

The Connecticut Societies
of the
Sons & Daughters of the American Revolution



Presents a Grave Marking Ceremony

Honoring

18 Revolutionary War Patriots

Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery

Corner of Broad Street & Monument Lane

Stratford, Connecticut

Saturday August 26, 2017

10:00 A.M.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) is the largest male lineage organization in the U.S., consists of 50 societies with more than 500 local chapters, several international societies and over 34,000 members. SAR is dedicated to assisting our members, schools, teachers and the general public in their efforts to sustain and preserve our history and constitutional principles. For more information visit ConnecticutSAR.org

The Connecticut Society of the American Revolution (CTDAR) was organized April 2, 1889 and incorporated January 3, 1890. Today, the Connecticut SAR has 9 branches and over 500 members, along with three museum properties across the state.



The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) is a nonprofit, nonpolitical volunteer women's service organization dedicated to promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism. With 185,000 members in 3,000 chapters, DAR members are active in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. as well as internationally with chapters in Australia, Austria, The Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, France, Germany, Guam, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, United Kingdom. Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution is eligible.

The Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution (CTDAR) was organized 125 years ago in February 1892 and incorporated in 1917. Over the 125 years, Connecticut DAR has grown and evolved and remains a vibrant and enthusiastic organization with 39 chapters and over 2300 members. At the chapters members support veterans and patriotism, promote education and good citizenship and preserve historic properties, artifacts and stories. Many women join CTDAR primarily to honor and preserve their heritage but quickly discover endless opportunities to provide service to their communities and to America. For more information visit CTDAR.org.

Program

Posting of the colors	Connecticut Line / Living History Unit and the 6 th Connecticut Regiment
Invocation	Rev. Scott Lee, Christ Episcopal Church
Pledge of Allegiance	Ethan A. Stewart, State President SAR
Pledge to the SAR	David J. Perkins – National Trustee SAR
American Creed	Pat King, Regent Sarah Riggs Humphreys - Mary Silliman Chapter DAR
Preamble to the Constitution	Barbara Stewart, Regent Freeloove Baldwin Stow Chapter DAR
Welcome	Ethan A. Stewart, State President SAR Alice E. Ridgway, State Regent DAR
History of the Church & Cemetery	Ethan A. Stewart, State President SAR
Proclamations	Mayor John A. Harkins, Stratford
Reading of the 18 Patriot Names	Alice E. Ridgway, State Regent DAR
Biography of William Samuel Johnson	Damien M. Cregeau, 1 st Vice Pres. SAR
Song	Conn. State Troubadour, Tom Callinan
Dedication	Ethan Stewart, State President - SAR & Alice E. Ridgway, State Regent – DAR
Musket Salute	Connecticut Line / Living History Unit and the 6 th Connecticut Regiment
Taps	Conn. State Troubadour, Tom Callinan
Benediction	Barbara Stewart, Regent Freeloove Baldwin Stow Chapter DAR
SAR Recessional	Richard Kendall, Vice-President General David Humphreys Branch SAR

Invocation

Let us pray.

Lord God Almighty, in whose name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lit the torch of freedom for nations then unborn: Grant that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and peace; We remember before thee with grateful hearts the men and women of our country, especially those herein interred, who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of the land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines.

Adopted from The Book of Common Prayer, 1979.

Thou who hast in all ages shewed forth thy power and mercy in the wonderful preservation of thy church, . . . and all who [put] their sure trust in thee; We yield thee our unfeigned thanks and praise for all thy public mercies, and most especially for that signal and wonderful manifestation of thy providence in these defenders of liberty whom we commemorate this day;

Adapted from Prayers for the Fourth Day of July found in The Book of Common Prayer 1786, the creation of which was necessitated by the need to remove such prayers for the King and Royal Family as were commanded in the Pre-revolutionary Prayer Book of 1662

Pledge to the SAR

We, descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution who, by their sacrifices, established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and our Constitutional Republic, and solemnly pledge ourselves to defend them against every foe.

The American's Creed

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable, established upon those principals of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Welcome by SAR State President Ethan A. Stewart, Sr.

