

# RUFUS PORTER

(May 1, 1792 - August 13, 1884)

Rufus Porter was a traveling folk artist who decorated walls with stenciled images and original paintings throughout New England during the first half of the 1800s. His payment was often "bed and board" rather than hard cash. So, it is very possible that he laid his head down in Townsend Harbor while creating the scenes on the Oliver Reed Homestead's bedroom walls. His wall paintings were less costly for homeowners than expensive imported wallpaper of the time. Unfortunately, much of his work elsewhere in the region was destroyed when wallpaper was applied in later years. Subsequent stripping the paper removed the mural paint underneath. The Reed Homestead murals have escaped damage and appear as bright as they probably did in the early 1800s.

## Rufus Porter's Inventions

Aerial Locomotive, Air Pump, Automatic Grain Weighing Machines, Blind Fastener, Cam Lever Vise, Chair-Cane, Churn, Cork Maker, Corn-Sheller, Distance Measuring Appliance, Fan Blower, Fire Alarm, Floating Dry Dock, Fog Whistle, Horsepower Mechanism, Horse-Propelled Twin Boat, Life Preserver, Prefab Movable House, Punching Machine, Revolving Almanac, Revolving Rifle (Sold to Colonel Colt), Rotary Plow, Self-Adjusting Cheese Press, and Steam Engine 1858.