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ADDITIONS TO DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF  
WORKS AND PROJECTS BY JAMES CRAIG

ANTHONY LEWIS

**T**HIS SUPPLEMENTARY LIST describes a number of minor projects and further details that have come to light since the publication of the 'Descriptive List of Works and Projects by James Craig' in the volume commemorating the bicentenary of Craig's death in 1995.<sup>1</sup> No new major achievements have been uncovered, and many of the entries consist of unrealised projects or simple survey plans (often involving protracted arguments about payment), but it is hoped that continuing research into Craig's activities will fill out further the picture of his achievements within their historical context.

1765: PLAN OF THE ABBEY COURT AND  
PHYSIC GARDEN, WITH THE ROADS  
CONTIGUOUS, HOLYROOD, EDINBURGH

The date of this plan was unknown when the original 'Descriptive List' was prepared (p. 119). However, another copy, unsigned but dated 1765 on the back, has since been found in the papers of the Middle District Turnpike Road Trustees (see figure).<sup>2</sup> It can thus be compared with the revised issue of William Edgar's Plan of Edinburgh of the same date, and it seems probable that Craig's survey was to demonstrate the work involved in widening the existing narrow Horse Wynd to form a proper street around this time.

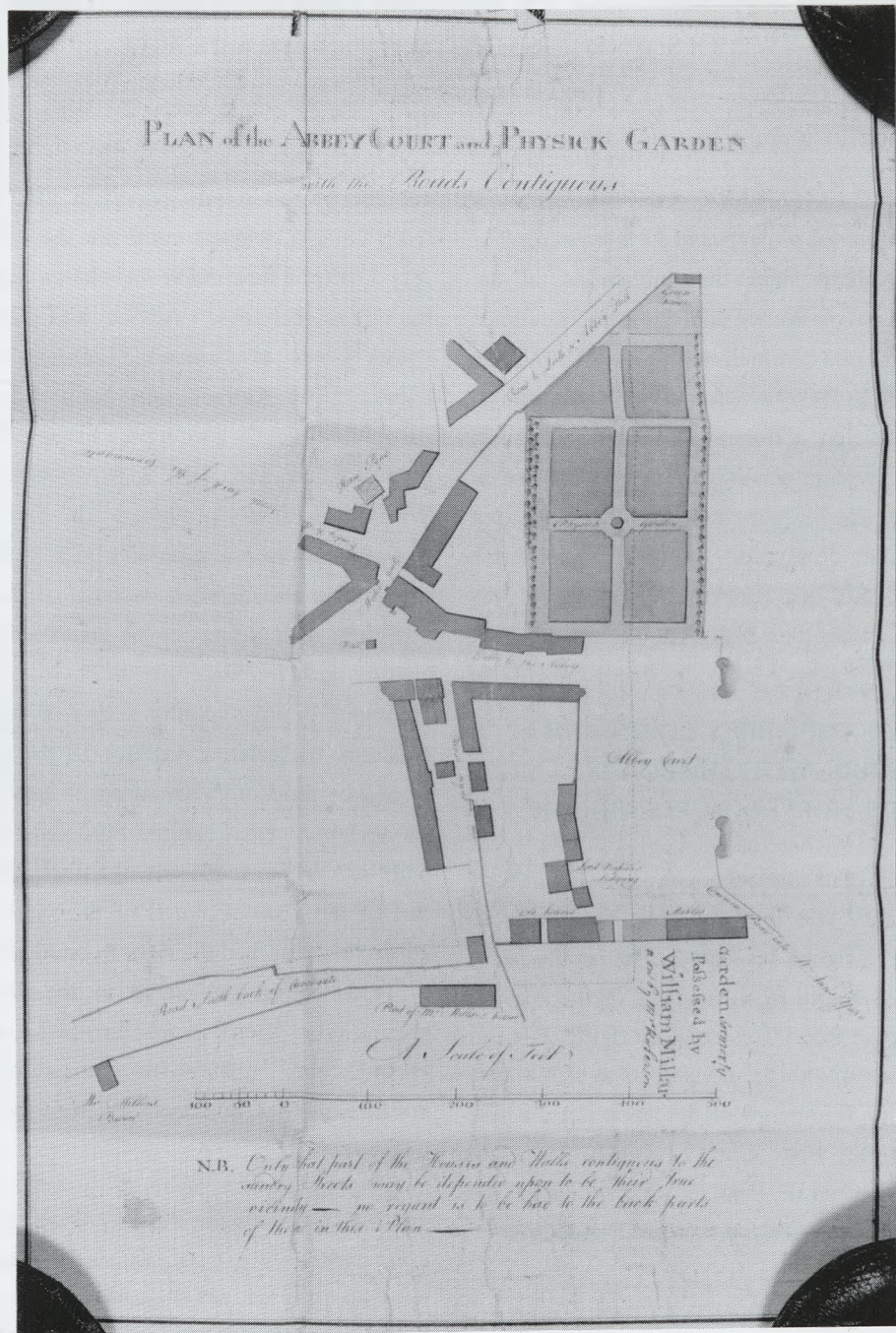
1766-1768: CRAIG'S PLAN FOR THE NEW TOWN,  
EDINBURGH

