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The Early History of Two Stonehouse Mills: a re-interpretation

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Introduction

Bond's Mill, on the northern channel of the river Frome at the western edge of the parish of Stonehouse, has usually been described as unrecorded before 1714, while references to various clothiers and fulling mills before that date have been attributed to Lower Mill, the next mill upstream on the same branch of the Frome (cf. Fig. 1).¹ This re-interpretation of the evidence is based on research for a doctoral thesis.² It includes a detailed survey of parish documentary sources which has suggested that in and before 1542 Bond's Mill was a fulling mill with a corn mill added, that it was called the New Mill, and that for a time it was the main base of the Fowler family's cloth business. Lower Mill was the ancient Stonehouse manor corn mill.

Bond's Mill

While the early history of some mills in the parish is well documented, other sites are difficult to identify accurately from the sparse surviving manorial records before 1558.³ In the court roll for May 1496 a fulling mill with one head, two stocks and a small close was surrendered to the lord of Stonehouse manor by Richard Bence and his son Richard and was taken up by another son William Bence, his wife Juliana and son Richard by copyhold for their lives. The new tenants were to rebuild the derelict (*quasi decas[us]*) wooden head in stone, with a sluice and rack, within eight years (a rack or rack close was a cloth-drying area normally found beside a fulling mill or dyehouse). The entry fine was 20s., to be paid in two instalments, 13s. 4d. in the first year and 6s. 8d. in the second. There is no indication of the position of this mill.⁴

The same entry fine was charged in October 1507 on Robert Collier, who took over the copyhold of a message and fulling mill formerly in the tenure of Robert Thatcher.⁵ It was again to be paid in two instalments, this time of 10s. each. Although an entry fine was negotiable, it was usually set at some customary level, such as two years' value at each renewal, and it was unlikely to have changed in the space of eleven years at a time before the conversion of copyholds into leases had become common practice.⁶ Collier's mill is therefore quite likely to be Bence's. It may be that Thatcher took over the mill from the Bences at some time before 1507, perhaps at the expiry of their eight years, or that he was their tenant.

It is difficult to identify the location of Bence's mill. A survey of Stonehouse manor in 1558 omits the demesne, which might be expected to have included Lower Mill, and lists only one copyhold mill, at Ryeford. This was held by the Gibbes family from 1486 and it seems to have been a corn mill at that date.⁷ However, in 1572 an order was issued by the manor court that the watercourse from the place called Thatcher's to Stonehouse Farm should be cleared by all those through whose land it ran.⁸ The 'Farm' in the manor records normally means the demesne, a usage which suggests that Thatcher's was on the same northern river channel as the manor

