

THE SUTTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

SUTTON'S STEPPING STONES

Carilyn E. Philbrook, *Editor*

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BRAMANVILLE COTTON MILLS - 1871-1875

by William Biggar Brierly

The Bramville Cotton Mills were organized in 1871 with Selectman James Brierly as President and Benjamin Brierly Treasurer. [1] The mills were organized with \$25,000 capital. Two hundred and fifty shares were issued with a par value of \$100 a share. [2] A map of the period shows that these mills which made cotton print cloth were located at the 4th privilege on Singletary Brook on r acres of land about 200 feet below Burbank Street on West Main Street. The mills also possessed additional buildings for tenants and storage of materials on the north side of High Street, north of the present St. Charles Hotel. These mills with a capacity of 3800 spindles obtained power from both steam and water with light provided by kerosene lamps. The employees worked 10 hours a day, 6 days a week. At the time of this writing, nothing is known of the quantity nor the quality of products produced, their distribution, or the number of employees and their wages. The mills occupied the same site and buildings and possessed similar equipment used by Emerson & Brierly Cotton Mills 1859-1870, owned by James Brierly from 1864 and later known as Mayo Mill #3.

The mill had 5 buildings which are described in detail in the following paragraphs. Building #1 was 3 stories high with an attic. Its size was listed by Barlow as 40ft. x 80ft. An actual photograph of the building is shown on p.255 of the History of Millbury. [4] The building built in 1844, was of brick construction with walls 16 inches thick on the 1st. floor, 12 inches on the 2nd floor, and 8 inches on the third. The shingled roof had skylights along its entire length. A boxed wooden cornice capped the tower which had a scuttle to the roof and could be reached by stairs and an elevator. The ceilings of each floor were open. The floors in the building were of double thickness with boxed belt holes. Carding machines and speeders were housed on the 1st. floor, looms for weaving the cotton print cloth on the 2nd floor and spinning machines installed on the 3rd floor. Both spinning and sizing were done in the attic.

Building #2 was also constructed of brick and was 3 stories high with a flat gravel covered roof. The 1st. floor was occupied by boiler, engine and machine room. A blank wall separated Building #1 from Building #2 on the 1st floor. The 2nd and 3rd floors were opened into Building #1 and were used for weaving and dressing. One tubular boiler was located in the basement.

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(1)

Building #3 the picker house was a two story brick building with a shingled roof! The pickers were located on the 1st floor and were powered by a belt from the mill which was inclosed in iron casing. Stairs led to a trap door on the 2nd floor where stock was stored. One steam jet provided at the pickers and the building was heated by steam. A brick companionway led to Building #1 with iron doors at each and as a fire precaution.

Building #4 a one story structure with a shingled roof and stone basement housed the storehouse and offices.

Building #5 housed the water wheel and consisted of a one story brick building with a shingled roof!

As a precaution against fire, waste was daily removed from the mill and a watchman with a watch clock was on duty at night! The mill was equipped for fire protection by a vertical water pipe installed in the tower with outlets on each floor. Fire appliances available included a Fales & Jenks fire pump with 200 feet of hose, a hand operated auxiliary engine and two new fire extinguishers supplemented by lightning rods, fixed and movable ladders and a generous supply of buckets. Hydrants and a steam house were located nearby.

At the time of writing, details as to the type of equipment within the mills is not available!

Tax reports for the period of operating indicate that the machinery was valued at \$9,448, engine and boilers for steam power \$2,000, factory and water wheel \$6,000, pickerhouse \$350, waste house \$75, storehouse \$700, blacksmith shop \$20, two stone basement houses \$1,600, boarding house \$1,000, the Harris House \$1,600, one half barn \$100, four acres of land \$1,000 and water power \$3,300! [5]

Evaluation of the mills for tax purposes over a five year period was as follows: 1871-\$27,193 1872-\$36,169 1873-\$40,233 1874-\$43,263 1875-\$40,120! [5] Barlow's Insurance Survey dated September 1874 states that the Buildings were in a very fair state of repair and the mills under systematic management. [3]

