Our Colonial Ancestors:

Daniel Cook Jr.

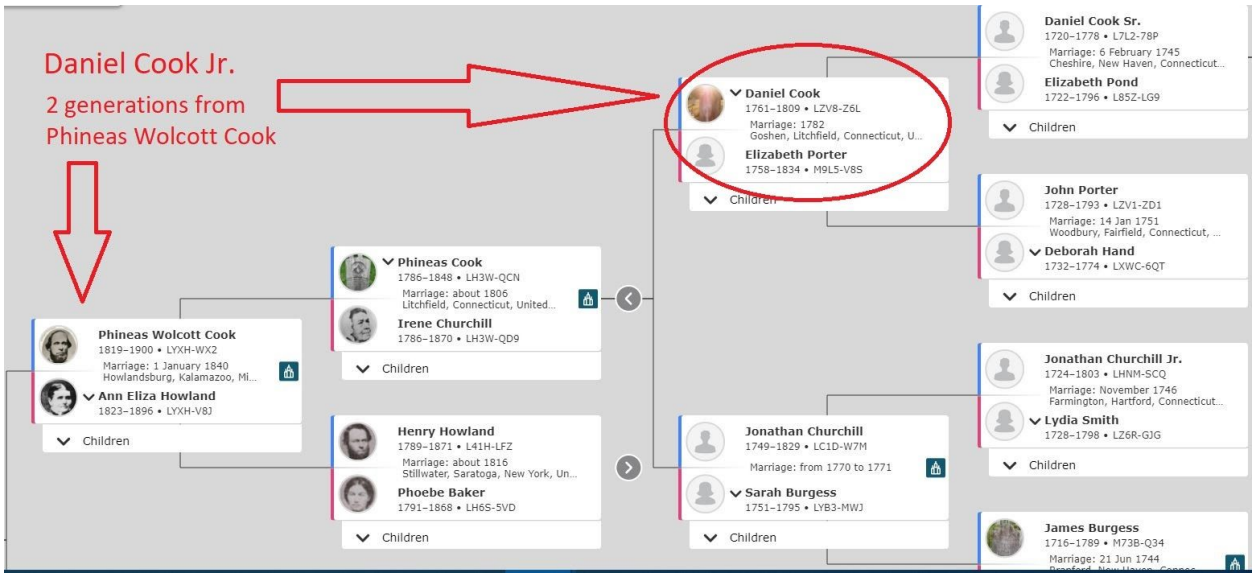
(1761 - 1809)

