

WILLIAM WAITE

Early Pioneer of Waite Hill

William D. Waite was born February 25, 1765 in South Hadley, Hampshire County, Massachusetts to William and Mary Waite. William's distinguished family history covers two continents. On the European continent, his lineage can be traced to Ralf the "Waite" (watchman/minstrel) of William the Conqueror. On the American continent, his descendants can be traced to Thomas Waite who immigrated to Boston, Massachusetts with brothers Richard and Gamaliel Waite in 1634. William served as a private during the Revolutionary War in the Connecticut Line under the command of Colonel William Douglas. He was fifteen years old when he enlisted on May 26, 1780.

William spent his youth in South Hadley, Massachusetts. He married Experience Spedy Ferry on June 13, 1792 in Grandy, Hampshire County, Massachusetts. Together they had six children. In time, they would eventually settle in Marcellus, Onondaga County, New York. William would go on to purchase a parcel of land in the Connecticut Western Reserve. The

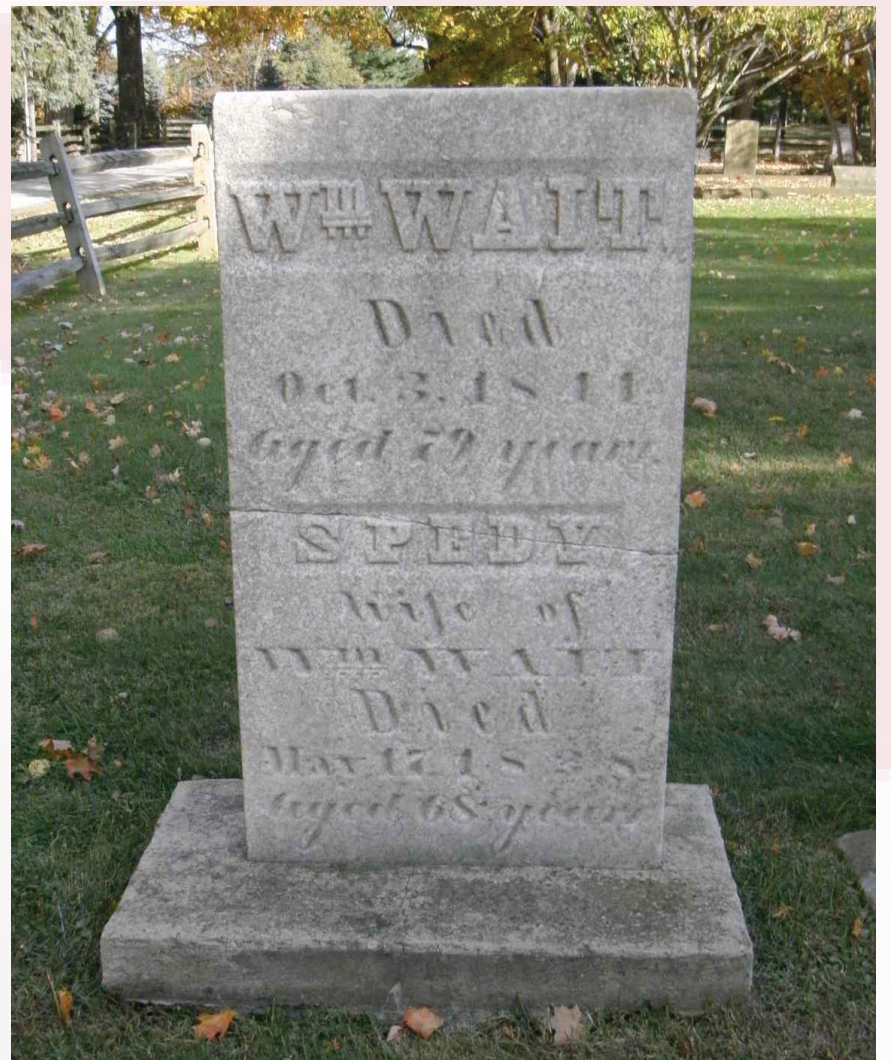


the brother's labors turned to clearing the necessary trees to establish a road toward Kirtland, thus making the nearby grist mill and saw mill more easily accessible. That fall after their crops were harvested, William along with his wife and children left New York for their new home in Ohio. They likely traveled by land to Buffalo, where they then boarded a steamship bound for Fairport Harbor. The following year saw the arrival of married daughters, Polly and her husband Dexter Otis and Roxanna and her husband Stephen Tinkham. A third cabin was added to the family settlement. The three log homes stood for more than forty years.

The earliest settlers saw Waite Hill transformed from a densely forested plateau to a square mile of prosperous farms. Today, Waite Hill occupies a mere 4.3 miles. Incorporated by unanimous vote in June 1928, this community has retained the expansive beauty and homesteads enjoyed by the earliest landowners. Careful planning and a generous donation of land in 2000 has allowed the community to retain its charm and beauty. A former resident generously donated 75 acres on the northern tip of Waite Hill to the Chagrin River Land Conservancy for perpetual preservation. This parcel of land borders Interstate 90 and prevents any development in perpetuity.

William died on October 3, 1844 at the age of seventy-nine. He is interred at Waite Hill Cemetery in Waite Hill, Ohio. The inscription on the headstone includes William's name, and those of his wife and several other family members. In "The Story of Waite Hill" it is shared "here they lived as honored citizens on the land they had cleared and here most of them lie buried".

William's grave is marked with a Sons of the American Revolution bronze grave marker. The New Connecticut Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) have honored William with an inscribed brick located at the America 250 Patriots Marker at the Lake County Courthouse in Painesville, Ohio.



deed for this land, dated November 20, 1820, recorded the transfer to William Waite of Marcellus, New York "in consideration of the sum of \$1572.50, all that undivided one-half of six hundred and twenty-nine acres of land...lying in the State of Ohio, in the County of Cuyahoga, formerly township of Charlton, now town of Chagrin". As the owner of a thickly wooded parcel of land overlooking a lovely river-valley with fine soil, this plateau became the site of the home for his family in Ohio.

In February 1821, Erastus Waite, twenty-eight years old and his brother Alvin, ten years younger, traveled from Onondaga County, New York to the land purchased by their father. The immediate aim of the Waite brothers was twofold. First, they cleared the unspoiled land and built two log homes on the plateau near a spring. Secondly,

