

Alexander Hamilton: The West Indian “Founding Father”

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The two hundredth anniversary of the death of Alexander Hamilton has generated renewed interest in the extraordinary life of this Founding Father, who helped define the government and financial structure of the United States of America.¹ Up to the twentieth century, Hamilton’s association with the West Indies was either reduced to a few anecdotes or ignored altogether. Gertrude Atherton, Holger Utke Ramsing, Broadus Mitchell, and Harold Larson pioneered efforts to understand the triumphs and tragedies of Hamilton’s formative years through archival research. In spite of monumental contributions to Hamilton scholarship in the last sixty five years,² we continue to see literature “...in which truth and legend are hopelessly intermingled. Old errors continue to be repeated, and new ones added.”³

Every story has a beginning, and that of Alexander Hamilton starts with his mother. Rachel Faucett (also spelled Faucette or Fawcett), born about 1729 on the British island of Nevis,⁴ is far less understood than her famous son. Rachel’s father, John Faucett, was a physician and planter of French Huguenot ancestry. Her English mother, Mary (born Uppington or Uppingham), was John Faucett’s second wife.⁵ Of the children of Faucett’s two marriages, only Rachel and an older half-sister, Ann, survived early

childhood.⁶ In mid-1745, Mary Faucett and 16-year old Rachel came to St. Croix, the largest of the “Danish Islands in America,” to visit Ann and her planter husband, James Lytton.⁷ The Lytton’s sugar plantation at No. 9 Company’s Quarter⁸ was situated 1-1/2 miles southwest of Christiansted.⁹ Rachel’s unwilling marriage to the older Johan Michael Lavien was quickly “arranged” by her mother, who was apparently motivated by financial if not social prospects. Lavien, a former “merchant in Neevis” and now an aspiring planter on St. Croix, has been estimated to be 12 to 22 years older than Rachel.¹⁰ At the time of their marriage, Lavien owned a 75-acre cotton plantation, No. 12b Company’s Quarter.¹¹ A son, Peter, was born to the couple there in 1746.¹²

The marriage lasted less than five years. The failure of the relationship is in sharp contrast to one modern biographer’s romantic imagery of Lavien “...riding into Christiansted in his carriage with his bride and liveried servants, and on credit buying furniture and luxuries for his house in the expensive shops of the capital.”¹³ Suffice it to say that Christiansted only ten years after its founding would neither have conveyed such amenities nor elegance! The cause of the break-up has been the subject of much speculation: difference in age, incompatibility of temperament, the squandering of Rachel’s inheritance, financial reversals,¹⁴ psychological if not physical abuse, and Rachel’s promiscuity if not infidelity. None of these are provable, although some are more plausible than others. The fact remains that by early 1750, Rachel had left her husband and child. Lavien petitioned the Danish authorities to have his errant wife jailed. He did not accuse her of adultery at this time, but implied that she was flirtatious and had refused to live with him as husband and wife.¹⁵ After several months imprisonment in

Fort Christiansvaern,¹⁶ Lavien had Rachel released, thinking that, "...everything would change for the better and that she, as a wedded wife, [would] change her unholy way of life and as is meet and proper live with him..."¹⁷ It didn't work out that way. It is believed that Rachel subsequently resided for a short time on property belonging to Town Captain (*Stadthauptmand*) Bertram Pieter de Nully, after which she and her mother left St. Croix for St. Kitts in the fall of that same year.¹⁸

The census register (*Mandtalslist*) for 1748 indicates that Lavien sold No. 12b Company's Quarter and purchased half of an adjacent tract, No. 19. After he sold that in 1753, Lavien could no longer be considered a planter in his own right. In 1753-1754 and again in 1758-1759, Lavien worked his slaves on one or more plantations belonging to the brothers Pieter and Johannes Heyliger¹⁹ in King's Quarter. He did the same for Governor-General Christian Lebrecht Baron von Pröck²⁰ in 1757 and 1760 at No. 19a Queen's Quarter, which together with No. 20 King's Quarter would be called "La Reine" (the Queen). These were possibly contracts to clear wooded tracts to facilitate sugar cultivation. The short duration of Lavien's ownership of plantation tracts has been thought to reflect his declining finances. However, between 1748-1760, the various registers consistently record his ownership of sixteen or seventeen slaves, of which ten to eleven were capable adults, and the rest were children under sixteen years of age.²¹ From 1761 until his death on February 28, 1771, Lavien lived in Frederiksted, earning income by renting out his remaining slaves and speculating in town real estate,²² but this evidence may only mask the reality of being "land poor."

Probably on St. Kitts, Rachel--separated but not divorced from Lavien--met and fell in love with a 32-year old Scotsman named James Hamilton,²³ who was working for the mercantile firm of Archibald Ingram in Basseterre, St. Kitts.²⁴ Under the system of primogeniture prevailing in Great Britain, the eldest son inherited virtually everything. Other male siblings may seek an appointment in the government, army, navy, or the church, or (like James) migrate to the colonies to find their fortune.²⁵ Daughters were simply expected to marry well. Rachel and James lived together in a seemingly stable common-law relationship on Nevis for almost 15 years.²⁶ They had two sons: James, born in 1753,²⁷ and Alexander, born on January 11, 1755.²⁸ Unfortunately, very little if any documentation or unaltered physical evidence relating to them survives on St. Kitts or Nevis.²⁹

The question of Rachel's marital status was resolved in 1759 when Johan Michael Lavien filed for divorce in St. Croix's matrimonial court (*Tamperret*). He now accused her of having committed "such mistakes which among married people are indecent and very suspect," and of "whoring with everyone."³⁰ Corroborating witnesses³¹ were never examined during the divorce proceedings. The language of the court's summons to Rachel reflected Lavien's bitterness. Rachel never received the summons because it was delivered to her last two known addresses on St. Croix--nine years earlier!³² In the absence of her response, a divorce was granted to Lavien by Governor-General Baron von Pröck in his capacity as the colony's highest judicial authority. Rachel was adjudged to be guilty, forbidden by Danish law to remarry, and forfeited any current or future claim on Johan Michael Lavien.³³ The divorce decree would not be Lavien's last word on the matter.

As the aggrieved party, no impediment to remarriage was placed on Lavien. Head-tax registers (*Kopskatlister*) provide interesting clues. In 1758 and 1759, we find a woman and boy (presumably Peter Lavien, age 12) enumerated as part of Lavien's "white family." Since Lavien's marriage was still binding at that point, the woman's presence should have had the same negative legal implications as was applied to Rachel, but it did not. No breakdown was given in the register for 1760. The totals remained the same in 1761. Two boys are listed in 1762 and 1763, one of them likely the issue of Lavien's second relationship. The following year, the register tallied two siblings, a boy and now a girl. Eighteen-year old Peter Lavien by that time had probably migrated to South Carolina, where he lived for the rest of his life. Only the girl appeared in the children's subcategory in 1765 and 1766. Neither the woman nor any children were recorded in 1767 and in subsequent years. It can be reasonably assumed that they had died.³⁴

In May, 1765, the Hamiltons traveled from Nevis to Christiansted, capital of the Danish West Indies. James Hamilton was sent with power-of-attorney (*fuldmægt*) to collect a debt on behalf of his employer.³⁵ It marked the beginning of the eight most eventful years of Alexander Hamilton's youth. By the end of July, for reasons now unknown, Rachel and James had gone their separate ways.³⁶ After collecting the debt through the Visitor's Court (*Gæsteret*) in early January, 1766, the senior Hamilton left St. Croix, never to see or support his children again. He returned to Nevis for a while, but may have moved to Tobago before 1771, where a "Mr. Hamilton" was wounded in a slave uprising.³⁷ James Hamilton was certainly present on Bequia, in the Grenadines, in 1774,³⁸ and on St. Vincent in 1793, where his death was recorded six years later.³⁹

At Christiansted, Rachel appears in the combined property ownership registers (*Matrikler*) and head-tax registers for 1765-1768, in the column for “white families” (*Blanke Familier*).⁴⁰ For the first two years, she was listed under her maiden name, Faucett (which the clerk spelled “Fatzieth”). She was subsequently found under her former married name (“Lewine” and “Lewin”), but never as Hamilton!

Rachel supported her family by running a small store selling plantation supplies. Her consumables inventory included “pork, beef, salted fish, rice, flour, and apples,” bought wholesale from her landlord, Thomas Dipnall, and from the import-export firm of David Beekman and Nicholas Cruger.⁴¹ Rachel’s store and residence was located at No. 34 Company Street,⁴² although there was a temporary move to No. 23 on the same street in 1767.⁴³ This move may have been necessary if No. 34 sustained damage in one or more of three tropical storms that affected St. Croix between July 14 and October 7, 1766. The principal structure was typically two story, with the store on the ground floor and the residence above. Unfortunately, neither building dating from Alexander Hamilton’s time has survived.

Nos. 23 and 34 Company Street were located half a block from the Sunday Market, an important economic and cultural venue for the slave population. Accounts contemporary with Hamilton convey a sense of the market’s physical setting and activity familiar to him during his years in Christiansted. “The public markets are held on Sundays only... They are supplied by the slaves, who, having this day to themselves, come in from the plantations with the little articles which they have for sale. There is a small grove in each

town devoted to this object. Under these trees, and generally on the ground, is spread their marketing.” Items for sale included birds and fowl, pigs, goats, tubers, beans, a wide variety of fruit and vegetables, and cassava bread. “One sees the towns swarming with many hundreds of Negroes on Sunday, and when they have sold their wares, they purchase for themselves necessities such as fish, codfish, meat, rum, candles, head scarves, cloth[,],... or other similar items; after which near evening they go home, with singing, merriment, and sometimes a little drunk....”⁴⁴

To help his family financially, eleven year old Alexander Hamilton went to work for Beekman and Cruger in 1766. Local tradition has long placed Cruger’s business at Nos. 56-57 King Street, across from Government House, but this is in error. The origin for this persistent legend likely stemmed from the fact that Cruger did own that property—beginning in 1781, eight years after Hamilton had left the island!⁴⁵ Prior to that, property records locate Cruger at Nos. 7-8 King Street.⁴⁶ The store and adjacent warehouses (which extended up King Cross Street) were eventually replaced by a large masonry town house.⁴⁷

In the 18th century, details of upper class children’s lives were seldom recorded, much less those in the lower strata of society. James and Alexander Hamilton would have spent a good part of their day helping their mother in her store or working elsewhere. Alexander Hamilton’s supposed familiarity with “Grange,” where he “spent happy childhood hours,”⁴⁸ is a fantasy. There was no longer a family connection to that plantation by the time the Hamiltons arrived at St. Croix in 1765: James Lytton had sold

it the previous December, and had rented a residence on Market Street where he lived with his wife and a granddaughter.⁴⁹

Assertions that “the Lyttons ... got [Rachel] readmitted to the Anglican Church despite the divorce, which thus enabled the boys to attend church school...with a mixed group of children who among them spoke English, French, Dutch and Danish, most of whom tried to learn the strange Dutch Creole patois”⁵⁰ should be read with caution. If the authors intended to the local congregation, Rachel could not be readmitted to a parish that was not established until ten years after she had left St. Croix in 1750.

