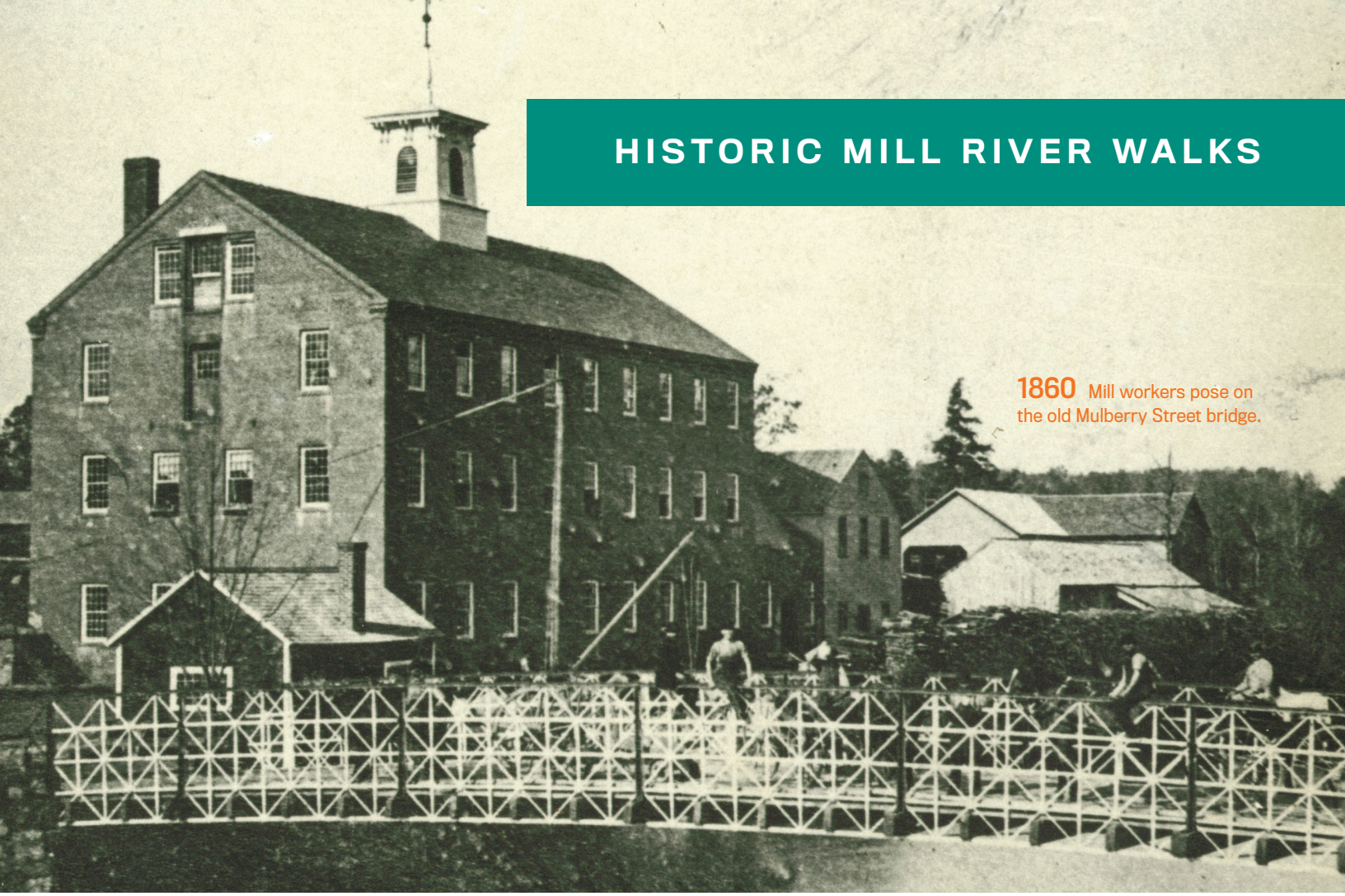
