

F89

T3 57

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 075 677 5 ●

89

J3 S7

copy 1

1966

THE  
**JAMESTOWN WINDMILL**

BY  
**MAUD LYMAN STEVENS**

11



---

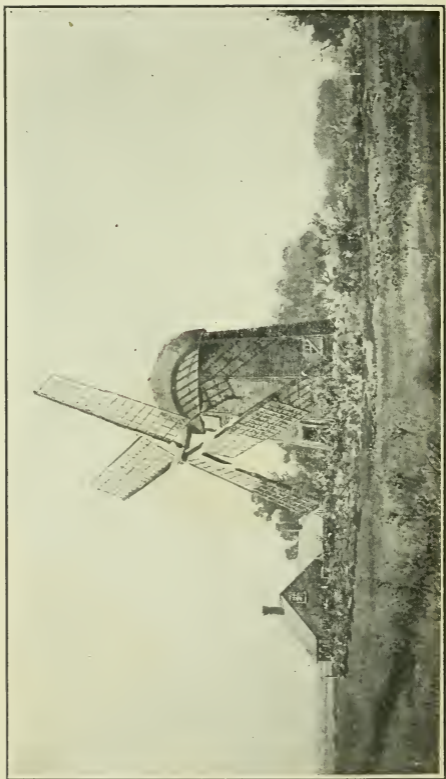
NEWPORT, R. I.  
REMINGTON WARD, PRINTER, CLARKE STREET  
1916

F89  
.J3S7

Source Unknown  
Sept. 24, 25







THE JAMESTOWN WINDMILL

# The Jamestown Windmill

BY

MAUD LYMAN STEVENS

---

There lies, near the mouth of beautiful Narragansett Bay a pleasant island, still retaining its Indian name of Conanicut. Parallel with the island of Rhode Island, and not more than two miles distant from it, it is even nearer to the mainland on the other side, here called the Narragansett country. Nine miles in length and with some diversity of high and low lands, Conanicut affords a variety of delightful views, and has preserved, to a remarkable extent, its country like appearance, in spite of its close proximity to so fashionable a summer resort as Newport.

Just at the most convenient part of the island for passing, a long road stretches across from side to side, connecting the two ferries that ply in the bay, and affording a convenient route from Newport to the mainland, and so on to Connecticut and New York. Where this road crosses the island, many houses cluster, churches and school

houses appear, and it is plain that this is the permanent settlement of a real little town, with town hall, library and all the paraphernalia of modern life.

This is Jamestown, the central part of a township, which not only embraces the island but also Gould Island to the East and Dutch Island to the West, two small islands which have not preserved in common speech their Indian names, Aquipimokuk and Aquidneset, as has their larger neighbor.

Jamestown in its more settled part, has a modern look, and one must look farther out in the island for the few old houses that have survived the ravages of time and the perils of war. Its history belies its fresh and modern air, however, for it is an old town, as towns go. Two hundred and thirty-eight years have passed over its head, since that November day in 1678, when it was organized as a town and received the loyal name of James Towne, for King James, first grandfather of the Charles of the day, or possibly in compliment to James, Duke of York, later to be James II, as some think.

Our first acquaintance with Conanicut in history is coeval with the genesis of Rhode Island. It was in 1638, at the beginning of the year, as March used to be considered, that William Coddington, Roger Williams and perhaps John Clark as well, journeyed to Aquidneck and Narragansett to obtain a deed



of land whereon a new state might be founded. William Coddington was the head of the band of colonists desirous of making a settlement, Roger Williams, already comfortably placed in his little town of Providence, his kind assistant in the matter.

For love and favor and for payment in wampum, generous for those days, they obtained from the Narragansett Sachems, Conanicus and Miantonomi, the grant of "the great island of Aquidnicke" and also the right to use the "marsh or grasse upon Quinuncutt and the rest of the islands in the bay" hereabouts.

It has been said that Conanicut was a favorite summer residence of the wise old chief, Canonicus. Certain it is that during his life time the use of the marsh grass on the island satisfied the Newport men, and no effort was made towards a purchase. It was not until 1657, nearly twenty years after the settlement of the larger island, that a deed was obtained to Conanicut.

