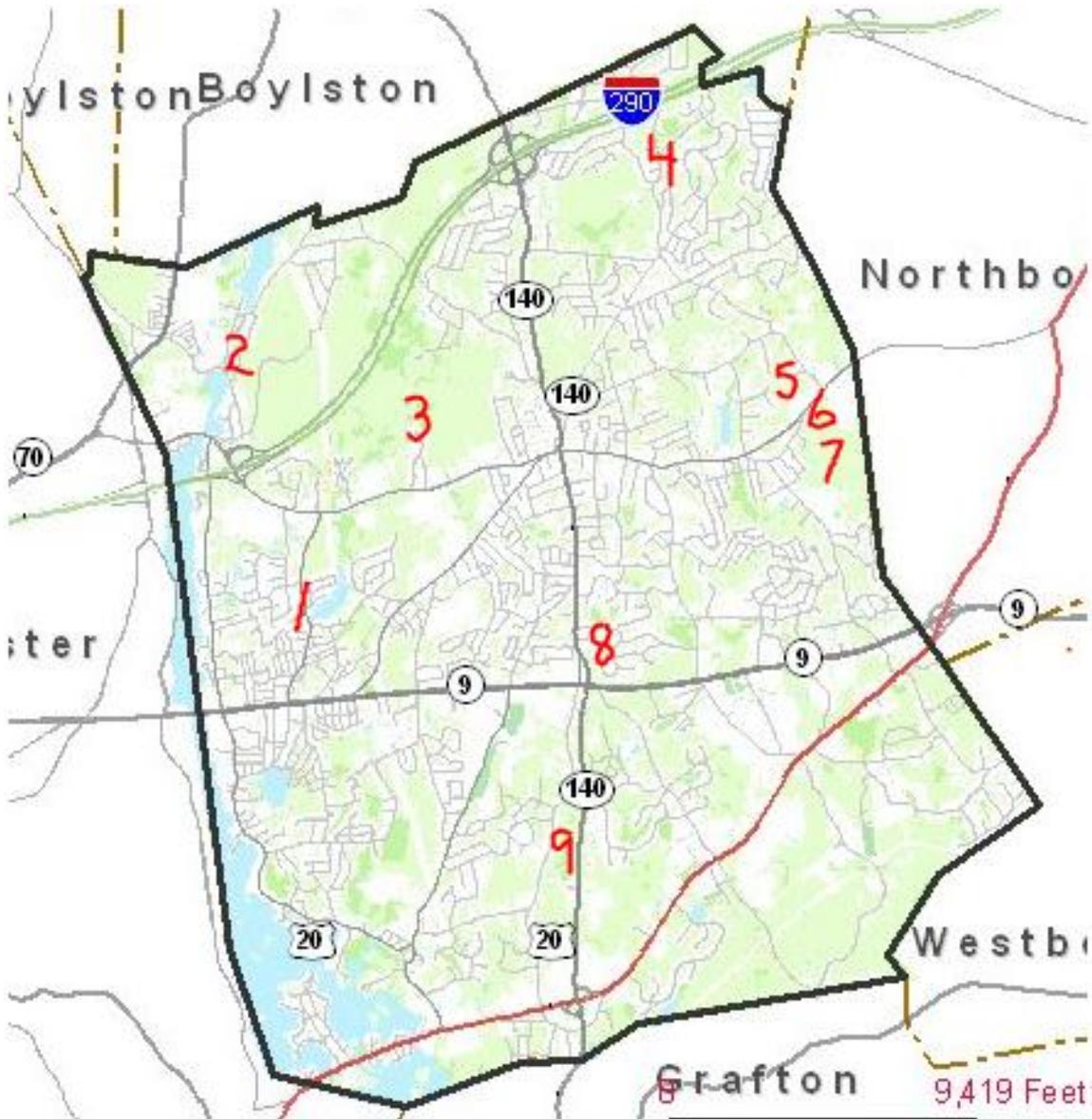


Remains of old water mills in Shrewsbury, Mass.

The map below shows the locations of the remains of nine water mills in Shrewsbury.



(1) Old Mill Pond

Located at the outlet of Old Mill Pond, near the intersection of Old Mill Road and Harrington Avenue.



