



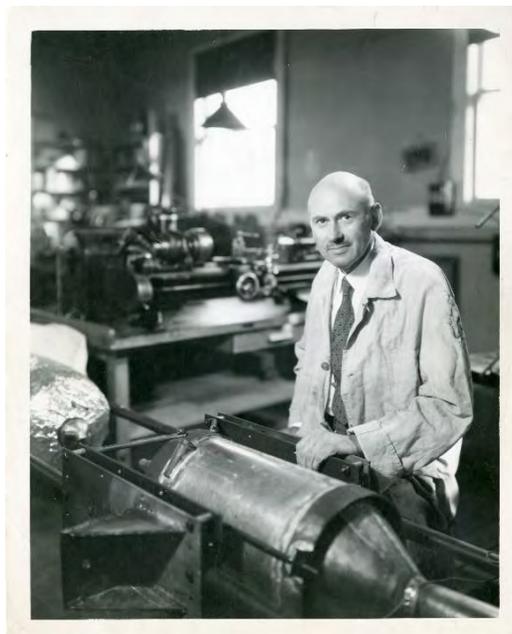
SALISBURY CULTURAL DISTRICT

## *Discovery Trails*

# Meet the Trailblazers in the Salisbury Cultural District

## Journey into Worcester's innovation history!

Get to know some of the extraordinary entrepreneurs, heroes, inventors, artists and visionaries whose creativity and ingenuity helped shape the city of Worcester and lay the groundwork for future achievements. Follow this suggested trail or create your own.



*Photo of Robert Goddard.  
Courtesy Worcester Polytechnic Institute.*

**MAJOR TAYLOR AND THE MAJOR TAYLOR MUSEUM**  
**At the Courthouse Lofts in the Old Worcester Courthouse**  
**2 Main St., Worcester, MA 01609**

In 1899, Worcester's Major Taylor rose to unprecedented fame when he became the world's first Black cycling champion. His amazing story is told in vintage photographs, graphic arts and memorabilia at the Major Taylor Museum inside the Courthouse Lofts.

Taylor lived in Worcester at the peak of his career, where he was famously known as the "Worcester Whirlwind." An exceptional sprinter, he broke scores of international cycling records and was one of the highest paid athletes in the country.



Despite his international fan base, however, Major Taylor experienced racist attacks including physical assault. In addition, poor health and unsuccessful business ventures depleted his savings. Taylor died in a Chicago hospital charity ward.

In addition to the museum, a kiosk is planned on nearby George Street. It's there, on a 500-foot, 18 percent incline, that Taylor trained.

*Photo of Major Taylor courtesy of Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites.*

## THE SALISBURY FAMILY AND SALISBURY MANSION

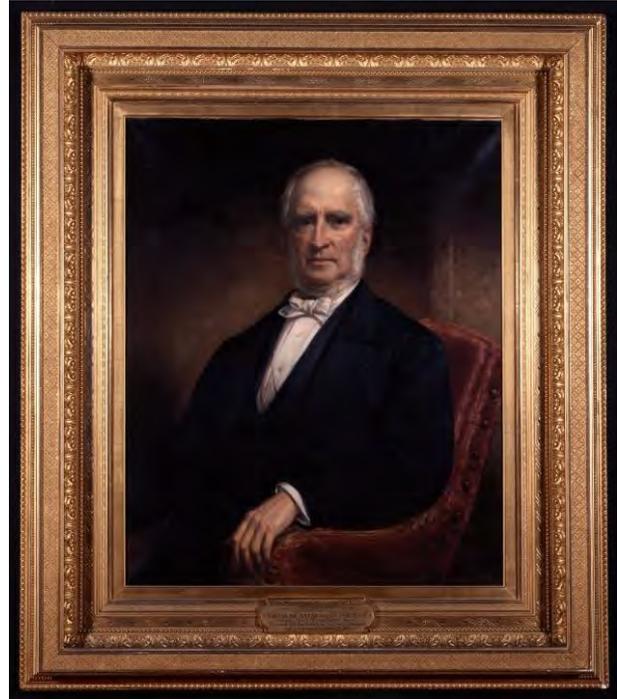
40 Highland St., Worcester MA 01609

508-753-8278 | [worcesterhistory.org/museum/salisbury-mansion/](http://worcesterhistory.org/museum/salisbury-mansion/)

