

**THE BURR-HAMILTON
DUEL: WITH
THE COMPLIMENTS
OF HAMILTON BANK**

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The Burr-Hamilton Duel: With the compliments of Hamilton Bank by Irving C. Gaylord

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IRVING C. GAYLORD

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DUEL: WITH
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MILTON
RANGE
NT AVENUE
41ST STREET
Y RESIDENCE
of
Alexander Hamilton
1804

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THE BURR-HAMILTON DUEL

COMPLIMENTS OF
HAMILTON BANK
75 WEST 125TH STREET OF NEW YORK CITY

7381.9

U. S. 4662, 28

AUG 21 1890

* Mr. Wm. Fowler
N. Y. City

THE DUEL between AARON BURR, third of the Vice-Presidents of the United States, and ALEXANDER HAMILTON, first Secretary of the Treasury, which took place at Weehawken, New Jersey, July 11th, 1804, is doubtless the most famous affair of its kind in the history of our country; and its unfortunate termination did more than everything else to abolish the practice of dueling in the North.

In the belief that a contemporaneous account of the event, and of some of the circumstances relating to it, will be of particular interest to residents in the northern part of New York City, where ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S country house, "HAMILTON GRANGE," still stands; the following compilation is presented with the compliments of

HAMILTON BANK
OF NEW YORK CITY.

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THE CORRESPONDENCE.

[*New York Herald*, July 18th, 1804.]

LETTER NO. 1.

[BURR TO HAMILTON.]

NEW YORK, June 18th, 1804.

Sir:—I send for your perusal a letter signed Charles D. Cooper,* which, though apparently published some time ago has but very recently come to my knowledge. Mr. Van Ness, who does me the favor to deliver this, will point out to you that clause of the letter to which I particularly request your attention.

You must perceive, sir, the necessity of a prompt and unqualified acknowledgment or denial of the use of any expression which would warrant the assertions of Dr. Cooper.


I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

A. BURR.

GENERAL HAMILTON.

* See appendix.




LETTER No. 2.

[HAMILTON TO BURR.]

NEW YORK, June 20th, 1804.

Sir.—I have maturely reflected on the subject of your letter of the 18th inst., and the more I have reflected the more I have become convinced that I could not without manifest impropriety make the avowal or disavowal which you seem to think necessary. The clause pointed out by Mr. Van Ness is in these terms: "*I could detail to you a still more despicable opinion which Hamilton has expressed of Mr. Burr.*" To endeavor to discover the meaning of this declaration I was obliged to seek in the antecedent part of this letter for the opinion to which it referred as having been already disclosed. I found it in these words: "*General Hamilton and Judge Kent have declared in substance that they looked upon Mr. Burr to be a dangerous man and one who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government.*"

The language of Doctor Cooper plainly implies that he considered this opinion of



you, which he attributes to me, as a despicable one, but he affirms that I have expressed some other still more despicable, without however mentioning to whom, when or where. 'Tis evident that the phrase "*still more despicable*" admits of infinite shades from very light to very dark. How am I to judge of the degree intended or how shall I annex any precise idea to language so indefinite?

Between gentlemen, despicable and more despicable are not worth the pains of a distinction: when, therefore, you do not interrogate me as to the opinion which is specifically ascribed to me, I must conclude that you view it as within the limits to which the animadversions of political opponents upon each other may justifiably extend, and consequently as not warranting the idea of it which Doctor Cooper appears to entertain. If so, what precise inference could you draw as a guide for your conduct were I to acknowledge that I had expressed an opinion of you still more despicable than the one which is particularized? How could you be sure that even this opinion had exceeded the