

# SUFFOLK MILLS GROUP

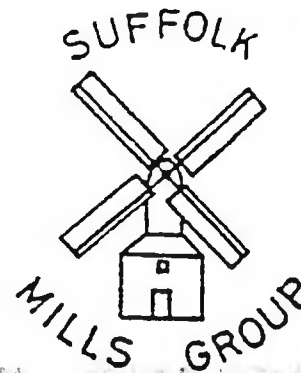
## Newsletter

No. 53

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Despite the mill preservation success stories of recent years, many of our windmills and watermills continue to slowly decay through lack of maintenance. The threat of 'demolition by decay' has recently been highlighted by a national sample survey, organised by English Heritage, of listed buildings at risk from neglect. Of the different categories of buildings, those in the 'power' group (largely mills) had the highest proportion 'at risk' - 750 out of a total of 2400. The study points out that this is of particular concern as windmills and watermills are among the listed buildings for which it is most difficult to find an appropriate and viable new use. One thing is certain - there are no easy answers, and the best we can hope for in many cases is to maintain the status quo for as long as possible in the hope that a saviour will be found.

This edition of the newsletter contains the usual New Year goodies, such as a prize crossword competition and details of our February public meeting. Information on all events is given at the end of the newsletter but here is a list of dates for your diary:

Sat. February 22nd	S.M.G. public meeting, Ipswich
Sat. March 14th	S.P.A.B. Windmill meeting, London
Sun. May 10th	National Mills Day
Fri. May 15th	S.M.G. public meeting, Bury St. Edmunds

Finally I would like to thank those of you who have written to me with material and with kind words about the newsletter. It's much appreciated. Keep it coming!

Mark Barnard

## SOME MORE EUROPEAN MILLS

NIALL ROBERTS

In November 1990 I made a two-week business trip to four mainland European cities and, as nearly always, I managed to include some 'milly' experiences in my itinerary.

My first destination was PARIS. On this visit I chose a hotel that was nearer to the Gare de Lyon than to the office of the people I was due to see, because my next train was from the GDL to Geneva. This 'East Paris' base made an interesting change from my hitherto usual 'West Paris' hotel bases for exploration of the city on foot and by Metro. I discovered, for example, that on one of the platforms at the Bastille station there is an excavated and surviving piece of the foundations of La Bastille itself, and that the walls of the same platforms are decorated with long ceramic murals of scenes and events of 1789 onwards - including an unidentified rural windmill! At the Hôtel de Ville Metro station, the walls of the

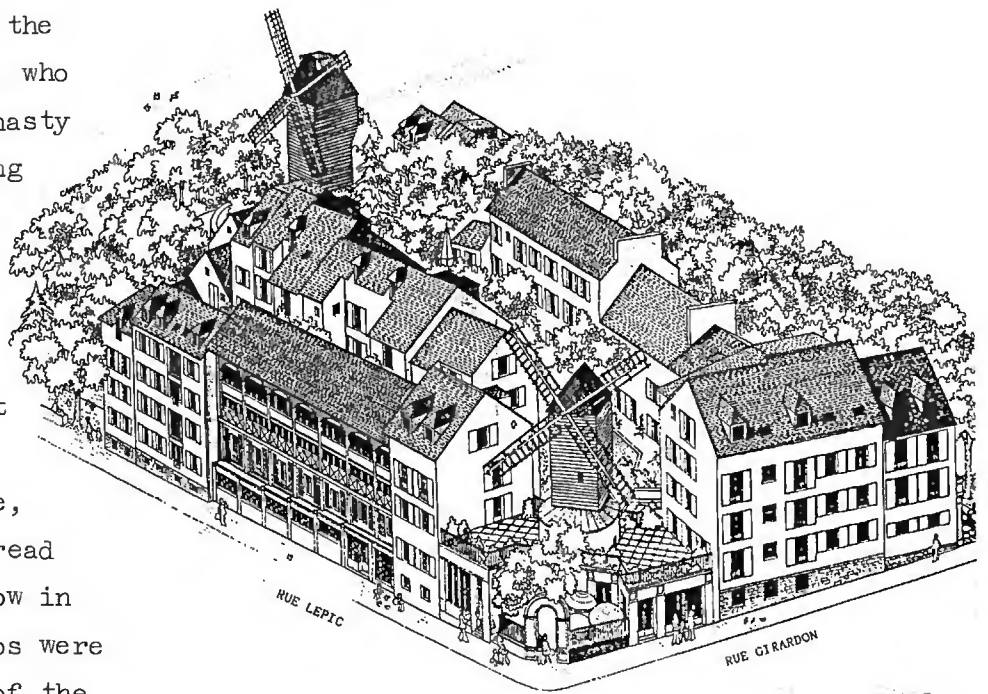
platforms are decorated with large reproductions of old (some very old) prints of scenes and events in that part of Paris, including three watermills set beneath one of the bridges and powered by the natural flow of the Seine. I photographed the windmill at the first station but at the second, unfortunately a lady tramp was sitting next to the watermill picture so I felt I couldn't photograph it, particularly as I would have needed flash.

