

NAME OF MILL **ABBEY MILL** **Silk Mill**  
 TOWN **SHERBORNE**  
 SOURCE of POWER **COOMBE AND DYMORE SPRINGS**  
 MAP REFERENCE **63 16 ?**  
 MILL REF **Dor.Wt. 303.**

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- 1432 first record found of Abbey Mill of a corn mill powered by an undershot water wheel "driven by a clear stream".
- 1775 Converted to a silk throwing mill using machinery obtained from a derelict Spitalfields mill. Owned by SMOUT and his wife. (*sometimes called Smout's Mill*) W.CRUTWELL and T. STIDSON were appointed managers.
- 1777 SMOUT took over as manager, due to poor management and inadequate profits.
- 1793 SMOUT sold the mill for a very high price. Buyer unknown, but J. SPILLER was appointed as manager.
- 1830 COUGAR John, silk thrower, Abbey Mills. (*dir*).
- 1839 SPILLER died and H.R. HESKETH appointed manager.
- 1842 RAWLINGS 7 ROBINSON, silk thrower, Abbey Mills. (*dir*).
- 1852 The Local Board of Health announced their intention to impound the Coombe and Dymore springs to provide drinking water for the town. The mill owners were notified that the scheme would reduce the flow of water by two thirds and offered £120 in compensation. A second hand steam engine was purchased with the money in order to power the mill.
- 1876 April. A reports states that the overall profit for the previous year £6/0/4d. (*hardly a succesful business*)
- 1891 A "catastrophic failure of the steam chest and cylinder castings occured" The owners cold not afford a new
- 1894 Sherborne School purchased the site. The factory and engine house were demolished to provide space for the erection of new school buildings. Part of the south wall of the engine house survives and forms part of the wall on the north side of Finger Lane. On the inside, the sawn off remains of massive machinery bolts remain.

One of the first school buildings to be erected was a swimming bath which continued in use until the 1970s. The old water point, which became redundant in 1855, was in the site purchased and was demolished in 1901. This is the area now occupied by the refractory and gymnasium.

NOTE; it is important not to confuse Abbey Silk factory with the other silk mill across the road in the school buildings which was converted into the school library in 1894 and is prperly called "Guesten Hall".

(*notes above from the chairman of Castleton pumping Station. 2001*).

- 1965 MARGGLASS Ltd., synthetic fibre manufacturers in a building orininally a silk mill. (*Hudson*). unlikely to be Abbey mill.TY.

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