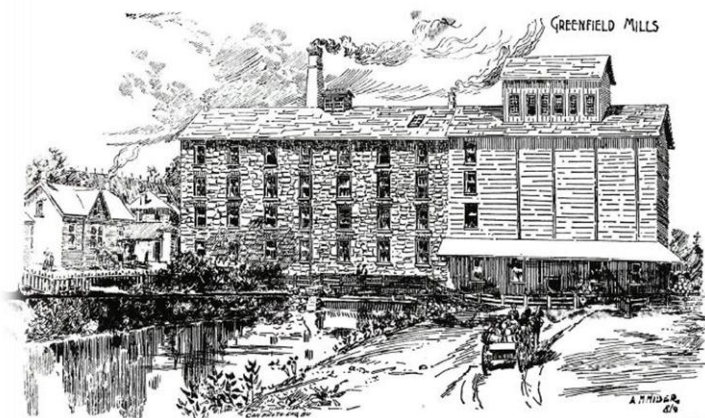




Greenfield Village Heritage Walking Tour



GREENFIELD MILLS, AYR, ONT.
DAVID GOLDIE, PROPRIETOR.

Welcome!

Greenfield Heritage Walking Tour

“Our Todays and Yesterdays” –Andrew Taylor

1

Overview of Greenfield

John Goldie Sr:

Greenfield is a hamlet north of Ayr established by John Goldie who was a Scottish botanist, horticulturalist and businessman. He was fascinated by flora and is noted as being adventurous in his travels, travelling as far as Russia to discover new species and record them. His deep interest led to the Goldie fern being named after him.

Born March 21, 1793 in Kirkoswald, Ayrshire, Scotland, he was trained in botany and horticulture and became associated with the Botanic Gardens of Glasgow where he met and became a great friend of David Douglas after whom the Douglas Fir was named.

From 1817 to 1819, John journeyed to Canada as well as the Northern U.S. collecting plant specimens which he documented in *Diary of a Journey through Upper Canada, and Some of the New England States, 1819*. In May of 1890, John Goldie Sr. was inducted into the Waterloo County Hall of Fame.

Settlement of Greenfield:

A friend of John Goldie Sr., Thomas Fulton, settled on a farm named ‘Belig’ (named after a small summit in Scotland) -situated about a mile north of the village of Ayr on the Roseville Road near the Greenfield Mill today (the farm was later sold to the C.P.R. for a gravel pit). He encouraged John Goldie Sr. to immigrate to Canada.

John Goldie Sr. and his wife left Wrightfield near Alloway to come to Canada with their two sons and four daughters (two other sons went to the U.S. in 1842 but joined the family afterwards). When the Goldie family first arrived, they stayed with the Fulton family. In 1844, they leased property for a farm (Lot 37) on the Nith River from Honourable William Dickson and took on a mortgage when Dickson passed away three years later.

John Goldie Sr. established a farmstead and commercial nursery to supply fruit trees and ornamental plants to the Canadian market naming it ‘Greenfield’ after a nursery/ farm near his home in Ayrshire, Scotland. He spent most of his life overseeing Greenfield Farm.

3185 Greenfield Rd**History:**

The River House, otherwise known as the White House, is the oldest on the street and was built by George Hazel who immigrated in 1831. The house was unconnected to the Goldie family until David Goldie, a son of John Goldie Sr., bought the house in 1860 from Adam Hazel, likely the son of George, originally as the home for the head miller for the Greenfield Mill that the Goldie family had established.

David's wife, Isabella or 'Bella' who he married in 1869, had a 'soft spot' for the home which resulted in the family living there for nine years (1869-1878). She gave birth to six of her children at the home. The Goldies had a close relationship with their employees, and the story goes that when one of her daughters named Anne was born, the workers celebrated by having a big bonfire on the sand hill opposite the house which one of her children claimed, "frighten[ed] mother nearly out of her wits."

