

## Birchington Windmills

From "Watermills and Windmills" by W. Coles Finch

Maps dated 1596, 1695 and 1719.

Marked E of Church.

A windmill evidently of post type is shown on the above maps but these are of such small scale it is only possible to approximate positions for the earlier mills.

Maps dated 1610 and 1695.

Mill marked N.E. of Church.

J. speeds map of 1610 and Robert Morden's map of 1695 show a mill at Dent de Lion. No mill is shown here on later maps.

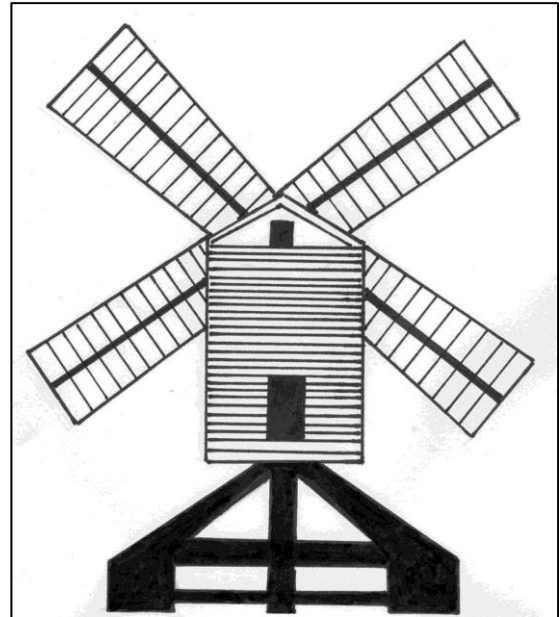
Maps dated 1736, 1769, 1819-1843.

Mill shown 7 furlongs S. E. of Church.

The mill was situated at the corner of Quex Park marked at Queeks on the older map.

Bawens 1736 map calls it Birchington Mill.

No information is available regarding its history unless as local people suggest it was moved and is the same mill as Hudson's Mill described later.



Griggs' post mill SE of Quex

Map dated 1769.

Mill marked 1 furlong W. N. W. of Church.

This mill apparently stood near the coast at  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile east of Grove (sic) End.

Mill marked 3 furlongs N. of Church on 1819-43.

On the 1819-43 map this mill is noted as a Seed Mill. It evidently stood near the railway station – no particulars of it.

1898 Map – Mill Lane marked "Windmill flour disused."

1872 Map. 6 inch map and 25 inch map – marked "Windmill (flour). This is the Mill Lane Mill.

Also one marked opposite the railway station marked "Old Windmill".

On Andrews Dury and Herberts map of 2 inches to 1 mile dated 1769, shows mills near the site of the railway station, and one between Acol and St. Nicholas.

1717 map shows mills on road Woodchurch to Acol, at Monkton, and between Pouces and Thorne.

## **Hudson's Mill, 3 furlongs SW of the Church**

### **Wm Coles-Finch**

It is thought that this mill originally stood on the east side of Quex Park, Birchington, but was removed to the position above noted owing to the trees of the Park obstructing the wind.

It was a large smock mill raised, in about 1350, fifteen to twenty feet higher and staging added round it. There were five doors in addition to the increased storage accommodation in the base that resulted from the structure having been heightened. Three pairs of stones were worked by the wind and latterly there were an additional two pairs of stones driven by steam.

The name of the mill is due to its having been in the Hudson family for about sixty years. Mr. Wilfred P. Hudson tells me that James Hudson came here in the 1830s, his father Zachariah Hudson (who had Mount Ephraim Mill, Ash, for many years) having bought this mill for him. James Hudson's Son, Charles James Hudson (who was born at the mill) took it over from his father in 1873 and carried it on till 1891. During the later years of his occupation he introduced several roller mills, which were run in conjunction with the stones.

A regular flour trade was maintained and the mill kept running till 11pm., all the week, the flour being sold in the neighbouring towns of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate. Later he purchased the Isle of Thanet Steam

Flour Mills at Ramsgate and this is the business that bears his name today – a large establishment equipped with all the modern machinery for the present day milling trade.

