



# Mill Memories

*The Newsletter of the Friends of the Mills Archive*

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**Autumn 2017**

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*Joseph Rank ~ p. 20*

## Derek Stidder (1950-2017)

Elizabeth Trout



*At the Frank Gregory Online workshop at West Blatchington windmill, Sussex, 12 April 2010 (Derek in centre at back).*

I first met Derek soon after joining the Mills Archive as a volunteer in 2008. I remember him coming through the office door, a giant of a man standing 6ft 5in to my lowly 5ft 1in - but I never felt small. We usually met when he came to trustee meetings or at the Mills Archive garden parties. He was always a cheerful and engaging man, interested in a wide range of subjects apart from mills; we found plenty to talk about.

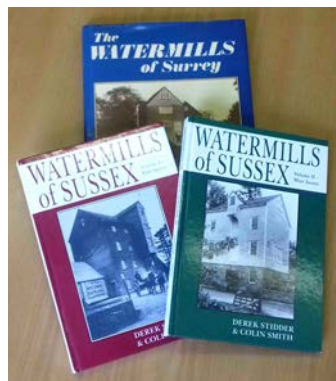
The first project I was given as a volunteer was to sort out about

eight large boxes of correspondence and research notes in Frank Gregory's collection as part of the Frank Gregory Online Project. To make sense of some of the material, I talked to members of the Sussex Mills Group who began to reminisce about Frank, his life and his work. I realised that Frank's story should be told and suggested that I write his biography.

Derek had known Frank for 35 years through a shared interest in Sussex watermills. A workshop was arranged at West Blatchington Windmill with those who had known Frank best. Derek eased my nerves, introduced me to people and encouraged everyone to chat about Frank; the stories flowed. My professional skills were soon better employed answering enquiries. Derek was always very helpful whenever I contacted him for information about mills in Surrey, Sussex and Scotland.

The two volumes on the watermills of Sussex and also his book on the watermills of Surrey are Derek's legacy. I frequently refer to them when answering enquiries as they contain a wealth of information about mills and millers. They are also a useful starting point for visitors researching watermills in Surrey and Sussex. He was in the process of writing a book on Dorset watermills when he died.

Derek will be greatly missed by everyone who had the privilege to have known him.





## Adopt a Collection Update

Liz Bartram

Since launching this scheme earlier in the year, three of our collections are no longer orphans! These are the Jon Sass Collection, the Gelder & Kitchen Collection and the E M Gardner Collection (which has been adopted twice). In addition to the generous support of the adopters, we have also received a donation to the Collections Fund and several new Friends.

**I would like to say thank you so much to our adopters, your support is already helping us care for our collections, and I hope that more adopters will join us.**

**There is still time for you to adopt a collection.** Collections can be adopted by more than one person, so you can still adopt those listed above.

I would recommend the **Victorian Milling Journals Collection**, which has not yet been adopted. This Collection contains thousands of issues of magazines and journals like *Milling*, *The Miller* and *The Northwestern Miller*. Personal accounts of the sudden changes society was experiencing through the roller milling revolution cover many of the pages. Amongst them is the fascinating story of how bread was brought to our table, overcoming wartime threats to food security. These journals are such a treasure trove; we hope to eventually digitise them.

In the meantime, we are working on making more of their information available so that people can enjoy them around the world.

This Collection has already inspired a number of blogs, which include:

- A mill murder mystery
- An account of how millers fared in Soviet Russia
- Five lesser-known figures of the Industrial Revolution
- Sustaining parliament with porridge!



**To find out more or to adopt a collection, visit our homepage and click “Adopt a Collection”.**

Alternatively, please contact me at [friends@millsarchive.org](mailto:friends@millsarchive.org)

**Please also get in touch if you would like to be added to our Adopt a Collection newsletter to receive monthly snippets from our collections.**





## New Heritage Partners/Corporate Friends

Liz Bartram

### Welcome, Wimbledon Windmill!

I am delighted to tell you that Wimbledon Windmill is the latest mill to join us as a Heritage Partner. Well known for the children's television series from some years back, *The Wombles* (of Wimbledon Common), the mill is open to the public. It has a museum devoted to the history of the English windmill, with excellent models showing all the different types.

The mill last worked in 1864, the machinery was then removed and the mill was turned into accommodation. Today however, there is a good display of how the mill would have worked. It recently had new sails and with the shutters in place this now allows the sails to turn and be controlled.

The mill is now run by a charitable trust and volunteers help in the shop and show visitors around. Find out more at [www.wimbledonwindmill.org.uk](http://www.wimbledonwindmill.org.uk)



### Burwell Museum Trust Extends its Support

Burwell Museum Trust, which runs Burwell Windmill in Cambridgeshire, has just become a Corporate Friend. The Trust had already been supporting us for several years as a Heritage Partner, but following a recent visit to the mill and a discussion of their plans for the future, they have decided to increase their support. There are exciting times ahead for the Mill, and a big event is on the horizon, so watch this space!

*Left: Liz visiting the mill, earlier this year.*



## Visitors to the Archive

Nathanael Hodge



*The London and South East Millers inspecting archival items in our exhibition.*

Recent months have seen several group visits to the Archive.

