

**THE STORY OF THE MEMORIAL IN  
HONOR OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE  
TOWN OF MILFORD: ERECTED BY THEIR  
DESCENDANTS AND THE CITIZENS OF  
MILFORD. DEDICATED AUGUST 28TH,  
1889, THE TOWN'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649749188

The Story of the Memorial in Honor of the Founders of the Town of Milford: Erected by Their Descendants and the Citizens of Milford. Dedicated August 28th, 1889, the Town's 250th Anniversary by Nathan G. Pond

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**NATHAN G. POND**

**THE STORY OF THE MEMORIAL IN  
HONOR OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE  
TOWN OF MILFORD: ERECTED BY THEIR  
DESCENDANTS AND THE CITIZENS OF  
MILFORD. DEDICATED AUGUST 28TH,  
1889, THE TOWN'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY**



## THE STORY OF THE MEMORIAL.

---

As the commencement of the 250th Year of Milford's history drew near, the people took their first official action in recognition of its importance, at its Annual Town Meeting, in Oct., 1888, by appointing a committee to act with a committee to be appointed by the First Church, and with their joint action make proper arrangements for celebrating the event. The Town Committee thus appointed, consisted of Charles A. Tomlinson, Phineas S. Bristol, Nathan G. Pond, Wm. Cecil Durand, and Henry C. Miles; who after earnest deliberation, decided that a substantial mark should be made in honor of the Founders; that such mark should unite utility with the picturesque, and at the same time, be typical of the men and the time of settlement.

This idea could be best expressed in a Bridge of Stone over the river, upon whose banks their first habitations were placed, and near the spot where the first mill was erected.

Our nation's first President had noted in his journal the beauty of the cascade on the west side, as he journeyed from New York to Boston, in Oct., 1786. As all traces of the settlers' graves had long been obliterated, and the stones that marked them (if any) destroyed, "Memorial Blocks" were suggested to keep in remembrance those men, and to give some data concerning them.

At a special Town Meeting, the report of the committee was read, and an appropriation of \$3000 was asked to defray the cost of the bridge alone, and that request was unanimously voted. At this point of the Committee's work, Mr. H. C. Miles refused to act further, giving as his reason, an unwillingness to incur any such expense, but personally willing to bear his share of the burden, and the Committee then called to its aid, Mr. Chas. H. Trowbridge.

It was promised to the town, that all inscriptions, together with the Tower, should be private gifts, and in accordance with that promise, such contributions and a detail of the work is here given.

As the tower was a prominent feature in the work and correspondingly expensive, much doubt was felt as to the ability of the Committee to raise the required amount, at least to erect a fitting structure in honor of the two governors, who, buried in our Grave-yard, were so important in the history of the colony. The door-step of Governor Law's house had been preserved by Capt. Marcus Stow, and was in possession of his daughter, Mrs. Mary S. Beardsley (wife of Hezekiah B. Beardsley), who refused to sell, but generously gave the stone to the Committee for such use and inscription as they saw fit. It was first contemplated placing it in the arch, over the Tower door, but the arch being inadequate, with other objections, changed its setting to the east end of the Bridge, and it is preserved in its entirety. The inscription reads :

IN MEMORIAM  
 JONATHAN LAW,  
 GOVERNOR OF THE COLONY OF  
 CONNECTICUT  
 FROM 1742 TO 1750.  
 THIS STONE, ONCE HIS DOORSTEP,

Six persons contributed One hundred dollars each, *Mrs. Mary A. C. Treat* (the widow of Judge Amos S. Treat, of Bridgeport, and herself a descendant of the Governor), *Robert Treat Payne*, of Boston (who descends from the signer of the Declaration of Independence, also through Governor Treat's oldest son Samuel), *Nathan A. Baldwin*, and Wm. M. Merwin, two Milford men, who are liberal in all public matters, *Wm. E. Downs*, of New Haven (but of Milford birth), and Henry A. Taylor, Esq., of New York. Dr. John S. Walker, \$70, Samuel S. White, of Philadelphia and Milford, with his family, \$100. Mrs. Martha J. Beard, Ex-Governor James E. English, Edwin P. Smith, Esq., Ex-Senator *Geo. M. Gunn*, Joseph Baldwin, Esq., of New York, fifty dollars each.

*Anson Treat Downs*, Charles H. Pond, Winthrop Pond, General George H. Ford, Abner L. Train, Esq., Lieutenant-Governor Samuel E. Merwin, Allston Gerry, Esq., Reginald Anthon Lawrence, Joseph E. Earle, Charles H. Trowbridge, Timothy Bristol, Esq., of Charleston, S. C., Senator George N. Morse, Wm. B. Stoddard, Esq., Albert A. Baldwin, twenty-five dollars each.

