

MILL ROAD HISTORY PROJECT
BUILDING REPORT

Mill Road Windmill, Cambridge

Post Mill (unknown–c.1786)

Brick Tower Mill (1792/93–1844)

Residential and Commercial Properties (c.1845–present)



Allan Bringham, Gordon Clark and Peter Filby

The Mill Road History Project was officially launched in 2013 under the umbrella of Mill Road Bridges¹ to study the heritage of Mill Road, Cambridge, its buildings (residential, commercial and industrial), institutions and community. It was supported by a two-year grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

First Edition – September 2015

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Cover picture: Clockwise from top left: (a) cricket on Parker's Piece (CC: J.P.J42) , (b) cricket on Parker's Piece (drawing by Richard Leach, 1833/44) , (c) Baker's map (1830)

¹ 'Mill Road Bridges seeks to grow and maintain the community spirit, heritage and rich cultural diversity of the Mill Road area by improving the flow of information between and about individuals, businesses, voluntary organisations and local stakeholders.'

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Abbreviations

CA	Cambridgeshire Archives
CC	Cambridgeshire Collection
<i>CCh</i>	<i>Cambridge Chronicle</i>
<i>CIP</i>	<i>Cambridge Independent Press</i>

NOTE

This report was produced as two essays with images, one by Peter Filby concerning the earlier history, and windmills in East Anglia, the other by Gordon Clark concerning the period of the mill and subsequent history of the site. These two essays were subsequently compiled, with original contributions, by Allan Brigham.

Location

The building is believed to have been situated on the site of what is now 56 and 56A Mill Road, located between Covent Garden and Mawson Road, opposite Emery Street, in the Petersfield ward of Cambridge.

National Grid reference

TL 460579 X: 546028 Y:257950

Latitude: 52.2004, Longitude: 0.1353

52° 12' 2" N, 0° 8' 7" E

INTRODUCTION

The Mill Road windmill may date back to as early as the 13th century, but much about its site and structure remains speculative, only glimpsed in documents and illustrations.

It is not until the late 18th century that clear evidence exists of the site, and it is only with the demolition of the last mill in 1844 that some idea of the mechanics of the final brick mill are revealed in the sale details.

But despite our shadowy knowledge of its past, the windmill has given its name to a major Cambridge arterial road whose surrounding streets were home to 18,000 people at the start of the 21st century.² Many of these people will tell their friends they live in the 'Mill Road area', but only a few pause to ask 'Where was the Mill?'.

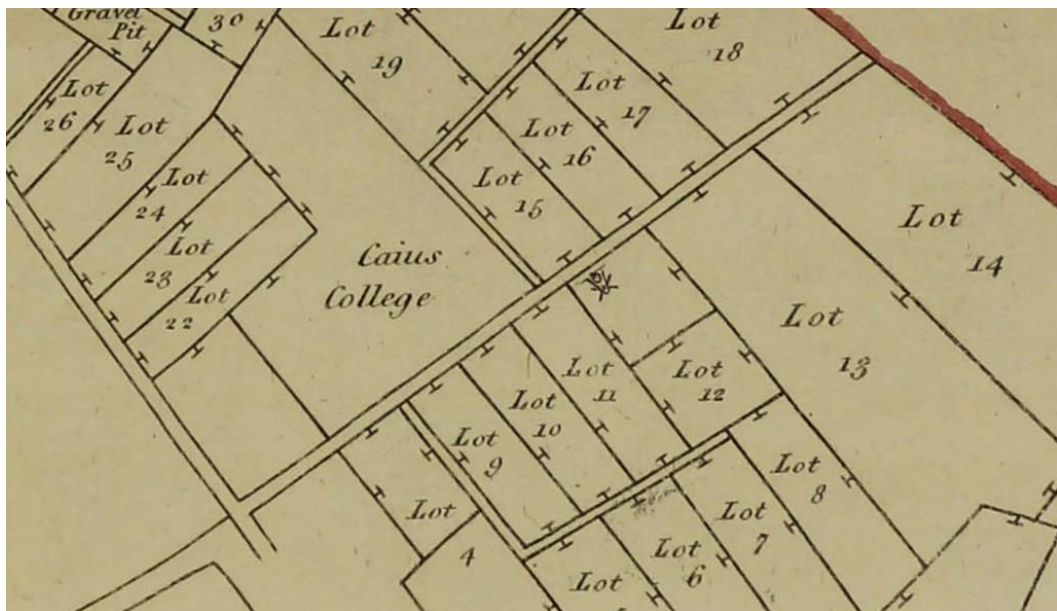


Figure 1 – 1809 Post-Enclosure Map

The first map to show the location of the windmill is the post-enclosure map of 1809, in which the mill can be seen between Lots 11, 12 and 13.³ (For more about this, see the section 'The Windmill Site', below.)

² The combined population of Petersfield and Romsey Town in 2015.

³ 10 November 1809. Barnwell Sale. Part of Pantown Estate. Details with Barnwell Inclosure Act. CA: L75/10.

BACKGROUND

Medieval Windmills in Cambridge

Windmills are first recorded in England in the latter part of the 12th century. By the 13th century two windmills were recorded in Cambridge in the Barnwell Open Fields, adjacent to the town. The Hundred Rolls of 1278⁴ state they were in the possession of the Prior and Canons of Barnwell, and add: 'They were raised upon their own soil and they could not compel any persons to grind there, not even their own tenants'.⁵ Barnwell Priory was in what is today the Abbey Road area off Newmarket Road.

These two mills probably stood on the slightly higher open ground on the south side of Barnwell Field, as it is known that windmills did in the 18th and 19th centuries. These were quite near to the site of the Abbey and also adjacent to tracks or roadways to and from the town of Cambridge.

As the Hundred Rolls of 1278 suggest, these early Cambridge windmills were probably built on an artificial mound, known as a Mill Hill, to raise them above the level of the surrounding land and any hedges that might obstruct the wind from striking the sails. Evidence for this comes from the 14th-century archives of the Bishop of Ely which record a murder near to the site of one of the windmills: on April 26, 1386:⁶

John Bernard of Pikardyn Schethere, murdered John Cook, servant and cook of the Austin Friars at Cambridge, and carried the dead body to a Mill-hill, called Swalnhill, within the liberty of Cambridge, and there got rid of it.

Evidence suggests that one of the two windmills in the Barnwell fields stood near what later became Mill Road. In the early 20th-century Stokes reconstructed a field map of Cambridge in the 14th-century, using old Field Books and Terriers, and comments on Furlong 38, running along the southwest side of Hinton Way, which became known as 'Mill Road' in the 19th century: 'This furlong was also in later times called "the Windmill Furlong" as it contained the building which gave its name to the present "Mill Road".' (see 2)⁷. Furlong 38, later called Windmill Furlong, corresponds with the windmill site shown on Mill Road on later 19th-century maps, but Stokes does not specify when the name, along with the presumed presence of a windmill, is first recorded.

⁴ The Hundred Rolls were a census of all England and part of Wales that was taken in the late 13th century. A 'hundred' was an administrative area of the country.

⁵ Stokes (1910), pp. 222-23.

⁶ Bishop Thomas de Arundel's Register at Ely, in Stokes (1910), p. 223. Austin Friars were probably those in Bene't Street.

⁷ Stokes (1915), p. 54. 'Terrier': 'a register of lands belonging to a landowner' (*Concise OED*, 11/2004). Henry Paine Stokes (1885–1931) was an authority on the ancient history of Cambridge. He was a fellow of Corpus Christi College, also vicar, later rector, of St Paul's Church, Cambridge, and a well known Cambridge figure.



Figure 2 – Map showing Furlong 38

There are no pictures of the Barnwell Abbey windmills but they were probably similar to other windmills portrayed and described in the medieval period. These were a type of mill, often quite small, known as 'open trestle post mills', named because the trestle woodwork that supported the windmill was not covered over. These early windmills often had four sails which drove just one pair of millstones.