“Readmission” also prompts a consideration of the family’s denominational affiliation in the West Indies. On Nevis, the Established Church—the Church of England—was preeminent. No baptismal or other church records for Rachel Faucett and her sons, James and Alexander, are known to exist there. This is probably due to natural disasters, the French occupation in 1783, or poor archival conditions.⁵¹ In raising their children on that island, there is no indication that Rachel Lavien and James Hamilton were concerned with “religion” beyond the nominal cultural and social conventions of the time.⁵²

St. Croix, on the other hand, was remarkable for its religious diversity.⁵³ Its inhabitants⁵⁴ were able to attend Lutheran, Dutch Reformed, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, or Moravian services.⁵⁵ Relative indifference about religion was apparently not as pervasive as elsewhere. Hans West, rector of the West Indian School Institute at Christiansted (1788-1791), noted that “...one often finds the churches...full of

members.” There was, he said, a “...benevolence toward the needy which many places would not easily equal.”⁵⁶ In the 18th century and beyond, religious identity was in large measure determined by cultural heritage and family tradition. Rachel (and her children by extension) would not have affiliated with some of the denominations at Christiansted for doctrinal reasons or because their services were conducted in languages other than English.⁵⁷

A few biographers⁵⁸ have stated that Alexander Hamilton was, for all practical purposes, Calvinist because of the influence of his Scots Presbyterian father, French Huguenot mother, and Dutch Reformed employer. This premise is not accurate in all respects. With no Presbyterian or French Calvinist congregation on Nevis, it was unlikely that Rachel would have grown up as a practicing Huguenot without the support and encouragement of co-religionists. The affiliation attributed to Hamilton’s Christiansted employers is in error; both were members of the Anglican Church. An association with the Presbyterian church⁵⁹ would have been plausible because of the influence of his Scottish father. The Rev. Hugh Knox,⁶⁰ pastor for that congregation beginning in 1772, did take a genuine interest in Alexander Hamilton’s education and spiritual welfare, and strongly influenced his later views of morality, propriety, and integrity. That congregation’s sole physical presence, at the intersection of Prince Street and Water Gut, was first recorded almost five years after Rachel’s death, and the same year that Alexander left the island!

The other probable choice was the Church of England. St. John’s Anglican Church⁶¹ was

founded in 1760 to minister to the increasing numbers of British subjects on St. Croix. Rachel, James, and Alexander—residing only a very short distance away—would have likely worshipped there, but there is no way to determine frequency. They would have sat on benches provided for the majority of the congregation who did not pay pew-rent. Hans West characterized the parish as “High Church,”⁶² that is to say, very liturgical by Protestant standards. The original wooden “T”-shaped church,⁶³ so familiar to Rachel and her sons, was destroyed in the 1772 hurricane.⁶⁴ By 1780, the cruciform Gothic Revival church that exists today had been completed on the same site.⁶⁵ Individuals closely associated with Alexander Hamilton between 1765-1773—the Lyttons; his employers, David Beekman⁶⁶ and Nicholas Cruger;⁶⁷ Thomas Stevens⁶⁸ and family, especially Edward Stevens⁶⁹--were all prominent parishioners.

Rachel and her two sons lived a trying but relatively stable existence until February 10, 1768, when she and Alexander were likely stricken with yellow fever.⁷⁰ Medical bills later submitted to the probate court help us understand the general progress of the illness. For the first week, Rachel and Alexander were cared for by a white woman, Ann McDonnell.⁷¹ When their conditions failed to improve, Dr. Agedius Heering⁷² was called in on February 17. He performed a bloodletting⁷³ on Rachel and gave her “fever medicine.” The next day, she received an emetic⁷⁴ and more fever medicine; Alexander got “cooling medicine.” On the 19th, Dr. Heering gave Rachel “fever medicine with valerian,”⁷⁵ a “decoction,”⁷⁶ and “alcohol for her head.” For ‘Elicks,’ he ordered a chicken, and administered a “clyster”⁷⁷ and bloodletting. The treatments ultimately proved ineffective for Rachel. She died at 9:00 pm that night, at the age of 38.⁷⁸

Rachel Lavien was buried the following day (20 February) at the Lytton family cemetery at “Grange,” which had been reserved by them when the plantation was sold.⁷⁹ Rachel’s entry in the St. John’s burial register indicates that the service was conducted by “D.O.” Although scholars have long assumed that the officiating minister was the parish’s rector, the Rev. Cecil Wray Goodchild, the initials match those of the parish clerk, Daniel Oxley.⁸⁰ The Burial Office was read from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. There are, however, some discrepancies in the register. Rachel’s age is listed as 32 instead of 38. If this was correct, she would have been born in 1735, married to Lavien at age 10 (talk about child brides), and would have given birth to her first son, Peter, at the age of 11! Her date of burial was recorded as February 26 instead of February 20. Finally, the preceding entry--in the midst of otherwise consecutive listings--was for March 16.⁸¹ Since all entries in the burial register between 1761-1775 were equally spaced and written in the same hand—which changed noticeably in the latter year—the evidence suggests that the existing register is a transcription of the original, which, water-damaged in the 1772 hurricane, would account for the errors .

In 1901, American author Gertrude Atherton discovered that Rachel had been buried at “Grange.” Although traces of the Lytton cemetery had long disappeared,⁸² Atherton paid for a granite monument out of her own funds, and had it erected on the estate in Rachel’s memory. The monument was inscribed with an erroneous birth date of 1736,⁸³ based on Rachel’s age in the burial register.

Because primary source material about Rachel is scarce, most Hamilton biographers have treated her as an enigma. Her physical appearance is unknown, in spite of conjecture by Atherton. Aside from Lavien, who was certainly not reticent expressing his opinions about her character before the matrimonial court, the head-tax lists, probate records, and the church register were non-judgemental. In later life, Alexander Hamilton would describe his mother as a woman of “superior intellect,” “elevated and generous sentiments,” and “unusual elegance of person and manner,”⁸⁴ although one should consider the possibility that this was “gilding the lily” for the sake of posterity. Atherton cast Rachel in the role of a romantic heroine. James Thomas Flexner judged Rachel harshly both as a wife and mother, but cites no evidence to support his contention that she was neglectful of, abusive to, or an immoral influence on her sons.⁸⁵ What can we honestly infer? Rachel was reasonably well educated for a woman in the West Indies, and endeavored to provide the same opportunity to Alexander. She was indisputably a very strong-willed and independent woman--perhaps unusually so even for the *de facto* role and influence of women of the time. If she chose to flaunt certain social and cultural conventions, she at least had the strength of character to live with the consequences.

James and Alexander Hamilton suffered other misfortunes following their mother's death. There was the matter of their small inheritance. According to the Dealing (probate) Court's assessment of her estate, Rachel was a competent businesswoman; it noted that “her bookkeeping was in good order, and [that] she could apparently meet her payments.”⁸⁶ Rachel's modest estate included the usual clothing, furniture, furnishings, a few domestic slaves—and 34 books!⁸⁷ Books in the 18th century were relatively

expensive and published in limited quantities. Even though the titles were not recorded, these books would typically have included works on literature, history and mythology, philosophy, romance languages, mathematics and science. They are worth noting because they hint at the classical foundations of Alexander Hamilton's early education. As Rachel's estate was in probate, Johan Michael Lavien re-entered the picture. Wielding his divorce decree, he insisted that the Hamilton boys had no legal right to any inheritance, being "whore children."⁸⁸ The Dealing Court agreed, and awarded everything to Peter Lavien, by then 22 years of age and living in South Carolina.⁸⁹ When Rachel's effects were auctioned off, the books and a few other items were purchased by her nephew, Peter Lytton,⁹⁰ but we do not know of their further disposition.

Who would now care for the Hamilton boys? The natural father, James Hamilton, had been absent and non-supporting for more than two years. Their maternal aunt, Ann Lytton, had already died, and her husband James Lytton (senior) was busy coping with financial and legal problems caused by some of their children.⁹¹ James and Alexander Hamilton were entrusted to the care of their cousin, Peter Lytton, but this arrangement proved relatively short-lived. Peter Lytton committed suicide 17 months later, despondent over financial reverses.⁹²

James Hamilton was apprenticed to Christiansted carpenter Thomas MacNoben, who resided in Water Gut.⁹³ James' life is otherwise a blank slate. He surfaced briefly in 1783 to ask his now-famous brother for financial assistance.⁹⁴ Alexander Hamilton's reply, dated June 22, 1785, reflected the anguish of years of separation. "The situation

you describe yourself to be in” he wrote, “gives me much pain.... My affection for you...will not permit me to be inattentive to your welfare, and I hope time will prove to you that I feel all the sentiment of a brother.”⁹⁵ He never got the chance. James Hamilton died on St. Croix the next year at age 33. He presumably left a widow, “Madame Anna Hamilton,” in Frederiksted. There is no indication that the couple had children.⁹⁶

Alexander continued to clerk for Cruger. Professor Waldemar Westergaard⁹⁷ astutely observed that “when...Alexander Hamilton was serving his apprenticeship [with]...the firm of Nicholas Cruger..., he was near the economic center of gravity in the New World.” Christiansted was a busy international port, with connections to Europe, West Africa, the circum-Caribbean, and British North America. Imports included necessities and luxuries: building materials, plantation equipment and supplies, livestock, furniture, crystal, porcelain, silver, linens, other household goods, clothing, food and drink. Local exports for the most part consisted of sugar, molasses, rum, cotton, and tropical dye- and hardwoods such as logwood, *lignum vitae*, and furniture-grade mahogany.⁹⁸ The town was also an integral part of the Danish slave trade. Slaves procured primarily in Guinea⁹⁹--now Ghana—were shipped across the Atlantic along the route known as the “Middle Passage.”¹⁰⁰ It has been calculated that eighty five percent of the estimated 60,000 slaves brought to St. Croix between 1747-1803 passed through Christiansted.¹⁰¹ Slave auctions took place either in the compound of the Danish slave trading company at the wharf, or in the yards of private importers such as Nicholas Cruger.¹⁰² As a clerk for Cruger, Alexander Hamilton learned the principles of international trade, foreign

exchange,¹⁰³ and credit.¹⁰⁴ Hamilton would later tell his children that his dealings with ships' captains, customs officials, merchants and planters, as well as his duties in warehousing and retail¹⁰⁵ were "the most useful part of his education."¹⁰⁶

Where did the Hamilton boys live after their mother's death? James and Alexander Hamilton lived with their guardian, Peter Lytton, from February, 1768 until his death in July, 1769. Tallies in the property register for that year hint that they were then taken in by Thomas Stevens and family, who resided was on King Street. Various sources have suggested that James subsequently boarded with Thomas MacNobeney and his wife in Water Gut, but the enumerations in the property registers for 1770-1773 do not confirm this.¹⁰⁷ While a few biographers have stated that Alexander Hamilton roomed above Cruger's store, variances in the annual registers similarly call this claim into question. Most Hamilton scholars subscribe to the premise that he lived with the merchant Thomas Stevens. Speculation about a familial relationship between Stevens and Rachel remain exactly that.¹⁰⁸

Alexander Hamilton and the Stevens' second son, Edward ("Ned") had become the best of friends.¹⁰⁹ On November 11, 1769, Alexander wrote a candid personal letter to Edward, who was then studying at King's College in New York City. Hamilton hinted at his ambition to "exalt his station," condemned the "grov'ling and condition of a Clerk," and recognized that the only chance for his advancement was to leave the island. "I wish," he wrote, "there was a War!"¹¹⁰ Little did he know at the time how prophetic those words would prove to be.

