

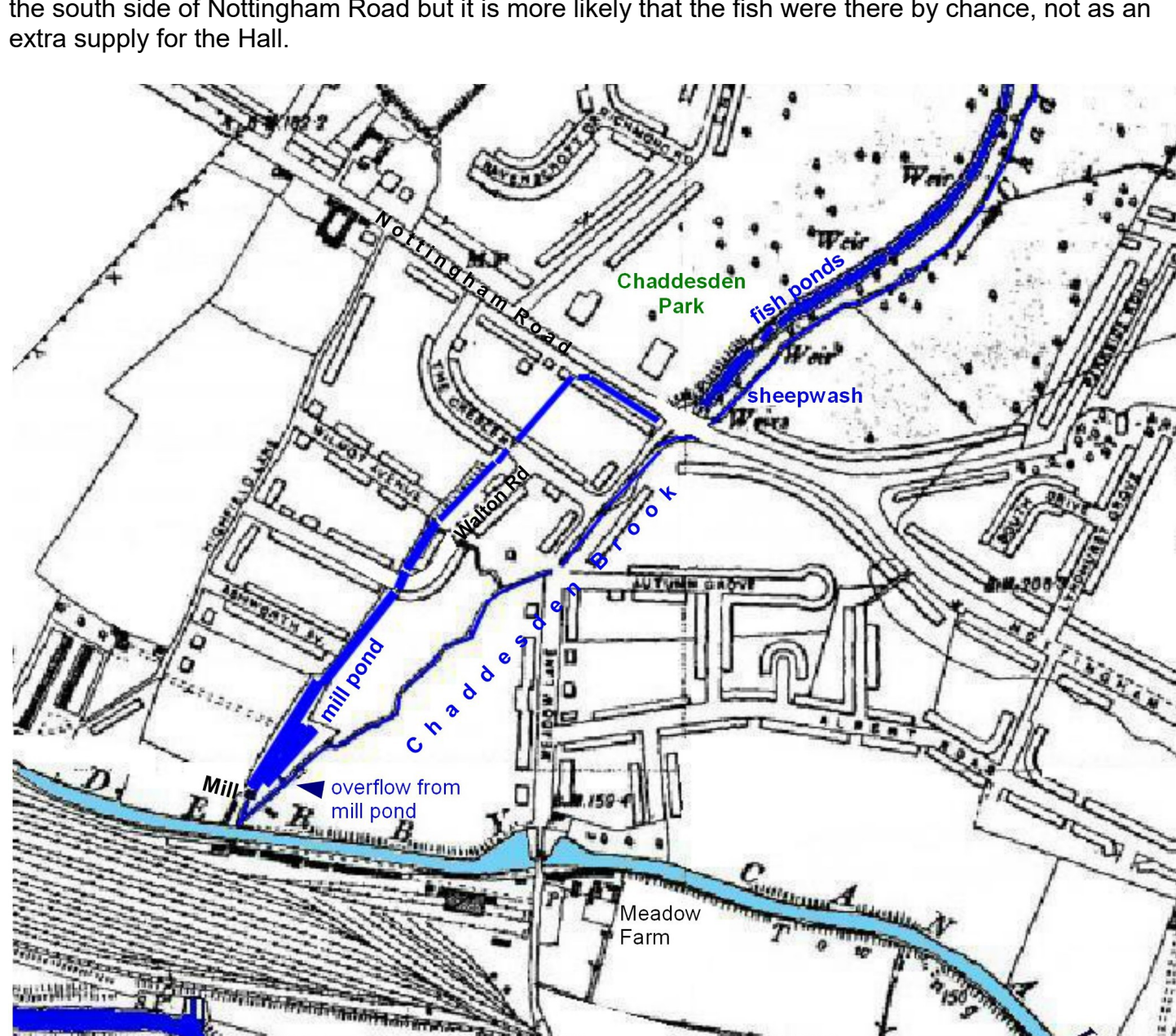
Chaddesden Mill

Chaddesden had three water-powered mills. The earliest was at Beaumontacre where the mill fleam by-passed a meander on the River Derwent. A grant from William de Ferrers, Earl of Derby, refers to "the mill upon the sluice of Chaddesden".^[1] The document is undated but believed to be c.1200. While that location would ensure a plentiful supply of water, there must have been times when the mill was inaccessible because the meadows were flooded. Eventually there was an exceptional flood resulting in destruction of the mill and the river using the mill fleam to break through the meander. In modern terms, the location was near the railway bridge over the river between Derby and Spondon. Plans for the railway, drawn in the mid-1860s, show osier beds and an ox-bow lake that would have been the original course of the river and was still the boundary between Chaddesden and Osmaston parishes. The area was transformed in the 20th century when the river level was lowered and rubbish tipped into its old course. It is hard to believe that a mill once stood here, close to the Rolls-Royce Raynesway site.