Figure 3 – Early medieval windmill: brass rubbing, Walsoken, dated 1349

The Corporation Watermill and Windmill

Following the dissolution of Barnwell Abbey in 1538, its property became part of the royal estate, and was sold or leased out. Later, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, one of the watermills that stood beside the Mill Pond on the Cam, together with a windmill, were purchased from the Queen by the Mayor and burgesses of the town of Cambridge. These later became known as the Corporation Watermill⁸ and Windmill. The mills were leased to the town bakers either together or separately. These leases specify the condition and thickness of the millstones and when they were to be replaced.

The site of the windmill is confirmed by an advertisement in 1777 for the sale of the lease of the Corporation watermill that stood by the Cam Mill Pond, and 'also all that WIND MILL, situate standing and being near Parker's-Piece, in the parish of Little St. Andrew, Barnwell'.⁹ Stokes mentions that this windmill site was in Mill Road, near Covent Garden, and quoted the Bowtell manuscripts¹⁰ written in the late 18th century:

It stood in Barnwell Field in the S.E. corner of Parker's Piece; on which spot, many years ago the old mill being much decayed was taken down, and a more substantial one of a very rare construction (being made to turn itself with the wind) was re-edified of brick and stone in 1792 and 1793, at an expense of about £2000 by Mr Charles Humphrey, timber merchant, of Cambridge. In the Barnwell rate-books it was known as the *Corporation Mill*.

⁸ Stokes (1910), p. 223.

⁹ CCh 757, 26 April 1777, p.3.

¹⁰ Stokes (1910), p. 223. John Bowtell (1753–1813) was a Cambridge bookbinder and stationer. His history of the town is deposited in Downing College.



Figure 4 – Great Gransden post mill

Figure 4 shows the post mill at Great Gransden as it was when disused in 1912 after storm damage. This mill, which dates from the early 17th century, is now preserved. The windmill on Mill Road probably looked like this until demolished c.1785. It was, as we will see, replaced in 1793 by a brick Tower Mill.¹¹

THE HISTORY OF THE MILL ROAD WINDMILL

The Post Mill: demolished c.1786

The Corporation Windmill was leased by the Anderson family for a number of years in the late 18th century, together with another windmill in Chesterton, and the Bishop's and King's watermills which stood by the Cam Mill Pond. The family built a stone granary to store grain and flour that stood opposite the watermills by the Small Bridges across the River Cam.¹²

¹¹ We now know through dendrochronology (i. e. the counting of tree rings) that a number of old windmills contain timbers dating back to the 16th century or earlier. Other aged windmills were said to be 300 or 400 years old when taken down. Great Gransden dates from 1612 and Bourn from 1632.

¹² Small Bridges became known as 'Silver Street Bridge'. The granary was part of Newnham Grange purchased by George and Maud Darwin (George was son of Charles Darwin). The Darwins demolished part in 1885 to make room for a new tennis court and kitchen wing, and in 1895 converted the remainder into 'an unusual and charming living-house, named 'The Old Granary' (Margaret Keynes, *A House by the River: Newnham Grange to Darwin College* (Cambridge: Darwin College, 1976), p.87). It was lived in by various people including Bertrand Russell, Henry Morris, and in the latter part of her life, the Darwins' daughter, Gwen Raverat, author of *Period Piece*. It is now part of Darwin College.

Following the death of John Anderson in 1782, his widow Mary surrendered the lease of the 'windmill in the parish of Little Saint Andrew, Barnwell' to William Sadler a baker, for the remaining fourteen years of its term.¹³

On 7 February 1786 a document of release of title to the windmill was drawn up for William Sadler:¹⁴

[H]e hath permitted ... the said Windmill to fall or be taken down, and hath converted the materials for his own use, but instead of rebuilding ... hath proposed and agreed to pay the ... Mayor, Bailiffs and Burgesses the sum of eighty four pounds

This was accepted, and William Sadler, his heirs, and assigns were released and discharged by the Mayor, bailiffs, and their successors.

The Brick Tower Mill

1792/93–1844: Humfrey Family

On 11 July 1791 Charles Humfrey snr, a carpenter and joiner and timber merchant, asked the Cambridge Improvement Commissioners for a 999-year lease on a piece of Cambridge Corporation 'waste land where formerly stood a windmill'—the old mill, very much decayed, having been taken down by 1785. The land in question was 50 feet north to south, and 40 feet east to west. On 5 August 1791 Humfrey's lease was agreed for a £5 fine, £1 a year rent, and a shilling a year to the Treasurer.¹⁵

The corporation allowed Humfrey to erect a large windmill, providing the reefing stage was 20 feet high. He built a substantial mill using a very rare construction (being made to turn itself with the wind), using brick and stone in 1792–93. —The cost of the mill was recorded in a codicil added to Humfrey's will shortly before his death in 1796. The will is difficult to decipher, but with its codicil makes clear that between 1792 and 1796 Charles Humfrey snr had built a windmill on a piece of ground in the parish of St Andrew in Barnwell. The land was leased from the 'Bailiffs and Burgesses of Cambridge' for a term of 999 years and under the will his son George Gobbett Humfrey was offered an option to buy the plot and the Mill. The purpose of the codicil was to include the price, which, now the Mill was built, was a known amount. The amount involved was £1,000.¹⁶ If George did not want to purchase the land and Mill then it would revert to his executors.¹⁷

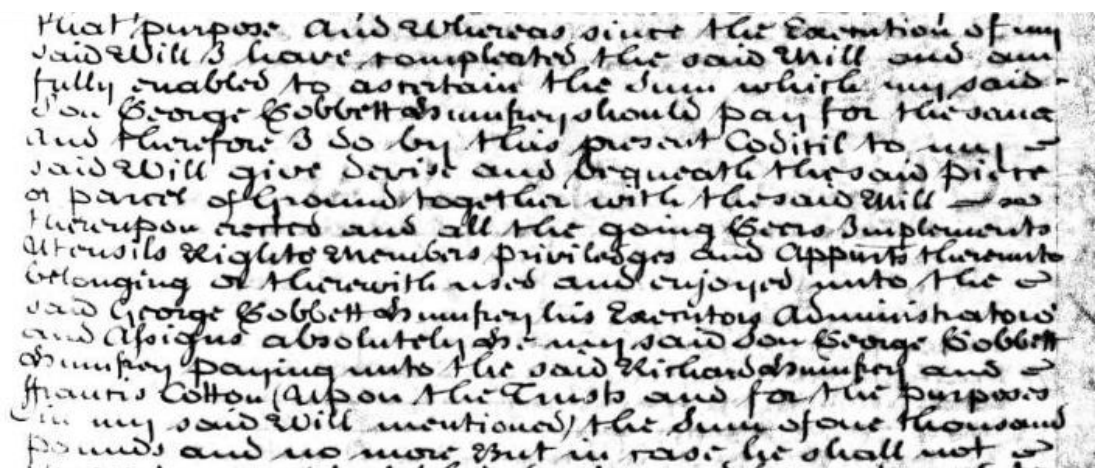
¹³ See: CA: CB/2/CL/17/5/p. 145, 16 Aug 1782. Millers: John Anderson, senior, died 1777; John Anderson, junior, died 1781; Mary Anderson, widow 1781–82; William Sadler 1782–85.

¹⁴ See: CA: CB/2/CL/17/5/p. 239 7 Feb 1786

¹⁵ See CA: CB/2/CL/17/6/p. 10 16 Aug 1871 'Lease between the Corporation and Charles Humfrey of a piece of waste ground near Parkers Piece'.

¹⁶ Using wage or GDP per capita indices.

