

## **Summaries of the Locations and Types of Watermills in British River Catchments.**

In this series of documents, we extract and summarise information on watermills, presented initially in the Appendices, attached to the accounts of historical river journeys on the website. Access to the documents can be obtained by clicking on the titles appearing below.

The 1<sup>st</sup> document was published in November 2021, as a free pamphlet, RIGG FREE PUBLICATIONS, EDINBURGH, 2022 ISBN 978-1-7399648-0-2, and a web document accessible here;

### **[Investigations of the Locations and Types of Watermills in 34 British River Catchments](#)**

#### **Synopsis**

The document pulls together information gathered in the course of a project which described historical journeys along 34 British rivers. Watermills featured strongly in the accounts, and for each journey, an Appendix was produced, which located all the post-1750 watermills in the catchment and identified their types, e.g., cornmills, textile mills, etc. The tabulated results in the pamphlet amount to information about 3414 commercial and farm watermills, and are presented in such a way as to allow comparisons between areas and river catchments. An overview highlights similarities and differences, but as the project is still work in progress, any conclusions should be regarded as interim. The further work which is envisaged will increase the depth of coverage of English and Welsh watermills to replicate the Scottish template, as regards farm mills, and complete further river journeys, principally in England to achieve broader coverage.

The Updates:

**[1st Updated Summary of the Locations and Types of Watermills in British River Catchments](#)**, was published as a web document, accessible by clicking on the title above, in April 2022.

**[2nd Updated Summary of the Locations and Types of Watermills in British River Catchments](#)**, was published as a web document, accessible by clicking on the title above, in final form in August 2022.

**[3rd Updated Summary of the Locations and Types of Watermills in British River Catchments](#)** is published as a web document, accessible by clicking on the title above, in April 2023.

#### **Synopsis**

This is the latest update on our investigations of mills, mainly water powered, but also those driven by horse gins. Altogether, we have identified and located almost 9500 commercial and farm mills, (defined early in the document), which operated after 1750; the majority processed corn, but others performed a wide range of functions, from making and conditioning textiles to manufacturing gunpowder. Geographically, the mills were distributed countrywide along 51 rivers, and many tributaries and other streams in their catchments. We have built an extensive and unique database of the locations and functions of commercial and farm water mills across the UK. Efforts have been made to explain different facets of the mill population, with considerable success, but many factors had influence and not all of them are well understood. In particular, we have identified some specific unanswered questions, and will continue our investigations in the hope of addressing them, though the time elapsed since most mills shut down, and the complexity of the situation may, on occasion, defeat our best efforts.