

IN THE SCRIPT YOU WILL NOTICE CERTAIN PASSAGES ENCLOSED BY QUOTATIONS AND MARKED BY AN ASTERISK[\*]. THESE ARE QUOTES FROM ANTONIA MAURO'S WORK, *NOTABLE DEEDS: A PROFILE OF MARGARET LIVINGSTON CHANLER ALDRICH OF ROKEBY, DUTCHESS COUNTY*. SHE ASKS THAT THEY NOT BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FASHION AND APPRECIATES YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

# ROKEBY

## ARCHITECTURE

### HISTORY

THE ORIGINAL TWO AND ONE-HALF STORY STUCCOED FIELDSTONE HOUSE WAS BUILT IN THE FRENCH TASTE BY GENERAL JOHN ARMSTRONG AND HIS WIFE ALIDA LIVINGSTON ARMSTRONG. ALIDA WAS THE DAUGHTER OF JUDGE ROBERT AND MARGARET BEEKMAN LIVINGSTON OF CLERMONT. HER SIBLINGS INCLUDED CHANCELLOR ROBERT LIVINGSTON (CLERMONT) AND JANET LIVINGSTON MONTGOMERY (MONTGOMERY PLACE).

WARNER RICHARDS, A SCOTSMAN, WAS THE BUILDER, BUT THE ARCHITECT IS UNKNOWN. IT WAS POSSIBLY THE FRENCHMAN, J.J. RAMEE. THE HOUSE WAS BEGUN IN 1811, BUT CONSTRUCTION WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE WAR OF 1812. DURING THE WAR, ARMSTRONG SERVED AS BRIGADIER GENERAL IN CHARGE OF DEFENSES OF NEW YORK CITY AND LATER AS SECRETARY OF WAR, UNDER PRESIDENT JAMES MADISON. IN 1815, THE FAMILY MOVED INTO THE YET INCOMPLETE BUILDING AFTER THE FARMHOUSE THEY HAD OCCUPIED TEMPORARILY BURNED TO THE GROUND.

THE ARMSTRONG'S ONLY DAUGHTER, MARGARET, MARRIED WILLIAM BACKHOUSE ASTOR, SON OF THE ORIGINAL JOHN JACOB ASTOR. AROUND 1858 THEY ADDED A CORINTHIAN COLUMNED PIAZZA ON THE SOUTH, A FULL THIRD STORY WITH MANSARD ROOF, A KITCHEN/LAUNDRY/ SERVANTS WING TO THE NORTH AND THE STRIKING FIVE-STORY POLYGONAL TOWER ON THE WEST. THE ADDITIONS WERE OF BRICK, STUCCOED TO APPEAR UNIFORM WITH THE EARLIER FIELDSTONE HOUSE. SUBSEQUENT ALTERATIONS TO THE INTERIOR, DESIGNED BY STANFORD WHITE, WERE MADE IN 1894.

IN THE 19TH CENTURY THE STUCCO EXTERIOR HAD BEEN PAINTED AN OFF-WHITE AND SCORED TO RESEMBLE MASONRY. THE TRIM WORK IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN TAN. ABOUT

1910, THE EXTERIOR WAS RESURFACED WITH WHITE BEACH SAND AND THE SHUTTERS WERE PAINTED DARK GREEN, AT THE SUGGESTION OF CHESTER H. ALDRICH OF THE FIRM, DELAND & ALDRICH, ARCHITECTS. [ALDRICH WAS THE BROTHER-IN-LAW OF MARGARET CHANLER ALDRICH, AN ARMSTRONG/ASTOR DESCENDENT WHO HAD BOUGHT OUT HER BROTHERS' AND SISTERS' INTERESTS IN THE PROPERTY].

THE BARELY VISIBLE MURALS ON THE PIAZZA WALLS WERE PAINTED BY ROBERT WINTHROP CHANLER, MARGARET'S BROTHER. HE CREATED THEM AS A TRIBUTE TO HIS SISTER'S HAPPINESS ON THE OCCASION OF HER WEDDING TO RICHARD ALDRICH IN OCTOBER, 1906.

## LANDSCAPE

### HISTORY & ARCHITECTURE

-IN THE 1840'S THE ASTORS EMPLOYED THE GERMAN LANDSCAPE GARDENER, HANS JACOB EHLERS TO LAY OUT A NEW DRIVEWAY IN THE ROMANTIC TASTE. HE ALSO MADE CHANGES TO THE GROUNDS NEAR THE HOUSE ADDING FLOWER GARDENS AND SPECIMEN TREES.