In pursuit of more windmills, I went up to Montmartre partly to look again at the two restored post mills up there, the sole survivors of the ten or more mills that once stood on this northern Paris hill. The Radet Mill is the more conspicuous (at the corner of Rue Lepic and Rue Girardon) although both it and the Blutefin Mill are features in the expensive apartment development known as 'Le Moulin de la Galette', completed just over ten years ago and which I first visited shortly before the project was finished. Chris Gibbings of TIMS (who has lived in France for many years and with whom I have been in molinological correspondence for the past ten) told me that Le Radet Mill - or at least its trestle and its body framework - was moved to Montmartre in 1636 from its former site near what is now the Place de l'Opéra and that it was moved at least three times whilst in Montmartre. In its latter days after 1870, it was the centrepiece of the bar-cabaret run by the Debray family who had been millers in Montmartre for over 350 years. The mill was dismantled in 1976 and the pieces were stored until its reconstruction on more-or-less its last site in 1979. It last worked with Berton sails but these were replaced by tapering dummy sails during its cabaret days. When it was reconstructed in 1979 it was given very flimsy common sails that soon began to sag, and by 1985 the uppermost sail had broken off about one metre from its base. This was repaired but all four sails still sag.

The larger and better preserved Blutefin Mill was (Chris Gibbings told me) originally built (on more or less its present site) in 1295, and was rebuilt - and probably enlarged - in 1621 and by 1640 a Debray was the miller. In the 1840's it was fitted with Berton sails. Some time after 1870 this mill too became part of the Galette mini leisure park run by the Debrays and its Berton sails were replaced by dummy parallel-sided common sails. Worse still, the roof was altered to provide a railed viewing platform. Authentic Berton sails were fitted as part of the mill's restoration in 1979 but the roof gallery has been retained. The artist's impression of the completed development shows, incorrectly, parallel-sided common sails (see p.3). The interior of this mill still retains the original Berton sail-control gearing. This only used small spur gears, which could not prevent the sail-boards being blown partly open by a stiff wind blowing in the right direction. Roy Berry's article (Newsletter No.49) illustrates a later version in which a small transverse shaft with a worm-and-pinion gear protected the sail-boards from this perverse wind effect.

The main purpose of this particular visit to Montmartre was to seek out the

model of a post mill on the tomb of the last miller, who came to a particularly nasty end (not due to a milling accident). I had read a year or so previously that the Rue des Trois Frères was named after the last three millers at the Blutefin mill. This time, in a different book, I read the grisly account of how in 1813, when Russian troops were besieging Paris in one of the Anti-Napoleonic Alliance



Montmartre: a developer's view

campaigns, a truce was being negotiated when a fourth brother (the other three having lost their lives during the preceding fighting) fired a cannon from near his mill. A Russian officer came up and demanded to know who had fired the shot, whereupon the surviving brother killed the officer on the spot - wishing thus to avenge the deaths of his three brothers. Other Russians immediately seized the brother, slew him, chopped his body up into four pieces (with his head as a fifth, I imagine) and suspended a quarter from each sail of the mill. In the evening, his mother took down the pieces and had them decently buried in the little cemetery beside the church of St. Pierre, behind the basilica of Sacre Coeur. His tomb is still there, surmounted by a fine metal model (about 300mm high) of a mill - probably the Radet or Blutefin. Unfortunately the cemetery is locked and is only open one day each year (1st November) and I had to content myself with a shot taken through one of the openings in the decorative work incorporated in the metal gate.

Another Paris cemetery I visited was the big one at Montparnasse, because Chris Gibbings had told me about an old mill tower in that cemetery. He had actually written to the mayor of Paris (M. Chirac) about the neglected state of the disused tower! Chris received from M. Chirac's office a letter saying that a clean-up operation would be undertaken. In due course the ivy was cut away from the tower, the stonework cleaned and restored, and the tower now stands clean and clear in a grassed area among the tombstones to the great and famous. According to Chris, this mill was built in about 1650 and, like a second surviving near-Parisian mill built at about the same time (see below), it has its vertical wall stepped on the outside in order to achieve the greater thickness needed towards its base. It has no sails or other machinery and now has a flattish conical cap.

