
The Breakup of Livingston Manor

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In July 1686, Robert Livingston (1654–1728) acquired from Governor Thomas Dongan a patent for the Lordship and Manor of Livingston through what Livingston’s biographer, Lawrence Leder, has called “one of the grossest land frauds ever perpetrated in an age noted for unethical dealings.”¹ Livingston had previously obtained patents for two land purchases from the Indians, one of about 2,000 acres along the Hudson River, and another of 600 acres in the Taconic Hills along the border with Massachusetts. The 1686 patent treated these two tracts as contiguous, thereby converting 2,600 acres into a property later surveyed to contain 160,000 acres. Leder suggests that this largesse from Governor Dongan was compensation for Livingston’s relinquishment of claims against the Manor of Rensselaerswyck. Whatever the explanation, the questionable nature of the Livingston Manor patent provided the basis for a number of challenges to its validity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The original manor extended east to west about twenty miles, from the Hudson River to the Massachusetts border, and north to south about twelve miles, encompassing the present-day towns of Livingston, Germantown, Clermont, Taghkanic, Gallatin, Copake, and Ancram. In 1986, its tercentenary year, only a tiny fraction of Livingston Manor still remained in family hands. The breakup of the manor

took place in several steps, but was particularly rapid in the first half of the nineteenth century, a period which saw the development of democratic politics and the “decline of aristocracy” in New York.² A major factor contributing to the breakup was New York’s “anti-rent” movement, which peaked in the 1840s.³ Another was the subdivision of manor lands through inheritance. We will first describe the details of the land divisions and transfers in Livingston Manor, then outline some of the relevant anti-rent history, and conclude with an assessment of the relative importance of the various factors contributing to the breakup of the Manor.

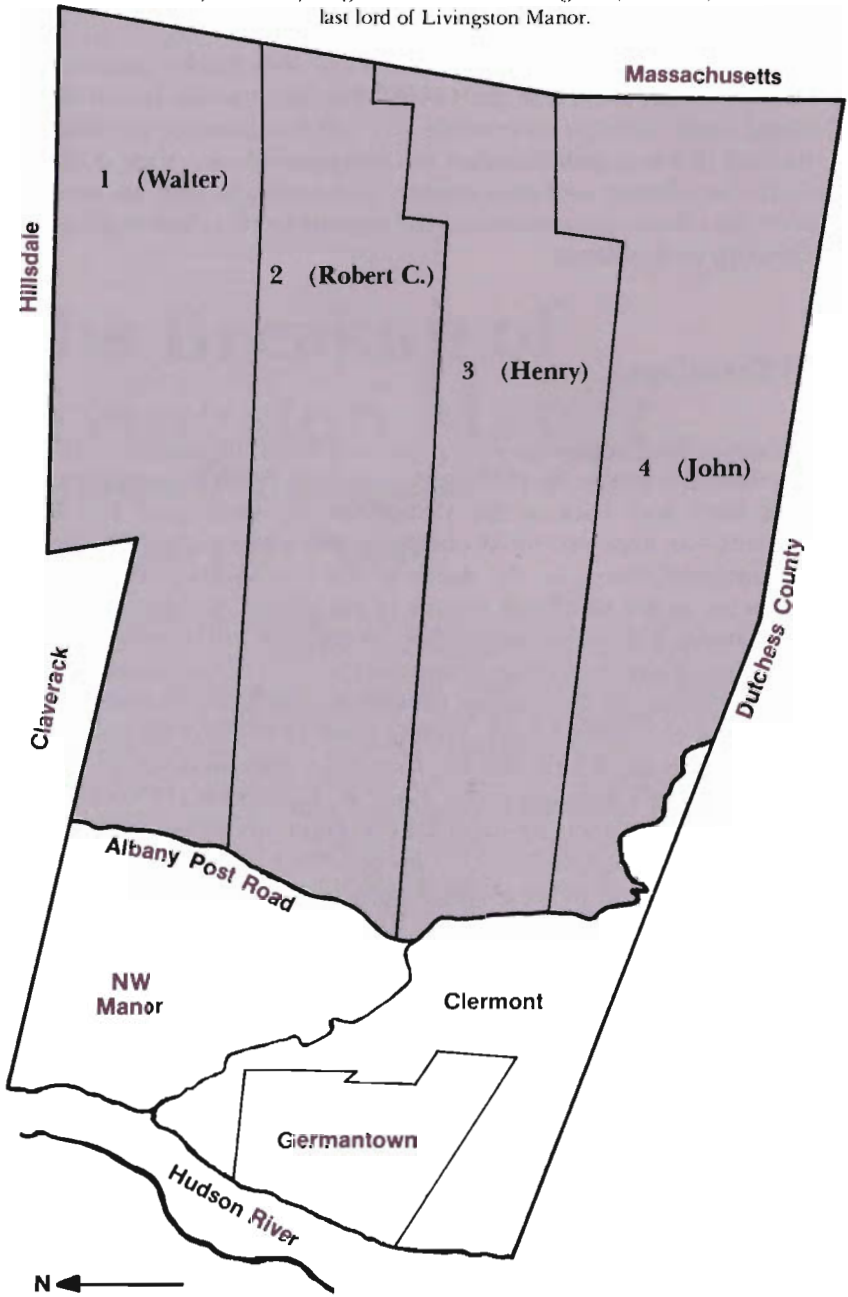
Land Transfers

Two major land segments were separated from the manor early in the eighteenth century. In 1710, approximately 6,000 acres along the Hudson were sold back to the Crown for the settling of Palatine immigrants—an area that today comprises the major part of the town of Germantown. Next, on the death of the first lord in 1728 about 13,000 acres in the southwest corner of the manor, bordered by the Roeliff Jansen Kill, were bequeathed to the late lord’s second son, Robert. Most of this area today comprises the town of Clermont.

