

throughout each tidal window could be found, it would reward expenditure, labour and capital.

It is clear that there was not a single solution to improving the mill's performance; a number of changes to the hydrology of the valley are evident and work probably spanned a number of years. *The Register of Butley Priory* records that in 1530 the monastery provided the capital to build the mill anew, '*de novo factum est*'. The building was erected some yards south of its predecessor on Butley soil and straddled the outfall of Butley's own stream. A major advantage of the move was the utilization of adjacent flooded peat diggings to form a large reservoir of water to turn the mill-stones efficiently.



Butley Mill and the miller's house is on the far side of the mill pond (left) with a post-mill on higher ground above a cottage (right).

Watercolour by Thomas Churchyard c. 1820 in private possession

The large mill pond still exists as does the complex series of small ditches by which the streams in the valley were diverted to feed it. In addition a leat was excavated along the south side of the valley, known in the later 16th century as the 'New River'. By the end of the century when the estate was in the hands of Robert Forthe, John Norden annotated Map XII of his survey of Michael Stanhope's estate, '*This is now very unprofitable Lande because it is altogether full of Reedes, Sedges and Boges by reason of the stopping of the water at the mill*', showing that water levels in the mill pond were not properly regulated⁸.

A delightful vignette of trouble caused by the relocation of the mill survives in a manorial court record of 1575⁹. The old mill and its mill-stream had formerly defined the boundary between Butley and Chillesford. Some time after the mill was moved, and the new outfall was created, Chillesford villagers concluded that the manorial bounds had also moved south. They seized an opportunity to take over the extra strip of land on their side of it, which happened to comprise the