Welcome and thank you for attending. I want to say that I am extremely proud to be here today at this historical cemetery. As the President of the Sons of the American Revolution Ct. Society, I want to give a special thanks to my Branch the General David Humphreys Branch #1 for spearheading the revitalizing of this historic cemetery. Especially their effort to bring in two local chapters of the DAR to help with project which has led to this historic Grave Marking Ceremony of the two-State Society's. The Humphreys Branch & two local DAR Chapters (Freelove Baldwin Stow & Sarah Riggs Humphreys - Mary Silliman) have been working very hard since May to clean & repair the grave stones. We have been working 3 days a week to get to where we are today. This project should take us about 2 -3 years to complete. One of the Patriots that we are honoring today is Benjamin Wells and I would like to announce that his 4th great grandson John Wells and 5th great granddaughter Donna Wells are here today.

Welcome by DAR State Regent Alice E. Ridgway

On behalf of the over 2,300 members of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Connecticut I am excited to be able to welcome you to this event. I have rarely met anyone with as much enthusiasm for holding a joint DAR SAR event as Ethan. Members of the Sarah Riggs Humphreys - Mary Silliman Chapter and the Freelove Baldwin Stow Chapter helped to clear and clean many the graves here. They also helped to research the Patriots being honored. That is how DAR works. With roughly 185,000 members worldwide the actual Service to America happens in small ways at the chapters. As the State Regent for this enchanting organization I encourage members to focus on why we do what we do for our communities. That's what brings meaning to our organization's efforts. We don't just belong to DAR because we can by virtue of our patriot ancestors. We belong because we want to make a difference by promoting education, patriotism, and historic preservation. This marking today does all three and we are also very elated to be an engaged in this endeavor.

History of Christ Episcopal Church and Cemetery

The Stratford Episcopal Church is the first Episcopal Church in Connecticut. The first vestry meeting was in 1707. The church building was completed and open for services on Christmas day 1724 by Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson.

The growth of the congregation was so rapid that a second church was built in 1743 on its present location. Dr. Samuel Johnson presented the church with its first bell as a donation. This bell was cast in Fairfield in 1739 and still hangs in the steeple today. Today's spire has the same old Weather Cock that was on the church in 1743. It was made by Col. John Benjamin a Goldsmith in 1743.

The third Church was rebuilt in 1858 at the same location.

Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery is also the first in the state of Connecticut built in 1723. The oldest grave is John Johnson, February 8, 1725. The cemetery size is 36 rods which in circumference is 594 feet.

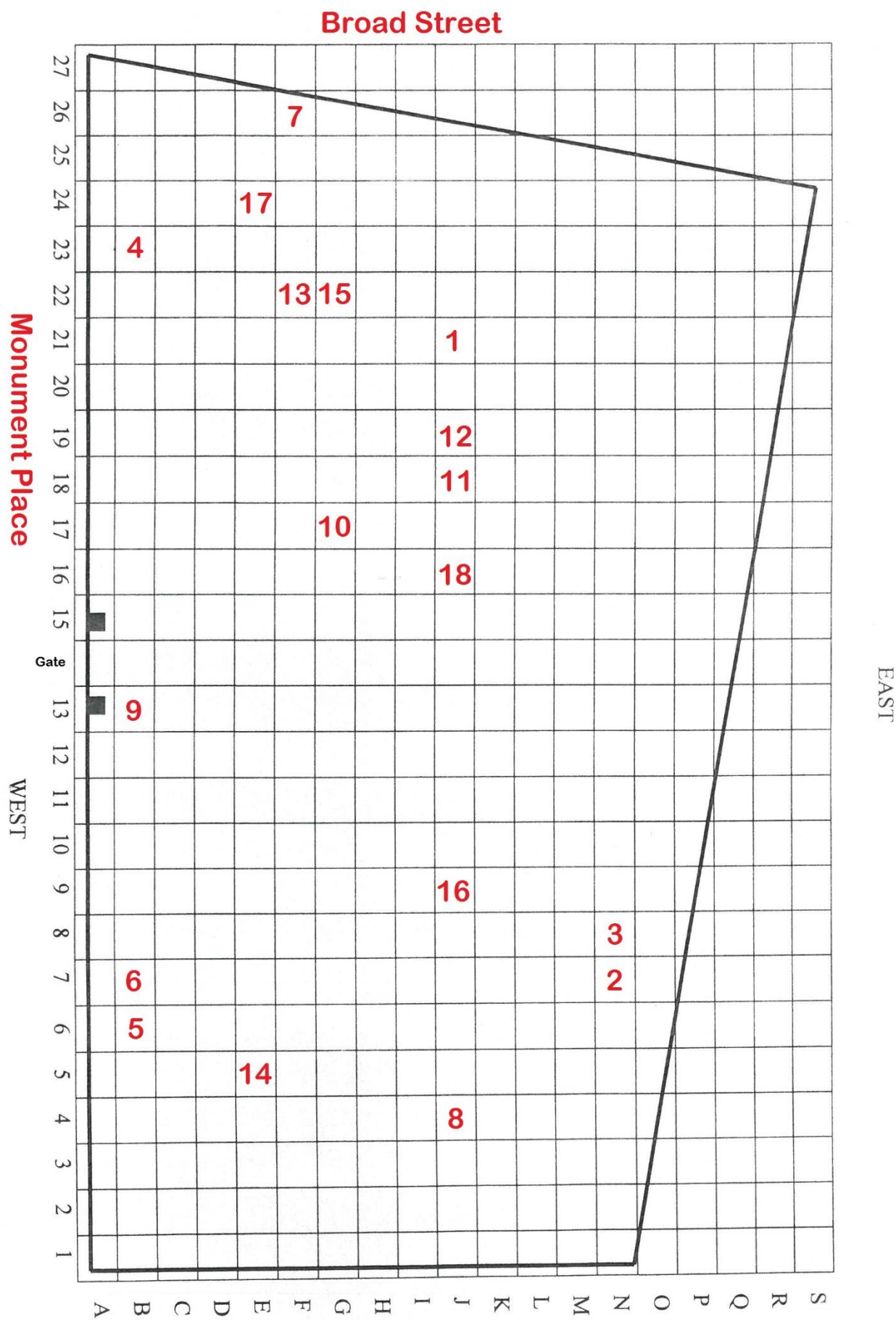
The Oak tree is a seedling of the Charter Oak. It was planted in commemoration of the signing of the United States Constitution by William Samuel Johnson. This planting was done by the Captain David Hawley Society of the CAR in 1938.



