

THE WINDMILLS AND MILLERS
OF
BRIGHTON
by
H.T. DAWES

2nd Edition



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Charles Cutress worked the Tower Mill in Round Hill Road with his grandfather, who was later the village baker of Ditchling, and came to Forfars in 1936. The family have been bakers and millers since 1818. Direct descendants Tim and Mathew Cutress are today's Master Bakers.

Cover design: Peter Messer

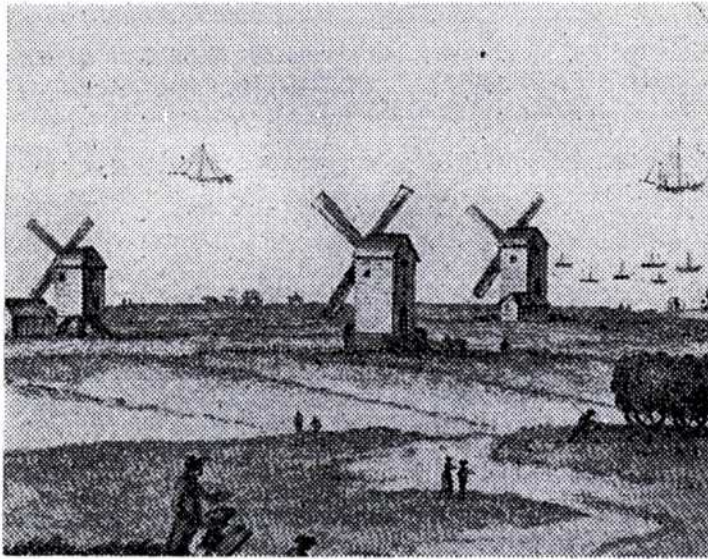
Cover photograph: The Tower Mill with bakery and shop, Round Hill Road, Brighton in 1888. Charles Cutress, miller and baker, is in the doorway. (From a photograph provided by Forfars).

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by H T Dawes



View of windmills on the slopes above the east cliffs
From James Lambert's *View of Brighthelmstone* 1765

Published by the
Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

Introduction

The author Harold Dawes carried out research for the original publication for many years during the 1980's. He received much encouragement and assistance from Frank Gregory who was highly regarded for his immense knowledge and enthusiasm for windmills. Sadly they had both passed away before publication of this second edition. However Harold Dawes had prepared detailed notes for a new edition which has formed the basis for amending and updating the book. The opportunity has also been taken to include a number of illustrations that were not in the first edition.

First Edition 1988 Preface and acknowledgements to the First Edition

Firstly, I would like to thank Mr Frank Gregory, who read this record of local windmills, corrected my errors, and gave me useful advice. He also brought me up-to-date regarding recent restoration work on the few windmills still remaining, checked the typescript, provided some of the illustrations and suggested that the material should be published. Mr Gregory is well known for his great interest in windmills, and his practical knowledge acquired by repairing and preserving them. He also gives talks in the subject, accompanied by models he himself has constructed. Mr Edwin Hole has assisted me with his accounts of repairs and renewals carried out locally by his firm of millwrights. John and Tony Cutress, whose family for well over half a century was connected with five windmills in Brighton, have volunteered useful information

The notes on windmills compiled by the late Mr H E S Simmons from the basis of any work on local mills. For over forty years he gradually assembled thousands of pieces of information regarding windmills in Sussex and well beyond. His widow has kindly allowed me to quote extracts.

Gurney Wilson's Notebooks written mainly in the opening years of this century, and now in the Hove Reference Library, have been of interest as the author included windmills in his local jottings. I have also gathered a great deal of information from reading letters and articles in many books, magazines and newspapers, and have acknowledged my indebtedness in the references.

Mr James Gray has allowed several of his photographs to be produced. Brighton Reference Library, Frank Gregory, Peter Hill, R Harris, N E S Norris and Brighton Museum have lent photographs; Jonathan Pratty and Ray Fowler have helped with reproduction. Alice Montford typed the text and Piran Montford gave advice with computing.

H T Dawes 1988 (The first edition was published in conjunction with the Lewis Cohen Urban Studies Centre, Director Selma Montford).

Second Edition 2002 Preface and acknowledgements to the Second Edition

For this fully revised edition the opportunity has been taken to correct some minor errors and to include additional information that became available following the publication of the first edition. Before he died in 1993, Harold Dawes had prepared a list of amendments that were to be included in any future edition. In particular he wished to acknowledge the information gained from the chapter on Falmer Windmill in Mrs Doris Williams book *Falmer Parish Reflections* and wished to thank Mr R Hawksley and Mr R Philpott for material they had provided following the original publication. The author's suggested amendments have been checked by Peter Hill and Malcolm Dawes and are included in this edition.

In addition details of recent developments in restoration of the mills that still exist have been included, all of the original illustrations have been enhanced, and many more copies of photographs, drawings and engravings have been added. Assistance with the reproduction of this edition was provided by Selma Montford and Dave Carver also provided valuable help with reproduction of the cover illustration.

Malcolm Dawes and Peter Hill, February 2002

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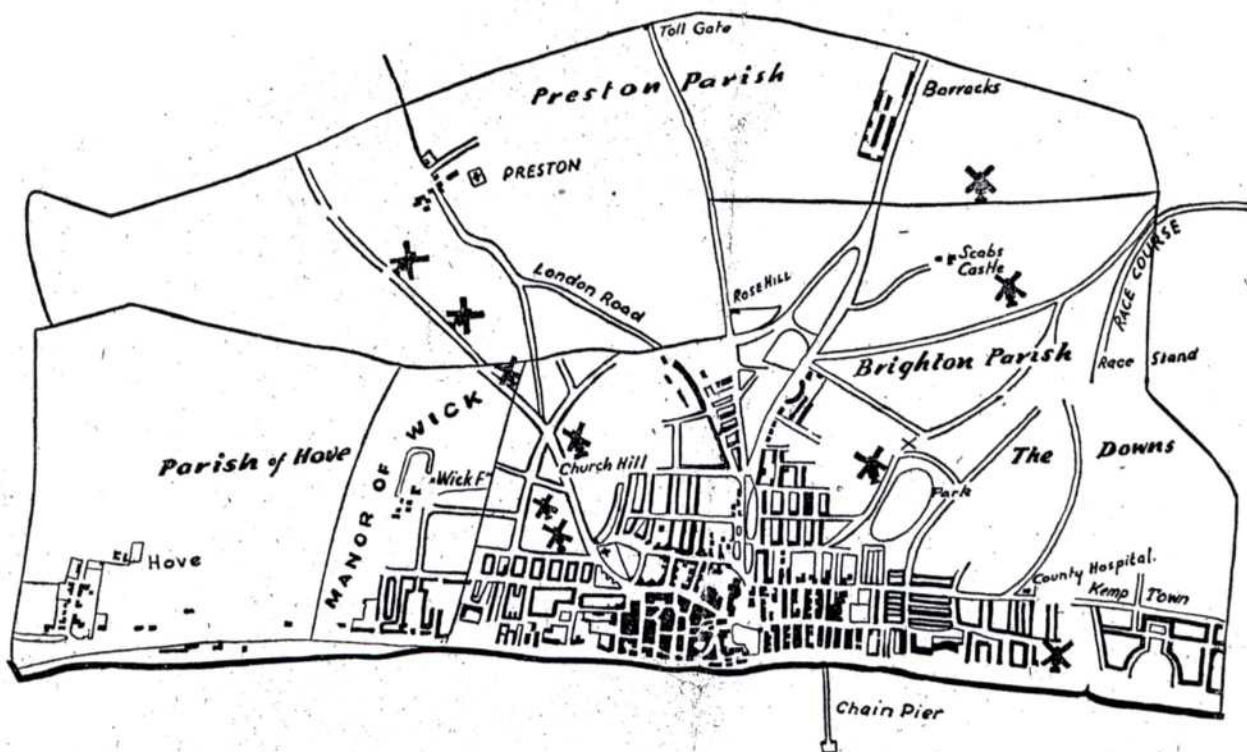
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Note: The locations given above refer to the sites where the windmills originally stood or are still standing.



*A perspective view of Brighthelmstone, and of the sea coast
as far as the Isle of Wight. James Lambert 1765*

In the view, the three mills on the extreme left are described on page 2.
The mill at right of centre was probably West Mill.



*The windmills of Brighton, as shown on an ordnance survey of 1831
 From *The Windmills of Brighton* by F G S Bramwell,
 Brighton and Hove Herald 6th August 1938*

Chapter 1 The Early Windmills

Windmills in England were mentioned in writings of the twelfth century, but were probably to be seen well before that time. In Sussex the earliest recorded was at Amberley in 1185, but the best known concerns an incident during the Battle of Lewes in May 1264. The King's younger brother took refuge in a nearby windmill, barricading the door with millstones. The site is now occupied by the Black Horse Inn in Western Road, Lewes.¹

The earliest known mills in Brighton were two 'wynde mylles' depicted on a coloured drawing of the French attacking the town. The mills appear to have been situated north of St Nicholas Church. The drawing is dated 1545, but was probably based on the events of 1514 when the invaders landed and burnt down every dwelling. In 1580 the town's mill stood on land to the east of the Steine, the rents being paid to the church-wardens on behalf of the town. An illustration of Brighthelmstone in 1588 included a windmill in the middle of the town. The view from the sea shows the fortifications in readiness for the arrival of the Spanish Armada; the windmill was a short distance north-east of the Blockhouse which was on the cliff at the south end of Middle Street.²

Sketches and maps show that there were certainly mills near the Steine and on nearby cliffs during the seventeenth century. At the time there was still probably at least one near St Nicholas Church, for it has been written that the future King Charles the Second passed a windmill hereabouts during his flight from the Roundheads in 1650s.

The south-westerly gale which struck Brighthelmstone in November 1703 was the worst storm ever recorded in the English Channel. The roof of St Nicholas Church was blown off, almost all the houses were damaged, and the two town mills were flattened.³ Some re-building must have taken place fairly quickly for Budgen's Map published in 1724 shows several mills in the town, including one on Church Hill, but later views of 1740 and 1743 fail to show it. This may have been the town mill blown down on the 10 May 1726.

A windmill is portrayed on an engraving dated 1736, a copy of which was later drawn by J Cordwell entitled *The East Battery*. (The engraving is located in Brighton Museum). Situated near Old Steine, it is possibly the Coffee Mill known to have existed in East Street. The date of the engraving appears to be incorrect as the East Battery was installed some years later

These early windmills were all post mills, where the rectangular body pivoted on a central post, often made from the trunk of a large tree. This centre post was supported by four diagonal timbers, each strongly jointed into the post and into two cross members at the base to form a trestle, which thus carried the full weight of the mill. From the underside of the rear of the body of the mill, a long wooden beam projected. This was referred to as the tail pole and when there was a change in direction of the wind the pole was pushed manually to rotate the mill until the sweeps or sails faced the wind again. The trestle supporting the centre post was often enclosed within a round house which protected the timber supports and provided additional space for storing both grain and flour.

1 R Thurston Hopkins, *Old Watermills and Windmills* (1930) p.21

2 L J Robinson, *The Lanes of Brighton* (Brighton 1967) p.25; *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.881;

F Harrison & J S North, *Old Brighton, Old Hove, Old Preston* (Brighton 1937) p.46

3 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.23 p.116



Coffee Windmill in the Old Steine, 1736
From an engraving, Brighton Museum

Chapter 2 The Windmills near the Sea

Budgen's Map published in 1724 shows four windmills to the east of the Steine, but James Lambert's 'View of Brighthelmstone' painted in 1765, shows only three cloth sailed post-mills standing in the fields between the Steine and the present Lower Rock Gardens. (Illustration included on frontispiece) The two on the western side were tall bodied with their bases enclosed in round houses. The eastern one was smaller and supported on open trestles. William Bradford may have owned one mill as at about that date his house and mill on the 'Stayne' were rated at three pounds. One of these mills and one rood of ground occupied by Roger Andrews were advertised for sale in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* of 13 June 1774. William Attree, Attorney of Brighthelmstone, arranged a sale at the Old Ship. In the 5 March 1787 edition of the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser*, one of the mills was to be sold by auction on 15 March. It was lately the property of Thomas Dennett of Preston, and occupied by John Sicklemore, who lived in North Street.¹ It was again to be sold by auction in the following year when it was still stated to be lately the property of Thomas Dennett.

In the 1770s the cliffs east of the Steine must have provided a pleasant walk, the only residence being Rock House on the south-western corner of the present Lower Rock Gardens. The house took its name from large rocks exposed at low tide on the beach below the cliffs here. An early Brighton windmill fatality occurred in 1771, when a man in drink kept running between the revolving sweeps until one hit his head, and he died on the spot. One of the three windmills had gone by 1780 as the farmland began to develop into a high-class residential district. Building work accelerated when the Prince of Wales, later to be the Prince Regent, arrived in 1783, and only one mill remained in 1795. Possibly the middle one of the three fell down, as the enclosed base, or round house, stood for many years in the back garden of a house in Marine Parade, and served as a wash-house.²

The small open trestle post-mill is said to have still been working in 1790, and may have been moved to Rose Hill, a short distance from the Level. A map of Sussex produced by Colonel Mudge in 1813, when the Government was still fearing an invasion by Napoleon, shows a windmill on Rose Hill.³ Mr Ede was the miller in 1822, but it is not traceable after that date.

Old Brighton Rate Books show that a windmill stood at the bottom of the western side of West Street between 1744 and 1750. Then owned by widow Gibbs, who lived in the mill house until her death in 1754, it was probably situated on raised land known as "The Bank", popular with fishermen attempting to forecast the weather before setting out to sea. The mill on the cliff can be seen in a caricature of bathing machines on the beach below. It was drawn by Thomas Rowlandson in 1791, but he used an old print to obtain a windmill background. A mill at this location also appears in the background of paintings of the Old Steine. (W.Crouch, 1807; J Spornberg, 1808; *Brighton Revealed, Bton Museum, 1995*). F.G.S.Bramwell, *Brighton & Hove Herald* (Aug 6th, 13th 1938) wrote an extensive article on Brighton windmills and includes a description of this mill and another possible mill at Black Rock in 1759.