In the year before, an active and enterprising man had come to Newport, deserting Providence, where his father had been one of the first settlers, for the more prosperous town. This was Benedict Arnold, soon to be governor of the colony, a merchant, and one, it would seem, desirous of a position as a landed proprietor. He acquired a goodly number of acres in and about Newport, and

then turned his attention to the islands still held by the Indians.

There had been some trouble about the use of the grass in the year of Arnold's arrival, which probably caused the Newport men to realize that Conanicut was of considerable value to them. At any rate Arnold succeeded in persuading a large number of persons to join with him in the purchase, among them William Coddington himself, Francis Brinley, a prominent merchant, Caleb Carr, later to be governor; it is said nearly a hundred in all. One of their number, Richard Smith, Jr., was familiar with the Indian language and methods, through his father's dealings with them in his trading house at Narragansett. He made the agreement with the Narragansett chief, Cashasaquoont, or Cajanaquant, as his name is sometimes written, the consideration being one hundred pounds in money and several gifts. Possession was given by Turf and Twig in the old English fashion.

A town side was planned, the intention being to follow the model set by Newport, though with somewhat different proportions, it being planned to give one acre as a home lot to twenty acres of farm land. To the South, twenty acres were reserved for prison house, artillery garden and burial place. It is probable that it was proposed to set the town in a general way where the present

settlement is. The plan, however, was never carried out. The lands were held in common for eight or nine years, and then divided among the original purchasers, and those whom they admitted as inhabitants with them. Each received land in proportion to the amount of money that he had put in. The town was never formally laid out, but the houses naturally clustered about the two landings, more especially that on the Newport side. Arnold and Coddington, as largest purchasers, were given first choice of the lands, and Coddington chose land at the North end of the island, Arnold a rocky hill or neck of land to the Eastward, probably what is now called Potter's or Tailor's Point. He also acquired the whole of Beaver Tail. William Brenton, another large land proprietor, owned at what is now the Dumpings.

It would seem that this attractive purchase was not pleasing to the state, cutting off as it did the useful supplies of marsh hay from the people in general, for in the year after the transaction was completed, the general assembly forbade any person, "stranger or other" to make further purchase of land or islands from the Indians, save by express order of a court of commissioners, acknowledging, however, that the purchase of "Quononagutt Island" could not "now bee made voyde."

For twenty years then, the Hulls, Carrs, Weedens, Arnolds and Bulls enjoyed their island farms, until the density of population, and perhaps some diversity of interest, seemed to warrant a separation from the mother town, and in 1678 on petition of Caleb Carr and Francis Brinley, "Quononogutt Island" was "made a towneship" under the name of James towne. To show its relative importance at this time it may be said that four days after its formal acceptance as a town, Jamestown was assessed, "for the paying and defrayeing of the Collony "debts" the sum of twenty-nine pounds, the same as Block Island; while Providence, impoverished by the recent Indian war, paid only ten, and Warwick escaped with 40 shillings. Jamestown was only temporary more important than Providence, however, as is shown by the rate of 1671 where Providence pays thirty-seven pounds to Conanicut's fifteen.

During this time and, indeed, all through Jamestown's history, its inhabitants were engaged in agriculture and the raising of stock. The large farms were cultivated and planted with crops of barley, rye, oats and more particularly the Indian corn, always a favorite grain with planters in Rhode Island. Our corn, traditionally a special variety obtained from the Indians, is quite different from that found in other sections, and seems

to require the mild island air to bring it to perfection. In early times it was one of the chief articles of diet, and with the pumpkins that were grown in the cornfield, bravely supplemented the rich stores of sea and forest that were to be had for the taking. The corn, to be used, must be ground. This was done in early times by pounding it with a pestle, Indian fashion, either in a hollowed rock or the scooped-out trunk of a small tree. Later small hand mills came into use, and as soon as it was possible or convenient, a water mill supplied the needs of the inhabitants. Our first Rhode Island settlement, (as distinguished from Providence Plantations) was Pocasset or Portsmouth, and here the building of such a mill was ordered at once. Newport, from the time of its founding, followed suit. Water mills were, however, a manifest impossibility in Jamestown unless, indeed, a tide mill had been set up. The next step was the windmill, the first of these, erected in Newport, being built in 1663. How early the sister town had a windmill we cannot say. It has been thought, from old stones found further North, that there was more than one. However this may be, our first positive record appears in 1728. In July of that year the proprietors and freemen at a quarterly meeting voted the erection of a windmill. "Ordered: that Richard Tew and David Green go and

