Of Druids, the Gothic, and the origins of architecture
The garden designs of William Stukeley (1687–1765)

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William Stukeley’s central place in the historiography of eighteenth-century England is hardly insecure. His published interpretations of the megalithic monuments at Avebury (1743) and Stonehenge (1740) earned him a prominent position in the history of archaeology, and his Vetusta Monumenta ensured his reputation as a draughtsman and antiquarian. Recent research has shown that Stukeley was a polymath, whose related interests in astrology, Newtonian natural history and theology formed part of a broader Enlightenment world view. Yet, in the lengthy scholarship on Stukeley, insufficient attention has been paid to his interest in another intellectual and aesthetic pursuit of eighteenth-century cognoscenti: garden design.

Stukeley’s voluminous manuscripts attest to his role as an avid designer of gardens, landscapes and garden buildings. His own homes were the subjects of his most interesting achievements, including his hermitages at Kentish Town (1760), Stamford (Barnhill, 1744 and Austin Street 1737), and Grantham (1727). In this, Stukeley can be located among a number of ‘gentleman gardeners’ in the first half of the eighteenth century from the middling classes and the aristocracy. He toured gardens regularly, and recorded many of them in his books, journals and correspondence. His 1724 Itinerarium Curiosum recounts his impressions of gardens, including the recent work at Blenheim Palace and the ‘ha-ha’ in particular, and his unpublished notebooks contain a number of sketches such as the gardens at Grimsthorpe, Lincs., where he was a regular visitor. Stukeley also designed a handful of garden buildings, apparently as gifts for friends and acquaintances. He prepared two versions of a bridge for the Duke of Montagu’s park at Boughton, one in the reigning Palladian style and the other Gothic, although neither design was ever realized. Unsurprisingly, Stukeley’s best-known portrait, attributed to Richard Collins c1726–29 and now at the Society of Antiquaries, features him in a garden setting which has been loosely connected with his gardens at Grantham (Pl. 1). It is the purpose of this paper to bring to light some previously unpublished material relating to Stukeley’s gardens and garden buildings designed for his homes in Grantham and Stamford, Lincolnshire. Little survives of these gardens, but their original appearance, construction and meanings can be substantially reconstructed from Stukeley’s unpublished drawings and notes. In doing so, this paper argues that gardens and garden architecture had an important and hitherto misunderstood place in Stukeley’s thought. Aside from their intrinsic value as largely unknown garden designs and garden buildings, examination of them contributes to an understanding of Stukeley’s theological interests and of his perceptions of architecture and its theoretical contexts.

The Temple of the Druids at Grantham

The early 1720s saw Stukeley living in London and actively touring England and Wales with his friend and correspondent, Samuel Gale. During these years he conducted his research on Avebury and Stonehenge and published his Itinerarium Curiosum. But in 1725, an ‘irresistible impulse seiz’d’ him to retire from London to his native Lincolnshire countryside, where he acquired a house and property. The house has recently been described and some of Stukeley’s drawings of its interiors have been published. Gardening appears to have begun almost immediately. By 1727 he had built a ‘Hermitage Vinyard’, which he recorded in a drawing, and he planned an Orangerie with Palladian temples and seats, which was apparently never executed. By October 1728 his plans for the garden had solidified. Stukeley states his intentions in a letter to Samuel Gale dated 14 October:

[Letter content]

[The letter is not transcribed here due to its length and complexity.]

The letter reveals Stukeley’s enthusiasm for gardening as a spiritual and intellectual pursuit. He describes his hermitages as places of retreat from the world, where he could pursue his interests in nature, history and religion. The garden buildings he designed at Grantham, such as the Orangerie and the Hermitage, were intended to be places of contemplation and reflection, embodying the principles of the Enlightenment.