In September we were visited by the London and South East Millers. They were very interested to see some of our more recent acquisitions from our roller flour mill archive and library, including the Gelder and Kitchen drawings covered in the last issue and the recently catalogued material on the Cranfield Brothers of Ipswich (see p. 12). There was much reminiscing as individuals discussed their time working at some of the mills featured in the exhibition. We enjoyed

showing off some of our collections and getting to know new people in the modern milling industry. We hope this will be the beginning of a fruitful relationship with the society.

In October we welcomed visitors from the National Archives of Indonesia. They are making use of the same cataloguing software that we use, AtoM, and were visiting several institutions in the UK to learn more about their experiences. We enjoyed an interesting discussion, as well as some surprise presents from Indonesia.

*Right: With our guests outside Watlington House.*





## The Mill of Wealth

Nathanael Hodge

Over the millennia, mills have often featured in myth, fable and religious symbolism. One such tale is the story of 'Grotti', the mill of wealth from Norse mythology, retold here.

**F**rothi was king of Denmark, and the mightiest king in the north. He brought peace to all the northern lands - it was called Frothi's Peace, and while it lasted none were hurt or injured and there were no thieves or robbers, so that a gold ring could lie for weeks by the roadside without anyone taking it.

But Odin the king of gods had little love for peace, and so he plotted Frothi's ruin. One day a one-eyed stranger appeared at the king's court. He called himself Hengekjapt, and said he had brought a gift for Frothi - two mighty quern stones, which when ground together could bring forth whatever the grinder asked for. Hengekjapt asked nothing in return for his gift, and left without a word, and none knew that it was Odin who had been with them.



*A beacon warns of the approaching army in this engraving of Menia and Fenia from an 1871 book.*

Frothi was eager to try out the mill. They called it 'Grotti', the Grinder - but there was one problem. No one had the strength to turn such enormous millstones. So Frothi hurried to Sweden, to the court of King Fjolner. At the feast there he saw two slave girls - larger and stronger looking than any of the warriors of Denmark. He soon settled on a price with Fjolner, and the girls were brought to Denmark and made to grind at the mill. Their names were Fenia and Menia.

The king gave them no rest - day and night they ground the millstone, singing as they worked. "We grind out gold, and good fortune," they sang. "Frothi will sit on gold, and sleep on down, and wake up wealthy."

"But you'll get no sleep," said Frothi, "I won't let you rest longer than the length of a song, or than the time the cuckoo is silent in midsummer. I want all the gold the mill can



give me" So the slave girls ground on, still singing.

"You're a fool, Frothi," sang Fenia. "You bought us for our strength, but you never wondered where we came from, or asked after our kin. We're the daughters of the giants, born under the mountains, and these millstones wouldn't be here without us. When we were no more than nine winters grown, we used to play with great boulders underground, dislodging them from the rock and rolling them down hillsides. That's how these millstones were made. Then we went to Sweden, and became Valkyries, fighting in battle, shattering shields and splitting skulls. We overthrew kings and conquered lands. Now we're made to slave in the cold and dirt, toiling at your mill. I've had enough! Let the mill stand still!"

A cold wind was blowing through Frothi's hall. The song had sent nearly all Frothi's soldiers and servants to sleep, and the king's eyes were heavy as well.

Now Menia started to sing. "We're not done yet!" she sang. "The mill can't stand still till we've ground out for Frothi what he deserves. Grind out helmets and shields, grind spears and swords. Wake up Frothi! Wake up now, if you want to hear our song! I see fire burning, east of the castle! Battle is coming - an army marches! They'll burn down your hall - they'll take your gold and your mill of wealth. Push harder, sister!"



*Grotti is depicted as a Pompeian style mill in this painting by Carl Christian Peters (1822–1899).*

The giant girls ground on, and as they did came the sound of battle. From out of the sea an army had arisen to attack Frothi's hall. The fighting was fierce, and before the night was done Frothi and his men were all dead, slain by the sea-king, Mysing. Frothi's Peace was ended.

Mysing and his men filled their ships with booty, and set sail towards the Orkney Islands. Grotti and Fenia and Menia were with them.

"What does this mill grind?" said Mysing.

"Anything you wish," said Fenia.





*“Then grind salt,” said Mysing.*

*So they ground salt, till the ship was filled to overflowing. “Have we ground enough salt yet?” said Menia.*

*“Grind on!” said Mysing. So they ground on and on, and very soon the weight of salt was so great that the ship sank. In the place where it went down, in Pentland Firth, there is now a whirlpool called the Swelkie. It still turns the mill where it sits on the seabed, forever grinding out more and more salt. And that’s why seawater tastes salty.*



*The Orkney Islands seen from Pentland Firth. Picture by Roger McLassus CC-BY-SA-3.0, via Wikimedia Commons*

The myth of Frothi’s mill exists in several versions. In the earliest, the poem *Grottasongr*, the mill breaks apart at the end of Fenia and Menia’s song, and Frothi’s death is at the hands of a relative, in vengeance for his murder of his brother in order to seize the throne. This part of the story was later replaced by the myth explaining why the sea is salty, connected with the ‘Swelkie’ (Norse for ‘swallower’), a tidal race near the Orkneys.