I later took the Metro out to the south-eastern suburb of Ivry to have another look at the restored stone tower mill there, complete with sails and a steep shingled conical cap. This mill had been bodily moved 30 metres or so on rails in 1976 because it was in the way of a large public housing development scheme. The tower, like the one in the Montparnasse cemetery, has its vertical exterior wall stepped. In its new position it is sitting over a disused limestone mine and the gallery beneath was filled with concrete before the operation to move the tower. The tower had been an empty ruin with missing stonework when it was moved. I visited it, inside and out, in its beautifully restored state, when we attended the TIMS Symposium in 1982. At that time it had no machinery below the windshaft and brakewheel but the intention was to reconstruct the drive for at least one set of stones. I was not able to see the interior on this recent occasion but I understand that this restoration work has now been at least partly achieved.

Unfortunately I did not have sufficient time to go further out to the south-eastern suburb of Saint Maurice to see what progress had been made in the restoration of the huge five-storey Moulin de la Chaussée watermill, in the care of the 'French Federation of Friends of Mills' (FFAM). This mill was once a 'hanging mill' (moulin pendant) whose huge wheel could be raised and lowered to match the changing levels of the river - here the Marne, not the Seine. In 1898, to increase the power of the mill a larger wheel was installed, with a fixed mounting, and a steam engine was added as an alternative power source. At that time the wheel had a diameter of 8m. and a width of 4m.. In 1902 the mill was severely damaged by fire. It was rebuilt as a roller mill, and in the 1930's the steam engine was replaced first by a gas engine and then by a diesel engine. The mill continued to work until 1972, when it was compulsorily acquired by the Public Authority and was due to be demolished as part of the clearance and consolidation works in preparation for the feeder roads to a new autoroute.

Demolition work actually began but was halted after one of the contractor's men was killed in a fall. This pause gave space for the future of the mill to be reconsidered, and in 1980 the FFAM itself acquired the mill. The site around the mill has been cleaned up and the structure of the mill has been at least partly restored. FFAM has ambitious plans for fuller restoration and use of the building as its main offices, a museum and conference centre, but financial constraints have at least delayed realisation of these aspirations. Participants in the 1982 TIMS Symposium visited this mill and saw - among other things - an impressive demonstration of fitting red-hot iron bands to the assembled segments of a burr stone.

In GENEVA, my next destination, at the library of the National Archive I was most impressed by the speed with which their computerised index displayed the titles of three or four volumes containing articles or reports on watermills, in response to the keyed interrogation by the charming librarian on duty at the time.

(When I interrogated the computerised index at the Science Museum library in London recently - not about anything milly - I found the system utterly useless for what I was looking for.) I spent a very enjoyable hour reading about the score or so of small watermills that were once clustered across the Rhône as it thunders out of Geneva's huge lake. These mills served many purposes besides grain milling, such as paper-making and driving forge bellows and hammers.

From Geneva I went on to GRENOBLE. There I visited the Musée Dauphinois in an old monastery to look at a special exhibition about hydro-electricity - which had been 'invented' in a converted watermill in the Isère valley more than a century ago (1869) and had been christened 'White Coal' (la Houille Blanche). I was naturally very pleased to see at the start of the display a large wooden horizontal waterwheel taken from an old corn mill - not the wheel used to generate the first hydro-electricity, but to illustrate how hydro-power had first been generated. The first hydro-electric power station in this country was also a converted watermill - at Godalming in Surrey, in 1881.

My fourth and last destination was LUXEMBOURG, and that was the one place where I did not have the good fortune to see anything milly, but to be fair to that impressively-sited city, I did not have time to make any enquiries about what might still exist in the surrounding countryside. From there I returned by train to Paris before flying back to London. To make up for Luxembourg's molinological emptiness I had a quite unexpected milly experience on the final train journey. I had with me a map of France which, unlike Michelin maps, showed the railways. I noticed that my route along the Marne valley would pass La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, once a major centre for the quarrying and fabrication of French burrs. When I judged that we were approaching La Ferté, I took my camera out, hoping to catch the station sign as we passed. To my delight we actually stopped at La Ferté but not knowing if it was a 'real' stop I did not get out but photographed the platform sign as we glided past on leaving the station. I am glad to say that my shot has come out well.

All in all, it was a very satisfactory winter molinological expedition, with some business meetings fitted in as well!

