

Mills on Field Visits

Keith Andrews

As promised in the last newsletter, here is a final selection of the mills that Ruth or I visited on the field visits organised by the University of Southampton Adult Education Department in conjunction with Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group (SUIAG) – as was, now Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society (HIAS). Again, the information about each mill is taken *as is* from the notes for the visit prepared by the leader Dr Edwin Course, so *remember that they relate to the situation at the date of the visit!*

**Herringfleet Windpump, near
Lowestoft (TM 466976) – August 1981**

A smock drainage mill, built in 1830 and worked until 1956.



**Kibworth Harcourt Windmill,
Leicestershire (SP 688945)
– August 1987**

An 18th century post mill, with roundhouse, worked until about 1916, and now restored.



Melin Howell, Anglesey (SH 352845) – August 1988

This is a commercial working watermill with an overshot wheel, in many ways comparable to Headley Mill.

KA: *It was closed by 2018.*



**Caudwell's Mill, Rowsley
(SK 256657) – August 1987**

Although an old site, the present 4-storey mill dates from 1874. Originally there were two breast shot wheels and eleven pairs of stones, but these have all been replaced: the stones by rollers in 1885 and 1914, and the wheels by turbines in 1887 and 1896. The mill is now run by a trust.



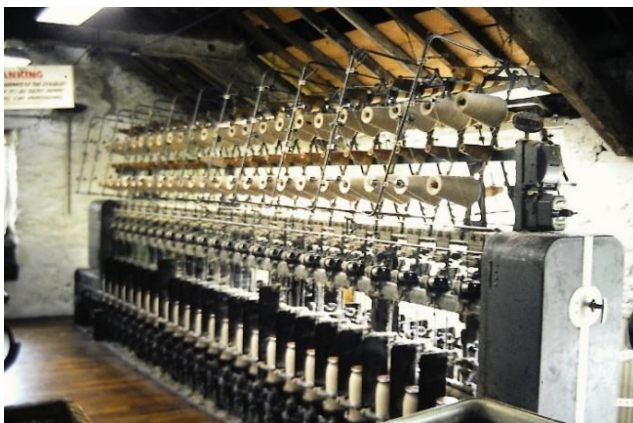
Photos taken on various dates. On the left below are the roller mills, and on the right are the plan sifters.



Bryncir Woollen Mill, near Porthmadog (SH 528424) – August 1988

Writing in 1968, Geraint Jenkins described this as a "flourishing mill turning out a great variety of woollen goods". He quotes a list from the current brochure, which included blankets, rugs, quilts, knitting wools, scarves, ties, and purses, all sold at the mill. Power was provided from a water turbine and mains electricity, and production by a staff of 15. Equipment included two carding sets, two spinning mules, and 6 looms. In 1987, most of this information was still valid. The mill was established in 1830 on the site of a 17th century fulling mill, and although the water wheel is disused, it is still to be seen. We shall be able to see most of the machinery working.

Photos taken in 1984.



Worsborough Mill, Barnsley (SE 3480934) – August 1984

The mill is a two-storey stone-built structure, parts of which date from the 17th century. It has recently been restored to working order. **KA:** See Ruth's article in newsletter 129.

Stanley Mills, Stonehouse (SO 813043) – May 1989

Unusual in being built of brick rather than stone. Rebuilt in 1812-13 as an early fireproof mill with cast iron columns down the centre of each floor. Originally powered by 5 waterwheels, a beam engine was added in 1820. In 1842 the mill was conveyed to Nathaniel Samuel Marling; the Marling family later ran both Stanley and Ebley Mills. The windows are a most attractive feature of the mill. A private siding ran from the nearby Midland railway from about 1891 until about 1930.

KA: HMG members visited Stanley Mills in May 2010; see newsletters 89 and 90.



Felin Geri, near Newcastle Emlyn (SN 300423) – August 1989

The centre piece is a 16th century water mill producing flour, operated by Michael Heycock. From this, semolina is obtained for use in the adjoining bakery for making shortbread and biscuits. Associated with the mill are inhabited pigsties; geese and other animals are also to be seen. Of special interest is a water-powered sawmill. *No photos available.*

KA: COFLEIN (*The online catalogue of archaeology, buildings, industrial and maritime heritage in Wales*, www.coflein.gov.uk/en) has more information and pictures.

Abermagwr Sawmill and Smithy, Ysyrwyth Valley (SN 666737) – August 1989

This estate sawmill, powered by an overshot wheel, is now disused and may be compared with the example seen at Felin Geri.



Felin Newydd, near Dolaucothi (SN 663385) – August 1989

This is a restored and working corn mill, with a mill on the site since about 1400. The present mill was built about 200 years ago, and has been little changed. Power is provided by an overshot composite waterwheel. Some of the graffiti reflects interesting connections with South America.



KA: COFLEIN says that the waterwheel is iron, 4ft diameter, and is labelled William Isaac, Carmarthen, and TMWD 1907. The mill is built into a bank; a wooden launder runs from the millpond which is fed by a 700m long leat. There is no information about the interesting sluice control mechanism that you can just about see in my rather poor photos.



Muncaster Mill, Cumbria (SD 096977) – August 1990

A restored bank mill owned by the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway, with a separate kiln house. The overshot wheel has a very long head race which acts as a mill pond. The present building is around 1700, and the machinery is mostly pre-1850. Flour is produced for sale.

KA: Alan Cullen and his wife visited Muncaster in 2019, when they were invited in to look around by the recently arrived owners, and took these photos.



Stott Park Bobbin Mill, Cumbria (SD 373882) – August 1990

Three of the principal uses for the extensive woodlands of this area were in the making of iron, of gunpowder, and of bobbins, mainly for the Lancashire cotton industry. The bobbin mill at Stott Park was built in 1835 and closed in 1971. It contains much of its 19th century equipment.

Photos taken in 2013.



Swaffham Prior Windmill, near Cambridge (TL 572643) – September 1990

This is a four storey tower mill of brick and clunch. It was built about 1860 by Fisons of Soham, and restoration of both the structure and the machinery is now virtually complete. Restoration of the structure of the vertically boarded smock mill on the opposite side of the road is underway.



Lode Mill at Anglesey Abbey, near Cambridge (TL 531626) – September 1990



Probably on a medieval site, the present watermill building belongs to the 18th century – it appeared in a sale catalogue of 1793. About 1900 it was adapted from grinding corn to grinding the cement produced in 6 kilns, linked by a railway line. The Bottisham Lode Cement & Brick Co was bankrupted in 1920, and the mill fell into disuse.

Lord Fairhaven purchased the abbey in 1926 and the mill in 1934. He demolished all traces of cement manufacture and restored the mill building. Between 1978 and 1982 members of the Cambridge Wind and Watermill Society restored the machinery to working order. This includes a breastshot wheel and four pairs of stones.

Fulwell Windmill, Sunderland (NZ 392595) – August 1991

Milling for the towns of the north east during their period of rapid expansion was by steam power, but a few wind or watermills have survived in the industrial area. There is a tower mill at Whitburn and a restored tower mill at Fulwell, now surrounded by housing. It was built of limestone in 1821, and the machinery is now undergoing restoration.



Stelling Minnis Windmill, Kent (TR 146466) – September 1991

A tarred smock mill, built in 1866, and worked until 1870, with a Ruston & Hornsby oil engine. It is restored to working order.