[Further discussion of the gardens and garden buildings at Grantham, including Stukeley’s designs and his correspondence with Samuel Gale, is provided here.]
If you enquire what I am now about: I am making a Temple of the Druids, as I call it, thus. There is a circle of tall filbord trees in the nature of a hodg [hedge], which is 70 feet in diameter, round it is a walk 15 foot broad circular too. For that the whole is 100 foot diameter. This walk from on a high point slopes each way and gradually, till you come to the lowest, which is the opposite point, and there is the entrance to the Temple, to which the walk may be esteemed as the portico. When you enter the innermost circle or temple, you see in the centre an ancient appletree overgrown with sacred mistletoe. Round it is another concentric circle of 50 foot diameter made of pyramidal greens, at equal intervals, that may appear verdant, when the fruit trees have dropped their leaves. These pyramidals are in imitation of the inner circles at Stonehenge. The whole is included within a square wall on all sides, except that, where is the grand avenue to the porticoe, which is a broad walk of old appletrees. The angles are filled with fruit trees etc. and such are likewise interspersed in the filbord hedg [hazel] and borders with some sort of i-
regularity to prevent a stiffness in the appearance, and make it look more easy and natural. But in that point where is the entrance from the portico into the temple is a tumulus, which was denominated Snowdrop Hill, being in Christmas time covered over with that pretty and early flower, but I must take it for a cairn or a celtic barrow. I have sketched you out the whole thing on the other page. It was formed out of an old orchard.13

Fortunately Stukeley’s drawing of the gardens survives on the verso of the letter as he indicated, but it has not hitherto been published (Pl 2). A second drawing taken from the same perspective shows a slightly different design for the garden and must be dated close to the first (Pl 3). Also surviving is a survey of the property of 1725 showing the state of the garden when he purchased it and indicating the presence of an original circular orchard upon which the Temple of Druids was based (Pl 4). The idea of transforming his circular orchard into a Druid Temple had occurred to him as early as 1727. In an earlier preparatory sketch for the tree-circle of April of that year (again appended to a letter to Gale) Stukeley provides a glimpse of what was to be his final plan, calling the circle ‘Il Circo di Chyndonacto’ (Pl 5).14 ‘Chyndonax’ was a Druid pseudonym adopted by Stukeley at this time and employed in his letters and in much of his later graphic work.15 The ‘Temple of the Druids’ was enclosed in a stone garden wall with Classical gates, one an austere Doric design and the other with urns and zig-zag stairs, designed by Stukeley in 1728 and 1729 (Pl 6).16 Thus described, Stukeley created a miniature garden version of the famous neolithic monument he had carefully studied in the early 1720s and which he would continue to study in the following decades, out of the remains of an original circular orchard.

This eccentric episode in the history of gardens must be explored within the contexts of Stukeley’s own developing interests in the Druids in the 1720s. As students of Stukeley’s career have often observed, the late 1720s saw not only a move from London to Lincolnshire, but also a profound shift in his thought from what might be called an archaeological antiquarianism, based on close analysis and recording of standing monuments, to a spiritual antiquarianism based in an interpretation of monuments within a broader theological system.17 1728 and 1729 were crucial years. In 1729 he was ordained within the Church of England. In the same year he wrote to William Wake, archbishop of Canterbury (1716–37) stating that although he had long had designs to enter holy orders, ‘the retirement from the hurry of a City life, & the
Stukeley sought to demonstrate that the stone circle was not a Roman monument as Inigo Jones had suggested, but rather a Temple of the 'Celtic Druids'; in *Abury* he applied Newtonian theology to prove that Trinitarianism was indeed 'Patriarchal' or pre-Noachian in origin, and that Trinitarianism connected many world faiths, from ancient Egypt to the pre-Roman or Druidic inhabitants of England, through a grand, spiritual teleology. The proof of this for Stukeley was found in Avebury, the groundplan of which was a 'hieroglyphic picture of the Trinity deduc'd from the Egyptians.' During the years in which these publications were written, Stukeley's syncretism also extended to the design of religious architecture. In 1734–4 he composed a groundplan of a centrally planned church based on Stonehenge with a Latin cross imposed on the centre, forming its nave and aisles, thereby physically syncretizing Druidic and Christian architectures (Pl 7). Conceived as a single work in two parts, *Stonehenge and Abury* were an attempt to 'promote… the knowledge and practice of true Religion [and] to revive in the minds of the learned the spirit of Christianity' as he understood it. A small but typical example of this is Stukeley's representation of the vernal equinox, which unmistakably juxtaposes sacrificial images of a ram and a crucifixion, set in front of a reconstruction of Stonehenge (Pl 8). Expanding upon this idea in 1723, Stukeley opines that the Druid's practice of 'cruci-fying a man at one of their festivals in the temple, is a wonderful tho' horrid notion of the sacrifice of the Messiah'.