The catalyst for Alexander Hamilton's journey to greatness was the hurricane of August 31, 1772. It was described at the time as "the most dreadful Hurricane known here in the memory of Man."¹¹¹ The center, or "eye," of the storm passed over St. Croix, wreaking frightful destruction. According to the local Royal Danish American Gazette, "All the houses near the shore [were torn] even to the foundations; beams, planks, and stones flew through the air like feathers... The wall around the King's store house, which was above a yard thick, was tumbled down to the ground, and hurled a hundred yards off... [The sea] swelled up to 70 feet above the usual height... in...a rapid manner...At Christiansted 460 houses were thrown down, and all except three at Frederiksted. All the ships...were cast ashore, 50 or 100 yards on the land. The damage at St. Croix is computed at 5,000,000 of dollars."¹¹² Hamilton's own vivid impressions were recorded in a remarkable letter, half descriptive and half philosophical, to his father in Tobago: "Good God! What horror and destruction—its impossible for me to describe—or you to form any idea of it. It seemed as if a total dissolution of nature was taking place. The roaring of the sea and wind—fiery meteors flying about in the air—the prodigious glare of almost perpetual lightning—the crash of the falling houses—and the ear-piercing shrieks of the distressed, were sufficient to strike astonishment into Angels."¹¹³ At Length, Rev. Knox persuaded the reticent Hamilton to have the letter published anonymously in the newspaper."¹¹⁴ It caused a literary sensation!

Alexander Hamilton's exceptional intelligence convinced Hugh Knox to try and further the young man's education. Financial assistance has been attributed to female relatives (which was not possible), popular subscription, and specifically to Nicholas Cruger.¹¹⁵

Knox provided letters of introduction to influential people in New York and New Jersey, and especially to his *alma mater*, the College of New Jersey at Princeton.¹¹⁶ Not long after June 3, 1773, 18-year old Alexander Hamilton left St. Croix for British North America.¹¹⁷ His arrival in New York City coincided with heightened political and economic tensions the British North American colonies on the eve of the Revolution. Hamilton would have his war! The rest is history.

Alexander Hamilton never returned to the islands of his youth. There were more than enough opportunities to keep him occupied in his adopted homeland. Within twelve years of the arrival of this poor, obscure immigrant in British North America, the old political order had changed, and a very different one was taking its place. During that short time, Hamilton's career went from college student to artillery officer, Revolutionary War hero, lawyer, abolitionist, congressman, Constitutional essayist, banker, newspaperman, and the first Secretary of the Treasury.¹¹⁸ His rise to one of the Founding Fathers of the new nation could not be simply explained on the basis of remarkable intelligence, boundless "drive," or coincidence. It was his destiny!

In order for the nation to survive and prosper, Alexander Hamilton envisioned a strong central government, sound monetary policies, and an economy based on manufacturing and commerce. True nationalism would supplant narrow and divisive state or regional interests.¹¹⁹ There were others who espoused a very different vision, and disagreed strenuously. The struggle between the two ideologies was passionate, and at times quite uncivil.

Alexander Hamilton certainly remembered and applied the lessons he had learned on St. Croix. International trade, the need for a standardized currency, and a sound fiscal policy are obvious, while other associations become apparent as his youth is better understood. Take, for example, Hamilton's career as a lawyer. His thoroughness of preparation and presentation was so remarkable that Chief Justice of the United States John Marshall would compare his intellect to Hamilton's "...like a candle `beside the sun at noonday.'"¹²⁰ The impetus for Hamilton's unwavering support of justice based on equitable laws was in part provided by the experiences of his mother at the hands of the Danish West Indian matrimonial court, and of his brother and himself in the probate court. And then there was the issue of slavery.

Among the Founding Fathers, Hamilton viewed slavery from a unique socio-economic (orphaned and relatively impoverished) and geographic (West Indian) perspective. As a young man, he had observed first-hand the conditions on slave ships and at auctions;¹²¹ understood the contributions of the black populations—slave and free--to the urban and rural economies;¹²² and witnessed the harsh punishments imposed to maintain the established order.¹²³ One should not expect an automatic sense of outrage in the 18th century, given society's general conditioning about the "peculiar institution." For Alexander Hamilton, moral perspective was achieved through Rev. Knox's influence. Hamilton became an outspoken opponent of slavery both as a moral issue and on legal grounds.¹²⁴

In a similar vein, Alexander Hamilton was also counted among the few officers who advocated a meaningful role for blacks in the military. During the Revolutionary War, the Patriot side was chronically short of many things. In 1779, as the British took the war into the South, Colonel John Laurens proposed raising several battalions of slaves to fight for the cause of American Independence in exchange for their freedom upon its successful conclusion. Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, George Washington's *aide-de-camp*, vigorously supported the plan. Not surprisingly, the proposal met with strong opposition by vested interests, and was never approved.¹²⁵ Hamilton was probably reminded of the example of the Free Negro Company (*Frineger Compagnie*) at Christiansted, which had been established in the 1760s.¹²⁶ Enrollment was mandatory for all able-bodied free black males between the age of 16 and 60, but the company itself was made up of 50-60 of the best men.¹²⁷ A Free Negro Captain was appointed from their ranks. Officers were specifically required to belong to either the Lutheran or Dutch Reformed Church, but all ranks had had to "have religion" (that is to say, be baptized), possess a trade, and take an oath of loyalty to the Danish Crown.¹²⁸ The company's responsibility was to patrol the streets of the town on Sundays and holidays to "forestall disorder,"¹²⁹ as well as hunt *maroons*—runaway slaves.¹³⁰ The Christiansted experience was rather unusual for its time. Few slave-owning societies trusted blacks to be trained and armed.

Hamilton's philosophies, political influence,¹³¹ personality traits--ambitious, forthright, opinionated, and uncompromisingly tenacious¹³²—and even the rare moral lapse in his persona life¹³³ gave rise to controversy. Opposition to his agendas

often manifested itself as character assassination, as well as political espionage and sabotage. Hamilton was derided as a “foreigner” (a curious concept, since all the Founding Fathers had been British subjects, regardless of whether they were born in North America or in the West Indies) with questionable loyalty to the new nation and to principles of democracy and “Republican” government.¹³⁴ John Adams, who came to regard Alexander Hamilton as his “Arch Enemy,”¹³⁵ considered him “another [Napoleon] Bonaparte...born on a Speck more obscure than Corsica, from an Original not only contemptible but infamous...”¹³⁶ Adams would also describe Hamilton as “the bastard brat of a Scotch Pedlar”¹³⁷ and a “little man.”¹³⁸ Thomas Jefferson, patrician theoretician of the Revolution, sneered that Hamilton was “a man whose history, *from the moment at which history can stoop to notice him*, is a tissue of machinations against the liberty of the country”¹³⁹ [emphasis added]. They all, in their own way, wished that Hamilton would return from whence he came. Hamilton, all too familiar with such pettiness and jealousy from his West Indian days, knew how to respond in kind.

During his life, and for decades after his death, Alexander Hamilton’s political and philosophical adversaries disparaged his integrity and labored to dismantle what he had achieved.¹⁴⁰ The effect was so profound that even today Alexander Hamilton is among the least honored of the Founding Fathers of the first rank. More politically detached, some European leaders regarded Hamilton rather differently. Charles Maurice Talleyrand-Perigord,¹⁴¹ the eminent French statesman and diplomat who served Louis XVI, Napoleon Bonaparte and Louis XVIII (but himself best of all), would write at the close of his life, “I consider Napoleon, Fox,¹⁴² and Hamilton the three greatest men of our

time, and if I were to chose between the three, I would give first place to Hamilton. He foretold Europe.”¹⁴³

Another “colonial,” from a different time and place, provided a fitting summation of Alexander Hamilton’s star-crossed life when he wrote, “What lies ahead of you and what lies behind you is nothing compared to what lies within you...”¹⁴⁴—Mohandas Gandhi.

