

Introduction

As the Colonial Revival reached its zenith in the 1920s, collecting American antiques evolved from nineteenth-century relic hunting into an emerging field with its own scholarship, trade practices, and social circles. The term “Americana” came to refer to fine and decorative arts created or consumed in early America. A new type of Americana connoisseurs collected such objects to furnish idealized versions of America’s past in museums and private homes.

One such Americana connoisseur was Maxim Karolik, a Russian-born tenor who donated to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston one of the most celebrated collections of American paintings, prints, and decorative arts. A report about the collection’s 1941 museum opening described how “connoisseurs looked approvingly” at the silver, “clucked with admiration” over the Gilbert Stuart portraits, and turned “green-eyed at the six-shell Newport desk-and-bookcase.”¹ Karolik began collecting antiques in the 1920s, adding to those that had been inherited by Martha Codman Karolik, his “Boston Brahmin” wife. His appetite for Americana grew until he became one of the 1930s’ principal patrons, considered second only to Henry Francis du Pont. He scoured auction houses, galleries, showrooms, and small shops. Karolik loved the chase and consorting with dealers. He enjoyed haggling over prices despite his wife’s substantial fortune.²

¹ “Art: Boston’s Golden Maxim,” *Time* (December 22, 1941).

² Frieda Schmutzler (of Katrina Kipper’s Queen Anne Cottage), Oral History, May 26, 1978, Winterthur Archives. See also Carol Troyen, “The Incomparable Max: Maxim Karolik and the Taste for American Art,” *American Art* 7, n 3 (Summer 1993): 65-87.

“About the things that happened collecting you could write a vaudeville,”³ he remarked; he relished its spotlight.

Even considering the unconventional patron, the catalogue accompanying Karolik’s collection included surprises. The first was the acknowledgment:

We owe a word to the dealers in works of art. The author of a book on American arts, one rich in historical data, expressed his position in part as: “having no reason to palliate, and little interest in their temporary possessions, he has had only formal associations with the fraternity of dealers.”

Our point of view differs, for dealers in works of art are like other men; some are admirable and some are otherwise. Museum officers, however, know that they often do “the spade work” and that public collections are indebted to them for good work usually unknown to the public. The general attitude may be, “well that’s their business.” Then it is a pleasure to state that their business has been a satisfying contribution toward the making of this collection.⁴

It was extremely unorthodox to mention antiques dealers within such a context. The Americana trade had become increasingly professionalized since the late nineteenth-century, but retained a stigma from its early associations with second-hand peddlers. Many collectors of American art longed for the idealized early days before they needed middlemen, before the threat of fakes, when antiques were plentiful and collectors traded amongst themselves. Profiting from the love of antiques somehow seemed tainted.

Another defiance of this convention appeared in Karolik’s description of a tea table, which he titled “Money Values, Dealers and Collectors”:

³ “Art: Boston’s Golden Maxim,” *Time*.

⁴ Maxim Karolik, acknowledgments in Edwin J. Hipkiss, *Eighteenth-century American Arts: The M & M Karolik Collection*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), xix. The quote Karolik countered was from William Macpherson Horner, Jr.’s famous *Blue Book, Philadelphia Furniture*. . . (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1935).

. . . it is worthwhile, I think, to mention the money value, because it throws an interesting light on the attitude of the dealer and average collector. . . If the prices of the objects in this collection should be compared with the prices of the inflated era in the late twenties, the difference would be startling, and tell a revealing story. It will show, once more, that money is the only tool with which human beings can build something worthwhile. And the value of that tool can be measured by the result of an effort, the realization of a dream, of an idea.⁵

These passages articulate the relevance of transactions—buying and selling—to the history of art, as records of changing perceptions of an object over time. Karolik’s catalogue stopped just short of including price comparisons, or dealers’ names in provenance listings alongside those of collectors or heirs.⁶ Perhaps Karolik decided to follow the antiquing tradition of keeping one’s sources to oneself, for oneself.

The nature of the antiques trade encourages secrecy. Some collectors were loathe to share the names of dealers whose stock they admired, a sentiment epitomized by Alice Van Leer Carrick’s 1925 nursery rhyme “Here I am then, little Jealous Joan. // When I go out antique-ing, I like to go alone.”⁷ Dealers must guard their sources to avoid being usurped or undercut. Museums protect the privacy of their donors and prefer to separate their collections from monetary values. As the field of Americana scholarship matured, museums battled to disassociate their scholarly authority from the tastes of collectors and dealers, and reformed their collections accordingly. Curators and academics were quick to omit dealers, their practices, and trade terms from the story.

⁵ Ibid, 363. Karolik went so far as to recount a detailed conversation with an unnamed dealer (Israel Sack) on his pricing methods (in that instance, Karolik thought too low).

⁶ Discussions of this kind were not only considered indiscreet, but might suggest the museum was endorsing one dealer over another.

⁷ Alice Van Leer Carrick and Kenneth Allen Robinson, *A Mother Goose for Antique Collectors* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1975 reprint of 1927 original), 19.

John Alden Lloyd Hyde witnessed first-hand the effects of such shifts. From the 1920s to 1970s, Hyde worked as an antiques dealer, helping furnish countless historic restoration projects, and private and public collections across the country. Hyde's progression from picker to department store buyer, independent dealer and retailer, to author, tastemaker, and advisor, speaks to every mode of the dealing profession. Many iconic examples of Colonial America and the Colonial Revival passed through Hyde's hands: period rooms, and nearly every type of decorative and fine art in the collections at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum and Country Estate; important lighting furniture at Colonial Williamsburg, Historic Deerfield, the White House, and the Newport Restoration Foundation; and celebrated examples of Chinese Export porcelain and textiles in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Peabody-Essex Museum. Much of his "Rare Americana" stock came from surprisingly distant places—origins that helped establish his reputation as "the archetype of the indefatigable searcher for the rare and beautiful."⁸ (fig. 1).

By the late 1970s, Lloyd Hyde had witnessed the dismantling of collections he had supplied and interiors he had helped furnish, several of which had been lauded as "the most beautiful in America." He had participated in oral history projects documenting the accomplishments and contributions of clients. Hyde did not even appear as a footnoted source in these histories, an omission he set himself to rectify. He began writing a memoir tentatively titled "After the Antique: An Autobiographical Essay in Collecting," recounting the five decades he spent buying, selling, and studying

⁸ *The Contents of Duck Creek: The Estate of J.A. Lloyd Hyde, Old Lyme, Connecticut Sale 293 July 13, 1982*, (New York: Christie's, 1982), 10.

European, American, and Asian Export antiques. Left unfinished at his death and since donated to Winterthur, the thirty brief chapters (tinged with some exaggeration and inaccuracy) provide insight into Hyde's adventures as a dealer, objects that passed through his hands, and his prominent circle of clients and friends. More objective evidence lies in archives and object files across the country, auction catalogues and period publications, and oral histories from contemporary collectors, curators, and dealers.

What "spade work" did J.A. Lloyd Hyde accomplish in the field of Americana? How has it endured the evolution of Americana scholarship? This thesis proposes to confirm, correct, and contextualize Hyde's memoirs and in turn, develop a neglected perspective in the history of collecting American decorative arts.

Early Days

John Alden Lloyd Hyde was born December 12, 1902, the youngest son of Ellen Elizabeth Hullings Williams Hyde and John Edmond Hindon Hyde of New York. As their names suggest, the family was extremely proud of its lineage. Hyde's father, a Manhattan attorney and amateur playwright,⁹ could recite his ancestors back through eighteenth-century New York shipping merchants, to forbearers in seventeenth-century Saybrook, Connecticut.¹⁰ Hyde's mother was born in Baltimore, a descendent of "the old Williams family of Virginia's Eastern Shore, living there from colonial times."¹¹ It was through her family that Hyde was named after his ancestor John Alden, the folk hero popularized in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858). The quiet scholar who unwittingly won the fair Priscilla's heart "was my great-great grandpappy," Hyde breezily explained.¹² Hyde's parents toured Europe following their 1889 wedding. The family resided (with two live-in maids) at 430 Lefferts Avenue

⁹ J.E. Hindon Hyde, "Experts and Expert Evidence," unpublished script, 1900, preserved at Columbia University Library and "A Quiet Afternoon: A One-act Farce Comedy," unpublished script, 1906, Yale University Law School Library.

¹⁰ J.E. Hindon Hyde's genealogical entry is among the most extensive in Thomas Patrick Hughes and Frank Munsall, *American Ancestry: Giving the Name and Descent, in the Male Line*. . . . vol. XII (Albany: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1898), 13-14.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² John Alden Lloyd Hyde (hereafter cited as JALH), Oral History, May 6, 1974, Winterthur Archives, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum and Country Estate.

in Richmond Hill, a middle-class suburb on Long Island.¹³ Perhaps Hyde's earliest artistic study took place as a boy at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where his parents were members.

The Hyde family's seemingly idyllic existence was disturbed in 1902 when the family lost son William, age 5, and again in 1911 with the death of only daughter Helen, age 19.¹⁴ Hyde's father died in 1912, leaving Ellen a widow with two boys and uncertain prospects.¹⁵

In 1920 Hyde enrolled at Hobart College in Geneva, New York, where he was "tolerated on a scholarship."¹⁶ He showed great aptitude for history, particularly that of early America. He studied colonial settlements and trade relations, knowledge he later used to track down antiques. Hyde's mother brought him to England and France during the summer of 1922 to complement his studies. That autumn Hyde returned to school, and to his Sigma Phi fraternity of young men with "good mind, lofty character, and cordial manners"¹⁷ (fig. 2). Such qualities did not protect him in June 1923 from what was described as a hazing riot.¹⁸ A group of students entered the dormitories, "dragged

¹³ United States Census Bureau, *U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1910: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics: New York* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910).

¹⁴ "Obituaries," *The New York Times*, March 1, 1902; October 8, 1911.

¹⁵ "Obituaries," *The New York Times*, September 10, 1912.

¹⁶ JALH, preface to "After the Antique: An Autobiographical Essay on Collecting," (unfinished, unpublished memoir), 1970s, JALH Papers, Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum and Country Estate, Delaware.

¹⁷ Ralph Carpenter, conversations with the author, July 2008.

¹⁸ "Hobart Expels Two for Hazing Riots," *The New York Times*, June 9, 1923.

several students from their beds and put them through various stunts.” Lloyd Hyde was singled out, “severely beaten and hurled down a fifty-foot embankment into Seneca Lake.”¹⁹ The college expelled two of the perpetrators and withheld diplomas from three others. Perhaps steeled by family tragedies, Hyde did not let the incident disrupt his academic success. In 1924 he returned to campus and won an essay competition of the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New York. He earned a \$100 prize and the Society published his thesis, titled “The Relations Between the Early Dutch and the Indians as Affecting the Subsequent Development of the Colony of New York.” Within days of his graduation, he and his mother sailed abroad again. Hyde’s passport application indicated they hoped to spend three years away, in France, the British Isles, Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Holland, but they returned to New York in June 1925.²⁰

Hyde had refused to discuss the “hazing” attack at Hobart with police or reporters. It was an early display of discretion, a virtue that would be demanded of him both personally and professionally. It was widely understood by Hyde’s contemporaries that he was homosexual, and that his long-time companions Arvid Knudsen (from c. 1932-1952) and Amos Shepard (1950s-60s), were more than business partners during most of their professional association. They lived together, traveled together, and were treated as a couple.

In Hyde’s day, homosexuality was at the very least taboo. At worst, it was quite dangerous. It could have prevented him from renting a hotel room or apartment,

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ JALH, United States Passport Application, April 17, 1924 (issued April 23, 1924), U.S. State Department Archives, Washington, D.C.

obtaining a bank loan, from joining a club or associating with potential clients. Even in 1920s-30s New York—then considered “the capital of the American homosexual world”²¹—reports indicate men could be fired, evicted, robbed, assaulted, arrested, and murdered for the mere suspicion of being “fairies.”²²

Women and racial or ethnic minorities faced similar issues, but with less opportunity to hide their minority status. The history of women dealers has received some attention by historians.²³ Challenges of Jewish dealers are better documented, thanks in large part to Israel Sack’s family firm, which dates its founding in Boston to 1905. Anti-Semitism was rampant in the first half of the twentieth century, and evident to varying degrees in the 1920s and ’30s correspondence consulted for this project. In a 1954 interview, Israel Sack—who used in advertisements the more ethnically ambiguous “I. Sack”—discussed his need to soften, if not suppress, his Jewishness. Blending in was an essential part of interacting with clients: “I’d take them to lunch. If it was a Greek, I’d go to a Greek restaurant. If he was a Catholic and it was Friday, I ate fish. You see, I figured this way. It’s so much easier to be like the other fellow than have the other fellow be like you.”²⁴ His son Harold Sack, who joined the business in the 1920s,

²¹ George W. Henry and Alfred Gross, “Social Factors in the Case Histories of One Hundred Underprivileged Homosexuals,” *Mental Hygiene* 22 (1938): 602, as quoted in George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 135.

²² Discussed throughout Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*.

²³ Design historians have particularly focused on women decorator-dealers. My thanks to Christopher Monkhouse for alerting me to Jeanne Schinto, “‘Miss Edgerton’s Ye Colonial Shoppe’ or Women in the Trade,” *Maine Antiques Digest* (June 11, 2008).

²⁴ Israel Sack, “The Reminiscences of Mr. Israel Sack,” unpublished oral history, February 9, 1954 (transcript), Ford Motor Company Archives, 23. My thanks to Elizabeth

provided a glimpse of the social barriers he encountered in the antiques trade in *American Treasure Hunt* (1986):

For me, it is a very long distance from those days when I was a boy, bouncing up and down in the back of my father's open touring Buick, traveling with him through a rural landscape populated by hostile farmers and their wives, most of whom may have subscribed to the occasional sign I remember which warned "No Dogs—No Jews."²⁵

For homosexuals the field of antiques, interrelated with arts, museums, historic preservation, and decorating, was far more tolerant than most. Gay antiques dealers, artists, and designers were so prevalent, these professions became euphemisms for homosexuality in fiction and film by the 1920s.²⁶ Historian Will Fellows examined the contributions of gay men to the preservation movement in *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* (2004). He profiled key figures involved in the founding of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, of the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, and similar antiquarian pursuits across the country. Fellows considered traits associated with homosexuality as instrumental to early twentieth-century preservation. These included a sensitivity to aesthetic detail, a connection to

Stillinger for sharing her copy with me. Sack found himself embroiled in controversy when, in 1927, his client Henry Ford attempted to pacify charges of anti-Semitism by citing his relationship with Sack, who supplied many antiques for Ford's historic Wayside Inn, and later the Henry Ford Museum. Per Rebecca Martin, "Past Masters" *American Heritage Magazine* (February/March, 1985), Harold Sack recalled, "Ford publicly mentioned my father as a man who was Jewish who carried out all his assignments in an ethical, professional manner."

²⁵ Harold Sack with Max Wilk, *American Treasure Hunt: The Legacy of Israel Sack* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1986), 262.

²⁶ Discussed in *The Celluloid Closet*, a 1995 documentary film directed and written by Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman.

one's elder female relatives, and a longing to rescue what has been cast aside and repair what has been broken. He lamented that:

Until recently being gay was considered to be of such devastating relevance to one's essential fitness as a human being that it was absolutely not talked about. Unfortunately, some have now fled to the other extreme, declaring it utterly irrelevant: being gay has nothing to do with one's ability to do anything, they argue, so it should not even be acknowledged. . . [This omission] serves to perpetuate the idea that whatever they have contributed to the culture has been accomplished *despite* their gayness rather than *because* of it.²⁷

Fellows criticized Elizabeth Stillinger's *The Antiquers: The Lives and Careers, the Deals, the Finds, the Collections of the Men and Women Who Were Responsible for the Changing Taste in American Antiques, 1850-1930* (1980), the landmark history of Americana collecting, for failing to discuss her subjects in these terms:

Of the nearly forty individuals profiled in the book, almost all were male, many of them fastidious dressers and artistic homemakers who never married, some sharing homes with their mothers for as long as their mothers lived. . . . the book goes no further in its exploration of these antiquarians' natures than to describe them as colorful, eccentric. . . .

Stillinger would have had to rely on innuendo and imagination to attribute homosexuality (in practice or inclination) to any of her *Antiquers*. Current scholarship is more accepting of this approach, as evidenced by a 2007 article labeling Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, William Beckford's Fonthill Abby, Gustav III's Haga Palace, and Henry du Pont's Winterthur, as "queer spaces."²⁸

²⁷ Will Fellows, *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 22.

²⁸ Peter McNeil, "Crafting Queer Spaces: Privacy and Posturing," a paper presented at the Queer Space: Centres and Peripheries Conference, University of Technology Sydney, February 20-21, 2007; accessed online at http://www.dab.uts.edu.au/conferences/queer_space/proceedings/index.html.

The interest in homosexuality and its relationship to the history of collecting is certainly a legitimate one. Lloyd Hyde fit gay stereotypes of being an aesthetic, a romantic, of dressing well, and composing beautiful interiors. He also enjoyed a close relationship with his mother, who divided her time between his and her brother's homes until her death in 1948 at age 91.²⁹ Being a homosexual undoubtedly influenced Lloyd Hyde's identity and relationships, excluding him from some collections and collectors, allowing him entrée to others. Adapting his persona to his surroundings helped Hyde move between second-hand shops and the world's most lavish residences, between salt-of-the-earth pickers and foreign dignitaries. Sources interviewed for this project named various collectors, curators, and fellow dealers—some of whom were married at the time—as having been romantically and/or sexually involved with Hyde. Perhaps at times Hyde benefitted from belonging to what social historian John Loughery called “a silent brotherhood. . . a hidden society of kindred spirits. . . made up of men who were always able to recognize one another.”³⁰ References to homosexuality are conspicuously absent from Hyde's memoirs. Without corroboration from Hyde nor any of his possible paramours, this study will endeavor to follow the example of Elizabeth Stillinger—as well as the subject himself—and err on the side of discretion.

²⁹ “Obituaries,” *The New York Times*, January 27, 1948.

³⁰ John Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives and Gay Identities* (New York, Henry Holt: 1998), 29, as quoted by Will Fellows, *A Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 22.

The Bottom Rung

According to Hyde’s own description, his professional debut in the field of antiques was as a picker, the lowest rung on the trade ladder. Picking was a means of making money while doing what he loved—hunting for antiques. A picker canvasses small shops and private homes, buys portable antiques with a minimal investment, then sells them to more established dealers at a profit. Harold Sack described pickers of the 1920s as “self-adaptors of the highest order, whose survival was based on equal parts of wit, sharp eyes, keen determination, and above all a gambler’s instinct (fig. 3).³¹ A 1973 tell-all by Maine dealer Chris Huntington described the practice of picking:

The closer the dealer can get to the original sources the fresher will be his merchandise and the better his prices. One route to this end is a picker. . . In Maine there are still a number of men and women who make their living by driving miles each day and canvassing house to house to buy antiques. . . It’s an independent life. A man is his own boss. . . . He is “buy oriented.”³²

From the earliest books romanticizing antiques, such as Mary Dow Brine’s *Grandma’s Attic Treasures: A Story of Old Time Memories* (1881), Alice Van Leer Carrick’s *Collector’s Luck* series (1910s-20s), and Walter A. Dyer’s *The Lure of the Antique* (1910) the joy of collecting was inexorably linked with the thrill of the hunt. Directed by advertisements and word of mouth, collectors poked into farmhouse attics and wayside shops. Maps advertised East Coast antique shops as points on a route, with each mark a site of potential discovery (figs. 4, 5). Motorcars made antiquing day-trips

³¹ Harold Sack with Max Wilk, *American Treasure Hunt: The Legacy of Israel Sack*, 43.

³² Chris Huntington, “Chris Huntington Speaks,” *Maine Antiques Digest* (November 1973), reprinted in Lita Solis-Cohen, ed., *Maine Antique Digest: The Americana Chronicles* (Philadelphia: Running Press and Maine Antiques Digest, 2004), 19-27.

even more convenient for collectors, and they found themselves sharing the road with dealers. Both amateurs and professionals were eager to find that cache of hooked rugs, pewter porringers, or Windsor chairs owned by simple country folk who weren't yet "price-wise."

In 1925, designer/illustrator and devoted antiquarian Lurelle Guild recounted an antiquing trip with his dog (named Rusty Highboy), setting out "with no other assets than a battered car, a tank of gas, and twelve score and ten shekels with which to lure from hiding enough antiques to furnish my living room."³³ The trip as described was every antiquer's dream—the open road, the freedom of leisure, and an abundance of antiques as desirable as they were affordable—just waiting for him to come along (fig. 6):

. . . We were spinning along about forty per toward Danbury, when, taking a sharp curve in New Canaan, we literally bumped into a truck loaded to the top and over with everything from gateleg tables to two-slat ladder-back chairs. It didn't take me long to swing into the driveway and put on the brakes. This was proving exiting and my blood was warming. I had never before realized how Izaak Walton and his disciples felt when they found a quiet stream in which a proud and handsome trout was displaying himself.

The driveway in which I had parked led into a barn that was oozing with antiques from every crack and cranny. To the right was a house beside which was displayed a corner cupboard and a collection of pottery. . . I looked around and beheld the owner, a tall and lanky typical New England Yankee. He was very enthusiastic about the load that he had just brought in and insisted on piling the stuff out on the lawn that I might see the particular attraction of each piece. . . The man was a scout and had been at it for years. As the things were being unpacked he volubly poured forth personal anecdotes about half of the dealers in New England. . . .

As we came near Boston we passed shop after shop. Some had their entire stock displayed in the front yard, others in the barn, and still others in delightful old houses. The nearer we were to the city the more abundant the "shoppe" for shop and "ye" for the. . . We expected and found the shops of famous old Salem a bit high in price, but before we left we picked up a portrait painted on a wooden panel for eight dollars and a Windsor armchair for ten.

³³ Lurelle van Arsdale Guild, "Travels of an Itinerant Antiquer," *Country Life* [New York] (November 1925): 51-54.

With pocketbook low and car overflowing, we entered the hubbub of the city [New York] just as the sun was setting, and swinging past the gaily lighted windows of the decorators' shops, I couldn't help but think of what I had been told: "New England has been fine-combed," but now I am going to add that some combs have a few teeth missing.³⁴

Under the pressure of turning a profit, Hyde's work as a picker may have more closely resembled Harold Sack's vivid description of pickers he knew as a youth in Boston:

Early each day, he would venture forth . . . on a foraging mission, to scour suburban streets and tiny outlying towns, where he would dodge angry dogs to knock on doors, much as a second-hand dealer, or a used-clothing buyer. . . . His would be a daily spin of the roulette wheel—hopefully to pry out of an unwilling and suspicious housekeeper some piece of dusty furniture, an old painting, or a batch of knickknacks, which could be promptly be turned over to any Charles Street dealer whose cash would reward the tired picker for his daily persistence and shrewdness.³⁵

Once he had managed to acquire some stock, Hyde would have looked for a buyer. The successful picker needed a reliable base of dealer-buyers, and the savvy to negotiate a price that would be profitable to both. According to Huntington, pickers were at the disadvantage:

Once [a picker] has bought his load he needs to sell it quickly. He is fair game for dealers who prey on his mistakes and believe the less the picker knows the better. At the same time, many of his finds are sold too cheap. He may ask too much, \$400 one day, \$300 the next, finally selling to the fifth or sixth customer for \$175. . . .³⁶

To identify desirable stock and price it advantageously, Hyde needed to acquaint himself with established dealers and their business practices. He seems to have focused these

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Harold Sack and Wilk, 43.

