

**William Newton (1730-1798) and the Development of  
the Architectural Profession in North-East England**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the emergence of the professional architect in the provinces of eighteenth-century Britain, drawing upon new research into the career of William Newton (1730-1798) of Newcastle upon Tyne. Section I assesses the growth of professionalism, identifying the criteria that distinguished professions from other occupations and their presence in architectural practitioners. It contrasts historians' emphasis upon innovative designs by artist-architects, such as Sir John Vanbrugh and Robert Adam, with their absence from the realisation of their designs. Clients had to employ capable building craftsmen to supervise construction and this was an opportunity for an alternative practitioner to emerge, the builder-architect exemplified by Newton, offering clients proven practical experience, frequent supervision, peer group recommendation and financial responsibility. Patronage networks were a critical factor in securing commissions for provincial builder-architects, demonstrated here by a reconstruction of Newton's connections to the north-east élite. Section II reveals that the coal-based north-east economy sustained architectural expenditure, despite national fluctuations. A major proposal of this thesis is that, contrary to Borsay's theory of an 'English urban renaissance', north-east towns showed continuity and slow development. Instead, expenditure was focused upon élite social spaces and industrial infrastructure, and by the extensive repurposing of the hinterlands around towns. This latter development constituted a 'rural renaissance' as commercial wealth created country estates for controlled access to social pursuits by élite families. Section III examines the designs of architects practising in north-east England during the eighteenth century, proposing that the martial history and cultural traditions of the region sustained the appeal of castellated and Roman architecture (as interpreted in the publications of Andrea Palladio) among its architectural patrons. The thesis concludes that

concentration upon London-based artist-architects has obscured the contribution to British architecture of provincial builder-architects and the varied cultural aspirations of their clients.

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## Abbreviations

Alnwick MSS	Duke of Northumberland's Archive, Alnwick Castle, Northumberland
CRO	Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle Castle
DRO	Durham Record Office, County Hall, Durham
DULASC	Durham University Library Archives and Special Collections, Palace Green, Durham
Freemasons	United Grand Lodge of England Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London
NPL	Newcastle Public Libraries, Local Studies Library
Northumberland Archives	Northumberland Archives, Woodhorn
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (online edition)
TWAM	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, Discovery Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne

## Terminology

Throughout this work Newcastle is used to denote Newcastle upon Tyne.

North East means the pre-1974 historic counties of Northumberland and Durham.

The term 'élite' is used to describe William Newton's client group. Élite is a contested word, sometimes used in self-justification and sometimes perjoratively. It is deeply contextualised, and its use here reflects the narrow focus of this research upon one individual and analysis of the world in which he lived. 'Élite' is recognition of the different economic and social grades within eighteenth-century British society. It is taken here to mean the very small percentage of people who held power and influence in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, specifically those who had the time and income to engage in the cultural activities of architecture and artistic appreciation. This group included landed aristocrats and gentry, and especially in the region's towns, the upper section of what historians have termed the 'middling sort', including merchants, professionals and families with a private income.<sup>1</sup> These individuals were able, through inheritance, rental income and fees for intellectual rather than manual work, to fund construction work on their own properties and on civic amenities such as churches, hospitals and entertainment spaces. They were able to afford some of the growing number of luxury goods and diversions including clubs, associations, subscription newsrooms and libraries, countryside activities such as hunting, to entertain their peers, and to demonstrate their wealth, taste and accomplishments. This is a widely-divergent group, including in the cast list dukes and duchesses, merchants, landed families of ancient lineage, clergymen and lawyers, and although their incomes were not comparable, and the influence they had varied, they still had incomes and some ability to improve upon what birth had given them, such as

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800*, (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1994).

voting rights for male members of this group, patronage either to influence elections or as churchwardens to promote the interests of their friends within a parish, or to loan money to others wishing to finance a business venture. They also shared some common values, including respect for education, authority and religion (usually Protestant), commercial enterprise, and of critical importance to this work, an appreciation of history and the philosophical heritage of classical Rome and Greece. All of these things were not shared by all at the same time, and this definition of élite is open to question in many ways, but the people mentioned in this work had more in common with each other than they had with the vast majority of their fellow-inhabitants of the British Isles in this period. For the majority, their lives were (as Hobbes noted in the preceding century) ‘poor, nasty, brutish, and short’.<sup>2</sup> In 1786, whilst the building committee of the new All Saints Church in Newcastle discussed whether or not to accept the mahogany offered for the new pews, tens of thousands of their fellow Novocastrians existed in squalid multi-occupancy tenements devoid of sunlight, water and sanitation in the narrow chares between the churchyard wall and the River Tyne. In these terms, those who rented their pews in the new church, danced in the Assembly Rooms, walked in the Forth gardens, or commissioned building work on their houses, were a world away from their fellow men and women; in this sense they were the ‘élite’.

