

# A FEW OF HAMILTON'S LETTERS

INCLUDING HIS DESCRIPTION OF  
THE GREAT WEST INDIAN  
HURRICANE OF 1772

EDITED BY

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

AUTHOR OF "THE CONQUEROR," "THE SPLENDID IDLE FORTIES"  
ETC., ETC.

*WITH PORTRAITS*

*New York*

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1903

*All rights reserved*

E  
302  
.H23

**COPYRIGHT, 1903,  
BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.**

---

Set up and electrotyped February, 1903.

**Norwood Press  
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith  
Norwood Mass. U.S.A.**

## FROM HUGH KNOX

ST. CROIX, December 10, 1777.

*Dear Hamilton,*— The fine, impartial, laconic, and highly descriptive account you favoured me with of the last year's campaign, in your letter of March last, excited in me, and many of your other friends here, an earnest desire of further accounts from your pen, of the succeeding fortunes of the Great American War: a war which will, one day, shine more illustriously in the historic page, than any which has happened since the times of Nimrod and the Giants; and deservedly, on account of the goodness of the cause, the grandeur of the object, the éclat of the generals, the bravery of the troops,—and (alas! that I should be obliged to add) of the cruelty and ferocity which has marked the route of your enemies; and the tons of brothers' blood which has been shed on the unhappy occasion.

I wrote two answers to your obliging letter both of which I hope have reached you; and in both of which I have urged it upon you, to make and collect such memoirs as the urgency

of your affairs will permit you; which may furnish materials for an accurate history of the war, when you shall have leisure to fill up and embellish such a skeleton, with all that elegance and dignity of which your fine pen is capable.

The honourable post you hold under the GREAT General Washington, and so near his person, will give you a peculiar advantage in delineating his character, both in his amiable private virtues and military abilities. And depend upon it, the very minutiae of that incomparable man will be read with avidity by posterity. You know me too well, I hope, to suspect me of superstition; yet I feel myself, at times, under a strong impulse to *prophesy*, that *Washington* was born for the deliverance of *America*—and that Providence who has raised and trained him up for that very purpose, will watch over his *sacred* life with a paternal and solicitous care; will shield his head in every day of battle—*will* give him to see *America free, flourishing, and happy*—and *will* adorn his fame, among latest posterity, with a Garland of Laurel, more verdant, blooming and enviable, than ever adorned the brow of a *Marlborough*!

The bearer of this line (if he should be indeed

so fortunate as to put it into your hand) is our worthy friend, Mr. Cornelius Durant, who is possessed of an ardent desire of having the honour of a short interview with General Washington; principally that he may have it to say, that he has seen and spoken to *the greatest man of this age*: and, indeed, considering Mr. Durant's personal worth; his uncommon zeal for, and attachment to the American cause; the losses he has sustained in attempting to assist her; and his extraordinary admiration of, and love to the General's character and person, few men more richly merit this indulgence. If you still exist, and exist near the General's person (and I have not yet seen your name among the list of the slain or the disgraced), you can easily procure him this honour — and I trust you will.

We are now blessed with, and certified of, the glorious news of Burgoyne's surrender to the immortal GATES; another bright star in the Constellation of American Heroes; and we are momentarily expecting to hear that General Washington has done something like the same by General Howe! But we yet tremble in suspense — and it is indeed a *painful one*. Probably

before this letter goes we shall hear more of the matter. Our general accounts are favourable; and while the *Chevaux de frize* are defended we have no fears about Philadelphia. May this campaign decide the matter!

By the time this reaches you, you will be (if you are at all) in winter quarters; and may perhaps be at leisure to write me a half folio, of which Mr. Durant will take care to write me duplicates, or triplicates, for fear of miscarriage.

A piece of mine, entitled "An Address to America, by a friend in a foreign government," has been sent to the Congress for publication (if approved). I know not yet its fate. It is, at least, an honestly designed and animating piece, but written incorrectly, and in a hurry. If you have seen it pray give me your sentiments about it; but let it be on a loose paper enclosed in your letter; for the knowledge of my being the author must be a profound secret here.

My wishes are, that the God of Armies may defend and protect you, and to cause you happily to survive, and to hand down to posterity the

present important scenes. Numbers here esteem you, and would join me in declaring themselves, as I do,

Dear Hamilton,

Your ever affectionate friend and servant,

HUGH KNOX.

To OTHO H. WILLIAMS

11th June, 1779.

*Dear Williams,*— The General sends you four fresh horsemen to enable you to transmit him intelligence. The General will take the road you marched to your quarters.

Mind your eye, my dear boy, and if you have an opportunity, fight hard.

Your friend and servant,

A. HAMILTON.

FROM COLONEL FLEURY

L'INFANTRY CAMP, 18th August, 1779.

*Dear Colonel,*— The officers of the two A Battalions of l'Infanterie, which I actually command, have applied to me for ceasing to run over these