

a View to a Mill

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Introduction

The mills in the Burlington/ Winooski area have always been a focal point for the cities. Originally they were what defined the city of Winooski as a center for commerce. All of the mills have gone through various changes of purpose.

Now all three of the main Burlington/ Winooski Mills serve a purpose far different from what they were originally designed to do. Especially Chace Mill, which is the last building you see as you cross the bridge into Winooski from Burlington.

Three mills surround the Winooski/Burlington border.
Woolen Mill, Champlain Mill and Chace Mill.



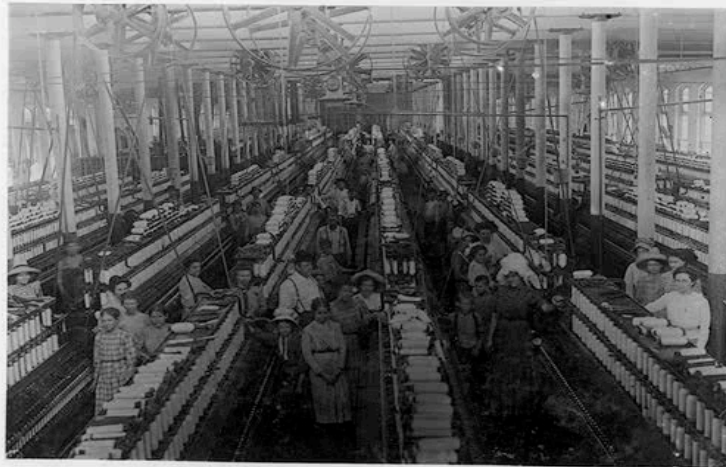
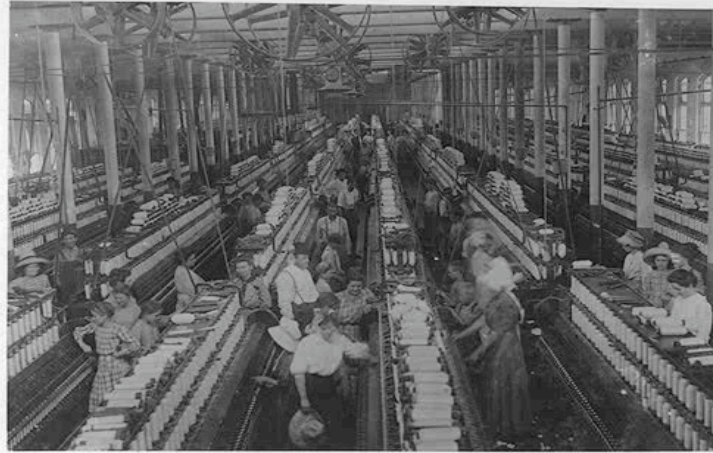
These mills were the livelihood of the Burlington/Winooski area. Bringing in commerce and jobs. Some of these jobs were given to young children.



Image source: <http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>

This boy worked at the Chace Cotton Mill.

Mills were large open rooms filled with many machines. This mill is not one of the Burlington mills, but is similar to how the mill would have been set up. The mill pictured is a cotton/textile mill.





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Chace mill was built in 1882 by the Winooski Mill Co. Around 1900 Burlington Cotton Mills bought the mill then in 1906 the Chace family of Massachusetts bought it out, after that Green Mountain Power bought the mill and turned it into a hydroelectric plant in 1929. In 1931 American Woolen Co took over the Chase Mill.



Image Source: <http://personalweb.smcvt.edu/winooskimills/millshistory/homeframe.htm>

The Chace Mill started being used year-round in 1904 when a steam-power system was installed in the mill providing 900 horsepower to the mills. At one time the mill housed 30,496 spindles, which was a lot.

While the production of child laborers and large machines has stopped, Chace is now a site for a different type of production including a web developer, yoga studio, hair salon, etc.



Above: Some walls have been constructed, but the floors have stayed the same. The dark spots are from machine oil from when the mills were in use. If you were to kneel on the floors today you would get oil all over your pants.

The elevator



The same mill windows now a site for a much different job.



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This is a picture of Chace Mill as it looks today.
Very similar, just a new addition of a stoplight.

