

COLONIAL CONNECTICUT

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Colonial Connecticut by Julia E. Hickok

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JULIA E. HICKOK

**COLONIAL
CONNECTICUT**

The Colonial Dames of America

In the State of Ohio



Connecticut

Studies in the Colonial Period for use
in the Public Schools

Colonial Connecticut



By
JULIA E. HICKOK
OF MARIETTA, OHIO

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Introduction

THIS is the fifth study of the colonial period prepared and published by the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Ohio, for use in the seventh and eighth grades, to help teachers and pupils to a clearer understanding of this important period of American history.

The first four studies—Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, were written by Mrs. Mary D. Phillips. Miss Julia E. Hickok takes up and carries forward the work which Mrs. Phillips left upon her removal from the State, following the completion of the Rhode Island monograph. Miss Hickok follows the high standard set by her predecessor—a standard of simplicity and clearness, of vivid statement, with the selection of the larger and more essential features in the life and thought of each colony, thus making clear their individual contributions in the making of America.

What was the central idea for which Connecticut stood? In many respects its history was like that of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, but the distinct contribution which this colony made was "The First Written Constitution in History, Creating a Government," the Federal Constitution following the Federal principle developed in Connecticut. "The Birthplace of American Democracy" is Hartford. This colony, also like Rhode Island, stood for absolute freedom of thought and its expression. The story of such a colony is well worth careful study.

I wish to express renewed appreciation for the work of the society which has made such a study possible for the pupils in the schools of this and other cities.

RANDALL J. CONDON,

Superintendent of Schools.

Cincinnati, Ohio,

June seventeen, Nineteen-seventeen.

SEP 17 1917

Colonial Connecticut

CONNECTICUT is farthest southwest in the group of six states called New England. In shape it is an irregular oblong lying north of Long Island Sound and south of Massachusetts, with Rhode Island on the eastern border and New York State on the west. Its area is 4990 square miles, more than half the size of Massachusetts. The Connecticut River crosses the central part of the state, from north to south, in a valley some twenty miles in width. East of this valley are low hills and smaller valleys traversed by other streams; a land known to the first settlers as the Pequot Country. The western portion of the state is rugged, with higher hills rich in minerals.

When the Plymouth men were struggling to hold their place on the shore of Massachusetts, and Boston was in its beginnings, this territory to the south and west was inhabited only by Indian tribes. From the discoveries of the Cabots in 1497, England had claimed this unexplored western land and had included it in the grant to the Plymouth Company; but no effort had been made toward its settlement.

Adrian Blok, a Dutch sailing master, is said to have gone up the Connecticut River, in 1614, as far north as the present site of Hartford.

It was not, however, until 1633, that stories of this fertile valley came to the ears of the Plymouth settlers, in the report of an adventurer, John Oldham, who had penetrated the forests, partly explored the country and returned to Massachusetts Bay.

In October of that year, a small ship under Captain William Holmes was sent around by sea to the mouth of the Connecticut River and sailed as far as Hartford. Here the Dutch had already established a fort, whose soldiers challenged the Plymouth captain and threatened to fire upon him. But Holmes was both brave and stubborn; he had been sent up the river and up the river he meant to go.