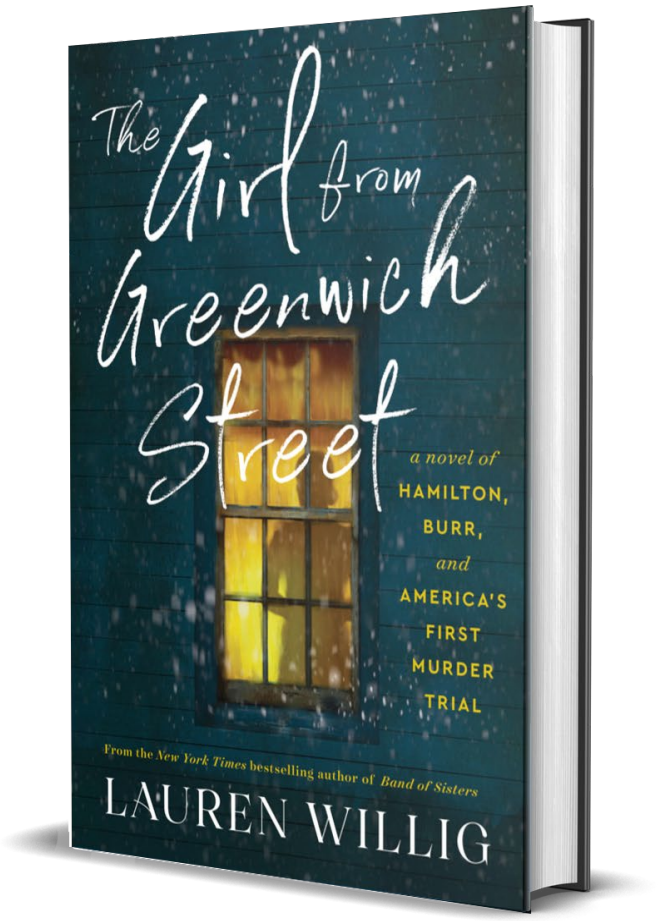
Readers' Guide



The Girl from Greenwich Street:

A novel of Hamilton, Burr, and America's First Murder Trial

The Girl from Greenwich Street

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Discussion Questions
(Warning: Spoilers!)

1. Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr come together as defense attorneys in the hopes of saving a man's life- but also to ingratiate themselves with the voting public. Are they more motivated by altruism or ambition? What about the prosecutor, Cadwallader Colden?

2. How do rumor and mob mentality shape the unfolding of events in the novel? Does public outrage serve any positive purpose? How do various characters try to use it to their advantage?

3. Brockholst Livingston, when coming up with a defense strategy, says: “The prosecution will attempt to stir the emotions of the jury by painting her as a virtuous woman seduced and betrayed. They'll be less sympathetic to a loose woman.” Do we still see this defense used today in criminal cases?

4. Particular attention is paid to dress and style. Elma's borrowed muff is the first clue to her murder, the girls in the Ring household earn money making hats, and Croucher sells luxuries like silk stockings. What is the role of clothing in relationships and social standing? How do characters' states of dress reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings?

5. Hamilton tells Burr: “If a thing is to be done, it should be done right. To merely acquit the boy isn't enough; we ought to bring the guilty to justice.” Do you believe that the two famous lawyers did right in their defense of Levi Weeks?

6. Elias tells Caty: “If thee had been here where thee were meant to be, none of this would have happened.” What is he accusing her of? Is there any truth to it? What does this moment reveal about Elias? Is he at all responsible for what happened to Elma, even though he didn't murder her?

7. Did you sympathize with Caty? Is her resentment of Elma justified? Why is she so conflicted about Elma's death and the resulting trial?

8. Nearly every woman in this novel's life is dramatically affected by pregnancy, miscarriage, and childbirth, from Elma to Caty to Eliza Hamilton, even more minor characters like Elizabeth Weeks and Maria Colden. What kind of insight do their experiences give you about women's lives in this time period? Why do you think Lauren Willig chose to include those stories in this novel?

9. How does Margaret Miller's revelation at the end of the book change the narrative around Elma's story? How does Cadwallader Colden's prosecution of her rapist mirror his failed prosecution of Levi Weeks? Does Margaret receive the justice that was denied to Elma Sands?

10. Eliza Hamilton tells Alexander: “There are no accounts and lines of credit in a marriage.” Does this ring true to you? What did you make of the different marriages that we see in this novel: Hamilton and Eliza's and Elias and Caty's, Maria and Cadwallader's? Which are models? Which are cautionary tales?

11. How does Hope's loyalty towards her family affect her choices? What changes for her as the trial unfolds? Do you agree with her choice to go back to New Cornwall at the end?

12. At the end of the novel, Lauren Willig provides an epilogue titled “What Became of Them After?” Were you surprised to learn about what happened to the real-life characters in this book in the years after the murder trial? Could you have imagined or wished different endings for the people you read about?