Worcester would not be what it is today without the ingenuity and foresight of people like the three generations of Salisburys who lived from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> to the early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Throughout the Salisbury Cultural District you'll find many examples of the family's commitment to the community they loved. The Salisburys generously supported and/or founded the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Tuckerman Hall, Institute Park and the Worcester Art Museum.

Their legacy began in 1767 when Stephen I moved to Worcester to expand his business importing and selling hardware and other merchandise. Learn more about this enterprising family with a stop at Salisbury Mansion, the home of Stephen Salisbury I.



Stephen II proved exceptionally gifted in business, like his father. He built the original Northworks mill and leased it to Ichabod Washburn. Further, he was a founder, benefactor and the first president of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and an overseer of Harvard College.

Stephen III followed suit. He traveled extensively, became deeply interested in Central American culture, served on many boards, and presided over companies like the Worcester & Nashua Railroad Co. and the Worcester National Bank.

*Portrait of Stephen Salisbury II. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.*



## **SARAH WYMAN WHITMAN AND WAMSWORKS**

**6 Institute Road, Worcester MA**

508-755-2329 | [wamsworks.org](http://wamsworks.org)

The good work going on at WAMSworks — The Worcester Area Mission Society — is an inspiring chapter in the life of this Worcester landmark, once the home of the Central and United Congregational Churches.

The beautiful stained-glass windows you see are the work of trailblazer Sarah Wyman Whitman (1842-1904). Her success was rare for women artists of her era. Championed by the era's most innovative stained-glass artist, John La Farge, she founded Lily Glass Works and made stained-glass windows for churches and colleges in the Northeast.

In Boston, Whitman built a vast network of accomplished artist friends. Passionate about education, she donated her energies and funds to colleges such as Radcliffe, which began as an annex to Harvard, dedicated to women's education. Multi-talented, she was a popular interior decorator and an esteemed graphic artist. She is known for her striking book cover designs. She also wrote books and poetry, and taught.

*Photo of WAMSworks, once home of the Central and United Congregational Churches. Stained glass designed by Sarah Wyman Whitman, courtesy Salisbury Cultural District.*



## **HIGHLAND STREET**

### **Pause for shopping and tasty treats**

Tracking trailblazers requires lots of energy! If you need to refuel, consider a break for delicious food and some shopping afterward. You'll find both along Highland Street.

You have lots of choices, from really fine pub cuisine to Thai, Middle Eastern and more. Check out Bean Counter Bakery Café for a delectable selection of beverages including coffees, teas and, of course, pastries and sandwiches.

Stop by Prints and the Potter Gallery for contemporary arts and crafts. If this history-oriented Discovery Trail has ignited your taste for the retro, spend some quality browsing time at Modern Muse Consignment Shop where you'll find quality vintage wear.

