TRACEBRIDGE, STAWLEY

ERIC G. RODWELL

Tracebridge

This article is an abridged version of a more detailed account of the hamlet, including a description of the houses and their occupants and references, copies of which are deposited in the Local History Library and in Wellington Library. The author particularly wishes to thank Ivan Prescott and Harold Davey for their readiness to provide information.

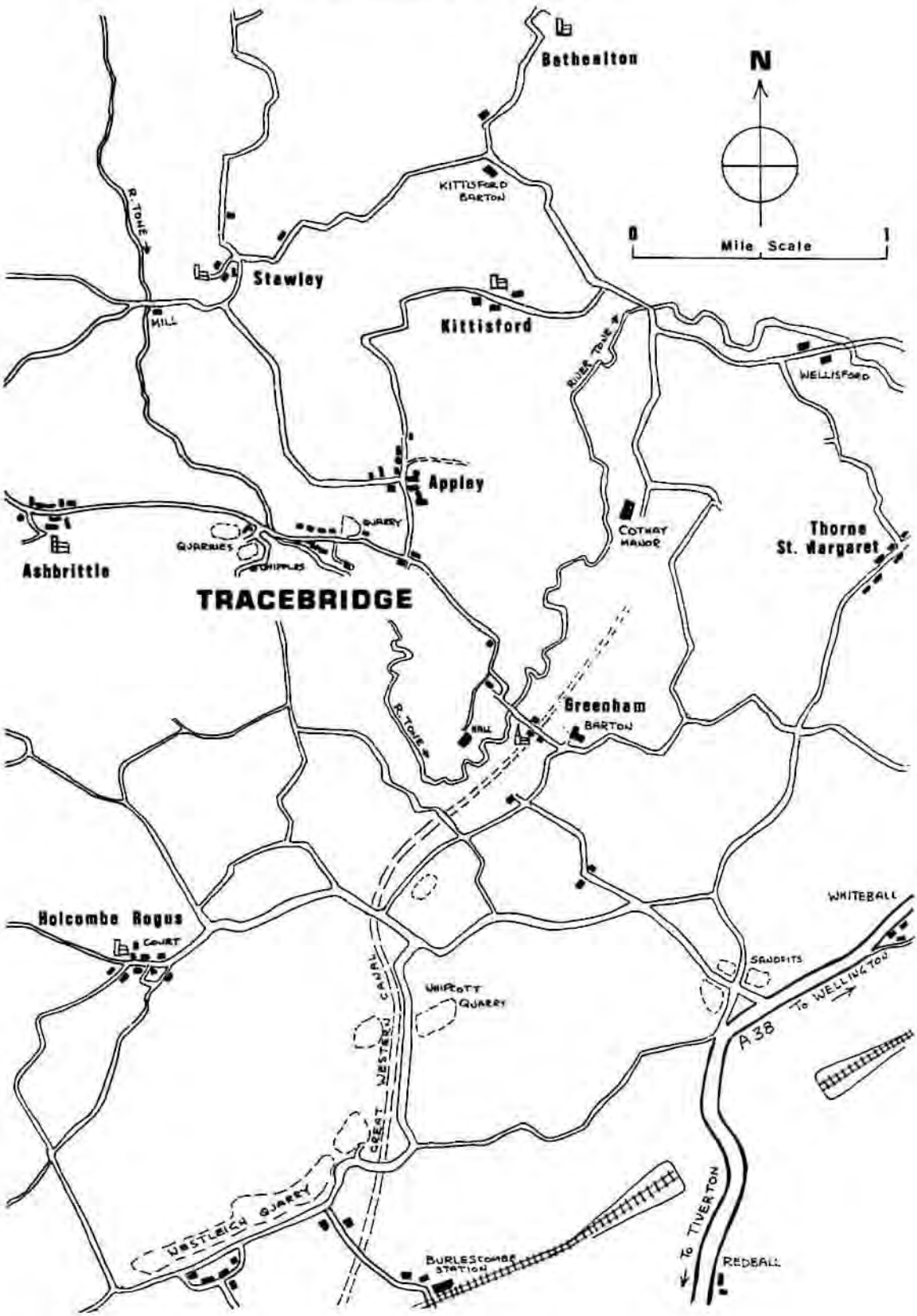
The Somerset-Devon border is marked for a short distance by the river Tone, and its steep-sided valley as it flows through the parish of Stawley is occupied by the hamlet of Tracebridge. The surrounding topfields when ploughed display the characteristic red-brown soil of the area, but the river exposes the underlying and folded strata intermingling with limestone. All the old houses in the hamlet are of the local slate, with a few surviving walls of cob. Roofs are largely of Wiveliscombe slate tiles, but a few houses have traces of thatch. One cottage and part of the original mill house had reddish-orange Roman tiles.