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, (Printed for Andrew Crooke, at the Green Dragon in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1651), p. 113.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

‘All the World are running mad after building.’

Sir John Vanbrugh, 1708.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth century, the Crown, élite families, religious and local authorities and commercial organisations across Britain spent inestimable sums of money constructing new houses, churches, civic and leisure buildings, with an equally inestimable expenditure on remodelling earlier structures, ranging from complete interior replacement to the decoration of single rooms.<sup>2</sup> English towns were altered through the development of polite space, becoming arenas in which regional élites could shop, dance, converse and be entertained, in a process that Peter Borsay characterised as an ‘English urban renaissance’.<sup>3</sup> Ramshackle streets were re-aligned to create wide carriageways for vehicles, pavements laid to ensure that fine shoes would not be sullied by mud and filth. Shop-fronts were remodelled, with large windows displaying choice wares from the new manufacturing areas of Britain, imports from the growing Empire,

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley, “‘A Pleasure Not to be Envied’ The Building of the English Country House’, *History Today*, 51.7 (2001), 41-47.

<sup>2</sup> For discussion of expenditure on country houses see Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley, ‘How Much Did the English Country House Cost to Build, 1660-1880?’, *Economic History Review*, LII, 3 (1999), 436-468, (436). The economic basis of eighteenth-century building has been explored in Christopher W. Chalklin, *The Provincial Towns of Georgian England: A Study of the Building Process 1740-1820* (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), Chalklin, ‘The Financing of Church Building in the Provincial Towns of Eighteenth-Century England’ in *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns*, ed. by Peter Clark (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1984) and Chalklin, *English Counties and Public Building 1650-1830* (London: Hambledon Press, 1998). For examples of expenditure on urban improvements see Malcolm Falkus and E.L. Jones, ‘Urban Improvement and the English Economy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, in *The Eighteenth Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1688-1920*, ed. by Peter Borsay (Longman, 1990), pp. 150-99.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

and all manner of luxury goods and consumables to be acquired as signs of one's taste.<sup>4</sup> Theatres, assembly rooms, gardens and promenades were created in which the élite of society could enjoy each other's company, listen to music or lectures, dance, read the growing number of newspapers, enjoy plays performed by travelling theatre companies, conduct business, meet marriage partners, and above all be seen to be fully conversant members of the consumer society identified by McKendrick, Brewer and Plumb.<sup>5</sup>

Élite families returned to their homes in the newly-constructed squares and avenues of town-houses, often with private gardens, enclaves of respectability away from the hovels and tenements of the lower sorts of society. For the wealthier members of society, their town-house was merely a convenient resting place and more selective entertainment space to use when in town. During the summer months they could escape the heat and noise of the towns and stay in their country mansions.<sup>6</sup> These buildings, some of great age, some new, also demonstrated the cultural identities of their owners. Many were adapted to reflect new architectural tastes and incorporate novel features, such as sculpture galleries, billiard rooms, dressing rooms and water-closets, and more efficient cooking and domestic arrangements. Country houses were the focal points in private landscapes, remade to resemble the paintings of Poussin and Claude by landscape designers such as 'Capability' Brown.<sup>7</sup> To this end, rivers were diverted,

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<sup>4</sup> Rosemary Sweet, *The English Town 1680-1840: Government, Society and Culture* (Harlow: Longman for Pearson Education Ltd., 1999); *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain. Volume II 1540-1840*, ed. by Peter Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Christopher W. Chalklin, *The Rise of the English Town, 1650-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J.H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Within histories of the eighteenth century and in architectural history, country houses are often considered as entities of their own, whilst town houses are discussed within the urban history narrative. For country houses, see Christopher Christie, *The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester University Press, 2000) and for town houses see Rachel Stewart, *The Town House in Georgian London* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009); Christopher S. Sykes, *Private Palaces: Life in the Great London Houses* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1985). This division would not have been recognised in eighteenth-century Britain when most of the population still lived in the countryside and élite families moved between the two areas. This was addressed most effectively in M.H. Port, 'Town House and Country House: Their Interaction', in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), pp. 117-138.

