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Old Town Mill
New London, Connecticut
New London Co.

HABS No. 3-18

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District #3

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Conn.

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Located in the then Northerly part of the Town, on so-called Mill Brook, which ran into Winthrop Cove, extending about three quarters of a mile from the Thames River; the Mill was placed in a valley between present Main Street and the residence of Governor Winthrop. It was built for Governor Winthrop by John Elderkin in the year 1650.

Mr. Elderkin had been engaged in similar work in Massachusetts and his residence can be traced to various places. Records shown that Governor Winthrop solicited his services two years before, but finally through the assistance of Roger Williams he came to New London. It was, therefore, inferred that he was then in Providence and that he came to New London early in 1650.

The Mill has been in almost constant use until about 1905, changing ownership many times. In 1892, the Winthrop residence and the Mill property was sold to the City of New London and at that time was operated by Jerimiah Calvert and later by a Mr. Smith. Since this time, it has been cared for by the City and kept as a point of interest.

The original oak frame, with the exception of a few rafters and plate in the upper part of the roof,

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have not been replaced. The main water wheel was rebuilt in 1892 by Asa A. Goddard, and was rebuilt from the hub out, in 1930, by the City.

To the north of the mill is a dam and water to the wheel is carried by an open wooden flume on trestles. On the west side of the Mill and operated from the grinding platform is a regulator which by raising or lowering determines the amount of water reaching the wheel. The excess water flowing over the side of the flume and thereby regulating the speed of wheel. The water continued through flume to top of wheel and into the buckets on wheel. The wheel by means of bevel gears rotates the grinding stones.

Materials to be ground were poured into a hopper above the stones, feeding through a hole in the top stone; and, as it was ground, ^{they} filled ^{the} octagonal bin built tightly around lower stone; from this bin, it flowed through a wooden tube to an outside container.

Sources: "History of New London", 1612 to 1860, by Frances Manwaring Caulkins

Compiled by Arthur M. Thompson

Approved: Harold A. Davis