

FRAM



December Up-Date 2020

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Christmas 2020 will be unforgettable for all of us, if only as the culmination of an extraordinary year. A year which has seen the curtailment of so many social activities as a consequence of Covid 19. Nevertheless, the Society has tried very hard to cultivate interest in matters historical for members, and we hope you have enjoyed our Newsletter and Updates. Thanks are due to members of the committee for their enthusiasm and endeavours to bring them about and we all hope for the opportunity to meet again soon, in 2021. In the meantime Happy Christmas to everyone and – stay well!

With all Good Wishes

David Ransom Chairman

Taken from an article originally compiled by Joan Flemming and published in the *History Society Journal* December 1998.

FROST ON THE MERE

Extracts from the *Framlingham Weekly News* December & January 1871

December 24th 1870

The late rains have well flooded the Mere, and the frost has covered it with an excellent piece of ice. So sharp was the frost on Wednesday night that the ice was strong enough to enable juveniles to have a treat in sliding.

The eclipse of the sun was visible with the naked eye for about a quarter of an our on Thursday noon, when the sun shone from behind the ridge of a cloud. The eclipse was ushered in with a heavy snowstorm which cleared off in time to enable the inhabitants to view the closing part.

December 31st 1870

Sir

Should any of your readers wish to know how cold it has been, the enclosed notes are at your service.

On the 21st the thermometer was down to 25 degrees or 7 degrees below freezing point.

- 22nd down to 23 degrees, 9 degrees of frost
- 23rd 15 “ 17 “
- 24th 12 “ 20 “
- 25th 10 “ 22 “
- 26th 15 “ 17 “
- 27th 24 “ 8 “
- 28th 26 “ 6 “
- 29th 25 “ 7 “

This severe frost with the heavy fall of snow we have had makes it appear more like the winters old men tell us were in fashion before some of us were born.

Yours truly

Reuben Whitehead

Framlingham 29th December 1870

Previous hard frosts: 1565 21st December – 31st January

1683 Early December – 7th January

1762 25th December – 29th January

1814 Fog and frost intense

January 7th 1871

During the week skaters have had enjoyment on the ice to their hearts' content. The number of ladies, who are trying to master the art, is greatly increased, and so many skaters, male and female, have never been seen on the Mere before.

Very little snow has fallen during the week, and the thaw on Thursday was followed by a sharp frost, converting the roads and paths to sheets of ice, making travelling a difficult undertaking.

January 14th 1871

The Mere is now the great attraction of the town; and it is visited daily by hundreds of skaters and others. The thaw on Friday of last week melted the heavy layer of snow on the ice and flooded the Mere to a large extent. The frosts of Saturday and successive nights have given the skaters about 20 acres of capital ice.

On Tuesday night last a torch-light procession was formed at the Castle, from whence about 50 torch bearers headed by the Framlingham Band marched through the Town to the Mere. The procession was preceded with two large square Chinese lanterns bearing inscriptions; "*Hail to King Frost*" and "*A Mere Frolic on a nice Night*".

As the procession advanced hundreds of the inhabitants followed to witness the sight. Several hundred ventured on the ice, many of whom donned the skates, and with the flaming torches whirled about lighting up the whole Mere and presented an animated sight. The band played several tunes, after which a country dance was engaged in on the ice by the young folks to the musical strains of the band. Squibs, crackers, roman candles, coloured lights etc., were exhibited, and the greatest zest was displayed by all to enjoy the pleasures of the reign of

“King Frost”. After an hour’s enjoyment, the moon peeped from behind the eastern clouds and paled the lurid flare of the torchlights; the skaters and sliders remained until ten o’clock enjoying the healthful recreation by the light of the moon.

On Thursday morning the son of Mr J Larner, whilst skating fell and broke his arm just above the wrist. Mr Jeaffreson surgeon was called and soon reduced the fracture.

January 21st 1871

On Friday night last another torchlight procession took place on a much larger scale. Mr J Brereton canvassed the town for subscriptions to defray the expenses. The meeting took place for forming the procession on the Castle Walk but it extended down Church Street and was the grandest procession of the kind ever seen in Framlingham. The procession was headed by a double file of about 30 illuminated Chinese lanterns, or variegated colours, the effect of which was very beautiful in contrast with the flare of the torches. Next followed the Band of the 2nd Suffolk Rifle Volunteer Corps, enlivening the procession with their music, and after them a double file of upwards of 100 torchbearers.

