The first minister of the Episcopal church in the city of Cincinnati, was born at Middletown, Conn., on the 16th of August 1789. His father was Captain Samuel Johnston, who was married August 6th, 1780, to Sarah Gage, born Jan. 14th, 1756. She was the daughter of Comfort Gage, who married Sarah, the eldest daughter of Colonel Jabez Hamlin and Mary Christopher, the former of whom was born at Middletown, on the 25th of July, 1709. Captain Johnston, the father of the subject of this sketch, was drowned at sea on his passage from St. Domingo to Greenwich, on the 7th of January, 1794. (Mary Christopher was born at New London, Conn., on the 25th of August, 1714.)

In his boyhood the subject of this sketch lived with Mr. Edward Hallam at New London, who had married his aunt, Miss Sarah Johnston. On leaving New London, he was placed in a counting house in the city of New York, but having predilections for the Christian ministry, he retired from mercantile pursuits, and entered Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., where he subsequently graduated. Desirous of being a thorough student of theology, he joined the General Theological Seminary in New York City, having as his co-students, the late Bishop Doane of New Jersey and the late Bishop Henshaw of Maryland. After his ordination, he labored arduously and successfully in Western New York as a missionary of the Episcopal church and officiated at Batavia, Canandaigua and Buffalo. In 1817, he organized the parish of St. Paul's in Buffalo, but not long afterward removed to Cincinnati, where he almost immediately became the pastor of Christ church, and, on its organization in 1822, became the rector of St. Paul's. He married Margaretta Elizabeth Wilson, who was born in Charleston, S. C., in 1790. Her father was the Rev. James Wilson, a clergyman of the Presbyterian church, who died at Norfolk, Va., and was buried in St. Paul's churchyard of that place. Mrs. Mary Wilson, his widow, sometime after married William Hartshorne, a merchant of Baltimore, and a native of Virginia, born at Hartshorne's Mills, near Alexandria. James and William Wilson, brothers of Margaretta E. Wilson, participated in the defense of Baltimore, one at North Point, the other at Fort McHenry, during the War of 1812. Not long after the peace of 1814, the family moved West and South, some to Cincinnati and others to New Orleans. Mrs. Johnston, the wife of Rev. Samuel Johnston, died in Cincinnati in October, 1873, in her 84th year. Their children were an infant, that died soon after its birth; Sarah Hallam Johnston, who married Henry D. Huntington, of Cincinnati and died January, 1857; William H. Johnston, of Cincinnati, paymaster in the United States Army. After laboring earnestly, faithfully, and consistently as minister of the church in Cincinnati for fifteen years. The Rev. Samuel Johnston died May 22d, 1833. A tablet is erected to his memory in the chancel of the church.

Biographical Cyclopaedia & Portrait Gallery—Ohio Vol. 2 p. 443
Western Biographical Publishing Co.,
Cincinnati, Ohio
1884.
"It was hoped that the Rev. Samuel Johnston, who had been made deacon in 1816, and had spent more than a year as missionary in Genesee and Niagara counties, would accept the invitation of the vestry made through the wardens and Mr. Trowbridge, to perform the ministerial functions in St. Peter's until the close of the next session of the Legislature. (This was on the resignation of Timothy Clowes) A condition of the invitation which reads strangely now, was that the vestry reserved the right to receive and hear candidates for the ministry in the said church, but without any prejudice to the engagement that may be made with the Rev. Mr. Johnston."

Like others who had been engaged in mission work in a newly settled country, Mr. Johnston was ready to go farther west, and he followed some of his flock to the new city of Cincinnati, Ohio, where a small congregation had already been gathered by the efforts of the Rev. Philander Chase on his first missionary tour, in May, 1817. In his letter declining the invitation Mr. Johnston says: "You have, gentlemen, conferred a great honor on me and I could wish it were in my power to accept it, but this cannot be done consistently with my engagements in a more distant part of our Zion."

St. Peter's Church of Albany  p. 219
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Rev. Samuel Johnston, A.M., 1815, a resident of New London, Conn., was a member of the Philomathean Society.

(Died: 1833)

Philomathean Catalogue 1830.