

A Portal to the Past

Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum

FAMILY THREADS

AN EXCERPT FROM *THE THREAD OF THE RIVER*

Upon his return from Java in 1857, where he had served as U. S. Consul from 1850 through 1856, Alfred Augustus Reed was living in West Roxbury, Mass., but looking towards Rhode Island to develop mill interests. In 1860, he bought land at Admiral and Whipple Streets in Providence and built a long three story building with a low gable roof and stair towers on each side of the center. This was the Oriental Mill, a cotton manufacturing operation, which remained in the Reed family until 1893, when it was sold to the J. P. Campbell Company, operator of the Cranston Print Works.

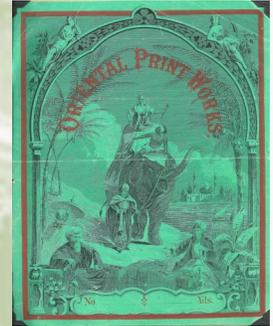
After the death of his wife,

Caroline in 1861, Alfred built a brownstone home at 232 Beacon Street in Boston, where he lived until 1868. By 1870, he had moved to Warwick, R.I. to the property in Cowesett, but owned 232 Beacon Street at least through 1874.

In 1890, with his sons, Alfred Jr. and William Gordon, running the mill in Providence, the Oriental Mill was employing about 250 workers on 1600 spindles to produce a fine grade of Turkish toweling.

In 1865, one of Reed's partners, Bostonian Edward D. Bolt, who was treasurer of the Oriental Mills, suggested acquisition of the Greene Mill in

Apponaug, as the Greenes were in trouble. The mill was located on an excellent water source with the waters of Gorton's Pond available. For about \$14,000, the buildings were acquired. With a total outlay of about \$60,000, the



Cloth Label from Oriental Print Works, Apponaug, RI

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ON THE FARM

Winter did not mean that activities died down at Cedar Hill Farm. The livestock needed tending daily, equipment needed to be repaired, the horses being used daily needed to be sharp-shod (have their regular shoes replaced with shoes which had the heels shaped to provide trac-

tion on icy patches; today, removable studs are used, or borium lumps are welded to the bottom of the shoe). Most importantly, winter was the time for wood cutting and ice harvesting.

With snow on the ground, removal of logs from the

woods became easier, and the farm's teams of oxen and horses were used to haul out logs from farm woodlands. Some went to the mill for cutting into boards; some was chopped for firewood.

Continued on page 4

T h r e a d s
c o n t i n u e d

Oriental Printworks produced 5000 pieces a week, for a price cheaper than its nearest rival. Soon six printing machines were added, bringing production to 10,000 pieces a week.



Remains of Alfred Reed's Oriental Print Works, Apponaug, RI

The influence of the mill owners on the welfare of their employees and the towns that grew up around the mills was immense. The very existence of some towns depended on the mills, evidenced by the disappearance of some mill

villages as the strength of the cotton industry in New England was drained out and directed south. Fortunately, the Allens, Slaters and Reeds were enlightened mill owners, working for the good of their employees, and becoming philanthropically involved in the communities in which they had interests.

REED MILL INTERESTS

DATE	LOCATION	RIVER	OWNER
1860	Providence	Moshassuck	Alfred A. Reed
1865	Warwick	Hardig Brook, Gortons Pond	Alfred A. Reed
1871	Forestdale	Branch	Alfred Reed, John F. Slater, William S. Slater

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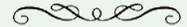
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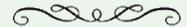
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**W H A T
Y O U
H A V E T O
S A Y . . .**

"A truly enlightening historic experience!"
Jerry and Jan Matranga,
Rocklin, CA



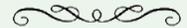
"House is cool!"
The Beaulieu children,
Warwick, RI



"Beautiful home - so much to look at - We'll be back"
Janet Discepolo,
Wolcott, CT



"A wonderful place to spend time - Anytime!"
Judy Guccione,
Wakefield, RI



"I do love Victorian houses. This is a great reference"
Leah Mikaelian,
Moosup, CT

FROM THE COLLECTIONS



The Porcelain Collection

Top left to right: soup tureen from the farm china of Mrs. John Carter Brown's Brick House Farm, Minton china for W.S. Coleman, Dist.; soup tureen, Ferrara, by Wedgewood, Etruria, England; Bottom left to right: tureen by Imperial Ironstone China, John Alcock, England; covered dish or soup tureen from French luncheon service by Luneville, Keller & Guerin



FROM THE KITCHEN

Winter is certainly a time for good hearty soups to warm up those coming from cold trips by horse and sleigh or the children coming in from an afternoon sliding on wooden sleds and skis or skating on the next-door ice pond.

