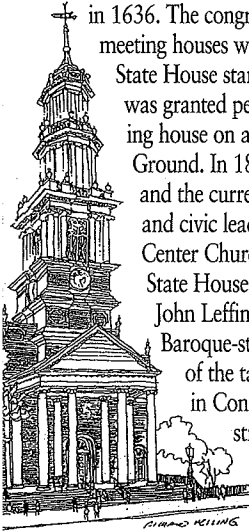


A Walking Tour of the Ancient Burying Ground

#1 Center Church Fourth Meeting House, 1807

The Center Church Meeting House is home to the First Church of Christ in Hartford, founded in 1632 in Newtown (now Cambridge), Massachusetts. The Reverend Thomas Hooker, the congregation's first minister, and his followers subsequently settled in Hartford in 1636. The congregation's first and second meeting houses were located near where the Old State House stands today. In 1737 the Society was granted permission to erect a new meeting house on a corner of the Ancient Burying Ground. In 1807 that structure was razed and the current one constructed. Art patron and civic leader Daniel Wadsworth designed Center Church which, like Hartford's Old State House, was built by architect/builder John Leffingwell. The soaring ornate white Baroque-style three-stage spire made it one of the tallest and most opulent structures in Connecticut at the time of its construction. The interior features five stained-glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany.



#2 African-American Memorial

Sacred to the Memory of the Three Hundred or more AFRICAN AMERICANS Free People, Slaves, and five Black Governors Who rest in Unmarked Graves in Hartford's Ancient Burying Ground 1640-1810

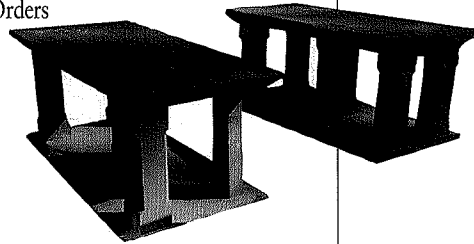
The Ancient Burying Ground acts as a catalyst for new discoveries and deeper insight into Hartford and Connecticut history. This stone represents a recent chapter in that continuing process of better understanding the past. Erected in 1998 through the efforts of Hartford schoolchildren, it commemorates 63 African Americans known to have been interred in the Ancient Burying Ground, as well as more than 250 others believed to lie here.

Most African Americans in colonial Hartford were slaves, as were the few surviving Native

#4 The Reverend Thomas Hooker (1586-1647)

IN MEMORY OF THE REV. THOMAS HOOKER WHO IN 1636 WITH HIS ASSISTANT MR. STONE REMOVED TO HARTFORD WITH ABOUT 100 PERSONS WHERE HE PLANTED YE FIRST CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT AN ELOQUENT, ABLE & FAITHFUL MINISTER OF CHRIST HE DIED JULY 7TH, 1647. AET LXI.

The Reverend Thomas Hooker, considered Hartford's Founding Father, led members of his Puritan congregation on a 100-mile trek through the wilderness from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to settle Hartford in 1636. A sermon he preached in 1638 was the basis for the Fundamental Orders, a communal framework of self-government adopted by the Connecticut River towns of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield, that drew its authority from the will of the citizenry rather than the divine right of kings. Some historians consider the Fundamental Orders the first written constitution in history. This tablestone dates from the first half of the 1700s.



