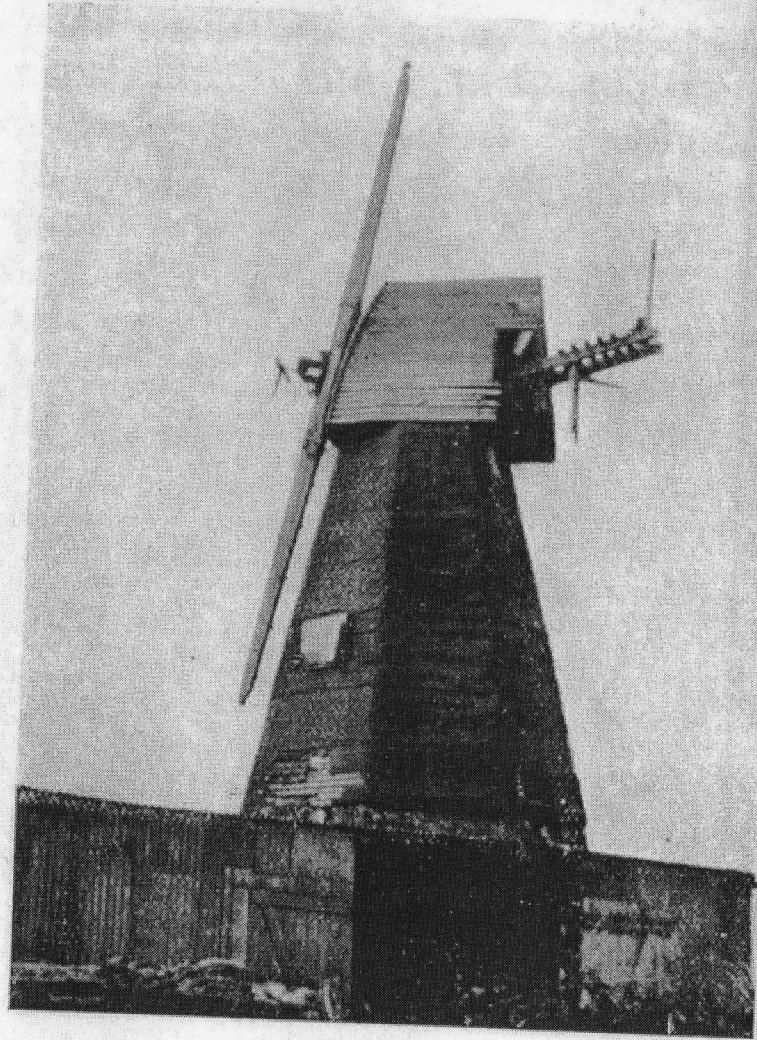




W.C.F.

BRIDGE

See page 174



A. W. Tiffin

Facing page 77

William Watten Dilled : 1816

William Cooper Dilled : 1671

Bridge Windmill

The village of Bridge, near Canterbury, still possesses one of our Kentish smock mills. Alas! It is derelict to-day and but a shadow of its former self, as the photographs indicate.

It is over a quarter of a century ago since its sails [more properly, sweeps!] revolved merrily in the breeze, for it was last worked by wind power in 1907, it then being used by Mr William Manwaring, who had held it for about seven years.

Mr Manwaring is today the proud owner of Willesborough Mill, one of the few remaining working mills of the county, which was described in the issue of the "Folkestone Herald" dated January 28th.

Bridge Mill is rather smaller than the average type of smock mill, but in days gone by its two pairs of mill-stones were fully occupied in grinding corn for the neighbouring farmers and in making flour for bread.

In the early half of the nineteenth century Thomas Johnson was the miller at Bridge, and local history has it that the figure of this dusty miller was a familiar sight in the village, for his practice was to deliver flour to his customers personally, his method of transport being the back of a donkey. One presumes, of course, that he loaded the donkey with his sacks of flour and he himself led the animal through the village.

What a contrast to the modern speedy transport of flour by motor lorry!

Bridge Mill is evidently well over a century old, for it is shown on an Ordnance Survey map dated 1819, and it may then have been standing for some years.

It was doubtless built at a time when windmills in Kent had reached the peak of their utility and popularity, for a large number were erected throughout the county between 1800 and 1820 - more, in fact, during that score of years than were built in any like period in the whole of Kentish history, as far as records can be traced.

It is an interesting study to examine old maps in search of windmills, for most maps indicate them, usually by a simple representative symbol, a miniature drawing of a windmill.

A map prepared by Phil: Symondson, of Rochester, in 1596, is the earliest Kentish map on which windmills are drawn (a reprint of this map has now been issued by the Ordnance Survey Office).

All the windmills shown on this map were, of course, of the early type of post mill, the whole structure of which revolved round a main centre post; whereas windmills like Bridge have a fantail gear operated by wind power, to turn the cupola and sweeps into the right direction for the wind.

