

SIMSBURY

Genealogical and Historical Research Library

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Summer 1999

William Phelps Eno Plaque Installed

Symbol of the Eno Foundation for Transportation

Something new has been added to the Simsbury Free Library building this summer. A five-foot square plaque is now attached to the southeast corner of the building facing the parking area. This impressive high relief sculptural piece depicts the seal of the Eno Foundation for Transportation.

As our members 1992 the Directors of Transportation installed Memorial Center, dedication's founder, in the library's reading room. contains Mr. Eno's original work, replicates Mr. Eno as an archive for his internationally regarded regulation and trans-

The Center was Foundation was vacated in Westport, plaque hung over the Foundation moved to the Directors moved the installed it in front of

building. Recently, upon deciding to move to another location in the Washington, D.C. area, they requested that the Simsbury Free Library take the plaque as part of the William Phelps Eno Memorial Center. The Trustees of the Simsbury Free Library were pleased to oblige.

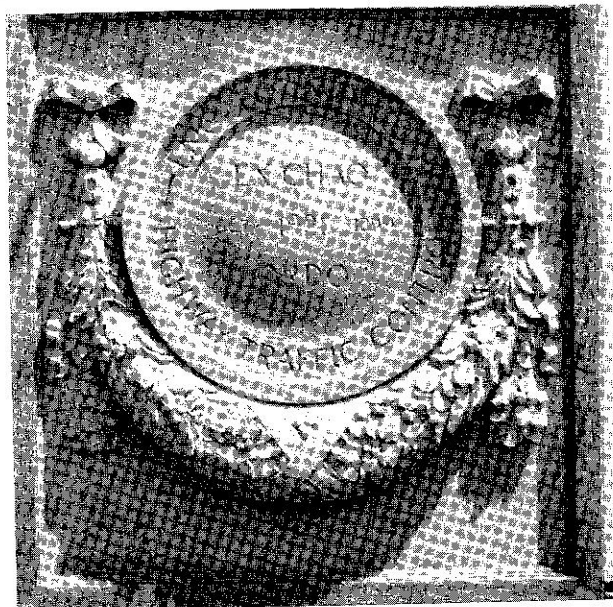


Photo by J. W. Springman

Seal of the Eno Foundation for Transportation

and friends know, in the Eno Foundation for the William Phelps Eno located to the Foundation north end of our library. The Center, which contains original furniture and art Eno's office and serves as a repository for his historic papers. Mr. Eno is as "The father of traffic transportation engineering."

opened just as the Eno Foundation moved to its original headquarters in Westport, Connecticut, where the front door. When the Landsdowne, Virginia plaque with them and their newly constructed

The plaque bears the motto *Ex Chao Ordo*, "out of chaos, order." It also has three dates that were significant to Mr. Eno. The earliest, 1867, marks the time when, as a nine-year-old, he witnessed the traffic snarl on a New York City street that impressed upon him the need for standard rules of the road. "That very first traffic jam (many years before the motor car came into use) will always remain in my memory," he said years later. "There were only about a dozen horses and carriages involved, and all that was needed was a little order to keep the traffic moving. Yet nobody knew exactly what to do;

neither the drivers nor the police knew anything about the control of traffic." Later in his life he realized that the lack of traffic regulations caused many fatalities.

In 1899 when he was 41, an inheritance from his father made it possible for him to retire and, as he put it, to devote the rest of his life to the "rational management of our street traffic." Because of his efforts most of the world drives on the right side of the road today. Because of him we have speed limits, pavement marking, one-way streets, turn signals, rules for right-of-way at intersections and rotaries. Mr. Eno preferred rotaries to stop signals as a way to keep traffic flowing. His idea influenced the English to construct Piccadilly Circus in London and the French, the rotary around the Arc de Triomphe.

After World War I the French government presented Eno with the cross of the Legion of Honor because his traffic system had enabled them to speed 60,000 soldiers to Verdun, thereby halting the progress of the German troops toward Paris and turning the tide of the war. Later Mussolini dictated that Italy would adopt all of Eno's traffic regulations and Germany modeled its autobahn on Eno's idea for a national network of superhighways.

The third date on the plaque, 1921, marks the founding of the Eno Foundation for Transportation. Realizing that the problem of traffic control would always exist and that it required the efforts of more than one man, Eno established the Foundation and nurtured it until his death in 1945. He was 87.