DURING THE SAME PERIOD, THE GATEHOUSE WAS ADDED AND A SERVICE ROAD FROM THE RIVER WAS REFINED INTO A SYLVAN PATH, KNOWN AS *POETS' WALK* IN HONOR OF THE ASTORS' FRIENDS FITZ-GREENE HALLECK AND WASHINGTON IRVING.

IN 1911, MARGARET CHANLER COMMISSIONED OLMSTED BROTHERS, THE EMINENT LANDSCAPING FIRM, TO IMPROVE THE LANDSCAPING TO THE WEST OF THE HOUSE. THEY ALSO DESIGNED AND ADDED A PRIVATE RIVERSIDE DOCK.

ROKEBY IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE 25 ACRES BEYOND THE RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY, INCLUDING A SCENIC HEADLAND KNOWN AS ASTOR POINT.

### SPECIMENS, ETC.

--*RARE, GIANT GINGKO TREE* ON THE SOUTH LAWN. MARIST COLLEGE AND LOCUST GROVE IN POUGHKEEPSIE ALSO HAVE GINGKOS. THE ONLY KNOWN ONE ELSEWHERE IN NEW YORK STATE, SIMILAR IN SIZE TO THIS ONE AT Rokeby, IS AT THE VANDERBILT MANSION IN HYDE PARK.

--*STONE WALL* WHICH RUNS ALONG RIVER ROAD WAS BUILT AS AN ACT OF GRATITUDE BY A FAMILY RETAINER, JOSIAH

HOUSE. AIDED BY A YOUNG ASSISTANT, HE COMPLETED THE WALL OVER AN EIGHT YEAR PERIOD, COMPLETING THE WALL IN 1888 AT THE AGE OF 80.

--*LARGE CACTUS PLANT* IS A DESCENDANT OF THOSE ACQUIRED BY THE ASTORS AS A PATRIOTIC GESTURE AT THE TIME OF THE MEXICAN WAR DURING THE LATE 1840'S. KNOWN AS "CENTURY PLANTS", THEY ARE SAID TO BLOOM AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS OF GROWTH AND DIE.

--*IRON CANNON* WAS BROUGHT BACK FROM CHINA AS A SOUVENIR OF THE BOXER REBELLION IN 1900. MARGARET ACTED AT A CRITICAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON D.C., AS CHAIRMAN OF A NATIONWIDE MOVEMENT TOWARD AN ARMY NURSES CORPS. LATER THAT YEAR, SHE TRAVELED TO THE FAR EAST ON BEHALF OF THE ARMY NURSES CORPS TO INVESTIGATE NEGATIVE REPORTS REGARDING THE STATUS OF U.S. NURSES THERE.

--*HORSE CHESTNUT TREES* NEAR THE HOUSE REFLECT THE INFLUENCE OF FRANCE ON THE ARMSTRONGS.

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*ROKEBY IS ON THE NATIONAL HISTORIC REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES AND ITS LANDS ARE PART OF THE MID-HUDSON HISTORIC SHORE LANDS SCENIC AREA, DESIGNATED BY NEW YORK STATE. IN 1990 THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR ESTABLISHED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT OF WHICH THIS IS AN IMPORTANT PART. THE PROPERTY IS SUBJECT TO A PERPETUAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT HELD BY SCENIC HUDSON LAND TRUST, INC.*

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# THE HOUSE

## ENTRANCE HALL ARCHITECTURE

--*STAIRCASE* IS ORIGINAL. IT WAS REMODELED FOR MARGARET CHANLER IN 1894 DURING THE MAJOR RENOVATION WORK BY STANFORD WHITE. HIS DESIGN INCLUDED RAILED PASSAGEWAYS ON THE LANDING. NOTICE THAT THESE PASSAGEWAYS ARE TODAY COVERED BY TAPESTRY SECTIONS.

--*WALLS*. IT IS UNSURE WHETHER THEY ARE ORIGINAL [1811-1815] OR DATE TO C.1836.

--*CABINET*. EARLY 19TH CENTURY ITALIAN AND IS FROM THE NEW YORK CITY TOWNHOUSE OF LAURA ASTOR DELAND. WHICH STOOD ON THE SITE OF THE FORMER B. ALTMAN'S DEPARTMENT STORE, AT FIFTH AVENUE AND 34<sup>TH</sup> STREET. LAURA WAS THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED ASTORS.

