

Entrepreneurs

BENJAMIN CHAPLIN (n.d.-1795)

CHAPLIN, CT ♦ SITE 33

Center Cemetery, Chaplin St. off Rte. 198, Chaplin, CT.



The Town of Chaplin owes its name and beginning to Benjamin Chaplin. As a young man he settled near the Natchaug River, earning a living making baskets and wooden trenchers; he was also a trained surveyor. Evidently his enterprises prospered, for upon his marriage to Mary Ross in 1747 he built a significant dwelling. It seemed both he and his wife had an entrepreneurial spirit that allowed them to expand their holdings, accumulating large tracts of land due to his surveying business. Benjamin and his family built a large enclave in the Natchaug neighborhood.

Benjamin was noted for his strength of character, vision and moral leadership. He died a very wealthy man and his generosity toward others was reflected in his gift of £300 to establish a church in his settlement. The parish was founded in 1809, but it was not until 1822, 27 years after his death, that the Town of Chaplin was incorporated.

Benjamin and Mary are buried in Center Cemetery where their final resting places are marked by table stone monuments believed to be among the first in Northeastern Connecticut.

Bayles, Richard M. History of Windham County. New York: W. W. Preston & Co., 1889. Connecticut Genealogy. "Chaplin, Windham County, Connecticut History." <http://www.connecticutgenealogy.com/windham/chaplin.htm> (accessed January 31, 2008).
Slater, James. The Colonial Graveyards of Eastern Connecticut. Hamden, Connecticut: Academy of Arts & Sciences, 1987.

AMASA NICHOLS (1773-1849)

DUDLEY, MA ♦ SITE 34

Nichols College, 127 Center Rd. off Rte. 197, Dudley, MA.

Amasa Nichols, the founder of Nichols Academy in Dudley, MA, was born in Thompson, CT, in 1773. He followed his father to Dudley, became a merchant, and was



Dudley's postmaster. In 1812, he took advantage of the water power potential of the French River that ran through Dudley by starting a cotton manufactory. With the assistance of the New England Universalists, he constructed an academy on Dudley Hill in the center of Dudley in 1815 and 1816. This structure burned to the ground just as it was being completed so he built another at a combined cost of about \$15,000. This academy, which was immediately named for him, offered a secondary school education, served as a Universalist Meeting House, and was intended to become a Universalist college. When his institution did not get necessary financial support and he began to fail financially, he resigned from the Nichols Academy Board of Trustees in 1822. Despite this beginning, Nichols Academy served young men and women from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island until 1909. Three of its later buildings are still in use. Academy trustees reorganized the school as Nichols Junior College of Business Administration (now Nichols College) in 1931. But its location on Dudley Hill and its steadfast commitment to education originally had been put in place by Amasa Nichols.

Text by Jim Conrad.

HEZEKIAH CONANT (1827-1902)

DUDLEY, MA ♦ SITE 35

Dudley Hill, Center Rd., Rte. 197, Dudley, MA.

Born in Dudley, MA, and a student at Nichols Academy on Dudley Hill, Hezekiah Conant pursued a most successful career as an inventor and industrialist. He eventually established the Conant Thread Company in Rhode Island. In 1874 he returned to Nichols Academy as a member of its Board of Trustees. Over the next



20 years he literally rebuilt the village on Dudley Hill and its academy. First, he constructed a plateau on which he placed three buildings: the Academy building, Conant Library and Observatory, and a boarding house which he named Roger Conant Hall. The architect for these small to medium sized buildings was Elbridge Boyden and Son of Worcester, MA. Next, when the First Congregational Church at the top of Dudley Hill burned in 1890, he replaced it with a majestic structure designed by Charles F. Wilcox, a Rhode Island architect. Wilcox then helped the

Town of Dudley to construct yet another building, a grammar school, between the Conant Memorial Church and the Academy buildings. These five buildings now crown the top of Dudley Hill. While he was helping to rejuvenate the Academy and the village, Conant constructed a summer estate for himself to the south of the Academy overlooking the valley created by the French and Quinebaug Rivers, all of which set the stage for Nichols College. His efforts saved the Academy, rebuilt the Dudley Hill area, and established an aesthetically pleasing landscape with buildings of architectural importance. This setting has changed little.