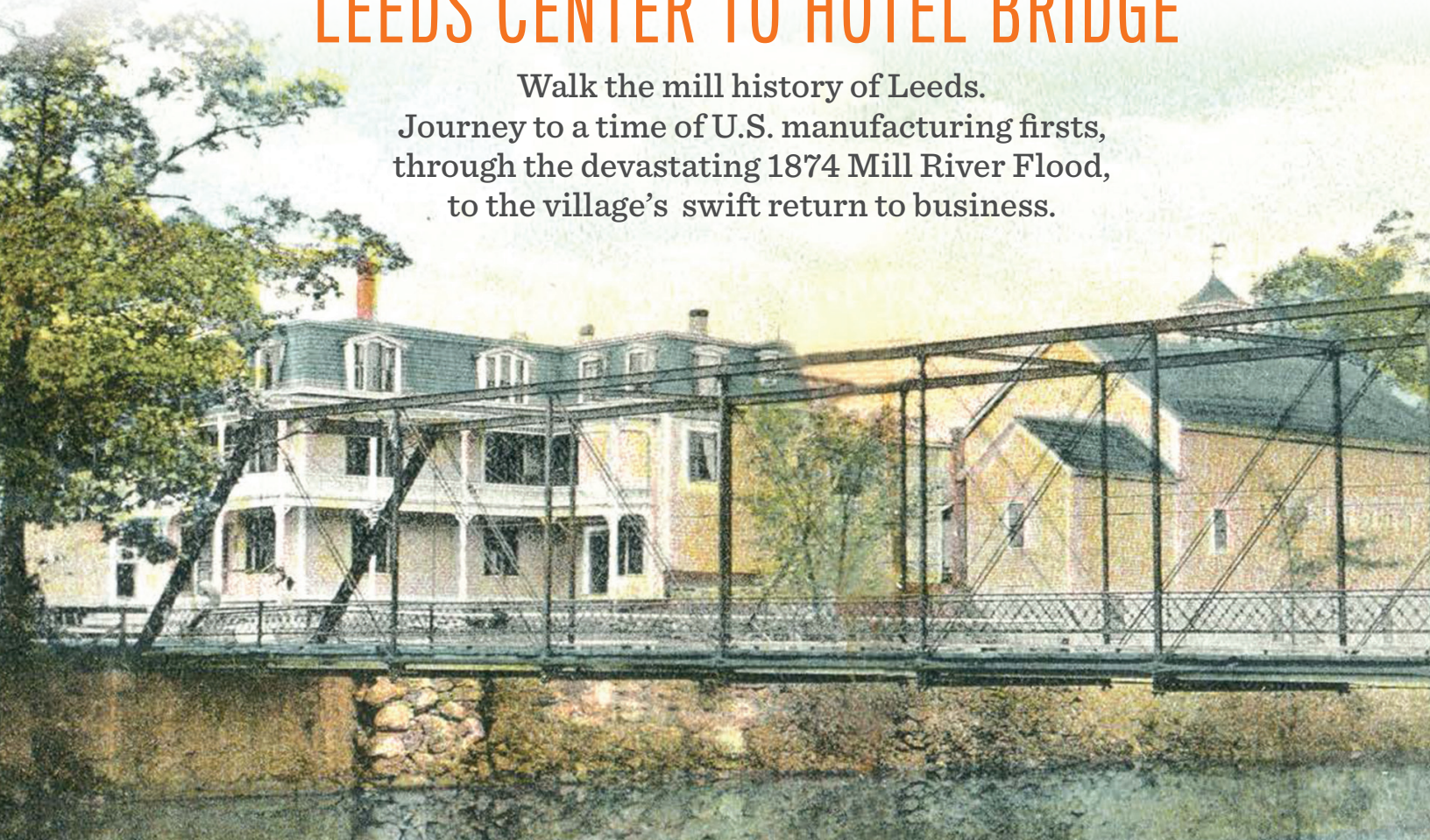
HISTORIC MILL RIVER WALKS