Between 1596 and 1801, when the first Ordnance Survey map of Kent was issued, there are a number of interesting and quaint old maps, for the most part drawn with much care and skill, that show the windmills. Many of the Public Libraries throughout the county have a collection of such maps that can be consulted in the Reference Rooms.

The tower of Bridge Mill is covered with tarred sheeting. It therefore has a sombre aspect and is not as picturesque as some of our old derelicts.

It is, in fact, rather a sorry spectacle, with two sweeps missing and only the midlings remaining of the other two.

The stage shown in the first picture has now vanished entirely, and the fantail has also disappeared. The body of the mill, however, is fairly sound, and there are two floors of solid brickwork beneath the weather-boarded structure.

(AW Tiffin: *More Kentish Windmills* - No. 7, in *The Folkestone Herald*, 25 March 1933)

The Mill was demolished on Wednesday 20 October 1954

From W Coles Finch: *Watermills and Windmills*, 1933, reprinted 1976:

1/4 mile E. of Church: [ie at the top of Side Hill, on the NE side of Bridge Hill]

There must have been one of the old post mills at Bridge, for Symondson shows one east of the Church on his 1596 map.

Dr Harris also gives a mill at this spot on his county map of 1719, but no mill is shown on the 1769 map.

The mill shown on the map dated 1829, accompanying Paterson's Roads, is probably a smock mill that replaced the mill of earlier type.

3 furlongs NW of Church. Standing today, derelict.

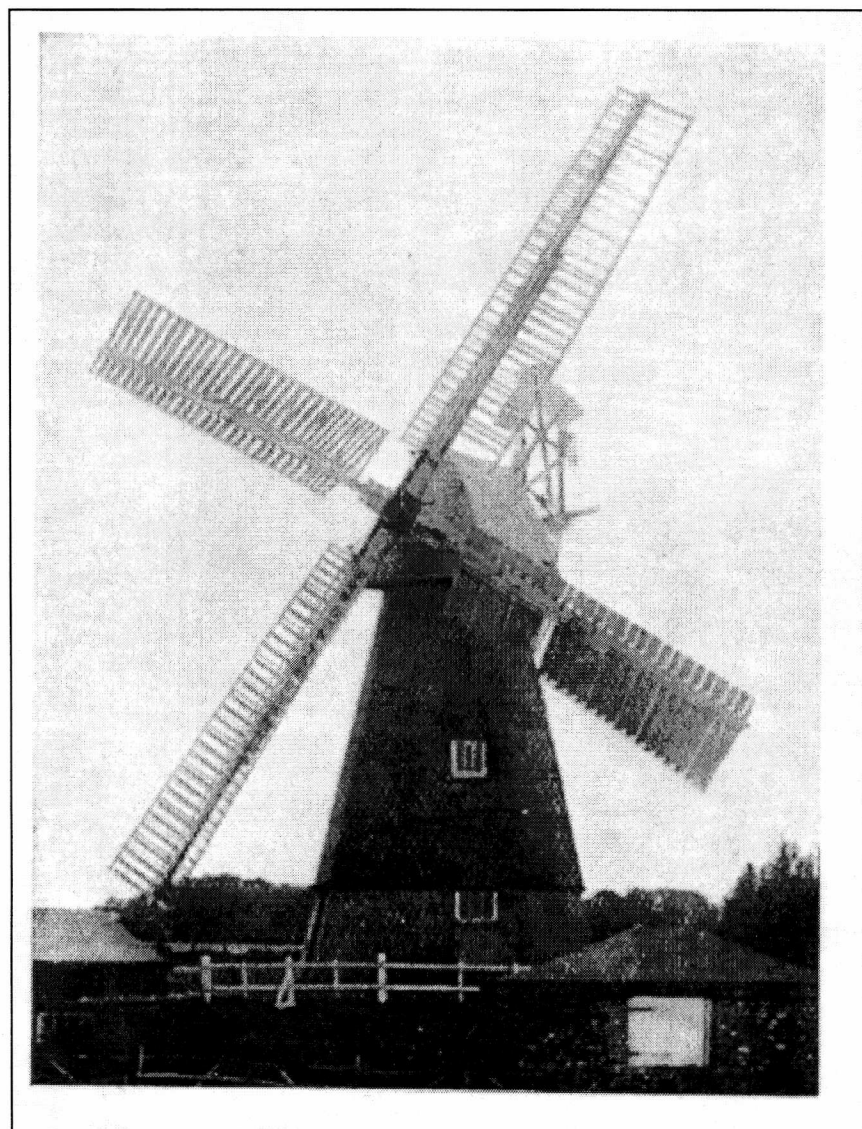
This is quite a small smock mill and used to work two pairs of stones. It is quite a derelict now; only the midlings of two of its sweeps remain, and it has lost its fan. It was run from 1900 to 1907 by Mr William Manwaring, who now owns Willesborough Mill. Mr Manwaring had a Blackstone oil engine installed in an outside store, to run another pair of stones.