The name Tracebridge has been in use for at least four hundred years and is locally believed to mean 'the place where the trace horses are kept near the bridge'. Extra horses would certainly have been needed to pull heavy loads up Ashbrittle Hill. The earliest reference to the name is in 1592, when two water mills there formed part of the manor of Greenham, then in the possession of Edward Marvin of Ashbrittle, a recusant. To him succeeded the Bluett family: Richard Bluett died in 1615 in possession of the mills, and his grandson John died in 1634 holding two water corn mills called Tracebridge Mills, and a quarry also called Tracebridge, but described as being in the parish of Holcombe Rogus. The property descended to the Jones and Clarke families. Fanny Whittier Clarke was owner of Tracemills in 1840 and T. E. Clarke held other property in the area and rebuilt Tremlett Hall, Greenham.

Bridge, quarry and mill form the main elements in the Tracebridge story. The bridge was an essential part of the hamlet name by 1592; another bridge was built in 1742, for which the overseers of Stawley paid £3 18s 8d. This in turn was replaced by a stone bridge which still survives, the work of Robert Pierce, mason, between 1765 and 1768. Mrs Smith of Ashbrittle, who grew up at Whipples Farm, on the hill above the bridge, says that when she was a girl she and her friends played on a little beach beside the bridge where horses went down to drink. That place was frequently flooded, so the road was raised and the stone river wall and the iron guard rail built. The infilling of the wall concealed the original hump of Pierce's bridge and allows it to be used today, by milk lorries and cattle food juggernauts.

The Quarries

There were two quarries in Tracebridge. Marcombe Lake quarry was an open-cast operation where slate was extracted from the sides of a narrow valley of a tributary stream which joins the Tone beside the bridge, a valley which is the boundary between Ashbrittle and Holcombe Rogus. To avoid flooding, the stream was diverted into an underground adit which discharges from a pipe built into the wall supporting the road up to Whipples Farm. The quarry today is an overgrown jumble of long-abandoned slate debris.


Bathealton
N
KITTISFORD BARTON
R. TONE
0
Mile Scale
1
Stawley
MILL
Kittisford
RIVER TONE
WELLISFORD
Appley
QUARRY
QUARRIES
COTTAY MANOR
Thorne St. Margaret
Ashbrittle
TRACEBRIDGE
R. TONE
HALL
Greenham
BARTON
WHITEBALL
Holcombe Rogus
COURT
SANDPITS
WHIPCOTT QUARRY
To WELLINGTON
A 38
GREAT WESTERN CANAL
WESTLEIGH QUARRY
BURLESCOMBE STATION
To TIVERTON
REDBALL

Tracebridge quarry in Holcombe Rogus was part of the estate of John Bluett in 1634, and it seems likely that the Marcombe Lake quarry is the old quarry site. That quarry was still in use until the 1920s; in 1894 it had been run by John Nethercott, and he was followed by the Bryant Brothers by 1897. By 1914 Bryant and Manning managed both quarries. Finally, Tracebridge Quarries Ltd. took over under the control of C. H. Broodbank and later of a Mr Broadbridge. Under the Broodbank management Marcombe Lake quarry was abandoned as a commercial concern in favour of a radical mechanisation of the other Tracebridge quarry in the 1920s.

Tracebridge quarry, earlier known as 'Broms', was part of the estate of the Sweet family of Appley Court and Stawley Wood farms. Slate was probably taken out at ground level when required for estate purposes. The quarry appears to have been leased for commercial operations during the last decades of the 19th century and by 1902 it had been enlarged and a new tunnel cut running from the bottom of the quarry, now well below ground, for 150 yards to the Somerset bank of the river Tone. Close by a weir was constructed of stone and oak timbers raising the river level. By a system of channels and sluice gates the river water was diverted to drive an undershot water-wheel to power slate-cutting machinery at the riverside.

