Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers
Circa 1660–1904 (bulk 1726–1865)
10 boxes, 8 bound volumes, 44 oversize folders

Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10029

Telephone: 212-534-1672
Fax: 212-423-0758
research@mcny.org
www.mcny.org

© Museum of the City of New York. All rights reserved.

Description is in English.

Descriptive Summary
Creator: Edward Floyd De Lancey, 1821–1905
Title: Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers
Dates: Circa 1660–1904 (bulk 1726–1865)
Abstract: The Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers consists of 715 objects documenting the lives of several related wealthy and prominent families from the New York City region, specifically Manhattan, Long Island, and Westchester County. Objects include ample correspondence; legal, financial, and business documents; military papers and orders; genealogical material; personal writings; and a broad range of real estate documents, many of which are oversize. The collection provides a rich and deep source of information about the personal and political lives
of New York City–region Loyalists before, during, and after the Revolutionary War. The collection also contains personal correspondence to and from John Jay and John Quincy Adams.

**Extent:** 10 boxes, 8 bound volumes, 44 oversize folders

**MCNY Numbers:** 42.315

**Language:** English

---

**Historical Note**

A brief discussion of the historical context of the Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers is critical to deciphering the connections within and among the collection’s series. The majority of the items date from the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s and originate from the New York City region, primarily the settlements in and around Long Island and Westchester County. This period, encompassing the late Colonial, Revolutionary, and early National years, was one of volatility, conflict, and incessant change in the area. In 1765, after nearly 100 years under British rule, the Empire moved to impose the Stamp Act on its colonists, throwing New York City into turmoil as residents both protested the tax and anticipated the coming unrest. A sense of restlessness and unease permeated the city, building slowly until word finally came of the dispute at Lexington and Concord in 1775—long-simmering resentments had finally erupted into outright armed conflict and the war was on. From 1776 until the passing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783 the British occupied the islands of Manhattan, Staten Island, and western Long Island, ruling with unrelenting military law and imposing rigid regulations on the densely packed area. Continental troops remained in the vicinity as well during these seven years, first in New Jersey and later north of the city, and residents of the entire region weathered the strain of close proximity to two large and voluble armies in a standoff, each operating with the emotional intensity of youth and a deeply held sense of moral imperative.

Most of the families in this collection were Loyalists who remained faithful to the British during the war. Key to understanding the milieu in which these families existed is the fact that, contrary to public declarations from leaders on both sides of the conflict, in many areas there was little definitive separation between those who pledged allegiance to the revolutionary cause and those who renounced it. They lived in intimate relation to their supposed enemies; differences in opinion existed even within families. With food and fuel scarce, ideological boundaries were blurred and military lines crossed as Patriots and Loyalists breached both to visit with family and friends and do business in the thriving black markets. For Loyalists, reasons for remaining true to the crown varied in accordance with economic, racial, and regional contexts. While some Loyalists, such as those represented within this collection, were members of the wealthy privileged elite with obvious interests in maintaining the status quo, many were not. Some were poor and feared losing what modicum of protection the British provided. Some were slaves who had been promised freedom if they crossed military lines to side with the British. Many were refugees from surrounding colonies who flowed into the city to join with British forces out of a sense of duty or, in some cases, to seek respite from the violence being perpetrated in rural areas by Patriots who demanded
uncompromising loyalty to the revolutionary cause. Regardless of the reasoning, rarely were their decisions unadulterated by socioeconomic concerns and familial bonds.

The early postwar years in the New York City region were a blur of debate, political jockeying, and transformation as the young nation (and city) sought to establish stable political and economic systems. After the British departed in defeat, estates and property that had been confiscated in the name of independence were suddenly up for grabs. Patriots and Loyalists alike raced to claim (or reclaim) lands. In 1779, New York had enacted the anti-Loyalist Act of Attainder, requiring “the forfeiture of real and personal estate” of 59 prominent Loyalists, who were then to be considered enemies of the state—the Act also banished those named from the state entirely. Several eminent De Lanceys, Judge Thomas Jones, and Colonel Richard Floyd, all influential New Yorkers well represented in this collection, were among those named in the Act, the immediate effect of which was to virtually decimate some of the large Loyalist estates in Westchester and Suffolk Counties. In the war’s aftermath, Loyalist families were often violently attacked, their families uprooted and their possessions plundered; formerly prosperous members of the Colonial elite now found themselves run out of town, humiliated.

By the early-mid 1800s, relative stasis had resumed in the region, but the area had seen a remarkable in- and outflux of inhabitants and continued to experience significant change as interests clashed and power consolidated and shifted. It is against this backdrop of displacement, divided loyalties, and political instability that the objects in this collection are set.