--*GRANDFATHER CLOCK* BELONGED TO THE ARMSTRONGS

--*MIRROR* WAS HUNG HERE IN 1997, HAVING BEEN IN STORAGE ELSEWHERE IN THE HOUSE FOR NEARLY A CENTURY.

## PORTRAITS

--*GENERAL JOHN ARMSTRONG* - AN ENGRAVING

--*MARGARET ALDRICH RAND* (BLUE SWEATER) BY ELLEN EMMET RAND

--*ELIZA ASTOR VON RUMPF* (NEAR CLOCK) AND A DRAWING BY HER.

--*STANFORD WHITE* - A COMMEMORATIVE MARBLE PLAQUE

--*OLD PEOPLE'S HOME IN WALDORF, GERMANY* (NO TITLE) - WALDORF WAS ASTOR'S BIRTHPLACE. AN ARCHITECT'S PLAN SUBMITTED TO WILLIAM B. ASTOR TO EFFECTUATE A PROVISION OF JOHN JACOB ASTOR'S WILL. BUILT AS SHOWN, THE INSTITUTION CONTINUES TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY TODAY.

--*JOHN JAY CHAPMAN* BY SERGEANT KENDALL. CHAPMAN WAS A POET, ESSAYIST, MORALIST AND HUSBAND OF ELIZABETH CHANLER. THE CHAPMANS LIVED NEXT DOOR TO ROKEBY.

--*SAMUEL WARD* - A BRONZE BUST. WARD WAS THE GRANDFATHER OF MARGARET ALDRICH

--*JOHN ARMSTRONG, JR.* - SUPERVISOR OF RHINEBECK 150 YEARS AGO.

## HOME PARLOR HISTORY

SOME RECREATIONAL PRACTICES DURING THE 19TH CENTURY OFTEN TOOK PLACE IN THE PARLORS OF GRAND HOMES LIKE ROKEBY. "ESPECIALLY DURING COOLER MONTHS, IT WAS NOT UNUSUAL FOR VISITING COUSINS, AND OTHERS, TO ENTERTAIN THE YOUNG CHANLERS BY READING ALOUD. ON SUNDAY, A NOVEL BEGAN EARLY IN THE MORNING. AS SMALL GROUPS WENT OFF TO CHURCH THEY WERE, ON THEIR RETURN, BRIEFED ON WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN THE CHAPTERS WHILE THEY WERE AWAY."\* THE PARLOR WAS ALSO THE SETTING FOR SOCIAL CALLS PAID BY GUESTS. MRS. ARMSTRONG USED THIS AS HER BEDROOM AT THE END OF HER LIFE, DUE TO RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS. SHE DIED HERE ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1882; HER 61<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY.

## ARCHITECTURE & DECORATIVE ARTS

--*WALLPAPER*, A WILLIAMSBURG PATTERN, WAS INSTALLED IN 1970. THE PREVIOUS DESIGN WAS SELECTED BY ARCHITECT STANFORD WHITE DURING THE 1894 RENOVATION. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT ARCHITECTS OFTEN TOOK AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE INTERIOR DECORATION OF HOMES, THEIR OPINION HIGHLY VALUED. THIS PAPER IS APPLIED TO FABRIC AND HANGS FREE OF THE WALL SURFACE, TO PROTECT IT FROM THE DAMPNES OF THE THICK MASONRY WALLS. *[THE EXTERIOR WALLS ARE THREE FEET THICK]*. THE SMALL PANEL TO LEFT OF THE FIREPLACE PRESERVES SMALL SAMPLES OF ORIGINAL AND LATER WALLPAPERS.

--*EDISON PHONOGRAPH* GIVEN TO RICHARD ALDRICH BY THE INVENTOR IN THE VAIN HOPE THAT ALDRICH WOULD PROMOTE THE PRODUCT IN HIS *NEW YORK TIMES* CRITICISMS.

--*MANTLE* DATES FROM A MID-19TH CENTURY REMODELING.

