



**Water Mills,**

**Beaminster**

## Water mills, Beaminster

*These are mills that cannot be associated with any of the listed mills for Beaminster*

- 1086 *Domesday* two Mills 28d (suggesting that both were small) Monks of Sherborne, Brictrin holds.
- 1472-5 In Beaminster Secunda the grist mill as held by the Fairwells, probably along the river off East Street<sup>1</sup> (NB East Street included the present Whitcombe Road and Bridport Road).
- 1525 Court roll entry Philip Spelt holds for life 1 water mill<sup>2</sup>. All customary tenants for Beaminster Prima had to bring their corn to be ground. It was a grist mill called Beaminster Mill. It was probably near the site of Ham Mill. Spelt had to keep all the buildings, ditches and the mill machinery in repair including ironwork, brazen bearings, cogs, run, 'betyngs' (*possibly the wax dropped from candles*) and 'leyengs' (*appears to mean layings?*)<sup>3</sup>.
- May 22 1783. Mary Osborne, late of Godmanstone but now of Winterborne Steepleton, widow of George Osborne, Clerk (formerly Mary Collins), being paid £220 by Baruch Fox Gent., had surrendered to Baruch Fox Jnr. cottage containing dwellinghouse and outhouses, garden and ground late an orchard called Mill Pond (1 acre)<sup>4</sup>. The pond appears to be roughly where Beaminster Mill pond was later, suggesting that there was an earlier mill somewhere in this area.

End GM Minute book 2 November 1798<sup>5, 6</sup>

Village/town	No of mills	Description of mills	No. sacks of flour		No. of ovens	No. of loaves to be delivered normally each 24 hours	No. of loaves to be delivered in an emergency each 24 hours	No. of journeyman required if to work all day and night	Kind of fuel used	Whether abundant or not
			Engaged to be furnished every 24 hours	Engaged to be delivered at the mill						
Beaminster	1	Water	10	10	7	2,000	3,800	17	Wood and Furze	Yes
	-	Wind	-	-						

1865 Sale of orchard tenement, formerly mill recently demolished and appurtenances in Beaminster Secunda<sup>7</sup>

1915 Richard Swatridge, corn factor and miller (water), Fore Place<sup>8</sup>

In addition there were other mills (some were not water driven) some of which spent part or all of their life as flax mills or manufactories. In addition there were weaving sheds and a millwright Coombs:

- Buckham
- Bugler's saw mill
- Langdon Mills
- Lenhams ( no further details except that its location suggests that a mill was there)
- East Street weaving sheds
- Fleet Street
- North Street
- Read's (at one time a woollen mill)
- Shadrack Street
- Parnham Mills
- Southgate saw mill
- South Hams (mainly a grist mill)
- Whatley (a paper mill, flax mill and grist mill)
- Whitcombe Road
- Yarn Barton Mill and Weaving Sheds
- Coombs, millwright

There are a lot more details for each under the name of the mill both in the Beaminster file and on the computer files.

19<sup>th</sup> century - early 20<sup>th</sup> century Shiner's timber yard, buildings down to the stream where the yard appears to be connected by sluice gates<sup>9</sup>, although the saw mill was apparently not water driven. The equipment was later transferred to South Hams Mill<sup>10</sup>

*Meerhay*

Possible water mill at Meerhay Manor



Leat coming in from streams, not certain of link.

The building is two stories high so could have been a grist mill

## Appendix 1

1809 Highway Certificate No.33

### Dorsetshire - Bridport Division

**DORSET!** WE Thomas Rose Drewe and Francis John Browne Esquires two of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said County of Dorset acting within the Division of Bridport in the same County having viewed the Foot Paths particularly described in the above Plan, beginning at the entrance into a certain Field called Parnham Walk and ending at the entrance into a Lane called the Kennel Lane which said Footpath is situate in the Parish of Beaminster in the County and Division aforesaid, and leads from the Town of Beaminster to the Village of Netherbury and containing in length Six hundred and Seventy one Yards and described in the above Plan as the Old Foot Path and also having viewed the Foot Path beginning at the entrance into the said Field called Parnham Walk and continuing from thence on the West Side of the River there through the Mill Barton to the entrance into the said Lane called the Kennel Lane leading also from the said Town of Beaminster to the Village of Netherbury and containing Six Hundred and Sixty nine Yards and described in the above Plan as the New Foot Path And having upon such View found that the Old Foot Path leading through Parnham Walk into Kennel Lane aforesaid is totally unnecessary for the Public and the Inhabitants of the said Parishes of Beaminster and Netherbury to go pass and repass to and from each Parish And that the said other Foot Path beginning at the entrance into the said Field called Parnham Walk and continuing from thence on the West Side of the said River there through the Mill Barton to the entrance to the said Lane called the Kennel Lane is in very good repair, more commodious, nearer and equally convenient for the said Public and Inhabitants to pass and repass to and from the said Parishes as will appear by the said Plan DO hereby Order the said useless Foot Path the Old Foot Path containing in length Six hundred and Seventy one Yards to be stop'd up and the Ground and Soil thereof to be appropriated to the use of Sir William Oglander Baronet the owner of the said Parnham Walk xx He the said Sir William Oglander having made the other Foot Path called the New Foot Path at his own expence highly commodious dry and fit for Foot Passengers. Given under our Hands at our Special Sessions held at Beaminster in and for the said Division the fourth Day of July one thousand eight hundred and nine.

*T.R.Drewe*

*F.J.Brow*

## References

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- 1 Eedle, M de G (1984) **A History of Beaminster**, Chichester, Phillimore, Pg 24.
- 2 Dorset History Centre D1-LN/17 (See D.1/LN18A for transcripts and translations.) .
- 3 Hine R (1914) **The History of Beaminster** Pg 306.
- 4 Beaminster Manorial Court records (copies on the Beaminster Museum computer).
- 5 Dorset History Centre L/B/1/1 Volume commenced by Edward Boswell, clerk 1792-1843 (information provided by Diana Trenchard).
- 6 Dorset History Centre reference D/52/3 1799-1803 Minute Book of the General Meetings of the Lieutenancy of Dorset (provided by Diana Trenchard).
- 7 Beaminster Secunda Minute Book Dorset History Centre D/KAT/ Acc.9146/Box 10/7.
- 8 Kelly's directory 1915.
- 9 Conversation with Maurice Gibbs, January 2017.
- 10 John Lake (2002) *Memories of Mills and Machinery*, **Around and about**, pp4,5, Issue 33 Spring (2002).

*Duncan Harris (November 2018)*

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