Biographical Notes (names in bold indicate representation in the collection)

De Lancey Family

The De Lanceys were among the wealthiest and most influential families in Colonial New York; their name carries on via Delancey Street in Lower Manhattan and various other namesake locations and institutions. The first De Lancey to arrive in America was Stephen, née Etienne (1663–1741), a French-Huguenot refugee who disembarked in 1686 with only £300 to his name. Subsequent decades would see him rise to prominence as one of the most successful merchants in the city; his descendants followed suit in commercial, legal, political, and military realms region-wide. Stephen’s house (purchased from his wife Anne Van Cortlandt’s father, New York City mayor Stephanus Van Cortlandt), was sold in 1762 to Samuel Fraunces, who transformed it into Fraunces’s Tavern, the site of many noteworthy events during and immediately after the Revolution—Washington used the tavern to bid farewell to his officers in 1783, and John Jay’s Department of Foreign Affairs, from which he strove to enforce the Treaty of Paris, was located on the second floor.

Because almost all De Lancey family members were Loyalists during the Revolution, many eventually fled New York for other areas of the British Empire. Some had their property confiscated and were banished from the state as a result of the 1779 New York Act of
Attainder. Some returned in the late 1780s, resettling in their original places of residence, but many remained abroad for the rest of their lives, having been granted seats of political power elsewhere in the British colonies. As such, some documents in this collection are written from island colonies like Jamaica, Montserrat, and the Bahamas.

Notable De Lanceys and descendants represented in the collection:

Susan Fenimore Cooper (1831–1894) was the daughter of James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851) and Susan Augusta De Lancey (1792–1852). Susan authored the popular diary-like nature text Rural Hours, notable both for being the first work of naturalist non-fiction published by an American woman and one of the first American environmentalist texts. Her father James was a hugely popular nineteenth-century author whose works include numerous historical novels—the most well-known being The Last of the Mohicans—naval histories, and social criticism. Susan edited her father’s work (as he did hers) and acted as his literary executor after his death, penning introductions to reprints of his work and editing and publishing his diaries and other writings. The Fenimore Coopers’ places of residence included Westchester County, Cooperstown, and Manhattan.

Edward Floyd De Lancey (1821–1905), creator of the collection, was the eldest son of Bishop William Heathcote De Lancey (1797–1865) and Frances Munro De Lancey (1797–1869). Born in Mamaroneck, NY, Edward was a lawyer, historian, and writer who served as the second president of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and the first president of the Westchester County Historical Society. He wrote several works of well-received non-fiction, including The Capture of Fort Washington, November 16, 1776, the Result of Treason (1877) and Origin and History of Manors in the Province of New York and in the County of Westchester (1886). He was a lifelong member of the New-York Historical Society, for which he edited and supervised the issuing of Judge Thomas Jones’s Loyalist text History of New York City during the Revolutionary War and of the Leading Events in Other Colonies in That Period (1879). The collection contains a number of condolence cards from friends and acquaintances responding to the early death of Edward’s wife Josephine De Lancey (1823–1865; née De Zeng), and his handwritten contextual notes can be found sprinkled throughout the papers.

James De Lancey (1703–1760), son of Stephen (Etienne) De Lancey and Anne Van Cortlandt De Lancey, served as Chief Justice of the Province of New York from 1733 until his death and Lieutenant Governor of the Province of New York for five intermittent years. He married Anne Heathcote, daughter of Caleb Heathcote, a mayor of New York and the first Lord of the Manor of Scarsdale. In 1754, Chief Justice De Lancey granted a royal charter for the establishment of King’s College, now Columbia University.
James De Lancey (1732–1800), son of Chief Justice James De Lancey and Anne Heathcote, was a Loyalist soldier, an officer of the Associated Loyalists of America, and a member of the New York assembly. He married Margaret Allen, daughter of Chief Justice of Pennsylvania William Allen, and is said to have had an earlier union with an unknown woman named Mary, who bore him three children as well. He was attainted under New York’s 1779 Act of Attainder and his prodigious lands were auctioned off in his absence; several documents in Series I relate to these transactions. He lived in exile in England until his death.

James De Lancey (1767–1808), son of James De Lancey (1732–1800), was a Loyalist lieutenant, serving in Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey’s “De Lancey Brigade” in Long Island. He later became a sugar planter and collector of customs in the Bahamas, where he died.

James De Lancey (1785–1857), son of James De Lancey (1732–1800), was a British lieutenant-colonel who served in South America and England, where he died unmarried.

John (Jack) De Lancey (1765–1809), son of James De Lancey (1732–1800), was a British captain who served in the West Indies and Jamaica. He was posted to Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands, where against his father’s wishes he married Caroline Carey (dates unknown), daughter of the wealthiest merchant on the island. He resided there until his death.

John Peter De Lancey (1753–1828), son of Chief Justice James De Lancey (1703–1760) and Anne Heathcote, was a British major who commanded a regiment of Pennsylvania Loyalists and participated in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. John Peter was an advocate of repayment from the Crown for Loyalist lands seized by Patriots during the war. Postwar, he and his wife Elizabeth Floyd De Lancey resided at Heathcote Hill, in Mamaroneck, NY, until their deaths.

Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey (1718–1785), son of Stephen (Etienne) De Lancey and Anne Van Cortlandt De Lancey, was a successful merchant and lifelong soldier. In 1742 he married Phila Frank (dates unknown). A Loyalist, Oliver raised and equipped at his own expense a three-regiment brigade during the Revolution known as De Lancey’s Brigade, after which he was made Brigadier General. His estate north of the city, Bloomingdale, was burned down by the rebels in 1777. In 1782 he was attainted under New York’s 1779 Act of Attainder and his property was confiscated, compelling him to seek asylum in Yorkshire, England, where he remained until his death.
Oliver De Lancey (1749–1822), son of Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey and Phila Frank De Lancey, was a general in the British Army. He remained unmarried.

Bishop William Heathcote De Lancey (1797–1865), born in Mamaroneck, NY, was the son of John Peter De Lancey and Elizabeth Floyd De Lancey, and the father of Edward Floyd De Lancey, creator of this collection. He was married to Edward’s mother, Frances Munro De Lancey (1797–1869). William was the first bishop of the Diocese of Western New York and the sixth provost of the University of Pennsylvania.

Anne Charlotte McAdam (1786–1862; née De Lancey) was the daughter of John Peter De Lancey and Elizabeth Floyd De Lancey, and the aunt of Edward Floyd De Lancey, creator of this collection. She was adopted by Judge Thomas Jones and his wife Anne (née De Lancey), and in 1827 married Scottish engineer and road-builder John Loudon McAdam (1756–1856). The two moved to England in the late eighteenth century, where they remained until their deaths.

Jay Family

Founding father John Jay (1745–1829), his son Peter Augustus Jay (1776-1843), and his nephew Peter Jay Munro (1767–1833) are well-represented in the collection, primarily by the frequent correspondence in which the three engaged in the late eighteenth and very early nineteenth centuries. John Jay, first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, two-term governor of the state of New York, contributor to the Federalist Papers, and negotiator of the Treaty of Paris, was an integral figure in the American Revolution with deep influence in all three branches of government. His early opposition to slavery distinguished him from many of his peers, although in this, as in other areas of contention, he was initially moderate, proposing a gradual approach to abolition. Jay married New Jersey governor William Livingston’s daughter Sarah in 1774, and with her had six children, the first of whom was Peter Augustus Jay, second cousin of collection creator Edward Floyd De Lancey. Peter, a lawyer and staunch Federalist politician, shared his father’s interest in abolishing slavery, serving as president of the New York Manumission Society, among other philanthropic and political affiliations. In 1822 John Jay deeded Peter his ancestral home in Rye, NY, which had been damaged in the Revolutionary War. Peter and his wife Mary Rutherfurd Jay (née Clarkson) rebuilt the house on its original footprint and resided there until their deaths.

Peter Augustus’s cousin Peter Jay Munro, maternal grandfather of Edward Floyd De Lancey, also strove for a life of public service under the guidance of John Jay. Peter Jay Munro and John Jay’s close relationship is clear from the collection’s correspondence; Jay and his wife Sarah came to consider Peter more a son than a nephew. When Peter was a young teenager, he accompanied his aunt and uncle to Europe, where he became friends with an adolescent
John Quincy Adams (1767–1848), letters from whom are also in the collection. Upon his return to New York and with the help of Jay, he studied law under Aaron Burr, eventually opening a practice in the city with Peter Augustus. Peter married Margaret White (1774–1857) in 1790 and near the turn of the century established a country home in Larchmont, NY, where he lived until his death in 1833.

Floyd Family

Colonel Richard Floyd (1731–1791), a wealthy Suffolk County landowner and Loyalist British officer, was collection creator Edward Floyd De Lancey’s paternal great-grandfather. He was attainted by the 1779 Act of Attainder and by 1784 his large Suffolk County estate had been fully confiscated. Floyd then fled to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, where he remained until his death, having never seen his family again. Floyd married Arabella Jones, sister of fellow Loyalist Judge Thomas Jones. Four generations of Floyds are represented in the collection: Colonel Floyd’s father (1703–1771), grandfather (1661–1737), and great-grandfather (ca. 1620–1700), all three of whom were also named Richard Floyd and were also British colonels. The Floyd family were some of the original settlers of Brookhaven, Long Island.

Jones Family

Lawyer and politician Samuel Jones (1734–1819), known as the “Father of the New York Bar” for his efforts revise New York state statutes in 1789, was the New York State Comptroller from 1797 to 1800 and a member of the New York State Senate. Great Jones Street, in Manhattan, is named after him. His father was William Jones (1708–1799).