The tunnel served as an adit to carry away unwanted water and as a route for a narrow-gauge railtrack for small four-wheeled trucks or 'dillies' from the quarry floor to the slate-cutting sheds. Local people of the older generation remember how as children they were given rides on the 'dillies' through the tunnel. The cutting of this tunnel through solid rock is still recalled in local memory as having been a very arduous job for the miners who did the work. An interesting additional means of dating the tunnel is a piece of cut slate engraved with the date 1894, found by the writer in the quarry waste that covered the flagstone floor of the ruined slate-cutting shed beside the river. About 1920, when extensive modernisation of the quarry works was undertaken, powered machinery was installed at road level and the riverside sites were abandoned. Thereafter the river valley was used as a tip for the uncuttable 'bilestone' and the old cutting mill was largely destroyed by the gradual avalanche of waste stone slabs.

The tunnel remained useful as a flood-water adit and as an access way to the quarry floor. The quarrymen walked down along an old cart track from the road down to the riverside and then through the tunnel to work. In the the 1930s the tunnel collapsed at the quarry end and the blocking rock fall is still visible from inside the tunnel, with the water continuing to flow through the debris. A new way was cut for the men to walk through to the work area. As the quarry floor was cut even lower the excess water had to be pumped upwards to the tunnel entrance by means of pipes and a pumping machine. In the 1930s an enormous rock fall or 'rousement' occurred one morning, when the whole eastern rockface shifted and slid into the quarry, burying the workings and the pumping machine. Fortunately on coming to work Harold Davey had observed the first slight movements of the rock against the skyline and so had given the warning which meant that no-one was down in the quarry at the time.

Tracebridge Quarry Ltd. was run as a partnership between C. H. Broodbank (to his death in 1935) and then a Mr Broadbridge with a Mr Jagger; the Head Office was at 8 Arthur Street, in the City of London. Visits were made to the quarry each quarter. Mr Ernest Howe was the quarry foreman for twenty years and lived for most of the time at Briars Cottage, just above the quarry. He retired to Holcombe Rogus, and died there in 1975. Mr Harold Davey was the 'engine driver' at the quarry. He was born in 1904 and grew up at Cothay, where his father was farm bailiff. He attended Appley Cross School, to which he walked each day, often up the track called the 'muletrack'. As a boy he came to Tracebridge to buy his sweets from a

Tracebridge Slate Quarry during the 1930s.

Miss Warren, who ran a shop in what is now called Bats Cottage. He now lives in Wellington. His courteous assistance and his excellent memory have been of inestimable help in the compilation of this account of the quarry where he worked from 1926 until its closure in 1940.

The stone from the quarry served a variety of purposes. The 'soft' slate and ends of cut pieces were sold in loads for buildings and road walls. Cut and finished slate was supplied to Cadbury's for dairy slabs, and water troughs were made by bolting five slabs together. The main product, however, was slates used in damp-proofing courses. These were split at the rate of six from a one-inch slab, and ranged in size between 18″×9″ and 9″×4½″. The largest single slab ever extracted from the quarry measured 22′×8′.