Mr J W King of the Crown and Anchor had a large marquee erected on the edge of the ice on the Mere, the tar-barrels burning to show the way to the entrance on the ice, which covered about 20 acres of the Mere. The lanterns were suspended to the trees, giving a very pretty effect to the scene.

The skaters were quickly skimming in all directions with their torches. All Framlingham seemed to be present, and a large number of the inhabitants of the villages nearby. Fireworks, Roman Candles, rockets etc. were discharged, and the blue lights burned, lighting up the vast extent of the ice and the old Castle. The Band continued to play good dance music, and quadrilles, polkas etc, were danced on the ice.

February 4th 1871

The Mere has been the general resort during the week. The ice has been rough and soft, and in certain parts very weak. Several “break-ins” have occurred to both ladies and gentlemen; but as the depth of water is so little the mishaps were generally greeted with laughter.

Thaw set in on Wednesday afternoon with a shower of rain and caused a general “skedaddle” and the Mere was soon cleared of at least the gentler sex, leaving only a few boys to risk the treacherous ice.



Hard winters now seem to be a thing of the past, but skating, ice hockey and general messing about on the ice was still great fun in the 1960s.

Quiz Questions & Answers - how did you get on with this tough local quiz?

1. Which former Archbishop of Canterbury is buried in a Suffolk churchyard and where is the church?
A) William Sancroft. Fressingfield Church
2. The headmaster of a North Norfolk school decided immediately after the First World War not to alter the school's clocks for an entire year. What was the school? A) Gresham's School
3. What was the last station on the British Railways network to use horses in its goods yard? A) Diss
4. From which USAAF airfield did President Kennedy's brother take off on his last short-lived flight? A) RAF Fersfield
5. What ecclesiastic building was claimed to be the tallest in the world for about 300 years? A) Lincoln Cathedral
6. A Russian prince, who scored what many considered to be the finest try when England beat the New Zealand All Blacks, was killed in a training accident at RAF Martlesham Heath. What was his name? A) Obolensky
7. Why are the nearby villages of Earl Soham and Monk Soham so named? A) Earl Soham belonged to the Dukes of Norfolk, while Monk Soham belonged to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds
8. King Edmund was killed by the Danes after losing a battle, when, according to legend, he was spotted hiding under a bridge. In which North Suffolk village did this event occur? A) Hoxne
9. A Dutch fleet was involved in an inconclusive battle with an English fleet in 1672 off the Suffolk coast. Where did this battle take place? A) Sole Bay, off the coast of Southwold
10. What links –or rather doesn't link- Southwold, Laxfield, Harleston, Bungay, Framlingham, Aldeburgh and Thorpness? A) They are no longer on the rail network
11. What, for a short time, once stood on top of the Martello Tower to the south of Aldeburgh? A) An Antony Gormley figure
12. Which small Suffolk town was a Rotten Borough and returned two Members of Parliament until the Great Reform Act, by which time, it only had 22 men entitled to vote? A) Orford
13. What is the most unusual feature of the Laxfield Low House (aka The King's Head)? A) It doesn't have a bar
14. Bawdsey Manor is best known as the base for the development of what major advance in technology?
A) Radar
15. Henry Ford's production line system for building cars was claimed to be ground-breaking. But he was beaten to this by a Leiston engineer. Who was he and what was he building? Richard Garrett, whose Long Shop built traction engines
16. The engineer's family included the first female mayor of Aldeburgh and what many claim to have been the first qualified female doctor in the UK. Who was she? A) Elizabeth Garrett Anderson
17. In which season did Ipswich Town win the old First Division Championship and who was the manager?
A) 1961-62. Alf Ramsey
18. Which Cambridge College owns 3,400 acres of land that makes up the bulk of what is now the Port of Felixstowe? A) Trinity Collage

