ye" answered Abel Peters, when asked if he would post a bond for Enoch Lester, midway through the annual meeting held in the newly established Town of Clinton. On that day, April 1, 1788, he agreed to guarantee Lester's performance as a newly elected town constable, a post Lester had held for five years immediately before the American Revolution. This was not the first time the paths of these two very different men had crossed. In 1776 both men had been arrested by the Committee for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies, then a newly organized committee empowered by the New York Provincial Congress to incarcerate any individual who subverted the American cause. Even then Lester and Peters had been neighbors. Peters, an affluent member of the community in 1788, had opened the first general store in Clinton Corners shortly before the Revolution. Lester, probably a patron in Peter's store, seems to have lived an undistinguished life, moving from one property owned by members of the Lester family to another. Both of these men came from affluent
families. The Lester family, as partners in the Nine Partners Company, owned part of the approximately 140,000-acre Nine Partners Patent which included Clinton. Abel Peters had come to Dutchess County only a decade before the Revolution as the 15-year-old son of George, who soon became a successful storekeeper in Pleasant Valley.

Although released shortly after his arrest, Lester's provocative description of himself as "a true subject to George the third . . . [who], meant to live and die so" resulted in a second arrest. Paroled a few months later he returned home in October 1777 and maintained a low profile for the duration of the war. Peters, too, had been released. He reopened his store and conducted business in Clinton Corners during the Revolution. No doubt his pledge to support the Revolution and his service in the militia had redeemed his earlier transgression. Also his neighbors and patrons, almost exclusively Quakers who objected to armed conflict of any sort, had little quarrel with him for his support of the "old" order.

These arrests, not particularly significant against the larger tapestry of the American Revolution, and Lester's reelection to public office in 1788 raise a curious and interesting question. Was the Revolution and the events which followed, such as the Constitutional Convention held at Poughkeepsie in 1788, treated as a significant social movement by the average individual in the agricultural communities of Dutchess County? Obviously by 1788, if Lester's election to public office is any barometer, memories regarding his earlier behavior had faded. However, could it be that the inhabitants in Clinton did not regard the events of the previous dozen years as matters central to day-to-day living, regardless of their political, social, or economic significance? Perhaps, as Edward Countryman concluded about New Yorkers at the outset of the Revolution, "a great number . . . tried desperately just to keep out of it."

Staughton Lynd in his analysis of the Revolutionary era in Dutchess County observed that, "Contemporaries had no doubt that the War for Independence was accompanied by a struggle over who should rule at home." And this struggle, Lynd believed, was "a conflict between economic classes," which was a principle "factor in shaping the politics of the seventeen-eighties." He concluded that newly emerging popular leaders in the county, in contrast to those of the privileged class, "developed a democratic philosophy of politics which called for the election to office of men of the 'middling sort,' frequent elections, rotation of office . . ." But Robert Brown, in his often cited study of Massachusetts, argued that colonial society even before the Revolution had already become "a relatively egalitarian middle-
class society in which there was a great deal of economic opportunity." Therefore, Brown infers, the American Revolution primarily reflected a dissatisfaction with British policies regarded by all the colonists as oppressive rather than a clash between classes within the colonies. And yet a third point of view argues that while there were wide economic differences between classes before and after the Revolution, the behavior of the people of New York regarding the American Revolution and the events which followed cannot be explained only in terms of class differences. Patriots and loyalists, and Federalists and Anti-Federalists were found at the top of the economic ladder as well as on its lower rungs.

Studying "the way government worked at the local level" to determine whether the earlier interpretations, social and economic, accurately portray the Revolutionary period is an important, but often overlooked approach. Two questions deserve attention if one is to understand the reaction of ordinary people to the important events which transpired between the years 1775 and 1788: 1. How responsive was the ordinary citizen to these events? and 2. Was there a struggle between the more affluent and those of lesser means at the local level? The purpose of this essay is to examine these questions as they are reflected in the voting behavior of citizens in the town of Clinton and its predecessor, Charlotte Precinct, during the Revolutionary era.

