



In-Depth First Settler Profile:
James Stanclift (1686) /
Mary (Tinker) (Waller) Stanclift

Name: James Stanclift (also spelled Stancliff)

Birth: Abt. 1639, Yorkshire, England (*Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*)

Emigration: To Lyme, Conn. by 1684; Middletown, Conn. before 1689 (*Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Connecticut*)

Death: October 2, 1712 (Frank Farnsworth Starr files at the Middlesex County Historical Society, Middletown, Conn.) or October 3, 1712, Middletown, Conn. (SAV) [**Compiler's note:** October 3 is implausible since administration was granted to the widow on that date (MAN vol. 2, p. 303).]

Occupation and public service: Stone carver/mason (HMC)

Marriage: m. Mary (Tinker) Waller, widow of William Waller, Jr., December 1685, Lyme, Conn. (b. July 2, 1653, Boston, Mass.; d. December 30, 1712, East Middletown, Conn.) She was the daughter of John Tinker and Alice (Smith) Tinker of Boston, Mass. and New London, Conn. She had three daughters (Elizabeth, Mary, and Alice Waller) by her first husband. (SAV; NEHGS vol. 149, p. 417; *Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*)

Parents: Unknown

Children: (BCVR; *Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*) [**Compiler's note:** James Stanclift did not have a daughter named Mary Stanclift; the Mary who was baptized on March 4, 1693/4 was his step-daughter Mary Waller.]

(1) William Stanclift, b. September 25, 1686, Lyme, Conn.; d. January 26, 1761, East Middletown, Conn.; m.(1) Olive (Stanborough) Wright, widow of Jonas Wright, March 30, 1710, Middletown, Conn. (1 child); m.(2) Esther Adams, October 5, 1721, Hartford, Conn. (9 children) [**Compiler's note:** BCVR lists both 1686 and 1687 for his birth; "William Stanclift d. Jan. 26, 1761 ae 74." (Cemetery Transcriptions from the NEHGS Manuscript Collections; Old Cemetery, Portland, Conn.).]

(2) Martha Stanclift, b. December 12, 1688, Lyme, Conn.; d. November 8, 1725, East Middletown, Conn.; m. Thomas Bevin, abt. 1710, Middletown, Conn. (6 children) [**Compiler's note:** "Ma[broken], wife of Thomas Beuin, daughter of James & Mary St[broken], d. Nov. 8, 1725, in 37th yr." (Cemetery Transcriptions from the NEHGS Manuscript Collections; Old Cemetery, Portland, Conn.) "Her gravestone was unique and cut by her brother, William. It has a full face skull and decoration on the side panels." (*Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*)]

(3) James Stanclift, b. March 24, 1691/2, Middletown, Conn.; d. January 1, 1772, East Middletown, Conn.; m. Abigail Bevin, April 8, 1714, Middletown, Conn. (11 children) [**Compiler's**

note: "James Stanclift d. Jan. 1, 1772, in 81st yr." (Cemetery Transcriptions from the NEHGS Manuscript Collections; Old Cemetery, Portland, Conn.)]

(4) Sarah Stanclift, b. December 8, 1695, Middletown, Conn.; d. unknown; m. Nathaniel Chadwick, abt. 1715, Middletown or Lyme, Conn. (8 children) [**Compiler's note:** She was baptized on December 9, 1694, so the record in BCVR is probably incorrect; she was mentioned in her husband's 1759 will in Lyme, Conn. (*Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*)]

Property/Residence: On May 2, 1690, "Land bought of Richard Goodall lying one the East Sid the Great Riuer Containing three acres" bounded north on the highway west on the common land east and south on Richard Goodale; on May 3, 1690, "Land on the East Sid the great Riuer Lying upon the Rocks Containing fourty nine Rods: Lying in a Square being Seauen Rods in bredth & Seauen Rods in Length measured from the top of the bank of the Riuer and So Eastward Seauen Rods bounded on the Great Riuer West and on the Comon or towne Land East north & South;" on June 6, 1690, "Land bought of the town lying one the East Sid the Great Riuer neare to the Sd Standclifts hous contening six acres" bounded east on William Thompson, Henry Cole, and James Cole west on a highway south on the commons and north on John Stow (MLR vol. 1, p. 97); on June 17, 1708, Edward Durant of Boston son of George Durant late of Middletown to James Stancliff six acres of pond meadow on the east side of the Great River. (MLR vol. 2, p. 241)

Will: Vol. 2, p. 303 (MAN). (Estate inventory taken October 15, 1712: 191-03-10, i.e., 191 pounds); on October 3, 1712, "Adms. granted to Mary Stanclift, the widow, and William Stanclift, the son of sd. decd." On April 4, 1713, agreement "between William Stanclift of the one part and James Stanclift of the other part, both of the Town of Middletown ... on the estate of their father, James Stanclift, late of Middletown, decd." for the sum of 31 pounds paid by William Stanclift to James Stanclift conveyed "9 acres of upland in the Township of Middletown, on the east side of the Great River, lying between lands of Mr. John Hamlin, Esq., and lands of Ebenezer Hurlbut, and also the 1-2 or 2nd part of a piece of meadow land at the upper end of Bushy Pond, which their father bought of Ned Durin, containing about 7 acres, and also the 1-2 of the quarry containing in the whole half one acre ..."

