

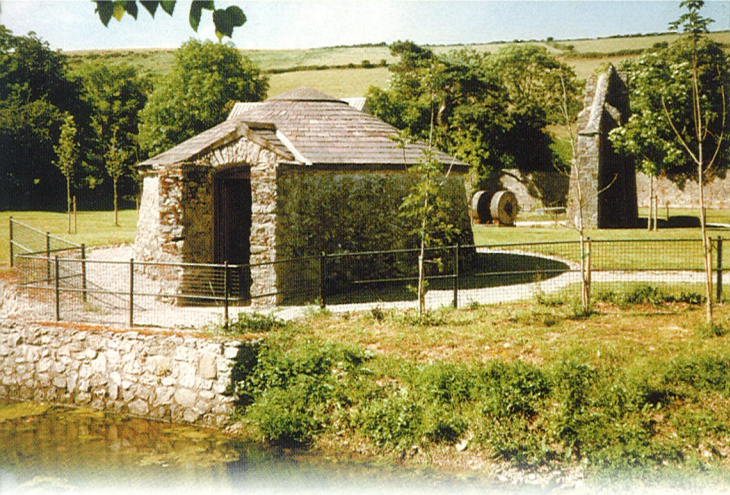
WASC 2033

WAI 515

Ballincollie

Royal Gunpowder

Mills leaflet



*Ballincollig Gunpowder Mills are 8 kms (5 miles) west of Cork City on the Killarney road (N22).*

**FACILITIES:**

- Tourist Information Point
- Disabled Access
- Craft Shop
- Powder Keg Coffee Dock
- Free Coach and Car Parking
- Toilets (including disabled)
- Guide Dogs only

**OPENING HOURS:**

April - September 10.00 - 18.00 daily  
 October - March Tours by arrangement

If you need further information, special reservations or details on tours, don't hesitate to contact us.

Ballincollig Gunpowder Mills Heritage Centre,  
 Ballincollig, Co. Cork, Ireland.

Telephone (353) 21 874430 Fax (353) 21 874836  
 email: ballinco@indigo.ie Website: <http://indigo.ie/~ballinco>



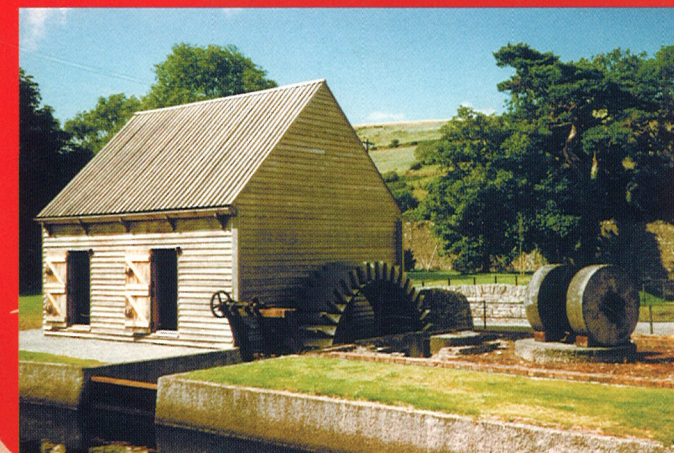
Supported by Cork County Council

Photography: T. Cadogan, C. Nídecker & K. Dwyer. Design: Dec O'Donovan. Print: City Print.

WDSC

**BALLINCOLLIG  
 GUNPOWDER  
 MILLS**

HERITAGE  
 CENTRE



Ce centre reconstruit l'histoire de la fabrication de la poudre qui se fabriquait de 1794 à 1903 dans cet unique complexe.

En este centro conocerá la historia de la fabricación de pólvora negra, de 1794 a 1903. Éste era el único lugar donde se fabricaba este tipo de pólvora.

Dieses Zentrum erzählt die Geschichte der Schießpulverherstellung von 1794 bis 1903 auf dem Gelände dieser einzigartigen Schießpulverfabrik.

