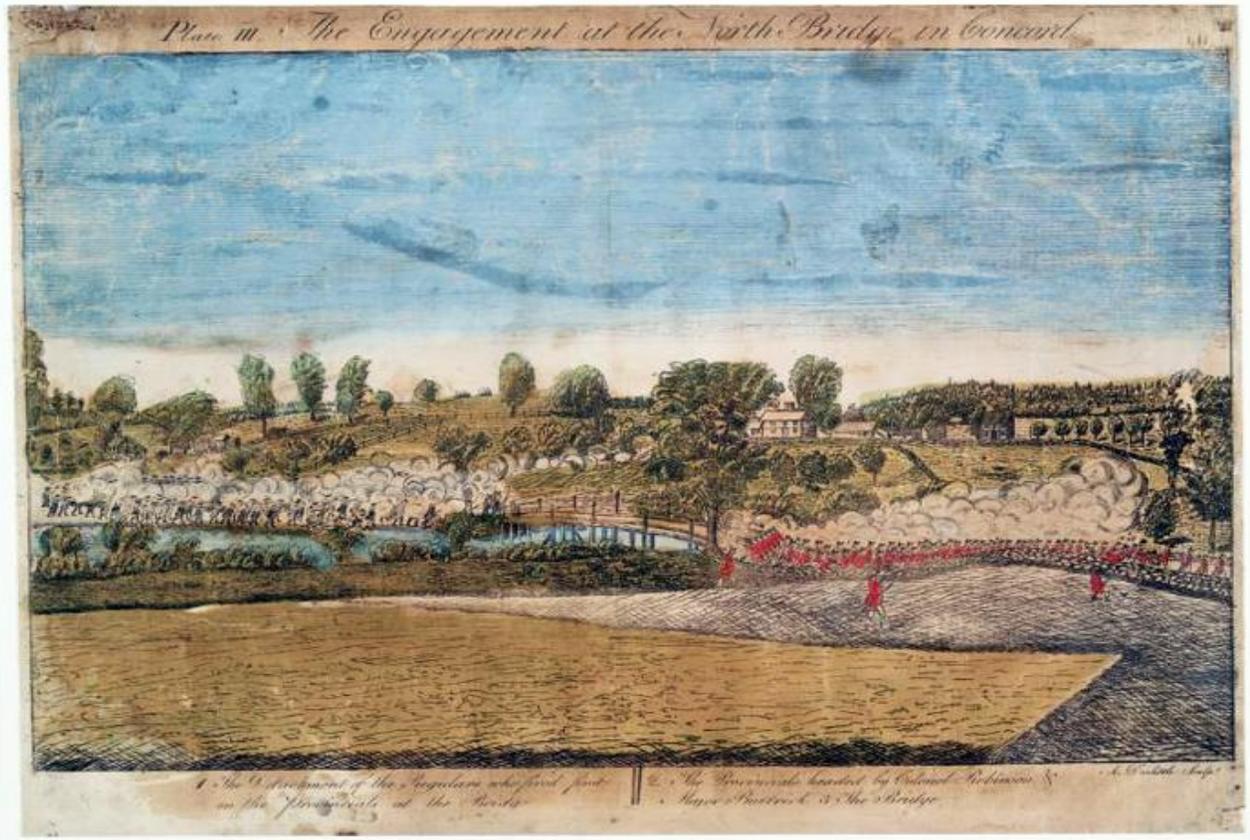


As we pause to remember the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in 2025, we would like to pay tribute to Westford's veterans who fought and died for American independence.



The contemporary Earl/Doolittle print of the Battle at the North Bridge, Concord (June, 1775).
The caption reads: *The Provincials headed by Colonel Robinson & Major Buttrick at the Bridge*

Westford: Revolutionary War Service

The Revolutionary War period proved to be a challenging and often difficult time for the men and women of colonial America. Westford provides a good example of a rural New England town whose beliefs and sacrifices helped to establish our nation. Records show that as tensions rose between Great Britain and her American colonies over such issues as taxation and remote rule, Westford residents overwhelmingly supported the rising call for fairness, and ultimately, separation from Britain.

Throughout the colonial period and well into the 19th century, town militias were a fixture of each New England community. In a tradition dating back to 16th century

England, it was expected that all able-bodied men gather on a regular basis to train for the purpose of protecting their communities. Indeed, such service was enforced by law and non-compliance would result in a fine. After the first colonies were established, the militia were organized to protect against attacks from the Native American inhabitants of New England. Later, they would become an important resource for Britain's military campaigns in North America, most notably against the French during the French and Indian War of the 1755-63. Town records show that many men from Westford participated in the campaigns against the French forts at Ticonderoga and Louisburg. As tensions began to rise between the American colonies and Britain, the militia became the means by which the political desires of the colonists would be enforced.

