



## SARRE MILL and GROVE FERRY

BILL BREEZE

**I**N SPITE OF the adverse weather forecast the enjoyment of our trip to Sarre Mill and Grove Ferry on Sunday, 18th July was not marred by inclement conditions. Our coach left Dover by Jubilee Way and, by way of Canterbury and Sturry, we reached Sarre Mill in a slight shower of rain, the only rain we experienced for the whole of the outing.

Sarre Mill is one of England's few remaining commercially worked windmills and produces high quality stone-ground flour in the traditional way. Built in 1820 it passed through many vicissitudes before it became derelict. It needed five years of careful restoration to bring it back to an operational condition and, on days when there is sufficient wind, the four sails are again turning, but were not, unfortunately, on the day of our visit.

Beside being sold in the Mill Shop and used in the adjacent bakery, flour from the Mill is supplied to bakers in the surrounding area.

An additional attraction at the Mill was a number of steam traction engines and other vehicles. The engines were under steam with the machinery turning.

Five minutes drive brought us to Grove Ferry where we embarked on a large launch aptly named "Grove Ferry" – a boat that has accommodation for seventy passengers with plenty of cover in case of rain. After settling on board we were immediately served with a cream tea while the boat began to move slowly downstream in the direction of Pluck's Gutter. We did not, however, travel as far as that place and after about an hour, at a point known as Cut End, we started to go in reverse, the river being too narrow for the boat to turn.

During our trip on the River Stour we were impressed by the large number of motor launches, and an occasional yacht, moored alongside the bank. This seemed to indicate that the boat owners were in the habit of making long trips, possible as far as Sandwich. The river follows a serpentine course and is only straight for a few yards at a time.

Apart from the boating facilities at Grove Ferry the only other feature is the Grove Ferry Inn, a hotel of substantial size, apparently modernised in recent years.

Our coach returned to Dover via Preston, Wingham, Adisham and the A2. It was clear that the members of the party found the trip enjoyable and we once again express our thanks to Joan Liggett for arranging everything so well.