

M. W. Joseph Warren

PATRIOT, PHYSICIAN, GRAND MASTER, BELOVED CITIZEN



On June 17, 1959, the U. S. Post Office will issue a stamp commemorating the Battle of Bunker Hill in which we, as Masons, have more than a passing interest. The battle actually took place on Breed's Hill, nearer Boston, but was easily flanked by the British. The defenders were unprepared for the frontal attack, but by holding fire until the "regulars" were close, the provincials cut the British forces to pieces, but being short of powder, finally quitted the defense. The British suffered 1054 casualties while the Americans lost 441, but among them were many Masons, including Brigadier General Joseph Warren, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, who had refused to take over the command from Generals Putnam and Prescott, but fought as a private and was killed by a bullet in the head.

He was buried in a shallow grave on the field, but later his Masonic brethren removed his body to the State House in Boston on the 8th of April, 1776 where an ovation was delivered by Perez Morton, Grand Marshall of the Grand Lodge. King Solomon's Lodge (then of Charlestown, now of Somerville (Mass.) in December 1794, erected and dedicated a monument to his memory, a Tuscan pillar (shown on our cover)*18 feet high, resting upon a platform 8 feet in height, and eight feet square. On the top of the pillar was a gilt urn with the initials and age of General Warren, enclosed with the



General Warren Portrait Library of Congress.

square and compasses. The dedicatory services and procession were elaborate.

The Lodge kept the monument in repair until March 8, 1825 when they voted to present the land and the monument to the Bunker Hill Association upon condition that there should be placed within the walls of the monument the Association was to erect, a suitable memorial of the ancient pillar to perpetuate that early patriotic act of the Masonic Fraternity.

In fulfillment of that condition, King Solomon's Lodge on June 24, 1845, placed within Bunker Hill Monument an exact model in marble of the original monument. The public ceremonies were conducted by the Grand Lodge. The cornerstone of the present monument was laid with Masonic ceremonies on the 50th anniversary of the battle, under the direction of Grand Master John Abbot, assisted by General Lafayette.

Joseph Warren was initiated in St. Andrew's Lodge of Boston, September 30, 1761. He passed on November 2, but there is no record of his raising.

(From the Grand Lodge Proceedings of Massachusetts June 14, 1916).

The Original Warren Monument Bunker Hill Monument

(See cover)

From the drawing by Brt. Abel Bowen

*The monument is shown on page 3.

Original Inscription

Erected A. D. MDCCXCIV., by King Solomon's Lodge of Freemasons, constituted at Charlestown, 1783, in memory of Major General Joseph Warren and his Associates, who were slain on this memorable spot, June 17, 1775.

None but they who set a just value upon the blessings of Liberty are worthy to enjoy her. In vain we toiled; in vain we fought; we bled in vain, if you, our offspring, want valor to repel the assaults of her invaders!

Charlestown settled 1628; Burnt 1775; Rebuilt 1776.

The enclosed land given by Hon-James Russell.

New Inscription

This is an exact model of the first monument erected on Bunker Hill, which, with the land on which it stood, was given, A. D. 1825, by King Solomon's Lodge, of this town, to the Bunker Hill Monument Association, that they might erect upon its site a more imposing structure. The Association, in fulfillment of a pledge at that time given, have allowed, in their imperishable obelisk, this model to be inserted, with appropriate ceremonies, by King Solomon's lodge, June 24th, A. D. 1845. c. 1795.