As early as 1645 New England saw the establishment of what would later be known as the “minutemen”, a subset of the town militias. Periodically, during times of crisis, a select group of men were set apart from the regular militia. They drilled more frequently, sometimes as often as twice per week, were specially equipped, and were expected to be ready at “half an hour’s warning”.

Westford provided a significant number of militia and minute-men – 131 in all – to the “Lexington Alarm” of April 19, 1775. As British troops marched to Concord to confiscate military supplies thought to be hidden there by the colonists, Westford militia-men heard the rising alarm and began the 10 mile march to Concord. There is evidence that one young Westford man, Peter Brown, spent the morning on horseback alerting parts of the Middlesex countryside as a member of the network of alarm riders made famous by Paul Revere. That afternoon Brown “pursu'd with the rest and fought that day.”

While only a handful of Westford men arrived in time to participate in the skirmish at Concord’s North Bridge, most arrived shortly after and engaged the Regulars later in the day and pursued them as far as Cambridge. [John Robinson](#), Lt. Colonel of the local regiment of minutemen, and three other Westford men were present at the bridge before the action. Among these was Westford’s candidate minister, the Rev. Joseph Thaxter. Robinson was offered command by Concord’s Major Buttrick but declined, citing the fact that few of his men had yet arrived. Instead, he offered to serve as Buttrick’s aide. This is borne out in a contemporary drawing documenting the events at the Bridge showing “The Provincials headed by Colonel Robinson & Major Buttrick at the Bridge.”

The official reports after the events of April 19th do not mention any Westford militia casualties. However, we know from subsequent accounts that 54-year-old Capt.

Oliver Bates, a long-time town leader, died on July 4th of that year as a result of his participation in the running fight of the “Battle Road”.

For the following year the Revolutionary War focused on a siege of Boston, where British troops remained. At least 58 Westford men contributed to an interim army that built and defended the earthworks on Breed’s (Bunker) Hill. Three of them would die there, including African American “servant” Ceasar Bason, and Captain Jonathan Minot’s son, Joseph.

In the first year of the war we see a particularly tragic result within the very walls of Westford’s homes. As men returned from the camps of the new army they brought diseases with them. Westford deaths in 1775 outpaced those of adjacent years by three times. Nearly 70% of non-army related deaths in 1775 occurred in August and September, with over 90% of those (23) being children under the age of 8. Especially hard hit were the Robinson family who lost three daughters within two weeks, and the extended Wright family who lost six children within three weeks.

Throughout the war Gen. George Washington relied heavily on local militias to reinforce his Continental Army. Such was the case when Col. John Robinson was commissioned to lead a regiment of over 400 men in Cambridge near the end of the siege of Boston. Notable on his staff were Concord’s Lt. Col. John Buttrick, Chaplain [Joseph Thaxter](#), Surgeon Dr. Asaph Fletcher and Surgeon’s Mate William Little from Westford. Two of his captains included John Ford of Chelmsford and Job Shattuck of Groton, who would be best known for his participation in Shay’s Rebellion of 1786-87. Robinson led another militia regiment in 1777, keeping watch of British occupied Newport, Rhode Island.

The entire war, between 1775 and 1783, would see at least 290 Westford men serve in the militia and Continental Army. Outside of New England, they served at such places as White Plains, Valcour Island, Cherry Valley, Saratoga, Valley Forge, and the final siege at Yorktown. Several men served through the entire war. At present 21 are documented to have died during service.

Men were often recruited for continental service from the local militia. Of the 41 Westford men who served in the 6th Middlesex militia regiment, 30 joined Col. Alden’s 6th Massachusetts Continental Regiment. One third of them would die in the next 15 months from disease or battle injuries. Late in the war “classes” of townsmen were established to “procure...soldiers to serve in the Continental Army.”

The Westford town meeting consistently voted “to take care and provide for the familys [sic] of the Continental Soldiers.” When requested by the state, townspeople provided raw materials and finished goods for the soldiers, including stockings,

shoes, blankets, and shirts. They were often reimbursed for spinning, weaving, and “nitting” for the soldiers.

