**A Biography of Gouverneur Morris 1752-1816**

Morris NY, in 1752. His family was wealthy and enjoyed a long record of public service. His elder half-brother, Lewis, signed the Declaration of Independence.

Gouverneur was educated by private tutors and at a Huguenot school in New Rochelle. In early life, he lost a leg in a carriage accident. He attended King's College (later Columbia College and University) in New York City, graduating in 1768 at the age of 16. Three years later, after reading law in the city, he gained admission to the bar.

When the Revolution loomed on the horizon, Morris became interested in political affairs. Because of his conservatism, however, he at first feared the movement, which he believed would bring mob rule. Furthermore, some of his family and many of his friends were Loyalists. But, beginning in 1775, he took a seat in New York's Revolutionary provincial congress (1775-77). In 1776, when he also served in the militia, along with John Jay and Robert R. Livingston he drafted the first constitution of the state.

In 1777-78 Morris sat in the legislature and in 1778-79 in the Continental Congress, where he numbered among the youngest and most brilliant members. During this period, he signed the Articles of Confederation and drafted instructions for Benjamin Franklin, in Paris, as well as those that provided a partial basis for the treaty ending the War for Independence. Morris was also a close friend of Washington and one of his strongest congressional supporters.

Morris emerged as one of the leading figures at the Constitutional Convention. His speeches, more frequent than those by anyone else, numbered 173. A strong advocate of nationalism and he actually drafted the Constitution.

In 1792 Washington appointed him as Minister to France, to replace Thomas Jefferson. Morris returned to the United States in 1799.

In an era when most Americans thought of themselves as citizens of their respective states, Morris advanced the idea of being a citizen of a single union of states.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gouverneur_Morris#cite_note-1)

Morris died at Morrisania in 1816 at the age of 64 and was buried at St. Ann's Episcopal Churchyard, in the Bronx, New York City.