West Street Mill
From a drawing by
Thomas Rowlandson, 1751

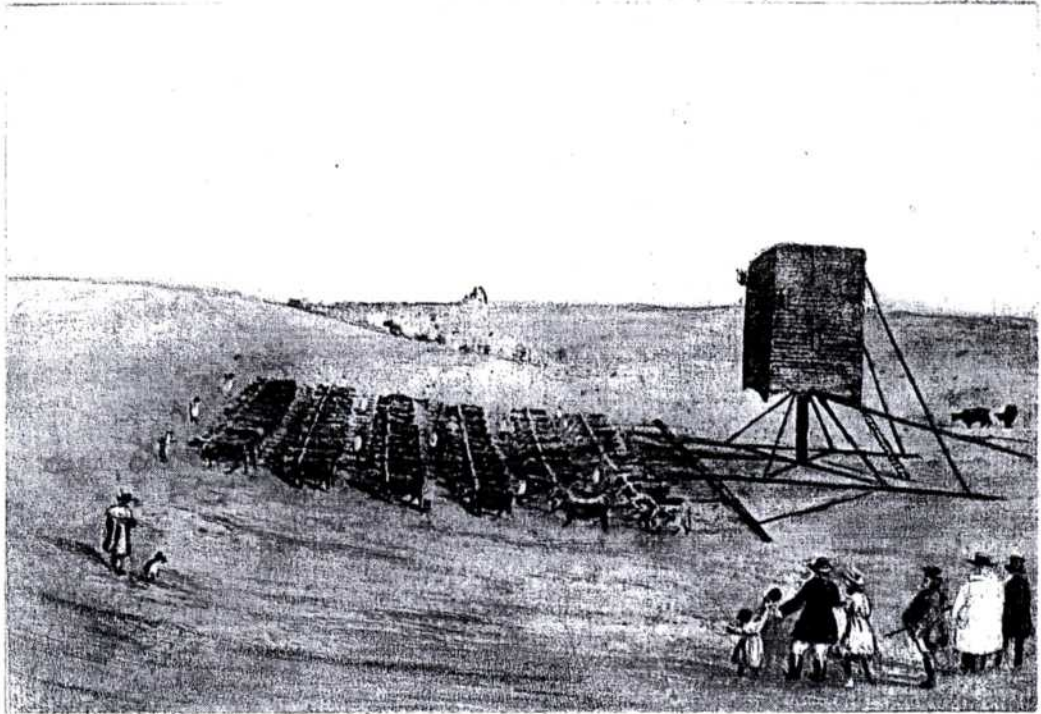


West Street Mill
viewed from Old Steine
From a View of Brighthelmstone
by J Watts, 1785

WEST MILL

A black post-mill known as West Mill was situated in Belle Vue Fields, now Regency Square. Matthew Bourne owned a house and mill there as early as 1744. The mill is shown on Lambert's *View of Brighthelmstone* of 1765. From 1770 John Brown was using the mill to obtain flour for his bakery in West Street. The *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 10 January 1785 contains an advertisement offering the mill for sale by private contract, and describing it as "a good accustomed freehold mill with about a rood of land". Anyone interested was asked to get in touch with Mr Brown or Mr Tourle, Attorney of Brighthelmstone. An item in the issue dated 21 February 1791, of the same newspaper, told its readers that on Wednesday night an old partridge's nest with one egg was found near the windmill westward of Brighthelmstone.

When John Brown died in 1792 the mill was taken over by John Streeter of North Street, who then insured the property for £200 against fire risk, and the bakehouse in West Street for the further £200. A few years later the mill was being described as a nuisance by the residents of the new high-class properties in the district. In 1797 a decision was made to transport it to Dyke Road, and a number of gentlemen farmers, led by Thomas Hodson, supplied eighty-six yoke of oxen free of charge. On 28 March, watched by a crowd of many thousands, the mill was dragged from its site "very near the edge of the cliffs" to a "brow near Withdean".⁴ The journey is perpetuated in a famous engraving shown on page 3.



West Mill was drawn from the spot now called Regency Square to Preston a distance of two miles on the 28th March 1797 by Eighty six oxen belonging to the following Gentlemen:- W.Stanford, Hodson, Hamshar, Scrase, Trill and Hardewicke. Quote from original engraving.

The history of this mill on its new site is outlined in the next chapter (Preston Mill, page 12).

EAST END MILL

Samuel Baker and John Hart dissolved their partnership on 18 May 1793, when they had a bakery in Brighton Place, and a windmill in East Brighton, probably near the present Lewes Crescent. The mill together with a small parcel of land on which it stood were put up for auction at the Old Ship Tavern on the 30 May 1793, the advertisement stating that the property was held on a 99 year lease, renewable forever. A few days later the same newspaper carried another entry offering the mill for sale by private contract. It was said to be equipped with two pairs of millstones, the proprietor being Richard Hart. The mill was again up for auction on the 25 July of the same year. In January 1795 a windmill and round house situated in East Lane was insured against fire for £360; the going gears, millstones, wire mesh and dressing mills for £40; utensils, cloth, sails and removable items for £150; and the storeroom, stable and cart lodge for £100.⁵

About 1800 a newly-built white post-mill with tail-pole and round house stood south of St George's Road, and became known as East End Mill. Today the only reminder of its existence is a street called Millfield Cottages, which is situated a short distance north of the mill site. These cottages can be seen in a narrow turning off the western side of Sudeley Place. The windmill was the last one of many once to be seen along the coast near Brighton.

The *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 16 November 1801 reported that thieves broke into the mill, Henry Hobden being robbed of a quantity of grain flour. The criminals "got clean off with their booty". The 1801 Defence Schedules, compiled during the Napoleonic Wars, stated that Henry Hobden agreed to supply ten sacks of flour every twenty-four hours, on the understanding that the authorities supplied the wheat. Later a second schedule increased the amount to fifteen sacks. As a sack then weighed 280 pounds, the order would have been difficult to carry out, but probably Government pressure was exerted on the miller as his was then the only working mill in the town (excluding Preston). In April 1802 one of Henry's carters had an accident serious enough to be a news item, and in November 1807 one of his cows had her back broken by the sweeps of the mill and "was obliged to be killed".⁶



"Mill on the East Cliff", 1840, East End Mill
Illustration provided by F W Gregory

The mill was up for auction at the Old Ship Tavern on 17 December 1807; the ground rent was stated to be £15 per annum. Henry Hobden was in financial difficulties, for some of his possessions were being sold for the benefit of his creditors.⁷ In 1822 John Pannett was the miller and continued in occupation until around 1829, when John Taylor was listed as the occupier of East Mill. Within a few years he lived in East Mill House which he had bought as part of the property.

The building of large residences in the district gradually encircled the mill, but it was still shown on Jobbin's Plan of 1842. It was probably moved between that date and 1847 to a new site in the Queen's Park district; Francis Taylor owned a mill there in 1858 and lived in Marine Parade. Wallis' Map of Brighton, published about 1842, includes the mill and East Mill House, a solitary building on the seafront east of the present Belgrave Place. That may have been the miller's cottage which still stood at the back of 162 Marine Parade in 1939. The history of this mill on its new site is outlined in the chapter "The East Brighton Windmills" on page 19.

ROTTINGDEAN POST MILL

The *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 22 November 1773 told its readers that the recent gale had severely damaged Rottingdean Windmill. The brake had failed to hold the sweeps which rotated with such fury that they were torn from the round beam. In one respect that was fortunate for the fast moving machinery inside the mill would have probably caused friction and set the structure alight, with the sweeps fanning the flames. Rottingdean Post Mill was at the top of the road called Dudeny's Hill, now Bazehill Road, on the south side. The mill was shown on Yeakell and Gardner's Topographical Survey of Sussex published in 1783, and on subsequent maps up to 1817.

The Sun Fire Policy No. 493179 dated 8 June 1784 taken out by William Richardson, miller of Rottingdean, states that the windmill near the dwelling house was insured against fire for £200, the utensils and stock for a further £50. In 1792 Mr Richardson, then aged 63, married "a young woman of 22 years".⁸

John Botting at the windmill promised three sacks of flour every twenty-four hours in the Defence Schedules compiled in 1801. The miller John Ockenden advertised the mill for sale by auction by Tester & Bates at the White Horse in Rottingdean on 26 May 1813. It was then in full trade, but on 26 October 1817 it was advertised for sale on condition that it was removed. It was equipped with two pairs of millstones and all necessary machinery intact. Anyone interested could obtain further particulars from Stephen Henley, miller of Rottingdean.⁹ He had lived in the village since 1785, and died there in 1825, aged 65.

In March 1818 John Goble, a Fletching auctioneer, asked for tenders from millwrights for the work of taking down the post-mill (except the round house), and erecting it on a new site, the frame of the mill to be moved whole with Mr Goble supplying the carriage. He also supplied the carriage and horses to move stones, post etc. The location of the new site was not given.¹⁰

At an auction held by John Goble at the Crown Inn, Horsted Green, Horsted Keynes on 24 October 1818, a newly erected Post Wind Corn Mill was offered to let on a three year tenancy. It was equipped with two pairs of stones and complete machinery. Two acres of rich meadow land, a stable and a hog pound included. It was situated at Danehill adjoining the turnpike road from Lewes to London.¹¹

BEACON HILL MILL

On the 7 June 1802 the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* informed its readers that when labourers, employed by Mr Beard, were digging foundations for the brick base of a smock-mill on Beacon Hill at Rottingdean, they had unearthed the skeleton of an ancient warrior and a sword. When the labourers returned after a meal, both items had disappeared. The Beard family were well known in the village having lived there since the 17th Century or even earlier. They lived in a farmhouse called Challoners situated on the eastern side of the main road north of the pond, and many members of the family are buried in the nearby Quaker burial ground.

Smock-mills were so designed that only the top section holding the sweeps was movable. This type of mill was a Flemish invention of the sixteenth century, and was so called as the shape was like a man in a smock or frock-coat, a common garment in those days. The main part of the mill was built of wood, and usually eight-sided; it stood on a base of brick or stone. When completed, the Beacon Hill Mill had some unusual features. The fan, constructed at the rear of the movable top, was painted red, white and blue, a unique colouring in Sussex but a common decoration in Suffolk. Smock-mills were often fitted with an endless rope reaching to the ground from the projecting gallery at the rear, but at Beacon Hill the rope was replaced by chains.¹² These were used to make adjustments to the patent sweeps.

The Defence Schedules, usually issued around 1801, stated that Thomas Beard of the smock-mill promised to supply eight sacks of flour every day, and would accept ready money or arrange a month's credit. This particular agreement must have been subject to completion of the mill then under construction. In 1806 Thomas Beard unsuccessfully tried to sell the black Beacon Hill Mill by auction at the White Hart Inn in Lewes. In the following year a local boy named Hyde played under the sack hoist, although he had been repeatedly told to keep away. While a sack of wheat was being hauled up, the rope broke causing the boy to be precipitated to a lower floor. He suffered a broken leg.¹³

Stephen Henley, who had been connected with Rottingdean Post Mill in 1817, before that mill was removed, probably also worked at Beacon Mill. It is almost certain that his second son John worked there. Between 1819 and 1832, when his children were baptised, he was stated to be a journeyman miller living at 83 West Side, Rottingdean. He was still a miller in the 1861 local census and was buried in Rottingdean in 1871 aged 77.

Charles Beard was the owner in 1849, John Bodle being employed as miller, when a labourer John Mockford was charged with stealing several yards of rope from the mill. In 1862 there was another accident when seven year old Henry Smith was struck by a sweep and died twelve hours later in the County Hospital. He had been staying with his grandmother who had taken him to see his uncle working at the mill. At one point the sweeps cleared the ground by only three feet. Charles Beard's death on the 21 February 1870 ended the long family connection with the mill. George Nicholls was in occupation in 1874, employing Ned Avery as miller. Ned was then an old man but had worked there when a youth. George advertised the property to let in 1877 at an annual rent of forty pounds. The prospective tenant was offered the use of the mill equipped with three pairs of millstones, the cottage and the coal trade.¹⁴

The great gale of March 1878 blew off the sweeps and severely damaged them. In 1880 when Sir Edward Burne-Jones took up residence in the village, the eminent Victorian painter noted that the mill was not working. His wife, on a visit a year or so earlier, had written that the mill was turning, and the miller's black timber cottage was there.¹⁵ In its exposed position the fabric of the mill rapidly deteriorated, and there were suggestions that it should be pulled down. A photograph taken around 1905 shows that the stocks had lost all four sweeps, the doors were missing, and so much boarding had gone that one could see right through the mill in places. The landmark was saved by the Marquis of Abergavenny who owned the land. The doorway was bricked up and the boarding renewed; the improvement could be seen in a photograph published in the 1910 edition of *Country Homes*.



Beacon Hill Mill
circa 1905
Postcard



Beacon Hill Mill
in the 1920's
Postcard

By 1922 the mill was again showing signs of decay. The Reverend Lewis Verey, vicar of Rottingdean, opened an appeal for £400 which was supported by the eminent author Hilaire Belloc. Brighton Corporation had recently acquired the land, and leased the property for 99 years to the vicar and three local residents as trustees. In 1935 when Sir George Lewis and three other gentlemen held the lease, an anonymous donor offered to carry out repairs and restore the sweeps so that once again it would regain its original appearance.¹⁶ Mr R Yapp of Beech Hurst, Haywards Heath financed the restoration work carried out during the following year. Fred Neve the Heathfield millwright undertook the work, and Holmans of Canterbury fitted the sweep frames in mid-July 1936; frames offer less resistance to strong winds.



