

CAMELFORD CORN MILL

If you walk right to the end of Enfield Park and look up the river you will see a small waterfall. On old maps this is marked as a weir with a sluice gate. This was where the water was taken from the river for the corn mill leat that goes down the western edge of the park. As you stand there, look ahead to the left and you will see a horizontal gap between large stone blocks. This is where the bank of the leat was taken down or washed away to leave the pool as it is today. Water from the leat now feeds the pond, while the rest of the leat has been filled in all the way down to Camelford. There were 3 further sluice gates along the length of the leat and as it approached the mill the leat is marked on old maps as a 'mill race.' The miller's house was on the corner of Mill Lane and up the lane is where the corn mill was. If you look at the side of this house from the road you will see an area that is slightly set back and is now has a window in it. This is where the over-shot waterwheel was. The mill is thought to have closed in the 1910s and it is interesting that you can still see the cast iron cover in the pavement just past the miller's house where the water went after powering the corn mill. Although there are several covers in the pavement, there is only one that is placed diagonally in the direction that the mill water used to flow back into the River Camel. Have a look!



Photographs by Bob Ireland. Published by *The Camelfordian*.

Camelford Town Trail and Enfield Park

“... a snaking street with fine historic buildings backed by green fields with mature trees along their hedges.” *John Betjeman*



A leisurely walk around the Town Centre and Park should take about an hour but we hope you will spend a little longer and make full use of the shops and facilities we have to offer. The park has a solid surface circular path which is wheelchair friendly.

There are free toilets at the entrance to the park.



More information at
camelfordian.co.uk and camelford.org



Camelford - Historic Town Trail

From Churchfield Car Park:



(1) **St Thomas Church**, adjoining the car park, was built in 1938. The parish church is at Lanteglos, about 1.5 miles from the town, originally Norman. In 1311 the Camelford burgesses (leading

citizens) built their own chapel near the river crossing in the town and dedicated it to St Thomas of Canterbury. However, this was despoiled at the Reformation, fell into disrepair and was eventually demolished. The name alone remains to connect the old with the new. There is a plaque near the entrance to the park to commemorate the site.

Because Bodmin Moor presented such difficult terrain for travellers (John Wesley got lost there in 1743), the old roads skirted round to north and south, and Camelford was an important staging post on the northern route. In the mid-18th century there was a great move to improve the main



through roads and Turnpike Trusts were formed. Money for the work was raised by tolls; there were three toll-gates (turnpikes) on the roads into Camelford. The Reverend William Phillips, vicar of Lanteglos at the time, was an ardent supporter of the cause and made himself responsible for many of the granite milestones along the turnpike roads, some of which are still in place. The mail coaches, which also carried passengers, travelled regularly along this road.

Why is it called Enfield Park?

A Mr Albert Carew Tingcombe was born in 1860. In 1880, Albert Tingcombe decided to go to London to find employment in one of the great wholesale warehouses. After many years struggling he became very successful and returned to Camelford in 1920. Having had a prosperous career, he purchased a field which he intended to lay out as a park and pleasure ground for the use of the residents of Camelford. He had a vision of running tracks, tennis courts, a bowling green and, for the children, a swimming pond (as it was then called).

The park was officially opened in August 1922. He named it Enfield Park because of his business success in "one of the most beautiful spots around London". Apparently the opening ceremony was the largest function since the Coronation (1911) owing to free tea being given to children, and the large attendance .



The people of Camelford at the opening of the park in 1922 from the Camelford History & Archive Trust.



Enfield Park



The park has a circular path which takes you along the upper side and along the river's edge. There is a pond with a decked observation area to enable you to look for pondlife safely. The wooden bridge offers you an alternative route out of the park and into Slaughterbridge via Trefrew Road.



Access

Near the entrance to the park is a fully enclosed children's play area with benches and tables for picnics.

To make sure that disabled children could enjoy the park, Camelford succeeded in obtaining an Aiming High for Disabled Children grant in 2011 and installed a wheelchair accessible roundabout and a basket swing. The site has 3 level entrances and an accessible toilet 50m away. Fitness equipment for adults has also been installed.

Flora and fauna The far end of the park has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status due to the presence of otters and bullhead fish which are protected species only to be found in clean water. Herons, kingfishers, dippers and yellow wagtails are often seen along the river and if you are lucky you may see deer.