Text by Jim Conrad.

HENRY HALE STEVENS (1818-1901)

DUDLEY, MA ♦ SITE 36

Stevens Linen, Rte. 197 near the bridge over the French River, Dudley, MA.

Henry Hale Stevens was from North Andover, MA, and grew up in a textile manufacturing family. He came to Dudley about 1846 and proceeded to construct the largest industrial facility in the community by the 1860s. Easily still visible with its two matching towers of heavy stone construction, the Stevens Linen Works was built on the site of the Merino Woolen Mill originally constructed in 1812. Unlike his predecessors in the area, Stevens focused on linen rather than cottons or woollens. Stevens' primary structure, built in the 1860s, deserves special recognition for its design, workmanship, and structural integrity. It is a singularly impressive building that reminds us of the commitment of 19th-century America to progress through manufacturing. In many respects, Stevens represented a group of American entrepreneurs who invested in the potential of mill towns. Arguably, he can be seen as the leading American pioneer in 19th-century linen manufacturing. Unfortunately, Stevens was not as good a manager as he was a designer. He lost financial control of the mill by 1870 and left the community within seven years. While the textile industry has moved on, Stevens' mill reflects the grandeur of this period and is a monument to the strivings of hard-working people who passed through its portals.

Text by Jim Conrad.



THE TIFFANY FAMILY (18th-19th centuries)

KILLINGLY, CT ♦ SITES 37, 38 & 72

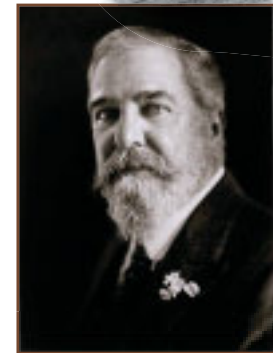
Site 37: Trinity Church at the junction of Rtes. 6 and 169 in Brooklyn, CT,

Site 38: Christ Church on Rte. 169 in Pomfret, CT, as well as

Site 72: First Congregational Church of Dudley, Center Rd. off Rte. 197 in Dudley, MA, all have Tiffany windows.



Charles Lewis Tiffany, the jeweler and son of Comfort, was born in Killingly in 1812. Comfort had moved to the area several years prior as one of the investors in the Danielson Manufacturing Company (c. 1810), and he operated the mill's store, located somewhere near the mill at the corner of Maple Street in Danielson (Killingly). It is thought that Charles was probably born somewhere in that neighborhood and the premise is supported by census records that put the Tiffany family in the locale. Comfort Tiffany later built a cotton factory on the Brooklyn banks of the Quinebaug in 1827 and moved his family there. Charles attended Plainfield Academy and, while still in his teens, ran the company store for his father's mill.



Charles left home, no doubt to seek his fortune. In the fall of 1837 with a \$1,000 loan from his father, he and John P. Young opened Tiffany and Young on Broadway, in New York City, later to become Tiffany & Co, where fine jewelry and gifts were sold. Always the entrepreneur, Charles acquired an unused portion of the Atlantic cable that the Atlantic Telegraph Company had installed from Ireland to New Foundland. He cut the length into segments and sold them as mementos of the historic telegraph connection between the continents. Charles married John's sister Harriet, and their child Louis Comfort Tiffany was born in 1848 in New York.

In his adulthood, Louis Comfort Tiffany incorporated the Tiffany Glass Company in 1886. His impact on interior design and glass making is notable, particularly in the Nouveau and Aesthetic Art movements. Many of his products like pottery, art glass, lamps and paintings were sold in his father's Tiffany Company retail stores.

Britannica Online Encyclopedia. "Charles Lewis Tiffany." <http://www.britannica.com/bps/topic/595434/Charles-Lewis-Tiffany> (accessed October 14, 2007).

Connecticut's Heritage Gateway. "Charles Lewis Tiffany." http://www.ctheritage.org/encyclopedia/ct1865_1929/tiffany.htm (accessed October 14, 2007).