Beacon Hill Mill after restoration in 1936
"Smugglers Village", Bton Herald Ltd

In late 1966 all the wooden exterior was creosoted and further repair work took place. Photographs taken at the time show that some of the machinery was intact. Still remaining today are the clasp-arm brake wheel, the wooden wallower, pine upright shaft with cast iron great spur wheel to drive the millstones, and above it a wooden crown wheel which drove the auxiliary machinery. Edwin Hole, the Burgess Hill mill-wright, fitted a new sweep frame and constructed a steel tubular tower inside the mill in 1972.¹⁷ This has strengthened the structure which was tending to twist.

During 1999, as a millennium project, much restoration work was carried out by millwrights Paul Rigden, Tim Harman and Adam Dodson. This involved replacement of three of the eight cant (corner) posts, renewal of the front boarding and re-boarding of the cap. The total cost of £58,000 was met by the Rottingdean Preservation Trust. In December 2001, a Heritage Lottery grant of £41,000 was awarded to the mill for the construction and installation of four new sweeps and improvements to the interior.

1 Brighton Reference Library, rate books 1744-61; J G Bishop, *A Peep into the Past* (Brighton 1892) p.294

2 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.1 p.422, Vol.13 p.349

3 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.881

4 Guildhall Library - City of London Record Office Royal Exchange Fire Policy 127460 11 April 1792 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 3 April 1797

5 Guildhall Library - City of London Record Office Royal Exchange Fire Policy 143685 21 January 1795; *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 27 May, 3 June, 1 July 1793

6 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 5 April 1802; *Brighton Herald* 21 November 1807

7 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 23 November 1807; *Brighton Herald* 21 November 1807

8 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 6 February 1792

9 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 12 April, 10 May 1813, 20 October 1817

10 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 23 March 1818

11 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 12 October 1818

12 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.700

13 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 14 April 1806; *Brighton Herald* 28 November 1807

14 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 20 March 1849, 9 July 1862, 26 June 1877

15 *Brighton & Hove Gazette* 14 April 1979

16 *Brighton and Hove Herald* 29 June 1935

17 *Sussex Life* January 1967; *Evening Argus* 26 January 1973

Chapter 3 The Windmills near Dyke Road



William Vine's Mill at Brighton
From a painting by Henry Bodle, 1843

VINE'S MILL and CLIFTON GARDENS MILL

A white post-mill was built between the present Powis Grove and Clifton Hill; the site is now used as a car park belonging to the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children. In the early days of the mill, the nearest dwellings were in Mill Place. Today this is Vine Place, a pedestrian way between Dyke Road and Powis Villas. The present Clifton Place was possibly the approach road to the mill as the Windmill public house at the bottom of the hill was certainly trading in the 1820s.

William Vine had been working a mill at Patcham for almost five years when he bought this mill in August 1818.¹ He had probably seen an advertisement in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 20 July of that year. This stated that the mill was to be auctioned by Verrall & Son at the New Inn Hotel in North Street. The windmill was described as lately new and in full trade. The address of the neat dwelling included in the sale was No. 1 Mill Place. A year later he was advertising for a grinder, but applicants had to be experienced, of good character, and of a serious disposition. About ten years later a winter hurricane blew off one of the sweeps.² Said to have been a pious man, William was a prominent member of the congregation of the Salem Chapel in Bond Street. After a short illness he died in 1837, but his wife Mary and family continued to work the mill for a few years.

Her son-in-law Henry Bodle portrayed Vine's Mill, as it had become known, in a painting dated 1843. This shows it in beautiful condition, with the base enclosed by a round house. The canvas cloth sails are shown slightly rolled back, or reefed. This was the usual practice during very windy weather. The tail-beam had to be handled manually to bring the mill into the wind.³

Thomas Knight worked at the mill when William Vine was the miller. His sister Ruth Knight, while working in Brighton in 1832, wrote to her mother in Wivelsfield to tell her that Thomas, then working with Mr Vine, would like a different colour smock. She also wrote that her employers were not satisfied with the flour and could her father John Knight send some flour from the water mill at Lindfield. Mr Pim was the carrier.

When Edward Cutress took over the mill from the Vine family about 1842, the two fields on the slope below Vine Place were owned by a butcher named Russell, who let them out to persons arranging pugilism and cricket matches. The isolated windmill was then in an excellent position to catch the wind. Edward was descended from a long line of Cutress millers and bakers, probably dating back to Stuart times.

During his early days at Vine's Mill he was still associated with Thomas Knight in working the Bear Mill near the present Kimberley Road, but the partnership was dissolved in 1844 by mutual consent.⁴ Within a short time he was using flour from Vine's Mill in the baking of bread and cakes, which he sold in a shop he had opened nearby. The address of the shop, just above the present Clifton Terrace, frequently changed. It was at one time in Powis Terrace, but that became part of Dyke Road around 1872. The business, run by Edward and his nephew Charles, continued to trade here for well over half a century after the mill was pulled down about 1850. No building has ever been erected at the site of the old windmill, and it is believed that there is a restrictive covenant in existence to prevent any development.

The building of Clifton Terrace in the late 1840s, and further development nearby, contributed to the ending of the mill's working life, but also brought more customers into the shop. Another source of flour had to be found, and an arrangement was made with Port Hall Mill, situated about a mile away. For over thirty years carts loaded with flour were to be seen making the journey down Dyke Road from Port Hall.⁵ Occasionally Edward also used Hodson's Mill in West Hill Road for flour supplies, but that mill ceased working in the mid 1860's. He may also have obtained flour from Taylor's Mill in Lennox Street during the 1850s; this was then being worked by Thomas Knight who had been Edward's partner at the Bear Mill in the early 1840s.

A windmill was mentioned in the Town Rate Book for 1784, listed among the properties in North Street. It was assessed at £1 10s (£1.50), with a rating of 3s (15p), and owned by John Sicklemore, who had a house and ground adjoining.⁶ North Street in those days was considerably longer, extending some distance into the present Dyke Road. The location of that mill is uncertain, but a mill is shown near the present Clifton Terrace on a map dated 1831 drawn by an officer of the Royal Artillery, Lieutenant Robert K Dawson. He also included Vine's Mill a short distance further up the hill. At that time John Hilder was probably the miller of the large post-mill with fantail gearing known as Clifton Gardens Windmill.

After John died in 1837 the mill was moved to a new site near Queen's Park. That operation would have necessitated it being pulled up Carlton Hill, which is extremely steep. As the mill was large enough to operate three pairs of millstones, the long haul up the slope must have presented many problems. The name survived, for Kelly's Directory of 1855 shows Clifton Mill in Lennox Street. The history of this mill continues in the next chapter (Clifton Mill, page 18).

HODSON'S MILL

Hodson's Black Windmill, an unusual smock-mill in that it had twelve sides, was erected in the present West Hill Road by the millwright William Pilbeam. The top extremity of the sweeps was 110 feet above the ground; the cap was dome shaped and fitted with a fan-tail, and the three pairs of French stones were capable of grinding between twenty and twenty-five loads of corn per week. Nearby were a brick dwelling house and a six-stalled stable. The cost was estimated at £4,000. William insured against fire soon after the mill started working in July 1808; the timber built mill for £400, and the standing and going gears, millstones, wire machines and dressing mills for £600.⁷

Within the next nine years the property on a 99 year lease was offered for sale on five occasions, the first by private contract advertised in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* of 29 January 1810. The mill was said to have been then the largest erection of its kind and the best constructed in the Kingdom. The same newspaper advertised the second attempt on the 10 September 1810 at the Auction Mart near the Bank of England in London.⁸ The *Times* newspaper dated 24 August also carried a notice, and added that the purchaser could have immediate possession. Meanwhile the financial position of William Pilbeam had been deteriorating. He was declared bankrupt in the *London Gazette* dated 24 November 1810, and three years later an entry in the same paper of 23 December 1813 announced that he was a prisoner for debt in Horsham gaol.

The mill in full trade and in the possession of Thomas Hill was auctioned at the Old Ship on 11 August 1814 and again on the 27 July 1815.⁹ The rent was stated to be £40 per annum. With Thomas still the owner, the mill was offered for sale by private contract in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 21 April 1817.

It is uncertain when the long association of the Hodson family with the mill began, but in 1822 the miller's son Thomas Henry Hodson died in a tragic accident. On the 19 November while working at the mill, part of his clothing became caught between the riggers and the shaft of the machinery causing him to be crushed to death.¹⁰ As a sign of mourning on the day of the funeral, the sweeps would have been set as the upright cross of St George. It was also the custom to set the sails in a like manner before starting work in the morning. At night they were set as an X similar to St Andrew's Cross.

During a Sunday night in November 1828 thieves broke into the mill and stole a sack of flour. Mr Hilder who used the mill immediately circulated hand bills offering a reward but the wrongdoers were not apprehended. In their haste they left behind a pair of deal steps. Another family tragedy occurred in January 1836 when Anthony William Hodson in a fit of delirium in his bedroom shot himself through the head and died instantly. In 1847 the father Thomas Hodson died and his three sons Charles, James and John continued the business. Thomas was probably the gentleman farmer of that name who was in charge of the moving of the West Mill in 1797. A further accident occurred on the 7 June 1850 when the millwright Edward Hubbard fell when some steps slipped in the mill. Several ribs were fractured and forced into his lungs. He was conveyed to Mr Dunk's residence where he expired five days later.¹¹ John Dunk was a fellow millwright living in Cheltenham Place, with a manufactory in St George's Place Mews near the Gloucester Hotel.

The best known millwright in and around Brighton at that time, Samuel Medhurst, whose premises were in the parish of St Anne's Lewes, then absorbed the Hubbard business in the Cliffe Lewes. Samuel was aged about fifty, having started up as a millwright 30 years before. He was a great believer in using iron for machinery, replacing the wooden shafts and cog wheels. His friend John Every cast the parts at his Phoenix Ironworks in Lewes. Samuel was assisted by his son Boaz, who eventually managed the firm when his father retired. Unfortunately in 1878 Boaz died when only 36 years old, and the business was sold to Alfred Shaw.¹²

In February 1849 James Hodson and his brother were on a late night shooting party when they found the body of Mr Griffiths on the side of the road near Poynings. He was part owner of the Rock Brewery in St James's Street and had been murdered while collecting orders, and money from wayside and village inns.



A photograph taken about 1853 shows that Hodson's Mill was still complete with four canvas cloth sails and fan-tail. Houses had been built close by, and these must have affected working on calm days.

The Hodson family concluded that the mill's working life was ending, and bought Hunston Mill near Chichester in 1856. From a photograph of 1862 it can be seen that by then two sweeps of Hodson's West Hill Mill were missing and the whole structure was deteriorating. A decision was made to pull it down on the 25 June 1866, and Samuel Medhurst with a team of seven men undertook the task.¹³ Young John Cutress, the son of Charles who had worked Vine's Mill, saw the strong rope put around the top, the sweeps and fan having already been removed. The workmen gathered by a saw-pit on the opposite side of the road, and pulled the rope until the wooden structure fell. In John's words "there was plenty of dust flying about".¹⁴ A Police Station was later erected in the site of the saw-pit, and this dilapidated building can still be seen today, next to the Providence Chapel.



Hodson's Mill 25 June 1866 (Edward Fox)

The mill yard adjoined the boundary wall of Brighton's old workhouse, which closed at about the same time as the mill was demolished. The dodecagonal base of the old mill was very substantial, and it was left almost untouched. In later years it served at different times as a coal store and a garage. It had outlived the mill by almost exactly a century, and was over 150 years old when it was removed during July and August 1966. Members of the Hodson family occupied an adjoining house in West Hill Road for many years even after the mill disappeared. In the 1930s Thomas Hodson's grandson still owned the mill site. In the 1990's the site was developed for housing and a terrace named Mill Row now stands on the site of the mill.

PORT HALL MILL

A small white post-mill with fan-tail was called Port Hall Mill as it was situated behind Port Hall in Dyke Road. Dating back to 1800 or even earlier, it can be seen with its neighbouring Preston Mill in a water colour by C W Wing dated 1826, entitled *Brighton from Richmond Hill looking towards Preston*. (The painting is located in Brighton Museum).

A title apportionment of 1841 shows Thomas Stanford, who lived in Preston Manor, as the owner, but the miller, Richard Butcher, soon afterwards ran into financial difficulties. An entry in the *London Gazette*, issued on the 10 March 1848, announced that by indenture he was assigning his assets for the benefit of creditors. One of the assignees was William Briggs, who was the miller of the nearby Preston Mill at about the same time.

Mr Soughton took over the mill, but within a few months suffered a personal tragedy when his five year old son was struck on the head by the sweep, the blow affecting his sight.¹⁵ At that time Edward Cutress, having given up Vine's Mill further down Dyke Road, began to use the Port Hall Mill to maintain supplies of flour for the bread and cake trade in his shop.



*Port Hall Mill
from a pencil sketch
Provided by Peter Hill*



Port Hall Mill to the right of Port Hall in Dyke Road
From a photograph supplied by Peter Hill

Maude Robinson in her charming book *A South Down Farm in the Sixties* tells us of the scene in those days. She was a daughter of a farmer at Saddlescombe, who often drove the family into Brighton in the 1860s. After passing their nearest neighbours at Tongdean Farm, they travelled between cornfields down Dyke Road. They came to the black Preston Mill on the left, and then saw on the same side a white mill behind a house, even then old, called Port Hall.

James Trusler, the landlord of the nearby Windmill Inn, and the owner of Preston Mill for a time, bought the Port Hall Mill in 1866. He sold it in 1874 to Charles Cutress, who worked it for about twelve years. It was demolished in 1887. At the same time the Cutress family opened a second shop at No. 23 London Street selling bread and cakes. That street ran between Ann Street and York Hill, west of St Bartholomew's Church.