Gardening, Stukeley admits, and his work at Grantham in particular, was central to the change in his thought in the late 1720s. In a letter provisionally dated to 1729 Stukeley suggests that as 'the sweet tranquility of country retirement and self conversation in a garden had given me leave to look into my own mind, I soon discovered again the latent seeds of religion, which God's Holy Priest effectively revived in me'. The letter continues, '…if ever any person in this world was ever more sensible of it, I must acknowledge the divine notions thereof, so apparently that it surprises me more and more every day, in throwing rubbish out of my thoughts, and giving me such a vigor of mind, as to reach with great facility, to new heights and lengths in the most sublime doctrines of Christian faith… The more I consider it, the more I am enamored with it, and all other little acquisitions of learning, which by industry I have made, shall only be subservient to that grand purpose.'

The construction of a Druid temple within his garden was more than simply a clever translation of stone-built architecture into the natural forms of the garden, something that had ample precedent in early eighteenth-century garden design. In his *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718), for example, Stephen Switzer advocated the practice of creating gardens after the ground plan of a building, thereby theorizing a mimetic relationship between the forms of the garden and the forms of architecture. Actually, it fit neatly into Stukeley's developing image of the Druids as contemplative people whose lives and religious rituals were conducted in
nature. Stukeley developed the existing idea that the earliest Druid Temples were oak groves and sacrifices were made at a tree with a natural cross, upon which the names of the deity were inscribed (Pl 9). He wrote at length on the symbolism of trees and the intimate connection of Druids to nature and to mistletoe, and it is not coincidental that this sacred plant featured prominently in his garden. As David Boyd Haycock has shown, Stukeley’s interests in and perceptions of gardens influenced his appreciation of the ancient ‘landscapes’ at Avebury and Stonehenge: conceived as theatrical sites that were intended to be viewed from a distance, interrogated, explored, and then interpreted, the translation of Stonehenge from megalithic monument to garden folly was not a radical conceptual leap for Stukeley, as his prosaic description of his garden suggests.

The Templum Druidorum also fit neatly into Stukeley’s own conception of the very origins of architecture itself. Stukeley’s typology of Celtic/Druid temples suggests that the earliest ‘Patriarchal Temples’ were initially formed by rings of planted trees to create arboreal canopies prior to post-and-lintel stone constructions. He illustrates this in a drawing entitled ‘Abraham’s Temple or Grove at Beersheba’ – the prototype of a grove as religious architecture – in which he draws a circle of trees creating a vaulted walk beneath them, a drawing that clearly reflects his ‘Circo di Chyndonaceto’ (Pl 10). Stukeley prepared a series of drawings exploring early architecture, including his imaginative reconstruction of Arabian Temples after the Mosaic T意识Groves’ (Pl 11), a rectilinear grid of planted trees whose branches grow together to form vaults. Typical of contemporary authors, Stukeley had considered the Druids to originate in ‘Arabia’, thus suggesting that this reconstructed Temple was a prototype of Patriarchal Temples in general. Understood in these terms, Stukeley’s Templum Druidorum was more than simply the product of a fanatical and highly topical interest in Stonehenge. It functioned as a theoretical experiment, a recreation of an ancient architecture, and a validation of his theories of the architectural origins of the Patriarchal religion in England. In this, Stukeley’s Templum Druidorum was a predecessor of sorts to Sir James Hall’s experimental ‘Wicker Cathedral’ erected in the 1790s: an elaborate garden structure designed to grow into a Gothic building, thereby ‘proving’ the origins of the Gothic in the forms of the forest (a point to which I shall return below).

