



Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

# *Gunning Bedford, Jr.*

1747 - 1812

Delaware Delegate to  
the Philadelphia Convention

**Occupation:** Landowner, lawyer, and served as a major in the Continental Army in 1775 and became a lieutenant-colonel in 1776

**Education:** Graduate of the College of New Jersey (later known as Princeton) and was a former classmate of James Madison (known as the "Father of the Constitution")

**Political Accomplishments:** Served in the Continental Congress from 1783 to 1785. Selected by Delaware's General Assembly as one of the state's delegates to attend the federal convention in 1787 where he expressed great interest in the rights of small states, served on several committees, and supported abolition of slavery. Mr. Bedford was elected as a New Castle County deputy to attend Delaware's Ratification Convention in 1787. He continued a political career by serving as Delaware's Attorney General during the late 1780s and accepting an appointment by President George Washington as the first judge of the U.S. District Court of Delaware in 1789.

#### References:

Berkin, Carol. A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2002.

Bushman, Claudia L., Harold B. Hancock, and Elizabeth Moyne Homsey. Proceedings of the House of Assembly of the Delaware State 1781 - 1792 and the Constitutional Convention of 1792. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1988.

Madison, James. Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987.