



Boxwood Hall  
State Historic Site

1073 East Jersey Street  
Elizabeth, NJ 07201  
(908) 282-7617







*Alexander Hamilton*  
**FREQUENTLY VISITED HERE**

Notes









*Walk Through History*  
**IN MODERN TIMES**



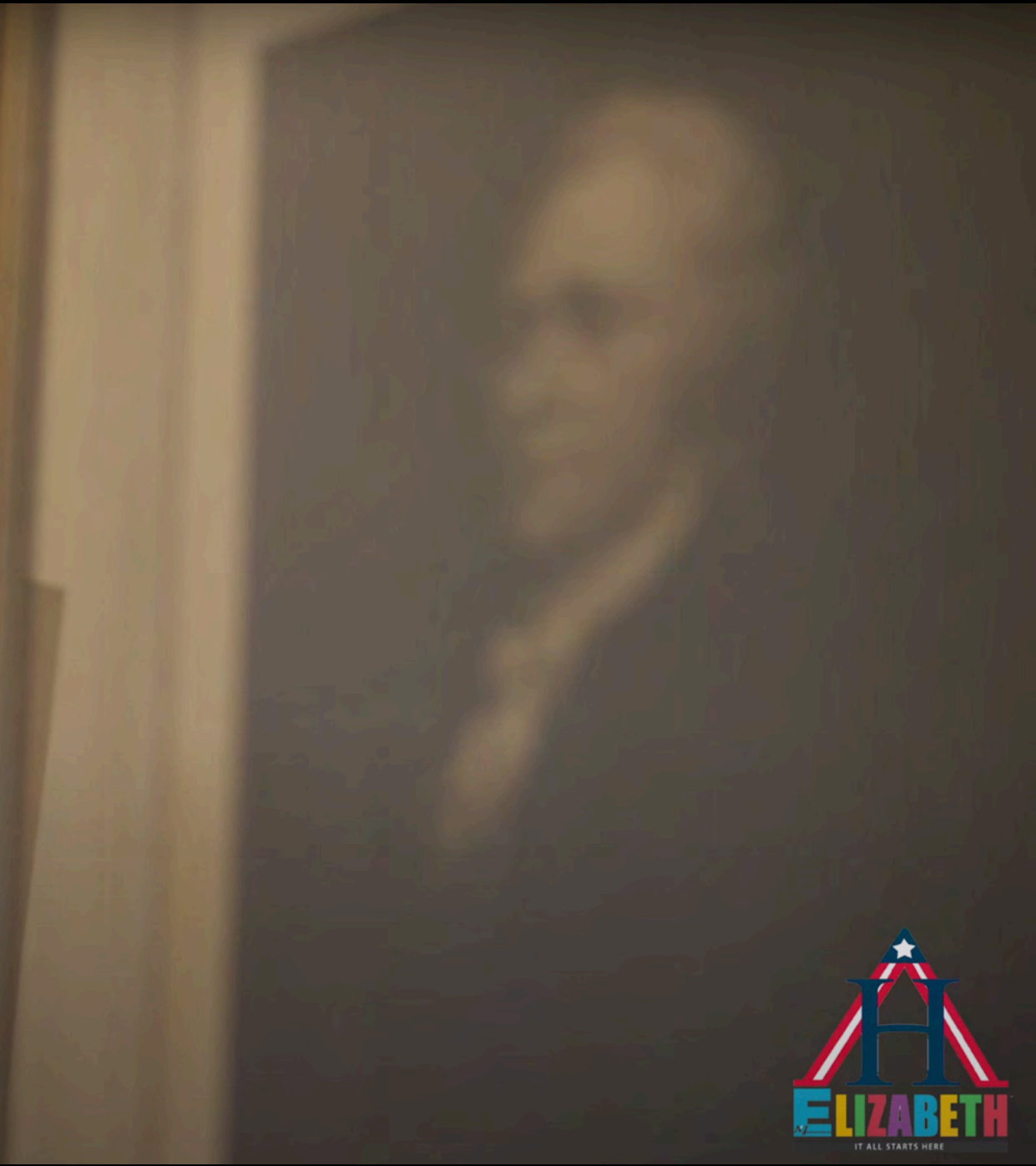












*For More Information:*  
**GOELIZABETHNJ.COM/HAMILTONTOUR**



**Image: Katherine**

Hi! On behalf of the NJ Division of Parks & Forests, welcome to Boxwood hall State Historic Site.