A saw and grist mill at the outlet of Old Mill Pond is shown in Shrewsbury maps of 1832, 1859, 1870, and 1898, so this mill almost certainly operated into the early twentieth century. The map of 1870 identifies it as belonging to “O. Doane”.

Unfortunately, the site was extensively modified in order to accommodate a dam at the outlet of the pond, the installation of a new outlet channel, etc., so no remains of the original mill remain.

The Orin Doane mill on Old Mill Pond



Source: http://dlib.cwmars.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shrewsbury&CISOPTR=10

(2) Harlow mill

Located at # 38 Brooklawn Parkway (outlined in red in the map below).



This mill appears on an 1832 map of Shrewsbury as “Harlow’s mills”; however, it does not appear on later maps. Nevertheless, extensive remains of this mill remain, and the remains indicate that this mill must have operated at least into the early twentieth century. A turbine still exists at the site and the top of the dam is concrete. The dam has been breached at its eastern end.



Close-up of the turbine in front of the dam



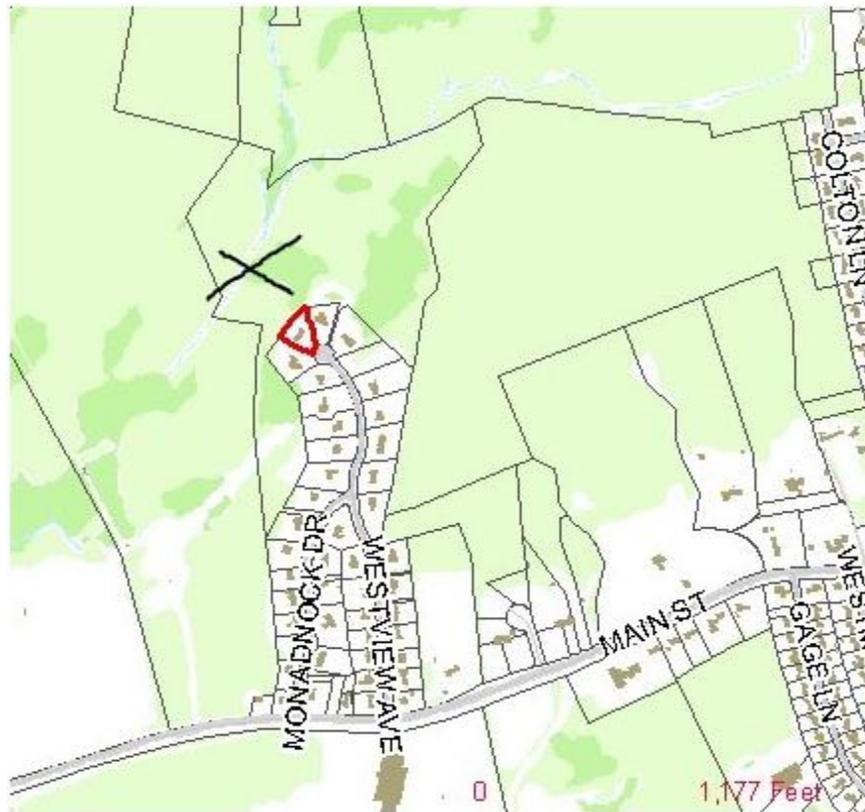
Detail of the turbine, showing two pulleys that drove belts in the mill



William Harlow states that: “... Harlow’s mills, burned nearly forty years ago.” [Hurd (1888) *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts*, vol. 2, page 782.] Since Harlow wrote his account in 1888, the Harlow mill fire must have occurred ca. 1848. However, the surviving equipment dates much later than 1848, so the mill must have been rebuilt.

(3) Saw mill

Located approx. 300 feet NW of # 47 Westview Avenue (outlined in red in the map below).



This saw mill appears in Shrewsbury maps of 1832 and 1859; however, it does not appear on later maps. This mill was incorrectly located on both maps: they show the mill as approximately 1460 feet north of the “Dolly Bond” house (now # 285 Main Street); however, the mill pond for this mill was formed by the confluence of two major streams which combine to form the West Brook, and that confluence occurs about 600 feet N of # 47 Westview Avenue. The mill was found about 300 feet NW of # 47 Westview Avenue. The error might have been caused by the inaccessibility of the site: the mill lies in the middle of a vast swamp; the mapmaker had to estimate the location -- and erred.

