

## Accomack, VA Mills

There were approximately 70 mills located in Accomack County Virginia. These mills consisted of either saw or gristmills. Some of these were tidalmills which caught the incoming tidal water and stored it in a pond until needed. These mills exterior water wheels while the rest used either covered water wheels or water turbines.

The local mills faded away due to the importation of pre-packaged flour and the increasing portability of steam powered sawmills. This change in technology made the old watermills obsolete.

The last two mills to operate in Accomack County were Drummond's Mill near Hunting Creek and Mason's Mill in Parksley.

Drummond's Mills operated from approximately 1840 until August 25, 1937 when the mill dam gave way after heavy rains. The entire millhouse was washed downstream. As a foot note: A milling operation was located on this location for 250 years, but each mill was eventually replaced until the last one which was built in 1840 and referred to as Drummond's Mill. 1787

Mason's Mill operated from it's location from the mid-1700's. Until 1912, there were two mills in this area, a gristmill upstream and a sawmill downstream. Both were

operated the Mason family. The sawmill was torn down in 1912. The gristmill was operated until 1943 when a heavy rainstorm washed it away. Mason's mill was the last one to grind flour commercially in Accomack County until Pungo Creek Mills.

Pungo Creek Mills was established in January 2009 to grow, cure, grind and market an heirloom variety of Heirloom Indian corn into Indian cornmeal. The millhouse is new but the mill is original to the Eastern Shore. It was salvaged and restored in the 1990's from an abandoned mill near Machipongo, located in Northampton County. The mill is a 1935 20" verticle stone mill built by Meadows Mills.

Pungo Creek Mills uses vintage machinery and hand selection to produce the finest Indian cornmeal possible. Our customers include local, natural and historical markets including: Blue Crab Bay Co., Whole Foods, and Monticello.

The Indian cornmeal is unique in texture and flavor. It has been DNA tested through Anson Mills back to 1840 and it received the 2010 Best New Food Product Award at the VA Food & Beverage show held in Richmond.

I am currently looking at other markets including the possibility of "reviving" cornbeer or burbon whiskey. All I need is the right contact in an established brewery or distillery to make this happen.