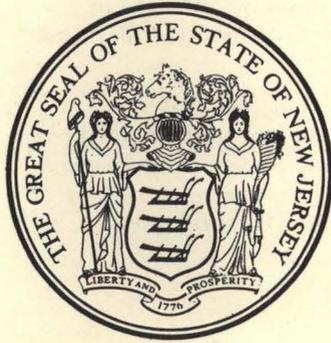


Volume 14  
The New Jersey Historical Series

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# *The New Jersey Governor*

*A STUDY IN POLITICAL POWER*



DUANE LOCKARD

1964

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## FOREWORD

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Many tracks will be left by the New Jersey Tercentenary celebration, but few will be larger than those made by the New Jersey Historical Series. The Series is a monumental publishing project—the product of a remarkable collaborative effort between public and private enterprise.

New Jersey has needed a series of books about itself. The 300th anniversary of the State is a fitting time to publish such a series. It is to the credit of the State's Tercentenary Commission that this series has been created.

In an enterprise of such scope, there must be many contributors. Each of these must give considerably of himself if the enterprise is to succeed. The New Jersey Historical Series, the most ambitious publishing venture ever undertaken about a state, was conceived by a committee of Jerseymen—Julian P. Boyd, Wesley Frank Craven, John T. Cunningham, David S. Davies, and Richard P. McCormick. Not only did these men outline the need for such an historic venture; they also aided in the selection of the editors of the series.

Both jobs were well done. The volumes speak for themselves. The devoted and scholarly services of Richard M. Huber and Wheaton J. Lane, the editors, are a part of every book in the series. The editors have been aided in their work by two fine assistants, Elizabeth Jackson Holland and Bertha DeGraw Miller.

To D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. my special thanks for recognizing New Jersey's need and for bringing their

skills and publishing wisdom to bear upon the printing and distributing of the New Jersey Historical Series.

My final and most heartfelt thanks must go to Duane Lockard, who accepted my invitation to write *The New Jersey Governor: A Study in Political Power*, doing so at great personal sacrifice and without thought of material gain. We are richer by his scholarship. We welcome this important contribution to an understanding of our State.

*January, 1964*

RICHARD J. HUGHES  
*Governor of the  
State of New Jersey*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thanks to the generous assistance of many friends this is a better book than it could possibly have been without them. Richard Huber, co-editor of the New Jersey Tercentenary Historical Series, originally suggested that I write this book and he has provided counsel and encouragement throughout its preparation. The Princeton University Research Fund gave me a grant which permitted me to engage John H. Strange as a research assistant. He collected biographical information on the governors, assembled election data, and prepared drafts of the tables and graphs. I am most grateful for his conscientious and imaginative assistance. John F. Sly, Professor Emeritus of Princeton University, interrupted his own work frequently to advise me. His rich experience in New Jersey government and his association with all the governors of recent decades made him an invaluable source of insights and information. My daughters, Linda, Janet, and Leslie, helpfully did small research chores for me during the steamy weeks of the summer of 1963.

Finally and most importantly I want to thank the readers of the manuscript. Their careful and painstaking criticism saved me from more errors than I like to admit. I greatly appreciate the suggestions and corrections made by John Bebout, Ronald Grele, Richard P. McCormick, Bennett Rich, and Paul Tillett. My wife, Beverly, improved style with her ruthless blue pencil; for that and much other assistance I am grateful to her.

DUANE LOCKARD

*Princeton, New Jersey*  
*January, 1964*



## CONTENTS

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Foreword	vii
Acknowledgments	ix
List of Illustrations	xiii
List of Tables and Graphs	xv
I The Development of the Office	1
II The Colonial Governor	12
III The Patrician Governor	36
IV The Businessman's Governor	57
V The Party-Machine Governor	71
VI The Modern Governor	98
VII Conclusion: Notes on Power	129
Bibliographical Note	133
Appendix	138
Index	149



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

---

Lord Cornbury	25
William Franklin	32
William Livingston	39
Morven	40
Peter D. Vroom	51
Leon Abbett	86
Woodrow Wilson	107
Walter E. Edge	113
Alfred E. Driscoll	119



## LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

---

I	Governors' Background and Experience, 1776-1964	10
II	Winners' Percentage of Two-Party Vote for Governor	73
III	Democratic Percentage of Two-Party Vote for Governor and President	75
IV	The Governor and the Legislature	77
V	Party Control of Governorship and Legislature	78
VI	Biographical Data on Nine Party-Machine Governors	80



# I

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OFFICE

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**F**ROM PHILIP CARTERET, the first English governor who took office in 1664, to Richard J. Hughes, the incumbent on the occasion of New Jersey's Tercentenary, 66 men have served as governor of the colony and state.\* Reviewing the careers of these men and the development of the office one is struck by two things. First, the name "governor" is about all that has remained constant about the position. Although the general trend has been for the governorship to gain in power and prestige over the centuries, the line of development has been anything but steadily upward. In fact the governor's relative influence in New Jersey government and politics has fluctuated from zero to zenith, often within a remarkably short time. Second, these 66 men have been an incredibly assorted lot. Some were rogues and thieves; some were the mere agents of powerful outsiders (like business moguls or party bosses); some were amiable nonentities, adept at platitude and evasion, who served their terms and passed into deserved oblivion. But there were others. Some were men of firmness, ability, and principle who would com-

\* This figure is arrived at by excluding from the count several short-term deputy governors during the colonial era and the more than one hundred "acting governors" who as presidents of the Council, or of the Senate after 1844, exercised the powers of the governor during his absence from the state or when the office fell vacant due to death or resignation.

pare well with any group of chiefs of state drawn from a comparable society that developed in three centuries from a collection of a few hundred hardy settlers to a metropolitan state of six million people.

The careers of the good, the bad, and the indifferent are equally pertinent to this inquiry. Through their administrations one can trace the evolution of state government, illustrating changing conceptions, values, behavior patterns, and distributions of political power. Much of what has been written about the New Jersey governorship (and that of other states as well) has overemphasized the role of the constitution in determining the relative effectiveness of a governor's leadership. Without denying the importance of the constitution as one source of a governor's potential power, the question persists: how can we explain wide variations in the degree of power wielded by two governors within the same decade when no constitutional changes have taken place? The answer must be found in other political phenomena.

Hence this is called a study of "political power." The term does not mean to me something derogative or petty but something comprehensive, involving all the things that men can do or draw upon to influence others to take desired actions on matters of public policy. Political power thus involves such elements as a governor's personal qualities, his formal authority, the alliances he makes, the reputation he acquires, and the sources of rewards or punishments he commands. Whether a governor will prevail in a dispute over policy (or even whether he will be significantly involved) is the resultant of a subtle combination of factors, not of any single determinant.

A governor who lacks the personal qualities of leadership, or who has no great desire to make new laws or otherwise shape policy, acquires a reputation for weakness. Inevitably this invites others active in state affairs either to ignore him or to risk defying him. A governor who possess the same formal authority but has a strong will to power and is personally persuasive may develop exactly the opposite reputation with the result that other

politicians will defer to him rather than resist. What Richard Neustadt has said of the President is equally applicable here to the governor. "If he cannot make men think him bound to win, his need is to keep them from thinking they can cross him without risk, or that they can be sure what risks they run." \* A reputation for strength is dependent upon more than personal qualities, however. Possession of the means to punish or reward is also important; thus close association with a strong political-party organization or with powerful economic groups enhances a governor's potential. Wide authority to appoint and remove personnel may combine with other bases of power to make the governor's position a formidable one. Or authority to appoint and remove may mean little because of the absence of other empowering factors.

Evaluating the power potential of a single governor is no simple undertaking, and searching for evidence of changing power sources over a three-century period is infinitely more complicated, since there is limited information readily available for some periods of New Jersey history. But even if there were more data available complete certainty about the reasons for gubernatorial effectiveness would be next to impossible to achieve. Nevertheless by examining the changing general bases of gubernatorial power we can at least reveal the significant factors in the power equation even if we cannot quantify their relative weights with precision. By a "base" of political power I mean a resource on which a governor may draw.\*\* As a nation's base of power in international affairs would be (in part) its economy and its military capacity, so an official's base of power is the personal and institutional sources of strength he can call upon. As noted above a governor's personal qualities can be a source of power. The dynamic and magnetic personality

\* Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power* (New York, 1960), 64.

\*\* This method of assessing power derives from Robert Dahl's theory presented in his article "The Concept of Power," *Behavioral Science*, II, 201-215.

of a "born" leader attracts others to him and inspires loyalty and cooperation. Capacity to comprehend complex issues and to communicate effectively are indispensable tools of persuasion. Courage to take risks, the will to persist, and the political sense to perceive the point where moderation should supplant firmness are prerequisites to effectiveness for a chief executive. Partly out of such intangibles is a reputation created; once achieved, it is a source of continuing power.

A second base of power is the support of interest groups and/or organizations. Again to employ an analogy from international politics, it is a matter of alliances: of having supporting strength in reserve. If a governor can draw upon the power, prestige, and wealth of a dominant business group, as many nineteenth-century governors did, he has a formidable source of power. Similarly a party organization and the loyalties and identifications that New Jersey politicians have toward party are important sources of power. Ambitious politicians submit to leadership and discipline in anticipation of future rewards. Prospects of the party's winning the next election can be a potent force in the hands of a governor who argues that specific legislation or actions are indispensable to holding or winning public support in the next election. Party is thus a dual source of power. Besides being an organization that can reward or punish, it is also an object of identification for voters and politicians which facilitates a governor's efforts to get support.

Another base of power is the constitutional-legal authorization for the governor to exercise certain prerogatives. Appointment and removal power, as stated in the constitution and amplified in statute law, is an obvious example. The power to veto legislation, to serve more than one term, and to direct agencies are other examples.

It is important to recognize that the constitutional factor is not solely a matter of words in a document. The language of constitutions and statutes is subject to interpretation and to reinterpretation as time passes. Indeed

a constitution in its most meaningful sense is the document plus its interpretations and the beliefs of the public as to what it ought to mean. An example from the United States Constitution will illustrate the point. The apparent intent of the framers of the Constitution was that presidential electors should exercise their personal judgment in voting for a president. Early electors did so. Gradually the practice of instructing electors through popular election became common, and the voters themselves soon expected to be the direct decision-makers. As early as 1812 the choice of electors by popular vote was so firmly accepted in New Jersey that the Federalist party further diminished its survival chances by repealing popular election and reverting to the old method of choosing electors by the Legislators.\* Today, a presidential elector who refuses to abide by the popular vote is accused of violating the Constitution.

In the same fashion attitudes have changed about the constitutional position of the New Jersey governor. As fear of the executive declined, and mass-based political activity expanded, the governor became not only more visible but much more powerful. Governors gradually came informally to exercise certain kinds of power which subsequent constitutional changes formally endorsed. Repeatedly one finds constitution-makers ratifying an existing situation more than innovating new practices; they put into the formal constitution political practices that had won common acceptance, partly because they had become commonplace. Thus the 1776 constitution created a governor in the mold of the actually weak (although formally strong) royal governor; the 1844 constitution formally gave to the governor appointment and other powers that party-leader governors had begun to acquire informally; the 1947 constitution endorsed and expanded chief-executive control over the bureaucracy which had been growing for decades.

To facilitate identification of the broad changes in

\* See Walter R. Fee, *The Transition from Aristocracy to Democracy in New Jersey, 1789-1829* (Somerville, 1933), 182-183.

gubernatorial bases of power, the history of the office is here divided into five stages. Admittedly these categories are somewhat arbitrary: their time spans overlap in some instances, some governors in one category clearly share some traits with those in another. The categories have no importance in themselves; their purpose is purely one of convenience in demonstrating the way sources of gubernatorial power shift with changing social, economic, and political conditions. Still the classifications are based upon significant historical trends and serve to highlight stages of evolution of the office. The categories are (1) the colonial governor (1664 to 1776), (2) the patrician governor (1776 to 1854), (3) the businessman's governor (1854 to 1911), (4) the party-machine governor (1870 to 1941), (5) the modern governor (from 1911). The categories are largely self-explanatory, but a comment about each may be helpful as a reminder of the major developments in the state's political history.

The colonial governor held an anomalous position, being in part an agent of feudal authority and in part an uneasy participant in (or a victim of) emergent democratic practices. For more than a century 19 governors and a series of deputy governors and presidents of the Council, serving on an interim basis, struggled to stabilize government in the growing colony. New Jersey did not suffer much from autocratic rule of the kind that enraged colonists in other colonies in the early eighteenth century—indeed colonial governors in New Jersey faced a frustrating task in trying to deal with the independent and democratically inclined settlers. A few governors, however, were not above using their offices to repair their personal fortunes, a trait not soon forgotten by the colonists.

The so-called patrician governors served largely under the constitution of 1776. New Jersey was among the first states to adopt a new constitution at the request of the Continental Congress, and the terms of that document illustrate how the mood of the times affected those who drew it up. Angry at the King and at his governors who

attempted to carry out imperial policy, the revolutionists distrusted the executive. Accordingly the New Jersey constitution provided legislative supremacy, denying the governor any significant executive power, even though he was said to have "the supreme executive power." In fact the governor had more judicial than executive authority since he served as chancellor and surrogate general. Lacking powers of appointment, subject to annual election by the Legislature, and performing most of his formal duties in conjunction with the Council (the upper house of the Legislature, later the Senate), the governor derived most of his power from other than constitutional sources. None of the 14 governors who served under the 1776 constitution exercised broad leadership, although some of them were men of personal distinction and leadership ability who had more influence than a reading of the constitution might suggest. In any event, most of them were either from the landed gentry or fairly wealthy families. Eleven of the sixteen governors of the period had a college education, a higher proportion than in any succeeding group except those who have served since 1941. It is interesting to note that even after the Constitutional Convention of 1844 had enlarged the governor's power considerably and had made it a popularly-elective office, the same kind of men still became governor for the next decade or so.

During the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth there were at least ten governors who could reasonably be classified as the businessman's governors for the simple reason that, apparently, the most important basis of their political power was the business community. It would not be accurate to say that they were "controlled" by businessmen, for they had party and other connections that also influenced their behavior, but of all the significant sources of influence on their official behavior the world of business was certainly predominant. In part this was a product of the mood of the times; industry was expanding in the nation generally and in New Jersey especially.

Not only governors but most people, judging by comments of the time, believed that promoting manufacturing and transportation growth was a good thing.

Naked power was also involved, however. Railroads and monopolies and trusts in the state had power and they used it to the hilt, buying and selling legislators for corporate advantage in the rawest kind of bitter competition. From the early political ventures of the canal builders to the rigging of corporation laws to facilitate the creation of trusts, New Jersey's government bent before the powerful forces of money-making entrepreneurs.

The era of the party-machine governor is hard to date for many of them served at intervals between governors devoted to business interests; nor were all the party-machine governors antagonistic to business interests. The critical distinction between the two types is the extent of reliance upon and/or responsiveness to business interests or to party organizations. Some of the business governors served at a time when the post-Civil War "Ring" occupied the State House in Trenton and it is obvious that those governors were not innocent of party intrigue. Yet they were less party men than business-oriented men, as their behavior in office indicated. Likewise some party-machine governors were very friendly to business interests, yet their political style suggested party-machine orientation, as their careers before, during, and after their governorships indicate.

The rise of party organizations to enormous power, like the comparable rise of corporations, was a new phenomenon and the careers of many governors were fundamentally shaped by that new force. Fairly strong party organizations existed before the Civil War but none resembled the powerful machines of the post-Civil War period. The "rings" of the growing cities with their exploitable immigrant population produced a new kind of political organization and, in time, a new kind of governor. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and throughout the long reign of Boss Frank Hague

of Jersey City, the influence of bosses on many governors was extensive. Hague's governors took their cues from him and made few significant moves without prior clearance. Although the most subservient of the machine governors brought the office to its nadir, some of the earlier party-machine governors were men of great ability who accomplished a great deal in office. The later governors were more allies than subordinates of the bosses, and as party leaders in their own right they were able to command organizational strength in their own behalf.

This brings up the last category of governor, the so-called modern governor who shows a certain independence of party organizations, makes the most of his having been popularly elected by appealing for public support, and seeks to maximize his power to govern by increasing his control over governmental administration and by frankly cultivating a public image. Although signs of willingness to use these techniques appeared before 1911 when Woodrow Wilson became governor, it is apparent that Wilson showed others how to create and make the most of the governor's public image as the honest, fearless, concerned-about-good-government public servant. As a kind of plebiscitary king, the modern governor depends heavily on popular support not only to gain office in the first place but to effectuate his program. The modern governor and his bases of power are distinctly different from those of earlier categories of governors, reflecting, as each succeeding category has, a new pattern of politics and a new distribution of political power.

An indication of the changes in the backgrounds of governors since 1776 is shown in the accompanying table, a statistical condensation of the information contained in the brief biographical sketches of governors presented in the Appendix. Note that there are several distinct breaks. In the period 1854 to 1881 the proportion of governors with higher education declined as did the percentage who had held state office previously, suggesting not only a

FIGURE I  
GOVERNORS' BACKGROUND and EXPERIENCE (1776-1964)

Period	Number of Governors	Percentage Democratic Governors	Percentage Years with Democratic Governors	Percentage College Educ.	Percentage Born in N.J.	Percentage From Prominent Family	Percentage Held Fed. Office Prior	Percentage Held State Office Prior
1776-1813	5	20	27	60	40	80	60	40
1813-1845	9 *	67	81	67	100	88	12	100
1845-1854	3 *	67	67	100	100	100	33	100
1854-1881	8	62	67	50	75	75	25	25
1881-1913	10	50	55	50	70	60	10	70
1914-1941	7 **	57	67	43	86	14	14	86
1941-1964	5 **	60	60	80	60	40	20	60

\* Governor Daniel Haines is counted in both categories here because he served before and after the new constitution.

\*\* Governor Walter Edge is listed in both categories because of the thirty-year interval between his first and second terms. Otherwise governors who served more than one term are counted only once, since this more nearly portrays the truth of the matter: the kinds of governors who served during different stages of history.

tendency for more plebian persons to become governor but also a break in a previously established system of advancement from lesser offices to the governorship. The low proportion of those who had had college educations in the period 1914 to 1941 is also indicative of political conditions of the Hague era. These and other changes will be discussed in the ensuing chapters.

## II

# THE COLONIAL GOVERNOR (1664 - 1776)

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THE GOVERNOR during the first half of New Jersey's colonial period was usually an insignificant political force. His legal status was often in doubt, his main source of support was remote in London, and his demands were often rejected—sometimes contemptuously. As the Colony became more stable and when the office was given added power as a result of London's becoming more interested in the colonies and their economic potential, traditions of local autonomy and popular legislative discretion were so strong that, although on paper the authority of the governor was extensive, resistance to the governor's will was common and frequently successful.

Nevertheless the one hundred-twelve years of colonial rule have great importance for the development of the governorship after 1776. Antagonism toward the governor's efforts to carry out Parliamentary and Crown policy left the firm belief that the governorship itself was not to be trusted. The Legislature came to embody, both symbolically and operationally, the will of the leading political elements of the settler population. In a paradoxical way, therefore, the governor contributed unintentionally to the rise of democratic practices. A brief review of the role of the colonial governorship will illumine the legacy it left behind.

Colonial government in New Jersey passed through three stages: the proprietary period from 1664 to 1702, and two stages as a royal province—first, under a governor shared with New York until 1738, and then with a separate governor until 1776. The “central” government of the province during the proprietary period was necessarily tentative; most governing took place in the local settlements for the obvious reasons of remoteness and the generally unsettled conditions of new communities in a wilderness. There was also instability of colonial government arising from conflict over land rights and taxation, and from confusion about which government had jurisdiction in New Jersey. Thus, plaintively, a Newark town meeting in 1669 sent emissaries to the governor of New York to inquire “concerning our Standing, whether we are designed to be part of the Duke’s Colony or not.” \*

Part of this difficulty derived from the confused origins of the colony. On March 12, 1664, Charles II granted to his brother, the Duke of York (later James II), a wide sweep of land from the Connecticut River to the Delaware Bay. The New Jersey portion of that grant the Duke deeded to John, Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. In 1674 Lord Berkeley sold his half of the territory to two Quakers, John Fenwick and Edward Byllynge, although their title to the land was jeopardized by the brief reconquest of the area by the Dutch, since, under feudal law, land reverted to the British Crown when recovered. The ultimate result of years of wrangling and negotiation was that influential members of the Society of Friends became proprietors of West Jersey and Sir George Carteret took over East Jersey.

The two halves of the colony developed quite different governments. The Friends in West Jersey sanctioned a liberal constitution, the Concessions and Agreements of 1676/1677. Besides clarifying title to lands the document established a very liberal government, placing almost

\* John E. Pomfret, *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1962), 102.

total power in the hands of an assembly of one hundred members who were to be elected annually not "by the common and confused way of cry's and voices, but by putting Balls into Balloting Boxes." \* During the early years of settlement, largely by Quakers, West Jersey had had neither governor nor assembly; instead commissioners for the proprietors managed affairs. Before an assembly was ever called, Governor Sir Edmund Andros of New York challenged its validity. Accordingly, the Duke of York gave the authority to govern to Edward Byllynge, one of the two Quakers who originally bought lands from Berkeley. Byllynge, still in England, commissioned Samuel Jennings, a proprietor, as governor of West Jersey. Jennings accepted the office in 1680 and became, in the view of one historian, "literally the tribune of the people of West Jersey." \*\* He called an assembly on November 21, 1681, which passed a series of resolutions restating almost verbatim the provisions of the liberal Concessions and Agreements of 1676/1677, including the necessity for annual sessions of the Assembly, a prohibition upon the governor's waging war, passing laws, or levying taxes without consent of the Assembly. All officers were to be appointed by the Assembly, and freedom of conscience in religion was proclaimed. Far from objecting to this set of demands, Governor Jennings signed them and concurred in other acts of the session.

In 1683 when it was reported that Byllynge would assume the governorship himself, the Assembly, without legal warrant, elected Jennings governor. The ensuing conflict between the settlers and Byllynge was arbitrated by a group of Quaker leaders in England who confirmed Byllynge's right to govern but emphasized the rights of the people given in the Concessions. Ultimately in 1685 John Skene was made deputy governor and was grudgingly

\* Edwin P. Tanner, *The Province of New Jersey, 1664-1738* (New York, 1908), 114.

\*\* John E. Pomfret, *The Province of West New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1956), 127.

accepted. On Byllynge's death in 1687, governing authority was in effect purchased by Dr. Daniel Coxe who continued Skene as deputy governor. This was shortly terminated, however, with the assumption of power by Sir Edmund Andros in June, 1688, who by the authority of King James II extended his hegemony from Maine to New Jersey in the so-called Dominion of New England. Not much is known about governing procedures during the Andros interval, but the Assembly apparently met with some regularity.\* Because it was more remote from New York, West Jersey suffered less from Andros' interference than did East Jersey. Andros continued West Jersey office holders, and Skene became a judge in Burlington. Government locally went on more or less as usual, but "during most of the interval 1685 to 1692 practically no general government seems to have existed."\*\* Colonel Andrew Hamilton became governor of both West and East Jersey in 1692, and except for a two-year interval he served until 1702. The interim governor, Jeremiah Basse, quarreled with factions of the proprietors in the period 1698 to 1699, but there were no major disturbances like those in East Jersey where tensions passed the breaking point and riots ensued.

The most significant difference between West and East Jersey was the early and important role of the Quakers in the former. The liberality of the Quaker proprietors and the democratic beliefs of both proprietors and settlers were conducive to strength in the Assembly and weakness in the governor. Executive power was weakened, too, by the fact that there were many proprietors, not just one or two. The resident proprietors did not take kindly to the grant to Byllynge of the power to govern more or less in the feudal manner. Some of them,

\* Most authorities assert that there were no Assembly meetings between 1688 and 1692, but Richard P. McCormick presents evidence that there were several sessions. See his *The History of Voting in New Jersey, 1664-1911* (New Brunswick, 1953), 30.

\*\* Edwin P. Tanner, *The Province of New Jersey, 1664-1738* (New York, 1908), 120. See also John E. Pomfret, *The Province of West New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1956), 159-168.

William Penn and John Fenwick particularly, opposed him vigorously.

In East Jersey, however, the Friends' influence was less important, and one proprietor, Sir George Carteret held control as long as he lived. Carteret, an old cavalier and favorite of the Duke, did not sell out as Lord Berkeley had done but stuck with the colonization scheme. Before Lord Berkeley sold out, however, the basic structure of East Jersey's government was established in the Concessions and Agreements which the two lords proprietor granted in 1655 shortly after acquiring ownership. Not so liberal as the Concessions and Agreements of the West Jersey Quakers in the next decade, the lord proprietors' terms for settler government were still generous. The proprietors appointed a governor but there was to be an assembly with power to pass laws subject to approval by the proprietors. Freedom of religion was proclaimed. The Concessions were sufficiently attractive to settlers that many from New England migrated with the result that some New England practices were transplanted, particularly town-meeting government.\*

In 1665 Philip Carteret, a twenty-six-year-old distant cousin of Sir George, was dispatched as the first governor of New Jersey. His first Assembly, in 1668, was marked by conflict with the Assembly, as was the second one later in the same year. Carteret's task in establishing a government was met with challenges of his authority from the settlers. Most of the settler-resistance came from residents in towns originally settled under the Elizabeth-town and Monmouth patents which had allowed certain exemptions from taxation and certain privileges of self-government. These grants had been made by William Nicholls, governor of New York during 1664 and early in 1665 before he learned that the Duke of York had granted New Jersey to Carteret and Berkeley. Settlers

\* See Hugh M. Clokie's essay, "Political and Constitutional Development," *New Jersey, A History* Irving S. Kull (ed.), (New York, 1930), I, 110ff.

under these patents resisted Carteret's attempts to levy taxes on the towns, and indeed they flatly refused to pay them. Another major item of discontent was the proprietors' demand for payment of quitrents. (A quitrent was a late-feudal development permitting the holder of land to pay in cash or kind annual sums in lieu of other feudal obligations.) Throughout the Colony there was resistance to the quitrent, arrears in payment were common, and from time to time rioting broke out when the proprietors pressed their demands. Often the resistance was too much for the governor to overcome. On one occasion eight rioters were convicted and fined for their activities, but, contemptuous of the court and supported by their neighbors, they stalked out of court and refused to pay.

Philip Carteret, during his incumbency of almost fifteen years, never managed to establish much personal authority over the colony. There was peace when demands were not being pressed and towns were permitted to govern themselves more or less. This, strangely, was as true of the interregnum of Dutch reconquest of the colony in 1673-1674 as it was of the assertion of authority by Andros in 1680-1681. The settlers cooperated with the Dutch conquerers and the Dutch in general allowed the settlers to go on as usual. As a historian of colonial New Jersey said, "Only Carteret's return was needed to throw the province into turmoil again." \* Similarly, there apparently was not much resentment on the part of the settlers of Andros' abuse of Carteret, nor of Andros' seizure of power. Andros had been eager to end the proprietary system and gain control over New Jersey, and on May 1, 1679, he arrested Carteret and took him, battered and bruised, to New York for trial on the charge that he persisted in an illegal attempt to assert his authority in the colony. To Andros' dismay a jury found him not guilty, but that did not prevent his

\* John E. Pomfret, *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1962), 81.

seizure of control in East Jersey. Although Carteret regained power in July of 1681, the last year of his reign was futile and empty of achievement.