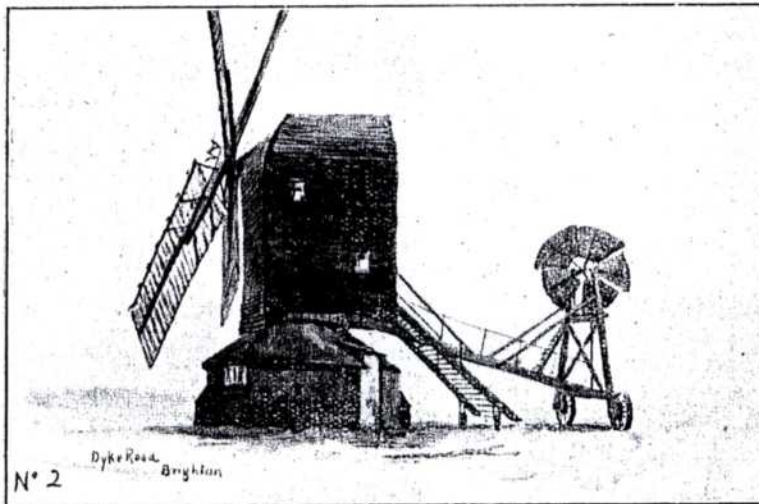
Edward Cutress's London Street baker's shop 1875

About 1880 Charles lived in Port Hall Cottage, which adjoined Port Hall in Dyke Road. The mill was pulled down about 1887, when the patent sweeps were advertised for sale; one pair went to the Race Hill Mill. Patent or 'self-reefing' sweeps were an improved shuttered type, the surface exposed to the breeze was reduced automatically when the wind increased. The site of Port Hall Mill is now occupied by some houses at the top of Port Hall Road, and the garages behind them.

PRESTON (OR STREETER'S, TRUSLER'S) MILL

The West Mill was moved in 1797 from Belle Vue Fields, now Regency Square, to a new site south of the present Dyke Inn, which is situated on the corner of Dyke Road and Highcroft Villas. This black post-mill was on land now occupied by Caffyns Garage on the east side of Dyke Road.

John Streeter who took over in 1792, five years before its journey, continued working the mill in its new situation. The Defence Schedules of 1801 stated that he agreed to supply five bushels of flour every day using his own wheat if necessary. The family worked Streeter's Mill for many years, and also traded as corn dealers and coal merchants in large premises in North Street where the owner was known as 'honest' Jonathan Streeter in the 1820s.



Preston or Dyke Mill showing tailbeam and step wheels
From a drawing by Clem Lambert from *Our Windmills* by W Law

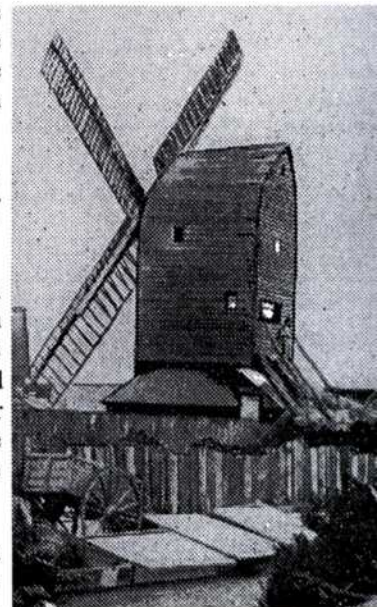
William Briggs, a corn merchant with premises in Upper St James' Street, worked Streeter's Mill from 1839 to 1844 and probably after that date. He was named as occupier in the title apportionment of 1841, William Stanford of Preston Manor being the owner. In 1847 John Fiest struck his head against a beam inside the mill with such force that his skull was cut so severely that he was taken to the Sussex County Hospital.¹⁶

The mill operated two pairs of millstones, the base was enclosed in a round house, and it was brought round to face the wind by moving the tail pole by hand. At some date after 1847 a large five-blade fan-tail was added. A change of wind caused this to rotate rapidly and drive two large wheels around a circular track made of iron rails which outlasted the mill and could be seen on the garage premises in the 1930s.

Streeter's Mill or the Black Mill became known as the Preston Mill because the village was at the bottom of the hill. The approach from Preston was called Millers Road, the present road of that name roughly follows the old track.

James Trusler occupied the mill and bought it in 1866. He also owned the nearby Windmill Inn in the 1870s. The small whitewashed inn must have been close to the miller's cottage, for when the larger Dyke Road Hotel was built here in 1900, it extended over the site of the miller's house.¹⁷ The hotel has been re-named the Dyke Tavern. James Trusler let the mill to Edward Soughton until 1874 when Jesse Hunnisett took over. He owned a thriving bakery in Trafalgar Street and ran two other mills. His nephew Frank William Willett sometimes helped at the Preston Mill which they called 'Old Blow Hard'. Even on calm days one pair of stones could be worked when all around were idle.

Trusler's Mill, as it had become known, was bought in 1882 by Joseph Harris, who had a bakery and postal telegraph office in Patcham. His daughter later told Gurney Wilson that her father removed some of the works from the mill for inclusion in his new Waterhall Mill then being built. The old mill was pulled down around 1890 over a century after its erection "westward of Brighthelmstone". As late as 1930 the garage on the site in Dyke Road, then owned by Mr Lambourne, was called the Old Mill Works and Garage.



Preston Mill in 1885
then known as Trusler's Mill
Bton & Hove Herald 6th Aug 1938

WATERHALL MILL

The Waterhall Tower Mill was completed in February 1885 and can still be seen on the south side of Mill Road at Patcham. Joseph Harris instructed Henry Hubbard, a bricklayer who lived in Middle Lane Preston, to build a five-storey tower. He finished the task in 1884 at a cost of £300. John Holloway & Son, a firm of Shoreham millwrights, fitted out the mill but Joseph Harris supplied them with some of the equipment. Parts for the new mill were brought from Preston Mill near Highcroft Villas which he had bought in 1882. These components would have been taken for overhaul and alteration to the blacksmith's forge at Patcham, situated conveniently near Joseph's shop in the present Old London Road. This forge was then worked by the Holder family. It ended its working life in 1954, and the site is now occupied by Patcham Garage. Remnants of the old roof edge can still be seen, and the blacksmith's cottages on the northern side are in excellent condition. We know that parts of the mill were made at this forge as Ernest Hole was there and helped in the work. In 1892 he opened his own millwright's business in Burgess Hill, his son Edwin ran this thriving firm, but died in 1987.



Waterhall Mill
Postcard

The last working windmill to be built in Sussex, Waterhall had patent sweeps, a large five-blade fan ten feet across, and worked three pairs of stones; the overall cost was £1,400. Unfortunately, a crack developed three years after completion, and an iron band was fitted around the outside; the cause was believed to have been soil subsidence. Running repairs in the early years were carried out by the Brighton millwrights Whittington & Sons, as can be seen from these entries in their account books:

14 September 1887 Repairs to sweeps... 16s 6d (82.5p)
19 April 1888 Repair to spur wheel and bearing to windshaft... £2 2s 7d (£2.13)
7 November 1891 Shortening sweeps, repair to fan, etc... £4 19s (£4.95)

Joseph Harris must have been well known in Patcham. Besides his connection with Preston and Waterhall Mills, he was also a baker with premises in London Road in the village. These are on the north side of the old Black Lion Hotel property in the present Old London Road. A photograph taken around 1903 shows that J Harris & Son were bakers, millers and corn merchants, and ran the Postal Telegraph Office. Today the same family still serves the public in the same shop with Nigel Harris running the post office. However the bakery which, was in a separate building at the rear, closed some years ago.

After Joseph's death in 1903, his widow was nominally the miller but employed the very experienced Mr Bull to run the mill until it ended its working life in 1924. When Gurney Wilson paid a visit in the following year, he noticed that nearly all the windows were broken and the fan-tail failed to respond to the wind. In 1926 the Harris family sold the property to Charles Stubbs who took a personal interest in the structure. Repairs were carried out and Mr Chater Lea overhauled the faulty gearing. A residence was erected on the frontage of the mill to provide a holiday retreat. Following the death of Charles Stubbs in 1935, his ashes were strewn from the mill tower.¹⁸

The mill was purchased by Stephen Easter in 1937, and a few years later was used as headquarters of the local Home Guard during the Second World War. By 1953 the property had been bought by two sisters Mrs Mary Christiansen and Mrs Anne Meyer. When Brighton Corporation refused permission for them to set up a tea garden in the windmill grounds, they successfully appealed against the decision. In early 1957 the sisters arranged for some renovation work to be carried out and the whole structure was enclosed with scaffolding.¹⁹

Five years later the five roomed cottage, the mill and three quarters of an acre of land were up for sale at £7,500. Outline planning permission for the mill to be converted into living accommodation had been granted. Film producer Miss Honoria Plesch took over the property and spent £8,000 converting the mill into a residence. Gas-fired central heating was installed, and the ground floor fitted out with a tailored kitchenette and bathroom.²⁰ A circular staircase gave access to the large sitting room on the next floor, where the big windows provide extensive views. Old mill gearing above the large central beam in this room was retained. Before putting up the mill for auction in 1968, Miss Plesch arranged for the cap to be covered with green rubberoid tiles, and the exterior of the tower to be whitened. Some millstones were built into the encircling wall.

Mr Peter Benning acquired the mill for £5,500, but in 1969 one sweep broke off during a gale. A year or so later Mr Benning arranged for the remaining sweeps to be removed; he considered that they were unsafe and a danger to his wife and young son.²¹ New stocks and sail frames were fitted in June 1972 by the millwrights Pargeter and Barrett-Lennard, who also replaced the fan and strengthened the fan-tail; Brighton Corporation gave some financial assistance. The mill still retains most of the basic machinery including the wallower, the upright shaft, the great spur wheel, stone nuts and three bedstones.

WEST BLATCHINGTON MILL

Although West Blatchington Windmill is not within the town boundaries, it is not far from Dyke Road, the site of so many mills, and merits inclusion. It seems to have been erected circa 1820; the Defence Schedules of 1801 noted that "there is no mill in this parish", is not marked on the 1808 Ordnance but one is shown on Greenwood's Map of Sussex surveyed in 1823 and 1824. The mill was painted by Constable in 1825. It is a smock-mill, with a six-sided wooden body built on a four-sided base of flint and red bricks. An unusual feature is the cast iron cross to which the stocks are attached, and this can be seen clearly as one approaches.

The whole structure appears to have been built on the barns, which were at one time considerably longer and formed part of a farm-yard. However, Mr R Thurston Hopkins, an authority on windmills, wrote in 1929 that he had thoroughly surveyed the building, and considered that the barns were added later.²² To further verify this, Ron Martin surveyed the building in 2001, and concluded that the mill had been built on a free-standing tower. (SIAS Newsletter No 111, July 2001). Some of the original circular windows had been blocked up when the barns were built out from three sides of the mill. The flint base was built with three floors, the middle one having machinery to transfer the wind power to chaff-cutters and a threshing machine in the barns. The two pairs of millstones were situated on the first floor of the wooden tower.

In its early days its position made the mill a seamount for mariners, and some of the millers acted as smugglers' retailers, hiding brandy and tobacco under sacks of flour.²³ It seems that the smugglers obtained contraband so easily that they were able to supply any item required.



West Blatchington Farm C1890. On the extreme right is Meadow Cottages, The present Holmes Avenue covers the site of the old duck pond.

During a great storm in 1881, snow accumulated in such quantities that the revolving cap would not move. Realising that a change of wind direction would wreck the mill, elderly Mr Strudwick at great personal risk, climbed out on to the fan-tail to clear the snow. Mr Whittington was milling here during the late 1880s, but when his assistant Mr Strudwick reached his eighty-fifth birthday, he was told that it was unsafe for him to continue to go on to the high unguarded outside stage to attend to the sails. A gale of 1897 damaged the sweeps so severely that the working life of the mill was ended.²⁴ Mr Whittington was the last miller, living in the nearby Meadow Cottage; he died in 1928 aged 83. In 1905 two sweeps were removed from their wooden stocks by Whittington & Sons the Brighton millwrights, and for many years the mill could be seen with two skeleton sweeps and two stocks.

An ancient cradle, for hanging outside to assist the men tarring the mill, was said in 1929 to be 150 years old.²⁵ When not required, it was hung inside the mill, complete with ropes and hooks. When working, the mill was probably tarred for the last time about 1880, and a character named Rounderby from his high perch amused the crowd by constantly arguing with his wife on the ground below, and frequently refreshed himself by drinking strong ale. The cradle is not there now; it seems to have disappeared during the 1930s. In December 1934 the fan, which had been chained for many years, broke loose during a gale and set the cap rotating. A farm hand climbed into the cap and stopped the movement with a crow-bar.

On the 3 May 1936 the south barn was severely damaged by fire and eventually demolished, and the farm given up. Hove Corporation acquired the mill in 1937 when they wisely bought the property and five acres of ground from the Marquis of Abergavenny for £3,400. This ensured that as the farmland developed into a residential district, the future of the old mill was in safe hands. However the north barn was demolished but in August 1939 new sweeps were fitted by Neves the Heathfield millwrights. In 1966 new pitch pine stocks forty feet long were fitted and the sweeps repaired by Edwin Hole the Burgess Hill millwright.

Since 1977 a great deal of work has been carried out by Hove Borough Council and latterly Brighton & Hove Council, to restore the fabric of this Grade II listed building. In 1997 a new north barn was constructed affording more space with seating, tables and lecture facilities plus a small kitchen from which light refreshments can be served to visitors. Internally the mill has been restored by "The Friends" of the mill who have set up displays both of the history of the mill and machinery related to the mill's working days. Described as one of the finest mill museums in the country, the mill has become a valuable educational resource with many unique features to be seen.