Thomas Jones (1731–1792), Edward Floyd De Lancey’s great uncle, was a prominent Loyalist politician, landowner, New York Supreme Court judge, and historian. Jones owned several large tracts of land in Queens County, Long Island, and a mansion in lower Manhattan; he lived there and in the Jones family estate in Fort Neck with his wife Anne Charlotte De Lancey, daughter of Chief Justice James De Lancey and Anne Heathcote De Lancey. An outspoken and acerbic critic of the rebels, Jones was taken as a prisoner of war twice during the Revolution and suffered injuries from which he never fully recovered. In 1781, after the plunder of his homes and the confiscation of his substantial acreage via the Act of Attainder, Jones moved to Hertfordshire, England, with several family members, remaining in exile until his death. In his later years in exile he authored the Loyalist text History of New York City during the Revolutionary War and of the Leading Events in Other Colonies in That Period, which implicated not only the Patriots but the British Army itself in the Crown’s loss. Jones’s father, Judge David Jones (1699–1775), a close friend of Chief Justice James De Lancey, also appears in the collection.

Associated Families
Allaire Family: Peter Allaire (1740–1820) was a New York City Loyalist merchant and businessman who was suspected to be a British spy, though this has never been proven conclusively. In 1780, he was imprisoned in the Bastille after having come under suspicion for attempting to poison Benjamin Franklin. Postwar, Peter and his family fled to Nova Scotia but soon returned to New York, where he resumed his life in business. His daughter, Calicia Allaire, is also represented in the collection.

Palmer Family: Samuel Palmer (1648–1716), his wife Mary Palmer, and their six sons (William, Obadiah, Nehemiah, Samuel, Sylvanus, and Solomon) were among the first settlers of Mamaroneck, NY, and left many descendants in the area.

Leonard Bleecker (1755–1844) was a New York City businessman and Patriot soldier who served as a Brigade Major under Lafayette and witnessed the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. In 1791 he became one of America’s first securities brokers, opening a stockbroker’s office with John Pintard.

Scope and Content

The Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers consists of 715 objects documenting the lives of several related wealthy and prominent families from the New York City region, specifically Manhattan, Long Island, and Westchester County. The objects date from the early Colonial through the pre–Civil War years and include ample correspondence; legal, financial, and business documents; military papers and orders; genealogical material; personal writings; and a broad range of real estate documents. Subject matter of the bulk of the material focuses on the personal and family issues, affairs of debt and estate, and business dealings of De Lancey’s own extended family, most of whom were Loyalists who remained faithful to the crown during the Revolutionary War. Many of the letters are among family members and document family history spanning several generations. The collection also includes objects from the Loyalist Allaire, Floyd, Jones, and Palmer families; these, combined with the De Lancey papers, provide a rich and deep source of information about the personal and political lives of New York City–region Loyalists before, during, and after the war. Much of this material pertains to the effects of the 1779 Act of Attainder and subsequent seizure of Loyalist properties in Westchester and Long Island. Notably, the collection also contains 243 pieces of correspondence to and from founding father John Jay, his son Peter Augustus Jay, his nephew Peter Jay Munro (Edward Floyd De Lancey’s maternal grandfather), and a young John Quincy Adams. These letters, spanning the postwar years 1783–1818, discuss Jay family and real estate concerns and evince the close relationships among the three Jay family members.

The collection was created by Edward Floyd De Lancey (1821–1905), a lawyer and historian who served as the second president of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and the first president of the Westchester County Historical Society.
Arrangement

The collection is arranged into five series, titled by family. Correspondence in Series I, III, and IV (sub-series A in all cases) is arranged alphabetically by recipient’s name, and then chronologically within each recipient. Other sub-series in these series are arranged chronologically. Series II, the Jay Family Papers, consists almost entirely of correspondence and is arranged by recipient’s historical relevance and then chronologically within each recipient. Series V, Associated Families, is arranged by family and then chronologically.

All undated material is arranged before dated material; within correspondence sub-series, undated material is placed before each recipient’s dated documents. If two documents of the same date exist, these are arranged alphabetically by type of document. Oversize and bound material is housed separately.

Note on Names:
Married names for female spouses have been used throughout. Further biographical information about these women can be found in the Biographical Notes.

Series I: De Lancey Family Papers (1738–1900)
  Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1753–1900)
  Sub-Series B: Financial and business documents (1767–1839)
  Sub-Series C: Genealogies and family papers (1738–1894)
  Sub-Series D: Legal and real estate documents (1739–1865)

Series II: Jay Family Papers (1778–1828)
  Sub-Series A: Letters, John Jay to Peter Jay Munro (1783–1818)
  Sub-Series B: Letters, Peter Jay Munro to John Jay (1783–1812)
  Sub-Series C: Letters, John Quincy Adams to Peter Jay Munro (1783–1784)
  Sub-Series D: Letters, Peter Jay Munro to Peter Augustus Jay (1794)
  Sub-Series E: Letters, Peter Augustus Jay to Peter Jay Munro (1794–1809)
  Sub-Series F: Other Correspondence; Wills; Real Estate Documents (1778–1828)

