

Rapid Building Survey

The Old Mill, Kinbuck, Stirling Council



The Old Mill, Kinbuck looking North West.



11th March 2021

Introduction

The planning consent for this development (Stirling Council Planning Application 20/00661/FUL) included an archaeological condition specifying the need for Historic Building Recording using ALGAO Scotland's Historic Building Recording Guidance (2013). This standing building survey was carried out by the author on Tuesday 9th March 2021 (Site Code KIN01), weather conditions were overcast and slightly damp.

Location (Illus 1)

The village of Kinbuck lies 2km North of Dunblane and the Old Mill lies on the Eastern side of the River Allan at the North Western end of the village and fronts the B8033 road to Braco.

Historical Background (Illus 2 to 11)

The earliest map showing a mill on the River Allan in the vicinity of Kinbuck is by William Johnson and is dated 1827 but is of a very small scale (Illus 2). 'Kinbuck Woolmill and Pertinents' are valued in the 1855 Valuation Roll at £114 18 shillings and 3 pence and are noted as being under the Proprietorship of John Stirling Esq of Kippendavie at Kippenross House (South of Dunblane), its tenants are listed as being Alexander and Robert Duncanson (<https://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk>). The Ordnance Survey Name Book of 1857-58 for Perthshire describes Kinbuck as 'A small village situated on the banks of the Allan Water and convenient to a Station of the Same name on the Scottish Central Railway, the houses are in general one Story high, Slated, **there is a carding and Spinning mill in which the most part of the inhabitants are employed James Stirling Esqr Kippenross propt.**' (<https://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk>). The mill complex is well mapped on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1864 which shows the buildings lying on the eastern side of a lead running from the River Allan, a gasometer is also shown which no longer survives. A second set of buildings labelled 'Carding and Spinning Mill' are shown on the map across the road in the area now occupied by Robertson's Auctioneers (Illus 3 and 4). A Video on You Tube shows an undated view of the mill building and an associated chimney on its Southern side (Illus 5) and an undated postcard shows the mill building from across the River Allan (Illus 6).⁶

From limited documentary research by the author by the early 1950's the site had been remodelled as an electricity meter factory operated by Smith's meters (Practical Wireless 1953) and this involved the construction of buildings against the South Western elevation of the mill and above a now backfilled mill lead (Illus 7 and 8). From at least 1976 the site was occupied by Ferranti Electrical Components and this was the case until Ferranti went bust in 1993 (Hume 1977, 264) (Illus 9 and 10). The Buildings At Risk Register notes that the buildings were still in use as auctioneer's storage until around 2009 when they are listed as being vacant (<https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/906470>). They remained that way until the current refurbishment into housing (Illus 11).

Survey

The Old Mill building which is in the process of being refurbished is a well-built sandstone building with a lower basement level, a ground floor, a first floor and an attic floor level. It fronts the road through the village on its North Eastern side and has a lower basement level which is accessed on its South Western side. A small sandstone building lies on its North Western side. At the time of this survey the former early modern building attached to the South Western side of the Old mill had been demolished. The mill building now has a new slated roof and a new dormer and is being fitted out internally (March 2021).

South Eastern Elevation (Illus 12)

This is a gable end with a chimney at its apex. It is built of mortared red sandstone with shaped quoins at its corners. Looking from its South Western end the basement floor has a window blocked with bricks, a doorway with a wooden door and another window blocked with bricks. The ground floor has a window currently blocked with wood. The first floor contains a window blocked with wood and then a 'dummy' window. The second floor has a window blocked with wood and then another 'dummy' window.

South Western Elevation (Illus 13)

This is built of mortared red sandstone with quoins at its corners. The basement floor level from its North Western end has a doorway (with a wooden door), a window, another window (blocked with bricks), another window (blocked with bricks), a wide doorway with wooden doors, another window (blocked with bricks) and finally a window (blocked with bricks). The ground floor has three small windows, one slightly taller window, a doorway, three slightly taller windows and finally two small windows (all blocked with wooden boards). The first floor has a row of ten small windows all blocked with wooden boards. The new slated roof contains a new central dormer with four windows and a refurbished dormer at its Southern end.

North Western Elevation (Illus 14 and 15)

This is a gable end with a chimney at the apex and is built of mortared red sandstone blocks with quoins at its corners, part of a former roof line for a now missing adjoining building is visible. The basement floor contains a window (blocked with bricks), a doorway blocked with concrete breeze blocks and there is a circular hole of 0.70m diameter blocked with mortared stone. The ground floor contains a window blocked with concrete breeze blocks and another blocked window. The first floor contains a blocked window and a blocked doorway. The attic floor contains a small, glazed window and an open window.