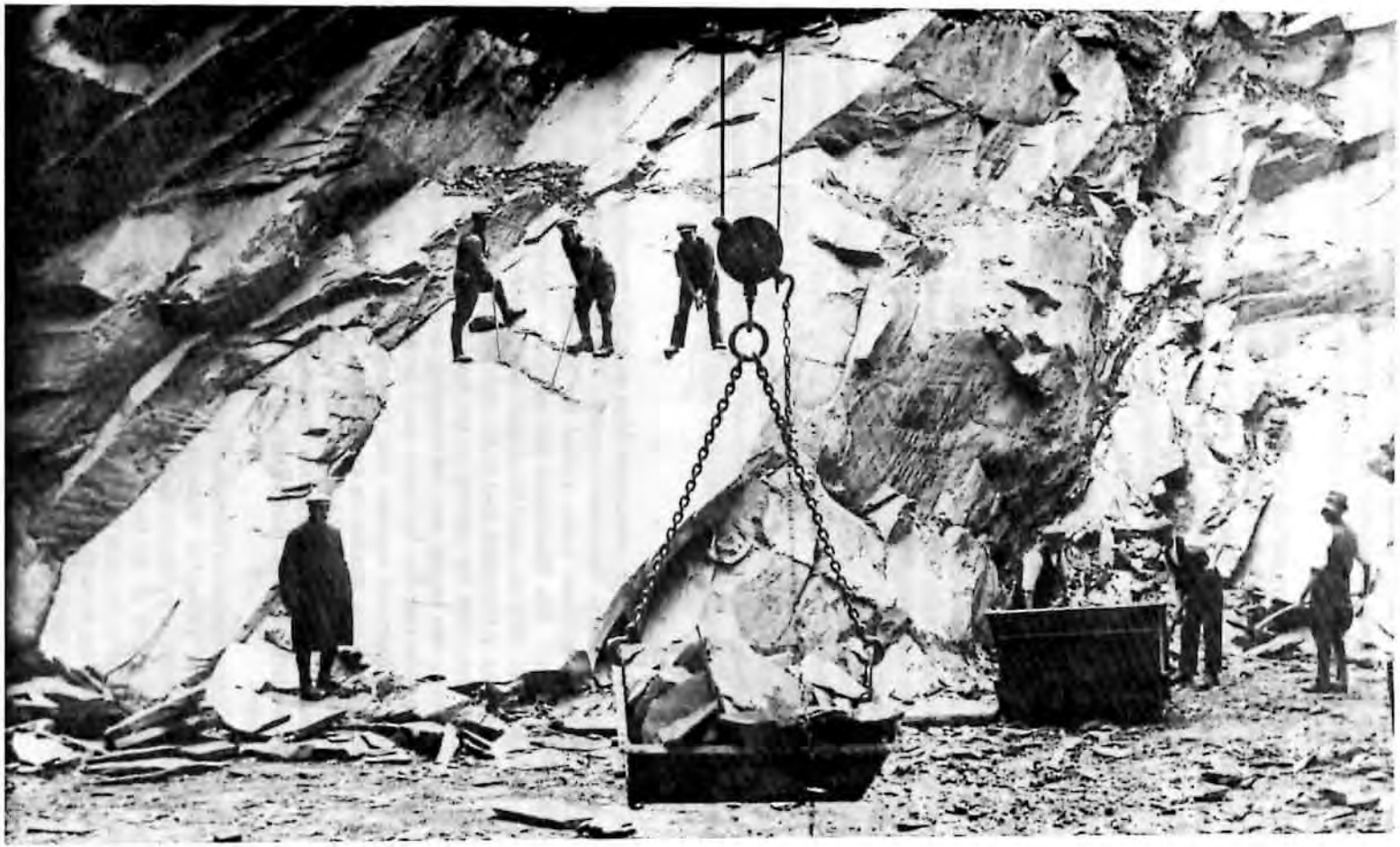
After the slate was taken from the rockface in the quarry, it was loaded into skips. These were machine lifted from the quarry bottom to the road level where the skips were lowered onto the 'dillies'. The 'dillies' were pushed by two men called 'runners' along the tracks that ran out of the quarry gate, across the road into the field opposite. There the railtracks divided and the left fork led to the 'drum' tip where all the unwanted and uncuttable 'bilestone' was tipped away as waste. The right fork of the railtrack ran to the cutting and planing sheds. Here the slabs were levered from the skip at the same height onto the bench rollers that led to the four sawbeds and planing machine.

Each cutting machine was the sole responsibility of one man, who had regularly to grind and reset the sawblade that was fitted to his machine. A workbench was provided for the men to work at, in their own time, when they had to resharpen their sawblades. The cutting and planing operations created large quantities of slate dust, which in some cases resulted in long-service quarrymen contracting industrial lung diseases. In still weather a grey cloud of dust hung around the field where the machinery was working.