In 1878, David Goldie's family moved to the Brick House (*see #5*) and for several years The River House was occupied by a succession of head millers and coopers employed by the Goldie Mill but remained the property of the Goldie family until 1910. Afterwards, the house as well as the mill were owned by various owners such as Canadian Cereal and Milling Co., and Hecker H-O Co. that produced the cereal 'Force'. However, eventually the home became uninhabited and began to fall into disrepair. In 1968, Erwin and Helen Rung bought the River House and spent eight years restoring and repairing it. In 1976, Chris and Mary-Jean Page bought the River House's half-acre lot with the house. Eleven years later they also bought Lots 37 & 38. Soon after, the River House became designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1990 for its historical significance and its association with the Goldie family and the Goldie Milling Company.

Architecture:

The original house was a 3-bay, 1 ½ storey wood frame with a verandah that encircled two sides. In the 1830s and 1840s, an upper half-storey as well as two chimneys and a kitchen wing were added. A board-and-batten summer kitchen was joined to the east side of the home and a garage to the east wall. One of the original windows was replaced by a fireplace and chimney on the main façade on the west wall. The original exterior was clapboard in the square five pattern.

After its vacancy, there was a great amount of restoration that needed to be done. The verandah was restored, the chimneys rebuilt and the roof returned to cedar shingles, and a dormer was added. Chris and Mary-Jean Page also replanted trees unique to the Carolinian forest region on the house's property.

The restoration of the old roadway that ran west of the house added an alternate driveway entrance. It is noted that the position of the main façade of the house on the west side was due to the presence of a road that existed by the home according to the Tremaine Map of 1861. The old road branched south off of Greenfield Road, passed west of the River House, crossed the river and joined Robson's Lane off of Trussler Rd (*see the map at front of booklet*).

3

Row 'Salt Box' Cottages

3161, 3163, 3167, 3169, 3175 Greenfield Rd

History:

The row of cottages otherwise known as 'salt box cottages' were built circa 1865 around the same time the Goldies opened a larger mill for international business. The cottages were built for the purpose of housing mill workers and their families. The area was known for being a "tight-knit milling community" according to David Goldie's daughter, Theresa. There were six cottages built however one burned down and was replaced and another is set back because of underground streams in the front yard.

Architecture:

The row cottages are conservative and simple in design made from stacked planks with stucco. 'Salt box' refers to a building with a long pitched roof that gradually slopes down to the back having just one storey in the back, having and 1 ½ in the front. This vernacular style of rural housing was common in the U.S. and came to Canada in the 1850s and 1860s to house workers. Once common in Ontario, few now exist. It is most often a wooden frame home and takes its name from its resemblance of the wooden salt lidded box of the period. An renowned architect who renovated Galt City Hall, Peter Stokes, once said "Greenfield's row of white salt-box cottages completely contradicted the usual architectural theory that every house in a city block has to be different; here is a row of matching houses and the overall effect is very delightful."



An example of a larger salt box cottage architectural design.

~EcoFacts~

- ✓ The **Norway spruces** along the street were planted by John Goldie. The Norway spruce is an evergreen, coniferous tree native to Europe. It was the Norway Spruce that produced Spruce Beer which cured and prevented scurvy! The trees are dated to the early/ mid 1870s according to core dating.
- ✓ Greenfield is home to **Chimney Swifts** that nest in chimneys. Due to changes in chimney design, potential nesting areas have decreased as well as their population which since 2010 has been considered 'near threatened'!
- ✓ **Barn Swallows** also live in Greenfield. It is a preferred habitat for the bird because it includes low vegetation, farmland, nearby water and open structures like the barn for nesting sites and exposed locations such as wires, ridges and bare branches for perching. It was actually a symbol of protection tattooed on sailors' arms for a safe return from sea!
- ✓ Greenfield Swamp is one of only two sites in Ontario where scientists found the **Black Redhorse Sucker**, a fish that was thought to be extinct!



4

Greenfield Manor Barns & Eden Creek

3158 Greenfield Rd

Greenfield Manor Barns:

When Greenfield was settled in 1844, John Goldie Sr. immediately went to work establishing Greenfield Farm, which he would spend most of his life tending. The aged barn wood and split rail fencing offer a charming view and warm reflection of his efforts.

