

Note on **Wyndford Mill**, Blymhill, (Staffs, but near Newport, Shropshire)

Grid ref: SJ 7999 1450 On Wyndford Stream (also called Wyndford Brook), which runs into R. Meese (being called various things on the way); R. Meese runs into R. Tern, itself a tributary of R. Severn

1 . I visited this mill on 10th October 1965. I made notes about the mill on an SPAB watermill survey form, though I did not send it in, and also took exterior photographs. Later, in 1967, I had two conversations with Charles Howell of Gt Bridgeford (1926-1993) in the course of which he mentioned the mill, and of which I made a note. He and various members of his family were millers and hauliers, who also did stonedressing and mill repairs for others and had very wide knowledge of local mills.

2. My observations noted on the SPAB form were-

The mill was built of non-shiny red brick and had white, metal, factory-type windows. The mill had been completely gutted of machinery. The water had entered the mill at first floor level. The ground floor had been made into pigsties and the upper floors were being used for storage. There had been one internal overshot waterwheel, 14 to 16 ft dm by 5ft wide. I estimated the area of the millpond to have been a third of an acre. In the garden [of the house by the mill] was a peak millstone 2ft 10in dm with 4 notches [for rynd]. I was told the owner was Mr Venables of Newport, and that the mill had ceased work about 1920 [however, see below].

3. My notes of the conversations with Charles Howell, on 4th April and 31st Aug 1967 show that he could remember the mill working. Since he was not even born till 1926, the closure date of c.1920 given me by someone at the mill was evidently wrong. He said the waterwheel was indeed overshot; it drove 3 pairs of millstones by a horizontal countershaft at right angles to the waterwheel, all the gears being bevel gears; the machinery was in good condition when it was taken out.

4. The mill pond was already drained of water and grass grown over it at the time of my visit. However, it appears from an aerial view available on the internet that most at least of the pond has since been reflooded.

5. Several documents relating to the mill appear in the catalogue of the Stafford record office; the details given there suggest that the mill fell out of

use between 1932 (when a sale catalogue described it as a “3 stone water corn mill” and 1945 (when a sale catalogue described it as a “disused mill”).

6. Mills Archive have details of several millers of this mill.

John Bedington, 2020

My photos of this mill:

B/W photos: Taken 10th October 1965 – ST 29a looking approximately south west; ST29b looking approx. north west; ST29c looking approx. south east; ST29d looking approx. north east (with part of the dried up millpond)