REFERENCES:

1. Bramanville Cotton Mills stock certificate for 10 shares issued to John Brierly dated February 10, 1871.
2. Beers, Frederick W. 1870 Atlas of Worcester County, Mass. Plate 80 Map of Bramanville. Pp 99 incl. 85 col maps 41 X 34, Philadelphia, Pa.
3. Barlow's Insurance Survey, #3415 Bramanville Cotton Mill, New York 1874.
4. Dunbar, Robert W. Editor 1915 Centennial History of the Town of Millbury, Mass. including Vital Statistics 1850-1899. Published the Davis Press, Worcester, Mass. 1870-1875.
5. Reports of the Town Officers of the Town of Millbury, Mass. 1870-1875 Valuation and Tax Section. Printed by Tyler & Seagrave, Spy Job Off. Worcester, Mass. for the town.

ERRATA - MARCH 1978, VOL. IV-No. 2, "BULLETIN" [rev. data]
p 1, line 15, should read:..... "glacial clays",
p 1, line 22 & 24, to read:..... "for 1.444hp/sec"

MY SUTTON ROOTS

by LOTTIE HOLLAND GODDARD

*Edward Rawson married Rachel Perne
William Rawson married Anne Glover
David Rawson married Mary Gulliver
Ebenezer Rawson married Sarah Chase
Elizabeth Rawson married Jacob Dodge
Reuben Rawson Dodge married Lydia H. Wood
Ella M. Dodge married Charles M. Holland
Lottie Holland married Edward F. Goddard*

Edward Rawson was the Secretary of Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1636-1650. He signed the first Thanksgiving Proclamation. My grandfather obtained the family Bible Edward brought over from England. He found an oil painting of Edward and his daughter Rebecca, also.

Edward's son Grindal was a preacher who settled in Mendon October 4, 1680. He learned the Indian language. He saved the town from being burned by the Indians. He served the parish 35 years, until his death.

My great great grandfather John Holland marched in the alarm of April 19, 1775 from Sutton.

John's son Cornelius was born in Sutton in 1783. When in his late teens he moved with his family to Dixfield, Maine. When quite young, he longed to be a doctor and spent much time with Dr. Freeland a Sutton MD and surgeon. Soon after moving to Maine, he was fortunate to attend the new medical school that Bowdoin College had. Upon graduation he started on a successful career as a doctor. He settled in Canton and was a country doctor going long distances on horseback. I have his datebook- 1815 "pulling 1 tooth 15¢, 2 teeth 25¢, delivery of baby \$1.50, setting limbs 75¢ on and on. In 1830 he went to Congress as a Democratic candidate. On his trip to Washington he went by stagecoach and by boat 8 changes. "Washington City" as he called it had "Roads just as muddy as back home." His Congressman's pay was \$8 per day.

My great grandmother Elizabeth was qualified to teach school. I have her teacher's certificate from Northbridge dated 1796. She lived in Sutton at that time.

My grandfather Reuben was a very prominent citizen of Sutton. Although he had six children, a large farm, he found time to help the community. He formed the Rawson Family Association. They met in Worcester in 1872 and for many years after.

Grandmother Dodge came from Nantucket but lived in Sutton until she died at 77. She had taught Sunday School for 58 years.

My mother was born in Sutton February 24, 1857. She was brought up where Arthur Keown has an orchard. I spent many happy vacations there.

