

= William Adam ( architect ) =

William Adam ( 1689 ? 24 June 1748 ) was a Scottish architect , mason , and entrepreneur . He was the foremost architect of his time in Scotland , designing and building numerous country houses and public buildings , and often acting as contractor as well as architect . Among his best known works are Hopetoun House near Edinburgh , and Duff House in Banff . His individual , exuberant style built on the Palladian style , but with Baroque details inspired by Vanbrugh and Continental architecture .

In the 18th century , Adam was considered Scotland 's " Universal Architect " . However , since the early 20th century , architectural critics have taken a more measured view , Colin McWilliam , for instance , finding the quality of his work " varied to an extreme degree " . As well as being an architect , Adam was involved in several industrial ventures and improvement schemes , including coal mining , salt panning , stone quarries and mills . In 1731 he began to build up his own estate in Kinross @-@ shire , which he named Blair Adam . He was the father of three architects ; John , Robert and James , the last two were the developers of the " Adam style " .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

William Adam was born in Linktown of Abbotshall , now a neighbourhood of Kirkcaldy , Fife , and was baptised on 24 October 1689 . He was the only surviving child of John Adam ( d. c . 1710 ) , a mason , and Helen Cranstoun , daughter of William Cranstoun , 3rd Lord Cranstoun . His paternal grandfather was Archibald Adam , a laird in Angus . Adam probably attended the grammar school in Kirkcaldy until 1704 , when he turned 15 , and thereafter learned the craft of masonry , possibly from his father . It is often suggested that Adam was apprenticed to Sir William Bruce at Kinross House , although the dates make this unlikely . John Fleming suggests that if Adam trained under Bruce at all , it must have been at Hopetoun House which Bruce was building from 1699 ? 1703 . By 1717 Adam was a fully qualified member of the Kirkcaldy masons ' guild , and before 1720 he travelled to France and the Low Countries , visiting country houses and viewing the canal at Ostend .

In 1714 , Adam entered into a partnership with William Robertson of Gladney , a local laird , to set up a brickworks at Linktown . The venture was successful , and Adam has been credited with introducing the manufacture of Dutch pantiles into Scotland . On 30 May 1716 , Adam married Robertson 's daughter Mary , and the couple moved into his home , Gladney House , at Abbotshall .

= = = Rise to fame = = =

It is not known how William Adam became a successful architect from these beginnings , but by 1721 he was engaged on major projects at Floors Castle , where he executed a design by Vanbrugh , and designing extensions to Hopetoun House . John Gifford links Adam 's rise with the retirement of James Smith , the most prominent architect of the early 18th century , who was in his 70s by this time . Like Smith , Adam was a trained mason , had social connections through his family , and had the financial backing of successful business ventures . It was in 1721 that Adam became a Freemason being initiated in The Lodge of Edinburgh ( Mary 's Chapel ) , No.1.

However , unlike the Episcopalians Smith and Bruce , Adam was a Presbyterian Whig , in a time of Whig domination of the British government . Scottish Episcopalians were associated with Jacobitism , and as such found little favour with the ruling Hanoverian regime . Sir William Bruce , for example , was imprisoned on at least three occasions between 1693 and his death in 1710 , merely on account of his principles . Adam 's beliefs were much more acceptable , although he did manage to maintain relations with the exiled Jacobite , and amateur architect , John , Earl of Mar. Adam 's political stance allowed him to acquire influential patrons such as John Dalrymple , 2nd Earl of Stair , and Sir John Clerk of Penicuik , who , besides being his clients , attempted to secure government

positions and contracts for him . For example , Sir John Clerk unsuccessfully proposed Adam for city architect under the " Town of Edinburgh Bill " , which would have seen him overseeing new public works in the capital . In 1727 , Stair tried , again unsuccessfully , to have Adam appointed Surveyor of the King 's Works in Scotland , although the following year he acquired the lesser position of Clerk and Storekeeper of the King 's Works in Scotland , under the Master of Works Sir John Anstruther . In 1730 Adam was appointed principal Mason to the Board of Ordnance in North Britain .

