
Robert R. Livingston, Jr.

The Reluctant Revolutionary *by Clare Brandt*

Robert R. Livingston, Jr. was a member of an extraordinary generation of American statesmen, a generation which included, among others, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, James Madison, George Washington, and John Jay. It is to their breadth of mind, erudition, foresightedness, dedication, and courage that the success of the American Revolution may be largely ascribed.

Most of these political and military midwives, who supervised the delivery of our infant nation during a long and hazardous labor, were very young at the onset. Thomas Jefferson turned thirty-three the year he wrote the Declaration of Independence; and that same year, 1776, Madison turned twenty-five, John Jay thirty-one, and Robert R. Livingston, Jr., of New York, thirty.

The name of Robert R. Livingston, Jr. does not, of course, usually appear with these others on the standard list of America's founding fathers. Anywhere outside the Hudson Valley, the inclusion of his name is generally greeted with "Robert Who?." But here today, *in* the Hudson Valley, and in the process of examining the Livingston family's role in American history, we may choose to ask a different ques-

tion about Robert: Why did this man, so eminently qualified, so strategically positioned, and so highly motivated, *fail* to gain a place in his country's pantheon of revolutionary demigods?

Chancellor Livingston was unquestionably a man of accomplishment, and the present inquiry is intended neither to deny nor to diminish those accomplishments. In fact, our investigation may result in a better appreciation of his real achievements—a clearer vision of what the Chancellor *was* by delineating what he *was not*.

Unfortunately, these are very muddy waters—due, in part, to a bad habit we all have of answering the question “Robert Who?” by citing, first and foremost, Robert’s membership on the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence. We do that, of course, because the committee is instantly recognizable; it is an efficient way to put Robert on the historical map. The trouble is that we are also, at least by implication, claiming a distinction for Robert that does not belong to him. We all know that Robert neither wrote nor edited a word of the document. Most modern historians have concluded that he was appointed to the committee simply in order to get the name of a prominent New Yorker publicly attached to the Declaration, thereby forcing the faction-torn New York Provincial Assembly into a firm commitment to independence. Robert was a pawn in a political maneuver, and he served on the committee not because of his eloquence and erudition (which he had in good measure), but because he was a delegate from a colony that could not make up its mind. Yet his membership on that committee has come to be his principal claim to fame. He is best known, even in his own family, for something he did not really do.

This is both ironic and emblematic. It is ironic because in the process of magnifying Robert’s national historical significance, we often minimize his real accomplishments—or at least put them badly out of focus. It is emblematic because this tendency to overinflate Robert—to try to turn him into something he wasn’t—is a tendency to which he himself consistently yielded.

Robert R. Livingston, Jr. was unlucky enough to be born into what the old Chinese curse calls “interesting times.” He graduated from King’s College in June of 1765, only a few weeks after the promulgation of the Stamp Act, and his commencement oration was aptly entitled “On Liberty.” But what he and most of the rest of his family, including his father, Judge Robert R. Livingston, Sr., meant by liberty in 1765 was not independence for the American colonies but rather a return to the *status quo ante*, before traditional colonial rights had been

usurped by the terms of the Stamp, Currency, and Sugar Acts. These conservative Whigs stood firm against independence at this stage not just because of its short-term dangers, but, much more important, because they firmly believed it was contrary to the best long-term interests of the thirteen colonies. Instead, they sought—and fought for, in a whole series of extra-legal congresses and committees during the decade leading up to the war—the restoration of their traditional rights as British citizens.

As late as May 1775, a month *after* colonial lives had been lost at Lexington and Concord, Judge Robert R. Livingston wrote to his son at the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia, “Every good man wishes that America might *remain* free [emphasis added]: in this I join heartily; at the same time I do not desire, she should be wholly independent of the mother country. How to reconcile their jarring principles, I profess I am altogether at a loss.”¹ For the judge, as for many patriotic colonials, the notion of an independent America was never the greater good, only the lesser evil. They were extremely reluctant revolutionaries.

What disquieted them as much as the act of insurrection itself was the stated political goal of the American revolt: the establishment of a democratic republic. Democracy was not a congenial concept to Judge Robert R. Livingston, Sr. or to his son. They did not share the faith of Thomas Jefferson in the virtue and educability of the people. Quite the contrary, they regarded the masses as irresponsible, immoderate, and injudicious—an attitude which they and other members of their family came by quite naturally, after three generations of exercising political power in the Province of New York and social and economic power in the manorial world of the Hudson Valley.