1860 Mill workers pose on the old Mulberry Street bridge.

LEEDS CENTER TO HOTEL BRIDGE

Walk the mill history of Leeds.
Journey to a time of U.S. manufacturing firsts,
through the devastating 1874 Mill River Flood,
to the village's swift return to business.



LEEDS MILL RIVER TOUR WALKING MAP



LEEDS MILL RIVER TOUR

Distance: .75 miles
Duration: 60 minutes

1800 Joseph Burnell builds sawmill

1809 Col. Shepherd buys cotton mill

1812 Shepherds build woolen mill on Main Street

1813 Sidney Brewster builds woolen mill

1814 Col. Shepherd converts cotton mill to woolen

1814 First schoolhouse built

1816 Shepherds patent power loom

1820-22 Cook Brothers buy Brewster's woolen mill

1824 Wool tariff

1827 Shepherds buy Cooks' mill

1827 Cooks' woolen mill fails

1828 Shepherds' woolen mills fail

1830 Shepherds' factories sold to Edward Robbins

1832 Samuel Whitmarsh and Northampton Assoc. of Education & Industry explore silk production

1835 Leeds-manufactured broadcloth wins first prize at international fair

1846

Begin your tour at the Chartpak parking lot. Look directly across Mulberry Street and see the 1814 schoolhouse, which survived the Mill River Flood of 1874. Turn left on Mulberry Street and cross the bridge to the old Nonotuck Silk Mill Boarding House on the left. While on the bridge, look upstream to see Top Dam. Look downstream to see the remains of Middle Dam and toward the west bank to see the brick building that was once Emery Wheel Works.

1 SHEPHERD'S WOOLEN MILLS & NONOTUCK SILK CO. BOARDING HOUSE

Shepherd's Hollow - Col. James Shepherd and his cousins, Charles and Thomas, ran the largest woolen business in the country. It began in 1809 on the southwest corner of Main Street and Mulberry and operated until 1828. The village of "Shepherd's Hollow," as Leeds was then called, grew considerably. The Shepherds were the first to import Merino sheep. They were the first in the United States to manufacture the durable woolen weave known as broadcloth. They patented the power loom in 1816 and began constructing looms in 1822. In 1824, the U.S. imposed a wool tariff at the same time England repealed its tariff. This hurt the domestic wool industry and the Shepherds' mills closed in 1828. The mills were sold in 1830 and became Northampton Woolen Company.

Boarding House - Skilled mill workers were brought in over the decades from neighboring states, Canada, Ireland and England. It was customary for mill owners to provide housing for employees. Several small boarding houses were situated near the factories. Nonotuck Silk Company built their finishing mill around 1859 on the west side of the river (Chartpak parking lot). A boarding house was erected on the east side of the river on Mulberry Street for female workers. The 1874 flood didn't destroy the finishing mill, but it did destroy the boarding house, and many tenants perished within. Nonotuck Silk Co. reconstructed this building during the rebuilding period after the flood.

Continue up Mulberry and turn left onto Front Street. (The stone wall on the right was commissioned by Alfred Critchlow to provide work during an economic downturn.) Continue up Front Street to the corner of Grove Avenue. On your right is the Dimock Mansion. Please respect these private homes by viewing them from Front Street.



Before the 1874 flood - Pictured here are the Nonotuck Silk Mill and the boarding house, which was situated just across the bridge on the east side of the Mill River.



1896 Ice is delivered by W.H. Rice at the mansion owned by Lucius Dimock, manager and part owner of Nonotuck Silk Company.

1847
Raw silk imported rather than raised locally

1848
Singer Sewing machine invented

1851
Northampton Woolen Manufacturing Company reorganized

1852
Machine Twist developed by Nonotuck Silk Co., Florence

1857
Financial crash

1858
Two Northmpton Woolen Co. mills in Leeds sold to Nonotuck Silk Company

2 LUCIUS DIMOCK'S MANSION

Lucius Dimock managed the Nonotuck Silk Mill. Six years after the Mill River Flood that destroyed the mill, he hired the same architect who designed the new mill and boarding house, E.C. Gardner, to design his mansion on the hill. The white tower echoes the Main Street mill's tower, creating an imposing effect below, exactly as Dimock intended. The Stick-Eastlake style marked a transition between Victorian and Arts & Crafts architecture. After decades as the neighborhood's haunted house, the mansion was converted into condominiums in 1983.

Retrace your steps down Front Street and cross over Florence Street to the bike path. This is where the Train Depot stood.

3 TRAIN DEPOT

The rail line to Williamsburg was completed in 1867, and passenger service started in February 1868. T.F. Vaughan, the Leeds Station Master, also managed the Boarding House. Vaughan took his responsibility for protecting the women boarders very seriously. At age 42, he was killed in the 1874 Mill River Flood when he re-entered the Boarding House to rescue Mary Woodward. Religious services were held in the depot after the flood, as the chapel had been destroyed. After 94 years of service, the "Burgy Bullet" had its last run in August of 1962.