The remainder of the manor remained largely intact under the ownership of the second lord, Philip, from 1728 until his death in 1749, and of the third lord, Robert, from then until his death in 1790. However, Robert’s heir apparent, Peter R. Livingston (1737–1809), had made numerous unwise financial commitments and was perennially in debt. The third lord in 1771 loaned Peter a substantial sum to pay off his debts, and wrote a codicil to his will leaving the bulk of the manor to Peter’s brothers Walter, Robert Cambridge, John, and Henry.⁴ This avoided the possibility of the manor’s falling into the hands of Peter’s creditors. Each of the younger brothers received a “small lot” of about twelve acres along the Hudson and a “great lot” exceeding 25,000 acres in the eastern part of the manor. The great lots ran east to west and were numbered one through four starting from the northernmost. (Fig. 1).⁵

The Manor in 1790 contained hundreds of farms occupied by leaseholders who paid annual rents to the Livingstons in cash, crops, and services. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the descendants of the manor lords gradually sold ownership of the farms to the occupants. This sell-off was accelerated by the further subdivision of

Figure 1 Division of the major part of Livingston Manor into four "great lots" inherited by the four younger sons of Robert Livingston (1708-1790), the third and last lord of Livingston Manor.



the manor with succeeding generations, which left many Livingston descendants, many of them not living on the manor themselves, with comparatively minor holdings. The effect of this inheritance pattern on land sales becomes clear with a detailed examination of subdivisions and sales within each of the four great lots.

Great Lot Number 2

The first of the great lots to be subdivided was Great Lot Number 2. The northwest and southwest corners of this lot are marked today by state historical markers in the hamlets of Livingston and Blue Stores, respectively. Robert Cambridge Livingston died in 1794, just four years after inheriting this lot from his father. His will specified that the lot be divided among his five children, each to take active ownership upon reaching the age of twenty-three.⁶ A survey done by John Wigram in 1804 showed the lot to contain 27,297 acres, and it was divided into five nearly equal portions (Fig. 2).⁷ Numbered from west to east, lots 1 through 5 were inherited, respectively, by Thomas Ferguson, James Duane, Robert Swift, Maria Livingston, and John Swift Livingston. Each lot contained about forty farms (plus several wood lots), the farms averaging about 120 acres.⁸

Records in the Columbia County Courthouse indicated that Thomas F. Livingston had sold off half his farms by 1832, and all of them by 1845.⁹ His brother John and his sister Maria were only a few years behind him, and had nearly sold out their portions by 1850. James had sold about one-third of lot number two (Fig. 3)¹⁰ before his death in 1837. The remainder was divided among his four daughters and his son Charles in 1841, and they had sold most of the remaining farms by 1850. One of the farms inherited by Charles became the target of anti-rent action in 1846.

Of the heirs of Robert Cambridge, only the oldest, Robert Swift Livingston (1781–1867), resided for any time on his inherited manor lands. He had a “manor house” near the southern border of his lot number three, located along Claverack Creek near the site of the eighteenth-century Maryburgh Forge operated by the Livingstons. After Robert Swift removed to his more sumptuous estate, Almont (in northwest Dutchess County), about 1813, one of his sons occupied the “manor house” for several decades. Perhaps because he maintained this close connection with his lot on the manor, Robert Swift was slower to sell off his tenant farms than his siblings had been; most were sold between 1845 and 1870. Figure 4 shows the comparison

Figure 2
Division of Great Lot No. 2 into five lots inherited by the children of Robert Cambridge Livingston (1742-1794).

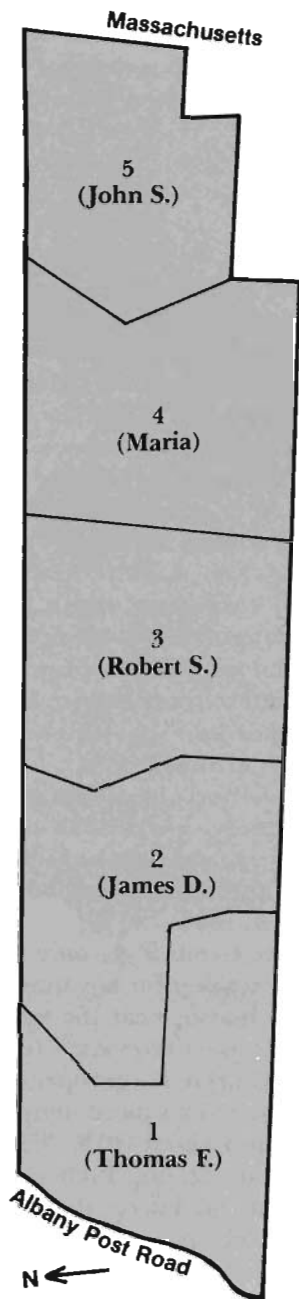


Figure 3

Division of lot 2 of Great Lot No. 2 among the children of James Duane Livingston (1786-1837). The shaded farms were sold before his death. For others, letters indicate child receiving ownership: M—Mary R., J—Julia C., A—Alice C., L—Louisa, C—Charles J. Small lots are mostly "wood lots." Farm marked with an asterisk was the site of anti-rent violence in 1847.

