

The History of Town Greens

New England town greens embody Yankee order and convey local history and civic pride. There are 170 town greens in Connecticut and Cromwell has four.

Most Connecticut greens were created by early settlers who laid out a common public space for grazing sheep and cattle, for religious gatherings, markets, a meetinghouse, a burial ground and for garbage dumping. Most greens that exist today were developed in their current forms during the Victorian era. During this time, societies and movements promoted the belief that beautiful surroundings improved the human spirit.

Cromwell's greens were championed by Charles Collard Adams (1836-1925). He was a local historian who had a love for genealogy. Born in Washington D.C., Mr. Adams went to Wesleyan University and Trinity College, and for a winter, was a teacher in Cromwell. During that time he fell in love and married Elizabeth Ranney. He helped to form Patriot's Corner, the Memorial Town Green and Pierson Park.



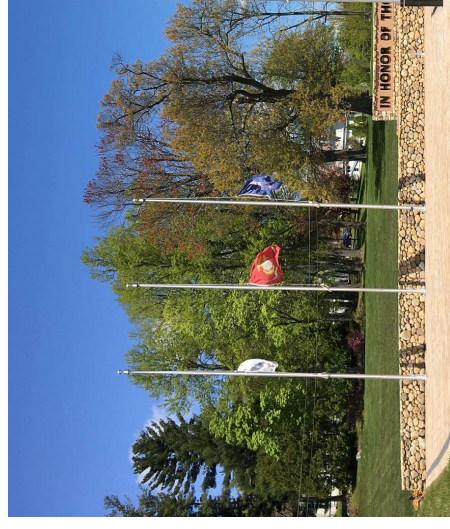
To begin your walk, park in the Cromwell Community Lot off of Community Field Road between Main Street and Pierson Park. If you would prefer to drive between the greens, adequate parking is available at all stops.

First Stop

Patriot's Corner -

Main & Wall Streets

Dedicated to veterans of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars and the founders and pastors of Cromwell, it is on land known as Stocking Triangle. The land was purchased for \$1 from a Samuel Stocking descendant (one of the first settlers). The State DOT and the Connecticut Valley Railroad have reduced it over time. The green holds 3 memorials. Patriot's boulder was dedicated in 1903 on Bunker Hill Day for soldiers of the Revolutionary War. It was originally located outside of the Old Burying Ground. In 1904 a mortar and shells were added in memory of those from Cromwell who served, but were buried elsewhere. In 1905 the memorial objects were relocated to Stocking Triangle/ Patriot's Corner and joined by a bronze tablet. The new memorial was considered a better spot because it was in a busy location. The sign that identifies this green was unveiled in 1977 with Elizabeth Maselli in attendance.



Second Stop

Memorial Town Green -

Main Street & West Street

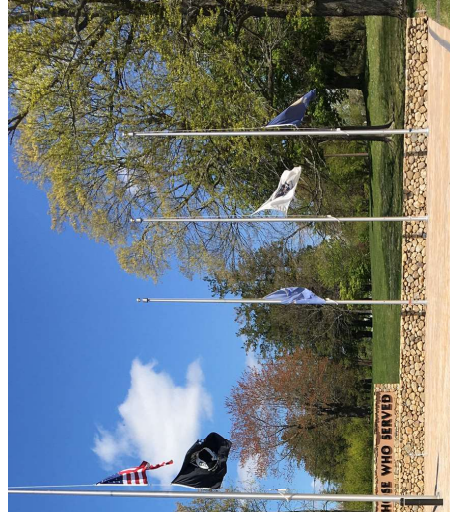
Originally known as the "Lower Green," this memorial was dedicated on November 13, 1921 for veterans who served and died in "the war that would end all wars." Each tree represents a Cromwell soldier who lost their life.

Third Stop

Valour Memorial Green -

Main Street & Fritsch Lane

Originally dedicated on July 4, 1973 to remember the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War, it was rededicated on September 15, 2019 to encompass all American wars and conflicts, those who have served and those who are service providers. The road bisecting the green is named after Thomas W. Fritsch (USMC), the only Cromwell soldier to die during the Vietnam War.