Economic conditions in Massachusetts declined throughout this period and became particularly difficult after the war, due in part to the huge debt incurred over the long and “unhappy” war. As a result, many of the veterans and their families emigrated to the relatively unsettled states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and what would later become Maine, often helping to found new towns. Many of those who remained would serve in town government and help to found institutions such as Westford Academy.

Daniel Lacroix, May 2025

Dan has been a member of the Westford Colonial Minutemen since 1996 and is a past president of the Westford Historical Society. He enjoys researching Westford's colonial period history and has made material related to the Revolutionary War period and the people who served available at www.westford1775.org.



North Bridge, Concord Massachusetts © Daniel Lacroix



War Memorial, Revolutionary War panel, Westford Common

If you're interested in learning more about the Revolutionary War period, Dan recommends these books and resources:

Please visit the website www.westford1775.org

Hodgman, Rev. Edwin. *History of the Town of Westford, 1659-1883*. Lowell: Morning Mail Co., 1883. An excellent, scholarly work with an abundance of details from early town records.

Fischer, David Hackett. *Paul Revere's Ride*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. A book which is rich with details not found elsewhere all in one book.

Gross, Robert. *The Minutemen and Their World*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1976. Although focusing on Concord, this book gives great insight into the everyday lives of the residents of colonial eastern Massachusetts. Updated in 2022.

Galvin, John R. *The Minute Men*. Washington: Brassey's, 1989. An excellent guide to early militia/minute companies and their significance to the early revolution.

French, Allen. *The First Year of the American Revolution*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934. A detailed and well researched account of the first year's efforts, organization (or lack thereof) and political realities from April 19th through the evacuation of Boston by the British. His analysis of the Battle of Bunker Hill is especially well done.

Ketchum, Richard M. *Decisive Day*. New York: Owl Books, 1962. A well written narrative dealing with the Battle of Bunker Hill.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR VETERANS OF WESTFORD



