A Constant and Formidable Foe:

Joshua Stow and the Fight for

Religious Freedom in Connecticut

Final Draft
Preface

Joshua Stow is mentioned in passing in many works concerning Connecticut history, usually in connection with the settlement of the Western Reserve or as an example of the political divide that existed between Federalists and Republicans in Connecticut at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Among authors who mention Stow in passing are Peter Hall, Elizabeth Warner, and Richard Purcell.¹

Several authors provide somewhat longer, though still brief descriptions of Stow’s life. Thomas Atkins and C.W. Burpee both give short descriptions of Stow’s life in their biography compilations.² Stow is also mentioned in several unpublished works. John H. Friar devotes an entire chapter to Stow, chiefly concerned with Stow’s activities as a land dealer, in his unpublished M.A. Thesis, Flowing North Is Not Against the Main Stream (Wesleyan University, 1992). Also, Barry Wilder mentions Stow’s role as a leader in Middletown’s Masonic Lodge in his unpublished paper, Middletown Masons, 1796-1826 (Wesleyan University, 1980).

Electronically published resources that mention Stow include the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library website (http://www.smfpl.org/joshua.htm), and the town of Stow, Ohio’s website (http://www.stow.oh.us/page142.html).

None of these sources provide an adequate account of Stow’s life, however. At best, they give summary account of his vital statistics and offices. Joshua Stow was a man who believed in religious freedom, and who fought for a large part of his life to secure this freedom for himself and his fellow citizens. It is this struggle against the status quo that makes Joshua Stow interesting. To understand his life and the context in which he lived is to understand why and how he had to struggle to secure a right that we now
take for granted. Thus, my aim is not just to describe Stow’s biography with a focus on his long-fought battle for religious freedom, but also to place this fight within the context of his times, so that his life and work can be properly understood.
Introduction

Connecticut after the American Revolution and in the early nineteenth century was a place of change, a place of uncertain boundaries. Not only was the physical frontier changing, but the state’s fabled “steady habits” of politics and religion were also in flux. Instead of a secure aristocracy of the rich, well connected, and Congregationalist, there began to appear a more diverse, pluralistic society. This change did not occur over night. Rather, it was a long and arduous metamorphosis that those in power resisted at almost every step of the way.

The Constitutional Convention of 1818 marks a major change in Connecticut’s government. The Constitutional Convention marked the end of the “Standing Order,” as the ruling aristocracy of Federalist-Congregationalists was known. The 1818 constitution destroyed the Standing Order’s most useful assets in maintaining their power – limited suffrage and the establishment of the Congregationalist Church. The limitations on voting rights and qualifications had kept opposition parties small in the first two centuries of Connecticut’s history, while the establishment of one church over all others had stifled expressions of dissenting opinions.

Joshua Stow of Middletown one of those whose voice was suppressed. He was a member of an opposition party, the Jeffersonian Republicans, and he held unorthodox religious views. But he did not accept the status quo. He fought for most of his adult life to secure religious freedom in the state of Connecticut. Throughout his life, through his association with the Ethosian Society (a debating club and lending library), the Republican Party, and the Universalist Church, Stow loudly voiced his unorthodox opinions in his local community and in the state at large. In 1818 Stow’s work finally
paid off, when the General Assembly called a constitutional convention, in part to
address the question of religious freedom. Stow was one of the delegates to the
convention who was chosen to draft the article concerning religion. It was Stow’s draft,
with some small changes, that finally passed and became law, thus guaranteeing religious
freedom in Connecticut. So Joshua Stow not only fought for, but also won the battle for
religious freedom in Connecticut.

The Early Life of Joshua Stow

Joshua Stow was born on April, 22 1762, to Elihu Stow and Jemima Payne Stow
in what is now Middlefield Connecticut.³ Joshua was the second son born to Elihu and
Jemima, one of a total of seven children.⁴ Joshua’s older brother, Elihu settled in
Granville, Massachusetts, after he was married. His younger brother Silas went on to
settle in New York and became a representative to Congress for that state. His brother
Obed, however, stayed on in the area, as did his sisters Naomi, Lydia, Jemima, and
Eunice.⁵

Both father and son served in the Revolutionary war. Elihu served in Captain
Alden’s Company, of the Additional Continental Regiment, from 1777 until 1781,
eventually rising to the rank of Sergeant. Joshua served as a private in Captain Hopkins’
Company, Third Regiment, from 1781 to 1783.⁶ During his military service Joshua
probably gained some exposure to the ideas of the Enlightenment, the European and
American movement of the late 17th and early 18th centuries that emphasized the
application of reason to human problems. Though Stow was certainly not a deist, as many
leaders in the American Enlightenment were (Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, and
Thomas Jefferson, to name a few), Stow did seem to be greatly influenced in his later life by the idea that a person should be free to practice what ever religion they chose. Later, at least, many ministers blamed the rise of “infidelity,” or denial of the truth of the Christian Bible, on the war. They pointed to educated French officers who had come into contact with Americans during the war as the source of the wave of infidelity that came at the close of the revolution. In any case, it is probable that Stow, at the very least, gained exposure to different versions of Christianity, through his fellow soldiers, and that this might have stimulated thought about religion in him.

In his twenty-first year Joshua began keeping a journal of his activities. It records that after the war, Joshua went back to helping tend the family farm and grist mill in the spring and summer, and teaching school during the winter. He also learned how to survey, and thus employed himself surveying land in Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts when not needed on the farm. As Stow himself put it, he “kept school,” “tended mill,” “mowed hay,” “reaped wheat,” “carted grain,” and on Sundays he “went to meeting [usually church services].” Stow reveals in his journal that he was very much concerned with his future. After looking over his first year of journal entries in 1783, Stow reflects upon all of the time he had lost, and laments that he still does not know what he wants to do for the rest of his life:

After school sat down and looked over this journal, had many melancholy reflections...thought of many sinful actions and many hours misspent. Concluded for the future to amend. At a loss as to which way to spend the rest of my days; whether among Books or in seeking after honor and worldly interests...Many are the temptations of this world and many are the troubles...  

In other words, Joshua reveals himself to be a fairly normal twenty-one year old – unsure of himself and his place in the world.
During this time Joshua also engaged himself in study with educated neighbors, with whom he studied many subjects: Navigation, Surveying, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Philosophy, to name a few.\textsuperscript{11} Stow was also close friends with Rev. Abner Benedict, minister at the local Congregational Church from 1771 to 1785. In his diaries, Stow often mentions having had many extended conversations with Rev. Benedict about religion.\textsuperscript{12} This undoubtedly influenced his later opinions concerning religion.

