

## AN ACT

Authorising the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to acquire by gift on behalf of the Commonwealth the real property, known as Hope Lodge in Montgomery County; providing for its control, management, supervision, restoration, improvement and maintenance, and appropriating for this purpose all funds received in behalf of or as the result of operation of Hope Lodge.

## Preamble.

Whereas, Hope Lodge in Montgomery County, on the Bethlehem Pike near its intersection with the Skippack Pike, is one of the Commonwealth's finest examples of Georgian Colonial architecture and a historic home worthy of preservation; and

Whereas, this beautiful mansion is a memorial to Pennsylvania's remarkable cultural and material progress in its early years for, the Quaker, Samuel Morris built it in 1723, less than a half century after Pennsylvania was founded; and

Whereas, throughout the eastern Pennsylvania campaigns of the American Revolution, Hope Lodge lay in the midst of the alarms of war, with Washington's army and British forces encamped nearby at various times, and is said to have served as an emergency hospital after the Battle of Germantown; and

Whereas, after a long succession of owners, Hope Lodge was acquired in 1922 and carefully restored by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Degn, who furnished it appropriately with eighteenth-century furniture and maintained it with praiseworthy and reverent regard for its historic character; and

Whereas, Mrs. Degn at her death left Hope Lodge as •a historic monument, to be maintained in perpetuity for the instruction of the public, and the historical and architectural significance of this colonial mansion dictates the acceptance of this munificent bequest as a historic shrine of the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, Mrs. Degn in paragraph eighteen of her Last Will and Testament, executed January 20, 1950, and since her death admitted to probate in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, provided that the buildings and surrounding land should be held "in perpetuity for the enjoyment and education of the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and others, as a museum and permanent exhibit typical of the architecture and furnishings of the Colonial period of America;" and

Whereas, the Trustees in the said Will have expressed a desire to make a gift of this and other property to the

\* "an" in original.

Commonwealth for preservation by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in accordance with the Will of the testatrix, and to pay to the Commonwealth for its upkeep the net income from approximately two hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$290,000.00) in trust securities in Mrs. Degn's estate.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is hereby authorized and empowered to accept, on behalf of the Commonwealth, upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon between the Trustees of Mrs. Degn's estate and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, with the approval of the Governor, the gift of the real property known as "Hope Lodge on the Bethlehem Pike" in Montgomery County, the said property being more specifically two parcels described as follows:

**Authority to accept "Hope Lodge on the Bethlehem Pike."**

All that certain lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate in the Township of Whitemarsh, County of Montgomery and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows:

**Location of real property in Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County.**

Beginning at a point on the easterly side of Bethlehem Pike, which said point is at the distance of 51.57 feet measured south 4 degrees 51 minutes 58 seconds east from the intersection of the easterly side of Bethlehem Pike with the southerly right-of-way line of the Pennsylvania Turnpike; thence extending along land of the Philadelphia Electric Company the six following courses and distances: (1) north 70 degrees 58 minutes 32 seconds east 374.31 feet to a point of curve, thence (2) on the arc of a circle curving to the right with a radius of 11,309.19 feet the arc distance of 467.12 feet to a point, thence (3) south 52 degrees 27 minutes 53 seconds east 229.96 feet to a point, thence (4) north 39 degrees 14 minutes 12 seconds east 213.87 feet to a point, thence (5) south 66 degrees 50 minutes 48 seconds east 175.33 feet to a point, thence (6) south 32 degrees 29 minutes 03 seconds east 600.00 feet to a point; thence south 59 degrees 50 minutes 50 seconds west 764.88 feet to a point; thence south 74 degrees 57 minutes 30 seconds west 675.00 feet to a point; thence south 74 degrees 51 minutes 38 seconds west 294.00 feet to a point on the easterly side of Bethlehem Pike; thence along the said easterly side of Bethlehem Pike, the two following courses and distances: (1) north 2 degrees 11 minutes 56 seconds east 104.60 feet, thence (2) north 2 degrees 30 minutes east 782.04 feet to the

**Description.**

first mentioned point and place of beginning, containing 32.273 acres, more or less, and

All that certain lot or piece of ground situate in the Township of Whitemarsh, County of Montgomery and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at an interior point, said point being in line between land of C. Jared Ingersoll and land, now or late, of William L. Degn and at the distance of 333.7 feet measured north 75 degrees 11 minutes 30 seconds east along the said line from a point in the easterly side of Bethlehem Pike (60 feet wide, passing over a stone set at the distance of 294.5 feet from the said easterly side of Bethlehem Pike), said last mentioned point being at the distance of 718.3 feet, more or less, northwardly from the centerline of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (Trenton Cut-Off Branch); thence from the first mentioned point and place of beginning, along land, now or late of William L. Degn north 75 degrees 11 minutes 30 seconds east 635.80 feet to an angle point; thence along same north 60 degrees 20 minutes east 765.00 feet to a point, a corner of land late of Manor Real Estate and Trust Company, now Prock; thence along said land south 44 degrees 58 minutes east 206.89 feet to a point; thence along land of the Philadelphia Electric Company south 59 degrees 53 minutes west 1436.17 feet to a point, a corner of land of the Ambler Water Company; thence along same north 2 degrees 15 minutes east 202.98 feet to a point; thence still along same south 73 degrees 08 minutes 30 seconds west 153.59 feet to a point; thence crossing land of C. Jared Ingersoll of which this was a part north 14 degrees 48 minutes 30 seconds west 173.33 feet to the place of beginning, containing 7.6378 acres.

Title to be in name of Commonwealth and approved by Department of Justice.

Responsibilities of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Section 2. The title to said real estate shall be taken in the name of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and shall before its acquisition be approved by the Department of Justice.

Section 3. Upon acquiring the property aforesaid, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission shall have full control, management and supervision thereof, and shall have power to adopt and carry into effect plans for the restoration, improvement and maintenance of the property and to make and enforce rules and regulations for the preservation of the property and the visitation thereof by the public, including the charging of admission and other fees. All such revenues and all other funds received for or in connection with Hope Lodge being hereby appropriated to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for the care,

preservation, maintenance and improvement of Hope Lodge.

Section 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Act effective immediately.

APPROVED—The 28th day of June, A. D. 1957.

GEORGE M. LEADER

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No. 233

AN ACT

Authorizing the Department of Property and Supplies, with the approval of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, to acquire on behalf of the Commonwealth, certain land, buildings and personal property, located in the Township of Whitemarsh, Montgomery County.

Whereas, the historic mansion known as "The Highlands" in Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County, is a faithful reflection of three periods of Pennsylvania's social life and a handsome example of the domestic architecture of the Federal period; and Preamble.

Whereas, The Highlands was built in 1796 by Anthony Morris, Philadelphia merchant and former President of the State Senate, as a country seat where the official world of the youthful United States, when Philadelphia was the national capital, was extensively entertained; and

Whereas, this notable mansion was acquired in 1813 by another Philadelphia merchant, George Sheaff, who laid the foundation of an exceptionally fine garden and brought the house into line with the cultural ideals of the second generation of the American nation; and

Whereas, the mansion and gardens were conscientiously restored and maintained in modern days by more recent owners, giving it outstanding character among the old estates of Pennsylvania, and adding to its interest and attractiveness with appropriate antique furniture and furnishings; and

Whereas, the present owners, concerned about its future preservation for the benefit of the people, have offered this magnificent historic property with most of its furniture and furnishings as a gift to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, subject only to the condition that, when transfer to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is made by the last survivor, no Pennsylvania transfer inheritance tax shall be imposed on such transfer.