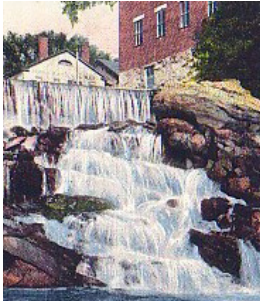


EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION:

It doesn't look like it now, but Brandon became an industrial village and a manufacturing center very early on.



In Brandon Village: Green Park (next to the lower falls): The falls powered Brandon's earliest industrial efforts. The foundations of the town's earliest mills are still visible directly across the falls from the park. Later, this was the site of Brandon's iron foundry

and the heart of local iron-goods manufacturing. Brandon's iron stoves were very well known. Across the street, the present Town Office was the manufacturing company's headquarters. Also across the street the picturesque upper falls are formed by a marble dam that powered the town's lumber mill. An early 20th century lumber mill is still perched above the falls.

In Forest Dale:

The Iron Furnace (behind Rt. 73): Forest Dale's large iron furnace (built in 1924) is a remarkable piece of early industrial archeology. Local deposits of iron ore fueled Brandon's iron manufacturing industries all through the first half of the 19th

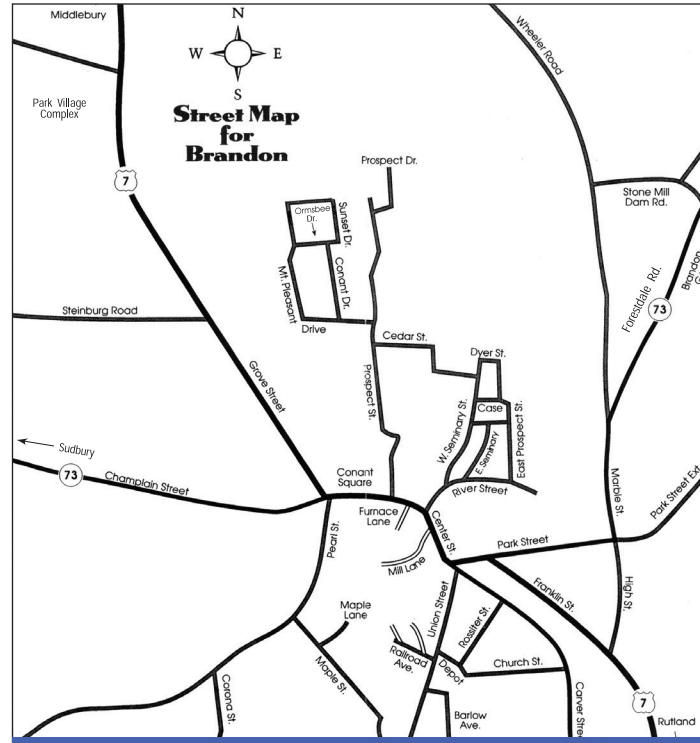
century. At the same time, Forest Dale was also a major paint manufacturing center. Directions: head east from the Civil War monument on Park St. Turn left on Rt. 73 (Marble St.). In Forest Dale, shortly after you pass Rt. 53 (North St.) turn left down Furnace Rd. A short distance in, just before the road curves to the left, there are two small pulloffs on the right. Use the second one. Park there and walk on the path 100 yards to the furnace on the right.

Thomas Davenport Home (2115 Forest Dale Rd. (Rt. 73)): Brandon blacksmith Thomas Davenport (1802-1851) invented the electric motor at this site in 1834. It was one of the major breakthroughs in the history of manufacturing – but he never made a cent from it!

...and a few more:

If you feel like combining a picturesque, easy hike and a little historical exploration, a visit to **Brandon's earliest graveyard**, up Old Brandon Rd. is worth the walk. (Take Old Brandon Rd., off Nickerson Rd., to where it turns into a trail and hike in, or come the back way on the trail that starts behind Otter Valley Union High School.) Finally **Silver Lake**, north of town, is both a beautiful place to hike and the site of a very early hotel/religious retreat that has long since burned. See the Gateways to Adventure hiking brochure for directions.

Enjoy your time exploring Brandon's history!



