



May 2011
Volume 2, Issue 5

America's Founding Patriots



Intrepid Books™: www.intrepidbooks.com or www.intrepidbooks.org



Special Interest Articles:

- **REMEMBERING OUR PAST**, an introduction by J. S. Smithies.
- **PEYTON RANDOLPH** by Benson J. Lossing, 1857.
- **PEYTON RANDOLPH** by Thomas Jefferson, 1854.
- **ALEXANDER HAMILTON** by Benson J. Lossing, 1857.
- **THE CHARACTER AND STATESMANSHIP OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON** by Willard Peck, 1864.
- The Vocabulary of Moral Character, **NOAH WEBSTER'S 1828 DICTIONARY**.

HONORING OUR PAST

During 2011, Intrepid Books is proud to continue the series on America's Founding Patriots. These reprints of historical documents and books provide us with the stories of our national's hero's and heroine's.

With the American social structure coming under fire from many areas of the modern world, we need to pause and remember our past; not only the noble deeds done, but the people who helped to form our nation.

The lives of these individuals should inspire us today and allow us to realize that each of us are unique and have the capacity to change the world around us. We each have the power to change our lives internally with our thoughts and externally with our actions and deeds.

We have the power to change our families through the choices we make.

We have the power to change our schools and business by living the principles that our Founding Patriots believed it.

We have the power to change our communities, states, and nation by accepting the great responsibilities that come with living in the greatest nation known. To those that much has been given, much is expected.

We hope you enjoy learning about our Founding Patriots.

THE STATESMEN OF THE REVOLUTION

In this newsletter, we will be presenting reprints of:

PEYTON RANDOLPH by Benson J. Lossing, **EMINENT AMERICANS**, Mason Brothers, New York, 1857.

PEYTON RANDOLPH by Thomas Jefferson, **THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON**, Taylor & Maury, Washington, D.C., 1854.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON by Benson J. Lossing, **EMINENT AMERICANS**, Mason Brothers, New York, 1857.

THE CHARACTER AND STATESMANSHIP OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON by Willard Peck, 1864.

PEYTON RANDOLPH

BY BENSON J. LOSSING



Peyton Randolph

The chronicler of ancient dynasties are often foiled in their researches concerning early kings, and when they have lost the clue of regular descent, or find it leading back into the domains of mere myth, they conveniently conclude that the first monarch of the line was begotten by a god.

We have no such difficulty in this great republican empire of the West, for dynasties change with men, and eyes are yet undimmed which saw the first chief magistrate of this free nation. He was a Virginian--a native of the State called "the mother of presidents"--and his name was Peyton Randolph.

He was born in the year 1723, and was a descendant of one of the oldest of the aristocratic families of Virginia who boast of having the royal blood of Powhatan in their veins.

According to a then prevailing custom, young Randolph was sent to England to be educated. He graduated at Oxford, with honor, and received the degree of Master of Arts. He commenced the study of law on his return home; and so rapid was his success in his profession, that he was made attorney-general of the colony of Virginia, in 1766, when thirty-three years of age.

At that time, the French and Indian War was progressing, and the Indians, incited by the French, were desolating the Virginia frontier. Narratives of these outrages aroused the indignation of Mr. Randolph, and collecting a hundred men, he led them to the borders of the Indian country, and taught the savages some terrible retributory lessons. Toward the close of that contest, Mr. Randolph was elected to a seat in the Virginia Legislature, and he often presided over that body. There his influence was very great, and as the storm of the Revolution came on apace, his voice was ever heard on the side of freedom.

Mr. Randolph was elected a delegate to the first Continental Congress, which assembled in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, on the 6th of September 1774. Charles Thomson recorded on that day: "*The Congress proceeded to the choice of a President, when the Hon. Peyton Randolph, Esq., was unanimously elected.*"

This vote made him really the first President of the United States, for then and there our Union had its birth. He was again chosen President when another Congress met at the same place, in May following, but feeble health compelled him to resign the office, fourteen days afterward, when John Hancock was chosen to fill his place. Mr. Randolph resumed his seat in Congress early the following autumn; and on the 22d of October 1775, he died at Philadelphia, from the effects of apoplexy, in the fifty-third year of his age.