LASHMAR'S (OR HOVE) MILL

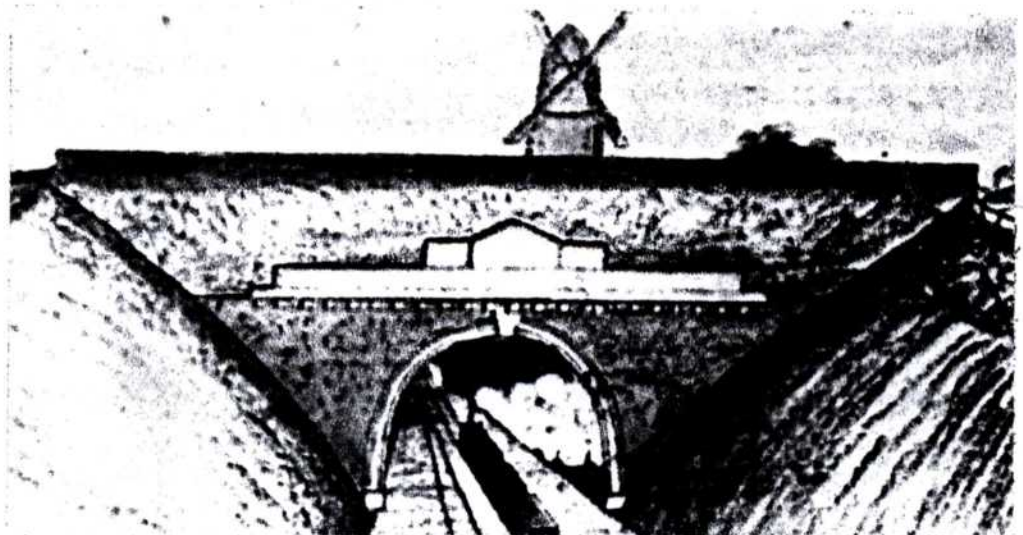
There was a post-mill near Dyke Road, south of Old Shoreham Road, near the eastern end of the present street called Belmont. The town boundary here was east of Dyke Road in those days, so this windmill usually known as Lashmar's, was sometimes called Hove Mill. It was erected around 1780, but suffered damage during a gale in 1793 when one sweep was blown off. It landed a considerable distance away, although its "weight was as much as three men could lift".²⁶

The Lashmars were then an important family in the commercial life of Brighton, Richard was High Constable in 1799. He even issued his own coinage, mainly pennies and half-pennies bearing his own name. At that time there was a shortage of small change, so prominent traders introduced token coins for local use. Richard was a grocer and draper in Middle Street, while his brother John from his baker's shop in Ship Street concerned himself with the windmill. Other Lashmars were coal merchants and lodging house keepers. By 1805 they had become bankers, opening the Union Bank in North Street in conjunction with other traders. Later they operated the Brighton & Sussex Bank in St James' Street in partnership with Mr Mugridge.

The Old Hove Windmill was replaced by a stronger post-mill, erected on the same site in 1821 for the Lashmars. This became known as the New Hove Mill, and can be seen in a painting of 1839 by Mr Nash. It appears that the mill was turned into the wind by a roof mounted fan, an unusual feature on post-mills. A complicated mechanism was needed to transfer the movement of the fan to wheels on a circular track on the ground. During a storm in January 1830, the main beam holding the sails broke; the sweeps were blown across a field, where two struck a building, demolishing the slated roof. In 1834 John Lashmar moved to a new tower-mill at Round Hill Road. Within a few years the partnership between him and his son John Young Lashmar was dissolved on 24 June 1843.²⁷



Lashmar's Mill above tunnel entrance
Brighton Herald 16th May 1840



Print of Lashmar's Mill on original site at Belmont above the railway tunnel
Illustration provided by Peter Hill

The son continued to work the New Hove Mill until it was bought from him by James Mitchell. In 1852 James transported it from Dyke Road to Clayton Hill, where it can still be seen as Jill, the white post-mill. A trolley drawn by teams of horses, later replaced by oxen, was used for the long journey.

James Mitchell and his son were then making large profits working Duncton Gate Windmill on Clayton Hill when Jill arrived, and was erected a short distance west of the existing mill. The newcomer was placed on four newly-built brick piers, and the whole base enclosed in a new round house. The well known Lewes millwright Samuel Medhurst supervised the work carried out in 1852. He built a large new fan on the tail-pole, and within a short time the two pairs of millstones were in full production. The two mills were worked by the Mitchell family until 1866 when the tower-mill Jack was built. With the exception of the round house, the old Duncton Gate post-mill was dismantled, and the new mill built so close to the old that a doorway gave access to the old round house, thus providing extra storage space.

At least ten windmills were working at that time within five miles or so of Clayton Hill, enabling local bakers, farmers, villagers and corn merchants to obtain flour, bran and meal for the pigs and cattle, often produced from their own crops.²⁸ They also used mills as markets to obtain or dispose of surplus flour or corn. Millers sometimes received payment by retaining a proportion of the ground meal. This arrangement legalised in 1808 was called 'knaveship', a term believed to be a reflection on the miller's honesty. Sometimes the wind on Clayton Hill was so strong that everyone was forced to crawl. To overcome this difficulty one miller dug a tunnel from the nearby sunken cottages to one mill. A mill worker tried keeping chickens but gave up the venture when birds were frequently blown away and could not be found.

Charles and Joseph Hammond took over Jack and Jill around 1870, James Mitchell having died in May 1867, aged 78. The two brothers worked in partnership here for about 10 years, and when Joseph left in the early 1880s, Charles lived in the village near the southern end of the footpath by the railway to Hassocks. His corn store was near the house. His miller Mr Muddle and cartman Dick Wooller lived in the cottages near the mills; stabling for two horses was nearby. In September 1884 Dick Wooller was said to have been drunk and incapable in charge of a pair-horse wagon in Dyke Road Brighton. He was fined 10s (50p). He was a keen cricketer, taking part in all the Clayton team's activities.²⁹ The farm workers' wives and children were allowed to glean the fields and took their ears of corn in a sack to the mills. When they received the flour, no charge was made but the miller retained the offal, bran and sharps.

Charles Hammond died in August 1903 aged 72; the pulpit in Clayton Church is a memorial to him. At that time Colonel Campion of Danny was the landowner, Charles Hammond had occupied the properties as a copyhold leaseholder. His executors offered that lease for sale at an auction where William Wood purchased it. He worked both mills for a few years and then had to cease milling in 1907 as they had become hopelessly uneconomic. Dick Wooller still occupied one of the cottages, and was milling on the last working day; he was at the mills almost forty years. In William Wood's words the mills were still "in perfectly efficient condition and well equipped in every particular". He came to an arrangement with Colonel Campion whereby he surrendered his interest to him. In 1908 Edward Martin, an archaeologist, rented Jack as a convenient residence while studying dew ponds. He has told us that Jill, having been filled with chalk to have it ballast, was severely damaged during a storm in 1908. After some delay men came from the north of England to repair the guiding mechanism.³⁰

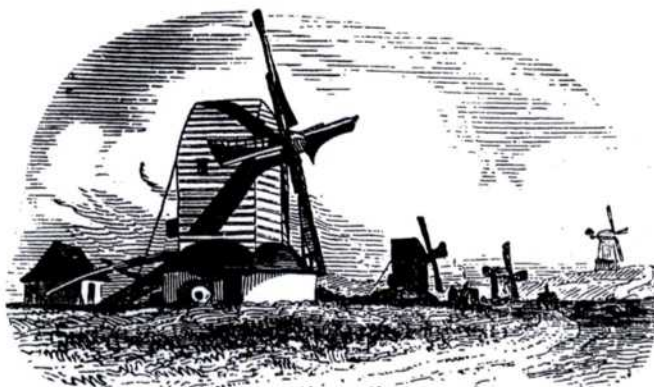
In 1911 Captain and Mrs Walter Anson took over the mill on lease, and eventually purchased the entire property in 1917 for £580. The transaction included two very old cottages, some outbuildings and an acre of land. By the 1930s Jill had lost her tail-pole and fan-tail, although Mrs Anson kept the weather-boarding in good repair, and had the mills painted regularly. In 1948 at the age of eighty-five Mrs Anson died, and five years later Henry Longhurst the well known golf correspondent took over the property. In 1953 the Burgess Hill millwright, Edwin Hole, repaired Jill and fitted two new sweeps. Henry Longhurst gave the mill to the local District Council in 1958.

The millwrights Messrs E Hole & Son carried out restoration work on Jill in 1980. A side girt, a front corner post and two beams across the front of the mill have been replaced, and the crown tree and sheers have been strengthened. They made and fitted a new ladder and tail-pole. In 1983 an unsafe wooden stock was removed, and replaced with one made of steel supplied by the same firm of millwrights. This enabled the sweeps to be re-fitted during the same year. Voluntary craftsmen completed the restoration of the body of Jill. A new fan-tackle over ten feet in diameter and weighing two tons was constructed by them, and fitted to turn the mill on a track 78 feet in diameter. On the 10 May 1986 corn was ground again after an interval of almost eighty years.



Jill Mill in the 1930's
Postcard

The mill suffered damage during the 1987 hurricane when the brakewheel failed to prevent the sweeps from turning. In the early hours of the morning great efforts were made to stop the sweeps and to extinguish fires caused by sparks and heat coming from the brakewheel. (Described in SIAS newsletter No.57 January 1988). Through these efforts major damage was averted and the mill was soon again grinding corn after repairs had been completed.



Dyke Road Mills 1847
(Preston, Port Hall, Lashmar's and Hodson's mills)
From an engraving in Brighton & Hove Archaeologist Vol 2 1924

- 1 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.8 p.610
- 2 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 18 October 1819; *Brighton Herald* 19 January 1828
- 3 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.8 p.610
- 4 *London Gazette* 13 February 1844
- 5 *Brighton Herald* 31 May 1913
- 6 J G Bishop, *A Peep into the Past* (Brighton 1892) p.294
- 7 Guildhall Library - City of London Record Office Royal Exchange Fire Policy 239215 4 August 1808; *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 25 July 1808
- 8 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 20 August 1810
- 9 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 25 July 1814, 3 July 1815
- 10 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 25 November 1822
- 11 *Brighton Herald* 22 November 1828; *Sussex Advertiser* 1 February 1836, 18 June 1850
- 12 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.26 p.8
- 13 *Sussex Advertiser* 3 July 1866
- 14 *Brighton Herald* 31 May 1913
- 15 *Brighton Gazette* 5 October 1838
- 16 *Brighton Herald* 3 July 1847
- 17 *Brighton and Hove Gazette* 4 April 1980
- 18 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.9 p.524; P Hemming *Windmills in Sussex* (1936)
- 19 *Evening Argus* 12 January 1957
- 20 *Sunday Times* 16 September 1962; *Evening Argus* 17 April 1968
- 21 *Evening Argus* 22 April 1971
- 22 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.880
- 23 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.722
- 24 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.700
- 25 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.800
- 26 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 22 April 1793
- 27 *Brighton Herald* 16 January 1830; *London Gazette* 16 September 1844
- 28 W Wood, *A Sussex Farmer* (1938) pp.112 - 114
- 29 *Mid-Sussex Times* 11 May 1937, 28 June 1973; *Brighton and Hove Gazette* 29 September 1984
- 30 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.10 p.219

Appendix:

John Lashmar is listed in the Post Office Directories of 1852 and 1855 as a 'miller and baker' of Ship Street Brighton, which may be the same property as that subsequently held by the Napper family. Frederick Napper is listed as a 'miller and baker' of 25 Ship Street in the Kelly's Directories of 1862, 1866, 1874 and 1878 and in the Kelly's Directory of 1887 he is listed as a 'miller (steam) and baker' at the same address. In 1903, 25 Ship Street is listed as Napper's Ltd Baker's
 County Planning Officer West Sussex County Council 1979

Brighton and Hove Gazette 1 December 1978

Windmills on the move: I was very interested to read.... about Mr Horton Ledger and his connection with the Nappers, one of the most famous milling families in Sussex...

Mrs Sally McEwan Lewes Road Westmeston Hassocks

Chapter 4 The East Brighton Windmills

CLIFTON MILL

About 1840, a large post-mill with fan-tail gearing called Clifton Gardens Mill and situated near Dyke Road, was moved to a site near Queen's Park. It is difficult to pin-point its new location, but Jobbins Plan seems to confirm that it was in the district in 1842. A sketch by John Nannon in 1850 shows the mill on Turner's Land, with the nearby East End Mill on its new site near the top of Sussex Street.

On Taylor's Map of 1854 a track runs northward from the top of Sussex Street with a mill at the far end. The Miller's Arms public house at the bottom of the present Windmill Street was then in existence, and may have been at the southern end of that approach road to the mill. Kelly's Directory of 1855 places the Clifton Mill in Lennox Street. This street is further south, but stretched further north in those days, and probably included any nearby buildings situated in the open ground around. By 1855 William Rye Streeter and James Henton, trading as Henton and Company, were the millers and corn dealers at the Clifton Windmill. The partnership was dissolved in February when James Henton continued trading at Park Mill nearby. Later in the same year Mr Hardwick was listed in Kelly's Directory as occupier of the Clifton Mill. It was still shown on Saunder's Plan of 1856, but had disappeared by 1862 when Taylor's Mill was the "last remaining Mill on the east side of the valley in which Brighton is situated".¹

At the present time on the west side of Windmill Street only two houses have cellars, and these are near the northern end of the street. Possibly these cellars have an association with an old windmill, which once stood hereabouts. Building alterations on the same side of the street unearthed old wells, which could be connected with old mill or farm buildings.

