Daniel Cook Connecticut Yankee
A Cultural and Contextual Biographical Sketch

Bryson Caldwell Cook

CAPTAIN DANIEL[4] COOK, son of Joseph[3] (*Samuel*[2], *Henry*[1]), and Eleanor (Johnson) Cook was born at Wallingford, New Haven, Connecticut, 19 August 1720.[1] His will is dated 30 December 1777, and he died at Goshen, Litchfield, Connecticut, prior to 13 January 1778, when the will was recorded and his widow applied for guardianship of her minor sons.[2] He married at Wallingford 6 February 1745/6, ELIZABETH POND.[3] She was born circa 1725 at Branford, New Haven, Connecticut, daughter of Samuel and Abigail (Goodrich) Pond. She died in Goshen and her will was written 16 December 1795, and proven 3 February 1796.[4]

Unlike all of her siblings, there is no birth record for Elizabeth Pond in the Branford town records. However, her relationship to her parents, Samuel and Abigail Pond, is confirmed through Samuel's estate papers. Although the exact date of Samuel's death is unknown, probate documents show that he died shortly before 28 April 1726, when his brother, Moses Pond, was appointed guardian of Samuel's daughter, Abigail. An inventory of Samuel's estate was presented to the court on 12 August 1726, and includes a list of his children and their ages. Elizabeth is listed as his youngest surviving child, though no age is given for her. By 28 April 1726, both of her parents had died leaving Elizabeth an orphan.[5]

While the identity of Elizabeth's guardian is not recorded, her eldest brother, Phillip Pond, was appointed administrator of the estate. He clearly acted on Elizabeth's behalf, as evidenced by a bond he posted in 1736, which obligated Elizabeth to transfer a portion of her inheritance in exchange for £100 from her brother, Josiah Pond, within twenty days of her reaching the age of twenty-one.[6] However, Josiah died in 1745 before Elizabeth came of age. After his death, "Elizabeth Cook, wife of Daniel Cook of Wallingford," deeded her interest in the real and personal property of her parents to Josiah's widow. The release of Phillip's bond, dated 25 February 1747, indicates that Elizabeth had reached the age of twenty-one by that date.[7] This suggests she may have been born in February 1726.

Daniel was the third of eight children raised in the town of Wallingford. Wallingford is about twelve miles north of New Haven and was originally part of the New Haven Colony. New Haven was founded in 1637 by colonists who would later be thought of as the "purest of the Puritans" which is remarkable considering the Puritan influence that dominated New England. By the time Daniel Cook was born, Puritan Connecticut had reached its apex. Soon the Puritan culture would evolve and transition into the culture of "Connecticut Yankees." Connecticut Puritans who settled the Colony were focused on religious and communal governance while Connecticut Yankees would be characterized by industry, ingenuity and commerce. The life of Daniel Cook and those of his family would typify many aspects of this transition.

Daniel's Puritan roots ran deep. His father and paternal grandfather were grounded in New Haven Puritanism. They are a reflection of the Puritan culture that socialized men to be fathers who were expected to lead and govern their families in a "Godly" manner. Children would have known and been submissive to stern fathers in their homes and in the church, society

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[1] Lucius A. Barbour and Lucius B. Barbour, The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records (Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut State Library, 1911-1934), citing Wallingford vital records, 2:788.

[2] Litchfield, Connecticut Probate Records, 1:456-457, [FHL Film # 007627333 image 507 of 799], "Capt. Dan'l Cook's Will." Litchfield Probate District, Daniel Cook, Goshen, 1778, probate packet #1599. Guardian Bond, "Elizabeth appointed guardian to Daniel Cook a minor of 16 years old, son of Daniel Cook. Witnesses: Philip Cook, Samuel Lyman." See also, Litchfield Probate District, Moses Cook, 1778, probate packet #1628. Guardian Bond, "Elizabeth appointed guardian to Moses Cook a minor of 11 years old, son of Capt. Daniel Cook. Witnesses: Phillip Cook, Samuel Lyman."

[3] Lucius A. Barbour and Lucius B. Barbour, The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records (Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut State Library, 1911-1934), citing Wallingford Vital Records, 9:547.

