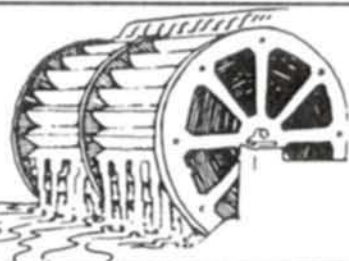


MILLWORK



Winter, 1992

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Vol. 6 - No. 3

What's New!

Our Annual Appeal will be mailed in early December. All donations will be matched by the O'Connor Foundation and, as always, they are tax deductible. Your gift will help build our endowment and secure the Museum's future.



Visitation Up in 1992

After two years of modest declines from our record season of 1989, visitation grew again this year. School visitation and event attendance increased impressively while daily visitation remained about even. We expect an even better year next summer.

Although the Museum is closed for the winter, don't forget us until next May. Remember the Members' Holiday Gathering on Saturday, December 5 in the John Hanford House, where you can sing songs, share Holiday cheer and food, and do a little shopping in the Museum Store. Also, don't forget next year's Ice Harvest on Sunday, February 7, 1993!

Restoration of Mill Dam to Begin

Recently, leaks through our dam have grown critical. A Dewar Foundation grant paid for an engineering and architectural study on the dam's condition. That report is complete and the O'Connor Foundation has committed capital support for the dam's repair.

Restoration will begin soon. Following the recommendations of preservation architect Carl Stearns and his consulting engineer, work will concentrate on the construction of a new concrete dam in front of the existing dam wall, that will both stop water and protect the archaeological resources behind the dam. These historic features will thus be preserved for future study and display.

Endowment Challenge Extended

The O'Connor Foundation has once again challenged the Museum to build its endowment. The Foundation has recently extended their 1 to 1 matching grant. This means that any money donated to the Museum's endowment fund will be doubled. If you work for a company that also matches donations (IBM for instance, matches employee contributions 2 for 1) you can more than double the impact of your gift to Hanford Mills Museum. Please keep this in mind when the Museum's Annual Appeal arrives in the mail in early December. We need your help to continue to preserve Hanford Mills.

In Memory Of

On September 20, 1992, Gilbert and Marguerite Meres died in an automobile accident. The Meres had a great interest in Hanford Mills and particularly liked bringing their grandchildren to our special events. Hanford Mills Museum was included on their list of memorials, and over 40 people contributed to the Museum in their name. All contributions were put into the endowment fund and were matched by the O'Connor Foundation.

Another recent passing was that of Dorothy Hamilton on October 28, 1992. Dorothy was born in East Meredith, spent much of her life teaching in the Albany area and returned home after her retirement. Both her grandfather and uncle worked at the mill and her father ran a sawmill east of town. Donations in her name were also matched by O'Connor and put in the museum's endowment.

You also may remember that a maple tree was planted on the John Hanford property in the memory of Dr. Charles Jones, for many years a museum trustee and President of the Board, as well as a strong supporter of the museum. Friends made contributions and recently a plaque was purchased to commemorate the planting of the tree. All funds over the cost of the plaque were put into the endowment fund.

Homecomings

The staff at the Museum is always learning more about Hanford Mills. We will probably never know the whole history of the mill, but this summer we were able to fill in a few parts of the story. Descendents of both the Hanford and Pizza owners came back this year for a visit, and each brought something to add to our knowledge of the mill and the site.

Our first visitor was Jack Pizza, son of Mike Pizza, one of the last owners of the mill. As Jack wandered the site during his visit, he remembered his days here as a child in the 1940s and 50s. He could place where buildings and machines, now long gone, had stood, and date when things happened and who did them. Jack also had lots of stories to tell, like how he hated to be sent to do work in the mill basement which didn't have electric lights at the time. The basement was filled with cobwebs, and Jack expected the "Boogie-Man" to jump out at him any second. It is memories like these that help the Museum put life into its story of the mill.