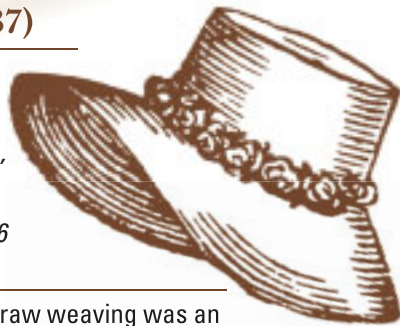
Margaret Weaver

MARY DIXON KIES (1752-1837)

KILLINGLY, CT ♦ SITES 39 & 40

Site 39: Killingly Historical Center, Main St., Danielson, CT, in the old Bugbee Memorial Library building, where samples of Mrs. Kies' work may be seen.

Site 40: Old South Killingly Cemetery off Rte. 6 eastbound is the location of her memorial.



During the early part of the 19th century, straw weaving was an important economic activity for women. Straw hats were used in the fields in the rural Last Green Valley. The Patent Act of 1790 allowed anyone, regardless of gender, to protect their invention with a patent. Mary Dixon Kies, born in Killingly in 1752 to Irish immigrant parents, was the first woman in the country to receive a patent from the U.S. Patent Office. It was particularly timely, as the U.S. Government had stopped the importation of European goods because of the Napoleonic Wars. The patent was granted on May 5, 1809, for a technique of weaving straw with silk and thread, and the document was signed by President James A. Madison. Dolly Madison was so pleased to see a woman receive a patent that she wrote a congratulatory letter to Mrs. Kies. Mary's invention became essential to making affordable work bonnets and increasing the viability of U.S. products.

Sadly, Mary did not profit from her invention and died a pauper in 1837 in New York. She was placed in a grave marked only by a common field stone. In 1965, the Killingly Grange erected a more respectful marker to the memory of this entrepreneurial woman.

Killingly Historical Society

CHARLES AND AUGUSTUS STORRS

MANSFIELD (STORRS), CT ♦ SITE 41

University of Connecticut, Rte. 195, Storrs, CT.

Charles and Augustus Storrs created the University of Connecticut in 1880 when they donated a former orphanage, barns and 170 acres of land to the State of Connecticut for an agricultural school for boys. In addition to the property, funds provided equipment and supplies.

The Storrs Agricultural School was opened September 28, 1881, with just twelve students taught by three teachers. The first class matriculated in 1883 with two-year degrees. In 1916, the school became known as the Connecticut Agricultural College and offered four-year degrees.

The Connecticut General Assembly appropriated \$50,000 in 1890 for a men's dormitory and the Main Building. It was not until 1900 that the first brick structure



appeared on the Mansfield hills, aptly named Agricultural Hall. The institution became Connecticut State College in 1933 and the University of Connecticut in 1939.

The Storrs Brothers could never have imagined how their generous gift would evolve. Today the main campus has reached 4,104 acres with five other regional campuses. The University of Connecticut is a Land Grant College, a Sea Grant College and part of the Space Grant Consortium. The enrollment for 2008 is nearly 21,000 undergrads and 8,000 graduate students. It is the top-ranked public university in New England.

University of Connecticut. "History." <http://www.uconn.edu/about/history.php>. (accessed May 14, 2007).

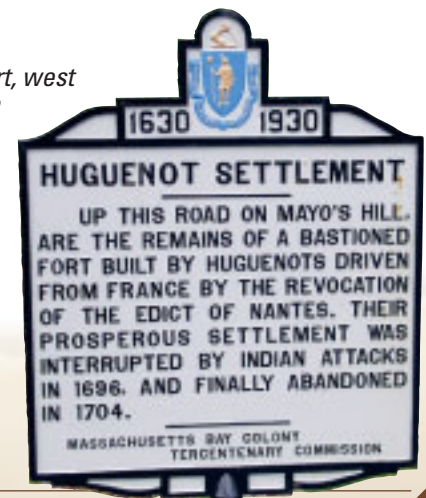
GABRIEL BERNON (1644-1736)

OXFORD, MA ♦ SITES 42 & 43

Site 42: Plaque on Rte. 12 and Huguenot Rd., Oxford, MA.

Site 43: Huguenot Monument and French Fort, west on Fort Hill Rd. from Huguenot Rd. off Rte. 12 east, Oxford, MA.

