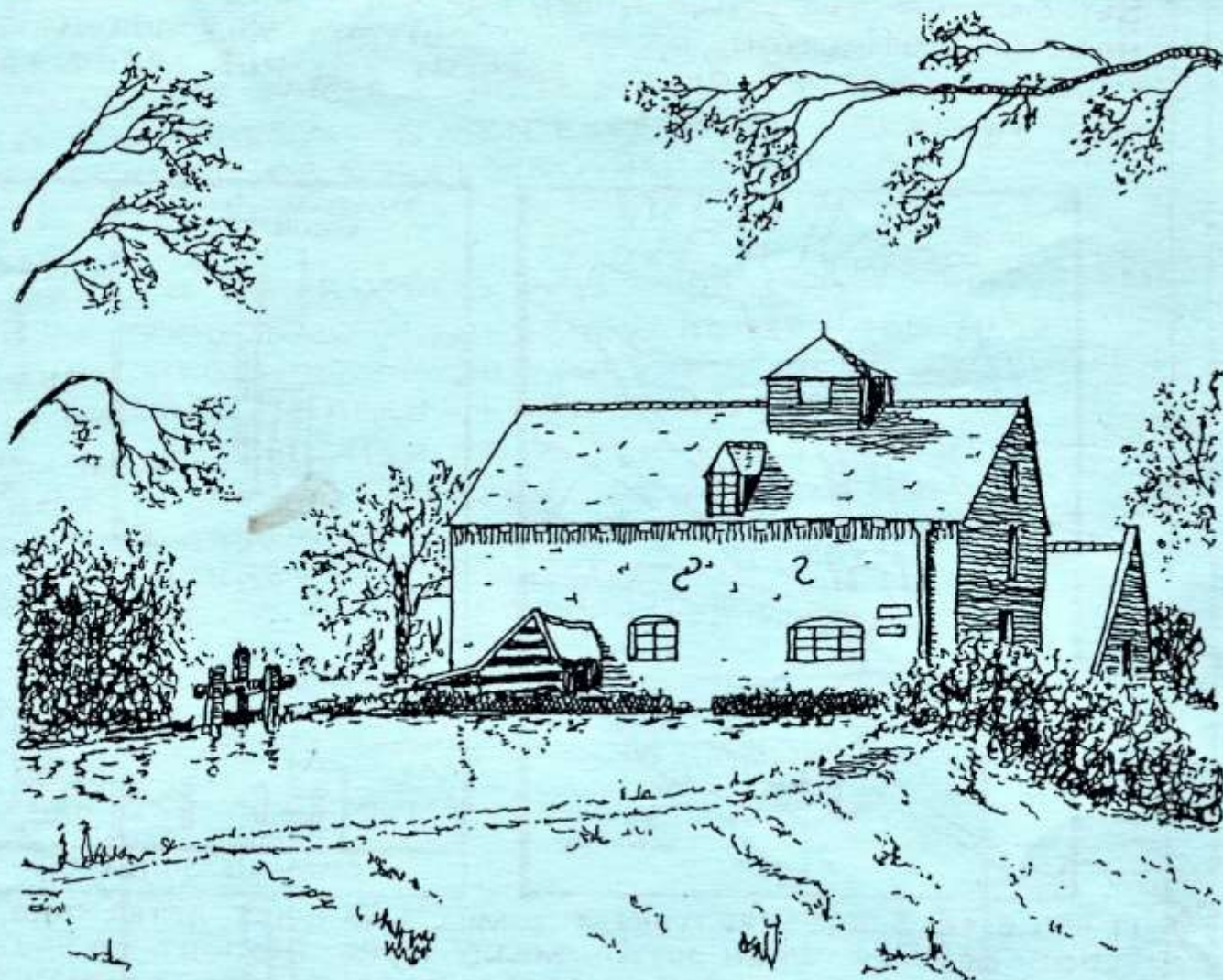


NEWHALL



WATER-MILL

SUTTON COLDFIELD

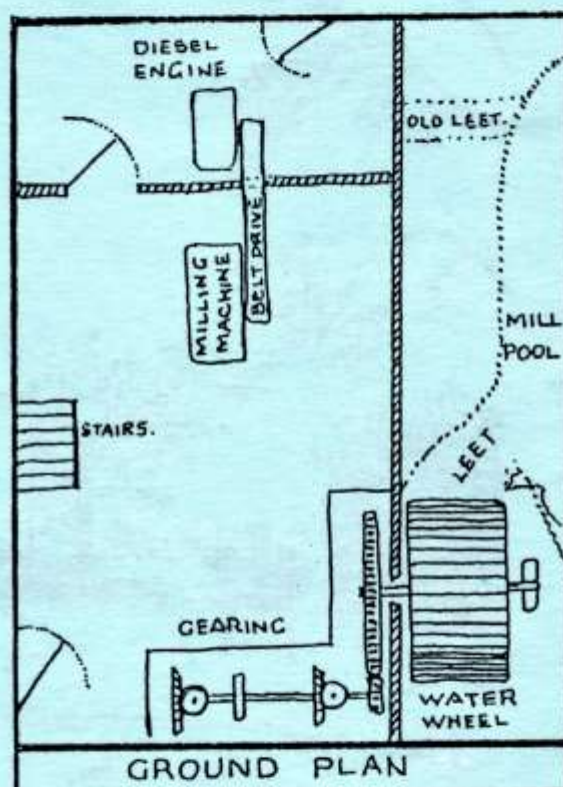
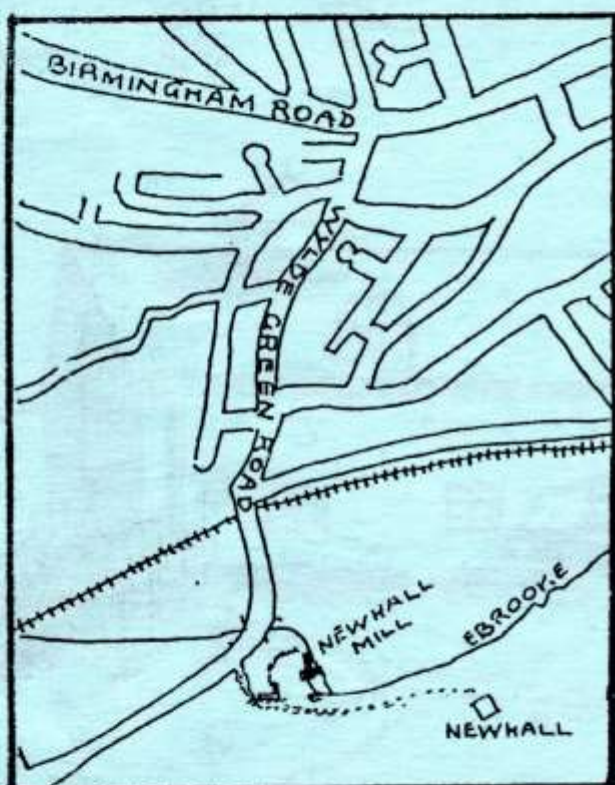
by

K.J. WILLIAMS.

SUTTON COLDFIELD LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP.

SUTTON COLDFIELD'S LINK WITH WATER-MILLS DATES BACK TO THE YEAR 1126 WHEN THERE IS A RECORD OF A CORN-MILL BELONGING TO THE LORD OF THE MANOR, SITUATED ON A SITE IN THE CENTRE OF THE TOWN NEAR TO WHERE THE PRESENT REFERENCE LIBRARY STANDS. SINCE THEN MANY WATER-MILLS WERE BUILT IN SUTTON CARRYING ON A VARIETY OF TRADES, BUT THESE HAVE NOW GONE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PRESENT MILL AT NEWHALL.

SET BACK OFF THE WYLDE GREEN ROAD, NEWHALL WATER-MILL HAS THE DISTINCTION OF BEING SUTTON'S SOLE SURVIVING MILL, HAVING STOOD ON ITS PRESENT SITE FOR MORE THAN 340 YEARS.



IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE MILL WAS BUILT AFTER THE FLOOD OF 1668 WHEN SUTTON MILLS WERE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN DESTROYED, BUT A SURVEY OF LANDS BELONGING TO EMMANUEL COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE, TAKEN IN 1638 BY THOMAS BANKS, MAKES REFERENCE TO NEWHALL MILL, CONFIRMING THAT THE MILL WAS IN EXISTENCE 30 YEARS BEFORE THE DISASTROUS FLOOD.