## PRINTS & PAINTINGS

--*LEWIS STUYVESANT CHANLER* - A PLASTER BUST BY SARGEANT KENDALL. CHANLER WAS BROTHER TO MARGARET ALDRICH AND A LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK STATE

--*ROKEBY*-1870'S OIL PAINTING FROM AN EARLIER PHOTOGRAPH AS IT LOOKED IN ARMSTRONG'S DAY

--*SAM WARD* AND *HAMILTON FISH* - CARICATURES OF FAMILY FOREBEARS

--*MR. & MRS. WILLIAM B. ASTOR*-PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATHEW BRADY [FAMOUS CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHER WHO WAS TAUGHT HOW TO USE THE CAMERA BY SAMUEL F.B. MORSE]

--*JACK FROST* - 100 YEAR OLD PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ICE YACHT.

--*HUDSON RIVER ICE YACHTS* (NO TITLE) - A PRINT [THE ALDRICHS OWN AND CONTINUE TO SAIL A COLLECTION OF SIMILAR 19TH CENTURY ICE YACHTS]

--*NIAGARA FALLS* - CHROMO-LITHOGRAPH OF FREDERIC CHURCH PAINTING OF THE FALLS. [CHURCH CHARGED \$.25 [CENTS] TO VIEW THE ORIGINAL PANORAMA PAINTING OF THE FALLS. THIS PIECE IS SET IN A FRAME SELECTED BY CHURCH. COPIES OF THE CHROMO-LITHOGRAPH WERE SOLD IN THESE FRAMES]]

--*ROKEBY* BY MARGARET ALDRICH'S NIECE, MARGARET ELMHURST PROSSER. 1960'S PAINTING OF WESTERN FACADE

--*CHANLERS* - POLITICAL PHOTOS

--*LIVINGSTON HATCHMENT*

--*MILITIA ON PARADE AT KINGSTON*

--*THE MOON* - AN EARLY PHOTO OF THE MOON TAKEN VIA TELESCOPE BY PROFESSOR LEWIS MORRIS RUTHURFORD, AN UNCLE OF MARGARET CHANLER ALDRICH

## DINING ROOM

### HISTORY

"THE DINING ROOM AT ROKEBY HAS BEEN THE BACKGROUND FOR MANY CHANLER EVENTS AT THEIR THEATRICAL BEST. INSPIRED BY THE ARTS AND DISTANT CULTURES AND, MOTIVATED BY POLITICAL POLICY AND CAUSE, THE CHANLERS HAD MANY AN ANIMATED DISCUSSION IN THIS ROOM. ONE NEW BRIDE BEGAN PACKING AFTER ONE SUCH BOISTEROUS CONVERSATION DURING DINNER. DISCOVERED, HER CHANLER HUSBAND ASKED WHERE SHE WAS GOING? THE YOUNG WOMAN PROCLAIMED THAT THE LOUD ARGUING WAS UNFORTUNATE AND, THAT SHE DID NOT EXPECT THE BROTHERS TO EVER SPEAK TO ONE ANOTHER AGAIN. HER HUSBAND INFORMED HER THAT ALL WAS FINE. THEY HAD JUST BEEN "TALKING!"

THE CHANLER BROTHERS MAY HAVE "TALKED" AT ELEVATED LEVELS BUT, THE SUBJECTS WERE USUALLY SINCERE AND THEY OFTEN TOOK ACTION ON THEIR WORDS. MARGARET WAS PROVOKED BY HER OWN INTENSE CONCERNS AND, MOTIVATED BY HER BROTHERS' ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT. WHEN MARGARET LEFT TO NURSE SOLDIERS DURING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, THEY MUST HAVE CHEERED HER ON! SHE BECAME THE NEW CHANLER FAMILY HERO, INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN AS "THE ANGEL OF PUERTO RICO."

IN OCTOBER OF 1906, THE DINING ROOM WAS ELABORATELY DECORATED FOR THE WEDDING OF MARGARET CHANLER TO RICHARD ALDRICH. ELIZABETH, MARGARET'S ELDER SISTER, SUPERVISED THE DECORATIONS INCLUDING FLOWERS AND SASHES. SHE ALSO COVERED THE ROOM'S WALLS AND CEILING WITH JAPANESE BEECH SPRAYS."\*

### ARCHITECTURE & DECORATIVE ARTS

--WOODWORK IS ORIGINAL EXCEPT FOR MANTLE INSTALLED BY STANFORD WHITE DURING THE 1895 RENOVATIONS THAT REPLACED THE VICTORIAN MARBLE ONE. ONGOING RESTORATION HAS REVEALED EARLY BLUE AND RED TRIANGLES ON FAUX BOIS GRAINING AROUND THE OUTER MARGIN OF THE CEILING.