* * *

In a long, twelve-foot-high, corrugated iron shed, for powering the quarry lifting work, was situated a 40 h.p. Blackstone engine. The foundations of the engine bed and of the shed can be found today amidst the brambles and trees, on the raised west side of the quarry. The Blackstone ran on heavy vapourising oil that was not volatile enough to mix with air, until the engine was sufficiently hot. To start up the engine in the morning, a blowlamp had to be used for ten minutes, or even longer in cold weather, and then with the turning of the flywheel, the engine started. Due to this starting problem, the engine was left running, with the operational machinery out of gear, during the mid-day half-hour meal break. The first Blackstone engine caught fire and was destroyed together with the engine shed. The burnt engine was replaced by a bigger 80 h.p. Blackstone engine, that was self starting after a coil had been heated to red-hot. Two 1000-gallon water tanks stood in front of the engine for cooling purposes. The new Blackstone provided extra power for working compressor drills down in the quarry. Before this all the quarry work had been done with crowbars and levers.

The stone lifting was worked through a system of pulleys running along 1¾″ ropes, sometimes described as 'Telfers' or 'Blondins'. These were stretched across the quarry from iron girder derricks or pylons on the west side to girders bolted to the high rockface on the east side. The first of the two cables was situated well into the quarry over where the water pool now lies, and its pylon was above ground level beside the engine site, where the pine trees grow today. A second and later cable was suspended from a pylon that stood just inside and to the left of the entrance gate. This second instal-



At the bottom of Tracebridge Slate Quarry. Standing, left to right: Ernest Howe, Ernest Gaines, Fred Tarr, William Keats, James Bristow, Sam Fouracre, George Fouracre.

lation enabled the quarry to be doubled in size. During operations in the 1930s the production of stone extracted and lifted was an average of 300 tons a day.

The large quantities of slate were loosened by blasting, for which rock powder and later gelignite was used. Close to the engine shed, a circular sawblade was suspended from a tree. Repeated striking of this sawblade with a hammer signified imminent blasting, and the quarrymen took cover under the overhang of rock at the northwest corner of the quarry, now obscured by trees. Robert Prescott related how even working in the sawmill down the hill he took cover from the fragments of flying slate that clattered down on the roofs of Tracebridge.

The usual workforce at Tracebridge quarry was about 25 men divided into several occupational groups: 5 quarrymen at the rockface, 6 casual labourers for muck-loading at the quarry, 2 runners for 'dillie'-pushing, 4 sawers, 6 splitters and 2 dressers. In 1926 the standard pay was £2.00 a week when agricultural labourers were paid 32s a week. Later on, in the 1930s, quarrymen were paid by piece-work rates that brought them £6.00 a week when slate production was high. The working hours were 7.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. for 5½ days a week. Due to heat in the bottom of the quarry in the summer weather, the summer working hours were 5.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m

The working men and their occupations were:-

Quarrymen at the rockface	Jack Bristow (Head Quarryman), Charles Enticott, Ernest Gaines, Dick Rich and Fred Tarr.
Muckloaders	Jim Bristow, George and Sam Fouracre and Billy Keats.
Cutters	Jack Alderman, Bill Brice, Sydney Taylor and later Charles Enticott and George Fouracre.
Splitters	Leslie Alderman, John Bryant, Tom and Eli Brice, Stanley Bristow, Sam Moon and Ken Western.
Runners	Jack Babb and Emlyn Lewis.

At the time of World War I the quarry managers were Bryant and Manning. They sold their business interests and John Bryant returned to the quarry as a splitter. He was respected for his religious uprightness, his punctuality and his love of animals. Manning became the baker at Ashbrittle and long-standing residents of the district well remember deliveries of his excellent bread, still warm from the oven. At his death the bakery was sold to a large competitor who closed it down, and today the site of Manning's bakery is occupied by a bungalow.

The outbreak of World War II would appear to have been the basic cause of the decision to close down the Tracebridge quarry. The slate was becoming increasingly difficult to extract and the manpower was being lost to the Armed Services and war work. When the end came in 1940 Harold Davey, who had been in charge of the machinery since 1926, had the sad task of organising the dismantlement of all the machinery, railway lines, pylons, skips and 'dillies'. Most of the metal went for scrap, and as one of the men put it, 'to send to Germany' . . . a reference to the very active campaign of the time to collect re-usable metals for war munitions.