The story gave rise to the term ‘Frothi’s flour’, a Norse kenning (metaphorical figure of speech) for gold.

One theory about the giant slave girls, born under the mountain and enslaved and set to turning the mill, sees them as personifications of mountain streams, enslaved by humans and given the job of turning millstones in watermills, but liable to break free and bring destruction.

For more information see *The Poetic Edda*, trans. L Hollander (1962, University of Texas Press), p 153.





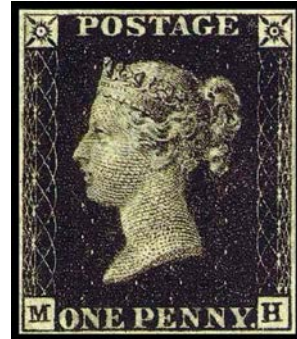
# Mill Stamps

Mildred Cookson

## A Brief History of Stamps

Great Britain issued the world's first adhesive postage stamp, resulting from reforms by Rowland Hill to simplify and reduce postage costs. The Penny Black came into use on 6 May, 1840. The design showing Queen Victoria, without country name, laid the foundations for British stamps.

From then on, British stamps, known as definitives, were issued with a portrait - often in profile or semi-profile - of the reigning sovereign.



The initial portrait of Queen Elizabeth II was by the photographer Dorothy Wilding, but in 1967 a portrait by Arnold Machin was adopted, the resulting design, still used today, is regarded as a classic for its simplicity. Stamps for special events were introduced in 1924, for the British Empire Exhibition in Wembley.



*'The Philatelist' by François Barraud (1899-1934).*

It was not until the 1960s that the potential of stamps was realised, when Postmaster Generals Reginald Bevins and Tony Benn encouraged the Post Office to issue sets of special stamps on a regular basis. Before 1961, just 12 commemorative issues had been released. Today, around 12 sets of Special Stamps are issued every year.

With this upsurge came other items, such as the Royal Mail's own First Day Covers, Presentation Packs - which combined information and illustrations with the stamps - and 'Stamp Cards', (postcards with an enlarged reproduction of the stamp design). Small sheets combining one or more stamps from a set, known as Miniature Sheets, first appeared in 1978, and are now an established part of the Special Stamp Programme.



### Royal Mail Windmills and Watermills Stamps 2017

The Royal Mail approached the SPAB Mills Section in June 2014 to explore the idea of producing a set of stamps depicting windmills and watermills. Eventually on 20th June 2017 they finally appeared.

The following were chosen for their type and location. Other considerations were the orientation and the position of the Queen's head.

- Nutley Post Mill, Sussex
- Woodchurch Smock Mill, Kent
- Ballycopeland Tower Mill, Ireland
- Cheddleton Water Mill, Staffordshire, with low breast shot wheel
- Felin Cochwillan Water Mill, Bangor, with high breast shot wheel
- New Abbey Water Mill, Dumfries, with overshot wheel

An explanation and other images are included in the Presentation Pack.

A set, first day cover, is now lodged at the Archive and has been added to the large collection of stamps covering all aspects of milling from around the world.



## Mill Stamps at the Mills Archive

The Archive has four large specific collections of mill stamps, and to add to these are smaller numbers of stamps contained in other collections. Some of the older stamps both franked and new are now quite rare, while in more recent years it seems it is much more common to produce them. There is a newsletter, produced in the USA, but available over here called *Windmill Whispers*, which covers all new stamps available and some history on others. It is very well illustrated with B&W images for the collector or those just interested in stamps. The Archive has almost a complete run of these.



*A set of French mill stamps.*



For general information there is a web page that helps to date a stamp on a postcard, although caution is said to be needed as sometimes stamps could be superseded by later issues. [http://sunnyfield.co.uk/dayspast/stamps\\_on\\_postcards.php](http://sunnyfield.co.uk/dayspast/stamps_on_postcards.php)

In connection with the Archive's project 'Quern to Computer' we even have examples depicting different flour milling processes, such as the quern stamp from Israel shown here.

We would like to sort and put them all into a spreadsheet and onto our catalogue. If you feel you could help with this please get in touch with me at: [mcstonenut@gmail.com](mailto:mcstonenut@gmail.com).







## Cranfield's Mill, Ipswich

Kolja Millers



My time at the Mills Archive began with me being handed a box. This box contained a range of photographs from Peter Dolman's collection relating to Cranfield's Mill, Ipswich, and encompassed almost a century of history surrounding the mill

As I began to catalogue and archive the photographs, I

was fascinated by the mill's history. The photographs provided a series of snapshots that showed some remarkable glimpses into the history and significance of the mill, along with its relationship with its employees, local community and technology over the years.

Cranfield's Mill stood close to Stoke Bridge, on the Ipswich Docks, Suffolk. The mill was built on the site in 1906, replacing an older building Cranfield Brothers built on the dock in 1884. It was an industrial roller mill for flour. Cranfield Brothers Limited (later part of Associated British Foods Ltd) have employed thousands at the mill since 1884. The mill was closed in 1999, and in 2007 work began to tear down the old mill and replace it with riverfront housing.

