

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New York	
COUNTY: Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON: "Clermont" - Livingston Lower Manor

AND/OR HISTORIC: Clermont

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Clermont State Park

CITY OR TOWN: Tivoli on the Hudson

STATE: New York      CODE:      COUNTY: Columbia      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: State of New York; New York State Historic Trust

STREET AND NUMBER: Building 2, State Office Campus

CITY OR TOWN: Albany 12226      STATE: New York      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE: New York      CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey (11 photos, c. 1870, 1900)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1937       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

217

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"Clermont," as rebuilt in 1778, apparently included the north and south (end) walls of the 1728 mansion. It was rebuilt as a two-story brick Georgian structure with a low hipped roof with a balustrade around the eaves and a pair of end chimneys in either of the side walls. The mansion was 55-feet (five-bays) wide and 45-feet deep. The brick walls were covered with a thin veneer of stucco which was scored to resemble stone blocks. In 1803 Robert R. Livingston II, added a one-story brick kitchen wing, 23 by 35 feet, to the north side of the house near the east (rear) corner. In 1830 a balancing one-story brick library wing 23 by 38 feet in size, was added to the mansion on the south side near the east (rear) corner, thus giving house its present U-shape. In 1874 the present steep-pitched hipped roof with dormers was added to give the mansion its existing third floor. Between 1874 and 1893 second stories were also added to the north and south wings.

The main house has a formal central hall plan, with two rooms located on either side of the hall. An unusually spacious parlor and dining room open south (right) and north respectively from the wide stair hall with its elliptical arch. About 1800 the present fireplace mantels were installed in these two rooms and also the sun-ray overdoor panels in the dining room. The arabesque overdoor panels in the parlor were apparently added a little later in the 19th century. Behind each of the large front rooms is a smaller rear room--a back hall to the north (left) and a library to the south. The kitchen is located in the north wing and the south wing, built as a library, now contains two bedrooms on the first floor.

"Clermont" is furnished with a large and original collection of Livingston Federal and Empire period furniture, as well as with original paintings, prints, and books of the Livingston family. The mansion has never been restored and appears to be in urgent need of renovation. A State Park since 1962, the Mansion was opened to visitors for the first time in 1970. The park includes 410 acres of what was once Livingston land.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1730, 1742-1813**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Clermont," erected in 1728 and rebuilt following a fire in 1777, was the country home from 1742 to 1813 of Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, a major political leader and the first secretary of foreign affairs of the United States during the War for Independence. An able jurist, inventor, and diplomat, Livingston negotiated the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 and he also played a key role in the development of the steamboat.

History

Robert R. Livingston II, later known as "Chancellor Livingston, was born in New York City in 1746. He was the eldest son of Judge Robert R. Livingston, second lord of Livingston Manor, a 162,000 acre estate on the east side of the Hudson River, and a Whig leader who died in December 1775. Young Robert attended King's (Columbia) College, where he graduated in 1765. When he left college he studied law, at first in the office of his cousin William Livingston, then with William Smith, Jr., the colonial judge. Admitted to the bar in 1770, he practiced for a time in partnership with John Jay. In 1770 he married Mary Stevens; they had two daughters. In 1773 he received his first political office, the only one he held under the Crown, recorder of the City of New York and in 1775, his revolutionary sympathies having made him no longer acceptable, he was replaced.

Many of young Robert R. Livingston's relatives were active in public life and were leaders in the Revolutionary cause. Notable among these were his father; his cousins: Philip Livingston, New York City merchant and a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, William Livingston, first governor of the State of New Jersey, and Peter Van Brugh Livingston, a New York City Merchant and Whig; and his brothers-in-law were General Richard Montgomery, Colonel John Armstrong, and Colonel Morgan Lewis, soldiers during the War for Independence. A large part of Robert R. Livingston's significance as an historical figure is due to the unofficial and largely unchronicled influence he wielded after becoming the most important member of the family group, with the death of his father.