Fourth Stop

Gold Star Green -

West Street/across from

St. John Church

Originally known as "Upper Green," this green is dedicated to veterans of WWII. During WWII, banners would hang in the windows of households with service members. It had a white background with a blue border and held a red star for each service person. If any died, the red star would be replaced with a gold star. There is a tree for each soldier who lost their life at war. There is a small island with one tree for the unknown soldier.



Further exploration

Old Burying Ground -

Timber Hill Road & Ranney Road

The Old Burying Ground became a cemetery in 1712/13. It is on 2 acres of land. Older headstones can be found in the southern end. Those stone carvings were most likely done by the Johnson family.

Headstones to visit:

- Veterans of the French & Indian, Revolutionary, Civil, and Spanish American Wars and the War of 1812 (all marked with flags)
- Thomas Ranny
- Bushnell family mound (only one in the cemetery)
- Ruth and Josiah Belden's unique arched headstone.

Hillside Cemetery, East & West - Hillside Road & Shelley Street

Hillside cemetery is on 12+ acres. The older portion is East Cemetery established in 1855. West Cemetery was acquired in 1905 and has views of the Connecticut River valley.

Headstones to visit in East Cemetery:

- Charles Collard Adams
- Thomas Ranny's boulder
- Zinc cast Smith family obelisk

Headstones to visit in West Cemetery:

- American Legion burial plot
- Veterans of the multiple wars (all marked with flags)
- Cromwell Women's Relief Corps Home plot



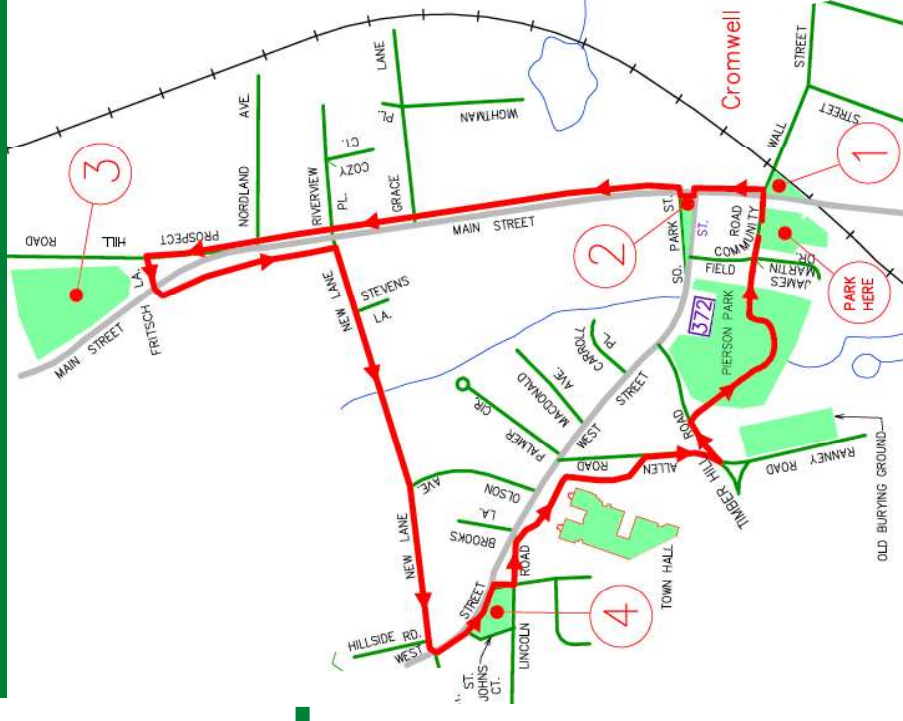
CROMWELL BELDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Elizabeth Maselli History Room Walk 2

2.7 miles

60-120 minutes

(depending on how long you explore each stop)



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39 WEST STREET

CROMWELL, CT 06416

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