Extending along the river valley from the cutting sheds were left the vast deposits of waste 'bilestone', tipped from the end of the ever-lengthening railway lines as the waste piles needed more space. Witnesses report the jagged tops of the rejected stone piles looking like a range of mountains in misty weather. With the entry of the United States into the war as an ally, the south-west of England became a vast training area for the U.S. Army. They required large all-weather airfields for use by their Flying Fortress and Liberator bombers and well-loaded Dakota transports. Airfields at Dunkeswell and Smeatharpe were planned but the ground at these sites was considered to be too soft in the winter; the runways might give way under the weight of

fully loaded and fuelled four-engined bombers. Large quantities of stone were needed to make a firm foundation to the concrete runways. The piles of waste stone at Tracebridge were deemed suitable and accessible foundation material. So for eighteen months in 1942–43, Wimpey's loading shovels and lorries were noisily shifting and transporting the now useful stone. The old cart track from the riverside cutting works was too narrow and steep and so Wimpey's needed an easier access. They built their own incline for the lorries to climb up from the river bank on their repeated journeys. The lorry track incline exists to this day.

The owner of all this stone was Mr J. H. Merson, by marriage a member of the Sweet family. The negotiated selling price was stated at the time to have been £14,800 for a total of 180,000 tons of stone removed to the two Devon airfields for the runways, which are still there forty years later.

The quarry's cutting and planing sheds were all demolished at the time of the Wimpey operation. The remaining sheds to be seen today were used for the storage of bales of straw used as packing material when loads of cut slate were transported. By the gates stood a small wooden hut, which was used for checking loads and as a pay office.

The Tracebridge Mills

In 1086 Bretel St Clare held the manor of Greenham which included a mill worth five shillings. Tracebridge was part of that manor and it is just possible that Tracebridge mill may occupy the same site. The earliest firm documentary evidence refers in 1592 to 'two water mills in the parish of Stawley called Tracebridge mills', then owned by Edward Marvin. Richard Bluett, who died in 1615, held the two mills, and they were again referred to in 1634 on the death of John Bluett. In 1675 three pecks of wheat were stolen from Thomas Hawkes, the miller at Tracebridge. Grace Palmer held the mill from 1734 until 1741 and Richard Palmer 1747–1762. It was leased to Richard Jones in 1791, to John Vickery by 1815 and to William Vickery by 1831. The census return for 1851 records the same William as aged 55 and living at 'Tracemills' with his son Samuel, a carpenter aged 20. In 1861 Samuel Vickery was head of his own family at the mill, and Henry Vickery, his younger brother by a year, was also a miller.

By 1871 Simon Ridgeway, an agricultural labourer, and his son John, 'an idiot and pauper', were living at the mill. The 1881 census does not name Tracebridge properties but records Samuel Parker and his wife Lucy. He is described as a 'sawmill foreman'. This is the first indication that the mills were put to a different use. According to Kelly's directories Albert Parr, a carpenter at Appley in 1883, was by 1894 running the sawmill at Tracebridge. He is still remembered by certain older locals as a very fat man who drove around in a trap pulled by a small pony. His wife ran a shop at what is now Bats Cottage. It is said that when Albert Parr died they could not decorously get his very wide coffin out of the door and so it had to be passed out of a window that was wider.

Thomas Sydney Scott was running the sawmill in 1902 with his sons Jack and Clem. Scott was followed by William H. Gamlin who became Parr's brother-in-law. He first appears in the 1881 census living with his wife at Tarrballs Cottages (now Tracebridge House). He prospered and became an important man locally as manager of the sawmill and developed a building side to the business. He built several properties locally — Dobles Farm, Appley Chapel and the now vanished Tracebridge Villa.

At his death in 1922 the mill was taken over by William Prescott, a wheelwright, and his son Robert who succeeded in the management at his father's death in 1935. He was the last manager of the Tracebridge sawmill, and its owner when he bought the freehold from the then proprietor Mr Merson in 1949.

The mill eventually ceased working in the late 1950s, when Robert Prescott was thinking of retirement and the demand for the sawmill's products was falling off. The maintenance costs of the mill machinery mounted. Finally the rim cogs on the outer edge of the water wheel became too worn to operate and too expensive to replace. Besides that, the wall end that supported the waterwheel was cracking from the top downwards with the weight of the wheel after several hundred years of use. The day came when the wheel stopped for the last time and the end of the mill's working life had come. The waterwheel rusted and had ivy growing over it, and the water leat from the weir choked up with weeds. The Tracebridge Mill had become a silent and melancholy place to visit.