The Edict of Nantes was issued by Henry IV of France in 1598, granting French Protestants, known as Huguenots, legal rights in the mostly Catholic country. However, when his grandson Louis XIV revoked the Edict, the Huguenots left France for other countries, including North America. Gabriel Bernon was one such Protestant who had become a



successful merchant and banker in Quebec. When the revocation occurred, he was returned to France where he was imprisoned. With the help of family members, he was released and fled to Amsterdam.

In 1688, Bernon immigrated to Massachusetts Bay Colony with his family and 40 other Huguenots whose passage he had underwritten. The party traveled to North Oxford on foot over the Bay Path. The land was divided among families, with expectations that Bernon would build a grist mill and a saw mill.

Another group of Huguenots joined Bernon's colonists and they carved out the beginnings of a settlement. The artisans were skilled in leather preparation and one of their mills was a chamoisiere or leather washing mill.

Marauding Indians from Canada made safety an issue. The Huguenot fort was built on Mayo's Hill (now called Fort Hill, Oxford, MA) but the settlement was abandoned for fear of massacre.

Gabriel Bernon died in 1736 in Providence, RI, where he was part of a group who built St. John's Cathedral. He is interred in the basement.

Moore, Janice R. *Oxford's Two hundred and Seventy-Fifth History Memory Book 1713-1988*. Oxford, MA: Oxford Historical Commission, 1988.

JAMES S. ATWOOD (1832-1885)

PLAINFIELD, CT ♦ SITE 44
Wauregan Mills and Village,
Rte. 205, Plainfield, CT.

The history of Wauregan Mills in the town of Plainfield, CT, is very much tied to the history of the Atwood family. For more than a century, in each generation son followed father in the management of the mills.

James S. Atwood was the son of John Atwood, a partner in the Williamsville Mill (now Rogers) in Killingly. Working under his father, James was said to have "mastered every detail of cotton manufacturing, serving in the various positions from bobbin boy to general manager."

In 1853, Amos D. Lockwood founded Wauregan Mills on the Quinebaug River in Plainfield and hired James S. Atwood as superintendent to manufacture "plain and



fancy cotton cloth." Water from the river and steam were used to run the factory.

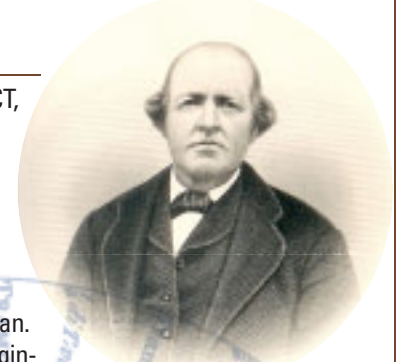
When Lockwood sold his stock and left the mill, Atwood also became agent; through the years bought stock until he had acquired the controlling interest. Wauregan Mills and the company-owned village complete with worker housing, company store, churches and the Atwood home, became one of the model textile mill hamlets in northeastern Connecticut. The village with its H-shaped fieldstone mills is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

After the death of James S. Atwood in 1885, his twin sons James Arthur and John Walter Atwood ran the business. After the disastrous 1955 flood, James A. Atwood, III, became president of the corporation and the decision was made to cease mill operations.

Bickford, Christopher. *Plainfield Transformed: Three Centuries of Life in a Connecticut Town 1699-1999*. Plainfield, CT: Plainfield Historical Society, 1999.

CAPTAIN GEORGE G. BENJAMIN (1814-n.d.)

PRESTON, CT ♦ SITE 45
Poquetanuck Cemetery, Rte. 2A, Preston, CT.



Captain George Benjamin was born in Preston, CT, in 1814. His old homestead still stands near the intersection of Route 2A and School House Rd. in the village of Poquetanuck. At age seventeen, possessing a strong desire for adventure and love of the sea, George presented himself at the well-known New London whaling firm of Williams and Barns where he was immediately hired as a seaman. He left port on the ship *Connecticut* which was beginning her ten-month journey to the whaling grounds of the South Pacific. In time, George made six voyages to the South Seas and elsewhere before being promoted to ship's captain of the vessel *Clematis*.

On July 4, 1841, Captain Benjamin began a voyage which would take him around the world. He successfully returned ten months and 29 days later carrying 2,548 barrels of whale oil, an extraordinary achievement considering the distance, time and quantity of oil delivered. Captain Benjamin made later voyages on the ships *Lowell* and *Montezuma*. His career at sea spanned 23 years and included sixteen years as ship's captain. During this time, Capt Benjamin circumnavigated the globe seven times.

