



Norwalk Historical Society

# The Little Red Schoolhouse Program

Pre-Visit Guidebook

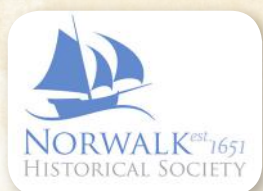




## Dear Visitor

Before you, your class, your troop, or your family visit Mill Hill Historic Park and take part in the Little Red Schoolhouse Program, read through this resource book and complete some of the Pre-Visit activities to give you a better understanding of the history of Norwalk during the Colonial & Revolutionary War period. The words in bold are defined at the end in the glossary section. To continue your historical learning off site, there are also Post-Visit activities included.

Have fun stepping back into the past!



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## The Native Americans' Way of Life - 1500s

**N**ative Americans were the first people to live in **Connecticut** and had been living in the Norwalk area for thousands of years. In the 1960s, **archaeologists** found Native American pottery and stone **projectile points** in Norwalk. These Native Americans left no written record as they did not have a written language. So it is very difficult to know what their life was like in Norwalk before the European explorers came to this area. What we know about the Native Americans is what the European explorers wrote down when they encountered them.

The Native Americans who lived in Norwalk were part of the **Algonquian** language group and were known as Eastern Woodland Native Americans, as they lived in the woods along the Eastern seaboard of North America.

They set up villages near Long Island Sound. The waters provided them with food including fish, clams, mussels, oysters and lobster. The men hunted for deer, wild birds, rabbits and other small animals in the forest. The women and children gathered berries, nuts and plants, which were used for food and medicine. The women also planted crops. The three most important to their diet were corn, beans and squash. These three vegetables grew together and were known as the **"Three Sisters"**.

Their tools were made from naturally occurring materials, such as stone, shells, plants, wood and animals. They used trees to make dugout canoes. Antlers and bones from deer were used to make needles and projectile points. Wood, bark and plants were used to make baskets and nets for fishing and food storage. Stone, wood and leather were used to make spears, axes and wood working tools. Cookware was made out of clay and stone. Clam shells were fastened to the end of sticks to create digging tools used for planting.

They lived in dome shaped huts called wigwams. Wigwams were made out of young trees, called saplings, and bark. These could be taken apart and moved when the village moved around the area.

# The Native Americans' Way of Life - 1500s

**Pre-Visit Art Activity:** Based on what you have read, draw a picture of a Native American village. Include their shelter, tools, food and work.

**Post-Visit Art Activity:** After viewing the painting, "The Norwalk Indians" by Tom Parker and some Native American tools, check back to see if your drawing needs to be changed. Is there anything you can add or take away?

## The Native Americans' Way of Life - 1500s - Reading Questions

After reading about the Native American's Way of Life, answer these questions and fill in the blanks.

What body of water did the Native American's set up their village near? \_\_\_\_\_.

The Native Americans who lived in the Norwalk area were part of the \_\_\_\_\_ language group.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were grown together and known as "The Three Sisters".

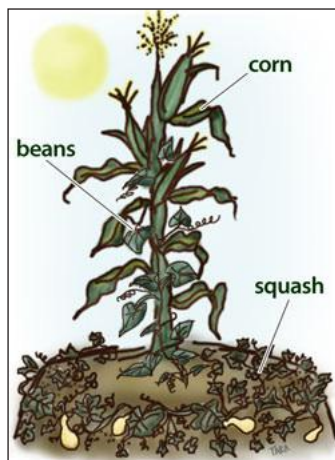
The dome-shaped huts that Native Americans lived in were called \_\_\_\_\_.



**Utilized flakes**

Left and center: basalt. Right: quartz  
Flakes knapped from stone have a sharp edge and can be used for a number of activities such as cutting or scraping. Flakes could also be used as spear points.

Photo and info-Holly Cuzzone

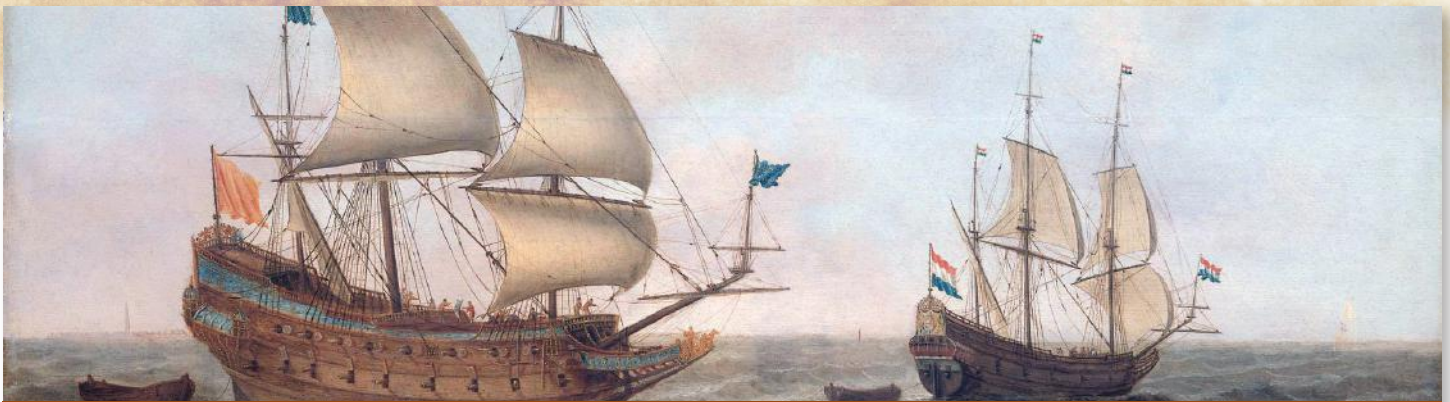


Direct sow, easy to grow:  
The Ancient Three Sisters



A typical wigwam





## Europeans Arrive in America – 1600s

**A**round 1400, many people from European countries such as Spain, the Netherlands, and England were sailing across the **Atlantic Ocean** in search of new land. People from the Netherlands, known as the **Dutch**, and people from England, known as the **British**, were exploring the eastern seaboard of North America. In 1614 Adrian Block, a Dutchman, was one of the earliest European explorers to visit our area and Long Island Sound. On a map of his explorations of Connecticut, he called our Norwalk Islands, the **Archipelagoes**.

A few years later, in 1620, the Pilgrims from England made their way over on the Mayflower and landed in what we now call Cape Cod in Massachusetts. They were the first British people to settle in what would be called the **New England Colonies**. Soon more British and Dutch families sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to begin new lives in New England. These families set up the first colonies in New England. But remember, the Native Americans were living all along the eastern seaboard.

