

# Hyde Families

Newsletter of the Hyde Genealogy Association

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## The Hyde Genealogy Association

The Hyde Genealogy Association (HGA) is a not-for-profit, non-commercial organization that fosters communication, collaboration, and community between researchers of variants of the Hyde surname including, but not limited to, Hide, Heide, Heyde and variants with prefixes such as de, dela, von and van der. We are volunteers whose objectives are to confirm connections and validate existing family research, update family records, examine conflicting records and correct errors whenever possible, and assist with using DNA results to sort and extend family lineages.

We encourage you to visit our website at **[www.HydeGenealogy.org](http://www.HydeGenealogy.org)** for the many resources available to Hyde family researchers. Also, you may submit a free query about your Hyde family and we will search our databases and respond with what we may have on your family.

Currently, we have several on going projects. One HGA project is investigating the use of Y-DNA testing for genealogical research. A major success of the Hyde DNA Project is that we have joined seven different Hyde lines that drifted apart in the late 1700's.

A second HGA group of Hyde researchers is working on a Project to sort out the Hide/Hyde families that originated in North Carolina in the 1700s.

If you are interested in becoming a HGA member, read the details on the “About Us” tag on our website.

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### *Hyde Families* Newsletter

This is the inaugural issue of the *Hyde Families* newsletter of the Hyde Genealogy Association. For this issue, Daniel C. Hyde agreed to research and write an original article on the Hyde Estate settlements of the nineteenth century. This never before published article is the result of several months of research and pulls together many aspects of the infamous Hyde Estates schemes and their impact on the Victorian-era Hyde pedigrees. We hope you enjoy it.

The purpose of the *Hyde Families* newsletter is to publish high quality articles on Hyde genealogy that are of interest to both Hyde researchers and non-researching Hyde cousins. The newsletter is published on-line on our website in PDF format for people to print and to distribute to family members. The plan is to publish two issues a year in March and September. The next issue we will explore the origins of the Hyde surname.

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Cover Photo: Governor William Frederick Milton Army (1813-1881) in his “Jayhawker” outfit. The identification on this photograph indicates that this is a disguise he used in Missouri in 1856. At the time, anti-slavery Kansans were at war with the pro-slavery Missourians, and Army used the disguise to infiltrate the enemies’ ranks. Photo from the Territorial Kansas History web site, [www.territorialkansasonline.org](http://www.territorialkansasonline.org)

## Where's your portion of the \$350 Million Hyde Estate?

By Dr. Daniel C. Hyde  
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Nearly every Hyde family has a story concerning a great fortune that was lost. In the Lawrence Hyde<sup>1</sup> family, here is our intriguing story:

“We learn from the oldest living members of the immediate family that our ancestors come from England. A man by the name of Governor Andre [probably refers to Governor Army] went to that country to investigate the matter of the Hyde Park Estate, as it was learned that this branch of the Hyde family was among the heirs. The messenger secured the papers containing the necessary information and started back for America. When the boat had nearly reached its shores, the messenger was killed and the papers stolen. The matter was then dropped. This event took place, it is presumed [just] after the marriage of Edson Hyde [1874].”

Written by Lawrence Hyde about 1955

The “Hyde Park Estate” mentioned could *not* be the Hyde Park of London for that has been owned by the Kings and Queens of England for many centuries. Therefore, if the story has any basis of truth, the “Hyde Park Estate” may refer to a small private estate somewhere in England, e.g., the Hyde estate of the village of Hyde, Cheshire, England, or the Hyde estate in the village of Denton, Lancashire, England (the two villages are only several miles apart).

Back in 1995, the author “discovered” his sixth cousin Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo of Youngston, Ohio, whose grandfather had given her a collection of newspaper clippings and letters pertaining to the infamous Hyde Estate Settlement of the 1870s. The newspaper clippings dating from 1875 and later indicate that the “Hyde Estate” was not real estate but money and stocks in England estimated to be worth \$350 million (in 1880 dollars! That’s \$8.2 billion in 2012 dollars!). Since there were no living heirs in England, officials were seeking possible Hyde heirs in America. Of course, many Hydes in America at the time were interested and they formed Hyde Associations to try to prove they were eligible for a portion of the money.

