

First Stop & Last Stop

Town Hall - 41 West Street

Cromwell's Town Hall was once the Nathaniel White School. Early in Cromwell's history, the town was divided into societies where each neighborhood paid for their own schools. Eventually, these schools became overcrowded and Cromwell citizens approved a consolidated school system in 1895. The Nathaniel White School was opened in 1902, and named after one of the original settlers who had given a portion of his estate to be used for Cromwell education. To address continued overcrowding, an extension was added in 1905. A second building similar in design to the first was erected to the east in 1922. The Nathaniel White School graduated its last class in 1980. It opened as a municipal center in 1985.



Second Stop

The Academy Building - 346 Main Street

The Academy Building was built in 1834. It was originally owned by the Congregational Church who used the second floor for religious gatherings. The lower floor was used for literary purposes. The first floor eventually became a school run by the Congregational Church for those who wished to continue their education beyond the elementary years. A library for the town was established on February 16, 1888 as the Cromwell Library Association, but after a generous donation by Josiah Belden, the library was renamed the Belden Library Association (BLA). The BLA used the second floor above the school. When the school moved out in 1901, the library took over the whole building. In 1938, for the library's 50th anniversary, the church presented the building's deed to the library. In 1986 the library moved to the town hall complex at 39 West Street and became the Cromwell Belden Public Library.



Third Stop

Patriot's Corner - corner Main & Wall

Patriot's Corner, also known as Stocking Triangle, was purchased by The Society of Middletown Upper Houses from a Stocking family member for \$1. The intention was that the land would be used as a more prominent place for memorials of Cromwell's past. Up to that point, memorial objects had been outside of the Old Burying Ground. The memorial objects found at Patriot's Corner commemorate veterans of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, founders of the community and pastors that served the community from 1714-1847. Charles Collard Adams was instrumental in developing the Corner and his name is remembered here as well. C.C. Adams was a chaplain in the Civil War, a teacher and a writer. He wrote the book *Middletown Upper Houses* which documents the early families and history of Cromwell.



Fourth Stop

Walk along Community Field Road to Pierson Park

Community Field Road was the location of a long-standing blacksmith shop run by many different owners over the years. The last owner was Charles Schreier. He served as the blacksmith from 1910-1945.

Pierson Park was once a quarry owned by many different companies throughout its history - The Connecticut Brownstone Quarry, The North Middlesex Quarry Company, The Cromwell Brownstone Quarry, and The Connecticut Freestone Company. In 1906 it was sold to a Portland company and closed soon after. Sometime later the town acquired the land. In 1925 Charles Collard Adams led a campaign to dedicate the space as a park to A.N. Pierson, thanking him for increasing and reshaping the population and architecture of Cromwell. The unworked land became a grassy park-like area and the quarry filled with water, becoming a local swimming hole. Unfortunately, the quarry water was polluted by the 1938 flood and all recreational swimming ceased. Over time the waters became an eyesore and grew foul. In 1976 the former swimming site was filled in, expanding the park.

Fifth Stop

The Old Burying Ground - 2 Timber Hill Road

(The front entrance is on Ranney Road. There is a back corner entrance off of Timber Hill Road.)

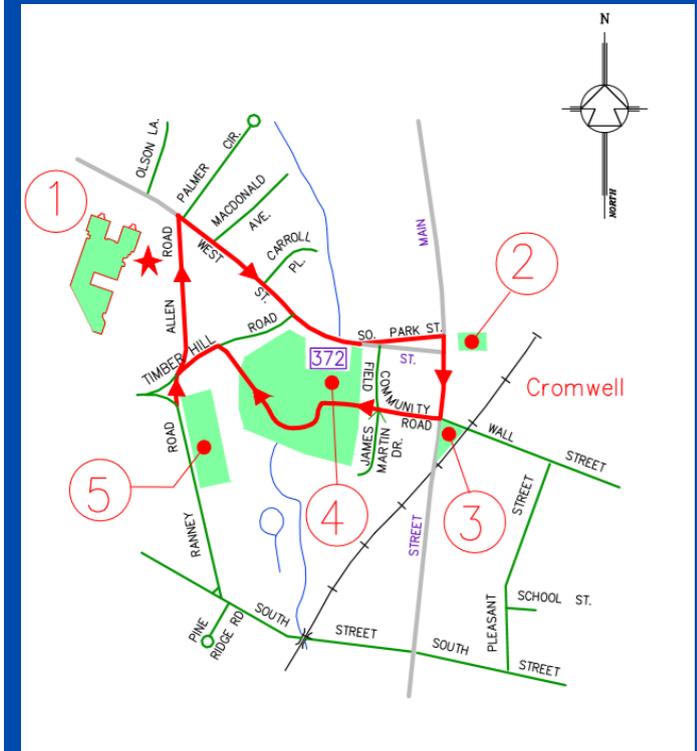
The Old Burying Ground, also known as Cromwell's Old Cemetery and Quarry Cemetery, became a graveyard in 1712/13. The discrepancy in the exact year is due to the change between the Julian and Gregorian calendars. It is on 2 acres of land & holds 990 graves. Thomas Ranny was one of its first residents. He died on June 25, 1713 at 97 years of age. Around 1900 Charles Collard Adams discovered the tombstone had broken. He cemented the stone to a nearby boulder. Decades later, and for unknown reasons, Gridley Adams, Charles's son, paid to move the boulder beside his parent's grave in East Cemetery. No one noticed the missing marker until the summer of 1969 when 4 Ranny descendants came looking for the headstone. Elizabeth Maselli investigated and encouraged a mailing campaign to have the marker replicated and replaced. Mrs. Maselli provided guided tours of the cemetery, photographed over 400 of the stones, and mapped all of the graves. She left the following words of advice to visitors: visit the graveyard 'in the morning when the sun's rays are at just the right angle so the inscriptions can best be read.'

CBPL

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Elizabeth Maselli History Room Walk 1

1 mile
20-90 minutes
(depending on how long you explore each stop)



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CROMWELL, CT 06416

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