New York had been founded in the mid-seventeenth century as a commercial colony. From the outset, its goals and values were commercial and its politics, quite unabashedly, were the politics of self-interest. During the Leisler interlude of the 1680s and '90s, New York's political picture was further disfigured by the stain of social snobbery. By 1765, when the first pre-revolutionary crisis hit the colony, New York was politically divided into two passionately opposed parties: the so-called “merchant faction,” led by the powerful DeLancey family of New York City, and the party of the upriver landed aristocracy, dominated by the Livingstons. These parties disagreed not so much on policy, or even goals, as they did on pedigree. The DeLanceys were descended from a supporter of New York's one-time self-appointed Lieutenant Governor, Jacob Leisler, a man whom Robert Livingston, the first manor proprietor, had called “ye vulgar

sort.”² Because the parties’ differences were social and personal rather than ideological, members of both were perfectly capable of shifting ground when the occasion demanded. (As Philip Livingston, the second manor proprietor, put it, “We Change Sides as Serves our Interest best.”³) In addition, the parties themselves veered from one end of the ideological spectrum to the other in the interest of expedience—a phenomenon amply demonstrated by the following capsule summary of the political events of the late 1760s.

In 1765, concurrent with the Stamp Act riots in New York City, there occurred a tenant uprising in the Hudson Valley which directly threatened both the life and property of Robert Livingston, the third manor proprietor. The proprietor’s Clermont cousin, Judge Robert R. Livingston, was appalled not only by the affrontery of the insurgents but also by the fact that, after the uprising was quelled by British troops and its leader, William Prendergast, convicted and sentenced to death, he was granted a full pardon by His Majesty George III, King of England. This, coming so soon after the contretemps with His Majesty over the Stamp Act, was naturally received by the Livingstons and their fellow landed conservatives as a humiliating royal slap in the face. Their sovereign, whom they had always regarded as their natural ally against the forces of domestic radicalism, had finally, publicly, slammed the door in their faces. When they turned to look for new allies among their own countrymen, they discovered an unpleasant truth. While they had been preoccupied with the tenant uprising and with the Stamp Act congresses, their committees and their moderate addresses to the king, the political opposition had been busy in the streets. The DeLancey party, recognizing the potential of the newly aroused populace of New York, had successfully wooed the radical leadership and manipulated its followers in order to control votes. It was all quite cynical: the DeLanceys were no more dedicated to the radical cause than were the Livingstons (even less, as it turned out). But they did recognize an electoral bonanza when they saw one, and they mined it with ruthless ingenuity.

In a series of stunning electoral victories between 1767 and 1770, the DeLancey party assumed political control of the Province of New York, and in the process confirmed all the conservatives’ fears about the baseness of popular politics. In pursuit of votes, they employed all the time-honored political techniques: oversimplification of issues, concoction of scapegoats, and inflammatory catchwords, not to mention intimidation, bribery, and titillation. Exploiting their party’s merchant origins and urban orientation, they depicted the Livingstons as

aloof highbrows and would-be intellectuals lolling on their vast country acres. In one election, they attacked the entire legal profession, largely because of the prominence and popularity of Judge Livingston and his cousin William. In another they exploited the issue of religion, depicting all Anglicans as snobs and royalists, in contrast to the Presbyterians as men of the people. They even tried to defame a Livingston political ally, John Morin Scott, as a homosexual; one of their political broadsides read: “[He] dances with, and *kisses (filthy beast!)* those of his own sex.”⁴

The Livingstons and their allies naturally fought back, indulging in a little mud slinging of their own. But they didn’t have their hearts in it; and by the end of the campaign of 1770, the DeLanceys and their allies were firmly established as the political darlings of the crowd and undisputed masters of the Provincial Assembly. It was from this unassailable position that they were able to unseat from the assembly both the popular Judge Livingston and his powerful cousin Philip, leaving the family unrepresented in the assembly for the first time since Livingston Manor had been given its seat, fifty-four years before. The judge, deprived of his voice and vote at a time when his country’s fate was hanging in the balance, suffered what he called “melancholy and dejection;” and he concluded sorrowfully, “This country appears to have seen its best days.”⁵

Within a few years, however, the situation had reversed itself, in a preposterous sequence that went roughly as follows. After the death of Governor Sir Henry Moore in 1769, the new acting governor, Cadwallader Colden, in an attempt to ape his sovereign, withdrew gubernatorial support from the upriver landlords—the Livingston party—and in the process perforce allied himself with the opposition. This meant that the DeLanceys, in order to capitalize on his support, had to endorse his measures in the assembly, even unpopular legislation such as a £2,000 appropriation bill for the provisioning of British troops in New York City. The Livingstons naturally exploited these issues to wean the populace away from the DeLancey party but then, in order to solidify their gains with the voters, found themselves toeing the popular line on almost every issue.