NOTES

- 1 Crossen (2004).
- 2 Atherton (1902), Ramsing (1939), Mitchell (1951), and Larson (1952). Ramsing, rarely cited because he wrote in Danish, referenced many valuable archival sources found only in the State Archives (*Rigsarkiv*), Copenhagen. An excellent English translation of Ramsing by Solvejg Vahl (1951) can be found in the New York Public Library, but there are infrequent and minor inaccuracies in translation. The compilation of Hamilton's papers by Syrett (1961-1987) and selections of the same by Freeman (2001) include all of his known correspondence from or about St. Croix and his parents' lineages. These provide rare glimpses into Hamilton's developing personality.
- 3 Larson (1952:139). Alexander Hamilton himself, in a letter to William Jackson dated August 26, 1800, contributed to the confusion. He prefaced an account of his family by stating, "...I am pained by the consciousness that it [his birth] is not free from blemish." He then describes Lavien as "a Dane, a fortune hunter," who courted Rachel on Nevis. The marriage between Rachel and Lavien was "unhappy and ended in a separation by divorce." As far as he was concerned, "...a marriage between them [Hamilton's parents] ensued, followed by many years of cohabitation and *several* [emphasis added] children," but in the end the divorce proved "qualified, and thence the second marriage was not lawful" (Freeman 2001:930-931). In another account, Hamilton concluded the saga of his parents thus: "...my father's affairs at a very early day went to wreck....This occasioned a separation between him and me when I was very young..." (Freeman 2001:880). Errors in popular literature (e.g., newspapers, tourism pamphlets) often result from a naïve dependence on secondary and tertiary sources and hearsay. There has certainly been no end to speculation. Alexander Hamilton's paternity has been attributed to George Washington on his trip to Barbados in 1751 (Flexner 1978:19) or to Ernst Frederik von Walterstorff, Governor-General of the Danish West Indies 1794-1796 (Ramsing 1939:270; Larsen 1940:118). The question of racial identity has been around for decades. Bobbé (1955:5) noted a "fable throughout the Caribbean isles" of Hamilton's "quarter colored blood" through his maternal grandmother, with an editorial in the St. Croix Avis (1982) and Davis (2004) becoming progressively more fictional. Other aspects of Hamilton's early life have been equally distorted. Newman (1918:6) stated that Hamilton's mother had died while he was an infant, and that he was sent to live with an aunt on St. Croix, arriving at Frederiksted. Carson (n.d.:1; Zabriskie 1918:47) located Nicholas Cruger's business on "...Bay [Strand] Street, fronting the roadstead...[where] Alexander Hamilton...had worked as a clerk..."
- 4 Ramsing 1939:248.
- 5 Ramsing 1939:226; Larson 1952:141; Flexner 1978:8-9.
- 6 Ramsing 1939:227; Flexner (*loc cit.*).
- 7 Mother and daughter's visit to St. Croix coincided with the baptism of one of the Lytton's children (Ramsing 1939:230). John Faucett had already died, leaving all his property (including slaves) to his daughter Rachel. Given Mary Faucett's legal separation from her husband in 1741 (Randall 2003:12), it is curious that he left her to administer Rachel's inheritance!
- 8 This plantation, consisting of 150 Danish acres (Hatchett 1859:25), was later named "Grange" (McGuire 1925:85). St. Croix maps by von Jægersberg/ Cronenberg (1750), Beck (1754), Zöllner (1760), Küffner (1768), and Oxholm (1778; 1799) are essential in tracing the development of this and other plantations in the second half of the 1700s.
- 9 *Christiansted* (literally, "Christian's place") was formally established in May, 1734, when King Street was laid out. The town, named in honor of King Christian VI of Denmark and Norway, served as the capital of the Danish West Indies from 1755-1871. Christiansted was the first planned town in the Lesser Antilles, and was originally envisioned to rival Christiania (now Oslo), Norway. Straight and parallel main streets and cross-streets of hardpacked earth with cobblestone or brick gutters, intersected at right angles. The building code of 1747 regulated street width, uniform frontages, access between lots, orderly and timely development, and defined the Free Negro quarter. Generally speaking, government buildings (with the exception of fortifications and batteries) and townhouses were built in the neoclassical style, with tropical modifications. Stores occupied somewhat smaller two-story buildings, the ground floor serving as a place of business and

the second floor as the residence. One-story wooden cottages housed blacks and poor whites. Some of the historic churches in Christiansted—notably the Anglican and the Dutch Reformed—reflect the architectural traditions of their countries of origin. Until the 1880s, most roofs were shingled. Plastered exterior walls were whitewashed, with contrast provided by hurricane doors and shutters painted in a range of solid colors (Pocket Companion 1780:19-20; Svensson 1980:7, 52-53, 58-59, 71; Chapman and Taylor 1986:5; Cissel 2003:2-3).

- 10 The surname is spelled “Lavine,” “Lavin,” “Lawien,” “Lawin,” “LeVine,” “Lewine,” “Lewin,” or “Lovien” in various registers and documents. Ramsing (1939:229, 230) and Flexner (1978:12) referenced Lavien’s prior career as a merchant in Nevis. Ramsing (1939:230) gave an age difference of 12 years, while Randall (2003:13) estimated 22 years. In keeping with the custom of the time, the wedding would likely have been performed in a private residence—in this case, the Lyttons’. Some sources (e.g., Randall 2003:8, 13) have stated that Johan Michael Lavien was a German Jew, while others (e.g., Larson 1952:142) disagreed. Ramsing (1939:237), crediting Professor L. L. Hammerich, believed that the surname was originally Slavic east of the Elbe, and noted that there was a small town in western Poland called *Lowien*. They believed, as did Flexner (1978:12), that Lavien’s nationality was North German. Given the prevalent anti-semitism of the time, some factors suggest that Lavien was not Jewish: (a) He was not identified as a Jew (*Joder*) in annual registers, even though Article I, Chapter XX, Book III of the Code of Christian V (1756:203) clearly stated that “no Jew shall be permitted to enter this Kingdom, or reside therein, without special License from the King, under Penalty of a thousand Dollars.” (b) Jews listed in the annual St. Croix property, population, and head-tax registers (*Landlister/Matrikler*, *Mandatslister*, and *Kopskatlister*, respectively) bore Sephardic surnames (e.g., de Cordua, Aboab, Melhado, la Pena, Mendes, Robles, and Mothas de Gotero). Although Oldendorp (1777 1:244) characterized St. Croix’s Jews as merchants, there is clear indication that a number of them were engaged as money lenders and real estate speculators (Ramsing 1939:235). (c) Marriage between individuals of different religions (as distinct from denominations) was rare, and would likely have generated some passing comment.
- 11 According to Ramsing (1939:229, 235), Lavien owned No. 21 Queen’s Quarter (1744); No. 12 Company’s Quarter (1745-1748); and No. 19 Company’s Quarter (1748-1753). Lavien is not found at No. 21 Queen’s Quarter in the 1744 property register (*Landlist*), likely due to a very brief ownership (financial default?) that occurred before the enumeration. Between 1745-1748, his possession of half of No. 12 Company’s Quarter is confirmed in the property registers (pp. 54, 46) and the population registers (*Mandatslister*, p. 18). Ramsing (1939:229) asserts that in the latter year—1748--Lavien sold No. 12 to Merrich Turnbull (not reflected in the property register until 1749 [p. 48] and in the population register until 1750 [p. 15]) and purchased half of No. 19 Company’s Quarter from Anna Poul’s heirs (first noted in the population register in 1750 [p. 17] and in the property register in 1751 [p. 39]). The cause of these discrepancies (e.g., the result of very tardy completion of annual registers) has not been determined. From 1750 until 1753, there is again general agreement about Lavien’s title to No. 19. In the latter year, the property register (p. 44) notes a change of ownership, to read “now Aron Mothas de Gottero.” Flexner’s (1978:13) and Randall’s (2003:13) assertion that No. 12 Company’s Quarter was ironically called “Contentment” in 1745 is incorrect because that name was associated with a plantation tract never owned by Lavien!
- 12 Ramsing (1939:230); Flexner (1978:13).
- 13 Randall (2003:14).
- 14 Assumptions of Lavien’s unstable or diminishing finances have been based on his relatively short-term ownership of plantations (see Fns. 11 and 21). This is not corroborated by the relatively constant number of slaves owned by him between 1747-1760, e.g., 10 capable adult slaves, 4 invalid slaves, and 6 children in the 1758 *Kopskatlister* for King’s Quarter (Tyson 2004). It was not an uncommon practice in the 18th century to sell a plantation after 5-7 years ownership, because it was believed that longer ownership diminished profitability. Furthermore, relevant to Lavien’s death, the Royal Danish American Gazette (1771:March 6) ran the following notice: “On Thursday next [i.e., March 14], at 10 o’clock forenoon, will be sold at Publick Vendue, at Mr. Roeder’s tavern in Fredericksted [*sic.*], 3 houses, some lots of land, and other effects, belonging to the estate of John Michael Lovien deceased.”
- 15 Ramsing (1939:232), Larson (1952:143), and McDonald (1982:6).
- 16 Ramsing (1939:230, 234). The location of Rachel’s cell—not the dungeon, as implied by Flexner (1978:13)--was one of adjoining two rooms in the west curtain, identified by Oxholm (1779b; see also Olsen 1960:178), as *Arrest Kamer for blanke Mand og Fruentimer* (“cell for white man and woman”). Both rooms had a brick floor, and were separated by a wooden partition with a connecting door. The partition was replaced by a

- solid masonry wall between 1784-1816 (Olsen 1960:69-70, 73). Originally, each cell had two smaller, barred windows facing west, with an unimpeded view of the wharf area and the eastern end of King Street. The outer defensive wall between the southwest and northwest bastions was not built until 1835 (Olsen 1960:95). A door from the courtyard led into the men's cell. The position of this door corresponds with Oxholm (*op cit.*) The window in the women's cell that faced the courtyard was converted into a door between 1784-1816 (Olsen 1960:71).
- 17 Ramsing (1939:232); Flexner (1978:14).
- 18 Ramsing (1939:234); Flexner (1978:14). In 1750, Major de Nully owned No. 35 Queen's Quarter (later known as "Peter's Rest") as well as a house on King Street, Christiansted. In the 1750 *Matrikler*, only slaves were listed as living on that plantation, but whites were in residence in town (Tyson 2004). The de Nullys—French Huguenots--fled to Holland shortly before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and from there to the Dutch West Indian island of St. Eustatius before coming to St. Croix (Ramsing 1939: 268). Lewisohn (1970:149), without attribution, stated that the family migrated from France to Martinique, which is not logical if their emigration had been undertaken for religious considerations.
- 19 Calmeyer (1973:128-129; 132, 134-135).
- 20 Baron von Pröck was born in Bayreuth (the seat of the Margraves of Brandenburg-Kulmbach) in Franconia, Germany, in 1716. Appointed by King Frederik V of Denmark as the first governor-general of the "Danish Islands in America," von Pröck served in that capacity from 1755-1766 (Bricka 1887 13:302-3; Larsen 1940:34, 99).
- 21 Lavien's half of No. 19 Company's Quarter was sold in that year to the "Jewish money lenders" Jacob de Cordua and Emanuel Aboab (Ramsing 1939:235). Genealogical information about the Heyliger brothers, of the prominent Dutch colonial family from St. Eustatius, is found in Calmeyer (1973:128-129 and 132-135). Baron von Pröck's ownership of his plantation in King's Quarter is referenced in Ramsing (1939:235) and McGuire (1925:112). Lavien's presence in King's and Queen's Quarters between 1753-1760 is found in the *Landlister* and the combined *Matrikler* and *Kopskatlister*.
- 22 Ramsing (1939:235-237).
- 23 Ramsing (1939:232). James Hamilton was the fourth son of the Laird of Grange.
- 24 *Laird* is the title for minor Scottish nobility--in this case, the Hamiltons of Cambuskeith. Their estate, "Grange," was in Stevenston Parish, Ayrshire. For an overview of James Hamilton's ancestry, see Ramsing (1939:231-232) and Flexner (1978:16-18), with the most detailed summary by far written by Chernow (2004:12-15).
- 25 Flexner (1978:17).
- 26 According to Flexner (1978:23), a 1758 baptismal record on St. Eustatius (the denomination was not specified, but probably either Anglican or Dutch Reformed) referenced "James Hamilton and Rachel Hamilton, his wife." If this implied a formal wedded state, the existence of the instrument of marriage is not known. Such a relationship would have been invalid at any rate, because Rachel was legally married to Lavien until 1759, and forbidden to remarry under the subsequent Danish divorce decree (see Fn. 33).
- 27 James was named after his father. Other than his age mentioned in his mother's probate file, there is no other known contemporary source from which a year of birth can be calculated.
- 28 Alexander was named after his paternal grandfather. Ramsing (1939:232) and Bobbé (1955:7) accepted 1755 as the birth year for Alexander Hamilton based on information in the St. Croix Dealing (i.e., probate) Court records for his mother's estate. Flexner (1978:18, 31-32), McDonald (1982:366-367), and Brookhiser (1999:16) support 1757 for various reasons, not the least being that it was given once by Hamilton himself. Brookhiser dismisses the earlier date because "...the clerk was not perfect, for he misspelled the name Lavien." Variant spellings were fairly common (see Fn. 132). Perusal of the annual registers for St. Croix, 1745-1768, show that government clerks often resorted to Germanic conventions in pronunciation when attempting to spell unfamiliar English and French surnames. Furthermore, English given names were sometimes translated into German. German was the language of the Danish Court until the scandal involving the Queen and Court Physician Johann Friedrich Struensee in 1772.