"This vote made him really the first President of the United States..."

PEYTON RANDOLPH

By Thomas Jefferson



Peyton Randolph was the eldest son of Sir John Randolph, of Virginia, a barrister at law, and an eminent practitioner at the bar of the General Court. Peyton was educated at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, and thence went to England, and studied law at the Temple. At his return he intermarried with Elizabeth Harrison, sister of the afterwards Governor Harrison, entered into practice in the General Court, was afterwards appointed the King's Attorney General for the colony, and became a representative in the House of Burgesses (then so called) for the City of Williamsburg.

Governor Dinwiddie having, about this period introduced the exaction of a new fee on his signature of grants for land, without the sanction of any law, the House of Burgesses remonstrated against it, and sent Peyton Randolph to England, as their agent to oppose it before the King and council. The interest of the governor, as usual, prevailed against that of the colony, and this new exaction was confirmed by the King.

After Braddock's defeat on the Monongahela, in 1755, the incursions of the Indians on our frontiers spread panic and dismay through the whole country, insomuch that it was scarcely possible to procure men, either as regulars or militia, to go against them. To counteract this terror and to set good a example, a number of the wealthiest individuals of the colony, and the highest standing in it, in public as well as in their private relations, associated under obligations to furnish each of them two able-bodied men, at their own expense, to form themselves into a regiment under the denomination of the Virginia Blues to join the colonial force on the frontier, and place themselves under its commander, George Washington, then a colonel.

They appointed William Byrd, a member of the council, colonel of the regiment, and Peyton Randolph, I think, had also some command. But the original associates had more the will than the power of becoming effective soldiers. Born and bred in the lap of wealth, all the habits of their lives were of ease, indolence, and indulgence. such men were little fitted to sleep under tents, and often without them, to be exposed to all the intemperances of the seasons, to swim rivers, range the woods, climb mountains, wade morasses, to skulk behind trees, and contend as sharp shooters with the savages of the wilderness, who in all the scenes and exercises would be in their natural element.

Accordingly, the commander was more embarrassed with their care, than reinforced by their service. They had the good fortune to see no enemy, and to return at the end of the campaign rewarded by the favor of the public for this proof of their generous patriotism and good will.

*“To counteract
this terror and to
set a good
example...”*

PEYTON RANDOLPH

by Thomas Jefferson, 1854, continues:

“He now devoted himself solely to his duties as a legislator, ...”

When afterwards in 1764, on the proposal of the Stamp Act, the House of Burgesses determined to send an address against it to the King, and memorials to the Houses of Lords and Commons, Peyton Randolph, George Wythe, and (I think) Robert C. Nicholas, were appointed to draw these papers. That to the King was by Peyton Randolph, and the memorial to the Commons was by George Wythe. It was based on the ground of these papers that those gentlemen opposed the famous resolutions of Mr. Henry in 1765, to wit, that the principles of these resolutions had been asserted and maintained in the address and memorials of the year before, to which an answer was yet to be expected.

On the death of the speaker, Robinson, in 1766, Peyton Randolph was elected speaker. He resigned his office of Attorney General, in which he was succeeded by his brother Randolph, father of the late Edmund Randolph, and retired from the bar. He now devoted himself solely to his duties as a legislator, and although sound in his principles, and going steadily with us in opposition to the British usurpations, he, with the other older members, yielded the lead to the younger, only tempering their ardor, and so far moderating their pace as to prevent their going too far in advance of the public sentiment.

On the establishment of a committee by the legislature, to correspond with the other colonies, he was named their chairman, and their first proposition to the other colonies was to appoint similar committees, who might consider the expediency of calling a general Congress of deputies in order to procure a harmony of procedure among the whole. This produced the call of the first Congress, to which he was chosen a delegate, by the House of Burgesses, and of which he was appointed, by that Congress, its president.