Series III: Floyd Family Papers (1679–1777)
  Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1726–1844, bulk 1726–1777)
  Sub-Series B: Financial and legal documents (1687–1813, bulk 1687–1768)
  Sub-Series C: Military documents (1756–1765)
  Sub-Series D: Real estate documents (1679–1763, bulk 1679–1697)

Series IV: Jones Family Papers (1755–1838)
  Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1760–1838)
  Sub-Series B: Financial and legal documents (1755–1904, bulk 1755–1812)
  Sub-Series C: Journals (circa 1790)
Sub-Series D: Real estate documents (1779–1806)

Series V: Associated Families (1660s–circa 1876)
- Sub-Series A: Allaire Family (1753–1824, bulk 1753–1807)
- Sub-Series B: Jackson Family (1794–1828)
- Sub-Series C: Palmer Family (1701–1800)
- Sub-Series D: Other papers (1660s–circa 1876)

Series and Sub-Series Descriptions

Series I: De Lancey Family Papers (1738–1900)
This correspondence-heavy series dates primarily from the mid-1700s and reflects a broad range of De Lancey family-related topics, including finances, intra-familial relationships, and the family’s real estate dealings in Westchester County and upstate New York. The series illuminates both the public and private concerns of wealthy Loyalists during and immediately after the Revolutionary War.

Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1753–1900)
This sub-series consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence written or collected by De Lancey family members. Much of the subject matter revolves around family members’ travel to and from the United States, including decisions regarding where to reside postwar—letters are postmarked Montserrat, Jamaica, and many locations in England, among others. The family’s financial concerns and debts to each other are frequent topics, as are requests for advice and guidance, discussions of genealogy, and general declarations of affection and concern. Notable letters include several official dispatches from Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey written in his capacity as a British officer, letters between brothers John and James De Lancey discussing their disillusionment with the British Army, and several pieces of correspondence regarding postwar compensation from the British government. Letters between John and John Peter De Lancey focus on John Peter’s resettlement in Westchester and John’s military career. The sub-series also contains dramatic correspondence regarding the early death of Josephine De Lancey, Edward’s wife, in 1865, and the death of John Loudon McAdam.

Sub-Series B: Financial and business documents (1767–1839)
Account ledgers, receipts and bills, and lists of expenses comprise this sub-series. Most are between and among the De Lancey family members, but several other prominent New Yorkers appear here as well, including Samuel Jones and Thomas Jones. Influential politician John Watts (1749–1836), grandson of Etienne De Lancey, also appears.

Sub-Series C: Genealogies and family papers (1738–1894)
This sub-series includes family trees, personal journals, accounts of family history, notes of death and marriage, and other objects related to family matters. Of specific note are James
Fenimore Cooper’s accounts of De Lancey family history and a several-hundred-page-long copy of Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey’s wartime military orders dated 1777 to 1778. The sub-series also includes an 1848 book of newspaper clippings debating Oliver’s potential part in Whig General Nathaniel Woodhull’s violent death by his own sword in captivity, with letters to the editor written by James Fenimore Cooper, historian Lorenzo Sabine, and Bishop Henry Onderdonk.

Sub-Series D: Legal and real estate documents (1739–1865)
Material in this sub-series includes De Lancey family wills and other legal documents regarding estates. Four related documents that hold particular historical significance concern the property of James De Lancey (1732–1800), who as a Loyalist was attainted, his lands confiscated, under the 1779 Act of Attainder. These 1785–1791 documents, two of which were signed by Isaac Stoutenburgh and Philip van Cortlandt, Commissioners of Forfeitures for the Southern District of the State of New York, tell the story of the seizure and eventual sale of De Lancey’s substantial Westchester County landholdings, the proceeds from which were sent to the New York State Treasury.

Also of note is an 1800 legal decision regarding John Peter De Lancey’s right to vote, which had been contested in light of his Loyalist views during the war. The deciding judge, Peter Jay Munro (a relative of De Lancey’s by marriage), granted him the right to vote, basing the decision on the concept that this right rested upon the question of whether De Lancey should be considered an American citizen or a British subject. Because De Lancey was a landholder, Judge Munro ruled that he was de-facto an American citizen and granted him the right to vote.

Series II: Jay Family Papers (1778–1828)
This series consists almost entirely of correspondence and lays bare the close relationships among three Jay family members: founding father John Jay, his son Peter Augustus Jay, and his nephew Peter Jay Munro, who is the maternal grandfather of Edward Floyd De Lancey. Because of this De Lancey family connection, correspondence between John and his nephew is especially well-represented here. John Quincy Adams’s letters to Peter Jay Munro, in sub-series C, provide an entertaining and absorbing depiction of a teenage year in the life of the son of founding father John Adams.

