



In-Depth First Settler Profile: ***Samuel Stow (1651) / Hope (Fletcher) Stow***

Name: Samuel Stow

Birth: February 8, 1623, Biddenden, Kent, England (Parish Register; see "Genealogical Research in England: Stowe," by Elizabeth French, *NEHGS Register*, Vol. 70, October 1916, pg. 347-349).

Emigration: He arrived in Boston May 17, 1634 with his parents on the Elizabeth Bonaventure. (*NEHGS Register*, Vol. 70, p. 348) To Middletown by November 1652. (FFS)

Death: May 8, 1704, Middletown, Conn. (MVR)

Occupation & Public Service: Minister; founder and first pastor of the First Ecclesiastical Society in Middletown. In November, 1652, the town meeting was held at his house. "In 1668 he was chosen rate maker, and in 1679/80, the Townsmen were ordered 'to make Adres to Mr. Stow in order to being a Schoollmaster for the years insuing.'" (FFS)

Marriage: m. Hope Fletcher, May 8, 1649, Chelmsford, Mass. (b. 1624/25, England; d. before 1702, Middletown, Conn.) She was a daughter of William Fletcher, of Chelmsford, Mass. ("Genealogical Research in England: Stowe," by Elizabeth French, *NEHGS Register*, Vol. 70, October 1916, pg. 347-349).

Parents: John Stow (1581-1643) & Elizabeth Bigg (1590-1638) of Biddenden, Kent, England; to Boston, Mass., 1634. (*NEHGS Register*, Vol. 70, p. 348)

Children (MVR, Land Records, vol. 1, page 22; BCVR) (*The Wetmore Family of America*, by James C. Wetmore. Albany, N.Y.: Munsell & Howland, 1861) (*Families of Ancient New Haven*, Donald Lines Jacobus. Baltimore, Genealogical Pub. Co., 1974) Vol. 8, pg. 1854.):

(1) John Stow, b. June 16, 1650, Charlestown, Mass. (also recorded at Middletown, Conn.); d. June 30, 1732; m. Esther Cornwell, about 1678, Middletown, Conn. (3 children)

(2) Ichabod Stow, b. February 20, 1652/3, Middletown, Conn.; d. January 25, 1695, Middletown, Conn.; m. Mary Atwater, October 22, 1688, Middletown, Conn. (2 children)

(3) Hope Stow, b. February 4, 1656/7, Middletown, Conn.; d. November 17, 1678, Middletown, Conn.; m. Abraham Smith, February 13, 1677 (1 child)

(4) Dorothy Stow, b. August 1, 1659, Middletown, Conn.; d. July 14, 1698; m. Jonathan Gilbert, June 22, 1679, Middletown, Conn. (9 children)

(5) Elizabeth Stow, b. August 11, 1662, Middletown, Conn.; d. February 21, 1738, Middletown, Conn.; m. Maybee Barnes, November 19, 1691, Middletown, Conn. (7 children) (*Families of Ancient New Haven*. Jacobus, 1974)

(6) Thankful Stow, b. May 5, 1664, Middletown, Conn.; d. after 1719, New Haven, Conn.; m. William Trowbridge, 1687, Middletown, Conn. (4 children) (*Families of Ancient New Haven*, Donald Lines Jacobus. Baltimore, Genealogical Pub. Co., 1974) Vol. 8, pg. 1854.)

(7) Rachel Stow, b. March 13 MAR 1666/7, Middletown, Conn.; d. 1723, Middletown, Conn.; m. Israhiah Wetmore, May 13, 1692, Middletown, Conn. (7 children)

(8) Margaret Stow, b. about 1668, Middletown, Conn.; d. February 21, 1710, Middletown, Conn.; m. Beriah Wetmore, September 1, 1692, Middletown, Conn. (7 children)

Residence/Property: "He held during his life, 1374 acres of land, some of which he deeded to his children, some he gave instructions in his will that it be sold, and the proceeds be used to present a Bible to each of the numerous young men among his kindred bearing his name. He also bequeathed a large tract in Newfield and Westfield to the town, and thus laid the foundation of the first free schools here, an example which was followed by Nathaniel White and Jasper Clements. These bequests combined are the source of the present town school fund." (HMC)

Will: Vol. 2, p. 120 (MAN). (Estate inventory, February 20, 1704/5: 368-09-09, i.e. 368 pounds.)

