Governor Robert Treat
(1622-1710)


He was the principal in “The Charter Oak Affair” in which he refused to surrender the Connecticut charter to the King of England.

This monument to our ancestor, Governor Robert Treat, is located in the center of Milford, Connecticut.

(Governor Treat is my 8th great grandfather. He is 9th great grandfather to my children, nieces and nephews. Robert Treat Paine is my 2nd cousin 7 times removed. He is the 2nd cousin 8 times removed for my children, nieces & nephews.)

By Tom Cloud email: webmaster@mykindred.com
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Dear kinfolks,

I hope all of you had a blessed Christmas and New Years. In my continuing quest to “honor my parents” and to give my children a sense of their heritage, I thought I’d share with you a side-trip we made over the holidays. I hope you find it useful and that, should you have anything interesting about our family, you will share it with me.

We spent this Christmas in Connecticut, the home of several of your and my ancestors. (Several of our Bumstead ancestors lived in New England.) The name Connecticut is Mohegan -- Quinnehtukqut -- for "Long River Place" or "Beside the Long Tidal River". Connecticut was first explored by the Dutch, who founded trading posts, and the first permanent settlements were made by English Puritans from Massachusetts, starting in 1633. It is believed that our ancestors, Richard and Alice (Gaylord) Treat, first settled with their children in Massachusetts in 1637, but we know they were in Watertown, Connecticut by 1641.

While we were there, we went to Milford Connecticut, where Richard and Alice Treat’s son Governor Robert Treat and his wife Jane (Tapp) Treat made their home on the beautiful beaches of Long Island Sound. Milford is on the Southern coast of Connecticut, on Long Island Sound, only a few miles North of Long Island, New York.

Milford was founded by Governor Treat, being first settled in 1639. The tourist literature says "Milford is one of those places where water meets land. The waters of Long Island Sound, the Oyster River and the Housatonic River border it on three sides and the Wepawaug and Indian Rivers cut the city in half. With a pond or two thrown in, you're never too far from getting wet!"

It was cold the day we were there and the wind was blowing, so the enclosed photos were taken quickly and perhaps with not enough care, but I thought you might like to see them. (I have extra “real” color prints if you’d care to have them.) We drove from Wethersfield/Rocky Hill, Connecticut to Milford December 23. I didn’t know what to look for, so we wandered around until we crossed a bridge over a stream and saw a tower that looked historical. Parking the car, we went and looked, and voila’, it had a memorial plaque there honoring Governor Robert Treat, our ancestor!

It turns out the “stream” is the Wepawaug river, where it meets Milford Bay just before entering Long Island Sound.
To the left is a drawing of the tower and below is the photograph my wife Terry took of Kelly, Matthew, and me. Notice, in the drawing to the left, that there are stones on the bridge railing behind the tower. On these stones are the names of early settlers and the dates they died (see the picture of one of those stones, below, with our ancestor Edmund Tapp’s name on it).

Governor Treat’s wife, Jane (Tapp) Treat, was the daughter of Edmund and Ann Tapp, also our ancestors. Edmund Tapp was a leader in the Milford, Connecticut settlement and served as an assistant governor. Below is a picture of a stone marker on a bridge in Milford reading "Edmund Tapp; Obit 1653; Ann His wife".

In addition to founding Milford, Robert, along with Jasper Crane, founded Newark, New Jersey. (Jasper Crane is also our ancestor, as his son, Azariah Crane, married Robert’s daughter, Mary Treat.) Treat’s leadership and role as negotiator facilitated the legal agreements related to the founding of the New Jersey colonies. Robert Treat and Jasper Crane went to New Amsterdam as early as 1661 to see Governor Peter Stuyvesant regarding a place of settlement but were initially thwarted in their efforts.

Captain Treat and others conferred with Governor Philip Cartaret and obtained a land grant from him. But, upon arriving at their chosen spot for the city, the Hackensack Indians refused to let them settle. The settlers returned to Elizabeth-town Point, and Treat and others met again with Carteret who refused to pay the Hackensacks anything for the territory that was to be the city of Newark and Essex county New Jersey. The settlers then chose to pay the Indians themselves for the land
The Indians agreed to sell in May of 1666 but the bill of sale was not signed until July 11, 1667. The original owners of the soil received goods valued at about $700.00 for the greater part of what is now Essex County, New Jersey.

Robert Treat was governor of Connecticut during the "Charter Oak Affair" when he hid the colonial charter in a hollow oak to prevent its being destroyed by Governor Andros when England took the governorship from him.

Governor Robert Treat was a great-grandfather of a signer of the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776) -- **Robert Treat Paine** a signer from Massachusetts. (The lineage to Mr. Paine is: Gov. Treat through his son, Samuel Treat, who was the father of Eunice Treat, Paine’s mother.)

Governor Treat’s parents were **Richard and Alice (Gaylord) Treat**. Richard Treat was Deputy to the Connecticut Legislature from Wethersfield April 1644 - Oct. 1657. Assistant, Connecticut Colonial, May 1658 - May 1644. Patentee -- Royal Charter of Connecticut from Charles II of England, 1662. One of the twelve appointed Assistants of said Company established in said Royal Charter. Ensign -- Wethersfield Trainband, Feb. 1653. Corporal -- Connecticut Colonial Troop, March 1658. Richard Treat was baptized under the name Trott, married under the name Trett; his children were baptized as Trott, and Tratt, and he was called Treat when he died.

It is not known when Richard Treat came to the colonies. Some theorized he settled in Watertown, Massachusetts in 1637, but he is first recorded at Wethersfield, Connecticut September 6, 1641, when he recorded his purchase of John Whitmore's house, barn and 12-1/2 acres of land.

On November 13 1654, Richard and one of his sons Richard were censured by the Particular Court saying "there is several in Wethersfield hath not upheld theire howses upon theire home lotts according as the Law requires ...."

Richard Treat was one of the judges who presided over the witchcraft trial of Nathaniel Greensmith and his wife, in December of 1662.

Richard and Alice (Gaylord) Treat and their children -- including Governor Treat -- were born in Pitminster England and were christened at the church there. The picture of it on the left was taken off the internet.

I hope you’ve enjoyed this -- perhaps the kids can use it as material for reports at school. I have more information if they want it.

Sincerely yours,

Tom Cloud
The Milford Cemetery, Milford, Connecticut

These brass plaques are at the entrance to the Milford Cemetery, each affixed to a stone pillar on either side of the shell-covered driveway entrance.

Matthew and Kelly Cloud at the head of Gov. Treat’s grave. To the right of his grave is the headstone and footstone of his wife Jane Treat (circled). Below is a view of the top of Gov. Treat’s grave.

The inscription on Governor Robert Treat’s grave reads “HERE LYETH INTERRED THE BODY OF COLL (?) ROBERT TREAT ESQ. WHO FAITHFULLY SERV'D THIS COLONY IN THE POST OF GOVERNOUR AND DEPUTY GOVERNOUR NEAR YE SPACE OF THIRTY YEARS AND ATT. YE AGE OF FOUR SCORE AND EIGHT YEARS EXCHANGED THIS LIFE FOR A BETTER JULY 12 ANNO DOM: 1710"

Jane (Tapp) Treat’s gravestone reads: “1703; HEERE LIETH INTERRD Mrs JANE TREAT AGED 75 YEARS AND DYED THE ??” (can’t read the rest, it’s covered by dirt).