William Samuel Johnson the only other signer of the United States Constitution in Connecticut along with another 17 Revolutionary Patriots which gives us a total of 18 Revolutionary Patriots are buried here. There is one Privateer, several Patriots from the War of 1812, and Mary Wells Roosevelt an aunt of President Theodore Roosevelt that are also buried here. The last burial was in 1913.

The cemetery ordinarily had a stone wall around it, then a wood fence and now a wrought Iron fence in which the gates and pillars were donated by **Columbia University** in 1931.

Map of the Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery



Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery Patriots

1. J21 - **Abijah Beardslee**, B-1 Jan 1764 died 3 Sept 1839. His Pension # 17278. Private under Lieut. Patterson in Whiting's CT. Regiment. He was stationed at Stratford where he guarded the town for 8 months. B-1764, D-3/Sep/1839.
2. N07 - **Curtiss Beardslee**, B- 9 Aug 1754 died 15 Sept 1796. SAR & DAR applications. He was a Corporal in Capt. Wheelers Co. under Col. Lewis from 26 Aug 1776 in the battle of Long Island. B- 1752, D-13/Sep/1796. DAR # A008101
3. N08 - **Abraham Beardslee**, B-1726, D-13/Feb/1815. He was an inspector of Gunpower and maker of Guns. SAR & DAR applications. In Capt. Booths Reg. called to defend the coast from July 5th to the 9th 1779. DAR # A008095
4. B23 - **Henry Beardslee**, B-1737, D-3/Aug/1806. Hale Collection Rev. War, Ct. Revolutionary War Military List 1775-83. 4th Regiment Capt. Booth Co. under General Silliman, Ration Rolls. History of Stratford men in the Revolution Pg. 541. Listed on abstract of graves of Revolutionary Patriots. (No grave stone)
5. B06 - **Col. Aaron Benjamin**, B-17/Aug/1757, D-21/Nov/1828. Revolutionary War. Pension # W25223, served under Count Casimir Pulaski. He was an Ensign in the 8th CT. Regt. In Jan. 1777 and also served in the 3rd and 5th Regt's. and became a Lt. Col. (Count Pulaski is credited with saving the life of George Washington). His wife Dorothy, received a pension. SAR # P-113099
6. B07 - **Col. John Bradford Benjamin**, B-1730, D-14/Sep/1796. SAR application, Book- Ct. men in the Revolution. Benjamin served in Col. Huntington's Regiment in 1775, Col. Lamb's Artillery 1777-1783, Sergeant 1777 2nd Lieutenant 1778. Promoted from Captain 1782 Major of 4th Regiment Danbury Alarm 1777. SAR # P-113169, DAR # A009125
7. F26 - **Isaac J. Curtiss**, B-1740, D 17/Jul/1815. In CT. Revolutionary War Military list, 1775-83 page 181. Listed in the History of Stratford PG 543 men in the Revolution. He was in the 4th Regiment, Company Booth's. Ration roll which were detached for the purpose pursuant to order of Brig. Genl. Silliman.
8. J04 - **Jeremiah Curtiss**, B-4/Apr/1716, D - 4/Sep/1782 In the Ct. Revolutionary War Military List, 1775-83 page 181. He was in the 4th Regiment, Company Booth's. Ration Roll of Guards detached from the 4th Regt. To the 11th Regt. By order of Brig. Genl. Silliman. DAR # A028878
9. B13 - **John C. Fairchild**, B-20/Feb/1745, D-2/Feb/1825. Dar# 92175 He joined the 5th regiment, 2nd company, Lieut. Col. Samuel Whiting in command. Also, listed in the U.S., Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783 page 86. SAR # P-156171, DAR #A038558

