

CHAPTER 11: GHOSTS

Hamilton desired a large family. Over the course of 20 years he and Eliza had eight children. Needless to say Eliza was constantly consumed with being pregnant or raising children and it is suggested this may have contributed to Hamilton's later womanizing. SMH.

Their first daughter was named after Angelica and the fourth and favorite child of Ham's was named after his estranged father, James.

After the birth of their third child, Alexander, the Hamiltons graciously took in an orphaned child as well. The daughter of Colonel Edward Antill, a King's College grad and Revolutionary War veteran. His wife died in 1785 and he was grief stricken. They had six children which he now was left with. Two years later he had a breakdown and his two year old daughter Fanny was taken in by the Hamiltons. Edward died two years later so Fanny stayed with the Hamiltons until she was 12 and went off to live with a married sister.

So now Eliza has married an orphan, adopted another, and eventually co-founded an orphanage as well. *snaps*

The Hamiltons lived a fairly comfortable life, though records do show several loads from friends at the time as well. They must have been great company though as they were frequent guests at dinner parties and at the top of the list of invitees.

Eliza was very crafty and skilled despite being a society woman. She made bags, pot holders, designed patterns for furniture and made clothing for the children.

At this time Angelica is living an ocean away with John Barker Church. Both Ham and Eliza hated that she was not close by. In fact, Angelica had hoped that one day Ham would come to Europe and succeed Benjamin Franklin as American Minister. And even though Angelica thrived in London and Paris she always held on to a homesickness for Eliza, Ham, and America.

As has previously been stated, Eliza was very spiritual. She was intent on religious instruction for the kids and had the 3 eldest, Phillip, Angelica, and Alexander simultaneously baptized at Trinity Church. Hamilton even rented pew 92 (this is a thing people did??) and offered free legal work for the church.

His children loved him and never had a bad word to say about him. When he came home, he dropped everything and enter their "imaginative world"

More acts of loyalty and kindness:

- Baron Von Steuben had been promised by Congress that he would be paid if the Patriots won the Revolution. When Congress went back on their word Ham took him in and helped him write up petitions. Records also show a good amount of unpaid loans from Ham to the Baron.
- Ralph Earl: a painter who painted many scenes from the Revolution. He arrived back in New York, lost his money, and ended up in a debtors prison. Ham persuaded Eliza to go there and sit for her portrait. Then she influenced other women to do the same. Allowing him to make enough money to pay his debts. This portrait is the one on display at the Museum of the City of New York!

Hamilton seemed to purposely distance himself from his past and from St. Croix altogether. Even his mentor and one of his earliest supporters, pastor Hugh Knox, was feeling neglected. Ham used to find time to write him even during the midst of war but then after the victory he went three years without writing to him. Knox wondered if he had become too rich and proud. Ham responded (finally) saying he had never received the letters Knox is referring to which was all Knox needed to be over the moon happy to have heard from him. And even though it's 100% possible he never received the letters, why would he have gone three years without initiating any of his own? Hmmmm? Ham's ghosting may have been a subconscious need to distance himself from any ties with that period of his life in order to become a new man in America.

The only relationships from his childhood he held on to were his aunt Ann Lytton Venton who had helped bankroll his education at King's College and his best friend (possible brother) Edward Stevens. Ann's awful husband died in 1776 and she married a Scot named George Mitchell who ended up filing for bankruptcy forcing them to flee the Caribbean. They settled in Burlington, NJ but they still struggled greatly. Ham often offered legal and financial aid but he never got over feeling guilty that he could have done more.

Note: He also regretted not writing Knox more before Knox died.

"Have you an ounce of regret?" uhhh a little more than that, yes.

Slavery

- Ham had supported Laurens' efforts to emancipate southern slaves who fought for independence
- In 1775 the Quakers had launched the first anti-slavery society
- Ham's marriage into the Schuyler family created some complications. Phillip Schuyler had up to 27 slaves at his mansion at any given time doing everything from cooking to cleaning to fishing.
- Eliza helped manage them, which is kind of crazy since she opposed it so much. PLUS. There is also some suggestion that Ham and Eliza owned one or two household slaves as well after their marriage. All we have are quotes from letters and the context can go either way. (pg 211)
- Slavery was in no way only happening in the South. It was very common in the North as well but by 1784 Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Connecticut outlawed slavery or passed laws to gradually extinguish it.
- Unfortunately, NYC though was well known for slavery and they still held slave auctions
- Slavery had some influence on Ham's career. The idea that the whole topic should be tabled as a way to help preserve the union meant the Southern plantation economy was basically ruled off limits in political discussions. What did that leave? Ham's Northern financial system. Everyone scrutinized it because it was the only thing to talk about.