JOEL ABBOT

2LT JOHN ABBOT, JR

SAMUEL ADAMS, JR

TIMOTHY ADAMS

BENJAMIN BARRETT

EBENEZER BARRETT

JOHN BARRETT

OLIVER BARRETT ♦

THOMAS BARRETT

CAESAR BASON ♦

Killed in Action at Bunker Hill

CAPT OLIVER BATES ♦

SIMEON BIGLOW

ASA BIXBY

DAVID BIXBY

EPHRAIM BIXBY

ISAAC BIXBY

JACOB BIXBY

LEVI BIXBY

THOMAS BIXBY

WILLIAM BIXBY

CALVIN BLANCHARD

JAMES BLODGETT

JONAS BLODGETT

AARON BLOOD

COL ABEL BOYNTON

JOSIAH BROOKS ♦

PETER BROWN

WILLIAM BURROWS

JAMES BUTTERFIELD

SAMUEL BUTTERFIELD

DAVID CHAFIN

EPHRAIM CHAMBERLIN, JR

JOHN CHAMBERLIN

NATHANIEL CHAMBERLIN

SAMUEL CHAMBERLIN

EBENEZER CHANDLER

ISAAC CHANDLER

Died of Injuries in Service



Bunker Hill Monument, Charlestown MA

JESSE CHANDLER

SILAS CHANDLER

WILLIAM CHANDLER

EBENEZER COREY

ISAAC COREY

ISAAC COREY, JR

DAVID COWDREY

JOHN COWDREY

THOMAS COWDREY

SAMUEL CRAFT

EPHRAIM CUMINGS ♦

Killed in Action

LT THOMAS CUMINGS

DRUMMER TIMOTHY CUMINGS

NATHANIEL CUMMINGS

SAMUEL DARBEE

JOB DODGE

DANIEL DUDLEY ♦

Killed in Action

JESSE DUDLEY ♦

Killed in Action

ISAAC PRESTON DURANT

DAVID DUTTON

JOSEPH DUTTON, JR

EPHRAIM DUTTON

HILDRETH DUTTON

SAMUEL DUTTON

WILLIAM DUTTON

BENJAMIN ESTABROOKS

JOEL ESTABROOKS

BENJAMIN FARMER

JOSHUA FASSETT

DAVID FISH

DAVIS FISK

THOMAS FITCH

CAPT AMOS FLETCHER, JR

ANDREW FLETCHER

DR. ASAPH FLETCHER

DAVID FLETCHER, JR

EBENEZER FLETCHER

SGT GERSHOM FLETCHER

JAMES FLETCHER

JEREMIAH FLETCHER

JESSE FLETCHER

JOHN FLETCHER

JOSEPH FLETCHER

JOSHUA FLETCHER

JOSHUA FLETCHER, JR

JOSIAH FLETCHER

LEVI FLETCHER

NEHEMIAH FLETCHER

PAUL RAYMOND FLETCHER ♦

CAPT PELATIAH FLETCHER

SAMPSON FLETCHER

SOLOMAN FLETCHER

THOMAS FLETCHER

CPL WILLARD FLETCHER



Paul Revere Monument and Old North Church, Boston

Died in Service

EBENEZER FOSTER ♦
ELIAS FOSTER
SAMUEL FOSTER
SMITH FOSTER
JOHN GLENNA
WILLIAM GLENNA
ISAAC GLENNEY
CAPT DAVID GOODHUE
CPL DANIEL GOODHUE
ISAAC GREEN
CPL NEHEMIAH GREEN
FIFER THOMAS GUY
JOHN HADLEY
JOHN HADLEY
JONAS HADLEY
JONATHAN HADLEY ♦
YORK HAMBLETON
WILLIAM HARDWICK
AMOS HARDY
EPHRAIM HEALD
OLIVER HEALD
CPL AMAZIAH HILDRETH
ELIJAH HILDRETH
HEZEKIAH HILDRETH
CPL HOSEA HILDRETH
JEREMIAH HILDRETH
JOHN HILDRETH



Minutemen face British regulars, reenactment, North Bridge, Concord

JONATHAN HILDRETH
OLIVER HILDRETH
PETER HILDRETH
DEACON WILLIAM HILDRETH
LT ZECHARIAH HILDRETH
CPL ZECHARIAH HILDRETH, JR
ASA HOLDEN
DAVID HOLDEN
JOHN HOLDEN
JONAS HOLDEN
NATHANIEL HOLMES
SILAS HOWARD
DAVID JOHNSON
JONATHAN JOHNSON, JR
JONATHAN JONES
EPHRAIM KEMP
JONAS KEMP
SIMEON KEMP
ABNER KENT
SIMEON KENT
CHARLES KEYES
DAVID or DANIEL KEYES
CAPT JONATHAN KEYES
SAMUEL KEYES ♦
FRANCIS KIDDER
JOSEPH KIDDER ♦
THOMAS KIDDER