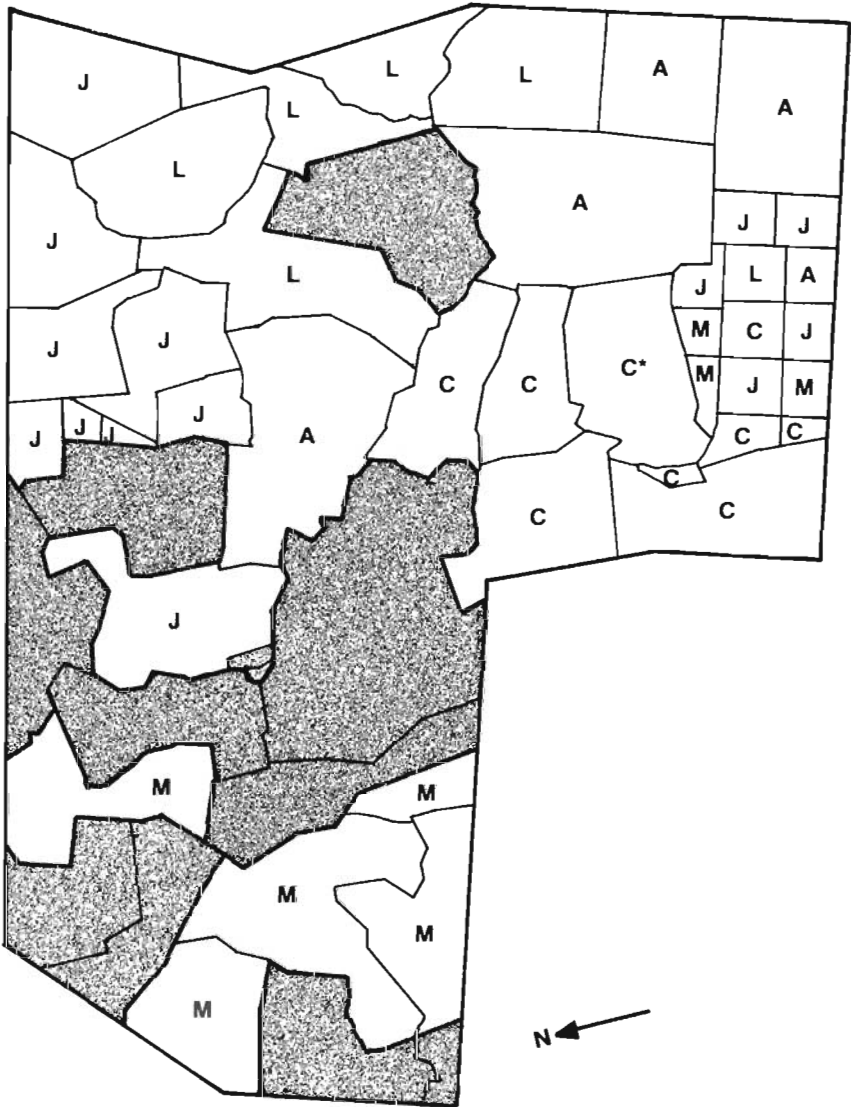
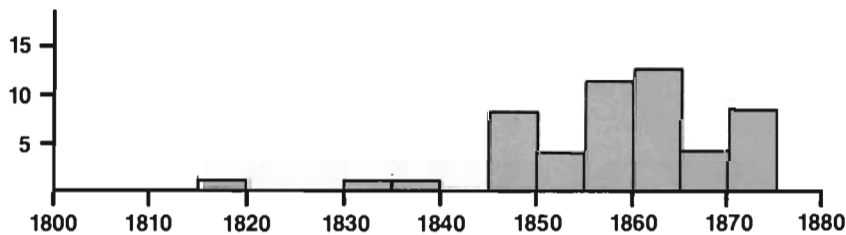
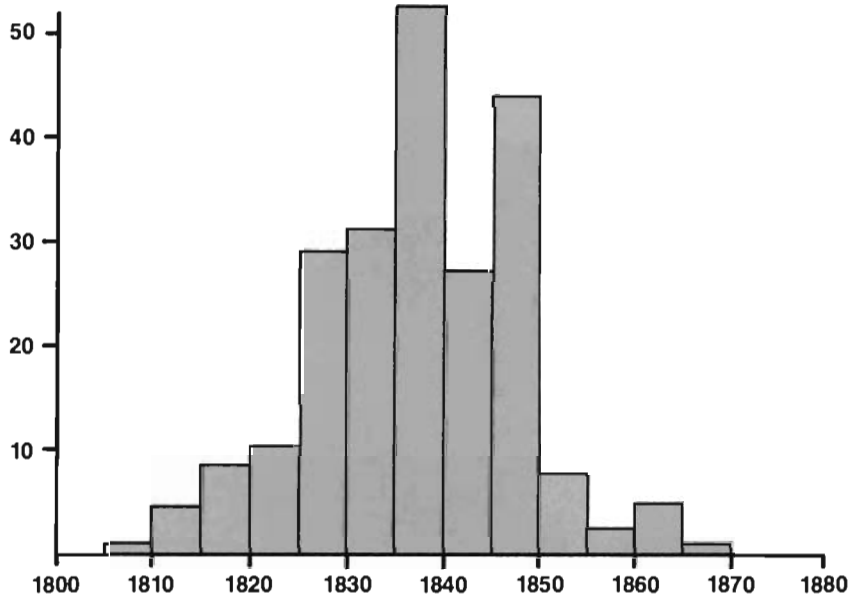


