

## A 'Classical Goth':

### Robert Adam's engagement with medieval architecture

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Robert Adam's Grand Tour in 1754–8 had a profound impact upon his understanding of the forms and ornament of Classical architecture. This became manifest after his return to Britain in his country house designs, as, for example, in the south façade of Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (from *c* 1760).<sup>1</sup> Beyond this elevation's dynamic advancement and recession of planes, the architecture paraphrases two notable monuments of ancient Rome: the Arch of Constantine and the Pantheon. Kedleston's interior, including its celebrated Saloon, was equally responsive to antique forms, and the tour's impact upon Adam in the shaping of his eponymous neoclassical style is explored elsewhere in this volume.

The vast majority of Adam's country house architecture – from the remodelling of existing homes like Osterley Park, Middlesex (1763–80), through to the creation of new structures such as Witham Park, Somerset (1762–70) – was neoclassical.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, of his realised work, only three of his 89 known country estate commissions were overtly Gothic, and all were south of the border: the interior of the Church of St Mary Magdalene, Croome d'Abitot, at Croome Court, Worcestershire (1763); the Round Room at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (1766–7); and his work for the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick – namely the interiors for Alnwick Castle (*c* 1770–80) and its associated Gothic eye-catcher, Brizlee Tower, Hulne Park (1777–83). In 1958 John Fleming suggested that the Gothic interiors of the so-

called Lord's Tower and garden house at Hulne Priory were also by Adam, a claim later refuted by Alistair Rowan; though it should be pointed out that the chimneypiece in the upper room of the garden house resonates with aspects of Adam's proposed chimneypieces for Alnwick Castle, in particular the blind panelling and clustered columns included in his 1769 design for the drawing room chimneypiece.<sup>3</sup> To this short catalogue of finished Gothic works in England can be added the earlier Decorated-style west front of Yester Chapel, on the outskirts of Gifford, East Lothian, designed around 1753 by Robert in partnership with his older brother John; and also the unrealised proposals for Sir William Pulteney (1684–1764), Earl of Bath, at Shrewsbury Castle, Shropshire, of c 1769, in a quasi-Perpendicular style of Gothic not too dissimilar from his densely panelled proposals for Alnwick's interiors of around the same date.<sup>4</sup>

A further seventeen of Adam's known country houses were castellated, such as Culzean Castle, Ayrshire (1777–92), but these cannot be considered wholeheartedly Gothic, incorporating as they do forms and features, including Venetian windows, entablatures and pilasters, from Classical and other architecture.<sup>5</sup> Alistair Rowan has referred to this castle style as 'amongst the most original creations of eighteenth-century European architecture ... with a vocabulary and syntax of its own'.<sup>6</sup> The difference between Adam's Classical-Gothic hybrid structures and the Gothic Revival buildings of the earlier eighteenth century, including Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill (1747–80) at Twickenham – a country villa intended by Walpole to represent 'the castle ... of my ancestors' – relates, in part, to the time and place in which Adam was working and to his very personal synthesis of the various styles that appealed to his romantic sensibilities.<sup>7</sup> Adam saw these castle-dwellings 'not as a Gothic house but in some sense perhaps as an ancient Caledonian fort', and infused also with his memories of the ancient Roman fortifications

he had seen in Italy.<sup>8</sup> The handful of self-consciously Gothic commissions, sketches and preparatory designs considered here, albeit small in number, is extraordinarily varied, and is important for what it reveals about Adam's evolving engagement with the language of medieval architecture – an important, imaginative and largely overlooked undercurrent to his trademark Roman style.

Gothic design in Georgian Britain developed tremendously between around 1730 and 1840, and Adam's place within that tradition has not been assessed fully.<sup>9</sup> His experiments with Gothic date from the mid-to-late eighteenth century and are thus sandwiched between the work of the earlier, whimsical Gothicists and later, more antiquarian-minded individuals. He postdates the Classical-Gothic of William Kent in the 1730s and 40s, as seen at Esher Place, Surrey (c 1733), and York Minster (1740–1); also the designs presented by Batty Langley in his *Ancient Architecture, Restored and Improved* (1741–2); and the highly decorative, whimsical rococo-Gothic promoted by the likes of William and John Halfpenny and Thomas Chippendale in their publications.<sup>10</sup> But, as this essay suggests, Adam's post-Grand Tour Gothic is indebted, at least initially, to Kent's distinct interpretation and reuse of medieval forms, which falls short of the later, more serious and antiquarian work of architects deeply concerned with understanding medieval architecture, such as James Essex (1722–84).<sup>11</sup> Adam did not share Essex's antiquarian pretensions; instead he developed a highly personal style of Gothic that, at its creative zenith, manipulated medieval forms and combined them with (or converted them into) Classical shapes and motifs. In finish, this neoclassical-Gothic also mirrored his more familiar Classical colour schemes in the tinted grounds of pastel colours that helped define the ornamental patterns.<sup>12</sup> Adam, in effect, pioneered neoclassical-Gothic design: a phase of

Georgian Gothic architecture and furniture that has only recently been given sufficient attention.<sup>13</sup>

*The Works in Architecture; Adam, Wyatt and Gothic*

Given the minor role that Gothic design played in Adam's *oeuvre*, and the overwhelming preference for Classicism in late eighteenth-century Britain, it is not surprising to find him being critical of the style when the occasion suited. This is, of course, consistent with the received architectural wisdom of the period. Sir Christopher Wren's memoirs, *Parentalia*, had only recently been published (in 1750), in which Wren largely dismissed Gothic as a 'rude and unsophisticated' style.<sup>14</sup> Writing in the first volume of *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam* (1773), Robert Adam echoed the by-then well-established criticism of pointed-arch architecture. He implied that Gothic was a low point in British architectural history, remedied by the sophisticated appropriation and deployment of Classical forms by post-medieval architects:

We intended to have prefixed to our designs a dissertation concerning the rise and progress of architecture in Great Britain; and to have pointed out the various stages of its improvements from the time, that our ancestors, relinquishing the gothick style, began to aim at an imitation of the Grecian manner, until it attained that degree of perfection at which it has now arrived.<sup>15</sup>

But perhaps we should not take Adam's words in *The Works* too seriously. The book was a work of polemic, intended to bolster his and his brother James's positions as the foremost neoclassical architects of their day. In order to stress the pre-eminence of his new, pioneering 'revolution' in design,

Adam also took great pains in the text to distance himself from the preceding British fashion for Palladianism, yet so much of his own architecture was firmly rooted in its forms and proportions.

Referring in the same publication to James Wyatt (1746–1813), the *arriviste* and highly fashionable architect then challenging the Adams' architectural hegemony, the brothers dismissed him as a copyist rather than an inventor – an imitator, not an original genius.<sup>16</sup> Their argument was that Wyatt had nothing new to offer eighteenth-century architectural design:

We hope it will be thought no more than justice to ourselves, thus to ascertain the originality of our designs, and enable the world to discover, where they have been imitated with judgment, and where they have been servilely copied or misapplied. -----An artist who feels in himself an inability of presenting to the public any thing from his own store of invention, has no title to be offended if an author is solicitous to vindicate himself to posterity from any imputation of plagiarism.<sup>17</sup>

The brothers were clearly troubled by the instantaneous success with which Wyatt arrived on Britain's architectural scene courtesy of his spectacular Pantheon in Oxford Street, London, which opened to critical acclaim in January 1772.<sup>18</sup> Even Walpole, that great supporter of Gothic architecture, had nothing but praise for Wyatt's Pantheon.<sup>19</sup>

Much like Adam, Wyatt is known primarily as a Classical architect, but he too made recourse to Gothic forms, with early Gothic-style works including the Great Hall at Beaudesert, Staffordshire (1772), the exterior and Entrance Hall of Sandleford Priory, Berkshire (1780–9), and Sheffield Place, Sussex (1775–87).<sup>20</sup> A comparison with Adam's Gothic is instructive. Unlike