This is, of course, an oversimplified description of a very complex shift. Suffice it to say that after the political seesaw tilted once again, the Livingston and DeLancey parties found themselves at the opposite ends of the political spectrum from where they had started, with the Livingstons, perhaps to their own surprise as much as anyone else’s, holding down the left. If this seems unlikely, just remember that this

was New York, where politics was practiced with mirrors, and logic, loyalty, and principle stood regularly on end in obeisance to power.

It was in this political tradition that Robert R. Livingston, Jr. was raised, so perhaps it is understandable that he should instinctively distrust the people as a political force. He shared the desire of his colleague, Thomas Jefferson, *for* the people, but good government *by* the people was, to him, a self-contradiction. He was not alone in this; many of his contemporaries—including some of our more eminent founding fathers—distrusted the people. What set Robert apart—and what finally prevented him from achieving preeminence in the political democracy his colleagues created—was that he lacked not only the head for democracy but also the stomach. His disdain for the people was both intellectual and visceral. He harbored a deeply felt, personal aversion to the people—an aversion that was a strong element of Livingston family tradition, bred into the family's collective subconscious as part of the manorial experience.

The Hudson Valley society into which Robert was born had almost as much in common with European fifteenth-century medieval society as it did with the eighteenth-century European Enlightenment. His perception of the character of the people was inevitably colored by his family's traditional perception of the tenants of Livingston Manor—a perception which had gotten off to a bad start, three generations before the Chancellor was born, when the relationship between his great-grandfather, the manor's founder, and a group of Palatine refugees ran on the rocks of greed, wishful thinking, and ineptitude. Their story has been told elsewhere in all its heartrending detail, and I will not repeat it here. By the end of it, the first proprietor of the manor had reached the conclusion that his Palatine tenants were, to a man and woman, nothing more than shiftless parasites, out to bleed the Livingston family and its resources to death. He called them (among other things) “worse than northern savages”⁶—which, in the context of the bloody French and Indian Wars, was probably the worst thing he could think to say about them.

This profound suspicion of the tenantry, laced with fervent contempt, was inevitably passed along to the next generation of Livingstons, and the next, until in the family vocabulary tenant came to mean parasite, and the people became synonymous with scoundrels. An examination of Livingston descriptive language over several generations leaves little doubt of the validity of this conclusion. One good example is the second manor proprietor's injunction to his son: “Our

people are hoggish and brutish[;] they must be humbl'd."⁷ And in the next generation, Walter Livingston simply categorized the tenantry as "Pests of Society."⁸

Naturally, the feeling was mutual. One of the third manor proprietor's tenants, escaping capture by his lordship's constables during a tenant uprising, yelled over his shoulder as he ran into the woods, "Robert Livingston: Kiss his ass!"⁹

In this context, Robert R. Livingston, Jr.'s assessment a few years later seems quite moderate. In 1779 he wrote, "From habit & passion I love and pity my fellow creatures would to God I could esteem them."¹⁰

The Chancellor's misgivings about his fellow men were not alleviated by the demeanor of the Livingston tenantry during the Revolutionary War. In 1775, when the Articles of Association were circulated, Robert informed his friend, John Jay, that "many of our Tenants here refused to sign . . . and [have] resolved to stand by the King . . . [But] since troops have been raised changed their battery."¹¹ Later in the war, bands of Tory tenants roamed the valley; and Robert's mother, Margaret Beekman Livingston, reported, "Some say their number is 4000 . . . They have taken a Congress Member . . . and carried him off to no one knows where, they have three boxes of gun powder that has been sent to them by some as bad as themselves."¹²

That letter was written on July 6, 1776, two days after the final draft of the Declaration of Independence had been sent to the printer in Philadelphia. Robert R. Livingston, Jr. was already on his way back to New York to steer ratification of the declaration through the faction-torn Provincial Assembly. The assembly managed without him, however. Acting expeditiously for perhaps the first and only time, it approved the declaration after one morning of debate; and Robert, arriving days later, was permitted to contribute nothing, not even his vote. Having thus forfeited this mark of distinction in the history books of his home state, he proceeded to lose his rightful place on his country's most exclusive roll of honor. Becoming engrossed in urgent business at home, he was unable to return to Philadelphia in time to sign the declaration, a ceremony which took place (popular legend notwithstanding) on August 2. His cousin Philip was there to give the Livingston seal of approval, and he is known in the family to this day as "Philip the signer." Robert's posterity, on the other hand, has had to be content with the inadvertent, but devastatingly accurate, designation on a plaque in the town of Rhinebeck, where he is memorialized as

