

The John Gridley House
205-East Seneca Turnpike
Syracuse, N.Y.-Onondaga County

HABS NY-222

HABS
N.Y.
34 SYRA,
4-

ADDITIONAL
PHOTOS

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT OF NEW YORK-2

Historic American Buildings Survey
Walter H Cassebeer, District Officer
84-Exchange St., Rochester, N.Y.

H.A.B.S.
N.Y.,
34-SYRA,

JOHN GRIDLEY HOUSE
305 East Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, N.Y.

Generally known as the Phil Gridley House.

OWNER: Girard M. Paroe
305 East Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse, N.Y.

OCCUPANT: The Owner

DATE OF ERECTION: 1812

ARCHITECT: Unknown

BUILDER: Unknown

PRESENT CONDITION: The building is in good state of preservation, the owner taking great pride in keeping it so and in restoring it to what he believes it to have originally been. A modern porch has been removed from the front. The entrance way is to be furnished with a new six panel door in duplication of the former door. The side lights have been patterned from those originally in the Samuel Forman House at 405 West Seneca Turnpike, Project 5-S-4. The original roof pitch was one to two. It has been raised to its present slope of about one to three. The rear porch is of later construction.

The interior had been altered by a former owner, who changed the location and design of stairs, replacing it with poor modern detail. Doors at the foot of this stairs are modern "French" Doors and are similar to those to the Dining room. There were formerly two panel doors in the arch between the Sitting Room and the Parlor. Closet doors and casings to the south of fireplaces in both these rooms have been removed and the opening plastered. Linen closet on the second floor is a modern addition of old materials. There have never been any shutters at the windows.

Number of Stories:

There is a basement and two full stories and attic. The first floor is reached by stone steps from the street grade. Part of the basement is plastered, the entire first and second floors. Attic is unfinished.

Materials of Construction: The exterior is local stone, probably quarried at the DeWitt quarries which were operating at this early date. Brick is of local make, hand made, size $3\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2} \times 3$ inches. The arch stones over the entrance are dressed and axed. Lintels and sills are the same. The keystone is ornamented with the usual Masonic emblems, with the addition of what appears to be two cloverleaves above the "G". The stones used in the fireplaces are a harder limestone probably corniferous limestone all nicely tooled.

The interior of Masonry walls are furred with split cedar and ash lath. The entire first and second floors, and part of the basement is plastered. Floors throughout are the wide one inch pine boards of the period. In some rooms they have been covered with modern materials. Trim throughout is painted white. There are seven fireplaces in the building.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS:

"Past and Present of Syracuse and Onondaga County" by Rev. William M. Beauchamp S.T.D.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The following data is furnished by Mr. Girard M. Parce, the owner of the building.

The house is on the north side of the highway about 500 feet east of South Salina Street. The elevation of the front walk in front of the house is 424.8 feet above sea level.

The house was built in 1813 according to report by John Gridley and is shown in George Knapp's paintings of early Onondaga Valley, which hang in the Onondaga Historical Assn. building in Syracuse. Dr Beauchamp refers to the house as the Philo Gridley House. It is generally known as such.

The facts are that Philo Gridley was sixteen years of age when the house was built. He never had title to the property.

In April 28, 1810, George Kibbe sold two acres of land to John Gridley for \$1400. Deed also gave right to use a nearby spring, mentioned in later transactions affecting the property.

John Taylor of Newark New Jersey acquired the place in April 18, 1832 and in October 27, 1833 sold it to Daniel Cometook.

It was transferred in November 25, 1836 to William J. Cook.

Then in November 25, 1842 to Edward T. Slocum, and in September 10, 1903 by the Slocum Family to Mary Blanchard.

It was acquired by the Parce Family February 5, 1909. In recent years the house has been known as the Slocum House.

In reference to the Masonic Keystonr, it is said that the builder Gridley was a member of the order and spent \$10,000 in its construction. It made him bankrupt. At the time of its construction the United States was at war with Great Britain, the Seneca Turnpike was the main east and west road through the state. The builder of the house believed that if the British soldiers did come through there they would not destroy the house because of the Masonic Emblem on the keystone.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240