Cranfield's Mill is a flour mill, and has used and embraced a range of technologies over the last century to process and provide that flour. Early photographs show that the mill would receive the grain it would process in large barges, and store it in great warehouses next to the mill. Some of the earliest photos show a collapsed wall in the 1890s, which allowed grain to spill over the dock.

Then there are pictures of great multi-floor industrial machines that would treat and process the grain into flour, through to pictures in the 1970s of modern lines of roller mills ready to efficiently process a large amount of grain for larger and larger markets.





The mill was a large employer for the area, and the photographs show their enthusiasm for engaging in the local community. Cranfield Brothers Limited had their own football and cricket teams, made up of employees, as early as 1919. The company would also participate in local parades through Ipswich, with their old delivery trucks being used as rides for the general public.



To see, through these photos, snapshots of the history of this company and this mill has been a joy. These photos capture small moments of history for the mill and the company. It was a surprise to be provided with such an intimate glimpse into the history of this mill over the years. I cannot wait to open my next box and see what glimpses that will provide into the history of another mill.



They also celebrated their own history in other ways than local parades. There are pictures of high class dinner parties in the 1930s, celebrating the company's jubilee, and of handing out clocks for employees on its 75th anniversary in the 1950s.

There are also pictures showing the impact of World War II on the mill. A few photos show employees in their military uniforms, and a series of photos show bomb damage sustained by the mill during the war.





## Summer Internships

### Lydia Smith

Hello everyone! I'm Lydia and this summer I have been one of two interns here at the Archive. If you follow us on social media or read the blog then you might have already seen what we've been up to!

I'm currently studying history, going into my third and final year at Reading University. It was here that I heard about the opportunity to work at the Archive through the Reading Internship Scheme, and I'm so glad I applied. Working on a subject area like the milling industry had never crossed my mind before; I always stuck with what I knew and studied the typical wider periods of history. It wasn't until I came to the Archive that I realised sometimes you have to consider a specific area to understand the wider implications. I realised the milling industry is a lot more relevant than I first thought!



*Hannah and Lydia viewing the Archive's exhibition at Reading Museum.*



*Mildred showing Hannah and Lydia some items from the collections.*

My project here was to look through the Archive's material and find interesting 'gems' that I thought would appeal to a wider audience. These will be used to grab the attention of anyone from historians to mathematicians, young and old! The gems showcase the work of the Archive and highlight fascinating pieces that will draw in people who may never have considered the importance of mills. Ideally, the final result of my project will be a growing audience with more people discovering the fascinating world of mills. Some people may not think of mills as an important part of history; we hope to change that!

**Turn to p. 16 for a preview of one of the gems Lydia discovered.**





## Hannah Pomeroy

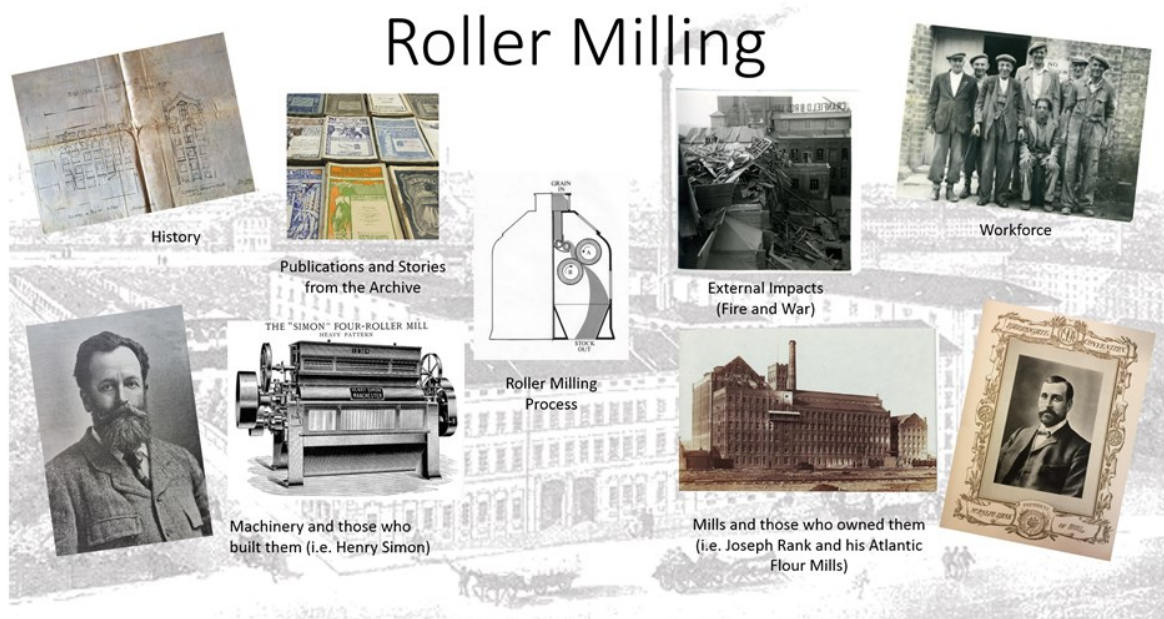
From July to October this year I have been interning at the Mills Archive working on their roller milling project. The two main elements to this project are to:

- expand the amount of roller mill material held by the Mills Archive to build a dedicated roller milling archive
- make this material and information accessible to the public

My role has involved working on the latter. Funded by a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation, I have been creating new pages for the website to make information about roller milling and the Archive readily available. Garfield Weston himself was a great businessman and philanthropist inextricably tied to the milling industry through his biscuit manufacturing company.