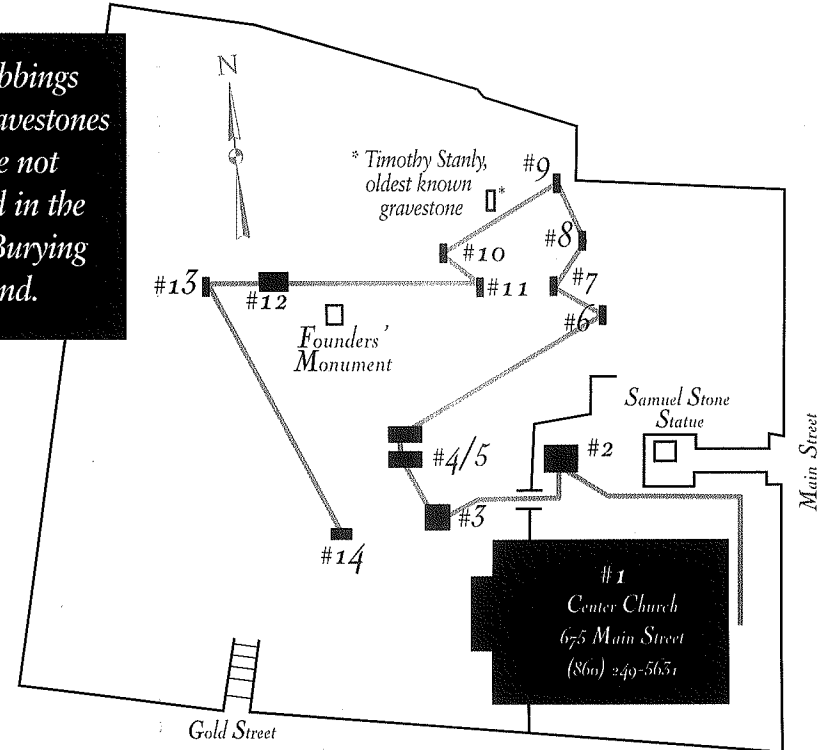
#5 The Reverend Samuel Stone (1602-1663)

AN EPITAPH ON MR. SAMUEL STONE, DECEASED YE 61 YEARS OF HIS AGE JULY 20, 1663

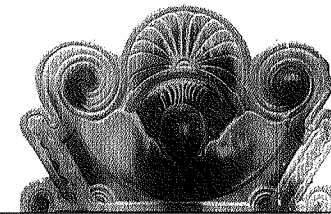
NEW ENGLANDS GLORY & HER RADIANT CROWN, WAS HE WHO NOW IN SOFTEST BED OF DOWNE TIL GLORIOUS RESURRECTION MORNE APPEAR DOETH SAFELY, SWEETELY, SLEEPE IN JESUS HERE, IN NATURES SOLID ART, AND REASONING WELL 'TIS KNOWNE, BEYOND COMPARE, HE DID EXCELL ERRORS CORRUPT, BY SINNEWOUS DISPUTE, HE DID OPPUGNE, AND CLEARLY THEM CONFUTE: ABOVE ALL THINGS HE CHRIST HIS LORD PREFERD, HARTFORD; THY RICHEST JEWEL'S HERE INTERRED

The Reverend Samuel Stone fled religious oppression of Puritans in England to come to the New World with Thomas Hooker. Stone negotiated the purchase of Hartford from the Suckiag Indians, and became one of the settlement's most influential founders.

Stone rubbings damage gravestones and are not permitted in the Ancient Burying Ground.



#8 Captain Israel Seymour (1735-1784)



Here Lies Interd the Remains of Capt. Israel Seymour who was kill'd by Lightning Augst. 14th 1784, in ye 49th year of his Age. With awful rev'rence GOD adore Whose holy Hand with Sov'reign pow'r Did in an Instant stop his Breath And clos'd his Eyes in Sleep of Death

The literally shocking manner of Captain Israel Seymour's death is conveyed by the words on his gravestone. Captain Seymour was in his house when, according to the

Elizabeth gave birth to six children. Richard insisted he was not the father of the firstborn, which had been conceived before their wedding.

In 1689 Richard, now a prosperous and powerful attorney, petitioned the Connecticut General Court for a divorce from Elizabeth, on the grounds of insanity and adultery. There is evidence that Richard, too, had committed adultery.

The Court denied Richard's request, but he petitioned again in 1691, claiming Elizabeth had threatened "to Cut my throat when I was Asleep." Richard had good reason to take his wife seriously, for her family had a history of homicidal insanity, including a brother who murdered their sister in a deranged fit of anger. This time the Court granted the divorce.

Within months Richard, 44, wed 27-year-old Mary Talcott, with whom records suggest he had committed adultery. The couple were apparently able to live down the scandal that preceded their marriage, for both were