In 1727 Adam and Sir John Clerk travelled to London , visiting a number of country seats along the way , including Cliveden , Wilton , and Wanstead Park . In London , Adam attempted to make further political contacts , as well as seeking out an engraver for his projected book of architectural plans , which would eventually become *Vitruvius Scoticus* . Also while in London , he sat to William Aikman for his portrait .

= = = Architect , entrepreneur , and laird = = =

By 1728 , Adam was firmly established as a successful architect with numerous ongoing business concerns , including coal mining , salt panning , quarrying and agricultural improvements , although in that year occurred the death of his partner and father @-@ in @-@ law William Robertson . For the same year , William Adam and Alexander McGill are called architects in the subscribers ' list to James Gibbs 's *Book of Architecture* . On 21 February 1728 , Adam was made a burghess of Edinburgh , and moved with his family to a property on the Cowgate , where he later built a large tenement .

His business activities continued to expand . Since the commission for Hopetoun in 1721 , he had leased quarries near Queensferry which provided the stone for his building contracts . Starting in 1734 , he leased lofts , granaries and warehouses in Leith , and leased coal mines and salt pans at Cockenzie , and later at nearby Pinkie he built a canal in 1742 ? 44 , to serve the mines . Other engineering works included an aqueduct cut through a hill at Inveresk , and in 1741 , an attempt to promote a Forth and Clyde canal , a project eventually realised by others some 30 years later . His main concern from 1731 became Blair Crambeth , the estate in Kinross @-@ shire , near Kelty , which he purchased that year for £ 8 @, @ 010 Scots . Renaming the estate Blair Adam , he set about expanding and improving it , planting trees , enclosing land , and setting up coal mines . He established the village of Maryburgh to house the miners , and built a small house , although he seldom visited for any length of time .

= = = Later life = = =

In 1741 Adam was forced to initiate legal proceedings against William , Lord Braco , to retrieve unpaid fees arising from his work at Duff House . There was no formal contract , and client and architect disagreed on costs for carved stonework . Adam sued for £ 5 @, @ 796 12s 11 ? d , and the matter was initially resolved in his favour . However , Braco was a stubborn opponent , and dragged out the proceedings , which were not resolved until just before Adam 's death .

After the Jacobite rising of 1745 , Adam 's position as Mason to the Board of Ordnance brought him a number of large military contracts in the Highlands . In 1746 , the position of Master Carpenter to the Board of Ordnance became vacant , and Adam was quick to put forward his son John 's name for consideration , although he was unsuccessful in securing him the post . His three eldest sons were all involved in the family business by 1746 , James and John both leaving Edinburgh University early to join their father .

William Adam succumbed to illness in late 1747 , dying the following summer . He was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard , Edinburgh , where John Adam designed the family mausoleum built in 1753 . This was restored by Edinburgh City Council and Historic Scotland in 1997 to mark the 250th anniversary of his death .

= = Architectural works = =

Adam used a wide variety of sources for his designs , and created an inventive personal style of decoration . His chief influences were from English Palladianism , and several of his houses have been likened to designs reproduced in Colen Campbell 's Vitruvius Britannicus , but Adam mixed these with English Baroque motifs from Gibbs and Vanbrugh . He relied greatly on a range of French , Italian and English pattern books , including Gibbs ' Book of Architecture , from which he borrowed freely with little regard for consistency of style . In addition , he took inspiration from earlier Scottish renaissance architecture , and from his predecessors Bruce and Smith . During his nearly 30 @-@ year career as an architect , Adam designed , extended or remodelled over 40 country houses , and undertook numerous public contracts . He also laid out landscape garden schemes , for instance at Newliston and Taymouth Castle .