³⁶ Huntington, "Chris Huntington Speaks."

efforts in Manhattan, then supplanting Boston as the hub of high-stakes antiquing.³⁷ Hyde named Charles Woolsey Lyon as his best customer of these early transactions,³⁸ demonstrating an equal measure of ambition and people skills.

Lyon was the son of Dr. Irving Whitehall Lyon, who famously authored the first scholarly treatise on American Furniture, *The Colonial Furniture of New England* (1891).³⁹ Charles Lyon chose dealing in antiques over a medical career, beginning by selling off objects inherited from his father's collection. In 1916 he founded the galleries of C.W. Lyon Inc. (fig. 7), later joined by his sons.⁴⁰ Lyon benefitted from his father's esteemed reputation and knowledge,⁴¹ but managed to make a name for himself as a prominent purveyor of period paneling and "choice antiques, both American and imported, and an assortment of incidental objects of beauty at prices consistent with the

³⁷ The influx of dealers "from all parts of the city to Madison Avenue" is discussed by Marty Mann, "Seen in the Galleries," *International Studio* (March 1930): 12. "It is a relief to have the stuffy little holes that were inhabited by antique shops not so long ago—before the days when the buying and selling of antiques was as much of an established business as the buying and selling of stocks and bonds—replaced by the present day palatial mansions, which are becoming more and more in order among the exclusive dealers." By the end of the decade, a dominant antiques district had formed in the blocks spanning 57th-60th Streets, between Third and Fifth Avenues.

³⁸ JALH, preface to "After the Antique."

³⁹ See Elizabeth Stillinger's chapter on Irving Lyon in *The Antiquers: The Lives and Careers, the Deals, the Finds, the Collections of the Men and Women Who Were Responsible for the Changing Taste in American Antiques, 1850-1930* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).

⁴⁰ 29 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York, and 416 Madison Avenue in Manhattan.

⁴¹ Rarely was his name mentioned in period articles without a reference to his father.

times.”⁴² Harold Sack recalled that the Lyons “kept a beautiful shop. . . . They were wonderful promoters, good showmen, and had superb taste in American furniture.”⁴³

Before building up his own stock, Hyde recommended Lyon as one of the two best dealers in New York.⁴⁴ He maintained close ties until Lyon’s death in 1946, perhaps an extension of their interdependence as picker and dealer. Per Chris Huntington:

A good dealer should be able to function well with pickers, combining their skills into a loose team. . . . The picker needs to honor the customers that live at his doorstep or soon they won’t be there when he needs them. What he needs as well is a change for a fair price for the exceptional things he finds each week or month, for it is those that allow him the chance to do better than working for wages.⁴⁵

Wages won out for Hyde, and in 1925 he took a job “for a brief period as an antique buyer for Lord and Taylor,” one of Manhattan’s premier department stores.⁴⁶

⁴² Charles Woolsey Lyon Inc., promotional card, undated [1930s], Winterthur Archives, announcing the firm’s move from to 15 East 56th Street (the firm later moved to 20 East 56th).

⁴³ Harold Sack and Wilk, 97. Sack continued “The one flaw in the Lyons’ operation was that they took the liberty of embellishing, or changing some of their pieces to a point which they believed the items should have been originally.” As Sack recalled, the firm closed in part because it was forced to refund Henry Ford for having over-restored some antiques. Most likely it was Sack’s father Israel who alerted Ford to their problematic state.

⁴⁴ JALH to Russell Plimpton, November 16, 1927, MIA Archives. The other person he named was Charles R. Morson, a Brooklyn dealer whose antiques were illustrated in several surveys, including Luke Vincent Lockwood’s *Colonial Furniture in America* (1913 revised edition of 1901 original) and Wallace Nutting’s *American Furniture Treasury* (1928).

⁴⁵ Huntington, “Chris Huntington Speaks.”

⁴⁶ JALH, preface to “After the Antique.”

Antiques and the Emporium

It is difficult to date the earliest appearance of antiques within the evolution of department stores. From the late nineteenth century, stores had installed antique paneling and furniture as backdrops for clothing, linens, and other merchandise. Selling antiques was likely an outgrowth of selling new and second-hand furnishings, upholstery and decorating services, and estate jewelry. Around the turn of the twentieth century, growing interest in antiques inspired department stores and manufacturers across the country to partner with museums on reproductions, and to educate customers and staff on “good taste.”⁴⁷ By the 1910s several retailers considered antiques profitable enough to warrant inclusion in their household furnishings and decorating departments, including Chicago’s Marshall Field & Company, Boston’s Shreve, Crump and Low Company. Perhaps the best known antiques shop within a department store at this time was Au Quatrième at Wanamaker’s in New York, directed by Nancy McClelland.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Many American museums were founded expressly for this practical purpose—to make art available to designers, manufacturers, and consumers and thereby benefit American commerce. Examples include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cooper-Union Museum (now Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum), and the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design—all of which were modeled on London’s Victoria and Albert Museum. The Metropolitan’s American Wing, opened in 1924, proved particularly influential for American interiors.

⁴⁸ For Marshall Field’s history, see Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan, *Give the Lady What She Wants!* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1952). Shreve, Crump and Low (now limited to jewelry and *objet de vertu*) devoted an entire floor to antiques as early as 1891, according to Catherine Zusy, “Trophies and Treasures: Two Centuries of Luxury at Shreve, Crump & Low” *Antiques and the Arts Weekly* (Summer 1997). Au Quatrième was highly celebrated, doing much to popularize antiques and launching the careers of many decorators who did the same, including Ruby Ross Goodnow (later Wood), Mary Dunn, and Rose Cumming. Dunn wrote a history of the department now preserved with Nancy McClelland’s papers at the Cooper-Hewitt. The history (which has been

Founded in 1826, New York's Lord & Taylor was one of many stores displaying new household furnishings in period domestic settings by the 1920s.⁴⁹ The store's president, Samuel W. Reyburn took personal interest in the furniture trade, and just after World War I, established a new department to sell antiques alongside contemporary and revival-style furnishings. In a promotional letter to potential clients, Reyburn enthused:

Present day Americans in large numbers not only have the means to own conveniences never dreamed of in former times, but also to gratify the desire for the possession of objects of beauty. . . . We believe we have brought together a collection that expresses the traditions of the art of Spain, Italy, France, England and America, XV to XIX centuries.”⁵⁰

Lord & Taylor's period settings were praised as models of “reproductions and genuine antiques harmonizing pleasantly, and with no detracting to either.”⁵¹ Flemish tapestries, Spanish wrought iron, Della Robbia plaques, and “Greco-Roman” torsos were displayed against dark wood paneling—evoking the *style Rothschild* look still in

repeatedly miscredited to McClelland) erroneously asserts Au Quatrième was the first antiques venture in an American department store—even Wanamaker's sold antiques prior to McClelland's tenure. My thanks to Greg Herringshaw for allowing generous access to these archives.

⁴⁹ In 1826, Samuel Lord and George Washington Taylor opened the store in a basement on Catherine Street in lower Manhattan. By 1914 it had relocated several times and finally settled at Fifth Avenue and Thirty-eighth Street. The location was the site a 1776 Revolutionary battle between Generals Washington and Howe, and therefore “worthy to be the home of a firm with one hundred years of honorable history behind it,” per *The History of Lord & Taylor 1826-2001* (New York: Lord & Taylor, 2001), 48. The store was nearly ruined by the cost of its new, Italian Renaissance building with ten stories above ground and two below, and latest technologies for ventilation, vacuuming, fire prevention, and merchandise handling.

⁵⁰ Sameul Reyburn to Russell Plimpton, December 14, 1926, Minneapolis Institute of Arts [hereafter footnoted as MIA] Archives. My thanks to Janice Lurie and Cori Wegener for their assistance.

⁵¹ “Period Rooms for Antiques and Reproductions,” *Good Furniture* (December 1927): 302-305.

favor. Other displays appealed to Colonial Revival tastes, such as the “maple living room” with a brick hearth and built-in cupboard for pewter (fig. 8). Its chintz curtains, wing chair, rustic bench and drop-leaf table were “suitable for a cottage of an early American type.”⁵² Lloyd Hyde was hired to furnish these room settings with antiques.

When he began at Lord & Taylor in 1925, Hyde had no formal training to be an antiques dealer—nor did most of his competitors.⁵³ Before establishing Au Quatrième at Wanamaker’s in 1913, Nancy McClelland had been writing advertising copy. “I don’t know what special qualifications I had for the work,” she recalled, “except a great delight and love for beautiful old things. I was a college girl and after leaving college I went abroad, where I spent all my time in the museums and antique shops.”⁵⁴ Hyde’s education also consisted of self-directed study and travel, with the additional experience from his days as a picker. At Lord & Taylor he may have expanded his education with

⁵² “Maple Gains in Favor,” *Good Furniture* (July 1925): 40. The store also sold avant-garde design, including Paul Poiret textiles and furniture by Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Eileen Gray, and Sue et Mare gathered in Paris at the 1925 Exposition des Arts Décoratifs—none of which found easy favor with customers. See Wallace L. Franken, “Letters” *Antiques World* (September 1981): 18 and Wallace L. Franken and Susan Franken Anderson, ed., *The Buyer: A Lifetime in the Decorative Arts* (New London, NH: privately printed, 1996), 21.

⁵³ Trade journals *American Collector* (1933-1948), *Antique Dealer & Collector’s Guide* (1930s-) and others provide a wealth of information on the professionalization of the antiques trade. Dealers were largely self-educated or trained by employers, unless raised in a family with ties to antiques or related fields. Advanced degrees in decorative arts or material culture history from programs such as Winterthur’s Program in Early American Material Culture and the Cooperstown Graduate Program came much later— 1952 and 1964, respectively—both intended as preparation for academic or museum careers. New York’s Antiques and Decorative Arts League and Boston’s Association of Antique Dealers, both founded in the 1920s, offered infrequent learning opportunities, but the first formal, advanced studies in the United States to emphasize *dealing* were Sotheby’s Institute and Christie’s Education, founded 1969 and 1978, respectively.

⁵⁴ “Selling Antiques as a Department,” *The New York Times*, October 24, 1920. McClelland also benefitted from studio arts training at the Pennsylvania Academy.

the same junior executive training described by Wallace Franken, a furnishings buyer hired the year before:

John Beecroft was the first one of us to be moved up. . . . He became assistant service manager of the fifth floor. That was furniture. At lunch he would drop names like Chippendale, Sheraton, and Hepplewhite. I'd never heard of them. . . . Fortunately, part of the training of the executive training staff was in outside studies. I went to New York University for business administration and the Metropolitan Museum for art and related courses. And how lucky could I be? The lecturer on English furniture was Herbert Cescinsky, the greatest authority of that time, and perhaps of all time. I learned about those men that John Beecroft had been talking about. I found out about the guilds that controlled all the work. About woods. About how to read a piece of furniture by the way in which it was made—the mortises, the tenons, the dovetails, the solid wood and the veneers. . . . It was a whole new ball game.⁵⁵

It may have been through the close association between the Metropolitan Museum of Art and department stores that Hyde befriended Metropolitan curator Charles Over Cornelius around 1925.⁵⁶ He had ample opportunity to meet serious as well as casual antiquers at the store; visitors flocked to see its latest period settings. “They are rooms done in a mixed good taste,” according to one account, “each is individual, and with some touch of originality to take it decidedly from the beaten track of model interiors. As usual, hundreds of people visit them daily.”⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Franken and Anderson, *The Buyer: A Lifetime in the Decorative Arts*, 16-17.

⁵⁶ In JALH, “Vermont: The Duncan Phyfe Piano” in “After the Antique,” Hyde recalled Cornelius’s 1922 exhibition and accompanying catalogue on Duncan Phyfe, and meeting the curator “around this time.” The earliest documentation of their association is in correspondence between Lloyd Hyde and Russell Plimpton during 1926, preserved in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts archives (to be discussed in the following chapter).

⁵⁷ “Decorated Interiors in Retail Stores,” *Good Furniture* (June 1927): 329.

Lord & Taylor was considered “always to the fore with model interiors,”⁵⁸ a reputation established during Hyde’s tenure:

A fine high color note is struck in a Colonial breakfast room, whose furniture of maple, pine and oak, is made up entirely of copies of museum pieces, painstakingly prepared under the direction of Wallace Nutting. It is a gay, bright room, prepared in yellow background paper dotted with sepia oak leaves, and curtained with Chinese red glazed chintz. A whole collection of gleaming pewter is disposed on the dresser and chests, its high lights catching every reflection.⁵⁹

Lord & Taylor was Hyde’s first foray into the carriage trade. It introduced him to collectors and colleagues. The job offered the potential to hone his buying, selling, and merchandising skills, with greater stability than he’d enjoyed as a picker. The store’s interiors may have given Hyde his first opportunity to develop his famously “great eye”⁶⁰—that elusive aesthetic quality attributed to admired dealers, collectors, and decorators—and to demonstrate those talents in a public setting. One can only speculate how much credit is due Hyde for the store’s “interesting effects not only in the placing of the furniture, but in the color schemes, and in the selection of accessories.”⁶¹ He spent only two years at Lord & Taylor; yet fifteen years later a trade journal recalled, “Some years ago this store had an antiques department managed by J.A. Lloyd Hyde, who later established his own business. . . .”⁶²

⁵⁸ Ibid, 325.

⁵⁹ “Period Rooms for Antiques and Reproductions,” *Good Furniture* (December 1927): 303.

⁶⁰ William A. Stanley, “One thousand buyers to bid Tuesday on a man of the world’s noted antiques,” *The Day* [New London, Connecticut], July 10, 1982.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² “Traveling About,” *American Collector* (March 1943): 14.

The Quest for the Silver Fleece

J.A. Lloyd Hyde's earliest documented acquisition outside of Lord & Taylor was most auspicious: the remarkably complete, Neoclassical tea service by Paul Revere now in the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (fig. 9).

In 1792 Paul Revere sold a tea service to newlyweds Mehitable and John Templeman. In 1926 Templeman descendants in Michigan and Minnesota decided to part with their components of the set. They sent letters and photographs east to gauge its appeal. One letter went to Edwin Hipkiss at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Revere's birthplace), and the other to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which had recently published its first American silver catalogue.⁶³ One of the descendants also mentioned the service to a Minneapolis Institute of Arts trustee, who showed "considerable interest."⁶⁴

That spring Russell A. Plimpton (fig. 10) was celebrating his fifth year at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, where he had earned the reputation of being "one of the most distinguished American museum directors beyond the East Coast."⁶⁵ He was the Institute's second director, and also the second drawn from the ranks of decorative arts

⁶³ C. Louise Avery, *American Silver of the XVII and XVIII Centuries: A Study Based on the Clearwater Collection* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1920).

⁶⁴ Per JALH to Russell Plimpton, undated [June 4, 1926], Minneapolis Institute of Arts (hereafter cited as MIA) Archives, a descendant had spoken of the service to a "Mrs. Carpenter," most likely Florence Welles Carpenter, the philanthropist wife of a lumber scion who served as one of the most active founding trustees of the museum.

⁶⁵ Jeffrey A. Hess, *Their Splendid Legacy: The First 100 Years of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, 1985), 42.

curators at the Metropolitan.⁶⁶ From 1914-1920 (interrupted by service in World War I) he had helped lay the groundwork for the 1924 opening of the Metropolitan's American Wing, giving him the vision, connections, and experience to fulfill Minneapolis's commitment to decorative arts and period rooms.⁶⁷ What Plimpton lacked in proximity to the art market, he made up in trustee support. He devoted himself to cultivating Minnesota collectors, encouraging them to fill the museum as shrewdly and determinedly as they had built fortunes in lumber, mining, railroads, and flour milling.

Silver was one of Plimpton's many personal passions. While visiting New York in May of 1926 he made it known to dealers, collectors, and former colleagues he was "anxious to have a small representation of American silver" in Minneapolis.⁶⁸

Plimpton's former Metropolitan colleague Louise Avery showed him a photograph of the Revere set, and the accompanying letter from its owners.

Plimpton immediately recognized that a complete Revere tea set would be the cornerstone for any Americana collection. Revere carried obvious historical appeal

⁶⁶ The first was Joseph Breck, who returned to the Metropolitan Museum of Art after his 1914-1917 tenure in Minneapolis.

⁶⁷ The museum was founded 1883 as the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. A program of period rooms was planned from the earliest inception of its 1915 McKim, Mead, and White building. Plimpton was first hired as an administrator at the Metropolitan, and served as curator of decorative arts from 1914 until his 1921 departure. For more on Plimpton's impressive tenure in Minneapolis, see Anthony M. Clark, *Catalogue of European Paintings in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1970), 5; *French and English Silver: A Loan Exhibition in Honor of Russell A. Plimpton* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1956); "Past Arts Director Dies," *Minneapolis Tribune*, December 10, 1975, and Hess, *Their Splendid Legacy*, chapters 4 and 5.

⁶⁸ Russell Plimpton to R.T. Haines Halsey, May 22, 1926.

(magnified by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow⁶⁹), and his spare, Neoclassical forms appealed to the Art Deco age. Revere had long reigned in the homes of private collectors such as William Loring Andrews, R. T. Haines Halsey, Francis Bigelow, Hollis French, Francis Palmer, George Palmer, and Henry Davis Sleeper—and was one of the first American craftsmen in any field to be celebrated by name in an art museum.⁷⁰ His silver was priced accordingly, making headlines in 1924 with the \$4,200 sale of a presentation punch bowl at auction.⁷¹ Since then, the market had grown volatile due to a flood of Revere forgeries.

Plimpton went for advice to R.T. Haines Halsey, a prominent collector/scholar instrumental in the Metropolitan’s landmark Hudson-Fulton exhibition of 1909, and the creation of its American Wing. Halsey advised caution:

Beware of Paul Revere silver, There is a gang in Boston who have caught a number of new silver collectors. The forgery is hard to detect. Old silver pieces are used. The original marks are removed and reworked and a very clever mark of Revere established—one almost invisible of detection even with a confirmation of the real mark. About 40 pieces were sold and later returned. They are now being offered out west to collectors and museums—with good histories attached.⁷²

⁶⁹ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere,” first published in his *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863) was frequently quoted within descriptions of Revere silver; see Arthur Hayden, *Chats on Old Silver* (London: Ernest Benn, 1915), 51-52.

⁷⁰ “Exhibition of Early American Silver,” *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 4, n. 20 (June 1906): 23.

⁷¹ “Bowl By Paul Revere Is Bought For \$4,200,” *The New York Times*, February 12, 1924. The auction was an American Art Galleries sale, February 11-16, 1924.

⁷² R.T. Haines Halsey to Russell Plimpton, May 15, 1926, MIA Archives.

For those wary of the Boston faker,⁷³ the Templeman tea set would have raised alarm. It had never been published, was owned by an unknown Midwestern family with a provenance almost too good to be true. The components were executed in coin silver, delicately fluted and engraved, comprising a teapot and stand, helmet-shaped cream jug and sugar urn, with the potential of reuniting the matching tea caddy, another stand, tea scoop, various spoons, and a punch strainer.⁷⁴ If authentic, it would be the most complete Revere service anywhere.⁷⁵ While East Coast experts worked quietly amongst themselves to verify the Templeman provenance, Plimpton pounced.⁷⁶

Throughout his Minneapolis career, Plimpton's greatest ally in American decorative arts was James Ford Bell (fig. 11), founder of the flour-milling consortium

⁷³ The identity of the Boston faker (unrelated to the Boston Faker of furniture) was never uncovered. My thanks to Christopher Monkhouse and Ron Bourgeault for explaining this reference.

⁷⁴ Unrelated sugar tongs by Revere were added. See Francis J. Puig et al, *English and American Silver in the Collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1989), 272-275.

⁷⁵ MFA Boston collection included smaller Revere sets. By 1926 it owned a matching teapot with stand, cream, and sugar donated in 1896 (96.1-4) and was promised the extensive collection of Pauline Thayer, Revere's great-granddaughter, which included the four-piece Edmund Hart set. The Metropolitan's Clearwater set consisted of a matched cream and sugar (33.120.546-47), plus orphan teapot (33.120.543).

⁷⁶ Edwin Hipkiss attempted to corroborate the family history in Revere's ledger, but did not obtain the information in time. The account books were still owned by Revere descendents, but photostats had been made for the Massachusetts Historical Society. Hipkiss consulted his museum's primary Revere donor, Mrs. Nathaniel (Pauline Revere) Thayer, Revere's great-granddaughter, who inherited, bought, and sold Revere silver. According to Edwin Hipkiss to Russell Plimpton July 20, 1926, MIA Archives, the service "was known to us, and our friends interest in silver were interested in it" but not in time to beat out Plimpton and Bell.

General Mills.⁷⁷ Bell agreed to purchase the set for his personal collection, promising to make it available for loan and eventually donate it to the museum. While in New York that May, Plimpton had dined with the young Lloyd Hyde (who also may have learned about the silver through his Metropolitan connections). Hyde was eager to make a name for himself outside the walls of Lord & Taylor and offered to act as Plimpton's agent. After receiving Halsey's warning about potential fakes, Plimpton engaged Lloyd Hyde to broker the sale.⁷⁸

Hyde agreed to track down the Templeman components and negotiate their purchase on Bell's behalf. The terms of Hyde's compensation were not clearly defined, but the potential for prestige was obvious. To maximize that potential, Hyde deviated from the plan to have the silver sent from the family to Minneapolis and instead, diverted it to himself in New York. He explained to a surprised Plimpton that he "wanted to assure myself of authenticity"⁷⁹ and that "I have felt that if it remains in Minneapolis and I might never see it, I would be at a disadvantage in tracing the two remaining pieces of the set."⁸⁰ For nearly a week Hyde flashed his find around New York. He reported back

⁷⁷ With Plimpton close at hand, Bell formed what became the foundation of the Institute's American and English silver collection, and with Hyde's involvement, funded the purchase, restoration, and furnishing of two period rooms from Charleston, South Carolina. See JALH, "Charlestown, South Carolina: The Great Paneled Rooms" in "After the Antique."

⁷⁸ The nature of their relationship is undocumented, but their letters are friendly and reveal they shared several acquaintances, including trustees and staff at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Hardinge Scholle of the Museum of the City of New York, and Adam Paff, a dealer with the New York branch of the London-based Durlacher Brothers. They met in Paris at least once by the autumn of 1927.

⁷⁹ JALH telegraph to Russell Plimpton, June 16, 1926, MIA Archives.

⁸⁰ JALH to Russell Plimpton, June 11, 1926, MIA Archives. Bell and Plimpton declined to purchase the tea- and tablespoons, several of which have been reunited since by later

that Louise Avery, Charles Cornelius, and Edward du Parcq (of the retail and restoration firm Crichton), “were very enthusiastic about the pieces and seem to think there is no doubt at all as to their authenticity.”⁸¹ Plimpton lost patience when Hyde then showed the service to collector and Yale benefactor Francis P. Garvan. Fearing Hyde might disregard his obligations and sell the set to Garvan, a far more prominent collector, Bell sped to New York to finally meet this young Mr. Hyde and claim his prize.