Stukeley’s time in Grantham was to be short-lived, and his Templum Druidorum did not grow to maturity under his ownership. On 10 August 1729, Thomas Hearne commented upon the event that would precipitate Stukeley’s move from Grantham to Stamford: ‘Dr. Stukeley, to the surprise of everybody, has taken orders. His friends think him crazy’. On 16 October 1729 the Lord Chancellor granted him the living of the Church of All Saints, Stamford, where he was to take up residence as vicar in early 1730. Even if it was never fully realized – as his drawing indicated – Stukeley’s Templum Druidorum appears to have been the first example of a trend for simulated megalithic monuments in eighteenth-century English gardens. These include the so-called ‘Three Shire Stones’ of 1736 (which may re-employ ancient megaliths) marking the juncture of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Somerset, and the Druid’s Circle at Bierley Hall, Bradford of £1740–50. Undoubtedly inspired by Stukeley’s design, the Earl of Pembroke (dedicatee of his Templum Druidorum) created a second ‘fine and costly model of Stonehenge’ in his garden, which was described in 1759 as ‘a Stonehenge in miniature, as ‘twas supposed to have been in its first glory’. Posterity connected Stukeley with megalithic garden monuments. In the later 1780s Henry Seymour Conwy removed the newly discovered passage grave from Mont St Hilier in Jersey to Park Place, near Henley. Calling the monument a ‘Druidic Temple’ and ‘Little Master Stonehenge’, Horace Walpole praised the apparent archaeological exactitude of the monument’s recreation, lauded its natural setting, and concluded that ‘Dr Stukeley will burst his cerements to offer mistletoe in your temple.’

The Gothic Temple of Flora at Stamford

The earliest evidence of his gardening activities in Stamford appears in the second half of the 1730s. A drawing of 1738 illustrates his ‘Hermitage’ garden at Austin Street, which reflects aspects of his earlier design at Grantham (Pl 12). This, it seems, was underway in 1737, when he described finishing niches in his ‘hermitage grotto called Merlin’s Cave’, undoubtedly following the famous example at Richmond. Stukeley’s Stamford works were poised to benefit from the destruction and defenestration of various Lincolnshire churches and houses in the first half of the eighteenth century. In May 1745, for example he ‘put up the painted glass in the upper window of my hermitage [at Barnhill], being S. Joseph the Virgin’s husband and S. Wilfred archbishop of York’, and shortly afterward he ‘put up the painted glass in the stone window in my hermitage, containing the effigies of S. Simon, S. Jude, S. Jamys, S. Barnabas. The stone window was given me by Mr Seabroke when he rebuilt his house’. Stukeley also employed pieces of sculpture bought or pilfered from local churches. He describes either a retrospective sculpture, or a sculpture to which he has given an historical
identity and an inscription, thus: 'I made a niche in my garden to set up Lord Turketyll's head, by the hermitage. On a pedestal this inscription: DNS TURKETYLUS ABBAS CROYLANDIE AD 946 FUNDATOR ACADEMIARUM CANTABRIGIE ET STAMFORDE'.

The jewel of the Stamford garden was his Temple of Flora, begun in 1747. In a letter to Samuel Gale, Stukeley states, 'I am now busy in making your sister [Stukeley's second wife] the Temple of Flora, where she is to put her numerous pots of elegant curiosities in nature. The work is gothic, that suits the place best. Four demi-columns stand in the front. It faces the rising sun. The statue of Flora is pure statuary marble, as big as life, which the Duke of Montagu gave me, is placed before it. Over the entrance is pinnacle work, foliage work &c., proper, & coats of arms. Two folding doors, 8 feet high, turn back on each side, & let in the air. The building is theatrical, upon steps of Ketton stone for the pots of flowers to stand on, some 5 steps, one above another, some fewer. The walls are of brick, built together in niche arch. Above the flowers are golden boys supporting two spandrils of the roof.