Burial Location: Riverside Cemetery, Middletown, Conn. (*Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Conn.*); "Mary Stanclift died Dec. 30, 1712, age bout 58 yrs." (*Hale Collection of Cemetery Inscriptions*, Middletown, Conn.; McDonough Cemetery no. 711-19, p. 647)

Notes:

(CAF): "Sketch of Portland ... The first two persons who settled in Portland were James Stancliff and John Gill. The former had a house on the bank of the river at the end of Portland street about 1690, perhaps a little earlier. The latter had a house nor far from him about the same time."



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(SAV): “STANCLIFFE, JAMES, Middletown, had, says Mr. Parsons, betw. 1686 and 1712, William, Martha, James, Sarah, William, again, and James, again; but no date to either is seen. He d. 3 Oct. 1712, and his wid. of whose bapt. or fam. name knowl. is not gain. d. 30 Dec. foll. JAMES, Middletown, s. of the preced. m. 8 Apr. 1714, Abigail Bevans, prob. d. of Arthur, had Abigail; Mary; Martha; Sarah; James; Sibbil; and Benoni, wh. d 5 Mar. 1727. WILLIAM, Middletown, br. of the preced. m. 30 Mar. 1710, Olive, wid. of Jonas Wright, had James, b. 30 Sept. 1712. His w. d. 7 Nov. 1719, and he m. 5 Oct. 1721, Esther Adams of Hartford, had William, 1722; Samuel, 1724; Oliver, 1726; Esther, 1727; Jerusha, 1730; Solomon, 1732; Josiah, 1734; Olive., 1737; and Joseph, 1789, as in Geneal. Reg. XIV. 133.” **[Compiler’s note:** James and Mary Stancliff had only two sons; however, the births of their sons are recorded in two different volumes of the land records (MLR vol. 1, p. 20 and vol. 2, p. 26).]

(TAG): “Mary Waller, widow & adm’x of estate of William Waller, to ‘my brothers’ Amose tinker & John Waller of Lyme, in trust for my three daus. Elizabeth, Mary & Alice Waller, under age, 17 Dec. 1685 [p. 154].” (vol. 10, p. 225)

(NEHGSR): “Mary Tinker ... m. (2) ca. Dec. 1685, JAMES STANCLIFF, a stonemason, of Lyme, who d. at Middletown, Conn., 3 Oct. 1712. Proof of this marriage is found in a series of deeds recorded at Lyme, involving Mary’s Waller and Stancliff heirs. [Lyme Land Records, vol. 5, p. 278, p. 280, p. 363, vol. 6, p. 42, p. 43, p. 256; vol. 7, p. 148] (vol. 149, p. 423) **[Compiler’s note:** Names of children of Mary Tinker listed in this article erroneously included Mary Stancliff, b. 4 March 1693/4; confusion arose from misinterpretation of the church records; Mary Waller, daughter of Mary Tinker was baptized on that date.]

(NEHGSR): Taxes under Governor Andros in Lyme, Conn. taken on August 27, 1688, an account of each man’s estate real and personal with assessment of one penny upon the pound included, “James ffancliff, 31 [pounds],” with house, land and trade, 1 horse, 1 cow and 1 sow (vol. 34, p. 379 & 381)

(HMC): “The first inhabitant of Portland mentioned is James Stancliff. February 24th 1686-7, the town ‘approved of the agreement made by the selectmen with James Stancliff, concerning the building the chimneys, and other stone work, and that when the work is finished the town empower the selectmen to give the said James Stancliff legal assurance of a parcel of land upon the rocks, according to their agreement;’ and it was recorded to James Stancliff, May 3d 1690, ‘on a small parcel of land on the east side the great River, Lying upon the Rocks, containing fourty nine rods, Lying in a square, being seaven Rods in breath, & seaven Rods in Length, measured from the top of the bank of the River and so easward seaven Rods bounded on the great River west, and on the Common or town land east, north, and south.’ His house stood there, ‘founded upon the rock,’ in 1690. How long it had

stood there then there are no means of knowing. The town, in 1696, granted him another half acre, ‘on the south side his lot not intruding upon the Rocks.’ This house stood on what is now Middlesex Quarry, and at least some part of it was standing 50 years ago ... Prior to 1700 there were but three houses in Portland. James Stancliff had built upon the river bank, opposite Middletown.”