### Story of the Hyde Estate Settlement as it unfolds

In trying to uncover the infamous Hyde Estate story, the first mention I find is that certain “gentlemen were induced to take up the subject” after reading an advertisement that appeared in *The London Times* on 6 April 1851.<sup>2</sup> Soon after, a meeting of the family was called in Boston. At a 17<sup>th</sup> April 1877 meeting of the Halifax, Nova Scotia “Committee to Investigate the Hyde Estate,” they claim to have in their possession:<sup>3</sup>

“An advertisement [that] appeared in a Boston paper of the 16th February, 1853 calling upon all persons of the name of Hyde, for the purpose of forming an association to devise and raise

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Hyde (1888-1960) of Ulysses, Potter County, PA is the author’s grandfather.

<sup>2</sup> “Three Hundred Million: The Quest for the Wealth of the Hydes – The Vast Sum Awaiting the Claimants” in *New York Herald* about 1875. Newspaper clipping in Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo’s collection.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Committee to Investigate the Hyde Estate*, July 1<sup>st</sup> 1878, Halifax, N. S., J. Bennett Strong, Printer, 81 Argyle Street, pages 5&6. Available on-line at [http://archive.org/stream/cihm\\_06818#page/1/mode/1up](http://archive.org/stream/cihm_06818#page/1/mode/1up)

means to send an agent to England to examine Records there for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not we (the heirs in this country) are heirs-at-law to the large Estate and unclaimed Dividends in East India Stock, which have been laying there for years awaiting claimants.”



Reuben Hyde Walworth (1788-1867) was an American lawyer and politician and the Chancellor of the State of New York from 1828 to 1848, when the office of chancellor was abolished.

After the early 1850s Hyde Estate advertisements, key individuals with leadership ability started to contact families in their region to form Hyde family associations. During the mid 1850s and through the 1860s, other individuals compiled genealogies of their Hyde families. The most notable was the respected Chancellor Reuben Hyde Walworth who in 1864 published the seminal work<sup>4</sup> on the descendants of William Hyde (d. 1681) of Norwich, Connecticut. This two-volume set contains 1446 pages and is available on-line.

By 1877, many Hyde families had formed associations as estate claimants, incorporated under the laws of their state. There were Associations in Boston, Cincinnati, Detroit, Rochester, NY, Halifax, NS, Maine, Mississippi, New Mexico, and elsewhere, with the main “Hyde Association of America” directing the national effort from their offices at No. 86 Front Street in New York City. In about 1875, at a gathering of the Hyde Association of America, “... Mr. N. D. Morgan was chosen president, W. F. M. Army and J. H. Duryen, vice presidents; H. C. Parke and Roger H. Lyon, secretaries, and Messrs. Parke, Army, Morgan and Lyon an executive committee to collect evidence.”

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<sup>4</sup> *Hyde Genealogy of the Descendants, in the female as well as in the male lines from William Hyde, of Norwich*, by Reuben H. Walworth, J. Munsell Company, Albany, NY, 1864, 1446 pages, two volumes available on-line at <http://archive.org/details/hydegenealogyord01walw> and <http://archive.org/details/hydegenealogyord02walw>



Governor William Frederick Milton Arny (1813-1881) in his "Jayhawker" outfit.

The identification on this photograph indicates that this is a disguise he used in Missouri in 1856. At the time, anti-slavery Kansans were at war with the pro-slavery Missourians, and Arny used the disguise to infiltrate the enemies' ranks.

Photo from the Territorial Kansas History web site, [www.territorialkansasonline.org](http://www.territorialkansasonline.org)

One of the most colorful characters in the story is the Hyde Association of America's vice president William F. M. Arny. Lawrence R. Murphy published a well-researched book on Arny.<sup>5</sup> Arny grew up in Georgetown, VA just outside of the National Capital and became friends with many powerful government politicians. In 1850, Arny moved to Bloomington, Illinois and was influential in establishing Illinois State Normal University, a teachers college in Normal, Illinois and promoting the science of agriculture. Also, he was an active leader in the Illinois Republican Party where he met Abraham Lincoln. In 1860, his friend Abraham Lincoln appointed Arny to succeed Kit Carson as agent to the Utes and Jacarilla Apaches. Arny was one of the best of the Old West's Indian Agents.

