



May 24 – Gold Selleck Silliman Marries Mary Fish
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On May 24, 1775, Gold Selleck Silliman married Mary Fish. Their marriage was built on lasting friendship, deep affection, and mutual respect, surviving many trials and tribulations during and after the Revolutionary War. After marrying in Stonington, the couple moved to “The Orchard,” located on what is now Jennings Road in Fairfield.

With Fairfield roots dating back to the 1600s, the Sillimans were an influential family. Like his father, Gold Selleck Silliman studied law at Yale and became a king’s attorney for what is now Fairfield County in 1768 and later a justice of the peace. In May 1774, Silliman joined the 4th Regiment, Connecticut Militia as a major, rising through the ranks to become a brigadier general by 1776.

Mary Fish was an avid reader and writer. Widowed in 1767, Mary waited nearly 8 years for the right person before marrying again. Mary listed ideal expectations for a husband, writing, “May he love to see his table furnished with the good things... May his library be ever free for my ... improvement.”

During the American Revolution, Gold Selleck Silliman protected the southwestern border of Connecticut from loyalists. He also fought in the Battle of Long Island in 1776 and Battle of Ridgefield in 1777. On the night of May 1, 1779, loyalists from Long Island kidnapped him from his home. Ever devoted to her husband, Mary negotiated for his safe return a year later. Their life together was documented in letters and a detailed diary that Mary kept, revealing an invaluable personal perspective on the Revolution’s impact on Fairfield.

Image: Portrait of Mary Fish Silliman, c. 1795, Reuben Moulthrop, Gift of Mrs. Olive Gould Jennings.