Waterpower

Although the Tone flows only a few yards away from the Mill, the waterpower operating the wheel came from a weir situated about a quarter of a mile upstream. A few years ago this weir was destroyed by winter floods, but previously the structure stood about eight feet high, with deep still water behind it and a picturesque jumble of rocks below the waterfall in front. The whole was enclosed in a little wood appropriately named Weir Copse. The sluice beside the weir channelled the water intended for turning the waterwheel down the leat that still runs along the far side of the narrow

Harold Prescott at Tracebridge Sawmill Waterwheel, about 1960, after closure.

Tracebridge Mill, interior; oil painting by the Author.

meadow beside the Tone. At Tracebridge the route of the leat has already been described. At the Mill an adjustable wooden channel controlled to the top of the large overshot waterweeel. After turning the wheel the water escaped back to the Tone by a short, L-shaped, stonewalled leat running through the mill garden.

The building of the weir and the quarter of a mile of leat is evidence of the importance of Tracebridge Mill and the value of having a reliable supply of waterpower all the year round. All the earlier historical records refer to cornmills, and it is not often realised that this function of milling continued into this century. The cornmill machinery was situated on the upper floor of the building where there was provided a large doorway at the road level, for loading and unloading carts visiting the cornmill.

The Waterwheel and Sawmill Machinery

The cast iron water-wheel, twelve feet in diameter, was built in 1875 by the Lords Foundry in Wellington. The earlier water-wheels were probably of wooden construction, as was the now-vanished water-wheel of Stawley Mill. On the outside rim of the iron wheel, nearest the mill wall, was bolted in sections a continuous circle of cog teeth.

Those drove a smaller cog attached to an axle that went into the mill interior and there engaged with a variety of large cogs that geared the driving power to the speed required. The revolution of the water-wheel outside was controlled by pulling a chain that adjusted the position of the wooden water channel outside, so increasing or reducing the water supply from the leat. The cog sections of the water-wheel rim were replaced periodically because of wearing away of the cog teeth. New sections were cast by Bishop's Foundry which used to stand beside what is the present North Street car park in Wellington.

The power drive from the water-wheel was carried to all parts of the extensive workshops around the mill, by a system of long straight axles upon which, at convenient points, wooden drive wheels were mounted. From these wheels, long revolving belts connected to various machines. By sliding the belt off the driving wheel, the power could be disengaged although the axle continued to turn. At a distance then, the water-wheel powered longitudinal and transverse log cutters, a band saw, a circular saw upstairs in the long workshop, an apple mill, the flour mill and a grindstone that was often visited by the local farmers when their tools needed sharpening.

The longitudinal log cutter was situated outside, but under a sloping verandah-type roof, constructed along the side of the long workshop. The logs were placed along a platform that ran on rails underneath. By the turning of a long handle, the platform could be moved slowly along and thus carrying the log in position whilst the circular saw cut the wood into planks or timbers. At the end of the platform site, there is still to be seen a shallow arched alcove, built into the wall supporting the road above. Contrary to some peoples' interpretation, this was not where the water tunnel was situated, but is an extra space created for the log platform to complete its movement for cutting logs from end to end.

The Buildings

The oldest building in the whole mill complex was the millhouse with the water-wheel fixed to the eastern end of it. Originally there were two floors with the flour-milling upstairs. Downstairs on the ground floor, beside the mill machine room, was a second room containing an inglenook fireplace and bread oven. Mrs Smith of Ashbrittle recalls her grandfather telling of his memories of this room at the mill being lived in. Ivan Prescott knew the wide chimney being used for curing bacon. He would as a boy be paid a penny for climbing up inside the chimney to hang up as many as sixteen hams at one time, on the hooks hammered into the sooty flue walls. A sawdust fire smouldered for two days continuously, providing the smoke to thoroughly cure the bacon.

At the west end of the old millhouse was added, probably in the 18th century, the long two-storied workshop. It had large windows with narrowly-spaced frequent wooden mullions and these were filled with overlapping small rectangles of glass, evidently at a time when glass in larger panes was an expensive luxury. The upper workshop was fitted with two large doors that opened up straight onto the roadway. Underneath the working space was a long storage area that connected undercover with the timber-pillared sheds that ran alongside the riverbank, supported by slatestone walls. After cutting, the timber was stored here until it seasoned ready for use.