## LETTERS

Patricia & Dick Parr of Herne Bay, Kent write:

'Though it has taken us several seasons, we have now almost completed in locating and photographing the entire windmills recorded in Suffolk. This we would not have been able to achieve if it had not been for the contemporary surveys carried out by such people as Peter Dolman, Arthur Smith, etc.. In fact we carried Peter's 'Windmills in Suffolk' like a well-loved bible, so enabling us to achieve so much.

Therefore we are down to trying to locate the very minor bits and pieces of the remaining mills, and locating the remaining watermills, although we have visited quite a number already.

Some of the mills that we discovered are now gradually disappearing or otherwise gone for ever. For instance last September we found the once large Occold smock mill base (Grid Ref.156705) that back in 1971 had a conical roof, situated only

yards from the front door of Mill Cottage. The new owner told us that the mill base accidentally caught fire a couple of years ago, so they are now having to dismantle the base because it has become unsafe and in danger of falling down. He is still hoping he can do something with what remains of the base. He has just started renovating the entire Mill Cottage which may include the old out-buildings as well.

The post mill roundhouse at Brome (Grid Ref.135761) was dismantled by the son of the previous owner and on the site now stands a modern house appropriately named 'Mill House'.

I understand that Somerleyton has now gone?

At All Saints South Elmham (Grid Ref.344828) we were informed by the Mill Farm owner that the tower mill base had become very unsafe so it was pulled down to make way for a new farm building.

We had some difficulty in locating the whereabouts of the old post mill of Creeting St. Mary, of which the body was brought down to Needham Market about a hundred years ago. It stands on a farm, at Grid Ref.091553, where it was used for many years as a dovecote. We eventually located it standing behind the now house-converted barn. Unfortunately it is now in a very ruinous state and is leaning over like the Tower of Pisa. It is now being used by the owner to hanker his washing line to. What a come-down for a registered listed building!

A couple of years back we visited Shimpling Street (Grid Ref.870529). This unusual shaped smock mill base was being dismantled by the owner, but it was stopped when the local people stepped in before he had completely dismantled the entire mill. A court action was in process at the time, but so far we haven't heard the outcome. If anyone in the S.M.G. lives close to this mill, we would be most grateful for any information on what will happen to it.

When we went to locate the old tower mill base at Haverhill (Grid Ref.671452), we were surprised to find that it has now been incorporated into a modern bungalow.'

Don Porter of Charlbury, Oxfordshire writes:

'In a recent CPRE Bulletin somebody called Peter Hodgson of Corpus Christi College wrote warning members of the possible effects of 'wind farms'. He said that about 6,000 turbines spread over an area of 200 square miles would be needed to provide the output of one normal power station. He quotes figures for the amount of land (in square metres this time) needed to produce one megawatt:

Nuclear power station	630
Oil power station	870
Gas power station	1,500
Coal power station	2,400
Solar power plant	100,000
Hydro-electric power sta.	265,000
Wind turbines	1,700,000 (0.7 sq. miles approx.)

I don't know the original source or the margins of error but the figures do not surprise me. I remember talking once to a 'Safe Energy Group' whose members seemed to think that if we build a windmill (unspecified) on our redundant playingfield we could all cut off our present electricity supplies! They were amazed when I tried to explain how much physical energy a modern household's consumption represents (although I expect that quite a few of them had 'O' Level Physics).'

## **STEAM MILLS IN SUFFOLK (2)** PETER DOLMAN

### Independent steam mills adjacent to wind or watermills

Many mills, especially windmills, had steam mills in separate buildings; I will list those of greater size than usual or those of note for other reasons.

Alpheton (878492) Converted from maltings next to windmill c.1869, worked until 1956. In 1914 a waterwheel was added to drive some machinery, but steam was main power (later diesel).



Above: Barningham Below: Chilton Street, Clare



Barningham (969769) Another of the early mills; this was running in 1826, when it was converted from a malting. It worked with two post mills until 1850's, then alone until 1930's. Subsequently refitted as feed mill - still working. The original steam engine is preserved in the U.S.A..

Bury St. Edmunds West Mill (842631) Built 1846 to assist post mill. Still working 1930's; now disused, with permission for house-conversion.

Buxhall (996577) Working by 1857 (i.e. before present tower mill was built). Probably disused as mill after World War One. A good brick mill (now converted?).

Chelmondiston (200374) Built 1892 by post mill; worked until 1930's (or later). Converted to flats.

Clare Chilton Street (757469) Built in 1860's with nearby tower mill; ceased work World War One and now used as farm building.

Cowlinge (714537) Stood by smock mill; mid 19th century date. Still working in 1930's. Present condition unknown.

Elmsett (048465) Built next to post mill 1869. Still working as feed mill.