¹⁷ England & Wales, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills, 1384-1858, PROB 11: Will Registers, 1796-1798, Piece 1278: Quire Numbers 387-434 (1796), pp. 413-21, extract from the codicil referencing the Mill and the sum of £1,000.



that purpose and whereas since the execution of my
said Will I have completed the said Will and am
fully enabled to ascertain the sum which my said
son George Gobbett Humphrey should pay for the same
and therefore I do by this present Codicil to my
said Will give devise and bequeath the said piece
or parcel of ground together with the said Will as
thereupon acted and all the going &c. implements
utensils rights members privileges and appurtenances
belonging or therewith used and enjoyed unto the
said George Gobbett Humphrey his Executors Administrators
and assigns absolutely &c. my said son George Gobbett
Humphrey paying unto the said Richard Humphrey and
Francis Cotton (upon the Trust and for the purposes
in my said Will mentioned) the sum of one thousand
pounds and no more but in case he shall not

Figure 5 – Extract from will of Charles Humfrey detailing cost of building windmill

In the Barnwell rate-books it was known as the 'Corporation Mill'. In 1796, three years after it was built, a lady was hit by a sail and knocked off the reefing stage of the mill and fell 24 feet, but 'no bones broken'.¹⁸ Figure 6 below shows Burwell Tower Mill: Humfrey's Mill on Mill Road probably looked similar to this mill, built in 1820 and now preserved by Burwell Museum.

¹⁸ Stokes (1910).



Figure 6 – Burwell Tower Mill

Charles Humfrey snr died in 1796. His eldest son, another Charles (1772–1848), builder, surveyor and architect, succeeded to his late father's business in that year. He also became a member of the Borough Council, and rose to prominence in the early 19th century, establishing his own bank. He was Mayor of Cambridge in 1838/39 but by 1845 was in debt and his bank and property had to be sold over the following years. His grand house fronting Parker's Piece was demolished and is now the site of Earl Street and Victoria Street. All that remains is a gazebo in the garden of 2 Emmanuel Road.

George Gobbett Humfrey, the younger son, purchased the mill on the death of his father, and ran the mill, employing a miller and servants who worked the mill for him until he retired in 1821. Shortly before he retired, a lightning strike on the mill was graphically reported in the newspaper:¹⁹

On Sunday afternoon, about half past four o'clock, this place was visited by tremendous storm of lightening, thunder and rain. We have not, however, heard that it has caused any particular damage, excepting that Mr. Humfrey's mill, near this town, was struck by the electric fluid, and so great was its force, and so rapidly was it conveyed thro' the various parts of the building, that the destruction which has been caused by the lightning affords an interesting spectacle to the observer of the operations of nature.

¹⁹ CCh 3 March 1821.

The lightening first struck the sails of the mill, and not only burnt the canvas to atoms, but so shivered and broke the wooden beam [sail stock], that its remains literally present a bundle of splinters.

After passing thro' the brick-work, the fluid entered the building, shattered the windows to pieces, tore up the floor, singed the ropes, broke a barrow, and in this way taking its course thro' successive stories regularly pursued its destructive career.

Though the fluid passed thro' the greatest part of the mill, yet fortunately little or no damage has been sustained in the machinery.

The miller who was in the act of shutting the door which opens on the stage, was suddenly struck down by the lightening, but being perceived by some persons who were near was soon removed from his perilous situation and tho' much hurt in one eye, and on the face, yet is we understand in a fair of recovery.

A sow, which was in an adjoining yard, was killed on the spot, and a cat in the mill was singed on its back.

The report hints at the early 19th-century fascination with electricity, and paints a picture of the brick tower mill with the miller working inside, a cat probably hunting mice, and the unfortunate pig in the yard outside.

George Gobbett Humfrey retired in December 1821, moving to Harston to live as a country gentleman, and leasing the windmill out until his death in 1843. He was buried in Great St. Andrew's Church, Cambridge, where he had been a parishioner and church warden for many years.²⁰ His substantial old house and bakers shop in St. Andrew's Street was advertised in July 1844 together with the lots for the mill:²¹

This valuable property, having a large space and great accommodation behind the House and Shop, is in a neighbourhood which cannot fail to improve, and is likewise freehold.

1821-44: James Harris & William Thurnell

An advertisement in the *Cambridge Chronicle* on 11 January 1822 announced that James Harris, an established baker, had 'succeeded to the business of Mr. G. Humfrey, MILLER and BAKER', of St. Andrew's Street (Figure 7):

²⁰ Parish records of the Church of St Andrew the Great, Cambridge (CA).

²¹ *CIP* 7 July 1844.

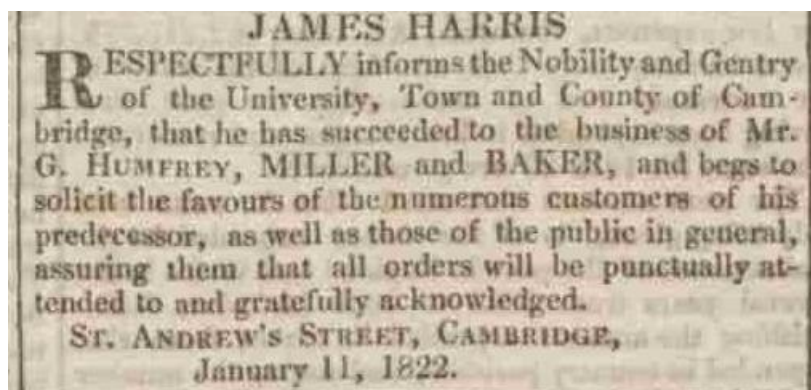


Figure 7 – Notice by James Harris

However after a few months the *Chronicle* of 13 December 1822 announced: 'Death, on Friday last of Mr. James Harris, miller and baker of this town, St. Andrew's Street, aged 54.'

William Thurnell a south Cambridgeshire miller and oilseed crusher, who ran several wind and watermills from his base at Duxford watermill, then took over this mill for at least eight years.

In June 1831 the mill was advertised:²²

To let with immediate possession, A very powerful brick WINDMILL, within a quarter of a mile of the town of Cambridge; It has 2 pair of Stones, and there is stowage for full 200 loads of Wheat. With it also (if desired) a BAKER'S SHOP, in one of the best and most populous streets of the town, —above the ovens and back premises of the same are several roomy and convenient CORN CHAMBERS.

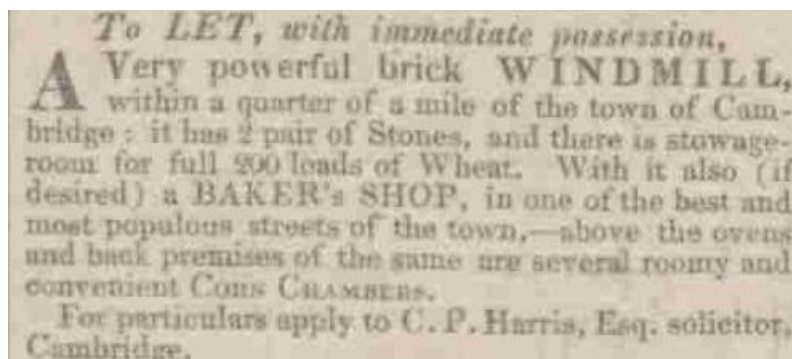


Figure 8 – Notice of sale of mill in 1831

The windmill was not used after losing its sails in a storm c.1840 and is shown without sails in the background of several drawings and paintings of Parker's Piece (see, e.g. Figures 9 and 10 below), east of the then new gaol. The mill was unoccupied when the census was carried out in 1841.

²² CCh 24 June 1831.

Millers:

- *George Gobbett Humfrey* 1793–1821
- *James Harris*, baker, 1822
- *William Thurnell* c. 1823–31, Humfrey's mill, Barnwell
- No millers were listed in directories for the period 1839–44

Figures 9 and 10 show the brick windmill viewed from Parker's Piece in the 1830s or early 1840s: In Figure 9 it appears on the horizon close to the left-hand side; in Figure 10 it can be seen just above the receiving batsman. The main building to the right in both pictures, on the south edge of Parker's Piece, is the Town Gaol, which stood between 1828 and 1880.