19. Which foreign company now owns and operates the Port of Felixstowe? A) Hutchison Whampoa's Hutchison International Port Holdings
20. Which Suffolk port rivalled London in the early Middle Ages and was another Rotten Borough until the constituency was abolished in 1832? A) Dunwich
21. Where were children encouraged to win T-shirts emblazoned with the message: "I caught crabs at xxxxxxxxxxxx!"? A) Walberwick
22. In 1991, which Ipswich building became the youngest in the country to be given Grade 1 listed building status, and who was the architect? A) Willis Building; architect, Norman Foster
23. There is a grave site beside the road from Newmarket to Bury St Edmunds. Who is reputedly buried there? A) A Gypsy boy called Joseph
24. Although it is now a private house, Wingfield College was founded in the 1360s by a soldier who made a fortune by ransoming French aristocrats captured at the Battle of Poitiers. Who was he? A) Sir John de Wingfield
25. Who designed the Scallop, to be found on the beach between Aldeburgh and Thorpness? A) Maggi Hambling
26. The church tower in a Waveney valley town has a clock face on three of its four sides. Which town is it and why, according to local legend, isn't there a clock on the fourth, north-facing side? A) Because it faces Norfolk and the inhabitants of Beccles felt the Norfolk people couldn't tell the time, so a clock would be wasted on them
27. Which condiment was partly responsible for funding the construction of the old Norfolk and Norwich hospital and which family supplied it? A) Mustard, produced by the Colman family
28. Who was the Swedish opera singer who gave her name to the Children's Hospital in Norwich? A) Jenny Lind
29. Looking due east from Holt in North Norfolk, what is the name of the first bit of higher land? A) The Ural Mountains, east of Moscow
30. What is unusual about Happisburgh, Wymondham and Stiffkey (and possibly, Cley, depending on who you talk to)? A) They are not pronounced the way they are spelt
31. After a lifeboat disaster, when the crew kept attempting at great loss to themselves to rescue some stranded sailors, the coxswain of which lifeboat replied: "xxxxxx men never turn back." A) Caister
32. Which Waveney Valley village contains what is possibly the oldest surviving example of a reinforced concrete structure in the country? Constructed in the 1860s, the bridge over the river consists of a wrought iron frame encased in concrete, with cast iron balustrades. A) Homersfield
33. Mary Tudor used which castle in Suffolk to gather her forces before marching on London to claim the crown? A) Framlingham
34. What seafood is Cromer most famous for? A) Crabs
35. What have the inhabitants of Long Stratton, on the Norwich-Ipswich road, been seeking for decades, so far to no avail? A) A by-pass
36. Where did King John lose the crown jewels? A) The Wash

37. What happened to the castle in Eye? A) It was attacked and sacked in the Second Barons' War in 1265 and then abandoned
38. According to legend, how many churches and public houses were at one time to be found in Norwich? A) 52 churches and 365 pubs
39. Many of us growing up in East Anglia in the 1950s and 60s learned to drive on the numerous disused airfields. What was the only manoeuvre which couldn't be learnt on them? A) Starting on a hill
40. What makes Adnam's distribution centre environmentally friendly? A) Its green roof means it is carbon neutral
41. Where is the only chain ferry on the Broads based? A) Reepham
42. A small Suffolk coastal hamlet was evacuated in 1940. Rumours later circulated that a German invasion there had been foiled. This has now been disproved. What is the name of the hamlet? A) Shingle Street
43. Which Suffolk forest was the site of a supposed UFO sighting in 1980? A) Rendlesham
44. Which famous artist, who was fond of a drink or two, gave a number of paintings to the landlord of a pub in Harleston as a way of paying his bar bills. Unfortunately, the pub changed hands and the paintings have disappeared. Who was the artist and what was the name of the pub? A) Sir Alfred Munnings and the pub was the Magpie
45. Another local artist, who was equally fond of a drink, and whose work is to be found in numerous local pubs, was better known as a very accomplished cartoonist, often featuring his family, including his long-suffering wife, a fearsome Granny, and his Land Rover, registered: LRT 140. Who was he and where did most of his work appear? A) Carl Giles. His work appeared in the Express newspapers



George I said, 'Christmas Eve. What better time to ask our new neighbours round for a drink and meet Mummy', 1974, by Ronald 'Carl' Giles (1916-95), 93/4 in by 6½ in, Daily Express. Credit: British Cartoon Archive

THE MILLS OF FRAMLINGHAM

PART 1

By *John F Bridges*

Corn mills were found in most towns and villages up to the early part of the 20th century, when large scale production methods in the larger towns effectively put them out of business. Framlingham has a rich history of milling that dates back a long time but the information is sometimes unclear and conflicting. Various sources have been assembled to build a picture of the numerous mills that existed in the town.