[4] Connecticut State Library (Hartford, Connecticut), Probate files collection, early to 1880 (Salt Lake City, Utah: Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1977-1979), [FHL #1022333]. Probate Packet, 1604: Elizabeth Cook, Goshen, 1796, will signed and sealed 16 December 1795; will proved 3 February 1796. She died between 16 December 1795 and 3 February 1796.

[5] Ancestry, US Connecticut Wills and Probate, "Samuel Pond, 1727." "Inventory submitted 12 August 1726 with "Names and ages of children: Phillip of full age, Josiah 18, Abigail 16, Phineas, Peter, Elizabeth." Donald Lines Jacobus, *Families of Ancient New Haven,* (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1974), 6:1456.

[6] Branford deeds, 7:496, [FHL Film # 008140455 image 263 of 573]. Phillip as the administrator of Samuel's estate posted a bond to secure the transfer of his sister Elizabeth Pond's interest in their parents' estate within twenty days of her twenty-first birthday. Bond dated: 10 January 1734.

[7] Branford deeds, 7:497, [FHL Film # 008140455 image 264 of 573]. Elizabeth Cook wife of Daniel Cook of Wallingford transferred her interest in the estate on 25 February 1747.

and the state. “Weakness in the family endangered the entire social order, for Puritans knew that that the pattern of submission set in the home fixed the attitude toward authority throughout life, and strong family government prevented disorder in the state. The father was the model for all authority, magistrates were called the fathers of their people, and the biblical commandment to honor parents was expanded to include all rulers.”[8] Preachers would exhort their parishioners to submit to their fathers and reinforced his standing in the home. Fathers, while stern in relation to discipline, were also loving and generous and expected to rear their children in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.”[9] Daniel was born into a rich cultural and theological legacy.[10]

In Connecticut, citizens were legally required to attend church services and could face fines or other penalties for noncompliance. However, while attendance was mandatory, formal membership was not. To become a member, individuals had to appear before the minister and demonstrate a personal conversion experience. At the time of Daniel's birth, membership growth in the Congregational Church was stagnating, which sparked a doctrinal controversy across New England, leading to what became known as the "Halfway Covenant." This controversy centered on whether to baptize the infants of churchgoers who were not yet full communicants or members.

"Old Light" ministers, committed to traditional Puritan orthodoxy, saw the Halfway Covenant as a solution to the growing spiritual apathy and declining membership. This covenant allowed for the baptism of infants whose parents were not full church members. In contrast, "New Light" ministers, favoring a more dynamic approach, advocated for religious revivals to spiritually renew congregants and encourage personal conversions, thus fulfilling the requirements for church membership. These revivals, which became known as the "First Great Awakening" during the 1730s and 1740s, were opposed by the "Old Light" ministers who supported the “Halfway Covenant.” The resulting theological tensions would have lasting repercussions for years to come.

In fact Daniel’s family would witness this tension first hand. It manifested itself with the founding of the town of Goshen. The town was organized when the proprietors met in New Haven in 1739. After the allocation of the land, the first order of business was to select the minister. The Reverend Stephen Heaton of New Haven was appointed to the Goshen pulpit. He was considered an “Old Light,” and his selection soon became controversial. In addition to the theological issues, he riled the selectmen and congregants because it was thought he tried to curry the favor of undecided church members to advocate against his dismissal. These efforts were fruitless and he would be dismissed by the town from the Goshen pulpit in less than a year. Reverend Abel Newell, known as a “New Light” minister, was appointed shortly before the arrival of Daniel’s family to Goshen in 1750, and remained in the position throughout his life.[11]

Familiarity with Reverend Heaton dismissal and the pragmatic approach to the appointment of Reverend Newell, both by consent of the congregation, reflects the shift from the Puritan social order to the Yankee entrepreneurial and practical culture in Goshen and the colony. The irony of the Puritan movement is that they truly got what they wished for: congregational governance of the church and freedom from the Anglican Episcopacy, the natural extension of which led to a desire for self-governance and independence from the English monarchy. This would be demonstrated profoundly near the end of Daniel’s own life and in the lives of his children, as they would all risk life and property to achieve that end.

