

= Alexander Hamilton =

Alexander Hamilton (January 11 , 1755 or 1757 ? July 12 , 1804) was a Founding Father of the United States , chief staff aide to General George Washington , one of the most influential interpreters and promoters of the U.S. Constitution , the founder of the nation 's financial system , the founder of the Federalist Party , the world 's first voter @-@ based political party , the founder of the United States Coast Guard , and the founder of The New York Post newspaper . As the first Secretary of the Treasury , Hamilton was the primary author of the economic policies of the George Washington administration . Hamilton took the lead in the funding of the states ' debts by the Federal government , the establishment of a national bank , a system of tariffs , and friendly trade relations with Britain . He led the Federalist Party , created largely in support of his views ; he was opposed by the Democratic @-@ Republican Party , led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison , which despised Britain and feared that Hamilton 's policies of a strong central government would weaken the American commitment to Republicanism .

Born out of wedlock , raised in the West Indies , and orphaned as a child , Hamilton pursued a college education through the help of local wealthy men . Recognized for his abilities and talent , he was sent to King 's College (now Columbia University) in New York City . Hamilton played a major role in the American Revolutionary War . At the start of the war in 1775 , he joined a militia company . In early 1776 , he raised a provincial artillery company , to which he was appointed captain . He soon became the senior aide to General Washington , the American forces ' commander @-@ in @-@ chief . Washington sent him on numerous important missions to tell generals what Washington wanted . After the war , Hamilton was elected to the Congress of the Confederation from New York . He resigned , to practice law , and founded the Bank of New York . Hamilton was among those dissatisfied with the weak national government . He led the Annapolis Convention , which successfully influenced Congress to issue a call for the Philadelphia Convention , in order to create a new constitution . He was an active participant at Philadelphia ; and he helped achieve ratification by writing 51 of the 85 installments of The Federalist Papers , which to this day are the single most important reference for Constitutional interpretation .

Hamilton became the leading cabinet member in the new government under President Washington . Hamilton was a nationalist , who emphasized strong central government and successfully argued that the implied powers of the Constitution provided the legal authority to fund the national debt , assume states ' debts , and create the government @-@ backed Bank of the United States . These programs were funded primarily by a tariff on imports , and later also by a highly controversial tax on whiskey . Facing well @-@ organized opposition from Jefferson and Madison , Hamilton mobilized a nationwide network of friends of the government , especially bankers and businessmen . It became the Federalist Party . A major issue splitting the parties was the Jay Treaty , largely designed by Hamilton in 1794 . It established friendly economic relations with Britain to the chagrin of France and the supporters of the French Revolution . Hamilton played a central role in the Federalist party , which dominated national and state politics until it lost the election of 1800 to Jefferson 's Democratic Republicans .

In 1795 , he returned to the practice of law in New York . He tried to control the policies of President Adams (1797 ? 1801) . In 1798 and 99 , Hamilton called for mobilization against France after the XYZ Affair and became commander of a new army , which he readied for war . However , the Quasi @-@ War , while hard @-@ fought at sea , was never officially declared and did not involve army action . In the end , Adams found a diplomatic solution which avoided a war with France . Hamilton 's opposition to Adams ' re @-@ election helped cause his defeat in the 1800 election . When Jefferson and Aaron Burr tied for the presidency in the electoral college in 1801 , Hamilton helped to defeat Burr , whom he found unprincipled , and to elect Jefferson despite philosophical differences . Hamilton continued his legal and business activities in New York City , but lost much of his national prominence within the Federalist party . When Vice President Burr ran for governor of New York state in 1804 , Hamilton crusaded against him as unworthy . Taking offense at some of Hamilton 's comments , Burr challenged him to a duel in 1804 and mortally wounded Hamilton , who died the next day .

= = Childhood in the Caribbean = =

Alexander Hamilton was born in and spent part of his childhood in Charlestown , the capital of the island of Nevis , in the Leeward Islands ; Nevis was one of the British West Indies . Hamilton was born out of wedlock to Rachel Faucette , a married woman of partial British and partial French Huguenot descent , and James A. Hamilton , the fourth son of the Scottish laird Alexander Hamilton of Grange , Ayrshire .

His mother moved with the young Hamilton to St. Croix in the Virgin Islands , then ruled by Denmark . It is not certain whether the year of Hamilton 's birth was 1757 or 1755 ; most historical evidence after Hamilton 's arrival in North America supports the idea that he was born in 1757 , and many historians had accepted this birth date . But , Hamilton 's early life in the Caribbean was recorded in documents which were first published in Danish in 1930 ; this evidence has caused historians since then to favor a birth year of 1755 . Hamilton listed his birth year as 1757 when he first arrived in the Thirteen Colonies . He celebrated his birthday on January 11 . In later life , he tended to give his age only in round figures . Probate papers from St. Croix in 1768 , after the death of Hamilton 's mother , list him as then 13 years old , a date that would support a birth year of 1755 . Historians have posited reasons for the different dates of birth being used : If 1755 is correct , Hamilton may have been trying to appear younger than his college classmates or perhaps wished to avoid standing out as older ; if 1757 is correct , the probate document indicating a birth year of 1755 may have been in error , or Hamilton may have been attempting to pass as 13 , in order to be more employable after his mother 's death .

Hamilton 's mother had been married previously to Johann Michael Lavien of St. Croix . Faucette left her husband and first son , Peter , traveling to St. Kitts in 1750 , where she met James Hamilton . Hamilton and Faucette moved together to her birthplace , Nevis , where she had inherited property from her father . The couple 's two sons were James Jr. and Alexander . Because Alexander Hamilton 's parents were not legally married , the Church of England denied him membership and education in the church school . Hamilton received " individual tutoring " and classes in a private school led by a Jewish headmistress . Hamilton supplemented his education with a family library of 34 books .

James Hamilton abandoned Rachel Faucette and their sons , allegedly to " spar [e] [her] a charge of bigamy ... after finding out that her first husband intend [ed] to divorce her under Danish law on grounds of adultery and desertion . " Thereafter , she supported her children in St. Croix , keeping a small store in Christiansted . She contracted a severe fever and died on February 19 , 1768 , 1 : 02 am , leaving Hamilton orphaned . This may have had severe emotional consequences for him , even by the standards of an 18th @-@ century childhood . In probate court , Faucette 's " first husband seized her estate " and obtained the few valuables she had owned , including some household silver . Many items were auctioned off , but a friend purchased the family 's books and returned them to the young Hamilton .

Hamilton became a clerk at a local import @-@ export firm , Beekman and Cruger , which traded with New England ; he was left in charge of the firm for five months in 1771 , while the owner was at sea . He and his older brother James Jr. were adopted briefly by a cousin , Peter Lytton ; but when Lytton committed suicide , the brothers were separated . James apprenticed with a local carpenter , while Alexander was adopted by a Nevis merchant , Thomas Stevens . According to the writer Ron Chernow , some evidence suggests that Stevens may have been Alexander Hamilton 's biological father ; his son , Edward Stevens , became a close friend of Hamilton . The two boys were described as looking much alike , were both fluent in French , and shared similar interests .

Hamilton continued clerking , but he remained an avid reader , later developing an interest in writing , and began to desire a life outside the small island where he lived . He wrote an essay published in the Royal Danish @-@ American Gazette , a detailed account of a hurricane which had devastated Christiansted on August 30 , 1772 . His biographer says that , " Hamilton 's famous letter about the storm astounds the reader for two reasons : for all its bombastic excesses , it does seem wondrous the 17 @-@ year @-@ old self @-@ educated clerk could write with such verve and gusto . Clearly

, Hamilton was highly literate and already had considerable fund of verbal riches . " The essay impressed community leaders , who collected a fund to send the young Hamilton to the North American colonies for his education .

= = Education = =

In the autumn of 1772 , Hamilton arrived at Elizabethtown Academy , a grammar school in Elizabethtown , New Jersey . In 1773 he studied with Francis Barber at Elizabethtown in preparation for college work . He came under the influence of William Livingston , a leading intellectual and revolutionary , with whom he lived for a time at his Liberty Hall . Hamilton entered King 's College in New York City (now Columbia University) in the autumn of 1773 " as a private student " and officially matriculated in May 1774 . In what is credited as his first public appearance , on July 6 , 1774 at the liberty pole at King 's College , Hamilton 's friend Robert Troup spoke glowingly of Hamilton 's ability to clearly and concisely explain the rights and reasons the patriots have in their case against the British . Hamilton , Troup and four other undergraduates formed an unnamed literary society that is regarded as a precursor of the Philolexian Society .

When the Church of England clergyman Samuel Seabury published a series of pamphlets promoting the Loyalist cause in 1774 , Hamilton responded anonymously with his first political writings , A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress and The Farmer Refuted . Seabury essentially tried to provoke fear into the colonies and his main objective was to stopgap the potential of a union among the colonies . Hamilton published two additional pieces attacking the Quebec Act and may have also authored the fifteen anonymous installments of " The Monitor " for Holt 's New York Journal . Although Hamilton was a supporter of the Revolutionary cause at this prewar stage , he did not approve of mob reprisals against Loyalists . On May 10 , 1775 , Hamilton won credit for saving his college president Myles Cooper , a Loyalist , from an angry mob by speaking to the crowd long enough for Cooper to escape .

