

# **HISTORIC WATERCOURSES**

## **Using Imagery to Support Identification of the Historic Character of Watercourses**

*A Case Study on the Dorset Stour Catchment*

**FINAL REPORT FOR HISTORIC ENGLAND**



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**Figure 2:** Arthur H. Davis *'Rear View of Walford Mill, Wimborne'* 1881  
Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery, Bournemouth

**Front Cover Image (Figure 1):** *'The Mill at Sturminster Newton'* by Henry J. Moule. Late nineteenth century. Watercolour. Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum



**Figure 3:** John Constable RA (1776-1837) visited Gillingham in 1820 and 1823 and produced several views of 'Purn's Mill' or 'Parham's Mill' as well as one of the bridge. Constable had an eye for detail and his depictions in the Dorset Stour Valley can be considered to provide an accurate record of the locality in the early nineteenth century. This view of the Mill represents one of only two depictions of the building in full colour as it burnt down in September 1825.

Image courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

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## List of Abbreviations

AG	Agnew's
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AOWS	Associate of the Old Watercolour Society
BGS	British Geological Survey
BI	British Institute
Defra	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EH	English Heritage
FAS	The Fine Art Society, London
Fl.	Flourished (The period during which the artist was active)
HE	Historic England
HER	Historic Environment Record
LIDAR	Light Detection And Radar
NE	Natural England
NEAC	New English Art Club
NT	The National Trust
NMR	National Monument Record (now English Heritage Archive)
NSA	New Society of Artists
NWS	The New Watercolour Society (founded in 1832)
OWS	The Old Watercolour Society (founded in 1804, became RWS in 1881)
PC	Private Collection
POWS	President of the Old Watercolour Society
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England
RA	The Royal Academy
RBA	The Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street
RBC	Royal British Colonial School of Artists
RCZA	Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey
RE	Royal Society of Etchers and Engravers
RI	The Royal Institution of Painters in Watercolours
ROI	Royal Institute of Oil Painters
RP	Royal Society of Portrait Painters
RPE	Royal Society of Painters and Etchers (later becoming RE)
RWS	The Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SS	Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street (founded in 1824)
V&A	The Victoria and Albert Museum, London

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Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 5:** *'By the River'* by Peter Monstead. 1908. Oil on Canvas.  
Image courtesy of Bonham's.



**Figure 6:** *'On the Stour'* by Walter Frederick Tyndale. 1906. Watercolour.  
Private Collection.

## 1. Executive Summary

Rivers are a key component of the English landscape and they have fulfilled a vital role in its culture, development and history over the centuries. Many of the earliest settlements developed where fords allowed the possibility of crossing rivers, and particularly since Roman times towns and cities developed along their banks, often at bridging points such as at Chester, York and London. Elsewhere, bends in rivers provided defensive locations for Medieval castles such as those at Ludlow and Durham.

Many of England's sixty-three major rivers have been developed progressively in recent centuries. They have been widened, obstructed or re-routed, and their waters dammed or diverted to suit changing agricultural, industrial, trade and commercial requirements over time. Rivers not only make a very significant contribution to the economic wellbeing of the nation, but they also provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation and enjoyment within a diverse range of outstanding natural and heritage-rich environments.

Over the centuries, buildings and other structures of heritage interest, including mills, weirs, leats, water wheels, water supply infrastructure, monasteries, castles, churches, locks, bridges, fish ponds and water meadows, have been constructed or cultivated in what have often become vulnerable locations, which are now increasingly affected by inundation, undermining or, in some cases, total loss. Climate change impacts, including more extreme weather events, are exerting an increasing influence on the heritage assets within or adjacent to river systems; these events are likely to be more severe with increasing flooding and erosion damage in future decades. The last two decades provide numerous examples of devastating consequences for heritage from rural flooding.

Around the coastline of south-west England, the CHERISH project – *'Coastal Heritage Risk – Imagery in Support of Heritage Management'*, commissioned by Historic England and completed in 2016 (McInnes, 2016<sup>1</sup>), examined how historical imagery dating back to the late eighteenth century could inform heritage management in coastal zones. The study concluded that a similar approach could be very valuable with regard to other heritage-rich environments within the interior of the country, such as river systems. Such a study could use imagery to provide additional data and information in support of our understanding of the *'historical character'* of river catchments. In terms of historic character this is not just confined to specific 'heritage sites' such as bridges, mills or manor houses but through historic categorisation taking a wider view of the landscape itself as heritage (Clark *et al.*, 2004<sup>2</sup>; Historic England, 2018<sup>3</sup>). Landscape paintings, prints, old photographs and postcards can be used as evidential proof of the historical character of river landscapes and features. The use of imagery represents a novel way of illustrating river character change through time, which also allows the evaluation of heritage benefits in an immediately accessible format. An intended output from this study, alongside improving our understanding of heritage, is to highlight the value that artworks and other historical imagery can fulfil as competent and supportive tools for heritage evaluation and management across all of England's river environments.

Rivers and their catchments extending from source to sea cover most of the interior of England. However, it has been observed that *"the archaeology of watercourses in England has been seriously under-developed in terms of baseline knowledge"* (Firth, 2014<sup>4</sup>) and that *"a formal categorisation of watercourses in terms of their historic character would be very helpful... focussing on the identification of different 'types' of watercourse based on the historical development"* (Firth, 2017<sup>5</sup>). This approach has been supported by Historic England through the commissioning of the *'Historic Watercourses'* project (Fjodr 16390/HE7244). This study, which focuses on the use of imagery, will support the wider study of historic watercourses being undertaken by Fjodr.

These studies for Historic England are both being undertaken within the catchment of the River Stour, a 98km long river, which flows through Wiltshire and Dorset in southern England and drains into the English Channel. The catchment for this river and its tributaries extends to a total length of 1,240km. Running southwards from its source at Stourhead in Wiltshire, the river flows through the Blackmore Vale, before breaking through the chalk ridge of the Dorset downs and flowing across the heathlands of south-east Dorset. Increasing in size as it is joined by its tributaries, the Stour at Christchurch is joined also by the River Avon before flowing out through the harbour into the English Channel. The varied topography, natural environments and heritage encompassed within the Stour catchment makes the river an ideal case study for the evaluation of historic character and its portrayal through imagery.

## 2. Project Background and Aims and Objectives

One of the primary aims of the Historic England's *'Three Year Corporate Plan 2016-2019'* (Historic England, 2016<sup>6</sup>) is to reduce the risks to heritage assets. The Plan recommends that this can be achieved most effectively *'by gaining a better understanding of the nature and the extent of risk, and by building capacity to deliver solutions to support improved heritage management'*. Improving our understanding of risks to heritage is just one component of a wider need to achieve an improved understanding of the nature and historic character of England's varied historical environment such as rivers, and this is recognised in the *'Heritage 2020'* Strategy (Historic Environment Forum, 2015<sup>7</sup>), which identified *'discovery, identification and understanding'* as one of its five Strategic Areas for Action.

This study was developed following a recommendation contained in the previously completed CHERISH project (McInnes, 2016<sup>1</sup>) that highlighted the potential value of using large numbers of historical images of rivers, alongside coastal views, to support understanding of the full range of England's historic landscapes and environments. This study examines what historical imagery can tell us about physical and environmental change and risks to heritage assets but importantly also it illustrates the *historical character* of river landscapes through a diverse range of images, often in full colour, and extending back long before the introduction of photography. In view of the approved *'Historic Watercourses'* study on the Dorset Stour (Firth, 2017<sup>5</sup>) Historic England recommended that this project should be taken forward and could make a valuable contribution to the wider Dorset Stour *'Historic Watercourses'* project.

The commissioning of an *'Imagery to identify the historical character of watercourses'* study alongside *'Historic Watercourses'* has allowed the testing and evaluation of heritage benefits arising from the use of imagery (landscape art, old photographs and postcards 1770-1960) to be investigated and to support *'Historic Watercourses'*. More widely the study will support an improved understanding of more sustainable management of heritage sites and landscapes adjacent to, across and within river systems across England. The results of this study, together with the CHERISH findings, illustrate the value of artworks and other historical imagery as tools to support heritage management in an effective and comprehensive way across all of England's environments.

Alongside the Historic Environment Records (HERS) artworks, old photographs and postcards illustrate river landscapes, recording their earlier forms, and later, often more extensive river bank and in-channel developments, encroachments and modifications. Such images can provide a chronology of the physical and social changes that have affected river banks, rivers and floodplains, and the changing heritage they contain, over time. These additional and often currently under-used artistic and photographic resources provide an improved understanding of changes affecting river heritage sites over the last 250 years, thereby allowing us to take advantage of the *wisdom of hindsight* when

planning, for example, for risk reduction for the future, in line with the objectives of Historic England's 'Corporate Plan' (Historic England, 2016<sup>6</sup>).

Despite the importance of rivers to the English landscape, the subject itself has received relatively little attention in recent years, with a lack of river books being published since the nineteenth century. Both the portrayal and description of our great rivers by some of our leading artists, including Turner, Girtin, Sandby, De Wint and others, have provided a wealth of illustrations, and this rich art heritage, often with accompanying letterpress, continued through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Stark & Robberds, 1834<sup>8</sup>; Tombleson, 1834<sup>9</sup>; Wyllie, 1905<sup>10</sup>; Bradley & Sutton Palmer, 1909<sup>11</sup>); more recent publications include 'Along the River Bank' (Reader's Digest, 1983<sup>12</sup>), 'Rivers of Britain' (Muir & Muir, 1986<sup>13</sup>), 'Rivers in the British Landscape' (Pooley, 2005<sup>14</sup>) and 'Rivers' (Holmes & Raven, 2014<sup>15</sup>). These books describe river scenery in general and river environments, but they make little or no mention of the wealth of artistic imagery of rivers and their heritage, which has often been depicted so clearly.

In terms of research, a report on 'Heritage Assets in Inland Waterways' (Firth, 2014<sup>4</sup>) focussed on heritage assets that lie partly or wholly beneath England's inland rivers. A further study commissioned by Historic England examined 'South Yorkshire's Historic Water Management Assets in relation to Water Framework Directive Requirements' (Thomson, 2016<sup>16</sup>) and usefully described the range of heritage assets to be found along rivers and other water bodies. The study of 'Historic Watercourses' (Firth, 2017<sup>5</sup>), which is now progressing, will address the gaps in our current knowledge.

Landscape painters generally create images that we can understand and appreciate. River landscapes have proved to be a significant source of inspiration for artists, particularly since the late eighteenth century. There are a wealth of artworks that can be examined and appraised in terms of the evidence they may contribute to our understanding of riverside development patterns, river uses and activities and approaches to river heritage risk management. Some specific information can be gained from historic imagery, for example relating to disused structures along rivers, in-river human activities, past industry, channel form changes over time and vegetation changes and uses. Artworks and other depictions can often provide detail that is not known, for example, on maps, which are a commonly used resource for such studies.



**Figure 7:** 'Christchurch Priory' by Alfred Robert Quinton. c.1925. Watercolour. Image courtesy of J. & F. Salmon Limited of Sevenoaks.

Works of art and old photographs also represent media that are familiar to a wide range of riverside stakeholders, and which they can immediately relate to. Rivers have an historical fascination and attachment for many of their residents as well as visitors. Therefore, works of art and other historical images are of immediate interest by offering a comparison to the present day situations that are so well known to many riverside residents. Initial research by the author suggests that a substantial, currently under-used archive of such historical images exists for river systems. The study can assist by diagnosing the effects of historical river management over time, assessing the nature, scale and rate of change and the impacts on heritage through a series of well-illustrated case studies based on the Dorset Stour catchment.

The overall purpose of this study is to provide a range of useful imagery that will support the understanding of the historic character of watercourses, and encourage the improved protection and management of heritage landscapes, sites and assets on, within, crossing and adjacent to rivers from source to sea. The artistic record will allow us to record how such culturally-important sites have been artistically and visually represented in the past, and to illustrate the various approaches that have been taken to try and manage river catchments over the last two centuries, based on the Dorset Stour case study. The study will provide a list of those artists and their works that have been ranked in terms of the value of contribution they make to improving our understanding of the historical character of catchments and in terms of supporting river protection and management. The findings of this study will inform and support the wider '*Historic Watercourses*' study both in terms of the research, and, importantly, engagement with Stour stakeholders.

In order to quantify the contribution that imagery may make to the gaining of an improved understanding of river heritage on the Dorset Stour, the study has involved an assessment of works of art and photographs contained within public and private collections nationally, regionally and locally. The results of this research allowed the development of a shortlist of those artists whose works present the most reliable record of river conditions on the Stour at the time they were painted, as well as the extent of the art and photographic resource itself. The application of a tried and tested ranking system provides a methodology for accurate assessment of the relative value of this evidence to support our understanding of both physical and social changes since the 1770s and their impacts on the heritage sites over time. Whilst the CHERISH study (McInnes, 2016<sup>1</sup>) focussed on topographical accuracy, it has been noted that some early images of rivers, for example showing daily life and river's usage, may offer useful information even though there may be certain landscapes that are not topographically accurate; this aspect has been explored as part of the study.



**Figure 8:** Durweston Mill near Blandford Forum. c.1920.

Private Collection.



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**Figure 10:** '*On the Stour at Cut Mill*'. Colour photograph. c.1960. Private Collection.

### 3. Illustrating the Historical Character of the Dorset Stour Catchment

#### Introduction

England's rivers form a key component of the country's topography and, for thousands of years, they have fulfilled an important role in terms of the development of both the interior and the coast in terms of culture, trade and industry. Providing access to the interior, rivers have proved to be vital conduits for trade, as well as forming natural defences against attack in some locations and also providing a source of food for riverside residents. Alongside some rivers, such as the Dorset Stour, local communities occupied hilltop sites as strongholds which were fortified with ditches and palisades, particularly during the Bronze Age and Iron Age periods, and fine examples of these structures can be seen today, such as at Hambledon Hill and Hod Hill near Blandford Forum. These such sites continued on into Saxon times before new standards of defences were constructed after the Norman Conquest. Through the centuries, increasing industrialisation led to alterations to the natural courses of many of our rivers which were channelized, re-routed or dammed for the operation of mills or for transportation purposes. In some locations, water meadows were created in floodplains for grazing and agriculture generally.

Often early settlement sites were selected because of their ability to cross rivers at fording sites, whilst, even as early as the Iron Age, causeways of timber were being constructed to cross areas of soft ground. The invention of the water wheel during the Saxon period had a major impact on water management within many river systems and, by the Medieval period, thousands of mills had been constructed adjacent to England's rivers. Many rivers were rich with fish and land owners, monasteries and tenants sought innovative ways to catch freshwater fish and eels, with fish weirs and traps being used widely alongside angling for this purpose.

During the eighteenth century, the gentlemen owners of country estates sought to manage their land, including rivers passing through their estates, in order to create classical scenery reminiscent of the paintings of Claude Lorrain, Poussin and Salvator Rosa. Their aim was often to create Italianate landscapes such as they had observed on the Grand Tour. Architects such as William Kent and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown were commissioned to design estates, often involving major alterations to the course and flow of rivers, as well as earth-moving on a grand scale.



**Figure 11:** *'An April Evening'* by Alfred De Breanski. c.1900. Oil on Canvas. Such highly detailed paintings illustrate the character of rivers such as the Stour. Image courtesy of Bonham's.

Some rivers were much more suitable for river transport purposes than others and the widening, straightening and deepening of rivers has been a common practice through history. Cross river transport was achieved through the construction of bridges, particularly from the Medieval period. Often these were built of stone on timber piles, before arched structures became much more widespread on account of their strength and durability in times of flood.

The results of human activity within and alongside rivers has resulted in significant variations in their natural landscape setting, aesthetics and cultural history over time. The River Stour in Dorset (see Figure 9), which is 98km in length, flows south-east from the Wiltshire-Dorset border, through beautiful natural landscapes, cutting its way through downland and following the Vale of Blackmore on its course to the coastline at Christchurch. Along its route the river passes massive Iron Age hill forts high above, whilst along its banks there are numerous ancient villages with their manor houses and mills taking advantage of their riverside situations. The rich variety of landscape and cultural heritage within the Dorset Stour river catchment does, therefore, provide an ideal case study for assessing the contribution that historical imagery can make towards our understanding of the character of such rivers from source to sea.

A visual description of the character of the Stour and its depiction through imagery can be provided most effectively through an examination of three geographical components – the Upper Reaches which extend from the river source at Stourhead southwards to Gillingham, the Middle Reaches from Gillingham through the Vale of Blackmore to Wimborne Minster, and, finally, the Lower Reaches extending south-east from Wimborne past Bournemouth to Christchurch Harbour and the English Channel. The general nature of the Stour was described well by Clark and Thompson in 1935:-

*“The Stour is the great Dorset river. It rises in Wiltshire amongst the wooded hills of Stourton, and enters the county between Bourton and Zeals. At Gillingham it has grown into a sturdy stream, but it is not ‘til it is past Stalbridge amid those level meadows with their lines of pollarded willows, and been reinforced by the waters of the Cale and Lydden, that it achieves the dimensions of a river. It sweeps in a glorious bend round Sturminster Newton beneath the graceful Medieval bridge, past Hammoon with its thatched manor house, and the ornamental grounds of Hanford, to enter the gap in the Chalk Downs which it has been able to carve out in the course of ages. Here it winds through the wooded path of Bryanston, past Blandford, Langton House and Spetisbury with its ancient Crawford Bridge; round the church at Shapwick, under the White Mill Bridge, and onward to Wimborne where it meets the River Allen, and so in a huge loop round Canford Park and the old village of Hanpreston down towards the coast” (Clark & Thompson, 1935<sup>1</sup>).*



**Figure 12:** ‘The Valley of the Stour from Kingston Magna, Blackmore Vale’.

Photo courtesy of Shutterstock/ Joe Dunckley.



*“The Dorset rivers such as the Stour are of that gentle southern (England) type which meander slowly through the valleys, often breaking into a dozen little streams. Wide green water-meadows, in winter seriously liable to flood, follow their courses in irregular sweeps between the chalk hills or the brown open heath. On their banks may be seen farmhouses and mills, villages and churches. Ornamental park lands enrich their valleys, whilst ancient camps overlook them from the lofty open downs, and from bank to bank at intervals man has thrown across them multicoloured bridges.*

*“The River Stour has four outstanding bridges of interest: the old bridge at Sturminster Newton, the Crawford Bridge at Spetisbury, the White Mill Bridge near Sturminster Marshall and the Julian Bridge at Wimborne. In each case a rhythm of stone arches carries the roadway in a gentle curve from bank to bank. But bridges are not only beautiful features in a river landscape they’re points of vantage from which to view the valleys. Stand on any of these Dorset bridges and the scene will be the same. Flat green water meadows stretching away on one bank to a line of woodland; cattle standing out vividly in the sunlight, little islands thick with rushes or willows and alive with birds; trout swimming in the shallows of the arches or darting swiftly at some sudden movement that startles them. Few English rivers are so consistent in their landscape as those of Dorset. Rising amongst hills they flow through the chalk uplands and enter the heaths before extending down to the sea in their wide estuaries” (Clark & Thompson, 1935<sup>1</sup>).*

### 3.1. The Upper Reaches

The source of the River Stour is marked by a Scheduled Ancient Monument, St Peter’s Pump, an ancient market cross which was relocated from Bristol; several fine drawings of the source are contained in the National Trust’s collection at Stourhead. The springs from the natural Chalk and Upper Greensand aquifers within the surrounding hills were collected to form a component of the landscaped grounds of the magnificent Stourhead estate and were inspired by the artworks of Claude Lorraine, Poussin and Gaspard Dughet in particular, who painted Utopian-type views of Italian landscapes. Stourhead was designed by the architect, Colen Campbell, in the early eighteenth century, with the mansion being substantially extended by Richard Colt Hoare in the late eighteenth century. The mansion contains numerous watercolours and engravings which illustrate the evolution of this modified landscape during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Encompassing the site of Medieval fish ponds, the garden lake at Stourhead forms a substantial and very decorative body of water. Below the estate is situated the village of Stourton; *‘the village of Stourton, standeth on the bottom of the hill upon the left bank of the River Stour. The River of Stour riseth there with six fountains or springs, whereof three be on the north side of the (deer) park, the other three being north also but without (outside) the park’* (Leland, 1540<sup>2</sup>). Sir Richard Colt Hoare’s new ‘lake’ completed the extensive landscaping in the vicinity of Stourhead House.



**Figure 14:** ‘St Peter’s Pump, Stourhead’ by Rev. Richard Peter Hoare. 1839. Pen and Ink.

This ancient market cross is located close to the source of the Stour in Wiltshire.

Image courtesy of Stourhead House © National Trust/David Cousins.



**Figure 15 (above):** *'Stourhead Pleasure Gardens, Views of the Pantheon'* by Coplestone Warre Bampfylde. 1775-1777. Watercolour. Image courtesy of Stourhead House © National Trust/David Cousins.

**Figure 16 (below):** *'The Palladian Bridge at Stourhead'*. Image courtesy of Shutterstock/Fabio Reis.



The 'New Lake' is located at 435 feet (139 metres) above sea level and its retaining wall collapsed on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1917, causing extensive flooding. *"After a prolonged cloud burst, over eight inches of water had been recorded at Pensel Wood in 24 hours. With a noise like continuous thunder the water had escaped from the new lake at Stourhead, sweeping down the narrow valley that normally takes a tiny stream. It had demolished the dam and the bridge that carried the road from Pensel Wood to Gaspar and Stourton. Without warning the old foundry below situated just below Pen Mill was flooded to the eaves with water escaping out of the windows and the caretaker only reaching the roof in the nick of time. Hundreds of tons of foundry fuel were washed away to disappear leaving no trace at all. Cottages beside the usually placid little Stour were flooded to their thatched roofs, and many were the tales of incredibly narrow escapes"* (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>).

*"The former Bourton Foundry was once the hub of Dorset's prime contribution to mechanised water power. The Stour valley wheels of the Industrial Revolution were produced at Bourton Foundry, which was under the ownership of Samuel Hindley who made a sixty foot diameter iron overshoot water wheel that was claimed in 1855 to be the largest in England. Lesser examples are still visible in mills down the valley, with one displayed example being mounted as a roadside feature beside Waterloo Mill at Silton"* (Legg, 2003<sup>4</sup>).