**Think:** How might the Native Americans have felt when these new settlers came from across the ocean? Write down some ideas and talk with a friend about it.

These new settlers brought a different way to life as well as new tools, food, and disease. Many Native Americans died of disease when the European settlers arrived. Those that survived saw their way of life start to change as the European settlers wanted more of their land.

### Europeans Arrive in America – Reading Questions

After reading about Europeans arriving in America, answer these questions and fill in the blanks.

What ocean did the Europeans sail on to get to America? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ named the Norwalk Islands the **Archipelagoes**.

The Pilgrims were the first British people to settle in the \_\_\_\_\_ Colonies.

The new settlers brought with them \_\_\_\_\_ which killed many Native Americans.



## The Purchase of Norwalk - 1640

**R**oger Ludlow was born and raised in England and then sailed across the **Atlantic Ocean** to settle in Massachusetts. He helped to start the towns of Hartford and Fairfield in the **Connecticut Colony**. In February of 1640 he decided to acquire more land for the Connecticut Colony, and the area that we now know as Norwalk was what he wanted. He met with **Sachem** Chief Mahackemo of the Norwauke Native Americans to purchase all of the land between the Norwalk River and the Saugatuck River. Today, that is East Norwalk, the Cranbury area, Wilton and parts of Westport.



The Ludlow deed

**C**aptain Daniel Partrick was born and raised in England, and he too sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to settle in Massachusetts. He helped the New Haven Colony, which was separate from the Connecticut Colony at the time, acquire new land. In April of 1640, he met with Sachems Mahackemo, Naramake and Pemenate Hewnompom of the Norwauke Native Americans to purchase all of the land between the Norwalk River and the Five Mile River. Today, that is South Norwalk, Rowayton, West Norwalk and parts of New Canaan and Darien.

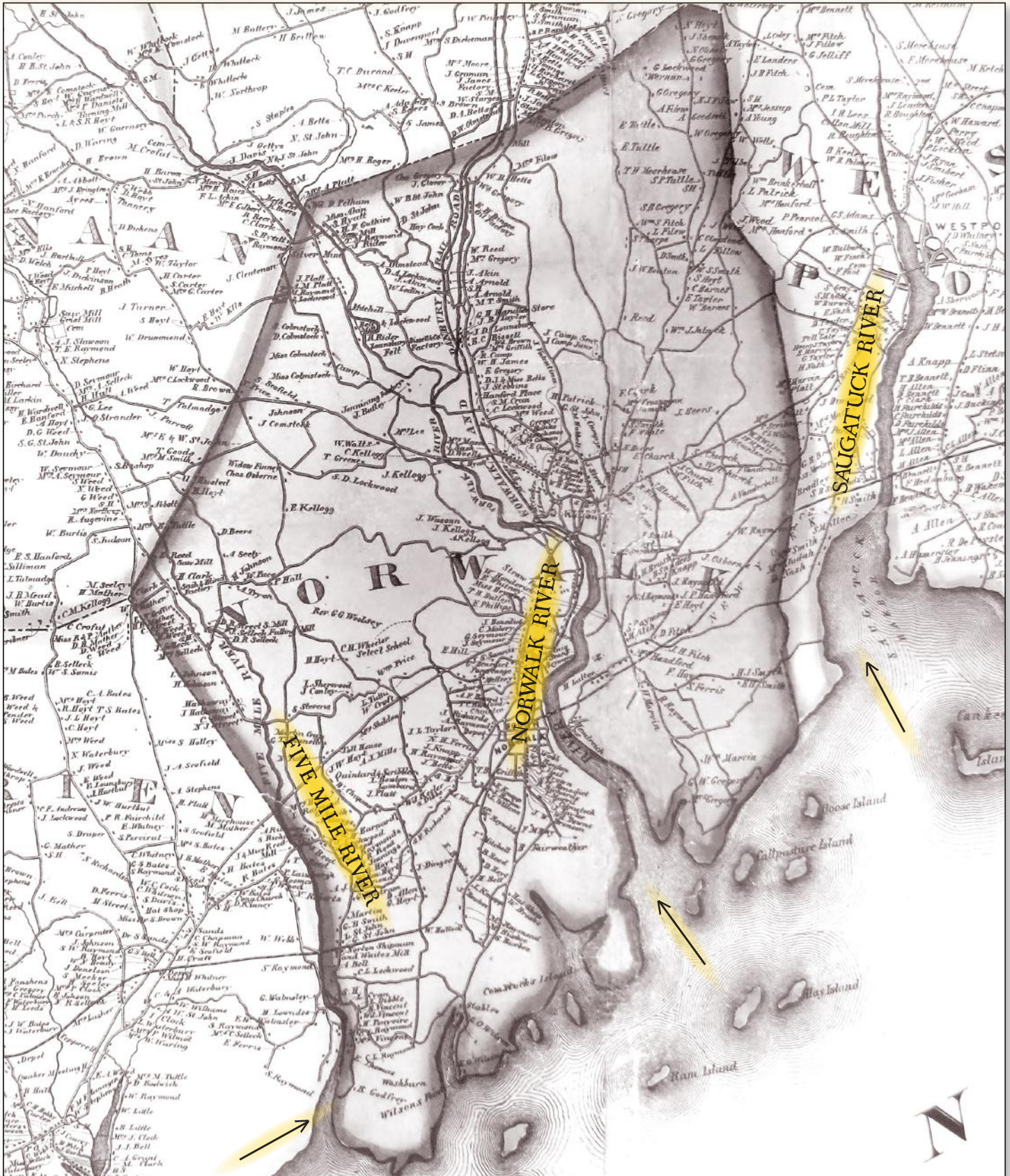
Their land measured from Long Island Sound and went as far north as a Native American could walk in a day. It certainly wasn't an exact measurement, but more of an estimate.



The Partrick deed



**Pre-Visit Geography Activity:** On this map, highlight the Norwalk River, Five Mile River and Saugatuck River. Then shade in Patrick's and Ludlow's purchases in two different colors and see if you can estimate how far north their lands went.





# The Purchase of Norwalk - 1640

## What did the Native Americans Receive for Their Land?

The Native Americans had no use for English money. Ludlow and Partrick understood this, so instead they gave them items that would be useful to their community.

### Roger Ludlow gave:

- 8 Fathoms of Wampum
- 10 Fathoms of Tobacco
- 6 Coats
- 10 Hatchets
- 10 Knives
- 10 Garden Hoes
- 10 Scissors
- 3 Kettles
- 10 Jaw Harps
- 10 Mirrors

### Captain Daniel Partrick gave:

- 10 Fathoms of Wampum
- 12 Tobacco Pipes
- 3 Hatchets
- 3 Knives
- 3 Garden Hoes
- 10 Drills
- 10 Needles
- 6 Mirrors

**Pre-Visit Language Arts Activity Activity:** Why would the Native Americans find these items valuable to their way of life? Write down your ideas and discuss them with a friend.