- 29 The website of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society (<http://www.nevis-nhcs.org/nevishistory.html>) states that "...a Caribbean Georgian building...was built on the foundation of the structure where Alexander Hamilton was born..." Another Nevisian website (http://www.nevisl.com/museum_of_nevis-history.html) claims that the original building "...was destroyed by an earthquake in 1840." Bobbé (1955:7) and Lewisohn (1970:150) have declared, without attribution, that James and Alexander Hamilton were not eligible for church school on Nevis because they were illegitimate. Flexner (1978:24) cites John Church Hamilton's biography of his father, which stated, "Rarely as he dwelt upon his personal history, he mentioned having been taught to repeat the decalogue [Ten Commandments] in Hebrew at the school of a Jewess, when so small that he was placed standing by her side on a table."
- 30 Ramsing (1939:232-233).
- 31 In 1759, the witnesses identified by Lavien were James Hendricks of King Street, Christiansted; Jemima (spelled "Jeahomie") Gorley of Market Street, Christiansted; and James William (germanicized as "Wilhelm") Ash. Ramsing (1939:234) characterized them as "people of little means who owned few or no slaves at all." Tyson (2004) states that Ash did not own No. 32 King's Quarter as claimed by Ramsing, but rather Nos. 45b and 46a (half-plantations of 75 acres each) in the same Quarter.
- 32 Fort Christiansværn (her place of imprisonment) and a property of *Stadthauptmand* de Nully (Ramsing 1939:234). See Fn. 18 for a discussion on the possibility of each location.
- 33 For the details of the divorce decree, issued June 25, 1759, see Ramsing (1939:234-235) and Larson (1952:141-142).
- 34 Ramsing (1939:235-236). In the combined *Matrikler* and *Kopskatlister*, Lavien's entries in King's Quarter are 1758 (p. 21), 1759 (p.27), 1760 (p. 23), and 1761 (p. 12).
- 35 Alexander Moir, of the mercantile firm of Alexander Moir and Alexander Gordon, Christiansted, had filed official notice of his intention to leave for Europe, triggering the collection effort (Ramsing 1939:237).
- 36 The 1765 *Matrikler*; see Ramsing (1939:238) and Flexner (1978:25). Randall (2003:19) advanced the theory that James and Rachel Hamilton may only have become aware of the divorce and its terms when they arrived at Christiansted: "Levine's [divorce] decree not only made [Rachel] a bigamist and an adulterer but also deprived her younger sons of all inheritance rights and formally declared them bastards." Ramsing (1939: 238), for his part, stated tactfully that James Hamilton probably found "...his marital situation to be as unstable as his financial situation."
- 37 A correspondent to the Royal Danish American Gazette (January 26, 1771) reported a recent "Coromantie" [*sic.*] slave insurrection on Tobago. It read in part, "They attacked Mr. Hamilton's house the night I left [for Grenada]; wounded three white men desperately, two of whom are since dead; Mr. Hamilton was shot through the thigh, but is recovering." Ramsing (1939:238) speculated that "Mr. Hamilton" was Alexander Hamilton's father because of the island's proximity to St. Vincent, where James Hamilton was ultimately traced (see Fn. 38). Ramsing, however, erroneously placed the revolt on Grenada.
- 38 Chernow (2004:40) is the first work to document James Hamilton in Bequia, in the Grenadines.
- 39 Hamilton wrote to his son, Alexander, from St. Vincent on June 12, 1793. He probably remained on that island for the remainder of his life, and was buried there on June 3, 1799 (Ramsing 1939:238). In her endnotes, Atherton (1928:534) included a transcription from the Register of Burials, St. George's Cathedral, Kingston, St. Vincent, for 1790: "June 3d. James Hamilton – Father of General Hamilton in America killed by Col. Baird" [*sic.*: Burr]. Lewisohn (1970:147) misread the entry, assuming that the victim was James Hamilton (senior).
- 40 Ramsing (1939:238). Evidence to support a renewed local assertion that Rachel Faucett—and as a consequence Alexander Hamilton--were black or of mixed race has not been forthcoming. The distinctive phrase used by the claimant with regard to skin color was shortly thereafter repeated exactly by Davis (2004) in a local newspaper account. Valdemar A. Hill, Sr. (1971:25 -26), author of several books on Virgin Islands history with distinctly afrocentric perspectives, unequivocally stated that Hamilton was "white."
- 41 Ramsing (1939:244). The Beekman-Cruger partnership is noted in the 1766-1769 head tax lists (Ramsing 1939:265). In the latter year, Cruger had a new business partner, Cornelius Kortright. Nicholas Cruger finally closed his business on St. Croix in 1785 and moved to New York (Ramsing 1939:269).

- 42 This property was rented from Thomas Dipnall for 12 *Rigsdaler* a month from August 1, 1765 until an undetermined date in 1767, and again from early January, 1768 until her death. The entry number does not reflect the lot number, but the order in which the property was enumerated. Lot numbers were not assigned until well after Rachel's death, and the number and size of lots within a block varied in a twenty year period--compare town plans by Zöllner (1760) and Oxholm (1779b). Short of a very time-consuming analysis by tracing the ownership of lots in descending order, we are dependent on Ramsing (1939:238) for the current lot number. Dipnall's property was described as being "...on the north side of the street, close to the English [i.e., Anglican] church and school house" (Ramsing 1939:244), which coincides with the deed to St. John's Church by M. de Francis [the name would infer a Free Colored person] on May 4, 1847 (Deeds, VI:158). With the exception of "Samuel Hartford's widow" in the 1766 *Matrikler*, Rachel and her two sons were the only whites in residence at this location. In the 1766 *Matrikler*, the principal physical feature of this property was a *Huus*, which meant either a building or a residence. Tropical storms on July 14, September 19-20, or October 7, 1766, may have resulted in sufficient damage to warrant a temporary relocation to No. 23 Company Street in 1767. At the time of Rachel's death, this property contained a "lumber room" and two "warehouses in the yard" (Ramsing 1939: 245). Those structures may well have been impacted by any of the 17 hurricanes and 9 tropical storms that affected St. Croix between 1772-1928 (Cissel 1996), or ultimately removed due to an advanced stage of deterioration if they were of entirely wooden construction. Compare the footprint of structures for this location in Oxholm (1779b) with Svensson (1980:61, 63, 65, 67, 69). This lot does not appear in the list of properties affected by the Sunday Market fire of February 5, 1866, which burnt the Anglican church, its schoolhouse, and 38 other houses (Avis 1866:February 6, 9; April 3, 13; Svensson 1980:57), but this author is not entirely convinced. The lot is completely devoid of any structures today.
- 43 This property was rented from Captain William Egan (also spelled "Eggen") from early 1767 until early January, 1768 (Ramsing 1939:244-245). The 1767 *Matrikler* does not indicate the presence of any whites other than Rachel and her two boys living on this property as well. See Fn. 42 for a discussion on lot number, size, and lack of survival of historic structures. An "outbuilding" on this lot was included in the list of properties burned or otherwise destroyed by the 1866 Sunday Market fire (see Fn. 42). Title to No. 23 Company Street was last transferred from Joseph E. Bough to the Missionary Society of the Most Holy Redeemer (Roman Catholic Church) (Deeds, VI:143).
- 44 Smith (1840:44-45); West (1793:77-78). West enumerated the following items for sale at the Sunday Market: "...hens, guinea fowl, ducks, pigeons, chickens, eggs, pigs, goats, yams, batatas, pumpkin, cassava bread, beans of various sorts, cucumber, melons, oranges, mamee, papayas, bell apples, cashew, limes, guava, sugar apples, soursop, guavaberry, okra, bananas, bacuba, tannia, turnips, carrots, parseley, cabbage and all the above sort of fruit and vegetables."
- 45 Ramsing (1939:265), Larson (1952:147), and Randall (2003:25). de Booy (1918:218-219) noted that "...the house where [Alexander Hamilton] resided [*sic.*] is still pointed out to visitors." Bough (1932:1) observed that Cruger became owner of this property in 1781, which may explain the origin of this persistent myth. This building was destroyed by fire in 1967; as a result of reconstruction, only the façade facing King Street remains from the 18th century. The fire consumed a collection of Hamilton memorabilia belonging to the property's owner (Lewisohn 1970:150-151).
- 46 Ramsing (1939:265) and Larson (1952:147). Ramsing (*loc cit.*) stated, "At the new Matricul for Christiansted in 1777, it appears that Cruger was the sole owner of the two lots Nos. 7, 8, in King Street at which he started the firm with David Beckman, but had enlarged the business by the purchase of Nos. 23 and 26 in King Cross Street."
- 47 Cruger's establishment was laid out like a capital "L," with the storefront facing King Street and the warehouses extending along King Cross Street (Oxholm 1779b).
- 48 Lewisohn (1970:147).
- 49 Ramsing (1939:243).
- 50 Lewisohn (1970:150) probably copied from Bobbé (1955:8) without acknowledgement. No records for St. John's Church address Rachel's "readmission" or the boys' schooling. Only scattered references to a "Poor school" are found in the parish's Vestry Minutes (1797:May 22; 1799:March 24, September 27; 1801:April 14), 24 years and more after Hamilton's departure. This "Poor school" should not be confused with the parish's Sunday School building erected in 1848, nor the West Indian Institute established in 1788 as the first government-sponsored high school (West 1789:49). Only the reference to the 34 books in Rachel's estate