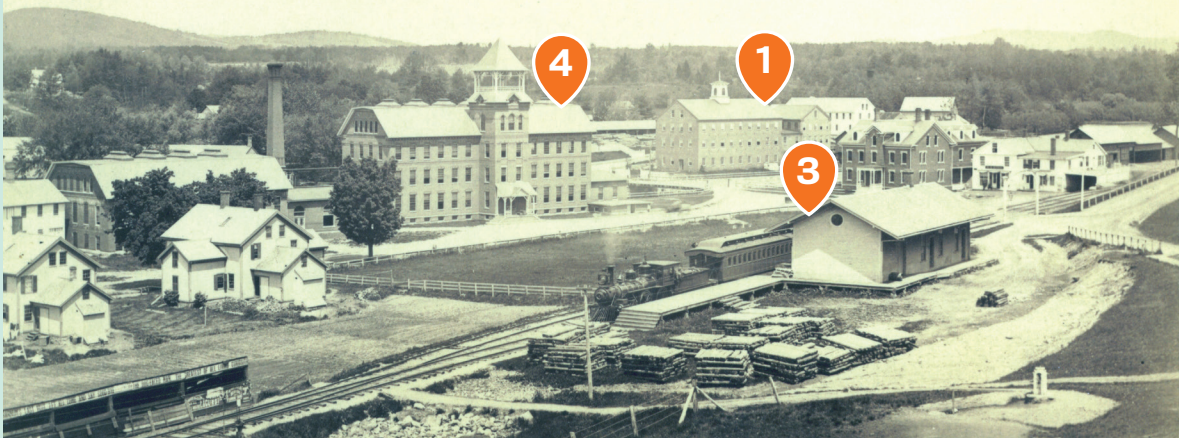
Walk down to the corner of Main and Mulberry Street and turn left onto Main Street. The Leeds Village Apartment building on your right was once the Nonotuck Silk Company. Please respect these private homes by viewing from the park across the street.

4 NONOTUCK SILK MILL

In 1852, Samuel Hill of the Nonotuck Silk Company of Florence developed an evenly spun thread which ran smoothly in the new Singer sewing machines. "Machine Twist," as it was called, was unlike other threads that tangled and broke frequently. Machine Twist was a national success, and the Nonotuck Silk Company grew. They bought two of the Leeds woolen mills in 1858. By 1859, the mills were in full operation and continued until the 1874 flood destroyed all the dams and severely damaged Nonotuck's mill building and the support buildings next to it. The factories were quickly rebuilt. By 1875, Nonotuck Silk Company was the largest manufacturer in Northampton with product worth $1.1 million. Nonotuck Silk Company continued in this location until 1922 when it became the Corticelli Silk Company, which continued making quality thread until 1931. During that time there was a trolley, called the "Corticelli Express," that stopped in front of the building for passengers to ride into Northampton.

Continue down Main Street to the Hotel Bridge. On the left (east) side of Main Street is where the Button Factory stood.

CIRCA 1900 Leeds village was a thriving manufacturing center with Nonotuck Silk Mill in full production.

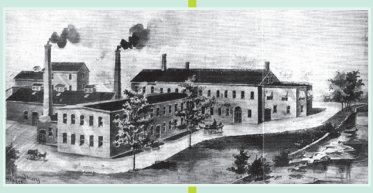


1858
Alfred Critchlow buys one of Northampton Woolen Co.'s mills for his button factory.

1859
First vegetable ivory buttons made in U.S.

1870
Emery Wheel Works moves to Leeds.

1871
George Warner buys button factory.



1872
Emery factory burns; moves to Nonotuck building on western bank of Mill River. They made made hydrants and machine equipment until 1913.

1874
MILL RIVER FLOOD

Nonotuck mill is severly damaged.

Emery Wheel suffers minor damage.

Button factory is destroyed.

