

# The Brown Family

Ten flour mills in a hundred years

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This is the history of the Brown family's involvement in flour milling between 1848 and 1954. During that time they owned, leased or operated ten mills, first in Waltham Abbey, then in Ware, Croydon, Wadesmill, Exeter, Bermondsey, Horley, St Albans, Cork, and lastly Vauxhall. Some were almost destroyed in fires and rebuilt with insurance money, others were sold following bankruptcies. The last were Charlie Brown's at Tower Bridge Flour Mills and the Royal Flour Mills on the Albert Embankment, but in 1954 the company was sold to Spillers, which promptly closed the mills.

The extent of the Brown family's flour milling has never been told before. It began with Frederick Shadrach Daniel Brown who built the Sun Flour Mills in Waltham Abbey in 1848 and was continued by four of his sons and one daughter through a critical period for the milling industry – when steam-powered stones were giving way to rollers and cheap grain was flooding in from North America. Only a few of their descendants have any memories of flour milling, so this short history is as much for them as for all those interested in how the industry changed over those years.

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6. Saundersons – Millwrights and Engineers of Louth, Lincolnshire (author Jon A. Sass)

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