Adam, Wyatt's Gothic interventions brought him notoriety and criticism because he attempted something that Adam never did: the restoration of medieval monuments, especially at Westminster Abbey (from 1803), and the cathedrals of Litchfield (1787–93), Salisbury (1787–92), Hereford (1788–96), Durham (1795–1805) and Ely (1796–1802).<sup>21</sup> This isolated Wyatt and placed him in direct conflict with preservationists and antiquaries who opposed any such 'improvements' to medieval fabric. John Carter (1748–1817), for example, a topographical draughtsman and staunch medievalist, labelled him 'the Destroyer' for his interventions.<sup>22</sup> But, contrary to this criticism, Wyatt's Gothic country houses, culminating in Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire (1796–1812), and Ashridge Park, Hertfordshire (1808–13, completed by Jeffry Wyatt, later Sir Jeffry Wyatville, 1813–17), reveal a sophisticated understanding of medieval architecture applied in educated, calculated and associatively charged ways.<sup>23</sup> Although distinctively Georgian, courtesy of Wyatt's active architectural imagination, his Gothic works from 1780 were clearly concerned with imitating true medieval forms. This cannot be further removed from the tenor of Adam's interest in the Gothic. Even at his most inventive, Adam did not, for example, attempt to follow strictly the visual language and appearance of medieval architecture. Instead, he created Gothic buildings, furniture and interiors from the absolute position of a Georgian designer unhampered by antiquarian interest and restraint. Consequently, he was able to recreate and recast medieval Gothic in a decidedly fashionable 'Adamesque' mode – since described as 'bizarre and even barbarous'.<sup>24</sup>

As with his castle architecture, discussed elsewhere in this volume, Adam's Gothic was heavily indebted to the language of the Classical antique and late Georgian aesthetic fashion. This mixture of styles is something that Wyatt never really harnessed for his Gothic projects: whilst the Adams may have considered him a plagiarist who threatened their primacy, there was no

attempt on Wyatt's part to imitate, improve upon or even approach Robert Adam's style of Gothic. Their respective output in this mode helps separate the two as architectural designers, though this crucial difference has received little sustained attention. The case studies considered below illustrate the distinct evolution of Adam's Gothic and show how his innovatory genius – a genius that he was so keen to promote and defend in *The Works* – was not confined solely to Classical and castle architecture, but also included the medieval, and in a more pronounced manner than is generally acknowledged.<sup>25</sup>

*Adam's Gothic background: early designs, sketches and musings*

Despite Adam's implied criticism of medieval fabric in *The Works*, he obviously paid serious attention to Gothic architecture. In the sale of the Adam architectural library by Mr Christie in 1818, one of the first lots was described as a large parcel 'of gothic Architecture and Antiquities'.<sup>26</sup> In addition to this cache, there is plentiful other evidence of an absorbing interest in medieval architecture from early in his career. Regarding his trip south of the border to England, in 1749–50, Adam remarked on his shifting interest from Gothic to Classicism: 'At London I first felt the Change of Taste grow on me from that I had contracted in Scotland', and his friend and brother-in-law, the draughtsman John Clerk of Eldin agreed that it was during this trip that Adam 'first began to prune the exuberance of his fancy, & to correct his taste'.<sup>27</sup> This 'exuberant fancy' was expressed directly in Adam's Gothic *capricci* of the period. Despite his turn toward Classicism, reflected in a robustly Palladian proposal from May 1750 for 'Pavilions to Lord Pembroke's

House at Wilton', Wiltshire, Adam's sketchbook from this trip contains eight imaginative and highly ornamental Gothic designs (see Figs 1a–b).<sup>28</sup>

It has been suggested repeatedly that Adam's early Gothic *capricci* are indebted to the plates in the first Georgian pattern-book on Gothic architecture: Batty Langley's *Ancient Architecture* (1741–2), of which there was a copy in his father's library at Blair Adam.<sup>29</sup> But in terms of their form, lively filigree ornament and architectural ethos, these 1749–50 sketches bear no relationship to Langley's work and its mostly linear, classical structuring (albeit that Adam would later rewrite his Gothic in neoclassical terms). Instead, they are characterised by dilated Y-tracery windows, and galleries of cusps and pendants running against lines of enlarged crockets. Indeed, the designs are significantly over-crocketed in comparison with typical medieval architecture and the work of other Georgian designers. These ornamental and imaginative predilections of Adam's emerge strongly throughout the pocketbook, but especially so in the sketch on folio 19, where a hexagonal window is cusped to make a sexfoil and the external angles are finished with finials creating a hexagram (Fig 1a). Equally ornate are the gables on what appears to be a church in folio 17; these are cusped externally, similar to those on the tomb of Edmund Crouchback at Westminster Abbey, and bedecked with crockets (Fig 1b). Adam's fertile imagination overloads these Gothic designs with crockets, cusps and windows to create impossibly busy and ornate structures that are unrelated to England's medieval fabric. Adam stuck mostly to the ornamental micro-architectural vocabulary of Decorated Gothic but he deployed these motifs in an imaginative manner never anticipated by early Georgian architects like William Kent or Batty Langley (Fig 1c).

Other drawings in the Blair Adam collection show that this overtly ornamental and picturesque Gothic style of Adam's extended beyond the



pages of his English tour sketchbook. A drawing for a folly, worked up with body colour and shadow and currently dated to 1749, is of similar character, albeit with the addition of ogee-arched openings. Another contemporary drawing that relates directly to the 1749–50 trip is his *Elevation of the Cross at Winchester*, of 1750 (Fig 2a). It has been suggested that this inaccurately-scaled depiction of the Winchester Cross is based on a 1741 engraving by George Vertue (Fig 2b), published by the Society of Antiquaries of London in the first volume of their *Vetusta Monumenta* (1747).<sup>30</sup> Vertue's crudely-depicted ogee gables and overabundant aedicules above the primary niche are not, however, reproduced in Adam's version. This is not the only difference: more significant, perhaps, is the angle from which the cross is depicted. Whereas Vertue's engraving renders the structure from a high viewpoint that introduces perspectival distortion, Adam's elevation is drawn orthographically, preserving the architectural details, and is thus akin to studies in early eighteenth-century pattern-books, such as the various volumes of Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715–25). Additionally, the aedicules and buttressing, along with the finer details — pinnacles, finials and crockets — are all delineated by Adam with close attention to form and scale, more so, actually, than in Vertue's engraving.<sup>31</sup> These differences suggest that Vertue's work was almost certainly not Adam's model; he either viewed the structure in person (he was close to Winchester in 1750) or worked from another rendition. Though its source remains uncertain, the Winchester Cross drawing shows that Adam was no mere Gothic fantasist, but was willing when required to attempt a close interrogation of medieval architecture.<sup>32</sup> The difference between this study and his other, more imaginative *capricci* emphasises the significance in his work of the creative design process.

There are more sketches of Gothic buildings, mostly dating from 1753, shortly before Adam's departure for the Continent, including designs for a tower and a church.<sup>33</sup> These structures, much like those in his sketches of the late 1740s, are also said to have been influenced by Langley, but they, too, owe very little to the linear plates in *Ancient Architecture*, which lack the elaborate gables, finials and swags seen, for example, in Adam's Gothic folly (see Fig 1c).<sup>34</sup> Indeed, the underlying rectilinear form and mural mass of the tower and church are, instead, derived almost exactly from the plates in William and John Halfpennys' recently published *Rural Architecture in the Gothic Taste* (1752). Plate 11 in that book, for example, *A Lodge or House of Retirement in the Gothic Taste*, depicts a country house with a large, quasi-Palladian accommodation block, which, along with its pavilions, is 'made' Gothic by the addition of lancet-shaped windows, ogee arches, crenellations, spires and crockets.<sup>35</sup> This technique – not seen in Adam's known 1749–50 sketches – was used by him again in an almost identical fashion for his 1753 church design, suggesting a familiarity with the Halfpennys' work. The tower's distinctively Scottish crown steeple, on the other hand, comes from another source close to Adam – that on the tower of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh – and its offset and attenuated buttressing imitates that in his drawing of the Winchester Cross.<sup>36</sup> One particularly distinctive feature of the church's design is its Gothic Venetian window. Whilst Batty Langley did not include this motif in his pattern-book, it accords exactly with the architectural ethos driving *Ancient Architecture*. Langley wished to rehabilitate the Gothic style and reinstate its respectability by applying its motifs to the underlying form and structure of Classical architecture.<sup>37</sup>