Between Bourton and Gillingham historic mills were located on the banks of the Stour at Silton, Waterloo (the mill being named after the Duke of Wellington's victory in 1815) and Milton-on-Stour. The Waterloo Mill is marked by a large iron water wheel, which is located in a field alongside the road. In this part of the Stour valley, winding lanes often leading down to the water and this is the case at Milton-on-Stour. *"A narrow winding trail through two fields of mown grass led down to the weir. This was narrow, the fall of water was nothing compared with the mills downstream. But if the weir and the fall were nothing much, the mill building and the mill-lead were the largest I'd seen. The dammed-up stream was long and severely rectangular... it lay open to the sky like some narrow reservoir"* (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>). The mills and their working lives are illustrated most effectively through numerous Victorian and Edwardian photographs and postcards as only a few of the most beautiful mills were painted by artists.

The town of Gillingham is best known for the fact that John Constable painted the bridge and nearby mill in 1823 when staying with his friend, the Archdeacon John Fisher, who was the Vicar of the town at that time. The town bridge, formerly known as Barnaby Bridge, carries traffic over the Shreen Water, a tributary of the Stour. These two watercourses combine a short distance to the south of the bridge.

Whilst at Gillingham, Constable painted the Bridge, as well as the Town Mills. Following his painting of Gillingham Bridge in July 1820, Constable was to return in August 1823 to paint Purn's Mill, which was an undershoot mill located on the Shreen Water a short distance north of Gillingham Parish Church. The mill, which was sketched or painted by Constable on at least four occasions was later destroyed by a fire and therefore, his artworks represent the only historical records in full colour of the original building.



**Figure 17 (above):** *'Gillingham Bridge'* by John Constable RA. Oil on Canvas. 1823.  
Image courtesy of Tate Images 2017.

**Figure 18 (below):** *'Parnham's Mill'* or *'Purn's Mill'* by John Constable RA. c.1826. The colours are more muted in this painting of the mill compared to his early oil (see Figure 3).  
Image courtesy of Yale Center for British Art/Wikimedia Commons.



### 3.2. The Middle Reaches

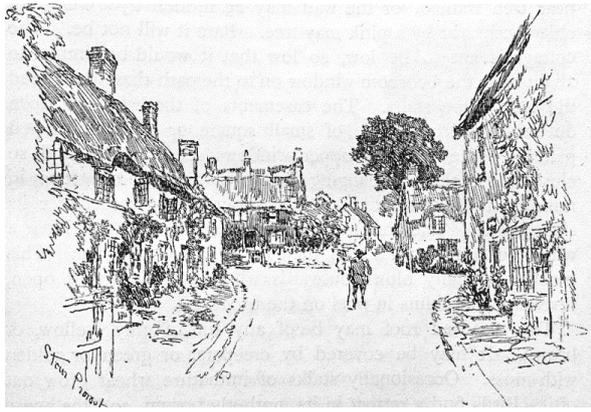
The Middle Reaches of the Stour can be regarded as the section flowing south and then south-eastwards from Gillingham towards Sturminster Newton and beyond, passing through the beautiful Blackmore Vale. The Blackmore Vale extends towards Cranbourne Chase to the east and west to Sherborne with streams flowing from the catchment into the Stour. *“Strictly speaking, the Blackmore Vale runs south from Wincanton in Somerset, along the valley of the Cale, and enters Dorset near Stalbridge. It continues in a wide curving band between Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton, and ends in the hilly country south of Yeovil. However, from the landscape point of view, it may be considered to fill the whole of the low-lying area west of Shaftesbury, which is dominated by the chalk escarpment of the Dorset Downs”* (Clark & Thompson, 1935<sup>1</sup>).

Along the middle reaches of the Stour the water body grows considerably in size as it is fed by a series of smaller watercourses and rivers, including from the north-west the River Cale, the River Lodden from the north, from the south-west the Rivers Lydden and Divelish and from the east the Iwerne and the Tarrant. This stretch of the river has a rich heritage of mills in particular, including Eccliffe, which was visited by Monica Hutchings in the 1950s *“this is no longer a working mill, and though the building is still there, in use as a farm store house, the hatches, weirs and bridges have completely fallen into ruin or disrepair. The pool was small, in the deep shadows of the trees surrounding it, and much overgrown. The pillars that once supported the bridge above the pool and across the mill stream were left broken and useless, supporting nothing, and with no hatches to span. The curving bridge that carried the roadway looked down on the shallow, pebbly river, bearing in its deeper stretches long tentacles of tress-like weed”* (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>).

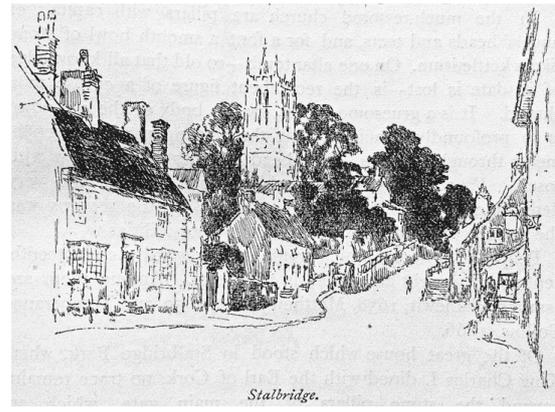
The villages of East Stour, West Stour and Stour Provost take their names, of course, from the river and, again, include mills in various states of repair. West Stour Mill is particularly well described by Hutchings when she visited the site in the 1950s (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>). The villages of Stour Provost, Fifehead Magdalen, Marnhull and Hinton St Mary between Gillingham and Sturminster Newton, all contain historic waterside mills and were much photographed. Some of the mills, such as that at Stour Provost, date back to the Domesday Book, whilst others, which have been designated as Listed Buildings, now form private residences. King’s Mill is particularly attractive in its restoration, located close to the arched stone bridge, which was built in 1823 and replaced a late seventeenth century structure. Whilst Fifehead Mill, formerly a fulling mill, has virtually disappeared, others have been carefully restored.

Moving south towards Hinton St Mary, Cut Mill is located in a most picturesque situation beside the river, which has grown significantly at this point through the addition of the tributary of the River Lydden. To the south is Sturminster Newton and the severed viaduct of the former Somerset and Dorset railway forms a picturesque ruin on the banks of the river. This railway line followed the Stour valley in the direction of Corf Mullen until the line was closed in 1966. A surviving bridge is the Victorian iron structure mounted on stone pillars at Colber, which was erected in 1841.

Of the many mills that are located through the middle reaches of the Stour, the mill at Sturminster Newton is one of the most attractive and was the most painted and engraved. This seventeenth century structure was built of stone and brick, and it is likely that there has been a mill there since the eleventh century, although the present building dates from the seventeenth century. *“The huge water wheel was replaced by an under-shoot turbine in 1904. Unlike so many mills in the area, the intact machinery makes it a treasure house of advanced industrial archaeology, preserved and performing as a working museum”* (Legg, 2003<sup>4</sup>).



*'Stour Provost'*



*'Stalbridge'*



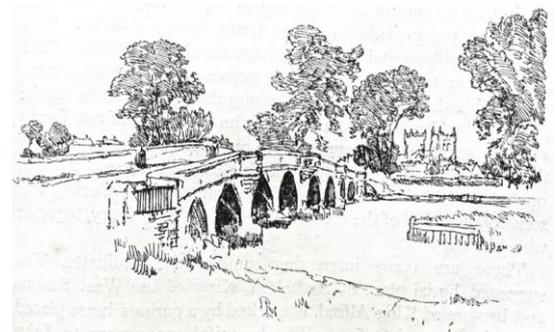
*'Sturminster Newton'*



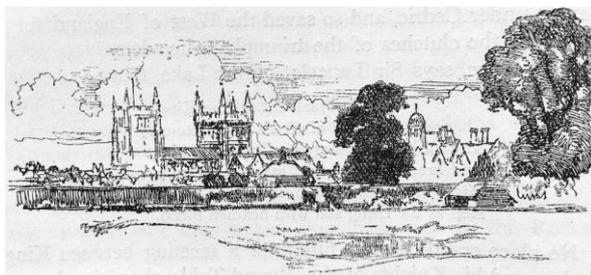
*'Okeford Fitzpaine'*



*'Blandford Forum'*



*'The Bridge leading to Wimborne Minster'*



*'Wimborne Minster from the Meadows'*

**Figures 19-25: 'Views of character villages and towns on the Stour sketched by John Pennell in pen and ink for Sir Frederick Treves', 'Highways & Byways of Dorset' (1923<sup>5</sup>)**

Some of the most picturesque bridges across the Stour are located in this part of the river and the town bridge at Sturminster Newton, which was constructed in the early sixteenth century, is a fine example. As mounted on other Stour bridges, a plaque warns *“any person wilfully injuring any part of this county bridge will be guilty of felony and upon conviction liable to be transported for life”*. A short distance to the south-east is Fiddleford where the mill and an important small manor house are located adjacent to the river. This property, which is managed by English Heritage, was completed in the late fourteenth century, and is celebrated for the quality of the timber work in its great hall.

To the north of the Stour lies Hambledon Hill, a fine example of an Iron Age hill fort, with a magnificent series of ramparts forming a striking landscape feature. Whilst a little to the south is Hod Hill, like Hambledon, this was an important stronghold 2,000 years ago because it offered commanding views over the River Stour and the surrounding countryside. These sites offered vantage points for artists as well as being interesting landscape subjects when painted from the river valley below. *“Hod Hill would appear to have been rather a fortified town and Hambledon a fortress or military camp. On the summit of Hod Hill the defences, strong and well-fashioned, are left in a perfect state. There still remains the devil rampart and the fosse the Celts built, together with the square earthworks thrown up by the Romans in the north-west corner of the enclosure”* (Treves, 1923<sup>5</sup>).

*“Hod Hill in fact represents the largest fortified enclosure in Dorset (see Figure 26 below). The hilltop and much of its southward slope are inside a rectangle of Iron Age double banks and ditches that protected stockades and huts. Following the conquest of the area by the Roman Commander, Vespasian, he used the site as his base, making it the only major fort in the British Isles that held a Roman garrison”* (Legg, 2003<sup>4</sup>). Both Hod Hill and Hambledon Hill offer outstanding views of the Stour valley and the adjacent countryside, and the picturesque scenery is described in a most charismatic way by Monica Hutchings in her *‘Dorset River’* (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>).



**Figure 26:** *‘Hod Hill from the south showing the site of the Roman Camp’*. English School. c.1925. Pen and Wash. Image courtesy of Dorchester County Museum.

South-east of Hod Hill the road follows the river past Durweston where there is an eighteenth century mill and a crossing point of the river by means of a stone arched bridge. Close by is Bryanston, an earlier mansion designed by Sir James Wyatt, was demolished by Viscount Boardman in 1888 and replaced with a brick mansion designed by Norman Shore. The Stour passes through the school grounds before reaching Blandford Forum, a market town located on one of the major fords on the River Stour. A magnificent multi-arched stone bridge crosses the Stour here and probably dates from the late thirteenth century. The structure was substantially rebuilt in the seventeenth century and, like many of the bridges along this section of the river, it was constructed of local Upper Greensand. The river viewed from its banks was a favoured subject for Victorian artists and photographers.

Between Blandford and Wimborne Minster the village of Spetisbury is notable for both the Iron Age hill fort located above the village, overlooking the river, and Crawford Bridge. Constructed of Purbeck stone, this graceful nine arched structure is regarded by many as one of the most beautiful bridges in Dorset. Its aesthetic appearance is accentuated by the attractive colour of the Purbeck Stone. *“On the upstream side it thrusts out angular buttresses of enormous strength, to show that it can stem a torrent if the need arose. In 1506 the bridge was in ruins, and as money was scarce, an indulgence of forty days was granted to any who contributing to its repair”* (Treves, 1923<sup>5</sup>).

A short distance to the east of Spetisbury is Shapwick, an attractive village running down to the northern bank of the Stour. Its church is located picturesquely very close to the riverbank. *“Shapwick is a dead end village. Roads lead through it certainly, but they do not go anywhere very much, as there is no way across the river here. I could not understand this absence of a bridge for quite a large inhabited place that stood on a river road running north to Badbury Rings. Then I began to wonder if the Romans had found a ford here practical and a bridge unnecessary”* (Hutchings, 1956<sup>3</sup>). The picturesque church adjacent to the river was painted in oils by the prolific Dorset artist Frederick Whitehead (1853-1938) (see Figure 27 below).



**Figure 27:** *‘Shapwick Church on the Stour’* by Frederick William Newton Whitehead (1853-1938). Oil on Canvas. Image courtesy of Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum.

From Shapwick the road runs past Badbury Rings, passing through a long avenue where beech trees were planted by the Kingston Lacy. *“Badbury Rings itself is an Iron Age hill fort, which is managed by the National Trust. The well-preserved site comprises three sets of ground works with outer ditches, and the history of the site has been described by numerous authors”* (Legg, 2003<sup>4</sup>). Perhaps the best available images of the Stour valley hill forts are colour aerial images as they show both the engineering detail and the aesthetic beauty to greatest effect. By Badbury Rings, Kingston Lacy is also located within the proximity of the river, this grand mansion and extensive landholdings extend down to the Stour. Constructed in the 1660s it was substantially improved and refurbished in the 1830s for William John Bankes; there is a fine selection of engravings of this beautifully proportioned mansion.

South of the river at this point is the village of Sturminster Marshall, which, one again, has a fine mill and a bridge of exceptional architectural quality. White Mill is one of numerous mills in the vicinity that were listed in the Domesday Book, although the present structure is of eighteenth century age. The building was restored by the National Trust and is picturesquely located close to White Mill Bridge. This structure, which dates from the sixteenth century, is regarded by many as the most beautiful bridges in Dorset, and comprises eight arches of iron stained sandstone. *“The massive weight of the structure is believed to be founded on oak piles, via rafts of horizontal oak under each pier, with the permanently saturated muddied pile timbers being preserved from decay by the lack of oxygen”* (Legg, 2003<sup>4</sup>).

The entrance to Wimborne Minster from the south-west is via Julian’s Bridge, which was originally constructed in the mid-seventeenth century. Comprised of eight pointed arches, the structure was expanded in the mid-nineteenth century and is Grade I Listed. Julian’s Bridge features in many artworks, photographs and photographic postcards of the town (see Figure 28) although the spread of development and the growth of trees alongside the highways means that many of the vistas depicted by nineteenth century artists can no longer be appreciated. At Wimborne the Stour is joined by the River Allen, which flows south from Wimborne St Giles on Cranborne Chase. To the south the Stour flows under Canford Bridge towards Canford Magna where a long cast-iron steel suspension bridge crosses the river; this well-made structure was erected in 1846.



**Figure 28:** *‘The Stour, Wimborne in the Distance’* by Walter Frederick Tyndale. 1906. Watercolour. Private collection.

### 3.3. The Lower Reaches

After Canford Magna the Stour flows east through Longham, where it passes beneath Longham Bridge, alongside which there is an extensive waterworks and pumping station. The river then continues north of the Bournemouth conurbation, through West Parley to Throop, where the ancient brick mill bears the name *'Parson & Son's Flour Mill'*. The mill occupies a tranquil setting despite its close proximity to Bournemouth itself. At Hurn, the Moors River joins the Stour, adding to its size and flow before passing beneath Iford Bridge, historically an important river crossing. Nearby there are numerous paintings and photographic images of the old Blackwater Rope Ferry, which was located adjacent to a thatched cottage belonging to the ferryman. A rope suspended across the river allowed the ferryman to transport passengers to and fro (see Figures 78 and 175).

Approaching Christchurch, the Stour passes beneath the Iford Bridges with the original structure remaining preserved alongside its 1930s replacement. During the Victorian period the ferry crossing was provided at Wick, a popular and much photographed location in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, where boating on the tranquil waters was particularly popular. Close to Christchurch Priory (see Figure 29), one of the most painted buildings on the banks of the Stour, stands Place Mill (see Figure 31), which dates from Medieval times and occupies the location adjacent to the old quay. The Priory itself dominates the waterfront and was painted by numerous artists from across the waters showing its close proximity to Christchurch harbour itself. The River Stour and the Avon meet at Christchurch Harbour before flowing together past Hengistbury Head and Mudeford, to enter the sea through a channel called 'The Run'.



**Figure 29:** *'Christchurch'* by William Daniell RA. 1823. Aquatint engraving from his *'Voyage Round Great Britain'* (1814-1825<sup>6</sup>).

Private Collection.

**Figure 30:** *'Christchurch Harbour'* by William Pitcairn Knowles (c.1846- c.1904). Oil on Canvas.

Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth.



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6. Daniell, W. & Ayton, R., 1814-1825. *'A Voyage Round Great Britain'*. Longman & Co. London.



**Figure 31:** *'Place Mill and Priory, Christchurch'* by Christina Allen. Oil on Canvas. c.1880.  
Image courtesy of The Red House Museum, Christchurch.

## 4. The Portrayal of the Stour Catchment through Art and Photography 1770-1960

Before the early eighteenth century there was little interest in Britain in terms of depiction of the landscape. Landscape art only developed when some of the great collectors returned from the Grand Tour with Italian landscape artworks. However, rich descriptions of the landscape, including those of the Dorset countryside and coast, started to appear in the sixteenth century, and these were sometimes accompanied by woodcuts or, later, copperplate engravings. One of the first of these was Thomas Gerard's *'General Description of Dorset'* (Gerard, 1622<sup>1</sup>). Later a *'Compleat History of Dorsetshire'* was written by Thomas Cox in 1730. This formed part of a substantial work entitled *'Magna Britannia'* (Cox, 1720-1731<sup>2</sup>). Together with the *'History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset'* by John Hutchins (Hutchins, 1698-1773<sup>3</sup>), these represent two substantial early works relating to the County of Dorset.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century more books were starting to appear with topographical accounts. By the early nineteenth century many of our greatest artists were making tours either at the request of wealthy patrons, or for their own commercial interest. J. M. W. Turner and many other topographical artists were producing series of watercolour drawings, some of which formed publications (Cooke, 1826<sup>4</sup>). Through the nineteenth century increasing numbers of books appeared, first, often illustrated with copperplate or aquatint engravings and, later, steel engravings. A review of artworks and photography of Dorset can commence at Stourhead, where the National Trust holds a fine collection of paintings, watercolours and engravings showing the development of the estate and its pleasure gardens. These include, for example, *"A Panorama of the Pleasure Gardens at Stourhead"* by Sir Richard Colt Hoare (1758-1838) and a view of *'St Peter's Pump'* by the Reverend Richard Peter Hoare drawn in 1839. The villages and the towns through the Stour valley appeared as images in Victorian and Edwardian travel books, but prior to that the artworks were limited. Some views appeared in magazines such as *'The Gentleman's Magazine'* (1731<sup>5</sup>) which was a monthly magazine published in London commencing in the eighteenth century. A view of Kings Stag Bridge in the parish of Pulham by Thomas Rackett was published as early as 1731. Views of country houses within the Stour catchment were also numerous and important artists such as Thomas Hearne drew detailed architectural views such as of *'Ranston'* on the River Iwerne near Stourpaine or of *'Woolland House'* near the headwaters of the River Devilish.

The most famous artist to paint from the Stour was John Constable, who stayed at the Vicarage at Gillingham, where the Archdeacon, John Fisher, was a friend. He produced several paintings of Purn's Mill between 1823 and 1824, and also painted Gillingham Bridge in the town. It is likely that Constable's sketches, which he produced on the spot, have the greatest topographical accuracy, as in them he was recording the lay of the land and, in the swift brush strokes, managed to capture some of the movement of trees. Sometimes he would take several such sketches which he would then compose into a finished landscape (Concannon, 2017<sup>6</sup>).

One of the most prolific painters of the Dorset landscape was Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904). Moule was appointed first curator of the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester in 1883 (Yarker, 1997<sup>7</sup>). An enlightened antiquarian, Moule was also familiar with the writings of John Ruskin, whom he greatly admired. Moule used to lecture regularly on the Dorset landscape describing the geology and *"objective beauties of its environs"*; his series of lectures were published in *'Old Dorset'* (Moule, 1893<sup>8</sup>). An acquaintance of the novelist, Thomas Hardy, who he also gave art lessons, consideration was given to a book by Hardy that would be illustrated by Moule but this did not come to fruition. Moule's numerous views of the Dorset landscape included many river scenes and details of interest showing the various weirs, fish traps, water wheels and mills, which give an appreciation of the river

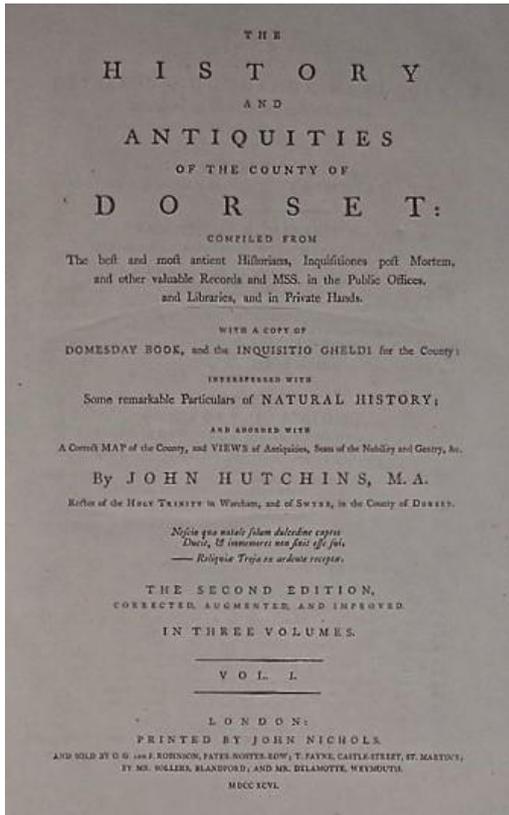


Figure 32: Title page of John Hutchins' 'History & Antiquities of Dorset' (1733)

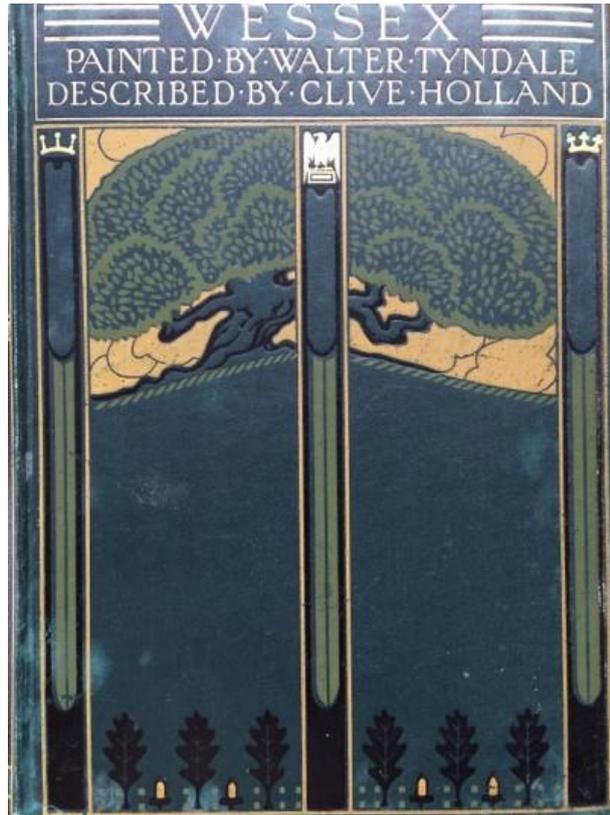


Figure 33: 'Wessex' illustrated by Walter Tyndale. 1906.