Eden Creek:

Eden Creek was once a popular creek for millers in the surrounding area. Not only was it used by a son of John Goldie Sr. but was also being used to power a mill down the road at Black Horse Corner. In 1846, only two years after the Goldie family arrived, John Goldie's son, John Goldie Jr., who was a millwright, set up a lathe by Eden Creek and constructed a small shop beside

their home and made furniture for the house. A year later, Thomas Fulton and John Jr. bought a sawmill and moved it by the dam powering the lathe at Eden Creek. Unfortunately, one day the dam broke and the sawmill had to be moved across the road from the house near the Nith River into which Eden Creek flowed. In 1849, the sawmill stopped being used because it was no longer profitable.

It was fortunate that the sawmill remained standing for a few more years, because on January 2, 1854 the Goldie family's first house, a log home, burnt down (destroying John Goldie Sr.'s records of his trip to Russia and the family Bible). After staying at the neighbour's home for a few nights, they moved to the sawmill which was emptied for a season until they had a new house built on the ruins of the old one-The Brick House. The site of the sawmill has since been covered by the waters of Greenfield Dam.

5 *Brick House/ Greenfield Manor House*

3144 Greenfield Rd

History:

The Brick House, otherwise known as the Greenfield Manor House, was built by the Goldies in 1854 as a replacement for their first log home, and for some time housed quite a large family! This home served as a residence for John Goldie Sr. for many years.

David Goldie, a son of John Goldie Sr., moved to the Brick House in 1878 after his mother passed away. David moved his whole family from the River House to care for their grandfather who was living in this house and "still vigorous and interested in the garden." Theresa, David's daughter, described the home as "a beautiful and strong home." David's wife, Isabella, bore two children in the house and it was also in this house that David Goldie had his leg amputated by a surgeon from Paris, a cooper (barrel maker) and a nurse! Theresa, his daughter, remembered seeing the wooden leg covered in painted paper maché for a life like appearance, and seeing it stored in a closet after her father passed away.

In 1884, David Goldie and his family left the Brick House and moved to their newly built home, 'The Gore', which is located on Northumberland Street. The home was transformed by John Goldie Sr., the avid horticulturalist, who planted cedar and fir hedges, pine, cut-leaf maple, purple beech, blue spruce and Douglas Fir (in memory of his old friend). John Goldie Sr. passed away in the Gore home in 1886. The Brick House was occupied for several years by David Goldie's son George until 1910, when it was sold to the Guthrie family.

Architecture:

The Greenfield Manor House is 1 ½ storeys, but according to a family member it “seemed to extend a long distance at the rear” where a little back room was situated. Apparently it is in this room where they would make soap using fat drippings and lye from wood ash. The family dubbed the home ‘The Brick House’ because of its brick construction.

The house is typical of homes built in south-western Ontario between 1850 and 1870, with a Neoclassical doorway incorporating a transom light above the door and sidelights, as well as a signature Gothic Revival window in the peaked gable looking out from the top storey.

~Greenfield Village Ontario Heritage Plaque~

A provincial plaque by the Ontario Heritage Trust was installed in the early 1990s as recognition of the Goldie family and the Village of Greenfield.

6

Sluice Gates, Millpond, Dikes & Mill Race

The mill pond was created as part of the construction of the mill dam across the Nith River as a reservoir supply for the water powered mill. Sluice/head gates at the head of the water channel (also known as a sluice or millrace) controlled the water level and changed the original water levels of the Nith River within the channel. The sluice gates were constructed on either side of the river, with grooves where a wood barrier would slide depending on the desired water levels.

7

Dam & Rapids

The original dam and mill race were built in the summer of 1847 for a sawmill and soon after a raceway was cut from this dam to power an oatmeal and flour mill. The dam was enlarged for the larger mill in 1863.

In 1883, there was a great flood that swept away the north end of the dam and the sluice/head gates. The mill was then closed for some time until the dam was lengthened and raised a foot or two, new sluice gates were put in and a protection dike built from the sluice gates to the road. Even though the dam has been eroded over time, hence the rapids, it still remains a feature of the Nith River, “The Goldie dam, though rendered non-functional by the ice many years ago, still spans the Nith.”

