HOPKINS IN 1760

In 1760, New Haven was sharing in the joyful news of the defeat of the French army in Quebec at the hands of British and colonial troops under the leadership of General Wolfe. The hostilities of the Seven Years’ War (known as the French and Indian War by the British colonists) appeared to be ending. At Hopkins, the school’s centennial passed with no notice in the school records. The new head of school was Noah Williston, who was succeeded the next year by Ebenezer Grosvenor. They were part of a string of heads who served for one year or less. The fortunes of the school appeared to be dwindling despite the best efforts of the Committee of Trustees. The Trustees missed an opportunity to collect the portion of Edward Hopkins’ estate that had been set aside for the care of his wife, Ann, when she died in 1710. These funds were ordered by the British court to be sent to Harvard, as the judge was unaware of any other possible use for promotion of education in New England. The funds were used to purchase the land that later became “Hopkinton,” and the proceeds continue to fund books for Harvard libraries today. Funding to run Hopkins Grammar School in New Haven came from leases on land given to the Trustees by the town for their use to raise revenue. Parts of the endowment were used to make personal loans for which the Trustees charged interest, but many of these loans proved to be poor investments. Out-of-town students were charged tuition, and later, children whose parents did not attend Center Church were charged tuition. The New Haven Colony also supplemented the school as part of its legal requirement to provide education in the community, but it also supported “English” or common schools to satisfy the desires of some townspeople for a more “practical education” than that provided by the Grammar School.

The fifty years prior to 1760 in New Haven had seen the advent of some Yale students seeking to become ordained as priests in the Church of England rather than seeking a pastorate in the Congregational Churches. Among the first to announce his intention to do so was Daniel Brown, graduate of Hopkins in 1714 and rector of...
Hopkins from 1716 to 1718. This trend became so alarming to the New Haven Puritans, that in 1728 the town declared that only Congregationalists and Presbyterians would be allowed to attend the grammar school. However, Anglicans continued to grow in number, and one even became rector of Hopkins for five years beginning in 1742. Richard Mansfield (1737 HGS) later left Hopkins to become an Anglican missionary in Derby, CT and went on to become an influential loyalist during the American Revolution. He even went so far as to write a letter to Governor Tryon of New York with advice about how best to subdue Connecticut during the revolt. His letter was intercepted, and for a time, Mansfield was forced to flee to Long Island. At the end of the war, however, he returned to Derby and served his community ably. In 1791, Yale awarded him a D.D., the first Episcopalian so honored, noting, “No citizen of the town was ever so respected or beloved.” A devoted family man, he fathered thirteen children before he died at the age of 96.

While Mansfield made a name for himself as a loyalist, other Hopkins’ graduates were known for their patriotic zeal on behalf of the Revolution. Nathan Beers (1767 HGS) was the paymaster for Connecticut troops under the command of George Washington. His father had been killed by the Redcoats in the invasion of New Haven in 1779. During that same invasion, Noah Williston, former head of the school in 1760, was captured and threatened with execution for the revolutionary sentiments expressed from the pulpit of his West Haven Congregational Church. Following his participation with

### 1750–74

- 1757 New schoolhouse made of brick
- 1760 HGS centennial passes without notice
- 1762 Jared Ingersoll (future delegate to Constitutional Convention)
- 1764 HGS hires 20-year old prodigy Punderson Austin to serve as Head of School graduates
- 1769 James Hillhouse (US Senator) graduates
- 1773 HGS hires Jared Mansfield as Head of School (future surveyor of the NW Territory)
It certainly was not because of his father’s influence that Ingersoll became a revolutionary. Jared Ingersoll the elder had been a colonial agent for Connecticut in London where he worked alongside Benjamin Franklin engaged in a similar task on behalf of Pennsylvania. When Parliament passed the Stamp Act in 1765, Ingersoll agreed to act as stamp master in Connecticut. Upon returning to Hartford, however, he was met by a mob who forced him to resign. In 1773, when his younger son Jared was ready to study law, his father sent him to London to shield him from the growing “radical influences” in the colonies. It did little good, however. Jared

1776–1783 American War for Independence
1787 U.S. Constitutional Convention
1789 French Revolution begins
1789 George Washington inaugurated
1795 U.S. negotiates treaties with Britain and Spain

1779 New Haven, Fairfield and Norwalk attacked by the British
1781 Led by Benedict Arnold, British forces take New London.
1784 Gradual emancipation of slaves passed by Connecticut
1795 Connecticut claims to northeast Ohio sold to establish School Fund by James Hillhouse, HGS 1769
1799 Eli Whitney contracted to build muskets

1775–99

1777 HGS hires Chauncey Goodrich to serve as Head of School briefly. He later goes on to a career in Congress, Senate and as Lt. Gov of CT
1779 HGS graduates, and future and former teachers assist in the defense of New Haven against the British
1780–82 HGS closed off and on “for vacation” during the war
1786 Jeremiah Atwater HGS 1760 opens new book of Trustee minutes
1790 HGS begins a brief experiment in coeducation and modern studies, (including dance) under leadership of Abraham Bishop.
1791 Lyman Beecher (future Pres. Lane Theological Seminary, father of Harriet Beecher Stowe) graduates
1793 Henry Baldwin (future Supreme Court Justice) and Henry Waggaman Edwards (Congress, Senate, Governor) graduate

1800–09

1802 school moves to Temple and Crown into a two-story building with cellar
1804 Ralph Ingersoll (Congress, Mayor, Diplomat) graduates
1804 HGS hires Chauncey A. Goodrich to be Head of School (future editor Webster’s Dictionary)
1807 Roger Sherman Baldwin (Amistad atty, Governor, Senator) graduates

1806 Noah Webster published American dictionary
1807–11 Embargo Acts deeply affect New Haven’s economy

1800 Jefferson elected President
1803 Napoleon declared Emperor
1807 Britain abolished slavery

the younger left London shortly before the Declaration of Independence was adopted and went to France where he lived until 1778. He returned to the new “United States” and went to Philadelphia where he was elected to the Continental Congress in 1780 and subsequently as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1787. A fellow delegate remarked, “Mr. Ingersoll speaks well, and comprehends his subject fully.” Ingersoll went on to serve as Attorney-General of Pennsylvania and was the unsuccessful Federalist candidate for Vice-President in 1812.

Hopkins around the period of 1760 was surviving, but not really thriving. While it continued to provide excellent preparation for children seeking higher education, a sense of a need for change was growing, just as it was in the new nation. However, it would take another hundred years before that change would begin to take hold.

Quod felix faustumque sit,
Thom Peters, Archivist

Jared Ingersoll

a group of Yale students who led sniper fire against the British invasion before narrowly escaping capture, Zebulon Ely was appointed to teach at Hopkins for a year in 1780. But by far the most significant contributor to the American cause from Hopkins was Jared Ingersoll (1762 HGS).