Framlingham Victoria Mill (283630) Set up next to tower mill before 1883; ceased 1929. Some buildings remain, converted.

Framsden (192598) Late 19th century timber mill next to post mill. Still stands, although gutted.

Gedding (957576) Built 1905 near post mill; worked until 1930's or later. Now disused.

Gislingham (067720) Built 1854 next to tower mill; worked until early 1930's. Still standing (?).

Gorleston Cobholm Mills (517074) Huge steam mill attached to equally huge tower mill (Green Cap Mill) in late 19th century; burnt out 1898 but rebuilt. Now gone.

Great Ashfield (990664) Built 1893 with Turner roller machinery. Probably pulled down before 1920. Worked with post mill.

Great Barton (881678) Built by 1883 to work with post mill; still standing.

Hartest (825520) Steam mill dated 1866 but chimney dated 1854 so presumably rebuilt. Stood next to post mill and worked until 1920's. Present condition unknown.

Haverhill (674462) Small steam mill run in conjunction with the annular sail mill. Demolished in 1970's.

Kelsale (382647) Built 1856 next to tower mill. Ceased work in 1930's. Rebuilt as house in 1980's.

Knodishall (433610) In existence by 1885; worked with post mill. Pulled down many years.

Laxfield (294727) In existence by 1883; worked with smock mill. Roller mills by 1908; still working as feed mill in 1970's. Present condition unknown.

Mendlesham (101657) Dated 1867; worked with, and after, post mill. Still going in 1930's. Demolished by 1970's.

Nayland (975343) Another contender for the first steam mill in Suffolk, this being built in 1821 next to the larger of the two watermills. It was originally a separate mill but was linked to the watermill. All the mills folded up by the 1890's as a result of bankruptcy and the steam mill has now gone, apart from parts of what was probably the boiler house.

Norton (955671) Dated 1854, an attractive brick mill once run with a post mill. Fitted with oil engine and machinery from Botesdale in 1936, it is now converted to a house.

Peasenhall (351694) Smock mill, moved from Cransford in 1881 and converted to steam mill next to post mill. Still standing, but original machinery now gone.



Roller mills, Rattlesden



Pettaugh (167595) Very large steam roller mills built 1899 next to post mill; ultimately led to destruction of windmill through extensions. Still working (?) as feed mill.

Rattlesden (968583) Originally the smock mill was converted into a roller mill c.1890 but about 1905 a major rebuild in brick resulted in the present untidy collection of buildings. Worked until 1960's; now disused although most machinery is still in situ.

Rushmere St. Andrew (202458) Working by 1883 next to smock mill; ceased work c.1930; pulled down in 1970's.

Sweffling (349640) Timber mill with high chimney, next to two post mills. In existence by 1883; ceased work before Great War. In 1970's was in ruins; present condition unknown.

Swilland (190539) Small roller mill built next to post mill in mid 1890's. Ceased work in 1930's (?). Now used as pottery workshop.

Trimley St. Martin (273380) In existence by 1860, worked with post mill until Great War. Pulled down many years.

Wickham Market (306566) Built 1868 using materials (and gear?) from tower mill next to watermill. Refitted 1893 as roller mill by Whitmore & Binyon. Ceased work and gutted 1960; now a store and shop. The engine and one roller mill are now at Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket. Some small gear survived in steam mill such as centrifugals.

Wortham 1. Ling Mill (091796) Working by 1883, next to post mill; rollers installed by 1900 (Tattersall). Still working in late 1930's but now pulled down apart from brick engine house.

2. Long Green (080768) Also working by 1883, next to smock mill; ceased work in late 1930's and pulled down in 1948.

Wrentham (499823) Standing by 1861 next to tower mill. Rollers installed by 1912 and worked until 1970's or later, latterly as feed mill. Present condition unknown.

#### Non-trading farm or estate mills

There were many of these, probably hundreds by the 1920's and their spread led to the demise of most windmills by the 1930's and watermills by the 1950's. Many were built into existing farm buildings and are virtually impossible to detect, only coming to light by chance visit. The following list is of the only ones I know of; further information would be welcomed. The earlier ones were either driven by



Pettaugh



Swilland

stationary or portable steam engines; later oil engines or tractors were the usual power plant.

Knettishall Hall Farm (966805) Large brick mill cum barn with lucam. Martin Watts' book 'Corn Milling' (Shire) has a good interior picture of it in the 1930's.

Lackford (794700) Standing by 1882; demolished late 1980's.

Redgrave Hall Farm (060780) Marked on 1905 O.S. as 'Corn mill and sawmill'. Present condition unknown.

