



ARCHITECTURE AND POLITE CULTURE IN  
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND:  
BLACKSTONE'S ARCHITECTURAL  
MANUSCRIPTS

By

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# ‘Architecture and Polite Culture in Eighteenth-Century England: Blackstone’s Architectural Manuscripts’

## Thesis Abstract

Sir William Blackstone (1723 – 1780) is a significant historical figure, known to historians as a judge and as the author of the highly influential *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765 – 1769). An enormous scholarly literature has been devoted to Blackstone's legal thought. As Prest recently observed however, biographers have long acknowledged the existence of Blackstone’s interest in architecture, yet its “duration, depth and significance [has] never been properly explored or appreciated”.<sup>1</sup> This thesis takes up that challenge, arguing that an understanding of his unpublished architectural treatise, ‘Elements of Architecture’ (1746 – 1747),<sup>2</sup> enriches our understanding of Blackstone and of his jurisprudence. The thesis seeks to establish, for the first time, architecture’s role in Blackstone’s life and intellectual development. It endeavours, most importantly, to determine the extent to which the use of architectural metaphor in his great legal text might offer a new perspective on his reputation as an arch conservative and upon the methodology and very genesis of the *Commentaries*. The thesis has three major aims: to situate Blackstone’s treatise within its biographical, historical and intellectual contexts, to conduct a detailed examination of the manuscript and, thirdly, to identify key issues and questions worthy of further research. Thus, it adopts an innovative methodology: that of a scholarly edition of Blackstone's 'Elements of Architecture'. Part one comprises an extended Introduction to the ‘Elements’, part two constitutes an edited and annotated transcription of the manuscript and an Appendix provides relevant illustrations.

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<sup>1</sup> W. Prest. ‘Blackstone as Architect: Constructing the *Commentaries*’ *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 15/1 (2003), 111.

<sup>2</sup> W. Blackstone. ‘Elements of Architecture’ (1746-1747), (unpublished ms, Codrington Library, All Souls College, Oxford, MS 333).

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This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available in all forms of media, now or hereafter known.

12/1/07.

## *Acknowledgements*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, place of publication is London

- Blackstone, 'Abridgement' 'An Abridgment of Architecture' W. Blackstone, unpublished MS, (1743). Special Collections, Getty Research Institute (890227).
- Evelyn, *Account* *Account of Architects and Architecture* J. Evelyn, 1664.
- Perrault, *Abridgment* *An Abridgment of the Architecture of Vitruvius Containing A System Of The Whole Works Of That Author* C. Perrault (J. James Trans.), 1692.
- Clitherow Clitherow, James. 'Preface', Elsley, Charles Heneage, *Reports Of Cases Determined In The Several Courts Of Westminster Hall From 1746-1779 By The Honourable Sir William Blackstone ... with Memoirs Of His Life*, (2nd ed.), 1828.
- Prest, 'Constructing the Commentaries' W. Prest. 'Blackstone as Architect: Constructing the Commentaries', *Yale Journal Of Law And The Humanities*, 15, 1 (2003), 103-133.
- Blackstone, *Commentaries* *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 4 vols., (Chicago, 1979), (facsimile of 1st ed., c. 1765-1769).
- Chambers, *Cyclopaedia* *The Encyclopaedic Dictionary in the Eighteenth Century ...* vol 2, *Cyclopaedia* / Ephraim Chambers, Terence M. Russell (comp.) Aldershot, c1997.
- Perrault, *Vitruvius* *Les dix livres d'architecture de Vitruve corrigez et traduits nouvellement ...* P. Vitruvius (C. Perrault Trans & Ill.), Paris, 1673.

- Blackstone, 'Elements' 'The Elements of Architecture' W. Blackstone, unpublished MS, 1746 – 1747. Codrington Library, All Souls College, Oxford. MS 333.
- Wotton, *Elements* *The Elements Of Architecture, Collected By Henry Wotton Knight, From The Best Authors And Examples*, Sir H. Wotton, 1624.
- OED* *Oxford English Dictionary*.
- Leoni, *Architecture* *The Architecture of A. Palladio...* G. Leoni (ed. & trans.) (including I. Jones. *Notes and Remarks on Palladio*), 1742.
- Fréart, *Parallel* *Parallel of the Ancient Architecture with the Modern ...* Fréart, R. Sieur de Chambray (J. Evelyn, Trans.), c. 1664, 1723.
- Gibbs, *Rules* *Rules For Drawing the Several Parts of Architecture ...* J. Gibbs, 1732.
- Vitruvius, *Ten Books* *The Ten Books on Architecture ...* (trans. H.M. Morris), NY (Harvard ed.), 1960, c.1914.

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## *Chronology*

1723: 19 July		Blackstone is born, Cheapside, London
1738		Admitted to Pembroke College, University of Oxford
1741		Admitted to Middle Temple, London
1743: July	Completes 'Abridgement of Architecture', composes <i>The Pantheon: A Vision</i>	
1746	Oversees completion of Wharton Building and Codrington Library at All Souls. Commences Revision of 'Abridgement'	Elected Bursar of Law at All Souls.
1747	Completes 'Elements of Architecture'	
1753		Releases Prospectus: "A Course of Lectures on the Laws of England"
1755	Inserts details of a Corinthian Column at Easton Neston in 'Elements'	Visits Easton Neston regarding Pomfret Donation to the University of Oxford
1756		Publishes <i>Analysis of the Laws of England</i>
1758 October		Delivers inaugural lecture as Foundation Vinerian Professor of the Laws of England
1761		Marries Sarah Clitherow. Purchases and rebuilds Priory Place, Wallingford
1765 - 1769		Publishes <i>Commentaries</i>
1767	Involves Robert Taylor in restoration of interior of St. Peter's church, Wallingford. <i>The Pantheon: A Vision</i> is published	
1769	Oversees construction of Swinford Bridge	
early 1770s	Commissions Taylor to design and erect spire for St. Peter's church.	
1780 February		Blackstone Dies in London
1781 February		James Clitherow writes Memoir of Blackstone

*Part One:*

*Blackstone and his Manuscripts*



## Chapter One:

### *Why an Edition of Blackstone's 'Elements'?*

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*My father bought this MS from a bookseller at Brighton in January 1904 . . . He was surprised at Sir W. Blackstone's interest in architecture but attributed it to the orderliness of mind attested by the Commentaries. In this conjecture he was probably right. (R. A Lloyd, 1959).<sup>1</sup>*

*While the bare fact of Blackstone's architectural interests has long been known, their duration, depth and significance have never been properly appreciated or explored. (W. Prest. 2003).<sup>2</sup>*

Rarely does a document come to light with the potential to challenge a long-established view of a significant historical figure's life and thought. William Blackstone's 'Elements of Architecture' (1746-1747) is such a document.<sup>3</sup> As Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780) is known to historians and lawyers as a judge and legal scholar. His reputation is founded upon his authorship of one of eighteenth-century England's most influential didactic books, the celebrated *Commentaries on the Laws of England* which was first published in four volumes between 1765 and 1769.<sup>4</sup> A comprehensive systemization of the labyrinthine English common law, the *Commentaries* has been continually in print for two hundred and forty years, was used (as Prest notes) in American law schools “well into the twentieth century” and has been described as “the most influential law book in Anglo-

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<sup>1</sup> R. A. Lloyd. Unpublished typescript. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 890227.

<sup>2</sup> W. Prest. 'Blackstone as Architect: Constructing the *Commentaries*', *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 15/1 (2003), 111.

<sup>3</sup> W. Blackstone. 'Elements of Architecture', unpublished MS, Codrington Library, All Souls, Oxford catalogued at MS 333. Hereinafter 'Elements'.

<sup>4</sup> W. Blackstone. *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (4 vols.), (Chicago, 1979), fac. ed., c. 1765-1769). Hereinafter *Commentaries*.

American history”.<sup>5</sup> In 1976 for instance, Nolan traced “Blackstone’s influence on politics, courts and legal education in America during its formative years. The long trail of Blackstone’s contributions” he tells us in picturesque fashion “leads us to the constitutional Convention and to Lincoln’s log cabin, to the College of William and Mary, and to frontier saloons”.<sup>6</sup> As a commentator on architecture however, Blackstone remains virtually unknown. His ‘Elements’ was penned twenty years prior to the *Commentaries*, while he was a young law student at Oxford. To date, his few biographers have viewed his life and works *through*, rather than *because* of, his great legal text. Consequently, they have, until very recently, regarded the ‘Elements’ merely as a youthful curiosity: as early evidence of the “orderliness of mind” Blackstone would one day bring to bear upon the common law.<sup>7</sup>

In 2003, Prest identified a “neglected architectural theme in Blackstone’s life and writings”.<sup>8</sup> He argued that Blackstone’s interest in architecture might enrich our understanding of Blackstone the man and of his *Commentaries*. This thesis is an integral part of the Australian Research Council’s ‘William Blackstone: Life and Works’ Discovery Project, which also includes an edition of Blackstone’s correspondence and a full-length biography.<sup>9</sup> It moves beyond the scope of Prest’s “preliminary survey” to conduct, for the first time, a detailed exploration of Blackstone’s architectural interests. Blackstone’s contemporary eminence alone (as a judge, first Vinerian Professor of Law and author of the

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<sup>5</sup> W. Prest. ‘Constructing the Commentaries’, *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 15/1 (2003), 107-108. Albert Alschuler. ‘Rediscovering Blackstone’, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 145, (Nov. 1996), 1. For accounts of Blackstone’s impact on early American thought see also Dennis R. Nolan. ‘Sir William Blackstone and the New American Republic: A Study of Intellectual Impact’ *New York University Law Review* 51 (1976), 731-768 and, more recently, Miles, A. Dagley, D. and Yau, C. ‘Blackstone and his American Legacy’, *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Law and Education* 5/2 (2000), 46-59.

<sup>6</sup> D. Nolan. ‘Sir William Blackstone and the New American Republic: A Study of Intellectual Impact’ *New York University Law Review* 51/5, (1976), 736.

<sup>7</sup> R. A. Lloyd. Unpublished typescript. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 890227.

<sup>8</sup> Prest. ‘Constructing the Commentaries’, 124.

<sup>9</sup> ARC Discovery Project (DP0210901) headed by ARC Australian Professorial Fellow Wilfrid Prest. See W. Blackstone. *The Letters of Sir William Blackstone, 1744 – 1780*, (W. Prest, ed.), (London, 2006).

*Commentaries*), could justify this study. Can his interest in architecture, this thesis asks, cast new light into any of the unexplored corners of his life? His early study of architecture is of interest to biographers because architecture appears to have touched many aspects of Blackstone's life. For instance, the research presented in this thesis highlights his twenties, a formative yet sparsely-documented period. Furthermore, his architectural activities were not limited to the 'Elements'. Indeed, Blackstone's first published work was a poem on an architectural theme entitled *The Pantheon: A Vision*, written in 1743.<sup>10</sup> That same year, he compiled a short architectural manuscript he called 'An Abridgement of Architecture'.<sup>11</sup> In fact this is the manuscript R.A. Lloyd's father purchased in 1904. The 'Elements' is a heavily revised, extended and more complex version of the 'Abridgement'. Neither was Blackstone's interest strictly theoretical. He initiated and supervised building projects in both his professional and personal lives.

Prest provided a brief description of the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements' noticing, for instance, that the text of the 'Elements' "is more attractively and clearly presented", is "less tightly crammed on the page ... and [is] punctuated by twenty-three meticulous pen-and-ink architectural drawings".<sup>12</sup> He also observed that the "number of chapters has been reduced from thirty-seven to twenty-nine".<sup>13</sup> This thesis aims to present a more detailed description of each document and to identify and explain any significant differences between them in terms of objective and content. Further research also enables us to appreciate the manuscripts' individual histories and the extent of Blackstone's revision process during 1746 and 1747.

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<sup>10</sup> W. Blackstone. *The Pantheon: A Vision* (London, 1747). Originally published anonymously.

<sup>11</sup> W. Blackstone. 'An Abridgement of Architecture' (1743). Unpublished MS, Special Collections, Getty Research Institute, 890227.

<sup>12</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 114.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

Blackstone penned all three of his architectural writings during the 1740s. A building slump in this period prompted the modern commentator Giles Worsley to dub the 1740s a “lost decade”.<sup>14</sup> Worsley’s term is a reference to the significant drop in the number of county houses commenced during the 1740s. It does not allow for the proliferation of new institutional buildings in Oxford (to which Blackstone contributed) and London. Nor does it take into account a number of important architectural publications such as John Wood the Elder’s *Origin of Building* (1741) and new editions of two of the most significant English translations of continental publications: Sir John Evelyn’s edition of Roland Fréart’s *Parallel of the Ancient Architecture with the Modern*, and James Leoni’s edition of Palladio’s *Four Books on Architecture*, upon both of which Blackstone drew.<sup>15</sup> Consider too that it was the decade during which Horace Walpole planned Strawberry Hill, his neo-Gothic masterpiece at Twickenham, and it becomes apparent that the 1740s were anything but a lost decade.<sup>16</sup>

For instance, as Prest was aware, the 1740s were a transitional point in English architectural history.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the potential of Blackstone’s ‘Elements’ to enrich scholarly understanding of England at mid-century and of the early British Enlightenment enhances the thesis’s significance. The Georgian built environment was an expression of the ideas and ideals which underpinned the classicist culture of politeness: knowledge of the rules of

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<sup>14</sup> G. Worsley. ‘The 1740s: The Lost Decade’, *Georgian Group Journal* (1991), 21-24.

<sup>15</sup> J. Wood. *The Origin of Building, or, the plagiarism of the heathens detected. In five books.* (Bath, 1741); B. Langley. *Gothic Architecture, improved by Rules and Proportions. In many Grand designs of Columns, doors, windows ... With plans, elevations and profiles; geometrically executed.* (London, 1747). Roland Fréart de Chambray. *A Parallel Of The Ancient Architecture With The Modern, To Which Is Added An Account Of Architects And Architecture, In an Historical And Etymological Explanation Of Certain Terms Particularly Affected By Architects. With Leon Baptista Alberti's Treatise Of Statues* (Paris, 1650); Leoni, James (1686-1746). *The architecture of A. Palladio : in Four books. Containing a short treatise of the five orders, and the most necessary observations concerning all sorts of building ... Revis'd, design'd, and publish'd by Giacomo Leoni ... Translated from the Italian original.* 3rd. ed, (London, 1742).

<sup>16</sup> Worsley. ‘Lost Decade’, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Prest, ‘Constructing the Commentaries’ 122.

architecture was deemed a polite accomplishment.<sup>18</sup> A study of the young Blackstone's pursuit of classical architecture, then, may offer scholars a unique insight, not only into his personal life but also the world of polite eighteenth-century England at mid-century and the under-researched question of its architectural taste.

One of this thesis's central tenets is that architecture exists as much intellectually and textually as it does materially: that the architectural treatise has played as significant a role in European architecture and the development of architectural taste as have buildings themselves. Thus, Blackstone's 'Elements' should be read against the background of a long European tradition of architectural writing, a tradition dating from the Renaissance but with its roots embedded firmly in antiquity. Prest's brief comparison of the publications upon which Blackstone based the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements', led him to conclude that we "can do little more than speculate" about Blackstone's choice of sources.<sup>19</sup> It is now possible to elaborate a little further. This thesis aims to situate the 'Elements' within its intellectual context and to explain Blackstone's choices and to gauge the impact each had upon his own treatise.

Undoubtedly its most challenging and important task, though, is to identify the ways in which his interest in architecture may help us to better understand the development of Blackstone's legal thought (and thereby the *Commentaries*).<sup>20</sup> While the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements' remain unpublished and *The Pantheon* almost forgotten, Blackstone's better-

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<sup>18</sup> See for example *The Polite Arts, or, a Dissertation on Poetry, Painting, Musick, Architecture, and Eloquence* (London, 1749; facs. edn., New York, 1970). Architectural and cultural historians have been commenting upon the eighteenth-century Rule of Taste and its association of architecture and polite culture for some twenty years. See A. Tinniswood. *The Polite Tourist: A History Of Country House Visiting* (London, 1989). Text first published as, B. Blackwell, *A History Of Country House Visiting: Five Centuries Of Tourism And Taste* (London, 1988). P. Ayres. *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1997), 115-132; J. Black. *A Subject for Taste: Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Hambledon, 2005), 44-82.

<sup>19</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 122.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, 110.

known works are the products of his legal career. They include *An Essay on Collateral Consanguinity* (1750), *An Analysis of the Laws of England* (1753), *The Great Charter and Charter of the Forest* (1759) and the *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-1769) upon which his fame rests. Analyses of Blackstone's jurisprudence often seem to lose sight of the fact that Blackstone lived and wrote during the century prior to the demarcation of knowledge into separate academic disciplines which developed in the nineteenth century as part of the modern university system, each with its own set of questions, methodologies and culture.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, this thesis attempts to view the *Commentaries* from an eighteenth- rather than a twenty-first century perspective. That is to say, from Blackstone's perspective and that of his readers. Our appreciation of Blackstone's jurisprudence can only be enriched by the recognition that it is the product of his architectural and antiquarian interests as well of his legal studies. Lawyers will certainly recognize in his architectural treatise the "orderliness of mind attested by the *Commentaries*" to which Lloyd referred.<sup>22</sup> What might we find, if, instead of looking backwards at the 'Elements' for evidence of the mature lawyer, we look forwards, seeking the influence of the young student of architecture on the *Commentaries*? For example, Prest drew scholars' attention to Blackstone's use of architectural metaphor in the *Commentaries*.<sup>23</sup> Blackstone repeatedly likens the law to an old house or a gothic castle.<sup>24</sup> Is this more substantial than a simple literary allusion? This thesis traces the development of Blackstone's imaginative and unusual metaphor, from one

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<sup>21</sup> C. Younès. 'Doctorates Caught Between Disciplines and Projects', *Journal of Architecture* 11/3 (2006), 316.

<sup>22</sup> Lloyd. Unpublished typescript [1].

<sup>23</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*'.

<sup>24</sup> For discussions of eighteenth-century views on Tudor and Jacobean architecture see: M. Girouard. 'Attitudes to Elizabethan Architecture, 1600 – 1900' in *Concerning Architecture: Essays on Architectural Writers and Writing Presented to Nikolaus Pevsner*, J. Summerson ed., (London, 1968), 13-27. An exemplary introduction to the intellectual basis of 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup> – century architecture can be found in M. Airs. *The Tudor and Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud, 1995).

of his earliest surviving letters, through his early legal writings and into the *Commentaries* in order to evaluate the possibility that classical architecture influenced the methodology and even the very genesis of his great legal text.

The past twenty years has seen a remarkable interest in the classical architecture of the eighteenth century, an interest which does not seem to be subsiding in the early years of the twenty-first century. “Why” as Hersey asks, “do we still use the classical orders?”<sup>25</sup> Indeed, Tzonis and Giannisi have recently remarked that it might “seem strange in our age of dramatic change [that classical] architecture should still be such a gripping subject”.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, there are many parallels between Blackstone’s time and our own and the experience of change and a revival of the classical in post-modern architecture are two of the most striking.<sup>27</sup> The style certainly offers us a useful way of thinking about such issues as change, invention, authority and universality. Perhaps, as Tzonis and Giannisi continue, “it is precisely because we live in a period of such significant change that exploring classical ... architecture is so compelling, despite its reputation as a conservative, closed, and standardizing system”.<sup>28</sup> Our shared interest in the style which marks the birth of the western mind is surely evidence of our similar needs and interests. We too live in a period of rapid economic, technological and social change and we too filter and interpret classical architecture and the discourse associated with it through the ideas and ideals of our own

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<sup>25</sup> G. Hersey. *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venuti* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 1.

<sup>26</sup> A. Tzonis and P. Giannisi. *Classical Greek Architecture: The Construction of the Modern* (Paris, 2004), 17.

<sup>27</sup> The post-modern employment of classicist elements marks yet another revival of interest in the style. According to Greenhalgh its use in this context is central to the post-modern “quest for traditional values [thus] Post-Modernism has often looked to Classicism both for justification and for inspiration”. The crux, he adds, “of the continuing debate on Post-Modernism, however, is just how the past is to be used in constructing the future – especially, the modernists might add – because we are separated from that past by industrial methods of construction”. See M. Greenhalgh. *What is Classicism?* (London, 1990), 63, 45. For an informative introduction to post-modern classicism, see pp. 41-49 of that work.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*

time and of our own use of the past to make sense of the present. Perhaps, above all we, too, take comfort in a sense of stability or continuity proffered by ancient architecture in an age of strife.

The most effective way to ascertain the duration, depth and significance of Blackstone's interest in architecture is to conduct a close reading of his architectural treatise and to situate it within its biographical, historical and intellectual contexts. The most comparable published studies are Colvin and Newman's edition of lawyer *Roger North's Writings on Architecture* and Lydia Soo's *Wren's "Tracts" on Architecture and Other Writings* which offer valuable counter-points to Blackstone's treatise.<sup>29</sup> The documentary edition is an unusual methodology in history, although the literary edition is reasonably common in literary studies. The format has been adopted here because it offers several distinct advantages. As noted above, it is a convenient medium through which to analyze Blackstone's architectural writings and activities. Secondly, the format facilitates detailed discussion of, and reference to, the text. Thirdly, it provides scholars with a printed version of this unpublished and relatively inaccessible document, has the added benefits of relating the document's history and providing readers with invaluable contextualization and provenance.

The thesis is divided into three parts. Part One comprises an extended Introduction to the manuscript and has three major aims. The first is to highlight the most significant ways in which the 'Elements' can help historians to better understand Blackstone, his society and the development of his jurisprudence. The second is to provide provenance information and identify important differences between the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements'.

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<sup>29</sup> J. Newman and H. Colvin (eds.). *On Building: Roger North's Writings on Architecture* (Oxford, 1981). L. Soo. *Wren's "Tracts" on Architecture and Other Writings* (Cambridge, 1998).

Part One also identifies areas in which further research is warranted. Part Two is the edited and annotated text of the 'Elements'. Here, to borrow Hersey's words, in general my "method will be to unpack certain terms and passages [of the 'Elements'] so as to get a fuller range of meanings, associations, and images that lurk inside the words".<sup>30</sup> Part Three contains Appendices: a transcription of the *Pantheon* (discussed in some detail in several chapters), reproductions of the diagrammatic analyses from both Blackstone's 'Abridgement' and *Analysis of the Laws of England* and from Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* (for comparative purposes). The third appendix is comprised of several relevant illustrations because although history is in general a predominantly textual discipline, architectural historians and architects provide illustrations to which readers can refer as common practice.

Such a methodology has significant benefits but can prove a double-edged sword. On one hand, it offers a degree of conceptual freedom. On the other, one has to deal with several associated challenges. Like any document, for example, the 'Elements' is a detail in a complex tapestry of historical events and processes. In order to study it to a meaningful depth however, it is necessary to tease apart the biographical, historical, cultural and intellectual strands from which it is woven. This is not an easy task. How does one separate the biographical, for instance, from the historical? Such interconnectivity means that deciding upon a logical structure can be difficult. For example, the sequence of the chapters in part one, which place the 'Elements' in separate contexts, could have been arranged in several different ways. The structure which appears here allows the focus to fall first upon Blackstone and his 'Abridgement' and 'Elements' and then upon the broader historical and intellectual contexts against which they should be read. With this wider background in

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<sup>30</sup> G. Hersey. *Lost Meaning*, 3.

mind, it is then possible to demonstrate how his early study of architecture might have influenced the development of Blackstone's mature legal thought.

This task requires a detailed knowledge of both manuscripts, the development of editorial skills and a depth of knowledge over a broad range of historical issues. It also demands familiarity with the relevant literatures in all three modern fields of history, architecture and jurisprudence. The final result, moreover, must be sufficiently technical to be of use to both architectural and legal historians and at the same time accessible to each. The consequent length of a conventional literature review would be impractical. In the interest of brevity, therefore, literature is reviewed throughout the body of the thesis. That is to say, within the relevant chapters and in footnotes and annotations. It should also be noted at this point that although, like Blackstone's *Commentaries* this thesis certainly operates at the intellectual and cultural boundaries of history, architecture and law, it should not be considered an interdisciplinary project as such. Rather, it is a cultural and intellectual history which engages in the current academic climate of cross pollination because we are "often exhorted to break down the barriers between the disciplines".<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the architect Younès recently pointed to the "polyphonic exchange" which can "open new heuristic forms of mutually supportive creativity ... and help to expand the scope of what is known".<sup>32</sup>

There is also the knotty question of Blackstone's architectural motivations. Ascertaining why a busy young eighteenth-century law student might devote a good deal of time to the study of architecture is no less problematic than methodological concerns.

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<sup>31</sup> W. Prest. 'William Blackstone and the Historians', *History Today*, 56/7 (2006), 44. Indeed, once regarded as insular specialty, the history of the built environment is increasingly being integrated into more general histories. See for example F. Dosdworth. "Virtus on Whitehall: The Politics of Palladianism in William Kent's Treasury Building. 1733-6" *Journal of Historical Sociology* 18, 4 (Dec. 2005), 282-317.

<sup>32</sup> Younès. 'Doctorates Caught Between Disciplines and Projects', 316-317.

Although we know that Blackstone began writing about architecture in the 1740s he provides little indication of what prompted him to do so. We can say that some eighty years earlier another young lawyer, Roger North, attributed his discovery of the “joys of designing and executing known only to such as practise or have practiced it” to a fire at Middle Temple in 1678. In its wake, North learned to use a scale and thoroughly enjoyed “drawing the model of my little chamber, and making patterns for the wainscot”.<sup>33</sup> Later, like Blackstone, he put this skill to good use, designing the new gateway for the Middle Temple (1683-4) and remodelling the family’s country seat of Rougham Hall (1690-demolished abt. 1771).<sup>34</sup> Like Blackstone too, North learned the principles of architecture through books. He read Palladio, Scamozzi and Evelyn’s translation of Fréart.<sup>35</sup> Nowhere does Blackstone state his motivations so clearly.

The only explanation he provides is contained in the closing lines of the ‘Abridgement’ which read as follows

Such are the principal Rules laid down by the greatest Masters in this most excellent Art, by the due Observation of which a Man may easily acquire a Taste for the Beauties, and perhaps make some Proficiency in the Practice of Architecture; a Science which for its Use, Nobility and Delight has not its equal in the Universe, having had the honour of employing the Divine Majesty itself; in the Temple erected by God’s Direction at Jerusalem.<sup>36</sup>

Several motivating factors can be gleaned from this list: a set of authoritative design rules, the development of good taste, practicality and ennoblement. The problem is that the standard contemporary biographical account by his brother-in-law James Clitherow attributes Blackstone’s initial motivation as developing solely from his interest in

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<sup>33</sup> Colvin and Newman. ‘Introduction’, *Of Building*, xiii.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, xv.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>36</sup> Blackstone. ‘Abridgement’, 51.

mathematics. It is worth stepping briefly aside to consider this discrepancy because skills in geometry and proportion were fundamental to the design and appreciation of classical architecture in the eighteenth century. Evelyn, one of Blackstone's main authorities, considered classical architecture "the flower and crown of all the sciences mathematical".<sup>37</sup> In fact, the beauty at the top of Blackstone's list resides in the harmony achieved when each room and architectural element of a classical building conforms to a standard set of mathematical proportions. As the contemporary architect Robert Morris put it "Architecture is one easy uniform *Harmony*".<sup>38</sup> In this respect, the ideal classical building can be likened to a symphony, or even more closely, to a poem. Indeed, Evelyn, advises that the Orders "are to *Architects* what the *Modes* be in *Musick*, and the *Carminum genera* among *Poets*, all *Buildings* whatsoever being under the regiment of some one of them, or at least ought to be".<sup>39</sup> Both music and poetry are as concerned with formal order, with invention within a set of rules, as is classical architecture. A modern commentator has written of classical buildings in much the same spirit, describing them as "compositions ... in stone, intelligently argued dialectics and hermeneutics".<sup>40</sup> Just like a poem, a classical building transcends the sum of its parts – it is a work of art. Prior to the computer age classical architecture required skills in Euclidian geometry, necessary for the drawing or drafting of plans and facades. Indeed a distinctive feature of the 'Elements' is the inclusion of an introductory chapter giving instructions for drawing the most frequently-employed geometric forms. Chapter 15, 'Of Intercolumnation' explains the importance of measuring accurately the distances between individual columns and pilasters and provides this

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<sup>37</sup> Sir J. Evelyn. Quoted in H. Colvin and J. Newman. *Of Building*, xiii.

<sup>38</sup> R. Morris. 'An Essay Upon Harmony', *Lectures On Architecture* (London 1759 & 1736) *And An Essay Upon Harmony* (London 1739), fasc. ed. (Westmead, 1971), 13.

<sup>39</sup> *Account*, 126.

<sup>40</sup> A. Tzonis & L. Lefavre. *Classical Architecture: The Poetics of Order* 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 275.

information in convenient tabular form. Chapter 26 'Of Private Buildings' relates the ideal proportions of rooms such as halls, galleries, chambers, and lobbies. Furthermore, the proportions of the Orders (base, column and entablature) were increasingly emphasized during the early modern period. They were, as one commentator has written, "the absolute criteria for design" and thus "the primary and constant subject of architectural books".<sup>41</sup> In fact for Blackstone the Orders, their proportions and ornamentation, are quite literally the elements, or first principles, of architecture.

It is their significance for polite culture however which may have provided the most persuasive reason for a young lawyer to study architecture. So, before considering the 'Elements', it is useful to establish how historians interpret the terms 'politeness' and 'polite culture'. This is not as straightforward a task as it might sound, because politeness is perhaps more easily recognised than defined. Paul Langford's description bears repeating. The term "conjures up" he wrote:

some familiar features of Georgian society ... its attachment to elegance and stateliness, its oligarchic politics [and] aristocratic fashions. Politeness is stamped upon the country houses and portraits which for many provide the most vivid introduction to the culture of the eighteenth century. It is to be found in the pages of the standard texts through which modern readers customarily encounter eighteenth-century literature, the *Spectator's* journalism, Pope's poetry, Horace Walpole's letters, Gibbon's history, Burke's rhetoric, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Johnson's own *Lives of the Poets*.<sup>42</sup>

Architecture did not exist in a cultural vacuum,<sup>43</sup> for the culture of politeness was grounded in the humanist and classicist, gentlemanly education. The country house, with the architecture of which Blackstone is chiefly concerned, ranks high on Langford's list of the

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<sup>41</sup> E. Harris. *British Architectural Books and Writers 1556-1785* (Cambridge, 1990), 23.

<sup>42</sup> P. Langford. *A Polite And Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1992), 1.

<sup>43</sup> This observation is a modified version of Giles Worsley's remark that "[a]rchitectural debate seldom happens in an economic vacuum". G. Worsley. 'The 1740s: The Lost Decade', *The Georgian Group Journal*, (1991), 21.

period's cultural products. Yet, as Jeremy Black reminded historians recently, the study of eighteenth-century culture is complex. It is more for example, than the study of its polite arts - the plays and paintings, books and buildings which we associate with England in this period. It is also, and more fundamentally, the study of the society that sustained what were known as the polite arts: of the people who attended the plays, saw the paintings, read the books and studied the architecture.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, "throughout the Georgian period anybody with any pretensions to taste, anybody in fact who considered themselves to be educated, was naturally familiar with the orders of architecture and the system of design to which they supplied the key".<sup>45</sup>

For them, that classical "system of design" (or, in the language of architecture, design grammar) was an expression of the elegance, grace, reason and sense of proportion, the sociability, harmony, civility and urbanity, which together characterized polite culture. It is important that we distinguish, moreover, between politeness as simply a code of manners and the wider understanding held of it during the eighteenth century. Proficiency in pastimes deemed polite (including architecture) also affirmed one's gentility, at least for men, and during the first half of the century, architecture meant classical architecture. From young professionals like William Blackstone to the young future George III (1738-1820), a working knowledge of architecture was the keystone of Georgian politeness.<sup>46</sup> In Blackstone's own case it seems reasonable to consider a range of motivations: a combination of personal inclination, intellectual stimulus and cultural significance. As

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<sup>44</sup> J. Black. *A Subject for Taste: Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, 2005), iv.

<sup>45</sup> J. Gloag. *Georgian Grace: a Social History of Design From 1660-1830* (London, 1956), 17.

<sup>46</sup> At twenty-one George, then Prince of Wales, took lessons in architecture and drawing from William Chambers. C. Hibbert. *George III: A Personal History* (London, 1998), 26. Hibbert's biography includes two of the Prince's architectural drawings, *Corinthian Temple for Erektion at Kew* and *Composite Order*, plates 4 and 5.

outlined below, a psychological approach suggests that his personality and background may have inclined him towards the study of classical architecture because of its twin emphasis upon order and antiquity. Blackstone was also an exceptionally bright young man so the sheer intellectual stimulation of coming to grips with a complex body of knowledge cannot be overlooked.

Ultimately, the 'Elements', like all architectural treatises, is an interpretation of architectural principles. Thus, as Krufft notes, it probably tells us "more about the position of the interpreter than what is being interpreted".<sup>47</sup> So what, to paraphrase Dodsworth, was Blackstone doing in the context of polite culture when he compiled his treatise?<sup>48</sup> We now have some idea of what architecture meant to Blackstone as an individual but what did the act of writing an architectural treatise mean in the context of early eighteenth-century English society? The general question of meaning in architecture is too large and complex to be tackled to sufficient depth here. Suffice to say that Dodsworth has recently pointed out that historians

should treat ... buildings as statements, that is to say as necessarily inter-subjective acts with a social function and public legibility and that their meaning should be subject to the same form of analysis as literary or political performances [because] in doing so we are extending the range of sources for the study of political ideas beyond the textual into the material domain.<sup>49</sup>

This thesis leaves that task to Dodsworth and others. It attempts merely to establish what the act of writing an architectural treatise meant to the young Blackstone in the context of mid-eighteenth-century polite society.

Considering Blackstone's contemporary fame, the *Commentaries* enormous and

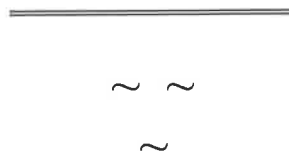
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<sup>47</sup> H-W. Krufft. *A History of Architectural Theory: From Vitruvius to the Present* (London, 1994), 13.

<sup>48</sup> F. Dodsworth. 'Virtus on Whitehall', 295.

<sup>49</sup> Dodsworth. "Virtus on Whitehall", 282-283.

enduring influence and the current revival of interest in classical architecture and the scholarly discourse associated with it, it is astonishing that this should be the first substantial study of his architectural interests. This introductory chapter began with two observations. The first was that R. A. Lloyd, his father, and scholars alike have seen only evidence in Blackstone's architectural writings of the orderliness of mind for which the *Commentaries* are justly celebrated. The second was that the "duration, depth and significance" of Blackstone's architectural interests "have never been properly appreciated or explored".<sup>50</sup> Does the 'Elements' have anything more significant to reveal than Blackstone's orderliness of mind? This thesis seeks to establish the significance of his 'Elements', for biographers, historians and legal scholars. How important a manuscript is it? Does it have the capacity to change the way scholars perceive Blackstone himself? Can it do anything to correct the "monumental posthumous image of Commentator and Judge [which overshadows] our view of the precocious, even radical young intellectual"?<sup>51</sup> Can it enrich our understanding of eighteenth-century English Polite Culture? Most importantly, does it offer us a new perspective upon his life's greatest work, the *Commentaries*? These are the questions raised in Prest's article. They form the starting point for this thesis. It is now possible to begin to answer them.



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<sup>50</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 111.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, 124.

## Chapter Two

### *Sir William Blackstone: Life and Architecture*

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*to pay a Tribute to the Memory of so respectable a Person . . . . [to] hold forth to the rising Generation a bright Example of a Man, who, without Fortune, Family Interest, or Connexions, raised himself by diligent Attention to his studies, even from his earliest Youth, and the strictest sense of every moral and religious Duty, to a very eminent and honourable Office in his Profession: and which, had his Health and Constitution been equal to the Faculties of his Mind, would most probably have advanced him to one of the highest. (J. Clitherow, 1781).<sup>52</sup>*

James Clitherow's memoir of his famous brother-in-law is dated 20 February 1781, barely a week after the first anniversary of Blackstone's death. Prefaced to an edition of Blackstone's *Reports of Cases Determined in the Several Courts of Westminster Hall from 1746-1779*, Clitherow's remarkably colourless account is more concerned with Blackstone's legal and academic careers than with his personal life. Nevertheless, it is the authoritative contemporary account of his life. Therefore, like many studies before it, this chapter sifts from Clitherow's "faithful and impartial account of the life of this great man" an impression of the man behind the judicial wig and robes.<sup>53</sup> Unlike previous studies however, it argues that architecture's role in Blackstone's life adds considerably to this picture. It enriches our understanding of several points Clitherow discusses: his personality, personal and professional lives and offers a unique glimpse into his friendships and religious convictions, upon which Clitherow is virtually silent.

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<sup>52</sup> J. Clitherow. 'Preface', to *Reports of Cases Determined in the Several Courts Of Westminster Hall From 1746-1779* Taken and Compiled by The Honourable Sir William Blackstone ... with a Preface containing *Memoirs Of His Life*, J. Clitherow ed. (London, 1781), i, ii.

<sup>53</sup> Clitherow. 'Preface', vii-viii.

We ought first to ask what can be deduced about Blackstone's background and personality from Clitherow's account. We learn that Blackstone attended the Charterhouse School in London from the age of seven, was orphaned "before he was twelve years old" and was thereafter dependent upon the generosity of various members of his mother's family.<sup>54</sup> In addition, his initial education and then entry into university as a commoner at the age of fifteen were facilitated by recommendations and scholarships.<sup>55</sup> Although Clitherow was well-qualified to write the memoir (having known his subject for the last thirty years of his life) he cannot tell us what kind of child Blackstone was or how he reacted to these circumstances. It is possible nonetheless to glimpse between Clitherow's lines a bright, even high-minded, serious and industrious boy with an early taste for literature. Clitherow's references to a mature "rigid ... punctuality", senses of "obligation" and "duty", "a certain irritability of temper" combined with a "strong nervous affection" and a life-long, almost frenetic, intellectual (if not physical) workload, pepper Clitherow's account.<sup>56</sup> Taken together, they imply a highly-strung disposition.

Blackstone also appears to have been a modest man in an age more appreciative of the larger-than-life personalities of people like the scurrilous political journalist John Wilkes, the irascible writer and journalist Samuel Johnson and the flamboyant actor David Garrick. Blackstone's "natural reserve", Clitherow writes, "which he could never shake off, appeared to a casual observer, though it was only appearance, like pride; especially after he became a judge, when he thought it his duty to keep strictly up to forms".<sup>57</sup> Thus scholars have been bequeathed an impression of Blackstone as a pompous and rather curmudgeonly

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<sup>54</sup> In 1735 Blackstone was "by the nomination of Sir Robert Walpole, on the recommendation of Charles Wither a cousin by the mother's side" to the Charterhouse Foundation. Clitherow. 'Preface', iii, iv.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, vii – ix.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*, xxvi, xvii, xxiii.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, xxvii.

man. Indeed the scholarly consensus has been, to quote one commentator, that Blackstone was "stiff, stuffy, and pompous from childhood and as a professor and judge he felt it his duty to become more so".<sup>58</sup> Perhaps some conjecture might be forgiven here in the search for a more sympathetic psychological approach. Might not this boy, perhaps acutely conscious of his financial and social status at Oxford, throw himself into his studies in order to justify his benefactors' generosity? Such a boy might well also mature into a man driven by a desire to prove worthy of the "very eminent and honourable office in his profession" to which he subsequently managed to rise. He might also have been inclined towards the study of classical architecture because, besides confirming his claim to gentility, it offered a sense of order and stability.

Though much scholarly attention has focused upon the *Commentaries*, surprisingly little has been devoted to its author's life and architectural activities. In this biographers and legal scholars have followed Clitherow's lead. For example, the unnamed author of an 1829 article, tantalizingly entitled 'Life and Writings of Sir William Blackstone', merely informs the reader that Blackstone "made a respectable proficiency in mathematics particularly, which he applied to the science of architecture as the recreation of his leisure hours".<sup>59</sup> G.P. Macdonell's eight page entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* devoted a dismissive five lines to his subject's architectural activities.<sup>60</sup> Two rather dull biographies were published in 1938, both of which attempt a slightly more complex portrait of their subject. Even so, on the subject of architecture, Lockmiller looks no further than Clitherow's account. He examined the 'Elements' at All Souls College but expanded little upon it in his

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<sup>58</sup> J.W. McKnight. "Blackstone, Quasi-Jurisprudent", *South Western Law Journal*, XIII/4 (1959), 401-402

<sup>59</sup> Anonymous. 'Life and Writings of Sir William Blackstone' *American Jurist and Literary Magazine* Jan. (1829), 118.

<sup>60</sup> G. P. Macdonell. 'Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780) in L. Stephen ed., *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 5, (London, 1886), 133.

*Sir William Blackstone* beyond stating its provenance details in a footnote.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, Warden raises more questions than he answers.

According to his *Life of Blackstone* the young William “seriously considered .... making architecture his life’s work”.<sup>62</sup> Blackstone was “quite certain” Warden tells us, “as were his masters that he would make a good architect” but that he returned to an earlier intention to practice law from a desire to be of public service.<sup>63</sup> No evidence now exists to confirm this intriguing claim. It has also proved impossible to locate the source of a curious assertion that Blackstone’s

concepts on the decorative branch of the art [were derived from] his own ideas exclusively for they were strange to the profession. It was on them that he received condemnation from those who read the treatise [and] later in life for he employed very strange designs and methods for which he received criticism.<sup>64</sup>

Thus, by the close of the twentieth century scholars had a muted and somewhat confused impression of Blackstone’s life and of architecture’s role in it. The opening years of the twenty-first century however have provided some clarification. In 2001 Doolittle’s brief but welcome study delved more insightfully into Blackstone’s personal life and touched upon his architectural activities.<sup>65</sup> Prest was the first to take more than a passing interest, drawing scholars’ attention to a string of architectural metaphors in the *Commentaries* and proposing that they offered a new perspective on Blackstone’s great legal text.<sup>66</sup>

Clitherow himself paid so little heed to the ‘Abridgement’ and ‘Elements’ that he actually confused the two, referring to the ‘Elements’ rather than the ‘Abridgement’ as the

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<sup>61</sup> D. Lockmiller. *Sir William Blackstone* (Chapel Hill, Va., 1938), 10.

<sup>62</sup> L. Warden. *Life of Blackstone* (Charlottesville, Va. 1938), 35.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.* 43.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.* 36.

<sup>65</sup> I. Doolittle. *William Blackstone: A Biography*, (Haselmere, 2001).

<sup>66</sup> W. Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 118. Prest first raised the issue of Blackstone’s architectural mss at a Seminar at the School of Architecture and Design, University of South Australia, in 1998 and in his entry on *Blackstone* for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (submitted 1999).

“treatise intituled *Elements of Architecture*”.<sup>67</sup> He was also inclined to portray the manuscripts as something of a youthful diversion, preferring to emphasise the architectural projects in which Blackstone was involved as evidence of an “ardour for improvement”.<sup>68</sup> It was certainly an ardour from which the university and the town of Wallingford (where Blackstone made his home following his marriage in 1761), benefited. Elected a Fellow of All Souls, appointed its dean, and then bursar, of laws,<sup>69</sup> his duties there involved him in the completion of the Codrington Library as early as 1746. By 1757 Blackstone was occupied with another architectural project, this time converting what Clitherow calls a “confused Heap of Ruins” at Queens’ College into “that handsome Pile of Building towards the *High Street*”.<sup>70</sup> He also attempted, in vain, to persuade the University to accept a plan to use the Radcliffe Camera as a dedicated manuscript library.<sup>71</sup>

Acting in a private advisory capacity to Lord Abingdon he superintended the rebuilding of the Botley causeway.<sup>72</sup> The design of a bridge erected at Swinford as part of that project hints that he may well have commissioned the fashionable architect Robert Taylor for this project.<sup>73</sup> A fundamentally pragmatic man, his “ardour for improvement” also prompted renovations to his new family home in the nearby town of Wallingford, Berkshire.<sup>74</sup> An attractive house, boasting a Jacobean wing, Castle Priory (formally Priory Place) still nestles on the banks of the Thames near St. Peter’s church and the graceful

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<sup>67</sup> Clitherow, v.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, xvii.

<sup>69</sup> The latter appointments were annual.

<sup>70</sup> Clitherow, xiii.

<sup>71</sup> I. Doolittle. ‘William Blackstone and the Radcliffe Camera’ *Bodleian Library Record*, 11 (1982), 47- 50.

<sup>72</sup> Willoughby Bertie, 4th Earl of Abingdon. The “three-arched stone toll bridge” at Swinford was part of an ambitious project designed to connect Gloucestershire and Wales by road with London. The bridge is attributed to Gibbs who designed six other minor bridges on the Botley Road, of which only the Osney Bridge survives. See Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*, 117-118; E. de Villiers, *Swinford Bridge 1769-1969* (Eynsham, 1969), 15, 28-29, Doolittle. *Blackstone*, 108.

<sup>73</sup> For a more detailed account of these projects see Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 116-118.

<sup>74</sup> Doolittle, *Blackstone*, 101. For Taylor’s involvement see Colvin. *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects* (London, 1978), 816.

Wallingford Bridge. Its lawns sweep from the house to the river: the epitome of the ideal polite eighteenth-century situation as described in the ‘Elements’.<sup>75</sup> Blackstone referred affectionately to the home as his “Cabin in Thames Street” at least once.<sup>76</sup> Though he also maintained lodgings in New Inn Hall and kept a London residence in Lincoln’s Inn Fields towards the end of his life, Castle Priory was his family home from 1761 until his death in 1780.<sup>77</sup> The town itself benefited from his renovations to the neighbouring church of St. Peter’s.<sup>78</sup> He commissioned Robert Taylor for an extensive refurbishment of the church’s interior and again in the early 1770s for a neo-gothic spire - which appears less incongruous from across the river than from the street.<sup>79</sup> He also provided funds for a clock face on the church tower’s southern facade.

To return to Clitherow’s account, it is uncertain just when, or how, the decision was made that the young William Blackstone enter the legal profession but we do know that he was admitted to the Faculty of Law at Oxford in 1740 and to the Middle Temple in 1741.<sup>80</sup>

We also know that he was not altogether enthusiastic about a legal career, for he now

found it necessary to quit the more amusing pursuits of his youth,  
for the severer studies to which he had dedicated himself. ... How  
disagreeable a change this must have been to a young man of

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<sup>75</sup> Illustrations of two residences situated in just this manner, the Countess of Suffolk’s House (James Mason after Augustin Heckell, 1749) and Alexander Pope’s Villa (after Augustin Heckell, c.1750) can be found in J. Bryant. ‘Villa Views and the Univited Audience’, in *The Georgian Villa*, D. Arnold (ed.), (Stroud, 1996), 14, 15.

<sup>76</sup> W. Blackstone. *The Letters of Sir William Blackstone, 1744 – 1780*, W. Prest, ed., (London, 2006), 133.

<sup>77</sup> Doolittle, *Blackstone*, 103. Blackstone maintained no. 55 Lincoln’s Inn Fields as his town residence between 1768 and 1780. According to E.B. Chancellor, he wrote much of the *Commentaries* in the house. See E. B. Chancellor. *The Romance of Lincoln’s Inn Fields* (London, 1932), 63.

<sup>78</sup> Clitherow, xvii. Later renamed Castle Priory. The house and church still stand. Castle Priory is a Grade II Listed building on the National Monuments Record. In the late nineteenth century the house was sold to the Hayllar family. (I am indebted to Ray Johnson, former National Training Manager of Scope at Castle Priory for the following information). During last century, the house passed into the ownership of the National Railwaymen’s Union and then served as the national training centre for Scope (private communication). Marygai Hayllar kindly brought to my attention several paintings by Jessica Hayllar which feature the interior of the house. Castle Priory is now once again in private ownership.

<sup>79</sup> See figs. 25 and 26 Appendix, of the present day interior of the church and Taylor’s spire.

<sup>80</sup> Clitherow. vi.

brilliant parts, and a fine imagination, glowing with all the classical and poetical beauties he had stored his mind with, is easier conceived than expressed.<sup>81</sup>

Blackstone marked the rite of passage with a poem entitled *The Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse*, which reads in part:

How blest my days, my thoughts how free,  
In sweet society with thee!  
Then all was joyous, all was young,  
And years unheeded roll'ed along:  
But now the pleasing dream is o'er,  
These scenes must charm me now no more,  
Lost to the field, and torn from you -  
Farewell! - a long, a last adieu!

Me wrangling Courts, and stubborn Law,  
To smoke, and crowds, and cities draw;  
There selfish Faction rules the day,  
And Pride and Av'rice throng the way ...  
No room for Peace, no room for you -  
Adieu, celestial Nymph, adieu!<sup>82</sup>

Macdonell may have been right to consider that "nothing has been lost to English literature by Blackstone's seeking in poetry only a relaxation"<sup>83</sup> and Blackstone's reluctance may indeed have been more easily felt than expressed, but the *Farewell* nevertheless conveys a very real sense of the instinctive recoil from the vice and distress with which his legal practice would soon bring him into close contact.

Eager to portray Blackstone as an orphan who rose to the heights of respectability through industry and talent alone, Clitherow conveys the distinct impression that Blackstone dedicated himself entirely to the study of the law as early as 1741. It seems far more likely that if Blackstone ever fully committed himself to the law it was not until at

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<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Biographical History of Sir William Blackstone*, Catalogue, 4-5.

<sup>83</sup> G. P. Macdonell. 'Blackstone, Sir William (1723-1780)', *DNB*, 133.

least 1747, when he completed the 'Elements' and by which time he had already been called to the bar. In 1743 alone for instance, he wrote both the 'Abridgement' and a rather ambitious poem entitled *The Pantheon: A Vision* which was published anonymously in 1747.<sup>84</sup> The *Concise Oxford Chronology of English Literature* lists the poem under Blackstone's name but declares the attribution uncertain<sup>85</sup> but Prest attributes the work to Blackstone on the basis of three sources. The first is Blackstone's letter (claiming authorship) enclosed with a copy presented to All Souls, which seems convincing in itself.<sup>86</sup> The second is the published memoirs of Blackstone's Oxford colleague Richard Graves who states that it was published "by my persuasion".<sup>87</sup> The third is Horace Walpole's copy at Harvard, which attributes the poem to "Blakiston".<sup>88</sup>

Clitherow confides little about Blackstone's religious views. He notes a sincere attachment to the Church of England "from conviction of its excellence" and that his "attendance on its religious duties [was] regular ... and always performed with seriousness and devotion".<sup>89</sup> We learn a great deal more from the *Pantheon*. The anonymous advertisement which preceded the poem states his intention as:

To take a *Poetical View* of the several Religions, that have prevailed in the World, which are represented by different *Genii* residing in their different Temples, with the proper Symbols of their respective Faiths.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> *The Pantheon: A Vision*. (London, 1747).

<sup>85</sup> M. F. Suarez. *The Concise Oxford Chronology of English Literature* (M. Cox ed.), (Oxford: 2004), 217.

<sup>86</sup> See W. Prest. 'The Religion of a Lawyer? William Blackstone's Anglicanism', *Parergon* 21, 2 (July, 2004), n. 16, 155.

<sup>87</sup> G. Bingham. *Dissertations, Essays and Sermons... to which are prefixed Memoirs of His Life etc.* (London: 1804) I, xxiii-xxv.

<sup>88</sup> See Prest. 'Religion of a Lawyer' n. 16, 159.

<sup>89</sup> Clitherow, xx – xxi.

<sup>90</sup> Blackstone. *Pantheon*, ii.

The poem relates a dream in which these "several religions" are represented to him in turn.<sup>91</sup> Paganism is depicted as "A lofty Temple .. of cubic form/ but rising from the midst an ample dome".<sup>92</sup> From this building he sees: to the north a "pointed arch...delicate/ With gothic pride and lavish ornament".<sup>93</sup> To the east, a wall, encrusted with jewels, to the south "pointed obelisks".<sup>94</sup> To the west: "an arch, on Dorian columns rais'd/ Supports the fabled Gods of ancient Greece, and Rome's proud tow'rs."<sup>95</sup> Blackstone then subdivides Christianity into "*Popery, Sectarism, and true Religion*" by which he means the Church of England "the most pure and Apostolical upon Earth".<sup>96</sup> These divisions he represents as three similar yet distinct architectural styles. It is with these that the poem's symbolism is most intriguing. "Popery" is associated with "a lordly pile" in "gay Corinthian mode,/ Rich with luxurient art and wanton pride".<sup>97</sup> "Sectarism" he describes as being "Of clumsy Tuscan dress, unhewn and rude".<sup>98</sup> The Church of England though is envisioned as a "beautious dome, whose marble portal, [is] deck'd/ With chaste Ionic ornaments" and as "our sacred structure".<sup>99</sup>

In fact in each of his three architectural writings, the 'Abridgement', the 'Elements' and the *Pantheon*, Blackstone indicates that he sees the origins of architecture in Christian history, specifically in Solomon's Temple, rather than in classical mythology. He may well have worked upon *The Pantheon* and 'Abridgement' simultaneously but the relationship between them is more complex than simple chronology might suggest. For example, the

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<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*, 45-46.

<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, 70-71.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, 95-99, 118.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid.*, 143-145.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid.*, 468.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, 131-134.

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*, 137.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*, 401-402, 168.

closing lines of the 'Abridgment' make it clear that he considered architecture an activity fit for God Himself and therefore not only instructive but ennobling. An echo of the statement appears in a footnote in *The Pantheon* which reads in part "Villalpandus has undertaken to prove, that the Ornaments and Proportions of the *Grecian* Architecture were borrowed from *Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem.*"<sup>100</sup> Blackstone mentions the theory again three years later in Chapter 12 of the 'Elements' where he describes the Corinthian as

the most delicate of all the Orders, the very Perfection, and *Ne plus ultra* of regular Architecture. It is said to have been invented by the famous Callimachus of Corinth, the Reason and Manner of which Invention is minutely related by Vitruvius. Yet on the other hand Villalpandus would persuade us (and plausably enough) that is only an Imitation of an Order erected in Solomon's Temple, the Capital of which was of Palm Branches, and the whole Composition, as he designed it, exceeding glorious.<sup>101</sup>

It seems likely that Blackstone encountered this idea in Fréart's *Parallel* as early as 1743 for the *Pantheon* and 'Elements' clearly refer to Fréart's discussion of Juan Bautista Villalpando's commentary on the Old Testament description of the Temple in Ezekiel.<sup>102</sup> Nor was he the first to do so. John Wood the Elder (1704-53) also stressed a Christian origin of the Corinthian Order.<sup>103</sup> Together Blackstone's architectural writings demonstrate that he considered architecture to have been derived from Christian origins but also that it symbolised a relationship between the intellectual and the spiritual.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> *ibid.* 248.

<sup>101</sup> Blackstone. 'Abridgement', 51. See below, n. 105, p.190 for publication details and a more detailed explanation. The apparent discrepancy between the two suggested origins of the Corinthian Order (one attributing it to Corinth, the other to Jerusalem), Blackstone seems to accept Villalpando's explanation that the first is merely a copy, perhaps indeed, a corruption of the latter. This would account for the accusation of 'wantonness' in *The Pantheon*.

<sup>102</sup> Fréart, *Parallel*, 63.

<sup>103</sup> J. Wood. *The Origin of Building or the Plagiarism of the Heathens Detected. In Five Books*. (Bath, 1741).

<sup>104</sup> It is difficult to say how much influence Blackstone might have exercised over the completed interior of the Codrington but Clitherow tells us that Blackstone "corrected" a number of "mistakes" in the architecture. Clitherow, viii. An observation by Sir John Summerson provides an interesting aside to this point. He described the Codrington's interior as "200 feet long and with one side nearly all windows and the other

Thus, new research might fruitfully focus more attention upon the connections between the architectural symbolism in the *Pantheon* and the 'Abridgement' than can be attempted here. Prest has argued for instance that Blackstone's "religious views have attracted attention only in the context of the fierce protests with which Dissenters greeted the fourth and final volume of the *Commentaries* on its publication in 1769".<sup>105</sup> Notwithstanding Blackstone's mature desire to distance himself from his early literary endeavours his architectural writings may assist historians to gain a deeper understanding of Blackstone's religious views.

Despite Blackstone's interest in such matters the fateful decision to enter the law remained. To his credit he made a genuine and concerted effort to establish a successful legal practice. He gained his BCL in 1745 and was called to the bar the following year. For seven long years he "attended the Courts in Westminster-hall". Then, "finding the profits of his profession very inadequate to the expense", he retired from practice in 1753 to concentrate upon his administrative and academic careers at All Souls.<sup>106</sup> This was an important decision because, as Prest notes, what distinguishes Blackstone "from other legal practitioners over the mid- to later eighteenth-century was his academic persona".<sup>107</sup> Blackstone had first entered Pembroke College as a student in 1738. He would be involved with All Souls College for the rest of his life. Consequently, he was undoubtedly "moulded by his academic affiliations and experiences".<sup>108</sup>

Speaking of those affiliations and their impact upon his life, Clitherow is at pains to assure us that despite his gruff reputation "the virtues of [Blackstone's] private character"

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nearly all books; no paintings or architectural sculpture whatever: a very 'Protestant' version" of the eighteenth-century library. See his *Architecture of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1982).

<sup>105</sup> Prest. 'The Religion of a Lawyer', 155.

<sup>106</sup> Clitherow. xii.

<sup>107</sup> Prest. 'The Religion of a Lawyer' 159.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid.*

included those of the "cheerful, agreeable, and facetious companion [and] faithful friend".<sup>109</sup> He was indeed jovial within a small but close circle of friends comprised in the main of colleagues from All Souls.<sup>110</sup> Doolittle adds considerably to our knowledge of this side of Blackstone's personality. He observes that Blackstone bequeathed rings to each of the four "worthy friends" he met there. These friendships, with John Tracey, Alexander Popham, Richard Bagot and his "longest and most faithful friend" Benjamin Buckler, lasted the rest of his life.<sup>111</sup> In a touching footnote to this latter friendship, Doolittle also tells us that as Buckler later lay dying in 1780, he contributed £50 towards the cost of the statue of his "late dear friend" Blackstone who had predeceased him by ten months. The statue by John Bacon now stands in the Codrington Library.<sup>112</sup>

One of Blackstone's most important and also highly valued friendships was with Sir Roger Newdigate, M.P. for the University.<sup>113</sup> As Doolittle observes, the relationship may have been "tinged with deference" on Blackstone's part but was nonetheless genuine despite the difference in their backgrounds. Newdigate was four years Blackstone's senior and born into the wealth and privilege which allowed him to complete two grand tours (1738-40, 1774-76): a luxury Blackstone would never be able to afford. Newdigate was tall and thin and enjoyed fishing, bowling and walking.<sup>114</sup> Blackstone was shorter and portly, reluctant to exercise and reportedly given to writing with a bottle of port at his elbow.<sup>115</sup> Their correspondence betrays a delightful sense of humour - on Blackstone's part

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<sup>109</sup> Clitherow, xxv.

<sup>110</sup> Doolittle, *Blackstone*, 99.

<sup>111</sup> *ibid.*, 97.

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> Fifth Baronet, (1719-1806).

<sup>114</sup> Doolittle, *Blackstone*, 98. A. Wood. 'The Diaries of Sir Roger Newdigate, 1751-1806', *Transactions Birmingham Archaeological Society* 78 (1960), 41.

<sup>115</sup> J. Boswell. *Life of Johnson* (Oxford, 1980), 1135.

at least because Newdigate seems to have been a rather "humorless" man.<sup>116</sup> Their relationship was beneficial in professional as well as personal terms.<sup>117</sup> Lewer informs us that "Blackstone promoted Newdigate's interest assiduously in ... two elections for the ... University" (1751 and 1768) and "provided Newdigate and his friend and kinsman Charles Mordaunt with important legal advice."<sup>118</sup>

It is their common and well-documented interest in architecture with which this thesis is concerned. Newdigate's architectural interests have received more scholarly attention than Blackstone's.<sup>119</sup> Whereas Blackstone's writings reveal him as a firm classicist, Newdigate's passion was for the Gothic style. Lewer describes Newdigate as "an early exponent of the Gothic Revival in architecture and was ... over the course of fifty years, to remodel [his ancestral home] Arbury Hall, hitherto a conventional Elizabethan mansion, into [what Tyack called] 'the most impressive 18<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic house in England, Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill not excepted'".<sup>120</sup> Newdigate was also responsible for "the design and funding of alterations to the interior of the dining hall at University College" in 1766.<sup>121</sup> An entry in Newdigate's diary for 1758 indicates that he

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<sup>116</sup> A. Lewer. 'Sir Roger Newdigate (1719-1806)', [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20003, accessed 10 Feb 2005].

<sup>117</sup> Doolittle. *Blackstone*, 98.

<sup>118</sup> Lewer. 'Sir Roger Newdigate'.

<sup>119</sup> See for example A Wood. 'The Diaries of Sir Roger Newdigate, 1751-1806' *Birmingham Archaeological Society Transactions* 78 (1960), 40 – 54, which provides a chronology of the building work at Arbury Hall and M. McCarthy. 'Sir Roger Newdigate: Drawings for Copt Hall, Essex, and Arbury Hall, Warwickshire' *Architectural History* 16 (1973), 25-36+77-88.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid.* A photograph of Newdigate's medievalised Dining Room at his ancestral seat of Arbury, Warwickshire appeared (courtesy of *Country Life*) in Sacheverell Sitwell's *British Architects And Craftsmen: A Survey of Taste, Design and Style during Three Centuries, 1600-1830* (London, 1945). The image was recently reproduced in A. Lewer's 'Sir Roger Newdigate (1719-1806) in the *ODNB*. Walpole must have been planning Strawberry Hill during the 1740s because it was begun in 1750. For a detailed account of Walpole's intentions in building Strawberry Hill see D. McKinney. 'The Castle of My Ancestors: Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill', *BJECS*, 13 (Autumn, 1990), 199-214. Aspects of the contemporary debate as to whether the classical or gothick tradition best expressed British ideas and values are discussed below in Chapters Two and Five.

<sup>121</sup> *ibid.*

presented Blackstone with a copy of Isaac Ware's *Complete Body of Architecture*.<sup>122</sup> In a subsequent letter to Newdigate Blackstone begged

leave to return You my Thanks for the very elegant Present I received from You last week by the hands of Dr Winchester; of which I would not depreciate the Value, but must say that (since Example is better than Precept) you have almost rendered it a useless Ornament to my Study, by the Lectures I have heard, and the practice I have seen, at Arbury and its Environs.<sup>123</sup>

On the other hand it has proved impossible to substantiate a claim that the two men "enjoyed an architectural drawing trip" in 1752.<sup>124</sup> No mention is made of the trip in Clitherow's memoir, Newdigate's diary or in Blackstone's existing correspondence. Newdigate's papers do include a sketch of the floor plan of "the Chapel of Nuneaton surveyed by Willm. Blackstone". It bears the date "24 Aug. 1752" and is in Newdigate's handwriting. It appears however, that he merely made a rough sketch of the church's dimensions according to measurements kindly "Made out by the very extraordinary Genius of Wm Blackstone Dr. of Laws".<sup>125</sup>

Newdigate did involve Blackstone in Lady Pomfret's donation of the Pomfret Marbles to the University in 1755.<sup>126</sup> The donation prompted a flurry of letters between

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<sup>122</sup> Newdigate's diary entry for April 15, 1758 records his intention to "buy Ware a present to Blackstone". Newdigate Diaries WRO CR136/A589 (1758). The gift seems to have been I. Ware. *A Complete Body of Architecture Adorned with Plans and Designs* (London, 1756).

<sup>123</sup> Blackstone to Newdigate, April 30, 1758. Blackstone. *Letters*, 54-55.

<sup>124</sup> Doolittle, *Blackstone*, 98 and Lewer's unpublished 'Sir Roger Newdigate and Sir William Blackstone: the Forgotten Friendship' (p. 12), delivered at the Warwick University Social History seminar, 1995. I am grateful to Mr. Lewer for a copy of his paper.

<sup>125</sup> W.R.O. CR136/B2587. Probably St. Nicholas parish Church, Nuneaton, Warwickshire which dates from 1350.

<sup>126</sup> Henrietta Lousia Fermor, (d. 1761) to whom Newdigate was related by marriage. The Pomfret marbles Lady Fermor donated to the university were originally part of the famous Arundel Collection. Although Haynes's *Arundel Marbles* does not mention the column, it may have been part of the collection. For a history of the Arundel Marbles see H.E. L. Hayes, *The Arundel Marbles*, (Oxford, 1975). Easton Neston is a Grade I listed building. An extensive discussion of Easton Neston's design and construction is in K. Downes, 'Hawksmoor's house at Easton Neston', *Architectural History*, 1987, 50-76. See also 'Cleley Hundred:

Blackstone and Sir Roger between February and October of that year, discussing the donation and the selection of a suitable exhibition space. Blackstone's letter to Sir Roger, of 22 April, refers to certain "Difficulties I am under of obeying Lady Pomfret's and your Summons to Towcester next week ... If you do not reach Towcester before Friday the second, I can then have the Satisfaction of waiting upon you and our Benefactress".<sup>127</sup> A marginal note in Chapter 12 of his 'Elements' describing a Corinthian column on her estate at Easton Neston in Northamptonshire suggests that he attended his friend and her Ladyship as planned.<sup>128</sup> The notation is firm evidence that Blackstone actually maintained his interest in the manuscript and added to it over the years. His correspondence reveals his enthusiasm about the donation and his confidence that the university would cheerfully bear "the Expense of Removing & Fitting up the Marbles with proper Pedestals & Inscriptions". He also proposed a plan to move them into a suitable temporary location until "the Magnificence of a Greek or Roman Temple to display them to proper Advantage" could be provided. He proposed that the schools of Logic and Philosophy be moved to create a "large, public Room, well lighted, &, what is a main Article, on the ground Floor" and enclosed a sketch of the area.<sup>129</sup> His confidence did not last long. On the 27th he wrote again to say that he was "sorry to hear Frugality so much talked of upon this occasion". He wrote in disgust that the collection's temporary home was rather more likely to be either a "Room under the Museum, a common Throughfare & of no size; in the Anatomy School, up one pair of Stairs; [or] a Lumber Room for dry bones & stuf Alligators".<sup>130</sup> This "frugality" he attributed to "a coldness of Constitution natural to those advanced in Years

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Easton Neston House and Park', in *VCH Northampton*, V (Oxford, 2002), 102-111, neither of which mention the column.

<sup>127</sup> Blackstone. *Letters*, 38.

<sup>128</sup> See Part II, 176.

<sup>129</sup> The sketch is reproduced in Blackstone, *Letters*, 33.

<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*, 35.

[and] better qualified perhaps for adorning the University by their Learning, than by their Taste in the politer Arts".<sup>131</sup> Regardless of whatever else this episode reveals about Blackstone's opinions, (or the time-honoured "frugality" of universities), it does demonstrate his appreciation of classical architecture as part of a polite comportment and of his architectural endeavours on the University's behalf.

What fresh insight does Blackstone's interest in architecture offer scholars into his personality and life? It confirms and enriches much of Clitherow's account. He is revealed for example as a deeply practical man, actively involved in his collegiate and municipal communities. It deepens our appreciation of Clitherow's assurances that Blackstone's aloofness was something of a public mask by illuminating one of his most significant friendships. It also offers scholars a rich seam of previously overlooked documentary evidence of his religious views and enables us to better-appreciate both the breadth and depth of his intellectual capacity and astonishing drive. During this decade - while still in his twenties - Blackstone commenced serious study of the law, was called to the bar and began both a legal practice and administrative career but still managed to write three architectural pieces, each of which constitutes a considerable intellectual achievement in its own right, and to oversee his first architectural project. In hindsight we can say that this decade set him upon the path which led to his authorship of the *Commentaries*. Thus this chapter also reveals the 1740s as a turning point in Blackstone's life.



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<sup>131</sup> *ibid.*

## Chapter Three

### *The Manuscripts*

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*The following Elements were first compiled in the Summer of the Year 1743. They have been since revised and transcribed, with considerable Additions and Improvements, at leisure Hours in the Years 1746 and 1747. (W. Blackstone, 1747).*<sup>132</sup>

This chapter focuses upon the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements', their provenance and the most significant differences between them. A study of their provenance authenticates Blackstone's authorship and demonstrates that on one level the manuscripts are strikingly similar. For example, both documents are written in the same neat hand that characterizes Blackstone's correspondence and both bear his bookplate. They were also bound in calf during the eighteenth century; almost certainly by Thomas Sedgely of Oxford.<sup>133</sup> Their scope and objective too seem remarkably similar because in both, as Prest notes, "architecture is conceived as a rule-bound art [and in both Blackstone's] chief concern is to present the classical rules, drawing on authority both ancient and modern".<sup>134</sup> On that level the two versions seem so similar that Clitherow understandably confused them. He tells us that "at the age of twenty, [Blackstone] compiled a treatise intituled *Elements of*

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<sup>132</sup> Blackstone. 'Elements', i.