buy stores and irons for the building a Wind-Mill, and the money to be paid out of the Treasury, Ordered: that Richard Tew and Thomas Carr provide lumber for the aforesaid Wind-Mill." At the next quarterly meeting the plan was somewhat changed. Richard Tew and Thomas Carr were now to have authority to buy a mill complete, and the charge to be paid by the town treasurer. It was by no means unusual, but rather the rule for the Newport windmills to change their position, but it is hard to see how "a mill complete" could be brought across the water, unless on some kind of raft.

In the following April it was voted that the town treasurer hire sixty pounds of money for the use of the mill. It would seem that all was well and truly done, for in the next year, 1730, at the May meeting, it was "Voted: that the mill be fitted upon ye town's charge and the keeper of said mill to deliver her in the same good order as he received her." This is all we hear about it for eight years, when it being perhaps found advisable to make some one man responsible for the mill, it was "Voted: that Nicholas Carr have the mill that is erected in Jamestown at ye public charge of the town for his own proper estate, forever. He, ye said Nicholas Carr, paying the sume of fifty pounds into the town treasury, and be obliged to keep said mill in good repair for and during the term of twenty

years. If ye main part of said mill with good management will stand so long, and to give a bond of one hundred pounds for the true performance of all ye above articles with ye town clerk, who shall receive ye same."

Immediately after this, comes the vote that Richard Tew "shall receive ye above said sum of fifty pounds upon ye towns' account" and then—the rest is silence. How the mill prospered, what occurred at the end of twenty years, its final destruction—all these are unrecorded. Its position was, however, it is probable, the same as that of the present one, upon Mill Hill, high land and easily accessible from the main settlement, as well as near the old ferry road that crosses the island from side to side, north of that now used.

We may conclude that this is the "Old Post-Mill," concerning which T. R. Cole speaks in the Jamestown section of the "History of Newport County." This old first mill, he says, was built on the principle of a turnstile. The top and shaft were immovable, but when the wind changed, a yoke of oxen was hitched to the end of a long lever and the whole building, which stood upon a single post or pivot, was turned until the arms of the shaft came face into the wind. This seems a cumbersome arrangement and unique hereabouts, though it has been said that the Old Stone

Mill required a yoke of oxen to turn its head, so that the sails might come into the wind.

Supposing this to be the mill on Mill Hill, precursor of the present one, it appears certain that it met its fate either within the stipulated twenty years or immediately after, for by 1760 it would seem that there was no windmill in Jamestown. The question was thus agitated. "It being put to vote whether a windmill should be built in this town, it was passed in the negative." Eight years later "Voted: whether to raise one hundred dollars to assist Isaac Howland in building a Wind Mill and passed in the negative." It would seem that no mill was built, which was perhaps just as well in the troublous times to come, when those malign visitors, the British and Hessians, under Wallace, visited the island and burned the greater part of the village.

Certain it is, that at the close of the Revolution in January, 1787, we again find the question of a windmill mooted. At this time a committee was appointed to inquire on what terms a windmill could be built in the town, what the cost would be and who would undertake it, and to make report thereon.

The committee's labors seem to have been successful, for in March it is voted, that the town petition the General Assembly for a lot of an acre where the old mill formerly stood, and set a windmill on it. The petition was



favorably received, and the reply of the Assembly is duly recorded in Jamestown's book of Land Evidence. This is the text of it.

"In General Assembly, March, 1787, upon the petition of Town of Jamestown.

"It is voted that this petition be received and so far granted that one-half acre of land, being part of a farm lying upon Jamestown, which did late belong with Col. Joseph Wanton, an absentee, and was confiscated to and for the use of this state, be set off and assigned to and for the use of the inhabitants of Jamestown for a special purpose, and upon terms they erect and keep in repair a good wind mill for grinding grain, to be and remain to and for their use for so long time as said windmill, when erected, shall be kept in order for grinding. That Mr. John Weeden be, and hereby is, appointed to set off the exact measure, one-half acre of land at or near the place where the former mill stood, bounded westerly on the highway; that he erect bounds and monuments, and make a plat thereof, and return the same to this Assembly. That same lot be fenced and enclosed at the expense of the inhabitants forever hereafter, the fences to be by them maintained for inclosing same. That if said mill be not erected within one year, or shall, after the same is erected, become useless for two years, this grant is to be void, and the

land is to revert to and for the use of this State."

