



John Prall's Ownership c. 1792 – 1831

A Time-Line History of the historic Prallsville Mills complex

1792- John Prall Jr. (1756-1831) purchased the former Reading/ Howell property to the south of the mill tract from the Ely Family. The property totaled 280 acres and included all the land between the Wickecheoke Creek and the present day Ferry St in Stockton.

1794- The Woolverton Brothers sold the mill property to John Prall for the price of 1,500 pounds. Two years prior to this acquisition, Prall had purchased the former Reading/Howell farmstead to the south of the mill tract from the Ely family. The property, which the Ely family had acquired from Joseph Howell, totaled 280 acres, and, with the mill tract, gave John Prall Jr. control of all the land on the Delaware River between the Wickecheoke Creek and the Present day Ferry Street in Stockton. Prall's newly acquired property was described in the deed as including "a corn or Grist Mill & Sawmill with the Full custom Benefit in Grinding & Sawing" and "Ponds, pools, Dams, Banks Water courses Streams of water Races Sluices flood Gates Bolting Mills Chests & all Implements there unto belonging." Mr. Prall expanded these mills; remodeled or rebuilt them soon after his purchase in 1794.

1813- William Livingston Prall married Charlotte Parker and she gave birth to John Parker Prall, John Prall's grandson.

1814- "William Prall & Jacob Lambert were authorized by the legislative enactment to erect a wing dam in the Delaware River at Trenton"¹

1819- John Parker Prall is born. He noted in the memoirs that he was born in the dwelling house next to the stone store building and that these structures, called John Prall's Mill Manor House, were built by his grandfather, John Prall, and "were the work of his hands." The grandson also tells us his grandfather built the linseed oil mill just opposite across the road from the stone store, a large plantation house on the hill was built, now the Woolverton Inn, and the "Letitia" house was built near by for his daughter.

The stone store building was used as a general country store and a post office and became the focal point in the community. The grandson in the memoir states:

1820- John Prall placed an advertisement in the "True American" Trenton newspaper in which he offered "for rent a saw mill, a plaster mill and an oil mill, in the pleasant village of Prallsville, near Centre Bridge, Amwell, Hunterdon County. Together with a dwelling stone house, port house, two barns, a smoke house and several trick patches." These properties were still for rent in March of 1821. It appears rental did not take place and the operations were carried on by Mr. Prall's son-in-law, Jacob Lambert.

1821- Wm. Livingston Prall bought the True American newspaper.

1822- William Livingston Prall is appointed as NJ State Librarian.¹ He served for one year.

1826- General Assembly of the State of NJ elects William Livingston Prall Clerk of the House². He was reappointed the next year³.

1828- William Livingston Prall married Mary Frances Buckner

1830- Jacob Lambert, Letitia's husband, became the post master in 1830 of the Prallsville Post Office.

1831- John Prall Jr. died and his executors sold the mill property of 73 acres to William Hoppock and John Wilson in 1833. Hoppock absorbed the whole property the next year and occupied the dwelling house next to the stone store. William Hoppock is said to have renovated the stone store into a dwelling house c.1850 and moved the store operation and post office into the linseed oil mill building on the opposite side of the street.

1876- John Prall's grandson, John Parker Prall, wrote a memoir of the Prall family. In the memoir he tells us his grandfather was a soldier in the American Revolution, that he was a lieutenant and fought in the battles of Millstone, Monmouth and Germantown. His old musket is still preserved in the Prall family.

¹ Raum, John. *History of Trenton*. W.T. Nicholson & co. Trenton, NJ; 1871.

² *Votes and Proceedings of the Fifty Second General Assembly of the State of NJ*. Printed by William L. Prall. Trenton, NJ; 1826.

³ *Votes and Proceedings of the Fifty Second General Assembly of the State of NJ*. Printed by PJ Gray. Woddbury, NJ; 1828