The Templeman tea set transaction concluded amicably enough for Bell and Plimpton to employ Hyde to track down the other Revere pieces remaining amongst Templeman descendants in Baltimore, and work as their “independent runner” for the next two years.⁸² He located, purchased, and transported for Bell and the Institute two Charleston period rooms that Hyde enthused “would make the Metropolitan jealous!” (fig 12).⁸³ He advised Plimpton and Bell on furnishing the rooms—with a set commission of 10 per cent to avoid any confusion on first-refusal rights. The proceeds and prestige of the Revere service helped Hyde established himself as a dealer. As if he’d earned a blessing from the patriot silversmith himself, Hyde’s newly engraved letterhead proclaimed his specialty as “RARE AMERICANA” (fig. 13).

curators David McFadden, Christopher Monkhouse, and Jason Busch. Winterthur owns one of the wayward spoons (64.240.560).

⁸¹ JALH to Russell Plimpton, June 19, 1926, MIA Archives.

⁸² James Ford Bell memo to Walter G. Robinson, June 10, 1960, MIA Archives.

⁸³ JALH to Russell Plimpton, April 19, 1927, MIA Archives.

Interdependence

As Elizabeth Stillinger discussed so ably in her 1980 survey *The Antiquers*, the market for American antiques was late to bloom. Colonial relics, from Revolutionary swords to presidential letters, could be found alongside shrunken elephants' feet in the Dickensian curiosity shops of the 1890s, but as an aesthetic commodity and specialty, Americana sustained very few dealers until the first decades of the twentieth century.⁸⁴

According to historian Russell Lynes, it was not until the 1920s

that the 'antiques craze' turned every old farmhouse and barn into a potential treasure trove, and aged maple beds and corner cupboards, spinning wheels and cobbler's benches, chests of drawers and blanket chests became the apples of a million eyes. . . . Pewter that the family had put away when they could afford china, and luster candlesticks that had been forgotten when they could buy brass or silver came out of the attic or the cold-cupboard to be proudly displayed and sold for gratifying prices to collectors. . . . Affluent collectors began to buy entire paneled rooms and build homes to go around them.⁸⁵

Historian Neil Harris credited the 1920s and '30s as key decades in shaping America's cultural identity, "because three constituencies assert themselves: the community of scholars, the class of collectors and connoisseurs, and the touring public." Harris, as have most historians, omitted dealers from this constituent list, thereby ignoring their important contributions. Dealers shared with scholars, collectors, and museums an

⁸⁴ Peter G. Buckley, "The Old Curiosity Shop and the New Antique Store: A Note on the Vanishing Curio in New York City" *Commonplace* 4 n. 2 (January 2004). Ginsburg and Levy was founded in 1901, but as a "junk," or curio shop. Despite the firm's cited date of "est. 1905," even Israel Sack was not yet supporting himself by selling antiques until the 1910s. See Jeanne Schinto, "Israel Sack and the Lost Traders of Lowell Street," *Maine Antiques Digest*, April 2007.

⁸⁵ Russell Lynes, *The Tastemakers* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 239.

interdependence that often blurred these distinctions. Lloyd Hyde's life and career epitomized the integral role of dealers in the emerging field of American decorative arts.

In addition to acting as purveyor, Lloyd Hyde served as an expert, tastemaker, advisor, and cultural booster. These roles are best exemplified by his relationship with Henry Francis du Pont, whose collection evolved into the H.F. du Pont Winterthur Museum and Country Estate outside of Wilmington, Delaware, with unparalleled Americana collections and a distinguished research center. Thousands of documents spanning forty years of Hyde and du Pont's relationship are preserved at Winterthur. Receipts, correspondence, photographs, and the objects du Pont acquired from Hyde chronicle the men and their relationship, the mechanics of dealing and collecting, and the evolution of Winterthur and related collections and institutions. In its broader context, their relationship traces the development of Americana as a personal pursuit, business, and field of scholarship. It is particularly enlightening on the subjects of desirability and authenticity, ever-shifting concepts that complicate each man's legacy.

* * *

Lloyd Hyde was one of many hopefuls eager for independence and profit in the antiques trade. A generation before, Israel Sack transitioned from being a cabinetmaker who built, repaired, and faked furniture into one of the field's most successful dealers.⁸⁶ Other dealers began as owners of inns or tearooms, who found that antique furnishings outsold their intended offerings. Some began by disposing of generations of their own family heirlooms. Many dealers had been collectors themselves, and turned their passion

⁸⁶ Israel Sack, *The Reminiscences of Mr. Israel Sack*.

and knowledge into a vocation.⁸⁷ A 1936 article surveying the trade asked, “Do you know of any other business that can be started with practically no money, where a room or an old shed serves as a shop and your equipment consists of a cheap automobile and some dollar stationary with your name and the word, *antiques*?”⁸⁸

Hyde had larger ambitions. Thanks in part to the Revere silver transaction, and help from his expanding cadre of antiquarian colleagues and friends, he had sufficient prestige to move beyond the “rum bottles and paperweights” he had traded as a picker.⁸⁹ In the autumn of 1926, he orchestrated an introduction to Henry Francis du Pont.

One of two surviving children of Mary Pauline (née Foster) and Henry Algernon du Pont, Henry Francis du Pont grew up dividing his time between his mother’s native city of New York, and the du Pont family’s stronghold along the Brandywine River in northern Delaware. His French-born great-grandfather, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, immigrated to the United States in 1800, and by 1802 was harnessing the Brandywine’s power to manufacture the finest black powder (an explosive mixture of sulfur, charcoal, and potassium nitrate) yet made in America. Black powder built a foundation of vast family fortune, and launched the chemical conglomerate that carried the du Pont name into the twenty-first century.

Du Pont’s father, called “the Colonel” in deference to his distinguished Civil War service, enjoyed a long career in the family business and other enterprises before

⁸⁷ One of many such dealers was Charles Montgomery, who began his career as a dealer by selling off his own pewter collection to pay his mortgage. Charles Montgomery, Oral History, May 16, 1977 (transcript), Winterthur Archives.

⁸⁸ “Antique Dealers Only Seem Crazy,” *American Collector* (October 1936), 6.

⁸⁹ JALH, preface to “After the Antique.”

representing Delaware in the U.S. Senate from 1906-1917. In 1876 the Colonel moved his family to Winterthur, an 1839 house and surrounding estate named for the Swiss ancestral home of a previous owner and relative. The Colonel expanded the house and land holdings several times. French was spoken in the home, which was richly appointed in ornate European revival styles. Henry du Pont's primary interests as a youth were horticulture and husbandry, inexorably linked to his beloved Winterthur.

The du Pont family background and prosperity may have predetermined at least some familiarity with antiques. In her biography *Henry F. du Pont and Winterthur* (1999), daughter Ruth Lord discussed her father's early interest in design while attending Groton, a boarding school in Massachusetts. "With his mother's help," wrote Lord, "he found furniture, rugs, and pictures to go with the green fleur-de-lys wallpaper" in his lodgings.⁹⁰ The practice of nesting was also a comfort to du Pont when he moved onto Harvard. He was able to escape the confines of school by assisting his older sister Louise and her husband Francis Boardman "Frank" Crowninshield decorate their apartment in nearby Boston, and helping oversee his father's 1902 expansion of Winterthur. Lloyd Hyde later recounted that du Pont's first purchase of an antique for himself was a pair of delft cows he kept in his rooms at Harvard.⁹¹ Surviving receipts with New York dealers such as Richard W. Lehn, Wannamaker's, and Yamanaka indicate he was collecting for Chinese Export porcelain, European furniture, and tapestries by the 1910s. In 1916 he married Ruth Wales of New York, where the couple furnished their 280 Park Avenue

⁹⁰ Ruth Lord, *Henry F. du Pont and Winterthur* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University, 1999), 76. The du Pont family also preserved antiques as heirlooms, including a group of chairs made in New York c. 1800.

⁹¹ JALH, Oral History.

apartment with French and English antiques. “I was always very interested in all foreign furniture,” du Pont revealed later in a rare interview, but “no one knew about American furniture. . . . People had [American] furniture, of course, but you didn’t see much about it from our point of view here.”⁹² By the early 1920s, however, du Pont experienced what has been described by historians as a conversion, of sorts, from European antiques to Americana.

The importance of Winterthur as a monument to Americana, as a singular expression of H.F. du Pont’s taste (and nearly limitless resources) and a think-tank for the study of American history and material culture has inspired much interest in du Pont’s development as a collector. Historians have credited various sources for du Pont’s Americana passion, such as his innate interests in color and proportion, the influence of specific collections and collectors, and the Colonial Revival in general. Du Pont’s motivations and influences are shrouded by his enigmatic personality, and limited personal testimony on the subject. It seems appropriate to attribute at least some of du Pont’s appreciation of American antiques to his sister and brother-in-law, Louise and Frank Crowninshield, who began their antiquarian pursuits (including collecting, preserving and restoring historic properties, and building public collections) long before his own.⁹³ The single event most often cited as igniting du Pont’s Americana interest was

⁹² Henry F. du Pont, Oral History interview with Harlan Phillips for the Archives of American Art, April 11, 1962 (transcript), Winterthur Archives.

⁹³ A handyman-turned-dealer named H.L. Lindsey remembered Mrs. Crowninshield convincing du Pont to collect “ball and claw” furniture before he had previously, probably around the time he sold du Pont what is believed to be his first American furniture, a walnut chest of drawers, in October 1923 (prior to his visits to Shelburne and Beauport). See H.L. Lindsey, Oral History, undated [late 1970s] (transcript), Winterthur Archives. Chestertown House was largely limited to country-style furnishings, compared

a trip in October 1923 to his sister's home in Marblehead, and to the country houses of Electra and James Watson Webb in Shelburne, Vermont and Henry Davis Sleeper in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Du Pont later recalled, "I hadn't thought anything of American furniture at all. I went upstairs [at Shelburne] and saw this dresser—this pine dresser, and I thought it was charming, quite lovely. It just took my breath away. I had never seen pine furniture, or heard of it in fact. . . . so I said to my wife, 'Why don't we build an American house? . . . Since we are Americans, it's much more interesting to have American furniture.'"⁹⁴

While Electra Havemeyer Webb did not become an active partner in du Pont's Americana pursuits,⁹⁵ du Pont formed a partnership with the Boston architect, decorator, and antiques dealer Henry Davis Sleeper. At Beauport, his rambling cottage along Boston's North Shore, Sleeper constructed a fantasy of salvaged pediments, shop windows, and freely adapted interior paneling that framed color fields of collections—red Western lacquer, green majolica, and amethyst glass in every shade. Sleeper papered his Chapel Room with the same historic scenic wallpaper pattern found in Paul Revere's house, a visual and symbolic effect reflected and magnified by his sculptural groupings of Revere silver. The play of historicism, exoticism, and whimsy reached its climax in the

to Winterthur's more encyclopedic collections. Du Pont's earliest surviving request specifically for "ball and claw foot mahogany" furniture is HFdP to JALH May 31, 1927: "I am looking for very small ball and claw foot tables, or any very tiny Sheraton or Hepplewhite tables, as I am putting some of this kind of furniture in my house here."

⁹⁴ Du Pont, Oral History.

⁹⁵ Despite du Pont's oft-quoted admiration of Webb's pine dresser, Shelburne's impact did not translate into a steady dialogue with Webb via correspondence, antiquing trips together, or visits; she is recorded in du Pont's guestbook as having visited Winterthur only once (1948) before it became a museum.

China Trade Room, replete with Chinese Export wallpaper and porcelains, high-style Chippendale furniture, a pagoda, and a tented ceiling.

In the summer of 1925, du Pont visited Sleeper again to study Beauport's theatrical lighting effects.⁹⁶ "I find your lights are so delightfully arranged – so cleverly placed with always some definite effect in mind," wrote du Pont, "that it makes me quite desperate about my perfectly conventional arrangement of lights, and I wonder if you could take the time to look over my plans and suggest some other places for outlets, which might or might not be used as we required."⁹⁷ The consultation developed into a contract for Sleeper to decorate du Pont's new Chestertown House at Southampton, Long Island. In addition to overseeing the composition of new and salvaged architectural elements, subtle surface treatments, Sleeper recommended antiques for the house and helped arrange them. The contract specified a flat fee—probably augmented by dealers such as Charles Woolsey Lyon and Katrina Kipper, whose hooked rugs and eagle carvings he found on du Pont's behalf.

Perhaps Sleeper's most influential talent was the apparent ease with which he referenced and played upon historical associations and motifs. He encouraged du Pont to inject his rooms with "eccentricities," lest they look "too ordinary."⁹⁸ Since the late nineteenth century, tastemakers such as Edith Wharton had promoted the so-called

⁹⁶ See HFdP to Henry Davis Sleeper, June 4, Winterthur Archives.

⁹⁷ HFdP to Henry Davis Sleeper, July 7, 1925, Winterthur Archives. Du Pont treated lighting as an integral element in his interior and entertainment schemes, converting antique fixtures for electricity, even developing devices and fittings to simulate candlelight. Not coincidentally, Lloyd Hyde developed a specialty in lighting fixtures.

⁹⁸ Henry Davis Sleeper to HFdP, September 2, 1924, as quoted in Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 128.

harmonious interior as an expression of gentility and prosperity. Sleeper mounted a rebellion against such uniformity, a sentiment expressed in Ruby Ross Goodnow's 1916 decorating manual, "There is something so very dreary about a proper room with a set of furniture carefully matched, and sets of pictures and cases and books—not an accidental anywhere!"⁹⁹ By the first decades of the twentieth century, a canon of American period room displays had formalized at the Rhode Island School of Design's Pendleton House (opened 1906), the Essex Institute's period rooms (1907), the Metropolitan's American Wing (1924) or pictorial reenactments by Edward Lamson Henry or Wallace Nutting—all profound influences on private and public collections of Americana. Like Webb and Sleeper, du Pont bore the confidence and vision to divert from these examples. By the late 1920s, du Pont's attentions turned to Winterthur, which he inherited upon his father's death in 1926. He claimed to Sleeper, "I am doing the house archeologically and correctly."¹⁰⁰ Despite this stated goal, du Pont never entirely constrained his vision to the confines of historicism, mixing periods and geographies, altering architectural fragments and other objects whenever he desired. Du Pont's gravitation towards Beauport and Shelburne marked his early and ultimately unshakable attraction to eccentricity, a quality that would enliven, distinguish, and challenge his Winterthur Museum.

Still a new convert to the field of Americana, du Pont was focused on antiques for his Chestertown House on Long Island (figs. 14, 15) when he first met Lloyd Hyde in 1926. An intensely private person, du Pont went to great lengths to keep secret his

⁹⁹ Ruby Ross Goodnow and Rayne Adams, *The Honest House* (New York: The Century Co., 1916), 200.

¹⁰⁰ Henry Davis Sleeper to HFdP, November 12, 1930, Winterthur Archives.

collecting. He often used agents and aliases to avoid the appearance of extravagance, and to keep his family's famous wealth from hindering his ability to bargain.¹⁰¹ Despite his best efforts to maintain a low profile, however, the scale of du Pont's buying precluded anonymity. Hyde could have learned from any number of sources about du Pont, who patronized both Charles Woolsey Lyon and Lord & Taylor during Hyde's association with them.¹⁰² Another likely source was one of Hyde's friends at the Metropolitan, Ruth Ralston or Charles Cornelius, whom du Pont hired to catalogue his Chestertown House collections.¹⁰³ The exact details of Hyde's introduction are lost to history, but he later recalled their first deal:

I was just new in the antique business. I had gotten a hold of a wonderful bed hangings set of red and white toile de jouy, Benjamin Franklin and Washington. . . It came from an old house up in Connecticut—it was found in the attic—the Cannonball house. . . . I heard that Mr. du Pont was starting to collect—

¹⁰¹ Lord, 85. Du Pont bought objects through agents and friends such as Benkard, favorite dealers Hyde, Joe Kindig, Jr., Elinor Merrell, and Mary Allis, and others. A secretary named Ruth McCollum described taking part on du Pont's behalf with other members of his staff around 1933, in Ruth P. McCollum, Oral History, May 8, 1975, Winterthur Archives. Du Pont frequently used aliases (including "Mr. Hyde," "Mr. Francis," and "H.F. Winthrop"), scattered bank accounts, and employed other divertive tactics to conceal his purchases. He was little known by other collectors until the 1929 Girl Scouts Loan Exhibition of American decorative arts, per Wendy A. Cooper, *In Praise of America: American Decorative Arts 1650-1830* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 7.

¹⁰² Day Book and dealer files, Winterthur Archives. Neither Charles Woolsey Lyon, nor Lord & Taylor correspondence from this period mentioned Hyde.

¹⁰³ See Ruth Ralston to HFdP, July 29, 1928 and HFdP to Ruth Ralston, August 5, 1928, Winterthur Archives, for a discussion of Ralston's efforts cataloging Chestertown House. Ralston (d. 1946) was the unnamed person remembered in Lord, 138 as "a woman who spent many months hunched on the floor with a tiny paintbrush, numbering in red every single antique object or piece of furniture in the entire house." Some of du Pont's early acquisitions still retain Ralston's numbering, and portions of her lists are preserved at Winterthur in Ralston's correspondence file. Charles Cornelius was engaged to author the proposed Chestertown House catalogue, which was never completed. See Cantor, 154-56.

he was just starting then. I went to see him. I took this with me, and he bought it right away.¹⁰⁴

The eighteenth-century bed hangings to which Hyde referred were made from cotton printed with the “Apotheosis of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington” pattern, an eighteenth-century import printed in several colorways in France and Britain (fig. 16). “Apotheosis chintz” had already become an icon for Americana enthusiasts. A well-known 1785 account praised a set of Apotheosis chintz bed hangings, and other historical records indicated that the pattern had been used “to furnish the guest chamber of a southern house where [French officers] had been entertained during Lafayette’s sojourn in America.”¹⁰⁵ As early as 1908 the Metropolitan Museum purchased and exhibited a fragment of the pattern.¹⁰⁶ In 1925 a second example was donated and exhibited in the museum’s textile study gallery, where it appears to have been viewed by Hyde and du Pont.¹⁰⁷

Hyde had acquired the textiles, comprising a “bed-covering, back drop, four curtains, and two valances” from the Cannonball House (fig. 17) in Ridgefield, Connecticut.¹⁰⁸ Built along Main Street c. 1713, the house earned its name because of

¹⁰⁴ JALH, Oral History.

¹⁰⁵ Frances Morris, “Printed Fabrics in the Munn Collection,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 20, n 2 (February 1925): 55. See also the exhibition organized and described by Joseph Downs, “Benjamin Franklin and His Circle,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 31, n 5 (May 1936): 98-104.

¹⁰⁶ “Complete List of Accessions,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 3, n 11 (November 1908): 215.

¹⁰⁷ Frances Morris, “Printed Fabrics in the Munn Collection,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 20, n 2 (February 1925): 53-55.

¹⁰⁸ JALH, receipt dated October 25, 1926, Winterthur Archives.

damage suffered during the 1777 Battle of Ridgefield, further enhancing the textile's Revolutionary associations.¹⁰⁹ Hyde's sale to du Pont began with a telegram:

OCT 20 1926
 HAVE JUST OBTAINED COMPLETE SET BED HANGINGS WASHINGTON
 AND FRANKLIN IN BETTER CONDITION THAN MUSEUMS. IF
 INTERESTED TELEGRAPH ME ELEVEN WEST FIFTY THIRD STREET
 AND WILL HOLD FOR YOUR INSPECTION.
 J A LLOYD HYDE¹¹⁰

Hyde had correctly gauged du Pont's interests; the textile added to his growing collection of "historical chintz" and decorative arts with presidential associations—with Washington and Jefferson as its principal players. The hangings even inspired du Pont to purchase "a handsome ball and claw foot mahogany bed"¹¹¹ for their display, and later to create Winterthur's Franklin Room (fig. 18), where the toile took center stage in a shrine to the statesman. Hyde's pitch was also pitch-perfect, the type of approach to which du Pont responded most favorably: directness and implied urgency, the flattery of first refusal, and the chance to surpass another collection.

¹⁰⁹ Architect Cass Gilbert acquired the house (123 Main Street) and some of its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century contents in 1907; it remained the family's summer residence until 1957. In 1966 it opened as the Keeler Tavern Museum. My thanks to Brenda DeVos for consulting period photographs and Gilbert archives for reference to Hyde, the hangings, or their sale, none of which were found. It seems likely the hangings were removed from the house before the Gilberts' ownership, as the family was careful to preserve as a Revolutionary relic a nineteenth-century George Washington print found in the house, and active in the Daughters of the Society of Cincinnati. See Julia Gilbert Finch, *Truths and Traditions of the Daughters of the Cincinnati* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1931).

¹¹⁰ JALH telegram to Henry Francis du Pont [hereafter footnoted as HFdP], October 20, 1926, Winterthur Archives. The museum Hyde referenced was likely the Metropolitan (who had exhibited a related textile shortly before), suggesting the museum was a topic of prior discussion, if not the site of their actual meeting.

¹¹¹ HFdP to JALH, May 31, 1927, Winterthur Archives. The hangings were subsequently mounted on a later bedstead from Salem.

The sale launched Hyde into du Pont's orbit and he was eager to advance the acquaintance. Hyde wrote soon after, "I hope some day to get down to Southampton to see your house as you once asked me to do, Charles Cornelius has told me so much about it that I am keener than ever to see it."¹¹² A few months later du Pont instructed Miss Ralston to bring along "Mr. Hyde" to Southampton for the weekend.¹¹³ In the meantime, Hyde worked towards the all-important stamp of approval from du Pont's most trusted advisor, collector Bertha Benkard.

Throughout his collecting career, du Pont solicited the advice and expertise of others. Although the vision and final decisions were his alone, he sought out dealers, curators, decorators, and fellow collectors whose expertise and advice he cultivated. Some he valued for their aesthetic sensibilities, their ability to arrange objects to create a desired effect. Some were respected for their connoisseurship, an understanding of an object's history and condition, and the ability to detect discrepancies between the two. Others he appreciated for their collecting acumen – their ability to acquire desirable objects unavailable to others (and lead him to the same). Admired for all of these traits was du Pont's friend Bertha Benkard, de-facto chair of his informal committee of taste. Befriending Benkard gave Hyde entrée into this circle and gave him a standard on which to model his own usefulness to du Pont.

Bertha King Benkard (née Bartlett) of New York was a girlhood friend of Louise du Pont "in the 1890s," perhaps meeting in Washington through their fathers' respective

¹¹² JALH to HFdP, May 26, 1927, Winterthur Archives.

¹¹³ HFdP to Ruth Ralston, September 7, 1927, Winterthur Archives.

political careers.¹¹⁴ In 1903 she married New York stockbroker Harry Horton Benkard. The couple was well-connected “with an ancestry dating back into the Colonial period.”¹¹⁵ Benkard dressed her windows with “proper window hangings and draperies made from old fabrics;” displayed “primitive pieces” with a restored cooking stove in her entrance foyer, and lit her Ninth Street apartment’s formal room “only by candles. (It took 65 of them.)”¹¹⁶ She had inherited antiques, including an embroidered Federal fire screen, a Rembrandt Peale portrait, a set of Sheffield whale oil lamps once owned by Joseph Bonaparte at his Bordentown estate in New Jersey, and a set of chairs—accompanied by the original bill of sale—by Duncan Phyfe, the Scottish-born cabinetmaker active in New York 1792-1854 whose Neoclassical furniture was amongst the most sought-after by Americana collectors.¹¹⁷ By 1907 Benkard was actively

¹¹⁴ Mrs. Reginald (Bertha) Rose, Oral History, December 13, 1973, Winterthur Archives. Accounts differ regarding when and where Benkard met Louise du Pont. Elsewhere Rose recalled them “coming out together” when their fathers’ worked in Washington; Col. Henry A. du Pont was Delaware’s U.S. Senator 1906-17. Benkard’s father Col. Franklin Bartlett represented New York in the U.S. House of Representatives 1893-97. Per Lord, 151, they met as young girls “in New York.”