13. After reading the book and the historical note, who do you think murdered Elma Sands? Do you agree with Willig's conclusions or do you have a theory of your own?

14. Even though Elma Sands's body was found in the Manhattan Well over two hundred and twenty-five years ago, the story of her murder is still a feature of city tours and frequent articles, blog posts, and most recently a dedicated podcast by actress Allison Williams. What is it about Elma's death that still resonates today?

The Murder of Elma Sands

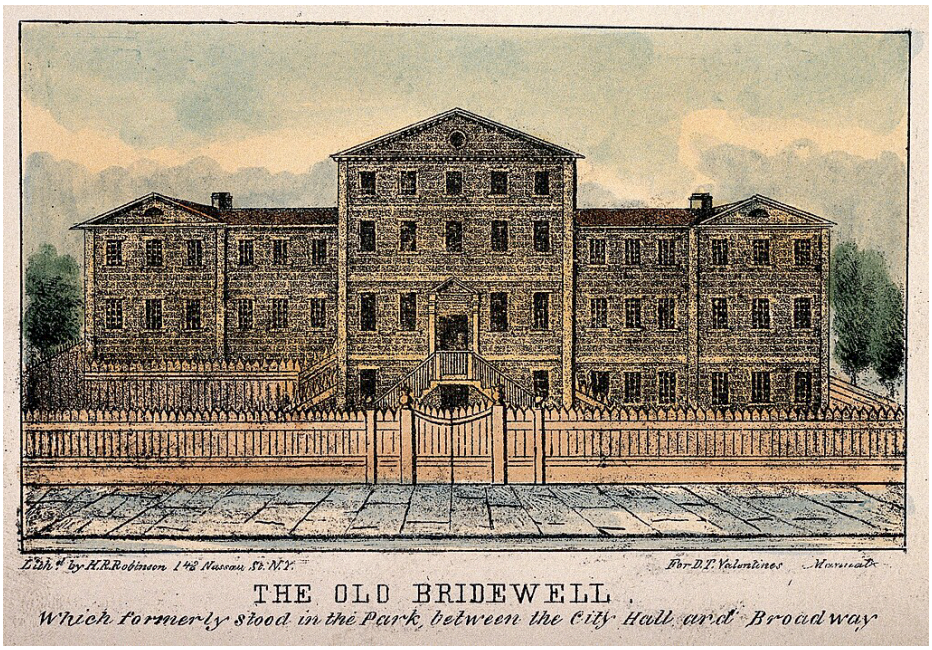
On the evening of December 22nd, 1799, Elma Sands left her Quaker cousin's boarding house at 208 Greenwich Street. She never returned.

On the 2nd of January, 1800, Elma's body was found in the Manhattan Well in Lispenard's Meadow.

The Island Where It Happened

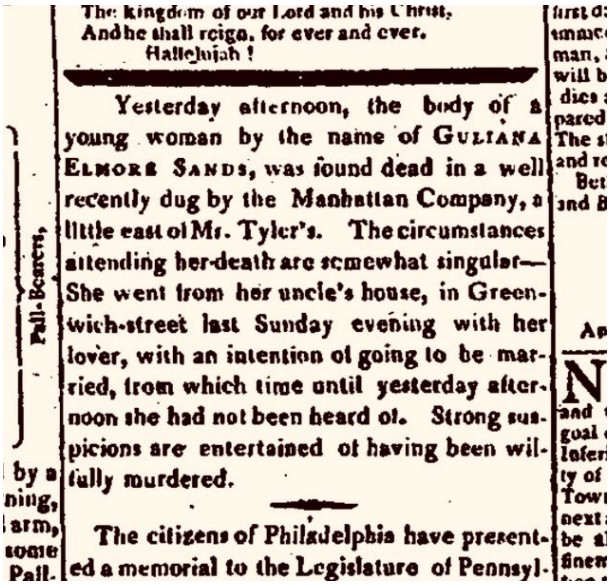
In 1800, the population of Manhattan numbered just over 60,000. While the city had doubled in size since 1790, New York was still a very small place by our standards, with the population clustered at the tip of the island.

So it was no surprise that within hours of the discovery of Elma's body, the city was abuzz with the news that Elma had been seduced and murdered by a young carpenter named Levi Weeks. Weeks was immediately arrested and taken to the Bridewell prison.