Adam's ornamental brand of Gothic, as seen in his 1749–50 *capricci*, was realised in 1753 at Yester Chapel, East Lothian, for John Hay (1695–1762), 4th Marquess of Tweeddale. Here Adam and his brother John refashioned the

truncated collegiate church dating to 1421 (a letter from the Adam Office of March 1753 records: 'we are busy with the drawings of the old church').<sup>38</sup> The brothers' interventions concentrated on the church's west front; the adjacent cusping and crocketing on the façade's gable, together with a cusped parapet, reproduce, almost exactly, a *capriccio* by Robert in his English tour sketchbook.<sup>39</sup> John Adam made similar sketches in his youth (as indeed did James Adam), and the ornate early Gothic, almost rococo musings of the three brothers are manifest in the West front of Yester Chapel. The drawings and the Yester commission establish beyond doubt the depth of Robert Adam's early interest in Gothic design. This fascination stayed with him and was to return in subsequent *capricci*, especially his picturesque renderings of castles within landscapes, such as *Castle, Bridge and Causeway*, of c 1780.<sup>40</sup>

When he arrived in Italy in 1755 for the crucial phase of his Grand Tour, Adam's interest in Gothic was, by all accounts, extremely obvious to his architectural tutor, Charles-Louis Clérisseau (1721–1820). Though reported much later, and at second hand, Clérisseau's assessment of Adam – 'very ignorant of Architecture when he came to me, except the Gothick: but I put him off that; and gave him some taste for the Antique' – seems surprising, given the young Scot's grounding in Classical and Palladian architecture.<sup>41</sup> His Grand Tour *capricci* are predominantly of classical structures, but a few possess Gothic details and on occasion relate to his 1749–50 sketches, such as one of a tower with orthogonal turrets (where the Y-tracery and windows resonate with those incorporated into designs in his 1749–50 sketchbook), and also a low Gothic folly, encrusted with crockets and cusping.<sup>42</sup> A number of sketches betray the influence of Italian Gothic cathedrals, such as Milan, Siena, and the baptistery at Pisa: the latter especially informed some *capricci* incorporating dominant rings of Gothic gables (Illustrate – can we go for 55/4.2). Others also seamlessly hybridise Classical and Gothic elements, an

artistic process that would prove influential for Adam's post-Grand Tour Gothic architecture, especially at Alnwick.<sup>43</sup> Despite Clérisseau's best efforts, Adam clearly retained an interest in medieval buildings. His imaginative engagement with and playful recontextualisation of Gothic forms was hardly dented by his Continental experiences; instead, he appears to have embraced and harnessed Italian Gothic and Classical styles in his *capricci*; their fusion was ultimately reproduced in his work back in England in the 1760s.

## CASE STUDIES

The early designs by Adam for Gothic structures discussed above, however, have very little connection with the character and ethos of his post-Grand Tour Gothic architecture. Confined to an eighteen-year period, this later Gothic output nevertheless reveals an important and distinct evolution in ornament and syntax, which, like his castle architecture, is highly personal and dependent upon his admiration and understanding of Classical forms. Adam's three Gothic commissions considered here — the Church at Croome Court, Worcestershire (1763); the Round Room at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (1766–7); and the interiors at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland (c 1770–80) — are each examined chronologically, revealing a nuanced and evolving style of neoclassical-Gothic that has, until now, received little attention.

### *Adam at Croome Court*

Croome Court, Worcestershire, the family seat of George William (1722–1809), 6th Earl of Coventry, was a mid-seventeenth-century double-pile house,

improved by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown from 1750 according to designs by Sander Miller (1716–80).<sup>44</sup> Miller's and Brown's interventions were Classical – the end bays of the original 1640s structure were taken down and rebuilt as corner towers in a Palladian style. Adam took over from Brown in 1760 and was responsible for Croome's interior spaces, particularly the Gallery, as well as for the addition of suitable fittings, such as seat furniture and the Library bookcases.<sup>45</sup> Beyond working at the house, Adam also made designs for fitting out the interior of the new Croome Church, built in the grounds of the house around 1758–63, probably according to a proposal by Brown, replacing an old village church that had stood inconveniently close by.<sup>46</sup> Whereas Adam's work at the house presented his characteristic brand of neoclassicism, not surprisingly his designs for the church interior were Gothic. This respected and reflected Brown's church exterior, which in turn had followed the medieval precedent for English ecclesiastical architecture and, simultaneously, the 18th-century fashion for Gothic structures in landscaped gardens.<sup>47</sup>

A number of Adam's unexecuted proposals survive for the church's internal furnishing programme.<sup>48</sup> This corpus demonstrates that initially he turned to a printed source to guide the design of this project, despite his facility with devising hypothetical Gothic structures. There is, however, a difference between playful sketches for the exteriors of imagined structures and formal proposals for the fitting up of an actual building. Significantly, Adam's two presentation designs for the church's interior reveal a fundamental shift in his Gothic style over a relatively short period of time.<sup>49</sup> What is certainly his first, and most straightforward, rendering of the church's side-aisle walls emphasises his reliance on a Gothic pattern-book (Fig 3a).<sup>50</sup> It is not, as is the case with his 1750s designs discussed earlier, related to the Halfpennys' *Rural Architecture in the Gothic Taste*, but John Vardy's *Some*

*Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. Wm Kent* (1744). A posthumous volume, bringing together the work of two of Britain's most prolific Classical architects, Vardy's *Some Designs* compiled and published a range of Kent's Gothic designs, from a candlestick through to the screens at Westminster Hall (1739, heightened 1755) and Gloucester Cathedral (1741), and York Minster's pulpit (1740–1).<sup>51</sup>

The panelling beneath the window in Adam's design for Croome Church matches closely the idiosyncratic panelling incorporated by Kent in his York Minster pulpit – an ogee-headed lancet subdivided with a Y-shaped pendant at the head and a double cusped and finialed base – as well as paired shaft rings on the adjacent clustered columns, and a Gothic-pendant frieze (Fig 3b). This unusual panelling can also be found on the interior of Shobdon Church, Herefordshire, of c 1755, a building either designed, or at the very least directly influenced, by Kent.<sup>52</sup> Similar panelling is also incorporated into the side piers of a highly unusual polychromatic cabinet for a friend of William Kent's, Henrietta Louisa Fermor (1698–1761), Countess of Pomfret, and probably executed around 1752–3 by the Westminster cabinet-maker William Hallett Senior (c 1707–81).<sup>53</sup> Adam's first proposal for the aisle panelling at Croome Church therefore sits happily within a limited but notable corpus of Georgian architectural works directly referencing Kent's idiosyncratic Gothic designs. As I have argued elsewhere in regard to these two separate occurrences of Kent's motifs, this suggests that Adam may have been reluctant to develop Croome Church's interior without an external source to guide him. This is understandable, especially given that his architectural practice up until this point had been almost entirely Classically based.<sup>54</sup>

This reliance upon Kent's particular brand of Classical-Gothic was only temporary, however. Adam's second proposal for the church's side aisle, dated to 1761 and also unexecuted, similarly places Gothic panelling along the aisle walls, though their form in this instance bears no relationship to Kent's work (Fig 4a).<sup>55</sup> Instead, Adam's new proposal sets a rectilinear, gable-like tone that his later, executed Gothic work in the church and at Alnwick would follow, together with his unrealised and executed designs for the Classical-Gothic funerary monument at Milton Abbey, Dorset, for Lady Caroline Milton (d 1775).<sup>56</sup> This runs contrary to mainstream Georgian Gothic design that was speckled, often liberally, with Gothic architecture's pointed and ogee arches, as can be seen in the work of Kent at Esher Place and by Thomas Farnols Pritchard at Croft Castle, Herefordshire (1765), and in cabinet-makers' designs of the 1750s and 1760s such as those by Chippendale in his *Director* (1754, 1755, 1762), and Ince and Mayhew in their *The Universal System of Household Furniture* (1762).

