Inside the Vault:
Highlights from the Gilder Lehrman Collection

June 12, 2020

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The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

• We are the leading nonprofit organization dedicated to K–12 history education while also serving the general public.
• Our mission is to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources.
• We provide direct access to unique primary source materials.
Panelists

• Sandy Trenholm – Collection Director
• Gena Oppenheim - Hamilton Education Program Senior Education Fellow and educator at Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn
• Paige Smallwood - Principal Standby for the Schuyler sisters in the Angelica Company of *Hamilton*

Support

• Allison Kraft – Assistant Curator
For Security

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How to Participate on PC or Mac

- In order to keep this a safe and secure meeting, your mic is automatically muted and your camera is automatically off.

- If you would like to ask a question, **you can use the Q&A feature** which can be found along the bottom of your screen.
Today’s Documents

- A love letter from Alexander Hamilton to Elizabeth Schuyler.
- Angelica Church’s letter announcing Alexander Hamilton was shot by Aaron Burr.
Alexander Hamilton to Elizabeth Schuyler, 1780

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Eliza was born August 7, 1757, in Albany, New York.

She was the second child of Philip & Catharine Schuyler.

○ They had 15 children, 8 of whom survived to adulthood.

The Schuyler family was one of the wealthiest and most powerful political families of the time.

We learn about her primarily through the eyes of others.
Elizabeth Schuyler & Alexander Hamilton

- Eliza met Alexander at a ball in February 1780.
- Within two months they decided to marry.
  - On April 14, Alexander wrote to Eliza’s mother to convince her that he would be a good husband for Eliza.
- They were married ten months later on December 14, 1780.
- Their first child, Philip, born in 1782.
- Alexander and Eliza would have a total of eight children and raised Fanny Antil, an orphaned daughter of a friend.
Alexander Hamilton to Elizabeth Schuyler, 1780

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“I have told you, and I told you truly that I love you too much – You engross my thoughts too entirely to allow me to think of any thing else – You not only employ my mind all day; but you intrude upon my sleep – I meet you in every dream – and when I wake I cannot close my eyes again for ruminating on your sweetnesses –”
“Tis a pretty story indeed that I am to be thus monopolized, by a little nut-brown maid like you – and from a statesman and a soldier metamorphosed into a puny lover – I believe in my soul you are an inchantress;”
The Nut-Brown Maid

- The *Nut-Brown Maid* is a poem that was first published in the late 15th Century.
- It was published in poetry compilations up until the early 20th Century.
- It takes on the style of a conversation between a man and a woman.
Alexander Hamilton to Elizabeth Schuyler, 1780

unhappy and impatient under the hand
necessity that keeps me from you, and yet
the longest interval as I advance—hamilt
has just received an account of the death of
his father and will be obliged to go to Virgin
Meade affairs (as well as his love)
and tacle him to go there also in a little time
Here will then remain too few in the family
to make it possible for me to leave it till
Hamiltos return—but I have told him
that I will not be delayed beyond Novem
ber—I hope the Middle will have
given up to each other—And I never fear
it will bear the latter end—Though the period
of our reunion is really approaches
it seems farther off—Among the causes
of uncertainty, I should let you know
imagined I yield too easily to the base
that keep us a friend but if you have
not an idea you ought to be able to
and who can be reflected and remain in
should enter into this, heavier from
when all is justice, can be more
ardently for the enjoyment—than I do
my darling Beauty, to taste the heaven that
awaits me in your bosom. So my language
are strong, it is a false picture of my feelings
—and now songs can tell you how much I love
and how much I long—you will only know it
when whist in each other arms we
and take those sweet cares which
love inspires and marriage sanctifies

Indeed my dear Betty you
do not write to me often enough. I ought at least
to hear from you by every post and you tell me
it as it is on the middle of what I have written you
when from my return from Hartford
You will laugh alone for
consulting you about such a trifler, but I want
you to know what you would prefer my receiving
the multiplicity of benefactions in my uniform or in a
different habit—It will be just as you please
to consult your whim and what you think
most convenient with propriety

If you mean to follow our
plan of being secretly married, the letter ought
to be from entirely your own and you should sign
to your heart of it—Tell my Peggy I will only
open correspondence with her I am content
combining a friend of whom, from the moment
I have of her qualifications, I have endeavored
to prevent upon him to ask the principal
unhappy and what shall I say under the hard necessity that keeps me from you and yet the prospect lengthens as I advance—Hamilton has just received an account of the death of his father and will be obliged to go to Virginia—Mead's affair (as well as his hows) compel him to go there also in a little time—There will then remain too few in the family to make it possible for me to leave it till Hamilton's return—but I have told him that I will not be delayed beyond November—I had hoped the middle would have given us to each other but I now fear it will be the latter end—Through the period our reunion in reality approaches it seems further—Among the causes of uneasiness, I dread lest you should imagine I yield too easily to the Evans [Evans's] is in a corner; for if you have such an idea you ought to summon [M. H.] and apprize yourself with assurance—My heart is open to his, his to me, open to all opportunities when all is clear, sound, long more ardently for the enjoyment than I do my daily Bethany to taste the heaven that awaits me or you both. So my language too strong. It is a sad picture of my feelings—new words can tell you how much I love and how much I long—you will only know it when made in each other's arms we grieve and take those delicious careless which love inspires and marriage sanctifies.