James T. Higby, *George Gunn Baldwin*, of Sioux City, Iowa, Wm. H. Law, Esq., of New Haven, Edward G. Miles, Thomas Fowler, Franklin Fowler, Frank M. Howe, *David B. Ingersol*, J. C. O'Connor, Jr., twenty dollars each.

*John Harvey Treat*, of Lawrence, Mass., Mrs. Mary Pond Sill, of Lyme, Ct., *Owen Treat Clark*, John G. North, fifteen dollars each.

Charles W. Beardsley, and *Wm. Cecil Durand*, twelve dollars fifty cents each.

*Lyman V. Treat*, of N. H., Dennis Beach, *Isaac C. Smith*, Joseph Clark, Mrs. *S. G. Champion*, of N. H., Lyman Law, Nicholas M. Pond, of Osaka, Japan, Rev. George H. Griffin, ten dollars each.

Besides many gifts of five dollars each, and from a child of two years, *Atwater Treat Casial*, of Anoka, Minn., two dollars.

The inscription on the Treat stone is the gift of Stancliff B. Downes (son of Anson Treat Downes, of New York), a man who has much pride in his Milford ancestry, which includes Treat, Bryan and Buckingham lines.

The inscription is as follows :

IN MEMORIAM  
ROBERT TREAT,  
FOR FORTY YEARS  
GOVERNOR & DEPUTY GOV  
of the Colony of  
CONNECTICUT.  
Obit. 1710.

The roof is in Spanish tile, made expressly for the Tower, at Akron, Ohio. A Lantern of ancient design hangs near the door and near the stone, showing the mark of Ansantuwæ, the Indian chief who signed the deed of purchase, given to Mr. William Fowler, Benjamin Penn, Edmund Tapp, Zachariah Whitman and Alexander Bryan, on the 12th of February, 1639, O. S.

His mark was a bow and arrow. The keystone of the door arch has carved on it an ideal head of the chief, a gift of the Ansantuwæ Lodge of F. and A. M., No. 89.

NOTE.—Names in italics have Treat blood.

The door is of oak, on which hangs a door knocker of historic interest: it is from a house built by a son of Ensign George Clark, on his father's original home lot. On the porch of the house George Whitfield, in 1740, preached, and from his listeners sprung the congregation that afterward made the Plymouth Church. Majors David Baldwin and Edward Allen (men prominent in the Canadian wars), together with Garret Van Horn De Witt, occupied the house, and from its present owner, Charles W. Beardsley, member of the Legislature for Milford during its 250th year, and who married a daughter of Elnathan Baldwin, its last owner, gives the knocker.

Over the door are the figures 1639, in worked iron.

A buttress extends from the Tower towards the north, ending in a seat made from the first mill-stone used in the Colony, on which is inscribed:

MR. WILLIAM FOWLER.

Obit 1660.

THE FOUNDER OF THIS THE FIRST  
MILL IN THE COLONY IN 1639,  
WHEREIN HE USED THIS STONE.

Mr. Fowler held the three important positions of Trustee, Pillar of the Church and Judge.

At the combination of Milford and Guilford with New Haven, in 1643, and the establishment of the jurisdiction of "the New Haven Colony," Mr. Fowler was selected as the Chief Magistrate of Milford, which he held for several years, and was succeeded at his death by Mr. Benjamin Fenn. He was evidently a man of much practical knowledge, energetic and persevering. He early discovered the advantages and facilities furnished by the river or stream running through the town, and at once determined to secure them to the community.

Since that period nine generations of the Fowlers have successfully conducted its operations, and recently the eighth William Fowler has completed the fifth mill in succession on the precise spot, confirming the wisdom of his honored ancestor whose keen eye discerned the advantages and facilities presented, when single handed in a country scarcely a year old. He accepted the situation and at once proceeded to control the water power in its natural condition, to block out a



location, to build the dam, quarry out the millstones and obtain the iron and other necessary materials with the limited means of transportation the wilderness afforded, and all this was to be done in the midst of arduous duties thrust upon him, filling various offices, and a leading citizen in the numerous projected improvements in progress.

The stone presented to the committee by the present energetic proprietor and bearing the inscription, tradition says, has lain dormant about the premises for centuries, and which on examination by geologists and antiquarians, has been pronounced as doubtless the original millstone quarried and hewn out by Mr. Fowler and used temporarily, until a better substitute could be obtained.

It is now acknowledged to be the oldest business establishment of its kind in the country; and the present proprietor's grandson is the 10th Wm. Fowler in a direct line.