Adam, on the other hand, ignored these obvious arched forms in his second design – countering Brown's arched windows that dominate the church walls – in favour of the rectilinear Gothic gable. This gable (quite distinct from the shallow-pitched classical pediment) is, nevertheless, consistent with medieval architecture, where it was used for portals, gable-ends, on tomb canopies, and on buttressing.<sup>57</sup> Despite this prevalence, the gable had not previously been incorporated widely and as a primary decorative form in fashionable Georgian Gothic design. Adam, consequently, was offering the 6th Earl of Coventry a newly developed, distinctive interior for Croome Church. Adam deploys this motif widely: as hood mouldings over the windows, on the inter-window buttress-like blind panelling, and on the sub-window 'choir-stall'-like seating. Contradicting this overtly linear phrasing of the interior's elevation is a profusion of scroll-like crockets, finials

and cusping added to the gables — details that overtly tie them into the Gothic scheme. The end result is an attenuated and filament-like arrangement of motifs ranged around the gable: such a proposal can be regarded as a Gothic equivalent to Adam's neoclassical wall designs, for example as in the Painted Breakfast Room in the Family Pavilion at Kedleston Hall (of 1760).<sup>58</sup>

Adam's reconfiguration of Gothic forms according to his motif-based design aesthetic had the by-product of giving the side-aisle seating the appearance of the Coronation throne repeated along the wall. These aisle seats were never executed but a throne matching their design was made for Croome Church and the pattern was later reused by Adam at Alnwick Castle, and also for a parson's chair in the Gothic Chapel built at Audley End House, Essex, by John Hobcroft (or Hobcraft) and James Essex in 1770–2. Hobcroft was the carpenter at Croome Church, responsible for realising Adam's designs for the Gothic interior, including the triple-decker pulpit (now sadly separated from its boxes), throne and pews, and his familiarity with Adam's work there explains the reappearance of the throne's design at Audley End.<sup>59</sup> This pulpit (Fig 4b) is based on Kent's York Minster pulpit (Fig 3b), but with cusped and crocketed gables paraphrasing those found in the inter-window panels Adam's second side-aisle design for the church, of 1761 (Fig 4a).<sup>60</sup> The overall effect is delicate, attenuated and, with a large number of crockets, best characterised as 'prickly'. This is significantly different from the overwhelmingly curvilinear Gothic preferred by cabinet-makers and other Gothic architects at the time, including those in the circle of Horace Walpole.

Equally idiosyncratic are Adam's two unexecuted designs for the church's vaulting. Both demonstrate an awareness of medieval vaulting patterns, especially the fan vault and attendant pendants, as well as the rose window. In his simpler proposal for the ceiling, Adam places a pendant at the



centre of each bay, and creates the impression of a rose window motif where these bays intersect (Fig 5a). A more complex second proposal arranges four pointed arches with cusped-panel borders around a rose window in each of the ceiling's central bays (Fig 5b); the lateral arches also – in an unprecedented fashion – include cusped Y-tracery in imitation of the side windows.<sup>61</sup> With its different arch head-heights, and the misalignment between the centre and flanking bays' fan-vault patterns, Adam's proposal is a flat, imaginative and purely decorative rearrangement of medieval forms, without conveying any real sense of a coherent Gothic structure. In both designs, Adam's use of Gothic forms to create a ceiling design is akin to his treatment of antique Roman motifs in his neoclassical proposals. This is, perhaps, why there is no attempt to produce, or even recreate, medieval-style vaulting in his designs for Croome Church.

Ultimately these designs, like so many of Adam's innovative proposals for Croome Church, were largely unrealised. The ceiling's decoration was pared back to a simple, easily moulded and reproduced Gothic frieze of intersecting and cusped Y-tracery and quatrefoils running around the bays' perimeters (seen in Figs 5a–b), together with a modest ornamental pendant (similar to the types seen in Figs 5a–b) in the middle of each of the nave's central bays, and an oval of tracery (not a blind rose window) in the sanctuary vault. Of his contribution to the interior, the pulpit and throne are the most ambitious stylistically. Adam's Gothic would evolve in later commissions at Strawberry Hill and Alnwick Castle, but the design-based reconfiguration of medieval forms so evident in his Croome Church proposals would remain at its heart.

*Working for the 'High Priest' of Georgian Gothic: Adam at Strawberry Hill*

Adam's next and notable foray into Gothic was for Horace Walpole at his villa, or 'little Gothic castle' – Strawberry Hill in Twickenham. This links Adam directly with one of the most important and well-documented structures of the eighteenth-century Gothic Revival.<sup>62</sup> It is noteworthy that Walpole should seek the advice and involvement of a professional architect-designer – and the most fashionable Classical architect of the day at that – as for the most part Strawberry Hill had, up until this point, been designed by Walpole himself and a group of male amateur architect friends known as the 'Strawberry Committee'.<sup>63</sup> Adam worked on the Round Drawing Room, located at the end of the Gallery (or State Apartment), on the first floor, part of the major additions made to the house by Walpole in 1759–71.<sup>64</sup> He was not, however, given free rein to refit the apartment as he liked but was guided closely by Walpole. In September 1766, Walpole provided him with the specific source material necessary to determine and complete the room's two most important decorative elements, the ceiling and chimneypiece – William Dugdale's *The History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London* (1658) and John Dart's *Westmonasterium* (1742):<sup>65</sup>

Mr Walpole has sent Mr Adam the two books, and hopes at his leisure he will think of the ceiling and chimney-piece. The ceiling is to be taken from the plate 165 of St. Paul's, the circular window. The chimney from the shrine of Edward the Confessor, at Westminster. The diameter of the room is 22 feet. The enclosed little end is for the bed, which Mr Walpole begs to have drawn out too.<sup>66</sup>

Walpole turned to Adam after having attempted to design the chimneypiece himself in direct imitation of the shrine of St Edward the

Confessor in Westminster Abbey. In September 1768 he explained in a letter to the diplomat and art collector Sir William Hamilton:

For this year past I have been projecting a chimney in imitation of the tomb of Edward the Confessor, and had partly given it up, on finding how enormously expensive it would be. Mr Adam had drawn me a design a little in that style, prettier it is true, and at half the price. I had actually agreed to have it executed in scagliola, but have just heard that the man complained he could not perform his compact for the money settled.<sup>67</sup>

Clearly, Walpole wished for the chimneypiece to be made in imitation of the shrine of St Edward the Confessor, and, significantly, he recognised that Adam's proposal was only 'a little in that style'. Indeed, in *The Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole* (1784), Walpole wrote that the chimneypiece was 'taken from the tomb of Edward the Confessor, improved by Mr. Adam'.<sup>68</sup> Adam effectively transformed the 1268 tomb base by 'Peter of Rome' into a neoclassical form enriched with anthemion, guilloche, husks and affected Corinthian-like capitals, all largely typical of his contemporary neoclassical work.

A series of five drawings, dated to 1766, trace Adam's incremental 'improvements' to the shrine.<sup>69</sup> The initial designs reproduce the structural polychromy of the shrine's Cosmati mosaics (Figs 6a–b), including the alternation of wide and narrow diamonds, and the spiral-turned columns at the orthogonals.<sup>70</sup> It is clear that, even from the start, Adam based the chimneypiece on one of the shrine's trefoil-headed prayer niches, stretched laterally to form the grate opening. This softened out the niche's pointed arch and Adam retained only a subtle nod to the design's Gothic heritage by retaining the cusps. The tomb of John of Eltham (1316–36), Earl of Cornwall,

was similarly stretched and reinterpreted by Richard Bentley for the Library's chimneypiece at Strawberry Hill the decade before, so Adam's reconfiguration of Walpole's source material was by no means unprecedented.<sup>71</sup> The Round Room's chimneypiece ornament, unlike its form, gradually developed away from the Westminster model: two detailed proposals for the scagliola decoration demonstrate how the Cosmati patterns were progressively modified — losing their looped extensions, connecting the diamond pattern with anthemion and inserting typically Adamesque ornament throughout the entablature and frieze.

Perhaps to compensate for this reinvention of the Cosmati patterns, Adam introduced other Gothic motifs into what had become an overtly neoclassical scheme. The barley-twist columns had a certain Gothic currency, for they are found on Walpole's favourite medieval turned ebony furniture — what he called 'the true black blood' — that he collected and displayed at Strawberry Hill.<sup>72</sup> Above these columns Adam incorporated narrow cusped Gothic panel motifs to replace the Cosmatesque diamond pattern. Trefoil cusped at the head, and kicking up at the foot, these shapes are of a similar form to the panelling in Adam's provisional design for the side aisle at Croome Church (discussed above), derived ultimately from William Kent. However, in the Strawberry Hill chimneypiece design the Gothic finial is replaced by a line of five neoclassical husks. This pattern, like the neoclassical-Gothic moulding below the chimneypiece's lintel, is not derived from the shrine, which suggests that Adam was specifically introducing these elements to Gothicise what is to all intents a neoclassical design.

