Dorr Pond and Woodman

A series of lakes, ponds, and wetlands are found in the northeastern-most corner of Wakefield near the Maine state line. These water features are linked by streams that flow through sandy and relatively level terrain. Here impoundments have created Belleau Lake (formerly Dorr Pond), Sand Pond and Stump Pond.

The archeological sites recorded in this part of Wakefield reveal how this mosaic of streams and wetlands provided industrial water-power in the absence of natural falls and rapids through construction of a series of dams. Ironically, the water which powered the mills also took them away (Wakefield-Brookfield Historical Society 2006).

Campbell Mill (27-CA-168)

The Campbell mill site is enigmatic. Aside from the mill's position on the 1861 Walling map, no archival data are available in any sources, including the 1850, 1860, 1870 or 1880 United States Federal Census Products of Industry. The mill may have existed only a short time, between 1861 and 1869 or the operation may have been of such a small-scale that it escaped recording.

The site is similarly elusive. It is located immediately downstream from the Belleau Lake dam, barely escaping impact by dam construction in the 1960s. The site includes earth berms associated with the former dam on both sides of the stream and a shallow flume on the right bank. The berms are low and rounded with boulders and stone eroding from their faces. On the right bank, the berm is split where a canal race or wheel pit was probably located.

No foundations or other elements of the nineteenth century mill were observed in the field. However, orientation of the berms suggests a wooden dam and spillway had been built across the stream and the mill floor was positioned on posts above the berms and wooden dam. It is likely that the mill was powered by water flowing through the flume beneath the building, or the flume may have been a means of passing excess flow during periods of high water. This mill operated with a low-head dam, constructed with readily available materials, including stones, earth and wood timbers. The original lay of the land was quite level, necessitating construction of a dam to create a pond, which could provide water head to power the mill. It is likely that this mill and dam operated for only a short period and were washed away in floods. See illustrations on page 45.

Campbell Mill (27-CA-168)
Chronology and Evolution

1861 – Campbell mill depicted on Walling map

1892 – Hurd map indicates mill no longer standing

1960s – Belleau Lake dam constructed

1996 – Belleau Lake dam improved

Alfred Woodman Mill (27-CA-169)

Like the Campbell mill, only a faint trace of the Alfred Woodman mill survives today. This mill, situated in the village of Woodman, was in operation by the 1850s and stood at least until 1935, perhaps washing away in floods of 1936 or 1938. The 1850 US Census Bureau report reveals that the mill produced 90 thousand feet of lumber and 300 thousand shingles.

Historic photos (c.1935) depict a small wooden mill building on the left bank and a bermed dam that doubled as an access road and footbridge between the mill and Woodman. The dam was constructed of timber crib framing with rubble fill. Today, scattered boulders and remnants of the berms are visible but there are no traces of the mill structure, bridge or dam. The dam once provided sufficient power to operate the lumber and shingle mill; however, it was not substantial enough to endure. See illustrations on pages 46 and 47.

Alfred Woodman Mill (27-CA-169)
Chronology and Evolution

1850 – Census indicates mill in operation

1861 – Walling map depicts shingle and saw mill at location

1935 – photographs indicate mill and dam still standing