

justice, in each case he was passed over, and he remained on the court until his death in 1806.

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John E. O'Connor



RICHARD HOWELL (October 25, 1754–April 28, 1802), revolutionary officer, lawyer and third governor of New Jersey, was born in Newark, Delaware. He was a twin, and one of the eleven children of Ebenezer Howell, a farmer, and Sarah (Bond) Howell, Quakers who had emigrated from Wales to Delaware in about 1724. Educated at an academy and then privately, Howell became an Episcopalian during the American Revolution. He married Keziah, the daughter of Joseph Burr, who owned extensive property in Burlington County. The Howells had nine children.

Between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, from the time he moved with his family to Shiloh, in Cumberland County, New Jersey, to his inauguration as governor, Howell played an active part in the movement for American independence. He participated in the Greenwich Tea Party and, months before the Declaration of Independence, wrote newspaper essays for the *Plain Dealer* calling for armed resistance to the British.

During the revolutionary war, Howell rose to the rank of brigade major and

participated in the Canadian campaign and the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. He spent the winter of 1777–78 at Valley Forge with Washington, for whom he resigned his commission to perform intelligence work.

Howell first practiced law near his home, then in Trenton. While traveling to the first inauguration in New York, he participated in Trenton's reception for President Washington. After being appointed clerk of the New Jersey Supreme Court, he joined the nucleus of the New Jersey Federalist party, which was made up of members closely connected to Washington and Alexander Hamilton.

Howell became the third governor of New Jersey in 1793 and served until 1801. During most of this period he was the only candidate nominated. In 1798 the Republicans nominated several candidates, but Howell was elected by a very large majority. His victory margin was considerably smaller in 1799, when Republicans united on moderate Federalist Andrew Kirkpatrick as their alternative to Howell's reelection.

While governor, Howell carried out the varied and exacting judicial duties that constituted the major functions of the office. He performed the duties of surrogate general, of chancellor—hearing appeals from cases tried in equity—and of presiding judge of the state court of errors and appeals, the highest appellate court in New Jersey. He also was president of the council, where he possessed a tie-breaking vote. By virtue of the New Jersey constitution he also had the executive power of captain-general and commander of the militia.

In September 1794, to comply with President Washington's orders, Howell led the New Jersey militia into Pennsylvania to help crush the Whiskey Rebellion. President Washington met the troops in Pennsylvania and named Howell commander of the right wing of the army. After cowing the insurgents, the president dismissed the troops, and Howell and his men returned to New Jersey in mid-November.

In August 1798, Howell was involved in the sedition charges brought against the most ardent Republican organ in New Jersey, the *Newark Centinel of Freedom*. In May, Republican militia officers had refused to add their names to the state militia's expression of support for the Federalist president, John Adams. As head of the militia, Howell lashed out at them publicly for this. In reply, the Republicans forwarded an address to Howell, charging that the president was at fault, not they. Adams had violated the constitution they said, and therefore they had no confidence in the government. Governor Howell then attacked his addressers as "the shreds of a French faction [that operated as a] dagger in the hands of . . . [a French] assassin." In the *Centinel*, the Republicans now called him "the Prince of Blackguards." This epithet formed the basis for the governor's charges of seditious libel against the newspaper.

Considering his background, it is not surprising that when a Federalist party split occurred in the late 1790s, the militant Howell sided with war and the army. Under orders from Major General Alexander Hamilton, Howell gladly raised an infantry regiment in case of a French invasion.

Finally, in February 1799, when Fries's Rebellion broke out in Pennsylvania protesting the taxes levied to support the provisional army and other elements of the Federalist defense program, Howell responded with alacrity to President Adams's order to ready two thousand New Jersey militiamen to march. His prompt, decisive action brought one Philadelphia militant Federalist newspaper's praise: "What a charming thing it would be if every state had such a governor as New Jersey! . . . It will be long, very long indeed, 'ere Poor Pennsylvania will see a Howell in her chair of state."

Howell's last term in office ended in October 1801, when the Federalists lost the state. Disgrace and death followed in quick succession. As soon as the Republicans had taken office, the legislature

accused Howell of failing to account for all monies spent on military preparedness and ordered him to give the state treasurer the unexpended monies and a statement of expenditures. The investigation was incomplete in April 1802, when Howell died with a clouded reputation—at least in Republican minds. In his obituary, the Republican press stated that he was possibly guilty of embezzling funds. The Federalists answered that Howell's failing health had prevented him from maintaining proper accounts.

At the end of Howell's long tenure as governor, six months before his death, the Federalists acknowledged publicly that he had not been a statesman of the first magnitude. His popularity with his electors, the members of the Federalist-dominated New Jersey legislature, surpassed his effectiveness as governor.

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Rudolph J. Pasler  
Margaret C. Pasler



JOSEPH BLOOMFIELD (October 18, 1753–October 3, 1823) was the fourth governor of the state (1801–2; 1803–12) and the first Jeffersonian-Republican to hold the office. He was first elected in 1801, then