Probably more trouble would have followed immediately had it not been for the transferal of the proprietary rights to the Quakers at this point. Sir George Carteret died in 1680, and in the settlement of his estate William Penn and other Quakers bought the territory. From that time until the establishment of the royal province, East Jersey was under the rule of the "Twenty-Four" proprietors, a majority of whom were Quakers, who had acquired Carteret's rights. A series of deputy governors for the Twenty-Four served during the next decade (Thomas Rudyard, Gawen Lawrie, Lord Neil Campbell, and Andrew Hamilton), and with varying degrees of success they mediated between the proprietors and the settlers. From time to time force was used to collect quitrents, and at other times governors negotiated and settled arrears for reduced sums. Conflict with the Assembly was common, and usually that body refused to levy taxes. In 1686 the Assembly bluntly said the people would not accept a tax "to maintaine a governm't ag't themselves &c." \*

In the final years of proprietary government the governor was incapable of putting down the near anarchy that prevailed when anti-proprietary elements armed themselves and successfully resisted all efforts by the proprietors to govern. Indeed before the final curtain fell for the proprietors, the once-respected Governor Andrew Hamilton was subjected to the ignominy of seizure and detention by rebellious settlers. This happened in Middletown, a focal point of resistance to proprietary rule from 1665 onward. The settlers were unhappy over abuses of authority, as they saw it, particularly at the dispossession of settlers for nonpayment of quitrents, and severe riots began in Monmouth County. To repress the rioters the government jailed

\* John E. Pomfret, *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1962), 227.

several leaders of the settlers and others had to give bail as a security for peaceful behavior. In March of 1701 Hamilton and four councilors had come to Middletown to conduct the trial of a pirate who was said to have sailed with Captain Kidd. The trial had scarcely begun when a mob freed the prisoner and seized the governor, councilors, and court attendants. They were held several days.\*

Recurrent outbreaks such as this one destroyed the prestige of proprietary government and brought the moment of surrender to royal authority nearer. Capitulation by the proprietors of both East and West New Jersey came in 1702. The chaotic conclusion was characteristic, for in neither of the Jerseys did the governorship become a powerful office. Both Byllynge and Carteret desired a firmer executive control, but conditions would not permit it. To attract settlers concessions and promises of at least a degree of self-government were necessary, and once the promises were made reneging was not easy. The governors, and their principals in England, lacked the power to establish firm control. They had neither military nor economic power to apply and their legal authority, when not in honest or feigned dispute, was not very substantial. The difficulties of communication between London and the colony and between the provincial seats of government and isolated settlements weakened the governor further. This is not to say that the settlers had complete control; on the contrary, central-government decisions were often made by committees of proprietors, frequently without convening the Assembly. Political arrest and other forms of force were used. Still the Assembly was a well-rooted institution, and by 1700 the settlers were, as one scholar observes, "no strangers to the fundamentals

\* One report said they were "traytorously" seized and "kept . . . close prisoners under a guard" from Tuesday to Saturday. *New Jersey Archives*, II, 362. But Pomfret says that those seized held court the next day, although there is no mention of Hamilton himself attending that session. John E. Pomfret. *The Province of East New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1962), 347.

of self government." \* When faced by efforts to expand central government control, whether by the original proprietors, proprietary committees, or governors, the settlers found the means to resist.

The failure of the proprietary system to provide a workable government for the Jerseys led to the decision by the British Board of Trade, a special committee of ministers and administrators appointed to oversee colonial matters, to place New Jersey under a royal governor. Whereas in some respects government in the proprietary period resembled the relationships between feudal lords and tenants, the new system was analogous to the historic relationship between Crown and Parliament. The royal governor was more acceptable to the Englishmen-colonists than the proprietary system which rested, after all, upon now-discredited quasi-feudal concepts. A measure of self-government was not inconsistent with a royal governor whose role resembled that of the king's—particularly the post-Glorious Revolution king who had narrower prerogative powers and dealt with a Parliament existent by right and not by sufferance of the Crown. So the governor made a speech to the Assembly analogous to the speech from the Throne, and the Assembly performed a familiar role in granting some things, denying some, and bargaining about others. There were differences of course. The governor was not the King of England but his representative three thousand miles from the seat of authority. Moreover the royal governor of New Jersey was not for thirty-five years after 1703, when the system was instituted, the governor of New Jersey alone—he was simultaneously the governor of New York. As such he tended to mind the affairs of the larger and more dangerously exposed New York colony and to concern himself with New Jersey matters only when he had to.

Even though preoccupied with New York affairs, the royal governor was rarely as weak and insignificant as

\* Richard P. McCormick, *The History of Voting in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, 1953), 34.

the proprietary governor had been. Perhaps the foremost reason for this was the legitimacy now associated with the office in contrast with the legal uncertainty of the proprietary governor's position and the unwillingness of the colonists to accept his authority. Originally, because of the anarchic conditions, there was readiness to accept the royal governor on the grounds of expediency, but also at the same time the rightfulness of Crown authority was not questioned. As Tanner observes, it would be a false interpretation to read

into the history of the governorship during the earlier part of the eighteenth century opposition to the governor as the royal representative. The attacks upon the governor were always made upon the ground that he did not properly represent the king; that is to say, they were based upon the true principles of the English system of government. The theory was always that the interests of the people and the king were identical, and the time had not yet come when men saw that it was not so.\*

The Board of Trade in establishing the governorship provided broad legal powers. In the "commission" of appointment of Edward Hyde Lord Cornbury, the first royal governor, the Board set the pattern that was to remain essentially unchanged for the next seventy years. The governor's executive authority was fairly broad: he could appoint subordinate executive officials, had an absolute veto over legislation, and could convene and dissolve the Legislature. His powers with regard to the judiciary were very broad including not only the right to appoint judges but the authority to establish a court system and to act as chancellor. He was given wide power to control the militia and some authority in ecclesiastical matters. This publicly announced set of rules served in lieu of a constitution, although it was supplemented by secret "instructions" to each governor which set forth detailed administrative responsibilities. In Lord Corn-

\* Edwin P. Tanner, *The Province of New Jersey, 1664-1738* (New York, 1908), 457.

bury's instructions there were 103 items, many of them minor and very specific, although others provided general directions for the conduct of financial, judicial, and military affairs, and he was specifically instructed that any matter not covered in his commission or instructions was to be dealt with temporarily with an immediate, full report to London.

As it turned out it was easier to grant this sweeping authority than to use it. Constitutionally, the governor was strong, in practice he was not. Whatever his commission or instructions might prescribe, the governor's authority was narrowed by an increasingly assertive Assembly, exactly as Parliament over the years trimmed away the prerogatives of the King. The Assembly, backed in times of stress by rioters violently objecting to unwanted policies, sought by threat, denial, guile, and negotiation to enlarge its own discretionary power and to diminish the governor's. Its main weapon was the power of the purse. Fiscal power was unusually important because of the kind of men who were chosen as royal governors. For the most part they were job-seekers from the gentry who by reason of family connection or party favoritism won assignment to a colonial post, hoping for financial reward. Few had independent fortunes and most of them were critically in need of the salary the Assembly alone could grant. The Assembly showed political skill and great imagination in dangling the salary carrot: they gave bonuses, made cuts, refused entirely to vote a salary, and freely threatened or promised any of the three, as seemed appropriate.

The governor's prerogatives were inadequate for mastering the settler-politicians. He had an absolute veto with which he sometimes forced a desired result by threatening to veto bills desired by the Assembly, but this was a weaker threat than the Assembly held over him on the salary issue or through its right to refuse to levy taxes or to appropriate money to carry out colonial administration. The governors could prorogue or dissolve the Assembly, but neither was much help: to pro-

rogue (i.e., send the Assembly home without dissolving it) often stiffened resistance; and to dissolve often resulted in the election of a new Assembly as bad as or worse than its predecessor. He had some patronage power but not enough to build support of the kind needed.

Nor did the governor get much aid from London. Pre-occupied with other matters, slowed by bureaucratic rigidity, hampered by ignorance of conditions in the colonies, the Board of Trade and the ministers responsible for colonial policy asked the impossible too often, threatened the settlers with punishments that they did not deliver, and at times punished governors for actions they were powerless to prevent. Part of the problem was the six to ten weeks it took to get communications across the Atlantic, but this difficulty was exaggerated by the vagueness and delay that attended most decisions. The members of the Assembly realized the small likelihood of London's threats being carried out except perhaps against the governors themselves—and laid their strategy accordingly. Moreover once they grew accustomed to such inaction, they were shocked and adamant when, in the 1760's Parliament attempted coercion.

Governors who moved into the internal wars of the several political factions of the province, seeking to carve out an amenable majority in the Legislature, occasionally succeeded in the short run, but tended to lose out in the long run because the factions could not provide continual political support. The essential difference of interest between the London-appointed governor and the local-minded factions destroyed any chance for long-run alliances. As the ensuing brief comments indicate, governors tended to surrender bits of their prerogatives whatever course of action they took—whether they bullied, bargained, conciliated, or subsided into inactivity.

The behavior of the first royal governor gave little reassurance to those who had advocated surrender of proprietary government as a remedy for the colony's problems. Lord Cornbury, the first royal governor, was

the worst possible governor to inaugurate the new regime: he was extravagant in his tastes, poverty-stricken, and purchasable. Cornbury, who won the position largely because he was a first cousin of Queen Anne, used his office to restore his depleted personal fortune. Shortly after he took office one faction reportedly gave him bribes of £200, and, on hearing this, another faction collected a larger bribe by soliciting funds around the colony, promising remedies to political problems without specifying how they were to be achieved. This was known euphemistically as the "blind tax," and, although Cornbury denied receiving it, there was, in the words of a contemporary, "all the reason in ye world to believe his Lordship had it." \*

He bullied the Assembly, intrigued with factions to get his policies approved, appointed hacks to administrative positions through which he and they made money on the sale of land, harassed three Quaker members of the Assembly by refusing to allow them to take their seats, and annoyed all Quakers by attempting to deny them the right of political participation. The Assembly retaliated by refusing to vote taxes, declining to meet to pass any kind of laws after he had outraged them repeatedly, questioning whether Cornbury's instructions had validity on any point not otherwise stated in law, and setting precedents regarding control of appropriations. The Assembly was aided in its campaign by Cornbury's general unpopularity. He set tongues wagging by appearing in female attire, because, he was reported to have said, he could better represent the Queen that way.\*\* He also drank heavily and got deeply in debt. The Board of Trade finally mustered the courage to remove him in 1708. Notwithstanding his peculations, he left office still

\* Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 56.

\*\* See Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 72-73, for documentary support for this scandal.



Lord Cornbury

in debt and soon went into debtor's prison. Cornbury spent months there, and only the death of his father which made him Earl of Clarendon, won him his release.

With the bitter memory of Cornbury in mind the Assembly was doubly alert and untrusting toward succeeding governors. The next two were undistinguished men who served for brief periods, but the third, Robert Hunter, was probably the ablest and the most evenhanded of New Jersey's colonial governors. After a successful military career he was dispatched to New Jersey in 1710 with orders to preserve harmony, which neither he nor any other leader could have carried out completely in that maelstrom of factional conflict, but his initial impartiality and good political sense won him considerable approval and support. His possession of a moderate personal fortune made him less susceptible to pressure on

the salary question. In time he took firm stands on many issues, dismissed his enemies from office and replaced them with his supporters. At first his relations with the Assembly were good, as shown by the Assembly's willingness to vote support bills for more than one year in advance. Later an opposition group won control of the Assembly—Hunter thought by chicanery—and he dissolved it in 1715. Dissolution was of no avail, however, and neither was a second dissolution in 1716. He found it hard to believe that his antagonists had won fairly, and he "disconsolately blamed it all on an appealing combination of 'Palpable Lyes' and a 'Large dram bottle.'" \* Following a by-election, a faction more favorable to Hunter regained control, and amicable relations with the Assembly continued until Hunter's voluntary return to England in 1719. After commenting that Hunter "was the most nearly ideal governor colonial New Jersey ever had," the same historian of the province observed that, "Perhaps the secret of Hunter's success lay in his early decision to side with the party of wealth and talent and by his leadership to shape their policies with a moderation that had been previously absent and was to disappear after his departure.\*\*"

The three governors who served (along with Council presidents during interim periods between appointments) during the remaining years New Jersey shared a governor with New York were undistinguished men who often allowed the Assembly to have its way. The first, William Barnet, is said to have tired of constant bickering and to have turned over government to his advisers, while he occupied himself with "his hobby, a study of the Book of Revelation." The second, John Montgomerie, apparently worried constantly about whether the Crown

\* Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 101.

\*\* See Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 111.

would grant New Jersey's wish to have a separate governor, thereby diminishing his salary. He seldom firmly restrained the Assembly, and he turned it back on only one major issue, the triennial act, a guarantee that a new Assembly would have to be called at least once every three years, something the Assembly always sought but never won. The third, William Bosby, was so pre-occupied with New York that he had little to do with New Jersey affairs, meeting the Assembly but once in his four-year term.

Thus, when New Jersey was awarded a separate governor in 1738, the Assembly's position was much improved over that of 1703. Its taxing and fiscal power, while not unrestricted, was relatively great. The limitations of the governor's instructions had been chipped away at considerably; the Assembly now repassed, with impunity, laws disallowed in England, thus taking advantage of their provisions until they were again disallowed (quite contrary to explicit commands); and, despite London's orders not to do so, the Assembly indirectly lowered qualifications for voting and office-holding.

But if the last governors under unified government with New York were weak, the new governor for New Jersey was not. Indeed he was one of the most interesting personalities in colonial New Jersey history—the tempestuous, ambitious, and able Lewis Morris. For half a century before becoming governor, Morris had been active in New Jersey politics, usually attacking vigorously on behalf of colonial interests and seeking to restrain governors. Born into a wealthy family, he was a rich man when he became governor. Born into a political family, he was endowed with long experience in politics, having joined the Council at the age of twenty-two. He also had a reputation as a battler for whatever cause he joined. In support of Governor Hamilton, he threatened his home county, Monmouth, with a bloodbath if resistance to the governor's authority did not cease; in opposition to Governor Hamilton a few years later, he

helped terminate proprietary government by his relentless attacks.

This aggressive quality was Morris' most distinguishing trait; despite his experience in colonial politics and his familiarity with the slow accretion of Assembly prerogatives, he was a relentlessly aggressive governor. His term—1738 to 1746—was one long state of political warfare with the Assembly. He was seventy years old and a curmudgeon by the time he became governor, but there was plenty of fight left in him.

Immediately upon his taking office there was a dispute over his salary. He took offense at a too-bluntly-put warning from an Assembly member who said, "let us keep the dogs poore and wee'll make them do what we please." \* When the Assembly refused to pass appropriations, Morris announced that he would give his assent to no measure they passed "unless sufficient provision be made for the support of the government previous to the passing of any bill. And this, Gentlemen, I desire you to take notice of and govern yourselves accordingly." \*\* When the Assembly was obstinate in pursuing a policy that the Board of Trade was resisting, Morris reported to the Board that the Assembly members "fancy themselves to have as much power as a British house of commons, and more, notwithstanding anything your Lordships have said, or can say," and he added, prophetically, that if the Assembly persisted and the bill was allowed to pass unnoticed, the "aid of a British Parliament" might be needed to "Perswade them." † Like his predecessors, Morris dissolved the Assembly to seek a more amenable one, and to further his cause he had his speeches to the Assembly published prior to the campaign, but the result was a heavy majority for the opposi-

\* Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 157.

\*\* Hugh M. Clokie, "Political and Constitutional Development," *New Jersey, A History*, Irving S. Kull (ed.) (New York, 1930), I, 211.

† Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 159.

tion. He later called the Assembly before him and expressed his outrage at the implicit bribe of £500 which the Assembly had offered in seeking his assent to a paper-money bill. "Your making of that offer Shews what your Notions of Virtue and Honour are, & what many of you would do, if in my Case, for a Much Less Sum: but you Mistook your Man." †

Morris' aggressive methods were countered with stubbornness on the part of the Assembly. While this resulted in no gains in Assembly prerogatives, it did furnish exercise in exploiting all the gains of earlier administrations. Not even the flat refusal to pay him any salary at all during the last two years of his term brought Morris to heel; he defended the governor's right to the bitter end. It is suggestive of the ultimate outcome of their contest of wills that not even the urging of the Board of Trade could persuade the Assembly to pay to Morris' widow and son the £2000 salary due him at his death. Aggressiveness held the ground for the governorship, but the Assembly remained eager to enlarge its prerogatives and limit the governors'.

The behavior of several governors following Morris accommodated the Assembly in that pursuit, and the trend was accelerated by conditions in the empire and in the colony. War with France and the Indians and internal disorder in the colony resulted in attempts by London to discipline the colonists, and that in turn hastened the decay of the governor's position. The Crown's need for troops and money from the colonies put the Assembly in a position to bargain, and its interest in supporting the war seem to grow or shrink depending upon whether the Board was willing to let it undertake its desired paper-money ventures. Internal disorder and riots put governors in an awkward position, particularly when the Assembly supported the rioters, and the proprietors and the Board of Trade insisted that the governor do something. When the rioters discovered

† Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self Government in Colonial New Jersey 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940) 165.

that nothing worse than firm language was to be expected from London, they pursued their course with impunity, leaving the governor in an increasingly untenable position.

Such were the dilemmas of the four governors who served between Morris' death in 1747 and 1763, when Governor William Franklin, illegitimate son of Benjamin Franklin, took office. The first, Jonathan Belcher (1747-1757), was a Massachusetts man, eager to win the favor of the people and anxious lest his salary be cut. Riots over land rights grew more and more serious late in Morris' term and early in Belcher's, and the Council, representative of the more conservative proprietary faction, demanded that Belcher do something to safeguard property and to uphold the law. When he did nothing, it asked him to join in an appeal to the King, but he refused to do even that. The Assembly, among whose members were some rioters, voted to do nothing. Two councilors claimed the reason Belcher refused to act was that an Assembly leader had threatened to cut off his salary entirely if he joined the Council petition, which, they said, was "A severe tryal of a mans vertue, & some Extenuation Should he Err, for Starving is hard for any man & much more so to a man who had been used to Live as well as he has done." \* (He also had eleven children!)

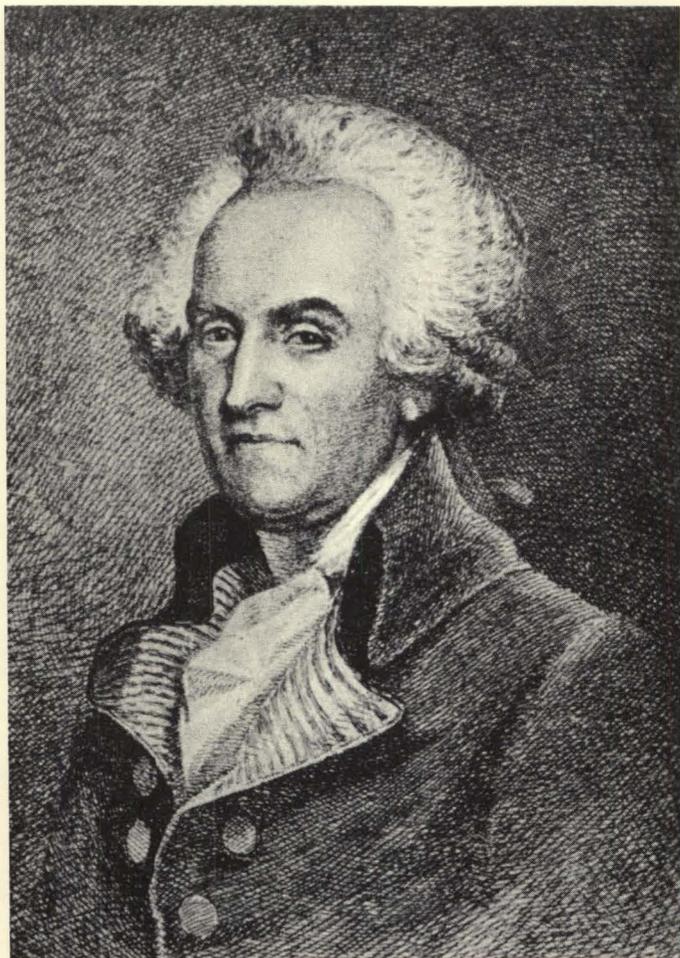
The other three governors before Franklin served relatively short terms, and their problems with maintaining their position were not significantly different from those of their predecessors. The travail of the last in the series, Josiah Hardy, illustrates the ineptitude of the London government in dealing with colonial governors. Hardy was preëmtorily removed as an example to other governors because he gave his assent to an act similar to ones that had previously been accepted without objection. The act in question concerned the tenure of judges

\* Donald L. Kemmerer, *The Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940), 219.

—at the insistence of the Assembly. Judges could remain in office “during good behavior”; they could not be dismissed at the King’s pleasure. Freeing judges from executive coercion had long been accepted in England, but the colonies had not been granted that privilege. When the Assembly bargained for it, Governor Hardy was in a delicate position, especially in view of the fact that Governor Morris had made a judicial appointment on good behavior without its being rejected by the Board. If Hardy vetoed the bill, he brought the Assembly’s wrath down on himself; if he assented, he might, like Morris, get away with it. The double inconsistency of imperial policy (one rule for England and another for the colony; acceptance of good-behavior appointments at one time and rejection at another) further diminished the standing of the governor by making him the scapegoat for colonists’ infractions.

The last stage in the process of disintegration began with the efforts of British ministries to discipline the colonies into conformity with new policies. The Quartering Acts, the Stamp Act, and the Townshend Acts were, to the colonists, incitement to riot, and riot they did. It was over this impossible sequence of events that the hapless William Franklin had to preside in New Jersey. Franklin was an able man, well educated (he deserved the Master of Arts degree he was given by Oxford at the same time that his father was made a Doctor), patient and skillful as an administrator, and in spite of the times he managed to win the respect of the people of New Jersey. Some of the gentry, however, were not pleased at his appointment, and John Penn, William’s son, wrote that, “If any *gentleman* had been appointed it would be a different case—but I cannot look upon the person in question in that light by any means.” \* Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to his ability is the fact that he could maintain reasonably cordial working relationships with colonial politicians in the face of

\* Hugh M. Clokie, “Political and Constitutional Development,” *New Jersey, A History*, Irving S. Kull (ed.) (New York, 1930), I, 402.



William Franklin  
(Copy of an etching by Albert Rosenthal)

constant provocation from London. It is noteworthy that he was a man of courage and strong will which he displayed equally when reporting to London as when deal-

ing with Jerseymen. On one occasion he received a reprimand from the Earl of Hillsborough, Secretary of State, for having permitted the reading in the Assembly of a seditious letter from the speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly. Franklin replied that he had not known it was scheduled to be read, but that, in any event, the letter was provoked by the actions of Parliament in laying duties on the colonies, which, he said, "rekindled the Flame that had subsided from the Time of the Stamp Act, and . . . occasioned as general Dissatisfaction and Uneasiness as ever prevailed among any People." After noting that the dispatch of troops to the colonies might prevent "scandalous riots, and attacks on Officers of Government," he observed that this still "does not remove the principal Difficulty. Mens Minds are sour'd, a sullen Discontent prevails, and, in my Opinion, no Force on Earth is sufficient to make the Assemblies acknowledge, by any act of theirs, that the Parliament has a Right to impose Taxes on America." \*

Men's minds were "sour'd" indeed. When Franklin appointed a collector of the Stamp tax, the appointee at first accepted the post, but later declined it without ever taking a single step to enforce the law, and for a very good reason: he feared for his life if he did. Politicians openly held meetings to plan revolutionary activities; the colonial Assembly and the Council met infrequently and were less and less the source of public authority, for control was passing to the Provincial Congress. In the end Franklin chose to ride down with the sinking ship of colonialism. He could easily have taken refuge from the rising storm, but he chose not only to remain loyal but to remain at his post to the end.

He was placed under house arrest when at "two o'clock that Night [Jan. 8. 1776] . . . I was awakened with a violent knocking at my Door, which alarmed my Wife so much that I was not without Apprehensions of her Dying with the Fright. Looking through the Chamber Window I perceived that a Number of armed Men had invested

\* *New Jersey Archives*, X, 70.

the House." The Lieutenant in command asked for assurance that the Governor would not depart the province pending a decision about him by the Continental Congress, to which he replied that "I have not the least Intention to quit the Province nor shall I unless compelled to by Violence." \* Not until June was he seized, however. He was taken to Connecticut where he was held a prisoner of war for two and a half years, finally being exchanged for the president of Delaware. Franklin remained in New York until 1782 when he went to England. There he was pensioned and compensated for his losses. He died in 1812.

The final phase of the royal governorship, when New Jersey had its own governor, from 1738 to 1776, was a time of disintegration. In the early part of the period, governors were unable to cope with the conflicts between the proprietary and anti-proprietary factions. Later governors were even less able to deal with the colonists' resentment over Parliament's invasion of what the colonists deemed their rightful discretionary authority. A governor responsible only for New Jersey should have been in a stronger position than his predecessors, but this does not seem to have been the case. Also the stationing of British troops in New Jersey during the French and Indian War might have strengthened the governor, but this too does not seem to have mattered much. These gains were more than offset by Parliament's involvement in colonial policy. Parliament demanded that governors do more and more when clearly they were able to do less and less. Every effort to follow Parliamentary directives met resistance based upon a belief in a right of self-government. The last decades of the royal governorship were thus not a time of executive tyranny but of executive decline.

If New Jersey had little cause to complain of open tyranny on the part of its governors, it had not much more ground to object to the tax and trade policies of Parliament, since, as a largely agricultural area with

\* *New Jersey Archives*, X, 699-700.

relatively little commerce, it was not badly hurt by those policies. Nevertheless, along with other colonists who were more directly injured by the actions, the New Jersey rebels saw these acts as deviations from practices they had long believed immutable. If these laws could stand, then others more directly bearing on their interests were possible. The royal governor in New Jersey had not been an ogre, at least not often, but he was a representative of a power that the rebels determined to escape. The latter history of the office was deeply affected by this identification of the governor with the misdeeds of the governor's superiors. It is, then, no accident that the next epoch of the governorship is in the main a study of political powerlessness.

### III

## THE PATRICIAN GOVERNOR

(1776 - 1854)

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THE CONSTITUTION OF 1776 was essentially a codification of the existing political situation. Sovereignty had passed from the Crown to the Provincial Congress and so far as the framers of the new charter were concerned, the King, Parliament, the Board of Trade, and their agent the royal governor were bad memories not to be recreated. Accordingly the Congress' drafting committee made the governor a figurehead and a judge but not much more so far as formal powers were concerned; the government of the new state was to be the legislature. The constitution provided no veto, absolute or otherwise, to curtail legislative actions. Elected annually by the Legislative Council and General Assembly in joint meeting, the governor was to preside over the Council and cast a vote in case of a tie. He lacked any significant appointing power. Having failed to grant any executive powers to the governor, the framers then incongruously (perhaps to the wry amusement of some of them) proclaimed him possessor of "the supreme executive power." They did add that he was to be "captain-general and commander in chief of all the militia, and other military force in this Colony," and he was given a number of judicial functions. His judicial duties resembled those of the royal governor: the new governor was to be chancellor, "ordinary and surrogate general," and sitting

with the Council, was to be the "Court of Appeals, in the last resort, in all causes of law, as heretofore." The Council and the governor also could grant pardons. The actual government of the first months of 1776 thus became the model for the future charter. The Provincial Congress, at least so far as its members were concerned, was the government of New Jersey; they did not recognize the authority of Governor Franklin and did not provide an executive themselves. In fact the document may also be said to have copied the status quo in that it provided for a nominal chief executive, for certainly Franklin's powers were more nominal than real during his last two years in office.