The Eno Foundation for Transportation is the world's only independent, self-supporting institution devoted entirely to improving the efficient conveyance of people and goods. Its scope covers traffic and related transport functions on land, water, air, and even transport concerns for space travel. It publishes the *Transportation Quarterly*, which it distributes free of charge worldwide to a select list of government and public officials, libraries and universities, and other influential persons and institutions. It also supports educational programs and funds research projects and books.

The story of William Phelps Eno's connection to Simsbury and the Simsbury Free Library is also worth retelling at this time.

The library building was built in 1890 through the generosity of Amos Richards Eno, Mr. Eno's father. The library had been founded in 1872 by a group of public-spirited citizens and was operating out of the second story of the Hopmeadow School. This group of citizens appealed to Amos Eno, a Simsbury native who had made a fortune in New York City real estate, to donate something toward the construction of a permanent library building. He responded by donating land and sufficient money for a building and an endowment for books. Mr. Eno also gave the town a farm to house its poor. His daughter, Antoinette Eno Wood, gave the Eno Memorial Hall in memory of her parents.

William Phelps Eno's mother, Lucy Jane Phelps, was the granddaughter of Major General Noah Phelps, who figures in the following article in this newsletter, and the daughter of Elisha Phelps, who built the house on Hopmeadow Street that is now the inn called the Simsbury 1820 House. ☉

Scouting Southern Markets

A Little Account Book Made for Travel

In 1796 a citizen of Simsbury folded eight sheets of plain paper in half and pinned them at the middle with a straight pin. For two years his homemade book, measuring about six and one-half by three and three-quarters inches, would serve as his personal account book for use in a new business venture.

Although nothing in the book declares the identity of its owner, the contents reveal that it contains the record of a company formed by Noah A. Phelps and Joel Saxton, who both put up capital to fund the enterprise. The way certain entries are worded and the distinctive handwriting strongly suggest that the owner was Noah A. Phelps.

Noah A. Phelps was the oldest son of Major General Noah Phelps, Simsbury's Revolutionary War hero who had aided the Patriots under Ethan Allen to capture the British fort at Ticonderoga by entering the fort to spy. Noah A. Phelps served as a Private under his father and later became a Colonel in the Militia. He graduated from Yale College in 1783, studied law and opened a practice in Simsbury. He represented the town in the General Assembly many times and, toward the end of his life, he lived in the Phelps House (800 Hopmeadow St.), which is now the home of the Simsbury Historical Society.

Joel Saxton was a Simsbury man who also owned land in the Hop Meadow section of town. His name does not appear in the Simsbury Vital Records, but historian Noah Amherst Phelps, the son of Noah A., wrote in 1845 that tin ware had been manufactured in Simsbury for about fifty years and he named Joel Saxton as one of the early tanners. He also named Thomas Barber.

The first entries in the little account book show that Thomas Barber's twenty-one year old son Titus Barber was in Philadelphia between June and November of 1796 working on behalf of Phelps and Saxton's company. The book does not show that he put up any capital, however, and he evidently did not figure in the new venture that the partners began in December of that year.

The book shows that in December Phelps and Saxton bought at least nine horses. One entry reads "to my old Sorrel Mare 20 [pounds] if with foal, if not 40/[shillings] is to be deducted." They charged against the company the cost of a saddle, bridle and two sleigh whips. They also purchased a tin oven and bought thirty-four pounds of tin from George Phelps. On a separate piece of paper, Saxton signed a note to Noah A. Phelps promising him "one pound three shillings LM [lawful money] which I am to pay him out of my part of the avails of the Tin Ware belonging to him & me when I return from the Southward."

Evidently, Noah A. Phelps had formed a partnership and planned to peddle Simsbury-made tinware in the South. The final pages of the little book contain a description of an exploratory trip:

Set out from Philadelphia to Baltimore Jan:y 26th 1797

from that to Darby 7 Miles & 1/2 which is a decent Village on a Navigable River [illegible]

from that to Chester 7 miles x [] a Country Town on the Delaware River is a decent Market Town

from that to Wilmington 14 Miles to Capt Patrick O'Flinns is a Country Town 5 Miles & [] N.W. from New Castle & his on the Christiana River & is navigable for Sea Vessells, it being in the Delaware State

from that to New Port 4 Miles

from that to Stanton 3

from that to Christiana 2 & his on the Christiana River & is navigable

from that to the Head of Elk 10 Miles which is in the State of Mariland lying at the confluence of the Great & Small Elk Rivers, a considerable Village x Markett, the River navigable for Shallopps from the Chesepeek Bay, it being 8 Miles distance

from that to Charlstown 10 Miles, lying at the Head of the Chesepeek Bay & 10 Miles from where the British Army landed [At first he had written "from where Cornwallis landed his Army" but crossed it out.]

