

The Life of the Troy Brook

A Growing Hamlet

The small village of Troy grew and thrived because of its access to the **Troy Brook** (formerly known as the Parsippany Brook). The **South Beverwyck Road Bridge** now crosses this historic waterway, which once provided the essential energy needed for the area's first industries.

The Power of Water

Before the invention of the steam engine, water power was the primary form of industrialization.

- **Evolution of Forging:** While humans have been heating and shaping iron by hand for thousands of years, water-powered forging revolutionized the process by the 10th century.
- **Mechanical Wheels:** By harnessing the flow of the brook, settlers could turn massive mechanical wheels. These wheels provided the strength needed to grind grain, saw heavy lumber, and operate forge bellows.

The Mills of Troy

The Troy Forge was actually a large industrial complex home to several different types of mills:

- **The Grist (Grain) Mill:** Likely the oldest mill on the site. Milling was a vital colonial service; farmers brought their grain to the miller to be ground into flour, saving them hours of grueling manual labor.
- **The Sawmill:** Essential for any new settlement. With a plentiful supply of local timber, the sawmill provided the wood needed for building homes, heating, and cooking.
- **Other Specialized Mills:** The complex also featured a **turning mill**, a **fulling mill** (for processing wool), and a **cotton mill**.

Charcoal: The Fuel of the Forge

While water provided the movement, **charcoal** provided the heat. Producing charcoal was an incredibly labor-intensive process:

- **The Pits:** Wood was harvested and processed in specialized pits.
- **Location:** Most of this production took place in the **Troy Meadows**, located just downstream from the Troy Brook.
- **Terminology:** In colonial times, this fuel was simply referred to as "coal."