

The Henry Livingston Papers

Repository

Dutchess County Historical Society
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Access Number

DC.0301 – DC.0319

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Finding Aid Author: Gregory Wiedeman, 2013
Arranged by: unknown
Described by: unknown
Preservation work: unknown
Encoded by: n/a

Date Completed

2013 May 1

Creators

W. Arthur Saltford

Extent

.1 linear feet, or 15 files

Dates

Inclusive: 1761 – 1920

Bulk: 1880 – 1920

Conditions Governing Access

No Restrictions

Languages

English

Scope and Content

The collection consists of two court summons written by Henry Livingston while he was Dutchess County Clerk under the British Colony of New York. Also included are a number of secondary materials and reproductions concerning Henry Livingston likely gathered by W.

Arthur Saltford, judging from an envelope in the collection, and the original correspondence surrounding the popularization of the Livingston claim to “A Visit from St. Nicholas.”

Historical Note

Henry Livingston, Jr. was born in Poughkeepsie on October 13, 1748 and lived in the region until he died in February of 1828. He was a poet, whose work was signed “R.” in many local publications, including the *Poughkeepsie Journal*. His family has claimed, with some evidence, that Livingston wrote the famous poem, “A Visit from St. Nicholas,” better known as, “The Night Before Christmas,” that was originally attributed to Clement Moore. The Livingston claim was first popularized by William Sturgis Thomas in the 1919 Dutchess County Historical Society yearbook.

Provenance

The Collection was donated to the Dutchess County Historical Society by Mrs. W. Arthur Saltford at an unknown date.

Subject Headings

Christmas; DCHS administrative history; Literature; Poetry

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Container List

Small Collections Box 5

File	Contents	Date
File 3	Summons signed by Henry Livingston (clerk) for the arrest of Richard West	1781 October 1
File 4	Summons signed by Henry Livingston (clerk) for the arrest of Samuel Hodge	1761 October 23
File 5	Print of drawing of West Point and an article from New York Magazine	1791 (undated reproduction)
File 6	Print of drawing of Livingston homestead, Poughkeepsie and an article from New York Magazine	1791 (undated reproduction)
File 7	Sheet of references to Henry Livingston	undated
File 8	Print of a drawing of a saw mill and an article of Henry Livingston from New York Magazine	1792 August (undated reproduction)
File 9	Letter from Benson Lossing to Cornelia Goodrich regarding Henry Livingston and “A Visit from St. Nicholas”	1886 November 25 and December 8

File 10	Journal of Henry Livingston, reprinted in Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography	1898 and 1917 March 2
File 11	Typewritten copy of verses by Henry Livingston	1917 March 2
File 12	Correspondence of William S Thomas with Frank Hasbrouck concerning Henry Livingston (7 items)	1920 May 11 – July 23
File 13	“’Twas the Night Before Christmas” in <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> , article concerns the authorship controversy	1920
File 14	Clippings from <i>New York Times Magazine and Book Review</i> , “Lost Camps of the Hudson Highlands”	1920 September 5
File 15	Printed circular of Martlaer’s Rock Association for the preservation of Warner House, opposite West Point	undated
File 16	Typewritten sheet of Livingston family from “Rambles in Colonial By-ways,” by Rufus Wilson	undated
File 17	Typed article by Henry Livingston (excerpt) and two poems	undated
File 18	Typewritten copies of poems by Henry Livingston (50 sheets)	undated