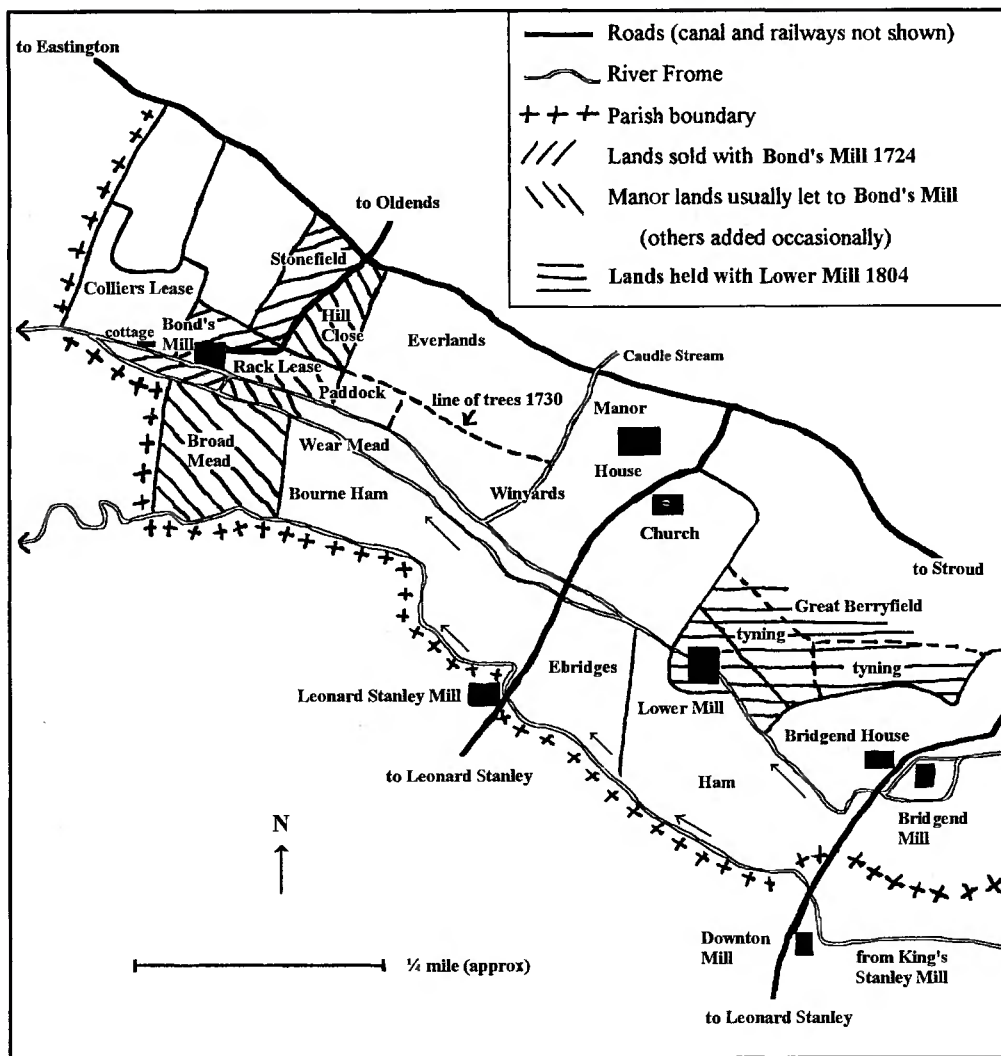


Fig. 1. Bond's Mill and Lower Mill, Stonehouse, 1724–1885 (based on a map of Stonehouse manor c. 1730: Glos. R. O., photocopy 1850; J. Elliott, map of Stonehouse 1803: *ibid.* D 1347, maps: J. Elliott, survey of Stonehouse 1804: *ibid.* P 263/MI 9; O.S. Map 6", Glos XLIX. NW. 1885 edn.).

house. It would be strange for a working cloth mill or the ancient Lower Mill to have been called a 'place'. There is no indication that the 1572 reference is to a mill, or even to a building, and the name Thatcher's is not found in any later court record or other document. It may simply be a field name referring to the site of one of the small fulling installations which did not survive the 16th century. It seems likely that the expected stone rebuilding never materialised and that Bence's/Thatcher's/Collier's mill is not represented by any modern structure.

A possible location for this mill is suggested by the field name Colliers Lease, two pieces of land, west of Bond's Mill, made into one and described in 1751 as having the cottage of William

Evans and the river on its south side.⁹ This cottage is now (2000) part of Bond's Mill Cottages. It is a long leap from Robert Collier in 1507 to a field name in 1751, with little intervening reference to any land called Colliers Lease. The name may have been rarely used because Colliers Lease was part of a larger area called Gravel Pit Lease, Stonepit Lease or Stonefield Lease.¹⁰ In 1740 John Evans, father of William, described his cottage as 'new built' on land taken out of Stonepit Lease. This suggests that there had been no existing structure on the site.¹¹ If Robert Collier's mill was in this position, the place called Thatcher's in 1572 would have provided the manor court with a way of describing the western edge of Stonehouse manor, which corresponded to the western parish boundary, and of locating the watercourse without having to list any particular people as responsible for it. Maintenance was evidently a perennial problem. The river Frome westwards from Stonehouse to Fromebridge was described in 1641 as unnavigable due to 'sunke trees' and overhanging branches, as well as 'high banks at fulling mills (where there are many)'.¹²

There is another reference in the court rolls which has not been considered in standard accounts of the mills. In October 1496 Richard Hathemere took of the lord 2½ a. of land of the New Mill (*de novo molin[o]*) in Winyards furlong, parcel of the lord's land, to be held with the consent of the demesne farmer by Richard, his wife Joan and son William for their lives. They were to rebuild (*de novo eregere et conformere*) within one year a fulling mill with two stocks and a gig mill.¹³ This sounds like the same property as that granted to Bence the previous May, but there is no reference to Bence or to any reason why his tenure might have been so short. The entry fine for Hathemere's tenement was only 3s. 4d. and the rent 7s. 8d. a year, a more lease-like arrangement than that for Bence's mill. If the mill granted to Hathemere was 'new' in 1496 it was probably not the derelict wooden structure granted to Bence.