The basic method for grinding the corn to make flour changed little over the centuries. A stationary circular bedstone and the upper running stone were the main components along with many associated mechanisms to control the process. The motive power to drive the mill changed with time. Initially, water, wind and horse power were used, followed by steam, oil, and electricity.

The aim of these articles is to record details of the sites, the types of mill and the people who operated them. Technical details of mills and how they worked can be found in a number of reference books¹.

There is considerable information that has survived from the 19th century, and there are also references to mills in Framlingham dating back to the 13th century.² For the intervening period, a mill or miller reference may be found, but location is often not possible. There is always more research to be done. A surprising number of mills have existed in the town, with the main sites identified so far being:

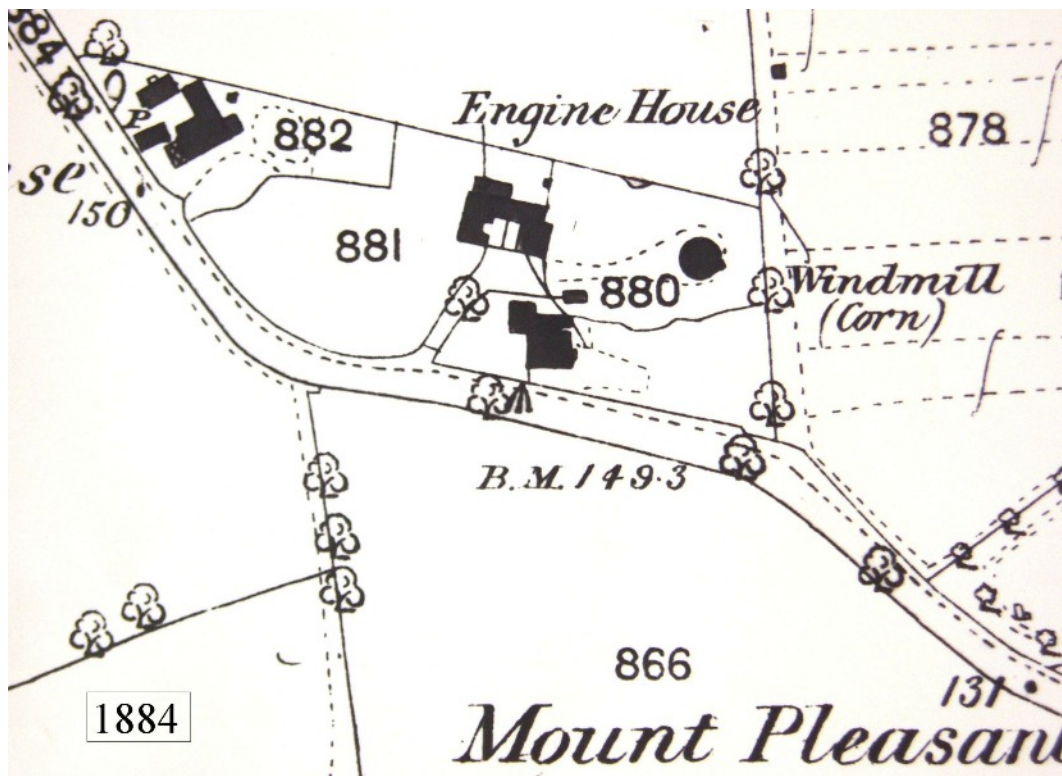
- Mount Pleasant - smock/tower and post mills
- Victoria Mill Road - post, tower and steam mills
- Albert place - steam mill
- Bridge Street - steam powered stone and roller mills
- Saxmundham Road - post mill
- Station Road - steam mill
- Station Road - smock mill (The Round House)
- Station Road and Haynings - Clarke's mills
- Apsey Green - post mill
- Double Street - post mill
- Saxtead Lodge farm - smock mill
- Coles Hill - mill site?
- Bridge Street - water mill
- Station Road - water mill
- Castle - horse powered mill

For some of these mills, very little information is known about them. Double Street is a surprising location, but with only one reference³ so far. It is hoped that these records can be updated as further information becomes available. The approximate location of each mill is provided by a six figure reference, which can be located on the current Ordnance Survey map. Earlier maps can provide a guide to a mill's existence, but should be used with caution. The scale of most county maps precludes precise location, and later editions may not truly reflect changes that have occurred.

