

WESTMORLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 58 ISSUE # 2 JUNE, 2023 ISBN320813

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I've always been a believer that when one door closes another one opens. It's not always easy to see people go and to be faced with change, but there are always new opportunities around the corner just waiting to be discovered.

Over the past 6 months we have seen some big changes at WHS.

In December 2022 Bonnie Swift stepped down as President after years of tireless work and exceptional dedication.

Bonnie's work over the past few years has been pivotal in continuing to build the cornerstone of the society and we are so grateful for all she has done. Bonnie remains on the Board as Past President, continues to sit on our Finance Committee, and has been working with me during the handover.

Thank you so much Bonnie for all you have done, and continue to do, for WHS.

As we closed the doors at the end of the

2022 season, we also closed the door on another chapter of the Westmorland Historical Society's story, with Donald Alward stepping down as Museum Manager.

Although you will no longer see Donald's face at the Museum each day when we open in June 2023, we have not said goodbye as he continues to share his expertise and passion for history as a member of our Board.

We are thrilled to welcome a new member to our team, as Keegan Hiltz joins us as our new Museum Manager.

Keegan lives in Sackville and is a Mount Allison University graduate. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, including work experience at Mount Allison University, Archives & Parks Canada, and study in Cultural Resources Management and Museum Collections and Preser-

vation.

We want to welcome Keegan to WHS and look forward to working with him as we open our doors in June.

2023 Planning

2023 is a year of reflection, review and refocus for WHS.

With so many changes, including the amalgamation of Dorchester into the Tantramar District and the impact of the pandemic highlighting new opportunities, we are taking time this year to revisit our strategic plans and goals.

We will be working to identify gaps in our human, financial and logistical resources, explore expansion plans, and to build an action plan to move us forward.

More details of our strategic plans will

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KEILLOR HOUSE MUSEUM —SPECIAL EVENTS

Great News!

Our Special Events are back with a vengeance, so much so that there is not enough space here to list them all. Please go to page 15.

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MUSEUM MANAGER'S REPORT

Editor's Note: On rather short notice I asked our new Museum Manager, Keegan Hiltz, to write a few words about himself and his plans for our museums. I think you will see why we hired him. He will prove a worthy successor to Don.

Starting work as museum manager for Keillor House and St. James Textile Museum this past 15th of May has me thrilled about the upcoming season, albeit suffering just a little bit from information overload. As many already know, my field of post-graduate study has been Cultural Resource Management. This online program from the University of Victoria provides course work in such topics as collections management, conservation, visitor experience, and exhibition planning, so my new position is the perfect opportunity to put the skills and knowledge I am developing into practice.

I am particularly fascinated with the art of designing exhibitions that engage visitors' interest and support impactful learning experiences. To finish up my time at the Mount Allison University Archives I reassembled some of my past exhibition projects to coincide with the year's convocation and reunion events. The most recent is a selection of archival objects supporting a short biography of renowned Maritime artist Tom Forrestall. This accompanies an overflowing display of personal sketchbooks, notebooks, and sculptures from 1952 to the present furnished by Forrestall himself to mark the release of his new book *Thinking Made Visible: The Notebooks of Tom Forrestall*. Another is my display demonstrating the evolution of Mount Allison publications over the years to coincide with the 150th anniversary of The Argosy student newspaper. This physical arrangement was born out of my archival research undertaken in development of the virtual exhibition Early Mount Allison Papers (available at <https://libraryguides.mta.ca/archives>). These small exercises in exhibition planning will remain available in the foyer of the R.P. Bell Library throughout the summer.

At the time of writing, I am in the midst of the hiring process for this year's round of student interpretive staff. One of my goals as manager is to provide valuable learning experiences. Most heritage sites teach their staff effective interpretation, but I feel there is room to develop other new skills in a hands-on approach. I hope to help our students devise personal research projects, interpretive plans, exhibition proposals, and learn object conservation strategies according to their personal interest. With our local tourism industry rebounding from the challenges of a pandemic, investing extra effort in these learning opportunities for staff can strengthen the assets of Dorchester's sister museums and kick-start new careers in our region's heritage sector.

As I get the museums prepared for our opening day, I am very grateful for the help of the Westmorland Historic Society board and our community volunteers. There is much to be done in implementing the adjustments that have been requested. Of particular note is the shift of the Keillor House visitor entrance from the side to the front. The flow of visitors through a site is an important part of the experience and I hope that making use of this grand entryway will help to reinforce our narrative about the structure and history of the home. I have already been discussing solutions involving signage (among other strategies) to help guide visitors through the site optimally from the moment they enter the driveway. The greatest strength of both museums is their ability to create unique visitor experiences. The feeling of stepping into a stately home from the past or learning a skill from days gone by will stay with our visitors for a long time afterward. I am very excited to get to work creating these experiences for people, and grateful for the opportunity to start putting my learning into practice in this new role.

Keegan Hiltz

be shared over the coming months.

Events

We are excited to have a new Events Committee this year that is chaired by Bernie Melanson. Bernie and his team have created a calendar of events that brings history, creativity, and community together to give visitors an opportunity to enjoy a unique experience surrounded by the heritage of Dorchester.

Events in 2023 include Victorian Garden Parties, Dinner with the Keillor's, Victorian Christmas Dinners, and much more. We will also be attending the Highland Games and the Lady Smith Manor Summer and Christmas Markets.