Daniel's father was a prosperous farmer who learned tanning from his own father. Farming in Colonial Connecticut was labor-intensive and a true "home industry," requiring the whole family to contribute for survival. The seasons offered routine and security: spring involved sowing corn, mending fences, calving cows, and planting gardens, while June was dedicated to haying. The inventory of his estate listed fifteen head of cattle, two horses, and twenty-five sheep, all needing winter feed. The family had to store twenty to twenty-five tons of hay, requiring four to five men working daily for about a month to cut, rake, haul, and stack it. In July and September, they harvested the wheat planted the previous fall. A family like Daniel's would plant about twenty acres, aiming for a yield of 10 to 15 bushels per acre, totaling around two hundred bushels. The wheat would be cut, bundled, threshed, winnowed, milled, and the flour sacked for the coming year. In September they also harvested corn for personal use and as animal feed, involving chopping, shucking, shelling, and milling. Additionally, they gathered garden produce and preserved seasonal fruits. Before the freeze, they would sow winter wheat for the next season. While cattle and sheep grazed half the year, cows needed to be milked twice daily, sheep sheared in spring, and cheese pressed and marketed.

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8 Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Press, 1967) 14.

9 Ephesians 6:4.

10 Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*, Chapter One, “Law and Authority.”

11 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut.* (Hartford: Press of the Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1897), 58.

Not much had changed by the time his great-grandson, Phineas Wolcott Cook, described the farming season in his journal. He helped his father farm and relates, "We had a yoke of stags.[12] I used to plow from thirty to fifty acres in spring and put it into corn, oats and buckwheat and potatoes with the help of a hired man. … In fall our job was to gather apples for our cider to make to the amount of thirty to forty barrels, and wood to get for winter which was no small matter."[13]

When time allowed, they built and repaired structures and maintained equipment. This industriousness and physical effort were both necessary and central to the Puritan ethic. Farming fostered problem-solving and creativity, which would come to define "Yankee Ingenuity." Everyone's contribution strengthened familial bonds and harmony with God and nature. Daniel's family owned extensive land, which required immense effort but made them self-reliant and independent. Land ownership represented both independence and freedom. The family was industrious and pragmatic, relying on each other. This ethos stemmed from Puritan culture and the practical demands of farming. Farming required harmony with nature, which, when in conflict, could be both humbling and a matter of faith.

Another example of the cultural shift from Puritan to Yankee traditions was Joseph's effort to secure his sons' futures. One of Joseph Cook's most notable qualities was his generosity toward his children. This certainly was demonstrated toward his son Daniel. On 9 January 1744/1745 Joseph Cook "out of love and goodwill" gave his "son Daniel Cook" half of his home in Wallingford, including half of the house, barn, and twenty acres of land.[14] About a month later, Daniel married Elizabeth Pond, and they lived in the home and worked the farm with his father until the couple moved to Goshen. While living in Wallingford, Daniel and Elizabeth had two sons: Samuel, born 2 August 1747, and Amasa, born 26 October 1749. They moved to Goshen shortly after Amasa's birth.

The year 1750 proved to be a sorrowful one for Daniel and Elizabeth Cook. Shortly before their move from Wallingford to Goshen, Daniel's brother, named for his father Joseph Cook, passed away.[15] He had married Phebe Hall just two years earlier and was the father of Joseph Cook III, who was only one year old at the time of his father's death. Phebe was named executor of Joseph's will.[16] Their son, Joseph, was gifted thirty acres of land in southwest Goshen by his grandfather's 1764 will.[17] In 1773, he was "of Sheffield, Berkshire, Massachusetts" when he sold his Goshen land.[18] He was living in Sheffield where, as a Minuteman, he responded to the alarm of 19 April 1775.[19] He moved to Cornwall, Addison, Vermont, where he became a man of wealth and prominence. He was elected a Brigadier General in the Vermont State Militia and died there 30 December 1828.[20]

Tragedy also struck Elizabeth's side of the family that same year. Her brother Josiah Pond had died shortly after her marriage to Daniel, and in 1750 she lost two more of her three surviving brothers—Philip and Phineas. The death of Phineas was especially heartbreaking, as his wife, Martha (Howd) Pond, died within weeks of his passing. Daniel Cook was appointed one of the guardians for their orphaned children.[21] Their eldest son, Phineas would later be killed in Albany, New York while serving in the French and Indian War.[22]

Elizabeth's last surviving brother, Peter Pond, established a family in Milford while also operating a fur trading business in Detroit, Michigan. His son Peter would go on to become a noted explorer and adventurer.[23] Elizabeth's sister, Abigail (Pond) Page, remained in Branford, where she raised her family.