Stow's father's opinions concerning religion undoubtedly shaped Joshua's thoughts on religion. Elihu was a staunch Strict Congregationalist, a member of the "New Light" movement that rebelled against the lax standards of the established Congregational Church in the 1740's during the Great Awakening. The Strict Congregationalists were not large in number: only about twenty congregations actually broke away from orthodoxy during the Great Awakening, reaching a height of thirty five mainly small congregations in the 1790's; but only seven survived to see the Constitution of 1818. Their example, however, provided the basis for dissent in Connecticut and paved the way for wider religious toleration.\textsuperscript{13}

Elihu's adherence to the "Strict" Church meant that he and his wife had to ride approximately six miles every Sunday to attend services at the nearest Separatist Church, in Middletown. It also meant that Elihu was opposed to being taxed to support a ministry of which he did not approve. So opposed, in fact, that he allowed his horse to be sold at auction rather than pay a tax to support the local Congregationalist church, according to Thomas Atkins, a historian of Middlefield.\textsuperscript{14} So thus, even in his youth, Joshua was exposed to differing ideas about religion, and had his father to look up to as an example of conscientious dissent.
On January 24, 1786, Joshua married Ruth Coe, whom he had been courting for several years. About this time Stow's intellectual concerns with religion were beginning to take shape. In 1790 he joined the Ethosian Society, a library and debating society composed of young men of Middlefield and Durham that existed from 1787 to 1793. Stow remained a member for at least a year. The Society was a place where Stow and others could explore ideas that were unorthodox, as well as discuss current political issues. In later years, during Stow's libel suit against Sherman Converse, Stow's political enemies accused him of personally propagating infidelity by inviting others to the society. According to the members of the society, however, the society was devoted mainly to earnest discussion of philosophy and religion, not just criticism of the Bible. It was true that among the library's books were the works of Voltaire and Petit Pierre; but the members stressed that there was also frequent discussion of Scripture.

Stow began to develop his Universalist leanings during this time as well. A Universalist, as I shall use the term, is a follower of the liberal Christian theology of Universalism. Theologically, Universalists held that all souls must, in the end, reach salvation through God's love for humanity. As Manoah Camp, founder of the Ethosian Society and a friend of Stow, stated during the Libel trial when asked if Stow had a dispute with the Calvinists [i.e. the Congregationalist Church]:

Such was my idea. He trusted to a God of Love. He said nothing of a savior, &c. to me. He said men were inspired by degrees, one above another to write, and everything was by inspiration. It was so in the Scriptures as in other books. He held the Scriptures to be a revelation from God...

Stow's unorthodoxy is clear here, in the testimony of an old friend. To discuss religion without mentioning a savoir was a shocking enough, but then to go on to assert that all
men were inspired in a similar manner as those who wrote the Scriptures was completely outlandish. Stow, rather than regarding the Scriptures as a specially revealed text, compares them to other books, arguing that the only difference is not one of substance or kind, but rather of degree. This was surely not a part of the accepted church doctrine at the time. Furthermore, if the testimony of Manoah Camp is to be believed (and I see now reason to question his opinion of Stow), then even in the early 1790's Stow reveals himself to already be in the midst of this radical departure from orthodox Congregationalist theology. Stow was already beginning to move away from orthodoxy and towards a more radical opinion, even while a young man.

An examination of the books Stow owned at about this time suggests the drift of his thoughts.\(^\text{20}\) In 1787 Stow owned, among other things, a copy of the *Statutes of Connecticut* and *A Young Secretary's Guide* - already Stow was studying for his future occupation as lawyer, legislator, and judge. Turning to his thoughts on religion we find that in 1792 Stow also owned a copy of Doctor Richard Price's *Observations: On Universal Salvation and God's Love to Mankind* (The Rev. Dr. Price was a leading Unitarian in England at the time\(^\text{21}\)). Stow was continuing his study of unorthodox theologies that he had begun with his association with the Ethosian Society.

**The Western Reserve**

By 1790 Stow was working as a surveyor, maintaining his own farm, and working as collector of State and Town taxes.\(^\text{22}\) His family had grown to include two daughters – Julia, born November 4, 1786 and Laura, born November 8, 1790. In 1796 Stow joined Gen. Moses Cleaveland's expedition to the Western Reserve, Connecticut's holdings in
what is now Northwestern Ohio. Cleaveland was the representative (and major
shareholder) in the Connecticut Land Company, the thirty-five-member body (never
incorporated) that had bought the rights to all of the lands that Connecticut owned in the
west. 23 The exception to this purchase were the so-called “Fire Lands;” these were lands
reserved for distribution to residents of the coastal towns of Connecticut that had received
heavy damage in the Revolutionary war at the hands of the British. The purchase was for
an estimated 3 million acres, sold for 1.2 million dollars in 1795. The proceeds from the
sale went directly into the State’s “School Fund”, a fund created to provide for the
education of Connecticut’s residents. 24

After the Company purchased the land, Cleaveland arranged for an expedition to
visit, and survey, the Western Reserve so that it could be divided up and then sold to
individuals. The plan was to survey the Reserve in 5 square mile townships. Cleaveland’s
party consisted of 50 men, including Stow, who was taken on as commissary. 25 Stow was
in his mid-thirties at this time, had two daughters, and was a prominent member of his
community, having been initiated into the Middletown Masonic Lodge the previous year.
He had been a practicing surveyor since 1783, so he certainly had the skills and
experience necessary for the job.

The expedition reached the Western Reserve on Independence Day, July, 4
1796. 26 The first building that the party constructed was named “Stow’s Castle” in honor
of Stow. 27 Stow was known for his prowess in killing and cooking rattlesnakes during the
trip (as commissary, he apparently was eager to conserve supplies.) 28

The survey party lasted until October, 17 1796 before returning to Connecticut for
the winter. Unfortunately, not much land was surveyed, not even enough to start
distributing land to the shareholders of the Connecticut Land Company. So, the next spring, another survey party went out, and this time they were able to finish the job. Subsequent to his work for the Company, Stow became an investor himself. He paid $6,000 for a roughly 5,000-acre plot just north of Akron. He named the township Stow after himself. In later years he was to make thirteen trips back to Ohio to survey and then settle the land he had bought.