<sup>7</sup> David Brown, 'Lancelot Brown and His Associates', *Garden History*, 29.1 (2001), 2-11.

lakes and ponds dug and entire villages demolished and resettled beyond park walls to complete the artifice.<sup>8</sup> The agriculture that sustained many of these houses was also transformed, as old farms in vernacular architectural styles were amalgamated into symmetrically-planned units of agrarian efficiency. New techniques of crop management and animal husbandry were introduced, and vast areas of moorland enclosed and brought into production.<sup>9</sup> These urban and rural homes were connected by an expanding number of well-built turnpike roads, providing rapid transport for people, produce and products.<sup>10</sup> In many areas canals were dug, facilitating the transport of cargoes too heavy for the roads, but bringing these goods into the centres of towns and cities where they were required.<sup>11</sup> This was the England that featured in contemporary descriptions by Daniel Defoe, Arthur Young and William Cobbett.<sup>12</sup> This thesis examines how these processes of urban and rural change occurred in north-east England. It proposes that a rural renaissance in the eighteenth century was funded by urban mercantile wealth, whilst (contrary to Borsay's hypothesis of an 'urban renaissance') the region's towns saw relatively little improvement until the nineteenth century.

An important strand of historical research over the past thirty years has been the growth of a historiography of consumption in eighteenth-century Britain, with detailed analysis of expenditure on the luxury products that were to be found in these élite

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<sup>8</sup> Christopher Taylor, *Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England* (London: George Philip, 1983), p. 209.

<sup>9</sup> John Martin Robinson, *Georgian Model Farms: A Study of Decorative and Model Farm Buildings in the Age of Improvement, 1700-1846* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

<sup>10</sup> William Albert, *The Turnpike Road System in England 1663-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

<sup>11</sup> Charles Hadfield, *British Canals: An Illustrated History* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1974); J. R. Ward, *The Finance of Canal Building in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974).

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, introduction by Pat Rogers, 3 vols (London: Folio Society, 1983); Arthur Young, *A Six Months Tour Through the North of England*, 4 vols (New York: A. M. Kelley, 1967); William Cobbett, *Rural Rides: In the Southern, Western and Eastern Counties of England, Together with Tours in Scotland and in the Northern and Midland Counties of England, and Letters from Ireland*, 3 vols (London: Peter Davies, 1930).

houses. Studies by Weatherill, Nenadic, Berry, and Vickery of inventories, estate and business papers, bank ledgers and shopping bills paint a vivid picture of the ‘polite and commercial people’ of eighteenth-century Britain, using artefacts as signals of status, wealth and owners' taste.<sup>13</sup> Architecture was also a major element in eighteenth-century culture, as the commercial and social ventures of the élite were enacted in a physical environment carefully and expensively created, adapted and replaced by craftsmen and architects as requirements evolved throughout the century.

However, buildings, like consumer possessions, were also loaded with symbolism and social and cultural meanings.<sup>14</sup> Though élite architecture is often mentioned in analyses of Georgian Britain, detailed study of buildings as a form of historical evidence has been mainly the preserve of art historians or architectural historians assessing aesthetic features. When building work is cited, it is often in connection with Borsay's ‘urban renaissance’ theory, noting (for example) the appearance of brick-built terraces in provincial towns. There has been comparatively little examination of building as an activity governed as much by economic prosperity and social and cultural change as the artworks, furniture, clothing and food that filled élite houses. To some extent the focus on the contents of houses is understandable, as the viewer tends to look at the picture, not the frame, even though the frame may have cost many times that of its contents. Décor also provided a more adaptable and

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<sup>13</sup> Examples of the insight these sources can offer include Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 1996); Lorna Scammell, ‘Was the North-East Different From Other Areas? The Property of Everyday Consumption in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries’ in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 12-23; Stana Nenadic, ‘Middle-Rank Consumers and Domestic Culture in Edinburgh and Glasgow 1720-1840’, *Past & Present*, 145 (1994), 122-156; Helen Berry, ‘Polite Consumption: Shopping in Eighteenth-Century England’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*; 12.1 (2002), 375-394; Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783*. The New Oxford History of England (Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>14</sup> John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988). For example, the religious iconography incorporated by John Wood in the buildings of Bath has been noted, see Peter Borsay, ‘New Approaches to Social History. Myth, Memory, and Place: Monmouth and Bath 1750-1900’, *Journal of Social History*, 39.3 (2006), 867-889.

responsive means to embrace fashions than the more permanent building that might be unchanged for several generations. However, travel diaries of the eighteenth century make it clear that the ‘frame’ was not to be ignored.<sup>15</sup> A fashionable building would invite approbation and prepared the viewer for delights within, hence the ‘madness’ for building alluded to in the epigraph by Sir John Vanbrugh, a man whose lavish ‘frames’ often overwhelmed their human and material contents.

