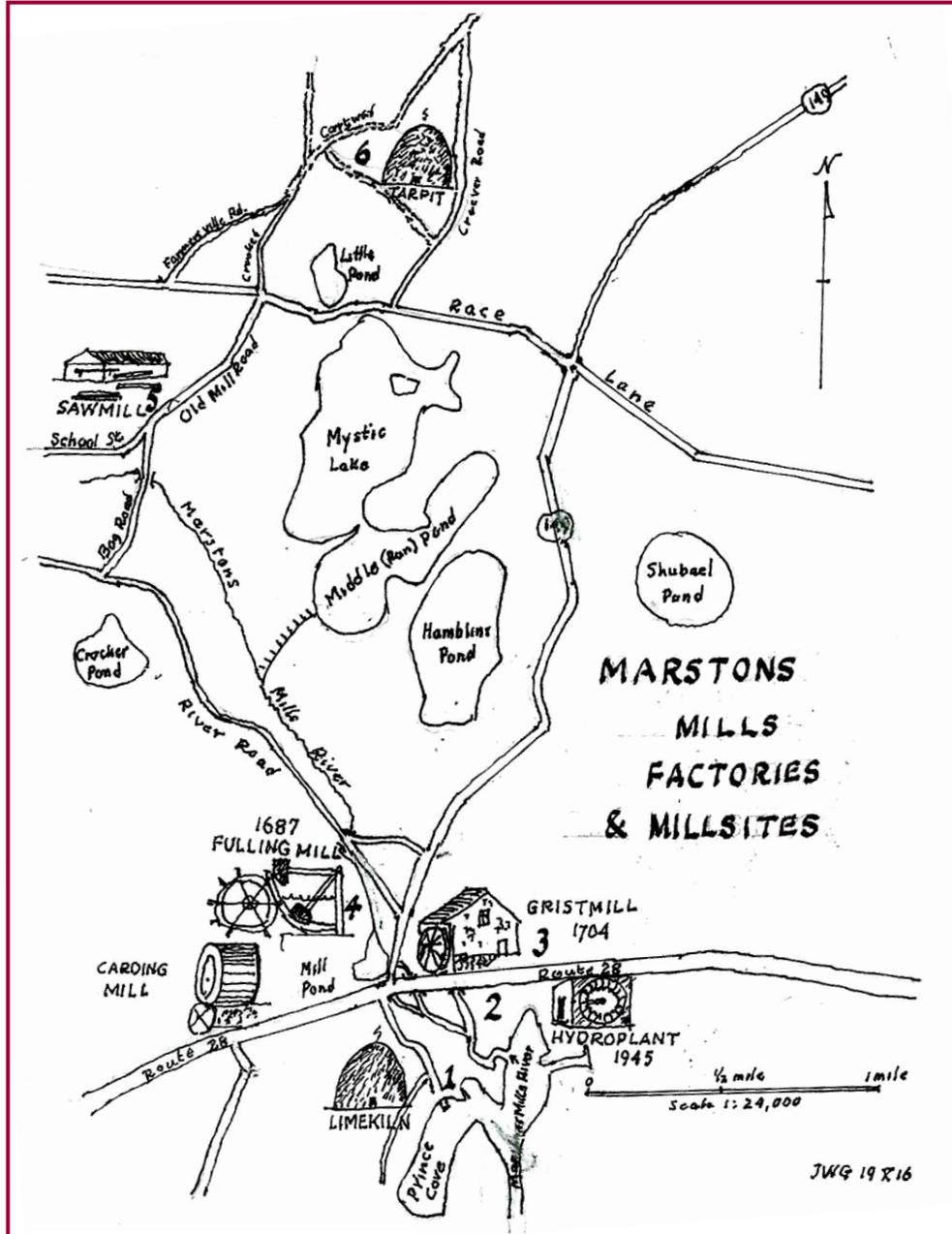


FACTORIES & MILL SITES



Map drawn by James Gould



Historical Sites of the Mills: A Guide

This narrative guide and map, developed by Professor James Gould, will lead visitors and residents to six sites in Marstons Mills where different mills and factories were once located.

Your tour can begin and end anywhere, but for a complete tour, we recommend starting at Number 1 and proceeding generally northward, finishing at Number 6.

marstonsmillshistorical.org

Introduction

The village of Marstons Mills, part of the Town of Barnstable, was founded in 1648 by Roger Goodspeed. In colonial times and thereafter, the village became the location of a number of manufacturing enterprises, some of which continued into the 20th century. As of 2015, none of these mills is functional, but their locations have been identified. It is recommended that highly visible historical plaques be installed to mark the locations of these historical places. Proceeding south to north, these six sites and their functions are as follows, and may be found with the help of the local map appended to this description.