= = During the Revolutionary War = =

= = = Early military career = = =

In 1775 , after the first engagement of American troops with the British at Lexington and Concord , Hamilton and other King 's College students joined a New York volunteer militia company called the Corsicans , later renamed or reformed as the Hearts of Oak . He drilled with the company , before classes , in the graveyard of nearby St. George 's Chapel . Hamilton studied military history and tactics on his own and was soon recommended for promotion . Under fire from HMS Asia , he led a successful raid for British cannons in the Battery , the capture of which resulted in the Hearts of Oak becoming an artillery company thereafter . Through his connections with influential New York patriots such as Alexander McDougall and John Jay , he raised the New York Provincial Company of Artillery of sixty men in 1776 , and was elected captain . It took part in the campaign of 1776 around New York City , particularly at the Battle of White Plains ; at the Battle of Trenton , it was stationed at the high point of town , the meeting of the present Warren and Broad Streets , to keep the Hessians pinned in the Trenton Barracks .

= = = George Washington 's staff = = =

Hamilton was invited to become an aide to William Alexander , Lord Stirling and one other general , perhaps Nathanael Greene or Alexander McDougall . He declined these invitations , believing his best chance for improving his station in life was glory on the battlefield . Hamilton eventually received an invitation he felt he could not refuse : to serve as Washington 's aide , with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel . Washington felt , " Aides de camp are persons in whom entire confidence must be placed and it requires men of abilities to execute the duties with propriety and dispatch . "

Hamilton served for four years as Washington 's chief staff aide . He handled letters to Congress , state governors , and the most powerful generals in the Continental Army ; he drafted many of Washington 's orders and letters at the latter 's direction ; he eventually issued orders from Washington over Hamilton 's own signature . Hamilton was involved in a wide variety of high @-@ level duties , including intelligence , diplomacy , and negotiation with senior army officers as Washington 's emissary .

During the war , Hamilton became close friends with several fellow officers . His letters to the Marquis de Lafayette and to John Laurens , employing the sentimental literary conventions of the late eighteenth century and alluding to Greek history and mythology , have been read by Jonathan Katz as revealing a homosocial or perhaps homosexual relationship , but few historians agree .

While on Washington 's staff , Hamilton long sought command and a return to active combat . As the war drew nearer to an end , he knew that opportunities for military glory were diminishing . In February 1781 , Hamilton was mildly reprimanded by Washington and used this as an excuse to resign his staff position . He asked Washington and others for a field command . This continued until early July 1781 , when Hamilton submitted a letter to Washington with his commission enclosed , " thus tacitly threatening to resign if he didn 't get his desired command . "

On July 31 , 1781 , Washington relented and assigned Hamilton as commander of a New York light infantry battalion . In the planning for the assault on Yorktown , Hamilton was given command of three battalions , which were to fight in conjunction with the allied French troops in taking Redoubts No. 9 and No. 10 of the British fortifications at Yorktown . Hamilton and his battalions fought bravely and took Redoubt No. 10 with bayonets in a nighttime action , as planned . The French also fought bravely , suffered heavy casualties , and took Redoubt No. 9 . These actions forced the British surrender of an entire army at Yorktown , Virginia , effectively ending their major British military operations in North America .

= = = Congress of the Confederation = = =

After the Battle of Yorktown , Hamilton resigned his commission . He was appointed in July 1782 to the Congress of the Confederation as a New York representative for the term beginning in November 1782 . Before his appointment to Congress in 1782 , Hamilton was already sharing his criticisms of Congress . He expressed these criticisms in his letter to James Duane dated September 3 , 1780 . In this letter he wrote , " The fundamental defect is a want of power in Congress ? the confederation itself is defective and requires to be altered ; it is neither fit for war , nor peace . " While on Washington 's staff , Hamilton had become frustrated with the decentralized nature of the wartime Continental Congress , particularly its dependence upon the states for voluntary financial support . Under the Articles of Confederation , Congress had no power to collect taxes or to demand money from the states . This lack of a stable source of funding had made it difficult for the Continental Army both to obtain its necessary provisions and to pay its soldiers . During the war , and for some time after , Congress obtained what funds it could from subsidies from the King of France , from aid requested from the several states (which were often unable or unwilling to contribute) , and from European loans .

An amendment to the Articles had been proposed by Thomas Burke , in February 1781 , to give Congress the power to collect a 5 % impost , or duty on all imports , but this required ratification by all states ; securing its passage as law proved impossible after it was rejected by Rhode Island in November 1782 . Madison joined Hamilton in persuading Congress to send a delegation to persuade Rhode Island to change its mind . Their report recommending the delegation argued the federal government needed not just some level of financial autonomy , but also the ability to make laws that superseded those of the individual states . Hamilton transmitted a letter arguing that Congress already had the power to tax , since it had the power to fix the sums due from the several states ; but Virginia 's rescission of its own ratification ended the Rhode Island negotiations .

= = = Congress and the army = = =

While Hamilton was in Congress , discontented soldiers began to pose a danger to the young United States . Most of the army was then posted at Newburgh , New York . Those in the army were paying for much of their own supplies , and they had not been paid in eight months . Furthermore , the Continental officers had been promised , in May 1778 , after Valley Forge , a pension of half their pay when they were discharged . By the early 1780s , due to the structure of the government under the Articles of Confederation , it had no power to tax to either raise revenue or pay its soldiers . In 1782 after several months without pay , a group of officers organized to send a delegation to lobby Congress , led by Capt. Alexander MacDougall . The officers had three demands : the Army 's pay , their own pensions , and commutation of those pensions into a lump @-@ sum payment if Congress were unable to afford the half @-@ salary pensions for life . Congress rejected the proposal .

Several Congressmen , including Hamilton , Robert Morris and Gouverneur Morris , attempted to use this Newburgh Conspiracy as leverage to secure support from the states and in Congress for funding of the national government . They encouraged MacDougall to continue his aggressive approach , threatening unknown consequences if their demands were not met , and defeated proposals that would have resolved the crisis without establishing general federal taxation : that the states assume the debt to the army , or that an impost be established dedicated to the sole purpose of paying that debt . Hamilton suggested using the Army 's claims to prevail upon the states for the proposed national funding system . The Morrises and Hamilton contacted Knox to suggest he and the officers defy civil authority , at least by not disbanding if the army were not satisfied ; Hamilton wrote Washington to suggest that Hamilton covertly " take direction " of the officers ' efforts to secure redress , to secure continental funding but keep the army within the limits of moderation . Washington wrote Hamilton back , declining to introduce the army ; after the crisis had ended , he warned of the dangers of using the army as leverage to gain support for the national funding plan .

On March 15 , Washington defused the Newburgh situation by giving a speech to the officers . Congress ordered the Army officially disbanded in April 1783 . In the same month , Congress passed a new measure for a twenty @-@ five @-@ year impost ? which Hamilton voted against ? that again required the consent of all the states ; it also approved a commutation of the officers ' pensions to five years of full pay . Rhode Island again opposed these provisions , and Hamilton 's robust assertions of national prerogatives in his previous letter were widely held to be excessive .

In June 1783 , a different group of disgruntled soldiers from Lancaster , Pennsylvania , sent Congress a petition demanding their back pay . When they began to march toward Philadelphia , Congress charged Hamilton and two others with intercepting the mob . Hamilton requested militia from Pennsylvania 's Supreme Executive Council , but was turned down . Hamilton instructed Assistant Secretary of War William Jackson to intercept the men . Jackson was unsuccessful . The mob arrived in Philadelphia , and the soldiers proceeded to harangue Congress for their pay . The President of Congress , John Dickinson , feared that the Pennsylvania state militia was unreliable , and refused its help . Hamilton argued that Congress ought to adjourn to Princeton , New Jersey . Congress agreed , and relocated there .

Frustrated with the weakness of the central government , Hamilton while in Princeton drafted a call to revise the Articles of Confederation . This resolution contained many features of the future U.S. Constitution , including a strong federal government with the ability to collect taxes and raise an army . It also included the separation of powers into the Executive , Legislative , and Judicial branches .

= = = Return to New York = = =

Hamilton resigned from Congress , and in July 1783 was authorized to practice law in New York after several months of self @-@ directed education . He practiced law in New York City in partnership with Richard Harison . He specialized in defending Tories and British subjects , as in *Rutgers v. Waddington* , in which he defeated a claim for damages done to a brewery by the Englishmen who held it during the military occupation of New York . He pleaded for the Mayor 's Court to interpret state law consistent with the 1783 Treaty of Paris which had ended the

Revolutionary War .

In 1784 , he founded the Bank of New York which became one of the longest operating banks in American history , it stayed in business for over 220 years before it merged with another bank in 2007 . Hamilton was one of the men who restored King 's College , which had been suspended since 1776 and severely damaged during the War , as Columbia College . Long dissatisfied with the weak Articles of Confederation , he played a major leadership role at the Annapolis Convention in 1786 . He drafted its resolution for a constitutional convention , and in doing so brought his longtime desire to have a more powerful , more financially independent federal government one step closer to reality .