FOUNDING FATHER SLAVE BREAKDOWN

- JOHN ADAMS: Didn't own any slaves and thought the idea was foul. BUT he didn't always practice what he preached. As a lawyer he did defend slaves, but as a politician he did nothing to help them. In fact, he opposed plans to emancipate slaves joining the Continental Army, he contested the use of black soldiers at all, AND he opposed a bill in Massachusetts legislature to abolish it. All because he was scared of the South. Sit down, John.
- BEN FRANKLIN: In his early years, he brokered slave sales for himself and others. Later in life admitted that his previous slave owning troubled his conscience and he became President of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. Took him a while but he made it.
- GEORGE WASHINGTON: He owned 100 slaves and treated them very well. He wouldn't break up families. Although, Chernow says he was "a bit of a stickler for reclaiming runaway slaves." YIIIIKES . He didn't feel great about it - but once again, he didn't speak out about it until later in life. He emancipated his slaves in his will and set aside money for the freed slaves and their children.
- THOMAS JEFFERSON: According to Chernow, he understood the hypocrisy of being part of a revolution and also being a slave owner. Kinda hard to do that when you owned 200 slaves AND thought African Americans were innately inferior but okay. (whatadick) He actually endorsed a plan to stop importing slaves and was bummed it never went through. Unlike Washington only freed a small amount. Among them were the brothers of his mistress, Sally (be a lamb) Hemings.

He thought slaves were innately inferior (srslywhatadick). When he was prez he had all these bullshit plans to gradually and kinda but not really abolish slavery - like sending slaves to the West Indies, and ending slavery in the Northwest Territory but giving owners a SUUUUUPER generous sixteen year grace period.

- JAMES MADISON: He was fairly humane to his 120 slaves and though he never publicly defended slavery he also didn't do anything to dismiss it. Madison, like many others, claimed he wasn't able to live without them considering all the work they did for the plantation houses. As my friend Sean would say.... GUR L BYE.

Okay. So there was a peace treaty that ended the Revolution but it also started a whooooole bunch of drama. Article 7 says the British were banned from "carrying away any negroes or other property" after the war.

- Slave owners thought this meant British had to return slaves back to them and the British thought the slaves were considered free because they crossed British lines. I THINK IT'S BANANAS TO TALK ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE PROPERTY.
 - Anddddd so did Ham. He refused to defend the slaveowners. If there was something that stripped people of their personal freedom, Ham was not having it. Which is interesting, because when it came to business Hamilton was alllllll about contracts and stuff. But not with this and that's awesome.

By 1785, the New York Manumission Society started up. Yes, as in - A bunch of revolutionary manumission abolitionists. It began campaigning against slavery with letters and essays. What was WEIRD THOUGHHHHH was that John Jay was the chairman and he owned five slaves. YOU GUYS.

- Started a registry to prevent African Americans from being tracked down and forced back into slavery. They also set up the African Free School.
- Aaron Burr agreed to help. He proposed a bill stating that all black people born after a certain date would be free. And! That slavery would end completely after a certain date.
- Buuuuuuuuuut Burr himself had 4 or 5 household slaves soooo. He wrote of them affectionately but as he got deeper into Jefferson's camp he thought it was a good move to not make any mention of being an abolitionist. INSERT EYE ROLL EMOJI.
- Here's what Burr DID back: an amendment enacted a TOTALLY voluntarily - basically a suggestion - that if you wanted to, you could free slaves between the ages of 21 and 50. But what? Kids and the elderly should stay? WHAT IN THE ACTUAL F.

The fact that so many people speaking out against slavery - ya know - actually owned slaves... uh yeah that was kind of awkward for the New York Manumission Society. So they had to have a meeting to figure out what these slave owners were going to do.

Hamilton proposed a plan: slaves under 28 years old will be freed on their 35th birthday. Those under 28 should be freed in 7 years from now. And any slave over 45 should be freed right now. Again - what about the younger slaves?!?! ALSO: you had to emancipate them, not sell them because things might be a lot worse for them in a place other than NYC.

The timetable complicated things and everyone had something to say about it. So Hamilton goes back to his roots and backs a pamphlet. It's called "A Dialogue on the Slavery of Africans, etc" and it goes off on how terrible it is. It calls for the complete and total abolition of slavery ASAP.

It still didn't happen for a while but it's good to know that Ham was on the right side of history... even though he kinda owned slaves. BLEH.