

fountains fountains!

In the 1880s, not long after the unveiling of the fountain, a letter appeared in the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette* from a lady recently returning from travelling in Europe. She claimed to have seen a fountain in the town of Hildesheim in Germany that was an exact replica of the Devizes one! She suggested that as Mr Woodyer, the architect, had been commissioned to create an original design he should be challenged and his fee returned! Unfortunately we don't know what happened next.

As travel was still limited and cameras not yet carried by tourists her claim would have been hard to substantiate. However, a recent investigation has revealed that Hildesheim does indeed have a fountain. It is much older than ours and although it shares some design features with the Estcourt fountain it is hardly an exact replica. So what was the motive of this correspondent?

The Market Fountain in Hildesheim, Germany, has a venerable history but was probably not the inspiration for the Estcourt Fountain!



The Estcourt Fountain photographed from the upper window of Clarke's shop in the Market Place (now W H Smith) in the 1890s



The fountain shaded by trees in around 1905