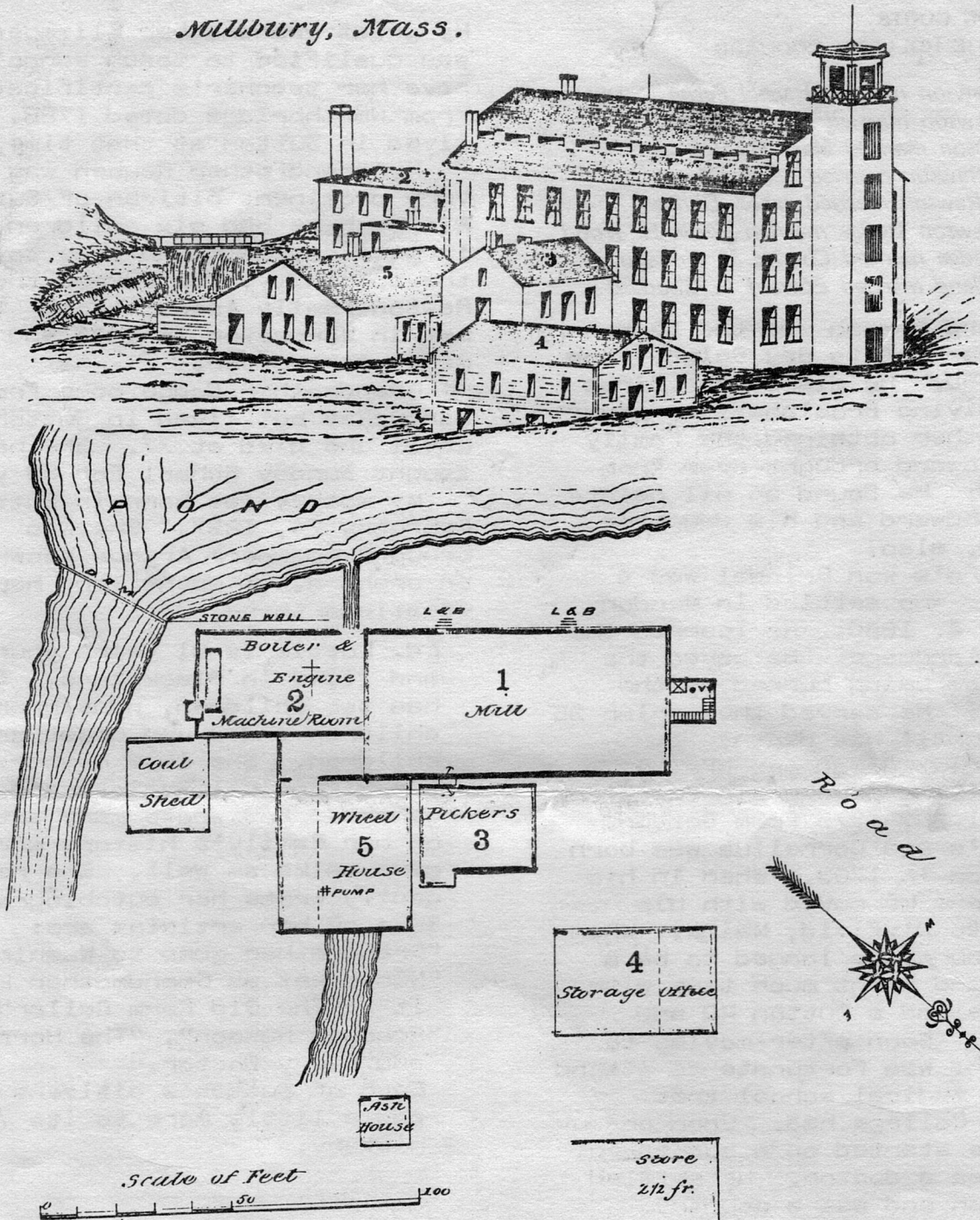
Ed. Lottie is 91 years young and lives in Blackstone. She has two children, nine grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. She is a member of our Historical Society and four others. She wrote many articles on her family's history and gave talks as well. She recently wrote her autobiography. Some of her articles are: "Grandfather goes to Washington" "Nantucket as Grandmother knew it", "The Old Farm Cellar", "Rebecca Rawson", "The Horse and Buggy Doctor." Each of Sutton's citizens add a little more to its history.

ANNUAL
OLDIES BUT GOODIES SALE
AT
SHERMAN BLACKSMITH SHOP
SUTTON CENTER

SATURDAY JUNE 10, 10-4 P.M.
Consignment Tables, Bake Sale,
Books, Tools, Household Articles,
and what have you.

SEE YOU JUNE 10

*BRAMANVILLE COTTON MILL,
Millbury, Mass.*



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