

Historical Background

In 1817, Isaac Rumsey built the hamlet's first gristmill to grind the grain of local farmers. The water that powered the mill came from Five Mile Creek, also known as Enfield Creek. The first gristmill burned down in the 1830s, and Jared Treman (an ancestor of Robert Treman) replaced it with another gristmill that operated from 1839 to 1916. This 1839 gristmill is now known as the Old Mill and is listed on both the State Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

By 1866, the people of Enfield Falls could boast of a gristmill, two sawmills, a tourist hotel (the Enfield Falls Hotel), twenty-eight homes, a school, a blacksmith shop, a post office, a cooper (barrel) shop, two cemeteries, and a general store. The community continued to thrive throughout the nineteenth century both as a center of commerce serving local farmers and as a tourist destination. The hotel managers marketed the beautiful gorge and the waterfalls, including the majestic Lucifer Falls. Scenic walking tours were first designed by Mrs. Henrietta Wickham, the original owner of the hotel. In the 1850s, she laid out the same pathways and the locations of the bridges that you enjoy today – although of course her wooden staircases and fragile bridges have been replaced by safer pathways and stone bridges constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.

The transformation of Enfield Falls into a park began during World War I when Robert H. Treman of Ithaca became interested in the scenic qualities of Enfield Falls. He began buying property within the hamlet. In 1924, Robert and Laura Treman donated the land to the State of New York in order to establish the park. This park has continued to inspire visitors just as it did when Mrs. Wickham laid out her pathways through the majestic beauty of the gorge, the waterfalls, and the wonderful rock formations.



If you look out from the back porch of the Old Mill (gristmill) you will see these waterfalls. The water from this creek powered the Old Mill's waterwheel. (Photo: Brant Venables)

Welcome

A village lies buried beneath this State Park. Only the gristmill (the Old Mill) and the Miller's House remind us of Enfield Falls, a once-vibrant hamlet in the 1800s. Remnants of the settlement, including homes and two cemeteries, still exist beyond the boundary of the park.

For decades no one knew how much of the old hamlet was preserved beneath the ground, waiting to tell its story. Then, in 1998, the Friends of Robert H. Treman State Park and the park staff partnered with archaeology Professor Sherene Baugher and her Cornell University students to rediscover the life and times of Enfield Falls.

Since 1998, the rich history of the hamlet has been revealed by documentary research, archaeological excavations, and family histories. Former residents as well as the descendants of the villagers shared their stories with the archaeologists. Archaeological digs soon discovered house foundations, wells, roads, and even garbage pits buried below the present ground level. These echoes of the past have played crucial roles in helping to piece together the story of Enfield Falls.

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ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE PARK A Walking Tour

ROBERT H. TREMAN STATE PARK
Ithaca, New York



Imported British ceramics (such as the dish in this picture) were found in the middens (garbage pits) of the homes in Enfield Falls.

(Photo: Yasha Rodriguez)



Many men smoked stemmed clay pipes with pipe bowls such as those in this picture.

(Photo: Brant Venables)

What can archaeological artifacts tell us about life in Enfield Falls?

After archaeologists excavate a site, they bring the artifacts back to their laboratories to wash, identify, date, and analyze. The artifacts all provide clues about the people who lived in the community of Enfield Falls. Unlike the popular image of rural 19th century life created by Laura Ingles Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* and other popular works, the community of Enfield Falls did not primarily use homemade or locally-made goods. Because of the Erie Canal and the railroads, the community of Enfield Falls enjoyed access to imported and American-made goods. Though the families of Enfield Falls lived in a rural setting, they had tastes and material possessions that were similar to those of urban families.



Parents helped their children learn the alphabet with this whimsical cereal bowl with the alphabet around the rim.

