

**FURNITURE  
MASTERPIECES  
OF DUNCAN PHYFE**

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Furniture Masterpieces of Duncan Phyfe by Charles Over Cornelius

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**CHARLES OVER CORNELIUS**

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OF DUNCAN PHYFE**



**FURNITURE MASTERPIECES  
OF DUNCAN PHYFE**



Warehouse, Salesrooms, and Workshop of  
Duncan Phye,  
at Nos. 168-170-172 Fulton Street, formerly  
Partition Street

# FURNITURE MASTERPIECES OF DUNCAN PHYFE

BY  
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MEASURED DETAIL DRAWINGS  
BY STANLEY J. ROWLAND  
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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## FOREWORD

DUNCAN PHYFE is the only early American cabinet-maker to whom a very large group of furniture may be attributed on documentary grounds. Much of the attribution to other American cabinet-makers is based upon purely circumstantial evidence, but in the case of Phyfe there exist documented examples of practically every type that is shown herewith. The aim, therefore, has been to present at least all the general known types of furniture from Phyfe's best period and as many variations of these types as space would permit.

It has also been attempted to place this art-craft of the Early Federal Period in the United States against the background of the time, thus to relate the utilitarian art to the influences—artistic, social, and economic—which controlled to a large degree the forms which it took.

The book has been a result of the assembling of material for an exhibition of the work of Duncan Phyfe at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In the search for Phyfe furniture there appeared a larger group of more varied material than had ever been supposed to exist.

It was deemed, therefore, advisable to put into permanent form this record of Phyfe's handiwork as it is known to-day, with no pretense to an exhaustive treatise. It may be affirmed that the book includes most of what is known about Phyfe and his work up to date, but the many surprising finds during the search for material to exhibit would

lead any expert to speak with some hesitation in saying that all types or all variations of types of Phyfe furniture are included between these covers. At least those that are shown will form a valuable basis for future attribution.

The author's cordial thanks are due to those whose possessions are illustrated in the book. It is only their courtesy which has made possible its compilation. To these the author's appreciation is expressed: Mr. and Mrs. Warren B. Ashmead, Dr. and Mrs. Lewellys F. Barker, Mr. and Mrs. Harry H. Benkard, Mr. and Mrs. Allan B. A. Bradley, Mr. Henry de Forest Baldwin, Mr. Elihu Chauncey, The Colonial Dames of the State of New York, Mr. F. Kingsbury Curtis, Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. de Forest, Mr. and Mrs. Francis P. Garvan, Mr. and Mrs. R. T. H. Halsey, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert W. Johnston, Mr. and Mrs. V. Everit Macy, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Mansfield, Miss Jane Elizabeth Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Guerineau Meyers, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wilmerding Payne, Mr. I. N. Phelps Stokes, The New York Historical Society, The New York Public Library.

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