Figure 9 – Cricket on Parker's Piece (drawing: ©Richard Leach, 1833/44)

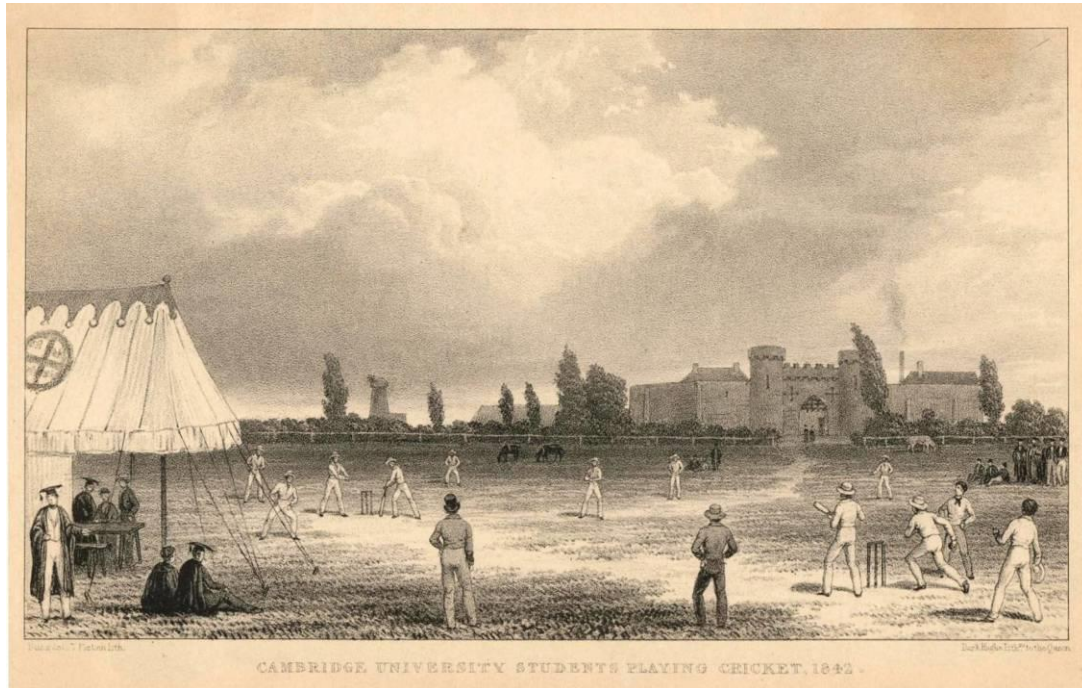


Figure 10 – Parker's Piece with mill on horizon²³

Description of the Mill

As there are no detailed pictures of this mill it is open to conjecture what it actually looked like. It was built at a considerable expense, and we know it was a tall brick tower mill from later distant illustrations and adverts, with a reefing stage at about 24 feet height from which the sails were adjusted or set. This would make it four or probably five stories high, and we know from maps that it had a large circular base, and from advertisements a large internal storage capacity of 200 full loads of wheat. Two pairs of stones were mentioned in 1831, which were typical for this and the earlier period.

As built it seems to have had the usual four sails that were 'common' canvas sails, alluded to in the lightning strike of 1821. The mill may well have been refitted later with 'patent' or spring sails, which were popular at that time. At least one picture shows a long low fantail (which turned the sails of the mill into the wind) at the back of the cap, typical of expensively built windmills of the 1790s and early 1800s.

²³ CC: J.P.J42 From Cambridge Past & Present No 23.

The Demolition of the Windmill

The windmill had been the landmark building on Mill Road for generations, and had given its name to the road. It was also a reminder of a time before the Enclosure of the Barnwell Field in 1806 when the local economy in the area was closely tied to agriculture. But on 5 August 1844 the executors of the late owner, George Gobbett Humfrey, auctioned the entire building, materials and fittings.²⁴

The sale included all the bricks and timber, 'The Revolving Roof, covered with Copper, and the Machinery by which it is put in motion, with the Iron Neck for the sails, and the Shaft attached thereto'. Finally, after the building was auctioned, the land on which it stood was offered for sale in four lots, each with a 58-foot frontage and 120 feet deep, together with the three-acre orchard behind 'planted with choice Fruit Trees'.²⁵ A subsequent sale was recorded in September of the machinery that had failed to find bidders in August. The list of items reduced the windmill to its mechanical parts, and included the the large Dome, and²⁶

wind-tackle complete, large iron neck for sails, break wheel (10ft), with break complete, oak shaft, 13ft long, 21 inches square, large oak girders, upright shaft 28ft by 1ft 8in, oak and elm curbing, useful oak and elm curbing, useful oak and other scantling, fire wood, large quantity of iron bolts, of all dimensions, three tons of cast iron wheels, building bricks etc.

²⁴ CIP 27 July 1844.

²⁵ CIP 27 July 1844.

²⁶ CIP 31 August 1844, 9 June 1847.

**Valuable Freehold Estates,
MILL ROAD and ST. ANDREW'S STREET,
CAMBRIDGE.**

JOHN GARNER

IS instructed by the Executor of the late Mr. George Gobbett Humfrey, deceased, to **SELL** by **AUCTION**, in four lots, on **MONDAY**, the 5th of August next, at 12 o'clock at noon, upon the Premises, all the Interior and Exterior of the **WINDMILL**, now standing near the Union Workhouse, in the Mill-road, Cambridge, viz.:-

LOT 1.—The Revolving Roof, covered with Copper, and the Machinery by which it is put in motion, with the Iron Neck for the sails, and the Shaft attached thereto.

LOT 2.—The remainder of the Machinery contained within the walls of the Mill.

LOT 3.—The Brickwork, Timber, &c., of the building, down to the stage floor.

LOT 4.—The remainder of the Brickwork, Timber, and other Materials.

To be sold also immediately afterwards, in four lots, the **GROUND** upon which the Mill stands, and parts surrounding it, each lot having a frontage of 38 feet, and a depth of 120 feet. Also the whole of the **ORCHARD** behind the Mill, well planted with choice Fruit Trees, containing rather more than three Acres, all Freehold.

J. GARNER is also instructed to offer for Public Sale, on **MONDAY**, the 19th of August next, at the Red Lion Inn, Petty Cury, Cambridge, at 7 o'clock in the evening (unless sooner disposed of by Private Contract) —

The **HOUSE** and **PREMISES** in St. Andrew's-street, which for some years past has been occupied by Mr. John Cooch, ironmonger, and is now in full trade.

This valuable property, having a large space and great accommodation behind the house and shop, is in a neighbourhood which cannot fail to improve, and is likewise all Freehold.

Further particulars will appear in future papers, and may be obtained of Mr. **FETCH**, solicitor; or the **AUCTIONER**, Crescent, Cambridge.

Figure 11 – Sale of mill in 1844

**To Millwrights and Others,
CAMBRIDGE.**

**TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, BY
ELLIOT SMITH & SON,**

On **THURSDAY NEXT**, the 5th September, 1844, at 11 o'clock, on the premises, Mill-road, leading to Cherry-hinton;

THE **MATERIALS** and **MACHINERY** of a large Dome, and other parts of a **MILL**, recently taken down, comprising wind-tackle complete, large iron neck for sails, break wheel (10 feet), with break complete, oak shaft, 13 feet long, 21 inches square, large oak girders, upright shaft, 28ft. by 1ft. 8in., oak and elm curbing, useful oak and other scantling, fire wood, large quantity of iron bolts, of all dimensions, three ton of cast-iron wheels, building bricks, &c. &c.

May be viewed the morning of sale, and catalogues will be in circulation in a few days, to be had at the public-houses in the neighbouring villages, and of **ELLIOT SMITH and SON**, Cambridge.