Robert R. Livingston
Draftee of the Declaration of Independence

Despite his increasing concern, even abhorrence, at the democratic complexion of his newly independent country, Robert R. Livingston, Jr. served both the nation and his state with great steadfastness and personal courage throughout the war. During late 1776 and early 1777 he labored unceasingly, at considerable personal risk, to secure the defenses of New York State, particularly of the Hudson Valley, the military key to the war. (He was rewarded by having his magnificent new Hudson River mansion burned to the ground in October 1777, during the British army's only successful foray into the valley.) Concurrently, he served on the committee to draft New York State's first constitution. A predictably conservative document—penned largely by John Jay, with Robert's assistance—it was accepted by the constitutional convention at Poughkeepsie only after considerable amendment from the floor, engineered by a large group of delegates from the new political class: mechanics, small farmers, and country lawyers. Observing the process, Robert complained to his friend Edward Rutledge, "In this state we are to form a government under which we are to spend the remainder of our lives, without that influence that is derived from respect to old families wealth age &c.—we are to contend with the envy of some, the love of power in others who would debase the government as the only means of exalting themselves and above all with that mixture of jealousy and cunning into which Genius long occupied in trifles generally degenerates when unimproved by education and unrefined by honor . . . I am sick of politics and power, I long for more refined pleasures, conversation and friendship. I am weary of crowds and pine for solitude nor would in my present humor give one scene of Shakespeare for one thousand . . . Lockes, Sidneys and Adams to boot. If without injuring my country I could once return to my own farm and fireside, I aver, I would not change any situation to be Great Mogul or President of the Congress."¹³

Unfortunately for Robert's peace of mind, the latter was not true. He hungered for recognition, fame, and power; so despite his revulsion, he stayed on.

To Robert's horror, the winner of the New York gubernatorial election a few months later, over the patrician Philip Schuyler, was George Clinton, a country lawyer and the son of a farmer. Meanwhile, the tenants of the Hudson Valley had staged an uprising in support of the British army which, although easily quashed, nonetheless confirmed the Livingstons' perception of their tenants as ungrateful, unreliable, and short-sighted. Robert's mother may have summed up the family attitude best when, in a New Year's greeting to her son, she

prayed for "Peace and Independence and deliverance from the persecutions of the Lower Class."¹⁴

Robert R. Livingston, Jr. became his country's first Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1781; but within a year of taking office he had reached the conclusion that the position was not commensurate with his political abilities and social standing, so he resigned. The implications of this action, as well as the motives behind it, did not escape his political colleagues—men such as George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, who would become the first three presidents of the United States of America. Robert's now firmly established reputation for pride, disdain, and ambivalence probably cost him the high positions in their administrations which he felt he deserved. Robert was not only unprepared to share power with the *hoi polloi*, he was even more squeamish about submitting himself to their political judgment as a candidate for public office. Yet at the same time, he hungered for eminence at the national level. Torn between ambition and repugnance, poor Robert never satisfactorily sorted out his muddled set of goals, motives, and loyalties. It was perhaps nature's little joke to have given him one blue eye and one brown.

Robert's inevitable frustration at not receiving the recognition he thought he deserved soon began to express itself in behavior that was petty, foolish, transparent, and utterly self-defeating. For example, shortly after administering the oath of office to George Washington at the first presidential inauguration in April 1789, Robert conceived a burning notion that a major post in Washington's first cabinet was his due. During the early weeks of the new administration, he and his sister, Janet Montgomery, waged a strenuous behind-the-scenes campaign to secure one of the coveted places. But although President Washington solicited Robert's advice on a variety of matters, the expected offer of a cabinet post did not ensue. Finally, Robert swallowed his pride and applied to Washington directly, letting it be known that he preferred one of two offices: Secretary of the Treasury or Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The president's reply to his letter was swift, tactful, and devastating: "When I accepted of the important trust committed to my charge by my Country, I gave up every idea of personal gratification that I did not think was compatible with the public good However strong my personal attachment might be to anyone—however desirous I might be of giving a proof of my friendship—and whatever might be his expectations, grounded upon

the amity, which had subsisted between us, I was fully determined to keep myself free from every engagement that could embarrass me in discharging this part of my administration.”¹⁵

