



# CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION

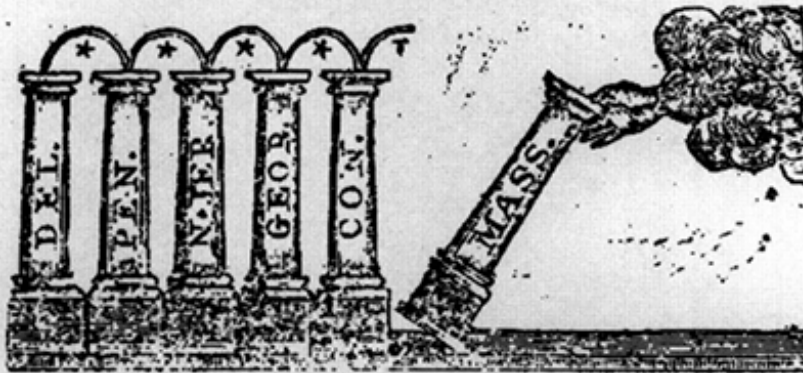
[csac.history.wisc.edu](http://csac.history.wisc.edu) > Ratification at a Glance > Massachusetts > Significant Events and Outcomes Associated with Massachusetts > Massachusetts: The Sixth Pillar of the Great Federal Superstructure

## Massachusetts: The Sixth Pillar of the Great Federal Superstructure

On 26 December 1787 Benjamin Russell of the Massachusetts Centinel used the metaphor of raised pillars in “a great FEDERAL SUPERSTRUCTURE” to describe the ratification of the Constitution by three states. On 16 January 1788—a week after the Massachusetts Convention assembled—Russell revived and extended this metaphor by printing an illustration in his Centinel. Headed “THE FEDERAL PILLARS” and preceded by two lines of verse, this illustration had five erect pillars, depicting the five ratifying states, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, and Connecticut, respectively. The illustration also included a sixth pillar labeled “MASS.,” which was in the process of being raised.

The Massachusetts Convention ratified the Constitution at 5:00 P.M., on 6 February, by which time the semiweekly Massachusetts Centinels issue of 6 February had been printed and distributed. Therefore, on 7 February the Independent Chronicle became the first newspaper to print an illustration showing the sixth pillar raised.

States—like the gen'rous vine supported livē,  
The strength they gain is from th' embrace they give  
**THE FEDERAL PILLARS.**



**UNITED THEY STAND—DIVIDED FALL.**

A vessel arriv'd at Cape-Ann, after a short passage from Georgia, confirms the pleasing intelligence announced in our last, that that State has unanimously ratified the Federal Constitution. Thus is a **FIFTH PILLAR** added to the glorious fabrick. May Massachusetts rear the **SIXTH**.

As we predicted in our last, so it happened—Monday morning, was ushered in with the ringing of bells in this metropolis, on account of the pleasing intelligence received by Saturday night's mail, that the State of Connecticut had added a **FOURTH PILLAR** to that **GRAND REPUBLICAN SUPERSTRUCTURE**, the **FEDERAL CONSTITUTION**.

*The Sixth Pillar Raised, Independent Chronicle, 7 February 1788*



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