**Freehold Building Ground, a Large Booth,
And Effects,
MILL ROAD, CAMBRIDGE;
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, BY
CHARLES WISEY,**

On **THURSDAY NEXT**, the 16th day of June, 1849, punctually at Seven o'clock in the Evening, on the ground where the mill formerly stood, by direction of the Trustee and Executor of the late William Cook, in two lots:

TWO Valuable Pieces of **FREEHOLD GROUND**, recently purchased of the late Mr. Humfrey, situate in Mill Place, each piece being a corner situation fronting a 32-feet roadway, and running by the side of a 40-feet roadway, leading to Covent Garden: the frontage of them is 31 feet, and the depth 110 feet.

Building Ground in this locality is daily increasing in value, as Houses are much sought after in this pleasant part of Cambridge.

Also, in lots, a capital **BOOTH**, 62 feet in length, 24 feet in width, which may be seen any time previous to the sale; also, some Articles used with the Booth, and a large **OAK MILL WHEEL**.

Further particulars may be had of Mr. **RANDALL**, solicitor; or of **CHARLES WISEY**, auctioneer, valuer, and estate agent, Cambridge.

Figure 12 – Advertised sales of mill equipment, 1844, 1849

There were two other windmills in Barnwell Field in the 19th century. Both were nearby, but closer to Hills Road,²⁷ with owners who had no connection to the Mill Road mill. By 1844 both of these mills had been taken down. Thus had ended over 500 years of wind

²⁷ The site of one of these mills, in Cambridge Place off Hills Road, is marked on Baker's map (1830).

milling in the Barnwell area of Cambridge. Later a couple of steam mills were built, but although nearby, these were outside the fields of Barnwell.

THE WINDMILL SITE

1806–44: The site from Enclosure to Demolition

The earliest map showing the site of the windmill (Figure 13 below) is a copy of the Enclosure Award of 1806,²⁸ clearly delineating a square of land (here, circled in red) allotted to George Gobbet Humfrey.

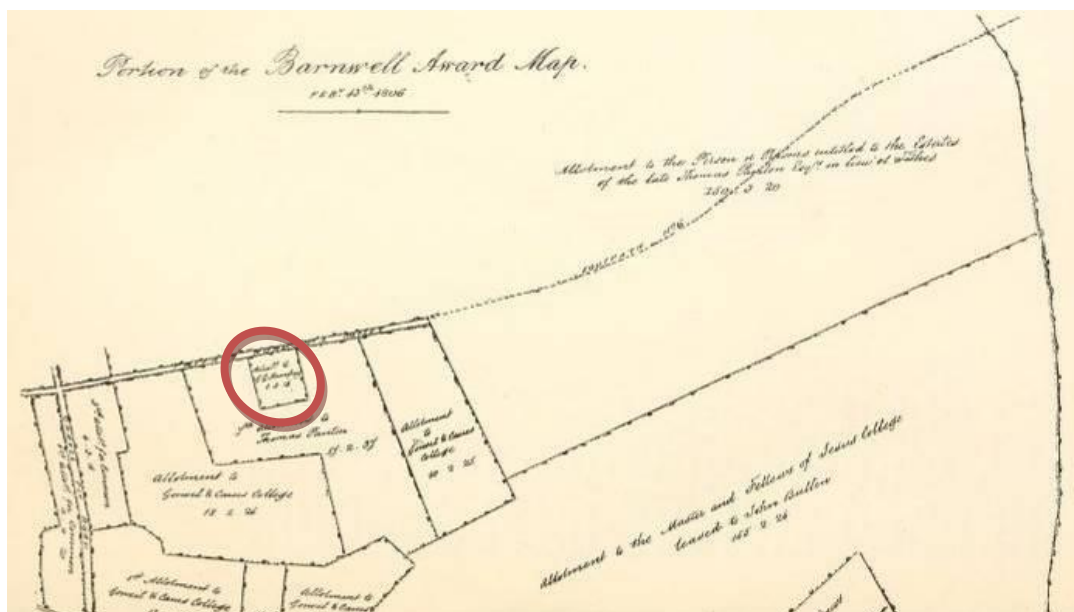


Figure 13 – Enclosure Barnwell Award Map, 1806 (detail).

Adjacent land was bought by Charles and George Humfrey from the Thomas Panton estate sale in 1809 (Panton had been the former major landowner in Barnwell). In Figure 14, the windmill site is circled in red and the adjoining lots 10,11 and 12 were bought by Charles Humfrey (bordered by blue square).²⁹

²⁸ 1806 Enclosure Award. Copy in Stokes (1915).

²⁹ 10 November 1809. Barnwell Sale. Part of Panton Estate. Details with Barnwell Enclosure Act, CA L75/10.

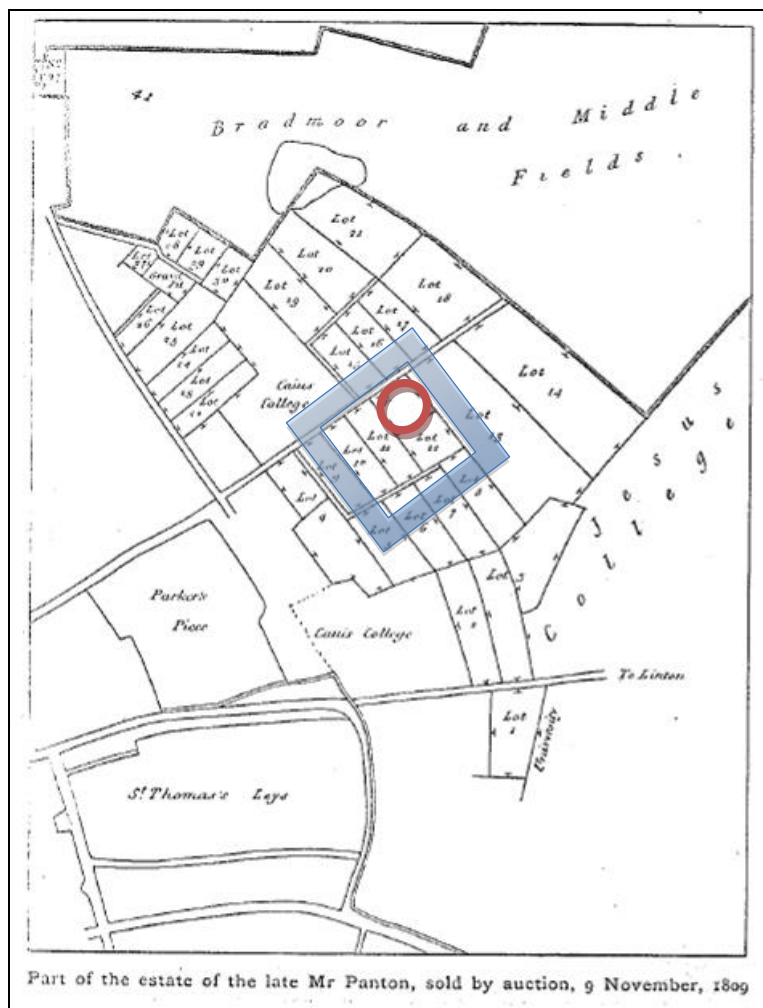


Figure 14 – Sale of part of Panton estate (1809)

In these early maps Mill Road is only marked as a 'Private Road', but slowly the road becomes identified by the windmill. In 1815 there are references in local papers to wheat being sold 'on the Road by Mr Humfrey's Mill',³⁰ and by 1823 a sale of land at Covent Garden locates it on 'Mill Road, leading to the footpath to Cherry Hinton'. The sale details state that 'the salubrity of the situation renders it particularly eligible for building; added to which it is connected with a good carriage-way and foot-path'.³¹ This hint that the area might soon lose its rural character is confirmed by both Baker's map of 1830 and Richardson's map of 1832 (Figures 15 and 16 below). Both maps show the first new houses built in the area on land adjoining the windmill site known as Covent Garden. The Windmill is shown, with an orchard at the rear (Baker).

³⁰ CCh 21 July 1815.

³¹ CCh 14 March 1823.

