

# STUKELEY REVISITED

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The eighteenth century antiquarian, William Stukeley is perhaps best known in Wiltshire for the record he created of Stonehenge and Avebury. This drawing was published in *Itenerarium Curiosum* published in 1724. It is well known locally, included in at least two recent publications. A readily accessible source is *Salisbury Past* (Newman and Howells 2001). They caption it as a 1723 view from Harnham Hill showing Old Sarum and the city of Salisbury. That is, of course, quite right and appropriate to a study of the city.

However to the best of my knowledge it has not previously been assessed as a valuable source of information for the wider landscape and land use. What it shows very clearly, just below the Cathedral Close, is the junction of the Rivers Avon and Nadder enclosing Harnham's extreme eastern meadows. The Avon, north of the city, curves round the base of Old Sarum and in the distance to the east is the River Bourne in its valley. The viewpoint, commonly selected by artists, is close to the present Old Blandford Road, showing a coach heading down towards East Harnham

Perspective from this viewpoint seems to distort the willow pollard boundaries to the west. However given the clear line of Fisherton Street, exactly reflecting Naish's near contemporary map of 1715, the church, arrowed A,

seems to be St Clement's (demolished in 1852, the graveyard still there in Mill Road). This locates the tall building of Fisherton Mill, newly built in the 'early eighteenth century', arrowed B. Naish's 1715 map shows the path 'To West Harnham' so our present Town Path was in existence. Where does Stukeley put it?

The small building, arrowed C, may be Harnham Mill, the low sixteenth century building that still survives, with Longbridge Lane (nowadays Town Path) connecting the two mills across the valley and along the line of a pollarded boundary. The course of the southern arm of the Nadder seems to be about in the right place

I think this is an uncertain interpretation and others may see things differently. What does seem incontrovertible is that the pattern of meads that are accurately delineated in the 1787 Inclosure Map were broadly in existence in 1723 and this picture takes our documented knowledge back another 56 years; and that much nearer to their creation for the Earl of Pembroke in the mid seventeenth century.

