

## *To the Bag*

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### “bastard Bratt of a Scotch Pedlar”

To the Bag:

I am afraid that the Founders may have had less weighty reasons than fear of scheming foreigners for excluding non-citizens from the presidency. (James C. Ho, *President Schwarzenegger – Or At Least Hughes*, Winter 2004.) The provision most likely targeted Alexander Hamilton, born in the Virgin Islands. The

product of an adulterous relationship, he was raised poor and fatherless. John Adams called him a “bastard Bratt of a Scotch Pedlar,” and the aristocratic Virginians looked down their noses at him. Brash and brilliant, he could have been a contender. Instead, as the first Secretary of the Treasury, he managed to put the new nation on a

secure financial footing. For that, I suppose we should thank the Founders for their short-sightedness – but we should not credit them with honorable, if misguided, motives.

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