Figure 34: 'Highways & Byways of Dorset'. 1923.

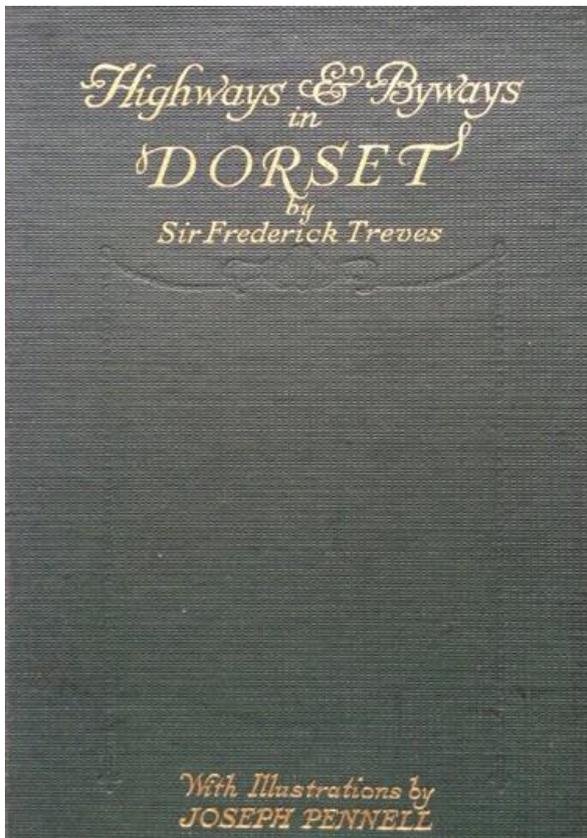
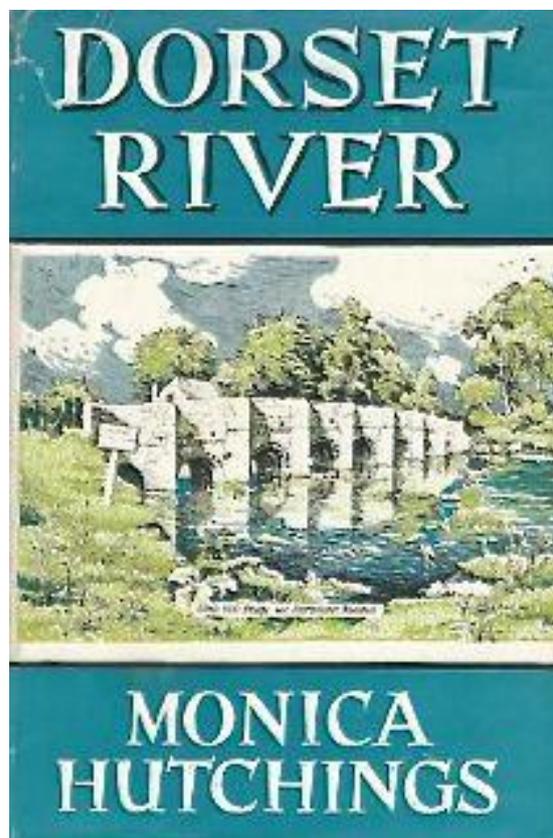


Figure 35: 'Dorset River'. 1956.



landscapes of Dorset's interior. Moule was also closely acquainted with the artist, Frederick Whitehead RA (1853-1938), and the two artists worked together. Whitehead generally painted '*en plein air*' and they shared their subject matter. Whitehead was essentially a naturalist painter who captured the Dorset landscape and coastline with remarkable detail.

General landscapes of the middle reaches of the River Stour are few in number, although the most scenic mills, bridges and churches were painted, such as Whitehead's '*Shapwick Church*'.

One of the most popular subjects for painting were the historic mills and Arthur Henry Davis (c.1847-1895) painted a detailed view of the '*Back of Walford Mill, Wimborne*' in 1881. Like a number of other artists, he also painted in oils the '*Blackwater Ferry, Christchurch*' in 1879 and '*Wick Ferry*' also in 1879. Christina Allan (fl. 1880-1900) chose similar subject matter including '*The Village and Bridge at Iford*' and '*Place Mill and Priory at Christchurch*' (c.1880).

Christchurch and the entrance of the Stour to Christchurch Harbour were painted by many artists including Sidney Pike (1846-1907), who produced numerous oils of '*Christchurch Priory*' (1896), and other views in the vicinity. These works represent a long succession of images of this famous building, one of the earliest being the fine aquatint by William Daniell RA (Figure 29), which he produced near the end of his '*Voyage Round Great Britain*' (Daniell & Ayton, 1814-1825<sup>9</sup>). A further detailed depiction of Christchurch Priory was produced by Eric Trayler Cook (1893-1978) in 1935.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw steadily increasing numbers of tourists travelling to the Stour Valley towns as the railway network had expanded. This led to a greater demand for illustrated books depicting local scenes. Henry Wimbush (1858-1943) was particularly prolific in the production of attractive watercolours for book publishers, A. & C. Black. Other artists including Harold Sutton Palmer (1854-1933) and Walter Frederick Tyndale also produced watercolours of the Stour for '*Wessex*' published by A. & C. Black (Holland, 1906<sup>10</sup>). Frederick Treves' publication '*Highways and Byways in Dorset*' was illustrated by Joseph Pennell (Treves, 1923<sup>11</sup>). Pennell illustrated this publication with fine pen and ink and wash vignette views covering the whole of Dorset.

Although the introduction of the postcard took place in Great Britain in 1870, it was not until 1899 that the prolific postcard publishers, Raphael Tuck & Sons and J. & F. Salmon Limited, launched their first designs for colour picture postcards. Not only did these prove popular with the public who were able to send views to their family and friends from their holiday destination, but also they started extremely popular fashion for collecting sets of postcards. Landscape artists including Henry Wimbush and Alfred Robert Quinton were commissioned to paint numerous attractive views, particularly along the Dorset coast, and these include views of the mouth of the Stour at Christchurch.

From the 1840s portraiture photographs proved extremely popular, although there was very little interest in photographing landscapes at that time. This may have been partly because the photographic images of the landscapes were not of sufficient quality, but also because Victorians preferred the landscape colour images being produced, often very accurately, by painters in oils and watercolours. It was not until the late 1860s and 1870s that coastal scenery became more widely photographed, reaching its zenith in the photographic medium of black and white by the end of the nineteenth century. At about the same time black and white photographs on postcards were also being published, and these proved to be extremely popular.

Aerial photography was stimulated during the First World War when surveys of enemy territory led to an increased understanding of the potential of such images. Between the wars advancing science and understanding of the potential of this new approach to the investigation of heritage sites was recognised by archaeologists (Barber, 2011<sup>12</sup>).



**Figure 36:** Christchurch Priory and environs in 1951 showing the excellent detail that can be appreciated from black and white aerial photography. The use of colour aerial views became more widely available from the mid-1990s.

Image courtesy of *'Britain From Above'* © Historic England.

## 5. Validating the Accuracy of Artworks and Photography

The perception by some scientists that art may have little practical application as a tool in support of our understanding of changing landscapes and environments has been a commonly held view, whilst others have not considered the context at all. This was partly an understandable result of the lack of knowledge of the art resources available in the absence of adequate databases and other records, but also because of concerns about the accuracy of such depictions (McInnes & Stubbings, 2011<sup>13</sup>).

Particular fashions and styles over the last 200 years, led some artists to exaggerate natural features whilst in other cases wealthy patrons required their properties or estates to appear grander than was actually the case. By contrast certain artistic schools such as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood sought *'absolute, uncompromising truth in all it does, obtained by working everything down to the most minute detail from nature'* (Ruskin, 1853<sup>14</sup>).

In view of the fact that the landscape of Dorset has been a significant source of inspiration for artists since the late eighteenth century, the opportunity to bridge art and science and maximise the potential of previously under-used art resources to support understanding of river heritage should be realised. In fact, works of art extending back to the late eighteenth century, long before the days of photography, may provide the only record of our changing river environments over time, depending on the accuracy of the work concerned. Art can, therefore, form a useful benchmark when assessing changes affecting rivers and their impacts on heritage sites. However, concerns about accuracy must be satisfactorily addressed, and previous research (McInnes & Stubbings, 2011<sup>13</sup>; Momber *et al.*, 2013<sup>15</sup>) has provided a methodology for ranking both artworks and photographs; these approaches were modified to suit the requirements of the CHerISH study in terms of informing coastal heritage risk management (see <http://cherish.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/>).

### Ranking artworks and photographs in terms of their accuracy and usefulness

The purpose of a ranking system is to assess and evaluate river artworks and photographs, and to provide a list of those artists and their works that can be relied upon in terms of providing truly accurate depictions of the Dorset Stour catchment and thereby informing us of the historic character of the river. If this can be achieved, users can easily turn to the artist's list and find the names of painters who have depicted their particular site of interest without having to undertake their own time-consuming research. The purpose of the ranking task is to provide a readily available resource for use by all those professionals involved in heritage management, planning and conservation management more widely. The ranking system described below considers first art then photography. Artists' names such as those listed as the highest ranked in Table 2 (below) are easily searchable on national and art gallery databases.

The relevant artworks fall under the general heading of *'River Landscape Artworks,'* which can be suitably evaluated and ranked against four criteria:-

1. **Accuracy of the Artistic style of painting** - for example 'genre' (human or social) subjects, 'romantic scenery' representative of tastes influenced by those returning from the Grand Tour, 'coastal/estuarine' subjects (where the river meets the sea) and, finally, 'topographical' paintings, drawings and prints.
2. **Choice of mediums** available to artists in terms of achieving the most detailed depictions of the river heritage. Increasing levels of detail were achieved through copper plate engravings, oil paintings, aquatint engravings, steel engravings, lithographs and watercolour drawings.

3. **Content of the artwork**, which may comprise general river views, more detailed views of the river, riverside or in-river heritage, or highly detailed views of heritage assets showing their relationship to the river landscape, and changes that may affect them.
4. **The time period of the artwork** in terms of its usefulness in informing us of the patterns of river change merits consideration. For example, the 'Pre-Victorian' (and pre-photographic period broadly extending from 1770-1840 when art represented the only medium available and the only colour representation of a location), the 'Victorian riverside development' period from 1840-1880 when photography ran in parallel with art although only in black and white, and the 'Late Victorian and Edwardian coastal development period', which, in practice, extended up to 1930 and by which time colour photography had started to appear. Finally, *Modern images* from 1930 up to 1956 (up to the end of the study timeline).

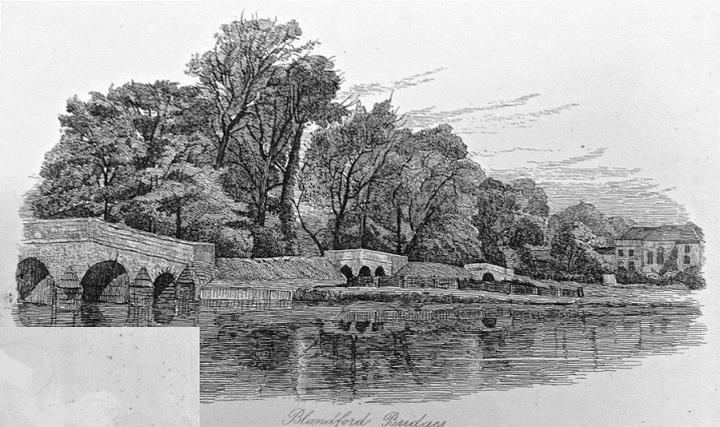
## SELECTED EXAMPLES OF ARTWORKS – PRINTS AND DRAWINGS



**Figure 37:** An example of a late eighteenth century copper plate engraving. This view of 'Bryanston' shows some good architectural detail but generally such images are quite coarse. A change to the use of steel engraving plates in the 1830s allowed much finer detail to be achieved.

*Bryanston in Dorsetshire the Seat of Henry Wile*  
Published March 1790 by E. Smith, Cornhill.

**Figure 38:** This steel engraving of 'Blandford' from the mid-nineteenth century provides an accurate depiction of the historic bridge. Steel engravings together with aquatints and lithographs are scored more highly than copper plate views.



**Figure 39:** The use of pen and ink for drawing allowed very fine detail to be portrayed. This view shows 'Spetisbury Rump from the Stour near Blandford' (c.1925). Such images offer excellent topographical and landscape detail.



Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

## OIL PAINTINGS



**Figure 40:** John Constable's large oil paintings were developed from sketches that he made on site and his work is generally regarded as accurate. It is not possible to obtain the same level of detail with oils compared with watercolour drawings so they are scored lower for this reason. This view shows 'Purn's Mill' at Gillingham.

Image courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

**Figure 41 (below) and 42 (bottom left)** show two oil paintings by Arthur Henry Davis of 'Wick Ferry near Christchurch' and 'Rear View of Walford's Mill at Wimborne Minster'. Davis' work is perhaps as detailed as may be achieved through the medium of oil painting.

Images courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Museum and Art Gallery, Bournemouth.



**Figure 43 (below right):** A further oil painting by A. H. Davis shows 'Blackwater Ferry at Christchurch' in 1879. Again, the artist's skilful use of oils is evident.

Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth.



## WATERCOLOURS



**Figure 44:** The detail achievable through the medium of watercolour drawing is evident in this fine view of the mill at Sturminster Newton by Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904). Watercolours are ranked most highly of all art media in terms of the topographical and architectural detail that they can provide.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 45:** This watercolour by H. B. Wimburgh is an example of a 'more detailed view', which shows not only the architecture but the proximity to the water and water levels at the time.

Private Collection.

**Figure 46 (below left):** 'Eel Traps'. Although the location is not known, this Victorian watercolour provides a detailed depiction of a past rural practice, which was common on Dorset's rivers and streams.

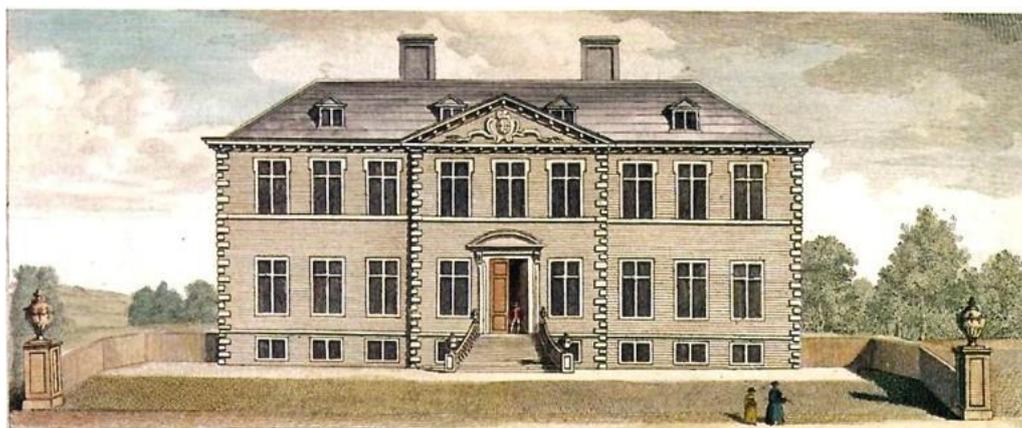
Private Collection.



**Figure 47 (right):** 'Fetching Water' by Myles Birket Foster RWS. Watercolour. Mid-nineteenth century. Birket Foster produced many highly accurate topographical watercolours including Dorset landscapes, although the precise location is not known. He also painted numerous views of rural life including many cottage scenes such as this. The detail of his watercolours was not surpassed by any other artist of the period.  
Image courtesy of Bonham's.



1.	<u>Accuracy of Artistic Style (Maximum 5 Points)</u>	
1.1	Genre subjects	1 point
1.2	Romantic Scenery	2 points
1.3	Harbour/Estuarine subjects	3 points
1.4	Topographical Subjects	4 points
1.5	Topographical Subjects with Pre-Raphaelite influence	5 points
2.	<u>Most advantageous medium for illustrating coastal change (Maximum 6 points)</u>	
2.1	Copper plate engravings	1 point
2.2	Oil paintings	2 points
2.3	Steel Plate engravings and aquatints	3 points
2.4	Oil paintings by Pre-Raphaelites, and their Followers	4 points
2.5	Daniell Aquatints, Lithographs, Fine pencil and watercolour drawings	5 points
2.6	Watercolour drawings exhibiting Pre-Raphaelite influences	6 points
3.	<u>Value of the subject matter in supporting understanding of coastal change &amp; heritage risk (weighting x2 and Maximum score of 6 points)</u>	
3.1	General river catchment views	1 point
3.2	More detailed views including some appreciation of processes and impacts on landscape and development	2 points
3.3	Detailed views informing of hazard/character/heritage of the Stour catchment	3 points
4.	<u>Value of the time period (Maximum of 3 points)</u>	
4.1	1770-1850 (early)	3 points
4.2	1850-1930 (Victorian/Edwardian and post WW1 period)	2 points
4.3	1930-1960 (Post-WW2/Recent period)	1 point
	<u>Compiling the scores for ranking artists and their works</u>	
1.	Accuracy of artistic style	Maximum 5 points
2.	Most advantageous medium	Maximum 6 points
3.	Value of subject matter	Maximum 6 points
4.	Value of the time period	Maximum 3 points
5.	Total maximum score	20 points



**Figure 48:** 'Kingston Hall' a copperplate engraving of the original house prior to the Georgian alterations by Henry Banks the Younger (1757-1834). Architectural draughtsmen were able to achieve considerable detail despite the limitations of copper engraving plates. From 'History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset' by John Hutchins (1698-1773).

Artist	Accuracy of Style	Most Advantageous Medium	Value of Subject	Time Period	Total Score
William Daniell	4	5	6	3	18
John Constable	4	4	6	3	17
Henry J. Moule	4	5	6	2	17
Harold S. Palmer	4	5	6	2	17
Alfred R. Quinton	4	5	6	2	17
Walter F. Tyndale	4	5	6	2	17
Rev. R. P. Hoare	4	5	4	3	16
Sir. R. Colt Hoare	4	5	4	3	16
William Westall	4	3	6	3	16
D. A. McKewan	4	5	4	2	15
Joseph Pennell	4	5	4	2	15
Edward F. D. Pritchard	4	5	4	2	15
Henry B. Wimbush	4	5	4	2	15
Christina Allen	4	2	6	2	14
Arthur H. Davis	4	2	6	2	14
Thomas Girtin	4	5	2	3	14
David Lucas	4	3	4	3	14
Paul S. Munn	2	5	4	3	14
Sidney Pike	4	2	6	2	14
Frederick Whitehead	4	2	6	2	14
Wilfrid Williams Ball	4	5	2	2	13
Eric T. Cook	4	2	6	1	13
Copplestone W. Bampfylde	2	1	6	3	12
Emma L. Hardy	4	2	4	2	12
Thomas Hearne	4	1	4	3	12
William P. Knowles	4	2	4	2	12
William Parrott	4	2	4	2	12
Thomas Rackett	4	1	4	3	12
Walter W. Stevens	4	2	4	2	12
Percival A. Wise	4	2	4	2	12
Henry J. Yeend King	4	2	2	2	10
J. Smith	2	1	4	3	10
W. Thompson	2	1	4	3	10
W. Tomkins	2	1	4	3	10
John Everett	4	2	2	1	9
Leonard Knyff	2	1	2	3	8
John Preston Neale	2	1	2	3	8

**Table 2: Examples of more prolific Artists' Rankings for the Stour Catchment**

**Notes:**

1. Where an artist painted in more than one medium the score is based on the most commonly used medium.
2. Where an artist spans two time periods the score relates to the period in which the artist was more prolific.

## Ranking photographs and photographic postcards

Photographs are an invaluable resource to support heritage studies because they represent true depictions of the landscape; there is not the need to rank them in the same way as artworks (where views may be susceptible to interpretation and variation). For photographs to be used effectively to support our understanding of historic character of rivers the three key issues are first, the *content* (in terms of what the image tells us), second, the *quality of the image* and finally the *time period* of the photograph, as early views may provide the only record of lost or altered heritage.

### Quality of the Image:

- *Poorly exposed* or the original has deteriorated, and yet still allows an element of interpretation a ranking score of one point is appropriate.
- *An image of satisfactory but not exceptional clarity* merits two points.
- *A sharp, well-defined photograph* that allows significant scope for interpretation would score three points.

### Content of the Photograph:

- *General river views*, which contribute to an overall appreciation of the historic character of the catchment scores one point.
- *More detailed works* providing information on the character of the river catchment and its heritage assets would score two points.
- *Works providing a detailed appreciation* of many aspects of the river catchment's heritage character and assets, which score three points.

### Value of the Time Period:

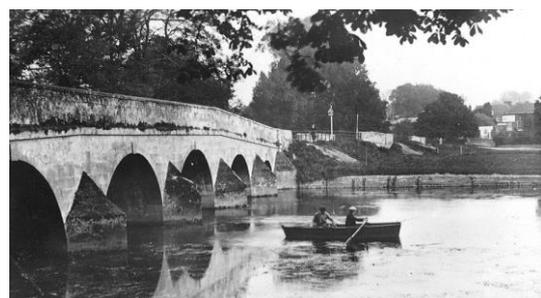
The third photographic ranking category represented the value of the time period in which it was taken.

- *1840-1860* (scoring four points);
- *1860-1900* (scoring three points);
- *1900-1930* (scoring two points);
- *1930-1960* (scoring one point).

The rationale behind these scores is that in the earliest photographs (1840-1860) may offer very rare depictions of their subjects with the greatest time-depth possible for such a photograph, often depicting heritage features long removed or masked by development or vegetation they may also provide evidence of long-vanished land-uses. By 1860-1900 landscape photography was well developed and becoming increasingly popular. The third time period from 1900-1930 saw the emergence and popularity of photographic picture postcards, which resulted in a huge increase in the availability of images for potential study, including, increasingly, the use of colour; this category scores two points. Finally, the period from 1930-1960 saw the more widespread use of aerial photography and colour photography of rapidly increasing quality; this formed an ideal resource in support of the interpretation of heritage sites including particularly buried features, hence a score of one point.