In 1862 President Lincoln appointed Arny Secretary of the Territory of New Mexico. The Territorial Secretary served as governor when the governor was out of the territory. Governor Connelly and Governor Mitchell were both absent from the territory several times, allowing Secretary Arny to serve as governor. Therefore, he was known as Governor Arny of New Mexico. He was a great favorite with the Native American in that region, and, in his official duties, accomplished much in exploiting the mineral resources of New Mexico. In his dealings with others including the Native Americans and mineral resources interests, he did not seek financial gain but a sense of fairness. He had been trained at Bethany College to be a minister and decided to devote his life to spreading God's word on the American frontier. At Bethany he became involved in a dispute that drove him out of Bethany College and the Christian Church. The dispute resulted from his character flaw of sometimes not being flexible with others who disagreed with his convictions. However, Arny's strength in his convictions served the Native Americans well as Arny was willing to take on the Indian Affairs bureaucracy on their behalf and prevail.

Governor Arny's claim to the large Hyde Estate was through his mother Elizabeth whose maiden name was Hyde. He claimed that his great-great uncles Thomas, John, and Humphries Hyde made fortunes as

<sup>5</sup> *Frontier Crusader – William F. M. Arny* by Lawrence R. Murphy, University of Arizona Press, 1972, 313 pages.

East India Merchants.<sup>6</sup> John Hyde, heir in question, came to America in 1732 as a cloth-dresser by trade and worked in Long Island. Army claimed his great-great uncle John to be the same John Hyde as the heir. With a clear stake in the matter and his vast experience in cutting through governmental red-tape, Army rose as the natural leader for the Hyde Association of America's cause.

Under the leadership of Ex-Governor Army, the Hyde Association of America traced their lineage, gathered their evidence and put their claims in proper form.<sup>7</sup> On December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1879, Army and other members of the delegation sailed for Southampton, England on the steamer *Algeciras*.<sup>8</sup>

On January 3, 1880, the following item appeared in *The New York Times*:<sup>9</sup>

#### Heirs of the Hyde Estate

“Mr. N. Denison Morgan, President of the Hyde Association, has received advices from Ex-Gov Army, the association's delegate to England, to the effect that great hindrances are put in the way of inquires by the authorities. Notwithstanding these obstructions, however, by the aid of influential people in London and Manchester, including the United States Consul-General, it has been ascertained that there are large sums of money and securities held for the heirs of the Hydes. The exact amount, and by whom left, must be learned by future and patient investigation.”

On June 5, 1880 an item in *The New York Times* states the following:<sup>10</sup>

#### Hyde Heirs Losing Hope

“Lambertville, N. J. June 4. – The many heirs to the Hyde estate have abandoned about the last ray of hope. The enthusiasm which prevailed six months ago, and which led many who could trace themselves back to John or William Hyde, to plan methods for expending their legacies, has died away. **Young Armstrong, who was sent as agent to England by the New-Jersey heirs, has accomplished nothing, and professes to have been misled by the authorities in London. Ex-Gov. Army, who returned [from London] a few weeks ago, said the Bank of England would not allow him to investigate its ledgers; demanded additional money to cross again, and, being refused the stipend, grew indignant, pocketed the papers in the case and started West. When last heard from he was in Kansas, and purported proceeding to New Mexico. The Hyde Association in New York still assures the heirs that the fabulous sum awaits them, and if they will respond to an extra assessment at once it can be procured. If the claim is not filed before next January, the estate, provided there is any, will revert to the Crown by a recent statute.** The New Jersey heirs seem strongly

<sup>6</sup> “After an Immense Fortune: Gathering Heirs for the Hyde Property – A Trifle of \$150,000,000,” *The New York Times*, June 26, 1879. Available on-line at

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F60F1EFD385A127B93C4AB178DD85F4D8784F9>

<sup>7</sup> “Heirs to Hundreds of Millions: A Prospect that the Great Hyde Estate in England will be Awarded to the American Hydes,” *The New York Times*, November 10, 1879. Available on-line at <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F70D15F73B5A127B93C2A8178AD95F4D8784F9>

<sup>8</sup> *Frontier Crusader – William F. M. Army* by Lawrence R. Murphy, University of Arizona Press, 1972, page 244.