The land on which a site for the mill was thus granted was part of the farm of Colonel Joseph Wanton, a Tory, and eldest son of that Governor Joseph, who was deposed by the people for his Loyalist proclivities. The younger Joseph had himself twice acted as Deputy Governor under Stephen Hopkins at an earlier period. He had received a college education, going to Harvard at the age of sixteen and a half, and had his residence in the beautiful old house on the Point in Newport now known as the Hunter House. His friend, Stephen Hopkins, says of him: "I hear it said that he is a proud, foppish fellow, wears ruffles and laced clothes, and will not take any notice of, or speak to, a poor man. This is an unworthy calumny of his enemies, he has been gently bred and received a liberal education which (has) matured and polished a sound understanding and enterprising genius. In General Assembly he remarkably and invariably appeared to be the poor man's friend." These were times of a marked difference between high and low, but the portrait of Joseph Wanton, Jr., while it certainly exhibits the ruffles, shows as well a pleasing countenance, which indicates perhaps some obstinancy, but is not marked by the haughtiness so noticeable in his father's likeness. The Colonel, because of his prin-

ciples, was much thrown with the British, and it is probable that he retired with them on their evacuation of the town of Newport, for in the following year he died in New York, August 8th, 1780. He is styled in his obituary notice "Superintendent General of Police in Rhode Island," though necessarily only an absent one, as Rhode Island, by this time, was free of British and Tories alike.

Thus at the time of the granting of a half acre of Joseph Wanton's confiscated land he, though called in the deed "an absentee," had in reality been dead nearly seven years. He had married twice, the second time a daughter of Jahleel Brenton, another prominent Newport Tory; in 1775, Governor Joseph Wanton died at nearly the same time as his son, and the young widow, accustomed to every luxury, found herself "reduced to difficulty and distress for the necessaries of life," and, with husband and father-in-law gone and property confiscated, was obliged to petition the legislature for the use of the farm in Jamestown, late belonging to her husband. Her son, Joseph Brenton Wanton, was at this time, March, 1781, only two years of age. The committee, appointed to lease confiscated properties, was thereupon empowered to lease the farm and pay the rent thereof to Mrs. Sarah Wanton for the ensuing year. Appeals continued to be made until 1787 by the "next friend" of the little boy, for the rents of the

farm, which were in this year granted, after a committee had inquired as to "what was justice." Mrs. Wanton's difficulties had, however, been solved some time earlier by her marriage in 1784 to William Atherton of Jamaica. It is interesting to know that descendants of Joseph Brenton Wanton still cherish, in England, a portrait of him at the age of 70; showing a fine and thoughtful face.

Deputy Governor Wanton's memory was long preserved on his farm by the lane next south of the wind mill, until recently called Deputy Lane. It is now known as Weeden's Lane. The Wanton farm at a subsequent period passed into the hands of the Watson family, by whom it was long retained. It was finally sold by the heirs of Weeden Watson to Mr. George Carr. The old farm house was standing, considerably modernized, until within a few years, when it was destroyed by fire.

So much for the site of the wind mill on Mill Hill. The new mill itself was, it would appear, paid for, in part at least, by the sale of the highways "running between the North Point Farm and Jonathan Hopkins and Tidde-  
man Hull's, and the highway running through Joseph Martin's farm." The wind mill being built, as was speedily the case, the next step was the securing of a miller. He was found in the person of one Jethro Briggs, who was to give a bond in money or "as much Indian

corn as one hundred dollars will purchase" for the faithful performance of his duties. In the following year we see him installed.

"March 25th, 1788. Voted and resolved by this meeting that the wind mill which is now erected and belongeth unto Jethro Briggs, shall take the toll of three quarts for grinding one bushel, and no more. It is voted by this meeting that Jethro Briggs give his obligation for two hundred bushels of good merchantable Indian corn unto the town, upon them giving him a lease of the mill lot as long as he keeps the mill in good repair for grinding." Neither Mr. Briggs nor any miller who might succeed him was to be allowed to go without oversight, for at the next meeting the town council was authorized to "have the care and oversight of the said wind mill, concerning taking more toll than is lawful, and removing the miller that shall be found in such act." Sad to say, Jethro Briggs seems to have removed from Jamestown and neglected the mill, for in 1793, five years later, Samuel Carr is appointed a committee to go to Newport and have a conference with him, "concerning the wind mill and his attendance thereof, and inform him that the town in general is very much dissatisfied with bad attendance given at said mill."