The overall ranking rationale is set out in Table 3 below.

**Figure 49:** Photograph of 'The Bridge at Blandford' a general view which would score one point.



<b>1. Quality of the Image (Maximum of Three Points)</b>		
1.1.	Poorly exposed or deteriorated images	1 Point
1.2.	Photographs of satisfactory clarity	2 Points
1.3.	Sharp and well-defined photograph	3 Points
<b>2. Content of the Photograph (weighting x2 and Maximum score of 6 points)</b>		
2.1.	General river catchment views	1 Point
2.2.	More detailed views including some appreciation of river processes and landscape/historic character	2 Points
2.3.	Detailed views informing of the historical character of the river catchment and its heritage	3 Points
<b>3. Value of the Time Period (Maximum score of four points)</b>		
3.1.	1840-1860	4 Points
3.2.	1860-1900	3 Points
3.3.	1900-1930	2 Points
3.4.	1930-1960	1 Point
<b>Compiling the Scores for Ranking Photographs and Photographic Postcards</b>		
1.	Quality of the Image	Maximum Score 3 Points
2.	Content of the Photograph	Maximum Score 6 Points
3.	Value of the Time Period	Maximum score 4 Points
<b>Total Maximum Score (with Weighting)</b>		<b>13 Points</b>

**Table 3: Summary of Ranking for Photographic Images**

**Figure 50:** A postcard of Tuckton Bridge from the 1920s showing old and newer forms of transport scores two points.



**Figure 51:** The Mill at Sturminster Newton. This late-nineteenth century photograph shows the general arrangement of the Mill and would score two points.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 52:** This photograph of the Stour at Shapwick is interesting because it shows a sheepdip enclosure in the river in the foreground and, therefore, scores three points.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 53:** This view of the rear of the mill at Sturminster Newton provides a more detailed appreciation of the location and accessways and scores three points.

Private Collection.

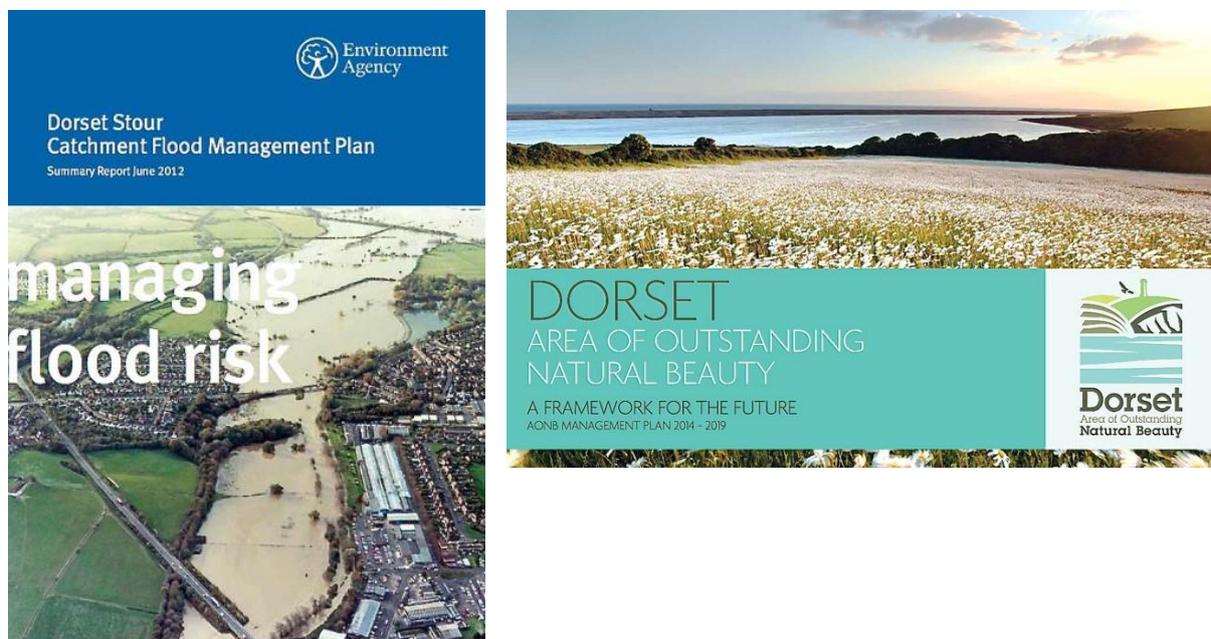


**Figure 54:** This interesting photograph shows the Blackwater Ferry near Christchurch in operation in about 1910. The ferryman used a rope stretched across the river to pull the boat and passengers from one side to the other. Score - three points.

Image courtesy of the © Francis Frith Collection.

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**Figure 55:** Two key policy documents relevant to the Dorset Stour. The Environment Agency's *'Catchment Flood Management Plan (2006)'* and Dorset County Council's *'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Plan'*, which includes parts of the Stour catchment (2014). The Stour Catchment Initiative (SCI) hosted by Wessex Water and Dorset Wildlife Trust builds upon existing partnerships to improve the water environment within the catchment.





**Figure 57 (above):** A view of Gillingham from the north-west in 1930 showing the Blackmore Vale beyond. Image courtesy of *'Britain From Above'* © Historic England.

**Figure 58 (below):** Looking down the Stour Valley from the hill at Kingston Magna in Dorset's Blackmore Vale. Image courtesy of Shutterstock/Joe Dunckley.



Imagery depicting the characteristics of the Stour catchment are most usually focussed on the great country estates, the towns and villages of architectural quality, and other key buildings of historical importance; views of the mouth of the river in the vicinity of Christchurch are also more numerous. The rural stretches of the river were painted much less frequently except by some local Dorset artists and engravers but, from the 1860s onwards, black and white photographs of the landscape started to appear, although, again, these were not prolific until the late nineteenth century when photographing the landscape became much more popular.

The course of the Stour itself has been adapted for commercial and agricultural purposes over time, not least following the construction of numerous mills, which were able to take advantage of water power for a wide range of rural industrial purposes. Mills, such as Cutt Mill at Hinton St. Mary near Sturminster Newton, derived its name from the old English word 'Cut' or a 'water channel', which necessitated alteration to the river channel.

The principal natural process affecting the Stour catchment is the impacts of rainfall run-off in terms of soil erosion and flooding. The natural weathering and erosion of soil from steep hillsides within the Stour valley was also aggravated as a result of the intensification of agriculture, particularly during the War when vast areas of downland pasture were ploughed for the growth of crops. This increased farming activity had a significant impact on not just the landscape but also on some of the most important archaeological sites that occupy hilltop and hillside positions overlooking the Stour valley (Groube & Bowden, 1982<sup>1</sup>).

The source of the Stour, in the vicinity of Stourhead, lies within a landscape that has seen significant alteration and 'improvement' as seen through the eyes of wealthy landowners in the eighteenth century. With a romantic eye for classical scenery and great wealth, famous architects, including Capability Brown, William Kent and others, helped to beautify the landscape drawing on the great sights that they had observed on the Grand Tour. Views such as that of the pleasure grounds at Stourhead provide a detailed appreciation of the landscape at that time, even though some exaggeration of the topography can be observed (see Figure 15).

To the north and south of Gillingham, artistic depictions of the Stour itself are rare, although there are many photographic images of the riverside mills that are so numerous along this frontage. The river itself, for example at West Stour, Stour Provost and Marnhull, has a very modest flow and it is not until the tributaries start to join the main river that the volume increases significantly. As the river flows through the wide Blackmore Vale, it follows a meandering course through a pastoral landscape, within a wide and settled floodplain. *'Small blocks of wet woodland alongside the river provide structure and diversity and a sense of intimacy to this otherwise flat and open landscape. Dense hedgerows with trees, small scale fields and occasional grassy meadows and remnant withy beds along the river give way to nucleated villages and large blocks of deciduous woodland along the valley sides'* (Dorset County Council, 2014<sup>2</sup>). In places remnants of water meadows can be found, a resource that fell out of use from the late nineteenth century onwards, following the onset of a deep agricultural recession, which continued almost unabated up until the Second World War.

Therefore, the extent and nature of the river and its wider landscape characteristics can be seen most clearly in nineteenth century and later photographs, which have usually been taken in the vicinity of historic mills, such as Cutt Mill at Hinton St. Mary, as well as numerous photographs around Sturminster Newton. Photographic evidence and historical artworks, where they are available, suggest the overall landscape of the river from Stourhead down to Blandford Forum would be easily recognisable to landowners and farmers from a century and a half before.



**Figure 59:** The Stour at West Stour from the bridge on the A30.



**Figure 60:** Downstream at Marnhull. Here the river is more a large stream until rivers join it lower down the catchment.



**Figure 61:** Flooding on Sackmore Lane, Marnhull in 1912. Many of the riverside villages have been affected historically by flooding, particularly in the middle and lower reaches of the Stour.

Private Collection.



**Figure 6.2:** Stour Provost Mill in about 1920.

Private Collection.



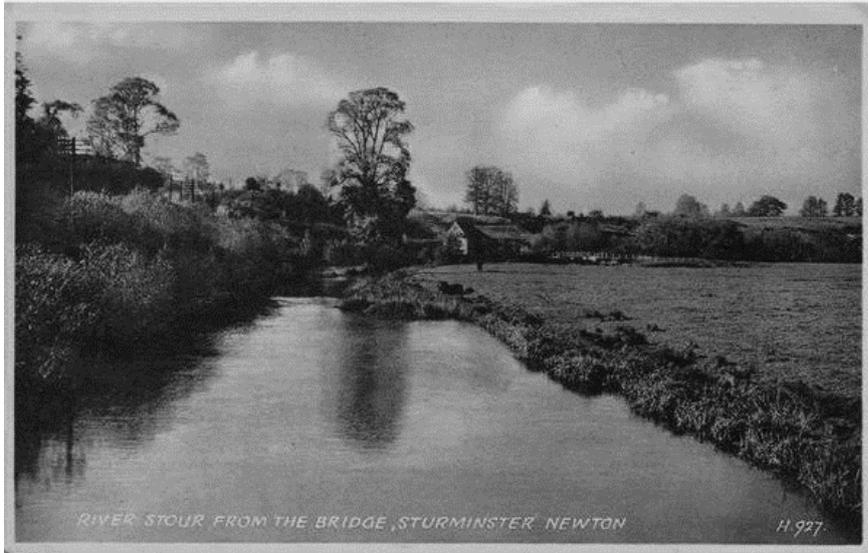
**Figure 63:** The ruin of Cut Mill at Hinton St Mary near Sturminster Newton; here the river volume has increased significantly as flows from the wider catchment joins it. Unlike many of the historic mills along the Stour, Cut Mill has not been restored.

Image courtesy of Helen Hotson/Shutterstock.

**Figure 64:** The Stour Valley near the old railway viaduct at Colber Bridge at Sturminster Newton.

Image courtesy of Flickr/Joe Dunckley.





**Figure 65:** The Stour from the bridge at Sturminster Newton in about 1910, looking down river towards Fiddleford. From here the river turns north, then east following a meandering course past Shillingstone and beneath Hod Hill towards Blandford Forum.



**Figure 66:** The Stour valley viewed from the Iron Age fort at Hod Hill in about 1920. The river flows close to the foot of the hill, which is now heavily wooded.

Image courtesy of Dorset History Centre.



**Figure 67:** The Stour downstream of Blandford Forum presents a tranquil scene in this photograph c.1900.

Image courtesy of Dorset History Centre.



**Figure 68:** This view of the ancient bridge at Blandford Forum shows a clear expanse of river on the lower side. c.1915.



**Figure 69 (left) and Figure 70 (below)** show the nature of the river today. It has a more natural appearance with reeds, lilies and weed extending across the whole width. Large trees extend along the banks blocking the more open vistas that were enjoyed in Victorian and Edwardian times.



Historical imagery depicts heritage features such as mills, riverside manors and bridges and the changes that have affected them over time, but also the changing natural environments as a result of agricultural practices as well as development.

From Sturminster Newton, south-eastwards towards Wimborne, images of the river become more numerous, partly because of the picturesque nature of both this historic landscape and of the towns and villages such as Sturminster Newton itself, Shapwick, Sturminster Marshall, and Wimborne Minster. Additional artworks and photographs also feature the important archaeological sites located on high ground, such as Hod Hill, Hambledon Hill, Spetisbury Rump, and Badbury Rings, whilst important mansions in the vicinity, including Kingston Lacy House, and Bryanston at Blandford Forum are also frequently illustrated in nineteenth century topographical books.

Whilst a scattering of sites through the upper reaches of the Stour catchment are affected by flooding, the river south-east of Blandford, past Wimborne, and to the north of Bournemouth, has experienced numerous flooding incidents and some of the historic bridges and mills are frequently affected by inundation. Such flood events are monitored and recorded by the Environment Agency. The bridges and riverbanks bordering the Stour, for example at Blandford, provide the opportunity to make comparisons over the last century. Old photographs appear to show the river at Blandford largely clear of vegetation, whilst today the river takes on a more natural appearance with water weed, reeds and lilies in abundance.



**Figure 71:** Extensive flooding at White Mill Bridge near Sturminster Marshall in February 2017.

Image courtesy of Robert Hurworth/Shutterstock.



**Figure 72:** Flooding at White Mill, Sturminster Marshall in November 2016. The mill, which is in the ownership of the National Trust, forms part of the Kingston Lacy estate.

Image courtesy of Shutterstock.



**Figure 73:** White Mill in the summer. This was one of eight mills on the Stour that were listed in the Domesday Book.

At Wimborne Minster, which is also built close to the Stour floodplain, a sequence of photographic images shows an increasing encroachment of vegetation, both scrub and trees, adjacent to the riverbank in areas that were previously largely pasture land.



**Figure 74:** The River Stour looking towards Wimborne Minster was illustrated by the watercolourist, Walter Frederick Tyndale, in 'Wessex' by C. Holland (1906). Water meadows occupy the floodplain south of the town.



**Figure 75:** This postcard c.1930 shows a slightly closer view of the town but, overall, there is relatively little change to the river environment over the intervening period.



**Figure 76:** From slightly further to the west the present day view shows more recent residential development between the river and the Minster.

Flowing east and then south-east from Wimborne Minster, the Stour follows a winding course forming a northern boundary to the Bournemouth conurbation. At Throop once again the river's waters have been harnessed and their volume can be clearly seen in the photograph of the mill and weir at Throop (see Figure 77 below). The wider river floodplain becomes more confined past Blackwater, the site of a popular ferry crossing and tavern in Victorian and Edwardian times. From there the river flows past Iford and Tuckton to Wick, before emerging into Christchurch Harbour. There are many artworks depicting scenes of the harbour, particularly of views looking across the water towards Christchurch Priory.



**Figure 77:** The Stour towards Throop Mill marks the northern boundary of Bournemouth. This section of the Stour has been subjected to alteration for flood defence, water abstraction and highway improvement purposes.

**Figure 78 (below):** The picturesque Inn at the Blackwater Rope Ferry crossing was demolished in 1925; the site was chosen by many artists. The improvement of the A338 and other development have left the site overgrown and lost in time (see **Figure 79, right**).

Image courtesy of Sue Newman (Newman, 2009<sup>3</sup>).

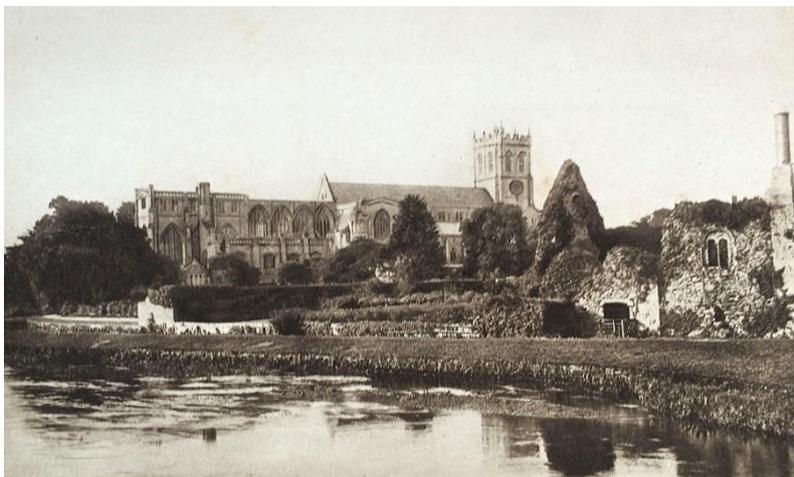


On the northern side of the River Avon, at its confluence with the Stour, lies the Medieval town of Christchurch, which contains a designated conservation area with numerous Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments; one of these is Christchurch Priory. The watercolour drawings and oil paintings by artists from the middle and late nineteenth centuries show the Priory set slightly above the adjacent river and water meadows. Other historic buildings, including Place Mill, benefitted from improved flood defence measures particularly after floods in 1979 and later. The openness of the harbour and the channel known as ‘The Run’ were also depicted by artists both for the quality of the natural landscape and for the distant views offered of the Priory from across the waters from Mudeford to the north-east and from Hengistbury Head to the south-west.



**Figure 80:** ‘Priory Church, Christchurch’ c.1840, a lithograph by B. Hawkins. The view from across the river was selected by many artists. On the right is the Constable’s House, which, with the castle, dates back to Norman times.

Image courtesy of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.



**Figure 81:** This sepia postcard, c.1910, shows the same view with a stone wall protecting the river bank. Further flood defence measures are under consideration. **Figure 82 (below left)** shows the nature of the river from the eastern side where the vulnerability of waterfront properties at that time is clearly illustrated.

The Lower Stour flood defence scheme (1993) saw the provision of tide gates and other improvements to protect low-lying properties including Listed Buildings (**Figure 83 below**).





**Figures 84 and 85 (above)** show Christchurch Harbour as depicted by William Pitcairn Knowles (c.1846-c.1904), with the Priory Church on the horizon. The harbour is sheltered by Hengistbury Head to the south and east and Mudeford to the north-east.

Image courtesy of Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth.

**Figures 86 and 86 (below)** show *'The Run'* at Mudeford painted by the same artist and a present day photograph from a similar vantage point.

Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art gallery & Museum, Bournemouth.



Hengistbury Head runs eastwards from Bournemouth for a distance of approximately 3km, and protects Christchurch Harbour from the prevailing south-westerly storm waves. The location is particularly well-known for the 'Double Dykes' which are at the seaward end of the Head. During the Iron Age, the headland was defended by this parallel pair of dykes that ran from the sea to the south across Hengistbury Head to Christchurch Harbour to the north. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the frontage is defended by a substantial beach along the south side, which is controlled by rock groynes. The Long Groyne, and the seventeen associated groynes sited due north of it at Hengistbury Head, fulfil a key coast protection function. Because of the nature of this landscape, it was not chosen by many artists as a subject in its own right in the past and there are very few historical artworks of it.

## **6.2. Images illustrating the heritage assets of the Stour Catchment, including mills, bridges and residences**

The County of Dorset has a very rich heritage in terms of both its historic landscapes and the built environment, and a journey down the River Stour, and within its catchment from source to sea, clearly influences how its occupiers over time have changed the river landscape in a range of ways including river engineering and land drainage, urban development, the construction of riverside fortifications, water mills and bridges, as well as private residences. *'The Stour is particularly rich in terms of its historic mills and the Domesday Book of 1086 listed 226 working mills in Dorset'* (Guttridge, 2010<sup>4</sup>). Many of these, together with local farm buildings, manor houses and bridges have been carefully restored in line with the planning guidelines set out by Dorset County Council in its 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Plan' (Dorset County Council, 2010<sup>2</sup>).

Historic towns and villages built alongside the Stour contain numerous Listed Buildings and sixteen of these have their own designated Conservation Areas. The high land through which the rivers of the Stour catchment have carved their valleys offered the potential as a natural barrier against attack and in Prehistoric times hilltops, such as those at Hod Hill, Spetisbury, Badbury Rings and Hambledon Hill, formed local strongholds which were protected by ditches, earthworks and palisades from the Bronze Age and Iron Age; later, some of these were overrun and occupied by the invading Romans.

Whilst the Stour played an important role in terms of communication and the local economy of the area, it could also act as a barrier to cross-country movement, and from the Middle Ages bridges were constructed often initially of timber but, later, of stone or brick. The Stour valley has a remarkable heritage in terms of bridges, and those at Spetisbury, White Mill Bridge near Sturminster Marshall, Blandford, Wimborne and Sturminster Newton are some of the finest examples.

Alongside the rich farmlands of the Stour valley the villages and small towns contain numerous fine buildings, many of which are Listed on account of their historic interest. Apart from the great estates, such as Stourhead, Bryanston, and Kingston Lacy, which are frequently illustrated in major topographical works, many of the smaller houses were also illustrated in early-to-mid-nineteenth century local publications and travel guides, often as copperplate engravings or, later, as steel engravings which tended to offer finer detail. Such images can show how properties were altered and extended over time, or some lost altogether as a result of fire, neglect or change of use. Landmark buildings, such as Christchurch Priory close to where the Stour and Avon meet the sea at Christchurch Harbour, were painted by numerous artists on account of the striking scene provided by the Priory set against the low-lying surrounding land.

Local artists, such as the prolific Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904), gave us an insight to the management of land, including streams and water meadows, in Dorset through some 1500 watercolours held by Dorset County Museum. Frederick William Newton Whitehead (1853-1938) was

a painter of the landscape, including also architectural subjects. His numerous works give an indication of the rural character of this part of Wessex and the day-to-day lives of local residents.

### 6.2.1. Hill Forts

Figures 88 and 89 show the location of Rawlsbury Camp on a spur of Bulbarrow Hill near Blandford Forum. The painting is by the Dorset artist, Emma Lavinia Hardy (1840-1912), and clearly shows the embankments and ditches. The present day view shows increasing scrub growth on the hillsides as a result of reduced grazing, a feature commonly observed when comparing Victorian artworks with present day photographs.

**Figure 88 (right):** Photograph courtesy of Jim Champion.

**Figure 89 (below):** Courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



~ HILL FORTS ~



**Figure 90 (above)** is a pen, ink and wash drawing of Hod Hill looking from the west. Painted c.1930, this view looks across the Stour floodplain and the railway embankment to the Stour beyond, which closely follows the foot of the hill. The hill fort was inhabited from the Iron Age and was later the site of a Roman Camp in its north-west corner (Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum). The open downland contrasts with the heavily wooded slopes to be observed in the present day view (**Figure 91 below**). The railway line was closed in 1966.