When C. J. Hudson left Birchington Mill he sold it to James Fright, who let it for a short period to Stone and Roberts. Edwin Smith was, however the last owner. The mill was unoccupied for a few years and finally pulled down about 1900. Nothing remains of it today, there is just the house and few outbuildings on the spot.

Various repairs were carried out at the mill by Messrs Holman Bros., of Canterbury. Two new sweeps were fitted in 1876 at a cost of £25, in 1879 a new silk dressing machine was installed costing £75. In 1884 two midlings were repaired and in 1887 the tower of the mill was strengthened, evidently when J. Fright purchased the mill. There is a record of a millwright working at the mill for five weeks in 1891 which seems to show that substantial repairs were carried out and that when the mill was demolished in about 1900 it could not have been derelict.

From the book Watermills and Windmills by William Coles Finch.

## Birchington Tithe Map 1841

Entries from the schedule relating to the Mill and Mill Row area of Birchington.

Ref.	Landowner	Occupant	Use	Size A.R.P.
285	Birchington Churchwardens	Sundry poor persons	Allotments Arable land	0.3.38
286	Mary Darby	James Hudson	Arable land	0.1.5
287	James Hudson	James Hudson	Cottage Windmill	0.1.5
288	John Pete	Thomas Hogben	Arable land	2.0.20
290	John Paine	John Danton	Arable land	0.3.11
291	James Gibbens	John Hayward	Cottages and Gardens	0.1.4

## References from Kelly's Street Directory 1897-1905

James Fright who bought Hudson's Mill in 1891 is shown as being a Fly Proprietor at The New Inn which is now known as the Pewter Pot. Kelly's 1897-8.

Edwin Smith who was the last owner of the Mill owned Street Farm Church Street, Birchington.

William Coles Finch's book "Watermills and Windmills" states that James Finch let the Mill for a short period to a "Stone & Roberts". The only reference to be found in Kelly's is an O. E. Stone who farmed at Great Brooksend Farm, Birchington.

Kelly's 1904-5 gives the first reference to Mill Cottage and Mill House. It states that a George Horne occupied Mill Cottage and a John Ward occupied Mill House.

**From KEBLE'S GAZETTE - 1891**

**BIRCHINGTON** loses this week one of its ablest and most respected inhabitants in the person of **Mr. Charles. J. Hudson**, who is leaving the village to take the Thanet Steam Flour Mills, Ramsgate. Although his neighbours cannot help feeling a sense of personal loss, Mr. Hudson will take with him their best wishes for his success in his new venture. Birchington Mill has been in the hands of the family for over 50 years, and "Hudson Mill" has become such a part of Birchington that one cannot fail to remember regretfully the old ties which will be severed by the removal of the business. The willing way in which Mr. Hudson has served his neighbours, both in parochial offices and in more private capacities, will not soon be forgotten, and it may be mentioned that it was largely owing to his energy that the Vicarage was completed.



This painting of Hudson's Mill was made by Charlie Smart from the detailed plans produced for its sale in 1891

**Hudson's Mill**

Tele Thanet 42106

11<sup>th</sup> Nov 198113 Kent Gardens  
Birchington  
Kent CT7 9RS

Dear Mr Walker,

Just to thank you for sending me a copy all about the mill. I did not know it was called Hudson's Mill. I only knew at one time it belonged to a distant uncle of mine. A great shame it has been demolished. I once heard my grandmother say a Mr Wilfred Hudson had visited her. My grandfather was born at Wingham in 1854. Most likely it was his father's brother who had the mill at Ash.

There are a number of our ancestors buried in Wingham Churchyard.

Thanking you for such a valuable piece of information.

Yours Sincerely

K. R. Hudson.

Kathleen's parents were deeply involved in taking care of the two Ward sisters after they were released from their mother's 30 year domination in 1938. For more information on this, see under 'Ward Sisters' in the BHT Museum in Birchington Library.