¹¹⁵ “Mrs. Harry Horton Benkard: A Collector’s Portrait,” *American Collector* (July 11, 1935): 9. Benkard was the first woman elected member of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, and served as National President of the Colonial Dames of America. Per Harry Benkard’s obituary in *The New York Times*, January 4, 1928, he was a member of the Sons of the Revolution, Society of Colonial Wars, Mayflower Society, Loyal Legion, and the Society of the War of 1812.

¹¹⁶ “Mrs. Harry Horton Benkard: A Collector’s Portrait,” *American Collector*, 9.

¹¹⁷ According to “Benkard Memorial Room Shows Phyfe Pieces in a Fine Setting,” *American Collector* (May 17, 1934) 1, 11. The Peale was of Henry Post, Jr., “Mrs. Benkard’s great-great-grandfather and the Phyfe furniture from his wife, née Penelope Minton. “Mrs. Harry Horton Benkard: A Collector’s Portrait,” named the ancestor who patronized Phyfe as Mary Minturn; Joseph Downs, “The Metropolitan Museum Adds an American Room,” *American Collector* (January 1948): 14-15 listed as the buyer of the Bonaparte lamps as “Mrs. Benkard’s grandfather, Dr. Minturn Post.”

collecting, and considered an authority on Phyfe and his contemporaries. She counted collector and Metropolitan Museum of Art patron Emily de Forest and curator Charles Cornelius amongst her friends, an indication of her place within the Americana elite of New York. Cornelius and R. T. Haines Halsey featured Benkard's collection in the Metropolitan's 1922 exhibition and catalogue *Furniture Masterpieces of Duncan Phyfe*.¹¹⁸ According to the magazine *American Collector*, Benkard was:

constantly developing new interests. She has gone from Phyfe furniture to many other things, such as the block printed linens of Long Island and New Jersey, early lighting devices, and the decorative accessories imported from England and France in the Phyfe period. The China trade items, pictures, Oriental Lowestoft, lacquered tables and boxes, and the boxes that sea captains of New England and Philadelphia brought home from their Oriental voyages, predominate.¹¹⁹

She visited Winterthur as early as the 1890s, and seems to have been the first amongst du Pont family friends to collect, study, and promote American decorative arts (fig. 19).¹²⁰ By the mid 1920s, Henry du Pont and his sister Louise Crowninshield shared (sometimes begrudgingly) Benkard between them.¹²¹ Whereas Louise's husband Frank shared an interest in antiques, du Pont's wife Ruth did not. She considered antiques "symbols of

¹¹⁸ Charles Over Cornelius, *Furniture Masterpieces of Duncan Phyfe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1922). Benkard did not profess herself to be a Phyfe expert, but she did claim enough knowledge (and humility) to warn against the period's rampant over-attribution to Phyfe. Her reputation as a connoisseur has diminished considerably as subsequent scholars have attempted to distinguish Phyfe from his contemporaries, and originals from later reproductions and fakes. See Deborah Dependahl Waters, "Is it Phyfe?," *American Furniture* (1996), and a forthcoming catalogue on Phyfe by Peter Kenny of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

¹¹⁹ "Mrs. Harry Horton Benkard: A Collector's Portrait," *American Collector*, 9.

¹²⁰ The du Pont guestbook, Winterthur Archives, first recorded Benkard in 1905. My thanks to Maggie Lidz for informing me of her appearance in 1890s photographs at Winterthur.

¹²¹ Rose, Oral History, Winterthur Archives.

extravagance” and his parade of dealers as “competitors for her husband’s time.”¹²² To all outward appearances, she seemed grateful to Benkard for participating in her husband’s antiquarian pursuits.¹²³ Between frequent antiquing trips, visits, and letters, du Pont and Benkard shared almost daily phone calls. Benkard’s daughter, Bertha Rose, remembered that du Pont:

used to call her up around 7:30 in the morning. . . They would talk on the telephone for, I would say, an hour. It would be detail after detail. What particular tassel should be used on a curtain. Whether it was a wise idea to paint a certain panel this color or that color. It was such infinite detail that looking back on it . . . I think its interesting that anybody could have taken as much interest in somebody else’s house as my mother was obviously doing. . . . She must have had the most extraordinary memory for what that house was like, to be able to talk on the telephone and remember the room and the wall and the space and the color and everything in that enormous house.¹²⁴

As a widow whose finances did not allow collecting on the du Pont scale, Benkard must have enjoyed participating in the plethora of du Pont family residences and restoration projects. Given his extreme reserve and demanding nature, du Pont’s reliance upon her “expert advice and absolutely faultless taste and eye” must have been flattering.¹²⁵ She took part in many of the same museum efforts, as well as launching her own. In 1934 Benkard established in memory of her husband a period room at the Museum of the City

¹²² Lord, 138.

¹²³ See Lord, 5-6 for Ruth du Pont’s appreciation for the friendship Benkard and du Pont shared.

¹²⁴ Rose, Oral History, Winterthur Archives.

¹²⁵ Quote attributed to du Pont, but not footnoted in Jay Cantor, *Winterthur* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 158.

of New York.¹²⁶ She donated and arranged the 1790s-1810s furnishings (against paneling obtained from Hyde) to “show the elegance of New York homes at this date.”¹²⁷ A contemporary review of the installation declared “Mrs. Benkard’s scholarship is thorough and her taste impeccable. . . . Consequently the Benkard room sets a standard. It is *correct*.”¹²⁸

Benkard regularly visited the shop of New York upholsterer Ernest LoNano at du Pont’s behest to ensure the precision of his pelmets, pleats, and seams. Elinor Merrell, du Pont’s favorite source for textiles and trimmings, recalled in a 1974 Oral History the close collaboration between the two collectors during the 1920s and ’30s:

MERRELL: Well, first Mrs. Benkard would come. . . This was *all* the time. She would sort of look around and see [what du Pont might want]. She was a charming character, perfectly lovely, I thought. . . . So she would come in and then pretty soon Mr. du Pont would come in with her. . . . And they seemed to agree about everything.

INTERVIEWER: Was Mrs. Benkard in the decorating business at all?

MERRELL: Oh heavens no.

INTERVIEWER: Just a lady who was interested?

MERRELL: Well, I don’t know anything about that. I thought she was a lady just interested. I thought she was deeply interested in Winterthur. She seemed to know about every single solitary thing that he was talking about or wanted.¹²⁹

The interviewer’s confusion (or incredulity) about Benkard and du Pont’s relationship also prompted questions among their contemporaries. Some dealers were unnerved by

¹²⁶ “Duncan Phyfe Room at Museum Set Up to Show Life Here in 1800,” *The New York Times*, May 15, 1934. Louise and Frank Crowninshield donated the paneling from a Greenwich Street house.

¹²⁷ “Benkard Memorial Room Opened at City Museum,” *The New York Sun*, May 19, 1934.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, emphasis added. The Museum of the City of New York dismantled the room in 1992.

¹²⁹ Elinor Merrell, Oral History, March 6, 1974, Winterthur Archives. The interviewer was John Sweeny.

Benkard's habit of scouting for others—was she somehow skimming profit for herself, or reporting negatively on their goods or prices? Her gentle and generous manner, and strict refusal to accept payment from buyer or seller put their fears to rest.¹³⁰ As reported by *American Collector*,

The dealers like Mrs. Benkard. They know her cordiality is genuine and they respect her wide knowledge of American antiques. Let her attend an antiques show and the news, 'Mrs. Benkard is here,' travels rapidly from booth to booth. Similarly, a visit from her to any city of country antique shop is spoken of with pride and pleasure.¹³¹

Dealers came to understand—or at least realize—Benkard was a direct conduit to du Pont, who had rapidly ascended to the uppermost echelon of collectors. If they could not gain a personal audience with du Pont, they hastened to dash off notes informing him of anything and everything that “Mrs. Benkard thought a perfect beauty” or “Mrs. Benkard was enthusiastic over” or “Mrs. Benkard saw here.”¹³²

It is undocumented when or how Hyde first met Benkard, but not surprisingly, his shop at 8 East 66th Street, became a regular stop on her antiquing route when it opened in 1927. The two already shared a number of acquaintances, including Charles Cornelius and Hardinge Scholle, the recently appointed director of the Museum of the City of New York. Hyde's friendships tended to combine personal interest with professional

¹³⁰ Bertha Benkard (Mrs. Reginald) Rose, Oral History, July 13, 1976 (transcript). My thanks to Pauline Metcalf for sharing with me this oral history, copied from Museum of the City of New York files (now lost). Du Pont did favor Benkard with gifts and services, including the occasional use of his gardeners and other staff.

¹³¹ “Mrs. Harry Horton Benkard: A Collector's Portrait,” 9.

¹³² Katrina Kipper particularly benefitted from such recommendations, as Louise and Frank Crowninshield frequented her shop near their Marblehead home, accompanied by Mrs. Benkard whenever possible. See Mrs. Harry (Bertha) Benkard to HFdP, undated [mid December 1939] in Kipper files, and HFdP to Katrina Kipper 12-19-1939, Katrina Kipper to HFdP 12-19-1935.

advantage, and Benkard was no exception. He became nearly as attentive to Benkard as to his own mother, accompanying her to Winterthur, Boston, Marblehead—even to Paris;¹³³ and in turn, she promoted him as a bright, honest dealer with a good eye. Hyde impressed Benkard sufficiently for her to recommend him to du Pont. In May 1927 Hyde received a du Pont letter with a phrase many dealers considered a promising indication of an impending sale: “Mrs. Benkard tells me you have. . . .”¹³⁴

du Pont relied upon Benkard’s advice on aesthetic arrangements, authenticity, as well as collecting strategies. Hyde seems to have emulated that role, joining Benkard on du Pont errands, and eventually relieving her of some duties. He described his early involvement with Benkard and du Pont, an account perhaps clouded by the self-importance of youth:

“In the very early beginning [du Pont] got in the hands of one unscrupulous New York dealer, who is no longer in business, who sold him quite a few things that weren’t right. And those of us who knew this man were very sorry that Mr. du Pont had confidence in him because we knew, we felt, that he was being taken for a ride. Little by little with Mrs. Benkard’s help and a few other people like myself who did happen to know more about the subject than he did at *that* time—although he came to know more than most of us did later—we got him along in the right direction, I think.”¹³⁵

¹³³ JALH cable to HFdP, July 20, 1931, Winterthur Archives.

¹³⁴ HFdP to JALH, May 31, 1927, Winterthur Archives. The object of interest was “a Martha Washington chair” du Pont asked to have sent on approval. If the chair was purchased, it has not been identified in Winterthur’s collection.

¹³⁵ JALH, Oral History. It is unclear to whom Hyde was referring as du Pont’s disreputable dealer, because 1) du Pont was trading with dozens of New York dealers by the late 1920s, 2) much of Winterthur’s collection has not yet been retraced to its retail source, and 3) Hyde’s assessment may not conform to current appraisals of authenticity; even the best-intentioned dealers are subject to occasional grievances from clients or fellow dealers.

Hyde began scouting for potential du Pont purchases on his rounds to supply his shop and other clients, bidding for du Pont at auctions, and serving as another du Pont representative at LoNano's.¹³⁶ In order to gain du Pont's trust and favor, Hyde performed such services *gratis* and for the first few years kept his own commission to a scant 10 per cent on direct purchases.¹³⁷ Although du Pont (thrifty when he chose to be) may not have always agreed, Hyde later claimed that, "I was very careful not to overcharge him or put a high price on things, because I wanted to have his friendship always. . . . As long as I made a decent amount I wasn't like some of [du Pont's other dealers] that wanted the last penny for things, you see."¹³⁸ Given the volume of their dealings, and the multitude of clients Hyde gained through his association with du Pont, the relationship was undoubtedly Hyde's most profitable asset.

Like most dealers of the period, Hyde's offerings were broad, including American, European, and Asian Export antiques. By the fall of 1927 he was trading

¹³⁶ LoNano operated from New York and Williamsburg, Virginia, and during the height of its work for H.F. du Pont, had an outpost in Wilmington, Delaware. The Manhattan location was an important intersection for decorators, dealers, and their clients. Leaving furniture at LoNano's to be upholstered was particularly strategic for dealers who did not have galleries in New York, such as Winsor White, who then invited clients to view his stock there (leaving objects with fellow dealers required splitting the sale's profits). For more on LoNano's treatment of textiles, see Jeni Sandberg's presentation during Winterthur's 2007 *Chic It Up!* symposium titled "LoNano Redux: The Historic Interiors of Ernest LoNano, 1930-1950," thankfully preserved in Winterthur's video archives.

¹³⁷ du Pont was leery of paying for what amounted to decorating services, as in 1928-1931 he was in the midst of a nearly quarrelsome contractual arrangement with Henry Davis Sleeper over the decoration of Winterthur. Sleeper had completed satisfactorily his \$5,000 contract to decorate Chestertown House, but was unable/unwilling to devote sufficient time to his 1928 Winterthur contractual duties at the doubled rate of \$10,000. Du Pont eventually protested, and asked him to return a half of his fee. See Henry Davis Sleeper-HFdP correspondence from October 1928-August 1931, Winterthur Archives.

¹³⁸ JALH, Oral History.

everything from wallpaper and prints to furniture and Bristol glass. Hyde was handling his first period room transaction for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts when du Pont wrote:

Dear Mr. Hyde:
Should you ever run across a large American room, or know of one, I should be much obliged if you would let me know, as I might need one for this house here sometime.¹³⁹

This letter, which has been credited as du Pont's earliest reference to his intention to "Americanize" Winterthur with period architectural fragments, demonstrates Hyde's involvement at the outset of the transformation. Hyde answered the request with Readbourne, a 1733 house from Maryland acquired November of 1927, and the following February with Port Royal, the historic house that endowed Winterthur with more exterior and interior details than any other (figs. 20-23),¹⁴⁰ and in May of 1929, elements from the c. 1810 Pendleton House from New York.¹⁴¹ Architect Albert Ely Ives was tasked to rework the fragments into Winterthur's 1928-31 expansion, which Hyde described as an

¹³⁹ HFdP to JALH, October 6, 1927, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁴⁰ JALH, "Philadelphia: The House from the Train," in "After the Antique." My thanks to Winterthur's Greg Landry for discussing with me his extensive research, which is pending publication, into the specific elements related to Port Royal.

¹⁴¹ The Readbourne transaction took place over November and December of 1927. See Day Book and JALH to HFdP, December 8, 1927, Winterthur Archives. Readbourne elements were installed in the Readbourne Parlor, Readbourne Stair Hall, and du Pont Dining Room. Other architectural elements Hyde sold du Pont include woodwork from a 1806 New York Apothecary Shop installed in the End Shop and Staffordshire Room, and several mantels. Pendleton House provided woodwork for du Pont's Phyfe Room at Winterthur, four doorways are described in detail in JALH to HFdP, May 22, 1929, Winterthur Archives. Hyde discusses procuring it and other architectural elements in JALH's "New York: Rescuing Old Paneling, etc," in "After the Antique."

architectural “Chinese puzzle.”¹⁴² Du Pont had shifted his attentions from Chestertown House to Winterthur, expanding his collecting pursuits, and Hyde’s involvement, exponentially. Hyde supplied furniture, lighting fixtures, portraits, prints and frames, ceramics of all kinds, glass, silver and other metalwork, countless candlesticks, candelabrum, sconces, sculpture, even books and sheets of music.

A pivotal moment came in 1929, when Hyde tracked down and sold to du Pont a desk-and-bookcase made (and labeled) by Salem cabinetmaker Nehemiah Adams between 1796 and 1798.¹⁴³ The desk had been exported from Massachusetts to Capetown, South Africa, and its “repatriation,” as Hyde referred to it, sparked new research into American venture cargo.¹⁴⁴ It was one of several acquisitions Hyde made in the late 1920s that sparked “what proved to be an inspiration” for a new business model:

I would study carefully the history of American merchant sailing ships, those of pre-clipper date especially, see to which ports they had gone on their far-reaching voyages, learn through reading their manifests what ‘venture cargo’ they had taken along, and then go to as many prosperous ports-of-call the ships had touched as possible. Then I would look about and discover what might still be around (and purchasable) of the china, the glass, the silver, and the American furniture that had been taken away from Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston and New Orleans and scattered all over the world, and then repatriate it. . . .¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² JALH, Oral History.

¹⁴³ The date range is based upon the shop location printed on Adams’s label; the form resembles closely the “gentleman’s secretary” illustrated in Thomas Sheraton’s *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer’s Drawing Book* (1793). Hyde tracked the secretary through a published reference. See JALH, “JALH’s “Capetown, South Africa: The Salem, Massachusetts Piece,” in “After the Antique.”

¹⁴⁴ Adams’s desk-and-bookcase was celebrated as material evidence of a cooperative of Salem cabinetmakers involved in international shipping. See Fiske Kimball, “Salem Furniture Makers II. Nehemiah Adams,” *The Magazine Antiques* 24, no 6 (December 1933): 118-20 and Mabel Munson Swan, “Coastwise Cargoes of Venture Furniture,” *The Magazine Antiques* (April 1949): 278-80.

¹⁴⁵ JALH, “Preface.”

The scheme drew upon Hyde's college studies of Colonial trade routes, and gave him access to antiques whose desirability to collectors far outpaced their American survival and/or availability. Hyde's efforts so impressed du Pont that the exacting, enigmatic collector paid him the highest compliment in 1930, within four short years of their first meeting. Du Pont drafted a memoranda laying out a governing structure and detailed instructions for the preservation of his Chestertown House and its furnishings "as a Museum for the education and enjoyment of the public in perpetuity."¹⁴⁶ Du Pont instructed the board to:

appoint a Curator of the Museum, and should Mr. J.A. Lloyd Hyde be available at the time this Museum is created and he should wish the appointment, and if the Board of Directors feel at that time he is desirable, I direct that he shall be offered the appointment as Curator. He shall have the charge and custody of the land and buildings and of all the pictures, ceramics, ironwork, bric-a-brac, furniture, books and papers, belonging to the Museum. . . .¹⁴⁷

The Board of Directors was to include curators at the Metropolitan's American Wing, Pennsylvania (now Philadelphia) Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. This structure suggests du Pont considered Hyde as sufficiently scholarly to steer his private collection into the museum realm, and his experience as a dealer as beneficial. Until the establishment of formal education programs, expertise in American decorative arts was gained through self-study and the constant interaction with antiques, giving dealers a natural advantage over

¹⁴⁶ H.F. du Pont, "Memorandum for my Executors and Trustees and for the Directors and members of Chestertown House Corporation," unpublished memo February 28, 1930, Winterthur Archives, 1-2.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 3-4. The wording was softened with pencil edits: "I direct" became "I request" and "he shall" became "he should."

academics.¹⁴⁸ In 1930, du Pont felt the most knowledgeable, trusted curator for his collection was the 26-year-old dealer, J.A. Lloyd Hyde.

* * *

After du Pont inherited Winterthur in 1926, the Brandywine Valley estate became the powerbase of his four residences (Chestertown House on Long Island, an apartment at 280 Park Avenue in Manhattan, Winterthur, and a cottage at the du Pont family's winter enclave in Boca Grand, Florida), and the focus of his insatiable appetite for Americana. It served as a stage set for du Pont and what daughter Ruth Lord described as his "old money" circle. With an army of domestic staff and unlimited personal luxuries, the du Ponts lived a level of opulence afforded few outside of royalty. "He smoked gold-tipped cigarettes," Lord recalled, "stamped with his initials, also in gold."¹⁴⁹ Upon first seeing Winterthur, many visitors were awed by its scale and grandeur (fig. 24, 25). Elinor Merrell described her first visit in the early 1930s, a few years into her dealings with du

¹⁴⁸ In a review of several books on Chinese Export porcelain, the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (October-December 1962) asserted that dealers "whose daily lives are occupied with the handling of these fascinating porcelains. . . . gain more first-hand experience than the book-scholar can normally expect to have." When later establishing Winterthur, du Pont appointed both an academic (Joseph Downs) and a dealer (Charles Montgomery), a partnership that underscored the interdependence of collectors, dealers, academics, and museums. Downs (former curator at the Metropolitan and Philadelphia Museum) was expected to lend his vast and highly respected expertise and Montgomery, was expected to assist Downs manage day-to-day affairs. Downs became incapacitated and after his death, Montgomery was named Director, but felt he'd never earned du Pont's confidence in his connoisseurship beyond metalwork, per Charles F. Montgomery, Oral History. Ironically, this collector-turned-dealer-turned-curator was responsible for establishing prestigious graduate degrees in American decorative arts at Winterthur and later Yale University, which in turn helped demarcate the perceived boundaries separating collectors and dealers from curators and academics.

¹⁴⁹ Lord, 132-34.

Pont, “I had heard him talk about this room and that room, but didn’t have any idea of the scale of it. I knew it was *terrific* in scale, but you couldn’t imagine anything like it, really.”¹⁵⁰ Lloyd Hyde recalled first visiting Winterthur shortly after du Pont had inherited it in 1926. Per du Pont’s usual practice, Hyde would have traveled by train to Wilmington, been collected by du Pont’s chauffeur, and whisked at break-neck speed to the Winterthur gates, which swung open as if by magic:

I came in under the porte cochere. . . into this hall, which was a white marble hall with a very handsome staircase here, in bronze. The whole thing was Louis XVI. The Colonel had put it in in the ’90s, I think. It was really a superb hall. To the right was the so-called Red Room and it was called the Red Room because it was hung in red material. It had a very Victorian—French Victorian—or should I say, Second Empire mood. We had tea, and the whole thing was done in such style and charm it made a great impression on my young mind. . . . His worldliness and his knowledge of so many different fields had enormous appeal to me.¹⁵¹

The visit was his first of dozens, both professional and personal.

Like the objects he collected, du Pont was careful to keep his friends within what he saw as their most appropriate context, so as “never [to] put anyone in any way in an awkward position.”¹⁵² He and his wife (fig. 26) labored over their guest lists and table placements to orchestrate optimal conviviality for all. Of her parents’ dizzying social schedule, Ruth Lord recalled that “the favorite house party guest or overnight visitor was one with a dedicated interest in American antiques.”¹⁵³ Of the more than 800 dealers

¹⁵⁰ Elinor Merrell, Oral History.

¹⁵¹ JALH, Oral History. Hyde remembered this as 1928, and that he visited du Pont the weekend following the “Apotheosis” textile sale. Records establish he actually met and sold the “Apotheosis” textile to du Pont in 1926, visited Chestertown in 1927. His first visit recorded in du Pont’s guestbook was in 1928.

¹⁵² Edgar Bingham, Oral History, January 16, 1974, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁵³ Cantor, *Winterthur*, 132.

whom du Pont patronized, few shared more than a cordial acquaintance with him. Harold Sack recalled that when du Pont visited his family's shop, the collector had "no time for small talk, nor would he chuckle at any of my father's store of cheerful jokes."¹⁵⁴ Lloyd Hyde did not enter through the servants' entrance as other dealers recalled doing, suggestive of a difference in status. Perhaps most telling, by February of 1928, du Pont had warmed to Hyde enough to address him as "Dear Lloyd," and be addressed in return as "Harry." Hyde achieved this feat within less than two years, while others recalled waiting decades for the privilege.¹⁵⁵ A few favorite dealers saw du Pont socially, but no dealer maneuvered himself into du Pont's social and familial circles as successfully as Lloyd Hyde.¹⁵⁶

Winterthur was as formal an environment as many visitors would ever encounter, with an unceasing parade of occasions requiring distinct protocol and dress.¹⁵⁷ Du Pont obsessed over the tiniest detail in his own clothing as well as those of the domestic staff.