The mill pond apparently drained sometime before 1870, because the pond does not appear on the maps of 1870 or 1898. A vast swamp exists where the mill pond once existed.

This mill site is typical of most of the mills in town. A stone wall was constructed to form a retaining wall on the downstream face of what would become the dam. Earth was excavated from what would become the mill pond and heaped behind the stone wall. A tail race (the channel that conducts water from the mill) was excavated at the outlet of the dam, and the tail race was lined with coarse stones.

Part of the stone wall that formed the face of the dam

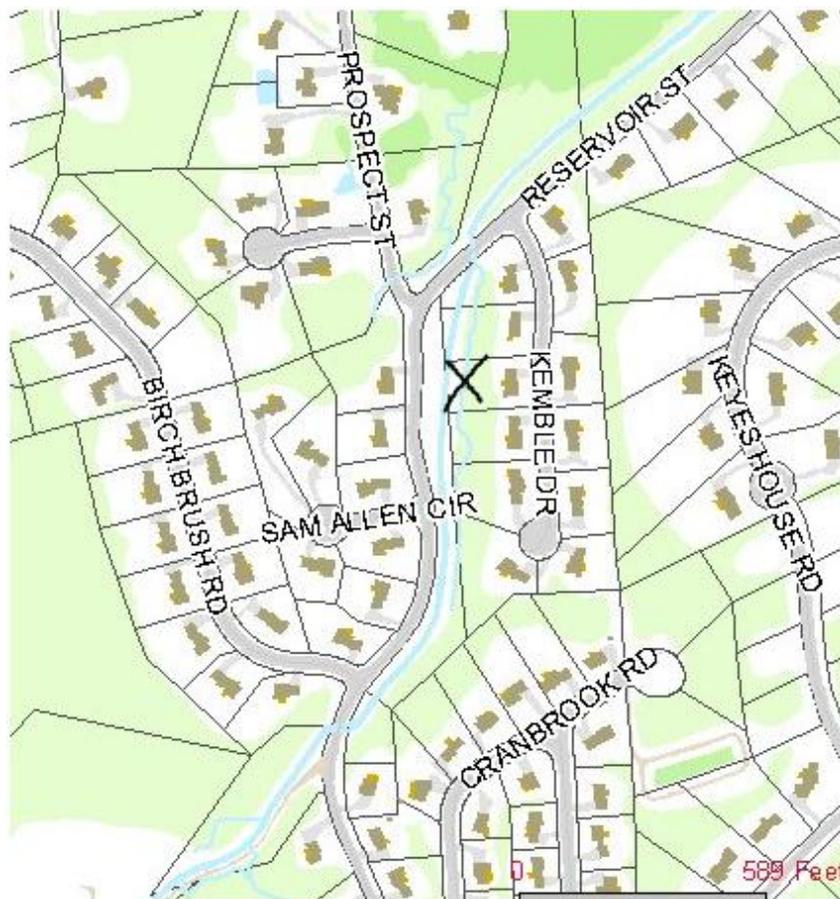


The tail race from the dam extends approximately 150 feet.



(4) Butler's mill

Located near the junction of Prospect Street and Reservoir Street.



This mill appears on Shrewsbury maps of 1832 (as “Butler’s Mills”), 1859, 1870 (as the “W. Fay S. Mill & G. Mill” [William Fay saw mill and grist mill]), and 1898.

Only part of this mill remains. Apparently the western half of the dam was destroyed by developers who installed a drainage system along the east side of Prospect Street, just before it joins Reservoir Street. The mill pond appeared on maps as late as 1898, but it no longer exists.

The mill probably operated into the twentieth century, since it is shown on the 1898 map of Shrewsbury and since the dam is topped with concrete, presumably forming a floor for the mill.