Note, however, that this refers to the constitutional provisions regarding the governorship. Although this obviously was a vitally important cause of the relative weakness of the governorship during the first seventy-five years of statehood, it is erroneous to believe that the office was never of any significance throughout the period. It amounted to almost nothing at times, but it was also a position of leadership for some incumbents. A review of the sources and uses of executive power during the patrician era will demonstrate this point.

To begin with nearly all the governors were from affluent and established families. Those who were not so well born tended to affect the manners and assume the values of the upper class. Patrician class standing was important then for there remained an element of deference towards the elite, despite the less than docile behavior of the anti-proprietary farmer-rioters. This was, after all, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century when aristocratic forms and patterns of deference were either observed or at least were recent memories. Also, if New Jersey was not a Philadelphia or a Boston in its deference to aristocrats, neither was it the Kentucky frontier.

It is significant that 15 of the 17 governors who held office between 1776 and 1854 came from wealthy and prominent families. (See the data summarized in Figure

I). Even after the constitution of 1844 instituted direct election of the governor, the kinds of governors who came to office did not change. The three governors in the decade 1845 to 1854 were from wealthy and prominent families and all had graduated from college. The decade 1845 to 1854 is the only period in the history of the office when all governors had these two marks of high standing in the community. Attendance at college then was a mark of high status which only the most privileged families could afford.\*

The Legislature in its initial choice of William Livingston demonstrated this tendency to choose aristocratic types, acting very much as the Board of Trade might have done in an earlier year. Livingston would probably never have been a royal governor since his zeal for American independence was strong (he insisted upon naming his home in Elizabethtown "Liberty Hall" despite his family's wish for a more dignified name\*\*), but on every other ground he might have qualified. A graduate of Yale College, member of a wealthy New York family, he was a lawyer who gave up a successful practice at forty-nine to become a country gentleman. Haughty and given to irony and bitter sarcasm, he was commanding personality as well as a man of wealth and position. The Legislature was following colonial practice in another respect, in that Livingston was not at the time of his election a long-standing New Jersey leader. He had moved to the state only four years earlier, retiring to two hundred acres in Elizabethtown where he built a house and prepared to settle down as a gentleman farmer. His first two years in New Jersey were spent largely in supervising the establishment of his estate, but inevitably he was drawn into the political turmoil of the incipient rebellion, and before

\* Even grammar school tuition, then required throughout New Jersey, was beyond the reach of many. Not until 1820 did the Legislature authorize towns to pay the school expenses of those unable to afford the fees.

\*\* Theodore Sedgwick, *A Memoir of the Life of William Livingston* (New York, 1833), 156.



William Livingston  
*Courtesy of the American Historical Company*

his selection as governor he had been sent as a delegate to the Continental Congress.

Had Livingston not been selected as the first governor, the likely alternative choice would have been equally patrician, if not more so, for Livingston won the office from the wealthy Richard Stockton, aristocratic squire of "Morven," the Princeton mansion which in a later day was to become the official residence of New Jersey's governor. In the first balloting for governor by the Legislature, meeting in Nassau Hall of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) in late August of 1776, Livingston and Stockton were tied and the meeting was adjourned until the next day.

During the evening a compromise was proposed in an informal caucus of some members, and the next morning John Stevens went down the street to "Morven" to inform Stockton of the proposal that Livingston be made



Morven

governor and Stockton chief justice. Stockton said he was willing to step aside for Livingston, but he did so in an ambiguous way and Stevens and Stockton parted without a common understanding of what procedure was to be followed at the meeting. Stockton expected to be heard before the voting took place, but Stevens did not succeed in arranging such a confrontation. Stockton was greatly annoyed when he arrived at Nassau Hall to learn that his rival had already been elected. Stevens held that Stockton was angry not to have been given the chance to sound "magnanimous in defeat" and claimed that he was a poor loser. "Just what effect Stevens' actions had on the final outcome cannot readily be assessed," says Richard P. McCormick, "but in all likelihood the matter had already been largely determined at a meeting in a 'smoke-filled room' the night before." \*

Livingston's successor, William Paterson, was born in Northern Ireland and was from a family wealthy enough to send him to Princeton College where he graduated in 1763. Joseph Bloomfield, the first Jeffersonian governor and a Republican leader, nevertheless affected a patrician way of life. A brief description of Bloomfield from a later memoir suggests the style of life he enjoyed at "government house" in Trenton. The Governor, says Judge Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Elmer who recalled his childhood visit to the mansion, had a "large, well maintained, and productive garden, with a brick office near the house standing where Chancery Lane now is, and kept a gardener, coachman and footman. . . . The Governor wore his hair powdered and a cue, according to the fashion of an earlier day . . ." \*\* There were other notably aristocratic governors like Aaron Ogden, whose family had large holdings in Sussex; Peter D. Vroom, scion of a distinguished family of Dutch background;

\* "The First Election of Governor William Livingston," *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, LXV (April, 1947), 100. Stockton was elected chief justice but refused to accept the office.

\*\* L. Q. C. Elmer, *The Constitution and Government of the Province and State of New Jersey* (Newark, 1872), 114.

and Mahlon Dickerson and his brother, Philemon Dickerson, who came from a wealthy family of iron-mine owners.\*

A second source of power that many of the governors in this period could draw upon was their standing as party leaders. This is certainly not true of them all; indeed some of them were so vague about their party affiliations that their own backers debated what they were. Joseph Bloomfield, governor during the first dozen years of the nineteenth century, was an effective leader of the Republican party. He had been a Federalist, and at one point it was rumored that the Federalists in the Legislature might vote for him so as to keep out of office a Republican "more revolutionary in his principles." \*\* The problem never arose, however, and Bloomfield was elected without opposition. Ogden, who succeeded Bloomfield, was a Federalist leader, and William Sanford Pennington after him was an outspoken Republican leader from Essex County. Pennington, fired by partisan zeal and righteous indignation, condemned the Hartford Convention in his message to the Legislature in January of 1815, claiming that the New Englanders were risking a breakup of the Union, casting it to the wind, "in a paltry struggle for the gratification of a silly ambition to govern." † Federalists in the Assembly moved to return the message to the governor as it contained matters on which the Legislature could not act, but Republican members rallied round and defeated the motion in a party vote. Pennington's son, also named William, was governor some twenty years after his father's term, and he was a leader in the Whig party. Others could be cited as faithful party men. Peter D. Vroom, ardent Democrat who in his later years helped McClellan win New Jersey in the

\* The dates during which these governors served are in the Appendix.

\*\* Walter R. Fee, *The Transition from Aristocracy to Democracy in New Jersey, 1789-1829* (Somerville, 1933), 142.

† See *Minutes of Votes and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey 1815*, 107.

1864 campaign, was governor twice in the 1830's when party zeal was warming after the lull in the "era of good feelings."

Yet it should not only be admitted, it should be emphasized that party in the first half of the nineteenth century was a different phenomenon from that of later years. In the beginning of the century party lines were fragile not firm. Men abandoned the sinking Federalist party both opportunistically and in disgust with its policies, but the associations of yesterday often persisted. Later as factions in the Republican party multiplied, which side an individual was going to be on was not always predictable and certainly not controllable. Under these circumstances leadership in a party was not the formidable kind of power it subsequently became, although undoubtedly it did count for something since jockeying for election by the Legislature as governor, treasurer, secretary of state, attorney general, and as United States senator was constant, and must have had some carry-over into matters of policy-decision.

Given the scant constitutional power the patrician governor possessed and the relative weakness of parties in the period, whatever power he exercised depended primarily upon his own personal resources or on circumstances that called for leadership. The development of the office during the period suggests that these were the critical factors. First, no governor in that period achieved a dominant position in state politics. Second, there were variations in the degree of leadership achieved which appear to correspond with personality factors and changes in external circumstances, such as war. Third, it appears that the office, notwithstanding its insubstantial base of power, gradually increased in significance during the later part of the period, although it is difficult to say exactly why.

One contributing factor was the gradual extension of government which called for an increasing role by the executive. Over the course of a few decades state government changed as taxes became more onerous, state

institutions such as prisons and, later, asylums raised cost and management problems (and patronage opportunities), state support for education grew, and the state began to participate in transportation facilities.\* Also the popularization of the executive office had begun, and the governorship, like Andrew Jackson's presidency, acquired some power because it was gathering public attention. A brief examination of the trends in gubernatorial power during the 1776 to 1854 period affords an opportunity to explore these hypotheses.

The choice of William Livingston as the first governor of independent New Jersey was fortunate for he used his position extensively in behalf of the Revolutionary War effort. The British thought him important enough to dispatch a thousand men in an attempt to capture him. Although his position afforded him almost no executive power and although the state possessed little in the way of administrative machinery, Livingston nevertheless gained in influence as a symbol of stability and patriotic attachment to the cause of Independence. He was a spokesman for the cause beyond the state, although his main channel was the *New Jersey Gazette* in which he published under the pen name of "Hortentius." He also made numerous speeches and proclamations. George Washington once requested Livingston to write letters to the *Gazette* to refute British peace feelers intended to demoralize the Americans, and Livingston complied by sending "a number of letters, as if by different hands, not even excluding the tribe of petticoats, all calculated to caution America against the insidious arts of enemies." \*\*

He was, however, more a spokesman than a dominant

\* A state prison was established in 1799, and a new one was opened in 1837. Both had much use. See the evidence in the document accompanying the Governor's Message of 1846: "Statistics of the New Jersey State Prison, 1799 to 1845, Inclusive." The first asylum was not created until 1848.

\*\* Letter to Washington quoted by Margaret B. Macmillan, *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943), 271. She also quotes one of his "petticoat" letters on the same page, illustrating Livingston's versatility with a pen.

figure in state decision-making, judging from the evidence available. The Legislature respected him and regularly re-elected him until his death, but it was jealous of its prerogatives and were far less zealous in support of the War than Livingston wished. He was, despite his fervor for the War, quite deferential toward the Legislature and cautious in his efforts to press his policies; he made his case but apparently did little to rally support. In his letters to Washington and others he often lamented that what he proposed had not been adopted, but he spoke only of his rhetoric in behalf of measures. At one point he wrote to Washington, saying, "Our Council have passed an exceeding good Militia bill the last session, but it did not pass the Lower House, whether it was there obstructed on account of its goodness, does not become me to say." \* Later he wrote that he had been displeased at the slowness of the Legislature in passing a militia bill and frustrated by its inadequacy. "My only consolation is that my messages upon their minutes will show my sense of the matter, and that I was not remiss in the strongest recommendations to construct it in such a manner as would effectually answer the purposes intended." \*\* Particularly during the early years of the War he made many fervent appeals to the Legislature for action on a broad range of issues. In September, 1777, he asked consideration for a law to exempt from military service men who worked at "Furnaces, Forges and Rolling-Mills" producing needed munitions.† In May of the following year he urged ratification of the Articles of Confederation, even though the Legislature had refused to ratify them in the previous session.

The Legislature showed him considerable deference, and indeed their printed journal had emblazoned across the right-hand page the running head "William Living-

\* Margaret B. Macmillan, *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943), 234.

\*\* Margaret B. Macmillan, *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943), 235.

† *Votes and Proceedings of the General Assembly 1777*, 158.

ston, Esquire, Governor." But as the years passed he appeared less frequently in the record; he rarely presented a message and in 1785 one was received from him but not printed. As of 1780 his name disappeared from the top of the pages of the *Votes and Proceedings*. Respect and deference the Legislature granted, but it did so with an eye to its own predominant position in policy making. For example, when the Governor in 1778 granted a charter to a Baptist church, following the precedent of the royal governor by acting only after consulting with the attorney general and the Council, the Assembly revoked the charter the next year, declaring that the governor had exceeded his authority. In 1778 there was enough opposition to Livingston to make him doubtful of his re-election, and in that and the following year there was more organized opposition than in other elections. But the effort to unseat him amounted to little, partly because of the activity of the Presbyterian ministry who "exerted themselves" in his behalf.\* He retained his office, but he apparently became less active after the opposition arose. For example, he ceased writing his "Hortentius" articles after members of the Legislature complained.\*\*

That Livingston aroused opposition is not surprising for he was given to heavy sarcasm and was a forbidding personality in the view of some of his contemporaries. Isaac Ogden wrote about Livingston to a friend, "You know the Man, & will with Me pity the poor People, that fall under his displeasure." † His sarcastic remarks must have pricked the skins of some legislators, for he complained, much in the manner of a royal governor, that

\* Livingston wrote a pessimistic letter to Henry Laurens about his chances of re-election; Isaac Ogden claimed that the "dissenting Parsons" were responsible for halting the campaign against Livingston; Margaret B. Macmillan *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943), 240; 238-239.

\*\* Leonard Lundin, *Cockpit of the Revolution The War for Independence in New Jersey* (Princeton, 1940), 282.

† Margaret B. Macmillan, *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943), 239.

the Legislature was unwilling to pay an adequate salary. In a 1786 newspaper article, entitled "The Primitive Whig," he said,

I have seen several of our Assemblies attempting public economy, by lowering the salaries of the officers of government . . . and costing the public more money in their own wages, by the time they spent in making the reduction (which ought not to have been made) than it finally amounted to. . . . I have seen paper money emitted by a Legislature that solemnly promised to redeem it, that afterwards depreciated it themselves—and I therefore believe that I shall never see the honest redemption of it . . .\*

By outward measures of open political activity it would appear that Livingston's immediate successors matched his later rather than his early years in office. William Paterson claimed that he did not want to be governor when he assumed the office at the urging of his friends. He claimed he was looking forward to retiring to private life.\*\* During his two years as governor his most significant duty was his work on the codification of the statutory law of the state, a task that he continued for six years after he left the office. Neither Paterson nor his successors, Richard Howell and Joseph Bloomfield, had much to say for the record; their messages were brief and usually dealt with communications from the national or other state governments. The treasurer's report consumed many pages of the official legislative record, but the governor was limited to a word of gratitude at being re-elected. The paltry importance attached to the governorship is suggested by the Republican legislators' decision in 1802 to do without the office rather than compromise with the Federalists. In the joint meeting Republicans and Federalists were tied and the Federalists

\* Theodore Sedgwick, *A Memoir of the Life of William Livingston*, (New York, 1838), 392-394.

\*\* See his letter to Jonathan Dayton who urged him to take the governorship, quoted in Gertrude S. Wood, *William Paterson of New Jersey* (Fairlawn, 1933), 117.

proposed a deal: divide the governorship and the United States senatorship between the parties, allowing the Republicans first choice. They chose neither, and John Lambert became acting governor, since he was vice president of the Council.\*

The outbreak of the War in 1812, however, brought renewed requests for action from governors. Presumably this was partly the result of the governor's military responsibilities and partly in keeping with the tradition of patriotic affirmations at such times. Governor Aaron Ogden was duly apologetic for his intrusion in presenting a message to the Legislature in 1813, but, Federalist though he was, he wanted it known that the War imposed obligations that the state must accept.\*\* Likewise his successor, William Sanford Pennington, sent a series of long messages during the war years from 1813 to 1815, including the one denouncing the Hartford Convention referred to above. Mahlon Dickerson gave a rousing political message in 1816 and added favorable comments on the Delaware-Raritan Canal project and further urged support for New Jersey's growing manufacturing endeavors.†

Isaac Williamson returned the governor's office to "normalcy" following the war, for once again during his twelve-year tenure the name of the governor rarely appeared in the legislative journal. He transmitted messages from other legislatures and governors and did little else. In the absence of more specific evidence than is now available on the details of executive-legislative politics of the period, it is no more than conjecture to say that the Legislature may have tired of assertive governors (as earlier they did of Governor Livingston) and accordingly may have chosen a more retiring type. Such is at least indicated by the fact that Williamson was a man of un-

\* Walter R. Fee, *The Transition from Aristocracy to Democracy in New Jersey, 1789-1829* (Somerville, 1933), 130-131. (Lambert was a Republican which made it easier to reject the deal with moral indignation.)

\*\* See *Votes and Proceedings of the Assembly*, January 21, 1813, 9-10.

† See *Votes and Proceedings*, January 12, 1816, 87-92.

certain political party affiliation, had never been very active politically, and proved to be inactive in office. Williamson was a Federalist until the Hartford Convention when he abandoned the party.\* He was chosen governor by a Republican majority just two years later and served from 1817 to 1829 when a Jacksonian faction dismissed him.

Why Williamson held onto the job is somewhat puzzling if he was in fact as powerless as it appears he was. The financial emoluments were not attractive and even the honorific rewards of the post must have been modest. During this period, it was more a judicial than an executive office. The governor's duties as chancellor, member of the Court of Appeals, and as surrogate general took considerable time. (Indeed the younger Pennington claimed in 1840 that the duties of chancellor had become so heavy that it required the full-time attention of a governor and he proposed the creation of a separate chancellorship.\*\*) Williamson had a reputation as a fine lawyer and may therefore have been attracted by his judicial functions. Otherwise there would be no apparent explanation for the statement attributed to him by Elmer who was a close friend; Elmer says,

More than once, during the time he held the office, I heard him lament, almost with tears in his eyes, that he had been so foolish as to leave the profession he loved, and place himself in a position from which he was liable at any time to be removed. His salary was only two thousand dollars, provided for by a new law every year, supplemented by some fees—a large part of which, I have understood, through the defaults of the officers to whom they were paid, he never received.†

\* Walter R. Fee, *The Transition from Aristocracy to Democracy in New Jersey, 1789-1829* (Somerville, 1933), 223-224.

\*\* See Charles R. Erdman, Jr., *The New Jersey Constitution of 1776* (Princeton, 1929), 137. Pennington added that it had become mandatory for the governor to be a lawyer and that others might want the office. See *Votes and Proceedings of the General Assembly*, October 27, 1840, 9.

† L. Q. C. Elmer, *The Constitution and Government of the Province and State of New Jersey* (Newark, 1872), 175-176.

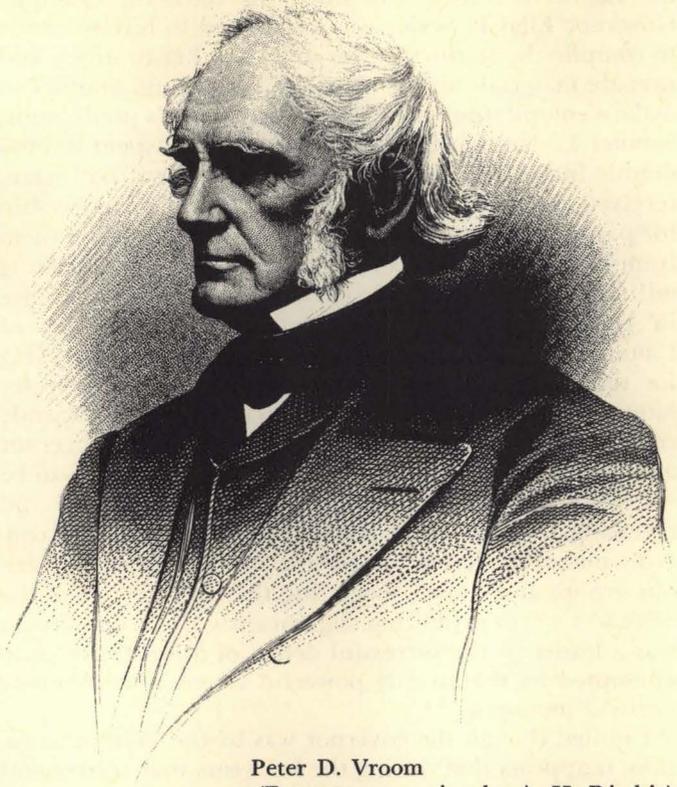
Another indication of the status of the governorship at that time is Garrett D. Wall's refusal to accept the office after he had been elected to it, following Williamson's term. He wrote the Legislature that he was too busy with his private affairs to undertake the functions of the position, although undoubtedly the factional politics of the time was an additional factor in his refusal.\*

If the office sank to insignificance with Williamson, it was soon to rise to greater prominence during the next decades. Whereas brief messages from Williamson in 1828 and 1829 discussed the New York—New Jersey boundary dispute and the possibility of cooperating with Pennsylvania on canal construction and operation, his immediate successor, Peter D. Vroom, launched into a substantial series of proposals in his 1830 message. He urged action on matters ranging from education and prison management to taxation and canal-railroad problems. In the month following that lengthy message, the Legislature by joint resolution made it the duty of the governor to address a message "recommending such measures in relation to the resources, finances, laws, and polity of the state, as may tend to promote the happiness and prosperity of the people. . . ." \*\* Thereafter substantial messages were submitted annually, dealing with a broad range of subjects from banking, internal improvements, education, prisons and asylums, to the presentation of a general financial report and comments on current national or local topics. Thus the Whig governor, William Pennington, observed in 1839 that since manufacturing and commercial interests are "exposed to great fluctuations, they should be treated kindly, and their interests guarded with a sustaining hand." † The year before he warned that "we are governed too much," although

\* His letter of November 2, 1828, appears in the *Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Council and General Assembly, 1829-1830*, 15.

\*\* *Votes and Proceedings of the General Assembly*, February 18, 1830, 231.

† *Votes and Proceedings*, October 22, 1839, 17.



Peter D. Vroom  
(From an engraving by A. H. Ritchie)

this did not prevent his concerning himself with legislative business to the extent of urging both houses of the Legislature to continue their committees on agriculture. Evidence that the governor had a growing concern with the whole administration is the fact that a financial report became a part of his message and recommendations rather than a separate submission by the treasurer.

There are other signs that the governor's position changed during the 1830's. He began to be granted

authority to make appointments which in earlier years the Legislature itself had filled. In 1833, for example, Governor Elias P. Seeley was authorized to hire someone to compile the statutes of the state, another to digest and prepare materials on the Orphans' Court, and another to make a compilation of criminal laws. Seeley's predecessor, Samuel L. Southard, a Whig leader who spent a busy double life as attorney and state and national politician, received constant appeals during his brief governorship for patronage appointments or assistance in getting them from others. His papers contain many letters requesting military-aide assignments, judicial posts, and assistance in getting construction contracts. Josiah Harrison, of Camden, wrote a letter, in December of 1832, pleading for the job of revising the public statutes which Seeley later gave him in 1833.\* J. L. Lewis wrote, too, warmly congratulating Southard upon his election as governor and none too subtly reminding him that he wished to be surrogate for Morris County. It is also interesting and revealing that Governor Southard's correspondence contains numerous letters requesting him to speak for various groups and causes, suggesting that the prestige of the office was worth exploiting. Significantly Governor Vroom was a leader in the successful defeat of a legislative coup attempted by the already powerful Camden and Amboy railroad monopoly.\*\*

Limited though the governor was by the 1776 constitution, it appears that during the last years that instrument was in effect the governorship was gaining in power. It is true that the governor had been, as John Bebout points out, "just a convenience occasionally employed by the legislature to carry out a mandate which it did not see fit to direct to some other officer or body." † And the

\* Southard Papers (MSS in Princeton University Library).

\*\* Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse* (Princeton, 1939), 331, 337.

† John Bebout, *Introduction to the Proceedings of the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention of 1844* (Published by the State, edited by the New Jersey Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1942) lxxxiv.

list of legislatively-assigned duties of the governor that Bebout cites is an insignificant, even insulting, roster of duties. He was given over the years such duties as these: to proclaim contagious diseases on a ship in harbor, to order suits on a sheriff's bond, to subscribe to one hundred shares of stock in the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures, to appoint notaries public, to issue licenses to peddlers on recommendation from a court of common pleas, to appoint inspectors of flour and meal, beef and pork, and to carry out half a dozen other such duties.\*

Apart from these mundane administrative chores, however, his general position was changing. As the functions of government were expanding year by year, total state expenditures of \$31,000 in 1804 jumped to \$89,000 by 1838, and to \$114,000 in 1845. State participation in public improvements, education, public health regulation, and humane institutions pushed the governor into showing some concern for the political issues that resulted. Notwithstanding his subordination to the Legislature, he began to ask it for action on a wider and wider range of issues. He did not hesitate to reprove the Legislature, even if in a respectful tone, for what he deemed its errors. William Pennington in 1838 condemned the practice of granting too many divorces, which is interesting since divorces were a sole prerogative of the Legislature.\*\* As noted earlier he felt free to tell the Legislature that it ought to retain its committees on agriculture. He

\* Bebout lists them all, *Introduction to the Proceedings of the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention of 1844* (Published by the State, edited by the New Jersey Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1942), *lxxxiv-lxxxv*. The licensing of peddlers was a source of apparent annoyance to Governor Southard whose papers contain a number of communications recommending individuals as "peddlars" under the Act of July 27, 1830. Southard rejected one application for lack of endorsement by a court of common pleas.

\*\* Pennington's message of that year rebuked the Legislature on several matters. See the message in the *Votes and Proceedings of the General Assembly*, January, 1838, 201.

told them in 1841 that he saw no need for a veto power, and that a constitutional convention was, in his opinion, unnecessary. In that same session he reported at length on his negotiations with officials of the Camden and Amboy Railroad concerning their dispute over taxes due the state. The Governor took a leading role in the controversy; he was not the insignificant figure one conjures up from reading the list of puny administrative chores referred to above. The increasingly detailed discussion of state finances by the governor also suggests that his involvement with state administration was growing even though his formal authority remained meager.

It is also revealing to compare the activities of governors during the early years under the 1844 constitution with those of governors of the preceding decade. Their messages showed no changes of any importance. In 1845 Daniel Haines, in his last year as governor appointed by the Legislature, said he wanted action on an issue so much that "I feel constrained even at the peril of your displeasure to make another effort to obtain it." \* This message and others in the early forties compare favorably with those of governors during the first decade under the new constitution. The message of Governor Charles C. Stratton in 1848 was less detailed than many in the earlier period, said little about the finances of the state, and did not press for much action. Daniel Haines, the only man to serve both as an appointive and an elective governor, presented messages between 1849 and 1851 similar to his earlier ones. The note of deference had not changed and the kind of requests remained much the same. Republican Governor William A. Newell sounded the continuing note of the modestly involved governor as late as 1857 when he said that whatever the view of the executive may be, his duty was "to interpose no obstacle to the will of the legislature, with whom the responsibility of making laws properly belongs—except in cases

\* Daniel Haines, "Message to Both Houses of the Sixty-Ninth Legislature," reprinted as a separate pamphlet, 9.

of the most urgent necessity." The next year he said, "In the belief that the welfare of our constituents is best promoted by the enactment of few laws, and by a brief session of our Legislature, I have suggested little business for your consideration." The newly-granted veto power was not much used; a summary review of records of the period indicate it was not employed until 1852 when Governor George F. Fort successfully vetoed two acts to incorporate business and one to grant "incidental expenses" to legislatures.\*

The new constitution altered the governorship considerably. The judicial functions of the governor were eliminated and a separate chancellorship established. The governor acquired a veto that could be overridden by simple majorities in both houses. He was now subject to popular election for a three-year term and barred from serving two consecutive terms. His salary was not to be increased or diminished during his term. He remained commander in chief of the state military force, and was given much broader executive prerogatives. He acquired considerable power to appoint officials, including judges, prosecutors, the attorney general, secretary of state, and others not provided for by law. The governor got authority to convene the Legislature and to recommend measures to it, as well as general executive authority to take care that the law be faithfully executed. Also, significantly, the governor was the only elective executive official in New Jersey, which was not true in most other states where the governor was only one among many other elective executive officers.