(Records of First Church of Christ, Congregational, Middletown, Connecticut, 1668-1870): On November 26, 1693, “Mary wife of James Stantliffe” admitted to full communion (p. 43); on March 4, 1693/4, “William, James, Mary & Martha ye children of our sister (ye wife of James) Stantliffe” baptized (p. 44); on December 9, 1694, “Sarah daughter of Mary (ye wife of James) Stantliffe” baptized (p. 45); on March 17, 1694/5, “There was also baptised Elizabeth Wosler [Compiler’s note: Corrected to Waller in a different handwriting] ye daughter of our sister Mary Stantliffe the sd Eliz. owning covenant.” (p. 45); on October 31, 1697, “Mary Waller made publick confession of her sin of fornication the church so far accepted thereof as to suspend admonition & wait for ye fruit of Repentence.” (p. 51); on November 14, 1697, John son of Mary Waller baptized, reputed father being John Thomas (p. 51) **[Compiler’s note:** Mary Waller was the daughter of William and Mary (Tinker) Waller who was born abt. 1679 (NEHGSR vol. 149, p. 423) and baptized on March 4, 1693/4 with her half-brothers and half-sister. James Stancliff was not a member of the Church of Christ.]

(MLR): “John Thomas being Illegittimate: son to John Thomas & mary Waller was born Feburary the: 9th: 1697:” (vol. 1, p. 20)

(MLR): “James Stancliff plantf did recover judgmt against John Thomas defent at a Court of pleas held in Hartford march the 2d: 1698 for ten pounds in cash and cost of Court twenty nine shillings ... This Execution was served on the abovementioned John Thomas for land on the East side the river ... and delivered to said Stancliff march the 19th 1699 or 1700 ... a parcel of Land on the east side the Great River in Midletown conteineing about seventeen acres ... belonging to the heirs of James Stancliff deceasd which lands decended to the sd James Stancliff by Judgment of Court & the Execution abovesd from John Thomas which land has been quietly & peaceably possesst by the sd James Stancliff & his heirs full twenty & two years.” (vol. 2, p. 58)

(MLR): On March 31, 1704, James Stancliff and John Thomas in consideration of the sum of six pounds and ten shillings conveyed to Noadiah Russell thirteen acres on the east side of the Great River bounded east by the highway going to Wongog north on John Hamlin west by swamp land of said Noadiah Russell and south by land of the Browns. (vol. 2, p. 130); on December 21, 1710, James Stancliff “for the good affection which he bareth to his sonne William Stancliff” conveyed eight acres lying on the east side of the Great River bounded east on a highway west on his own land north on Mr. Hamlin and south on Ebenezer Hurlbut. (vol. 3, p. 36)



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(MLR): On January 29, 1707/8, Joshua Gill of Middletown, in consideration of a half mile lot which the grantees purchased from John Clark and his wife of Farmington and also for four pounds, sold to John Gill, Sr., George Stocking, William Cornel, Sr., Joseph Warner, Jonathan Smith, Ebenezer Smith, Francis Smith, Joseph Long, Jonathan Stedd, Jonas Wright, Thomas Wright, John Miller, Ephraim Wilcox, James Stanclift, Nathaniel Savage, Samuel Bidwell, Jr., Jacob Cornell, Jr., Thomas Buck, Ebenezer Hurlbutt, Richard Gill, Ebenezer Gill, John Gill, Jr., and the said Joshua Gill, eighteen acres on the east side of the Great River where also the above purchasers do now inhabit and dwell. (vol. 2, p. 218)

(HMC): “The oldest record now extant, kept by Samuel Hall, gives an account for the first meeting of the inhabitants on the east side of the river, March 2d 1710, for the building of a meeting house for the preaching of the gospel. A building committee was appointed, and 20 men pledged themselves to pay their equal proportion, according to their estates, in a bond of £20. This agreement was signed by John Gill, William Cornwall sen., Samuel Hall, Nathaniel Savage, Ebenezer Smith, Shamgar Barnes, Ephraim Wilcock, William Stancliff, Jonathan Gleed, Richard Gill, Coriah Bacon, Thomas Wright, John Begin, George Stocken, David Strickland, Thomas Buck, Joseph Warner, Ebenezer Hurlbut, and John Meer.”

(HMC): “In 1712-13, one acre of land was granted the inhabitants 'ye East side ye great river' between the land of James Stancliff and the river for a burying place. This was the old quarry burying ground, the remains of which have been removed and located east of the present Episcopal Cemetery.”