Before you, a niche with a gilt statue of the Venus de Medicis, 2 foot high. Several bustos, & other curiosities, in proper places. Toward the south is a pointed window composed of painted glass, of figures, & coats of arms, inscriptions &c. St Laurence with the grid-iron, S. Kyniburga, Abbess of Caster near us, wife of King Peada, first christian King of Mercia, they built Tickencote church, Peterborough cathedral; King Alkfrid, who lived in our castle, to whom St Wilfred was chaplain.

The roof is supported by 8 spandrils which bear up a cupola open at top. Above is my dumb dell, which I ring every morning, a most agreeable exercise.

In my Temple of Flora I placed this inscription:

HIC SPARGE FLORES, SPARGE BREVES ROSAS.
NAM VITA GAVDET MORTVA FLORIBUS.
HERBISQVE ODORATIS CORONA
VATIS ADHVC CINEREM CALENTEM.'

Stukeley's description can now be supplemented by his unpublished drawings in Oxford and Spalding, Lincolnshire, allowing us visual access to a significant early example of eighteenth-century medievalism. The groundplan now in the
Spalding Gentleman’s Society shows that the Temple of Flora was a centrally planned structure based upon an octagon set within a square (Pl 13). In this, it is related to garden buildings such as Batty Langley’s Gothic garden temple, the Gothic temple at Painshill, or the Gothic temple elevation in the Yale Center for British Art.46 A further drawing from Spalding is a cross-section of the Temple, showing its domical vault, the interior seats, the dumbbell, and a sculpted bust placed in a niche (Pl 14). A drawing now in Oxford shows only the doorway of the Temple (Pl 15). The style of the doorway is composite: the columns, bases and capitals reflect early Gothic forms, while the canopies are close approximations of late medieval architecture in Lincolnshire, particularly Stukeley’s own All Saints. A second drawing from the same portfolio, whose notation has been lost due to cropping, may be provisionally considered Stukeley’s designs for the interior of the Temple (Pl 16). A complex design of three Decorated arches over an uninscribed plaque and a bust with two flanking arches containing niches, the design confirms closely to Stukeley’s description. The stylistic inconsistencies of Stukeley’s Temple may suggest that parts of the building – particularly the doorjambs and bases – were spolia from local buildings. The acquisition of these disjecta membra and various aspects of the description can be confirmed elsewhere in Stukeley’s diaries.47

Typical of eighteenth-century garden designs, Stukeley’s Temple of Flora was encoded with layered literary allusions. The inscription derives from Abraham Cowley’s (1618–67) Epitaph of a Living Author. Cowley was of course a logical reference in this context, since he had published a famous Essay on Gardening that was sympathetic to Stukeley’s sentiments on gardens as loci of meditation removed from worldly concerns: ‘I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always, that I might be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them and the study of nature’. Stukeley also visited Cowley’s own garden48 which may have provided the source for the inscription. As likely a source was Addison’s Spectator, which reprinted and translated Cowley’s epitaph in full in 1712:

Bring flow’rs, the short liv’d roses bring,  
To life deceas’d, fit offering!  
And sweets around the poet strow,  
Whilst yet with life his ashes glow.49

There was of course precedent for the creation of temples dedicated to Flora in English landscape gardening at Stourhead, Wilts. of 1744, or the example in an eighteenth-century book of garden designs in Oxford (Pl 17). But Stukeley’s Temple of Flora was not simply following fashion. Rather, it was an elaborate and highly topical literary allusion in itself. His Gothic Temple, constructed after his second marriage and intended as a gift to his wife for her to keep her plants, is an ingenious reference to Ovid’s Fasti, a copy of which Stukeley owned.50 Ovid describes Flora’s wedding gift from her husband Zephyrus thus:

