**Public access description**

Constable rarely toured in search of scenes to paint. His works usually show places that he knew well, or visited for reasons other than painting. This watercolour dates from his last visit to his friend John Fisher, who lived in Salisbury, England. Old Sarum (from the Roman name for Salisbury) had fallen into decay by the 16th century. It was therefore a popular subject with artists who wanted to paint ruined or wild landscapes. These were favourite subjects with artists during the ‘picturesque’ period of the late 1700s. They were also popular with artists of the ‘Romantic’ movement of the early 19th century, when Constable painted this picture.

**Descriptive line**

John Constable, Old Sarum, 1834, Reynolds cat. no. 359

**Physical description**

Landscape with clouds, foliage, fields, and a figure and dog in the foreground.

**Dimensions**

Height: 30 cm, Width: 48.7 cm

**Museum number**

1628-1888

**Historical context note**

‘In 1834 Constable exhibited at the Royal Academy three water-colour drawings and a pencil drawing; the former included ‘The Mound of the City of Old Sarum, from the south’ (No. 359 [1628-1888]) and a view of Stoke Poges Church. He visited George Constable for the first time at Arundel in July and Lord Egremont at Petworth in September.’


**URL**

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O74457/old-sarum-watercolour-john-constable/