

Malt Mill at Waddon, Croydon.

This mill was situated on the south bank of the Wandle, where the present Purley Way crosses it, and on the east side of that road. The river is now culverted here; its course is approximately marked by a concrete boundary fence about 45 yards north of Jennet Lane.

So far as I can ascertain, this mill has never been mentioned in any historical or topographical accounts of Croydon, or in any published works. The main source of information concerning it is contained in a series of records of insurance policies from 1731 to 1785. The only map found on which it is shown, although not identified, is a plan of "The Mannor of Wadden" of November 1692 [1].

Possibly the mill was in the occupation of Richard Yeoman and his son Thomas, who held the lease of Waddon Manor and farm in 1575, and who were said to have owned a messuage and malthouse in Waddon Street [2].

However, the earliest specific reference found was a register record of a policy taken out with the Hand in Hand insurance company on 12 July 1731 by John Wood, maltster, to cover his dwelling house, stable, barn, mill house, malt house, and kiln house situate in Waddon [3]. The location given corresponds with that described above.

John Wood renewed the insurance policy on 12 July 1738 [4]. He died on 28 February 1738/9 at the age of 69, and by his will proved on 8 March 1738/9 he bequeathed his house and mill to his wife Arabella and his son Thomas [5].

Arabella Wood renewed the insurance policy on 11 July 1745 [6], and again on 9 July 1752 [7]. She died on 9 October 1757 at the age of 84, and by her will proved on 23 November 1757 she bequeathed her estate to her son Thomas. However, he died before the execution of her will, on 8 November 1757, at the age of 47, and administration was granted to his sister Elizabeth Moulton, wife of James Moulton, who thereby acquired the property [8].

James Moulton renewed the insurance policy on 19 July 1759 [9]. He died on 5 October 1761 at the age of 59, and by his will proved on 27 October 1761 the Waddon properties reverted to his wife Elizabeth [10].

Elizabeth Moulton renewed the policy on 24 July 1766, when the premises were said to be in the occupation of George Jackson [11]. She died on 10 February 1772 at the age of 67, and by her will proved on 27 February 1772 she bequeathed her properties at Waddon to her brother William Wood and her "kinswoman" Joanna Wood in equal shares [12].

Apparently they sold the lease of the mill premises to John Charlton, who renewed the insurance policy on 23 July 1773 [13]. He renewed it again on 24 July 1780, and then yearly until 2 August 1785 [14].

There is no record in the policies registers of the insurance having been renewed subsequently, and no further information about the mill has been found. It was not shown on a map of Waddon Court Farm, including the area of the site, dated 1799, so it seems that it had been demolished by that time [15].

References

- 1.** Lambeth Palace Library, TD 98. Reproduced as Sheet III of maps accompanying Lilian Thornhill, *A Croydon Backcloth*, Proceedings of the Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society Ltd., Vo1.16 [3], 1977.
- 2.** Lilian Thornhill, *Waddon prior to the Inclosure Award 1803*, in Proceedings of the Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society Ltd., vol.18 [4], 1994, p.109.
- 3.** Guildhall Library, MS 8674/43, p.74.
- 4.** Ibid. MS 8674/55, p.309.
- 5.** PROB 11/695 q68.
- 6.** Guildhall Library, MS 8674/67, p.282.
- 7.** Ibid. MS 8674/79, p.269.
- 8.** PROB 11/834 q346.
- 9.** Guildhall Library, MS 8674/92, p.156.
- 10.** PROB 11/869 q362.
- 11.** Guildhall Library, MS 8674/104, p.246.
- 12.** PROB 11/975 q60.
- 13.** Guildhall Library, MS 8674/114, p.344.
- 14.** Ibid. MS 8674/123, p.195
- 15.** Lilian Thornhill op. cit. *A Croydon Backcloth ... Map TD 100 (Sheet IV)*.