North Eastern Elevation (Illus 16 to 19)

This is built of mortared red sandstone and fronts the road. All of the windows in this elevation are defined by shaped red sandstone blocks. The ground floor contains a doorway (with wooden door), four glazed windows, a doorway with a wooden door and then another four glazed windows. The first floor contains four glazed windows, a door to a loading bay (blocked with wooden panels) and then another four glazed windows. The slated roof contains a dormer with a doorway and a crane hoist (now blocked with wood).

Interior (Illus 20 and 21)

The mill building is in the process of being refurbished for housing and now contains a new attic floor, a new ground floor and a new first floor. The basement floor level contains brick support pillars for the ground floor which relate to a previous use of the building.

Small Building to North West (Illus 22)

This is built of mortared red sandstone and has a doorway in its South Eastern elevation with a wooden door. Its South Western elevation contains a doorway with a wooden door and a glazed window. Its North Western elevation is slightly angled, and a flight of stairs lead up to the road level in front of it.

Interior (Illus 23)

The single room inside is accessed by a staircase that leads up to a doorway in its North Eastern elevation. It contains a cupboard under these stairs and a large cast iron tank of uncertain function.

Suggested Phasing of Building and general comments.

The Old Mill at Kinbuck is a well-built example of 19th century Scottish rural industrial architecture. The later 20th century reuse of the building and site for a electricity meter factory has meant that most of the original elements of the mill complex have either been removed or filled in. From cartographic and photographic evidence, it is clear that the sites conversion into a factory involved the original 19th century mill building being enveloped by extra buildings that have subsequently been demolished as part of the current development. The 'dummy' windows overlooking the road in the South Eastern facing elevation of the mill building are an interesting survival of an attempt to ensure that the mill building is architecturally sensitive to its location. The blocked circular hole in the North Eastern elevation of the mill building may be evidence for the former position of a drive shaft into the mill building. The Ordnance Survey Name Book entry of 1857-58 indicates that when the wool mill was operating it employed most of the inhabitants of the village.

Recommendations

The author feels that the photographic survey and written notes of the mill building at Kinbuck are an adequate record of the building prior to its total refurbishment for housing.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Lee Collins of Braco Designs for a useful guided tour of the building.

References

Books

Hume, J R 1977 *The industrial archaeology of Scotland, 2, the Highlands and Islands*, 264

Cartographic Sources (<http://www.nls.uk/maps>)

Part of Perthshire with Clackmannanshire from Mr James Stobie's survey by William Johnson 1827.

Ordnance Survey Maps – 25 "1st edition, Scotland, 1855-1882

Ordnance Survey Name Books (<https://www.scotlandspplaces.gov.uk>)

Perthshire Ordnance Survey Names Books 1857-58

Valuation Rolls (<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>)

Online Resources

Kinbuck village Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/kinbuckvillage>

Kinbuck Life website <https://kinbucklife.com/colourisation/>

Old Photos Kinbuck on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBxGZcCEuGg>

Digitised Archive of Practical Wireless Magazine (Issue for August 1953 recording opening of Smith's Meters factory in Kinbuck) <https://worldradiohistory.com/hd2/IDX-UK/Technology/Technology-All-Eras/Archive-Practical-Wireless-IDX/IDX/60s/PW-1953-08-IDX-10.pdf>

Buildings At Risk Register entry for The Old Mill, Kinbuck
<https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/906470>

Postcards for sale on www.ebay.co.uk

Illustration List

Illustration 1- Location of The Old Mill, Kinbuck (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2020. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100060449)

Illustration 2- Mill at Kinbuck? as shown on Thomson's map of 1827 (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 3- The Old Mill at Kinbuck as shown on Ordnance Survey map of 1864 (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 4- Detail from Ordnance Survey Map of 1864 showing mill complex including mill lead, gasometer and associated building across the road (site now occupied by auctioneers) (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 5- Undated photograph of mill building looking North showing chimney stack and associated building across road (still from a You Tube video)

Illustration 6- Undated post card of mill building (red arrow) from the other side of the River Allan looking East (www.ebay.co.uk).