~ HILL FORTS ~



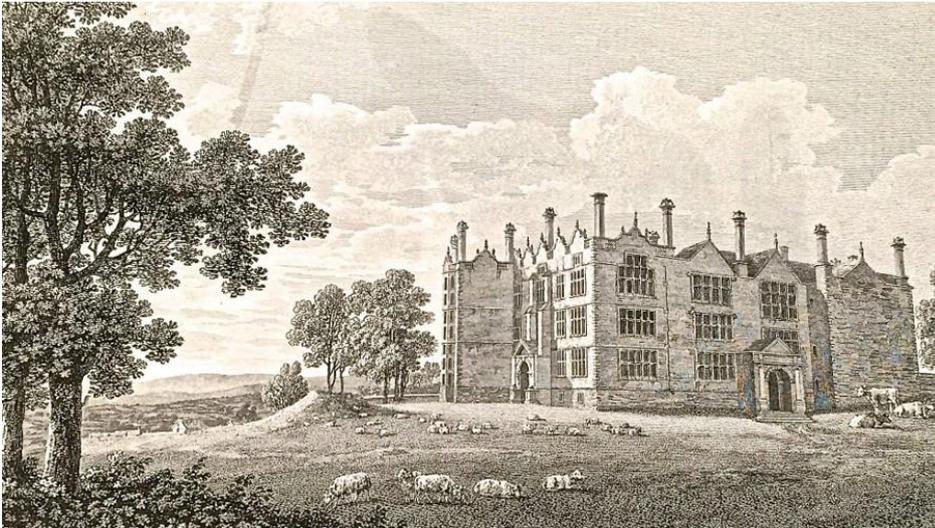
**Figure 92 (above):** This pen, ink and wash view shows the village of Spetisbury which is located adjacent to the River Stour to the south-east of Blandford Forum. Behind this linear village is Spetisbury Rings, an Iron Age hill fort, which is visible on the summit in this drawing. The fine detail depicted here shows the River Stour in the foreground, the limited development at that time and the layout of the fields on the hillside. Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum. **Figure 93 (below)** shows the present day view, which, even in late autumn, is largely obscured by the trees.



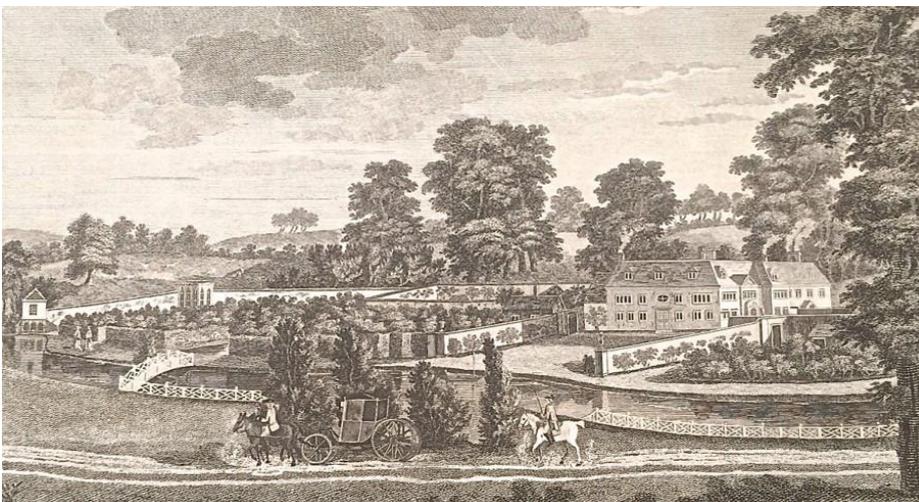
~ FINE MANSIONS ~



**Figure 94:** There are a wealth of drawings, watercolours and paintings of Stourhead and its grounds (see also Figures 14-16), which plot the gradual development and landscaping of this site since the eighteenth century. Many of these are in the collection of the National Trust and may be viewed online.



**Figure 95:** Early engravings such as this view of 'Stalbridge House' by J. Nichols (1813) provide the only visual images of properties that have been lost through fire, changing tastes and demolition. This house was demolished in 1823, long before the days of photography.



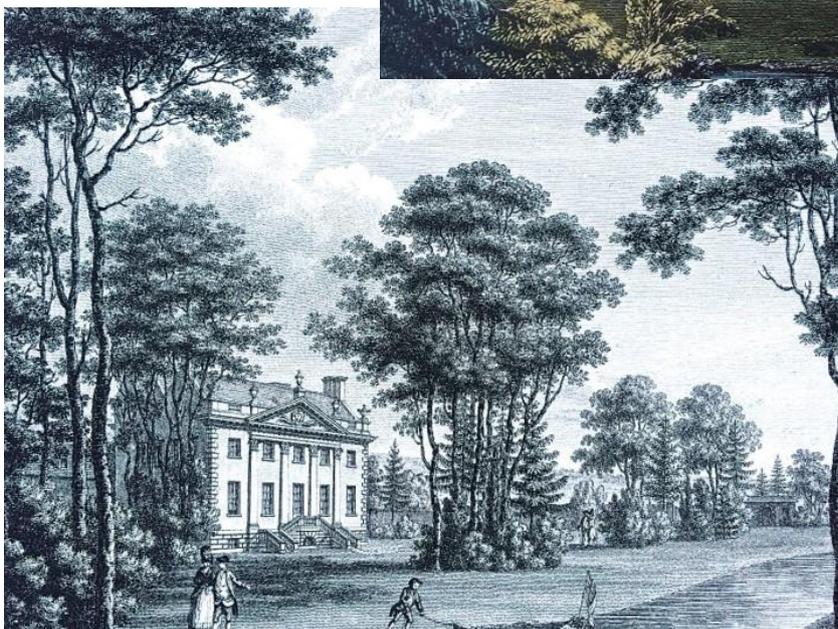
**Figure 96:** Some properties such as 'Plumber Manor' near Sturminster Newton on the River Divelish (which flows into the Stour) have been altered over time. This eighteenth century copperplate engraving shows the arrangement of the old house as well as depicting its landscaped grounds at that time; the property was modernised in the early twentieth century.

~ FINE MANSIONS ~



**Figure 97:** This copperplate engraving by Jan Kip (c.1709) from *'Britannia Illustrata'* (Kip, 1709<sup>5</sup>) shows the layout of formal gardens at Bryanston, the seat of Henry Portman. Although such views were not necessarily topographically accurate, or may have been aspirational, they can provide information on the layout of historical properties and their formal gardens.

**Figure 98:** This more detailed view of *'Bryanston'* by John Preston Neale (1831) is from *'Views of the Seats, Mansions, Castles, etc. of Noblemen and Gentlemen'* (Neale, 1831<sup>6</sup>). Engraved on a steel plate finer detail could be achieved compared to the copperplate engravings of Kip and others.



**Figure 99:** This view of *'Ranston'* on the River Iwerne, which flows into the Stour, is situated near Stourpaine. The scene was drawn by the leading late eighteenth century watercolourist, Thomas Hearne, in 1779. Early views of this kind form a starting point for the study of the architectural history of such properties.

~ FINE MANSIONS ~



**Figure 100:** This engraving shows 'Wolland House' on the River Divilish in 1857. The property has seen a long history of alterations since the seventeenth century and such changes have been recorded through the eyes of engravers.



**Figure 101:** This engraving of 'Kingston Hall' (now known as Kingston Lacy) was drawn by John Preston Neale in 1831. It shows the home of the Bankes family and their extensive landholdings extended down to the River Stour. Artists such as Neale, and others with architectural draughtsmanship skills, provide valuable records of historic buildings, which are often very accurate.



**Figure 102:** The classical, two storey Kingston Hall was transformed by architect Charles Barry in the 1830s by encasing and enlarging the original building to produce an Italianate mansion.

Image courtesy of Andrew Matthewson/Geograph.

~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figure 103:** John Constable RA (1776-1837) visited Gillingham in 1820 and 1823 and produced several views of 'Purn's Mill' or 'Parham's Mill' as well as one of the bridge (see also Figure 3 and 17). Constable had an eye for detail and his depictions in the Dorset Stour Valley can be considered to provide an accurate record of the locality in the early nineteenth century. This view of the Mill represents one of only two depictions of the building in full colour as it burnt down in September 1825. Image courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.



**Figure 104 (left):** This photograph, c.1950, shows Eccliffe Mill, Madjeston and bridge. There are fewer artworks of the lesser mills as they were seen by some artists as part of every day life and did not merit a painting. Fortunately, there is a rich photographic record such as that held by The Mills Archive (<http://catalogue.millsarchive.org>).

Image courtesy of The Mills Archive.

**Figure 105 (below)** shows the present condition of the mill, the wheel and sluices having been removed.



~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figures 106 and 107:** Dating back to the Domesday Book Stour Provost Mill was one of many along the upper reaches of the river. The early nineteenth century mill buildings have been carefully restored. Image courtesy of The Mills Archive.



**Figures 108 and 109:** Dating from the 1820s the picturesque King's Mill at Marnhull is clearly depicted in this photograph taken in about 1931. The mill wheel is on the left hand of the building. Image courtesy of The Mills Archive.



~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



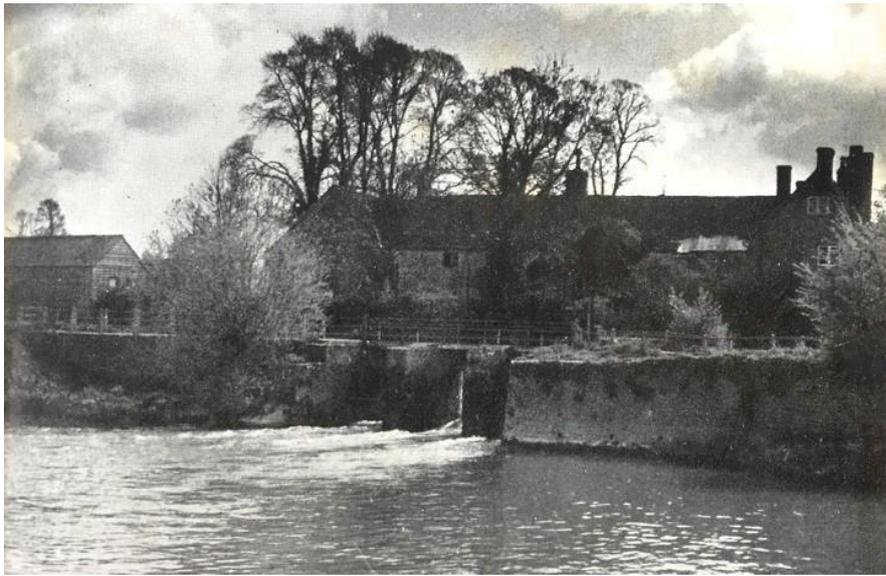
**Figures 110-113:** The mill at Sturminster Newton (left) is finely painted in watercolour by Dorset artist, Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904). The ancient mill dates from the seventeenth century and is in working order. The scene has changed little over the last three centuries.

Images courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 113 (above):** This very clear photograph shows the rear view of the mill in about 1900. Private Collection.

~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figure 114 (left):** A short distance down river is Fiddleford Mill, the site also being well-known for its Manor House, which is in the care of English Heritage.



**Figures 115 and 116:** The engraving from about 1870 and the photographic postcard below show Durweston Mill.

Constructed of red brick this substantial mill ground flour though now it forms residential apartments. The sluices in the engraving and the bridge can be seen in both views, although the side of the mill had been substantially altered by 1900. Present day views of the mill are shown in Figures 117-1190.



~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figure 117:** Today's view shows the significant modification of Durweston Mill over a period of 150 years, although the sluices and bridge remain. The roar of the water passing under the bridge contrasts with the tranquility of the mill pond (**Figure 118, middle**).



**Figure 119:** View of the mill today from the south-east side.

~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figure 120:** This very detailed oil painting by Arthur Henry Davis (1881) shows the rear view of Walford Mill at Wimborne Minster on the River Allen. Such artworks allow us to make direct comparisons with the present day view (**Figure 121 below**). Today the old thatched mill now has a tiled roof and the buildings have been restored beautifully. However, the mill pond is now overgrown and just an area of marshy ground.

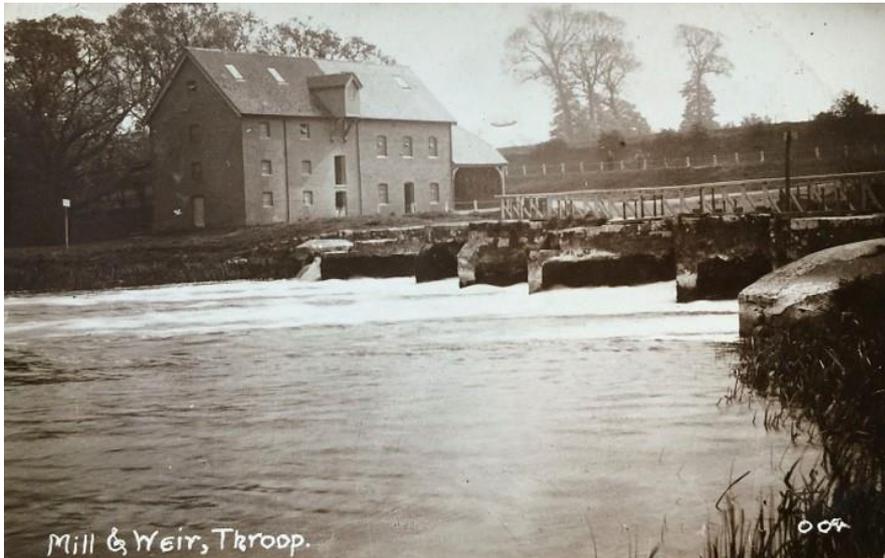
Image of painting courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth.



~ HISTORIC MILLS ~



**Figure 122:** White Mill on the Kingston Lacy estate is one of the oldest mills on the Stour. No artworks have been found of the Mill despite its picturesque location.

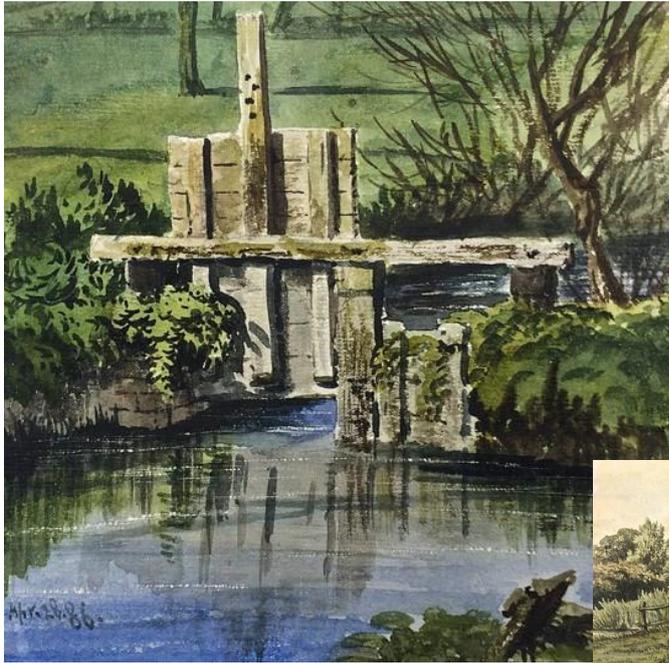


**Figure 123:** This view shows the Victorian Throop Mill in about 1900, although its origins date back to the Domesday Book. The brick mill remains today in excellent condition and virtually unaltered from the Victorian photograph. A detailed history of the mill is provided in *'The Stour Valley'* (Legg, 2003<sup>7</sup>).



**Figure 124:** A present day view of the mill.

~ RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT ~



The depiction of weirs, traps, water wheels and other such local features were often ignored by artists, with the exception of local artists/antiquarians who were fascinated with rural life and practices. In Dorset Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904) painted rural scenes such as these (Figures 125-129) along Dorset's rivers and streams. Although not of the Stour, these scenes are typical of the river landscapes and structures within the catchment. Moule did, however, paint views on the Stour including the mill at Sturminster Newton (front cover).



Images courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

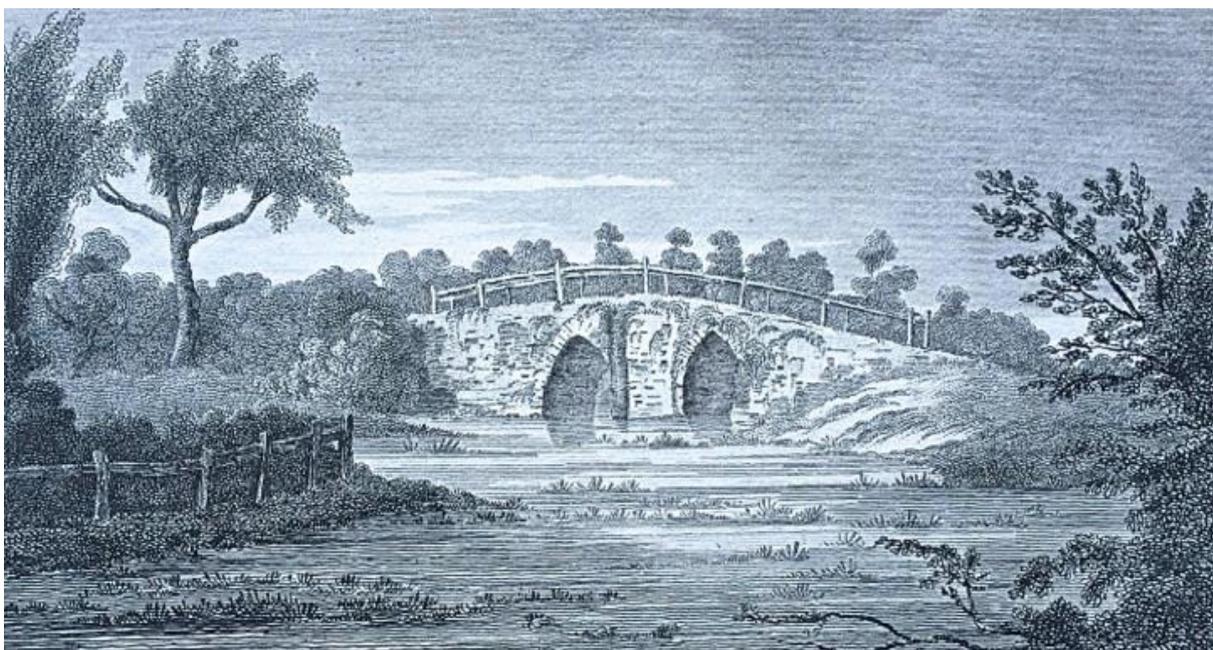


~ BRIDGES ~

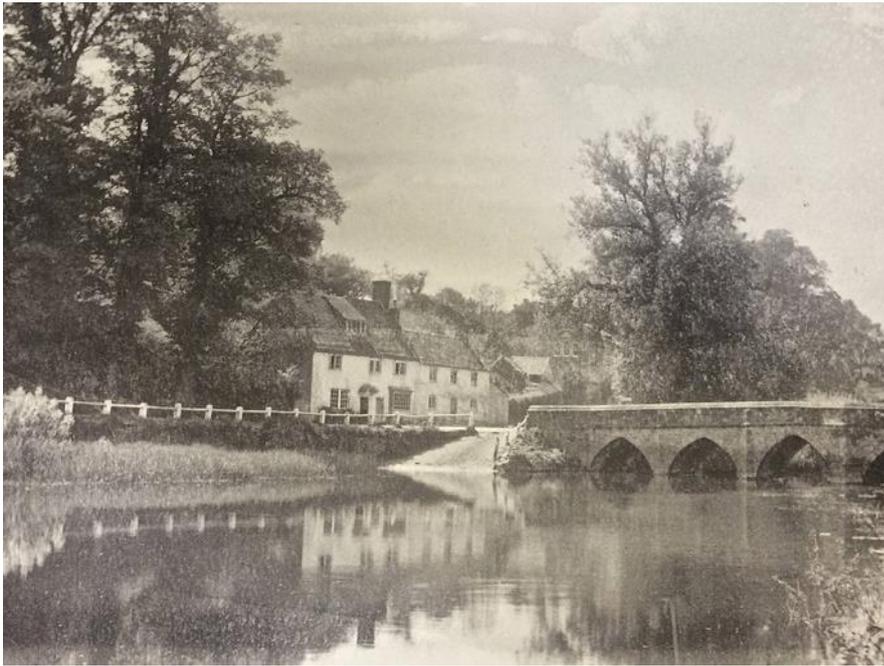


**Figure 130:** In 1811 Dr John Fisher introduced his nephew, John Fisher, to Constable. The younger Fisher became the artist's closest friend, providing moral and financial support whenever they were needed and often purchasing works from Constable which he could ill afford. In 1819 Fisher became Vicar of Gillingham in Dorset and Constable was invited to stay there in 1820 and again in 1823. On the second occasion he painted this picture of the bridge with the village church beyond. Fisher's son, Osmond, later recalled seeing Constable sitting with his easel in the meadow at the right hand corner. Image courtesy of Tate Images © 2017.

**Figure 131 (below):** This early copperplate engraving by T. Rackett shows King's Stag Bridge over the River Lydden, south-east of Sturminster Newton in 1813. It was published in the monthly '*Gentleman's Magazine*' (1731<sup>8</sup>) which is a rich source of such early antiquarian subjects.



~ BRIDGES ~

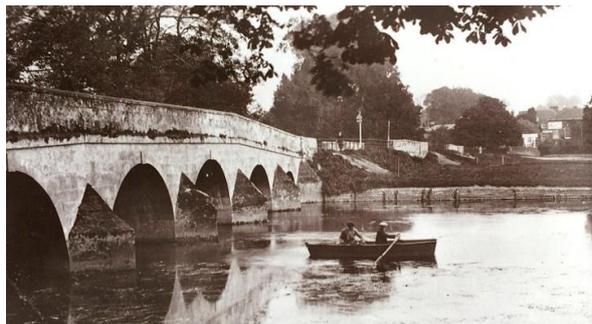


Figures 132 (top) and 133 (middle) show the Sturminster Town Bridge in the 1930s and the present day view of the structure. It is one of several iconic bridges over the Stour and others are depicted overleaf.



Figure 132 courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

Figures 134 and 135 (below) are a steel engraving and a photograph (c.1920) of Blandford Bridge, which dates back to the thirteenth century. Colour artworks of this bridge have not been found, although there is a rich photographic resource.



~ BRIDGES ~



**Figure 136:** Crawford Bridge at Spetisbury and **Figure 137 (middle)** White Mill Bridge near Sturminster Marshall are both of considerable historical importance and aesthetically pleasing. Despite this, artworks of bridges are rare and, therefore, the best medium for research is old photographs or photographic postcards.