Our Online Auctions continue to be a huge success and this year we have two planned; one in April and the other in September. A big thank you to Alice, Debbie, Margaret, and Bonnie who made our Mother's Day Online Auction such a success.

Opening Day at the Museums will be on Saturday 10th June with a Victorian Garden Party including our opening ceremony, historical play, refreshments, games on the lawn and an opportunity to tour the museum and gardens.

The day will end with our AGM at the Veterans' Community Centre in Dorchester where dinner will be served. Everyone is welcome and we would love to see you at both our Opening Day Victorian Garden Party and our AGM.

All the details of our events will be released on our website and Facebook page, so stay tuned.

A big thank you to Bernie, Alice, Debbie, and Judy for all their work in organizing the events this year. Without everyone's hard work we wouldn't be able to offer such an exciting calendar of events.

Properties

Nathalie Bouchard, our Property Manager continues to work tirelessly to stay on top of the challenges of maintaining our buildings. Old, historic properties are full of challenges and the list of maintenance work never ceases to grow.

As we move forward this year, the Board are focused on identifying the top priorities for the maintenance of our historic properties, identifying resources, and incorporating the work into our strategic plans.

Finally, I want to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported me as my role has changed from Vice President to Acting President. I am immensely grateful to have the support of all the Board Members as I make the transition.

With our doors opening again soon I am excited to see the Museums come back to life and to hear the chatter of people as they enjoy experiencing living history within the walls of the Keillor House Museum and St James Textile Museum.

I want to extend a very warm welcome and invite you to join us at our events and the museums this summer.

I hope to see you there.

Miriam Andrews – Acting President

DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM: MEMORIES OF SOME LONG GONE LANDMARKS

Author's note: As I have often had occasion to do, I would once again like to thank Paul Bogaard of Tantramar Heritage Trust for valuable assistance in preparing this article.

Ogden Mill Road. Anderson Mill Road. Trueman Mill Road. Johnson's Mills. Berry Mills. Mill Road. These names are just about the only surviving reminders of an establishment that was once common in almost every community of any size in this area. I am talking about mills, at once vital components of the local economy and picturesque features of the local landscape that can still evoke nostalgia. In time, they came to be powered by smoke and fume-belching steam and gasoline/diesel engines, but until the latter part of the 19th century they ran on the "green" power of running water and often caught the attention of romantic landscape artists, as witness this attractive specimen published by Currier and Ives, the same outfit that produced the scary bear-hunting scene hanging on the kitchen wall of Keillor House. (See the September 2021 issue of the Newsletter for particulars on that.)



Long known in Europe and America, mills came to our area with the first settlers and were located wherever there was a community large enough to make them profitable and a running water source adequate to power them. They were not absolutely necessary to existence. People had been grinding grain, sawing lumber, and carding and fulling wool by hand for millennia—and those who couldn't, or wouldn't, pay the milling fees continued to do so long after mills were established. Howard Trueman, author of the well known study *The Chignecto Isthmus and Its First Settlers* (sold in the Keillor House Gift Shop) testified that hand querns were still common in the Chignecto in the late nineteenth century. But, if not an absolute necessity, mills were a great labour-saving convenience and were one of the first orders of business when laying out a settlement.

The first mills in the Chignecto were, of course, Acadian. The leaders of the French settlement at Port Royal (now Annapolis Royal) ordered the building of a small gristmill in 1607, no doubt the first one in North America, or at least North America north of Mexico. Both wind and water-powered gristmills were a common feature of the Acadian settlements established in the decades after 1633. Indeed, building them and charging a grinding fee to *habitants* who were obliged to use them was among the more important rights granted to recipients of the seigneuries (or manors) into which Acadia was initially divided for settlement, although it is an open—and debated—question as to how long and in what areas the seigneurs were able to enforce them. Archeological evidence has been found of windmills near Grand Pré, water-powered mills near Kentville, and several others at New Minas. Eleven gristmills were on the list of houses, barns, and other buildings ordered to be burned when the Acadians were deported from Grand Pré in 1755. Closer to home, when Pierre Thibodeau, a French-born miller, left Port Royal with his four sons in 1698 to found a settlement and, he hoped, a seignury on the Shepody River, one of the first things he did after building an aboiteau, breaking some soil, and planting some crops was to order machinery and millstones from New England for both a grist and a sawmill. Whether he ever managed to establish a seignury over the *habitants* is unknown. His right to do so was contested by Michel LeNeuf de la Vallière, briefly Governor of Acadia (1681-84), who was granted a large seignury stretching in theory all the way from Tatamagouche to the Petitcodiac that also included the beautiful area below Fort Lawrence called 'Beaubassin' by the Acadians. As an assertion of his seigneurial rights as well as a view to profit, he built a gristmill there. So far, archeological evidence of it has failed to turn up in excavations near the site of the village (it must have been

somewhere on the lower Missiquash River), but in compensation, even after he was recalled as Governor, Le Neuf continued to call himself the 'Sieur de Beaubassin'.

There is good indirect evidence of Acadian mills in what became Sackville Township after the British conquest of New France, although it is difficult to say very precisely when they were built. The first Acadian settlements appear to date from the 1720s, a time when seigneurial rights could no longer be enforced, but there can be little doubt that, whether seigneurial or built by private enterprise, there had been Acadian mills within the later township that were probably burned during the Expulsion. At the first meeting of the Sackville Proprietors' Committee (August 17, 1762), called to allot the township's shares to the New England subscribers, it was resolved "that the Lower Mill Creek be the dividing line between Westcock and the Middle Village [today Sackville]... And that the other boundary of the Middle Village begin at the Old Mill Dam at the Upper Mill Creek." If the "old mill dam" was already old when the first New England settlers arrived, it could only have been Acadian, and the same argument could reasonably be applied to the Lower Mill Creek as well.