The Papers Went Wild

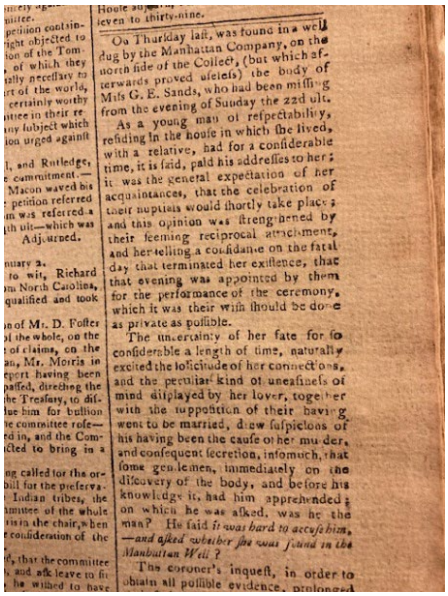
The murder of Elma Sands became an instant sensation. The story of poor betrayed "Juliana Elmore Sands" (not her actual name) caught the public imagination: seduced, betrayed, murdered. Every paper carried its own version of the story, each more florid (and riddled with misinformation) than the next.



The kingdom of our Lord and his Christ,
And he shall reign, for ever and ever.
Hallelujah!

Yesterday afternoon, the body of a young woman by the name of GULIANA ELMORE SANDS, was found dead in a well recently dug by the Manhattan Company, a little east of Mr. Tyler's. The circumstances attending her death are somewhat singular—She went from her uncle's house, in Greenwich-street last Sunday evening with her lover, with an intention of going to be married, from which time until yesterday afternoon she had not been heard of. Strong suspicions are entertained of having been wilfully murdered.

The citizens of Philadelphia have presented a memorial to the Legislature of Pennsyl-



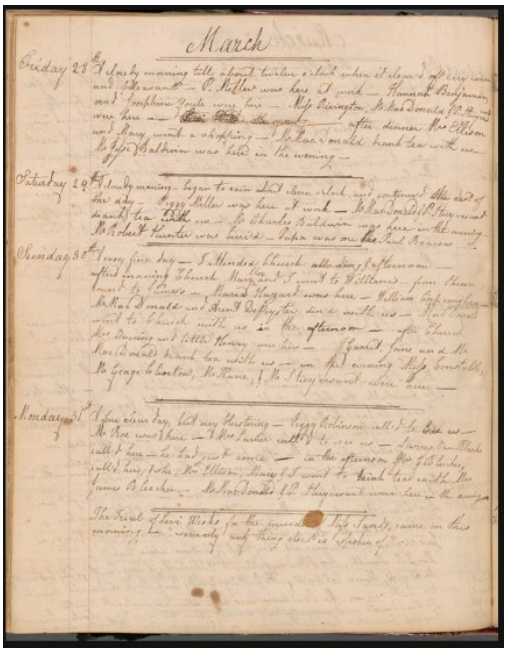
On Thursday last, was found in a well dug by the Manhattan Company, on the north side of the Collect, (but which afterwards proved useless) the body of Miss G. E. Sands, who had been missing from the evening of Sunday the 22d ult.

As a young man of respectability, residing in the house in which she lived, with a relative, had for a considerable time, it is said, paid his addresses to her; it was the general expectation of her acquaintances, that the celebration of their nuptials would shortly take place; and this opinion was strengthened by their seeming reciprocal attachment, and her telling a confidante on the fatal day that terminated her existence, that that evening was appointed by them for the performance of the ceremony, which it was their wish should be done as private as possible.

The uncertainty of her fate for so considerable a length of time, naturally excited the solicitude of her connections, and the peculiar kind of uneasiness of mind displayed by her lover, together with the supposition of their having went to be married, drew suspicions of his having been the cause of her murder, and consequent secretion, insomuch, that some gentlemen, immediately on the discovery of the body, and before his knowledge it, had him apprehended; on which he was asked, was he the man? He said *it was hard to accuse him, —and asked whether she was found in the Manhattan Well?*

The coroner's inquest, in order to obtain all possible evidence, prolonged

Even the tea tables of the elite were abuzz with the story. Elizabeth De Hart Bleecker devoted an unusually long diary entry to Elma's murder (below).



March

Friday 28th

Saturday 29th

Monday 31st

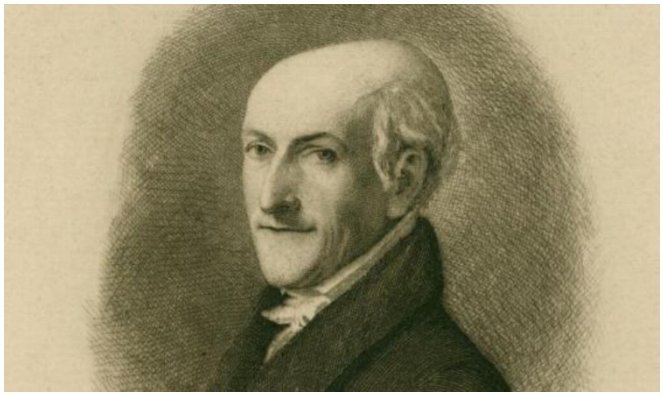
New Yorkers thronged to see Elma's corpse, which was displayed by her family at the boarding house on Greenwich Street. When the press of visitors grew too great, Elma's coffin was moved outside so more people could witness what Levi had done to her.