On May 25th, 1795, and for three successive weeks this advertisement appears in the

"Newport Mercury." "To be sold at public vendue on Monday, the 22d day of June next, at 11 o'clock A. M. on the premises, A Wind Mill and Dwelling House at Jamestown." The mill was sold on the day specified and bought by Benjamin Carr of Jamestown, but he goes on record in the following August that he, "for divers reasons thereunto me known" yields up his "right, claim and demand of and with a certain dwelling house and wind mill, which I purchased at Vendue on the 22d day of June last of William Battey, vendue master of said town of Jamestown." Perhaps this transaction was in satisfaction of a claim on Jethro Briggs, unless we accept the hypothesis of a second mill then existing, for in January, 1796, Jethro Briggs conveys the mill to Nathan Munro in fee simple, in consideration of 301 Spanish silver milled dollars, thus finally severing his connection with it.

From this time on we can trace an unbroken series of owners, who in most cases were also millers. The list and the gradual rise in price as it passes from one to another may be interesting.

Nathan Munro held it over thirty years, conveying it in 1827 to Caleb F. Weaver for \$700. Caleb Weaver kept the mill as long as he lived, it being disposed of after his death to William G. Carr in 1847, the consideration being \$1,250. William G. Carr sold it within

the year to Arnold Hazard, receiving \$1,800. Arnold Hazard gave Job W. Hazard a quit claim deed, in 1850, the sum agreed upon being \$1,025. Job W. Hazard, after five years, passed it on to John W. Potter, who paid \$2,150 for it. During Mr. Hazard's ownership of the mill it was run for a time by Mr. Eben Tefft, now the oldest citizen of Jamestown.

John W. Potter held it until 1874 and then disposed of it to his brother, Isaac W. Potter, for \$3,000. This was high water mark for the old mill. Its next sale, in 1882, was for \$1,525 to Elijah Anthony, still living in Jamestown and one of the well known family of Rhode Island. Mr. Anthony sold it in 1883 to William A. Barber, who, then as now, resided near the mill, in the fine old Weeden place on "Deputy Lane." Mr. Barber disposed of it in 1888 to Philip A. Brown for \$1,550; Mr. Brown in 1893 to Mr. Thomas A. H. Tefft. Mr. Thomas Tefft afterwards removed to New Bedford and his brother, Mr. Jesse Tefft, now resident in Jamestown, was, I think, the last to run the old mill in 1896.

It now remained idle for several years, until in 1904, a number of ladies, both permanent residents and summer visitors, interested themselves in the valuable old relic. It was discovered that the old mill was being torn to pieces by the tenants at that time in the small house adjoining and the feeling was

mill is once destroyed, no amount of money can ever replace it. Not only is it an object general that so interesting a link with the past should not be lost to Jamestown.

Accordingly a determined effort was made to raise the money for its purchase. In this Mrs. Frank H. Rosengarten of Philadelphia was largely instrumental, giving a whist party in its behalf at her house and personally circulating subscription papers. Many were interested to give, including a number of Jamestown people and the majority of the summer visitors then on the island. The circular, drawn up at the Carr homestead and setting forth the wishes and plans of those who had the scheme at heart, is here given:

“We, the undersigned, hereby pledge ourselves to give the amounts written opposite our names, for the purpose of purchasing and repairing the old wind mill. It has been ascertained that the mill and land enough to drive around it with right of way thereto, can be purchased for a maximum sum of three hundred dollars and repairs sufficient to keep the mill standing for many years can be made for four hundred dollars. Unless these repairs be made at once, it is evident that the old structure must soon be a thing of the past, for it cannot stand through another winter in its present condition. We earnestly believe that this destruction should



not take place before our eyes without an effort on our part to prevent it; for if the of beauty in itself and a fine specimen of a type of building very rare in this country, but it is one of the few remaining links which bind us to the past, and almost the only object of interest of which Jamestown can boast. We therefore believe that the aforementioned sums of money cannot be better expended than in preserving this old land mark for future generations."