Burial Location: Riverside Cemetery, Middletown, Conn. (HMC)

Notes:

(CAF): "Samuel Stow, who preached to the people of Middletown some years as a candidate for the ministry, I have very lately been informed by a friend, was not born in Concord, Mass., as represented on p. 48, but in Roxbury, and that he did not live in Concord until after he became a candidate. The probability therefore is that his brother Thomas STOW, if not his nephew, John STOW, were also born in Roxbury, Mass. Samuel Stow died May 8, 1704." (Field, pg. 147)

(FFS): "He was the minister of the town from his settlement here until 1659. Opposition to him had been growing for some time, which culminated in petitions to General Court, from him and his opponents. The Court authorized the town to employ some other minister, but gave him permission to preach to those who cared to hear him. ... From 1681 to 1685 he preached at Simsbury. ... In 1695 the General Court voted to return their thanks to Mr. Stow 'for his great paynes in preparing a History of the Analls of New England.'"

(SAV): "SAMUEL, Middletown, s. of John the first, b. in Eng. tho. Dr. Field in his valua. acco. of Middlesex Co. Conn. makes him native of Concord, wh. error he was led into by Shattuck, but it wd. have been impossib. had he recollect. the yr. of his gr. at Harv. 1645; and in his invalua. [[vol. 4, p. 218]] Memor. of Grad. Farmer, misled by the same high vouchers, erron. calls him s. of Thomas, instead of his



Samuel Stow (1651) / Hope (Fletcher) Stow

Page 2-2-2

br. He was freem. 1645, while undergr. but had his degr. few wks. aft.; went to preach at Middletown a. 1653, where no ch. was gather. for many yrs. and seems never to have been ord. but was the first and only min. there bef. 1668, by the gen. assem. as early as 1660, the town had been liberat. from contrib. to his support, on condit. of giv. him a recommend. to others. He, however, was well content with civil duties, tho. during Philip's war, as sev. yrs. bef. he preach. in various near towns, instead of more popular persons, wh. were sometimes invalid, or call. from their pulpits to accomp. the soldiers. By w. Hope, d. of William Fletcher he had John, b. at Charlestown, 16 June 1650; Ichabod, at M. 20 Feb. 1653; Hope, 4 Feb. 1657; Dorothy, 1 Aug. 1659, wh. m. Jonathan Gilbert sec. and d. 14 July 1698; Elizabeth 1 Aug. 1662; Thankful, 5 May 1664; Rachel, 13 Mar. 1667; and Margaret (nam. in the will of her f.) whose date of b. is not kn.; and he d. 8 May 1704, aged 82, says Judge Sewall. His will, of 13 Aug. 1702 is very minute, and enlarges our geneal. details by ment. of his br. Nathaniel's s. Samuel of his dec. br. Thomas's. Nathaniel, Thomas, and John, of wh. the latter being d. his heirs are ment. as also Samuel, s. of that neph. Thomas; beside his cous. Rev. James Pierpont, whose mo. was sis. of the testat. His w. was d. as was the younger of his two s. leav. only ch. Hope, and his oldest d. Hope, wh. m. 13 Feb. 1678, Abraham Smith, and d. 17 Nov. foll. only 5 days aft. the d. of her newborn inf. Aft. s. John, and the only ch. of Ichabod, therefore, of his own ch. only the five surv. ds. are to be looked for; Dorothy, wid. of Jonathan Gilbert; Elizabeth wh. had m. 1691, Maybee Barnes; Thankful, w. of William Trowbridge; Rachel, w. of I[z]rahiah Wetmore, m. 13 May 1692; and Margaret, w. of Beriah Wetmore."