<sup>133</sup> I am indebted to John Chambers on this point and also for filling several gaps in my knowledge of the history of the 'Abridgment' between 1959 and 1987. For a detailed account of Sedgely's bindings, including illustrations of the tooling used on Blackstone's MSS, see J. Chambers's exemplary 'Thomas Sedgely Oxford Binder' *The Book Collector* 26, (1977), 363. For Mr. Chambers's description of the ms see the Christies' Sale Catalogue of 13th and 14th, June, 1979, 'Aristotle', Part 1: A-L, 40-42.

<sup>134</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 115.

*Architecture*".<sup>135</sup> Indeed Blackstone's own prefatory remarks in the 'Elements' (quoted above) may have contributed to Clitherow's mistake because they state that the "following Elements were first compiled in the Summer of the Year 1743". That first draft however, was actually entitled 'An Abridgement of Architecture' and it was to that manuscript that Blackstone apparently put the finishing touches on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 1743, barely a fortnight after turning twenty.<sup>136</sup> He did not commence work on the revised 'Elements' with its "considerable Additions and Improvements" until 1746.<sup>137</sup> Alike as the documents may seem, the differences in their provenance and structure are more significant than their similarities might suggest.

Its title page tells us that the 'Abridgment' was originally compiled in Oxford. It is now held in the Getty Centre's Research Institute in Los Angeles. The Getty's catalogue listing identifies many of the manuscript's most important features and something of its provenance. Further research has revealed additional information, which deepens our appreciation of Blackstone's revision process. The 'Abridgement' is divided into thirty-two chapters extending over fifty-one pages. The organization of the contents confirms the title's implication ('An Abridgement of Architecture') that it is largely a redaction of Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements of Architecture*. That conclusion is supported by a diagrammatic representation of the chapters: an "Analysis of this Abridgement".<sup>138</sup> Here Blackstone lays out the plan of his 'Abridgement', and notes in which chapter he expands upon each point. The 'Abridgement's' organization replicates Wotton's. The 'Analysis' itself is reminiscent of Ephraim Chambers's tabular division of knowledge in the preface of his *Cyclopaedia*. A

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<sup>135</sup> Clitherow. ix.

<sup>136</sup> According to Blackstone's notation, 51.

<sup>137</sup> Blackstone. 'Abridgement', 51, Preface. Blackstone's notations in the 'Abridgement' reveal that he completed that text on 22 June, 1743 and the Index the following day.

<sup>138</sup> Blackstone. 'Abridgement', unpaginated [3].

point of departure is Chambers' classification of knowledge into "*Natural and Scientific*, or, *Artificial and Technical*" whereas Blackstone's 'Analysis' divides architectural theory into the fields of "military", "naval", and "civil".<sup>139</sup>

Furthermore, the closely-written pages of his 'Abridgment' bear witness to Blackstone's extensive and characteristically thorough revision process. There is much evidence of the "considerable Additions and Improvements" made to the second draft. Sections ranging from sentences to entire paragraphs are struck through<sup>140</sup> and frequent marginalia indicate meticulous attention to his emendations and insertions.<sup>141</sup> That marginalia appear in both black and brown inks as well as in pencil suggests that Blackstone reviewed his text on more than one occasion. The most obvious revisions are to Chapters II (Of the Situation), IX (Of the Pedestal, Column, and Entablature), XVI (Of the Intercolumnation), XVIII (Of Pilasters), XXVI (Of Staircases and Stairs), and XXX (Of the Several Sorts of Rooms). Page numbers in the "Index of near Seven Hundred terms in Architecture, that are explained in the Abridgement" have been struck through and new numbers noted alongside, in Blackstone's hand, which correspond to the pagination of the 'Elements'. Stubs indicate the removal of fourteen pages.<sup>142</sup> These seem likely to have been the fourteen pages of illustrations, to which Blackstone refers in the text (though their removal does not affect the pagination of his text).<sup>143</sup> The condition of the stubs indicates that the pages were torn, rather than cut from the bindings. Lloyd's transcript, preserved

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<sup>139</sup> Chambers. *Cyclopaedia*, unpaginated. See figs. 27 & 28, Appendix II.

<sup>140</sup> Blackstone. 'Abridgement', 12,13, 24,26,28, 29,30, 31, 33, 40, 44.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 3,4,5,6,8,9,10,11,12, 20, 28,29, 30, 32, 34, 35,37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50.

<sup>142</sup> The stubs appear between page nos. 10-11 (x2), 16-17 (x2), 20-21, 24-25, 28-29, 34-35, 38-39,40-41, 46-47, 48-49.

<sup>143</sup> Blackstone's references to Table I (32 figures) appear on the following pages: 5-10, to Table II (12 figures),11-13, to Table III (3 figures), 14-17, to Table IV (4 figures), 17-19, to Table V (2 figures), 18, to Table VI (3 figures), 21-22), to Table VII (3 figures), 25-26, to Table VIII, (6 figures), 28, to Table IX (17 figures), 28-31, To Table X (4 figures), 32-33, To Table XI (10 figures), 35-38, to Table XII (11 figures), 10, to Table XIII (39, 41,42,45,46), to Table XIV (10 figures), 47-48.

with the 'Abridgement', indicates that these pages were removed at a date prior to 1959 because he compared his manuscript with the 'Elements' at the Codrington Library and noted that the "ALL SOULS copy has illustrations".<sup>144</sup> The reason for their removal is not known but an examination of the bindings of the 'Elements' reveals that they were not rebound with that manuscript. Nor were a further six pages (13-18), of an original twenty, missing from a section of 'Additions' to the chapters. The upper third of folio 36 has also been removed.

The 'Elements' emerged from Blackstone's painstaking revision process as an expanded and significantly more complex work. Its increased complexity is probably the reason the 'Analysis' was not transferred to the 'Elements'.<sup>145</sup> An expanded Index now lists "about nine hundred Terms" though careful reading reveals that the increase does not necessarily imply a greater range of architectural terminology, because the 'Elements' lists several variations of many terms. The reorganization of Blackstone's material resulted in a reduction in the number of chapters. The 'Elements' contains twenty-nine rather than thirty-two chapters (as in the 'Abridgement') but over 137 rather than 51 pages. The lines of text are more widely spaced in the 'Elements' and appears within neatly-ruled borders. Blackstone's handwriting is clearer and he has added such embellishments to the 'Elements' as the double-ruled lines which delineate the chapters and are reproduced in my transcription.

Twenty-three neat if not accomplished pen-and-ink drawings, featuring grey wash to indicate shading, illustrate the text. Although Blackstone's drawings are generally executed in black ink, details in several appear to have been deliberately highlighted in

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<sup>144</sup> R. A. Lloyd. Unpublished typescript.

<sup>145</sup> Although it will be argued below that its influence can be seen in Blackstone's mature legal thought.

brown. For instance, Table II depicts twelve varieties of masonry.<sup>146</sup> In fig. 7 of that table, the iron bands are featured in brown ink whilst the brickwork itself is in black. Many of the drawings, including those depicting the five Orders, are based upon those found in Evelyn's edition of Fréart's *Parallel*. Table XVII, representing the different arrangements of staircases is an exception, being derived instead from Leoni's translation of Palladio's *Four Books On Architecture*.<sup>147</sup> The origin of figs. 1 and 2 in TAB. XXIII, a cross-section and elevation of the cupola of Sir Christopher Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral, is unknown but may be a simplified version of one of the hundreds of Wren's drawings preserved in the Codrington Library, Oxford.<sup>148</sup>

Tracing each manuscript's provenance during the two and a half centuries since Blackstone's death, or relating how the Getty Research and Codrington Libraries acquired them constitutes the other half of their individual stories. It may also explain the differences in their present condition. It appears that the documents were dispersed when they passed from the Blackstone family's possession in the 1880s. A person identified only as J.M. Blackstone either sold or presented the 'Elements' to the Codrington Library in 1882. A note to that effect, tucked into the manuscript, bearing that signature, the address 2 Chestnut Place, Brighton and the date 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1882 reads: "Dear Sir, I forwarded the manuscript from Brighton by Mail on Thursday last, to Oxford. Could only pay the carriage as far as London. I hope therefore that it has arrived safely at its destination".<sup>149</sup> It seems indeed to have done so even though the Codrington apparently bore the cost of the second

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<sup>146</sup> Part II: TAB. 2, 143.

<sup>147</sup> G. Leoni. *The Architecture of A. Palladio...* (ed. & trans) I. Jones (including I. Jones. *Notes and Remarks on Palladio*), (London, 1742).

<sup>148</sup> Wren was also a Fellow of All Souls and it is possible that Blackstone played a significant role in the College's purchase of the drawings in 1751. See J. S. G. Simmons, 'The Wren Drawings at All Souls: Notes for Members of the National Art-Collections Fund', privately printed, Oxford, 1986, 2-3.

<sup>149</sup> Unpublished note. Codrington Library, Oxford. MS 333.

half of its journey. The Elements has, in any event, remained virtually undisturbed in the Codrington Library ever since, which may explain its excellent condition.

On the other hand, the 'Abridgement' is in good condition but its cracked bindings and missing pages hint at a far more eventful history. With the aid of an assortment of documents it is now possible to piece together most of that history, tracing the manuscript's journey from Oxford to Los Angeles. Preserved with the manuscript in the Getty Centre's Research Library is a folder containing research and provenance notes recording its history between 1904 and approximately 1959. Working chronologically through these papers it is possible to make the tentative suggestion that the same J.M. Blackstone who put the 'Elements' on the carriage from Brighton in 1882 sold the 'Abridgement' to a book dealer there, for it is in Brighton that we first glimpse it in 1904.

A receipt dated 18<sup>th</sup> January that year records the sale by bookseller William J. Smith to A.K. Lloyd M.P. for the sum of £1.5.0. A handwritten memorandum on the book dealer's stationary declares

I bought the M.S.S. [*sic*] many years ago. It was sold to me by a gentleman who declared it to be written by Sir Wm. Blackstone. By some means it got buried and lost sight of till just recently when I unearthed it. I regard the M.S. myself as a valuable document and really cheap.

Yours obediently,

W. J. Smith.<sup>150</sup>

The folder also includes a typescript apparently commissioned in 1910 by A.K. Lloyd. That the text is blue implies that it is a carbon copy. The year in which the manuscript then passed to R.A. Lloyd "who inherited it with the great library at Downs House, Wantage" is

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<sup>150</sup> Unpublished memorandum. Getty Research Institute, Special Collections, ms 89022.

not known.<sup>151</sup> Nevertheless, R.A. Lloyd's signed statement of 1959 authenticates the document, verifies the circumstances under which his father purchased it and identifies it as the document to which (having looked no further than Clitherow's memoir) the *DNB* inaccurately refers as that written in Blackstone's "twentieth year".<sup>152</sup>

The 'Abridgment' changed hands at least twice during the 1960s. The first documented sale, presumably following Lloyd's death, was at a Sotheby's auction in 1962. It may have been purchased there by Alan Thomas, a book dealer in Bournemouth. The *Justice of the Peace and Local Government Review* of July 1965 features an article noting the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Commentaries*' publication. It also mentions Blackstone's youthful writings, including his architectural manuscripts and mentions that the 'Abridgement' could be purchased from Alan Thomas for £500.<sup>153</sup> Perhaps it was from Thomas that the American millionaire, philanthropist and collector (of books and manuscripts) Arthur A. Houghton Jr. purchased the 'Abridgement'. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, Houghton "was a member of more than 100 organizations dedicated to education and the arts."<sup>154</sup> Houghton began an important collection of manuscripts in 1929. The obituary also reveals that among his acquisitions were letters and manuscripts by Samuel Pepys and Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. He became Curator of Rare Books at the Library of Congress and in 1942 endowed the Houghton Library at Harvard: to which he donated an impressive Keats collection, one of the largest of its kind in the world. The lengthy list of boards and committees of which he was a member "because he believed things should be done and because he was interested"

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<sup>151</sup> Unpublished note, Getty Research Library, Los Angeles, author unknown. Wantage, Berks. is south west of Oxford and approximately 20 km west of Wallingford.

<sup>152</sup> *DNB*. 'Blackstone, Sir William (1723-1780)', 133.

<sup>153</sup> Sotheby sale catalogue, 19 December, 1962,

<sup>154</sup> G. James. 'Arthur Houghton Jr., Dies; Led Stuben Glass', *New York Times*, 4 April 1990.

included the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the New York Philharmonic Society and the committee which oversaw the creation of the Lincoln Centre.<sup>155</sup> Houghton's interest in the 'Abridgement' is a testament to the significance of both Blackstone's influence in America and importance of his architectural writings.

In 1979 a Christies's catalogue records the sale of a portion of Houghton's collection, including the 'Abridgement'.<sup>156</sup> The Heritage Bookshop in Los Angeles purchased the document at that sale, for £1,300. The bookshop retained it for a decade before selling it to the Getty Institute in 1989, for the sum of USD \$20,000.<sup>157</sup>

One final point should be raised regarding provenance: the question of previous attempts to publish the manuscripts. Perhaps A. K. Lloyd's 1910 typescript of the 'Abridgement' indicates an intention to publish the manuscript but research has failed to uncover further evidence. In contrast, soon after the Codrington's acquisition, there was a documented attempt to publish the 'Elements'. A four page prospectus announcing a forthcoming edition of the 'Elements' (to be sold by subscription) appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1858.<sup>158</sup> Perhaps insufficient subscriptions were obtained because the project ultimately failed. What of Blackstone's own intentions? On the one hand Blackstone did publish *The Pantheon: A Vision* in 1747 (albeit anonymously), so the timing is perhaps suggestive, as indeed are the meticulousness and sheer attractiveness of the manuscript. On the other hand, Clitherow who was guided by Blackstone's notes,

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<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> Lot 43, Christies Sale Catalogue. 'Books and Manuscripts from the Library of Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.' 'Aristotle', Part I: A-L, 13-14 June, 1979 (Foreward by W.H. Bond, Librarian Houghton Library, Harvard University).

<sup>157</sup> I am grateful to Ms. Lucy Schuster for confirmation of the acquisition date. The purchase price is noted in pencil on the front fly-leaf of the 'Abridgement'.

<sup>158</sup> Kuist. T.M. *The Nichols File of the 'Gentleman's Magazine', Attributions of Authorship and Other Documentation in Editorial Papers at the Folger Library* (Madison, 1982), 176.

declares the 'Elements' written "for his own amusement only and not for publication".<sup>159</sup> The protest may have been conventional but cannot be discounted. The question of Blackstone's intentions must be relegated to speculation.

Analysis of the two manuscripts' structures is far more revealing. Even a brief examination discloses some of the most important differences between the draft and final version. In his prefatory remarks to the 'Elements' Blackstone declares that the "Method made use of, and many of the Observations, are borrowed from Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements*".<sup>160</sup> A comparative table of Blackstone's chapters demonstrates that Blackstone followed Wotton's chapter division almost to the letter in the 'Abridgement' but made some significant changes in the 'Elements'

#### Structural Comparison of the 'Abridgement' and 'Elements'.

Table of Contents: 'Abridgement'	Table of Contents: 'Elements'
Introduction: 'Of Architecture in general'	Introduction
1. 'Of the Situation'	1. 'Of Architecture in general, and the several Conditions of a good Building'
2. 'Of the Structure and Materials'	2. 'Of the Situation'
3. 'Of the Disposition or Form'	3. 'Of the Structure, and first of the Materials'
4. 'Of the Foundation'	4. 'Of the Disposition of the Materials, or Form'
5. 'Of the Walls or Muring'	5. 'Of the Foundation'
6. 'Of Columns, Pilasters and their Orders'	6. 'Of the Walls or Muring'

<sup>159</sup> Clitherow, ix.

<sup>160</sup> 'Elements' 'Preface'.

7. 'Of the Members or Mouldings'	7. 'Of the Members or Mouldings, and their Ornaments'
8. 'Of Ornamental Members'	8. 'Of the Orders in general, and the Proportions common to them all'
9. 'Of the Pedestal, Column and Entablature'	9. 'Of the Tuscan Order'
10. 'Of the Doric Order'	10. 'Of the Doric Order'
11. 'Of the Ionic Order'	11. 'Of the Ionic Order'
12. 'Of the Corinthian Order'	12. 'Of the Corinthian Order'
13. 'Of the Tuscan Order'	13. 'Of the Composite Order'
14. 'Of the Composite Order'	14. 'Of Irregular and Spurious Orders'
15. 'Of the Persian, and other Spurious Orders'	15. 'Of the Intercolumnations'
16. 'Of the Intercolumnation'	16. 'Of the Crowning of the Orders'
17. 'Of the Crowning of the Orders'	17. 'Of Pilasters'
18. 'Of Pilasters'	18. 'Of Arches and Vaults'
19. 'Of Arches'	19. 'Of the Arches of the several Orders'
20. 'Of Arches adorned with Columns, etc.'	20. 'Of Apertures, and first of Doors'
21. 'Of Vaults'	21. 'Of Windows'
22. 'Of the Orthography etc. of the Walls'	22. 'Of Staircases, Stairs, etc.'
23. 'Of Apertures in General'	23. 'Of Chimneys, and Conducts for the Suillage'
24. 'Of Doors'	24. 'Of the Compartition in general'
25. 'Of Windows'	25. 'Of Public Buildings'
26. 'Of Of Staircases and Stairs'	26. 'Of Private Buildings'

27. 'Of Chimneys'	27. 'Of Floors and Ceilings'
28. 'Of Conducts for the Suillage'	28. 'Of the Roof or Cover'
29. 'Of the Compartition'	29. 'Of Accessories or Ornaments'
30. 'Of the Several Kinds of Rooms'	
31. 'Of Floors'	
32. 'Of Ichnography'	
33. 'Of the Roof or Cover'	
34. 'Of Domes and Steeples'	
35. 'Of Accessories or Ornaments'	
36. 'Of Painting and Statuary'	
37. 'How to judge of a Building'	

A tabular comparison of the structures of the manuscripts gives the misleading impression that the 'Elements' is merely a condensed version of the 'Abridgement'. The 'Elements' does contain eight fewer chapters but Blackstone combined several brief sections of the 'Abridgement' to provide a less disjointed and more comprehensive coverage in the 'Elements'. For instance, he amalgamated chapters 7 and 8 of the 'Abridgement' to create the single chapter 'Of the Members or Mouldings, and their Ornaments' in the 'Elements'. He also combined chapters 28 and 29 of the 'Abridgement' into chapter 23, 'Of Chimneys and Conducts for the Suillage'. The disappearance of chapter 36, 'Of Painting and Statuary', is the most telling omission for the 'Abridgement' includes the condensed version of Part Two of Wotton's *Elements of Architecture*; itself a redaction of Alberti's

'On Painting' (1435-1536).<sup>161</sup> Blackstone's decision to omit the section from the 'Elements' highlights his decreased reliance upon Wotton's *Elements* by 1746. Wotton's lessened influence in the 'Elements' is also visible in Blackstone's treatment of the Orders.

Here indeed is the crux of an important difference between the 'Abridgement' and the fully-fledged treatise that is the 'Elements', because in Blackstone's revised version the Orders are the fundamental components from which he considers 'correct' architecture to be derived. Now he lists the Orders in ascending order of delicacy: from the Tuscan to the Composite.<sup>162</sup> As the most important structural component of a building, they comprise the central third of the treatise. The shift in emphasis upon the Orders, from design feature to the very soul of classical design, also marks Blackstone's 'Elements' as an early Enlightenment rather than a purely Renaissance text because it is evidence of a shift in the prevailing British regime of rationality. In other words, the introduction of Newtonian ideas indicates a shift from the humanist to a scientific intellectual climate.

A detailed examination of Blackstone's manuscripts has shown that they have much in common. Central to their similarities is a common goal: an attempt to find a set of universal design rules. The result is an eighteenth-century English gentleman's guide to architecture, derived from both ancient and modern opinion. Their provenance however exposes some important differences between them. This thesis aims to provide scholars with a printed version of the 'Elements'. The *Pantheon* and 'Abridgement' however are

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<sup>161</sup> L. B. Alberti. *On Painting* (1536-1537). According to Lefaivre and Tzonis, the treatise captured "the cognitive revolution of the Renaissance; the attachment to innovation in the name of progress [and] contains the first formulation of the rules of perspective". See L. Lefaivre and A. Tzonis *Emergence of Modern Architecture*, 52-53.

<sup>162</sup> As Blackstone puts it: "The usual Method of considering these is according to their Delicacy, beginning with the grossest, The Tuscan, and so proceeding through the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, to the Composite, which is vulgarly taken for the most delicate of all. This Method shall be here observed; premising first, wherein the Delicacy here spoken of consists; which is, the different Height of their Columns, or rather the Proportion which the Entablature bears to the Column". Chapter 8 'Of the orders in General and the Proportions common to them all'.

significant intellectual and cultural achievements in their own right and warrant more attention than can be justified here. The significance of the year 1743, and thus their significance for Blackstone's intellectual development, remains tantalizingly undefined.



*Chapter Four*

*Architectural Taste and*

*Stylistic Diversity in the 1740s*

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*It is also worth remembering that the 1740s was something of a transitional decade in English architectural history; Batty Langley's attempt to rationalise the vocabulary of the gothic style in *Ancient Architecture*, restored and improved... in the Gothick mode appeared in 1742, while *Strawberry Hill*, Horace Walpole's influential early Gothic Revival house at Twickenham, was begun in 1747. So the conventional disdain of the Gothic echoed by Blackstone's architectural treatises was already being challenged even as he wrote. (W. Prest. 2003).<sup>163</sup>*

At this point it is useful to step back from Blackstone himself in order to situate the 'Elements' within the complex historical and intellectual context of England at mid-century because, if the 1740s marked a turning point in Blackstone's life, they were also a turning point in English architectural history. The English Baroque clearly survived into the 1740s despite the neo-Palladian domination of the building boom of the 1720s and early 1730s. Furthermore, by 1748, there were signs of a growing interest in the Gothic Revival style and the variety of styles employed in interior decoration. Thus, Blackstone wrote the 'Abridgement', *Pantheon* and 'Elements' and supervised the completion of the Codrington Library in a period of remarkable architectural diversity. This must be taken into account when evaluating the broader significance of the 'Elements' because the manuscript must be considered as part of a rich tapestry of historical, cultural and social processes. This chapter

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<sup>163</sup> W. Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 122.

suggests, for instance, that polite society's taste in architecture, interiors and furnishings was directly related to contemporary economic and political conditions. More fundamentally, it also casts new light onto the society which ultimately gave meaning to the various styles.

Some historians have associated neo-Palladianism with whig ideology: proposing that the whigs saw themselves as the inheritors of Republican (Augustan) Rome and in Palladian country homes and public buildings "a refined architecture flatteringly appropriate to Roman Senators."<sup>164</sup> The situation seems to have been a little more complex however because Mowl and Earnshaw have proposed that whigs associated the style with Hanover rather than with Rome. They note that in the seventeenth century Inigo Jones' Banqueting Hall had linked Palladianism firmly with the Stuart dynasty.<sup>165</sup> They argue with some justification that George I had fostered the style in Hanover before his accession to the British throne. "He was proud" they say

of the fact that his own family the Welfs ... originated, like Palladio, from the Veneto. [Furthermore,] George came to the [English] throne in 1714. In 1715 two splendidly produced and subsequently highly influential folio volumes were published: the first volume of Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* and Giacomo Leoni's first volume of his translation of Palladio's *Quattro Libri*, dedicated to King George .... it seems highly probable that the new German dynasty favoured the style and that the Whigs adopted it as a mark of royal favour despite its Stuart associations. George was, of course, James I's great-grandson and so in a sense a Stuart; the Palladian could with something of an effort be seen as a sign of his legitimacy.<sup>166</sup>

Ayres has certainly confirmed that in the private domain Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* is "generally and, on the whole, persuasively regarded as a whig architectural manifesto"

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<sup>164</sup> Mowl and Earnshaw. *Insular Rococo*, 13.

<sup>165</sup> *ibid.*, 15.

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, 15-17.

while in the public domain, as Dodsworth recently demonstrated, Burlington actively promoted the style at the Office of Works in such buildings as Kent's new Treasury building.<sup>167</sup> Whatever the reason for its initial adoption, Palladianism was grounded firmly in the established classicist tradition and thus associated in broad terms with what many contemporaries considered "true" or "correct" architecture. That is to say, it was based upon a set of rational rules or first principles held by many to be universal.

It is clear that by 1740, however, such classicist orthodoxy was already crumbling at the edges.<sup>168</sup> Not everyone agreed that the style was culturally and historically appropriate for England. The Gothic Revival rejected Italianate classicism and instead derived its authority from an idealised version of England's medieval past, as symbolised by gothic architecture and specifically by the gothic castle. According to McKinney, in this period the castle "exemplified the legacy of English heroism, government and way of life".<sup>169</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine* protested for example that

[t]here is surely nothing more absurd than to see, as one often does, than a *Venetian* Window and a *Grecian* portico stuck on to an old decaying Mansion Seat .... I own I am always griev'd to see the venerable Paternal Castle of an ancient Family, and a competent Fortune ... dwindled down into an imperfect imitation of an *Italian Villa* .... Our old *Gothick* Constitution had a noble Strength and simplicity in it, which was well enough represented by the bold Arches, and the solid pillars of those days.<sup>170</sup>

According to Brooks, the first example of the Gothic Revival architecture is the Gothic

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<sup>167</sup> See F. Dodsworth. 'Virtus on Whitehall: The Politics of Palladianism in William Kent's Treasury Building, 1733-6', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 18 (December, 2005), 282-317 and Ayres, 'Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome', 116.

<sup>168</sup> R. Porter. *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, rev. ed., (Penguin Social History of Britain, London, 1991), 247.

<sup>169</sup> D. McKinney. 'The Castle of my Ancestors: Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 13/2, (1990), 199.

<sup>170</sup> Anonymus. 'Common Sense', *Gentleman's Magazine*, IX, No. 150, (Dec. 15, 1739), 641.

Temple (1716-17) in the grounds of Shotover Park.<sup>171</sup> Although the movement began with such small garden buildings used as landscaping elements, the style soon moved indoors. Here, according to Brooks, chimneypieces “were frequent recipients of gothic detailing and gothic elements often got into ceiling decoration”.<sup>172</sup> Horace Walpole’s Strawberry Hill is the most famous example of the gothic revival country house.<sup>173</sup> McKinney has outlined the reason Walpole, a member of one of the most influential whig families, chose to medievalise the house.<sup>174</sup> Strawberry Hill has been called “one of the great architectural impostures of the period”, not least for its use of *papier maché* ornamentation and Flemish arms which Walpole confessed he liked to pretend were those of his ancestors.<sup>175</sup> Even so, understanding why he chose the gothic style for his “*lasting mansion* to his noble heritage, *virtú* and ambition” helps us to better-understand the multi-faceted meaning of the Gothic style in this period.<sup>176</sup> Strawberry Hill drew upon a highly romanticised version of English history in order to establish a metaphoric link between Walpole’s ancestry and the creation of the parliamentary system itself.

It should also be recalled that the high tory, Sir Roger Newdigate, commenced the medievalisation of Arbury Hall in 1746; at least a year before Walpole purchased Strawberry Hall. It is impossible to deduce Newdigate’s inspiration from the available evidence but Brooks is probably correct in inferring that “gothic meant for him, I think, what it had for the university in the seventeenth century: the medieval authority of Church

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<sup>171</sup> C. Brooks, *The Gothic Revival* (London, 1999), 51. It should be acknowledged that Brooks’ proposed date of 1716-7 is not corroborated by supporting documentary evidence and that, in addition, such an early date might suggest a survival of the Gothic style as much as it does a Gothic revival.

<sup>172</sup> *ibid.*, 78.

<sup>173</sup> So much so in fact that one commentator reportedly quipped that the house had been “studied at least as much as it deserves”. See K. Clark. *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste* (New York, 1974), 46. Quoted in McKinney. ‘The Castle of my Ancestors’, 199.

<sup>174</sup> *ibid.*, 199 – 214.

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.* 204. See also *fig. 5*, 209.

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*, 199.

and King, and ultimately the divine right upon which monarchical power rested”.<sup>177</sup> Strawberry Hill has generated considerably more scholarly interest than Arbury Hall yet Arbury was at least as significant a reminder of “the legacy which eighteenth-century England continued in Parliamentary rule”<sup>178</sup> and deserves equal consideration. Arbury is also evidence that historians need to exercise caution when associating meaning to architectural styles with party affiliation. For example, although whiggism has been associated with the neo-Palladian style, Klinger observes that “an association had been [also] formed in some eighteenth-century minds between Whig principles of popular government and the freedom from neo-classical restraints displayed in the Gothic building”.<sup>179</sup>

Thus Walpole and Newdigate may well have attributed different meanings to the Gothic style, regardless of party: a point illustrated further by Gothic sham ruins during the 1740s. Stewart argues that, far from constituting a celebration of England’s feudal past, in the wake of the ’45, sham ruins “were produced as attacks on England’s Catholic and baronial past ... [were] monuments of ridicule and images of *just* destruction, commemorating the defeat of Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, by the forces of George II”.<sup>180</sup> Thus we can conclude that both neo-Palladianism and the Gothic Revival style carried political as well as cultural connotations and that for polite society these were open to interpretation.

Secondly, it is clear that the mediaevalisation of Strawberry Hill and Arbury Hall were deliberate choices: a statement made by Walpole and Newdigate rather than by

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<sup>177</sup> Brooks. *Gothic Revival*, 81. This point gains some significance in the light of the development of Blackstone’s jurisprudence, as discussed in Chapter 5 below.

<sup>178</sup> McKinney. ‘Castle of my Ancestors’, 201.

<sup>179</sup> S. Klinger. *The Goths in England*, New York, 4.

<sup>180</sup> Stewart, D. ‘Political Ruins: Gothic Sham Ruins and the ’45’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 55/4 (Dec., 1996), 400.

architects.<sup>181</sup> This is an important point because, conventionally, history of architecture is restricted to buildings themselves. That is to say, it does not take interiors into account. Some architectural historians are currently challenging this view because it treats buildings merely as cultural products. For instance, McKellar and Craske argue that in order to more fully understand the history of architecture we need to address the way it functioned within society, to understand the ideas and ideals with which contemporaries associated styles such as neo-Palladianism, Baroque and Gothic Revival. Widening the definition of architecture to include interiors does offer a new perspective upon the 1740s because it enables us to appreciate that the architectural taste of this under-researched period was more diverse and significant than Worsley was able to discern.

For example, McKellar is one of the most important British architectural historians of the last quarter-century. She has complained that “[c]ultural studies of the early modern period, particularly eighteenth-century studies, have undergone a radical re-assessment in the past ten to fifteen years”. Few branches of this field, she added, “have remained as remote and undisturbed as that of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architectural history”.<sup>182</sup> Perhaps inspired by such comments, a new breed of architectural historian is now investigating a whole new range of social and political applications in which architecture functioned and upon which it casts light.<sup>183</sup> This approach has reinvigorated the

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<sup>181</sup> McCarthy gives a detailed account of Newdigate’s discussions with the architects commissioned for various works upon Arbury Hall, such as Sanderson Miller and Henry Keen, which shows that he, rather than his architects, was the driving force behind the design. See M. McCarthy. ‘Sir Roger Newdigate: Drawings for Copt Hall, Essex, and Arbury Hall, Warwickshire’, *Architectural History* 16 (1973), 26-36 + 77-88.

<sup>182</sup> E. McKellar. ‘Palladianism via Postmodernism: Constructing and Deconstructing the ‘English Renaissance’’, *Art History* 20/1 (1997), 154-174.

<sup>183</sup> An example of particular relevance to the present study is Graham’s *Ordering Law: An Architectural and Social History of the English Law Court to 1914*.<sup>183</sup> Rather than examine the style of court buildings, Graham chooses (as one reviewer puts it) to situate “court buildings in their social and legal contexts” and to thereby to analyze “their highly segregated patterns of access and internal movements”. See also F. Dodsworth. ‘Virtus on Whitehall: The Politics of Palladianism in William Kent’s Treasure Building, 1733-6’, *Journal of*

field and is currently facilitating its integration into a broader range of historical enquiries. Craske's recent comments are particularly interesting in the light of the present discussion. He notes that general histories of the period now view politeness, consumption and taste and as characteristic of eighteenth-century English society.<sup>184</sup> Thus historians of art, he explains, have "sought to incorporate" the polite arts "within these wider debates on consumption".<sup>185</sup> Yet, historians of the period's architecture have

for the most part, sailed on with sublime indifference to the direction of this mainstream. There has been a major disparity between the issues which concern those studying the objects that formed the interior of buildings and the matters which preoccupy those scholars working upon the masonry envelopes in which these objects functioned. The study of eighteenth-century debates on architecture has had little or no part to play in accounts of 'the rise of polite society'. Given that architects provided the physical environment in which this society functioned ... the small part played by architectural historians in this debate is extraordinary.<sup>186</sup>

With this in mind, it does seem useful to include a discussion of interiors in an evaluation of eighteenth-century architectural taste and stylistic development. It seems particularly fruitful when discussing a decade as transitional as the 1740s.<sup>187</sup> For instance, Worsley argued that economic conditions had a negative impact upon country house building. Yet, at the same time real wage figures for building craftsmen rose rapidly between 1740 and about 1748.<sup>188</sup> If architects were receiving fewer commissions, refurnishing and refurbishing actually seem to have increased. Indeed these have been called "halcyon days

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*Historical Sociology*, 18 (December, 2005), 282-317; C. Sherriff. ' "But the Empire Cannot Live by Muscle Alone": An Architectural History of the Edwardian Public Library ', *Library History* 21, (Nov. 2005), 195-211 and Machlan, E. B. ' "There are Plenty of Houses": Architecture and Genre in the Portrait of a Lady ', *Studies in the Novel* 37/4 (2005), 394-411. The quotation is from W. E. Rumble. Review of Graham. *Ordering Law*, *Albion* 36/4, (2004), 668-669.

<sup>184</sup> M. Craske. 'From Burlington Gate to Billingsgate: James Ralph's Attempt to Impose Burlingtonian Classicism as a Canon of Public Taste', in B. Arciszewska and E. McKellar *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture* (Aldershot, 2004), 97.

<sup>185</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> J. Black. *A Subject for Taste: Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Hambledon, 2005).

<sup>188</sup> W. Prest. *Albion Ascendant: English History 1660-1815* (Oxford, 1998), fig. 1, 9.

for the output of top-quality decorative art”.<sup>189</sup> Consequently, it does seem likely that any stylistic development during the 1740s is more readily discernable in the period’s interiors and furnishings than in their masonry envelopes.

Sigworth’s long-overlooked article lends weight to this argument because as a literary critic, he was not restricted by architectural history’s orthodox methodology. Worsley was interested in the lack of construction during the 1740s. Sigworth on the other hand, sought in the decade’s fashionable interiors “a more reliable mirror” than the period’s literature because he found that “its writers did not always say what they meant or mean quite what they said”.<sup>190</sup> What he saw reflected in that mirror understandably confused him because a prime example of the kind of interior he discussed is found in Robert Walpole’s Houghton Hall where according to Black

the decoration was a riot in gilt and stucco, with an ample use of expensive woods, including much mahogany, for extensive and ornate wood-carving ... Pillars, pilasters, capitals, friezes, marble (or scagliola – imitation marble) overmantles, dramatic chimney-pieces, brackets, impressive stair-cases and lavish tapestries contributed to a heady sense of opulence.<sup>191</sup>

Is it possible that contemporaries found something appealing about variety for its own sake, or that it functioned as an expression of tensions within society? A comparison of the four distinct styles Sigworth identified as fashionable in the 1740s’ interior decoration seems to suggest that there was. The differences and tensions between the Palladian, gothic, rococo and *Chinoiserie* are immediately apparent. The Palladian is smooth and emphasises the horizontal. The gothic is more heavily ornamented and emphasises the vertical. The *Chinoiserie* is clearly exotic. Mowl and Earnshaw have suggested that the rococo in

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<sup>189</sup> Porter. *English Society*, 246-247.

<sup>190</sup> Sigworth. ‘Four Styles of a Decade’, 407.

<sup>191</sup> J. Black. *A Subject for Taste: Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Hambleton, 2005), 52-53.

particular “came in as a much needed decorative response” to the severity of the neo-Palladian exterior.<sup>192</sup> Brooks went so far as to remark that the rococo’s “naughty curves” were a subversion of the “foreign, restrictive [and] unnatural” neo-Palladianism.<sup>193</sup> Indeed, the gothic, rococo and *Chinoiserie* all mark a clear break with Palladian restraint. Furthermore, each of the four styles looks away from eighteenth-century England. According to Sigworth the Palladian looks “to the classic past, the gothic to the English past, the Chinese to a fabulous land the charm of which was only enhanced by ignorance, and the rococo to a pure dream-world where fantasy was supreme”.<sup>194</sup>

Yet, he also found a surprising unity with that diversity. Looking more closely at the Palladian, gothic, rococo and *Chinoiserie* led him to conclude that the differences between them are in fact “more apparent than real”.<sup>195</sup> All but the rococo, for example, are symmetrical. More fundamentally, each style features the “S” curve: apparent in the swirls and swathes of rococo clocks and picture frames and in the decorative features of small gothic and Chinese garden buildings and bridges.<sup>196</sup> Even the Palladian interior and furnishings are embellished in the 1740s with festoons atop doorways, in decorative flourishes on mantelpieces, and in graceful cabriole table and chair legs. Under these conditions it seems unlikely to be purely coincidental that the influential artist William Hogarth went so far in 1745 as to describe the “S” curve as the key to the human sense of beauty.<sup>197</sup> Each style was also given a uniquely English interpretation. The English rococo

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<sup>192</sup> Mowl and Earnshaw. *Insular Rococo*, 13.

<sup>193</sup> Brooks. *Gothic Revival*, 59.

<sup>194</sup> Sigworth. ‘Four Styles of a Decade’, 429.

<sup>195</sup> *ibid.*, 408.

<sup>196</sup> Black. *A Subject for Taste*, 68.

<sup>197</sup> His 1753 treatise on beauty declares that “in the year 1745, [I] published a frontispiece to my engraved works, in which I drew a serpentine line lying on a painter’s pallet with these words on it THE LINE OF BEAUTY”. See W. Hogarth. ‘Preface’ in his *Analysis of Beauty Written with a view of Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste* fac. ed., 1973, (London, 1753), x.

was a characteristically restrained version of the style, never as flamboyant for instance as in France or Germany. The Gothic and *Chinoiserie* might seem very different but Sigworth points out that they are actually distinguished only by decorative features such as willows and Mandarins.<sup>198</sup> His comparison led him to conclude that, taken together, like the decade's literature these four styles attempt "to bring an order out of diversity, to piece together puzzling fragments of experience".<sup>199</sup> In other words, the period's architectural taste is evidence of a struggle to reconcile what he tells us contemporaries felt was a society wrought by "disturbing" dynamism and instability.<sup>200</sup>

Sigworth's central question was "what need did [polite society] find satisfied or expressed by these particular fashions?"<sup>201</sup> His unconventional approach to the architectural taste of the 1740s allowed him to reach an equally intriguing conclusion because historians have not necessarily been accustomed to using terms such as diversity or dynamism to describe eighteenth-century English society at mid-century. Indeed some of the most eminent historians of eighteenth-century England once painted a very different picture. Almost seventy years ago Basil Williams opened the first edition of his influential analysis of eighteenth-century politics with the lines:

[t]he period of the first two Georges seems an oasis of tranquillity between two agitated epochs: before it, a century of revolutionary unrest hardly stayed even by the glorious twelve years of Anne; following it, the long reign of George III with its uneasy

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<sup>198</sup> Sigworth, 'Four Styles of a Decade', 418. (Or, as Porter observed, to the "classicist critic, in other words, the Chinese and gothick styles can be logically grouped together because they offend in the same manner against good taste"). See D. Porter. 'From Chinese to Goth: Walpole and the Gothic Repudiation of *Chinoiserie*', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 23, (1999), 48.

<sup>199</sup> Sigworth, 'Four Styles of a Decade', 425, 431. Sigworth's first point applies to the Palladian only in the context of the 1740s. He sees the Palladian designs of the decade (such as Ware's design for A Palladian Front and Charles Over's Ionic Temple) in which "the decorative elements seem striving to extend beyond the limits of the design", as exhibiting a certain dynamic movement not present in earlier examples of the style. See 413-14 particularly.

<sup>200</sup> *ibid.*, 431.

<sup>201</sup> *ibid.*, 419-420.

adjustments, at home and in America barely completed when all the energies of the nation were called for the quarter-century of struggle with France for security – almost for existence. Between 1714 and 1760 the English people, wearied with struggles and sated with glory, was content to stabilize the results of the [Glorious] Revolution under a [Whig] dynasty .... It was an age of stability in politics, in religion, in literature, and in social observances .... a humdrum age.<sup>202</sup>

Plumb concurred, writing that in comparison with the uncertainty and brutality of the seventeenth-century civil war, England in this period was characterized by “profound inertia”.<sup>203</sup> Yet, this vision of England between 1714 and 1760 as a tranquil idyll was an illusion. These historians interpreted the unprecedented longevity of the whig government during these years as evidence of stability, even inertia. Compared to the tumultuous and violent seventeenth century, the apparent political calm and establishment of the Hanoverian dynasty might well seem stable, even “humdrum” – to historians. Almost a lone voice, Marshall protested that “stability comes from the balancing of tensions, not from inertia”.<sup>204</sup> A brief assessment of the most significant tensions within English society at mid-century seems to buttress her objection further. Tensions such as intermittent threats to the succession (which looks so stable in retrospect), the frequency of war, economic problems and unsettling social change make it unlikely that England seemed tranquil to Blackstone and his contemporaries.

In 1714 for instance, the Glorious Revolution (1688) was well within living memory. Consequently, the Jacobite uprising of 1715 in the name of the Catholic Charles Stuart can hardly have seemed humdrum. Indeed, as we have seen it appears to be reflected in

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<sup>202</sup> B. Williams. *The Whig Ascendancy 1714 - 1760*, 2nd ed. (The Oxford History of England, Oxford, 1962), 1.

<sup>203</sup> J. H. Plumb. *Political Stability*, 13. Quoted in J. A. Sharpe. *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550- 1760* 2nd. ed., (London, 1997), 356.

<sup>204</sup> D. Marshall. *Eighteenth-Century England* 2nd ed. (London, 1974). Quoted in J.A. Sharpe. *Early Modern England: A Social History 1550-1760* 2nd ed. (London, 1997), 356.

architectural style. So alarmed was the whig government in fact, that it suspended *habeas corpus* and passed a Riot Act enabling it to quell an anticipated public rebellion with a standing army.<sup>205</sup> Just five years later the financial crisis of the South Sea Bubble appeared to threaten seriously England's very financial viability.<sup>206</sup> As noted above, 1745 saw a second Jacobite rebellion: the invading army this time reaching as far south as Derby. Again, the government was concerned that the English population would rise in support of the Stuart at its head: a very real fear of a repetition of the civil war. Horace Walpole's famous letters express his fears during 1744 and 1745. "There is no doubt of the invasion" wrote the chief minister's son, "the young Pretender is at Calais... All is at stake".<sup>207</sup> In November the following year he divulged the "rebels are come into England". Not until December 1745 could he state with palpable relief "[w]e dread them no longer".<sup>208</sup> Indeed, the brutality of the subsequent "pacification" of the Highlands in the wake of the blood bath that was the Battle of Culloden is testament to the level of tension.

Nor were the Jacobites the only threat to England's security before the quarter century of struggle with France. The War of the Spanish Succession (1702 – 1713) was barely over in 1714. By 1750, England had also fought the Wars of Jenkins Ear and of the Austrian Succession (1739 to 1748). By 1760, England had fought four years of what would be the

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<sup>205</sup> Sharpe. *Early Modern England*, 351.

<sup>206</sup> The South Sea Company was formed in 1711 to take advantage of a booming trade with South America. Buoyed by what proved to be the market's unrealistic faith in the merits of credit, the South Sea Company negotiated successfully with the government (and the incentive of extravagant ministerial bribes) to acquire the entire National Debt on the understanding that it reimburse private investors in government securities with South Sea stocks and pay a premium of £7,000,000. Governmental approval of the deal precipitated a "speculative mania" and subsequent collapse which seemed, to many, to endanger England's financial structure. Selley's account of the speculation and subsequent stock market crash is yet to be surpassed. See W. T. Selley. 'South Sea Bubble' (Appendix) in his *England in the Eighteenth-Century* 3rd, ed., rev. (London, 1964), 374-383.

<sup>207</sup> H. Walpole. 23 Feb., 1744 in *Horace Walpole's England: As his Letters Picture it*, A. B. Mason ed., (London, 1930), 35.

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*, 53.

Seven Years War (1756-1763).<sup>209</sup> In addition there were sharp increases in Land Tax during 1739 and 1741, severe winters and consequent “appalling harvests” in 1740 and 1741, high rates of bankruptcies, riots and escalating interest rates, particularly in 1744 - 1745.<sup>210</sup>

Consider too, the escalating wealth and significance of the commercial and professional classes, which challenged the established social order. Early modern England was an hierarchical society in which the hallmark of social status was noble birth.<sup>211</sup> A detailed exposition of the early modern social system is beyond the scope of this thesis but Prest’s brief summary is informative:

human differences in material, physical, political and social terms were [considered] entirely natural and hence unproblematical, part of the divinely ordained regime which embraced all Creation. Propagated, not always consciously, in families, schools, and churches, this notion of a ‘Great Chain of Being’ was reflected in the structure of most social institutions and powerfully reinforced by everyday experience.<sup>212</sup>

Speck’s *Stability and Strife* declared that “[d]escribing the social structure of England in the early eighteenth-century invariably presents a static picture of society”, even though a marked and prolonged population growth began in 1740.<sup>213</sup> Langford is probably the best-known of the historians who have since convinced us that society was rather more fluid than Speck claimed and that the rise of the middling orders was one of the most significant changes in eighteenth-century society. Contemporaries generally understood the term “middling sort” to represent a conglomeration of occupations and gradations of income,

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<sup>209</sup> H.B. Bowen. *War and British Society, 1688 – 1815* Cambridge, 1998), 6.

<sup>210</sup> See Worsley, ‘Lost Decade’, 23.

<sup>211</sup> P. Corfield. ‘Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century England’, *History* 72, (1987), 47.

<sup>212</sup> Prest. *Albion Ascendant*, 12.

<sup>213</sup> W. A. Speck. *Stability and Strife: England 1714-1760* 2nd ed. (New History of England, London, 1984), 62.

ranging from tradesmen, wealthy farmers and shopkeepers, to merchants and men in the genteel professions such as clergy, lawyers, and physicians.<sup>214</sup> In this rapidly commercialising, urbanising and secularising society however, the newly wealthy and socially ambitious middling sorts were increasingly able to afford a life-style previously available only to their social superiors and to cultivate a polite comportment. Indeed, this pursuit of gentility and politeness was virtually all that united the increasingly diverse elite and achieved a “fundamental transformation” of the social order.<sup>215</sup> On balance, then, the period must hardly have seemed an oasis of tranquillity to those who lived through it.

Two preliminary conclusions can now be drawn. First, in the light of these tensions within early eighteenth-century society, the longevity of the whig government could arguably be seen less as evidence of stability and more as evidence of a *need* for stability, or perhaps continuity, in an age of strife. Secondly, and perhaps consequently, architecture fulfilled a dual role in society. The built environment was not merely functional but also expressive of eighteenth-century ideas, ideals and tensions.

Sigworth saw the 1740s as “assimilative”, as a period prepared to experiment as much with architectural style as with literature: a period in which taste was “plastic” or formative.<sup>216</sup> The 1740s are under researched and certainly worthy of a more comprehensive exploration than is possible in this thesis. The slump in new houses commenced was balanced by an increase in refurbishing and refurnishing. Thus, much needs to be done on patterns of consumption and taste in the decorative arts during this intriguing decade. The 1740s also seem to offer an interesting test case for a long-overdue investigation into women’s involvement in architecture. After all, women comprised half of

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<sup>214</sup> Langford. *Polite and Commercial People*, 61-62.

<sup>215</sup> *ibid.*, 59, 66.

<sup>216</sup> Sigworth, 431, 415.

polite society. One new house, Castle Ward, actually combined classical pillars and pilasters with gothic windows and battlements because Bernard Ward (later Lord Bangor) favoured the neo-Palladian and his wife the Gothic.<sup>217</sup> Architects are at last venturing to provide feminist readings of the modern built environment.<sup>218</sup> Yet, astonishingly little has been written about womens' architectural knowledge in the past. To what extent were polite women encouraged to cultivate architectural taste? Was Lady Ward's influence over Castle Ward's design and interior exceptional or were women regularly consulted and how involved were they in the design of such areas of the house as their own apartments or the choice of furnishings? If women influenced interior decoration, might they have actually have driven the stylistic development of the 1740s? These questions remain. The answers will help us to better-understand the role of women in the cultural and social world of eighteenth-century England.

But where does all this leave our understanding of the historical context in which Blackstone wrote his architectural treatise and against which it should be read? A close reading of the 'Elements' discloses that his own taste was for the English Baroque rather than either the neo-Palladian or the Gothic styles. Was his taste old-fashioned by 1746? Prest has made a sound argument that it was. The English Baroque began to fall from favour with the formation of the whig government in 1714 and Wren's consequent ousting from the office of Surveyor General.<sup>219</sup> As Prest noted moreover, Blackstone's "own Oxford college was the site of significant movement" in the direction of the Gothic

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<sup>217</sup> *ibid.*, 416-417. Castle Ward is in Strangford, Co. down, Northern Ireland.

<sup>218</sup> See for example: D. Agrest. *The Sex of Architecture* D. Agrest et.al. (New York, 1996), D. Coleman. *Architecture and Feminism* D. Coleman et. al. (New York, 1996), J. Rothschild and A. Cheng. *Design and Feminism: Re-Visioning Spaces, Places, and Everyday Things* (New Brunswick, 1999) and L. Weisman. *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment* (Urbana, 1992).

<sup>219</sup> E. Burton. *The Georgians at Home, 1714 – 1830* (London, 1967), 69.

Revival, in the form of Hawksmoor's redevelopment of its North Quadrangle.<sup>220</sup> In the light of this research it could also be argued that Blackstone's interest in the Baroque underscores the diversity of architectural taste at mid-century. More broadly, the historical context within which he wrote demonstrates that, as a polite pursuit, the study of architecture bolstered his claim to gentility. England at mid-century was wracked by economic and social tensions. Those tensions and the desire to reconcile them appear to have found expression in the period's polyphonous architectural taste. If Blackstone found comfort in the ordered world of architecture and a sense of continuity through its connections to a Golden Age he was probably not alone.

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<sup>220</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 122.

## Chapter Five

### *Blackstone's Sources*

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*The Method made use of, and many of the Observations, are borrowed from Sir Henry Wotton's Elements. The rest are, in great part, taken from Monsr. Fréart's Parallel, and Mr. Evelyn's Account of Architects and Architecture annexed to it; from Monsr. Perrault's Admirable Translation and Comment on Vitruvius, and his Abridgement of the same Author; and from Palladio's elegant Designs, as they are now illustrated by the Notes of Inigo Jones. A few mechanical Precepts, for the more commodious drawing of the several Parts of Architecture, are borrowed from Mr. Gibbs's Rules; and as to the several Definitions, and synonymous Terms of the Members, they have been chiefly furnished from Mr. Chambers's Cyclopaedia. (W. Blackstone. 1746-1747).<sup>221</sup>*

At first glance Blackstone's list of authorities is informative. It acknowledges the sources from which he derives the 'Elements' methodology, content, illustrations and technical information. Yet, like the decade in which it was written, it reflects a fascinating complexity. Blackstone includes French texts as well as English and incorporates both ancient and modern architectural treatises into his own work. Thus, it highlights both the scholarly background against which the young Blackstone's 'Elements' should be read and his intellectual capacity. On closer inspection, several questions come to mind. Who *were* Sir Henry Wotton, Monsr. Fréart, Mr. Evelyn, Monsr. Perrault, Vitruvius, Palladio, Inigo Jones, Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Chambers? Upon what criteria did Blackstone select their works? To what extent does each influence his own treatise? The answers to these questions are more revealing than one might suspect. For instance, a detailed examination

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<sup>221</sup> Blackstone. 'Elements'

of the 'Elements' reveals that he relied more heavily upon Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* than he suggests. His choice of authorities seems also to reflect his political views and may, therefore, provide additional information about his architectural motivations.

The 'Elements' represents a link in an intellectual chain, for in writing about architecture Blackstone followed in a long-established European tradition. The first link of that chain was forged in antiquity and additions were made to it during the Renaissance classicist revival. The three key links in the Continental (as distinct from the British) section of the chain were the Roman architect Vitruvius and two Renaissance Italian architects Alberti and Palladio. The most influential links in the English section were Inigo Jones, Sir Henry Wotton and Sir John Evelyn. It should be borne in mind that each writer in this chain absorbed previous writings and either sought to clarify them or reacted to them. The extent to which this occurred can be discerned from a twentieth-century commentator's description of neo-Palladianism as "an Englishman's misunderstanding of a Renaissance Italian's misinterpretation of a classical Roman's misinformation about Greek architecture".<sup>222</sup> Two factors emerge as having played crucial roles in the development of this tradition: the fifteenth-century rediscovery of Vitruvius's *Ten Books on Architecture* and the invention of printing, a combination of events which resulted in a proliferation of architectural treatises (and later pattern books) which played a vital part in the promotion and dissemination of classical architecture as an expression of humanist, and then Enlightenment, cultures. Thus Blackstone mined a rich body of knowledge which forms the scholarly background against which his own choice of sources and architectural manuscripts must be read.

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<sup>222</sup> Sigworth, 'Four Styles of a Decade', 412. The significance of the remark will become even more apparent in the light of the discussion below.

As the architectural commentator Krufft observes, in order to understand European architecture we must understand Vitruvius because

the whole literature on architectural theory from the Renaissance onwards has been based on Vitruvius or on a dialogue with his ideas. Without a knowledge of Vitruvius it is impossible to grasp any of the discourse on architecture from the Renaissance ... at least up until the nineteenth century.<sup>223</sup>

Yet, what little is known of the life and career of this Roman architect, the author of the sole surviving ancient treatise on architecture, can be summarized in three short sentences. He served in Julius Caesar's army, mainly as a builder of siege machines and under Augustus (later Octavian) he assisted in the construction of the Roman water supply.<sup>224</sup> The only building he claims to have designed is the basilica in the provincial town of Fano.<sup>225</sup> Vitruvius retired with a handsome pension in 33 BCE. Sometime between then and 14 BCE he penned the following statement in the preface to the first of his *Ten Books on Architecture*.

I thought I should compose with the utmost care a comprehensive work on the art of building and its methods in the belief that the future will not be ungrateful for this service to the world.<sup>226</sup>

Even he could not possibly have foreseen however, that some fifteen hundred years later the rediscovery of his *Ten Books* would in fact make him then the most influential architect in western history. The rediscovery of his *Ten Books*, in 1414, ensured that it became the corner stone of the classical canon. To trace the history, then, of northern European architectural theory since the early fifteenth century is effectively to trace the history of this

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<sup>223</sup> H-W. Krufft. *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*, R. Taylor, E. Callander and A. Wood trans. (London, 1994), 21.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>225</sup> *ibid.*, 22.

<sup>226</sup> Vitruvius. *The Ten Books on Architecture*, M.H. Morgan trans., NY, c 1914, 1960, 'Preface', 3.

one treatise's influence. To do so is well beyond the scope of this thesis but the fact must nevertheless be taken into account when identifying Blackstone's sources and evaluating their influence upon his 'Elements'.

Vitruvius divides his subject into six departments: buildings, horology, mechanics, public edifices, domestic architecture and town planning. It opens with the fundamental dichotomy of architecture: the architect must be master of both theory and practice.<sup>227</sup> Its first chapter is dedicated to the architect's education and represents the birth of the European tradition of the learned architect. In England, this tradition came to full flower in England with Inigo Jones, for as Burns remarks "Jones became, in architecture, like Johnson in the field of literature, not only a practitioner, but a scholar".<sup>228</sup> Returning to Vitruvius, the profession requires that the architect be naturally gifted, able to draw, and educated in geometry, history, philosophy, music, medicine, law and astronomy.<sup>229</sup> His stated objective is to "reduce the whole of this great art to a complete and orderly form of presentation".<sup>230</sup> His coverage is sweeping indeed but not perhaps as systematic as might have been intended. For example, he makes no attempt to outline a mathematical theory of proportion in any but the broadest terms (and then only in relation to temples). Nor does he place any particular emphasis upon the Orders. Both these aspects of classical architecture were of deep concern to the Renaissance humanists who adopted his *Ten Books* and to the Enlightenment theorists who followed them, including Blackstone. Vitruvius's might have

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<sup>227</sup> *ibid.*, I:1, 5.

<sup>228</sup> H. Burns. 'Palladio and the Foundations of a New Architecture in the North' in *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books, Travellers, Architects*, G. Beltramini et. al., (London, 1999). This quotation is taken from p. 30 but see 26-35. See also R. Wittkower. 'Inigo Jones, Architect and Man of Letters' in *Palladio and English Palladianism* (London, 1983), 51-64; L. Newman. 'Inigo Jones and the Politics of Architecture', in K. Sharp and P. Lake, (eds.), *Culture And Politics In Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke, 1994), 229-255; C. Anderson. 'Masculine and Unaffected: Inigo Jones and the Classical Ideal', *Art Journal*, 56/2 (1997), 48-54 and Summerson, John Sir. *Inigo Jones* (Hammondsworth, 1966).

<sup>229</sup> *ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>230</sup> *ibid.* IV, 'Introduction', 101.

been the only Roman text available to them but his scholarly descendants did not always find in it the rational order they sought.

So why else might Vitruvius have become a focal point for Renaissance scholars and architects? The answer lies chiefly in what has become known as ‘Vitruvian man’: the human figure as the measure of both square and circle. In other words, Vitruvius considered human proportions the basis of all geometry: ‘man as the measure of all things’, as famously depicted by Leonardo da Vinci. Furthermore, Geoffrey Scott observed some time ago that the

humanist instinct looks in the world for physical conditions that are related to our own, for movements which are like those that we enjoy, for resistances that resemble those that can support us, for a setting where we should be neither lost nor thwarted.<sup>231</sup>

Humanists relied upon Vitruvius for textual evidence of a model of order based upon human proportions and, as Tzonis and Giannisi have observed, they sought to “construct a syncretist culture synthesising Christian doctrines with the writings of antiquity, they reinterpreted, amplified, and applied Vitruvius’ proportions of the Doric, Ionic, and the Corinthian styles of architecture as derived from the model of the human body”.<sup>232</sup>

Leone Battista Alberti (1404-1472) was the first to filter Vitruvian theory through humanist values. His *De Re Aedificatoria* or *On Building* (1452) is also divided into ten books but unlike Vitruvius's treatise is written for scholars rather than practising

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<sup>231</sup>G. Scott. *The Architecture of Humanism: A Study in the History of Taste* (London, 1961), 235.

<sup>232</sup>A. Tzonis and P. Giannisi. *Classical Greek Architecture: the construction of the Modern* (Paris, 2004), 31. Unfortunately, Vitruvius’ general methodology and terminology are so vague that they sought clarification of his definitions. Terms like *scamilli impares*, are still notoriously difficult to clarify. His explanation is unclear and the text provides no illustrations. The resulting disagreements raged throughout the Renaissance and into the Enlightenment. Several of Blackstone's sources for instance disagreed about the definition of *scamilli impares* and about more fundamental terms as symmetry and disposition. How Blackstone reconciled their conflicting opinions highlights his own intellectual development.

architects.<sup>233</sup> Alberti spent his childhood in Venice before receiving a humanistic education in Padua and earning a doctorate in canon law in 1428. In 1443 he moved to Rome where he is known to have advised Pope Nicholas V on architectural matters.<sup>234</sup> Tzonis' description of Alberti's treatise is worth repeating. "It succeeds", he tells us, "in establishing a daringly innovative, systematic and coherent set of practices and ideas .... it argues that the formal rules which produce beauty in certain buildings are natural - as opposed to divine in origin - and that these natural laws are also implanted in the human mind".<sup>235</sup> The latter point in particular had an enormous impact on subsequent Western architectural theory. So too, as we shall see in Blackstone's 'Elements', did his conception of a building as an organic entity. Alberti's central idea is that buildings are composed of lines and proportions and, furthermore, that humans possess an *a priori* appreciation of an ideal and fixed relationship between them. Thus his conception of architectural beauty is grounded in an immutable relationship, tied to Nature, between number, proportion and distribution of parts: the trinity upon which classical architecture is grounded.<sup>236</sup> Consequently, Alberti disputed several of Vitruvius' definitions: including that of symmetry, which he understood to mean "the Members on the right side should exactly answer the left".<sup>237</sup> Whilst Blackstone did not consult Alberti's treatise directly, it must be remembered that its ideas were integrated into succeeding authors' works - upon some of which Blackstone did rely. Wotton, for instance, accepts Alberti's conception of symmetry while Perrault does not.

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<sup>233</sup> Written in 1452 and printed posthumously in 1485. For publication history, see Krufft. *History*, 49-50.

<sup>234</sup> For a more detailed biographical account see Krufft, *History*, 41-42.

<sup>235</sup> L. Levaivre and A. Tzonis. *The Emergence of Modern Architecture: A Documentary History From 1000 to 1810* (London, 2004), 53-54.

<sup>236</sup> Krufft. *History*, 46. Indeed his claim was not questioned seriously until Claude Perrault's controversial 1674 French edition of Vitruvius in which he asserted that the foundations of proportion and beauty constituted nothing more than custom and personal taste. See W. Herrmann. *The Theory of Claude Perrault*, (London, 1973), 31-69.

<sup>237</sup> Quoted in Krufft. *History*, 47.

Again, the way Blackstone deals with this disagreement is revealing of his own youthful intellectual capacity as well as the changed historical context in which he compiled his own treatise.

If Vitruvius' *Ten Books* made him the most influential architect in Western history and Alberti's *On Building* arguably made him the most innovative, then the *Quattro Libri*, or *Four Books* (1570)<sup>238</sup> made Palladio the most imitated.<sup>239</sup> Originally a stonemason, Palladio is the only architect to have given his name to a style. Palladian villas, as Tzonis notes, "provided an architectural imagery of power for Venetian patrician businessmen whose great trading and shipping assets were being massively transferred to farmland".<sup>240</sup> He was born Andrea di Pietro della Gondola (Palladio was a nickname)<sup>241</sup> in 1508 and died in 1580. His lavishly illustrated *Four Books* is undeniably the work of a humanist architect and scholar. It draws upon three authorities: Alberti's *On Building*, Renaissance editions of Vitruvius's *Ten Books* and his own measurements of surviving Roman buildings. Although his adherence to Roman precedents might seem evidence of a merely antiquarian architecture, Palladio sought not simply to recreate ancient buildings but to incorporate their "forms and principles" into a modern practice.<sup>242</sup> Furthermore, as Burns has observed, Palladianism "was the architecture of cultivated gentlemen and studious architects, themselves gentleman".<sup>243</sup> (Nowhere was this more apparent than in the Palladian dominance of early eighteenth-century England, with Lord Burlington its chief

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<sup>238</sup> Palladio may have originally intended to complete ten books. The manuscript may even have been ready at the time of his death in 1580. Most of the drawings seem to have survived, but not the text and only four were ultimately published. See Kruff. *History*, 88.

<sup>239</sup> L. Lefaivre and A. Tzonis. *Emergence of Modern Architecture*, 151.

<sup>240</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> Kruff. *History*, 83.

<sup>242</sup> Burns, Howard. 'Palladio and the Foundations of a New Architecture in the North', in G. Beltramini (et. al.) *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books, Travellers, Architects*, (Geneva, 1999), 17.

<sup>243</sup> *ibid.*, 18.

promoter).<sup>244</sup> Burns has also pointed out that Palladio assumes his readers' knowledge of prior learned works, including Vitruvius and Alberti, and assumes a "familiarity [furthermore] with a whole aesthetic and artistic culture, involving concepts of judgement, of appropriateness, of invention, of design ...".<sup>245</sup> It is difficult to exaggerate the significance of Palladio's assumption for it is the great, unstated factor in architectural treatises from his *Four Books* through to Blackstone's 'Elements' and beyond.

Inigo Jones (1573-1652) has been credited with single-handedly bringing classical architecture to England. As Wittkower puts it "everyone agrees that Inigo Jones brought about a revolution - at once so thorough and irrevocable that, whether we like it or not, it determined the course of English architecture for almost three centuries".<sup>246</sup> Jones certainly did seek to import the classical style in order to raise English architecture to a new intellectual and artistic level. But he did not do so alone. Jones's buildings, like The Queen's House, Greenwich Palace (1616-1619) and celebrated Banqueting Hall at Whitehall Palace (1619-1622) were undeniably revolutionary. Revolutions, however, are rarely conducted single-handedly and the English cultural revolution, in which these buildings struck a controversial but crucial early blow, was no exception. In fact, Jones' work only becomes more interesting when he is considered as part of a small group of men who nurtured the classical style in England. Jones, as Wittkower also tells us, "lived in a circle which

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<sup>244</sup> Richard Boyle, third earl of Burlington and fourth earl of Cork (1694-1753). See for example, T. Barnard and Clark, (eds.), *J. Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art And Life*, Introd., H. Colvin, (London, 1995) and J. Harris. *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (New Haven, 1994) and P Denman Kingsbury. 'Burlington and architecture' in 'Boyle, Richard', [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3136>, accessed 18 August 2005].

<sup>245</sup> Burns, Howard. 'Palladio and the Foundation of a New Architecture in the North' *Palladio and Northern Europe: Books Travelers, Architects* (Geneva, 1999), 16-55.

<sup>246</sup> R. Wittkower. 'Inigo Jones, Architect and Man of Letters', *Palladio and English Palladianism: The Collected Essays Of Rudolf Wittkower*, (London, 1983, c. 1974), 51.

included men like John Donne and Sir Henry Wotton".<sup>247</sup> Architecture exists as much intellectually, and textually, as it does materially. Wotton's and Evelyn's architectural books were conscious promotions of classical culture which made contributions to the English classicist revolution every bit as significant as Jones's buildings.

Blackstone's own 1743 title page describes the 'Abridgement' as "Chiefly Extracted from Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements*, / Monsieur Freart's *Parallel*, / Mr Evelyn's *Account of Architecture*. / Mr. Gibbs's *Rules*, / and Mr Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*."<sup>248</sup> The revised 'Elements' however, also lists Claude Perrault's "Admirable Translation and Comment on Vitruvius and his Abridgement of the same Author" alongside "Palladio's elegant Designs, as they are now illustrated by the Notes of Inigo Jones".<sup>249</sup> It is unclear where or when he accessed all but three of these. According to the catalogue of an 1845 sale of the Blackstone library, paintings and plate, Blackstone owned both a 1733 edition of John Evelyn's English translation of Roland Fréart's *Parallel of the Ancient Architecture with the Modern*<sup>250</sup> and an unidentified edition of John James' English translation of "Perrault's Architecture".<sup>251</sup> Evelyn's handy compendium comprised the *Parallel* to which was appended both Wotton's *Elements of Architecture* and his own *Account of Architects and Architecture*.<sup>252</sup> The latter is a collection of architectural terms gleaned during Evelyn's own travels in Italy during

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<sup>247</sup> Wittkower, 'Inigo Jones', 64.

<sup>248</sup> 'Abridgement', title page.

<sup>249</sup> 'Elements', unpaginated [3].

<sup>250</sup> Fréart, Roland, Sieur de Chambray, *A Parallel Of The Ancient Architecture With The Modern, To Which Is Added An Account Of Architects And Architecture, In an Historical And Etymological Explanation Of Certain Terms Particularly Affected By Architects. With Leon Baptista Alberti's Treatise Of Statues* (J. Evelyn, Trans.), 1732.

<sup>251</sup> This assumes that editions dated prior to his death in 1780 can tentatively be identified as Sir William Blackstone's and those published after that date as belonging to descendants. The catalogue's claim that the "greater part of the collection" had been amassed by the "celebrated JUDGE BLACKSTONE and Dr. Blackstone of Oxford", supports that conclusion. Probably *An Abridgement of the Architecture of Vitruvius ...* (J. James trans.) (London, 1692). A 1755 edition of Isaac Ware's translation of Palladio's *Four Books* is also listed in this collection but post-dates the 'Elements' composition.

<sup>252</sup> Listed as "Freart's Architecture, by Evelyn, *plates*, 1733". Item number 237, *Bibliotheca Blackstoneiana. A Catalogue of a Library of 4,500 Volumes ...*, 18. The auction was held in London, 10-12<sup>th</sup> September, 1845.

what has been called "one of the great seventeenth-century examples of the grand tour" between 1641 and 1647.<sup>253</sup> The other work Blackstone apparently owned is the two-volume fourth edition (1741) of Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia: or, An Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences*,<sup>254</sup> a copy of which, bearing Blackstone's bookplate, is now held in the library of Balliol College, Oxford.

Who were these authors upon whom Blackstone drew, and what influence do each of their works have upon the 'Elements'? An examination of his chosen works and their places in the broader context of contemporary scholarship can help us answer this question. Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639), described by one biographer as "the most widely cultivated Englishman of his time", was a poet, ambassador, classical scholar, architectural writer and friend of such luminaries as John Donne<sup>255</sup> and the Earl of Essex.<sup>256</sup> Wotton's famous wit is perhaps typified by his definition of an ambassador as an "honest man sent abroad to lie for the good of his country".<sup>257</sup> His *Elements of Architecture*, first published upon his return to England, in 1624, is concerned to educate the English gentleman in what he considers the ennobling principles of architecture, as derived from Vitruvius and Palladio. He identifies four central principles of design: harmony, proportion, décor and disposition or internal distribution of rooms according to function. So successful was Wotton's *Elements* that by the mid- eighteenth-century it had been "reprinted and incorporated into other publications no less than sixteen times".<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Douglas, D.C. Chambers, 'Evelyn, John (1620-1706)', *ODNB*, 2004

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8996>, accessed 18 August 2005].