¹⁵⁴ Sack, 139. Regardless of du Pont's esteem for Sack as a connoisseur, the du Pont's social set was particularly intractable for Jews. See Lord, 157, for a du Pont party with an expressly anti-Semitic theme.

¹⁵⁵ Winterthur historian John Sweeney often asked oral history sources how many years it took for them to share a first-name basis with du Pont, as a measure of their intimacy.

¹⁵⁶ Joe Kindig II, the Philadelphia dealer on whom du Pont admired and relied upon tremendously, was a close comparison, and more than worthy of his own biography. Kindig is remembered by many as a gracious personality in addition to an astute antiquary with an innate understanding of antiques, particularly from his native Pennsylvania. Cantor, 150, characterized his relationship with du Pont as "a close friendship," but one largely confined to the realm of collecting. Delaware dealer David Stockwell (related to du Pont by marriage) and Boston dealer-decorator Edgar Bingham, both a generation behind Hyde, joined many of Hyde's same social circles.

¹⁵⁷ Lord, 69. Du Pont's motives were linked to aesthetics and propriety, but not meant to be exclusionary. Edgar Bingham insisted that "If somebody arrived without dinner clothes, he would probably come down in a business suit himself," in Edgar Bingham, Oral History.

He corresponded with Brooks Brothers, “on every point imaginable, from the butler’s garb at various times of day to the coachmen’s costumes for the stable and beyond (silk and rain top hats, matching lap robes, gloves of coon or pigskin).”¹⁵⁸ Some guests felt inadequate when faced with such finery. Dealer Harriet “Hattie” Brunner, who specialized in Pennsylvania German antiques, recalled that one visit to Winterthur made her painfully aware she “looked like an old country woman, wearing a ten-year-old hat.”¹⁵⁹ Architect Thomas T. Waterman felt enough pressure to write in advance of a visit, “I hope you aren’t having any very fashionable guests as I am down to one suit, one linen suit & evening clothes (!) and a much darned bathing suit.”¹⁶⁰ Opulence did not intimidate Lloyd Hyde, who was always nattily dressed, carried himself as “someone who had style and had an eye for very nice things.”¹⁶¹

Hyde possessed all the manners, skills, and lineage required to mix well within du Pont’s various social spheres. He had a quick wit and could converse pleasantly on a broad range of topics outside of antiques, including business innovations and conditions, travel, music, theatre, sports (he was an avid skier and swimmer, played golf and tennis, and rode horses), history, and current events of the day. As a bachelor, Hyde was also high on the du Ponts’ list of “Extra Men” for parties, to ensure an equal number of each

¹⁵⁸ Lord, 85.

¹⁵⁹ Hattie (Harriet) Brunner, Oral History, undated [autumn of 1977], Winterthur Archives.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Waterman to HFdP, July 31, 1936.

¹⁶¹ Polly Peabody (of Christie’s), as quoted in Stanley, “One thousand buyers to bid Tuesday on a man of the world’s noted antiques.”

sex.¹⁶² Guest numbers were particularly crucial for the du Ponts' many bridge parties, and although a mediocre player, Hyde filled out the table and kept the evening lively. Hyde paid special attention to du Pont's wife Ruth, making more palatable the company of museum professionals and dealers, most of whom she considered "anathema."¹⁶³ He also befriended several of du Pont's relatives, including Louise and Frank Crowninshield, Pierre S. du Pont, Pamela and Lammot Copeland, and H. Rodney Sharp, all of whom patronized Hyde for their homes as well as philanthropic efforts. For Louise Crowninshield, that included her Eleutherian Mills home near Winterthur, the Peabody Museum and Jeremiah Lee Mansion in Salem, Kenmore (the Fredericksburg, Virginia home of George Washington's sister), Mount Vernon, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the White House, and others.¹⁶⁴ Pierre du Pont, in addition to his management roles at the DuPont Company and General Motors, lavished attentions on the University of Delaware and his estate, Longwood. Pamela and Lammot Copeland ("Pam and Motsey" or "the Copes" to Hyde), a generation younger than their aforementioned cousins, served many of the same institutions. They relied heavily on Hyde as friend, advisor, and decorator (a term and role he preferred to avoid) for their home near Winterthur, called Mount Cuba.¹⁶⁵ In close collaboration with Hyde they

¹⁶² Lord, 159-160. Ralph E. Carpenter, interview with author, June 2008.

¹⁶³ Lord, 138.

¹⁶⁴ JALH, "Patna on the Ganges: The Story of the Big White House Chandelier," in "After the Antique."

¹⁶⁵ Hyde eventually objected to the Copelands' reliance upon his services, writing that he "had no thought whatever of making a penny out of [helping them with Mt. Cuba] at all, but as time went on and I found that I had to devote a great deal of time going into LoNano's over a period of about two years, hardly a week passing but I had to explain

formed an important collection of figural Asian Export porcelain now at the Peabody-Essex Museum.¹⁶⁶ Hyde supplied antiques to Rodney Sharp's Florida home, The Hacienda, and several historic buildings Sharp restored and furnished in Odessa, Delaware.¹⁶⁷ Du Pont contributed advice as well as Hyde-derived objects to numerous restoration and decoration projects outside of his own residences, including rooms at his local church, the University of Delaware, the American Museum in Britain, and most prominently, the White House, and State Department Reception Rooms.¹⁶⁸

Around 1930, H.F. du Pont and his circle befriended a soft-spoken Norwegian man named Arvid Knudsen, who had come to the United States as a student a few years before. The son of an Oslo banker, Knudsen was working for a New York decorator specializing in European antiques after a brief stint in publishing.¹⁶⁹ A mutual

things to him and give you and Pam what advice I could . . . it began to seem to me that I should have some return on the time and effort. . . . I never regarded myself as your decorator, or anyone else's for that matter, and it is never a role that I wanted to play." These passages are excerpted from correspondence in which Hyde explains having added a 10 per cent commission to LoNano's bill to the Copelands, much to their surprise. The matter was settled with apologies on both sides and a partial commission to Hyde. See Copeland-Hyde correspondence, December 1937-January 1938, The Pamela C. and Lamot du Pont Copeland Family Papers, Hagley Museum and Library.

¹⁶⁶ See William Sargent, *The Copeland Collection: Chinese and Japanese Figures* (Salem: The Peabody Essex Museum of Salem, 1991) and Morrison Heckscher, "Living with Antiques: Mt. Cuba in Delaware," *The Magazine Antiques* (May 1987): 1078-1087.

¹⁶⁷ See summarizes of these collectors and their homes in Maggie Lidz, *The du Ponts: Houses and Gardens in the Brandywine, 1900-1951* (New York, Acanthus Press, 2009).

¹⁶⁸ Hyde provided a chandelier to the rectory of du Pont's church (see Hyde receipt dated May 20, 1939, Winterthur Archives), for the American Museum on Britain paneling from a house in Colchester (JALH to HFdP, March 16, 1959, Winterthur Archives).

¹⁶⁹ The decorator was named as John G. Hamilton, Inc. at 20 East 57th Street, New York, in HFdP to Arvid O. Knudsen, November 11, 1930, Winterthur Archives. According to a recommendation letter by HFdP to James S. Barstow, February 6, 1931, Winterthur Archives, Knudsen was "a young Norwegian who has been in this country for three

acquaintance introduced him to du Pont. Knudsen managed to endear himself immediately to du Pont, who freely provided him with references for apartments and various jobs. Du Pont helped formalize Knudsen's immigration status, and supported Knudsen with numerous personal loans and "little cash presents."¹⁷⁰ Knudsen was eventually hired by Lloyd Hyde as a shop assistant, and became Hyde's partner in business and in life. By 1934, the two were traveling together and shared an apartment,¹⁷¹ followed by a compact country house Knudsen built in Old Lyme, Connecticut around 1941.¹⁷² Hyde added Knudsen to his letterhead (fig. 27), but there is little record of Knudsen's specific contribution to the business. Those few who still remember Knudsen (nicknamed "Knuts") recall him balancing out Hyde's lackings in stability, organization, and temper.¹⁷³ Although Knudsen had "no special training,"¹⁷⁴ he

years. . . His father, who is dead, was Otto Knudsen. . . [of] Den Norske Credibank or from Simers & Co. . . . I have known this young man since he has been in this country and think he is an extremely good sort and well worth helping. For two years he worked for Doubleday, Doran & Co. and has good reverences from them. . . He is 26 years of age and naturally speaks English, German, Norwegian, and French. When he was 17 he spent a year at the Choate School in Connecticut. . . ."

¹⁷⁰ HFdP to JALH, Jun 22, 1934, Winterthur Archives. Numerous sources at Winterthur and the Hagley Museum confirm du Pont's outlays were outpacing his resources.

¹⁷¹ du Pont advised Hyde that "the more I think of it, the more sensible it is for your to share the apartment with Arvid, as you certainly could live more reasonably in this way than you could do otherwise." See HFdP to JALH, March 9, 1934, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁷² The property's 13 acres included a nine-room house, small guesthouse, formal gardens along the marshy banks of Duck River. The interiors were a confection of French, English, Swedish, chinoiserie, Colonial Revival, and Moderne tastes. See JALH, "Living with Antiques: Duck Creek, a House in Old Lyme, Connecticut," *The Magazine Antiques* (December 1957) and Christie's, *The Contents of Duck Creek: The Estate of J.A. Lloyd Hyde, Old Lyme, Connecticut* (sale 293 July 13, 1982). New York: Christie's, 1982.

¹⁷³ My thanks to Albert Sack, John Benson, and the late Ralph Carpenter for sharing their recollections.

was considered knowledgeable in his own right on European and Asian Export antiques, and able to compose beautiful arrangements in interiors and gardens, particularly those at Duck Creek, his much-admired Connecticut house (fig. 28).¹⁷⁵ Du Pont took an almost proprietary interest in Duck Creek (as he did with friends and relatives' houses), sending plants for Knudsen's gardens, and even a suite of pilasters, remnants of du Pont's father's Louis XVI-style décor, which Hyde enjoyed describing as "the only bits of woodwork that ever came *out* of Winterthur"¹⁷⁶ (fig. 29). Hyde and Knudsen were favorite guests at Winterthur and in New York, as well as at the family compound in Boca Grande, Florida. Knudsen and Hyde were virtually inseparable until Knudsen's death in an auto accident on his way from New York to Delaware to visit the Copelands in 1952.¹⁷⁷

As du Pont's knowledge and interest in authenticity grew, Hyde's quasi-curatorial role gradually narrowed to the subject of international trade routes and the antiques related to them. The China Trade evoked romantic notions of patriotism, adventure,

¹⁷⁴ JALH, "Living with Antiques: Duck Creek, a House in Old Lyme, Connecticut," *The Magazine Antiques* (December 1957), 540-46.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ JALH, Oral History. H.F. du Pont removed the pilasters from what had been his father's White Room, when transforming it into the Empire Room. Knudsen installed them against mirrored walls in his dining room at Duck Creek. Knudsen's house comprised many architectural fragments, including slate tiles and stonework from the New London, Connecticut post office razed in 1939, and woodwork and marble salvaged from various historic Manhattan residences, and a parquet floor reportedly from Fontainebleau.

¹⁷⁷ Knudsen (then 46) was thrown from the passenger seat of an MG roadster when its tire was punctured on the New Jersey turnpike. The driver, painter Robert H. Bushnell, survived. See "Dealer Dies, Artist Hurt on Way Here," unlabeled newspaper clipping, April 24, 1952, Winterthur Archives, and "Obituaries," *The New York Times*, April 28, 1952. In reporting on the accident, *The New York Times*, April 24, 1952, confused Knudsen with a graphic designer of the same name.

exoticism, luxury, entrepreneurial acumen, and wealth—qualities Hyde sought to emulate. The most lucrative types of China Trade antiques included cut and engraved glass lighting fixtures England had exported to China, India, and the West Indies from the eighteenth- to early twentieth centuries. Hyde became known for uncovering elaborate examples, highly desired for adding sparkle to public and private collections. Hyde also dealt in large quantities of historic brocades, velvets, and other textiles from France, Spain, and Italy, considered appropriate materials with which to upholster antique furniture. His most advantageous specialty was Chinese Export porcelain (porcelain manufactured in China for export to western markets). From Alice Morse Earle's *China Collecting in America* (1892) to Esther Singleton's *China Described by Great Writers* (1912), China Mania was as fervent for American collectors as it had been for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century aristocrats. The established term for Chinese Export porcelain in Hyde's youth was "lowestoft," a misnomer resulting from a mistaken association with an English manufacturing port. From the earliest American collections, lowestoft featured prominently in antiquarian interior schemes, and museum galleries. Du Pont began collecting it even before American furniture, amassing more than 5,000 examples. Lowestoft appeared regularly in publications for collectors, artists, dealers, and the general public, yet no one had emerged as the field's primary expert. Hyde was eager to fill that void, an effort aided by more than a few nudges from du Pont.

Many generalist dealers who could afford to trade in lowestoft, did so, gaining the greatest profits by matching the right piece to the right buyer. Collectors sought "private trade" porcelain, examples with enamel decoration customized for the original owner or intended market. In the United States, the rarest and most expensive pieces could be

linked to patriots, important families, or the broader American market. Collector-scholar R.T. Haines Halsey rhapsodized about lowestoft in *The Homes of Our Ancestors* (1925), writing,

Possibly no element which went into the making of the American home is more characteristic than the Chinese table-ware which formed part of the home cargoes of our early ships in the Oriental trade. It crowded the dining-rooms in the vicinity of the ports from which the ships sailed on their long voyages when our nation was striving for a foothold in the commerce of the world.¹⁷⁸

Commanding top prices were those with the Society of Cincinnati's emblem (fig. 30)—considered by Halsey “the most aesthetically charming”¹⁷⁹—followed by monograms or coats of arms, emblems of states, and eagles. Less desirable was mass-produced blue-and-white porcelain without customized decoration, sometimes referred to as “maid’s china.”

Matched sets were highly prized by collectors eager to set their tables with antique dinner services, and to crown their mantles, highboys, and overdoors with garnitures. Du Pont’s elaborate table settings and entertainments required dinner services with hundreds of component pieces (fig. 31).¹⁸⁰ By 1930, several of his most expensive acquisitions were lowestoft porcelain services, including 44 pieces with the Society of Cincinnati emblem, purchased for \$60,000 from a family with ties to George

¹⁷⁸ R.T.H. Halsey and Elizabeth Tower, *The Homes of Our Ancestors* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1925), 201.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 204.

¹⁸⁰ See JALH, “Paris: Chinese Export Dinner Service Bought out of the Louvre,” in “After the Antique.” See also Jennifer Nicole Lindner, *Food and Dining at Winterthur: The Personal Passions and Public Performances of Henry Francis du Pont*, (master’s thesis, Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, 2001).

Washington.¹⁸¹ Along with Hyde, du Pont's main purveyors were Charles Woolsey Lyon (transactions with which Hyde was no doubt familiar), R.W. Lehne, Katrina Kipper, Arthur Sussel, and Ginsburg and Levy.¹⁸²

An occasional source was Edward August Crowninshield, the cousin of Louise du Pont Crowninshield's husband, Frank.¹⁸³ Edward was a collector-turned-dealer specializing in Chinese Export porcelain and "Finer Antiques" in his shop, The Old Corner House in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.¹⁸⁴ The Crowninshields' China trade ancestry enhanced his reputation as an Export porcelain expert, and added to his stock. In 1925, Edward signed his name in Louise's guestbook as "one of the antique nuts" in her circle.¹⁸⁵ He was a frequent traveler through the United States and Europe, often visiting Louise and Frank at their various homes in Boston, Marblehead, Florida, and later Delaware. Hyde described him as

the first dealer in Chinese Export porcelain in the country. He had a very strong influence on Harry du Pont. . . . Eddie was very nice, and he had loads of Chinese

¹⁸¹ Roughly the equivalent of \$757,715 in 2010 currency. The supplier was Thomas McCreedy, date 5-8-28. See Daybook, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁸² See Daybook, Winterthur Archives. Lyon transactions included a 175-pc set for \$12,000 11-1-27, 146-pc set for \$5,000 4-9-29, and 96-pc set for \$5,760 5-28-31; R.W. Lehne supplied a 160-pc set for \$3,500 8-4-26, 194-pc set for \$10,000 10-8-28, and several others; Katrina Kipper sold an 18-pc set of green Fitzhugh with an eagle for \$1,800 5-15-28; Arthur Sussel a 33-pc set for \$1,500 11-12-29; Ginsburg and Levy sold various individual pieces for large sums.

¹⁸³ Crowninshield had been a famous tennis and hockey player in the 1890s-1900s. Du Pont's purchases from him were infrequent overall, but included a service with blue star boarder and sepia medallion decoration for \$13,500 purchased 2-18-30.

¹⁸⁴ "Crowninshield Sale . . .," *American Collector* (November 15, 1934): 1. See also Crowninshield's obituary in "Traveling About" *American Collector* (October 1938): 18.

¹⁸⁵ Entry for November 7-9, 1925, Louise and Frank Crowninshield Guestbook, Crowninshield Papers, Hagley Museum and Library.

porcelain – export porcelain - used to sell it to all the Brahmin families, all the New York collectors. Harry used to see a great deal of him because he was always at his cousin Frank and Louise's house. I sort of inherited his mantle, so to speak, in the Chinese export porcelain and lowestoft business.¹⁸⁶

Hyde gave Crowninshield more credit than he ultimately deserved. He was probably the first antiques dealer du Pont knew socially, but far from the first Chinese Export dealer and—despite the advantage of familial ties—was not a particularly “formative influence” on du Pont.¹⁸⁷ Crowninshield did, however, warn du Pont against purchasing a 232-piece Chinese Export dinner service with a faked crest of New York State (fig. 32 is an authentic example), and a phony provenance linked to the Van Rensselaer family. Already several transactions removed from the perpetrators of the fraud, the set was offered to du Pont in the spring of 1930 by Boston dealer Clinton I. Nash (apparently acting on ignorance rather than deception). Edward Crowninshield examined the service and “running his fingers over the ‘Van Rensselaer’ plates he announced at once that they ‘didn't feel right.’ A more careful examination convinced him that the service was of plain Lowestoft porcelain which had been skillfully decorated on top of the glaze, then sandpapered to give approximately the correct ‘feel.’”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ JALH, Oral History.

¹⁸⁷ Cantor, 89. Cantor did not attribute this assertion, but the likely source was Hyde’s Oral History. Apart from the dinner service previously mentioned, du Pont’s purchases from Crowninshield were few and relatively minor. Little correspondence survives between the two, and Crowninshield is listed just once (1931) in du Pont’s guestbook (Hyde was recorded 36 times in the 1930s alone).

¹⁸⁸ “Faked Lowestoft,” *Time* (November 3, 1930). See also that article’s correction in *Time* (November 17, 1930) in which Anderson Galleries denies ever offering “spurious” porcelain to du Pont, and “Woman is Jailed in Chinaware Deal,” *The New York Times*, October 22, 1930. Benjamin Ginsburg recalled the incident in Benjamin Ginsburg, Oral History, July 16, 1976 (transcript), Winterthur Archives, in which he remembered the

In the autumn of 1930, Boston detectives traced the service back to Manhattan, and a Sixth Avenue art restorer specializing in antique porcelain, described as a “traditional sinister oriental . . . known as ‘Mr. Chicago.’”¹⁸⁹ The incident was amongst the most widely publicized episodes of art fraud at the time, and mentioned du Pont by name as a near-victim. Du Pont sent clippings of the “counterfeiting chinaware swindle” to Hyde, writing, “I know you will be interested in the enclosed.”¹⁹⁰

The scandal immediately depressed the price of Chinese Export porcelain, particularly services with New York coats of arms. Hyde was traveling through China at the time, one of several trips that enhanced his authority on China Trade objects (fig. 33). Upon returning, he informed du Pont he intended to send a letter of congratulations to Crowninshield, a sign he thought himself Crowninshield’s peer. He was forced to convince du Pont of the same, when in June of 1931 du Pont wrote to Hyde that a “Lowestoft expert” (whom he did not identify) had questioned a punchbowl Hyde sold to du Pont in November of 1928 (fig. 34).¹⁹¹ The example was a hong bowl, so-named for being decorated with images of Canton’s waterfront with hongs (trading houses) of Western countries. As the United States did not have its own hong in Canton until after the 1784 Treaty of Paris, the hongs depicted on most bowls were European, identifiable

incident also appearing in the pulp serial *The Detective Story* (sadly not found). The surface of genuine export porcelain was commonly termed “orange peel.”

¹⁸⁹ “Faked Lowestoft,” *Time*. The first seller of the porcelains was arrested and tried (as was his wife), but “Mr. Chicago” was not, as repainting ceramics was not considered a crime.

¹⁹⁰ HFdP to JALH, October 29, 1930, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁹¹ See JALH receipt dated November 8, 1928, Winterthur Archives, describing it as a “Large Lowestoft Punch bowl decorated with some of the East India Company’s offices in Canton and the American Consulate established in 1784.”

by flags flying overhead. Hong bowls were a rare form, and those with an American flag extremely so.¹⁹² It raised the suspicion of du Pont and his unnamed advisor, who wrote to du Pont, warning him:

I have looked up many records and asked a number of people about this American flag. . . . A great authority on Chinese paintings and enameling told me that he had never heard of one with the American flag, because the border of the bowl, as well as decoration, should it to be made not later than 1775. . . . There is a white flag—pure white—on the right of the Russian flat on [an authenticated] bowl. This would, of course, be very easy to make into an American flag.”¹⁹³

Hyde fired back:

Dear Harry—

You can tell your ‘expert’ friend (with my compliments) that he is an unmitigated ass and should not talk of things of which he knows so little as Lowestoft. He is famous for the latter characteristic and you ought to know it. . . . As to date and the idea that the border must be prior to 1775 he is as far off as he is about the rest. . . . When you go to the American Wing on Wednesday go into the dining room next to the Benkard Phyfe room, bend your sylph-like figure and see the [similar border] on their bowl and note that this bowl was presented by General George Washington to one of his officers about 1785 . . .

If your connoisseur is casting aspersions, as I strongly suspect he is in a not too subtle way—ask him what all this talk of his about looking in records means. There are no records.

¹⁹² America’s first China trade ship, *Empress of China*, reportedly carried “4 Factory Painted Bowles @ 5-1/2 [dollars] each,” but historic references specifically to bowls with American flags were unknown. There were, however, several examples of hong bowls with American flags available for Hyde’s defense, including one in the collection of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design since 1909 (the first in a public collection), and at the Peabody Institute, Salem. See Kee Il Choi, Jr., “Hong Bowls and the Landscape of the China Trade” *The Magazine Antiques* (October 1999) and David Howard and John Ayers, *China for the West* (London: Sotheby, Parke, Bernet, 1978), 209. My thanks to Hope Alswang for sharing RISD’s hong bowl file, including research compiled by Tom Michie.

¹⁹³ Du Pont did not identify the source whom he quoted in HFdP to JALH, June 25, 1931, Winterthur Archives, but in 1928 Crowninshield had “Edward Crowninshield spent an hour here the other day with a magnifying glass and a strong light, and I really believe that the American flag on our Embassy bowl was painted on by some enterprising person, as the glaze is certainly entirely different on the American flag from any others.” See HFdP to JALH, undated letter [December 1928], Winterthur Archives.

