

Cobham Mill

What we know of the ownership and tenants of the Mill

- 1086 The Domesday Book. 3 mills in Cobham – Cobham, Downside and Ash Ford.
- At the time the Domesday Book was produced there were 5624 water powered flour mills in England, about one for every 300 inhabitants. The number peaked at about 17000 by 1300, roughly following the rise in population.
- 1534 Leased from the Abbot of Chertsey by Richard Sutton on a 40 year lease.
- 1535 The Manor of Cobham was valued at £37.9s.8p per annum.
- 1537 Dissolution of the Monasteries – Manor of Cobham is acquired by Henry VIII for the sum of £5000. The Mill lease passes to the Crown. Birth of Edward, son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, later to become King Edward VI.
- 1544 George Bygley, to whom the bailiwick passed, acquires the former Chertsey Abbey manor of East Clandon from Sir Anthony Browne of Byfleet, Master of the Horse.
- 1546-9 Covenham Myll in tenure of John Collyn.
- 1547 Henry VIII dies and Edward VI inherits the Manor of Cobham.
- 1552 Edward VI demised by letters patent ‘Cobham Mill and all the waters to the same belonging’, to Sir Anthony Browne the second (whom he knighted at his coronation), for the term of 21 years, on condition that he should keep in repair ‘the Cogges, Ronges and les Bayes of the said Mill’.
- (Cogges (cogs) are removable wooden teeth of a gearwheel).
(Ronges (rungs) are wooden or metal floats of the waterwheel).
(Bayes (bays) were dams or embankments).
- 1552 Sir Anthony Browne’s servant George Bygley demises the mill to Thomas Howse.
- 1553 Edward VI dies and the Manor of Cobham passes to Queen Mary (Bloody Mary), daughter of Catherine of Aragon and ex wife of Henry VIII.
- c1554 Queen Mary sells (grants reversion of) the Manor of Cobham to George Bygley (who becomes Bailiff for the Crown) and Elizabeth his wife for £1092–14s. The purchase included Cobham Court Farm, Church House and Cobham Mill.
- 1558 Queen Mary and George Bygley died. In the meantime George had married Elizabeth, the former wife of Richard Sutton who had a 40year lease of Cobham Mill.

1572 Cobham Manor passed to the Gavell family. Robert Gavell (son-in-law of George Bygley) and Dorothy (daughter of George Bygley) his wife, demise the mill to William Sewer of Fetcham for 21 years to 1593.

At this time the mill is referred to as 'Cobham Myll' in Cobham, and is described as having 'One corn mill and one malt mill being under one rofe, with all waters, fishing in the 'mylbaie', ponds, wharfs &c belonging thereto'.

The manor of Cobham continued to be held 'under an entail' by the immediate descendants for upwards of one hundred and fifty years.

1593 Robert Gavell the elder and Francis Gavell 'his son and heir-apparent', lease the mill to William Sewer of Fetcham for a further term of 21 years. The mill is now described as having one corn mill, one malt mill, and one fulling mill for £10 at an annual rent of 20 marks. (1 mark post 1066 was worth 160p, i.e. 20marks = £ 13-6s-8d)

Robert Gavell receives a grant of arms, and subsequently died on 22nd July 1595.

1619 Francis Gavell, son of Robert Gavell, of Cobham, gent, leases the mill to Thomas Browne of Cobham, miller, for a term of 21 years.

1708 Robert Gavell senior, and son Robert, junior and heir-apparent, conveyed the manor and several farms with the exception of the manor house (Cobham Court) and the farm attached to it. At this time the appurtenances of the manor included two water grist mills.

1719 The Manor was bequeathed to Frances, Viscountess Lanesborough's 2nd grandson, James Fox who subsequently died without issue in 1753. He was succeeded by his brother Sackville Fox. He died in 1760 leaving an only son, James Fox, in whom the estate ultimately became vested.

1754 Benjamin Casseldine – Miller at Cobham (whether at Cobham mill or Downside Mill is not clear).

1760 Mill repaired.

1777 The mill is leased to Thomas Lucy (+ the mill house opposite). There was a questionable claim made by Thomas Lucy regarding the Lucy fortunes (Inheritance of Charlecote Park near Stratford-upon-Avon) Thomas Lucy was paid off in 1778 in the sum of £1050.

1778 James Fox sells the estate to Robert Mackreth.

1779 Robert Mackreth sells the estate to Thomas Page. He dies in 1781.

1787 John Tupper, takes the lease until 1803. In October 1789, a John Tapper, Cobham, Surrey, miller, makes an insurance claim with the Sun Fire Office. We presume that John Tupper and John Tapper are one and the same person.

- 1798 Freehold of the mill and neighbouring Old Meadow purchased by Thomas Lucy.
- 1799 The mill was occupied by John Tupper. Mill severely damaged by floods (recorded as 'washed away') but was quickly re-built.
- 1803 James Peto takes the lease to 1816.
- 1816 James Thorpe takes the lease to 1824.
- 1820-2 The mill facility is enlarged by the addition of the current mill building.
- 1851 William Batchelor was the miller in Cobham at the time of his death in 1851.
- 1871 Mrs. Batchelor is the Master Miller, employing 'Five men and a boy'.
- 1882 Thomas Sweetlove (nephew of Mrs. Batchelor) takes the lease for 21 years to 1903.

In the 1990s the mill was sometimes known as Munby's Mill.

In the early 1900's (1903), the mill is bought by Henry Moore and Son. They remained the millers until the early 1920's, but they did not renew the lease.

- 1925 Mill sold to Charles Harvey Combe and continued to be rented by Henry Moore and Son until 1926.

Subsequently the mill was sold to Surrey County Council.

- 1953 The main mill building demolished for road widening.

Subsequently, the remaining mill building was bought by Tom Hollinge of T W Hollinge Ltd. In 1986 the freehold of the mill was taken over by the Thames Water Authority. In 1989 the responsibility for the River Mole was transferred to the National Rivers Authority and later The Environment Agency.