Hathemere's land may be the later Rack Lease at Bond's Mill, adjoining the west end of land called Winyards. This name was usually given to the area round the manor house which according to a map of c. 1730 comprised Vine Court and Vine Orchard.¹⁴ They then lay wholly east of the Caudle stream, the main water supply which ran south from Stonehouse High Street to the river down the boundary line west of the manor house (cf. Fig. 1) and which is now (2000) under the canal turning basin or 'ocean'. The same pieces of land were called 'Wineyard and Wineyard Orchard' in 1729, containing four acres together.¹⁵ Vine Orchard was probably the site of the vineyard mentioned in Domesday Book, which contained only c. 1 a. but may have been extended in medieval times when Gloucestershire was noted for its vines.¹⁶

There are indications that in the 16th century Winyards reached west of the Caudle stream towards the site of Bond's Mill. In 1567 it contained 16 a., four times the area in 1729.¹⁷ The adjoining field called Everlands, on the other hand, contained 12 a. in 1567 and 20 a. in 1729. The measurements are not exact, especially at the earlier date when an 'acre' may be a customary unit. However, it does seem that in 1567 Winyards was larger than Everlands, and that Everlands gained at Winyards' expense, both being divided from most other fields by water and roads and by demesne and church boundaries which did not vary. In 1804 the area immediately around the manor house comprised c. 4 a. and Everlands, which by then had lost land to the canal but had absorbed the remains of Hill Close, comprised c. 21½ a. in two pieces.¹⁸

The name Everlands comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'ea-furlongs', the furrow-lengths or plough-strips by the river.¹⁹ The larger size of Winyards in the 16th century may have resulted from one of the riverside furlongs coming to be known as Winyards furlong because it was next to the vineyard or even contained an extension of it. No reference to Winyards as a furlong has been found after 1496, suggesting that it ceased to be ploughed. The best site for vines would have been the strip along the river which has a fairly pronounced south-facing slope, good for ripening crops but less easy to plough. By 1729 the whole area between roads, river and the Caudle stream had changed from arable use to pasture, all called Everlands.²⁰ However, the map

of c. 1730 shows an orderly band of three rows of trees or bushes following the brow of the slope across Everlands from the corner of Vine Orchard and extending across Hill Close to Bond's Mill rack close, along the line of the later canal.²¹ This could be an ornamental avenue like that shown on the same map running northwards from the manor house, but the trees have no central space and the line does not relate to the house. If the plants were still vines some reference to them would surely have been found. They may be a plantation marking the edge of what was once Winyards furlong.

These are disjointed references, but they can be interpreted to suggest that the original Bond's Mill was a small, late 15th-century fulling and gig mill at the western end of a long riverside strip called Winyards, was called the New Mill and was rebuilt in 1496 by Richard Hathemere. It was held of the manor by a lease-like arrangement, and it was apparently developed in preference to a neighbouring fulling mill which had fallen into disuse by 1572.

Two conjectures can also be made as to early occupants of Lower Mill. In 1507 four corn mills were probably operating in the manor, namely Lower and Upper Mills and Ryeford and Ebley Mills. The court roll of that year records fines as millers on John Bennett, known to be at Ebley, Richard Mill, known to be at Upper Mill, and William Carver. Ryeford Mill is known to have been run by the Gibbes family at this time, so William Carver may be assigned to Lower Mill.²² In the years 1487, 1491–2 and 1495–8 similar fines were levied on Lewis Brown, Richard Mill and William Malson. Lewis Brown can be placed at Ebley by court roll entries in the year 1496–7, so again William Malson may be assigned to Lower Mill. In 1486 the millers were William Malson, Robert Page and Thomas Payne, Robert Page *alias* Mill being the tenant of Upper Mill and Payne probably being at Ebley.²³ William Malson was thus a corn miller, probably at Lower Mill in the manor demesne, throughout the period when Bence and Hathemere were being granted fulling mills.

The basis of the prevailing interpretation of Bond's Mill's history has been the association of Lower Mill with Richard Fowler, a prosperous clothier whose son William became joint owner and lord of Stonehouse manor in 1558.²⁴ Richard Fowler himself leased the manor demesne from the earl of Arundel before 1558.²⁵ The Stonehouse manor court roll for October 1533 describes the river Frome flowing from Dudbridge to the mill of Richard Fowler as being anciently in three divisions, two running into the Stonehouse demesne, and one into the King's Stanley demesne.²⁶ The northern stream of the river westwards from Dudbridge does at times have three channels. It has been assumed that in 1533 it served Ryeford and Upper and Lower Mills, with Richard Fowler's mill taken to be the one furthest west along it within the manor, namely Lower Mill.²⁷ The entry has therefore been thought to describe the Frome from Dudbridge to the place called Bridgend, where the road south to Leonard Stanley crosses the river near Lower Mill.