Figure 4

(top) Number of land sales per five-year period by inheritors of lots 1,2,4, and 5 of Great Lot No. 2. (bottom) Same for inheritors of lot 3 of Great Lot No. 2 (Robert S. Livingston & heirs).



between the time distribution of his sales and those of his four siblings combined.

Great Lot Number 4

The southernmost of the four great lots, left to John (1750-1822), was the next to be subdivided. John's will (which specified that anyone who raised any dispute was disinherited) divided the lot into two parts, with the Roeliff Jansen Kill serving as the natural dividing line.¹¹ The part southeast of the Kill went to his son, Robert Leroy Livingston (1778-1836), and in 1846 was further divided among Robert's eight children: George D., John L., Edward, William Leroy, Norah C., Catherine Cornelia (and husband Abraham Pierce), Mary Elizabeth (and husband Andrew Pierce), and Anna Maria (and husband John Rutgers).¹² Each inherited about twenty farms. County records show that George D. sold most of his within the next four years, and he is probably representative of the others.

The portion northwest of the Kill was left to John's son Henry, but only temporarily. Because Henry was expected to inherit half of Great Lot Number 3 from his uncle, his father's will stated that, should this occur as expected, the northwest half of Great Lot Number 4 should go to John's younger son Herman (1793-1872). Herman did indeed inherit this portion. Unluckily for him, it included the unoccupied wood lot that New York State chose in 1850 for a legal challenge to the validity of the Livingston Manor title.

Great Lot Number 3

This lot was drawn by General Henry Livingston (1752-1823). A bachelor, he left the land to two other Henries: his nephew Henry (1790-1828), son of his brother John, and Henry W. (1798-1848), grandson of his brother Walter.¹³ The first Henry inherited the eastern half, but died five years later, leaving the land to his eight children (Catherine, Ancram, Herman, William, Emma, Cornelia, Ann, and Henry) with instructions not to sell it. It was nevertheless subdivided in 1841 (Herman, for example, receiving thirteen farms totaling about 2,000 acres), and much of it was sold within the next five years.¹⁴ Henry W., who also inherited part of Great Lot Number 1, had already sold forty-five farms before 1840, and a total of eighty-seven

before his death in 1848. Another sixty were sold in the 1850s by Mortimer Livingston, trustee for his estate.

Great Lot Number 1

The northernmost of the four great lots was inherited by Walter (1740–1797), sold to his brother Henry in 1792 for 24,900 pounds, and then sold by Henry for the identical price five years later to Walter's son, Henry W. (1768–1810), upon Walter's death.¹⁵ Walter, like his older brother Peter, had been heavily in debt, and this maneuver was probably used to avoid the land's going to Walter's creditors.

Henry W.'s will left the land to his widow Mary and, after her death, to their three sons. The oldest son, Henry W. (1798–1848), was to get the portion west of the landmark known as Manor Rock. The land east of the Manor Rock was to be divided between his brothers Walter and James, with James getting the easternmost portion. Mary chose to convey the lands to her sons in 1824, and Henry W. began selling off some of his farms soon thereafter.¹⁶ The history of the eastern portion was more complex. James died in 1828, bequeathing his land to his mother, his brother Walter, and his four sisters (Mary, Elizabeth, Cornelia, and Ann).¹⁷ Walter, who lived many years in his mother's hometown, Allentown, Pennsylvania, transferred part of his inheritance to his wife Mary,¹⁸ and his mother transferred much of hers to her daughters and her sons-in-law, Carroll and Anson Livingston.¹⁹ Farm sales in this portion commenced in the 1830s but proceeded slowly until the 1850s.

