

NAME OF MILL **WALFORD MILL**
TOWN **WIMBORNE**
SOURCE of POWER **Allen trib. Stour**
MAP REFERENCE **195-SU-009-007**
.MILL REF **Dor.Wt. 366.**

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Walford Mill - working - ¼ml. NE of western church. At the north end of the town where Cramborne Road crosses the river Allen. No mill is shown on the 1956 OS map. (*Simmons*).

Walford Mill. Crownwheel has the cogs faced with leather strips nailed on; the shanks of the cogs were pinned and wedged as well, the only example of wedged cogs, besides those of the great spur wheel at Town Mill, Gillingham, which were not pinned. R.Allen. 2 turbines. Working. (Rex Wailes c1950).

In David Popham's book "The History of Wimbome" there is a reference to "a mille at Wimbom Town Centre end" which is believed to refer to Walford Mill in the 16th century. The name "Walford" is derived from the old word for "wobbly" or "uncertain" denoting that the river crossing was a treacherous ford! The existing main building is believed to date from 1760/1770. Certainly old maps (1775) in the County records show buildings sited in the same position. It is also believed that at this time the mill was powered by 2 waterwheels of the undershot type about 8 ft - 2.4 m in diameter. There is, however, no evidence left in the building of this period. At about the same time, the main mill building was extended to provide additional storage areas on the upper floors and a furnace/boiler room on the ground floor. This was intended to provide an alternative source of power to the mill wheels when river flows were low. (~).

C16th Reference to "a mille at Wimbom Town Centre ende". Believed to refer to Walford. (#).

1760-70 Approximate date of mill buildings given by Mr. Drake.

1775-1800 Dates of maps showing mill buildings on the site. (#)

c1800 Date attributed by David Popham to mill (#)

1830 George & John HATCHER, millers, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1842 George & John HATCHER, millers, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1851 George HATCHER & Son, millers, Walsford Mill, Wimborne Minster. (*Kdir*).

1855 G. HATCHER, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1859 J. HATCHER, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1867 H. HATCHER, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1875 William ATKINS, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1883 Mill auctioned by Richards & Sons at Crown Hotel. (#)

1887 A turbine and spur gear has been put in at Walford Mills, Wimborne, for Mr W ATKINS by Messrs Munden Armfield & Co. of Ringwood. (*The Miller 7 Feb. 1887*).

1889 We understand that Messrs Joseph J Armfield & Co. of Ringwood, Hants, have been favoured with the order for a twelve sack roller plant for Mr William ATKINS, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*The Miller 6 May 1889*). "British Empire Turbines" (~)

1889 William ATKINS, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

1894 To be let from Christmas next. Superior steam and water mill known as Walsford Flour Mills, about one mile from Wimborne Station, comprising a water mill with 2-sack roller plant, turbine and auxiliary steam power. A steam mill with two pairs of mill-stones. Apply to Mr J F HATCHARD, "Highlands", Wimborne, Dorset.

1895 William ATKINS, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).

- 1899 J F HATCHARD, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).
- 1907 J F HATCHARD, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).
- 1911 J F HATCHARD, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne and at Corfe Molen. (*Kdir*).
- 1915 J F HATCHARD, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).
- 1920 J F HATCHARD, miller, Walsford Mill, Wimborne. (*Kdir*).
- 1909 Photograph Messrs Ainsworth, Squib and Bundy loading grain at the mill (#).
- 1939-54 Mr. Drake working for Mr. Ford initially as lorry driver, subsequently as foreman miller.
- 1953 Walsford mill owned by GOATMAN & Co. The building appears to be 150 years old though the adjacent cottage may be older by some 60 years. Driving power, two turbines, cast iron, driving by belts two sets of stones. These turbines, one is 8hp and about 50 years old and the other about twice this size and the same age. The mill is rather attractive with a nicely tiled roof. Most of the windows are original with small window bars so characteristic of the late Georgeon period. These mills stand on a little island, with the cottage beyond the mill. The cottage was clearly thatched but is now only roofed with corrugated iron. the condition of the mill is good for it is clearly very prosperous.
(*J K Major Feb.1953*)
- 1956 Construction of w.c. on ground floor and extension of office building for female clerk.
- c1966 Mill ceased operation. The mill complex had a chequered history, particularly after it ceased operation as a working mill in about 1966. From this date it was used successively as a coal yard, builder's yard and a furniture showroom. (~).
- 1971 October Chilcotts P.A. for change of use from coalyard to builders yard. (~).
- 1972 March - Chilcote P.A. for demolition of cottage on site (see sketch) and construction of single storey workshop. Removal of part of 1st floor.
- 1972 Nov. Avon & Dorset P.A. for diversion of river, infilling of hatches and construction of gauging station.
- 1974? Following diversion of river, flow in mill stream severely reduced resulting in silting of the leat. At request of the owners of the "Mill House" the turbines were removed. (~).
- 1977 P.A. for portable office onsite by Guildcrest,. (~)
- 1981 P.A. for use as a coalyard - withdrawn. (~)
- 1982 The freehold interest, which had been held by Mr Bankes, and upon his death in 1982 the mill, together with the remainder of his estate which included Kingston Lacy House, Badbury Rings and Corfe Castle was bequeathed to the National Trust. The District Council approached the National Trust with a view to acquiring 13 acres of the estate which had been designated within the local plan for development.(~)
- 1983 The land, together with the mill buildings and "island" which comprise the Walsford Mill complex, were purchased by the Wimborne District Council in March 1983. (~).
- 1986 The mill was leased at a peppercorn rent to the Dorset Craft Guild, a registered educational charity formed in 1978. (~).
- 1991 A Craft Centre- no wheel or machinery- chimney remains and part of sack hoist- also part of a grain bin. (TY)
- 1995 Since September 1995 the mill has been independent, managed by the Walsford Mill Education Trust. (~).

refers to "The 13ook of Wimborne" David Popham.

(~) information from mill leaflet.