--MIRRORS AND CONSOLES BETWEEN THE WINDOWS ARE FRENCH EMPIRE BROUGHT BACK FROM FRANCE BY GEN. ARMSTRONG IN 1810.

--APPLE GREEN FRENCH PORCELAIN WAS THE SUMMER SERVICE AT ROKEBY USED BY THE ASTORS. A LARGE QUANTITY WAS PURCHASED IN FRANCE.

--RED PAINTED LEATHER FIRE BUCKET WAS PURCHASED IN NORTHERN ENGLAND AT THE "ORIGINAL" ROKEBY ABOUT WHICH SIR WALTER SCOTT WROTE.

--THE DEATH OF THE WHITE HART - A FREE-STANDING SCREEN WAS PAINTED BY ROBERT W. CHANLER



**PORTRAITS**

**SOUTH WALL**

- ALIDA LIVINGSTON ARMSTRONG & DAUGHTER, MARGARET IN PARIS CA. 1810, A COPY OF ORIGINAL BY REMBRANDT PEALE
- WILLIAM B. ASTOR BY WILLIAM WEST

**NORTH WALL**

- RICHARD ALDRICH BY ELLEN EMMET RAND

- MARGARET LIVINGSTON CHANLER ALDRICH ALSO BY RAND

- SHERIFF BENJAMIN CLARKE CUTLER BY JOHN WESLEY JARVIS, A NEW ENGLAND PORTRAITIST

**WEST WALL**

- GENERAL JOHN ARMSTRONG, COPY OF ORIGINAL
- SUSAN CUTLER ALDRICH BY ELLEN EMMET RAND
- ROSALIND ALDRICH MICHAHELLES
- MADDIE WARD AND MADDIE ALDRICH - OVAL PORTRAITS OF GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDDAUGHTER, PAINTED SEVENTY YEARS APART



## RECEPTION ROOM

### HISTORY & ARCHITECTURE

THIS ROOM WHERE VISITORS WERE WELCOMED TO ROKEBY, HAS CHANGED VERY LITTLE SINCE THE EARLIER PART OF THIS CENTURY. THE ROOM INDEED, SERVES AS A PREVIEW AREA FOR THE GREAT ART AND FINE FURNITURE SEEN THROUGHOUT ROKEBY AND SETS THE TONE OF THE HOUSE

--MANTLE IS MID-19TH CENTURY, REPLACING THE ORIGINAL.

--FLOOR MAY BE A COPY OF AN AUSTRIAN PARQUET INSTALLED IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT IT MAY CONCEAL THE ORIGINAL FLOOR; WIDE PINE BOARDS AND PAINTED.

### DECORATIVE ARTS

--WALLPAPER IS THE ORIGINAL BROUGHT FROM FRANCE BY ALIDA LIVINGSTON ARMSTRONG. IT IS BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE EARLIER PAPERS, IN ITS ORIGINAL LOCATION, IN NEW YORK STATE. IN PLACES, THE RED PIGMENT OF THE ROSES HAS SURVIVED.

--PLEYEL PIANO IS SIMILAR TO ONE OWNED BY CHOPIN. IT BELONGED TO EMILY ASTOR WARD.

--SPINET PIANO IS AN ASTOR & COMPANY PIECE AND WAS MADE AT CORNHILL IN LONDON.

THE ORIGINAL JOHN JACOB ASTOR EMIGRATED FROM GERMANY TO ENGLAND WHERE HE WORKED FOR HIS OLDER BROTHER MAKING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, LONG ENOUGH TO LEARN ENGLISH AND COMMERCE. HE CONTINUED ON TO NEW YORK AS HIS BROTHER'S SALESMAN, BUT SOON WENT INTO THE LUCRATIVE FUR TRADE WHERE HE BUILT HIS FORTUNE.

--CHINESE PORCELAIN URNS WERE ACQUIRED BY JOHN JACOB ASTOR. ASTOR TRADED BEAVER PELTS FROM THE COLUMBIA RIVER REGION FOR CHINESE PORCELAINS AND OTHER GOODS. HIS SHIPS CIRCUMNAVIGATED THE GLOBE IN PURSUIT OF TRADING OPPORTUNITIES, AND THE PROFITS OF ALL HIS ACTIVITIES WERE INCREASINGLY INVESTED IN MANHATTAN REAL ESTATE.

