



## George Clinton

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GEORGE CLINTON, FIRST GOVERNOR of New York State, was born on July 26, 1739, to an Irish family that had immigrated to Little Britain, a small town near the Hudson River. His father, a member of the New York colonial assembly, was his political inspiration and tutor. At the age of 18 Clinton enlisted in the British Army to fight in the French and Indian War. Later he studied law, was appointed clerk of the court of common pleas, and served in the state assembly.

Elected to serve in the Continental Congress, Clinton voted for the Declaration of Independence but was called by Washington to serve as brigadier general of militia and had to leave before the signing occurred. In 1777 Clinton became the first governor of New York, and he served until 1795. He was also known for his hatred of the Tories and was partially able to keep taxes down through seizure and sale of Tory estates. A supporter and friend of George Washington, he supplied food to the troops at Valley Forge. Clinton rode with Washington to the first inauguration and gave an impressive dinner to celebrate the occasion. However, this friendship did not influence Clinton's politics; he did not support the adoption of the Constitution until the Bill of Rights was added.

He served again as governor of New York from 1801 to 1804 and as vice president under Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Clinton died in Washington on April 20, 1812, and was buried there; in 1908 he was reinterred at Kingston, New York.

January 2014

Bronze by Henry Kirke Brown  
Given in 1873; located in Senate wing, 2nd floor.