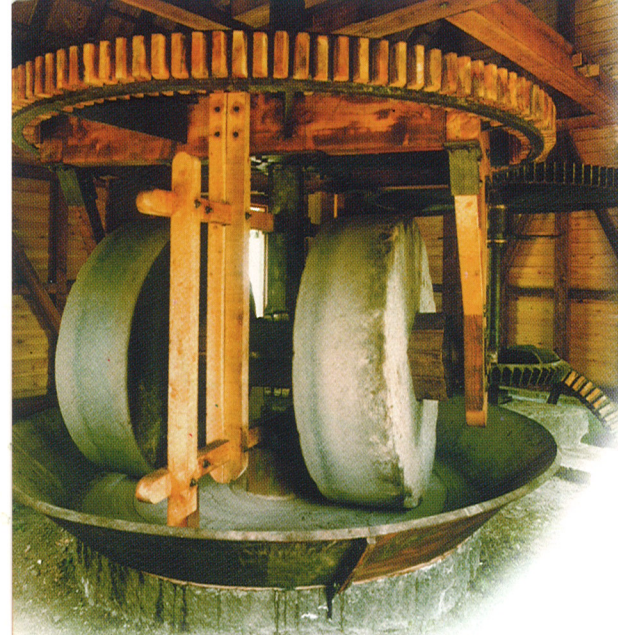
Questo centro racconta la storia della fabbricazione di polvere da sparo dal 1794 al 1903 in questo unico complesso per la produzione di polvere da sparo.

Dit centrum veront alles over de kruitfabricage van 1794 tot 1903 precis op de plek waar deze unieke kruitfabrick ooit werkzaam was.



**Ballincollig, Co. Cork, Ireland.**

Telephone: (353) 21 874430 Fax: (353) 21 874836  
 email: ballinco@indigo.ie Website: <http://indigo.ie/~ballinco>



**T**he Ballincollig Gunpowder Mills, Ballincollig, Co. Cork is a unique and exciting Heritage Centre.

The mills were established in 1794 by Charles Henry Leslie, a leading Cork bank family. Eleven years later, when Napoleon's control of France posed a grave threat to Britain, the British Board of Ordnance bought the mills from Leslie. As well as this, the Army Barracks was built in town to protect the supply of gunpowder.

In 1837 the mills employed about 200 workers and produced about 16,000 barrels of gunpowder. By the mid 1880's the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Ballincollig was one of the largest industrial establishments in the Cork area. About 500 men and boys were employed and a wide range of skills were in use in the mills - coopering, millwrighting, carpentry as well as other skills associated with gunpowder production.

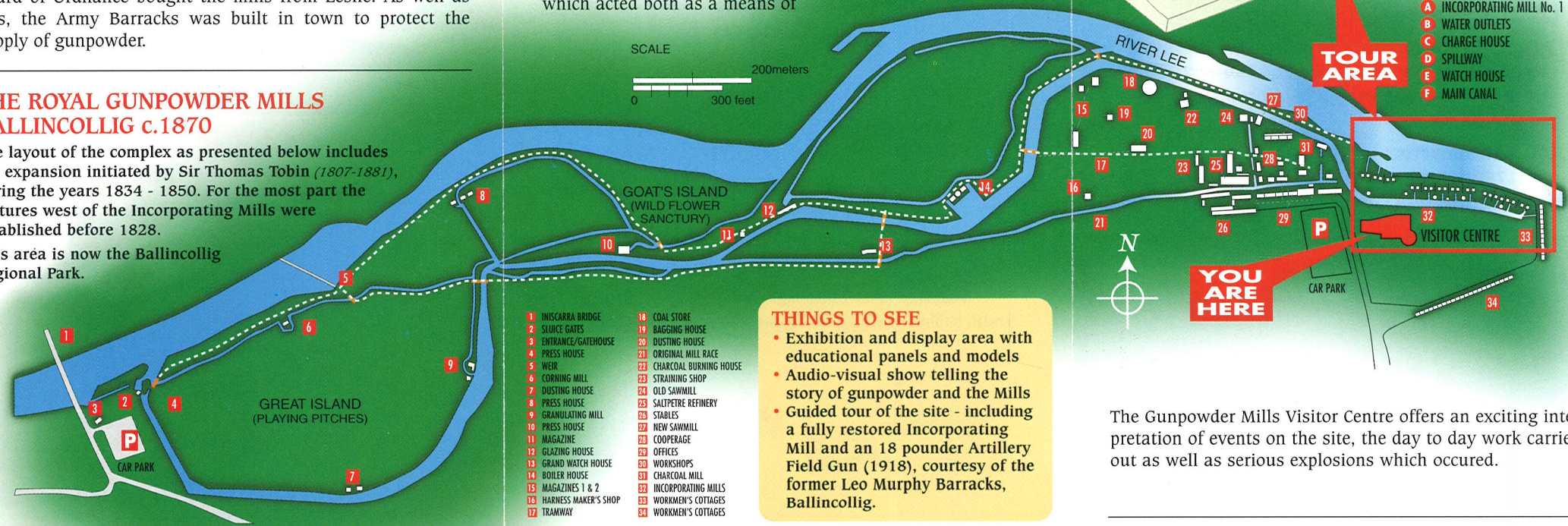
The many buildings used in the manufacture of gunpowder are still scattered along the main canal and millraces which stretched for about a mile and a half along the Southern bank of the River Lee. The mills complex covers over 130 acres. One of the most important features of the mills was the main canal which acted both as a means of