from that to Haverdegrass seven Miles, a considerable of a Village laid out for a Cyty, & his on the Western Shore at the Mouth of the Susquehanna River where it emties into the Chesepeek Bay a few Miles distant from Turkey Point where the British Army landed

Many Simsbury townspeople must have been interested in the outcome of this trip because transactions recorded before it began were peppered with the names of men from old families in town like Pettibone, Humphrey, Case, Mills, Gillet, Stebbens, and Bidwell. Whether the venture was successful is unknown, but some evidence indicates that it was not, at least for Joel Saxton.

In January 1798, John and Chauncy Deming of Farmington, who were importers of sheet tin, went to court to recover debts from Joel Saxton. The judgment was in the Demings favor and when the Deputy Sheriff sent by the court went to Joel Saxton's last know place of abode he found that Saxton had "absconded to parts unknown." Two pieces of his property along the highway that is now Hopmeadow Street were seized and handed over to the Demings in payment of the debt. Other records of land transfers show, however, that Saxton transacted business in town until at least 1800.

A letter written in January 1802 by Jonathan Humphrey to Noah A. Phelps, who was then in Washington, makes this oblique reference, "Respecting Saxtons Matter Gen:ll Phelps hath Called upon Amos Tuller he can give no information Your wife hath had an oportunity with Saxtons wife. Cannot obtain the writing you mention."

Titus Barber's affairs, on the other hand, most certainly took a happy turn. Historian Lucius I. Barber wrote in 1888 that "Titus Barber, for many years, carried on the manufacture of tinware, in which he was largely successful, sending his wares by 'peddlars' into the Southern States, realizing great profits, whereby he became, for those times, a wealthy man." In 1812 Barber was able to build himself the fine house that stands at 920 Hopmeadow Street, on the southwest side of the Simsburytown Shops. ☉

SGHRL PROJECTS UPDATE

Archives Specialist Walter V. Hickey from the National Archives drew an audience of about forty people for his talk at SGHRL in June. Since there seemed to be particular interest in Naturalization Records and Passenger Lists, Walter has agreed to write an article on the relationship between these subjects for a coming SGHRL newsletter. We all appreciate his fine contribution to the Library.

Our loyal and hard working volunteers enjoyed the luncheon that the Trustees gave in their honor in June. We thank them for all they do to help us maintain a high level of research and service.

Joyce Cahill has done a marvelous job with the flower beds around the library this hot, dry summer. In addition to the perennials, Joyce planted annuals that were donated by the Simsbury Beautification Committee. She wants to thank Bob Lindauer for watering during the week she was on vacation. And all the Board of Trustees want to thank Joyce for her skill and dedication.

Dr. Robert B. McComb has joined the research group for the 18th Century Simsbury Account Book Research Project. He is working on records kept by William and Eliphalet Mitchelson, who lived in the Scotland section of Ancient Simsbury, now northern Bloomfield. Bob has a special interest in the Mitchelsons because he lives in the house built in 1774 by Eliphalet. He also writes a monthly article for the Old Saint Andrew's Church bulletin on the history of that very early Episcopal congregation and of the surrounding area.

Bob retired in 1991 after thirty years at Hartford Hospital where he worked as a clinical chemist. He still does research there on lab methods for analyzing calcium in blood.

Carol Laun, Director of the Salmon Brook Historical Society in Granby, tells us that she and her volunteers have begun a research project focused on the account books in their archives. We at SGHRL are grateful that they have begun with an 18th century ledger that has a bearing on our project. Also, Ann Arcari of the Farmington Public Library inquired about our project.

Notes about the Articles on the Preceding Pages

The material used in the article on the Eno Foundation for Transportation plaque came from *Eno, the Man and the Foundation: A Chronicle of Transportation* by John A. Montgomery. The book was published in 1988 by the Eno Foundation for Transportation.