This area of Dutchess County is particularly well suited for study. Clinton, when established as a town in 1786, had been part of a larger geographical unit called Charlotte Precinct from 1762. This precinct encompassed the present towns of Clinton, Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, Stanford, and Washington. In 1786 Charlotte was divided into Clinton (Hyde Park and Pleasant Valley included) and Washington (Stanford included). Combined they covered 22 percent of the land mass of Dutchess County at that time and represented about 17 percent of the county's population in 1775. Charlotte in many ways was representative of Dutchess County as a whole. Its location, its ethnic composition, and its agricultural economy reflected much of Dutchess County's makeup during the revolutionary era. Its location in the middle and northwest section of the county with two principle roads, the present Routes 9 and 44, and its shoreline along the Hudson River planted it firmly in the stream of Dutchess County's commercial activity. Most of its land was owned and farmed by its residents, although there appear to have been pockets of land rented...
to tenants. Additionally, its population, largely English by the time of the Revolution, included substantial groups of Germans and Dutch. This mix was representative of Dutchess County as a whole during this era. Using the 1775 tax lists as a measure of personal wealth, although comparability between precincts has yet to be studied, Charlotte Precinct was representative of the economic condition of Dutchess County citizens in 1775.11

The attitudes of Charlotte’s inhabitants to the politics of the Revolutionary era could be understood best, if a record of their thoughts and actions had been left. But the inarticulate neither chronicle their lives nor leave memoirs of it; nevertheless they can be heard. A glimpse of their points of view regarding politics is reflected in the surviving minutes of “town” meetings held in Charlotte and later Clinton. Skimpy though they are, these records at least noted who was elected to public office at the annual meetings held each April. In addition, tax lists and other records can be used to ferret out clues regarding elected officials, the “class” to which they belonged, and other pertinent information about them.12

In February 1775, after the New York Assembly failed to support the First Continental Congress, its supporters in New York City appealed to all New York counties to send delegates to a provincial convention, convening on April 20, to elect delegates to the Second Continental Congress. In a sense each county and town was being asked to choose between loyalty to the Crown and the more radical policy of revolution and independence.13 In Dutchess County only the vote on this issue taken in Charlotte and Poughkeepsie precincts have survived. At its annual meeting, April 7, 1775, this vote was supervised by Cornelius Humphrey, Esqr., who favored sending delegates, and Enos Northrup who was opposed. The resolution to send delegates was defeated soundly, 250 to 35.14 But the outcome in Charlotte was not unique; only four of 11 precincts in Dutchess County, Amenia, Northeast, Rhinebeck, and Rumbout, voted to send delegates. At a meeting of those four precincts Egbert Benson, Morris Graham, and Robert R. Livingston were chosen to represent Dutchess County. This questionable decision did not go unnoticed. One angry Dutchess County freeholder, noting Charlotte’s rejection and referring to Poughkeepsie’s vote of 110 to 77 against the resolution, questioned in his letter to a New York City newspaper, the right of this minority to represent all of Dutchess County. Nevertheless, Dutchess County was represented.15
The vote in Charlotte is particularly interesting. The tax list compiled in 1775 lists 658 taxpayers. Individuals who didn’t own taxable property were not recorded so the actual number of “freeholders and inhabitants” eligible to vote exceeds this number by as much as 30 percent. Based on this, fewer than 40 percent of eligible voters made their point of view known by voting. What is important here is that about 60 percent of Charlotte’s residents remained uncommitted. While some may have been lackadaisical, a great many others were simply neutral, defined by Edward Countryman as those “who avoided being mentioned in any of the political sources.” And in Poughkeepsie, despite its higher percentage of voters, at least four of ten chose to remain uncommitted. These findings and the fact that only four of 11 precincts voted in favor of sending representatives indicates that, like Charlotte, a great majority of individuals in Dutchess County were opposed, neutral, or simply unwilling to commit themselves. This conclusion is consistent with the outcome of the same vote on the same proposal taken at the same time in Queens County. There, only 12 percent supported the American cause, while fully 60 percent chose to remain neutral. Incidentally, in 1788 the delegations sent by both of these counties to Poughkeepsie were opposed to a federal constitution.

