

Warwick Bridge Corn Mill progress August 2019

Since the start of the project the question of dating of the mill has lingered. It has been assumed that the dated wind vane crowning the roof was the date of completion for the main block, with the various additions, which are clearly constructed against the existing mill, being in place by the time of the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey, surveyed in 1861. John Harrison's 2003 report for NECT raised an element of doubt when he suggested a late C18 or early C19 date for the primary phase.

A further trawl through the newspapers has produced an advertisement in the *Carlisle Journal* of September 29th 1804 for the letting of "The Water Corn-mill at Warwick Bridge" which clearly states that the mill was "rebuilt in 1803 on the most improved construction". It is also described as having "four pairs of stones" at this date, which corresponds with the original hurst layout. A significant investment in a large mill by the Corby Castle estate fits much better in this period when agriculture was relatively buoyant before the slump following the Napoleonic Wars and the rise of steam milling in Carlisle began to capture the market.

So what of the 1839 wind vane date? It may be that it marks a significant completion of the complex as a whole. But if that is the case why not date the additions rather than the existing building? Looking at references for Warwick Bridge for that year produced another possibility. The effects of a "dreadful storm" in early January 1839 were reported on the 12th by both the *Carlisle Journal* and the *Carlisle Patriot*, and other papers around the country and in Ireland carry similar reports of widespread damage. At Warwick Bridge the Langthwaite cotton mill chimney was toppled and fell onto the Gas House, killing the foreman of the bleaching department. Was the corn mill roof, the other tall building in the village, perhaps also damaged in the Great Storm, requiring repairs, completed that same year?

Meanwhile, the current work on the mill drew to a close with much completion of the interiors and the digging of a final short rainwater drainage trench in the downstream loading dock. This replaced part of the original run of six inch diameter land drainage pipes from the yard gully and linked in a rainwater down pipe at the corner of the outbuildings to the west of the barn.



Lifting a large sandstone slab on the line of the drain



New drainage in place

Inside the barn secondary glazing and the screen inside the large cart doors was completed.



Looking south inside the barn

The wooden casting template for the Pit Gear, which has survived in the barn roof since the mid-Victorian upgrade of the mill's machinery, finally made it down to the floor in one piece!



The large template awaiting attention on the joiners' bench



Secondary glazing inside the refurbished shutters in the kiln building



The new access ramp completed in the east yard