**Figures 138 and 139 (below)** are of the Grade I Listed Julian's Bridge at the entrance to Wimborne Minster from the south-west. The land adjoining the riverbank has since been developed.



~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figure 140 (above):** This oil painting of *'Shapwick Church'* by Dorset artist, Frederick Whitehead (1853-1938), shows the church located very close to the north bank of the River Stour. Its picturesque location is illustrated clearly in the aerial photograph (as **Figure 141 below**). Whitehead produced over fifty paintings of Dorset, which are held in public collections, and this view was selected in view of its careful portrayal of the historic character of the waterside village.

Figure 140 courtesy of Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum. Figure 141 courtesy of Archaeology National Trust SW.wordpress.com.



~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figure 142 (left):** This photograph of Shapwick (c.1950s) still shows the apparent vulnerability of the church and flooding in its location immediately adjacent to the River Stour.



**Figure 143 (left):** The present day view of Shapwick Church. The riverside properties now have the additional protection of flood defence measures including gates.



**Figure 144:** For each site included within these case studies images were taken to the sites concerned in order that direct comparisons could be made in terms of both topographical and architectural accuracy. The results were used to inform the artists' ranking system and scoring. In addition, this allowed an on-site assessment to be made of the sites' contribution to our understanding of how imagery can inform us of the historical character of the Stour catchment.

~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figures 145-158 (following)** provide a sequence of depictions, in chronological order, of one of Dorset's (formerly Hampshire's) most painted locations – Christchurch Priory. Such sequences of artworks illustrate differing artistic styles and media and also test artistic accuracy, as well as depicting the historical character of the site. **Figure 145 (above)** is an aquatint engraving by the topographical artist, William Daniell RA, and is a plate from his '*Voyage Round Great Britain*' (Daniell & Ayton, 1814-1825<sup>9</sup>). **Figure 146 (below)** is a lithograph taken from across the river by Louis Haghe in about 1840.



~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figure 147:** This oil painting by Christina Allen shows '*Place Mill and the Priory*' in c.1880 and can be compared with the present day view (**Figure 149 below**).

Image courtesy of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.



**Figure 148:** Sidney Pike, a prolific painter of south coast views in oils, painted the Priory in 1896. It compares favourably with the present day view.

Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth.



**Figure 149:** The present day view remains virtually unaltered except for the mature trees, which in summer obscure the Priory from the water.

~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figure 150:** The prolific postcard artist, Alfred Robert Quinton (active 1900-1934), painted several views of Christchurch with his bright watercolour palate. This view is taken from Wick across the river in about 1915.

Image courtesy of J. & F. Salmon Limited of Sevenoaks.



**Figure 151:** This photographic postcard, c.1900, is taken from almost the same location. Place Mill stands out in the centre right of the view.



**Figure 152:** This aerial view of Christchurch Priory in 1951 shows its location close to the confluence of the Avon and the Stour and almost surrounded by water. Although more development has taken place Victorian and Edwardian visitors would notice relatively little change as the historical character of the waterfront is well preserved.

Image courtesy of Britain From Above © Historic England.

~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



This series of views of Christchurch Priory are all taken from the north-east and include in the foreground (right) the ruins of the Constable's House and Keep, which date back to Norman Times.

**Figure 153** is a lithograph by Day & Haigh, c.1850, and shows the open view of the waterfront.

Courtesy of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.



**Figure 154:** This further view by Sidney Pike of *'The Priory and Constable's House'* was painted in 1894, and the scene is virtually unchanged. Image courtesy of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.



**Figure 155:** This attractive watercolour by Henry B. Wimbush, c.1900, provides a closer and more detailed view of the riverside architecture at that time.

Private Collection.

~ ECCLESIASTICAL BUILDINGS ~



**Figure 156:** A further view by A. R. Quinton, a contemporary of Wimbush, painted in about 1910 provides more architectural detail of the Priory.

Image courtesy of J. & F. Salmon Limited of Sevenoaks.



**Figure 157:** A photographic postcard, c.1920, closely replicates the watercolours of Wimbush and Quinton and confirm the attention to detail provided in their artworks.



**Figure 158:** The present day view with the growth of trees along the riverside and around the Priory now partially obscures the architecture.

### 6.3. Images illustrating the working lives of riverside communities

The Stour catchment of Dorset is a key feature of the landscape for at least 2,000 years, it has contributed to the development and culture of the County. Art and photographic imagery, dating back to the late eighteenth century, provide an insight into daily life of residents within the Stour valley, for which an important focus was agriculture, in terms of grazing on the water meadows and adjacent hillsides, and the growth of crops. The river itself provided resources in terms of reeds (osiers) for the manufacture of household goods. The river was also a source of food, with marine species being common in the lower reaches, including flatfish, bass and mullet, as well as annual runs of salmon and sea trout; higher up the river eel fisheries were historically important.

Riverside residents often occupied small thatched cottages immediately abutting streams and rivers which were prone to regular flooding, whilst more substantial mills were constructed where the opportunity for harnessing water power could be maximised.

In those locations where bridges did not exist, local ferries fulfilled a useful role, such as those at Wick near Christchurch and the Blackwater Ferry. On account of the human interest and the opportunities to portray attractive rural scenes, the 'ferry' was a popular subject for both artists and, later, photographers.



**Figure 159:** Riverside life for farm workers might seem idyllic in the watercolours of Myles Birket Foster from the late nineteenth century but often cottagers lived in very poor conditions with their properties at risk of flooding. Although of an unidentified location, this watercolour '*Fetching Water*' depicts a typical scene from daily life, which is echoed in the watercolours of Dorset artist, Henry J. Moule (see **Figures 175 and 176**).

Image courtesy of Bonham's.

~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



**Figure 160:** Larger quantities of water were collected using a barrel mounted on a horse-drawn cart as here at Blandford Forum in about 1890.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 161:** This wicker enclosure on the banks of the Stour at Shapwick may have been cut into the river bank, which is supported by timber shuttering providing access into the water and the dip.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



**Figure 162:** This watercolour by H. J. Moule, late nineteenth century, shows farmworkers sawing logs; a routine task for winter fuel. Moule's Dorset riverside watercolours provide a wealth of local detail on life in the countryside along the county's rivers.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



**Figures 163 (top) and 164 (middle):** Rushing or the utilisation of the Bullrushes (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) along the river banks is a well-documented activity stretching back to ancient times, and was undertaken along the River Stour.

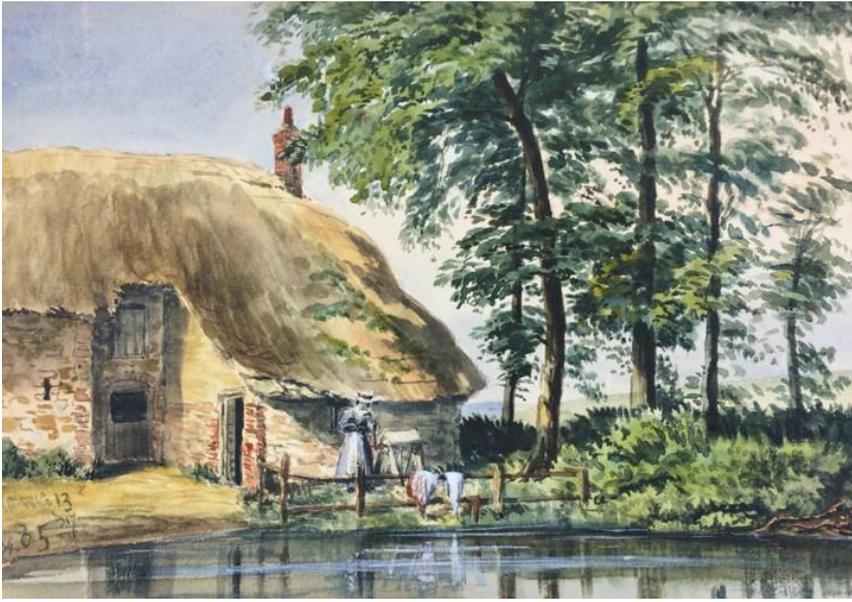
Traditionally, the men harvested the rushes in bundles and the family collaborated to turn these into goods such as floor mats, chairs, baskets and footwear during the winter for use and sale, with each cutter owning a right to a certain length of river bank (Parker, 2007<sup>10</sup>). These woodcuts (also Figures 168, 173 and 177 below) are from an article on 'Life on the Upper Thames' (Sept. 1873). These activities were typical also of the Dorset Stour.



**Figure 165:** Water meadows are irrigated areas of agricultural land alongside rivers which, thanks to the carefully engineered and maintained channels, produced rich crops and lush grazing land due to nutrient trapping and a steady water supply. In the south-west of England these became popular from the thirteenth century and were highly sought after until the late nineteenth century when cheaper imports and artificial fertilisers became more economically viable. Water meadows are found along the banks of the Stour including at Blandford,

Shillingstone, Durweston, Sturminster and Stourpaine (Historic England, 2007<sup>11</sup>). This oil painting by Peter Monstead (1908, oil on canvas) depicts a typical rural scene. Image courtesy of Bonham's.

~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



Figures 166-168 depict typical scenes of riverside life in the late nineteenth century.



Figures 166 (top) and 167 (middle) are watercolours by Dorset artist, Henry J. Moule (1825-1904) whose collections of over 1,400 local views form a valuable archive of Dorset riverside and rural life; they are held by Dorset County Museum.



Figure 168 (bottom) is a late nineteenth century woodcut engraving from *'The Graphic'*, a popular illustrated magazine, which described English riverside life.

~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



**Figures 169-171** show harvesting scenes adjacent to the river within the flood plains and water meadows. The upper and middle images are again depictions by H. J. Moule, whose late nineteenth century watercolours are often finely detailed.



Images courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

On some stretches of rivers it was possible to use shallow-bottomed barges for local transport of hay or reeds where conditions permitted (**Figure 180 bottom**). This oil by Henry H. Parker (1858-1930) depicts such a scene.

Image courtesy of Bonham's



~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



Figures 172-174 depict fishing scenes.

The Stour is recognised as a historically important fishery of Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and Salmon. These species used the river as a migratory corridor and this made capture using eel traps and nets relatively easy. Stationary traps were the traditional, passive method of catching eels and fish as they swam up or down the river, typically made from timbers, rubble and wicker baskets. Other structures include weirs, derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for fish trap, also create a barrier to the fish. The traps have not changed significantly over the last 3,000 years. On the Stour an eel weir is still in use, this works through a slightly different mechanism by channelling the eels up towards the surface where they can be captured (Historic England, 2011<sup>12</sup>; Righton & Roberts, 2014<sup>13</sup>).



Figure 172 image courtesy of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.

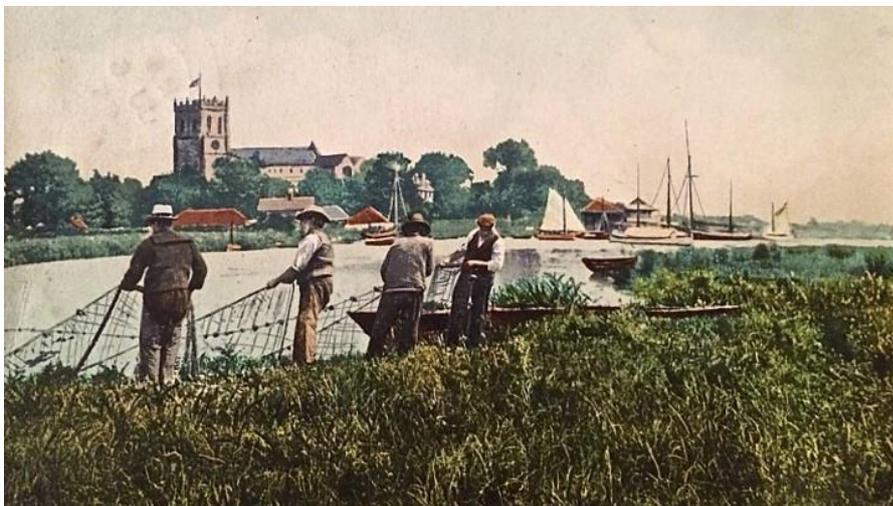
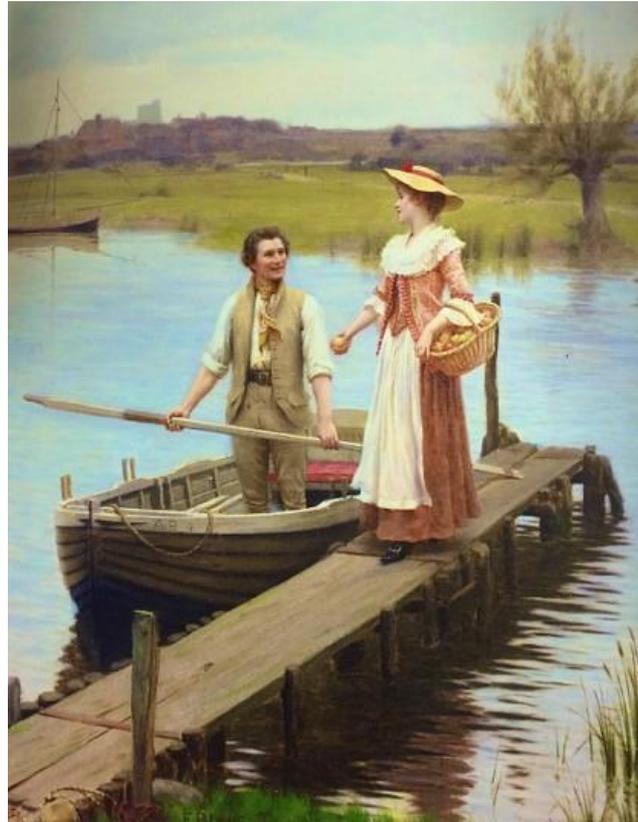


Figure 173 from *'Life on the Upper Thames'* (1873) shows a scene that would be typical also on the Stour.

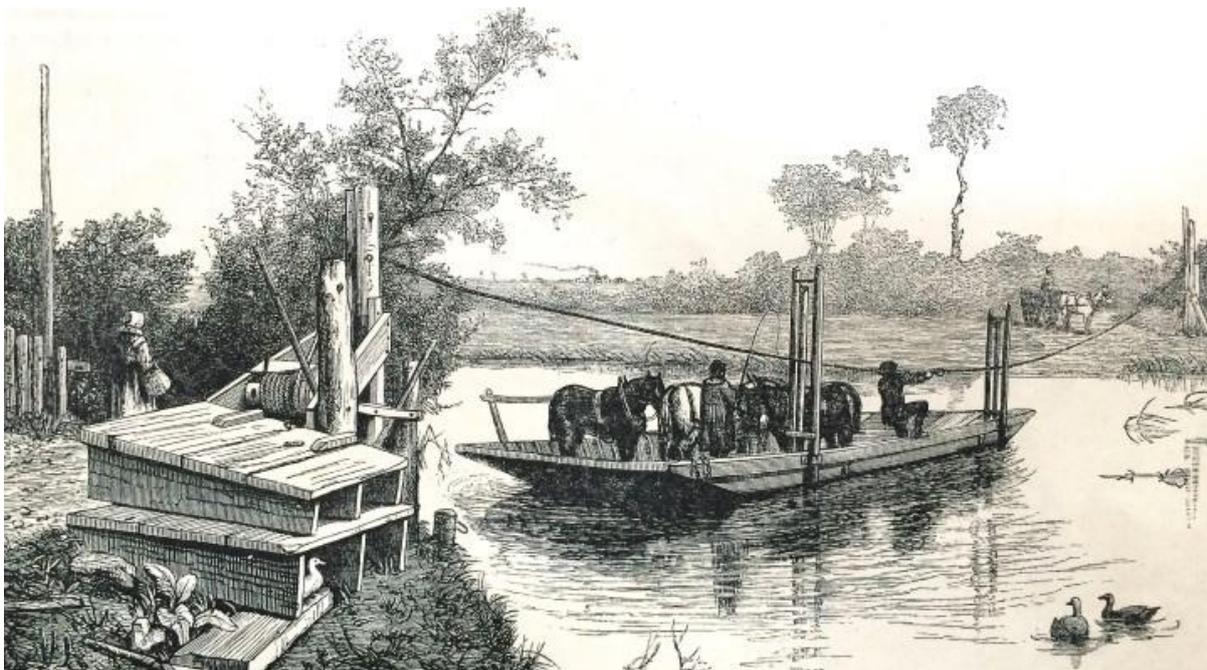
Figure 174: Salmon fishing at Christchurch in 1905.

~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



**Figures 175-180 (and overleaf)** illustrate ferries, which formed a vital communication link where bridges were unavailable. Examples of these are illustrated here.

**Figure 175 (top left)** shows the rope ferry at Blackwater to the north-east of Bournemouth (image © Francis Frith Collection), whilst the oil painting in **Figure 176 (top right)** shows a simple passenger link. This oil is by E. B. Leighton (1996); image courtesy of Bonham's. Where livestock or other larger items required transport, rope bridges could also be used, as illustrated in this woodcut (**Figure 177 below**).



~ WORKING LIVES OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES ~



Where passenger traffic increased as a result of recreation ferries fulfilled a key role such as at Wick near Christchurch. **Figures 178-180** below provide three such views.

**Figure 178:** *'Wick Ferry'* by Arthur H. Davis in 1879.

Image courtesy of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth.



**Figure 179:** *'Wick Ferry West Landing'* in 1900.

Image courtesy © Francis Frith Collection.



**Figure 180:** *'Wick Ferry'*, c.1910. Fishermen could gain income from the provision of ferry services during the summer season as Christchurch's visitor numbers increased steadily.

## 6.4. Imagery and leisure within the Stour catchment

The depictions of social life along the River Stour vary considerably depending on the location and the wealth of the adjacent land and property owners. At Stourhead, at the headwaters of the river, the owners made continuous improvements to their property and to the estate with the assistance of the nation's leading architects and landscape gardeners. The result was that the owners often wished to show off their elegance and good taste by welcoming visitors who enjoyed the opportunity to admire the state rooms or to stroll through the pleasure grounds.

During the nineteenth century, the British middle classes began to revel in the varied delights of 'messaging about on the river' (Muir, 1986<sup>14</sup>). The publication of the *'The Compleat Angler'* in 1653 (Walton, 1653<sup>15</sup>) highlighted the recreational opportunities and benefits of angling and boating, and this became increasingly popular through the decades. There are numerous artistic depictions of both angling and leisure boating, which are often set against the backdrop of river scenery.

Recreational sailing and yacht racing became increasingly popular in the early part of the nineteenth century, but images by artists such as William Daniell RA depict small boats with sails on the lower Stour, set against Christchurch Priory in the background, whilst elegant ladies enjoyed rowing on the quieter stretches of the river where, on occasions, they gathered lilies to fill their garden ponds and lakes or to sell at market.



**Figure 181 (left):** *'View of the Pantheon and Gardens at Stourhead'* by Paul Sandby Munn (1817). Image courtesy of Guy Peppiatt Fine Art.

**Figure 182 (bottom left):** *'The Young Fisherman'* by Edward Wilkins Waite. Image courtesy of Bonham's.

**Figure 183 (bottom right):** *'Beside the river'* by Dorset artist, Henry J. Moule (1825-1904).



~ IMAGERY AND LEISURE ~



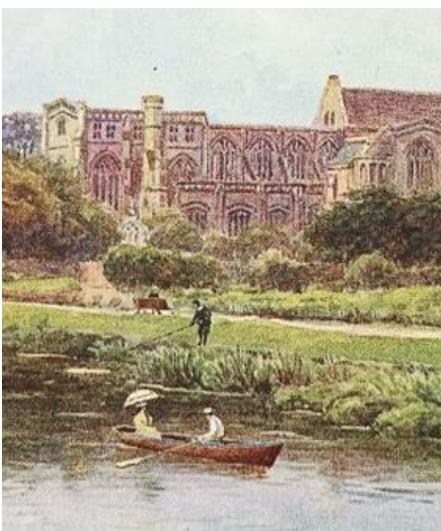
**Figure 184:** Elegant ladies and a gentleman rowing on the Stour in 1883.

Image courtesy of Dorset County Museum.

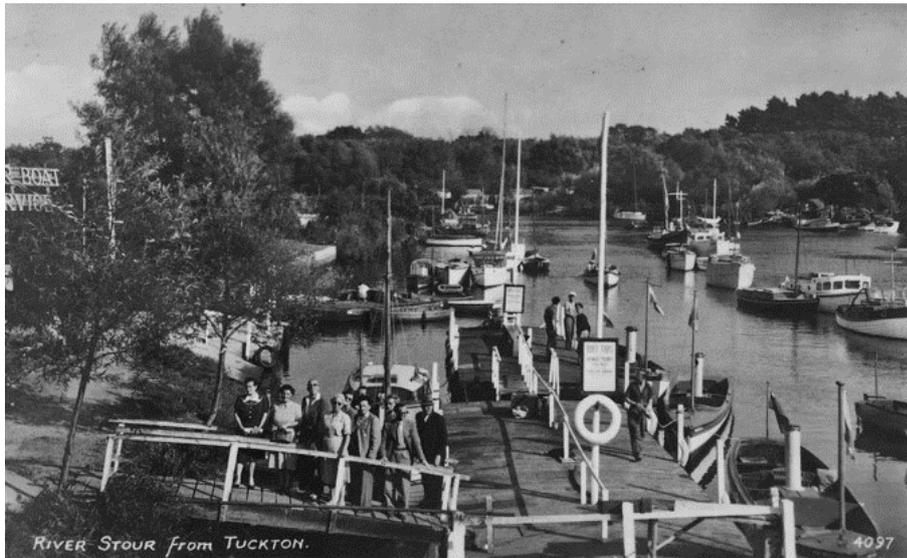


**Figure 185:** Ladies boating amongst the water lilies. Late nineteenth century woodcut.

**Figures 186 (bottom left) and 187 (bottom right)** show rowing and sailing against the backdrop of Christchurch Priory in 1910 and 1823 respectively.



~ IMAGERY AND LEISURE ~



**Figures 188-190** on this page show the increased development and intensification of leisure boating along the banks of the river. The photographic postcard (top) shows the Stour at Tuckton in 1950, whilst the postcard in the middle, of the same date, shows steam launches lined up alongside the jetty.



**Figure 190 (bottom)** shows the river frontage today, with extensive property development and moored pleasure yachts.



Image courtesy of Ian Woodcock/Shutterstock.

Illness in the Victorian era, such as consumption, encouraged walking in the fresh air and riverside paths provided ideal walks for this purpose (see Figure 183).

