



Society of Stukely Westcott Descendents of America

Know your kindred better

President's note

I'm hoping that everyone had a pleasant and rewarding summer. We enjoyed lots of travel and spent some wonderful times with family and friends.

Now we move into fall, another great time of year, with football, the World Series, and for the younger among us, a return to school. A milestone for Nancy and me is that we now have a grandchild in high school!

Nancy noticed a calendar note on my phone the other day referring to our ancestor Stukely, and she marveled at how this man's memory has been kept alive for nearly 400 years, long enough to appear in a digital device he probably couldn't have imagined.

I hope you will all start making plans to join us at the 2026 reunion to honor our past and share new experiences in a beautiful part of New York. You'll find more details in this issue.

All the best,
Bart Westcott
Palo Alto, California





Make your plans to attend the 2026 SSWDA biennial family reunion

When: July 9-12, 2026

Where: Watertown New York at the Hilton Garden Inn

<https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/artgigi-hilton-garden-inn-watertown-thousand-islands/>

Special room rates will be available for the Westcott family reunion. Indicate you are coming for the reunion when you make your reservations. We will be able to visit Westcott Beach State park during the reunion, just 20 minutes from the hotel.



Welcome to our newest Westcott cousins

2024 - 5 New Members

Michelle L Ling - Oregon
David V. Westcott - California
Jane Tidball Wescott Bailey - North Carolina
Alyson Bailey - North Carolina
AbdurRahman Rozell - New York

2025 - 5 New Members

Zora Josephine Leflar
Nancy V. Westcott
Christopher Westphal - New York
Tedi J. Roach - Oregon
Thomas Wheelock Worth

Annual Donation Honors Stukely Westcott and His Descendants



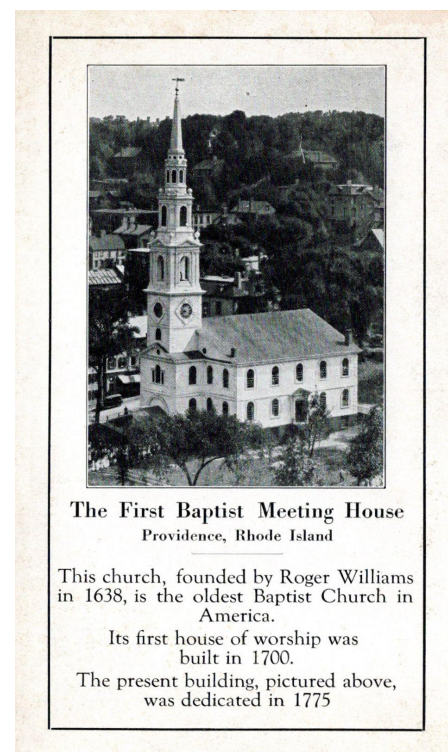
On April 4, 1993, **Betty Westcott Acker**, then the Historian of the Wescott Society, attended Plam Sunday service at the meeting house on North Main Street in Providence, R.I. that has been the home of the First Baptist Church in America since 1775. After a tour of the meeting house, Betty donated to the church's Easter Lily Fund in honor of Stukely Westcott, a founding member of the church. And Betty made sure the donation

became an annual tradition and one of the responsibilities of the Westcott Society Historian enumerated in the by-laws. It is an obligation I joyfully fulfill, arranging a donation this year of \$100 in honor of Stukely and Juliana Westcott and in memory of **Wilma W. Avery** of Arkansas and **Leroy Westcott** of Arizona, society members who died since the previous donation. The practice has evolved as we now donate “to the ministries of the church in Providence” with the admonition “Please spend it wherever it can blossom.”

The First Baptist Church in America was formed in 1638 when Stukely and other followers of Roger Williams gathered in Williams’ Providence home for worship. During the meeting, Ezekiel Holliman baptized Williams, who in turn baptized twelve others including Stukely Westcott (and presumably, Juliana), Ezekiel Holliman and William Arnold. A few years later when the Westcotts moved to the new settlement of Shawomet (later renamed Warwick) to the south of Providence, Stukely Westcott, Ezekiel Holliman and William Arnold formed the First Baptist Church of Warwick.