Also visiting this summer was Horace Hanford's granddaughter, Sandra Hanford Davis and her husband, Alden. Not only did she bring many memories as did Jack, she brought objects and records that will help us better understand the mill's distant past. The mill received prints and paintings that Horace Hanford used to decorate his home. Some of these will be displayed in the John Hanford House. Mrs. Davis also brought maps from 1856 and 1915, magazines from the 1860s to the turn-of-the-century that give us an idea of what the Hanfords read, and tools that D.J. Hanford used. Perhaps the most

exciting are records from the 1850s to the 1870s. These have given us information about the gristmill (see "Window on the Past" article in this issue), and other papers which tell us things such as the first water turbine may have been put in as early as 1867, that D.J. Hanford may have been running the mill in 1858-59 before he bought the business, and that he sold washing machines on the side. Each old piece of paper adds more to what we know about the mill.

Joe Pizza Jr., son of Joe Pizza, the last owner of the mill also visited. Like his cousin, Jack, Joe brought great childhood memories of the mill. He remembers harvesting ice for the store ice houses which stood on what is now the gift shop side of the pond. Joe told us how, one day, he took a wrong step and backed right off the ice into the pond. Someone was able to fish him out by the collar with an ice hook and he had to run all the way across the site. As Joe put it, he was an "icicle" by the time he got home! Joe Pizza is also going to let us copy some of the old 8mm films his family took at the mill

in the 1940s and 50s. If they copy well, we hope to show them at appropriate events.

Elizabeth Botting, granddaughter of John Hanford and cousin to Sandra Hanford Davis visited the mill late this fall. Elizabeth has been a great help as we plan the restoration of her grandfather's house to the 1920s-30s period. She has been able to tell us what the house looked like in that period and has told us stories about the family, including a story about when John Hanford was young and living with his father, D.J., who was a widower at the time. A local lady, meaning well, admonished John not to climb the tree he was in because he could break an arm. John told her he would break an arm if he wanted to! Without Elizabeth, we would know very little about the later Hanford farming years.

Each homecoming brought valuable information as well as pleasant people to visit with. There is always more to learn. We would like to thank the Pizzas, Davises and Bittings for their help, and we hope that they enjoyed their visit as much as we did.



Part of Sandra Hanford Davis' recent donation included the above advertisement indicating that D.J. Hanford sold Van Auken washing machines before he bought the East Meredith mill. He used a Davenport Center address since East Meredith did not yet have its own Post Office.

William VanAlstine - Can't Keep a Good Man Down

William VanAlstine worked at Hanford Mills from 1889 to 1922. Like Dan Wightman (see the article from the Fall, 1991 Millwork), William worked with the mill's steam engines. He also did road repairs and garden work for D.J. Hanford, especially in his earlier years at the mill. William was born in August of 1851 according to what he told the census taker in 1900. He was married to a woman named Mary, and together they had at least nine children. According to one daughter, William's "service [to the mill] was so indispensable that when he was forced to retire because of ill health, it was extremely difficult to find a replacement." According to timebooks, he retired in 1922. He died in 1929.

William's life sounds relatively calm - he had a wife and large family and he had various jobs though he kept returning to the mill and became a valued employee. Local newspapers and diary accounts add another, more disastrous, outlook on his life story, however.

The first time the VanAlstine name appears in the local newspaper it is in an article about his oldest daughter, Nellie. On January 25, 1895, a Delaware Dairyman article states that Nellie VanAlstine was recovering from a surgical operation. It wasn't until February 22 that the newspaper said that she was home and her fast recovery was "Almost a miracle." Then disaster struck in March as Nellie was "not so well." The December 13th edition announced, "Nellie, oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. VanAlstine, ... departed this life from the residence of Dr. Peck, ... in the 22nd year of her age. Up to within about a year ago Miss Nellie was a

healthy, hard working girl, when her health failed her and her physician operated on her for appendicitis. The operation was not a successful one, the patient never recovering from its effects." William VanAlstine and his family had to care for an ailing daughter for nearly a year!

The same year that Nellie was sick, William also had medical problems. In September, the paper stated that he was at home and "laid up with nervous rheumatism." Nervous rheumatism may have been neuralgia which is shooting pains along the nerves (usually

mill's business diary when Merritt Barnes wrote on July 6, 1910, "Wm. Van Alstine lost part of middle finger of left hand - caut in engine." He did not work again until August 3. In an era when workers compensation was rare, it is interesting to note that William was paid for a full week although he worked no more than three days of the six day week. He still missed nearly a whole month of pay afterwards. The engine that Barnes refers to was probably their steam engine, since William was the engineer at that time.