= = Constitution and The Federalist Papers = =

= = = Constitutional Convention and ratification of the Constitution = = =

In 1787 , Hamilton served as assemblyman from New York County in the New York State Legislature and was chosen as a delegate for the Constitutional Convention by his father @-@ in @-@ law Philip Schuyler . Even though Hamilton had been a leader in calling for a new Constitutional Convention , his direct influence at the Convention itself was quite limited . Governor George Clinton 's faction in the New York legislature had chosen New York 's other two delegates , John Lansing , Jr. and Robert Yates , and both of them opposed Hamilton 's goal of a strong national government . Thus , whenever the other two members of the New York delegation were present , they decided New York 's vote , to ensure that there was no major alterations to the Articles of Confederation .

Early in the Convention he made a speech proposing a President @-@ for @-@ Life ; it had no effect upon the deliberations of the convention . He proposed to have an elected President and elected Senators who would serve for life , contingent upon " good behavior " and subject to removal for corruption or abuse ; this idea contributed later to the hostile view of Hamilton as a monarchist sympathizer , held by James Madison . According to Madison 's notes , Hamilton said in regards to the executive , " The English model was the only good one on this subject . The hereditary interest of the king was so interwoven with that of the nation , and his personal emoluments so great , that he was placed above the danger of being corrupted from abroad ? Let one executive be appointed for life who dares execute his powers . " Hamilton argued , " And let me observe that an executive is less dangerous to the liberties of the people when in office during life than for seven years . It may be said this constitutes as an elective monarchy ? But by making the executive subject to impeachment , the term ' monarchy ' cannot apply ? " During the convention , Hamilton constructed a draft for the Constitution based on the convention debates , but he never presented it . This draft had most of the features of the actual Constitution . In this draft , the Senate was to be elected in proportion to the population , being two @-@ fifths the size of the House , and the President and Senators were to be elected through complex multistage elections , in which chosen electors would elect smaller bodies of electors ; they would hold office for life , but were removable for misconduct . The President would have an absolute veto . The Supreme Court was to have immediate jurisdiction over all law suits involving the United States , and state governors were to be appointed by the federal government .

At the end of the Convention , Hamilton was still not content with the final form of the Constitution , but signed it anyway as a vast improvement over the Articles of Confederation , and urged his fellow delegates to do so also . Since the other two members of the New York delegation , Lansing and Yates , had already withdrawn , Hamilton was the only New York signer to the United States Constitution . He then took a highly active part in the successful campaign for the document 's ratification in New York in 1788 , which was a crucial step in its national ratification . He first used the popularity of the Constitution by the masses to compel George Clinton to sign , but was unsuccessful . The state convention in Poughkeepsie in June 1788 pitted Hamilton , Jay , James Duane , Robert Livingston , and Richard Morris against the Clintonian faction led by Melancton

Smith , Lansing , Yates , and Gilbert Livingston . Hamilton 's faction were against any conditional ratification , under the impression that New York would not be accepted into the Union , while Clinton 's faction wanted to amend the Constitution , while maintaining the state 's right to secede if their attempts failed . During the state convention , New Hampshire and Virginia becoming the ninth and tenth states to ratify the Constitution , respectively , had ensured any adjournment would not happen and a compromise would have to be reached . Hamilton 's arguments used for the ratifications were largely iterations of work from The Federalist Papers , and Smith eventually went for ratification , though it was more out of necessity than Hamilton 's rhetoric . The vote in the state constitution was ratified 30 to 27 , on July 26 , 1788 .

In 1788 , Hamilton served yet another term in what proved to be the last session of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation . When the term of Philip Schuyler was up in 1791 , elected in his place was the attorney general of New York , one Aaron Burr . Hamilton blamed Burr for this result , and ill characterizations of Burr appear in his correspondence thereafter . The two men did work together from time to time thereafter on various projects , including Hamilton 's army of 1798 and the Manhattan Water Company .

= = = The Federalist Papers = = =

Hamilton recruited John Jay and James Madison to write a series of essays defending the proposed Constitution , now known as The Federalist Papers , and made the largest contribution to that effort , writing 51 of 85 essays published (Madison wrote 29 , Jay only five) . Hamilton supervised the entire project , enlisted the participants , wrote the majority of the essays , and oversaw the publication . During the project each person was responsible for their areas of expertise ; Jay covered foreign relations , Madison covered the history of republics and confederacies , along with the anatomy of the new government and Hamilton covered the branches of government most pertinent to him : the executive and judicial branches , with some aspects of the Senate , as well as covering military matters and taxation . The papers first appeared in The Independent Journal in October 27 , 1787 .

Hamilton wrote the first paper signed as Publius , and all of the subsequent papers were signed under the name . Jay wrote the next four papers to elaborate on the confederation 's weakness and the need for unity against foreign aggression and against splitting into rival confederacies , and , except for Number 64 , was not further involved . Hamilton 's highlights included discussion that although republics have been culpable for disorders in the past , advances in the " science of politics " had fostered principles that ensured that those abuses could be prevented , such as the division of powers , legislative checks and balances , an independent judiciary , and legislators that were represented by electors (Numbers 7 ? 9) . Hamilton also wrote an extensive defense of the constitution (No. 23 ? 36) , and discussed the Senate and executive and judicial branches in Numbers 65 ? 85 . Hamilton and Madison worked to describe the anarchic state of the confederation in numbers 15 ? 22 , and have been described as not being entirely different in thought during this time period in contrast to their stark opposition later in life . Subtle differences appeared with the two when discussing the necessity of standing armies .

= = Reconciliation between New York and Vermont = =

In 1764 King George III had ruled in favor of New York in a dispute between New York and New Hampshire over the region that later became the state of Vermont . New York refused to recognize claims to property derived from grants by New Hampshire governor Benning Wentworth during the preceding 15 years when the territory had been governed as a de facto part of New Hampshire . Consequently , the people of the disputed territory , called the New Hampshire Grants , resisted the enforcement of New York 's laws within the Grants . Indeed , Ethan Allen 's militia called the Green Mountain Boys , noted for successes in the war against the British in 1775 , was originally formed for the purpose of resisting the colonial government of New York . In 1777 the statesmen of the Grants declared it a separate state to be called Vermont , and by early 1778 had erected a state

government . During 1777 ? 1785 , Vermont was repeatedly denied representation in the Continental Congress , largely because New York insisted that Vermont was legally a part of New York . Vermont took the position that because its petitions for admission to the Union were denied , it was not a part of the United States , not subject to Congress , and at liberty to negotiate separately with the British . The latter Haldimand negotiations led to some exchanges of prisoners of war . The peace treaty of 1783 that ended the war included Vermont within the boundaries of the United States .

By 1787 the government of New York had almost entirely given up plans to subjugate Vermont , but still claimed jurisdiction . As a member of the legislature of New York , Hamilton argued forcefully and at length in favor of a bill to recognize the sovereignty of the State of Vermont , against numerous objections to its constitutionality and policy . Consideration of the bill was deferred to a later date . In 1788 and 1789 extensive negotiations were carried out between Hamilton and Nathaniel Chipman , a lawyer representing Vermont . Among the topics were the location of the border between Vermont and New York , and financial compensation of New York land @-@ grantees whose grants Vermont refused to recognize because they conflicted with earlier grants from New Hampshire . In 1788 the new Constitution of the United States went into effect , with its plan to replace the unicameral Continental Congress with a new Congress consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives . Hamilton wrote :

One of the first subjects of deliberation with the new Congress will be the independence of Kentucky [at that time still a part of Virginia] , for which the southern states will be anxious . The northern will be glad to find a counterpoise in Vermont .

In 1790 the legislature of New York agreed to give up that state 's claim to jurisdiction in Vermont on condition that Congress would admit Vermont state to the Union .

= = Secretary of the Treasury = =

President George Washington appointed Hamilton as the first United States Secretary of the Treasury on September 11 , 1789 . He left office on the last day of January 1795 . Much of the structure of the government of the United States was worked out in those five years , beginning with the structure and function of the cabinet itself . Biographer Forrest McDonald argues that Hamilton saw his office , like that of the British First Lord of the Treasury , as the equivalent of a Prime Minister ; Hamilton would oversee his colleagues under the elective reign of George Washington . Washington did request Hamilton 's advice and assistance on matters outside the purview of the Treasury Department . In 1791 , while Secretary , Hamilton was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences . Hamilton submitted various financial reports to Congress . Among these are the First Report on the Public Credit , Operations of the Act Laying Duties on Imports , Report on a National Bank , On the Establishment of a Mint , Report on Manufactures , and the Report on a Plan for the Further Support of Public Credit . So , the great enterprise in Hamilton 's project of an administrative republic is the establishment of stability .

= = = Report on Public Credit = = =

Before the adjournment of the House in September 1789 , they requested Hamilton to make a report on suggestions to improve the public credit by January 1790 . Hamilton had written to Robert Morris as early as 1781 that fixing the public credit will win their objective of independence . The sources that Hamilton used ranged from Frenchmen such as Jacques Necker and Montesquieu to British writers such as Hume , Hobbes , and Malachy Postlethwayt . While writing the report he also sought out suggestions from contemporaries such as John Knox Witherspoon , and Madison . Although they agreed on additional taxes such as distilleries and duties on imported liquors and land taxes , Madison feared that the securities from the government debt would fall in foreign hands .