## Moving the Mill

This item appears on page 131 of Kentish Patchwork by R. Godsall, and came from the Kentish Post and Canterbury Newsletter or Kentish Gazette.

**Tuesday August 11, 1772.**

Yesterday the windmill near Birchington in the Isle of Thanet, which has been so long complained of as an annoyance to the road between Canterbury and Margate, was removed sixty yards backwards, at the expense of the Hon. Charles James Fox, who is proprietor of the estate. The removal of the mill was completed in little more than one day, with the utmost ease, and by the assistance of two horses only. Its weight was supposed to be upwards of forty tons, so neither the sweeps or mill stones were taken down. The engineer was Mr Peake, a carpenter at Manston in St. Lawrence parish.

?? Was this the mill at the corner of Quex Park, SE of the village. See Bygone Kent Vol 2, No 6?

?? Or was it Hudson's Mill situated 60 yards back from the Canterbury Road at the top of Brooksend Hill? Both this road and the Margate to Canterbury Road through Woodchurch and Acol are contenders for this 'honour'

## SEED MILL – JAMES NEAME, BIRCHINGTON

Page 78. "Near this place (Birchington) is a curious mill, the property of that intelligent and hospitable farmer, Mr. James Neame, in which the seeds of clover and hop medic (cultivated in this island under the name of trefoil) are separated from their husks dressed and prepared for use.

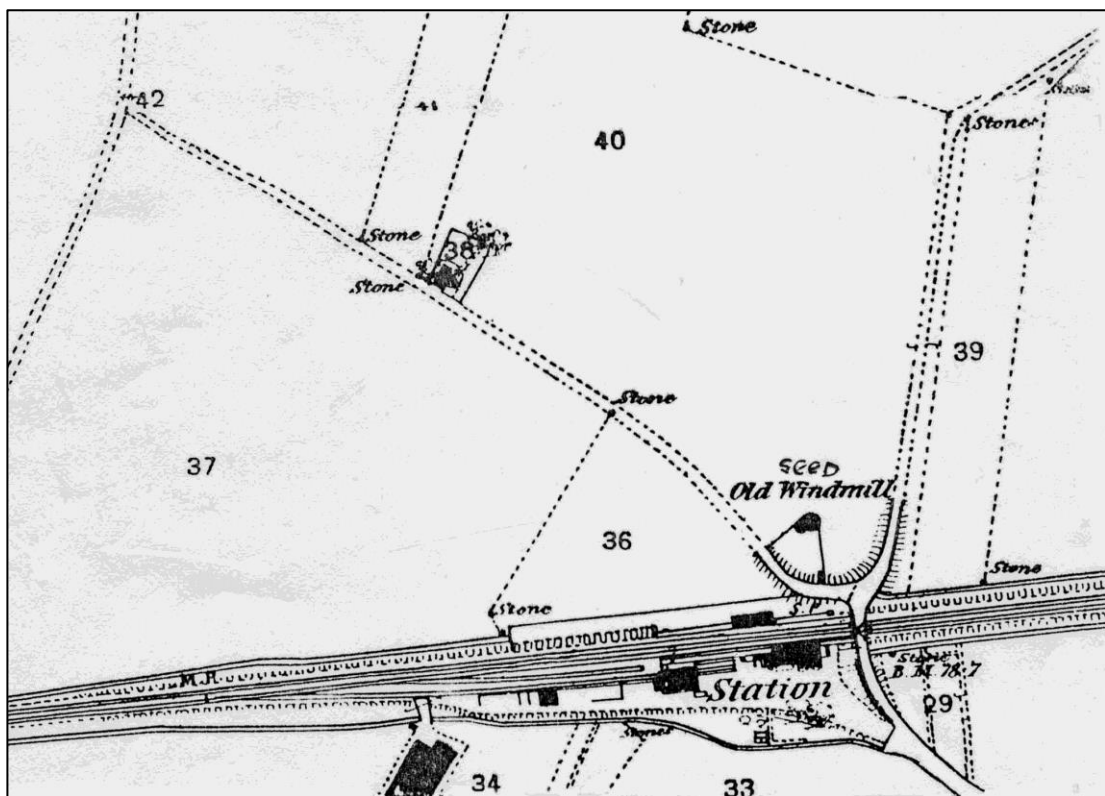
The Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of 2 inches to one mile dated 1769 shows Mills near where the railway station now is, and one between Acol and St. Nicholas. The 1717 map shows a mill on the road from Woodchurch to Acol, also at Monkton and also one between Pouses and Thorne.