## The Purchase of Norwalk – Reading Questions

After reading about the purchase of Norwalk, answer these questions and fill in the blanks.

Norwalk was purchased in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ purchased areas of Norwalk from the Native Americans.

Roger Ludlow purchased all of the land between the \_\_\_\_\_ River and the \_\_\_\_\_ River.

Captain Daniel Partrick purchased all of the land between the \_\_\_\_\_ River and the \_\_\_\_\_ River.





## Norwalk Becomes a Town - 1640-1651

**C**aptain Daniel Partrick purchased his section of Norwalk in April 1640 and then went on to form the town of Greenwich. A few years later, he died.

Roger Ludlow had a plan for his section of Norwalk. He wanted **British** families to settle on the land and start a town. Around 1650 he went up to Hartford and began encouraging families to leave their homes and start a new life along Long Island Sound in Norwalk. Nathaniel Eli and Richard Olmstead agreed to buy Roger Ludlow's land and bring no less than 30 families down to settle a town. These families became known as the First Settlers of Norwalk. Families packed up all of their belongings from their homes in Hartford and sailed down the Connecticut River, across Long Island Sound and up the Norwalk River into Norwalk to start a new life. The first settlers had to clear land and chop down trees so that they could build homes and barns. They had to plant crops and set aside space for livestock. The first area of Norwalk they lived in is the area we now call East Norwalk.

Finally, on September 11, 1651, the leaders of the **Connecticut colony** officially declared that Norwalk was a town. Slowly, more people moved to Norwalk and began to move into the areas we now call South Norwalk, Rowayton and West Norwalk. People also moved into what is now Westport, Wilton and New Canaan as these areas were at first part of Norwalk.

**But What about the Native Americans?** At first, the small clans of Native Americans lived among the settlers, but as the town grew the Native Americans were forced to live in only a few, remote areas. Finally, they moved further north into what is now Ridgefield. They eventually moved as far north as what is now Kent, Connecticut as well as areas near the Massachusetts border. Let us never forget the first inhabitants of Norwalk, the first to set up a community and call this area home, the Native Americans.



# Norwalk Becomes a Town - 1640-1651

**Pre-Visit Language Arts Activity Activity:** Look at the list of some of the first settlers of Norwalk. Pay attention to their last names. Do any of these names look or sound familiar to you and why? How are these people honored or remembered in Norwalk today?

## THE FIRST SETTLERS.

There is no complete list of the original settlers, but a Table of "Estates of lands and accommodations" in 1655, contains the names of the following inhabitants.

ABBITT, GEORGE	KELLOGGE, DANIEL
BEACHAM, ROBERT	LUPTON, THOMAS
BECKWITH, STEPHEN	MARVIN, MATTHEW, SEN.
BOWTON, JOHN	MARVIN, MATTHEW, JR.
CAMPFIELD, MATTHEW	MORE, ISACKE
ELI, NATHANIEL	MARSH, JONATHAN
FITCH, THOMAS	MORGAN, WIDOW
GRIFFORIE, JOHN	OLMSTED, RICHARD
HALES, SAMUEL	RICHARDS, NATHANIEL
HALES, THOMAS	RUSKOE, JOHN
HAITE, WALTER	SENTION, MATTHIAS, SEN.
HAIES, NATHANIEL	SENTION, MATTHIAS, JR.
HANFORD, THOMAS REV.	SENTION, MATTHEW
HOMES, RICHARD	SEAMER, THOMAS
KEEILER, RALPH	WEB, RICHARD.
KEEILER, WALTER	

Some of the First Settlers' last names are spelled differently today than they were in the 1600s. Here are the spellings that have changed over the years. The current spellings are in parenthesis.

George Abbitt (Abbott)	Daniel Kellogge (Kellogg)
John Bowton (Bouton)	Richard Olmsted (Olmstead)
Nathaniel Eli (Ely)	John Ruskoe (Ruscoe)
John Griggorie (Gregory)	Matthias Sention (St. John)
Nathaniel Haies (Hayes)	Matthew Sention (St. John)
Walter Haite (Hoyt)	Thomas Seamer (Seymour)
Richard Homes (Holmes)	Richard Web (Webb)
Ralph Keeiler (Keeler)	
Walter Keeiler (Keeler)	

## Norwalk Becomes a Town - Reading Questions

After reading about how Norwalk became a town, answer these questions and fill in the blanks.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ agreed to buy  
Roger Ludlow's land

and bring no less than \_\_\_\_\_ families to start the town of Norwalk.

This group of families became known as the \_\_\_\_\_

Where were these families living right before they moved to Norwalk?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who were the first inhabitants of Norwalk and the Norwalk area?