Nevertheless, in John Bebout's opinion,

The men of 1844 had learned to trust the legislature less than did their forebears of 1776, but they were not disposed to trust the governor much more. The constitution of 1844 departs therefore from the principle of legislative responsibility for the

\* *The Journal of the Proceedings of the Senate*, 1852, 498-501, 717, 724-727.

general conduct of the government, which was implicit in the constitution of 1776, without making provisions for any other system of responsibility.\*

Right or wrong the Convention of 1844 made about as much provision for ultimate responsibility in the conduct of state government as had most other state conventions, and, as it turned out in practice, means were evolved for the sharing, evading, and exercising of responsibility under the new system.

As we have pointed out, the earliest pattern seems to have been largely influenced by the habits acquired under the 1776 constitution. At first there was not a great deal of change. As the following chapters on various types of governors will demonstrate, however, the constitution of 1844 allowed much room for the exercise of executive power; some governors did nothing, but others dominated the Legislature and, to a lesser degree, the administrative agencies of the state. In this respect the new constitution was like its predecessor: it was subject to variable interpretation and use as the power bases of governors and as circumstances of government changed with the passing generations.

\* John Bebout, *Introduction to the Proceedings of the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention of 1844* (Published by the State, edited by the New Jersey Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1942), *ciii*.

## IV

### THE BUSINESSMAN'S GOVERNOR (1854 - 1911)

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COMMENTATORS ON NEW JERSEY LIFE have made too much of the point that this is a state between two metropolitan centers. The economic, social, and even intellectual attractions of these giant cities have been such, it is sometimes maintained, as to erase the man-drawn and physical boundaries that delineate the State. As a corridor between these magnetic cities, as a dormitory where people spend their hours when not pursuing their occupations in New York and Philadelphia, the State of New Jersey is supposedly an amorphous thing without identity or even recognition by its own citizenry. Pushed very far, this argument is not persuasive, and yet there is, at least in one respect, a strong element of truth in it. The fact that New Jersey was a corridor, a space between two rapidly-growing metropolitan centers, contributed largely to the role of business in the State's politics and indeed to its whole life. It was the corridor-factor that led to the peculiarly important role of the transportation industry in its political history. The economic attraction of creating transportation lines between New York and Philadelphia and the economic and therefore political power of those media once created are historical facts without which New Jersey's development cannot be comprehended. It is true that railroads from Maine to California played an important role in state politics during

the nineteenth century, but in no state was that role assumed earlier nor more pervasively than in New Jersey. Before the expansion of railroads ended there were twenty-five hundred miles of track inside the narrow boundaries of New Jersey, and every mile of it had political consequences.\*

There was a widespread agreement that the development of transportation facilities would be economically advantageous (the farmers saw a way to market, the businessman expected commercial activity, and the developers envisioned a road to riches), and this helped make it possible to win incredibly advantageous concessions for the early canals and railroads. The guarantee of monopolistic exclusion of competition and agreement to limit taxation of the railroad facilities became the bases of enormous political power. For once the state had made the agreements the owners could bargain with future officials, knowing that the courts would probably back up their "rights" against any "interference" by the state, however apparently "just" these might seem in placing the transportation industry on a par with other citizens or interests. Thus armed, the railroad resisted newcomers with understandable passion. From these beginnings a massive source of power was created, for transportation was not only economically important, it was also a source of hard cash and other rewards with which to build a political empire. What began with a railroad empire spread to other businesses, and in time New Jersey became the ideal place to get a charter for a trust. New Jersey specifically amended its laws to encourage holding companies and justly came to be known as the "Mother of Trusts."

This prefatory note to the era of the businessman's governor should not be dismissed as window-dressing for the show to follow nor as candle burned to the memory of the muckrakers. William E. Sackett, the

\* See Ransom E. Noble, *New Jersey Progressivism before Wilson* (Princeton, 1946), 6. There were also 173 miles of canal operated as subsidiaries of railroads.

clever, competent newspaperman who told the story of New Jersey politics in his two delightful volumes called the *Modern Battles of Trenton*, saw the importance of transportation to Jersey's politics and accordingly opened his history with an account of the rise of the Camden and Amboy Railroad and its successors and competitors. De-ferring what must have been a great temptation to get to the gossip that he loved, his first chapter was characteristically entitled, "Chapter I, Which Is In The Nature Of An Introduction, And, Though Ancient History, Should Be Read For A Full Comprehension Of The Chapters Which Follow." The long last paragraph of that chapter presents a close observer's jaundiced but well illustrated view of the Camden and Amboy's lurid role in nineteenth-century New Jersey politics:

[The Railroad's] early alliance with the Legislature of the State and the popular enthusiasm with which its coming had been hailed, and the State's habit of conceding to it, for the purpose of increasing her own prosperity, whatever of privilege or franchise or exemption, or even monopoly, it asked, made it arrogant and aggressive, and it soon came to be recognized as the power behind the throne in the control of all the affairs of the Commonwealth. It went into the counties, picked out its own nominees for places in the Senate and Assembly and secured their election to the seats for which they stood. The ambitious politician, hopeful for public honors, had first to make his peace with this rapidly-growing monopoly and to secure its favor and consent to his canvass. Such a thing as a candidate announcing his opposition to the railroad company and surviving the election was almost unheard of in State politics. Once in a while a man, permitted to reach a seat on the assumption that he would be favorable to its schemes, would show a disposition to curb its greedy reach for power. With its rich treasury it brought him into line with the majority of his fellows, and never failed to punish him for his temerity by defeating his re-election to his seat at the next poll. The legislation proposed for the people was all scrutinized at the companies' offices in Trenton and allowed to go through if the company was favorable and indifferent, but its disapproval doomed it to certain defeat. It selected the

Governors of the State, picked out the men who were to go to Congress and named the United States Senators. So absolute was its control of all departments of the State government that the State itself came to be known derisively among the people of other States as the State of the Camden and Amboy. . . . There never was a more complete master anywhere of the destinies of a State than was this monster monopoly of New Jersey. Its enterprise reached out in a thousand different directions, and there came a time when the State that had taken the corporation to its bosom as a child began to fear it as a master.\*

Sackett's own evidence proves this is an exaggerated picture. The Camden and Amboy's control was not that absolute; there were competing railroads later and competing forces of other kinds; the Camden and Amboy and its successor, the Pennsylvania Railroad, were not *always* victorious. If the Camden and Amboy did not have absolute control, however, and if it faced competitors, and if it didn't always win, its influence and its successes were so pervasive that no one could be governor of New Jersey without reflecting or feeling that influence and, equally important, the ominous reputation for absolute power built up through a long history of successful ventures in politics.

Although I have placed the businessman's governor in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the railroad monopolists were not only active but highly successful from the 1830's onward. Indeed it was during this period that they won their precious concessions on which their later power and bargaining position were based.\*\* From compliant legislatures and an apparently satisfied public the railroad won the privilege of being the only railroad

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), 17-18. This volume covers the period from 1868 to 1894. Later he published *Modern Battles of Trenton, From Werts to Wilson* (New York, 1914). Although there is much hearsay and exaggeration in both volumes, they are an invaluable chronicle of New Jersey politics from the Civil War to World War I.

\*\* Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse* (Princeton, 1939) gives a full and fascinating account of this process, 321ff.

operating between Philadelphia and New York. In a fateful step the Legislature passed the following provision:

That it shall not be lawful, at any time during the said rail road charter, to construct any other rail road or rail roads in this state, without the consent of said companies, which shall be intended or used for the transportation of passengers or merchandise between the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, or to compete in business with the rail road. . . .\*

In return for this the State received shares of railroad stock and agreement by the railroad to pay a guaranteed minimum annual sum, to be raised through transit duties. In a time when total governmental spending was relatively low, this meant that railroad passengers and those who met freight charges paid nearly the whole tax bill. Eventually the monopoly was broken and other railroads were developed, but for decades the state felt the consequences of this deal.

In this early period the railroad leaders worked mainly in the Democratic party, and it became a point of Whig attack that Democrats were slaves to the railroad interests. The Whig governor, William Pennington, incurred the wrath of the Camden and Amboy men for his attacks and his insistence upon more taxes from the company. But note the characteristic tenderness of Governor Pennington as he reported to the Legislature in 1841 on his negotiations with the railroad leaders: "I do not call it a controversy [but] a difference of opinion . . . as to the true construction of those acts, and from no disposition, as I am assured, to avoid on the part of the companies a faithful discharge of their liabilities to the State." \*\*

In 1844 the railroad felt strong enough to try winning the governorship directly and it therefore got the Democratic nomination for a railroad official, John R. Thomp-

\* Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse* (Princeton, 1939), 325.

\*\* Message of October 26, 1841, printed as a pamphlet.

son. In a bitter contest during which the Whigs campaigned more against the railroad than the Democratic party, Thompson was defeated—although by the very narrow margin of less than 1 per cent of the nearly seventy-five thousand votes cast. The next governor, Daniel Haines, was by no means an enemy of the railroad but neither was he its tool. His successor, George F. Fort, elected in 1850, claimed he was opposed to the monopoly, but it is doubtful if many believed it, for during his administration the courts were packed with friends of the railroad. Fort, it could reasonably be argued, should be cited as the first of the businessman's governors, but in most respects his term fits better as the culminating stage in the establishment of railroad power. Before this point in time railroad men had made requests and worked for their achievement; now with the courts packed and other sources of power firmly established they made demands and insisted on compliance.

It is also interesting that around midcentury the kind of man who became governor subtly changed. The patrician governors with long family lineage faded away and men of humbler ancestry were more numerous. Also the occupational backgrounds of governors changed; whereas before they were usually lawyers and politician-office holders in state or national government before going to the governor's office, now they were lawyers who were also in business or banking. Thus Rodman M. Price, governor from 1854 to 1857, illustrates the change: he was in banking before he went to Congress, after which he became governor, and he returned to business, mixed with politics, after leaving office. Many other governors of this period tended to fit this pattern. In the period 1854 to 1881 only half of the governors had had college educations; only a quarter had held state office prior to becoming governor. Between 1854 and 1911 there were 17 governors and 13 of them can be classified as businessman's governors. Significantly nine of these thirteen were involved in business activities in some form before becoming governor. The remaining business-

man's governors (that is, the four not chiefly engaged in business prior to their terms of office) were a military man, a physician, and two politician-office holders who were only marginally involved in business: George B. McClellan, William A. Newell, Theodore Randolph, and Robert S. Green.\* Four governors in the period must be classified more as professional politicians who in greater or lesser degree were independent of railroad and other business power and who depended largely on their party organizations for political strength.

Sackett says at one point that all the governors who served from 1869 to 1896, "with the exception of Leon Abbett, who was a law unto himself . . . were the puppets of a masterful coterie of party managers, who pulled the strings of politics behind the curtain of officialism (sic)." \*\* Judging from the evidence that Sackett himself provides this is not necessarily valid for all these governors. It is true that there was a "Ring" at the State House which exercised great power during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, but in some respects many of the governors Sackett designates as puppets of party managers were even more the puppets of business interests.

The Ring, guided mainly by Secretary of State Henry C. Kelsey with the assistance of Supreme Court Clerk Benjamin F. Lee and Chancery Court Clerk Henry S. Little, had a strangle hold on the Democratic party during most of that period and dominated the state's politics much of the time. The Democratic party was then ascendant in New Jersey politics; elections were usually close, but Republicans won only 3 of 15 gubernatorial elections between 1850 and 1892 and none at

\* The businessman's governors in addition to those just cited and their years in office were: Rodman M. Price, 1854-1857; Charles S. Olden, 1860-1863; Marcus L. Ward, 1866-1869; Joseph D. Bedle, 1875-1878; John W. Griggs, 1896-1899; Foster M. Voorhees, 1899-1902; Franklin Murphy, 1902-1905; Edward C. Stokes, 1905-1908; John Franklin Fort, 1908-1911.

\*\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton*, (New York, 1914), II, 13.

all between 1868 and 1892. On the surface it might seem valid to say that a series of Democratic governors, obviously nominated by the Ring and used by the Ring for patronage purposes, were merely its puppets. But on closer examination it is apparent that in several of these administrations more than party-machine power was involved. In the case of four governors who served during the Ring's hegemony, business interests were prominent and powerful. As the evidence cited below indicates, three of these Democratic governors came to their offices from the world of business, all conducted their administrations favorably toward business interests, and two of them went to lucrative business positions after leaving office. It is true that these governors (Randolph, Bedle, McClellan, and Green) *could* be designated as party-machine governors in view of their association with the Ring, but that association was notably less significant for them than it was for the machine governors, and the business association was a prominent feature of their administrations.

It is not difficult to demonstrate the continuing influence of railroads and other business on governors in this period. One incumbent after another was "kind" to business, openly or covertly, directly or indirectly, presumably both through ideological agreement with business interests and in response to unascertainable degrees of political pressure. Of course, some of them also opposed the railroads on such matters as state taxes due or on the manner of use of railroad power. The more excessive actions of business interests even these politicians might be expected to oppose, but most of the time these governors were more compliant than resistant. But these governors were not crusaders, they were men riding a wave of political power that could reward as abundantly as it could punish. In general, their programs were innocuous and their leadership insignificant.

Thus Governor Newell asked for more money for schools—but not until the state got out of debt.\* In the

\* Inaugural of January 20, 1857, 9.

same address he condemned "any attempt upon the part of incorporated companies to interfere with the legislation or official appointments of the state. . . . Any such interference in the primary elections [should] be regarded as an unwarrantable assumption of power. . . ." However, he offered no suggestions as to how to curb these practices and indeed held his comment to exactly two sentences in an eleven-page message. Many governors contented themselves with platitudes and vague generalities in their communications to the Legislature, which was characteristically the manner of the erstwhile Union Army General George B. McClellan during his tenure as governor (1878-1881). In his final year in office he noted with sorrow that the average salaries of teachers had declined; he expressed a hope that as the assessed value of property increased there might be more revenue for teachers' salaries in general, but he had nothing at all to say about the practice of allowing railroads to pay a paltry sum in state taxes, a source from which money might have been drawn to improve salaries.\*

McClellan, a vice president of a railroad between his army service and his election as governor, had an extremely conservative, pro-business point of view. His admiring biographer says his administration was devoted to three major objectives: tax reduction, improved technical training for potential employees in New Jersey's glass, pottery, silk, and cotton factories, and improvement of the militia. He did "reduce state taxes (in large part . . . abolishing them)," and he "improved the discipline, marksmanship and organization of the state militia." \*\*

Symptomatic of the mood of the time was a special message to the Legislature from Governor Theodore E.

\* Message of January 11 1881, 4-5. Other particularly vacuous messages came from Charles S. Olden and John W. Griggs among others.

\*\* William S. Myers, *General George Brinton McClellan* (New York, 1934), 500. Myers, in a concluding statement on the General's term as governor, says it was "a good piece of work, 'solid,' but undistinguished."

Randolph, saying he had signed a bill to grant a particular corporation tax exemption; he said he thought this was not very wise, but he did not chose to veto it. He told the Legislature,

I have been unable to discover any sufficient reason for exempting the corporation created by the bill under notice, from the general rule of taxation applicable to private corporations. But, inasmuch as sufficient reasons for making that exception may have been known to the Legislature, and, as a similar exception may have been inserted in other charters of private corporations . . . and passed unchallenged . . . I have concluded that, without a veto of this bill, my duty will be discharged by inviting your attention to [it].\*

The Legislature was unimpressed for it neither amended the law nor entered his protest in its journal.

Governors assisted business interests in many ways. One can read their messages and find almost no recognition that child labor was prevalent in the state and that other serious social problems were accompanying the expansion of industry and urban growth. Even occasionally when the Legislature did act on some of these problems the governors frequently had not urged the action in their messages. Joseph D. Bedle, although he, like most post Civil War governors, made proposals for more equitable taxation of railroads, was nevertheless ready to employ state troops during a railroad strike to "keep the rabble at bay," as Sackett put it.\*\* Bedle emerged, following his governorship, as counsel for the Jersey Central Railroad.

Leading businessmen participated in politics in many ways beyond the traditional lobbying and outright bribery. The following illustrates some aspects of Pennsylvania Railroad participation after it had acquired the Camden and Amboy. It became a quasi-political party, fielding a team of political agents whose duty it was to finance and assist in election campaigns and later to

\* Message of March 3, 1869, 4.

\*\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 143.

exact returns for services rendered. One Frederic A. Potts was aided by the Pennsylvania Railroad in winning the Republican nomination for governor in 1880. "Potts," says Sackett, "was one of the kings of the coal trade in New York City, of the highest social standing, of large wealth, with widespread corporation alliances, who . . . had served as the Senator From Hunterdon." \* Potts was an influential stockholder in the Jersey Central, and the other railroads were expected to assist through the persuasion of Senator Garret Hobart of Passaic who was the new chairman of the Republican party. Before election day there was a suspicion that a deal had been made between a Democratic party leader and an official of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the rumor spread that Jersey Central employees were to be instructed to vote for Potts and Pennsylvania workers for the Democratic candidate. The result of competition between railroads acting as political organizations was an extremely close vote: the Democrat won by a scant 650 votes out of nearly a quarter million cast (with 50.01 per cent of the vote). Potts' supporters charged that a backroom deal at the last minute had sabotaged their man. Sackett said,

It was answered for the railroad that the vote in the counties through which the Pennsylvania railroad runs indicated they were not behind the other counties in their fealty to the Republican candidate. In Burlington, Potts ran 33 ahead of his ticket; in Camden, 59; in Essex, 347; in Hudson, 450; in Hunterdon, 269; while in the Central Railroad county of Monmouth he was 49 behind, and in Ocean, 34.\*\*

The governors of the first decade of the twentieth century fitted the prototype of the businessman's governor perfectly (three Republicans who were respectively a wealthy varnish manufacturer; a bank president and a

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 163.

\*\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 179.

railroad director; and a lawyer who dabbled in business and banking as well as politics). These governors had a special problem, however: there was a clamor of noisy opposition to the power of the railroads, trusts, and public utilities. The protest was centered in, although not restricted to, Hudson County partly because, as a terminal site, so much of the County's real estate was owned by railroads. Railroad tax exemptions meant an acute consciousness of the privileges of the railroads in Hudson County among the citizens who made up in their tax payments what the railroad was not required to pay. Two Republican politicians from Jersey City, Mark Fagan and George L. Record, were responsible for igniting what became a most discomfiting fire under the last of the typical businessman's governors. Fagan was a popular figure who had courage and appeal but little formal education. An erstwhile undertaker's helper at \$15 a week, he came to politics with a passionate concern for the miserable people with whom he had lived, and in time he emerged as the reform Republican mayor of Jersey City. Record was a talented lawyer and fervent idealist-reformer, and he advised Fagan at each step along their path toward reform goals. With their "New Idea" movement between 1899 and 1910, Fagan and Record, although they lost more often than they won, did help to produce a Public Utilities Commission, merit system changes, a primary for electing the United States senator, and local taxation of utilities. And, more important, they opened a path for the innovations Woodrow Wilson promoted in his term as governor. To be sure, it was not these two men alone who did these things. They had allies and, significantly, they acted during the political ferment raised by the muckrakers.

Notwithstanding the growing pressure for correcting business excesses, Franklin Murphy, the varnish manufacturer who was governor from 1902-1905, made few concessions to the reformers. That he was cast from the old mold is quite evident from his message to the Legislature of 1903. After noting that the proposals for a party primary law and action against river pollution and

some minor changes were needed, he turned to reports on the conditions in factories where children worked, assuring the Legislature that upon investigation he had not found them as bad as reported. Still, he was ready to agree that it was time to join the eleven other states that had adopted a fourteen-year-minimum age for the employment of boys. He thought a commission to study tenement-house conditions should be appointed, and in a sublime moment he defied the twentieth-century's mechanical invasion by suggesting that "no automobile shall be allowed in this state that is geared to run at a higher speed than fifteen miles an hour. . . ." \* He closed with a brief defense of trusts and an attack on demagogues who falsely arouse the people against them.

Murphy's alignment with business interests is illustrated by his appointment of Thomas N. McCarter, later head of the Public Service Corporation, as his attorney general. Later he gave McCarter's brother that office when McCarter left for a post with the public utility. As Republican State Chairman, however, McCarter remained in a key position to defend his interests. This he is said to have done in a battle with Fagan and Record over whether a suit could be brought to clarify the franchise of a Jersey City trolley company. The franchise had lapsed some ten years prior to Record's discovery of the fact and when he sought, as Jersey City's counsel, to bring a suit testing the right of the trolley company to operate under its old franchise, McCarter was reported to have cut him off with these words: "To all of you, I say, you can't bring your suit without the consent of the Attorney General, and the Attorney General is my brother." \*\* McCarter denied he had said it, but the important point is that Governor Murphy's attorney general did not grant permission to bring the suit.

Just at the end of Murphy's term, however, Fagan scored a major point in his war with the established

\* Message of January 13, 1903.

\*\* Ransom E. Noble, *New Jersey Progressivism before Wilson* (Princeton, 1946), 36. The authority for this is Lincoln Steffens who was told by Record.

order. Fagan, a Republican himself, sent a letter of open challenge to the Governor following a long and frustrating campaign during Murphy's term to get an equalization of tax load for railroads. The letter, written by Record and released to the press for maximum effect, was sent at the close of the 1904 legislative session. "It cited bills locked up in committee and accused the Legislature of being hopelessly under the dominaton of the corporations; called upon Governor Murphy, as the official head of the Republican party in the State, to compel it to forsake its corporation servitude and work in the interests of the people. . . ." \* Governor Edward Caspar Stokes, Murphy's successor, went along with a bill to raise railroad taxes, resulting in their paying some three million dollars more per year than they had paid before. An era was drawing to a close.

The businessman's governors were not inclined to advance or challenge an age with new ideas; they did not even make much of the office as a source of administrative control apart from policy leadership. Governors Murphy, Stokes, and Fort all urged the consolidation of state agencies and greater administrative efficiency, but little was accomplished. Did they fail because they lacked the constitutional authorization to act more vigorously? Only the most distorted reading of the history of the period would lead to that conclusion. They were not philosophically inclined to move fast and had they been, their political backing would have been inadequate to the task. Their constitutional authority was undoubtedly a much less significant reason for failure to assert leadership than other more plausible explanations. Further evidence that the constitutional factor was not the determinative one is to be found in the careers of some of the party-machine governors to whom we now turn.

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (New York, 1914), II, 184. See also Edwin P. Conklin for a useful summary of these events in Irving S. Kull (ed.), *New Jersey: A History* (New York, 1930), IV, 1114-1143.

V

THE PARTY-MACHINE GOVERNOR  
(1870 - 1941)

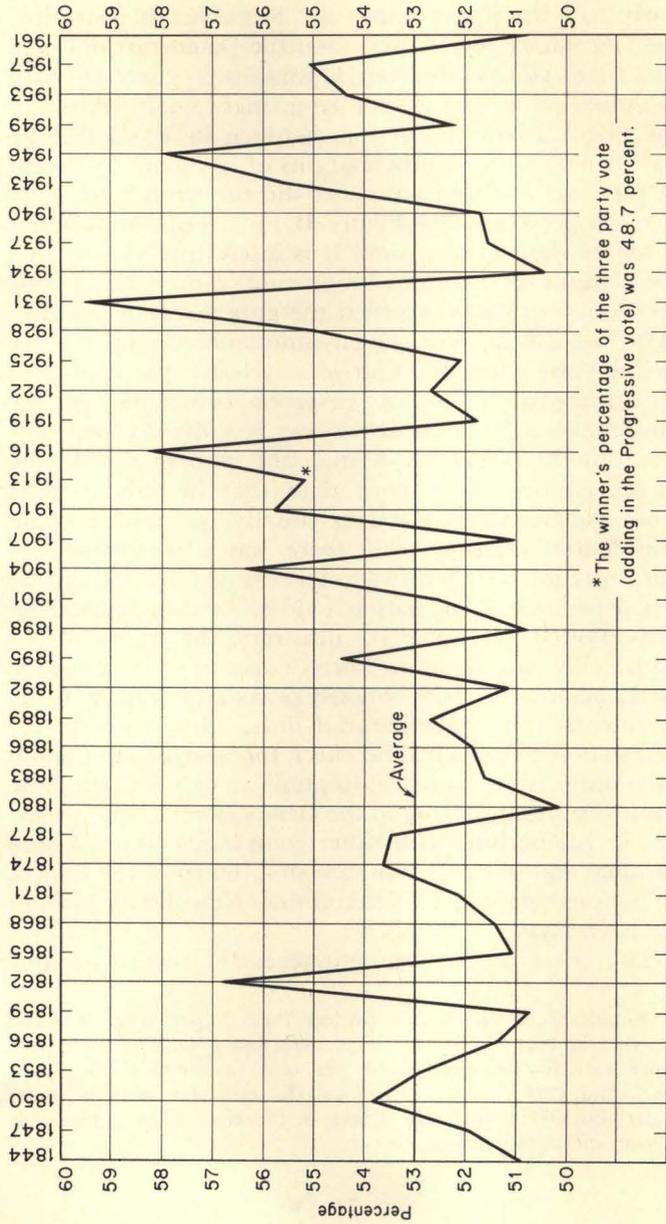
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THE GOVERNORS whom I have classified as party-machine governors are the products of a phenomenon of striking importance to the development of American politics: the political machine and its boss. The professionalization of politics that took place in the United States following the firm establishment of modern parties produced a new kind of politician. In the 1820's parties gradually ceased to be cliques of office-holders (exemplified by the early practice of making nominations in legislative caucuses where those in office assumed the power to determine who might contest for other offices) and became organizations with a wider base of membership and participation. The Jacksonian movement demonstrated not only the possibility of wresting control from the cliques by appealing to the mass of enfranchised voters, but also the ways in which political parties could enhance their power by distributing the jobs that the spoils system now opened to loyal followers. This was applicable not only to the national government, of course, but even more rewardingly to state and local governments where most of the governing of that day took place. Accordingly party organizations in states, counties, and localities developed a businesslike managerial elite who made politics their lifework. In one sense, of course, they resembled the gentry who earlier had had nearly exclusive power in

the political realm. Both gentry and professional politicians devoted themselves sedulously to the arts of political manipulation and both exercised enormous power. But the gentry held power by tradition, by law, by wealth and not, usually, through the electoral sanction of universal suffrage. The new political breed did have popular support, and by astutely combining that with corporate wealth they achieved a totality of control in many cities and states that matched or surpassed that of the gentry who preceded them.

It is no cause for surprise that these powerful party machines and their commanders selected governors amenable to their ends, nor that some of the leaders of the party machines became ambitious for and achieved the governorship, using the party's resources as bases of power both to achieve the office and to assert leadership once elected. From the late eighteenth century onward, all New Jersey governors have in greater or lesser degree been party men and their actions have been affected by that attachment; the distinctive feature about the nine governors here classified as party-machine governors is that to an unusual extent they either relied upon or were the minions of party organizations or machines. Naturally their party associations were not their only bases of power; personal ability and popularity, constitutional authority, and connections with business, among other factors, were also involved. It is, however, the singular importance of party in their careers that distinguishes them from others.

Before discussing the characteristic features of this kind of governorship, the point should be made that party has been a vitally important force shaping New Jersey gubernatorial politics. In the first place it is a state that has never been dominated by one party at any stage in its history. At various times the Democratic or Republican party has clearly been stronger than its opponents for a generation, but for no long period has the opposition been shut out as a helpless minority. Competition has been constant. Even during the thirty years following the Civil War, when the Democratic



\* The winner's percentage of the three party vote (adding in the Progressive vote) was 48.7 percent.

