

### Town of Partridgefield's Minutemen

The year 2025 celebrates the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. These battles are acknowledged by historians as being the start of the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). The hostilities that occurred on April 19, 1775 are the events that would mark the 'shot heard around the world'. To be clear, the Revolutionary War was fought so that the colonists could gain their freedom from the British Crown and the rule of King George III. Trouble had been simmering in the colonies for many years and each town had its own militia, including Partridgefield.

Peru was still named Partridgefield in 1775. Recall that in 1762 Township #2 was purchased at auction from the Commonwealth by Oliver Partridge and his partners Elisha Jones and Governor Francis Bernard. The town was incorporated in 1771 and the name change to Peru happened in 1806.

If you do your research, you'll learn that each town had to fill a quota of soldiers to provide to the war and the town voted their support for these soldiers in cash as well as clothing and provisions. Interestingly, some out-of-town residents fought on behalf of Partridgefield and a few town residents fought on behalf of other towns. Either way, these men fought for and were a presence in Partridgefield.

The battles of Lexington and Concord occurred on April 19, 1775. The Massachusetts Soldier and Sailor reference includes very specific text which indicates that the man was a Partridgefield Minuteman: (Naming the soldier) being in 'Captain Nathan Watkin's Company, which marched April 22, 1775, in response to the alarm of April 19, 1775.' Many of the Minutemen volunteered initially for 14-day enlistments and some also enlisted for years-long terms of service with the Continental Army. The battle of Bunker Hill occurred on June 17, 1775.

The History of Berkshire County, Vol 2 states that town resident Captain Nathan Watkins had a list of 40 names who marched on Boston and to the Battle of Bunker Hill. Of those 40 Minutemen, 15 are recorded from Partridgefield. The following list includes 21 names of Minutemen who marched from Partridgefield or resided in town after the war. For those buried in Peru, their resting place is included should there be interest in visiting a soldier's grave. They are:

Capt Nathan Watkins Bunker Hill	Capt William Watkins	Lt Samuel Willcox North Cem - 164	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt Jacob Lyon
Sgt Sylvanus Smith	Sgt Jonathan Thayer	Sgt Edward Kebby	Sgt Beriah Smith
Cpl Cornelius Miller	Cpl Nathaniel Stowell Bunker Hill and French and Indian War	Pvt Elijah Gilbert Center Cem - C9	Pvt Avery Roswell

	Center Cem - C12		
Pvt James Hide	Pvt Mark Eames	Pvt Daniel Kinne Bunker Hill	Pvt Zebediah Morse
Pvt Moses Bixby	Pvt John White	Pvt Samuel Addition	Joseph Badger Bunker Hill
Joseph Goldthwaite Center Cem – B8			

It was common for men to volunteer and march on an alarm, often multiple times throughout the war, sometimes serving less than two weeks. A few of these soldiers were as young as 16 years. Men from Partridgefield served at Valley Forge, Bennington, Camp Totowa in NJ, along the Hudson River Vally at West Point, Fishkill, Saratoga, Lake George, Ticonderoga and Stillwater NY, Quebec, and, of course, Boston.

Pvt Salmon Daton KIA July 7, 1777	Pvt Mark Watkins PoW July 7, 1777	Jesse Bruce PoW July 7, 1777	
Lt Col Joseph Thompson Center Cem – E11	Maj Amasa Rockwell	Col David Tuttle Center Cem – E11	Maj Everett Andrew Center Cem – C8
Maj Asa Spalding Center Cem – B10	Capt Thomas Frissell Center Cem – H10	Capt Ezekiel Little Center Cem – E9	Capt William Fletcher
Capt Rufus Butts Center Cem – C8	Lt William Frissell Center Cem – F12	Lt Amherst Thompson Center Cem – G12	Lt Thomas Axtell North Cem - 189
Pvt John Geer Center Cem – B11	Pvt David Ide Center Cem - C11	Pvt Joseph Bacon Center Cem – G9	Pvt Zacharia Watkins Center Cem – E12
Pvt Smith Phillips Center Cem – B11	Pvt James Watkins Center Cem – F10	Pvt Daniel Cone Center Cem - B10	Pvt Elias Ballou Center Cem - B12
Eli Pierce Center Cem – D12	Roger Haskell Center Cem – H9	Christopher Bowen Center Cem – G10	Peter Thompson Center Cem – E11
Oliver Stevens Center Cem – D10	David Foot Center Cem – E12	Oliver Ide Center Cem – C11	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt William Walkins	Sgt Stephen Payne	Cpl James Sawyer	Cpl Amos Thayer
Cpl Elias Babcock	Cpl Experience Fisk	Cpl Jonathan Thayer	Cpl Jonas Bruce
Cpl James Sawyer	Pvt William Fleacher	Pvt Prince Mathews (16yo)	Frederick Millar (16yo)
Pvt / Fifer Webb Harwood	Fifer Josiah Torrey	Pvt John Torrey	Pvt Ebenezer Russ
Pvt Luke Fletcher	Pvt Jonas Babcock	Pvt Bezaleel Phelps	Pvt Charles Hutchins
Pvt Zaccheus Wadkins	Pvt William Woodward	Pvt Abraham Blackman	Pvt Samuel Blackman

Pvt Zaccheus Watkins	Pvt Benjamin Higgens	Pvt Hanford Olds	Pvt Caleb Eddy
Pvt Samuel Orvis	Pvt Samuel Watkins	Pvt Bryan McCue	Pvt Michael Madden
Pvt Charles White	Pvt Benjamin Bixby	Pvt Ebenezer Bixby	Pvt Elgar Thomas
Pvt Peter Sawyer	Pvt Thomas Whitney	Pvt Jothan Bruce	Pvt Charles Turner
Pvt Benjamin Dike	Pvt Ephraim Wright	Pvt John Brackett	Pvt David Warner
Pvt Landon Smith	Samuel Babcock	Jacob Payn	Frederick Miller
Joseph Clark	Elias Kingsly	Jabez Kingbury	Ephram White
John Vaughn	Nicholas Buckley	Samuel Bolkcom	John Herrick
Gilbert Walkins	Oliver Wotkins	Squire Wood	Moses Thayer
Abiezer Richmond	Thomas Fish		

The internet allows research to be done more easily today than ever. This listing of the men who served will continue to be updated to provide military rank as well as the to be refined regarding additions and deletions of names.

The members of the Historical Commission would be very interested to speak with any descendants of these soldiers. Please don't hesitate to contact Susan Masino or Jim Kenney.