<sup>254</sup> E. Chambers. *Cyclopaedia*, first published 1728. No fewer than five editions had been published by 1750. Blackstone's copy is held at Balliol College, Oxford, library shelf mark 1555 h.1.

<sup>255</sup> L.G. Smith, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, (2 vols.), (Oxford, 1907).

<sup>256</sup> A.J. Loomie. 'Wotton, Sir Henry (1568-1639)', *ODNB*, (Oxford, 2004)

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30001>, accessed 18 Aug 2005].

<sup>257</sup> J. H. Hendrickson. 'An Ambassador', *Modern Language Notes*, 64/4, (April, 1949), 288.

<sup>258</sup> L. Lefaivre & A. Tzonis. *Emergence of Modern Architecture*, 179.

Wotton's *Elements of Architecture* has been described as "the first English treatise to be based on High Renaissance architectural theory" and Wotton himself as "one of the first independent architectural critics in history".<sup>259</sup> Little wonder then that Blackstone's brief Preface to the 'Elements' declares that the "Method made use of, and many of the Observations, are borrowed from Sir Henry Wotton's Elements".<sup>260</sup> Wotton's method is in fact one of the most striking aspects of his treatise: so much so that Wittkower attributes its critical analysis to the influence of Wotton's friend Francis Bacon.<sup>261</sup> Blackstone follows the organization of its contents closely. His interest in Wotton's method is confirmed by the inclusion of a diagrammatic 'Analysis of this Abridgement' which strongly resembles Chambers' printed Table of Knowledge in the *Cyclopaedia*. Its influence is echoed in the mature Blackstone's *Analysis of the Laws of England* (1756). He deviates somewhat from Wotton's table of contents in his own *Elements*. For instance he inserts a chapter he calls 'Architecture in General' and expands and reorganizes the section concerning the Orders, allowing him to emphasize their proportions rather than their anthropomorphic qualities.

As noted above, Wotton was one of a group of Englishmen keen to import classical culture to their native land upon returning to England from the continent. His friend John Evelyn was another. According to Howard Colvin's invaluable *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*<sup>262</sup> John Evelyn (1620-1706) was an amateur who built nothing of significance but who was nevertheless a "virtuoso" of architectural theory and a far greater influence upon British architecture than his amateur status might suggest: an influence

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<sup>259</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> 'Elements', [1].

<sup>261</sup> R. Wittkower. *Palladio And English Palladianism*, (London, 1983),

<sup>262</sup> H. Colvin. *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, London, 1978, 303.

ascribed to his translation of Fréart's *Parallel*.<sup>263</sup> Evelyn was a Fellow of the Royal Society, philanthropist and "friend of the principal architects of his day".<sup>264</sup> Having spent time abroad during the Civil War as a voluntary exile, he was involved in the negotiations for Charles II's Restoration. His translation of Fréart's *Parallel* is one of Blackstone's most important sources. Many of Blackstone's own drawings, including those of the Orders, are based upon Fréart's engravings, as are his references to ancient buildings and monuments such as the Temple of Mars Altor at Rome and Trajan's Column. Wherever possible, Blackstone lists Latin, Italian or French alternatives for architectural terms, where they are given by Evelyn.

Evelyn's influence upon the 'Elements' is enormous. The first may be the least obvious for his *Account* provides a tantalizing hint that it may have motivated the 'Elements'. Not only does Evelyn insist that architecture was of value to scholars of the Humanities, he also protests the current state of English architecture and calls for

some more intire treatise of the whole Art than is yet extant among us, and to be delivered by some industrious Person who shall oblige the *Nation* with a th[o]rough examination of what has already been written by *Vitruvius* 1.2.c.3 ad 9. *Palladio* 1.c2. *Leon Alberdi* [sic] 1.2.c.45.46. *Dan Barbaro* 1.II. Sir H. Wotton in his concise and useful *Theorems &c.* and in what shall be found most beneficial for our *Climate*; it were I say, becoming our great needs that some ingenious Person did take this in hand, and advance upon the *Principles* already establish'd, and not to acquiesce in them as if there were a *Non Ultra* Engraven upon our *Columns* like those of *Hercules*, after which there remained no more to be discovered ...<sup>265</sup>

That is substantially what Blackstone has done. The material from Book One of Vitruvius to which Evelyn refers comprises Vitruvius' 'Fundamental Principles of Architecture' (i.e.

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<sup>263</sup> *ibid.*, 303.

<sup>264</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> J. Evelyn. *Account*, 118-119. Daniele Barbaro (1516-1570). According to Le Faivre and Tzonis Barbaro was a "Venetian patrician and patron of Palladio". See their *Emergence of Modern Architecture*, 129. Evelyn is referring to Barbaro's Italian *Translation of Vitruvius' Ten Books* (Vinegia, 1556).

his definitions of “Order”, “Arrangement”, “Eurythmy, Propriety, and Economy”) and his three-way division of architecture (into “the art of building, the making of time-pieces, and the construction of machinery”).<sup>266</sup> Blackstone incorporates the first of these but ignores much of the rest, presumably because it covered firstly astrology and thus was outdated and secondly, because he limited his own discussion to domestic architecture. However, he does use the material from Palladio which outlines the use of the various building materials from foundations to roof, and Palladio’s general “Rules for all Edifices”.<sup>267</sup> Blackstone does not refer directly to either Alberti or Barbaro but Wotton’s *Elements* is based upon their works as well as well his own first hand knowledge. Wotton’s “useful *Theorems*” however Blackstone incorporates into the ‘Elements’ as Chapter 18 ‘Of Arches and Vaults’. In addition, he takes every opportunity to identify sensible adaptations of antique buildings to the English climate. In chapter 23 for example he mentions the need for chimneys.

Much of Blackstone’s rejection of Gothic architecture may well originate in the combined influence of Evelyn and Fréart who both heap scorn upon gothic architecture.<sup>268</sup> This is an important point because although it appeared to Prest that “the basic approach and content of the [‘Elements’] appear to be unchanged”, it becomes apparent upon closer inspection that the anti-gothicism introduced into the ‘Elements’ represents a fundamental departure from the objective of the first version of the treatise, the ‘Abridgement’.<sup>269</sup> Whether this striking change in content (the appearance of an antagonism to gothic architecture) influenced his developing legal thought will be investigated below. It does

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<sup>266</sup> Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, I:2,3, 13-17.

<sup>267</sup> *Palladio*, vii.

<sup>268</sup> Such instances are identified in footnotes in Part Two.

<sup>269</sup> Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 115.

indicate though that Blackstone continued to consult architectural books between 1743 and 1746: that he not only maintained his interest in architecture but also that his theory of architecture continued to develop as his study deepened.

The Scot James Gibbs (1682-1754)<sup>270</sup> was the only professional architect amongst Blackstone's chosen authors. After avoiding a planned career in the church Gibbs visited Rome in 1703 where he devoted himself instead to architecture, becoming a pupil of the "leading Roman architect" of the time, Carlo Fontana.<sup>271</sup> He returned to Britain in 1709 armed with training in Italian Baroque architecture unparalleled among British architects. He held the office of Master-General of the Ordnance worth £120 a year, from 1727, until his death in 1754. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1729. Following the opening of his celebrated Radcliffe Camera at Oxford in 1749 the university awarded him an honorary MA.<sup>272</sup> Colvin dubs Gibbs the "Tory architect *par excellence*" of early Georgian England, because he and the majority of his clients were Tories.<sup>273</sup> Perhaps due either to that political affiliation or training in the Baroque style, Gibbs was never a devotee of the whig Lord Burlington's Palladian campaign (despite his later works in that style).<sup>274</sup> Whatever the reason, Gibbs appears to have been a deliberate omission from Colen

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<sup>270</sup> Unless otherwise stated, biographical information details of Gibbs are taken from T. Friedman. 'Gibbs, James (1682-1754)', *ODNB*, Oxford, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article.10604>, accessed 18 Aug 2005].

<sup>271</sup> Colvin. *Biographical Dictionary*, 337-345, 337.

<sup>272</sup> The commission awarded to him upon Hawksmoor's death in 1736. See: S.G. Gillham (ed.), *The Building Accounts of the Radcliffe Camera*, Oxford Historical Society, N.S. xiii, 1958 and S. Lang. 'By Hawksmoor out of Gibbs', *Architectural Review* (April, 1949), 183-190.

<sup>273</sup> According to Colvin these included the young Harley who involved him in the development of the family estate in Marylebone. See his *Biographical Dictionary*, 338.

<sup>274</sup> Rather, he was an admirer of Wren's work, particularly his London churches. See Colvin. *Biographical Dictionary*, 338. Friedman recently described Gibbs as having "a personal style that combined late baroque and antique classical architectural vocabularies, which was rivalled in England only by that of his contemporary Nicholas Hawksmoor". T. Friedman. 'Gibbs, James (1682-1754)' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/10604>, accessed 18 Aug 2005]. Dodsworth has recently given a convincing account of the political connotations of Palladianism. See his 'Virtus on Whitehall: The Politics of Palladianism in William Kent's Treasure Building, 1733-6', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 18 (December, 2005), 282-317.

Campbell's hugely successful *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1725)<sup>275</sup> and seems to have taken this as a personal attack by a fellow Scot.<sup>276</sup> He compensated for the slight, however, with the publication of *A Book of Architecture* in 1728.<sup>277</sup> This book, comprised exclusively of his designs, featured 150 plates and was so popular that a second edition was published in 1739. In between, he published his *Rules for Drawing the Several Parts of Architecture* in 1732 (new editions of which were issued in 1738 and 1753) which has been described by a modern commentator as the "first major eighteenth-century British treatise on the orders [in which Gibbs,] like most of his contemporaries enthusiastically adopted Palladio as his principal authority".<sup>278</sup> Unlike his contemporaries however, Gibbs breaks with Italian tradition and "depicts the orders as being the same height". Blackstone retains the established Italian practice instead which "shows a progression in height from the Tuscan to Composite".<sup>279</sup> Gibbs's designs for the Radcliffe Camera, *Bibliotheca Radcliviana*, followed the *Rules* in 1747.<sup>280</sup> His public buildings include: The Senate House, Cambridge (1722-1730),<sup>281</sup> Radcliffe Library, Oxford (1737-1748) and the Oxford Market, Marylebone (1724-c1730).<sup>282</sup> His London churches include St Mary-Le-Strand (1714-1717) and St. Martin-In-The-Fields (1722-1726). His best-known houses include Ditchley

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<sup>275</sup> Colen Campbell (1676-1729), architect. Campbell bore the somewhat dubious honour of the title Laird of Boghole and Urchany. For a detailed biographical account see T.P. Conner. 'Cambell, Colen, of Boghole and Urchany (1676-1729)' *ODNB*, Oxford, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4485>, accessed 18 Aug 2005].

<sup>276</sup> Colvin. *Biographical Dictionary*, 373.

<sup>277</sup> J. Gibbs. *A Book of Architecture* (London, 1728).

<sup>278</sup> J. Archer. *The Literature of British Domestic Architecture, 1715-1842* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 25.

<sup>279</sup> E. Harris. *British Architectural Books and Writers, 1556-1785* (Cambridge, 1990), 26. See Part II, fig. 5, 158.

<sup>280</sup> J. Gibbs. *Bibliotheca Radcliviana* (London, 1747).

<sup>281</sup> See T.P. Hudson. 'James Gibbs's Designs for University Buildings at Cambridge', *Burlington Magazine*, Dec., 1972, 842-848.

<sup>282</sup> Gibbs' involvement is posited by Colvin as undertaken for Edward Harley, 2nd Earl of Oxford: see his *Biographical Dictionary*, 339.

House, Oxfordshire, (1720-1731).<sup>283</sup>

Much less is known about the encyclopaedist Ephraim Chambers (1680?-1740) than of Blackstone's other authorities.<sup>284</sup> Between 1714 and 1721 he was apprenticed to John Senex, map and globe maker, and that during this period the young Chambers developed the idea of expanding and improving upon John Harris' *Lexicon technicum* of 1704. We are far better acquainted with Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* than with its author. First issued by subscription in 1728, the *Cyclopaedia* was already in its fifth (and posthumous) edition in 1746, the year Blackstone began revising his 'Abridgement'. The first modern English language encyclopaedia, the *Cyclopaedia*, not only influenced Samuel Johnson but was also the inspiration for Diderot's and D'Alembert's famous *Encyclopédie*. Although Blackstone claims that only "several Definitions, and synonymous Terms ...have been chiefly furnished from Mr Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*" he relied upon it more heavily than he admits.<sup>285</sup> The architectural articles in the *Cyclopaedia* are derived from many publications, but often with subtle changes in wording. A careful reading of Blackstone's 'Elements' reveals that much of the material which might be assumed to have come from Wotton is in fact taken, often verbatim, from Chambers. Such passages are indicated by annotations to Blackstone's text in Part Two below.

Blackstone adds two new authorities not cited in the 'Abridgement' to the

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<sup>283</sup> Featured in his *Book of Architecture*, pl. 31. See also C. Hussey. 'English Country Houses: Early Georgian', *Country Life* (1955), 66-71.

<sup>284</sup> What little is known of his life is contained in F. Epinasse. 'Chambers, Ephraim (1680?-1740)' rev. Michael Harris, *ODNB*, Oxford, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5070>, accessed 18 Aug 2005]. I am also grateful to Richard Yeo for pointing me to several of his publications on the subject of Ephraim Chambers and his authorship of the *Cyclopaedia*. See ' "The Best Book in the Universe": Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia*' in *Encyclopaedic Visions: Scientific Dictionaries and Enlightenment Culture*, (Cambridge, 2001), 120-144 and 'Encyclopaedic Collectors: Ephraim Chambers and Sir Hans Sloane', *Enlightening the British: Knowledge, Discovery and the Museum in the Eighteenth Century*, R.G.W. Anderson et. al., (London, 2003).

<sup>285</sup> See Part II, 108.

'Elements': Leoni's translation of Palladio (addressed below) and Claude Perrault's *Abridgment* (in translation) of Vitruvius together with his annotated edition of the *Ten Books*. Claude Perrault (1613-1688) was not trained as an architect but as a physician and was a member of the French academy of sciences. Blackstone adopts the most controversial of Perrault's views – views which brought him some of the most significant architectural commissions in France, among them the western façade of the Louvre. Perrault was one of “a small group of highly regarded, scientific elite supported by the Crown whose task was to [apply] innovative logico-empirical methods to all the important fields of enquiry.”<sup>286</sup> His annotations to his translation of Vitruvius's *Ten Books*, which Blackstone dubs an “Admirable Translation and Comment on Vitruvius”, flew in the face of established architectural theory. As we have seen, the classical canon. i.e. Vitruvius, Alberti and Palladio, held that beauty was grounded in nature, in a fixed relationship between proportion and lines, and that humans have an inherent appreciation of that beauty. Perrault claimed that beauty resides partly in custom and personal taste. In other words, the established principles of architecture, derived from the Italian tradition, were in a sense arbitrary rather than fixed. Though Perrault was consequently “reviled throughout the next hundred years as being responsible for the undoing of good taste” he hoped his edition would “initiate a tradition ... more in keeping with the modern [French] absolutist state”.<sup>287</sup> His inclusion among Blackstone's sources is intriguing because it hints that Blackstone's reputation as an apologist for the status quo may be exaggerated.

The identification of Blackstone's sources raises an important point. One of the difficulties associated with compiling an edition of the 'Elements' is that the text can be

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<sup>286</sup> L. Lefavre and A. Tzonis. *Emergence of Modern Architecture*, 204.

<sup>287</sup> *ibid*, 205.

read on two levels. It could be argued that it is no more than an amalgamation of various readily available authorities: its principles borrowed from one source or another as they appealed to the young Blackstone. Given his youth, this might seem an adequate explanation. The problem with this reading is that such a casual approach would not only be uncharacteristic of Blackstone's meticulous nature but also underestimates his intellectual capacity. Bearing these considerations in mind, his 'Elements' could be a quite deliberate attempt to arrive at a truly independent systematic treatment of classical architecture. If so, it is an impressive intellectual achievement: complex and subtle, an achievement worthy indeed of a young man who would one day systematize the even greater complexities of the common law. Which is the more likely explanation? The answer lies in his sources, which authorities he chooses, what he selects from each for inclusion in the 'Elements' and what he omits.

Nowhere does Blackstone justify his choice of these particular sources but several conclusions, of varying significance, can be drawn which indicate that the second reading provides a more convincing explanation. It is true that together these authorities span much of the accumulated theoretical knowledge available to him in the 1740s - a perfectly good reason for his having selected this combination. On the other hand, one might conclude that Blackstone simply chose those which were most accessible - perhaps among friends and extended family - or at the university. According to the records of the Bodleian library, architectural works were not among the books he ordered up during the 1740s: a fact which makes this conclusion unlikely.<sup>288</sup> Alternatively, Blackstone may have deliberately selected

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<sup>288</sup> According to Prest, the "books and manuscripts he ordered up from the stacks of the Bodleian Library, [included] works of classical letters, theology, church history, and antiquarian studies, as well as legal texts". Wilfrid Prest, 'Blackstone, Sir William (1723-1780)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford

these works because they represent a thoughtful blend of the humanist concern with harmonic proportion, neo-Platonist idealization of beauty, and the rational, pragmatic, scientific approach of the early Enlightenment. A third possibility seems more plausible. These sources represent a cross-section of the more genteel works available which highlight a distinction between the learned architect and the builder. Evelyn expressed this distinction in his *Account*, advising his readers that “as the great Plato somewhere defin’d him ... [n]o Architect is to be presum’d for the commonly illiterate *Mechanick* ... but for the person who *Superintends* and *Presides* over him”.<sup>289</sup> In this light, the fact that Blackstone did not include any of the popular but “vulgar” works aimed at the surveyor and builder like William Halfpenny’s *Art Of Sound Building*, (1725) gains significance when we consider an observation made by Prest.<sup>290</sup> By 1746, Prest writes, Blackstone was a Fellow of All Souls, a “college dominated ... by ‘Persons of great Fortunes and high birth’ [so] a city-born and bred scholarship boy elected to a fellowship on his second application from one of Oxford’s least grand societies [Pembroke College] might well have felt the need to cultivate some such mark of gentility”.<sup>291</sup>

Ultimately, asking which sources Blackstone actually used is possibly less helpful than asking which he did *not*. There are two startling omissions: Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus*, and Isaac Ware’s English translation of Palladio’s *Four Books*. Indeed it is difficult to believe that anyone interested in architecture in the 1740s could fail

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University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2536>, accessed 6 July 2007].

<sup>289</sup> Evelyn, *Account*, 117.

<sup>290</sup> W. Halfpenny. *The art of sound building: demonstrated in geometrical problems: showing geometrical lines ... kinds of arches, niches, groins, and twisted rails, both regular and irregular. With several other draughts of buildings and staircases, all curiously engraven on copper plates. Wherin are laid down (suited to every capacity) easy practical methods for carpenters, joiners, masons, or bricklayers, to work by*, (London, 1725).

<sup>291</sup> Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 123.

to be aware of them. Why might Blackstone have omitted them? The answer may be political, for Blackstone has ignored the Palladians. In other words, it is possible that Blackstone was making something of a political statement with his 'Elements' for he, like his friend Sir Roger Newdigate, was a tory.

It may be objected that to attempt to draw any connections between Blackstone's architectural and political principles is to run the risk of exaggeration at best, or, at worst, speculation: especially in light of Blackstone's omission of Leoni's edition of Alberti (1726) and Dodsworth's recent observation that despite "a long history of speculation about a link between whiggism and Palladianism ... [i]t is difficult to see any particular architectural style as denoting any specific political affiliation, for adherents of all parties built in all styles".<sup>292</sup> This is true. However, the debate is not entirely speculative because contemporaries like the tory Lord Oxford recognized the connection between Palladianism and whig ideals.<sup>293</sup> Indeed Dodsworth's own argument is based upon his claim that William Kent's (Palladian) Treasury House (1733-36) made a deliberate political statement because "architecture had an explicitly governmental connotation" in the early eighteenth century. The adoption of the Palladian style by the Office of Works during the 1730s, he argues, thus "made an architectural statement about the conduct of Walpole's government" which is "only comprehensible in the context of contemporary political debate".<sup>294</sup>

In 1994 Klein drew on the work of Pocock and others to demonstrate that

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<sup>292</sup> Dodsworth. "Virtus on Whitehall", 297. That speculation has played out in works such as Worsely's *Classical Architecture in Britain: the Heroic Age*, (London, 1995), Barnard & Clark (eds.) *Lord Burlington – The Man and his Politics: Questions of Loyalty* (Lampeter, 1998). More meaningfully, such a conclusion can be drawn from L. Klein's *Shaftesbury And The Culture Of Moral Politeness: Moral Discourse And Cultural Politics In Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>293</sup> P. Ayres. *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1997), 122.

<sup>294</sup> Dodsworth. "Virtus on Whitehall", 299, 282.

Shaftesbury<sup>295</sup> had deliberately crafted a political philosophy which equated the whig party with classical ideals of civic virtue and liberty.<sup>296</sup> Ayres has also argued convincingly that buildings like Kent's Treasury House ought indeed to be seen as "realizations of the Shaftesburian project".<sup>297</sup> There was certainly, he confirms, a successful neo-Palladian campaign "undeniably Whig in inspiration" and "under the direction of Burlington and his protégé William Kent [to capture] almost all the important positions in the King's Works and the patronage of the most influential elements in the oligarchy".<sup>298</sup> It was a conscious campaign; waged as much on paper as in stone for books were an important weapon in this war (not least because Burlington owned an impressive collection of editions and drawings by both Vitruvius and Palladio).<sup>299</sup> Thus the first steps in the operation were the publications of the first three volumes of Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715-25), a work Ayres considers "generally and, on the whole, persuasively regarded as a Whig architectural manifesto"<sup>300</sup> and Isaac Ware's English edition of Palladio's *Four Books*, with the translation of which Burlington apparently assisted.<sup>301</sup> In that light another look at Blackstone's sources is useful.

It is now apparent that together and within the broader classicist culture, his authorities represent the English Baroque, of Wren, Vanburgh, Hawksmoor and (to a lesser extent) Gibbs: a style generally associated with tory and country ideas rather than with the Palladian style which dominated the first half of the century when the whig oligarchy was in the political ascendancy. Bearing Gibbs's reputation as architect to the Tories,

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<sup>295</sup> Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713).

<sup>296</sup> Klein. *Shaftesbury*.

<sup>297</sup> Ayres. *Classical Culture*, 115, 116.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

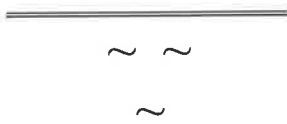
<sup>299</sup> *ibid.*, 119-121.

<sup>300</sup> *ibid.*, 116.

<sup>301</sup> Ware, Isaac. *The Four Books of Architecture by Andrea Palladio* (London, 1738).

Blackstone's inclusion of his *Rules*, seems almost pointed, especially considering that his method of drawing the Orders is ignored. Blackstone does draw upon James Leoni's edition of Palladio which was also commissioned by Burlington. This would seem to belie a rejection of the major Palladian works – except that he has chosen the edition Burlington and Ware, another of his protégés, repudiated as having taken liberties with Palladio's original proportions.<sup>302</sup>

What can we conclude from this discussion? On a theoretical note, the ideas upon which Blackstone drew had their origins in the ancient world. This is significant because although, as an Enlightenment text, the 'Elements' might at first be assumed to be based upon a different regime of rationality, to be a search for new ideas, it highlights the duration of these ideas in British architectural thought. His most important sources were written in the Renaissance. As we have seen they enjoyed enormous success in Blackstone's lifetime, and beyond. Renaissance ideas then held currency well into the Enlightenment. This is reinforced in Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* for many of the architectural articles are only slightly modified excerpts of Wotton's *Elements of Architecture*. On a more pragmatic note, Blackstone's 'Elements' must be read in the context of these ideas. Only then can we appreciate its intricacy. Rather than a simple conglomeration of ideas and principles from a handy collection of standard authorities, it is revealed as a complex weaving together of independent theories to form a rich defence of English Baroque against the increasingly influential, whig, neo-Palladianist theorists at the Office of Works.



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<sup>302</sup> *ibid.* 'Advertisement'.

## Chapter Six

### *The Commentaries on the Laws of England*

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*I don't intend to provide any background information on Blackstone, except to say that he published his treatise in England between 1765 and 1769, and that ... Blackstone's work is the only systematic attempt that has been made to present a theory of the whole common law system. It is the single most important source on English legal thinking in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.*  
(D. Kennedy. 1978).<sup>303</sup>

So far this thesis has established the significance of architecture in Blackstone's life and the broader historical and intellectual backgrounds against which his architectural treatise should be read. This chapter turns back to Blackstone in order to determine the extent to which his study of architecture might have influenced the text for which he is celebrated, the *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. How (it asks) can we hope to reach a meaningful understanding of the "single most important source on English legal thinking in the 18<sup>th</sup> century" without taking into account its author's background? Things, as Watson subsequently protested, "are not that simple".<sup>304</sup> Such an oversight has resulted, for example, in a failure to appreciate a fundamental relationship between Blackstone's architectural and legal texts. The first documentary evidence of such a relationship dates from 1746. From that point the young architect's influence upon the mature jurist can be traced through his legal writings over the next twenty years. The use of architectural metaphor in the *Commentaries* also hints at a significant broader intellectual relationship

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<sup>303</sup>D. Kennedy. 'The Structure of Blackstone's *Commentaries*', *Buffalo Law Review*, 28 (1978-1979), 205.

<sup>304</sup>A. Watson. 'The Structure of Blackstone's *Commentaries*' *Yale Law Journal*, 97 (1988), 795.

between history, architecture and law. His attitude to architectural innovation, furthermore, goes some way to countering his reputation as a stuffy arch-conservative.

Scholarly comment and debate upon the *Commentaries* is so large that an adequate review is manifestly beyond the scope of this study and is, in any case, a task rightly suited to jurists rather than to historians. This thesis has a far humbler aspiration. It seeks only to address the issues and debates upon which the 'Elements' bears directly: the development of his legal thought and the methodology and genesis of the *Commentaries*. That is to say, the ways in which Blackstone's background may have influenced the work around which legal scholars' debates continue to swirl.

A meaningful understanding of the *Commentaries* must surely take into account relevant events in Blackstone's life. He did not begin serious study of the law for instance until the mid-1740s, by which time he had already been actively involved in architecture for at least two or three years. In 1743 he wrote the *Pantheon* and 'Abridgment'. In 1746, he began both writing the 'Elements' and supervising the completion of the Codrington Library. He wrote that year to his uncle, Seymour Richmond, telling him of progress in his legal studies: a letter which constitutes the first documentary evidence of architecture's influence upon the development of his legal thought. "I have sometimes thought" he mused:

that the common law, as it stood in Littleton's Days, resembled a regular Edifice: where the Apartments were properly disposed, leading one into another without Confusion; where every part was subservient to the whole, all uniting in one beautiful Symmetry: & every Room had its distinct Office allotted to it. But as it is now, swol'n, shrunk, curtailed, enlarged, altered & mangled by various & contradictory Statutes &c; it resembles the same Edifice, with many of its most useful Parts pulled down, with preposterous Additions in other Places, of different Materials & coarse Workmanship according to the Whim, or Prejudice, or private Convenience of the Builders. By which means the Communication of the Parts is

destroyed, & their Harmony quite annihilated; & now it remains a huge, irregular Pile, with many noble Apartments, though awkwardly put together, & some of them of no visible Use at present. But if one desires to know why they were built, to what End or Use, how they communicated with the rest & the like; he must necessarily carry in his Head the Model of the old House, which will be the only Clue to guide him through this new Labyrinth.<sup>305</sup>

Not only is this an impressively detailed and imaginative analogy but, as Prest noted, it is “unique, both in terms of scale and concrete specificity, among the writings of English common lawyers between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries”.<sup>306</sup>

Furthermore there is evidence in the 1750s that the process of compiling the ‘Abridgement’ and ‘Elements’ had some influence upon the methodology of his *Analysis of the Laws of England*. By 1753 Blackstone had already laboured for seven long years at the courts at Westminster Hall in London and found the “profits of his profession very inadequate to the expense”.<sup>307</sup> In other words, he was not a great success as a practicing lawyer: hindered no doubt by his “not being happy in a graceful delivery or a flow of elocution ... nor having any powerful friends or connexions to recommend him.”<sup>308</sup> He now decided that his future lay at Oxford and retired to his fellowship at All Souls.<sup>309</sup> Was he impelled by financial pressure alone? Had his thirtieth birthday that very summer prompted a reassessment of his life and prospects? Was he relieved or disappointed to lay aside the burden of a practice he had initially assumed with such little enthusiasm? Clitherow does not tell us. He does inform us that upon retirement to an “academical life” Blackstone “began to execute” something he had “previously planned”: a course of

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<sup>305</sup> Blackstone. *Letters*, 4.

<sup>306</sup> W. Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 104.

<sup>307</sup> Clitherow, ‘Preface’, xii.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>309</sup> *ibid.*, xii.

“Lectures on the Laws of England”.<sup>310</sup> Prest’s ground-breaking preliminary enquiry into the intellectual implications of Blackstone’s architectural manuscripts for the *Commentaries* makes an interesting point. He considers the ‘Abridgement’ and ‘Elements’ “in retrospect as trial essays or dry runs” for the 1753 course of lectures and, ultimately, for the *Commentaries*.<sup>311</sup> The ‘Abridgement’ and ‘Elements’ “at the very least” he concludes,

must have provided Blackstone with invaluable practice in the arts of judicious borrowing, abbreviation, and paraphrase, as well as the experience of planning an overview which could plausibly claim to encapsulate an entire discipline, or body of knowledge, for didactic purposes.<sup>312</sup>

This is not to suggest, of course, that Blackstone deliberately set about abridging Wotton’s *Elements of Architecture* and then compiling the ‘Elements’ in order to devise the methodology of a book he would not write for twenty years. The suggestion is rather that when Blackstone began his course of lectures in 1753, he was able to draw upon his prior experience in reducing a complex body of knowledge to a set of rational principles. The title and diagrammatic representation of its contents certainly suggests some “judicious borrowing” for the *Analysis of the Laws of England*. Further evidence of architecture’s continuing influence upon his legal thought is found in his inaugural lecture as Vinerian Professor of English Law in October 1758. The “common law of England” he said

has fared like other venerable edifices of antiquity, which rash and unexperienced workmen have ventured to new-dress and refine, with all the rage of modern improvement. Hence frequently its symmetry has been destroyed, its proportions distorted, and its majestic simplicity exchanged for specious embellishments and fantastic novelties.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> *ibid.*. Despite the possible significance of Clitherow’s revelation, no one seems yet to have investigated the question of the date of the conception of the Course of Lectures on the Laws of England.

<sup>311</sup> The lectures commenced at Oxford on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 1753. See Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 118.

<sup>312</sup> *ibid.*, 119.

<sup>313</sup> W. Blackstone. *Commentaries*, I, ‘Introduction’, 10. First published as *Discourse on the Study of the Law* (1758).

The modified reappearance in this speech of his earlier image of the law as an edifice demonstrates its significance, confirming that architecture had indeed come to represent “something more than mere ornament or literary conceit” in Blackstone’s legal writing.<sup>314</sup>

As we will soon see, his architectural manuscripts can claim some credit for contributing to the methodology of the *Commentaries*, upon which his fame is founded. But only to a point because, without regard for its background, Kennedy makes the mistake of thinking that the *Commentaries* constituted “the only systematic attempt that has been made to present a theory of the whole common law system”.<sup>315</sup> It is a mistake Watson finds “astonishing” for, indeed, Blackstone himself lists his predecessors in the *Analysis of the Laws of England*.<sup>316</sup> Preceding the reign of Henry VIII, he tells us Glanville, Bracton, Britton and “the author of Fleta” were too concerned with “ancient” learning to integrate their works into a modern systemization. He rejects the alphabetical arrangements of Fitzherbert, Brook “and the subsequent authors of the Abridgments” as the least acceptable “of any to convey the Rudiments of a Science”. He regrets the “narrowness” of Bacon’s methodology which consists of “dis-joined Aphorisms” and declares Sir Edward Coke’s *Institutes* (1628) “unfortunately as deficient in Method as they are rich in Matter”.<sup>317</sup> Wood’s *Institute* (1713) had been so modernised as to leave the reader mystified as to the origins and purpose of some laws.<sup>318</sup> Blackstone prefers Sir Henry Finch’s method but finds the end result badly written and obsolete. His own method he declares based upon Sir Matthew Hale’s *Analysis of the Law* (1713), the “most natural and scientific of any, as

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<sup>314</sup> Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 15, 105-106.

<sup>315</sup> Kennedy. ‘Structure of Blackstone’s *Commentaries*’, 205.

<sup>316</sup> Watson. ‘The Structure of Blackstone’s *Commentaries*’, 795.

<sup>317</sup> W. Blackstone. ‘Preface’, *An Analysis of the Laws of England*, 4th ed., (Oxford, 1758), (first published 1756), v.

<sup>318</sup> *ibid.* vi.

well as the most comprehensive”.<sup>319</sup> The process of evaluating and then selecting a previous study upon which to base his methodology is reminiscent of that of his architectural treatise. As we saw in the previous chapter, Blackstone had selected Wotton’s *Elements* as a methodological model for the ‘Abridgement’. He integrated new sources into the ‘Elements’ but its preface still declares that “the Method made use of, and many of the Observations, are borrowed from Sir Henry Wotton’s *Elements*”.

The question of plagiarism in the *Commentaries* has also been raised occasionally since Blackstone’s death. Maine and Glasson suggested that Blackstone copied “the doctrines of Grotius ... textually from Burlamaqui”.<sup>320</sup> The ‘Elements’ has some bearing upon this matter because of Blackstone’s tendency to copy, often verbatim, from his architectural sources. Indeed, Blackstone’s reliance upon Chambers’ *Cyclopaedia* suggests that he relied upon it, perhaps exclusively, for his references to Wotton and to Perrault’s French commentary upon Vitruvius. There is no doubt that he relied upon Wotton’s *Elements* for the ‘Abridgement’ but subtle changes in wording suggest that he drew his references to Wotton in the ‘Elements’ from Chambers’ *Cyclopaedia*. It is possible that he may not have read Perrault’s *dix livres* because his does not make any references to Perrault’s commentary which do not also appear in the *Cyclopaedia*.<sup>321</sup> It is entirely possible therefore that he intended the list of sources in the ‘Elements’ as a general acknowledgment of debt rather than as a list of authorities actually consulted. As already noted, it was common practice among architectural writers to integrate previous texts into their own. It seems unlikely that this practice was considered plagiarism, as the word is

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<sup>319</sup> *ibid.*, vii.

<sup>320</sup> H. Maine, Sir. *Ancient Law* (1861). Quoted (without publication details) in P. Lucas. ‘*Ex Parte* Sir William Blackstone, “Plagiarist”: A Note on Blackstone and the Natural Law’, *American Journal of legal History* 7 (1963), 142. E. Glasson. *Histoire du Droit et des institutions politiques, civiles et juducaires de l’Angleterre*, V (1883), 399. Cited in *ibid.*, 143.

<sup>321</sup> Such instances are indicated by annotations in Part Two.

now understood, in the early modern era. Furthermore, Lucas reminds us that in legal writing “it is a most difficult task to prove that one author cribbed from another author that collection of commonplaces of Roman, Medieval, and Renaissance legal thought which admittedly constituted their joint intellectual heritage”.<sup>322</sup>

Kennedy and Watson may disagree about the resulting structure of the *Commentaries* but, ultimately, the most important thing about its structure is that it *had* one. As Watson notes, the common law is made by judges in the light of precedent: strictly speaking, it has no structure. It is, as Blackstone says in the *Analysis*, an “antient collection of unwritten maxims and customs” and as the *Commentaries* would have it “not committed to writing but only handed down by tradition, use, and experience”.<sup>323</sup> In this regard, knowledge of the common law was unlike that of architecture. Thus if Blackstone were to render it comprehensible to beginners and laymen as he intended, he had of necessity to draw a structure from an external source.<sup>324</sup> The *telos* of the treatise is to communicate knowledge. It does this best when information is presented in a structured, systematic way.<sup>325</sup> To render the formless common law comprehensible, Blackstone not only needed a method, he needed an analogy. He had already found it in architecture. Indeed some of the most memorable sections of the *Commentaries* are its architectural metaphors in which the law is represented as a building.

Representing the law in these terms was unusual, but there was little point in his describing the law as an edifice unless he fully expected his readers to understand the imagery. Thus it is useful at this point to step briefly aside to note that authors drew upon

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<sup>322</sup> P. Lucas. ‘*Ex Parte* Sir William Blackstone, “Plagiarist”: A Note on Blackstone and the Natural Law’, *American Journal of legal History* 7 (1963), 143.

<sup>323</sup> Blackstone. ‘Discourse of the Study of the Law’, *Analysis*, xxxviii; *Commentaries*. ‘Introduction’: I, 17.

<sup>324</sup> Watson. ‘The Structure of Blackstone’s *Commentaries*’, 796.

<sup>325</sup> *ibid.*, 796.

architectural imagery throughout the eighteenth century. In his *First Discourse* on painting, for example, Joshua Reynolds advises that the master may break the rules of painting but where the student is concerned: “let us not destroy the scaffold, until we have raised the building”.<sup>326</sup> William Shenstone’s essay ‘On Writing and Books’ counsels the aspiring writer that there “is a sort of masonry in poetry, wherein the pause represents the joints of a building: which ought in every line and course to have their disposition varied”.<sup>327</sup> While Shenstone strains the allusion somewhat Fussell points to Edmund Burke’s beautifully crafted and “habitual image of the state as a castle, fortress or temple” and notes that no less a literary figure than Samuel Johnson was also rather fond of the architectural metaphor.<sup>328</sup> Johnson’s *False Alarm* contains a memorable warning that governments comprise “fabricks of dissimilar materials, raised by different architects, upon different plans. We must be content with them as they are; should we attempt to mend their disproportions, we might easily demolish, and difficultly rebuild them”.<sup>329</sup> In his *Journey to the Western Islands* Johnson remarks that Scottish students “carry with them [into university] little fundamental knowledge, and therefore the superstructure cannot be lofty”.<sup>330</sup> Even Mrs. Thrale said that for Johnson “the world was well-constructed, but that the particular people disgraced the elegance and beauty of the general fabric”.<sup>331</sup>

One of the people he may have had in mind was the notorious political journalist and libertine John Wilkes, figurehead of the “Wilkes and Liberty Affair” of the 1760s and 1770s. Though elegant in dress and manner Wilkes was a strikingly ugly man. Referring to

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<sup>326</sup> J. Reynolds. Quoted in P. Fussell. *The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke* (Oxford, 1965), 188.

<sup>327</sup> W. Shenstone. Quoted in *ibid.*, 191-192.

<sup>328</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 186.

<sup>329</sup> S. Johnson. *Journey to the Western Islands*. Quoted in *ibid.*, 186.

<sup>330</sup> *ibid.*, 185.

<sup>331</sup> *ibid.*, 186.

himself in the third person as was his habit, Wilkes once declared that though some men's souls were housed in grand mansions, "I fancy he finds himself tolerably happy in the clay cottage to which he is tenant for life... I can scarcely imagine that he will be one moment peevish about the outside of so precarious, so temporary a habitation".<sup>332</sup> Perhaps the most charming, and extended, example appears in one of Lord Chesterfield's letters. The infamously cynical Chesterfield had no interest in the humble clay cottage variety of housing for his family's souls. "I dare say that you know enough of architecture," the urbane Earl writes to his young son,

to know that the Tuscan is the strongest and most solid of all the orders; but at the same time, it is the coarsest and clumsiest of them. Its solidity does extremely well for the foundation and base floor of a great edifice; but if the whole building be Tuscan, it will attract no eyes, it will stop no passengers, it will invite no interior examination; people will take it for granted that the finishing and furnishing cannot be worth seeing, where the front is so unadorned and clumsy. But if, upon the solid Tuscan foundation, the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian orders rise gradually with all their beauty, proportions, and ornaments, the fabric seizes the most incurious eye, and stops the most careless passenger; who solicits admission as a favour, nay, often purchases it. Just so will it fare with your little fabric, which, I fear, has more of the Tuscan than the Corinthian Order. You must absolutely change the whole front, or nobody will knock at the door.<sup>333</sup>

Blackstone's own metaphors may be less sophisticated, but they are every bit as intricate. The image with which he concludes the final volume of the Commentaries in 1769 is a good example. "It has been the endeavour of these commentaries", he writes:

however the execution may have succeeded, to examine [the common law's] solid foundations, to mark out its extensive plan, to explain the use and distribution of its parts, and from the harmonious concurrence of

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<sup>332</sup> J. Wilkes. *English Liberty* (London), 1769, 367-368. Quoted in A. Cash. *John Wilkes: The Scandalous Father of Civil Liberty* (New Haven, 2006), 124.

<sup>333</sup> Stanhope, Phillip, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters Written by Lord Chesterfield to his Son* (London, 1912), vol. 1, 348.

those several parts to demonstrate the elegant proportion of the whole. We have taken occasion to admire at every turn the noble monuments of ancient simplicity, and the more curious refinements of modern art. Nor have its faults been concealed from view; for faults it has, lest we should be tempted to think it of more than human structure: defects, chiefly arising from the decays of time, or the rage of unskilful improvements in later ages. To sustain, to repair, to beautify this noble pile, is a charge entrusted principally to the nobility, and such gentlemen of the kingdom, as are delegated by their country to parliament. The protection of THE LIBERTY OF BRITAIN is a duty which they owe to themselves, who enjoy it; to their ancestors, who transmitted it down; and to their posterity, who will claim at their hands, this the best birthright, and noblest inheritance of mankind.<sup>334</sup>

Two observations can be made here. The first is that Blackstone has extended and refined the image which he appears to have conceived in 1746 and modified for his inaugural lecture in 1758. The second is that Blackstone has developed the concept considerably. It no longer merely represents the law as an edifice, but equates that edifice with liberty itself and charges his readership with its maintenance and restoration. It seems unlikely that his study of architecture was entirely responsible for Blackstone's ability to systematize the large and complex body of knowledge that was the common law. It does appear however to have played an important role in the development of his ability to visualize the common law as a coherent system, very much like the original plan of that old house to which he refers in 1746. Indeed, juxtaposing these versions of this metaphor suggests that Blackstone consciously developed it in order that the *Commentaries* should serve his reader quite literally, as "the model of [an] old House" now in need of repair and restoration.

That proposition is even more plausible when we consider Blackstone's readership. During the 1720s and 1730s the English countryside (not to mention London and Oxford itself) reverberated with the sounds of masonry work, sawing and hammering. So much so,

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<sup>334</sup> Blackstone. *Commentaries*, IV:33, 436.

that in 1739 the *Gentleman's Magazine* complained that anyone who was anyone in polite English society, was "doing something at his place, as the fashionable phrase is." Indeed it seemed one could

hardly meet with anybody, who, after the first Compliments, does not inform you that he is *in Mortar and moving of Earth*; the modest Terms for Building and Gardening. One large Room, a Serpentine River, and a wood, are become the most absolute Necessities of Life, without which a Gentleman of the smallest Fortune thinks he makes no Figure in his Country.<sup>335</sup>

Blackstone's readers would therefore have understood completely his injunction that they sustain, repair and beautify the noble edifice of the common law.

The correlation in Blackstone's attitudes to both gothic architecture and feudal law is just as significant for an understanding of the *Commentaries*. The 'Elements' contains several disparaging remarks about gothic architecture. The most indicative example is found in chapter 14 'Of Irregular and Spurious Orders' which informs us that the Gothic style "was certainly the Work of great Labour and Industry". Yet, he sees

something oddly artificial in it. Huge ponderous Roofs being raised on slender Pillars, or rather Groups of Staves; great Masses of Stone, like Rocks, hanging in the Air without any visibly sufficient Support, and threatening every instant to fall. Every thing is crammed with Roses, Lace, Crosses, Monkeys, and other Quaintnesses, which glut the eye instead of filling it, by means of such a profusion of silly Ornaments. Whereas in the Greek Architecture there is not a single Member or Ornament but has its Propriety as well as Beauty. Add to this, that unreasonable Thickness of Gothic Walls, their clumsy Buttresses, Pinnacles, and Turrets, their sharp-pointed Arches and narrow Doors give it a heavy Look among all its trite and incongruous Embellishments.<sup>336</sup>

So, Blackstone's opposition to gothic architecture is based, not merely upon conventional prejudice but rather upon its divergence from the fundamental logic of classical design. He

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<sup>335</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. IX, Dec., 1739, 640.

<sup>336</sup> Blackstone. 'Elements', Chapter 14 'Of Irregular and Spurious Orders', Part II, 182.

has two main criticisms. First, gothic buildings can offend the eye because they appear unnecessarily “heavy” and “clumsy”. Secondly, and in the spirit of the early Enlightenment, they offend the mind because they are “unreasonable”. The slender Gothic pillars appear unable to support the “great Masses of stone ... threatening every instant to fall”. To put it another way, the point of the Gothic buttresses and other contrivances to which Blackstone objects is to conceal the building’s structure. Thus he concedes that gothic architecture involves some ingenious engineering but maintains that it is nevertheless not only ugly but illogical. The point of the classical Orders on the other hand is to reveal the building’s structure: to bear and be seen to bear the weight of the entablature and roof. Furthermore, Blackstone makes an important distinction here which illuminates the disdain for gothic, or feudal, law apparent in the *Commentaries*.

Blackstone describes his final chapter of the *Commentaries*, ‘Of the Rise, Progress, and Gradual Improvements, of the Laws of England’, as an “historical review .... of the state of our laws”.<sup>337</sup> It is also is a succinct exposition of his view of feudal law. In summary, Blackstone sees the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred as the architect of an unwritten constitution and legal system designed to protect traditional English liberties. In this system the king functions as “supreme magistrate” in whose person “all the executive authority of the law was lodged, and from whom justice was dispersed to every part of the nation by distinct, yet communicating ducts and channels”.<sup>338</sup> He lists eight distinguishing features of “Saxon justice”: parliament, election of magistrates, an hereditary crown, a marked decrease in capital punishment for first offences, the requirement of military service in proportion to land ownership and the descent of land ownership beyond

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<sup>337</sup> Blackstone. *Commentaries*, IV:33,400.

<sup>338</sup> *ibid.* IV:33,404.

primogeniture. Of particular interest are the settlement of serious cases in the courts of justice, by either the king or by a combined panel of civil and ecclesiastical representatives and trial by jury.<sup>339</sup> Saxon law was thus the “law of liberty”.<sup>340</sup> He perceived a fundamental logic in the Saxon legal system, just as he did in classical architecture.

He considers the Normans responsible for five significant changes to the benevolent Saxon court system. First, was the separation of ecclesiastical from civil courts. Second, new forestry laws not only depopulated large areas of the country but placed game in the king’s sole possession. Third, foreign judges were imposed upon, and the native language banned from, English courts.<sup>341</sup> Fourth was the introduction of trial by combat rather than by jury and fifth the imposition of feudal land tenure.<sup>342</sup> “From so complete and well concerted a scheme of servility” he adds, “it has been the work of generations ... to redeem themselves and their posterity”.<sup>343</sup> More liberal modern courts are therefore, he argues,

frequently obliged to have recourse to uncomfortable fictions and circuities, in order to recover that equitable and substantial justice which for a long time was buried under the narrow rules and fanciful niceties of metaphysical and Norman jurisprudence.<sup>344</sup>

The imposition of a foreign Church and legal system in the wake of the Norman Conquest meant that his readers inherited not a monument of ancient simplicity but

an old Gothic castle, erected in the days of chivalry, but fitted up for a modern inhabitant, the moated ramparts, the embattled towers, and the trophied halls, are magnificent and venerable, but useless. The inferior apartments, now converted into rooms of convenience, are chearful and commodious, though their approaches are winding and difficult.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33,409, 405-407.

<sup>340</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33,406.

<sup>341</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33,409.

<sup>342</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33,411.

<sup>343</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33, 413.

<sup>344</sup> *ibid.*, IV:33, 411.

<sup>345</sup> *ibid.*, 3, 268.

His choice of the gothic style here is significant. In today's world architectural styles can seem, "removed from the beliefs and public ceremonies which gave them their content", mere artistic convention.<sup>346</sup> Similarly, one of the consequences of discounting Blackstone's background when reading the *Commentaries* is that we fail to appreciate much of the power of his architectural symbolism. It would not have been lost on his contemporaries however. One of Blackstone's most important architectural authorities, Chambers' *Cyclopaedia*, states of Gothic architecture:

the Ravages of the *Visigoths*, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, destroyed all the most beautiful Monuments of Antiquity; and *Architecture* thence forwards, became so coarse and artless, that their professed Architects understood nothing at all of just Designing, wherein its whole Beauty consists: Hence a new manner of Building took its Rise, called the *Gothic*.<sup>347</sup>

Blackstone and his more architecturally-aware contemporaries understood gothic architecture very much in this light. Thus, Blackstone's gothic castle does not constitute a denigration of the gothic castle in general but is symbolic of a labyrinthine degradation of the original edifice. It represents what has become "hodgepodge" edifice, to which generations of jurists had been forced to add and to continue to modify in order to apply the law in a manner consistent with its original purpose. On another level, it could be seen as symbolic of the rule of a foreign and oppressive power: of political and cultural dominance. Whether he writes of the Gothic cathedral in the 1740s or of the law as a gothic castle in the 1760s, the edifice is not only illogical and badly ornamented: it is also the architecture of oppression.

This thesis finds no reason to disagree with Cairns who argued that "Blackstone emphasises in his *Commentaries* what he saw as the indigenous *English* nature of the

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<sup>346</sup> E. Baldwin Smith. *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (New York, 1978), 5.

<sup>347</sup> *Cyclopaedia*, 56.

Common law... Feudalism was 'Norman' and foreign, to be rejected, like law French, as a sign of Norman tyranny".<sup>348</sup> Nowhere does Blackstone expound upon the genesis of his jurisprudence but in light of the previous discussion it seems likely that at some time in the mid-1740s he began to see gothic architecture and feudal law as two sides of the same coin. He appears to have concluded that both were the result of the Norman Conquest: feudal law evidence of Norman suppression of English freedoms, and gothic architecture material evidence of Norman religious and cultural domination. In other words, the *Commentaries* is indeed just as much the product of his architectural, and antiquarian, as of his legal studies.

Until very recently Blackstone has been seen as an arch conservative. His views on innovation in both law and architecture belie that reputation. A careful reading of the *Commentaries* reveals that despite his reputation as an arch-conservative he certainly considered the law as founded upon set of fundamental principles but also that he considered it flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances. One of his earliest and most strident critics was his former student, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Bentham's *Fragment on Government* portrayed Blackstone as, to quote Richard Posner, "a shameless apologist for the status quo, an enemy of all reform, a Pangloss blind to the shocking deficiencies of the English legal system": the impression lingers still.<sup>349</sup> Indeed, modern commentators have used the metaphor of the gothic castle to point out "how inhospitable this approach was to any sort of change".<sup>350</sup> Yet, Albert Alschluer reminds jurists that the "claim that Blackstone regarded law as fixed for all time, unchangeable and merely awaiting discovery, is a calumny".<sup>351</sup> Blackstone was less conservative, Alschluer argues,

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<sup>348</sup> J. Cairns. 'Blackstone, the Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law', *Historical Journal* 28/3 (1985), 717.

<sup>349</sup> R. Posner. 'Blackstone and Bentham' *Journal of Law and Economics*, 19/3 (1976), 570.

<sup>350</sup> S. Landsman. 'Blackstone, Blackley and the Value of Rhetoric', *Mercer Law Review* 41 (1989-1990), 530.

<sup>351</sup> A. Alschuler. 'Rediscovering Blackstone' *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 145/1, (1996), 16.

than twentieth-century commentators have been inclined to believe. “The sceptical jurisprudence of the twentieth century has rested”, he continues, “on defaming the thought that preceded it”. Thus, in an effort to counter the last century’s “whipping of an imaginary deductive-formalist bogeyman alleged to haunt all pre-twentieth century law”, he points out that Blackstone’s support for precedent did not extend to situations where it was unreasonable.<sup>352</sup> Alschluer’s view is supported by the *Commentaries*’ suggestion that reforms of the outdated game, inheritance and poor laws were necessary.<sup>353</sup> It should also be noted that neither Blackstone’s architectural metaphors nor the book’s final chapter, ‘Of the Rise, Progress, and Gradual Improvements, of the Laws of England’, ought not to be considered Blackstone’s defence of a perfected legal system. Rather, they are evidence of his view that the law could, and ought, to be improved where possible in order that it continue to serve the best interests of the British people and the defence of British liberties upon which he regards the common law as founded.

The 'Elements' displays a similar pragmatism, for Blackstone patently did not consider architecture’s rules any more eternal and unchanging than those of the common law. While he considered that the fundamentals ought to be observed, adaptation of ancient designs to the British climate, for example, was only sensible. Just as reasonable were changes in construction due to improvements in technology and materials. Blackstone also supported the somewhat controversial use of paired columns in James Gibbs's Radcliffe Camera.<sup>354</sup> At the Codrington, Hawksmoor’s design was incorporated into an existing gothic-style exterior into a completed building "as wholly classical inside as it is Gothic

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<sup>352</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>353</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>354</sup> See ‘Elements’ Chapter 15 ‘Of the Intercolumnations’, Part II, 185.

outside"<sup>355</sup> in order that it blend with Hawksmoor's "baroque Gothic" North Quadrangle.<sup>356</sup> Furthermore, the Venetian Window at the western end of the library's gallery, for example, is classical when viewed from inside the building, but preserves its gothic exterior. Recall, too, the neo-Gothic spire for St. Peter's at Wallingford, for which he commissioned Taylor in 1767:<sup>357</sup> during the very period in which he was writing the *Commentaries*. Each of these suggests that throughout his life Blackstone's attitude to innovation was more flexible than has been generally recognised.

In summary, this research demonstrates that Blackstone was studying architecture and law simultaneously, that architecture subsequently influenced his methodology and even the development of the *Commentaries*' central idea: evidenced in a string of remarkable architectural metaphors which describe the law as an edifice. Furthermore, his architectural imagery hints that he considered the common law as designed. The Saxon "law of liberty" originally functioned, in other words, as a complete and harmonious whole. His final chapter moreover makes it abundantly clear that he considered the Saxon King Alfred its architect. This highlights a need for further research on the structure of the *Commentaries* and what seems to be a fascinating intellectual relationship between the disciplines of architecture and jurisprudence. Such research might usefully investigate the much-contested question of the structure of the *Commentaries* from a design perspective rather than from the purely legal. It does seem that the *Commentaries*, like the 'Elements', reveals Blackstone's legal thought as less *preservationist* than *conservationist* but can the *Commentaries* itself be interpreted as a textural edifice? Two possibilities seem worthy of

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<sup>355</sup> J. Sherwood and N. Pevsner. *Oxfordshire*, Buildings of England, N Pevsner and J. Nairn eds., (Harmondsworth, 1974), 96-97.

<sup>356</sup> Thanks to Christopher Codrington's £10,000 bequest in 1710. Colvin's term "baroque Gothic" is quoted in Prest 'Constructing the *Commentaries*,' 122.

<sup>357</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, 816.

further investigation. Firstly, Katz has described Blackstone as “a legal cartographer”, observing that his book conveys “a clear cartographic sense”.<sup>358</sup> Did Blackstone consider his legal text as an architect does a floor plan or blue print? If so, it may help to explain apparent oddities such as a lack of emphasis upon statutory law which, Katz complains, he seems to allot “only a peripheral position in the map of the English legal system”.<sup>359</sup> Does this make sense if we consider the proportional relationship (or compartition) rather than the logistical relationship between the parts? The second possible interpretation of the book’s structure awaiting investigation is that of the elevation. Blackstone clearly considers liberty the foundation of the English legal system. According to its Table of Contents the *Commentaries* is divided into four books: ‘Of the Rights of Persons’, ‘Of the Rights of Things’, ‘Of Private Wrongs’ and ‘Of Public Wrongs’. The distribution is certainly symmetrical. Does it suggest supporting principles?

Research to date has also raised the intriguing question of the intellectual connections between architecture and law. Thirty years ago Peter Collins, author of the acclaimed *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750-1950*, was struck by the pedagogical similarities between architectural and legal judgements.<sup>360</sup> Both architects and judges must consider individual cases or design situations against an accepted body of rules and precedent. In a hermeneutic circle, that body of rules evolves with each judgement, continually creating new precedent. A number of additional observations can be made on the subject of rules, one of the most obvious connections between theory and practice in both professions. Firstly, from an historical perspective, the 'Elements' was written in the

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<sup>358</sup> S. Katz. ‘Introduction’, *Commentaries*, v.

<sup>359</sup> *ibid.*, vii.

<sup>360</sup> P. Collins. *Changing Ideals In Modern Architecture, 1750-1950*, 2nd ed., Montreal, 1998, c.1965; ‘Affinities Between Architectral and Legal Judgement’, *Architectural Judgement*, London, 1971, 171-186.

mid eighteenth-century. It is difficult therefore to overstate the contemporary significance of Newton's conception of a mechanical universe: powered, not by angels as the Scholastics once claimed, but rather as governed by a set of comprehensible, rational rules or laws. Many Enlightenment scholars sought the underlying rules by which they considered human nature and society might also run.<sup>361</sup> Consequently, in both his architectural and legal writings, Blackstone seeks to establish and explain a set of universal rules. When thinking of eighteenth-century culture one also thinks of the contemporary Rule of Taste as well as of the "Rule of Law". From a modern perspective, too, as George Fletcher reminds jurists, "so far as anyone can tell, the law ... is written in the form of rules. Rules imply straight lines [and furthermore] Decisions according to the rules run in predictable, straight lines".<sup>362</sup>

Future research might also build upon the work of both John Onians and Jill Ramsfield. In 1992 Onians reflected upon a "unique relationship between building and thinking": arguing that "the study of architectural metaphors sheds light equally on the history of architecture, the history of language and the history of thought".<sup>363</sup> More recently Ramsfield's *The Law as Architecture: Building Legal Documents* echoed Onians's central point – that architecture and architectural imagery meet our intellectual needs "as nothing else can".<sup>364</sup> Legal writing, Ramsfield argues, "is analytical architecture".<sup>365</sup> Thus, she suggests, lawyers can produce better legal documents by designing them in precisely the way architects design buildings: considering client needs, theme, proportion, form and

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<sup>361</sup> British examples include: D. Hume. *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739); A. Smith. *An Inquiry Into the Wealth of Nations* (1776); A. Ferguson. *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1792) and *Lectures on Jurisprudence* R. L. Meek et al, (Oxford, 1978). See also R. Porter's exemplary *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (London, 2001), esp. 156-204.

<sup>362</sup> G. Fletcher. *Basic concepts of Legal Thought* (New York, 1996), 43.

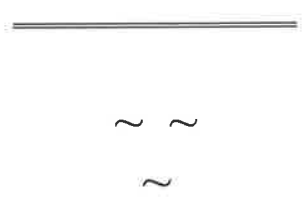
<sup>363</sup> J. Onians. 'Architecture, Metaphor and the Mind', *Architectural History* 35, (1992), 192.

<sup>364</sup> *ibid.*, 207.

<sup>365</sup> J. Ramsfield. *The Law as Architecture: Building Legal Documents*, (St. Paul, 2000), 68.

function. Such an approach to legal writing may shed light upon the development of Blackstone's thought because a relationship between thought, language and design may prove to have facilitated Blackstone's ability to organise a complex body of knowledge, to perceive its structure and to plan a discursive overview of that structure.

This chapter opened with a quotation from Kennedy's analysis of the structure of the *Commentaries*. Kennedy wrote that his methodology "might be called structuralist, or phenomenological, or neo-Marxist, or all three together".<sup>366</sup> It might seem odd then that Watson criticised his approach with the observation that things "are not that simple". In the end, however, Kennedy's mistake was simple. He did not take into account the background of the *Commentaries'* author. As a result, he missed much of the book's point. Divorced from his biographical background we are unable to comprehend that Blackstone was conducting his architectural and legal educations simultaneously. Disconnected from its historical background we cannot appreciate the power of the *Commentaries'* architectural metaphors. Disassociated from Blackstone's intellectual development we cannot construct a meaningful understanding of either the methodology or the very genesis of "the single most important source on English legal thinking in the 18<sup>th</sup> century".



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<sup>366</sup> Kennedy, 'Structure of Blackstone's *Commentaries*', 209.

## *Conclusion*

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*In attempting to make sense of the man and his books, we plainly cannot assume that Blackstone's broader intellectual, literary and theological interests contributed only a rhetorical trimming to the autonomous legal content of the Commentaries. (Prest. 2003).<sup>367</sup>*

Rarely does a document come to light which challenges a long-established view of a significant historical figure's life and thought. It is now possible to conclude that Blackstone's 'Elements of Architecture' is such a document. This thesis began with the aim of establishing the duration, depth and significance of Blackstone's interest in architecture. For example, the 1743 'Abridgement' is the first documentary evidence of his architectural activities. Additional notations made to the 'Elements' and his involvement in building projects into the early 1770s reveal that Blackstone was actively interested in architecture, both theoretical and practical, for at least thirty seven years, from around twenty years of age to within ten years of his relatively early death at fifty-seven. The depth to which he studied the subject will become clearer in Part Two. Even so, it is already apparent that his architectural treatise is the result of intensive and methodical study. The 'Elements' is an intricate blend of architectural theory ancient and modern, English and Continental, and seems likely to have been quite deliberately drawn from a specific range of highly-respected authorities. Neither as informal as Roger North's manuscript nor as professional as Sir Christopher Wren's tracts, it is best described as Augustan, a term usually reserved for the period's literature.

During the course of this research architecture's role in Blackstone's intellectual development and in the development of his jurisprudence assumed far greater significance

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<sup>367</sup>Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 124.

than anticipated. The well-known architectural metaphors in the *Commentaries* proved revealing indeed. That he studied architecture and law simultaneously meant that architecture had a demonstrable impact upon the methodology of the famous *Commentaries* and upon one of its central ideas. Each of these discoveries has been made within seemingly unrelated chapters. There are relationships between some of the chapters however, about which a few concluding remarks ought now to be made in order to weave together once more the various strands of this thesis.

The theme of Blackstone's opposition to gothic architecture deserves further comment. Though his architectural writings, and indeed the *Commentaries*, are sometimes fiercely anti-gothic, his attitude seems to have softened somewhat by the time he commissioned the spire for St. Peter's church in the early 1770s. Perhaps, as Prest has suggested, his subsequent experience of both the law and architecture in practice modified his youthful idealism.<sup>368</sup> Perhaps discussions with Newdigate prompted him to reconsider his position. Perhaps the growing popularity of gothic architecture in the second half of the century helped to dilute his disdain, either by sheer familiarity with it or a reluctance to appear old-fashioned. In the absence of documentary evidence, we can only speculate. It seems likely that we no longer need to speculate, on the other hand, about the link between gothic architecture and feudal law in the *Commentaries*. Whatever his attitude during the 1770s, it became increasingly apparent during the course of this research that Blackstone objected to gothic architecture on aesthetic, intellectual and political grounds during the 1740s, 50s and 60s, the period in which he wrote both his architectural and legal works. Furthermore, it appears that he also objected to gothic architecture on religious grounds and that this may indicate a link between what Prest described as Blackstone's "devout

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<sup>368</sup> *Ibid*, 121.

Anglican piety” and both his architectural and legal thought.<sup>369</sup>

Chapter one showed that one of Blackstone’s architectural writings, the *Pantheon*, described the Church of England as “our sacred structure”, that is to say, as an edifice.<sup>370</sup> It also indicated that he considered the origins of architecture as Christian, indeed as revealed knowledge. Thus, it seems likely that he considered gothic architecture a degradation of the classical and certainly as less ennobling. Chapter four demonstrated two other important points. First, he derived this antipathy largely from Evelyn’s translation of Frèart’s *Parallel* and from Evelyn’s own *Account* annexed to it. Secondly, he objected to gothic architecture because he considered it trite and illogical. This objection appears central to his theory of architecture. Chapter five concluded that the fact that Blackstone was studying architecture and law at a formative point in both his life and intellectual development had a more significant impact upon his theory of the common law and thus of the *Commentaries* than has previously been suspected. For example, twenty years after representing the Church of England as an edifice, he repeatedly represented the law as an edifice in the *Commentaries*. This thesis has agreed with Prest that there is more to this analogy than rhetorical “ornament or literary conceit” and has argued further that understanding Blackstone’s description of the law as an edifice is in fact fundamental to a meaningful understanding of the *Commentaries*.<sup>371</sup>

Taken together, these conclusions now appear to suggest something further. Although architectural imagery was not uncommon in eighteenth-century writing, Blackstone’s representations of both the Church and the law as buildings gain additional significance in the light of Cook’s opinion that the *Commentaries* “articulated a thoroughly

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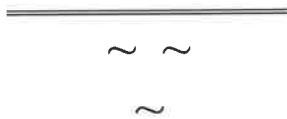
<sup>369</sup> *ibid.*, 123.

<sup>370</sup> Blackstone. *The Pantheon*, 168.

<sup>371</sup> Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 106.

Christian jurisprudence”.<sup>372</sup> According to Cook, Blackstone’s interpretation of the law saw “God as the ultimate source of law, god’s law as transcendent over man’s law, and a Biblical world-view as the well-spring of all legal knowledge”.<sup>373</sup> The existing evidence gives us no reason to doubt that Blackstone considered both the laws of classical architecture and the legal system as of Divine origin or that their revelation to humanity was not an historical event. Thus, the most significant outcome of this research is the recognition that if we are to understand Blackstone the man or his *Commentaries* we must understand the fundamental relationship in his thought between God, architecture and the law.

Further research has enabled part one of this thesis to expound upon Prest’s “preliminary survey”. We now have a clearer idea of the duration, depth and significance of Blackstone’s interest in architecture. This thesis has also demonstrated that “we plainly cannot assume that Blackstone’s broader intellectual, literary and theological interests contributed only a rhetorical trimming to the autonomous legal content of the *Commentaries*”.<sup>374</sup> Part two is an edition of the ‘Elements’ which comprises an explanation of the editorial principles employed and an annotated transcription of Blackstone’s manuscript which extends the process of the contextualization of Blackstone’s architectural treatise. In the process, it too reveals far more about Blackstone, his society, and ours, than R.A. Lloyd, his father and historians have yet suspected.



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<sup>372</sup> D. Cook. ‘Sir William Blackstone: A Life and Legacy Set Apart for God’s Work’, *Regent University Law Review* 13 (2000 – 2001), 176.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>374</sup> Prest. ‘Constructing the *Commentaries*’, 124.

*Part Two:*

*Editorial Conventions*

*and*

*Blackstone's*

*'Elements of Architecture'*

## *Editorial Conventions*

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The 'Elements' is neither as informal as Roger North's manuscript nor as expert as Sir Christopher Wren's tracts. It is best described as Augustan, a term usually reserved for the period's literature. It sits between the purist Palladian movement of the 1720s and 1730s and the flamboyant Gothic Revival of the later eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries. The first-time editor of such a document is presented with a considerable challenge. The objective is to provide one's intended reader with a useful printed replacement for a document. Yet is it impossible to reproduce any document, particularly a holographic document, without loss of meaning. Inconsistencies, spelling, and archaic expressions may require standardization or modernization for instance: particularly for a diverse rather than specialist readership. Furthermore, as Mary-Jo Kline notes, "the very act of printing such source texts suppresses some of their detail, for the *contents* of an unprinted document can extend far beyond its text".<sup>1</sup> One cannot reproduce such nuances as variations in Blackstone's choice of ink for example or indeed the current condition of the MS itself. One must nevertheless describe such features because they provide readers with valuable information.

Yet, editorial interventions should not detract, or indeed distract, from the text. The editor must decide upon a method, or set of conventions, with which he or she hopes to strike a delicate balance between the ideal and the possible and which best conveys as much of the original document's full meaning as is possible. To that end the method used here is based upon that of expanded transcription as outlined in Kline's

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<sup>1</sup>M-J. Kline. *A Guide To Documentary Editing* (Baltimore, 1987), 115.

*Guide to Documentary Editing*.<sup>2</sup> This method offers a useful compromise between the typographical facsimile (suitable for reproductions of printed documents), and diplomatic transcription, more applicable to literary works whose readers anticipate a critically edited text and therefore greater editorial intervention than is required here. A second benefit of expanded transcription is that it allows the editor to tailor a unique blend of silent and overt interventions to suit the individual document. My edition aims to reproduce Blackstone's 'Elements of Architecture' for a broad scholarly readership as exactly, and with as little editorial tinkering, as is possible and with modernization only of such features as may create a barrier to the modern reader.