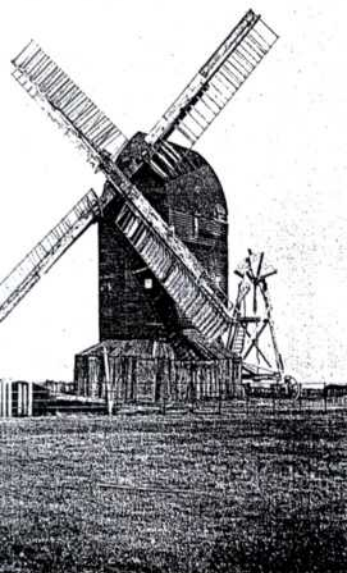
BUTCHER'S (OR PARK) MILL

A white post-mill was situated near the southern end of the eastern side of the present Toronto Terrace, and seems to have been erected about 1823. It was the only mill in the Queen's Park district to be shown on a map dated 1831, and was probably between the present No. 63 Toronto Terrace, which is set back behind the main row of houses, and the Walmer Castle public house. Queen's Park Road follows a straight course southward for a considerable distance, but soon after passing the Southover Street turning, it suddenly deviates slightly eastward. The old road did not bend, but continued in a straight line southward to become the approach road to the mill. This road and the mill are shown on Taylor's Map of 1854.

Richard Butcher, who lived at No. 32 Cavendish Street off Edward Street, was almost certainly the first miller. He took over in 1823 and worked it for about thirty years, so it became known as Butcher's Mill; other names were Park Mill and Albion Mill. From 1839 to 1845 he was also working Port Hall Mill near Dyke Road, but his financial position was deteriorating. In February 1848 he was ordered to assign his estate for the benefit of creditors. Three months later the Park Mill was due to be sold by auction on instructions of the mortgagee under a power of sale. The property was described as an excellent post windmill in most substantial order, together with the entire and complete gear (including two pairs of French stones). The mill, the miller's dwelling and premises were enclosed by a dwarf wall. The lease had 71 years unexpired at a rent of £2 per annum. Richard's finances had not improved six years later when he was described as an insolvent debtor, although he was still at the mill.² In 1855 he was listed as a miller and beer retailer, so after thirty years he was taking up a new vocation. In 1858 he was still living at No. 32 Cavendish Street.

The *Brighton Herald* dated 28 December 1861 told its readers that Butcher's Mill had been removed from its old site at the top of Richmond Hill near Park House, and was a considerable distance north of its old resting place, but had not reached its destination. In a letter to the *Brighton Herald* in 1906, Henry C Malden recalled seeing the mill as it was getting dark on a November afternoon some fifty years previously. He had returned from riding over the Downs when the horse's progress was impeded at the top of the Queen's Park Road by a windmill blocking the highway. It was on an iron contraption with ten or twelve wheels, being dragged up the road by about twenty horses and thirty or more oxen. There were many men with whips and sticks, and much shouting. It seems that steering difficulties were hindering progress. He was told that the sails had been removed before the journey started, and that the carriage was the same that had moved the West Mill about sixty years earlier. He wondered where they had kept it for such a long time.

On the 4 January 1862 the *Brighton Herald* continued its account of the journey which was being watched by "a large concourse of spectators". After travelling along Park Road, the mill had been pulled up Race Course Road until it was "lost in the Downs". As Mr Beard supplied fifteen horses and twenty-four oxen, and the journey ended on his land, one can assume that he had bought the mill. The three week journey finished near the top of the present Bear Road.



RACE HILL MILL

The mill's new position was near the half-mile post of Brighton Race Course, a short distance north-east of the reservoir at the top of Bear Road. Mr Beard may have been a member of the family of that name who were connected with the Beacon Hill Mill at Rottingdean for many years. The base of the mill was enclosed in a new wooden round house; the sweeps were re-fitted and soon the mill was in working order. It was dark in appearance as it was always tarred on its new site. Although it had not been previously equipped with a fan tail, a large six bladed fan was later constructed on the tail beam.

By 1872 Richard Ballard, who owned the windmill south of Patcham, also acquired the Race Hill Mill, which was worked by his employee Amos Hawes. In that year his two year old son was accidentally killed.³ The sweeps of the mill were so long that they cleared the ground by about eighteen inches only at their lowest point. Young George Thomas Hawes must have left the mill cottage nearby, and crawled or walked until a sweep struck him. At the inquest at the Bear Inn, it was said that the mill was unfenced.

The two patent sweeps which were acquired from the Port Hall Mill in the 1880s must have been modified before being fitted, as the Race Hill Mill could only operate with spring shuttered sweeps. A photograph taken around 1896 shows that by then the mill had become dilapidated with gaps in the wooden boarding, but still retaining four sweeps and a fan tail.⁴



At a later date the mill had only two sweeps, but it was still possible to work during periods of strong winds. The last miller was probably George Nicholls who took over around 1894, and was still working here in 1903. The mill's working days had probably ended when a severe gale blew off part of the body in 1908. The same gust turned over a van outside the mill house and broke the shafts. It had not been in use for some years when it suddenly collapsed from old age just before seven o'clock on the morning of the 16 May 1913. Mr W A Chapman, who then lived at the Race Hill Farm Cottages, was on his way to work at the farm when a rumbling sound from the mill attracted his attention. It was a clear spring morning with little wind when he saw the whole structure gradually collapse towards the south.⁵ A white cloud of dust and flour that had accumulated during the many years took over an hour to clear. The centre post and piers remained for a while, but when Gurney Wilson visited the site in July 1915, all that he could find was one millstone.

Mrs Elsie Maskey, who lived at No1 Race Hill Cottages, gave an account of the collapse to the *Brighton & Hove Leader* on 11 April 1987. During a gale in the small hours of the morning she heard a tremendous crash and went out to see the pile of timbers. Another correspondent in the issue of 28 March 1987 wrote that he knew the miller, his wife and two sons when he was a young lad. They lived in a tin hut in the grounds.

EAST END (OR TAYLOR'S) MILL

The East End Mill near the present Sudeley Place, and owned by John Taylor, was moved to the Queen's Park district between 1842 and 1847. In the 1855 edition of *Kelly's Directory* Thomas Knight was named as the miller of the East End Mill in Lennox Street. He had been in partnership with Edward Cutress at the Bear Mill in 1844, and their association was continued at the East End Mill. Edward used the mill to obtain flour for his bakery in Dyke Road, and may well have had a financial interest in the property.⁶

In 1858 Francis Taylor, who lived at No. 52 Marine Parade, owned the mill at the top of Lennox Street, near the wall of Queen's Park. In those days Queen's Park extended as far west as Park Road West (now Queen's Park Road) in this district. In February of that year Francis instructed Mr Absalom to sell the mill, then becoming known as Taylor's, at his auction rooms in New Road. A condition of the sale was that the mill was to be removed, although ample time would be given. The mill was advertised as equipped with a cast iron shaft, French stones, peak stones and a pair of wheels.⁷ The windmill was struck by lightning in June 1861, but it did not suffer serious damage. A donkey standing nearby was not so fortunate; he "fell to the ground and remained lifeless for half an hour".⁸



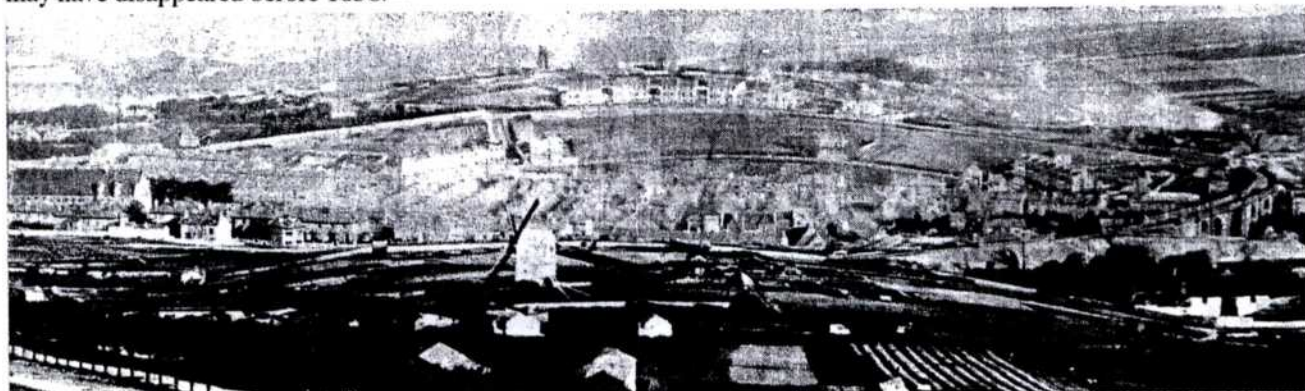
Gradual deterioration of Race Hill Mill Postcards

The *Brighton Herald* informed its readers on 4 January 1862 that Taylor's Mill was the "last remaining mill on the east side of the valley in which Brighton is situated". The Clifton Windmill near Windmill Street had disappeared and the Park Mill was on its way to the Race Hill. The reporter understood that Taylor's Mill was also soon to be moved northward.

Francis was still in possession of Taylor's Mill when he instructed James Jackson to move the mill to a spot near the Industrial Schools then being built at Woodingdean (later to be known as the Warren Farm Schools). In his opinion the mill was then between seventy and eighty years old. Just before noon on Monday the 24 March 1862, work was proceeding when the mill fell, killing Robert Ireland, one of the labourers, and Alfred Falgar, a little boy who was looking on.⁹ Josiah Jupp of the Devonshire Arms in nearby Carlton Street (now Carlton Hill) was 30 yards away when the mill, said to have weighed 30 tons, fell in his garden. The Devonshire Arms, largely re-built between the Wars is still trading on the same site. Another witness at the inquest, James Jackson an engineer living in Ann Street, who had been instructed to carry out the work, stated that he had ordered Henry Funnell to build a new carriage capable of supporting the mill. The fall was believed to have been caused either by the carriage not being strong enough for the task, or by the timbers of the old mill giving way. The jury considered the mill could not stand the strain of being moved, and recorded a verdict of Accidental Death. There was a dispute about payment for the removal of the mill ending in a Court Action on 5 September 1862. James Jackson finally agreed to accept eighteen pounds from Francis Taylor and judgement was given for that sum.

HANOVER MILL

The large white Hanover Post Mill was situated on the south side of the present Bernard Place, between Brading Road and Bernard Road. It may have been erected in 1838 when the 99 years lease commenced. A mill in the vicinity is featured on Colonel Mudge's Map of 1813, but that may have disappeared before 1838.¹⁰



Hanover Mill soon after construction. View across the Lewes Road valley to Round Hill Crescent. Round Hill Tower Mill can just be seen directly above Hanover Mill.

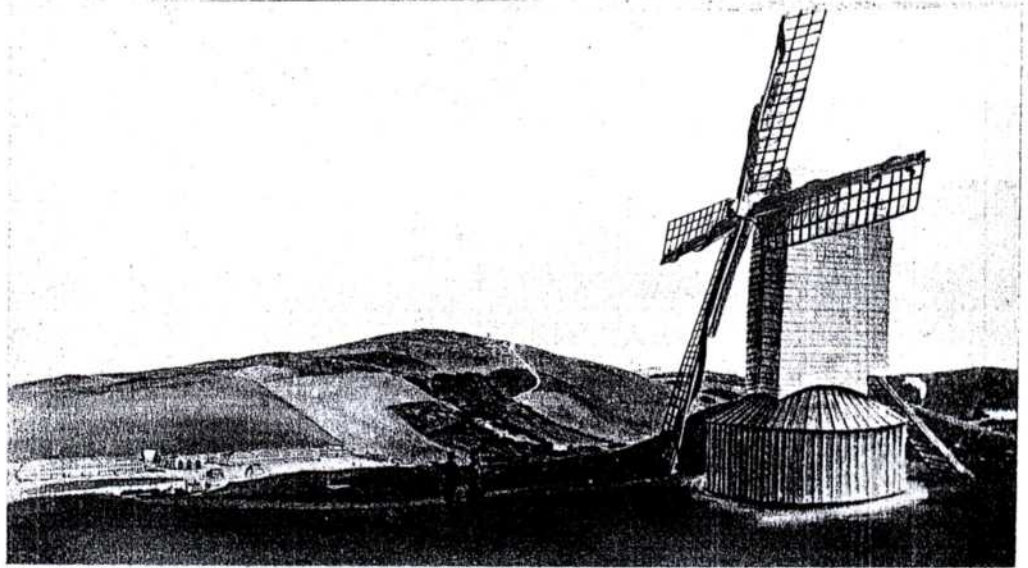
From Photograph provided by Peter Hill

James Dunk, a miller and corn merchant, was probably the occupier in 1845; in that year his milling partnership with Thomas Baker was dissolved by mutual consent.¹¹ At that time the mill was isolated; Cabe's Castle and its farm were then the only other buildings between the present Elm Grove and the Bear Inn.

Following James Dunk's death the Hanover Mill was put up for auction by his executors on 22 February 1866.¹² The mill was advertised as equipped with patent sails and fan-tail, two pairs of millstones, dressing and smut machines, oat crusher and bean cracker. Flour dressing machines or 'sifters' separated the white flour from the middlings (pig food) and from the bran; smut machines removed black fungoid specks. The base of the mill was enclosed in a capacious round house. The lease still had about seventy years to run at a ground rent of £10 per annum. Mr Levett then held the tenancy due to expire on the following Lady Day. Thomas Turner Brazier later occupied the mill but left in 1868 when he took over the Round Hill Mill near Ditchling Road. James Hunnisett then took over the tenancy.

When this ended, the mill and a large acreage of ground around were acquired in 1876 by Alderman Henry Abbey for building purposes. He leased the mill to Mr J H Levett (the son of the tenant in 1866) on condition that the lease terminated on the day the last sweep fell. At that time there were probably two cloth and two spring sweeps. When only two sweeps remained, work still continued occasionally but the mill fell into disuse and was pulled down about 1888.