10. G17 – **Phineas Lovejoy, Jr.**, B-15/Sep/1762, D-26/Sep/1803. He was a Captain in the third Battalion under General Wooster. Book State Regiments under Gens. Spencer and Wooster in Rhode Island and CT. 1776-77 PG 424. Listed in the History of Stratford PG 544 men in the Revolution. Hale Collection listed as being in the Revolutionary War.
11. J18 – **Colonel Philo Lewis**, B-7/Jul/1758, D-7/Nov/1836. History of Stratford, CT. page 544, Maritime Service CT. Men of the Revolution. He served on the Ship “Oliver Cromwell” 1777. His pension # is W20469. Philo also served in the War of 1812 (History of Stratford) and was in command of the troops which turned out for the defense of Bridgeport. He served from Apr. 15, 1814 - Apr. 17, 1814 and is listed in the CT. Militia War of 1812. (6th Regiment). SAR # P-236125
12. J19 – **Captain Nathaniel Sherman Lewis**, B-1730, D-11/Feb/1812. He is the father of Philo Lewis and also server on the Ship “Oliver Cromwell” 1777. He is listed in the CT. Men of the Revolution as Maritime Service. History of Stratford page 544. Nathaniel is listed in The Abstract of Graves of Revolutionary Patriots, DAR # 7685 & 7389. SAR # P-236104, DAR #A070091
13. F22 – **John McEwen**, B-1744, D-29/Sep/1842. He was a carpenter and served under Col. Samuel Whiting. Listed in CT. Men of the Revolutionary War at age 96. The History of Stratford page 544 and the Hale Collection. His Pension # S11056.
14. E05 – **Captain Ezra Hubbell**, B-2/Sep/1768, D-9/May/1804. Ezra was lost at sea along with his crew in Indonesia. (CT. Church Records Abstracts) Ezra was a private in the 5th Regiment 9th Company. (Connecticut in the Revolution page 70) SAR Application (1899).
15. G22 – **Silas Hubbell**, B-1752, D-30/Nov/1812. Silas was an Ensign in Captain Olmsted’s Co. on July 6, 1778. (Connecticut Men in the Revolution page 539) SAR application (1943). DAR #A059517
16. J09 - **William Samuel Johnson**, He was member of the Bar, Colonial House of Representatives 1761-65, Judge of Connecticut Supreme Court 1772-74 and a Signer of the U.S. Constitution) SAR # P-225590, DAR #A063871
17. E24 - **Benjamin Wells** B-17/Jun/1745, D- 8/Jun/1818. Listed in the Connecticut Men in the Revolution. 4th Regiment Captain James Booth, Col. Samuel Whiting. Fifer Sergeant. SAR # P-316147, DAR #A122310.
18. J16 - **James Walker, Sr.** B- Jul/1715, D- 9/Jun/1796. He served under Gen. Israel Putnam enlisted at the age of 60 and was in the 5th Co. Third Regiment. He also served as Justice of the peace. The homestead that he built is at “Beardsley Park” in Bridgeport, CT. DAR #A119392