During my time here I've been doing lots of research to understand the changes that took place at the end of the 19th century and how these fitted into the wider world. I gathered information and material from both the Archive and Library so that I could write numerous articles for the website. This includes information about pioneering individuals, the machinery, the roller milling process, the best way to construct a mill, stories of individuals and mills found in the collections here at the Archive and much more!

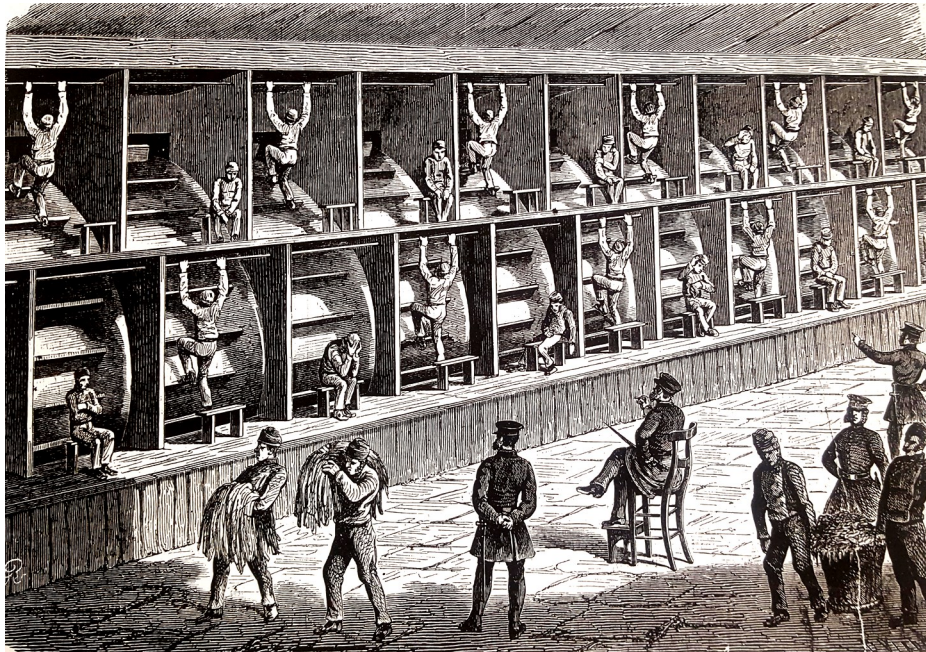
These webpages will give a glimpse into the roller milling world, how it started and the wealth of information that can be found here at the Archive.





## Prison Treadmills

Lydia Smith



As you have read (p. 14), my summer internship focussed on discovering and promoting gems in the Archive. A gem can be any object – a photograph, a letter, even a ticket – that has a particular attraction and significance. The purpose of promoting our gems is to show the world the wealth of material we have and how it connects to so many parts of our lives and our heritage, from international exploration and the arts, to the development of photography and even crime and punishment! Of the gems I have already found, my favourite so far has to be the prison treadmill picture. Here is a sneak preview of the gem, which will shortly appear in all its glory and with lots of fascinating snippets of related information for you to explore on the website!

This gem is a picture of a treadmill that was used in English prisons as a form of punishment. The device was created in the 19th century by a millwright who disliked seeing idle prisoners, and so he designed the treadmill to pass their time. It was widely criticised during its life, which speaks volumes about how terrible it was, especially as the approach with offenders was to punish rather than to help a more positive interaction with society. It was here that the treadmill came in, the very definition of hard labour! The treadmill, or treadwheel as it was more accurately known, was effectively a large wheel upon which the prisoners would have to climb as it rotated under their weight. This was extremely difficult work and inflicted injury amongst those who used it. Physically they had to endure hours of what equated to climbing up endless stairs, often clinging on to a bar

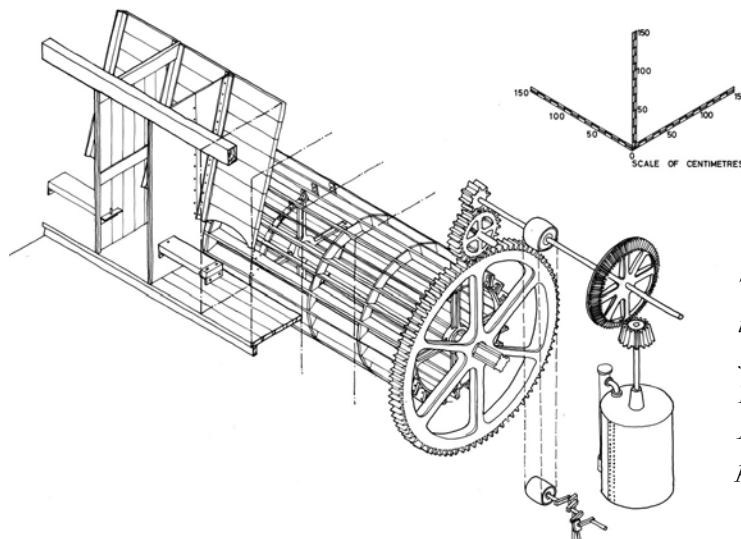


above their heads for stability. This meant the prisoners were constantly sore and aching from the task, which usually they had to do solidly for 8 hours a day. And that was if the guards were feeling nice - sometimes it could be up to 12 hours a day!