However, buying land in the Western Reserve did not turn out to be a wise business decision for most of the investors involved, Stow included. The Connecticut Land Company had bought the Western Reserve without much cash down. Rather, it secured the debt with mortgages and personal securities, trusting that the resale of the land would take care of all expenses. But, because of the slow settlement of the Western Reserve, their debts mounted, rather than being erased. Also, because the Connecticut Land Company was not a corporation, but rather a collection of individual investors, they were individually responsible for its debt, and so many of them were ruined by their investment. Stow was one of these. At the end of his life, he still owed money to the School Fund, as the state trust towards which all debt for the Western Reserve were paid was known. He owed so much in fact, that his widow was left with nearly nothing after his debts were cleared.

Beginnings of Establishment in Connecticut

From the very beginning, church and state were connected in colony of Connecticut. Beginning with the Fundamental Orders of 1638 right up until the Constitution of 1818, the Congregational Church was supported by, and in turn
influenced, the state. Not only was the Congregational Church supported by taxes collected by magistrates, but also no other church could be organized without the consent of the legislature. This presented a great problem when the Congregational Church began to fracture and lose support – and was ultimately to put pressure on the legislature to separate ecclesiastical authority from government.

Both the establishment of a government in Connecticut and the establishment of the Congregational Church as the state church in Connecticut began at the same time, with the adoption of the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut in 1638-39. The Fundamental Orders, “by which the inhabitants and residents of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield” were joined as one state, were intended to give the colony a government “established according to God” and contracted to “maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”34 The Fundamental Orders did recognize some separation of church and state, as civil privilege was not dependent upon church membership, except in the case of the Governor, who must “always be a member of some approved congregation”35.

However, members of sects other than the Congregational Church did not gain real political power until much later, even if their participation was not forbidden by law. Later legislation, recommended by the New England Confederation, confirmed the establishment of the Congregational Church. Magistrates were empowered to collect taxes to provide for salary of a local minister whenever necessary.36 Also, no church could be organized and no religious activity could take place without legislative approval.37 Thus the Congregational church was assured dominance in the state. The Fundamental Orders served as the frame of government in Connecticut until the Royal
Charter was granted in 1662, though the Royal Charter did not significantly affect the religious landscape.

**The Saybrook Platform**

The Saybrook Platform of 1708 provided the next change in the status of religion in Connecticut. In October 1708 the clergy assembled at Saybrook to formally structure the Church in Connecticut, essentially putting into writing the hierarchy that already existed, and defining the rights of ministers, members, and congregations more clearly. The General Assembly approved this new structure and made it law, with the proviso that those who dissented should not be prevented from worshipping in their own way:

... nothing herein shall be intended or construed to hinder or prevent any Society or Church that is or shall be allowed by the laws of this government, who soberly differ or dissent from the United Churches hereby established from exercising worship and discipline in their own way, according to their conscience.\(^{38}\)

This measure of religious toleration was not, however, to be understood as an exemption from the support of the established church – all citizens of the state were required to support their local Congregational Church, whether they were members or not.\(^{39}\)

Additionally, absences were punishable by a small fine.\(^{40}\)

This act was later tempered by several actions of the General Assembly. First, in 1727, an act was passed that allowed members of the Church of England to pay their "church" rates to their own church. This privilege was later extended to the Quakers and the Baptists, two years later.\(^{41}\) Second, in the revision of the laws in 1784 the phrase "established churches" was omitted.
Certificate Act

In May 1791 the Standing Order tried to address the discontent found among those who opposed them. The General Assembly passed its first Certificate Law, allowing a dissenter to be exempted from membership in the local established church through obtaining the signature of either two civil officers, or of the local justice of the peace on a certificate, which would then be filed with the local church.\textsuperscript{42} The dissenter would then be able to be absent from the established church’s service without fear of fines, and would be allowed to attend his or her chosen church. Since civil society gained benefits from religion (such as order, prosperity, respect for authority), the argument ran, the civil magistrate should then have power over religion, so as to assure the continued existence of the aforementioned benefits.\textsuperscript{43}

The law, unsurprisingly, aroused howling opposition. Chief among those who argued against it was the recently transplanted Virginian Baptist, the Rev. John Leland.\textsuperscript{44} He argued that religion did not need the support of the state, as the Virginian case of six years earlier demonstrated (Virginia had legislated religious freedom in 1785).\textsuperscript{45} Furthermore, he maintained, communities maintained in such a manner had been shown to be “productive of evil, of ignorance, superstition, persecution, lying and hypocrisy.”\textsuperscript{46} As he stated in his pamphlet, “The Rights of Conscience inalienable therefore Religious Opinions not cognizable by Law; Or the High flying Churchman, stript of his legal Robe appears a yaho:”

\textit{Government has no more to do with religious opinions of men that it has with the principles of mathematics} ... Truth disdains the aid of law for its defense...it will stand upon its own merit...Is it just to balance the Establishment against the rights guaranteed in the
Norwood

charter, and to enact a law which has no saving clause to prevent taxation of Jew, Turk, Papist, Deist, Atheist, for the support of a ministry in which they would not share and which violated their conscience?\textsuperscript{47}

(It should be noted that Leland’s statement of the problem of conscience and the injustice of the Standing Order’s establishment of the Congregational Church is very similar to the language which Joshua Stow allegedly used to support his draft of Article Seven, twenty-seven years later.) Inspired in part because of Leland’s exhortations, the Baptists petitioned the General Assembly every year, from 1801 until 1818, for the disestablishment of the State Church.

In October of 1791 the General Assembly realized its mistake, and repealed the Certificate Law, which had required every dissenter to register with the civil magistrate in order to be free from taxes supporting the established church. Instead the Assembly substituted a statute that required each dissenter to write his or her own certificate, and file it with the clerk of the society he was dissenting from.\textsuperscript{48} The wording of the certificate itself was also changed,\textsuperscript{49} but otherwise, the law remained as it had been in May, much to the dismay of those who felt the necessity of this certification process to be an indignity.\textsuperscript{50}

The State Government Before 1818

The government of Connecticut did not change greatly after the American Revolution. In fact, the only significant change was the removal of language describing the colony’s allegiance to the King. The power remained with the Legislature, and especially with the Upper House, known as the Council. The Judiciary was completely dependent on the General Assembly, and the Governor was largely so, too. This is why
the fight for a written constitution in Connecticut was so difficult, because the Council was made up of those who did not wish for any change.