The depths of Robert’s disappointment and humiliation are easily measured. Within a year he had launched a vicious public attack on the man who had received the job of Chief Justice, his one-time bosom friend, John Jay; and he had taken himself and the entire Clermont branch of the Livingston family out of the Federalist party and into an alliance with its political foes. This put him in the ridiculous position a few years later of supporting George Clinton for governor of New York, not because of any personal enthusiasm for the farmer’s son but because his opponent, the Federalist candidate, was John Jay. A sixteen-page diatribe entitled “John Jay Exposed for What He Is” appeared over Robert’s name. The Clinton victory (a highly questionable one, after the votes from two large Federalist districts were invalidated on a technicality) must have been a bittersweet triumph for Chancellor Robert R. Livingston.

During the next decade, as Jay went from triumph to triumph at the national level, Robert continued to serve as chancellor of New York State. He refused President Washington’s invitation to become minister to France in 1794; and five years later, when he was nominated to run for governor of New York against Jay, he waged only the most perfunctory of campaigns and lost by the largest majority in the state’s history.

Throughout this period, he professed to find entirely satisfactory the life of an enlightened eighteenth-century gentleman. In 1793 he began construction of a new and elegant mansion at Clermont. He read the classics. He studied mechanics, particularly steam propulsion, and formed a partnership with his brother-in-law to build a prototype steam vessel in the North Bay near Tivoli. He studied botany and conducted experiments in agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. He wrote public papers and corresponded extensively with other members of an elite transatlantic fraternity of like-minded intellectuals, including Arthur Young and William Strickland. His literary output during this period is remarkable for both its volume and variety, as demonstrated by the following representative titles: “Reflections on Peace, War and Trade;” “Thoughts on Lime and Gypsum;” “Reflections on the Site of the National Capital;” “Complaint on the Postal Service;” “The Use of Ashes and Pyrite as Manure;” “Reflections on Monarchy” (written in 1793 in response to the guillotining of Louis XVI); “Notes on Alkali;” “Thoughts on Coinage

and the Establishment of a Mint;" "Oration on the Fine Arts;" a plan regarding "the discovery of the Interior parts of this Continent & establishing the Indian trade in that Quarter;" "Notes on Winds;" and many, many others. His name was known and esteemed in the fraternity of learned men as well as in judicial and legal circles, where his performance on the bench drew continued regard.

It was not enough, of course—not for a spirit in which inner contentment was so dependent on outward acclaim. Living the private life that he professed to find ideal, Robert burned when others' public lives outshone it.

In 1801, Robert accepted President Thomas Jefferson's appointment as minister to France. His primary diplomatic objective—negotiating United States purchase of West Florida and the Port of New Orleans—quickly bogged down in French bureaucratic red tape and the whims of First Consul Napoleon Bonaparte (whom Janet Montgomery dubbed "the Wary Corsican;"¹⁶). None of this was Robert's fault. Nevertheless, in 1803, President Jefferson dispatched James Monroe to Paris as a special envoy to get the negotiations back on track. Within forty-eight hours of Monroe's arrival in the capital, Napoleon summoned the two American diplomats to his presence and stunned them with an offer to sell not only New Orleans but the whole of the Louisiana Territory, a tract of some 825,000 square miles, whose acquisition would double the size of the United States. Livingston and Monroe, with no instructions from home, took a deep breath and accepted, and the formal agreement was drafted and signed within a fortnight.

It was a diplomatic *coup* of major dimensions—a political jewel to fit nicely into Robert Livingston's well-earned crown—except that his cursed, battered pride rose up and knocked it away. After all his months of patient toil behind the scenes, Robert obviously felt upstaged by Monroe's dramatic entrance just before the denouement—and so he altered the dates in his official record book to indicate that Napoleon had offered to sell Louisiana three days earlier than he actually did, the morning *before* Monroe's arrival in Paris. To drive the point home, Robert leaked a "secret" memorandum to the same effect to the New York press.

The State Department in Washington issued a vigorous denial and then made public Robert's own official correspondence, which revealed the true timetable in his own handwriting. Public outrage was intense and long-lived. Robert's bungled lie cost him the credit he

rightly deserved for negotiating the Louisiana Purchase, and it gave the *coup de grace* to his political reputation. It also cost him the position that he had ardently desired for years, the governorship of the State of New York. A few weeks before the scandal broke, his party, virtually assured of victory in the approaching election, had promised the nomination to Robert. Now the offer was withdrawn for good, and a few months later Robert learned that the post had gone to a man of distinctly inferior intellect and attainments, his own brother-in-law, Morgan Lewis.

