

Windmills in Amesbury

Mike Harrold
Industrial Survey Volunteer

Amesbury Carriage Museum
Amesbury, MA

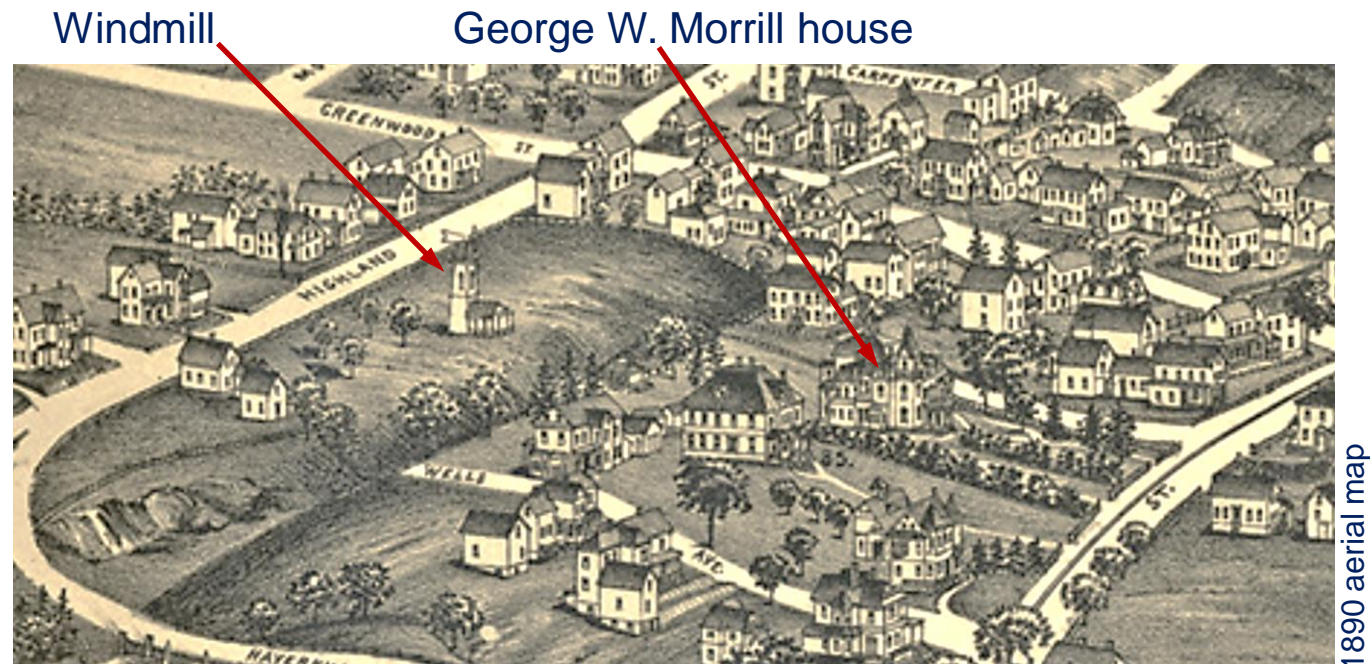
December, 2023

Windmills in Amesbury

Windmills have existed back into antiquity, as much for sawing and grinding grain as for pumping water. During pioneering of the American Great Plains windmills allowed agricultural development independent of natural surface water. That opportunity spurred, from the 1850s, midwestern industrial manufacture of drilling, pumping, and windmill technology, with metal windmills (often having wood blades) that could be packaged into kits and shipped by rail.

While hardly America's breadbasket, Amesbury was still largely agricultural throughout the 19th century, with an agricultural fairground operating into the 1920s (J. G. Whittier had once been secretary) and still having farms on much of Cedar and Elm Streets. While the 1870s suffered a depressed economy that slowed business, closed the textile mills, and would have discouraged the expense of windmills, the 1880s saw recovery and growth that began creating modern Amesbury. Still, there was no centralized Amesbury water distribution system until the mid-1880s, which needed time to fully develop in town, and would not quickly benefit rural locations. The 1880s thus saw occasional windmills poking up into Amesbury skies.

At right, a windmill of undetermined ownership at the current Highland St. Health Center location. George W. Morrill is a possible candidate, whose mansion was on Morrill Place where the elder care facility is now.