\_\_\_\_\_



# Norwalk Becomes a Town - 1640-1651

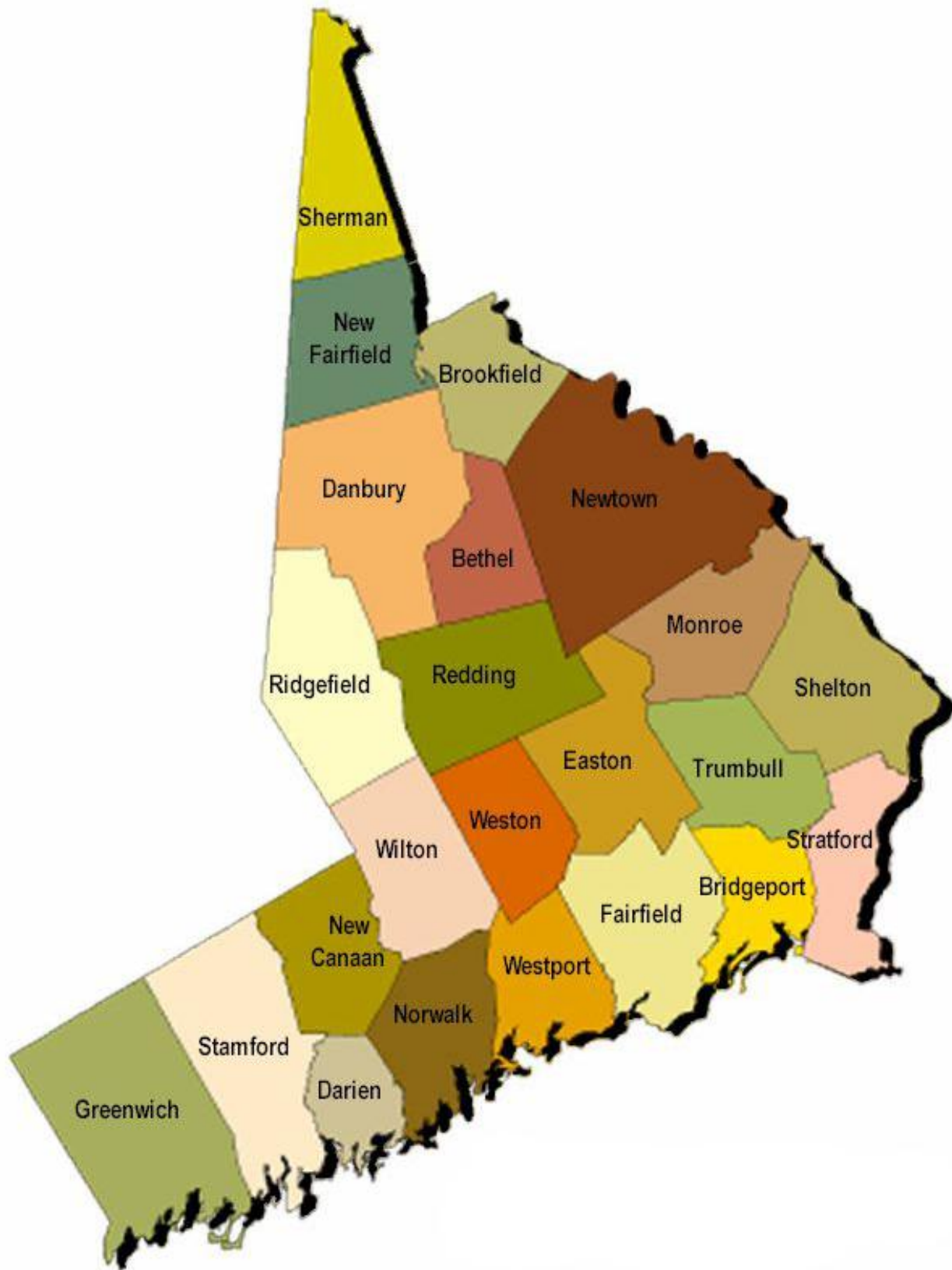
## Pre-Visit Geography Activity:

Look at these two maps. The older map, created by Moses Park, shows the original boundaries of Norwalk and other towns in **Fairfield County**. The other map shows the towns that make up Fairfield County today. How are these two maps of Fairfield County different? How are they alike? On the Modern Day map, color in the towns that used to be a part of Norwalk. What modern day towns in Fairfield County do you not see on the old map? What larger areas do you think they were part of?





# Norwalk Becomes a Town - 1640-1651







## The Colonial Era - 1651-1773

During this time, more people from England sailed across the **Atlantic Ocean** to live in the colonies. As a result, the **colony of Connecticut** as well as the town of Norwalk grew in population. The people coming to live in the colonies were known as **colonists**. There were **13 colonies** up and down the East Coast, all owned by England and ruled by the King of England.

### **Governor Thomas Fitch IV - *The Colonial Governor from Norwalk***

Governor Thomas Fitch IV was a well respected person in Norwalk even before he became Governor. His great grandfather, who he was named after, was one of the first settlers of Norwalk. Look back at the list of First Settlers and find Governor Fitch's great grandfather's name.

Governor Thomas Fitch IV went to Yale and graduated when he was 21 years old in 1721. He worked as a minister and lawyer. He soon became a well respected lawyer not only in Norwalk, but in the entire colony of Connecticut. He helped revise the laws of Connecticut and then became part of the colonial government. His intelligence and determination helped him become the **colonial governor** of Connecticut in 1754.

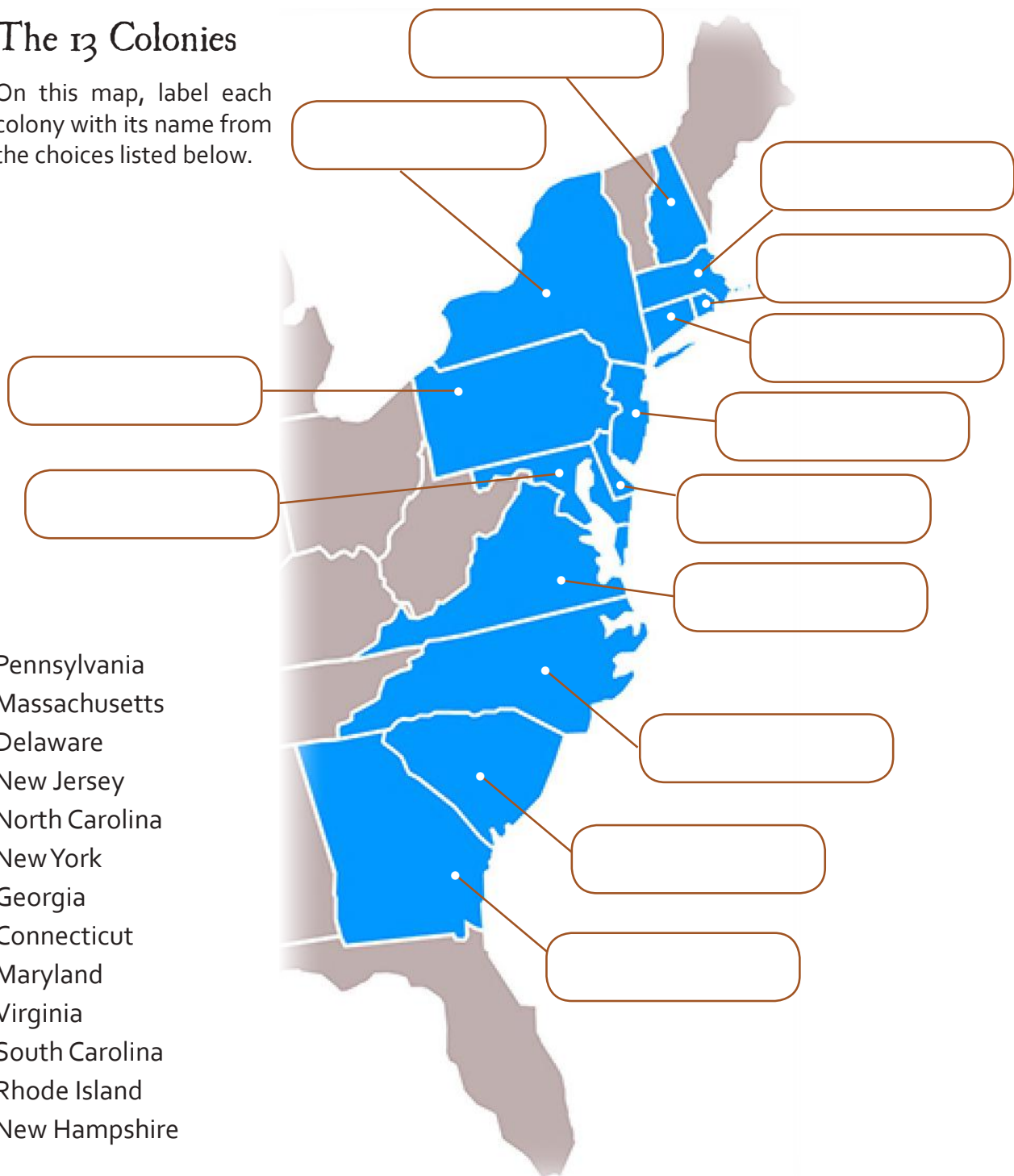
The year he became Governor, The **French** and Indian War broke out in the colonies. This was a war between the **British** and the French. The French, who owned land in Canada, wanted British land that bordered Canada. So British soldiers were sent to the colonies to help keep the French from stealing their land and attacking the colonists. In 1763, the British won and the colonies and colonists were safe. However, since the British government had spent a lot of money fighting this war, it needed money. So that year, the King of England and his government began taxing the colonists, asking them to pay extra money on items that they could only buy from England. These taxes made the colonists very angry. Many colonists did not want to follow the King's rule of paying the extra taxes because they had no say as to what was being taxed and how their money was being spent. Governor Fitch had a difficult decision: Should he support the colonists living in Connecticut or should he follow his boss, The King of England? He chose to follow the King's rules. Many colonists were mad with Governor Fitch and in 1766, they did not reelect him to be the colonial governor. Governor Fitch returned to being a lawyer after his 12 years of being colonial governor were over.