Moreover, I bought the bowl in Stockholm three years ago where there would have been no more object in painting the U.S. flag on it than the Hottentot.

Je m'en fiche—
Yours, Lloyd¹⁹⁴

Du Pont accepted Hyde's reassurances and kept the bowl, now considered a centerpiece in Winterthur's extensive Chinese Export collection. The skirmish strengthened du Pont's confidence in Hyde's expertise, and encouraged Hyde to formalize it by organizing exhibitions, lecturing, and publishing.¹⁹⁵ Hyde contributed articles to such publications as *The Magazine Antiques*, *Country Life*, and *Connoisseur*. His proudest achievement was his *Oriental Lowestoft: With Special Reference to the Trade with China and the Porcelain decorated for the American Market* (1936). Charles Scribner's Sons published 1,000 copies of the volume in a specialty binding, comprising 161 pages and 31 generously sized plates (fig. 35).

Hyde's book added to a proliferation of antiques publications that had begun in the late nineteenth century and dramatically increased in the twentieth. Collectors, dealers, and curators committed to print their thoughts on objects and collecting. Publications helped establish common vocabularies and standards of connoisseurship. They had a tremendous impact on the market, defining desirable characteristics, justifying or discrediting authentications, publicizing and influencing prices. For collectors, dealers, and students hindered by a lack of money, proximity, or access to collections, publications illustrated objects they could not otherwise see. On several

¹⁹⁴ JALH to HFdP, June 26, 1931, Winterthur Archives.

¹⁹⁵ Among others, Hyde curated a "China Trade Show" at New York's Grolier Club that opened March 22, 1934, and an exhibition titled "Chinese Painted Enamels" installed at New York's China Institute in America, October 1969 – January 1970.

occasions, Lloyd Hyde used antiques books and magazines to scout for acquisitions, tracing them back to their owners through the information printed.¹⁹⁶ Publishing helped dealers weather the market's ups and downs. It also provided a means of access to collections and collectors not otherwise inclined to consort with dealers.

Despite du Pont's refusal of most requests to publish his collections, he allowed Hyde to include them in *Oriental Lowestoft*. Illustrated alongside Hyde and du Pont's porcelain were examples from Louise Crowninshield, Natalie Blair, Harry T. Peters, Hardinge Scholle, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of the City of New York, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, Pennsylvania Museum, the Peabody Institute in Salem, British Museum, and Sweden's East India Museum, and from fellow dealers Arthur Sussel, Katrina Kipper, Sarah Conover, I. Staal of London, and Perret et Vibert of Paris. Hyde's *Oriental Lowestoft* was perhaps the most lavishly printed antiques book of the decade, with conversational chapters discussing the manufacture and trade of porcelain, specific porcelain forms with categorizations (e.g. "Jesuit" decoration, marine decoration, armorials) that continue to be used in Chinese export scholarship. Advertisements touted the book as a scholarly reference for serious collectors and students, yet "treated with a spirited and entertaining manner."¹⁹⁷ *American Collector* declared *Oriental Lowestoft* "a complete account of the how, why, and wherefore" of Chinese Export, and that "until now literature on the subject has been both scattered and confusing."¹⁹⁸ *Burlington*

¹⁹⁶ JALH, "Vermont: The Duncan Phyfe Piano," "Capetown, South Africa: The Salem, Massachusetts Piece," and "The Papier Peint by Papillon," in "After the Antique."

¹⁹⁷ Advertisement, *American Collector* (December 1936): 13.

¹⁹⁸ Thomas H. Ormsbee, "Oriental Lowestoft Was Once Carried as Ballast," *American Collector* (December 1936): 8.

Magazine reviewed the book as “quite the most useful work yet devoted to the subject,” but complained of several “errors in detail” and the lack of bibliographic sources.¹⁹⁹ Du Pont helped promote the book amongst his friends. He reported back to Hyde that collector-curator Luke Vincent Lockwood “spoke very favorably about your Lowestoft book” but that “you ought to have, in addition to the very rare pieces, some 12 or 14 pages showing the more usual kinds, as the average reader wants to see what he has rather than something he cannot get,”²⁰⁰ a comment Hyde and du Pont may have taken as an inadvertent compliment. *Oriental Lowestoft* did not stem the flood of articles and later books from other authors on the subject, but affixed Hyde’s reputation to the connoisseurship and collecting of lowestoft and—for better or worse—to the term.²⁰¹

As much as du Pont valued Hyde’s knowledge, collecting acumen, and charisma, their friendship was often tested by their business dealings. No one (except Bertha Benkard) could master every detail of du Pont’s collections nor entirely meet his expectations for service and attention. Du Pont’s admonishments could be harsh, such as the letter he wrote to Hyde complaining of sloppy handwriting and lax recordkeeping: “Another time for God’s sake write a business like letter giving me the exact dimensions of anything I might want, keeping a copy for your files in New York.”²⁰² In another letter regarding a desirable fireplace surround, du Pont warned, “I naturally do not want

¹⁹⁹ “Foreign Periodicals,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 71, n. 414 (September 1937): xvi.

²⁰⁰ HFdP to JALH, February 23, 1935, Winterthur Archives.

²⁰¹ Hyde adopted as his cable address “Lowestoft New York” around 1930.

²⁰² HFdP to JALH, February 20, 1932, Winterthur Archives.

to have it hacked out by one of your favorite men and have it broken in two.”²⁰³ Hyde did not share du Pont’s innate punctuality—a personal failing that resulted in arriving at an auction too late to bid for an object du Pont had wanted.²⁰⁴ Tardiness was no excuse according to du Pont, who insisted, “There are two ways of going to an auction. Either you buy or you don’t.”²⁰⁵ More than once Hyde disregarded du Pont’s demands for confidentiality. In September of 1932, a picker-turned-dealer Winsor White informed du Pont that he had overheard Hyde and Charles Woolsey Lyon conspiring to sell in secret partnership to du Pont a group of wax miniatures similar to one just acquired for Winterthur. It was not the intended collusion, but the indiscretion that prompted du Pont to respond, “I am very much annoyed with [Lloyd’s] having discussed what he had seen at my house with Mr. Lyon.”²⁰⁶ In February of 1933 du Pont purchased from Hyde a nineteenth-century Neoclassical pier table and took on approval a mirror in the same style. Hyde seems the first informed of du Pont’s plans for an Empire Room, and unfortunately did not keep those plans to himself. Du Pont dashed off a reprimand:

The Lammot Copelands dined here last night and I was much surprised to hear Mrs. Copeland say that you told her I was doing an Empire Room! . . . I think it is highly unprofessional as well as very bad taste to be talking about your would-be

²⁰³ HFdP to JALH, February 15, 1932, Winterthur Archives.

²⁰⁴ JALH, Oral History.

²⁰⁵ Lord, 179.

²⁰⁶ HFdP to Winsor White, September 19, 1932, Winterthur Archives. White informed du Pont of the plot because he had sold the first miniature to du Pont, a fact he wanted to keep secret from Lyon. See Winsor White to HFdP, undated letter [mid September 1932], Winterthur Archives. Hyde was planning to approach du Pont without mentioning Lyon’s involvement (or profit share). The incident is not complimentary to Hyde’s integrity, but suggests that Hyde was better positioned than Lyon to execute the sale.

clients. I think if you would remember that ‘silence is golden,’ it would be very much to your advantage.²⁰⁷

Du Pont was as secretive about divesting himself of antiques as he was about acquiring them. As his vision, knowledge, and confidence developed, he occasionally sold objects that no longer met his standards. Antiques were frequently touted as a solid investment, and most collectors “traded up” or sold objects from time to time. So as to avoid speculation about their finances or judgment, many collectors preferred to keep their selling discrete.²⁰⁸ In 1929, du Pont turned to Hyde to dispose of a few portraits and some furniture on his behalf.²⁰⁹

Hyde placed the objects in an auction that took place shortly after the 1929 Stock Market Crash and generated a fraction of what du Pont had paid to buy them. “The sale could hardly have come at a worse time, a fact which explains the low prices,” wrote Hyde.²¹⁰ Friendship notwithstanding, du Pont demanded that Hyde make up for the shortfall between du Pont’s purchase prices and auction revenue, and credit du Pont for

²⁰⁷ HFdP to JALH, April 19, 1933. Du Pont was particularly anxious to keep secret his extravagances during the depths of the depression. The receipt for a “American Empire Console Table with white marble top, columns, and pilasters; gilt legs and stenciling on mahogany” is dated February 16, 1933 and “mantel clock in Empire style - archway supported on four alabaster columns with gilt capitals” is noted in the Daybook as purchased April 24, 1933.

²⁰⁸ Shortly after a well-publicized donation to Yale University, Francis Garvan divested much of his remaining collection at public auction. Revealing his name as the seller probably added to the sale’s profitability, but it also inspired rumors that “Garvan was broke. . . . He couldn’t pay his bills.” Charles Montgomery, Oral History.

²⁰⁹ American Art Association/Anderson Galleries, Inc., November 19-21, 1929. See JALH to HFdP, January 2, 1930, Winterthur Archives.

²¹⁰ JALH to HFdP, December 26, 1929, Winterthur Archives.

commissions charged in the initial sales.²¹¹ Du Pont's reaction to the poor results demonstrated that he expected to receive his money's worth—if not a profitable rate of return—on antiques investments. Hyde scrambled to cover du Pont's shortfalls, the first of several financial blows to befall him in the early 1930s.

Within months of major auctions that set new records for Americana, Hyde and his fellow dealers found themselves caught at “the ‘Zero Hour’ in the antique business.”²¹² The crash slowed the pace of turnover, sharply depressed prices, and made it much more difficult for dealers to raise the capital necessary to obtain stock. Small dealer-to-dealer transactions could be negotiated with a trade note, an I.O.U. for buying stock on credit. Ready capital enabled dealers to be more aggressive in their acquisitions, providing the means to buy expensive stock with proven marketability, or the security to take risks on objects of untested appeal. Perhaps even more important than large amounts of capital was steady funding, enabling dealers to hold out for a profitable sale. Without capital, dealers were limited to incoming sales revenue, forcing many to liquidate their stock near—or below—the price they had paid, just to keep one step ahead of creditors.²¹³

Hyde benefitted greatly from an asset most dealers did not have, a brother in finance. His older brother, J.J. Hindon Hyde, followed their father into the legal

²¹¹ HFdP to JALH January 6, 1930, Winterthur Archives.

²¹² HFdP to Winsor White, September 19, 1932, Winterthur Archives. The sales include the famous Reifsnnyder sale in April 1929 and Flayderman sale the following spring, described from the perspective of both buyer and seller in Harold Sack and Wilk, *American Treasure Hunt: The Legacy of Israel Sack*.

²¹³ Such difficulties befell Israel Sack in the 1930s. See Albert Sack, Oral History.

profession, then moved into bonds and securities.²¹⁴ Banking ties were a tremendous advantage in a business fueled by fast-paced, often unforeseeable, transactions. Harry Arons of Ansonia, Connecticut was best admired amongst his fellow dealers not for his knowledge or eye, but for his bank backing. His purchasing power was ample enough to afford him the position of “wholesaler in American antique furniture and accessories.”²¹⁵

In 2003, Albert Sack recalled the envy he felt for Arons’s bank affiliation:

I was inspired by Harry Arons, who was a phenomenon. In the ’30s after the crash, Harry Arons had credit with the Birmingham National Bank. None of the dealers had any money but Harry had credit. I don’t know how much, maybe between twenty-five to fifty thousand dollars, and so the dealers would come up on the weekends and buy. They would buy on notes. They had 3-month notes and then if they couldn’t sell, they could renew the notes with interest and so they had six months to sell.²¹⁶

Hyde seems to have benefitted from similar bank backing, and also borrowed capital from some of his wealthiest friends and clients. Friendship and business mixed freely throughout his career, although not always easily. Friends such as H.F. du Pont, Pierre du Pont, Lammot Copeland, and Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva (a Lisbon banker and collector-dealer he met abroad), lent Hyde money for acquisitions. Hyde repaid investors with a fixed interest sum, a percentage of the profits, credit towards the investor’s own purchases, or a combination of all three. None of Hyde’s backers depended on such transactions for income (although all faced occasional disturbances in

²¹⁴ John James Hindon Hyde was born in 1896. In 1923 he married Cynthia Bigelow, a judge’s daughter, and left the firm of Hyde, Butler & Co. for the bond firm of Gilbert Elliott & Co., per *The New York Times*, April 10, 1923. By 1926 he was an officer at the Fifth Avenue Bank, then later with Van Alstyne, Noel and Co., an underwriting firm. My thanks to J.J.H.’s grandson (Hyde’s grand-nephew), Jim Hyde, for sharing his memories.

²¹⁵ “Traveling About,” *American Collector* (December 1937): 15.

²¹⁶ Albert Sack, Oral History with Brock Jobe, March 5, 2003, Winterthur Archives.

wealth). Perhaps they were lured by the idealized dealer's life that Hyde portrayed—always hunting the next great find—or wanted to claim at least some profit from the antiques market to offset their spending.

H.F. du Pont was Hyde's earliest recorded backer, offering to lend him \$10,000 in advance of his 1930 trip to Hong Kong "for the purpose of buying antiques for resale."²¹⁷ The terms of repayment are not clear, but so that du Pont would feel "covered against any possible eventuality," Hyde took out an insurance policy in the same amount naming du Pont as the beneficiary.²¹⁸ In 1932, Hyde borrowed more capital from du Pont, again guaranteed with an insurance policy. It was repaid within two years in objects rather than funds, valued to equal a rate of 5 per cent interest.²¹⁹

That Hyde was able to repay du Pont at all demonstrates the efficacy of his foreign buying strategy. The trade journal *American Collector* advised in the 1930s:

If an antiques dealer doesn't like travel, and objects to eating and sleeping away from home, he is apt to find himself without an adequate and representative stock. All he can afford to offer is what his vicinity affords, and that is frequently limited. . . . Antiques are no longer like the Fuller brush man. They don't come knocking at shop doors but must be sought for like any other rarity. So if you are not willing to take to the road and hunt, stay out of the antiques business.²²⁰

Hyde applied these principals on an international scale. Lloyd Hyde asked family, friends, and acquaintances for introductions to foreign nationals, diplomats, and expatriots who could direct him to potentially fertile ground. On the road, he canvassed

²¹⁷ JALH to HFdP September 27, 1930, Winterthur Archives.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ JALH to HFdP, undated letter [June 6, 1934] and HFdP to JALH, June 8, 1934, Winterthur Archives.

²²⁰ "Ye Notice Board," *American Collector* (July 1937): 2.

embassies, and foreign nationals' schools, clubs, and churches. He placed ads in foreign newspapers, canvassed antiques districts, bazaars, and museums, asked for leads to antiques at banks, restaurants, and even churches who served Europeans and Americans abroad.

Travel had the added benefit of providing the buffer of time, space, and funds to assert some independence outside of the du Pont clan. Although no location was too remote for du Pont to command near-constant contact, travel saved Hyde from being defined entirely as the du Pont family “errand boy.”²²¹ Travel was also personally transformative for Hyde (fig. 36). It appealed to his wanderlust, helped polish his worldly persona, and cultivated his own taste for luxuries that had been out of his reach in New York. A postcard Hyde sent to his mother from northern China was inscribed, “[I] Have blown myself to some silk pajamas. You won’t know the old Lloyd!”²²²

In the course of Hyde’s early travels he and Knudsen met the Lisbon banker Ricardo do Espírito Santo e Silva, with whom they formed a strong friendship and partnership (fig. 37).²²³ The *Journal of the American Oriental Society* described Espírito Santo as “the most successful Portuguese antique dealer of our time, a man of great taste who made a fortune in the trade . . . many of the choicest pieces [of Chinese Export

²²¹ Pamela Copeland to JALH, February 20, 1933, The Pamela C. and Lamot du Pont Copeland Family Papers, Hagley Museum and Library.

²²² JALH to Ellen Hyde, postcard from “Chen Foo”, date illegible [possibly 1928 or 1929], Winterthur Archives.

²²³ See *Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva: Coleccionador e Mecenas* (Lisbon: Fundação Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva, 2003). My thanks to the staff members of the Fundação Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva, Banco Espírito Santo, and the Espírito Santo family for their assistance.

porcelain] passed through his hands.”²²⁴ The earliest of the surviving correspondence suggests they met in Paris, followed by a three-week visit with Espírito Santo, his wife, and their daughters at their seaside home in Cascais. By September of 1931, Hyde had borrowed capital at 6 per cent interest from Espírito Santo for furniture, and eight cases of lowestoft they exported from Lisbon to New York.²²⁵

In early November 1931, Hyde rented a new shop at 20 East 57th Street in New York and there held an exhibition of furniture, lowestoft, Sheffield plate, and two portraits (of himself and Knudsen in Chinese attire) by Eduardo Malta, a Portuguese painter whom Ricardo do Espírito Santo favored and supported. Hyde reported back, “There have been at least a hundred and fifty people here to see the exhibition and I wish you could see it as it looks very pretty, and you would feel very much at home with so many of your things around. Arvid is assisting me and we are here everyday from ten until six.”²²⁶

Despite these positive signs, sales were slow. Hyde failed to make his first repayment installment to Espírito Santo in December as scheduled, and extended the second repayment by six months. In May 1932, Hyde contributed stock to an auction at Anderson Galleries in hopes of generating quick sales. Hyde wrote to Espírito Santo that the sale “was one of the worst disappointments I have ever had in business.”²²⁷

²²⁴ John Alexander Pope, “Review of Books,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 82, n. 4 (October-December 1962): 601-02.

²²⁵ JALH to Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva (hereafter footnoted as RESS), September 6, 1931, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

²²⁶ JALH to Ricardo do Espírito Santo e Silva, November 12, 1931, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

²²⁷ JALH to RESS 5-16-32, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

Everything was so well done in preparation. The catalogue which you have seen, was [as] well written and illustrated as possible (it cost \$3,000) the sale was widely advertised, and the exhibition which lasted for a week before the two days sale was better attended than any they have had this year at the [New York auction house] American Art Galleries . . . and yet when it came to the sale the prices were sickening. You will see for yourself when you go over the priced catalogue which I am sending along. The Lowestoft was probably the thing that brought the lowest figures and the Sheffield plate, too, went very badly. The French furniture went fairly well but the English brought almost nothing.²²⁸

Anderson charged percentages to both the seller and buyer (still a common practice amongst auction houses). For each lot Hyde had to “buy in,” he had to pay both fees, magnifying his losses. “As I owe the bank here eleven thousand and you five, and have a couple of thousand more in bills,” wrote Hyde, “you can imagine how disappointed I am.”²²⁹

Hyde’s debts mounted, and he was forced to ask Espírito Santo for repeated extensions. In a letter dated December 4, 1932, Hyde attributed the weak antiques market to political turbulence:

Perhaps when the war-debt question has been somewhat settled and the atmosphere will change but that is rather a big problem to solve very quickly. As you know the antiques game has been affected almost worse than any other and no one here seems to be doing anything at the moment. . . . I hate like the devil to say it but unless some miracle takes place (which I should be very grateful for) I shall not be able to meet your note which comes due a month from tomorrow or even pay off a part of it as I would like to do. I have put aside enough to pay the interest, of course. I particularly hate to do this as you have been such a saint about the whole thing and are more than a creditor—a friend. I have done everything that is humanly possible to avoid this but there is the situation. You need have no worry, my dear Ricardo, and if you will simply regard it as an investment returning you interest for another six months you will have the principal in time.²³⁰

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ JALH to RESS, December 4, 1932, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

Hyde's conscience was perhaps eased by the knowledge that the loan was no hardship for Espírito Santo, one of the world's wealthiest men. He wrote his creditor-friend that he'd been somewhat comforted to read in *The New York Times*, "that conditions in Portugal (especially government finances) were better than in any other country—that the cost of living was lower than ever and everything very plentiful. . . I hope it is true and that the Bank goes along prosperously."²³¹

Hyde's outstanding debt did not preclude further business transactions. Espírito Santo continued to offer Hyde antiques, and Hyde continued to request things he thought readily saleable. Considering his outstanding debts and the soft market, Hyde suggested the fairest way to proceed was to sell objects on Espírito Santo's behalf, retaining a 20 per cent commission for himself.²³²

If he did not know it before, Hyde was made painfully aware in 1931 that his relationship with Espírito Santo was far from exclusive. Espírito Santo had offered Hyde a lowestoft service with sepia medallion decoration and a blue and gold star border. Without having it on hand, he offered the service to H.F. du Pont, who agreed to buy it.²³³ Within a few days, du Pont was offered the very same service by Alfred Peter Rochelle-Thomas of London, as well as Edward Crowninshield, for a considerably lower price. Du Pont was irate to have promised more money than necessary for a service of murky ownership, especially one being shopped simultaneously to other potential buyers. Under pressure, Hyde revealed as the source Espírito Santo, whose conduct du Pont felt

²³¹ JALH to RESS 1-11-33, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

²³² JALH to RESS 12-4-1932, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon.

²³³ du Pont's inventory card system dates the transaction to 11-28-1931, Winterthur Archives.

warranted the moniker “Mr. Devil de Santo” rather than “Holy Ghost,” as his name would be translated.²³⁴ Du Pont kept his commitment to Hyde, however, and at the higher price. “It was bad business all around,” wrote Hyde to Espírito Santo, “and if this man were not an unusually decent sort there would be real trouble about it.”²³⁵ H.F. du Pont had once again sided with Hyde. “If he felt I had done something he didn’t approve of in the way of collecting,” Hyde later recalled, “he’d be very understanding about it and very good.”²³⁶ While their friendship would last forty years, du Pont’s reliance on Hyde’s expertise waned after World War II, which interrupted antiquing at every level.

²³⁴ HFdP to JALH 12-6-31, Winterthur Archives.

²³⁵ JALH to RESS 11-12-31, Banco Espírito Santo Historical Archive, Lisbon. RESS also dealt with I. Staal, a London porcelain dealer, whose other dealer-buyers included Katrina Kipper and Sarah Conover.

²³⁶ JALH, Oral History.

Antiques in Wartime

Although amongst its less important consequences, war has a tremendous impact on the antiques trade (fig. 38). As the physical embodiment a nation's cultural heritage and prosperity, antiques are often the target of enemy action. As commodities, they are bought, sold, and stolen at much higher frequency before, during, and just after armed conflicts. When bank accounts, businesses, and less portable properties can be frozen, seized, or destroyed, selling valuable heirlooms can be a primary means of survival. In the late 1930s, many buyers considered antiques a safe investment in a volatile economy, and anticipated ready profits when the conflict interrupted importation.

Bearing in mind these economic opportunities, Lloyd Hyde sailed for France on August 16, 1939.²³⁷ The voyage was extremely dangerous. Germany's Nazi government (having already conquered Czechoslovakia) was openly eying its European neighbors and trolling the high seas. London had begun evacuating civilians in earnest that June. Tensions were high on Hyde's ocean liner, the palatial *Normandie*, particularly as it sped from New York to Le Havre at full knots in a "zig-zagging course" to avoid detection. Hyde and his fellow 1,416 passengers were allowed only intermittent power and radio communication during the journey. *The New York Times* reported, "'As far as we knew, war had broken out,' one passenger said. 'All of the lights in our cabins were extinguished, except for indirect lighting and small bed lamps.'"²³⁸

²³⁷ Date supplied by André Soares, *Beyond Paradise: The Life of Ramón Novarro* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 224.

²³⁸ "Travelers in Dark Aboard the *Normandie*," *The New York Times*, August 29, 1939.