(Photo: Brant Venables)

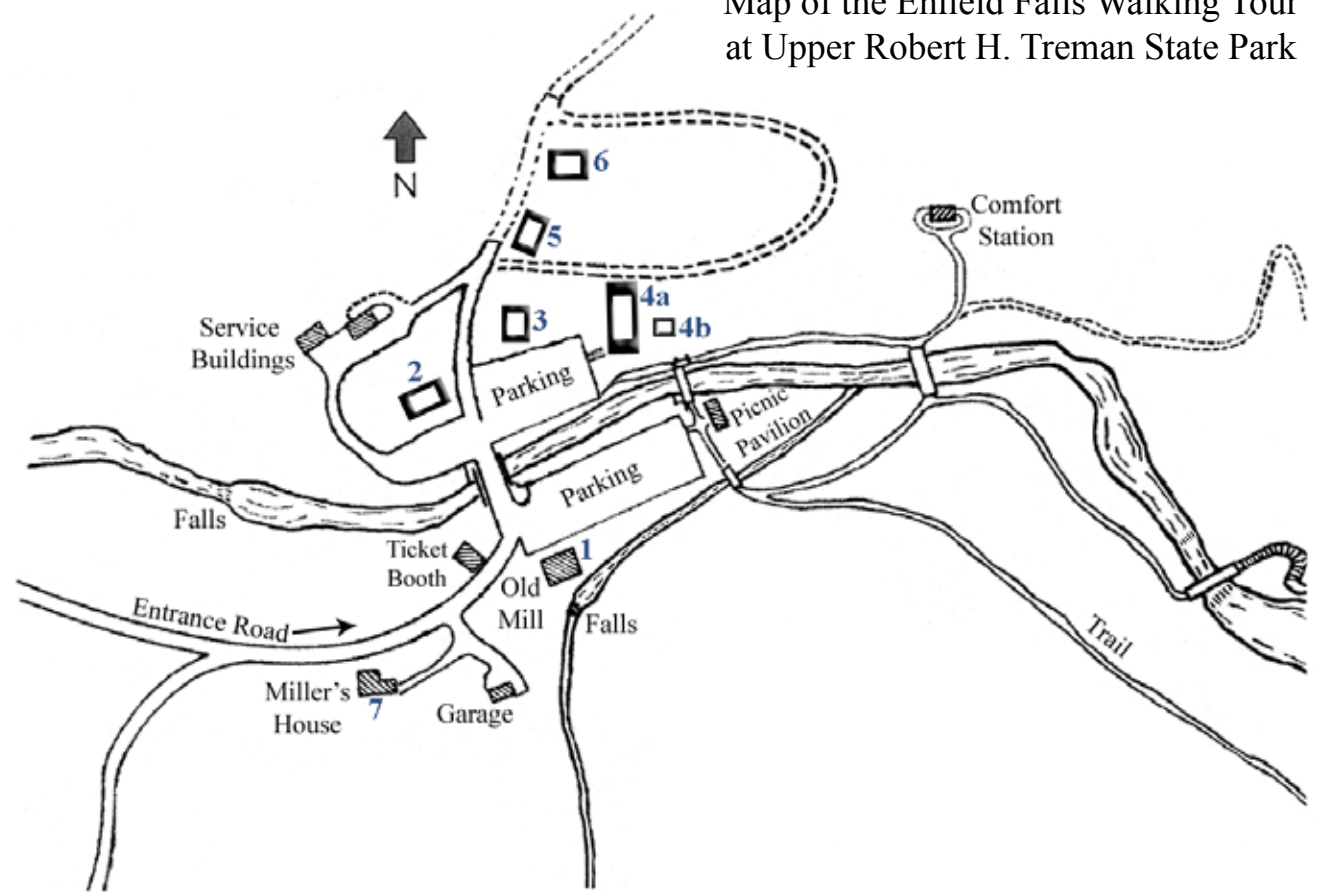
Map of the Enfield Falls Walking Tour at Upper Robert H. Treman State Park

Site 1: The Old Mill

Begin our walking tour at the Old Mill, a Greek Revival commercial building. The second and third floors of the Old Mill contain some of the machinery that was used when it was a functioning gristmill between 1839 and 1916. Also, in the basement there are displays that illustrate the big mill wheel and how the water was channeled to power the gristmill.



