

to conceal his disloyal machinations and treasonable acts from the knowledge of the national government and the people of the United States during the time he was engaged in the attempt to place Spain in possession of the territory of Louisiana, and to persuade the people of Kentucky to secede from the Union and acknowledge the supremacy of that foreign country's power, and thereby obtain for himself compensatory riches and titular distinction, exemplify an "art of traitorous diplomacy" truly astounding. Wilkinson's faithlessness to Aaron Burr, whom he knavishly used and artfully vilified in order to keep the public ignorant of the fact that he himself was the concocter of the plots which made his enthusiastic and incautious servitor a conspirator and a filibuster, reveals in liveliest colors Wilkinson's nefarious selfishness and personal turpitude. The temporary perplexity of General Wilkinson in determining the character of his treatment of Samuel Swartwout, to whom Burr had entrusted the delivery of the famous cipher-letter to Wilkinson, was undoubtedly due to Wilkinson's belief that the young man would not belie Burr's description: "a man of inviolable honor and perfect discretion; formed to execute rather than project; capable of relating facts with fidelity, and incapable of relating them otherwise." This truthful characterization evidently made Wilkinson unwilling "to place full faith in the frankness and candor" of the disinterested bearer of the cipher-letter. When acquitted of the charge of treason brought against him by Wilkinson, Samuel Swartwout, in publicly proclaiming him guilty of treason, forgery, and perjury, did not use words inapplicable to the numerous and now more clearly established offenses of the execrable impostor.

The outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Great Britain, in 1812, again quickened the martial spirit and valorous proclivities inherited by the members of the Swartwout Family. Midshipman Augustus Swartwout, although seriously wounded, persistently superintended the firing of a gun on the flagship *Lawrence* until it was dismantled, in the ever-memorable naval battle on Lake Erie, in which Captain Oliver H. Perry, with a squadron of small wooden vessels, grandly obtained the distinctive renown of having commanded the first United States fleet that encountered in a regular line of battle one of an enemy, which, having been worsted in a long and desperate action, he captured entire, without losing a single vessel of his own. The dash and gallantry of Brigadier-General Robert Swartwout in the battle of Chrysler's Field was the admiration of all the brave men who participated in it. As captain of the independent military organization, titled the Iron Grays, Samuel Swartwout was regarded by the citizens of New York as being the inspirer of the *esprit de corps* which gave it the noted distinction which it so long enjoyed as being the pride of the city. Composed of young men of marked social standing and education, the corps became famous for its skilled use of arms and precise and rapid evo-