Adam's conscious use of these additional Gothic motifs — effectively 'Gothing-up' his neoclassical reinterpretation of the medieval shrine — reduces the potential imbalance between the chimneypiece and the room's

explicitly Gothic ceiling, which, as Walpole instructed in 1766, is based upon the rose window of Old St Paul's Cathedral in London.<sup>73</sup> As Adam's design indicates, this ceiling, though convincingly following the St Paul's tracery pattern, was originally intended to have been elaborately coloured in the manner of his neoclassical ceiling designs, with accents of blue, pink, green and purple to the mostly yellow, brown and white plasterwork tracery.<sup>74</sup> But as recorded by John Carter in his 1788 survey of Strawberry Hill, the ceiling design was executed with a plain white field and gilt blind tracery (Fig 7).<sup>75</sup>

Adam's other notable, though unrealised contribution at Strawberry Hill was a proposal for the bed, mentioned in Walpole's letter quoted above.<sup>76</sup> This design, dated 1767, survives at the Lewis Walpole Library and is an idiosyncratic concoction of neoclassical and Gothic motifs (Fig 8). Scholars have claimed variously that this design was for a settle and bed, and observed that it would never fit in the Round Room; however its projected height is approximately 1ft less than the room's height.<sup>77</sup> But unlike the Round Room's chimneypiece, which is primarily neoclassical, the headboard design is undoubtedly Gothic, though peppered throughout with Classical motifs. The three fan-vault pendants are, for example, bracketed out on Classical acanthus-based corbels, with Roman-style finials that match the flaming Roman candelabra included by Wren on the interior of the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, and by William Kent on his screen in Westminster Hall. The rose-window panelling on the headboard is based upon the Old St Paul's model used in the Round Room ceiling, but Adam has reconfigured the tracery's structural pattern towards the circumference. This 1766 neoclassical-Gothic design clearly concentrates on surface pattern, and it is an important step in Adam's reconfiguration of the Gothic style. Although unexecuted, it is the template upon which his later remodelling of Alnwick Castle, discussed below, was based.

*Apex of neoclassical Gothic: Adam at Alnwick Castle*

Robert Adam's largest and most significant Gothic work was undertaken from 1769 at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland, for Hugh Smithson Percy (d 1786) and his wife Elizabeth Seymour Percy, 1st Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, for whom he had just completed the neoclassical state rooms at Syon House, Middlesex.<sup>78</sup> Though Alnwick was but one of the Percy's properties, it was the family's original seat. Following the death of Elizabeth's brother in 1744, and later her father, Algernon Seymour, 7th Duke of Somerset, in 1750, Elizabeth and, by extension, Hugh Percy, inherited the Earldom of Northumberland, and in 1766 George III elevated them to the Dukedom, thereby re-establishing the Percy's otherwise long and distinguished place in the British peerage. Their exaltation was marked in architecture, of which the 18th-century refurbishment and Gothicisation of Alnwick was an important and conspicuous statement, as were the neoclassical modifications to Syon and Northumberland House in London. The choice of Gothic was not accidental: like Walpole, whose Gothic villa at Strawberry Hill was a conscious expression or recreation of the historic and chivalric heritage of his lineage, for the Northumberlands an overtly Gothic Alnwick seamlessly professed their ancient and noble past. For example, the display of heraldry within the castle increased dramatically after the Percys' elevation to the dukedom, and in 1769 one hundred and ten painted coats of arms were sent up to Alnwick to enrich the great staircase's cornice.<sup>79</sup>

Adam took over as architect at the castle in 1767, replacing James Paine (d 1789) as he had done at Kedleston, and was responsible thereafter for fitting up its Gothic interiors. In the spring of 1759 John Adam, Robert's eldest

brother, spent the night at Alnwick on his way to London and his diary records Paine's Gothic work thus far:

The dining room & drawing room ... are all extremely noble & elegant in the Gothick taste but the drawing room please me most, at least it struck me with that idea. The ornaments of both these rooms on the walls & ceilings are done in very good Gothic stile, of stucco. My Lady's Bed Chamber, Dressing Room &c. are very suitably finished. These all in the old building.<sup>80</sup>

Although John Adam's assessment of Alnwick is positive, later reflections upon Robert Adam's and James Paine's involvement at the castle are mixed. In an undated entry in his collection of descriptions of noblemen's residences, the agriculturalist Arthur Young described the castle as 'new built, but not yet finished. The apartments are fitted up in the gothic taste, and ornamented in a light & elegant stile'.<sup>81</sup> The connoisseur and patron George Bowles (d 1817), of Wanstead Grove, praised the interiors, including those by Adam, such as the Library and Chapel:

the Staircase after mounting about 10 steps breaks off to the right & left & is very pretty, at top of the Stairs you enter the Saloon — a very elegant room filled up in the Gothick taste 2 towers mocking circular windows: the Drawing room very handsome Gobelin Chairs the frames only cost 25G apiece a large French glass £1000 seedy & the silvering damaged not pleasing & hung over the chimney very high: the next dining parlour a large good room & then a Breakfast room, the library very pretty & the Chappell at the end of it the roof after Kings Chappell at Cambridge Window painted Glass from York Cathedral & the whole variously coloured rather glaring; a state Bed in the middle of a room curtain tent fashion on other blue & white Satin furniture with 2 dressing rooms very elegant. All these are on one floor & are very curiously furnished in the Gothick style heavily ornamented.<sup>82</sup>

Bowles correctly identified Adam's source for the Chapel's window tracery — the west nave window, also known as the 'Heart of Yorkshire' window, at York Minster — and Adam's other ornamental Gothic additions are picked out.<sup>83</sup> In 1807 Thomas Smith of Bruce Castle, Tottenham, however, was thoroughly critical of this work, especially Adam's affected style of Gothic in the Chapel:

to Alnwick ... the castle presents itself very magnificently and covers a great space of ground ... I was disappointed in the number & style of the rooms most of them ornamented with plaster work in the gothic taste the drawing room is handsome, The Library comfortable – the dining room I thought shabby especially the chairs – the chapel I think is perfectly ridiculous covered with gilt, filigree & more like a music room – a monument to the late Duchess which did not please me.<sup>84</sup>

These vivid descriptions and assessments of Alnwick, and a view of the Saloon from 1823 depicting dense grid-like (though not strictly Perpendicular) blind tracery on the walls, matching Adam's design from c 1769, record his contribution to the castle.<sup>85</sup> Though Adam was responsible for the decoration of several rooms at Alnwick, including the Saloon, Drawing Room, Chapel and Library, today the only significant trace of his work on the estate is his Gothic eye-catcher and observation tower, called Brizlee Tower, designed in late 1777 and begun in 1778. The rest of his work was swept away from 1854 by Anthony Salvin (1799–1881) under the orders of Admiral Algernon Percy (1792–1865), 4th Duke of Northumberland, who felt that the 18th-century Gothic interventions had removed much of the seat's 'original beauty and variety of effect', and that Alnwick lacked 'the domestic comfort and modern conveniences requisite in the residence of a nobleman of his Grace's rank'.



Salvin preferred to 'devise Medieval decorations to a plan consistent with modern requirements', though in this instance his work was to be in an Italian Renaissance style instead.<sup>86</sup>

Adam's involvement at Alnwick Castle has been investigated thoroughly elsewhere, as has the Duchess's interest in Gothic forms.<sup>87</sup> This study therefore concentrates on and evaluates his surviving designs for the house and Brizlee Tower within the broader context of his Gothic work, demonstrating the continued development of his Gothic style. The most overtly Gothic of Adam's designs for Alnwick Castle – though still idiosyncratic – is a preliminary proposal for the end walls of the Library; it is dominated by overbearing ornamental patterns of cusped reticulations and pendants that suggest blind windows (Fig 9).<sup>88</sup> Over-scaled, and without mullions or tracery, these blind windows of sorts are separated by attenuated quasi-buttresses: Adam has effectively applied external architectural forms familiar from medieval tomb canopies and chantry chapels to Alnwick's interiors. Such a stylised Gothic scheme creates an uneasy distinction between Gothic ornament and plain wall-space; it is applied also to the chimneypiece, which repeats the room's four-centred arch-heads and buttressing.