This strong appeal met with a ready response. During the summer the sum named was raised and the purchase was made of the mill, and the land on which it stood. An approach was necessary, and the half acre of land to the south and towards the road was given for that purpose by Miss Louise Carr, who, with her mother, owned the old Wanton farm. The legal expenses of the transfer of this piece of land were borne by Mr. Theodore B. Stork of Philadelphia. Admiral Taussig, long a summer resident here interested himself in looking up those references to the mill in the town records, upon which part of this paper is based. That fall, repairs were begun, and the old structure so strengthened as to ensure a new lease of life for Jamestown's much valued relic.

The deed remained in the hands of Mrs. Rosengarten until 1912, when she became anxious to arrange for a more permanent or-

ganization. Accordingly a Historical Society was formed, its members including both summer and permanent residents, Miss Lena Clarke of Jamestown being its first president. The object of the society was to preserve the old mill and also to interest itself in local history in any way possible. Monthly meetings have been held since the society's inception with most interesting programmes on many occasions, persons who were qualified to speak, giving talks on Jamestown's history and that of Rhode Island in general. The society is now anxious to acquire quarters of its own, where meetings may be held and books and collections preserved.

In the summers of 1913 and 1914, most interesting loan collections were exhibited under the auspices of the Historical Society, the first of a general nature, showing many interesting articles of home manufacture, the quaint garb of an earlier generation, and valued heir looms of various sorts, the second more especially for china, pewter and silver. Further repairs were by this time urgently needed on the wind mill. A heavy storm, which had also done much harm to Newport mills, so injured the arms of the mill that several of them had to be practically rebuilt, with a resulting debt for the society. This was met by a tea held in the Jamestown Casino, which was kindly lent for the occasion. The Historical Society bids fair to con-

tinue its usefulness for many years, and has undoubtedly a most valuable possession in the old mill. As these old mills have nearly all disappeared, this is perhaps the only society of the sort with such a treasure and responsibility. The President of the Historical Society is now Dr. Bates of Jamestown.

The mill as it stands at present is externally in its original condition. Within, unfortunately, the depredations already alluded to, have entirely destroyed its ancient appearance. Hopper, meal chest, stairs even were broken up and burned. Nothing remains but the mill stones which are in a somewhat unusual position. Most of these old mills are what is known as "double gear," a part of the machinery being under the lower mill stone, or bed stone. This mill is "single gear," finding room for its reduced number of wheels in the attic story above. Thus it is not necessary to raise the stones as high as the second story, but instead they rest on a low platform. The second story was used simply as a store room.

Though the mill has been thus stripped of its fittings, the society has been fortunate, during the past summer, in the gift of a hopper from a disused mill in Narragansett, presented by Mr. George Clark, of Shannock, R. I., and it is hoped that this much appreciated addition may be supplemented in the

future by other fittings. The society is anxious to restore the old features now, while there are those still living who can give exact information on the subject. It would be a most interesting thing to see the mill once more in operation, and the miller again with his toll dish, taking his share from the corn brought in to be ground. A further ambition of the society is to acquire the little house adjoining, which could be rented to some person who would see that no harm befel the old mill.

— The Jamestown wind mill is precisely like those in Rhode Island, once so numerous, now, alas! reduced to a poor three or four. Unlike those formerly to be seen in Massachusetts, there is no gable, the head being round and the structure octagonal, reminding us of the old Stone Mill with its eight piers. The head or bonnet is movable, working on rack and pinion, with a large wheel on the side opposite to the sails and is drawn around by ropes to face the wind. On the right, on entering, is usually the rough stair by which the second story is reached, in the centre the meal chest and spout from which the warm, delightful smelling meal comes out and at the back a hatch to allow of the hoisting up of bags by a pulley. Everything is thickly powdered with meal; sacks stand about, waiting perhaps for the freakish wind; a small stove

affords the miller a modicum of much needed warmth.

The trade of a miller must have had its charms. He was, in the first place, the centre of much coming and going. No doubt all the gossip of the country side reached him, the mill, like the blacksmith shop, being a place of enforced waiting, as the grist slowly passed through the stones.