William VanAlstine, fourth from left in back row, sitting on lumber pile with other mill workers. Horace Hanford photo, April, 1900.

in the face, but it can also be elsewhere) or neuritis which is the inflammation of a nerve. Whatever it was exactly, it left two sick family members at home for a period of time.

After Nellie's death, the newspaper doesn't say much about the VanAlstine family until 1898, when William and his wife lost another child, a son, sometime around August. Unfortunately, the newspaper does not give details - how old was the boy, what did he die of or even when?

William VanAlstine's last recorded problem appears in the

William VanAlstine probably didn't have any more troubles than most people (though a daughter taking a year to die of an appendicitis must have been trying), but it is interesting how local records highlight the disastrous or sad side of his life. Despite his problems - illness, deaths and accidents - William VanAlstine persevered, made a reputation as a good, invaluable employee and supported his large family. William VanAlstine - you couldn't keep this good man down. Next issue - Andrew Brown, D.J. Hanford's Mentor.

The Beginnings of a Factory Museum

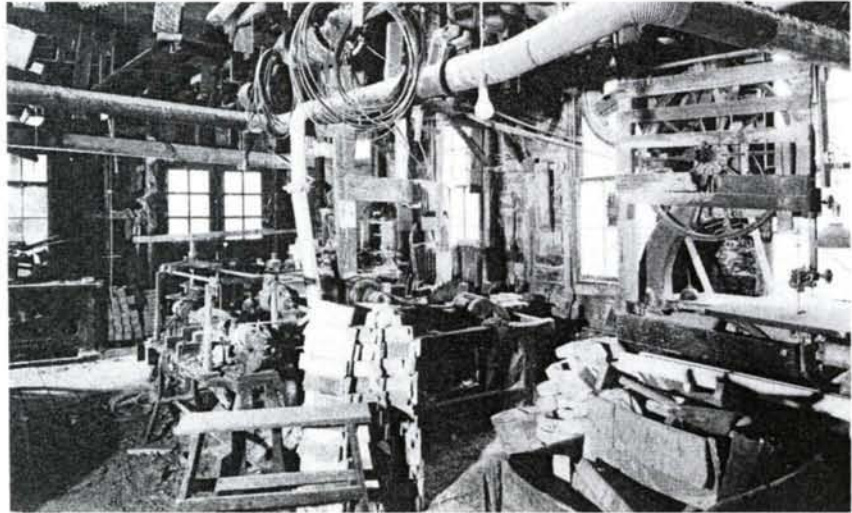
By John Staicer

Editor's Note: John Staicer, our former Programs Coordinator, now works for Historic Madison Inc., a nonprofit group founded in 1960 to preserve architecturally significant structures in Jefferson County, Indiana. HMI owns ten properties and operates two house museums. For more information, write Historic Madison at 500 West St., Madison, IN 47250 or call (812) 265-2967.

The Ben Schroeder Saddle Tree Factory is one of the most compelling historic industrial sites in the United States. It is a rare example of a completely intact factory complex, typical of the small 19th and early 20th century family run businesses. Such businesses played an important role in America's growth and development.

John Benedict Schroeder, a German immigrant, began making saddle trees (the internal wooden frames of saddles) at this shop on Milton Street in Madison, Indiana, by 1878. He, and later his children, continued and expanded that business until 1972, when Joseph A. Schroeder died, leaving the factory and an adjoining Victorian residence. In order to preserve the site's impressive collections, Historic Madison, Inc. (HMI) acquired the property. An Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation team recorded the principal features of the factory and residence through photographs and measured drawings. A 1990 study by Robert Vogel and James Massey recommended that HMI undertake a three phase project utilizing the Schroeder artifacts as the nucleus of a museum of industrial heritage.

Phase one of the Schroeder Saddle Tree Project focuses on the documentation and research of the factory site, completing what the HAER team began. The complex includes two wood frame workshops with about 6,600 square feet of work space as well as several outbuildings, filled with almost a century's accumulation of tools, machines, power



Interior view of one of the Schroeder Saddle Tree Factory buildings before work began to clear it out. Photo courtesy of Historic Madison

sources and wood products. (In addition to saddle trees, they made clothespins, hames, stirrups and canvas gloves.) The purpose of phase one is to establish a permanent record of the factory's layout and appearance and to determine the processes involved in saddle tree production. An accurate depiction of the site is essential, since this is the last remaining nineteenth century saddle tree factory in the United States.