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Harold D. Eberlein and Cortlandt V.D. Hubbard, Historic Houses of the Hudson Valley (New York, 1942), 94-97, 100, 101, 105, plates 86-90.  
Great Georgian Houses of America (2 vols., New York, 1933-37)  
Dictionary of American Biography, XI, 320-25.  
New York, A Guide to the Empire State (American Guide Series) (New York, 1956), 609-610.  
 Russell D. Bailey, A Report on Historic Sites and Buildings in the Hudson Valley (Utica, New York, 1967), 51-51a.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	42 ° 05 ' 14 "	73 ° 55 ' 45 "		42 ° 05 ' 09 "	43 ° 55 ' 10 "	
NE	42 ° 05 ' 11 "	73 ° 55 ' 30 "				
SE	42 ° 04 ' 46 "	73 ° 55 ' 35 "				
SW	42 ° 04 ' 43 "	73 ° 55 ' 50 "				

Location of House

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **14 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian**

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service**      DATE **4/20/72**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**801 - 19th Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE **D.C.**      CODE

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

258

STATE New York	
COUNTY Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Significance: (1) "Clermont" (Robert R. Livingston House)

In 1775 Robert R. Livingston II, was elected a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, in which he served during 1775-76, 1779-81, and 1784-85. He was a member of the committee of five appointed to draft a declaration of independence. His personal opinion was that independence was inevitable and necessary, but at that time inexpedient, and in debate he was, according to Jefferson, one of the chief speakers for a postponement of the issue. When independence was considered on July 2, 1775 every colony voted affirmatively except New York, whose delegation was excused from voting because it was not authorized to do so by the New York convention.

On the 9th a newly elected convention declared for independence. On July 15 Livingston left for New York to take a seat in that body and was therefore absent when the signing of the engrossed copy of the Declaration began on August 2. Thus it happened that, although a member of the drafting committee, Robert R. Livingston neither voted for nor signed the Declaration of Independence.

In addition to federal affairs, Livingston was also deeply involved in the public affairs of New York State. He was a leader in the successive Revolutionary organizations that replaced the imperial governmental machinery: the New York congress and committee of safety of 1776; the council of safety of 1777; and the commission to carry on the government during the interval between the adoption of a state constitution and the time when it began to function in 1777. He held the chancellorship of New York from 1777 to 1801 and was regarded as one of the ablest of American lawyers. He was a member of the committee to draft the first New York constitution in 1777.

On January 10, 1781, Congress by resolve established a department of foreign affairs; on August 10, Livingston, then enjoying at "Clermont" a brief respite from public affairs, was elected secretary of this department. Livingston was the candidate most acceptable to France and Luzerne, the French ambassador to the United States, claimed that he influenced the election in his behalf. The most important of Livingston's diplomatic correspondence while secretary related to the negotiations of peace with Great Britain. He approved the instructions to the American commissioners at Paris, directing them to act only with the knowledge and concurrence of France, a provision which Luzerne had induced the Continental Congress to endorse. Livingston did not share John Jay's suspicions, which much later were proved to be correct, that France was dealing with Great Britain behind America's back and undercutting the American position. When the treaty was submitted by the commissioners, Livingston approved it as a whole, but unfairly reprimanded them for their manner of negotiating without the full concurrence of France, eliciting a defense of their conduct in which even Benjamin Franklin joined. During the negotiations

STATE New York	
COUNTY Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Significance: (2) "Clermont" (Robert R. Livingston House)

Livingston sent quantities of data and arguments for the diplomatic battle. He recommended minor improvements in the provisional treaty which were incorporated in the definitive treaty. Livingston resigned on December 2, 1782, because of the inadequacy of his salary, which, he reported, was \$3,000 a year less than the expenses of the office. He was twice induced by Congress to prolong his stay, first until January 1, 1783, and thereafter until May. It was June 1783 when he finally left for "Clermont." In 1783-84 he was a member of the commission to govern New York City following the British evacuation, and of the commissions to fix on a boundary with Massachusetts in 1784, and with Vermont in 1790. In 1811 he was on the first canal commission, which projected plans that were later realized in the Erie Canal.

In the New York ratifying convention of 1788 Livingston not only ably led the influential Livingston factions in support of the Federal Constitution but was also one of the most frequent speakers. Excepting Alexander Hamilton, possibly no individual at this time contributed more toward the success of Federalism in New York. By virtue of his office as chancellor Livingston administered the oath to President George Washington in 1789. Despite his great contributions, in the distribution of patronage in 1789 Livingston was entirely overlooked by the new government. Carrying with him the numerous family group, he became a Republican some time before 1791, when he successfully supported Burr for Philip Schuyler's seat in the U.S. Senate. He disagreed with Hamilton's financial plans, especially the plan for funding the debt, and was one of the leading opponents of John Jay's treaty (1794). In 1795 he ran for governor of New York, but was defeated by Jay.