The chief executive of the state was ostensibly the Governor, although he actually did not have much power. He had no veto power over the legislature, nor any power to adjourn, assemble or otherwise control the General Assembly. He did however, serve as an *ex officio* member of the Upper Chamber of the Assembly, also known as the Council. He was elected annually by the freemen and was responsible for opening the Assembly with an address, conducting the formal ceremonies on Election Day, and calling fast and thanksgiving days.\(^{51}\) As commander-in-chief of the State militia he appointed generals and aides, and signed commissions of officers. He also signed the commissions of justices of the peace.\(^{52}\) The Governor’s power was slight, although his office did carry with it great respect and prestige. The Lt. Governor was also an *ex officio* member of the Council and served as a justice of the peace throughout the state. From 1741 until 1818 the Lt. Governor always succeeded the Governor.\(^{53}\)

The Lower House of the legislature, the Assembly, was semi-annually elected by the freemen of the state, with one or two representatives coming from each town.\(^{54}\) The Assembly made and repealed all laws, as well as defining the powers of the executive and the judiciary – thus the Assembly defined relations between religion and the state. All money bills had to originate in the Assembly. In short, legislative powers were only “limited only by the honesty of members, by certain vague customs, and the frequency of elections.”\(^{55}\)

Real power, however, resided with the Upper House of the Assembly, the Council, which was a bastion of conservatism in state politics. The Council’s meetings
were shrouded in secrecy - no public minutes were kept, and no observers allowed. It was composed of the *ex officio* Governor and Lt. Governor and twelve assistants, who represented the state at large. Their meetings were presided over by the Governor, or in his place, the Lt. Governor or senior assistant, who voted only in the case of a tie. The assistants all served as *ex officio* justices of the peace, and all could call out the militia and preside over freemen’s meetings. Seven members of the Council could veto any bill before the General Assembly. The assistants were elected annually and it was their method of their election that allowed the body to be dominated by those who were members of the Standing Order. At the freemen meeting in September each freemen wrote the names of twenty nominees on a piece of paper, which were then collected by the person in charge of the meeting (either constable, justice or assistant). This list was then submitted to the freemen at the April meeting, but arranged so that the incumbent assistants, or even ex-assistants, stood first on the list regardless of the votes for nomination that each had received. The freemen were then given twelve pieces of paper on which to write the names of their preference for assistant. The list of nominees was then read and the freemen cast their vote by dropping one of the slips of paper in the ballot box. In order to vote for one of the last eight in the nomination list, usually members of the dissenting party, one had to hold off on voting until all the incumbents names had been called, “with the minister present, under the eyes of local officers, and men of wealth, whose good will might be vitally necessary.”

This method of voting was clearly intended to favor the ruling party. It became even more unfair in 1801 with the passage of the so-called “Stand-up Law,” which was drafted by the Council and forced through the Assembly. The Stand-up law required
that the moderator at freemen’s meetings be either an assistant, a justice of the peace or
the senior constable, or elected by a majority of justices and constables present. This
guaranteed that a Republican moderator (i.e. member of the Jeffersonian Republican
party) would never be chosen. In addition, nominations, which could be theoretically
made by any freeman, had to be made by standing or raising one’s hand.61 So, with what
little secrecy there had been in the voting system disposed of, the Standing Order could
immediately identify and punish those who dared oppose it. Thus was the situation before
the Constitution of 1818: the Standing order, through the unlimited power of the
legislature, had successfully suppressed political and religious dissent.

Stow’s beginnings in business and politics

Stow was initiated into the Middletown chapter of the Masons, the St. John’s 2
Lodge, in 1795.62 His participation in the organization both generated and reflected the
change in the makeup of the Masons’ membership in Middletown. Men of the
entrepreneurial and professional classes soon dominated the Middletown Masons, after
Stow’s initiation.63 Previously the organization had been completely made up of
merchants. Additionally, the Masons, under the leadership of Stow and others, became “if
not a bastion of Jeffersonism, at least an organization of individuals who challenged the
existing hierarchy and controls of Middletown’s traditional community.”64 So Stow, with
his unorthodox religious opinions, fit very well into this new version of the Masons.

In 1800, Stow, along with Jacob Miller, decided to open a sawmill at the falls of
the West River (now the Coginchaug River).65 The sawmill operated for approximately
eight years before tailing off in production.66 However, Stow continued to own both the
mill and the full privileges of the water way from which it got its power until his death in 1842, when it was sold to cover his debts. Stow was also engaged in actively selling land in the Western Reserve.

Stow was involved in supporting manufacturing through his association with the "Connecticut Society for American Manufacturers." Stow was a member of the corresponding committee, along with other prominent Republicans and Masons, such as Alexander Wolcott. This organization was founded to continue the expansion of domestic manufacturing that had begun during the War of 1812. The organization seems to have been created to serve the interests of those who were excluded from the established merchant elite in Middletown. Indeed, the dominant group in the organization was those of Middletown's professional and entrepreneurial class that had been initiated into the Mason's several years before, proving that the Masonic bond could and did work as a business advantage.

Stow sought office in 1805 under the auspices of the Jeffersonian Republican party. One of the major issues of the day was the question of a new State constitution. It was the last time that the constitutional question would be a major issue before 1817, though it was kept as a plank in the Republican platform during this time. Stow, in 1805, was elected as one of Middletown's two representatives to the General Assembly of Connecticut and then served for a full year, in both the spring and the fall terms (elections were at that time held semi-annually). Stow, however, did not succeed in winning a second year in office, most likely because of the unfortunate "saddle bag" incident.
At the Republican general meeting of 1805 Stow was made the "sole manager for the county of Middlesex," and thus was entrusted with a copy of the Republican party circular, written by the State Chief Party Manager (and Middlesex County resident) Alexander Wolcott, which included an outline the Republican’s political strategy.\textsuperscript{74} Wolcott was the leader of the Jeffersonian Republican’s in Connecticut, and also one of the most radical (when the constitutional convention finally ended, Wolcott did not vote to accept the constitution that had been written, on the grounds that it did not go far enough). The plan outlined included instructions for each county manager to appoint Town Managers, who would in turn appoint District Managers. All would work together to compile a list of all freemen (registered voters), subdivided into: known Federalist supporters, known Republican supporters, undecided freemen, and Republicans who were not yet eligible to vote but who, with a little help, could be certified. Another list, this one containing the vote totals for the Republicans that had run for high office (Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary, Treasurer, and Congressional Representative) was also to be compiled by the various managers. These lists would then be sent on to Wolcott, who would bring the figures to the national Republican convention. The strategy’s focus was upon voting down the Standing Order through increasing the Republican presence in the General Assembly and especially in the Governor’s Council. As Wolcott states in the circular: “Federalism cannot be talked down or flattered down; IT MUST BE VOTED DOWN.”\textsuperscript{75} [emphasis in original]

