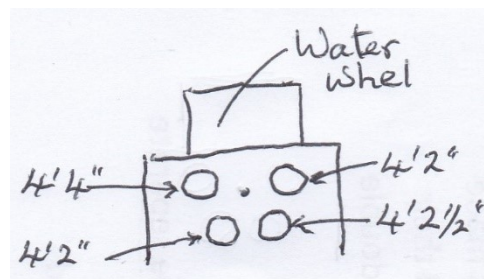


Note on Greensforge Mill, Staffs (nr Stourbridge, Worcs)

Grid Ref: SO 8615 8878 On Smestow Brook (sometimes called River Smestow), tributary of R. Stour, which runs into R. Severn.

1. I first visited this mill on 27th March 1965. The mill was then gutted of machinery and used for storage for the farm of which it was part. On either that occasion and/or my later visit there was someone, possibly a casual worker at the farm, sleeping in the mill. The mill struck me as an impressive piece of architecture, which one could not say for most mills in Staffordshire. Although the machinery had gone, certain details of it could be worked out from traces that remained (especially the wheelpit, which showed it had been a very wide wheel, undershot or low breast.) I made some rough notes (on an SPAB watermill survey questionnaire form) of what I saw, and of what local people told me at or near the site about ownership and when it had probably been built and last used. I wrote this up on a clean copy of the form and sent it to SPAB. Further details can be gained from it - it is now at Mills Archive under reference SPAB-WAS-STAFFS-08 – and from my photos.
2. I then visited the mill again, in July or August 1966 and made further notes on the original rough SPAB form because, by taking careful measurements from the marks or insets in the floor where the millstones had been, the hole for the upright shaft and the recess in the wall for the gt spur wheel, I was able to ascertain the size and position of the millstones (on the first floor) and of the gt spur wheel and stone nuts (on the ground floor)– radius of gt spur wheel - 4ft 6in; radius of stone nuts 10in, though the NE one appears to have been ½in bigger radius (which seems likely since the stone was the biggest). See sketch plan (reproduced from the notes) for stone diameters.



I also noted “Crown wheel – judging by the bearings for the two offshafts (each 3in dm), the crown wheel was about 6ft diameter (not much more, certainly not more than 7ft)” .

And I checked the height of the roof (eaves to ridge inside 6ft with estimated 4 or 5 in to outside – not enormously different from my previous estimate).

3.The property has now been made into residential apartments.

4.There are items on the mill in the Staffs record office, and two pictures on the Staffordshire Past Track website (where the date of building of the mill is given as *late* 19th century, and the closure date as c 1925).

John Bedington, 2020

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My items with this note:

B/W photos: Taken 27th March 1965 - ST6a, Mill from farmyard; ST6b, far side from road; ST6c, from across mill race. Taken Aug or Sept 1966 – ST6d, interior, ground floor (blurred); ST6e, from headrace side.

Other pictures: Exterior colour picture (print and negative) taken in 2004.