Amesbury Windmills

Urban Development of Elm Street Farmland

There was a Collins enclave on Elm St. where Collins Ave. and St. are now. Out beyond that Elm St. had large vacant areas, some owned by Edmund Morrill and Edwin S. Lane, the latter a brother of Thomas W. Lane. Edmund Morrill lived in East Salisbury at the edge of the Plains, which was the expansive flat marsh between Rt. 1 and the beaches. Edwin Lane perhaps obtained his land from Morrill, and the two had large holdings from the north side of Elm St. down to the Powow River. Dudley Marston purchased his L-shape lot in 1882 from E. S. Lane, who had opened Oak and Oakland Streets.

Collins family enclave
 Dudley Marston home & land
 Lane & Morrill
 Edwin S. Lane home and carriage complex



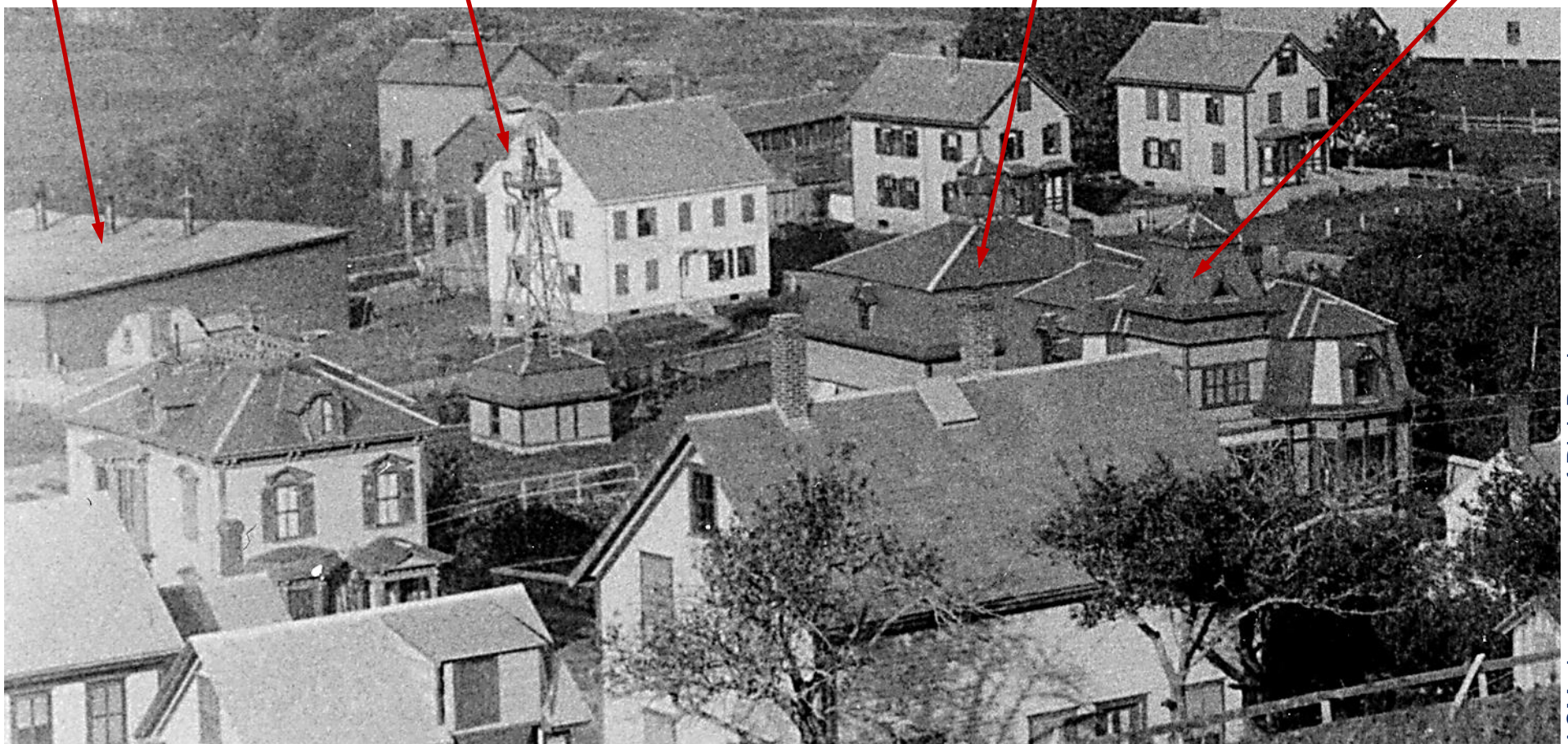
1884 Amesbury-Salisbury map

Amesbury Windmills

Dudley J. Marston Property & Windmill – Summer of 1887

This photo was taken from Brown's Hill, looking out over Elm Street. Most of these houses still exist. The railroad engine house would today back up against the paved walkway between Riverwalk and Oakland Street. Dudley Marston was a carriage wheel manufacturer who built his windmill and pump house in 1883 to match his Mansard house and carriage barn. This remains the first known windmill in town, the side street rapidly becoming known as Windmill Street. Edwin Lane built additional houses on Windmill, Oak, and Oakland Streets. Marston then removed his windmill in 1889, building there a side-by-side duplex house that still stands, and later another house in his L around on Oakland Street. This is the only photo found of any of the local windmills.