Unfortunately for Joshua, the saddlebags filled with copies of the circular fell from his horse while he was riding. The copies of the “general orders” were found by persons unfriendly to the Republican cause, and were subsequently published widely.
The incident was heralded as the revelation of a terrible conspiracy that threatened to destroy freedom; as the contributor the *Connecticut Courant* who found the saddlebags says:

If there were any room left for doubt, that a scheme had been formed, and a party thoroughly organized, for the purpose of producing a complete revolution in the Government of this State, the document which is enclosed, if I am not mistaken is calculated to remove that doubt, and to bring full conviction to every mind...A combination of this sort, unless resisted by every upright man, would overthrow and free government on earth -- that is will be resisted by the Freemen of this State, cannot be doubted for a moment...They will certainly persist in their exertions, with the evidence now before them to stimulate them, with redoubled zeal, activity and perseverance.76

The Republican circular was published before the next general election, with appropriate commentary, to once again bolster Federalist support.77 The result was a disgrace for the Republican Party, and a serious setback to Stow's political career. He was not to advance in public office for another decade.

In 1814 Stow ended his service as State Tax Collector and became the Federal Tax Collector for the same district.78 This can be seen as the fruits of political allegiance, as the chief Tax Collector for Connecticut at this time, Alexander Wolcott, was a Republican;79 there can be little doubt that, though Stow surely brought experience and integrity to the job, he was chosen because of his political service. Stow also began his term as postmaster for Middlesex County in April of the following year. He held this position until 1818, and then again from November 1821 until February 1841.80
A Letter to the Rev. Lyman Beecher

In this same year Stow made plain his opposition to state support of the Congregational Clergy. He published a reply to the Rev. Lyman Beecher’s proposal that the State fund the education of clerics, entitled “A Letter to the Rev. Lyman Beecher: On the Subject of his Address, in the name ‘of the Charitable Society for the Education of Indigent Pious Young Men for the Ministry of the Gospel’ by a Layman”. 81 The Rev. Lyman Beecher had argued that more ministers were needed to keep the State peaceful and prosperous, and he proposed that because the State would be receiving the benefit of this ministerial work the State should fund the educations and salaries of these ministers. Beecher was a prominent Congregationalist minister at the time (and also father of Harriet Beecher Stow).

Stow attacked Beecher on two fronts, the religious and the political. Stow argued that Beecher’s “…bold and daring assertions…are repugnant to the scriptures and equally repugnant to the common sense of mankind.” 82 He began by casting Beecher’s assertion that Connecticut needs more ministers as being self-serving and based upon the example of Europe, surely an example that Connecticut would not want to imitate. 83 Stow then went on to point out that Beecher, when he said that he wanted “regularly educated minister,” really meant “…an education, as is to be obtained at Yale College…” i.e. a sectarian education. 84 The twelve apostles did not need such an education, Stow pointed out. 85

Beecher had argued for “an extended combination of institutions, religious, civil, and literary” to preach the Gospel; Stow argued that “combination of institutions…have produced all the persecution, the martyrdom and bloodshed in the world, from the first
promulgation of the gospel, down to the present time.\textsuperscript{86} Stow argued that Beecher wanted this "combination" of institutions so that his faith may become "organized and established as to exclude all other persuasions of religion, but your own".\textsuperscript{87} Here is the clearest expression of Stow's opinion. He feared State meddling in religious affairs because he feared religious persecution. This is the opinion that he sustained throughout his adult life, as far as evidence can show, and this is the opinion that led him to focus on breaking the state and church union that existed before the Constitution of 1818. Stow ends his letter on a somewhat hopeful note, affirming that the citizens of the United States would not allow such an unjust situation to exist:

\begin{quote}
But let me tell you plainly, your object will not succeed. You are too late; the people of the United States have discovered the wolf in sheep's clothing; they are not to be caught by these combination trappings; not all the hypocritical pretensions to religion...; no even the Church and State union and connection in Yale College, will much longer answer your purposes.\textsuperscript{88}
\end{quote}

What Stow feared in Beecher's proposal did in fact come to pass, albeit in a somewhat different form. The October, 1816 Bonus Act, "for the support of literature and religion", divided money received by Connecticut to cover costs incurred in the war of 1812 between the major denominations, with the Congregationalists, and especially Yale College, getting the lion's share.\textsuperscript{89} The act was generated by the Federalist majority in order to try and placate its increasingly vocal opposition.

\textbf{The Bonus Act of 1816}

In 1816 Stow once again made his opinions concerning the State's authority regarding religion exceedingly clear. In a move that was to make him very unpopular with his Federalist-Congregationalist neighbors, Stow proposed a vote at the Middlefield
town meeting that clearly outlined opposition to the Bonus Act passed in October by the General Assembly that was to support “literature and religion”. (for background purposes, it should be noted that this society had been without a steady pastor since 1773, and three years were to pass before a new church was built and a new pastor found.\textsuperscript{90} Atkins reports that the Meeting House was even used for Universalist meetings at this time\textsuperscript{91}).

The Bonus Act divided the money received by Connecticut for expenses incurred during the recent war ($145,000) among the various denominations recognized by the Legislature. The money was not distributed evenly, however: Yale received $68,000; the Episcopalians, $20,000; the Baptists, $18,000; the Methodists, $12,000; and all other sects (Universalists, Quakers, Sandemanians, etc...), nothing; the remaining money was deposited in the State Treasury for general use.\textsuperscript{92} The act received widespread criticism for its inequity and its wastefulness. It was the final straw that united all dissenting sects with the Republican Party, which came together to form the Toleration Party. This alliance of Republicans and dissenters was what was to finally force reform in Connecticut. Stow’s proposed vote was not an anomaly in its contents, and was instead with the general outcry in its aims.

Stow proposed that the Middlefield Meeting house be open to all preachers, by vote of the congregation, except those missionaries (i.e. The Domestic Missionary Society) who were expressly supported by the government. Stow also used the proposal to attack Calvinist theology, arguing that its doctrines were “wicked and ruinous, calculated to do no good, but much mischief. We do fear that they have been the cause of
much mental derangement, and some consequent suicide." Stow’s proposed vote was not successful, though — most of the society condemned it.

Joshua Stow had, even before his actions at the State Constitutional Convention, clearly demonstrated an antipathy towards Connecticut’s union of church and state. He clearly showed his support for disestablishment through his membership in the Republican Party and his writings, particularly his response to Lyman Beecher’s proposal and his proposal for his own local parish that vehemently opposed the meddling of the State in religious affairs. But it is Stow’s hand in striking the final nail in the Establishment’s coffin that most clearly demonstrates his resolve on the matter.