A number of articles have spelt out the difficulties in determining how much of the New Town plan

adopted by the Town Council in 1767 was derived from Craig's original entry for the competition in July 1766 and how much was altered under guidance by others thereafter.<sup>3</sup> Advice was taken from Sir James Clerk of Penicuik, Commissioner George Clerk, Lord Kaimes and John Adam, and, in particular, there is a reference in the official records to 'a rectified Plan of the Improvements made out by William Mylne' produced in October 1766.<sup>4</sup> A contemporary mention of Mylne's plan has come to light in the detailed records of the legal case objecting to building on the south side of the east end of Princes Street in 1772-76.<sup>5</sup> Most of the argument in this lengthy series of printed papers concerns the relative validity of the adopted plan signed by the Lord Provost on 27 July 1767, which showed ornamental gardens bordered by trees but no buildings on the south side of Princes Street, and the Act of the Town Council of the same date, which apparently reserved the right to build there later.<sup>6</sup>

However, at one stage in the Town's formal presentation there is an intriguing reference to Mylne's plan, again in the context of whether or not trees were a fundamental part of the design from the start:<sup>7</sup>

The claimants have resorted to the act of council itself to prove that it was not Mr Craig's original plan which was adopted, but a new plan made out by him, with all the improvements suggested either by Mr Craig or other persons, as additions to the first design. But the respondents must observe, that the plan which was truly adopted, with some variations, was not Mr Craig's first plan, but Mr Miln's plan, which had no trees delineated upon it; and when Mr Craig was desired to make out a new drawing, the only directions given to him were, to make the great or middle street run



'Plan of the Abbey Court and Physic Garden, with the Roads Contiguous', James Craig, 1765. This shows the constricted state of Horse Wynd and a potential link between the foot of the Canongate and the South Back of Canongate. The alternative would be a line directly in front of Holyrood Palace, through the Abbey Court and Physic Garden, to link with the road to Abbeyhill. That the survey relates to road proposals rather than property ownership is indicated by a footnote stating that the parts of the houses and walls facing on to the streets are accurate, but 'no regard is to be had to the back parts of them in this Plan'. (Courtesy of Edinburgh City Archives.)

along the summit of the ground, instead of running nearer one side, as it had been laid down in Mr Miln's original plan, and to lay down all the other streets, &c. in every respect as in Mr Miln's plan.

This does not tell us anything about Craig's original competition entry, or how far Mylne's 'rectified plan' differed from it, but it does confirm that the plan drawn by Mylne, appropriately modified, was the basis for the final plan drawn up by Craig and adopted by the Town Council.

#### 1772: PLANS OF ROBERTSON'S CLOSE PROPERTY FOR EDINBURGH ROYAL INFIRMARY

The Managers of the Infirmary bought property in Robertson's Close, north of the hospital, in 1764, and set up a committee in November 1771 to consider ways to develop it. Craig was asked to survey the land, measure the buildings and draw plans, for which he was paid £14. 10. 5 on 19 May 1772.<sup>8</sup> Craig was later paid £7. 7. 0 'for making a survey of the Ground to the west of the Infirmary's property' on 24 March 1786, and £6. 12. 1 for making 'certain plans relative to the Infirmary's property in Robertson's Close' on 6 March 1792.<sup>9</sup> Whether these payments related to the original commission or to later work is unclear.