However, this entry also describes the whole course of the river from east to west throughout the length of Stonehouse manor and parish. Dudbridge was in an important position on the south-eastern boundary, almost the only place in the parish where the river could be crossed on firm ground by a single bridge. As far as Ebley the river was the parish boundary and a little further west it separated into two main channels. The northern one served Ryeford, Upper, Bridgend, Lower and, it seems, New Mills, often split into two or even three streams, but never leaving the parish. The southern channel crossed into King's Stanley and served King's Stanley and Downton Mills before it marked the Stonehouse parish boundary past Leonard Stanley Mill. From Bridgend westwards it ran parallel to the northern channel and reunited with it some way downstream outside the parish. Dudbridge on the eastern edge of the parish, and New Mill on the western may well have been chosen in 1533 as landmarks to indicate not a single water-course but the extent of the manor's interest in the river. It is true that if Richard Fowler was

leasing the demesne, the manor mill might have been referred to as his. He was called a corn miller in 1540.²⁸ However, as will be shown, his main interests are more likely to have been identified with a fulling mill than with a corn mill, and Lower Mill appears still to have been a corn mill in the 16th century.

Richard Fowler's corn mill in 1540 may in any case have been at New Mill. In 1542 the earl of Arundel, then lord of the manor, leased to Richard Fowler, his wife Margery and son William for their lives, the New Mill, described as 'one grist mill with a fulling mill' and a half yardland (c. 15 a.).²⁹ They were to provide one horseman in time of war. This may have been a renewal of an existing tenancy, made when William reached the age of 21.³⁰ The property was not included in the manor survey of 1558, which omitted the demesne, nor was it specifically mentioned in Richard Fowler's will, or in the inquisition post mortem for him of 1561.³¹ However, Margery was the next life in the lease, and would have received it on Richard's death in 1560. Richard Fowler also leased and lived at More Hall near Randwick, but one of his sons, Henry, may have occupied New Mill in 1558. Henry was a clothier and died in 1565, naming his mother Margery as his executor.³² Margery had probably moved out of More Hall, after she was widowed in 1560, in order to make it available to another son, Edward, who acquired its freehold by 1577.³³

In 1567 Stonehouse manor was divided between its two owners, William Fowler and William Sandford. New Mill, described as a corn mill and a fulling mill with three stocks under one roof, was part of William Fowler's share. The mill was then held by his mother Margery and it adjoined her house.³⁴ She held with it 1 a. in Stonefield, $4\frac{1}{2}$ a. of meadow south of the house, 3 a. in Wear Close, 4 a. of Rack Close, and $2\frac{3}{4}$ a. called Barley Close. As can be seen in Fig. 1, Stonefield and Wear (Weir) Close (Lease or Mead) were nearer Bond's Mill than Lower Mill. The meadow called Broad Mead, south of Bond's Mill, was later consistently held with it. The manor court book for 1577 records that William Fowler, the lord of the manor, Anselm Sandford, the owner of Upper Mill, and Joan Bennett, the lessee of Ebley Mill, were overcharging as corn millers.³⁵ William may have been operating the corn and fulling mills at New Mill at this time, during his mother's widowhood, as in the manor partition deed of 1567 he was called a clothier and the manor farm was in the possession of another brother, James Fowler, who died in 1577.³⁶ When Margery died in 1579 she left her 'farms', or leases, to William for life and then to whichever of William's children might be occupying her house.³⁷ In the manor rental of 1603 Henry Fowler, son of William, was a tenant by indentures for his house called the New Mill.³⁸

In 1603 Daniel Fowler, lord of Stonehouse manor, also leased to his brother Henry a close of 3 a. 'now divided and enclosed late part of a greater close called Hill Close', $\frac{1}{4}$ a. in the Bourne Ham 'now divided from it by the straightening of the watercourse', $\frac{1}{4}$ a. close called Caudewell, 1 a. in common Stonefield, $1\frac{1}{2}$ a. in Nastfield, Eastington, and 2 a. in Claycroft, all of which Henry already occupied. Daniel reserved a right of way to his own lands between the Bourne Ham and the Winyard over the ground between the brook, the Rack Close and the Wear Lease.³⁹ Henry Fowler was apparently adding demesne lands to his lease of a mill with a rack close next to Wear Lease and a piece of Hill Close nearby, lands which fit the position at Bond's Mill. In 1608 Henry Fowler paid a fine for being a miller, and according to a muster roll of that year he was to supply two corselets. The armour in his house had been divided between himself and Daniel by their father's will. In 1608 it was Daniel Fowler, the owner of the mill, who was to provide a light horseman, although both his and Henry's obligation presumably resulted from assessments of their estates for the muster rather than from any precedent set by their grandfather's lease.⁴⁰

