

CHAPTER 17: THE FIRST TOWN IN AMERICA: Louder than the crack in the bell.

THE MAN IS NON STOP

- After Ham gets his debt plan through, he doesn't stop for a breather or break at all. He remains (all together now) -- NON STOP
- All his letters are career focused, never talked of days off. In a letter to Angelica he told her his "favorite wish" would be to visit Europe one day but not only does he never leave the country, he barely goes further than Albany so who are we kidding here, Ham.

FAT HAMMY! (ala Fat Betty)

- Eliza has to coax him out into the fresh air and get some exercise (take a break!)
- Henry Lee even SENT HIM A HORSE so he could get out and take daily rides
- Word even reached Angelica in England who wrote to Eliza "Colonel Beckwith tells me that our dear Hamilton writes too much and takes no exercise and grows too fat" (Poor Ham. Everyone gossiping about his weight.)
- Too bad Betty Draper/Francis can't take him to Weight Watchers

LOVEABLE HAM

- Most people found Ham to be very personable and agreeable. The few unflattering accounts of him came not surprisingly from Political enemies.
- But he had a wealth of close friends: Gouverneur Morris, Rufus King, Robert Troup, Elias Boudinot etc ...
- Chernow says Ham's own grandson observed that people were "drawn to him by his humorous and almost feminine traits" ...
- He bailed out a friend and physician, James Tillary with a loan
- Recommended his barber to G. Wash's secretary "he desires to have the honor of dealing with the heads and chins of some of your family and I give him this line ...to make him known to you" (P. 335)

ELIZA

- Always the social presence. She was always at Martha Washington's tea parties
- Eliza admired Martha's style of entertaining so much that one of her few remaining personal effects is a pair of pink satin slippers Martha left at the Schuyler Mansion which she happily inherited.
- By the time Ham became treasury secretary she had birthed 4 of their 8 children and she spent the majority of her time taking care of them.
- Hamilton pitched it a little bit though, often taking the two oldest boys with him when he was travelling.

HEY ARE KIDS ARE PRETTY GREAT

Not surprisingly, Hamilton has high expectations for his children. He didn't expect them to follow directly in his footsteps but nonetheless encouraged them to be good students and well rounded individuals

- Phillip went off to boarding school in Trenton (where they don't teach you to duel) at age 9 and was joined by Alexander Jr.
- Phillip's teachers wrote to Ham telling him that Phillip had recited a lesson on his first day. Sounds about right. Like father like son.
- Daughter Angelica at age 9 was staying with Papa Schuyler where she began to study French. Ham was very clear with her that it was very important she be polite and well mannered.
- He has Angelica Church seek out the best piano in London and sent it for daughter Angelica (too many double names). Singing duets soon became their favorite past time. DUH! Do you think they'd be down for our RENT/HAM piano party?

©THEHAMILCAST

ALL THE HONORARY DEGREES

- In 1791 Ham was admitted to the American Philosophical Society.
- Despite never having actually graduated college he became a trustee of Columbia College as well as receiving honorary doctorates from Columbia, Dartmouth, Princeton, Harvard and Brown all before the age of 40.
- Meanwhile we're just happy we got out of Fordham in one piece *SHOULDER DANCE*

RELATIONS WITH NATIVE AMERICANS

Hamilton had a large interest in educating Native Americans.

- During the Revolution Papa Schuyler negotiated with the Indian Tribes to guarantee they would remain neutral
- Hamilton supported humane actions towards them
- Real-estate folk wanted to banish them from Western New York but Ham was quick to inform George (be-bop) Clinton it would be detrimental to do so
- Rev. Samuel Kirkland served as a translator and emissary between Ham and the Native Americans. He approached Ham on 1793 to be on the board of trustees for a school update that would educate both white and native American students. At first called Hamilton-Oneida Academy and then eventually in 1812 became Hamilton College

RELOCATING TO PHILLY

With the Residence law having been passed making Philadelphia the temporary capital, all gov't offices had to make their move by early December of that year. Little by little folks started to migrate over.