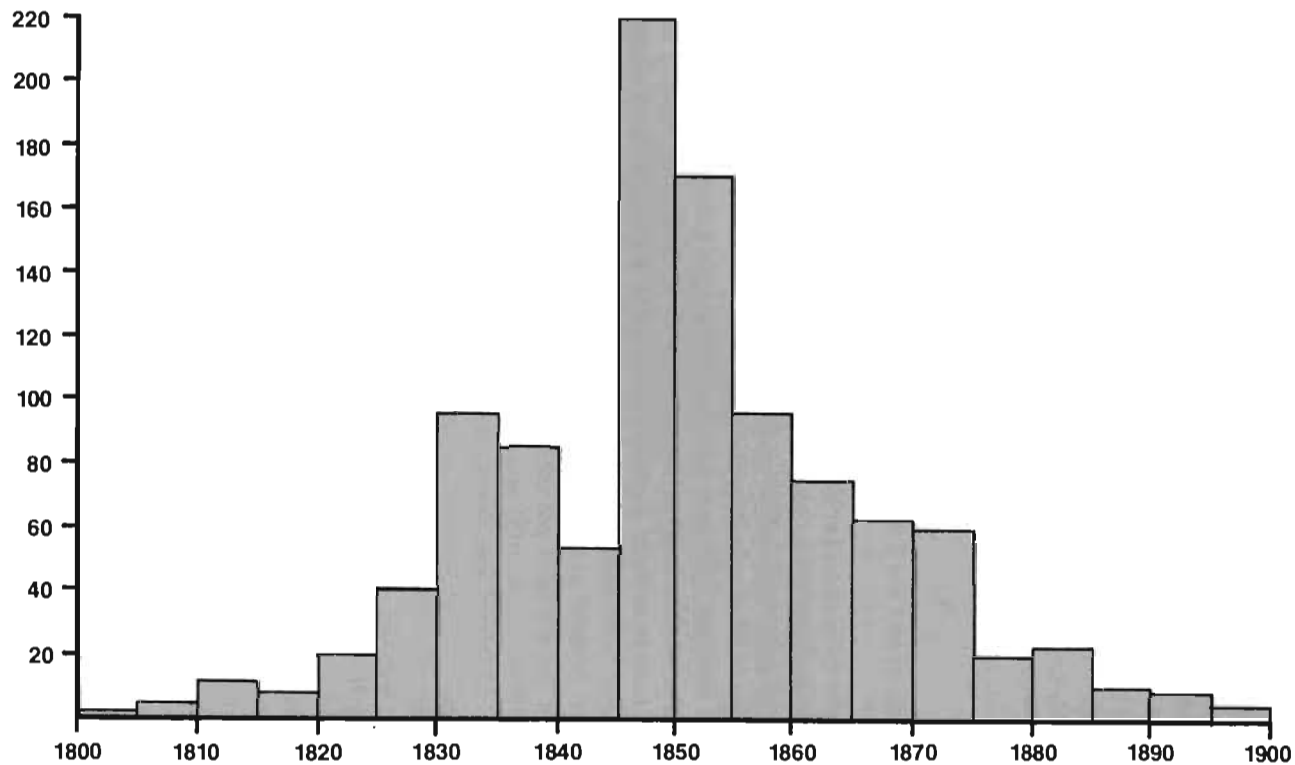
Overall Land Transfers

The division of the eastern part of the manor into four great lots, followed soon thereafter by further subdivisions, was clearly a major factor in stimulating land sales. In the western part of the manor, the Germantown area had left Livingston hands back in 1714, but the northwest manor and Clermont remained largely in family hands until the early nineteenth century. Then, as in the great lots, subdivision through inheritance, plus economic and political factors, led to substantial land sales.

The time distribution of all land transfers from Livingstons to non-Livingstons in Columbia County throughout the nineteenth century is shown in Fig. 5.²⁰ Sales were modest until about 1825, increased mark-

Figure 5

Number of nineteenth-century land sales in Columbia County per five-year period by Livingstons to non-Livingstons (total).



edly in the 1830s, and peaked in the late 1840s. From 1845 to 1854, a total of 390 farms were sold by the Livingstons, the peak year being 1847, with fifty-one sales. Comparison with Fig. 4 shows that a large fraction of the sales up to 1840 were in Great Lot Number 2, the first of the great lots to be subdivided by inheritance. Many of the other early sales were by Henry W. Livingston in Great Lots Numbers 1 and 3. The burst of sales in mid-century was influenced by extensive subdivisions of the eastern portions of Great Lots Numbers 3 and 4 by inheritance in the 1840s. However, the major cause of the accelerating sales in mid-century was probably the growing political success of the anti-rent movement.

Anti-Rent on Livingston Manor

The first anti-rent activities on Livingston Manor occurred in 1751. In that year, about twenty tenants living near the eastern border of the manor refused to pay their rents and petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts for title to their lands. Six years of controversy and violence followed, with several people killed, until New York and Massachusetts reached an agreement verifying the eastern border of the manor as their mutual border. These first anti-rent activities had largely been instigated by expansionist-minded leaders in Massachusetts. Several years of peace followed, but a broader questioning of New York's land policies continued and provided a basis for tenant rebellions in several counties in 1766. On Livingston Manor, about two hundred insurgents threatened the third lord and his manor house until they were turned away by an armed force led by his son Walter.²¹ Again in 1777, an uprising of several hundred manor tenants was put down by the state militia; this wartime incident, however, may have been motivated more by Toryism than by anti-rent sentiment.²²

America's achievement of independence from England brought no significant change in the conditions of leaseholders on the New York manors, and unrest continued. In 1795, over two hundred Livingston Manor tenants petitioned the state legislature to investigate the legitimacy of the manor title, declaring themselves to be "Tenants holding under the Descendants of the said Robert Livingston upon Terms and Conditions oppressive and burdensome to the last degree, unfriendly to all great exertions of Industry and tending to degrade your Petitioners from the Rank the God of Nature destined all Mankind to move in, to be SLAVES and VASSALS."²³ A committee of the Assembly

rejected the petition, and the full Assembly concurred. A similar petition, signed by 153 people (including one James Livingston!) was submitted to the legislature in 1811.²⁴ This time the tenants had been encouraged by an ambitious young lawyer named Martin Van Buren. Although the petition was rejected by the legislature, the committee report this time did express some sympathy with the tenants and some criticism of the leaseholding system.