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12 Stags were older breeding bulls repurposed as draft animals. Oxen were castrated. Draft horses weren't introduced in Connecticut until the mid-1800's.

13 Janet S. Porter, *Phineas Wolcott Cook, a Legacy of Faith*, (Bountiful, Utah: Phineas Wolcott Cook Family Organization, 2022), 14. When Daniel died he divided his estate equally among his living children and the children of his children who had predeceased him. After his wife Elizabeth's "widow's third" his son Daniel inherited one eighth of his estate. His son Daniel died intestate and his estate was distributed equally to his two sons after his widow, Elizabeth Porter, remarried.

14 Wallingford land records, 9:479. Deed dated, January 9, 1744/5.

15 Connecticut Vital Records, "Goshen, Joseph d. Mar. 2, 1750."

16 Litchfield District, Probate Records, Probate packet: #1620. Joseph Cook, Jr., Goshen, will dated 24 February 1750.

17 Ancestry, Connecticut Wills and Probate, Joseph Cook, 1764. "Item: I give unto my Grand Son Joseph Cook his heirs and assigns forever thirty acres of land in Goshen in the South West part of said town on the North West corner of my farm there to him and his heirs and assigns forever on this condition: that he lives to the age of twenty-one years."

18 Goshen land records, Volume 7. [FHL Film #4420, item 1]

19 Massachusetts Archives, *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, (Boston: 1896), 3:933.

20 Lyman Matthews, *History of the Town of Cornwall, Vermont*, (Middlebury, Vt:1862) 95-97.

21 Connecticut Probate Records, Woodbury District, Phineas Pond, [FHL Film 6172, image 58].

22 "Connecticut Births and Christenings, 1649-1906", database, FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F746-H4Z: 7 January 2020), Phineas Pond, 1737. See pages 144 and 160. "Phineas Pond killed in Albany." Also, see Jacobus Lines, Vol. VI. p. 1455.

23 Nathan Gillette Pond, The Ponds of Milford, Connecticut, Connecticut Magazine, 1906, 10:161.

In the spring of 1750, Joseph and Daniel sold their forty-two acre Wallingford farm to Joseph's son Benjamin for eighteen hundred pounds. The property included a tanning vat, as well as the structures and home.[24] With his share of the proceeds, Daniel purchased seventy-five acres in Goshen from Joseph Curtis for one thousand twenty-five pounds. The property included the "mansion" and was located on the west side of the road about one hundred and fifty yards north of Joseph's property on east side of Town Hill Road.[25]

When Goshen was settled in 1739, Joseph Cook was an original proprietor and founder.[26] The move to Goshen had been planned for some time, and except for Benjamin, his entire family relocated. Upon arriving eleven years later, Daniel continued to buy small parcels of land in Goshen, with only one instance of owning property jointly with a non-family member, which was eventually divided.[27] His largest land transactions were the purchase of the property of his two brothers. He bought sixty-five acres from Lambert who left Goshen and moved to Richmond, Berkshire, Massachusetts.[28] This transaction took place about a month after their father's death. Eight years later, Walter followed his brother and moved to Richmond after selling to Daniel.[29]

When the Cooks arrived in Goshen, the town had a population of about 500. Soon after settling with his young family Daniel became actively involved in the community. As a thirty year-old man, Daniel was required by law to drill with the town militia. In December he was appointed surveyor of town roads.[30] By state law, the town was required to appoint two officials, known as surveyors, who were given the power to "call out every Teeme and person fitt for labour, in their course, one day every yeare, to mend said highwayes … and Common wayes which are betwixt Towne and Towne."[31] He was appointed to this position twice, once in December of 1750 for the year 1751 and the second time in December of 1756 for the year 1757.[32] During his terms as surveyor, three children were born to Daniel and Elizabeth: Phillip born 2 February 1752, Lois born 27 February 1754, and Lydia born 29 October 1756. His last two children, Daniel and Moses were born 25 August 1761 and 25 April 1764.