FIGURE II  
WINNERS' PERCENTAGE OF TWO-PARTY VOTE FOR GOVERNORSHIP

party had the upper hand, the Republicans controlled the Legislature more often than the Democrats did, and gubernatorial elections were always closely contested with the usual margin of victory agonizingly small. Indeed of the 19 gubernatorial elections between 1844 and 1898 no less than 11 were won by margins of less than 2 per cent of the total vote and only once did the winner get more than 55 per cent. (See Figure II for details, and Figure V for legislative majorities.) It is interesting to note that the margins of victorious Presidential candidates in New Jersey have usually exceeded the gubernatorial margins. (The two offices were chosen simultaneously once every twelve years when the four-year cycle for president and the three-year cycle for governor coincided; in the simultaneous elections there was less than 1 per cent variation between presidential and gubernatorial vote in six elections and more than that in only three.\*) Since gubernatorial elections usually occurred in non-presidential election years there was a maximum opportunity for state politics to take its own course and be less dependent upon national tides. As the electoral results plotted in Figure III illustrate, the trends of national and state elections fairly frequently took opposite directions resulting in opposed peaks and valleys in the presidential and gubernatorial lines. This is not to say that national events had no effect, for clearly such nationwide shifts as the post-1896 Republican gain and the New Deal—Depression swing to the Democrats hit New Jersey. Yet in comparison with other competitive states where national and state elections are simultaneous, the impact of national politics in determining New Jersey politics has been small.

The effect of the competitiveness of the two major

\* Simultaneous elections with less than 1 per cent deviation occurred in 1844, 1856, 1868, 1880, 1892, and 1940. The years with wider variation were 1904 (2.2 per cent variation), 1916 (2 per cent), and 1928 (7 per cent). Since the four-year term of office, under the 1947 constitution, began in the election of 1949 simultaneous elections no longer occur.

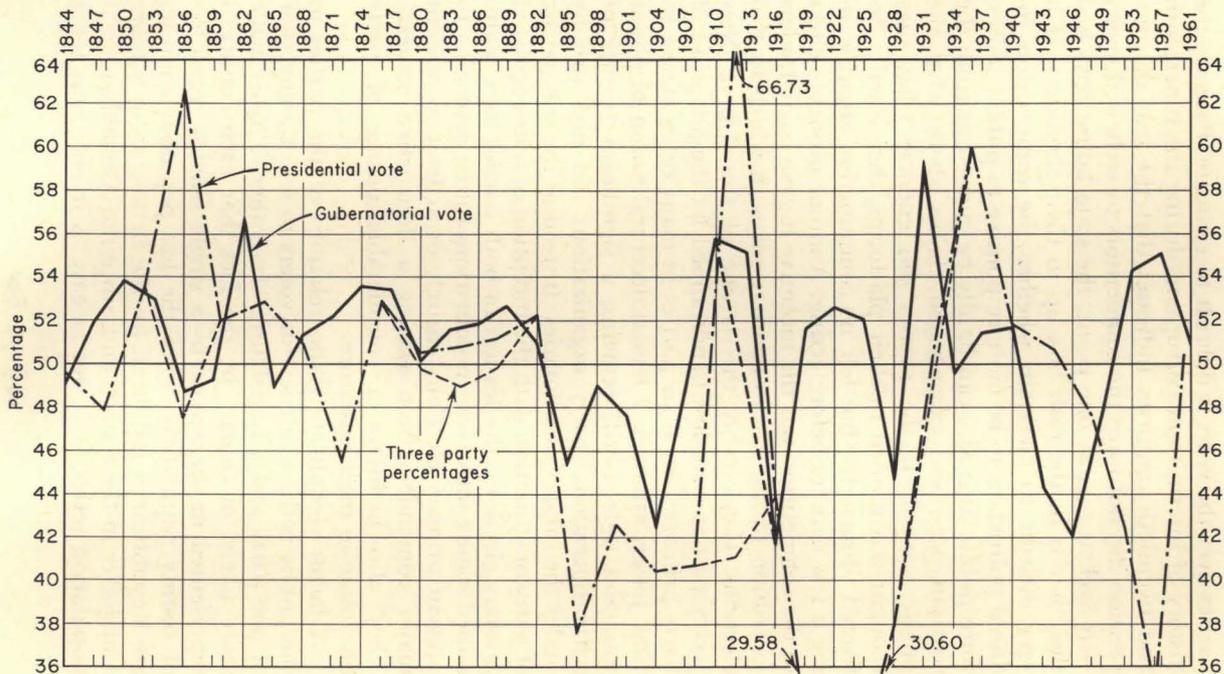


FIGURE III  
DEMOCRATIC PERCENTAGE OF TWO-PARTY VOTE FOR GOVERNOR AND PRESIDENT

parties over the years is difficult to estimate. Patently the history of intermittent corruption during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries indicates that the fear of competition did not force the competitors to eschew thievery—as Sackett says at one point, the state house boys had their hands in the cash box up to their shoulders. It is very difficult to ascertain whether the competition induced politicians to be more responsive to public desires, since public attitudes can hardly be guessed at from the partisan press and exaggerated claims about what the public wanted. If the parties did endorse what they thought was wanted in their platforms, they usually delivered ultimately—but felt no compunction about waiting a few decades before acting. Another probable effect of the competition was the incentive it gave party leaders to fashion strong party organizations with which to win elections. Conceivably this is one of the reasons New Jersey parties were less handicapped by the adoption of party primary laws than parties in many other states. In New Jersey, although a feudal decentralization of power was, and indeed still remains, a significant feature of party operations, party organizations did not atrophy under the impact of primaries. Instead of the splintering of party organization with the inception of state-regulated primary elections, the leaders in both parties have maintained some control over nominations (often managing to prevent primary elections entirely or at least to prevent major contenders from waging a destructive contest). They also maintain a considerable degree of party discipline in the Legislature.

A factor complicating the relations of the parties to the public is the tendency for voters to select a governor of one party and a Legislature of another. This is made more likely, of course, by the fact that each county is represented in the Senate by a single senator regardless of county population. Since the less populous counties are Republican it is difficult for the Democrats to achieve a majority in the Senate, and, since the Assembly reflects population levels, it is not as easy as it once was for a

Republican governor to win a Republican majority there in view of the heavy Democratic majorities in the large cities. As the data in Figures IV and V indicate this "bi-partisan" factor in state government has been very

FIGURE IV  
THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE:  
PARTY AGREEMENT AND DIVISION, 1844-1961

	Years	Percentage of years *
Democratic Governors with Republicans		
Controlling one or both Houses	53	44
Democratic Governors with Democrats		
Controlling both Houses	17	15
Republican Governors with Democrats		
Controlling one or both Houses	9	7
Republican Governors with Republicans		
Controlling both Houses	32	27

common, except for Republican governors in the present century who have usually had friendly majorities in both houses. Inevitably the divisions have led to efforts to confuse the public by claims and counterclaims about the responsibility for actions taken or evaded in the course of a legislative session. Mr. Dooley used to say, "Politics ain't beanbag," but New Jersey politics does sometimes resemble a beanbag game in which the players try *not* to be holding the bag when the legislative session comes to an end.

The long and not always illustrious history of the party machine in New Jersey left part of its record in a series of governors' administrations stretching over nearly a century's time from the Civil War to the outbreak of World War II. The first of the men here classified as party-machine governors was Joel Parker, governor from 1863 to 1866 and 1872-1875, and the last was A. Harry Moore, who left office in 1941. They are not only

\* The percentages in the table are based on the 119 years elapsed, although 8 years are omitted: 3 when Whig Governors had Whig majorities and 5 years when there were ties in one house. Figure V presents a year by year tabulation of party control.

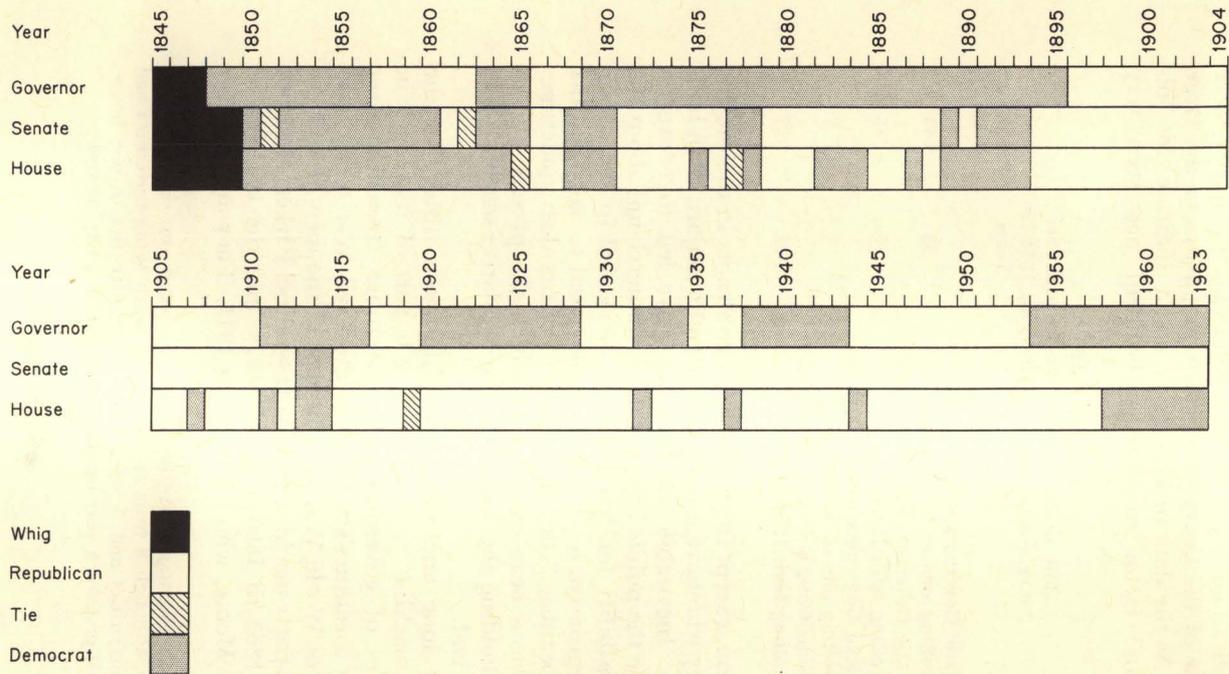


FIGURE V  
PARTY CONTROL OF GOVERNORSHIP AND LEGISLATURE IN STATE LEGISLATURE

at opposite ends of the time-scale but they also represent different types of party-machine governors. Parker is characteristic of those who were themselves party leaders and who used their party connections as their primary sources of power to carry out their programs. Moore on the other hand is typical of those who were subservient to party bosses. Notwithstanding these basic differences, they all share certain other characteristics as the data in Figure VI show. All of them had previously held positions in local or state government, and for most of them politics was a full-time career prior to and after their service as governor. Significantly the last five came from working-class families, and three were sons of immigrants. They were "ex plebes" as Robert Dahl calls the second-generation men who came into positions of political power in New Haven in the latter part of the nineteenth century.\* The ex plebes had less education than the first two party governors, Joel Parker and George Ludlow, who had graduated from Princeton and Rutgers respectively. Only one of the remaining seven had gone through college although several studied at Cooper Union and one had attended but never finished college. Parker and Ludlow were from middle-class families and, interestingly, both had fathers who were in politics. Leon Abbett, one of the ablest and most intriguing men ever to be governor, was the son of a journeyman hatter, an indication of the changing background from which leading politicians were drawn in the age of the party machine.

It is conceivable that Parker would have become a more or less typical collaborator with railroad power but for the fact that the Civil War thrust responsibilities upon him that made him seize leadership. He certainly was no adamant enemy of the railroads, and indeed came to their defense when the federal government made demands upon them in behalf of the war effort. On the other hand his freedom from railroad harness is suggested by the fact that he argued for general laws to in-

\* Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* (New Haven, 1961).

FIGURE VI  
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA ON NINE PARTY-MACHINE GOVERNORS

<i>Governor</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>	<i>Post Governorship Career</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Father's Occupation</i>
Joel Parker 1863-66 1872-74 (Dem.)	Assembly, Law	Attorney General, N.J. Sup. Ct.	Princeton, A.B.	Assembly, State Treasurer, Sheriff
George C. Ludlow 1881-84 (Dem.)	County Freeholder, N.J. Senate	N.J. Sup. Ct. Law	Rutgers, A.B., M.A.	Justice of Peace, Judge of Circuit Ct.
Leon Abbott 1884-87 1890-93 (Dem.)	Law, Assembly, N.J. Sen., Pres. of Senate	N.J. Sup. Ct. Law	High School	Journeyman hatter
George T. Werts 1893-96 (Dem.)	Mayor, Assembly, N.J. Senate, N.J. Sup. Ct.	N.J. Sup. Ct.	High School "State Model School"	Unavailable *
James F. Fielder 1913-16 (Dem.)	Law, Assembly, Pres. of Senate	Food Administrator	Columbia U. Law School	Jersey City Registrar Congress

Edward I. Edwards 1920-23 (Dem.)	State Controller, Banking	U.S. Senate	Public School, Attended N.Y.U.	Worked in bank; Welsh by birth
George S. Silzer 1923-26 (Dem.)	Bd. of Aldermen, N.J. Sen., Circ. Ct.	Chmn. of N.Y. Port Authority, Banking, Law	Cooper Union, N.J. Law School	Tavern prop.; German by birth
A. Harry Moore 1926-29 1932-35 1938-41 (Dem.)	Jersey City Comm. of Parks	U.S. Senate	Pub. School, Cooper Union, N.J. Law School	House painter
Morgan F. Larson 1929-32 (Repub.)	Engineer, N.J. Sen., Business	Consulting Engineer to N.Y. Port Authority	Pub. School Cooper Union	Blacksmith; Danish by birth
Harold G. Hoffman 1935-38 (Repub.)	Assembly, Banking, Congress Mayor, Motor Vehicle Commr. Newspaper,	Director of N.J. Unemployment Compensation Commission	High School	Railroad superintendent; family poor

\* According to Sackett, his "family had lived for generations in Morristown," *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 426.

corporate businesses and an end to the passing of special laws for individual companies which had led to so much abuse and favoritism. Nor would dependence upon railroad influence have seen him through the crises that the Civil War brought in New Jersey for the people of the state did not give very enthusiastic support to the Civil War. Pro-Southern "Copperhead" sentiment was widespread, and several moves were initiated to get the state to press for a negotiated peace. Evidence of the feelings of the state's population is found in its angry reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation, its attempted withdrawal of ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the failure of the state to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment. Significantly only New Jersey among the northern states voted for General McClellan in 1864.

Realizing that enforcing the Draft Act would mean violence in New Jersey, Parker got President Lincoln's permission to fill New Jersey's draft quota through volunteers, which commitment, with great difficulty, he achieved. Pressed on the one side by ardent Unionists and on the other by Copperheads and peace advocates, Parker steered a difficult and courageous path. Evidence of his success is the fact that he emerged as a popular, rather than a hated figure. This is due, one must assume, to more than courage for he seems to have been an adroit politician. Sackett says of him:

A great big, good-natured, rollicking fellow, tall of stature and broad of girth, with the air and manner and dress of a farmer, always accessible, with a generous word for everybody and a kindly sympathy for all who needed it, he had come to be looked upon as the personal friend of half the men, women and children in the Commonwealth, and they in turn esteemed it a rare flattery to be accounted his friend.\*

Counting on his continuing popularity, party leaders asked Parker to run for a second term in 1872, six years

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 36.

after he had left office. Only after getting their agreement to boost the governor's salary to five thousand dollars would he accept, and after some maneuvering in the party convention the nomination was delivered to him. Although he had intra-Democratic party opposition, he also had considerable support in the party's ranks. This, combined with his personal leadership ability, helped him to achieve several useful objectives, not least of which was a constitutional amendment to prevent "ripper laws," by which gangs could take over the government of a city by legislative fiat (including statutory specification of individuals to hold certain offices) and spend the city poor in their plundering. After both Jersey City and Newark had been subjected to this treatment, public attention focused on the problem, but Parker faced great opposition from politicians when he proposed a constitutional amendment that prohibited the passage of special laws for individual cities. Nevertheless he won legislative approval of a special constitutional commission—whose members he appointed—to draft this and other amendments. The local government amendment was approved in 1875.

The career of George C. Ludlow is similar to Parker's in that he too developed a stern sense of the limits of political decency and in that he had the courage to defend his principles. Chosen the Democratic candidate in 1880 in a rowdy Democratic convention, he came to office firmly committed to the State House Ring headed by Henry C. Kelsey. Kelsey, as noted in the last chapter, was a tough and shrewd operator who for twenty-seven years, from 1870 to 1897, occupied the office of secretary of state. With the patronage of that position and an accumulated reputation for great influence, he became a formidable boss. Ludlow in return for Kelsey's support at the convention maneuvered to retain Kelsey's office for him when the Republican Senate refused to confirm his appointment.

Because of his cooperation with Kelsey and because Ludlow had once been a railroad attorney, there was

doubt that Ludlow would veto a bill the Pennsylvania Railroad maneuvered through the Legislature to assist them in litigation concerning lands created by filling the bay off Jersey City. Veto it he did, however. Sackett says,

He had made up his mind before the bill reached him that he could not countenance it, and he was subjected by its promoters to an enormous pressure which a man of less stern mould could not have resisted. He was cajoled, coaxed and threatened by turns. The obligations of fealty to the corporation whose employe he had been, whose political beneficiary he was, were thrown in his face. Glittering inducements were dangled before him, and when he stood like adamant against them all, a threat of political extinction which was afterwards relentlessly redeemed, was hurled at him.\*

The Senate repassed it at once as anticipated and the Assembly might have done so, too, but for the exposure of a bribe attempt. A member of the Assembly reported that a representative of the railroad had come to him saying that "As your vote is to Senate 167 [the number of the disputed bill], so is \$500 to your answer." \*\* A waiter slipped an envelope with five hundred dollars in it under his plate during dinner a few days later. All this the member revealed in an excited speech on the Assembly floor, and a spate of reports of pay-offs followed. The ensuing publicity killed the bill. (The method chosen was death by expiration of the session rather than a roll call revealing defectors to the railroad's lobbyists.) Ludlow on three occasions also made demands for more equitable taxation of railroads, but he lacked the power to achieve it. That was left to his successor who demonstrated how much a governor, independent of the railroads and with a firm control over the party organization, could do.

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 196. His "extinction" was temporary; he went to the New Jersey Supreme Court in 1897.

\*\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 198.

This was Leon Abbett who had come to Hoboken as a young lawyer during the Civil War. First drawn into politics during the 1864 campaign when he made speeches for McClellan, he soon went into the Assembly for Hudson County. After being speaker of the Assembly, he went to the Senate, later becoming its president and a major power in the Democratic party, usually in opposition to the State House Ring. A man of sympathy for the underdog, he was considered a demagogue by those who objected to his appeals to workingmen. He got nowhere in the Senate in 1874 when he proposed a "Liberty of Conscience" bill "aimed at the admission of priests to the Senate reformatories, penal institutions and asylums"; he mustered only five votes for it.\* When he maneuvered his way against factional opposition into the governor's chair in 1883, the railroad faced a new kind of governor. In his inaugural he said bluntly,

The evil of bartering away the sovereign rights of the State over taxation is now apparent to all, but it is a doctrine which the courts have recognized, and complete sovereignty can never be restored to the State until all contracts on the subject of taxation are extinguished. Is there power in the State to resume its lost sovereignty? How can it extinguish these contracts? \*\*

He described a way in which it could be done: by levying a tax on franchises. When the pressure grew intense against passage of the bill, Abbett threatened to refuse to sign appropriations unless the bill was advanced. "Whenever the Governor found a Democratic Senator wavering in support of the bill in its most stringent shape, he subjected him to the pressure that kept him in line for it." † He needed more than party pressure to

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 115.

\*\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 224-225.

† William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, 235-236.



Leon Abbett  
(From an engraving by J. A. O'Neill)

get his bill through, however. He had a Democratic majority to work with in the Assembly but the Senate was in Republican hands: in the Senate some Republicans favored the bill, and Abbett had to hold all nine Democratic votes to win, which he did. Abbett's publiciz-

ing of the issue was undoubtedly one reason the once-impossible feat could be accomplished. A number of other reform bills were passed during his first term, and in due course the two parties began to debate whose achievements they were since the Republicans controlled both houses during the second two years of Abbett's term.

His second term was even more productive. Elected in 1890 and now with an ever firmer grip on the party apparatus, he pressed for and got labor laws, scholarships for an agricultural college, free public libraries, a commissioner of mines, road improvements, more money for schools, and a department of banks and insurance among many other things. He also got the Legislature to concentrate more power over administration in the governor's hands. The managers of the lunatic asylum were discharged and a new board replaced them, and the staffs of other institutions were partially replaced. One historian of the period notes that few nineteenth-century governors took advantage of their potential powers as leaders of legislation or as leaders of their parties.

Abbett was an exception. He *did* things, whether in his first term or his second. He was the party boss; he used his gubernatorial powers to their limits; he forced, when needs be, the passage of acts of which he approved; often he saw to it that bills passed by the Legislature should not be turned over to him until close to the end of the session so that there was seldom an opportunity given to override his veto.\*

In part his victories were facilitated by having Democrats in control of the Legislature (except for the Senate during the first year of the term). But it was a costly program and the tax bill for it was resented. Also he made concessions to predatory Democratic politicians that left the stench of corruption in the air. Abbett had ideals and goals to achieve for the public welfare as he

\* Edward P. Conklin, in *New Jersey, A History*, Irving S. Kull (ed.) (New York, 1930), 970.

understood it, but he also had personal ambitions, mainly to become United States Senator. And he was willing to use dubious means to please the men who could deliver the senatorship. Through powers he acquired over local government he perpetrated the equivalent of ripper laws in disregard of local desires; he went along with a notorious gerrymander; he played the game of the liquor dealers, whom he had once served as counsel, in getting county liquor license boards to supersede local boards that refused to grant licenses.\* It was a bitter blow for Abbett when, notwithstanding his willingness to meet his party henchmen more than halfway, they turned against him and elected James Smith to the United States Senate a few months after Abbett had left the governorship confident he would soon go on to Washington.

The details of Abbett's career could be spelled out more fully, but the foregoing is sufficient to support once again the general thesis of this study: independently of constitutional provisions, a governor is able to achieve leadership if he has personal qualities of leadership and controls other bases of power. Ludlow and others before him had sought equalization of taxes on railroads without avail. Ludlow and others either did not try or tried and failed to assert leadership. But Abbett working under the same constitution made something astoundingly different out of the governor's office—he used it as a tool for vigorous leadership.

James F. Fielder, who succeeded to the governorship in 1913 when Wilson went to the White House, was in some respects like Ludlow. He was a professional politician from Jersey City who had served in the Assembly and was president of the Senate at the right moment. Although Wilson preferred another candidate for the 1913 gubernatorial race, the party bosses, resuming their normal prerogatives now that Wilson was out of the

\* Sackett had respect for Abbett, but, watching this plundering along with Abbett's more reputable achievements, he got a very jaundiced view of the man and was very harsh in his judgment of him. See *Modern Battles of Trenton* (Trenton, 1895), I, Chapters XXIX through XXXII, and especially, 359 ff.

state, chose Fielder. Fielder therefore resigned, to avoid the rule forbidding a governor to succeed himself, and won the 1913 election. Walter E. Edge, who was president of the Senate during Fielder's term as governor, observed that, "Following Wilson's departure for Washington, life in Trenton settled down to a more or less normal status and members of both parties seemed relieved that he had graduated to a higher job and had left them to their own devices." \* If the more routine life to which New Jersey politics returned was, as Edge remarked, less exciting, it was also less productive of conflict and significant legislative enactments. Fielder chose to cooperate with party leaders rather than dominate them, and the result was a placid and relatively uneventful term.

Frank Hague, political boss extraordinary, was a major force in New Jersey politics from the end of World War I until 1950, and accordingly his actions deeply affected every governor—Democrat or Republican—who served in that era.\*\* The son of immigrant Irish parents, Hague was born in 1871 in the "Horseshoe Section" of Jersey City in Hudson County. (Somehow it is fitting that his neighborhood was named for a gerrymander.) A man with very little education (he is said to have been expelled from the sixth grade at the age of fourteen), he spoke the language of his neighbors and became their leader as soon as he turned twenty-one. Step by step he built up his power as he went from constable to custodian of city hall to the office of street and water commissioner. Then in 1913 he backed a "reform" charter for the city and got himself elected to the newly-created City Commission.† Hague became director of public safety which put him in charge of the policemen and

\* Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 78-79.

\*\* Hague was the subject of Dayton David McKean's brilliant study in bossism, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940).

† George C. Rapport contends that Hague was aided in his grab for power by Governor Wilson's refusal to employ his patronage powers to bolster the insurgent reform element. See *The Statesman and the Boss* (New York, 1961), 150-156.

firemen. By surrounding himself with loyal and able associates, by making the police and fire departments adjuncts of his political organization, and by patient, shrewd construction of a political machine, he soon had complete control of the city. He held on until 1950. Although he resorted to fraud and terror to maintain his power, he also provided services and assistance to Jersey City residents. Part of his support came from well-trained corps of political agents on the city's payroll, but he also had the loyal support of a large majority of the people in the city. In 1917 he became Mayor and the voters were given regular opportunities to turn him out of office, but for thirty years he held the office until he passed it on to his nephew, Frank Hague Eggers.

From his Jersey City base Hague branched out into state politics, not so much because he was interested in state politics but because it was useful to have state authority to protect Jersey City's interests. A man long active in New Jersey politics who sought reforms that Hague might not have been expected to appreciate said of the old boss, "He wasn't a hard man to work with when Jersey City wasn't involved." Hague's entry into state politics was made through Hudson County's state senator, sometime banker who had once been state controller, Edward I. Edwards, who won the governorship in 1919. Edwards' chief claim to fame previously had been his holding up Governor Woodrow Wilson's pay check for days spent out of the state campaigning for the Presidency. And his chief campaign stratagem in 1919 was a firm resistance to prohibition. Sounding very much like Alabama's Governor George Wallace in his "school house door" speech in 1963 against integration of the University of Alabama, Edwards proclaimed that he would "fight by every legal means the enforcement of prohibition in New Jersey."\* Word spread that he claimed he would make New Jersey wetter than the Atlantic Ocean, although *after* the election he said he

\* David Dayton McKean, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940), 48.

had been misquoted. In any event he beat his Republican opponent, Newton Bugbee, by a narrow margin. This was a marked contrast to the pitiful 29.5 per cent of the vote that the Democratic presidential candidate, James Cox, got in New Jersey a year later. While continuing a series of attacks on prohibition, Edwards began a process that his successors carried on: the appointment of Hague men to key positions in the state's administrative and judicial systems. The Port of New York Authority, an interstate agency to deal with transportation problems, was established during his tenure, but otherwise his administration was undistinguished.

Hague's next governor was George S. Silzer, who like Edwards campaigned against prohibition. The question was in Silzer's words, "Whether we should have Prohibition, with all its attending evils, or Temperance, with all its attendant blessings." \* Silzer was not a Jersey City man, however, and Hague's controls did not function as they had with Edwards and as they did with Silzer's successor. There was no open break between them, however, as evidenced by Hague's willingness to go along with a Silzer-for-President campaign in 1924—at least long enough for his name to be placed in nomination before New Jersey's vote was delivered to Al Smith. Silzer battled with Republican legislatures with great flair and with much consciousness of publicity, but, perhaps because the middle of the 1920's was not a propitious moment for some of his proposals, he did not achieve much except for road and bridge-building projects.