The dam, showing its concrete top (in profile)

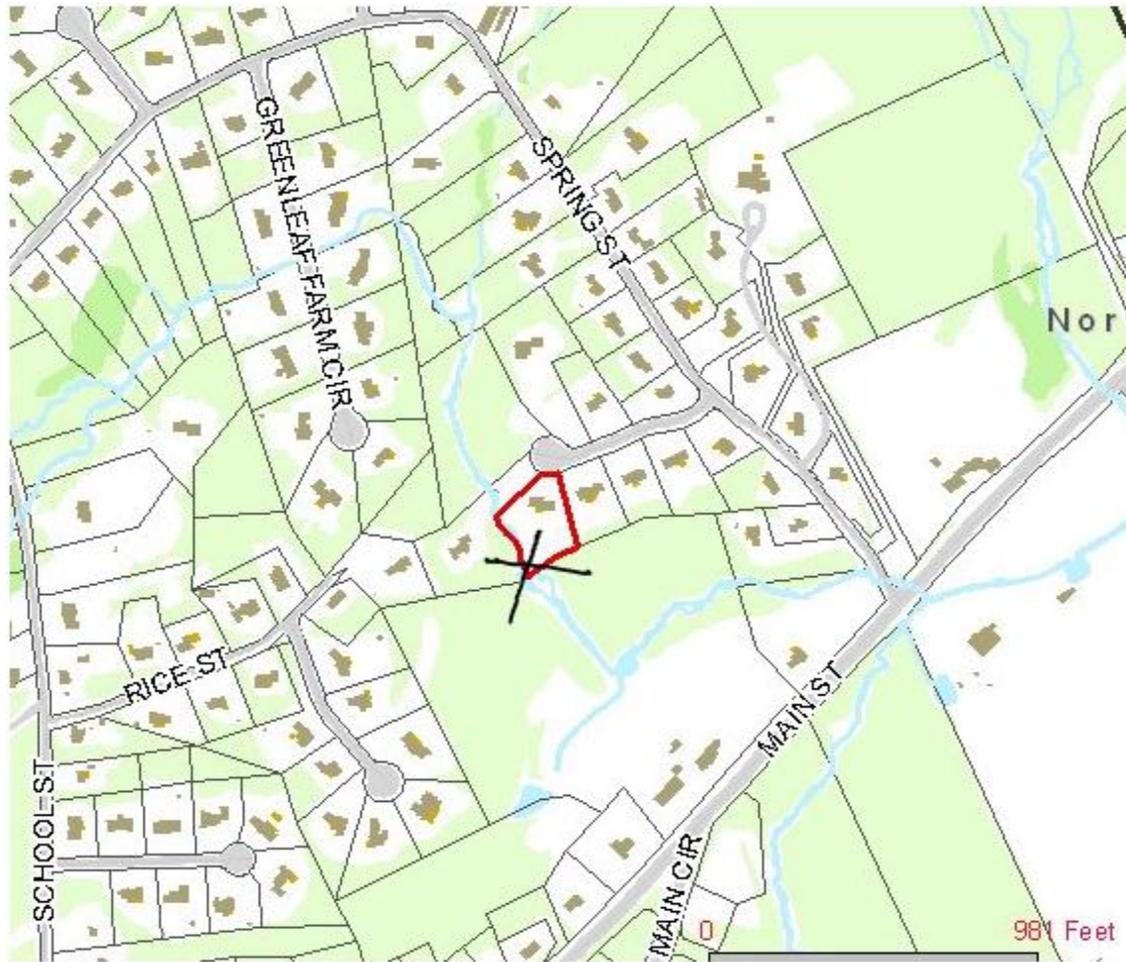


The mill's tail race (the right-hand channel)



(5) Ross Wyman's mill #1

Located behind # 9 Meadowbrook Circle (outlined in red in the map below).



Gunsmith Ross Wyman (1716-1808) had three mills on his property at the east end of Main Street. The first mill, a saw mill, appears on the 1832 map of Shrewsbury, but it does not appear on later maps, although the pond appeared on maps as late as 1898. The mill pond no longer exists.

Only the eastern half of this dam survives; there is no visible trace of the dam's western half. (There is a low stone wall where the western half of the dam should be.) A retaining wall, which runs parallel to the stream, survives. Behind the top of the retaining wall is a narrow path, just wide enough for a small cart. The tail race also survives.