RR engine house Marston's windmill & pumphouse Marston's carriage barn Marston's house



ACM photo, courtesy of Rick Bartley

News Articles regarding Dudley J. Marston's Home and Windmill

the windmill at the corner of Marston and Oakland Streets
Marston Street then known as Windmill Street

1882-07-27, Villager, Page1

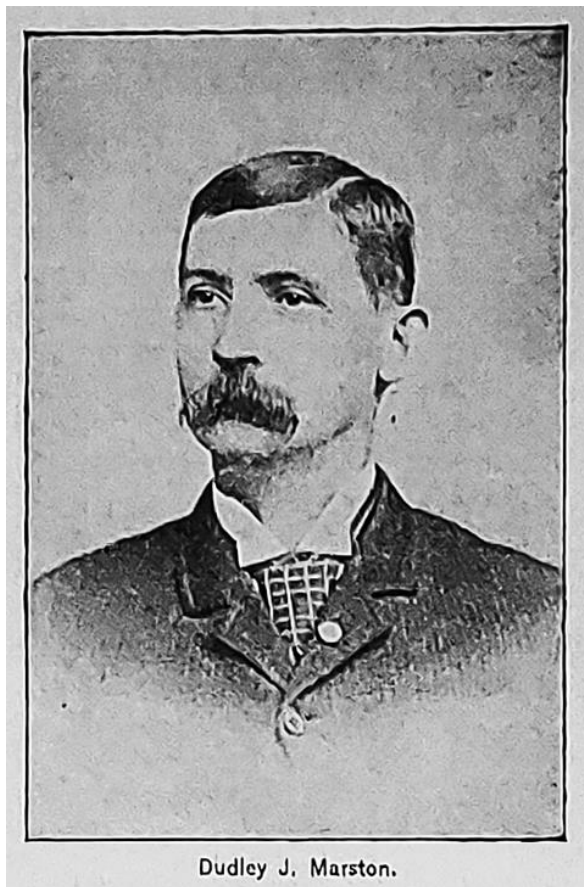
Dudley Marston & Co., have bought one hundred rods of land of E. S. Lane near the engine house of the Salisbury Branch Railroad, and will build wheel-factory there. A branch track will be laid in front of the factory and a road to be laid out through adjoining land will connect with Elm street.

1882-08-04, Weekly News, Page4

The report has been going the rounds that D. J. Marston is soon to put up a wheel factory on land owned by him a short distance from the depot. This is not so. He does not intend to build at present, but will move into Colchester Mill. Neither is it true that he has a Co. connected with him.

1883-08-31, Weekly News, Page4

—D. J. Marston is putting up a barn on Elm street, to correspond with his residence, and is also erecting a windmill for water.—E. S. Lane has contracted for the erection of another cottage house on Oak street, this making the third he has on this street.



Dudley J. Marston.

1889-12-19, Villager, Page1

The double tenement house being built for D. J. Marston on Windmill street is up and boarded.