Stow and the Constitutional Convention

Stow continued to rise politically, and in 1817 was appointed director of the office of discount and deposit of the Bank of the United States, located in Middletown, for probably political reasons. His tenure at the bank was to be short, however, because in 1820 Enoch Parsons, the Federalist Director of the Bank, brought suit against Arthur Magill, the Cashier of the Bank, Nathan Starr, Elisha Coe, and Stow (all bondsmen) for mismanagement of funds at the bank. Parson’s effectively ruined Magill and Coe, but was not successful in destroying Starr or Stow. Peter Hall, in Middletown: Streets, Commerce, and People, 1650-1981, argues that the suit was a politically motivated attempt by Federalists to strike back at the Republican’s who had ruined them politically. If so, it would not have been an extraordinary occurrence — the Federalists who had lost the hard fought battles for the Standing Order were not men who took defeat easily.
Stow had a heady year in 1818. He was appointed an associate judge of the Middlesex County Court, a post he was to hold until 1822, when he was promoted to Chief Justice of the County Court. Stow also continued to serve as Middletown’s Postmaster during this time, though he was to resign his post in April, 1818. Stow, at this time, also became a member of the recently created “Connecticut Society for the Encouragement of American Manufactures,” an organization of Middletown industrialists and supporters of industry that wished to promote American products, the market for which had soared during the Embargo of 1807-1809 and the following War of 1812.\(^6\)

But, of course, the most important thing that happened in 1818 was not Stow’s new judgeship, his association with Middletown Manufacturers, nor his term as Postmaster. Rather, the most important event occurred on July 4\(^{th}\), when Stow, along with Alexander Wolcott, the leader of the state Republican Party, was elected to serve as a delegate (one of two) from Middletown to the Constitutional Convention of 1818.\(^7\)

Many concerns had prompted the Constitutional Convention. Chief among them was the discontent among those who felt that the Congregational Church had too much power and influence. The rise of the Republican party since 1800 had also been quite dramatic – in 1817 the Toleration Party, an alliance of Republicans with dissenting religious, had managed to elect both the Governor and Lt. Governor, as well as increasing their gains in the Assembly. In 1818, these gains proved enough for the Toleration party to successfully call for a constitutional convention.

The Toleration Party, or the American Toleration Party as it was know for a short time, began its life in a Republican-Episcopalian meeting of citizens in New Haven, on
February 21, 1816. At this meeting Oliver Wolcott, a distinguished politician and merchant who had supported the War of 1812, was nominated for Governor, and Jonathan Ingersoll, a well known judge and Episcopalian, was nominated for Lt. Governor. Their successful campaign, in 1817, was the first step in taking control of the State in order to pave the way for a new Constitution and disestablishment. Also in 1816, an organized campaign to overthrow the Federalist leadership in the Council was begun.

The first act of the General Assembly of 1817 was to pass a bill “securing equal rights, powers, and privileges, to Christians of every denomination in the State.” The act provided any person, separating from the established society, could lodge a certificate with the town clerk, and thus be exempted from taxation for said society. Additionally, every Christian society was empowered to tax its members for the maintenance of church and minister. This was intended to placate religious minorities. The bill passed, though it could not be considered successful – rather, it was very unpopular. This attempt, like all other previous efforts, failed because it did not address the underlying problem: that any taxation for religion should not be tolerated. The Assembly did, however, with a Toleration majority, finally managed to repeal the obnoxious “stand-up” elections law, which required that nominations and votes for assistants be made by raising a hand or standing up at a town meeting. During the same session the possibility of extending suffrage to all tax paying white males was discussed, though no action was taken. At the close of the session, finally, a constitutional convention was suggested.

By 1818 calls for a Constitution had become too loud to ignore. The “American Toleration Party” of 1816 which was renamed the “Toleration and Reform Party” in 1817 now changed its name for a third time, this time going by the name “Constitution and
Reform. The Stand-up law, which required freemen to vote by standing or raising a hand at town meetings, had just been repealed through the efforts of the Toleration party, thus allowing for greater numbers of freemen to support non-Federalist candidates without fear of retribution from minister or employer. The Certificate law, which required that those with dissenting religious views file their dissent with the clerk of the "settled society" still existed. The Judiciary was still dependent on the Legislature for office. Even Federalists started to call for a written constitution, if only to answer to the charges of their opponents.

In the May Assembly, a resolution calling for a constitutional convention finally passed. Delegates were to be elected by the freemen on Independence Day, July 4th, and the convention was to be convened on the fourth Wednesday of August. In addition, the Assembly extended suffrage to all free males twenty-one years or older who paid taxes or served in the militia. Also, the Assembly removed the veil of secrecy from the Council, providing for galleries in the Council Chamber.

On Wednesday, August 26th, the Convention was met at Hartford, at the State House. Gov. Oliver Wolcott, elected a delegate from Litchfield, was chosen to preside over the Convention. After the ground rules for the convention had been made a committee made up of three delegates from each county, making a total of twenty four, was created to draft the new constitution. Stow, along with William Hungerford and Thomas Lyman, served on the committee as representatives from Middlesex County. Only five members of the drafting committee were vocal Federalists. Two members of the press, Messrs. H. Flagg and S. Converse were allowed to witness the proceedings beginning on Sept. 2nd, after all the preliminary details of the convention had been
worked out.\textsuperscript{109} Within the drafting committee Stow was assigned, along with Gideon Tomlinson (a future governor), the task of drafting the article concerning religion, Article Seven.\textsuperscript{110}

Article Seven, which came to the Convention’s attention on Friday, September 11\textsuperscript{th}, was the subject “protracted and lively debate,” as Convention historian J.H. Trumbull puts it.\textsuperscript{111} The Federalists resisted every sentence, fearing that it would, as former Gov. Treadwell put it, “dissolve all ecclesiastical societies in this State.”\textsuperscript{112} Nevertheless, the article passed 97 to 69 without significant editing.\textsuperscript{113} Stow’s opinion, given during the debate on the Article, “…that Christ’s Kingdom was not of this world, and all had a right to worship in their own way…” was found to be the opinion of the majority, and it carried the day.\textsuperscript{114} The whole of the constitution was adopted on Tuesday, September 15\textsuperscript{th}.