transport and also provided power to drive the waterwheels and a water turbine which worked the sawmills. The canal was fed from a weir on the River Lee. The entrance was controlled by sluice gates which have recently been restored.

### THE ROYAL GUNPOWDER MILLS BALLINCOLLIG c.1870

The layout of the complex as presented below includes the expansion initiated by Sir Thomas Tobin (1807-1881), during the years 1834 - 1850. For the most part the features west of the Incorporating Mills were established before 1828.

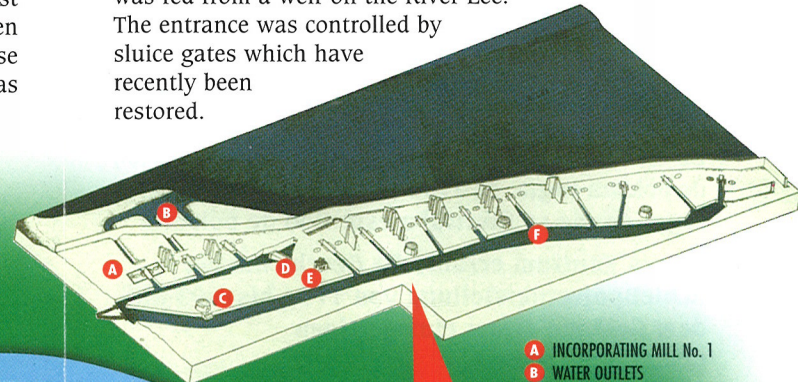
This area is now the Ballincollig Regional Park.



- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 INISCARRA BRIDGE       | 18 COAL STORE             |
| 2 SLUICE GATES           | 19 BAGGING HOUSE          |
| 3 ENTRANCE/GATEHOUSE     | 20 DUSTING HOUSE          |
| 4 PRESS HOUSE            | 21 ORIGINAL MILL RACE     |
| 5 WEIR                   | 22 CHARCOAL BURNING HOUSE |
| 6 CORNING MILL           | 23 STRAINING SHOP         |
| 7 DUSTING HOUSE          | 24 OLD SAWMILL            |
| 8 PRESS HOUSE            | 25 SALTRETE REFINERY      |
| 9 GRANULATING MILL       | 26 STABLES                |
| 10 PRESS HOUSE           | 27 NEW SAWMILL            |
| 11 MAGAZINE              | 28 COOPERAGE              |
| 12 GLAZING HOUSE         | 29 OFFICES                |
| 13 GRAND WATCH HOUSE     | 30 WORKSHOPS              |
| 14 BOILER HOUSE          | 31 CHARCOAL MILL          |
| 15 MAGAZINES 1 & 2       | 32 INCORPORATING MILLS    |
| 16 HARNESSE MAKER'S SHOP | 33 WORKMEN'S COTTAGES     |
| 17 TRAMWAY               | 34 WORKMEN'S COTTAGES     |

**THINGS TO SEE**

- Exhibition and display area with educational panels and models
- Audio-visual show telling the story of gunpowder and the Mills
- Guided tour of the site - including a fully restored Incorporating Mill and an 18 pounder Artillery Field Gun (1918), courtesy of the former Leo Murphy Barracks, Ballincollig.



- A INCORPORATING MILL No. 1
- B WATER OUTLETS
- C CHARGE HOUSE
- D SPILLWAY
- E WATCH HOUSE
- F MAIN CANAL

The Gunpowder Mills Visitor Centre offers an exciting interpretation of events on the site, the day to day work carried out as well as serious explosions which occurred.

# HISTORY OF THE MILLS

The Ballincollig Gunpowder Mills date from the wars between Britain and France at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794 a member of a well-known Cork bank family, Charles Henry Leslie, established the mills along the southern bank of the River Lee.

