



Alexander Hamilton & Aaron Burr: The Men Behind America's Most Famous Duel

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures of Burr, Hamilton, and important people and places.

*Explains the origins of their duel and includes the correspondence between them leading up to the duel.

*Includes accounts of the duel and explains the mysteries and controversies still surrounding what happened.

*Includes a Bibliography for further reading.

"General Hamilton and Judge Kent have declared in substance that they looked upon Mr. Burr to be a dangerous man, and one who ought not be trusted with the reins of government."

The Founding Fathers have been revered by Americans for over 200 years, celebrated for creating a new nation founded upon the loftiest ideals of democracy and meritocracy. But if the American Dream has come to represent the ability to climb the social ladder with skill and hard work, no Founding Father represented the new America more than Alexander Hamilton.

Unfortunately, one of the best known aspects of Hamilton's (1755-1804) life is the manner in which he died, shot and killed in a famous duel with Aaron Burr in 1804. But Hamilton started as an orphaned child in the West Indies before becoming one of the most instrumental Founding Fathers of the United States in that time, not only in helping draft and gain support for the U.S. Constitution but in also leading the Federalist party and building the institutions of the young federal government as Washington's Secretary of Treasury. Hamilton is also well remembered for his authorship, along with John Jay and James Madison, of the Federalist Papers. The Federalist Papers sought to rally support for the Constitution's approval when those three anonymously wrote them, but they demonstrate how men of vastly different political ideologies came to accept the same Constitution.

Conversely, it is hard if not impossible to find a figure with a more controversial legacy than Aaron Burr, one of the most reviled yet mysterious characters of the last 200 years. Today Burr is remembered almost solely for participating in the duel with Hamilton, but it is often forgotten that Burr killed Hamilton while he was Thomas Jefferson's sitting Vice President. As if that wasn't incredible enough, Burr's path to the Vice Presidency sparked a Constitutional crisis after the Election of 1800, and in addition to leading to the establishment of the 12th Amendment, it was Hamilton's support of his principal political foe Jefferson over Burr that helped ignite the arguments that culminated with their duel.

Burr was charged with murder for participating in the controversial and illegal duel, bringing his political career to an end, but he saved his most controversial act for last. After leaving politics, Burr headed west, where he engaged in a mysterious and convoluted scheme that eventually led to charges of treason for conspiring to create a new Western empire. Like the murder charges, he was never convicted of treason for the controversial and confusing conspiracy, but Burr had burned nearly every bridge by then. Having incurred massive debt, Burr took to practicing law and staying out of the public eye for the rest of his life. *Alexander Hamilton & Aaron Burr: The Men Behind America's Most Famous Duel* chronicles the lives and legacies of both men and their notorious duel, but it also humanizes them and provides contemporary accounts that offer conflicting opinions of them. Along with pictures and a bibliography, you will learn about Hamilton, Burr and their duel like you never have before.

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