Shimpling Rowhedge Farm (869496) Late 19th century farm mill with one pair hurst, house-converted in 1970's. The machinery is now in store at Thelnetham mill.

Westley Hall Farm (823644) Large farm mill with four pairs of stones. Guttled in 1980's for house conversion. Much gear was salvaged for use elsewhere.

Wilby Wilby Hall (261723) As seen by S.M.G. at our A.G.M. in 1991. Hornsby oil engine driving one pair hurst, dating from c.1900 and used until c.1953.

Witnesham Nelson Farm (178536) Two pair hurst in barn, driven by 1930's Ruston diesel engine. Was derelict with hurst outside in early 1980's, engine in situ; present state unknown.

#### Combined mills

This article would not be complete without mention of wind and watermills which had auxiliary steam power; by the turn of the century probably 90% of working mills had steam power, either to a separate hurst frame or by gearing to the main machinery. To list all would be futile, but I will note a few of the special cases that I know of.

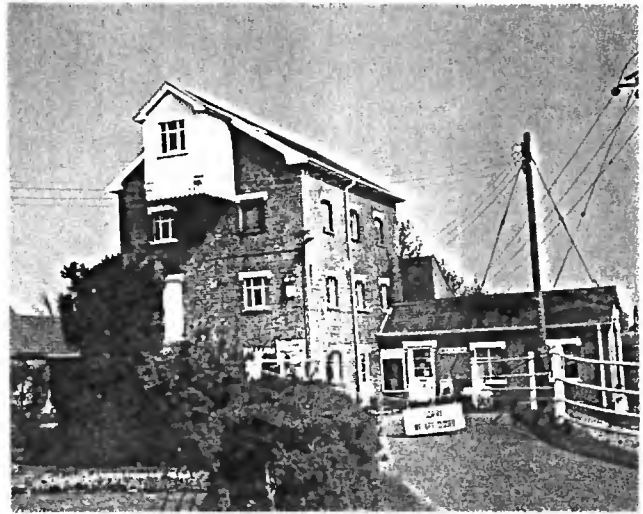
Stratford St. Mary (042341) Large watermill with integral steam engine. Built in 1826 and ceased work in 1890's due to bankruptcy (as at Nayland). Demolished in December 1947.

Sudbury Highfield Mill (866429) Large smock mill by William Bear, built in 1855, probably with integral steam power from the first. The engine was in one 'wing', the boiler in another, both built onto the three-storey base. The 16 h.p. Ransomes horizontal engine with Cornish boiler worked two of the four pairs of stones in the windmill. The mill was pulled down in about 1920 and the base is a house.

Bardwell (935743) Watermill had a fixed steam engine by 1840, coupled to the waterwheel and so proud of it was the owner that his 1844 directory entry lists him at the 'Steam Mill'. Funnily enough, after 1883, only water power is listed! No trace of the steam plant can be found now.

Capel St. Mary (083385) Watermill which in 1845 had an 8 h.p. engine driving one pair of stones but also could be attached to the waterwheel to help out in drought.

Ipswich Handford Oil Mill (157446) In 1847 steam power was connected to the waterwheel (which was 19ft 8ins in diameter by 14ft wide). Prior to this a governor had been used to regulate the waterwheel 'shut'.



Wickham Market

(Continued on p.12)

# CROSSWORD Compiled by MARK BARNARD

Below is the 1992 S.M.G. crossword competition. The first prize is a framed print of a watermill (believed to be Stratford St. Mary) by Constable. Second prize is a £10 book token.