Illustration 7- Undated photograph of mill buildings looking North, building now added on the Western side (www.kinbucklife.com)

Illustration 8- Mill building complex painted white and marked 'Smith Meters Ltd' (from Kinbuck Facebook page October 3rd, 2020)

Illustration 9- Mill building complex looking South West in 1976 marked 'Ferranti' (© John Hume)

Illustration 10- Mill building complex in 1976 marked 'Ferranti' looking North West (© John Hume)

Illustration 11- Mill building complex prior to refurbishment looking North (recorded building marked with red arrow, demolished early modern building on left) (Courtesy of Lee Collins)

Illustration 12- South Eastern external elevation of building (red arrows show dummy windows)

Illustration 13- South Western elevation of Mill building showing new roof and dormers.

Illustration 14- North Eastern elevation of mill building, red arrow shows position of blocked circular hole.

Illustration 15- Detail view of blocked circular hole in North Eastern elevation.

Illustration 16- General view of North Eastern elevation fronting onto road.

Illustration 17- Southern end of North Eastern elevation showing windows defined by sandstone blocks.

Illustration 18- Centre of North Eastern elevation.

Illustration 19- Northern end of North Eastern elevation

Illustration 20- Basement floor at Northern end of mill building looking East.

Illustration 21- Ground floor of mill building in process of refurbishment looking North West (2021)

Illustration 22- Small building on North West side of mill building (red arrow).

Illustration 23- Interior of small building showing iron tank and flight of stairs to door access from road.

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	The Old Mill, Kinbuck
PROJECT CODE:	KIN01
PARISH:	Dunblane and Lecropt
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Derek Hall
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Derek Hall, archaeologist, and ceramic specialist
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Standing Building Record
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Mill building
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NN 79029 05117
START DATE	9 th March 2021
END DATE	9 th March 2021
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) (May include information from other fields)	A photographic and written survey was carried out of the 19 th century mill building at Kinbuck prior to its total refurbishment. Limited documentary research recovered evidence for the buildings use through time including its final function as an electrical meter factory.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Not Known
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Lee Collins
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	N/A
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP

ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS
EMAIL ADDRESS:	Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk

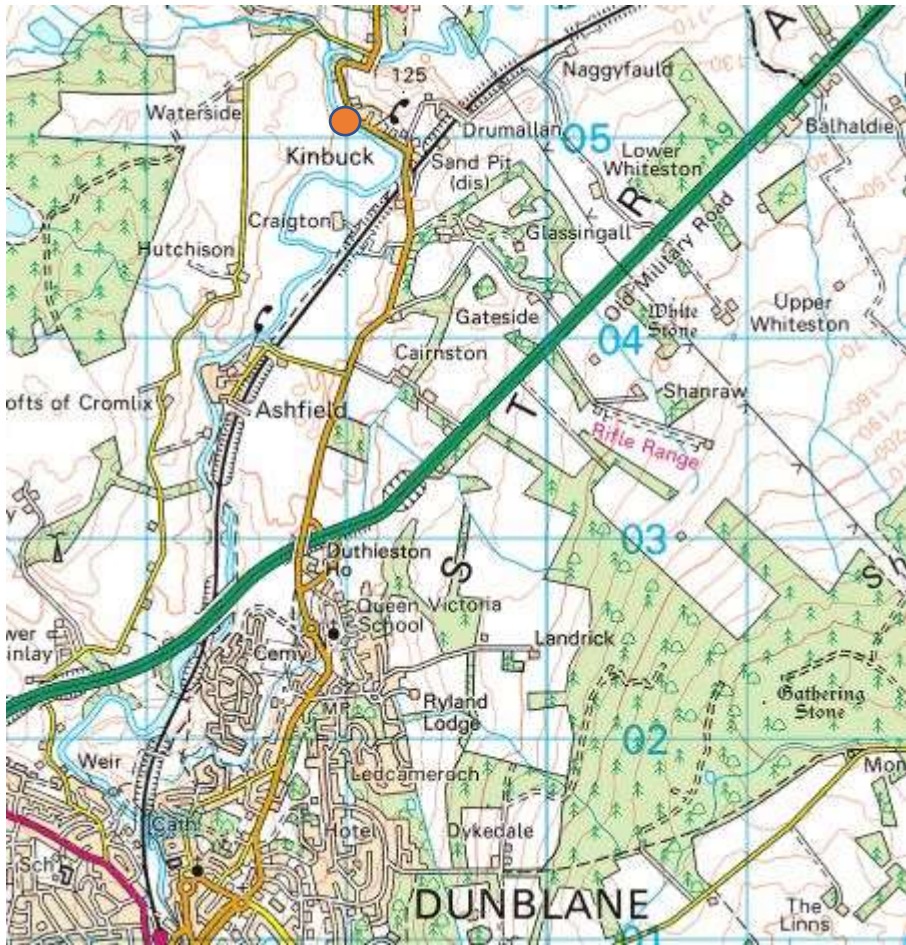


Illustration 1- Location of The Old Mill, Kinbuck (red dot) (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2020. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100060449)