#### *Spelling, Contractions, Numerals, and Punctuation*

Blackstone's hand is regular, neat and clear; his spelling and punctuation careful and consistent. To modernize these features would not enhance understanding of the text and may even obscure significant subtleties. So Blackstone's punctuation is, with rare exceptions, retained. Blackstone occasionally omits a full stop for instance, which is (overtly) inserted as [.]. His spelling is also retained but with the following conservative, silent, modifications.<sup>3</sup> The archaic use of [i] and [j], and of [u] and [v] are modernized. Likewise, the long S (*f*) is replaced by the short s. All contractions are expanded and superscripts brought down to the line thus: [w<sup>d</sup>] (would), [s<sup>d</sup>] (should), [w<sup>ch</sup>] (which), and [w<sup>th</sup>] (with). Other silent expansions are the thorn [ȝ], and [ye] (the), ampersand [&] (and), [&c] (etc.), and [tho'] (though).

Blackstone's use of numerals however presents the editor with a series of decisions. His use of fractions such as [<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>] is retained. He often uses numerals as

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 121-122, 125-129.

<sup>3</sup>That is to say, not indicated in the text.

contractions however, and these are treated in two different ways. They are retained, for example, in the sentence "The 5 last of which are comprehended virtually in the 3 first" because whilst such usage does not present a barrier to the reader. Contractions such as [3<sup>dly</sup>] are expanded however, as (thirdly), in line with other superscript contractions within Blackstone's prose. Within his tables of Intercolumnations on the other hand, such contractions as [1st] and [2nd] are retained because they do not represent a barrier to the reader and because this treatment best preserves the MS's appearance. Sometimes Blackstone includes in-text dots or dashes. These are reproduced as they appear in the MS. Those within tables however do not translate well into tables generated by word processing software and have been silently omitted. Blackstone gives linear measurements in Imperial feet and inches. These are retained.

### *Illustrations*

Blackstone's illustrations are full-page and are inserted in-text. For the reader's convenience however, they are presented here at the end of the relevant chapter. Where this occurs, it is indicated in the pagination thus [5] [6], the former being the original pagination of the illustration. Blackstone labels each illustration thus [TAB. 1]. His in-text references to individual figures in the tables are rendered thus (No. 1), these are reproduced as they appear in the manuscript.

### *Capitalization and Errors*

It often appears that capitals were used indiscriminately in the eighteenth century which can be distracting to the modern reader. Blackstone's capitalization however appears

deliberate. He capitalizes names, many nouns and on occasion capitalises words for emphasis. Again, this usage enhances rather than detracts from his meaning and so has been retained in order to preserve valuable nuances. Where Blackstone strikes through one or more words it is retained as ~~thus~~, where heavily crossed out and rewritten as [*two words crossed out*] and where illegible as [*three words illegible*]. The manuscript, notwithstanding, is remarkably free of slips of the pen. In order to preserve the meticulous nature of the text, on the very rare occasion that such an error occurs, for instance a double-word error, it is silently omitted.

#### *Marginalia and Interlineations*

Many pages contain marginalia or interlineations, insertion points for which are clearly indicated in the MS with [\*] or [^]. These are inserted overtly into the text at the appropriate point and enclosed within angled brackets: "The Capital of the Column < being one Module in Height > is divided into three parts." Several pages are faint in places, particularly in the upper right corner. Words or lines so faint as to be illegible are overtly indicated as [*two lines faint*].

#### *Pagination, Headings, Text Division, and Embellishments.*

Blackstone's text is clearly divided into chapters with headings which are retained, (as are the paragraphs which efficiently subdivide material within the chapters). Chapter divisions are further distinguished by doubled-ruled lines and often also by embellishments. Although, in print, the double-ruled lines detract from the text, such embellishments as are readily translated into printed symbols, for example [~], are

reproduced as they appear in the manuscript. Blackstone's pagination is given in square brackets thus [2]. His running headings and catchwords at the foot of each page however have been omitted.

### *Glosses and Foreign Words*

The meaning of the majority of the architectural terms in the manuscript is made clear in the text. Where they are not so explained they are glossed in a footnote. English language glosses are given if the word does not appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. On occasion Blackstone renders a word in Greek, which is retained. Blackstone does not italicize foreign words. Architectural terminology is not italicized here because Blackstone uses such terms liberally and as he would English.

### *Annotations and Quotations*

Annotations are kept to a minimum so as not to distract from the text. For example, lengthy passages are taken verbatim or almost verbatim from his sources, particularly from Chambers', *Cyclopaedia* and Wotton's *Elements*. Compounding this pattern are paragraphs which are in the main reproduced from one source but which often contain a sentence or more from a different section of that source, or from another source altogether. To annotate such passages is not only impractical but would detract from the text. Names are annotated where such information is not supplied in the text, and biographical details given when not provided elsewhere.

To conclude, the documentary editor's general challenge is to limit inevitable loss of meaning. On a specific level each document is unique, offering to the editor its own problems and idiosyncrasies but also its own rewards and charm. The editorial principles used here have been chosen so as to preserve as much of the 'Elements' unique character as is possible whilst simultaneously providing a broad scholarly readership with a useful document which can itself be used in research. Blackstone's 'Elements' is a carefully woven document. Amongst its charms are its intricacy and nuances: the editor's chief rewards are in retracing the weft and warp of its intricate fabric and, in so doing, becoming acquainted with one of the great minds of the English eighteenth century.



Elements  
of  
Architecture



~

The following Elements were compiled in the Summer of the Year 1743. They have since been revised and transcribed, with considerable Additions and Improvements, at leisure Hours in the Years 1746 and 1747. The Method made use of, and many of the Observations, are borrowed from Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements*. The rest are, in great part, taken from Monsr. Fréart's *Parallel*, and Mr. Evelyn's *Account of Architects and Architecture* annexed to it; from Monsr. Perrault's Admirable Translation and Comment on Vitruvius, and his *Abridgement* of the same Author; and from Palladio's elegant Designs, as they are now illustrated by the Notes of Inigo Jones. A few mechanical Precepts, for the more commodius drawing of the several Parts of Architecture, are borrowed from Mr. Gibbs's *Rules*; and as to the several Definitions, and synonymous Terms of the Members, they have been chiefly furnished from Mr. Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*.

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<sup>4</sup> Blackstone's pagination.

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## [1] Elements of Architecture

### Introduction.

#### Of the mechanical Description and Drawing of certain figures, etc. used in Architecture<sup>5</sup>

As the Art of designing and drawing accurately the several Parts of Architecture, is highly commodious; it may not be amiss to premise a few short Rules for describing those geometrical Figures which are most commonly made use of. And this not in a strictly mathematical, but a more mechanical Way, as best suiting our present purpose.

1. The erecting of Perpendiculars is a thing of very general use, and is thus to be performed. On a plane, A B, to raise a perpendicular at C, < TAB. 1. > (No. 1.) you must take two points equi-distant from C, as A and B. Then round the center A, with the distance AF describe the Arc F G; and with the same distance, round the centre B, describe an Arc D E; and from H, where the two Arcs coincide, let fall a Line H C which is the Perpendicular [2] required. But if it be wanted at the End of a Line (as in No.2.) at A; assume some middle Point as C, and fix the point H as before. Then round the Center A, with the Distance C H describe the Arc J K; and round the Centre H, with the Distance A C describe another, which shall cut the Arc J K at L. From whence drop the Perpendicular A L.

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<sup>5</sup> This chapter seems to be unique in English treatises. No corresponding section appears in the 'Abridgement'. Its inclusion in the revised version of the treatise lends some weight to Clitherow's conviction that mathematics was Blackstone's primary architectural motivation. Blackstone's instructions are not, as might be anticipated, derived from Gibbs's *Rules*. The inspiration for the chapter may be a short, though purely discursive, section of Wotton's *Elements* dealing with "Figures ... either *simple* or *Mixed*". (See Wotton, *Elements* I, 16-18. Chambers includes instructions for drawing points, triangles, squares and circles but Blackstone's instructions for triangles are not mere repetitions of Chambers'. Furthermore, Chambers relates the method for drawing circles, upon which Blackstone does not elaborate. See Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 312-315. Ultimately, Blackstone may well simply be repeating rules learned as part of his general education for Clitherow tells us that "although the classics, and particularly the Greek and Roman poets, were his [favourite subjects], they did not engross his attention: Logic, Mathematics, and the other sciences were not neglected." Indeed, this "science he was particularly fond of". See Clitherow, v.

2. An equilateral Triangle is thus described, on the Base A B Round A, with a Distance A B, describe the Arc E F; so C D, round B. Where they cut, at G, draw A G, G B. (No.3.) In the same manner is any Isosceles Triangle described, taking either more or less than the Base for the Radius of the Arcs C D, E F.

3. A Square (No. 4.) is described by erecting a Perpendicular A D, of the same length with the Base A B, and round B and D, with the Distance also A B, describing Arcs; and where they coincide as at C, drawing D C, C B. The Line A C is Diagonal, which is to one Side of the square, very nearly as 17 to 12.

4. A Circle (No. 5.) is too well known, as is also the method of describing it round the center A, to need any further Explanation.

5. There is one universal Rule for Describing all angular Figures, I mean < equilateral and equiangular > ones; which is: Divide a Circle, by two Diameters crossing at right angles, into four Quadrants: Then Divide the Arch of the Quadrant into so many equal parts as you would have angles in your Figure, and four of those parts shall be the exact length of one side of the Figure; which being found, the rest are described of course. This will hold in Triangles, and Squares; but is most used in multiangular Figures. As in Pantagons (No. 6.) Hexagons (No. 7.) Heptagons (No. 8.) Octagons (No. 9.) and so on. Hexagons and Octagons indeed may be more easily and readily described; the former by taking the Radius of the Circle, which is equal to one side of the Hexagon; the better, by halving the Arc of the Quadrant, instead of dividing it into 8 parts; but they are here thus described to demonstrate the Rule.

6. Elliptical Figures are often used in Architecture, yet are somewhat difficult to be described, either by elliptical Compasses,<sup>6</sup> or the [3] more usual way of

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<sup>6</sup> A specialized compass for drawing ellipses. The first English mention of such a device appears to be Hooke's diary for 1674. According to Hambly, a need for such devices gained "impetus and interest" from 1712 with a "desire to draw perspective accurately." (See M. Hambly. *Drawing Instruments, Their History, Purpose And Use For Architectural Drawings* (London, 1982), 22. Chambers observes

a loose thread flung over a couple of pins, fixed one in each Focus of the Ellipse. But the following method is more easy, and tho' perhaps not mathematically accurate, yet it is sufficient for common Draughts. It is performed by means of two coinciding equilateral Triangles, whose Bases are always parallel; but according as they approach or recede from each other, the Ellipse is less or more oblong. For Example, in No. 10, the Bases are distant from each other the exact Height of the Triangles; Now supposing the Sides of the Triangles to be as 30 < which will make the Height as 26 > the Length of the Ellipse will be as 45, the Breadth about 34. In No. 11. the Bases are distant  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Height of the Triangle; and the Length of the Ellipse is as 40, the Breadth about 26. In No. 12. the Bases are distant  $\frac{1}{3}$  only, and the long Diameter is to the short as 35 to  $16\frac{2}{3}$  or thereabouts. In No. 13. The Bases are  $1\frac{2}{3}$  apart, and the difference of the Diameters is only as 55 to  $51\frac{1}{3}$ , or very nearly a circle. Lastly in No. 14. the Bases are distant  $1\frac{1}{3}$  of the Height of the Triangles, and the long Diameter is to the short as 50 to about  $42\frac{2}{3}$ . The method of Describing them is this. Round the Centre A (the Apex of one of the Triangles) describe the Arc B C (on the Base of the same Triangle) Then round D (the Apex of the other Triangle) describe Arc E F (on the Base of the same) Then round G describe B E, and round H describe F C, and the Ellipse is thereby quite completed.

These are the Figures which will most commonly occur, and by a due attention to the method of drawing these, one may easily describe whatever others may be necessary, whether simple or complicated.

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that the use "of this *Compass* is easy; by turning round the long Branch, the Ink, Pencil, or other Point, will draw the *Ellipsis* requir'd." Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, I, 278.

## [4] Elements of Architecture.

### Chapter 1.<sup>7</sup> ~

Of Architecture in general, and the Several Conditions of a good Building ~

ARCHITECTURE, in general, may be defined, the Art of well building; i.e. of erecting Edifices proper either for habitation or Defence. It is usually, with respect to its objects, divided into 3 branches, Civil, Military and Naval:<sup>8</sup> The 2 latter we leave to the more immediate Consideration of the Engineer and the Shipwright, and shall confine ourselves to the first, also called absolutely, and by way of eminence, Architecture, and which is The Art of contriving and executing commodious Buildings for the use of Civil Life.

Every compleat Fabric must have 3 conditions, Firmness, Convenience and Delight, or Beauty:<sup>9</sup> In order to attain which there must be a due Ordonnance and Disposition of its Parts, regulated by a just proportion, and having regard to true Decorum and Oeconomy. Hence it appears, that in order to form a judgment of any Edifice,<sup>10</sup> these eight points are to be considered, viz. Firmness, Convenience, Beauty,

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<sup>7</sup> This is the first of several chapters for which a specific origin (or indeed origins) are difficult to identify. It appears that Blackstone read widely and that this chapter is the result of much careful selection, compilation and paraphrasing. Some of the material certainly originates in Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 55 and more in Wotton, *Elements* I: I but what Blackstone does here is to condense a wide range of material into an accessible list.

<sup>8</sup> Architecture was generally regarded as having two natural divisions: civil and military. Chambers' additional category is unusual but perhaps not surprising considering Britain's contemporary naval strength. Chambers defines naval architecture "or *Ship-Building*" as "that which teaches the construction of *Ships, Galleys*, and other floating Vessels for the water; with Ports, Moles, Docks etc. on the Shore", Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 130.

<sup>9</sup> According to Wotton who considers the "The end is to build well. Well building hath three Conditions. Commoditie, Firmerness, and Delight". See Wotton, *Elements*, I, 1. Evelyn renders this: strength, vitality and beauty. See Evelyn, *Account*, 117. This opening section has been transcribed from the 'Abridgement' where it comprises Blackstone's introductory remarks.

<sup>10</sup> Chapter XXXVII of Blackstone's 'Abridgement' is dedicated to this point but has been heavily revised. Rather than the list which appears in the 'Elements', the 'Abridgment' compares three

Ordonnance, Disposition, Proportion, Decorum, and Oeconomy: The 5 last of which are comprehended virtually in the 3 first.

1. Firmness or Strength depends on the goodness of the Foundation, the choice of Materials, and the manner of putting them together. [5] [6]

2. Convenience is primarily to be regarded in the Situation, and also in the Ordonnance of the Disposition.

3. Beauty, or Delight, derives likewise from the Situation, which should be pleasant, and from the Delicacy and Harmony of the Proportions.

4. Ordonnance, Ordinatio, or Taxis, is the judicious Contrivance which gives a Convenient Bigness to every part, considered either by themselves or with regard to the rest: So that the Apertures be large enough for their uses, yet not too large; that the Rooms be of a proper Size for their ordinary Employments, the Courts etc. sufficiently great for what they are intended, etc.

5. Disposition, Distribution, or Diathesis, is the orderly Ranging and just Union of all the parts and members of a Building, according to their Quality, Nature, Office, and Rank; So as the Vestibule proceed the Hall, the hall the Parlour, etc. Disposition, in short, respects the Form and Situation of the Parts, as Ordonnance does their Greatness; This relates to Quality, that to Quantity.

6. Proportion is the Relation between the Parts and the Whole, or one Part and another. Vitruvius mentions 2 sorts; Eurythmy, which is a Relation according to Reason, or perhaps Custom, whereby, for instance, the Height of a Door bears such a

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authorities' methods and is taken, almost verbatim, from Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 132. Blackstone, however, removes the following paragraph "The second way is Georgio Vassari's: who would have us pass a running Examination over the whole Edifice, according to the Proportions of a well-built man. As whether the walls stand upright upon a clean Footing or Foundation: Whether the Fabric be of a beautiful Structure; Whether, for the Breadth it appear well burnished; Whether the Entrances be on the middle Line or Face, like our Mouths: Whether the Windows or Eyes be equal in number and distance on both Sides: and Whether the Offices, like the Veins in our Bodies be usefully distributed; and so on".

particular proportion to its Breadth, or the several parts of an architectural Order [†] are in such a particular Ratio to each other, or to the diameter of the Column. Hence results that Majesty, Elegance, and Ease that appear in a beautiful Fabric. Symmetry, is the relation of Parity and Equality whereby opposite parts for instance, are not bigger or less, higher or lower, longer or shorter, closer or wider, one than another; So that one Wing shall < not > have 6 columns, and its Opposite which should answer it, but 5 in front, nor the Diameter of one Column be 2 feet, and that of its Opposite, three, etc.

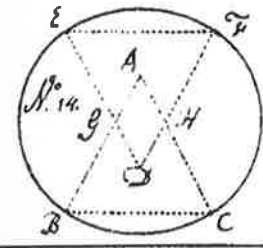
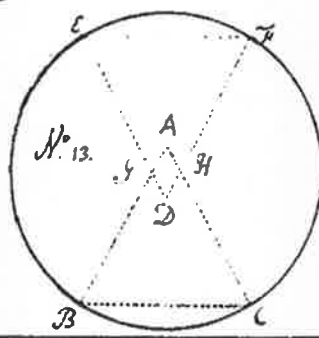
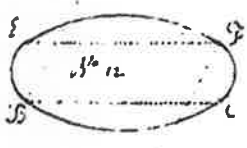
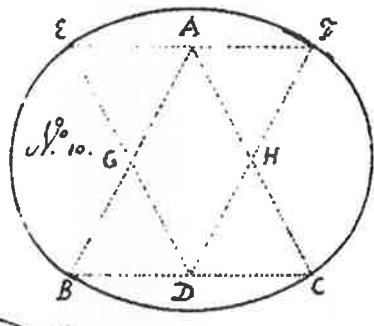
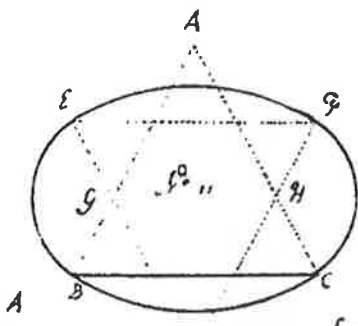
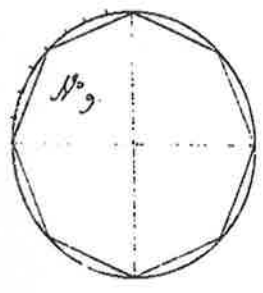
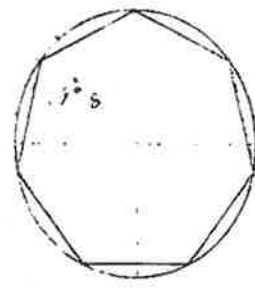
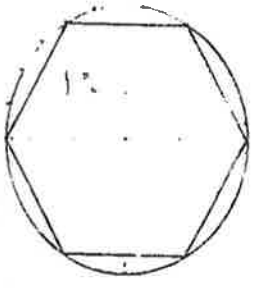
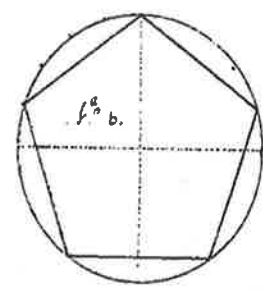
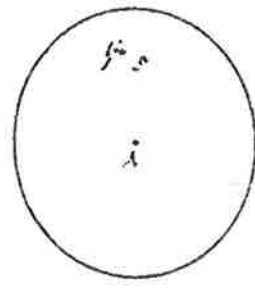
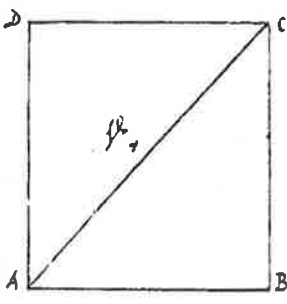
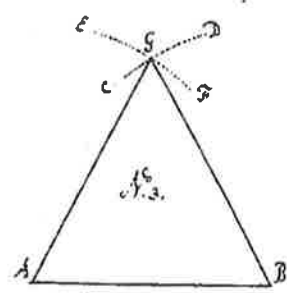
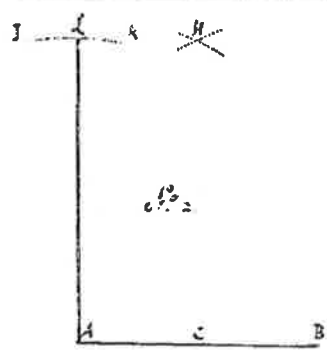
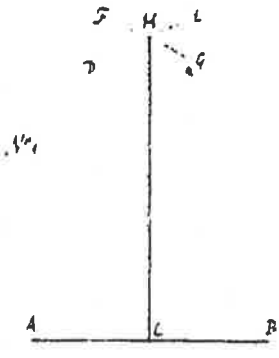
7. Decorum, Décor, or Propriety, is the Suitableness of a Building, its several parts, and ornaments, to the Inhabitant, the Place, and the Occasion. So to a Prison should not have a Corinthian, and a Theatre a Tuscan Portal. For due regard is ever to be had to the [6] Design, for the propriety of the thing; to Custom, which will prevent the Introduction of new Extravagancies; and to Nature, whereby we may learn to give different Aspects to different Apartments, as Use and Wholesomeness may require.

8. Oeconomy is ever necessary to an Architect, to regulate his Expenses, to direct him in the choice of his Materials, to provide lest any Space be rendered useless, or not employed to the best advantage, and to guard against Parsimony on the one hand, and Profuseness on the other: The former of which has ruined many a good Design, the latter impoverished many a good Estate: And with regard to the Fabric itself it may be observed that as too few Embellishments make a Building appear too heavy and clumsy, so a Profusion of lavish Elements will render it trifling, tawdry and confused.

These eight considerations should be always present in the mind of the Architect, when he frames the Idea of the future Fabric; nor should the Critic lose sight of them

when he comes to pass his Censure. All these need to be referred to < the > 3 first Points, Firmness, Convenience and Beauty. Such are the Qualifications of a good Building, those of a compleat Architect are as numerous; for according to Vitruvius, he ought to be an Adept in Drawing, Geometry, Arithmetick, History, Ethics, Physics Medicine, Law, Astronomy and Music.

In treating of Architecture we shall consider the Subject under two general Heads, 1. The Situation; 2. The Structure.



Chapter 2. ~.  
Of the Situation.<sup>11</sup>

In the Situation of a Building two only of the aforesaid Conditions are to be regarded, *viz.* Convenience and Delight. Firmness falling entirely under the Consideration of the [8] Structure, where also the other two are by no means to be neglected.

As to the Situation of public Buildings, there can necessarily be but few Remembrances, such as Easiness of Access, and the Advantage of a Spacious Area, if by any means it is to be obtained, for the benefit of viewing the Proportions at a due distance.

Such private Buildings also as are situated in Towns or Cities afford but little room for precept on this head, as they are generally circumscribed by contiguous Walls, fixed to a certain Spot, and rather calculated for Convenience than Delight.<sup>12</sup>

But with regard to the situation of Villa's or Country Seats, many are the Precepts to be observed. And indeed no one can be guilty of too great Care and Circumspection, in the Choice of his Seat; in which we should be as cautious as Wooers, Since Building is a kind of Marriage to a Place.<sup>13</sup>

Some Precepts are merely medicinal, touching the Quality, Temper, and Salubrity of the Air and Soil; a point of the utmost consequence, since its defects can

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<sup>11</sup> Chapter 2 is based upon Wotton, *Elements*, 2-6 and Perrault, *Abridgment*, 63-65. Chapter 1 is a more discursive version of the first chapter of Blackstone's 'Abridgement', (also entitled 'Of the Situation') but which consists only of three short paragraphs.

<sup>12</sup> In other words, the gentleman's town residence is situated conveniently for business rather than pleasure.

<sup>13</sup> Both Vitruvius and Palladio discuss town houses. The architect, Palladio says, must adapt designs to both the client's quality or rank, and "fancy" or individual taste. (Leoni, *Architecture*, 43). Blackstone however, omits all such discussion. Rather, he is interested in the Country House where, as Palladio observes gentlemen conduct "private Affairs and Family-business" (Leoni, *Architecture*, 55). Wotton's allegorical reference to marriage at the end of this passage recommends caution in the choice of site, suggesting that one might otherwise repent at leisure, a hasty choice.

never, or with extreme difficulty, be corrected. That the Air<sup>14</sup> be not too gross nor too penetrating; not impregnated with mineral Exhalations or watry Vapours; not undigested for want of Sun, or unexercised for want of some Wind, which were to live in a Standing pool or lake of Air. The Soil should be dry and healthful, not filled with Mines or Morasses, not in the neighbourhood [*sic*] of Lakes or Standing Water, but if possible, of some running Stream, which creates a convenient Current of Air. Water of a bad Taste or Colour is a pretty sure indication of an unwholesome Soil; as [*one word crossed out*] sickly Trees, a quick Decay in Buildings, sallow Complexions in the Inhabitants, but above all corrupted Entrails in the Animals there nourished, are of some Impurity of the Air.<sup>15</sup> Palladio advises to build on an Eminence, where he says both the Air and Soil are sure to be purer than below: and besides the want of pleasurable prospects in a valley or bottom, it has likewise these Disadvantages; That if the Sun cannot come there, the Air will prove damp, rotten, and infectious; on the contrary, if it has power to shine there, it will [9] be intolerably hot, from the Reflection and Closeness of the adjoining Hills. So with regard to Wind, there will either be too much or too little. If it want a free Current, the Air will stagnate and corrupt: If there be one, the Vicinity of the Hills will cause a greater Draught, and improve the Keeness of the Wintry Blasts. But here, as in all other rules, a Medium

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<sup>14</sup> "the Air". Overwritten.

<sup>15</sup> Vitruvius was the first to outline the importance of selecting a wholesome site for a city based upon the area's climate, the direction of the prevailing winds, its water supply, and the condition of local soils. (*Ten Books*. I:IV, 17-21). Animal entrails, the liver in particular, were deemed to reveal both the best site and orientation of a new city because they were, in effect a map of the area. This observation was not included in the 'Abridgment'. It appears as a margin note for insertion. As such notations are in a darker ink and more mature hand, it seems reasonable to conclude that they were made during the 1746-47 revision process and will be regarded as such throughout this edition. Blackstone changed the final wording slightly however from the original margin note which reads "The Antients used to judge the Quality of the Air by the Entrails of the Beasts that were nourished there". 'Abridgement', 1. Its deliberate inclusion in the 'Elements' is interesting because, in general, Blackstone's practice is to disregard what might have been regarded as outdated practice (such as Wotton's astrological remarks) in favour of a more modern scientific approach inline with the Newtonian thought of the early Enlightenment.

must be observed; and perhaps the Side of a Hill may be a better British Situation, than the top of it.

Some Precepts are oeconomical; that the Villa be situate[d] as near the Center of the Estate as the other Conditions will permit; that it want neither Water nor Fuel; that it be easy of Access, and not too far from some Town of Note or navigable River, for the convenience of Provision and Carriage, with other domestic Considerations. Some are optical, touching the choice of [*one word crossed out*] a Prospect, which should not be confined, nor yet too vast and indefinite. Some lastly prudential, as not to build too near a great Neighbour, lest we be obscured by brighter Beams than our own.

### Chapter 3. ~.

#### Of the Structure, and first of the Materials.<sup>16</sup>

The other general Division of this Science is with regard to the Work or Structure. This Part is generally most attended to by the mechanical Architect, he being not so often consulted in the Situation, as the Contrivance and Execution of a Building. Hence it is that this part has almost intirely appropriated to itself the Title of Architecture; though the philosophical Architect has full as much, if not more, regard to the first Branch:<sup>17</sup> For an indifferent Edifice in a convenient and delightful Situation, is far more eligible than the most beautiful Structure in a bad one; which though indeed a Jewel, is a Jewel buried in a Dunghill.

In treating of the Structure, we shall, first consider the principal Parts, then the Accessories or Ornaments: And to the Principals belong, first, the Materials, then the Disposition or Form.

[10] With regard to Materials, they may probably seem more the Concern of the manual Artisan, the Mason, the Carpenter, or the like; but surely it can never be

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<sup>16</sup> This chapter is based upon Wotton, *Elements*, I: 12-13 and 26, Perrault, *Abridgment*, I: II, 33-44, and Leoni, *Architecture*, I: II, III, IV, and V. The chapter differs only slightly to the corresponding chapter of the 'Abridgement' in that Blackstone refines the technical information regarding the treatment of stone, drying of bricks, and the addition of river sand to lime and mortar. Despite, or perhaps because of, these technical details it is in this chapter that Blackstone's concern with the intellectual aspect of architecture rather than the manual process of building itself becomes apparent. He draws a clear distinction between the contemplative role of the architect, whom he refers to as the philosophical, or speculative, architect and the builder who is referred to as the mechanical, or secondary, architect. Blackstone was familiar with the accepted contemporary hierarchical division of knowledge (of which Chambers' chart, and Blackstone's own analysis of the 'Abridgement' are examples. (See Appendix figs. 28 and 29) which placed theory above practice. As Blackstone expresses it, the architect's "Ambition should be to make the Form triumph over the Matter". Thus the 'Elements' itself commences with the intellectual aspect of architecture before descending to deal with its physical aspects.

<sup>17</sup> That is to say the architect is least interested in the physical, or "mechanick" aspects of building. Wotton considered that the architect's "glory doth more consist, in the Designment and Idea of the whole *Worke*, and his truest ambition should be to make the *Forme* which is the nobler part (as it were) triumph over the *Matter*". Wotton, *Elements*, I: 21. Throughout the treatise, such Platonist philosophy often sits comfortably alongside Newtonian science.

thought beneath the Dignity of a true Artist to examine the Properties of Stone and Wood, and to chuse such as are properest for the Work if it be only for his own Sake; that the Building, and with it his Fame, may endure the longer. Yet must it be allowed that the particular Parts of this Duty belong rather to a sort of Super-Intendant or secondary Architect. However, a general and speculative Knowledge is absolutely necessary for a compleat Master of his Profession.

A competent Knowledge, in particular, of the Sap and Juice of Stones is (as Mr. Boyle observes)<sup>18</sup> of the last importance: The same Sort of Stone, dug out of the same Quarry, at one season, being found to moulder away in a few Winters, which, dug at another Season, will brave the Weather for many Ages. And there are others, which, though dug at a proper juncture, will make but ruinous Buildings, if used at improper Seasons. Again, as there are some Stones which will decay in a few Years, so there are some which do not arrive at their full perfection of Hardness in 30 or 40 years, nay, in a much longer Time. Such is supposed to have been the nature of Porphyry, which the Antients worked into all Shapes, and the Modern Tools will hardly touch.<sup>19</sup> Some Stones also prove better when used within-doors, others are more adapted to the Weather, and even without, different Stones should be suited to different Aspects and Situations; Some being found to moulder more than others if exposed to the Sea, etc. or to be more subject to crack, if exposed to the Northern Frosts. Alberti<sup>20</sup> indeed seems to have paid no regard to this caution, when he advises

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<sup>18</sup> R. Boyle. 'The Usefulness of Philosophy', *The Philosophical Works Of The Honourable Robert Boyle Esq; Abridged, Methodized, And Disposed Under The General Heads Of Physics, Statics, Pneumatics, Natural History, Chemistry, And Medicine. The Whole Illustrated With Notes, Containing The Improvements Made In The Several Parts Of Natural And Experimental Knowledge Since His Time*, P. Shaw, (ed.) 3 vols., (London, 1725).

<sup>19</sup> According to Chambers porphyry is the hardest variety of marble "antiently brought from *Numidia* in *Africa*; the most beautiful is that, whose Red is the most vivid and the stains the whitest and the smallest". See Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 257.

<sup>20</sup> Leoni Battista Alberti. (1404-1472). Italian architect and polymath. His *De Re aedificatoria* (c.1452, 1485) was the first architectural treatise of the Renaissance. (Trans. J. Leoni), I have used the 1955

all the Stone to be not only of the same kind, but dug out of the same Quarry. And thus far he is certainly right, that such Stones as will bear those trying Situations, may with safety be used in any other Aspect of the Heavens.<sup>21</sup>

The same Author directs that all the Timber be cut out of the same Forest. And as for Timber in general, it has many circumstances that deserve our enquiry. It should be felled in Autumn, or rather Winter; because the Sap which rises in the Spring and Summer is very apt to breed Worms, dilates the Fibres and thereby renders it weak and Spongy, and apt to cleave when it dries: whereas the Cold closes and hardens it. Sap in short is so prejudicial to Timber, that it is highly proper [11] to cut your Trees round about quite through the Bark, and let them stand some time to drain before you fell them.<sup>22</sup> Neither will it be then dry enough to use till it has been felled at least 3 years. As for Trees which are very quick in their growth, they are seldom fit to be trusted in Building because of their abundant Moisture and the sponginess of their Texture. Trees of principal Use and profit are the following.

Oak, which has no Equal for enduring all Seasons, whether it be exposed to the Air, the Water, or both.

Elm, which is of singular Use when always wet, or always dry, and particular[ly] serviceable by its Toughness.

Beech, which, if constantly wet, is judged to outlast Oak itself, and is besides of use to the Carvers, etc. for its fine Whiteness and delicate Grain.

Ash, which is of universal Use; for Carpenters, Coopers, Turners, Plough and Wheelwrights, Gardeners, etc. and for Builders, if it may lye dry.

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reprint of the 3rd (1755) edition (J. Rykwert, ed.). Blackstone's reference is from Wotton, *Elements*, I: 12, but see Alberti, *Ten Books*, II: VIII, 31-32.

<sup>21</sup> In other words under Heaven or in other geographical locations.

<sup>22</sup> i.e. to ring bark.

Walnut, which is of great service, unless exposed to Wet, by reason of its curious Colour, and Freedom from Worms.

Fir or Deal, which is much used within doors, being very fit for any works of Ornament, but is subject to Worms and Fire.

Larch, which will not easily take fire, and may therefore be very properly used, in places subject to Danger from thence.

Chestnut, which next to Oak is most sought for, it being very lasting.

Service, which being of a fine grain is much used in Joinery, and also yields Beams of a considerable Bigness.<sup>23</sup>

Poplar, Abel,<sup>24</sup> and Aspen, which differ little from each other, and are much used of late instead of Deal, for they look as well, and are much firmer and harder.

Alder, which is extremely proper for Water pipes, and for Piles in marshy Places, since when always wet, it grows as hard as a Stone.

As to [p̄es] the position of Timber for Traverse-Work,<sup>25</sup> one Caution, may not be unnecessary; viz. If the Beams be not square, to lay them not flat, but edgewise; it being demonstrable that a Beam, whose Breadth is double its thickness, will, if placed that way carry twice as much weight, as if it were placed the other.

[12] In Bricks also, we should mind the Earth they are made of, that it be not sandy, which will render them both heavy and brittle, nor too, fat,<sup>26</sup> lest they crack in the drying. The time for making them is Spring or Autumn. The Antients used not to bake but dry their Bricks, which were made of a whitish Earth called Quadrells,<sup>27</sup> which are used abroad to this day. But with us they must be well burnt; and

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<sup>23</sup> Service Tree (*Sorbus domestica*).

<sup>24</sup> Abele (*Populus alba*), the white poplar tree.

<sup>25</sup> Beams placed transversely, or cross-wise, as support.

<sup>26</sup> i.e. thick.

<sup>27</sup> Palladio describes bricks as "Artificial Stones" or Quadrells, (Leoni, *Architecture*, I: I, 3).

Goldman<sup>28</sup> directs that after one burning they be steeped in Water and burnt afresh, which will give them, he assures us, a double Strength.

Nor does the Architect think it beneath him to descend yet lower; to the Examination of Sand, Lime, and Mortar. Sand should be dry, not fat and earthy, which will appear from several Experiments: For good Sand when rubbed between the Hands should crackle, when put in Water or on a clean Linen Cloth, should not muddy the one, nor Soil the other. It should not be long exposed to the Air before it < is > used, lest it get Earthy, and imbibe the floating seeds of Shrubs and Wall-Flowers,<sup>29</sup> than which nothing is more prejudicial.

De L'Orme<sup>30</sup> would have Lime made of the very same kind of Stones, as is used in the Building, as though they would sympathize and join the better by a kind of original Kindred: A notion, it may be, too refined. However it must be confessed an Error of no small moment to make Lime of any common Refuse-Stuff; whereas the Italians at this day (and much more did the Antients) burn their firmest Stone and even Fragments of Marble itself which in time becomes almost Marble again, or at

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<sup>28</sup> Nikolaus Goldmann (1611-1665), whose treatise *de Stylometris*, Chambers describes thus: "publish'd in Latin and High-Dutch, in the year 1661 has done good Service in reducing the Rules and Orders of *Architecture* to a further degree of Perfection, and shewing how they may be easily delineated by means of certain Instruments invented by him", Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 58. This paragraph, with the exception of the reference to Quadrells, is taken from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 126.

<sup>29</sup> This injunction against Wall Flower seeds is not found in any of Blackstone's sources. It seems likely that Wall Flower seeds germinate readily and that seeds present in a mortar mix may germinate, thereby weakening the wall. There is no guarantee however that the plant to which Blackstone refers is that now known as the Wall Flower. Not only may plant names have changed over time but also according to place and dialect. For example, in his *Mayor of Casterbridge* Thomas Hardy (himself a trained architect), describes "a grizzled church" from which "the mortar from the joints of the stone work had been nibbled out from time and weather, which had planted in the crevices thus made little tufts of stone-crop...". This plant he describes in his notes as a "herb with yellow flowers". T. Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, (Harmondsworth, 1983 c. 1888), 96 and n. 44, 422.

<sup>30</sup> Philibert De L'Orme (1510-1570). Author of *Nouvelles Inventiones pour bien bâtir à petis frais* (Paris, 1561). According to Tzonis and Lefaivre, De L'Orme, was the son of a master mason in Lyon. He received a humanist education and his architectural writings are "steeped in hermeticism". One time superintendent of the king's works under Henri II, his *Nouvelles Inventiones* "embraces ingenuity, novelty and economy, rejecting the strict adherence to established Italian prototypes". The work was re-edited 1568, 1576, 1626 and 1648. Blackstone appears to know of him only what he reads in Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*. See A. Tzonis and L. Lefaivre. *Emergence of Modern Architecture: A Documentary History From 1000-1810*, 2004, 131-137 and 141-147.

least of Indissoluble Durity. Good Lime should be well burnt, and well quenched. It is well burnt when it is  $\frac{1}{3}$  lighter than the Stone it is made of. It is well quenched when it becomes fat, and will stick to a knife thrust into it.

On the contrary, Mortar, if it sticks to the Trowel is good for nothing. Three parts of dug Sand, or two of River or Sea-Sand are allowed to one of Lime. If River or Sea-Sand be used, Vitruvius prescribes  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Tiles well beat to be mingled with it. The Mortar should be mixed and worked thoroughly till it become perfectly springy and elastic like a Jelly.

Thus far at least is necessary to be known by the most speculative Architect; though his true Glory, and indeed his very Essence, consists in the Designment and Idea of the whole Work, and his Ambition should be to make the Form triumph over the Matter.

[13] One thing must not be forgotten under this head: Always to have sufficient Materials ready before we begin to build; for when we build by fits, now one piece, then another, the Work dries and sinks unequally; whereby the Walls grow full of Chinks and Crevices, a thing to be ever most industriously avoided.

## Chapter 4. ~.

### Of the Disposition of the Materials, or Form.<sup>31</sup>

We are next to proceed to the Disposition or Form, where we will first consider the general Figuration, and then the several Members or Parts of a Building.

Figures are either curved, angular, or mixed and compounded of both; and of Curves, some are compleat, as just Circles, others deficient as Ovals etc. The circular Form is very commodious, as being the most capacious of any; very strong and durable, as being the most united in its parts; and very beautiful, on account of its Compleatness and Uniformity. For which reason the Antients used it in Temples, Amphitheatres, and the like public Buildings, which needed no Compartition.<sup>32</sup> But for private Uses, as it is a very expensive, so it is a very unprofitable Figure; for much Room is lost in the bending of the Walls when it comes to be divided, besides an ill Distribution of Light. Deficient Curves have the same Inconveniences, without the same Conveniences, being of less Beauty, as well as less Capacity.

As to angular Figures, this Art loves neither many, nor few Angles. For the Triangle, which has the Fewest, is condemned above all others, as having neither Firmness nor Capacity: and because also irresolvable into any other regular Figure, but itself in the inward Partitions.

As for Pentagons, Hexagons etc., they are fitter for military than civil Architecture. So that Rectangles are the only figures proper to be used, in which there

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<sup>31</sup> Compare Wotton *Elements*, I, 18-19 and 20-21, and Perrault, *Abridgment*, I: III, 29-30. This material comprised the third chapter of Blackstone's 'Abridgement' and is transposed almost verbatim, the only change being the omission of an observation that circular rooms may be lit from the centre of the roof.

<sup>32</sup> The internal distribution of rooms.

do not occur so many difficulties in disposing the Lights, and saving the Vacuities,<sup>33</sup> as in acute or obtuse-angled ones. But whether the exact Square or the Oblong be [14] the better, will be best determined by the particular conveniences of private persons: If it be the latter, the Length should not exceed the Breadth by above one Third.

With regard to mixed Figures, they may be judged of by the Rules of the Simpler ones. They indeed seem to offend against Uniformity; but a good Architect will easily reconcile that and Variety, though their Natures seem very opposite. This the Sovereign Architect has done in the human Structure, in which, though the Members be mostly different, they are all uniform.<sup>34</sup> Having thus touched the general Figuration,

We come to the several Members or Parts of a Building, which may be comprized under 5 Heads, 1. The Foundation, 2. The<sup>35</sup> Walls, 3. The Apertures, 4. The Compartition, and 5. The Cover.

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<sup>33</sup> Empty spaces. Blackstone is referring to Wotton's remark (Wotton, *Elements*, I: 18-19) regarding military buildings, the design of which had the effect of casting the corners of some rooms into deep shadow and thereby rendering them unusable unless windows were ingeniously placed.

<sup>34</sup> Blackstone seems to struggle with this concept, perhaps because he has not distinguished the difference in the ways Wotton and Perrault interpret Vitruvius on this point, though, like Vitruvius, both have used the analogy of the human body. Indeed Chambers, who frequently compares and contrasts the views of the most influential architectural writers, quotes Wotton on this matter but overlooks Perrault's view (Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 77). Vitruvius declares symmetry to be "a proper agreement between the members of the work itself, and relation between the different parts and the whole general scheme ... Thus in the human body there is a symmetrical harmony between forearm, foot, palm, finger ... so it is with perfect buildings". (I: II, 14). Wotton understands this to mean that although the human form is comprised of various parts, ("some round, as the *Armes*, some flat, as the *Hands*") their arrangement in pairs renders the body symmetrical. He concludes that the "limmes of a noble *Fabrique*, may be correspondent enough, though they be various (Wotton, *Elements*, I: 20-21). Perrault however understands Vitruvius to mean the proportional relationship between hand and arm; or leg and foot; limb and body. Chambers distinguishes two kinds of symmetry in architecture. First, uniform, in which the Ordonnance is constant throughout the building. Second. Respective, in which "only the opposite sides are equal to each other" (Wotton, *Elements*, I: 372).

<sup>35</sup> Overwritten.

Chapter 5. ~  
Of the Foundation.<sup>36</sup>

The Foundation either takes up the whole Area, as when Vaults<sup>37</sup> and Cellars are to be made, or it is drawn in Cuts and Trenches, as when only Walls are to be raised. It is, properly speaking, so much of the Masonry as reaches as high as the Surface of the Ground, and should always be proportioned to the Load or Weight of [the] Building it is to bear. That this may be firm, we should first of all examine the Bed of Earth on which we intend to build. Vitruvius advises to dig the Foundation, ad Solidum and in Solido, to the Solid and in the Solid; recommending thereby a jealous<sup>38</sup> Examination of the Firmness of the Soil; and advising us not to rest upon any apparent Solidity, unless the whole Mold, through which we cut, have been likewise solid. How deep we should go in this Search is a doubt: Palladio has allowed for this Cavasione or Underdigging a sixth of the Height of the whole Fabric, unless the Cellars be underground; in which case it must be deeper and larger, to resist the Efforts of the Earth, which swells in Winter by reason of the Water it has sucked up.<sup>39</sup> Some Italians prescribe, that when the Limits of a Work are laid out, we should first of all dig our Wells, Cisterns, and Sewers, by which we may not only search the Nature of the Soil in time, but discharge by [15] those Vents such Vapours, as, being pent up, might otherwise peradventure shake the Building.

If the natural Foundation cannot be safely trusted, they fortify the Ground by driving it full of Piles, which is called Pallification; or else lay large wooden Planks at

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<sup>36</sup> Compare Wotton, *Elements* I, 22-27 and Perrault, *Abridgment* I:III, 45-47. All but the last paragraph of this chapter is taken, almost verbatim, from Wotton's *Elements*.

<sup>37</sup> Overwritten.

<sup>38</sup> Thorough, or painstaking.

<sup>39</sup> Perrault, *Abridgment* I:I, 6.

the bottom of the Trenches dug for the Foundation. But the Ground that requires such Fortifying, should never be chosen, but upon the most urgent Necessity.

The Ground being secured, we should next proceed to the Substruction or Groundwork; and this is a kind of artificial Foundation as the other was natural. Walls under-ground are called Substructio, as those above-ground are in the Fronts called Structure, and the Inside-Work or Partition Walls Instructio. Concerning Substruction the chief Remembrances are, 1. That the Bottom be precisely level, to which end the Italians commonly lay a platform of good Board. This our Workmen seem to disregard, digging the Trench at unequal Depths, till they come to the Rock or a Bed of firm Gravel. 2. That the lowest Ledge be merely of Stone, and the broader the better, closely laid without Mortar. 3. That the Base of the Substructio be at least double to the insistent Wall;<sup>40</sup> letting off gradually, till it diminishes to the proposed Thickness. 4. Some prescribe that the Materials, below, be laid as they grew in the Quarry, supposing them to have most strength in their natural Posture: A Thing, if true, much to be regarded. For, as D' L'orme observes, the breaking or yielding of a Stone in this part, but the breadth of the back of a Knife, will make a Cleft of more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  a foot in the Fabric above. So important are fundamental Errors.

Those Walls which are underground, but have earth only on one side, as is the Case in Cellars, should according to Vitruvius have Buttresses next the Earth, distant from each other the breadth of the Wall, and diminishing till they come to the Surface of the Earth, which not only serve[s] to withstand the Pressure of the Earth, but lessens its Efforts when it swells, by dividing it into Parts.

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<sup>40</sup> A load-bearing wall.

[16] Chapter 6. ~.

Of the Walls or Muring.<sup>41</sup>

The Substruction thus laid, we arrive next at the Walls or Muring. Walls are either entire or intermitted: With regard to entire or continued Walls, the great Laws relating to them are, 1. That the Walls stand perpendicular to the Groundwork, the Right Angle being the cause of all Stability. 2. That the massiest and heaviest Materials be lowest, as fitter to bear than be borne. 3. That the Work diminish in thickness as it rises, for the Ease both of Weight and Expense. 4. That certain Ledges or Courses, of more Strength than the rest, be interlaid like Bones; to sustain the Fabric from total Ruin if the Underparts should decay. 5. That the Angles should be firmly bound, which are the Nerves and Sinews of the whole Edifice, and are therefore fortified commonly by the Italians, even in Brick-Buildings, with Squared Stones,<sup>42</sup> which add both Strength and Grace.<sup>43</sup>

In the Size of the Stones or Bricks, a Medium is to be observed; very large or very small Stones being unfit for Building. Of the two, little ones are the best, provided the Mortar be good; for it penetrates them in more parts than it can great ones, and consequently binds better. It is [at] all times ill Husbandry to be sparing of good Mortar.

The Manner of laying the Stones etc. is comprized under the general Name of Masonry. Whereof there are many kinds.

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<sup>41</sup> This chapter is based upon Wotton, *Elements*, I, 27-29, Perrault, *Abridgment*, I:IV, 47-53, and *Cyclopaedia*, 399-400. Blackstone omits a section of Wotton's *Elements* (27-28) which deals with the practical details of wall construction, details which Wotton recommends be left "to the meaner Artificers" or builders (p. 28).

<sup>42</sup> i.e. with quoins.

<sup>43</sup> Taken from Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 131.

< TAB. II.> 1. Net-Masonry, or *Reticulatum*, (No.1.) which consists of Stones perfectly square, and so disposed that their Joints go obliquely, and their Diagonals are the one perpendicular, the other level. This is agreeable enough to the Eye, but extremely apt to crack.

2. Bound Masonry, or *Inserta*, (No.2.) wherein the Stones are placed one over another like Tiles, the Joints of the Beds being level, and the Mounters perpendicular; so that the Joint which mounts and separates two Stones falls directly in the middle of the Stone below. This is much more [17] solid and durable than Network.

3. Greek, or Double-Binding Masonry, (No. 3.) which is that wherein after we have laid two Stones, or Rows of Stones, as in Bound-Masonry, each of which is a Course; another Stone or Row of Stones, which makes 2 Courses, is laid over them. Here not only the stones of the same Course are bound one with another, but also one Course is bound with the other.

4. Masonry by equal Courses, or *Isodomum*, (No. 4.) which differs nothing from Bound Masonry, but that the Stones are rough and unhewn.

5. Masonry by unequal Courses, or *Pseudisodomum*, (No. 5.) which is the same with the last, except that the Courses are unequal one to the other, though the Stones of the same Course are all equal.

6. Masonry filled up in the middle, or *Emplecton*, (No. 6.) which resembles the *Pseudisodomum* in all respects, only that the Stones are set in order in the Fronts alone, and the middle is filled up with Small Stones cast at random among the Mortar.

7. Compound Masonry (No. 7.) so called because compounded of most of the rest by Vitruvius himself. In this the Courses are of squared Stone, disposed in Bound-Work, by equal Courses, and the Middle being left void, is, in order to moisten the Joints of the large Stones, that they may bind the better, filled up with Pebbles and

Mortar thrown in together. After this the Stones of one Course or Parement, are bound to those of another Course with Cramp-Irons, fastened with melted Lead. These seven Methods are reckoned up by Vitruvius;<sup>44</sup> to these we may add,

8. Coffe-Work, or Riempiuta, (No. 8.) which is made by placing<sup>45</sup> two Rows of Planks edgewise, at the Distance of the proposed Thickness of the Wall, and filling it up with Mortar and Stones mingled. Thus the Antients were used to make Piers and Moles in the Sea, the Mortar being composed of Lime, and a Sand, dug near Naples, called Pozzolana; which had this peculiar Property, that in the midst of the Water it became as hard as a Stone.

9. Masonry with irregular Stones, (No. 9.) wherein the stones are of unequal Sides and angles, and no other care used in the forming it, than to place them, by the help of a Plumb-Line, perpendicular to the Ground-Work.

[18] The Antients often used to build with Stones, rough as they came from the Quarry, and to smooth it afterwards. In large Buildings they sometimes worked only the more delicate parts, leaving the rest untouched; which gave rise to what we call Rustic-Work, in opposition to < *Axle* or > After-Work, which is made with hewn < or axed > Stone.

In imitation of this, we sometimes build with squared Stones, the outward Surface of which is hatched and picked with a Hammer, which goes by the name of Rustic Work. (No. 10.) The Edges of these are frequently, and indeed generally, chipped and chamfered off, and they are then called, by Vitruvius, *Lapides minantes*.<sup>46</sup> When the Edges are chamfered, the Surface is not always thus hatched and roughed, but smooth and plain. (An Example of both sorts is in No. 11.) These

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<sup>44</sup> Perrault, *Abridgment*, I: II, 47-50.

<sup>45</sup> Overwritten.

<sup>46</sup> Roughened stones.

Sorts of Stones, both plain and rough, chamfered or unchamfered, are often applied to the Corners of Walls etc., or Quoins, (from Ἄγκυρα, an Elbow)<sup>47</sup> which are then called Rustic Quoins, (No.12.) The Stretchers (or those Stones that lye lengthwise) being twice as long as the Headers, or those that lye endwise.

Rustic Work is chiefly to be used in artless Buildings, and rude Imitations of Nature, in the Sea-Fronts, Waterworks,<sup>48</sup> etc.: But may also be not improperly applied in noble Edifices, where it sometimes forms the first Story, and is a Sort of Substruction above-ground, supporting a more delicate Structure. It is of this Advantage to high Buildings where only one Order is used, that it prevents the Columns from seeming too massy by placing them aloft; whereas if their Bases stood upon the Ground they would unavoidably appear heavy, unless viewed from a very considerable Distance, which Advantage does not often, especially in Cities, happen.<sup>49</sup>

Thus much for entire Walls; we come next to such as are intermitted; which intermission is made by Columns and Pilasters. These add great Strength as well as beauty to an Edifice. For Walls, though built very thick and strong, and their Foundations laid deep, yet if carried on straight in a Line for any considerable Length, are inclined to bulge, lean, or fall; and are not so lasting as those which are built otherwise than [19] [20] straight, although much thinner. If an Angle be set out about two feet or more at every 20 feet [*sic*] distance, it will remedy this Inconvenience, but at the same time appear unsightly. Nor is the Gothic Practice, of erecting Buttresses, or huge masses of Stone, against the sides of the Wall, a jot more

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<sup>47</sup> The architectural usages of many of Blackstone's Greek references originate with (and are sometimes limited to) Vitruvius. Blackstone transcribes Greek terms from Evelyn's *Account* although the source of this particular Greek term remains unclear. I am grateful to Paul Tuffin for help with Blackstone's Greek terminology which appears in this edition.

<sup>48</sup> That is to say in purely utilitarian buildings.

<sup>49</sup> As opposed to a country house, usually set in expansive, landscaped grounds, and approached from a distance.

ornamental. But if a Column or Pilaster be raised along with it at due distances, which shall project 6 or 8 inches on each side, over and above the thickness of the Rest of the Wall, such Wall will be much stronger than if five times the Quantity of Materials were used in a straight Line, and at the same time refresh the Eye by the beautiful Harmony of its Proportions.

The Columns or Pilasters, here spoken of, are called Inserted, because only part of them appears beyond the Wall, and the rest is supposed to be included in it. But when they stand quite free and detached, they are named Insulated, as resembling the Situation of an Island in the Sea. Sometimes when they stand at inward or outward Angles, they penetrate each other, i.e. the Squares or Circles, which bound their Superficies,<sup>50</sup> are supposed mutually to intersect each other, so neither of the Columns or Pilasters appear entire, but seem to be mutually buried in one another.

< TAB. III.> (No. 1.) This Penetration is often performed with two, sometimes with 3 Columns or Pilasters. Perrault treats it as a very great Abuse, and not without the appearance of Reason: For it implies a most unphilosophical Supposition, that two Solids can penetrate each other; and it differs much from the case of inserted Columns, because there the whole Body of the Column may well be supposed to be buried in the Thickness of the Wall. This is more frequent in Pilasters than in Columns; and indeed if it be ever tolerable, it is when two penetrated Pilasters meet at an outward Angle instead of one entire one; the Nakedness of whose two flat Faces is apt to disgust the Eye.

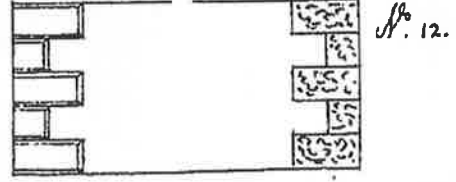
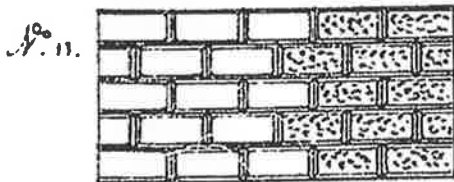
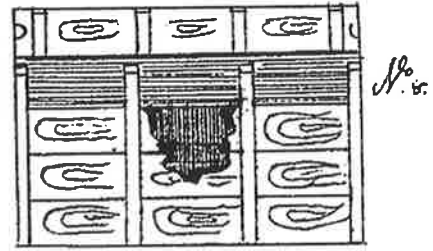
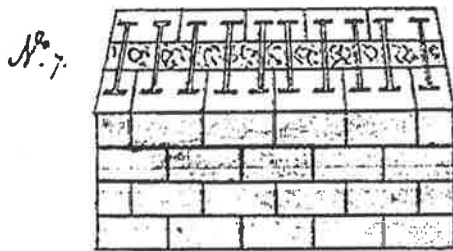
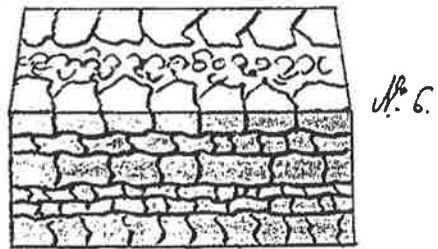
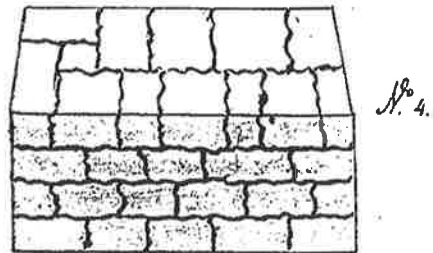
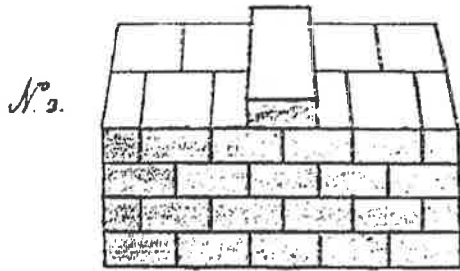
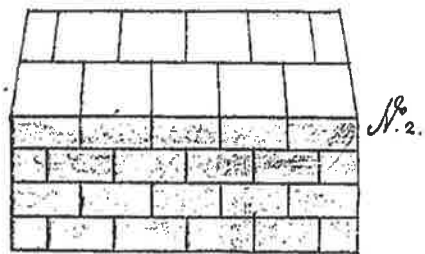
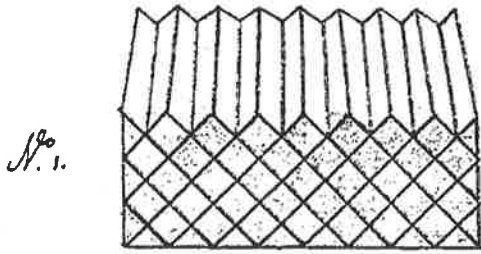
Detached or Insulated Columns and Pilasters, as being properly compleat, are the Subject of our present Discourse. But before we proceed to treat of them, we must step a little aside to give some account of certain Members etc., which will hereafter

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<sup>50</sup> Geometry: superfice is the boundary or surface of a two-dimensional figure, i.e. of length and breadth only.

frequently occur to us, and had therefore better be now spoken to, than interrupt the Thread of the Proportions.

TAB. II.



Of Members or Mouldings, and their Ornaments.<sup>51</sup>

A Member, in its largest Sense, signifies any part of an Order, as Architrave, Freeze, etc. but Members, in a more confined Sense, are taken for what are generally Mouldings; i.e. any Jettings or Projectures beyond the Naked<sup>52</sup> or Flush of a Column, or Wall, or the like; (which our Workmen call Sailings over, the Italians *Sporti*; the Greeks Ἐαφορχι)<sup>53</sup> the Assemblage of which forms all the Decorations in Architecture, wherein they are what Letters are in Writing; and by their various Combinations make an infinite Number of different Profiles, for all sorts of Orders and Compositions.

1. A Fillet (No. 2.) is a little Flat Member, generally used as a sort of Crown over a greater Moulding. It is so called from its Resemblance, whence it is also named Band, Bandette, Cimbria, Cineta, Cincture, Diadema, List, Listell, Listello, Orle, Orlet, Orlo, and Tonia. It is likewise called Annulus and Annulet from resembling a flat ring; Gradetto, as being like a little step; and Ruler, Regula, Reglet, and Ringlet, from resembling a thin Rule or Ruler. It is generally larger than ordinary, where it edges and shuts in the Cymatium of a Cornice, an Abacus, an Apophyge, or a Volute. This Member is never ornamented, unless in profusely delicate Examples.

2. A Platland, Fascia < Swathe, > or Corsa, (No. 3.) is a large flat Member, distinguished from a Fillet by its size. It varies its name sometimes according to the

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<sup>51</sup> This is one of the least revised sections of the treatise and contains one of Blackstone's few references to Gibbs' *Rules*. It is an expanded version of the seventh chapter of the 'Abridgement' and is a blend of terms derived mainly from *Account* and *Cyclopaedia*. Blackstone transposes his sources' French, Italian or Greek terminology. Greek terms are rendered in either the ancient Greek or Arabic alphabet and are reproduced here as they appear in the ms.

<sup>52</sup> According to Chambers: "the Surface ... Thus, we say, a Pilaster ought to exceed the *Naked* of the Wall by so many Inches". Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 283.

<sup>53</sup> The source of this Greek term is unknown. Evelyn renders this *Ecphoras*, see Evelyn, *Account*, 137.

place it is used in. In the Ionic Cornice, where Dentels are cut upon it, it bears the name of a Denticulus. Its Height, for the generality, exceeds its Projecture; except in the upper part of the Cornice of all the Orders; where its Projecture is sometimes double its Height. It there forms what is called the Corona, as crowning the whole Entablature, though it is itself always crowned with some superior Mouldings. [22] It is likewise < there > called Drip, Gocciolatrio, Larmier, Mentum, Mouchette, Stillicidium, Supercilium, and Ventale; from its Uses and fancied Resemblances. The underside or lower Face of the Corona bears the name of Soffita, and also Cofer, Lacunar, Plafond, Plancere, Platfond, or Platform. It is very seldom enriched < itself though the Soffita often is. >

3. An Astragal (N<sup>o</sup>. 4.) is a little Member, which takes its name from the Greek *Αστραγαλ*, being supposed to resemble a round Bone in the Heel. Its Profile, Contour, or Outline which bounds its Surface is a Semicircle. When it is enriched it changes its name, and becomes a Chaplet, (No. 5.) which admits of a great Variety of Ornaments. The most usual is in the form of a String or Chaplet of Beads, represented in the Figure, whence it derives its Title. Hence also our Workmen call the plain Astragal a Bead, as some Writers likewise call it a Baguette.

4. A Torus or Tore (No. 6.) is a large round Moulding, whose Contour is likewise semicircular, but is distinguished from the Astragal by its superior Size. It has its name from resembling a Bed or Pillow, swelled out by the incumbent Weight. It is also called Baton or Bâton, Tandino and Tondim from resembling a round Staff or Mace. This and all the following Members may be enriched at the Builder's Discretion.

5. A Scotia (No. 7.) is a Moulding the direct Reverse of a Tore, being a semicircular Cavity or Channel. I do not remember to have seen it used, but between

2 Tores in the Base of a Column, which makes its under Part project somewhat more than its upper. It has its Name from its Darkness, which proceeds from its Hollowness. It is likewise called Casemate, or Casement, and Cortice; Canal, from being channelled; and Trochilus, as being like a Pulley.<sup>54</sup>

6. A Cavetto is a hollow Moulding (No. 8.) whose Cavity is the just Quadrant of a Circle or half a Scotia, whence it is called Semi-Canal. It is also called Conge and Doric Cymatium. Sometimes we meet with it inverted. (No. 9.).

7. An Ovolo (No. 10.) is a round Moulding, the exact Opposite [23] of a Cavetto; its sweep or profile being a Quadrant of a Circle, or half a Tore, whence it is popularly called Quarter- Round. It is likewise called the Lesbian Astragal, Bedding-moulding, and Boultel or Boultin. It is seldom, if ever, to be found inverted. It is sometimes enriched with a particular Kind of Sculpture, invented by Callimachus<sup>55</sup> (No. 11.) by us, from their Resemblance called Eggs and Anchors, and by the French Oeuf. By the Antients it was called Echinus, from the Resemblance the figures bear to Chestnuts cut open, and discovering oval-shaped Kernels, which being flattened a little at the top, thence derive the Name of Decacurinata Ova. An exact Method of forming them may be found in Gibb's *Rules*, but is too long to be here inserted.<sup>56</sup> The principal Proportions are taken from a Division of the Height of the Ovolo into 9 parts; 2 of which are allowed for the top of the Darts or Anchors; 2 likewise for the

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<sup>54</sup> Hersey offers an intriguing explanation of this association of the scotia with darkness. The scotia casts deep horizontal shadows. He argues that these shadows held deep meaning for it was the name of the goddess of darkness and the underworld. His argument is that darkness or shadow “was perceived ... not as mere absence of light but as a palpable substance, a vapour that was dark because it was dense with the tiny mote-like souls of the dead”. *Lost Meaning*, 21, 23.

<sup>55</sup> This attribution was inserted during the revision process. According to *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary*, (3rd ed.), Callimachus (fl. 250 BC) was an influential poet, author of some 800 works. Ovid reputedly based his *Fasti* upon Callimachus' *Aitia*. See Chapter 12 ‘Of the Corinthian Column’, below for Blackstone's account of Callimachus' invention of the Corinthian capital.

<sup>56</sup> Gibbs, *Rules*, 21-22. It seems likely that the egg and dart moulding was originally intended to represent “eggs laid by the innumerable birds belonging to temples, ranging from hens to turtledoves ... sold as souvenirs” and carved upon altars. See Hersey. *Lost Meaning*, 34.

top of the Husk or Shell on either Hand; 6 for the greatest Diameter, crossways, of the Egg or Kernel; and 8 for the distance from one corner of the Shell to the other.

8. An Ogee (No. 12.) is a Moulding < 3 > concavo < 1 >-convex < 2 >; the one Half, which projects farthest, being convex, the other concave. It is also called *Talon*, *Lysis*, and Lesbian *Cymatium*. It is often found inverted. (No. 13.).

9. A Cymatium, or *Cyma*, (No. 14) from *Κυματιου* or *κυμα*<sup>57</sup> a Wave, being thought to resemble one, is also a *concavo-convex* Moulding; but the very Reverse of an Ogee; the Half which projects farthest, being concave, and the other convex. It is also called, by some, but ignorantly, *Simus*:<sup>58</sup> by others *Gula*, *Geule*, and *Gorletta* from a fancied resemblance to a human Throat; it also bears the name of *Gorge* and *Doucine*; and lastly, when used in the Cornice to crown the whole, it is by some called *Epictheahes* and *Intavolate*. It is often to be met with, inverted: concerning which there has been some small Doubts, many Writers, for want of a due Attention, having confounded the inverted Cymatium (No. 15.) with the Ogee, whereas the Distinctions between the Ogee and Cymatium, whether inverted or otherwise, are very easy. When the Convexity projects farthest and is uppermost, it is then an Ogee; when it is lowermost, but still projects farthest, it is an inverted Ogee; When the Concavity is uppermost and projects farthest, it is a Cymatium; when lowermost, and projects farthest, a Cymatium inverted.

[24] These are the Mouldings, which, as we have seen, may be reduced to nine, though they bear so great a Variety of Names; proceeding from the Affectation or Negligence of architectonical Writers, who sometimes make use of one Name, sometimes of another; often adopting those of other Languages, when our own are full as expressive.

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<sup>57</sup> *Κυματιου* is a diminutive form of *κυμα* and thus infers 'little wave'.

<sup>58</sup> As does Evelyn. See Evelyn, *Account*, 133.

To these Nine may be added what does not, strictly fall under any of their Denominations; and that is The Plinth. (No. 16) a flat Square Member, called also Quadra, Socle, Zocco, and Zoccolo. As a necessary Member in all Bases it might be reckoned a Species of Platband; but as it is now and then made use of to support a Column by way of Pedestal[s], and the like, it seems to be somewhat distinct. It is derived from the Greek *Πλωθος* a Brick, and was originally no more than a square brick, to preserve the wooden Posts it supported from rotting. From being the bottom of the Base or Foot of a Column, it is sometimes called Slipper. The Plinth of a Wall, which the workmen call a Watertable, is any high flat projecture, serving to mark the Floors, sustain the Eaves, or the like.

We may likewise here mention one or two Ornaments, which in our progress we may have occasion to speak of. And first the Console < Cartell > Braget, shoulderpiece, or Corbell. (No. 17.) called also Cartouch and Scroll: which often projects to support a small Cornice, Doorcase, etc. Palladio reckons it an insufferable Abuse, to load it with any thing weighty.<sup>59</sup> When it is made of the End of a Beam cut triangular, it is called Ancon. Where inverted, it bears the name of Cantaliver.

Festoons (No. 18.) are Assemblages of Fruit, Flowers, Foliages, Shells, etc, according to the place where they are used. They are in imitation of the Garlands which the Antients hung up in their Temples etc, upon Festivals, and are of various forms.<sup>60</sup> They are sometimes supported by Putti, i.e. little Boys or Cupids. Roses are often used singly, without any other concomitants.<sup>61</sup> Festoons differ from what is

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<sup>59</sup>'Errors and Abuses Introduced Into Architecture', Leoni, *Architecture*, I:XX, 24-25.

<sup>60</sup> Blackstone mentions here "Assemblages of Fruit, Flowers, Foliages, Shells, etc." as well as "Festoons" and "Wreathed Foliage". Hersey argues, convincingly, that vegetative and other ornamentation featured in classical architecture originated with ancient Greek sacrificial religious rites. Annotations identify relevant instances of such symbolism as they occur throughout this edition. See G. Hersey. *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture: Speculations on Ornament from Vitruvius to Venuti* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 11-45.

<sup>61</sup>Companions, accompaniments.