1. LIME KILNS: Manufacture of lime was the first industry on Cape Cod, dating to about 1650. Colonial builders at first constructed wooden fireplaces, which often burned up, and fireplaces of un-mortared stone collapsed. Seeing the need for some substance to hold the rocks in place, they realized that the plentiful oysters in the estuaries of Nantucket Sound (including, but not limited to, Prince Cove in Marstons Mills) could be a source of lime, once the oysters had been eaten. This realization led to the need for burning the shells into lime. Even in recent times, the Prince Cove side of Cedar Tree Neck Road has had huge mounds of oyster shells. Conversion of shells to lime is described in Amos Otis's *Genealogical Notes of Barnstable Families*, p. 465; the lime was used to make a cement for putting between the boards of houses. (At the junction of Prince Cove Road and Cedar Tree Neck Road, toward the water.)

2. HYDROELECTRIC PLANT: Cape Cod's first hydroelectric plant was established on July 4, 1945 by marine engineer David Leland to meet the urgent needs of World War II. It was located on the east side of the Marstons Mills River, just south of the current Route 28. Coming online at the end of the war, it was demolished, except for some huge concrete penstocks, which can still be seen. The history appeared in *The Barnstable Enterprise*, 27 March 2009. (At the southeast corner of Prince Cove Road and Route 28.)

3. GRIST MILL: On the right side of Route 149, just after crossing Route 28, was the Grist Mill, first built here in 1717. Farmers from the surrounding area brought their corn, wheat, and barley to be ground. Water came from the Mill Pond across the road. The grist mill served the community for over 200 years, until about 1923. The stone foundation can still be seen. A pathway to the site is definitely needed. The history of the mills was printed in *The Barnstable Enterprise*, 14 May and 17 December 2010. (On the east side of Route 149, opposite Mill Pond, near the curb cutout.)

4. FULLING MILL: A fulling mill (for the process of refining wool shorn from locally-raised sheep) was built in 1691 and functioned until the mid-1800s. The fulling process was the first unit of an industrial complex that involved spinning, dyeing and weaving woolen cloth. Marstons Mills was thus a major industrial village before the American Revolution. The location was off River Road, to the west of the current lane labeled as Fulling Mill Lane. The mill used a dam for its power from the Marstons Mills River. The early history of this mill is told by our local historian Vivian Cushing in the bicentennial history, *The Seven Villages of Barnstable*. (Near the corner of River Road and Fulling Mill Lane, but beyond the far shore of the pond.)

5. SAWMILL: Jedidiah Jones, whose present-day descendants still live nearby, set up a Sawmill as early as 1817. It was on the northwest side of the present Mill Lane, at the corner of Turtleback Road. Initially, an open-pit accommodated the huge vertical saw, which was drawn by sawyers at the top and below; the mill sawed huge logs dragged from neighboring towns into wood for the construction of buildings and barns. It operated well into the twentieth century, finally powered by a gasoline engine. (On north side of Old Mill Road, near the junction of Bog Road.)

6. TAR PIT: One of the industries of the village was shipbuilding, and tar was needed in order to make the spaces between boards on the hulls watertight. A tar pit was located in a kettle hole in an area that is now Town Conservation Land, located off of Crooked Cartway, north of Race Lane. The process involved the burning of pitch pine trees, which were plentiful in the stony area below the glacial moraine on the north border of the village. Many of these trees had already been tapped for the turpentine. The burning not only released the tar needed for shipbuilding, but also produced charcoal, which was useful for the fires needed by local blacksmiths, as well as domestic fires. (North of Race Lane, at the end of Crooked Cartway, on the right side of the walking pathway beyond the parking lot.)

SUMMARY

These industrial sites reveal a part of Cape Cod history that is largely unknown, but which should attract public interest. Publicly readable signs are now installed at each of the six sites for all to enjoy; we encourage citizens and visitors alike to drive to the sites, using the map that is on the back of this leaflet, and to read and appreciate the heritage marked by each sign.

Visit marstonsmillshistorical.org to find out more about the Society and download a membership form. The MMHS meets the second Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. at the Marstons Mills Public Library—all are welcome!