<sup>9</sup> “Heirs of the Hyde Estate,” *The New York Times*, January 31, 1880. Available on-line at

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=FB0C14FA3D5A137B93C6AB1789D95F4D8784F9>

<sup>10</sup> “Hyde Heirs Losing Hope,” *The New York Times*, June 5, 1880. Available on-line at

<http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F30715FD3D541B7A93C7A9178DD85F448884F9>

inclined to believe the Hyde Association a swindle and the officers mere schemers to extort money under false pretenses.”

Even before you read the last line in the above item, you can smell something fishy. This item appears to be a combination of two submissions to the *Times*. The title, the first two sentences and the last sentence seem to be written by someone from the New Jersey Association and warns everyone it's a fraud! The portion that I have placed in bold type seems to have been written by one of the schemers to discredit the two delegates Young Armstrong and Ex-Gov Army and reassure the heirs that everything is rosy and the money will soon be in the heirs' hands. But the heirs must provide more money and there is a sense of urgency. Take a moment and reread only the bold portion. In our scam-ridden twenty-first century eyes this reads like a classic scam!

In April, 1881, the Hon. Thomas A. Logan, of Cincinnati, one of the leading lawyers of the West, affirms that the decision of the High Court of Chancery in England with reference to the long-contested and famous “Jennens estate” case dashed the last ray of hope for the Hyde Estate Claimants. “He was over in London last year as the representative of the Cincinnati claimants of the alleged Hyde estate, and upon his return made them a report setting forth clearly his conviction of the extreme inadvisability of their squandering any more money in vain attempts for the recovery of the supposed wealth of a remote English ancestor.”<sup>11</sup>

In the April 18, 1881 *Times* article, Logan explains in great detail why he feels there is no hope. For example, he states the High Court of Chancery's key ruling: “No action to recover either real [estate] or personal property, it was held, can be maintained unless it is brought within 20 years after the death of the ancestor from whom the estate comes.” Since the Jennens Estate case was much stronger than the Hyde Estate case and was thrown out of court due to statute of limitations, there is no hope for the Hyde Estate case.

By 1885 the English Courts are sick of the “Estate” claims from Americans and send a letter to U. S. Congress and the President.<sup>12</sup> In strongly worded language, the *Times* article states the following:

“The report ... will blight the hopes of hundreds of American “claimants,” and it ought to drive out of the estate business the agents whose dupes these claimants are. For many years sharp scoundrels have made a good living out of contributions and assessments taken from persons in this country who have been led to believe that nothing but the discovery of a little more evidence and some purely formal proceedings at law stood between them and enormous fortunes.

“The alleged estates in England awaiting distribution to American heirs have ranged from \$50,000,000 to \$800,000,000. In some cases large associations of claimants have been formed and have supported agents abroad at good salaries. These associations have been kept alive by occasional meetings at which the agent's reports have been received with hopeful enthusiasm.”

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<sup>11</sup> “Pricking Many Golden Bubbles: How the Jennens Decision Affects the Hyde Estate Claimants and Others,” *The New York Times*, April 18, 1881. Available on-line at <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F10812FD385B1B7A93CAA8178FD85F458884F9>

<sup>12</sup> “Those “Estates” in England,” *The New York Times*, December 28, 1885. Available on-line at <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=F60F1EF9395B10738DDDA10A94DA415B8584F0D3>

The article also had the following:

“The report now sent to Congress contains another statement from the chief accountant [of the Bank of England], who declares that the unclaimed sums of money standing on the bank’s books probably do not in any individual case exceed £1,200.”

So where is your portion of the 350 Million dollar Hyde Estate? The money probably never existed and no Hyde ‘heir’ in America was awarded a dollar. Hundreds of people were swindled. Most families had to pay, at minimum, the \$5 dues. In the 1870s that was a lot of money. In 2012 dollars that’s about \$130. Many spent huge amounts of money in their effort to win their family fortune. One individual claimed he spent \$20,000 (or \$486,000 in 2012 dollars) towards the effort.