### PORTRAITS

--EDWARD LIVINGSTON - A BUST OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN THE JACKSON ADMINISTRATION, AND THE OWNER OF MONTGOMERY PLACE IN ANNANDALE

--ALIDA LIVINGSTON - A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL IN THE DINING ROOM, WITH DEMURE CLOTHING AND A HUDSON RIVER LANDSCAPE ADDED

--BONAPARTE - ON ASTOR PIANO.

--*LAURA ASTOR DELAND & ALIDA ASTOR CAREY* -  
DAUGHTERS OF WILLIAM B. ASTOR BY WILLIAM WEST (ABOVE  
THE SPINET)

--*ELIZABETH WINTHROP CHANLER* - A PHOTO OF THE OIL  
PORTRAIT PAINTED BY JOHN SINGER SARGENT IN 1893. IT  
WAS COMMISSIONED BY MARGARET CHANLER. THE ORIGINAL  
PAINTING HUNG OVER THE ASTOR PIANO IN THIS ROOM FOR  
70 YEARS AND WAS LATER GIVEN TO THE SMITHSONIAN. IN  
1896, ELIZABETH MARRIED JOHN JAY CHAPMAN AND THEY  
BUILT AN ELEGANT HOME, SYLVANIA, ADJACENT TO ROKEBY.  
CHANLER CHAPMAN WAS THEIR SON.

--*JULIA CUTLER WARD & LOUISA CUTLER MCALLISTER* -  
SISTERS. MRS. WARD WAS THE GRANDMOTHER OF MARGARET  
ASTOR WARD CHANLER (PAINTING ABOVE THE PLEYEL).

--*EMILY ASTOR WARD* - OVAL

--*SESSION OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS*. THIS  
ENGRAVING DEPICTS THE CONGRESS ABOUT TO APPROVE THE  
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. IT SHOWS CHANCELLOR  
ROBERT LIVINGSTON, AN ANCESTOR OF THE PRESENT FAMILY  
RESIDENTS .

--*THOMAS CRAWFORD* - A FRAMED DRAWING PORTRAIT OF  
CRAWFORD, AN AMERICAN SCULPTOR AND HUSBAND OF  
MADDIE WARD'S AUNT.

## DRAWING ROOM

### HISTORY & ARCHITECTURE

IN 1894, MARGARET CHANLER ENGAGED STANFORD WHITE, A MEMBER OF THE ARCHITECTURAL FIRM MCKIM, MEAD & WHITE, TO MODIFY ROKEBY. WHITE, A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE CHANLERS (ESPECIALLY THE ELDEST, ARCHIE), WAS ENLARGING MILLS MANSION, THE HOME OF OGDEN AND RUTH LIVINGSTON MILLS, WHEN HE CAME TO ROKEBY. HE CREATED (AMONG OTHER INTERIOR/EXTERIOR PROJECTS HERE) A NEW DRAWING ROOM BY COMBINING TWO SMALLER ROOMS. THE EARLIER DIVIDING WALL JOINED THE WEST WALL WHERE THE GOLD FRAMED PORTRAIT NOW HANGS; SEPARATING THE SMALLER ARMSTRONG LIBRARY FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWING ROOM. THE SCHEME ALSO INCLUDED NEW CEILING MOLDINGS, MATCHING BLACK MARBLE MANTLE AND GREEN WALLPAPER. "THE TALL *FRENCH DOORS* (CA. 1811-15) PERMITTED WESTERN VISTAS OF THE HUDSON RIVER AND ITS RICH SUNSETS. ...WHITE EMPHASIZED A COMMUNION OF THE ARCHITECTURE...WITH THE ENVIRONS OF ROKEBY. THE ORGANIC SHAPES OF NATURE OUTSIDE THAT WERE FRAMED BY THE WINDOWS TOOK NEW SHAPE IN THE CARVED FURNITURE WITHIN FEATURING MOTIFS OF HUNTSMEN, TREES, ANIMALS AND PINE CONES. THE LANDSCAPE EASED INTO THE ROOM IN THE FORM OF THE GREEN CARPET RECOMMENDED BY WHITE AND, THE *GREEN UPHOLSTERY* ON THE FURNITURE."\* [THE CARPET WAS REMOVED IN THE 1960'S WHEN THE NEW FLOOR WAS INSTALLED.]

"WITH THE ADDITION OF THE WALLPAPER, THE ETHEREAL LIMBS AND BRANCHES OF THE ESTATE'S TREES SEEMED TO CARESS THE ROOM. WESTERLY WINDS APPEARED TO BE BLOWING THE LANDSCAPE INSIDE. THE EYE OF THE OBSERVER WAS COMFORTED BY THE CONTINUITY OF LINE AND COLOR.

