

**MSS: FH810**  
**LUDLOW FAMILY PAPERS**  
**1743-1929**

Processed By: Scott McCloud  
Volume: 8 Boxes, 2.5 lin. ft.

June 1990

Provenance: The 8 account books and 94 letters were donated by Mrs. John A. Gorton. The remainder of the collection is from an unknown source.

Conservation: Documents were unfolded and placed in acid-free folders, staples and paperclips removed.

Restrictions: None

Copyright: Permission to publish material from this collection must be requested in writing from the Chief Librarian of the Albany Institute of History & Art.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

The Ludlows were a prominent New York family with branches in New York City and Claverack. The progenitor of the family in America was Gabriel Ludlow of Castle Cary, England, who arrived in America in 1694. He settled in New York City where he became a successful merchant. In 1697 he married Sarah Hammer, daughter of the Rector of the Trinity Church. They had twelve children. One of these children, Henry Ludlow, moved to Claverack and established that branch of the family.

Henry Ludlow became a prosperous farmer, merchant, landlord, and investor with far reaching business interests. His descendants, notably his son William Henry Ludlow, prospered through the extensive family land holdings. The Ludlows were founders and members of the Trinity Episcopal Church of Claverack and of the Columbia County Agricultural Society. The Ludlow homestead in Claverack is still standing.

The Claverack Ludlows were supporters of the American Revolution, unlike their NYC counterparts, who as Loyalists were forced to flee the country after the Revolution. William Henry Ludlow (1740-1803) married first Catherine Van Rensselaer, daughter of Killeen Van Rensselaer, and second Mary Broughton Gouverneur. Their only son William Broughton Ludlow (1788-1865) married Julia Morris, the daughter of Robert Morris. Marital ties to the Livingston and Fulton families were established through the marriage of William B. Ludlow's son Robert Morris Ludlow (1812-1892) to Mary Livingston Fulton, daughter of steamboat pioneer Robert Fulton.

A large portion of the Ludlow family wealth was generated from the leasing and selling of land in the Kaydeross Patent in Columbia County. The family also took an interest in the shipping trade with the West Indies as a result of William Henry Ludlow's marriage to Mary Broughton Gouverneur, who was the widow of Nicholas Gouverneur, part-owner of the shipping firm Cruger and Gouverneur. The later generations of Ludlows continued to make their living as farmers and merchants in Columbia County, although some did branch out into other vocations, notably William B. Ludlow's son Richard M. Ludlow, who became an artist.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection which spans from 1743 to 1929 documents four generations of the Ludlow family. The bulk of the collection is comprised of the papers of William H. Ludlow and his son William B. Ludlow. There is also a significant volume of correspondence by various members of the Livingston and Fulton families, who were relatives of the Ludlows. In addition to personal and business correspondence, the collection contains extensive business records of the Ludlow farm in Claverack in the form of account books, ledgers, and receipts. The collection is divided into four series: THE WILLIAM H. LUDLOW PAPERS, THE WILLIAM B. LUDLOW PAPERS, THE LUDLOW FAMILY PAPERS, and LUDLOW RELATIVES AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

WILLIAM H. LUDLOW'S PAPERS consist primarily of business records, correspondence, and legal papers. The large number of deeds and leases reveal William H. Ludlow's significant income through his ownership of lands in the Kaydeross Patent. His will and estate inventory as well as manumission papers for "Flora", one of his slaves, are included in the legal papers. Located in the business papers are Cruger and Gouverneur letters which furnish some insight into the problems and methods of conducting the British West Indian trade. There are also two account books relating to the operation of the Ludlow farm.

The PAPERS OF WILLIAM B. LUDLOW include a large volume of letters from family members and business associates which discuss health, family matters, and Ludlow's land investments and trade interests. There are two folders of correspondence from Robert Morris, one containing letters to W.B. Ludlow and one containing letters to Ludlow's wife Julia, Morris's daughter. They primarily discuss family activities and personal matters. As with the papers of his father, W.B. Ludlow's legal papers consist primarily of deeds and lease agreements. His business papers are comprised largely of receipts and account ledgers related to the costs of operating the family farm in Claverack.

