

“A TIME IN HISTORY” MURAL

Learn about people, places and events in Plymouth’s history.

Presented by

The Main Street Community Foundation

Art in Motion

Plymouth Beautification Committee

Kind volunteers



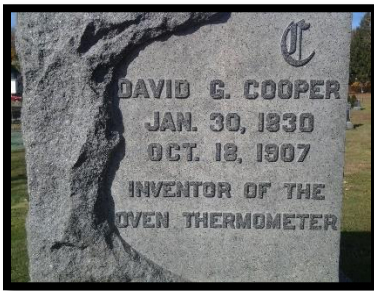
I Spy! – check off the symbols of Plymouth’s history when you see them on the mural, or even better, when you visit them in person.



- **Oven thermometer**
- **Terryville Trust**
- **1835 Mileage Marker**
- **Horseshoe –Horseshoe Falls**
- **Eagle Lock and the Lock Museum of America**
- **Knight helmet – Ted Knight**
- **Cannonballs – Dorence Atwater monument**
- **Clockworks – Eli Terry clock**
- **Pequabuck Tunnel**
- **Colorful dress form – Betsey Johnson**
- **Hot air balloon- Silas Brooks, aeronaut**
- **Water Wheel**
- **Clock face – Plymouth Congregational Church**
- **Buttermilk Falls and the Blue Trail**
- **Toll House – Plymouth Historical Society**
- **The Leatherman**
- **Tory Den**
- **British flag**

Oven Thermometer - David Cooper was born in Maine in 1830. He left school at the age of 15 to learn the trade of a machinist. He later worked in Cuba and at a silver mine in Chile. At some point, no doubt due to his knowledge of the properties of metals, he developed the idea of a bimetal oven thermometer. The different rates of expansion and contraction of two metal alloys cause the needle on the dial face of a thermometer to move, showing the temperature.

He founded the Cooper Oven Thermometer Company in 1885 and began manufacturing thermometers on Canal Street in Pequabuck. Although he died in 1907, his company was very successful and still exists today, known as the Cooper-Atkins Company, headquartered in Middlefield, CT. He is buried in Hillside Cemetery on Hillside Avenue in Terryville (across from Charles Street). Look for his unique gravestone!



1928 – represents the opening of the Terryville Trust building. Long a fixture on Main St. in Terryville for many years, it closed in the late 1970s and was torn down in 2016. Residents hope another iconic building will take its place in our town's history.



Hartford Turnpike mileage marker – this sandstone monument is at the corner of Main Street and Bushnell Street. In the 1800s, Main Street (Rt. 6) was a toll road. Markers were installed

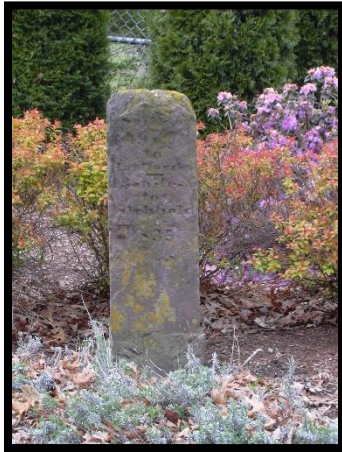
every mile so travelers could be charged for using the road. The term “turnpike” comes from when a wooden pole, or “pike”, was placed across the road to prevent access until the toll was paid. After payment, the pike would be turned to open the road and allow passage.

The inscriptions on this marker read:

19 miles to Hartford

13 miles to Litchfield

1835



Horseshoe - represents Horseshoe Falls in Pequabuck. The dam was originally called the “Circular Dam”. In 1851, Eli Terry built a dam on the Pequabuck River to supply water power for a new factory, the Terryville Manufacturing Company. Located on Canal Street, the shop made clocks and clock parts. Water from the pond was diverted down a canal to turn a water wheel that generated 35 horsepower at full speed. In 1864, the factory became the Eagle Bit and Buckle Company, manufacturers of harness bits and buckles for the Union Army during the Civil War. Eventually, locks for mailbag pouches were made here. Later a sawmill occupied the site, and by 1908, it was a woodturning plant (Charles Allen Woodturning) that made handles for all sorts of carpentry tools, such as braces, files, and mallets. They also made gavels and wooden spigots for barrels, as well as furniture knobs.

In autumn, the maples overhanging the falls turn red and orange, creating a beautiful site.