On the receipt of what was called Lord North's conciliatory proposition, in 1775, Lord Dunmore called the General Assembly and laid it before them. Peyton Randolph quitted the chair of Congress, in which he was succeeded by Mr. Hancock, and repaired to that of the House which had deputed him. Anxious about the tone and spirit of the answer which should be given (because being the first it might have effect on those of the other colonies), and supposing that a younger pen would be more likely to come up to the feelings of the body he had left, he requested me to draw the answer, and steadily supported and carried it through the House, with a few softenings only from the more timid members.

After the adjournment of the House of Burgesses he returned to Congress, and died there of an apoplexy, on the 22nd of October following, aged as I should conjecture, about fifty years.

PEYTON RANDOLPH

by Thomas Jefferson, 1854, continues:



He was indeed a most excellent man; and none was ever more beloved and respected by his friends. Somewhat cold and coy towards strangers, but of the sweetest affability when ripened into acquaintance. Of attic pleasantry in conversation, always good humored and conciliatory. With a sound and logical head, he was well read in the law; and his opinions when consulted, were highly regarded presenting always a learned and sound view of the subject, but generally, too, a listlessness to go into its thorough development; for being heavy and inert in body, he was rather too indolent and careless for business, which occasioned him to get a smaller proportion of it at the bar than his abilities would otherwise have commanded.

Indeed, after his appointment as Attorney General, he did not seem to court, nor scarcely welcome business. In that office he considered himself equally charged with the rights of the colony as with those of the crown; and in criminal prosecutions exaggerating nothing, he aimed at a candid and just state of the transaction, believing it more a duty to save an innocent than to convict a guilty man.

Although not eloquent, his matter was so substantial that no man commanded more attention, which, joined with a sense of his great worth, gave him a weight in the House of Burgesses, which few ever attained. He was liberal in his expenses, but correct also, so as not to be involved in pecuniary embarrassments; and with a heart always open to the amiable sensibilities of our nature, he did as many good acts as could have been done with his fortune, without injuriously impairing his means of continuing them. He left no issue, and gave his fortune to his widow and nephew, the late Edmund Randolph.



Peyton Randolph was buried at the Chapel of the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

by Benson J. Lossing, 1857

Around the name of Hamilton, the pure patriot, the brave soldier, the accomplished statesman, and acute financier, there in a halo which brightens with the lapse of years, for he was peerless among his fellows. He was a native of the island of Nevis, in the West Indies, and was descended from a Scotch father and a French mother. He was born on the 11th of January, 1767. He received a fair education in childhood, and at the age of twelve years he became a clerk in the mercantile house of Nicholas Cruger, at St. Croix. Every leisure moment he devoted to study; and while yet a mere youth, a production of his pen gave such evidence of great genius, that the friends of his widowed mother provided means for sending him to New York to be thoroughly educated.

At the age of sixteen years he accompanied his mother to the United States, and entered King's (now Columbia) College as a student, where he remained about three years. The contest of words, with Great Britain, was then raging, and gave scope to his thoughts and topics for his pen. When only seventeen years of age he appeared as a speaker at public meetings, and he assisted the Sons of Liberty in carrying off British cannon from the battery of Fort George, at the foot of Broadway, in 1776.

He entered the army as captain of an artillery company, raised chiefly by himself; and performed good service at White Plains, Trenton, and Princeton. His pen was as active as his sword, and many articles, attributed to more mature and eminent men, were the offspring of his brain.

He attracted the special attention of Washington, and in March, 1777, the commander-in-chief appointed him his aid-de-camp, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. During the remainder of the war, until the capture of Cornwallis in the

autumn of 1781, he was Washington's chief secretary, and was also the leader of a corps of light infantry, under La Fayette, at the siege of Yorktown.

After that event he left the army, and, in 1782, was admitted to practice at the bar of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. He was a member of Congress during that year, but declined a reelection. He had married a daughter of General Philip Schuyler, in 1780, and he looked to his profession for the support of his family.

He rose to distinction very rapidly, yet in the midst of his extensive business, he found time to employ his pen upon subjects of national importance. He was a member of the convention that framed the Federal Constitution, and in connection with Madison and Jay, wrote the series of articles in favor of that instrument, known as THE FEDERALIST. Of the eighty-five numbers, Hamilton wrote fifty-four.