But wait! In the 1890s, true believer “heirs” are still found. Conspiracy theories abound that British Courts are hiding the funds. We only need to try harder to get our fair share of the 350 Million dollar Hyde Estate. The sharp scoundrels are still at work. I discovered an 1894 newspaper article in the Rochester, NY *Democrat and Chronicle* that states the following:<sup>13</sup>

“If the latest efforts of what is known as the Hyde Association of America succeed, as those most interested believe that they will, the English government will soon be called upon to surrender a vast estate to its rightful owners.”

I find it amazing that Hyde Families were still hanging out for hope and paying periodic assessment fees thirteen years after Hon. Thomas A. Logan’s words in the April 18, 1881 *Times* article — “... his conviction of the extreme inadvisability of their squandering any more money in vain attempts for the recovery of the supposed wealth of a remote English ancestor.”

The hopes of elder members of families are passed down through stories. Even today you might encounter people who believe the stories and that the Hyde family fortune is still waiting to be recovered. I have seen on the Internet people claiming there is a lost Hyde family fortune out there somewhere. However, be warned! Be careful in pointing out the truth. They won’t appreciate you killing their sacred cows. The power of those family traditions is strong when it comes to family fortunes.

For those who feel the people involved were acting in good faith but just were unlucky. I discovered the work of a not-so-sharp scoundrel in the *New York Recorder* issue of December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1894.<sup>14</sup> Two thirds of the article (about 800 words) is an almost exact copy of a large portion of *The New York Times* article of November 10, 1879. The biggest change is that the Hyde Estate is now worth \$360 Million. Same tactics of social engineering used as in the 1870s. Huge sums of money are involved to attract attention. Articles are placed in prominent newspapers, e.g., *The New York Times* to provide credibility. The articles state that the British Parliament had just passed a new law making these funds available to “heirs.” Everything is rosy, it is just a matter of sending a representative to England to negotiate a settlement. Due to strict deadlines, ‘heirs’ are urged to move fast. Same old story .....

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<sup>13</sup> “There’s Million in it: The Hydes Think They Are in a Fair Way to Get Some of it,” Rochester, NY *Democrat and Chronicle*, October 10, 1894. Newspaper clipping in Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo’s collection.

<sup>14</sup> “A Fabulous Fortune: The Heirs to the Hyde Estate of England Expect to Receive Their Share – It is Estimated at \$360,000,000,” *New York Recorder*, December 10, 1894. Newspaper clipping in Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo’s collection.



Myra Vanderpool Gormley, CG<sup>15</sup> describes how these estate frauds worked:

“Confidence men sought “missing heirs” by placing advertisements in the personal ads or legal notices of newspapers. Then they planted stories in newspapers about huge estates that were soon to be awarded to rightful heirs. Naturally many people responded. Then these ‘heirs’ – at the urging of the swindlers – would form associations as estate claimants, incorporate under the laws of their state and write letters to their cousins encouraging them to join the association, and pay the membership dues and special assessments for legal fees to fight for their “estate.”

“Newspaper wire services picked up dozens of such items about meetings of these various ‘heir’ groups in small towns. Eventually these stories began to appear in major newspapers such as *The New York Times*. Naturally, appearance in prestigious newspapers gave credence to the stories of the estate. Among the well-known estate frauds are those for these surnames: Edwards, Edwards-Hall, Mercer, Harper, Jans, Baker, Crake, Fisher, Kohler, Springer, Hyde, and Van Horn.”

This Hyde Estate scam fits Gormley’s description like a glove. And, I discovered there were *many* Hyde Estate scams! Some newspaper advertisements allege the heir is a Hyde descendant of Edward Hyde, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord of Clarendon even though Burke’s Peerage published in the 1830s that the line became extinct in 1753 and the last Earl, Edward Hyde, had no living male heir. I discovered an article in the Rochester, NY *Democrat and Chronicle*<sup>16</sup> that states the alleged heir was William Hyde of Norwich and the article’s author states in his fabricated writing:

“William Hyde, the founder of the Hyde family in America, was the owner in 1647 of an estate in the north of England, near Norwich. .... When Charles II ascended the throne it was all up with William Hyde, who had come into possession of the family estate, and the confirmed Puritan had to flee from England to escape the same penalty which his father had helped to inflict on the former king. Driven from his native land, William Hyde came to America and settled in Connecticut, where he founded the city of Norwich.”