Eleven years later, when Napoleon's control of France posed a grave threat to Britain, the British Board of Ordnance bought the mills from Leslie. The board laid out the main canal and increased the productive capacity of the mills. As well as this, the Army Barracks was built in the town to protect the supply of gunpowder.

In 1815, however, Napoleon was beaten and sent into exile in St. Helena, so the demand for gunpowder produced in Ballincollig dropped considerably and Ballincollig was closed down. Over the next twenty years the canals and millraces became overgrown and many of the buildings decayed.

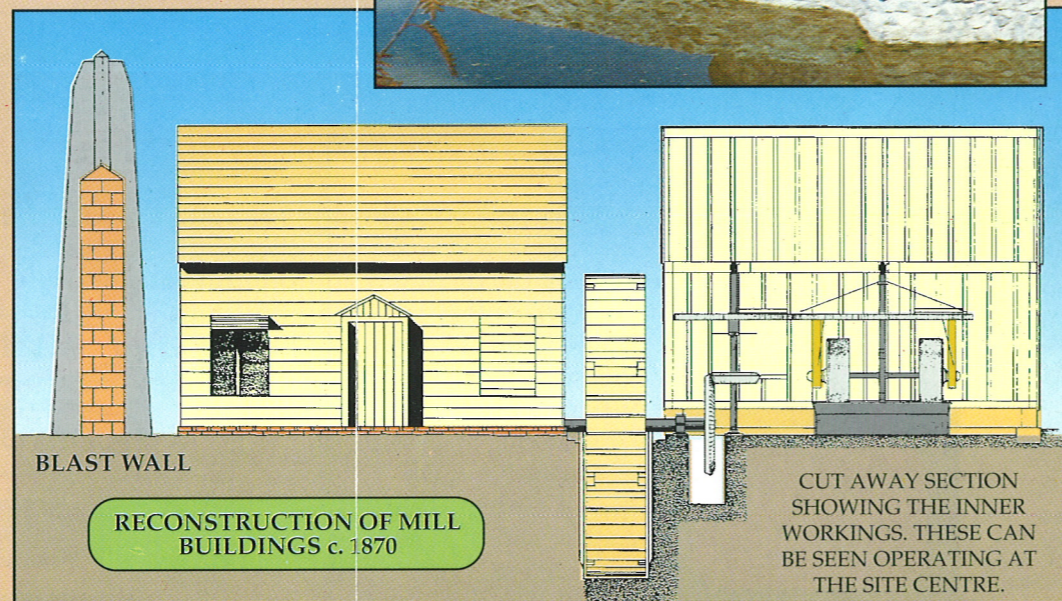
Life returned to the mills in the 1830's when a Liverpool merchant company, Tobin and Horsfall, acquired the mills.

Over the next twenty years the mills expanded rapidly. In 1837 the mills employed about 200 workers and produced about 16,000 barrels of gunpowder. By the mid 1850's the Ballincollig Royal Gunpowder Mills, as it was then known, was one of the largest industrial establishments in the Cork area. About 500 men and boys were employed and a wide range of skills were in use in the mills: coopering, millwrighting, carpentry, as well as the many skills associated with gunpowder production.

However, the years of decline were fast approaching.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century the demand for black gunpowder declined as other explosives were invented.

Curtis & Harvey, the then owners, succeeded in keeping the mills in operation as black gunpowder was again in much demand during the Boer War 1899-1902. However, the mills were forced to close in 1903, with devastating effects on the local community.



# LOCATION

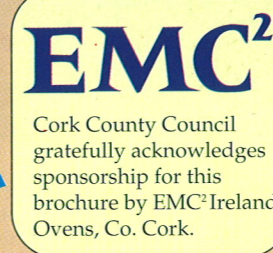
The Royal Gunpowder Mills are eight kilometres from Cork City on the main Killarney road. Visitors will experience a taste of what life was like working in a gunpowder factory during the nineteenth century.

The Royal Gunpowder Mills are open from 1st April to 30th September each year.

OPENING HOURS: 10.00 -18.00 DAILY.

Please contact us directly for further information and special reservations for educational and private tour groups.