Sub-Series A: Letters, John Jay to Peter Jay Munro (1783–1818)
In these letters, Jay attends to family affairs and his own personal finances and gives his nephew advice on a number of subjects. Early letters (1783–1785), written from Bath, London, and New York when Munro is in his teenage years, contain stern guidance on writing, spelling, and comportment; in one, written after Munro had penned and sent Jay a poem, Jay exhorts his nephew not to take up poetry as a profession. Reference is made at several points to correspondence between Munro and John Adams. Later letters (1789–1804), written from Albany and Bedford, NY, include discussions about family members,
finances, and real estate; in several of these Jay reflects on current events and politics and solicits Munro’s opinion, while remaining circumspect about the identities of whom he speaks. By then Munro had become a lawyer and set up a Manhattan law practice with Jay’s son Peter Augustus; Munro appears to have managed many of Jay’s financial and business affairs in New York City until this duty was transferred to Peter Augustus in 1809. Letters closer to the end of Jay’s life (1805–1818), all written from his retirement in Bedford, NY, are almost entirely real estate–related, with brief mentions of family members’ health.

Sub-Series B: Letters, Peter Jay Munro to John Jay (1783–1812)
The earliest letters in this sub-series are short updates to John Jay, who was traveling in England at the time, from Munro, then temporarily residing in Chaillot, France. Topics include family members’ travels and health, the latter of which was threatened by influenza and smallpox. Later correspondence in the sub-series is signed from New York and concerns Jay’s financial and business affairs, which Munro was managing at the time. In a 1792 letter, Munro and Jay discuss the viability of Jay’s Federalist Party run for governor of New York; Jay eventually lost by 132 votes to Democratic-Republican candidate George Clinton. Mentions of Benjamin Franklin and Aaron Burr also appear in this sub-series.

Sub-Series C: Letters, John Quincy Adams to Peter Jay Munro (1783–1784)
These playful and exuberant letters, written when both correspondents were seventeen years old, document a year in the life of a young John Quincy Adams. The letters indicate that the two friends had agreed to inform each other via post the details of their daily lives; much mention is made of their “agreement.” As the letters commence, Adams had just journeyed to London from Paris, where he had acted as secretary to his father John at the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the final treaty of peace with Great Britain. Adams describes immersing himself in London’s cultural offerings, including frequent outings to theatrical productions, bookstores, museums, and other tourist destinations; he also listened in on political debates in the House of Peers. His sense of humor is evident in the prose; he several times opens the letters with “Dear Moron,” a play on Munro’s last name, and inserts tongue-in-cheek comments in French. Adams also frequently sends news of Munro’s uncle, John Jay. In later letters Adams writes from the Hague, where he had returned to his studies; this correspondence centers around criticism and discussions of literature and poetry, particularly Milton, Alexander Pope, and Greek authors, and is signed “Eugenio.”

Sub-Series D: Letters, Peter Jay Munro to Peter Augustus Jay (1794)
These three pieces of correspondence focus on family matters and general discussions of the law.

Sub-Series E: Letters, Peter Augustus Jay to Peter Jay Munro (1794–1809)
The earliest letters in this sub-series are written from London, to which Peter Jay, eighteen years old at the time, had traveled with his father John to act as his private secretary during the 1794 Jay’s Treaty negotiations. Topics include updates on items (shoes, ale, parchment,
books) requested from Munro in New York, and the status of the military campaigns of the French Revolutionary Wars. A November 1794 letter indicates that Jay had been attending the trial for treason of radical British reformer John Horne Tooke. Later letters in the sub-series describe travels in Italy, France, and Bermuda and include continued discussions of political goings-on at home in New York. Notable is a copy of an 1807 exchange between Jay and Cadwallader D. Colden regarding a dispute over legal fees and payments. At the time Colden was attorney general of the First District of New York, which encompassed Suffolk, Queens, Kings, Richmond, Westchester, and New York counties.

Sub-Series F: Other Correspondence: Wills; Real Estate Documents (1778–1828)
This sub-series contains the wills of Peter Jay (1704–1783), John Jay’s father, and Peter Jay (1734–1818), John Jay’s brother. Materials also include Jay/Munro family real estate documents and several pieces of correspondence, including an exchange between John Jay and John Slidell, his neighbor, regarding structures on their properties. Two condolence notes, written by Peter Augustus Jay and William Jay and sent on the occasion of John Peter De Lancey’s 1828 death, also appear in the sub-series.

Series III: Floyd Family Papers (1679–1777)
Material in this series revolves around the Floyd family of Suffolk County, Long Island, and is practical rather than personal in nature. Four generations of Floyds, all named Richard and all British colonels, are represented in the collection. Many of the objects pertain to the family’s real estate and financial dealings in and around Suffolk County. Of particular note in this series is a formal oversize deed dated 1687 that conveys a parcel of land on the south side of Long Island from Native peoples to first-generation immigrant Colonel Richard Floyd. The document is signed by Tobacu the Sachem, elder of the Unkechaug tribe of Long Island, and several other Native men, using signature marks and red wax seals.

Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1726–1844, bulk 1726–1777)
The correspondence in this sub-series focuses primarily on matters of real estate, excepting one 1777 letter, written by New York Governor William Tryon to Colonel Richard Floyd. In it Tryon, on behalf of King George, expresses gratitude toward those Americans who have remained loyal to the crown during the Revolutionary War and requests that they donate funds to support the troops.

Sub-Series B: Financial and legal documents (1687–1813, bulk 1687–1768)
This sub-series consists of receipts, wills, statements of power of attorney, and several other legal documents pertaining to the Floyd family’s estate.

Sub-Series C: Military documents (1756–1765)
Military documents in this sub-series include a roll of the names of the soldiers in the Suffolk County militia, as recorded by Colonel Richard Floyd in 1756, and two orders given to Floyd by James De Lancey regarding military readiness.

Sub-Series D: Real estate documents (1679–1763, bulk 1679–1697)
The early real estate documents in this sub-series, dated 1679–1697, concern the first two American generations of Richard Floyds. Lands under consideration include parcels on Long Island, such as Little Neck, in Queens, and Pattersquash Neck in Mastic, Brookhaven. Of particular note in this sub-series is a formal oversize deed dated 1687 that conveys a parcel of land on the south side of Long Island from Native peoples to first-generation immigrant Colonel Richard Floyd (ca. 1620–1700). The document is signed by Tobacus the Sachem, elder of the Unkechaug tribe of Long Island, and several other Native men, using signature marks and red wax seals.

Series IV: Jones Family Papers (1755–1838)
Material in this series reveals the difficult and dramatic choices the Jones family was required to make during the Revolutionary War. Correspondence describes in detail the attempts family members made to retain and/or reclaim not only their Long Island land and property but their right to reside in America as well. It also makes reference to rifts within the Jones family on such matters. In addition, the materials concern the family’s entanglements over debts, documenting their attempts, as Loyalists, to receive compensation under Jay’s Treaty of 1794.

Sub-Series A: Correspondence (1760–1838)
The majority of the correspondence in this sub-series is between William Jones and his son, Samuel, and Judge Thomas Jones and his sister, Arabella Floyd-Jones. In the latter letters, dated 1782 to 1786, Judge Jones refers frequently and with great sentiment to his hopes for a repeal of the 1779 Act of Attainder, which would allow his return to America, and instructs Arabella on how to manage his affairs stateside. A repeal never occurred, however, and Jones remained in exile in England until his death; included here are some of the last letters he ever wrote. William Jones’s letters to Samuel, his son, are personal in nature and concern family health and relationships.

Sub-Series B: Financial and legal documents (1755–1904, bulk 1755–1812)
This sub-series consists of checks, wills, and other legal documents relating to the Jones family. Of note are two documents regarding postwar Loyalist claims, one of which lists amounts awarded them.

Sub-Series C: Journals (circa 1790)
This sub-series comprises three of Thomas Jones’s journals. More an account of Jones’s curiosities than a chronicle of his life, the volumes are a compilation of poems, epitaphs, anecdotes, and short histories.
Sub-Series D: Real estate documents (1779–1806)
These materials consist of inventories and descriptions of Jones family real estate holdings; a map of Thomas Jones’s Long Island house and an estimate of war damages to James De Lancey’s estate. The sub-series also includes an 1806 British document addressing the case of the debts of Anne De Lancey Jones as it pertains to Jay’s Treaty of 1794.

Series V: Associated Families (1660s–circa 1876)
The majority of the objects in the Associated Families series, which includes the Allaire, Jackson, and Palmer families, are formal oversize documents pertaining to real estate transactions in Westchester County. Many are focused in and around Mamaroneck. Wills, a map, and bond documents are also included. No direct familial relationship appears to have existed between the Allaire, Jackson, and Palmer families and Edward Floyd De Lancey, but the Westchester County location of the transactions connects the families geographically, and the sub-series reveals that some De Lancey extended family members acted as legal counsel and/or representatives for the transactions, in addition to other legal capacities. Caleb Heathcote, for example, ancestor of Edward De Lancey’s father William Heathcote De Lancey, is mentioned in Samuel Palmer’s will as an executor, and Peter Jay Munro, maternal grandfather of Edward Floyd De Lancey and nephew of John Jay, executed several of the Mamaroneck property sales and transfers.

Language of Materials
The materials are in English.

Access and Use
The Museum of the City of New York collections must be examined on site. Appointments to examine materials must be made in advance by contacting the Archivist through e-mail at research@mcny.org.

Collection use is subject to all copyright laws. Permission to publish materials must be obtained in writing from the Rights and Reproductions Office at the Museum of the City of New York. For more information please contact:
Rights and Reproductions office
Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10029
Telephone: 212-534-1672, ext. 3375
Fax: 917-492-3960
rightsandrepro@mcny.org
Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

[Title, date]. Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers (circa 1660–1904), Museum of the City of New York. [Accession #].