Unlike this exclusively Gothic, though stylised, design for the Library, Adam's 1769 proposal for the Saloon's chimneypiece offers a mix of both Gothic and Classical sources.<sup>89</sup> This chimneypiece proposal freely references medieval forms, including a frieze of 'ten elegant Gothic brackets' and two quatrefoil roundels 'richly adorned with the crest [crescent] encircled by the Garter'.<sup>90</sup> However the frieze's fan-vault inspired 'Gothic brackets' are interspersed with anthemion, albeit much in the manner of medieval window reticulations (Fig 10). The chimneypiece's Gothic columns also include Classical ornament in the borders of scrolls; these may give the appearance of crockets but they are essentially Vitruvian in form. Adam's choice of Classical

motifs is carefully calculated to harmonise effectively with medieval forms. This design was also reused, much like the Croome Church throne at Alnwick, almost verbatim in an Adam office drawing for Sir William Pulteney.<sup>91</sup> Another of Adam's contemporary designs for the Large Room at Pulteney's Shrewsbury Castle is a less balanced mixture of Classical and Gothic forms: the chimneypiece is entirely Classical, and the columns have more than a passing resemblance to those used by Horace Walpole for the Farnese tables in the Gallery at Strawberry Hill, supplied by Vile in 1765 and based on the Islip table-monument at Westminster Abbey.<sup>92</sup>

The chimneypiece in Alnwick's Saloon illustrates Adam's persistent and coherent introduction of Classical forms into his Gothic. This is even more explicit in a detailed proposal for the castle's Library chimneypiece, where the only Gothic forms are the Tudor arch, quatrefoil and cusping: the remaining ornament is otherwise firmly Classical.<sup>93</sup> Adam's design for the Circular Room at Alnwick developed this stylised mode of neoclassical-Gothic still further, incorporating anthemion, oval *paterae* and scrolled acanthus. In his carpet design of December 1780, the dagger-like Gothic decoration of Adam's rose window motif is gradually transformed so that the linear panels become curvilinear mouchettes modelled upon the anthemion's C-shape curve (Fig 11a). The Gothic panelling between the central cinquefoil in the chapel's circular recess is similarly moulded, and quasi Gothic-neoclassical reticulations within the lobes of the cinquefoil — particularly with the addition of classical filament-like lines of ornament — are thoroughly Classical within the Gothic context. Perhaps the most stylised are the squashed, lozenge-like, rose windows in the Circular Room's ceiling that are connected by quatrefoils containing putti, and surrounded by anthemion and neoclassical filament ornament (Fig 11b).<sup>94</sup>

The series of Adam designs for Alnwick's ceilings and carpets, in particular for the chapel, elaborate upon his earlier, neoclassical-Gothic bed design of 1767 for Horace Walpole (Fig 9). But whereas Walpole's bed remained largely Gothic in style, though interspersed with neoclassical features such as corbels, Adam's most extreme proposals for Alnwick retain only a modest and at best loose reference to Gothic motifs, such as the quatrefoil, cinquefoil and cusped panelling. Instead these set Gothic forms are used as a structural framework, within which to place neoclassical motifs, thereby creating a hybrid style. Even though the Chapel's window is overtly modelled upon the 'Heart of Yorkshire' window at York Minster, upon closer inspection its apparently Gothic design is, in fact, neoclassical.<sup>95</sup> Thomas Smith's criticism of the Chapel is understandable and valid: it is 'perfectly ridiculous covered with gilt, filigree & more like a music room'. Compared to the work in this style by his contemporaries, such as Essex or Wyatt, or Sir Roger Newdigate at Arbury Hall, Warwickshire, Adam's brand of Gothic rewrites medieval design according to his own, eighteenth-century neoclassical principles.<sup>96</sup> Had they survived, however, Adam's interiors at Alnwick would have offered a most remarkable, sustained and coherent glimpse of one of the most original and idiosyncratic exponents of later Georgian Gothic design. Nowhere else, nor under any other architect-designer, was the Gothic so systematically enmeshed within fashionable neoclassical design principles and forms.

Interestingly, this overt form of neoclassical-Gothic appears restricted to Alnwick's interiors; Adam's most notable and only surviving contribution to the estate, Brizlee Tower (Fig 12), returns to his angular, gable-style Gothic as seen at Croome and Strawberry Hill.<sup>97</sup> The tower incorporates occasional Classical forms, such as the medallions and fluted engaged columns, but the fluting has angular termini (corresponding with Adam's Gothic panelling in

the Saloon and a design for a ceiling in 'Huln Abbey'),<sup>98</sup> and the overriding tenor of the ornament is Gothic. Importantly, the openings on the tower's first floor – directly behind and above the crenulated entrance parapet – have ogee arch-heads and hence align much more closely with the mid eighteenth-century fashion for ogee-arch Gothic, as favoured, amongst others, by Batty Langley and William Kent.<sup>99</sup> The tower itself is a concoction of Gothic openings and castellations: its structure, however, makes no concessions to medieval forms and instead references Adam's early, pre-Grand Tour, Gothic architectural designs. It does, on the other hand, engage with his post-Grand Tour Gothic architecture by the advancement and recession of planes (notably the four projecting, buttress-like bays).

### *Coda*

Adam's interest in and engagement with medieval architecture and its vocabulary of ornament extends beyond his surviving architectural works. Having sketched designs for imaginative Gothic structures in the years before his Grand Tour and his immersion in the glories of Rome, Adam was happy to return to the style occasionally once back from the Continent and established as a leading neoclassicist. His extant Gothic buildings and schemes of interior decoration are not numerous, but they represent an important, highly idiosyncratic and until now relatively unexplored interpretation and use of Gothic forms. Although not universally approved of in the Georgian and Victorian periods, Adam's Gothic designs reveal his overriding ability to collect and reuse such motifs in explicitly decorative schemes, in a manner akin to his neoclassical works.

Whilst the earlier Gothic designs of his youth appear tentative, Adam's application of the style and its motifs in later country-house commissions across an 18-year period suggest a highly inventive attitude towards the Gothic aesthetic. He did not follow contemporary architects like James Essex, or even James Wyatt, who were increasingly applying antiquarian explorations of medieval architecture to the work of their practices. Instead, Adam was more interested in developing a new form of Gothic, one that was based essentially on his contemporary and highly successful style of neoclassical architecture and interior decoration, but 'Gothed-up'. Adam, consequently, although a minor exponent of Gothic design in eighteenth-century Britain, was a tremendously important and imaginative one whose work reveals the imaginative potential Gothic forms offered architects in mid-eighteenth-century Britain. The works and drawings considered here cannot be framed as, and are not widely considered to be, Adam's most important contribution to eighteenth-century design: nevertheless they reveal a remarkably inventive evolution, a subtle and aesthetic reinvention of Gothic forms harnessing the work of others and his own architectural genius. Adam may well be on the periphery of Georgian Gothic, especially when compared with James Wyatt, but he emerges without doubt as one of the most imaginative and unrealised exponents from this period.

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<sup>1</sup> Harris 2001, 4–5, 18–39; Harris 1987, 6–60.

<sup>2</sup> For Osterley see Harris 2001, 156–79. For Witham see SM, Adam vol 54/7/219–220; vol 43/25–32; and Collinson, J 1791 *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset, Collected from Authentick Records, and an Actual Survey Made by the Late Mr. Edmund Rack*, vol 2, 235.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Soane's Museum has Adam designs for in excess of 200 country houses: 89 is derived from Colvin 1995, 58–61. For the Hulne Priory debate see Fleming 1958; and Rowan 1998. The Alnwick drawing room chimneypiece design is in SM, Adam vol 22/53.

<sup>4</sup> For Yester Chapel see Cameron 1993; Dunbar 1972. For Shrewsbury Castle, see SM, Adam vol 50/83–4 and the related designs for Alnwick (SM, Adam vol 27/37; vol 39/14, 16). For interpretations of the Shrewsbury Castle designs see Williams, G 2016 'The Hidden Hand of Genius: Robert Adam and the Pulteney Estate in Shropshire'. *Georgian Group Journal* 24, 65–80.