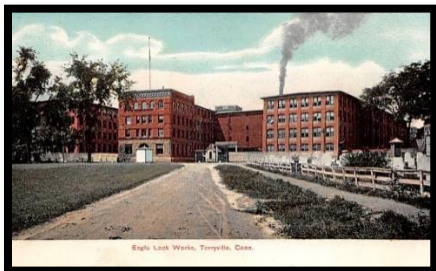


Eagle Lock – represents the Eagle Lock Company, Terryville’s biggest employer from the mid-1800s until 1974. James Terry, son of Eli Terry, Jr., acquired the former Lewis Lock Company in 1854, eventually forming the Eagle Lock Company. At its peak, 1,800 people worked here.

There were two factories, one on Main Street next to the Water Wheel, and the other on South Main Street. Some of the buildings are still used in manufacturing.

Originally, waterwheels and later, turbines, powered the factories.

The Lock Museum of America, at 230 Main Street, was located here because of Terryville’s lockmaking history.



Knight helmet – represents Ted Knight, a native of Terryville, who went onto fame in television and the movies. Born Tadequrz Konopka, he grew up on Allen Street. After graduating from Terryville High School, he served in World War II and was awarded the Bronze Star. After the war, he worked at radio stations, leading to acting roles in many television shows and films.

His most famous TV roles were as the egocentric weatherman, Ted Baxter, on “The Mary Tyler Moore Show” in the 1970s, for which he won an Emmy, and as Henry Rush on the sitcom “Too Close For Comfort” in the early 1980s. He hosted the Dec. 22, 1979 episode of “Saturday Night Live”.

He also played the part of Judge Smails in the 1980 movie, “Caddyshack”, considered one of the funniest sports movies of all time.

The bridge on Canal Street next to Horseshoe Falls was dedicated as the “Ted Knight Bridge”, just down the street from his boyhood home. Knight Lane in Terryville is also named for him. He died in 1986 at the age of 62 from colon cancer, but his memory lives on.



Cannonballs – represents the monument to Dorence Atwater, Plymouth’s Civil War hero. Captured by the Confederates and sent to the infamous prisoner of war camp at Andersonville, Georgia, Atwater kept a secret list of the 13,000 Union soldiers who died there. After the War, he and Clara Barton returned to Andersonville to properly mark the graves. They also worked at the Missing Soldiers Office in Washington, DC to account for 20,000 missing soldiers and provide their families some comfort in knowing what happened to their loved ones.

This was the first time in US history that a concerted effort was made to notify families about their fathers, brothers, and sons who were Missing In Action. The National Park Service calls Dorence Atwater the most important enlisted man in the Union Army.

His monument is located on a hill overlooking Baldwin Park off of Main Street. It consists of a Civil War-era cannon from a fort in Boston Harbor with a stack of cannon balls placed in front.



Clockworks - represents the clockmaking history of Plymouth. Eli Terry was born in in 1772 and was an apprentice to a clockmaker. He moved to Plymouth in 1793, married Eunice Warner, and set up his first clockmaking shop behind his house on Main Street on Plymouth Hill. He then

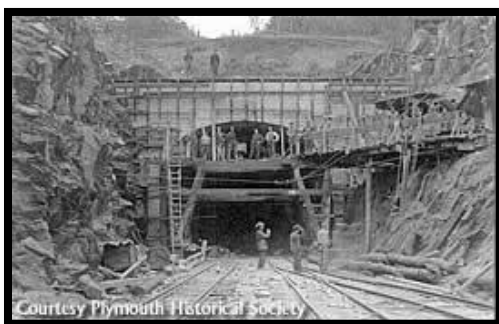
built a factory in the southern end of Plymouth, known as Greystone. He used water power from Hancock Brook to build an astounding 4,000 clocks in only three years by pioneering the use of mass production to make parts. At this factory, located at the end of present day Greystone Road Extension, he employed Silas Hoadley and Seth Thomas. Terry eventually sold his business to these men, who both went onto become famous clockmakers themselves. Terry continued to invent new clock mechanisms and helped his son Eli Terry, Jr. get into the clockmaking business as well.



Pequabuck Tunnel - The Pequabuck Tunnel is also sometimes called the Mile Long Tunnel. Actually, it is only 3,850 feet long, but it probably felt like a mile to the workers building it! Regardless, it is the longest tunnel in Connecticut. Construction began in 1906 and it was completed in 1910. The first passenger train went from the new station at Pequabuck through the tunnel on January 27, 1911, marking the opening of the tunnel for regular use. The new tunnel and improved grading of the track eliminated severe curves between Hartford and Waterbury, shortening the travel time between the cities and making it much safer.

The tunnel is privately owned by a freight railroad and trespassing is not allowed.

