

View to Wraxall



These two photographs show the main road out of Nailsea to Wraxall. The road leads down to the bottom of Wraxall Score, where originally stood Wraxall Mill, mentioned in the Domesday Survey. It was powered by an overshot wheel using water from the Land Yeo.

In the year 1846, the proprietors of the Bristol Water Works Company wished to extract water from the stream. This would have resulted in the seven mills between Barrow Gurney and Tickenham losing some of their trade, so they commissioned a firm of Surveyors to negotiate terms. They reported, "The Wraxall Mill, William Vowles tenant, will be void at Christmas. We have therefore



procured of Mr. Homer of Nailsea Glassworks, the owner, an offer of the Mill to the Company as tenants for the two years at the rate of £45." Although Mr. Homer appears to have relinquished his interest, the Mill continued to be worked.



These river- side corn mills played an important role in the life of the community for hundreds of years, the one at Wraxall surviving until the beginning of the 20th century. The cottage was occupied afterwards for a number of years. For centuries the

corn from Wraxall and Nailsea was ground there, but, with the march of time, new forms of power were introduced and the mill declined. It was demolished when the road was widened and straightened, destroying what had once been one of the most picturesque lanes in the area.

One of the new forms of power was steam. This was used to work the Steam Bakery – the tower of which can be seen on the left of the third photograph on page 47. From 1823 this was run by the Yendole family. Not only did they grind flour, but also ran a bakery attached to it. The bread was sold in the shop facing the road (now the dentist) by the Yew tree. The bread was also delivered to customers by horse and trap.



The other two chimneys in the photograph were those of the Saw Mills across the road from the Sawyers arms, the latter still thrives today. Sawing wood was thirsty work hence the name of the public house. These mills were at first steam driven although little is known of their early history. In 1844 they were owned by George Newton and described as “Timberyard and buildings”. According to Mr Greenhill this firm built the Market House in Clevedon. By 1902 they had fallen out of use but were reported as working again in 1953. The sawmills may originally have supplied the glassworks with wood since an enormous amount of timber was needed to make the crates in which to package the glass for transportation, but by 1870 the glassworks had its own sawmills. Part of the site was occupied by Mr R N Coate who established a very successful cider factory there in 1925.