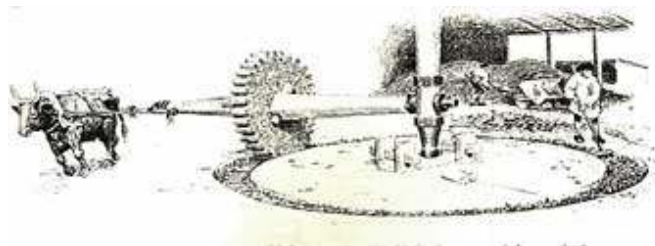
Mills were also a standard feature of post-Acadian British settlements of any size, as indeed they were throughout colonial America. At the first Proprietors' Committee meeting mentioned above, Simon Mason was admitted to one share in the Upper Village and "accommodated with land for a saw and gristmill." (New England/Nova Scotia townships initially claimed a 'seigneurial' authority over the granting of mill rights, but as in the Acadian case it, too, waned over time.) Simon was also granted permission to flood "as much land as necessary for said mills." In 1782 the township's mill privilege on the Upper Mill Creek (running out of what is now called Silver Lake) was transferred to Nehemiah Ayer who soon afterwards lost it to Yorkshire immigrant Christopher Harper in a bitter lawsuit stemming from the Eddy Rebellion. I don't know exactly when he built it, but New England settler Benjamin Tower ran a sawmill and a gristmill on Lower Mill Creek for some years before his death in 1804. John Fawcett, another Yorkshire settler, built a mill on the brook that ran through his farm on land now owned by Mount Allison University. Howard Trueman knew that "the Fawcett foundry [now a university parking lot] stands on what was the bed of the old mill pond."

For further evidence that mills were among the first order of business, even for small settlements, we need look no further than Moncton, which in 1782 had only eight families of impoverished Pennsylvania Germans. Yet, in that year Johann and Heinrich Schanz (anglicized as John and Henry Jones) built a gristmill, albeit a small one constructed of logs, on (you guessed it) "Mill Creek," apparently so-named when the township was laid out in 1766. Further eastward, Cumberland Township (re-named Westmorland after the creation of New Brunswick out of Nova Scotia in 1784) boasted two gristmills and one sawmill by the time the first census was taken in 1767. There is no surviving evidence as to where they were located, but it was most likely in the vicinity of Fort Beauséjour, now re-named Fort Cumberland. The same census also noted a gristmill and a sawmill in Sackville. This probably indicates that the two Acadian ones on Lower and Upper Mill Stream were rebuilt, or built over, by this time. None is noted for Moncton (or for Hillsboro), so it appears that Moncton's "Mill Creek" was named but not used as a millstream until the Jones/Schanzes built on it in 1782.

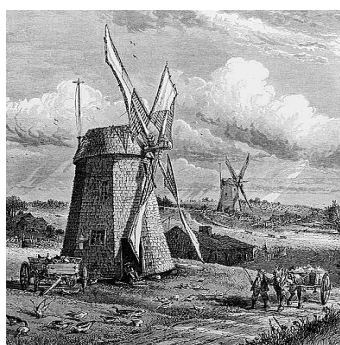
Before going on to locate other mills in the Aulac/Sackville/Midgic/Bai Verte/Dorchester areas in the later 18th to mid 19th centuries (the scope of this article), it would probably be a good idea to identify the various kinds of mills according to their purpose and power source and explain something of their workings. There were four main kinds of mills: *gristmills* for grinding grain into flour for making bread; *sawmills* for sawing logs into planks and smaller lumber for framing houses, barns, and other structures; *carding mills* for straightening the fibres and combing the crud out of wool; and *fulling mills* for cleaning and pounding raw loom-woven woolen cloth into a more homogenous textile. These mills worked on the same general principles and left abundant tracks in the historical record, but there was a fifth kind, extremely simple in construction, that did not, although it was an essential component of every tannery, of which there were once quite a number in the Chignecto, where a lot of cattle and sheep were raised. (W.C. Milner remembered no less than three in Sackville alone in the mid 19th century, while the *Bor-derer*—Sackville's first newspaper—noted seven between Silver Lake and Walker Road, the largest concentration in the prov-

ince.) This was the *bark mill*, used to break up the peeled bark of hemlock trees into smaller pieces so they could be soaked in vats to produce tannic acid. Unlike the others, bark mills were invariably animal-powered and consisted of a vertical post with a horizontal pole attached to it, rotated by an ox or a horse.

The pole served as the axle of a stone wheel that had corrugated edges. The wheel ran in a circular wooden trough over the slabs of bark and broke them up into small pieces for the tanning vats, as in this illustration conveniently found online.



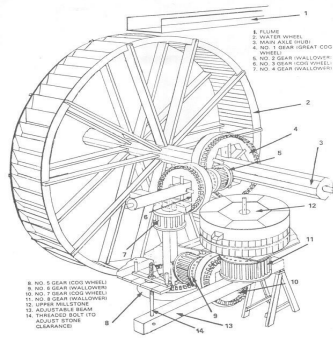
Gristmills could also be animal-powered, in their case by a horse. (Oxen were too slow.) Their construction was similar to that of a bark mill, except that a gristmill required two millstones, a 'runner' and a 'bedstone', the former rotating on top of the latter. The runner was turned by a horse harnessed to a shaft as in the illustration, again courtesy of the internet.