More information about the tunnel can be found in an article by Judy Giguere, Town Historian, on the Town of Plymouth website. www.plymouthct.us



Colorful dress form – represents fashion designer, Betsey Johnson, famous for her wild and crazy designs for women. Betsey grew up in town. She was the co-captain of the cheerleading squad during her junior year at Terryville High School, but her family moved to Wethersfield before she became a senior. She graduated from Syracuse University, then won *Mademoiselle* magazine's Guest Editor Contest, earning a job with the magazine's art department. From there her career took off. Her clothes were inspired by the new wave punk look of the 1970s. Her company has stores all over the world.



Hot air balloon – represents Silas Brooks, famous 19th century hot air balloonist, who was born in Plymouth in 1824. He was hired in 1850 by PT Barnum to create unusual musical instruments for one of the showman's circus acts. One of the features of Barnum's shows was the ascension of a hot air balloon. One day, the regular balloonist, or aeronaut as they were called, took sick and Silas took his place, starting a new career.

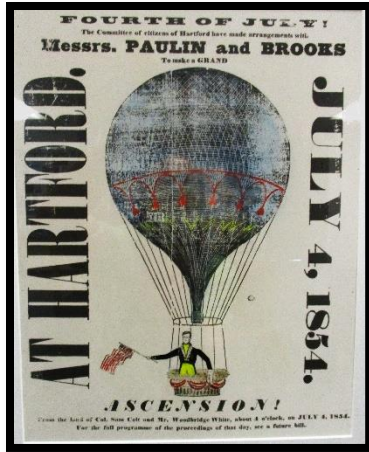
In 1854, Brooks was hired to fly a balloon to celebrate July 4 in Hartford. The poster advertised that the extravaganza required 2,400 pounds of sulfuric acid, 2000 pounds of wrought iron turnings, 5000 gallons of water, and 2000 pounds of ice, all needed to create the hydrogen gas to lift the balloon. It was described as "one of the greatest chemical experiments ever witnessed".

In 1863, Brooks married Harriet Beach, a circus bareback rider from Terryville. They had one child, Henry, who died at the age of 18 months from measles.

All told, Silas made 187 balloon ascensions, and was featured at exhibitions, fairs, and festivals all over the country.

Later in his career, Brooks was severely injured doing a chemical experiment, and he died in 1906. He had an obituary in the NY Times. He is buried in Center Cemetery in Burlington.

The New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks has an impressive display about Silas Brooks, including a wicker basket from one of his balloons, dating to 1870. According to the Museum, it is the oldest surviving balloon basket and the oldest surviving aircraft in the United States!



Terryville Waterwheel - The Waterwheel is a 20-foot diameter wood and iron waterwheel of pitch-back configuration dating to 1851. The wheel occupies its original site on the west bank of the swift-flowing Pequabuck River at 264 Main Street in the Terryville section of Plymouth. Originally, the wheel was enclosed by a small gable-roofed building attached to the main mill.

The name of the property, the Terryville Waterwheel, reflects its overall historical significance. It is also known as the Eli Terry, Jr. Water Wheel, in the belief that it dated from the construction of Eli Terry, Jr.'s clock factory on the site in 1824. That factory, then in the ownership of the Lewis Lock Company, was completely destroyed by fire on September 21, 1851, and immediately rebuilt, presumably including the wheel. Two years later, in January of 1854, the Lewis Lock Company was merged with the James Terry & Company lock company to become the Eagle Lock Company, a company that remained a major employer in Terryville for more than a century.

The Terryville Waterwheel is the most nearly intact of the three known 19th-century wooden waterwheels remaining in Connecticut. There are three interrelated components to its significance:

1. It is an evocative monument to Connecticut's early years of industrialization, when industries from clocks to firearms to textiles relied in whole or in part on waterpower.
2. It is a rare surviving example of a once-common type of construction, the wooden waterwheel, that was important not only for powering industry but also for advancing the knowledge and practice of civil and mechanical engineering.
3. Because so few survive, every remaining example has information value . Although it is known from published technical works what the period's leading authorities thought about the issues surrounding the efficient exploitation of waterpower, it can only be known what occurred in practice by studying actual examples.



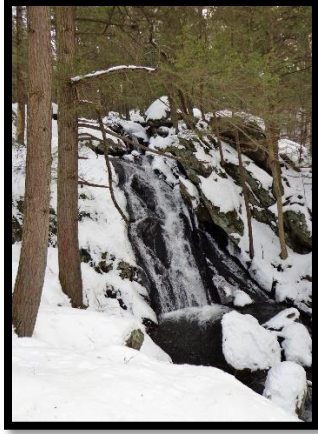
Clock face - The clock face represents the tower clock in the First Congregational Church of Plymouth on the Plymouth Green (10 Park Street, Plymouth). It was built by Eli Terry when the church was erected in 1838.



