



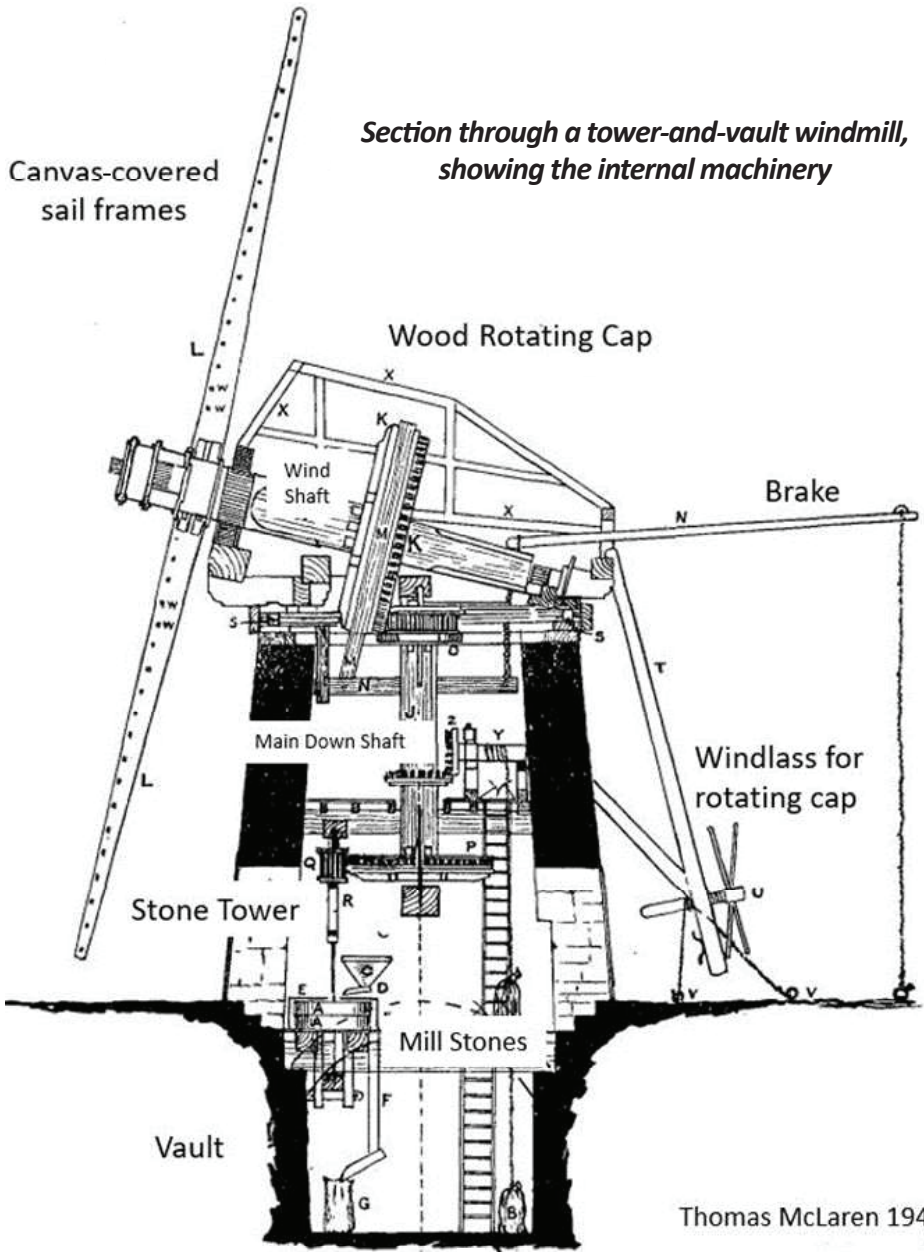
North Berwick

Balgone Windmill

**Seventeenth-century
Scottish tower-and-vault windmill**

North Berwick Environment and Heritage Trust
Heritage Guide

About 1½ miles outside North Berwick, on the Haddington road (B1347), in the middle of a field, there is the stump of the Balgone Windmill. The windmill is an early example of the Scottish tower-and-vault windmill.



The earliest reference to a windmill in Scotland is in the mid-15th century. Stone tower windmills with a rotating cap and sails were introduced from England in the early 17th century but the tower-and-vault version appears to be unique to Scotland.



The mill consisted of a fixed stone tower surmounted by a movable windcap which supported the sails. The windcap was turned into the wind by hand. The structure stood on an artificial mound built over a stone-built vaulted chamber. The latter often extended outwards from the base of the mill and provided a sheltered space to unload the grain and dispatch the milled flour.

The Balgone Windmill is built with rubble and roughly dressed stone. It stands about 35ft high and is 15ft in diameter. The vault is about 20ft long and 14ft wide. A band of dressed stone marks the original top of the windmill tower and the seat of the cap. The earth mound covering the vault has been lost. The mill fell into disuse in the 18th century and was heightened by 10ft. About a third of the extension has collapsed from the top on the south side. The tower is marked as a 'pidgeon cot' on Forrest's 1799 map. There are records of other disused windmills being used as dovecots.



Extended tower and stone course