#### 1773: PROJECTED REPAIRS TO ST LEONARD'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, ST ANDREWS, FIFE

During the summer of 1773 Craig was engaged to undertake repairs on St Salvator's College Chapel at St Andrews.<sup>10</sup> On 4 August his proposals for St Leonard's College Chapel were also considered, although it was decided not to pursue this scheme.<sup>11</sup>

Craig's plan of St Leonard's Chapel survives.<sup>12</sup> Although it is not signed or dated, and lacks a scale, this may be because the bottom right hand corner has been torn away. However, the design details, segmented arches with proud keystones, and pen and brush work in black and grey, are very similar to his drawing for St Salvator's Chapel, and characteristic of Craig's work.

#### 1775-76: PROJECTED SEATING PLAN FOR KINGHORN PARISH CHURCH, FIFE

Discussions about alterations to Kinghorn Parish Church are recorded in the Kinghorn Heritors' Records.<sup>13</sup> There had been debate since 1773 about alterations to the seating of the church, and the division of the costs between the Heritors and the Town. Craig provided a seating plan for a gallery in 1776, but the work was done to the design of George Paterson, who was responsible for the major reconstruction of the old church at this time.

#### 1777: DESIGN OF A MONUMENT TO LORD PROVOST ALEXANDER KINCAID, EDINBURGH

The original 'Descriptive List' (p. 110, and fig. 7.3) recorded a drawing by Craig of a proposed monument in Greyfriars Churchyard to Alexander Kincaid, who died during his term of office as Lord Provost in 1777. It was not built, and indeed now appears not to have been formally commissioned. There are further mentions in a lawsuit involving Kincaid's trustees.<sup>14</sup> As well as claims for payment for the design of the monument there is an account for 'Making a Design of a House intended to have been executed at White House', but the trustees insisted that Craig's designs had not been 'instructed in a legal manner' and refused payment.

## 1779–80: TENEMENT AT 31–32 BRIDGE STREET, NORTH BRIDGE, EDINBURGH

In the original 'Descriptive List' (p. 119) it was noted that Craig's *Plan for Improving the City of Edinburgh* (1786) includes the statement that he had 'designed and erected a building next the General Post-office upon the North Bridge'. The General Post Office opened in March 1779 on the west side of Bridge Street, at the south end of the bridge – the site later occupied by the *Scotsman* building.<sup>15</sup> In 1995 nothing more was known of this project, but some further information has since been traced.

In 1779 the Town Council decided to feu plots on the west side of Bridge Street, at the south end of North Bridge.<sup>16</sup> An advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* on 11 January 1779 specified that the tenements were 'to be of the height, and the front to be finished in the stile of the buildings lately erected on the opposite side'. Craig acted as cautioner for Alex Greig, butcher, who offered £656 in one of the first agreements.<sup>17</sup> Greig's tenement – traced through stent tax records – was at 31–32 Bridge Street, beside the new Post Office.<sup>18</sup>

Further details are included in records of a court case involving Craig and David Smith, a tea dealer, over a dispute in 1783 about payment for work done by Craig in his shop in this tenement, from which it is clear that Craig and Greig built the tenement as a joint venture in 1779. Greig and his daughter lived in the top storey, and Craig built and fitted up both the shop and the rest of the building, with Greig as landlord and Craig as factor.<sup>19</sup> By February 1780 Smith had taken the shop on the street level of the building, and employed Craig to make a partition. Craig claimed payment of an account for £3. 18. 9 in June 1780. Smith argued that,

although Craig's foreman and servants had carried out the work, Craig should seek payment from Greig, the landlord of the building.<sup>20</sup> Lord Monboddo, who judged the case, instructed Smith to pay the account.<sup>21</sup>