Eating meal was ground in this mill, of clear corn, and also "feed," barley and corn or oats and corn mixed, for use in feeding stock. Usually only a bushel was ground at a time, though the hopper, heaped up, would hold perhaps five bushels. The time consumed in grinding varied according to the wind, from a half hour to three times that period. The meal could not be ground fast, as this heated it, destroying its fine flavor. The slight irregularity of the wind favored the grinding of corn, the perpetual slacking and starting again preventing overheating. There was always a good market for Rhode Island Johnny cake meal, but it was difficult to get the right kind of corn. It had to be a year old to make good meal, and judicious millers were very careful in its selection.

The mechanical handling of the mill required a good deal of skill. The sails had to be reefed in stormy weather and furled at night, and just as the good sailor tends his sheet, the miller must keep his hand on the

pole, slightly varying the pressure of the stones, as the wind increases or diminishes. Uneven meal would result from lack of care in this direction. It was work that called for experience and judgment. The stones, too, often wore smooth, and had to be picked up with a bundle of pointed steel rods, kept for that purpose. For a time after this roughening, there would be some loose grit on the stones, and it was usual to run through feed for cattle for one or two grindings, but it is a tradition of this mill that if the miller was a Democrat he would choose the time immediately after picking up the stones to put in a Republican's grist! Another factor in the grinding of corn was the direction of the wind. The miller hailed a steady southwest wind as coming from the best possible direction. The northwest was too puffy and uncertain to make even meal.

It seems a great pity that so picturesque a vocation as that of a miller should now have become almost a thing of the past. We are told that the giving up of our own mill was due to the competition of Western corn, which made it less profitable for the farmers to raise their own. Now, however, with an increased population and a ready market, it seems as if it might again be put into operation, were the restorations carried out. Corn meal, as every one knows, is only good when freshly ground, the large amount of moisture

in the grain causing it to become musty if kept for any length of time. It is to be hoped that through the efforts of the old mill's friends we may, at some future time, see it working again, as in Nantucket, where the miller sells souvenir packages of meal to all comers. Valuable as it is in its present condition, it would be doubly interesting if in actual running order.

In the preparations of this brief sketch of the old mill and its history, thanks are due to Mr. Elijah Anthony, Mr. William Barber and Mr. Jesse Tefft for information given, more especially in regard to technical details.

It has seemed fitting to conclude with a poem written in 1905 in loving memory of her old home by a Jamestown lady, Miss Jane Eliza Weeden, at a time when she was far from the island and its associations:

### **The Jamestown Wind Mill.**

When from life's strenuous duties I retreat  
And in some vine clad arbor take a seat,  
My mind reverts with pleasure for a while  
To that old Wind Mill on our sea-girt isle.  
Which erst has ground from corn and golden grain  
A healthy nutriment for brawn and brain.  
I seem to see that boy on horseback still  
Who, with old Dobbin, took our grists to mill.

And poured them all an oaken chest within  
Corn meal and rye, two bushels in each bin;  
A third compartment of the oaken chest  
Held sieves and rolling pins and all the rest.  
This mill was builded in the olden days  
When real brown bread was beyond all  
praise;

When mother's griddle cakes were good  
enough,

And her crisp doughnuts more than rings of  
puff.

When farm house plain held more of home  
and heart

Than did the mansion in a city's mart.

Its founders doubtless were high minded men  
Who knew what should be done and how and  
when.

Such men, inspired by manhood's noble zeal,  
Have always wrought for God and human  
weal,

And so our heroes may be classed with those  
Who make the desert blossom as the rose.

The summer folk, who saved this prize to  
fame

May also boast of its untarnished name;

