

Mattituck, Long Island, New York

approximate location

41°00'32.1"N 72°32'56.8"W

41.008927, -72.549121

Mattituck is a hamlet in the Town of Southold



http://academyprintingservices.com/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/PBS_Sept_2019web_Part1.251120851.pdf The Mattituck Inlet Grist Mill

Details on the Mattituck Inlet grist mill was taken from information provided by the Mattituck-Lauren Historical Society. The tidal grist mill at this site was built by Richard Cox of Oyster Bay, in 1821 on the west side of Mattituck Creek and included a dam, tide gates and a bridge across the creek. Richard Cox operated the mill for a number of years and was later joined by his two sons. In 1825 he sold a half interest to Barnabas Horton. Other part owners during this time included Martin Robinson, George Cooper, Edward and Walter Terry. Evidently the mill was not an especially lucrative business for Richard Cox as in 1847 he sold the mill to Captain Joshua W Terry, a retired sea captain. Terry remained the miller until 1902 when he sold it to Yetter and Moore of Riverhead. Yetter & Moore operated the mill for three years before it converted into the Old Mill Restaurant.

For illustrations, see

<http://www.oldmillinmattituck.com/history/>

Craven p. 216

The "Oregon" road was opened as an approach to the tide mill from the east. From Cox's Lane in Peconic to "Tusten" it was laid out in 1832

The tide-mill, near the inlet, was built in 1821 by Richard Cox, of Oyster Bay, who secured permission from the town to erect and maintain the dam and tide gates. This mill was run for some years by Cox and his sons, who did a large and increasing business, The property became available and shares in it were sold after five or ten years to several parties. James Worth bought a half interest in 1825, and barnabas B. Horton a quarter interest in 1833. Walter and Edward H. Terry Martin L. Robinson and George W. Cooper were part owners at different times. The late Capt. Joshua W. Term became the miller in 1847., retiring from a sea-faring life, and continued the business until the growing infirmities of age compelled his retirement in 1902. He sold the mill to Yetter & Moore of Riverhead, retaining the house, in which he died in 1904, at the age of 82, having been born the year the mill was erected. His widow survives him in the old home. where she spent nearly sixty years of married life. The mill is now used as a place of public entertainment. The tide gaits are removed and ere long the old dam, with its low bridge, will give place to an elevated steel bridge, with a draw, spanning the entrance to Mattituck harbor.

<http://www.bygoneli.com/forums/content.php/258-Mattituck-Tidal-Mill-1820>

In 1820, Samuel Cox finished construction of a "Tidal Mill" at Mattituck Inlet. It took five years to complete the dam, mill, and gates. The incoming tide forced open gates. When the tide went out, these gates closed and an auxiliary gate opened, turning the mill once again.

In 1902, the mill was sold for \$300 and converted into a popular tavern.

"So much for the grist mill, it will now be known as a gin mill."



The Old Mill was a popular drop-off spot for rumrunners, and tales of bootlegging in the area are legend. At low tide, a drop door in the kitchen allowed boats to receive "booze" during low tides.

George William Cocks. *History of the Cock, Cocks, Cox Family*
p. 96

Richard Cock (1766-1851) ... was a farmer and drover, and in buying cattle in Suffolk Co., seeing the opportunity of a tide mill site on Mattituck Creek, purchased the property, built the mill still (1912) stading, and settled some of his sons thereat.

Rhoda Amon. *Time Machine Then & Now. Down by the Old Mill Stream*
<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/time-machine-then-now-down-by-the-old-mill-stream-1.359957>

Returning from the War of 1812, Samuel Cox applied to the Town of Southold for permission to construct a tidal mill on Mattituck Inlet. But it took years before the creek was dammed and the mill and mill gates were completed. The mill opened in 1821 and Samuel and his father, Richard, operated it for several years, according to the Rev. Charles E. Craven's 1906 "History of Mattituck, Long Island, N.Y."

One of the earliest tidal mills in the country, it was operated by the incoming and outgoing tides pushing underwater wheels, Audrey Wigley, CEO of the Southold Indian Museum, wrote in a brief history of the mill.

Barnabas Wines became the miller, probably in the 1830s, according to his great-great granddaughter, Edna Dickerson Montgomery, now 85 and a volunteer with the Southold Historical Society. She has seen many North Fork landmarks disappear. But the old mill building remains. No longer profitable after a steam mill was built in 1902, the mill was sold for \$300 and became a popular tavern, giving rise to the joke that the grist mill had become a gin mill.

With an expanded dining room, it's now the Old Mill Inn, the Mill Road restaurant shown at right. Owner Jerry Daly continues to preserve a stone used for grinding and gears from the old millworks as well as a drop door in the kitchen reportedly used to secretly hand up bootlegged booze during Prohibition.

References

Charles E. Craven. *A History of Mattituck, Long Island, N. Y.* (1906)

photo of the mill facing p. 216

Illustration

Cox Mill² was published in George William Cocks. *History and Genealogy of the Cock, Cocks, Cox Family ...* (1914)

<https://archive.org/details/historygenealogy00cock/page/60/mode/2up?q=mill>

Map

Travellers Map of Long Island 1806.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/6a5f3ea0-cdc3-0133-f287-00505686a51c>