The lower reaches of the Stour below Tuckton Bridge, leading down towards Christchurch Harbour, became increasingly popular into the twentieth century for recreational boating with visitors enjoying river cruises in small steamboats, which were drawn up in lines alongside the jetties. The popularity of this location has continued to the present day, with significant riverside development and anchorages for a wide range of craft, ranging from traditional to ultra-modern (see Figures 188-190).

Others preferred more leisurely pursuits, such as picnicking alongside the riverbanks, and the Blackwater Ferry site near Herne was particularly popular as Victorian and Edwardian visitors could enjoy refreshments overlooking the river and watching the ferryman passing back and forth with passengers by means of a rope straddling the river from side to side (see Figures 79).

From the late-nineteenth century into the twentieth century Christchurch Harbour and Hengistbury Head proved particularly popular venues for artists and photographers, and many of these views are contained in Dorset's public art galleries and museums.

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## 7. Analysis and Discussion

### 7.1. Introduction

This study has focussed on how historical imagery (landscape paintings, drawings, prints, postcards and old photographs) can be used as evidential proof of the historic character of the Stour catchment in Dorset, both in terms of heritage features such as buildings but also the landscape as heritage in its own right. The use of imagery provides a novel way of illustrating, often in full colour, river landscapes through time, and allows the evaluation of heritage benefits in an immediately accessible format for a wide range of river stakeholders. This study has sought to demonstrate the value of artworks and other historical imagery as a competent and supportive tool for heritage evaluation and management in such water environments.

This study supports the work of Fjordr Limited, which is preparing a wider study of *'Historic watercourses – developing a method for identifying the historic character of watercourses, the River Stour, Dorset'* (HB7244). The project concept for this particular study developed from a previous study supported by Historic England *'CHERISH'* (Coastal Heritage Risk – Imagery in Support of Heritage Planning and Management in South-West England) (7145), which can be viewed at <http://cherish.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/>. The development of the CHERISH project, which examined coastal heritage risk in south-west England, and this new study of the River Stour relies upon the identification and assessment of a sufficient number of images being available in order to evaluate the contribution that historical imagery can provide. Fortunately, a large number of suitable images have been identified with the assistance of museums and art galleries in Dorset, together with the London auction houses and image libraries. In addition, there are a number of topographical books of the County, which often contain engravings or photographs.

### 7.2. Case Studies

This analysis considers, through the results of four case studies, how successfully historical imagery can inform us of the historic character of the Dorset Stour catchment. This study was greatly assisted by the input and interest of a wide range of stakeholders, including officers within local authorities and the key agencies, as well as curatorial staff in both local and national museums and art galleries. Imagery and its depiction of the historic character of the Stour was considered through the following four case studies;

1. Imagery depicting the physical and environmental characteristics of the River Stour source to sea;
2. Images illustrating the landscape heritage and assets of the Stour catchment;
  1. Hill forts;
  2. Fine mansions;
  3. Historic mills;
  4. River water management;
  5. Bridges;
  6. Ecclesiastical buildings;
3. Images illustrating the working lives of riverside communities;
4. Imagery and leisure within the Stour catchment.

### 7.3. The availability of images of the River Stour

The rich art history of Dorset has been described and illustrated in detail through a wide range of topographical books, artworks and photographic images held in local, regional and national collections. For this study a total of 3,100 copperplate engravings, steel plate engravings, lithographs, aquatints, oil paintings and watercolour drawings were located and examined. Most of these artworks related to the nineteenth century and the twentieth century up to 1930. Some images dating from the late eighteenth century (1770-1800) were found, but there were fewer suitable images for the period from 1930-1960.

In terms of the availability of images, these provided some limitations but also some excellent opportunities to inform the study. Some of our greatest English river painters, including Harold Sutton Palmer, the Fraser Garden family, J. M. W. Turner and, later, Alfred Robert Quinton, did not paint within the Stour valley. Also, some stretches of the river, particularly from south of Stourhead to Sturminster Newton, a predominantly rural area, were painted by few artists, the exception being John Constable who painted at Gillingham. However, the coastal zone from Christchurch, extending up towards Hurn, was painted by numerous artists with Christchurch Priory being one of the most painted buildings in Hampshire (at that time).

In terms of Dorset artists, two names are particularly important. One of the most prolific painters was Henry Joseph Moule (1825-1904), who was first curator of the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester and an important antiquarian, as well as being a competent watercolour artist. Like Sir Henry Englefield, who painted the Isle of Wight and Dorset coastlines, and Peter Orlando Hutchinson, who painted the Devon coast, Moule's work has provided us with richly illustrated detail of the lives and times of working people within the Dorset countryside, including many views taken alongside Dorset's rivers.

In terms of subject matter, artists tended to paint beauty spots such as the Blackwater Ferry crossing to the north of Bournemouth, Christchurch Priory and the harbour, and some of the more picturesque mills, such as Walford Mill at Wimborne Minster, and, for Constable, Purn's Mill at Gillingham. Topographical artists produced numerous watercolours and engravings of some of the great houses, including Stourhead, Kingston Lacy and Bryanston, as well as many of the smaller country houses. These artworks, which often show the architecture in great detail, as well as the layout of the estates at that time, may often provide the only record of those buildings that have been destroyed by fire, altered or demolished over the intervening period.

Where artworks for a particular section of the Stour have not been found, it has generally been possible to fill gaps by taking advantage of numerous black and white photographs, particularly from the 1880s to the 1930s, which are held in public collections or photographic image libraries.

Although few artists tended to paint archaeological features such as hill forts or earthworks because of the difficulty in portraying them in oil or watercolour, there are some examples from the Stour Valley on account of their exceptional importance. Delicate pen, ink and wash watercolours were found of sites including Hod Hill and Spetisbury, as well as views of Bulbarrow and Hambledon. Generally though aerial photographs offer the best medium for examining such sites rather than artworks.

#### **7.4. How successfully do the Case Study images inform us of the historical characteristics of the Stour Catchment?**

In terms of the physical and environmental changes that have affected the character of the Stour catchment over time, changes as a result of erosion and instability, are clearly not as obvious as on the coast. Flooding, which is the most frequent hazard throughout the catchment, is difficult to depict through art, although there are numerous old photographs of flooding incidents and some historic examples are included in this report (e.g. Figure 61 of Marnhull). The most obvious observable changes are as a result of development and also the growth of trees on the hillsides as a result of the reduction of grazing since the beginning of the twentieth century; the growth of trees alongside public highways, also often obscures the open vistas depicted by artists a hundred years before.

In terms of architectural heritage, this study has demonstrated that there is a rich resource of images contained in topographical books or as artworks in museums and gallery collections. Numerous examples are illustrated in the case studies and, in order to assist researchers, practitioners and stakeholders more widely in the future, a ranking system has been refined which has provided a shortlist of over thirty artists who painted their subjects in a manner that is deemed to be most accurate. Further details of river artists can be found in Appendix 1.

Some locations were painted by numerous artists and a continuous record of the site can be provided from the late eighteenth century up to the present day. Where several images are available of a particular location or building it is possible to trace the alterations that have taken place to it, both in terms of the property and the estate, and if the building has been lost through fire or demolition, such as the case of Stalbridge House, north of Sturminster Newton (see Figure 95); this may provide the only record of the historical character of the building.

One of the significant changes that has taken place over time has been the reduction in the extent of water meadows through the Stour Valley, and numerous watercolours by H. J. Moule (Figures 125-129) illustrate the kinds of structures that were used to control water levels and flows within Dorset's rivers. Whilst not all of these were painted within on the Stour, they provide us with a clear idea of how management of land adjacent to Dorset's rivers was undertaken in practice. Further views by Moule and other artists illustrated the working lives of riverside communities, who were engaged in harvesting, fishing, reed cutting and other day to day tasks.

The Stour catchment has provided a broad range of imagery that informs us of the historical character of the Stour catchment. There are far fewer images of inland Dorset compared to the coast because of Dorset's dramatic coastal scenery, as well as the popularity of the seaside resorts and the market for the sale of paintings. Other rivers across England provide additional illustrations on physical and historic character but, for a relatively small geographical area, the Stour provides an excellent example of how art and photographic media can support understanding of riverside heritage over time.

#### **7.5. Transferability of approach to other situations and environments**

Through this river study the opportunities provided by the utilisation of artistic and photographic images extending back to the 1770s, has been described. Alongside the evaluation of coastal art provided through the CHERISH project, the study of rivers demonstrates the benefits that can be gained from following such an approach for other possible environments, such as the landscapes of other parts of the interior of this country. The rich resource of images of the English landscape, together with the heritage that borders other major rivers from source to sea, could provide further additional benefits to heritage, land and river management by drawing in examples from across the country. In addition, many artworks exist that provide great detail of the landscaped grounds of great



**Figure 191:** *'An Evening on the River'* by George Gordon Fraser (1859-1895). Watercolour. Image courtesy of Bonham's

**Figure 192:** *'Entrance to Boulter's Lock, Maidenhead'* by Alfred Robert Quinton. Watercolour. c.1920. Courtesy J. & F. Salmon Ltd of Sevenoaks. Quinton produced nearly one hundred accurate watercolours of English river scenery between 1900-1934.

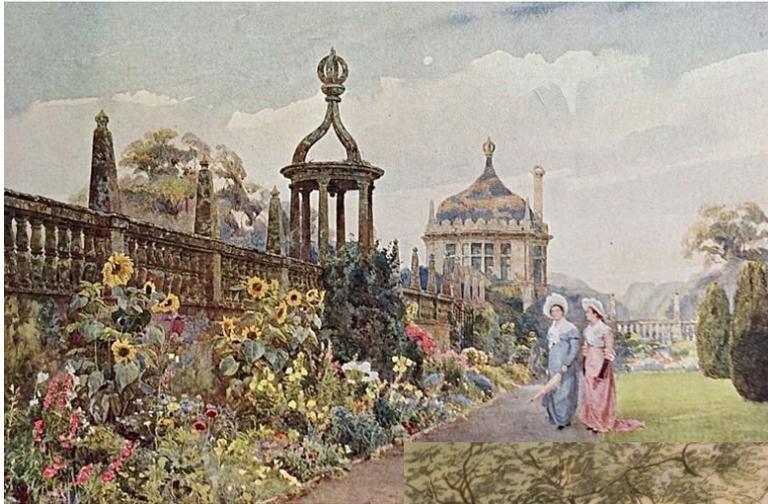




**Figure 193:** *'Knaresborough'* by Peter De Wint. Watercolour 1840-41. A range of architectural styles and functions border the River Nidd in North Yorkshire. Image courtesy of Sotheby's.

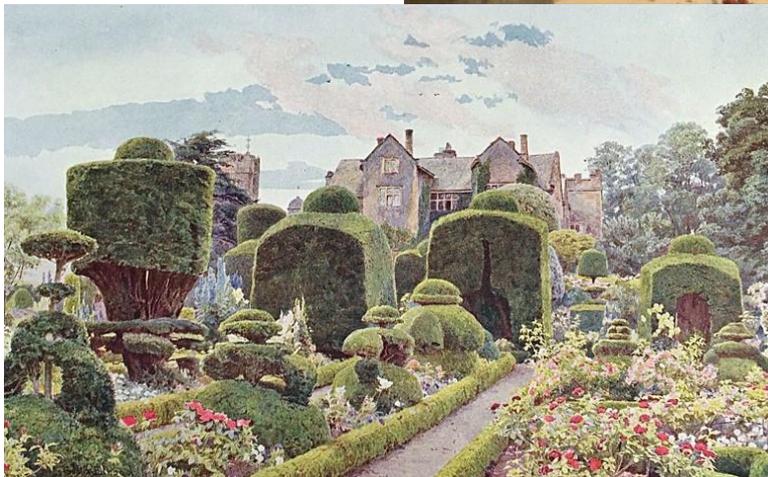
**Figure 194:** *'The Ouse at Hemingford Mill'* by William Fraser Garden. Watercolour, c.1900. The eight artist members of the Fraser family painted numerous highly detailed views of the River Ouse in Huntingdonshire. Image courtesy of Christopher Newall/Private Collection.





**Figure 195 (left):** *'Montacute'* by George S. Elgood. Watercolour, 1904. His detailed depictions of historic gardens provide a wealth of information on their design and layout in the early twentieth century.

**Figure 196 (right):** *'Westfield Park, Ryde, Isle of Wight – The Gardens'*, c.1855. The house remains, but the extensive gardens extending down to the Solent were developed for housing in the 1960s.



**Figure 197 (left):** *'Levens'* By George S. Elgood. Watercolour, 1904. Another detailed garden scene by Elgood. His works include properties by Lutyens and the gardens of Gertrude Jekyll.

**Figure 198 (below):** *'Water Meadows'* by Robert Collinson, c.1870. Artists provide us with detailed records of the natural environment including plant species, which allow comparisons to be made with today. Image courtesy of Bonham's.



houses, together with planting schemes, and some examples of these are illustrated overleaf. Such information could prove valuable to those responsible for the maintenance of Listed parks and gardens, for example.

In addition, as can be seen through some of the paintings of the Stour, some watercolours illustrate the natural flora and fauna of the countryside in great detail. The depiction of changing environments such as this over time through art, has not been explored previously and could prove a particularly worthwhile area of study in view of the rapid changes that are likely to take place as a result of both development pressures and climate change.

## **7.6. Accessing historical imagery to support understanding of the historic character of rivers**

### **7.6.1. Introduction**

The opportunity to take advantage of historical imagery to support our understanding of the historic character of rivers such as the Stour, has been explained in this report. The report can be read online at [www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com](http://www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com). It is possible to download the full technical report including the case studies from this site. Further information on those artists who painted the Stour Valley and Dorset more widely, and who are ranked as being the most reliable in terms of their depictions, is provided in chapter five of this report and includes the names of over thirty artists who have painted particularly useful artworks.

### **7.6.2. Art Reference publications**

The records of river artists and their works relating to the Stour and Dorset more widely from the mid-eighteenth century are contained in a hierarchy of publications ranging from comprehensive descriptions of the art history of the region to dictionaries of artists and their exhibited works, or national collection catalogues and overviews (Hardie, 1966<sup>1</sup>; Mallalieu, 1976<sup>2</sup>; Lambourne & Hamilton, 1980<sup>3</sup>; Graves, 1984<sup>4</sup>; Mackenzie, 1987<sup>5</sup>; Wood, 1995<sup>6</sup>; McInnes, 2014<sup>7</sup>). Art overviews have also been written, which set out theories on the landscapes, aesthetics and the development of art over time through both the written word and illustrations (e.g. Huish, 1904<sup>8</sup>; Tooley, 1954<sup>9</sup>; Wilton & Lyles, 1993<sup>10</sup>).

A publication devoted specifically to art collections in Dorset is the Public Catalogue Foundation's volume on *'Art in Public Collections in Dorset'* (Ellis, from 2004<sup>11</sup>).

Apart from the numerous images contained in topographical publications describing the County produced over the last three centuries there are a wealth of artistic and photographic images held in national, regional and local collections relevant to Dorset and including images of the Stour.

### **7.6.3. National Collections Containing Artworks of Dorset**

In terms of artworks at the national level, views of Dorset are held by many of the leading collections, including the National Maritime Museum ([www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum](http://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum)), the Victoria and Albert Museum ([www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)); Tate Britain ([www.tate.org.uk/tatebritain](http://www.tate.org.uk/tatebritain)), the British Museum ([www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)) and the National Gallery ([www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)).

### **7.6.4. Dorset Stour Art Resources**

Within the County major art galleries and museums contain fine examples of topographical views of the coast, and these include the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum at Bournemouth

([www.russellcotes.com](http://www.russellcotes.com)), the Dorset County Museum at Dorchester ([www.dorsetcountymuseum.org](http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org)), and The Red House Museum at Christchurch ([www.hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/red-house-museum-and-gardens](http://www.hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk/red-house-museum-and-gardens)).

Local authorities in Dorset also have major collections of images held in record centres and archives including the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester ([www.dorsetcountymuseum.org](http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org)), the Dorset History Centre also in Dorchester ([www.dorsetforyou.go.uk/dorsethistorycentre](http://www.dorsetforyou.go.uk/dorsethistorycentre)), and the collection of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society ([www.dorsetcountymuseum.org](http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org)).

This list is not exhaustive and there are also museums and heritage centres at Gillingham ([www.gillinghammuseum.co.uk](http://www.gillinghammuseum.co.uk)), Sturminster Newton ([www.sturminsternewton-museum](http://www.sturminsternewton-museum)), Blandford Forum ([www.blandfordtownmuseum.org/](http://www.blandfordtownmuseum.org/)) and Wimborne Minster ([www.priest-house.co.uk](http://www.priest-house.co.uk)) which contain heritage-related images. Many of the resource centres and museums described above have kindly provided assistance in terms of images to illustrate this report. Further extensive collections of art images can be found on the websites of commercial art galleries and print dealers as well as through online resources such as Ebay.

### 7.6.5. Art Online Databases

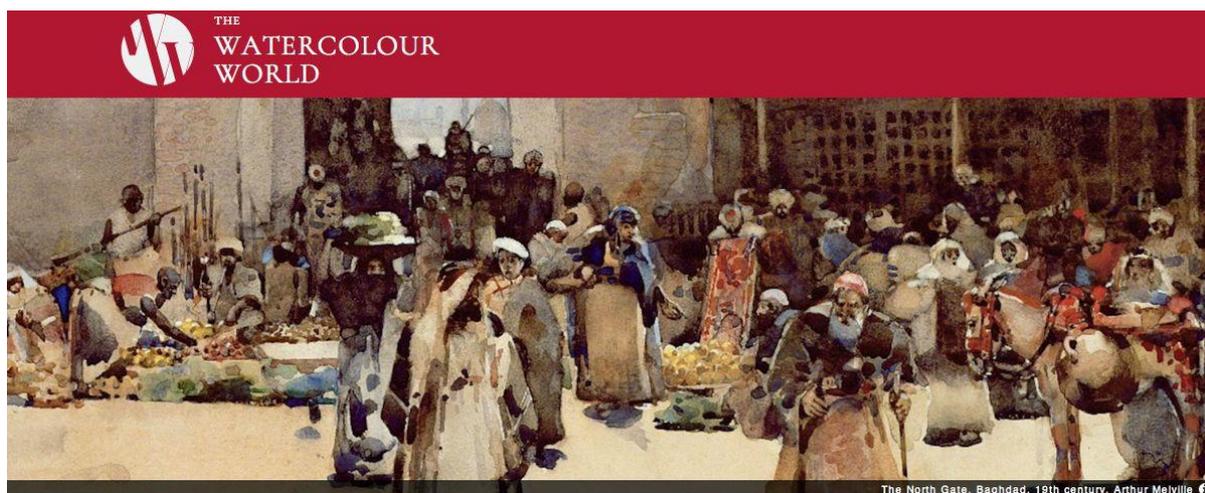
An excellent source of images of art in Dorset is the ArtUK website ([www.artuk.org](http://www.artuk.org)). On this website it is possible to search through the oil paintings contained in public collections nationally and in Dorset, and to view the fine artworks held in Dorset's major art galleries and museums.

In the CHERISH project the use of these online images was particularly welcomed and highlighted as a valuable resource. However, such studies were limited because the numerous watercolour drawings contained in public collections were not available online. As there are likely to be over six million watercolours contained in the collections of museums, galleries and local authority archives throughout the country, compared to 212,000 oil paintings, efforts to start to photograph and upload watercolours would be particularly welcomed. Fortunately, The Public Catalogues Foundation, which led the photographing of the nation's oil paintings, has now established a new charity entitled '*The Watercolour World*', which aims to create a visual, online topographical record of watercolours covering the period 1600-1900. The project will be made up essentially of images of topography, flora and fauna and historical events, which will be indexed geographically on the website and work is underway on starting to upload watercolours towards achieving this objective. It is believed that the addition of watercolours will provide potentially an enormous additional resource that can support understanding of the historical character of both rivers and coasts for the future.

Across Dorset there is a wealth of expertise within local authorities, regional and local museums and art galleries, most of whom hold large collections of artworks and photographs. Many of these now have online databases where large numbers of images can be viewed. Alongside art, the rich photographic resource covering Dorset is also becoming increasingly accessible to the wide range of interested stakeholders.



Figure 199: The home page of the ArtUK website.



## The Project

The Watercolour World is creating a unique visual history of the world through documentary watercolours painted before 1900. With tens of thousands of images already in the process of being uploaded, the full project website is set to become a significant new source of global history when it is launched in Spring 2018.

This free, new, online library will include topographical, anthropological and botanical subjects, plus observed historical events. Watercolours are welcome from across the world, from collections and individuals, both public and private. You will be able to explore the watercolours via an interactive map and help to identify unknown locations, create discussions and deepen all our understanding of this fascinating historical record.

**Figure 200:** The home page of the Watercolour World website.

### 7.6.6. Photographic Resources

In respect of photography, once again the libraries and resource centres already referred to hold a wealth of historical photographs with important local collections. Significant national collections include Historic England's own resources contained within their extensive archive ([archive.HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://archive.HistoricEngland.org.uk)). These include, for example, the Harold Wingham Collection of aerial photographs taken from the 1940s and the RAF Collection of aerial photographs. Historic England's collection can be examined through its public online catalogue, which contains over a million catalogue entries and 180,000 digital images. Whilst Historic England's '*England's Places*' ([www.historicengland.org.uk/englands-places](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/englands-places)) includes over 600,000 images with particular emphasis on buildings and architecture from the earliest days of photography up to the mid-1990s. A further excellent resource is Historic England's '*Pastscape*' collection ([www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)). '*Britain from above*' ([www.britainfromabove.org.uk](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk)) includes over 95,000 aerial images of the UK, mainly from the earliest part of the Aerofilms collection (1919-1953). Historic England holds high resolution versions of all the photographs covering English sites. Cambridge University collection of aerial photography, which was established in 1947 and which contains over half a million images (accessible via their on-line catalogue).

One of the largest private collections is the *Francis Frith Collection* ([www.francisfrith.com](http://www.francisfrith.com)), which contains about 125,000 images of Britain's towns, villages and landscapes dating from the mid-nineteenth century. It can be seen, therefore, that there is a rich resource of both artistic and photographic images that are publicly available alongside those images contained in illustrated topographical books or that were published separately as individual prints. Full use has been made of these resources with the cooperation and consents of the owners for the purposes of this study.