Its millers, trusted as of honest soul

Unchallenged, took their share of grain for  
toll,

And tho' with changing wind, its sails went  
round

Unchanged and pure was every grist it  
ground,

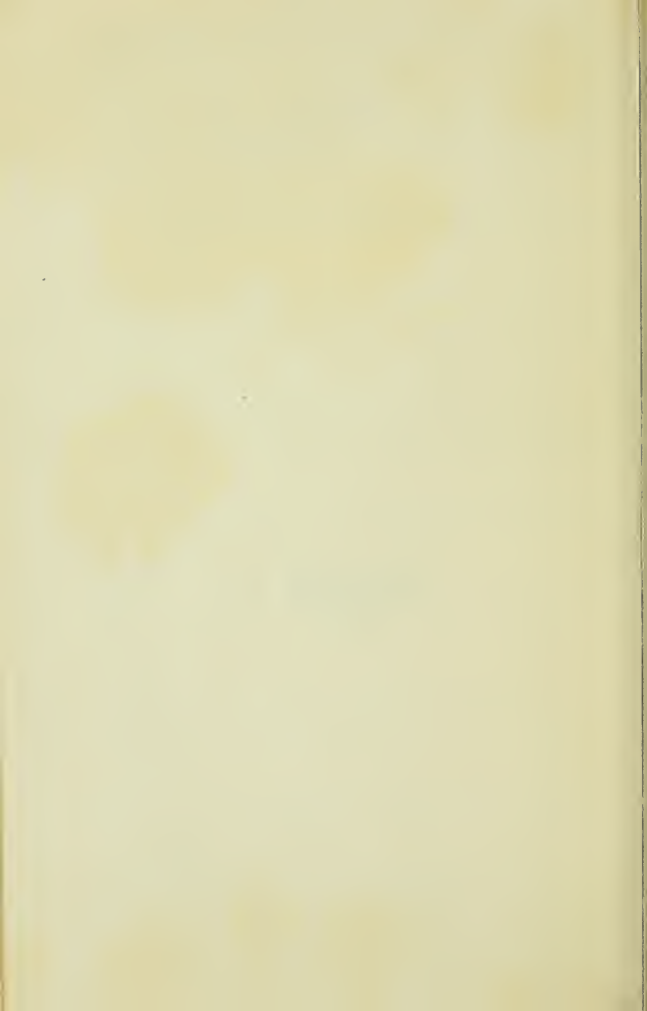


Like the Friend's Meeting house, its neighbor  
there,

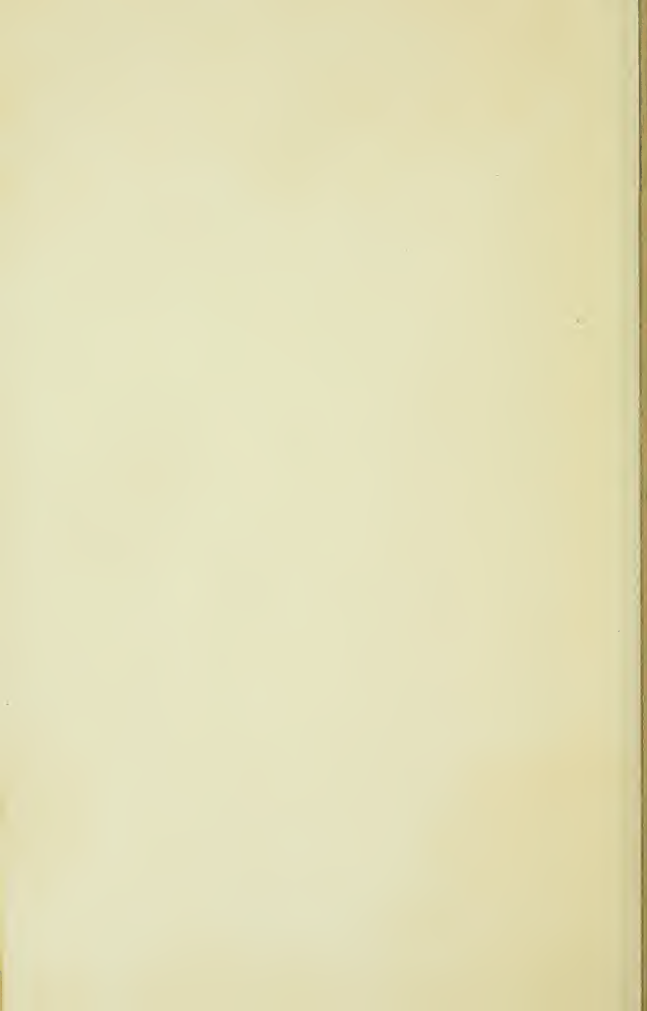
The mill still stands upon its hill site fair,  
As if to watch the boats that glide away  
O'er the blue waves of Narragansett Bay,  
Free from the pressure of vain-glorious  
strife.

Type of the truly grand—the simple life.











LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 075 677 5





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 075 677 5 ●