

— HISTORY —

Jonathan Trumbull: 'a well spent life' in service to his country

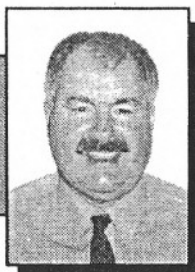
Part one of four

Connecticut Gov. Jonathan Trumbull (1710-85) is one of Lebanon's best-known sons. He was the son of Joseph Trumbull (1678-1755), a farmer and merchant who arrived in Lebanon in 1704. Jonathan Trumbull's elder brother, Joseph Trumbull Jr. (1705-32), worked in the family business.

Jonathan Trumbull was sent to Harvard to prepare for the ministry but decided to enter the family business. In 1732 Joseph Trumbull Jr. was lost at sea in the merchant ship Lebanon en route to Barbados. Jonathan Trumbull gradually took over his father's business and had an extensive overseas trade.

His experience as a merchant was put into use during the French and Indian War, where he helped supply the British Army, and during the Revolutionary War when he supplied the Continental Army.

Trumbull was first elected to the



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General Assembly in 1733 and in 1740 to the upper house. From 1766 to 1769 he served as Connecticut's deputy governor, and from 1769 to 1784, Trumbull was Connecticut's Governor, and a significant figure in America's revolutionary history.

Jonathan Trumbull supplied the Continental Army with provisions, and arranged for numerous cattle to supply Washington's starving troops in Valley Forge and Morristown.

Thanks to Trumbull, Connecticut became known as the "Provisions State" for his Herculean efforts to supply the beleaguered Continental Army throughout the war. When

Trumbull died, Washington wrote of him, "A long and well spent life in the service of his country, places Governor Trumbull among the first of patriots." Jonathan Trumbull's fame tends to overshadow the lives and careers of his six children.

He married into a New England aristocracy. His wife, Faith Robinson, was descended from New England's earliest settlers, and their marriage produced six children: Joseph (1737-78), Jonathan Jr. (1740-1809), Faith (1743-75), Mary (1745-1831), David (1751-1822) and John (1756-1843), the famous early American painter.

Gov. Trumbull's oldest child Joseph served as the first commissary general of the Continental Army from 1775 to 1777. Joseph resigned after a clash with Gen. Schuyler over policy and was then appointed to the War Board. He became ill from overwork in February 1778 and died five months later.

Gov. Trumbull's second son, Jonathan Jr., had an illustrious political career. He was paymaster general of the Northern Army, comptroller of the U.S. Treasury, 1778 to 1779, and then became George Washington's personal secretary from 1781 to 1783.

He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1789 to 1795, and from 1791 to 1793, was the speaker of the house. From 1795 to 1796 Trumbull Jr. was a U.S. senator, resigning to become lieutenant governor.

From 1797 until his death in 1809, he was Connecticut's governor, the second Trumbull to hold the post.

Jonathan Trumbull Jr.'s career flourished throughout the revolutionary period, and he engaged



A portrait of Faith Trumbull and Jonathan Trumbull Sr. painted in Lebanon by their son John Trumbull in 1778.

master builder Isaac Fitch to transform his house in Lebanon into a house suitable for a leading national and state figure.

After the war, he even had a piazza constructed across the front of the house in imitation of Mount Vernon, a place he knew from his visits as Washington's secretary.

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