

## Q89 – Alexander Hamilton is famous for many things. Name one .

**DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:**

Alexander Hamilton died before turning 50 – but this self-made man from humble beginnings turned a burning ambition into a lifetime of achievements.

During the Revolution, Hamilton served as an aide to George Washington – commander of the Continental Army. Hamilton was only 20, or 22 – his birth date is uncertain – yet he was already a lieutenant colonel. He distinguished himself in battle. At Yorktown he led a nighttime bayonet charge that hastened the British surrender. Hamilton also served in the Continental Congress – for barely a year, but long enough to see the great flaw in the young nation: The Articles of Confederation had created a toothless national government. As chief author of the Federalist Papers, Hamilton helped persuade his countrymen to adopt the new Constitution – creating a stronger federal government while protecting the liberties of the people. George Washington, the nation's first president, named Hamilton its first Secretary of the Treasury. There, he helped establish the First Bank of the United States – to promote trade and industry. The bank was opposed by fellow cabinet member Thomas Jefferson, who envisioned a nation built on farming – not finance. Hamilton's vision prevailed – and the United States grew into an economic superpower.