1875
Button factory is rebuilt

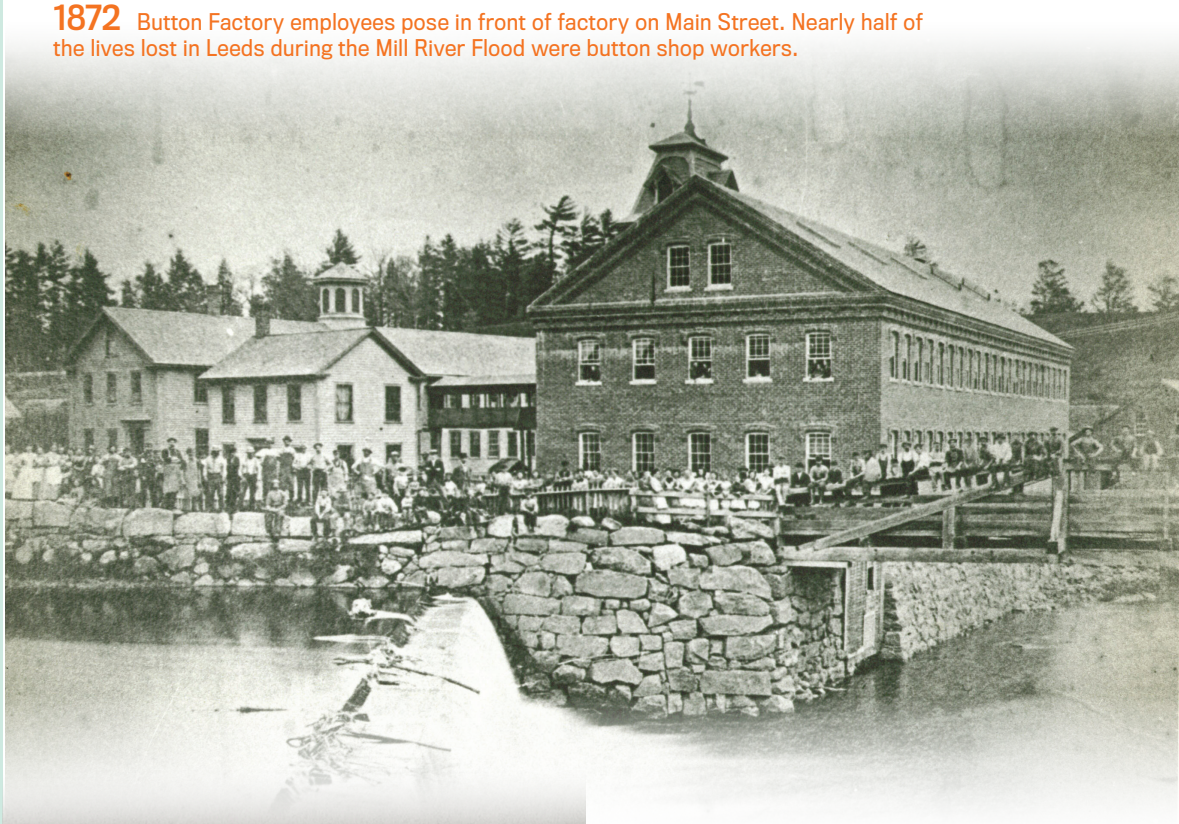
1876
Nonotuck Silk Company's Machine Twist thread is a success at the Philadephia Centennial Exhibition

5 BUTTON FACTORY

In 1858, Alfred Critchlow purchased the Northampton Woolen Company's lower mill to use as a button factory. His factory was the first in the United States to manufacture vegetable ivory buttons. Critchlow imported six hundred to 700 tons of Corozo nuts from South America per year. Corozo nuts are melon-sized and grow on Tagua Palms. Inside the large nut are many egg-sized seeds. The shell of these seeds is hard and white, resembling ivory. The soft inner seed was loosened from the usable shell after a drying process. Once dried, the seed shells were hand carved into buttons using lathes. Buttons were dyed, etched, drilled, polished, carded and boxed. In 1874, Critchlow sold the factory to his clerk, George Warner. Before the 1874 flood, the Button Factory produced 600 gross *(1 gross equals 144 buttons)* per day and employed 175 people. The flood destroyed every mill building and took the lives of about two dozen button shop workers. The factory was rebuilt and resumed business the following year. By 1880, the button factory produced 1,000-1,500 gross per day.

Continue down Main Street and cross Arch Street.

1872 Button Factory employees pose in front of factory on Main Street. Nearly half of the lives lost in Leeds during the Mill River Flood were button shop workers.





1874 Button Factory is destroyed by the Flood. Nearly half of the 51 lives lost in Leeds during the Mill River Flood were button factory workers.