<sup>5</sup> Harris, E 2001, 319–33. For Adam's castle architecture see Rowan, 1985, 14–19, 94–151; Tait 1981; Fleming 1968a and 1968b; Astley 2000.

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<sup>6</sup> Rowan 1985, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Lewis 1937–83, Vol 9 (1941), 149.

<sup>8</sup> Rowan 1985, 18; Fleming 1968a, 1356?.

<sup>9</sup> Aspects of Adam's relationship with the broader Gothic Revival is addressed briefly in Lindfield 2016, 154–6, 174–7.

<sup>10</sup> For Esher Place see White, R 2013 'William Kent and the Gothic Revival', in Weber, S (ed) *William Kent: Designing Georgian Britain*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 253–7. For York Minster see Friedman, T 1995 'The Transformation of York Minster, 1726–42'. *Architectural History* 38, 81–3. Kent's Gothic designs for a chimneypiece at Esher, and his work at Westminster Hall, York Minster and Gloucester Cathedral were published in Kent, W and Jones, I 1744 *Some Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. Wm. Kent*. London: Vardy, Plates 36, 48–9 and 51. For a full analysis of this early phase of the Gothic Revival, see Lindfield 2016, 7–80. For the Halfpennys and Chippendale see Halfpenny, W and Halfpenny, J 1752 *Rural Architecture in the Gothick Taste Being Twenty New Designs for Temples, Garden-Seats, Summer-Houses, Lodges, Terminies, Piers, &c.* London; Halfpenny, W and Halfpenny, J 1752 *Chinese and Gothic Architecture Properly Ornamented*. London; Chippendale, T 1754, 1755 and 1762 *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*. Also see Lindfield 2016, 81–130; and Lindfield P N 2015 'New Light on Chippendale at Hestercombe House'. *Burlington Magazine* 157, 452–6.

<sup>11</sup> Cocke, T H 1975 'James Essex, Cathedral Restorer'. *Architectural History* 18, 12–22, 97–102; Cocke, T H 1984 *The Ingenious Mr Essex, Architect, 1722–1784: An Exhibition to Mark the Bicentenary of His Death*. Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum; Stewart, D R 1950 'James Essex'. *Architectural Review* 108, 317–21.

<sup>12</sup> For example, SM Adam vol 12/109.

<sup>13</sup> See Harris 2001; Harris 1987, 50–1, 59–61. For the fullest assessment of neoclassical-Gothic, see Lindfield 2016, 171–9. Adam's approach is in marked contrast to Richard Payne Knight, who designed the interior of Downton Castle, Herefordshire (1772–8), in a neoclassical mode whilst the exterior was in the picturesque castle style. See Knight, R P 1805 *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*. London, 216–17.

<sup>14</sup> Wren, C 1750 *Parentalia: Or, Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens: Viz., of Matthew, Bishop of Ely, Christopher, Dean of Windsor, Etc. But Chiefly of Sir Christopher Wren in Which Is Contained, Besides His Works, a Great Number of Original Papers and Records*, 297. For the later view of Gothic see also Cocke, T H 1987 'The Wheel of Fortune: The Appreciation of Gothic since the Middle Ages', in Alexander, J and Binski, P (eds) *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400*. London: Royal Academy of Arts in association with Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 183–91.

<sup>15</sup> Adam 1773–1822, Vol 1, No 1, Preface, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Adam in *The Works* ridiculed formulaic design, arguing that 'among architects destitute of genius and incapable of venturing into the great line of their art, the attention paid to those rules and proportions is frequently minute and frivolous' (Ibid); see also Robinson 2012, 37–41.

<sup>17</sup> Adam 1773–1822, Vol 1, No 1, Preface, 5.

<sup>18</sup> Robinson 2012, 14–28.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis 1937–83, Vol 23 (1967), 298.

<sup>20</sup> See Robinson 2012, 48–50, 74, 219–20, 324, 345.

<sup>21</sup> Frew, J 1979 'Richard Gough, James Wyatt, and Late 18th-Century Preservation', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 38, 366–74; Robinson 2012, 223–31.

<sup>22</sup> See Robinson 2012, 224, 227; Crook, J M 1995 *John Carter and the Mind of the Gothic Revival*. London: W. S. Maney & Son in association with the Society of Antiquaries of London, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Indeed, as early as 1785, when he had completed the external elevations of Lee Priory, Kent, a house that Walpole styled as 'a child of Strawberry prettier than the parent', Wyatt's significant knowledge of medieval forms was manifest in his architectural practice. Lewis 1937–83, Vol 12 (1944), 111. See Reeve and Lindfield 2015.

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- <sup>24</sup> Rowan 1998, 269.
- <sup>25</sup> Lindfield 2016, 131–79.
- <sup>26</sup> Christie 1818, *A Catalogue of a Valuable Library Consisting of Pointed Books of Architecture, among Which Are Many of Rarity and Value; Books of Antiquities, Engravings by Woollett and Strange; Etchings by Rembrandt, and Other Old Masters, as Also, Drawings by Old and Modern Masters, Numerous Architectural Drawings and Landscapes, in Portfolios, and Framed and Glazed, and a Few Italian and Other Pictures, the Property of the Late Robert Adam, Esq. F.R.S & F.A.S.* London, 141.
- <sup>27</sup> Sanderson 1992, 36; NRS, GD18/4764, GD18/4981/1.
- <sup>28</sup> RIBA Drawings Collection, SE16/2, folios 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22.
- <sup>29</sup> Rowan 1990, 12.
- <sup>30</sup> SM, Adam vol 56/36. For the relationship between Adam's drawing and the Vertue engraving, see <http://collections.soane.org/OBJECT705>. For Vertue's drawing see Society of Antiquaries of London 1747–1896 *Vetusta Monumenta, quæ, ad rerum Britannicarum memoriam conservandam* 1 (1747). London, Plate LXI.
- <sup>31</sup> Despite Adam's overt concentration upon ornament, the gables and flying buttresses of the cross are stylised, indicating at least a partially imaginative, or inexperienced, assessment of its forms.
- <sup>32</sup> See Fleming 1962, 85.
- <sup>33</sup> These are in the collection at Blair Adam, Fife. The 1753 drawings of the Gothic church and tower are reproduced in Fleming 1962, Plates 24–5 and Stillman 1966, Plates 166–7. Others {note from CT to himself – check which} are reproduced in Beard 1978, Plates 11–13; also in Tait 1971.
- <sup>34</sup> 'His earliest architectural drawings', John Fleming writes, 'date from a few years later [after 1746] but many of them are in the same vein, being fantasies in an extravagant and whimsical Gothic à la Batty Langley, worked out with some sensitivity of line and precocious appreciation for the sophisticated charms of the Rococo'. See Fleming 1962, 81–2. For an account of Langley's plates, see Lindfield 2014; Rowan 1975; also Mowl, T and Earnshaw, B 1999 *An Insular Rococo: Architecture, Politics and Society in Ireland and England, 1710–1770*. London: Reaktion.
- <sup>35</sup> Halfpenny, W and Halfpenny, J 1752 *Rural Architecture in the Gothick Taste*. London, Plate 11.
- <sup>36</sup> SM, Adam vol 56/36.
- <sup>37</sup> See Lindfield 2014; Harris 1977; Rowan 1975.
- <sup>38</sup> National Library of Scotland, Yester Papers, 4862, 98/2.
- <sup>39</sup> RIBA Drawings Collection, SE16/2, folio 15.
- <sup>40</sup> National Gallery of Scotland, D 452. See Tait 1971, 164–8. These *capricci* resonate with Culzean Castle's position perched on the cliffs above the Firth of Clyde. See also Harris 2001, 317–33.
- <sup>41</sup> NRS, GD18/4907.
- <sup>42</sup> SM Adam vol 54/4.1 and 4.15; compare with RIBA Drawings Collection, SE16/2, folio 19.
- <sup>43</sup> For examples of these Grand Tour *capricci*, see SM Adam vol 54/4.2–4.11; vol 55/16–24.
- <sup>44</sup> Harris 2001, 41–53; and Colvin 1998, 28–32.
- <sup>45</sup> V&A Museum, W.76:1, 2, A/1 to 10, B-1975: SM, Adam vol 50/10: see also Beard 1953.
- <sup>46</sup> See Colvin 1998.
- <sup>47</sup> For Gothic follies, see for example Stewart, D 1996 'Political Ruins: Gothic Sham and the '45'. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 55, 400–11: Adshead, D 1998 'The Design and Building of the Gothic Folly at Wimpole, Cambridgeshire'. *Burlington Magazine* 140, 76–84
- <sup>48</sup> SM, Adam vol 25/209 (pulpit); vol 50/15–21 (gable-Gothic side aisle; Kent-Gothic side aisle; entrance door; gable-Gothic side aisle and vault; vaulting; plan; and office copy after Adam's

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design for the priest's chair); vol 52/167–8 (Gothic railings for church). There are also designs by Adam of c 1760 for Gothic tracery stained-glass windows, now in the V&A, Museum, Nos 3436.4–5; see also Rowan 1998a, 19, 50–1.