The election of town officials in Charlotte in April 1775 reflected an attitude of “business as usual.” Despite Humphrey’s obvious support of the American cause, he was elected town supervisor, a position he had held in 1773. Northrup, apparently loyal to Britain, was elected one of two assessors. He was also elected highway commissioner. Before the year closed Humphrey, becoming more deeply immersed in the revolutionary movement, prepared his mill for sale, and was elected to represent Dutchess County at the Provincial Congress in New York. At the town elections the following year Northrup was elected again as assessor.

In 1776 James Smith, Esqr., was elected Town Supervisor. His three years experience in that position, 1768-1770, would serve him well during this period of tension. But a few months later he was tarred and feathered for sentencing to jail a member of the Revolutionary Committee of Safety. This followed on the heels of an armed skirmish in Charlotte between 150 Tories and a number of Dutchess County patriots, strengthened by 500 Connecticut militia. Smith and other public officials from Charlotte, some of whom had been involved in the armed skirmish, did not serve their full term in office. They had been arrested by the patriots and sent to jail. This incident stimulated the citizens of the precinct to take action at the next
annual meeting held in April 1777. Incidentally, Enos Northrup, perhaps a loyalist but an inactive one, remained in town but never again held public office. His opponent, then Colonel Humphrey, served the town in several significant capacities after the war wound down in 1781, including town supervisor in 1786. 22

The 1777 election saw the most dramatic change in government since Charlotte Precinct was established in 1762 or for that matter until well into the 19th century. The voters swept out of office every public official who served in 1776. The completely new slate was led by the newly elected supervisor, Ezra Thompson, a prosperous farmer who had held only one other public office previously, but in subsequent years became prominent in precinct politics. A decade later in 1788, he would be elected an Anti-Federalist delegate to the Constitutional Convention. The magnitude of the change in those who served in public office in Charlotte in 1777 is startling. All but two or three of the newly elected individuals were political newcomers, never having held a precinct office before. Even more significant is the fact that typically individuals, once elected, were likely to be reelected in the following year. Obviously, this was not the case in 1777. Also, eight or 38 percent of the newly elected individuals or their sons were officers in one of the nine militia companies reported by Charlotte's Committee of Safety in September 1775, yet not one had been elected in 1776. 23 Not only had the voting inhabitants of Charlotte become politicized, but the events of 1776 seem to have swung their allegiance to one favorable to the Revolution. Unfortunately, how large was the group of inhabitants who continued to remain neutral is not known, the number of votes at annual meetings were never recorded. The following year, 1778, voters returned to office the highest percentage of public officials ever reelected; 20 of 21 incumbents were reelected.

In a span of just two years the inhabitants of Charlotte had twice used their right to vote to affect the policy making body in the precinct—its public officials. While neutrality was an option chosen by about 60 percent of the inhabitants in 1775 and continued to be an option, presumably chosen by fewer people in 1777, voters had had it their way. They exercised their right to disagree. Even a particularly well respected leader like Cornelius Humphrey could not persuade them. Nor were these important decisions reserved only for those who had "a stake in society" ie., those who owned property of a certain minimum value or leaseholders who met a similar property test. 24 Property qualifications required to vote in colony-wide elections were, as Williamson pointed out, "seldom if ever the same

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as those for voting in local elections in Town."²⁵ All of Charlotte's "freeholders and inhabitants" were permitted to vote in town elections.

It was local conditions rather than colony-wide issues related to broad principles, such as universal suffrage or other related issues, which determined how people voted at the local level. What was important was maintaining a certain orderliness in the community. Incidents, such as the skirmish with the Tories in 1776, or issues, such as the vote in 1775 which might have led to a sudden decision to separate from Great Britain, threatened the sense of order and therefore were quickly defused when ordinary people raised their voices at the annual meetings. Following the dramatic results of the 1777 election and the equally dramatic reelection of 95 percent of the incumbents in 1778, Charlotte inhabitants returned to their more usual voting behavior. Except for electing new assessors, reflecting the new law which required nine instead of the usual two or three, about 60 percent of the incumbents were reelected in 1779. In subsequent years this percentage was even higher. Apparently, an acceptable order had returned to the community in 1778 and continued thereafter. Perhaps as Tiedman so aptly put it, "traditional agricultural people, ... were more concerned with the soil, the weather, and the prospects for the next crop than debating the merits of Britain's imperial administration."²⁶