Col John Robinson Memorial, Westford Common

Killed in Action

Died in Service

ROGERS KING

PETER LARKIN

FRANCIS LEIGHTON

SURGEON MATE WILLIAM LITTLE

JAMES MAGERR

ABIJAH MASON ♦

Died in Service

PETER McEWIN

STEPHEN MEADS

THOMAS MEADS

JESSE MINOTT

CAPT JONATHAN MINOT

JOSEPH MINOT ♦

Killed in Action at Bunker Hill

HENRY MORGAN

WILLIAM NICHOLS

JACOB NUTTING

ENS JOHN NUTTING, JR ♦

Died in Service

THOMAS NUTTING ♦

Died in Service

CAPT AARON PARKER

COL BENJAMIN OSGOOD

ABEL PARKER

AARON PARKER, JR

DAVID PARKER

EBENEZER PARKER

DRUMMER ISAAC PARKER

JOHN PARKER ♦

Killed in Action at 2nd Saratoga

CAPT JOSHUA PARKER

JOSHUA PARKER, JR

LEVI PARKER

MOSES PARKER ♦

Died in Service

AMOS PARLIN

ASA PATCH

ISAAC PATCH

JOHN PATCH

ISAAC PATTEN

JAMES PERRY

CPL OBADIAH PERRY

JAMES PIKE

ISAAC POWERS

NATHANIEL PRENTICE

ABEL PRESCOTT

DAVID PRESCOTT

CPL JOHN PRESCOTT

JONAS PRESCOTT

CPL JOSEPH PRESCOTT

PETER PRESCOTT

TIMOTHY PRESCOTT

JETHRO PRINCE ♦

Died in Service

ABEL PROCTER

EZEKIAL PROCTER

JOSIAH PROCTER

OLIVER PROCTER

PHILIP PROCTER

CHARLES PROCTOR

CAPT LEONARD PROCTOR

LT SILAS PROCTOR

JOHN PUSHEE

ABEL READ

ABIJAH READ

BENJAMIN READ

ELEAZER READ

ELEAZER READ, JR

ELIAKIM READ

ELNATHAN READ

CAPT JOSEPH READ

JOSHUA READ

LEONARD READ

LT SAMUEL READ

SIMEON READ

STEPHEN READ

THADDEUS READ

WILLIAM READ

ELIHU REED

JOSHUA REED

OLIVER REED

ABIJAH RICHARDSON

LT WYLE RICHARDSON

BENJAMIN ROBBINS

JACOB ROBBINS

JACOB ROBBINS, JR

JEREMIAH ROBBINS

JOHN ROBBINS



Minutemen Reenactment, North Bridge, Concord

JOHN ROBBINS, JR

PETER ROBBINS

2LT PHILIP ROBBINS

THOMAS ROBBINS

ENS ZACHARIAH ROBBINS

COL JOHN ROBINSON ♦

WINTHROP ROBINSON

LT THOMAS ROGERS ♦ *Killed in Action*

TONY ROWE

PETER RUMRILL

ABEL RUSSELL

AMOS RUSSELL

JOHN RUSSELL

SIMEON RUSSELL

SIMEON SENTER

THOMAS SCOTT

ROBERT SKINNER ♦ *Died in Service*

FRANCIS SMITH

PHILIP SMITH

THOMAS SMITH

EPHRAIM SPALDING

JOB SPALDING

JOHN SPALDING

PHILIP SPALDING

PHINEAS SPALDING

SILAS SPALDING

WILLIAM SPALDING

SILAS SPAULDING
LT SOLOMON SPAULDING
SGT TIMOTHY SPAULDING
EBENEZER STONE
JONATHAN STRATTON
NATHAN TAYLOR
SAMUEL TAYLOR
CPL LEVI TEMPLE
STEPHEN TEMPLE
AMOS TID
JOHN TIDD
JOHN UNDERWOOD
JOSEPH UNDERWOOD
CAPT TIMOTHY UNDERWOOD
JACOB WENDELL
SGT SAMUEL WHITE
DANIEL WHITNEY
JETHRO WILKINS
ABRAHAM WRIGHT
CPL AMOS WRIGHT
EBENEZER WRIGHT
EPHRAIM WRIGHT
HENRY WRIGHT
JAMES WRIGHT
SGT JOHN WRIGHT
JONAS WRIGHT
JOSEPH WRIGHT, JR ♦



Paul Revere Bell, Westford Academy

OLIVER WRIGHT

PELATIAH WRIGHT

PETER WRIGHT

CAPT SAMUEL WRIGHT

1ST LT ZACCHEUS WRIGHT

PETER YOUNGMAN

◆ The Westford Honor Roll honors veterans with a connection to Westford who were killed in action or who lived in town for 35 years or more. You can find the honor roll online on the Veterans Services Office webpage:

<https://www.westfordma.gov/394/Veterans-Services-Department>

The Westford Military Burial Index attempts to acknowledge and honor all veterans with connections to town and their burial locations as we learn them.

<https://data.westfordma.gov/vets/>



Battle Drum, Westford Historical Society and Museum, sculpted by David Christiana

The Westford Historical Society and Museum has placed a historic marker with QR code at Fairview and Westlawn cemeteries so that you may take a self-guided tour of the Revolutionary War gravesites with the following links:

<https://museum.westford.org/historical-map/revolutionary-war-veterans-and-civilian-casualties-in-fairview-cemetery/>

<https://museum.westford.org/historical-map/revolutionary-war-veterans-and-civilian-casualties-in-westlawn-cemetery/>

The museum also offers many interesting research articles on their webpage and encourage you to visit the museum to view their artifacts and materials on the Revolution. This page may interest you:

<https://museum.westford.org/the-westford-military-leaders-of-the-american-revolution-1775-1781/>

Colonel John Robinson Tribute Video



For Memorial Day, 2021 Westford Veterans Services created a virtual Memorial Day video with local cable channel Westford CAT when live events were cancelled during the pandemic. This video included a tribute to Colonel John Robinson, narrated and guided by Westford Minuteman Daniel Lacroix.

Westford CAT director Nick Woodbury and Westford Minuteman Daniel Lacroix filming video at Westlawn Cemetery

You can view this video on YouTube and on the Westford Historical Society and Museum webpage, here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sS2J-LkZyw0> (tribute at the 29:42 minute mark)

<https://museum.westford.org/the-westford-military-leaders-of-the-american-revolution-1775-1781/>

(see Colonel John Robinson tribute video, second/middle video on the page)



Old West Division, Fairview Cemetery, Westford

Revolutionary War Veterans Connected to Westford

We would like to acknowledge the following men who we believe may had connection to Westford by birth, residence or death and who served in the war or we are unsure of their service records. We continue to research and will update what we know.