## 1789–1793: PROJECTED NEW SEATING FOR SOUTH LEITH CHURCH, EDINBURGH

Minutes of the Kirk Session for South Leith Church from March to April 1793 record the scheme to repair the building's seats. Craig made out plans and sections which were discussed on 12 April, but it was decided to adopt the plans by Mr Cairns, a wright in Leith.<sup>22</sup> Craig had been involved with these plans for some time, as in July 1791 he took James Morrison, junior, merchant in Leith, to court in Edinburgh over payment of an account for £21 for a plan 'of certain alterations and improvements then proposed to be made upon the church of South Leith and to make certain measurements in said Church', having been approached by Morrison 'about two years ago'.<sup>23</sup>

## UNDATED PROJECTS

## PLAN OF 'MR GRAY'S PROPERTY'

In the National Archives of Scotland there is an undated ground floor survey, signed by Craig and titled 'Plan of Mr Gray's property designed by James Craig, Architect'.<sup>24</sup> This may have been done for Robert Gray, Procurator Fiscal, who owned property near St James's Square.

PROPOSED MONUMENT TO JAMES THOMSON  
AT RICHMOND, SURREY

Craig had hopes of designing a monument to his uncle, the poet James Thomson, at Richmond (where Thomson lived at the time of his death in 1748). This project was previously known only through a passing mention in a collection of notes on Thomson dating from 1791, held in the National Library of Scotland: 'Mr Craig, a relation of Thomson's, was down here for the same purpose [erection of a monument] some years ago ...'<sup>25</sup> However, discovery of a further reference in a letter written by the 11th Earl of Buchan in 1790 casts a little more (if unfavourable) light on Craig's involvement: 'I dare say you knew that Lord Littleton offered a subscription of £300 for this design & that some time ago it was set on foot. James Craig the Poet's nephew did most unfortunately & foolishly put an end to the undertaking by his mismanagement.'<sup>26</sup>

PLAN OF ST CUTHBERT'S PARISH CHURCH,  
EDINBURGH

There is mention of rival claims by Craig and William Butter for payment of 'the Premium for the Plan of the Church' in the Heritors' Records in 1791.<sup>27</sup> The church was rebuilt, 'on foundations already laid, but to modified designs', by James Weir of Tollcross in 1773–75, after submission of competing tenders, but the actual designer is unknown. The steeple (which survives) was added in 1789 by Alexander Stevens, junior, probably to his own design.<sup>28</sup> Craig may have tendered for either job, and his request for payment might relate to either period, but no records of payment in relation to these contracts have been traced.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Anthony Lewis, Kitty Cruft and Andrew Fraser, 'Descriptive List of Works and Projects by James Craig', in Kitty Cruft and Andrew Fraser (eds), *James Craig, 1744–1795* (Edinburgh 1995), pp. 101–119.
- 2 Edinburgh City Archives (ECA), Middle District Turnpike Road Trustees, Miscellaneous papers, 1769–1842, tin trunk, box 11.
- 3 D. C. Simpson, 'City Plans and the New Town', *University of Edinburgh Journal*, 23 (1967), pp. 52–57; Stuart Harris, 'New Light on the New Town', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC)*, New Series 2 (1992), pp. 1–13; Anthony Lewis and John Lowrey, 'James Craig: Architect of the First New Town of Edinburgh', *Architectural Heritage*, V (1994), pp. 39–49; Andrew Fraser, 'A Reassessment of Craig's New Town Plans, 1766–1774', in Cruft and Fraser, *James Craig*, pp. 25–47.
- 4 ECA, Bridge Committee Minutes, 22 and 29 October 1766.
- 5 This case was described (though without detailed references) by William Cowan, 'The Buildings at the East End of Princes Street and Corner of the North Bridge', *BOEC*, 1 (1908), pp. 137–154. See also *Documents Relating to Prohibition against Feuuing on the South Side of Princes Street, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1868); and A. J. Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1966), pp. 86–91.
- 6 Different selections of the printed papers in this case are to be found in volumes of papers and pamphlets in ECA, the Signet Library (Court of Session Papers, vols 131 and 591), and the Advocates' Library (Arniston, vol. 98, f. 35; Arniston, vol. 116, N.177, 49; Appeals 1770–72, f. 58).
- 7 *Duplies for the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Edinburgh, &c. to the Replies for some of the feuers within the Extended Royalty*, 30 April 1774 (copy in Signet Library, Court of Session Papers, vol. 591).
- 8 Edinburgh University Library (EUL), Special Collections, Lothian Health Services Archive (LHSA), Edinburgh Infirmary, Minutes, 1761–1775, LHB 1/1/4, p. 269, 4 May 1772; Edinburgh Infirmary Hospital Cash Ledgers, LHB 1/13/1, p. 33.
- 9 EUL, LHSA, Edinburgh Infirmary Hospital Disbursements 1781–1791, LHB 1/11/4, p. 45; Edinburgh Infirmary, Minutes, 1789–1800, LHB 1/1/6.
- 10 See Lewis *et al.*, 'Descriptive List', in Cruft and Fraser, *James Craig*, p. 105.