1875 Button Factory is rebuilt



1872
An iron bridge replaced the wooden bridge over Cook's Dam

1878
Freshet washes out road to west side of river

1880
Hotel Bridge erected

1885
Leeds Hotel built

1913
Emery Wheel Co. fails

1922
Nonotuck Silk becomes Corticelli Silk. Uses Emery building until 1931

1931
Corticelli Silk Company closes

1938
New England Woven Co. purchases Emery building from Corticelli Silk Co. Manufactures labels until 1960s





1874 Mill RiverFlood destroys Cook's Dam

6 COOK'S DAM

Sydney Webster established a small woolen mill here in 1813. The three Cook brothers bought the small mill sometime between 1820 and 1822. The mill burned down in 1823, and the Cooks immediately rebuilt. The Cooks' woolen business failed in 1827, and the mill was sold to the Shepherds' enterprise. Boston cloth merchant Edward Robbins bought the mill in 1830, and his sole heir sold it and the water rights in 1855 to Thomas Musgrave of the Northampton Woolen Company. George Warner of the button factory eventually took ownership of the site. Since the Cook brothers' time, the dam has been called Cook's Dam. Sometime before 1895, it became the Nonotuck Silk Electric Power Station, producing electricity for the silk mills throughout town and the electric trolley.

Retrace your steps down Main Street to the Hotel Bridge.

7 HOTEL BRIDGE

The 1880 Pratt "through truss" wrought iron bridge in Leeds is the oldest bridge of this type in Massachusetts. Old Shepherd's Road Bridge, as it was first named, was built after the 1878 winter freshet carved a new river channel that washed away the only roadway to more than a dozen tenement homes. Taxpayers petitioned the city to construct a new road and erect a new bridge. The bridge was built by the Wrought Iron Bridge Co. of Canton, Ohio, and completed in January of 1881. The height of the uniquely turned hand guards suggests that the bridge was designed as a pedestrian bridge. The lattice railing has handsome rosette connections. Intricate iron scroll work tops the bridge designer's nameplate at the bridge portals. The Leeds Hotel was built on the northwest side of the bridge on Water Street between 1885 and 1886. Soon Old Shepherd's Road Bridge was called Hotel Bridge. To learn more about the Hotel Bridge restoration effort please visit the Leeds Civic Association (LCA) website at LeedsCivic.org.

Walk 25 yards north on the river side of Main Street to the memorial for the Flood victims.



Leeds Hotel and the Hotel Bridge

8 MILL RIVER FLOOD MEMORIAL

After the Mill River flood of 1874, the village of Haydenville was the only community along the river to erect a memorial stone to honor the victims of the disaster. In 1999, on the 125th anniversary of the flood, Leeds commissioned a memorial stone listing the names of the fifty-one victims who lost their lives during the Flood. The LCA raised and donated $1,835, Russ Myette donated the land on Main Street, and the new memorial stone was dedicated on May 16, 1999. In 2007, the LCA was awarded a $10,000 Community Development Block Grant to create a pocket park at the Flood Memorial site. The park was dedicated on May 18, 2008.



1874 Leeds Center after the Flood



Survivors in William Quigley's Main Street house gaze at flood damage



Main Street engine house in ruins



Arwork depicting the the Leeds flood scene was used as a Leeds Buttton Factory box label.



1873
BEERS' Map of Leeds

THE RIVER RUNS THROUGH US...

The **Mill River Greenway Initiative** and **Smith College** are creating a series of self-guided riverwalks along the Mill River in Northampton and Williamsburg, Massachusetts. Our goal is to celebrate the river, attract residents and visitors to its natural and historic heritage, and spur action to preserve and enhance the river's treasures.

In this brochure, co-sponsored by the **Leeds Civic Association** and **Friends of Northampton Trails and Greenways**, we focus on the extraordinary mill history of Leeds and the impact the Mill River had on the village's woolen, button, and silk mills situated along it. We welcome you to join the Mill River Greenway Initiative and add your voice and support in our efforts to open up the river for exploration and recreation.

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MILL RIVER GREENWAY INITIATIVE
millrivergreenway.org

SMITH COLLEGE
smith.edu

LEEDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION
leedscivic.org

FNT Friends of Northampton Trails
fntg.net