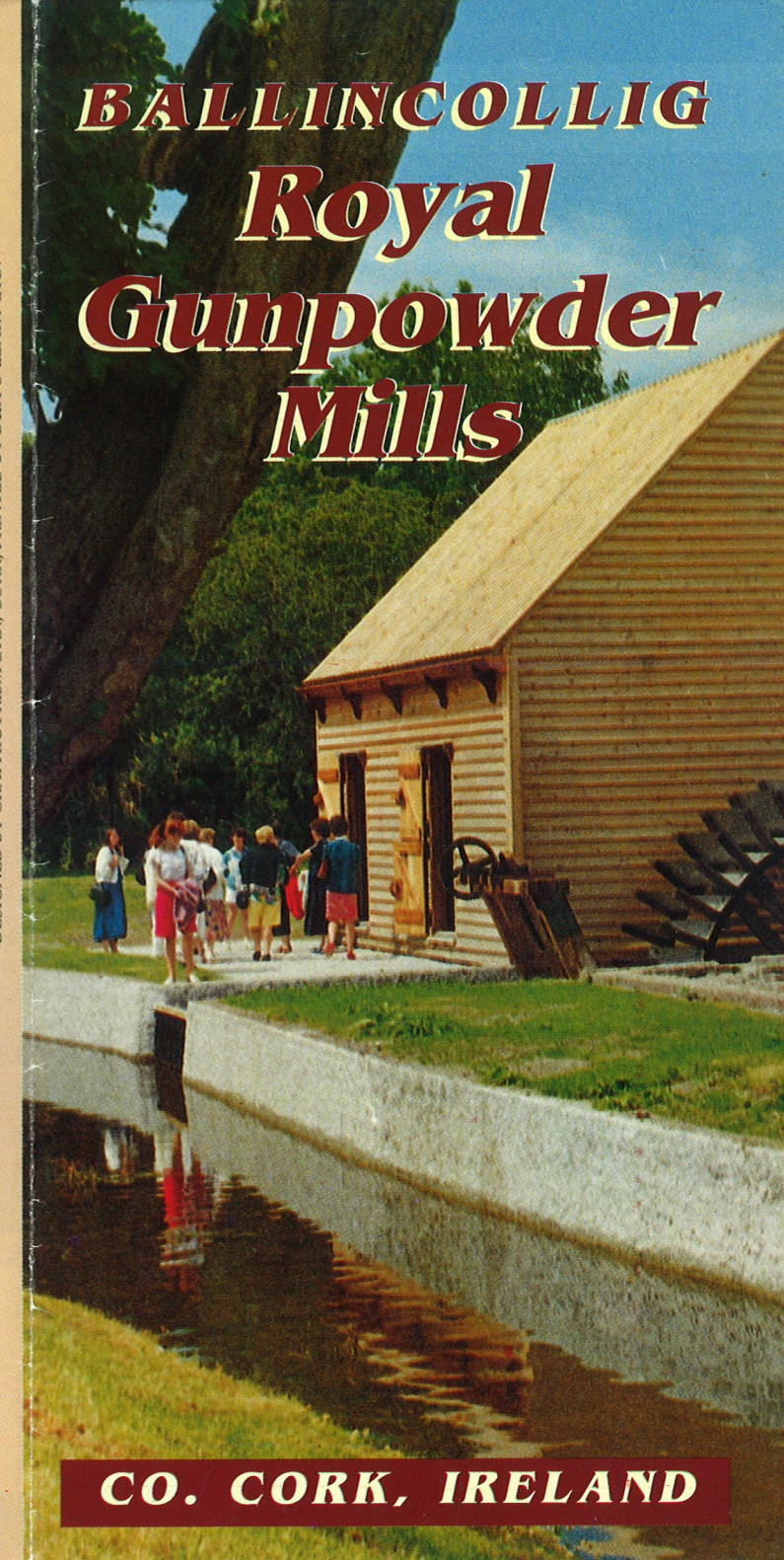
Telephone: 021-874430  
Fax: 021-874836



Ballincollig, Co. Cork, Ireland.  
Telephone: 021-874430 Fax: 021-874836

# BALLINCOLLIG Royal Gunpowder Mills

DESIGNED BY GRAPHIC PRISM LTD., CORK, PRINTED BY D&A O'LEARY LTD.



**CO. CORK, IRELAND**

# RELIVE CORK'S PAST BY EXPLORING THE ROYAL GUNPOWDER MILLS

## THE VISITOR CENTRE

The centre houses an exciting exhibition, of photographs, models and graphics telling the story of the production of gunpowder and working conditions of the employees.