MARGARET WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS, HOWEVER, HER PATIENCE FOR THE PROJECT WAS SOMEWHAT LIMITED. STANFORD WHITE REBUKED THE CREW TO CARRY OUT THE TASK EXPEDITIOUSLY FOR THE RETURN OF THE MISTRESS WAS IMMINENT!"\*

### DECORATIVE ARTS

--*MIRRORS AND CLOCK* ARE FROM THE ASTOR PERIOD, AS IS THE DARK CARVED FURNITURE AND GILDED TABLE

--*CABINETS* FLANKING THE SETTEE ON THE EAST WALL ARE BY ALEXANDER ROUX. ROUX WAS A FRENCH CABINET-MAKER WORKING IN NEW YORK FROM 1836 TO 1881. HIS WORK IN MANY REVIVAL STYLES INCLUDING ROCOCO, GOTHIC AND ELIZABETHAN WAS EXTREMELY POPULAR WITH AFFLUENT FAMILIES OF THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. THESE PIECES WERE

ONCE LOANED TO THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART IN NEW YORK CITY FOR AN EXHIBITION.

--*MALACHITE LAMPS* [MALACHITE IS A BRIGHT GREEN STONE FOUND MAINLY IN RUSSIA AND WAS WIDELY USED BY FABERGE] CAME FROM THE NEW YORK CITY TOWNHOUSE OF LAURA ASTOR DELAND. THE DELANDS' ELEGANT ITALIANATE VILLA, *STEEN VALETJE* WITH ITS MAGNIFICENT ARCHITECTURAL PRESENCE, WAS BUILT ON THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE ROKEBY ESTATE IN 1851. EXTENSIVELY REMODELED, IT IS CURRENTLY A RED-BRICK GEORGIAN-STYLE MANSION [SOLD OUT OF THE FAMILY AND RENAMED ATALANTA]. IT CAN BE SEEN FROM THE KINGSTON-RHINECLIFF BRIDGE. THIS COUNTRY SEAT IS JUST SOUTH OF ROKEBY.

MRS. DELAND WAS ONE OF THE SIX CHILDREN OF MARGARET AND WILLIAM B. ASTOR. FRANKLIN DELAND ROOSEVELT WAS NAMED AFTER HIS CHILDLESS GREAT UNCLE, FRANKLIN H. DELAND, LAURA'S HUSBAND.

--*DECORATIVE SCREEN, FIRE SCREEN AND TWO SMALLER PANELS* BY ROBERT W. CHANLER.

--*STEINWAY PIANOS* ARE A PAIR THAT BELONGED TO MARGARET CHANLER ALDRICH AND HER HUSBAND RICHARD, WHO WAS THE MUSIC CRITIC OF THE NEW YORK TIMES UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1937. NOTICE THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE PIANOS.

#### PORTRAITS

--*MARGARET LIVINGSTON CHANLER* - AN OIL BY SERGEANT KENDALL DEPICTS MARGARET AS A YOUNG WOMAN ON THE ROKEBY PIAZZA.

--*ROBERT W. CHANLER* - A BUST. ROBERT AN ACCOMPLISHED ARTIST WHO STUDIED IN FRANCE, WAS ALSO THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC SHERIFF IN DUTCHESS COUNTY KNOWN TO THE CITIZENS AS "SHERIFF BOB."

--*ELIZABETH WINTHROP CHANLER* - A PHOTOGRAPH. ELIZABETH, THE ELDEST OF THE THREE CHANLER SISTERS, IS PORTRAYED HERE AS A LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN.