St. James Chowder

serves six—Take six slices of good pickled pork (salt pork or thick bacon) and fry them in the bottom of a good size dinner pot (Dutch oven) – turning slices till brown on both sides. Take seven pounds tautaug, dressed, or a few pounds scup, tautaug preferred. Cut each in three pieces unless small, when cut in two. Place in pot on the pork drippings as many pieces of fish as will fairly cover the bottom of the pot. Throw into the pot, on the fish, three handful of onions peeled and sliced in thin slices. Do not be afraid of the onions. Put in over this salt and pepper to taste, as in other soups. Then lay on the six slices of pork; on the top of the pork, the rest of the fish; cover this with three handful more onions peeled and sliced (nine or ten onions in both layers will suffice...) More pepper and salt to taste. Then pour into the pot water enough just to come fairly even with the whole, or partly to cover the same. Put the cover on the pot and place it on the

fire. Let it boil gently and slowly for thirty minutes. It is to BOIL for thirty minutes, not merely to be on the fire thirty minutes. Let it boil until the onions are soft. Pour in at this point about a quart of best cider or champagne and a tumblerful of port wine, and at the same time add about two pounds of sea biscuits (thick milk crackers, hard tack, etc.). NOTE: if when onions are done, you find there is not enough liquid in pot, soak sea biscuits in water a few minutes before adding to chowder.

Soup Mulgatawni

To one pint of strong stock add a great spoonful of curry powder (well dissolved in a small quantity of the stock before adding), forcemeat balls, onions, fried, eggs boiled hard and cut in slices, salt to taste. Add one-half cup of cream or milk, just before serving for the table. *From the 1850 recipe book of Mrs. Alfred Augustus Reed*

Beef Soup

Boil beef soup bone the day before wanting it. Next day, skim off grease and melt the jelly; add salt and pepper to taste, a little brandy, a small tea cup of butter rubbed in browned flour, a little vermicelli, and grated carrot. Cook until the vermicelli is cooked. Boil eight eggs hard, mash smooth, then put in tureen and pour soup over them.

WHAT'S IT?

Visit our website, www.cloudshill.org, for the answer.



INSIDE SCOOP

Our Visitors

Between November and January, the museum greeted guests from California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Washington state; as well as Rhode Island residents from 21 cities and towns.

Upcoming Special Exhibits

Once again, February is "Romance" month, and the museum will host the annual "100 Years of Romance" display of wedding gowns from the 1880s through the 1990s. This display places the gowns throughout the museum in vignettes and includes accessories, invitations, bouquets, and cakes. In addition, this year a limited number of people will be able to partake of a 1930's wedding luncheon and short lecture on wedding traditions. The gown display will be up from February 7th through the end of the month. Special exhibit days are Sunday, February 10th and Sunday, February 17th, from 1 to 4 PM each day.

The 1930s wedding luncheon, catered by Tom's Market Catering, is by reservation only, and will be held on Saturday, February 9th, at 12:00 PM. It will be limited to 24 guests, so reserve early. Luncheon will be accompanied by a short lecture on wedding traditions and customs.