BEAR MILL



*Bear Mill by C Wing c1830. Note cavalry and Moulsecomb in the background
(Illustration provided by Peter Hill)*

The white Bear Post Mill was situated on land now between Ladysmith Road and Kimberley Road. A mill is shown here on Colonel Mudge's Map of Sussex published at the Tower of London in 1813.¹³ A corn windmill with an acre of ground on Whitehawk Hill was advertised for sale in the 16 December 1822 edition of the *Brighton Herald*. Mr Shotter, an auctioneer trading at 11 New Road next to the recently opened Theatre Royal, described the tenant as respectable. The rent was £50 per year.

Thomas Marchant was the miller in the 1820s, but was declared bankrupt in 1824. He gave up the tenancy at Michaelmas in 1826, but retained the house and garden. He continued to have financial troubles and in 1833 appeared at the Court for Relief of Insolvent Debtors in Horsham.¹⁵ He was a remarkable man, having also been a farm bailiff and the operator of a cross channel packet boat. The mill and the remainder of the property were taken over by Edward Faulkener on a half-yearly tenancy.

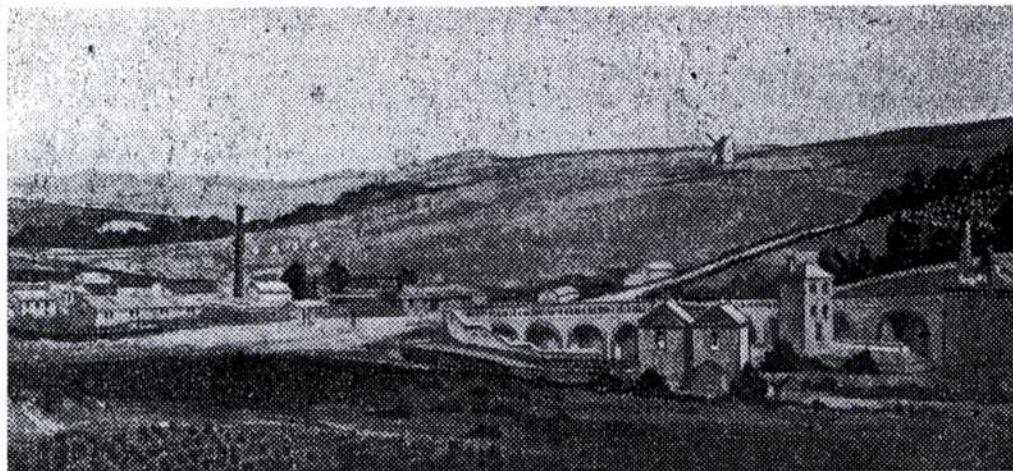
The mill was advertised for sale by auction in July 1826 and by private contract during the following month. It was up for auction again at the same place - the Star Inn, Lewes - on the 20 June 1827.¹⁴ It was described as a capital leasehold mill equipped with two pairs of stones and known as the Bear Mill; the lease had about twenty years to run at a rent of £12 per annum. Included in the sale were a substantial dwelling house, granary, stable and cart lodge.

Between 1832 and 1834 Richard Tye was working the mill but the tithe apportionment of 1841 names the occupier as James Donne and the owner as George Harrington. Edward Cutress had become associated with the property by 1844; in that year his partnership with Thomas Knight as millers at the Bear Mill was dissolved.¹⁶ Edward had taken over Vine's Mill near Dyke Road two years earlier.

Mr C R Smith, the owner of the Terminus Steam Corn Mills in Trafalgar Street, was the owner of the Bear Mill in the 1850s. He advertised it for private sale in January 1854; James Everett took over the tenancy two months later, but only stayed for a short time. Mr Smith was again advertising the property, described as "the best winded mill in Sussex", to be let with immediate possession in January 1855.¹⁷ The mill was then certainly in an excellent position to catch the wind, situated as it was in an exposed spot on a steep slope. Access was by means of a short approach track branching off a narrow lane, later to become Bear Road. Thomas Welfare Ford also worked the mill in the 1850s. He had previously been the miller at Valebridge Water Mill situated near Rocky Lane, Haywards Heath. When the *London Gazette* on 23 December 1856 quoted him as an insolvent debtor, his address was given as Kingsbury Road Brighton, formerly of the Bear Mill Preston. He died in 1857 aged 72.

In 1874 Charles Payne occupied the mill, and he was succeeded between 1875 and 1880 by Jesse Hunnisett and his family. They also worked the Hanover Mill near Elm Grove and the Preston Mill in Dyke Road during this period. The family considered the Bear Mill was the best, naming it 'Never Sweat'. In addition they had a thriving bakery in Trafalgar Street, just above Trafalgar Lane. Possibly all this activity by him and his wife brought their lives to a premature end. Bear Mill was demolished circa 1890.

Following a long calm period during which urgent work accumulated, dedicated millers like the Hunnisetts would clear the backlog as soon as the wind freshened by working up to twenty hours or so without rest. However, they stopped working on the Sabbath; the parson insisted that it was a day of rest. Some with urgent work to be completed, and a favourable wind blowing, were tempted to continue after midnight on Saturday, hoping no one would see the sweeps turning. It was said that a few even risked starting after Evensong if the night was very dark. Such unholy behaviour was called "cheating the Devil".



Bear windmill in 1876, also showing the Lewes Road railway viaduct and the first Brighton water pumping station with its tall chimney.
From Brighton & Hove Herald 13th August 1938

When Mrs Hunnisett died, the cloth sailed Bear Windmill with half an acre of ground was auctioned by her executors at the King and Queen in Marlborough Place on the 16 August 1880, and fetched £165.¹⁸ The lease at a nominal rent still had thirty years unexpired. Among the other items were some strange vehicles and a grey mare complete with harness to pull them. These were two spring vans, a spring cart, and a phaeton, a type of four-wheeled carriage.

A map of the district dated 1902 shows the mill property enclosed with the southern boundary in Bear Road. The mill is shown but was probably disused by that date. No other building is on that northern side of Bear Road or on the open downland beyond. Soon afterwards a pattern of roads was laid out in readiness for the building of houses. Kimberley Road is crescent shaped with both ends joining Ladysmith Road. The mill site situated in the widest part of the crescent was untouched so it would appear that the builders were unable to acquire the land.

FALMER MILL

Richard Dumbrell was the tenant of a windmill at Falmer in 1617; his ancestors were said to have built it. Possibly it was there in 1590 when Robert Edwards, miller of Falmer married Elizabeth Hardman. Thomas Walls was the owner in 1720. The mill is shown on Budgen's Map of 1724. Around 1750 Thomas Walls' successors mortgaged it to Richard Christmas. He was at the mill in 1801 when Falmer Mill was mentioned in the Defence Schedules. He agreed to supply seven sacks of flour every 24 hours on condition that the authorities supplied the wheat. In the same year robbers entered the premises and stole three sacks and a bag containing about four bushels of flour.

The mill was then situated on the west side of Park Street near the northern end, not far from the present No 76 Park Street. The road from Brighton to Lewes at that time passed through the village along the present Mill Street. The mill was near that road on the northern side. Thomas Pelham, first Earl of Chichester decided to move the mill as he wished to enclose that land into his Estate. He paid all expenses for the work carried out in 1817 by Henry Stevens, a millwright who had premises in Southover, Lewes.¹⁹

The mill was transported about a quarter of a mile to a site west of Ridge Road and north of Mill Street. The exact location is not known, but was probably where there are now tennis courts near Mill Farm Cottage which is situated on the corner of the two roads. Fifty-two oxen were used to pull the mill on a wheeled platform, and a temporary bridge had to be constructed to carry the mill over a steep hollow. The area between Park Street and Ridge Road north of Mill Street has now been levelled to provide part of the sports area of the University of Sussex.

Richard Christmas owned the mill when it was moved. After he died his brother-in-law George Mott took over and in 1835 he advertised it to be let by tender for 3 years. The mill was in full trade; also there were a cottage, a warehouse capable of holding twenty loads of wheat, a flour house, a cart house and a meadow. The landlord agreed to pay all taxes, but the tenant had to keep the mill, fences and buildings in good repair and pay the rent quarterly.²⁰

On his death his widow Mary Mott came into possession, and let the mill to Richard Outram Gasson who went bankrupt two years later. After Mary died, the property was acquired by Thomas William Roberts, who in 1846 advertised the premises to be let by tender on lease for seven years. William Marchant, who had worked the mill for at least eight years, was leaving. Five years later the property was again to let; this time with immediate possession.²¹

Later Mr Booth, owner of Mill House, became owner of the mill, and let it to Mr Green, who in turn shared it with the Ballard family of millers who owned Patcham Smock Mill. When Falmer Mill was idle during periods of calm weather, Jack Ballard brought supplies by horseback from Patcham to Stanmer by way of the Lady's Mile. Frederick Jones, who was a young Falmer lad at that time, remembered seeing Jack mounted on a fine mare at Stanmer pond one hot day. He had a sack of flour slung across the horse in front of him while the mare drank, when suddenly she decided to lie down in the cool water. The flour was ruined and Jack disconsolately rode back to Patcham for another sack.²²

The working life of Falmer Mill was drawing to a close. In 1866 the Lewes millwrights Samuel Medhurst & Son were advertising it for sale on condition that it was pulled down. The large white oak post mill was equipped with two patent and two common sweeps. In the same year it was pulled down. Mr Walter Hobden, who lived all his life in Falmer, was then a youth, but still remembered in the 1930's the cloud of grey dust that arose as the timbers collapsed. Nearly a century later the foundations of the old mill were visible, with a holly hedge surrounding them. The tenant of Mill Farm used this area as a chicken run, and it was known as the Mill Platt. It disappeared in 1961 when the University of Sussex absorbed Mill Farm and its surroundings into their sports area.

1 *London Gazette* 23 February 1855; *Brighton Herald* 4 January 1862

2 *London Gazette* 10 March 1848, 4 April, 25 April 1854; *Brighton Gazette* 4 May 1848

3 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 23 April 1872

4 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.11 p.304

5 *Sussex Daily News* 2 September 1908; *Brighton and Hove Herald* 6 August 1938

6 *Brighton Herald* 31 May 1913

7 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 3 February 1858

8 *Brighton Herald* 29 June 1861

9 *Brighton Gazette* 27 March 1862

10 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.881

11 *London Gazette* 11 March 1845

12 *Sussex Advertiser* 20 February 1866

13 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.3 p.881

14 *Sussex Advertiser* 10 July, 21 August 1826, *Brighton Herald* 12 May 1827

15 *Sussex Advertiser* 18 November 1833

16 *London Gazette* 13 February 1844

17 *Sussex Advertiser* 10 January 1854, 30 January 1855; *Brighton Herald* 25 March 1854

18 *Brighton Herald* 14 August, 21 August 1880

19 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 16 November 1801, 21 October 1817; Doris Williams *Falmer Parish Reflections* (1985) pp.48-50

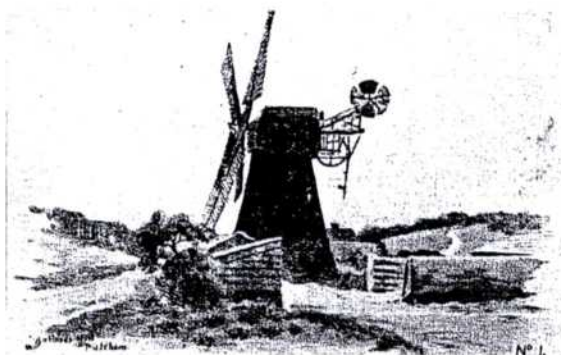
20 *Sussex Advertiser* 11 May 1835

21 *Sussex Advertiser* 2 June 1848, 21 October 1851

22 *Sussex Advertiser* 10 April 1866; *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.1 p.514

Chapter 5 The North Brighton Windmills

PATCHAM OR BALLARD'S MILL



Ballard's Mill
From *Our Windmills*,
W. Law, 1924

A windmill held by Richard Geeringe stood in Patcham in 1620, and one is shown on Budgen's Map of Sussex published in 1724. The *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 8 January 1776 recorded a windmill accident at Patcham; a miller working for Mr Scrase was adjusting the sails when they unexpectedly moved, but fortunately his only injury was a broken wrist.

That post-mill was situated on a hill east of the London Road and south of the Lady's Mile in the vicinity of the present Old Mill Close. Richard Scrase insured the property between 1781 and 1789; the Sun Fire Insurance policies included the windmill, dwelling house, granary and stables, all adjacent and timber built. The land tax in 1780 was 3s (15p) per annum. By 1791 Susannah Scrase was the owner; her relatives William and Thomas Scrase worked the mill. At about that date a smock-mill was erected near the old post-mill, and both mills are shown side by side on some maps around that time although probably the old one was derelict.

When thieves broke into the premises in 1801, John Streeter was the miller, running both this and the Preston Mill.¹ There must have been a crime wave at that time because although only two bushels of flour were stolen, John offered a reward of ten guineas and the Treasurer of the Preston Society for Prosecuting Thieves was willing to give five guineas for information. In the same year John was listed in the Defence Schedules as a Patcham miller promising to supply 15 sacks of flour every day. William Drew rented the mill until it was advertised for sale by auction on 3 April 1806 at the Old Ship Inn.² The purchaser was William Boniface who also owned a shop, warehouse and granary in Middle Street, Brighton. Seven years later he offered all the property for sale by auction in the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* dated 2 August 1813. William Vine and James Muggeridge bought the mill, but the partnership was dissolved by mutual consent in 1816.³ William continued to work the mill until 1818 when he took over one near St Nicholas Church, later to be called Vine's Mill.