Biography of William Samuel Johnson

by Damien Cregeau

Don't worry, compatriots and friends. It wasn't until two years ago I had not heard of William Johnson. My first thought was, "Who's That?!" William Samuel Johnson, not to be confused with the famous British writer Samuel Johnson, was born right here in Stratford, Connecticut on the 7th of October in 1727 and died on the 14th of November in 1819 at the age of 92. While it would have been more comfortable to be standing at this, his place of burial on the 7th of October in hopes of nicer weather, you probably agree with me that we have certainly been blessed with wonderful, comfortably warm weather throughout this summer. However, I also know that numerous volunteers from both the DAR and SAR would assert that they sweated for days, no, weeks, and many of them, as they toiled away on restoring this cemetery all summer long, and for those heroic efforts, they deserve our utmost, hearty, enthusiastic gratitude! The good news is that no one had to sweat over getting the U.S. Constitution ratified like William Samuel Johnson did, and he did it without air conditioning or even a fan!

William was born to Samuel Johnson, a well-known Anglican clergyman and later president of King's (later known as Columbia) College, and Johnson's first wife, Charity Floyd Nicoll. I don't know if there's any relation, and I couldn't determine it, but DAR ladies might be intrigued to know she as a Floyd could be a relative of Mary Floyd Tallmadge, namesake of the Mary Floyd Tallmadge Chapter of the Connecticut DAR, and also daughter of New York Signer of the Declaration of Independence William Floyd, who's the only signer to have not one but TWO houses still standing. One is part of a national park on Long Island, and the other is where he died in upstate New York. Furthermore, Mary Floyd married Major Benjamin Tallmadge, a graduate of Yale, classmate and friend of Nathan Hale, and who had just completed his work of serving as both cavalry officer and case officer for the now-famous Culper Spy Ring.

I say Senator Johnson because this locally prominent and then-famous but until 2014 forgotten founding father of Connecticut's colony and then state was eventually a U.S. Senator. But wait, I should mention in passing that I must admit I had never heard of William Johnson until I did some research as a historian on the various signers of the various founding documents that were instrumental in creating our representational republic of the United States, culminating in the U.S. Constitution, created in 1787 and yet not ratified until 1788. Anyway, I had never heard of Johnson, and when I discovered he was not only from Stratford but also buried in a well-marked grave here in Stratford, I immediately alerted my two Stratford compatriot friends, Rich Kendall and Ethan Stewart.

Johnson graduated from Yale College in 1744, going on to receive a master's degree from his alma mater in 1747. Do the math and you may be startled to know he was only 20 when he earned his master's, the same year he also received an honorary degree from Harvard! Nowadays you'll probably agree me as a former preparatory school teacher and dorm head that we're lucky if we can get a 20-year-old to finish his year of college learning more than grievance studies and how to NOT study the likes of local heroes like William Samuel Johnson, Roger Sherman, Oliver Wolcott, Samuel Huntington or Oliver Ellsworth.

Parents, you'll understand when I say you are apt to project your own values upon your children's generation, and hope they will follow in your footsteps. This might explain why Johnson did not heed his father's urging to become a minister, but instead pursued a legal career.

What we will all appreciate learning about Johnson is that he was well-respected legal authority, and for that reason he was consulted by many of Connecticut's founding fathers as they made their trips to Philadelphia to represent Connecticut in various editions of the Continental and then United States Congress. This list includes the aforementioned Governors and Declaration of Independence Signers Oliver Wolcott and Samuel Huntington, but also Roger Sherman as well as Oliver Ellsworth, William Williams, Governor Jonathan Trumbull and Silas Deane, diplomat to France who hailed from Wethersfield.

Before the American Revolution broke out in 1775, Johnson was sent to London, England to serve as a representative of the colony of Connecticut. Imagine this long-forgotten chapter in Connecticut's history. He appeared before British Parliament to advocate successfully for Connecticut's rights to Native American territory in what was then called Wyoming territory. I am not referring to what is now Wyoming, but instead, the western part of the modern-day state of Pennsylvania.

Johnson (much to my own surprise) also served as a colonel in the Connecticut militia during the American Revolution. It was after the war, however, that he gained his notoriety as both as U.S. Senator (dates?) and SIGNER of the U.S. Constitution. Speaking of the Constitution, we in Connecticut are likely aware that our DMV license plates say "The Constitution State" on them, but that is not because of the famous 1787 Constitution. Rather, it pays homage to the 1639 document known as the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut.