Barrett quotes from a Margate Guide 1796.

Near Birchington there is a curious mill known as the Seed Mill, where seeds of clover and hop medic are separated from the husks and prepared for sale.

1880 – Hasted's History, Map Vol. 10., of the Hundred of Ringsloe shows a mill near where the station now is, also near the road leading from Hengrove to Quex, also near the road leading from Acol to Sarre and marked Monkton Mill, also one marked at Sarre.

In the Terra Monachorum Archiepi, Monkton is stated to have one mill of ten shillings. Hasted states that the mill now called Monkton Mill still stands.



1870 map

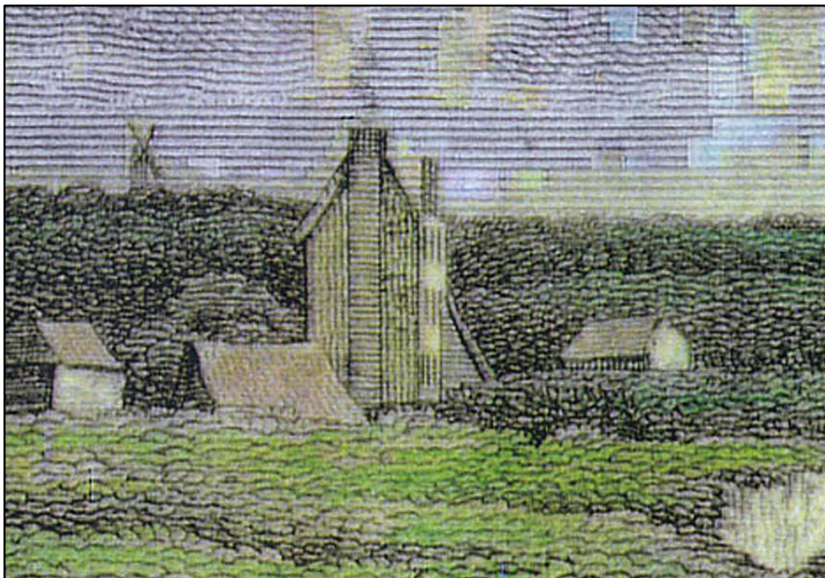


From “A short description of the Isle of Thanet” by Robertt Edward Hiunter 1799. Map shows a mill near where the present railway station now is, also one by the side of the road from Margate – Shottenane Road to Acol – the Summer Road to Sarre.

Over the years there were several different windmills to be found in the vicinity of Birchington. One was situated south east of the village at the corner of Quex Park and was shown on a map of 1736 as Birchington Mill. Some years later a newspaper reported the removal of the mill to a different position. (See a copy of this on the attached sheet.) Three other mills in Birchington included a post mill near Gore End, and a seed mill which stood very close to the present railway station.

The most famous windmill was Hudson’s Mill which was standing until about 1900, and which may have been the removed mill mentioned above as it was also situated near Quex Park. The Hudson in question was Zachariah who bought the mill for his son in the 1830s. It remained in the same family until 1891, when C. J. Hudson sold it and moved to the Steam Flour Mills at Ramsgate which still bear his name.

On the 1898 map, Mill Lane is marked and also (“Windmill, flour disused.”) On the 1872, 6 inch map, and the 25 inch map, is marked similarly “Windmill (flour), also one opposite the present railway station marked “Old Windmill”. (This was the Seed Mill)



This is the only image we have of our seed mill, painted in 1817 and seen from West Bay, at what later became Westgate.