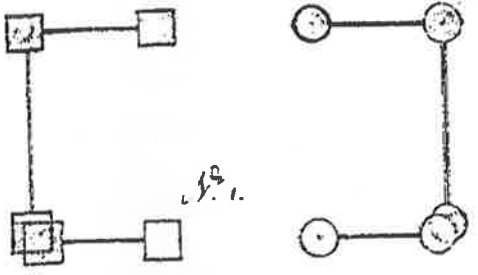
called Wreathed Foliage, which is a Cylinder of Leaves, round which a Band or Fillet runs helically, in the manner of a Herald's Wreath.<sup>62</sup> The middlemost Ornament of the Chaplet, (No. 5.) somewhat resembles it.

The Frette, or Guilochi, (N<sup>o</sup>. 19) is a Knot or Ornament consisting of one or more Lists or Fillets, variously interlaced and woven. They must run parallel, at Distances equal to their own breadth, and every Return and Intersection must be at right Angles. The French Word literally signifies the Timber Work of a Roof; whose Crossings etc., this is thought to resemble. [25]

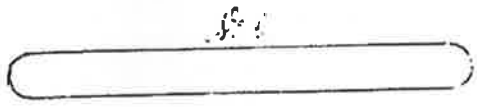
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<sup>62</sup> Heraldic device: a wreath or roll comprised of two twisted strands of silk (often shown in two colours), and supporting a crest.

TAB. III.



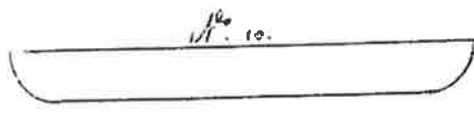
N<sup>o</sup>. 1.



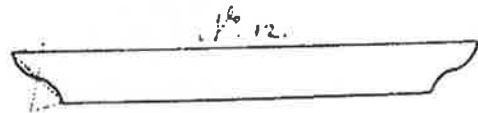
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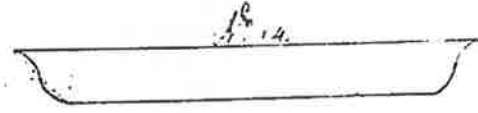
N<sup>o</sup>. 3.



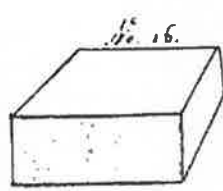
N<sup>o</sup>. 10.



N<sup>o</sup>. 12.



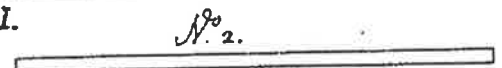
N<sup>o</sup>. 14.



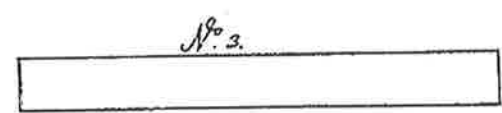
N<sup>o</sup>. 16.



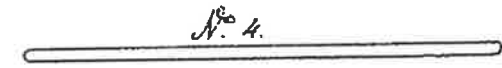
N<sup>o</sup>. 17.



N<sup>o</sup>. 2.



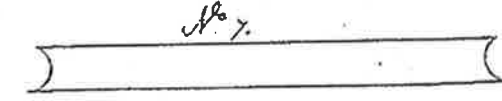
N<sup>o</sup>. 3.



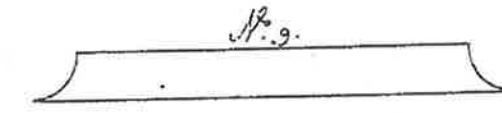
N<sup>o</sup>. 4.



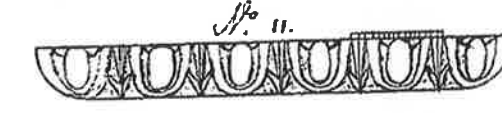
N<sup>o</sup>. 5.



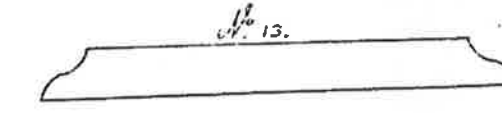
N<sup>o</sup>. 7.



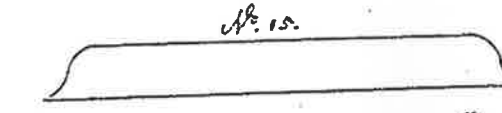
N<sup>o</sup>. 9.



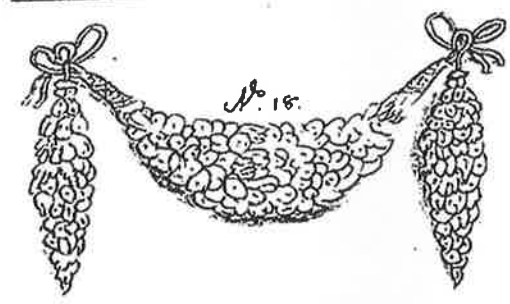
N<sup>o</sup>. 11.



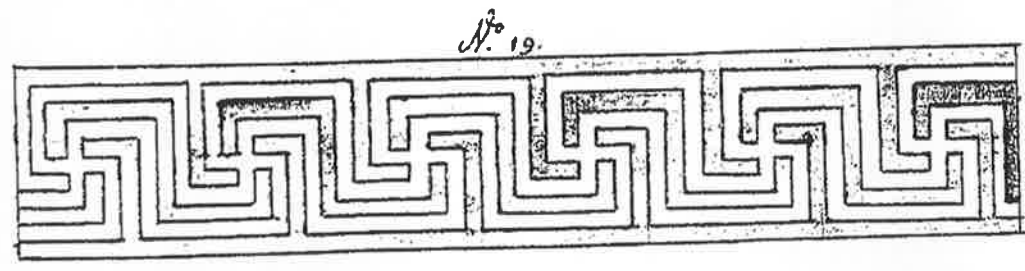
N<sup>o</sup>. 13.



N<sup>o</sup>. 15.



N<sup>o</sup>. 18.



N<sup>o</sup>. 19.

Of the Orders in general, and the Proportions

common to them all. ~.<sup>63</sup>

In treating of Columns and Pilasters the usual Method is to reduce them to certain Orders. By an Order is meant a System of the several Members, Proportions and Ornaments of a Column; or as some will have it, A Column, supported by a Pedestal, and charged with an Entablature. In considering of which, we shall first speak of the general and constituent Parts of an Order; Then, of the Number of the Orders, and their common Proportions with Relation to each other; and Lastly, of the particular Properties of the several Orders, and their private Proportions, with Relation to their own Members only.

The Original of Orders is almost as antient as human Society; The Rigour of the Seasons first led Men to make little Cabins or Huts to retire into, at first half under and half above ground, covered with Stubble. At length growing more expert they placed Trunks of Trees on end, and others across to sustain the Covering. Hence they took the Hint of a more regular Architecture, for the upright Trunks of Trees were turned into Columns; the Girths or Bands, which kept those Trunks from Bursting,

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<sup>63</sup> This is Blackstone's most intricate chapter and possibly the most important because although Fréart's tenth chapter of his *Parallel* is entitled 'Of the Orders in General', and Wotton discusses their common properties (Wotton, *Elements*, I, 30-35), Blackstone's treatment of the subject is far more substantial and demonstrates that his focus is firmly on the Orders as the basis, rather than a feature, of architecture. It is an amalgamation of Chapters six, eight, nine, and ten of his 'Abridgement'. It is also the most heavily revised section of the ms and bears evidence of substantial additions and emendations including lengthy marginalia and interlineations and with sentences and paragraphs being struck through. Eight tabular representations of the proportions of pedestals, columns, entablatures, and various mouldings are included however, which Blackstone omitted from the 'Elements'. He quotes many versions of each term because each molding has several titles according to the Order in which it is used. Where his sources list them, Blackstone quotes the French and Italian terms, repeating some (especially from Evelyn) which appear to be used only in specific regions of Italy: *membretti* (pilaster) and *Asseri* (Dentil) for instance. Where Blackstone provides Greek terms they are usually taken from Evelyn, *Account* and where rendered in the Arabic alphabet from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*.

produced Capitals and Bases; and the Beams laid across were refined into Entablature, etc.<sup>64</sup>

< TAB. IV > An Order (No. 1.) consists of three parts, the Pedestal, Column, and Entablature, each of which consists likewise of three subordinate Parts.

The Pedestal, A, is the lowest part of an Order, from Pes and Stare, serving by way of foot or stand to support a Column. It is also called Stylobates and Stereobates as being a solid Prop, or the Prop of a Column; though some will have Stereobates to signify what the French call Soubassement, and we the Basement or Continued Socle, which is a kind of continued Pedestal, ranging round the whole Building, though without either Base or Cornice; Which are constituent Parts of a regular Pedestal. The Parts are, in all, three. First The Base, (A. 1.) - 2dly The Die, (A 2.) so called from its cubic Figure, called also, Truncus, Dado, Pillon, and Poggio. 3.dly The Cap, (A 3.) Cornice, or Caronix, so named from crowning the Pedestal. The [27] Antients did not always use Pedestals no more than < the > Moderns, so that some have looked on them as by no means essential to an Order, though others are of a different Opinion. A single Pedestal, (No. 2.) is what supports one Column only. A double Pedestal is what supports 2 Columns (No. 3.) without Break or Interruption. A continued Pedestal (No.

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<sup>64</sup> This is a highly condensed version of an account which first appears in *Vitruvius* and was incorporated thereafter into many of the texts available to Blackstone. Hersey and Hendrix have offered a rather different account of the origin of classical architecture, that it originated in the sacred tree. "The Greek art we see today" Hersey wrote "is full of sacred trees. We see sacrifices being made before them, temples built around them and in them, and gods and goddesses appearing in their branches". He continues, such "trees, or groups of trees, were often decorated with the gear and materials used in sacrifice and with the victims' remains: bones, horns, urns, lamps, fruit and vegetable relics, flowers and weapons". See his *Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture*, 11, 12. Hendrix adds that several crucial elements of the classical Greek temple, including the column, pediment, metope and even the proportions and ornamentation, can be dated to between 1700 and 800 BCE and that these forms originate in the worship of the pre-Homeric gods: representatives of "the mysterious forces of the universe ... yet to be personified as the Olympian pantheon". In Crete and Mycenae, he explains for example, "the tree and then the pillar and column were worshiped as gods" and the oak tree as the body of Zeus. The ancient Greek temple, he concludes, "is a text of the epistemological structures of its culture, the formation of its cosmological and philosophical knowledge, in terms of the mythological allegories of the process of creation, and the abstract, pictorial and numerical symbolism of the same myths of creation". See J. Hendrix. 'Architecture and Cosmology in Ancient Greece' in his *Architectural Forms and Philosophical Structures* (New York, 2003), 35-50. The quotes are taken from pp. 35 and 50.

4.) is what supports a Row of Columns without Break or Interruption also; whereby it is distinguished from those which Vitruvius calls *Scamilli impares*<sup>65</sup> and we broken pedestals (No. 5.). which are also continued Pedestals, but with this Difference, that under every Pillar the Pedestal juts out, with a Break as our Workmen term it in the proportions of a single Pedestal; or if juts under 2 coupled Columns in the proportions of a double one. The Spaces marked a a, Columns between the projectures is called the Leaning- or Elbow- place. I know some understand Vitruvius's *Scamilli impares* in a different Manner; but in this Sense he is understood by his incomparable Commentator, Perrault < and also by Inigo Jones. ><sup>66</sup> Though the Antients thus broke the Pedestal sometimes under every Column, yet they were not wont to break the Entablature over them, as some Moderns have wantonly practiced. And the Reason is evident. For every single Pedestal is sufficient to support its Column, and the intermediate Spaces add nothing to the Stability of the Order; whereas those parts of the Entablature which are not immediately over the Columns, are yet supported or should seem to be supported by them; which Support, both in Appearance and Reality is lost, by those childish Breaks and Prominencies, which render the Building infirm and the Proportions trifling and confused.

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<sup>65</sup> The exact interpretation of Vitruvius' term *Scamilli impares* remains unsettled and has long been a contentious issue amongst theorists. Vitruvius declares that if laid level, the line of the *stylobate*, (on which the bases of columns will be ranged), will appear to sag in the centre. In order to counteract this optical illusion, he advises that the level of the *stylobate* be "increased along the middle" by [means of] the *scamilli impares*. This, he adds, will be made clear in a diagram at the end of the book. Unfortunately however, the diagram appears not to have survived, which has given rise to some confusion among commentators. Evelyn (Evelyn, *Account*, 124), like Chambers considers the term to mean blocks beneath the *stylobate* to raise its level to "an agreeable Reconciliation of *Geometry* with the *Opticks*" (Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 349). Blackstone follows Perrault however, who understood the term to mean the projection of the *stylobate* itself. Blackstone confirms this interpretation in Chapters 16, 'The Crowning of the Orders' and 21, 'Of Windows'. For an indication of the contention this term has raised among commentators see H. L. Warren's note on the subject in Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, 320.

<sup>66</sup> Blackstone refers to Jones' note to Plate VIB in Book II where Jones writes "The way of the *Scamilli Impares* from those *Ballustrodes* is set in as much as the Projection of the Base even with the Pedestal. This is part of the *Peristylos* but not yet done". See Leoni, *Architecture*, 70.

The Column (No. 1. B.) is the<sup>67</sup> principal or reigning Part of an architectural Order: So called as Being the Column or Support of a Building. It consists of three parts. 1. The Base, (B. 1.) called also Spira, because it somewhat resembles the Folds or Spires<sup>68</sup> of a Serpent laid at rest. Next comes the Shaft (B. 2.) so called from its Straightness; It is likewise called Fust, Vivo, < Trunk > Scapus, Tige, and in general The Naked, i.e. The Part whence from all of the Projectures are measured. It is always round and strait; for twisted, torsed, wreathed, and the like Columns are Abuses crept into good Building; whose first End being Firmness, can never admit of any apparent Weakness or Shrinking, such as those Extravagancies seem to have.<sup>69</sup> On the contrary, true and [28] regular Architecture aims at the general Appearance of Stability, which [it] is the Reason of.

The Diminution generally used in Columns; which is a Contraction of the upper Part of the Shaft, whereby its diameter is made less than that of the lower Part. It is also partly meant to represent the natural Tapering of Trees, whereof the first Columns were made. By this Diminution Pillars are distinguished from Columns, those being perfect Cylinders, without the least Contraction, as generally used by the Gothic Architects. For the Things which we see in old Cathedrals etc., to support their ungainly Arches and the like, though they seem of a Form hardly regular, are indeed Bundles of Staves, as Evelyn calls them, or slender cylindrical Pillars, which though generally inserted or rather bound together, are in some Instances found insulated and detached.<sup>70</sup> But to return: The Diminution generally commences at one third of the Height of the Shaft, and continues gradually diminishing to the top, where it becomes

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<sup>67</sup> Overwritten.

<sup>68</sup> Spines?

<sup>69</sup> Blackstone would have been familiar for instance with the twisted columns on the facade of St. Mary the Virgin, University Church in the Oxford High St., not far from All Souls College. No doubt he thought them very 'extravagant' indeed.

<sup>70</sup> Blackstone refers to Evelyn's dismissal of these columns as "those Slender and Misquine *Pillars*, or rather bundles of *Staves*". See Evelyn, *Account*, 9-10.

one Sixth less in Diameter than at Bottom. Some indeed will have this Diminution vary in the several Orders, others according, to the Tallness of the Columns; Some prescribe a greater Diminution in general others a less: But we have fixed on this Medium for Reasons that will appear hereafter.<sup>71</sup> Some make the Shaft taper all the Way, from bottom to top, which has not so good an Effect. Some Columns are swelled, or thicker at the place where the Diminution commences than at the bottom by one fortieth of the Diameter, which Swelling is called Entasis. But this is scarce, if at all, to be met with in the best Antient Examples, [and] is quite contrary to the Nature of Trees, which are never seen small at bottom and bulging in the middle, and in great measure destroys as well the real as apparent Firmness of the Column.

If the shaft of a Column be made of one entire Block, the Column is called a Solid one; if composed of many Stones, a Structile.

The Surface of the shaft is sometimes smooth, and sometimes channeled in perpendicular Cavities called Flutes or Flutings, as resembling the Section of that musical Instrument; also Strings, Rugæ, and Cannelures. They go Sometimes the whole Length except a Space equal to their own Breadth at [29] top and Bottom; Sometimes they begin with the Diminution only. Various are their Sorts. Some (No. 6.) are formed by dividing the Circumference of the Column into twenty parts, and forming a Square on each of them, and round the Centre of this Square describing the Quadrant of a Circle, whose Diameter is the Diagonal of the Square; This Arc shall form the Cavity of the Fluting. If You have it shallower, instead of a Square form an equilateral Triangle, whose Vertical Angle shall be

< the > Centre of the Curve which describes the Cavity. Here the Extremities of the Flutings meet in a sharp Edge or mathematical Line. This Manner of Fluting has been

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<sup>71</sup> The reason being that this standard facilitates the application of a standard module which simplifies calculation of the proportions of the Orders.

usually appropriated to the Doric Order. Vitruvius affirms, that instead of twenty Flutings they sometimes made 20 Cants or flat Faces on the Surface, (No. 7.) without any Cavity.<sup>72</sup> But these canted Columns can never have a good Effect, because the Bluntness of their Angles must render the Sides hard to be distinguished.

Another Method of fluting (No. 8) is by making 24 semicircular Cavities in the Surface of the Shaft, which are each of them separated by a List, Ray, or Stria, one third of its own Breadth. This is the most usual Way, generally practised on all the Orders except the Tuscan and Doric, the first of which is never fluted at all; and the latter ought to be only in the former Way.

Sometimes instead of a circular Cavity, a plain Groove is made (No. 9.) as in some Columns in the Pantheon. Sometimes the List is equal to the Fluting (No. 11.) and a little Astragal runs down it, as in the Temple of Mars the Revenger at Rome.<sup>73</sup> But these are rather to be regarded as Effects of a wanton Genius, than Copies to be imitated.

The Terminations of Flutings both at Top and Bottom usually are like the Head of a Niche, being bounded by the same Curve as the Fluting is itself channeled in. There are in some old Examples an Exception or two to this Rule: in some the Head being quite flat and strait; in others the Naked of the Column making the Semicircle, or other Curve on the Fluting, instead of that making it on the Naked.

The lower Third of the Fluting is sometimes found filled up with a certain swelling Ornament, resembling a Rope or Cable, and thence called Cabling, Staving, Enbastone, or Rudenture. (No. 10. is the Plan of it) This [30] is only to be used, when Columns stand on the Ground. For the Intention of this strengthening is, that the

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<sup>72</sup> Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, IV: III, 113.

<sup>73</sup> The Temple of Mars Ultor, in the Forum of Augustus, Rome. Begun by Octavian (later Augustus), to commemorate the battle of Filippi (42 BCE). The incomplete temple was inaugurated on August 1st, 2 BCE and was the location for festivals dedicated to Mars, the god of war. For biographical details see: 'Augustus' in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 151.

Flutings may not be broken and the Column thereby weakened, through Accidents that may happen to them when placed on a Level with the Pavement. It is therefore ridiculous to place cabled Columns on Pedestals or in upper Stories, where they are not liable to such Accidents as being generally out of reach of them.

The Capital, by some called Chapter Chapter, (No. 1. B. 3.) is the highest and last part of the Column. Its uppermost Member is called the Abacus < Plinth or Dye of the Capital. >

Next comes the Entablature (No. 1. C.) the third and last Part of the entire Order, comprehending the Architrave, Freeze, and Cornice. It has its Name from Tabulatum a Story; and is also called the Trebeation, as representing the Beamwork in the primitive Architecture; and the Ornament, because generally the place for Decorations.<sup>74</sup>

1. The Architrave (C. 1.) is the lowest Member of the Entablature, lying immediately over the Column, therefore called, by the Greeks, Epistyle. It represents the principal Beam in Timber Buildings, where it is called the Reason-piece, and Masterbeam: which last is also the signification of the Word Architrave, from ἀρχις, chief, and Trabs, a Beam. The Faces of the Architrave, are so many Platbands one above another, as in some of the Orders it is constituted.

2. The Freeze, (C. 2.) is the second Member of the Entablature, and is properly one large Fascia next above the Architrave and separating that from the Cornice. It is so called from the Latin, Phrygio, an Embroiderer, because frequently adorned with Sculptures in Relievo, imitating Embroidery. So too the Antients called it Zophorus, quasi Ζωοφορος<sup>75</sup>, because often enriched with the Figures of Animals.

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<sup>74</sup> Hersey has suggested that the entablature (as the root of its name indicates) served originally as the tablet or table, atop columns, upon which sacrificial offerings were laid. Hersey. *Lost Meaning*, 30.

<sup>75</sup> That is, bearing the figures (particularly sculptured) of animals.

3. The Cornice, Called also Coronis (C. 3.) as being the Crown and Finisher of the whole Order, is the third and last Member of the Entablature.

Having thus recounted the constituent Parts of the Orders, we proceed next to consider their Number and their common Proportions, with [31] [32] relation to each other: in order to which we shall make use of one universal Scale, Ordonation, or Module; which Module is the Semidiameter of the Shaft of the Column, before the Diminution commences; and this we shall subdivide into thirty Parts or Minutes. By which Means we may see at one View the Proportions of the Orders, both general and particular, which would otherwise cost infinite Pains and Trouble.

< TAB. V. > The regular Orders are five; The Tuscan, (No. 1.) The Doric, (No. 2.) The Ionic, (No. 3.) The Corinthian, (No. 4.) and The Composite, (No. 5.) Of these the three middle ones are of Greek Extraction, the first and last having been added by the Romans.

The usual Method of considering these is according to their Delicacy, beginning with the grossest, The Tuscan, and so proceeding through the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, to the Composite, which is vulgarly taken for the most delicate of all. This Method shall be here observed; premising first, wherein the Delicacy here spoken of consists; which is, the different Height of their Columns, or rather the Proportion which the Entablature bears to the Column. For the Height of the Entablature being always 4 Modules, or two Diameters of the Columns; as that is supported by a longer or shorter Column, it bears a less or a greater Proportion to its Column, according to which Proportion it is denominated more delicate or more solid.

Monsr. Perrault's Design can never be enough commended; for cutting off all Uncertainties, by reducing the orders, and each of them, to a settled Measure; by taking the Medium of the varying Proportions we find in Antient Examples, and

Modern Writers. And he has generally been very happy in the Execution of it. His Plan we shall endeavor to follow, but take the Liberty of varying from him in a few Particulars, especially in the Height of his Columns. The Diameter seems to be the natural and most easy Measure of it; but he, in order to keep up a gradual Delicacy, and set the Composite above the Corinthian Order, has been forced to have recourse to a Fraction of the Diameter. Whereas had he considered the Composite in the Light in which we do, and wherein we are warranted by Vitruvius,<sup>76</sup> and many of the best Moderns, as only the Corinthian altered (by the addition of a new Capital and Entablature) as to its Character, not as to its Proportions, he might [33] have made his Orders gradually more delicate by the Addition of a Diameter to each of them.<sup>77</sup>

We proceed now to take a view of general proportions; and first of those of Pedestals.

The Height of Pedestals is one Fifth of the Entire Order, or one Fourth of the Column and Entablature. The height of the Cap is one, of the Dye five, and of the Base two, Eighths of that of the Pedestal. The Height of the Base is divided into 3 parts, whereof the Mouldings have one, and the Plinth two. The Projecture or Breadth of the Dye is equal to that of the Plinth of the Base of the Column: The Projecture of the Base is equal to the Height of its Mouldings, or one Third of its own Height; and the Projecture of the Cap is equal to that of the Base. Hence we see that as the Orders rise in Delicacy, the Pedestal rises in proportion, since it is always one Fifth of the Order. In cases indeed, of great necessity (as in a second Order, to prevent the Breasts of the Windows from being immoderately high) it is pardonable to shorten the Pedestal.

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<sup>76</sup> Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, IV: I,102.

<sup>77</sup> This paragraph seems to be Blackstone's own. In this instance he follows Fréart. See Fréart *Parallel*, IV: 1,106 for Fréart's condemnation of this innovation. Compare Vitruvius, *Ten Books* IV:1,106.

On the Proportion of Columns depend all the rest; and these, we have observed, vary in the several Orders.<sup>78</sup> The Height of the Tuscan Column is Seven Diameters or 14 Modules; that of the Doric Eight Diameters, or 16 Modules; of the Ionic nine Diameters or 18 Modules; and lastly, that of the Corinthian and Composite Ten Diameters or 20 Modules. The Height of the Base is in all the Orders One Module; though in the Tuscan the Cincture [*three words crossed out*] at the Bottom of the Column is reckoned into it, which is not so in the rest. But the Height of it being in this Order determined to be 3 Minutes, it keeps that Proportion in all the others. So too the Astragal and Fillet at the top of the Shaft being in the Ionic Order determined to be, the former  $3\frac{1}{3}$ , the latter  $1\frac{2}{3}$  Minutes High, (or both together 5 minutes, whereof the former has two thirds and the latter one) this proportion is observed throughout all the Orders. The Height of the Shaft depends upon that of the Capital, which varies in the several Orders. The Height of the Shaft depends upon that of the Capital, which varies in the several Orders; and is indeed the principal Characteristic of them. There is, it must be observed, a wide Difference between the Proportions and the Character of an Order; the former determining its Height and Projectures, the latter prescribing how those Proportions shall be ornamented: The former may be compared to the Outlines of a Picture; the latter to the Colouring. [34] But to return. The Projecture of the Base beyond the Naked of the Column, is one fifth of its Diameter, or 12 Minutes. That of the Cincture at the Bottom of the Shaft is 4 Minutes. To this Cincture the Naked of the Column joins by a Sweep or Arch of a Circle, which kind of joining the French comprize under a general Term (wherever it is joined) viz. Addoucissement or softening, which is used to prevent the meeting of two

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<sup>78</sup> Blackstone highlights the fundamental role of the Orders thereby reinforcing his choice of title: 'Elements of Architecture'. Fréart considers the Orders "no other than the very *Elements of Architecture*". Perrault, *Parallel*, I: I, 8.

flat Members in a Right Angle, which in some Cases would displease the Eye. When a Platband, for instance, is crowned by a Fillet, this Addoucissement is seldom omitted. In the present Case it acquires a particular Name, and is called the Escape, Apophyge, Conge,<sup>79</sup> or Spring of the Column. The top of the Shaft is also joined to the upper Cincture in the same Manner. Of the Diminution and Fluting of the Shaft, we have already spoken. The upper Cincture projects 2, and its Astragal 4 minutes from the upper Naked, which governs all the Superior Projectures. No one Rule can be given for the projecture of the Capital, it varying according to its Orders.

The Entablature is universally 4 Modules or 2 Diameters in Height. In all the Orders, but the Doric, this Height is divided into Ten Parts, whereof the Architrave and Freeze have each of them three, and the Cornice four. The Projectures of the lower part of the Architrave and Freeze are equal to the most diminished Part of the Column, and the Cornice, except in the Doric Order, projects equal to its Heights. The Entablature likewise contains some principal Characteristicks of the Order. The Tuscan is quite plain; The Doric has Tryglyphs and Mutules, The Ionic is to be known by his Dentils; The Corinthian is enriched with Modillions.

By comparing their general Proportions together, as here laid down, we shall perceive a regular Gradation of Delicacy from one Order to another,<sup>80</sup> nay, and in the principal Members of each Order likewise. Thus the Tuscan Pedestal is two Diameters and a quarter in height; the Doric two and an half; the Ionic two and 3 quarters; the Corinthian and Composite, 3 Diameters of the Column. And it is easy to observe both from Sight and Reason, the Members of each Pedestal, the Base, the Die, and the Cap, must [35] necessarily increase in Height by the same regular

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<sup>79</sup> Congé.

<sup>80</sup> According to Chambers gradation "significes and artful Disposition of several Parts, as it were, by Steps, or Degrees, after the manner of an Amphitheatre; so that those place before, do no Disservice, but rather Service to those behind". *Cyclopaedia*, 188.

proportion, with regard to each other. Again; We cannot but observe the regular Increase of the Columns, by the Addition of one Diameter to each in Succession. The Entablatures are all of the same Height, while the Columns are continually increasing; and hence results a gradual Delicacy from the different proportions the Entablatures bear to the Columns; The Tuscan Entablature having Two Sevenths, the Doric One Fourth, the Ionic Two Ninths, and the Corinthian and Composite One Fifth only of its Column. Lastly, let us take the entire Order, Pedestal, Column, and Entablature together, and we shall find the Graduation to continue still regular, and each Order to rise in Delicacy. For the Tuscan has twenty-two Modules and an half, the Doric twenty-five; the Ionic twenty seven and an half; the Corinthian and Composite thirty; each Order increasing after the rate of two Modules and an half.

Upon the Whole we may observe, that the three Grecian Orders, the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, are sufficient for all kinds of beautiful Building. The Solid suits the Doric, and the Delicate the Corinthian Order, while the chaste Ionic is a Medium between both. As for the two Latin Orders, they deserve not to be ranked with these. The Rusticity and Meanness of the Tuscan Order has, or ought to have, exiled it from Cities, and sent it to Country-Cottages; and as for the Composite, it is yet more irrational.

The Tuscan Order may have its use; It may be employed in Works beneath the dignity of the Doric to be concerned in; but where shall we find a place for this newfangled Order, the composite? There is no Building so magnificent, no Composition so delicate, but the Corinthian is in all respects equal to; and if it were not, is the Composite really more delicate, or more sumptuous, as it pretends to be? Certainly the compounded Capital, and the Character of its Entablature give it an

appearance much more massive. [*one word illegible: crossed out*] This Scamozzi<sup>81</sup> seems to have been sensible of, by assigning it its place beneath the Corinthian Order, [36] instead of above it, which it has usually usurped. Others think they ought never to be used both together in the same Building; and indeed one could heartily wish that the Composite was never to be employed in any.

Perhaps we may seem to be too severe upon this Order; especially when we consider that some of the most judicious Masters in this Art, have employed it in their most elegant Structures, nay, and made the Corinthian subservient to it. One would not willingly suspect any Tincture of Gothicism to have remained uneradicated in such eminent Artists, which though watchfully kept under in most other Instances, had here been Liberty given it to display itself, under the specious Pretext of conforming to Antiquity. One would not, I say, venture to suspect it. But on the other hand, our Indignation is the more pardonable, as many of the ablest Architects, have industriously avoided it, and thought as meanly of it as we do; Looking upon it as the Source of all that Confusion and Gothicism, which by trifling and minute Spirits has been introduced into this noble Science.<sup>82</sup>

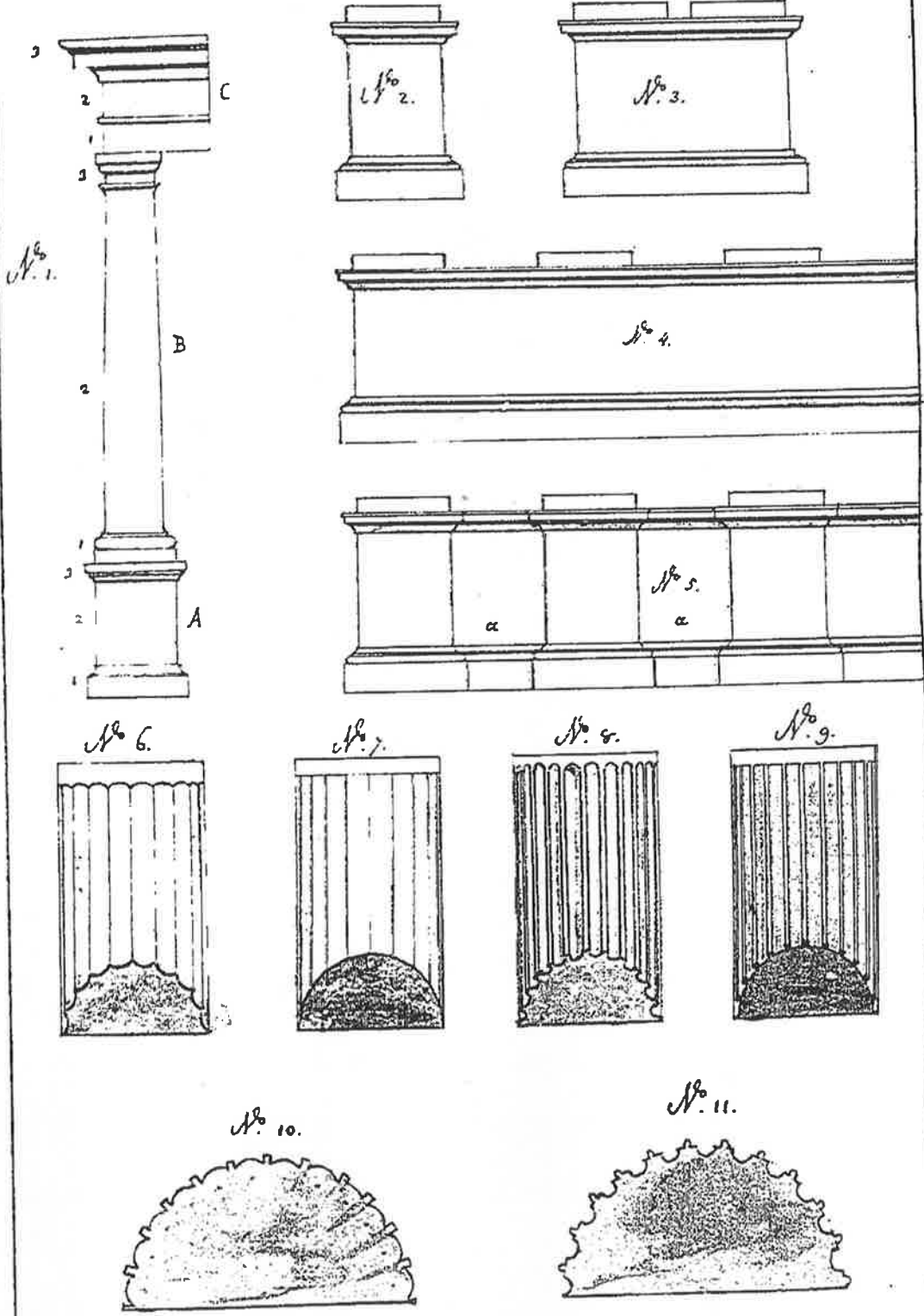
Having thus considered the general and constituent Parts of an Order, ascertained the Number of Orders, and laid down their common Proportions with respect to one another; we shall in the next Chapters proceed to consider the particular Properties of the several Orders, and their private Proportions; with respect of one Member to another. And first of the Tuscan Order.

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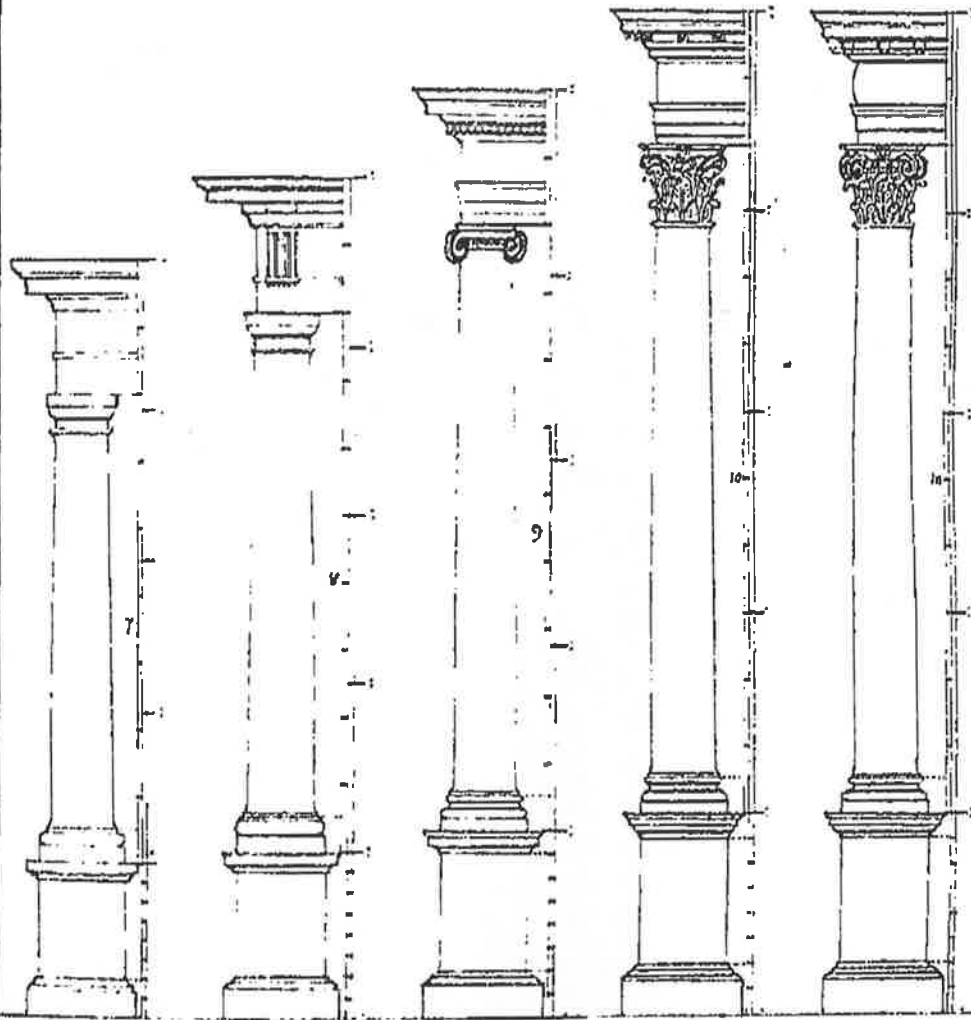
<sup>81</sup> Vincenzo Scamozzi (1552-1660). Italian architect and follower of Palladio. His masterpiece is the Rocca Pisana villa at Longio (1575-1578). He achieved wide and lasting influence via his codification of the Orders in *L'idea dell' architettura universale* (1615). Blackstone's references to him are derived from Leoni, *Architecture*, Wotton, *Elements*, and particularly from Fréart, *Parallel*.

<sup>82</sup> Blackstone expresses a conventional distaste for Gothic architecture. He will continue to do so. Evelyn for instance declares some innovations as barbarities "which we may look upon as purely Gotique" (Evelyn, *Account*, 131). Blackstone appears to have changed his opinion later in life however, for at least one of the architectural projects in which he was involved (Robert Taylor's spire atop St. Peter's church, Wallingford) is of a distinctly gothic design (See *fig. 25*, Appendix).

TAB. IV.



TAB. V.



No. 1.

No. 2.

No. 3.

No. 4.

No. 5.

## Chapter 9. ~.

### Of the Tuscan Order.<sup>83</sup>

The Tuscan Order has its Name from an antient People of Lydia, who coming out of Asia peopled Tuscany, and built after this Order.<sup>84</sup> It is also called the Rustic Order from its Coarseness, and the Gigantic from its Massiveness and Strength. The Proportions are said to be those of a strong, well-built, sturdy, Country Laborer. It is sometimes used [37] [38] in Prisons, Granaries, Magazines, the Piazza's of Markethouses, and other substantial Buildings; but its usual Place and Employment are in underground Work, as Cellars etc.

< TAB. VI > Its Projectures are marked on the Figure; as in all the rest of the Orders. Its Proportions with regard to Height are these.<sup>85</sup>

The Base of the Pedestal being divided into 3 parts; 2 are given to the Plinth < which is as often made round as Square > and one to the Mouldings; which one is again divided into 3 parts whereof two are given to the inverted Cavetto, and one to the Fillet. The Cap<sup>86</sup> is divided into 7 parts, whereof 4 belong to the Platband, 1 to the Fillet, and two to the Cavetto.

The Base of the Column is divided into ten parts, whereof the Plinth has 5, the Tore 4, and the Cincture one.

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<sup>83</sup> Chapter Nine is based upon Fréart, *Parallel*, II: I, 87-92, Perrault, *Abridgment*, I: IV:5, 93-96, and Wotton, *Elements* I: 33-35. The chapter appears in the 'Abridgment' as Chapter Eight. The order in which Blackstone discusses the Orders is changed in the 'Elements'. The 'Abridgment' lists the Orders as: Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, and Composite. Although his antipathy toward the Tuscan and Composite Orders remains, Blackstone lists the Orders in a more conventional manner, i.e. Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Composite, in the 'Elements'. The 'Elements' also provides the reader with a discursive rather than tabular account of their properties and proportions.

<sup>84</sup> See Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 388.

<sup>85</sup> Blackstone's 1743 'Abridgement' included tables listing the proportions of each Order and its various parts. His 'Elements' relates this information in discursive form.

<sup>86</sup> i.e. Capital.

The Capital of the Column < being one Module in Height > is divided into three parts; one of which is given to the Abacus, another to the Ovolo, and the third to the Hypotrachelion and its Mouldings. By Hypotrachelion in this and<sup>87</sup> the Doric Orders is meant that part of the Capital, which lies next above the Column, which has the same projecture as the most diminished part of the column; It is also called Neck of the Column, Freeze of the Capital, Collar, Collarin, and Gorgenin. The Moulding immediately above it, or rather the Moulding immediately under the Ovolo, is in this, and all the Capitals (except the Corinthian, which has it not) termed the Tusarole. To proceed: The one part, allotted this Hypotrachelion and Mouldings, is divided into 8, whereof 2 are given to the Astragal, 1 to the Fillet, and 5 to the Hypotrachelion.

The Entablature is divided into ten parts, whereof the Architrave has 3, the Freeze also 3, and the Cornice 4.

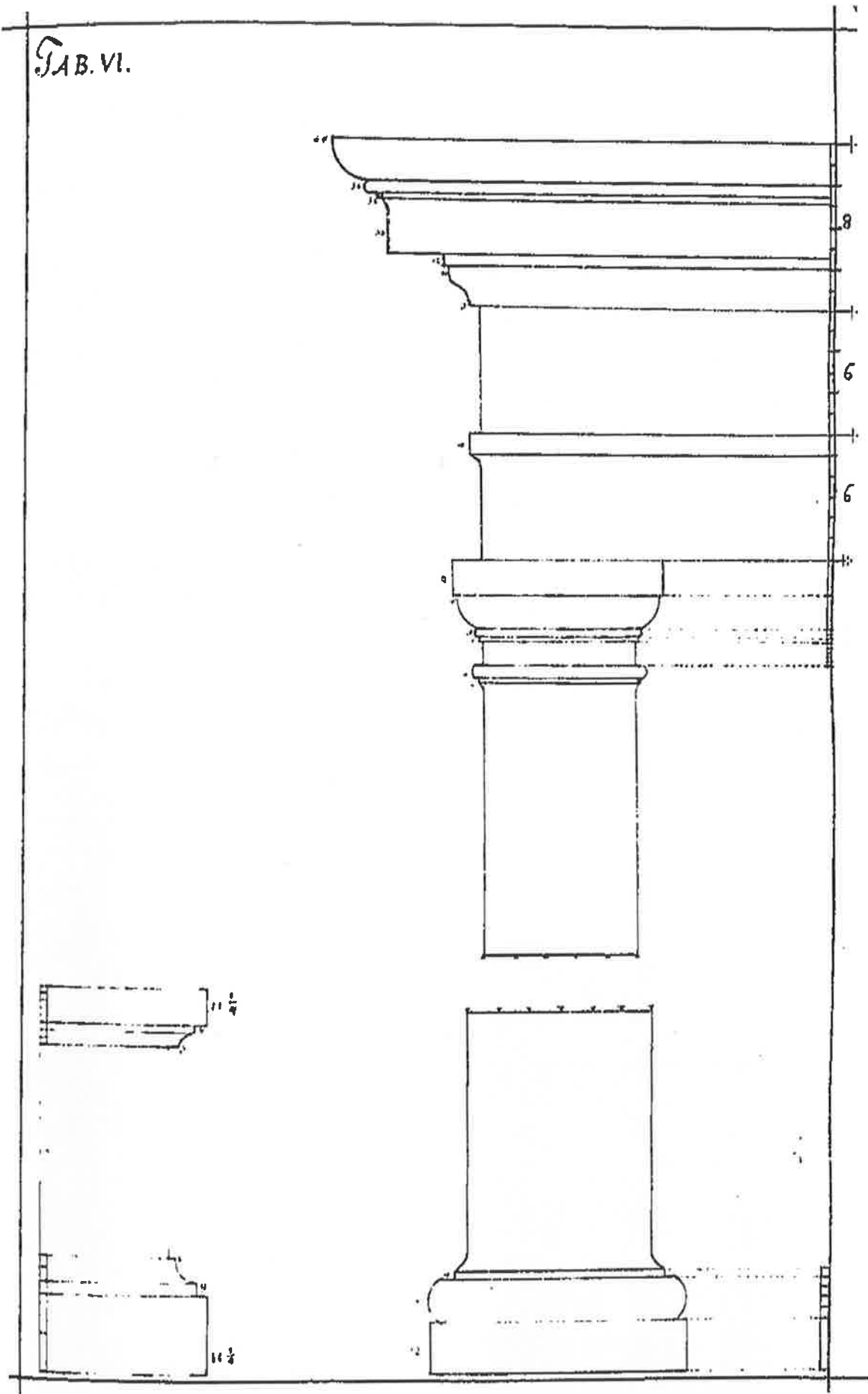
The Architrave is divided into 6 parts, whereof the Fillet has one. The Freeze has no Division. The Cornice has eight parts, two of which belong the Ogee, and half a one to its Fillet; two and a half to the Corona; one to the Astragal and Fillet, whereof the Astragal has two thirds and the Fillet one; and two lastly to the Ovolo, which crowns the whole.

The chief Character of this Order is, that it has no Ornaments; being originally so plain, that instead of Architraves of Stone, they were wont to place wooden Ones over the Column; which were made of two Sabbiers, or Plank-like Beams, joined together and set on Edge. [39]

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<sup>87</sup> Overwritten.

Таб. VI.



[40] Chapter 10. ~.

Of the Doric Order.<sup>88</sup>

The Doric Order is the most natural and best proportioned of any for Strength and Solidity; and is therefore most properly employed in the Gates of Citadels, and Fortresses, the Entrances of strong<sup>89</sup> Towns and the like; where Delicacy is neither convenient nor agreeable: Forasmuch as the heroic Aspect of this Order discovers a certain masculine and natural Beauty, which is, properly speaking, the true Grand Manner.

Now the Grandeur of Manner consists chiefly in not suffering the principal Members of an Order to be subdivided into a Multiplicity of Parts, and in taking Care that they be all great and of an ample Relievo or Swelling that so the Eye beholding nothing mean or little, the Imagination may be the more vigorously touched by it. But at the same time we must take Care to keep within the terms of Proportion; lest, instead of grand, it prove gross and heavy.

This Order owes its name to Dorus a Prince of Achaia, who, being Sovereign of Peloponesus, built in the City of Argus a magnificent Temple to the Goddess Juno; which was not only the first Model of this Order, but the first Edifice of any Grandeur

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<sup>88</sup> This is an extended version of the corresponding chapter in the 'Abridgment' (also the tenth chapter). It is based upon Fréart *Parallel*, 13-19, Leoni, *Architecture*, I: XV, Perrault, *Abridgment*, I:IV, 96-100, and Wotton, *Elements*, I: 35-36. The major difference between Blackstone's chapters on the Orders is that of presentation. Blackstone's 'Abridgment' displays the Orders' proportions in tabular form whereas in the 'Elements' he presents the information in prose. Although Gibbs's *Rules* offers an easy method of drawing the Orders which avoids the use of fractions, Blackstone follows Perrault's method because he approves Perrault's proportions. He will depart from this method for the Composite Order (chapter 12) and side with Fréart on that Order's origins.

<sup>89</sup> Strongholds or fortified towns.

or Regularity in all Greece. Its Strength and Robustness also entitle it, the Herculean, [*one word illegible: crossed out*] or Manly Order.<sup>90</sup>

< TAB. VII > It's proportions as to Height are as follow. The Base of the Pedestal being divided into three parts, one of them is given to the Mouldings; which being again divided into 7 parts; 2 of them are given to the inverted Cavetto, 1 to the Fillet, and 4 to the Tore. The Cap is divided into 9 parts, 2 whereof belong to the Cavetto, and one to its Fillet, 5 to the Platband and one to its fillet.

The Base of the Column (in which we follow Vignola, as judging his more suited to the Solidity of this Order, than the Attic Base, which most of the Moderns have assigned it, the Antients never allowing any to this Order)<sup>91</sup> consists of ten parts, whereof the Plinth has five, the Tore four, and the Astragal over it one: The Cincture of the Shaft being excluded from being part of the [41] Base, this Astragal supplies its place.

The Capital has in Height one Module, which divided into nine parts[,] three are given to the Hypotrachelion, three to the Ovolo and its inferior Mouldings, and three to the Abacus with its crowning Members. Of the three given to the Ovolo etc., two belong to the Ovolo, and one to 3 Fillets or Gradetti, of equal size, just beneath it.

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<sup>90</sup> Blackstone relates the oft-repeated story of this Order's invention by Dorus, son of Helen and the nymph, Phthia. According to the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* the Dorians were "the last of the northern invaders into Greece (c. 1100-1000 BC) [probably from] Epirus and south west Macedonia. .... They possessed a restraint and architectonic power which blended with the Ionic grace in Athens to produce the acme of Greek art". See N.G. L Hammond and H.H. Scullard (eds.) *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1970), 363. Hersey adds that the warrior Dorian ruled over the Dorians, one of the four "basic subdivisions of the Greek population" and that he was for a time the ruler of the Peloponnese. The Greek words "Dorian" and "Dorus" moreover, he says, represent linguistic tropes of violence and, taken together, imply "death by the spear, accompanied by sexual menace". Such violence is born out in the Doric entablature's ornamentation. See Hersey. *Lost Meaning*, 53-59.

<sup>91</sup> Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola (1507-1573). The leading Roman architect after Michel Angelo's death. His most influential building was the Gesù (church), Rome (begun 1568). The straightforward treatment of the Orders in his *Regole della cinque ordini* (1562) ensured its wide popularity. It was published in English in 1655. Fréart favours Vignola's base (Fréart, *Parallel*, 26). Blackstone appears not to be familiar with works by architects like Vignola, except as they are discussed in, or absorbed into, his sources.

So the Abacus likewise has two parts, the remaining one belonging to the Ogee and its Fillet; the former having 2 thirds and the latter one.

The Entablature is divided into 24 parts, whereof 6 are allotted to the Architrave, and to the Freeze and Cornice 9 each. The Architrave is again subdivided into 7 parts, 6 of which are allotted to its Face, and one to the Platband which forms the Base of the Triglyph. Some allow the Architrave two Faces, but one seems more suited to the Solidity of this Order.

In the Freeze is to be considered that essential Ornament, the Triglyph; so called because it has three Glyphes or Niches, two entire ones, in the middle, called Canaliculi, Channels, or Graveurs; and two half ones at each side, called Semicanaliculæ, or Demigraveurs.<sup>92</sup> The Breadth of the Triglyph is one Module, which being divided into 12 parts, two are given to each Glyphe, and one to each half Glyphe; and to the three Interstices between the Glyphes, called Shanks or Femora, two apiece. The Glyphes are furrowed in a right angle, which furrowing is continued to the Bottom of the Triglyph, and commences one Ninth from the Top. The Triglyph projects, from the Naked of the Freeze, one and an half of those 12th parts, we just mentioned; or 3 minutes and  $\frac{3}{4}$ : So that the Depth of the Furrow (which being in an right angle is necessarily  $\frac{3}{4}$  its breadth) is to the Depth of the Triglyph as 2 to 1. The distance, between Triglyph and Triglyph, is one Module and an half, which being also the Height of the Freeze, makes the Intervals between the Triglyphs (called Metops) exactly square. As there must indispensably be a Triglyph directly over every Column, there will be necessarily left at the end of the Freeze, a Space just one Third

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<sup>92</sup> According to Hersey, the Doric ornamentation is symbolic of sacrificial rites in which the "victim" (be it an animal or conquered king) was dismembered and reconstructed, laid out upon the entablature whereupon the body was inhabited by the relevant god. Once so sanctified, the fluids which drained from the body were allowed to drain from it and were collected. Therefore, he argues, the triglyph represents the thigh bone, divided into three and wrapped in a layer of fat. See his *Lost Meaning*, 18-19, 30-31.

of a Metop, or half a Triglyph in Breadth, which is nevertheless called Semi-Metop. Triglyphs are said to have been first used at the Delphic Temple, in imitation of Apollo's Lyre<sup>93</sup>. The Italians called them Pianetti, or little Plains.

In order to form the Base of the Triglyph, we must go back again to the Architrave; where the Platband projects with a Break immediately under the [42] Triglyph,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  minute[s] beyond it, as likewise  $1\frac{1}{2}$  more in breadth on each side. This Break, which some omit, prevents the immediate Projecture (viz.  $5\frac{1}{4}$  minutes) of the Platband under the Metopes. Beneath this Base hangs a little Fillet, with 6 pyramidal Guttæ, Drops, Lachrymæ, Campanulæ, or Clavares, which are truncated at top; but, if continued, their Apex or vertical Angle would touch the Bottom of the Platband, perpendicularly under the Edges which part the Glyphes and Shanks of the Triglyph. The Height of the Fillet and *Guttæ* is one 6th of the Architrave, of which the Fillet has  $\frac{1}{3}$  and of the *Guttæ*  $\frac{2}{3}$ . Their Breadth, and Projectures, are equal to that of the Triglyph.

The Cornice being divided into 9 parts; the 1st is given to the Platband, which forms the Capital of the Triglyph, which like the Base projects, with a Break, immediately over it, 2 minutes beyond it, and two more in breadth on each side. The third part being subdivided into 4, one of these subdivisions, together with the whole second part, forms the Cavetto, whose fillet has another of these little parts. The remaining two, together with the whole fourth part, are allowed to the Platband on which the Mutules are formed: and half the fifth part is allowed to an Ogee, the Return of which forms the Cap of the Mutule[.] The Mutule is a sort of square Block, of the same Breadth with the Triglyph, viz. 30 minutes, projecting plum[b] over it 36 minutes from the Naked of the Platband; and its Cap or Ogee projecting 2 minutes

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<sup>93</sup> Fréart, *Parallel*, 9.

farther, all round. The under Face of the Mutule is cut into 36 Drops in 6 rows, resembling the Drops of the Architrave, only that these are conical. The Mutules, we see, are not precisely square, being with their Cap, 34 by 38; and without it, 30 by 36: But this Cluster of Drops is quite square; the supernumerary 6 minutes being allowed to a Groove in the Fore-edge of the Mutule, the Hollow of which is allowed 3, and its Edge the remainder. This appears more plainly in the plan of the Sofita, A. The great Projecture of the Cornice in this Order is owing to the Mutules, which if we would restrain, we may make a kind of Semi-Mutules with 18 Drops only, in 3 rows, whereby the superior Members of the Cornice will project each of them 15 minutes less than they now do.

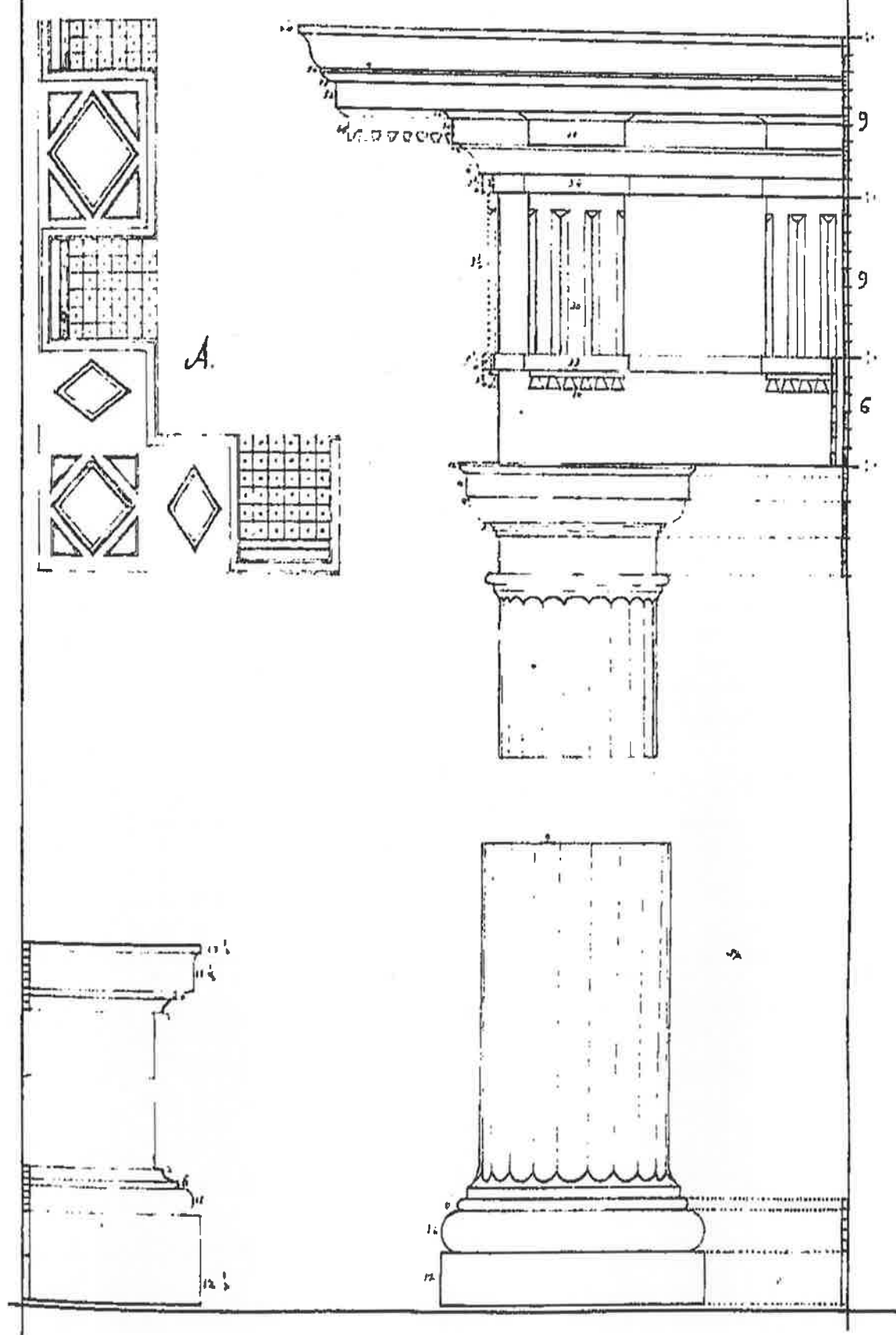
Of the nine parts of the Cornice we have already disposed of four, and  $8\frac{1}{2}$  the fifth; The remaining Half, together with the whole 6th, is given to the Corona. The 7th is subdivided into 4 particles; whereof 2 are given to an Ogee, and 1 to its Fillet, The remaining one, together with the whole 8th, and half the ninth, is allotted to the Cymatium, whose Fillet employs the remaining half of the ninth Part.

Some give us Dentils in the Cornice, which belong to another Order; The Characters of this Order being principally, the Triglyph with its Appendages, and [43] [44] Mutules. Some Ornaments may be used, but with a sparing hand. The Hypotrachelion may be stuck with four little Roses, at equal distances. The Metops will admit of some bold Sculpture, as Oxheads, Thunderbolts, Bucklers,<sup>94</sup> etc. The Inter-Mutules on the Sofit may be panned: But the Mouldings of the Cornice should very rarely, if at all, be enriched. After all, these Matters must be left to the Architect's Discretion who had better offend by Parsimony, than Profuseness.

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<sup>94</sup> A small round shield, either carried by a handle at the back or fastened to the arm by straps.

TAB. VII.



## Chapter 11. ~.

### Of the Ionic Order.<sup>95</sup>

The Ionic is a Medium between the Plainness of the Doric, and the Richness of the Corinthian Order; and as the Doric is said to have been formed upon the proportions of a stout Man; so this upon those of a young Woman; whence it is called the feminine or matronal Order. It was invented by the people of Ionia, and is particularly remarkable for having built the famous Temple of Diana at Ephesus.<sup>96</sup> As to the Proportions of the Pedestal,

< TAB. VIII.> The third of the Base, (which is allotted to the Mouldings) being divided into 8 parts; one is given to a Fillet, four to an inverted Cymatium, one to a second Fillet, and 2 to an inverted Cavetto. The Cap is divided into 10 parts, whereof the Cavetto has two, its Fillet one, the Platband 4, an Ogee 2, and its Fillet one.

The Height of the Base of the Column being divided into 6 parts, the first and second of them are given to the Plinth, the third and half the fourth to the lower Tore, the remaining half and the fifth to the Scotia and its two fillets, which are each of them  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Scotia, and the sixth part is given to the upper Tore. This, which is called the Attic or Atticurgic Base, is used in most of the Antient Examples, and

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<sup>95</sup>Chapter 11 is based upon Perrault, *Abridgment*. I:VII, 101-107. Unlike Perrault however, Blackstone includes the Ionic Entablature. He also justifies his preference for Perrault's Ionic capital rather than Fréart's choice of Scamozzi's example.

<sup>96</sup>Although this sentence may seem to be more clearly expressed as either "who are particularly remarkable . . ." or as "for being used in the building of the Temple", Blackstone may be speaking metaphorically. Such an interpretation is quite possible because of Blackstone's love of literature. Furthermore, as discussed in my Introduction above, Blackstone's use of metaphor in both his correspondence and in the *Commentaries*, is a marked feature of his thought. According to this reading, Blackstone suggests that the inherent femininity of the Ionic Order permeates, indeed determines, the temple's design. This reference to the Temple of Diana at Ephesus is derived from Fréart, *Parallel* though the metaphor is his own. Fréart considers the temple "a proud Edifice ... the most Memorable built by the Ionians" and of "astonishing beauty". Fréart, *Parallel* XIII, 37,38. Ephesus is near Izmir in modern Turkey. For more information see J. T. Wood. *Discoveries at Ephesus: Including The Site And Remains Of The Great Temple Of Diana*, (Hildesheim, 1975).

retained by Palladio and Scamozzi.<sup>97</sup> Vitruvius indeed prescribed an awkward Base of another Kind; for which the best Masters have much wondered at him, he having placed no less than eight small Cinctures and Membretti to sustain a vast Tore, near as large as them all put together.

The Height of the Capital, taken from the Astragal of the Shaft to the top of the Abacus, is 18 minutes and a third; or it is to the Astragal as 11 to 2. If [45] taken from the Bottom of the Volutes 31 minutes and two 2 thirds, being to the Astragal as 19 to 2. The Reason of which we shall see presently.

In order to form the Volute (A.) let us drop a perpendicular, at the distance of 2 minutes and a third from the Naked of the Shaft, which will cut off an exact Semicircle from the Astragal of the Shaft. This Perpendicular is the Cathetus of the Volute. Then through the middle or Axis of the Astragal draw a Horizontal Line, and where that cuts the Cathetus is the Center of the Volute. Next mark your Distances on the perpendicular and horizontal Lines, thus. The Space from the Center of the Volute to the top of the Abacus is divided into 12 parts, 1 of which is the height of the Fillet of the Abacus, 2 that of its Ogee, 1 that of the List of the Volute, 3 that of the < Front, Canal, or > Naked of the Volute (which is that part between the Lists) 4 for the Ovolo, and one, lastly, is the half of the Astragal; the other half being below the Center of the Volute, where you must mark 7 Divisions on the Perpendicular, of the same size with those above the Centre. On the outward part of the horizontal Line mark 8 of these Divisions, and on the inner part 6 of them. This done, round the centre of the Volutes with the distance of one of these Parts, draw a Circle, the half of which is the Contour of the Astragal. This is called the Eye < or Light > of the Volute (represented larger, B.) in which must be inscribed a Square, the Diagonal of which is the Cathetus of the

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<sup>97</sup> For his comparison of Palladio's and Scamozzi's Ionic bases see Fréart, *Parallel*, XIII, 51.

Volute; which Square must be divided, by 2 cross Lines, into 4 little ones. These Lines, being divided each into 6 equal Parts, shew the 12 centers of the 12 Curves which describe the Contour of the Volute.

Beginning at the Centre marked < *two letters illegible: smudged* > draw the first Arc from the Bottom of the Ogee till it encounters the horizontal Line; thence, round the Center marked 2, draw the second Arc till it meets the perpendicular; thence, round the Centre 3, draw the third Arc till it comes up to the Horizontal; proceeding thus regularly round the several Centres in the Order they are numbered, from the Perpendicular to the horizontal, and from the horizontal to the Perpendicular again, till the Spiral Line, at last, encounters the Eye of the Volute. The inner Edge of the List or Border, which makes it taper insensibly till it arrives at the Eye, is described in the same manner as the outer, only the Central Points are not exactly the same, being one fifth of the Distance from Point to Point more inward, i.e. nearer the Center of the Volute, than the former.<sup>98</sup>

[46] Thus was the antique Volute described, as to two of its Faces, viz. before and behind, which were absolutely flat, and thereby rendered it impossible that the side Faces should be of the same form. Upon which account they drest them up differently. (C.) This the Moderns call the Pillow of the Volute, the two Extremities of which are formed by the Edge of the List of the Volutes, which here acquires the Name of Axis of the Volute, and is of a Breadth equal to the thickness of the Eye. < *two letters illegible: crossed out* >. This Face, is not only called the Pillow, but the Balluster, as resembling the Cup of the Flower of the wild Pomegranate, called in the

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<sup>98</sup>Evelyn recommends Fréart's method of drawing the Volute but Blackstone follows Perrault. See Evelyn, *Account*, 129 and Perrault, *Abridgment*, 101-104.

Greek *Βαλανστιου*.<sup>99</sup> It here consists of a double Cup, having a Pomegranate in the middle.<sup>100</sup>

But Scamozzi, with reason disliking this difference of Faces, planned out a new Capital, in which he has been almost universally followed, taking away the Balluster entirely, and bending the Faces of the Volute from the straight Position they were before in, to the Corners of the Abacus, in which Situation they are called angular Volutes.<sup>101</sup> But there are two things which Perrault censures in his Composition, and has himself reformed them, which reformed Capital we have chosen. The first is that the Face of the Abacus is made not square but with a Sweep; So that the Corners (then called the Horns of the Abacus) meet in a sharp angle. This does not seem so suitable to the Ionic Plainness, as the other method; which we have therefore observed. The next is, that the Volutes are made to spring out < of > the Ovolo, as in the Composite Capital, the List not being continued under the Abacus; whereby the Abacus, which in this Order is but a thin Member, is only supported at its Extremities and appears too weak to bear its burthen. We have therefore followed Perrault's Emendation, which too bears a nearer Resemblance to the Ionic Capital of the Ancients, though the other has obtained very universally.

The Volutes are said to be meant to represent the Curls of Women's Hair, in this feminine Order. They are also by some called Rams-horns, Serials, and

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<sup>99</sup> An obscure usage which appears to originate with first and second century medical writings although Hersey notes that Clement of Alexandria condemned the Greek worship of such things as fig branches, ivy leaves and pomegranates. See his *Lost Meaning*, 19.

<sup>100</sup> This reference to pomegranates (and the preceding Greek term) is taken from Evelyn, whose description of these flowers as "*Pomegranades*" appears to be unique among architectural commentators in the period. He may have heard the term during his travels in Italy. See Evelyn, *Account*, 38. It may originate with early medical texts.

<sup>101</sup> See Fréart, *Parallel*, 44-45.

Snailshells; as is the Pillow, in the Antique Capital, called also the Pulvin, or Return of the Volute.<sup>102</sup>

We proceed now to take a view of proportions of the Entablature, which being divided into ten Parts, three are given to the Architrave, the [47] like to the Freeze, and the remaining four to the Cornice.

The part allotted to the Architrave is divided into five Divisions, the uppermost of which is given to an Ogee and its Fillet. The other four are subdivided each into three parts, or altogether into twelve, whereof three belong to the lower Face of the Architrave, four to the second, and five to the third. The faces of the Architrave are only so many Platbands, projecting a little beyond each other, whence they are also called Bands, Fascias, Fillets, Platbands, and Swathes of the Architrave.

The Freeze has no Division.

The Cornice is divided into Eight parts, the first of which is allotted to an Ogee; the second and third are subdivided each into four parts, eight in all, whereof 6 are given to the Platband or Denticulus on which the Dentils are cut.

The Dentils are so called from their resemblance to a Set of Teeth, as also Asseri, from their square Form.<sup>103</sup> They represent the Ends of Rafters in the first rude Buildings. The Method of cutting them is this. One of the six particles [*one word illegible: faint*] allowed for the Denticulus, is given to its Naked below the Dentils: The Remainder, being the Height of the Dentil, is divided into 3 parts, two whereof are the Breadth of the Dentil, and one of the Metop or Space between; so that the Dentil, together with its Metop, makes an exact Square. The top of the Metop has a little Projecture or Fillet, whose Height is one of the six little particles afore mentioned. The Depth [to] which the Dentils are cut is equal to their Breadth, so that

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<sup>102</sup> Hersey is of the opinion that the Ionic capital strongly resembles the skull, horns and hair of a sacrificial animal, arranged upon the sacrificial altar. See *Lost Meaning*, 23, 28.

<sup>103</sup> An alternate term taken from Evelyn, *Account*, 35.

their under Face makes a precise Square. The angular Dentil is often changed into a little Cone or Pine, pendant from a little Fillet, which ranges with that at the top of the Metop. Thus have we Disposed of the first, second, and half the third part.