In 1854, he retired from the sea and returned to his native town, purchasing a farm in Poquetanuck where he attended to family life. Town records state, he "kept the property up very well." The family had many pets, which they apparently loved dearly, for in the Benjamin family burial plot located in nearby Poquetanuck Cemetery, there is a section for the family pets complete with headstones.

Text by David Oats.

GEORGE WASHINGTON WELLS (1846-1912)

SOUTHBRIDGE, MA ♦ SITE 46

American Optical Company buildings and campus, Rtes. 131 and 169, Southbridge, MA.

Born in South Woodstock, CT, George W. Wells was a natural mechanical engineer. He began his career at age eighteen partnering with Robert H. Cole to purchase part ownership of an optical firm. By age 23, he was one of the incorporators of the American Optical Company whose goal was to “manufacture and sell spectacles and eyeglasses of gold, silver, steel and plated metals, also rings and thimbles, and such other articles as said company may from time to time desire to make.”

George was responsible for the innovations that moved the company forward. In 40 years, he had 26 patents including a method of edging bifocal lenses and the invention of a lens cutting machine. Wells devised rimless lenses in 1874 and ophthalmic lenses in 1883. After his death, the company grew to cover seventeen and a half acres on the banks of the Quinebaug River. It became the largest optical manufacturer in the world, making industrial history repeatedly for developing new safety lens, goggles and fiber optics.

George is remembered for his inventive intelligence, great work ethic and ability to solve any problem.



American Optical Manufacturing Company of Southbridge, Massachusetts. <http://www.antiquespectacles.com/american-optical/american-optical.htm> (accessed December 14, 2007).

AMASA (n.d.) AND WILLIAM SPRAGUE (1830-1915)

SPRAGUE, CT ♦ SITE 47

The former Baltic Mills site, on the Shetucket River, Rtes. 97 and 138, in the village of Baltic (Sprague), CT.

Near Elderkins Bridge over the Shetucket River, a large cotton mill was built by Amasa and William Sprague in 1857. The brothers had experience in large scale development. They were from a well-known Rhode Island manufacturing family that owned the largest calico printing mill in the world. Both sons had been educated at the Irving Institute in Tarrytown, NY, until their father was murdered New Year's Eve in 1843. They came home to Rhode Island to run the family business with their Uncle William, their cousin Colonel Byron Sprague, their widowed mother and an aunt. Amasa studied chemicals and dyes while William developed expertise with machinery and products.

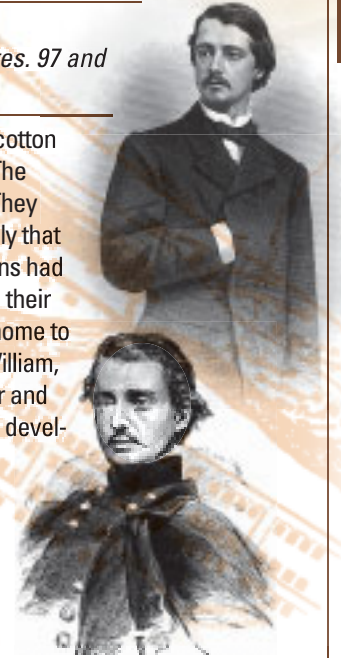
The main Sprague mill building was engineered from locally-quarried gray granite gneiss for \$1.2 million – a huge sum in the mid-nineteenth century. It was 954 feet long with six 30-foot-diameter water wheels. No mill was complete without a support village and so the Spragues also constructed a store, grist mill, boardinghouse, and more than 100 worker's houses. By 1864, there were 1,400 employees at the mill. As its official recognition of the new village, the Connecticut General Assembly incorporated the town in 1861 and Sprague, CT, was born. The town of Sprague prospered. The Sprague family suffered some grave losses during the Depression of 1873. Over-extension related to their four banks, nine mills and other interests resulted in their property being temporarily given to a trustee to manage until their debts were paid. Three years later, an early spring flood washed out the dam removing nearly 100 feet of the west end of the mill and rendering the headrace and tailrace unusable from silt deposits.