If the voters in Charlotte were able to impose their will as effectively as they did in 1775, 1776, and 1777, did this access to power affect who they elected in subsequent years? More specifically, did the democratic principles which were central to the Revolutionary movement become manifest in town politics, ie. did voters elect a greater number of individuals who were less affluent? To study this question the tax lists were divided into five categories representing different levels of wealth based on the assessed value recorded therein. The percentage of individuals in each of five wealth categories is listed in Table I. As one might expect there was an inverse relationship between assessed value and the number of individuals in each category. Next, the men who held public office and the assessed value of each during three periods, 1765-1768, 1775-1778, and 1786-1789, were examined. The assessed value in the first year of each of these periods was used to determine the relationship between wealth and the probability of holding public office and the relationship between wealth and the importance of the office held.
Additionally, public offices were divided in this study into two categories based on the degree of responsibility. In Category I were the supervisor, assessors (usually two or three, but in 1778 there were nine), commissioners of highways (usually three), and the town clerk. All of these officeholders, except the town clerk, were policy makers whose decisions affected the town at large and most of the individuals in it. The town clerk, primarily an administrative position, was included because of his close working relationship with this group and the likelihood he influenced their decisions. In Category II were the following lesser officeholders: a tax collector, four or five constables, two appraisers of interstate estates, two fenceviewers, two poundkeepers, and two overseers of the poor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE I</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TAXPAYERS AT EACH ASSESSED VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>assed value (in pounds)</td>
<td>1765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.1 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As one might have expected, wealth in Charlotte and later in Clinton was not distributed evenly. Briefly stated, during the 25-year period studied only about a quarter of the town’s wealth, as reflected in the assessment rolls, was controlled by those on the lower half of the economic ladder i.e., those assessed at £2 or under. In contrast, about 40 percent of the town’s wealth was controlled by men in the upper 10-12 percent of the economic scale. The remaining one third of the town’s wealth was held by the middle group, i.e., those assessed at £3 to £5. If representation in public office had been “democratic,” it should have been apportioned in a similar manner. This, in fact, was not the case.

Even before discussing the issue of representation, it is important to note that public office was typically held by a very small number of individuals. As Table II shows, 27 men were elected to the 72 town offices during the period 1765-1768. Many were reelected, and
a few held several offices. Twenty years later, at the end of the Revolutionary period, the picture was essentially the same.

**TABLE II**
OFFICEHOLDERS PARTITIONED BY VALUE OF ASSESSMENT AND CATEGORY OF OFFICE HELD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>assessed value (in pounds)</th>
<th>1765-1768</th>
<th>1775-1778</th>
<th>1786-1789</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of offices in each category

| 16 | 56 | 35 | 55 | 33 | 56 |

**Note:**

a) When two or more offices were held by the same man, only the principal office held was placed in the category.

b) The names of Commissioners of Highways were not recorded until 1774.

But during the 1775-1778 period this pattern was interrupted when 47 men were elected to 90 offices. Had public office become more accessible to a broader segment of the population during the early years of the Revolution? Actually not; it was the dramatic discharge from office in 1777 of every incumbent which accounted for almost all of the change during that period. In the following year and the subsequent years voters returned to their old habits. A few men were elected to all the public offices, many were reelected, and several were elected to two or more offices each year.

Regarding the issue of distribution of public office among the economic classes, the findings are clear. Table III shows that wealthy men in the community held a large number of the public offices throughout the entire 25-year period studied. Although there was a marked decline in their numbers over the years, the wealthy continued to be elected in numbers which far exceeded their numbers in town. However, despite an apparent trend towards more equitable
distribution of public offices, substantial underrepresentation of those from the lower socio-economic group continued. This underrepresentation was even more pronounced when the importance of the office is taken into consideration. In the 1765-1768 period, three of the five men who held the 16 most important offices in town (reelections included) were from the wealthy group. Twenty years later this condition had not changed: nine men held the 33 most important offices during the 1786-1789 period and five of them were from the wealthiest group. Even more striking is the fact that during the entire 25-year period only one man, Hugh Wildey, an ordinary farmer and veteran of the Revolution, served in an important office. Elected assessor in 1786, he was reelected each of the following three years.