The third series in the collection, LUDLOW FAMILY PAPERS, consists of the papers of Robert Morris Ludlow (1812-1892) and his wife Mary Fulton Ludlow, Richard Morris Ludlow (1818-1899), Robert Fulton Ludlow (1846-1927), and Frances M. Ludlow, another daughter of Robert Morris who married into the Ludlow family. It contains the personal correspondence of these persons and some business records. There are a number of letters between the Ludlows and the Livingston and Fulton families which discuss family and business matters. Robert M. Ludlow's wife, Mary Livingston Fulton, was the daughter of the famous Robert Fulton, and there are many letters which discuss the operation and management of the early steamship industry and the construction of steamships. One folder contains prints, drawings, and photographs, most of which are of prominent members of the Livingston and Fulton families. This series also contains nine account books of Robert M. and Robert F. Ludlow.

The final series in the collection, LUDLOW RELATIVES AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, contains miscellaneous legal papers, mostly deeds, from the late 18th and early 19th century, financial records from the Trinity Church in Claverack (late 19th century), papers of the Livingston family (mostly personal and business correspondence), and a ledger book containing letters between the Livingstons and Fultons pertaining to the steamboat business in the period between 1811-1854. Robert L. Livingston and Edward Livingston were investors and business associates of Robert Fulton and wrote many letters to the latter regarding the management and operations of his boats on the Mississippi. The collection contains no letters from Robert Fulton himself. The ledger book does contain some notes and specifications which may have been done by him, but this is not confirmed.

## LUDLOW FAMILY PAPERS

### SERIES LIST

- I. William H. Ludlow Papers
- II. William B. Ludlow Papers
- III. Ludlow Family Papers
- IV. Ludlow Relatives and Misc. Papers

### CONTENTS LIST

#### I. WILLIAM H. LUDLOW PAPERS

##### Box Folder

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Family Correspondence, 1781-1803.                   |
|   | 2 | Business Correspondence, 1770-1803.                 |
|   | 3 | Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1760-1803.            |
|   | 4 | Business Records, 1760-1785.                        |
|   | 5 | Account Books, 1760-1801.                           |
| 2 | 1 | Business Records, 1785-1803.                        |
|   | 2 | Legal Papers, 1776-1785.                            |
|   | 3 | Legal Papers, 1786-1795.                            |
|   | 4 | Legal Papers, 1796-1803.                            |
|   | 5 | The Cruger and Gouverneur Family Papers, 1761-1786. |

## II. WILLIAM B. LUDLOW PAPERS

- 3 1 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1803-1825.
- 2 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1826-1848.
- 3 Correspondence from Robert Morris, 1806-1847.
- 4 Family Correspondence, 1800-1852.
  
- 4 1 Letters; Robert Morris to Julia Ludlow, 1836-1851.
- 2 Business Records, 1806-1863.
- 3 Legal Papers, 1809-1853.

## III. LUDLOW FAMILY PAPERS

- 5 1 Robert M. Ludlow Papers, 1812-1892.
- 2 Mary Fulton Ludlow Correspondence, 1806-1859.
- 3 Frances M. Ludlow Correspondence, 1820-1849.
- 4 Robert F. Ludlow Papers, 1856-1927.
  
- 6 1 Richard M. Ludlow Papers, 1848-1867.
- 2 Miscellaneous Family Papers, 1756-1825.
- 3 Miscellaneous Family Papers, 1828-1929.
- 4 Prints, Photographs, Drawings, n.d.
  
- 7 1 R.M. Ludlow Account Books, 1837-1855.
- 2 R.F. Ludlow Account Books, 1868-1883.
- 3 Miscellaneous Account Books, 1846-1872.

## IV. LUDLOW RELATIVES AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

### Box Folder

- 8 1 Trinity Church of Claverack Papers, 1856-1897.
- 2 Livingston Family Papers, 1743-1911.
- 3 Fulton-Livingston Papers, 1811-1854.
- 4 Miscellaneous Legal Papers, 1761-1799.
- 5 Miscellaneous Legal Papers, 1800-1906.