He was also a member of the state convention, held at Poughkeepsie in 1788, that ratified the Constitution. When, in 1789, the new government was organized, Washington, on the earnest recommendation of Robert Morris, placed Mr. Hamilton at the head of the Treasury. It was a wise choice, for financial difficulties were more formidable than any others in the way of the administration, and no man was more capable of bringing order out of confusion, than Mr. Hamilton. His consummate skill soon regulated money matters; but while he was improving the fiscal condition of the government, he was injuring his own. He accordingly resigned his office, in 1795, and turned his attention to his profession.

When a provisional army was raised in 1798, Washington accepted the commission of commander-in-chief only on condition that Hamilton should be his associate, and second in command. This was Hamilton's last public service. In the Winter of 1804, he became involved in a political dispute with Colonel Aaron Burr, which resulted in a duel in July following. They met at Hoboken, and upon the same spot where his son was killed in a duel a few years previously, Hamilton was mortally wounded, and died the next day, July 12th 1804, at the age of little more than forty-seven years. His wife survived him, in widowhood, fifty years. She died on the 9th of November, 1854, at the age of ninety-seven years and three months.

The voluminous papers of General Hamilton were purchased by Congress and after being arranged by his son, John C. Hamilton, they were published in seven octavo volumes, in 1841.

THE CHARACTER AND STATESMANSHIP OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON

by WILLARD PECK, 1864.

Rome had her household gods in her illustrious dead. By the glory of their ancestors the hearts of her sons were fired with that valor and patriotism which crowned their city queen of the world.

America too has her Penates in the orators that initiated, in the warriors that achieved, in the statesmen that secured the success of the Revolution.

The sterling principle, the exalted patriotism, and the intellectual strength of that period are

most brilliantly exemplified in the character and statesmanship of Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton inherited from his parents their national characteristics. From his father he received the mental acumen, the sterling sense, and the high principle of the Scotchman; from his mother, the warm impulses, the refined sensibilities, and the chivalric honor of the Huguenot. Hamilton was thus by nature the affectionate husband, the faithful friend, the true gentleman, and the zealous patriot.

The distinguishing feature of Hamilton's character was intellectual power. The higher faculties of his mind reigned supreme. His feelings were as warm and his fancy as bright as the sun of his native Indies, but they never dazzled his reason or blinded his judgment. His mind was capable of keen analysis and broad generalization.

Unflinching courage, unflagging energy, and untiring industry were also his. An indomitable will, wielding superior mental faculties, gave to his character the attribute of executive power. Hamilton's life thus became a series of splendid intellectual achievements.

As the secretary of Washington he was the brain of the Revolution; as a writer and an orator he molded public opinion; and as a statesman he solved the problems of finance and government. Nor was Hamilton's character devoid of moral greatness. As a citizen, a lawyer, and a soldier, high principle ever controlled his conduct.

Regardless of his own interests he ever espoused the cause of truth and justice and devoted himself with a spirit of self-sacrifice to his country. In accepting the challenge of Burr to fight the duel in which he lost his life, Hamilton indeed disobeyed his convictions of right. He thought that to decline would impugn his courage and sully his honor. He erred: but it was the fault of a chivalric

nature, a fault expiated in his death. Character finds its true expression in life.

In the boy in business at fourteen, in the collegian swaying by his eloquence the people of New York, in the young captain in the vanguard of American freemen, in the confidential adviser of Washington, in the keen lawyer, the shrewd politician, the able editor, the comprehensive statesman, the true patriot, and the noble gentleman, Hamilton presents a mosaic of human character, wonderful in its combinations, striking in its contrasts, and grand in its integrity.

The character of Hamilton molded his statesmanship. Intellectual, moral, and executive power has stamped his work with the impress of utility, patriotism, and truth.

Let us examine his political philosophy and then estimate. In the Convention of '87 Hamilton advocated the strongest form of central republican government. History had pronounced pure democracy a failure. The American Revolution had discovered the weakness of confederation. A republic upon the confines of monarchy was the ideal of Hamilton.