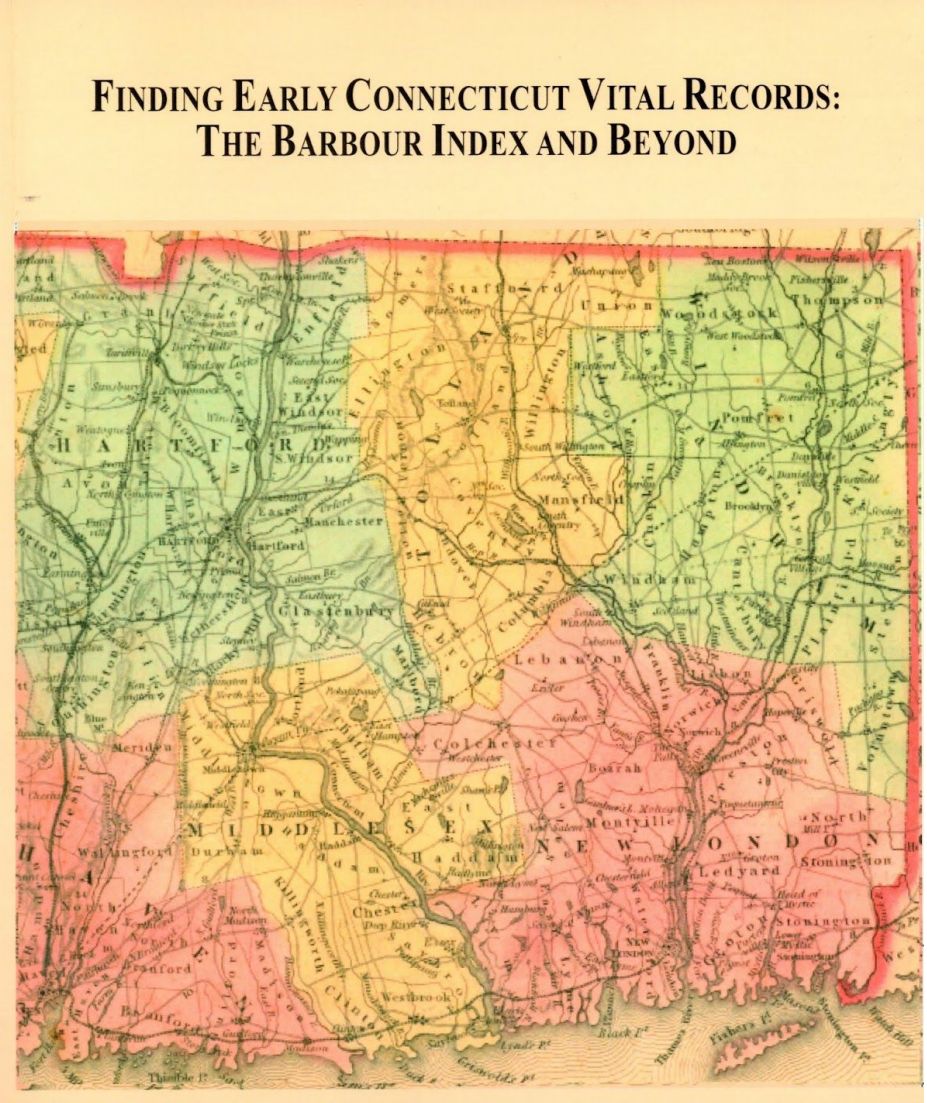
and Elizabeth Porter Cook

(1758-1834)

2 Generations removed from

Phineas Wolcott Cook





Daniel Cook Jr. was the 4th son of Daniel Sr. and Elizabeth Cook. Vital records haven't been found for his birth, but one historical compilation states that his birth date was 18 August 1761. However, his gravestone, which is still viewable in the Milton Cemetery in Connecticut, is engraved with the statement that he died "on his birthday August 14th 1809, Aged 49 years" which would make his birthday in 1760.



By the time Daniel Jr. was born to Daniel Sr. and Elizabeth Cook, the Cook family had been in Goshen, Connecticut for three generations. When the Revolutionary War broke out, Daniel was 15 or 16 years old. It is not known exactly when he enlisted, but all men ages 16 to 60 were required to be in the militia, so he most likely served at the beginning of the war. No records exist of his war service, but we assume he was in the Seventeenth Connecticut Regiment with others who served from Goshen and surrounding areas, including his brother-in-law and uncle. With that Regiment he would have served in the battle of New York.



Though no war records have been found, we have stories of Daniel's war service recorded in the diary of his grandson, Phineas Wolcott Cook. Phineas was born 10 years after his grandfather's death, so he must have heard the stories from his father.



How were these men were filled with such patriotic fervor they enlisted even at the peril of their lives. What exactly happened in town to inspire men, young and old, to march away to places they had never seen?

One of the early conflicts of the war was at Long Island, across the Long Island Sound from New Haven. Hessian soldiers had joined the British and made a formidable enemy, certainly capable of crushing any force raised by the scattered American rebels. Sensing the possibility of an early defeat, George Washington sent recruiters into every little town and village in New England. With that recruiter went a drummer and a fifer who stood on the steps of the church in Town Square.

To the sound of the drum and fife, the recruiter called one and all, pleading for able-bodied men and young men to bring their own guns and their own shoes to help fight for freedom. One historian present at the time recorded that after one or two of these recruiters had come through town there were few males left in Goshen above the age of 14.



Daniel Jr. served through the difficult years of privation and hardship, on occasion finding it necessary to leave his unit and go home for food to feed his comrades. For this he was court martialed and even sentenced to die. (His family later reported that the sentence was revoked because everyone was starving and needed his pork.) After seven years of privation, starvation, sleeping outdoors in snow and rain, suffering uncounted hardships, the war ended and he was released to go home.



Sometime during his last year as a soldier, Daniel Jr. married Elizabeth Porter. Their first child, Amasa was born in Goshen in 1782 about the time he returned for the last time from the war and another son Phineas was born in 1784. He took over his father's homestead and farm at the top of Town Hill in Goshen, and then sold some of the homestead to his brother Moses. He bought and sold land regularly in Goshen from 1780 through 1806 accumulating an additional 240 acres of land beyond that which he inherited. He ended his life living in the southwest part of the town, near Milton.