To date, more than 1,000 photos have captured the "as found" condition of the site. These include overall room views, plus details of writing on walls, initials carved into brick and close-ups of the deteriorated structures. Together, these photos record the many rich details which make this site unique. The photographic record also documents the cleanup and organization of the factory, a necessary step toward the exhibition and interpretation of the Schroeder artifacts.

Measured drawings of the entire complex complement the

photographic images. These drawings will depict each facade as well as floor plans and sections, or cutaways, of each room. They show construction and finish details, describe building materials and illustrate machinery layout. Drawings of ceilings will map electrical, belt drive and dust collection systems as well as the location of racks and other fixtures. With accurate drawings, it will be possible to restore the structures to their original condition or to design museum exhibits that evoke the feeling of this century-old workshop.

Phase one of the Schroeder Saddle Tree Project is well underway. With the expected completion of the measured drawings by October, 1992 and the photographic documentation and cleanup of the site progressing as planned, major strides are being made. Once this work is complete, feasibility studies will guide Historic Madison, Inc. towards establishing a museum of industrial heritage in Madison, Indiana.

Window on the Past

Hanford Mills Museum is very lucky to have an extensive collection of Hanford business records, but they are not always complete. For some eras in mill history, we have papers that give us a detailed story, while for other times we have very little. Such was the case with the Hanford's first gristmill.

The gristmill, as it appears today, was remodeled in 1898 with a new attrition mill, elevators and bins. This work is well documented by local newspapers and Hanford business records. However, there is very little left of the original stone gristmill that D.J. Hanford first built around 1869. The only evidence we had was the structure itself, and daybook entries recording that the first large amounts of grain were sold in February, 1869. We supposed, then, that it was likely the gristmill addition was built early in 1869. 123 years after the fact, you couldn't expect to find any better evidence - but we did.

The breakthrough came recently, when D.J. Hanford's great granddaughter, Sandra Hanford Davis, visited this summer bringing along artifacts and receipts from 1866 to 1873. These records brought the gristmill's history into focus.

These records show that building the gristmill began as early as June 1868. A railroad shipping receipt from June 27 mentions wheels, castings and shafts that may have been for the gristmill. Other shipping receipts list a water wheel, shafts and gate in November, more shafting and pulleys in December, as well as a cornsheller, iron frame and millstones. No doubt the building was already built by November. These railroad receipts list parts, but do not go into detail, neither do they mention costs

except for shipping. D.J. paid \$27.64 to ship various mill supplies from June to December, 1868.

Did D.J. take all these parts and put together the gristmill himself? He probably constructed the building with local help, but the receipts clearly show that Charles H. Metcalf and Company of Fly Creek, New York (just west of Cooperstown, 30 miles from East Meredith) actually did the metal work and probably the installation. A September, 1868 receipt shows that Hanford paid Metcalf \$200 to start.

A December bill is very detailed, listing parts worked on as well as the hours worked by Metcalf's men - Veber, Murphy, Niles, Doubleday and Pearsalls. All the parts prices are recorded by the pound (a 20 inch pulley weighed 48 pounds at 6 cents a pound - Metcalf charged \$2.88). This method seems unusual today but was common then.

Another unusual part of this

A. J. Hanford
Receipt with C. H. Metcalf & Co.

No. 11	24	8 3/4	Dime	40	4.08
" 11	18 1/2	"	"	"	3.28
" 11	27	"	"	"	4.82
" 14	1	"	"	"	50
" "	10	"	"	"	50
" "	20 1/2	"	"	"	14.14
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	15.85
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	18.56
" "	12	"	"	"	3.52
" "	1 1/2	"	"	"	12.08
" "	8	"	"	"	3.5
" "	14	"	"	"	3.20
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	3.50
" "	14	"	"	"	52
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	25
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	17
" "	12	"	"	"	1.44
" "	4	"	"	"	60
" "	14 1/2	"	"	"	3.52
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	1.85
" "	4 1/2	"	"	"	2.55
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	1.41
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	9.04
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	13.60
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	4.50
" "	11	"	"	"	4.00
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	15.68
" "	8	"	"	"	1.50
" "	4 1/2	"	"	"	17.60
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	3.40
" "	10	"	"	"	1.50
" "	1 1/2	"	"	"	1.68
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	1.48
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	3.69
" "	2 1/2	"	"	"	1.65
" "	4 1/2	"	"	"	1.24