- provides circumstantial evidence for Alexander Hamilton’s education on St. Croix (see Fn. 87). It is likely that the Hamilton boys would have picked up a few words and phrases in Dutch Creole, the linguistic form unique to the Danish West Indies that facilitated communication between Europeans and the more than 60 distinct West African tribes and linguistic groups identified by Oldendorp (1777 1:424-436) between 1767-1769, of which fifteen were statistically significant. However, the demographics of the white population had shifted in favor of a numerical majority of British (English, Irish, and Scots), so that English (or the local dialect thereof, later called Crucian) became the common language. Hans Tjellesen, Danish Lutheran missionary at Christiansted (1788-1795), complained that the growing numbers of “English” were “crowding out” Dutch Creole “since they would under no circumstances hear any other language than their own” (Larsen 1950:157).
- 51 Since 1729, many hurricanes and tropical storms have affected Nevis. The French occupied the island in 1783, during the Revolutionary War; prior to departing, they burned many civil and ecclesiastical records.
- 52 Flexner (1978:23); Brookhiser (1999:15); Randall (2003:17). During his student days in New Jersey and New York City, Hamilton was described by a close friend as “attentive to public worship,” (Brookhiser 1999:112-117). However, he attended church very infrequently during and after the Revolutionary War. As an adult, Hamilton philosophically considered Christianity to be indispensable for social morality and political stability. Like countless others before and since, Hamilton rediscovered his spiritual dimension at a time of profound personal crisis—the death of his eldest son, Phillip, in 1801. Hamilton thereafter made it a practice to read Matins (Morning Prayer) and Vespers (Evening Prayer) according to the rites of the Episcopal Church at home daily with his family (Randall 2003:4). The following anecdote, if correctly cited, only serves to complicate the question of Alexander Hamilton’s denominational affiliation in the West Indies. Mortally wounded in the famous duel with Aaron Burr in 1804, Hamilton requested the presence of the Right Reverend Benjamin Moore, Episcopal Bishop of New York, for Holy Communion and the last rites of that Church. Randall (2003:3-5) states that Bishop Moore initially “...refused Hamilton Holy Communion after he learned that *Hamilton...had never been baptized an Episcopalian....*” [emphasis added]. Chernow (2004:707), however, attributes Moore’s reluctance to his aversion to dueling and the fact that Hamilton was not a regular churchgoer. In the event that the duel went badly for him, Hamilton had written a touching farewell letter to his wife couched in religious terms: “I shall cherish,” he said, “the sweet hope of meeting you in a better world” (Freeman 2001:1019). Alexander Hamilton finally did receive Communion and the last rites of the Church, and, according to Bishop Moore, died peacefully.
- 53 When Denmark purchased St. Croix from France in 1733, the French insisted on certain stipulations. One was that only Danes could settle on the island. This was intended to exclude traditional rivals like the English and the Dutch. The Danes, however, were unable to encourage sufficient numbers of their fellow countrymen to migrate to St. Croix and establish plantations. The governing Danish West India & Guinea Company turned a blind eye to increasing numbers of Dutch and English settlers from nearby islands. During Company rule, denominations were limited to the Lutheran (the Danish state church), Dutch Reformed, and—eventually—Moravian. After St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix became Danish Crown colonies in 1754, many administrative, economic, and social changes occurred. Toleration was extended to include Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics. Allowing the non-Danish white majority to worship according to their own national customs was a small concession by the Danish Crown in exchange for relative contentment. The small Sephardic Jewish presence was not included, but they traditionally observed the Sabbath in their homes (Cissel 2002:1, 3).
- 54 The white population consisted of Danes, Dutch, Germans, English, Irish, Scots, and French Huguenots in varying ratios (Oldendorp 1777 1:232-233). The black population was made up of West African tribal and linguistic groups ranging from the Senegambia region to Angola, not including the present-day Ivory Coast (Oldendorp (1777 1:270-298).
- 55 Oldendorp (1777 1:48, 267) and West (1793:50). The location and “footprint” (building outline) of these churches are shown in Oxholm (1779b).
- 56 “...to send food, wine and refreshment to the ailing, to provide for the education and future well-being of godchildren, to give poor widows a certain amount of assistance, to assist impoverished families by subscription, or [by] collections to take care of the departure travel expenses of the needy...” (West 1793:45-46, 50).
- 57 Likely excluded from consideration were Roman Catholics for doctrinal differences, and Lutherans, Dutch Reformed, and Moravians, whose services were conducted in Danish, Dutch, Low German, or Dutch Creole. Although there is no indication that Alexander Hamilton learned any other foreign language than French,

- Chapman and Taylor (1986:71) have stated, without attribution, that he worshipped at the Dutch Reformed church.
- 58 Flexner (1978:59); McDonald (1982:10-11); Randall (2003:36). On Nevis, only the marriage of “John Fauseet and Mary Uppingham” (Rachel’s parents) was recorded at St. George’s Anglican Church, Gingerland Parish, on April 21, 1718 (Flexner 1978:8-9). This may imply that one or both were Anglicans. To assume that Rachel was a Huguenot simply on the basis of her paternal ancestry (Flexner 1978:8; McDonald 1982:6; Randall 2003:10-11) is hardly incontrovertible proof. About Nicholas Cruger, see Fn. 67.
- 59 Property ownership by the Presbyterian church (*den presbyterianske Kirke*) appears for the first time in the 1773 *Matrikler*. Oxholm (1779b) showed the Presbyterian church at the northwestern corner of Prince Street, at the intersection of that street with Water Gut. The building had an “L”-shaped plan, quite unlike the rectangular plans of the other 18th century churches on St. Croix. The building was described by Larsen (1950:96-97) as an “unpretentious dwelling,” but this should be read with caution, since statements about other historic churches in Christiansted (e.g., Fn. 65) have proven inaccurate. The size of the congregation is not known, but it had diminished to the point where it was disbanded by early 1818. The “Bond of Elliot Moore, dated 9th March last [1818] for ps. 3000 payable by Installments with Interest, and secured by Mortgage on the Lot No. 29 Princess [*sic.*] Street, together with Thomas Dalton as security & self Debtor, being proceeds of the sale of the old Church...” was transferred to the Wardens of St. John’s Church, with the stipulation that the proceeds be used for the “relief and benefit of the poor belonging to the Church” (Vestry Minutes 1819:June 16). If the church shown by Oxholm (*op cit.*) and the referenced No. 29 Prince Street are one and the same, they do not correspond with location for that lot number on the Department of Public Works map of Christiansted (1940s), which raises the possibility that the lot numbering system had been changed at some point.
- 60 Hugh Knox was born in 1727. Different internet sources give his place of birth as Belfast, Ireland, or Glasgow, Scotland. He migrated to British North America, earned a degree from the College of New Jersey at Princeton, and was ordained a Presbyterian minister. He served the Dutch Reformed congregation on the island of Saba from 1755-1771. Ramsing (1939:263-264) gave his permanent arrival at Christiansted in 1772, while Bobbé (1955:98) and Randall (2003:34) posit 1771. Rev. Knox’s influence with and on behalf of the young Alexander Hamilton has been ably treated by Mitchell (1951). His first meeting with Hamilton would most likely in the context of Cruger’s business. Knox died on St. Croix on October 9, 1790, at the age of 63 (Ramsing 1939:265).
- 61 The Church of England established the parish in 1760, although ownership of the lot on King Street in the name of *den engelske Kirke* (“the English Church”) appeared in the 1752 *Mandatallist*. It was the first formal Anglican presence in the Danish West Indies. The parish, called “St. John’s,” was funded by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), the missionary arm of the Church of England in the Americas. The S.P.G. strove to provide an “orthodox and learned clergy” to counter “the neglect of Christian ordinances, and the relaxation of morals” (Buchanan 1813:19, 35, 59). St. John’s first rector (1760-1785) was the Rev. Cecil Wray Goodchild. The Danish planter Reimert Haagensen said of him, “The British...have a pastor who holds services on Sundays in town [Christiansted] and again on the west end, in order to spare those who live far from town a long trip. This greatly satisfies his congregation, which pays him an annual salary of 1,000 Rdlr. [*Rigsdaler*; see Fn. 103]. In addition, he has income from several other sources and he lives in comfort” (Highfield 1995: 43). Goodchild’s plantation, half of No. 9 in Prince’s Quarter, is referenced in the 1767 *Matrikler*. His town properties were obviously badly damaged in the 1772 hurricane: “To be sold, two lots of land, with ruins therein, laying on the Hill above Watergut, and belonging to Cecil Wray Goodchild Minister of the English Church...” (*Royal Danish American Gazette* 1772: November 11). Rev. Goodchild, his wife and children subsequently lived in the house on King Street belonging to the parish (1773 *Matrikler*).
- 62 In the original, *høie-engelske*--“High English” (West 1793:50).
- 63 Oldendorp (1768).
- 64 in the original, *nedblast i Orkan*--“blown down in the hurricane” (1773 *Matrikler*).
- 65 Larsen (1950:82) perhaps assumed the existing building postdated 1848 from a marble plaque, dated 1850, set high on the exterior of the north transept. This statement was repeated and elaborated on by Chapman and Taylor (1986:75): “The present St. John Anglican church...was built in 1849... in keeping with the widely influential prescriptions of the London based Ecclesiological Society [*N.B.*: established 1845].” The existing church building was completed by 1780, and was so noted in the *Matrikler* for that year as “the new English