Hyde recalled in his memoirs only his luxurious satinwood cabin, and delightful evenings spent in the ship's glamorous dining salon. In Paris he assembled "a pot-pourri of old silks, lighting things like lamps à Bouillotte, glass chandeliers and wall lights," and lowestoft.²³⁹ He was in the midst of acquiring a set of French wallpaper panels he later sold to du Pont when commotion in the streets alerted him that, "the Germans had begun the war which was to effect us all."²⁴⁰ He left Paris by cross-channel ferry to Southampton, and managed to visit a few London antiques shops before catching the *Aquitania* to back New York.

Hyde described to Russell Plimpton his "interesting, if somewhat hectic" trip:

It was pretty depressing to see [Europe] under the present tense conditions but I am glad to have seen it. When I was in London I found, at one of the most reliable dealers, two of the most interesting glass chandeliers that have ever come to light. . . As I went into the shop they were being taken down for safekeeping for the duration of the war.²⁴¹

Hyde was able to sell at least one of the chandeliers soon after returning. Hoping to repeat this success, he sailed back to Europe in January 1940. His destination was Portugal, the home and powerbase of his old friend and partner Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva. Dictator António de Oliveira Salazar declared Portugal neutral for the duration of the war, clandestinely shifting his allegiances between Allied and Axis powers. Portugal was the western-most coast of Europe and buffered by Spain. For some, it was their last

²³⁹ JALH, "The Papier Peint by Papillon and the Second German War," in "After the Antique."

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ JALH to Russell Plimpton, November 8, 1939, MIA Archives. Hyde sought out the chandeliers after seeing them illustrated in J.B. Perret, "Evolution of the English Glass Chandelier," *Apollo* 30 (September 1939): 101-04, 139.

hope of escaping to North or South America. Wealthy aristocrats and exiled royals were the most welcome refugees; for them, Portugal was an ideal haven.²⁴² Lisbon became the *de facto* capitol of European affluence, hosting expositions, concerts, fashion shows, and film premieres that otherwise might have been held in London or Paris. Lavish lifestyles continued with only minor interruptions in Cascais and Sintra, coastal resort areas northwest of the Lisbon. Recounting his own experience as a refugee there, author Antoine De Saint-Exupry wrote that Lisbon carried on as if it might fool God into thinking there was no war (fig. 39).²⁴³

Hyde may have been fooled as well. In the autumn of 1940 he used his du Pont family connections to obtain assurances that General Motors would facilitate his return home despite wartime conditions.²⁴⁴ Hyde wrote to Lammot Copeland of his intentions “to look especially for unusual pieces of Lowestoft, large yardages of silks (for which there is considerable demand here and virtually no supply) and good lighting things—no furniture, of course.”²⁴⁵ When commercial traffic was temporarily halted, Hyde found himself severely delayed, and very nearly stranded. H.F. du Pont sent a letter to Portugal, chiding Hyde for his naïveté:

I saw Arvid about ten days ago. . . and he told me he understood [from you] that General Motors had a cabin on every plane coming back to this country, but I

²⁴² For more on Lisbon’s refugee population, see the documentary film directed by Pavel Schnabel, *Lisbon: Harbour of Hope* (1994).

²⁴³ Antoine De Saint-Exupéry, *Lettre à un Otage* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945).

²⁴⁴ Pierre S. du Pont had formed close financial ties between the du Pont family and General Motors, for which he served as board chair and president. See Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. and Stephen Salsbury, *Pierre S. du Pont and the Making of the Modern Corporation* (Washington, DC: Beard Books, 1971).

²⁴⁵ JALH to Lammot Copeland, January 13, 1940, Hagley Museum and Library.

quickly disillusioned him of that idea. However, I hope you will get back by hook or by crook. If you remember, I told you before you went away that you would have a hard time getting back. I think it is outrageous of the Company to assure you of a safe return when they could not guarantee it. I suppose, however, you will have time to comb Portugal very thoroughly and get a great many treasures.²⁴⁶

Portugal was certainly a safer choice than Hyde's Asian ports of call, thanks to domestic unrest and Japan's 1937 invasion of China (fig. 40). On July 24, 1938, *The New York Times* reported "astronomical measures must be used to describe the loss of life and property. . . . Chinese newspapers have been declaring that ten million dollars' worth of curios, jewelry, and antiques have been burned, stolen, or destroyed."²⁴⁷ Again, Hyde may have considered the chaos an opportunity, but would have had little hope of getting antiques out of the country safely. According to the *Times*, "the losses to China's new railway system have been astonishing. Hundreds of locomotives with thousands of passengers and freight trains have been bombed, shelled out, burned, or derailed and horribly smashed." Japanese naval blockades throughout the region made shipping by sea equally perilous.

Vessels, seaman, and sailing routes around the world were pressed into military service, bringing international commerce and leisure travel to a virtual standstill. The war in Europe even curtailed antiquing in the Caribbean and Bermuda.²⁴⁸ Transatlantic

²⁴⁶ HFdP to JALH, November 20, 1940, Winterthur Archives. For more on the difficulties of travel at this time, see memoir Henry J. Taylor, *Time Runs Out* (New York, Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1942).

²⁴⁷ Hallett Abeni, "China's War Loss is Huge," *The New York Times*, July 24, 1938.

²⁴⁸ In 1941 the British forbid the exportation of "furs, antiques, works of art, precious stones, jewelry or postage stamps" from the islands per "Export Curb Placed in Bermuda," *The New York Times*, February 16, 1941.

travel for cargo and people became extremely difficult and dangerous thanks to enemy actions and rampant pilfering on all sides. A widely publicized incident occurred in October of 1941, when Nazis sank a British vessel that included a shipment of antiques on its way to New York. Out of the ship's entire cargo, only one case, filled with antique glass meant for Steuben, was later recovered; it had survived intact except for one broken decanter stopper, and a pair of candelabra stolen in transit by a customs official.²⁴⁹

American sympathies for such difficulties ended with the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. After the U.S. joined the combat, a War Shipping Administration sought to prioritize military efforts over all commercial enterprise. Within a year, the office announced that shipments of luxury goods specified as “furs, soap and toilet preparations, metal articles, art works and antiques” were no longer eligible for war-risk insurance coverage.²⁵⁰ Other agencies applied new sales taxes on antiques and luxury goods in 1942 and 1944.²⁵¹

The war bore both positive and negative consequences for domestic trade in American antiques. Most importantly, after Pearl Harbor countless auctioneers, dealers, restorers, and pickers had to sacrifice their most precious resource—their sons. Long rosters of fighting antiquarians included Albert Sack, David Stockwell, Charles Wright,²⁵² Fred Johnson of Kingston, NY,²⁵³ Ruth “Pressed Glass” Webb Lee’s son

²⁴⁹ “Glass Cargo Here Once Lost at Sea,” *The New York Times*, February 28, 1942.

²⁵⁰ “Export Expenses Allowed Traders,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 1942.

²⁵¹ “Boom in Luxury Sales for Cash Began Long Before Beat-Tax Rush, Survey Shows,” *The New York Times*, April 1, 1944.

²⁵² “Traveling About,” *American Collector* (November 1945): 15.

²⁵³ “Traveling About,” *American Collector* (May 1945): 15.

Robert,²⁵⁴ and Arthur Sussel's son Allan.²⁵⁵ As in other fields, many women took on the home-front duties of their husbands and sons. The owner of Queen Anne Cottage in Massachusetts, Katrina Kipper (who supported herself with antiques after her fiancée died in World War I), had to reduce her hours to "by appointment only" when her refinishers and deliveryman went off to war.²⁵⁶ Some dealers such as Mary Allis, who shuttered her Connecticut folk art shop to work in an airplane factory,²⁵⁷ gave up the business entirely during the war. Trade journals abounded with announcements of which dealer or dealer's son was the latest to enlist or be drafted, or to be injured or killed.²⁵⁸

Apart from the war's human cost, Americana dealers had great difficulties coping with wartime shortages. Gas rationing and the scarcity of automobile parts made antiquing nearly impossible outside major cities or public transit routes for dealers and customers. Winsor White wrote to du Pont in August 1942, "I have just returned from a trip up the New England coast; used up the last of my 'B' gas card and my 'A' card up to the first of December. I guess I will have to look into the BLACK MARKET I guess, as the board here are holy terror's [sic]."²⁵⁹ Agnes Marshall, author of a regular column on

²⁵⁴ "Traveling About," *American Collector* (January 1946): 17.

²⁵⁵ "Traveling About," *American Collector* (May 1945): 15.

²⁵⁶ Schmutzler, Oral History.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ After Bertha Benkard informed H.F. du Pont that silver dealer Stephen Ensko lost his son William in 1944, du Pont sent condolences to the family, "I am so distressed to hear about it and I want you to know how much I am thinking of and feeling for you. It is all so tragic and heartrending, but still one would not want one's children to do anything else." HFdP to Stephen Ensko, October 5, 1944, Winterthur Archives.

²⁵⁹ Winsor White to HFdP, August 21, 1942, Winterthur Archives.

antiquing called “Shopping Around,” reported in September of 1942 that in the previous year she had traveled “four thousand miles in search of fine things to call to your attention,” but “wartime gas and tire regulations here in the east prevent any such extensive motoring.”²⁶⁰

In the spring of 1942, Lloyd Hyde decided to place his antiques business on hold for the duration of the war. Throughout his life he exhibited both patriotism and wanderlust, which may have influenced his enlistment. Perhaps his primary concerns were monetary; Hyde had an elderly mother to help support and antiques sales had been erratic at best.²⁶¹ In June of 1943, *American Collector* reported, “J. Lloyd Hyde, author and authority on Oriental Lowestoft, has enlisted in the United States Army and is now stationed in Washington D.C. His business is being carried on by his partner.”²⁶²

At 39 years of age, Hyde was a good deal older than the average recruit, and far worldlier, having circled the globe and consorted with sophisticates and aristocrats. These qualities made him an unlikely soldier in “this man’s army,” but Hyde was destined for the Office of Strategic Services. In June of that same year President Roosevelt authorized the agency by executive order “to gather intelligence and conduct subversive activities and psychological warfare” in the European and Asian theatres

²⁶⁰ Agnes Marshall, “Shopping Around,” *American Collector* (September 1942): 16.

²⁶¹ The OSS division in which Hyde served paid higher salaries than most other military or state department service, an enticement for many recruits according to George C. Chalou, ed., *The Secrets War: The Office of Strategic Services in World War II* (Washington, D.C., National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), 124.

²⁶² “Traveling About,” *American Collector* (June 1943): 16. “His partner” referred to Arvid Knudsen.

under the sole direction of General William J. Donovan.²⁶³ Whereas the average soldier required skill and fortitude on the battlefield, most OSS agents relied upon deftness in the drawing room.

The OSS grew from a close-knit cadre of 1,000 agents to around 13,000 American and foreign recruits at its peak in late 1944.²⁶⁴ According to military historian Patrick K. O'Donnell, the OSS's "shadow war" necessitated unorthodox methods and surprising alliances:

Safecrackers were sprung from prison, and Ivy Leaguer professors were recruited to analyze what was stolen from the safes. U.S. army paratroopers and other elite troops were recruited to serve as operatives. Communists who fought against Franco in the Spanish Civil War were recruited for operations in Spain or potentially to work with Communist resistance networks. Americans and foreigners alike were trained as citizen spies.²⁶⁵

Peacetime notions of decency and decorum were often cast aside to achieve the greater good. Although homosexuality might have barred one from typical military service, the OSS attempted to use every personal attribute—even so-called improprieties—to its advantage. It was thought amongst the intelligence field that homosexuals "must have already learned a great deal about clandestine meetings, messages, and habits of secrecy. . . . In this sense they were prime candidates for intelligence."²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Eugene Liptak, *Office of Strategic Services 1942-1945* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2009), 5.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ Patrick K. O'Donnell, *Operatives, Spies, and Saboteurs: The Unknown Story of the Men and Women in WWII's OSS* (New York: Free Press, 2004): xvii.

²⁶⁶ David McKnight, *Espionage and the Roots of the Cold War: The Conspiratorial Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 2002) 137.

OSS service was by invitation only. Potentially desirable candidates were handpicked from other service branches and from the broader civilian pool. Hyde's social circles, travel history, and New York residence offered ample opportunity to approach or be approached by OSS operatives; as early as February 1942 several OSS offices had secretly opened in Manhattan. A suite of offices at 630 Fifth Avenue housed agents whose mission was to "obtain intelligence, recruit agents, and maintain liaison with foreign government representatives in New York."²⁶⁷

References were required, and as he had done for apartment rentals and bank loans, Lloyd Hyde provided the name of H.F. du Pont, an ideal choice as a senator's son and director of a company with a long history of government contracts. Winterthur was a mid-point of travel between New York and Washington D.C., and not surprisingly its guestbook lists a number of visitors engaged in various aspects of military and intelligence service. After being interviewed by a lieutenant in Naval Intelligence on May 18, 1942, du Pont reported back to Hyde:

After he had asked a lot of questions, I finally inquired what part of the service you had applied for, and he told me vaguely what it was, so I said I thought you would be an excellent man to send anywhere around the world, as you would always have a perfectly good reason, viz: looking for Lowestoft and lighting fixtures. . . .²⁶⁸

Du Pont apparently omitted Hyde's many lapses in discretion in regards to his clients' collecting habits. Hyde passed the initial evaluation procedure and reported to

²⁶⁷ Elizabeth P. McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies: Women of the OSS* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1998), 90

²⁶⁸ HFdP to JALH, May 18, 1942, Winterthur Archives.

Washington D.C. He spent the summer of 1942 bouncing between New York, Old Lyme, and various lodgings in Washington D.C.

Hyde's Engagement Sheet signed September 29, 1942, indicated he was to be a Desk Head in Lisbon. Hyde's Employing Officer, Gardiner Platt reported to a superior officer on Hyde's status September 1943, that "when the Engagement Sheet was prepared, it was presumed that Lloyd would go over for the United States Commercial Company" (a government-run corporate cover), but his mission was apparently revised, and overseas deployment placed on hold.²⁶⁹

While awaiting his foreign assignment, Hyde may have undergone the same intense assessment and training sessions described by fellow recruit named Roger Hall, who published one of the first, and most descriptive, accounts of OSS service:

There was an extensive course in body search, then an even longer one in how to hide something in or on your own body. How to search a room, then how to conceal something in the same room. How to tap a phone, how to know if one was tapped. How to rig up a dictaphone from a regular telephone, and how to plant it. How to steal anything you could lift, how to open letters and reseal them. How to tail someone through hell and high water, how to get rid of someone tailing you. How to break into practically anything anywhere, and get out again leaving the place looking untouched.

There was an excellent course on lock picking, and another on how to make and use skeleton keys. We learned how to use secret writing, and how to detect it. How to interrogate a person, and how to trick him into revealing things. How to maintain cover, and the hundreds of ways it could be broken. How to pass messages over the phone or by hand. The best way to carry secret documents, the best way to take them away from someone else.

In the rough-stuff department, how to kill with a small rock, a pencil, or even a folded newspaper. How to act in enemy territory, how to avoid checks and

²⁶⁹ OSS Personnel File, JALH 230/86/33/05, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. The United States Commercial Company to which Hyde was originally assigned was a government-owned corporation tasked with keeping strategic materials safely in Allied hands.

searches. Yet all we learned was no more than a fraction of what a man or woman had to know in order to stay alive one day where it counted.²⁷⁰

After a period of mandated seclusion, Hyde kept in close contact throughout his service with partner Arvid Knudsen, H.F. du Pont, Bertha Benkard, and his mother. The stress and tedium of Washington work was alleviated by frequent invitations from the du Ponts, Crowninshields, and Copelands, and introductions to their diplomatic and collecting friends in Washington D.C. In August 1943, Arvid Knudsen joined Hyde in Washington D.C., where he obtained “a most responsible job” with the Office of Lend-Lease Administration.²⁷¹ The Copelands hosted the pair at Mt. Cuba and took Hyde fishing in Quebec that summer. In between their visits, du Pont kept Hyde informed on sales and mutual friends in the antiques world, his latest finds and wants, and news of the ever-changing Winterthur.

Hyde was still stateside in February 1944, complaining:

My departure seems to be more and more delayed which would be all right if I only knew the actual date when it would take place. As it was I gave up my flat as of the first of this month and have been living hither and yon in a very disconcerting manner ever since. . . . Incidentally, I thought that if you have been vainly searching for any special pieces of fabrics, tassels, or other hard-to-obtain antiques and will tell me—I might run across same.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ Roger Hall, *You're Stepping On My Cloak and Dagger* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004 reprint of 1957 original), 78-79.

²⁷¹ JALH to HFdP, undated letter [late October, 1943], Winterthur Archives. Knudsen's exact responsibilities are unknown, the Office of Lend-Lease Administration was transitioning into the Foreign Economic Administration. See also HFdP to Arvid O. Knudsen, August 16, 1943, and Arvid O. Knudsen to HFdP, September 7, Winterthur Archives.

²⁷² JALH to HFdP, undated letter [February 1944], Winterthur Archives.

After several postponements of his deployment, Hyde finally sent word of his safe arrival in Lisbon June 11, 1944, just after the Allied invasion of Normandy that marked a turning point in the war. He knew the city well from his frequent antiquing visits since the 1930s. Hyde's friendship with Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva positioned him at the social, political, and economic center of Lisbon.

OSS agents in Portugal engaged in a myriad of operations, including monitoring military and commercial shipping traffic, supplying and coordinating OSS units in Spain and occupied France, and keeping an eye on foreign agencies engaged in similar clandestine activities. Portugal was the most accessible source for tungsten (an important material in munitions manufacturing) which gave it leverage in negotiating with both Axis and Allied powers. It was also a primary neutral harbor for transporting fuel, food, currency, weapons and other equipment, and even personnel in and out of Europe.²⁷³

Period newspapers described the city as "teeming with spies . . . as ubiquitous as bootleggers were during prohibition in America."²⁷⁴ Portugal was portrayed as such in contemporary films, including *Casablanca* (1942) and *Storm Over Lisbon* (1944) and in novels such as *Passport to Oblivion* (1945). While reviewing the flood of spy novels,

²⁷³ Just before Hyde arrived, OSS Lisbon was responsible for two disastrous missteps: 1) A team of OSS agents were discovered in Spain, and those not gunned down by Spanish police were tried, and (having been disavowed by the U.S. government) hanged. 2) OSS agents stole Japan's communication ciphers from its embassy in Lisbon. The Japanese were able to detect the Lisbon theft, so changed their codes, rendering the theft counterproductive. Even more frustrating for the Joint Chiefs in Washington, the U.S. had already obtained the Japanese ciphers, an advantage the Lisbon caper cost them. The blunders resulted in a restructuring of OSS Lisbon coinciding with Hyde's service there. See Patrick K. O'Donnell, *Operatives, Spies, and Saboteurs: The Unknown Story of the Men and Women in WWII's OSS* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 43-48.

²⁷⁴ Harold Denny, "Portugal Viewed as Eventual Ally," *The New York Times*, January 18, 1944.

The New York Times proclaimed “it would be difficult to imagine a more appropriate setting for a tale of espionage and counterespionage than Lisbon.”²⁷⁵ Hyde described the scene to H.F. du Pont,

These particular days are very important ones. . . . There is a certain tenseness here in Lisbon these days and it is interesting to see the crowds gathered in the central square reading the latest news of the ‘liberator of Europe’ posted on the kiosks. It must be very exciting in London and I wish I could be there. However this place is really very interesting and I have been busy as a beaver lately.²⁷⁶

What can be gleaned about Hyde’s OSS duties in Portugal? It seems likely that they involved the “Devil de Santo” and his circle (fig. 41). The United States, Great Britain, and other countries kept careful watch of Portugal’s blatant profiteering, and its involvement with Nazi gold.²⁷⁷ Vast sums of money Germany confiscated from holocaust victims and occupied nations were funneled into untraceable foreign currencies through Lisbon’s centuries-old banking systems and colonial relationships.²⁷⁸ A focus of international suspicion at the time was Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva, whose bank

²⁷⁵ Isaac Anderson, “Tales of Spies and Murderers,” *The New York Times*, October 28, 1945.

²⁷⁶ JALH to HFdP, June 13, 1944, Winterthur Archives.

²⁷⁷ Greg Bradsher, “Searching for Records Relating to Nazi Gold,” *The Record* [Newsletter of the United States National Archives] (May 1998).

²⁷⁸ In the late 1990s, international commissions of experts on history, law, and finance were formed to investigate the looting, dispersal, and disposition of millions of tons of Nazi gold. Investigating organizations have charged that Portugal was second only to Switzerland in its importation of Nazi gold, some of which was smuggled to Macao, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brazil. See the report on the 1997 transnational meetings regarding this issue, *Nazi Gold: The London Conference* (London: the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 1998) and George Carpozi, *Nazi Gold: The Real Story of How the World Plundered Jewish Treasures* (Far Hills, NJ: New Horizon Press, 1999).

maintained large deposits in Berlin's Reichsbank.²⁷⁹ Like his friend and dictator Salazar, he was also considered pro-Nazi (while in Portugal in 1940, the Duke of Windsor was nearly kidnapped by German agents, despite Espírito Santo's supposed protection).²⁸⁰

It remains unknown if Hyde was asked to monitor Espírito Santo secretly, or if the two collaborated.²⁸¹ Whichever the case, he was able to stay close to his friend while engaging in three of his favorite activities—parties, antiques, and travel. Compared to the assignments of many OSS operatives, Hyde's service as "a humble attaché to our Embassy in Lisbon" was not a hardship post. In Lisbon he stayed at the Ritz Hotel (frequented by diplomats and spies). His own accommodations on the coast were comfortable, and kept in order by a maid and cook. His letters back to du Pont describe a whirlwind of activities both social and strategic:

²⁷⁹ Marlise Simons, "Nazi Gold and Portugal's Murky Role," *The New York Times*, January 10, 1997.

²⁸⁰ When Germany invaded France in 1940, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor fled to Portugal. They stayed in Cascais far longer than expected, golfing, gambling, and attending bull fights with Espírito Santo Silva, believed to be under imminent threat of capture by German agents until they were finally convinced to leave Portugal for the Bahamas. See Geoffrey Bocca, *The Woman Who Would be Queen: A Biography of the Duchess of Windsor* (New York: Reinhart and Co., 1961), 179-181.

²⁸¹ Espírito Santo's surviving family was not aware of Hyde's OSS connections, but it was widely understood that "anyone in Lisbon during the war was probably involved in something," per Mary Espírito Santo Silva Salgado, Espírito Santo's granddaughter. Ms. Salgado kindly allowed me to visit the Cascais estate and provided some family background in September 2009. Hyde was one of several OSS Lisbon agents drawn from the field of antiques and art history. Another was Robert Chester Smith, under the sponsorship of exiled Turkish-born oil scion Calouste Gulbenkian. Smith devoted his scholarly career to Iberia and Latin America, which helped cover his intelligence work for the OSS and later CIA. See Sala, Dalton, and Tamen, Pedro, et al., *Robert C. Smith, 1912-1975: A Investigação na História de Arte/ Research in History of Art* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2000). Yet another was Theodore Rousseau, a paintings curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art who was posted to Spain and Portugal before joining the commission on Nazi-looted art.