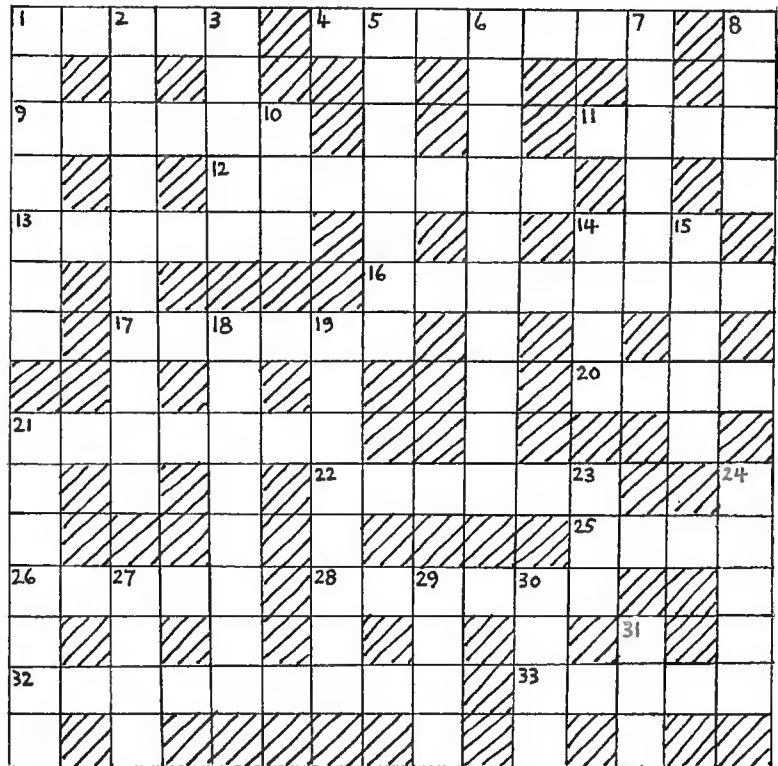
As is the custom, all clues are in some way relevant to mills and milling, with nothing very difficult or obscure (in fact easier than usual this year??). To enter, please complete the copy of the puzzle at the end of this newsletter and post it to arrive by first post of Friday May 15th 1992. The draw will be made at our public meeting at Bury St. Edmunds on May 15th. As I've said in the past, you have an excellent chance of winning so give it a go!

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Large watermill on Suffolk Stour (5)
4. The name of Margate's windmill (7)
9. Converted mill on the River Brett (6)
11. See 14. Down
12. Former large watermill on Suffolk Stour (7)
13. He invented a type of sail (6)
14. To put cloth on the sails (3)
16. Part of the striking gear (4,4)
17. They drive stones from above (6)
20. Grain is fed into them (4)
21. Essex windmill (7)
22. Windmill area of the North-West (6)
25. Norfolk base of defunct millwrights Smithdales (4)
26. See 3. Down
28. See 18. Down
32. Sussex post mill (9)
33. Essential part of a sack hoist (5)

## CLUES DOWN

1. Norfolk corn windmill (7)
2. Pumping mill on Suffolk coastal marshes (6,4)
3. (& 26. Across) Every old corn mill has one! (5,5)
5. Every new corn mill has them! (7)
6. Machine with tiers of flat sieves (4,6)
7. Another part of the striking gear (6)
8. Famous windpump manufacturer (4)
10. River on which Narborough watermill stands (3)



14. (& 11. Across) Main component of post mill frame (4,4)
15. Not post or smock (5)
18. (& 28. Across) Essex windmill (8,6)
19. Surrey windmill (8)
21. Textile mill in Conwy valley, visited on 1991 S.P.A.B. tour (7)
23. Type of governor (3)
24. Suffolk watermill river (5)
27. Raw material for 14. Down? (4)
29. A variety of 31. Down (4)
30. Important windmill bearing (4)
31. Could be ogee or boat-shaped (3)

Kersey (013444) Early 19th century (?) watermill with three pairs of stones on a lineshaft hurst with a steam mill built onto the back c.1882(?) with three pairs on a parallel hurst driven direct by horizontal engine. Much of this remains (apart from the engine itself).

## **A.G.M. REPORT**

The comments regarding Bardwell mill contained in the report of the 1991 Annual General Meeting in the last newsletter should not have been minuted and no longer form part of the record of the meeting. We apologize for publishing these comments in the newsletter.

## **NEWS**

### COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Chris Wilson has recently left the S.M.G. Committee due to pressure of family commitments. He has served for several years and has offered to help in an advisory capacity if needed. The Committee is sorry to lose him and thanks him for his help over the years. He will continue to support the Group's work as a member and we wish him well for the future.

Chris's resignation now means we have two Committee vacancies. In addition, Brian Flint has indicated he wishes to step down as treasurer at the next A.G.M., although he is willing to remain as a member of the Committee. We therefore need either a) two ordinary Committee members (if one of the existing Committee members takes over from Brian); or b) one ordinary member and one treasurer.

S.M.G. has a membership of around 150. The Committee (and certainly the officers!) have remained virtually the same for many years so how about some new faces coming forward? The Committee meets about five or six times a year, in members' homes, and the formal business is usually subservient to a good natter about mills! We arrange events, deal with situations such as planning applications needing response and discuss ways to influence or help the county's mills. The treasurer's job is not very onerous, being largely a regular record-keeping task. We operate a simple income and expenditure system; the accounts are abstracted from these records and typed up - help with this can be given if necessary. Simple numeracy skills and a methodical approach are all that are required so how about it, someone? Please let me know if you would like to help us. (Peter Dolman)

### EYE ROUNDHOUSE UNDER THREAT

A listed building application has been made to Mid Suffolk District Council by Persimmon Homes to lower the walls of the Eye post mill roundhouse to 900mm. and cap them in engineering brick, and to fill and grass the interior. This would mean the loss of a substantial part of the walls which, although in need of repair, are easily capable of being made sound. As more and more minor mill remains get swept away or reduced to a ring of bricks, it would be sad if a listed one went the same way. S.M.G. has objected and suggested a possible use for the building if the developers could be constructive rather than destructive and give it a new roof. (M.B.)