- church” (*den nye engelske Kirke*). The church was lengthened at the east and west ends—and not rebuilt—beginning in 1849, to accommodate a growing black membership following emancipation (Vestry Minutes 1849:June 7; 1852:January 16).
- 66 David Beekman (also spelled Beckman) was born in New York on January 17, 1733. From 1766-1768, Beekman resided with his business partner Nicholas Cruger at their business, No. 7-8 King Street, Christiansted. After the dissolution of the partnership in 1769, Beekman lived alone in John P. Richardson’s house at No. 21 Strand Street. On April 2, 1772, he married Sarah Harris, widow of planter George Harris (who had died three year earlier), on St. Croix (Ramsing 1939:265, 266-268). His tombstone, embedded in the center aisle in the nave of St. John’s church, reads “In memory of / DAVID BEEKMAN / who was born at New York / the 19th of January 1733 / and departed this life / the 13th of July 1793 / SARAH BEEKMAN / Relict of DAVID BEEKMAN / who departed this life on the / 8th of January 1818 / in her 82d Year...” Note that “relict” is archaic English for “widow.” Taylor’s (1996:4) assertion that, “Alexander Hamilton’s employers and benefactors, Beckman and Cruger of New York, were associated with St. Paul’s [Anglican Church, Frederiksted]” is questionable, considering evidence presented of their places of residence in Christiansted and the fact that said church was not built until 1812.
- 67 For an overview of the political, social, and financial standing of the Cruger family in New York, see Brookhiser (1999:19), Randall (2003:26), and Chernow (2004:30). Nicholas Cruger married Anna de Nully (daughter of *Stadthauptmand* Betram Pieter de Nully) on April 15, 1772 in the Dutch Reformed church, which is perhaps the basis for assuming his denominational affiliation. After her death, he married Ann Markoe (of a prominent St. Croix family of French Huguenot descent, with important Philadelphia connections during the American Revolution) on May 27, 1785. Nicholas Cruger was a member of St. John’s Church. Returning to St. Croix from the United States for the last time in January, 1800, he amended his will. Cruger died on March 11 of that year (Ramsing 1939:268-269). He was buried the following day. Lewisohn (1970:199) notwithstanding, the entry in St. John’s general register (interspersed baptisms, marriages, and burials) reads, “1800.... March 12th The Body of Nicholas Cruger (lately from America) was Deposited in the Family Vault, belonging to Mr. Hendrickson, in the Town of Fraedericksted [*sic.*].”
- 68 Thomas Stevens was born on Antigua ca. 1724. He married Ann Andsley there in December, 1745. The couple had three sons and two daughters, of which Edward [see Fn. 69] was the second oldest. The family moved to Christiansted by 1758, where he made a living as a merchant. The earliest reference to their residence on King Street was in the combined 1759 *Matrikler* and *Kopskatlister*. Thomas Stevens served as a vestryman and warden for St. John’s Church. He died May 24, 1778 (Ramsing 1939:259), and was buried the next day. The parish burial register reads, “Thomas Stevens in Do. [“ditto,” referring to “the Church yard”] May 25 Aged 54.” His wife’s burial is recorded in the same register: “The Body of Ann Stevens /. Aged [left blank] Years, was Interd in the Church Ground on the 28th July 1799. By the Revd William Niles.” Note the difference of the date of her death, April 1, 1789, given in Ramsing (*loc cit.*), which is obviously an error in transcription.
- 69 Edward Stevens was the second son of Thomas Stevens (see Fn. 68), born in Antigua in 1754. Stephens studied at King’s College, New York (1769-1773) and at the University of Edinburgh (1775-1777), and the University of Copenhagen (1782), becoming a noted doctor. He was elected a member of St. John’s Vestry (Vestry Minutes 1789:November 10; 1790:April 5; 1793:April 1). Stevens’ first wife, Eleanor, died March 13, 1792. The following year, the Vestry granted Stevens permission to erect a monument in memory of his deceased wife inside the church “in a space between the southern door and eastern window...” (Vestry Minutes 1793: September 3; see also Ramsing 1939:260). This monument no longer exists, possibly removed during the 1849 expansion (see Fn. 65). Edward Stevens next married Hester Amory (born Kortright). Dr. Stevens died on St. Croix, and was buried at “Grove Place” (Nos. 13, 20, and 21 Prince’s Quarter) on September 30, 1834 (Ramsing 1939:260-262; McQuire 1925:90).
- 70 The likelihood of yellow fever, a viral disease spread by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, is based Rachel’s symptoms documented in Ramsing (1939:245, 246) in comparison with Holvey (1972:80-81). Note the similarities for the active phase of the illness: increasing high fever, headache, and distress of the stomach and intestines. Geill (1981:8-19), while providing a good overview of yellow fever in the Danish West Indies, only deals with outbreaks after 1850. Another possible diagnosis is malaria, although the comparables are more limited (Holvey 1972:193-195).
- 71 Ramsing (1939:245) referred to McDonnell as *kone* (“woman” or “domestic help”), while Randall (2003:6) made her a “nurse midwife.” She lived at Doctor Pentheny’s House on Queen Street, Christiansted (1768 *Matrikler*).

- 72 Dr. Heering, his wife, 2 white female servants, and slaves lived on Queen Street (1768 *Matrikler*).
- 73 By removing “tainted” blood from the patient, the disease would be purged.
- 74 Emetics induced nausea and vomiting—another purgative.
- 75 “Valerian,” a plant-based drug, acted as a sedative.
- 76 “Decoction” was the result of extracting a water-soluble drug by boiling.
- 77 “Clyster” is an enema.
- 78 Ramsing (1939:245, 246).
- 79 Ramsing (1939:244, 246).
- 80 Ramsing (1939:246). The relevant entry in the St. John’s Burial Register for 1768 reads “Rachael Levine Feb. 26 at Mr. Tuite’s Plant. by D.O. age 32.” Burials on plantations (here abbreviated “Plant.”) were not uncommon in the 18th century, and were not often preceded by a church ceremony. Ramsing (1939:246) asserted that Rev. Goodchild (Rector, 1760-1785) performed the burial, while the “Anglican Deacon [*Degn*] Daniel Orly” issued notice for the funeral and convened the pallbearers. The surname “Orly” has not been found in a survey of the combined *Matrikler* and *Kopskatlist* for Christiansted between 1767-1769. There was a Daniel *Oxley*, who is found in the *Matrikler* residing on Company Street as early as 1761. His death is recorded in the St. John’s Burial Register several months after Rachel’s: “Daniel Oxley Octr. 14th in do. [i.e., “Church Yard”] aged 42.” Since the parish did not have a deacon, Oxley’s indicate that he was the parish clerk, who was responsible for recording baptisms, marriages, and burials, as well as assisting at Sunday services and officiating at funerals in the priest’s absence (see Vestry Minutes 1792:July 3). “D.O.” appears in scattered burial entries from October, 1761 until October, 1768, which corresponds with Oxley’s death. Lewisohn (1970:154) statement that Rachel’s death “...was recorded later in the Anglican church register of Nevis, and the entry indicates she intended to leave some slaves to her two sons” is very peculiar, and has not been verified.
- 81 Justification for the conjecture that “Rachel herself possibly contributed to the information of her younger age” (Ramsing 1939:248) and that “Possibly she had exercised the feminine prerogative of forgetting a few of her years” (Larson 1952:141) was not explained.
- 82 Atherton found that Rachel was buried at “Grange” when she traveled to St. Croix to do documentary research for her “historical novel” about Hamilton, *The Conqueror* (1902). Unfortunately, her archival discoveries were largely obscured by the romantic fiction.
- 83 1736 instead of 1729.
- 84 McDonald (1982:6); Brookhiser (1999:17); Chernow (2004:16).
- 85 Flexner (1978:25-27) strongly asserted that Rachel remained promiscuous, but cited no evidence to support this beyond the wording of the arrest warrant (1750) and divorce petition (1759).
- 86 Ramsing (1939:244).
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- 87 In addition to the 34 books, Rachel’s estate was enumerated as follows: “5 female Negro slaves, one of which has a child called Rachael, and 3 Negro boys [one boy named Ajax was to have been given to Alexander, and one named Christian given to James].” In a room, “6 silver spoons, 7 silver teaspoons, 1 sugar tongs, 4 dresses, 1 red skirt, 1 white skirt, 1 black silk sun hat. 1 chest of drawers, 1 chest, 1 bed with 1 feather comforter, 1 long pillow...” In the lumber room, “...6 leather chairs, 3 different tables, 14 porcelain plates, 11 cups and saucers, 3 stone platters, 1 porcelain basin, 2 irons, 1 iron pot, 2 metal candleholders, 1 mirror in a brown frame” (Ramsing 1939:245-246)
- 88 Ramsing (1939:247); Larson (1952:146).
- 89 The St. Croix records are largely silent about Peter Lavien. The 1765 *Matrikler* infers his emigration to South Carolina, at the age of 16, by his absence in the tally of his father’s residence in Frederiksted; the probate of his mother’s estate; and his reappearance on St. Croix in late November, 1769, for the

- disbursement of his inheritance. A most curious entry appears in the St. John's Church register (mixed baptisms, marriages, and burials), recording the baptism of "Peter, Son of Jno. Michael & Rachel LeVine Novr: 30th, born 1746." It was not customary to list sponsors (or godparents) for baptisms at this time. Given his father's feelings about Rachel, her reference as a (deceased) parent had to be at Peter's request to reinforce the legitimacy of his claim against her estate. If the entry reflected a second baptism for whatever reason, it contravened the theology and doctrine of the Church of England—see the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, XXV ("Of the Sacraments") and XXVII ("Baptism"). Holding the office of church warden in St. Helena's parish, South Carolina, Peter Lavien was presupposed to have already been baptized.
- 90 Ramsing (1939:246).
- 91 Ann Lytton died during a trip to Nevis between the end of 1765 and before January, 1767, when her husband, James Lytton (senior), returned to St. Croix (Ramsing 1939:239, 244, 253-254; Larson 1952:144). His burial is recorded in the St. John's Church register in 1769: "James Lytton Aug. 12th at Mr. Tuite's Grange Plant^a. aged 67."
- 92 He was found in his bedroom, dead by suicide, on July 16, 1769 (Ramsing 1939: 244).
- 93 Mc Nobeny, who also owned rental houses elsewhere in town, is recorded at this location with his wife in the 1767 *Mandtalslist* and the 1769 *Matrikler*; see also Ramsing (1939:248) and Larson (1952:147). They are the only whites living on the property. In the 1770 *Matrikler* and thereafter, he is alone; his wife had likely died.
- 94 Ramsing (1939:249); Larson (1952:147).
- 95 Freeman (2001:140-141).
- 96 According to Ramsing (1939:249-250), James Hamilton did not appear in any of the annual *Kopskatlister*. The *Matrikler* for 1786 and 1787 lists a "Madame Anna Hamilton," living in the house of Madame Ashbourne in Frederiksted. Ramsing presumed that Anna Hamilton was James Hamilton's widow, since he could find no other person surnamed Hamilton in the St. Croix records for those years. Her date of death was given as December 19, 1787.
- 97 Westergård (1917:249).
- 98 Oldendorp 1777 (1:245, 246-249).
- 99 For the procurement of slaves in West Africa, see Oldendorp (1777 1:347-356).
- 100 Denmark's participation in the African slave trade (until 1803) was carried out through a succession of royally chartered companies and private enterprises. Two excellent introductory essays on the Danish slave trade, by Arnold R. Highfield and Svend E. Holsoe, are found in Tyson (1994:11-46). For a description of the Middle Passage, see Oldendorp (1777 1:357-368).
- 101 For points of origin and distribution of slaves in Christiansted and Frederiksted, see Cissel (2002a:2).
- 102 Slave auctions took place either in the compound of the Danish West India & Guinea Company at the wharf, or in the yards of private importers. Although most slaves were purchased by planters and urban professionals, some were bought by Free Blacks to be rented out to generate income (Cissel 2002a:2)! Vivid accounts of slave auctions at Christiansted are related by Oldendorp (1777 1:368-372) and Isert (1788:290-291).
- 103 Currencies commonly circulating at St. Croix in the late 1760s included Spanish pieces of eight and *patagons* (Spanish Thalers), worth eight and twelve *reales*, respectively; Portuguese *Johannes* ("Joes"); Saxon *thaler*; Danish *ducats* (worth 20 reales), *Rigsdaler*, and *skilling*; Dutch *stiver*; British pounds sterling; and French *pistols* (Oldendorp 1777 1:245-6). For images of Danish West Indian coinage of the period, see Higgie (1962:6-7, 11-20). The Royal Danish American Gazette (1770:August 15) announced the local publication of a "Table of Money" ranging from "one Ryal [*real*] to one Thousand Pieces of Eight," but a surviving example has not yet been found.