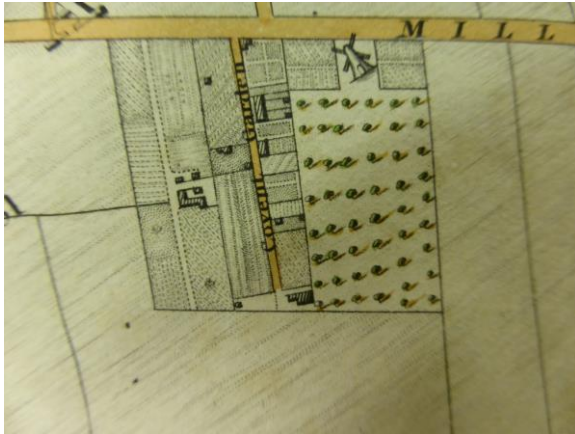


Figure 15 – Baker (1830)

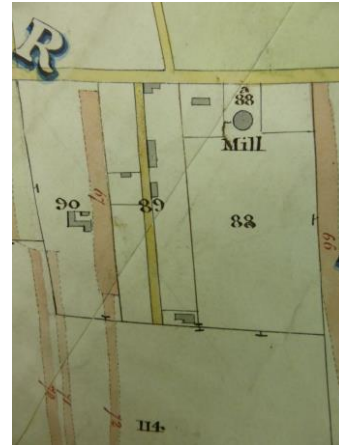


Figure 16 – Richardson (1832)

But despite the hopes of the local auctioneers there was no rush to develop Mill Road. Dewhurst & Nichols' map of 1840 shows more houses in Covent Garden, and the new Cambridge Union workhouse (built in 1837), but the windmill still stands set in an agricultural landscape surrounded by fields.

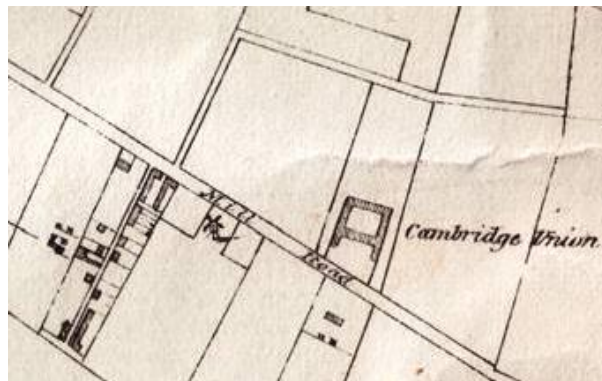


Figure 17 – Dewhurst & Nichols (1840)

However the mill may have fallen into disrepair by 1840, and after its demolition at the death of George Gobbett Humfrey in 1843 a newspaper advertisement recorded the subsequent sale of the site:³²

To be sold almost immediately afterwards in four lots, the GROUND upon which the Mill stands, and parts surrounding it, each lot having a frontage of 58 feet and a depth of 120 feet. Also the whole of the ORCHARD behind the Mill, well planted with choice Fruit Trees, containing rather more than three Acres, all Freehold.

In 1845 the land was for sale again, the details in the newspaper referring to the sale of "3½ acres of land, planted with potatoes, where The Mill lately stood, in separate

³² CIP 27 July 1844.

pieces".³³ This may just be the former orchard, but probably represents the entire site, with that of the windmill, as the Enclosure Map made for Jesus College in 1813³⁴ records the size of this as 3 acres, 2 roods, 17 poles. It also implies either that the 1844 sale had fallen through, or that the purchaser had, at least initially, seen planting potatoes as a more profitable option than developing the site for housing.

1844–1975: The Site since Demolition

The timing of the new sale was opportune. The railway came to Cambridge in 1845. Romsey Town was about to enjoy an explosive period of growth and development. In a sale catalogue of 1847 advertising an auction of freehold land to the north of Mill Road, the vendors stated:³⁵

Mill Road appears now to be the favoured spot for Building Speculation and an increasing neighbourhood is anticipated, the Houses built in this locality are eagerly sought after and let as soon as furnished.

Within six years of the 1845 sale the 1851 census shows that eleven houses had been built on the Mill Road frontage of the former windmill site. These started next to The Locomotive beer house (built on land adjacent to the windmill site while the mill was still standing), and ended at Mr Ward's, Baker (1861: No. 15 Mill Road; 2015: No. 58 Mill Road). Unlike today most of these were private residences as there were still few other houses in the area, and therefore little trade. James Ward, described as a 'Baker and Grocer', occupies the only property likely to have been a shop.

102	The Locomotive	Bossingham, William	44	Printer Compositor	Lincs, Stamford
103		Carpenter, Robert	20	Boot Maker	Cambs
104	[AB: 6 Mill Rd, 1861 Census]	Wright, Daniel	27	Blacksmith	Cambridge
105		Unoccupied			
106		Spink, John	55	Baker	Norfolk, Thetford
107		Newbury, Mary	69	Annuitant	Suffolk, Barden
108		Flay, William	58	Landed Proprietor	Bristol
109		Spalding, William	32	Lessie of Tolls	Cambs, Swaffham Bulbeck

³³ CIP 11 October 1845.

³⁴ CA: K107/P/4.

³⁵ CIP 8 May 1847.

110		Hurdly, John	22	Engineer	Sunderland
111		Marsh, William	26	Wood Carver	Suffolk, Ipswich
112		Bell, Alexander	26	Model Maker	Cambs, Drayton
113	[AB: 15 Mill Road, 1861 Census]	Ward, James	25	Baker & Grocer	Cambridge

Figure 18 - 1851 Census Mill Road: Household Heads

It is possible that remaining Mill Road frontage of the site between Mr Ward and Union Terrace (2015: Mawson Road) had also been built on by 1851 as the land was advertised for sale in 1847 (Figure 19 below).³⁶



Figure 19 – Freehold Building Ground, Mill Road

These plots had definitely been developed by 1858 when Richard Reynolds Rowe's map shows houses along the entire front of the former windmill site (Figure 20 below, in which Nos 10, 14 and 18 are editorially marked in red).

³⁶ CIP 4 September 1847.

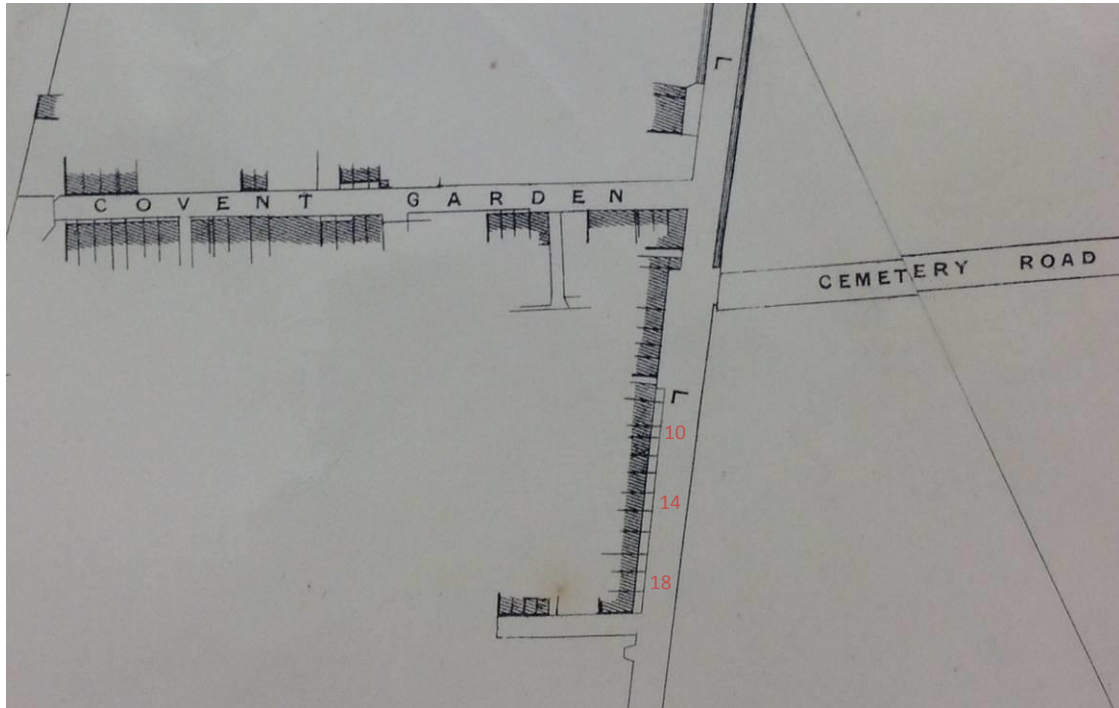


Figure 20 – Rowe survey map (1858)