Henry Fowler died in 1629. He left the lease of his house, mills and lands to three of his daughters, Sarah, Abigail and Alice, and the lease of a house occupied by Samuel Halliday to Samuel Havilland, his grandson through another daughter.⁴¹ His executors included his son-in-law John Jesser, who had married Sarah at Eastington in 1628. Hannah Jesser, probably John's sister, had married William Mill at Stonehouse in 1627 and their son William was baptised in Stonehouse in 1632. The marriage settlement drawn up when Thomas Smith married Mary Fowler, heiress to the manor, in 1647, included in her property a messuage and mill leased by John Jesser for a term of 31 years.⁴² In the hearth tax return for Micheldmas 1672, William Mill the younger was assessed on seven hearths for property listed after entries for Oldends, a hamlet north of Bond's Mill.⁴³ He appears to have held the same property as his uncle John Jesser had done, as the marriage settlement for Thomas Smith the younger and his first wife Mary Ridler in 1674 included as part of the manor a messuage, grist and fulling mills, orchard, garden and (unspecified) lands tenanted by William Mill. The settlement also mentioned a paddock of 1 a. adjoining Everlands 'late in the tenure of William Mill clothier', which had been exchanged for other lands.⁴⁴ A suggested position for this, using boundaries shown *c.* 1730, is given in Fig. 1. Land adjoining Everlands is more likely to have been part of Bond's than of Lower Mill.

That this was the same property as that passed from Henry Fowler (d. 1629) to members of his family, as tenants of the manor, is indicated by the marriage settlement for Thomas Smith the younger and his third wife, the widow Elizabeth Atkyns, in 1685. This repeated the reference to the paddock, and included in her jointure the messuage lately of William Mill, clothier, a water grist mill, four fulling mills, an orchard, 6 a. of Mill Mead (Broad Mead), 6 a. of Wear (Year) Mead, 5 a. of Hill Close, $3\frac{1}{2}$ a. in Claycroft, $\frac{3}{4}$ a. in Oulmore, a Rack Close of 2 a., and $3\frac{1}{4}$ a. in Stonefield, all normally held with the mill.⁴⁵ The same description was used for the moieties held by Thomas Smith's daughters Mary Smith and Fowler Smith, which in time came to his grandson John Ball.⁴⁶

In 1709 the mill was in the hands of Elizabeth, Thomas Smith's widow. Tithe accounts kept by the vicar between 1709 and 1722 suggest a number of sub-tenants including Edward Keene, Edward Webb, Mr. Dean and John Mills, before 1714 when John Bond of Stroud held by direct rent of Madam Smith 'the Broadmead at the mill', Little Oldings and Sweetmeads in Cowmead, the orchard, the little Rack Close or Hill Close, Wear Mead (Wiremead), and 'the wheels'.⁴⁷ John Bond was baptised in Stonehouse in 1681 and was the son of John Bond, a clothier, and Ursula Webb, a great-granddaughter of Daniel Fowler. He was thus a distant relative of Henry Fowler.⁴⁸

In 1724 the mill passed out of manorial ownership when it was sold by John, Levi and Samuel Ball of London to Daniel Webb of Stroud, gentleman, and John Peach of Woodchester, clothier. The property then comprised a messuage, tuck or fulling mill, the Rack Lease of 3 a., an arable tyning of 3 a. adjoining the mill and a little close of 1 a. between the brooks, on part of which stood a dyehouse.⁴⁹ The arable tyning may be equated with the close called Mr. Peach's Stonefield on the map of *c.* 1730, and with the piece called Stonefield in Elizabeth Atkyns' jointure of 1685, which included the western part of Hill Close. The mill's history from 1724 onwards is well established, ownership passing by 1750 to Richard Pitt and in 1774 to Henry Eycott. The additional lands usually let with the mill, however, remained manor property, and the eastern part of Hill Close was absorbed into Everlands by 1804.⁵⁰ It would seem from these documents that the mill held by John Bond in 1714 was associated with some of the lands Margery Fowler held with New Mill in 1567.

Corroborative evidence for some of these conclusions has been found by analysing an unusually full series of resiant lists, which were annual lists of male inhabitants produced for the Stonehouse manor court. These make it possible to place residents in particular properties

between 1622 and 1799 with a greater degree of certainty and continuity than parish sources usually allow.⁵¹ At Bond's Mill, the early presence of the Fowler family is confirmed, and Samuel Halliday, the tenant of a house belonging to the late Henry Fowler, is present in 1632. Both the elder and younger William Mill follow them, presumably as tenants of their absent relative John Jesser. John Bond, the husband of Ursula Webb, appears in 1683, but his son seems to have stayed in Stroud and sublet the mill to others. The name Bond's Mill, which replaced New Mill, may in fact refer to the father rather than to the son. Richard Pitt arrives as a tenant of the new owners in 1725, later becoming the owner himself. The known occupations of many of the residents confirm that, although there was a corn mill on the site until at least 1685, the main business conducted there was in cloth.