In the same year Richard Ballard bought Patcham Mill and its long association with the Ballard family began. The squat white smock-mill was not in a good position to catch the wind as there were higher hills to the east and the west. To overcome that difficulty the sweeps were made as wide and long as possible so that they almost touched the ground. Two years after taking over, the family suffered a tragedy when two year old William Ballard was struck by a sweep and killed in 3 July 1820.⁴ Succeeding generations worked the mill for over half a century. Ballard's Mill, as it had become known, operated two pairs of millstones and was equipped with a six-blade fan and a hand chain wheel. A distinctive feature was the low stone wall surround. The family also worked Falmer Mill during the late 1850s, and the Race Hill Mill for a few years in the 1870s. In its later years Ballard's Mill was only capable of undertaking grinding and crushing work for local farmers, and that work ceased when the unsafe sweeps were removed around 1885; Ebenezer Ballard was the last miller.

The main structure was demolished about 1900, but the ground floor was retained as a store until the early 1920s. At that time Gurney Wilson periodically visited the octagonal building then being used as a fowl house, but by 1926 it had disappeared. Ten years later the mill house and stable were still standing. Ebenezer Ballard and his wife continued to live in the Mill House operating the bakery after milling ceased. Just before the First World War the business was called Ballard's Patcham Steam Bakery situated on the north side of Patcham Grange. Ebenezer Ballard's brother-in-law Ebenezer J Hammond took over the business; he and his family were associated with it for many years. An advertisement in *Pike's Directory* for 1909 gives details of a business Ebenezer Ballard then conducted in South Road, Preston. In addition to being a miller, baker and corn merchant, he sold garden sheds of every description, and hired out pony traps. He was also the proprietor of a horse bus service to Patcham leaving the Stanford Arms public house at Preston Circus every thirty minutes.



Ballard's Mill
Postcard



Round Hill Mill
soon after construction
ton & Hove Herald 6th Aug 1938



Round Hill Mill from Belton Rd
Postcard



"Tower Mill" near to demolition
Postcard

ROUND HILL (OR CUTRESS'S) MILL

Around 1834 John Lashmar and John Ingledeu erected a cement-faced brick built tower-mill on Round Hill, east of the present St Saviour's Church. Situated at the top of Round Hill Road on the northern side, it was a large mill with five floors, and a copper domed cap. There was also a wide base used for storing sacks of corn. No expense was spared; it was eighty feet high, the sweeps were 32 feet long, the walls were over two feet thick at the base. 50,000 bricks were used, and the revolving top ran on a walnut wood stage. When completed at a cost of £2,000, the Tower Mill operated three pairs of millstones, and there was sufficient space for a fourth to be installed. The mill was capable of milling ten loads of wheat per week. It traded under the name of Ingledeu & Co., but within a few years John Lashmar gave up his share of the undertaking. John Ingledeu replaced him with two new partners, Thomas Wisden and Jonathan Streeter.

The Streeter family had then been associated with milling for over fifty years, and also had large shop premises in North Street, but the prosperous days were over, and Jonathan's bankruptcy in 1852 caused the firm of Ingledeu & Co. to be dissolved.⁵ John Ingledeu continued to trade as a bread and biscuit baker at 78 St James' Street on the western corner of Rock Place, but he was unfortunately killed in the Clayton Tunnel railway accident of 1861.

The Round Hill Tower-mill, which had been closed within twenty years of its erection, was advertised for sale or to be let on lease in 1853. It was "universally acknowledged to be the finest in the county" in the agent's opinion. William Welfare Ford, a corn dealer and baker, took over on lease at £85 per annum. He was soon in financial difficulties and advertised the mill to let in April 1858, but he was unsuccessful and had to give up the mill a few months later. Bankruptcy followed but by 1862 he was beginning to pay off his creditors. The empty mill was put up for auction in August 1858 by the trustees of the late Bright Smith. It was described as equipped with flour dressing and smut machines. Less than one month later it was advertised to be let with immediate possession.⁶ Thomas Turner Brazier took over in 1868 when he vacated the Hanover Mill near Elm Grove.

In 1879 Charles Cutress, who then owned the Port Hall Mill near Dyke Road, bought this larger mill by auction for £1,810 at the Old Ship Hotel. The family also acquired a corn and bread merchant's shop, which adjoined the yard in which stood the mill, then becoming known as Cutress' Tower Mill. A fourth pair of millstones was installed in the vacant position on the stone floor, and around 1880 a steam engine was working them. The sweeps still drove the old stones, and the millwrights Whittington & Sons, who had workshops in Providence Place near York Hill, fitted a new sweep in 1890. Minor repairs were being carried out up to 1893.

When the mill was advertised for sale in 1900, it was said to be capable of working by wind and steam, probably obtained by means of an eight horse power portable engine included in the sale items.⁷ Later the sweeps were made fast and the fan-tail removed. In 1908 Whittingtons removed the sweeps, and the mill ceased working in 1910.

Charles Cutress was fifty when he bought the mill, so he brought his son John into the business, then re-named C.Cutress & Son. John, however, around 1890 left the partnership and retired to Ramsgate. Luckily his son Charles, when old enough, assisted his grandfather, and was running the mill when the elder Charles died in 3 February 1912 at the age of 83. Born in Patcham, he had been connected with milling since 1845.⁸

The mill was taken down by a builder from nearby Springfield Road, Mr Dawes, who made good use of the materials. The timber was used to make the window sashes for the fourteen houses that were to be built on the site in Belton Road. Many of the 50,000 bricks were cleaned, and also used in the house building. All the metalwork was sold as scrap to the Star Foundry in Brighton. The dismantling commenced on 17 March 1913, and was completed by 25 April. It was the 16 May before the site was completely cleared, and by a coincidence, the Race Hill Mill fell down on the same day.

The London Street shop had been sold about fifteen years earlier, when in 1912 the family gave up the bakery in Round Hill Road. Soon afterwards young Charles opened a steam bakery and shop in Compton Road, on the corner of Millers Road in Preston. This business was sold in 1916 when he joined the Army in the First World War. Four years later he moved to Ditchling where he took over the village bakery in West Street. In 1936 he bought from Mr G R Forfar the old established bakers and confectioners in Hove.



Charles Henry Cutress, aged 13 in 1900, a pupil at York Place School working for his grandfather Charles Cutress as a Saturday boy at Tower Mill Ditchling Road Brighton.

1 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 19 October 1801

2 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 17 March 1806

3 *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* 25 November 1816

4 *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.13 p.70

5 *London Gazette* 16 July, 27 August 1852

6 *Brighton Herald* 15 January 1853, 4 September 1858; *Sussex Advertiser* 14 April, 21 August 1858:

London Gazette 1 August 1862

7 *The Miller* 5 November 1900

8 *The Miller* 4 March 1912

Chapter 6 The Steam Flour Mills

Members of the Lashmar family can be traced back in Brighton Parish Registers to 1665, and their bakery was opened in Ship Street in 1745. John owned the Hove Windmill, but his son John Young Lashmar disposed of that property, and in the 1840s installed a small stone milling plant driven by steam behind the shop at No. 25 Ship Street.¹

Soon after John Young Lashmar's death, Frederick Napper married the widow in 1857, and during the following fifty years he and his son Frank enlarged the premises and converted them into Steam Roller Flour Mills. Flour produced from rolling mills made whiter bread which the public liked, but some were critical. They said that in order to obtain the whiteness, the most nutritious particles of the wheat berry had been removed.

In an advertisement dated 1907, Nappers Machine Bread Factory specialized in Vienna Fancy Bread, making deliveries to customers twice daily. The firm retained the name Nappers Limited until it was closed in the late 1920s, even though John Napper had ceased managing the business. These large mill premises behind the shop were then taken over by Dreadnought Garage, which traded between Ship Street and Middle Street for many years. Later Wadham & Stringer used the garage, and when they vacated it, the precinct Dukes Lane was built here.

Mr C R Smith, who owned the Terminus Steam Corn Mills in Trafalgar Street, Brighton, took over the newly erected Britannia Steam Flour Mills belonging to John Borrer in 1854. The Britannia Mills were situated in Copperas Gap, Portslade. At about the same time Mr Smith was trying to dispose of the Bear Windmill near the present Kimberley Road in Brighton.² Messrs C R Smith Ltd later sold the Britannia Flour Mills to Mark Mayhew Ltd, one of the largest flour milling firms in the country. Around 1932 the Portslade premises were closed down, and demolished in the autumn of 1936.³

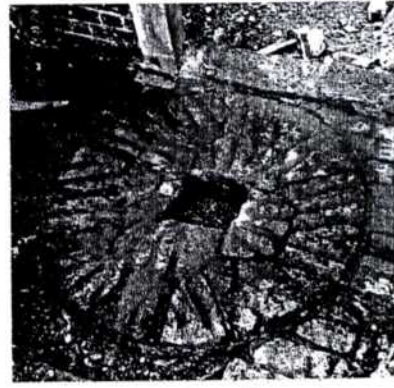
William Catt took over the Tide Mills at Bishopstone, between Newhaven and Seaford, about 1800. Under his control, the undertaking became extremely prosperous with sixteen pairs of millstones operating. Tidal water flowing through a creek from the River Ouse at Newhaven was trapped, and released when the tide was ebbing. By controlling the rate of discharge, the three undershot water wheels, each about fifteen feet in diameter, were turning for possibly sixteen hours every day.

In the 1830s William Catt enlarged his business by taking over premises in Eastern Road, Brighton, between the present Freshfield Road and Sutherland Road. Whether he was the first miller there is uncertain, but *Leppard's Directory* of 1839 lists the occupiers as Catt & Son, Albion Steam Mills, millers. William Catt ground mainly imported grain brought from the London Docks by teams of horses making three journeys a week. Flour from Bishopstone Mills was hauled into Brighton by teams of six horses making one journey a day. Twenty-four pairs of millstones were operated up to 1885, when the plant was converted into the Albion Rolling Mills. In July of that year the mills, together with twenty-two bakers' shops and bakehouses, were sold for £23,000.⁴ During the following year, a tall chimney 133 feet high, with an internal diameter of six feet at the top, was built at a cost of £970, and became a well known landmark in East Brighton.

A measure of turnover can be gauged from the fact that in 1890 a large silo granary capable of holding 32,000 bushels was built at a cost of two thousand pounds. The mill was driven by eight cotton ropes from the sixteen feet flywheel by a steam engine of 120 horse power. There was a well on the premises 230 feet deep, the water being forced up by compressed air.

The mills, providing employment for about thirty men, were closed in 1923, and in July of the following year were offered for sale by auction. In March 1926 the tall chimney was demolished by steeple-jacks who detached and dropped every brick into the courtyard below. The remainder of the property was occupied by various firms during the following sixty years. The premises were demolished in 1986 when a large number of old industrial buildings between Freshfield Road and Sutherland Road were removed so that the nearby Freshfield Industrial Estate could be extended southward.

Frank Gregory knew the approximate location of a French buhr millstone which had been part of the Albion Steam Mills operating there up to 1885. He had seen it used as a doorstep when Braybors the builders occupied part of the disused mill premises. When demolition started he was allowed to clear rubble and recover the millstone which was in pieces. The Friends of West Blatchington Windmill removed the pieces which have now been reassembled and the restored millstone can be viewed at West Blatchington Windmill.



*The buhr millstone
from the Albion Mills site*
Photograph provided by Peter Hill



The remaining buildings of Albion Mills about to be demolished in 1986. The tall building was the granary.

From a photograph provided by Malcolm Dawes

1 *The Miller* 4 March 1895

2 *Sussex Advertiser* 3 January, 10 January 1854, 30 January 1855

3 *Brighton & Hove Herald* 24 October 1936

4 *Brighton & Hove Herald* 6 March 1926; *Brighton & Hove Leader* 27 July 1985



SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 2671509

S.I.A.S. was founded in 1967 to record and study buildings and equipment associated with industry, transport and other commercial enterprises within the counties of East and West Sussex. Apart from survey and restoration projects, it organises an annual programme of visits, lectures and conferences and publishes a quarterly newsletter and the annual journal 'Sussex Industrial History'.

Details of membership can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary : R. G. Martin, 42, Falmer Avenue, Saltdean, Brighton BN2 8FG



SUSSEX MILLS GROUP

The Sussex Mills Group has been formed to promote the study and restoration of mills and associated artifacts. Benefits of membership include regular newsletters, advice and support with comprehensive information on suppliers of mill and millwrighting necessities etc. plus an annual Mills Tour and Autumn get-together of mill enthusiasts.

Recently, the introduction of the 'Dusty Miller' Passport Scheme has proved very successful in attracting youngsters to visit these fine monuments to our industrial heritage.

The group will be pleased to welcome new members whose subscription will also cover membership of the Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society.

Details of membership can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary : D. H. Cox, 3, Middle Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, W. Sussex RH13 8JA

WEST BLATCHINGTON WINDMILL



Visit this unusual example of a wooden 'smock' mill. Built around 1820 on a tall flint and brick base, it played an important role in the everyday life of a large farming complex. Much of the original machinery still exists and in recent years the mill has been restored and now serves as a museum of milling and agricultural history. John Constable visited and sketched the mill in 1825 so why not follow in his steps and spend a pleasant afternoon discovering the past.

Open: on Sunday and Bank Holiday afternoons
May - Sept. (inc.) from 2.30 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Refreshments are available in the north barn.

Location: From the A27/A2038 junction on the Brighton by-pass, take the A2038 for approx. 3/4 mile and turn left at the lights. The mill is in Holmes Avenue, Hove. TQ 279068

JILL WINDMILL



Situated above the village of Clayton, adjacent to 'Jack' (a tower mill that is not open), this post mill was moved to her present site in 1852. After years of neglect she has been restored to working order and grinds flour occasionally.

Open: on Sunday and Bank Holiday afternoons
May - Sept. (incl.) from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m..

Location: From the A23 at Pyecombe take the A273 North. The mill is signposted right after 3/4 mile.

TQ 303134

The Windmills and Millers of Brighton

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