Railway employees and engineering occupations rather than retail trades still dominate. The red numbers on the map are a best interpretation of the numbering and its link to the following 1861 census records:

- | | |
|----|---|
| 4 | John Bulter, 49, Publican (<i>The Locomotive</i>) |
| 5 | Jerome Neale, 37, ECR Porter |
| 6 | Daniel Wright, 38, Blacksmith |
| 7 | David Robinson, 30, Iron Moulder |
| 8 | Charles Baker, 40, Blacksmith |
| 9 | John Bradbury, 37, Publican and Cabinet Maker (<i>The Crystal Palace</i>) |
| 10 | William Flay, 67, landed proprietor |
| 11 | William Jewell, 38, turner iron |
| 12 | James Morry[?], 35, ECR Rail Engine Driver |
| 13 | Frederick Hunter, 29, ECR Engine Driver |
| 14 | John Spink, 50, point cleaner (widow still at this address in 1871) |
| 15 | James Ward, 36, baker & grocer (son and grandson at this address till 1950s) |
| 16 | Benjamin Reeve, 39, carpenter & joiner (still at this address in 1871) |
| 17 | William Branon, 43, printer and compositor (still there in 1871 and 1881) |
| 18 | Benjamin Rivers, 42, ECR Guard |
| 19 | Henry Pilgrim, 37, blacksmith (still there in 1871 and 1881 and also at No. 18) |

By the 1880s more of these properties were given over to retail, and included a tailor, a boot-maker, a general draper and hosier, replacing some of the railway workers. The 1886 Ordnance Survey map shows that the remainder of the site once occupied by the windmill and orchard had been developed as residential housing. The site is defined by a line that starts on Mill Road, follows the rear boundary of the properties to the east of

Covent Garden, crosses to Caius Street (2015: Glisson Road) at Caius Terrace, and returns to Mill Road along the front of the properties on the left of Union Terrace (2015: Mawson Road).

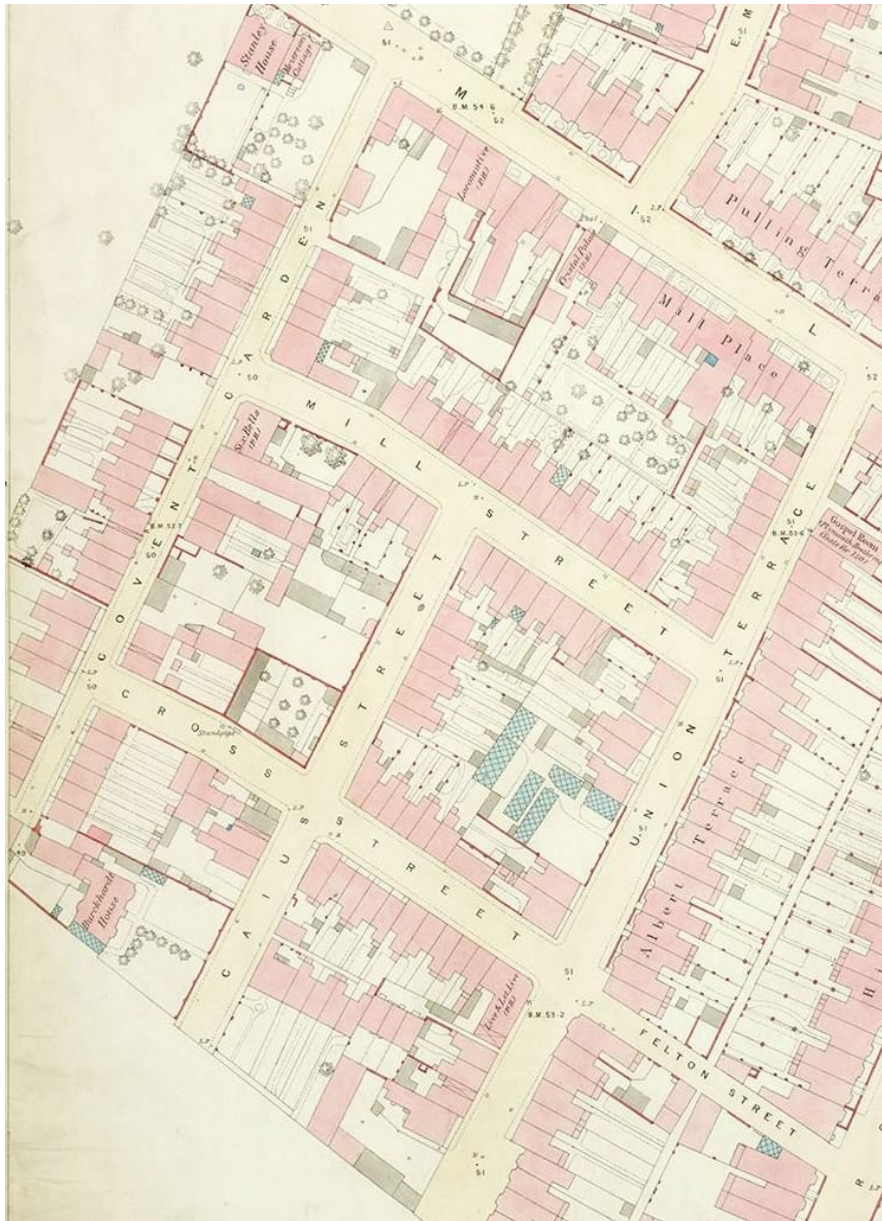


Figure 21 – Ordnance Survey map (1886)

The map shows how the site of the windmill and orchard owned by George Gobbett Humfrey was developed 1845–86. The houses along Mill Road still have small front gardens. The name 'Mill Place' is a reminder that the site of the windmill lay somewhere in this area.

In the 1890s there are two re-numberings of houses on Mill Road and some significant rebuilding as shown by the decoration that can be seen today on No. 58. This proudly

displays the initials 'FW' -- Frank Ward, the upwardly mobile son of James Ward -- surrounded by the date '1892' (perhaps the date of the building). James Ward was recorded living here as one of the first Mill Road retailers in the 1851 census. The new properties also have their fronts directly onto the footpath, without gardens.



Figure 22 – No 58 Mill Road (2015) – 'FW'/'1892'

As the population of the surrounding streets grew, more and more of the property owners along Mill Road followed the example set by the Wards and transformed their premises into shops. A description of Mill Road in the 1890s describes the street as the place to buy anything from a piano to a tombstone.³⁷ A trade directory from 1895 shows that on the small block between Covent Garden and Union Terrace, less than a tenth of a mile in length, the late-Victorian shopper could have bought a tombstone, a dress, furniture, meat, sweets and confectionary, fruit, cigars, provisions and wine, a new suit, boots or shoes, hosiery and haberdashery, stationery and newspapers, and a piano. Quite a shopping trolley full!

The early 19th-century hopes of the auctioneers that enclosure of the open fields would lead to rapid development had not been realised, and the landscape remained predominantly rural until the coming of the railway. But after 1845 change had been rapid. Within just 50 years the fields and hedges had disappeared to be replaced by a new suburb, and the site of Humfrey's windmill was lost under shops selling consumer goods for the new population who had moved into the area. Many of these new residents were living on the former orchard that had adjoined the windmill site.