The mill was restored to operation and the Sprague family finances improved. New construction added dams and canals. While the workers now numbered around 1,100, they were still processing 142 bales of cotton each week.

But a third disaster fell in the autumn of 1887. Fueled by cotton lint and grease, a fire erupted in the spinning areas and, according to the Willimantic Chronicle (October 19, 1889), “In less than an hour the fire had run the whole length of the mill, and in three hours nothing but the bare wall stood.” This was cataclysmic for the mill town and workers had to move on to other communities. Sprague lost its largest tax payer and two-thirds of its revenue. The Sprague Brothers sold the property in 1892 to Ponemah Mills.

*Clouette, Bruce. *Baltic Mill, Sprague Ct.* Hartford, CT: Connecticut Historical Commission, 1998.*

Congressional Biographic Directory. “William Sprague.” <http://www.bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000747> (accessed May 15, 2007).



CHARLES J. DOW (1851-1902)

STERLING, CT ♦ SITE 48

Historic marker on Rte. 49, Sterling, CT.

Charles J. Dow, Jr.'s, birthplace is marked by a plaque on beautiful Ekonk Hill (Sterling) with its incredible view. Charles started his career as an apprentice to become a reporter and printer. He worked for the *Windham Transcript*, later for the *Springfield Republican* in Massachusetts where he was eventually promoted to the assistant editor, and then for the *Providence Journal*. Mr. Dow had a remarkable ability to grasp the importance of economic news and translate it into meaningful articles for the readers. His career really took off after the publication of a series of articles he wrote on the silver mining boom.



By 1879, Charles had moved to New York City where he was employed as a financial reporter, and very soon thereafter, as an editor for the Kiernan News Agency on Wall Street. While working at Kiernan, he was reacquainted with a former colleague from Providence, Edward Jones. In 1882, the two men began their own financial reporting services, Dow Jones & Co., in the basement of a candy store on Wall St. Dow Jones began publishing a daily financial report that realized near instant success. In 1889, their newsletter became the *Wall Street Journal*.

In 1884, Charles Dow came up with the idea for the Dow Jones Average. He selected eleven representative stocks traded on the market, averaged their closing prices and reported the average as an indicator of market activities. Initially, these were transportation firms. Jones realized the importance of other major industries and spent the better part of the next decade developing a list of companies on which to base the average. The Dow Jones Average was first published in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1896.

It is still there today, as well as on all news broadcasts on radio, television, and the Internet. The Dow Jones Average is no longer a true average, rather a more sophisticated weighted formula using a larger group of stocks.

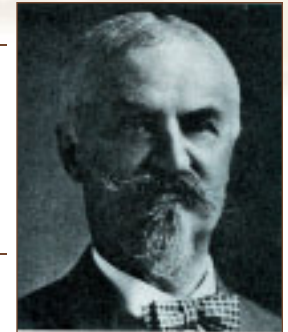
Dow Jones. "Dow Jones & Company." <http://www.dj.com/TheCompany/AboutDowJones.htm>. (accessed January 8, 2008)
The Oxford Club Investment. "Charles Dow." <http://www.investments.com/IOEL/2002/20020211.html>. (accessed January 8, 2008).

WILLIAM BARROWS (1841-1901)

WINDHAM, CT ♦ SITES 49 & 50

Site 49: Windham History and Textile Museum, Union and Main Sts., Willimantic (Windham), CT.

Site 50: The Oaks can still be seen off Rte. 32, Windham Ave., and Fairview and Quercus Aves., Willimantic (Windham), CT.



The Willimantic Linen Company was once the wealthiest manufacturing company in the world. Mr. Barrows was its general manager during the 1880s, a man ahead of his time. Working conditions were very poor in those days, with long hours of back-breaking work, child labor, no benefits, and company-owned stores that controlled how meager wages were spent. William Barrows helped to change those standards for the better. For more than a decade, his innovations revolutionized the way workers were treated in the textile mills.

As an experiment, Barrows instituted a break for the children working in the mill, providing them with juice and a muffin. Their renewed energy more than paid for the cost of the snack and the time lost. The advantage was soon offered to the adults, and the coffee break was born.

During Barrow's tenure, a library was built for the workers. Since many workers came from European countries, classes were offered in reading, writing and speaking English. Laborers were also encouraged to finish their education. They could learn drawing and music. The workers formed a chorus with management support.

