

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

A Guide to the Ludlow Family Papers, 1743-1929

Summary Information

Repository

Albany Institute of History & Art Library

Creator

Ludlow Family

Title

Ludlow Family Papers, 1743-1929

Identifier

FH 810

Date

1743-1929

Physical Description

8 boxes; 2.5 linear feet

Physical Location

The materials are located onsite in the Museum.

Language of the Material

English

Abstract

The Ludlows were a prominent New York family with branches in New York City and Claverack. The bulk of the collection is comprised of the papers of William H. Ludlow and his son, William B. Ludlow, but also documents four generations of the Ludlow family.

This collection contains correspondence, documents, business records, legal papers, and a small amount of prints, drawings, and photographs.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Ludlow Family Papers, FH 810, 1743-1929. Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Albany, New York.

Conditions Governing Access and Use

Restrictions on Access

None

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession: #FH 810

Accession Date: January 1975

Gift in part of Mrs. John A. Gorton

Processing Information

Processed by S. McCloud, June 1990. Finding aid updated by H. Cox, August 2020.

Biographical/Historical

The Ludlows were a prominent New York family with branches in New York City and Claverack. The American progenitor of the family 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. One of their twelve 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 founding members of the Trinity Episcopal Church of Claverack and the Columbia County Agricultural Society. The Ludlow homestead in Claverack is still standing.

The Claverack Ludlows were supporters of the American Revolution, unlike their New York City counterparts, who, as Loyalists, were forced to flee the country after the Revolution. William Henry Ludlow (1740-1803) married Catherine Van Rensselaer (died 1778), daughter of Killian Van Rensselaer (1717-1781) in 1771, and after Catherine's death, Mary Broughton Gouverneur (1748-1799). Their only son, William Broughton Ludlow (1788-1865) married Julia Morris, the daughter of Robert Morris, around 1807. Marital ties to the Livingston and Fulton families were established through the marriage of William Broughton Ludlow's son, Robert Morris Ludlow (1812-1892) to Mary Livingston Fulton (1813-1861), daughter of steamboat pioneer Robert Fulton and Harriet Livingston Fulton.

A large portion of the William Henry Ludlow family wealth was generated from the leasing and selling of land in the Kaydeross Patent in Saratoga 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 Herman 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 Broughton Ludlow's grandson, Robert Fulton Ludlow (1846-1930), who became an artist.

Scope and Contents

This collection dates from 1743 to 1929 and documents four generations of the Ludlow family. The bulk of the collection is comprised of the papers of William Henry Ludlow and his son, William Broughton 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 Henry Ludlow Papers, the William Broughton Ludlow Papers, the Ludlow Family Papers, and the Ludlow Relatives and Miscellaneous Papers.

The **William Henry Ludlow Papers, 1760-1803**, consists primarily of business records, correspondence, and legal papers. The large number of deeds and leases reveal 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 **William Broughton Ludlow Papers, 1800-1863**, includes 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. William Broughton 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 **Ludlow Family Papers, 1756-1929**, consists of the papers of Robert Morris Ludlow (1812-1892) and his wife Mary Fulton Ludlow, Richard Morris Ludlow (1818-1899), Robert Fulton Ludlow (1846-1930), 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 **Ludlow Relatives and Miscellaneous Papers, 1743-1911**, contains miscellaneous legal papers, mostly deeds, from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, 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.

Contents List

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Description	Box	Folder
William Henry Ludlow Papers, 1760-1803		
Family Correspondence, 1781-1803	1	1
Business Correspondence, 1770-1803		2
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1760-1803		3
Business Records, 1760-1785		4

Account Books, 1760-1801		5
Business Records, 1785-1803	2	1
Legal Papers		
1776-1785		2
1786-1795		3
1796-1803		4
Cruger and Gouverneur Family Papers, 1761-1786		5
William Broughton Ludlow Papers, 1800-1863		
Miscellaneous Correspondence		
1803-1825	3	1
1826-1848		2
Correspondence from Robert Morris, 1806-1847		3
Family Correspondence, 1800-1852		4
Correspondence, Robert Morris to Julia Ludlow, 1836-1851	4	1
Business Records, 1806-1863		2
Legal Papers, 1809-1853		3
Ludlow Family Papers, 1756-1929		
Robert M. Ludlow Papers, 1812-1892	5	1
Mary Fulton Ludlow Correspondence, 1806-1859		2
Frances M. Ludlow Correspondence, 1820-1849		3
Robert F. Ludlow Papers, 1856-1927		4
Richard M. Ludlow Papers, 1848-1867	6	1
Miscellaneous Family Papers		
1756-1825		2
1828-1929		3
Prints, Photographs, Drawings, undated		4
R.M. Ludlow Account Books, 1837-1855	7	1
R.F. Ludlow Account Books, 1868-1883		2
Miscellaneous Account Books, 1846-1872		3
Ludlow Relatives and Miscellaneous Papers, 1743-1911		
Trinity Church of Claverack Papers, 1856-1897	8	1
Livingston Family Papers, 1743-1911		2
Fulton-Livingston Papers, 1811-1854		3
Miscellaneous Legal Papers		
1761-1799		4
1800-1906		5
Cancelled checks signed by C. James Ludlow (Bank of Commerce, New York, 1863-1864)		6