But it was often the mental strain that caused the most distress; the stairs seemed endless and prisoners were forced to stare straight ahead. Talking or any form of engaging with other inmates was strictly banned, with the threat of whipping if they broke this rule. Even if they were allowed to converse, inmates were divided by a wall so there was little to do but stare mindlessly at a blank wall. The mental effects were just as debilitating as the physical; sheer tedium can sometimes do a lot more damage to a person's spirit than physical torture. This was exactly what those running the prisons wanted; they felt that it was better to mentally break a prisoner as a reassurance that they would not reoffend. It was, in a rather macabre way, the perfect Victorian punishment. It had no real result or objective, and was mentally and physically draining. They believed that only these types of punishment would be enough to stop criminals reoffending, which is why they also used the 'Crank', or 'Oakum picking'. Look them up and see how they compare to the treadmill!

Reading has its own, rather negative claim to fame to do with treadmills. Upon Oscar Wilde's conviction of homosexuality, he was briefly imprisoned in Reading Gaol. It was here that he was forced to work the treadmills like so many before him, and his experience prompted him to write his famous poem *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. In the years after his release, Wilde became a strong advocate for prison reform, citing his torturous experience on the treadmill as the cause for his troubles post release.

Fortunately for the inmates this treatment did not last long. It was condemned by critics in both England and America, before being abolished in the early 20th century. Today the treadmill is a reminder of the cruelty suffered at the hands of the state. Luckily we have come a long way since then!



*This drawing shows the workings of a surviving treadmill in Beaumaris prison, Anglesey, which powered a water pump.*

JKMG-DRW-36-130





Mill Memories

## Quern to Computer Symposium

**Liz Bartram**

We were delighted to host a joint symposium with the SPAB Mills Section in October, and it was lovely to see some familiar faces. The symposium was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of our two year project, *From Quern to Computer*. This project tells the story of flour milling, from its ancient origins up to the present day. The symposium aimed to echo this story and was supported by several brilliant speakers who are experts in their fields. The day was unseasonably mild, which meant that in addition to browsing the bookshop and visiting the exhibition, people could sit in the walled garden with their lunch.



## The speakers



*Martin Watts*



*Ruth Shaffrey*



*Sue Watts*



*Grant Campbell*



*Roger Gilbert*



*Mildred Cookson*



*Thank you to all who attended!*





## Joseph Rank

Mildred Cookson

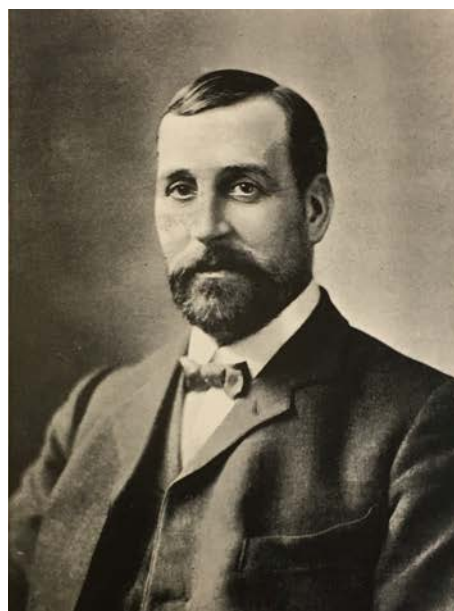
### Part 1

**"Do your best  
and leave the rest"**

**"Never look backwards"**

**"Always be learning"**

**- slogans of Joseph Rank**



Joseph Rank was one of the great enterprising mill pioneers. Born in the cottage adjoining his father's windmill on Holderness Road in Hull on 28th March 1854, he inherited and ran the mill himself and started to build the "Rank Empire" of roller flour mills. The Archive library holds the two books written on the man himself and the firm, *Through the Mill* written in 1945 by RG Burnett with its original dust jacket and *The Master Millers: The Story of the House of Rank* written on the firm's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Joseph Rank soon realised he was never going to make his fortune from flour sales from his windmill, and was quick to see the potential of roller milling over traditional millstone milling. In 1883 he visited Ingleby's Mill at Tadcaster which had just had its new roller mill system installed, and commented:

*"I saw at once there the great advantage to be gained by grinding with steel rollers in preference to millstones. Although at that time the mill was*

*Right: Two valuable sources on the life of Joseph Rank, both available in our library and bookshop.*







*The windmill at which Joseph Rank's career began.*

not automatic, and they had to move the products about in sacks, the flour was in every way better. Mr. Upton, who recently retired from Buchanan's, was at Tadcaster at that time, and showed me round; I came back fully convinced that I ought to have a roller mill, and I tried all I could to persuade Mr. West to put a roller plant in his mill, but he would not do so, and unfortunately I had not quite enough money to do it myself.