A distinguishing feature of Hamilton's theory was the appointment of State officers and the revision of State laws by the federal executive; and by this virtual consolidation of the States to create a central power, which should "*unite, pervade, and invigorate the whole country.*" Sectional prejudice may become stronger than national pride. The natural supports of government are the interests and necessities of the citizens.

A centralized government would have pledged these principles to the maintenance of national faith, honor, and integrity. Secession would have been not only unconstitutional but impossible.

Another distinguishing feature of Hamilton's theory was in the organization of the Senate. He would have made it a select legislative body whose members should be chosen for life by the landed proprietors of the nation.

The people are not infallible. *Vox populi is not vox Dei.* A reckless democracy is the most terrible of despotisms. Freed by its tenure of office from the influence of popular passion, a senate thus constituted would have been a great conservative element in the government.

Still another feature of Hamilton's theory was to strengthen the executive. Upon the administration depends the efficiency of every system. The noblest government ever devised by philosophy, without ability to maintain its authority, is contemptible. The liberty and safety of the citizens are the true objects of government. Hamilton would have clothed the executive with strength commensurate with these objects. He would have created an executive, single in person, permanent in tenure, and independent in power.

Such in general are Hamilton's peculiar views as a constitutional statesman. Strength was his ideal; to found a permanent republic, his object. On account of these views Hamilton has been reproached as a monarchist. The charge is unwarrantable. He declared that a republic only could be founded in America.

Hamilton was the intelligent patriot. He sought to establish the Republic upon the basis of law. The government of England was his model, not to copy but to imitate. Hamilton was a national statesman. Free from local prejudice his care was not for the interest of the States but of the nation. Hamilton was a practical statesman. He recognized facts and regarded man not as he ought to be but as he was. Hamilton was a

true conservative statesman. Like Hampden and Lafayette he opposed all oppression, whether of the monarch or the mob.

Hamilton was the philosophic statesman. History was the oracle from which he drew his political inspiration. He analyzed human action and made its motives the basis of his science of government. Hamilton was a comprehensive statesman. He never proposed measures but always advocated principles.

In his political philosophy he studied the past and embraced the future. The work for the state and the spirit, which he imparts to its institutions are the crowning glory of the statesman.

The first work of Hamilton was the education of public opinion to the adoption of the Constitution. By pen and voice he stimulates the national thought. During the Revolution he discovered to the leading minds of the day the imbecility of the old Confederation and demonstrated the necessity of a stronger government. At the conclusion of the war, through the press and in the forum, Hamilton urged upon the people the consideration of the mighty question of government; and by continuous effort succeeded in assembling the States in constitutional convention. The composition of that body indicated the temper of the people. Many members were pledged to resist any change; others were absorbed in the interests of their respective States.

Hamilton presented the testimony of history, developed established truths, pictured to their minds his own ideal of unity and power, and by the most forcible argument and most eloquent appeal wrought the sentiment of the Convention to the standard of the present Constitution. Hamilton now labored for its adoption. With Madison and Jay he issued the "*Federalist*," and, as its ablest expounder, explained its character and secured its acceptance by the people. But the work of

Hamilton was not yet complete. The government must be put into successful operation.

Washington appreciated the eminent talents of Hamilton and appointed him Secretary of the Treasury. This was the most responsible office under the new government. During the Revolution a heavy debt had been incurred. Business was paralyzed and the nation was upon the brink of bankruptcy. To restore the public credit was a Herculean task few could have accomplished. But Hamilton developed the hidden resources of the people, rescued the nation from the dishonor of repudiation, and laid broad and deep the foundations upon which has since been built the grand structure of our financial prosperity.

In the conception, adoption, and early administration of the Constitution, the statesmanship of Alexander Hamilton is thus everywhere conspicuous. The wisdom of Hamilton's philosophy has vindicated itself. Under the influence, which his spirit has imparted to its institutions, the country has for eighty-one years advanced in a career of unparalleled prosperity. Today too in the hour of national trial, the vigor, which it was at once the object and fruition of Hamilton's statesmanship to infuse into the Constitution, is the element of strength which will enable it to survive the attacks of a giant rebellion and to perpetuate the national honor, integrity, and power.