Handbills circulated around the city, pointing the finger at Levi, accusing him of having seduced Elma under promise of marriage, luring her from the boarding house under pretext of an elopement, and dumping her in the well. As the *New York Gazette* floridly put it, "*…but alas, little did she suspect that the arrangements that she had been making with so much care, instead of conveying her to the Temple of Hymen, would direct her to that bourne from which no traveler returns.*"

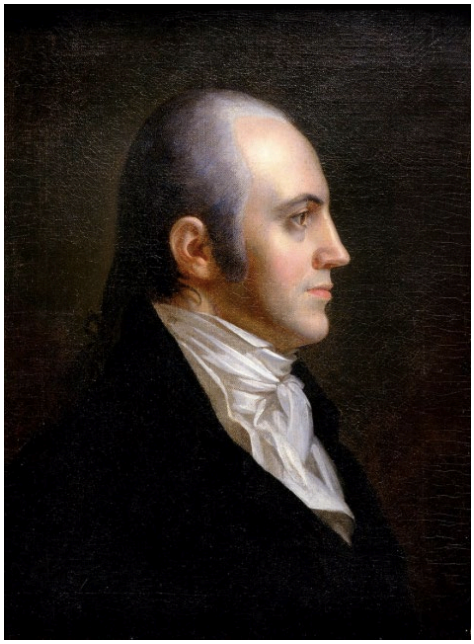
The Legal Team

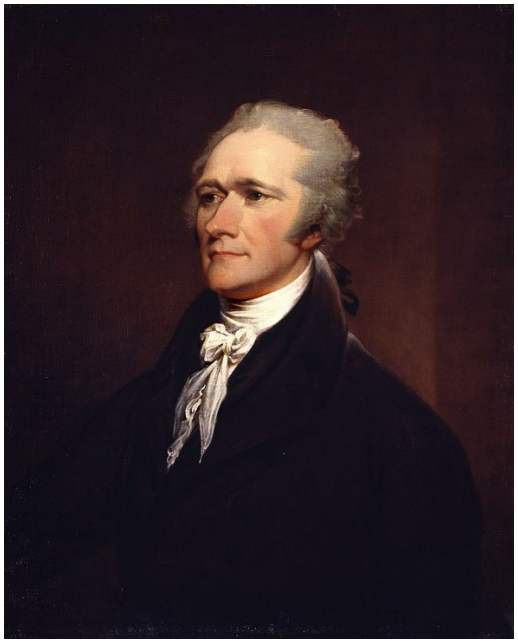
While Levi Weeks might have been a humble carpenter, his older brother was a wealthy and influential contractor, who speedily assembled a legal dream team:

Brockholst Livingston. You may not have heard of him (dissent in Pierson v. Post, anyone?), but he was the most ruthless criminal defense lawyer in New York in 1800. However, I suspect you have heard of his two colleagues….



Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, working together to save Levi from the gallows while they plotted to tear each other to shreds in the 1800 elections.

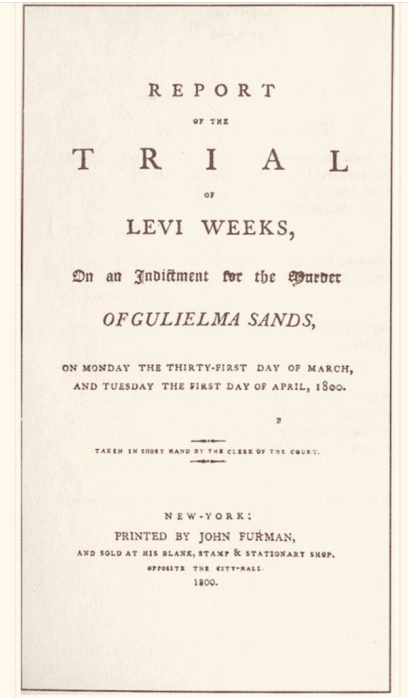




Burr had business dealing with Ezra Weeks involving the very well in which Elma drowned (for more on that, see the Historical Note at the back of the book). As for why Hamilton was on the defense team… We'll get to that story in a minute!

Fun Facts About the Trial

There is so much about this trial that is incredible, but here are two of my favorite details:



REPORT
OF THE
TRIAL
OF
LEVI WEEKS,
On an Indictment for the Murder
OF GULIELMA SANDS,
ON MONDAY THE THIRTY-FIRST DAY OF MARCH,
AND TUESDAY THE FIRST DAY OF APRIL, 1800.
TAKEN IN SHORT HAND BY THE CLERK OF THE COURT.
NEW-YORK:
PRINTED BY JOHN FURMAN,
AND SOLD AT HIS BLANK, STAMP & STATIONARY SHOP,
OPPOSITE THE CITY-HALL.
1800.