Lower Mill

If the early evidence formerly attributed to Lower Mill is to be transferred to Bond's Mill an alternative record needs to be established for Lower Mill, which probably was one of the two mills mentioned as at Stonehouse in the Domesday Book. Its history from 1697 is known, so the search will be concentrated before that date.⁵² In 1608 fines for being corn millers were recorded on William Sandford, Edward Mayo, Henry Fowler, and Edward Daniell.⁵³ Sandford is known to have been at Upper Mill, and Mayo and Fowler have been associated through the resiant lists with Bridgend Mill and Bond's Mill respectively.⁵⁴ Ebley Mill was run at that time by the Bennett family, and it may already have turned wholly to cloth production, as Ryeford Mill had done.⁵⁵ Edward Daniell may therefore have been operating Lower Mill.

It is possible that Lower Mill had been separated from the manorial demesne and made into a freehold before 1608. It is not clearly mentioned in any manorial survey or deed. The court books record Anselm Sandford of Upper Mill, the Bennett family of Ebley and William Fowler as corn millers in 1577 and 1579, Fowler being both the owner of Bond's Mill and the lord of the demesne corn mill.⁵⁶ However, Lower Mill may, as a corn mill, have been of less value to the Fowlers than their cloth mill. It was possibly settled before 1567 on William Fowler's nephew Richard Fowler, probably the father of Elizabeth Fowler who was baptised at Great Barrington in 1585. She married there in 1605 William Smith, who was said in 1609 to be a freeholder in right of his wife in Stonehouse. In 1616 Smith was ordered by the manor court to clear his ditch next to the Berryfield and at the upper end of his mead next to Richard Halliday's rack close, part of the dyeworks at Bridgend House (cf. Fig. 1).⁵⁷ In 1621 he was said to have penned water into the highway at the Bow Bridge at Bridgend, and in 1622 he was presented for not giving an indemnity bond for poor-law purposes for his tenant Thomas Chapman.⁵⁸ It is possible that William Smith enjoyed the use of Lower Mill as part of his wife's estate, although he left the corn grinding to a tenant such as Edward Daniell or Thomas Chapman. If the mill was now a freehold, its absence from most manorial documents is explained.

In 1632 an inquisition post mortem was compiled of the property of William Sandford, the owner of Upper Mill, who also held large estates in Leonard Stanley.⁵⁹ It included a mill called Stradlyngs or Lye Mill, occupied by William Lye and his mother, on the southern channel of the Frome at Stanley Downton. This was apparently always a corn mill, and was one still in 1885.⁶⁰ In 1637 William Lye, a resident of Stonehouse, was ordered to hold a view, or inspection, about clearing out the river between his mill and the mill tail of Giles Nash, who held Bridgend Mill. This must refer to the northern channel of the Frome, and it suggests that William Lye, a corn miller, had taken over Lower Mill. In 1660 his son William was still being ordered to sort out the watercourse with Giles Nash, and in 1665 he was told to mend his hedge at his mill close at the lower end of the Berryfield.⁶¹ These orders echo those made against

William Smith, and the only mill in such a position, as shown in Fig. 1, was Lower Mill. The use of the term 'mill close', rather than 'rack close', again suggests that the mill was not a cloth mill. In the hearth tax for Michaelmas 1672 William Lye's assessment for three hearths immediately follows Giles Nash's assessment and indicates a modest house when compared to the seven hearths at Bond's Mill.

In 1673 William Lye was ordered to take measures against flooding the road at Bridgend.⁶² There was another adult William Lye, possibly a cousin of the first, in Stonehouse at this time. He was listed as 'junior' in 1675 and was a clothier with property at Cainscross.⁶³ When William Lye the elder died in 1683 he was described as a miller in the Stonehouse parish burial register and as a yeoman in his will, rather than as a clothier like his Cainscross namesake.⁶⁴ He left his 'messuage, mills and lands' to his son, also William Lye, the third of that name at Lower Mill, who seems to have begun a cloth venture there with his mother Temperance. In 1697 they mortgaged to William Clutterbuck a messuage, a fulling mill with three stocks, a gig mill, a grist mill, and two closes called Floodgate Hay and Mill Hay, all part of the property which had been left to William by his father. In 1701 William Lye sold the whole property to John Arundel, who in the tithe accounts of 1709 held Floodgate Lease, 'the wheels', and Rack Lease, the first evidence of 'racks' at Lower Mill. The two pieces of the Berryfield called the tynings (cf. Fig. 1) were added to the mill from the manor estate in 1781.⁶⁵ Until then, the property seems to have been quite small, an ancient corn mill changed into a freehold and developed as a modest cloth mill only after 1683.