receipt is how the rates at which workers' pay was recorded - they either earned "40f" or "32f" an hour (one hour of work at a rate of 40f equalled 50 cents an hour). "F" seems to stand for 5/4 of a penny. The word "farthing" comes to mind. An old Webster's Dictionary definition was found that defines a farthing as, "The fourth of a penny ... of Great Britain. ... In America, we have no coin of this kind. We ... use the word to denote the fourth part of a penny in value; but the penny is a different value from the English penny, and different in different states. It is becoming obsolete with the old denominations of money." Was the New York definition for farthing perhaps 5/4 of a penny instead of 1/4? At any rate, the last receipt was dated November, 1869, when D.J. Hanford appears to have finished paying off his bills.

Other receipts give us details about additional machinery. The grist stones (called a portable mill) were 32 inches in diameter, purchased from Hart and Munson of Utica, New York. The stones, hoisting screw and bales and other parts cost D.J. \$400. An industrial size Smith cornsheller (we've had it all along, but were never sure if it was an original Hanford piece) was purchased from Wheeler, Melick and Company of Albany, New York for \$68. Finally, a set of millpicks (metal tools used to sharpen mill stones) was bought from D.P. Keator and Company of Kingston, New York for \$10 (one of these picks was also donated by Sandra Hanford Davis).

All together, it looks as if D.J. Hanford spent between \$790 and \$905 dollars for his new gristmill, not counting the cost of putting up the building.

Notes from the Field

During the nineteenth century, Hanford Mills was just one of many mills and shops operating throughout New York. Each town had at least one, usually a lot more, of these businesses. Today, Hanford Mills is unique because it has survived mostly intact and is still operating. It is one of few such sites in the country. Over a hundred years ago, in this area alone, there were the Hanfords' mills (sawmill and gristmill) and a water powered furniture and coffin manufactory in the village itself, as well as a sawmill a mile to the east and a shingle mill about a mile to the west. Then three miles away in Davenport Center, there were three or five more water and steam powered mills.

To better understand the past, the museum staff likes to find and explore other mills and shops that have survived in the area. Those that we find are often in bad shape, abandoned or partially disassembled. The more sites we explore the better we can explain Hanford Mills and the world in which it operated. The following reviews two such sites visited recently.

The floorplan in illustration 1 shows the first site we visited, the Buell woodworking shop now owned by Lillian Buell Goss, located east of Stamford in South Gilboa, NY. While the shop itself is not old and ran completely on electric motors, the machinery used, the products made and the locations are similar to Hanford Mills. The machinery is mostly second hand; many were built in the 1860s and 1870s. The shop was part of Keith Buell's lumber and hardware business. Leveling wedges for the Cannonsville Dam, beveled siding, matched louvers and slats were a few of the things made at the shop.

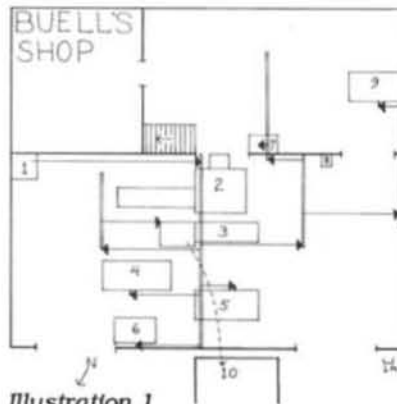


Illustration 1

1. Electric Motor
2. Rip Saw with own Motor
3. Planer & Blower
4. Moulder
5. Handmade Matcher
6. Resaw
7. Knife Grinder
8. Drill
9. Bandsaw
10. Shavings Room

Solid arrows show direction of power.

