



Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

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Lathrop Brown House, Montauk, before 1935

I've mentioned windmill houses in a previous "Item of the Week" post, as there were many in East Hampton, but Lathrop Brown's "Windmill House" served as the original inspiration for that feature.

Born in New York City in 1883, Lathrop Brown came from a wealthy and prominent family. His father, Charles Stelle Brown, founded the real estate company Brown, Harris, Stevens in Manhattan in 1873, which still exists today. Lathrop Brown was a U.S. Congressman (D-NY) from 1913 to 1915, and was a personal friend of President Franklin D. Roosevelt (they were classmates at Groton and roommates at Harvard).

In the summer of 1922, Robert C. Baldwin sold a 30-acre tract of oceanfront property in Montauk, about a mile from the Montauk Point Lighthouse, to Lathrop Brown on behalf of Arthur Benson's heirs. In early 1921 or 1922, Brown purchased a windmill in Wainscott that he later moved to the property. The windmill was originally built in Southampton in 1813 and was previously owned and operated by John Hand.

Once in place, he had a low, clinging cottage built and attached to it. It's believed Edward M. Gay was the hired builder. The windmill contained a living room on the lower level, and bedrooms on the two upper floors. Brown also purchased 13 old

millstones, which he had set into the living room floor. The cottage itself contained a dining room, kitchen, and an additional bedroom upstairs that could only be reached by an outdoor staircase.

In 1942, the U.S. Navy absorbed the Lathrop Brown property into Camp Hero. As a result, the windmill was detached and moved to the Georgica Association (where it remains today). The cottage and adjoining buildings were subsequently broken up and moved off the property. However, it appears, the current owners of the Brown tract have reunited the buildings, sans windmill.

During WWII, Lathrop Brown moved to California before finally settling in Florida in the 1950s, where he died in 1959.

EXPLORE MORE

The Digital Long Island Collection is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

The East Hampton Star Archive is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

The Karl Grossman Research Archive is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

The Local Artist Research Archive is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.



Welcome to the Long Island Collection's "Item of the Week."

We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to [Digital Long Island](#) on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.

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Gina Piastuck joined the East Hampton Library in 2007 as a librarian and archivist and has served as the Head of the Long Island Collection since 2009. She's a graduate of LIU Post's Palmer School of Library and Information Science and holds both an M.L.I.S. degree and a Certificate in Archives and Records Management. Her responsibilities managing the Long Island Collection include providing reference and research assistance to patrons on and off site, as well

as the acquisition, arrangement, description and conservation of rare and new materials
pertaining to the history and people of Long Island.

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