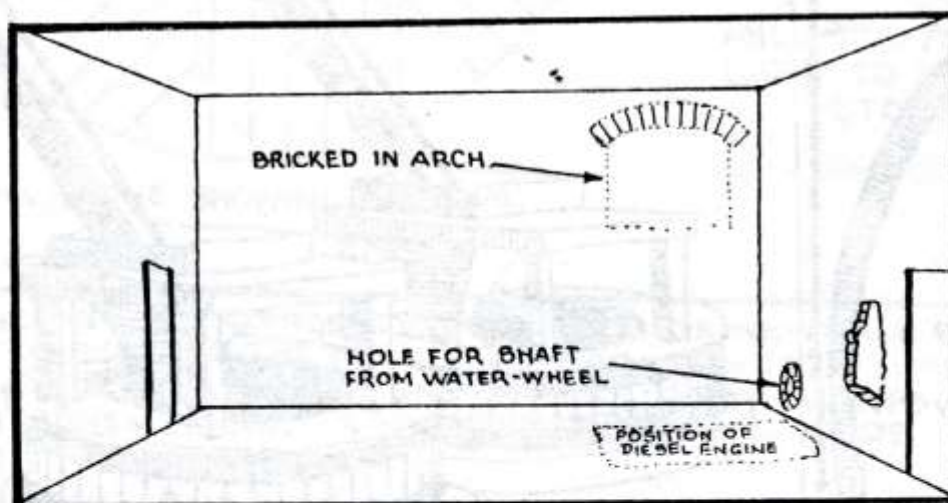
IN THE YEAR 1682 WE LEARN IN A "BARGAIN AND SALE BY THOMAS KENE AND SYBELL HIS WIFE," THOMAS GYBONS OF NEWHALL ACQUIRED SUTTON MILLS, THIS WOULD SUGGEST THAT THERE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A WATER-MILL AT NEWHALL AT THAT DATE, SO THIS WOULD PUT THE BUILDING OF NEWHALL MILL AT SOME TIME BETWEEN THE YEARS 1582 AND 1638.

AT THE TIME OF THE FLOOD IN 1668 THE MILLER AT NEWHALL WAS THOMAS TURNER. THE PARISH REGISTER TELLS US THAT A DAUGHTER WAS BORN FOR HIM ON 26th DECEMBER 1667.

THE MILL HAS BEEN IN CONTINUOUS USE SINCE 1638, GRINDING CORN FOR THE LOCAL FARMERS, ALTHOUGH NOT ALWAYS POWERED BY THE WATER-WHEEL, FOR BEN DAVIS INSTALLED A DIESEL ENGINE TO DRIVE THE MILL, AND THIS IS STILL IN USE TODAY.

THE WATER-WHEEL HAD NOT TURNED SINCE THE 1960'S BUT IT HAS NOW BEEN RESTORED TO WORKING ORDER, AND WATER FROM THE MILL-POOL IS USED ON OCCASIONS TO SET THE WHEEL AND MILL-STONES INTO OPERATION TO PRODUCE THE WHOLE MEAL FLOUR THAT QUEEN VICTORIA AND OUR PRESENT QUEEN ELIZABETH HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF SAMPLING WHEN LOAVES AND ROLLS WERE SPECIALLY BAKED FOR THEM.

AN EARLIER WATER-WHEEL WAS LOCATED AT THE FURTHER END OF THE BUILDING WHICH NOW HOUSES THE DIESEL ENGINE. EVIDENCE OF THIS PREVIOUS WHEEL IS PROVIDED BY A BRICKED IN ARCH IN THE WALL LEADING FROM THE POOL WHICH FED WATER TO IT. THERE IS ALSO A BRICKED IN HOLE IN THE WALL DIVIDING THE WHEEL-HOUSE AND MILL, AND THIS SHOWS WHERE THE SHAFT FROM THE WATER-WHEEL ENTERED THE MILL. THE WALL STILL BEARS SCORE MARKS FROM THIS WHEEL.



OLD WHEELHOUSE NOW CONTAINS A DIESEL ENGINE.

BEN DAVIS THE PRESENT MILLER WAS TWO YEARS OLD WHEN HE CAME TO THE MILL, AND HIS FAMILY HAVE OPERATED IT SINCE 1903 WHEN BENJAMIN STYLES, HIS GRANDFATHER, AND CHARLES. G. DAVIS, HIS FATHER, WERE PREVIOUS MILLERS. BEN DAVIS TOOK OVER FROM HIS FATHER IN THE LATE 1940'S AND HAS WORKED THE MILL SINCE. ALTHOUGH THE WATER-WHEEL HAS BEEN RESTORED ANY WORK DONE IS USUALLY CARRIED OUT USING THE DIESEL ENGINE.