The final version of the 1818 constitution contains two sections on religion: Article seven and section three of the Declaration of Rights. Section three guarantees the “…exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination,” but not so as to “excuse acts of licentiousness, or to justify practices inconsistent with the peace and safety of the State.”\textsuperscript{115}

Article Seven, section one, states that it is the “right and duty of all men to worship the Supreme Being” in any manner they chose. It also declares that “no person shall be compelled to join or support…any congregation, church, or religious association.” The article goes on to grant the right of “every society or denomination of Christians in this State” to support themselves through collections from their members,
but that these taxes shall fall only on their declared members. No civil authority is
granted the right to collect taxes for the support of a church.

The second section concerns the right of “any person” to separate themselves
from a society. In that case, all the person has to do is to give “written notice thereof with
the Clerk of such society” and then that person will “thereupon be no longer liable for
any future expenses which may be incurred by said society.” In other words, no
certification of any sort was needed, just written notice. Additionally, no civil authority
was involved at all in this transaction. Both of these were great changes from what came
before.

The Aftermath - Stow after 1818

After the Constitutional Convention Stow went back to his other duties: acting as
an associate judge in the county court and as Federal Tax Collector, and managing his
farm. On March 16, 1819 a libelous article concerning Stow appeared in the Connecticut
Journal, which accused him of spreading infidelity and of extortion, among other things.
Sherman Converse published the Connecticut Journal when Stow sued him in New
Haven’s Superior Court for libel. Converse, as his attack on Stow demonstrates, was not
a supporter of the Republican Party or the new constitution. The case was not decided
until July 1821, after two trials.

Essentially, Converse, who had been present during the Constitutional
Convention as a reporter, accused Stow of infidelity, citing Stow’s language in debate at
the convention.116 Also, Converse accused Stow of using his office as a Director of the
United States Branch Bank and his office of Federal Tax Collector to illegally extort
money, and of “farming out” his office of Postmaster for a profit. It was in these trials that Stow’s involvement in the Ethosian Society came under scrutiny, as well Stow’s political efforts to separate church and state. Both trials saw long lines of witnesses consisting of Stow’s political enemies willing to testify to his infidelity. Even Stow’s brothers and sisters, with whom he had been feuding, showed up to denounce him as an infidel. The case was retried because of conflict over what was admissible evidence. The second trial was decided in favor of Stow, although the jury, which consisted of Federalists (as noted by the presiding Judge, S. Titus Hosmer), would not award anything but the most minimal damages.

Even during the trial, however, Stow continued to in civil office. In 1819 he was elected as a State Senator (the same position was, previous to 1818, known as State Assistant), a position he served in for three years. He continued to serve as associate Judge of the Middlesex County Court. In 1823 he was promoted to the rank of Chief Justice of that same court, a post he held until 1826. In 1838, Stow is listed as a member of the recently founded Universalist Church of Middletown, a continuation of his longstanding opinions concerning the impossibility of eternal damnation, which were particularly evidenced in the proposed vote to the Middlefield Society suggested after the passage of the Bonus Act.

On October 10, 1842 Joshua Stow passed away quietly at his home. He left an estate worth $20,725.99 to his widow and his grandchildren. All of it was spent paying the debts he owed, however. His largest creditor appears to be the School Fund, the body that received the proceeds from land sales of the Western Reserve. Only the furniture was left to his widow. He had tried to advance himself economically and politically, with
mixed success. He had, however, succeeded in his long campaign to win the right to religious freedom for Connecticut. The inscription on his tombstone in Middlefield Cemetery notes his finest accomplishment:

Author of the article securing
Religious freedom in the
Constitution of his native state.
To every species of tyranny and domination
A constant and formidable foe.
Now first in peace, for the impartial page
Shall greet thee as an honor to our age.
Long in these climes thy memory shall remain
And still new tributes from new ages gain.

Conclusion

As Andrew Murphy, author of Conscience and Community, states in his introduction, “regardless of whether the right to religious exercise is a political or natural one, arguments about such liberty are always situated in a political context and are always granted by state acquiescence.” So it was in Connecticut. The process that led to the official disestablishment of the Congregational Church was one that had serious political ramifications. The dissenting sects and the anti-clerical Republicans both had a political stake in the outcome of this struggle, as did Joshua Stow – they were all set to gain power and influence if the battle was finished in their favor. The Standing Order fell, although not quite as far, nor quite as dramatically as either side expected. That the churches of Connecticut survived, even flourished, should not come as a surprise – Stow’s goal, and the goal of the others he worked with, was not to destroy religion. As the Rev. Lyman Beecher says of his resistance to the changes taking place at this time:

It was a time of great depression and suffering. It was the worst attack I every met in my life...I worked as hard as any
mortal man could, and at the same time preached for revivals with all my might, and with success, till at last...my health and spirits began to fail. It was as dark a day as ever I saw. The injury done to the cause of Christ, as we then supposed, was irreparable. For several days I suffered what no tongue can tell for the best thing that ever happened to the State of Connecticut. It cut the churches loose from dependence on state support; it threw them wholly on their own resources and on God.

They say ministers have lost their influence; the fact is they have gained...[emphasis in original] 125

So indeed, the establishment (Christian) religious freedom in Connecticut was not the blow to the Congregational church that its ministers feared. Indeed rather the opposite, as Beecher declares that it turned out to be a good thing!

Andrew Murphy further notes that when considering the question of religious toleration, “we should not disregard how Christian early modern toleration debates were. Deeply religious Christians populated both sides of the argument, amassing impressive scriptural arsenals and deploying them vigorously.” 126 This was true in Stow’s case as well. In his letter to the aforementioned Rev. Beecher, he uses a scriptural basis for his argument alongside his political one. The struggle in Connecticut for religious freedom was not one that those involved checked their beliefs at the door; on the contrary, it was the joining of dissenting Christians with anti-federalist Republicans that finally gave the opposition enough weight to force a constitutional convention.

Joshua Stow’s place in this process is clear and his influence readily apparent. Though Stow may not have been a national figure, his significance on the state level was considerable. If nothing else, his enemies’ bitter attacks against him prove his importance. Thus, Joshua Stow of Middletown contributed to the cause of religious freedom in the state of Connecticut. He was indeed a most constant and formidable foe.
Universalism was founded in America when John Murray, an English minister, landed and began his missionary activity in 1770. The Universalist position is very close to that of the Unitarians (so close, in fact, that the two groups formerly merged in 1961), who held that any person has the ability to attain salvation, through moral behavior and thought. The Unitarians, however, did deny the reality of the trinity, as their name implies. The Universalists did not. Both faiths gained ground in the United States at roughly the same time, after the Revolution. Socially, however, the two groups were very separate. The Universalists drew from mainly the lower, uneducated classes of New England society, while the Unitarians drew from the educated, upper classes of New England society and were centered in Boston. The Universalists also maintained a more biblical basis for their faith, using more "reasoned scriptural exposition" to defend their faith (Cassara p. 8), where the Unitarians increasingly turned "to non-biblical sources for inspiration." (Cassara, p. 5). Both views contrasted sharply with the orthodox Congregationalist view, that there were only a set number of soul's that would be saved (this group is known as 'the elect'), and that no action human action could increase one's chances for salvation.