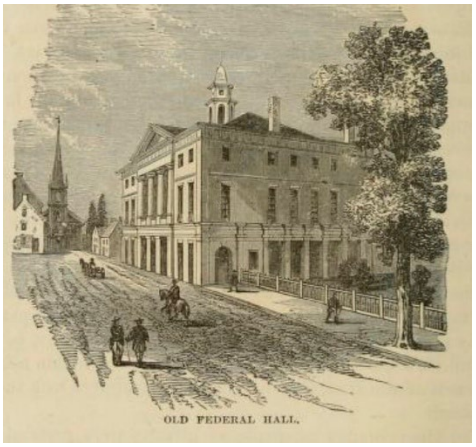
1. This is America's first fully recorded murder trial.

   Yes, you heard that right. The clerk of the court, William Coleman, had just learned a cool new thing called shorthand. As opposed to previous trial reports, which would run a few pages consisting of a handful of details and lots of moralizing, Coleman took down the entire, action-packed trial as close to verbatim as he could get.

   The result is a historian's gold mine, a hundred pages of testimony packed with details about daily life in 1799, the cadences of the participants' voices, and tons of clues to the murder of Elma Sands….

2. The trial ran more than one day.

   Now, we take multi-day trials for granted. At the time, it was a shocking novelty, and no-one quite knew what to do when the prosecutor, Cadwallader Colden, was still calling witnesses in the wee hours of the first day. In the end, they hastily put the jurors to sleep on the floor of the Picture Room in Federal Hall (which doubled as the courthouse, among other things). When the trial threatened to run into a third day, the jurors rebelled, wrapping the case up with suspicious speed.



OLD FEDERAL HALL.

Misconceptions about the Case

Over the centuries, the Manhattan Well Murder and Levi Weeks trial have become a massive game of historical telephone, with rumor and misinformation repeated until they take on the veneer of fact. One of the maddening things about researching this case was discovering how much of what "everyone knows" is just plain wrong. Here are two of my favorite examples….

Misconception 1: The Murder Well

Everyone knows that you can still visit the well where Elma drowned. It's a feature of New York City ghost tours, situated in the basement of a clothing store at 129 Spring Street. People have claimed they can hear the voice of poor wronged Elma, crying from the depths for justice.

There's just one problem with this. It isn't actually the well.

According to local historian Keith Taillon, the well in the basement of the store on Spring Street isn't the Manhattan Well at all. It's a cistern first built in 1817, over a decade after the murder of Elma Sands. (You can read all about it in his book, *Walking New York*.)

As for the actual well? No one knows for sure, but the best guess is that it's somewhere under Greene Street.

So if you hear Elma calling to you from the men's department at 129 Spring Street, you might want to rethink that….

Misconception 2: Hamilton's Debt

One of the great mysteries of this case (not as great as who killed Elma, but still an intriguing conundrum) is why Hamilton was on the defense team.

Hamilton was a brilliant commercial lawyer, but his defense cases are few. He was also absurdly busy in the spring of 1800, even by his standards. The story traditionally told to account for Hamilton's presence on the defense team is that he owed Ezra Weeks money. Weeks was the contractor for Hamilton's country house, the Grange. Weeks, the story goes, called in the debt.

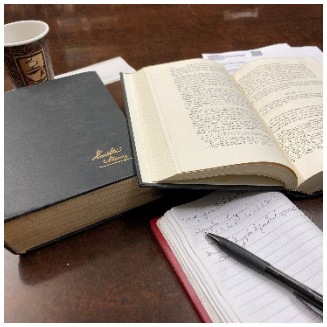
This story works—until you visit the Grange and notice the timeline.

Hamilton first bought the land on which the Grange is situated in August 1800, four months after the trial.

He commissioned architect John McCombs to design it in 1801.

The house was built in 1802.

You may wonder, as I did, how can Hamilton be in debt to his contractor for a house that hasn't been built, hasn't been designed and for which he hasn't yet bought the land?



The only person who seems to have flagged this discrepency is a legal scholar, Julius Goebel, back in the 1960s, in a footnote in his massive and magisterial multi-volume set, *The Law Practice of Alexander Hamilton*. (Many thanks to the New York Law Institute for making me free of their copy!)

The debt story, Goebel concluded, made no sense. What did make sense? Hamilton knew this trial was a media sensation. With the 1800 New York elections looming, there was no way Hamilton (a Federalist) was letting Burr and Brockholst (Republicans) bestride that courtroom without him.

Also, Hamilton knew he wanted to build a country house. Good contractors are hard to find. If Levi were acquitted, Ezra Weeks would have to build Hamilton's country house for him….

Open any book (except Goebel's and mine!) and you'll still find the debt story.