On the buttress is cut LAW, ORDER, MORALITY, LIBERTY, CHARITY, to typify the principles that buttress our institutions. The gift, a special contribution of Charles H. Trowbridge, Esq.

At the west end of the south coping is placed a stone four feet wide and five feet six inches high, with an inscription on its curved front, in remembrance of the spiritual leader of the Colonists. It reads:

IN MEMORIAM  
PETER PRUDDEN,  
FIRST PASTOR IN MILFORD,  
Obi. 1656.  
THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE  
WILDERNESS, REPAIR YE  
THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.

Giving the text of the first sermon he preached in the Colony, at New Haven, on the afternoon of the 15th of April, 1638, under a large spreading oak, which stood near the present corner of George and College streets. The stone is the gift of the Pastor's descendants—a liberal contribution coming from James W. Beardsley, Esq., of Bridgeport, who descends from the pastor's daughter Abigail, who married Joseph Walker—together with gifts from the Strongs and Ponds, descendants of Ephraim Strong, who married Mary Prudden, great grand-

daughter of Peter, and sister to Job Prudden, first pastor of Plymouth Church (Milford).

At the east end of the same coping stands a similar stone in remembrance of the temporal leader or guide, on which is inscribed :

IN MEMORIAM  
CAPT. THOMAS TIBBALS,  
Obit 1793.  
IN CONSIDERATION OF HIS  
BENEVOLENCE AT THE FIRST COM-  
ING TO MILFORD TO SHOW THE  
FIRST COMER THE PLACE.  
(Land Recor68.)

This stone is the contribution of his descendants, a liberal portion coming from Fredk. L. Tibbals. The *inscription* is the gift of the children and gr. children of Joseph Whiting Tibbals. Thomas Tibbals had been engaged in the Pequot war, and in the pursuit of the remnant of the tribe, that fled to the Fairfield swamps the year previous, had seen the river, and for his services as guide the next spring, the Colonists granted him land, and in the deed made his "usefulness" the consideration.

Between the larger blocks are placed memorial stones to ten men prominent in Milford's history, most of them holding positions of trust and honor in the church or Town offices. Starting from the east, the first is to

WILLIAM FOWLER 2ND,  
Obit 1682.  
MARY TAPP HIS WIFE.

He was the son of the founder of the mill, and his wife was the daughter of Edmund and Ann Tapp (18), and sister to Jane, the wife of Governor Robert Treat.

He came to Milford with his father and his brother John, who moved to Guilford in 1629. William spent much of his early life in New Haven, where he became a large land-holder, but on the death of his father in 1660, he returned to Milford, inheriting his possessions, and died there in 1682. He was the ancestor of all the Milford Fowlers. In East Haven, Fowler's Cove and Fowler's Creek derived their names from him. About two miles from New Haven and on the site of the

establishment for the manufacture of fire arms, erected by Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton gin, Wm. Fowler 2d, built a mill in 1645, which the town bought of him when he returned to Milford in 1659, for £180. From the Colonial Records we find he was a member of the House of Deputies from 1673 to 1680, from Milford, serving on various committees, and on a secret council of war in reference to hostilities with the Dutch upon the eastern end of Long Island and the main land.

His second wife was the widow of (7). This stone is the gift of John W. Fowler, Esq., the present Town Clerk, and for many years Judge of Probate, and whose gr. grandfather and gr. gr. grandfather, both John Fowlers, were also Town Clerks, making the office for seventy years held by the same name.

No. 2.      ZACHARIAH WHITMAN.  
Obit 1662.  
SARAH BISCOE HIS WIFE.

He was one of the Trustees in the first deed, one of the judges chosen by the settlers to act in civil affairs, and one of the seven pillars of the church.

He married in England Sarah Biscoe, who was cousin to Nathaniel Biscoe, one of the settlers.

Zachariah Whitman calls John Stream (23) in his will his cousin (meaning nephew). He also calls George Clark the same. Benjamin Fenn (5), Thomas Welsh (20), and Richard Platt (10), were his executors.

(This stone is the gift of Charles W. Farnam, Esq., of New Haven, whose mother was a Whitman.)

No. 3.      ALEXANDER BRYAN.  
Obit 1675.  
ANNA HIS WIFE.

He was a prominent merchant in Milford, and with his son Richard stood in such high credit at Boston that his note of hand passed current as bank bills in the present day, says Lambert. He was the son of Thomas Bryan, of Aylesbury, England, and was baptised there, September 29th, 1602. His wife was Anna, only child of Robert Baldwin and Joane, his wife. From 1668 to 1673, he was assistant Governor of the Colony of Connecticut, and in Milford was one of the purchase trustees. (This stone is the gift of Mrs. Jean E. True, of Washington, D. C., who was by birth a Bryan.)