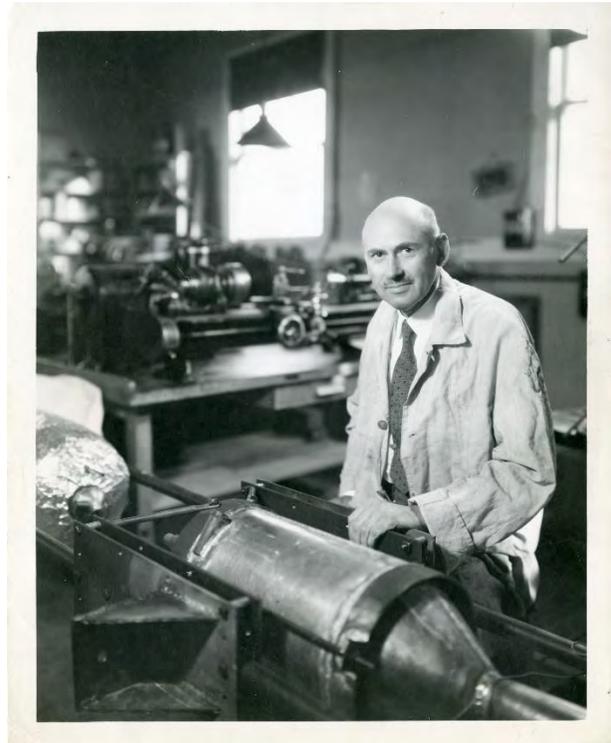
*Photo of Modern Muse Consignment Shop. Courtesy of the Salisbury Cultural District.*

**ROBERT GODDARD AND WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE**  
**100 Institute Road, Worcester MA**  
508-831-5000 | [wpi.edu](http://wpi.edu)

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), one of the nation's leading schools in science and engineering, has propelled the careers of many trailblazers.

One example is Worcester native Robert Goddard (1882-1945), who graduated from WPI in 1908 and became known as “the Father of Modern Rocketry.” While still a boy, he dreamed of going to the moon and in 1926, launched the first liquid-fueled rocket in the nearby town of Auburn. Goddard taught physics at Clark University in Worcester and made significant contributions to rocket research over the course of his career, laying the foundations for the development of long-range rockets, missiles, satellites and spaceflight.

Additional WPI trailblazers in the field of space include astronaut Albert Sacco, who was head of WPI's Chemical Engineering Department while aboard the space shuttle Columbia in 1995, and distinguished NASA scientist Laurie Leshin, who became WPI's first female president in 2014.



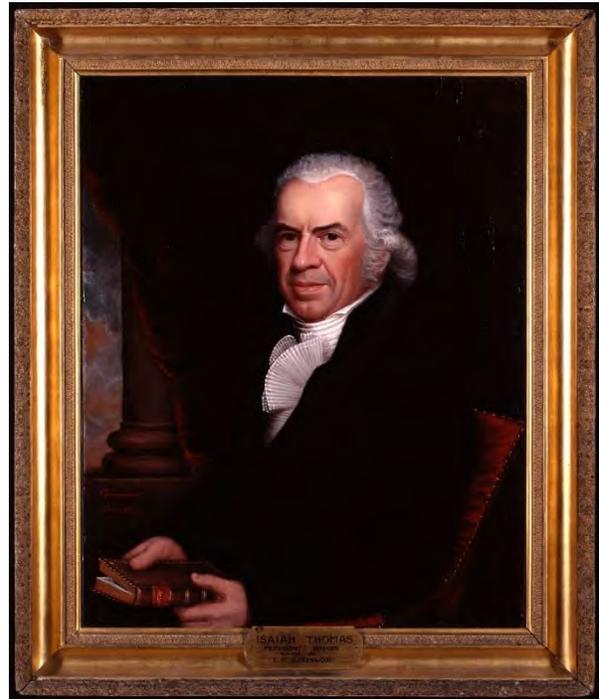
*Photo of Robert Goddard. Courtesy Worcester Polytechnic Institute.*

**ISAIAH THOMAS AND THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY**  
**185 Salisbury St., Worcester MA**  
508-755-5221 | [americanantiquarian.org](http://americanantiquarian.org)

The American Revolution was fueled, in large part, by the printed word, and the patriot printer, Isaiah Thomas, used the power of his press both to inform and inflame.

When the British tried to disband Thomas's printing press in 1775, he moved his operations from Boston to Worcester. Thomas then published the first eyewitness account of the Battles of Lexington and Concord in his newspaper that helped unite the 13 colonies and build a case for war against Great Britain. This newspaper was the first piece ever printed in Worcester.