# The Colonial Era - 1651-1773

## The 13 Colonies

On this map, label each colony with its name from the choices listed below.



- Pennsylvania
- Massachusetts
- Delaware
- New Jersey
- North Carolina
- New York
- Georgia
- Connecticut
- Maryland
- Virginia
- South Carolina
- Rhode Island
- New Hampshire



# The Colonial Era - 1651-1773

## Governor Fitch's Law Office and a Look at Life in the Colonial Days - 1740s

When you visit Mill Hill Historic Park, you will get to go inside Governor Fitch's Law Office and experience what it was like to work and live as a **colonist** during the year 1740. The Law Office was where Governor Fitch went to work everyday and it was attached to his house. Governor Fitch was a very busy man so he had an assistant. That person was known as the scribe or clerk because he was in charge of all of Governor Fitch's paperwork. The scribe not only worked in the law office but lived there in an attic room. In the office is a small kitchen where the scribe would prepare his breakfast and make tea for Governor Fitch during the day. Governor Fitch's cook might also prepare lunch for both men in the small office kitchen.

Governor Fitch's house and office once sat along East Avenue, where the bridge over I-95 is today. In the 1970s, his house was torn down to build I-95, but the Norwalk Historical Society saved the law office and moved it to Mill Hill. Even though Governor Fitch was a wealthy man, his life in the Colonial Days would be very different from our lives today. **These are just a few modern conveniences that colonial people did not have:**



Indoor bathrooms



Ready-made clothes



Cars



Supermarkets



Electric or gas stoves



Planes or trains



Computers



Modern medicine



TV or radio



Copy machines



Running water



Refrigerators or freezers



Electricity



Phones



Batteries



Microwaves



Electric heating and cooling



# The Colonial Era - 1651-1773

## Pre-Visit Language Arts Activity:

Compare your life to Governor Fitch's life. Write how you do the following tasks today and then write how Governor Fitch might do the same tasks in Colonial Days? Write your answers and then discuss with a friend.

How do you contact people who live far away?

In 1740, how would Governor Fitch contact people who lived far away?

Where does your family keep its eggs, milk, cheese and meat?

In 1740, where might Governor Fitch store his eggs, milk, cheese and meat?

How does the inside of your house stay warm in the winter time?

In 1740, how might the inside of the Governor Fitch Law Office stay warm in the winter time?

## Post-visit Math & Language Arts Activity:

Now that you have visited the 1740 Governor Fitch Law Office, create a Venn Diagram to show the differences and similarities between your life and life in 1740.





# The Colonial Era - 1651-1773

## Governor Thomas Fitch IV - Reading Questions

Thomas Fitch, one of the first settlers of Norwalk, was Governor Fitch's

\_\_\_\_\_.

Before he became Governor, Thomas Fitch IV worked as a \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_.

In the year \_\_\_\_\_, he became the **colonial governor** of **Connecticut** and the

\_\_\_\_\_ War broke out in the colonies.

The King of England began to tax the **colonists** to help pay back the money spent in fighting the

**French** and Indian War. Many colonists did not want to pay the extra taxes because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Governor Fitch and his \_\_\_\_\_ worked in the law office.

List three things that people living in the Colonial days did not have.

\_\_\_\_\_





## Revolutionary Era

### The Road to Revolution: 1763 – 1775

With all of these new taxes and rules the **colonists** had to follow, anger towards the King of England began to rise! When the King of England sent **British** soldiers to the **13 colonies** to make sure colonists were following these new rules, the colonists were outraged! At this point, many colonists felt it was time for the 13 colonies to become its own nation and no longer live under the rule of the King. However, the King was not going to give up the 13 Colonies. The colonists were going to have to fight for their freedom from England. The war between England and the 13 Colonies is known as the American Revolution or the **Revolutionary War**.

### The Revolutionary War: 1775 – 1783

Colonists from all 13 Colonies organized to create an army called the **Continental Army**. They chose General George Washington to be their leader. The colonists who joined the Continental Army were **Patriots** fighting for their freedom. They usually wore blue uniforms or sometimes just wore their regular clothes. Each town also had a **militia**, local men who would be ready to defend the town if the British attacked. The King of England sent thousands of British soldiers dressed in bright red uniforms across the **Atlantic Ocean** to fight with the colonists. Battles broke out in all of the 13 Colonies. Some battles were won by the British soldiers and some won by the Colonists.

Not all colonists wanted the 13 Colonies to separate from England. Some colonists, known as **Loyalists**, did not see the value of the 13 Colonies becoming its own nation. In Norwalk, Patriots and Loyalists lived side by side. Some Loyalist Colonists joined Loyalist armies and fought against the Patriotic Colonists. Other Loyalists kept their feelings to themselves.

### The Road to Revolution and The Revolutionary War – Reading Questions

After reading these two sections, answer these questions and fill in the blanks.

The war between England and the 13 Colonies is known as the \_\_\_\_\_.