I have a fertile garden in the lands that are my wedding gift, filled with noble flowers by my husband, who said, ‘Be ruler, O goddess
favor of the Gothic design. On one level, Stukeley’s comment relates the gender of the intended user of the Temple to nature and to the Gothic, both of which were gendered as feminine in the years around 1700.50 On another, Stukeley refers to the appropriateness of the Temple’s dedication to Flora – the goddess of nature – to the use of the Gothic, and thus to a perceived relationship between the two. Linking the choice of the style of the building to its setting, Stukeley’s thought is consistent with contemporary thinking about ‘situation’ in garden design and architectural theory, particularly that of Robert Morris.51

The most significant text connecting nature with the Gothic is Raphael’s famous Letter to Leo X in which he stated that the Gothic was the architecture of the primitive dwellers of the forest and that its forms – twisted columns and ribbed vaults – replicated the forms of trees.52 However, the text was not published until 1733 (in Rome) and there is no definitive evidence that the text was known via copies existing in England or that its wisdom had otherwise filtered through travelers on the Grand Tour.53 Stukeley’s knowledge of the theory could have derived directly or indirectly from Félibien’s influential 1699 account, which also provided a version of the ‘forest theory’ for the Gothic. But it is not strictly necessary to suggest that Raphael or any foreign source lurked behind a conception of Gothic as an art of nature in England, since there is some evidence to suggest that it had an independent history from the Middle Ages onward.54

Whatever the ultimate origin, Stukeley had already mused on the relationship of the Gothic to nature. In his Vetusta Monuménta, he compared the cloister of Gloucester cathedral to the forms of the forest: ‘Nothing could have made me so much in love with Gothic architecture (so-called), and I judge for a gallery, library or the like, “tis the best manner of building, because the idea of it is taken from a walk of trees, whose touching heads are curiously imitated by the roof’.55 The natural origins of Gothic were explored by other authors in the same years: in a letter of 1728, Alexander Pope declared his intention of ‘planting an old Gothic cathedral, or rather some old Roman Temple, in trees. Good, large poplars, with their white stems, cleared and brought to a proper height, would serve very well for their columns, and might form the different aisles, or peristilums, by their different distances and heights’.56 Pope’s ‘Gothic cathedral’ was never planted, but in concept it anticipates James Hall’s experiment linking the Gothic to the forms of nature at the end of the century.57

The thrust of Stukeley’s commentary on the Gothic related less to appraisals of the Gothic as a contemporary style, and more to a broader, ultimately religious interest in the very origins of architecture, a dominant discourse of eighteenth-century architectural history.58 One reason that the Gothic may have appealed to Stukeley was a current association of the Gothic with the ancient Druids. Stukeley would have agreed with his friend and close correspondent William Warburton, who not only provided a version of the ‘forest theory’ on the Gothic within a few years, but also proposed a direct relationship between the forest groves of the Druids with the Gothic in his notes to Alexander Pope’s Epistle to Burlington: ‘For having been accustomed, during the gloom of paganism, to worship

over flowers.’ As soon as the dewy frost is shaken from the leaves... the ‘Hours’ come together clothed in many colors and gather my flowers in lightly woven baskets. Then come the ‘Graces’, twining flowers into garlands... I was the first to make a flower from the blood of the boy from ‘Therapnae’ [Hyacinthus]... You too, ‘Narcissus’, keep your name in my well-tended garden... And need I tell ‘Crocus’ and ‘Attis’ and ‘Adonis’, the son of ‘Cynyras’, from whose wounds I caused the flowers to spring that honor them?

Ovid, Fasti 5.209-30.

Understood in these terms, Stukeley takes the guise of Zephyrus and his wife that of Flora, who shared his enthusiasm for gardens.

