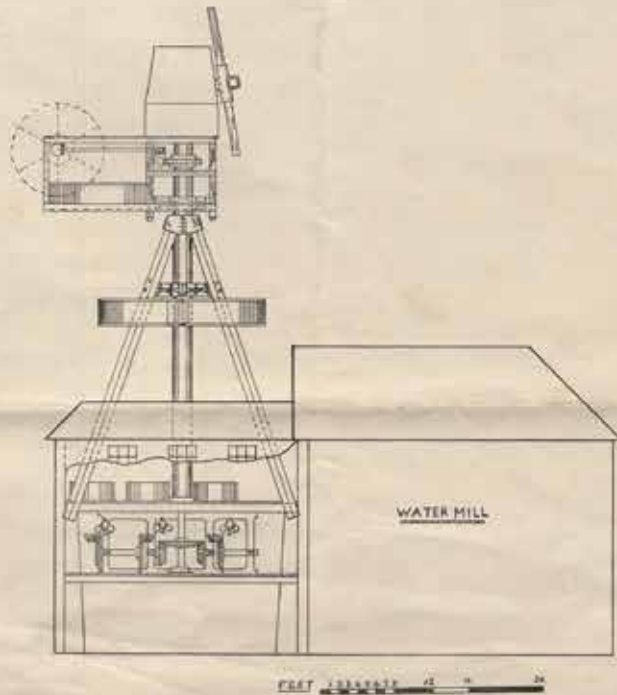


The Rex Wailes Collection

The Rex Wailes Collection: His published work; articles on milling



by Mildred Cookson, The Mills Archive Trust, UK

As we start to explore this amazing collection of photographs, drawings and documents, I am faced with what to describe first. We know Rex Wailes was an accomplished engineer and prolific writer, but I hadn't realised how much he had contributed to Milling, the precursor of Milling and Grain. So this seems an appropriate introduction to the series of snapshots I am preparing for the coming months.

Rex travelled the length and breadth of the UK as well as many other countries recording, photographing and talking to mill owners. His visits included two trips across the Atlantic to the US by ship. He also visited the Netherlands, Finland, France, Spain, Portugal and Barbados to name a few. All of these will be

featured in future issues of Milling & Grain.

I have found several articles in Milling that Rex wrote in 1938, 1939 and again in the 1950s. In April 1938 he wrote about mills in various counties. In Sussex he describes one unusual "ancient and surviving stalwart", termed a hollow post mill, standing on the roof of a building attached to a water mill. It had been built for paper making and then converted to a flour mill.

Rex wrote, "The mill was built in 1868. There were four patent sails and a fantail, the drive was taken down by a seven-inch diameter upright shaft, through a hollow post two feet in diameter and made of wrought iron plates to three pairs of stones carried on a cast iron hurst frame which also supports the post below the stone floor. The four pine quarter bars are fitted at the top into wrought iron caps riveted into the post and rest on triangular piers integral with the building."

An article entitled "Windmill Notes" from June 1938 starts with the words, "It is seldom that a derelict mill is put into working order. Suffolk may soon be enjoying the distinction at Stanton, Bury St Edmund where UK £160 is required to repair the post mill. Donations were received but it was only when Messrs Spillers Ltd, and Joseph Rank Ltd, announced that each would donate £25 a year for three years that the repairs went ahead".

My next article will mention some of the books he wrote. His most influential one is *The English Windmill* and I will feature his personal, annotated leather-bound copy now in the care of the Mills Archive.