Indeed my dear Betty you do not write to me often enough. I wish at least to hear from you by my Jewel and your last letter is as old as the middle of May. I have written you twice since my return from Hartford.

You will laugh when you consider you about finding out, but I want to know, whether you would prefer my receiving the military benediction to my uniform or in a different habit. It will be just as you please to consult your whim and what you think most consistent with propriety.

If you more so pleased then an idea of being secretly married, the people ought to know entirely your own and you should keep to your heart, of it. Tell my reggy I will only open a correspondence with her. I am writing considering a peace of which from the summer I know of her qualifications, I shall enter upon to prevail upon her to act the principal.
“A spirit entering into bliss, heaven opening upon all its faculties, cannot long more ardently for the enjoyment, than I do my darling Betsey, to taste the heaven that awaits me in your bosom. Is my language too strong? it is a feeble picture of my feelings: – no words can tell you how much I love and how much I long – you will only know it when wrapt in each others arms we give and take those delicious caresses which love inspires and marriage sanctifies”
“Indeed my Dear Betsey you do not write to me often enough – I ought at least to hear from you by every post and your last letter is as old as the middle of sept – I have written you twice since my return from Hartford –”
What’s in a name

- Elizabeth
- Betsy
- Eliza
“You will laugh at me for consulting you about just a trifle; but I want to know, whether you would prefer my receiving the nuptial benediction in my uniform or in a different habit – It will be just as you please; so consult your whim and what you think most consistent with propriety – If you mean to follow our plan of being secretly married, the scruple ought to appear entirely your own, and you should begin to give hints of it –”
Angelica Church to Philip Schuyler, July 11, 1804
Angelica Schuyler Church

● She eloped with John Barker Church in 1777.
  ○ They had 8 children together.
  ○ The family lived in Europe, including Paris and London, from 1783-1797.
The Schuyler Sisters

- Their father had an extensive library and the sisters were very well-read.
- They were exposed to a lot of famous and influential people.
- The sisters were very close.
On the morning of July 11, 1804, Burr and Hamilton met in Weehawken, New Jersey, to duel.

Hamilton was mortally wounded. Burr was unharmed.

The duel was the same location that Hamilton’s son Philip had been killed three years earlier.
Friends rowed Hamilton across the river to Manhattan.

William Bayard met the boat and took Hamilton to the Bayard home.

Doctor David Hosack treated Hamilton.

Hamilton died on July 12th - 31 hours after the duel.
Angelica Church to Philip Schuyler, July 11, 1804
Handwriting shows one's emotional state

Angelica’s handwriting, 1794

Angelica’s handwriting after the duel, 1804
My dear Brother

I have the painful task to inform you that General Hamilton was this morning wounded by that _wretch_ Burr but we have every reason to hope that he will recover.
“May I advice that you repair immediately to my father, as perhaps he may wish to come down – My dear Sister bears with saintlike fortitude this affliction;”
Angelica Church to Philip Schuyler, July 11, 1804

“The Town is in consternation, and there exists only the expression of Grief & Indignation.

Adieu my dear Brother remember me to Sally, ever yours

A Church”
Eliza after Hamilton

- Eliza suffered a tremendous amount of loss in a few short years.
- Hamilton's death left her in financial duress.
- She contributed to numerous charitable works including
  - Establishing an orphanage
  - Building the Washington Monument
- She never remarried
Study the Founding Era with EduHam at Home

Getting Started / Empezar
This course examines the rich tradition of protest literature in the United States from the American Revolution to the present.

This course led by Professor John Stauffer.
Thank you!

- We will send you a packet with the documents we talked about today.
- Please complete a 2-minute feedback survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ITV_June12
- Book Breaks with Elizabeth Varon and her book Armies of Deliverance, Sunday, June 14 at 2pm ET.
- Our next Inside the Vault will be Friday, June 26 at 2pm ET and will feature the Declaration of Independence and a soldier’s experience at Gettysburg.
- Visit gilderlehrman.org for free resources for students, teachers, families, and history enthusiasts of all ages.