(HMC): "Rev. Samuel Stow came to Mattabesett in 1651. He was the youngest of the four sons of John and Elizabeth Stow, who 'arrived at New England the 17th of the 3d month ano 1634,' and was then twelve years of age. He graduated in the first class of Harvard College, 1645, studied for the ministry, was employed in Massachusetts for a time, and on his removal here became the founder and pastor of the 'First Ecclesiastical Society' in this city, and was recognized by the General court as 'their engaged minister,' as recorded in volumes of the Colonial Records.

In March 1669 he made an appeal to the General Court (still extant) to settle differences that had arisen between him and his people, which resulted thus:

"That the people of Middletown are free from Mr. Stow as their engaged minister. 2dly. That the people of Middletown shall give to Mr. Stow Lrs Testimonial as drawn up by the worshipfull Governor in ye Courte. And Mr. Stow is not infringed of his liberty to preach in Middletown to such as will attend him, until there be a settled minister there. It is

ordered by this Court, that ye people Middletown shall pay unto Mr. Stow for his labour in ye ministry the year past 40 pounds, which is to be paid unto – by the 10th of April next." (Trumbull's Colonial Records, Vol. 1, pg. 361-362.)

He continued his work in various places, and founded churches. In 1680, twenty persons from Simsbury petitioned the Legislature thus: the petitioners 'having knowledge and tryall of Mr. Samuell Stow in ye labours of ye Word, & doctrine of ye Gospell, manifest their desire, for his continuance, to be a Pastor and Watchman over our Souls and ye Souls of ours, and ask ye countenance of the General Court to their settlement and order;' which petition was granted and the order given. (Col. Rec. Vol. III, p. 191)

He married Hope Fletcher, the daughter of William Fletcher, of Chelmsford, Mass. With the exception of John, his oldest son, born at Charlestown, Mass., June 16th 1650, his children were all born here. (His home lot consisted of five acres, situated on the northwest corner of Main and Washington streets, running west on the last-names to what is now Pearl, or near there, and the remainder on Main street.) After his retirement from the work of the ministry, he wrote several books for the press, one of which was probably the earliest history of New England, and is not know known to be extant, another on the conversion of the Jews, all of which appear in the inventory of his estate. He held during his life, 1374 acres of land, some of which he deeded to his children, some he gave instructions in his will that it be sold, and the proceeds be used to present a Bible to each of the numerous young men among his kindred bearing his name. He also bequeathed a large tract in Newfield and Westfield to the town, and thus laid the foundation of the first free schools here, an example which was followed by Nathaniel White and Jasper Clements. These bequests combined are the source of the present town school fund.

As his two sons died without male heirs, the name of Stow is extinct in his line, but the standing of his descendants at this day shows the fulfillment of the promise of 'the jealous God' who 'sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.'

He died at Middletown, May 8 1704, aged 82. The table monument in the Riverside Burying Ground, supposed to be his, is devoid of any inscription, time and the elements combined having left the surface smooth."

(Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663): "A perticular Court at Hartford 26th Aug 1657: The testimony of William Markum & John Wilcox, vpon oath, that Mr. Stow was a contentious pestilent person, and that that which he preached was not worth hearing."

"At a quarter Court held at Sept. 57: John Halls charge of Mr. Stow, that Mr. Stow did expresse, that those that were not in vissible Couenant are dogs & among dogs and in the kingdome of Sathan, & at Sathans comand. George Hub-



Samuel Stow (1651) / Hope (Fletcher) Stow
Page 3-3-3

bard's testimony: That all those that were not the vissible subjects of the kingdome of Christ were the vissible subjects of the kingdome of Sathan. It is being testified to this Court that John Hall did reproack Mr. Stow, by saying, that hee was a pestilent person, a plague to the place, and that what hee preached was not woorth hearing. Wherevppon the Court doth censure the said Hall to bee publickly reprovud by the

Magistrate at the next lecture at Wethersfield and to find suretyes for his good behavior, and to pay the wittnesses that attended the businesse.”

For further reading:

NEHGS *Register*, Vol. 70, Oct. 1916, pg. 347-349.

The History of Middlesex County 1635-1885, J. H. Beers & Co., New York, 1884.

VERIFY - VERIFY - VERIFY

***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)