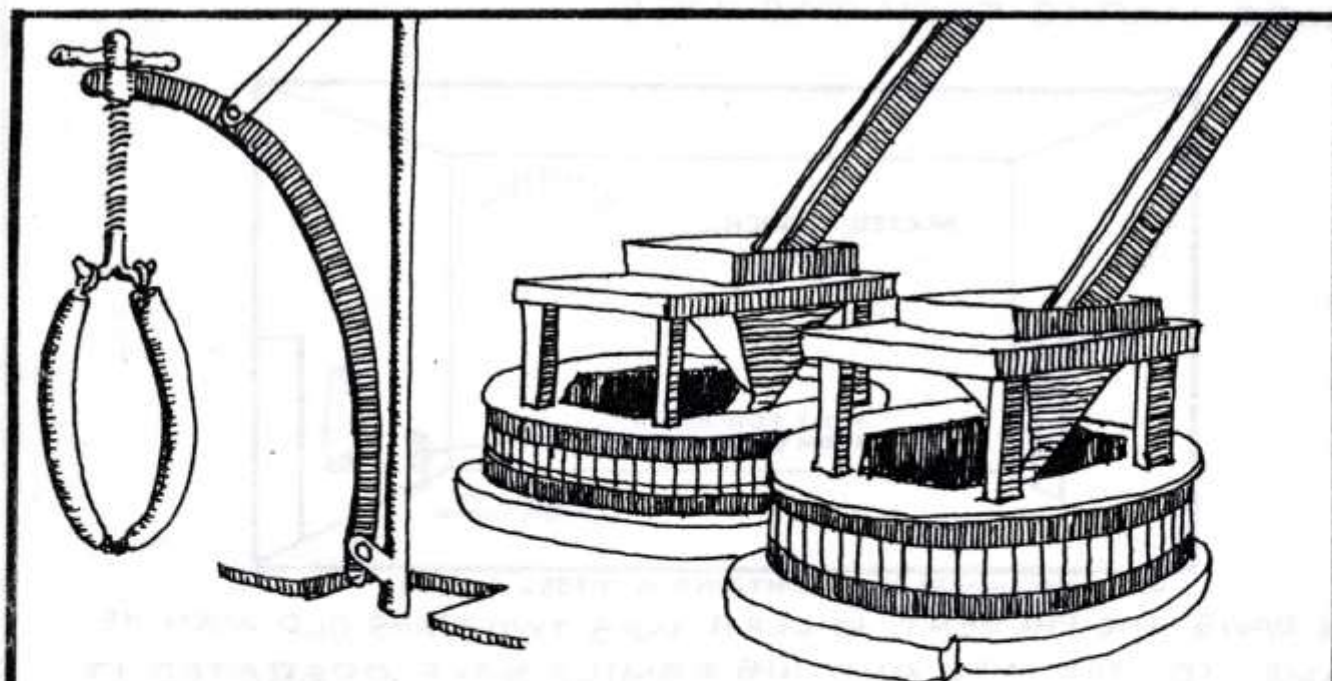
THE THREE STOREY WATER-MILL IS CONSTRUCTED IN LOCAL RED BRICK AND HAS A TILED ROOF WHICH WAS RENEWED DURING THE RECENT RENOVATIONS TO THE MILL. ORIGINALLY THE SMALL MILL-POOL WAS FED BY THE EBROOKE, WHICH RISES IN GUTTON PARK, BUT SINCE THIS STREAM WAS DIVERTED THERE IS NO CONTINUAL WATER SUPPLY, AND DURING DRY SPELLS THERE COULD BE INSUFFICIENT WATER TO WORK THE WATER-WHEEL.

IN THE MILL THE PRESENT MACHINERY IS MID 19TH CENTURY, WHILST OUTSIDE THE 11FT. DIAMETER WATER-WHEEL ON ITS CAST IRON AXLE, WAS MADE BY THE FIRM OF THOMAS AND HENRY PRICE, IRONFOUNDERS OF BILSTON, STAFFS, IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY.

TWO RIGHT HAND FRENCH BURR MILLSTONES ARE USED TO GRIND THE CORN. THIS TYPE OF MILLSTONE CONSISTS OF PIECES OF STONE FITTED TOGETHER, SET IN PLASTER OF PARIS AND HELD TOGETHER BY METAL BANDS SHRUNK ON AROUND THE OUTER EDGE. WHEN NEW A FRENCH BURR CAN WEIGH OVER $1\frac{1}{2}$ TONS.

ANOTHER TYPE OF STONE USED WAS THE DERBY PEAK. THIS WAS CUT FROM A COMPLETE PIECE OF STONE AND SOME OF THESE CAN BE SEEN SET IN THE GROUND OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE TO THE MILL.