William Barrows was also known for two exceptional building projects: the No. 4 Mill Building and the Oaks neighborhood. No. 4 was the first mill in the world to be lit with electricity. That innovation meant the mill could be built wider than previous mills, since it did not need the sunlight to reach the center of the floor. When completed in 1879, No. 4 was the biggest factory building in the world. It also was designed to be the most beautiful. The windows were glazed with colored glass, making the overall appearance more like that of a house of worship than a factory.



It was Barrow's philosophy that workers and managers should live side-by-side. So he built a new neighborhood called the Oaks. Instead of row houses, the workers were housed in single family homes of three alternating designs that occurred throughout the complex. Barrows built his own house in the same locale. He frugally used the leftover materials from building No. 4 to construct his "summer cottage," still a mansion by most standards. Unfortunately, it no longer stands.

Beardsley, Thomas. Willimantic Industry and Community. Willimantic, CT: Windham Textile and History Museum, 1993.



HENRY CHANDLER BOWEN (1813-1896)

WOODSTOCK, CT ♦ SITES 51 & 52

Site 51: Roseland Cottage, the Woodstock Hill Common, and the Woodstock Hill Cemetery, Rte. 169, Woodstock, CT.

Site 52: Roseland Park, Roseland Park Rd. off Rte. 169, South Woodstock, CT.

Descended from one of the first thirteen "goers" who came to settle Woodstock in 1686, Henry Chandler Bowen grew up near the Woodstock Hill Common. His father ran a store that housed the post office and Bowen learned the merchant trade first hand. He later moved to New York where he became a successful, rich and extremely influential man, whose outspoken nature made his views on temperance, Congregationalism, abolition and civic pride well known.

Henry used his wealth to enhance his home town, which was always close to his heart. He supported Woodstock Academy, the First Congregational Church, landscaped and fenced the Hill Common, and created Roseland Park. In 1846, Henry built an exuberant pink Gothic Revival summer cottage across the common from his boyhood home. It was much more than a vacation home. The

Fourth of July had fallen by the wayside of public celebration and Memorial Day had begun to have greater importance after the Civil War, a practice that Bowen lamented. As publisher of the popular Christian newspaper, *The Independent*, he used his weekly forum to urge Americans to reclaim their truly American holiday and hold it dear. Roseland Cottage became the focal point of his own revival of the Fourth of July.

Beginning in 1870 and continuing until his death in 1896, Henry presented festive observances that drew enormous audiences and made Woodstock the focus of power, position and press. Presidents Grant, Hayes, Harrison and McKinley joined cabinet members, congressmen, senators, businessmen, orators, literary figures, and even the Queen of Romania as Bowen's special guests in Woodstock. The official ceremonies were held on the town common, preceded by an evening garden party on the grounds of Roseland Cottage. Newspaper accounts describe the beauty of the evening scene with flowers in full bloom, paper lanterns adorning the landscape and fireflies – a fairy-like quality. Inside, the cottage was filled with flowers and flags adorning every corner.

As the crowds outgrew the common, Henry Bowen built Roseland Park on the shores of Roseland Lake to accommodate the huge gatherings. He was already planning his next Independence Day fete when he passed away in February, 1896, and was buried in the Woodstock Hill Cemetery. However, he will always be remembered as "Mr. Fourth of July."

Charlene Perkins Cutler

ISAAC GLASKO (n.d.)

GRISWOLD, CT ♦ SITE 53

Glasko Village, Rtes. 165 and 201, Griswold, CT.



Tool inventor Isaac Glasko, also a Native American/African-American, bought property in 1806 in Griswold, CT. His blacksmith shop was constructed near the intersection of Routes 165 and 201. Glasko's production level was enhanced by a trip hammer, a mechanical hammer that sped the manufacture of tools for agriculture and carpentry. He was known for making whaling implements like harpoons and lances, and he held several patents for whaling tools. Glasko was a highly respected craftsman and his work had an excellent reputation up and down the coast.

Isaac's daughter, Eliza Glasko, attended Prudence Crandall's academy for young ladies in Canterbury from 1833-34. Isaac's final resting place is in a quiet burying ground near the center of the village that now bears his name.