The account book featured in "Scouting Southern Markets" is in the Connecticut Historical Society archives. Joel Saxton's note of hand is in the Simsbury Historical Society archives. The writ of execution against Joel Saxton is in the probate record collection in the Connecticut State Library archives. The Simsbury land records are in the Simsbury Town Clerk's office. SGHRL would like to thank the staffs of these institutions for their gracious assistance.

Both articles were written by Mary Jane Springman.

Some Recent Acquisitions

Books

- Land & Property Research in the United States* by E. Wade Hone
Rhinebeck Precinct Account Books, 1783-1788 transcribed and indexed by Arthur C. M. Kelly
Descendants of Peter Mills of Windsor, Connecticut by Helen Schatret Ullmann
Edward Doty of the Mayflower and His Descendants for Four Generations compiled by Peter B. Hill
Mayflower Families Through Five Generations, Volume 11, Edward Doty: His Descendants Through Sons Edward and John (Parts 1 and 2) compiled by Peter B. Hill
Colonial American English, A Glossary by Richard M. Lederer Jr.
Genealogy Online for Dummies by Matthew L. Helm and April Leigh Helm
Mayflower Families through Five Generations, Volume 16, Part 1, Family of John Alden compiled by Esther Littleford Woodworth-Barnes

Periodicals

- Berkshire Genealogist*: Winter 1998, Spring 1999
Connecticut Nutmegger: March 1999, June 1999
Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine: November/December 1998, January 1999, February 1999, May 1999
The Dutchess: Winter 1998-99, Spring 1999, Summer 1999
Genealogical Helper: January/February 1999, March/April 1999, May/June 1999
Godfrey Gazette: October 1998, April 1999
Vermont Genealogy: October 1998, April 1999
Welsh-American Genealogical Society (WAGS) Newsletter: Spring 1999, Summer 1999
Windsor Historical Society News: January 1999, March 1999, May 1999, July 1999

Did you know that Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States from 1877 to 1881, descended from the George Hayes family of Simsbury?

Others on that family tree might want to visit the Hayes Library and Genealogical Collection at the:

Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center
1337 Hayes Avenue, Spiegel Grove
Fremont, Ohio 43200

Telephone: 419/332-2081 Web site: www.rbhayes.org E-mail: bhill@rbhayes.org

SIMSBURY MARRIAGES

Date	Name	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Aug. 21, 1860	Henry A. Brown	28	Farmer	Simsbury
	Elisabeth Calhoun	17		Boston, Mass.
Oct. 24, 1860	Marcus Moses	34	Farmer	Simsbury
	Jane Curtiss	18		Canton
Nov. 7, 1860	John W. Dodge	24	Clergyman	Newburyport, Mass.
	Mary H. Toy	26		England
Nov. 6, 1860	Harvey G. Rogers	37	Farmer	York State
	Susan Scoville	25		Winsted, Ct.
Nov. 1, 1860	Hugh R. Patterson	29	Farmer	Ireland
	Isabelle E. McRoy	26		Ireland
Dec. 2, 1860	Henry Axe	30	Farmer	England
	Caroline Head	31		England
Dec. 31, 1860	Joseph Coley	27	Mechanic	England
	Sarah Ann Cartwright	27		England
Dec. 29, 1860	Stephen Broughten	28	Farmer	Ireland
	Julia Graday	35		Ireland
Dec. 22, 1860	Edward Hennisee	23	Laborer	Ireland
	Mary Doolan	18		Ireland
April 9, 1860	Patrick Collogett	23	Laborer	Ireland
	Ellen Nolon	20		Ireland
Dec. 20, 1860	Andrew Allen	25	Laborer	Ireland
	Catherine O. Shea	22		Ireland
Jan. 31, 1861	Charles E. Page	22		St. Johnsbury, Vt.
	Eliza A. Higley	21		Granby, Ct.
Feb. 1, 1861	Edward Stone	22	Laborer	Ireland
	Mary Kennedy	23		Ireland

*This continuing series on Simsbury's early marriage records has been copied by
Stephen E. Simon from microfilmed records at the Connecticut State Library.*

National Genealogical Society 2000 Conference in the States

**31 May-3 June, 2000
Providence, Rhode Island**

Local Host: New England Regional Genealogical Conference

For a brochure, please send your name, address and telephone number to:
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E-mail: conference@ngsgenealogy.org Web site: www.ngsgenealogy.org

**More information will be coming to SGHRL about the Conference.
Please stop by and take a look!**



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