In the report , Hamilton felt that the debt that the United States had accrued during the Revolutionary War was the price it paid for its liberty . He argued that liberty and property security were inseparable and that the government should honor the contracts , as they formed the basis of

public and private morality . To Hamilton , the proper handling of the government debt would also allow America to borrow at affordable interest rates and would also be a stimulant to the economy . Hamilton divided the debt into national and state , and further divided the national debt into foreign and domestic debt . While there was agreement on how to handle the foreign debt (especially with France) , there was not with regards to the national debt held by domestic creditors . During the Revolutionary War , affluent citizens had invested in bonds , and war veterans had been paid with promissory notes and IOUs that plummeted in price during the Confederation . In response , the war veterans sold the securities to speculators for as little as fifteen to twenty cents on the dollar . Hamilton felt the money from the bonds should not go to the soldiers , but the speculators that had bought the bonds from the soldiers , as they had little faith in the country 's future . The process of attempting to track down the original bond holders along with the government showing discrimination among the classes of holders if the war veterans were to be compensated also weighed in as factors for Hamilton . As for the state debts , Hamilton suggested to consolidate it with the national debt and label it as federal debt , for the sake of efficiency on a national scale . The last portion of the report dealt with eliminating the debt by utilizing a sinking fund that would retire five percent of the debt annually until it was paid off . Due to the bonds being traded well below their face value , the purchases would benefit the government as the securities rose in price .

When the report was submitted to the House of Representatives , detractors soon began to speak against it . The notion of programs that resembled British practice were wicked along with the power of balance being shifted away from the Representatives to the executive branch were some of the prejudices that resided within the House . William Maclay suspected that that several congressmen were involved in government securities , saw Congress in an unholy league with New York speculators . Congressman James Jackson also spoke against New York with allegations of speculators attempting to swindle those who had yet heard about Hamilton 's report . The involvement of those in Hamilton 's circle such as Schuyler , William Duer , James Duane , Gouverneur Morris , and Rufus King as speculators was not favorable to those against the report , either , though Hamilton personally did not own or deal a share in the debt . Madison eventually spoke against it by February 1790 . Although he was not against current holders of government debt to profit , he wanted the windfall to go to the original holders . Madison did not feel that the original holders had lost faith in the government , but sold their securities out of desperation . The compromise was seen as egregious to both Hamiltonians and their dissidents such as Maclay , and Madison 's vote was defeated 36 votes to 13 on February 22 .

The fight for the national government to assume state debt was a longer issue , and lasted over four months . During the period , the resources that Hamilton was to apply to the payment of state debts was requested by Alexander White , and was rejected due to Hamilton 's not being able to prepare information by March 3 , and was even postponed by his own supporters in spite of configuring a report the next day (which consisted of a series of additional duties to meet the interest on the state debts) . Some of the other issues involving Hamilton were bypassing the rising issue of slavery in Congress after Quakers petitioned for its abolition (though he returned to the issue the following year) , having Duer resign as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury , and the vote of assumption being voted down 31 votes to 29 on April 12 . The temporary location of the capital from New York City also played a role , as Tench Coxe was sent to speak to Maclay to bargain about the capital being temporarily located to Philadelphia , as a single vote in the Senate was needed and five in the House for the bill to pass . The bill passed in the Senate on July 21 and in the House 34 votes to 28 on July 26 , 1790 .

= = = Report on a National Bank = = =

Hamilton 's Report on a National Bank was a projection from the first Report on the Public Credit . Although Hamilton had been forming ideas of a national bank as early as 1779 , he gathered ideas in various ways over the past eleven years . These included theories from Adam Smith , extensive studies on the Bank of England , the blunders of the Bank of North America and his experience in establishing the Bank of New York . He also used American records from James Wilson , Pelatiah

Webster , Gouverneur Morris , and from his assistant Treasury secretary Tench Coxe .

Hamilton suggested that Congress should charter the National Bank with a capitalization of \$ 10 million , one @-@ fifth of which would be handled by the Government . Since the Government did not have the money , it would borrow the money from the bank itself , and repay the loan in ten even annual installments . The rest was to be available to individual investors . The bank was to be governed by a twenty @-@ five member board of directors that was to represent a large majority of the private shareholders , which Hamilton considered essential for his being under a private direction . Hamilton 's bank model had many similarities to that of the Bank of England , except Hamilton wanted to exclude the Government from being involved in public debt , but provide a large , firm , and elastic money supply for the functioning of normal businesses and usual economic development , among other differences . For tax revenue to ignite the bank , it was the same as he had previously proposed ; increases on imported spirits : rum , liquor , and whiskey .

The bill passed through the Senate practically without a problem , but objections of the proposal increased by the time it reached the House of Representatives . It was generally held by critics that Hamilton was serving the interests of the Northeast by means of the bank , and those of the agrarian lifestyle would not benefit from it . Among those critics was James Jackson of Georgia , who also attempted to refute the report by quoting from The Federalist Papers . Madison and Jefferson also opposed the bank bill ; however , the potential of the capital not being moved to the Potomac if the bank was to have a firm establishment in Philadelphia (the current capital of the United States) was a more significant reason , and actions that Pennsylvania members of Congress took to keep the capital there made both men anxious . Madison warned the Pennsylvania congress members that he would attack the bill as unconstitutional in the House , and followed up on his threat . Madison argued his case of where the power of a bank could be established within the Constitution , but he failed to sway members of the House , and his authority on the constitution was questioned by a few members . The bill eventually passed in an overwhelming fashion 39 to 20 , on February 8 , 1791 .

Washington hesitated to sign the bill , as he received suggestions from Attorney @-@ General Edmund Randolph and Thomas Jefferson . Jefferson dismissed the ' necessary and proper ' clause as reasoning for the creation of a national bank , stating that the enumerated powers " can all be carried into execution without a bank . " Along with Randolph and Jefferson 's objections , Washington 's involvement in the movement of the capital from Philadelphia is also thought to be a reason for his hesitation . In response to the objection of the ' necessary and proper ' clause , Hamilton stated that " Necessary often means no more than needful , requisite , incidental , useful , or conducive to " , and the bank was a " convenient species of medium in which they (taxes) are to be paid . " . Washington would eventually sign the bill into law .

= = = Establishing the U.S. Mint = = =

In 1791 , Hamilton submitted Report on the Establishment of a Mint to the House of Representatives . Most of Hamilton 's ideas for this report were from European economists , resolutions from Continental Congress meetings from 1785 and 1786 , and from people such as Gouverneur Morris and Thomas Jefferson . Due to the Spanish coin being the most circulated coin in the United States at the time , Alexander Hamilton proposed that the minting of the United States dollar weighing almost as much as the Spanish peso would be the simplest way to introduce a national currency . Hamilton wanted the U.S. dollar system to be set for decimals rather than the eights like the Spanish mint . In spite of preferring a monometallic gold standard , he issued a bimetallic currency at ratio that was to be similar to most European countries . What was different from the European currencies was his desire to overprice the gold on the grounds that the United States would always receive an influx of silver from the West Indies . Hamilton desired the minting of small value coins such as silver ten @-@ cent , copper , and half @-@ cent pieces , for reducing the cost of living for the poor . One of his main objectives was for the general public to become accustomed to handling money on a frequent basis .

By 1792 , Hamilton 's principles were adopted by Congress , resulting in the Coinage Act of 1792 ,

and the creation of the United States Mint . There was to be a ten dollar Gold Eagle coin , a silver dollar , and fractional money ranging from one @-@ half to fifty cents . The coining of silver and gold was issued by 1795 .

= = = Revenue Cutter Service = = =

Smuggling off American coasts was an issue before the Revolutionary War , and after the Revolution it was more problematic . Along with smuggling , lack of shipping control , pirating , and a revenue unbalance were also major problems . In response , Hamilton proposed to Congress to enact a naval police force called revenue cutters in order to patrol the waters and assist the custom collectors with confiscating contraband . This idea was also proposed to assist in tariff controlling , boosting the American economy , and promote the merchant marine . It is thought that his experience obtained during his apprenticeship with Nicholas Kruger was influential in his decision @-@ making .

Concerning some of the details of the " System of Cutters " , Hamilton wanted the first ten cutters in different areas in the United States , from New England to Georgia . Hamilton also wanted those cutters to be armed with ten muskets and bayonets , twenty pistols , two chisels , one broad @-@ ax and two lanterns . Hamilton also wanted the fabric of the sails to be domestically manufactured . Hamilton was also concerned of the employees ' food supply and etiquette when boarding ships , and made provisions for each . Congress established the Revenue Cutter Service on August 4 , 1790 , which is viewed as the birth of the United States Coast Guard .