A Conversation with Lauren Willig about *The Girl from Greenwich Street*

Q. How did your background as a history PhD student help you research *The Girl from Greenwich Street*?

A. One of the best pieces of advice my advisor ever gave me, on my first week of grad school was, "Always make friends with librarians." As in so many other things, he was absolutely right. I couldn't have written this book without the help of the amazing Vicki Parsons, my own personal Angel of the Bibliography; Emily Moog of the New York Law Institute; Caroline Bartels of the Yale Club of New York City; and the archivists at the New-York Historical Society and New York Public Library, among others.

But the Harvard history professor to whom I owe the greatest debt in writing this book is the legendary American historian Bernard Bailyn, with whom I had the great good fortune to study back in 1999, when he taught the Practice of History. It was Professor Bailyn who introduced me to the concept of "accidental evidence", particularly in the context of historical trials: the idea being that while people are trying not to tell you one thing, they're quite often revealing another. The Weeks trial was an absolute bonanza of accidental evidence, and it was using that concept that helped guide me to a theory of just what might have happened in the weeks leading up to Elma Sands's death….

Q. You were also a lawyer. Did your background in litigation help in writing this courtroom novel?

A. No! Absolutely the opposite. Legal practice was wildly different in 1800. There was no discovery. There was no doc review. There were no police detectives; in fact, the lawyers on the case were expected to conduct their own investigations. The court in which the case was held, the Court of Oyer and Terminer, no longer exists; it was abolished in 1895. It was all so foreign to my experience that I called in a grad school friend, an expert in Early America, who put me in touch with an expert in late 18th century law and justice, who had to pat my hand and explain to me that I wasn't misreading; it was just that the practice of law has evolved dramatically over the past two hundred years. Another example: the defendant, Levi Weeks, was not allowed to speak in his own case. That right was only enshrined in New York law sometime after the Civil War. I can go on and on. I had to do my best to forget everything I remembered of modern legal practice and learn 18th century legal practice from the ground up—and some of it still feels strange to me!

Q. What did you make up?

A. As little as possible. That being said, even with historical figures as well documented as Hamilton and Burr and a case that's had as much ink spilled over it as the Levi Weeks trial, there are alarming evidentiary gaps. For example, we have no notes from any of the lawyers on the case. We do have Hamilton's notes on other cases, so I was able to infer from his methodogy elsewhere how he might have approached this case, but I kept pawing through the archives, hoping for a forgotten scrap of paper, a line in a letter, anything. As I mentioned before, we can assume Hamilton didn't get strong-armed onto the team by Ezra Weeks, but we don't have any evidence at all about how Hamilton did come to be on the defense team. The story of Hamilton's going to get Eliza a coffee biggin and stumbling on the story was pure invention (although Gouverneur Morris did recommend the coffee biggin!). It was in situations like that, where we have no direct evidence at all, that I had to resort to invention to fill the gaps. There were also some instances where I can make a good guess, but I don't know for sure—for example, the question of the opening statement at the Levi Weeks trial. Did Burr really take Hamilton's closing statement and use it as his own opening statement? Given the evidence available, I would stake money on it, but I have no direct proof. There are many instances like that in this book, where I've relied on historical guesswork, triangulating from the facts we do know to infer the details we don't. My grad school advisor used to say that just because we haven't found something yet doesn't mean it doesn't exist and I'm still hopeful that new documents on this case will surface someday…. For more details on what we know and what I guessed, check out the Historical Note at the back of the book.

Q. Are you planning to write about more historic American trials?

A. Funny story, that. When I finished writing *The Girl from Greenwich Street*, I started work on a book about the infamous 1793 Randolph infanticide trial (John Marshall and Patrick Henry as lawyers for the defense!) and Nancy Randolph's subsequent romance with Gouverneur Morris when she arrives penniless in New York over a decade later. Confession: I have always had a huge historical crush on Gouverneur Morris, and his romance with Nancy Randolph sounds like the stuff of fiction, except it isn't. It actually happened. Their letters are a joy. But, while I was hard at work, reading trial transcripts, researching 1790s Virginia and 1800s New York, mooning over Gouverneur's correspondence with Nancy, my editor took me on a tour of her husband's family's mausoleums at Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn—and suddenly I found myself writing a very different book, a madcap paranormal contemporary romance set at Green-Wood. That book, *What Happens at Nightfall*, is coming out in October 2026, just in time for Spooky Season. As to whether I go back to 18th century trials—I hope to someday!

Recipes from Old New York

1. Oil Cakes

"Rachel is with them," said Hope soothingly. "I've finished the hats Peggy left to trim and I've fried the oil cakes thee asked me to make. I thought I would bring a basket of oil cakes to the Widow Broad—thee are always saying what a sad thing it is she gets so few visitors and her son never takes any notice of her."