After the war, Thomas became the foremost printer of his generation and one of the wealthiest men in the new nation. In 1812 he founded the American Antiquarian Society (AAS), as the first national historical society which you see before you.



The AAS is now an esteemed research library and learned society of pre-20<sup>th</sup>-century American history and culture. It is used by researchers from all over the world. It is open to the public, for tours, for research and for public programs.

*Portrait of Isaiah Thomas. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.*

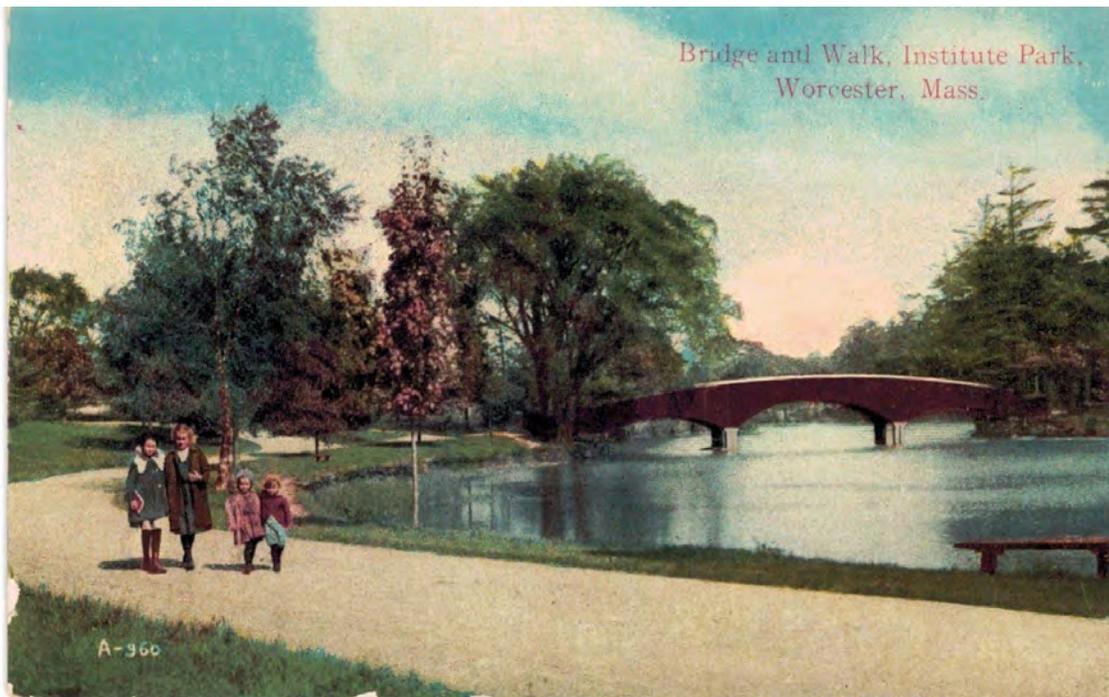
## STEPHEN SALISBURY III AND INSTITUTE PARK

This lush stretch of parkland lies in the heart of the beautiful Salisbury Cultural District. Like so many gems here, it owes its existence to the Salisbury family. Stephen Salisbury III created this 18-acre park beside Worcester Polytechnic Institute for recreational use by students, residents and workers at the nearby Washburn & Moen wire manufacturing factory. He later gave the park to the city of Worcester.

Institute Park is an ideal stop along the Trailblazer Discovery Trail. Birdwatchers may enjoy the view from the boardwalk that borders the pond, and the lawns are perfect for a game of frisbee. For those who prefer a picnic lunch or a deep dive into a good book, spread a beach towel and go for it!



If you are lucky, you may catch one of the summer concerts performed by the Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra (celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> year of free summer performances in 2021) or one of the many festivals or celebrations that take place in the park. The magical setting beside Salisbury Pond draws families and fans from all directions.