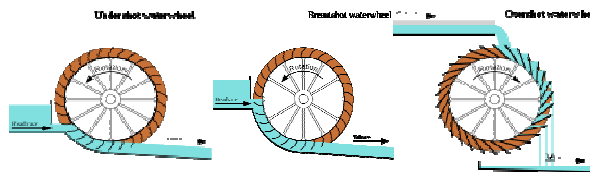
Another possible power source for a gristmill was wind, as anyone familiar with Dutch landscape painting will know. What is less well known is that grist windmills were common in both Yorkshire and New England, from whence the original British settlers of the Chignecto came, and they looked a lot like their Dutch counterparts:

At this point you may be wondering whether there were once wind or horse-powered gristmills in the Chignecto. The answer is apparently 'yes', although I found only one reference to them. The above-mentioned Howard Trueman (1837-1908), a third generation Yorkshire settler who was raised on Prospect Farm at Point de Bute, knew of a family tradition that the first Trueman gristmill (of which there would be several) was a horse mill and that it was replaced by a windmill, which in turn was replaced by a water-powered version. From documents preserved in the Trueman family fonds in the Mount Allison University Archives (described in the February 2023 issue of the Newsletter) I was cleverly able to deduce that the horse mill was built about 1780, replaced by the windmill in 1794, and it by the first water-run mill in 1802.

Whatever the number of horse mills and windmills may have been—and I don't think it was ever a large one—by far the most common power source for the four main kinds of mills we are talking about was running water. The power was extracted from the running water by a water wheel—the most conspicuous and best known feature of a traditional mill—and again there were several kinds. Made of wood with a few metal parts, a water wheel could be constructed by a good carpenter with the help of a blacksmith. It consisted of two identical circular frames—which could range from ten to thirty feet in diameter—supported by spokes mounted in a hub turning on an axle (like a wagon wheel). Attached to the perimeters of the circular frames was an evenly-spaced series of buckets or paddles to carry the water, as in the illustration.



Although flat-running versions were not unknown, water wheels generally ran in the vertical plane and were of three types, named according to where the water contacted the buckets or paddles. Again, an illustration will make this clearer:



Overshot wheels were used in streams of low velocity with little pressure from gravity (known as ‘head’). They did not work well in swiftly flowing streams, which called for *breastshot* wheels. Water contacted the buckets, shaped to minimize turbulence, just below the wheel’s centerline so that both its (the water’s) movement and its head were harnessed to turn the wheel. This was the most common type and the one that appears in the Currier and Ives print above. But, again, not all streams were suitable for it, namely those that were slow-running and/or shallow. This is where the *overshot* wheel came into its own. It was turned by the weight of the water aided by gravity flowing into the buckets or paddles from above. Overshot wheels were the most efficient type, utilizing up to 90% of the potential energy of the falling water, but they required a larger ‘head’ than did a breastshot, which usually meant damming a creek in a fairly steep ravine to create a millpond at least ten feet (and ideally considerably more) above the wheel and then building a long and somewhat complicated millrace to carry the water to it.

Besides the waterwheel, the other basic elements of a water-powered gristmill were: a *cogwheel* (also called a counterwheel) attached to the axle of the waterwheel. The cogwheel turned a horizontally rotating *trundle head* attached to a vertically turning *spindle*. The spindle ran through the centre hole (called the *eye*) of the bottom millstone (called the *bed stone*) and continued upwards into the eye of the top millstone (called the *runner*). The spindle was attached to the eye of the runner, causing it (the runner) to rotate with the spindle. Grain was fed into the eye of the runner from a *hopper* mounted above the millstones from whence it trickled down onto the grooved and stationary bed stone. There it was ground into flour by the similarly grooved runner turning just a fraction of an inch above it. (The stones never touched, and the spindle could be raised and lowered to achieve a finer or coarser grind.) The flour was pushed along the grooves to the periphery of the millstones, which ran inside a *wooden casing* to prevent the flour from spilling out onto the floor. From the casing it was exuded out into a *meal bin*, then carried up to the top storey of the mill and spread out onto the floor to cool. After cooling, the bran and coarse ‘middlings’ were sifted out, leaving the fine flour for making bread. This was called ‘boulting’. In some mills boulting was done by hand using a fine mesh screen, in others by a boulting machine powered by the mill machinery. In case you have difficulty visualizing mechanical operations from verbal descriptions (as I do), here is an illustration of gristmill construction in its simplest form:

spun)—and there were quite a few who did in this area, where sheep outnumbered cattle by a considerable margin—was the carding mill. Carding mills were also powered by a waterwheel. In their case the wheel turned a belt that turned a series of interlocking and rotating drums or rollers. Pins were mounted onto the surfaces of the rollers to form a kind of roller brush. Its inner workings were of metal and probably not manufactured locally. I found evidence of carding mills in the Chignecto from the early 19th century, but the best picture I could find was of one built ca. 1840 for a miller in Maine. It is now in the Old Sturbridge Village Museum in Massachusetts.