First Baptist Church Meeting House in an undated postcard (hint: required postage was 1¢)

Many Westcott descendants – both those who remained in Rhode Island and those who migrated north and west – actively professed their Baptist faith. For example, in the 18th century, Nathan Westcott (Nathan⁴, Josiah³, Jeremiah², Stukely¹) was a popular speaker at meetings of Six-Principle Baptist congregations throughout the Rhode Island Colony. And in the 1800s, Stukely Westcott, Jr. (Stukely Jr.⁶, Stukely⁵, Stukely⁴, Stukely³, Jeremiah², Stukely¹) gradually migrated through Massachusetts and Vermont, joining the local Baptist church at each stop, and finally settled in New York, where he became a deacon of the Canton Baptist church. This is not to say that a Baptist profession is a Westcott requisite. That would be contrary to the deep belief in religious freedom and **Soul Liberty** of the founding members of the Providence church.



Westcott Cousins gathered in front of the First Baptist Church in Providence during the 1935 Reunion.

In June 1935, the first reunion of the Westcott Society met in Salem, Massachusetts, and then moved the festivities to Providence, which included a visit to the First Baptist Church in America. And since then, reunions in the Providence area have always scheduled a visit to the meeting house.

During the 2019 Westcott trip to England to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Stukely and Juliana’s marriage at the Church of St. John the Baptist in Yeovil, the travelers carried with them a **letter of**

transfer from Pastor Jamie Washam of the First Baptist Church in America recommending acceptance of the Westcotts and their descendants “albeit 400 years later.” On Sunday the Westcott cousins participated in the All Generations service at St. John’s, during which SSWDA Chaplain Laura Westcott read from Pastor Jamie’s letter: “We trust that the doctrinal issues that divided our forebearers are now surpassed by the kinship we share in the love and way of Jesus Christ.”

On your next trip to discover your roots in Rhode Island, a visit (or revisit) to the First Baptist Church in America is a must. In the meantime, you can stop by virtually at:

<https://www.firstbaptistchurchinamerica.org/>

David Wescott Smith
SSWDA Historian
historian@sswda.org



Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants of America
SSWDA.org
Sunday, April 6, 2025
Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam, Pastor
The First Baptist Church in America
75 North Main Street Providence, RI 02903

Dear Pastor,

It has been a tradition of the Westcott Society to donate Easter Memorials to the First Baptist Church in America to honor our ancestors Stukely and Juliana Westcott, who gathered with their friend Roger Williams in 1638 in faith.

This year, we especially remember members Wilma W. Avery of Arkansas and Leroy Westcott of Arizona.

We would like to have our donation directed to the ministries of the church in Providence. Please spend it wherever it can bloom.

And Happy Easter to you and all the Church.

Peace,

David Smith, SSWDA Historian



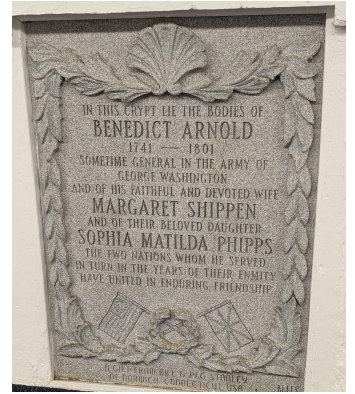
From: Elizabeth Crosswhite <ea.crosswhite@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Apr 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Subject: Benedict Arnold

To: Bart Westcott <bwestcott2@gmail.com>

Craig and I were recently in London and decided to look up Benedict Arnold's grave. It turned out to be in the basement of the church in Battersea.



To stay up on the Society of Stukely Westcott descendants, share family events or contact the board of directors, check out the SSWDA website <https://www.sswda.org/>