= = = Whiskey as tax revenue = = =

One of the principal sources of revenue Hamilton prevailed upon Congress to approve was an excise tax on whiskey . In his first Tariff Bill in January of 1790 , Hamilton proposed to raise the three million dollars needed to pay for government operating expenses and interest on domestic and foreign debts by means of an increase on duties on imported wines , distilled spirits , tea , coffee , and domestic spirits . It failed , with Congress complying with most recommendations excluding the excise tax on Whiskey (Madison 's tariff of the same year was a modification of Hamilton 's that involved only imported duties and was passed in September) .

In response of diversifying revenues , as three @-@ fourths of revenue gathered was from commerce with Great Britain , Hamilton attempted once again during his Report on Public Credit when presenting it in 1790 to implement an excise tax both imported and domestic spirits . The taxation rate was graduated in proportion to the whiskey proof , and Hamilton intended to equalize the tax burden on imported spirits with imported and domestic liquor . In lieu of the excise on production citizens could pay 60 cents by the gallon of dispensing capacity , along with an exemption on small stills used exclusively for domestic consumption . He realized the loathing that the tax would receive in rural areas , but thought of the taxing of spirits more reasonable than land taxes .

Opposition initially came from Pennsylvania 's House of Representatives protesting the tax . William Maclay had noted that not even the Pennsylvanian legislators had been able to enforce excise taxes in the western regions of the state . Hamilton was aware of the potential difficulties and proposed inspectors the ability to search buildings that distillers were designated to store their spirits , and would be able to search suspected illegal storage facilities to confiscate contraband with a warrant . Although the inspectors were not allowed to search houses and warehouses , they were to visit twice a day and file weekly reports in extensive detail . Hamilton cautioned against expedited judicial means , and favored a jury trial with potential offenders . As soon as 1791 locals began to shun or threaten inspectors , as they felt the inspection methods were intrusive . Inspectors were also tarred and feathered , blindfolded , and whipped . Hamilton had attempted to appease the opposition with lowered tax rates , but it did not suffice .

Strong opposition to the whiskey tax by cottage producers in remote , rural regions erupted into the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 ; in Western Pennsylvania and western Virginia , whiskey was the basic

export product and was fundamental to the local economy . In response to the rebellion , believing compliance with the laws was vital to the establishment of federal authority , Hamilton accompanied to the rebellion 's site President Washington , General Henry " Light Horse Harry " Lee , and more federal troops than were ever assembled in one place during the Revolution . This overwhelming display of force intimidated the leaders of the insurrection , ending the rebellion virtually without bloodshed .

= = Manufacturing and industry = = =

Hamilton 's next report was his Report on Manufactures . Although he was requested by Congress on January 15 , 1790 for a report for manufacturing that would expand the United States ' independence , the report was not submitted until December 5 , 1791 . In the report , Hamilton quoted from Wealth of Nations and used the French physiocrats as an example for rejecting agrarianism and the physiocratic theory ; respectively . Hamilton also refuted Smith 's ideas of government noninterference , as it would have been detrimental for trade with other countries . Hamilton also thought of the United States being a primarily agrarian country would be a disadvantage in dealing with Europe . In response to the agrarian detractors , Hamilton stated that the agriculturists ' interest would be advanced by manufactures , and that agriculture was just as productive as manufacturing .

Among the ways that the government could assist in manufacturing , Hamilton mentioned levying protective duties on imported foreign goods that were also manufactured in the United States , to withdraw duties levied on raw materials needed for domestic manufacturing , pecuniary boundaries , and encouraging immigration for people to better themselves in similar employment opportunities . Congress shelved the report without much debate (except for Madison 's objection to Hamilton 's formulation of the General Welfare clause , which Hamilton construed liberally as a legal basis for his extensive programs) .

Subsequently in 1791 , with his ideas for manufacturing being a major influence , Hamilton , along with Coxe and several entrepreneurs from New York and Philadelphia helped form the Society for the Establishment of Useful Manufactures , a private industrial corporation . The location at Great Falls of the Passaic River in New Jersey was selected due to access to raw materials , it being densely inhabited , and having access to water power from the falls of the Passaic . The factory town was named Paterson after New Jersey 's Governor William Paterson , who signed the charter . The profits were to derive from specific corporates rather than the benefits to be conferred to the nation and the citizens , which was unlike the report . Hamilton also suggested the first stock to be offered at \$ 500 @,@ 000 and to eventually increase to \$ 1 million , and welcomed state and national government subscriptions alike . The company was never successful : numerous shareholders reneged on stock payments , some members soon went bankrupt , and William Duer , the governor of the program , was sent to debtors ' prison . In spite of Hamilton 's efforts to mend the disaster , the company would expire by 1796 .

= = = Emergence of parties = = =

During Hamilton 's tenure as Treasury Secretary , political factions began to emerge . A Congressional caucus , led by James Madison and William Branch Giles , began as an opposition group to Hamilton 's financial programs , and Thomas Jefferson joined this group when he returned from France . Hamilton and his allies began to call themselves Federalists . The opposition group , now called the Democratic @-@ Republican Party by political scientists , was at the time known as Republicans .

Hamilton assembled a nationwide coalition to garner support for the Administration , including the expansive financial programs Hamilton had made Administration policy and especially the president 's policy of neutrality in the European war between Britain and France . Hamilton 's public relations campaign attacked the French minister Edmond @-@ Charles Genêt (he called himself " Citizen Genêt ") who tried to appeal to voters directly , which Federalists denounced as foreign interference

in American affairs . If Hamilton 's administrative republic was to succeed , Americans had to see themselves as nation citizens , and experience an administration that proved firm and demonstrated the concepts found within the United States Constitution . The Federalists did impose some internal direct taxes but they departed from the most implications of the Hamilton administrative republic as risky .

The Jeffersonian Republicans opposed banks and cities , and favored France . They built their own national coalition to oppose the Federalists . Both sides gained the support of local political factions ; each side developed its own partisan newspapers . Noah Webster , John Fenno , and William Cobbett were energetic editors for the Federalists ; Benjamin Franklin Bache and Philip Freneau were fiery Republican editors . All the newspapers were characterized by intense personal attacks , major exaggerations and invented claims . In 1801 , Hamilton established a daily newspaper , the New York Evening Post and brought in William Coleman as editor . It is still publishing (as the New York Post) .

The quarrel between Hamilton and Jefferson is the best known and historically the most important in American political history . Hamilton 's and Jefferson 's incompatibility was heightened by the unavowed wish of each to be Washington 's principal and most trusted advisor .

= = = Jay Treaty and Britain = = =

When France and Britain went to war in early 1793 , all four members of the Cabinet were consulted on what to do . They and Washington unanimously agreed to remain neutral , and to send Genêt home . However , in 1794 policy toward Britain became a major point of contention between the two parties . Hamilton and the Federalists wished for more trade with Britain , the new nation 's largest trading partner . The Republicans saw Britain as the main threat to republicanism and proposed instead a trade war .

To avoid war , Washington sent Chief Justice John Jay to negotiate with the British ; Hamilton largely wrote Jay 's instructions . The result was Jay 's Treaty . It was denounced by the Republicans but Hamilton mobilized support up and down the land . The Jay Treaty passed the Senate in 1795 by exactly the required two @-@ thirds majority . The Treaty resolved issues remaining from the Revolution , averted war , and made possible ten years of peaceful trade between the United States and Britain . Historian George Herring notes the " remarkable and fortuitous economic and diplomatic gains " produced by the Treaty .

Several European nations had formed a League of Armed Neutrality against incursions on their neutral rights ; the Cabinet was also consulted on whether the United States should join it , and decided not to . It kept that decision secret , but Hamilton revealed it in private to George Hammond , the British Minister to the United States , without telling Jay or anyone else . (His act remained unknown until Hammond 's dispatches were read in the 1920s) . This " amazing revelation " may have had limited effect on the negotiations ; Jay did threaten to join the League at one point , but the British had other reasons not to view the League as a serious threat .

= = = Second Report on Public Credit = = =

Before leaving his post in 1795 , Hamilton submitted Report on a Plan for the Further Support of Public Credit to Congress to curb the debt problem . Hamilton grew dissatisfied with what he viewed as a lack of a comprehensive plan to fix the public debt . He wished to have new taxes passed with older ones made permanent and stated that any surplus from the excise tax on liquor would be pledged to lower public debt . His proposals were included into a bill by Congress within slightly over a month after his departure as treasury secretary .

= = Post @-@ Secretary years = =

= = = The Reynolds affair = = =

In 1791 , Hamilton became involved in an affair with Maria Reynolds over a nine @-@ month period that would be revealed to the public several years afterward . Reynolds appeared to Hamilton as a woman who had been abandoned by her husband , James , at New York and wished to return to there . Hamilton did not have any money on his person , so he retrieved her address in order to deliver the funds in person . After the brief dialogue in Reynolds ' bedroom , he had frequent meetings with her . Hamilton then received two letters on December 15 , 1791 , one from both Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds . The first letter was Maria warning of her husband 's knowledge and of James attempting to blackmail Hamilton . By this point Hamilton contemplated ending the relationship , and briefly ceased to visit , but both apparently were involved in the blackmailing scheme as both sent letters , and at one point James Reynolds requested to ' befriend ' her . By May of 1792 , James Reynolds had requested for Hamilton to no longer see his wife , but not before receiving fifty and two hundred dollars out of over \$ 1300 in blackmail . Hamilton possibly was aware of both Reynolds ' being involved before the blackmailing incident .