After carding, wool was spun into yarn, which in turn was woven into cloth (or knitted into socks, mittens, sweaters, etc.), but that wasn't the end of the story. The loose weave of a manual loom left the 'homespun' limp and easy to fray. Worse yet, it was still saturated with oils and dirt. So it had to be thoroughly cleansed ('scouring' was the technical term) and then stiffened and thickened ('fulling' was the technical term here) by pounding the daylights out of it. Fulling could be done with a wooden club but, like carding, that was a lot of hard and tedious work. Scouring wasn't much fun either, as the cleansing agent was a mixture of a special clay called 'fuller's earth' and stale urine. The easier and more pleasant alternative to hand-scouring and fulling was the fulling mill, which performed both operations. Like its grinding, sawing, and carding cousins, the fulling mill was driven by a water wheel, which in its case powered heavy wooden hammers that pounded the cloth in scouring vats. The illustrations, again easily found online, give a good idea of how it worked.



Now that we know what they were and how they operated, we can return to the specific mills of the Chignecto and surrounding area.

The ones I have the most complete information on are the Trueman mills at Point de Bute. William Trueman Senior, the first Yorkshire settler to bear that name, was a joiner (first class carpenter) and millwright, as well as a miller, back in the old country. He built a horse-powered gristmill about 1780 and replaced it with a wind-powered gristmill in 1794, which he operated with his son, William Junior, until his death in 1797. In 1802 William Junior (who was actually now William Senior because he also had a son called William, but we'll just call him plain William) began constructing a water-powered gristmill with the help of master carpenter William Chapman Junior. The lumber was sawn at Brownell's sawmill located on a stream near the Lucyphy Road in Jolicure (it is marked on the Walling Map, to be discussed below) and the gristmill started operating on April 25, 1803. (I know this from a diary/logbook that William called his 'Memorandum of Events' preserved in the Trueman family

fonds at Mount Allison University and described in the June 2023 issue of the Newsletter.) It was located in a steep ravine on Prospect Farm, on a stream that ran into the Aulac River, and was powered by a large overshot waterwheel. The mill was a small one, apparently turning relatively small grindstones—which may have been remnants of the windmill—and couldn't keep up with the demand for its services. It seems that a lot of folks didn't want to grind any more grain than they had to on their old 'Armstrong' hand querns. So, over the course of four years, from 1808 to 1812, the Truemans dammed up a larger millpond further upstream (to create more 'head') and built a larger gristmill that, in Howard Trueman's words, "proved a great convenience to the whole country for many years." To ensure a greater grinding capacity and a finer grade of flour, they installed a new and larger set of millstones that may have been French buhrstone. Many years after the mill had rotted away, several of them were discovered at the site and Ron Trueman brought them up into the yard at Prospect Farm where they now serve as handsome lawn ornaments and reminders of times gone by.

The Trueman gristmills did indeed "prove a great convenience to the whole country," as people brought in their sacks of grain by cart and sleigh from miles around. Records of them (very incomplete) in the Trueman family fonds include: Tolar Thompson of Sackville, Amos Fowler of Westmorland Township, John Pattison from Cole's Island, and a number of Acadians from Shemogue. Business was brisk and the main thing that slowed it down were the frequent shortages of water in the mill pond—which was heavily dependent for its supply on rain and snow melt because the stream was a small one—and more than occasional damage to the mill dam from freshets and sudden thaws, which could put the mill out of commission for days. In this respect, the second and larger mill was more troublesome than the first and smaller one, as the pond was larger and higher up the ravine, creating not only more head for the waterwheel, but also more pressure on the dam. In 1817, for example, William recorded no less than forty-two days of labour expended on the dam, which nevertheless gave way completely on a number of occasions. No doubt the mills were a "great convenience to the whole country," but they weren't always to the Truemans.

In 1806 the Truemans built their first sawmill very close to where the second gristmill was sited; indeed the two may have been parts of a single complex, using a common waterwheel. This arrangement was common, as was the combination of a gristmill and a sawmill in a single enterprise. Gristmills seem to have been the first order of business, but as the country opened up to settlement and framed buildings gradually replaced log structures the demand for sawmills outpaced that for gristmills and, being enterprising people, the Truemans would not have wanted to miss out on that business. We have less evidence for the construction of the Trueman sawmills than we do for the gristmills, but in compensation we have the exact date of the first one. William wrote in his Memorandum of Events that on January 2, 1806, which was "a fine day," they "started to cut timber for the saw mill." On April 22, a "very fine drying day" (for the fields), and also the one on which Robert Dickie and Nellie Chapman were married, they "started to frame the saw mill." They raised it, along with a barn, on May 3. The ground was still too soggy to plough, so what better time to do it?

William died in 1826 and since his six oldest boys were by this time settled on farms of their own, Prospect Farm passed to the youngest, Thompson, and along with it the mills. Thompson, too, was an active miller, but milling is hard work and Thompson does not seem to have enjoyed great health. After working at the gristmill all one day in 1845 he died of an apparent heart attack at the age of forty-four. The farm and mills passed to his son, Albert, Howard's older brother, but Albert doesn't appear to have been very successful at milling, possibly because of the actions of two of his cousins, Joseph and Benjamin Trueman. They were the sons of William's second oldest son, officially named William but better known as Willie. Willie inherited some Trueman lands further up the millstream from Prospect Farm that included what today is still called the Trueman Millpond. He, or he and his sons, built a dam just a little below where the Trueman Mill Road crosses the millstream (hard by the Trueman Blueberry Farmstand) and erected a sawmill that became known as the Upper Mill. But the Upper Mill became a bit of a downer for Albert because Joseph and Benjamin got into the habit of keeping their gate shut until the millpond was full, then "sawing it out" in one fell swoop and letting the water down into Albert's pond faster than he could make use of it. Albert sued them and won a judgment in the county court forcing his cousins, "when water becomes scarce," to slow the flow out of the Upper Mill enough to accommodate his machinery. Joseph and Benjamin continued to operate the Upper Mill jointly and it was

successful enough to be worthwhile passing on to their sons, Amos and Johnson Trueman. They continued in their fathers' footsteps until about 1913, by which time big lumbering operations such as the Hickman's were squeezing the smaller saw-mills out of business.