Augustus N. Parry – 1884 Carriage Maker & Purveyor of Windmills

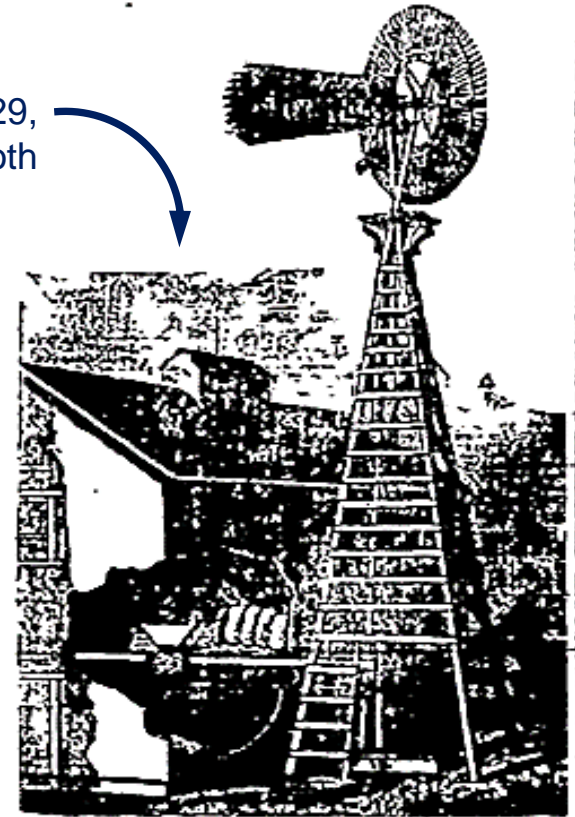
A. N. Parry was the carriage-making son of carriage maker, Felix D. Parry. In 1884 he was advertising as also being the local agent for Stover windmills, suggesting a growing market. Farmers were generally the primary windmill buyers, but in the period before Amesbury had a centralized domestic water source (1884) there would also be in-town customers who would desire an automatically pumped water supply. Also, commercial water distribution would be slow to reach all over town, and even then, some people would continue relying on hand pumped wells, either public or their own.

These windmills were made by E. Stover & Brothers of Freeport, Illinois.

A. N. Parry will manufacture about 700 carriages this year. His pay roll is about \$2000 a month.

Two items from 1884-05-29, Weekly News, Page 3. Both carriages and windmills

The Old Reliable Stover



**THE OLD RELIABLE
STOVER
WINDMILL
HAS NO SUPERIOR!**

For prices and other particulars, consult

A. N. PARRY,

Agent for Amesbury, Salisbury and Vicinity.
may9tt

Amesbury Windmills

HAS NO SUPERIOR.

Has less Parts to get out of order.
Is noiseless in its operation.
Revolves Upon Anti-friction Steel Balls.

Prices for mills, pumps, towers, and everything complete, furnished upon application to

A. N. PARRY,

1884

1884-05-09, Weekly News, Page 3

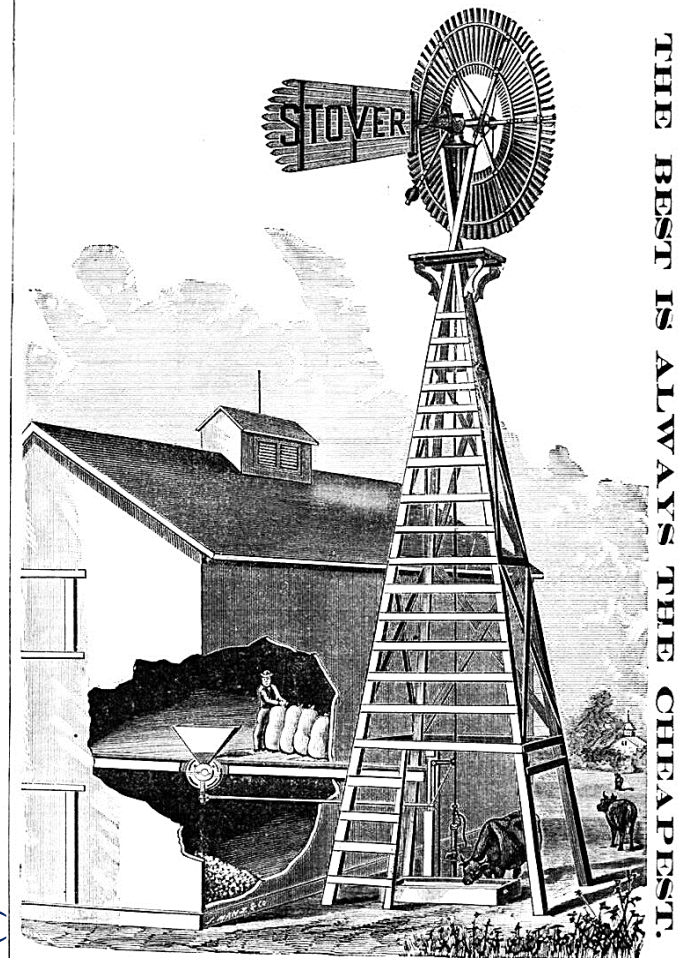
E. Stover & Brothers Windmills, Freeport, Illinois

Intended for Irrigating, Draining, Furnishing Water for Railroads, Villages, Water Works, Brickmakers, Farmers, Stock Ranches and Suburban Houses, giving them Full Benefits of Elevated Water at a Trifling Cost.