A. Harry Moore was Hague's ideal governor and he won the office three times—in 1926, 1932, and 1938. The rule against two successive terms interrupted his tenure, but nothing else kept him from being Hague's man in the governor's chair. Moore had known the Boss back in Hague's early days as a custodian in City Hall when Moore was secretary to the then mayor of Jersey City. He was elected with Hague in the 1913 "reform" election

\* Edwin P. Conklin, in *New Jersey, A History*, Irving S. Kull (ed.) (New York, 1930), 1080.

and for years was Jersey City's commissioner of parks. The association continued and Moore obligingly ran for the United States Senate when the Boss needed him on the ticket in 1934, and, equally helpfully, he resigned that seat three years later to become governor again.

Moore won when the Republicans were riding high in the twenties and just as easily again when the Democrats prevailed during the New Deal. Although nothing could have been more evident than that Moore was the mere agent of Hague, the public did not object enough to defeat him. His biographer pictures him as a very kind and sentimental man, but he also recognized Moore's flair for publicity and adroit self-promotion. Fred L. Bloodgood tells of how Moore promoted "Crippled Kiddie Committees" in every Elks' Club in New Jersey, and he adds, "It was not the work that he did for the crippled children that made him the logical candidate for [governor], but it certainly contributed to his election." \* He was a perfect spellbinder, according to those who remember hearing his campaign speeches. Said the *New York Times* of Moore:

He can talk circles around any other politician in New Jersey. He has joined every social organization that is helpful to a candidate. He is well grounded in the art of public improvements. There is nothing of interest to the average citizen that he can't "orate" about with the facility of a river flowing over a dam. He has a speaking acquaintance with everybody whom he ever met in New Jersey and expects to take every voter by the hand before election day. Mr. Moore will have a dripping wet platform. No wonder the Republicans are worried.\*\*

He won easily, and would have done so even without the frauds perpetrated in his behalf at certain Jersey City polling places where the number of votes cast exceeded the number of registered voters. Prosecution of

\* Fred L. Bloodgood, *The Quiet Hour* (Trenton, 1940), 129.

\*\* Dayton David McKean, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940), 51.

such frauds was difficult and became more so as the courts and prosecutors' offices acquired more Hague men: they simply sidetracked prosecutions. McKean says that, "In spite of reams of testimony and hundreds of affidavits no adherent [of Hague's] has ever been convicted of an election fraud; a few from time to time have been indicted, and fewer still brought to trial, only to be acquitted." \*

Many illustrations of Moore's cooperation with Hague could be cited, but one example will suffice: the story of the appointment of Hague's son to the Court of Errors and Appeals. Frank Hague, Jr., was not of the same tough fiber as his father, and indeed was never interested in politics. He attended several preparatory schools, went to Princeton University for two years, and then entered the law school of the University of Virginia. (McKean says he failed nine of twenty courses he took in law school.) He nevertheless took the New Jersey bar examination, which graduates of law school often fail in their first attempt, and Frank Hague, Jr., passed it on his first try. In 1939 Moore nominated the thirty-four-year-old Hague to the Court of Errors and Appeals, reportedly because it would "make his dad happy." \*\* It took some bargaining with Republican senators to get the nomination confirmed, but it was done.

The last two governors of the party-machine era are Republicans: Morgan F. Larson (1929-1932) and Harold G. Hoffman (1935-1938). Larson was indebted to Hague for his admission to the chief executive's suite after a fairly undistinguished seven years in the State Senate, although that was not the way the Boss had planned it. Larson got Hague's assistance because he believed Larson the weakest of the Republican candidates. Hague was eager to field a good Democratic candidate in 1928 be-

\* Dayton David McKean, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940), 65. McKean presents ample evidence of the prevalence of voting frauds.

\*\* Dayton David McKean, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940), 78.

cause a good state ticket might have helped Al Smith in the presidential contest; he also supported Larson to prevent a Jersey City Republican, Robert Carey, from reaching the governor's office since that would be a danger at home. So the orders went out and thousands of Democrats invaded the Republican primary to vote for Larson. Even Democratic election officials themselves voted in the Republican primary, and an investigating committee estimated that some twenty-two thousand Democrats crossed over. Hoover's landslide victory in 1928 put Larson in by a good margin over Hague's Democratic candidate.

Larson did not have a distinguished career as governor, but it cannot be said that he collaborated with Hague. Larson's major problem was his lack of support in his own party, and not his lack of constitutional authority, as one commentator contended. Noting that Larson lost battles with the Legislature over control of appointments which the Legislature often took away from the governor and reserved to itself, William S. Myers observed, "This has caused an increasing lack of unity and efficiency in the State government, a division of counsels and a duplication and wasting of funds at the cost of the taxpayer. . . . As a consequence of this division of authority and power in New Jersey, Governor Larson's administration was undistinguished." \* In view of the success of several earlier and later governors in asserting command over the Legislature and administration, this is a less than logical deduction. Larson's administration was undistinguished for a complex set of reasons, and the passage of such statutes was more symptomatic of the basic political weakness of the governor than a singular cause of failure.

If Hague had trouble dealing with Larson, the same can not be said of Harold G. Hoffman, who, as a Republican, had proclaimed he would never make deals with bosses. In the end, other Republicans were complaining

\* William S. Myers, *The Story of New Jersey* (New York, 1945), I, 345.

about the evils of "Hague-Hoffmanism." And the Boss himself said of Hoffman, "That little fellow, he's a million." \* Hoffman had Republican majorities in both houses of the Legislature, but he was troubled by an internal division in the party. The Essex County "Clean Government" faction, led by the late Arthur T. Vanderbilt, differed with Hoffman on many issues and left him without the votes to put his program over. Dealing across party lines was nothing new in New Jersey politics and certainly nothing new to Hoffman who was a seasoned politician (among other things he had been motor vehicle commissioner in a department where deals were not unknown) and a man of sufficient flexibility to make a little bargaining seem proper. But bargaining with Boss Hague was costly, for he made Hoffman pay heavily for the legislative votes he needed.

As a Depression governor, Hoffman faced some agonizing problems; and among the worst was the lack of revenue; there simply was not enough money to do things that seemed absolutely necessary such as providing relief for the hungry. New Jersey, then as now, had no broad-based tax such as the income or sales tax, and politicians were loath to propose either tax for fear of political reprisals on the proposers. While there are some considerable shortcomings in Hoffman's record of performance, he alone among governors of recent decades had the courage to venture a remedy to this continuing problem.\*\* He asked for a sales and an income tax in 1935, and thereby invoked a storm of protest. He stuck to his proposal, however, and when Essex County Republicans refused to go along with the sales tax that emerged from committee, he made a deal with Hague for the needed Democratic votes to pass his bill. McKean tells of the embarrassment of the Democratic minority leader

\* Dayton David McKean, *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940), 83.

\*\* After this book was written, in February, 1964, Governor Richard J. Hughes proposed an income tax to meet long-delayed needs.

in the Assembly who, after having led the battle for the governor's tax bill at Hague's direction, denied that any patronage deal had been made. He demanded that the assemblyman who made the charge offer some evidence of a deal; unfortunately for the minority leader, while he "was speaking word reached the Assembly that the governor had just nominated him for the Court of Errors and Appeals. . . ." \* When the minority leader sat down, his tormentor arose to inform him that his nomination had been sent in. The Democratic leader had nothing further to say.

Hoffman stayed in the political arena following his term as governor, trying with moderate success to keep alive a personal faction in the party. He sought but did not get another nomination for governor. He was for many years director of the Unemployment Compensation Division, persuading governors to reappoint him periodically. His career ended in infamy when he was removed from his cherished post by Governor Robert Meyner in 1954 on suspicion of fraud and mishandling of state funds. He died shortly thereafter and in a posthumous letter confessed the theft of three hundred thousand dollars from the bank of which he had been president. The embezzlement was said to have ended in 1938, but he had during the intervening years juggled state funds to cover the original theft and to pay off a blackmailer.\*\*

The power of the party machine reached its climax with Hague; nothing comparable to it has existed since nor is likely to in the future, for the basis of machine power has withered. Yet while such machines existed, the governorship was inevitably affected. Even when the machine-controlled Democratic party was not formally in office, Hague found ways of exerting his influence. As Abbott demonstrated in the nineteenth and Hague in

\* Dayton David McKean, *Pressures on the Legislature of New Jersey* (New York, 1938), 175.

\*\* *New York Times*, January 15, 1954.

the twentieth century, the potential power of a political party can modify or eliminate seemingly impregnable constitutional barriers to a governor's power or greatly supplement his constitutional authority. In examining some of the modern governors in the following chapter, examples of how party power has been used in conjunction with other bases of power will illustrate a final configuration of the politics of the New Jersey governorship.

## VI

### THE MODERN GOVERNOR

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**T**HE ESSENCE OF the modern \* governorship is well put by Woodrow Wilson's biographer:

He was truly a prime minister in the state, in an unofficial, a party sense, at least. He prepared the legislative program; he argued the cause of reform before the Democratic legislators; he endeavored to whip recalcitrant lawmakers into line by using the party caucus to determine party policies; as a last resort, he threatened when cajoling did not succeed.\*\*

The assumption of prime responsibility for preparing, promoting, and carrying out a program distinguishes the modern governorship. The chief executive is conceived to be the cardinal position in the government, and as such the initiating and the driving force in the policy-making process, assuming responsibility and taking credit for achievements in a broad spectrum of public business. Gradually not only governors, but legislators and most of the public concerned with state politics accepted the

\* I should explain that the word "modern" here is not intended to suggest approbation in contrast to, say, an "old-fashioned" governor. The word is a convenient way of summing up the newly available or newly exploited resources of leadership which half a dozen governors in this century have deployed.

\*\* Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 249. This excellent biography treats Wilson's governorship in detail; I have relied on it heavily in my treatment of Wilson here.

idea that it is not only right but necessary for the governor to assume conspicuous leadership.

Unquestionably the circumstances of the twentieth century have nurtured this development. Today the complexities of social life increasingly demand hierarchical concentration of authority; corporations, labor unions, even charitable organizations are so large that hierarchy is mandatory. The ubiquitous specialization of function common to our social and economic life has also invited hierarchy in an effort to minimize working at cross-purposes. What happened in private affairs has happened at any equal pace, or greater, in government. The post of chief executive—national, state, or local—has been transformed from a largely ceremonial office to the most dynamic and powerful element of government. The contemporary governor of New Jersey has a role totally different from that of his nineteenth-century predecessor. A look at the volume of statutory law suggests the change. The first compilation of the laws in 1795 filled one small volume; in 1847 the statutes covered one thousand pages; by 1874 it took three fat volumes to contain the four thousand pages of laws; now the laws fill two four-foot shelves if we include the indispensable indexes to the forty-volume set. Naturally much of this the governor has nothing to do with—it is technical detail for courts, clerks, and experts to deal with. Yet any aspect of the law or of the far-reaching bureaucracy, the judicial, military, or even local governmental system can become an issue for a governor if scandal, conflict, or publicity make it come alive. He has become a kind of a plebiscitary king; his responsibility is the well-being of the realm. Natural disasters, economic conditions, water resources, gambling, racial conflict, highway accidents, or governmental scandal of any kind are a small part of what a governor's agenda may include.

Modern conditions also create some of the tools the governor uses to cope with his tasks, whether self-imposed, legally-imposed, or imposed by circumstances. In addition to his constitutional authority and whatever

personal assets he may have, he has available unparalleled publicity resources, varying amounts of political party power, and public acceptance of the rightfulness of his having broad powers including that of general control over the administrative machinery of the state.

Contemporary communications media provide the governor with an unprecedented opportunity to enlist public support. Admittedly the ubiquity of newspapers, magazines, radio and television does not force the inattentive to take note of state problems—and manifestly most New Jersey citizens are rarely aware of state politics. This is not exclusively a New Jersey problem, but it probably is exaggerated somewhat by the high proportion of daily commuters out of the state \* and by the fact that its population is growing rapidly, resulting in at least temporary ignorance of New Jersey affairs on the part of newcomers. Still, the existence of modern communications facilities means that information can be conveyed more readily to those who are concerned. Regular television and radio performances supplement press conferences and mimeographed news releases. Also high-speed highways increase the governor's opportunities for using personal appearances as a means of persuasion.

This does not mean, however, that a wholly new element has been added to state politics. Earlier governors (Abbott, for example) were aware of public opinion and made appeals for public support, and governors' messages to the Legislature as far back as the patrician governorship showed an awareness that someone other than the Legislature would be, hopefully, listening. The distribution of governors' messages from the 1840's onward as separate pamphlets is evidence of that. The distinction is that modern opportunities and modern means of capitalizing on publicity are much greater. In the absence

\* The tons of New York and Philadelphia newspapers sold in New Jersey daily also divert attention from New Jersey affairs—at least in contrast with more isolated states where the major papers are local or intrastate. The existence of metropolises also results in less than the usual television coverage of New Jersey.

of other favorable factors, however, these facilities amount to little.

Enough has been said in the preceding chapter on the potential power of the political party that it may suffice now to repeat that the political party constitutes a major base of power in New Jersey. However, the instances in which Mayor Hague took command of governors or used his party position to force Republican governors to meet his demands as a condition for his cooperation illustrate trenchantly that the existence of party power does not mean the governor automatically has that power at *his* disposal. Yet the modern governors in varying degrees have had party support because they became party leaders as governor; they were more than titular leaders of their parties—when they were most successful they were the driving and dominating figures in their parties.

Equally important to the governor's rise in modern times is the fact that his control over administration has been enlarged by political, legal, and constitutional changes. The enlargement of administrative control has come about partly because a large segment of the public has accepted the need for a more hierarchical pattern of state government. Both the public and official readiness to accept the propriety of gubernatorial control and the formal enlargement of command-authority have been bases of power. In truth "control" is a misnomer, for the fact is that a governor is more likely to bargain or persuade than to command flatly or control.

It is more mythical than realistic to portray the governor as authorized to control administration and to conceive of him as capable of issuing orders about day-to-day operations of bureaus. He does nothing of the sort, for two reasons. First, no governor can keep track of the myriad functions of modern state government in any more than a general way; there is too much going on to make that feasible and, anyhow, the governor is pre-occupied with the making of general policies and the settling of specific disputes to serve as a supervisor of administrative details in the fashion that some com-

mentators on the office seem to have postulated. The modern governor is not an overseer of administrative operations so much as he is a representative of the public, seeking to make policy and maintain public well-being. Robert Wood in an analysis of the governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey came to the conclusion that the typical characterization of the governor as primarily an administrator made no sense.

To cling to the idea that the office of governor is primarily an executive one is to continue a criterion which neither tells us what a governor does nor what he should do. At rock bottom, the fallacy of much modern state administrative theory has been this continual attempt to fit the governor into the executive framework. . . .\*

Second, the bureaucracy always has a certain amount of power of its own, thus limiting the governor's "control" or "command" over administrators when he deals with them. The clientele groups that support the commissioner of labor or the agriculture board, or the education commissioner are figuratively at the elbow of the administrator and the governor is well aware of it. The capacity to remove subordinates is important as a last resort, but last resorts are what governors want to avoid. Use of the ultimate sanction may give an administration a bad press and possibly a reputation for excessive conflict or confusion, and it also may so disrupt the operations in a given service as not to be worth the effort. Speaking of Governor Alfred E. Driscoll's administration, Wood said,

"What becomes apparent when one examines the present operation of the New Jersey Governor's office, is that it resembles neither a corporation nor a crusade. Alfred Driscoll is

\* Robert C. Wood, "The Metropolitan Governor" (unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1949), 328-329. Quoted by Wood's permission. Although Wood now says this was the work of "an angry young man," it nevertheless contains an excellent comparative analysis of the governorship.

firmly embarked upon the project of representation. Despite the new tools he has at his disposal, [from the new constitution] his conduct is not one of dictation but persuasion and discussion.\*

Having pointed this out, I hasten to add that I do not assume that authority to appoint, supervise, and remove subordinates in the executive branch is of no importance. As *one* factor in the complex of gubernatorial power it is manifestly significant. Governors before my so-called moderns were aware of this and fought frequent battles with the Legislature about the right to appoint and remove administrators. Several of the businessmen who became governors argued for improved tools of management for the office. Governor Franklin Murphy at the beginning of this century, for example, was anxious to improve administrative operations, which were, he thought, too slack and easygoing. When the business of state was not extensive governors paid little attention to current operations; they did not live in Trenton and appeared there regularly only when the Legislature was in operation. The last one to live in "Government House" in Trenton was William Sanford Pennington (1813-1815). Later governors leased the house and boarded elsewhere when in town. This supplement to their salaries ceased when the mansion was sold and became a hotel. As transportation improved, it was easy to commute irregularly. Murphy urged the Legislature to provide a residence once again, but not until Governor Walter E. Edge gave "Morven," the handsome Stockton mansion in Princeton, to the State in the 1940's did the State have a residence for the governor. Of course some twentieth-century governors rented houses in Trenton, but earlier the more prevalent practice was the one Sackett describes as he discusses Governor Murphy's efforts to improve operations.

\* Robert C. Wood, "The Metropolitan Governor" (Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1949), 206.

One idea that [Murphy] had in mind when he went to Trenton was that the department chiefs ought to give more attention than they had been doing to the duties of their offices, and, that he might be an exemplar among them, he sought authority for the establishment of an Executive Mansion in the Capital City. With the head of the State making his home in a State residence near the State House, the departmental chiefs might be shamed out of their apparent notions that the State was paying them big salaries only to have them serve as State House ornaments. Since the days [of Kelsey and the State House Ring] the chiefs of the State House had gone to their offices in Trenton only—well, they were always there on paydays, at any rate. The work of their departments—even the supervision of them—was left entirely in the hands of their deputies and assistants and clerks.

The Governor, too, of later days had fallen into the prevailing habit of absenteeism. It had become his custom to visit the capital only at irregular—and to make it worse at uncertain—intervals. And when he did honor Trenton with his presence, for half a day's visit, he floated around the hotels in his recreation hours, ate his dinner at a restaurant, and hastened out of town by an early afternoon train. . . . Governor Abbett had named Tuesday as the day of the week when he could be found [in Trenton]. The department heads felt forced to follow the precedent he set for them. . . . "Governor's Day," as Tuesday has since been known, was marked by "Cabinet meetings," at which the department heads laid before the Governor the things they had done—or rather had not done—during the week past for the public weal, and the programmes for the week ahead were laid out. And they all flitted out of town into seclusion again until the next week's gathering was due.\*

Even after making allowances for journalistic exaggeration, this picture of the nineteenth-century executive is a stark contrast with the rigorous schedule of the executive today. Note, however, that the lack of power to control administration in the past was not strictly a matter of constitutional failure. Long before constitutional

\* William Edgar Sackett, *Modern Battles of Trenton* (New York, 1914), II, 143-144.

changes improved his controls, the governor's capacity to deal with the administration improved as his political power grew and as the public became aware of the "problem" of control over administration. A series of studies and recommendations for increasing his formal powers led to a more and more favorable climate of opinion. By statutes during the thirties and forties changes were made that increased the governor's authority, and in 1947 the new constitution provided other and more fundamental changes, such as requiring that all agencies be reorganized into no more than twenty departments, eliminating the fixed five-year terms of the secretary of state and attorney general, and making most terms of office coincide with the governor's.\* The New Jersey governor became, as a result of these several lines of development, one of the strongest governors in the nation in terms of his administrative authority.

Before discussing the careers of the six modern governors, it is interesting to note how their personal backgrounds differ from those of earlier groups. They have come from middle-class families (one exception: Meyner, whose father was a skilled worker); they have had college educations (one exception: Edge, who only went through grammar school). For the first time in the history of the state a Roman Catholic became governor: Richard Hughes. It is interesting to note that, although New Jersey has a very high proportion of Catholic citizens—over a third and exceeded in percentage of Catholics by only three states\*\*—still no Catholic was nominated for the governorship until 1943, when Vincent J. Murphy opposed Governor Edge. This reflects more than any-

\* See Bennett M. Rich, "Administrative Reorganization in New Jersey," *Public Administration Review* (1952), 251-257. Rich concentrates on the revisions resulting from the new constitution, but he also notes that several basic changes had come in the years before the 1947 Convention.

\*\* By the best estimate one can make from inadequate data New Jersey has a population 37 per cent Catholic. Connecticut has the same proportion, and only Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Mexico have higher percentages.

thing else the timidity of politicians who often rely on the weakest kind of evidence to guide their decisions, however much rationality calls into doubt a long-standing habit. This is about the only reasonable explanation for New Jersey's having its first Catholic governor only after the Presidency itself was declared open to a Catholic. This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that other states with only half as high a proportion of Catholic population (e.g., Ohio) had chosen Catholics as governors.

In addition to timid fetishism, this also indicates that New Jersey organizations retain the power to control access to the office in contrast to the free-for-all-primary states where Catholics or anyone else can build personal organizations and, in disregard of the party leadership, win nominations. It is also interesting to observe that four of the six moderns were professional politicians before becoming governors. One of those who was not, Wilson, was a professional student of politics who had necessarily been a kind of politician in academic affairs; he was among the most effective leaders in the group. The other non-professional, Edison, had had New Deal federal agency experience and had been, briefly, Secretary of the Navy, but he nevertheless was an ineffective political leader as governor. The most experienced professionals, Edge and Driscoll, achieved and maintained the most effective leadership of them all.

General similarity in background does not mean that these six governors had identical bases of power or similar results from their efforts. On the contrary their administrations varied considerably. Three of them, Woodrow Wilson, Walter Edge, and Alfred Driscoll, as I shall briefly show, asserted very extensive leadership during their terms. Robert Meyner was somewhat less successful in asserting his personal leadership for a combination of reasons, primarily political-party complications, but he won enough of his battles to build a reputation as a fairly strong executive. Governor Charles Edison made an attempt to be governor in the modern sense but for



Woodrow Wilson

personal and political-party reasons he failed to achieve his most cherished goals. Whether the incumbent, Governor Richard Hughes will achieve a strong leadership position remains to be seen.

Woodrow Wilson broke pathways not only for governors of New Jersey but for the governorship generally. His administration was dramatic and productive, especially during his first year in office; he caught the public's eye—as he meant to do since he was aiming for the White House—and in the process dramatized the governorship and emphasized the need for purposeful gubernatorial leadership. Wilson made his mark, not only through providing an object lesson in vigorous practice, but also through highly effective preaching of the gospel of executive responsibility—and he was a superb preacher. Morally certain of the rectitude of his position and intellectually convinced of its value, he may sound self-righteous now, but half a century ago he did not seem so to the millions whom he impressed deeply. In a letter describing his first few days in office, he wrote:

Since Tuesday I have been in Trenton every day, except yesterday, getting into harness and learning the daily routine of the office; and all the while deeply moved by the thought of my new responsibilities as the representative and champion of the common people against those who have been preying upon them. I have felt a sort of solemnity in it all that I feel sure will not wear off. I do not see how a man in such a position could possibly be afraid of anything except failing to do his honourable duty and set all temptations (if they be disguised enough to be temptations) contemptuously on one side. I shall make mistakes, but I do not think I shall sin against my knowledge of duty.\*

His inaugural message made those of his predecessors look like bedtime stories: he announced his intention of pursuing a broad program of reforms: in corporations, labor laws, public utilities, primary elections and the referendum, ballot reform, even concerning high food prices.\*\* He had no intention of making suggestions and

\* Quoted by Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 244.

\*\* The inaugural message is in the *Senate Journal* for January 17, 1911, 58-68.

then merely hoping the Legislature would agree; on the contrary, he got bills drafted for submission and proceeded to do everything he could think of to move them along. As Arthur Link says, ". . . no governor in our history has ever made better use of his political opportunities and potentialities than did Wilson in his relations with the Democratic majority in the New Jersey legislature in 1911." \*

In prime-minister fashion he attended the Democratic caucus to plead his case: the caucus lasted four hours, and for two hours and ten minutes "Wilson was on his feet, discussing various measures and answering questions." He broke with the political bosses who had been instrumental in picking him as a candidate and assumed their functions as much as possible. Strangely enough, he did not use his patronage powers to bolster his cause; he turned over to his staff the task of distributing the petty jobs that supporters clamored for. Perhaps this was a reflection of his distaste for the spoils system and his commitment to a professional civil service. All other formal and informal powers he used fully. He used the veto rarely in the harmonious first session and when he did it was never overridden. In the second session, however, he vetoed nearly one-tenth of all bills passed. Many of these were overridden, but some of them stood, notwithstanding the ease of overriding by mere majority vote. On a single day in 1912 he sent "forty-two stinging veto messages, in which he accused the Senate and Assembly of passing 'scandalous,' 'whimsical,' 'arbitrary,' and 'dangerous and objectionable' legislation." Such outbursts did not improve relations between the executive and the legislative branches, but somehow the combination of forces he employed produced enormous effects. When the first session ended, George Record, erstwhile ally of Mark Fagan and the Jersey City Republican reform movement, said in a moment of euphoria, "The present Legislature ends its session with the most remarkable record of

\* *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 249.

progressive legislation ever known in the political history of this or any other state." \*

How did he do it? The answer is not to be found in any single aspect of his power or use thereof. The personal element is obviously vitally important: he could inspire and convince men who themselves did not expect to be persuaded, especially by a professor. This account, as quoted by Link, from a Democratic legislator of Wilson's performance at the four-hour caucus in the first session illustrates the point:

I have never known anything like that speech. The governor talked for at least an hour. . . . And the whole thing was merely an appeal to our better unselfish natures. The State had trusted us, as Democrats, with great duties and responsibilities. Would we betray the people or would we seize this splendid opportunity. But it is useless to attempt to describe that speech or the effect that it produced. We all came out of that room with one conviction; that we had heard the most wonderful speech of our lives, and that Governor Wilson was a great man. Even the most hardened of the old-time legislative hacks said that. . . . When we went into the caucus we had no assurance as to what the result would be. But opposition melted away under the Governor's influence. The caucus settled the fate of the [primary law], as well as the whole Democratic program.

The mood of the times was also partly responsible; at this time even as conservative a president as William Howard Taft went along with the Sixteenth Amendment and the imposition of an income tax.\*\* Wilson also "went to the people" with speeches calculated to win support for his program, and he threatened to do so more often than he actually did. He went into communities to campaign for the "right" candidates for the Legislature, and in one of these campaign speeches he told an audience of farmers:

\* Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 304, 272.

\*\* Wilson failed to get New Jersey to ratify it, however.

When I was here ten months ago I was appealing for your suffrage, now in a way I am accounting for my stewardship, and I think you will admit there has been something doing in New Jersey. I want you to understand that I am not particularly interested in running for office, but I also want you to understand that I will make it as hot as I can for those who do not represent the people, whether I am in office or out of it.\*

No doubt his bark was worse than his bite could have been, but legislators found it hard to disregard such threats. Perhaps it was the novelty of a governor's using his popular appeal that scared them into acting when they were not persuaded by his rhetoric or cajolery. A rational answer probably cannot be found for the simple reason that men fear things in irrational ways: people run from mice and garter snakes, but under certain conditions stand in the street and hurl rocks at oncoming tanks. New Jersey legislators later learned to hurl rocks at Wilson, too, but never without great respect for the potential power he held. It need hardly be said that the constitutional element in his armory of powers was not all-important since he achieved so much where others under the same constitution achieved so little.

