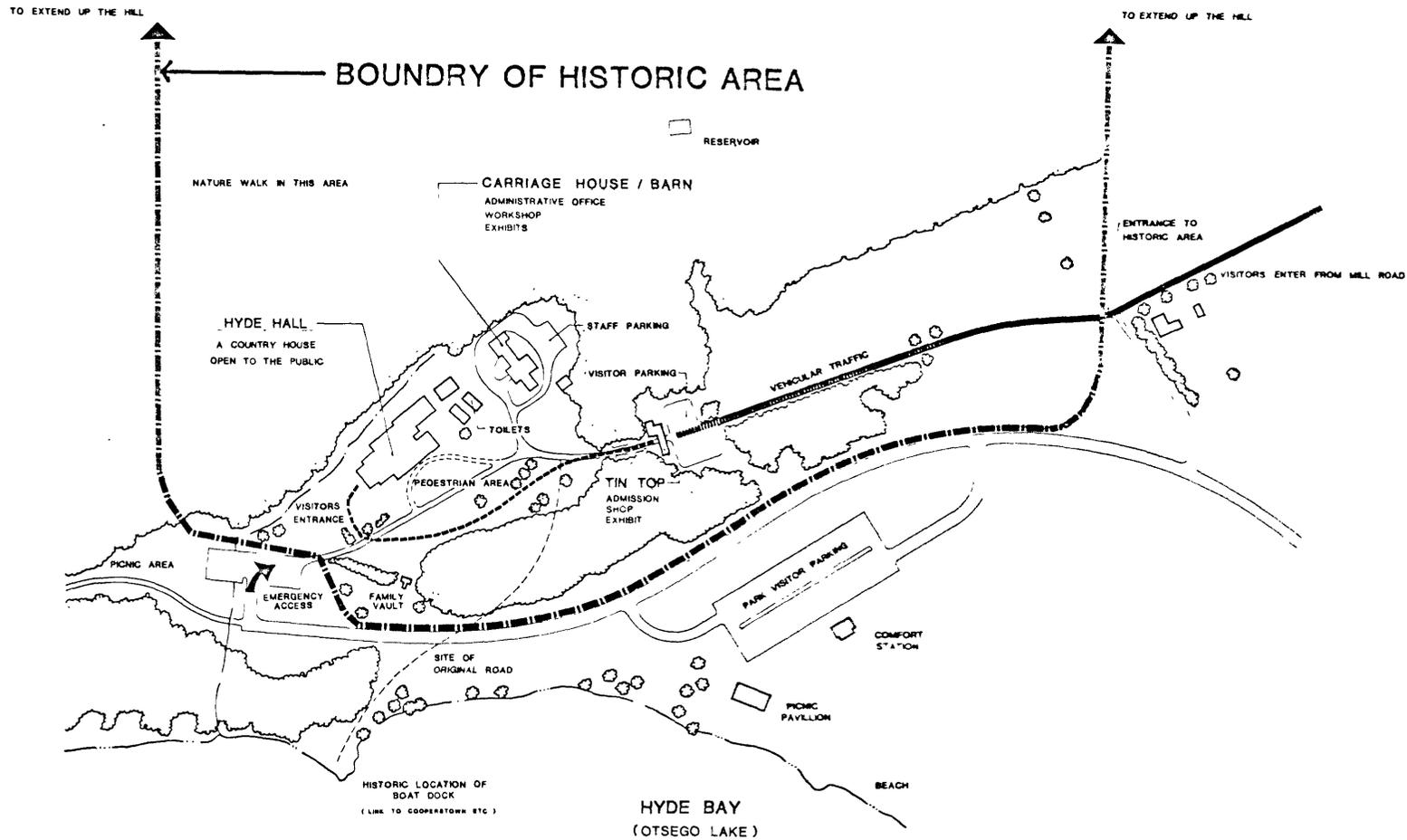
Hyde Hall was finished in 1834, underwent some repairs in the 1890s by Stanford White, and in 1916 Lawrence White drew up plans for a remodeling that was never completed. In 1963, New York State Department of Parks took over the 600-acre estate and created Glimmerglass State Park. In 1964 a group called The Friends of Hyde Hall, Inc., was formed to help in the restoration and preservation of the mansion as a house museum. Hopefully it will be seen soon again as a prime example of the best of our American Architectural heritage.

Footnotes

- 1 Kent, Douglas R. "Hyde Hall, Otsego County, New York" Antiques. August 1967. pp. 187-188.
- 2 Ibid., p. 188.
- 3 Bucher, Douglas. "Phillip Hooker," Preservation League of New York State, January 1984. p. 4.
- 4 Kent, op. cit., p. 191.

Bibliography

- Architects Emergency Committee. Great Georgian Houses of America, New York, 1933-1937.
- Bucher, Douglas G. "Phillip Hooker." Preservation League of New York State, January, 1984.
- Hamlin, Talbot, Greek Revival Architecture in America, Dover, New York, 1944.
- Kent, Douglas R. "Hyde Hall, Otsego County, New York." Antiques. August, 1967.
- Root, Edward W. Phillip Hooker. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York, 1929.
- Wilson, Edmund. Upstate. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1971.



SITE PLAN



HYDE HALL - A MASTER PLAN

THE PROPOSED SITE USE