

June 1972

Gager

Early Norwich Settlers

By Philip A. Johnson

(Mr. Philip A. Johnson is a native of Norwich and a graduate of Yale in 1914. He spent his business years in the textile manufacturing business from which he retired in 1946. Since then he has been connected with various civic enterprises in Norwich and in the State of Connecticut. He is currently President of the Society of the Founders of Norwich, Connecticut, Inc.; a trustee of the Antiquarian & Bookmarks Society; a member of the Connecticut Historical Commission, the Connecticut Committee for the National Bicentennial Celebration in 1976 and of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies.)

I am not a genealogist and therefore cannot make any contribution along that line. In the Founders Society we have over 1,000 members scattered through 38 states. The early settlers were prolific - families of ten or twelve children were not at all unusual. The younger generations struck out into new territory in every direction. That is why our membership is so widely distributed. Many of these families take an interest in their forebears. Every summer visitors come to Norwich to visit the old burying ground in Norwichtown - to identify their family's early home, if possible - to visit historic shrines - and absorb the historical atmosphere of Old Norwich.

Originally, to be a member of the Founders, one had to establish descent from one of the 35 founders or early settlers to whom "home lots" were also assigned. The names of the 35 Founders as listed in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Society are:

Rev. James Fitch
Major John Mason
Thomas Adgate
Robert Allyn
William Backus
William Backus, Jr.
John Baldwin
Thomas Bingham
John Birchard
Thomas Bliss
Morgan Bowers
John Bradford
Hugh Calkins
John Calkins
Richard Edgerton
John Gager
Francis Griswold

Thomas Howard
Christopher Huntington
Simon Huntington
William Hyde
Samuel Hyde
Thomas Leffingwell
John Olmstead
John Peese
John Post
Thomas Post
Josiah Reed
John Reynolds
Jonathan Royce
Nehemiah Smith
John Tracy
Thomas Tracy
Robert Wade
Thomas Waterman



*Dr. William Gager
on the "Arbella" with Gov. Winthrop
in 1630 - Died some year
also wife & 2 children*

*left one son
John went to Saybrook then in
1648 to New London with John
Winthrop Jr. & in 1660 to Norwich
where he was a "Freeman" in 1675
In 1650 m. Elizabeth - d. 10 Dec 1703
1 son, Samuel, 6 daughters
Capt.
 Hannah Gager m. Daniel Brewster
b Feb 1666 m. 23 Dec 1686 d 25 Sept 1727*