Illustration 2- Mill at Kinbuck (red arrow) as shown on Thomson's map of 1827 (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)

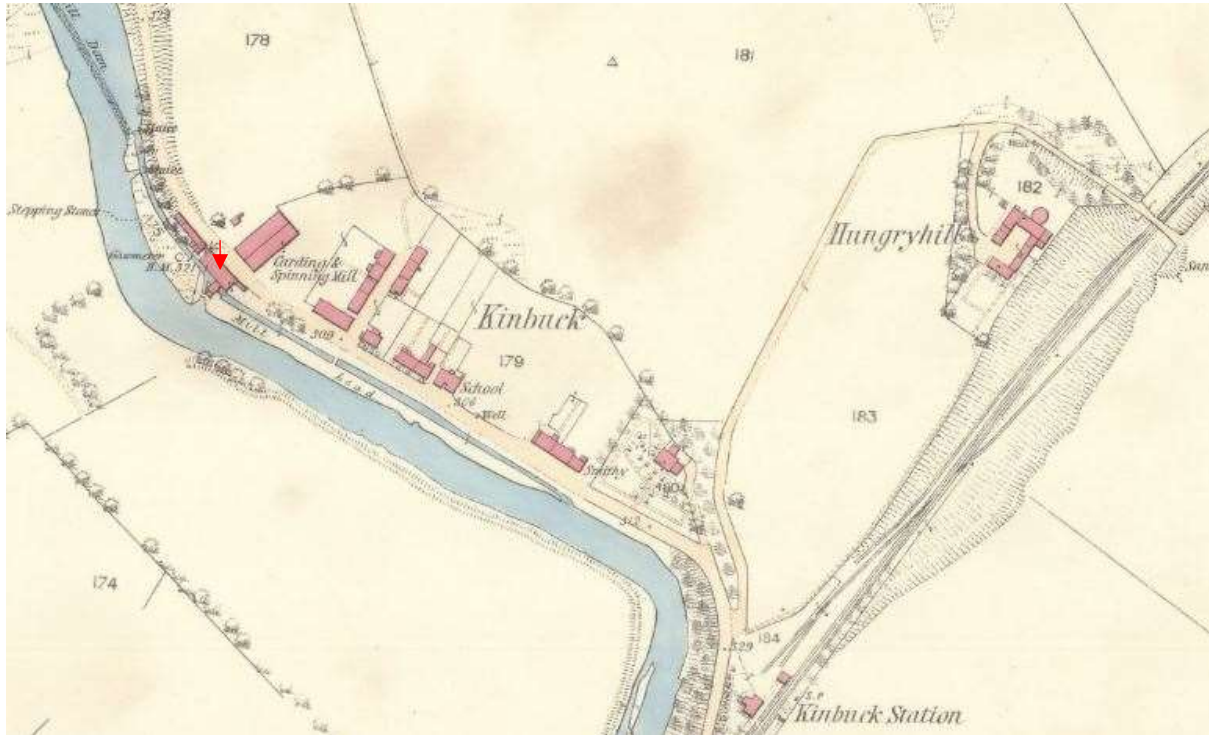


Illustration 3- The Old Mill at Kinbuck as shown on Ordnance Survey map of 1864 (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)



Illustration 4- Detail from Ordnance Survey Map of 1864 showing mill complex including mill lead, gasometer and associated building across the road (site now occupied by Robertson's auctioneers) (© Trustees of the National Library of Scotland)



Illustration 5- Undated photograph of mill building looking North showing chimney stack and associated building across road (still from a You Tube video)



Illustration 6- Undated post card of mill building (red arrow) from the other side of the River Allan looking East.