When Robert returned to Clermont in the summer of 1805, it was easy for him to become embroiled in domestic details: his handsome house had to be enlarged to accommodate the new furniture and fittings he had purchased in France; he spent hours supervising the care of the merino sheep he had imported from the famous flock at Rambouillet; and he worked enthusiastically with Robert Fulton on the final stages of their steamboat, which made its triumphant maiden voyage in 1807, the year of Robert's sixtieth birthday. Two years later he published the charming "Essay on Sheep." He suffered a series of strokes in late 1812 and died at Clermont in February of 1813.

Back in 1768, when Robert was twenty-two years old, his father had written a letter to his mother as follows: "My son Robert must not live in the country, he has talents, if he will use them, to make a figure at the head of his profession, a farm would ruin him."¹⁷

In a way the farm did ruin him, although perhaps in ways that even his wise father had not imagined. It ruined him, in the first place, by elevating his expectations. Robert always assumed that, as a Livingston of Clermont, he would automatically achieve primacy in every undertaking. At the same time, "the farm"—Clermont—effectively saw to it that these dazzling prospects could never be fulfilled, by instilling in him a manorial attitude that was utterly out of place in the new republican America.

"The farm" also provided him with a refuge from disappointment. Clermont's attraction for Robert went far beyond its pastoral serenity and much deeper than the satisfaction he received from its socially redeeming intellectual activities—husbandry, botany, mechanics, etc. At Clermont he was utterly secure: his status there was guaranteed by his name. On "the farm," the lower orders kept their places, and nobody dared to visit on him the humiliations he experienced in the outside world. Because of "the farm," Robert expected perhaps more than was his due, but he ended by settling for less. The son of the manor was also its victim.□

Notes

¹ Robert R. Livingston to Robert R. Livingston, Jr., May 5, 1775. Livingston-Bancroft Transcriptions, Broadside Collection, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, The New York Public Library.

² Letter from Robert Livingston, November 27, 1690. Livingston-Redmond Papers, F.D.R. Library, Hyde Park, New York.

³ Philip Livingston to Jacob Wendell, October 17, 1737. Livingston Papers, Museum of the City of New York.

⁴ Broadside Collection, New York Public Library.

⁵ Judge Robert R. Livingston to Robert R. Livingston, Jr., September 18, 1767. Livingston-Bancroft, op. cit.

⁶ Robert Livingston to Alida Livingston, May 31, 1713. Lieurance Translation, Livingston-Redmond, op. cit.

⁷ Philip Livingston to Robert Livingston, Jr., June 1, 1745, Livingston-Redmond, op. cit.

⁸ Walter Livingston to Robert Livingston, December 29, 1766, Livingston-Redmond, op. cit.

⁹ E.B. O'Callaghan, *The Documentary History of the State of New-York* (Albany, N.Y.: Weed, Parson & Co., 1849–1851, 4 vols.), Vol. III, p. 753.

¹⁰ Robert R. Livingston, Jr. to John Jay, February 2, 1779. Robert R. Livingston Papers, New-York Historical Society.

¹¹ Robert R. Livingston, Jr. to John Jay, quoted in Staughton Lynd, "The Tenant Rising at Livingston Manor, May 1777," *The New-York Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2, April 1964, p. 167.

¹² Margaret Beekman Livingston to Robert R. Livingston, Jr., July 6, 1776. Livingston Family Papers, Broadside Collection, New York Public Library.

¹³ Robert R. Livingston, Jr. to Edward Rutledge, October 10, 1776. Livingston-Bancroft, op. cit.

¹⁴ Margaret Beekman Livingston to Robert R. Livingston, Jr., December 30, 1779. Robert R. Livingston Papers, op. cit.

¹⁵ George Washington to Robert R. Livingston, Jr., May 31, 1789. Robert R. Livingston Papers, op. cit.

¹⁶ Janet Montgomery to General Horatio Gates, December 4, 1803. Emmet Collection, New York Public Library.

¹⁷ Robert R. Livingston to Margaret Beekman Livingston, January 11, 1768, quoted in E.B. Livingston, *The Livingstons of Livingston Manor* Supplement, handwritten manuscript, Clermont State Historic Site.