The style of the Temple (‘the work is gothic, that suits the place best’) cannot be divorced from our understanding of its symbolism, particularly since his Temple appears to have been the first Temple of Flora erected in England in the Gothic style. Stukeley’s notebooks contain a handful of preliminary sketches of an austere Doric Temple of Flora and a Palladian Temple of Flora (Pl 18) with foliage growing up its columns both dated to 1746, which he clearly abandoned in
the Deity in Groves (a practice common to all nations), When their new Religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble Groves, as nearly as the distance of architecture would permit.30 Warburton’s positive interpretation of the Gothic as Druidic architecture had some precedent in England: in 1726 Francis Hutcheson disparingly commented on the ‘fictitious Deities’ of ‘Heathen Priests’ that appeared in forests in his brief commentary on the Gothic.31 The association of Gothic architecture with ‘Celtic’ or ‘Druidic’ cultures was also current in France: in 1735 H. Le Blanc suggested that Gothic architecture evoked the Celtic twilight of forest groves, and in 1724 Bernard de Montfaucon (who worked Stukeley knew and with whom he corresponded) attributed to the Druids not only the stone circles but also a number of ashlars now categorized as “Romanesque” and “Gothic.”32

There can be little doubt, however, that the figure of Warburton stands behind Stukeley’s implicit argument that the Gothic was an architecture connected to England’s Patriarchial Christian tradition. Warburton was a prebend and later bishop of Gloucester, and he shared Stukeley’s enthusiasms for the Druids, even providing him new texts on the subject.33 Warburton and Stukeley thus modified and nationalized the ‘forest theory’, considering the Gothic to be a stone-built version of forest groves, the sacred architecture of the Druids. Within a decade, Thomas Wright employed the same wisdom in his *Universal Architecture* of 1755, which features designs for a ‘Druide’s Cell, or Arbour of the Hermitage Kind’, a building that freely fuses Gothic and Classical forms within a ‘natural’ structure overgrown with roots (PI 19), suggesting that ‘the wildest face of nature being the proper Accompaniment, as it partakes in some measure both of the Genus of the Cave and Grotto’.34 William Stukeley’s garden designs are extraordinarily interesting aspects of his oeuvre. I have been able to cover only a small corner of what is a vast canvas, but I hope I have shown that they cannot be dismissed as frivolous, or isolated from broader discussions of his thought. Both designs under consideration functioned as experiments or validations of existing theories, and they shed light on his interests in and interpretations of architecture, a subject on which he wrote remarkably little. The artistry of Stukeley’s designs is evident in the wealth of largely unexplored evidence he left behind; their esotericism, however, is more apparent than actual, since these projects were rationalized contributions to contemporary discourses on theology, history and architecture in the eighteenth century.

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4 These have been considered in Longstaffe-Gowan 1991, op cit n5.


7 Oxford, Bodleian MS Top Gen d. 14 f. 40v; 47r. A model of Stukeley’s gothic bridge still survives at Broughton.

8 I am grateful to Bernard Nurse for discussing this with me. The most telling parallel is with his ‘Orangerie’ (see below, n12) which can be loosely paralleled with the portrait’s landscape. However, aside the circular form of the orangery and the common form of the classical garden gate, neither the architecture of the house nor aspects of the garden (such as the fountain and the mature trees) can be paralleled at Grantham. See most recently David Gaimster, Sarah McCarthy and Bernard Nurse, eds, *Making History: Antiquaries in Britain 1700–1777*, London 2007, n69.

9 Some of the carvings and tablets from Barnhill are still extant. My thanks to John FH Smith for discussing this with me.


13 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng Misc c. 538, f. 9, reprinted in Stukeley and Gale, op cit n10, 208–9.

14 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng Misc c. 538f. 5.

15 Stukeley’s Druid name was hooversome from Jean Gouenheuld, *Le reveil de Chyndonax, prince des Vacies, dryades celtiques d’aiton, avec la sancente, religion, 5 dizevrie des ceremonies observeeaux aux anciennes sepultures, Paris 1625*, a copy of which he owned. For discussion, see Stuart Piggott, *The Druids*, London 1975, 125–7. Stukeley also owned a pilory bust of himself as Chyndonax ‘carved by Disher’ which was set in his hall at Stamford. Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng misc .7197 f. 150.