Yet, one cannot overlook the gradual trend toward more egalitarian representation; a greater number of individuals from the middle and lower economic groups were able to attain public office after 1775. This trend, imperceptible in the most important offices, is apparent in the secondary offices. About 20 percent of these offices were held by men from the “lower order” after 1775 compared to ten percent during the earlier period. However, half of these men were elected to the office of town constable, probably regarded as the least prestigious office. But can even this change be attributed to newly developed interest in democracy brought about during the Revolution and the years which followed? Probably not. The trend toward broader representation had already begun in the late 1760s and it crystallized in the early 1770s. For example, during the period 1772-1775 37 men were elected to 79 offices. Of these only half were men from the wealthier group compared to 63 percent during the 1765-1768 period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>number of offices</th>
<th>number of men elected</th>
<th>percent held by the wealthiest 15 percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1765-1768</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>63 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772-1775</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775-1778</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786-1789</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table III shows, a greater number of men were elected to public office during the 1770s than had been elected during the 1760s.
or the 1780s. Clearly, during the 1770s there was dissatisfaction. In 1773, four years before the clean sweep in 1777, three of every four incumbents were not reelected. Although the extant records shed no qualitative light on this election, the matter, whatever it was, also colored elections in 1774 and 1775. In those elections only about 45 percent of the incumbents were reelected. While it would be some time before a consistent reelection rate of about 75 percent evident from 1765 to 1772 would return, the election in 1776 returned 62 percent of the incumbents to office. Except for the debacle in 1777 and its reversal in 1778, reelection rates were closer to 65 to 75 percent in the years which followed than to the 27 percent noted in 1773. While these years were marked by high inflation, call to duty of men in the militia, profiteering by a few, and other such wartime ills, elections in Charlotte were uneventful. Men who served in local office were not seen as responsible for these conditions, nor did the inhabitants choose to vent their frustrations about the war and its effects at their public officials.

Thirteen years after the issue of independence was initially considered in 1775, the people of Charlotte and Dutchess County were again presented with a broad issue to vote on, the ratification of the Constitution. And once again voters were neutral or indifferent, though those who did vote strongly opposed ratification. In Dutchess County fewer than 2,700 votes were cast, about one third of the total electorate of 8,000. Nor was this unenthusiastic response unique to Dutchess County. Alfred Young, comparing the number of voters in 1775 and in 1788, demonstrated voting turnout in New York was lighter than one might have expected.

Again in 1788 and 1789 inhabitants in Clinton focused more on conditions immediately relevant to their lives. Because local controversy was absent, these elections, contrary to those in 1776 and 1777, were uneventful. The reelection rate was 75 percent, and men were elected to town offices regardless of their obvious differences about the Constitution. Anti-Federalist Cornelius Humphrey was elected to the position of inspector (overseer of the town meeting) in 1788 at the same time that Federalist Richard D'Cantillon was elected town supervisor. At the state level Clinton resident John De Witt, an Anti-Federalist, served in the New York Assembly in that year and the next. And during this time Cornelius Humphrey served his Dutchess County constituency as state senator.

What conclusions can be drawn? There are several:

1. Many voters in Charlotte and Dutchess County chose to remain
uncommitted regarding significant issues in 1775 and again in 1788.

2. Voters in Charlotte were not adverse to discharging incumbents from office when a significant issue of local importance stirred them.

3. Contrary to general belief, the change to broader or more democratic representation in public office had already begun to evolve prior to the Revolution.

4. Men of wealth were favored with elective office significantly more frequently than those of lesser means before, during, and after the Revolution.

5. Elected office did become more available to men from the lowest economic group during the 1770s, but it was primarily secondary offices which were attainable.

6. The number of different individuals elected to public office increased during the Revolutionary era during periods of dissatisfaction, but when dissatisfaction was not evident the electorate typically elected men from a small pool of individuals.

7. And finally, in Charlotte/Clinton it was local conditions which appear to have affected elections rather than issues of general political, social, or economic magnitude.