Longevity seemed to be a major consideration when the Mill was built in 1892. It is built almost entirely out of brick and stone. To save wood from rotting at any point that the beams (which were wooden) were to be joined with the stone a steel plate was installed, so that the wood could not absorb water.



This mill while not a Chace Mill is a great example of the architecture of the building.

The flood of 1927 had a large impact on all of the mills with the water from the Winooski River coming in and flooding many of the buildings, but shut down production for only 3 days.

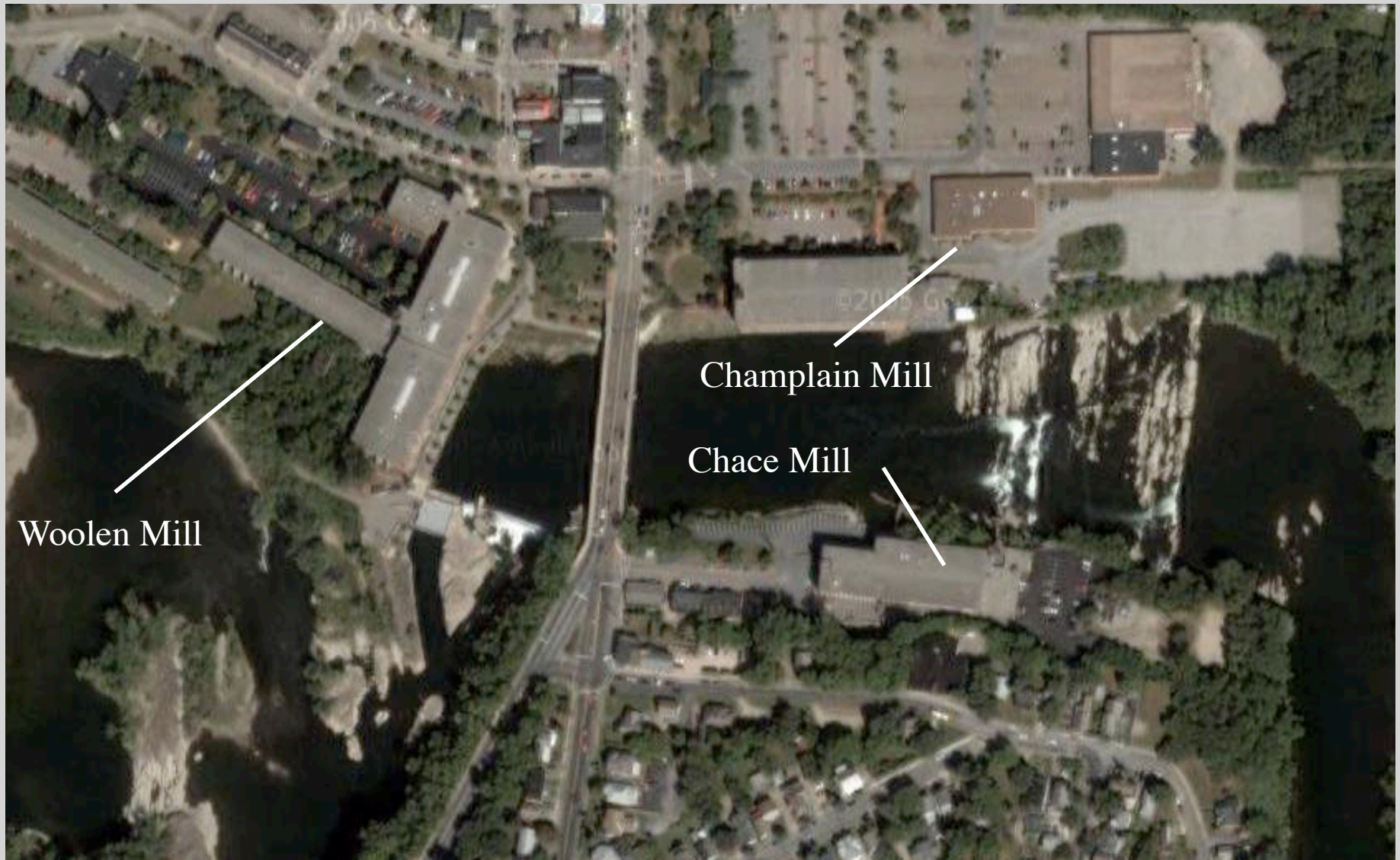


Chace Mill was luckier than these buildings.