The Continental Army was led by \_\_\_\_\_.

A \_\_\_\_\_ was a person who wanted to stay loyal to the King of England.





## The Burning and Battle of Norwalk - July 11, 1779

**F**ighting didn't come to Norwalk until 1779. On July 11, 1779, **British** General William Tryon, British General Garth, and over 2,500 British, **Loyalists**, and Hessian (German) soldiers attacked Norwalk. The night before this attack, Tryon and half of his army landed at what is now known as Calf Pasture Beach, while General Garth and the rest of the soldiers landed in South Norwalk. They set fire to homes, barns, ships, shops, mills and churches. Women and children were told to get out of town and hide in The Rocks, the area that is now known as West Rocks and East Rocks.

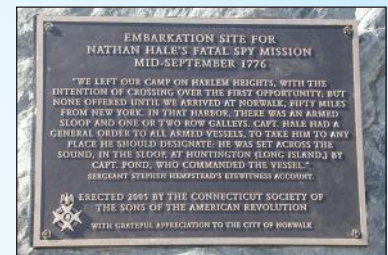
Norwalk **militia** men as well as some from other towns did their best to defend the town, but Tryon's army was too powerful. Battles were fought by the area near today's West Rocks Road and Cannon Street, and on the Norwalk Green. By the end of the day on July 11th, much of South Norwalk, Central Norwalk and East Norwalk were burned. Some Norwalk Loyalists' homes were not burned since they were friendly with some of the men in the Loyalist army.

The people of Norwalk now had to rebuild as the war continued on. Norwalk slowly began to recover from the burning. Finally the **Revolutionary War** ended in 1783 and the **13 Colonies** officially became the United States of America! The King of England no longer ruled. The United States Government was formed and George Washington, who had been leader of the **Continental Army**, was elected first President of the United States of America.

### Nathan Hale—Connecticut's State Hero and His Connection to Norwalk

During the Revolutionary War, a young soldier named Nathan Hale volunteered for an important spy mission. Disguised as a schoolmaster, Nathan Hale left camp at Harlem Heights and traveled to Norwalk, **Connecticut**, where he boarded the Continental armed sloop "Schuyler" that took him across Long Island Sound to Huntington, Long Island. He penetrated British lines to learn about their plans. On returning to camp, Hale was captured by the British and condemned as a spy. Before his execution on September 22, 1776, Hale bravely declared, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." He is Connecticut's State Hero and Norwalk is the only Connecticut town associated with his spy mission.

— Written by Edward and Madeleine Eckert



This monument marks the site where Nathan Hale embarked on his fateful spy mission. It is located at Irving Freese Park at the corner of Wall and Main Streets in Norwalk. Look for it next time you are in that area and think of Nathan Hale's bravery!



# The Burning and Battle of Norwalk - July 11, 1779

During your visit inside the Norwalk Townhouse, you will get to perform in a Burning of Norwalk skit. You will get to play one of these characters, if you choose to.

Here is the list of characters and some information about each.

**The British:** Fighting or in favor of the King of England

**General William Tryon:** He was the British General who led the Burning of Norwalk.

**General Garth:** He was General Tryon's right hand man. He helped General Tryon plan this horrible attack on Norwalk and led British troops into South Norwalk.

**Norwalk Loyalists:** Loyalists were colonists who wanted to remain loyal to England. Some people living in Norwalk were Loyalists. When they heard that Tryon and his British Army were coming to burn Norwalk, they knew their homes would be safe since they supported England.

**The Patriots:** Fighting for the 13 Colonies to become its own country

**Norwalk Town Crier:** A town crier was a person who would walk from town to town telling the news in the town square or on the steps of the town meeting house.

**Norwalk's Town Leader:** He gathered the citizens of Norwalk in the Town Meeting House to discuss how to defend the town and keep the citizens of Norwalk safe.

**General Samuel Parsons:** He was a Colonial General from the Continental Army who helped lead the local Norwalk men in defense of the town.

**Norwalk Soldiers:** Soldiers fighting for freedom! These men were citizens of Norwalk or other neighboring towns who wanted to fight back against Tryon.

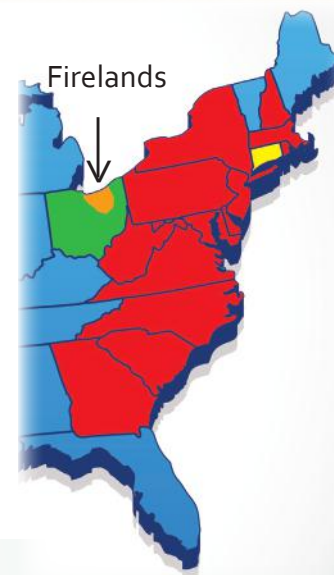
**Pre-Visit Writing Activity:** Imagine you lived in Norwalk in 1779. You are on the Patriot side and find out that the British are coming to burn Norwalk! Write a diary entry on a separate piece of paper and describe how you feel and what you will do!

**Post-Visit Writing Activity:** Who did you play in the Burning of Norwalk skit? Write a diary entry as that character. Imagine it is July 11, 1779 and describe who the character is, what the character is seeing, doing and feeling.



# Norwalk Rebuilds & The Firelands - 1779 - 1809

It took many years for Norwalk to get on its feet again after the Burning and War. Since Norwalk was not the only town in **Connecticut** burned by the British during the war (Danbury, Fairfield, Ridgefield, New Haven and New London were also burned) the state had to do something to repay the people's losses. So in the 1790s, over 10 years after the Burning, the state government gave out new land to those who had lost property. This new land was not in Connecticut but in the Ohio Territory, which is now the State of Ohio. The land set aside was known as **The Firelands**. Around 1809, some Norwalk families moved out to the Firelands to start a new life. Those that did set up a town, which they named Norwalk. There is a Norwalk, Ohio, to this day.



**Post-Visit Writing Activity: What Would You Do?** Would you choose to stay and rebuild, or would you choose to move out to the Firelands? Decide what you would do and explain why. On a separate piece of paper, please write your answer.

## The Burning and Battle of Norwalk and Norwalk Rebuilds/The Firelands- Reading Questions

Norwalk was attacked by the **British** on what date? \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were the British generals who led the attack on Norwalk.

The British Army landed at \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_.

When the **Revolutionary War** ended, the **13 Colonies** became the \_\_\_\_\_.

Name 3 **Connecticut towns**, other than Norwalk, that were burned by the British during the Revolutionary War?

\_\_\_\_\_

People who lost property during the burnings of the Revolutionary War were given land in the \_\_\_\_\_ Territory.