Finis



Intrepid Books™

PO Box 66
Mount Vernon, WA 98274

E-Mail:

Intrepid.books@att.net

**Teaching Integrity
to Tomorrow's
Leaders**

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.intrepidbooks.org



The definitions of moral character are from Noah Webster's **1828 DICTIONARY**:

character — a mark made by cutting or engraving, as on stone, metal or other hard material...a mark or figure made by stamping or impression...the peculiar qualities, impressed by nature or habit on a person, which distinguish him from others.

charity — love, benevolence, good will.

chastity — purity of the body,...freedom from obscenity, as in language or conversation.

civility — the state of being civilized; refinement of manners; good breeding; politeness; complaisance; courtesy,...civilities denote acts of politeness.

complaisance — a pleasing deportment; courtesy; that manner of address and behavior in social intercourse which gives pleasure; civility.

complaisant — pleasing in manners; courteous; obliging.

courtesy — elegance or politeness of manners; especially, politeness connected with kindness; civility...to treat with civility.

ethics — the doctrines of morality or social manners...a system of moral principles.

evil — having bad qualities of a moral kind; wicked; corrupt; perverse; wrong...moral evil is any deviation of a moral agent from the rules of conduct prescribed to him by God, or by legitimate human authority.

felicity — happiness; blessedness.

fidelity — faithfulness; careful and exact observance of duty,...honesty; veracity.

humble — lowly, modest; meek.

humility — in ethics, freedom from pride and arrogance; humbleness of mind.

industry — habitual diligence in any employment, either bodily or mental.

justice — the virtue which consists in giving everyone what is his due...honesty and integrity in commerce or mutual intercourse.

manner — form; method; way of performing or executing; custom; habitual practice.

mannerly — with civility; respectfully; without rudeness.

manners — deportment; carriage; behavior; conduct; course of life; in a moral sense.

modesty — that lowly temper which accompanies a moderate estimate of one's own worth and importance.

moral — relating to the practice, manners or conduct of men as social beings in relation to each other, and with reference to right and wrong. The word moral is applicable to actions that are good or evil, virtuous, or vicious, and has reference to the law of God as the standard by which their character is to be determined.

morality — the doctrine or system of moral duties, or duties of men in their social character; ethics.

polite — literally, smooth, glossy, and used in this sense till within a century. Being polished or elegant in manners; refined in behavior; well bred; courteous; complaisant; obliging.

precept — in a general sense, any commandment or order intended as an authoritative rule of action; but applied particularly to commands respecting moral conduct. The Ten Commandments are so many precepts for the regulation of our moral conduct.

principle — in a general sense, the cause, source or origin of anything; that from which a thing proceeds; as the principle of motion; the principles of actions;...ground; foundation; that which supports an assertion, an action, or a series of actions or of reasoning....a general truth; a law comprehending many subordinate truths; as the principles of morality, of law, of government, etc.

quality — property; that which belongs to a body or substance, or can be predicated of it...virtue or particular power of producing certain effects...disposition; temper...virtue or vice as good qualities, or bad qualities...character.

refinement — the act of purifying by separating from a substance all extraneous matter;...polish of language; elegance; purity,...purity of heart; the state of the heart purified from sensual and evil affections.

rule — government,...control; supreme command or authority;...that which is established as a principle, standard or directory; that by which anything is to be adjusted or regulated, or to which it is to be conformed...established mode or course of proceeding prescribed in private life. Every man should have some fixed rules for managing his own affairs.

strength — firmness; solidity or toughness...power of resisting attacks; fastness.

temperance — moderation; particularly, habitual, moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions.

truth — conformity to fact or reality; true state of facts.

valor — strength of mind in regard to danger; that quality which enables a man to encounter danger with firmness; person bravery.

veracity — habitual observance of truth.

vice — properly, a spot or defect; a fault; a blemish...in ethics, any voluntary action or course of conduct which deviates from the rules of moral rectitude, or from the plain rules of propriety...corruption of manners.

virtue — strength, the practice of moral duties and abstaining from vice...the practice of moral duties from sincere love to God and His laws, is virtue and religion.