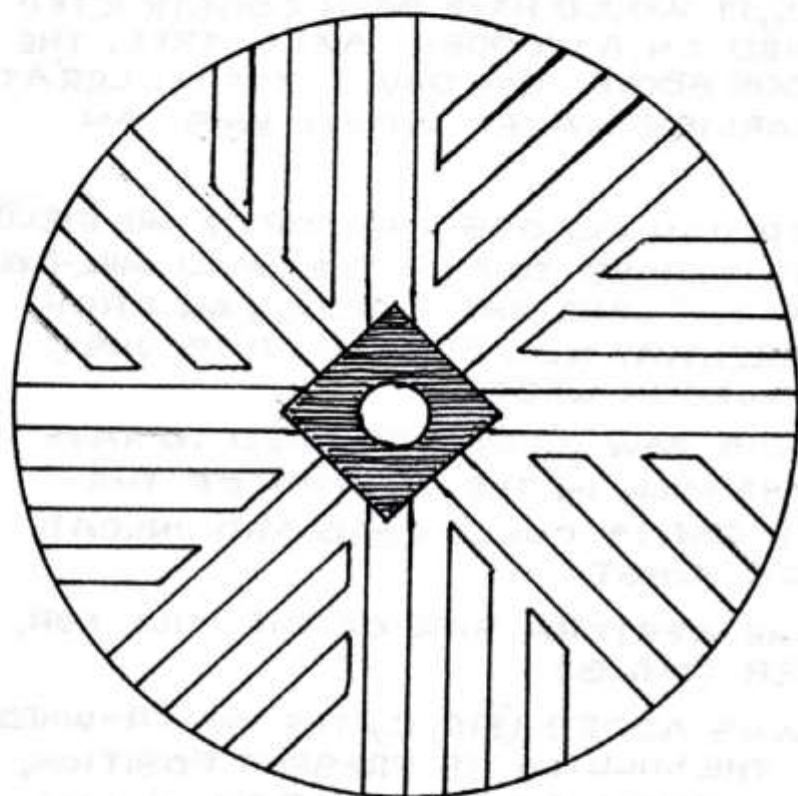
WHEN A NEW RUNNER STONE IS PLACED IN POSITION IT HAS TO BE TRUED UP, JUST AS A CAR WHEEL DOES WHEN FITTED WITH A NEW TYRE. TO DO THIS MOLTEN LEAD IS POURED INTO HOLES AT THE EDGE OF THE STONE UNTIL IT RUNS FREE OF VIBRATION.



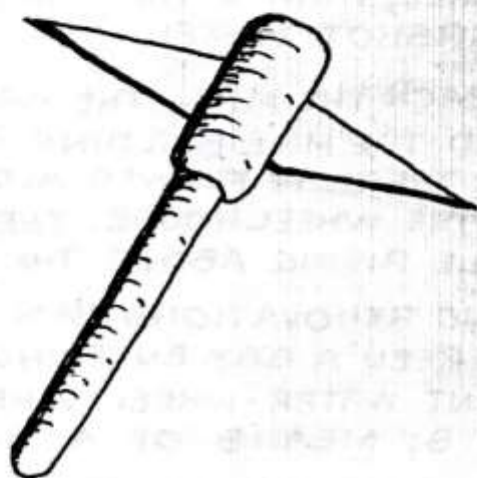
TWO PAIRS OF FRENCH BURR MILL-STONES

ALSO STONE LIFTING APPARATUS FOR LIFTING RUNNER STONES FOR DRESSING.

AFTER MILL-STONES HAVE BEEN IN USE FOR A TIME THE SURFACES WEAR AWAY AND NEED TO BE DRESSED. THIS IS DONE BY LIFTING THE RUNNER STONE AWAY WITH STRONG LIFTING APPARATUS, OR IF THIS ISN'T AVAILABLE, THE SACK HOIST IS USED. A MILLWRIGHT WILL THEN CUT THE FURROWS DEEPER ON BOTH THE BEDSTONE AND RUNNER STONE BY USING A SPECIAL TOOL CALLED A MILL BILL WHICH IS MADE OF HARDENED STEEL. THIS IS SET IN A HANDLE CALLED A THRIFT. AS THE MILLWRIGHT USES THIS TOOL, BITS OF STEEL SOMETIMES FLY OFF AND BECOME EMBEDDED IN THE BACK OF HIS HANDS. OVER THE YEARS THIS CAN ACCUMULATE, AND MILLERS, TO FIND WHETHER THEY WERE EMPLOYING EXPERIENCED MILLWRIGHTS WOULD ASK, "SHOW ME YOUR METAL."



MILL-STONE SHOWING FURROWS.



MILL BILL AND THRIFT
USED TO DRESS THE
STONES.

IN 1971 THE LATE SIR ALFRED OWEN, OWNER OF NEWHALL ESTATE DECIDED TO RESTORE THE MILL, AND EARLY IN 1972 WORK STARTED. ADVANTAGE WAS TAKEN OF ONE OF THE FIRST MANPOWER SERVICES SCHEMES AND A NUMBER OF LOCAL LADS HELPED REBUILD THE DAM.