Dogs

It is possible to exercise your dog providing it is on a lead. There are waste bins along the path.

(2) The Town Jail: Crossing the road from the car park you come to a long building (now Sleeps) which was once the town jail, where during the Napoleonic wars it is said that many French prisoners of war were locked up. During the First World War it became a cheese factory and, later, it was used as an army barracks and nursing home.



Turn towards the bridge and cross the entrance to **College Road**, so called because Sir James Smith's Grammar School was there (about 100 yards up) from 1894 until the new comprehensive school was built in 1962 at the top of the town. Until recently it

was used by Camelford Council for offices.

The original foundation was endowed in 1679 by Sir James Smith, MP for the town, but because of "misappropriation of the funds" the school did not function until the 19th century. The present school, at the top of the town, was opened in 1962 and dedicated to Sir James Smith as the first man to support education in the town. It was the first comprehensive school in Cornwall and was the brainchild of the then headmaster, Kenneth Sprayson, who was awarded the MBE for his contribution to education in Cornwall.



(3) The handsome **Bridge House**, on the left, shows that by the mid-17th century, Camelford was a sufficiently prosperous place to be deemed suitable for a substantial "gentleman's residence". Looking back at the gable-end of the house from the bridge you can see how the roof was raised

(probably in the late-18th century) to accommodate a third story, making the house even more imposing. The name of the town tells us the earliest crossing of the River Camel at this point was a ford, but certainly there has been a bridge here since 1521, when there are records of it being repaired. Probably the earliest one was of timber, to be superseded later by stone.

As carts and carriages got bigger and heavier, the bridge would have been strengthened and widened. More recently, the river bed underneath has been deepened, to accommodate the floodwater after heavy rain, which used to flood the lower part of the town.

(4) The Mason's Arms:

Shortly after crossing the bridge, you will come to the Mason's Arms on the left, obviously a coaching inn with its two big archways. The earliest part of the building (c1600) is that on the right and it was progressively extended



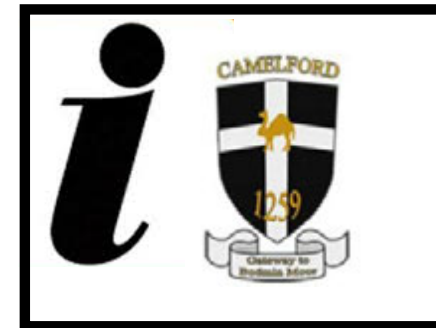
down the street in the next 200 years. Behind the pub, in what was once the stable yard, are three tall posts, all that remains of the stables where jingles, or small carts, were kept. In 1755 the inn was described as "that ancient commodious and well-accustomed inn situated in the great post road from London to Falmouth".



(14) The large white house on the other side of the bridge is known as the Manor House or simply **Camelford House**. Its most famous owner was Thomas Pitt 2nd and last Baron of Camelford, cousin of William Pitt, the Prime Minister. During a short but adventurous life, Lord Camelford ran away

from school to join the Navy at the age of 14, was shipwrecked, flogged and court-martialled; he travelled secretly to France planning to assassinate Napoleon and was finally killed in a duel at the age of 29.

There is, of course, much more to see in the town and several of the shops and businesses offer tourist information. They will display this logo in the window.



Things to find out

1. Where is the smallest window in the town?
2. Who was Samuel Pollard?
- 3 Where is the town water pump?
- 4 Why is the town called Camelford?
- 5 When did we receive the Royal Charter?

The next turning on the left is **Mill Lane**. The old mill house is on the right-hand side of the lane, behind the shop on the corner. A leat from the River Camel turned the water-wheel and was then channelled under the road and so back to the river. The next door building was the grain store for the mill. Some years ago, workmen found that the spaces between the first-floor joists were choked with chaff, which had to be carted away by the sack full. Looking across the street, on the gable end of the building below the Mason's Arms, can be seen a tiny chink in the wall, through which the residents could read the time on the Town Hall clock.

Immediately before the bridge is the entrance to **Enfield Park**, which was presented to the town in 1922 by Albert Tingcombe, a Camelford tailor, who lived in Enfield for most of his working life and then returned to his birthplace. Previously on this site was the Acetylene Gas Company, which produced gas lighting in the town. The process involved adding water to calcium carbide, the resultant gas being piped into large storage containers. The old mill leat can still be traced along the upper edge of the park.