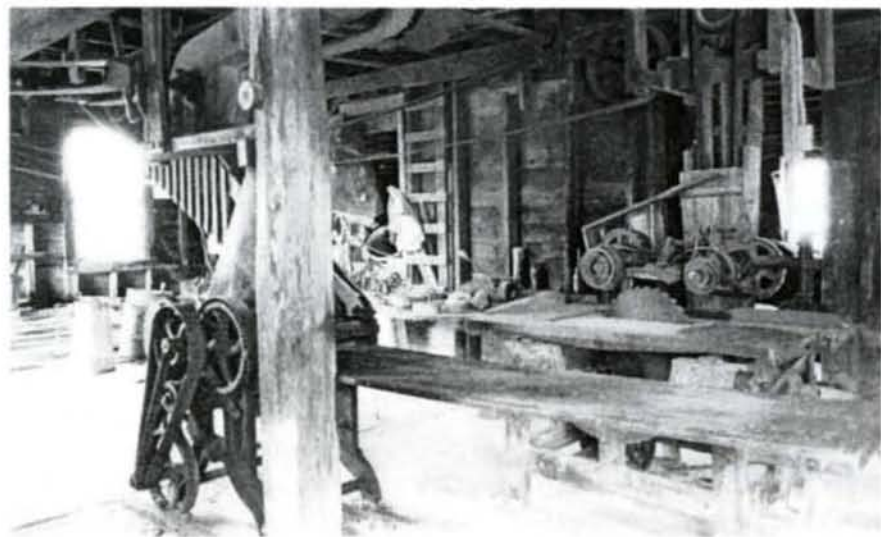
Double lines show ceiling shafts.

Dotted arrow shows path of shavings.

How the shop is set up is of special interest. The floorplan is arranged so unfinished materials come in the door on the left and finished products go out the door on the right. Two of Buell's machines are of particular interest. The first is a matcher(5) which was essentially homemade. Constructed by Ken Corbin some time after

the turn-of-the-century, it has a beautiful beaded wooden frame and metal parts cast in nearby Stamford. Another, is the planer(3), set up with a blower and chutes. The blower picks up shavings from the planer and blows them through a tube into another room(10). Hanford Mills has parts of its blower system, but the Buell shop shows how such a system was set up. The oldest machines (4 & 6) exhibit the artistic designs of the 1860s and 70s. During that time, some machines were designed with cast legs made to look like fancy wood turned legs, while others had painted pinstripes.

Like the Hanfords', the Buell shop is situated near the Ulster and Delaware railroad. Buell probably faced the same economic changes and problems that the railroad brought to such businesses. The railroad made it possible to get a product out to more markets, but it also made it cheaper to get products from outside markets. The Buell shop ended operations about the same time as the Pizzas in the 1960s or 70s, at a time when it was no longer profitable to run such a shop.



Interior view of Buell's Woodworking Shop with planer in foreground and rip saw behind it. Photo by Keith Bott

By Caroline L. Meek

Field Notes - continued. from page 6

Illustration 2 shows the second site we visited, a water powered crate making and grain cleaning mill near Andes, NY, now owned by John Coss. As John Coss remembers, one of the George family sons, John, was interested in engineering but he was not allowed to leave the farm. To satisfy his mechanical interests, he built a water wheel to run machinery for the family farm. With water powered saws, he made crates for his broccoli and cauliflower crops and cleaned grain for neighbors and himself. It was a time when machinery was relatively cheap and accessible, and magazines like Scientific American and Woodworker proved that the science of engineering was within everyone's grasp.

The water system is of prime interest at the George Mill site. Water comes from a pond on the slope above the mill and through a flume in the top floor of the building. From the

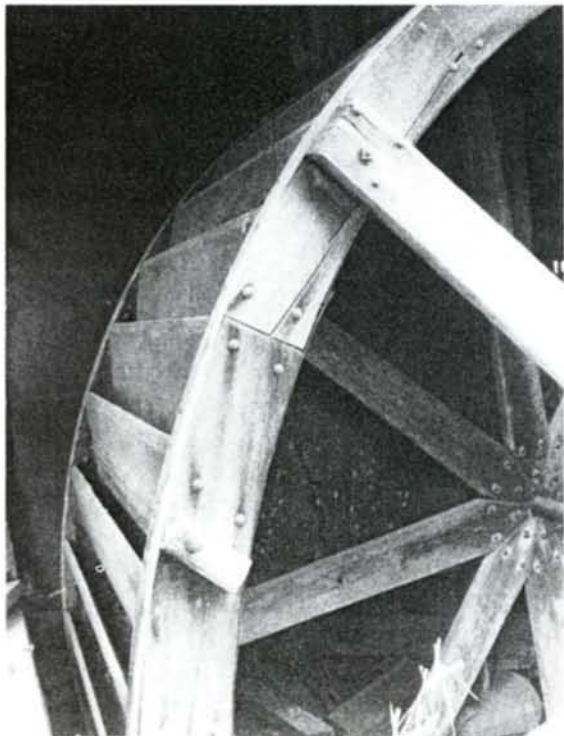


Exterior view of George Mill looking north. The wooden water wheel is seen in the left corner of building. Photo by Keth Bott