INSIDE THE MILL BUILDING NEW STAIRWAYS HAVE BEEN BUILT. THE GROUND FLOOR CONTAINS THE WHEELS AND SHAFTS TAKING THE DRIVE FROM THE WATER-WHEEL. POWER IS THEN TRANSMITTED DIRECT TO THE MILL-STONES ON THE FIRST FLOOR. THE GROUND FLOOR ALSO CONTAINS THE MACHINES FOR PROVIDING THE GRIST FOR THE LOCAL FARMERS. THESE MACHINES ARE WORKED BY THE DIESEL ENGINE IN THE END ROOM.

ON THE SECOND FLOOR IS STORED ALL THE GRAIN READY TO FEED DOWN THE CHUTE TO THE MILL-STONES BELOW, AND THE FLOUR IS COLLECTED FROM THE CHUTES ON THE GROUND FLOOR.

6
DURING ITS LIFETIME A WATER-MILL MAY UNDERGO MANY CHANGES RESULTING IN THE FINAL STRUCTURE BEARING LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO ITS ORIGINAL APPEARANCE. IF A MILL HAS STOOD ON THE SAME SITE FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS A NUMBER OF BUILDINGS WILL PROBABLY HAVE SHARED THE SAME POSITION. WHAT MAY HAVE STARTED OUT AS A SINGLE BUILDING COULD END AS AN ENLARGED THREE STOREY BUILDING WITH EXTENSIONS.

AN EXTERNAL EXAMINATION OF NEWHALL MILL REVEALS EVIDENCE OF RECONSTRUCTION AND ALTERATION THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE OVER THE YEARS. THE INTERIOR ALSO BEARS WITNESS TO THE MOST RECENT RESTORATION WITH THE NEW STAIRS AND OTHER WOODWORK.

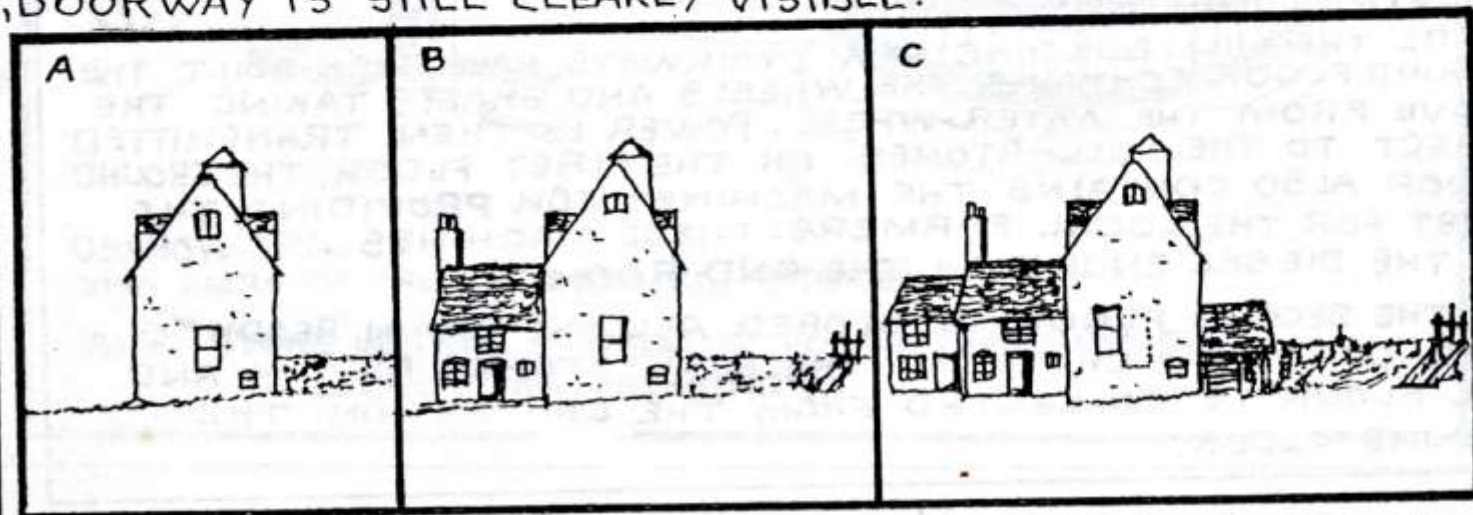
THE MILL WHEN FIRST BUILT MAY HAVE BEEN A SOLITARY BUILDING WITHOUT THE COTTAGES (FIG. A) THE WATER-WHEEL WAS THEN SITUATED AT THE NORTH END OF THE MILL, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED ENTIRELY OF WOOD AND TURNED ON A WOODEN AXLE TREE. THE MILL-STONES WERE ON THE FLOOR ABOVE. BEN DAVIS, THE MILLER AT NEWHALL, THINKS THAT THIS EARLIER WATER-WHEEL WAS AN UNDERSHOT WHEEL.