In 1762, Daniel and Elizabeth divested themselves of her remaining interest in her parents' estate in Branford. The deed is interesting because it confers the balance of her inheritance to Rosewell Pond, the son of her deceased brother, Josiah Pond. "Daniel Cook & Elisabeth his wife, of the County of Litchfield, for divers goods, causes & considerations, … & more especially for the sum of one hundred pounds money, received & paid by Roswell Pond of Branford in the County of New Haven. Being the full part & portion of their Honored Father Samuel Pond's Estate, Dec'd & also of our Honored mother Abigail Pond's Estate of Branford in the County aforesaid hath remanded, released … & forever quitclaim unto the said Rosewell Pond. ... In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands & seals the 6th day of December in the Third Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third of Great Britain & King, Signed, Sealed & Delivered … Daniel Cook and Elizabeth Cook."[33] While the property was Elizabeth's, her husband was required to sign and she certified that she signed free of coercion from her husband.

By 1761, Daniel's civic responsibilities multiplied and increased in importance. In 1763, Sergeant Daniel Cook was appointed to a committee charged with settling a boundary dispute between Ensign Ebenezer Hill and the town of Litchfield regarding a contested survey of town boundaries.[34] Later that year in December he was chosen to serve on the School Committee.[35]

In the spring of 1764, Sergeant Daniel Cook was again called upon to serve on a three-member committee to settle a property line dispute with the Town of Cornwall.[36] By September of that year, Sergeant Cook was appointed as a "Grand Juror," a position reserved for men of high social standing, elected by the freemen of the town.[37] Grand Jurors were

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24 Wallingford Land Records, 11:375. Deed dated, April 30, 1750.
25 Goshen Land Records, 3:651. Deed dated, 17 May 1750. Also, A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut.* (Hartford: Press of the Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1897), 58.
26 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut*, 22.
27 Goshen Land Records, 5:193.
28 Goshen Land Records, 4:239. Deed dated, 17 December 1764.
29 Goshen Land Records, 5:177. Deed dated 14 December 1772.
30 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:33-34.
31 State of Connecticut portal; Department of Transportation, "Highways to History."
32 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:33, 34, 49.
33 Town of Branford Deeds, 8:273-274, [FHL Film # 008140455 image 523 of 574].
34 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:62.
35 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1: 245.
36 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:64-65.
37 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1784, 1:66.

responsible for overseeing town affairs, ensuring that parents taught their children to pray, read scriptures, and learn the laws of the colony. Parents failing in these duties could face fines or other legal consequences.[38] In addition to his role as Grand Juror, Daniel Cook held the rank of sergeant in his town militia company. Militia companies voted on their own captains, who in turn would appoint non-commissioned officers such as sergeants and corporals.

His father, Joseph Cook died in Goshen on 7 November 1764.[39] He had written a will on 20 August 1764 and Daniel Cook and his mother were named as the executors of the estate.[40] In his will Joseph bequeathed "his son Daniel Cook" … "all my lot of land that I bought of Jonathan Wadhams that lieth west of Dog Pond in Goshen aforesaid. And also I give one half of my proprietor's right of land to be laid out in Goshen aforesaid" … "Also I give him five acres and half of land in Goshen above said joining to the land aforementioned given to my well beloved wife to him and his heirs."[41]

Three years later his mother, Eleanor (Johnson) Cook died and the inventory of her estate was taken on 15June 1768. Her son Daniel was named as the executor. Eleanor was the mother of eight children, seven of whom grew to maturity. She had a daughter Lois, who is known to have been born in Wallingford, but there is no indication she grew to maturity. Both Joseph and Hannah are known to have predeceased their parents. In his will, Joseph, remembers his grandson, Joseph and the children of his daughter, Hannah Pettibone.[42]

Their estate papers also give us some insight into their relationships with their neighbors. For example, the Cooks and the Lymans were next door neighbors on Town Hill near Dog Pond.[43] Moses Lyman, a fellow town proprietor with Joseph Cook, would be appointed by the court to take the inventory of Joseph's estate. He died a few years later and Daniel Cook would be appointed to take the inventory of his estate in 1768. They would often witness each other's deeds and support each other in farming, business and other neighborly pursuits. Ultimately their descendants would intermarry.