MOUNT PLEASANT MILLS

All mills needed to be built where they would be well exposed to the wind. Mount Pleasant was a good position, with one reference⁴ describing the mill as being 'remarkably well winded.'

The general arrangement of the Mount Pleasant site is shown on the 1884 map, with a single windmill and separate engine house noted. It is useful to consider the site in two parts, i.e. east and west, with the above mill being on the east site. Kirby's 1736 map shows a single mill, and this is considered to be on the west site. Hodskinson's map of 1783 also shows a single mill.



Robert Hawes⁵ lists the Freeholders of The Manor of Framlingham, noting that 'Joseph Bird, holdeth freely the New Wind-Mill, and three pieces of land about the same, called Pinfolds: which were Richard Waller's 1689, John Stevens' 1659 and Catherine Chambers.' Although Robert Loder printed the book in 1798, Robert Hawes was responsible for most of the information. He was Steward of the manors of Framlingham and Saxtead in 1712, and the reference is contemporary with that period.

The Framlingham Tithe map⁶ and Apportionment book⁷ show that in 1842, there was still a parcel of land immediately to the north of the mill that was called 'Upper Pinfold'. Early legal documents⁸ for the mill site also refer to Joseph Bird in 1714.

The above details link Joseph Bird and Pinfolds to the Mount Pleasant site. It is not yet clear if the new mill replaced an older one, and whether those earlier owners of Pinfolds also had a mill. It is reasonable to suggest that there was a mill on the site by around 1700.

Early documents⁹ refer to Thomas Butcher as the miller, and his name is recorded as a Framlingham miller in The Universal British Directory of 1790-1798. From 1801 there are a number of documents¹⁰ which relate to financial contracts involving Philip and John Aldrich with local business men. John died in 1818, when Philip took over the mill.

There was also a nearby post mill at Apsey Green (approx. 272633), which is shown on the 1736 map. The 1842 Tithe map shows a large parcel of land at this location which was called Mill Hill. It is assumed that the mill was located at the highest point of this land, shortly before the right turn to D'Urban's farm. This mill was then moved to Mount Pleasant¹¹ and positioned on the east site (approx 279637). There is contradictory evidence¹² that it went to the west site, but this does not accord with subsequent events. The date of the move is between 1810¹² and 1820¹³. At the new position, it was erected on a new brick roundhouse and had a fantail, which it did not have at Apsey Green.

Returning to the west site (approx 278637), there is uncertainty over the type of mill, but we do know that it was destroyed by fire. *Framlingham Weekly News*¹¹ provides a vivid description:

‘The brick tower mill was burned down in the winter of 1837. It was a bitter and severe frosty night, and when water was thrown on the burning mass, great icicles formed on several portions of the walls. Mr. Wm. Manning, chemist, who assisted at the fire in handing buckets of water that night caught a chill which ended in his death.

The origin of the fire at that time was a perfect mystery; but in later years it was cleared up. It appears that Mr Aldrich that night had a party of friends at his house. Being a determined hater of smoking, his sons and their cousins slipped quietly into the mill to indulge in a ‘bit of weed’ on the quiet. Whilst in this smoking bout they heard their father coming, and expecting a rumpus, they hid their pipes in the mill desk. Having received a due and proper chiding for their folly, the father ordered these young transgressors indoors, and locked up the mill. Some hours after, however, the mill was discovered to be in flames, and the town was alarmed at what was an awfully grand sight, the mill sails whirling in the air, all ablaze and seen for many miles around. The sons at the time were afraid to confess what they suspected was the cause of the fire, but did so in later life. The tower mill was not rebuilt’.

These notes were recorded in 1894 in relation to an event some 57 years earlier. There are concerns over the stated date of the fire and the type of mill. William Manning (druggist), died on September 4th 1836, which is over a year before ‘the winter of 1837.’ Also, a map⁴ associated with the sale of the eastern mill in 1837 shows no other mill. The blacksmith records of John Fruer Bridges show that in 1836, he received 4cwt., 12qtrs., and 12 lb. of old iron and a smaller quantity of cast iron from Philip Aldrich. Was this from the remains of the mill? Green’s history¹⁴ of 1834 shows a distant view of the town, from which two mills are evident. This information would suggest a slightly earlier date for the fire of perhaps early 1836.