When under suspicion of illegal actions while Secretary of the Treasury by associating with William Duer from John J. Beckley and Jacob Cline, the latter also had alleged evidence of James Reynolds being an agent of Hamilton 's , with accompanying letters gathered from Maria Reynolds that were from Hamilton . This information was relayed to James Monroe , who consulted with Congressmen Muhlenberg and Venable on what actions to take . When it was suggested by Cline that James Reynolds had evidence that would incriminate Hamilton , after both were arrested for counterfeiting and Cline was released , Monroe and the Congressmen soon confronted Hamilton on 15 December 1792 . After Hamilton discussed the affair , the trio were to keep the documents privately with the utmost confidence .

In 1797 , however , when " notoriously scurrilous journalist " James T. Callender published A History of the United States for the Year 1796 , it contained accusations of James Reynolds being an agent of Hamilton using documents from the confrontation on December 15 , 1792 . On July 5 , 1797 , Hamilton wrote to all three men to confirm that there was nothing that would damage the perception of his integrity while Secretary of Treasury . All complied but Monroe , and after several rounds of argument , the two almost resorted to a duel . When Hamilton did not obtain an explicit response from Monroe , he published a pamphlet in order to preserve his public reputation , and discussed the affair in exquisite detail . His wife forgave him , but not Monroe . Though he faced ridicule from the Democratic @-@ Republican faction , he maintained his availability for public service .

= = = 1796 presidential election = = =

Hamilton 's resignation as Secretary of the Treasury in 1795 did not remove him from public life . With the resumption of his law practice , he remained close to Washington as an advisor and friend . Hamilton influenced Washington in the composition of his Farewell Address by writing drafts for Washington to compare with the latter 's draft , although when Washington contemplated retirement in 1792 , he had consulted James Madison for a draft that was used in a similar manner to Hamilton 's .

In the election of 1796 , under the Constitution as it stood then , each of the presidential electors had two votes , which they were to cast for different men . The one who received most votes would become President , the second @-@ most , Vice President . This system was not designed with the operation of parties in mind , as they had been thought disreputable and factious . The Federalists planned to deal with this by having all their Electors vote for John Adams , the Vice President , and all but a few for Thomas Pinckney of South Carolina .

Adams resented Hamilton 's influence with Washington and considered him overambitious and scandalous in his private life ; Hamilton compared Adams unfavorably with Washington and thought him too emotionally unstable to be President . Hamilton took the election as an opportunity : he urged all the northern electors to vote for Adams and Pinckney , lest Jefferson get in ; but he cooperated with Edward Rutledge to have South Carolina 's electors vote for Jefferson and

Pinckney . If all this worked , Pinckney would have more votes than Adams , Pinckney would become President , and Adams would remain Vice President , but it did not work . The Federalists found out about it (even the French minister to the United States knew) , and northern Federalists voted for Adams but not for Pinckney , in sufficient numbers that Pinckney came in third and Jefferson became Vice President . Adams resented the intrigue since he felt his service to the nation was much more extensive than Pinckney 's .

= = = Quasi @-@ War = = =

During the Quasi @-@ War of 1798 ? 1800 , and with Washington 's strong endorsement , Adams reluctantly appointed Hamilton a major general of the army ; at Washington 's insistence , Hamilton was made the senior major general , prompting Henry Knox to decline appointment to serve as Hamilton 's junior (Knox had been a major general in the Continental Army and thought it would be degrading to serve beneath him) . Hamilton served as inspector general of the United States Army from July 18 , 1798 , to June 15 , 1800 ; because Washington was unwilling to leave Mount Vernon unless it were to command an army in the field , Hamilton was the de facto head of the army , to Adams 's considerable displeasure . If full @-@ scale war broke out with France , Hamilton argued that the army should conquer the North American colonies of France 's ally , Spain , bordering the United States .

To fund this army , Hamilton wrote regularly to Oliver Wolcott , Jr . , his successor at the Treasury ; William Loughton Smith , of the House Ways and Means Committee ; and Senator Theodore Sedgwick of Massachusetts . He directed them to pass a direct tax to fund the war . Smith resigned in July 1797 , as Hamilton scolded him for slowness , and told Wolcott to tax houses instead of land .

The eventual program included a Stamp Act like that of the British before the Revolution and other taxes on land , houses , and slaves , calculated at different rates in different states , and requiring difficult and intricate assessment of houses . This provoked resistance in southeastern Pennsylvania , led primarily by men such as John Fries who had marched with Washington against the Whiskey Rebellion .

Hamilton aided in all areas of the army 's development , and after Washington 's death he was by default the Senior Officer of the United States Army from December 14 , 1799 , to June 15 , 1800 . The army was to guard against invasion from France . Adams , however , derailed all plans for war by opening negotiations with France . Adams had held it proper to retain the members of Washington 's cabinet , except for cause ; he found , in 1800 (after Washington 's death) , that they were obeying Hamilton rather than himself , and fired several of them .

= = = 1800 presidential election = = =

In the 1800 election , Hamilton worked to defeat not only the rival Democratic @-@ Republican candidates , but also his party 's own nominee , John Adams . In November 1799 , the Alien and Sedition Acts had left one Democratic @-@ Republican newspaper functioning in New York City ; when the last , the New Daily Advertiser , reprinted an article saying that Hamilton had attempted to purchase the Philadelphia Aurora and close it down , Hamilton had the publisher prosecuted for seditious libel , and the prosecution compelled the owner to close the paper .

Aaron Burr had won New York for Jefferson in May ; now Hamilton proposed a rerun of the election under different rules ? with carefully drawn districts and each choosing an elector ? such that the Federalists would split the electoral vote of New York . (John Jay , a Federalist who had given up the Supreme Court to be Governor of New York , wrote on the back of the letter the words , " Proposing a measure for party purposes which it would not become me to adopt , " and declined to reply .)

John Adams was running this time with Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina (the elder brother of candidate Thomas Pinckney from the 1796 election) . Hamilton now toured New England , again urging northern electors to hold firm for Pinckney in the renewed hope of making Pinckney

president ; and he again intrigued in South Carolina . Hamilton 's ideas involved coaxing middle @-@ state Federalists to assert their non @-@ support for Adams if there was no support for Pinckney and writing to more of the modest supports of Adams concerning his supposed misconduct while president . Hamilton expected to see southern states such as the Carolinas cast their votes for Pinckney and Jefferson , and would result in the former being ahead of both Adams and Jefferson .

In accordance with the second of the aforementioned plans , and a recent personal rift with Adams , Hamilton wrote a pamphlet called Letter from Alexander Hamilton , Concerning the Public Conduct and Character of John Adams , Esq . President of the United States that was highly critical of him , though it closed with a tepid endorsement . He mailed this to two hundred leading Federalists ; when a copy fell into the Democratic @-@ Republicans ' hands , they printed it . This hurt Adams 's 1800 reelection campaign and split the Federalist Party , virtually assuring the victory of the Democratic @-@ Republican Party , led by Jefferson , in the election of 1800 ; it destroyed Hamilton 's position among the Federalists .

Jefferson had beaten Adams , but both he and his running mate , Aaron Burr , had received 73 votes in the Electoral College (Adams finished in third place , Pinckney in fourth , and Jay received one vote) . With Jefferson and Burr tied , the United States House of Representatives had to choose between the two men . Several Federalists who opposed Jefferson supported Burr , and for the first 35 ballots , Jefferson was denied a majority . Before the 36th ballot , Hamilton threw his weight behind Jefferson , supporting the arrangement reached by James A. Bayard of Delaware , in which five Federalist Representatives from Maryland and Vermont abstained from voting , allowing those states ' delegations to go for Jefferson , ending the impasse and electing Jefferson President rather than Burr . Even though Hamilton did not like Jefferson and disagreed with him on many issues , he viewed Jefferson as the lesser of two evils . Hamilton spoke of Jefferson as being " by far not so a dangerous man " , and that Burr was a " mischievous enemy " to the principle measure of the past administration . There is strong circumstantial evidence , however , that what Hamilton really feared was Burr 's appeal to the members of the Federalist Party and loss of his control over them . Many Federalists viewed Burr as a moderate who was willing to dialogue with them . It was for that reason , along with the fact that Burr was a northerner and not a Virginian , that many Federalist Representatives voted for him . Hamilton wrote an exceeding number of letters to friends in Congress to convince the members to see otherwise . However , the Federalists rejected Hamilton 's diatribe as reasons to not vote for Burr . Nevertheless , Burr would become Vice President of the United States . When it became clear that Jefferson had developed his own concerns about Burr and would not support his return to the Vice Presidency , Burr sought the New York governorship in 1804 with Federalist support , against the Jeffersonian Morgan Lewis , but was defeated by forces including Hamilton .

