

“ During this conversation Mr. Swartwout’s surgeon knelt by his side and extracted the ball from the opposite side of the leg ; Mr. Swartwout at the time standing erect, and positively declining any overtures short of an apology from Mr. Clinton. They fired a fifth time, and Mr. Swartwout received Mr. Clinton’s ball in his left leg, about five inches above the ankle, still, however, standing steady and perfectly composed.

“ At the request of Mr. Riker, I again addressed Mr. Swartwout, ‘ Are you satisfied, sir?’ He forcibly answered, ‘ I am not, sir ; proceed.’ Mr. Clinton then quitted his station, declined the combat, and declared he would fire no more shots. Mr. Swartwout expressed his surprise that Mr. Clinton would neither apologize nor give him the satisfaction which he required, and addressed me, asking, ‘ What shall I do, my friend?’ I answered, ‘ Mr. Clinton declines making an apology, refuses taking his position and declares he will fight no more ; and as his second apparently acquiesces with his principal, there evidently is nothing further left for you to do but to have your wounds dressed.’ The surgeons attended and dressed Mr. Swartwout’s wounds, and the gentlemen in their respective barges returned to the city.”¹

In an issue of the *American Citizen*, Richard Riker, Mr. Clinton’s second, said that it was “ due to Mr. Swartwout to declare that he acted with honor and bravery.” Doctor John H. Douglass was John Swartwout’s surgeon, and Doctor Ledyard, DeWitt Clinton’s. One of the balls fired by Marshal Swartwout made a hole through his antagonist’s coat.

After the duel, DeWitt Clinton “ was scandalously maligned in the opposition newspapers. He was satirized and caricatured.” His second, Richard Riker, deputy attorney-general of the state of New York, “ was indignant, and published his sentiments in defence of his friend so freely that Robert Swartwout, the marshal’s brother, challenged him to fight a duel. They met at Weehawken, on Monday, November 14, 1803. At the first fire, the attorney fell severely wounded in the right leg, a little above the joint of the ankle. The duellists were severally indicted in New York for breaking the laws of the commonwealth.”²

The criminations and recriminations with which the Clinton and Burr wings of the democratic party defamed the character of their respective adversaries occasioned the bitterest ill-feeling. There can be no doubt that both parties were reprehensibly unjust in their animadversions. “ Honorable men, under high party excitement, will so distort and discolor facts in their statements that it will often be difficult for a disinterested person to arrive at a correct conclu-

¹ *New York Evening Post*, Monday, August 2, 1802. History of the county of Hudson, New Jersey. By Charles H. Winfield. 1874, pp. 207-214.

² *Ibid.* ; History of New York City. By Benson J. Lossing. 1848, vol. i., pp. 239, 240.