- Washington was on his way at the end of August
- On September 1st Jefferson & Madison followed - "surely with an Audible sigh of relief" as Chernow puts it. Relax guys. No wonder their streets intersect downtown.
- Abigail Adams put off the journey as long as possible it seems. She didn't go until November and she was NOT PSYCHED to be heading south. She said she would try to enjoy Philadelphia but that "when all is said and done it will not be Broadway" - YAAAAAAAAS ABIGAIL!
- Despite Abigail's reluctance, Philadelphia was in fact a cosmopolitan city. It was larger than New York and Boston and had a bunch of newspapers, bookstores, theatres libraries etc ... (fine)
-

Hamilton gets a two story brick building for the Treasury offices on Third Street between Chestnut & Walnut Streets

- The office may have started small but soon expanded so that it took up the entire block!
- It contained:
 - 8 employees in Ham's office
 - 13 in the comptroller's office
 - 15 in the auditor's office
 - 19 in the registers office
 - 3 in the treasurer's office
 - 14 in the office for settling accounts between states and federal govt
 - 21 in the customs office
 - 122 customs collectors and surveyors scattered about

Naturally, not everyone was in love with this army of employees under Ham's belt.

- The Treasury Dept payroll shot up to 500+ employees
- Meanwhile, Henry Knox in the War Dept had 12 employees and Jefferson had just 6 ...

Around this time Hamilton also wanted a home for his family to move into that was close to work so he could roll out of bed and roll to work. He had amusing expectations for this residence especially by our standards today. He wanted:

- At least 6 rooms
- Good dining and drawing rooms
- Elbow room in the yard
- Oh yea and the cheaper the better
- They ended up with a home on Third and Walnut (no word on the elbow room)

PROTEAN CREATOR OF THE COAST GUARD

We touched on this with Nicole but we get some background here as well. Pre-Revolution, smuggling was a form of patriotic defiance against the British. However now, Hamilton realized it was very important to maintain amicable trade relations with the Brits. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the revenue for the Treasury Dept came from GB. Washington signed a bill setting up this service which later became known as The Coast Guard

- Customs Service took up the bulk of his time during his first year. He wrote more letters about lighthouse construction than anything else - THRILLING
- He created a string of beacons, buoys and lighthouses along the Atlantic.
- Hamilton was very strict with how the boarding of foreign vessels was to be treated and his practices were so well regarded that they were still being used during the 962 Cuban Missile Crisis

Ham's powers reached beyond his employees though. Several of the Treasury Dept employees worked outside the capital and supplied Hamilton with valuable intelligence.

- They provided Hamilton with weekly reports from collectors and he was able to track every ship that passed through American ports
- He insisted on knowing the size, strength and construction of the ships
- One of Jefferson's allies, John Beckley hated this and referred to it as an "organized system of espionage through the medium of revenue officers"

IMAGINE WHAT GON HAPPEN WHEN YOU TRY TO TAX OUR WHISKEY

By late 1790, Ham had actually amassed a sizeable gov't surplus. BUT now that we had assumed state's debts, there was a need for a "second income".

As we already know though, Americans and taxes ... not so much. He knew he couldn't tax people or land directly so that left ... Whiskey and other domestic spirits

POSITIVES:

- Ham knew people would HATE this. Especially in rural areas where moonshine was all the rage
- He had hoped it would be more favorable to farmers than a land tax though
- Madison actually AGREED with the tax because he too realized there was no other realistic alternative. He also thought it would increase sobriety and prevent disease and untimely deaths

NEGATIVES:

- A possible precursor to the Whiskey Rebellion a few years later. The Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a motion protesting the tax
- William Maclay saw Ham as an evil arm of congress and stated that “war and bloodshed are the most likely consequence of all this”

Inspectors were granted a large amount of power when it came to checking up on people.

- They were allowed to enter homes at any hour to confiscate hidden spirits
- Dealers of spirits no matter how large or small their operation had to have proper certificates and maintain meticulous records
- Ham wanted inspectors to visit distilleries TWICE A DAY and file corresponding reports

Talk of a revolt did not take long to start brewing in Western Pennsylvania. As soon as the tax took effect the locals began to threaten the inspectors. The local discontent with the liquor tax soon seeped into critiquing any and all of Ham's policies.

Even as Ham caught wind of the unrest over the tax he didn't loosen up his enforcement at all. He felt obligated to stand by necessary policies no matter how unpopular they may be. Chernow leaves us with the cliffhanger of how we're nowhere near finished with Hamilton's litany of controversial policies ... DUN DUN DUN