We also manufacture GEARED WINDMILLS for running Lathes, Wood-saws, Corn-shellers, Feed-cutters; and GRINDING-MILLS, which we also manufacture extensively.

A. N. Parry's advert on the previous page was taken from Stover's general advert at right. Stover was in the Midwestern agricultural and industrial heartland spread across northern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, from which Amesbury received various carriagemaking iron wares, and later orders for boutique auto bodies. As seen above, the company made a range of hardware, including grinding mills, to be driven by their windmill. The installation at right powers both a water pump and a feed grinder for a cattle ranch, and the company notes applicability to other machining functions. Closer to home, the Joy brothers of Newmarket, New Hampshire made carriage jacks in a wood shop that at one time was powered by a windmill.

Old Reliable Stover.



THE BEST IS ALWAYS THE CHEAPEST.

FREEPORT MACHINE CO.,

Freeport, Ill., U. S. A.

Sole Manufacturers of the Stover Windmill

D. C. STOVER, Prest.
A. S. HELD, V. Prest. O. J. ZIEGLER, Supt. Machinery.
JOHN M. IRWIN, Supt. Agencies.
W. A. MERRIFIELD, Secy & Treas.

INCORPORATED 1882.
CAPITAL STOCK \$250,000.

STOVER Manufacturing Co.

MAKERS OF THE

IDEAL WIND MILL.

BUILDERS & SPECIAL HARDWARE,
LIGHT GRAY IRON CASTINGS TO ORDER.

Ebay photos (2)

1884-5 - the "Eclipse" Windmill

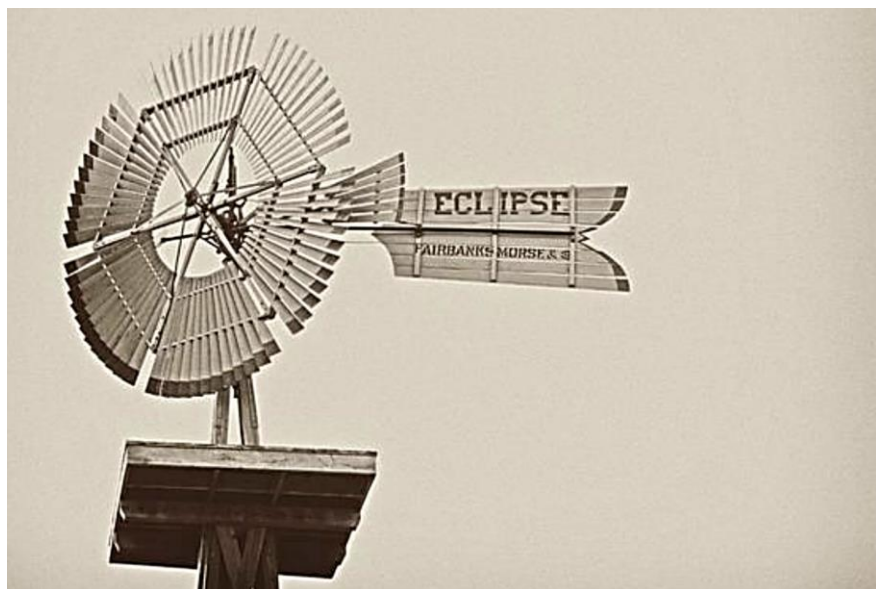
Windmills had provisions for facing into winds, for power, and eventually for repositioning to drop load during high destructive winds. On the other hand, such protections were not always effective.

Eclipse windmill at the American House Hotel, which was on Main St. in what is now the parking lot of McGinnis Auctioneers.

A new Eclipse windmill has recently been placed on the American House stables, it being a substitute for steam, in pumping the water into the tanks in the upper part of the building.

1884-04-25, Villager, Page5

Eclipse windmills originated during the 1870s, with a high-wind protection device and then merged into Fairbanks Morse of Chicago during the 1890s.