As with Bond's Mill, the names found in the resiant lists support some of the deductions made for Lower Mill. Thomas Chapman, the tenant of William Smith, is present in 1622, followed by three William Lyes, the first two of whom were known to be millers rather than clothiers. The lists also suggest that the first known clothworker at Lower Mill, Jeremiah Snow, had been enlisted by 1685 to help the 20-year-old William Lye set up cloth production.

Conclusion

It seems therefore that Bond's Mill, far from being a late arrival on the scene, was among the earlier cloth mills in the district. It was probably established before 1496 as part of the late 15th-century expansion of fulling in Gloucestershire. The fact that its original name was New Mill suggests that it was purpose-built for cloth fulling and not developed from an existing corn mill. It was taken over by the Fowler family as the basis of their cloth business, and run by them or their relatives until 1724. There was corn milling on the site in 1542, but this does not appear to have continued after *c.* 1685. Bond's Mill has primarily accommodated the Stroudwater cloth industry and its successors, and has done so for longer than has hitherto been supposed.

Notes

1. J. Tann, *Gloucestershire Woollen Mills, 1550–1900* (1967), 144, 147; *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire* 10 (1980), 280–2.
2. J. Hudson, 'Residence and Kinship in a Clothing Community: Stonehouse 1558—1804' (Bristol Univ. Ph.D. thesis, 1998).
3. *V.C.H. Glos.*, 10, 278–82. Stonehouse manor court rolls survive for 1486–7, 1491–2, 1495–8, 1507, 1533–5, 1542, 1550, 1554, 1556: Glos. R.O., D 445/M 1–2; D 340a/M 23; D 4289/M 1. Those in D 445/M 2 are translated in C. Swynnerton (ed.), 'Some Early Court Rolls', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 45 (1923), 203–52.
4. Glos. R.O., D. 445/M 2.
5. *Ibid.*

6. C. Clay (ed.), *Rural Society — Landowners, Peasants and Labourers 1500–1750* (Chapters from the Agrarian History of England and Wales 2, ed. J. Thirsk, Cambridge, 1990), 325–8.
7. Glos. R.O., D 4289/M 1; *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 282.
8. Glos. R.O., D 4289/M 1.
9. *Ibid.* D 445/T13.
10. Land called Collier's Lease was held of the Sandford estate by Stephen Vaisey in 1738, but was apparently called Stonefield Layes in 1709. Colliers Lease was rented by the manor estate in 1748 and was manor land in 1751: Glos. R.O., D 445/T 12–13, E 5; P 316/TN 3/1; D 1086/E 164; D 1278/P 3; D 1180/8/2; P 263/MI 9.
11. G.D.R. (Gloucester Diocesan Records in Glos. R.O.) wills 1740/15.
12. M. Handford, *The Stroudwater Canal* (Gloucester, 1979), 8.
13. Glos. R.O., D 340a/M 23.
14. *Ibid.* photocopy 1850, which is a photograph of the map (now destroyed).
15. *Ibid.* D 445/T 14.
16. *V.C.H. Glos.* 2, 150; 10, 276.
17. Glos. R.O., D 445/T 12.
18. *Ibid.* D 1347, maps; P 263/MI 9.
19. A.H. Smith (ed.), *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire* (English Place-Name Society 29, 1964), part 2, 203.
20. Glos. R.O., D 445/T 14.
21. *Ibid.* photocopy 1850.
22. *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 280–2.
23. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 1–2; D 2957/289/9; D 340a/M 23.
24. *Ibid.* D 4289/M 1.
25. *Ibid.* D 445/T 21.
26. *Ibid.* M 2.
27. C. Swynnerton, 'The Water-Mill of the Abbots of Gloucester in Stonehouse', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 46 (1924), 149–68.
28. *Ibid.* 156, refers to a court roll for October 1540, now unknown, which recorded fines for overcharging on John Sandford of Upper Mill, William Bennett of Ebley Mill, and Richard Fowler as common corn millers.
29. Glos. R.O., D 294/6.
30. *Visitation of the County of Gloucester, 1623*, ed. J. Maclean and W.C. Heane (Harleian Society 21, 1985), 61: Glos. R.O., D 445/E 1, copy of an inquisition post mortem for Richard Fowler giving William Fowler's age in 1561 as 39.
31. Glos. R.O., D 4289/M 1; D 445/E 1; a transcript of Richard Fowler's will is in W.F. Carter (ed.), 'The Fowlers of Gloucestershire', *Glos. N. & Q.* 1 (1881), 282.
32. Glos. R.O., D 294/7.
33. *Ibid.* D 4289/M 1.
34. *Ibid.* D 445/T 12.
35. *Ibid.* D 4289/M 1: Ryeford Mill was devoted to cloth by this time.
36. *Ibid.* D 445/T 12.
37. G.D.R. wills 1579/111.
38. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 13.
39. *Ibid.* T 24. Hill Close contained 6 a. in 1558, 4 a. of which were still manor property in 1729: *ibid.* D 4289/M 1; D 445/T 14; photocopy 1850.
40. *Ibid.* D 445/M 7: J. Smith, *Men and Armour for Gloucestershire 1608* (ed. anon 1902, reprinted Gloucester, 1980), 297–9; G.D.R. wills 1598/194; L. Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia, 1558–1638* (London, 1967), 10–15.
41. Public Record Office (P. R.O.), PROB 11/157; incomplete abstract in W.F. Carter (ed.), 'The Fowlers of Gloucestershire', *Glos. N. & Q.* 2 (1884), 57. At his death Henry Fowler was living at Deerhurst.
42. Glos. R.O., D 445/T 12.
43. P. R.O., E 179/247/14.