Additionally, their estate papers provide insight into their religiosity. Joseph willed his son Benjamin his "Sabbath Day house in Wallingford." In Colonial Connecticut wealthy farmers who lived in rural areas would own a home near the churches where they worshiped, often in the center of the nearest town. Joseph's Sabbath Day house in Wallingford would have provided his family with a place to stay after traveling into town, to keep warm in the winter, and prepare light meals between morning and evening services. In the inventory of Eleanor's estate a Bible is listed with her personal property. Daniel willed his personal Bible to his son Daniel. His written will is a reflection on his attitude toward the Christian faith. It was obviously important to him.

Their estate papers reveal that Daniel functioned as the executor of both parents' estates. With his oldest brother remaining in Wallingford, two siblings making the move to Goshen but predeceasing Daniel's parents, and two younger brothers moving to Richmond, Daniel Cook and his older sister Phebe (Cook) Gaylord were the only family members remaining in Goshen when their parents died. After their deaths he would continue to grow in prominence.

As the family dynamics were evolving so was the town of Goshen. Within twenty years of its founding, the town's population had grown close to 1,000 inhabitants. Approaching fifty years old, Daniel was elected to serve as a town Selectman from 1769 to1770.[44] During this period, Goshen typically held town meetings biannually, though occasionally they convened three or four town meetings in a year. At these meetings, the town Selectmen were elected by the town proprietors and freeman.

Initially, to become a freeman in Connecticut, a male was required to be a member of the town Congregationalist Church. By the time Daniel became a freeman the requirements had shifted to age and property ownership. Freemen were designated by the town Selectmen, and once granted this status, they had the right to vote in town meetings. Goshen typically elected eight Selectmen each year. Among them, one would serve as the moderator of the town meetings while another was appointed as the town Clerk. The Selectman were responsible for making appointments to town committees and other town offices.

Goshen Town meetings addressed three main functions: town business, church matters, and school affairs. The minutes for each of these categories were recorded separately in the Town Record Book. The Selectmen approved town budgets, laws,

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38 Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*, 14.
39 The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing Wallingford VR, 1:235. "Cook, Joseph, d. Nov. 7, 1764, ae 82."
40 Litchfield Probate District, Probate Records, Vol. 1-4, 1743-1788, 105-108.
41 Litchfield Probate District, Probate Records, Vol. 1-4, 1743-1788, 105-108.
42 Litchfield Probate District, Daniel Cook, Goshen, 1778, probate packet #1602.
43 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut,* 58.
44 Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:73, 75.

and licenses. They set fees and taxes and managed the daily operations. There was no separation of Church and State; the Selectmen hired ministers, appointed their wages and fixed tax rates to support the church. The town meeting house accommodated both civic functions and church services.

As the town expanded, it was decided to construct a new meeting house for civic functions while the old meeting house was repurposed as a "Sabbath-day house" for the community. According to Church meeting minutes from 1771, Daniel was part of a group of leading men who financed the remodeling of the old town meeting house. This house was used by the community between services to gather, stay warm, and prepare light meals between services. Additionally the town also used the structure for town business during the week days. At one time there were up to four such "Sabbath-day" houses near the church on the Goshen town green.[45] A year later the town voted to release Daniel Cook from this obligation requiring him to "pay ten pounds and return all dove tails."[46]

From the School meeting minutes, we learn that Daniel served on a committee to evaluate whether the east school district of Goshen should be divided into two districts. The committee members included "Capt. Daniel Cook, Ensign Jonathan Wadhams, and Moses Lyman." This meeting took place on 14 December 1772.[47] Additionally, Daniel served on the School Committee from 1763 – 1766.[48]

School Committees in colonial times were responsible for recruiting and hiring teachers, ensuring smooth operation of schools, maintaining buildings, setting budgets, managing education , and approving curricula. Daniel's involvement reflects his strong interest in education, which is further supported by his role as the father of seven children, all of whom were educated and well read. His commitment to education is also evident from his estate records, which show he contributed to the town library and included several books and pamphlets in his estate inventory.