Amesbury Windmills

Eclipse windmill at Daniel Huntington farm (see next page), at the intersection of now Main Street and Rt. 110, by Captains Well.

1884-05-15, Villager, Page5

A large windmill, of a new pattern, the first of this kind ever built, has lately been erected on the land of Daniel Huntington, by Calvin Horton and son, and will be used to pump water, supplying the farm and adjoining buildings.

1884-05-29, Villager, Page5

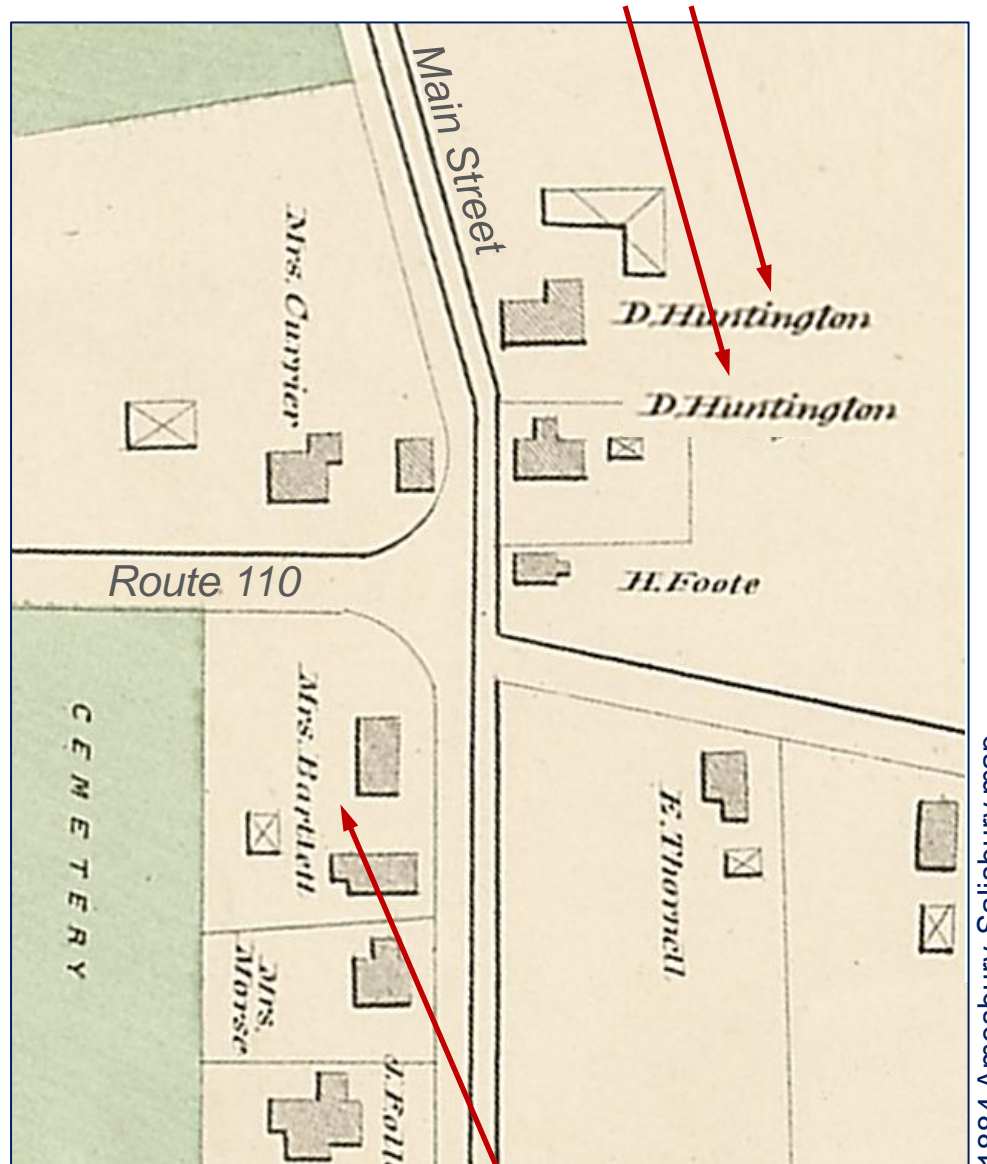
The windmill lately erected on the farm of Daniel Huntington, which was blown to pieces during a recent high wind, has been replaced by a new "Eclipse."