44. Glos. R.O., D 445/T 12: Thomas son of Thomas Smith was baptised in Stonehouse in 1648/9.
45. Ibid. T 12, L 9: the Stonefield piece apparently consisted of the Stonefield acre and the piece of Hill Close divided off in 1603, the 5 a. of Hill Close being the manor's portion. Part of Margery Fowler's larger rack close was probably the southern end of Hill Close, which was also retained by the manor c. 1730: *ibid.* photocopy 1850.
46. Ibid. D 445/T 14: Mary Smith and Fowler Smith, Thomas Smith's daughters, were baptised in Stonehouse in 1675 and 1686/7 respectively.
47. Ibid. P 316/TN 3/1, 48.
48. *Visitation of the County of Gloucester 1682-3*, ed. T. FitzRoy Fenwick and W.C. Metcalfe (Exeter, 1884), 197.
49. Glos. R.O., D 2193, Purnell family papers, Stonehouse deeds 1724-53.
50. Ibid. D 445/T 14-15; P 263/MI 9; G.D.R., T 1/172 (Stonehouse tithe award and map, 1839): on Elliot's 1803 map of Stonehouse (Glos. R.O., D 1347) and the tithe map Everlands comes right up to the road which leads down to the mill.
51. The nature and use of these documents is described in Hudson, 'Residence and Kinship', chapters 2-3, 7. The resiant lists are in Glos. R.O., D 445/M 7-11; D 517/1772.
52. *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 280.
53. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 7.
54. Bridgend Mill, a freehold, was described as a fulling mill only in 1579, but did include a grist mill in the 17th century: Glos. R.O., D 2957/289/42; Gloucestershire Collection (in Gloucester City Library) 18067, memo 1711 to list of leases by the Selwyn estate.
55. Glos. R.O., D 2957/289/46, 65; there was a grist mill at Ebley Mill in 1598, but no other surviving deeds mention one until 1721, when a new grist mill had been built. The Gibbes family of Ryeford were clothiers in 1608 letting the mill to tuckers: *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 282; Smith, *Men and Armour*, 298; cf. resiant list for 1622 in Glos. R.O., D 445/M 7.
56. Glos. R.O., D 4289/M 1.
57. Ibid. D 445/M 7, T 24; D 1086/E 135: Bridgend House (1591) and Bridgend Mill (1588) are said in Feet of Fines to have had water mills, apparently used for dyeing and fulling respectively: P.R.O., CP 25/2/145/1883/4; CP 25/2/144/1872/4; cf. resiant list for 1622 in Glos. R.O., D 445/M 7.
58. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 3.
59. P.R.O., C 142/157/78.
60. *V.C.H. Glos.* 10, 262; OS Map 6", Glos. XLIX. NW (1885 edn.).
61. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 4. The junction of Bridgend Mill race and the river loop round it at the bridge is closer to Lower Mill than the outfall of the dyehouse at Bridgend House would have been, although the order of the buildings on the river seems to suggest otherwise.
62. Glos. R.O., D 445/M 5.
63. G.D.R. wills 1712/166; cf. resiant lists for 1675-6 in Glos. R.O., D 445/M 8. In 1676 William, son of William Lye, baptised in Stonehouse in 1665, was listed as 'junior' to his father at Lower Mill; in the Middle Ages boys were sworn in as manorial tenants at the age of 12, rising to 16 around 1700: A. Macfarlane, *Reconstructing Historical Communities* (Cambridge, 1977), 53-7.
64. G.D.R. wills 1683/174.
65. Glos. R.O., D. 1815, Davies family papers, Stonehouse deeds 1697-1781; P 316/TN 3/1, 39.