



Theodosius Fowler, Revolutionary War Soldier

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July 4th marks the 231st anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, a fitting time to recall the life and military service of Theodosius Fowler, one of the more interesting Revolutionary War soldiers buried in the historic cemetery at St. Paul's Church National Historic Site.

A scion of one of Westchester's most prominent colonial families, Theodosius joined the American army as an ensign officer in March 1776 to help defend New York against an expected major British invasion. In search of more soldiers for General Washington's army, he returned to his neighborhood and recruited for troops on the St. Paul's village green. This public display of support for the revolutionary cause outraged his father Jonathan Flower, who was a judge, former militia leader and leading citizen of the town. Jonathan was a Loyalist, who eventually fled to Nova Scotia, making the Flowers one of many families disrupted by the great struggle of the American Revolution.

Theodosius Fowler, who was eventually promoted to captain, fought in several engagements, including the Battle of Long Island in 1776 and the critical Battle of Saratoga in 1777. In 1778, he was posted to the Light Infantry, the elite of the Continental army, and was engaged at the Battle of Monmouth (NJ), where Washington's army tried to halt the British as they moved from Philadelphia to New York City. In September 1781, Fowler, in command of the Light Infantry company of the 2nd New York Regiment, was ordered down to the Yorktown, Virginia peninsula, where he participated in the final siege that forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis' British army, effectively ending the Revolutionary War.

Fowler married Maria (Steele) in 1784 at New York City's Trinity Church, although they lived in Eastchester (today's Mt. Vernon), raising two children. Ironically, Fowler assumed his father's role as large landowner and leading citizens of the town, serving as Overseer of Roads and as a vestryman of St. Paul's Church. The 1800 showed that he was the wealthiest man in town. He also was a member of the Cincinnati Society, the influential Continental Army veterans' organization. At his death in 1841, Fowler was living in Amboy, New Jersey, but was interred in the Flower family plot at St. Paul's Church -- alongside his father, who had died in 1787. Theodosius's final resting place is also marked by a marble veteran's stone.