*Portrait of Stephen Salisbury III. Photo courtesy American Antiquarian Society.*

*Institute Park postcard from the 1998 Worcester Historical Museum publication titled "Wish You Were Here...Worcester Postcards ca. 1905-1920" by Anne Morse Lyell.*



**600 ARMENIAN TRAILBLAZERS AND THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOR**  
**87 Salisbury St., Worcester MA 01609**  
508-756-2931 | [facebook.com/Armenian-Church-of-Our-Saviour-257853407658976/](https://www.facebook.com/Armenian-Church-of-Our-Saviour-257853407658976/)

The story of the first Armenian church in the Western Hemisphere — established in Worcester in 1891 — is a story of 600 Armenian trailblazers with a mission.

The enterprising Armenian immigrants wanted to erect a church but did not have enough money. They hatched a plan to mail letters soliciting donations to “Mr. John Armenian” in 20 U.S. cities with Armenian neighborhoods. Mailmen delivered the letters to the first Armenians they encountered, just as Worcester’s Armenians suspected. Success! The 600 Worcester Armenians received donations from around the country and were able to build their church.

A few things to know:

First, the beautiful church you see here was built in 1952, replacing the earlier structure described above.

Second, Worcester was one of the earliest places in America settled by Armenians drawn to the city by jobs at the mills.

*Celebration Mass of the Armenian Church of Our Savior dedication, 1952, courtesy of Worcester Historical Museum.*

## **FANNY BULLOCK WORKMAN AND RURAL CEMETERY**

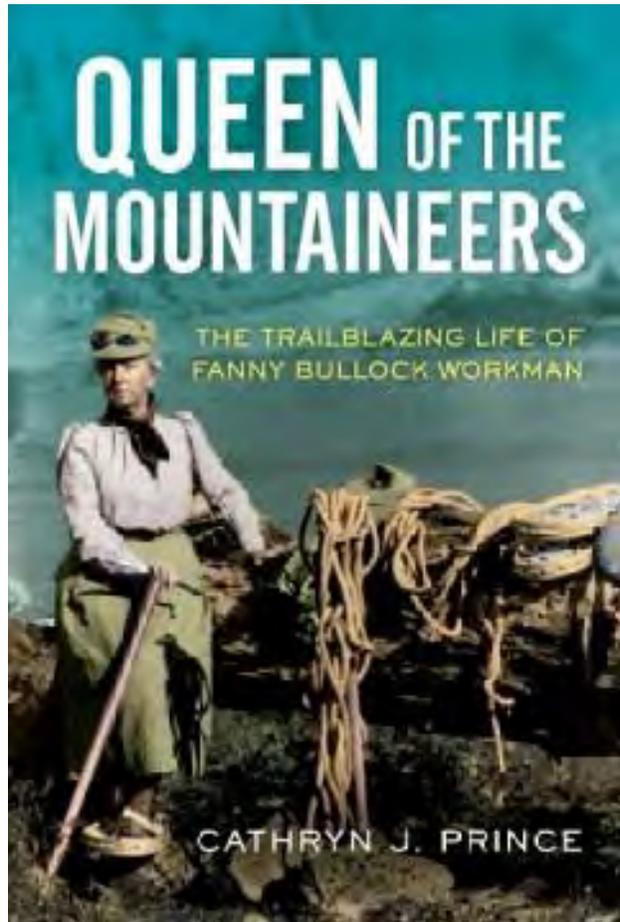
**180 Grove St., Worcester MA**

[facebook.com/RuralCemeteryCrematoryWorcester/](https://www.facebook.com/RuralCemeteryCrematoryWorcester/)

This 40-acre garden cemetery is the resting place of 13,000. As you explore this peaceful oasis, you will encounter the graves of industrialists, cultural and artistic legends, war heroes, explorers, political leaders and many others known to us for their accomplishments.