My name is Katherine & I am the permanent staff here.

**Image: Boxwood Exterior and/or Interior shots**

Boxwood Hall is over 250 years old & it & the surrounding area have changed a lot over the years. What was an 18-room mansion in semi-rural Elizabethtown is now an 8-room house in the thriving City of Elizabeth. As you can imagine, we have a lot of stories to tell.

Today, we're going to focus on the second owner of the house, Elias Boudinot, who was a mentor to Alexander Hamilton.

**Image: Boudinot Room (green wallpaper room)**

We call this the Boudinot Room; it's decorated in the style of the 1770's. We don't know exactly what paper was on the walls when Hamilton was here, but this paper is a copy of a pattern popular at that time. But Hamilton would have seen this King of Prussia marble fireplace and this lovely hand carved woodwork.

**Image: Elias Boudinot**

Here is Elias Boudinot. This is a copy of a Charles Wilson Peale portrait, done about 15 years after Boudinot's first contact with Hamilton.

**Image: Hannah Boudinot**

And this is Elias' wife, Hannah Stockton.

**Image: Katherine**

Elias Boudinot IV was born in Philadelphia & spent much of his boyhood there. One of his neighbors was Benjamin Franklin. When Elias was about 13, the Boudinots moved to Princeton, NJ, where his father became the Postmaster.

Boudinot studied law with his sister's husband, Richard Stockton, where he met & fell in love with Richard's sister, Hannah. Elias was licensed to practice law in 1760 & promptly moved to the larger city of Elizabethtown, where he opened a law office. Two years later, he & Hannah married; settling into a small house on what is now Madison Avenue. Ten years & two children later, Elias & Hannah bought this house.

**Image: Hamilton (the first one)**

It was here that the teenaged Alexander Hamilton made his way, carrying a letter from Rev. Hugh Knox. Elias Boudinot had met Hugh Knox back in Princeton, when Knox was studying for the ministry at the College of NJ. After his ordination, Knox went to the West Indies, settling in St. Croix, where he met Alexander Hamilton. The minister believed Hamilton had a great future ahead, but needed formal education. Knox became one of the principle sponsors of the plan that brought Hamilton to Elizabethtown. The combination of Hamilton's demeanor & Knox's letter encouraged Boudinot to take the young man under his wing.

**Image: Elias Boudinot**

What would Hamilton have seen in & learned from Elias Boudinot?

First & foremost, a self-made man. While Boudinot did not have the irregular childhood that Hamilton experienced, Boudinot's was no bed of roses. His father was a silversmith, but developed a palsy—possibly Parkinson's—which meant he had to find another way to support his family. The job of Postmaster in Princeton brought in an income & life was probably cheaper than in Philadelphia, but there would be no money for Elias to attend college.

This was a blow. Elias dreamed of becoming a minister, but clergymen had to be college graduates. So, Elias had to forfeit his dream & find another career. Since in those days, lawyers did not need college, Boudinot decided on the legal field.

Boudinot, like Hamilton, was determined to succeed. He worked at his law practice & also was a very successful land speculator.

On a personal level, Hamilton would have known a man who was faithful to his God & to his family. Belief in God shaped Boudinot's life; he strove to obey his Lord in all aspects of his life. Boudinot had a stable home life. He may have "married up"—the Stocktons were more prominent & richer than the Boudinots—but he adored his wife & was a loving father to his children. Quite a change from Hamilton's father!

### **Image: Hannah**

And how might Hannah have influenced Hamilton? In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, married couples depended on each other more than they do today, so choosing a mate was a very serious matter. Women may have had few legal rights, but without their moral support & their tending to the details of daily life, few of our Founding Fathers could have achieved what they did. In Hannah Boudinot, Hamilton would have seen a woman whose life was centered on her family, and who held the heart & trust of her husband.

(Hamilton himself would "marry up". Although he was not the faithful husband Boudinot was, he & Eliza had a strong enough relationship that she never remarried.)

One last incident shows the closeness that developed between the Boudinots & Hamilton. When the Boudinots younger daughter, Anna Maria, became seriously ill, Hamilton sat up with the two year old, allowing the parents to try to get some rest. After the little one passed away, Hamilton wrote a memorial poem, mourning her death.

**Image: Hamilton (the familiar one)**

Long after Hamilton left Elizabethtown, he maintained a relationship with Elias Boudinot. Mutual admiration & respect, born in this house, lasted until Hamilton's death.