As well as these economic and cultural developments, this thesis examines the practice of architecture as an example of social change during the eighteenth century, a period in which it changed from a craft vocation and gentlemen’s hobby to become an intellectual occupation for educated and relatively wealthy middling individuals, who increasingly viewed their work as a profession alongside the more established professions, such as law and medicine.<sup>16</sup> In 1700, there was little consensus about what was meant by the term architect and how this differed from other terms, including builder, surveyor and engineer. In many cases a combination of educated clients wishing to emulate their peers, the widespread availability of pattern books and experienced local building craftsmen were responsible for the construction of fashionable houses and public buildings. By 1800, however, there was a growing expectation that for public works such as government and ecclesiastical buildings, and for large private houses, clients would employ a professional architect to draw up plans and supervise construction.<sup>17</sup> The building industry was no longer dominated by craft-

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<sup>15</sup> Alnwick MSS, Diaries of the 1<sup>st</sup> Duchess of Northumberland 1752-63, 121/62; John Byng, *Byng’s Tours: The Journals of The Hon. John Byng 1781-1792*, ed. by David Souden (London: Random Century Ltd, 1991); Richard Wilson, ‘Novelty and Amusement? Visiting the Georgian Country House’, *The Historian*, (Summer 2001), 4-9; Dana Arnold, ‘The Country House and its Publics’ in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998), pp. 20-42.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Saint, *The Image of the Architect* (New Haven and London; Yale University Press, 1983), p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> Frank Jenkins, *Architect and Patron: A Survey of Professional Relations and Practice in England From the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 48; Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* 4<sup>th</sup> ed (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 15.

trained artisans and artistic patrons, but by middling professionals increasingly vocal in their disdain for those with manual skills and drawing upon an aesthetic education to underpin their expertise.

The development of the professional architect in eighteenth-century Britain mirrored developments in other occupations, as new professions emerged alongside the established vocations of law, medicine and the clergy.<sup>18</sup> Previous research into the development of the English architectural profession identified key individuals, including Robert Smythson, Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren and Sir John Soane, as defining a new approach to architecture distinct from that of the craft guilds that dominated architecture throughout the medieval period.<sup>19</sup> Design skills were seen as the chief characteristic of the professional architect, skills derived from classically-grounded education (often including a Grand Tour or study in Europe) which craftsmen did not have, and which could also overcome the higher social status of aristocratic and genteel patrons (traditionally leaders of architectural taste) by emphasising the superiority of architects' designs. This thesis will explore the development of the professional architect in the eighteenth century, firstly in the national context of increasing professionalism, in order to establish the defining characteristics of professions, and then examining how deeply this change in roles within the building world was accepted at local level.

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<sup>18</sup> A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933); Wilfred R. Prest, *The Professions in Early Modern England*. (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 16; Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), p.7; Geoffrey Millerson, *The Qualifying Professions: A Study in Professionalization* (London: Routledge, 1964), p. 4; Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London: Routledge, 1995); Rosemary O'Day, *The Professions in Early Modern England, 1450-1800: Servants of the Commonwealth* (Harlow: Longman, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> Barrington Kaye, *The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain: A Sociological Study* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1960), p. 12; Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*; John Wilton-Ely, 'The Professional Architect in England', in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. by Spiro Kostof (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp.180-208.

Much of the research into eighteenth-century architectural history has hitherto focused upon what may be termed ‘national’ architects: those men, based in London, who were able to influence élite taste and attract clients from across Britain. There are many monographs devoted to Sir Christopher Wren, Sir John Vanbrugh, Lord Burlington, William Kent, Robert Adam and Sir John Soane, whilst Sir William Chambers, James Wyatt, James Paine and Sir Robert Taylor have had published biographies available for some time.<sup>20</sup> Each has extensive entries in Colvin’s *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects* and in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and many articles investigating and re-assessing their work.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the frequency with which their influence in British architecture is cited, Vanbrugh, Paine, Taylor, Adam and Wyatt did not design all of the thousands of country and town houses, churches, civic buildings and polite spaces for élite entertainment that were erected throughout Britain in the eighteenth century. Even when one of these illustrious names can be confirmed as the designer, investigation often reveals a rather detached connection to the creation of the building. Vanbrugh, for example, made short visits to the North East in 1720 and in 1721, meeting potential clients and Admiral Delaval, for whom he had designed a new house, Seaton Delaval Hall on the Northumberland coast, under construction from 1718 to 1728.<sup>22</sup> Vanbrugh