- 104 Randall (2003:30, 33-34)
- 105 Brookhiser (1999:19); Randall (2003:29-34). For examples of customs regulations and duties (taxes) at Christiansted in Hamilton's time, see Oldendorp (1777 1:249-251) and Pocket Companion (1780:32-33).
- 106 Flexner (1978:37); Brookhiser (1999:20)
- 107 See Fn. 93.
- 108 Bobbé (1955:96) and Randall (2003:25) have asserted that his room was at Nos. 7-8 King Street. During the years that Hamilton worked for Cruger, his employer lived at that address. His partner, Beekman, also lived there until the partnership was dissolved, after which he rented a house on Strand Street (see Fn. 65). In searching the *Matrikler*, one should be cautious about drawing inferences from the presence of a white boy and a white male servant in the registers for 1766 and 1767—before Rachel's death. The white boy is not listed in 1768 or thereafter. Two white men are consistently listed between 1768-1773, but it is very difficult to explain how the enumerator would have initially classified the 13 year-old Hamilton as a man when one compares the treatment of Peter Lavien in King's Quarter and Frederiksted prior to his migration to South Carolina (see Ramsing 1939:235-236). Ramsing (1939:249), Larson (1952:147), and Randall (2003:23) have given credence to Hamilton residing with the Thomas Stevens family, whose home was on King Street--not Strand Street. The Stevens had 3 sons and 2 daughters. The 1769 *Landlist* for their residence tallied that number of boys in the family. The enumeration, taken early in the year before the second son (Edward) went to New York to study at King's College (see Fn. 69), also noted the presence of 2 "white male servants" [Danish: *karl*]—possibly both Hamilton brothers, taken in after the death of Peter Lytton! The 1772 register shows 3 white boys in the family but no white servants, so Alexander Hamilton may have been "upgraded" in relationship. His brother James was living elsewhere.
- 109 Larson (1952:147).
- 110 Ramsing (1939:260); Bobbé (1955:97); Freeman (2001:3). Of the "seventy letters [that] survive from Hamilton's St. Croix years" (Randall 2003:24), this appears to be the only personal correspondence. In the early 1770s, Christiansted had 3,579 inhabitants, of which 971 (or 27%) were white (Ramsing 1939:252). This increased to 3,730 inhabitants, of which 1,060 (or 40%) were white ten years later (Pocket Companion 1780:*ad pag* 13). While Ramsing (*loc cit.*) postulated that, "...this was not the place for a young man with ambitions," one would think that legitimacy, social class, and inherited wealth--not minority status--would have affected a white person's chance for advancement.
- 111 Royal Danish American Gazette (1772: September 9).
- 112 Gentleman's Magazine (1772:590).
- 113 Royal Danish American Gazette (*loc cit.*).
- 114 The letter, dated September 6, 1772, was published in the Royal Danish American Gazette (1772:October 7). The full text is found in Syrett (1961 1:34-38) and Freeman (2001:6-9).
- 115 The story of the "two generous aunts," noted in Larson (1952:148), is apocryphal. Rachel's half-sister, Ann Lytton, had already died in 1765 [see Fn. 90]. Her daughter, Ann Lytton Venton (later Mitchell)--Alexander Hamilton's cousin--was in no position to contribute to Hamilton's education, since she and her husband had fled to New York in 1763 following his bankruptcy (Ramsing 1939:239, 244, 253-254; Larson 1952:144). de Booy (1918:204) wrote, "[Hamilton's] letter attracted so much attention from admiring friends and relatives that it was decided to give him the chance he longed for to go to the United States [*sic.*] to secure a college education." Ramsing (1939:270) was confident that the funds were provided by Nicholas Cruger. Randall (2003:40) stated that Rev. Knox arranged pledges totaling 400 pounds from "wealthy merchants[,]...Nicholas Cruger[,]...Cornelius Kortright[,]...Thomas Stevens, the probate judge, and the son of *Stadthauptmand* de Nully." Chernow (2004:37-38) supports some form of popular subscription; however, a survey of the Royal Danish American Gazette between September, 1772 and July, 1773, did not show any notice for a public subscription.
- 116 Randall (2003:40).

- 117 This timeframe is based on a receipt signed by Hamilton on St. Croix on behalf of his cousin, Ann Lytton Venton, for whom he served as agent (Ramsing 1939:252; Flexner 1978: 453-454). Compare this with the rationale for a 1772 departure by Brookhiser (1999:20) and Randall (2003:41).
- 118 Chernow (2004:5).
- 119 Chernow (2004:3-4).
- 120 Brookhiser (1999:10).
- 121 As clerk for Nicholas Cruger, Hamilton would have witnessed and recorded the sales for the slave auction which notice appeared in the Royal Danish American Gazette, January 26, 1771.
- 122 An assessment of Free Negroes and slave craftsmen, house servants, and field workers in 1767-1769 are provided by Oldendorp (1777 1:401-403, 380-381, 379-380, and 381-383) and West (1793:57-59, 59-61, and 61-72).
- 123 Tyson and Highfield (1994b:16-17) have conveyed the range of punishments for blacks prevalent in the Danish West Indies up to 1747. Oldendorp (1777 1:386-393) records conditions during his residency on St. Croix, 1767-1769.
- 124 Hamilton's opposition to slavery and his role in the New York anti-slavery movement are summarized by Brookhiser (1999:175-178), Randall (2003:162-163, 291-294), and Chernow (2004:210-211). Hamilton alleged ownership of slaves (see Chernow 2004:210-211, 581) has been refuted by McDonald (1982:373, note 12) and Brookhiser 1999:176).
- 125 Flexner (1978:258-259); Brookhiser (1999:41-42, 176); Randall (2003:163-165); Freeman (2001:56-58).
- 126 Oldendorp (1777 1:267); Høst (1791:160, 165).
- 127 Oldendorp (loc cit.); Høst (1791:165, 166).
- 128 Oldendorp (loc cit.); Høst (1791:165).
- 129 Oldendorp (loc cit.); Pocket Calendar (1780:18); Høst (1791:162).
- 130 Oldendorp (1777 1:396); Høst (1791:167).
- 131 During Washington's presidency, Hamilton's influence was not limited to finance and economics, but extended to foreign policy, to the great annoyance of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton even drafted Washington's farewell address, which was serialized in the Royal Danish American Gazette!
- 132 Chernow (2004:5).
- 133 James Monroe failed to honor his pledge of confidentiality about the details of Hamilton's extra-marital affair with Maria Reynolds and his subsequent blackmail, conveying the information instead to Thomas Jefferson. Newspaper editor James Callender was induced to publicize the scandal in a series of pamphlets (Brookhiser 1999:97-100, 132-5; McCollough 2001:492-493). Callender eventually defected to the Federalists after his request for a political appointment was refused. He then exposed Jefferson's rumored relationship with one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, whom the Federalist press referred to as the "African Venus" and "Montecellian Sally" (McCullough 2001:577-81).
- 134 These accusations stemmed from Hamilton's semi-aristocratic demeanor; pro-British sympathies; misgivings that the Constitution gave *carte blanche* for government by the "mob," which he inherently distrusted; his personal preference for a select national government headed by a President for Life; and his abhorrence of the excesses against persons and religion during the French Revolution, especially the Reign of Terror.
- 135 Knott (2002:19).
- 136 Jeffersonian congressmen tried repeatedly but unsuccessfully to charge Hamilton with financial improprieties in his capacity as Secretary of the Treasury (Brookhiser 1999:111-112); see also Knott (2002:19) and McCullough (2001:538).

- 137 Brookhiser (1999:3); Knott (2002:19).
- 138 Brookhiser (1999:1-2) may have misunderstood the cultural implications of this phrase. In that context, “little man” did not refer to stature or physique (Hamilton was a slender 5’7”), compared to the shorter and portly Adams), but rather to very humble origins or low social status.
- 139 Brookhiser (1999:109).
- 140 The most comprehensive treatment of this subject is by Knott (2002).
- 141 Talleyrand (1754-1838) is regarded as one of the most influential individuals in French foreign policy. His life was a Machiavellian odyssey: the priesthood (he was ultimately bishop), early supporter and near-victim of the Reign of Terror, plotter of political assassinations, inveterate accumulator of wealth, notorious womanizer, and ultimately traitor to his heads of state!
- 142 Charles James Fox (1749-1806), British politician having held occasional ministerial appointments. Talleyrand presumably wished to recognize Fox for his initial enthusiasm for the French Revolution, his anti-war stance, and his persistent calls for a negotiated peace during the Napoleonic Wars.
- 143 “*Je considère Napoleon, Fox, et Hamilton comme les trois plus grands homes de notre époque, et si je devais me prononcer entre les trois, je donnerais sans hésiter la première place à Hamilton. Il avait deviné l’Europe*” (Atherton 1928:title page).
- 144 <http://home.att.net/~quotesexchange/mahatmagandhi.html>.

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