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csac.history.wisc.edu > Ratification at a Glance > New Hampshire > New Hampshire  
Ratification > Significant Events and Individuals in New Hampshire Politics

## New Hampshire Biographical Gazetteer

The following sketches outline the political careers of the principal New Hampshire leaders who participated in the process of ratifying the U.S. Constitution. Their political positions are indicated on the Constitution in 1787 and 1788 (Antifederalist or Federalist) and in national politics after 1789 (Democratic-Republican or Federalist). Inclusive years, especially for state offices, reflect periods of repeated, not necessarily successive office-holding. (Membership in the New Hampshire legislature only is indicated for the period 1776–93.) The exception to this practice is delegates to Congress, where inclusive years indicate only the delegates' actual attendance for any portion of the years listed.

### **ATHERTON, JOSHUA (1737–1809) Antifederalist/Federalist**

Born, Harvard, Mass. Lawyer. Graduate, Harvard College, 1762; taught school for a time; read law under James Putnam and Abel Willard; admitted to Worcester County, Mass., bar, 1765. Moved to Litchfield, N.H., in 1765; to Merrimack, 1768; and to Amherst, 1773. Justice of the peace and register of probate for Hillsborough County, 1771–76. Removed from list of justices as an opponent of the revolutionary movement against Great Britain. Jailed as a “disaffected person,” 1777; took oath of allegiance, October 1778. Readmitted to law practice by the state Supreme Court, 1779. Member, state constitutional convention, 1781–83. Member (Amherst), first and second sessions of N.H. Convention; Antifederalist leader; voted against ratification in June 1788. Delegate, state constitutional convention, 1791. Member, state Senate, 1792–93. State attorney general, 1793–1800. Became a Federalist in the 1790s and lost his popularity.

### **GILMAN, NICHOLAS (1755–1814) Federalist/Democratic-Republican**

Born, Exeter, N.H. Resident of Exeter. Studied in common schools and served as a clerk in his father's mercantile house. Officer, Continental Army, 1776–83, rose to the rank of captain; saw action at Saratoga, Monmouth, and Yorktown. Original member, New Hampshire Society of the Cincinnati. Elected to Confederation Congress, June 1786, but did not attend. Led volunteers who aided the militia in breaking up a mob threatening the state legislature in Exeter, September 1786. Delegate, Constitutional Convention, 1787; signed Constitution. Delegate, Confederation Congress, 1787–89. Member, U.S. House of Representatives, 1789–97. Accompanied President George Washington on his tour of Rhode Island in the fall of 1790. Presidential elector, 1793, 1797. By 1802 became a Democratic-Republican and was appointed a federal bankruptcy commissioner by President Thomas Jefferson. Member, U.S. Senate, 1805–14.

**LANGDON, JOHN (1741–1819) Federalist/Federalist/Democratic-Republican**

Born on a farm near Portsmouth, N.H. Merchant and politician. Attended Major Samuel Hale's Latin Grammar School. Clerk, Daniel Rindge's counting house, Portsmouth. Ship captain and later owner of vessels engaged in West Indian trade. Early opponent of British imperial policy. In December 1775 led a raid on Fort William and Mary, Portsmouth, to seize British munitions. Delegate, Second Continental Congress, 1775–76. Continental agent for New Hampshire selling spoils of privateers for a percentage of sales. Militia colonel; saw action at Saratoga and in Rhode Island, 1777–78. Judge, Court of Common Pleas, Rockingham County, 1776–77. Member and speaker, state House of Representatives, 1776–82, 1786–87. Member, state Senate, 1784–85. Delegate, Confederation Congress, 1787. State president, 1785–86, 1788–89. Delegate, Constitutional Convention, 1787; signed Constitution; paid for N.H. delegates to attend Convention. Delegate (Portsmouth), first and second sessions of N.H. Convention; Federalist leader; voted to ratify Constitution, June 1788. Member, U.S. Senate, 1789–1801. Became a Democratic-Republican in the mid-1790s. Member, state House of Representatives, 1801–4 (speaker, 1803); state governor, 1805–11 (except for 1809).

**LIVERMORE, SAMUEL (1732–1803) Federalist/Federalist**

Born, Waltham, Mass. Lawyer and land and mill owner (owned over half of town of Holderness). Taught school in Chelsea, Mass. Graduate, College of New Jersey (Princeton University), 1752. Read law under Edmund Trowbridge of Middlesex County, Mass.; admitted to Massachusetts bar, 1756, and practiced in Waltham. Representative (Londonderry), General Assembly, 1768–69. Judge advocate general of admiralty and king's attorney general, 1769–74. State attorney general, 1778–80. Member, state House of Representatives, 1779–80. Appointed New Hampshire representative to the Continental Congress in the dispute with Vermont over towns on east bank of the Connecticut River, 1779. Delegate, Confederation Congress, 1782, 1785–86. Chief justice, state Supreme Court, 1782–90. Delegate (Campton, Holderness and Thornton), first and second sessions of N.H. Convention; active in debates; voted to ratify Constitution, June 1788. Member, U.S. House of Representatives, 1789–93. Member and president, state constitutional convention, 1791. Honorary Doctor of Laws, Dartmouth College, 1792. Member, U.S. Senate, 1793–1801 (president pro tempore, 4th and 8th sessions).

**SULLIVAN, JOHN (1741–1795) Federalist/Federalist**

Born, Somersworth Parish, Maine. Read law under Samuel Livermore, Portsmouth, N.H.; set up practice in Durham, N.H., 1763. Accepted military appointment from royal governor of New Hampshire, but broke with government and supported revolutionary movement against Great Britain. In December 1775 led a raid on Fort William and Mary, Portsmouth, to seize British munitions. Delegate, First Continental Congress, 1774, and Second Continental Congress, 1775, 1780–81. Appointed brigadier general, Continental Army, June 1775; major general, August 1776. Saw service at Siege of Boston (1775), invasion of Canada (1776), and Battle of Long Island (1776). Captured by British at Long Island, but exchanged soon after; his command was restored. Served at Trenton (1776), Princeton, Brandywine Creek, Germantown, and Staten Island (all four, 1777). Spent winter of 1777–78 with General George Washington at Valley Forge. Commanded at Battle of Rhode Island, 1778. Failure dogged him during his command.

He had confrontations with Congress, the French (in Rhode Island), and other American generals. His greatest success occurred in 1779 against the Iroquois in western Pennsylvania and New York. Resigned commission, November 1779. Honorary M.A., Harvard College, 1780. Member, state constitutional convention, 1781–83. State attorney general, 1781–86; member, state House of Representatives, 1785–86, 1788–89 (speaker, 1785–86); state president, 1786–88, 1789–90. Delegate and president, first and second sessions of N.H. Convention; voted to ratify Constitution, June 1788. Honorary Doctor of Laws, Dartmouth College, 1789. Federal judge for District of New Hampshire, 1789–95 (in last four years illness prevented him from acting as a judge, but he did not resign).

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