Sometime in the late 1850s, the mills on Prospect, or at least the gristmill, got a new lease on life when another of Albert's many Trueman cousins, Rufus, a son of Thomas, acquired them and rebuilt and modernized the gristmill (and probably the sawmill too, but I don't know that for sure). He operated it until 1872 when the mill dam went out yet again and the milling business had declined to such an extent that it wasn't worth the trouble to repair it. Howard, who, although he farmed apparently never took to milling, remembered that it had three sets of grindstones. It had clearly increased in size and grinding capacity and was no doubt utilizing the metal gears that were found on the site and are now beside the two millstones in the front yard at Prospect. We could even speculate, and with considerable plausibility, that it was modernized along the lines of the "Evans automated mill," which had become fairly common in North America by this time. The design was the brainchild of Oliver Evans (1755-1819), a particularly ingenious Yankee millwright who developed a number of labour-saving devices to make the miller's life easier and more productive. The most important of them were the bucket elevator to move the grain from the bottom to the top of the mill (rather than carrying it up in sacks on the back) and the mechanical spreader, called the "hopper boy," which gathered the hot, moist meal from the bucket elevator and spread it evenly over the drying floor—quite an improvement over the old 'shovel' method.

I turn now to some of the other mills that used to grace the Chignecto countryside, but I don't have nearly as much information on them as I do for the Trueman mills. More information could probably be found but this is not intended to be an exhaustive study. What I have is from the following sources: a. the Sackville Township Plan drawn up from surveys made in 1791, a splendid copy of which graces a wall in the Boultenhouse Heritage Centre; b. a census undertaken in 1840 by the Westmorland County General Sessions of the Peace; c. the well known Walling Map published in 1862; d. William Trueman's Memorandum of Events and other material in the Trueman family fonds; e. W. C. Milner's well known *History of Sackville*; f. miscellaneous information from various works I have written over the years; g. fruitful discussions and a mini-field trip I enjoyed with Paul Bogaard.

The Sackville Township Plan shows two mills. The one on Lower Mill Creek, which is still the boundary between Sackville and Westcock, seems to have been located just a little west of where the Diamond A Dairy Farm stands today. From the lettering, the word 'mill' seems to have been added sometime after the 1793 original of the copy in the Boultenhouse was done up, and this is consistent with Milner's information that in 1812 Amos Botsford, Sackville's leading squire, built a mill there "to saw timber, grind grain and it was fitted with a carding machine....the first ever seen in the country." There is little reason to doubt that this mill, which could very well have been built on the site of an Acadian predecessor, was owned by the Botsfords. Writing towards the end of the century, Milner remembered seeing its timbers, "having been preserved by the salt water," but I am rather skeptical that it was Amos who ran it. Besides being a wealthy gentleman farmer, assiduous office collector, and politician (he was Speaker of the House of Assembly)—a man who would have been above such work—he died in Saint John in September of 1812 after a lengthy period of illness. My guess would be that the mill was managed, if not built, by his son and only surviving heir, William, also a lawyer and politician, who moved to Westcock in 1808 to be closer to his ailing father.

I also have to take tentative issue with Milner's statement that the carding machine was "the first ever seen in this country." On July 29, 1811, the year before Botsford is said to have built his mill, William Trueman wrote the following in his Memorandum of Events: "Goes to the carding mill. A son of John Harper [and grandson of Christopher] gets badly hurt in the mill. Broke his thigh." William seems to be referring to the mill on Upper Mill Creek running out of what is now Silver Lake that Christopher Harper won from Nehemiah Ayer in the lawsuit mentioned above. It is true that the court documents mention only a gristmill and a sawmill—clearly marked as 'mills' on the Sackville Township Plan—but Trueman's testimony seems to

be that the Harper mills had a carding machine by 1811 that Milner didn't know about. The only way I can think of to resolve the contradiction in the evidence is to suppose that Trueman went to *Botsford's* carding mill and that young Harper just happened to be there, got involved with the mill's operation and was hurt, which in turn would mean that Botsford built his mill sometime before 1812. Documents exist proving that he acquired the land in 1800, so that is not impossible. It is also possible that there was a post-Acadian mill on the site even before that. Colin MacKinnon, another assiduous researcher of local history, gave Paul some information that Samuel Ballau (or perhaps his son, Stephen) had a mill in the near vicinity of the Botsford mill by 1770. Whatever the case, the mills on Upper Mill Creek certainly had a carding machine later. Harper's heirs sold the mills to John Morice and the mill pond became Morice Mill Pond—and remained so until it became Silver Lake sometime after 1939 when the mill ceased operating. Milner had information that Morice got the carding machine from the Botsford mill when it shut down (to replace the one in the Harper mill? Possibly, possibly not) and this seems to be confirmed by the Walling Map, which shows a gristmill, a sawmill, and a carding machine in the same location as the mills on 'Silver Lake' marked on the Sackville Township Plan. In the accompanying list of manufacturers and blacksmiths in Sackville on the Walling Map we find "W. & J. Morice, Carding Mill."