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The mills then.



Woolen Mill

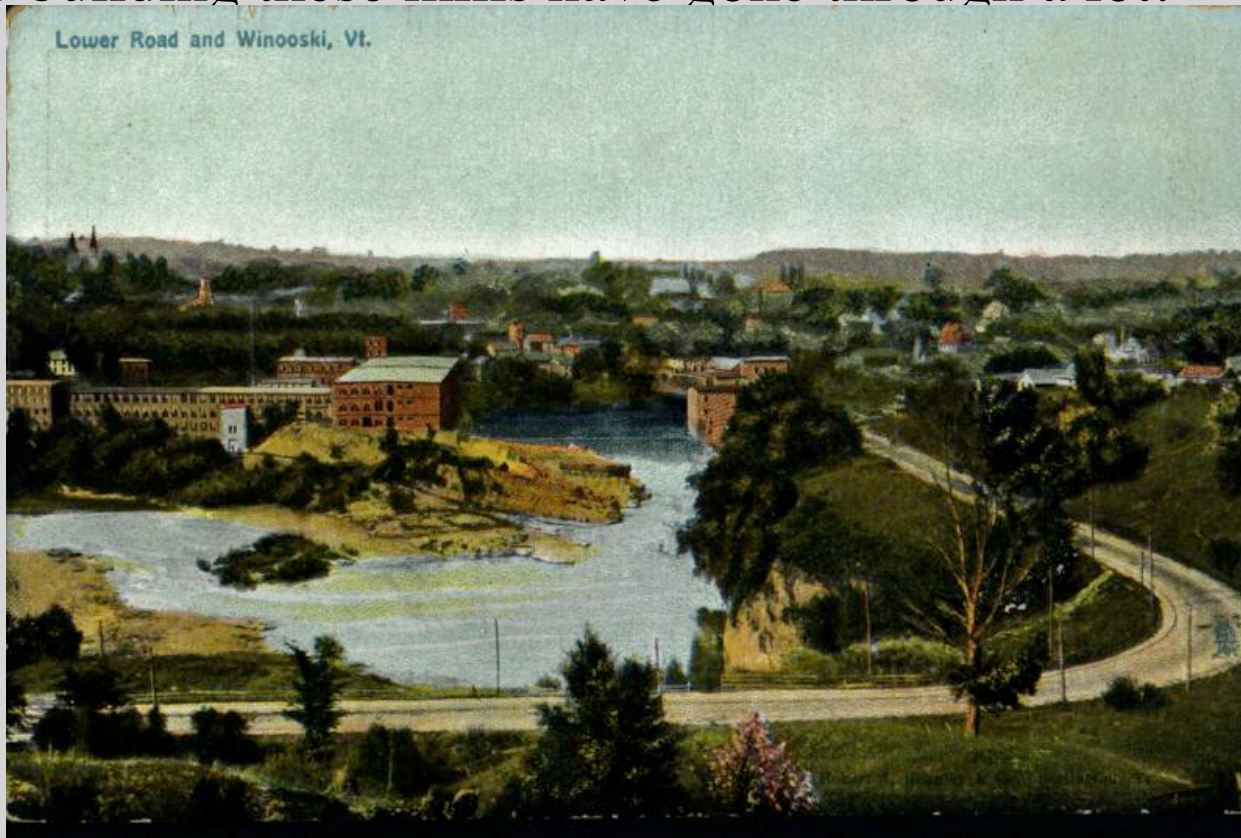
Champlain Mill

Chace Mill

Image Source: maps.google.com

The mills now. Surrounded by the bustling cities of Winooski and Burlington.

Each of the three mills has their own history and it can be found in the buildings themselves. The Heritage Winooski Mill Museum has put together murals of the mills over time. It is remarkable to see how the use of the buildings has changed over time. From a dirty, textile mill to a pristine office building these mills have gone through a lot.



And will probably go through a lot more.

Cool Links

Heritage Winooski Mill Museum:

<http://personalweb.smcvt.edu/winooskimills/HeritageWinooski.html>

Website with lots of information and great sources from the students at St. Michael's College:

<http://personalweb.smcvt.edu/winooskimills/Default.html>