If you like to look for gravesites, consider the world-class adventurer Fanny Bullock Workman (1859-1925) of Worcester. She helped break the British stranglehold on Himalayan mountain climbing, set several women's altitude records and climbed more mountains than any of her male peers. Along the way she advocated for women's rights, including the vote. She was only the second American woman to address the Royal Geographical Society of London.

Rural Cemetery, created in 1838, was just the second rural cemetery established in New England. The first, built seven years earlier, was Mount Auburn rural cemetery. Rural cemeteries are carefully designed to include trees and flowers, paths and rolling hills to mirror the serenity of a natural setting in contrast to the earlier church or town burying grounds.



*Fannie Bullock Workman, depicted on cover of book titled "Queen of the Mountaineers."*

**JOSEPHINE WRIGHT CHAPMAN AND TUCKERMAN HALL**  
**10 Tuckerman St., Worcester MA 01609**  
508-754-1234 | [tuckermanhall.org](http://tuckermanhall.org)

Welcome to Tuckerman Hall, a stunningly beautiful work of architectural excellence created by another Salisbury Cultural District trailblazer.

Josephine Wright Chapman, one of the first female architects in this country, designed this Neo-Classical hall. It has nurtured intellectual, civic and creative endeavors for nearly 125 years. Worcester native son Stephen Salisbury III donated the land for what was a groundbreaking venture in more ways than one.

Chapman, born in 1867, bucked social norms. She sold her belongings to create a working fund and apprenticed with a noted Boston architect at a time when women were not welcomed into the architectural profession. She attained great stature and got high-profile work. In 1901, the Worcester Women's Club set historic precedent by hiring Chapman. They needed a special place to work on women's rights issues including the right to vote.



MISS JOSEPHINE WRIGHT CHAPMAN.

Today Tuckerman Hall is a popular venue for all kinds of events and celebrations. It is also the home of the Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra.

*Photo of Josephine Wright Chapman, from "The Worcester Magazine" published November 1902, by the Board of Trade of Worcester, Massachusetts.*

**HELEN BIGELOW MERRIMAN AND WORCESTER ART MUSEUM**  
**55 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609**  
508-799-4406 | [worcesterart.org](http://worcesterart.org)

One of New England's finest art museums, WAM was started in 1896 when a powerhouse team joined forces and resources. It is well known that the ambitious group included one of Worcester's most generous benefactors and visionaries, Stephen Salisbury III. But key to the endeavor was painter and philanthropist Helen Bigelow Merriman (1844-1933).

Sole heir to her father's carpet fortune, Helen was also a writer and a passionate advocate for art education. A founding WAM board member, she set the high standards that helped make the museum what it is today. Helen and husband Rev. Daniel Merriman (Central Congregational Church) gave generously of their energies and resources. They were among the five top donors to the building fund and Rev. Merriman was WAM's first president.

Helen helped lead the effort to build the museum's art collection, donating both works and funds to purchase art. She also championed women artists, including Sarah Wyman Whitman and Cecilia Beaux.



*Painting of Helen Bigelow Merriman by Cecilia Beaux (American, 1855–1942). Photo courtesy Worcester Art Museum.*



## **LEON KROLL AND WORCESTER MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM (“THE AUD”)**

**Lincoln Square**

[worcaud.com/history](http://worcaud.com/history)

Inside Worcester Memorial Auditorium are three massive murals depicting war scenes. The largest — the "Shrine of the Immortal" — shows an American soldier ascending to heaven. He is surrounded by Americans of multiple ethnicities living in harmony. Peace and hope are among the messages.

It took Artist Leon Kroll three years and one broken leg (he fell off the scaffold) to paint the famed murals. He was a devoted artist who studied in France, lived in New York City and Gloucester, Massachusetts, where he became friends with artists like Paul Manship, Walker Hancock and the Folly Cove Artists.

This auditorium is closed, awaiting restoration. Dedicated in 1933 as a memorial to those who died in World War I, it was used for a concert by Bob Dylan’s Rolling Thunder Revue. A scene from the film “American Hustle” was filmed here in 2013.

