

## 18th Century Grist Millers's Clothing

In a Grist Mill you must think about safety. A miller would not wear loose fitting clothing that would tend to catch itself in the machinery. Anyone with any sense would not wear loose fitting clothing around moving machinery.

For centuries the miller wore white clothing. The millers did not have a means of cleaning grains until the end of the 1700's, so if the miller maintained a general white clean appearance perhaps his product was the same way, relatively free from dirt and contamination.

- Fabric Choices: Common materials included wool, linen, and cotton for durability and comfort.
- Shirts: Typically made of linen, featuring long sleeves and a loose fit for ease of movement.
- Breeches: Knee-length trousers that were often worn with stockings, made from sturdy fabrics.
- Coats: Tailored waistcoats or frock coats were popular, often adorned with buttons and pockets.
- Footwear: Leather shoes or boots, designed for practicality and protection while working.
- Headwear: Non-brimmed hats or caps.

The miller would either keep his shirt sleeves buttoned or tightly rolled up and never hanging loose because of safety. His waistcoat would be buttoned and closed. The miller generally also kept the top buttons of his shirt closed. Any miller can tell you once pieces of grain get into your clothing because it is open, how it can become uncomfortable and itchy in the warm weather. This is perhaps another reason why a miller wore his neckerchief tied around under his collar of his shirt to keep the small particles out. The same reason for wearing the miller's cap, to keep the flour dust, flour and grain particles out of his hair.

The miller often wore an apron. Sometimes a half apron tied around the waist but generally a full apron that would have a bib that covered the chest. The miller could quickly take it off to attend to the machinery or greet an important customer if need be. Often these were made by the miller's wife. The miller's wife in sewing his shirts would sometimes embroider things below the split of the neck opening or the back of the collar. This might be the miller's initials, and a symbol of his industry, a sheave of wheat; a millstone; or related item. They would generally be embroidered in the same color thread as his shirt and most often go unnoticed by others.