

ROUNDAABOUT  
RINGWOOD & FORDINGBRIDGE

# NOW and THEN

## Town Mill, Ringwood



**T**here was a flour-mill on the River Avon at Ringwood for almost a thousand years. It stood very close to the Parish Church across the other side of the very narrow Mill Lane leading to Fordingbridge and Salisbury.

First mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, the mill was rebuilt several times. Much of it burnt down in a fire in 1814, which was thought to have been caused by friction in the works. The last mill was built around 1854. It is pictured in the old photograph of

about 1900 when it was equipped with new roller-mills and water turbine installed by J.J.Armfield Ltd. At that time the mill was run by Harry Atkins who employed four men, a carter and his helper and one boy. The roller-mills produced whiter flour than the old mill-stones which were retained to grind animal feed. However the old mill could not compete with the large firms importing American wheat in the 20th century. In the early 1930s the mill was pulled down to make way for the first bypass.

The exact location of the mill itself has now disappeared under the tarmac of the A31 but it stood roughly facing the north transept of the Parish Church. The traffic now thunders over its site unaware of the centuries of milling that once took place there while the river flows idly under the road where once it was put hard to work.

The miller's house, which lay immediately to the west, survived and became the Avon Hotel, but it too was demolished when the A31 was widened in the 1970s.



April 2010 - even on Google Earth the position of the mill is difficult to ascertain - this is from the same location today!