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Tavernkeeper, Howell's Tavern, Tredyffrin Township, Chester County, Pa. 1765

David Howell, son of Howell Howell, Quaker, was born c. 1736 in Easttown, Pennsylvania; died 3 April 1778 in Tredyffrin Township. He married on 28 January 1763 Mary Douglass, born c. 1744, who married second, John Gardner and died 10 July 1818 in Charles Town, West Virginia and is buried in the Zion Episcopal Churchyard.

David and an older brother were disowned in 1759 by the Quakers for enlisting in the militia. By 1765 he was operating the King George Tavern in Tredyffrin Township, more familiarly known as Howell's Tavern. It was located at the junction of the Bear and Swedesford Roads in the area still known as Howellville. One of the frequent customers was Anthony Wayne who found the strong Whig clientele there to his liking. On one occasion Wayne was involved in a tavern brawl when a drunken tavern girl leaped on the back of a local woman, Mrs. Malin, who had come to take her husband home. The girl dragged her down and in a rough and tumble match tried to scratch out Mrs. Malin's eyes. Wayne and another grabbed the girl's arms to pull her away, which ended the fight that had become a general scrimmage.

David and Mary were operating the tavern in 1777 when General Howe and his army passed through town after the Battle of Brandywine. Mary submitted a detailed claim for £ 696 in 1782 for the losses sustained by Howe's visit. In September 1777 Howell's Tavern received the wounded Americans taken prisoners by the British after the Battle of Paoli and, with neighboring houses, cared for them until exchanges were arranged between Howell and Washington.

Mary operated the tavern after David's death in 1778 and was succeeded by their oldest son, John Howell, in 1785. Rerouting of roads and encroachment of modern offices make it difficult to pinpoint the original location of the tavern; what remains is a wild overgrown plot of land, but its placement is forever marked on the map erected at the Paoli Monument as a tribute to those who lost their lives in that battle.

- Billie L. Stanton
#86-13

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