

Visit to Botley Mills

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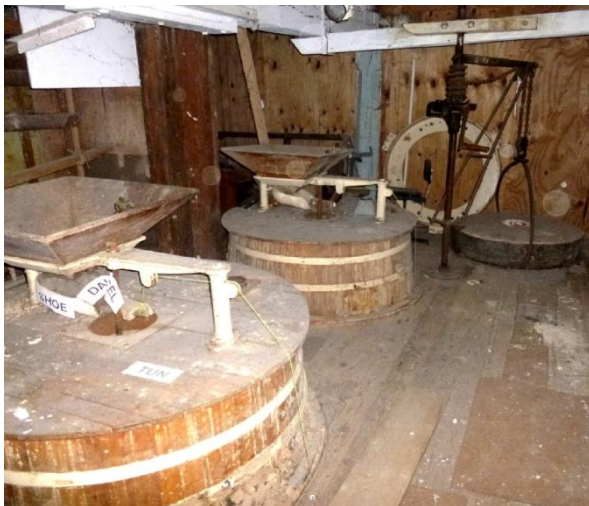
This report of mine was published in SPAB "Mill News" #148 in July 2016.

Botley Mills are situated at the end of the tidal reach of the River Hamble and have been in the Appleby family ownership since 1928. The Appleby family have been involved in milling for about 300 years, owning mills in the North of England before moving to the South. My thanks go to Patrick Appleby for giving me a guided tour of not only the millstone mill but also the separate roller mill building.



Prior to the Appleby ownership, the site was bought in 1838 by W & J Clarke and the mills traded under that name until 1921, when the Botley Flour Milling Company Limited was formed.

Sometime between 1900 and 1910 the waterwheels were replaced by a turbine built by Armfield of Ringwood. It drove two pairs of French burr stones which remained in full commercial operation until 1985. A single cylinder horizontal Ruston engine (*below right*) worked in conjunction with the turbine.



In 1892, a three sack roller plant by Messrs Turner was installed. In 1921 a new roller milling plant of approximately seven to eight sacks was installed in a former granary building using some new equipment and some of the old milling equipment. This eventually amounted to 8 roller mill stands, which are on the first floor of a four storey building and were powered by gas engines until 1948 when a twin Ruston Hornsby oil engine was installed. This ceased to

operate in 1971 when the crankshaft broke, thereafter the roller mill was electrically driven.

Commercial white flour production continued at Botley until December 1990 and stoneground flour until 1993, when for economic reasons production ceased.

Clockwise from top right: a Turner roller mill, one of 3 Turner double centrifugals (there are also 2 singles), a plansifter, a Robinson milling separator, one of 2 Turner purifiers



Among some of the associated equipment not illustrated was an Apex separator, a Carter disc separator, an Invincible brush machine, and also some Moir feeders. At the top of the building is a large multitubular dust collector.

The areas toured are not open to the public and plans to create a milling museum are on hold.