Cover photos: Kevin Thornton and archives

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BRANDON'S Gateways to ADVENTURE HISTORY



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BRANDON'S Gateways to ADVENTURE HISTORY



Brandon's rich history is evident all around. The town has over 250 buildings listed on the National Historic Register, most right in the village. If you're interested in learning a little New England history, you're in the right place!

Start Here:

Begin with a trip to the **Brandon Museum at the Stephen A. Douglas Birthplace** (on the west side of Route 7, next to the Baptist Church on the north side of the village). Admission is free. The museum is open 11:00-4:00 every day from mid-May through mid-October. It takes anywhere from fifteen minutes to one hour to see, depending on your level of interest. One room is devoted to Brandon's history and development, while another focuses on Brandon-born Stephen A. Douglas (of the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates) and the abolitionist era here in town. Be sure to pick up whatever brochures may interest you at the Brandon Visitor Center, also at the museum.



Ready? Now it's time to begin exploring our history in more depth. Here are a few suggested themes to explore:

ANTI-SLAVERY: Brandon has a strong anti-slavery tradition that dates back to the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society in January 1834. Two of the sixty-two national founders of that organization lived in Brandon. Sites include:

The Baptist Church (next to the museum): Brandon's local anti-slavery society was founded here in 1834, just six weeks after the national society was formed. In 1837 the Vermont anti-slavery society met here, and in 1844 an escaped slave spoke here. The church retains its anti-slavery resolutions in its records.

The Rodney Marsh House, 11 Pearl Street: Rodney V. Marsh was an anti-slavery legislator and orator. It is possible this fine Greek Revival house harbored runaway slaves in the 1850s.

Orson Murray House, 5 West Seminary Street: This brick house, set back from the street, was the home of Orson Murray (1806-1885), one of the first anti-slavery organizers and publishers in America. He settled in Brandon in 1833 and lived in this house until 1842.

Green Park (next to the lower falls of the Neshobe River): Two anti-slavery newspapers were published in Brandon at the printing office, which was located on the site of this park. This building's foundation is now the base of the park's pavilion.

The Congregational Church (on the town green): The leading abolitionist Beriah Green was pastor of this congregation in the 1820s. Nevertheless, as late as 1842 the Congregationalists were generally hostile to anti-slavery. In that year the Brandon church expelled the abolitionist Jedediah Holcomb. The church eventually adopted an anti-slavery position in 1845.



CIVIL WAR: Brandon was deeply affected by the Civil War. More than ten percent of the town's 1860 population fought in the Union army during the war, and fifty-four local men died. Sites include:

The Town Hall (Intersection of Rt. 7 and Seminary Street): This classic Greek Revival structure was under construction in 1861 when the war broke out, and Brandon's soldiers received their equipment and weapons here as they marched off to war. When Brandon men returned from Gettysburg in July 1863, there was a reception for them here, as well as in the fall of 1864, when many men from the First Vermont Brigade came home. Veterans' events were held here for decades after the war.

The Leary Building (Center St., now shops next to the Town Office): The Brandon post of the Civil War veterans' organization, the Grand Army of the Republic, met upstairs in this building for many decades – at least until the 1920s.

The Civil War Monument (Intersection of Park Street and Rt. 7): When it was erected in 1886 this fine Vermont granite monument cost more than the town's annual budget. Listed on it are the names of the fifty-four Brandon dead, categorized by date and means of death. Every Memorial Day since 1902, our first-grade girls perform a touching ceremony where they slowly process around the monument, casting flowers at its base.



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The Brandon Inn (on the town green, just across from the monument): On this site in 1860, at an earlier version of the inn, the town welcomed native son Stephen A. Douglas and his wife when he returned home during his campaign for president. But with its strong abolitionist views, the town then went on to vote for Lincoln by a ratio of four to one.

Pine Hill Cemetery (one mile north of town on the east side of Rt. 7): Many Civil War veterans are buried here (look for flags and G.A.R. markers). There are also monuments to three brothers from Brandon killed in the war, and, just to the left of the entrance, a local man who died in Andersonville prison.