The retaining wall



The tail race



(6) Ross Wyman's mill #2

Located between (and east of) # 78 and #80 Main Circle.



This mill ("Wyman's mills") appears on the Shrewsbury maps of 1832, 1859, 1870, and 1898. The 1870 and 1898 maps list it as a grist mill. The mill pond appeared on maps as late as 1898, but it no longer exists; a swamp now exists behind the dam. Unlike most of the other mills in town, this mill has no tail race.

This mill contains a large concrete chamber that probably contained a turbine, which drove the mill's machinery.



An old millstone is lodged in the retaining wall of the dam



Close-up of the concrete chamber



A photograph of the Wyman mill #2 as it appeared in the late 19th, early 20th centuries



Source:

http://dlib.cwmars.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shrewsbury&CISOPTR=14&CISOBX=1&REC=2

(7) Ross Wyman's mill #3

Located behind # 5 Turtle Creek Circle.



This saw mill appears on the Shrewsbury maps of 1832, 1859, and 1870, but not 1898. The map of 1870 identifies it as an “S. Mill” (saw mill).

This mill is very similar to Wyman's mill #2: it consists of a long stone retaining wall that forms the face of the dam, with earth heaped behind the stone wall; there is a concrete chamber where (probably) a turbine was housed; and there is no tail race.

The mill has been breached east of the concrete chamber.

Retaining wall forming the face of the dam

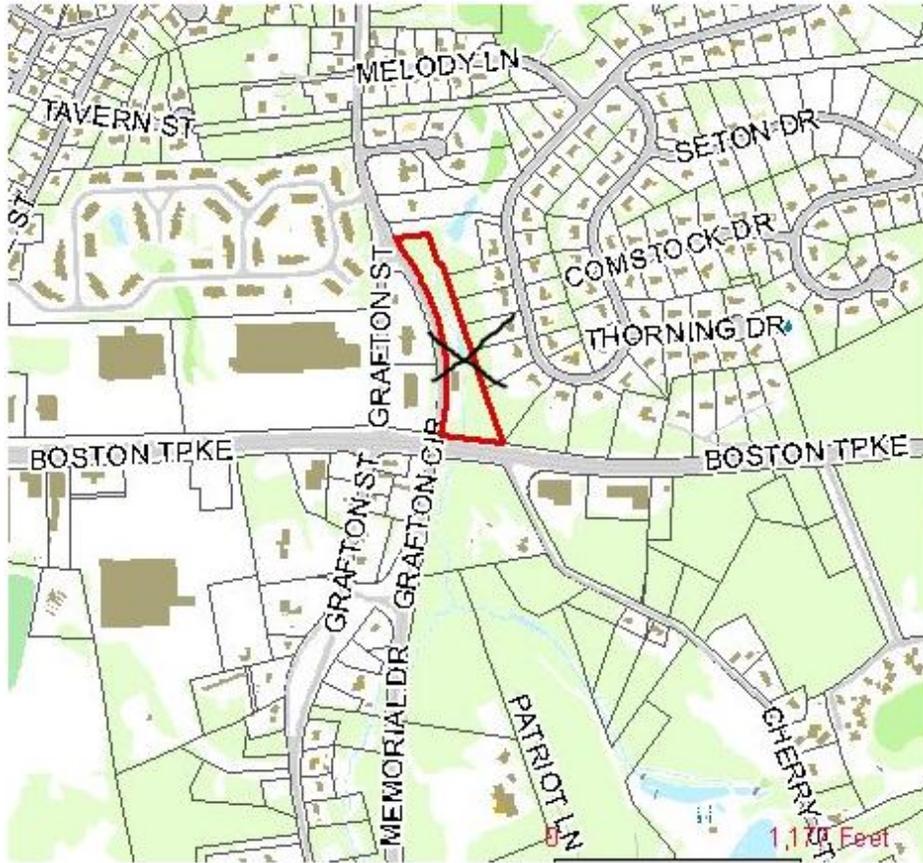


The concrete chamber is heavily enveloped by brush and fallen trees.
(This photo of the chamber was taken from above and behind the chamber; a brown, Y-shaped, steel prong can be seen at the top of a cement column, just below the center of the photo's top edge.)