Daniel Cook stands out as a great grandson of the immigrant Henry Cooke in terms of literacy. While Henry and his descendants were literate, Daniel's list of books and pamphlets found in his estate papers was most extensive. Included in the list were two Bibles, several New Testaments, a primer and a speller. He was an investor in the Goshen Library and held a financial interest in the Library at his death.[49] His support of literacy and education is a legacy d'emonstrated by the achievements of his posterity. His grandson Samuel graduated Yale class of 1795.[50] His son Daniel's grandson, Darius Burgess Cook, became the Editor of the Niles Republican, a newspaper in Michigan. His grandson, Phineas Wolcott Cook, who was a builder by trade, was a prolific writer and a journalist.

From town meeting minutes, we learn that Daniel was commissioned a militia captain prior to 1772. In New England, men ages sixteen to fifty were required by law to join the town militia company. Every Connecticut town had such a trained band or militia company commanded by a group of officers, the highest rank being Captain. The officers were commissioned by the General Assembly in Hartford. Prior to 1774, the Goshen militia company would have been part of the 13th Connecticut Militia Regiment. The town companies drilled locally but also with their regiment at least annually. These gatherings served as social events as well. During Captain Daniel Cook's tenure, Goshen, Litchfield and Woodbury were part of the same regiment. These gatherings would have brought the Cooks, Churchills and Porters together, leading to future intermarriages among them.

In 1774, the State Assembly reorganized the militia, and the Goshen militia became part of the new Seventeenth Regiment commanded by Colonel Oliver Wolcott.[51] New Captains for the Goshen militia were commissioned as a result of those changes. While there is no record of Daniel serving in the French and Indian War, during the Revolutionary War he contributed to the war effort and signed the Smallpox Petition of 1775. The Freeman of Goshen petitioned state assistance to care for soldiers afflicted by smallpox contracted during the operations related to the fall of Fort Ticonderoga.[52]

In the summer of 1776 the governor of Connecticut, Jonathan Trumbull, ordered all able-bodied militia men west of the Connecticut River to march to the aid of Washington's army in New York. Historians believe virtually every man living in

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45 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut*, 85. Also, see Goshen Town Records transcribed 1840, 1:185.
46 Goshen Town Records Transcribed 1840, 1:187.
47 Goshen Town Records, 1:249.
48 Goshen Town Records, 1:62, 245, 246.
49 Litchfield Probate District, Daniel Cook, 1708, packet no. 1592.
50 Biographical sketches of Yale graduates, 5:142.
51 Connecticut Sons of the American Revolution, Articles, Understanding the Connecticut Militia, Sarconnecticut.org.
52 Sylvester Judd and Connecticut State Library, comp. Connecticut Archives: Revolutionary War (Selected Papers), 1763-1789, [FHL 3,537 Series 1 v. 4 pt. 2], 4:329.

western Connecticut was involved in the Battle of New York. Daniel's sons responded to the call, leaving him to manage the harvest alone at age 56.

In October of 1776 the Connecticut State Assembly required all freemen of the towns to sign an Oath of Allegiance. In November of 1777 he signed the following Oath of Allegiance as Captain Cook:

"You, [Capt. Daniel Cook], do swear by the ever-living God that you will truly and faithfully adhere to and maintain the government established in this State under the authority of the people, agreeable to the laws in force within the same; and that you believe in your conscience that the King of Great Britain hath not, nor of right ought to have, any authority or dominion in or over this State; and that you do not hold yourself bound to yield any allegiance or obedience to him within the same; and that you will, to the utmost of your power, maintain and defend the freedom, independence, and privileges of this state against all open enemies or traitorous conspiracies whatsoever: So help you God."

Swearing this Oath was considered by the King of England to be an act of rebellion and treason, punishable by hanging. By signing it Daniel was putting his life at risk. The family was clearly aligned with the principles of the American Revolution. His older sons Phillip and Amasa also signed the Oath in November. All of his sons, with the exception of Moses, fought as soldiers in the war. His son, Daniel Cook, was wounded in battle, recovered and continued to serve until the end of the war. Both of his daughters married Revolutionary War veterans. This family took tremendous risk to help establish the United States of America. As the Psalmist said:

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; ***and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance****.* (Psalms 33:12)

All of his children lived to marry and raise their own families with the exception of his oldest son Samuel. Samuel was living in 1750 when the family moved to Goshen.[53] Although there is no death record for him, it is certain he predeceased his father because he is not mentioned in Daniel's will. There are no land or town records or a will for Samuel, suggesting he never reached the age of majority in 1768. He most likely died as a minor and certainly before 4 March 1776 when his brother Phillip named his first son Samuel Cook.[54] The family naming patterns for several generations suggest a custom of naming children for deceased family members.[55]