The Old Mill, 2005
(Photo: Brant Venables)



Site 2: The Budd House

Charles Budd worked as blacksmith. His shop was near his house, and the shop was probably destroyed during a devastating flood in 1935. Charles was also the postmaster of Enfield Falls. The parlor of his home served as the post office between 1882 and 1902. Deborah Budd helped her husband run the post office. After her husband's death in 1896, the Federal government appointed her postmaster. In the 1890s, Deborah Budd was one of a small but growing number of women postmasters in the United States. After 1924, this building was used as a home for park staff. It was demolished in 1979.



The Budd House, circa 1920
(Photo courtesy of: The History Center, Ithaca, New York)

Site 3: The Tryon House

Edward K. Tryon owned a gun factory and store in Philadelphia. In 1878, Tryon purchased the gorge, waterfalls, and the Enfield Falls Hotel. He continued to live in Philadelphia but built his summer vacation home in Enfield Falls. He hired people to manage the hotel for him. His descendants sold the property to Robert Treman, and in 1924 the former Tryon property became part of the new park. Park staff lived in the Tryon summer home until it burned down on December 26, 1926. The fire was started by candles on a Christmas tree.



The Tryon House, circa 1924
(Photo courtesy of: Finger Lakes Park Regional Office)

Site 4a & 4b: The Enfield Falls Hotel (4a) and Summer Kitchen Building (4b)

4a) The Enfield Falls Hotel (1853-1906) provided meals and rooms for middle class tourists eager to visit Enfield Creek's beautiful gorge and waterfalls. The Wickham family owned and operated the hotel from 1853 until 1868. After Henrietta Wickham sold the property there were no longer owner-managers. Other owners hired hotel managers, most lasting only a few years. However, the Teeter family managed the hotel from 1880 until 1895 and their descendants still live nearby. The hotel burned down sometime after 1906.

4b) To keep the hotel cooler in the summer, meals were cooked in a separate kitchen building.



The Hotel Front Wall Excavation, Fall 2006
(Photo: Sherene Baugher)

Site 5: The Wickham House

This home was originally owned by Albert Chapman, who also used it as a general store in the early 1850s. In 1856, Henrietta Wickham purchased the property. She converted the building into a home for her family and lived in it for decades. Because of her husband's long-term illness, Henrietta Wickham became a business woman to support her family. She owned and operated the nearby Enfield Falls Hotel. Her daughter Nettie was one of the first women to graduate from Elmira College in the 1860s. The Wickham house was torn down in the 1920s during the landscaping that occurred when the hamlet of Enfield Falls was converted into a State Park.



The Wickham House, circa 1880
(Photo courtesy of: The History Center, Ithaca, New York)

Site 6: The Duncan-Bower House

William Duncan settled in Enfield Falls in the 1850s. He worked in a sequence of occupations: housepainter, grocer, and then farmer. In 1869, Duncan's wife, Elizabeth Rumsey Duncan, inherited money from her father James Rumsey. The money enabled William and Elizabeth Duncan to purchase local farms. In 1893, Duncan sold his home to his daughter, Mary Bower, who kept the home as a summer residence until it was incorporated into the park. The house was demolished in the 1930s.

Less than a foot below the sod the archaeologists found the foundation of the Duncan family home.



The Duncan-Bower House Excavation, Fall 2001
(Photo: Sherene Baugher)

Site 7: The Miller's House

As you are leaving the park you can see the Miller's House on your left. Today the building is a private residence, so please be respectful of the family that lives there. In the 19th century, the gristmill owner, Jared Treman, and his family lived here. The house is on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places because of its well-preserved classic Greek Revival style architecture, which was popular from 1830 and 1860. Notice the colonnaded porch and the small windows called "frieze-band windows" on the second floor, classic features of Greek Revival homes.



The Miller's House, 2010
(Photo: Sherene Baugher)