TO REACH THE MILL, THE WATER RAN ACROSS THE TOP OF THE FIELD BEHIND THE MILL BUILDING AND TURNED TO FILL THE SMALL MILL-Pool. FROM THERE IT FLOWED ALONG THE LEET, AND THROUGH AN ARCH INTO THE WHEELHOUSE. THE ARCHWAY NOW BRICKED UP, IS JUST VISIBLE RISING ABOVE THE FILLED IN LEET.

DURING RENOVATIONS BEN DAVIS SAW WHAT APPEARED TO HAVE ONCE BEEN A BAY ENTERING THE MILL IN THE VICINITY OF THE PRESENT WATER-WHEEL WHERE CARTS COULD LOAD AND UNLOAD CORN BY MEANS OF A SACK HOIST.

A COTTAGE WAS BUILT ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE MILL FOR, PERHAPS, A RESIDENT MILLER. (FIG. B.)

LATER ANOTHER COTTAGE WAS ADDED (FIG. C.) THE WATER-WHEEL WAS ALSO RESITED OUTSIDE THE MILL TO ITS PRESENT POSITION, THE WOODEN WHEEL BEING SUCCEEDED BY ONE OF IRON, WHICH TURNED ON A CAST IRON AXLE TREE. THE FIRST FLOOR WAS RAISED AND THE MILL-STONES MOVED TO THE OTHER END OF THE FIRST FLOOR, THUS REQUIRING THE DOOR, WHICH OVERLOOKS THE COURTYARD, TO BE MOVED UP TO THE NEW FLOOR LEVEL, AND TO BE CLEAR OF THE MILL-STONES IT WAS ALSO MOVED TO ONE SIDE. THE BRICKWORK FILLING THE OLD DOORWAY IS STILL CLEARLY VISIBLE.



7
IN FEBRUARY 1903 BENJAMIN STYLES WROTE A POEM ABOUT THE MILL.

I AM AN OLD WATER-MILL-IN THE ROYAL TOWN OF SUTTON
I DO MY WORK WELL, AND DON'T CARE A BUTTON.
I'VE STOOD ALL MY LIFE ON THIS VERY SAME SPOT,
I USE THE PARK WATER AND DON'T WASTE A LOT.
I'VE A FINE WATER-WHEEL, WHICH IS TERMED OVERSHOT,
AND THE STONES TURN ROUND JUST LIKE A TOP,
I HAVE A GOOD FRIEND, IN THE SQUIRE AT THE HALL.
I SUPPLY ALL THE FLOUR AS FAST AS THEY CALL,
I GRIND FOR THE FARMERS AND OTHERS BESIDES,
I GIVE THEM GOOD WEIGHT AND MEASURE LIKEWISE.
I GROUND SOME WHEAT ONCE, THAT WAS REAPED THE SAME DAY
AND IN LESS THAN SIX HOURS IT WAS BREAD ON THE TRAY.
THERE WERE SEVENTY NICE LOAVES, SO GOOD TO DIGEST,
AND EVERYONE SAID 'T WAS A VERY GOOD TEST.
THE DEMAND FOR THE BREAD WHICH WAS VERY KEEN,
THAT A LOAF WAS SENT TO OUR LATE BELOV'D QUEEN.
I MAKE A GOOD PICTURE, I WISH YOU TO KNOW,
I'VE HUNG IN THE ART GALLERY THREE MONTHS FOR A SHOW.
I'M HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD, IF MY DAYS WERE ALL NUMBERED
I'VE ALWAYS STOOD FIRM IF ITS HAIL'D RAINED OR THUNDERED
I HAD A SEVERE TEST WHEN WYNDLEY POOL BURST
OF ALL THE GREAT FLOODS, THIS WAS THE WORST,
IN CONCLUSION I ASK YOU TO GIVE ME A CALL
AND LEAVE SOME GOOD ORDERS FOR THE MILL AT NEWHALL.

MANY OLD BUILDINGS ACQUIRE THE REPUTATION OF BEING HAUNTED,
BUT THE COTTAGE ADJOINING THE MILL HAS A RESIDENT GHOST, FOR
BEN DAVIS, HIS WIFE AND FATHER HAVE ON OCCASIONS AT NIGHT
HEARD UNSEEN HANDS OPENING AND CLOSING THE DOORS OF THE
OVEN IN THE KITCHEN. SHARP RAPS ON THE DOOR HAVE ALSO
BEEN EXPERIENCED, AND WHEN THE DOOR WAS OPENED NO ONE
WAS THERE.