Daniel was clearly a leading citizen of Goshen. His livelihood was farming and he not only provided for his family but also prospered. Some Goshen Church records were destroyed by a disgruntled minister and there is no record for Daniel's church membership in Goshen, but he owned several Bibles and psalm books, indicating his personal commitment to worship. His wife was known to have been a member of the church.[56] That he was of an elevated social status is borne out by his children intermarrying with very prominent Goshen families. His wife, Elizabeth (Pond) Cook survived him by twenty-two years. She remained active and was involved in family and business affairs until her death.[57]

While the exact date of Daniel's death is not known, we can narrow the time frame significantly. He was alive and presumably well when he signed the Oath of Allegiance in November of 1777 and when he sold land to Abel Smith signing the deed dated 12 December 1777. In 1781 his son Daniel repurchased this land, which Abel describes as the same land he purchased by deed of Daniel Cook on "12 December 1777." This confirms that Daniel was alive in mid-December and active enough to conduct business. His health may have failed rapidly thereafter, as his will is dated 30 December 1777 and accepted and recorded by the Goshen Town Clerk, Samuel Lyman, on 13 January 1778.

His widow, Elizabeth (Pond) Cook, was appointed the guardian of their two minor sons on the same day. Her appointment as guardian was necessary for the stewardship of land and property willed to her minor sons until they came of age. Daniel's inventory was submitted to the court in January 1778 and the estate was settled 6 April 1779.

Daniel's estate papers indicate that his life personifies the transitional shift from the Puritan to Yankee culture. His inventory lists his ownership of several Bibles, a Psalm Book and two New Testaments suggesting his commitment to personal worship and faith in Christ. The absence of a church membership record may indicate a personal integrity that, despite his faith, did not necessarily align with the formal requirements for church membership.

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53 Charles Davis, *History of Wallingford, Connecticut*, (Meridian, Connecticut: 1780), 678. "Samuel … went to Goshen.")

54 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut,* p. 448-453.

55 For example, Daniel's father Joseph Cook presumably named his first son Benjamin born 1718 after his half -brother Benjamin who died 1717. Also, Daniel named Phillip born 1752 after his brother in law Phillip Pond who died 1750.

56 A. G. Hibbard, *History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut,* p. 448-453.

57 Land Records and Probate Records.

Daniel's prosperity illustrates a movement from the austerity of Puritan thought to the Yankee acceptance of prosperity as a sign of God's grace. His personal property, including linen sheets, china, and pewter, reflects a modest affluence. While his standard of living surpassed mere subsistence farming, it remained temperate and modest relative to his land holdings and assets. The most significant indicators of his wealth were his livestock and the cash he had on hand at his death. Despite having outstanding personal notes to various creditors, he was liquid and solvent, demonstrating frugality and practical resource management. In an economy where cash was scarce and personal debts often exceeded assets, Daniel managed to bequeath his entire estate while satisfying his creditors.

His support for the American War for Independence was a natural extension of Congregationalist theology, reflecting the belief that if ministers could be voted out, so could kings.

Yankee culture, rooted in small-scale farming required innovation and efficiency to produce more than a subsistence living. Emphasis on education is another economic aspect of Yankee culture that valued learning and supported economic development. Yankees were known for their thriftiness. This was not only a personal virtue but also supported economic development. Daniel Cook was born a Puritan and died a Connecticut Yankee.

The children of Daniel and Elizabeth (Pond) Cook, the first two born at Wallingford [58] and the remainder at Goshen:[59]

I. SAMUEL COOK, b. 2 August 1747.
II. AMASA COOK, b. 26 October 1749.
III. PHILLIP COOK, b. 2 February 1752.
IV. LOIS COOK, b. 27 February 1754.
V. LYDIA COOK, b. 29 October 1756.
VI. DANIEL COOK, b.14 August 1761.
VII. MOSES COOK, b. 25 April 1764.

58 The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing Wallingford VR, 9:559 and 11:546.
59 Ibid. citing Goshen VR, 1:234, 263, 268, 271, 273.