



The Quest Where the River and Mill Combine

Lebanon, NH

Physical Difficulty: Easy

Special Features: Historical, Watershed

Walking Conditions: Walking through town (pavement)

Duration: 1:00

Season: May-Oct

N.B.: Go on this outing during normal business hours (Mon-Fri 9-5) if you want to be able to do the optional side trip (see below).

To get there: Take exit 19 from I-89 toward West Lebanon/Hanover. Turn right onto US-4 E/Mechanic St and take it for 1.5 miles into downtown Lebanon. Start swinging around the green. After you pass the post office on your right, take the center lane onto E Park St. Follow it as it becomes Campbell St. Just after a right corner, turn left onto Spencer, and in 100 feet turn left into the CCBA parking lot. Park around back by the picnic pavilion.

Overview:

This Quest is meant for the fun and enjoyment of those seeking knowledge and Quest boxes. Let these clues lead you through our town of Lebanon, the Mascoma River's history winding around every corner.

Clues:

Eldridge Park is where you should start--
Your adventure can begin in the pavilion.

Leave the concrete columns behind,
The chain link fence is easy to find!

From the northwest corner, step onto the trail—
Mosey down to the bank, and the Mascoma River you'll unveil.

Mascoma is an Abenaki word that translates to:
(well, it's not a what, but a who)

Mascommah was his name,
In 1887 most of his information went up in a flame.

Here you can watch fallen leaves ferry and bird race,
As they follow the river's steady, calm pace.

After a moment of relaxed observation, about-face
And get ready to rev up your pace.

Turn right at the chain link, and continue to follow this green strip.
Courts on your left, buffer on your right, go to the black top (don't trip!)

Imagine a raindrop falling here—this water can't get into the ground,
The metal grate is the only way down.

That drop tumbles into the grate, falling deep below our feet.
What then will it meet?

A culvert! A very large pipe, it carries our drop below,
Walk 20 steps north and its mouth will show.

While you're there, peek down along the river. I don't mean to be frank,
But look at the riparian habitat on that bank!

The sidewalk you're on will lead you to the loud water sound.
Look up and see where the bridge meets the ground.

Pop up on that bridge for a dual view of the river:
Look first upstream, whence these clues deliver.

Zig right along Route 120 up to the crosswalk; traverse the traffic.
Zag back along the sidewalk so you see ahead in the distance the
Lebanon green and its buildings of brick.

Now peer right from the downstream side of the bridge.
What remains from an old dam here? Just a smidge.

Follow the river downstream on the sidewalk. Hear the sound—
That's the Mascoma River, rip-roaring around.

Peer below and espy a picnic table near where they laid the rail.
Turn the sharp right corner to find the Purple Heart trail.

Pass through the Goss Logan parking lot and go behind the building.
That old railroad track you'll find—it's kind of re-wilding.

Upstream see remnants of the old dam that kept the water in check.
Cross over the Mascoma River on the rail trail's wooden plank deck.

Leaving the rail trail behind,
Cross the street one last time.

Hang tight, Questers, you're almost there
Unless these hints your mind ensnare:

Sugary treats are pretty sweet: get a scoop of moose tracks,
And spin around to view the infamous smokestack.

The fire of 1887 took its toll,
Destroying most mills, and leaving nothing but wool.

The fire burned furniture factories, leveling the town's main mastery.
With these buildings gone, Lebanon needed a new industry.

Wool mills filled the vacancy, and business thrived.
Powered by the forceful Mascoma River, which was prized.

Its water is soft, which is good for bleaching and dyeing wool.
The state was full of sheep pastures then, so the supply was quite full.

Can you imagine this town full of river mills,
Spinning the wool that once kept sheep from catching chills?

L.W.M. the smokestack reads.
Can you guess what these letters mean?

At long last the time to find the Quest box is nigh.
Where, you ask? Between dry-clean and ice cream you must hie.

At the cluster of three what you seek will be found.
Congratulations! Retrace your steps to be homeward bound.

If you are curious to learn more about the old mills of Lebanon, follow the clues below for an optional side trip.

A hint to the name of your destination:
Do as this Quest's title literally says, a word aggregation.

It's a place where businesses bustle, a riverside locale.
Mill photographs and artifacts it has; let that boost your morale!

This place is ground zero for Lebanon's mill history.
Enter the main lobby—during business hours—to extend this story.

This Quest was started by the 2017 Quest Writing Workshop participants as a part of Valley Quest's 2017 Watershed Challenge. It was finished by Courtney Duquette and Jennifer Donovan later that year and updated in 2018.

Other things to do nearby: *The Northern Rail Trail starts on Spencer Street near Eldridge Park and CCBA too. It runs all the way to Boscawen, NH.*

Please be a good steward of the land: leave it better than you found it and pack out any trash you find.



Valley Quest is a collection of treasure hunts that share and teach the natural gems and cultural heritage of the Upper Valley with children, families, adults, and visitors. It is a program of Vital Communities, a regional nonprofit working to engage citizens, organizations, and communities in creating solutions to our region's challenges. Learn more at vitalcommunities.org.

Have a suggestion, question, comment, or idea for us? We'd love to hear from you. Reach us at valleyquest@vitalcommunities.org or 802-291-9100.