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<sup>20</sup> Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale: The Outstanding Career of Sir Christopher Wren* (London: Harper Collins, 2002); G. W. Beard, and A. F. Kersting, *The Work of John Vanbrugh* (London: Batsford, 1986); Kerry Downes, *Sir John Vanbrugh: A Biography* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1987); Vaughan Hart, *Sir John Vanbrugh: Storyteller in Stone* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008); John Wilton-Ely, *Apollo of the Arts: Lord Burlington and His Circle* (Nottingham: Nottingham University Art Gallery, 1973); J. Clark, and T. C. Barnard, *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life* (London: Hambledon, 1995); Timothy Mowl, *William Kent: Architect, Designer, Opportunist* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2006); G. W. Beard and R. Adam, *The Work of Robert Adam*. (Edinburgh: J. Bartholomew, 1978); Roderick Graham, *Arbiter of Elegance: A Biography of Robert Adam* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009); A. Dale, *James Wyatt*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956); Gillian Darley, *John Soane: An Accidental Romantic* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999); Marcus Binney, *Sir Robert Taylor: From Rococo to Neoclassicism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1984).

<sup>21</sup> Comprehensive bibliographies of books and articles for these men appear in their entries in Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2008), with additional material in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edn.

<sup>22</sup> Downes, *Sir John Vanbrugh*, p. and p.

returned to the region a final time in August 1724, meeting his clerk of works William Etty at Seaton when the house had been roofed.<sup>23</sup> His principal communication with the Admiral and with the builders constructing the new house was by letter. Neither Vanbrugh, nor Delaval, lived to see the house completed. Vanbrugh may have designed Seaton Delaval Hall, but he did not build it. Similarly, Robert Adam dispensed his stylistic genius in beautifully-drawn and coloured images to clients across Britain from his offices in London. Colvin suggested that it was accepted that an architect would visit a site ‘at least once a year’, so for much of the year the architect was not on hand to supervise the quality of building and resolve any problems that might occur.<sup>24</sup> Others had to be on site, ensuring that the many craftsmen, whom Mrs Montagu called a ‘regiment of artificers’, kept to the schedule and costs, and soothed the client’s worries.<sup>25</sup> Adam employed John Paterson in Edinburgh and James Nisbet in the Scottish Borders, both capable architects who also designed buildings for other clients, to be his executant architects.<sup>26</sup>

It is suggested in this thesis that there is something missing in this narrative of élite architecture, namely those who were on site to turn the drawings of these London-based designers into buildings, and who were responsible for designing the thousands of other country and town houses, civic buildings and churches that appeared in eighteenth-century Britain, without the imprimatur of leading architects, but in the latest manifestations of élite taste. Leading architects, including Robert Adam and James Paine, described themselves as ‘artists’, and historians have accepted this self-

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<sup>23</sup> Downes, *Vanbrugh*, pp. 456-459.

<sup>24</sup> Howard Colvin, ‘Architect and Client in Georgian England’ in *Essays in English Architectural History* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1999), p. 269.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Mrs Montagu to the Duchess of Portland, 20 July 1779: ‘Mr Adam came at the head of a regiment of artificers an hour after the time he had promised’. Cited in Geoffrey Beard, *The Work of Robert Adam* (Edinburgh: J. Bartholomew, 1978), p. 23. Note that Adam’s reputation was such that he could arrive late and still gain admittance.

<sup>26</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*, p. 750 and p. 785.

designation as artist-architects.<sup>27</sup> The others are sometimes given the second-rate designations of ‘provincial architect’, ‘builder-architect’, ‘builder’, ‘artisan’ or ‘craftsman’.<sup>28</sup> This thesis proposes that these provincial practitioners were an essential factor in the architectural history of Britain, providing the practical skills of supervision, knowledge of materials and construction techniques that were essential in creating elite buildings. They were also critical agents in the diffusion of new national tastes in provincial Britain, whilst their activities were a significant aspect of the British economy. They formed a little-mentioned transitional stage in the development of the professional architect in Britain, one that challenged those seeking to create an occupation for upper middling men by excluding those from craft origins. As demonstrated below, these men often began their careers as craftsmen in one trade, but through experience (sometimes working on buildings designed by leading architects) they gained the ability to supervise all trades involved in construction, and to produce designs themselves for clients in their local area. If their designs were not as innovative as those of leading architects, the latter’s relative inattentiveness to specific projects provided opportunities for provincial builders to demonstrate other skills, including supervision of building from design to completion, and the ability to adapt fashionable designs to the patron’s finances. Many builders enhanced their social status by assuming the title of architect themselves. A welcome development of the last twenty years has been the publication of biographies of several provincial architects, including John Carr (perhaps the best-known of provincial practitioners), John Johnson, Thomas Harrison and Joseph Pickford, to address this gap in the received narrative of architectural

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<sup>27</sup> Robert Adam and James Adam, *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam* (London, 1778), p. 2; James Paine, *Plans, Elevations and Sections, of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses, and also of Stabling, Bridges, Public and Private, Temples and Other Garden Buildings* (London, 1767), p. ii.