16 The image not reproduced here is... London, British Museum MS 1928, 0426.1.1–24 f. 15.


18 Stukeley and Gale, op cit n10, 216.

19 Parriachial Christianity, or a Chronological and Historical Enquiry into the Origin and Progress of the True Religion*, now Yale University, Lewis Walpole Library, MS Vol 45, 5 vols, f. 57–50. MS is dated 1731. For the development of these ideas in Stukeley’s *Itinerarium Curiosum*, 1890, op cit n7, ch 5.


22 Stukeley's published materials contain little information about England, which he often been over-looked. These issues are explored Yale University, Lewis Walpole Library MS vol 45.

23 Oxford, Bodleian MS Top Gen.53 f. 36v–37e contain Stukeley's imaginative reconstructions of the scenes of the Druid 'liturgical year': vernacular equinox, mid-summer sacrifice, autumnal equinox, and The Druid sacrifice of Yule/Tide.


25 Yale Walpole Library MS Vol 3 f. 60. See also John Wilmerding, A Theme for the British Druids, London 1740, Preface.

26 Oxford, Bodleian MS Top Gen.53 f. 59–60, 63 for the influence of the grove on subsequent religious architecture and on the Druids: 'Hercules would not have to be slack in following this practice after his old acquaintance Abraham and carried it with him into all his colors.'

27 Oxford, Bodleian MS Eng misc c. 719/14 f. 20 ff. See also Almond, op cit n20, 385–7.

28 Twentieth-century archaeology has gone some way in confirming this hypothesis: discovering original or remains of the stone rings at Stonehenge. For a recent overview, see Hill, op cit n17.


33 haycock, op cit n5, 66. See also Bamber Gascoigne and Jonathan Ditchburn, Images of Twickenham, Richmond 1981, 107. Arboral metaphors for gothic ornament were prominent in the eighteenth century. See for example Isaac Ware, A Complete Body of Architecture, London 1776, 1768, 10, where ‘Branches’ is defined as A term used by some to express the arches of Gothic vaults.

34 William Stukeley, Itinerarium Curiosum, 2nd ed, London 1776. Soll of great value on these issues is Arthur O Lovejoy's classic paper, 'The First Gothic Revival and the Return to Nature', Modern Language Notes, 47.7 (1952) 419–46. Notably, Stukeley's house at Stamford displayed an image of the Gloucester cloister. Oxford, Bodleian MS ENG misc c. 196 f.107. The appropriateness of the Gothic to a gallery or library could possibly have been suggested to Stukeley by the 1725 design competition to build a site for the Spalding's own harmonies, which clearly featured a Gothic design by William sands. See Harris, op cit n11, 41–2.


36 On Pope's work in particular, see Leatherbarrow, op cit n52, esp. 56–7.


39 Pope, op cit n59, 3.266–68. On Stukeley's relationship with Warburton, see Stukeley and Gale, op cit n10, 127–80, which recounts their early friendship and estrangement in later life. This wisdom was reprised in the notes of Captain Gros’s ‘Essay’, in Thomas War ton, John Bentham, Capt. Gros and John Miller, Essays on Gothic Architecture, London 1802, 121.

40 On this, or versions of it, were commonly enough expressed in the later years of the 18th century. See for example the origins of Gothic in 'the groves of the heathens' in James Anderson, Constitutions of the ancient fraternity of free and accepted masons, containing their bylaws, charges, regulations, &c., London 1784, 67–8, 90. See also Brownell, op cit n57, 235 n11.


42 Architecture des druides anciens et modernes, Paris 1780.


44 Piggott, op cit n17, 84.

45 Thomas Wright (of Durham), Universal Architecture, London 1775, I, Design E.