The most significant wave of anti-rent activity was triggered by the death of Stephen Van Rensselaer in 1839 and subsequent attempts by his heirs to collect back rents from the tenants of Rensselaerswyck. The “Helderberg War” ensued, with angry tenants, often armed and disguised as “Indians,” doing battle with sheriffs and other authorities attempting to collect rents or evict tenants. The Livingstons soon found that they were not immune to the growing militancy of the leaseholders. Organized opposition to the landlords spread through several counties, and in 1844 Dr. Smith Boughton, a popular anti-rent orator known as “Big Thunder,” traveled to Livingston Manor and stirred up its tenants. Among the locals stirred into action by Big Thunder were the Finkles.

Charles Livingston versus the Finkles

The Finkle family became the “most conspicuous” among the anti-renters in the Taghkanic area.²⁵ According to a family account, Finkles were among the Palatines brought from Europe into the Germantown area in the early eighteenth century.²⁶ The 1798 manor map shows two Finkle homes north of Germantown, but by the mid-nineteenth century, Finkles occupied seven separate farms in the town of Taghkanic.²⁷ In 1846, Peter and Calvin Finkle, probably acting with the blessings of the local anti-rent association, chose to challenge the Livingston Manor title by occupying a farm about to be sold.

By the 1841 division of lot two of Great Lot Number 2 (Fig. 3), Charles James Livingston (1821–1871) of New York City became the owner of five farms and four wood lots, totaling 1,177 acres. Charles started selling his farms in 1845 and soon found a buyer for a farm that had been leased by Peter Houghtaling for about fifteen years. (This farm is marked by an asterisk in Fig. 3.) Houghtaling agreed to give up possession in April 1846, but the farm was occupied quickly thereafter by Calvin and Peter Finkle, who refused to vacate it on the grounds that Livingston’s title to the property was invalid. Livingston was thus forced to bring the Finkles to trial to have them evicted.

The case was tried in Hudson that September before Circuit Judge Bowen Whiting, with the Finkles represented by ex-Governor William H. Seward. Seward probably represented the Finkles with some enthusiasm; while governor, he had made numerous statements critical of the leasehold system and sympathetic to the anti-rent cause. To prove title to the land, Livingston's lawyer entered into evidence the original 1686 manor patent, the confirmatory 1715 patent, the wills of several generations of Livingstons, documents describing the details of the land partitions in this area, and other legal documents. Witnesses called included Augustus Tremain, who had surveyed the area, William Ludlow, who had been collecting rent from Houghtaling for the Livingstons for many years, and Peter Houghtaling himself. The judge charged the jury that the evidence presented, if accepted, proved that Livingston owned the property both on the basis of written title and on the basis of possession. The jury decided in favor of Livingston.

Seward entered a long "Bill of Exceptions," objecting to each piece of evidence presented and to the judge's charge, and this was argued before the New York Supreme Court in New York City the next May. The three judges unanimously supported the Hudson verdict. In an addendum to his report, Chief Justice Greene C. Bronson wrote:

The Finkles forcibly resisted the enforcement of the Judgement, and attempted to hold the Farm in defiance of the Process of the Court, during which they committed certain acts of violence, for which they were indicted, and on the 18th of June 1847, were sentenced to three years, and four months imprisonment in the State Prison at Sing Sing.²⁸

The "certain acts of violence" occurred when Charles Livingston and his lawyer Edward Cowles, accompanied by deputies, attempted to evict the Finkles from the Houghtaling farm. Assisted by a group of anti-renters, the Finkles "forcibly resisted;" Calvin and Peter Finkle were later convicted in Hudson of assault and battery with intent to kill, while John and Joseph Finkle, Hiram Benton, Philip Van Tassel, and Henry Jackson were convicted of simple assault and battery.²⁹ On leaving the courthouse after conviction, the Finkles attempted to escape and, after capture, threatened to "raise forces from abroad to rescue them" and to "fire the city." The court in response ordered twenty-five extra men hired to guard the jail.³⁰ Joseph Finkle, father of Calvin, Peter, and John, died in 1849. According to his epitaph,

. . . death was caused through perpetual grief by the false imprisonment of three of his sons . . . who ware all three falsely condemned and sentenced for a term of years in Singing prison, in order to quail thare noble spirits, blight their patriotic zeal, constrain them to

renounce thare honest integrity of honesty, & submit to oppression, frauds, and fudal sistoms.³¹

The State versus Herman Livingston

In addition to bringing legal actions and engaging in sporadic violence, anti-renters in the 1840s undertook organized political activities, including the endorsement of candidates for local and state offices. After anti-rent forces had attained notable victories at the polls, both Whigs and Democrats began seeking their support. The assembly appointed a select committee, chaired by Samuel J. Tilden, that in March 1846 brought in a strong report recommending numerous changes in New York's leaseholding system, including taxation of the landlords' rents. The constitutional convention held that year also enacted several changes favorable to the tenants. In response to the political successes of the anti-renters, the power of New York State had begun to be directed against the landlords. Following urging by Governor John Young, the legislature in 1848 passed a joint resolution authorizing the attorney general to bring suit against any landlords holding lands based on manorial titles, "to test the validity of such title or claim." In 1850, New York State used the resolution to question the title to Livingston Manor.