<sup>28</sup> Giles Worsley described David Stephenson as ‘the leading master builder’ in Newcastle when John Dobson began his pupillage with Stephenson in 1803, and that after his London training Dobson ‘found it difficult to establish himself as an architect rather than as a master builder like Stephenson’ (Giles Worsley, *Architectural Drawings of the Regency Period* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd, 1991), p. 6 and p. 19). However, Stephenson had attended the Royal Academy in 1782 so was not simply a master builder in the traditional meaning. Contemporaries called Stephenson ‘architect’, as can be seen in the dedication stone of All Saints Church, Newcastle upon Tyne.

history, though it should be noted that these are only a small number of the many practitioners who were responsible for the building of Georgian England.<sup>29</sup>

Contrary to historians' emphasis upon design skills as the key characteristic of the architectural profession that emerged in the eighteenth century, this thesis proposes that patronage and a strong local economy were critical features of provincial architects' success, especially in the transition of craft practitioners to professional status. By exploiting their clients' family, business, political and social connections, provincial architects created patronage networks that they could draw upon to obtain building commissions and exclude rivals from outside their areas. These networks were local rather than national. It is suggested here that it was the decline in the influence of patronage through greater competition and better training from the last quarter of the eighteenth century that created an alternative means of gaining respect for professional architects. At the same time, patronage could only deliver commissions if clients had steady incomes to expend on new buildings and refurbishment of older properties. This thesis proposes that design ability and supportive patrons had to be matched to regional prosperity if the provincial architect was to have a career. Furthermore, architects had to produce buildings that appealed to the taste of clients and matched the ideals and identities that clients sought to display. For example, whilst many Home Counties English clients of the 1660s built compact 'double pile' houses in the style of Coleshill House in Berkshire, Scottish patrons were still building houses derived from the medieval castles and tower-houses, such as Drumlanrig Castle in Dumfriesshire, built between 1675 and 1689.<sup>30</sup> The houses contained the same elite rooms (hall, saloon,

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<sup>29</sup> Brian Wragg, *The Life and Works of John Carr of York*, ed. by Giles Worsley (York: Oblong, 2000); Briggs, Nancy, *John Johnson 1732-1814: Georgian Architect and County Surveyor of Essex* (Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 1991); Edward Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993); John Champness, *Thomas Harrison: Georgian Architect of Chester and Lancaster 1744-1829* (Lancaster: Centre for North West Regional Studies, University of Lancaster, 2005).

<sup>30</sup> Sir John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (London: Penguin Books, 1953), p. 94, defined 'double pile' as 'a simple rectangular block divided down its length by a corridor, with important

dining room, bedrooms) but their appearance and the cultural antecedents from which they emerged were very different, factors which had to be recognised by any architect practising across the Anglo-Scottish border (supposedly rendered irrelevant by the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660). It is suggested in this thesis that the adoption of architectural styles throughout Britain in the eighteenth century was dependent upon a shared cultural identity or taste, but this was not always exclusive of other identities that were displayed through architecture, as witnessed by the continued appeal of castellated architecture to many Scottish and northern English clients.

These themes of professionalism, patronage, economic prosperity and taste require a focus for analysis and this thesis will examine these developments in the context of north-east England. The North East was selected for this thesis as an area geographically remote from London (where leading architects were based), with a distinctive economy dominated by the coal trade and other industries rather than agriculture, with many previously-neglected examples of eighteenth-century architecture and with rich archival sources surviving to support new research. Some aspects of the architectural history of the North East have been analysed extensively. There are many publications examining the region's medieval castles, tower houses, and unique defensible structures called bastles.<sup>31</sup> As in the wider sphere of 'castle studies', analysis has turned in recent years from discussion of these castles' military role and defensive capabilities to study of these élite buildings in their landscape context.<sup>32</sup> For

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rooms either side of it'. For Coleshill House see pp. 93-95 and plate 51A; for Drumlanrig Castle see p. 334 and plate 189B.