It was Roger Sherman, William Johnson and Oliver Ellsworth who were the three representatives from Connecticut to head back town to venerable Philadelphia for the Constitutional Convention. Lest any of you think that Congress moves like molasses nowadays, I like to remind contemporaries like yourselves that Congress moved even slower in those days. For example, it took over a year to ratify our

famous U.S. Constitution. Why? Because, much like nowadays, no one could ever possibly agree on even fundamental issues, so we had, or might say, were cursed with, the two unofficial political parties then known as Anti-Federalists in confrontation with the Federalists. Unlike today's triumphant tweets and titanic disasters of press conferences, back then the difference of political opinion could lead to one congressman caning another - on the floor of Congress - or, worse yet, come to blows with another weapon: the dueling pistol. Imagine nowadays if Clinton and Trump were to meet in Weehawken to settle their differences on a dueling ground overlooking New York City and the Hudson River. Well, not only did Hamilton die now famously in 1804 at the hands of Vice President Aaron Burr, but Hamilton also nearly came to dueling with future president James Monroe.

Thankfully, I am not aware of any evidence of William ever engaging in a duel to settle differences or slights towards his reputation, or harming another's. Yet, it was Alexander Hamilton who, in agreement with Mr. Johnson, wanted the thirteen states to come to a reasonable consensus that the U.S. Constitution would once and for all put to rest the risk of anarchy embodied in such civil uprisings as Captain Daniel Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts in 1786, as well as the Whiskey Rebellion and other contemporary challenges. Hamilton argued that the U.S. federal government needed the power to tax in order to collect revenue.

In conclusion, I wish to offer several thought-provoking quotes from Mr. Johnson:

"He knows not his own strength who hath not met adversity."

"To keep your secret is wisdom; to expect others to keep it is folly."

and finally, "Whatever you have, spend less."

These fine words come from Stratford's founding father who will no longer be a forgotten founding father thanks to the incredible efforts of volunteers such as Ethan and Barbara Stewart.



Patriots In Christ Church Graveyard

By Tom Callinan • © 2017 – CANNU YUSIC, LTD.

In 2017 we gathered, for patriots interred below,
To make sure that they would **not** be forgotten, for what they did – so long
ago.

Among the many buried in Christ Church graveyard,
In Stratford, near Long Island Sound,
Are men who served in our War of Independence, from the British Crown.

REFRAIN:

***Some served upon the battlefield for the cause of LIBERTY;
While others served behind the scenes – at home or on the sea.***

At least eighteen such men, who lie below us, stood up, risking all –
Their lives, their treasure, and sacred honor – in response to FREEDOM's
call.

They shifted their allegiance, rejecting the monarchy;
As thirteen colonies, united – opposing tyranny. – ***REFRAIN***

*Bridge: One who lies here was a soldier of conscience,
A godly man, who saw PEACE the prize.
Guided by the words of *Matthew,
He urged restraint and compromise. – ***REFRAIN****

TAG: And what they did has made us FREE.

**Matthew 5:9 of the King James Version of The Bible:*

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Benediction

Almighty God, as we go from here, may this marker remind all who pass by of the devotion and dedication of all who have made our nation great. May all be humbled and encouraged by this marker to esteem and perpetuate these virtues with our lives. May the peace of God, which surpasses all, guard our hearts and minds in the ties of friendship and unity of love. Amen

SAR Recessional

SAR reccessional: "Until we meet again, let us remember our obligations to our forefathers who gave us our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court and a nation of free men."

This Gate Is the Gift of Columbia University in the City of New York

In Grateful Memory of Samuel Johnson

The First President of King's College In the Province of New York

1754 - 1763 A.D.



And of His Son, William Samuel Johnson

the

First President of Columbia College in the City of New York

1787 - 1800 A.D.

Whose Graves Are Within This Cemetery.

**"Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge
of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions."**

Following the grave marking ceremony

Please join us for refreshments in the Christ Episcopal Church hall next door on the corner of Main street and Academy Hill street.



Special Thanks

To Columbia University for their generous donation of \$10,000 for the restoration of the cemetery.

We appreciate the donation of their time and services

Mayor John Harkins - The Town of Stratford

Mark Bernier - County Meadow Tree Service

Tom Callinan – Connecticut State Troubadour

Ray Scholl – Superintendent of Milford Cemetery

Jim Bria – Artista Studios & Monument Works

Carl Selvaggi, Jr. – Carl's Monuments LLC

Leo Chavez – repaired front gate pillars

The 6th Connecticut Regiment