The article also refers to a ‘brick tower mill’. A smock mill might also have been referred to as a tower mill, with the base being of brickwork. A full brick tower mill from the early 18th century is likely to have been better recorded as they were not common in that period. Jesse Wightman, a respected millwright thought it to be a smock mill. To date, no other reference to the mill fire has been found, and no further mill construction took place on the west site.

Philip Aldrich got into financial difficulty, and the mill was put up for auction in June 1837⁴, when it was stated that Jeptah Wightman, merchant of Framlingham, with Harsant and John Sutton of Tannington were trustees of the sale. The auction document provides the following details of the mill:

Erected upon a brick built Round House, 24ft. in diameter, with double floors and solid brick piers, and is a most substantial mill, 19ft. by 11ft., driving 2 pair of French stones, 4ft. 10in. and 4ft. in diameter, with 3 floors and spring sails.

The mill was bought by Samuel Woods for £890. During his occupancy, he ‘purchased a small mill at Woodbridge, and had it conveyed home intact on a trolley, and set up on piers by the side of the present mill, so that again, there were two mills on the premises¹¹.’

A survey of Woods’ property¹⁵ in 1851 refers to:

Spacious post windmill on brick round house, driving 3 pairs of stones, with patent sails, stocks, shaft, winding tackle and all machinery complete.

A smaller windmill standing on brick piles, with 2 pairs of stones and all going gear---in working condition

In February 1852 the smaller mill is advertised for auction¹⁶:

A nearly new post windmill with iron shaft, patent sails, driving 2 pairs of French stones, 3ft. 8in. high, in the occupation of Mr Samuel Woods Trustees.

To be removed off the premises at the purchasers expense...

The mill was sold to Mr Sutton of Tannington, whose name is noted earlier. It was common for small mills to be moved in one piece, but not always without problems. 'Several old men (now dead) could recollect Tannington post mill being moved from Mount Pleasant to Tannington, and the drug breaking down on Saxtead Green through the ruts in the road and the weight of the mill body¹⁷.' Framlingham Weekly News¹¹ also noted '---- but when it was trolled as far as New Street, it had to be taken down and carried in portions to Tannington'



The main mill was also advertised for auction in 1852,¹⁸ and again referred to 3 pairs of stones, so a further pair must have been added in Woods' time, along with patent sails. Reuben Whitehead bought the mill for £500. He is noted as the miller in 1855¹⁹, but in 1857 it was again advertised for auction²⁰ with reference to 'S Woods, tenant at will.' Samuel Woods eventually moved to Tannington, but was to meet with a sad fate. 'Mr Woods, who afterwards worked for Mr Sutton at Tannington, fell through a trap door of this very mill, once his property, and died from the injuries received.'

Before the age of 'Health and Safety', most industrial premises presented significant risk to life. Jeremiah Marjoram had his skull fractured by Whitehead's mill in 1878, while at Saxtead mill in 1905, Alfred Aldred the owner received severe head injuries in the same way.

The mill remained in the ownership of Reuben Whitehead until 1887. Apart from his mill work, he took a great interest in the weather, and his 'Weather Indications' are recorded in Lambert's Family Almanacs²¹ from 1872 until 1898. He died in 1901, aged 81 years.

The 1887 auction details²² now refer to the mill only having two pairs of 4ft. French Burr stones, and it may be that there was rarely sufficient power to drive three pairs. Reuben did not rely solely on the wind, and had a purpose built steam mill house constructed on two floors, with a 5h.p. engine to drive a pair of 3ft. 6in. French Burr stones. It was noted that Mr F. Button was the tenant of the mill at this time, with his agreement not expiring until 6th April 1888. There are some interesting details from the final sale account:

Half year rent from F. Button	£17.10. 0
Deductions for repair costs from:	
H. Mallows, bricklayer	£ 0. 3.11
Fisk and Hunt, plumbing	£ 0. 8.00
Bridges, blacksmith	£ 1. 9.00
Moore, carpenter	£ 1. 6. 4
Barker, ironmonger	£ 0. 1. 8