= = = Country houses = = =

His first commission seems to have been for extensions to Hopetoun House , near Edinburgh , for Charles Hope , 1st Earl of Hopetoun . Hopetoun had been built only 20 years before by Sir William Bruce , and Adam was retained to rebuild the south @-@ east wing . These works , completed in 1725 , aimed to give the east front a bold new facade , stepping forward at the ends with curved sections . According to John Fleming , " nothing so ambitious or imaginative had ever before been attempted in Scotland " . Over the following years , Adam would return to Hopetoun , building the south colonnade from 1726 , the north wing from 1728 , and finally the pavilions from 1736 . These were not finished until 1742 , the year of the Earl 's death , and the completed scheme was finished by Adam 's sons after his own death . Adam also laid out the gardens , possibly to designs by Bruce , whose axial style they follow .

Other early designs included Drum House , which boasted Scotland 's first venetian window , and Mavisbank , both near Edinburgh . Mavisbank House , constructed between 1723 and 1727 , was the first Palladian villa in Scotland , a collaboration between Adam and the owner , amateur architect Sir John Clerk of Penicuik . The latter claimed much of the credit , and certainly criticised some of Adam 's suggestions , although evidence suggests Adam got his way on a number of points . As at Hopetoun , here Adam enjoyed an unusually close relationship with his client , despite their differences of opinion . His most ambitious early work was the baroque , Vanbrugh @-@ inspired house at Arniston , near Gorebridge . Built for Robert Dundas , a lawyer and politician linked to the Earl of Stair , Arniston includes extensive grounds laid out by Adam , with a parterre and cascade , and a main avenue centred on Arthur 's Seat to the north . The stucco work to the hall at Arniston is one of Adam 's finest Vanbrughian interiors .

Duff House , Adam 's major work of the 1730s , demonstrates his accretion of local and foreign influences , presenting itself as " a medieval castle in baroque dress " . Built between 1735 and 1739 , Adam acted as contractor and architect to William , Lord Braco . James Gibbs had recently built another house for Lord Braco , but he declined the commission for Duff , recommending Adam for the job . The main facade of Duff House is remarkable for its height , and with the tall corner towers the impression is of a highly vertical house . This style is related to the designs produced by the exiled Jacobite Earl of Mar , an amateur architect who collaborated with Adam at the House of Dun . Charles McKean compares Duff to the 17th century Drumlanrig Castle , and places it within the Scottish architectural tradition . Like Drumlanrig , and Heriot 's Hospital ( 1620s ? 1690s ) in Edinburgh before it , Duff House has a double @-@ pile block flanked by taller square corner towers . The " baroque dress " at Duff derives from Vanbrugh , and particularly Eastbury Park ( 1724 ? 38 ) in Dorset . Designs for pavilions and quadrant wings were never executed due to Lord Braco 's dispute with Adam . Braco never occupied or fitted out the house for the same reason .

Adam 's other houses of the 1730s include House of Dun in Angus , Tinwald in Dumfriesshire , Lawyers House in Perthshire , and Haddo House in Aberdeenshire . His early , unexecuted design for House of Dun , a collaboration with the Earl of Mar , is interesting , as it appears to show a traditional tall Scottish tower house , complete with spiral stairs within the walls , but externally clad in neo @-@ classical detailing ; Adam clearly took some inspiration from the Scottish vernacular . Chatelherault , the Duke of Hamilton 's " Dogg Kennel " and hunting lodge near Hamilton , was

completed in 1743 . His redecoration of the Duke 's apartment in Holyroodhouse was Adam 's most important interior design commission . In the 1730s Adam extended Taymouth Castle and laid out gardens , although his work was largely demolished to make way for the present building in the 19th century . Adam 's approach here mirrored the work of Bruce at Balcaskie , extending a Scottish tower house to form a near @-@ symmetrical architectural composition .