= = Duel with Burr and death = =

Soon after the 1804 gubernatorial election in New York ? in which Morgan Lewis , greatly assisted by Hamilton , defeated Aaron Burr ? the Albany Register published Charles D. Cooper 's letters , citing Hamilton 's opposition to Burr and alleging that Hamilton had expressed " a still more despicable opinion " of the Vice President at an upstate New York dinner party . Cooper claimed that the letter was intercepted after relaying the information , but stated he was ' unusually cautious ' in recollecting the information from the dinner . Burr , sensing an attack on his honor , and recovering from his defeat , demanded an apology in letter form . Hamilton wrote a letter in response and ultimately refused because he could not recall the instance of insulting Burr ; also , Hamilton would have been accused of recanting Cooper 's letter out of cowardice . After a series of attempts to reconcile were to no avail , the duel was accepted through liaisons on June 27 , 1804 .

The night before the duel , Hamilton wrote a defense of his decision to duel . Hamilton viewed his roles of being a father and husband , putting his creditors at risk , placing his family 's welfare in jeopardy and his moral and religious stances as reasons not to duel , but he felt it impossible to avoid due to having made attacks on Burr which he was unable to recant , and because of Burr 's

behavior prior to the duel . He attempted to reconcile his moral and religious reasons and the codes of honor and politics . He intended to accept the duel and throw his fire in order to satisfy his morals and political codes , respectively . His desire to be available for future political matters also played a factor .

The duel began at dawn on July 11 , 1804 , along the west bank of the Hudson River on a rocky ledge in Weehawken , New Jersey . After the seconds measured the paces , Hamilton , according to both William P. Van Ness and Burr , raised his pistol " as if to try the light " and had to wear his spectacles to prevent his vision from being obscured . Hamilton also refused the hairspring set of dueling pistols (that would make the pulling of the trigger lighter) when offered by Nathaniel Pendleton . Vice President Burr shot Hamilton , delivering what proved to be a fatal wound . Hamilton 's shot broke a tree branch directly above Burr 's head . Neither of the seconds , Pendleton nor Van Ness , could determine who fired first , as each claimed that the other man had fired first . Soon after , they measured and triangulated the shooting , but could not determine from which angle Hamilton fired . Burr 's shot , however , hit Hamilton in the lower abdomen above the right hip . The bullet ricocheted off Hamilton 's second or third false rib , fracturing it and causing considerable damage to his internal organs , particularly his liver and diaphragm , before becoming lodged in his first or second lumbar vertebra . Biographer Ron Chernow considered the circumstances to indicate that , after taking deliberate aim , Burr fired second , while biographer James Earnest Cooke suggested that Burr took careful aim and shot first , and Hamilton fired while falling , after being struck by Burr 's bullet .

The paralyzed Hamilton , who knew himself to be mortally wounded , was ferried to the Greenwich Village home of his friend William Bayard Jr . , who had been waiting on the dock . After final visits from his family and friends and considerable suffering , Hamilton died on the following afternoon , July 12 , 1804 , at Bayard 's home at what is now 80 ? 82 Jane Street . Gouverneur Morris gave the eulogy at his funeral and secretly established a fund to support his widow and children . Hamilton was buried in the Trinity Churchyard Cemetery in Manhattan .

= = Personal life = =

= = = Family = = =

While Hamilton was stationed in Morristown , New Jersey , in the winter of 1779 and 1780 , he met Elizabeth Schuyler , a daughter of Philip Schuyler and Catherine Van Rensselaer . The two were married on December 14 , 1780 , at the Schuyler Mansion in Albany , New York . He and Elizabeth had eight children , including two named Philip . The elder Philip , Hamilton 's first child (born January 22 , 1782) , was killed in 1801 in a duel with George I. Eacker , whom he had publicly insulted in a Manhattan theater . The second Philip , Hamilton 's last child , was born on June 2 , 1802 , after the first Philip was killed . Their other children were Angelica , born September 25 , 1784 ; Alexander , born May 16 , 1786 ; James Alexander (April 14 , 1788 ? September 1878) ; John Church , (August 22 , 1792 ? July 25 , 1882) ; William Stephen (August 4 , 1797 ? October 9 , 1850) ; and Eliza , born November 26 , 1799 .

Hamilton was also close to Elizabeth 's older sister , Angelica , who eloped with John Barker Church , an Englishman who made a fortune in North America during the Revolution . She returned with Church to London after the war , where she later became a joint friend of Maria Cosway and Thomas Jefferson .

= = = Hamilton 's religion = = =

Hamilton , as a youth in the West Indies , was an orthodox and conventional Presbyterian of the " New Light " evangelical type (as opposed to the " Old Light " Calvinists) ; he was being taught by a student of John Witherspoon , a moderate of the New School . He wrote two or three hymns , which were published in the local newspaper . Robert Troup , his college roommate , noted that Hamilton

was " in the habit of praying on his knees night and morning . "

Gordon Wood says that Hamilton dropped his youthful religiosity during the Revolution and became , " a conventional liberal with theistic inclinations who was an irregular churchgoer at best " ; however , he returned to religion in his last years . Chernow says he was nominally an Episcopalian but :

he was not clearly affiliated with the denomination and did not seem to attend church regularly or take communion . Like Adams , Franklin , and Jefferson , Hamilton had probably fallen under the sway of deism , which sought to substitute reason for revelation and dropped the notion of an active God that will intervene in human affairs . At the same time , he never doubted God 's existence , embracing Christianity as a system of morality and cosmic justice .

Hamilton made jokes about God at the Constitutional Convention . During the French Revolution , he displayed an " opportunistic religiosity " , using Christianity for political ends and insisting that Christianity and Jefferson 's democracy were incompatible . After 1801 , Hamilton further asserted the truth of Christianity ; he proposed a Christian Constitutional Society in 1802 , to take hold of " some strong feeling of the mind " to elect " fit men " to office , and he wrote of " Christian welfare societies " for the poor . He was not a member of any denomination . After being shot , Hamilton spoke of his belief in God 's mercy , and of his desire to renounce dueling ; Bishop Moore administered communion to Hamilton .

Hamilton had always had respect for Jews . His birthplace of Charlestown had a large Jewish population with whom Hamilton came into contact on a regular basis . As a boy , he had learned Hebrew and could recite the Ten Commandments in its original language . He believed that Jewish achievement was a result of divine providence and warned that those who discredit the Jews " destroy the Christian religion . "

= = Legacy = =

Hamilton 's interpretations of the Constitution set forth in the Federalist Papers remain highly influential , as seen in scholarly studies and court decisions .

Though the Constitution was ambiguous as to the exact balance of power between national and state governments , Hamilton consistently took the side of greater federal power at the expense of the states . As Secretary of the Treasury , he established ? against the intense opposition of Secretary of State Jefferson ? the country 's first national bank . Hamilton justified the creation of this bank , and other increased federal powers , under Congress 's constitutional powers to issue currency , to regulate interstate commerce , and to do anything else that would be " necessary and proper " to enact the provisions of the Constitution . Jefferson , on the other hand , took a stricter view of the Constitution : parsing the text carefully , he found no specific authorization for a national bank . This controversy was eventually settled by the Supreme Court of the United States in *McCulloch v. Maryland* , which in essence adopted Hamilton 's view , granting the federal government broad freedom to select the best means to execute its constitutionally enumerated powers , specifically the doctrine of implied powers . Nevertheless , the American Civil War and the Progressive Era demonstrated the sorts of crises and politics Hamilton 's administrative republic sought to avoid .

Hamilton 's policies as Secretary of the Treasury greatly affected the United States government and still continue to influence it . His constitutional interpretation , specifically of the Necessary and Proper Clause , set precedents for federal authority that are still used by the courts and are considered an authority on constitutional interpretation . The prominent French diplomat Charles Maurice de Talleyrand , who spent 1794 in the United States , wrote , " I consider Napoleon , Fox , and Hamilton the three greatest men of our epoch , and if I were forced to decide between the three , I would give without hesitation the first place to Hamilton " , adding that Hamilton had intuited the problems of European conservatives .

Opinions of Hamilton have run the gamut : both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson viewed him as unprincipled and dangerously aristocratic . Hamilton 's reputation was mostly negative in the eras of Jeffersonian democracy and Jacksonian democracy . However , by the Progressive era , Herbert

Croly , Henry Cabot Lodge , and Theodore Roosevelt praised his leadership of a strong government . Several nineteenth- and twentieth @-@ century Republicans entered politics by writing laudatory biographies of Hamilton .

Historians have generally taken one of two main views of Hamilton . Wilentz says :

In recent years , Hamilton and his reputation have decidedly gained the initiative among scholars who portray him as the visionary architect of the modern liberal capitalist economy and of a dynamic federal government headed by an energetic executive . Jefferson and his allies , by contrast , have come across as naïve , dreamy idealists .

The older Jeffersonian view attacks him as a centralizer , to the point sometimes of advocating monarchy .

= = = Monuments and memorials = = =

Since the beginning of the American Civil War , Hamilton has been depicted on more denominations of US currency than anyone else . He has appeared on the \$ 2 , \$ 5 , \$ 10 , \$ 20 , \$ 50 , and \$ 1 @,@ 000 . His likeness also began to appear on US postage in 1870 . His portrait has continued to appear on U.S. postage and currency , and most notably appears on the modern \$ 10 bill . On 18 June 2015 it was announced that his portrait would be replaced by that of a woman , to reflect the changing nature of American democracy and society , but it was later decided his portrait would remain and the portrait of a woman was moved to the \$ 20 bill . Hamilton also appears on the \$ 500 Series EE Savings Bond . The source of the face on the \$ 10 bill is John Trumbull 's 1805 portrait of Hamilton , in the portrait collection of New York City Hall .