A couple of details on the Harper mills, this time from my own work on local government, may be of interest. There was a great deal of resentment on the part of the Ayers and their supporters over Harper's lawsuit that deprived them of their mills on Upper Mill Creek, and they expressed it in deeds as well as words. In 1787, soon after their ejection from the property, they burned Harper's house to the ground and set fire to his gristmill, which only escaped total destruction because of the damp weather. In 1802 Joseph Smith, David Howe, and Israel Thornton were convicted in the court of General Sessions of the Peace of "obstructing and damaging the mill wheel of Christopher Harper Esq. in Sackville" and fined ten shillings each plus costs of prosecution. Such doings, or the fear of them, would not have been pleasant for Harper, but I suppose it relieved the monotony of the 'daily grind'.

Returning to the Botsford mill on Lower Mill Creek, Milner didn't have a date for when it ceased operating but he did know that Charles Bulmer bought the gears from it and put them into a mill he was building at Fairfield, and also that John Fawcett bought its millstones for the one he built on the site of the later Fawcett factory, mentioned near the beginning of this article.

Milner also mentions a mill at Frosty Hollow "erected probably before 1790 by a Mr. Tower to grind wheat and saw lumber..." 'Mr. Tower' would have been the Benjamin Tower also mentioned above who died in 1804. In the course of another project, I had occasion to examine all the estate inventories preserved in the Westmorland County probate records from 1785 to 1808, which included Benjamin's. Looking over my notes, I see that the value of his estate was among the lowest in the county, so milling by itself was hardly a road to riches. Whether it is significant or not, Benjamin was also once convicted of petty larceny in the court of General Sessions of the Peace. Perhaps he needed the money. Milner also informs us that the mill was eventually sold to George Bulmer, who passed it on to his son, Seth, who in turn sold it to a John Wiggins. "The machinery having become out of date, and the mill suffering from old age, he [Wiggins] demolished it in 1933."

Actually, the story is more complicated—and interesting—than that, thanks to Paul Bogaard's diggings in the land registry office and other hidden corners. Benjamin Tower, who died in 1804, willed the mills to his two youngest sons, Joseph and Gideon. They operated them until 1814-1815, when they sold them to David Stone, who in turn sold them to John and Oliver Barnes a few years later. The Barnes brothers replaced the gristmill with a fulling mill (keeping the sawmill), probably because the Palmer fulling mill in Dorchester to be mentioned again below had by this time ceased operating, creating a business opportunity. It was the Barnes brothers who sold the sawmill and recently built fulling mill to George Bulmer, who gave his name to what is still occasionally referred to as 'Bulmer's Pond'. It is not known exactly when Bulmer bought the mills, but there is evidence from the 1850s that Sackville's leading merchant, William Crane, had a mortgage on the property—as he did on many others. In 1890 George turned the property over to his son, Seth, by which time the fulling mill had in its turn been re-

placed by another gristmill. Seth kept the mills going until 1924, when he sold the property to John Wiggins. Wiggins established an inn in the handsome house that still stands above the monument at Frosty Hollow and allowed the mills to lapse into what was no doubt a picturesque ruin regretted by many. He finally demolished the remaining eyesore in 1933.

While we are talking about the Walling Map, let's use it to locate some more mills in the area of interest, as it's really the best source we have for doing this. It actually shows more mills than will be mentioned here, but these are the ones I have something to say about.

Still within Sackville, a sawmill is noted on the stream running out of the west side of Morice Mill Pond (Silver Lake) and beside it is the name 'A. Ogden'. The road leading to the mill is still called the Ogden Mill Road. Because the leaves were off the trees, Paul was able to point out where the mill pond once stored the waters that powered the millwheel. Whether 'A. Ogden' was the Amos Ogden listed on the accompanying Business Directory for Sackville as being one of the merchants dealing in "groceries, dry goods &c.," I know not, but it seems likely enough.

Although today one would look in vain for a stream that could have run them (there obviously once was one), a gristmill, a sawmill, and a carding machine are shown in close proximity to one another at Beech Hill. It's nice to think that Sackville housewives wanting to do up a bit of homespun—something that was positively encouraged by the New Brunswick government in the 1840s to reduce reliance on imported cloth—had a choice of two carding mills, and that, once they had finished weaving the yarn into cloth (looms were a fairly common household item), they could take the backbreaking and smelly job of scouring and fulling it over to Barnes' / Bulmer's fulling mill.

Moving a little northeastwards, we find two sawmills in the vicinity of Midgic, one at the juncture of Luciphy Road and Lake Road, the other nearer the Midgic Baptist Church, and both in Westmorland Township/Parish, which shared Midgic with Sackville. Near the beginning of this article I mentioned another sawmill on the Luciphy Road, this one on the eastern end in Jolicure, namely Brownell's, which was established sometime before 1802 when William Trueman got the lumber for his first waterwheel sawn there. As a totally irrelevant aside, did you know that 'Luciphy' is an older word for a wildcat? It's a corruption of 'Lucifer', no doubt alluding to the beast's hellish temperament. The area must have once been a good place for trapping bobcats or lynx—which people unfortunately did.

Bai Verte was humming with sawmills by the time the Walling Map was published. No less than six are noted on streams in and around the village, which also boasted two hotels (Reade's and Hewson's), as well as two schools and a cooper's shop. There seems to have been no gristmill, but that job could be done not far away in Port Elgin where one of the mills also had a carding machine. Of course, there were a number of sawmills there as well.

