

Note on Enville Windmill, Enville, Staffs, near Stourbridge, (W. Midlands, formerly Worcs), (possibly more correctly called “Enville Common Windmill”); it was also, along with the watermill close by, called Spittlebrook (or Spital Brook) Mills, at one time).

Grid Ref SO 8452 8766

1. I first visited this derelict mill on 3rd January 1964 and talked with an elderly farmer there. A note I made afterwards reads:

“Enville Estate. Across road from watermill, shell of tower mill. Apparently once there were 4 floors and cap. Now no floors are left, just two hefty floor beams half way up. About 30ft dm at base [I see Barry Job’s book, below, gives 24ft 10in]. Built of small bricks and plastered externally [a cement rendering on part of the tower, actually]. Wall two stretchers thick (at base at any rate). “Live” curb, remains of pinion up there and base of wooden cap. Two doors, several windows. Evidence of staircase to three upper floors inside. Also inside is long tree-trunk shaft about 35-40 feet long [certainly an exaggeration, but it did impress me] with spokes of gear wheel; remains of all-wooden gear wheel. [This refers to the detached part rim of what was evidently the gt spur wheel which lay on the ground inside, visible in one of my photos. Interestingly its teeth (cogs) had evidently been doubled up, because there are two rings of mortices].

History. Old farmer says he remembers sails in position but not working. Boarded cap and fantail [winding wheel?], he said. Pitched cap probably it seemed from what [he] said. [He] thought it was 400 years old; I put it at 200 years [it was in fact described as “newly built” in 1801- per Barry Job]. “

2. For more details see Barry Job’s book “Staffordshire Windmills”, published by Midland Wind and Water Mills Group, 1986. Particularly interesting is his statement that in 1845 Spital Brook Mills were not only using wind and water power, but there was also a steam engine (at the watermill). Presumably trade was flourishing because of the relative proximity of the rapidly expanding population of the Black Country.
3. There are various items on this mill at Mills Archive and on internet, and mentioned in the catalogue of Staffs record office.

John Bedington, 2020

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My photos accompanying this note:

B/W photos: ST1a – exterior, taken 3rd Jan 1964; ST1b – inside, looking up, taken Sept 1965; ST1c – (cut-off) arms of spur wheel (on upright shaft), taken Sept 1965; ST1d – Remains of the spur wheel (on ground, inside tower), taken Sept 1965 (2 negatives, slightly different, both poor quality)

Colour slides: STa1 – Back of mill, taken 21st Sept 1966