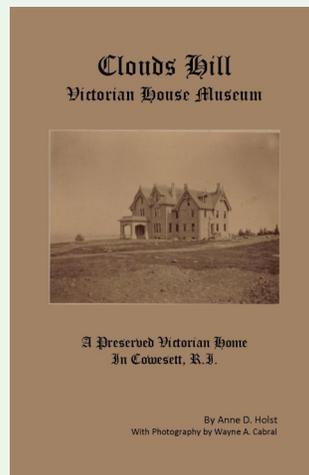
March, which is National Women's Month, will feature a special exhibit titled Anne Crawford Allen, An Unusual Woman. This 3rd generation owner of Clouds Hill grew up at a time when women were working to change society's attitudes towards their positions in life. Miss Allen's activities as the first woman fire chief in the world, one of the first female aviators, author, lecturer, and housewife will be shown with

pictures, articles, and more. This display will be up from March 15th through the end of the month and will be open on Sunday, March 17th and Sunday, March 24th from 1 to 4 PM each day without prior reservation.

April will feature the first crafts workshops hosted by the museum on the second and third Saturdays in April, from 10:00 AM to Noon. April 14th will feature Edith Johnson teaching the art of quilling, creating beautiful rolled paper embellishments. These can be added to baskets, cards or made into ornaments. On April 21st, Anne Holst will teach napkin folding and setting a pretty table with interesting centerpieces. These workshops will be limited, so check our website for details and reserve your spot early.

You Asked For It!

So many of our visitors have been asking for a publication about the Clouds Hill and it is finally here. The more than 50 page booklet contains 45 colored photographs. Visit our gift shop page on our website or stop by our gift shop when you visit Clouds Hill to get your copy.

**Farm**
continued

Ice harvest was essential, as blocks of ice cut in winter and stored in ice houses under blankets of sawdust, provided the only refrigeration for foods in the summer months. The farm had several ice ponds – a small pond on Love Lane about 200 yards north of the driveway to the farmhouse and the pond on the Alfred Reed estate which provided water to the main house. This pond, although almost non-existent, is still to be seen off the end of Chevy Court in Crestwood. The foundation of the ice house still can be seen at the north end of the pond. The museum has a number of ice harvesting items in the farming collection, including ice saws and an ice plow, used to mark the blocks to be cut. Several ponds that still exist today were used for ice harvest by area farms, including the one on the Godfrey Farm off Cowesett



Ice-cutting on Warwick pond—1920s

Road (Larchwood Road passes next to it, and the ice house foundation is still evident), and the twin ponds on Division Street west of Love Lane on the Roelker property.

As a special treat in the winter, a barrel of freshly pressed apple cider was often placed on the north side of the barn and left for the winter. After a hard freeze of several weeks, the men would hammer out the bung (wooden plug) from the bung hole at the bottom side of the barrel and draw off the liquid. Since all of the water would have frozen out of the cider, what you had left was alcoholic and a delicious "pick-me-up!"

PROFILE

This quarter, we will summarize a number of local concerns who were involved in the building of the house.

From the East Greenwich area:

Tarbox Granite quarry at Carr's Pond, West Greenwich. Joseph Tarbox, born in 1818, was the first in the Tarbox family of West Greenwich, to operate the granite quarry, which produced a fine, light granite used for many area buildings. Joseph's son, Joseph, in turn operated the quarry, while his brother ran a nearby gristmill, using stones from the family quarry. Joseph died in 1888, closing the quarry until 1896, when John David and Jesse Tarbox reopened it in partnership with George Goodwin.

James L. Congdon of East Greenwich – dealer in choice family groceries, floor, provisions, hardware, wooden ware and earthen ware

E. W. Lovell and Co. of East Greenwich – copper smiths, plumbers and roofers and dealers in stoves and hardware – tin, Britannia, wooden, Japan and glass ware, force and lifting pumps, lead pipe, sheet lead, etc. – Wm. G. Lovell, E. W. Lovell

From the Providence area:

Barker, Whitaker and Co. – hardware and house furnishing goods. The first general hardware store in the city of Providence was kept by Peckham and Barker, about 1776, near where the Arcade stands. This firm was succeeded by Brown and Barker, as jobbers, in 1830. In 1846, William Whitaker was admitted as a partner, under the firm style of Brown, Barker and Co. In 1849, Mr. Brown retired. In 1852, F. A. Barker was admitted to the firm, and the title changed to Barker, Whitaker and Co. Located on Westminster St., the firm were importers of hardware and cutlery and dealers in manufacturers, machinists and builders' supplies.