<sup>31</sup> Anthony Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300-1500. Volume 1: North East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); John F. Dodds, *Bastions and Belligerents: Medieval Strongholds in Northumberland* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Keepgate Publishing, 1999); Mike Salter, *The Castles and Tower Houses of Northumberland* (Malvern: Folly Publications, 1997); T.H. Rowland, *Medieval Castles, Towers, Peles and Bastles of Northumberland* (Warkworth: Sandhill Press, 1987).

<sup>32</sup> For these revisionist studies of castles, see Oliver H. Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes: Power, Community and Fortification in Medieval England* (London: Continuum, 2002); Robert Liddiard, *Castles in Context: Power, Symbolism and Landscape, 1066-1500* (Macclesfield: Windgather Press, 2005);

example, recent research on Dunstanburgh Castle on the Northumberland coast has shown that it stood in a landscape as symbolic, demonstrative and man-made as those created by Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton in the pursuit of arcadia around eighteenth-century country houses.<sup>33</sup> The late-Georgian and Victorian buildings of Newcastle, commonly called ‘Graingertown’ have also received attention.<sup>34</sup> Eighteenth-century work in the North East by leading architects such as Vanbrugh, Garrett, Paine, Adam and Wyatt is often noted in general histories of the period, but it is suggested in this thesis that much of its élite architecture, particularly its country houses, is little-researched and little-known even in the region. For example, Wallington Hall and Belsay Hall (Northumberland, 20 miles north-west of Newcastle upon Tyne) are frequently cited, but neighbouring houses such as Little Harle Tower, Woolsington Hall, Dissington Hall and Eachwick Hall are rarely mentioned.<sup>35</sup>

Matthew Johnson noted that ‘It is striking that historians of the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see “their” century as the one when domestic interiors were transformed’.<sup>36</sup> This is a reminder that although historians may specialise in specific historical periods, buildings are a form of evidence that challenge such periodisation. This is particularly true of churches and the élite architecture whose production is the subject of this thesis. These buildings were designed for a set of functions and cultural meanings, but were adapted over subsequent centuries as requirements developed. They embodied several phases of meanings to those who lived

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Matthew Johnson, *Beyond the Castle Gate: From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 2002). For a contrary view, see Colin Platt, ‘Revisionism in Castle Studies: A Caution’, *Medieval Archaeology*, 51 (2007), 83-102.

<sup>33</sup> Jeremy Ashbee, ‘Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, and the Great Gatehouse of Dunstanburgh Castle’, *English Heritage Historical Review*, 1 (1996), 29-35.

<sup>34</sup> Lyall Wilkes and Gordon Dodds, *Tyneside Classical: The Newcastle of Grainger, Dobson & Clayton* (London: J. Murray, 1964); Thomas E. Faulkner, Peter Beacock and Paul Jones, *Newcastle and Gateshead: Architecture and Heritage* (Liverpool: Blue Coats Press, 2006); David Lovie, *The Buildings of Grainger Town: Four Townscape Walks Around Newcastle* (Newcastle upon Tyne: North East Environmental Education Forum, 1997).

<sup>35</sup> These are noted in John Grundy, Grace McCombie, Peter Ryder and Humphrey Welfare, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

<sup>36</sup> Matthew Johnson, *An Archaeology of Capitalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 170.

in and observed them, denoting different identities and cultural allegiances. As will be noted below, many north-east buildings are palimpsests, with evidence of work from medieval to Victorian periods. These north-east buildings challenge the single-build examples of architectural styles that appear in standard histories.<sup>37</sup> In particular, the combining of classical and Gothic features in the same building, seen in several élite houses, is explored in this thesis as a deliberate allusion to the Roman and medieval heritage of the North East, and the role of its principal inhabitants in resisting invaders from beyond the border.

This layering of identities conflicts with much of the literature on architectural history. Leading architects such as Vanbrugh, Adam, Chambers and Wyatt were based in London, and much of the succeeding centuries of architectural history was written from this perspective. Sir John Summerson's influential and frequently-cited *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* was written almost entirely about south-east England.<sup>38</sup> His progressive narrative of castle abandonment in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and their replacement by comfortable residences with symmetrical façades has little relevance in large areas of England such as the Welsh borders, the North West, and the North East of England, and not at all in Scotland and Ireland. Many landowners in these areas continued to live in buildings designed originally for defence in the centuries of Border warfare up to 1603, with more domestic buildings attached in later centuries. Although works by Gomme and Maguire and Cooper illustrated several new buildings erected in the North East, such as Gainford Hall (County Durham) and Capheaton Hall (Northumberland), they say little about houses that retained medieval

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<sup>37</sup> For example, James Lees-Milne, *English Country Houses: Baroque, 1685-1715* (London: Published for Country Life Books by Hamlyn Publishing, c1970); Christopher Hussey, *English Country Houses: Early Georgian, 1715-1760* (London: Country Life, 1955), *English Country Houses: Mid-Georgian, 1760-1800* (London: Country Life, 1956) and *English Country Houses: Late Georgian, 1800-1840* (London: Country Life, 1958).