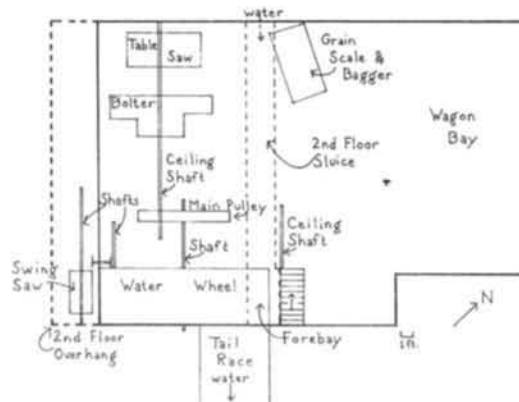
flume, the water flowed over the wheel on the first floor and fell to a tailrace below. The 13 foot diameter overshot wheel is well made and dominates the first floor where only 5 other small machines sat with a thresher (not shown on the floor plan) on the second floor above the bagger. The size of George's business appears similar to D.J. Hanford's early years when working the mill was meant to supplement farm income. George's mill was abandoned by the 1930s, because it was

easier to buy crates, and new outlets replaced the need to clean grain on the farm.

These are just a few of the things we learned at Buell's woodworking shop and George's Mill. It is important to see how others built and used their manufactories, to see what the Hanfords did the same or differently. It is also important to learn about these sites because they are disappearing rapidly. Buell's machines are no longer in use and the Andes mill is literally falling down. Sites like these will not be around for long and they should be recorded for future research.



Close up of John George's water wheel.

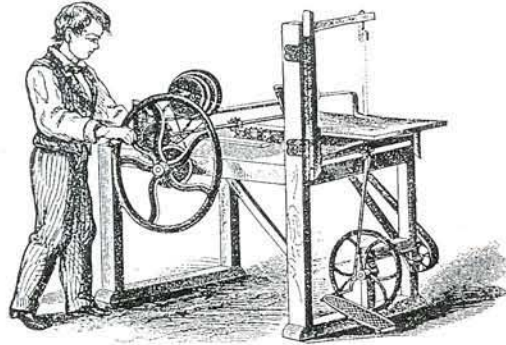


GEORGE'S MILL

Illustration 2

Improved Hand Saw-mill.

*Editor's note: Many forms of power have been mentioned in this **Millwork**, including water, steam and electric. These forms of power weren't always necessary to run woodworking machinery. Take a look at this machine from the January 1, 1866 issue of **Scientific American**.*



TALPEY'S HAND SAW-MILL.

The machines for sawing up lumber by hand power are very convenient - indeed, they are indispensable in small shops, where there is no power to be had.

The one here shown has had great popularity among mechanics, and numbers of them have been sold. It consists of a circular saw fitted to a bench as usual, and provided with a self-feeding arrangement, whereby the

stuff runs up to the saw without any assistance from the workman other than furnishing the power to drive the saw. This part of the machine is intended, principally, to split lumber, but as it often happens that ornamental work would be done if the proprietor had facilities, another attachment is provided, by the aid of which all kinds of fancy sawing can be executed. The detail referred to is the jig saw, shown

at the end of the bench. This saw is driven by foot power, which leaves the hands quite free to turn the work in any direction.

One man, or a strong boy, can, with perfect ease, rip a two-inch hardwood plank, or a three-inch pine, in one-third the time that it takes with the ordinary handsaw; and, besides, the most inexperienced apprentice can, with this machine, saw truer and straighter than the best journeyman can with the handsaw.

The first premium was awarded this machine at the Fair of the American Institute, the New York State, and other Fairs. These machines are sold for \$100 complete; and further information can be had by addressing Wm. H. Hoag, Box 4,245, New York Post Office. State and county rights for sale. Machines can be seen in operation at No. 40 Cortland street, New York.

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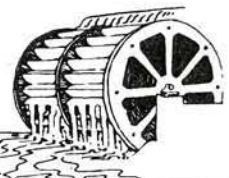
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