Custodial History

The collection was assembled in the nineteenth century by Edward Floyd De Lancey. According to a New York Times article dated September 20, 1942, the papers stayed in the De Lancey family’s possession after Edward’s death in 1905. The Museum purchased the collection in 1942 through the Mrs. Elon Huntington Hooker Acquisitions Fund, and since then it has remained in the Museum’s care. Some 200 of the 715 objects, relating primarily to real estate and finance/business, were dispersed at some point among the Museum’s thematic artificial collections; these were reunited with the original collection prior to processing (see Processing Information).

Acquisition Information

The collection was purchased through the Mrs. Elon Huntington Hooker Acquisitions Fund in 1942. No other acquisition documentation exists.

Processing Information

The processing of the Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers was made possible by the generous support of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation. The collection was processed and finding aid created by Mary LaMotte Silverstein between January and June of 2018. Emily Chapin, Collections Access Archivist, oversaw the process. The collection was not documented thoroughly at the time of accession, and the majority of the objects were never catalogued. No inventory was created and the original order is unknown. In 2010–2011, support from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation allowed the Museum to identify, as part of an assessment project, that the collection had been dispersed by family; some 200 objects, relating primarily to real estate and finance/business, had also been integrated into the Museum’s thematic artificial collections. All of these materials were identified by accession number and reunited with the original collection, which was then processed as a single, coherent collection. Some rehousing was necessary, but most of the documents and objects are in good condition.

Related Material

Museum of the City of New York
The Museum holds another collection (accession number run 40.190), gifted by Beverley R. Robinson in 1940, containing many documents closely related to the Edward Floyd De Lancey Collection of Family Papers. Numerous De Lancey family members, including Chief Justice James, Brigadier General Oliver, and John, appear in this collection, as do the Heathcote, Munro, and Palmer families. We suspect that these two collections were part of a whole that at some point was separated.

Collections in Other Repositories

Columbia University Libraries, Rare Book and Manuscript Library
John Jay Papers, 1668–ca. 1862 (69 boxes)
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_4078947/

Papers of John Jay Image Database
https://dlc.library.columbia.edu/jay

New-York Historical Society
James De Lancey Papers, 1747-1759 (8 items)
https://library.ny.edu/persistent/lcn/nyu_aleph004146863?institution=NYU&persistent

James De Lancey Family Papers, 1735–1869 (1.5 linear feet)
https://library.ny.edu/persistent/lcn/nyu_aleph001616341?institution=NYU&persistent

Stephen De Lancey Papers, 1712–1775 (9 items)
https://library.ny.edu/persistent/lcn/nyu_aleph004151858?institution=NYU&persistent

Stephen De Lancey and Oliver De Lancey Papers, 1647–1905 (3 boxes)

John Jay Papers (2.5 linear feet)
http://dlib.ny.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/jay/

University of Michigan, William L. Clements Library
Allaire Papers
https://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/clementsmss/umich-wcl-M-4481all?view=text

Access Points

Personal names
Adams, John Quincy, 1767–1848
Barnard, Mordaunt
Bleecker, Leonard, 1755–1844
Cooper, James Fenimore, 1789–1851
Cooper, Susan Fenimore, 1813–1894
De Lancey, Edward F. (Edward Floyd), 1821–1905
De Lancey, James, 1703–1760
De Lancey, James, 1732–1800
De Lancey, Oliver, 1718–1785
De Lancey, Oliver, 1752–1822
De Lancey, William Heathcote, 1797–1865
De Zeng, William Steuben, 1793–1882
Erskine, William, Sir, 1728–1795
Floyd-Jones, Henry
Hamilton, James, 1710-1783
Herbert, Mary Elizabeth Herbert, Baroness, 1822–1911
Jay, John, 1745–1829
Jay, Peter A. (Peter Augustus), 1776–1843
Jones, Cave, 1769–1829
Jones, Samuel, 1734–1819
Jones, Thomas, 1731–1792
Munro, Peter Jay, 1767–1833
Thompson, Benjamin F. (Benjamin Franklin), 1784-1849
Watts, John, 1749–1836

Topical subjects
American loyalists--New York (State)
Great Britain. Army. Provincial Corps. De Lancey’s Volunteers
Judges
Landowners
Military
New York (State)--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
New York (State)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783
New York (State)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--British forces
New York (State)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Social aspects
New York (State)--Politics and government
New York (State)--Politics and government--1775-1865
Real property--New York (State)--New York--19th century
United States--Continental Army--Military life
United States--Foreign relations
United States--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783
United States--Politics and government—1783-1789
United States--Social life and customs
Geographic subjects
Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)
New York County (N.Y.)
Nassau County (N.Y.)
Queens County (N.Y.)
Suffolk County (N.Y.)
Westchester County (N.Y.)

Sources

**Family Trees**

Note: The family trees below highlight those family members represented in the collection; they are not depictions of these families in their entireties.