To circumvent a Livingston defense based on possession, the state chose to challenge the title to unoccupied land—specifically, about 150 acres of woodland in the western half of Great Lot Number 4, inherited by Herman Livingston. The case of "The People of the State of New York against Herman Livingston" was argued by John Van Buren (son of the ex-president) for the state and by Josiah Sutherland for the defense.

Van Buren attacked the validity of the Livingston Manor patents of 1686 and 1715, claiming they were "fraudulent" and "absolutely void" for a wide variety of reasons.³² Sutherland based his defense on legal points similar to those cited in the Finkle trial, and also attacked anti-renters as "armed mobs disguised like Indians," noting that Van Buren had been hired by them.³³ (He also stated that all but 35,000 of the original 160,000 acres of the manor had already been sold, a claim that the data in Fig. 5 suggest was somewhat exaggerated.) After days of arguments before a jury in Hudson in April, the parties agreed to waive the jury and re-argued the case in Albany in May before Judge William B. Wright. In his written opinion, Judge Wright stated that the leaseholding system of the manor lords was "not even in the col-

ony favorable to their settlement and improvement, and the moral and social elevation of the tenants,” and “that it is antagonistical to free institutions the enlightened of all classes admit.” He noted also that it was not surprising “there should be indications of popular convulsion and disquietude.” Nevertheless, he felt such “popular convulsion” should never invade the administration of the law, and that, legally speaking, the Livingston Manor titles were clearly sound. Like all the judges before him, he decided in favor of the Livingstons.³⁴

Conclusions

The various legal actions taken by the anti-renters did not overthrow the Livingston title. Their recourses to violence helped solidify their organizations and won the attention of the press and the public, but often were counterproductive to their goals, generating a backlash in public opinion. However, these actions did make life difficult for the landlords, and the political activities of the anti-renters brought about changes in state law that made life less profitable for the landlords as well. It is surely no coincidence that sales by the Livingstons peaked (Fig. 5) in the years immediately following the political successes of the anti-renters in the 1840s.

Another factor strongly influencing the sale of Livingston Manor lands, which had been brought about in part by intra-family problems, was the subdivision of the manor on the death of the third lord (Fig. 1). This subdivision set the pattern for further division with succeeding generations, as exemplified by Figs. 2 and 3. Rather than a resident landlord leasing over 100,000 acres, there were soon many landlords (and landladies), many non-residents, each with only a few thousand acres. The first lot to be subdivided, Great Lot Number 2, dominated the early sales, which were substantial well before the anti-rent decade of the 1840s (Fig. 4). Subdivisions in the other great lots were less substantial until the divisions of the eastern halves of Great Lots Numbers 3 and 4 in the 1840s, each among eight heirs.

The interplay of the two main factors influencing the breakup of the manor—anti-rent pressures and land subdivision through inheritance—can be seen clearly in the case of Charles Livingston in 1846. A 25-year-old resident of New York City, he had inherited just five manor farms as a great-grandson of the third lord. Even if the rents could be collected without difficulty, these upstate farms provided him with an annual income of only 655 dollars. For this modest in-

come, he faced the expense and trouble of a complex court case to prove his title, and then faced physical danger in attempting to carry out the court's decision against the Finkles. It is small wonder that he sold out the remainder of his farms within a few years.

The majority of the manor granted to Robert Livingston by Governor Dongan in 1686 was still held by his grandson, the third lord, in 1786. By 1886, however, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the third lord had sold off nearly all of his manor lands, and the leaseholding system was gone. The loss of entail and the development of democratic politics, responding to the anti-rent movement, had worked together to produce a nearly bloodless "land reform" on Livingston Manor.□

Notes

¹ Lawrence H. Leder, *Robert Livingston 1654–1728 and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), p. 35.

² Dixon Ryan Fox, *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York*, Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, Vol. 86 (1919). Analysis by Edward Pessen in *Riches, Class, and Power before the Civil War* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1973) suggests that the "decline in aristocracy" in this time period was in most cases more apparent than real.

³ David M. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers in the Hudson–Mohawk Region* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1946). A popularized but less balanced account appears in Henry Christman, *Tin Horns and Calico* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1945, republished Cornwallville, N.Y.: Hope Farm Press, 1978). Two unpublished doctoral dissertations on this subject are: Isabel Thompson Kelsey, *Down with the Rent: A Story of Social War in Rural New York* (Columbia University, 1950) and Eldridge Honaker Pendleton, *The New York Anti-Rent Controversy, 1830–1860* (University of Virginia, 1974).