(Pictured is Dog Pond in Goshen, CT. Town Hill runs along the east side of the pond.)



Daniel Jr.'s grandson, Phineas Wolcott Cook reported that fighting the war for the full 7 years of the conflict broke his grandfather's health. His tombstone reads,

"In memory of
Capt. Daniel Cook
who died on his birth
day August 14th 1809
Aged 49 years.

Harke my gay friends, that Solemn toll
Speaks the departure of a soul;
Tis gone that's all, we know not where:
Or how the unbodied soul doth fare."



They may not have known how his soul fared, but the inventory of Daniel's estate shows how he managed his mortal affairs. Daniel, with the help of his sons, was a man of energy and ingenuity in providing for his family. He had eleven barrels plus four half-barrels of beef at the New Haven market and 300 pounds of beef waiting to go to market at the time of his death. He owned one-fourth of a sawmill which his family used at turns, beehives and bees, a cider mill and press.

Daniel's wife Elizabeth Porter was born in 1758 in Bethlehem, Litchfield county, Connecticut, the daughter of John and Deborah (Hand) Porter.

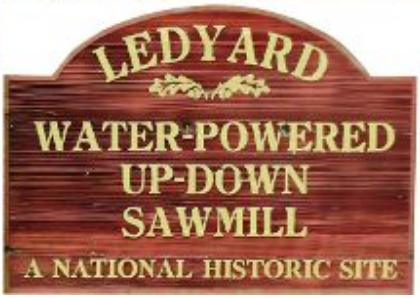
As you remember, Daniel Jr's great-grandfather was Samuel Cook who was one of the founders of Wallingford, CT. Elizabeth Porter was also descended on her mother's side from another of the 38 founders of Wallingford: John Moss.



Before founding Wallingford, John Moss emigrated from England on a ship that wrecked in Barbados. He later made his way to Massachusetts and then Connecticut. He was one of the first colonists to New Haven Colony, and signed the compact there in 1639. He was a representative to the General Court from New Haven for many years. He held the rank of Corporal and was one of the original purchasers of the town. He was also prominent in the establishment of the church there. At age 67 he applied for the incorporation of the new city of Wallingford, and some believe it was Moss who named Wallingford. He lived a long 103 years.



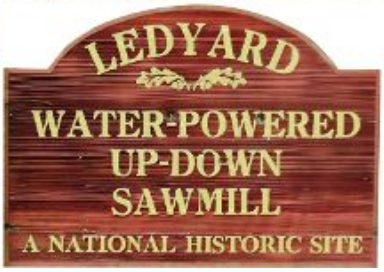




The Cooks in Goshen built and operated sawmills. To understand more about early New England sawmills, we turn to the Ledyard sawmill in Ledyard, Connecticut which is the only operational sash sawmill in the United States. It is on its original site, with its original saw mechanism, and is accessible to visitors. From them we learn the following (ledyardsawmill.org).







“In the American colonies, there was a shortage of labor, but [there were] hundreds of streams and rivers ripe for exploitation as power sources. In order to utilize the vast forests of the New World and supply the need for building materials in the growing country, sawmills (and other mills) were eventually built on nearly every source of moving water—by 1840 there were about 5,500 sawmills in New England, with nearly 700 in Connecticut alone. Most of these sawmills were on a small scale with a single saw, and were part of the local economy.

“The thousands of sawmills in New England for about 200 years beginning in the 1630s used essentially a single technology—a wooden water wheel with a crank connected by the ‘pitman’ arm to a wooden sash (frame) in which was mounted a straight saw blade. The reciprocating motion of the vertically mounted saw results in the characteristic straight “up and down” saw marks on boards and timbers cut on these sash type saws.” (ledyardsawmill.org).



After Daniel Cook Jr.'s death, his widow Elizabeth married Benjamin Beach in Goshen, and after he died she married Joseph Peters in Kent, Litchfield county.

In 1826, Elizabeth and Joseph Peters moved to Bloomfield, Ontario, New York and lived with Joseph’s daughter and son-in-law Asaneth and Darius Carter for a year. The Carters owned and lived in a tavern in town which still stands at 9 Main St., Bloomfield, NY and is now a private residence (see photo). Joseph and Elizabeth lived out their lives in Darien, Genesee, NY near his son Joseph Jr. Joseph Peters died in January, 1835 and is buried in the cemetery there. Elizabeth died in 1834 but her burial place is unknown, as is her birthdate.

The End