

Corn Watermills of the National Trust in England

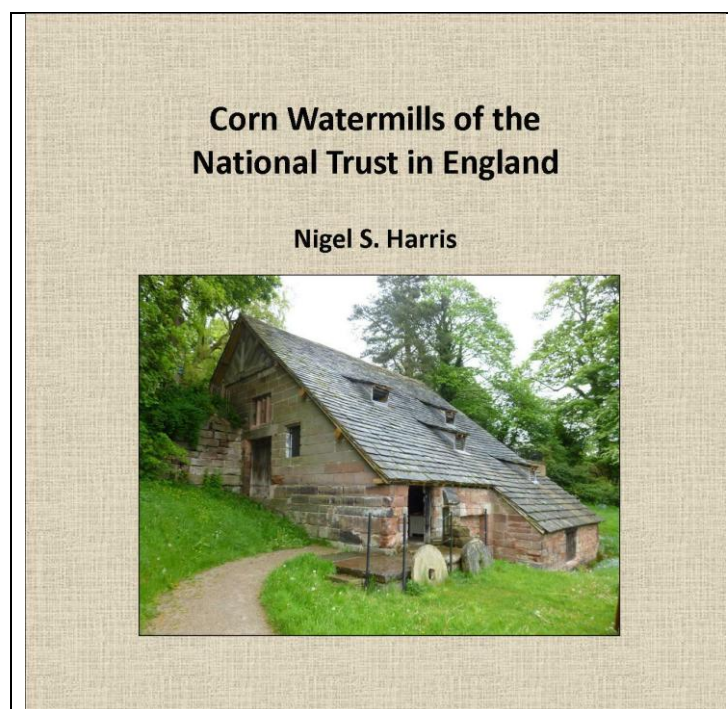
Review by Ruth Andrews

Nigel S Harris has published a new book about corn watermills owned by the National Trust. As you know, he is the author of several works on mills and milling, most recently *Watermills and Stoneground Flour Milling*, *Wheat Flour Milling, from Millstones to Rollers*, and *The Corn Mill Drawings of John Brandrick*.

Hardback 21cm x 21cm
75 pages with over 140 illustrations,
mostly in colour

Published by
Nigel S Harris (2019)
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Available from
Waterstones, eBay, and Amazon,
Price **£20**



The aim of the book is twofold: firstly it describes the basics of flour production using water power and millstones. It then goes on to give a brief introduction to each of the 19 English corn watermills in the care of the National Trust that are open on a regular basis.

The first section gives a well-balanced overview of features common to many mills, with excellent illustrations, many by John Brandrick, and relevant photos. It clearly demonstrates that Nigel has extensive knowledge of mills and mill machinery, which makes it much more informative than the older generation of books about mills, which I think tend to have too many picturesque views and not enough technical detail.

The second section devotes 2 or 3 pages to each of the 19 mills, again with attractive photos. Nigel has cunningly inserted some technical details, again assisted by John Brandrick's very informative illustrations, which makes the book much more interesting to someone like me, and would hopefully encourage casual visitors to the mills to look at them more carefully. There are notes on the history of each mill, and some details of the work done by the National Trust.

I have always been a bit confused about the differences between the various types of flour dressers, and this book manages to clarify these for me. There are detailed explanations of the operations of a bolter at Coleshill Mill, a bolting reel at Lode Mill, a wire machine at Shalford Mill, and a centrifugal dresser at Houghton Mill.

So all told this is a unique book that seems to have identified a gap in the market, and filled it in an informative and readable way.