## The Little Red Schoolhouse (*The Downtown District School*) - 1826

**E**ducation had always been important to the people of Norwalk. Once Norwalk had officially become a town in 1651, a minister was hired to lead church service and teach the town's children. During these early days, the children were taught their lessons in the minister's home. As time went on, a schoolhouse was finally built in 1679 along what is now East Avenue. In 1826, a new schoolhouse was built on East Avenue and was used until around 1871. This school was known as the Downtown District School because before it was called East Norwalk it was called Downtown. There was an Uptown Schoolhouse and soon there were schoolhouses being built in other sections of Norwalk. This occurred so that children did not have to walk too far to get to school.

The schoolhouse that you will get to visit at Mill Hill Historic Park is the Downtown District school that was built in 1826. In the 1970s, the schoolhouse was moved from its location on East Avenue to Mill Hill so that it could be saved from being torn down.

Inside, the schoolhouse looks like it would have in 1826. There would be no electricity, batteries or modern day technology.

**Pre-Visit Language Arts Activity Activity:** Imagine a day in an 1826 schoolhouse. Write down what you imagine a school day to be like. What might you learn? What supplies will you use in the schoolhouse to complete your assignments?

**Pre-visit Geography & Art Activity:** Draw a map or diagram of your school. Label the different areas of your school and/ or specific objects in your school.



# The Little Red Schoolhouse

*(The Downtown District School) - 1826*

**Post-Visit Geography & Art Activity:** After visiting the schoolhouse, draw a map or diagram of the schoolhouse. Label the different areas and specific objects you remember. Then take out the picture you drew of your current school and compare the two drawings. Talk with a friend about what is similar and what is different. Talk about how schools have changed over time.

**Post-Visit Language Arts Activity Activity:** Now that you have experienced a school day in 1826, write a diary or journal entry as a school child from 1826. Write about what you did at school, how your day went and what you learned.

## The Little Red Schoolhouse (The Downtown District School) - Reading Questions

The \_\_\_\_\_ was the first school teacher in Norwalk.

East Norwalk used to be known as \_\_\_\_\_.

The Downtown District school, also known as the Little Red Schoolhouse, used to be on \_\_\_\_\_ and was moved to Mill Hill Historic Park in the \_\_\_\_\_.



## Book Your Group for The Little Red Schoolhouse Program

**The Little Red Schoolhouse Program brings Norwalk history to life!** The program is offered on site at Mill Hill Historic Park or off site at your location through the Little Red Schoolhouse Travel program.

**At Mill Hill Historic Park** – *length: 120 minutes*

**The Mill Hill Historic Park** tour includes the Town House (1835), Governor Fitch Law Office (1740), and Downtown District School House (1826) and colonial herb garden.

During the tour of the Town House, students will learn about early Norwalk and the town's significance during the Revolutionary War through an interactive history lesson and Burning of Norwalk skit. In the Governor Fitch Law Office, students will observe and take part in a colonial day as well as visit the colonial herb garden. In the one-room schoolhouse, School Mistress Benedict will lead the students in a reenactment of a 19th century school day. Students write with a quill & ink and participate in various 1826 reading, writing and arithmetic lessons.

**Ages: Elementary and Middle School**

**Travel Program** – *length: 120 minutes*

This program uses reproduction items from the Norwalk Historical Society's collections to bring history to life. The Little Red Schoolhouse Traveling program includes:

- Interactive history lesson about early Norwalk
- Reenactment of the 19th century school day including a writing lesson with quill & ink and various 1826 reading, writing and arithmetic lessons
- Colonial items display

Each presentation is conducted by one of our museum educators and is designed for a maximum class size of 25 students. This program is not suitable for assemblies or extremely large groups. A maximum of two presentations can be scheduled for the same day.

**Ages: Elementary and Middle School**

**Please contact the Norwalk Historical Society** at [info@norwalkhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@norwalkhistoricalsociety.org) or 203-846-0525 for more information on available dates, pricing or to book a tour.



# Little Red Schoolhouse Guidebook Glossary

**Algonquian** – The group of Native American languages.

**archaeologists** – Scientists who study objects that people made or used many years ago. Archaeologists usually need to dig in the ground to uncover the objects they are looking for. Finding these objects help them discover what people of the past were like and how they lived.

**Archipelagos** – The name Adrian Block gave to the islands around Norwalk when he sailed Long Island Sound in 1614, meaning a sea or stretch of water containing many islands.



**Atlantic Ocean** – The 2nd largest ocean in the world. This body of water separates North and South America from Europe and Africa. This is the ocean you would sail on if you were traveling from England to Connecticut.

**British** – people from England, a European country.

**Colonial Governor** – All of the 13 Colonies had its own Colonial Governor. This person represented the King and his job was to oversee the colony.

**Colonist** – a person who lives in a colony.

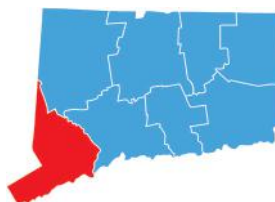
**Colony** – A settlement that is ruled by a distant country. The people who set up the colony are from the ruling country.



**Connecticut** – This is the state that we live in. It is bordered by New York to the West, Massachusetts to the North and Rhode Island to the East and Long Island Sound to the South. It is part of New England. Connecticut was also one of the original 13 Colonies. After the Revolutionary War when the 13 Colonies became the United States of America, Connecticut became the 5th State to join the United States on January 9, 1788.

**Continental Army** – The American army during the Revolutionary War. The leader of the Continental Army was George Washington. The army was made up of men from the 13 colonies who trained under George Washington to fight the British.

**Dutch** – people from the Netherlands, a European country.



**Fairfield County** – a group of towns that surround the town of Fairfield. The names and amount of towns have changed over the years. Today, the towns that are part of Fairfield County are: Bethel, Bridgeport, Brookfield, Danbury, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, New Fairfield, Newtown, Norwalk, Shelton, Sherman, Stamford, Stratford, Redding, Ridgefield, Trumbull, Weston, Westport and Wilton.

**fathoms** – a unit of measurement, 1 Fathom equals 6 feet.



**Firelands** – An area of land set aside in what is today Ohio. This land was for the families who had lost property during the Burning of Norwalk as well as the other burnings that took place in other towns of Connecticut.

## Little Red Schoolhouse Guidebook Glossary

**French** – people from France, a European country.

**Loyalists** – During the Revolutionary War, loyalists were colonists who wanted to stay loyal to the King of England. They did not want the 13 Colonies to become its own country. Many loyalists fought against their patriot neighbors.

**militia** – Colonists who were not part of the Continental Army but had some training. They would help defend their town or surrounding towns during emergencies.