(MLR): On June 18, 1714, William Stanclift “in consideration of a Legacy due his brother James Stanclift from the Estate of their father James Stanclift Deceasd” conveyed to said James Stanclift parcels of land on the east side of the Great River, including nine acres of upland by Ebenezer Hulburt; three acres lying at the upper end of Bushy Pond being one half “of that Lottment or perciel of Lane which there father bought of Edward Durant;” twenty six rods of “quary” at the north end of the house bounded west on the Great River. (vol. 3, p. 136); on October 30, 1714, William Stanclift of Middletown, stone cutter, and Olive his wife in consideration of one hundred pounds conveyed to William Webster of Boston six acres of upland and quarry, “which sd land was formerly granted to James Stanclift father of the said William and James by the selectmen of the said town of Middletown;” half part of land called pond or meadow lying on the eastern side of the Great River containing ten acres “all of which Land the said James Stanclift ye father formerly purchased of Mr. Edward Durant son of George Durant;” William Stanclift appeared before Paul Dudley, Justice of the Peace in Boston “and acknowledged the above written Instrumt to be his act & deed.” (vol. 3, p. 163-164)

For further reading:

Descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Connecticut and Allied Families, by Sherry Smith Stancliff and Robert C. Stancliff (Cincinnati, Ohio: S. S. Research, 1995.)

“The English Ancestry of the Merwin and Tinker Families of New England Part Two: John Tinker of Boston and Lancaster, Massachusetts, and Windsor and New London, Connecticut,” *NEHGSR*, volume 149 (October 1995), p. 401-432.

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Abbreviation code used in SMFSD
biographical sketches and in-depth profiles:

- (MVR)** Middletown Vital Records (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)
- (BCVR)** *The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records* (original index at Connecticut State Library, Hartford, Conn.; printed index available from Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.; digitized index available on CD-Rom as part of *The Ricker Compilation of Vital Records of Early Connecticut*, Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, Md.)
- (MLR)** *Middletown Land Records* (originals at Middletown City Hall, Middletown, Conn.; also available on microfilm at Russell Library, Middletown, Conn.)
- (MAN)** *Digest of Connecticut Probate Records*, Hartford District (Manwaring, Charles William. *A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records*. Originally published 1904-1906; reprinted 1995, Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995.)
- (CBRMC)** *Commemorative Biographical Record of Middlesex County, Connecticut, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and Many of the Early Settled Families*. Chicago, Ill.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1903.
- (MUH)** *Middletown Upper Houses* (Adams, Charles C. *Middletown Upper Houses, A History of the North Society of Middletown, Connecticut from 1650 to 1800 with Genealogical and Biographical Chapters on Early Families*. New York, N.Y.: The Grafton Press, 1908.)
- (FFS)** Frank Farnsworth Starr (“The Settlers of Mattabesec 1650-1660,” *Middletown Penny Press*, Oct. 11, 1900; also published in the *Middletown Tribune* 250th Anniversary supplement.)

- (CAF)** *Centennial Address of Rev. David Field*. (Field, David D. *Centennial Address: With Historical Sketches of Cromwell, Portland, Chatham, Middle Haddam, Middletown, and its Parishes*. Middletown, Conn.: W.B. Casey, 1853.)
- (GMB)** *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633* (Anderson, Robert Charles, FASG. *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1633, Vol. I-III*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1996.)
- (SAV)** *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (Savage, James. *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, Showing Three Generations of Those Who Came Before May, 1692, on the Basis of Farmer's Register*. Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Co., 1860-1862.)
- (GFHC)** *Genealogical & Family History of the State of Connecticut* (Cutter, William Richard. *Genealogical and Family History of the State of Connecticut: A Record of the Achievements of Her People in the Making of a Commonwealth and the Founding of a Nation*. New York, N.Y.: Lewis Publishing Co., 1911.)
- (HMC)** *The History of Middlesex County* (Henry Whittemore, ed. *The History of Middlesex County 1635-1885*. New York, N.Y.: J.H. Beers & Co., 1884)
- (RPCC)** *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut, 1639-1663* (Adams, Arthur W., ed. *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663*. Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Historical Society, 1928.)
- (HCCM)** *Hartford County Court Minutes, 1663-1687* (Ullmann, Helen Schatvet, CG, FASG., ed. *Hartford County, Conn., County Court Minutes, Vol. 3 & 4, 1663-1687, 1697*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2005.)
- (NEHGSR)** *NEHGS Register (New England Historical and Genealogical Register)*. Boston, Mass.: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1847-2007.) (Online database available at NewEnglandAncestors.org)
- (TAG)** *The American Genealogist* (articles by Donald Lines Jacobus, ed., 1922-1971) (*The American Genealogist*. New Haven, Conn.: D.L. Jacobus, 1922-1971)