Walter E. Edge, who had been in the New Jersey Senate during Wilson's tenure, came to the governorship in 1917, and although he was utterly different in personality and outlook from Wilson, he was nevertheless similar in the sense that he, too, became a highly effective leader. He was a professional politician, however, and some of Wilson's tactless errors in dealing with fellow politicians he naturally avoided. He was impressed with Wilson's unbending stubbornness. After describing a scene in which he, as a member of a commission on a workman's compensation bill, had found Wilson adamant and unwilling to compromise in the least, Edge said, "He never knew and he never learned the strength

\* Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 286.

of the old adage: You'll always get more from a donkey with a carrot than with a stick." \*

Edge had the personal traits indispensable to leadership: a driving will to succeed and the capacity to inspire loyalty and a high capacity for comprehension of complex issues. A tireless party leader, by no means unwilling to utilize patronage to achieve his ends, he would hold up major appointments until the legislative session was over. By the State House "grapevine," he wrote,

it took only a short time for word to get around in the legislature, and eventually to the press, that all executive appointments would await the adjournment of the legislature. I do not wish to seem cynical, but it is difficult for a modern governor to be a great administrator and a great legislator at the same time. The appointing power, for better or worse, is an important factor in his legislative program.\*\*

And he was experienced in the use of the *quid pro quo* to win his objectives, as he proudly says in telling how he got a bridge across the Delaware at Camden by pairing it with a Hudson River tunnel.†

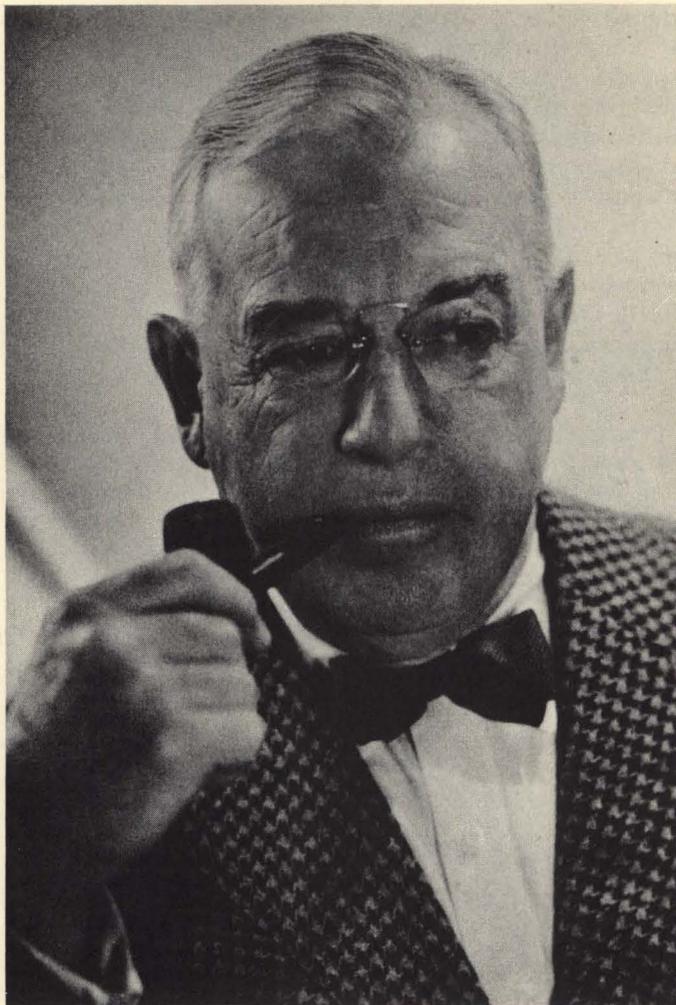
Returning from retirement during World War II to halt the inroads of Franklin D. Roosevelt's electoral tides, he regained the governorship for the Republicans in 1943.‡ If he had been effective in his first session, he was even more so in his second, at least where the Republicans in the Legislature were concerned. By that time, says one of his old friends, Edge was a legend in the party, its patriarch, and they dared not ignore his suggestions.

\* Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 74-75. On this issue Edge was wrong, however, for Wilson persuaded a Democratic sponsor to accept Edge's bill as the only available course. See Arthur S. Link *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 264. Partisan Republican that Edge was, he was still able to admire Wilson, observing that the eloquence of his speeches was "almost hypnotic."

\*\* Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 271.

† Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 91-92.

‡ F.D.R. barely won in New Jersey in 1944, but Edge went in with a 127,000 vote plurality in 1943.



Walter E. Edge  
*Courtesy of Princeton University Press*

On one occasion when Edge had a Saturday afternoon visitor at "Morven," the telephone kept ringing and

the Governor refused to answer it. He told his visitor he knew what it was and he wasn't interested. Earlier in the day a delegation of senators had come to him, complaining that he was taking too much responsibility for initiating bills and that they resented his reliance on outsiders for advice. He replied that the proposals he had made were sound, that they couldn't give him as good advice as he got elsewhere, and that the bills had better be passed or he would see to it that pet bills that they were interested in died. The telephone calls, according to the Governor, were from other members of the Senate proclaiming their loyalty and disavowing rebellion.

Edge wrote in later years:

Years of experience in legislative halls both in Trenton and Washington had convinced me that the only way to get a program enacted was to drive constantly. While respecting the rights of minority members and the desirability of study and discussion, I had seen too many programs deliberated or filibustered to death. Accordingly, from the first day of a legislative session until adjournment, I applied constant pressure in every legitimate manner to get the administration bills passed.\*

On some issues he met firm resistance from Republican leaders but he usually got his way in the end. Prior to his nomination for his World War II term, he accepted constitutional revision as one of his goals. Some Republican leaders, like Arthur T. Vanderbilt (leader of Essex County Republicans, eminent lawyer, judge, and devoted advocate of judicial and constitutional reform), insisted that the party should support constitutional revision. But what Vanderbilt wished, several other Republican county leaders ardently opposed, and since they controlled enough votes in the Senate to defeat the proposal, Edge had to do something. He called a meeting of the leaders and in effect refused to run unless the Senate would pass a bill, already approved by the Assembly, to

\* Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 263.

place a referendum on the 1943 ballot asking popular endorsement for the drafting of a new constitution. The Senate passed it.

As a businessman and a firm believer in the gospel of efficiency, Edge constantly sought administrative improvements. Wilson had urged such reforms and Edge carried through on several such proposals\*; as a state senator Edge had promoted laws providing for a state budget system and centralized purchasing of supplies. And during his first term as governor, Edge had made some administrative changes and put the new budget system into operation, and in his second he got approval of a program to consolidate agencies with roughly similar functions under single-headed departments; and ultimately 24 agencies were concentrated into five departments.\*\*

His interest in administrative efficiency had encouraged him to press for a constitutional revision so that changes not possible under the old constitution could be made. He particularly wanted a four-year term, a more effective veto, more control over the appointment and removal of department heads, and the elimination of all special funds. Edge maintained control over the drafting of the new constitution that was submitted to the voters in 1944, but some of the provisions he insisted upon, or which came through the straight-line party voting in the Legislature, produced considerable opposition from labor unions, teachers, and Catholic groups. Moreover, opposition developed from Frank Hague, who waited until four weeks before the referendum to begin a vigorous campaign in opposition. Two things bothered Hague: the extension of investigatory powers of the governor where municipalities were concerned and railroad taxation. The

\* In the course of several administrations following Wilson's a number of his proposals were adopted—for example, the creation or reorganization of Departments of Health, Conservation and Development, Commerce and Navigation, Shell Fisheries, Labor, Agriculture, Municipal Accounts and, finally the Department of Institutions and Agencies. See Bennett M. Rich, *The Government and Administration of New Jersey* (New York, 1957), Chapter 8.

\*\* Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948), 106.

long war between the railroads and Hudson County flared again as Hague saw, in the language of the proposed constitution, the possibility of Jersey City's losing tax revenues. The combined opposition was sufficient to sink the revision by a margin in excess of one hundred thousand votes.\*

It is ironic that Edge was defeated, at least in part, by his own stubbornness on the issues he cherished so fondly. This was the lesson he claimed to have learned from Wilson and, indeed, his career demonstrates that he had learned it for the most part. But in this instance he adamantly refused to compromise or treat with Hague in any way. Whether Hague was the substantial cause of the defeat of the constitution no one can say with certainty, but he was surely among the major causes. Following this failure, Edge strove for revision again by calling a special session in 1945 to consider a series of amendments to the constitution embodying some of the goals of the earlier frustrated campaign. This time the Essex County Republican delegation in the Assembly, still dominated by Arthur Vanderbilt, refused to agree to the amendments, and, without these 13 votes or Democratic votes, the only alternative was adjournment without action.

But if Edge's career seems to have ended on a note of despair, the impression one has of his two terms is not one of failure but of highly effective leadership. When he left office he had enough political power in reserve to control the choice of his successor. The decision he made was subsequently not entirely satisfactory to him, but it is significant that his man, Alfred E. Driscoll, was his equal in the exercise of legislative leadership and his superior in the politicking required to achieve a new constitution. But before discussing Driscoll's governorship, a brief note is necessary on Governor Charles Edison's difficulties in trying to be a modern governor.

\* Bennett M. Rich, *The Government and Administration of New Jersey* (New York, 1957), 22. See also Walter E. Edge, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948).

Edison resigned as Secretary of Navy to run for governor in 1940. He had served on several federal agencies, but he was not otherwise experienced in politics. Men who worked with him during his tenure as governor attribute some of his difficulties in personal relations to his serious difficulty in hearing, but whatever the root cause he did not excel in asserting personal leadership. One admirer of his says firmly, "Edison was wholly unsuited for public life." A man of firmness of character and strength of conviction, he inevitably split with Hague, who had supported his nomination. Their already impaired relations were not improved by Edison's backing a plan to grant the railroads relief on their overload of back taxes incurred during the depression. If Edison was no puppet of Hague's, neither did he defeat the Boss or establish an alternative source of continuing support, although on many issues he worked with the Republicans who controlled both houses during his term.

It was, however, Edison who initiated the long struggle for constitutional reform that culminated in success in 1947. In his 1941 inaugural address Edison sounded the keynote of the campaign, restating the familiar complaints and making the standard requests for constitutional reform. By his initiative the 1941 Constitutional Commission, the so-called Hendrickson Commission, was appointed and drafted a constitution, the traces of which can be found in attempts at revision during the next six years.\* Hague forces were conspicuously absent from the ranks of the Commission, although thoughts of Hague were not, since the Commission specifically provided ten years of legal experience as a condition for appointment to the higher courts which would have disqualified Hague's son from his recently acquired post. Hague had no enthusiasm for the changes and neither did a number of Republicans; the question was dropped in 1942. Dur-

\* A statement of the rationale for these changes can be found in a pamphlet by Charles R. Erdman, Jr., who served as secretary to the Commission: "The New Jersey Constitution—A Barrier to Governmental Efficiency and Economy" (Princeton, 1934).

ing the next session the bill to call an advisory referendum on revising the constitution was on the legislative calendar, but Edison was unable to move it, and indeed not until Edge put personal pressure and threats behind it did it pass, as noted above.

In brief, Edison's administration illustrates that, although the ways and means to exercise stronger leadership were well enough known by 1940, the exercise of such leadership did not automatically follow. In his plea for a new constitution Edison attributed the governor's difficulties to the inadequacy of his formal authority, but as others before and after him amply proved, there were ways to assert leadership that did not depend upon formal authority.

It is worth noting that the governors who have become the most effective leaders have been men of driving ambition and fierce concentration, who pursue their goals relentlessly. Wilson was such a personality and in a different way so was Edge. Wilson set his sights on the White House and spared no man, including himself, in his campaign to get there. Edge pursued his goal of business success in much the same way that he poured his energies into competitive, long-distance bicycle racing as a youth; in politics he was no different. Such men work their staffs to exhaustion, and every move is calculated as far as human design permits.

Alfred E. Driscoll, governor from 1947 to 1954, was another driving, relentless man who never let up, who set his goals and pursued them with all the force he could muster. John F. Sly, former head of Princeton Surveys, who knew and worked with every governor from Hoffman to Meyner, says none of them equaled Driscoll's punishing schedule of work. But more than long hours was involved in the success that Driscoll achieved as a party leader and as a policy leader in the broadest sense. His political experience (he had been in the State Senate and had served as alcoholic beverage commissioner), his conciliatory tactics, his capacity to persuade, and the strong position he created for himself



Alfred E. Driscoll

in the Republican party all help account for his achievements. John Sly also said of Driscoll that "he relies on persuasion, arguing that coercion exacts too big a price

for the results it temporarily achieves. He welcomes publicity in the sense that his activities are being understood. I've never seen him ask anyone to vote his way. . . . But his ideas usually sink in." \*

Driscoll's two administrations produced numerous achievements such as highway projects (the New Jersey Turnpike was built in his term and the Garden State Parkway Authority established), extensive administrative reforms, laws forbidding discrimination in public accommodations and housing, illness and off-the-job injury disability benefits in the employment-security field, and the adoption of a system of optional municipal charters among others. But none of these is more impressive than his role in promoting a Constitutional Convention.

His operations concerning the Convention are most revealing of the tactics and strategy of his leadership. He was, to begin with, responsible for the revival of the question and for providing the leadership it desperately needed from time to time when it lagged. The Convention naturally cannot be labeled as his single-handed accomplishment, but in contrast with other measures adopted or reforms made during his term this one was dependent upon him in a singular way, as the ensuing discussion will illustrate. While the efforts of the two preceding governors prepared a stepping stone of public awareness for Driscoll to climb on in publicizing his appeal for revision, their efforts had also produced antagonisms to the whole idea, and some of that animosity resided in formidable political quarters—like Hudson County and the small-county Republican leaders. Note, too, that Driscoll's base of formal authority, so greatly broadened by the new constitution, was not available to him when his greatest feat of persuasion and promotion took place, i.e., the campaign for the convention itself.

It came as a surprise to the leaders of the party that Driscoll intended to press for a convention after his

\* Quoted by Robert C. Wood, "The Metropolitan Governor" (Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1949), 208.

election in 1946, but by careful explanation and persuasion he got the Legislature to approve the calling of a convention for the summer of 1947.\* He made concessions to the Democrats on the appointment of the delegates to the Convention but hedged this enough not to lose Republican votes. He agreed that the call to the Convention would flatly prohibit the Convention from any consideration of the apportionment of the Senate. In a judicious and effective opening address to members of the Convention, Driscoll underscored the gravity of their undertaking, urged that they refrain from including purely legislative content in the document and strongly endorsed the reorganization of the judiciary, for the courts are, he said, "our principal instrument of individual liberty and political security." \*\* The amazing thing about the speech was that he said nothing about reforming the executive branch. Whether this was a matter of tactics or a reflection of what he thought should have the highest priority on the agenda, one can only guess, but it is at least in contrast with his predecessors' heavy emphasis on executive reform as a major reason for holding a Convention.

In the course of the Convention one dispute became so serious that the Convention committee to which it had been assigned could not cope with it. This was the perennial issue of taxation of railroads. Legislation of 1942 permitted the taxation of "secondary" railroad property (i.e., terminals, yards and stations) at a lesser rate than other taxable property, resulting in a tremendous loss in revenue for Hudson County, in which more than three-quarters of all such property is located. The Convention's Committee on Taxation and Finance at one point accepted a version of the taxation provision which the Governor appeared before them to endorse, but this the Hudson County delegation absolutely refused to accept.

\* See the detailed account of the convention by Richard N. Baisden, *Charter for New Jersey, The New Jersey Constitutional Convention of 1947* (Trenton, 1952).

\*\* *New Jersey Constitutional Convention of 1947*, I, 8.

Accordingly the Governor through his staff began consultations with the Mayor of Jersey City and in due time worked out a compromise acceptable to all. It meant five million dollars in revenue for Jersey City, so Hague was elated and now ready to support the constitution. In his characteristically blunt fashion, he urged his people to support it on election day: "With this new constitution, we forgive everyone—because we won." \* Once over that barrier, the course of the Convention was easy and the people approved the new constitution by a sizable majority in the election of 1947.

The executive section of the new document greatly expanded the formal authority of the governor. The major changes were these:

1. The governor's term was extended to four years and he was permitted to succeed himself once.
2. The veto power of the governor was strengthened by making a two-thirds vote necessary to override such a veto, by permitting the governor a conditional veto by which he in effect proposes a corrective amendment, and by allowing for a reduction of items in appropriations as well as a flat item veto.
3. All agencies were to be concentrated into no more than twenty departments.
4. The terms of office of the department heads were to coincide with the governor's.
5. The governor's appointment and removal powers were bolstered, and the Legislature was permitted to choose only an auditor.
6. The governor was given wider authority to investigate and power to call upon the courts to enforce laws.

Quickly Driscoll set about the reformation of the administrative system, concentrating agencies under the

\* Quoted by Bennett M. Rich, *The Government & Administration of New Jersey* (New York, 1957), 33. Former Governor Edge was less pleased; he hoped the price paid for support had not been too high and observed, "The unanimity is almost embarrassing."

roofs of 14 single-headed departments. In some cases, the agencies are almost as independent as they ever were, but for budgetary matters and general procedure they are probably more readily pulled into line now than before, although no thorough investigation of this has as yet been undertaken.\* The veto was much stronger, and Driscoll used it freely—rejecting 516 bills between 1948 and 1953. Not one was passed over his veto, although he did accept 151 of them following revisions suggested in his conditional veto messages.\*\* (In 1954, 1955, and 1956 Governor Robert Meyner faced Republican majorities in both houses and yet he had relatively few of his absolute vetoes overridden: 11 out of 203; he also gave 103 conditional vetoes of which 69 were repassed.†

With the new constitution in effect, Leslie Lipson, a leading student of the American governorship, commented, "For the first time in the evolution of the state constitutions, over one hundred and seventy years, the executive branch has come into its own." ‡ The executive had indeed come into his own where formal authority was concerned, but, as the events of the last years of Driscoll's term show, the supplementary facets of gubernatorial power are also important. Where Edge retained some of his party power even after he left office, Driscoll during his second term had become involved in numerous disputes with Republican leaders, and so he lost much of his influence in the party. Then came an unpredictable but shattering blow to his position in the spring of 1953—revelations of scandals involving gamblers. The Republican state chairman testified in an investigation of the removal of a special prosecutor that

\* At least not to my knowledge; a before and after study of administrative independence might reveal some unexpected findings.

\*\* Bennett M. Rich, *The Government and Administration of New Jersey* (New York, 1957), 98.

† Calculated from data presented by Robert J. Cutler, "Charter Reviewed: The New Jersey Constitution, 1947-1957" (Unpublished dissertation, Princeton University, 1957), 62-63.

‡ "The Executive Branch in New State Constitutions," *Public Administration Review* (1949), 21.

gamblers had contributed heavily to Governor Driscoll's 1949 campaign and, worse still, it was said that the Governor himself had been the recipient of gambler "protection money." Driscoll denied the charge vehemently, and the supposed intermediary between the governor and the gamblers, who was brought back from Holland to stand trial, was acquitted of the charge. But the damage had been done in so far as Driscoll's position was concerned, even though he was innocent of the charges. What internal battling had not done to destroy his power, the scandal charge did. So fragile can political power be.

Robert B. Meyner was, as governor, an illustration of how personal warmth and attractiveness can be converted into political power. He faced a Legislature controlled entirely by Republicans during four of his eight years and with the Senate in Republican hands the other four years. A handsome man, a relatively young governor of forty-five on taking office, blessed with a rich baritone voice and an easy, informal way of talking, he built up considerable power, in good part on the basis of those personal traits. He had not had very extensive political experience—a single term in the Senate and several losing campaigns for office—but he had a set of deep convictions about politics and government that he relied on, in a more modern way than Wilson perhaps, but with equal ultimate tenacity. If Meyner was a man of practicality who did not undertake risky political ventures on which his adherents constantly wanted to send him, he was also a man of ideals and integrity. A characterization of him as a man who had cultivated an image for its political value, for all its cruel oversimplification and its distortion of his career, has an element of truth in it. The *Newark Evening News* commented,

In office his was the tested formula for popularity: tireless attendance at gatherings large and small, sedulous attention to correspondence, meticulous observance of amenities. He came to terms with party bosses, while preserving a reputation for independence. He has so thinned out his image that he won

over the progressive concerned with human welfare and the conservative concerned with property. His youthful energy delighted the young, his marriage [while in office] enchanted the romantic, his concern about the aged, the disabled, the underpaid and under-privileged touched the public conscience.\*

To the extent that he brought off the projection of that many-faceted image of himself he was creating a power resource. When politicians got the impression that Meyner was popular, he was thereby in a degree empowered, for reputations are a major form of currency in the transactions of politics.

Meyner's political party position was not strong, even though he came to power partly as a result of a vacuum that developed in the party with the decline of Hague's hegemony. He was chosen by the leaders of the anti-Hague elements partly for lack of any more formidable candidate on whom they could agree. He thought he had been given an "empty honor" when he was designated to represent the anti-Hague leaders against a Hague-backed candidate. Even after winning the nomination, there was a long way to go in view of the fact that the Republicans had won three successive gubernatorial elections and that, in 1952, President Eisenhower had swept the state. And had the scandals referred to above not developed, he might indeed have lost. When he won, he had the task of building an organization in collaboration with the leaders who had chosen him. One of his methods was to distribute patronage to areas where the Democratic party had never been very strong but where local Democrats had backed him. This naturally displeased the big city leaders who made trouble for him as a result. His party position was nearly as weak as Driscoll's at the end of his two terms, although this was partly due to a coolness between Meyner and President Kennedy growing out of the 1960 convention. Since the Governor was on the way out and the President was on the way in, politicians read the signs accordingly.

\* *Newark Evening News*, January 20, 1958.

Meyner took seriously his responsibility for administrative oversight and made a valiant effort to keep informed. He insisted upon written reports from agencies and held monthly cabinet meetings. He delegated responsibility and much discretion—some thought too much—to certain of his subordinates, particularly the highway commissioner. But the commissioner, Dwight Palmer, a retired businessman whose executive ability and experience make him an imposing and respected figure, is the kind of man who inevitably acquires a certain independence regardless of how clear the lines of responsibility may be on the organizational charts or even in the constitution itself. So it is with many other departments, including some that have special statutory insulation against the “politicians.” Where an agency has a powerful clientele—such as agriculture or education or highways—the governor’s opportunities to command are at best limited.

An illustration of this development lies in the Department of Institutions and Agencies with which governors have had difficulty for decades. The individual institutions jealously guard their local autonomy and enlist important political support every time a governor or commissioner of institutions and agencies threatens to tighten central control. Richard Frost analyzed at length Meyner’s attempt to

strengthen the administrative design and operating procedures of the Department [of Institutions and Agencies] and therefore contribute to the establishment of improved standards of care for our less fortunate citizens, mentally ill, mentally retarded, welfare recipients, and delinquents.\*

What this meant in blunter language was that the authority of the central board would be increased at the inevitable expense of the local boards. Since the Gov-

\* Quoted from the Governor by Richard Frost in “The New Jersey Institutions Case,” from *Cases in State and Local Government*, Richard Frost (ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, 1961), 220.

error had some influence over the state board and little over the local ones, he was talking about his own potential control. As he said, when trouble or a scandal breaks in one of the agencies it is not the anonymous boards that are "blamed" but the governor. The "press always comes to me," he complained.

*I'm the one who has to take it when something happens! . . . You all know I'm a firm believer in understandable lines of authority. If I'm chief executive and I'm going to be publicly responsible for the Department's affairs, then I've simply got to have the authority to go with that. . . .\**

A study commission was set the task of assessing the system and making recommendations. The Commission members were divided in their attitudes toward local autonomy, but in the end a majority report that recommended some limitation of local powers was issued with the chairman a dissenter to his own report. This was sent to the Legislature, but the net result of the long struggle was zero; no action followed. Frost, the author of the case study, came to the general conclusion from this and comparable situations that, "if one could put a finger on the primary reason why good governors are not always good administrators, it would probably be the lack of legal authority commensurate with their executive responsibilities.\*\*"

The "primary reason" governors are sometimes not "good administrators" is surely not easily established. The essential argument of this book has been that the law and the constitutional authorization are not necessarily any more "primary" than some other power factors. In the Institutions and Agencies case the reorganization plan bogged down because of the political persuasiveness

\* Richard Frost, "The New Jersey Institutions Case," *Cases in State and Local Government*, Richard Frost (ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, 1961), 235.

\*\* Richard Frost, "The New Jersey Institutions Case," *Cases in State and Local Government*, Richard Frost (ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, 1961), 219.

of the local boards. Their contacts with legislators, with local party leaders, with individuals whose dependents are in a mental hospital or a home for retarded children are significant sources of power. Even if the governor's legal authority were greater, does it follow that a governor would be willing and able to confront and subordinate the local boards? The evidence presented here on the role of the modern governor suggests that legal authority alone would be an insufficient basis for the assertion of control unless other empowering forces were present.

## VII

### CONCLUSION: NOTES ON POWER

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**C**OMMENTATORS ON STATE GOVERNMENT naturally use constitutional conventions or other major points of significant change in formal governmental structure as their bench marks of political evolution. These changes are important ones in a state's political history, but a primary reliance on constitutional breaking points may obscure other equally or even more important aspects of a state's government.

As the evidence of this book demonstrates, a political institution like a governorship is no single phenomenon during the life of a constitution. The New Jersey governor under the 1776 constitution had changed greatly by 1844. The governorship was sometimes a powerful office and sometimes a singularly powerless one during the one hundred and three-year duration of the second constitution. A variety of social, economic, and political forces and concomitant ideas about what a governor should be and do combine to shape the office. These forces and ideas constitute a kind of "over-constitution" that conditions not only the role of an individual governor but also shape the formal constitutional document.

The influence of these forces and ideas in shaping constitutional documents is not difficult to trace. The reader will recall the mixture of dawning democratic ideas and waning feudal concepts in the Concessions and Agreements of the proprietary era, and the widening of the royal governor's authority because of the memory of the

ineffectiveness of the proprietary governor. As the 1776 constitution institutionalized the ideal governor of that day—that is, nearly no governor at all—so the 1844 and 1947 constitutions gave governors formal authority to exercise kinds of power that they had been wielding informally before the constitutional conventions met. Thus the 1947 constitution increased the governor's formal authority to control the administrative hierarchy, powerfully reinforcing the informal authority that had been developing the office for decades.

Richard Neustadt sums up the problem of executive power by pointing to the sources of power available to the American President:

First are the bargaining advantages inherent in his job with which to persuade other men that what he wants of them is what their own responsibilities require them to do. Second are the expectations of those other men regarding his ability and will to use the various advantages they think he has. Third are those men's estimates of how his public views him and of how their publics may view them if they do what he wants.\*

This applies equally well to the governor of New Jersey: his bargaining advantages and his reputation both with other politicians and with the public are important sources of power.

Focusing on these bases of power can take one a long way toward explaining the variations in the effectiveness of governors, but that does not entirely solve the problem by any means. In the first place, the description of the bases of power is an involved undertaking: the sources are elusive and interpretation of the data is in part subjective. One wants to look beyond the reputation of governor as to his "will to use [his] advantages" to his *actual* will to act quite apart from reputation. This leads one into guessing at the motives of long-deceased politicians, which is risky at best. Also one must take account

\* Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power* (New York, 1960), 179.

of the fact that a part of the "advantages" of a governor is the position of his opposition. Too much attention to the governor's position might obscure the fact that the power of his opponents is a measure of his probable success. Another important variable is the mood of the community—the prevailing social condition. A crisis creates a potential for action that otherwise would be impossible; social disintegration may make even the most routine action difficult. Thus wartime governors were empowered by crisis, and the final stages of the proprietary and the royal governorship were marked by debilitating social disintegration.