**New England Colonies** – The name for the area the British people would settle in America. In the 1600s, only Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire were part of New England. Today, there are 6 states that make up New England. Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

**Patriots** – During the Revolutionary War, patriots were colonists who wanted the 13 Colonies to become its own country, the United States of America.



**projectile points** – These are also known as Arrow Heads. They are pieces of rock or bone shaped into a point. They are then tied onto sticks to create spears, darts or arrows.

**Revolutionary War** – The war between the colonists of the 13 Colonies and England. The 13 Colonies won the war and became the United States of America.

**Sachem** – the name for the Native American chief.



**Thirteen (13) Colonies** – A group of settlements founded by the people of England up and down the East Coast of North America. The King of England ruled over the 13 Colonies. The 13 original colonies were: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. These 13 Colonies finally became the United States of America.

**Three Sisters** – Corn, Beans and squash. These three vegetables were very important to the Native American diet. They would grow these three vegetables together. The cornstalk would grow tall, the beans would grow on the cornstalk and the squash and grow under the cornstalk to keep the weeds from growing.



**Wampum** – beads made from clam and whelk shells. These beads were made by Native Americans and turned into belts or jewelry presented to important people in their tribes. Wampum was very valuable to the Native Americans and when the European Explorers came, they used Wampum as a form of money with the Native Americans.



## Reading Questions *Answer Key*

### The Native Americans' Way of Life - 1500s – Reading Questions

- What body of water did the Native American's set up their village near? **Long Island Sound.**
- The Native Americans who lived in the Norwalk area were part of the **Algonquian** language group.
- **Corn, beans** and **squash** were grown together and known as "The Three Sisters".
- The dome shaped huts that Native Americans lived in were called **wigwams.**

### Europeans Arrive in America – Reading Questions

- What ocean did the Europeans sail on to get to America? **Atlantic Ocean.**
- **Adrian Block** named the Norwalk Islands, the Archipelagoes.
- The Pilgrims were the first British people to settle in the **New England** Colonies.
- The new settlers brought with them **disease** which killed many of the Native Americans.

### The Purchase of Norwalk – Reading Questions

- Norwalk was purchased in the year **1640.**
- **Roger Ludlow** and **Daniel Partrick** purchased areas of Norwalk from the Native Americans.
- Roger Ludlow purchased all of the land between the **Norwalk** River and the **Saugatuck** River.
- Captain Daniel Partrick purchased all of the land between the **Norwalk** River and the **Five Mile** River.

### Norwalk Becomes a Town – Reading Questions

- **Nathaniel Eli** and **Richard Olmstead** agreed to buy Roger Ludlow's land and bring no less than 30 families to start the town of Norwalk.
- This group of families became known as the **first settlers of Norwalk.**
- Where were these families living right before they moved to Norwalk? **Hartford, Connecticut.**
- Who were the first inhabitants of Norwalk and the Norwalk area? **Native Americans** or **Norwalk Native Americans.**

### Governor Thomas Fitch IV – Reading Questions

- Thomas Fitch, one of the first settlers of Norwalk, was Governor Fitch's **great grandfather.**
- Before he became Governor, Thomas Fitch IV worked as a **minister** and **lawyer.**
- In the year **1754,** he became the colonial governor of Connecticut and the **French and Indian War** broke out in the colonies.
- The King of England began to tax the colonists to help pay back the money spent in fighting the French and Indian War. Many colonists did not want to pay the extra taxes because **they had no say as to what was being taxed** OR they had **no say as to how their money was being used.**
- Governor Fitch and his **scribe** OR **clerk** worked in the law office.

## Reading Questions *Answer Key*

- List three things that people living in the Colonial days did not have.

Possible answers:

electricity	computers	phones
copy machines	refrigerators	electric or gas stoves
supermarkets	indoor bathrooms	cars, planes or trains
batteries	TV or radio	electric heating & cooling
running water	electric freezers	microwaves
ready-made clothes	modern medicine	

### The Road to Revolution and The Revolutionary War & Reading Questions

- The war between England and the 13 Colonies is known as the **Revolutionary War** OR **American Revolution**.
- The Continental Army was led by **George Washington**.
- A **loyalist** was a person who wanted to stay loyal to the King of England.

### The Burning and Battle of Norwalk and Norwalk Rebuilds/The Firelands – Reading Questions

- Norwalk was attacked by the British on what date? **July 11, 1779**.
- **General William Tryon** and **General Garth** were the British generals who led the attack on Norwalk.
- The British army landed at **Calf Pasture Beach** and in **South Norwalk**.
- When the Revolutionary War ended, the 13 Colonies became the **United States of America**.
- Name 3 Connecticut towns, other than Norwalk, that were burned by the British during the Revolutionary War? **Possible Answers: Danbury, Fairfield, Ridgefield, New Haven, New London.**

### The Little Red Schoolhouse (The Downtown District School) – Reading Questions

- The **minister** was the first school teacher in Norwalk.
- The Little Red Schoolhouse, also known as the Downtown District School, was built in **1826**.
- The Downtown District school, also known as the Little Red Schoolhouse, used to be on **East Avenue** and was moved to Mill Hill Historic Park in the **1970s**.



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- Page 7:** The Ludlow deed and Partrick deed: Hall, Edwin. The Ancient Historical Records of Norwalk, Conn.; With a Plan of the Ancient Settlement and the Town in 1847. Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman & Co., 1865.
- Page 8:** Chace Jr., J. Map of Fairfield County, Connecticut 1856. Purchased by the Norwalk Historical Society from Old Maps, Westchesterfield, NH.
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- Page 18, bottom:** Eckert, Ed. Hale Plaque on Monument. 2005, Private Collection of Ed and Madeleine Eckert, Norwalk, CT.
- Page 20:** Firelands Map created by Audrey Cozzarin
- Page 21:** \*Diane will be sending you another picture of the schoolhouse showing the front door.
- Page 23:** Fargione, Justin. Downtown Schoolhouse Interior, 2007, Private collection of Justin Fargione, Norwalk, CT.
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- Wampum: Penn Museum.  
<https://www.penn.museum/blog/museum/wampum-research-notes-from-the-trail-june-2015/>



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\*Please note that the date of the burning and battle of Norwalk and the name of the ship Nathan Hale sailed on is incorrect in *Norwalk Being an historical account of that Connecticut Town*

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## Norwalk Historical Society

The Norwalk Historical Society was incorporated in 1899 with the focus on “the research, preservation, and promotion of interest in the history of Norwalk.” Through our many educational exhibits, programs and lectures, we highlight Norwalk’s rich history and diversity in the region. The Norwalk Historical Society manages and operates the Norwalk Historical Society Museum and Mill Hill Historic Park.

The Norwalk Historical Society is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization.

### Norwalk Historical Society

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