However, it was well known in 1894 that before founding Norwich, CT in 1660, William Hyde traveled to Hartford, CT in 1636. Reuben Hyde Walworth states this on page 2 in his 1864 seminal book on William Hyde.<sup>17</sup> Modern researchers are uncertain where in England William Hyde lived.

To the average newspaper reader with only a scant knowledge of English history this reads like a great story. Poor guy loses his estate to the political forces of the time and the estate is now available to the heirs. You need only prove you are one of William’s heirs to gain your portion of the fortune.

There was never one specific ancestor or estate consistently named, rather the fabricator of a scam used social engineering to keep the scam alive by its interesting story, vagueness and the popular imaginations of newspaper readers at the time.

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<sup>15</sup> Myra Vanderpool Gormley, “Genealogical Frauds: Traps for the Imprudent” in her *Shaking Your Family Tree* column for 26 Jan 1995. Available on-line: <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tmark/GeneFraudsArticle.html>

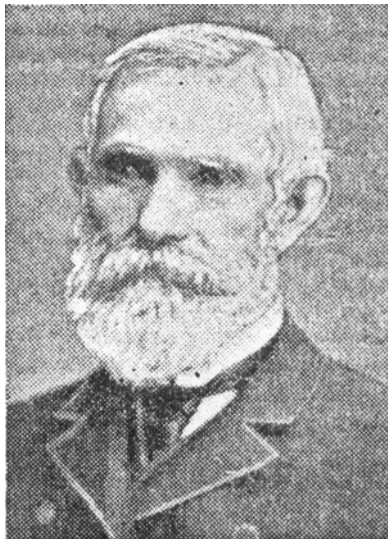
<sup>16</sup> “There’s Millions in it: The Hyde’s Think They Are in a Fair Way to Get Some of it”, Rochester, NY *Democrat and Chronicle*, Oct. 10, 1894.

<sup>17</sup> *Hyde Genealogy of the Descendants, in the female as well as in the male lines from William Hyde, of Norwich*, by Reuben H. Walworth, J. Munsell Company, Albany, NY, 1864, 1446 pages, two volumes available on-line at <http://archive.org/details/hydegenealogyord01walw> and <http://archive.org/details/hydegenealogyord02walw>

## Impact of the Hyde Estate Scams on Genealogy and Family History

Some say the silver lining in the Hyde Estate scams was that many families wrote down their pedigree as part of their effort to obtain their cut of the Estate pie. And as a result many Hyde genealogies were printed in the 1860-1890 timeframe. Many of these printed pedigrees contain valuable family information. A good example is *The Hyde Family, a Partial Record of One Branch: Descendants of Samuel who came from London to Boston in 1639 and Jonathan who came to America in 1647*, published in 1931 by **The Tuttle Company** in Rutland, VT, 30 pages. Originally, privately printed in July 1878 by Rufus S. Warner of Ludlow, VT. Additions were added up to the year 1885.

Because of the large sums of money involved, many 'heirs' had a strong psychological desire to connect with the John Hyde who came to America in the 1730s (or depending on the scam, the Earl of Clarendon with a Hyde surname, or William Hyde of Norwich), the supposed link back to the English Hyde Estate.