## **LIBRARY**

### **HISTORY & ARCHITECTURE**

AROUND 1858, WILLIAM BACKHOUSE ASTOR AND HIS WIFE, MARGARET ARMSTRONG ASTOR, GREATLY ENLARGED ROKEBY, INCLUDING THE ADDITION OF THE FIVE STORY TOWER IN WHICH THIS LIBRARY IS LOCATED. THREE FLOORS OF LIBRARIES WERE BUILT TO HOUSE THE EXTENSIVE BOOK COLLECTION OF GENERAL JOHN ARMSTRONG AND THE RAPIDLY EXPANDING ASTOR COLLECTION. THE GROUND FLOOR OCTAGONAL LIBRARY IS THOUGHT TO BE ONE OF THE FINEST GOTHIC REVIVAL ROOMS IN AMERICA AND STRONGLY RESEMBLES THE WORK OF ALEXANDER JACKSON DAVIS. [DAVIS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DECAMETER HOUSE IN RHINEBECK, LYNDHURST IN TARRYTOWN, LOCUST GROVE IN POUGHKEEPSIE, EDGEWATER IN BARRYTOWN, MONTGOMERY PLACE AND THE *ORIGINAL* BLITHEWOOD (SINCE DEMOLISHED) IN ANNANDALE. ALL THAT REMAINS OF BLITHEWOOD IS THE HEXAGONAL GATEHOUSE.]

THE DESIGN OF THIS DRAMATIC CHAMBER FEATURES FAUX BOIS (A TYPE OF GRAINING) GOTHIC GROINS OF PLASTER. ALL THE WOOD GRAINING IN THE ROOM WAS HAND PAINTED TO UNIFY THE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS MADE OF PINE, TO RESEMBLE OAK, AND PLASTER.

"MARGARET ALDRICH REMEMBERED AS A CHILD THAT EDUCATION AT ROKEBY WAS THE EMBODIMENT OF FRIENDS - DOZENS OF BOOKS AND HISTORY! FAIRY STORIES, *THE LITTLE DUKE*, *ARABIAN NIGHTS*, POETRY AND PROSE BY AUTHORS SUCH AS BROWNING AND MEREDITH WERE WRITTEN FOR FAMILIES SUCH AS THE CHANLERS. THEY READ INSATIABLY AND WORKS SUCH AS VICTOR HUGO'S *MEMOIRS* WERE READ ALOUD IN FRENCH."\*

### **DECORATIVE ARTS**

--*SMALL SETTEE & MATCHING CHAIRS* ARE FRENCH, IN THE EMPIRE STYLE. THIS FURNITURE STYLE IS ASSOCIATED WITH NAPOLEON I FROM 1804 TO 1815. THEY MAY BE ORIGINAL TO THE HOUSE, DURING THE ARMSTRONG PERIOD.

--*CARPET* IS AUBUSSON. AUBUSSON CARPETS ORIGINATED FROM A GROUP OF WORKSHOPS AROUND THE VILLAGE OF AUBUSSON IN FRANCE IN THE EARLY 16TH CENTURY. THESE CARPETS WERE UNIQUE BECAUSE THE WEAVERS WERE ALLOWED TO WORK IN THEIR HOMES RATHER THAN IN A CENTRAL FACTORY. MOST OF THE WEAVERS WERE HUGUENOTS. BY THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY, WEAVERS WERE GIVEN MORE FREEDOM IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SCENES AND DESIGNS THEY WERE CREATING. COLOR

SCHEMES WERE INFLUENCED BY FRENCH MEDIEVAL  
TAPESTRIES AND PRE-COLUMBIAN TEXTILES

--*CEILING HOOK* WAS DESIGNED FOR A CHANDELIER OR  
CANDELABRA AND HAS NOT BEEN USED SINCE 1876 (IF  
EVER). THERE IS SPECULATION AS TO THE BLOCKING OF THE  
REFLECTED VIEW OF THE RIVER FROM THE MIRROR ON THE  
EAST WALL

- *BOOKCASES* CONTAIN MUCH OF GENERAL ARMSTRONG'S  
PERSONAL LIBRARY AND INCLUDE NUMEROUS WORKS ON  
AGRICULTURE AND MILITARY AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS. THERE  
ARE APPROXIMATELY 4,000 VOLUMES IN THIS ROOM AND,  
12,000 ELSEWHERE IN THE HOUSE.

## ART

--*WILLIAM ASTOR CHANLER* - A BUST PORTRAYS THE  
CONGRESSMAN AND AFRICAN EXPLORER, A BROTHER TO  
MARGARET ALDRICH. THIS IS A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL BY  
SAINT GAUDENS.

--*BUST OF JULIA WARD HOWE* ON CIRCULAR RADIATOR. JULIA  
WARD HOWE WAS AN AUNT TO THE CHANLERS AND A PILLAR  
IN MARGARET ALDRICH'S LIFE AS A YOUNG WOMAN. HOWE  
BECAME NATIONALLY RENOWNED FOR HER PATRIOTIC VERSE  
*THE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC* WRITTEN IN  
WASHINGTON D.C., IN 1861.

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END

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