

NORTH PLYMOUTH, 1824

BOOK 151, PAGE 218

PLYMOUTH CORDAGE COMPANY

WORLD'S LARGEST ROPE MAKER

In 1824, Bourne Spooner, born in Plymouth in 1790 and a descendant of the original Plymouth colonists and sea captains, founded the Plymouth Cordage Company with ten local investors and capital of \$20,000. That year Spooner was granted a charter for producing cordage, mainly ropes and cords used in the marine market for rigging on ships. Ropewalks, with 220 degree hot tar to weatherproof hemp rope were subject to fire, forcing the company to locate on Plymouth's northern border.

The Cordage Company brought Plymouth into the Industrial Revolution . At the time, commerce traveled over the ocean. In 1845, the Old Colony Railroad connected Plymouth to Boston and beyond, expanding The Cordage Company's market and their business.

By 1924, The Cordage Company had 1,779 employees including many European immigrants . From 1941 to 1945 the company produced many items for the war effort and received the Army-Navy "E" Award for excellence in maritime production. The Cordage Company was unique in its era for the development of employee housing, education and other employee benefits.

For many years, The Cordage Company kept its vibrancy through diversification with other products. In 1965, a hostile takeover ended The Cordage Company's 141 year operation.

In 2000, JD Cordage LLC purchased the site for the Cordage Commerce Center, donating space for the Cordage Museum. In 2008, the site now called the Seaport at Cordage Park was designated a growth district by Governor Deval Patrick to enhance redevelopment efforts.

**Compliments of Register of Deeds John R. Buckley, Jr.
and Marilyn M. Dupuis**

From the "Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Notable Land Records Collection"