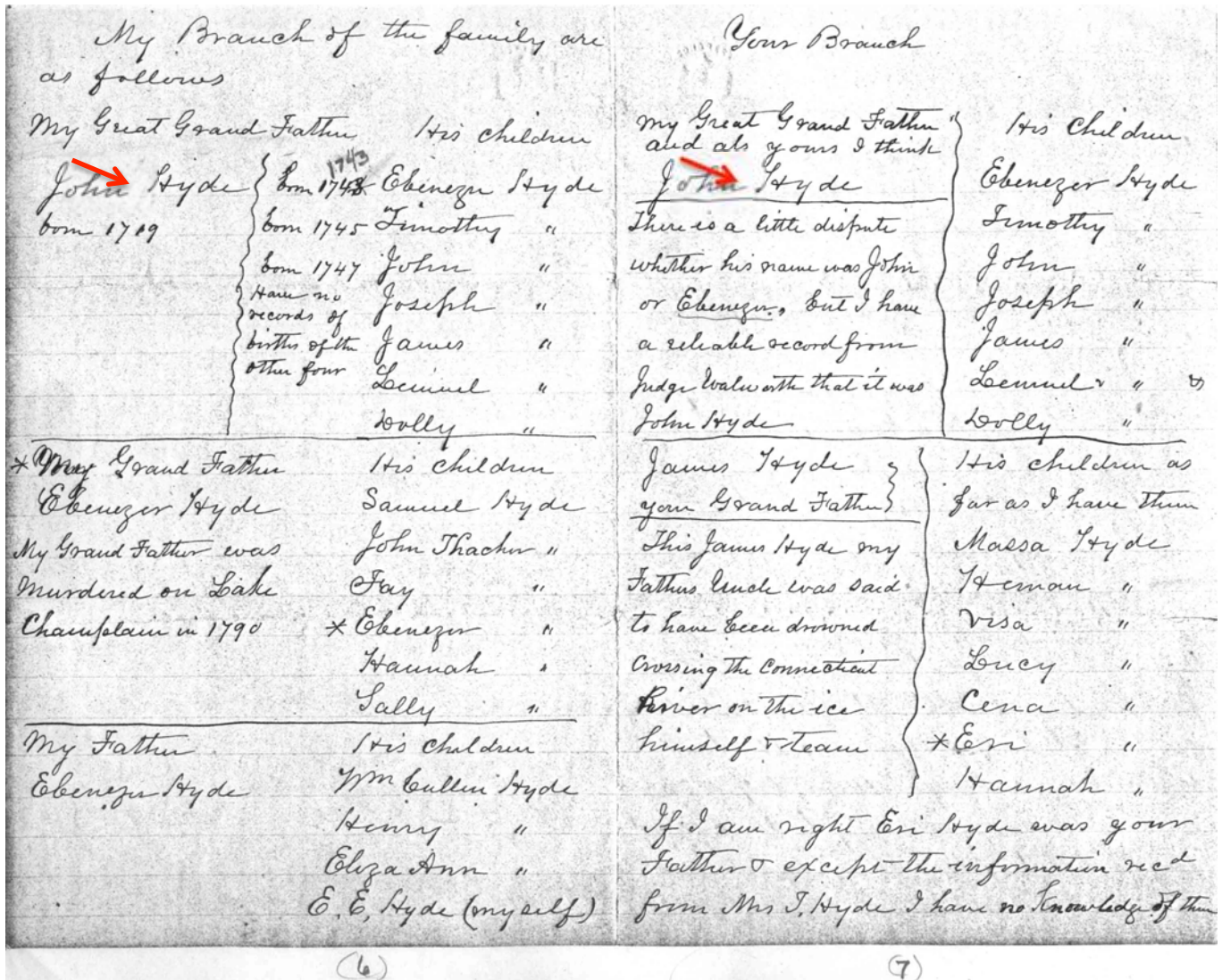


Dr. Ebenezer E. Hyde (1819-1903) medical doctor for many years in Belmont, NY

Even intelligent, respected stalwarts of their communities fell prey to over zealously attempting to link back to the alleged heir. For example in Dr. Ebenezer E. Hyde's December 15, 1879 letter to Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo's great grandfather James Hyde, Dr. Hyde writes on page 4 "... and James had a son John as I have it – others say it was Ebenezer – born 1719 and he had a son Ebenezer born 1743."<sup>18</sup> Recall that in this scam the Hyde Estate heir was a John Hyde who came to America in 1732. See also the following image of the letter's pages 6 and 7, where on page 6 near the left red arrow, Dr. Hyde says his Great Grandfather was John Hyde born in 1719. He writes on page 7 near right red arrow "... but I have a reliable record from Judge [Reuben Hyde] Walworth that it was John Hyde." Judge Walworth died twelve years before in 1867 so one wonders if one of the con men didn't supply Dr. Hyde with a fabricated record. Later researchers have determined that James's son was indeed Ebenezer. Even a medical doctor could be swayed by his own wishful thinking and believe a myth. Without hard evidence to convince them otherwise, the family pedigree compilers believed these myths. It is fortunate that the Hydys documented their ancestors, but unfortunate that the Victorian-era genealogies tried very hard to link back to those Great Estates.

