


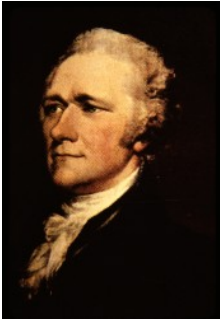



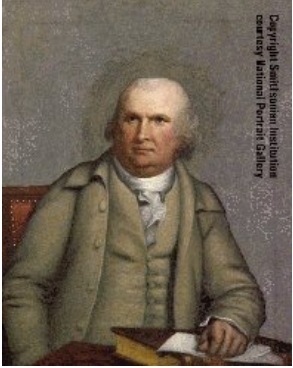

## Activity One: Signers of the Constitution and their Convention Contributions

Christy numbered each of the delegates in his painting for the public to view. Christy lists the following individuals first, all of whom are pro strong central government Federalists, except for Franklin: Washington, Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, G. Morris, R. Morris and James Wilson. These delegates are separated out from their state delegations and are displayed as independent heroes at the Convention.

**Instructions:** Read the following Convention contribution summaries and identify the significant Convention contribution of each delegate.

Founder	Convention Contribution:	Summary of Convention Contribution:
<p><b>Washington</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 25 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. He spoke only once near the end of the deliberations, but the record suggests that he had a profound influence on the scope and direction of the discussions. William Pierce stated that "having conducted these States to independence and peace, he now appears to assist in framing a Government to make the People happy. Like Gustavus Vasa, he made be said to be the deliverer of his Country."</p>	
<p><b>Franklin</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 28 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. On June 28 when the Convention was in disarray he suggested that "hence forth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business." He is also known for his Rising Sun speech delivered on September 17. William Pierce stated that "the very heavens obey him, and the Clouds yield up their Lighting to be imprisoned in his rod. But what claim he has to the politician, posterity must determine. ... He is, however, a most extraordinary Man, and tells a story in a style more engaging than anything I ever heard."</p>	

<p><b>Madison</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 25 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. He is best known for writing the Virginia Plan and defending the attempt to build a stronger central government. He kept copious notes of the proceedings of the Convention which were made available to the general public upon his death in 1836. William Pierce stated that "Mr. Madison is a character who has long been in public life; and what is very remarkable every Person seems to acknowledge his greatness. He blends together the profound politician, with the Scholar. ... The affairs of the United States, he perhaps, has the most correct knowledge of, of any Man in the Union."</p>	
<p><b>Hamilton</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 25, departed June 30, and except for one day, August 13, he was absent until September 6. Upon his return he remained present through the signing of the Constitution. His most important contribution was the introduction and defense of the Hamilton plan on June 18, 1787, that argued neither the Virginia Plan nor the New Jersey Plan were adequate to the task at hand. William Pierce stated that "there is no skimming over the surface of a subject with him, he must sink to the bottom to see what foundation it rests on."</p>	
<p><b>G. Morris</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 25, and except for a three week period in late June, he was present through the signing of the Constitution. He spoke more frequently than any other delegate and supported the effort to build a strong central government. He is best remembered for writing the Preamble to the Constitution and for the "obligation of contracts clause" in Article I, Section 10 in the Constitution. William Pierce stated that "Mr. Governor Morris is one of the Genius's in whom every species of talents combine to render him conspicuous and flourishing in public debate. ... No Man has more wit, nor can anyone engage the attention more than Mr. Morris."</p>	

<p><b>R. Morris</b></p>  <p><small>Copyright, Smithsonian Institution Courtesy, National Portrait Gallery</small></p>	<p>Arrived May 25 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. He was one of two delegates who <b>signed all three of the nation's founding documents.</b> With the exception of May 25, when he nominated Washington for president, <b>he is not recorded as participating in the discussions of the Convention.</b> He did, however, second a motion on June 26. William Pierce stated that "Robert Morris is a merchant of great eminence and wealth; an able <b>Financier</b> and a worthy patriot."</p>	
<p><b>Wilson</b></p> 	<p>Arrived May 25 and was present through the signing of the Constitution. <b>He spoke often and with much fervor on behalf of a strong central government</b> that nevertheless conformed to majoritarian principles. William Pierce stated that "no man is more clear than, copious and comprehensive than Mr. Wilson, yet he is no great Orator."</p>	