Moving over to Dorchester, the Walling Map shows a gristmill and a sawmill on the southeast side of Palmer's Pond, but the fulling mill built by Gideon Palmer I in 1805 was gone. As described in the June 2021 issue of the Newsletter, Palmer rented it to itinerant weaver, teacher, and courthouse tavern keeper Josiah Wood. After Wood died young in 1809 Palmer, perhaps together with his son, Philip, who married Wood's widow, ran it himself. It seems to have ceased operations when Philip and Sarah moved over to Sackville about 1818. Besides scouring and fulling, its services included dying and pressing cloth. The Trueman family fonds preserves a statement of account from Gideon Palmer to Mrs. William Trueman for fulling, pressing, and dying woolen cloth in 1813 and 1814. Other customers included Christopher Harper of Sackville and Martin Bent of Fort Lawrence, so it must have been the only fulling mill in the area at the time.

Another Dorchester mill missing on the Walling Map is the oatmill built in the early 1820s on Robb's Creek near the present-day Veterans' Community Hall by John Keillor's son-in-law, John Robb. It was one of the first oatmills in the province and reflected a growing taste for oatmeal, the result of Scottish influence and the provincial government's encouraging its consumption by humans (as opposed to horses, who had always liked it) because oats were one of the easiest crops to grow in New Brunswick. The Robb mill was said to have produced the best oatmeal in the province, so it's a bit of a disappointment that it was no longer in operation when the Walling Map was published in 1862. By that time John was seventy-five, but his very successful son, Alexander, could have run it. Apparently he didn't.

Other mills on the Walling Map in the Dorchester-Rockport area include: a sawmill on Cape Road just north east of Cole's Point; a sawmill at Dorchester Cape on the stream running past it at Buck's Flats; a sawmill on a steam crossing Westcock Hill Road going to Second Westcock (there was also a school and a church nearby); a sawmill at Slack's Cove; and another sawmill at Wilbur's Cove. No mill is noted at Johnson's Mills, so these mills must have been built after 1862. Most likely, it, or they, were sawmills.

There is also a sawmill marked on the Anderson Mill Road on a stream running into the Memramcook River, and another near Breau Creek. The only thing I know about the Anderson mill is that John Sullivan, who was hanged in 1897 for the murder and robbery of Eliza Dutcher and her young son, Harry, worked there for a time, and that Mr. Anderson testified at his trial that he was of good character. (The details can be read in the June 2019 issue of the Newsletter.)

So far, we haven't talked about the census ordered by the Westmorland County General Sessions of the Peace in 1840. (It is reproduced in the February 2022 issue of the Newsletter.) In addition to counting people, as previous censuses had done, it gave the figures by parish/township for cattle, horses, sheep, swine, and—of most relevance here—gristmills and sawmills. There was a total of sixty-two gristmills in the county by this time, six in both Sackville and Dorchester, four in Westmorland, and nineteen in Botsford. Numbering one hundred and forty-one, there were now more than twice as many sawmills as gristmills, whereas in the earliest years of settlement the ratio was about even or even in favour of gristmills. I think this reflected the shift from log to framed buildings, as well as the growing export market for sawn deals. Dorchester had eighteen sawmills, Sackville twelve, Westmorland eight, and Botsford twenty. Clearly, Botsford was the 'growth parish' of the day. For some reason, the census did not include carding and fulling mills, but, as we have seen, there were some around, although not in the same numbers as gristmills and sawmills. With 27, 553 sheep in the county (9942 more than there were people) there would have been no lack of wool to keep them going.

Like covered bridges—those other pieces of picturesque nostalgia—water-driven mills eventually fell victim to progress, with the difference that New Brunswick still has fifty-eight covered bridges you can drive or walk over, while there are no working water-powered mills apart from the reconstructed sawmill at Kings Landing. In compensation, you can visit a working gristmill in Denmark (the Balmoral) near Tatamagouche, N.S. and even buy some flour there. There is also a working carding mill (the Wile, which was in commercial operation from 1860 to 1968!) in Bridgewater, N.S. All three are well worth a visit.

Gene Goodrich

WHS Events 2023

Keillor House Museum Opening Garden Party

Sat 10th June at Keillor House Museum - 2pm – 4pm

Join us for a Victorian Garden Party including our opening ceremony, the performance of a historical Dorchester play, refreshments, music, games on the lawn and an opportunity to tour the museum and gardens.

Westmorland Historical Society AGM & Dinner

Sat 10th June at Veterans Community Center, Dorchester- 5pm – 7pm

Keillor House Museum Victorian Garden Party

Sat 8th July at Keillor House Museum – 2pm – 5pm

Tickets: \$20

Join us for a Victorian Garden Party including the performance of a historical play, refreshments, games on the lawn and the opportunity to tour the museum and gardens.

Lady Smith Manor Summer Market

Sat 15th and Sun 16th July at Lady Smith Manor

Visit our booth at the Lady Smith Manor Summer Market to enjoy a traditional weaving demonstration and to browse our local artisan and heritage items.

Sandpiper Festival Victorian Garden Party

Sat 12th August at Keillor House Museum – 2pm – 5pm

Tickets: \$20

Join us to celebrate the Sandpiper Festival with refreshments, a historical play, games on the lawn and the opportunity to tour the museum and gardens.

Details of all our events can be found on our website www.keillorhousemuseum.com



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Museum Hours

Daily from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

June 10 to September 2

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