

INTRODUCTION

WHEN consenting to the private publication some years ago, of a limited edition of *The Livingstons of Callendar and their Principal Cadets*,¹ for presentation only to near relatives and literary friends, I had no idea there would have been an outside demand for a work of this nature, or I might then have been induced to have had a larger edition printed by subscription. As, however, the reprinting of this work would be a very expensive affair, I have been precluded from acceding to the wishes of numerous kind correspondents, who wrote requesting a new edition. But understanding there would be a demand in America for that portion of my book, which treats of the branches settled in New York, I have so far gladly fallen in with their wishes, and the result is the present volume.

For some years past, I have devoted my leisure hours to fresh researches connected with this portion of the family history, and the results of these researches are incorporated in this edition. To save space, and make the book better suited for a larger circle of readers, I have, though with considerable reluctance, eliminated nearly all the explanatory notes, which were a feature of the work as privately printed. These notes I had purposely made very full, as I consider anyone engaged in compiling a family history cannot be too careful in giving chapter and verse for every statement contained therein, otherwise the truth of his conclusions might be left open to doubt.² I must, therefore, refer any of my readers, who may want to test any statement, and where no reference is given in this volume, to my earlier work, copies of which are to be found in the libraries of the New York Historical Society, and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, both in the City of New York, as well as in that of the British Museum in London. This volume, I may add, is not a mere copy of the earlier work, but has been entirely re-written; and while the historical portion

has been added to, wherever possible, by the aid of my later researches, the purely genealogical parts have been much condensed, so as to endeavour to make the history of more interest to the general reader.

It may be of interest to American Livingstons to know that they have preserved the correct form of spelling the family surname, which in Scotland in modern times has been sadly spoilt by the addition of a final “e,” which alters its whole meaning! For the surname of “Livingston” is derived from the name of the Saxon thane, the founder of the family, one Leving or Living, in conjunction with his lands or dwelling place, which in the earliest charters now extant, namely those of the twelfth century, is either written in the monkish Latin of those days “Villa Leving,” or in the vernacular Saxon equivalent “Levings-tun.” Hence the origin of the village of Livingston, in Linlithgowshire, Scotland, and the surname adopted by Leving’s descendants— “de Levinstoun,”— when these came into use about a century later.

The American Livingstons have, however, with some rare exceptions, not been so careful of preserving the family arms intact; for misled by careless information furnished in 1698 to their ancestor Robert, the first lord, or proprietor, of the New York Manor of Livingston, they have borne for over two centuries, a spurious quarter in the place of one of the two Callendar quarters, to which they are legally entitled, according to the laws of heraldry, as cadets of that ancient and noble House. Surely it ought to be a matter of justifiable pride to members of this family on the other side of the Atlantic, that their right to bear the quartered arms of Livingston and Callendar, which date back to the middle of the fourteenth century, and have figured honourably in the history of Scotland, is so unquestionable!

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Notes

1. Issued in five parts between the years 1887–1892. A sixth, containing the Addenda, Errata, etc., still remains to be printed. This edition was limited to seventy-five sets.
2. At the end of this volume will be found a list of the authorities, manuscript and printed, made use of in writing this portion of the family history; but wherever I have quoted from *any other author*, his or her name is always given, either in the text or in a footnote; otherwise the authorities are all original, such as family charters, deeds, memoirs, journals, letters, public papers, correspondence, Journals of Legislative Council, Assembly, Provincial Congresses, Conventions, Continental Congress, and other public documents. I have, however, when making use of *new material*, given the references, as these will not be found in my earlier work.