Possible future uses include a high-tech performance space, IMAX-style theater, competitive gaming, e-sports center, restaurants and shops.

*Photo of Leon Kroll. Courtesy Worcester Historical Museum.*

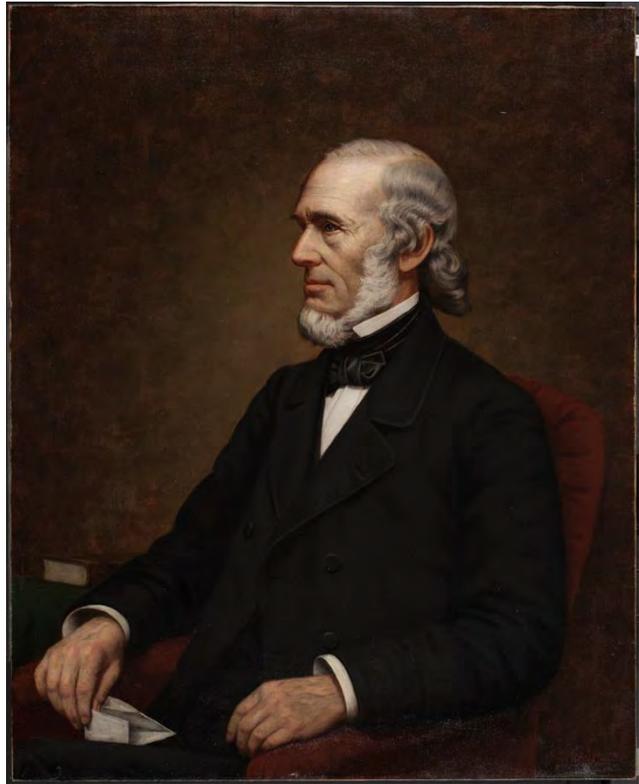
## ICHABOD WASHBURN AND WASHBURN & MOEN MANUFACTURING CO.

Behind every architectural wonder in this district is an outstanding story. This mill complex is no exception. Here's a story about hoop skirts and barbed wire.

Thanks, in part, to Ichabod Washburn (1798-1868), Worcester was home to the world's largest manufacturer of wire — Washburn & Moen Wire Co.

The wire manufactured here was used for the ubiquitous hoop skirt, fencing and pianos. At one time, Washburn was Worcester's largest employer.

At 9, Washburn was a blacksmith's apprentice. By 33 he had improved the quality, machinery and production of wire. In fact, he is known as father of the wire industry. Now called Northworks, the historic mill Washburn founded houses businesses, shops and restaurants.



Washburn was also an abolitionist and champion of education. The generous man who advocated for the people helped found Worcester Polytechnic Institute and taught vocational skills. He established WPI's philosophy of "theory and practice." He also supported construction of Mechanics Hall and Memorial Hall in Worcester. One of his significant bequests established the first Memorial Hospital, the predecessor of today's UMass Memorial healthcare giant.



*Portrait of Ichabod Washburn. Photo courtesy Worcester Polytechnic Institute.*

*Photo of American Steel & Wire yards. Courtesy Worcester Historical Museum.*

## ENJOY MORE TRAILBLAZING EXPERIENCES!

[discovercentralma.org/see-do/events/](https://discovercentralma.org/see-do/events/)

Take a few minutes to explore all the events listed on the Discover Central Mass calendar for more celebrations of trailblazers, past and present, in the Salisbury Cultural District and beyond. From the Massachusetts Symphony's Jazz in the Park honoring great African American composers, to special events and innovative festivals like Touch Tomorrow at WPI, there are many trailblazing stories and experiences to celebrate in the heart of Worcester.



*Members of the Massachusetts Symphony perform at a summer concert entitled “Jazz in the Park: Celebrating Great African-American Composers.”*