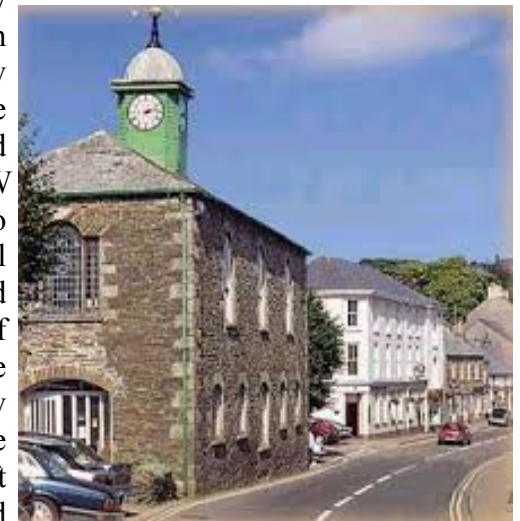


At this point you may wish to visit the park or continue up the hill and back to the car park. A brief history of the park begins on page 10.



(5) Next door but one is the "**Free Methodist Chapel**". This was built in 1837 by a group of Wesleyans who had rebelled against the "despotic and tyrannical" organisation of the Central Methodist Conference and had been banned from the original chapel in Back Street. At the time of its opening, the chapel was described in the "West Briton" as "a neat building and an ornament to the town".

(6) Just up the road, where Chapel Street forks off to the right, stands the **Town Hall**, topped with a weather-vane in the shape of a golden camel. It was built in 1806 by the Duke of Bedford. Originally the ground floor was a market house, with the main entrance in the centre, facing the road. The upper chamber is reached from Chapel Street by a double flight of granite steps and in 1906, was still the meeting place for the Petty Sessions, County Court and the Education Committee. The building is now the town library. By the entrance can be seen an old bell, presented to the town by the Mayor, W Prideaux, in 1699. It used to hang in the cupola (the small dome over the clock tower) and served to warn townspeople of fire or any other calamity. The stained glass "Venetian" window above this entrance carries the old borough's arms and was a gift to the town from T E Wakefield in 1933.





(7) and (8) Going up Fore Street you will notice, on both sides, alleyways or "opes" between the houses, which gave the householders and shopkeepers access to their rear premises and provide short cuts between Fore Street and Chapel Street, or Front and Back Streets, as they were once known. The opeways are among Camelford's special places.

(9) Further up the hill on the left is "**The Indian King**", part of an L-shaped building which was formerly an inn. The name "Indian King" dates back to the eighteenth century when a Cherokee Indian, his wife and son, were brought over from North America. They may well have travelled up-country from a Cornish port and would, certainly, have aroused great interest at the places where they stayed en route. In 1735 the name was changed to The Higher King's Arms. By the nineteenth century it was simply known as the King's Arms and the name has now come full circle to The Indian King.



(10) Turning right, up **Cleas Road**, the old elementary school, built in 1843 for 300 children, is on the left. The 1753 map of the town shows an area called 'The Cleas or Fair Park' – an irregular shaped open area with a sinuous lane crossing it, essentially on the line of the present Cleas Road. A small square pound (for holding trespassing livestock) was set immediately south of the road. Its shape gives the impression that the Fair Park had by 1753 been encroached upon in a piecemeal fashion, especially by buildings and enclosures on the eastern, Fore Street side.

On the right is the site of the **North Cornwall Museum and Gallery** (which closed in 2013), originally a coach and wagon building business.



(11) Turn right into **Chapel Street** which has cobbled gullies running down each side, with a little slate bridge to each house. The Chapel is now a private residence.

(12) Part way down the hill on the right is the Old Slaughter House. **The Chapel**, after which the street is named, is about halfway down the hill on the left. The date, 1810, is over the door, but this building replaced an earlier one, built in 1785, during John Wesley's lifetime. Wesley was a regular preacher in Camelford from 1747 onwards. At his first visit he was stoned and hounded out of the town, but he later built up a strong following. Facing the Methodist Chapel is the old Sunday School. The imposing building to the right of the gateway was once the Manse or minister's house.



(13) Further down on the left is **Warmington House**, home to Sir James Smith MP in the 17th century. It was bought by George Warmington in 1704 for £90. In 1722 he sold the house to Lord Falmouth. A hundred years later it was bought by the Earl of Darlington, one of the great patrons of the town.