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<sup>18</sup> Dr. Ebenezer E. Hyde's December 15, 1879 letter to Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo's great grandfather James Hyde. Shirley (Hyde) Caccamo's collection.



Pages 6 and 7 of Dr. Ebenezer E. Hyde's letter of December 15, 1879

Notice also that E. E. Hyde's letter only lists the names and some birth and death dates. (See pages 6 and 7 of Dr. Ebenezer E. Hyde letter above.) A modern genealogist would expect and demand sources - - at least secondary sources if not primary sources. The pedigrees were compiled by writing letters to relatives, e.g., second and third cousins, and relied on the memory of the responders of the letter. In the introduction of his book on William Hyde, Judge Walworth complained about the number of families who would not answer his letters and that he had to construct families the best he could. As one can imagine, it was easy to leave off a relative or spell a name wrong. For example, the "John C. Burdie" who married Charlotte Maria Hyde on page 17 in Tuttle is really "John C. Burdick." These errors were collected and propagated in the published pedigrees. No one carefully checked the entries. For a modern genealogist to correct such errors requires long hours investigating in town libraries, county courthouses, family records, and soliciting information from distant cousins. In the Burdie for Burdick's case, I discovered the error while interviewing a distant cousin.

Also, the pedigree compilers of the Hyde Associations were easy victims of fabricated genealogies by unscrupulous men such as Gustav Anjou, a Staten Island, NY genealogist, who developed a profitable

business in mail order ancestries.<sup>19</sup> In the early twentieth century, Anjou produced over 200 fabricated genealogies for paying customers. Not only did Anjou falsify many genealogies, according to Gordon L. Remington, Fellow of Utah Genealogical Association and editor of *Genealogical Journal*, Anjou fabricated his own pedigree and credentials.<sup>20</sup> Every period of history has had scam artists, and the large sums of money involved in the estate scandals drew them out of the woodwork.

Today's genealogists must be aware of these estate scams and fabricated genealogies, especially when using manuscripts and books from the nineteenth century. Many family researchers have inadvertently perpetuated these genealogical myths, errors, and fabrications. Today these myths, errors, and fabrications are proliferated in pedigrees all across the Internet. Don't continue to spread the myths and errors, check the accuracy of any pedigree you find by consulting primary sources. Just because you find something in print on the web doesn't make it so!

### **The Lawrence Hyde Story Revisited**

At the start of this article, I told a story that is part of the Lawrence Hyde family traditions. Much like many family traditions, it's not true but it has an element of truth. In the 1870s there were "heirs" to a valuable Hyde Estate with a Governor Army (remembered as Governor Andre) sailing to England to prove the claim.

Lawrence R. Murphy in his book relates how William F. M. Army died from an attack reminiscent of the ending of the Lawrence Hyde story. In both, after his return from England, Governor Army is killed in an attack and the Hyde Estate papers stolen.

"Arriving at the Kansas capital of Topeka on September 14, 1881 he became very sick but assured a hotelkeeper named Poppendick that with rest he would soon recover. The next evening while Army was attending the theatre, a band of robbers attacked him, took all of his money, railroad passes, and the evidence regarding the Hyde claim."<sup>21</sup>

William F. M. Army never recovered from his wounds and died three days later on September 18, 1881.

The Lawrence Hyde story demonstrates that family historians need to listen to the old stories and record them. Even after being altered by many retellings, they may contain an element of truth.

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<sup>19</sup> Gormley op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Gordon L. Remington, "Gustave We Hardly Knew Ye: A Portrait of Herr Anjou as a Jungberg," *Genealogical Journal*, Vol. 19, combined issues Nos. 1 and 2. 1991. Pages 47–70.

<sup>21</sup> *Frontier Crusader – William F. M. Army* by Lawrence R. Murphy, University of Arizona Press, 1972, page 245.