ONE EVENING WHILST ALONE IN THE COTTAGE, MRS DAVIS HAD THE
UNNERVING EXPERIENCE OF HEARING THE NOISE OF FURNITURE
BEING MOVED AROUND THE BEDROOM. ON HIS RETURN HOME BEN
DAVIS - A HARDENED SOLDIER OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR -
WENT UPSTAIRS TO INVESTIGATE AND, AS HE SAID, "THE HAIR
WAS STANDING UP ON THE BACK OF MY NECK," ON ENTERING
THE BEDROOM HE FOUND NO ONE THERE AND THE FURNITURE
STILL IN POSITION.

MANY THEORIES MAY BE SUGGESTED AS A REASON FOR THE
GHOSTLY HAPPENINGS BUT FURTHER SUPPORT FOR THE STRANGE
EXPERIENCES CAME FROM AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE. ONE DAY
AN ELDERLY GENTLEMAN WAS INTRODUCED TO BEN'S MOTHER
HE HAD QUITE A KNOWLEDGE OF THE MILL AND TURNED OUT TO BE
EDWARD CALDICOTT, THE MILLER BEFORE BENJAMIN STYLES,
BEN DAVIS' GRANDFATHER. DURING THE CONVERSATION HE ASKED
HER A SURPRISING QUESTION. "HAVE YOU HEARD THE OVEN
DOORS IN THE KITCHEN OPENING AND CLOSING AT NIGHT?"

IT APPEARS THAT THE GHOST GOES BACK TO AT LEAST 1892 TO
THE TIME OF EDWARD CALDICOTT AND PERHAPS EVEN FURTHER.

THERE IS NOW A NEW STOVE IN THE KITCHEN, THE OLD OVENS
HAVING BEEN TAKEN OUT, AND BEN DAVIS ADMITS THAT HE
HASN'T HEARD THE GHOST LATELY.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AT NEWHALL WATER-MILL.

1582. THOMAS GYBONS OF NEWHALL PURCHASED SUTTON MILLS.
 1638 FIRST RECORD OF NEWHALL MILL IN SURVEY FOR EMMANUEL COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE.
 1667 THOMAS TURNER, MILLER - DAUGHTER DIANAH BORN.
 1668 GREAT FLOOD RECORDED IN PARISH REGISTER.
 1679 JOHN BURTON, MILLER, BURIED.
 1684 WILLIAM BURTON, MILLER. SON RICHARD BORN.
 1698 TERRIER OF GLEBE LANDS. GEORGE SACHEVERALL PAYS TYTHES FOR LAND AND MILLS £3.
 1716 5th MAY. GEORGE SACHEVERALLS WILL. RALPH FLOYER INHERITS MILL.
 24th MAY GEORGE SACHEVERALL AGED 82 BURIED.
 1742 WILLIAM TWAMLEY, MILLER, ONE OF FOUR SUTTON MILLERS FINED 6d(2½)^p EACH.
 1758 WILLIAM TWAMLEY, MILLER, ALSO IS CHURCHWARDEN.
 1840 JOHN BRIDGE, MILLER.
 1848 WILLIAM DUTTON, MILLER.
 c1855 Z. TWAMLEY IN UNPUBLISHED HISTORY, DESCRIBES MILL AS SIXTH ON THE EBROOKE. TWAMLEYS MILLERS BEFORE AND AFTER CHARLES CHADWICK WAS OWNER.
 1856. PAROCHIAL VALUATIONS SHOW MILL IN AN IMPROVED STATE.
 1856 THOMAS DUTTON, MILLER.
 1860. NEWHALL ONE OF SIX MILLS OPERATING WITHOUT STEAM ENGINES.
 1860 ANN BROCKAS, OCCUPIER OF MILL.
 1862 THOMAS DUTTON, MILLER.
 1868 HENRY ADCOCK, MILLER.
 1876 BENJAMIN JOHN TYLER, MILLER.
 1878 HUTCHINSON BROS, MILLERS.
 1882 JOHN MCNEE, MILLER. - ALSO MILL UP FOR SALE.
 1892. EDWARD CALDICOTT, MILLER. - HEARD GHOST IN KITCHEN
 1899 BENJAMIN STYLES, MILLER.
 1911 EDWARD CALDICOTT, KILLED BY HIS HORSE.
 1920's CHARLES G. DAVIS, MILLER. "
 1940's BENJAMIN DAVIS, MILLER. "
 BEN DAVIS INSTALLED DIESEL ENGINE.
 1960's WATER-WHEEL NOT WORKING, WATER DIVERTED FROM MILL.
 1961 DECISION BY SIR ALFRED OWEN TO RESTORE MILL.
 1970's MILL RESTORED TO WORKING ORDER. ELECTRIC WATER-PUMP INSTALLED.
 1977 2 DOZEN LOAVES & 6 INCH ROLL MADE FROM CORN GROUND AT NEWHALL MILL SENT TO QUEEN ELIZABETH.