Across the entrance courtyard stood a stone stable or barn that has been converted into a home and stable, now called the Old Mill. In the time of the Prescott management this building housed Sammy the horse, who was used for pulling the timber wagon, when deliveries of cut timber were made or fresh cut timber was fetched. If the loads were very heavy, an extra horse was borrowed from a farm at Appley. Harold Davey said his father was involved in the same practice, when he used to

bring extra horses from Cothay Farm to help Albert Parr with his timber for the sawmill at the turn of the century.

Made at Tracebridge

Tracebridge was involved in the local production of chairmaking which then seems to have centred on Holcombe Rogus. Some managers made parts for assembly elsewhere, others made the complete article. Mr Hurford of Chackridge recalls chairs in cartloads being sent regularly to Burlescombe station from the mill.

William Prescott was a wheelwright who passed his skill on to his sons, particularly to Robert who succeeded him in running the sawmill. Of the other sons, Jack had a workshop at Staple Cross, Jim had another at Huntsham and Ted had his place at Halse. Of the two remaining brothers, Reg lived up at Rose Cottage and worked with petrol engines and ran a hire car business. The last brother chose to be an electrician at Eastbourne.

At the sawmill the building of wagons was the principal industry of the Prescotts. Whilst Robert made the wheels his carpenter brothers came over to help with the bodywork. The iron tyres were fitted out in the open between the stables and the river, so that the river water was handy for the cooling process. The carts were made with narrow wheels for the roads and wider wheels for farm use in muddy fields. Robert Prescott reckoned that the majority of the local farm carts and wagons were made at Tracebridge. He said that in the old days he could hear a wagon a mile away, starting to descend Ashbrittle Hill, and by the time it reached the bridge and passed the mill, he knew from the particular sound whose and what cart it was. He employed seven men when business was good.

Chairmaking still went on and the lathe was used for making the legs; they and the other parts were sent to Mr Woodbury's workshop at Holcombe Rogus for assembly. All forms of agricultural tools and equipment were made — gates, hurdles, hayracks, wheelbarrows and doors. Wooden handles of all kinds were produced for picks, shovels, axes and scythes. Elm coffins were made as needed and even spare wooden legs for a one-legged man who lived nearby. A Prescott speciality was skittle pins by the hundred, although Prescott pins were made of sycamore to last longer than those of the commonly used elmwood. Skittle pins were the last things that Bob Prescott manufactured, as he continued turning them out on his lathe, on request, until late in his retirement.

During World War II the sawmill went into working for the war effort. Bell & Co. of Westford were manufacturing water purifiers which were needed all over the world. For safe delivery, light but strong boxes were required. So at Tracebridge sawmill, packing boxes measuring $3' \times 8' \times 1'$ were mass produced in poplar wood and loads of them were dispatched daily to Westford.

Mr Hurford of Chackridge related during 1980 in the Stawley parish magazine how he was instrumental in getting two railway sleepers for his brother-in-law, Robert Prescott, from Mr Rhodes of Stawley Mill. In exchange Mr Rhodes gained two pieces of Prescott matured oak that were cut up to make three oak doors for Stawley mill. The sleepers were laid across the water leat in front of the waterwheel, thus making the foundation for a little wooden bridge that was a short cut for Bob Prescott from his cottage door to the old mill workshops.

The End

At Robert Prescott's death in 1979, Tracebridge mill passed to his son Ivan, who put it on the market. It was bought by a developer who hoped to make a quick

profit by doing up Riverview Cottage, and selling the millhouse and the stables as suitable for conversion into houses.

Regretfully the inhabitants of Tracebridge had to watch the piecemeal demolition of the riverside workshops and sheds, with the aid of chain saws and tractors. For a while the stables and the millhouse were left standing, although the latter had been robbed of half its roofing of roman tiles and the water-wheel had been demolished by a digger-tractor. Then the empty shell of the mill was deemed dangerous by the local council, who ordered the site to be made safe. As a consequence two young men were sent with a wire cable and another tractor, with which they proceeded to wrench off the rest of the roof and pull down the upper parts of the walls outwards, onto the surrounding muddy ground. So was left the weed grown stump of a ruin, shared between the two present properties. What was named River View Cottage has been renamed Old Mill Cottage. The Teal mill has effectively disappeared from view.