In a safer location was a mill driven by the Lees Brook and described in another article on this web site as Bradcar Watermill. While it was in a more convenient location (close the modern Lees Brook School) there would have been periods when it could not work for lack of water. That mill was last used around 1715. For many years, it seems that Chaddesden had no mill leaving residents the inconvenience of having to take corn grown here to another parish for milling or selling it as grain with the buyer to arrange for milling.

Although no mill is shown on the Chaddesden Enclosure map of 1791, the idea of building one was probably there, prompted by the success of Richard Arkwright at Cromford where a cotton spinning factory, powered entirely by water, had been built twenty years earlier. Chaddesden Mill appears to be one of many built in the 1790s and around the same time as the Derby Canal (1794-96). It is uncertain whether the mill pre-dates the canal or the other way around, in other words, did the presence of the mill and mill pond force the Derby Canal's engineer to take a curved route to pass to the south of the mill, or did the presence of the canal determine the position of the mill as water from the mill had to be returned to the Chaddesden Brook which passed under the canal in culvert?

The water supply to the mill was an improvement upon that at Bradcar where an undershot wheel would have been driven directly from the brook. Alongside the brook in Chaddesden Park were fish ponds to provide a supply of fresh fish for the Wilmot family at Chaddesden Hall – an otherwise rare commodity with Derbyshire being so far from the sea. Instead of returning the water from the fish ponds to the brook, it was culverted under Nottingham Road and into an elongated mill pond that went around two sides of a field. Near the mill was a spillway so excess water would return to the brook and not flood the mill. This arrangement can be seen on a plan of 1821 for a diversion of the Derby – Nottingham turnpike road which marks a "Mill Dam".^[2] Some maps show "fish ponds" on the south side of Nottingham Road but it is more likely that the fish were there by chance, not as an extra supply for the Hall.



The 18th century water supply arrangement to the mill superimposed on an OS map of 1938. The sheepwash is described in detail in another article on this web site.

Ideally a mill pond would hold enough water to allow the miller to do a full day's work and then re-fill overnight for the following day. When there was a long, dry period and the water level in the brook was low it might take several days to refill. As evidence that the water in the brook was insufficient to power the mill at all times is this advertisement from the Derby Mercury of 2 May 1832 which describes the equipment of the mill in detail and refers to the presence of an 8hp steam engine.

CHADDESSEN MILL NEAR DERBY.

TO BE LET.

ALL that well accustomed WATER CORN MILL, with a Steam Engine of eight-horse power attached thereto, now in the occupation of O'Brien Witherley.

The Water Wheel drives one pair of French, two pairs of Grey, and one pair of Shelling Stones, and a Dressing Machine.

The Engine has a pair of French Stones attached to it, and will drive either the French Stones & Dressing Machine together, or two pair of Stones.

There is also attached a good Drying Kiln, and requisites for making Meal.

The Mill is in good repair, on the Banks of the Derby Canal.

Also a Cottage, with an excellent Garden and Orchard, and two Meadows adjoining, containing 12A. 2R. 38P.

Possession may be had immediately; and for particulars, application may be made to Mr. WHITE, Alton Hall, near Wirksworth, or to Mr. W. M. WHITE, Chaddesden Meadow.

Chaddesden, April 28th, 1832.

There is more about William White of Alton Hall and his son, William Morledge White of Meadow Farm, Chaddesden, both named at the end of the advertisement, in the article on the Wragge Brothers on this web site.

In the 1841 Census, the miller was Joseph Parker but he died in 1844 aged 81 and his son, also Joseph Parker, requested outstanding creditors to send in their accounts as in the notice below.

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS.

ALL Persons who have any CLAIMS against the Estate of JOSEPH PARKER, late of Chaddesden Mill, in the County of Derby, Miller, deceased, are desired to send particulars thereof to JOSEPH PARKER, of Chaddesden Mill, aforesaid, his Son and Administrator, as soon as possible; and all Persons indebted to the said Estate are requested to pay their respective Accounts to the said Joseph Parker forthwith.

Chaddesden Mill May 28, 1844.

Joseph junior took over the tenancy of the mill. In 1851 Ann Parker, Joseph's mother died there. Joseph married Maria Glover in 1853. They were still at the mill with their children in the 1861 Census. The mill was taken over by Joseph's brother, Thomas, who had been at Nun's Mill in Derby until 1865. He was declared bankrupt on 18 July 1868.

THOMAS PARKER, formerly of Nuns' Mill, Nun-street, Derby, in the County of Derby, then of Chester-road, Derby, in the County of Derby, and now of Chaddesden Mill, Chaddesden in the County of Derby, Miller, having been adjudged Bankrupt on the 18th day of July, 1868, is hereby required to surrender himself to **GEORGE HENRY WELLER**, Esquire, Registrar of the County Court of Derbyshire, held at Derby, at the first meeting of Creditors, to be held on the 6th day of August, 1868, at 12 o'clock at Noon precisely, at the County Hall in Derby.—**WILLIAM BRIGGS**, of 43, Full-street, Derby, is the Solicitor acting in the Bankruptcy.

