

Stratford Remembers Our Founding Father

The 225th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution on September 17, 2012 is a fitting time to recall the significant role that a Stratford man played in its creation.

Stratford salutes native son William Samuel Johnson, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 who chaired the “Committee of Style” that shaped the final document. Johnson was 59-years-old at the time of the Constitutional Convention.



Born in Stratford in 1727, Johnson’s father was a well-known Anglican clergyman. Johnson graduated from Yale College in 1744, and embraced the profession of law. After gaining admittance to the Bar, he opened a legal practice in Stratford.

Johnson gravitated toward government, serving as a member of the colonial House of Representatives and of the Upper House, and as a member of the Continental Congress from 1785-87. It was reported that Johnson attended virtually every session of the Constitutional Convention. He was among the Founding Fathers who signed the Constitution on September 17th. Johnson also was a staunch advocate for ratification in Connecticut.

Johnson served in the new government until 1791, when he resigned and devoted his energies to his position as president of Columbia College in New York City. Johnson died in Stratford in 1819 at the age of 92 and was buried in the Old Episcopal Cemetery.