

for the war against Britain.

The Rev. Hugh Knox wrote a blistering pamphlet in 1770, defending free will, and attacking the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards, the main American theological advocate of John Locke. Knox knew the radical anti-republican Edwards somewhat from the inside, having studied theology at Princeton under Edwards's son-in-law Aaron Burr, Sr. (whose son, the future U.S. Vice President Aaron Burr, Jr., would later shoot and kill Hamilton in a duel in 1804).

Reverend Knox moved over to the Danish island of St. Croix the following year. There he took one of his parishioners under his wing, the teenager Alexander Hamilton. Knox supplied Hamilton with his first serious books, Classical literature, and inspired him to Christianity, opposition to slavery, and an awareness of the evil of the British Empire. Hamilton's biographies record that in August 1772, after a great hurricane, the clergyman preached a thundering sermon, warning of God's wrath against the wicked. A week later, Alexander wrote an identical polemic, warning that, to avoid God's vengeance, the rich must "succor the misera-

ble," and the white slavemasters who "revel in affluence" must "see the afflictions of humanity, and bestow your superfluity to ease them"; and that he had personally "absolutely been an eyewitness to" each injustice that he reported.

Recognizing Hamilton's talent, Knox organized his reception among his contacts and sent the young man up to the American mainland. With a letter of introduction from Knox, Hamilton went to live with Elias Boudinot IV—the son of the Princeton postmaster—in Elizabethtown, New Jersey.

Hamilton was prepared for college in the passionately patriotic Boudinot household, and after a year he was sent to New York to attend King's College (later Columbia University). The outbreak of a shooting war with the British found the young student fully ready to play a man's part in the military struggle. He had already been recruited to the American Revolution, in fact, by the Franklin intelligence organization, before he had even arrived on the continent.

Hamilton served during the Revolution as General Washington's chief aide and military intelligence officer. Within the Continental Congress, which was often slow to function

## The 'deranged' Newton

*John Maynard Keynes, himself a "very peculiar" person and member of the occultist Cambridge Apostles, wrote this assessment of Isaac Newton, "Newton the Man," in his Essays in Biography (New York: The Norton Library, 1951).*

*Geniuses are very peculiar. . . . In the eighteenth century and since, Newton came to be thought of as the first and greatest of the modern age of scientists, a rationalist, one who taught us to think on the lines of cold and untingered reason.*

*I do not see him in this light. I do not think that any one who has pored over the contents of that box which he packed up when he finally left Cambridge in 1696 . . . can see him like that. Newton was not the first of the age of reason. He was the last of the magicians, the last of the Babylonians and Sumerians. . . .*

*For in vulgar terms Newton was profoundly neurotic of a not unfamiliar type, but—I should say from the records—a most extreme example. His deepest instincts were occult, esoteric . . . with profound shrinking from the world, a paralyzing fear of exposing his thoughts, his beliefs. . . . The too well-known conflicts with Hooke, Flamsteed, Leibnitz are only too clear an evidence of this. Like all his type he was wholly aloof from women.*

*. . . He believed that . . . clues [to the riddle of the universe] were to be found . . . partly in certain papers and traditions handed down by the brethren in an unbroken chain back to the original cryptic revelations in Babylonia. . . . All his unpublished works on esoteric and theological matters are marked by careful learning. . . . They are just as sane as the *Principia*, if their whole matter and purpose were not magical. They were nearly all composed during the same twenty-five years of his mathematical studies. . . .*

*A large section [of his writings] . . . relates to alchemy—transmutation, the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life. The scope and character of these papers have been hushed up, or at least minimized, by nearly all those who have inspected them.*

*. . . He was a very successful investor of funds, surmounting the crisis of the South Sea Bubble, and died a rich man. . . . And when the turn of his life came . . . he put his books of magic back into the box. . . . Somewhere about his fiftieth birthday [in] 1692 he suffered . . . a severe nervous breakdown. Melancholia, sleeplessness, fears of persecution—he writes to Pepys and Locke . . . letters that lead them to think that his mind is deranged. . . . He never again concentrated after the old fashion or did any fresh work.*

*. . . Voltaire returning from his trip to London was able to report of Sir Isaac—'. . . Reason alone was cultivated and Mankind could only be his Pupil. . .' Newton, whose secret heresies and scholastic superstitions it had been the study of a lifetime to conceal!*