Industrial Archaeology Notes
1980

Compiled by Malcolm G. Knapp

BOURNE  Baldowns Watermill, South Street
Catherine M. Wilson

A survey of this building was carried out at the request of the Bourne United Charities who now own the building which they are planning to convert to a Museum. Ground floor measurements only were taken as the building had not been used as a watermill for many years and there was little trace of where the machinery had been. The wheel pit (Plate I) was measured by candlelight as we had all forgotten to take torches and had to scour Bourne to find a shop open on a Sunday which sold candles!

![Plate I](image1)


The date of erection of the building is not known but it was probably built in the nineteenth century and was part of the estates of the Marquess of Exeter. Directories give some information about the owners of the mill. From 1896 to about 1900 the miller was W. Townrow. He was succeeded by John Pocklington, recorded as a carpenter as well as a miller, who in turn was succeeded by Frederick Balduck in 1905. In 1909 Frederick Balduck is recorded as 'miller, steam and wind' but this must surely be a mistake. Frederick Balduck's first trade (see below) was that of carpenter and from 1922 onwards he is recorded only as a timber merchant, the mill having ceased to be used as such soon after the First World War. Subsequent to the survey, the writer visited Mrs Ray of Bourne, whose father, John Thomas Balduck, was the last person to use the mill. The following notes were made from her memories.

The mill was owned by Burghley Estates (Plate II). Mrs Ray can remember going to Stamford with her father twice a year to pay the rent. Her grandfather, Frederick Balduck, served his apprenticeship as a carpenter at Keal Cotes. He moved to Bourne c. 1900 (his youngest daughter is now 75 and she was born at the mill) and lived in the millhouse. Although he used the mill (his daughter can remember the house shaking as the mill worked), he remained primarily a carpenter. The land attached to the mill included what is now the memorial gardens, and the carpenter's shop (Plate III) was on the site of the Darby and Joan Hall.

Although Frederick had several sons, one was drowned and two were killed in the First World War, leaving only one, John Thomas (Jack), to carry on the business. Mrs Ray thinks it likely that the mill never worked seriously after 1918, as her father was more interested in the carpentry side which he carried on with his father. John Thomas and his family moved into the millhouse about 1930 when his father moved out. By this time the carpentry business had been transferred to the mill end of the site, the other end being let off. Mrs Ray cannot remember a great deal about the inside of the mill but is certain there was only one pair of stones, on the first floor. There was a 'huge' all wooden water wheel which could still be turned but was very rotten. In the other part of the wheel pit was a small water wheel, used by her father on occasions for sawing logs, etc., but basically the mill was used for storage. The mill was run in conjunction with Notley's Mill further down stream. This mill continued working until its demolition five or six years ago and they often had to ask her father to lift the sluice to let more water through so that they could work. The water comes from a series of springs in Wellhead field immediately behind Baldowns Mill. Mrs Ray said there was much more water in her childhood than there is now. Her mother finally moved out of the millhouse about twelve years ago (i.e. 1968), and Mrs Ray has not been inside since.
BRANSTON Barn, Rectory Lane
(Grid reference TF 019673)

Catherine M. Wilson

A substantial stone-built barn just off Rectory Lane in Branston was purchased during 1980 for conversion to a house. The barn was of considerable interest since, as well as its original agricultural use, it had also been used as a gas works and a cornmill.

The owner kindly allowed the Industrial Archaeology Sub-Committee to survey the remains before their removal.

The barn itself was probably built in the 18th century but its industrial activities belong to the end of the 19th century. White's Directory for 1892 records for Branston that 'the village has much improved during the last 20 years and private gas works were erected by the late Hon. Alexander Leslie-Melville from which gas is supplied to many of the houses'. There were few remains of the gas works, all retorts, purifying equipment etc., having been removed sometime ago. The pits for the gas holders were, however, clearly visible as was the concrete base for the scrubber. We were fortunate in being able to copy a photograph (Plate IV) taken in the 1920s showing the equipment in situ. The owner of the photograph, Mr Footit, thought that the gas works went out of use about 1930.

Plate IV  Branston barn. The gas works with equipment in situ. 1920s. Catherine M. Wilson.

The cornmilling equipment consisted of two pairs of stones, one pair Peak stones on a fairly conventional hurst frame (Plate VI), the other pair, French stones, at a higher level and on an unusual long cast iron shaft with a decorative cast iron column containing the tentering adjustment. It is possible that this second pair of stones was re-used from a watermill and installed later than the first pair. Both pairs were under-driven by a steam engine in a lean-to on the end of the barn. The surviving chimney seems to relate to this engine, rather than to the gas works.

WADDINGHAM Brandy Wharf Bridge
(Grid reference TF 014970)

Catherine M. Wilson

The cast iron bridge (Plate VIII) over the New River Ancholme at Brandy Wharf was built at the time of Ancholme improvements in the 1820s. It is now subject to a weight restriction and is due for replacement in the near future. As no original plans could be traced it was decided to record the bridge before its removal.

The bridge consists of five identical cast iron ribs slotted into cast iron plates on the stone abutments (Plate VII) and cross-braced beneath (Plate IX). The abutments are echoed by stone pillars at the ends of the wing walls and are connected to them by railings which run the full length of the bridge. At the north-west corner the railings make an abrupt turn to give access to a canal-side warehouse. The appearance of the bridge is now marred by water pipes on both sides.
Plate IX  Brandy Wharf bridge showing bracing.  
*Catherine M. Wilson.*

Plate X  Brandy Wharf bridge, east abutment.  *Catherine M. Wilson.*