However, I found my trade had begun to increase, and in 1885 I built and started a small roller mill of six sacks an hour capacity in Williamson Street, Hull. How I managed to do it with my limited means, I find it difficult to explain, as I had to finance the buying, yet I always succeeded in finding the money to pay cash when I could buy a parcel of wheat at threepence a quarter less."

After running the Alexandra Mill, his first roller mill for around four years he was walking home and met his mill manager returning from Gainsborough Market. Joseph asked him if he thought he could sell more flour if he produced more; undoubtedly was the response. He immediately started looking for a suitable site which had water transport available. A site became available and so the Clarence Mills were built.

He was a man who treated his workers well, as long as they did the job they were employed to do. He would often say that running a business was like riding a bicycle – you either had to keep on pedalling ahead or you just fell off, there was no stopping still or going backwards. His mills meant a lot to him, but he was not one to get downhearted with a crisis or even fire.



*Clarence Mills, Hull, constructed c 1890 to a design by Gelder and Kitchen.*

**Find out more  
next issue!**

## The Helen Major Legacy

Liz Bartram

**How one woman's gift helped to open the door to education, exhibitions and accreditation.**



For years, a local lady by the name of Helen Major volunteered tirelessly at the Mills Archive. The wife of one of the Archive's first trustees, she worked on a number of projects and would never hesitate to help at any event.

Helen was passionate about ensuring that the nation's milling heritage was preserved for generations to come. She saw how her fellow volunteers were doing great work in making this happen. But she also saw that they were faced with cramped conditions. With limited space and a creaking website, it was also hard to take our message out into the world and to help others to take part in preserving the history of milling.

So Helen decided to transform what could be done at the Mills Archive, and in 2014 she left a generous legacy. She helps us reach 75,000 people through our website every year - more on this in a later issue of *Mill Memories*, but the achievement I wish to emphasise on this occasion is how we have been able to serve and connect with many people through the Founders' Room.

The Archive now benefits from an attractive, fully-functional and comfortable room that we use in lots of different ways on an almost daily basis, all of which help us to build relationships and engage with the public, our supporters and other organisations. It wasn't always such an attractive space - it needed significant refurbishment before we could start using





it, and I remember some of the volunteers arguing over the best colour theme (green and cream won!).

You will be familiar with this room if you have been to our Friends' events or attended one of our workshops. The Founders' Room gets its name from the four Foundation Collections first donated to the Archive and their owners: Ken Major (Helen's husband), the SPAB Mills Section, Mildred Cookson and Alan Stoyel.

Just in the last month, the Founders' Room hosted an exhibition covering the history of flour milling for our Friends and SPAB Mills Section members (see pages 18-19).



We are also about to run our regular training workshop, *Caring for your Collection*. These workshops involve people who work at mills and are designed not only to give archiving advice but also to help participants to share ideas and expertise with each other. This workshop programme, and the chance to share skills and support mill groups, would not have been possible without the Founders' Room.

The National Archives, when assessing our archive accreditation application, were particularly interested in our workshops for mills. I am certain that the Founders' Room and the opportunities it has opened up contributed to our success in becoming an accredited archive service.

Visitors to the Founders' Room often ask about Helen, whose portrait watches over the room. I know that her kindness will continue to benefit the mills community for many years to come.



## Talbot Green

**Ron Cookson**



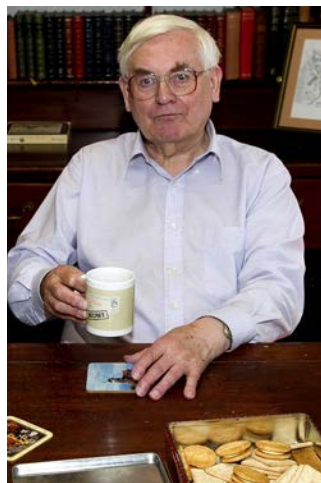
*Talbot at work cataloguing press cuttings.*

Talbot, who started as a volunteer in November 2009, has now decided to retire. He will be much missed. Rarely missing a Wednesday and Friday each week, he will be well known to visitors and many of our alumni. He joined us with a background in quality control and was fastidious in checking his sources for accuracy. I recall his frustration, when working on Sussex watermills, with the indexing errors in the two-volume work by Stidder and Smith. His solution was to take the books home and re-index them (copies of his index are available on request). That work is not the only one I have come across where publishers have scrambled authors' careful work!

Coming from a windmilling family, Talbot wrote a precis of his family history research for Mill Memories as well as a couple of articles relating to his work on Syd Simmons' collection. Over the years he has catalogued and scanned thousands of items, all from important collections. The table gives a flavour of his important contribution. If you live near enough and feel you would be interested in lending a hand to explore more collections, please get in touch!