A spectacular audio visual introduces the visitor to the invention and development of gunpowder and the story of the mills at Ballincollig.

## GUIDED TOUR

A personalised tour of the site includes a visit to a reconstructed incorporating mill. One of the most important features of the mills was the main canal which acted both as a means of transport and also provided power to drive the waterwheels. The dangers associated with gunpowder manufacture called for many precautions. Massive masonry blast walls separated each pair of incorporating mills. The incorporating mill, is the only one of its type in full

operation, anywhere in the world. You can experience the sights and sounds, which would have been characteristic of the mills one hundred and fifty years ago.

*This tour is also given in five foreign languages if requested.*

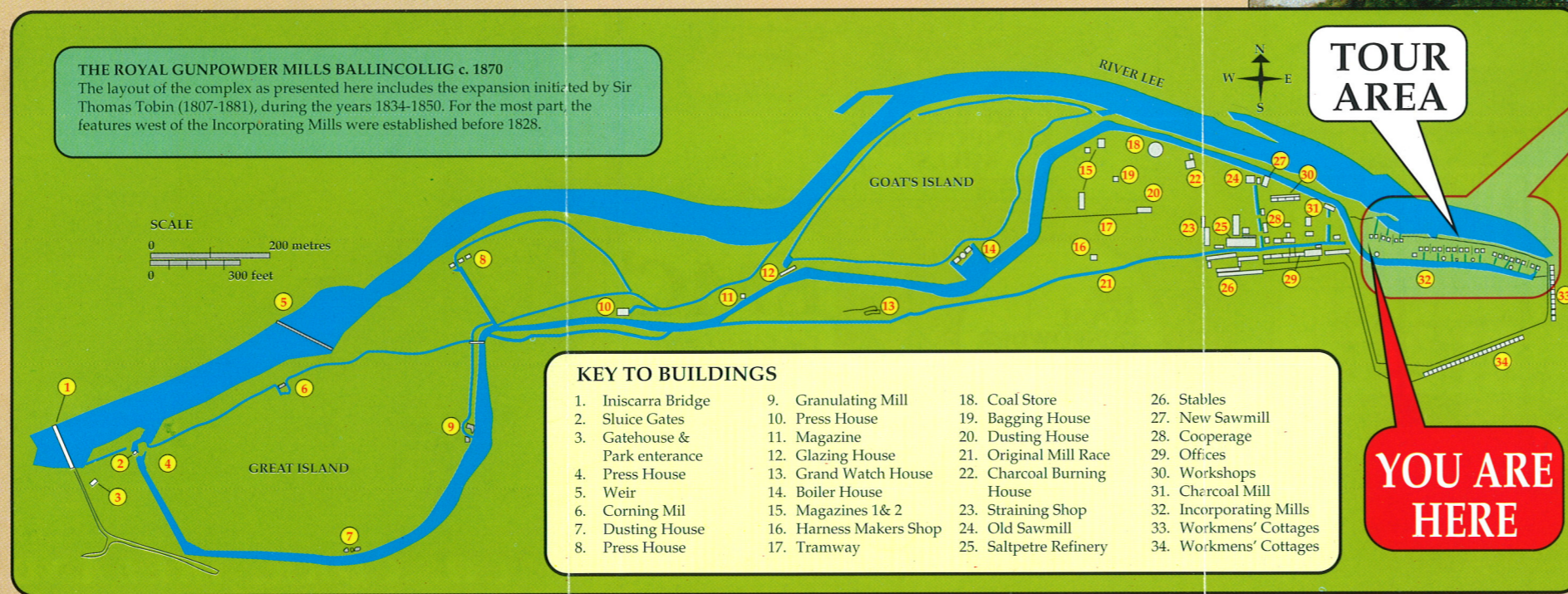
## A TRANQUIL SETTING

The restaurant and craft shop have been designed to give the most impressive view of the canals and mills, as well as the beginning of the Lee Valley. You can enjoy a cup of coffee or lunch, at any time, without taking part in the tour.

## SCHOOL GROUPS

Further facilities include a specially designed package for school groups who wish to visit, and we also welcome visitors with disabilities.

*Any group wishing to visit can also avail of our special group prices.*



A public park occupies the balance of this site and you can continue your tour of the Gunpowder Mills by following the numbers indicated on the map. Orienteering maps are also available at the Visitor Centre. Please enquire at reception for more details.

## THE STAGES OF MAKING GUNPOWDER