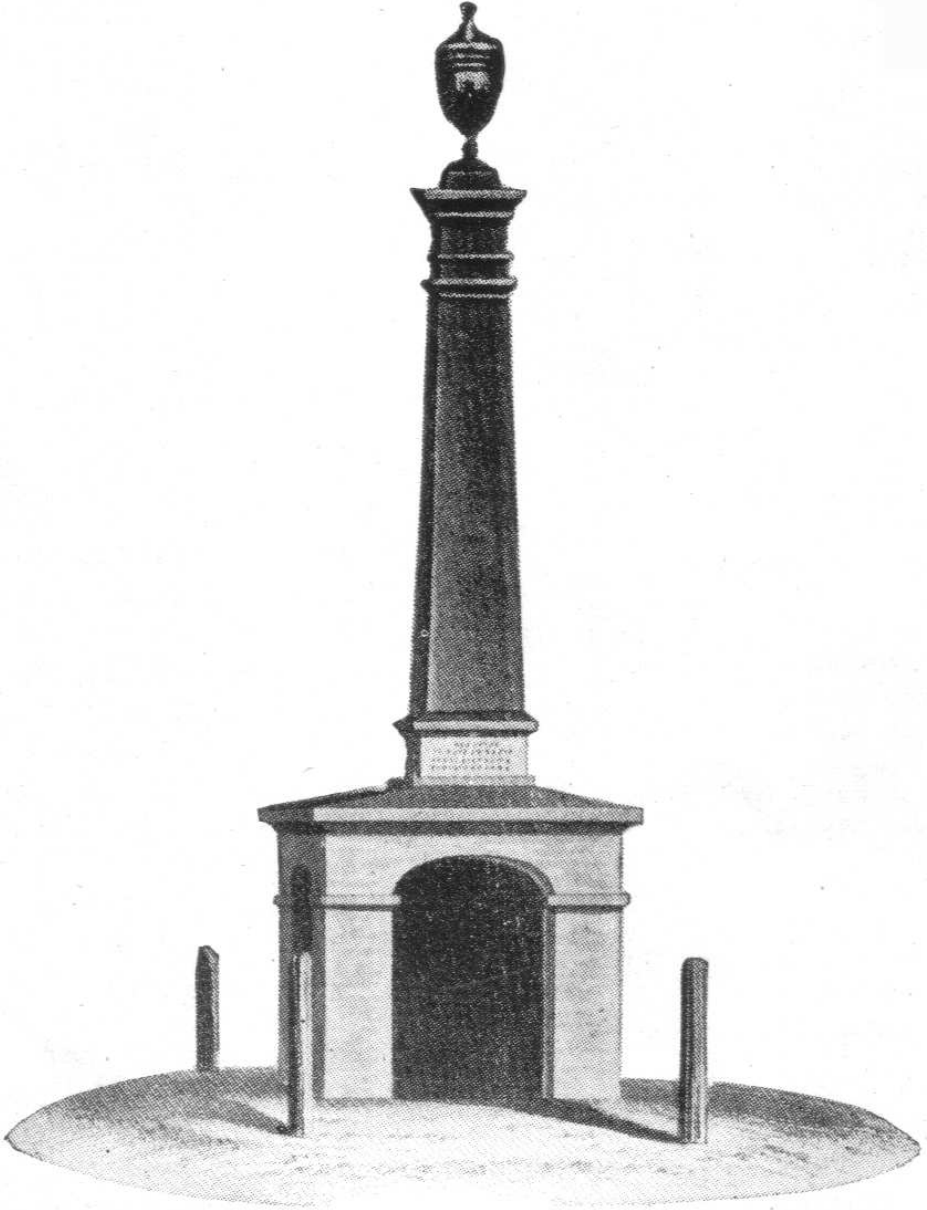
The Warrens' Birthplace

The first house was erected in 1720 by Joseph Warren, the grandfather of General Joseph Warren and his brother, Dr. John Warren. Here both Joseph and John were born, the former on June 11, 1741, the latter on July 27, 1753. The house was located on the site now identified as No. 130 **Warren Street**, Roxbury, Mass. The present stone house at that address and known as Warren Manor was erected in 1846 by Dr. John C. Warren, the son of Dr. John Warren, to mark the spot where the two famous patriots were born.

Not far distant was located the ancient school founded by John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, in 1645. This school, a private endowed preparatory school long known as The Grammar School in the Easterly Part of Roxbury still lives on as The Roxbury Latin School. Both Joseph Warren and John Warren prepared for Harvard there. The memory of both is revered. The one served his country even to the extent of laying down his life in the Battle of Bunker Hill—and the other made an immeasurable contribution to medical science by the establishment of the first medical school in New England at Cambridge in 1781.

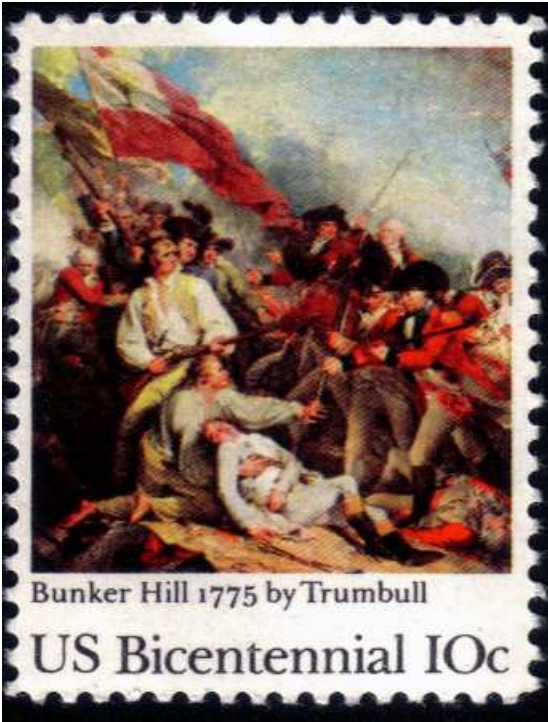


Battle of Bunker Hill by John Trumbull



First Warren Monument on Bunker Hill

ADDED PAGE



This stamp is a detail from the painting seen on the previous page. (USA #1564)



This stamp is just *based* on the painting seen on the previous page. We are told that it was “modeled by Robert J. Jones.” A group of soldiers (red coats) with rifles in the air was put in behind the subject’s right hand and they apparently “came through” the hand when the stamp was printed. The images below show the painting hand and the stamp hand.



Painting hand

Stamp hand

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The stamp itself is actually a tribute to John Trumbull. It would have been far more appropriate for the stamp designer to have used the detail as it is seen in the painting. How can one pay tribute to an artist and not show his actual work?