

MORDEN HALL PARK TRAIL

Morden was owned by the Crown and Church until it passed on to the Garth family in the 1500s, Morden Hall was built in around 1750.

Stop 1. Morden Hall Snuff Mills



The Morden stretch of the River Wandle had been used for milling in records going back to the Domesday Survey in 1086. But the Tobacco Mills, like we see today, were first built here in the 1700s.

The first snuff mill was built on the estate in 1750 on the east side of the River Wandle. It was first run by Peter Davenport and Nathaniel Polhill. Nathaniel was also an MP for Southwark in the late 1770s. During this time snuff was growing in popularity and to meet demand the West Mill was built in 1830. This new mill benefited from modern technology including a mechanical pestle and mortar to grind the tobacco leaves. The machinery was all sold for scrap in 1929, but a spare wheel remains in the park today.

Can you find the Waterwheel and the old Millstones?

What is Snuff? – Snuff was ground from tobacco leaves and was sniffed through the nose. It became very popular in the 18th Century. The tobacco was brought from Virginia in North America by ship. The leaves were dried in the mill and broken up into small pieces before grinding. The ground snuff was then transported by cart to East London for blending and to add scents before it was sold in shops.



The Hatfeilds

In 1834 the Hatfeilds, after marrying into the Taddy family, took over the lease of the snuff mills. The Taddy family owned 'Taddy and Co.' which was a successful tobacco grower and snuff manufacturer. In 1865, Gilliat Hatfeild also acquired Morden Hall and owned the entire park as well as the mills.

Gilliat Edward Hatfeild decided to close the business in 1922 following a strike by workers at his tobacco business in East London. Snuff had become far less fashionable by this time. However, he ensured that the workers at Morden Hall were found new jobs on the estate.

Stop 2. Mill Cottage

The Groves: Three generations of Snuff Foremen

Three generations of the Groves family worked in the snuff mills at Morden, starting with James Groves who is recorded as a 'snuff grinder' in Morden in 1861. He lived there with his wife Rachel and their 10 children.

Records show that his son William and grandson John continued his line of work and all other male family members worked in the mill in different jobs. John continued to work at the estate after the mills closed in 1922 and remained in Morden until his death in 1967. The Groves family lived in Mill Cottage for over 100 years, and the women of the family also found work on the estate.



There is one room called the "bothy" attached to Mill Cottage for part-time gardeners to stay in. It had six bunk beds and a small fireplace.

Can you find the bothy?

Stop 3. Morden Cottage

The owners of the Snuff Mill originally lived here from 1758, but the Hatfeilds moved into Morden Hall when they bought it in 1865. When Gilliatt Edward Hatfeild inherited the hall from his father, he found it too large for his needs and moved back into Morden Cottage where he had been born.



Can you find the oldest part of the cottage?

The Dairy

Morden Hall Park was also a working farm with cattle. The Dairy was used to make cheese and butter in addition to milk. It is also thought that part of the building was used for the breeding of trout, as it leads on to the River Wandle. Gilliat Hatfeild was a keen fisherman.



Can you find the Dairy?

Stop 4. The Stableyard

Horses and Coaches for use by the Hatfeild family and the business were kept in the stable yards. It is thought that up to 12 horses and 6 coaches were kept here. Gilliat Hatfeild always travelled into London by horse and coach as he did not like trains.

Can you find the horse boxes inside the stables?

There was also a small room in the stables for a stableboy to stay in overnight if one of the horses was unwell.

Can you find the Stableboy's room?



Interesting Facts about Morden Hall Park

- Gilliat Edward carried a walking stick with a tiny spade on the end so he could remove any daisies he saw on the grass
- Gilliat Edward loved wild birds so much that he banned any cats from the estate
- He ran children's parties every summer for the local people
- There were many complaints filed by visitors to the mill about being attacked by angry cows in the next door field
- Every Christmas, Gilliat Edward would go round to all of the houses of his workers and give a sixpence to every child
- Mill workers remember the Mill cottage being guarded by two incredibly fierce geese called Gert and Daisy
- It was the job of one employee at the mill to spend his entire day in the river wearing waterproof trousers and fishing out excess river weeds and litter left in there
- Whilst Morden Hall was a hospital during the war, Gilliat Edward took patients out on boat trips on the river every Sunday

Morden Hall Park after the Snuff Mills

During World War 1 Morden Hall was used as a convalescence hospital for women and children who were wounded from the bombing that was happening all over London at the time.

Morden Hall has been in the care of the National Trust since the death of Gilliat Edward Hatfeild in 1941 along with the estate under the condition that the gates should remain open to the public. In his will he left money to every single worker from the mill to be paid to them every week for the rest of their lives.

“Film Star” parties took place at Morden Hall in the late 1940's and early 1950's for fans to collect signatures. This picture shows a famous Italian film star called Gina Lollobrigida at one of the Morden Hall parties.



The River Wandle

The river runs for 16 miles from Waddon and Carshalton to where it enters the Thames at Wandsworth. In the 17th Century there were said to be up to 200 mills along its course mostly for milling corn.

Calico printing on cloth became popular here in the 1700s with mills set up north of Morden Hall Park at Bunce's Meadow, Phipps Bridge and Merton Abbey as well as to the south in Ravensbury Park.

Surrey Iron Railway

The Surrey Iron Railway was the world's first public railway built in 1803; it ran on a track for horse-drawn carts moving goods from the mills. The line ran on part of the route that is now used for the Croydon Tramlink.

The pictures below show a painting of the old railway and Phipps Bridge tram stop today.



DRAWING PAGE

TO DO:

***FIND ONE OF THE BUILDINGS LISTED HERE
AND DO A QUICK SKETCH OF IT ON THIS PAGE***

Don't forget to add **your name** at the bottom!

- *The Stable Yard*
or
- *The Waterwheel*
or
- *Morden Cottage*