Was the struggle between classes a principal issue at the polls during the Revolutionary era? To be sure, antagonism did exist between the classes, and between some tenants and landlords, it was intense. The tenant uprising on Livingston Manor in 1777 is a good example of dissatisfaction which festered well before the Revolution. But this struggle was not necessarily representative of all of the mid-Hudson Valley. Nor did it necessarily intrude in local politics. In fact, it may not have characterized the politics of freehold settlements at all. Charlotte Precinct is a case in point. Primarily a freehold, its political atmosphere, if its elections are a credible measure, was often indifferent, focused on local conditions, and interested in maintaining the status quo locally.

That is not to say in Charlotte or in the rest of Dutchess County there was no interest in broader political issues during the Revolutionary era. Both sides of issues such as independence at the start of the Revolutionary period, and the ratification of the constitution at its end were represented when county-wide votes were taken. But on home ground inhabitants were essentially satisfied to vote for men
they had always elected regardless of their stand on the broader issues; men who had achieved status in the community. Many of the men elected to public office in Charlotte were successful merchants or large landowners who operated farms worked, one might assume, by "hired men." But these men, although wealthy relative to the rest of the inhabitants, were not, nor had they ever been, nor were they likely to join the ranks of the super-rich of the sort spoken of in discussions regarding the land rich aristocracy in the mid-Hudson Valley. In fact, in all of Dutchess County only 28 men were assessed at £20 or higher, and fewer than 100 were assessed more than £12 in 1775. Of the 3,950 individuals whose names appeared on the tax lists only Henry Beekman of Rhinebeck, assessed at £265; Beverly Robinson of Philipstown, assessed at £70; David Johnson of Charlotte, assessed at £50; and perhaps a dozen others assessed at £35 or higher could be considered super-rich. Typically, these men did not hold local office.

Struggle for control based on class conflict was not evident at the ballot box in local elections. Certainly, men of wealth were elected to local office considerably more frequently than those of lesser means, not only in Charlotte Precinct but in other precincts in Dutchess County. This was also the case in similar towns in Massachusetts. Towns like Amherst and Weston elected men of wealth more frequently, particularly to the principle town offices. It was "proper" to elect this kind of men, and as Bonomi observed, the "better sort" continued to be chosen for political office 40 years after the Revolutionary period. Ordinary people believed elective office had been earned by and was reserved for men of status and dignity. Seeing through our 20th-century eyes and minds it is difficult to conceive this was the prevailing attitude. But the concept of equality at that time was still only a fresh breeze, yet to be appreciated. As J.R. Pole so aptly put it, "Deference, it does not seem, in retrospect, is a very secure cement to the union of social orders. Yet to those who live under its sway it can be almost irresistible." Even Melancton Smith, regarded at the Constitutional Convention as the spokesman for the common man, acknowledged the power of deference. "Will anyone say that there does not exist in this country the pride of family, of wealth, of talents, and that they do not command respect among the common people." But as Pole further points out, men were willing to accept their lot, even when it meant accepting less than universal suffrage, because they, too, expected to advance to loftier heights one day.30
Notes


8. A review of these policies can be found in Edward S. Morgan, The Birth of the Republic, 1763-1789 (Chicago: University, 1956), chapters 2, 3, and 4.


15. “Protest of the Freeholders of Seven Precincts in Dutchess County, New York.” Shortly thereafter on May 1, 1775, the validity of this protest was questioned by another Dutchess County freeholder, who challenged the initial letter writer to obtain 600 signatures to support his protest. He indicated that of the 1,800 freeholders in Dutchess County, he could obtain 1,200 signatures from those who would agree to send delegates. Force, Fourth Series, Vol. II, p. 304; Calendar of Historical Manuscripts relating to the War of the Revolution, 2 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1868), Vol. I, p. 41.


22. Records of Crum Elbow, passim.


27. *Country Journal*, June 3, 1788. In 1790 there were 10,968 males over 16 years of age in Dutchess County. Using the 75 percent to 80 percent rule regarding ratio of males over 21 years to total number of males produces an electorate of over 8,000. Also it should be noted that shortly before the election, provisions had been made for universal male suffrage on this issue. Furthermore, a secret ballot and voting places located in each precinct provided the broadest opportunity to vote. *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States in the Year 1790* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1909); Lynd, *Anti-Federalism*, p. 18.