Precisely where, then, on the modern 'block' between Covent Garden and Mawson Road, to the north of George Gobbett Humfrey's orchard, did the windmill lie? Is it possible to pinpoint its former location? By overlaying Baker's map of 1830, with its windmill symbol,

³⁷ Petty (1988), p. 118 (the allusions are to Harry Leavis's piano shop at 14 Mill Road and Ivett & Reed's monumental masonry showroom beside the entrance to Mill Road Cemetery).

on to the Ordnance Survey map of 2015,³⁸ it can be demonstrated that the windmill probably stood in what are now the rear gardens of Nos 56 and 56A (see Figure 23). Mill Street runs parallel to Mill Road (see Figure 21), and No. 13 Mill Street backs directly on to the area identified by the map overlay. Thus the site of the windmill most likely lies between Nos 56/56A Mill Road and No. 13 Mill Street.



Figure 23 – left: 54 & 54A Mill Road right: 56 & 56A Mill Road

1976–present : Recent History of the Site

In 1976, No. 56 Mill Road became Browne's Bookshop, the proprietors being Patrick and Gerda Browne. Between the rear of their shop and the back gardens of Nos 13 and 15 Mill Street was a parcel of land, approximately 20 by 30 feet, dominated by a large sycamore tree. The tree was eventually felled, probably in early 2003. In May of that year the Brownes sold the parcel of land to the owners of No. 13 Mill Street, who found 'masses of lumps of concrete, stone, metal, and who knows what else, on top of, and embedded in the soil, underneath enormous amounts of weeds.' They bagged these and removed them to the Council recycling plant, and landscaped the area with a pond, patio, and fruit trees (thereby restoring a small portion of the Humfrey's orchard!).

In view of the 1844 and 1849 sales of mill paraphernalia detailed earlier in this report (Figures 11 and 12), and the fact that the site had been used for many different purposes during the subsequent century and a half, it seems unlikely (though not impossible) that any of this rubble included remnants from the Mill. Nor were there signs of an earlier mound.³⁹

When the Brownes sold the shop, it was split into two premises numbered 54A and 56. At the time of writing, these and the adjacent premises are occupied as follows:

³⁸ This overlay was created by Gareth Rees of Oxford Archaeology East, but cannot, unfortunately, be shown in this report because of Ordnance Survey licensing restrictions.

³⁹ Information kindly supplied by Eva Simmons.

54	Tulip Restaurant : Turkish Cuisine
54A	Charisma Unisex Hairdressers
56	Petersfield Pharmacy
56A	[vacant: under redevelopment]

Nos 56 and 56A are currently being extensively remodelled, with a rear extension to include a number of flats that will partly occupy the presumed site of the Windmill. The rear area, as of March 2015 when construction was underway, is shown in Figure 24.⁴⁰



Figure 24 – Rear of 56 and 56A Mill Road

If there had been a mound at the rear of these buildings, it had long been flattened – perhaps to accommodate the construction of the brick mill in 1792/93, but certainly for the urban development of the site after the demolition of the Mill. Although several features were uncovered during the excavation of the new foundation trenches, no direct evidence of either the tower or post-mill was found. A 19th-century brick footing located

⁴⁰ Photograph by Lucy Walker.

at the rear of the plot could have been part of the windmill's foundation, however it could not be seen to continue into any other part of the plot and so is more likely to have been a garden wall or later outhouse. Remains uncovered in the centre of the plot consisted of a series of deep pits filled with 19th- and early 20th-century refuse. These pits may have been small gravel quarries which could have been contemporary with the use of the mill. Sherds of 17th-century pottery were recovered from a subsoil at the rear of the plot, indicating that this part of the site lay outside of the area where the mill was developed leaving deposits pre-dating the mill undisturbed.⁴¹

⁴¹ This paragraph was provided by Gareth Rees of Oxford Archaeology East. For further archaeological information, see Rees, G. (in preparation).

APPENDIX : 52-58 : Mill Road 1909-2012

Below are six 'snapshots' of the history of the Mill Road frontage around the site of the windmill between 1909 and 2012, with a word about the situation in 2015.

1. 1909

The following information of some of these properties is from the 1909 Land Value Tax survey (the valuations should be correct as at 30 April 1909).

Occupier	Owner	Number	Type	Gross Annual Value	Rateable Value	Area	Original Gross Value	Value of buildings
John Macrae	Bullard & Co	52	Public house and premises <i>The Crystal Palace</i>	£35	£28	311 sq yards	£1100	£740
Eastmans Ltd	Charles Wells	54	House, shop, factory and premises	£47	£38	279 sq yards	£1170	£770
Alec Cecil James Clark	George Scales trustees		House, shop and premises	£35	£28	299 sq yards	£560	£275
London Central Meat Co	George Scales trustees	56	Shop and premises	£28	£22 10s	115 sq yards	£540	£355
Frank Ward	Frank Ward Ltd	58	House, shop, bake house, premises	£85	£68	514 sq yards	£1800	£1300

2. 1911 census

The Crystal Palace Harry Bull (age 23), married to Edith (age 25) for four years with both their children alive (John Bull age 2 and Florence just 2 weeks old). Harry is a licenced victualler and Edith is assisting in business. The property is recorded as having seven rooms.

54 George William Smith (age 44), married to Florence (age 38), all their three children (age 11 to 5) living with them. George is a butcher (working for a company). The house has six rooms.

56 Alec Clark (age 32), married to Annie (age 33) for ten years. They have had six children, four of whom are still alive, with three at home on the night of the census. Alec is a fruiterer, confectioner and tobacconist (dealer, own account). They are living in five rooms.

- 58 Frank Ward (age 62), married to Ellen for thirty-five years and with eight children, all still alive (17-year-old Charles still at home and assisting his father; and Eric Ward age 14 still at school). On the night of the census they have one visitor. Frank is recorded as baker and grocer (own account) and the family are living in eight rooms.

3. 1925⁴²

- 52 Home and Colonial Stores
 54 Eastmans Ltd.
 54 George S. Harrup
 54A Eastmans Ltd, sausage factory
 56 Alec Clark, confectionery, fruit and cigar stores
 56A London Central Meat Co., George Rutter, manager
 58 Frank Ward Ltd. grocers, bakers, wine and spirit merchants, C. H. Ward, 782

4. 1948⁴³

- 52 Home & Colonial Stores (H & C Retail) Ltd. provision merchants
 54 Eastmans Ltd. Butchers
 54 J H Dewhurst Ltd. Butchers
 54A H G Stiles Ltd. Bakers
 56 Leslie Clark, fruit
 56A Jas. Smith & Sons, dyers & cleaners
 56B Selright (Cambridge) Ltd. ladies' outfitters
 58 Frank Ward Ltd. Grocers

Frank Ward was last mentioned in trade directories in 1957. In 1960 the property is not mentioned and by 1962 it is listed as Barclays Bank.

5. 1975⁴⁴

- 52 Seven Seas, fishmongers
 52A E Bullard
 54 Last Exit, booksellers
 54 Stephen De Bondt
 54 Christopher Guest
 54 H Painter
 54A Stitches Wools, woolshop
 56 J D & J M Clements, fruit.

⁴² 1925-26 Spalding's Directory of Cambridge.

⁴³ 1948 Kelly's Directory of Cambridge.

⁴⁴ 1975 Kelly's Directory of Cambridge.

- 56B Modern Shoe Repair Service
56B Marie, ladies' hairdresser
58 Barclays Bank Ltd (H W Rawlings, manager). Tel No 53031

6. 2012

The composite photograph below was created in 2012.⁴⁵ It shows the premises, in the order No. 52 (right), 54A, 54, 56A, 56, to 58 (left), and their occupants.



⁴⁵ Created by Pamela Wesson in time for the carrying of the Olympic Torch along Mill Road on 7 July 2012 on its way to the London Summer Olympics, the composite photograph of which the above is a short section covered the entire length of Mill Road on both sides.

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