Pitcher of Buttermilk – represents Buttermilk Falls, a lovely series of cascades off of Lane Hill Road in the southeastern part of Plymouth. There is a stone dam at the top of the falls that stored water to power a sawmill in the 1800s.

Buttermilk Falls are easily accessible by following the **blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail** from a pull off on the side of Lane Hill Road. During the winter, the road is closed, but the trail is only 500 feet from the closure, so the Falls can be enjoyed all year round.

The GPS coordinates of the access point are N41.64475, W73.00755 The Falls are owned by The Nature Conservancy, and the Mattatuck Trail is maintained by volunteers from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association.



Toll House – represents the Plymouth Historical Society. The Society has two buildings at 572 Main Street; the Toll House Museum and the Alley House Museum. The maroon-painted toll house was built in the early 1800s and was the home of the tollkeeper on the Hartford - Litchfield Turnpike. Inside the toll house is the completely restored 1852 Woodruff and Beach steam engine. It powered the Shelton and Tuttle carriage shop in the mid-1800s. This is the only engine of its kind in the United States. The Alley House museum, a white Greek Revival house built by Augustus Shelton in the mid-1800s, contains a collection of Plymouth memorabilia, including items from the Civil War.

www.plymouthhistoricalsociety.org



Leatherman Cap – represents The Leatherman, who was born in the 1830s, perhaps to a French Canadian family. He first appeared in Connecticut in 1856. From 1856-1882, he traveled extensively between Connecticut, the Hudson River Valley, the Berkshires, and possibly Canada.

From 1883-1889, he walked his famous regular clockwise loop through Connecticut and NY. Covering 365 miles, it usually took about 34 days. He would stay overnight in caves or rock shelters. When visiting Plymouth, he would stay in Tory Den.

His true identity was never discovered nor the reason for his wandering. He could speak French and English but rarely talked. Newspapers would write articles when he appeared in towns. People would leave food out for him because they knew his schedule. His shelters were often near water and some had gardens. He tanned leather and preserved meat. He chewed tobacco and smoked a pipe.

In 1879, CT and NY passed Tramp Laws that ordered the imprisonment of vagrants, but the Leatherman was not arrested, because he wasn't feared. He did not steal, confront people, or act aggressively.

In 1888, people observed a cancerous growth on his lip. In Dec. 1888, concerned citizens took him to Hartford Hospital, but he escaped the next day. Supposedly he registered as "Zacharias Bovelait", but no records exist.

He died near Ossining, NY in March, 1889. His body was found in a cave. It was reported in the New York Times. He was buried in potter's field (where the poor and unknown people were buried) in Sparta Cemetery in Ossining, NY. His leather suit was stuffed and displayed in a store in Ossining. It was later moved to a museum in New York City, then a Museum in Coney Island. The museum burned down in 1928 and the suit was probably destroyed.

In 1953, the citizens of Ossining installed a new gravestone with a plaque referring to "Jules Bourglay, The Leatherman". But there is no proof of that name being correct. In 2011, the Leatherman's grave was exhumed, but no remains were found. Only coffin nails and dirt. The remains were reburied with a new headstone and a brass plaque commemorating his life.

In 1998, Pearl Jam wrote a song called "Leatherman" with verses that refer to the actual Leatherman. Look it up on YouTube!



British flag - represents the colonists who supported their mother country of England during the Revolutionary War. They were called Tories, or Loyalists. In the late 1700s, the hamlet of East Church, in the northeastern part of Plymouth, was inhabited by Tories. Periodically, the local Sons of Liberty would raid their homesteads and farms. They escaped by hiding in a cave deep in the woods called "**Tory Den**". After the War was over, the residents built St. Matthew's

Episcopal Church, completed in 1794. St. Matthew's cemetery is next to the church. Today, the church is a private residence.

You can walk to Tory Den by following the Tunxis Trail for about one mile to the cave. The Trail is marked with blue blazes. The entrance to the Trail is about 1/2 mile north of St. Matthew's cemetery on East Plymouth Road. There is parking for several cars.

East Church is on the National Register of Historic Places. The center of the village is at the intersection of East Plymouth Road and Marsh Road.

The British flag depicted on the mural was flown during the Revolutionary War by the British military. It combines two symbols. The first is a red cross, representing St. George, the patron saint of England. The second is a white "X" on a blue background, the symbol of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland.



***Learn more about Plymouth's fascinating history at
www.plymouthhistoricalsociety.org***