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A possible 12th century mill at Kingston Seymour, North Somerset

by Keith Gardner and Stephen Rippon

In 1982, part of a substantial timber structure was uncovered during improvements to the sea wall along the River Yeo in Kingston Seymour (ST 3778 6633). The

following account of the discovery is taken from the brief published note (Evans 1983). A large timber beam (or possibly two timbers laid side by side), 0.94 m wide, 0.3 m deep and at least 6 m long was laid flat with stone packing above and below. This formed part of a rectilinear arrangement of smaller timbers, all at a depth of c.3.6 m (2.1 m OD).

These timbers were interpreted as part of a tidal mill structure, based on a number of local place-names which are first recorded in 1701 (Mill Lease and Mill Lease Rhyne).

Fortunately, Mr Gerald Harris of Fair View Farm saved one of the timbers, and in 1997 this was sampled for radiocarbon dating giving a result of 890 +/- 50 BP (cal AD 1025 to 1260: Beta-112242).



Figure 1: worked timbers from the possible tide mill at Kingston Seymour (reproduced by kind permission of the North Somerset Museum Service).

Evans, J. (1983) Discovery of a possible tide mill at Kingston Seymour, Bristol and Avon Archaeology 2, 40-44.

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