

Note on Himley Mill, Staffs, (near Wolverhampton)

Grid Ref : SO 8791 9113

Driven by a small tributary of Smestow Brook that flows from the Great Pool in Himley Hall Park (in turn fed by watercourses that appear to flow from springs in the Park). Smestow Brook (further down sometimes called R. Smestow) is a tributary of R. Stour which runs into R. Severn.

1. I visited this mill on 19th May 1965 and met John Lindsay who lived in the house opposite, which I assumed had been the mill house. He gave me various pieces of information about the ownership and history of the mill, and I noted that down, along with my own observations and measurements on an SPAB watermill survey form, which I later wrote up more neatly on a fresh form and sent in to SPAB. That is now at Mills Archive under reference SPAB-WAS-STAFFS-09. See it for further information, but note the following points:
 - P1, heading. "Smethstow" should be spelled "Smestow" (though we always pronounced it Smethstow)
 - P1, no 1: what might appear to read "The mill itself had 3 *stones*" is in fact "3 stories" (or storeys).
 - P2, 10. Earl of Dudley's principal estate was at Gt Witley (not Whitley).
 - P2, no 11 What might appear to be "Swing" is in fact S. wing (south wing)
 - P3 Pt2 1. Waterwheel. My rough notes give the additional information (deduced from remains of wheelpit, etc) – almost certainly overshot; 12 to 14 ft dm.
 - P4, (pt2) 7 ; Rough notes say "pulley in roof possibly sack hoist".
2. The property has apparently since been made into a house. See items at Mills Archive under Ref SM-2014.0027—01 to 05.
3. Staffordshire record office has at least one relevant item (sale catalogue of Himley Hall estate, 1947).
4. The mill is mentioned in an article on mills of the Smestow Brook and tributaries by SM and MV Cooksley in Midland Mills Group journal no7 (1986). They mention iron working activities that may have taken place here, but their information on the then existing building they had from

me. The photograph in the article labelled Himley Mill, however, relates not to this mill but to Holbeache (otherwise “Holbeche”) Mill at grid ref SO 884905. I took it myself in 1965.

John Bedington, 2021

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My photos with this note:

B/W photos: Taken 19th May 1965 – ST16a looking South east; ST16b looking north; ST16c Looking west (from pond). Copies of contact prints of these were attached to the SPAB form)