

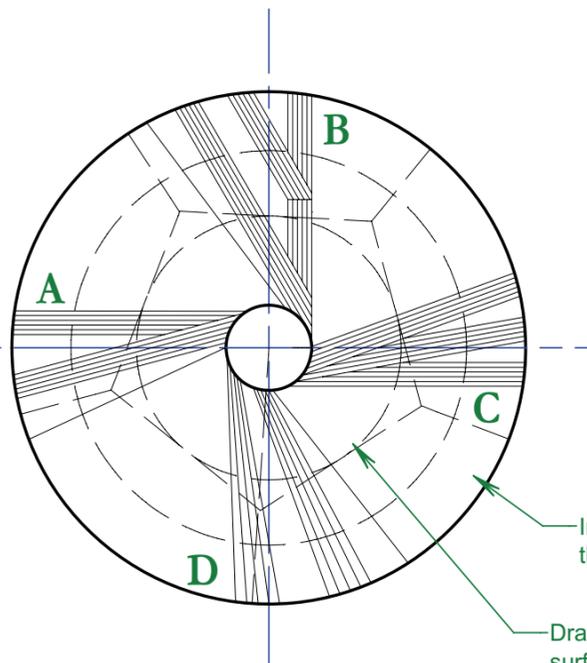
HOW MILLSTONES WORK

The “dress” of a millstone, that is the system of grooves and furrows cut into its surface is critical to its ability to make good flour. Millers used several different systems of dress according to the grain they were grinding and their own preferences. The millstones did wear as they ground and thus the stones had to be redressed or sharpened on a regular basis. Pine Mill’s were dressed every Saturday morning. To dress the stones, the top “runner” stone had to be lifted off and turned upside down. The miller used a hammer like tool called a millpick to dress the stones.

Millstone Dress

Millstone dress is the term for the system of cutting the furrows and crackling lines into the surface of the stone. Millers used many different dresses depending on the grain they ground and their on preferences.

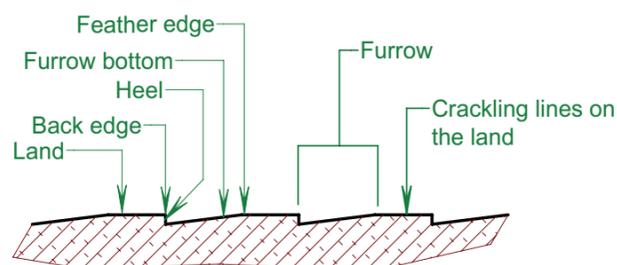
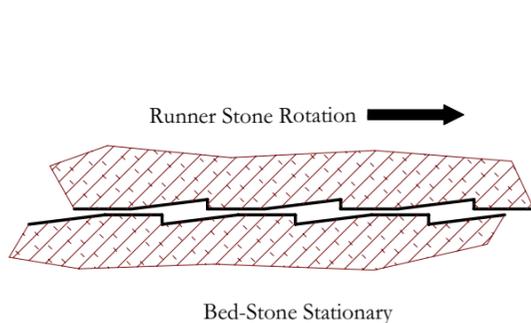
- A: The Two-Furrow or Two-Quarter system.
- B: The three-quarter
- C: Straight or Union
- D: Dress where the Furrow and Lands are equal.



This drawing shows four systems of dress for illustration only. An actual stone would have only one system of dress. The furrows would cover the entire face of the stone.

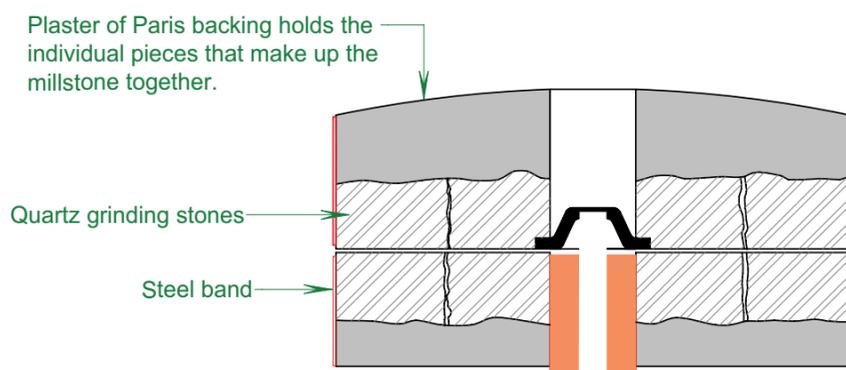
Individual blocks of stone that make up the body of the millstone.

Draft circle, a slight depression in the stone's surface to allow the grain to work out into the furrows.



The Furrows moved the grain out form the eye of the millstone and cut the grain into small pieces. The Crackling lines are fine grooves cut in the surface of the lands. They continued the cutting action reducing the pieces into fine flour.

Millstone Construction



Pine Creek Grist Mill has French burr stones. The stone is a very hard type of gray colored quartz mined at just one quarry outside of Paris France. Since there are no stones large enough to make an entire mill stone, a complete millstone is made from several small segments. The segments are held together by a plaster of Paris matrix. Steel bands around the outside of the stones then further reinforce them. The runner stone may have pockets cast in it for lead weights used to balance it.