

**GENERAL HISTORY OF CONNECTICUT,  
FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT UNDER  
GEORGE FENWICK TO ITS LATEST  
PERIOD OF AMITY WITH GREAT  
BRITAIN PRIOR TO THE REVOLUTION**

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General History of Connecticut, from Its First Settlement Under George Fenwick to Its Latest Period of Amity with Great Britain Prior to the Revolution by Samuel Peters & Samuel Jarvis McCormick

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**SAMUEL PETERS & SAMUEL JARVIS MCCORMICK**

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THE REV. SAMUEL PETERS' LL. D.  
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GENERAL HISTORY  
OF  
CONNECTICUT,

FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT UNDER GEORGE FENWICK  
TO ITS LATEST PERIOD OF AMITY WITH GREAT  
BRITAIN PRIOR TO THE REVOLUTION;

INCLUDING

*A DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY, AND MANY CURIOUS  
AND INTERESTING ANECDOTES.*

WITH AN APPENDIX, POINTING OUT THE CAUSES OF THE REBELLION IN  
AMERICA; TOGETHER WITH THE PARTICULAR PART TAKEN BY  
THE PEOPLE OF CONNECTICUT IN ITS PROMOTION.

BY A GENTLEMAN OF THE PROVINCE.  
LONDON: 1781.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED, ADDITIONS TO APPENDIX, NOTES, AND EXTRACTS  
FROM LETTERS, VERIFYING MANY IMPORTANT STATEMENTS  
MADE BY THE AUTHOR.

BY  
SAMUEL JARVIS McCORMICK.

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1877.

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William J. ...  
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1811  
1812

### PREFACE.

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THOUGH Connecticut be the most flourishing, and, proportionally, the most populous, province in North America, it has hitherto found no writer to introduce it, in its own right, to the notice of the world. Slight and cursory mention in the accounts of other provinces, or of America in general, has yet only been made of it. The historians of New England have constantly endeavored to aggrandize Massachusetts Bay as the parent of the other colonies, and as comprehending all that is worthy of attention in that country. Thus Governor Hutchinson says, in the preface of his history of that province, that "there was no importation of planters from England to any part of the continent northward of Maryland, excepting to Massachusetts, for more than fifty years after the colony began;" not knowing, or willing to forget, or to conceal, that Saybrook, New Haven, and Long Island, were settled with emigrants from England within half that period. Another reason

for the obscurity in which the Connecticutians have hitherto been involved is to be found among their own sinister views and purposes. Prudence dictated that their deficiency in point of right to the soil they occupied, their wanton and barbarous persecutions, illegal practices, daring usurpations, etc., had better be concealed than exposed to public view.

To dissipate this cloud of prejudice and knavery, and to bring to light truths long concealed, is the motive of my offering the following sheets to the world. I am bold to assert that Connecticut merits a fuller account than envy or ignorance has yet suffered to be given it; and that I have followed the line of truth freely, and unbiassed by partiality or prejudice. The reader, therefore, will not be surprised should I have placed the New-Englanders in a different light from that in which they have yet appeared: their characterizers have not been sufficiently unprejudiced, unawed by power, or unaffected by the desire of obtaining it, always to set them in a true one. Dr. Mather and Mr. Neal were popular writers, but, at the time they extolled the prudence and piety of the colonists, they suppressed what are called in New England unnecessary truths. Governor Hutchinson, who loved fame, and feared giving offense, published a few only of those truths, which failed not to procure him a proportionate share of popular distrust and odium. For my own



part, I believe my readers will give me credit for having neither the favor nor the fear of man before me in writing this history of Connecticut. I discard the one; I court not the other. My sole aim has been to represent the country, the people, and their transactions, in proper colors. Too much, however, must not be expected from me. I am very sensible of many great defects in this performance, wherein very little assistance was to be obtained from publications of others. Mr. Chambers, indeed, who is writing "Political Annals of the Present United Colonies," pursues that task with great pains and address. His researches have been of some use to me; but, as to the New England writers, error, disguise, and misrepresentations, too much abound in them to be serviceable in this undertaking, though they related more to the subject than they do. The good-natured critic, therefore, will excuse the want of a regular and connected detail of facts and events which it was impossible for me to preserve, having been deprived of papers of my ancestors which would have given my relation that and other advantages. I hope, therefore, for much indulgence, striking, as I have done, into a new and dark path, almost without a guide. If I have carried myself through it, though with some digressions, yet without incurring the danger of being accounted a deceiver, my disordered garb will, I presume, find an apology in the ruggedness of the

road—my Scriptural phraseology be ascribed to the usage of my country.

For three generations my forefathers were careful observers of the proceedings of the Connecticut colonists; and if their papers and myself should continue in existence till a return of peace shall restore them to my possession, I trust the public will not be displeased with the design I have of committing them to the press. In the mean time, lest that event should never take place, I beg their acceptance of the present volume, which, whatever other historical requisite it may want, must, I think, be allowed to possess originality and truth (rare properties in modern publications), and, therefore, I hope, will not be deemed unworthy the public favor.

## SECOND PREFACE.

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MR. JAMES HAMMOND TRUMBULL, the author of the work entitled "The Blue Laws of Connecticut and New Haven, and the False Blue Laws invented by the Rev. Samuel Peters," which has just made its appearance, attempts to throw discredit on the work of Dr. Peters, and represents it as a fiction, and a calumny upon the early settlers of Connecticut.

Mr. Trumbull seems to have spared no trouble in his researches to show that no such laws as the "Blue Laws" represented by Dr. Peters were in existence, and to impress this more forcibly upon the public he gives the laws of 1639, 1650, and 1656; when, had he looked more carefully at the doctor's "History of Connecticut," he would have found he alluded to them in these words: "The laws made by the independent Dominion, and nominated the Blue Laws by the neighboring colonies, were never suffered to be printed;" nevertheless, Mr. Trumbull shows that there were laws