2009 - 2010	Frank Gregory images
2010 - 2011	HES Simmons postcards
2012	Stanley Freese & James Venn sketches
2013	Don Paterson research notes
2014	HES Simmons research notes and maps
2014	Michael Dunn photographs
2014-2016	Press cuttings
2016-2017	David Jones Welsh images

The images of Talbot underline not only the work he accomplished but his contribution as a raconteur to the social side of life at the Archive. Thank you Talbot, and for your continuing support as a Friend of the Mills Archive!



*Time for tea and biscuits.*



*Right:  
Talbot in  
listening  
mode at the  
Christmas  
lunch.*

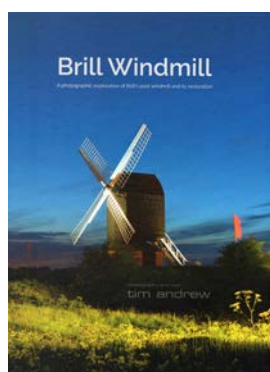


## Bookshelf

Ron Cookson

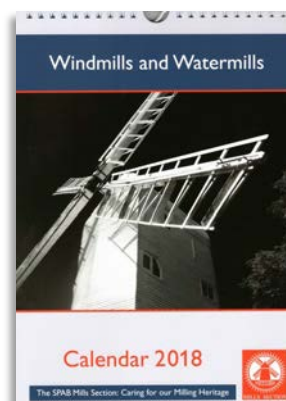
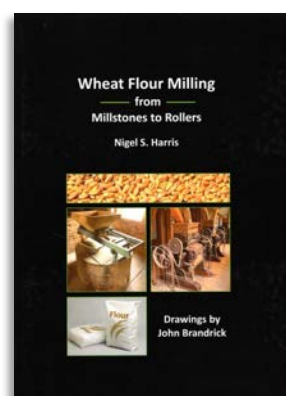
### Recent Publications

Two of our Heritage Partners have produced impressive books this summer, both worth the money. Be warned that they are very heavy. Nigel Harris' book *Wheat Flour Milling From Millstones to Rollers* is probably the best recent mill book, well up to the standard we have come to expect from him. It is certainly our best seller of the year.



Alternatively, if you would like a coffee-table book, the book on Brill by Tim Andrews will stun you; it is the most attractive volume on one mill you are ever likely to see. Tim is a professional photographer who lives near the mill and this is a labour of love – a marvellous present.

Also just in time for Christmas is the SPAB Mills Section Calendar, inexpensive but well-produced with attractive images, you are bound to ask the question “why don't they do this every year?” All three items and many more - all at [millsarchive.org/shop](http://millsarchive.org/shop)!



# Visiting the Mills Archive

**Friends and members of the general public are welcome to visit us in Reading. The address is on the back page and directions and a map are available on our website.**

Our Library and Research Centre are on the ground floor of Watlington House, and we are convenient for the town centre with free car parking.

We welcome visitors but please make an appointment first. We are open from 10am until 3pm on Mondays to Fridays.

We strongly encourage you to let us know beforehand of any specific research you are undertaking, so that we can retrieve the files from our store before you arrive.

Email [enquiries@millsarchive.org](mailto:enquiries@millsarchive.org) 1–2 weeks before your planned trip and offer us alternative dates if possible. We will do our best to be there when you need us.



*The Mills Archive  
Library and Research  
Centre*

*Ground floor access*

*Free car park*

*Appointment necessary*





# Key Privileges For Our Friends

**As a Friend, are you making the most of the privileges available to you?**

- 80% discount on high resolution digital images
- 10% discount on all other purchases from our online shop
- Research service: 1st hour free every year, discounted thereafter
- Copyright waivers
- Mill Memories every 6 months
- Invitations to exclusive Friends' events



Visit our website and blog: [millsarchive.org](http://millsarchive.org)

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Follow us on twitter: [twitter.com/MillsArchive](https://twitter.com/MillsArchive)





## The Friends of the Mills Archive

Part of the Mills Archive Trust  
Registered Charity no 1155828

Watlington House  
44 Watlington Street  
Reading, RG1 4RJ  
United Kingdom

The Friends of the Mills Archive are dedicated to aiding the work of the Mills Archive Trust and we value new members. We extend a warm welcome to family, local and national historians as well as to those who simply want to find out more about our milling heritage.

As a Friend you are supporting the care and public access to one of the world's great mill collections. It is an Aladdin's cave filled with memories, free to users and run by volunteers. The collections show the rich and diverse crafts, people, buildings, machinery and equipment involved with mills in the UK and around the world.

Friends enjoy a number of benefits (see page 23) as well as knowing they are helping to protect an unrivalled world-class resource.



*For more information write to the address above or email us*  
[friends@millsarchive.org](mailto:friends@millsarchive.org)

Did you know that you can read past issues of *Mill Memories* online? Visit our website to view all past issues: <https://millsarchive.org/news/mill-memories/>

We now send *Mill Memories* by email to some people, which helps reduce our postage costs. If you would prefer to receive future issues by email, please let Liz Bartram know: [friends@millsarchive.org](mailto:friends@millsarchive.org)

### Next Time: Mystic Mills

Find out what's going on in these images in the next issue of *Mill Memories*.