Those oil cakes Hope brings to the Widow Broad are a Dutch New York staple—and the ancestor of doughnuts! Oil cake is a corruption of the Dutch *oly koek*, a ball of deep fried dough, sometimes stuffed with apples, almonds, or brandy-soaked dried fruit.

Susannah Carter's 1803 *The Frugal Housewife* contains the following recipe: *To one pound of flour, put one quarter of a pound of butter, one quarter of a pound of sugar, and two spoonfuls of yeast; mix them all together in warm milk or water, of the thickness of bread, let it raise, and make them in what form you please, boil your fat (consisting of hog's lard), and put them in.*

For modern adaptations, visit Max Miller's Tasting History or Inliterature.net's 1800s Sleepy Holly oly koek recipe.

2. Cherry Bounce

On an impulse, Cadwallader abruptly switched course and hurried into the Old Coffee House instead…. A group of men had moved on from coffee to cherry bounce and were talking merrily in one corner.

One of the favorite tipples of eighteenth century America, cherry bounce was a brandy-based cordial made from brandy, cherries, sugar, and various spices, including cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.

Here's Martha Washington's own recipe for cherry bounce: *Extract the juice of 20 pounds well ripend Morrella cherrys. Add to this 10 quarts of old french brandy and sweeten it with White sugar to your taste. To 5 gallons of this mixture add one ounce of spice such as cinnamon, cloves and nutmegs of each an Equal quantity slightly bruis'd and a pint and half of cherry kirnels that have been gently broken in a mortar. After the liquor has fermented let it stand close-stoped for a month or six weeks then bottle it, remembering to put a lump of Loaf Sugar into each bottle.*

To make your own, try this modern adapation from the kitchens at Mount Vernon or this one from *New York Times* Cooking.

3. Plum Cake

Maria tossed her serviette down on the table and pushed back her chair with an audible scrape. "Be here at four," she said sharply. "And don't forget to stop at Monsieur de Singeron's confectionery to pick up the plum cake I commissioned."

Cadwallader looked up from the paper. "You commissioned a plum cake?"

Monsieur de Singeron fled Paris during the French Revolution. He settled in New York, where his confectionary on Pine Street became the place to buy pastries and cakes, many of them decorated with images of the late French monarchs or the Tuilleries Palace. Contemporaries speak of the excellence of the frosting of his plum cakes. Sadly, Monsieur de Singeron's plum cake recipe (and its frosting) is lost to us, so one is left to speculate just how his French plum cake might have differed from the American and British plum cake recipes available to us.

After surveying a number of late 18th century recipes, this "Bride Cake" from Elizabeth Raffald's 1769 cookbook, *The Experienced English Housekeeper*, sounds closest to accounts of Monsieur de Singeron's cakes.

Take four pounds of fine flour well dried, four pounds of fresh butter, two pounds of loaf sugar, pound and sift fine a quarter of an ounce of mace and the same of nutmegs, to every pound of flour put eight eggs, wash four pounds of currants, pick them well, and dry them before the fire, blanch a pound of sweet almonds, and cut them lengthways very thin, a pound of citron, one pound of candied orange, the same of candied lemon, half a pint of brandy. First work the butter with your hand to a cream, then beat in your sugar a quarter of an hour, beat the whites of your eggs to a very strong froth, mix them with your sugar and butter, beat your yolks half an hour at least, and mix them with your cake, then put in your flour, mace, and nutmeg, keep beating it well till your oven is ready, put in your brandy, and beat your currants and almonds lightly in, tie three sheets of paper round the bottom of your hoop to keep it from running out, rub it well with butter, put in your cake, and lay your sweetmeats in three lays, with cake betwixt every lay, after it is risen and coloured, cover it with paper before your oven is stopped up; it will take three hours baking.

The recipe also contains instructions for Almond Icing and Sugar Icing, to be layered atop each other.

You can find the full recipe and commentary on Max Miller's Tasting History. You can find a modernized version of Raffald's plum cake recipe on The British Baker. For a plum cake recipe on a slightly smaller scale, try this one from the Westminster City Archives's Cookbook of Unknown Ladies.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Disclaimer: this is not meant to be an exhaustive bibliography or anything close to it. Journal articles alone could fill a dozen pages and don't even get me started on the obscure local histories, the archival sources, and the contemporary newspapers. Instead, I tried to pick a balanced assortment of what I found to be some of the more engaging, accessible, or illuminating sources, starting, of course, with the trial transcript itself.

William Coleman's *Report of the Trial of Levi Weeks.*

This is it, folks. One of the most fascinating historical documents it has ever been my privilege to read. Even better? It has been digitized and is freely available online. I urge everyone to read this original source and see if you reach the same conclusions I did…

James Hardie's *An Impartial Account of the Trial of Levi Weeks* and David Longworth's *A Brief narrative of the trial for the bloody and mysterious murder of the unfortunate young woman, in the famous Manhattan well. Taken in short hand by a gentleman of the bar.*

These two accounts of the trial, rushed out to the public immediately after the trial, are excellent examples of the prevailing style of court report at the time (brief and vague). They are, however, useful as a cross-check with Coleman's account. You can read Hardie's account here and Longworth's here.

