

CHAPTER 9: RAGING BILLOWS: Dear Theodosia/Non-Stop

The Battle of Yorktown is now over and Ham is residing at the Schuyler mansion in Albany.

Ham becomes an official citizen of New York State in May 1782 *cue the streamers*

New baby Phillip has arrived and Hamilton is smitten. He writes in a letter to an ex-Washington aide that he is growing "entirely domestic", lost "all pursuits of ambition" and wants nothing more than to be with his wife and son. This will be short lived. He also boasts of Phillip's good looks and features at the ripe age of 7 months. But then also adds "if he has any fault in manners, he laughs too much" (P.167)

Hamilton resumes his legal studies during the war and in order to make up for lost time. Normally the Supreme Court required a 3 year apprenticeship before appearing in court but good ol' Aaron Burr started a petition to waive that rule for any returning veterans who had begun law studies prior to the war. With that Ham qualified for this exemption and was off and running. He chose not to clerk under an already practicing attorney and decided to teach himself (because, of course). In just 6 months he passed the bar and became a fully licensed attorney who could present to the New York State Supreme Court. Guess he didn't have ADD like the rest of us.

At the same time, both Ham and Burr were setting up their practices in order to benefit from the amount of legal work that would be coming to them after the peace. Though they kept meeting and crossing paths, while Ham was a war hero living a luxurious life at the Schuyler mansion, Burr settled for a more modest life, married Theodosia after her British officer husband died and built his legal clientele. Daughter Theodosia was born a year later.

Hamilton begins to advocate for the taxing of imported goods to strengthen America's economy. Clearly this is a touchy subject since, you know, they just fought an entire war based on this very issue. After some persuasion by fellow founding father Robert Morris and being guaranteed a percentage of the money owed and collected, Hamilton agreed to be the official Tax Receiver for New York State. This is a huge step for establishing Hamilton's role as a financial figure.

He ends up traveling to Poughkeepsie to argue for a special committee to expedite tax collection. The legislators were so enamored and taken with Ham that they chose him as one of the five members from New York's delegation to the Continental Congress.

In mid August of 1782, knowing Laurens' sense of patriotism and leadership abilities, Hamilton imagined once the war ended he would embark on a journey with him to lay the foundation for the new nation. He wrote to him (P.172) "Quit your sword my friend, put on the toga, come to Congress. We know each other's sentiments, our views are the same. We have fought side by side to make America free, Let us hand in hand struggle to make her happy."

Sadly, there is no way of knowing if Laurens ever received this powerful request. A letter which turned out to be Hamilton's last in their history of correspondence because in late August of 1782 Laurens was cut down by a British bullet in an ill thought out attempt to ambush them while foraging for rice. Ham not surprisingly, was never the same after Laurens' death :(

Some playing with the timeline in the show's narrative. Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr did serve as defense attorneys on the Levi Weeks case the earliest recorded murder trial in U.S. history, but the trial was in 1800, long after Hamilton wrote the Federalist papers and became Treasury Secretary.

Hamilton and Madison initially were friends and like-minded peers. They shared similar views and served on many committees together. It is interesting that they ended up having such a falling out. People generally loved or loathed Hamilton but Madison is one of the few who fell on both sides.

Chernow describes Madison as "usually dressed in black, had the bookish pallor of a scholar and cut a somber figure" "Seldom did he smile in public" and the wife of one Virginia politician referred to him as "a gloomy stiff creature".

Observation: If hip hop is the best genre to suit Hamilton then Madison needs a goth musical adaptation.

"Raging Billows" is taken from a letter Washington wrote after Congress ratified a peace treaty with Britain. The treaty caused a stir among soldiers who wanted to pocket their money before returning home. The fervor kept on as troops petitioned congress demanding their money. All the fighting forces them to move the capital from Philadelphia to Princeton. (typical Philly fans) Followed by Annapolis, Trenton, and then NYC.

With the war fully over now, Washington gathers all his officers at Fraunces Tavern to say goodbye where there were calls for him to become a king.

At the same time Ham, Eliza, and Phillip rent a house at 57 Wall Street. Just down the block from Aaron Burr & Theodosia at 3 Wall Street.

Also, Hamilton could've bought dirt cheap Manhattan real estate and missed his chance. He bought land upstate instead. Really dropped the financial ball there, Ham.