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## 8. Conclusions

- 8.1. The River Stour catchment of Dorset has a rich heritage in terms of historical images dating back to the late eighteenth century and earlier. Many of the images are displayed or stored in an excellent range of public and private art galleries, museums, heritage centres, archives and image libraries. Collections of such images are becoming increasingly available online.
- 8.2. Whilst photographic images, both terrestrial and aerial, are familiar aids used by researchers and practitioners, for example in the compilation of Historic Environment Records (HERS), the art resource is much less well used. This is partly because of a lack of awareness of the images available but also due to uncertainty about their accuracy.
- 8.3. For this study, ranking systems for both artworks and photographs have been refined and are suitably tailored to the subject of historic character. This has led to the preparation of a list of those artists and their works that have depicted the historic character of the Stour catchment most accurately.
- 8.4. The art record provides full colour images for some river locations through the Stour catchment, dating back to the late eighteenth century, some ninety years before the wider introduction of landscape photography and one hundred and fifty years before the use of colour photography. Use of such images can allow researchers to review river heritage in colour before development took place in many locations.
- 8.5. The most informative and accurate artistic depictions are those completed by artists with architectural or topographical/geological backgrounds. This is particularly evident in the paintings of country houses and churches, and of the hills bordering the Stour Valley.
- 8.6. Few artists included details of surface or buried heritage sites in their artworks and, equally, low-lying, flooded sections of the river valley were painted less frequently.

- 8.7. Artworks form an additional valuable and currently under-used resource available for use by a wide range of scientists, practitioners and other river stakeholders. However, there are some limitations relating to the detail of heritage/archaeological sites either buried or showing as surface features, and in terms of some of the rural villages and stretches of river within the catchment. Therefore, aerial photography and Lidar are likely to be the most suitable tools for evaluation of such locations.
- 8.8. Local antiquarians such as H. J. Moule recorded the rural landscape character of the County in comprehensive albums, diaries and books, which are preserved in public collections within Dorset.
- 8.9. Numerous artworks and photographs depicting some of the historic towns and villages along the Stour are available and together they allow the progression of development to be plotted and understood. Such images, which record the details of changes to individual buildings, as well as the expansion of towns and villages, can inform the planning process and can be used, for example, to illustrate Conservation Area plans. Equally, larger numbers of artist's works, such as those of Christchurch, allow their accuracy to be further evaluated through direct comparison.
- 8.10. Compared to the nineteenth century and the twentieth century up to 1930 there are very few artworks for the study timeline between 1930 and 1960. This was a result of changing public tastes away from the traditional landscapes of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, the effects of the Second World War and the advent of new styles of painting. Since the 1960s there has been a revival of traditional landscape painting, with some fine examples held in Dorset's public collections.
- 8.11. The project has raised interest and awareness of the potential of art in terms of supporting understanding of the historic character of the Stour catchment. Through this study and the deliverables (technical report, website, newsletters, articles and lectures) a large number of images will become much more accessible, with helpful advice being provided on those artists that painted this part of the Dorset landscape in the most accurate way.
- 8.12. This study has raised the profile for both artworks and photographic contributions and has provided clear understanding of the extent of the resources available for interrogation and where they may be found.
- 8.13. The interest, support and assistance of a wide range of consultees is very gratefully acknowledged.

## 9. Recommendations

1. Artworks and old photographs can offer a detailed description, over time, of changes affecting the historical character of the landscape itself and heritage features within the Stour catchment from source to sea. It is recommended that greater use is made of such images to support HERS citations, Conservation Areas policy documents, heritage risk studies and registers, and river management more widely.
2. The findings of this study will support the '*Historic Watercourses*' study and will be disseminated through newsletters, illustrated lectures, websites and an academic paper.

3. Artworks and old photographs are images that riverside residents and other stakeholders are familiar with, and which they trust. They can form excellent visual aids to support presentations on river policy changes, such as those affecting heritage sites, where difficult choices over future management may require careful explanation.
4. The study has taken advantage of the wealth of oil painting images collated from all UK public art collections by the Public Catalogues Foundation, and placed online through ArtUK. The collation of watercolours in the same way is essential to support a wide range of uses including both heritage planning and management. The commissioning of this substantial task through *'The Watercolour World'* initiative is strongly supported in order to help complete the historical online art resource for the United Kingdom.
5. The study of the Dorset Stour illustrates the role of images (1770-1960) in support of understanding historical character of the river within its landscape settings. It would be beneficial to draw further case study examples from across England to demonstrate how this approach can be applied equally successfully across the full range of historic and cultural landscapes and environments existing in England.
6. Consideration should be given to the publication of a book on the subject of the use of applications of historical imagery, extending the timeline from 1770 up to the present day. This would provide a definitive record of the image resources available and their applications for the whole of England, covering both coasts, rivers and developed areas.

## Appendix 1. Shortlist of artists who painted within the Dorset Stour Catchment

### **ALLEN, Christina – fl. 1890-1900.**

A painter of river subjects, including mills and bridges along the lower Stour valley. Her paintings in oils of *'Village and Bridge at Iford, Dorset'* and *'Place Mill and Priory, Christchurch'* are held in the collection of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.

### **BALL, Wilfred Williams – 1853-1919**

A London landscape and marine painter, etcher and watercolourist, who also illustrated topographical books on the New Forest and Dorset. The Red House Museum, Christchurch holds eight of his oil paintings.

### **BAMPFYLDE, Coppleson – 1720-1791**

A British landowner, garden designer and artist, who produced a highly detailed watercolour of *'The Pleasure Grounds at Stourhead'*, which was later reproduced as a copper plate engraving.

### **CONSTABLE, John RA – 1776-1837**

A romantic painter of the English landscape, who was born in Suffolk and is known particularly for his paintings of the landscape around the Dedham Vale. Constable sketched and painted several views in the vicinity of Gillingham in Dorset, including Gillingham Bridge and Purn's Mill.

### **COOK, Eric T. – fl.c.1900-1930**

A painter in watercolours, who produced a view of *'Christchurch Priory from the Water Meadows'* which is in the collection of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.

### **DANIELL, William RA – 1769-1837**

A painter in oils and watercolours, who is particularly well known for his mastery of the aquatint engraving process. His British topographical works include his *'Voyage Round Great Britain'* (1814-1825). This publication includes a fine view of *'Christchurch Priory'* (1823).

### **DAVIS, Arthur H. – fl.1871-1893**

A London landscape painter in oils, who produced some detailed views along the lower Stour, including *'Blackwater Ferry'*, *'Wick Ferry'* and the *Rear View of Walford's Mill at Wimborne Minster'*. These works are in the collection of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery at Bournemouth.

### **GIRTIN, Thomas – 1775-1802**

One of the greatest English watercolourists of the late eighteenth century, Girtin only lived to the age of 27; Turner said *"if Girtin had lived I would have starved"*. Girtin painted several watercolours along the Dorset coast, including a view of Christchurch Priory, which was published as a copperplate engraving.

### **HARDY, Emma Lavinia – 1840-1912**

She produced an oil of *'Bulbarrow'* after the Dorset Artist, Frederick Whitehead, which is in the collection of Dorset County Museum.

### **HEARNE, Thomas FSA – 1744-1817**

Hearne was a topographical artist, who contributed drawings to *'The Antiquities of Great Britain'* (1777-1781), and *'Britannia Depicta'* (1806-1818). He made drawings of churches and country houses including properties within the Stour valley.

**HOARE, Rev. R. P. – fl.c.1830s**

A fine pen and ink drawing of 'St Peter's Pump' at Stourhead is in the collection of the National Trust.

**HOARE, Sir R. Colt FRS FSA – 1758-1838**

Hoare was a patron of the arts and an amateur watercolourist. A number of his watercolours of the estate are on display at Stourhead.

**KING, Henry John Yeend RBA VPRI ROI – 1855-1924**

King was a London landscape and rustic genre painter, he worked mainly in oils. He painted an impressionist view of the waterfalls in the grounds of Stourhead.

**KNYFF, Leonard – 1650-1722**

He produced a detailed drawing of the Bryanston House and gardens, which was published in Jan Kip's 'Brittania Illustrata' (1708).

**MOULE, Henry J. MA – 1825-1904**

Henry Moule was an antiquarian and watercolour artist, who painted widely across Dorset, but particularly in the vicinity of Dorchester. Many of his detailed watercolours were painted 'en plein air' and he was influenced by the writings of John Ruskin, the Victorian art critic. Between 1856 and 1860 he taught the novelist Thomas Hardy to paint in watercolours. In 1883 he was appointed at the first curator for the newly opened Dorset County Museum in High West Street, Dorchester. Moule was a friend of the artist, Frederick Whitehead (1853-1938), who was a painter, in particular, of Hardy's Wessex scenery. Moule's watercolours often provide us with detailed information on the daily lives of those living and working in the countryside, particularly along its riverbanks and streams, and numerous works by Moule are illustrated in this report. Some 1,500 of Moule's watercolours are held in the collection of Dorset County Museum.

**MUNN, Paul Sandby – 1773-1845**

Munn was a topographical watercolourist and was the godson and pupil of the celebrated early watercolour artist, Paul Sandby. He painted a watercolour of 'Visitors Viewing the Pleasure Gardens at Stourhead'.

**NEALE, John Preston – 1780-1847**

Neale was a painter of topographical and architectural subjects, including country houses in the Stour valley. He travelled widely across the country making drawings of country seats and churches, some of which were published in 'Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland' (1824). He also provided illustrations for the 'Gentleman's Magazine' (1847).

**PALMER, Harold Sutton RBA RI – 1854-1933**

Sutton Palmer was one of our leading river illustrators in watercolour. He painted peaceful and idyllic scenes, including many views of Dorset, some of which are illustrated in 'The Rivers and Streams of England' (1906) published by A. & C. Black.

**PARROT, William – 1813-after 1891**

Parrot was a topographical painter and watercolourist, who exhibited at the RA, BI and SS. He painted an oil of Christchurch Priory, which is in the collection of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery, Bournemouth.

**PENNELL, Joseph – fl.1920s**

He provided illustrations in pen and ink for 'The Highways and Byways of Dorset' by Sir Frederick Treves.

**PIKE, Sidney – fl.1880-1901**

A painter of landscape and coastal scenes in oils, he produced numerous views along the Dorset coast, eight of his oil paintings are in the collection of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery at Bournemouth and two at The Red House Museum, Christchurch. A favourite subject for Pike was Christchurch Priory from the river, often at sunset.

**PRITCHARD, Edward Drew – 1809-1905**

A painter of marine, landscape and architectural subjects, Pritchard painted several Dorset oils with examples in the collection of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society.

**QUINTON, Alfred Robert – fl.1900-1934**

A prolific book and postcard illustrator working in watercolour, Quinton painted numerous coastal views as well as river scenes across England. He painted a watercolour of Christchurch Priory from the river and a view of 'Wick Ferry' in the 1920s.

**RACKETT, Thomas – 1757-1841**

Rackett specialised in drawing antiquarian subjects, including bridges and gentleman's properties. Some of his works were published in the 'Gentleman's Magazine'.

**WESTALL, William ARA – 1781-1850**

Westall exhibited over eighty works at the RA, covering all parts of Britain. He drew 'Christchurch' in 1830, which was engraved by E. Finden and was originally produced for his 'Great Britain Illustrated' (1828-1830).

**WHITEHEAD, Cedric William Newton – 1853-1938**

Whitehead was a painter of the Wessex landscape, working mainly in oils, with his works being held in the collections of Leamington Spa Art gallery (the town where he was born), and Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society (twenty three works). His artistic style was strongly influenced by John Constable and in 1895 an exhibition of thirty five of his Wessex paintings was held in London. Many of his oil paintings have generic rather than specific titles. He was a friend of the artist, Henry Joseph Moule (see above), and they painted together on occasions.

**WIMBUSH, Henry B. – fl.1880-1908**

Wimbush was a prolific landscape artist who was commissioned by the postcard manufacturers, Rafael Tuck, to produce a large number of views along the south, south-west coast of England. His light, clear and bright style is particularly distinctive. He painted a detailed view of the Christchurch Priory waterfront in about 1920.

## Appendix 2. Newsletter Number 1

### **"Using Imagery to Identify the Historical Character of Watercourses" 'The Dorset Stour' Newsletter No.1 October 2017**

***In April 2017 Historic England commissioned Coastal & Geotechnical Services to undertake a study, which will examine how imagery from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century up to 1960 can support our understanding of the historic character of watercourses, and thereby encourage and revitalise protection and management of heritage sites within river catchments from source to sea.***

The Study, which will focus on the Dorset Stour catchment, is being undertaken by Professor Robin McInnes OBE, who has a particular experience of the interpretation and use of historical images (paintings, watercolours, prints and old photographs). This study follows the 'CHERISH' project (Coastal Heritage Risks Imagery in Support of Heritage Management), which was completed for Historic England in 2016.

Rivers form a key component of the English landscape and have played a crucial role in the development of our cultural heritage; however, rivers heritage has received relatively little attention in recent years. This six month study aims to provide, through historical imagery, visual data and information that will contribute towards improving our understanding of the historic character of the Dorset Stour, and English rivers more widely. The study will take advantage of a wealth of currently under-used images dating from the 1770s held in both public and private collections, allowing us to recall how culturally important sites along rivers were represented in the past, and approaches to their maintenance and management during this period (1770-1960). The study will help inform a wide variety of rivers stakeholders: researchers, planners, local residents, and support river management in general.

Professor McInnes is collaborating closely with Dr Antony Firth of Fjordr Ltd who is carrying out a wider study for Historic England on the historic character of watercourses based on the Dorset Stour, which this image-based study will support and inform. The first steps of this project have included an in-depth search for relevant artworks, old photographs and postcards depicting the River Stour and life on and within its catchments; this has been undertaken with the assistance of the region's art galleries, museums, heritage centres, image libraries and auction houses. Data and information provided by the Environment Agency has also proved valuable to the building up of the case studies in the Stour catchment.



1. 'The Mill at Sturminster Newton' by Henry Moule. c.1880s. Courtesy of Dorset County Museum.



2. 'A View of the Gardens of Stourhead' by C. P. Bampfylde. c.1770s. Courtesy of The National Trust

3. 'By the River' by Peter Monstead. 1908. Courtesy of Bonham's.



4. 'On the Stour' by Walter Frederick Tyndale. 1906.



Professor McInnes said “the project case studies will illustrate how this image-based approach can provide additional information to support management and good practice for riverside and in-river heritage sites. Such images will allow us to recall how such culturally important sites have been artistically represented in the past, and they can illustrate the various approaches that have been taken to management over the last two centuries or where the approach has been unmanaged”.

The study results will include a comprehensive, ranked list of river artists, based on their value of contribution and level of accuracy, and from this create a fully transferable approach, applicable to any river system in England. The main output will be a well-illustrated Project Report – available for download – complete with examples illustrating the practical uses of river imagery as a supportive tool to river and heritage management and suitable for dissemination to a wide range of stakeholders.

Updates on this project will be posted at:  
[www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com](http://www.coastalandgeotechnicalservices.com)

The ‘ChERISH’ project final report can be viewed and downloaded at: <http://cherish.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/>



8. White Mill Bridge, Sturminster Marshall. Photo: S. McInnes, 2017.

**Can you assist this project? If you have not been approached and would like further information please contact us by email or telephone. We are searching for more highly detailed oil paintings and watercolours (1770-1950) of the River Stour (Dorset), which show heritage structures (e.g.: mills, bridges, weirs, river-based activities, barges or other river vessels and other heritage features), or which illustrate the progressive development of the towns and villages along the river since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. If you think you have such an image or useful information that may be of interest please contact Robin McInnes.**

Phone: 01983 854865; Email: [rgmcinnes@btinternet.com](mailto:rgmcinnes@btinternet.com)



5. ‘Gillingham Bridge’ by John Constable RA. 1823. Courtesy of Tate Images, 2016.



6. ‘Rear view of Walford Mill, Wimborne’ by A. H. Davis. Courtesy of Russell-Cotes Art Gallery, Bournemouth.



7. ‘Hod Hill showing the site of the Roman Camp’. c.1930. Courtesy of Dorset County Museum



9. ‘Christchurch Priory’ by Henry Wimbush. c.1900.



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## **Appendix 3. Additional Information on the Sourcing of Historical Image Resources Relating to the Dorset Stour Catchment**

The purpose of this appendix is to describe in more detail how the historical images (artworks and old photographs) were sourced and selected for the purpose of illustrating this report. It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to others wishing to search for images both of the Stour and of other heritage related subjects in Dorset and more widely. These notes should be read in conjunction with Section 7.6 of this report, which provides details of a number of national and local collections including websites.

### **Oil Paintings**

The starting point for identification of images was to search for oil painting views and this can now be achieved relatively easily through the ArtUK website ([www.artuk.org](http://www.artuk.org)), which holds images of all 212,000 oil paintings in United Kingdom Public Collections. From this website it is possible to search by artists' name or perhaps more easily for researchers who are less familiar with artists themselves by art gallery name. It is possible to search for art galleries in Dorset where a list will appear and each individual gallery can then be searched.

The collections that were most geographically relevant to the Dorset Stour such as those of the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery in Bournemouth, Dorset County Museum, Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society and The Red House Museum at Christchurch contained oils that showed parts of the river catchment and some of the historical sites in varying levels of detail.

There are 57 museums and art galleries in Dorset that hold oil paintings and these can all be viewed online or through purchase of the book *'Oil Paintings in Public Collections in Dorset'* (ISBN: 978-1-904931-47-8). More widely ArtUK highlighted the oils of the Dorset Stour painted by John Constable that are in the collections of Tate Britain and the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. There are a large number of oils by the Dorset artist Frederick Whitehead in Leamington Spa Art Gallery, which were found through searching 'Dorset Paintings' on the Internet.

### **Watercolour Drawings**

Unlike ArtUK there is no national database of watercolours in public collections. However, in April 2018 a new website *'The Watercolour World'* ([www.watercolourworld.org/](http://www.watercolourworld.org/)) will come online. This initiative by Dr Fred Hohler who founded the Public Catalogues Foundation (leading to ArtUK) will gradually upload hundreds of thousands of watercolours from both public and private collections. As watercolours are often the most effective medium for accurate depiction of topographical and heritage subjects this will be an enormously valuable new resource.

Some collections do have watercolours (and oils) online such as the collection of over 3,000 images on the website of The Red House Museum at Christchurch. At Dorchester Museum there is a large collection of watercolours in albums by the artist and first curator of Dorset County Museum, Henry Joseph Moule. For this study the author reviewed all 7,000 works in the collection. These are mainly of the countryside around Dorchester but there are also views on the Stour and within its wider catchment. Many of Moule's views show rural properties and the working lives of local people and these would be typical of the Stour in the mid to late nineteenth century. From a coarse screening of the Moule watercolours and others 1,250 images were identified as of possible interest but eventually 12 were used to illustrate the report. Clearly this collection has significant potential in terms of supporting local research.

There are a number of other ways of searching for Dorset images all of which were used for this study. First, Dorset auction house catalogues, which are often held as archives on their websites can be

searched, as can artist's names on the various Art Prices Indices that can be found online. Art libraries such as Bridgeman Images ([www.bridgemanimages.com](http://www.bridgemanimages.com)) and the Fine Art Photo Library ([www.fineartphotolibrary.com](http://www.fineartphotolibrary.com)) are also useful sources. More easily Google searches of 'Dorset paintings' or 'Dorset Stour Paintings' also yielded further examples of artworks.

### **Engravings**

The full range of engravings including steel and copper plate examples, aquatints, lithographs, etchings and woodcuts can also be found online and through major print shops such as Grosvenor Prints, which holds a huge stock of British views including over 1,000 of Dorset ([www.grosvenorprints.com](http://www.grosvenorprints.com)) and Heaton's of Tisbury ([www.heatons-of-tisbury.com](http://www.heatons-of-tisbury.com)); images for this report were found from both these sources.

### **Book Illustrations**

Although some engravings were published singly or in sets many originated from topographical books. The Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society holds a fine library at Dorchester Museum. This includes such works as Hutchin's *'History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset'* (1733), which contains numerous detailed engravings including important country properties located within the Stour catchment. Later topographical books on the County contained aquatint views or steel engravings, which can provide even greater detail. Alongside the book collection the Society's collection includes several large albums compiled by local antiquarians, which also contain pen and ink drawings such as those illustrated as Figures 90 and 91 in this report.

### **Photographs**

There is a wealth of photographic images of the County of Dorset including views of the Stour and the sources of these are described in Section 7.6.6 (above); these include a vast collection of views belonging to Historic England. Some were used to illustrate this report such as Figures 36, 57 and 152. Dorset Museum also has a large collection of local photograph albums including numerous Stour river views, depictions of rural life, and heritage sites. Again, some of these images can be found in this report. Other heritage centres along the Stour such as Gillingham Museum also have excellent collections.

The internet again provides a rich source of photographs and a Google search for 'Old Dorset photographs' or 'Old photos of Dorset Rivers' show many more examples.

### **Postcards**

Postcards, both colour and black and white, can be found in large number on sites such as ebay. In terms of colour postcards these may be photographic or reproductions from the watercolours of particularly accurate late nineteenth and early twentieth century artists such as the prolific Alfred Robert Quinton and Henry B. Wimbush (see Figures 155 and 156). Most of their works are confined to the coast, particularly of Christchurch but for wider research there are hundreds of examples to be viewed. In terms of black and white photographic postcards these are even more numerous and feature most of the towns along the Stour, particularly in the hinterland of Christchurch, Wimborne, Blandford and Sturminster Newton.

### **Successes and Problems in sourcing images**

From all of the sources described above a total of approximately 3,100 images were regarded initially as having some potential relevance to the Dorset Stour catchment. These comprise 120 oil paintings, 1,250 watercolours, 880 engravings, 640 photographs, 30 artistic postcards and 180 photographic postcards. Using the ranking criteria described in Section 5 (above) these were screened for accuracy, condition, relevance and avoidance of overlap and duplication of subject matter. This led also to the compilation of the *'List of Artists'* set out in Table 2 on page 37.

In terms of finding useful imagery there were some *shortcomings* including:-

- A general lack of artworks of the Stour Valley in the rural areas above Sturminster Newton;
- A surprising lack of artworks of the many historic Listed bridges.

The *successes* in terms of imagery are regarded as:-

- A wealth of artistic and photographic imagery of the Lower Stour below Wimborne Minster and particularly the environs of Christchurch;
- Views of historic properties including mills and churches by Constable, A. H. Davis and F. Whitehead;
- Photographs of mills and bridges within the Middle and Lower Reaches of the Stour and engravings of historic houses and their estates;
- The Moule collection of watercolours belonging to Dorset County Museum, which illustrates rural practices across Dorset.
- Paintings and drawings of early heritage sites including Hod Hill, Bulbarrow and Spetisbury.

Importantly readers should note that the forthcoming *Watercolour World* website referred to above should provide an invaluable additional resource for a wide range of users. The recommendation that the Nation's collections of watercolours should be made available online (alongside the completed oil paintings) was a recommendation of the CHERISH project.