In 1801 Thomas Jefferson appointed Livingston minister to France. Livingston proved to be an able diplomat, dealing successfully with Talleyrand and Napoleon. When the Emperor suddenly offered to sell the entire Louisiana territory, Livingston after waiting in order to act concurrently with Monroe, who was on his way to join him, seized the opportunity; and after some profitable haggling over the price, 60 million francs and payment of the spoliation claims by the United States was agreed upon (May 2, antedated to April 30, 1803). This was, according to Henry Adams, "the greatest diplomatic success recorded in American history." Livingston himself said as he signed the treaty: "From this day the United States take their place among the powers of the first rank." Livingston resigned in the autumn of 1804 and after a visit to London and several months' travel with his family in Europe he returned to "Clermont," where he lived the rest of his life in political retirement.

He devoted his leisure to a wide range of intellectual interests and hobbies. In 1793 he designed and built near "Clermont" a fine house. Much of his time he occupied with the study of agriculture, corresponding

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Significance: (3) "Clermont" (Robert R. Livingston House)

with Washington, Jefferson, and his friends abroad in the interest of scientific methods. He was a pioneer in the importation of Merino sheep and in the use of gypsum as fertilizer. He was one of the organizers, in 1791, of a society subsequently called the Society for the Promotion of Useful Arts, served as president from 1791 to his death, and contributed to its publications. He was also interested in paleontology. He was founder and first president (1808) of the American Academy of Fine Arts, and a trustee of the New York Society library.

Livingston had been associated with the attempts in steam navigation of Fitch, Morey, Stevens, and Nicholas Roosevelt, and in 1798 had undertaken the construction of a steamboat. His aid, which was technical as well as financial, made possible the experiment of Robert Fulton on the Seine and later (1807) the success of the Clermont on the Hudson. From the beginning Livingston sought exclusive rights in steam navigation. His great political influence enabled him to secure the grant of a New York monopoly in 1798 (on conditions, however, which his boat failed to fulfill), the renewal of this monopoly in 1803 in his and Fulton's joint interest, and supplementary laws in 1808 and 1811. The monopoly was popularly felt to be onerous, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Ohio all passing retaliatory laws relating to navigation on interjacent waters, but Livingston turned his earnings back into the business, and the money from the monopoly was partly responsible for the rapidity with which the steamboat was developed. The difficulty of maintaining the monopoly was great, and in consequent litigation and pamphlet warfare Livingston was personally very active. Undaunted by competition, the partners extended their operations to the Mississippi, and petitioned the legislature of Virginia for a monopoly on the James River. Legal conflict over the New York monopoly continued after Livingston's death and was ended only by the decision in the case of Gibbons vs. Odgen in 1824. Livingston died on February 26, 1813 and was buried at Linlithgo, New York. His body was later reburied in the St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church cemetery at Tivoli, New York.

(continued)

STATE New York	
COUNTY Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Significance: (4) "Clermont" (Robert R. Livingston House)

"History of "Clermont"

The original Livingston Mansion, a Georgian brick and stone house, was built about 1730 by Robert R. Livingston I, his 13,000 acre estate "Clermont." When the British General Vaughn burned Kingston, New York, in October 1777, he also burned "Clermont." Mrs. Margaret Beekman Livingston, mother of Robert R. Livingston II, rebuilt the mansion in 1777-78. The walls of the older structure were incorporated into the new house. About 1793 Robert R. Livingston built a house a few hundred yards south of "Clermont," where he resided until the death of his mother in 1800. Livingston's second house was destroyed by fire in 1909.

The north and south wings of "Clermont" were added in 1800 and the steep-pitched roof and dormers in 1878. The mansion was occupied by the Livingston family until 1962, when it was acquired by the State of New York for State Park purposes.



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

STATE New York	
COUNTY Columbia	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

Clermont

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Boundaries for the Robert R. Livingston House, "Clermont," Historic Site:

Approximately 16 acres of land, including Robert R. Livingston's mansion known as "Clermont," beginning at the northwest corner on the eastern edge of the New York Central Railroad track at latitude 42° 05' 14" - longitude 73° 55' 45", then going east about 900 feet to the northeast corner at latitude 42° 05' 11" - longitude 73° 55' 30", hence going southwest about 3,100 feet to the southeast corner at latitude 42° 04' 46" - longitude 73° 55' 35", then proceeding northwest about 900 feet to a point on the eastern edge of the New York Central Railroad track at latitude 42° 04' 42" - longitude 73° 55' 50", hence going northeast along the east edge of said railroad tracks about 3,000 feet to the point of beginning, the northwest corner.

Precise boundaries, as described above, are on record on a copy of U.S. Geological Survey Map: Saugerties Quadrangle, New York, 1963, 7.5 Minute Series, on file with the Historic Sites Survey, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.