CAPT JOHN BATES

ENS NATHANIEL BOYNTON

MOSES BURGE

ENS BENJAMIN CARVER

WILDER CHAMBERLIN

CAPT JEREMIAH COGSWELL

ENOCH WILLIAM COOK

CAPT NATHAN DAVIS

NATHANIEL FARROW

BENJAMIN FLETCHER

JONAS FLETCHER

DEACON JONATHAN FLETCHER, JR

SAMUEL FLETCHER
TIMOTHY FLETCHER
WILLIAM FLETCHER
THOMAS GREENOUGH
MAJ ELEAZER HAMLIN
AMOS HILDRETH
EPHRAIM HILDRETH
EPHRAIM HILDRETH, JR
PHINEAS HILDRETH
THOMAS C. KIDDER
FRANCIS KIDDER
DEACON REUBEN LEIGHTON
DANIEL NUTTING
LT JOHN PARKER
SGT MAJ JOHN PARKER
LT MOSES PARKER
CAPT JAMES POLLARD
OLIVER PRESCOTT
ELIJAH PROCTER
SIMEON PROCTER
CAPT JOHN READ
REV JOSEPH THAXTER
LT NAHUM WIGHT

Revolutionary War Veterans Buried in Westford



Grave of Captain Joseph Read, Fairview Cemetery

Fairview

JOEL ABBOT

2LT JOHN ABBOT, JR

JOSIAH BROOKS

SILAS CHANDLER

EPHRAIM CUMINGS *

Killed in Action

LT THOMAS CUMINGS

JOSEPH DUTTON, JR

CAPT AMOS FLETCHER, JR

DAVID FLETCHER, JR

EBENEZER FLETCHER

CAPT PELATIAH FLETCHER

HEZEKIAH HILDRETH

CPL HOSEA HILDRETH

JOHN HILDRETH

Deacon WILLIAM HILDRETH

CAPT JONATHAN KEYES

JESSE MINOTT

CAPT JONATHAN MINOT

JOSEPH MINOT*

Killed in Action at Bunker Hill

ENS JOHN NUTTING, JR*

Died in Service

COL BENJAMIN OSGOOD

DAVID PARKER

CHARLES PROCTOR

CAPT JOSEPH READ

JOSHUA READ

LT SAMUEL READ

ELIHU REED

ABIJAH RICHARDSON

LT WYLE RICHARDSON

LT THOMAS ROGERS*

Killed in Action

SGT TIMOTHY SPAULDING

ABRAHAM WRIGHT

EBENEZER WRIGHT

CAPT SAMUEL WRIGHT



Grave of Captain Oliver Bates, Hillside Cemetery

Hillside

CAPT OLIVER BATES *

Died of Injuries in Service

WILLIAM CHANDLER

LT SOLOMON SPAULDING

EPHRAIM WRIGHT

SGT JOHN WRIGHT

JOSEPH WRIGHT, JR

PELATIAH WRIGHT



Grave of Colonel John Robinson, Westford's highest-ranking officer of the Revolutionary War, who fought in Concord, the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the Siege of Boston, Westlawn Cemetery

Westlawn

SGT GERSHOM FLETCHER

CAPT DAVID GOODHUE

ELIJAH HILDRETH

LT ZECHARIAH HILDRETH

ROGERS KING

FRANCIS LEIGHTON

CAPT AARON PARKER

DAVID PRESCOTT

TIMOTHY PRESCOTT

ABIJAH READ

OLIVER REED

COL JOHN ROBINSON

OLIVER WRIGHT



The American Soldier

A Picture from the Life

To serve with love,

And shed your blood,

Approved may be above,

But here below

(Example shew,)

'Tis dangerous to be good.

--Lord Oxford

Deep in a vale, a stranger now to arms,

Too poor to shine in courts, too proud to beg,

He, who once warred on *Saratoga's* plains,
Sits musing o'er his scars, and wooden leg.

Remembering still the toil of former days,
To other hands he sees his earnings paid;--
They share the due reward—*he* feeds on praise.
Lost in the abyss of want, misfortune's shade.

Far, far from domes where splendid tapers glare,
'Tis his from dear bought *peace* no wealth to win,
Removed alike from courtly cringing 'squires,
The great-man's *Levee*, and the proud man's grin.

Sold are those arms which once on Britons blazed,
When, flushed with conquest, to the charge they came;
That power repelled, and *Freedom's* fabrick raised,
She leaves her soldier—*famine and a name!*

Philip Freneau

(He was known as the "poet of the American Revolution")



Concord Hymn

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The poem was sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument in Concord, July 4, 1837