

The following is a transcript of a handwritten document recently purchased by the Borough government. Today's reader will find in it much that is familiar and signers number among them many familiar names, among them Zebulon Hancox and Alexander Smith Palmer.

1862 Borough Petition to the General Assembly of Connecticut

To the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, next to be convened at New Haven, in said State, on the first Wednesday of May, A.D. 1862. The undersigned Freemen and taxpayers of the Borough of Stonington would respectfully represent, that only within a day or two we have become aware that a petition has been surreptitiously circulated to which are attached (29) Twenty-nine names (out of a list of Two hundred and Sixty-Five freemen, taxpayers and their representatives) one of which, at least is not a resident of the Borough, praying your Honorably body to revoke the charter of this Ancient Borough, among the oldest in the State, having existed over Sixty Years, claiming to be inconvenient to the citizens of said Borough, and entirely inadequate for the purposed for which they were originally enacted, that no necessity exists for further continuance of an organized Borough Government, that such a government is burthensome to the inhabitants of said Borough, and no practical benefits accrue from the exercise of the rights and privileges conferred by the charter, that the municipal government of the town affords to the citizens of the Borough ample security in their persons and property, and all requisite privileges without the pressure and burthensome additional taxation required to meet the current and extraordinary liabilities of the Borough: From all which deductions we most respectfully beg leave to dissent. To substantiate the grounds of our dissent, we triumphantly appeal to our excellent code of By Laws, whereby we are protected from nuisances from hogs and animals running at large within the limits of our Boro; from fast driving through our streets, from the sale and firing of squibs, crackers and other fireworks in our village, from having our gardens and lots trespassed upon; which protect our fruit and ornamental trees, by which we can establish a Night Watch and can do anything within the limits of our charter necessary for our protection. All which may be done by the Town, but we have yet to learn whether our Town will assume such additional responsibilities, and your Remonstrants further represent that if our charter has not accomplished all the good it might have done, it is the fault of the citizens in not availing themselves of its liberal provisions, rather than of the itself. We furthermore represent to your honorable body, that under the provisions of our charter, we have established a most efficient fire department, with two engines, hose and necessary apparatus, which has in a number of instances, saved our Village from most destructive conflagrations. We further represent that the

Borough has been donated, by the late John C. Waldron, a fund of one thousand dollars, the interest of which is to be applied annually to the relief [sic] of the poor of said Borough and through this channel the hearts of such poor have been gladdened to the extent of more than Fifteen hundred Dollars. We, in our corporate capacity, are in possession [sic] of a Borough Clock, the gift of the late Charles H. Phelps, which is an incalculable convenience to our citizens, both of which gifts would revert to their several heirs should the prayer of the petitioners be granted. We further certify your Honorable Body that there exists between this Borough and the War department of the United States Government, two certain Eighteen-Pounder Cannon, used successfully in the attack on this Borough under the combined forces of Sir Thomas Hardy, consisting of two Brigs, one Bomb Ship, one Frigate, and one seventy-four, on the 10th of August 1814, which cannon the citizens of this Borough almost worship. Your Remonstrants further represent that the taxes are not so very onerous as the petitioners would induce you to believe [sic]. That during the Sixty-One years of our corporate existence the aggregate of taxes levied and collected in this Borough would not reach the sum of Five thousand Dollars; of this amount we have near Four thousand invested in two engine houses, one of which has a Hall over it, used for Borough and other meetings. Two engines with hose and cart, also Four Reservoirs costing some Twelve hundred Dollars, and it is our firm conviction that in revoking the Charter of this Borough you will destroy the efficiency of our fire department and that the advance on Policies of fire insurance will more than counterbalance all taxes past or prospective. Therefore, believing [sic] that the interest of this Borough will be greatly injured by the revocation of its charter, we most respectfully but decidedly remonstrate against it and pray your Honorable body will allow the petitioners to withdraw their petition, or that you will take such action as will ward off from us such a calamity; and your remonstrants as in duty bound ever pray.

Dated at Stonington Boro

This 30th Day of April, A.D. 1862

[Signed by Geo. E. Palmer, Warden, and 117 others]