~Unfortunate Incident on the Nith~

According to Theresa Goldie, David Goldie's daughter, in 1912 her brother David Jr. drowned in the Nith, "In 1912, my youngest brother David was home on holiday from McGill University and drowned accidentally in the River Nith when it was in spring flood." His memorial is in downtown Ayr on Northumberland Street by Watson Pond.

**Some people have written that David was 12 years old which could have been confused with the year of the incident.*

8

Head of Millrace

The length of the millrace can be seen from the head. When the larger mill was planned, the water power had to be increased. Accordingly on August 5, 1863, David Goldie and Hugh McDonald entered into an agreement to "cut a certain mill race from the dam built across the Nith." The workers who worked on this project were paid 75 cents a day digging the mill race by hand. Most of the workers came from the United States to avoid conscription in the Civil War. The raceway from an enlarged dam to the site of the new mill was completed two years later.

9

House 3127

3127 Greenfield Rd

This home is part of the Goldie complex and was built around the same time as the workers' cottages in the mid 1860s. The architecture of the home was similar to the workers' cottages in dimensions, however, it was altered in the 1970s. The fieldstone foundation is still visible and the home is set back from the road.

10

Cooperage and Water Tower

A cooperage is where barrels are produced. The original cooperage was destroyed by fire. The building was replaced but then deconstructed when basswood, the material it was constructed from, became limited and was used to create barrels. Eventually, all material for making flour barrels was brought in from Western Ontario and assembled in a cooper shop built on high ground to the north of the new mill. The cooperage was ingeniously connected to the mill by a conveyor ramp so that the barrels would be conveniently at hand. There was also a water tower believed to be used in connection with the mill. The mature conifers in this area are interesting to note as they were specimens imported and planted by John Goldie.

3089 Greenfield Rd**History:**

In November 1848, four years after the Goldie family settled in Greenfield, a raceway was cut from the sawmill dam and they built an oatmeal mill. In a letter by John to his brother in the United States he writes explaining its construction, “all the framing timber is drawn, and John is making windows. It is to be 3 storeys high and 30 feet square.” Samuel Austin from the nearby town of Ayr was a millwright and promised to work for free until the mill started to gain profit as long as he was given food and shelter. A year later in 1849, they began to gather stones to set up a flour mill in conjunction with the oatmeal mill. In November of 1850, it was completed and known as “Greenfield Mills.”

By 1863, the Goldie family was ready to establish a larger mill for international production and so David Goldie, son of John Goldie Sr., made an agreement with Hugh McDonald to develop the new mill. They began building a four storey limestone mill and a stacked plank grain storehouse which had the capacity of 70,000 bushels! Two run of millstones were driven by a turbine and flutter/undershot wheel. Two years after they had started construction, the mill was completed.

In 1880, mill-stones were abandoned and replaced with the new Hungarian process system introduced into Canada five years earlier, described here by Theresa Goldie:

“This system included ‘ending stones’ corrugated Gatz steel break rolls, and smooth rolls for grinding the middlings, some of porcelain and some of chilled iron. Ten pairs of French buhr-stones were used in the final reduction of middlings to flour.”

According to Megan Robson, an architectural historian, the first mill to convert to the Hungarian roller press system, which used porcelain rollers instead of millstones, was St. Jacob’s Mill in 1875. Greenfield Mill was among the earliest mills to use this process in Ontario.

In 1889, the capacity of the mill was 400 barrels daily or a yearly output of about 125,000 barrels. A couple of years later, the mill was changed into an enlarged steam powered mill and two storeys of brick construction were added to the mill. In 1894, soon after the mills became incorporated as ‘The Goldie Milling Company (Limited)’, David Goldie passed away. On October 12, 1889 the mill was stated in The Globe to be “one of unquestionably the model mills of Ontario.”

After David's death, his sons John Goldie Jr. and James with the help of Robert Neilson, a friend of their father's, carried on the business. John Goldie Jr., although dying only two years after his father in 1896, owned Goldie & McCulloch Foundry in Galt, a large machinery works which is now known as Babcock and Wilcox Canada Limited. His other son James, who pursued the flour milling business owned Goldie Mill in Guelph. They also acquired mills in Galt on Bruce Street at Ainslie, and in the village of Highgate.

