

Tithe Map 1837 Land Ownership

3

January 2026

a proposed CONSERVATION AREA for SPROUGHTON



■ Landowner: **Joseph Burch Smyth**

By 1902 much of the Burch Smyth landholding had been transferred to of Isabella Percival and Lucy Mary Phillips and Robert Phillips

▲ Landowner: **Reverend Edward Gould**

LANDOWNERS	OCCUPIERS	Area	Quantity	Value	Notes
Ransom, John (tenant)	George, George (tenant)	180	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
	Sherrard, Wm	181	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		182	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		183	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		184	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		185	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		186	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		187	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
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		300	1 1/2	1 1/2	...

LANDOWNERS	OCCUPIERS	Area	Quantity	Value	Notes
Neeve, Henry	Henry Neeve	243	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		244	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		245	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		246	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		247	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		248	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		249	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		250	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		251	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		252	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		253	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		254	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
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		270	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
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		287	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		288	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		289	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		290	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		291	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		292	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		293	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		294	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		295	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		296	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		297	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
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		299	1 1/2	1 1/2	...
		300	1 1/2	1 1/2	...

Henry Neeve is listed in the History, Gazetteer and Directory of Suffolk as a maltster. He occupied and operated the Mill for many years.

The present building dates from c. 1817-1820. In early 1817 it was advertised to be let by tender on a building lease "the mill to be improved agreeably to drawings, specifications and an estimate now lying at the offices of Mr. Bunn, Solicitor, and Mr. William Cubitt, Engineer, Ipswich".

1818 The old water mill was dismantled, and the new/existing **Sproughton Water Mill** was built in brick, the building engineer later in his life was knighted for his works as an engineer and is the famous as **Sir William Cubitt**.

The Water Mill was built for the owners the **Constable family of East Bergholt**

In **September 1820**, it was again advertised "to be let and entered upon at Michaelmass next, as the **Capital Water Mill**... The above mill (which has been lately rebuilt on the most approved principles) with four pairs of stones, also a dwelling house. The mill has a 7ft fall." Application was to be made as in **1817**.

From this it can be inferred that rebuilding took place between these two dates. It is possible that no one took up the "building lease" and that the landlord carried out the work himself, letting the new mill once finished.

Sir William Cubitt was originally a millwright, the patentee of a self regulating windmill sail (in **1807**) which became the standard design in this country and remains in use to this day. At this time he was working as chief engineer at Ransomes in Ipswich. He was later knighted after an illustrious career in Civil Engineering. No other examples of his millwrighting are known to survive (although it must be said that the mill has been refitted in **1840** and subsequently gutted since **Sir William Cubitts** time).

In **1835** it was again advertised, to be let following the death of Thomas Thurston. The Tithe Map and Apportionment of **1837** name Joseph Burch Smyth (a local landowner) as owner, and Henry Neeve as occupier. He developed a large business and also was a maltster and corn merchant with a shop in Ipswich. In **1840** Sproughton Water Mill was remodelled for Mr. Henry Neeve by John Whitmore, a millwright from Wickham Market.

From the layout of the water courses, it is clear that there were originally two waterwheels. It is however not so apparent in the surviving fabric and the present mill has only ever used one wheel; perhaps this change was part of the "improvement". None of the original plant survives, but there is evidence in the hurst framing (which remains in the larger part) of a later alteration. The original floor beams are fir, and show evidence of being altered with many redundant mortises. It is not clear whether these alterations were made in the present building or whether the timbers may be second-hand. What is clear however is that the hurst frame is a later insertion, being of well finished oak. This is probably part of Whitmore's mid 19th century remodeling, which also appears to have involved the construction of a raised floor at 1st level to clear the large 16 ft Iron waterwheel. The driving gear and shafts were of iron and would have replaced the earlier timber gear. The new hurst frame is independent of the brick structure, an indication that structural problems occurred early in the mill's life.

Henry Neeve ran the mill until **1874**, then William Ladbrook until the late **1870's** when William Rose took over. He died in **1893**, being succeeded by his widow who by **1896** had given up the mill, J & E Mudd being listed as millers in that year until c. **1922**.

In **1903** the mill property was sold for £1,275 to Mr. Godfrey Hempston. The last miller would seem to be Ernest Edwin Jacob, from c. **1922** to **1946**.

In **1947** the mill was sold to the Hughes-Rickett family who still live in the mill house, after which the mill was gutted of its beautiful 16 ft Iron waterwheel, all the mill machinery and used for a variety of other purposes.

In **1990** the mill was put up for sale, nobody was prepared to take on the Water Mill until **1995**, which means it was for sale locally on the open market for five years.

In **August 1995** the mill was sold