At the meeting the Registrar will receive the proofs of the Debts of the Creditors, and the Creditors may choose an Assignee or Assignees of the Bankrupt's estate and effects.

All persons having in their possession any of the effects of the said Bankruptcies, must deliver them to the Registrar, and all debts due to the Bankrupts, must be paid to the Registrar.

GEO. H. WELLER,
Registrar.

The mid-19th century saw the industrialisation of flour-milling as large mills, powered by steam engines were built, against which the small village millers found it hard to compete.

The mill was taken over for a time by John Richardson, a miller from Wirksworth who was there in 1871. Then came Charles Martin and William Winfield in partnership which suggests that both had other employment and the mill was merely a sideline, but this partnership was dissolved in October 1876. It is possible that Martin and Winfield were the last millers at Chaddesden.

NOTICE is hereby GIVEN, that the PARTNERSHIP lately subsisting between us, the undersigned, **CHARLES MARTIN** and **WILLIAM WINFIELD**, as Millers, at Chaddesden Mill in the Parish of Chaddesden, in the County of Derby, under the firm of "Martin and Winfield," has been DISSOLVED by mutual consent, as and from the 9th day of October instant, and that all Debts due and owing to or by the said Firm will be received and paid by the said **WILLIAM WINFIELD**,

As witness our hands this 27th day of October, 1876.
WILLIAM WINFIELD,
CHARLES MARTIN.

Signed by the said Charles Martin and William Winfield in the presence of
W. B. HEXTALL,
Solicitor, Derby.

In 1881 the mill was occupied by another Joseph Parker, (not related to the earlier Parkers) from Sawtry, Huntingdon. Joseph gave his occupation as agricultural labourer in that year's census. If he was still working the mill occasionally he did not mention that to the census enumerator.

The invention of the Francis and Pelton water turbines in the latter half of the 19th century led to a few watermills being upgraded to water turbine operation. Reference [3] mentions an advertisement in 1886 for a water turbine which suggests that consideration was given to updating and re-opening Chaddesden Mill. The idea that someone might have a surplus turbine seems optimistic, also the machinery would need to be modified to work with the much greater speed of a turbine.

In 1891 the mill was in the possession of Thomas Vickers and his wife, Elizabeth (formerly Davison of Chaddesden). The mill is marked as disused on the 1900 edition of the Ordnance Survey (OS) 1:2500 map which shows no mill pond, only a ditch alongside a field boundary to return water to the brook.

In 1901 a market gardener by the name of John Normanshaw was occupying the mill and land. This highlights a problem with mill ponds: fast flowing water from the Chaddesden and Lees Brooks would hold solids in suspension. If the water is allowed to stand, as in a mill pond, the solids are deposited. Mill ponds need to be periodically dredged if they are not to fill with soil. The fertile soil in the former mill pond had probably become Mr Normanshaw's market garden.

The last census which mentions Chaddesden Mill is 1911 when the mill was inhabited by Francis James Woodings, a farm labourer and his family, three of the four children being born in Chaddesden. Both Francis and his wife had previously been employed by William Jackson, farmer and market gardener of Meadow Farm, Chaddesden.

The mill lasted nearly as long in disused condition as it did as a working mill. The ruin is marked on OS 1:2500 maps as late as 1951, by which time the access road from Meadow Lane to the mill was also the access to Chaddesden sewage treatment works on the opposite side of the brook from the mill. The mill site appeared to be in the ownership of Shardlow Rural District Council, the same as the sewage works.

House building in the late 1920s and 1930s destroyed the water supply which would have passed through the front gardens of the houses on Nottingham Road, now opposite Aldi.^[4] The garden boundary of Walton Road and Wilmot Avenue is a former field boundary with the mill pond being in the Walton Road gardens. The site of the mill remained undeveloped until the early 1960s when Margaret Avenue and Carol Crescent were built. Comparison of old and new maps suggests that the Carol Crescent houses with high even numbers are on the site of the mill and pond. The curved garden boundary between Carol Crescent and John Berrysford Close follows the original course of the Chaddesden Brook, although the present culvert does not necessarily follow the same route. The mill has gone and the brook has disappeared, too.

Peter Barnes

This article is based on unpublished text in the Chaddesden Historical Group archive, ref Buil10. In addition the following have been consulted:

- Transcript of grant from William de Ferrers relating to Spondon and Chaddesden in CHG archive ref Buil24.
- Deposited plan for an improved route of the Derby – Nottingham turnpike road held at Derbyshire Record Office ref Q/RP1/36.
- Derbyshire Historic Environment Record:
[Monument record MDR8652 - Chaddesden Mill \(site of\), Derby](#)
- Reader's letter in the Derby Daily Telegraph, 20 April 1928, on the subject of flooding at Chaddesden Lane End refers to the culvert, under Nottingham Road being cleaned out (in early 1928?), states that the so-called large fish pond was a mill dam and that the dam had been filled in and bungalows (The Crescent) built upon it.