Unfortunately, in 1910 the Goldie family was forced to sell three mills: Greenfield Mill, the mill in Galt, and the mill in Highgate as well as the River House to the Canadian Cereal and Milling Company. The Greenfield Mills and the River House later became owned by various companies including Hecker H-O Company of Canada Limited. The Goldie Mill in Guelph was sold in 1918.

Architecture:

For its time, given the limited resources of early settlers in Dumfries, this was a large well constructed mill. The Goldie Mill in Guelph is similar and was constructed around the same time (1866). The Guelph mill was destroyed by fire but the ruins have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act for its historic and architectural value.

The four-storey mill is constructed of regularly coursed fieldstone with large blocks used to reinforce corners and openings. This technique allowed for an open timber-framed interior that could accommodate the milling machinery.

The four-storey grain storehouse at the back was constructed of stacked planks. This is a technique that was common in early Ontario settlements with saw mills. It was easy to build with limited carpentry skills but required a large amount of sawn lumber. The storehouse has been covered with asphalt tile but originally the planks were left uncovered. Very few examples of stacked plank structures have survived in Ontario and this is probably one of the largest still standing.

The mill was enlarged in the 1890s after the milling process was converted to steam power. Two brick storeys were added to house machinery and allow ventilation.

The Greenfield Mill site represents a very good and rare example of an intact milling complex. The mill complex includes; four-storey stone mill with attached four-storey stacked plank storehouse, mill race, mill pond, sluice gate, Nith River dam, superintendent's office/house, remnant railway siding. The mill is part of a larger milling community that includes the mill complex, the Miller's House (River House), the Mill owner's house (Brick House), workers' cottages and the village school.

Superintendent's Office, Fire Pump & Train Station

History:

The Superintendant's Office was the headquarters of the mill operation. A mill office was constructed so that a superintendent could always be on site to oversee operation of the mill. An old photo shows that there was an earlier office, not much more than a shed. The new office was larger and had a domestic style, perhaps providing residential quarters above the office.

When the mill was converted to steam power in the 1890s, the mill race supplied water to a large fire pump housed in a small brick structure between the mill race and the mill. This pump supplied water to an early automatic sprinkler system. Many mills were lost to fire but the Greenfield Mill survived due to these precautions.

Alongside the establishment of a larger mill by 1865, David Goldie reviewed the option of having the Canadian Pacific Railway operate to the mill to advance trade,

"when David Goldie asked the C.P.R. for a railway siding to the mill, they were willing, provided that, at his expense, a road-bed was built to Company standards on which they could lay their tracks. When this became known, a large group for farmers volunteered and, without charge, worked with mill employees, moving and leveling earth until the task was completed."-Andrew Taylor, Our Today's and Yesterdays, 241-242

When the railway came, it was estimated that more than 1,000 railway cars were loaded and unloaded every year in transferring grain and grain products. It was claimed that 90% of the flour was shipped to the Maritime Provinces where the trade mark of Goldie Star Flour became popular.

~Mill Deposit Runs and Notorious Robbers~

David Goldie used to have to go 10 miles past Black Horse Corner to deposit cash from the mill. He didn't want to take a gun with him but his friend convinced him to take one to protect himself from the notorious Lou Mudge whose robber band worked at the Black Horse Tavern by the Black Horse Road which is now Highway 97. Apparently, David was in the States and met Mudge who was fleeing from the law. Mudge said that he would protect David from his robber band in return that he provided food for his mother in North Dumfries while he was hiding in the States.

12

Beehive School, U.S.S. 15

3206 Greenfield Rd

In 1890, David Goldie donated land for the first public school to educate children of the mill workers and surrounding farmers. Union School Section 15 (U.S.S. No. 15) was otherwise known as the 'Beehive School' because the site of the school originally "housed a beekeeping operation" in addition to the beehive stained glass window in its doorway.

A stone marked 'U.S.S. No. 15, 1890' placed out front is the repurposed back of a Scottish gravestone originally used as ship ballast- frugal Scots!

The school has been converted into a private home, and in the 1980s alterations were made by the owners. Also, the original tall spruces which outlined the schoolyard were removed.

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