



Major William J. Sewell, who for more than twenty years had been one of the most distinguished and influential men in New Jersey was born in Castlebar in 1835 and emigrated to America before the start of the Civil War. He was mustered into the Union army in 1861 as a captain of the 5th New Jersey Volunteers. With this regiment, which was attached to the Army of the Potomac he fought in all the engagements in which the army took part up to the battle on Spottsylvania in 1864. Promotion came rapidly for him and he was appointed Colonel of the regiment in 1862 and when General Mott was wounded at Chancellorville the command fell on Colonel Sewell.

He was wounded in that battle and also at Gettysburgh where he also distinguished himself. At the close of the war he was breveted as Brigadier General Volunteers for meritorious conduct at the battle of Chancellorville and Major General for meritorious service throughout the war. His interest in military affairs continued after the war and he was actively involved with the National Guard of New Jersey. In 1898 he was appointed Major General of Volunteers of service in the war with Spain. He declined the high position offered him so that he could continue to discharge his duties as a member of the National Senate.

Senator Sewell chose railroading as a life business. He joined the West Jersey Railroad Company and rising step by step he eventually became Head of the entire Pennsylvania rail system in South Jersey. He was later promoted to Vice-President and General Manager of the company. For thirty years Senator Sewell had been active in politics in New Jersey and for most of the latter part of that time he was the acknowledged Republican leader of the State. As a politician he was as fearless and courageous as he was on the battlefield. When he died after a long illness at the end of December 1901. He was given a military funeral by the National Guard.