The first postage stamp to honor Hamilton was issued by the U.S. Post Office in 1870 . The portrayals on the 1870 and 1888 issues are from the same engraved die , which was modeled after a bust of Hamilton by Italian sculptor Giuseppe Ceracchi . The Hamilton 1870 issue was the first U.S. postage stamp to honor a Secretary of the Treasury . The three @-@ cent red commemorative issue , which was released on the 200th anniversary of Hamilton 's birth in 1957 , includes a rendition of the Federal Hall building , located in New York City . On March 19 , 1956 , the United States Postal Service issued the \$ 5 Liberty Issue postage stamp honoring Hamilton .

The only home Hamilton ever owned was a Federal style mansion designed by John McComb Jr . , which he built on his 32 @-@ acre country estate in Hamilton Heights in upper Manhattan . He named the house , which was completed in 1802 , the " Grange " after his grandfather Alexander 's estate in Ayrshire , Scotland . The house remained in the family until 1833 when his widow sold it to Thomas E. Davis , a British born real estate developer , for \$ 25 @,@ 000 . Part of the proceeds were used by Eliza to purchase a new townhouse from Davis (Hamilton @-@ Holly House) in Greenwich Village with her son Alexander . The Grange , first moved from its original location in 1889 , was moved again in 2008 to a spot in St. Nicholas Park on land that was once part of the Hamilton estate , in Hamilton Heights , a neighborhood in upper Manhattan . The historic structure was restored to its original 1802 appearance in 2011 , and is maintained by the National Park service as Hamilton Grange National Memorial .

Alexander Hamilton served as one of the first trustees of the Hamilton @-@ Oneida Academy in New York state . Later the Academy received a college charter in 1812 , and the school was formally renamed Hamilton College . Columbia University , Hamilton 's alma mater , has official memorials to Hamilton on its campus in New York City . The college 's main classroom building for the humanities is Hamilton Hall , and a large statue of Hamilton stands in front of it . The university press has published his complete works in a multivolume letterpress edition . Columbia University 's student group for ROTC cadets and Marine officer candidates is named the Alexander Hamilton Society .

The main administration building of the Coast Guard Academy in New London , Connecticut , is named Hamilton Hall to commemorate Hamilton 's creation of the United States Revenue Cutter Service , one of the predecessor services of the United States Coast Guard . The U.S. Army 's Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn is named after Hamilton .

In 1990 , the U.S. Custom House in New York City was renamed after Hamilton .

In 1880 , his son John Church Hamilton commissioned Carl Conrads to sculpt a granite statue , now located in Central Park , New York City .

One statue honoring Alexander Hamilton in Chicago was mired in controversy , at least concerning the surrounding architecture . Kate Sturges Buckingham (1858 ? 1937) , of the Buckingham Fountain family , commissioned the monument . Its impetus was that Treasury Secretary Hamilton " secured the nation 's financial future " and made it possible for her own family to make its fortune in grain elevators and banking . Consequently , John Angel was hired to model a figurative sculpture and the Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen was to create a " colossal architectural setting " for it . The proposed 80 @-@ foot tall columned shelter was poorly received . By Buckingham 's death in 1937 , the sculpture 's setting , location , and design were uncertain . Conspiracy allegations surfaced , and the matter became mired in litigation . After the courts ordered the construction to be completed by 1953 , the trustees hired architect Samuel A. Marx . The structure was completed , had structural problems , and was eventually demolished in 1993 . The statue was gilded , and is still on display .

A statue , by James Earle Fraser , was dedicated on May 17 , 1923 , on the south terrace of the Treasury Building , in Washington .

Hamilton County , New York , Hamilton County , Florida , Hamilton County , Illinois , Hamilton County , Indiana , Hamilton County , Kansas , Hamilton County , Nebraska , Hamilton County , Ohio and Hamilton County , Tennessee are all named in his honor .

= = = On slavery = = =

Until recently the prevailing scholarly view was that Hamilton , like the Founders generally , lacked a deep concern about slavery . John Patrick Diggins traced this animus of historians against Hamilton to Vernon L. Parrington , who , writing in the 1920s to praise Jefferson and the Enlightenment , denounced a reactionary and unenlightened Hamilton as greedy and evil . Sean Wilentz contends that the consensus has changed sharply in Hamilton 's favor in recent years . For example , Michael D. Chan argues that the first U.S. Treasury Secretary was committed to ending slavery , Chernow calls him " a fervent abolitionist " , David O. Stewart states he was a " lifelong opponent of slavery " , and Braun says he " was a leading anti @-@ slavery advocate " . Historian Manning Marable says Hamilton " vigorously opposed the slave trade and slavery 's expansion . "

Hamilton 's first polemic against King George 's ministers contains a paragraph that speaks of the evils that " slavery " to the British would bring upon the Americans . McDonald sees this as an attack on the institution of slavery . David Hackett Fischer believes the term is used in a symbolic way at that time .

During the Revolutionary War , Hamilton took the lead in proposals to arm slaves , free them , and compensate their masters . In 1779 , Hamilton worked closely with his friend John Laurens of South Carolina to propose that such a unit be formed , under Laurens ' command . Hamilton proposed to the Continental Congress that it create up to four battalions of slaves for combat duty , and free them . Congress recommended that South Carolina (and Georgia) acquire up to three thousand slaves for service , if they saw fit . Although the South Carolina governor and Congressional delegation had supported the plan in Philadelphia , they did not implement it .

Hamilton believed that the natural faculties of blacks were probably as good as those of free whites , and he warned that the British would arm the slaves if the patriots did not . In his 21st @-@ century biography , Chernow cites this incident as evidence that Hamilton and Laurens saw the Revolution and the struggle against slavery as inseparable . Hamilton attacked his political opponents as demanding freedom for themselves and refusing to allow it to blacks .

In January 1785 , Hamilton attended the second meeting of the New York Manumission Society (NYMS) . John Jay was president and Hamilton was the first secretary and later became president . Chernow notes how the membership soon included many of Hamilton 's friends and associates . Hamilton was a member of the committee of the society that petitioned the legislature to end the slave trade , and that succeeded in passing legislation banning the export of slaves from New York . In the same period , Hamilton felt bound by the rule of law of the time and his law practice facilitated the return of a fugitive slave to Henry Laurens of South Carolina . He opposed the compromise at

the 1787 Constitutional Convention by which the federal government could not abolish the slave trade for 20 years , and was disappointed when he lost that argument .

Hamilton never supported forced emigration for freed slaves . Horton has argued from this that he would be comfortable with a multiracial society , and that this distinguished him from his contemporaries . In international affairs , he supported Toussaint L 'Ouverture 's black government in Haiti after the revolt that overthrew French control , as he had supported aid to the slaveowners in 1791 ? both measures hurt France . Scant evidence has been interpreted by a few to indicate Hamilton may have owned household slaves , as did many wealthy New Yorkers (the evidence for this is indirect ; McDonald interprets it as referring to paid employees) .

= = = On economics = = =

Hamilton has been portrayed as the " patron saint " of the American School of economic philosophy that , according to one historian , dominated economic policy after 1861 . He firmly supported government intervention in favor of business , after the manner of Jean @-@ Baptiste Colbert , as early as the fall of 1781 . Hamilton opposed the British ideas of free trade , which he believed skewed benefits to colonial and imperial powers , in favor of protectionism , which he believed would help develop the fledgling nation 's emerging economy . Henry C. Carey was inspired by his writings . Hamilton influenced the ideas and work of the German Friedrich List . In Hamilton 's view , a strong executive , linked to the support of the people , could become the linchpin of an administrative republic . The dominance of executive leadership in the formulation and carrying out of policy was essential to resist the deterioration of republican government . Ian Patrick Austin has explored the similarities between Hamiltonian recommendations and the development of Meiji Japan after 1860 .

= = = In popular culture = = =

Apart from the \$ 10 bill and an obscure 1931 film , Hamilton did not attract much attention in American popular culture until the advent of the 2015 hit Broadway musical Hamilton . The musical , which features music , lyrics , and a book by Lin @-@ Manuel Miranda , is based on a biography by Ron Chernow . The New Yorker called the show " an achievement of historical and cultural reimagining . In Miranda 's telling , the headlong rise of one self @-@ made immigrant becomes the story of America . " The off @-@ Broadway production of Hamilton won the 2015 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical as well as seven other Drama Desk Awards . In 2016 , Hamilton received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama and a record 16 Tony nominations , winning 11 of them including Best Musical .

Hamilton has also appeared as a significant figure in popular works focusing on other American political figures of his time . He is a major character in Gore Vidal 's 1973 historical novel Burr and in episodes of the 1976 PBS miniseries The Adams Chronicles .

= = = Biographies = = =

= = = Specialized studies = = =