

# Who was Roger Sherman?

Roger Sherman wasn't born into wealth or privilege.

He didn't attend elite schools, and he wasn't known for fiery speeches or larger-than-life charisma.

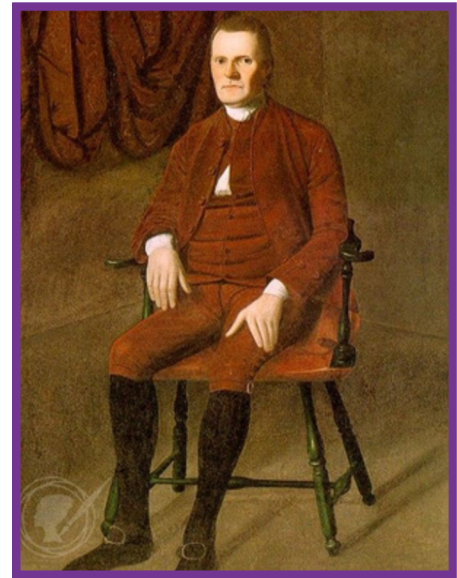
In fact, in many ways, he was just an everyday person — someone who worked hard, learned as he went, and cared deeply about his community.

And yet, his impact on American history is extraordinary.

Sherman was born in 1721 in Massachusetts and grew up in a modest family. When his father died, Sherman helped support his family by working as a shoemaker. He had little formal education, but he was determined to learn.

With the help of a local minister, who became his mentor, he began educating himself: reading everything he could get his hands on, studying law, and developing the knowledge that would shape his future.

That self-made path defined Sherman's life. He moved to New Milford, Connecticut, opened a store, became a surveyor, and eventually a lawyer, despite never attending



April 19, 1721 – July 23, 1793

## Flat Fact from Secretary Thomas

Small actions like asking a question, attending a meeting, or learning something new are how civic engagement begins.

## Choose the version of Flat Roger Sherman that appeals most to you, and then:

- Color or cut
- Do a civic action
- Post a photo of Flat Roger on social media using the hashtags **#CTFlatRoger**, **#CTSOTS**, and **#CT250**. You can also tag us using **@CTSOTS!**



## Who was Roger Sherman, continued

law school. From there, he stepped into public service, not for recognition, but because he believed in doing his part.

And he did more than his part.

Roger Sherman is the only person in American history to sign all four of the nation's founding documents:

- The Continental Association
- The Declaration of Independence
- The Articles of Confederation
- The U.S. Constitution

These weren't just signatures. They were the result of years of steady, thoughtful work behind the scenes.

While others like Hamilton, Franklin, and Jefferson often took center stage, Sherman was known as a problem-solver. In 1787, when disagreements at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia between large and small states threatened to derail the process

of creating a new framework of government for the United States, it was Sherman who helped craft what became known as the "Great Compromise." His idea created a two-part legislature — one based on population (the U.S. House of Representatives) and one with equal representation (the U.S. Senate) — balancing power in a way that still defines our government today.

Sherman wasn't flashy. He didn't seek attention. But he was respected for his integrity, his practicality, and his ability to bring people together. He believed in strong communities, thoughtful governance, and the idea that everyday citizens should have a voice in how they are governed.

That's what makes his story so powerful and so relatable.

Roger Sherman reminds us that you don't have to be famous, wealthy, or extraordinary to make a difference. With curiosity, hard work, and a commitment to others, an "everyday" person can help shape history.

That's what Roger Sherman did, and what you can do, too!



### Flat Fact from Secretary Thomas

Sometimes history can feel a little "ho, hum." But this isn't that kind of project. This is your chance to get out, look around, and see how civic life is happening all around you—no textbook required.