(8) Cutlery factory mill

Located behind # 29 Grafton Circle (outlined in red in map below).



This mill appears on the map of Shrewsbury of 1832 (marked “Cutlery Facy”), but not on any later map. Even the mill pond disappears from maps after 1832.

The cutlery factory was established in the 1820s but ceased operations by 1837 (when a major economic depression suddenly began). [MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Shrewsbury (1983), pages 5 and 6.]

The mill is in very dilapidated condition: the dam has been breached, so the mill pond is now a swamp. Nevertheless, a stone retaining way still extends across the stream, the eastern half of the dam is still backed with earth, and the tail race is still largely intact.

Dam

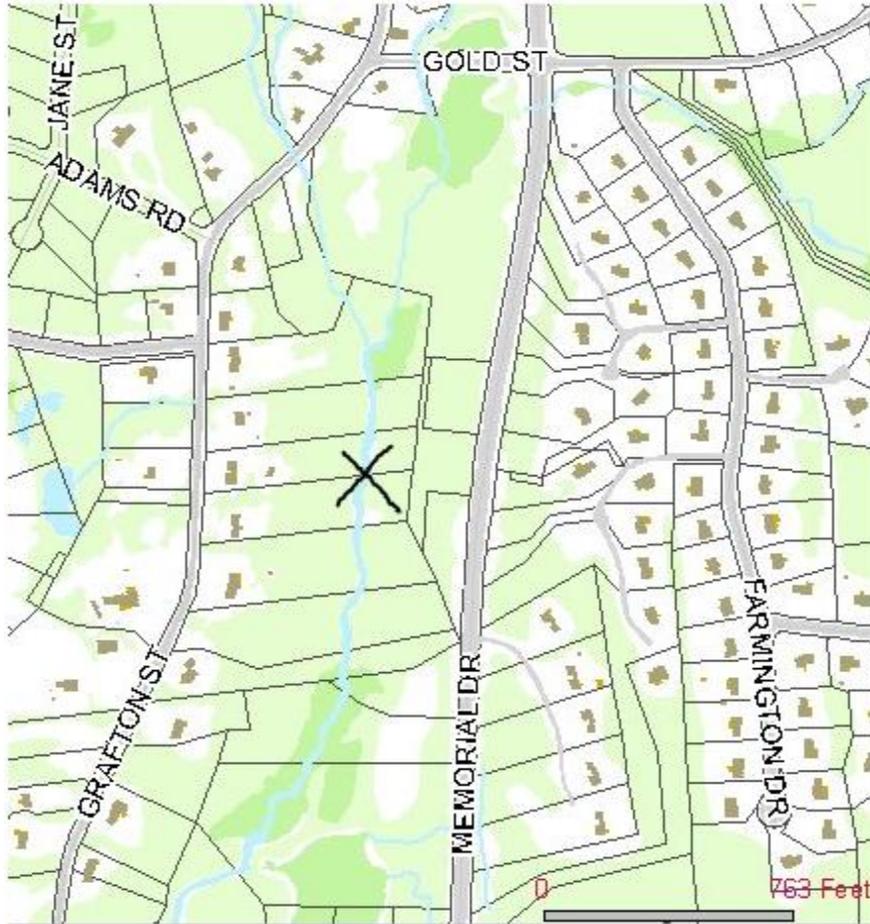


Tail race



(9) Winchester cider mill

Located between # 495 Grafton Street and # 144 Memorial Drive (Rte. 140).



This mill does not appear on any historic map of Shrewsbury, although the 1859 map of Shrewsbury shows the home of “M. Winchester” near this site, and the 1870 map contains an advertisement reading: “Winchester, M., Farmer and Manufr of Cider and Cider Vinegar, P.O. New England Village”.

The mill has partially collapsed into Bummet Brook. The former mill pond is now largely swamp. A trace of a switchback road lead from the mill to Grafton Street. Unlike the other dams in town, this dam does not have earth heaped against the upstream side of the dam’s stone wall. The section of Bummet Brook that’s immediately south (downstream) of the dam has been partially lined with stone, forming a crude tail race.

The dam



A close-up of the dam