After 1740 , Adam built only two houses , Cumbernauld House for the Earl of Wigton , and Cally House for Alexander Murray , which was not complete until 1763 . From 1746 , Adam was acting as " Intendant General " and contractor , overseeing the building of Inveraray Castle to a Gothic design by Roger Morris . His role was to correspond with the architect on behalf of the client , Archibald Campbell , 3rd Duke of Argyll , and Adam also offered Morris his own advice on detail design . He also provided an early draft for the layout of the new town at Inveraray . His last architectural work was for Lord Lovat in 1744 , for a new house at Castle Dounie . The stone was supplied , but construction never started as Lord Lovat was " out " in the Jacobite rising of 1745 , and his property was sacked by government troops .

= = = Public buildings = = =

Adam 's first public building commissions were in Aberdeen , where he built the town house , or town hall , from 1729 ? 30 , since demolished , and Robert Gordon 's Hospital from 1730 ? 32 , now an independent school . The original Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on Infirmary Street was an imposing building designed by Adam in 1738 , although based on a standard Ordnance Board barrack block . One of the first infirmaries in the world , it was founded by physician Alexander Monro , and was demolished in 1884 . Remnants of the building can be found on various sites in the city . Also in Edinburgh , Adam built George Watson 's Hospital from 1738 ? 41 , demolished 2004 , which in the 19th century was incorporated by David Bryce as part of the new Royal Infirmary . In 1745 , work was completed on William Adam 's " New Library " for the University of Glasgow , also since demolished . Adam 's town house for Dundee has also been demolished ; that of Haddington remains but is much altered . Adam built only one church , Hamilton Old Parish Church , in 1733 while working on nearby Chatelherault .

The last Jacobite rising occurred in 1745 , when " Bonnie Prince Charlie " attempted to seize the British throne , aided by rebellious Scottish Highlanders . In the aftermath of this unsuccessful coup , the Highlands were extensively militarised by the government , and Adam 's Ordnance Board work consequently multiplied . He and his sons carried out works at Fort Augustus , Fort William , Carlisle , and the castles of Dumbarton , Stirling , Edinburgh , Blackness , and Duart . He was engaged in 1747 to provide the mason work and brickwork for Fort George near Inverness , although the project only began shortly before Adam 's death . Every summer until 1760 , one of his sons spent the summer at Fort George , supervising the works under Colonel Skinner , the chief engineer for North Britain .

= = = Vitruvius Scoticus = = =

In the 1720s Adam planned to publish a book of architectural drawings of Scottish houses , including his own work and that of others . His Vitruvius Scoticus was started and named in response to Colen Campbell 's Vitruvius Britannicus . He commissioned some engravings during his 1727 trip to London , and had begun to collect subscriptions . Further engraving were completed in Edinburgh in the 1730s by Richard Cooper . The project then stalled , possibly due to the lack of subscriptions ( only 150 were collected , compared to over 700 for Vitruvius Britannicus ) , although it may have been revived around the time of Adam 's death . In 1766 , John Adam attempted to restart the project and collect fresh subscriptions , although nothing came of this . The book was finally published in 1812 by John 's son William , and contained 160 plates , including 100 of Adam 's own designs .

= = Legacy = =

William Adam 's dominant position in Scottish architecture is reinforced by his lack of contemporaries . Colin McWilliam , in *The Buildings of Scotland : Lothian* , wondered " whether Scottish architecture at this period ... would have achieved very much without him . "

Adam 's death coincided with the final defeat of the Jacobite threat in 1746 , and the advance of the Scottish Enlightenment , which resulted in new styles of building becoming popular . The development of Neoclassicism in the late 18th century was paralleled by a revival of the " castle " form of house , which would lead to the Scottish baronial style . Neither idiom however , owed much to the work of William Adam . As a practical man rather than a theorist , Adam never developed a strong enough style to exert a direct influence on the course of building design .