<sup>49</sup> SM, Adam vol 50/16 (the Kent-Gothic side aisle) is based on William Kent's Gothic work and almost certainly predates the gable-Gothic side aisle and vault drawings in SM, Adam vol 50/15, 18.

<sup>50</sup> SM, Adam vol 50/16 (Kent-Gothic side aisle).

<sup>51</sup> Kent, W and Jones, I 1744 *Some Designs of Mr. Inigo Jones and Mr. Wm. Kent*. London: Vardy, Plates 36, 48–9, 51.

<sup>52</sup> See Colvin, H 2009 'Henry Flitcroft, William Kent and Shobdon Church, Herefordshire', in Jones, D and McKinstry, S (eds) *Essays in Scots and English Architectural History: A Festschrift in Honour of John Frew*. Donington, Lincolnshire: Shaun Tyas, 1–8; Lindfield 2016, 71–8.

<sup>53</sup> See Lindfield, P N 2014 'The Countess of Pomfret's Gothic Revival Furniture'. *Georgian Group Journal* 22, 77–87.

<sup>54</sup> His arrangement of Gothic panelling quotes, though perhaps unintentionally, medieval sub-window blind arcading seen, for example, in Chapter Houses.

<sup>55</sup> SM, Adam vol 50/15.

<sup>56</sup> SM, Adam vol 2/7; vol 19/62–4.

<sup>57</sup> The Gothic gable, for example, was not incorporated into any of Langley's designs in *Ancient Architecture* (1741–2), or by Chippendale in his *Director* (1754, 1755, 1762 edns). For the gable's role in English Decorated Gothic architecture see Binski, P 2014 *Gothic Wonder: Art, Artifice and the Decorated Style 1290–1350*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 81–279.

<sup>58</sup> For the Breakfast Room at Kedleston see Harris 1987, 52–4.

<sup>59</sup> Colvin 1987, 31; Sutherill, M 1999 'John Hobcroft and James Essex at Audley End House'. *Georgian Group Journal* 9, 17–25: Saffron Walden, Audley End House, Picture Store Scrapbook, folio 72.

<sup>60</sup> SM, Adam vol 25/209 (Gothic pulpit); vol 50/15 (gable-Gothic side aisle) and vol 50/18 (gable-Gothic side aisle and vault).

<sup>61</sup> Similar decorative flourishes were proposed for the family pew ceiling at the Chapel at Audley End, Essex, designed by John Hobcroft (or Hobcraft). See Sutherill 1999, 19–23.

<sup>62</sup> See McCarthy 1987, 63–91; Snodin, M 2009 *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 15–73; Guillery, P and Snodin M 1995 'Strawberry Hill: Building and Site'. *Architectural History* 38, 102–28.

<sup>63</sup> Following Adam's involvement, Walpole used other professional architects — James Essex and James Wyatt — to work on Strawberry Hill's Gothic gates and offices. See Snodin M 2009, *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 80–1, 349.

<sup>64</sup> See Wilton-Ely 2014 for a brief assessment.

<sup>65</sup> It has also been suggested that the first volume of the Society of Antiquaries of London's *Vetusta Monumenta* (1747) could have been the source for the Westminster Abbey ornament, as it contains a detailed plate by George Vertue of Edward the Confessor's shrine. See Wilton-Ely 2001, 149–51.

<sup>66</sup> Lewis 1937–83, Vol 41 (1980), 39.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, Vol 35 (1973), 406–7.

<sup>68</sup> Walpole, H 1784 *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole, the Youngest Son of Sir Robert Walpole Earl of Orford, at Strawberry-Hill, near Twickenham. With an Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Curiosities, &c.* Strawberry Hill, 53.

<sup>69</sup> SM, Adam vol 18/59, 61; vol 22/227–9.

<sup>70</sup> SM, Adam vol 59/227–8.

<sup>71</sup> Walpole, H 1784 *A Description of the Villa*, 33.

<sup>72</sup> Wainwright, C 1985 'Only the True Black Blood'. *Furniture History* 21, 250–7.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid; Lewis 1937–83, Vol 41 (1980), 39.



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- <sup>74</sup> SM, Adam vol 11/234.
- <sup>75</sup> Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 33 30 Copy 11 Folio, folio 153.
- <sup>76</sup> Walpole, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, vol 41, 39. The Round Room was originally designed to be a State Bedroom, and a design by John Chute for a low, couch-type bed under a canopy based upon that of Sir Simon Burleigh's tomb at Old St Paul's, London exists: Farmington, Lewis Walpole Library, 49 2523, folio 121.8. The Round Room would accommodate the bed's height (9ft 6in) as specified in Adam's design. See Snodin, M 2009 *Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill*, 48, 57.
- <sup>77</sup> Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 49.3678. The design is inscribed with 'H Walpole Esq' on the verso. There is also a previously unknown preparatory design for the bed: SM, Adam vol 27/41. See also Wilton-Ely 2011, 7; Wilton-Ely 2001 152–3.
- <sup>78</sup> See Harris 2001, 65–83.
- <sup>79</sup> For Walpole, see Lindfield, P N 2016 "'Hung Round with the Helmets, Breast-Plates, and Swords of Our Ancestors': Allusions to Chivalry in Eighteenth-Century Gothicism?", in Stevenson, K and Gribling, B (eds) *Chivalry and the Vision of the Medieval Past*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 77–82; for Alnwick, see Alnwick Castle, MS U/I/44; also Harris 2001, 87.
- <sup>80</sup> Quoted in Harris 2001, 85.
- <sup>81</sup> Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, LWL MS Vol 52, folio 197
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, Vol 47.
- <sup>83</sup> For the west nave window, finished 1338–9, see Binski, P 2014 *Gothic Wonder*, 172.
- <sup>84</sup> Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, LWL MS Vol. 189. For the Duchess' monumental legacy, see Aymonino 2010.
- <sup>85</sup> SM, Adam vol 39/16. The Saloon was also described as 'the gayest and most elegant style of Gothic architecture' (Harris 2001, 87).
- <sup>86</sup> T. L. Donaldson, 'Some Description of Alnwick Castle, Northumberland, the Seat of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, K.G.', *Papers Read at the Royal Institute of British Architects* (1856–67), 14–16.
- <sup>87</sup> Harris 2001, 84–93; Mayer 2011, 34–9.
- <sup>88</sup> SM, Adam vol 24/214.
- <sup>89</sup> SM, Adam vol 22/50.
- <sup>90</sup> Alnwick, Alnwick Castle, Alnwick MS (P. Wadell). Also see Harris 2001, 87.
- <sup>91</sup> SM, Adam vol 50/85.
- <sup>92</sup> Pulteney: SM, Adam vol 50/84; Alnwick: SM, Adam vol 39/16. For the tables at Strawberry Hill, see Toynbee, P 1927 *Strawberry Hill Accounts*. 10, 124. For Shrewsbury Castle, see Williams, 'The Hidden Hand', 65–80.
- <sup>93</sup> SM, Adam vol 22/54.
- <sup>94</sup> SM, Adam vol 11/30.
- <sup>95</sup> SM, Adam vol 39/18.
- <sup>96</sup> For Arbury Hall see Tyack, G 1994 *Warwickshire Country Houses*. Chichester: Phillimore, 9–15.
- <sup>97</sup> SM, Adam vol 19/156–9; vol 21/29.
- <sup>98</sup> SM, Adam vol 5/74.
- <sup>99</sup> See Lindfield 2016, 16–19, 60–67; and White, 'William Kent', pp. 247–69.