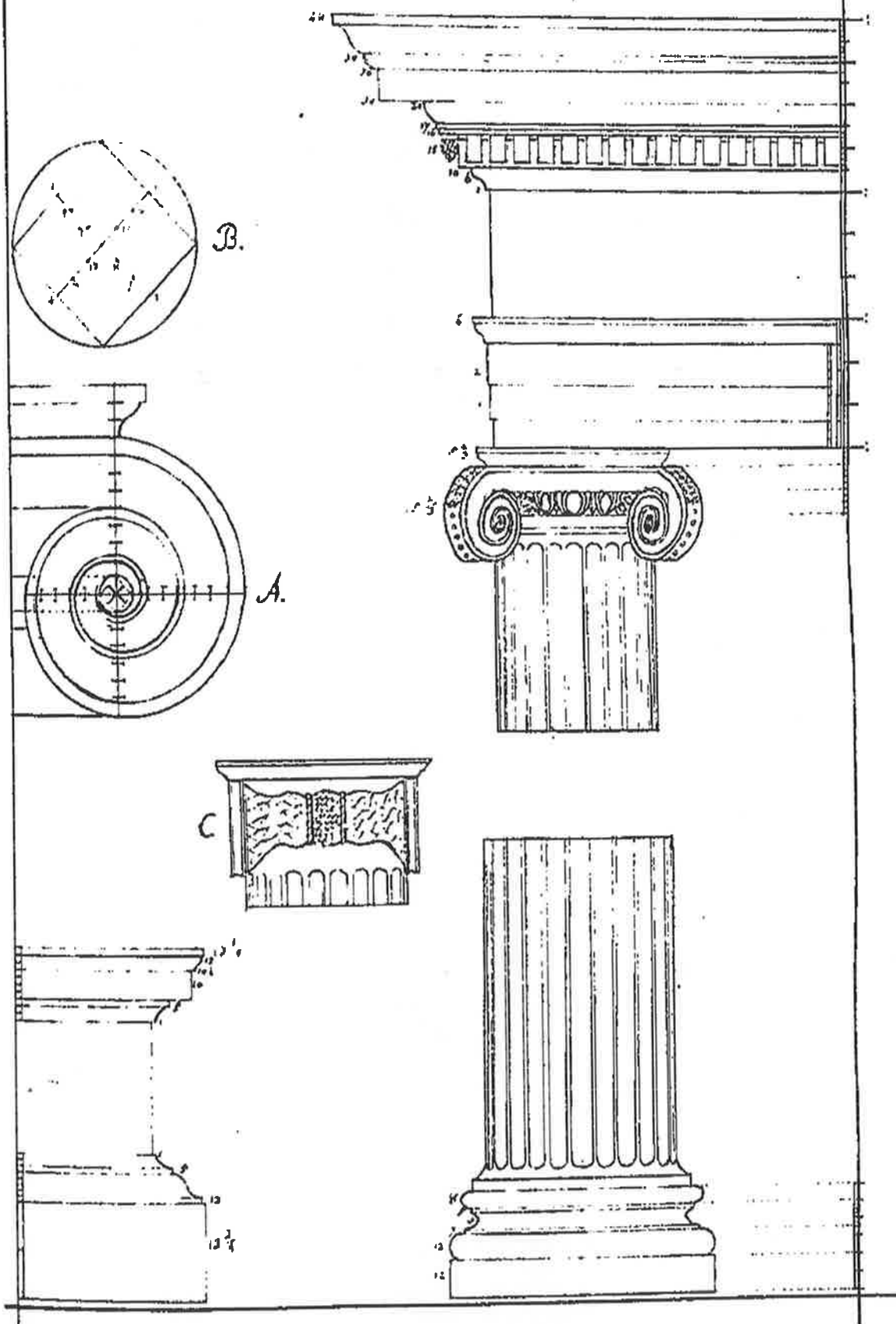
The remaining half of the third part is given to a Fillet, and a small Astragal over it, both of the same size. The fourth part forms an Ovolo; the fifth and half of the sixth is allowed for the Corona; The other Half makes an Ogee. The seventh and eighth are subdivided into 8 parts, one of which forms a Fillet which crowns the Ogee, five are given to the Cymatium, and two to its Fillet, which finishes the whole Entablature.

This Order will admit of more Ornaments than the last, though by no [48] means of a profusion, it affecting rather Decency than Gaiety. The Ovolo of the Capital is constantly enriched with the Echinus, and very often the Astragal beneath it is turned into a Chaplet of Beads. < *one word illegible: faint* > are no uncommon Decorations of the Capital, < *four words illegible: faint* > to the Eyes of the Volutes. The Freeze is often adorned with Festoons and Carving in Base-Relief. The Sofita of the Corona is hollow to about two Minutes, and sometimes adorned with a Frette or Guilochi. One or two Mouldings of the Cornice besides, may be enriched but with Caution and Judgement. None of these Embellishments, hardly, are expressed in our Design, that the proportions may be better discerned.

The Character of the Ionic results chiefly from its Capital and Entablature. The Volutes of the one, and the Dentils of the other, being according to our section, peculiar to this order. We indeed meet with these Volutes again in the Composite Order, but there they are professedly borrowed from hence, and are comparatively but a small part of the Capital. Dentils are also by some indiscriminately used, not only in this, but in the Doric, Corinthian, and Composite Entablatures. But if we consider the

Original of Dentils and what they represent, we shall find reason to condemn this practice. For as they represent the Ends of the supposed Rafters of the Roof, as Mutules and Modillions do likewise (which are Ingredients of the other Cornices) it seems absurd to represent the same thing twice over in the same Composition. Besides they have something in them too trifling for the Solidity and grand Manner of the Doric; and in the Corinthian and Composite, as the Members above and below them are usually carved, so great a Clutter of Ornaments would cause a Confusion very disagreeable to the Eye. [49]

TAB. VIII.



[50] Chapter 12. ~.

Of the Corinthian Order.<sup>104</sup>

The Corinthian is the most delicate of all the Orders, the very Perfection, and Ne plus ultra of regular Architecture. It is said to have been invented by the famous Callimachus of Corinth,<sup>105</sup> the Reason and Manner of which Invention is minutely related by Vitruvius.<sup>106</sup> Yet on the other hand Villalpandus would persuade us (and plausibly enough) that it is only an Imitation of an Order erected in Solomon's Temple, the Capital of which was of Palm Branches, and the whole Composition, as he designed it, exceeding glorious.<sup>107</sup> But leaving the Origin, we shall come to the

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<sup>104</sup>This chapter is derived from Perrault, *Abridgment*, I: IV:IV, 85-94 and I: IV: VIII, and from Fréart, *Parallel*, XXVI, 62-81.

<sup>105</sup>According to Vitruvius, the poet and artist Callimachus invented the Corinthian capital when he came upon the grave, in that Greek city, of a young virgin. Upon this grave had been left an upturned basket, through which had grown an acanthus plant. Vitruvius, *Ten Books* I:IV, 104-106. Fréart relates the story and provides his own artistic impression of the event, see his *Parallel*, XXVI, 62-63. The invention of the Corinthian capital has been attributed to an Athenian smith who worked on the Acropolis in the temple of Erechtheion who first cast the design in iron. According to Tzonis and Giannisi the legend of the invention of the Corinthian capital was perpetuated, not only because it was "romantic" but also because it embodied "in one plot three major ideas – life, death and ceaseless renewal [and] is also about poetic creativity inspired by the drawing of unexpected analogies from everyday reality and the victory of art over death". A. Tzonis and P. Giannisi. *Classical Greek Architecture: The Construction of the Modern* (Paris, 2004), 25, 24. The legend, Hersey is convinced however, "belongs to the tradition in which trees and plants serve as tombs". He suggests further that the Corinthian is regarded as the *ne plus ultra*, or point beyond which there can be no further invention. because in dying unmarried, the young girl of the legend will bear no offspring. Thus it is the culmination of architecture. See *Lost Meaning*, 64, 67.

<sup>106</sup>Blackstone also omits altogether the details of this story which he related briefly in the 1743 'Abridgement', including a reference to Callimachus having been "a Corinthian sculptor".

<sup>107</sup>Spainard Juan Bautista Villalpando, co-author (with Jerónimo Prado) of a commentary on Ezekiel in which he argued that the Corinthian Order originated, not with the Greeks, but with the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, the design of which had been delivered to the Jews by Revelation. (See their *In Ezechielem Explanaciones et Apparatus Urbis, ac Templi Hierosolymitani Commentariis et imaginibus illustratus*, 3 vols., Rome, 1596-1604). Fréart discusses Villalpandus' argument and provides an illustration of the Order as described by him (see his *Parallel*, 72-73). The capital of this Order greatly resembles the Corinthian but uses palm fronds rather than acanthus leaves. Evelyn also mentions the Order in his *Account* (128), claiming that it included olive branches. As discussed above in Part One, Blackstone's first published work was a poem employing an extended architectural metaphor and entitled *The Pantheon: A Vision*. The poem contains a footnote which states: "Villaplandus has undertaken to prove, that the Ornaments and Proportions of the Grecian Architecture were borrowed from Solomon's Temple at Jeruslaem" (see Blackstone, *Pantheon*, 20). Chambers also mentions the theory: "Villalpandus, indeed, contends, that only Underworkmen were sent for from Tyre, Artificers in Gold, Silver, Brass etc. and that the rules of *Architecture* were delivered by God himself to *Solomon*."

Proportions, which being < said to be > those of a slender young Virgin, denominate it sometimes the Virginal Order, and are as follows.

< TAB. IX. > The Third of the Base of the Pedestal, which is allotted to the Mouldings, being divided into nine parts, two and a half are given to a large Astragal or small Tore, half a one to its Fillet; three to an inverted Cymatium, and half a one to its Fillet, and two and a half to an inverted Ogee. The Cap is divided into 12 parts; two of which belong to a Cavetto, and one to its Fillet; three to an Ovolo, and three to a Platband; two to an Ogee and one to its Fillet.

The Base of the Column is formed by dividing the Height into 4 parts, of which one is the Plinth. A fourth of the remainder is the lower Tore; So again, a fourth part of this last remainder is given to the upper Tore. What remains is divided into two parts, each of which forms a Scotia; 2 Fillets, and an Astragal, thus: One fourth is the height of the Astragal; a fourth of the remainder forms that Fillet which is next the Tore; a fourth of this Remainder forms the other Fillet, and the remaining three fourths are given to the Scotia. These proportions may read very confused; but are sufficiently distinct in the Figure. However it must be owned that this Base is proper to be used only when the Diameter of the Columns is large; otherwise the Attic Base may be used, as is warranted by many antient Examples; or Palladio's and

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Hence, he adds, the *Tryians* rather learnt their *Architecture* from *Solomon* which they afterwards communicated to the *Egyptians*; these to the *Grecians*, and these again to the *Romans* – In effect, the author last cited, undertakes to prove, all the Beauty and Advantages of the *Greek* and *Roman* Buildings, were borrowed from this *Fabrick*. ... To confirm this *Sturmius* produces several Passages in *Vitruvius*, where the Rules given by that Architect ... quadrate exactly with what *Josephus* says of the *Jewish Temple* ...". Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 129-130. Furthermore, the closing lines of Blackstone's 'Abridgement' refer to the Temple of Solomon. See also R. Taylor. 'Hermetism and Mystical Architecture in the Society of Jesus', in *Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution*, R. Wittkower & I.B. Jaffe eds., (New York, 1972), 63-91. As Prest was aware, the closing lines of the 'Abridgement' and other references to the Temple raise the question of whether "Blackstone's devout Anglican piety was further reinforced by the burgeoning cult of freemasonry (a movement whose elite and middling-sort adherents were particularly fascinated by the Temple of Solomon)". Prest. 'Constructing the *Commentaries*', 123. There is no evidence however, that Blackstone joined the movement. Rather, his interest in the temple appears limited to his architectural writings.

Scamozzi's Base,<sup>108</sup> which is the Attic Base a little enriched by adding 2 Astragals, one between each Tore and the Fillet of the Scotia, as we have used it in the general View of the Orders, Tab. 5. No. 4.

The Capital is two Modules and ten minutes in Height, and [51] is divided into seven parts, two of which are given to the first Row of Leaves, which are named Leaves of the first order, in number eight, imitating Leaves of Olive Branch-Urfin,<sup>109</sup> etc., at the Architect [']s pleasure. Their Heads or Tops bend down one Third of their Height, which is called their Return. Two more parts are given to the Leaves of the second order, which spring up behind, or as it were between those of the first Order; their Number being the same, and their Return likewise one Third of their Height. The remaining three parts are divided into Seven, Two whereof are given to another row of Leaves, called of the third order, whose return is equal to half their Height. These are in number 16, rising from 8 Stalks, Stems, or Caulicoles, (two from each Stalk) which spring up between the Leaves of the second Order. < At Lord Pontefract's, near Towcester in North[amp]tonshire, is an antient Corinthian Column brought from Greece which has only two Rows of Leaves to the Capital; the Vase appearing quite bare at top, and covered with a Tile, without any Helices or Leaves of the third Order. ><sup>110</sup> Over each of these last Leaves hangs a Volute or Unilla; or, as it is generally called, Helix. These Helices are, in number, 16. 8 larger, i.e. 2 under each of the Horns of the Abacus; and 8 smaller, i.e. 2 under the middle of the Sweep with which the Abacus is made. Between these, is discovered the Culathus, Panier, or Vase of the

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<sup>108</sup> See Fréart's comparison and illustrations in his *Parallel*, 75-75.

<sup>109</sup> Seemingly an obscure reference to the acanthus plant. The source of this term is apparently Wotton whose *Elements* is the only one of Blackstone's sources to mention it. Wotton usage ("the *Aconitum Paradalianches* (rejected perchance as an ominous *Plant*) *Acanthus* or *Branca Urfinâ*") suggests that he may have acquired it during his time in Italy. It may be a term used in one of the Italian dialects. See Wotton, *Elements* I: 38.

<sup>110</sup> The column to which Blackstone refers is at Easton Neston (begun 1702), Lord Pomfret's estate near Towcester in Northamptonshire. As related above, Blackstone visited the estate in 1755. See my discussion of this point in chapter two above.

Capital, called sometimes Tambour and Campana (a a). The Rim of this Vase going over the middle Helicus is the Cause of their being smaller than the angular ones, which rise equally high with the Rim. These Volutes also appear to rise from the Caulicoles, just between the Leaves of the third Order. Three of the sevenths we just mentioned are allowed to the angular Helicus for the Height, but [fœr] to the middle ones only  $2\frac{1}{3}$ ; the Rim of the Vase taking up  $\frac{2}{3}$ . The remaining two sevenths constitute the Abacus; which is formed with a Sweep, in the middle of which is fixed a round Flower, called the Flower of the Capital, whose Diameter is the Height of the Abacus and the Rim of the Vase. The Abacus consists of a kind of Cavetto, or rather a Platband joined with an Addoucissement, and over them an Ovolo; the Platband being equal to both Fillet and Ovolo.

The Entablature is parted into 20 Divisions, whereof the Architrave and Freeze have each 6, and the Cornice 8.

The first Division of the Architrave is given to its lower Face; A little Astrgal takes up  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the second Division, the remainder of which and half the third forms the second Face: The other half being given to a small Ogee. The fourth and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the fifth makes the upper Face, the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$  forming another Astragal. The sixth Division is parted between an Ogee and its Fillet, whereof the Ogee has  $\frac{2}{3}$  and the Fillet  $\frac{1}{4}$ . The Freeze has no Division.

[52] The Cornice is divided into ten parts. The first goes to an Ogee and its Fillet, whereof the Ogee has  $\frac{3}{4}$  and the Fillet  $\frac{1}{4}$ . The second and half of the third form a Denticulus, which member is admitted though no Dentels ought to be cut upon it; The other half of the third part goes to a Fillet, crowned with an Astragal, both of the same height. The fourth part forms an Ovolo, The fifth and sixth a Platband fro<m>

which the Modillions project; as half of the seventh does a small Ogee and Fillet, whose Return is the Cap of the Modillions.

Modillions are a sort of Consoles, placed horizontally, to sustain the Corona, representing the Ends of Rafters. Their Form is some what like an S, placed thus  $\sim$ . Their Breadth is 12 minutes, and their distance from each other, the double of their Breadth, viz. 24 minutes; or both together One module, six minutes. Their Length is 19 Minutes, beyond which it's Cap projects 2 minutes, as it does on all 3 sides of it; which makes the Inter-Modillions on the Soffit (A) precisely square; an indispensable Condition of Inter-Modillions. Ours are 20 minutes square.

Six parts and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the Cornice being thus dispatched; the remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the seventh, and also  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the eighth parts is employed in the Corona. The remainder of the eighth part goes to an Ogee. One fourth of the ninth part is given to a Fillet which crowns the Ogee. The rest of the ninth and half of the tenth is allotted to the Cymatium, whose fillet takes up the remaining half, and finishes the Entablature.

The Characteristics of the Corinthian Order are principally its Capital and Modillions.

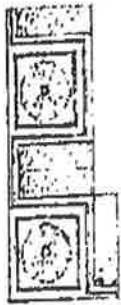
This Order may be more properly ornamented than any other, being as it were one great Congeries of Delicacy and Profuseness. In some antient Examples, particularly the Baths of Dioclesian [*sic*],<sup>111</sup> every Member almost, even the Corona and the Faces of the Architrave are richly adorned; so that nothing has escaped but the Plinth of the Base, and one or two small Fillets. One thing is observable; that in the richest Examples the Astragal at the Neck of the Column is always plain, serving thereby to set off the Beauty of the Capital. Upon the whole, we may here once again inculcate Caution in using of Decorations; for though when properly disposed, they

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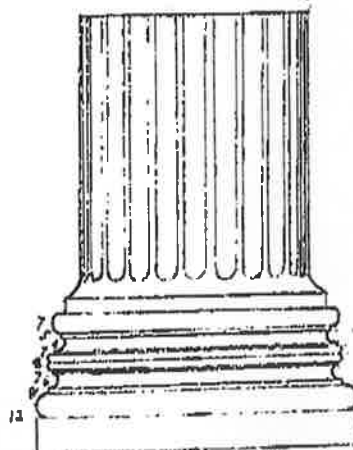
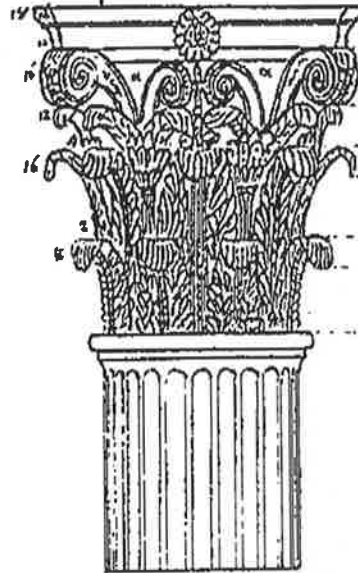
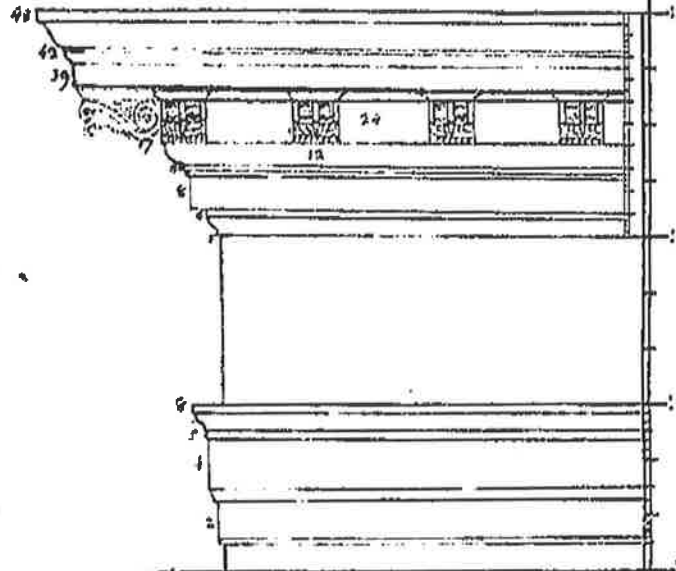
<sup>111</sup> See Freart's 'Perspective Elevation of a Profile drawn from the Baths of Dioclesian at Rome', in his *Parallel*, 42-43.

add much Grace to a Composition; Yet when used indiscreetly, and crowded into every part that will admit of them they give a tawdry Confusion, and gothic Triflingness to the best proportioned Edifice. [53]

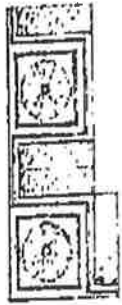
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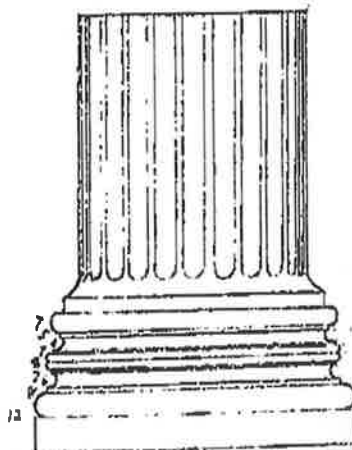
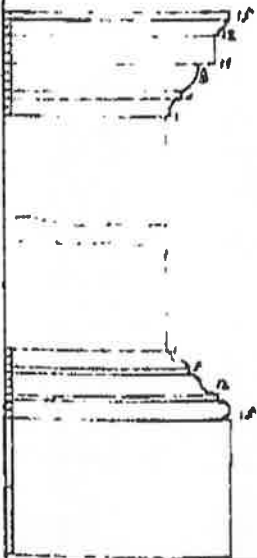
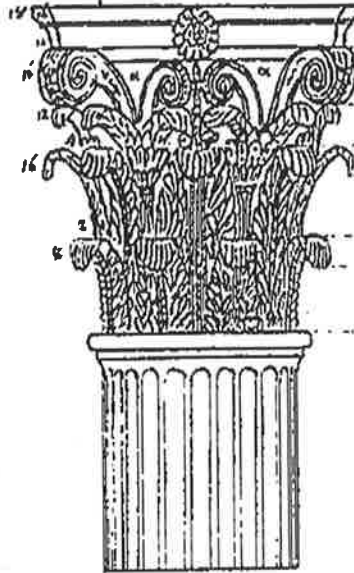
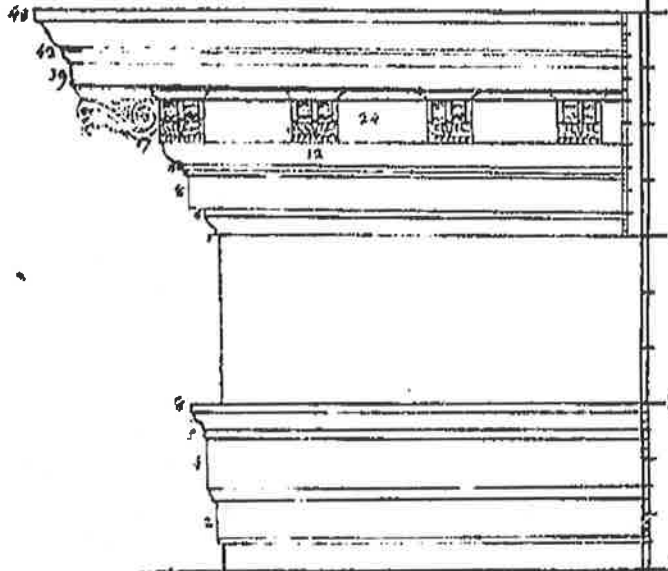
A.



TAB IX.



A.



[54] Chapter 13. ~.

Of the Composite Order. ~.<sup>112</sup>

The Composite Order (whereof we have already spoken pretty freely) bears its Character in its Name, being a borrowed Medley from three beautiful Orders, viz. The Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian; from the first of which it has its Mutules from the second the upper part of its Capital (wherein the Absurdity of its Composition is evident, the Astragal of the Ionic Shaft being here put as part of the Capital) and from the third every thing else. Its Admirers call it the Heroic, Roman or Italic Order.

Its proportions differ from those of the Corinthian, in the Capital and the Entablature only.

< TAB. X. > The Capital is < of > the same Height with the Corinthian; and like that divided into 7 parts; the 4 lowermost of which are disposed of in the very same manner. The 3 uppermost are divided into 8 particles, two whereof go to the Abacus, which as in the Corinthian is composed of a small Ovolo, Fillet, and Cavetto, and formed with an Arch or Sweep. The other 6 are the Height of the Volutes, which are angular, and formed as in the Ionic Order, only the List springs out of the Ovolo beneath the Abacus, and is not continued all the way between these 2 Members. The proportions differ somewhat from the Ionic; the part allotted to the Canal of the Volutes, though hid with Foliage, is one of the eighth parts; the Ovolo, 2; and the Astragal one. The part of the Vase or Tambour (which appears above the Leaves of the second order, and is partly covered with some Sprigs that rise like the Caulicoles

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<sup>112</sup> This chapter is based upon Fréart, *Parallel*, I:IV, 99-109. Again, the Order's proportions are presented discursively rather than in a table. Blackstone is demonstrably more antagonistic towards the Composite Order in the 'Elements' than in the 'Abridgement' which only remarks of the Order that it is "scarce a hairs-breadth from degenerating into Gothicism". Such subtle differences as this between the two mss are evidence of an increasingly conservative (or indeed discerning) architectural taste.

of the Corinthian Capital) is 2 of these parts in height. The Flower of the Capital is 3 of these parts in Diameter.

The Architrave and Freeze have each three, and the Cornice four Tenths of the Entablature.

The lower Third of the Architrave is subdivided into 6 parts; five of which make its first Face, and one is given to a little Ogee. The second part, and one Sixth of the third part compose the second Face. The other five Sixths are thus disposed of. Two of them go to an Ovolo and a small Astragal beneath it, the Ovolo being  $\frac{3}{4}$  and the Astragal  $\frac{1}{4}$ . Two more to a Cavetto, or rather a small Platband, joined with a Sweep or Addoucissement to a Fillet which crowns it, and take up, the remaining sixth of the Third Part.

The Freeze is of that Sort we call Bolstered or Pulvinated Freezes. An equilateral Triangle being formed on the Line (which marks the [55] Projection of the usual flat Freeze) as upon its Base, its vertical Angle shall be the Centre of an Arch, whereof its Base is the Chord,<sup>113</sup> and which marks the Contour of the Swelling of this Freeze.

The Cornice is divided into ten parts. Half the first Part is divided between a Fillet, and an Astragal over it. The remaining Half, together with Half the Second Part, is allotted to a large Ogee. The other half of the Second Part, together with the third, fourth, and fifth Parts are given to those Members, which, projecting every now and then with a Break, form the Mutules of this Order; called also Simple Modillions, as having none of that graceful Volution which appears in the Corinthian Modillions, but being as to their principal Faces quite plain, and flat. The Members are, a Platband, which takes up half the second and half the third part; an Ogee, to which is

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<sup>113</sup> Geometry: a straight line joining the extremities of an arc.

given the other Half of the third part; another Platband, which occupies the fourth part and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Fifth; a Fillet, which has another  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Fifth Part, and an Ovolo, which takes up the remaining half of the Fifth Part. The Breadth of these several Members, when by their Projection they form the Mutule, may be collected from the Figure. Their Projecture from the Naked of their several Members is 15 minutes < *one word crossed out* > ; whereby < *seven to nine words crossed out* > there will be left on the Soffit of the Corona (A) beyond their Projecture a Ledge of 3 minutes breadth, one of which, viz. the middlemost, is hollowed into a Groove or Channel.

Half the Cornice is thus already disposed of. The sixth and seventh parts are allotted to the Corona, which is much more massive here than in the Corinthian Order. The eighth part is employed by an Ogee and its Fillet; of which the Ogee has  $\frac{2}{3}$  and the Fillet  $\frac{3}{1}$ .<sup>114</sup> The ninth and tenth parts make up the Cymatium and its Fillet, the Cymatium having a part and a half, and the Fillet half a one only.

This Order admits of all possible Ornaments; and as it should never find a place in regular Edifices, but only be employed in trivial Works of Fancy, if even there, it cannot easily be too much crowded with Decorations.

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<sup>114</sup> Should read  $\frac{1}{3}$ .

Of irregular and Spurious Orders.<sup>115</sup>

Besides these five, which are generally regarded as regular Orders, there are some, which we may term irregular or spurious Ones.

1. The Persian Order is that wherein Statues of Men are employed instead of Columns, to support an Entablature. It was first practiced by the Athenians, who, under the Command of Pausanias claimed a Victory over the Persians to perpetuate the memory of which they assigned their Statues this Employment, with their Hands bound together as a mark of Servitude. The Entablature is Doric, and one fourth of the Height of the Statue, as when over Columns. The French call these Telamounes or Atlas's.

2. The Order of the Caryatidis , or Caryatic Order, is that wherein the Figures of Women are employed in the same manner, to support Ionic Entablatures. It had its original likewise from the Greeks, who having sacked the city Carya, led away their Women captive, and to perpetuate the Exploit, placed their Images in this servile Situation.<sup>116</sup> In this and the former Order, the Figures sometimes support their Burthen with their heads, or on their Shoulders, and sometimes with their Hands; which Modern Architects have often thought fit to unloose, especially when they

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<sup>115</sup>This appears as chapter XV of Blackstone's 'Abridgement' where it bears a slightly different title: 'Of Persian, Caryatic, and other Spurious Orders'. Here, Blackstone makes two changes to point 3. He includes "Spanish, or other National Orders" in addition to the Gallic and removes a reference to the French as "that vain Nation". All but the second sentence of point 2 and the final sentence of point 4 is taken, verbatim, from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 188-9, which is, in turn, based upon Fréart, *Parallel*: I:XIII, 36-37, I:XXII and I: XXIII, 54-57.

<sup>116</sup>An alternative explanation is associated with the tradition of sacred trees. According to Hersey a young woman by the name of Carya, the daughter of Dion (King of Laconia) repudiated the love of Dionysus who punished her by turning her into a walnut tree. Thus, the order commemorates not female subjection but chastity and sacrifice. See Hersey, *Lost Meaning*, 71-72.

employ them, (as is sometimes the case but never commendable) contrary to their original Institution, to represent Virtues and Vices, etc.

3. The Gallic, Spanish, or other National Orders, which are a sort of Spawn of the Composite, and therefore by some of the French Writers called Compo-Composite or De-Composite Orders. They are little more than the Corinthian, disgraced, as in the Composite, with a new Capital, composed of the proper Attributes of the respective Nations whose Names they bear. As in the Gallic, of Fleurs de-lis, and Cock's Heads; in the Spanish, of Lions' Souts, etc. Were this to be tolerated it would soon put an end to all that is beautiful or regular in Architecture, since every Nation would have its own Order, and every Dabbler in every Nation would be, out of a benevolent Zeal for his Country, perpetually inventing a newer, and more apposite Order than before. But for setting the Example of this Licentiousness, we were obliged to the Composite Order.<sup>117</sup> [57] [58] 4. The Gothic Order, if it indeed deserves that Name, is that which in any manner whatsoever differs from the regular antique Architecture: So that when a Building can be reduced to no other Order, it is then perfectly Gothic; wherefore we can expect no Settled Rules of Proportion, since that would destroy the very Essence of the Order. However we may distinguish two kinds of Gothic Architecture, one ancient, the other modern. The ancient is what the Goths brought with them from the North in the fifth century. The Edifices built in this Style were exceeding heavy, massive, and coarse. The Modern runs into a contrary Extreme, being delicate, rich, and light to a Fault. It began to be used in the thirteenth and continued to the sixteenth

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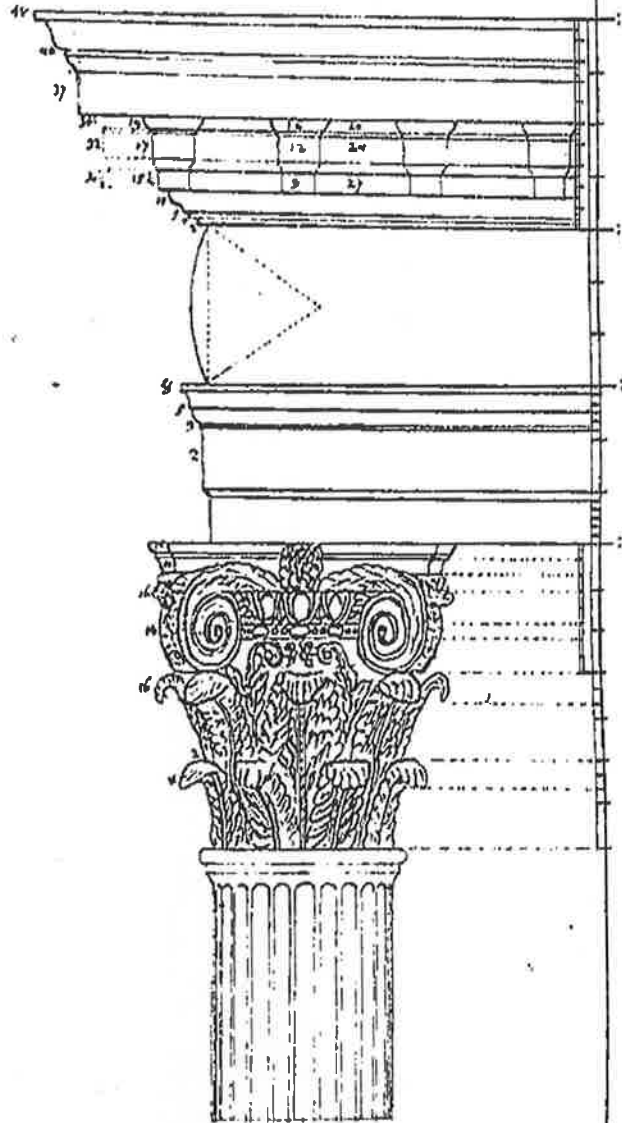
<sup>117</sup> Such as the French and Spanish Orders. Le Clerc described the French as capital as three *Fleur-de-Luces* on each Side, with *Palms*, and the badge of France, viz. a Cock; Arms underneath and a Lyre in the shade of the Palms under each Horn of the Abacus, which are so many Symbolical Ornaments, that Persons of understanding will perceive without any Difficulty. Crowns", he adds, "make the Ornament of its Freize with a Sun shining in the middle; whence it will be easily apprehended that this Order is consecrated to the Glory of the Grand Monarch." The Spanish capital is likewise "adorned with a Lion's Snout, instead of a Rose. I need not mention that this animal is the Symbol of Spain; and that it expresses the Strength and Gravity, as well as the Prudence of that Great Nation." S. le Clerc. *A Treatise of Architecture with Remarks and Observations Necessary for Young People, who would apply themselves to that noble Art* (London, 1732), 58, 143.

Century. It was certainly the Work of great Labour and Industry, and has something oddly artificial in it. Huge ponderous Roofs being raised on slender Pillars, or rather Groups of Staves; great Masses of Stone, like Rocks, hanging in the Air without any visibly sufficient Support, and threatening every instant to fall. Every thing is crammed with Roses, Lace, Crosses, Monkeys,<sup>118</sup> and other Quaintnesses, which glut the eye instead of filling it, by means of such a profusion of silly Ornaments. Whereas in the Greek Architecture there is not a single Member or Ornament but has its Propriety as well as Beauty. Add to this, that unreasonable Thickness of Gothic Walls, their clumsy Buttresses, Pinacles, and Turrets, their sharp-pointed Arches and narrow Doors give it a heavy Look among all its trite and incongruous Embellishments.

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<sup>118</sup> Seemingly a reference to gargoyles derived from Fréart who complained of the Gothic: "I know not what *Chunera's* and ridiculous *Monkeys*, [are] to be met with in every corner of our old *Churches*". See Fréart, *Parallel*, 36.

TAB. X.



A.

Chapter 15. ~.  
Of the Intercolumnations.<sup>119</sup>

Intercolumnations are the Distance between Columns in an Edifice, which the Antients distinguished into 5 kinds.

1. Pycnostylos,<sup>120</sup> which is that where-in the Columns stand very close to each other, at the distance only of one Diameter and a half, or three modules;  
< TAB. XX. > (No. 1.) This can only be used in the Doric and Ionic Order. For the Division of Triglyphs, Dentils, and Modillions, is the reason that all Intercolumnations will not suit all Orders. The Tuscan indeed, having no such Division, is accommodated to any Intercolumnation. The Antients, tis true, used this in the Corinthian Order, but then the Corinthian Column had an Ionic Entablature.

[59] 2. Systylos, is that wherein the Columns are at the distance of two Diameters or four Modules. (No. 2.). This may be used in either Ionic or Corinthian Columns.

3. Eustylos, which they reckoned the most Strong, beautiful, and convenient Disposition, is that wherein the Columns are two Diameters and a quarter, or four Modules, and 15 minutes apart. (No. 4, 5.) This is most natural to the Ionic Order. The middle Intercolumnation is usually 3 Diameters.

4. Diastylos, is that wherein the Columns stand somewhat wider apart, at the distance of three Diameters or 6 Modules. (No. 2, 3.) This is most used in the Ionic Order.

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<sup>119</sup> Despite its modest length, this is a heavily revised, and somewhat extended, version of the corresponding chapter in Blackstone's 'Abridgement' (Chapter XVI). The tabular presentation of information appears to be Blackstone's innovation, though inspired perhaps by Chambers' table which describes incremental increases in the length of Girders.

<sup>120</sup> Much of this terminology is taken from Evelyn, *Account*, 131-132.

5. Arceostylos is the widest sort of Intercolumnation, wherein the Columns were 4 Diameters or 8 Modules apart. (No. 1.) This may be used in the Doric Order. To these five we may add

6. Diplostylos, or Pseudostylos as it is called, i.e. The doubling or Coupling of Columns, (No. 1.) wherein two Columns are placed as near as possible together, in Couples; and between each Couple of Columns a wide Intercolumnation intervenes, even wider than the Arceostylos. This Method is very convenient, as well as beautiful; But is disliked by some, on account of its supposed Modernness in which point they seem to be under a Mistake.<sup>121</sup> For there are many Instances of it in a Collection of Antiques by Frane. Palumbus, Novanesis; particularly in an ancient Sepulchre near the Via Appia, and more especially in the Palace of M. Agrippa, which is raised with three stories of coupled Columns.<sup>122</sup>

Such were the Rules the Ancients confined themselves to, in their Temples, etc. but the Moderns have taken a greater Latitude; placing the Columns at such Distances as they find most suitable to the present Purpose. And indeed they seem to have as good a right to change the Intercolumnations, so as to suit the Divisions, of Tryglyphs, Dentils, Modillions, and Mutules in the Entablature, as the Antients had to change those proportions, as they frequently did, to make them suit the Intercolumnation. As we therefore constantly keep the same Proportions, be the

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<sup>121</sup> "Q. All Souls. Libr." is an intriguing notation at the end of this line in the 'Abridgement'. It is not clear whether this was added after 1743. Pairs of Columns do not feature in the Codrington Library interior, the completion of which Blackstone oversaw. Gibbs did use them however in his Radcliff Camera, situated adjacent to the Codrington Library entrance on Catte St. See also his *Rules*, 22 and Plate XXIX of that work. Hawksmoor's original design for the Radcliff Library did not feature paired columns though Blackstone was probably familiar with Hawksmoor's paired columns in College Hall, All Souls. For further reading on Hawksmoor's life and career see K. Downes, *Hawksmoor*, 1979. For his work in Oxford see H. Colvin's excellent chapter 'Hawksmoor's Oxford', in his *Unbuilt Oxford*, New Haven & London, 1983, 60-77. More significant for Blackstone is the fact that Perrault's 17th century eastern façade of the Louvre featured paired columns, for which he was widely criticized at the time. The clearest photograph of Perrault's paired columns on the facade is reproduced in J. Curl. *Classical Architecture: An Introduction to its Vocabulary and Essentials with a Select Glossary of Terms* (London, 1992), 119, pl. 5.29.

<sup>122</sup> The source from which Blackstone drew these examples is unidentified.

Intercolumnation what it will, it follows that the Intercolumnations must depend on those Proportions, since we lay it down as an indispensable Rule, that a Triglyph, Dentil, Modillion, or Mutule, must be perpendicularly over the middle of every Column. It will not therefore be amiss to set down a short Table of several Intercolumnations that may be used in each Order, which may be easily continued to the most distant one whatever.

[60] The Tuscan Order, having no such Division, is suited to any Intercolumnation.

The Breadth of the Doric Triglyph is one Module, of its Metop one Module 15 Minutes, whereby the nearest Intercolumnation will be 3 Modules, and its Intercolumnations increase by two Modules and 15 minutes each, thus

1 <sup>st</sup> . 03' : 00"	2 <sup>d</sup> . 05' : 15"	3 <sup>d</sup> . 08' : 00"	4 <sup>th</sup> . 10' : 15"	5 <sup>th</sup> . 13' : 00" etc.
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The Breadth of the Ionic Dentil is 5 minutes, of its Metop 2½; whereby the nearest Intercolumnation is one Module; and the Intercolumnations increase by 7½ minutes each: thus,

1 <sup>st</sup> . 01' : 00"	5 <sup>th</sup> . 02' : 00"	9 <sup>th</sup> . 03' : 00"	13 <sup>th</sup> . 04' : 00"	17 <sup>th</sup> . 05' : 00"
2 <sup>d</sup> . 01' : 07½"	6 <sup>th</sup> . 02' : 07½"	10 <sup>th</sup> . 03' : 07½"	14 <sup>th</sup> . 04' : 07½"	18 <sup>th</sup> . 05' : 07½"
3 <sup>d</sup> . 01' : 15"	7 <sup>th</sup> . 02' : 15"	11 <sup>th</sup> . 03' : 15"	15 <sup>th</sup> . 04' : 15"	19 <sup>th</sup> . 05' : 15"
4 <sup>th</sup> . 01' : 22½"	8 <sup>th</sup> . 02' : 22½"	12 <sup>th</sup> . 03' : 22½"	16 <sup>th</sup> . 04' : 22½"	20 <sup>th</sup> . 05' : 22½"
				etc.

The Breadth of the Corinthian Modillions is 12 minutes, and their Distance from each other 24 Minutes; the nearest Intercolumnation therefore is one Module 18 Minutes, and the Intercolumnations increase by the one Module six minutes each, thus,

1 <sup>st</sup> . 01' : 18"	3 <sup>d</sup> . 04' : 00"	5 <sup>th</sup> . 06' : 12"	7 <sup>th</sup> . 08' : 24"	9 <sup>th</sup> . 11' : 06"
2 <sup>d</sup> . 02' : 24"	4 <sup>th</sup> . 05' : 06"	6 <sup>th</sup> . 07' : 18"	8 <sup>th</sup> . 10' : 00"	10 <sup>th</sup> . 12' : 12"
				etc.

The Composite Mutules tallying with the Corinthian Modillions, the Intercolumnations in both Orders are the same.

Under this head may be added, what it will not be improper to call, Supercolumnation, or placing Orders over Orders in an Edifice<sup>123</sup> < for to make one Order contain many Stories, is reckoned an Abuse > wherein we must observe, to place the Columns precisely over one another, and to put the most solid Orders beneath the most delicate. Two Orders are usually as many as are employed at once, the third story (if any) being commonly Attic, though sometimes three have been made use of. The great Question is, What proportion the Columns above should bear to those below. Vitruvius, in speaking of Theatres and Egyptian Halls, prescribes that they superior Orders be one fourth less than the inferior; and hence some Moderns have drawn a general Rule. Others, as Palladio, seem by their Practice to have understood him as ordering this for those Structures only, which he there describes; and this seems the more reasonable, for that in the Egyptian Hall the upper range of Columns is only the same Order repeated.<sup>124</sup> However this be, [61] Custom has much lessened this Diminution, and upon a Medium we may make this universal Rule, That the greatest Diameter of the upper Columns shall be equal to the least Diameter or Diminution of the lower ones; or in other words, That the Columns above be one Sixth less than those below.

We had a View to this, when we settled the general Diminution of all the Columns to be ten Minutes. For were it eight only, according to Perrault, then the

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<sup>123</sup> The most striking ancient example is the Colosseum in Rome, which features four of the five Orders. Blackstone was undoubtedly familiar with the University of Oxford's Schools Gateway (1613), which utilizes all five Orders and is located at the Bodleian Library on Catte St. For illustrations of these and other examples of Supercolumnation see J. Summerson, *The Classical Language Of Architecture*, 30. More recently, Chitham has remarked of superimposed orders that "of the Renaissance architects Palladio who most refined the technique of superimposition and many of his designs for villas feature 'double-decker' orders as the central element of the facade." Chitham. *The Classical Orders of Architecture* (London, 1985), 118.

<sup>124</sup> Perrault, *Abridgment*, II: III, 141.

[Co1] Corinthian Order placed over the Doric would be higher than its supporting Order, which is not to be suffered: But being ten, it < is > now only of the same Height. Nor is this all. For so happy is the Combination of these two Diminutions, (viz. that of each Column with respect to itself, and that of the upper Column with respect to the lower) that in placing Orders over Orders each may have a regular Intercolumnation without changing any of the Proportions of the Entablature. A short Table of this may not be un-useful, whereby it will appear what Intercolumnation the lower Order ought to have, in order to make that of the upper one regular.

1. In placing the Ionic Order over the Doric, the Doric Intercolumnation must be either . . .	03' . 00"	whereby the Ionic will be	04" : 00"
	05 . 15		07 : 00
	08 . 00		10 : 00
	10 . 15		13 : 00
	13 . 00		16 : 00

2. In placing the Corinthian Order over the Doric, the Doric Intercolumnation must be	03' . 00"	whereby the Corinthian will be	04' . 00"
	08 . 00		10 . 00
	13 . 00		16 . 00

3. In placing the Corinthian Order over the Ionic, the Ionic Intercolumnation must be	01' . 00"	whereby the Corinthian will be	01' . 18"
	02 . 00		02 . 24
	03 . 00		04 . 00
	04 . 00		05 . 06
	05 . 00		06 . 12
	06 . 00		07 . 18
	07 . 00		08 . 24
	08 . 00		10 . 00
	09 . 00		11 . 06
	10 . 00		12 . 12
	11 . 00		13 . 18
	12 . 00		14 . 24
	13 . 00		16 . 00

Of the Crowning of the Orders.<sup>125</sup>

After we have marshalled our Columns properly in an Edifice, with all their necessary Concomitants, it remains that we crown or finish the Frontispiece; which is done in several Ways. Sometimes by raising a little < TAB. XI. > Order over the Cornice in the manner of a Pedestal (No. 1. A.) called an Attic Story or Attic Order. The Height of this varies at Discretion, but should never be less than two, or more than four Modules. Its Character is the same as that of the Pedestal beneath; the projecture of the Dye (which regulates all the rest) being equal to the Diminution of the Column. This Attic Order projects with a Break immediately over the Column in the manner of a single Pedestal or, if the Columns are coupled, sometimes (but not always) like a double Pedestal; and over the Intercolumnation it is like a continued Pedestal; the Whole resembling Vitruvius's Scamilli impares. Its Base is sometimes omitted.

If this Attic Order is only a single Wall or Parapet (i.e. A little Wall breast-high) and really contains no Rooms, but only serves to hide the Roofing, and secure People from falling, is it then called the Attic of the Roof [*two words illegible: crossed out*], and the continued Pedestal is often cut into Ballusters or Poctiae, which seem to have taken their name from the Resemblance to the Balluster of the antique Ionic Capital. These are of different Proportions according to their different Delicacy. To form them, their Height must be divided into any number of Parts, not exceeding twelve or less than eight, one of which is always the Height of the Plinth at top and

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<sup>125</sup> This is the second chapter, the origins of which are impossible to positively identify.

bottom, two of them is its Breadth, and also the Breadth where the Balluster swells in the middle, and one of them the Distance from one Balluster to another. A series of them is called a Ballustrade.

But when this Story is enriched for other Uses and Conveniences [*one word crossed out*] within-doors, forming a room or rooms, it then acquires also the Names of Mezzanine or Entresole. Then too it usually changes its Form and is built with Pilasters and Entablature peculiar to it-self. (No. 2.) It is sometimes inserted [63] between two regular Orders, and is then called the Attic interposed. The Height of this Order is undetermined; Palladio has made it from a Fourth to a Third of the Order beneath it. The Diameter of the Attic Pilasters is equal to the Diminution of the Columns below. Half of this Diameter is given to a Plinth which runs along the Bottom of the Order, and, projecting with a Break, forms the Base of each Pilaster. The Pilasters are crowned with a little Plinth or Abacus; whose Projecture is equal to that of the Base, and ~~their~~ its Height is one Sixth of the Diameter of the Pilaster. Over this the Entablature is placed, which is what they call an Architraved Cornice, having no Freeze. Its Height is one Diameter of the Pilaster, which being divided into Eight Parts, three of them are given to the Architrave, and five to the Cornice. The Ornaments and Character of this Entablature, should bear some Analogy to those of the Order beneath.

Architraved-Cornices ought never to be placed over regular Columns; but over Caryatids, Consoles etc. they may be admitted. The Cornice is often supported by a sort of Blocks or Cartouches, which profile against the Architrave. This is called a Block-Cornice.

Another Way of crowning is by a Pediment or Fronton<sup>126</sup> (No. 3, 4.) which is a kind of low Pinnacle, either triangular or the Segment of a Circle: imitated from the Slopes of the antient rude Roofings. It consists of three Parts; 1. The Base, which is no other than the Cornice from which it is raised: 2. The Tympanum, Pannel, Naked, Area, or Dye of the Pediment is that flat angular Plain enclosed between the Base and the Mouldings above; which make, 3. The Cornice, which is the same with that of the Order which it crowns, having the same proportions and the same Ornaments. The Cymatium or uppermost Member (whatsoever it be) of the Cornice is usually omitted in the Base, but is always found in the Cornice of the Pediment. One thing is remarkable, that if there be any Ornaments in the Cornice, as Mutules, Dentils, or Modillions, they are generally placed not perpendicular to the Slope of the Pediment, but perpendicular to the Horizon; which we shall find to be quite irrational if we consider that since Pediments represent the Gabel-End of a [64] Roof, the Modillions etc. represent the Ends of the Purlins, which are never found perpendicular to the Horizon, but to the Rafters. For which Reasons, some Moderns have in this point ventured to deviate from the uniform Usage of the Antients.

The Form and Proportion of Pediments differs much. Some being as was said triangular, others circular; to which last some entirely appropriate the name of Frontons. Of those who make them triangular, some make them equilateral, which are called pointed Pediments and Plastea, because formerly used to raise Statues upon; others, more flattened. The most beautiful Proportion is when its Height is almost one Fifth of its Base; or more exactly, when its obtuse Angle is of 135 degrees, i.e. the Angle of a regular Octogon. It is thus described. (No. 5.) Let the Line A. B be the Base of the Pediment. Divide it into two equal Parts by the perpendicular D E, at

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<sup>126</sup> Evelyn, *Account*, 128.

Point C, and round the Centre C describe the Circle ADBE; then where the Circle encounters the Perpendicular, at E, fix your Centre, and, with the Distance E A, describe the Arc A F B; and where that intersects the Perpendicular, at F, then is the Fastigium or Top of the Pediment. The Arc, A F B, is also the best proportion for circular Frontons. *NB.* This describes the Outline of the whole Pediment, not that of the Naked or Tympanum only.

Pediments are sometimes ornamented with Acroters or Pinnacles, which are little Pedestals, usually without Bases (No. 3. a. a.) placed at the Fastigium and near the two Extremes of Pediments to support Urns, Statues, or the like. Their Breadth is equal to the Diminution of the Columns below, the two angular ones being perpendicular over them. The Height of the two angular ones is equal to half the Tympan, and that of the middle one an Eighth more.

There are many Abuses practised in Pediments, 1. When they are Broken or cut open at the top, which is destroying the very End of a Pediment, viz. to shelter and carry off the Rains. 2. When it is formed of two Consoles or Catrouches inclining to each other, which will fall under the same Censure. 3. When it has no Base, the Entablature beneath being all cut away, except what is plumb over two Columns or Pilasters, from whence the Pediment springs. This is called a Hollow Pediment; but is equally absurd as the Broken. For as that takes away the Support of the Rafters at top, by not suffering them to meet and lean [65] against each other at the vertical angle; so this, by withdrawing the Beam which should support their Pressure, and hinder them from spreading, takes away their Stability at Bottom. 4. When a double Pediment is formed; i.e. a less in the Tympanum of a larger; which implies the same Absurdity as if a Man were to erect two Roofs one within another. 5. When two Pediments are put over one another in the same Frontispiece, which is nearly the same Absurdity;

though some will admit it, provided the lower be circular, and the upper triangular; imagining perhaps that the circular may represent the End of a Cradle Vault, which may be used below Stairs. For it is an indispensable Condition of a good Building that the Proportions of the Outside correspond to and indicate those within; whence we may collect by the by, that all Deceptio Vissu's<sup>127</sup> etc. which please trifling Genius's, are not to be admitted in sound and regular Architecture.

To conclude; One Caution remains, Not to suffer a Pediment to crown more than ten Columns, and those pretty close, lest it be too massive.

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<sup>127</sup> Visual deceptions, tricks of the eye, optical illusions.

## Chapter 17. ~

### Of Pilasters.<sup>128</sup>

By Pilasters in the more confined sense of the Word are meant nothing but square Columns, which differ from round ones only in the Shape of the Shaft and some other Particularities we shall mention; but having the same Character and Proportions. When inserted, they are called Antœ; when insulated, Parastatœ Their chief Laws are,

1. That the Projecture of Antœ, or inserted Pilasters, shall be either one Half or one Sixth of their Breadth out of the Naked of the Wall; except when any Ornaments project farther than one Sixth, for then the Projecture of the Antœ should equal that of the Ornaments. When also Imposts of Arches profile against their Sides, they should then project one Fourth of their Diameter.

2. Pilasters are never diminished, unless where they stand in the same Line with Columns, and the Entablature is continued over both without any Break or Interruption; at which time the Face respecting the Columns [66] should be diminished, but not the Sides. For otherwise the Abacus of the Capital will project much more beyond the first Face of the Architrave, than that of the Capital of the Columns it ranges with.

3. Pilasters are sometimes fluted when the Columns which they accompany are not, and so vice versâ They have usually nine flutings on each Face, but the Return or Flank of inserted Pilasters is not fluted lest we transgress the first Law laid down (which is sometimes allowed) by making them project a little more than half

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<sup>128</sup> This short chapter is based upon Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 321-322. The corresponding Chapter of Blackstone's 'Abridgement', 'Of Pilasters' bears evidence of extensive revision.

their Breadth viz. enough to make five Minutes. For the same Reason, chiefly, when Pilasters penetrate each other at an inverted Angle, the same Caution should be observed, to have always a little more than half the Pilaster appear.<sup>129</sup>

4. The Capitals are much broader in Pilasters than Columns, occasioned by their want of Diminution.

But besides these regular Pilasters, the Name, Pilaster, is applied to any square Block, that has no < one > determinate Proportion and serves for [a] Variety of Uses, as for Butments, Piers, Attic Stories and all which have their respective Rules belonging to them.<sup>130</sup>

5. Piers or Piles, that sustain the Arches of Bridges, must not be less than a Sixth or more than a Fourth of the Diameter of the Arch. They are sometimes made semicircular, but those pointed at Right-Angles are to be preferred, as best calculated to resist and divide the Impetuosity of the Current.

When Pilasters support Arches, they are then called Butments or Piedroits; concerning which the Rules are, 1. That their Breadth should never be more than<sup>131</sup> Two Thirds or less than one Third of the Diameter of the Arch. 2. That the angular ones should be two Thirds bigger than the rest. 3. That they should be exactly square; or if they deviate from it, that they be less in Flank than in Front. Sometimes, as in Venetian Windows, a whole Order, Pedestal, Column, and Entablature, serves as a Butment to an Arch.

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<sup>129</sup> In the corresponding section of Blackstone's 'Abridgement' point 3 with the sentence "Their Flutings are always odd in number." The three words [odd in number] are also underlined, apparently during the revision process.

<sup>130</sup> This sentence appears in the 'Abridgement' as the first sentence of the revised text. That is to say, Blackstone strikes through the first word ("Pilasters") and inserts this sentence. He seems to have intended the sentence as the chapter's first, but it does not appear as such in the 'Elements'.

<sup>131</sup> Overwritten.

Hereby we are naturally led to speak of Arches and Vaults, their several Species, Proportions, Natures, and Ornaments; of all which more at large in the next Chapter.

Of Arches and Vaults.<sup>132</sup>

We speak of these together, as they bear so great an Analogy to each other, a Vault being little more than a dilated Arch, as an Arch is a contracted Vault. However we shall consider them separately after having laid down the Principles on which they both depend in a few simple Theorems.

1. All solid Materials, when free from Impediment, tend to the Centre of the Earth in a perpendicular Line.<sup>133</sup>

2. All solid Materials, when in a rectangular Shape, if they shall be laid one by another in a level Row, supported by only at the two Extremes; (No. 6.) all the pieces between will necessarily sink by their own Gravity, and much more if pressed by any superior Weight. So that to make them stand, we must either change their Posture, their Figure, or both.

3. If Stones, etc., be figured cuneatim, or wedgewise, broader above than below, and laid in a level Row, with their two Ends supported as before, and their Joints all pointing to one Centre. (No. 7.) Now none of them can sink till their Supporters give way, because they want Room to sink perpendicularly. But this is but a weak Structure; for the Supporters are subject to too much Impulsion, especially if the Line be long. To fortify the Work we must change not only the Figure of the

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<sup>532</sup> Blackstone's 1743 'Abridgement' treats the subject matter herein in three much shorter chapters: XIX 'Of Arches', XX 'Of Arches adorned with Columns etc.', and 'Of Vaults'; 30-34. This chapter is based, upon Wotton's five theorems. See Wotton, *Elements*, 46-51. (The theorems themselves feature in Evelyn's list of recommended inclusions in a new architectural treatise. See Evelyn, *Account*, 118). Blackstone's subtle changes however highlight a scientific, indeed Newtonian, view of physics rather than the Aristotelian understanding inherent in Wotton's seventeenth century text. In fact Blackstone has taken much of this section almost verbatim from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 52-54 rather than from Wotton.

<sup>133</sup> This is a good example of Chambers' slight rewording of Wotton's original, which in this case reads: "All solid *Materials* free from impediment, doe descend *perpendicularly* downwards, because *ponderosity* is a natural inclination to the Centre of the World, and *Nature* performeth her motions by the shortest lines." Wotton, *Elements*, I: 47.

Materials, but their Position.

4. If the Materials be shaped wedgewise, and disposed in a circular Arch, all pointing to the same Centre (No. 8) neither can the pieces sink for want of Room, nor the Supporters suffer so much Violence as before; For the Convexity makes the incumbent Weight rather rest on the Supporters than heave them outwards: Whence we may draw this Corollary, that the securest of all Arches is the semicircular.<sup>134</sup>

5. What has been said of Arches is equally applicable to Vaults, < as > most of them [~~being~~] may be conceived to be formed by the progression of Arches, or their turning on their Axis; in the same manner as a Cylinder is generated by the progression of a Circle, or a Sphere by the turning of a Circle [68] on its Axis or Diameter. As therefore the Materials of a Vault are Shaped and disposed in the same manner as in an Arch, or rather a Combination of Arches, it follows that the properties of An Arch must be those of a Vault also.

Having thus laid down the general Doctrine of Arches; we now proceed to consider the several Sorts of Arches.

1. Strait or Flat Arches (No. 7.) whose upper and under Edges are strait, those Edges parallel, and the Joints all pointing towards one Centre, (as m ) which is found by describing a Square on the lower Edge of the Arch and dividing the Side parallel to the Edge into two equal Parts, the middle Point is the Centre of all the Joints.

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<sup>134</sup> Blackstone was not the first architectural writer to transpose sections of an existing work, often paraphrased, or slightly condensed but still almost verbatim, into his own. Indeed this seems to have been common practice in early modern architectural writings. In this instance, Chambers updated Wotton's language to reflect the contemporary scientific discourse. Blackstone in turn takes this section from Chambers, condensing it still further. A comparison of point four in Wotton's and Chambers' texts with Blackstone's demonstrates this tendency particularly well. Wotton writes in part: "for the roundness will always make the Incumbent waight, rather to rest upon the *Supporters*, then to shove them". Chambers renders the same section: "for the Convexity will always make the incumbent Weight rather rest upon the Supporters, than heave them outwards". See *Elements* I, .49, Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 54. It is unlikely that this practice was regarded as plagiarism in the eighteenth century. Leoni clearly regarded his additions to Palladio's text sufficient to render his translation an original work but both he and Chambers acknowledged their sources. Blackstone does so in his prefatory remarks. It seems likely that he considered such remarks sufficient acknowledgment.

2. Semicircular Arches (No. 8.) called also perfect Arches and Arches en plein ceintre, are formed of a complete Semicircle, to the Centre of which ( p ) the Joints all point.

3. Scheme Arches or Imperfect Arches (No. 9.) are less than a Semicircle, containing from 60 to 90 degrees. Their Joints all point to the Centre ( c ) of the circle which is an Arc of [blank space]. This is weaker than the Semicircle as being flatter, and its Supporters more subject to Protrusion.

4. Elliptic Arches are of two Sorts, the one flatter than a full Semicircle (No. 10.) the other higher (No. 11.) [.] They both are formed of a Semi-Ellipse, only one is divided in the long Diameter, the other in the short. Their Joints all point to the midst of their Diameter.

5. Arc-Rampart are those which have one Butment higher than the other. (No. 12.) They may be made of any Species.

6. Arches of the third or fourth Point, or di terzo and quarto Acuto (No. 13.) are formed of two Arcs of a Circle meeting an Angle at the Top. They have their Name from the manner of their Formation, which is by dividing the Diameter into three or four Parts at pleasure, and taking one of them ( as a ) for the Centre of the Arch co, and b for the centre of the Arch m c, which two Arches intersect at the Point c. Sometimes the Centres are fixed at m or o; Sometimes one fourth or one third farther out. The farther the Centres recede from the middle of the Diameter d (to which all the Joints point) the sharper and narrower is the Arch. Of this kind are most of the Gothic Arches; but they ought, both on account of their Weakness and Unsightliness to be ever [69] [70] excluded out of all Buildings.

7. Arcs Boutants are a Sort of Half Arch, not much unlike our figures of the Archivaults, one End of which abutts against the ground, or perpendicularly; the other

abutts horizontally against the Side of a Wall etc., to prevent its Bulging or giving Way.

The tops of the Pilasters which support Arches are usually crowned with a sort of protuberant Heads, not unlike the Tuscan or Doric Capitals, called the Imposts, Incumbæ, or Chaptrells. The Pilaster has its Astragal and Fillet < in height one sixth of the Impost > like a Column. The Imposts are universally divided into three parts, one of which is given to the Hypotrachlion, another to the Mouldings, and a third to the Abacus and its crowning Members. The Tuscan Impost, or that made use of in < TAB. XII. > Tuscan Arches (No. 1.a.) has only a square Plinth for its Abacus and the Mouldings are only an Ovolo and a small Astragal beneath it [.] The Doric has its Abacus crowned with a Fillet, and its Mouldings are a Fillet, an Astragal and an Ovolo. The Ionic, (No. 3.a.) has its Abacus crowned with an Ogee and Fillet, and its Mouldings are a Caveto, Fillet, and Ovolo. The Corinthian (No. 4. a.) has its Abacus crowned as the Ionic, and its Mouldings are a Fillet, an Astragal, a Cymatium, and Fillet. The Composite (No. 5.a.) has its Abacus crowned as the Ionic, and its Mouldings are a Cavetto, Fillet, Cymatium, and Fillet. The Height of the whole Impost is an Eighth of the Opening of the Arch. The projecture of the Abacus etc. is one Third of the Height of the Impost. Imposts add great Grace to the Pilasters, and besides that they take off the disagreeable Look that the Juncture of a Curve with a Perpendicular would occasion, they also add an apparent [*one or two letters crossed out*] Firmness to the Arch. For as the Feet, or lower Parts of the Arch, rest on them; they seem less liable to slide off, by reason of the Projecture of the Imposts, than if they rested only on a Pilaster which does not project at all.

The Archivault also is an almost necessary Ornament of an Arch; which is the inner Contour or Frame of the Arch, by some called the Architrave of the Arch, which

bears on the Imposts. Its Breadth is universally one Eighth of the Opening of the Arch, or equal to the Height of the Impost. Its Mouldings vary according to the Orders it is employed in. In the Tuscan it has only one Face crowned with a large Fillet. In the Doric (No. 2.) it has [71] two Faces, crowned with an Ogee and Fillet. In the Ionic (No. 3.) it has two Faces separated by a small Astragal, and crowned with another Astragal, an Ogee and Fillet. In the Corinthian and Composite (No. 4, 5. b.) it has the same Mouldings as the Architrave of the Order. The under face of the Archivault (resembling the Inrados of a Cradle-Vault) is called the Soffit of the Arch.

The wedge-like Stones of which the Archivault is formed (No. 6. a. a.) are called Coussinets < the Gimals > . The middle one (b) which locks them fast together is called the Keystone, Archstone, Voussoir, or Mensula. This is usually made of a greater Height and projecture than the rest, partly for Strength, and partly for Ornament. It is then made of such a proportion that if the Sides of it were to be prolonged till they met in the centre of the Arch, they would form an angle of 15 degrees; or in other words, its Breadth is one Twelfth of the Contour of the Arch. It is quite plain in the Tuscan and Doric Arch, but waved and carved like a Console in the rest. When over a Gate, it is called Prothyris. Sometimes the two next Coussinets are made to project etc. one on each Side of the Keystone, but not so far (c c ) by way of Stays of Supporters. These are called Side- or Sku-Stones, and their Breadth is half that of the Keystone.<sup>135</sup>

We proceed now to consider the several Kinds of Vaults; which are more various than those of Arches. The principal are as follow [*sic*].

1. A circular Vault, or spherical one, (No. 7.) is that whose Sweep, (i.e. the Curve its inner Surface describes) is an Hemisphere, the Strongest of all Vaults whatsoever. It

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<sup>135</sup> The origin of the term Sku-Stones is unclear.

is also called Testudo and Cul de four.

2. An [*one word illegible: crossed out*] elliptical Vault, or rather a Spheroidal one is that whose Sweep is half a Spheroid. If by this means it become higher than an Hemisphere, it is called a surmounted Vault; if lower, a surbased one.

3. A flat Vault < Rernenato > or one whose Sweep is the portion of a Sphere, yet less than a Hemisphere, is also a surbased Vault.

4. A strait Vault is that whose Materials are of the same wedgelike Form with the rest, pointing all to one centre, but disposed in a strait Line, without any Concavity, like the Continuation of a strait Arch.

[72] 5. A cradle Vault or Fornix (No. 8.) which is a long semicircular Roof, like the half of an hollow Cylinder. It may be also surmounted or surbased, etc. or of as many kinds as there are Arches, being only an Arch continued.

6. A fasciated Vault (No. 9.) is that which springs from its Butments in a Curve (e.g. the Quadrant of a Circle) but the Curve is not continued over the whole Roof, but joins on all Sides to a flat Face or Fascia, which covers the middle of the Room. < the flat Face is sometimes called the Square; the coved the Sesto of the Vault. > This differs little from what is called Coving; that is, when the Angle formed by the Top and sides of a Room is rounded off in the Arch of a Circle. Hence we call a little Seat or Pavilion, that projects over in a half Arch, an Alcove.

7. Cross Vaults < called also [*one word illegible*] > or Camerae (No. 10.) are such as seem to be formed by the natural Crossing or Intersection of two cradle Vaults, consequently of these are as many Species as of those. By this Intersection certain angular Edges are formed, which pass diagonally from one Corner of the Room to the other, uniting [*one word illegible: crossed out*] in the Keystone of the Vault. These are called the Nerves, Rains, or Branches; and in Gothic Vaults (wherein

this Species is generally used) they are called Ogives or Formerets; as the Spaces between them are Pendentives or camerated Spaces. This is reckoned a very strong Manner. In long Rooms, as Galleries etc., that are to be vaulted, it is used to employ these Cross Vaults and the testudinal,<sup>136</sup> alternatively, (No. 11.) separated by a kind of Arch which hangs down lower than the Vaults, a a; [*two or three words illegible: crossed out*] These are called by the French, Arcs doubleaux.

8. Groined Vaults (No. 12.) are when in a cradle or other Vault a Groin or *Lunette* is made; i.e. another little Vault is made in the side of it for a Door, Window, or the like, or sometimes only to relieve the Eye. These Groins may be circular, pointed, elliptical, or of any Shape. If their Sweep be the same as that of the Vault they are made in, and they placed as near as possible together, they will form a Series of camerated Vaults, for the Camera is nothing else than a cradle Vault with a Groin or Lunette, equal in Dimensions to itself.

9. Conchæ or Shell-Vaults, are somewhat resembling Cradle Vaults, only they grow wider as they lengthen, like a Trumpet. [73] [74] A single Vault is that which has only one Crust or Shell - a double one that which being built over another, leaves a [*one word illegible: faint*]<sup>137</sup> between the Convexity of the One and the Concavity of the other, chiefly intended to make the inner Decoration range with the exterior. A Master-Vault is that which crowns the principal parts of a Building, in contradistinction to the lesser or more subordinate Vaults which cover only some little Apartment.

