

5. PRETOLA TOWER AND MILL, 13th-14th CENTURIES.

Photo 1. Tower, mill, sluice. Pre-1900. The Mill at the Tower of Pretola is situated on the right-hand shore of the Tiber, beside the medieval tower. In 1926, the mill was equipped with three pairs of millstones operated by hydraulic power.

Photo 2. A map from 1686, from the archives of the Misericordia Hospital. Pretola's two grain mills can be seen, with their respective sluices.

Photo 3. Pretola - View over the Tiber. Photo from 1921 - In the area around Perugia, milling activities were widespread from the Late Middle Ages. In 1538, the S. Maria della Misericordia Hospital controlled most of the mills along the Tiber.

Diagram - A schematic diagram of the machinery used in a water-operated mill, with the individual components and their names (drawn by G. Cangini) - From the book "*L'Umbria dei mulini ad acqua*", by Alberto Melelli and Fabio Fatichenti.

PRETOLA TOWER MILL IN THE MIDDLE AGES

One of the most important factors to consider in positioning mills along the Tiber was, understandably, the distance from fords and bridges. Many documentary sources demonstrate that, from the Middle Ages, the mill buildings located in the stretch between Villa Pitignano to the north and Ponte San Giovanni to the south were, for the most part, controlled by city religious bodies and only occasionally by the Perugian middle classes. Between the Rio river and the inhabited area of Pretola to the right of the Tiber, the Chapter of the Cathedral of Perugia owned no fewer than four mills; in 1264, the monastery of Santa Giuliana owned a mill in Pretola, and as early as 1301 records also exist of multiple mills belonging to the monastery of Monteluca. In 1370, a fortified palace belonging to the Boccoli family was constructed in Pretola. From then on, grain mills located in the area where the medieval tower still soars today had to be associated with this palace. During the course of the 15th century, the dominance of the Santa Giuliana monastery seems to give way to the economic power of the hospital of Santa Maria della Misericordia, the most important welfare association in Perugia. The hospital would only assume control of the mechanisms of production along the Tiber in 1538, however, after having absorbed the lands previously owned by the Del Colle hospital. This meant that by 1589, the Misericordia hospital owned the Tower Mill — with its two grain mills — and the Abbate Mill in Pretola, while in Ponte San Giovanni it owned the Del Colle Mill and another mill in the area of Getola.

From the book "*L'Umbria dei mulini ad acqua*", by Alberto Melelli and Fabio Fatichenti. Published by Quattroemme, Perugia, 2013.

HOW WERE SLUICES CREATED ALONG THE TIBER?

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