⁴ Codicil to Will of Robert Livingston, Jr., 1771, Livingston Papers, Museum of the City of New York. His 1784 will incorporating this change is filed at the Columbia County Courthouse (hereafter referred to as CCC), Hudson, N.Y. A printed version appears in *Calvin and Peter Finkle vs. Charles J. Livingston, Bill of Exceptions* (1846), individual trials item 2353, New York State Library, New York.

⁵ Based on the 1798 map of Livingston Manor by John Wigram, in Christopher Morgan, *The Documentary History of the State of New York*, Vol. III (Albany, N.Y.: 1850) and the 1791 map of the division into great lots, also by John Wigram, in the Livingston-Redmond Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y. A copy of the latter is also in CCC, map book 14, pp. 1080–81. The partition is described in CCC, deed book A, p. 134.

⁶ Livingston Papers, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York. A printed version appears in *Finkle Bill of Exceptions*, op. cit.

⁷ Drawn from large and small maps (1804) in Livingston Papers, Butler Library.

⁸ Detailed maps of these five lots, showing individual farms, are located as follows: lot 1—Columbia County Historical Society, Kinderhook, N.Y.; lot 2—Livingston Papers,

Butler Library; lot 3—CCC, map book 3, pp. 194–95; lot 4—CCC, map book 18, pp. 1338–40; lot 5—CCC, map book 1, p. 38.

⁹ Statistics on sales in these and other lots were accumulated from the Grantors Index, CCC.

¹⁰ Partition of this lot, including a detailed description of each farm and its lease terms, appears in Finkle Bill of Exceptions, op. cit.

¹¹ Will of John Livingston in manuscript collections of the New York State Library, Albany, and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, New York.

¹² Partition described in CCC, deed book 00, p. 1. Map in special (oversized) map book, CCC.

¹³ Will filed at CCC.

¹⁴ Partition described in CCC, deed book KK, p. 185. Maps of Great Lot Number 3 in CCC, map book 18, pp. 1314–15, 1318–19, 1322–23, 1326–27, 1330–31, and 1334–35.

¹⁵ CCC, deed book A, p. 121 and p. 136.

¹⁶ CCC, deed book H, p. 71, and deed book R, p. 61. Maps of Great Lot Number 1 in CCC, map book 1, p. 10 and p. 318.

¹⁷ CCC, deed book M, p. 468 and p. 541.

¹⁸ CCC, deed book I, p. 102.

¹⁹ CCC, deed book KK, p. 396 and p. 399.

²⁰ Data from CCC Grantors Index. Although the index includes all of Columbia County, nearly all of these land sales, which total over 1,200, were of land originally within Livingston Manor.

²¹ Pre-Revolutionary anti-rent activities are described in Sung Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York: Manorial Society, 1664–1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

²² Staughton Lynd, “The Tenant Rising at Livingston Manor, May 1777,” in *Narratives of the Revolution in New York* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1975); Sung Bok Kim, “Impact of Class Relations and Warfare in the American Revolution: The New York Experience,” *J. American History*, Vol. 69, no. 2, 1982: p. 326.

²³ Petition of Petrus Pulver & Others Demanding an Investigation into the Livingston Title. Morgan, op. cit, p. 834.

²⁴ “Petition of a few Dam’d Rascals of the Manor of Livingston to the Legislature of New York” (copy), 1811. Livingston Papers, Butler Library.

²⁵ Franklin Ellis, *History of Columbia County* (Philadelphia: Everts & Ensign, 1878; reprinted Old Chatham, N.Y.: Sachem Press, 1974), p. 401.

²⁶ Grace Finkle Tomko, “Little Thunder,” unpublished manuscript in Columbia County Historical Society, Kinderhook, N.Y. In it, she identified her great-grandfather, Peter Finkle, as Little Thunder and head of anti-rent activity in Columbia County. Peter is also identified as Little Thunder in Simon W. Rosendale, “Closing Phases of the Manorial System in Albany,” *Proc. N.Y. Historical Assoc.* VIII (1909), p. 236, although Christman, op. cit., and others identify Mortimer C. Belden as Little Thunder. Perhaps several anti-renters assumed the title.

²⁷ Beers’ Columbia County Atlas (1858).

²⁸ Finkle Bill of Exceptions, op. cit. The accounts of this incident by Christman, op. cit., Franklin Ellis, op. cit., and Tomko, op. cit., all imply that Livingston, Cowles, and the deputies were attempting to evict the Finkles from their own farm, rather than, as the trial records indicate, from a farm recently seized by them.

²⁹ Unidentified newspaper clipping (item II-23) in Livingston Papers, Butler Library. This collection also contains a letter from E. Cowles to Charles Livingston, dated April

26, 1847, urging him to “enter a complaint against Peter, Calvin, John & Joseph Finkle for the assault & battery on you & Harrington on the 31st March.”

³⁰ *Albany Argus*, June 21, 1847.

³¹ Franklin Ellis, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

³² John Van Buren, Argument delivered at Albany, May 28, 1850. Manorial Pamphlets Collection, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, N.Y.

³³ Josiah Sutherland, Argument, *The People of the State of New York agt. Herman Livingston*, *ibid.*; *Deduction of the Title to the Manor of Livingston* (Hudson, 1850), *ibid.*

³⁴ William B. Wright, Opinion of Judge Wright, Supreme Court—Columbia County, *ibid.*