

1. The hike starts at **Upper Nicholson's Lock**. Robert Nicholson was a United Empire Loyalist who first settled along the St. Lawrence in 1784. After 10 or 11 years, he moved to the north shore of the Rideau River above Burritt's Rapids. The rapids on this section of the river became known as Nicholson's rapids. The lock station was named for both the rapids and Robert Nicholson.

2. The **Swing Bridge** is one of the original bridges of its type on the Rideau system. This king post truss bridge weighs 43 tons, yet can be swung by merely pushing on it. Once started, the bridge will rotate under its own momentum and must be stopped so that it does not make a full circle.

3. The nest high on a pole is an **Osprey Nest**. The ospreys arrive in April, rear their young and then return south in the fall. They mate for life, which can be 15 to 20 years.

4. As you cross the iron bridge, look upstream for the remains of an old **Power Dam**. This dam, built in 1861, first provided power for the mills in Andrewsville. Later, it was used to produce electricity to help meet the needs of Kemptville. In 1930, during an unusually high spring runoff, the dam was destroyed and never rebuilt.

5. Once across the bridge, you are in the ghost town of **Andrewsville**. The town got its name from Rufus Andrews who built the first mill here. In 1880, the

population was over 200 and the town boasted a grist mill, a saw mill and a shingle mill as well as a store, a tavern, a blacksmith shop and a post office.




*Mill at Andrewsville in 1904 and bridge failure. Parks Canada.*

6. Walk back across the iron and swing bridges to River Road. Turn right and walk about 1 km. **Spillway House** stands on the 200 acre farm that Phoebe Nicholson, daughter of Robert Nicholson, received as a Loyalist grant in 1820. Behind the house is an overflow dam (spillway) for Clowes Lock which is on the opposite shore.

7. The **McGuigan Cemetery** is an historic site for the Royal Sappers and Miners - a special construction corps of the British Army, organized in England. These skilled labourers - carpenters, masons, bricklayers, smiths - were held in high esteem by Colonel By. Also buried here are early settlers and Irish labourers who died during the building of the canal. *Can you find the gravestone for the lockmaster who died suddenly in 1847? Can you find Robert Nicholson's grave marker?*

## ***Walking Tour of Nicholsons Locks and Vicinity***

8.  As you walk back along the River Road, notice the orange triangular markers of the **Rideau Trail** along the route. You are now walking along a section of this hiking trail that stretches from Kingston to Ottawa.

9. The red brick **Miner House**, on the left just past Andrewsville Road, was built about 1863. It originally presented identical faces toward the water and the road. When the house was built, travel was mainly by water. Today, the house has an addition on the left side and an addition on the back which obscures the original facade facing the water.

10. Turn left on Nicholsons Road. Straight ahead is the **Lockmaster's House**, built in 1838. Originally built as a single story stone building, the second storey and side kitchen were added later. The house is referred to as the Crown House because it is owned by the Crown (the government). (*The lockmaster who died suddenly in 1847 was commissioned to have the house built.*)

11. Cross the canal on one of the gates of the **Lower Nicholsons Lock** and return along the channel to the upper lock.



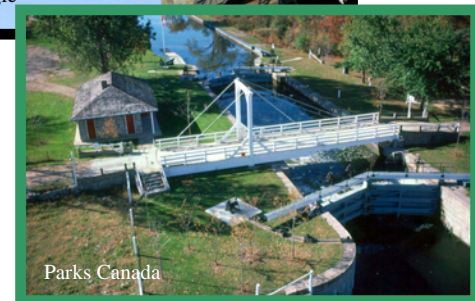
The Rideau Trail stretches from Kingston to Ottawa along the Rideau corridor.

Research and design by  
Rideau Trail Association,  
P.O. Box 15,  
Kingston, Ontario K7L 4V6  
613-545-0823  
[www.rideautrail.org](http://www.rideautrail.org)

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Answers: 7. a) Thomas Jenkins died in 1847. He was the second lockmaster at Nicholsons Locks. b) Robert and his wife Elizabeth can be found in the graveyard. On the gravestone the surname is spelled Nicklesson. This Robert is the son of the Robert Nicholson after whom the rapids and later the locks were named.



*Discover some of the history of this area on a 3.5 kilometre walk.  
Estimated time 1 1/2 hours.*