The house at Sintra is proving to be very pleasant. . . I do so wish you could come over and be with me. Mr. and Mrs. Howel came out and spent the night last Thursday. We had a very good time and went to bed at two in the morning! George Keenan was there for dinner that evening. He is on his way to Moscow from Washington as the new counselor and is most interesting and has a charming Norwegian wife. He will be one of the future leaders of the Department and is most stimulating. I have seen quite a lot of a very charming American, Louise Campbell (Mrs. Ian Campbell). She is Mrs. Henry Clew's granddaughter and her husband has been a prisoner of war in Germany for four years. She has done great work here throughout the war getting packages and letters to us from the prisoners and their families. He is the future Duke of Sutherland. Tomorrow I am going to meet Dom Pedro of Braganza who had just arrived, at the Swedish ministries, a man named Weidel—very pleasant with a middle western American wife. They have just arrived. I see lots of Lispenard and Ned Crocker and it is nice to have several New Yorkers here! I suppose it all sounds very social for such serious times, but it is all part of the game. . . .

Have picked up a few more good little odds & ends—but really, prices are discouraging. Found a lovely Pillement in a third rate auction and told “Devil de Santo” (as you used to call him) about it. He got it for nothing and was thrilled. He now has 18 of them. His prices which used to seem steep now seem very mild.²⁸²

The next month Hyde described to du Pont a trip he took with Espírito Santo Silva,²⁸³ the plethora of famous bridge players in Lisbon, and of course, his latest finds in the realm of antiques and antique collectors.²⁸⁴

During these seven months abroad in 1944, Lloyd Hyde began writing *Chinese Porcelain for the European Market* (1956) with Espírito Santo, who died just before its eventual publication by Espírito Santo's foundation. Neither Hyde nor Espírito Santo contributed much in the way of new scholarship to the book, but thanks to watercolor illustrations by Portuguese painter Eduardo Malta, it was even more lavish in design than

²⁸² JALH to HFdP, June 13, 1944, Winterthur Archives.

²⁸³ JALH, “Portugal: A Ghost in an Ancient Castle,” in “After the Antique.”

²⁸⁴ JALH to HFdP, July 27, 1944, Winterthur Archives. See also JALH, “Lisbon: The Count of Paris” and “Lisbon: The King of Italy and the Unexpected Ship,” in “After the Antique.”

Hyde's *Oriental Lowestoft*. A fellow collector, Malta's renderings made *Chinese Porcelain* the subject's first full-color publication, and cleverly referenced the historical illustrations used in the *China Trade* to order custom-decorated porcelain. In his preface, Hyde memorialized Espírito Santo as "the greatest collector of all time of this sort of china. No one has amassed such a quantity, such a variety, or so many examples of superb quality."²⁸⁵ The 700 copies printed (350 in English and 350 in Portuguese) sold out within months (fig. 42).

Like many OSS agents, Hyde is thought to have continued his intelligence work in some capacity under the organization's successor, the Central Intelligence Agency, a supposition that cannot be confirmed by official sources. He returned to Portugal frequently, owning a house south of Lisbon into the 1950s,²⁸⁶ and continued to visit the Espírito Santo Silva family.

²⁸⁵ J.A. Lloyd Hyde, "Appreciation of Ricardo Espírito Santo Silva" in J.A. Lloyd Hyde and Ricardo Espírito Santo Silva, with illustrations and descriptions by Eduardo Malta, *Chinese Porcelain for the European Market* (Lisbon: Fundação Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva, 1956), n.p. The book was reissued in 1994 and has since gone out of print.

²⁸⁶ Hyde described his house Quinta do Almelaio in Setúbal, adjacent to the Quinta da Bacalhôa (a 16th-century estate in the Azeitão region restored by Connecticut-born Mrs. Herbert Scoville) in JALH to Ralph Carpenter, Ralph Carpenter Papers, Redwood Library, Newport: "The dining room is to have a red lacquer (wood) ceiling and I have a set of Queen Anne chairs for it which I have had covered in dark green damask. Have also a very good oval drop leaf Q.A. table and side table (when open it's a card table with pockets for chips) & a red lacquer tall case clock for that room. The living room (formerly two rooms) is to be late Sheraton and I have a pair of big corner cupboards with glass doors above, another flat one to go against the wall, an English Sheraton piano which cost \$28.00, a 3 oval-shield back settee & seven rather Phyfe-like chairs that had cushions made for all those of a cyclamen red and stripe material with the tree of life printed hanging on the wall and the room painted robin's egg blue. I believe the general effect should be at least cheerful. . . . I found for this room a very swell Queen Anne desk with domed upper section of candle pulls (cost \$175—), a Q.A. settee and a Chippendale bench that becomes a bed if you feel so inclined, several Chippendale chairs, and a painted (gilded) metal chandelier. All the upper rooms have tent-like ceilings of wood

The most tangible evidence of Hyde's ties to Lisbon can be found in the lighting fixtures he acquired from the *Palacio Porto Covo* (a Lisbon villa named for the coastal territory of the Marquis de Pombal, the house's first inhabitant). The house was purchased in 1942 for the British Embassy, when wartime demands rendered its previous quarters insufficient. The height of its perimeter walls, sizable surrounding garden, and hilltop location on the *rua São Domingos* made *Porto Covo* one of the most secluded villas in Lisbon's busy diplomatic district. When erected in the 1790s it had been appointed with the finest cut glass chandeliers, wall lights, and candelabra imported from England. During his Oral History interview for Winterthur, Hyde remarked upon:

the very swell candelabra, of which there are six, I believe, all together. . . . And the original bills for all the lighting fixtures are in the *Porto Covo Palace* which were ordered in London in 1790 are in existence, and all these things are listed. . . . These chandeliers, the two chandeliers in the . . . entrance hall of the White House—which Mr. and Mrs. Copeland . . . got from me and gave to the White House under Mr. Truman's administration, and several other chandeliers that are in the White House all came from the *Porto Covo Palace*.²⁸⁷

Du Pont had the *Porto Covo* candelabra and wall lights installed in his Montmorenci stair hall and dining room. Mates from the same palace remain in the collection of Espírito Santo Silva's family at their *Boca do Inferno* estate in Cascais (fig. 43). They represent the effects of war on the antiques trade and the heretofore unexamined link between J.A. Lloyd Hyde, the Americana collections he helped form, and the City of Spies.

that go up to a point, and the widest floorboards I have ever seen anywhere. . . ." Hyde sold the house, its contents, and his English sports car in Portugal after Knudsen's death per JALH to HFdP, undated [early August, 1952], Winterthur Archives.

²⁸⁷ JALH Oral History, May 6, 1974, Winterthur Archives.

Caveat Emptor

While Hyde's wartime experience further expanded his worldliness, his status as a scholar waned after the 1945 death of Bertha Benkard. Du Pont felt the loss acutely²⁸⁸ and with his sister campaigned for the creation of two Benkard memorial rooms, one at the Museum of the City of New York and one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (figs. 44, 45).²⁸⁹ In celebrating the rooms' opening, Americana impresario and Metropolitan Museum of Art curator Joseph Downs (the field's most prominent curator, who had known and advised du Pont while curator at the Pennsylvania Museum in the 1920s), described Benkard in the Metropolitan's *Bulletin* as "one of the foremost amateur antiquarians and connoisseurs of American decorative art. . . . Her ready assistance in the restorations of historic buildings and active encouragement of beginning collectors was heartening to a wide circle of people."²⁹⁰ Downs's careful wording eulogized an equally palpable demise in the field of American decorative arts—the declining influence of *amateur antiquarians* and the rise of a new generation of Americana academics.

Downs drove home that point at a lecture series held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to celebrate its 1946 exhibition of the Helena Woolworth McCann collection of Chinese Export porcelain. Hyde was invited as a guest lecturer and at the exhibition's

²⁸⁸ Lord, 4-5.

²⁸⁹ The Metropolitan has several times revised the Benkard Room for the sake of historical accuracy, much of the room's furnishings have been dispersed and some discredited, and the paneling sold to the De Young Museum in San Francisco, which was subsequently given by Benkard's family a portion of her collection.

²⁹⁰ Emphasis added. Joseph Downs, "The Benkard Room," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 6, n. 5 (January 1948): 137.

opening party, flatteringly placed at the head table with the McCanns and John Phillips, curator of the exhibition. Hyde, who was one of the McCanns' favorite dealers, complimented the exhibition as "very chic in its arrangement with a background of deep mauve and brilliant yellow inside the cases—a daring and successful combination."²⁹¹ He complained to du Pont, however, that Joseph Downs launched a surprise attack during the program against the "collector's term," lowestoft. "A furor is now raging as to the correct name of the porcelain," Hyde reported, "Phillips & I having said it was useless to try to change the general name of 'Lowestoft' at this late date & Joe Downs and his (rather dreary) cohorts insisting on the pedantic title of 'Chinese Export Porcelain,' which people simply won't bother with I fear."²⁹²

Joseph Downs won the lowestoft debate, and Chinese Export porcelain became the subject's accepted term.²⁹³ Du Pont even renamed Winterthur's Lowestoft Shop, a period setting overflowing with porcelain acquired from Hyde (fig. 46). Du Pont secured Downs's supremacy by hiring him to catalogue and serve as the first curator of his collections at Winterthur, which opened as a museum in 1951. The selection of Downs,

²⁹¹ JALH to HFdP, February 10, 1946, Winterthur Archives.

²⁹² JALH to HFdP, February 10, 1946, Winterthur Archives. The "dreary cohorts" may have been MFA Boston curator Edwin Hipkiss and Columbia University professor Charles Cole, the other guest speakers.

²⁹³ Porcelain, an Italian-derived term, is also a misnomer (stemming from early confusion over its composition). "China" was the commonly used English term in Colonial America. For more on the debate between terms, see Harold Donaldson Eberlein, "The China Called 'Lowestoft,'" *Country Life* [New York], (October 1927); Thomas H. Ormsbee, "瓷 Was Its Real Name," *American Collector* (March 7, 1935); Harold Lewis Bond, "The Legend of Lowestoft: Or What's In a Name?," *American Collector* (March 1939); and M. Vaughan, "Largest Collection of 'Chinese Lowestoft,'" *American Collector* (March 1946).

his nemesis, must have rankled Hyde, who had been du Pont's first choice as curator twenty years before. Hyde was not even welcomed onto Winterthur's advisory board, despite his suggestion to du Pont that he had, "Better put my name on the list if you want someone who will follow out your very own plans and ideas and would see that nothing might be done in some other way. Few know the collection as I do."²⁹⁴ Hyde was also deemed inadequate to lecture for Winterthur's graduate program by Downs and his successor Charles Montgomery.²⁹⁵ When a Winterthur student named Jean McClure undertook a thesis on Chinese Export porcelain, Montgomery advised her against relying on Lloyd Hyde as any sort of resource.²⁹⁶ McClure researched and presented the subject as Hyde's *Oriental Lowestoft* had not, grounded in historic documentation and carefully sourced. Her thesis, titled "The American-China Trade in Chinese Export Porcelain" (1957), was yet another demonstration that the history of American decorative arts was shifting from the hands-on experience of self-studied connoisseurs, towards a more academic, professionalized approach.

Winterthur was one of many institutions wrestling with the compromises made by preceding collectors and/or curators. A younger, academically trained generation of curators sought to disassociate period rooms and house museums from their 1920s-40s installations, and more accurately depict the intended date of interpretation. Some

²⁹⁴ JALH to HFdP, undated letter [early October 1943], Winterthur Archives. Hyde's letter was prompted by du Pont's invitation to Lamot Copeland to serve on Winterthur's board.

²⁹⁵ Charles Hummel, interview with author, August 2009.

²⁹⁶ Charles Montgomery advised McClure against working with Hyde on the subject, per Jean Mudge, e-mail correspondence with the author, October 24, 2009. Her thesis was later published as Jean McClure Mudge, *Chinese Export Porcelain in North America* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., Publishers, 1986).

curators revised their period installations with restraint, believing that no matter the advances of technology or research, “the arrangement of a period room is inescapably influenced by the person who sets it up and the taste of that person’s time.”²⁹⁷ Colonial Williamsburg was a leader in the more stringent approach, calling on international archeologists and decorative arts experts to re-evaluate the collection and correct its period installations based on *research*, not *taste*.²⁹⁸ Curator Graham Hood and his colleagues determined that the collection included many objects that were of insufficient quality or inappropriate origins for Williamsburg according to period, geographic, and economic constraints. By the 1990s, many of the hundreds of objects Hyde supplied between the 1920s-50s were deemed too late, too luxurious, or from too far afield to remain in the collection. Much of the Chinese Export porcelain had been meant for European markets, and was far too elaborate in form and decoration for Colonial America. Hyde’s other specialty, eighteenth-century glass chandeliers, wall lights, and “hurricane” (cylinder) shades made in England for export to China and India, was equally problematic. Hyde had to travel far to supply the collectors’ demand for period fixtures

²⁹⁷ Dianne H. Pilgrim, “Inherited from the Past: The American Period Room,” *American Art Journal* 10 (1978): 18.

²⁹⁸ Graham Hood led this charge at Colonial Williamsburg, reacting against the theatrical displays of curator John Graham (a friend of Hyde’s and former dealer/decorator, and previous curator at the Brooklyn Museum), and the inconsistencies of the institution’s early collecting. See Graham Hood, *The Governor’s Palace in Williamsburg* (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1991), Graham Hood, “Dismantling the Most Beautiful Rooms in America,” *Colonial Williamsburg Journal* (Winter 2000-2001) and Cary Carson, *Colonial Williamsburg and the Practice in American History Museums. The Public Historian* 20, n. 3 (Summer 1998). My thanks to Cary Carson for describing a showdown between Graham and certain trustees who were appalled that he would even propose “to dismantle the most beautiful room in America,” referring to rooms within the Governor’s Palace, prominently featured in Helen Comstock’s *The 100 Most Beautiful Rooms in America* (1958).

chandeliers precisely because they were so rare in Colonial America (fig. 47).²⁹⁹ Hyde's buyers certainly knew of the exotic sources of his so-called Americana, but their successors were not as comfortable choosing contemporary aesthetics over historic authenticity (fig. 48). Removing artifacts and historic architecture from their original context became increasingly seen as destructive and unethical, as were the practices of using historic textiles as upholstery materials, and drilling holes into chandeliers and other objects to wire them for electricity.³⁰⁰

Hyde left such debates to others, continuing to trade into the late 1970s antiques more accurately classified as Americana Exotica than "Rare Americana." Having afforded H.F. du Pont first refusal since the late 1920s, in later years Hyde earned a reputation for saving his best finds for himself. He focused his selling on antique textiles,

²⁹⁹ Cut glass chandeliers and wall lights such as Hyde was selling were almost unknown in Colonial America outside of the grandest public buildings. Hyde also dealt in colored glass components, which, like hurricane shades, were historically exported for Asian and Caribbean markets. Lighting is of course an inherently problematic issue in recreating historic interiors, as truly period-appropriate lighting is insufficient for modern viewing or living. An ongoing struggle with issues of lighting has resulted in recent efforts to "de-lamp" select collection objects at Winterthur; see Beverly N. Perkins, "The De-Electrification and Re-Electrification of Historic Lighting Fixtures at Winterthur Museum," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 42, n. 3 (Autumn-Winter, 2003), 457-462.

³⁰⁰ This sentiment of "collector's guilt" was occasionally expressed in the 1920s and 1930s, but such practices have been increasingly criticized since the late 1970s. Complaints of the inaccuracies, inflexibility of many period rooms installations are too numerous to list in this context; for an insightful, relatively balanced appraisal, see Dianne H. Pilgrim, "Inherited from the Past: The American Period Room," *American Art Journal* 10 (1978): 4-23, and Elaine Greene, ed., "The Period Room Reconsidered: A House & Garden Symposium," *House & Garden* (October 1986). Winterthur Museum has examined these issues both internally and publically, addressing them in numerous publications and symposia, and revising its collections and conservation policies accordingly.

lighting fixtures, and of course, lowestoft. In the 1960s his clientele expanded to include many of the decade's great decorators, such as Sister Parrish and Richard Nelson, who were refurbishing the White House. Nelson, who became a close friend of Hyde's, recalled his shop as having "crystal sparkling everywhere from all the chandeliers . . . a few pieces of furniture, and a large armoire against the wall filled with beautiful brocades. Lloyd had fabulous things, always—and charged accordingly."³⁰¹ Price did not preclude him from selling some of his later finds to other dealers, including Philip Suvall, Isabel and Price Glover, and Elinor Gordon, who began her distinguished Chinese Export career as Hyde's client, then his gallery assistant. Hyde retired from retail trade gradually in the 1970s, eventually ending an (occasionally quarrelsome) association with his second partner, Amos Shepard (fig. 49).³⁰² He formed an informal partnership with his young friend Tom Benson (fig. 50), a member of Newport's famous stone carving family, whose father John Benson had met Hyde in the 1930s while moonlighting as an antiques picker. Tom Benson found, sold, and restored antiques for Hyde, and with his wife, accompanied Hyde on his last trips abroad to Asia and Europe. Trading on his

³⁰¹ My thanks to Richard Nelson for discussing Lloyd Hyde with me on several occasions, and helping fill in gaps of Hyde's later years. Hyde's shop assistants included Dick French (1940s-50s, who opened his own shop in Old Lyme, Connecticut), Gene F. Lynch (1960s-1969), Nell and John Christoffel, and a Mrs. John M. Wood, a collector-turned-dealer favoring Pennsylvania German toleware.

³⁰² Shepard's ambitions and aptitudes did not match his predecessor's. After leaving Hyde he opened a shop, Parsnip Hollow, near his house of the same name in East Haddam, Connecticut. He and co-owner Jim Wynn offered antiques, but mainly tourist trade items described by *The Gazette* [Old Lyme, CT] (December 12, 1985) as "exotic gifts, silk dresses, and oriental artwork." Wynn had been a television executive Hyde met while developing an idea for a television program titled "Heritage," intended to feature historic interiors. For Shepard's house, Parsnip Hollow, see Henry Lionel and Ottalie K. Williams with J.A. Lloyd Hyde, *America's Small Houses and City Apartments: The Personal Homes of Designers and Collectors* (New York, Bonanza Books, 1964).

longstanding contacts to high-stakes buyers and sellers (fig. 51), and his reputation as a supplier to the many admired collections, he joined the auction house Christie's as a consultant in the 1970s and served as such until his death.³⁰³

In 1962 Hyde added to his list of residences Pagoda House, an eighteenth-century house adjacent to the famed Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island (fig. 52).³⁰⁴ Hyde had vacationed and scouted for antiques in Newport since the 1920s and in the 1940-50s helped furnish Hunter House, one of the city's first restoration efforts, with collector-turned-scholar (and later dealer) Ralph Carpenter and the newly formed Preservation Society of Newport County.³⁰⁵ Friends recalled that he never seemed to age and never stood still. When not traveling, he spent Wednesdays through Fridays in Old Lyme,

³⁰³ Hyde was a member of the Nine O'Clocks, an exclusive dinner-dancing club whose 100 members comprised diplomats, executives, and society impresarios such as Earl Blackwell. See Charlotte Curtis, "Party is of the Essence for the Nine O'Clocks," *The New York Times*, December 4, 1968.

³⁰⁴ Also known as the Erastus Pease Residence, dated 1750-85 with later additions, at 36 Church Street. Hyde frequently opened the house tours to help encourage preservation, and published it in JALH, "Pagoda House in Newport, Rhode Island," *The Magazine Antiques* (August 1963) and Pauline C. Metcalf, "Pagoda House," *House and Garden* (November 2003). In addition to those already mentioned, Hyde briefly owned another house in Connecticut in the 1960s, and at times rented houses on Long Island, Bermuda, and other locations around the world.

³⁰⁵ Carpenter, who launched his antiquary career with Hyde's help, has received the majority of credit for the restoration of the Nichols-Wanton-Hunter House at 54 Washington Street, but he himself described Hyde as an equal partner, who had to finish the furnishings on his own after Carpenter's volunteering was interrupted by service in the Korean War per Ralph E. Carpenter, correspondence and interviews with the author throughout the summer of 2008. Carpenter met Hyde in the 1930s through their mutual fraternity, Sigma Phi, and Hyde supplied antiques and period rooms for Carpenter's Mowbra Hall residence in Scarsdale, New York. See JALH, "Rhode Island: The Remarkable Day," in "After the Antique;" and Ralph E. Carpenter, "Mowbra Hall: An Eighteenth-Century Dwelling House," *The Magazine Antiques* (May 1952); and Carpenter, "Mowbra Hall: A Collection of Period Rooms," *The Connoisseur* (June and August 1972); and his seminal work, *The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1820* (Newport: Preservation Society of Newport County, 1954).

Mondays and Tuesdays in Manhattan, and weekends in Newport, driving between them by motorcycle.³⁰⁶ He was repainting a room at Duck Creek when he died from a heart attack on August 22, 1981. He had already commissioned Benson's brother John to carve a headstone with a stylized pagoda, his family crest, and coats of arms for New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Portugal. His Pagoda House in Newport was later sold virtually intact (and remained so for twenty more years), and an army of Christie's staff gathered various collections to be auctioned at Duck Creek (fig. 53). The sale "end[ed] an elegant era," reported the local newspaper, and attracted thousands to the sale and its two-day preview.³⁰⁷ The event as described was one Hyde would have enjoyed attending, with "well-dressed people were crowded everywhere," as interested in each other as they were in antiques. "'What are you doing here?' asked one woman, meeting a friend. 'Snooping,' was the reply."³⁰⁸ In anticipation for the sale, "dealers came from Virginia and Maryland and Georgia, as well as from Maine, New York, New Jersey and Rhode Island" and speculation abounded about the identity of a mysterious bidder from Hong Kong.³⁰⁹

Photographs of Duck Creek had appeared in several publications, most notably an interiors survey titled *100 Most Beautiful Rooms in America*. The book illustrated a range of domestic spaces, private homes as well as historic house museums, furnished

³⁰⁶ Stanley, "One thousand buyers to bid Tuesday on a man of the world's noted antiques."

³⁰⁷ Jan Trecker, "Estate Auction Ends Elegant Era at 'Duck Creek,'" *The Gazette* [Old Lyme, CT], July 14, 1982.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

with antiques. The rooms represented various stylistic periods and geographical sources and settings. Most had been furnished or restored within the previous three decades—more than a dozen of which can be linked to Hyde at least peripherally. Author Helen Comstock confessed the difficulty of living up to her title:

It has not been easy to select only one hundred especially beautiful rooms where antiques are used. There are at the present time very many hundreds of such rooms in existence in America—more, without a doubt than there ever had been. . . .

Certain conditions have led to the selection. A guiding principle has of course been the claim to authenticity of the furnishings, . . . the interesting character of the architecture and its state of preservation, the arrangement of furniture and its suitability to the room, and the livable atmosphere or charm of the whole ensemble.³¹⁰

Lloyd Hyde's career coincided with a tremendous surge of interest in antiques, and the formation of countless major collections both private and public. Until his ease into semi-retirement in the 1970s, he supplied, advised, and befriended many of the most influential, avaricious Americana collectors of the twentieth century, and like them, was equally incapable of "eliminating one's own time and taste upon one's concept of the past."³¹¹ He promoted himself as an expert, benefitted by a Colonial heritage, a keen eye, and extensive travels. Hyde's natural talents and highly polished charms allowed him to navigate as a near-peer to his well-heeled clients. He clearly enjoyed his friendships and social status; it also proved advantageous for his business. Most significantly, it infused his dealings with an intimacy that enriches and enlivens the history of Americana collecting, the profiles of his prominent clients, and the collections they formed.

³¹⁰ Helen Comstock, *The 100 Most Beautiful Rooms in America* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1958), 5.

³¹¹ Dianne H. Pilgrim, "Inherited from the Past: The American Period Room," 15.

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