Connecticut Freedom Trail

SAMUEL SLATER (1768-1835)

GRISWOLD, CT, AND WEBSTER, MA ♦ SITES 54, 55 AND 56

Site 54: The clock tower from Slater's original Green Mill is at Cranston Print Works, Rtes. 12 and 16, Webster, MA.

Site 55: An obelisk marks Slater's grave in the Mount Zion Cemetery, off Rte. 12, Webster, MA.

Site 56: The Slater Mill, 39 Wedgewood Dr. between Rtes. 12 and 138, Jewett City (Griswold), CT.



Samuel Slater is considered the Father of American Manufacturers. He was born in England where he received a good education. Samuel was apprenticed to the cotton-spinning industrialist Jedidiah Strutt, the partner of Richard Arkwright, an innovative businessman who harnessed waterpower, designed new machinery and segregated manufacturing tasks among his work force.

Slater was clever, well-organized and inquisitive, learning all about Arkwright's machines and systems. England had made it illegal to copy and transport industrial methods out of the country, but some states had passed legislation to encourage manufacturing and there were rewards posted for anyone who would bring the Arkwright system to America. Since no drawings or notes were possible, Slater committed to memory the process made famous in England. He has been called the first industrial spy.

Slater immigrated to the U.S. with the cotton spinning techniques firmly planted in his head. In 1790, he settled in Pawtucket, RI, and went into business with William Almy and Smith Brown. The mill they eventually built had different departments, types of machines and processes. The first cotton yarns produced were of very high quality.

Slater's factory system came to include worker housing and company-owned stores, schools and churches. He hired children and their parents, encouraging them to attend school on Sundays to improve their education. He controlled every element of life, essentially creating a whole new community centered around the mill. It became known as the Rhode Island System. In *Memoir of Samuel Slater*, written in 1836 by George S. White, the author recalled a comment by Slater on the effectiveness of his system, "Yes Sir. I suppose that I gave out the psalm and they have been singing to the tune ever since."

By 1812, Samuel Slater turned his attention to Oxford (now Webster), MA, transferring cotton manufacturing to the new mills he built there. Three years later he added a woolen mill and also invested in iron manufacturing. At one time, Slater owned 90% of the present town



of Webster and is considered the founder of that community. In 1824, he and his brother also had a successful cotton manufacturing company in Jewett City (Griswold), CT.

*Public Broadcasting Service. "Who Made America? Samuel Slater." http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/theymadeamerican/whomade/slater_bi.html (accessed February 4, 2008).
Virtual American Biographies. "Samuel Slater." <http://www.famousamericans.net/samuelslater/> (accessed February 4, 2008).*

THE WELLS BROTHERS (20th century)

STURBRIDGE, MA ♦ SITE 57

Old Sturbridge Village, off Rte. 20, Sturbridge, MA.

The sons of George Washington Wells, founder of the American Optical Company, inherited his work ethic and were all very successful executives with the manufacturing firm. However, it was their fascination with the everyday objects from New England's past that created their greatest legacy.

Albert B. Wells started collecting first, gathering handmade artifacts that appealed to his interest in manufacturing. He liked country things with innovative design or style. Joel Cheney Wells collected clocks. Channing Wells enjoyed fine furniture. Their collections became enormous, quickly outgrowing their homes, despite additions.

In 1935, they started the Wells History Museum, a non-profit and educational venture. They plotted a suitable home for the collections, at first envisioned to be early structures around a common space. It evolved into the idea of a real living village with different structures to display collections. Within a week they had bought the Wright Farm in Sturbridge with 153 acres of land. The Wells History Museum became the Quinebaug Village Corporation. The 1938 hurricane destroyed much of the first two years of work, but by 1941 several major elements were in place: the Fitch House, the Miner Grant Store, the Richardson House, and the Grist Mill. Old Sturbridge Village officially opened on June 8, 1946, welcoming 5,170 visitors in its first year. The project was passed along to the next generation and the Wells family continues to be involved into the 21st century.

Today, Old Sturbridge Village is a greatly expanded venue educating hundreds of thousands of visitors on its 200 acres with 40 historic structures.

Old Sturbridge Village. "Early History of Old Sturbridge Village." <http://www.osv.org/museum/history/html> (accessed December 14, 2007).

