Walking In Hamilton’s Footsteps

EARLY FEDERALIST

50 STATE STREET: FORMER HOME OF JUDGE JOHN TAYLER

Though the original structure no longer stands, this corner is the location of a pivotal moment in Hamilton’s life. Judge Tayler hosted a dinner party at his home at 50 State Street attended by Alexander Hamilton, Philip Schuyler and Taylor’s son-in-law Dr. Charles D. Cooper. Cooper later composed a letter detailing the evening, claiming Hamilton called Burr “a dangerous man and ought not to be trusted.” The Albany Register obtained a copy of a letter and published it on April 23rd, 1804. When Burr demanded a retraction, Hamilton would neither admit nor deny the allegation. Burr challenged Hamilton to a duel on July 11th in Weehawken, New Jersey, where he fatally shot Hamilton.

CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMER

ALBANY CITY HALL

Albany City Hall was constructed between 1800-1803. Some time after the first time of Hamilton. However, in front of its steps a statue has been erected to celebrate an important figure in Hamilton’s Albany life. Revolutionary War General Philip Schuyler Schuyler was both father-in-law and mentor to Alexander Hamilton. Schuyler and Hamilton were federalist allies and it was Schuyler who chose Hamilton as a delegate for the Constitutional Convention. A lifelong resident of Albany, Schuyler served as member of the New York State Assembly and was elected to the Continental Congress in 1775. Incensed by British colonial rule, he joined the Continental Army in summer of 1775, and helped the colony overthrow the British. Following the revolution, he was the first Senator for the state of New York. Schuyler lost his seat to Aaron Burr in 1791. This is considered the beginning of Hamilton and Burr’s rivalry.

CAPITAL CITY

NEW YORK STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

The NYS Capitol Building construction began in 1867 and was declared completed in 1899 at the cost of $25 million dollars. During Hamilton’s life, state government resided in the more modest Stadt Huys, at the foot of State Street, which no longer stands. As the original city hall, the Stadt Huys was home to the local revolutionary movement during the Revolutionary War, and temporary home for the New York State Legislature after the U.S. won its freedom from Great Britain. In 1754, the Albany Plan of Union was drafted at the stad Hudson with Benjamin Franklin, which was the founding of the Articles of the Confederation.

HAMILTON AND BURR: POLITICAL RIVALS AND PERSONAL VENDETTAS

The Fort Orange Club has been a private club since 1880. Built in 1810 as the private residence of Samuel Hill. Between 1819-1827 it was a boarding house named “Soulden House.” Reportedly, Aaron Burr, then disgraced by the duel with Hamilton, stayed the night here.

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THE QUACKENBUSH HOUSE

Now the home of The Olde English Pub, the Quackenbush House is the second oldest building in Albany. It was built c. 1730 for brick maker Peter Quackenbush and generations of his family lived here for nearly 150 years. During the American Revolution, the home belonged to Col. Henry Quackenbush who fought in the Battle of Saratoga in 1777. Quackenbush escorted British captive General Burgoyne to Albany. They briefly stopped at the Quackenbush house for refreshments before continuing the journey to Schuyler Mansion, where Burgoyne would be imprisoned.

THE FIRST CHURCH

The congregation of the First Church in Albany, part of the Reformed Church in America, was established in 1642. It is the second oldest congregation in New York State. State Aaron Burr’s daughter, Theodosia, was married here and Hamilton’s in-laws, the Schuylers, were members of the church congregation. After Hamilton’s death, the Reverend Eliphalet Nott from the First Presbyterian Church gave a rousing eulogy at the church titled On the Death of Hamilton, which was considered a driving force in the eventual outlawing of dueling.

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