His main bequest to architectural history were his three architect sons , and in particular Robert Adam , whose success as developer of the " Adam Style " far outran that of his father . Although Robert formed his own style through lengthy study in Rome , John Fleming detects traces of his father 's influence on all three of the brothers ' work , and suggests that the Adam principle of " movement " in architecture was partly inspired by William 's admiration for Vanbrugh . More concretely , Fleming notes that working with their father gave the brothers a solid grounding in the technical aspects of architecture , and introduced them to a set of clients which they might never otherwise have had access to .

= = = Critical appreciation = = =

Although his contemporaries acclaimed Adam 's " genius for architecture " , recent architectural historians have found his work of more variable quality . In the 18th and 19th centuries , he was accepted as Scotland 's " Universal Architect " , and at the end of the 19th century , MacGibbon and Ross suggested in *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland* that William was " at least " the equal in talent of his son Robert .

In the 20th century , a more critical view of Adam 's work was taken . For example , Ian Hannah in *The Story of Scotland in Stone* ( 1934 ) found Adam to be " a rather ordinary classical architect " . Arthur T. Bolton , in the introduction to his definitive work on Robert and James Adam ( 1922 ) , dismissed the father 's work as " heavy and ordinary " , and a mere " compilation of ideas ... from Vanbrugh and Gibbs to Kent " . John Fleming lamented his " ad hoc improvisation from source books , improperly digested " , and decided that he " cannot be allowed great distinction as an architect " . John Summerson disregards Adam 's work , in *Architecture in Britain , 1530 ? 1830* ( 1953 ) , as it does not fit into the English Palladian orthodoxy , although John Dunbar suggests that " he could express himself convincingly enough in that idiom " , for instance at Haddo House . Dunbar found Adam 's work " as remarkable for its eclecticism as for its unevenness of quality " , and he went on to stress William Adam 's " robustness and directness " , and found these " appropriate to the artistic climate of North Britain " . Gifford also stresses Adam 's Scottish context , pointing out that Scotland was in many ways a foreign country during his working life , and indeed was a separate country to England until 1707 . Adam should , he argues , be seen not as a provincial British architect , but as " the architect of Scotland " .

John Fleming and Colin McWilliam are in agreement that Adam was at his best as a collaborator . Fleming 's comment that Adam " was at his best when guided by a man of taste who knew his own mind " , is echoed by McWilliam , who suggests that William Adam " always did his best , but did his best architecture ... when he was in touch not only with his source books , but with other lively minds " .

= = Family = =

William Adam and Mary Robertson had ten surviving children :

Janet ( " Jenny " ) ( b . 1717 ) , born at Linktown , later managed their brothers ' London business .

John ( b . 3 July 1721 ) , born at Linktown , took over Blair Adam and the other family businesses , as well as practising architecture .

Robert ( b . 3 July 1728 ) , born at Linktown , architect , and best known of the Adam brothers .

James , ( b . 21 July 1732 ) architect , business partner of Robert .

William ( " Willie " ) ( b . 1738 )

Elizabeth ( " Betty " ) , with Janet , managed their brothers ' London business .

Helen ( " Nellie " )

Margaret ( " Peggy " )

Mary , married Rev John Drysdale FRSE ( 1718 @-@ 1788 ) , minister of the Tron Kirk with the rare distinction of being twice the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ( 1773 and 1784 ) , though now chiefly remembered for his friendship with economist Adam Smith .

Susannah , married Sir John Clerk of Eldin , son of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik .

The birth dates of their five younger daughters are not recorded . In addition another son , named William , and two daughters died in infancy .

After William Adam 's death , John inherited the family business , and immediately took his brothers Robert and James into partnership , which would last until the late 1750s when Robert established himself in London . William Adam 's obituary in the Caledonian Mercury noted that " it is fortunate he has left behind him some promising young men to carry on what he has so happily begun " . John Adam passed Blair Adam on to his own son , lawyer and politician William Adam KC , whose descendants continue to own the estate , and have included several notable politicians , soldiers and civil servants .