



**The James Mitchell Varnum House**  
By Grace Birkett and Robert Sprague

Have you ever heard of the James Mitchell Varnum House? The James Mitchell Varnum House was built in 1773 and finished in 1778 by John Reynolds. It is located at 57 Peirce Street.

James Mitchell Varnum was born on December 12, 1740 and died January 9, 1787. He was a lawyer and a patriot. He was also a general in the Revolutionary War. George Washington picked James Mitchell Varnum out of thousands of people to lead the troops during the Revolutionary War. In fact, they became good friends. Our first President actually slept in the Varnum House several times.

James Mitchell Varnum attended Harvard University and Rhode Island College and graduated from Brown University. He settled down in East Greenwich and married Martha Patty. James practiced law in the East Greenwich Town Hall, which was then the Courthouse. He also served in many famous battles during the American Revolution. James Mitchell Varnum was well known

for his writing and public speaking. He was the founder of the Kentish Guards, but left to start his own militia called the Varnum Continentals.

The Varnum House is known as a colonial mansion and is a museum today. The outside is yellow and it has two big chimneys on each side. It's a two-story house with a basement, carriage barn, and outhouse. There are beautiful walled gardens, a covered well, front porch, and a wall around the house. The shutters on the Varnum House have been there since 1778. The inside of the Varnum House has eight rooms with low ceilings. There is a kitchen, an office, a dining room, a southeast bedroom, a southwest bedroom, a northeast bedroom, and a northwest bedroom. The house also has a small crawl attic and a central hall. The wooden flooring is almost the same as it was 200 years ago!

James Mitchell Varnum bought the land for only \$90.00. In 1939, the Varnum Continentals purchased the house and made it into a historic museum. You should stop by and visit it today!