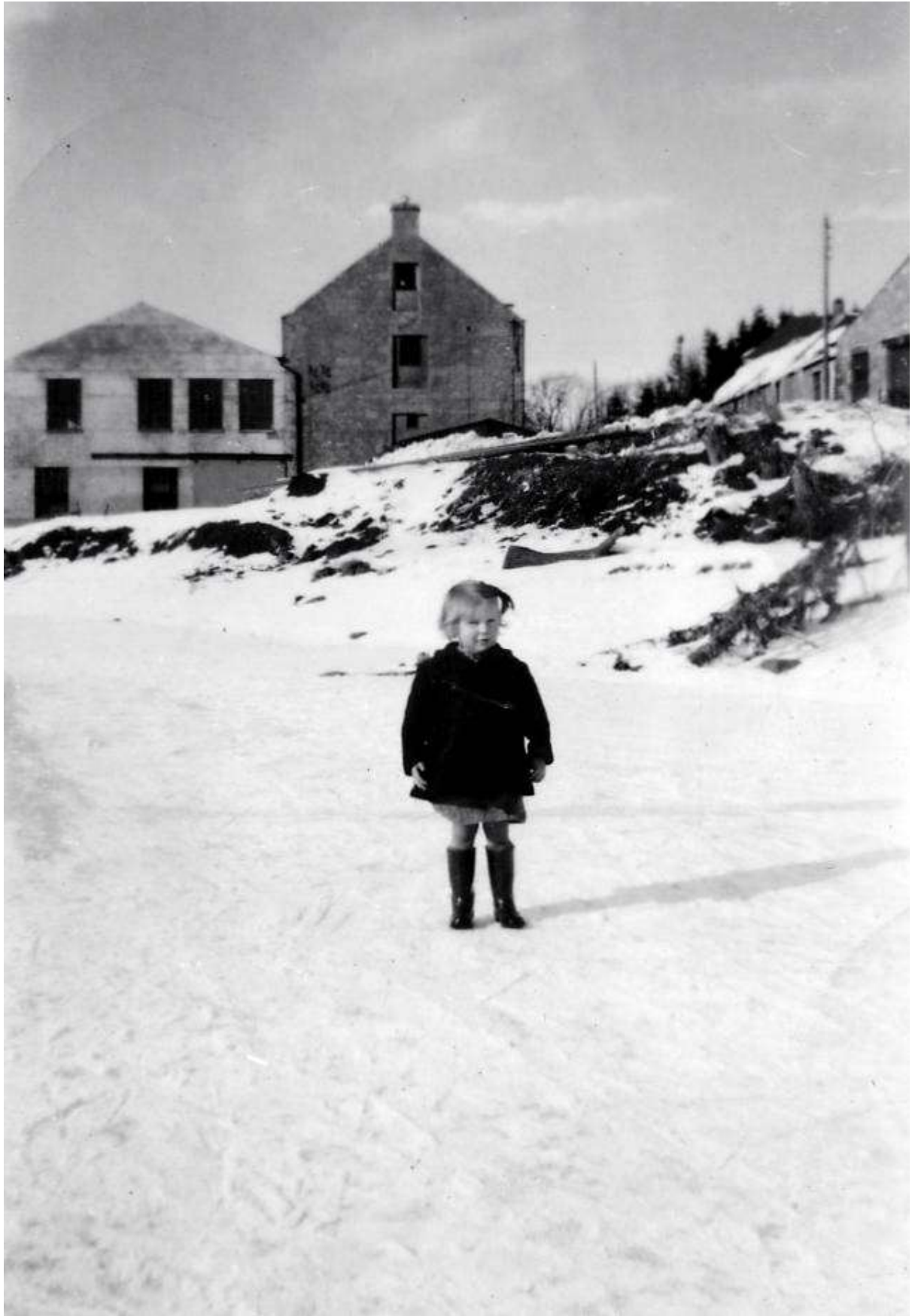


Illustration 7- Undated photograph of mill buildings looking North with building now added on the Western side (www.kinbucklife.com)



Illustration 8- Undated photograph of the Mill building complex painted white and marked 'Smith Meters Ltd' (from Kinbuck Facebook page October 3rd, 2020)



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Illustration 12- South Eastern external elevation of building (red arrows show dummy windows)



Illustration 13- South Western elevation of Mill building showing new roof and dormers.



Illustration 14- North Eastern elevation of mill building, red arrow shows position of blocked circular hole, green arrow shows former roof line of adjoining building.



Illustration 15- Detail view of blocked circular hole in North Eastern elevation (red arrow).



Illustration 16- General view of North Eastern elevation fronting onto road.



Illustration 17- Southern end of North Eastern elevation showing windows defined by sandstone blocks.



Illustration 18- Centre of North Eastern elevation.



Illustration 19- Northern end of North Eastern elevation



Illustration 20- Basement floor at Northern end of mill building looking East.



Illustration 21- Ground floor of mill building in process of refurbishment looking North West (2021)



Illustration 22- Small building on North West side of mill building (red arrow).



Illustration 23- Interior of small building showing cast iron tank and flight of stairs to door access from road.