Estelle Fox Kleiger's *The Trial of Levi Weeks.*

Along with the chapter about the case in Julius Goebel's *The Law Practice of Alexander Hamilton*, this is by far the most reliable non-fiction work on the Manhattan Well Murder. Kleiger reprints the trial transcript with annotations, context, and additional information. So if you do not want to go downloading the trial transcript online, this is another excellent way to read the original material, with the extra benefit of Kleiger's notes and research.

Julius Goebel's *The Law Practice of Alexander Hamilton.*

Speaking of Goebel…. His chapter on the Levi Weeks trial (section V, chapter 2) is the best work I've found on this case. Like Kleiger, Goebel reprints the trial transcript in its entirety, so this is another way to access that transcript with notes and commentary.

Catherine Ring's *The Journal of the Life and Gospel Labors of David Sands with Excerpts from his Correspondence.*

For anyone wanting to understand the household in which Elma Sands grew up, this biography of Elma's uncle, the Quaker preacher David Sands, written by his devoted daughter Catherine Ring is incredibly revealing.

Ron Chernow's *Alexander Hamilton.*

This needs no introduction, surely? The premier biography of Alexander Hamilton. The sections on the late 1790s were immensely helpful in understanding the challenges Hamilton faced at this particular point in his life.

The Alexander Hamilton Papers from the Library of Congress

When it comes to Hamilton's writings, one is spoiled for choice. He did not spare the ink. The reason I selected this particular collection to share here is that it is readily available and, even better, contains not just text, but digital images of the actual letters (there's really nothing like reading someone's own words in their own handwriting). Click here to dip into Hamilton's correspondence.

Allan McLane Hamilton's *The Intimate Life of Alexander Hamilton.*

A charming and, yes, intimate look at Hamilton's family life written by one of his grandchildren, drawing on family papers and stories. Possibly not the most reliable, but filled with entertaining anecdotes.

Nancy Isenberg's *Fallen Founding Father.*

This is to Burr what Chernow's biography is to Hamilton. A thoughtful and sympathetic look at one of our most controversial founding fathers. For those wanting to do a deeper dive into Burr's psyche, I also recommend Milton Lomask's multi-volume biography of Burr, particularly *Aaron Burr, the Years from Princeton to President*.

***The Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, edited by Matthew L. Davis.**

The title is slightly misleading: this isn't a memoir as such but a compilation of Burr's correspondence and writings compiled by a friend and published in 1837—which from my point of view made it even better, since memoirs tend to be exercises in creative evasion. It is invaluable hearing Burr in his own voice in his letters, particularly those to his wife and daughter.

John Wood Sweet's *The Sewing Girl's Tale: A Story of Crime and Consequences in Revolutionary America.*

The Sewing Girl's Tale covers the 1793 Lanah Sawyer rape trial, a case often mentioned in connection with the 1800 trial of Levi Weeks. Not only does Sweet present a vivid and granular view of the city in which Elma and Lanah both lived, but the book is particularly illuminating when it comes to Brockholst's methods as a criminal defense lawyer.

Report of the Trial of Richard D. Croucher

More fun with trial transcripts! If you've read *The Girl from Greenwich Street*, you'll know why this one is so significant. It also tells us something about Croucher's life and movements in those months both before and after Elma's death—and, again, it is particularly telling with regard to Brockholst Livingston's defense style. This trial transcript of an 1800 rape trial pairs well with John Wood Sweet's book (above) about Lanah Sawyer's attempt to bring her rapist to justice. The transcript is publicly available here.

Victoria Johnson's *American Eden: David Hosack, Botany, and Medicine in the Garden of the Early Republic.*

Hosack was Hamilton's personal physician, his friend, and one of the doctors called to the stand in the Levi Weeks trial. Although this book is only peripherally related to the Manhattan Well Murder, it paints a beautiful picture of the world inhabited by all the participants in the trial.

The Diary of Elizabeth De Hart Bleecker.

Do you want to know what it was really like living in 1800 New York? Elizabeth De Hart Bleecker will tell you, from the daily weather to the scandals being whispered around the tea table (her misinformation about the Weeks case told me a great deal about how the story was changing in the telling). Her diary presents a fascinating picture of daily life for a well-to-do young lady in New York. (Think Fanny Burney's *Evelina* or the daily lives of the Bennett sisters, only not fictional and not in England.) Thanks to the wonderful people at the New York Public Library, you can peek into Bleecker's diary from the comfort of your own desk chair. You can find the digitized document here.