- 11 St Andrews University Library, United College Minutes, UC 400/3/1.
- 12 St Andrews University Library, UY 1381, 1773. The author is grateful to Dr Norman Reid, University of St Andrews, for drawing his attention to this plan.
- 13 National Archives of Scotland (NAS: formerly Scottish Record Office), Kinghorn Heritors' Records, HR 238/1. Minutes 1752–1815, ff. 59–60, 68–69, 78.
- 14 NAS, Alexander Fraser v. Kincaid's Trustees, SC 39/17/365/C 1783, 23 July 1780 and 6 August 1783. The trustees agreed that Craig had sent the drawing to them in May 1779, but found no record that it had ever been commissioned by Kincaid's son, who had since also died.
- 15 ECA, Town Council Minutes (TCM), 24 March 1779.
- 16 ECA, TCM, 6 January 1779 (see also TCM, 16 July, 13 and 20 August 1777).
- 17 ECA, TCM, 3 February 1779.
- 18 ECA, Stent Rolls, SL35, 1827–28.
- 19 NAS, David Smith v. James Craig, CS 271/10,426; CS 271/28,102; CS 271/41,162.
- 20 ECA, Bailie Court Processes, box 169,446, 1783, James Craig v. David Smith.
- 21 This was not Craig's first involvement in this area – Dean of Guild Court processes show that in 1777 both he and John Adam had inspected tenements there on behalf of the Court in relation to repair work. Also, it appears that Craig supplied stone to George Steel, a smith, who feued the plot next to the tenement: ECA, Bailie Court Processes, George Stiele (*sic*) v. James Craig, box 167,442, 1782, 16 November 1780.
- 22 NAS, CH2/716/29, 12 April 1793.
- 23 ECA, Bailie Court Processes, box 187,510, James Craig v. James Morrison, 26 July 1791. There is no mention of this in the Kirk Session minutes for 1789. The present pews date from renovations by Sydney Mitchell and Wilson in 1893–94.
- 24 NAS, RHP 35138, paper on linen.
- 25 National Library of Scotland (NLS), Adv. MS. 22.3.11, f. 53v. Memoir of Thomson compiled from notes taken by Thomas Park in conversation with a Mr Robertson, and apparently subsequently enclosed by Park in a letter to ?Lord Buchan in ?1792. This reference was cited in Iain Gordon Brown and Anthony Lewis, 'David Allan's Portrait of James Craig and its Documentary Significance', in Fraser and Cruft, *James Craig*, pp. 71–73.
- 26 NLS, MS. 3391, Letter from Buchan to Thomas Coutts 28 September 1790. Buchan did however commemorate Thomson in other ways, putting a gilded brass plaque in Richmond Church, and erecting a Temple of the Muses dedicated to Thomson at Dryburgh (1817–18) and an obelisk monument at Ednam, Roxburghshire, the poet's birthplace (1819–20): Sir David Erskine, *Annals and Antiquities of Dryburgh* (Kelso 1836), p. 189; Charles Alexander Strang, *Borders and Berwick* (RIAS, Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 117, 171.
- 27 NAS, St Cuthbert's Heritors' Records, HR 152/2, Minutes 1788–1835, 2 August 1791.
- 28 John Gifford, Colin McWilliam and David Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (Harmondsworth 1984), p. 274; Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840*, 3rd edn (Yale 1995), pp. 924, 1035.