### WORK AT TIDE MILL

Last autumn the waterwheel at Woodbridge tide mill received a new set of elm paddles as the old ones, dating from when the wheel was renewed in the mid 1970's, had become very spongy. This deterioration was probably caused by the long wet - dry cycles which the wheel had to endure



before the new pond was built, after which it was able to be turned more often. The recent work, which was carried out by Chris Olley, also included renewal of 16 of the oak starts. From now on visitors will be able to see the wheel more easily as a walkway has been built beside the wheelhouse (see photo above). This leads to a viewing door on the river side which can be slid open when the mill is open to the public. The mill was also re-painted late last year, and with Buttrum's Mill also resplendent after redecoration, Woodbridge can be justly proud of its mills. (M.B.)

### PROGRESS AT THORINGTON STREET WATERMILL

Through the winter we have been working on the hurst frame. One post which had been hanging from the floor beam it should have been propping up has had a new end scarfed on and is once again bearing weight. The beam supporting one end of the main bridgetree which had broken, been plated, broken again and been propped up has also been repaired. This work is not quite finished and when it is, the floor adjacent to it will be rebuilt. We have also begun work on the other defective post, which is currently propped up by a jack, awaiting completion of the repair! Support has dwindled during the winter so the pace of work has slowed. Further week-ends will be held on March 7th-8th, April 4th-5th and May 2nd-3rd. Please come along and help if you can; work can continue on several fronts with the aim of getting the mill going again by the summer (when painting will resume!). (P.D.)

### LEAD-BASED PAINT

At the end of February 1992 regulations will come into force which will ban the use of lead paint, traditionally used for millwork. One of the few exceptions will be its use on Grade I and II\* listed buildings, provided prior application is made to English Heritage. This is somewhat stricter than the concession which was previously reported, which allowed its use on all listed buildings. Quite how the restriction will work in practice remains to be seen. (M.B.)

### STANSFIELD MILL LISTED

The tower mill at Stansfield was listed Grade II by the Department of the Environment

just before Christmas. The brick tower (photograph opposite) is dated 1840 and is probably a product of the Sudbury millwright William Bear. The interior is very derelict but a good deal of the machinery survives, including a bolter, the last one in a Suffolk windmill. The mill and nearby house have recently changed hands, and it will be interesting to see what plans the new owner has for the mill. (M.B.)



## **EVENTS:**

S.M.G. PUBLIC MEETING: SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22nd at 7.30pm. at TALK ELECTRIC CENTRE, CONSTANTINE ROAD, IPSWICH

The theme for this year's February meeting is mills on film and the highlight will be the first public showing of Viv Codd's 8mm film on the restoration of Thelnetham windmill, which runs for 30 minutes. Other films we plan to show include 'And Now They Rest', made on 16mm in the 1930's, and Alan Willmott's 'Turn to the Wind', also 16mm. There will be shorter films on Pakenham watermill and Herringfleet, plus (we hope) a few snips from the East Anglia Film Archive. Our last film evening back in 1981 proved very popular so we hope for another good turnout.

The Talk Electric Centre is at the junction of Constantine Road and West End Road, behind Ipswich Town F.C.'s ground. There is a free car park adjacent.

HERRINGFLEET MARSH MILL OPEN DAY: NATIONAL MILLS DAY, SUNDAY MAY 10th.

As in past years S.M.G. will be opening Herringfleet mill to the public on National Mills Day, when the mill be be running (wind permitting). Another two or three open days at Herringfleet will be held in the course of the summer.

S.M.G. PUBLIC MEETING: FRIDAY MAY 15th at 7.30pm. at CENTRAL LIBRARY, OFF ST. ANDREWS STREET NORTH, BURY ST. EDMUNDS

It will be fitting to hold a public meeting in the west of the county as this is where much of our practical work has taken place - Drinkstone, Bardwell windmill, Pakenham watermill, Stanton and Thelnetham come readily to mind. Like the Lowestoft meeting in 1988 we aim to inform and to recruit (not to mention entertain!). As well as short talks with slides there will be a showing of the Thelnetham film. If time permits we will try to set up a small display in the library for a week or two prior to the meeting.

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