1885-01-29, Villager, Page5

Heavy wind last week destroyed the fan of Daniel Huntington's windmill at Bartlett's corner.

The Daniel Huntington Farm, Where the Middle School Is Now

The Daniel Huntington properties: one was where the Middle School is now, the other is the still extant yellow colonial house next door, sideways to Main Street. The 1890 aerial map does not show a Huntington windmill.



1884 Amesbury-Salisbury map

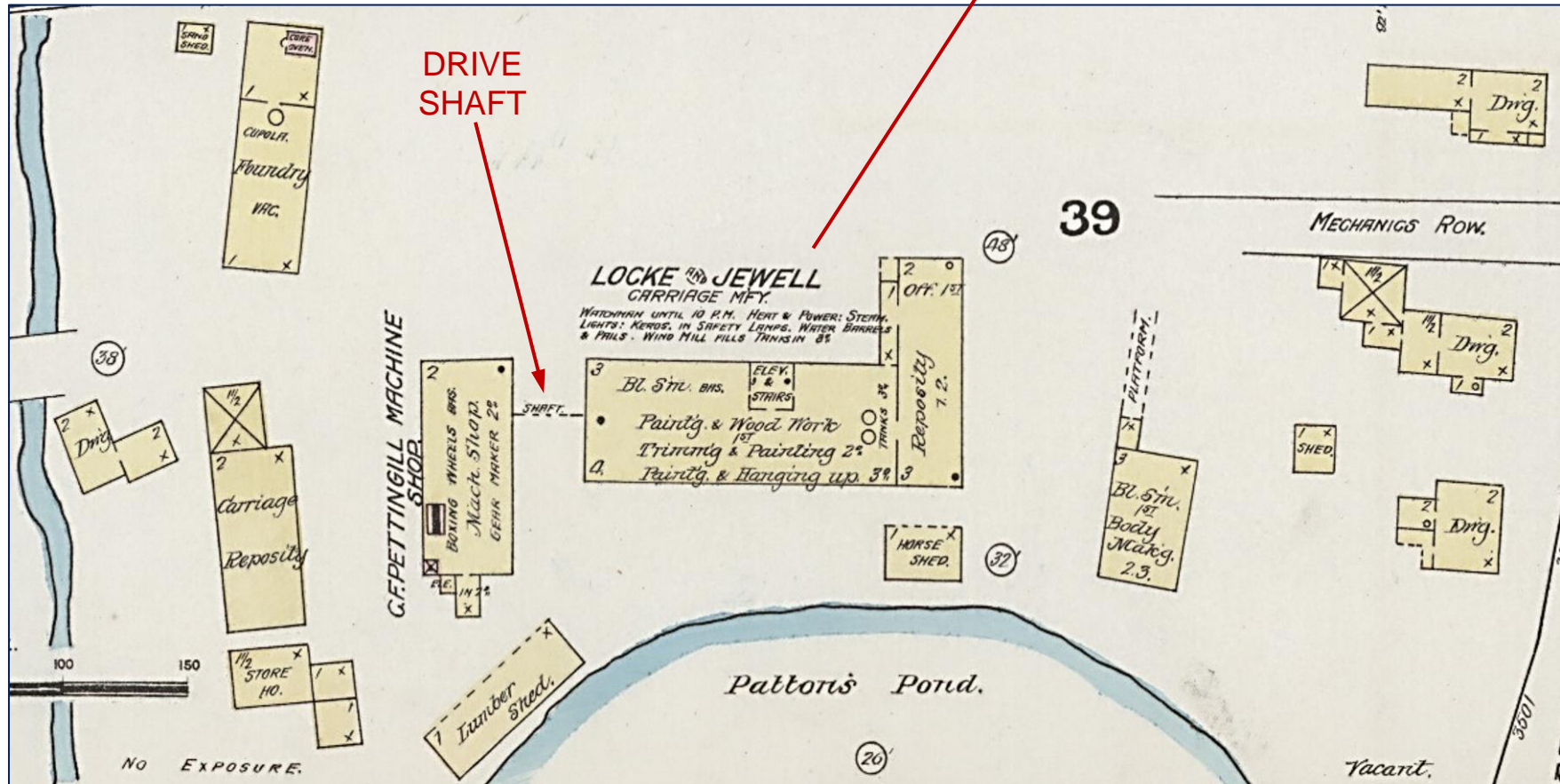
Bartlett estate, now Cumberland Farms, at Bartlett's corner

Amesbury Windmills

Locke & Jewell Factory at Mechanics Row, After Fire of 1887

1889 Sanborn Insurance Map, Sheet 1

The rebuilt Locke & Jewell factory has water tanks on its 3rd floor, plus a windmill that fills water tanks in the basement. Safety lamps are kerosene lamps that have burners specially designed to have extra airflow around them to prevent ignition of kerosene fumes. Despite such measures, the factory burned again in 1891. An interesting note is the drive shaft that provides power to the Charles Pettingell (misspelled on the map) factory next door.



