

Lovedays Mill – the Old House?



It all started whilst chatting with John and his mate during a break in their re-pointing of the old part of Lovedays Mill (The right hand side in the photo). He made the remark that that some of the mouldings didn't seem quite right. He followed this up by noting that quite a few of the building stone blocks he was re-pointing were not regular rectangles, but had 'cut-outs' that had been replaced by stone inserts.

And so we got diverted into looking at this a bit more closely.

I recalled a line drawing I had seen in Baddeley's History of Painswick¹, and got a copy out from the local library. It was unattributed, but I show a copy below.



LOVEDAYS MILL 1829, AND OLD HOUSE

And that's when the sleuthing began.

Now, Lovedays grade II listing starts "*House and attached mill. C17 and C19. Large coursed and squared limestone to house, ashlar to mill, stone slate roof etc*" and I (and my insurance provider!) had no reason to doubt it. I'd also read Colleen Haine's excellent (and pre-internet) "*The Cloth Trade along the Painswick Stream*"². But something wasn't quite right.

Baddeley's drawing was dated 1829: and from the mid-19th century, generally speaking, Lovedays Mill followed the path of hiccupy decline traced by all the Painswick valley mills – to the extent that by the mid 1930's it was near derelict (some pre-restoration 1930's photos came with the house).

The buildings to the right of Baddeley's drawing were long gone – just a bump in the lawn now. But could I trust the accuracy of the drawing, or was it just a cartoon? Well, a close comparison of the left hand section (the C19 'attached mill' part of the listing) shows a remarkably close alignment with the building of today. The window count and spacing, and even the courses of dripstones above them - spot on. So the Old House part was likely to have been accurately drawn as well.

Which is where it gets interesting.

Comparing with today's picture, we just have two gables, not three.

Oh, and the left-hand sub-gable has gone. Except we now have mini-gable in the middle.

And the window count isn't quite right.

Hang on a minute – the roof line is wrong.

And so the evidence starts to stack up that today's 'old house' is not the same Old House shown in Baddeley. There are more details to evidence that the present house has been rebuilt a couple of feet to the left of the Old House (the clues are in the window spacing and the original dripline stone coursing). It is not a C17 house as listed, but is a downsized rebuild using the architectural features (windows, mullions, 'eye-brows', glass even) from the Old House. It is C19.

The sleuthing goes on, and I'm pleased to say that I tracked down the origin of Baddeley's drawing in the Museum in the Park in Stroud – it is based on a delightful watercolour in "*A Survey of Houses, Mills and Land in the Parish of Painswick ... belonging to Mr William Baylis 1829*"³. An impressively high quality 'sales brochure', but as Colleen Haine notes it does not appear to have been sold, as it appears again as Lot 7 in auction particulars for November 1856⁴. Most notably, the map accompanying the 1856 sales particulars shows a high level plan of the old house in its modern configuration.

So now we can date the old house to being rebuilt between 1829 and 1856 – coincident perhaps with its change of use from fulling etc to corn milling?

Thanks John, and the sleuthing continues.....

Jeremy Tyson – Painswick, July 2021

References:

- 1 Welbore St. Clair Baddeley, *A Cotteswold Manor being the History of Painswick, Gloucester* 1929, reprinted 1980, facing p.170
- 2 Colleen Haine, *Cloth Mills along the Painswick Stream – mills near centre of Painswick*, GSIA Journal, 1982
- 3 Museum in the Park, Stroud. STGCM1967.111 - *A survey of houses, mills and land at Painswick belonging to Mr. William Baylis 1829*, leather bound pp.23
- 4 Gloucestershire Archives. D1388/SL/4/39 *Title or description Particulars of sale of Freehold & Copyhold Estates in Reversion of William Baylis Baker Esq. 1856*