Mr Jack Holman tells me that in 1879 the mill was taken over from George Fryer by Messrs. Johnson (who had at one time the Barton watermills at Canterbury). In 1880 the mill changed hands again, a Mr White succeeding Messrs. Johnson.

Mr J Holman informs me that this mill has recently (June 1933) been repaired to some extent. He writes:

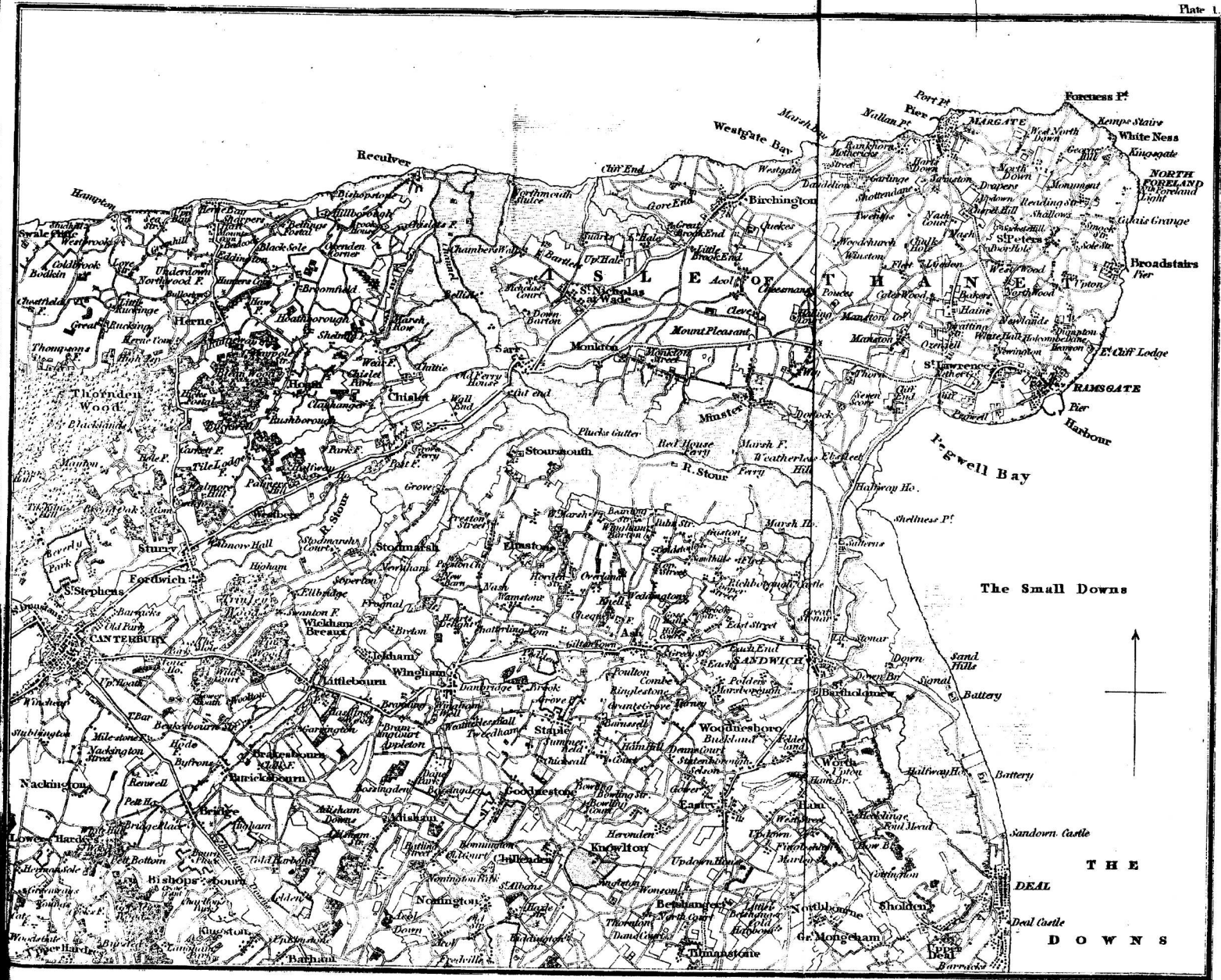
The midling has been cut off at the end of the cheek pieces, the cap reboarded and creosoted. The back of the cap has been cut off short and boarded up, while the tower has also been repaired. Although the cap looks a bit strange, I am glad that repairs have been carried out since the mill was getting into a bad state. I believe it is now used as a store.

[In 1596 there were 39 windmills known in Kent. Coles Finch records 410 to the mid-19th c.]



THROUGH RENDCOMB

From	
1	RENDCOMB. Rendcomb Park, Sir Berkeley William Guise, Bart.
2 1/2	
3 3/4	
4 1/4	
7 1/2	COLDSBORNE Henry Elwes, Esq.
9 3/4	
11 1/4	
13	CHARLTON KINGS. East Court, Alexander Nicholson, Esq.
14	
15	



ENGLISH MILES.

