



# *A Patriot Story*

## **Joseph Ruggles**

Service: Patriotic Service / Committee of Inspection & Correspondence Committee of Correspondence; Civil Service / Grand Juror, Surveyor of Highways, Justice of the Peace

Residence: New Milford, Litchfield Co, CT

Born: 30 Jan 1701 / Suffield, Hampshire Co, MA

Died: p 5 Jan 1791 / Brookfield, Fairfield Co, CT

Joseph Ruggles descends from the Ruggles family who came to America in 1635 on the Hopewell. Joseph married Rachel Tolles in 1722 and together they raised fifteen children: Sarah, Benjamin, Lois, Capt. Joseph Jr., Capt. Lazarus, Rachel, Mercy, Mabel, Timothy, Ens. Ashbel, Lucy, Ann, Samuel, Elizabeth and Mary. Rare for the time, all fifteen married having survived the hardship of war and sickness.

Joseph moved to Brookfield in 1733 and settled at the Half-Way Falls of the Still River. As one of the earliest settlers of Iron Works (later known as Brookfield) he became a partner in the iron furnaces set up along the Still River. He also purchased considerable land in the Still River Neck, , not far from the Newtown line.

Joseph was a deacon in the Congregational Church at New Milford for a short time. Later, when a church was organized in Newbury Parish, Brookfield Center, he became a deacon there and continued in the office for forty years.

Joseph is referred to as "Captain"; however, there is no record of his participating in the Militia. Sine he would have been in his late seventies at the time of the Revolution, Captain could be a title of respect given his role in the church and the community.

Based on Joseph's civil service during the Revolution, he must have been very influential. He was a member of the Committee of Correspondence, which exchanged information and rallied Colonial opposition against British policy. Members of the committee utilized town meetings, the clergy, and newspapers to cultivate public support for the movement leading to the Revolution. One could deduce, then, that the Committee of Inspection and Provisions was critical to supplying the troops with food, water, clothing, weapons and ammunition.

Rachel died in 1746. Joseph married Elizabeth Dorman in 1748 and Elizabeth Sturdevant in 1749. Joseph died in 1791 and is buried in the Fairfield East Cemetery in Fairfield, CT.

Source(s): Historical Sketch of the 1st Congregational Church & the Town of Brookfield by Emily Hawley. Pp 49,79,80,154; Annals of Brookfield, Fairfield CT by Emily Hawley, p 195; History of the Towns of New Milford & Bridgewater C11703-1882 by Samuel Orcutt. Pp 221, 245-246.