Amesbury Windmills

Into the 1890s, Windmills Were Going Up and Coming Down

1887-06-03, ADN, Page 2

Samuel Rowell, Jr., has taken down his windmill on Powow Hill, used for pumping water to his residence, as it stood in the line of the road he is building up the hill. Another water taker.

1899-03-08, ADN, Page 2

FERRY AND POINT.

The wind, during the storm here yesterday morning, blew with such force as to blow over the windmill of Alderman Faulkner and destroy the shed of Wm. E. Worthen's at Pleasant Valley. Pedestrians found it hard work also to get along here at the Point and Ferry

1894-10-09, ADN, Page 1

NEW WATER SUPPLIES.

Pond Hills people are putting in several new water supplies. R E Woollard has a windmill in operation for supplying his premises. John Clark also has one nearly completed.

D Q Maxfield and D E Currier are each erecting windmills and also a reservoir on the knoll on Mr. Maxfield's land the power from which will be sufficient to send water into the upper story of their buildings.

Maxfield & Currier owned a large lumberyard on Railroad Avenue, and lived near each other around Rt. 110 at Bear Hill Road. This item at left appears to refer to their residences.



1894-12-27, ADN, Page 3

Highest Windmill Tower.

WOODSVILLE, N. H., Dec. 26.—Baldwin's windmill tower at Wells River, Vt., built by Smith & Winchester of Boston, was successfully raised yesterday. The total height of the tower, with wheel, is 198 feet, and it is said to be the highest windmill tower in the world. J.

Elsewhere



The Aermotor Windmill Company

Address.
AERMOTOR COMPANY.
 Chicago; San Francisco, Cal.; Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Tex.; Lincoln, Neb.; Kansas City, Saint Louis, Mo.; Sioux City, Dubuque, Davenport, Des Moines, Ia.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Toledo, O.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Peoria, Ill.; Detroit, Mich.; Buffalo, N.Y.; New York City; Boston, Mass.; Baltimore, Md.

CUT PRICES by the only concern that ever voluntarily reduced prices, or in recent times originated a new idea in Windmill and Water Supply Goods. Everything the farmer sells is low. Who sells low to him? We have repeatedly refused to join, and have therefore defeated windmill combination, and have, since '89, reduced the cost of wind power to $\frac{1}{3}$ what it was. Through gratitude, and because we are price makers, and are safest to deal with, and because we are the sole originators of all that is good in the modern steel windmill and tower, **THE WORLD HAS GIVEN US MORE THAN HALF ITS WINDMILL BUSINESS.** We believe in low prices, high grades and large sales. We make short hand with long power stroke pumps, with best seamless brass tube cylinders, lower than iron ones—a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 16 inch at \$2.64. We prepay freight to 50 branch houses. Send now for beautifully illustrated catalogue of up-to-date ideas, as this appears but once. Our imitators may not have in print our latest plans. No one knows the best Mill, Pump or Price until he knows ours.

A feared Aermotor oil pump is a POWER for good and a powerful good thing.

1898-02-01, ADN, Page2

The above advert ran a number of times in the Amesbury Daily News around the turn of the century. Aermotor still exists, building metal-bladed windmills as seen at right. The blades are relatively broad, with curved airfoil shapes that are more efficient, higher lift, than flat narrow wood-slat blades that had been used on older windmills. The design emerged from 5000 tests conducted on 61 different rotor designs conducted indoors under controlled conditions. The Aermotor, made in Chicago, was introduced in 1888 after which the company rapidly expanded. Manufacturing locations and company ownership changed several times over the decades. They moved to San Angelo, Texas in 1986 and are currently owned by a private group of West Texas ranchers. These devices are still sold and used in their originally intended environment.

Information and photo, <https://aermotorwindmill.com>