The mill was bought in July 1887 by Augustus Roe for £560. Frederick Button would soon have to leave the mill, but he would be back! Roe was involved in various activities apart from milling, and was well known for his inventions. These included 'The Gravy and Juice Preserver' which found royal patronage, along with the 'Rosebud' pie vent and the 'Rosebud Chimney Pot'. Roe's manure factory had opened at Broadwater in 1872, but after initial success, then laid empty for some years. It reopened in 1899 with much publicity as Roe's Hygienic Company Ltd, being a bacon factory. It closed the next year when Roe became bankrupt. There are hints that relate to the progress of the mill in his time, based on adverts in 'The Miller', as follows:

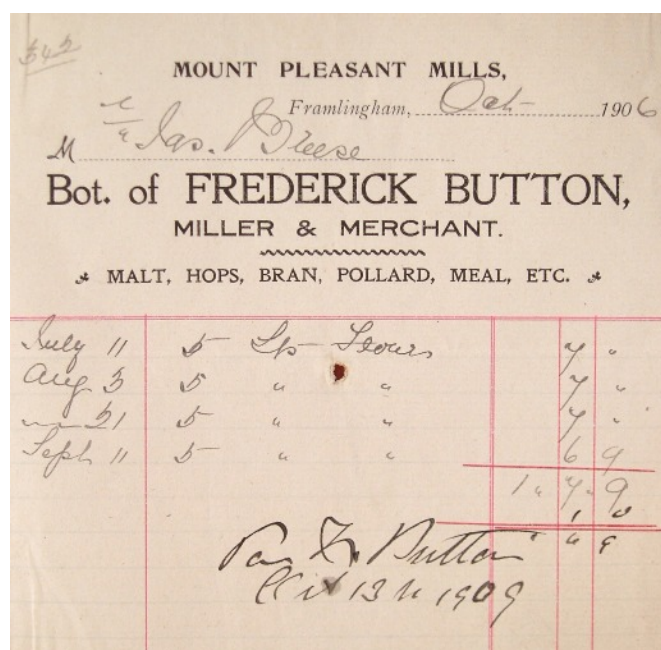
July 2nd 1888. For sale, cheap, nearly new 10h.p. Robey engine, two pair iron hursts, wire flour machine, stone crane, New Albion Iron Works grist mill.

June 1st 1891. Wanted, two 4ft. right hand runners (Peak and French Burr) for wheat, good and cheap.

August 5th 1895. For sale, business premises with steam and windmills in good repair and in full work. Particulars and reasons for dispersal. A. Roe, Mount Pleasant Mills, Framlingham, Suffolk.

In the bankruptcy sale of 1900, the mill was bought at auction by Charles Goodwin on behalf of Frederick Button for £550. It was concluded at the time that 'the property changed hands at an awful sacrifice.'²³ James Maulden's roller mill in Bridge Street was now in full production, so buying a post mill at this time may not have been the greatest business opportunity. However, Button was no stranger to the mill and moved his activities from Station Road back to Mount Pleasant.

He continued to operate the mill through to 1921 as there are various trade invoices²⁴ that cover this period. The mill was then dismantled²⁵ in August 1921. One pair of sails was then used on his nephew John's mill in Diss. The brick round house remained until about 1926, with foundations still visible in the 1930's. The only remaining link to the milling days at Mount Pleasant is the naming of the new housing on the site as 'Button's Corner'.



A brief time history of the site is as follows:

New mill on site around 1700
One mill shown on 1736 map, west site
Apsey Green post mill moved to east site c.1810-1820. Two mills now present
Smock/tower mill on west site burns down c.1836
Small mill added to east site, two mills present again
Small mill moved to Tannington in 1852
Steam mill and engine house built c.1880
Milling ceases 1921
Post mill dismantled 1921

Any further information to update any aspects of the article would be most welcome.

I would like to thank Mark Barnard of The Suffolk Mills Group for his assistance in relation to additional references and the work of Peter Dolman. Also, thanks to Peter Green who is researching many Suffolk mill sites, and for sharing his knowledge on those in Framlingham.

Perhaps someone with personal knowledge could provide a record of Clarke's 20th century milling activities, as all evidence will probably soon disappear.

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SROI is the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich