

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Underground Railroad in New York at John Jay Homestead on April 15

“**Through the Eyes of Three Generations of Jays,**” the 2010 series of Scholars Lectures at John Jay Homestead State Historic Site, will continue on Thursday, April 15, with Graham Russell Gao Hodges presenting his book **David Ruggles: A Radical Black Abolitionist and the Underground Railroad in New York City**, published this month by University of North Carolina Press. David Ruggles was one of the most bold and heroic figures of the early abolition movement, working as an activist, writer, publisher and hydrotherapist. A founder of the New York Committee of Vigilance, he counseled civil disobedience and self-defense for self-emancipated enslaved people and secured freedom for more than 600 former slaves, including Frederick Douglass. Born free 200 years ago in Lyme, CT, he became a linchpin of the antislavery movement in the 1830’s and 40’s, bridging race, gender, religion and class divides among activists. William Jay supported him financially, personally and professionally.

Graham Russell Gao Hodges is George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana at Colgate University. He is author or editor of more than a dozen books, including *Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613-1863*. He has also taught at Beijing University and written a cultural history of the New York City cabdriver.

The lecture series presents three periods of crisis in our early history involving three members of the Jay family. The first evening, on February 4, told the story of the Civil War Draft Riots, with John Jay II pleading with Abraham Lincoln to declare martial law and put down the violence in New York City; the second lecture, to be rescheduled, will present the Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Marshall and the establishment of the doctrine of judicial review.

The 2010 John Jay Lecture Series is organized by the Scholars Committee of Friends of John Jay Homestead, whose members include John Greenwood, Donald Gregg, Mary Hamill, Timothy Harwood, Alexia and Jerry Jurschak, Brian Landry, Bonnie and Piers MacDonald, Silvia and Steve Ohler, George Roberts, Robert Saunders, Timothy Schieffelin, Roger Schwartz, Norman Selby, John Stockbridge, Kate and Tom Terry, Melissa Vail (Chair), and Caroline and John Walker.

Lecture tickets are \$15 per lecture for Friends members; \$25 for non-members; free for students. Reservations are recommended. Registration begins at 6:30; the talks begin at 7:00; and are followed by a short reception and book-signing. For more information, or to reserve tickets or books, please contact the Friends of John Jay Homestead office at (914) 232-8119; email friends@johnjayhomestead.org; or visit www.johnjayhomestead.org.