

WATERMILLS

In 1086 Domesday book records –

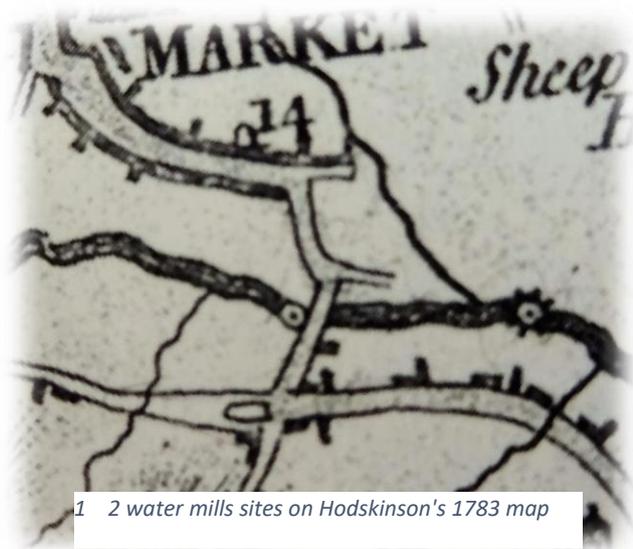
King William holds THORNEY, which King Edward held as one manor. This included then 2 mills, later and now 1. This would refer to water mills as windmills were not introduced until the 14th century.

Documents from the early 1400s onwards list two water mills. An undated but probably early 1400s rental of the manor of Columbine Hall then held by the Hotot family includes “*the manor of Clement*” included as being held by Matilda Hotot

The two water mills are listed as being held by –

John Wolfnard for a water mill called Alwynesmelle.

William Lavenham for a water mill called Clementes melle



In the 1327 subsidy return are listed –

William Clement taxed at 7 shillings fourpence farthing

Richard Clement taxed at 4 shillings and a halfpenny

They were two of the three highest taxed individuals in “Villata de Stowe” probably the earlier owners of the manor and the mills.

The area of Clements manor and the location of the water mills is defined in a document from the Manor of Haughley dated 1554 –

John Tyrrell: of Collombin Hall esquier holdethe att the Southend of Stowe Strete one close nowe divided into foure partes with one medowe or marisshe lienge in length on the Southe syde therof & one marisshe & aldercarre also in th'estend therof conteyning in the hoole 40 acres as ytt liethe in Stowe aforseid betwine the common Rever Runnyng from the Forthe mylle [Alwynes later Ford Mill then Boulters Mill] unto the mylle of the seid John called Taylors Mylle on the Southe parte / And the wey called Clementes Lane [Takers Lane?] in parteon the Northe parte / And ytt abbuttethe uppon the Common Rever runnyng from Thorneye Bredge unto Taylours Mylle aforseid agenste th'este / And uppon the Kinges Highe Weye ledinge from Jppeswiche to Stowe agenst the weste:"

Although the mills would later have ground corn, they may have been fulling mills as Stowmarket had a thriving cloth trade at that time.

In rentals of the manor of Columbine Hall between 1546 and 1554 Clements mill is held by a Thomas Taylor and the Ford mill previously Alwynes mill is held by a William Gower or Jower.

Clements Mill in 19th century became known as Crosse's mill. Early maps of the course of the Gipping Navigation and Ordinance Survey maps show a watermill immediately downstream of the bridge across the river on the site of the later gun cotton works. The course of the navigation bypassed the original course of the river at this point, the original stretch of river forming the mill race. This stretch has since been filled in.

The mill was on the Stowupland side of the river so was also known as Stowupland Mill (the river being at that time the parish boundary) and was by 1817 owned by Mr. Pearl Cross. Subsequently it was owned by his widow Sarah and daughter Elizabeth. On 17th July 1852 William Freeman records in his diary going swimming at Miss Cross's mill.

The mill was sold by the Cross family in 1860 when a Henry Wicks was miller there and it was described as a mill of four floors with three pairs of millstones.

It is uncertain when milling ceased but the mill would have surely been severely damaged in the 1871 explosion at the nearby gun cotton factory and probably milling ceased then.

The Ford mill previously Aldwynes Mill was being worked by a William Boulter by 1794, this William Boulter had died by 1837 but another William Boulter probably his son ran the mill until at least 1853.



2 Site of Boulter's Mill