The outer Surface of a Vault is called the *Extrados* the inner the *Intrados*. The shoot or Drift of a Vault is the Effort it makes to separate the Stones it is composed of, which is prevented by their Wedgelike Form. The Compartments of a Vault are

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<sup>136</sup> i.e. shaped like the shell of a tortoise.

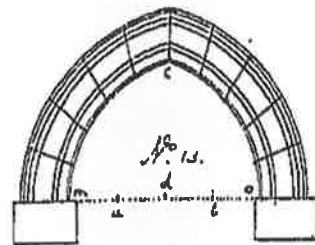
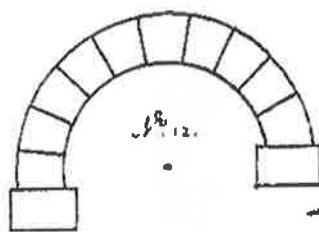
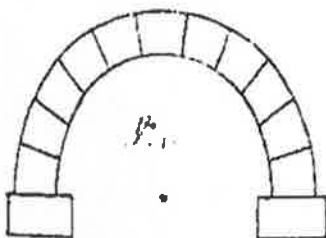
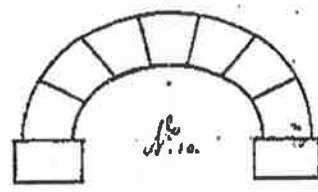
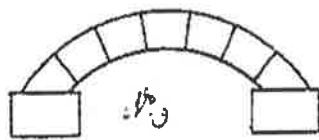
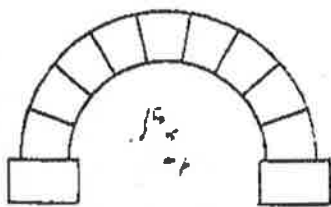
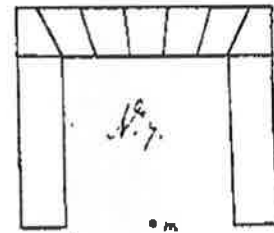
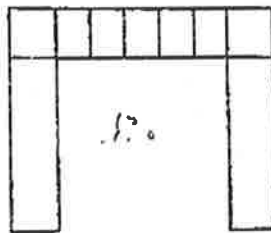
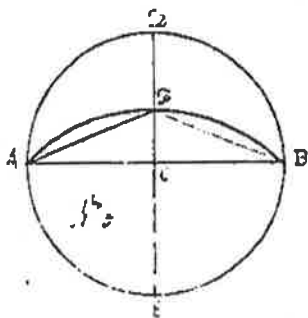
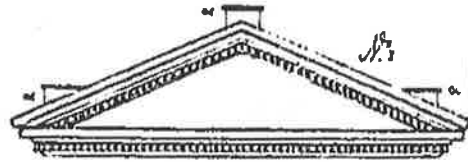
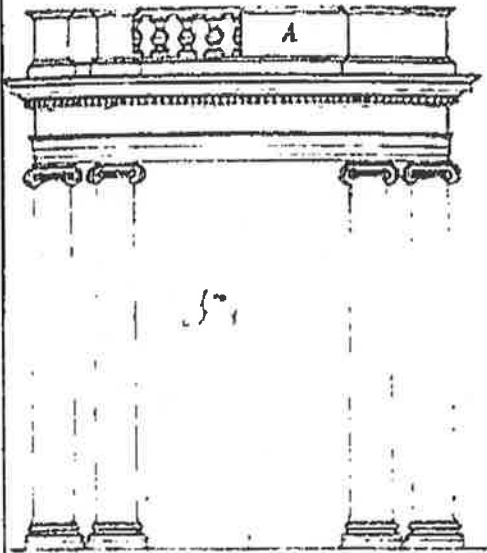
<sup>137</sup> [Square]?

Pannels of a Triangular Form on the Intrados, separated by Platbands etc. from each other; In cross Vaults the Pendentives are the Compartments.

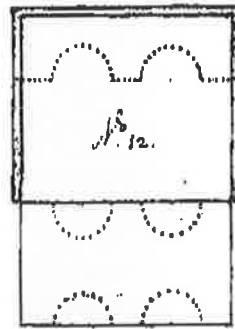
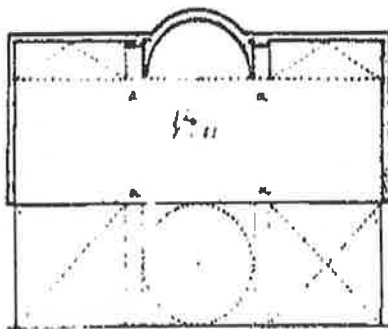
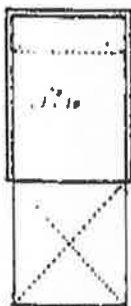
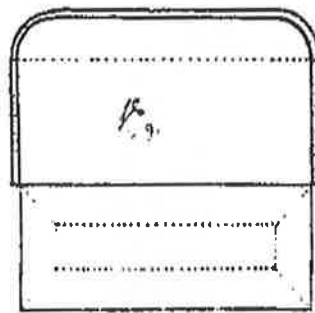
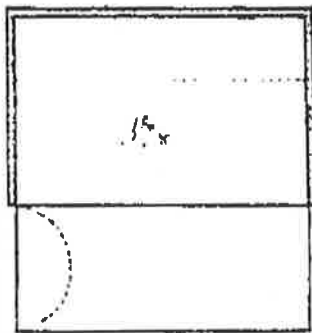
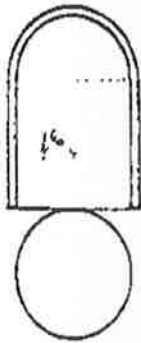
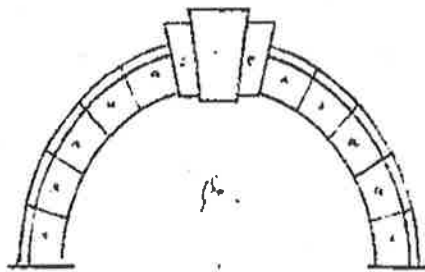
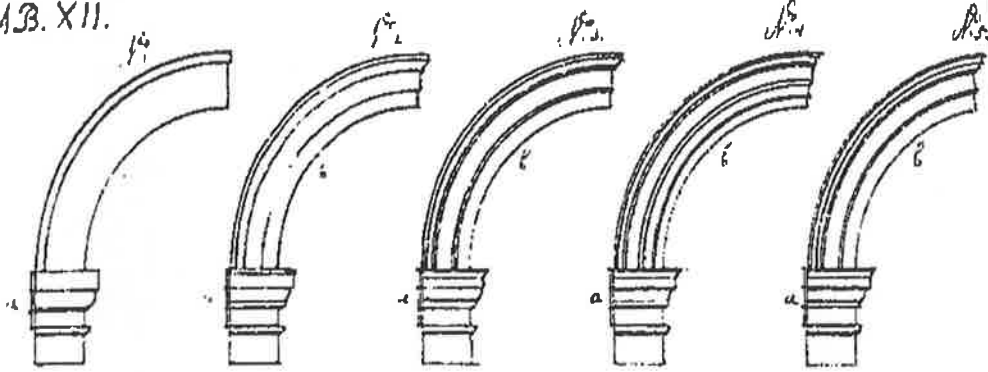
In Vault-Work Care must be had, 1. That the Butments be very substantial. 2. That the *Ogives* where they cross (if we use camberated Vaults) should not entangle confusedly, but be disposed in a neat Manner. 3. That the Joints of the Coussinets be exceedingly close and true, not needing any Pegs, or filling up with Mortar. 4. That where they are used aboveground they be rendered as light and cheerful and possible, consistently with their due Strength.

# Architecture.

TAB. XI.



ТАБ. XII.



[75] Chapter 19

Of the Arches of the several Orders<sup>138</sup>

Having thus settled the several Species and Proportions of Arches and Vaults, we proceed next to consider their Characters and Ornaments, those of Arches in particular, when used in magnificent or elegant Buildings to which they add both strength and Grace.

The Character and Ornaments, we are now to speak of, consist in the Columns and Pilasters of the several Orders, which are applied to Piedroits of the Arches, and crowned with their proper Entablatures.

The columns that are put to this Use are inserted, One Half of them only projecting. They are sometimes supported on Pedestals, Sometimes not; as we would have our Arch larger or less. It is so contrived by the Intercolumnations that the Arch shall grow gradually more and more delicate, according to the Delicacy of its Order. Now the Delicacy of the Arch consists in the greater Proportion its Height bears to its Breadth; so that the Doric Arch is narrower than the Tuscan, the Ionic than the Doric, the Corinthian than the Ionic. The Composite Arch has the same Proportions as the Corinthian, for which reason no further Mention shall be made of it.

These Intercolumnations now must indeed vary, if we place Arches over Arches, but as that is a thing seldom practiced; and, as I apprehend, as [76] seldom approved of, we shall lay down no Rules but leave it to the Discretion of the Architect.

The general Rule for making these Arches is as follows; When the

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<sup>138</sup> The pages of the corresponding chapter of the 'Abridgement', 'Of Arches adorned with Columns and Pilasters' shows considerable evidence of revision. The introductory paragraph, for example, is more discursive. The section has been rewritten in order to integrate Perrault's system of proportion (that is to say, using modules rather than diameters) and is based upon Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 52-54.

Intercolumnation or Distance from Column to Column is settled, that Distance being divided into ten Parts, one of them is the Breadth of each Pilaster or Butment (to which the height of the Imposts, and the Breadth of the Archivault are equal) and the other Eight are the Opening or Diameter of the Arch. We are next to consider the particular Proportions of Arches belonging to each Order.

<TAB III> The Tuscan Arch without the Pedestal (No. 1.) is thus formed: The Intercolumnation is ten Modules. The Plinth beneath the Columns is in height two Modules, to which the Plinth of the Pilaster is equal, both in Height and Projecture. Divide the height from the Ground to the top of the Columns into three parts, and at the End of two will be the centre of the Arch. By this means the Diameter of the Arch will be Eight Modules and its Height Fourteen modules, and Twenty minutes. *NB.* The triangular Space A A is in this and all Arches called the Pannel or Tympan of the Arch.

The Tuscan Arch with the Pedestal (No. 2.) has twelve Modules for its Intercolumnation. The Plinth of the Pilaster is equal to the Base of the Pedestal, in this and all other Arches with the Pedestals. The Centre of the Arch is found as in the former, by which the Height of the Arch becomes Seventeen Modules and nine Minutes, and its Diameter, nine Modules, 18 minutes.

The Doric Arch without the Pedestal (No. 3.) has for Intercolumnation ten modules, 15 minutes. The additional Plinth beneath the Column is one module high, to which that of the Pilaster is equal. The Centre of the Arch is found as before; by which the Height of it becomes  $15^{\circ}. 16'$ , and its Diameter  $08^{\circ}. 12'$ .

The Doric Arch with the Pedestal (No. 4.) has for Intercolumnation thirteen Modules: by which the Diameter of the Arch is ten Modules. Twelve Minutes, and its Height Nineteen Modules and Six Minutes. [77] [78] <TAB. XIV > The Ionic Arch (No. 1.)

without the pedestal has for Intercolumnation ten Modules. The Plinth of the Pilaster is equal to the Base of the Column, the Centre is found as before, whereby the Diameter of the Arch is Eight Modules and its Height Sixteen; a most beautiful Proportion.

The Ionic Arch with the Pedestal (No. 2.) has thirteen modules for Intercolumnation, The Centre of the Arch is found [*two letters crossed out*] by dividing the Height of the entire Order into five parts, and at the End of three will be the Centre; whereby the Diameter of the Arch will be Ten Modules and Twelve Minutes and its Height Twenty one Modules and as many Minutes.

The Corinthian Arch without the Pedestal (No. 3.) has for its Intercolumnation Eleven Modules and Six Minutes the rest is as the Ionic Arch; whereby the Diameter will be Eight Modules and Twenty Eight Minutes, and four Fifths; and its Height Seventeen Modules, Twenty four Minutes and two Fifths. This is the proportion as delineated in the Figure, though, in order to keep up the gradual Delicacy of the Arches, it will be more advisable to make the Intercolumnation of Ten Modules only, whereby the Diameter will be Eight Modules, and the Height Seventeen Modules and Ten Minutes.

The Corinthian Arch with the pedestal (No. 4.) has for its Intercolumnation Thirteen Modules and Eighteen Minutes; The rest as the Ionic Arch with the Pedestal, whereby the Diameter will be Ten Modules, Twenty Six Minutes and Two Fifths; and the Height Twenty three Modules, Thirteen Minutes and one Fifth.

Having thus treated at large of Walls or Muring, both entire and intermitted; and therein of Masonry, of Columns and Pilasters, their Orders and Members, their Characters and Proportions, and all their Appurtenances whatsoever, of Arches lastly and Vaults, their Theory, Proportions, and Ornaments, we are now to proceed to our

third general Head, that of Apertures; but shall first subjoin a Word or two concerning the Methods used by Architects to express the Idea formed in their Minds of the outward View of the Walls or Muring, or the manner of delineating on Paper the Effect any Building has or will have [79]

to the Eye of the Spectator.

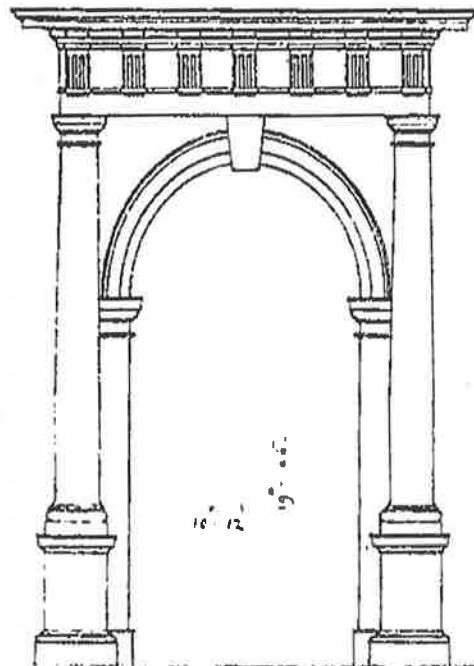
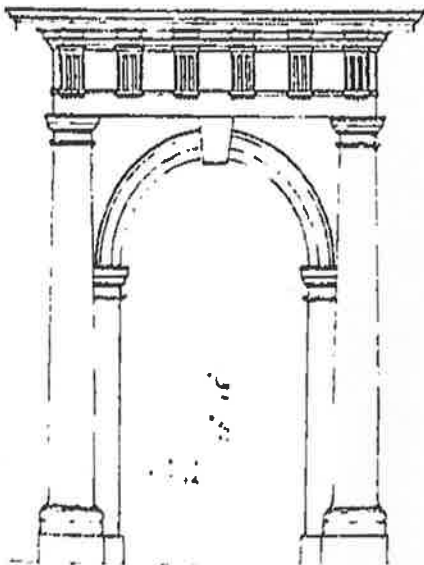
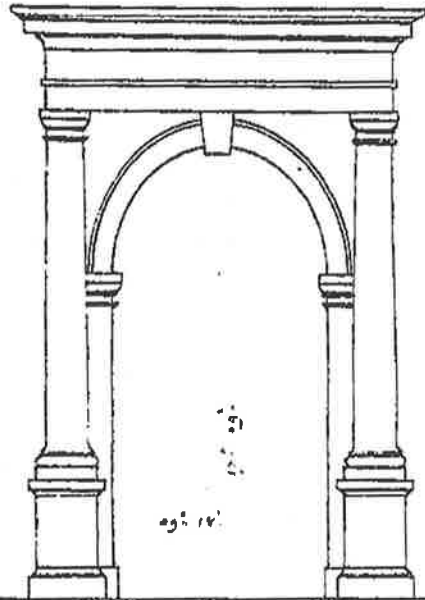
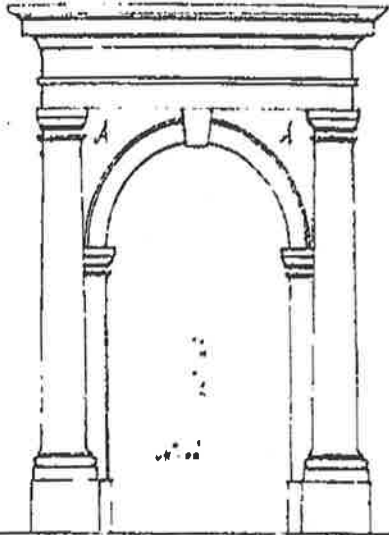
1. The Orthography,<sup>139</sup> Elevation, or Upright, is the Delineation of the outward Face or Front of a Building, exhibiting the principal Wall with everything thereon visible to an eye placed immediately before it; of which kind are the Draughts in the present Treatise. It is also called the External Orthography to distinguish it from the internal, of which hereafter. The outer or principal Face of a Building is called the Frontispiece, Façade, or Portrait. In an Orthography the Profile or Contour has its true and exact proportions, without any regard to Perspective which distinguishes it from

2. The Scenography, or Elevation in Perspective; which is the Representation of a Building, Front and Sides, [~~and~~] in all its optical Flexures, Shadows, and Dimensions; such as it would appear to an Eye placed at a distance. These two Methods have their distinct Uses; One to express the exact Dimensions for the Use of Workmen, the Other to shew the Effect those Proportions will have, when actually put in Practice.

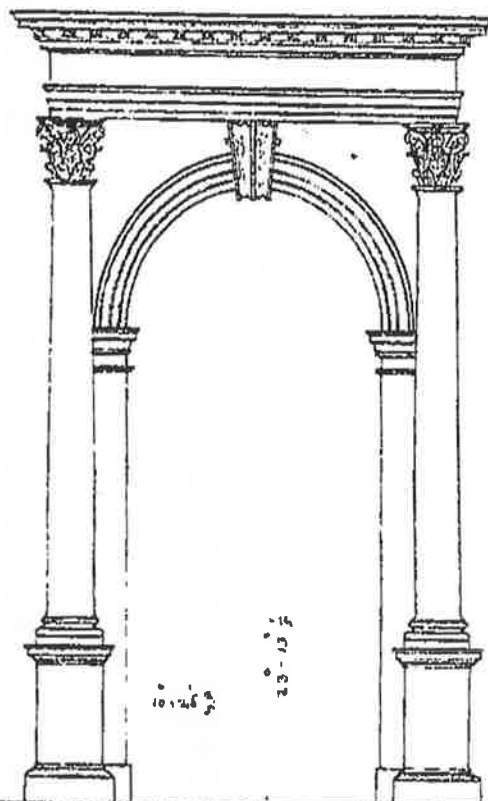
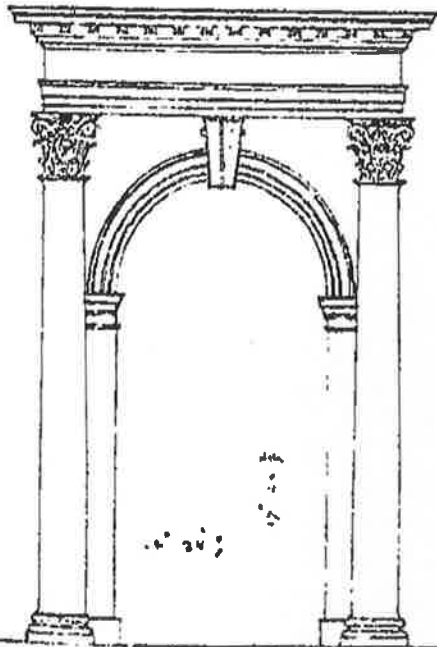
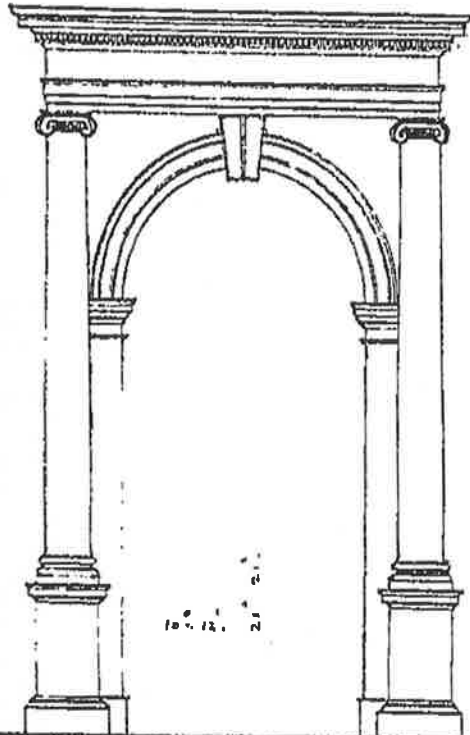
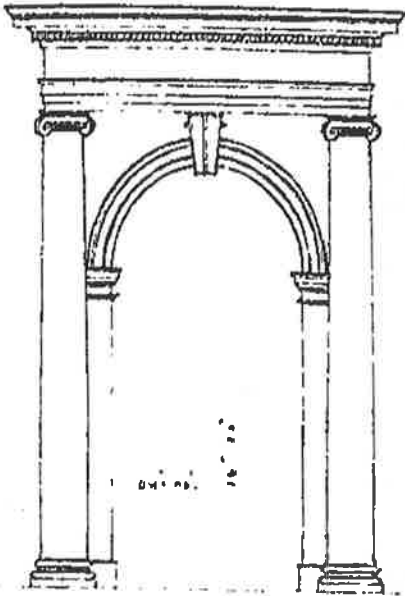
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<sup>139</sup> The concluding section of this chapter is also based upon Chambers, *Cyclopaedia* which describes methods of drawing elevations (and various geometrical shapes and architectural elements such as doors) with and without perspective, as Blackstone describes them here. Blackstone draws a distinction between Orthography or elevation, Ichnography or floor plan and Sciography or cross-section.

o. A. B. VIII.



F. A. B. XII.



N<sup>o</sup> 3.

N<sup>o</sup> 4.

## Chapter 20. ~.

### Of Apertures, and first of Doors<sup>140</sup>

The third general Head we proposed to consider is that of Apertures; by which we mean all Inlets and Outlets whatsoever; which are, generally speaking, of five Sorts; Doors, Windows, Staircases, Chimneys, and Conducts for the Suillage:<sup>141</sup> of all which we shall speak in their Order, premising first two general Cautions.

1st. That they be as few in Number, and as moderate in Dimensions, as is possible, consistently with Convenience and Beauty; for in a word all opening are Weakenings. [81]

2ndly. That they do not approach too near the Angles of the Wall; but be (with Palladio) as least as far off as the Breadth of the Aperture, for it were a most absurd Solecism to weaken that Part which must strengthen all the rest.

We now proceed to speak of Doors in particular.

A Door is an Aperture in the Wall serving to give Entrance to, or Exit from a House or any particular Apartment.

Doors should, if possible, be right over each other, that the Void may be over the Void, and the full over the Full.

The principal Gates of the House will do well to be opposite to each other, that one may enjoy a Vista thro' the whole Edifice.

No Doors should be less than Six Feet in Height, and three in Breadth, to admit a wellgrown Man without any Inconveniency[.] According to some Architects

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<sup>140</sup> This chapter is a combination of chapters XXIII and XXIV of Blackstone's 'Abridgement', in which "Apertures in General" is effectively a ten-line introduction to the following chapters, concerned with doors, windows and the like as in his 'Abridgement'. The chapter is based upon Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 51, 138-139 and Wotton, *Elements*, I:51-56. These are, in turn, derived from Leoni, *Architecture*, I: XXVI, 30-32, 'Of the Ornaments of Doors and Windows'.

<sup>141</sup> The etymology of this word is somewhat uncertain but seems likely to be derived from the Anglo-French "suillage", from "souiller", soil.

the Breadth of the principal Door in small buildings should be about four foot or four and an half; In middling Buildings, five or six; In large ones, seven or eight. In Chambers of the first three and a half or four; of the second, four or four and a half; of the third, five or six. The Doors of Churches should be seven or eight and the Breadth of Gates should be from nine to twelve. Hence their Height is easily determined, being double their Breadth at least; except in Gates of Cities, which being usually of a very extended Breadth, may be allowed to have only one and a half of their Breadth in Height.

#### Doors of many Sorts.

1. Architrave Doors (No. 1.) whose Sides and Top are moulded like an Architrave. <TAB. XV.> The sides are called the Jambs or Antepagmenta, and in Carpentry the Door-posts. The Architrave at top is called also the Hyperthyron or Soppra-frontale; and in Carpentry the Kingpiece < or Doorband > though Hyperthyron is by Vitruvius applied to the Freeze, sometimes used over the Architrave. The Mouldings of these Architraves differ according to the Richness required in the Door. They are in Breadth one Sixth [82] of the Coping, and are generally supported by two Plinths, whose Height is equal to the Breadth of the Architrave. Sometimes the Architrave is crowned with a Freeze and Cornice (No. 2.) when the Freeze will be one Seventh, and the Cornice one Fifth of the Opening: This is also often crowned with a Pediment. In this Example the Architrave is kneed; i.e. it juts outward, one Fourth of its Breadth. This Kneeing is for the most part at the Angles, where the extraordinary Breadth continues till it is equal to one fourth of the Opening. It is sometimes also on both sides [of] the Angle, viz. both Top and Jambs; sometimes (especially when the Architrave is crowned with any superior Members) on the Jambs only. Sometimes, lastly, the Kneeing begins at one fourth of the

Opening from the Angles, as may be seen in some of the Architrave Windows hereinafter. These Kneeings are sometimes called Ears, Elbows, and Crosettes.

2. Pilastered Doors (No. 3.) are nothing else than Architrave Doors, having Pilasters on each Side, two thirds of the [*one word crossed out: illegible*] Breadth of the Architrave; on which are fixed Consoles of the same Breadth as the Pilasters, and two Fifths of the Opening in Height, which support the Cornice and Pediment. The Freeze and Cornice are of the same proportions as over Architrave Doors. In this Case the Opening must be Six Thirteenths of the Height.

3. Rustic Doors (No. 4.) are of the same Proportions with regard to Breadth and Height as the foregoing; only instead of an Architrave it is surrounded with Rustic Work in the Manner of Rustic Quoins. Here the headers are one Fourth of the Breadth of the Opening; and the Stretchers one Third broader than them. The Headers appear best when they make an exact Square. The Top of the door forms a straight Arch; having a Keystone, supported by four Sku-Stones, pointed to the middle of the Opening. Sometimes Rustic Doors have a Tuscan Cornice.

4. Venetian Doors have the same proportions with the Windows of the same Name, hereinafter to be described; only there is no continued Pedestal under the middle Intercolumnation. [83]

5. Doors of the several Orders are frequently made use of in elegant Buildings, and are of various proportions. In all, the Columns are placed on a Plinth two Modules high. The part between the Aperture, and the Columns or Entablature, is called the Door-Case, Door Freeze or Chambranle; The two Sides or Jambs are called the Ascendants, and the Top the Transverse or Supercilium of the Chambranle. In the Tuscan Door, the Intercolumnation is Ten Modules, the Chambranle (which is quite plain) one Module, the Opening of the Door Eight Modules, and its Height Fifteen

Modules (No. 5.) In the Doric Door, the Intercolumnation is Ten Modules and an Half, the Chambranle (which is still plain) One Module, the Opening of the Door Eight Modules and an Half, and its Height Seventeen Modules. (No. 6.). In the Ionic Door, there is an Intercolumnation of Eleven Modules, the Chambranle (which has now a single Moulding) is in Breadth one Module, so that the Opening of the Door is Nine Modules, and its Height Nineteen Modules, (No. 7.). In the Corinthian and Composite Doors, there is an Intercolumnation of eleven Modules and Six Minutes; the Breadth of the Chambranle (which may now be richly moulded) is One Module; the Opening of the Door is Nine Modules and Six Minutes, and its Height One and Twenty Modules (No. 8.). In all these Doors, the Columns are inserted about Ten Modules, and their Entablature is crowned with a Pediment.

6. Arched Doors were never used by the Antients, but in the Entrance of Castles, Cities, and the like. So that the Introduction of them into private Houses, etc. may be looked upon as merely Gothic and Modern. Wherever they are used the Imposts should be above the Height of Six Foot from the Ground; and the Proportions are the same as in the Arches of the Several Orders, except a small [84] difference in some of the Intercolumnations. The Tuscan arched Door has an Intercolumnation of ten Modules: the Doric, of ten and an Half: The Ionic, of twelve; and the Corinthian and Composite (No. 9.) of twelve Modules, and twelve Minutes; unless the Columns that adorn the Arch are coupled; and then the Intercolumnation is but eleven Modules and Six Minutes, and it abates proportionally in the same Case in all the orders. In all these Arched Doors, the Columns are placed on a Plinth of two Modules in height; they are likewise inserted fifteen Modules; and their Entablature is Crowned with a Pediment.

## Chapter 21

### Of Windows.<sup>142</sup>

A window is an Aperture in a House etc., for the Admission of Air and Light.

Care is to be taken that the windows be all equal with one another, in rank and order; so that those on the right hand answer those on the left, and those above be right over those below; for this Situation will be not only uniform and beautiful, but a strengthening of the whole Fabric, the Void being over the Void, and the Full over the Full.

The Apertures of windows in middle-sized Houses may be four and a half or five Feet: In larger Buildings from thence to seven Feet; and their Height at least twice their Breadth, or in more pompous Structures, a third, fourth, or half their Breadth more. Such are the proportions of the first Story. [85] [86] In the upper Stories the Breadth must continue the same but the height must diminish. Palladio advises to make the second Range one Twelfth lower<sup>143</sup> than the first, and the third Range one Fourth lower than the second. Others make the Second Range a Fourth lower than the first, and the third Range a third lower than the Second: which, if the lower Range be a double Square, renders the Third or upper Range precisely square. Only Qu. whether the second Range will not be too low for a handsome Apartment in the latter Method.

Windows are of various Sorts, some Square, some round, some mixed and compounded of both.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> This chapter is based upon Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 402-403, and such other relevant definitions as Chambers' includes in entries scattered widely throughout the *Cyclopaedia*.

<sup>143</sup> i.e. shorter.

<sup>144</sup> The list of window varieties in the 'Elements' is more comprehensive than that in the earlier 'Abridgement'. Blackstone adds the Attic and Egyptian windows to this list. He also revises the order

< TAB. XVI. > 1. Architrave Windows (No. 1.) are such as have an Architrave all round them in the same Manner as it surrounds three sides of the Architrave Door. The proportions are the same as in Doors. The part of the Architrave which goes over the Lintels of tops of the Windows or Doors, is called the Heading Architrave. These are sometimes adorned with a Freeze and Cornice, as in Doors, and over them a Pediment is often raised.

2. In the Windows of the several Orders the Columns are supported on a continued pedestal, and crowned with an Entablature and inserted about one Module. They are seldom drest with Tuscan Columns. The Doric Window (No. 2.) has ten modules and a half for its Intercolumnation. The Chambranle or Window-Frame is one Module, within which is another of seven minutes and a half, or a Quarter of a Module. The Opening therefore is Eight Modules, and the Height fourteen and a half. In the Ionic Window the Intercolumnation is Ten Modules; the Chambranle (which has a single Moulding) is one Module; therefore the Opening is Eight Modules, and the Height Seventeen. In the Corinthian and Composite Windows (No. 3.) the Intercolumnation is Ten Modules; the Chambranle (which is richly moulded) one Module, and the bottom of its Traverse ranges with the Astragal of the Capital, the Space betwixt that and the Architrave being decorated with Festoons etc. Hence the Opening [87] will be Eight Modules, and the Height Seventeen Modules and Twenty Minutes. In these Windows the Pedestal, immediately under the Opening, is often cut into a Ballustrade; agreeably to the Uses of the Antients who had their Windows open [*one word: smudged*] to the very floor, or who only closed in by a Ballustrade.

3. Pilastered Windows (No. 4.) are little else than Architrave Windows with Pilasters on each Side, two thirds of the Breadth of the Architrave, supported by a

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in which the various types of windows are presented. The text of the chapter is largely unchanged however.

continued Pedestal. On these are Fixed Consoles of the same Breadth as themselves, and two Fifths of the Opening in Height which support the Cornice and Pediment. The Freeze and Cornice are of the same proportions as in Architrave Windows. Here the Opening must be either Half or Six Thirteenths of the Height. Sometimes the Pilasters are omitted, and the Pedestal has only an Architrave Window. Pedestals in these Cases are four Fifths of the Opening in Height. Sometimes, in this latter Method, all the Pedestal is omitted but the Cap (No. 5.) which then is called the Jack, and is generally, but not always, Supported by Cartouches. Sometimes the Base only of the Pedestal is omitted and the remaining Part is called a Stool or Tablet.

4. Attic Windows are little Square ones generally used in Attic Stories, or the upper range of Lights. They are usually a Species of Architrave Windows.

5. Transom Windows (No. 5) are such as are divided into two or more Lights by Transoms, i.e. Pieces of Wood, Stone, etc. that rest athwart the Window, either perpendicularly, horizontally, or both. In the Gothic windows these Transomes are called Mullions.

6. Bow-, or more properly, Bay- Windows, from the French, bayer, to project, are such which instead of going flush or level with the Wall they belong to, jetty out in a Curve or Bow. Sometimes the Wall itself forms a Curve or sort of Bastion, and is enlightened with three ordinary Windows, all which together is called a Bow or Bay Window.

7. Rustic Windows (No. 6.) are such whose Sides and Top are edged with Rustic Work, in the manner of Rustic Doors, and are supported by a Jack, with two Cartouches.

8. Venetian-Windows were so called from being first used at Venice. They

have a fine Effect at the end of a long Room.<sup>145</sup> They consist of four regular Pilasters, supported on that Sort of Pedestals we distinguish by the name of Scamilli impares, the Elbow-places of which are usually cut into a Ballustrade. The middle Intercolumnation is much the widest; those on each side being equal. The Pilasters are charged with a regular Entablature, which is discontinued over the middle Intercolumnation, and instead of the Archivault of the Order is raised, [*one word crossed out*] springing perpendicularly from over the middlemost Pilasters, to which it is equal in Breadth. Venetian Windows are seldom formed in the Tuscan Order. In the Doric Venetian window Ten Modules and a half is the middle Intercolumnation, and five and a half the side ones. In the Ionic (No. 7.) the middle is Eleven, and side ones five and a half. In the Corinthian and Composite the Middle is Eleven Modules and six minutes, and the Side ones Five Modules and six minutes.

9. Luthern, Lucern, Lucar, or Dormer Windows, are such as are placed above the Cornice in the Roof of a House, to illuminate the upper Story. If they admit the Light perpendicularly, and not side-ways, we call them Abajours or Sky-Lights. The form of Lucar windows is indeterminate, except when they are placed in a Dome to enlighten it, when they are generally round or oval with a little circular Fronton at top, and are called Bulleyed or Oxeyed Windows. To these we may add

10. Circular Windows, being such (No. 8.) as we frequently see in the Tympanum of a Pediment or the like, which are precisely round, and mostly adorned with four Keystones. The most beautiful part of gothic Architecture is the circular Window. When the Area is not large enough to admit of a whole Circle, a Semicircular Window is formed instead of them; which is sometimes no more than half one of the Sort we are now treating of, at other times (especially over a Venetian

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<sup>145</sup> The completed Codrington Library features a Venetian Window at each end of that long room.

Window) is of a Form somewhat different, and makes what is called

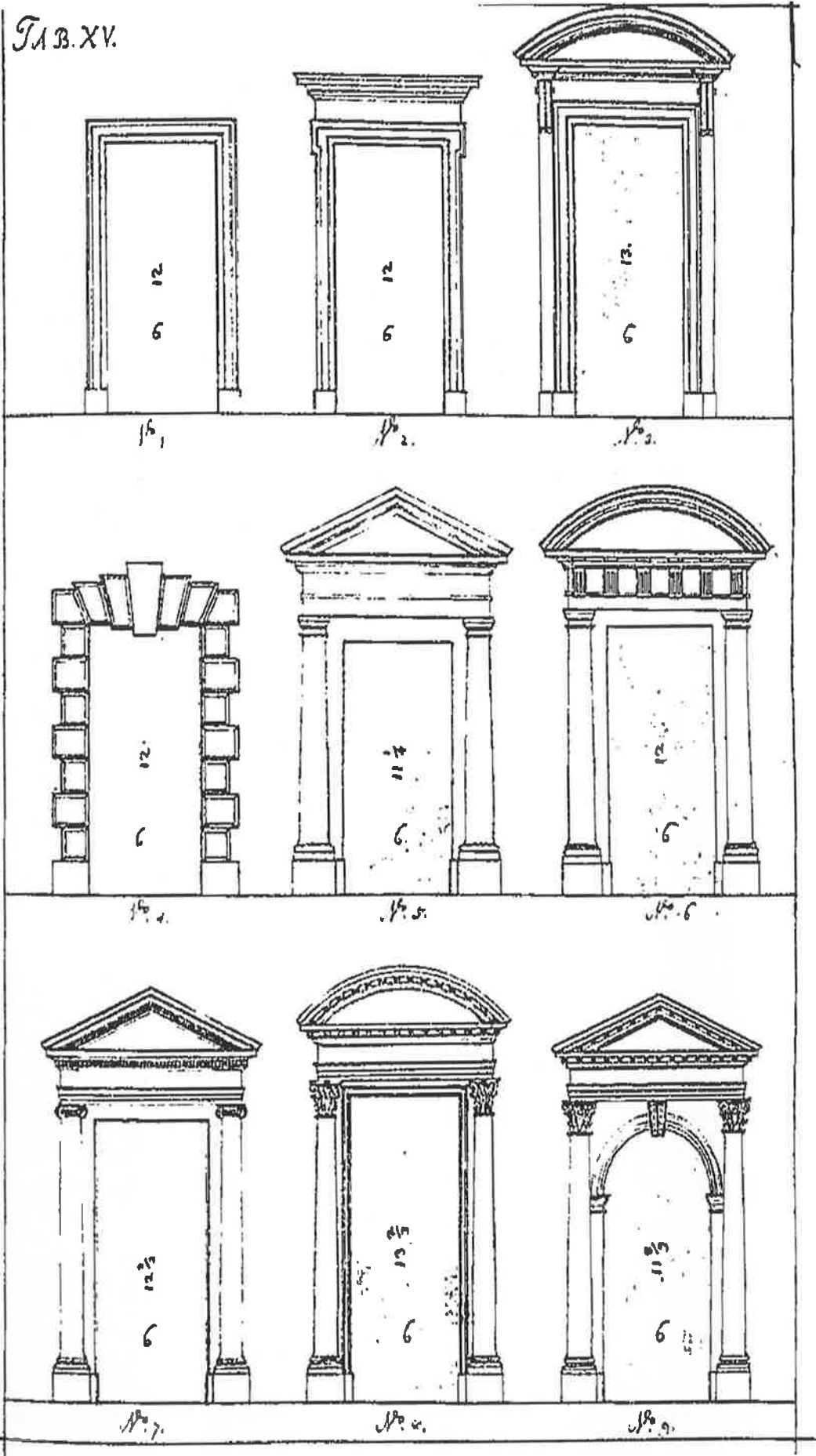
11. An Egyptian Window < by some called a Vitruvian, > which is a Semicircular One, divided into three Lights by a brace of perpendicular Transoms. When the Egyptian is placed over the Venetian Window, it must be so contrived that the Breadth and Distance of the Transoms may answer that of the Pilasters beneath. [89] Otherwise it may serve for a general Rule, that the distance from one Transom to another shall be double the Distance from the Transom to the Angle of the Window, and the Breadth of the Transoms one Sixth of the middle Opening. This is a Window at present much in vogue, the reasonableness [øf] and Elegance of which Taste we shall not undertake to defend.

12. Arched Windows were never used by the Antients, so that they are a Modern piece of Invention. In Vault-Work they are indeed ornamental, because of their Propriety: And in other places Arching certainly discharged<sup>146</sup> the incumbent Weight excellently; but that may be contrived and put in execution without appearing. In Brick-Buildings it must be owned, a small Segment of an Arch is ornamental, by reason of the Freestone Keys which generally accompany them. Here then, but not in any Works of an exact Kind, arched Windows may be admitted and in our Churches also a fancied Solemnity of Aspect has usually retained and employed them.

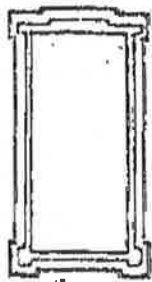
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<sup>146</sup> Or discharges.

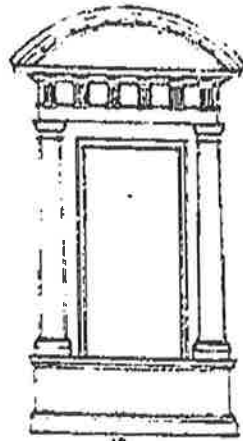
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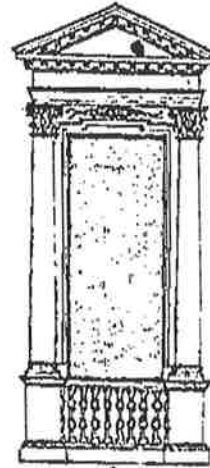
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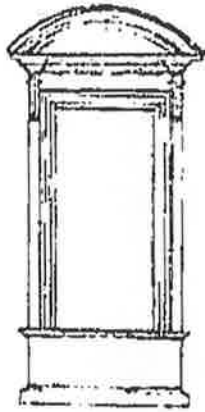
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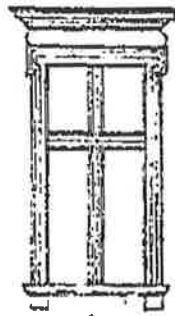
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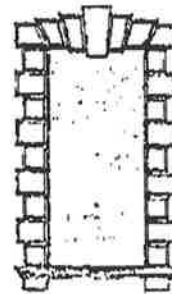
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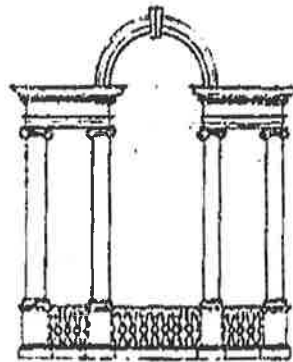
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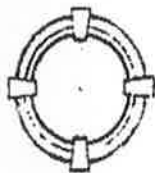
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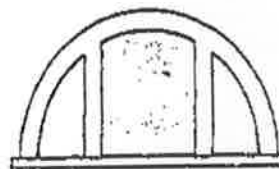
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Chapter 22. ~.  
Of Staircases, Stairs, etc.<sup>147</sup>

A Staircase is an encased Ascent, consisting of Stairs or Steps with Landing-places and Rails, serving to make a Communication between the several Stories of a House.

To make a compleat one is reckoned among the most curious Works in Architecture. The common Rules to be observed are these; 1. That it have a liberal Light, to prevent Accidents. 2. That the Space overhead be large and airy, for (saith Sir H. Wotton) one spends much Breath in mounting.<sup>148</sup> 3. That it be not too narrow, to prevent Accidents from Rencounters. 4. That the Landings be conveniently distributed, to repose by the Way. 5. That the whole be so placed as to communicate easily [91] with all the Apartments.

Stairs are the Steps by which we ascend in the Staircase; which are not to be more than six, or less than four inches high; not more than eighteen, or less than twelve inches broad; not more than sixteen, or less than six foot long, each Stair. But this Rule can be only observed in fine Buildings; however in the most ordinary

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<sup>147</sup> Again, this chapter is based upon Chambers, *Cyclopaedia* rather than upon Wotton, *Elements* I: 57-59 from which Chambers takes most of the material in *Cyclopaedia*, 363-366. This can be discerned in three ways. Firstly, through Blackstone's use of Chambers' word "Rencounters" rather than Wotton's "Encounters" and secondly, the slightly different ordering of the five rules. According to the *OED*, the word 'rencounters' implies that an encounter is not simply unexpected but also unpleasant or unfortunate, which, it is not difficult to imagine, might well be the case on too narrow a staircase. That Blackstone consciously preserved this implication is suggested by the choice of Wotton's succinct "liberall Light" rather than Chambers' "full, free Light". A third possibility of course, is that, having read both sources, Blackstone simply wrote this section from memory, producing an almost verbatim account of each and changing the latter rule in the process. This is made less likely by the fact that Chambers' article amalgamates both Wotton's and Palladio's chapters on stairs and staircases, although Blackstone omits examples of various kinds of staircases, as given by Chambers. Blackstone's drawings appear to be simplified versions of the illustrations in Leoni, *Architecture*, I: XXVIII, plates XXXVII-XLIII. See also in that work Chapter XXVIII, 'Of Stair-cases, and their different sorts; of the number and proportions of their steps', 34-36.

<sup>148</sup> "That the space above the Head bee large and Airy ... as it were good *Ventilation*, because a man doth spend much breath in mounting" for, as he later notes, "our *Legges* doe labour more in *Elevation*, then in *Distension*". See Wotton, *Elements*, I, 57, 58.

Houses the Stairs should not be more than eight inches high; nor less than nine inches broad, and three foot long, each Stair.

A Newel is the middle part of a Staircase, surrounded by the Stairs entirely; one end of which always rests, or seems to rest, thereon. They are Solid, Open, Round, Square, Triangular, or any Form.

Landings, Halfpaces, or Pallieres, are those Plains, either in the middle or at the top of the Ascent, on which you arrive after mounting a Flight of Steps. Their Form varies with that of the Staircase.<sup>149</sup>

Staircases are of various kinds; in some, the Stairs are strait or Flyers; in some, Winding; in others, mixt and compounded of both.

1. Direct or Plain Flyers, (No. 1.) are such as proceed < TAB. XVII > directly from one Floor to another, without any turning. They are not often used, but in Cellars and Garrets.

2. French Flyers (No. 2.) which first fly directly forwards to a rectangular Halfpace, whose length is twice its Breadth, and then fly directly back again, parallel to their first Flight.

3. Triangular Flyers (No. 3.) which fly round the Sides of a triangular Newel, either solid or Open; the Length of the Stairs being Perpendicular to the Sides of the Triangle, and forming thereby at each Corner a trapesial Half-Pace.

4. Square Flyers, (No. 4.) which fly round the Sides of a square Newel, either Solid or Open, to which the Length of the Stairs is perpendicular whereby there is formed, at each Corner, a square Half-Pace or Landing. The Breadth of the Staircase being divided into four parts, two are for the Breadth of the Newel, and two for the Length of the Stairs on each side. [92] 5. Circular Winders (No. 5.) which wind round

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<sup>149</sup> This short but informative list of definitions does not appear in Blackstone's 'Abridgement'.

a circular Newel, either Solid or Open. They are of two kinds: first such as have their Fore-Edge Straight; and pointing in a right Line to the Centre of the Newel. Secondly; Such (No. 6.) whose Fore-Edge is formed in the Arc of a Circle, either concave or convex: which have this Advantage, where the Diameter of the Staircase growing narrower every step.

8. Square and Triangular Winders are such as wind round a square or triangular Newel, in such a Manner that no two Stairs [93] immediately following each other are parallel, which would intitle them to be ranked under the Denomination of mixt Stairs. These are rarely put in Execution, and only mentioned as possible Contrivances. On the same Principle Winders made be made round any Polygon, as may also Flyers etc. round any multiangular Newel.

9. Mixt Stairs, called also Flyers and Winders, are such as partly fly and partly wind. Of these there are near as many Sorts as of Flyers, which they entirely resemble, only that they have Winders instead of Half-Paces. When the Half-pace of the French Flyers is changed into Winders (No. 9.) they are called Dog legged Stairs, or French Flyers and Winders. The Number of Steps to be allowed in the Semicircle of this Staircase, in the obtuse-angled Section of triangular Flyers and Winders (No. 10.) and in the Quadrant of square Flyers and Winders (No. 11.) must be ascertained by finding the Diameter of the Circle of which they are part (and the Centre of which is always at the angle of the Newel) and by comparing that with the Rules laid down with regard to circular Winders. These Mixt Stairs are chiefly to be used [†] in what are called Scale occulte or Back Stairs.

These are the principal Kinds of Staircases, and if there are any others, they may be referred in great measure to some one of these.<sup>150</sup> Palladio and other ingenious Artists have amused themselves with Inventions somewhat different, as Double and Quadruple Stairs, i.e. Where there are two, four, or more Entrances to the Staircase, and as many Flights of Stairs all ascending equally at the same time, open to each other, yet without Communication and without Confusion. But these are rather Matters of Curiosity than Use.

A Word may be added with regard to the Support of Stairs; which at one end is always the Wall of [the] the Staircase, at the other various Contrivances. To omit the vulgar inartificial Way of Posts and Beams, we will mention only two. 1. When Stairs are supported by Columns placed at convenient Distances, which will have a noble and beautiful Effect. [94] 2. When Pensile, or as the Vulgar call them Geometry,<sup>151</sup> Stairs are made Use of; which seem to hang in the Air without any Support, but are really held up by a Vault either of the straight or cradle Kind, which ascends with the Staircase, and abutts on one side against the Wall, on the other against the Newel. If the Newel be solid and the Stairs short there is no need of Vaulting, for one Stone will lie athwart from the Wall to the Newel: but not so, if the Stairs be long. If the Newel be open, the lower Coussinets of the Vault must be so shaped as to form a Circle, which from the wedgelike [~~Shape~~] Shape of its Materials may resist the Drift of the Vault, in the same manner as when the Navel of a Dome is left open. This is the true Pensile Way; and can only be executed in circular or elliptical Staircases. Our Workmen indeed, have a different Way of doing Business,

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<sup>150</sup> Blackstone's makes several small changes to this section as it appears in his 'Abridgement'. The major change is to combine two lists, of straight and winding staircases into one. Two smaller changes are the transposition of French and square staircases (points 2 and 4) and the combination of square and triangular winding staircases into one item.

<sup>151</sup> According to the *OED* pensile means suspended or supported by means of an arch. The reference to geometry is presumably due to the use of complex geometry required in the construction of such stairs.

i.e. by mortising one End of the Stair strongly into the Wall, so that its Support entirely depends on the Strength of the Stone, which, should it happen to crack, must ruin the whole Staircase.

The Number of Stairs in each Flight, is and should be generally odd; saith Vitruvius; which proceeded from a superstition of his Countrymen, who always chose to begin and end their Ascent with the right Foot.<sup>152</sup> By a Flight we mean so many Stairs as we mount before we arrive at a Landing or Half-pace, which should not be more than 11 or 13.

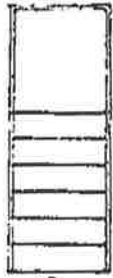
Under this head may be included those Flights of Steps whereby we generally ascend to any noble or elegant Structure. They are most usually direct Flyers, which sometimes (No. 12.) diminish in Length by a gradual Curve, as you ascend; Sometimes keep always the same Length. Sometimes (No. 13.) they form so many concentrical Semicircles (or Semi Ellipses) as there are Steps; Sometimes (No. 14.) so many Half-Squares. At other times (No. 15.) they are made in the form of two Sets of French Flyers; or like half a circular or elliptical Staircase (No. 16.) with two Ascents. These two last are of use when the Offices are underground, by making room for a Door to be made for their use under the grand Entrance, without passing through that on all Occasions. [95]

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<sup>152</sup> Vitruvius says on this point that the “steps in front must be arranged so that there shall always be an odd number of them; for thus the right foot, with which one mounts the first step, will also be the first to reach the level of the temple itself”. Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, III: IV,88. The Roman preference for alighting upon the right foot seems a superstition.

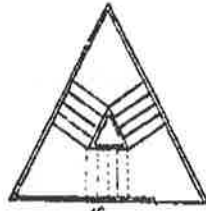
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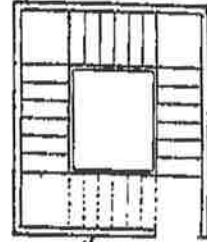
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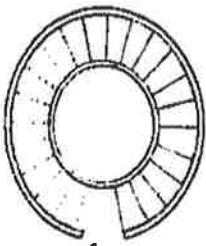
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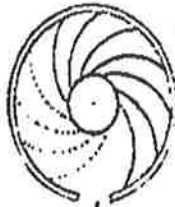
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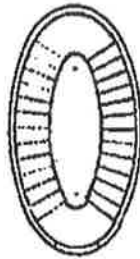
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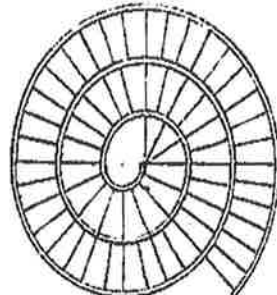
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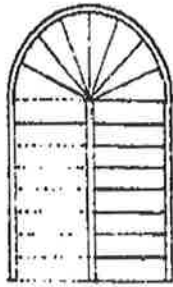
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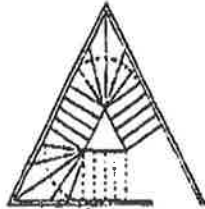
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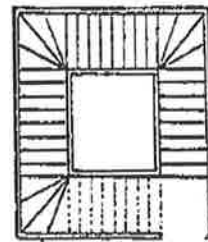
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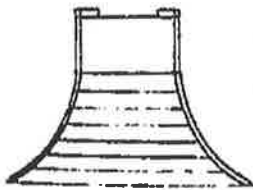
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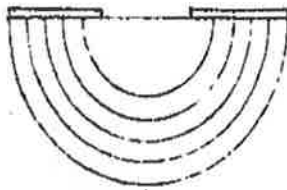
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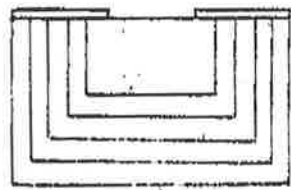
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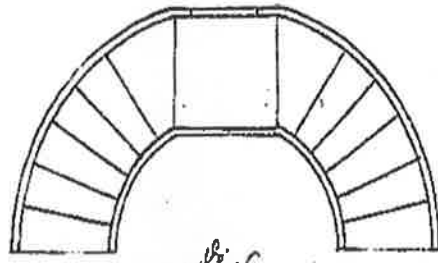
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## Chapter 23

### Of Chimneys and Conducts for the Suillage<sup>153</sup>

The fourth Aperture to be considered is that of Chimneys. A Chimney is that part or Aperture wherein the Fire is made. Its principal parts are six.

1. The Hearth is that part which serves as a Foundation and Subtraction to all the rest, and whereon the Fire is made. It usually comes forward into the room beyond the rest of the Chimney, about half of its Length, to prevent Accidents from Fire.

2. The Back or Hood is the farthest Extremity of the Aperture the general Rule for this is; that it shall recede about two foot, or three and an half. It should not be more, lest there be too much Room for the Air and Wind; nor should be too shallow, lest the Smoke miss its Way at first setting out.

3. The Jambs, Wings, or Sides of the Chimney are those Parts, which stand forwards parallel to the Back, and perpendicular < TAB. XVIII > to the Heath. (No. 1. A A) If the Flank of the Jambs is joined to the Back in a parabolical Curve, the Chimney will propel the most Heat. The Breadth between Jamb and Jamb may be from three to seven, or at most eight, Feet: the Breadth and Mouldings of the Jambs are the same with those of the Mantletree. They generally rest on Plinths, whose height is Three Fourths of the Breadth of the Jamb.

4. The Mantletree or Architrave of the Chimney is that part which lies parallel to the Hearth, and perpendicularly over the Jambs (No. 1. B.) The Height from the Hearth to the Architrave is either equal to the Breadth of the Aperture, or at

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<sup>153</sup> Blackstone combined chapters XXVII and XXVIII of his 'Abridgement' to form this chapter which deals with the dispersal of various forms of waste from the building. It is based closely upon Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 98-99.

least Three Fourths of it. The Breadth of the Mantletree is one Sixth of the Height from the hearth; and it is Moulded variously, like an Architrave Door. [97]

5. The Tube, Funnel, or as some call it, Tunnel, is that Part whereby the Smoke is conveyed into the Air. In the formation of this consists the chief Art of preserving smoky Chimneys. It is also called the Flew. Some make it twisted, that the Smoke may not descend too easily; others, which is a better Way, carry the Flew aslant for a considerable Time, for there the Draught is greater, and the Wind has less power, than in perpendicular Tubes. Some, which is no bad method, contract the Funnel at the bottom, where it joins with the Chimney-Back; for the impulsive Heat of the Fire is thereby brought into a less Space, and acts with a greater Force: and the Smoke can more easily disgorge itself at top, than return thro' so narrow a Vent. Others face a moveable Vane at the top of the Tube, so that which way soever the Wind comes, the Aperture will be screened. Others leave two Holes or Pipes in each side of the Tube, one sloping upwards and the other downwards, thro' one of the Smoke will pass in any Posture of the Wind. These and many other Devices are proposed by ingenious Artists; but they seldom succeed in mending a Chimney that is faulty. The best method seems to be to pull them down, and rebuild them with an Eye to these Rules; at the same Time taking Care that no Hill or Higher Fabric overtop the Chimney; that the Doors of the Room be so disposed as to give a convenient Current of Air; and that the Back and Jambs be properly joined to the Tube, which Experience alone can teach. Funnels, according to Palladio, may rise above the Ridge of the Roof from three to five Feet. These the Italians are apt to disguise by turning them into Urns, Vases, etc., and which may be a good Method with them, who have so little Need of Chimneys: But with us, who Use them above half the year, the Prospect of

Chimneys, aptly and regularly disposed, has somewhat in it of Comfortableness and Hospitality.

6. The Chimney-piece is an ornamental Part, that comes immediately over the Mantle-tree.<sup>154</sup> It is sometimes (No. 2.) no more than a Freeze and Cornice; both which together are one and a half of the Mantletree [98] in height; and the Freeze is to the Cornice as four to five. Sometimes over this a Pediment is raised, either entire or broken to admit a Bust or the like. And indeed if broken Pediments be ever tolerable it is here, where they cannot aim at the Use they have without Doors *viz.* to shelter from, and carry off, the Rains. Sometimes (No. 3.) the Cornice is supported by Consoles, fixed on Pilasters on each Side [of] the Jambs, the Height of which may be equal to one Third of the Height of the Aperture, and the Height of the of the Freeze be enlarged to the same Dimensions. Sometimes a complete Order, i.e. a continued Socle, Columns, Entablature and Pediment is erected; or Caryatids etc. For Columns; and in the middle is left a Pannel for a Picture or the like. Sometimes (No. 4.) only a single Pannel is raised, with an Architrave round it like that of an Architrave Window, and supported on each Side by inverted Consoles or Festoons. Over this sometimes are a Freeze, Cornice, and Pediment, of the same proportions as those over the Mantletree before-mentioned. A general Rule for the Height of these three latter sort of Chimney-pieces, is, that where an entire Order is raised over a Mantletree, Freeze, & Cornice; the Height from the lower Cornice to the top of the Capitals, is equal to its own height from the Ground. So when a Pannel with Consoles is put instead of an Order, the Top of the Architrave of the panel is the same Height from the Top of the Cornice, as that is from the Hearth. In this latter case indeed the Rule is often

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<sup>154</sup> This last element of the chimney does not appear in the corresponding list in Blackstone's 'Abridgement'.

dispensed with, and great Variety of lower Chimney pieces may be made, and all very neat, if the Architect have a good Taste and Invention.

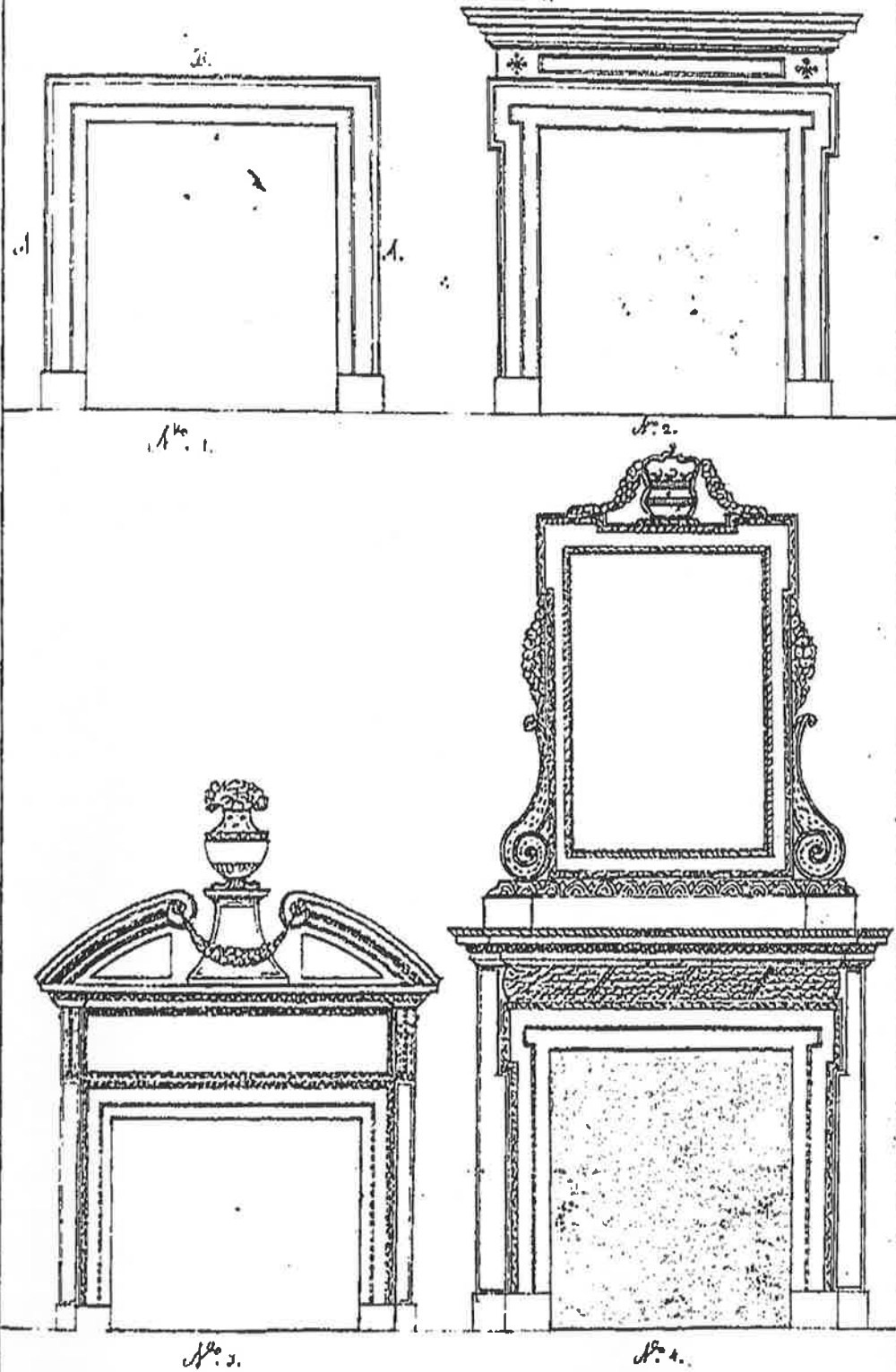
The Antients seldom used Chimneys, but instead of them, Hypocausta, Stoves, or Alvei, which were a sort of Ovens, and serving to warm the Rooms above them. Sometimes they made use of secret Pipes, or Caliducts, which came through the Walls, [99] [100] and heated every Room and Apartment throughout the House, from one common Furnace.<sup>155</sup>

The fifth and last Kind of Apertures are Conducts for the Suillage; under which term are comprehended all manner of Drains, Sewers, Cloacæ, and the like; which discharge the Filth of any Edifice. To descend into minute particulars, with regard to the Formation and Diposition of these is beneath the Dignity of an Architect; but this one general Rule may be observed, *viz.* That where there wants a running Water, which is by much the most eligible Conveyance, they should be separated from Sight into the most remote, lowest, and thickest Part of the Foundation, with Secret Vents, like Funnels, passing up thro' the Walls to the wide Air; which is in truth the most convenient Way for the Discharge of the noisome Vapours.

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<sup>155</sup> See Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 206.

ТАБ. XVIII.



## Chapter 24. ~.

### Of the Compartition in general.<sup>156</sup>

Our Fourth general Division was the Compartition, or graceful and useful Distribution of the whole Space included by the Walls.

The Gracefulness of this Distribution will consist in a double Analogy; First, between the Parts and the Whole; whereby a large Fabric should have large Partitions, large Entrances, large Columns, and the like; Secondly, between the Parts themselves [101] with regard to the Length, Breadth and Height.<sup>157</sup> The Antients determined the Length of their oblong Rooms, by doubling their Breadth; and their Height by Half the length and Breadth added together. When the Room was precisely square, they made the Height half as much more as the Breadth. All [of] which Rules, the Moderns make no Scruple of Dispensing with; by sometimes squaring the Breadth, and making the Diagonal thereof the Measure of the Height; and sometimes by other Measures; as will hereafter be expressed. In very high Rooms, to prevent a troublesome Echo, Vitruvius advises to make a Cornice or some other Projecture all round, about the middle of the Wall, to break the Sound.

The second Consideration in the composition is Usefulness; which consists in having a suitable Number of Rooms of all Kinds, without Distraction, and with proper Communications. This we shall more at large consider when we come to treat of private Buildings.

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<sup>156</sup> This material equates to Chapter XXIX 'Of the Compartition', 42-43, of Blackstone's 'Abridgement'. Blackstone based this chapter upon Wotton, *Elements*, I, 68 and Chambers *Cyclopaedia*, 131. Chambers paraphrases Wotton's section on Compartition for part of this Article in his own work, again, acknowledging Wotton's authorship, which Blackstone does not. Again, too, Blackstone condenses Chambers' account and his language is more like his than Wotton's, reinforcing the suggestion that he found the *Cyclopaedia* a handy summary and that he took the material from it rather than from Wotton.

<sup>157</sup> The question of whether the much-debated structure of the *Commentaries* can be seen in a similar light remains and awaits further investigation. See chapter five of Part One above.

By Compartment a Building is distinguished into Rooms, which are either public or private according to their Use; whence also results a natural Division of all Buildings into public and private, both [of] which we shall separately consider.

[102] Chapter 25  
Of Public Buildings<sup>158</sup>

In treating of public Buildings we shall consider those of the Antients, after the Model of which, as near as may be, our most magnificent Structure are at present built. Their principal Structures were Fortresses, Temples, Marketplaces, Basilicæ, theatres, Gates, Baths, and Academies or Palæstræ.

Fortresses fall entirely under the Notice of Military Architecture. [102] Temples are public Buildings erected to the Honour of some Deity, of these the Romans had several Sorts.

1. Temples without Columns; whose Proportion was twice as long as broad, and their Height Three Fourths of their Length. < TAB. XIX. >

2. < TAB. XIX > Tuscan Temples (No. 1.) which were 6 parts long and 5 broad. The Porch (which was equal to the Temple) had 4 Tuscan Columns in Front and two in the midst, and its Sides were half closed up by two angular Pilasters and the Continuation of the Wall of the Temple. The Temple within had two Chapels of either hand.

3. Ædes in antis; the most simple of all Temples, whereof Perrault distinguishes three Sorts. First, that which had two angular Antœ or inserted Pilasters, one at each Corner of the Front, and beyond which two Columns projected in the middle supporting a little Pediment, which served for a Door-case. Secondly, that with two Columns between the Antœ, on the same Line as they were; and Thirdly, a Sort which had also Columns within the Porch.

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<sup>158</sup> This chapter is based upon Perrault, *Abridgment* II: I, II, III, 113,116-138. Blackstone omits Perrault's abridged version of Vitruvius' instructions for the fortification of cities. The inclusion of both this and the following chapter, 'Of Private Buildings', are the result of Blackstone's revision as they do not appear in his 'Abridgement'.

4. Prostyle, (No. 2.) which had four insulated Columns in its Front; the Space between which and the Body of the Structure formed the Atrium, Porch, Pronaos, Propyleum, or Vestibule of the Temple. Thro' this (to which the Antients generally ascended by an odd Number of Steps, for the Reasons before mentioned) they passed to the Cell, Nave, or Sacos of the Temple, which in pillared Temples was the middle part inclosed by four Walls and lighted only by the Door unless uncovered at the Top. The Proportion of the Cell is entirely dependant on that of the Porch, Porticoes, etc. and consequently differs according to the Intercolumnations made use of in them. But as the Temples without Columns are an exact Double-Square, so the temples with Columns (of all Sorts) approach as near as may be to that Proportion, including in the Temple not the Cell only, but the [103] Porch, Isles, etc., and in general, whatever Parts of it are contained within the Columns and bounded by them. This may be collected from all such Temples as are entirely surrounded by Columns. The Cell, and of course the whole Temple, was used to [be] run from East to West, the principal Door fronting the Sunrising; which is what Vitruvius means by the Aspect of a Temple.

5. Amphiprostyle (No. 3.) which has its Proportions etc. the same as the Prostyle, only that it has a Row of Columns also behind, the Space between which and the Body of the Structure obtains the Name of Posticum or Opithedome.

6. Periptere (No. 4.) was that which had a Row of insulated Columns on all four Sides, Six in Front, and Six behind, and Eleven on each Side, counting those at the Corners as belonging to two Rows. The Columns are set at the same Distance from the Walls of the Cell as they are from one another, forming thereby, at each End of the Temple, the Porch and the Posticum; and on each Side a Wing, Isle, Portico, Cloyster, Piazza, or Xystus. A Cloyster indeed is more properly such an Edifice as we

see in Gothic [*three letters crossed out*] Buildings, admitting Light only through certain narrow Windows, and supported by no Columns. A Xystus likewise is more properly, a Peristyle of the Palæstra, whereof hereafter. A Peristyle is distinguished from a Portico or Periptere, as being a Row of insulated Columns on the inside of a Court, whether round or angular. Both these Sorts may fall under the Name of a Colonnade which is a Series of insulated Columns, as a Ballustrade is of Ballusters. If a Series of Arches be used instead of Columns, it is called an Arcade. The Porch and Posticum [104] of this Species of Temples are half closed up at the Sides by the Continuation of the Wall if the Cell or Sacos.