One final paradox of gubernatorial power should be noted: the impact of election day. Patently this forces governors both to insist on certain policies and to evade others. The governor in the course of New Jersey history has become an increasingly "representative" official, one who seeks to reflect public desires not only because ideologically this seems the right thing to do but because of expectations of rewards for doing so. The restraint which the electorate implicitly places upon governors, particularly when elections are closely contested, prevents certain kinds of abuse of power, no doubt, but it also makes for timidity. Representativeness induces governors to support popular policies that cost a lot of money, but it also scares them into not doing the things needed to pay for the popular programs—for example, the levying of taxes. Neglect of important public services or evasive and costly financing of programs may result.

If election day frightens politicians on routine matters like current revenue, it is no occasion for surprise that governors rarely dare to propose sweeping changes in governmental arrangements and extensive new programs or policies. Governors are further dissuaded from daring programs of innovation by the existence of a chrysalis of lethargy that wraps itself around the status quo. Both liberal and conservative program proponents grow weary from unavailing preaching to the apathetic multitude whose time and energy are seldom devoted to the causes

that excite the activists. Because governors and other politicians are well aware of this widespread unconcern—or satisfaction (and how much of which is involved in any issue no one can say with confidence), they refuse to risk much of their political “capital” on precedent-shattering ventures that activists promote.

In the last century on only three occasions—during the terms of Abbett, Wilson, and Driscoll—have the conditions of the state, public awareness of problems, the bases of gubernatorial power, *and* incumbent governors with the will to act coincided to produce sweeping changes in public policy or governmental arrangements. If our capacity to predict the probable effectiveness of governors is not very imposing, we can at least be sure that the elements prerequisite to sweeping change will occur simultaneously very rarely.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

For certain periods of New Jersey history the existing literature provides excellent material on the governorship, but unhappily for other eras there is little secondary material available. Some of the more important governors have been neglected by scholars. If the nineteenth century had also been the subject of histories like those devoted to the colonial period, the task of analyzing the governorship would be greatly simplified. There is need, for example, of a good study of Leon Abbett's place in the political life of the State during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The emergence of the governor as a party leader earlier in that century also deserves scholarly attention. Other gaps in the record are noted in the following survey of major sources on the governorship.

The office of governor has been dealt with in two general works which are useful as background for the New Jersey experience: Leslie Lipson, *The American Governor from Figurehead to Leader* (Chicago, 1939), and Coleman B. Ransone, *The Office of Governor in the United States* (University, Alabama, 1956). The approach to the study of executive power used in the present work was suggested by the argument of Richard Neustadt in *Presidential Power* (New York, 1960); an analysis of the office of governor using concepts similar to Neustadt's may be found in Duane Lockard, *The Politics of State and Local Government* (New York, 1963), Chapter 13.

For the colonial period there are several excellent sources. Edwin P. Tanner's *The Province of New Jersey, 1664-1738* (New York, 1908) is thorough and detailed, although later

scholarship has supplemented his findings. See the two works by John E. Pomfret, *The Province of West New Jersey, 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1956) and *The Province of East New Jersey 1609-1702* (Princeton, 1962). Donald L. Kemmerer's *Path to Freedom, The Struggle for Self-Government in Colonial New Jersey, 1703-1776* (Princeton, 1940) includes detailed discussion of the royal governorship. Hugh M. Clokie's essays on the political and constitutional development of the colony are useful, if more superficial than the previously mentioned works. Clokie's essays and those of Edwin P. Conklin for later periods appear in *New Jersey, A History*, Irving S. Kull (ed.) (5 vols.; New York, 1930). William S. Myers presents a general and often superficial account of political developments in his *The Story of New Jersey* (2 vols.; New York, 1945). Useful as a bibliographic guide and as a chronology is the *Outline History of New Jersey* (New Brunswick, 1950). Many aspects of colonial political development (and that of later periods) are covered by Richard P. McCormick, *The History of Voting in New Jersey, 1664-1911* (New Brunswick, 1953). Finally, on the colonial and early statehood periods, the *New Jersey Archives* (Newark, published by the State of New Jersey, varying dates) contain extensive documentary records and newspaper excerpts.

On the early years of statehood, Richard P. McCormick's *Experiment in Independence* (New Brunswick, 1950) contains an account of the politics of the period 1881 to 1889; Margaret B. Macmillan presents considerable evidence on Governor Livingston's term in *The War Governors in the American Revolution* (New York, 1943); and the politics of the Revolution in New Jersey is detailed in Leonard Lundin, *Cockpit of the Revolution* (Princeton, 1940). Some aspects of the governorship under the 1776 constitution are covered by Charles R. Erdman, Jr., in *The New Jersey Constitution of 1776* (Princeton, 1929). The most useful of all sources on early nineteenth-century politics is Walter R. Fee's *The Transition from Aristocracy to Democracy in New Jersey, 1789-1829* (Somerville, 1933). The focus of Wheaton J. Lane's *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse* (Princeton, 1939) is not primarily political, but its description of the transportation industry in pre-Civil War state politics is very illuminating.

Aspects of the nineteenth-century governorship are discussed

at some length by John Bebout in his *Introduction to the Proceedings of the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention of 1884* (Published by the State, edited by the New Jersey Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, 1942). The memoirs of L. Q. C. Elmer, *The Constitution and Government of the Province and State of New Jersey* (Newark, 1872) are quaint but often revealing.

The politics of the last third of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century is fascinatingly chronicled by William Edgar Sackett in *Modern Battles of Trenton, 1868-1894* (Trenton, 1895) and *Modern Battles of Trenton, From Werts to Wilson, Volume II* (New York, 1914). With a good reporter's verve, thoroughness, exaggeration, and prejudice, Sackett presents a lively account of behind-the-scenes politics. Politics during the nineties and the first decade of this century is also well covered by Ransom E. Noble, *New Jersey Progressivism before Wilson* (Princeton, 1946).

For the party-machine governors two books by Dayton David McKean are indispensable: *Pressures on the Legislature of New Jersey* (New York, 1938) and *The Boss, The Hague Machine in Action* (Boston, 1940). Both are detailed and highly informative. On modern governors, Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947) is excellent—extensively descriptive of Wilson's term as governor. Similar analysis of the administrations of some other governors (like Peter D. Vroom, Joel Parker, and Alfred Driscoll) would be a most welcome addition to the literature. Walter E. Edge's autobiography, *A Jerseyman's Journal* (Princeton, 1948) is revealing and instructive.

On the modern period Bennett M. Rich, *The Government and Administration of New Jersey* (New York, 1957) contains a wealth of factual information on the governorship and the executive branch. Robert C. Wood's excellent, although unfortunately unpublished, dissertation, "The Metropolitan Governor" (Harvard University, 1949), has a very perceptive discussion of Edison, Edge, and Driscoll. Robert G. Cutler in his dissertation, "Charter Reviewed: The New Jersey Constitution, 1947-1957" (Princeton University, 1957) has interesting comments on the executive branch under the new constitution. Driscoll's role in promoting a new constitution is discussed in Richard N. Baisden, *Charter for New Jersey*,

*The New Jersey Constitutional Convention of 1947* (Trenton, 1952). Two senior theses by Princeton students present in some detail the administrations of Driscoll and Meyner; both are adulatory and uncritical, but they are useful reviews of otherwise elusive information: Brantz M. Bryan, Jr., "Alfred Eastlack Driscoll, Governor of New Jersey" (1952) and Paul D. Taylor, "Robert B. Meyner, A Personal Portrait" (1960).

There are a few biographies of governors of New Jersey (apart from the Link volume on Wilson and the Edge autobiography, mentioned previously). Theodore Sedgwick wrote a not very distinguished one of his grandfather, Governor Livingston, *A Memoir of the Life of William Livingston* (New York, 1833). Gertrude S. Wood produced *William Paterson of New Jersey* (Fairlawn, privately printed, 1933); William S. Myers published *General George Brinton McClellan* (New York, 1934); and Fred L. Bloodgood wrote *The Quiet Hour* (Trenton, 1940) about A. Harry Moore. But none of the four gives much useful information about their subject's activity as governor.

A superficial but useful summary of information about the personal lives of the governors was presented in a series of articles written for the *Newark Sunday News*; the articles were collected and published: Frank H. Pierce, *The Governors of New Jersey* (Newark, 1951). These sketches must be used with some caution, however, for they contain minor errors. Much information on governors and their families can be gleaned from a series of county histories published late in the nineteenth century. These histories, all published by Everts and Peck of Philadelphia, include James P. Snell, *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties* (1881); W. Woodford Clayton, *History of Bergen and Passaic Counties* (1882); Evan M. Woodward and John F. Hageman, *History of Burlington and Mercer Counties* (1883); and William H. Shaw, *History of Essex and Hudson Counties* (2 vols.; 1884). General biographical data for the State is available in William Nelson (ed.), *Nelson's Biographical Cyclopedia of New Jersey* (2 vols.; New York, 1913) and Charles Robson, *The Biographical Encyclopedia of New Jersey of the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1877).

For twentieth-century governors much information can be found in standard sources such as *Who's Who in America*, *The Dictionary of American Biography*, and *The National*

*Cyclopedia of American Biography. Who's Who in New Jersey*, Albert Marquis (ed.) (Chicago, 1939) is also very helpful.

Certain of the more elusive facts about governors' lives were gleaned from obituaries published in various New Jersey newspapers.

## APPENDIX

### BIOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL DATA ON THE GOVERNORS OF NEW JERSEY (1776 - 1963)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>	<i>Age at Inaugural</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>
William Livingston (1)	F	1776-1790	53	Law, N.Y. Legislature, Continental Congress
William Paterson (2)	F	1790-1792	45	Law, Attorney General of N.J., Legislative Council, U.S. Senator
Richard Howell (3)	F	1792-1801	38	Military, Clerk of N.J. Supreme Court
Joseph Bloomfield (4)	R-D	1801-1802 then 1803-1812	about 48 about 50	Law, Legislative Council, Attorney General
Aaron Ogden (5)	F	1812-1813	56	U.S. Senate, Military, Law
William S. Pennington (6)	R-D	1813-1815	56	Military, business, Assembly, Legislative Council, Law, Judge of N.J. Supreme Court
Mahlon Dickerson (7)	R-D	1815-1817	44	Law, Assembly, N.J. Supreme Court

<i>Post-Gov. Career</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Father's Occupation &amp; Family Status</i>	<i>Birth &amp; Death Dates</i>
Died in office	Yale B.A. Yale M.A.	Dutch Reformed	Landed Gentry, Mayor of Albany	1723- 1790
U.S. Supreme Court	Princeton B.A.	Presby- terian	Tinplate manu- facturer	1745- 1806
Law	academy	Quaker	unavailable	1754- 1803
General in War of 1812, Congress	academy	Presby- terian	Physician, mem- ber of Provincial Congress	c.1753- 1823
Steamship business, Law	Princeton B.A., M.A.	Presby- terian	Land holder, Continental Congress	1756- 1839
U.S. District Court	district schools	Presby- terian (?)	unavailable	1757- 1826
U.S. Senate, Sec'y of Navy, U.S. District Court	Princeton B.A.	Presby- terian	Iron mine owner	1771- 1853

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>	<i>Age at Inaugural</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>
Isaac H. Williamson (8)	R-D	1817-1829	39	Deputy Attorney General, Assembly
Peter D. Vroom (9)	D	1829-1832 1833-1836	38 42	Law, Assembly
Samuel L. Southard (10)	W	1832-1833	45	Law, Assembly, U.S. Senate, Secretary of Navy, N.J. Attorney General
Elias P. Seeley (11)	W	1833-	42	President of Legislative Council
Peter Vroom		(See above)		
Philemon Dickerson (brother Gov. Mahlon D.) (12)	D	1836-1837	48	Assembly, Congress
William Pennington (son Wm. S.P.) (13)	W	1837-1843	41	Clerk of N.J. Supreme Court, Assembly
Daniel Haines (14)	D	1843-1844 1848-1851	42 47	Law, Council
Charles C. Stratton (15)	W-R	1845-1848	49	Assembly, Congress Farmer
Daniel Haines		(See above)		
George F. Fort (16)	D	1851-1854	42	Physician, Assembly, Senate

<i>Post-Gov. Career</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Father's Occupation &amp; Family Status</i>	<i>Birth &amp; Death Dates</i>
Law, Mayor, Railroad exec.	grammar school	Episco- palian	General in Revolution	1778- 1844
Foreign serv- ice, Congress, Indian Comm.	Columbia B.A., M.A.	Dutch Reformed	Assembly, Legis. Council	1791- 1874
U.S. Senate	Princeton B.A., M.A.	Presby- terian	Farm, Congress	1787- 1842
Assembly	grammar school	unavail- able	Assembly, Legis. Council, County Clerk	1791- 1846
Congress U.S. Dist. Court	Pennsylvania B.A.	Presby- terian	Iron mine owner	1788- 1862
Congress (Speaker of U.S. House)	Princeton (did not complete degree)	Presby- terian	Governor William S. Pennington	1796- 1862
Law, N.J. Sup. Ct.	Princeton B.A., M.A.	Presby- terian	Merchant in New York City	1801- 1877
Farm	Rutgers B.A.	Episco- pal (?)	unavailable	1796- 1859
Physician, Court of Errors & Appeals	U. of Pa., M.D. Princeton, M.A.	Methodist	unavailable	1809- 1872

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>	<i>Age at Inaugural</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>
Rodman M. Price (17)	D	1854-1857	38	Financier, Congress
William A. Newell (18)	W-R	1857-1860	40	Physician, Congress
Charles S. Olden (19)	R	1860-1863	61	Business, Senate
Joel Parker (20)	D	1863-1866 1872-1875	47 56	Assembly, County Prosecuting Attorney
Marcus L. Ward (21)	R	1866-1869	54	Business, Banking
Theodore F. Randolph (22)	D	1869-1872	53	Law, Newspaper, Assembly, Senate, Business
Joel Parker		(See above)		
Joseph D. Bedle (23)	D	1875-1878	44	Law, N.J. Supreme Court
George B. McClellan (24)	D	1878-1881	51	General of Union Armies, Vice. Pres. of Railroad
George C. Ludlow (25)	D	1881-1884	51	Law, County Free- holder, Pres., N.J. Senate
Leon Abbett (26)	D	1884-1887 1890-1893	48 54	Law, Assembly, Pres. of Senate

<i>Career Post-Gov.</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Father's Occupation &amp; Family Status</i>	<i>Birth &amp; Death Dates</i>
Business, Gov. of California	Princeton (did not complete degree)	Dutch Reformed (?)	Storekeeper, Real Estate, Court of Errors & Appeals	1816-1894
Coast Guard Supt., Congress, White House, M.D.	Rutgers A.B., M.A. U. of Pa., M.D.	Presbyterian (?)	Civil Engineer	1817-1901
Court of Errors and Appeals	Lawrenceville high school	Presbyterian	Merchant—general store	1799-1876
N.J. Atty. Gen'l, N. J. Sup. Ct.	Princeton, B.A., M.A.	Presbyterian	Assembly, State Treasurer, Sheriff, Bank President	1816-1888
Business, Congress	Private, limited schooling	Episcopalian	Manufacturer & Business	1812-1884
U.S. Senate	Rutgers grammar ("common schools of New Bruns.")	Presbyterian	Congress, Newspaper publisher	1816-1883
Law	academy	Presbyterian	Merchant, Common Pleas Court	1831-1894
Business, Writing	West Point	Presbyterian	Physician, Founder of Medical School	1827-1885
Law, N.J. Sup. Ct.	Rutgers B.A., M.A.	Presbyterian	Justice of Peace, Judge of County Court	1830-1900
N. J. Sup. Ct.	high school	Episcopalian (?)	Journeyman hatter	1836-1894

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>	<i>Age at Inaugural</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>
Robert S. Green (27)	D	1887-1890	56	County officer, County Court Judge, Congress
Leon Abbett		(See above)		
George T. Werts (28)	D	1893-1896	47	Mayor, Pres. of Senate, N.J. Supreme Court, Law
John W. Griggs (29)	R	1896-1898	47	Law, Assembly, Pres. of Senate
Foster M. Voorhees (30)	R	1899-1902	43	Law, Assembly, Pres. of Senate
Franklin Murphy (31)	R	1902-1905	56	Varnish manufacturer, Assembly, City Council
Edward C. Stokes (32)	R	1905-1908	44	Assembly, Senate, Banking, Railroad Director
John Franklin Fort (33)	R	1908-1911	56	Law, N.J. Supreme Court, Business, Banking
Woodrow Wilson (34)	D	1911-1913	55	Law, Professor, President of Princeton Univ.
James Fielder (35)	D	1914-1917	47	Law, Assembly, Pres. of Senate
Walter B. Edge (36)	R	1917-1919 1944-1947	43 70	Newspaper pub., Advertising, Assembly, Pres. of Senate
Edward I. Edwards (37)	D	1920-1923	57	N.J. Controller, Banking, Senate

<i>Post-Gov. Career</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Father's Occupation &amp; Family Status</i>	<i>Birth &amp; Death Dates</i>
Vice Chan- cellor, N.J. Court of Er- rors & Appeals	Princeton B.A.	Presby- terian	President of Princeton Univ.	1831- 1895
Law, N.J. Sup. Ct.	State Model Sch.	Episco- palian (?)	unavailable	1846- 1910
U.S. Atty. Gen'l, Law	Lafayette B.A.	Episco- palian (?)	Farmer	1849- 1927
Law, State Commission, Pres. Bankers Insurance Co.	Rutgers B.A., M.A.	Presby- terian	Cashier, Bank President, Law	1857- 1927
Business, unsuccessful candidate	academy	Episco- palian	Shoe manufacturer	1846- 1920
Banking, unsuccessful candidate	Brown B.A.	Quaker	Bank President	1861- 1942
Federal Trade Comm.	Mt. Holly Institute Albany Law	Presby- terian	Assembly, Farmer	1852- 1920
President of U.S.	Princeton B.A. Johns Hopkins Ph.D.	Presby- terian	Clergyman	1856- 1924
State Food Administrator, Chancellor	Law LL.B.	Episco- palian (?)	Hudson County Registrar, Congress	1867- 1954
U.S. Senate, Ambassador	grammar school	Presby- terian/ Episco- palian	Pa. Railroad employee	1874- 1956
U.S. Senate	Pub. sch. Cooper Un. NYU (no degree)	Episco- palian	Bank employee, politics; Welsh by birth	1863- 1931

<i>Name</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>	<i>Age at Inaugural</i>	<i>Prior Career</i>
George S. Silzer (38)	D	1923-1926	53	City Bd. of Aldermen, Senate, Circuit Court
A. Harry Moore (39)	D	1926-1929 1932-1935 1938-1941	47 53 59	Jersey City Commission, Law
Mogran F. Larson (40)	R	1929-1932	46	Engineer, Banking, Business, Senate
A. Harry Moore		(See above)		
Harold G. Hoffman (41)	R	1935-1938	38	Newspaper, Banking, Assembly, Mayor, Motor Vehicle Commr., Congress
A. Harry Moore		(See above)		
Charles Edison (42)	D	1941-1944	51	NLRB, FHA, NIRA, Secy of Navy, Business
Walter E. Edge		(See above)		
Alfred E. Driscoll (43)	R	1947-1954 (2 terms)	45	Law, Local offices, Senate Alcoholic Beverage Commr.
Robert B. Meyner (44)	D	1954-1962 (2 terms)	45 49	Law, Naval officer, State Senate
Richard J. Hughes (45)	D	1962-	53	Asst. U.S. Attorney for N.J., County Court, Superior Court

<i>Post-Gov. Career</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Father's Occupation &amp; Family Status</i>	<i>Birth &amp; Death Dates</i>
Chmn., Port of N.Y. Authority, Banking, Law	Coopers Un. Institute N.J. Law Sch.	Episco- palian	Tavern pro- prietor; German by birth	1870- 1940
Law	Coopers Un. N.J. Law Sch. LL.B.	Reformed	House painter	1879- 1952
Consulting Engr. to P.N.Y. Author.	Coopers Un. Institute	Lutheran	Blacksmith; Danish by birth	1883- 1961
Dir., N.J. Unemployment Compensation Comm., Banking	High school	Methodist	Supt. for rail- road	1897- 1954
Business	M.I.T.	Methodist	Thomas A. Edison, Inventor	1890-
Business	Williams Coll. B.A. Harvard Law	Presby- terian	Paint & Varnish Manufacturer	1902-
Law	Lafayette B.A. Columbia Law	Raised as Catholic, later non- denomina- tional	Silkloom repairer	1909-
—	St. Josephs B.A. N.J. Law Sch.	Catholic	Mayor, N.J. Civil Service Commr., Postmaster, Prison Warden, Insurance	1909-



## INDEX

---

- Abbett, Leon, 63, 79, 85-88,  
96, 100, 132, 133
- Administrative reorganization,  
70, 102-104, 115, 126, 127
- Andros, Sir Edmund, 14, 15,  
17
- Baisden, Richard N., 121n,  
135
- Barnet, William, 26
- Basse, Jeremiah, 15
- Bebout, John, 52, 53n, 55,  
56n, 134
- Bedle, Joseph D., 64, 66
- Belcher, Jonathan, 30
- Berkeley, Lord John, 13, 14,  
16
- Bloodgood, Fred L., 92, 136
- Bloomfield, Joseph, 41, 42
- Board of Trade, 20, 21, 23,  
24, 36
- Bosby, William, 27
- Bugbee, Newton, 91
- Byllynge, Edward, 13, 14, 15,  
19
- Camden and Amboy Railroad,  
54, 60, 61, 66
- Campbell, Lord Neil, 18
- Carey, Robert, 94
- Carteret, Sir George, 13, 16,  
18
- Carteret, Philip, 1, 16, 17, 19
- Chancellor, 36, 49
- Charles II, 13
- Civil War politics, 81-82
- Clokie, Hugh M., 16n, 28n,  
31n, 134
- Concessions and Agreements,  
13, 14, 16, 129
- Conklin, Edwin P., 70n, 87n,  
134
- Constitution of 1776, 36-37
- Constitution of 1844, 38, 55-56
- Constitutional Convention of  
1947, 120-123
- Cornbury, Lord Edward  
Hyde, 21-22, 23-24
- Coxe, Dr. Daniel, 15
- Cutler, Robert J., 123n, 135
- Dahl, 3n, 79
- Dickerson, Mahlon, 42, 48
- Dickerson, Philemon, 42
- Driscoll, Alfred E., 102, 116,  
118-124, 125
- East Jersey, 13-15
- Edge, Walter E., 89, 103, 105,  
106, 107, 111-116, 123
- Edison, Charles, 106, 117-118
- Edwards, Edward I., 90
- Eggers, Frank Hague, 90
- Elizabethtown Patent, 16

- Elmer, L. Q. C., 41, 49, 134  
Erdman, Charles R. Jr., 49n, 117n, 134
- Fagan, Mark, 68, 69, 109  
Fee, Walter R., 5n, 42n, 48n, 49n, 134  
Fenwick, John, 13  
Fielder, James F., 88-89  
Fort, George F., 55, 62  
Fort John Franklin, 70  
Franklin, Benjamin, 30  
Franklin, William, 30, 31, 32-33, 37  
Frost, Richard, 126, 127
- Garden State Parkway, 120  
Governorship, power of, defined, 2-5; appointive powers of, 4, 5, 22, 36, 52, 55, 122  
Green, Robert S., 63
- Hague, Frank, 8, 89-97, 101, 115, 117, 122, 125  
Hague, Frank, Jr., 93  
Haines, Daniel, 54, 62  
Hamilton, Col. Andrew, 15, 18, 27  
Hardy, Josiah, 30  
Hillsborough, Earl of, 33  
Hobart, Garret, 67  
Hoffman, Harold, G., 93-96, 118  
Hughes, Richard J., 1, 96n, 105, 107  
Hunter, Robert, 25-26
- Jackson, Andrew, 44  
James II, 13, 15  
Jennings, Samuel, 14
- Jersey Central Railroad, 66, 67
- Kelsey, Henry C., 63, 83  
Kemmerer, Donald L., 24n, 26n, 28n, 30n, 134
- Lane, Wheaton J., 52n, 60n, 61n, 134  
Larson, Morgan F., 93-94  
Lawrie, Gawen, 18  
Lee, Benjamin F., 63  
Link, Arthur S., 98n, 108n, 109, 110, 135  
Lipson, Leslie, 123, 133  
Little, Henry S., 63  
Livingston, William, 38-41, 44-46  
Ludlow, George, 79, 83-84, 88  
Lunden, Leonard, 46n, 134
- McCarter, Thomas N., 69  
McClellan, Gen. George B., 42, 63, 64, 82  
McCormick, Richard P., 15n, 20n, 41, 134  
McKean, Dayton David, 89n, 90n, 93, 96n, 135  
McMillan, Margaret B., 44n, 45n, 46n, 134  
Meyner, Robert B., 96, 105, 106, 122, 124-127  
Middletown riots, 18  
Monmouth County, 18-19, 27  
Monmouth Patent, 16  
Montgomerie, John, 26  
Moore, A. Harry, 77, 91-93  
Morris, Lewis, 27-29, 31  
Morven, 103, 113  
Murphy, Franklin, 68-70, 103  
Murphy, Vincent, J., 105  
Myers, William S., 65n, 94, 134, 136

- Neustadt, Richard, 2, 130, 133  
Newell, William A., 54, 63, 64  
New Jersey Turnpike, 120  
Nichols, William, 16  
Noble, Ransom E., 58n, 69n,  
135
- Ogden, Aaron, 41, 48
- Parker, Joel, 76-83  
Paterson, William, 41  
Penn, John, 31  
Penn, William, 18  
Pennington, William (the  
younger) 42, 53, 61  
Pennington, William Sanford,  
42, 48, 103  
Pennsylvania Railroad, 66, 67,  
83  
Pierce, Frank H., 136  
Political party competition,  
72-75  
Pomfret, John E., 13n, 14n,  
15n, 17n, 18n, 19n, 134  
Port of New York Authority,  
91  
Potts, Frederick A., 67  
Price, Rodman M., 62  
Princeton University, 41, 93  
Public Service Corporation, 69
- Railroad political influence,  
57-62, 66-68, 83  
Randolph, Theodore, 62, 65  
Ransome, Coleman B., 133  
Rappport, George C., 89n  
Record, George L., 68, 69, 70,  
109  
Rich, Bennett M., 105n, 115n,  
122n, 123n, 135
- "Ring" (post-Civil War party  
cabal) 8, 63-64, 83, 85  
Rudyard, Thomas, 18
- Sackett, William E., 58-60, 63,  
66, 67, 70n, 82, 84, 88n,  
104, 135
- Sales Tax controversy of 1935,  
95  
Sedgwick, Theodore, 38n, 47n,  
136  
Seely, Elias P., 52  
Silzer, George S., 91  
Skene, John, 14  
Sly, John F., 118, 119  
Smith, James, 88  
Southard, Samuel L., 52, 53n  
Stockton, Richard, 40  
Stokes, Edward Caspar, 70  
Stratton, Charles C., 54
- Tanner, Edwin P., 14n, 15n,  
21, 133  
Thompson, John R., 61
- Vanderbilt, Arthur T., 95,  
114, 115  
Vroom, Peter D., 41, 42, 50,  
52
- Wall, Garrett, D., 50  
Wallace, George, 90  
Washington, Gen. George, 45  
West New Jersey, 13-16  
Williamson, Isaac, 48, 49, 50  
Wilson, Woodrow, 68, 88, 90,  
98, 106-111, 132  
Wood, Gertrude S., 47n, 136  
Wood, Robert C., 102-103,  
120n, 135



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