Inventory of the possessions of Joshua Stow, 1787. Partial inventory, 1792. Joshua Stow Collection, Middlesex County Historical Society, Middletown CT.

Cassara, p. 15.

"Tax reminder from J. Stow", Middlesex Gazette, 6 November 1790 and 18 December 1790

Hatcher, p. 14

Ibid.

Ellis, p. 32

Hatcher, p. 12

Hatcher, p. 19

Ellis, p. 72-73; and in Howe, "Augustus Porter, Esq., the principal surveyor, in his history of the survey, in the Barr manuscripts, gives the following anecdote of Mr. Stow, who was the commissary of the party.... In making the traverse of the lake shore, Mr. Stow acted as flag-man; he, of course, was always in advance of the party; rattlesnakes were plenty, and he coming first upon those in our track killed them. I had mentioned to him a circumstance that happened to me in 1789. Being with two or three other persons three days in the wood without food, we had killed a rattlesnake, dressed and cooked it, and whether from
the savory quality of the flesh or the particular state of our stomachs, I could not say which, had eaten it with a high relish. Mr. Stow was a healthy, active man, fond of wood-life, and determined to adopt all its practices, even to the eating of snakes; and during almost any day while on the lake shore, he killed and swung over his shoulders and around his body from two to six or eight large rattlesnakes, and at night a part were dressed, cooked and eaten by the party with a good relish, probably increased by the circumstance of their being fresh while all our other meat was salt.”

39 Hatcher, p. 32
39 Hatcher, p. 36
31 Howe, “JOHNSA STOW was from Middlesex county, Connecticut, and was born in 1762. He was a proprietor of the township of Stow, surveyed in 1804, under his personal supervision, by Joseph Darrow, of Hudson, commissary of the party”;
32 Hatcher, pp. 76-77
33 Middletown Probate Records, 1 November 1842, vol. 17 pp. 45-46 and 209
34 Hoadly, pp. 1-16
35 See Hoadly, pp. 1-16 and the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, section 4 in Hoadly, p. 13
36 Coons, p. 3
37 Coons, p. 3
38 as quoted in Greene, p. 154.
39 Trumbull, p. 32
40 Greene, p. 370
41 Trumbull, pp. 32-33
42 Greene, p. 372

The text of the certificate, as quoted in Greene from Acts and Laws of the State of Connecticut (ed. of 1784) pp. 403-404, reads:

“We have examined the claim of ______ who says he is a Dissenter from the Established Society of ______ and hath joined himself to a church or Congregation of the name of ______; and that he ordinarily attends upon the public worship of such Church or Congregations; and that he contributes his share and proportion toward supporting the public worship and ministry thereof, do upon examination find that the above facts are true.

Dated ______, Justice of the Peace”

43 Greene, p. 373
44 Greene, p. 374
45 ibid.
46 Greene, p. 376
47 Leland, J. High Flying Churchman, pp. 10, 11, 16, 17. as quoted in Greene, p. 376. [emphasis mine]
48 Greene, pp. 376-377
49 Greene, p. 378

The text of the new certificate, as quoted in Greene from Acts and Laws of the State of Connecticut (ed. of 1784), reads:

“I certify that I differ in sentiment from the worship and ministry in the ecclesiastical society of ______ in the town of ______ constituted by law within certain local bounds, and have chosen to join myself to the (insert here the name of the society you have joined) in the town of ______.

Dated at ______ this ______ day of ______ A.D.”

50 Purcell, p. 62 “Being known as a certificate man placed one in a lower social category and in practice under a political disability. The dissenter felt this and keenly resented the method of certifying as well as the narrow interpretation of the law, which so largely counteracted the legal tolerance.”

51 Purcell, p. 117
52 Purcell, p. 118
53 Purcell, p. 119
54 Purcell, p. 120
55 Purcell, p. 121
56 Purcell, p. 124
The river runs north through Middlefield and Middletown, eventually connecting with the Mattabassett river along the border between Middletown and Cromwell, and then feeds into the Connecticut River.


Middletown Probate Records, 1 November 1842, vol. 17 pp. 45-46 and 209

Middlesex Gazette, 5 March 1818.


Trumbull, p.31

Purcell, p. 122

Connecticut Courant, 27 November 1805

ibid.

ibid.

Connecticut Courant, 12 March 1806

Stow v. Converse, 3 Connecticut 325; 1820

Purcell, p.154

Beers, p. 75


ibid. p.1

ibid., "Who are you, vain mortal presuming for the Almighty what number of Ambassadors he shall send forth..." p. 1-2.

ibid. p.2

ibid. p.3

ibid. p.3

ibid. p.4, [emphasis mine]

ibid. p.7 [emphasis in original]

Greene, p 467

Beers, p. 437

Atkins, p.12

Greene, p. 467

4 Connecticut 17; 1821, p. 4

3 Connecticut 325; 1820, p.1

Hall, p.14

Connecticut Courant, 5 March 1818

Beers, p.76

Purcell, p. 211

Trumbull, p.38

ibid.
101 Trumbull, p.40
102 Purcell, p. 230
103 Purcell, p. 231
104 Purcell, p. 235
105 ibid.
107 Journal, p. 12
108 Trumbull, 52.
109 Journal, p.19
110 Trumbull, p.57, footnote #3.
111 Trumbull, p. 56
112 Trumbull, p. 57
113 Journal, p. 53
114 Connecticut Courant, 8 September 1818
115 Connecticut Constitution of 1818, art. 1, sec 3.
116 Stow was to have said that “Government has no more right to provide by Law for the worship of the Supreme Being than to provide for the worship of the Devil.” It should be noted that this falsified statement is very similar to that of Rev. Lelaund’s previously mentioned statement.
117 3 Connecticut 325; 1821
119 Beers, p.58
120 Beers, p.143
121 As listed on Stow’s tombstone in Middlefield Cemetery.
122 This puts Stow squarely in the upper middle class, much as a lawyer would be today.
123 Middletown Probate Records, 1 November 1842, vol. 17 pp. 45-46 and 209
124 Murphy, p. xi
125 Beecher, pp. 252-253
126 Murphy, p.12