7. Pseudo periptere (No. 5.) was in all respects similar to the Periptere, having the same Number of Columns [*one word faint*] but the Walls are extended to the Whole Front, so that the Side-Columns are inserted, and no Portico but in Front.  
< TAB. XX.>

8. Diptere (No. 1.) had two rows of Columns all round, i.e. two Rows of Eight each in Front and Behind, and Two of Fifteen each on either Side, forming thereby, a double Portico. But as the Intercolumnations were generally pretty close, and some Inconveniencies caused by the narrowness of the Isles; to prevent this Evil, and make the Walk more commodious, Hermogenes invented

9. Pseudo-diptere, which is in most Respects like the Diptere, havng eight Columns in Front and Back and Fifteen Sidesways; but the Distance from the Columns to the Wall of the Spaces, is more [*one word crossed out*] (by the diameter of a Circle) than double the Intercolumnations which are between the Pillars. For in short the Pseudo-diptere is nothing else than the Diptere, if the middle Row of Columns be removed; and thereby the one Isle of this is as roomy and the Two of the other put together, and the Diameter of a Column besides.

10. Hypæthre (No. 2.) which was the most magnificent Structure of the all. It consisted of a double Row of Columns on all Four Sides; that is, two Rows of Ten each, before and behind; and Two of Nineteen each on either Hand. The Intercolumnations were usually of the closer Kind, to prevent the excessive Largeness of the Pediment, which in this, and all the former Temples, is a constant [105] [106] Member. On the Inside of the Cell, which was uncovered at the [*one word faint*] there was a Peristyle of single Columns, four at each end, and eleven at each side, reckoning the corner ones Twice. All these Species of Temples were rectangular.

11. Monoptere (No. 3.) was a round Temple, whose Roof was vaulted and supported by Columns only, without only Walls. The Diameter of the Temple on the Inside was equal to the Height of its Columns; and the Steps on the Outside are, on either Hand, one Third of the Diameter of the Temple including the Columns.

12. Round-Periptere (No. 4.) had this Proportion. The Diameter on the Inside of the Cell was equal to the Height of its Columns, and the Thickness of the Wall equal to their Diameter. Round the Cell ran a circular Periptere of Columns. Divide the whole Temple into five Parts; three are given to the Cell and its Wall and one to the Periptere on either Hand. Above the Entablature of the Periptere, the Wall is continued upwards, and finished at last with a circular Dome; the Height of the top of which from the [*one word crossed out*] Level of the Entablature, is equal to half the Breadth from one Extremity of the Entablature to the other.

Such were the principal Species of ancient Temples. The remaining publick Buildings we shall not so minutely consider, chusing rather to have recourse, on occasion, to Palladio, or to Perrault's admirable Translation, and Comment on Vitruvius. However, we will mention them cursorily, in order to explain some Terms that will frequently occur.

Marketplaces or Fora were the second sort of public Structures among the Romans; They were usually rectangular Spaces [107] [108] whose Breadth was two Thirds of their Length, surrounded on all Sides by a Peristyle.

Basilica were public Spaces for the Administration of Justice. They were usually of a rectangular Figure, and their Breadth < TAB. XXI. > never less than one Third, or more than half their Length. (No. 1.) The Breadth of the Isles or Wings was equal to the Height of the Columns, which ran in two Rows along the whole Length of the Basilica. The Breadth of the middle Space between the Isles < which was *four words illegible* > was equal to three times the Height of the Columns. A second Rank of Columns was placed upon those beneath, which formed certain Galleries for the Benefit of Spectators, and were supported by their Pedestals. These Galleries served also to open a Communication to and between two large rooms, called Chalcidicæ, which were placed at each End of every Basilica, supported underneath by a large Assemblage of Columns. These also served for Spectators.

Theatres were Places set apart for public Diversions, and more particularly for Dramatic Performances. Their Proportions and Manner of Construction will appear better from the Plan (No. 2.) than from any Description. Suffice it to say, they were divided into three Parts. 1. The Steps or Degrees 2. The Proscenium. 3. The Postscenium. The whole was surrounded on the Outside by an Arcade adorned with Columns, over which another Arcade (with Columns of a superior Order) was raised. The under One formed a Portico or Periptere within. Thro' some of these Arches you entered by a long narrow Passage into the Steps or Degrees which formed the Seats for the Spectators. They were disposed in a Semicircular Form, and were parted by divers Stairs which led to different Parts of the Seats, and ended at convenient Landing Places dispersed here and there. Beneath these seats were placed twelve

Staircases which led to the Portico above, and also twelve Chambers, in which were placed Vessels of Brass, musically tuned, which helped, 'tis said, with the Voice of the Players. *NB.* The Right-Hand Part of the Plan [109] represents this under Part of the Steps; and the Left-Hand the Steps themselves. Above the Steps was placed a Semicircular Portico or Peristyle of Columns; which were insulated, and corresponded with those of the upper Portico without. To these twelve Staircases before mentioned led. The Steps involved a Semicircular Space called the Orchestra, which was the Seat for Senators among the Romans, but in the Grecian Theatres was allotted to the Dancers. Between the Orchestra and the [*four words crossed out*] Proscenium was the Pulpit, whereon the Actors played; which is what we call in our Theatres the Stage; though the Stage or Scene among the Antients comprehended the Pulpit, the Proscenium, and the Parrascenium. The Proscenium was the Front of the Stage, which was adorned with three Orders of Pillars one above another, the second Order being one fourth less than the first, and the third diminishing in the same Proportion. In the middle were three Gates, the middlemost called the Royal Gate, and those on each Hand the Gates of Strangers. These three Gates were closed with triangular machines, painted in Perspective, which served for Scenes; their three Sides being adapted to the three different Sorts of the Drama, i.e. Palaces and Temples for Tragedy, Private Houses for Comedy, and Fields and Groves for the [*two letters crossed out*] Satyrical or Pastoral. The Parascenium or Postscenium was the hinder part of the Theatre, where the Actors retired to dress, rehearse, etc.

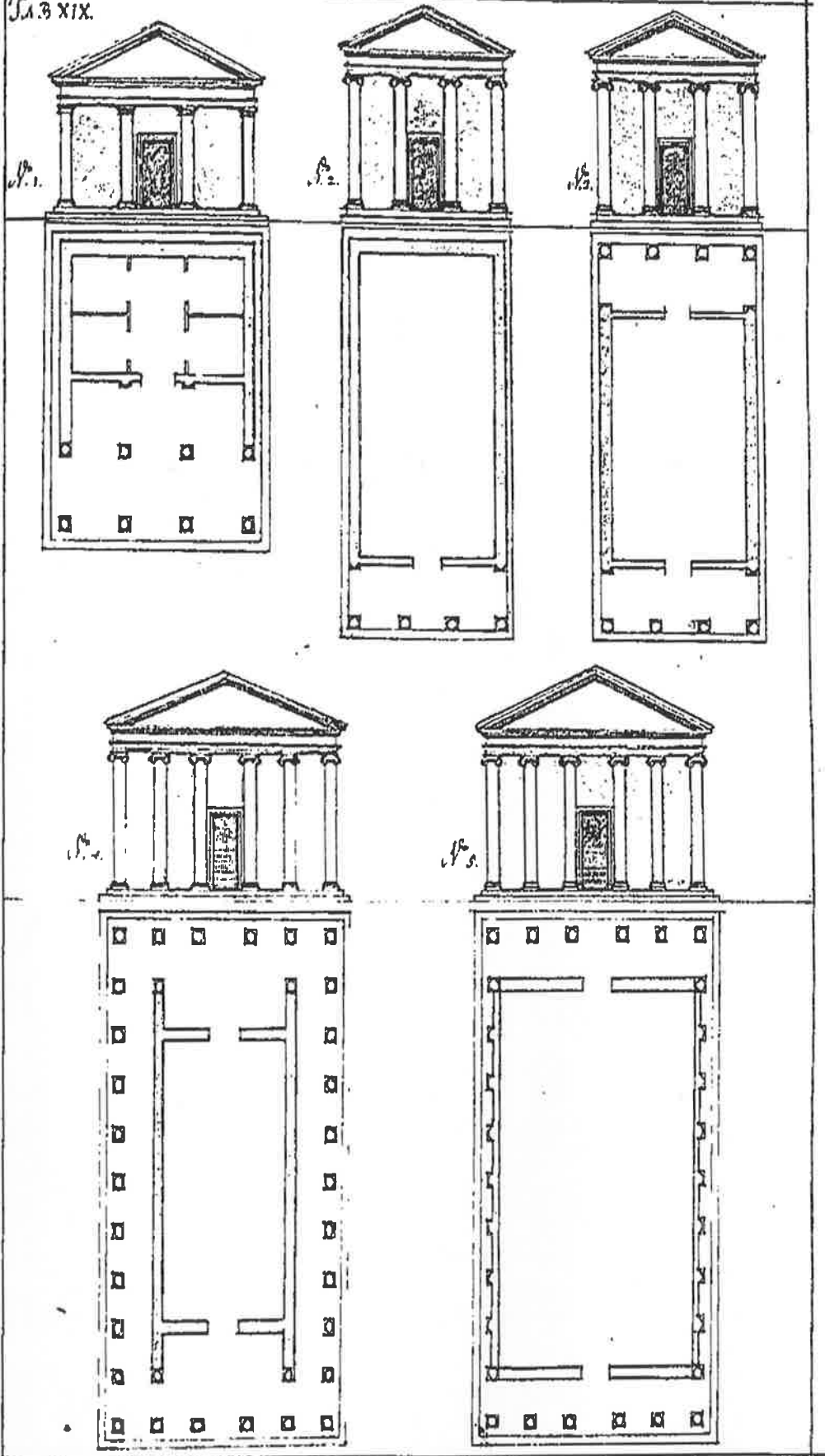
Amphitheatres were quite < Ellipses nearly > circular, being little else than the Steps of two theatres put together, and forming thereby a < n > ~~eircular~~ < oval > Orchestra, which served for Gladiators, Beasts etc. to engage in. Sometimes they were elliptical.

The Romans had many other Sorts of Buildings for public Spectacles, but this Taste may suffice.

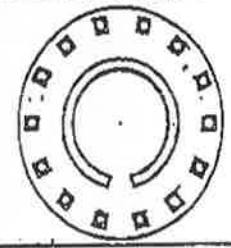
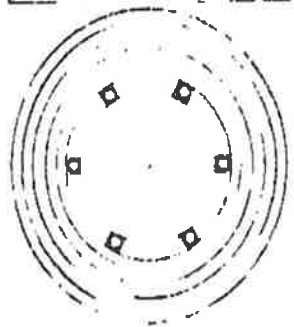
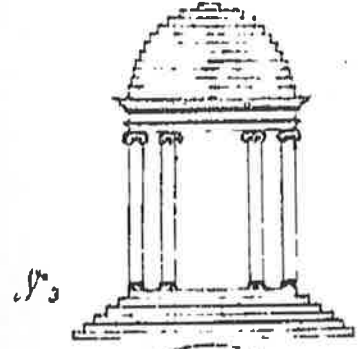
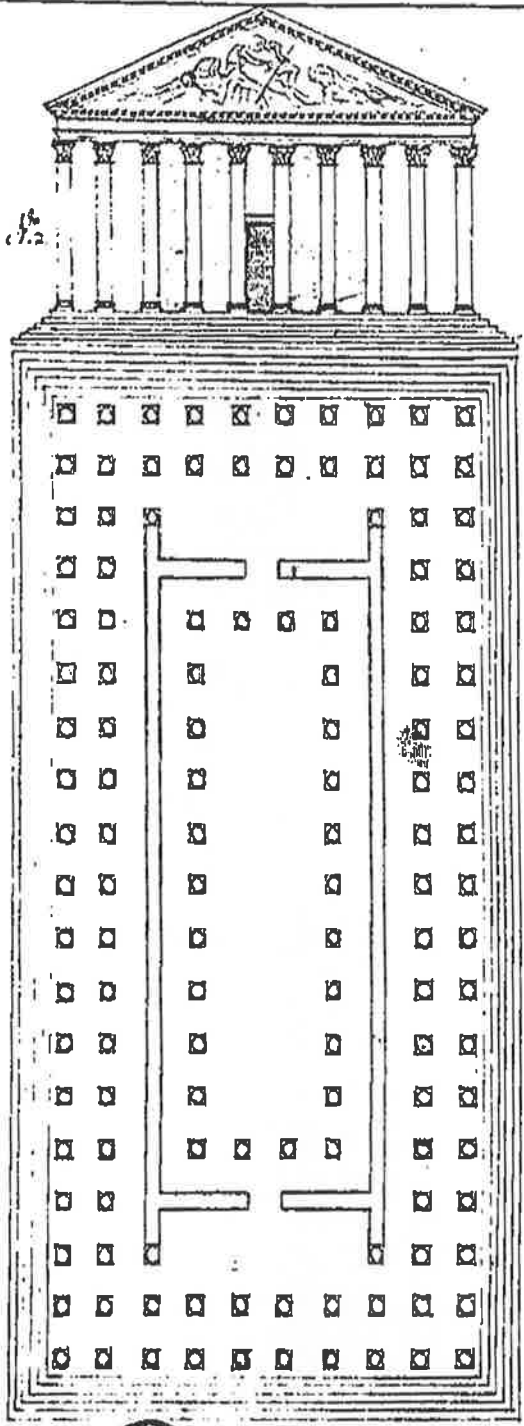
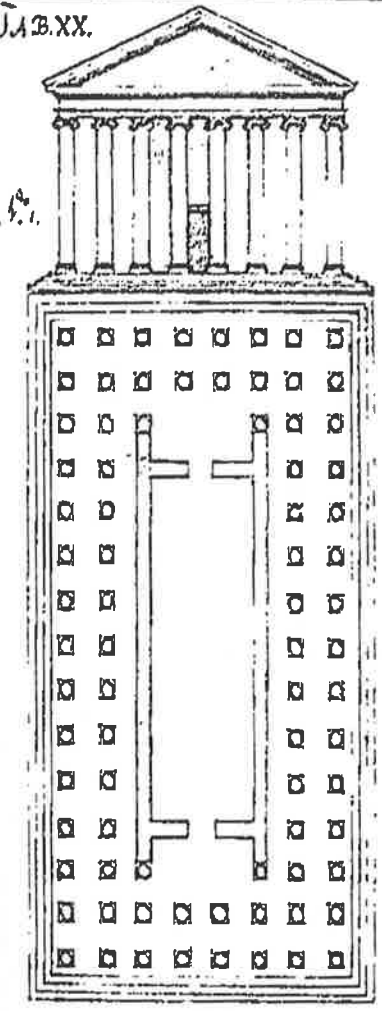
A particular Description of the Baths of the Romans would be of little modern use. The Chamber they used to sweat in was called [110] Laconicum, which the Air was heated by a Furnace, and the Heat at pleasure augmented or diminished by shutting or opening a Brass Buckler which covered a Vent-hole in the top of the Vault.

Academies or Palæstræ were Places wherein the Youth learned Letters, and performed their Exercises. They consisted of three Parts. 1. A Peristyle, or Court surrounded with Porticoes, leading to the several Schools, Baths, Lodgings, and other Publick Rooms. 2. A Xystus which was a rectangular Space planted with Trees, and surrounded by a Peristyle, wherein the robuster Exercises were performed. 3. The Stadium which was a long Space, bending in like a Bow at both Ends, with a few Steps and Degrees like a long Theatre, for the Convenience of seeing the Foot Races which were here Performed. And thus much for public Buildings.

Tab XIX.

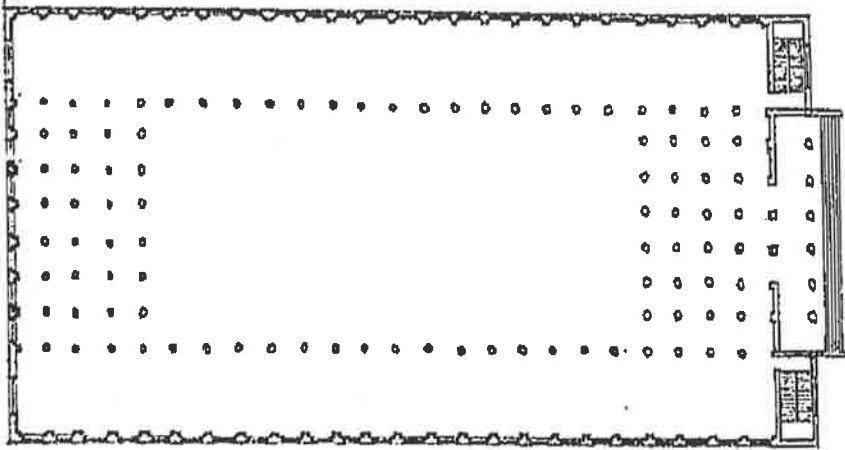


Tab. XX.

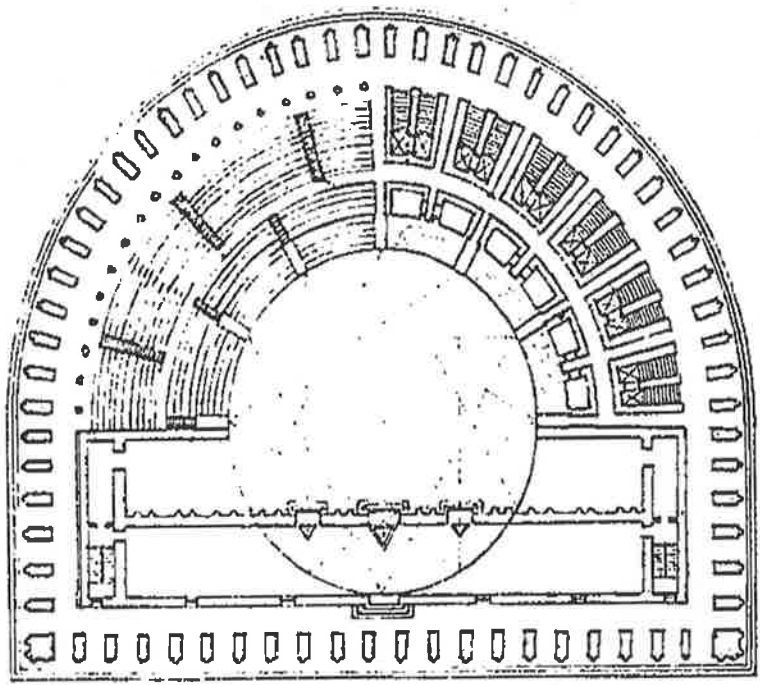


ТАБ. XXI.

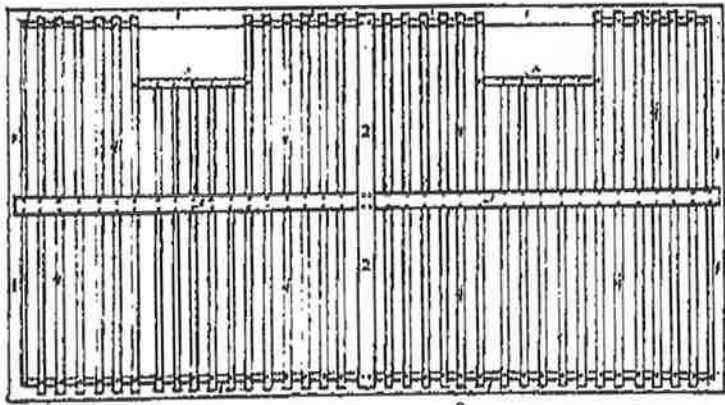
№ 1.



№ 2.



№ 3.



## Chapter 26

### Of private Buildings<sup>159</sup>

In private Buildings or Houses we will [*one letter crossed out*] consider the several Species of Rooms and their different Proportions.

1. The Vestibule, Entry, or Lobby,<sup>160</sup> is the first Part of the House that presents itself to a Person entering; It is as a common Place in the House, serving to entertain those who wait for the Master, and to join by a proper communication all the Rooms on the same Floor. In large Houses there ought to be one of these common Rooms on every Floor. The Cautions with regard to them are that they be sufficiently large for their ordinary use, and that there be an easy Access to the formal Apartments. < The Vestibule is sometimes no more than a Portico. If the Columns of such Portico do not project beyond the Front of he Building, but range even with the Wall, so that the Space of the Portico is within the Body of the Edifice, it is called below stairs a Lodge or loggia, and above stairs a Corridor. [111]

2. The hall is a large room serving for Feasts, and other public Occasions. In England indeed this Room is generally called the Salon, (which is only a French name for a Hall) and by the Hall is understood what we have termed the Vestibule. The Antients had three sorts of Halls. 1st. Corinthian whose Proportions were as Five to Three, surrounded by inserted Corinthian Columns, which supported a flat vaulted Roof. 2dly. Egyptian, whose proportions within the Columns was as Two

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<sup>159</sup> The information in this chapter in halls is derived from Perrault, *Abridgment* II: III, 141-142. The remainder is based upon the corresponding entires in Chambers *Cyclopaedia*. From the beginning of chapter 26 to the end of the ms, Blackstone's handwriting becomes progressively larger and more widely spaced upon the page, suggesting, perhaps, that he was hurrying to finish within a given time period or that his responsibilities at All Souls (including the supervision of the completion of the Codrington Library) were demanding more of his time and perhaps attention as he neared the end of his treatise.

<sup>160</sup> Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 395-396.

to One. The Columns were insulated or detached from the Wall, in the Manner of a Peristyle, and of the Corinthian Order. These supported an Architrave (to which Palladio has well added a Freeze and Cornice) and which was raised another Row of Columns of the same Order, but one Fourth less, and also inserted. Between these were the Windows; the Base of the Peristyle forming a Terrass. 3rdly. Cyzican, which were twice [~~as long~~] as long as broad, and were always turned to the North. The Height of all these Halls, was half their Length and Breadth added together.<sup>161</sup> As to modern Halls Palladio allows them to be made either in the proportion of Two to One, Nine to Four, Seven the Three, or Three to One. We often make them cubic, but the most beautiful Proportion is a Double Cube.

3. Parlours, which are handsome Rooms for Entertainment and Conversation, may be made either Square, or in the Proportion of Nine to Eight, Eight to Seven, Seven to Six, Six to Five, Five to Four, Four to Three, or at utmost Three to Two.

4. Anti- Chambers, or Places for Strangers to be conducted into till they are introduced are allowed by Palladio to have their Length half as much again as their Breadth, i.e. three to two; or to have their Length the Diagonal of the Square of the Breadth, that is, about Seventeen to Twelve.

5. Chambers, which are retired Room to repose in, may have the same Proportions as Parlours. In laying out of Chambers the Situation of the Bed ought always to be regarded, that [112] it may not approach too near the Chimney or Windows.

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<sup>161</sup> Seemingly a reference to halls built in the ancient town of Cyzicus. According to the *Classical Gazetteer* Cyzicus was a city built "by Cyzicius, son of Apollo, the chief of a Pelasgic colony from Thessaly. Permanently settle by the Milesians". W. Hazlitt. *The Classical Gazetteer: A Dictionary of Ancient Geography, Sacred and Profane* electronic ed. T. Spalding ed, (Cambridge. Mass., 2005). Print edition. (London, 1851), 130.

6. A Cabinet, Conclave, [~~and~~] Withdrawing-Room, or Closet, is the most retired Part of an apartment set aside for private Occasions. By Withdrawing-Room indeed is often meant that Room which is allotted for the Reception of Ladies.

7. Galleries are long Rooms serving for many Purposes as for Libraries, Museums etc. They should be in the Proportion of either Five, Six, Seven, or Eight Times their Breadth long. Their Height, if flat, should be their exact Breadth; if vaulted one Third, Fourth, or Fifth more.

8. Offices are a general Name comprehending all the Apartments that serve for the necessary occasions of the House, as the Kitchens, Larders, Stables etc.

A Vestibule, Parlour, Antichamber, Chamber, and Cabinet are said to form a compleat Apartment.

Having thus adjusted the Proportions of Rooms as to Length and Breadth, we are now to consider their Height, first premising that these Rules must often be dispensed with, in Order to make all the Floors of the second Story equal, without Steps or other Inequalities. However we may always keep them in our Eye.

There are many Proportions of Height, as being equal to the Breadth; to  $\frac{4}{5}$ ,  $\frac{2}{3}$ , or [*one letter crossed out*] (which is the lowest that can be admitted)  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Breadth. In the second Story (by which we mean a second Range of Rooms, raised over the first) the Height must diminish one Twelfth; and the third Story has three Fourths of the Second. This is the Proportion of flat Rooms. In vaulted ones of the first Story < half the Length and Breadth added together > Five Sixths, Seven Eighths, or Eleven Twelfths of the Breadth are allowed; and in the Second Story one Sixth less. Such is the proportional Height of the Rooms; as [112] to the absolute Height, it greatly depends on the Nature of the Building. In Houses of any Quality it should seldom be less than fourteen Feet in the [*one word crossed out*] first Floor; and in

those that approach to Palaces, sixteen, eighteen, or twenty.

Having thus laid down a few Memento's with regard to a graceful Compartition of private Building, we proceed now to the useful Part of it.

This, as was before observed, consists in having a fit Number of Rooms of all kinds, properly communicating, without Distraction. Here, in our Way of Building, the chief Difficulty will be in disposing of the Lights; an inconvenience unfelt by the Antients, who had usually two Courts, one for Men and another for the Women; by which means the Reception of Light was easy. This with us must be supplied by graceful Breaks, Refuges, or Fallings back of the Building, by Terrasses, and by the Sky-Lights.

There can be no particular Rules delivered with regard to casting or distributing the several Apartments. Herein the Architect must rely on his own Sagacity, and this is indeed the most difficult Part he has to do. He will be reduced to many Shifts, as to hide a Buttery or the like under a Staircase, and frequently to damn one Room for the sake of another. A few general Remembrances are these 1. That a due order be observed in ranging the Rooms; so that the Vestibule preceed the Hall, the Hall the parlour, the Parlour the Withdrawing Room etc. 2. That the Hall, Staircases, Galleries, and other common Places be easy of Access, and the Private Rooms retired. 3. That the Rooms be suited to ordinary, not extraordinary Occasions, for an House had better be too little for a Day, than too big for a Year. 4. Let the Situation of the Bed be always regarded in [114] laying out of Chambers, that it do not approach too near the Doors, the Windows or the Chimneys. 5. Let the principal Rooms, as well as the Studies and Libraries, be toward the East if conveniently

possible.<sup>162</sup> 6. Let the Kitchens, Stillatories,<sup>163</sup> and all Rooms that require Heat, be toward the South.<sup>164</sup> Let such as require Coolness, as Pantries, Butteries, etc. be towards the North; as likewise all that require a steady Light, as Picture Galleries, Museums, etc.

An eighth Caution may be added, not to cast the Compartition in such a Manner, as that when all the Doors are open, a Man may see thro' all the Rooms at one Glance; a Fault usually proceeding from Ostentation. It should be considered, that hereby an incredible Servitude is put upon all the Rooms except the last, where none can arrive but thro' the rest; unless the Walls be extremely thick for secret Passages: and even then, each Room must have at least three Doors, which is not only a great Weakening to the Work, but insufferable in our cold, misty Regions.

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<sup>162</sup> According to Perrault this is advised for two reasons. First, libraries "ought to be turned to the rising Sun, because they are generally made use of in the Morning" and secondly, books in south- and west-facing libraries are more likely to suffer damage due to worms and to mould, encouraged by "a certain Humidity". See Perrault, *Abridgment*, 66-67.

<sup>163</sup> Stillrooms, in which were produced the household medicines.

<sup>164</sup> So as to make best use of the Sun's warmth in winter.

## Chapter 27. ~.

### Of Floors and Ceilings.<sup>165</sup>

Under this Head of Compartition, we are led naturally to speak of Floors and Ceilings, and first of Floors, which are the underside of Rooms whereon we walk, and are of a great many Sorts,

1. Boarded Floors, such as are made of Planks laid close [115] to each other, and forming a smooth level surface.

2. Earthen Floors; which are commonly made of Loam; or of Lime, Brook-sand, and Gum or Anvil Dust from the Forge. They are used for Threshing-Floors, to make Malt on, etc. Ox-Blood and fine Clay tempered together, are said to make a most beautiful Floor.<sup>166</sup>

3. Brick or Stone Floors, usually called Pavements, which consist of Stones etc. of several Colours: by which means may be made a surprising Diversity of Figures and Arrangements; for two Square Stones, divided diagonally into two Colours, may be joined together in thirty two different Figures.<sup>167</sup> When the Pieces are very small, and curiously inlaid, it is called Emblema, Opera musiva, Mosiac Work, and tessellated Pavement; If the same work be performed in Wood, it is then called Parquetage or Marquetry.

By the term Floor is also understood not only the Part whereon we tread, but the Timberwork beneath, which falls indeed under the Cognizance of Carpentry; Yet

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<sup>165</sup> This chapter equates to Blackstone's 'Abridgement' chapters XXXI, 'Of Floors' and XXXIII 'Of the Roof or Cover' but is a greatly extended version of both.

<sup>166</sup> This point comes from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 166. Chambers however credits "Sir Hugh Plat" with recommending the combination of ox blood and clay. Chambers refers to Sir Hugh Plat[t] (*bap.* 1552, *d.* 1608), an inventor and writer on architecture. S. Lee. 'Plat, Sir Hugh', [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22357>, accessed 19 Feb 2007].

<sup>167</sup> Taken from Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 305.

must the Architect by no means be ignorant of this Branch [of Architecture], that in casting of his Compartition, he may make the principal Timbers etc., avoid the Chimney Hearth and the tops of the Doors and Windows: Which is a necessary Caution, lest the Work be endangered either by their sinking or taking Fire. A Floor (No.3.) consists of

1. The Lintel or Wall-plate, 1, which covers part of the Wall, and into which the other Timbers are Framed. In Timberwork where there is no Wall, this is much larger and forms the Brest-Summer.

2. The Summer < Reason, > or Beam, 2, is the largest Piece of Timber in the Floor. Both Ends of this are fixed in the Wall or Wallplate; and should each of them be let in at least ten inches; to prevent Accidents from shrinking.

[116] 3. The Girders, 3, or Building Interduces, are not constantly used, but in large Floors. They are usually let into the Wallplate at one End, and framed into the Summer at the other. These three are the principal Timbers.

4. Joists, 4, are those pieces of Timber which are framed into the Summers and Girders at one End, and the Wall or Wallplate at the other; these more immediately sustain the Boards. They should never be at a greater Distance than ten, or at most twelve inches asunder, which will also regulate the Breadth of them; For it is a rule that Joists shall be distant from each other just the Breadth of a Joist and an half. If wider, the Boards cannot be laid so well; if closer, there will not be Wall enough between the Ends of the Joists, to support the Wall above; in case the Joists should decay. When two Rows of Joists are laid athwart each other, they are called Furred Joists. Furring also of Joists or Rafters is when on a natural or accidental Sticking of them from the Level of the rest, small pieces of Wood are fixed on them, to restore them to their due Bearing.

5. Trimmers, or Trimming Joists, 5, are such as are formed at both Ends into two common Joists, and into which is<sup>168</sup> framed one End of all the intermediate Joists between those two which support the Trimmer: Leaving thereby a Vacuity for a Hearth, a Staircase, or the like.

We come next to consider Ceilings or Lacunars, which are the Upper Side of Rooms, and formed by Coverings of Stucco or Plaister over Laths, or thin slips of Wood (instead whereof the Antients used Reeds) nailed to the Joists of the Floor above. They [117] [118] are either round or flat. If round, they are made either in the Arch of a Circle or an Ellipse; Gibbs, from his own Experience, says that elliptical Ceilings are better for sound than circular. If it be a Scheme-Ceiling, i.e. made with a less Arch than a [*one word illegible: faint*] the Rule is that the Arch shall be one third of the Breadth of the Room. If the Ceiling is Coved, the Coving is usually one Fourth of the Height of the whole Room. In short, [*one word illegible: faint*] round Ceilings differ nothing from Vaults, but in that they are made of Laths and Stucco, or Plaister. Stucco differs little from common Mortar, only it has an Addition of pulverised Marble mixed with the usual Ingredients. Plaister also differs only from Mortar by being mixed up with Hair, Straw, etc. to make it more consistent than otherwise it would be. < If across a flat ceiling, the Cornice of the Order be continued, as we sometimes see it, to cover the Summers etc. it is then properly called the Spondati. >

The great uses of Ceilings are, 1. To make the Room lightsome; 2. To choak Fire; 3. To stop the Passage of Dust from one Story to another; 4. To lessen the Noise overhead; 5. To make the Air cooler in Summer.

Having thus gone through our fourth general Division of the principal Parts of Architecture, viz. Compartmention; we are next to proceed to the fifth and last Part; the

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<sup>168</sup> Overwritten.

Roof or Cover; but shall first subjoin a Word or two concerning the various Methods made use of by Architects to express the Compartment of an Edifice. This is done by

1. Ichnography, the Plan, Area, or Groundplot of a Building; which is a transverse Section of an Edifice (such as is made use of in the Figures of Temples, Theatres, and just exhibited)<sup>169</sup> shewing the whole Circumference, and that of the [119] several Apartments, in any one Story with the Dimentions of the Walls, Partitions, and Apertures.

2. The Section, Sciography, or internal Orthography; which is a Draught of the Building as it would appear, were it cut asunder in the middle. By this we are partly enabled to judge of the Effect, which the Height and other Proportions of Rooms, and all other inside Work would have; as also of the Texture of the Roof. But in order to do this compleatly we must have recourse to

3. A Method or Archetype, which it is advisable in all great Buildings to make beforehand, being an exact Representation of the whole Structure, and each particular Part of it, in Wood, Pasteboard, or the like. This should be as large as may be, conveniently; and quite plain, lest the Ornaments of Paint, Gilding, etc. pre-occupate and dazzle the Judgment.

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<sup>169</sup> That is to say, in TAB. XXI, reproduced here at the end of Blackstone's Chapter 25 'Of Public Buildings'.

## Chapter 28. ~.

### Of the Roof or Cover.<sup>170</sup>

Our last Division of the Principal Parts of an Edifice is that of the Roof or Cover; the last indeed in Execution, but the first in Intention, for who would build but to cover? In this there are two Extremes to be avoided, that it be neither too heavy nor too light: The first will press too much on the under-Work, the latter has a more unregarded Inconvenience; For the Cover is not only a bare defence, but a kind of Band and [120] Ligature to the whole Fabric; and therefore requires a reasonable Weight.<sup>171</sup> But, of the two Extremes, a House top heavy is the worst. Care is likewise to be taken that the Pressure be equal on all sides, and that the inner Walls bear their share in the burthen as well as the outer.

The Forms of Roofs are various; but usually they are either in a Point or a Right Line. These, according to their different proportional Altitudes, are divided into three Sorts.

< TAB. XXII > 1. Flat Roofs, (fig. 1.) which have the form and proportions of a triangular Pediment; and must be used where the falling of much Snow is not to be apprehended; and indeed, if covered with Lead or the like, anywhere. These are also called under-pitched Roofs, this Angle a b c being greater than a right Angle. These are said to be in < flat Pitch >.

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<sup>170</sup> This is an extended version of Chapter XXXIII of Blackstone's 'Abridgement'. Blackstone's descriptions of the pitch of various varieties of roofs employ an interesting musical analogy. Compare Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 323. His introductory remarks appear to be an intricate blend of Wotton, *Elements*, I: 78-79 and of Chambers, *Cyclopaedia*, 130-132 and, 342-343. It is not possible in this instance to say whether Blackstone drew more from one of these than the other because his adoption of Chambers' occasional alternate wording compared to Wotton is not consistent.

<sup>171</sup> Leoni, *Architecture*, I:XXIX, 36.

2. Pointed or over-pitched Roofs; (fig. 2.) in which the Angle  $a c b$  is less than a right one, being usually about sixty Degrees. These are  $<$  said to be in high or shaper pitch, and are  $>$  fit only to be used where great Quantities of Snow fall, they being very unsightly.

3. Square Roofs (fig. 3.) where the Angle  $a c b$  is a right Angle. These are a medium between the flat and the Pointed; and are fit to be used anywhere, being more firm than the flat, and not so high and exposed as the pointed.

Such is the Division of Roofs with regard to the Pitch they are set to. By the Pitch we understand that Proportion which the Height of a Roof,  $c d$ , bears to its Breadth,  $a b$ ; or, which is the same thing, the Dimensions of the Angle of the Roof  $a c b$ . Now if the Altitude,  $c d$ , be exactly half of the Breadth,  $a b$ , then will the Angle  $a c b$ , be a right one, and the Roof itself be in true Pitch.

[121] On the other Hand if the Height  $c d$  be less or more than half the Height of the Breadth,  $a b$  [remainder of word *illegible*: smudged] the angle of the Roof will be obtuse or acute; and the Roof itself be either under or over pitch. In a true-pitched Roof the Length of the Rafters,  $a c$ , and  $c b$  will be 12 seventeenths of the Breadth of the Roof, not 3 fourths, as is usual with some Workmen, which will make the Roof be over pitch.

After the Pitch of a Roof is settled there still remain two Sorts of them, which are generally used, viz. Gabled and Hipt or Italian Roofs.

Gabled Roofs (fig.3.) are made in manner of a hollow Prism, being formed by the meeting of two inclined Planes in an angle. The Parts thereof are as follows. The triangular upright flat Face,  $a c b$  is the Gable End:  $a b$  is the Beam to the Roof, being the same as the Girder to the Garret Floor.  $c d$  is the Kingpiece or Jogglepiece:  $a c$  and  $c b$  are the principal Rafters, which meeting at the Point,  $c$ , and a Series of them

being continued to, o; form the Ridge, c o e f are Strutts; h h are the Collar-Beams, Strutt-Beams, Wind-Beams or Top-Beams. g g are Puncheons or Braces; Where they are more in the middle, and Larger, serving to support the principal Rafters from sinking, ( as in fig. 1. e f ) they are usually called Prick-Posts; i i are the Lintels or Doorbands; b n is the Wall-Plate, into which the Ends of the Rafters are mortised; m m are the Rafters, which should not be placed farther than a foot asunder; l l are the Purlins, framed into the principal Rafters, and serving to keep the intermediate ones from sinking. No Rafters should be above eight feet in [122] Length, without a Purlin to support them.

When the lower End of the Rafters has a little Slip of Wood, which runs into a Hole made on purpose to fit it in the Beam etc. as at a and b, they are then said to be mortised in; but when a Notch is made in the Beam which receives the End of the Rafters as at a and b (in fig. i.x.) they are then said to be joggled in. And these terms, of Mortising and Joggling are used in other similar cases, as well as in the present.

The Construction of these 3 Roofs (fig. 1, 2, and 3.) deserves to be remarked: For the King - or Joggle Piece, c d, being made with a large Head, c, into which the upper end of the Rafters, c o, are joggled and the middle of the Rafters (especially in fig. 2. and 3.) being supported by the Strutts, e f, which are also joggled into the lower End of the King-piece, at f; it is so contrived that the whole Roof must be immoveably fixt; since the greater the Nisus to descend in each of the Timbers is, so much the more firmly is the whole held together. When the Cover End of the King-Piece, instead of being simply mortised is screwed to the middle of the Girder, by large iron Cramps as at d (fig. 2.) it serves admirably well for the support of a long piece of Timber, and hinders it from swagging, at the same time that the Height of the Timber binds the Roof more closely together. Upon this Principal, though in a more

complicated Manner, is the famous Roof at the Theater in Oxford<sup>172</sup> supported, by the Contrivance of Sir. Chr. Wren; and any flat Roof of what Dimensions soever may be held up the same way, by a Combination of short Timbers, without any Post or Pillar whatsoever. By the same method [123] may a Bridge be carried over the widest River, without fixing any Pier or other Support in the Water: of which there are several Examples in Palladio's Designs.<sup>173</sup>

But to return to our Gabel Roofs. If we would have our Roof low, and yet preserve it in true Pitch, one may subdivide it into two or more. Thus because to construct one Roof upon so great a Length as a b (fig. 4.) may upon many accounts be inconvenient we may contrive to form two or more smaller ones instead of it. To do this it is first of all necessary to sketch out the Dimensions of the great Roof, as a c b, and then divide the Lines, a c, c b, into as many equal Parts as we would form little Roofs; as, in the present case, into two. Do the same with the Beam, a b. It will follow that each of the Parts of the Lines a c, c b, will < be > the Length of the Rafters to the smaller Roofs, as e a, e b: And each of the aliquot Parts of the Beam will be the Beams of such smaller Roofs; as a d, d b. Thus instead of one great Roof, a c b, are formed two little ones, a e d, d e b. The Part, d, where the two Roofs meet in an inward Angle, is called the Gutter.

Before we leave this figure, we may observe, that the principal Rafters here are cut with a Knee, as some Architects advise us, that they may be mortised into the Beam, not aslant, but perpendicularly. In this case the Slope of the Roof must be continued to the Eaves or Cornice by small pieces of additional Timber which are called Turnings or Shreddings. (See fig. 4.)

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<sup>172</sup> The Sheldonian Theatre (1669), Broad St, Oxford.

<sup>173</sup> Leoni, *Architecture*, III:IV-XIV, 79–95 and III, Plates II-12.

[124] In order to ascertain the exact Dimensions and to shew the manner of framing of every Timber in the Roof, it is necessary to have recourse to a Diagram. (fig. 5.) Let therefore a b c d be the space to be roofed, the two gabel Ends whereof are a b, and c d. Let each of those Ends be divided into two equal Parts, at e and f; and draw the Line, e f, which will mark the Place over which the Ridge will run. Then on the Base a b erect the right-angled Triangle a g b, and on the Base c d erect the right-angled Triangle c g b. Next draw the Line, h a, equal to the Line, a g; the Line, b k, equal to the Line, g b; the Line, i c, equal to the Line, c g; and the Line, d l, equal to the Line, g d; which four Lines will be only the Lines, a b, and c d, produced; provided the < Ends of the > Roof be square, as in fig.5. But if one or both ends be level, i.e. not at right angles, (as in fig. 6.) we must proceed in a different Manner. For then, at e, the middle point of the Bevel End, must be drawn the indefinite Line, h k, perpendicular to the Line, e f; and round the centres, a and b, with the Distances, a g, and gb, must be described the Arcs, h and k: and where they cut the Line h e k, as at h and k, from thence must be drawn the Lines, h a, and k b. Then (in both figures) join h and i, and k and l; and the perpendicular pieces, h a i c, and b k d l, will be the exact size of each side of the Gabel-Roof; which being folded up and meeting together, perpendicularly over the Line e f, will there form the Ridge, whose Height at the End, a b, will be the Line, e g, and at the End, c d, the Line f g. And this Method will serve for all Roofs whether square or bevel, parallel or otherwise; and for any Pitch whatsoever, by altering the Angles, g g, from right ones, to acute or obtuse ones.

[125] We are next to consider the Hipt or Italian Roof (fig. 7.) This is formed out of a Gabel Roof, or rather by the Intersection of two Gabel Roofs, the Gabel End of each being cut off by the Sides of the other; in the same manner as a Pyramid is generated by the Intersection of two Prisms: A Hipt Roof (when constructed on a

square Base) being an exact Pyramid. So that a Hipt Roof has Rafters on all Sides of it. The Lines where the two Roofs intersect, a c, c b, form the Hips, Dormers, or Sleepers. Sometimes one End of a Roof is Gabel, and the other Hipt, as in fig. 7.

The Dimensions of the Hipt Roof are ascertained thus. Let a b c d (fig. 8.) be the Roof to be hipped. From the middle of the Line, a b, to the middle of the Line, c d, draw the Line, e f; and thereon mark the Distance, e o, equal to a e; and f p, equal to c f; and form the Triangles, a o b, and c p d. On the Legs of each Triangle mark the Distances o g, and p g, equal, the former to o e, the latter to p f. Draw the Lines, a g, b g, d g. then on the Base a b form the Triangle, a m b; a m being equal to a g, and m b to b g. In like Manner, on the Base c d form the Triangle c n d; c n being equal to c g, and n d to d g. These two Triangles form the Front and Backside of the Hipt Roof; for the point, m, will come perpendicularly over the point, o, and n, over p; and the Lines, a m, m b, c n, n d, will come respectively over the Lines a o, o b, c p, p d; which last Lines, a o and mark the place over the Dragon, or (according to Dr. Plott) the Trigon-Beams of the Floor are to lay, in order to brace up, and support the Hips.<sup>174</sup> Having thus finished the two fronts of our Roof, let us next proceed to form the sides if the Roof be longer than it is [126] broad. From the points, o, and p, draw the parallel Lines, o k, and o l, perpendicularly to the Line b d, [two words illegible: smudged] parallel Lines [two letters illegible: smudged] and [two letters illegible: smudged] perpendicular to the Line a c. Then draw Lines, a k, b k, [four letters smudged] respectively equal to, a m, b m, c n, d n, and when they meet the parallel Lines, as at h, i, j, k, and l, draw the Lines h i, and k l, which will meet, and form the Ridge, perpendicularly over o p. The Lines a h, b k, c i, d l, will respectively meet the Lines a

<sup>174</sup> Robert Plot (*bap.* 1640, *d.* 1696). Plott, an antiquarian and naturalist taught at University College, Oxford where his “formidable erudition ... earned him the sobriquet ‘learned Dr. Plot’”. See A. J. Turner “Plot, Robert (*bap.* 1640, *d.* 1696), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22385>, accessed 19 Feb 2007].

m, b m, c n, d n, and form the Hips. By this Method any Quadrilateral Hipt Roof may be formed, whether square and parallel or otherwise.

To hip a Triangle or Polygon is more difficult: But the Method for the Triangle is this. Let a b c (fig.8.) be the Triangle to be hipped. From the middle of each side to the opposite Angle draw the Lines a f, b e, c d, which meeting in the point, i, shew the center of the Triangle. Mark the Lines, g f, f h, equal to the Line, f i, and form the Triangle, g i h; on the Legs of which mark, i k, i l, equal to i f. Then on the Base, g h, form the Triangle, g m h; g m being equal to g l, and h m, equal to h k. Then form the Point, m, Draw the Lines m b, m c, and the Triangle m b c will be on one Side of the Roof. In the like manner, mutatis mustandis, are the other two Sides, b n a, a o c, found out. This Method will hip any Triangle, whether regular or not.

But there is no one Method of hipping (or indeed Roofing) an irregular Polygon. This Case, which rarely happens, must be left to the Builder's Sagacity, assisted by the Rules to be observed in similar Cases. As for regular Polygons (fig.10.). From the Centre g, draw the Line, g m, through the middle of the side a b. Continue the Line a b, till h i and h k be equal to g h. Let h l be equal to h g, and draw the Triangle i l k. Mark l s, l t, equal to l h; then form the Triangle, i m k; i m, and m k being respectively = to, i t, and k s. Then form the Point, m, draw the Lines, m a, and m b; and the Triangle a m b, will be one Side of the Roof. Construct equal Triangles on all the other Sides of the Polygon, and the Roof is compleat. [127] [128] Sometimes the Ridge or Point of the Roof is truncated or cut off square at the Top, and it is then called a terraced Roof, for a Terrace is properly a flat place on the top of a House to walk on, though often used for any other exalted Walk.

After the Rafters are thus laid, we next proceed to cover them, and that generally either with Lead shingles, Tyles or Slate. Lead is the properest for flat

Roofs; for if it be laid on such as are very sloping, its own Weight will draw it down when softened and rendered more ductile by the Heat of the Sun, There are none of these Inconveniences in Copper, but that is too dear to come into common use. Shingles are pieces of Wood cut into the Shape of Tyles, and used as such. Tyles are only a thinner and broader Sort of Bricks, prepared in the same Manner, and of various shapes according to the use required. Slates are a fissile stone which may be divided into thin Laminæ and used as Tyles: Of these there are two Sorts, blue and grey; the former being much handsomer as well as lighter than the Latter. All these Coverings are fastened to the Roofing being pegged to Laths or thin Strips of stout Oak, which are nailed to the Rafters.

These are the most useful Methods of Roofing in common Houses; In Works of Magnificence there is Room for more magnificent Furnishings, such as Domes and Steeples.

A Dome, Coupe, Tholus, or Cupola, is a spherical vaulted Roof, usually set on the middle of a Building, as a sort of Crown or Finishing. They generally are either spherical or oval; though there are some Polygons, nay [129] some perfectly square. Hemispheres are too flat to have a good Effect on the outside of a high Building, though nothing can be more beautiful within. For this reason they often make use of half an oblong Spheroid, which is therefore frequently called the Dome-Spheroid. These are also very convenient, when it is necessary (as it often is) to make use of two Domes one within the other, that so [*one word illegible: crossed out*] a proper Proportion may be observed, both in the inward and outward Decorations. Sir Christopher Wren has indeed made use of a Method somewhat different. The Cupola

of St. Paul's Church, which is represented in fig. 1<sup>175</sup> is raised upon < TAB. XXIII > an upright Basement; so that though the Contour of the Dome be circular, it has all the Advantages of those which are made elliptically, and is also much handsomer.

To crown the Dome it is usual to form what is called a Lantern, as A, being a sort of a smaller Dome raised over the other, and serving to transmit Light to illuminate the Inside. A good proportion for the Height of these, is the Semidiameter of the Dome; their Diameter may be about a fifth of that of the Cupola. They are sometimes called the Flos of a Dome, as resembling a Flower set atop of it. Instead of these Lanterns, the Antients had only a round aperture in the Navel or Center of the Dome, which served to admit Light sufficient to illuminate the whole Edifice, as in the Pantheon at Rome.

The Construction of the Inside of the Cupola at St. Paul's is well worth remarking. See fig. 2. It was here necessary to have [130] two Domes; and the Lantern, being of stone, required a solid Support. The other Dome, a a, which rises from a Stone < [four words illegible: smudged] is called the Dome of the Cupola > Basement is only Timber, and leaded over. From the same Foundation as the Basement, springs an hollow Cone of Brick-Work, b b, which is open at top, and supports the Lantern. Within this Cone is formed the Inner Dome, c c of Brick-Work likewise, and springing from the same Butment as the Cone and Basement. The navel of this is left open, at d; the Aperture being equal to the Diameter of the Lantern, at e. And (which shews an admirable Skill in Optics) it so happens, that to a Spectator below d and [one letter? illegible: smudged] seem close together, and the Lantern

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<sup>175</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, London. The origin of this drawing remains unclear but it may be based upon one of the hundreds of Wren's drawings now held at the Codrington Library, All Souls. *NB.* It does not resemble closely any of the collection of several hundred of the most frequently viewed of these drawings. Blackstone seems however, to have been a sufficiently able draftsman to have adapted one of any number of similar representations of domed buildings. Alternatively, the image may be his own composition.

appears to be raised immediately over the inner Dome though in reality it is a considerable Distance above it.

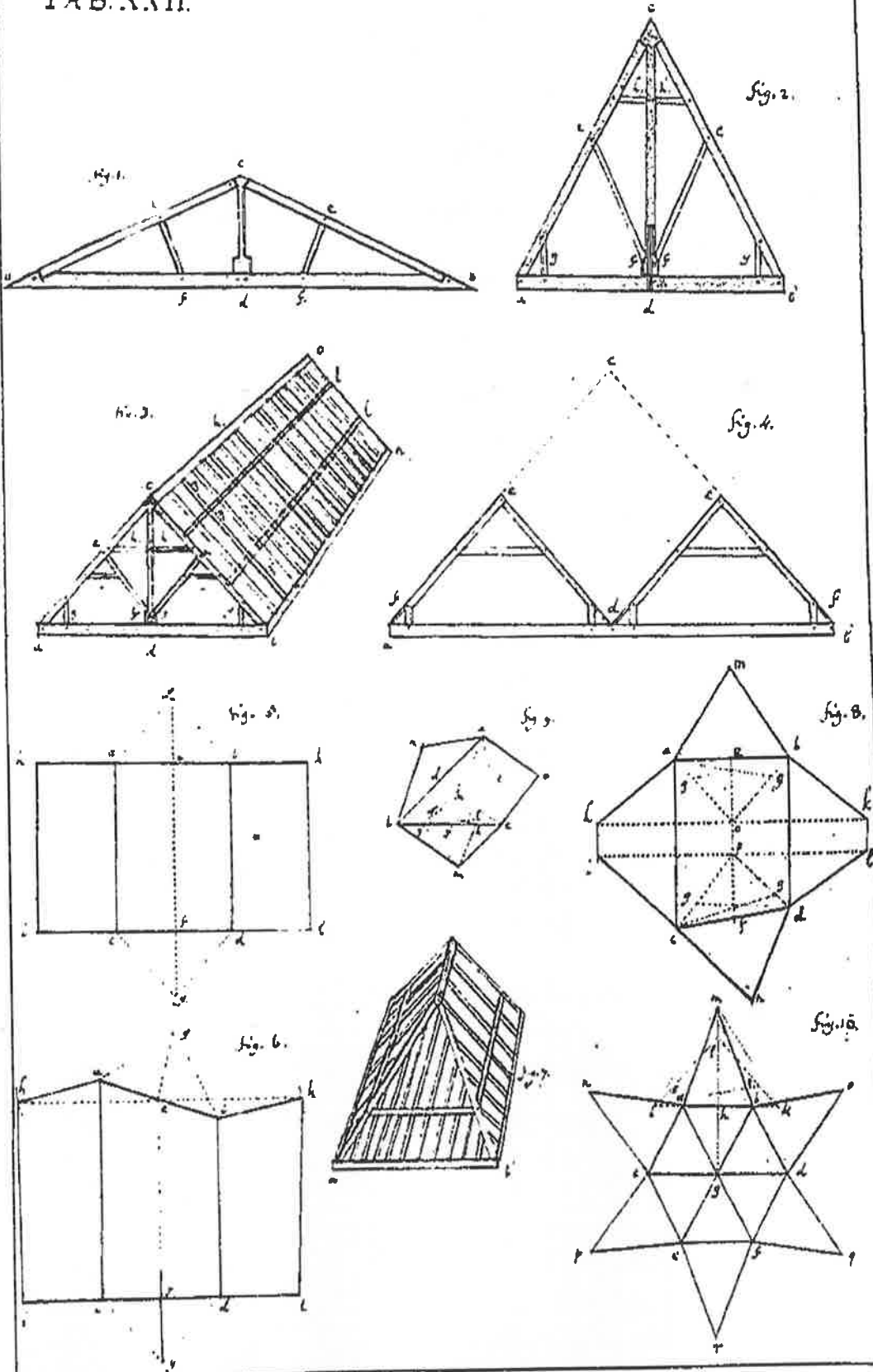
Steeple are high slender Buildings, consisting of several orders and Species, diminishing very gradually as they rise, and usually ending in a very sharp Cone or Pyramid. These, though indeed of Gothic Extraction, have yet their Beauties, when their Parts are well disposed; when the Plans of the several Degrees and Orders, of which they are composed, gradually decrease, and pass from one Form to another without Confusion; and when every part has the Appearance of a proper Bearing.<sup>176</sup>

We have now done with our fifth and last principal Division, that of the Roof or Cover. We are next to speak of Accessories or Ornaments.

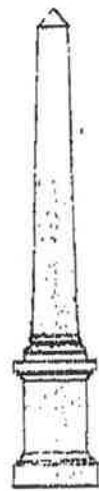
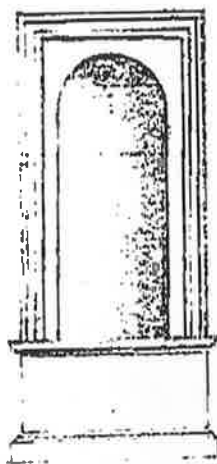
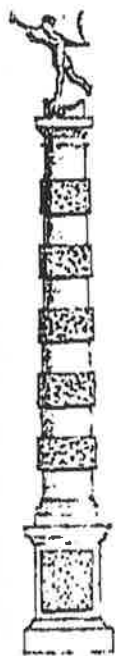
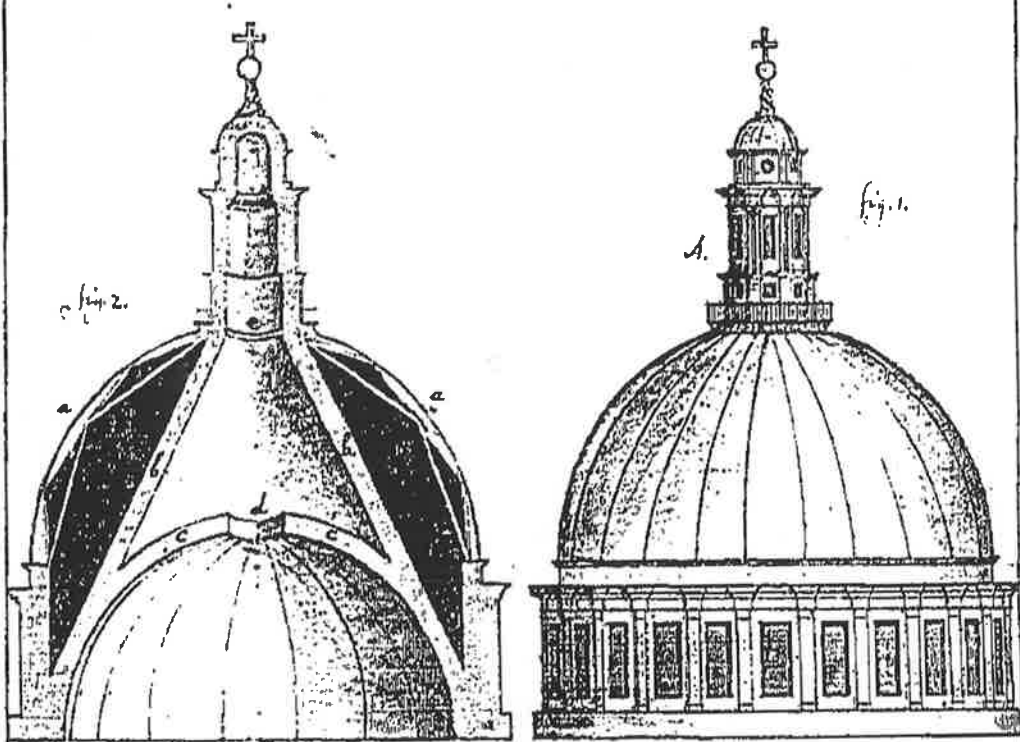
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<sup>176</sup> This reference to steeples of a “Gothic Extraction” is derived from J. Gibbs. *A Book of Architecture* (London, 1728), viii rather than any of Blackstone’s sources. It might, perhaps, be evidence, therefore, that Blackstone’s reading of architectural reading was not limited to the list of authorities presented in the ‘Elements’. Blackstone’s concession that steeples may, “have yet their Beauties, when their parts are well Disposed” may go some way to explaining the curious Gothic-inspired steeple Blackstone would commission Robert Taylor to design and erect in the early 1770s. See above, p. 23.

# TAB. XXVII.



T. B. XXIII.



Of the Accessories or Ornaments.<sup>177</sup>

By Accessories or Ornaments we mean those Parts which we may call Non-Necessaries, or whatsoever Things are made use of in Building, which cannot be ranked under any of the five Principals before spoken of. With Regard to all these, Care is to be taken, that we be not too liberal of them, lest they give our Structure a crowded tawdry Look, and hide the Beauties of the Proportions. They are usually fetched from Sculpture, Painting and Statuary.

In plain Sculpture the principal are these;

1. Niches, which are Cavities, or hollow Places in the Wall, to place a figure in. (fig. 3.) They are sometimes drest and adorned with Columns and Pilasters, like Windows; but are best when plain, except at the End of a Long Gallery, or the like. The Proportions are much the same with those of Windows. The Hollow of the Niche is either Square or the portion of a Circle; the former are called square, the latter round Niches; the latter is most in Use. The hemispherical Top is called the Capital or Cul de four of the Niche. The Use of Niches is for vacant Places, against dead Walls<sup>178</sup> and [132] very distant Windows, to relieve the Eye. But they should never crowd themselves into Places already full, to break any of the Members for their Admission: Much less should they be placed at the Quoins of Buildings, where they are called angular Niches; a practice very frequent abroad in order to show the same figure in different Views; but at the same time it very much weakens the Angles,

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<sup>177</sup> This chapter is based upon Part Two of Wotton, *Elements*, which is in turn based upon the corresponding section of Alberti's *Ten Books On Architecture*. No similar section appears in Blackstone's 'Abridgement'.

<sup>178</sup> That is to say blank or bare walls.

which are the Nerves of the whole Edifice. An Assemblage of Niches is called a Tribunal; Judgement Seats being often made in this Form.

2. Sculpture in Creux: Which is when any Figures are formed in the Manner of Engraving, within the Face of the Plane it is ensculped upon, by scooping out the Superfluities. This is often used upon Members in Architecture as in forming the Echinus, etc.

3. Relievo is that kind of Sculpture wherein the Figures stand prominent from the Ground or Plane on which they are formed. This is of three Kinds. Alto Relievo, when the Figure projects as much as the Life, differing from compleat Statues, etc., only in this; that some one Part is not detached from the rest of the Work. Basso-Relievo, when the Figures are very little raised from the Plane; but if any particular Part projects beyond the rest, it is called Demi-Basso. Mezzo-Relievo, or Demi-Relievo, when the Body of a Figure seems half in, and half out of the Plane. All these are very frequently used on any naked Members; as on the Dye of [133] a large Pediment, or Pedestal, on the Freeze, etc. They often represent Histories of Facts, as well as Works of Fancy. When they represent Fruit, Flowers, or Leaves, they require the Names of Fruitage, Flowerage, and Foliage.

4. Ornamental Columns. Which are either memorial, triumphal or the like. Of these there are two sorts generally used, one formed on the Model of that of Trajan<sup>179</sup> at Rome, which is supported on a Tuscan Pedestal, with a Tuscan Base and Capital, but its shaft is [*blank space*] Modules long, and either carved in Relievo or fluted in

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<sup>179</sup> Trajan, Roman Emperor (98-117 AD). Chambers describes Trajan's Column thus: "a famous historical column, erected in Rome, in Honour of the Emperor Trajan. .. 'Tis of the *Tuscan Order*, though somewhat Irregular: Height is Eight Diameters, and its Pedestal *Corinthian*; it was built in a large Square there, call'd the *Forum Romanum*. Its Base consists of 12 Stones of an enormous Size, and it is raised on a Socle or Foot of eight Steps. Within-side, is a staircase, illumined with 44 windows. 'Tis 140 Foot high, which is 35 Foot short of the *Antonine Column*; but the workmanship of the former is much more valued. 'tis adorn'd from top to bottom with Bas-relievo's, representing the great Actions of that Emperor against the *Dacæ*."

the Doric Manner, whence some call it a Doric Column. The other (fig. 4.) has all its Proportions entirely Doric; but the Shaft is divided into eleven Parts, the five innermost Compartitions of which (alternatively taken) are frosted with Rustic Work, whence they are called Frosted and sometimes Clouted Columns. In both, the Figure, Vase, or whatever is atop of them must be exalted so as to be one fourth of the Column in Height, for this is in the stead of Entablature.

5. Pyramids are solid massy Edifices, which from a Square, or other angular Base rise continually diminishing to a Point. They are usually erected to preserve the Memory of singular Events. When the Bases are very small, and the Pyramids are very slender, they are called

6. Obelisks or Needles, (fig. 5.) which are pyramidal Figures, tending towards a very acute Angle, but are truncated towards [134] the middle, and finished off with a rectangular Diamond Point. They are generally supported on a Tuscan Pedestal, with an Attic Base. The mean Proportion of their Height is Seven times their Diameter, and their Slope or Diminution about one Third of their Diameter.

7. Balconies, or Meniana, are Projectures in the Front of a Building, encompassed with a Ballustrade, and supported either by Columns, or Consoles, which are then called Trusses. Balconies < , > are often very gracefully formed by the projection of the Stool or Pedestal of a Window, which is cut into Ballusters.

8. Blind-Windows are such as have all the Ornaments and Proportions of real ones, only are not pervious. They are of the same Use as Niches, etc.

9. Exotic Pedestals are such as are irregular, and serving only to support Bustoes, Vases, etc. Of these may be made innumerable Species according to the Fancy of the Architect.

10. Urns, Vases, etc. are well-known Ornaments, used in crowning a Frontispiece, or decorating any dead Space, etc. There is a Happiness in forming those that can be reduced to no Rules. The same may be said of Sarcophagi, which were a Sort of antique Coffins; now usually placed on Funeral Monuments. And these are the principal Ornaments in Sculpture as it stands distinguished from Statuary.

11. Painting is an Art used in Subservience to Architecture, by way of Ornament, either within or without an Edifice. We shall touch therefore upon this and Statuary [135] [136] in that light only, and not ascend to the Delicacies of each Art, nor to Enter too minutely into the several Kinds of Painting, we shall here speak only of two; that on Walls on the Outside of a Building, and that disposed in Frames, etc., for the Garniture of the Inside. The first, called Painting in Fresco, is often placed between Windows, etc. abroad; but is not so proper for the inclement climate we possess. Whenever it is used, the Figures should not be less than eight or ten feet high, & only in black & white or in dusk and light brown (which are called Chinro-obscure, or Clare-Obscure) lest the Gaudiness of other Colours draw off our Attention from the Building and its proportions. As to the other, these necessary Cautions should be observed in disposing them. 1. That no Room be furnished with too many of them, unless it be in Galleries and the like set apart for that very purpose. 2. That the best pieces be placed where there are only single Lights if possible, but by no Means where there is a thorough Light. 3. That Regard be had to the Posture of the Painter in designing them. 4. That they be accommodated to the Uses of the Room they are placed in.

12. In Statuary also we may reckon two Sorts, viz. the compleat Statues, and imperfect ones or Bustoes, which only shew the Head and shoulders: concerning the placing of both which, these Rules may be observed. 1. That it be not too general and

abundant for then they will seem rather intended for Sale than Ornament, especially at first Entrance; where a Doric Garnishment is preferable to a Corinthian. 2. That the Niches, which contain Statues of white Stone or Marble, be not coloured in their Concavity too black, but rather duskish; the Light being displeas'd with too sudden a Departure from one Extreme to another. 3. That fine [137] and delicate Sculptures be help'd with Nearness, and gross with Distance. 4. That Statues placed above should be less than those below, diminishing in proportion to the Orders. 5. Some advise, that in placing Statues aloft, we incline them a little forwards; which they call the Resupination of the Statue. But great Masters have with Reason question'd the Justness of this last Rule; for the Eye, the Use, will make proper Allowances for all Distances; and though it were allowed that this Resupination might have a good Effect when we look directly in the Front of the Figure; yet it would have a very awkward one, when we behold it sideways.

Finis . ~ .

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<sup>180</sup> The pagination indicated here is Blackstone's.

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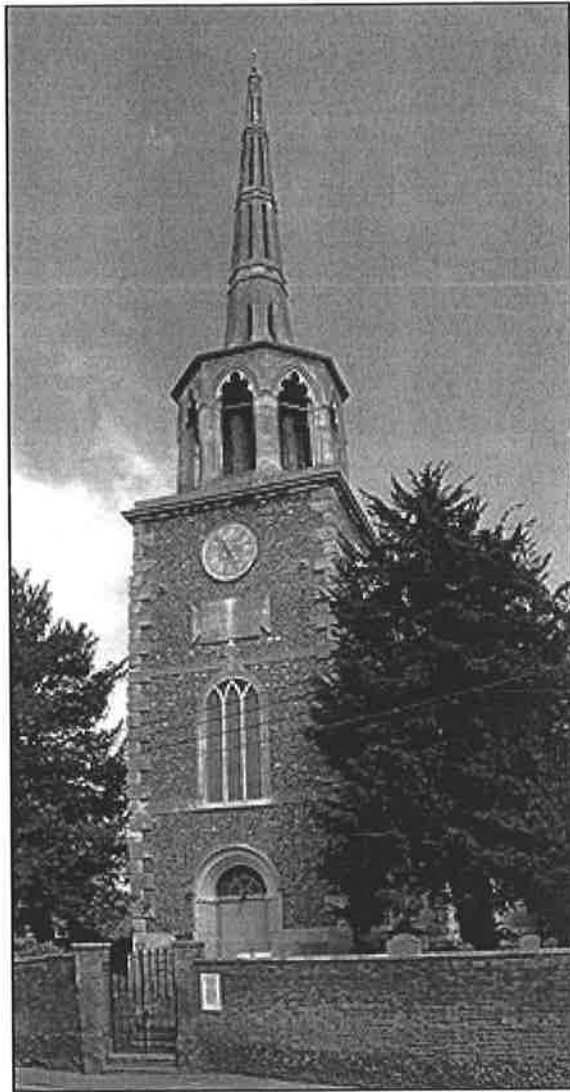
*Illustrations and  
Supporting Documents*



**Figure 24. Castle Priory**



**Figure 25. Interior, St.Peter's, Wallingford, Berks.**



**Figure 26. St. Peter's Church Spire (Sir Robert Taylor).**



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        - 2. Reprieve, or Pardon.
      - 11. Execution.

Figure 29. Blackstone's Analysis of the Contents of the *Commentaries*.



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