George M. Carr, 102 Weybosset St., Providence – gas, steam and water pipe fitting

D. D. Sweet and Co., 155 Eddy St., Providence – manufacturers and dealers in windows, doors, blinds, shutters, mouldings, inside finish, stair rails, balusters,

newel posts, gutters, conductors, etc. – glass glazing, blinds trimmed, painted and hung, patent window weights, sash cords, and irons – Jencks window spring – Specialty: first class inside blinds and doors

Freeman and Kelly, 88 Weybosset Street, Providence – manufacturers of wholesale and retail dealers in cooking, parlor and office stoves, double oven ranges, brick and portable furnaces, also grates, registers, ventilators, and tin, sheet iron, and copper work made to order

French, MacKenzie and Co., Providence – contractors and builders – Warren A. French, Hector MacKenzie, Wm. E. Atwood – the general contractors for the building of Clouds Hill

Alexander Grant, 19 Meeting St., corner of Benefit St., Providence – housepainters and interior decorators, make a specialty of tinting walls and ceilings in oil or water colors

Mason, Chapin and Co., 33-37 Canal St., Providence – importers of and wholesale dealers in drugs, dye stuffs, chemicals, medicines, paints, oil, window glass, and manufacturers', bleachers' and calico printers' supplies; E. Philip Mason, Wm. P. Chapin

N. B. Schubarth, 29 Weybosset St., Providence – architect, civil and hydraulic, engineer and land surveyor – special attention given to the erection of factories, churches, public and private dwellings. Plans and designs, estimates and specifications, furnished at short notice and moderate charges



Rhode Island Cement Drain Pipe Co., Providence – manufacturers of cement drain and sewer pipe

Rhode Island Frear Stone Co., Providence – manufacturers of all kinds of building and ornamental stone – office, 4 Weybosset St, manufactory, Valley St., near R. I. Locomotive Works

Rice, Draper and Co., 25-27 Exchange Place, Providence – proprietors of the Diamond Ready Made Colors – importers and dealers in chemicals, dye stuffs, paints, oils, glues, etc. New England agents for Peter Cooper's Refined Neatsfoot Oil

Snow and Lewis, 67-8 Exchange Place, Providence – wholesale dealers in all articles used for coloring by calico printers and woolen manufacturers, also wheat and potato starch and other articles used by bleachers and cotton manufacturers

Tingley Marble Co. – monumental and building work of marble, freestone and soapstone – steam marble works, 131 South Main Street, Providence; free-stone yard and wharf, 417 South Main Street, Providence; monuments, tablets, headstones, table tops, mantels and grates, washbowl slabs, mirror slabs and brackets, soapstone wash tubs, sinks, factory rolls, etc.

Tucker, Swan Co., corner of Dyer and Dorrance Sts., Providence, dealers in anthracite and bituminous coal

Wm. H. Fenner and Co., 129 and 131 Broad Street, Providence – plumbers, metal roofers, and dealers in house furnishing goods; sole agent of Chilson's Cone Furnace, double oven range and stoves, also, agents for Richmond Stove Co.

From Providence County:

William G. Slade, Pawtucket – wholesale and retail dealer in building and wrapping papers – general agent for Rhode Island for the Virginia Cane Fibre company's rosin sized paper felts

Welcome Whipple and Co. quarry, Diamond Hill – suppliers of all blue granite used for trim on the house at Clouds Hill

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.CLOUDSHILL.ORG



Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum

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... a portal to the past ...

Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation operating a historic Victorian home as a museum for the public.

The house is an important part of the history of the City of Warwick and the State of Rhode Island. It was built in 1872 by William Smith Slater for his daughter, Elizabeth Ives Slater, on her marriage to Alfred Augustus Reed, Jr. It has remained in the same family since it was built, passing from female to female until reaching the current owner. The lineage of the family can be traced to several notable figures.

In addition to the architecture and interior of the house, other collections include textiles, porcelain, carriages, and much more. The property on which the house sits has been referred to as the West Bay arboretum.

Donations to Clouds Hill are deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Clouds Hill Victorian House Museum
P.O. Box 522
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