<sup>38</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, p. 104. For example, two centuries of Scottish architecture were relegated to an eleven page appendix, whilst Wales and Ireland were omitted altogether, except to mention buildings that he deemed replicating English developments.

towers, perhaps because such complexes do not fit into their narrative of building development.<sup>39</sup> It will be suggested in this thesis that in many instances the retention and replication of castellated buildings in Scotland, northern England and the Welsh border counties was a deliberate decision emphasising families' lineage and regional identity, with their alignment to national, classically-influenced tastes indicated by added structures and refitted interiors.

This thesis proposes that the focus upon individual London-based designers has obscured the activities of other practitioners, and the principal aim of this research is to examine the development and influence of the provincial architect in eighteenth-century Britain, those who until relatively recently were dismissed (if mentioned at all) in general architectural histories with a few lines, often noting how inadequate their work was in comparison to that of the London colossi. Sir John Summerson defined their work in the seventeenth century as 'artisan mannerism', and historians of eighteenth-century architectural practice continued to suggest that London-based architects were innately superior to provincial practitioners.<sup>40</sup> This thesis will analyse the eighteenth-century architecture of the North East in an attempt to bridge the gap in previous research between Adrian Green's investigation of building in the region from 1660 to 1730, and the extensive work on nineteenth-century architecture, including biographies of John Dobson (1787-1865) and Richard Grainger (1797-1861).<sup>41</sup> Fortuitously, one

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<sup>39</sup> The period from 1500 to 1700 in which this transition in north-east architecture occurred has been addressed nationally in Gomme and Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House* and Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry, 1480-1680* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>40</sup> Writing about the 1790s alterations to Capheaton Hall, Northumberland, Nicholas Cooper ('Capheaton' in Hugh Dixon and Peter Leach, *Annual Conference Tour of Northumberland, Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain*, (1997), p. 46) claimed these were designed by John Tasker of London, rather than William Newton of Newcastle, the architect who was paid for designing the alterations and who carried out the work. Cooper wrote that that 'an architect with a wider reputation was to be preferred to a local contractor-designer, however competent.' Colvin (*Biographical Dictionary*, p. 1015 for Tasker and pp. 744-745 for Newton) noted ten building commissions for Tasker, and twenty-four for Newton, whilst this thesis has identified many other definite and attributable works for Newton (see Appendix 2).

<sup>41</sup> Adrian G. Green, 'Houses and Households in County Durham and Newcastle c.1570-1730.' Unpublished PhD thesis. Durham University, 2000; Adrian G. Green, 'Houses in North-Eastern England: Regionality and the British Beyond C.1600-1750', in *Archaeologies of the British: Explorations of Identity in Great Britain and Its Colonies, 1600-1945*, ed. by Susan Lawrence (London, 2003), pp. 55-75.

individual bridged not only this time frame, but also the transition between the traditional craft and patron model of élite architecture and the modern dominance of the professional architect, independent of craft and client: William Newton (1730-1798).

William Newton was a native of Newcastle upon Tyne and established himself as the leading architect in north-east England in the last three decades of the eighteenth century. He came to the present author's attention through the 1992 edition of Pevsner's *Buildings of England: Northumberland*, as a name associated with many country houses and churches in the county but with little information about his origins and extent of his practice.<sup>42</sup> Newton received no mention in general architectural histories of the eighteenth century.<sup>43</sup> Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary* noted a similar number of commissions to Pevsner, whilst articles by Phoebe Lowery and Margaret Wills provided more information.<sup>44</sup> The catalogue for the Laing Art Gallery's *Tyneside Classical Tradition* exhibition in 1980 placed Newton in the wider context of classical style building in the region.<sup>45</sup> Research by Thomas Faulkner and Helen Berry has added further to an understanding of Newton's place in the architectural history of north-east England, but this thesis is the first attempt to investigate the whole of Newton's career from teenage joiner to 'eminent architect'.<sup>46</sup> It became apparent during research for this thesis that Newton's hitherto-neglected formative years in the 1740s and 1750s were

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Thomas E. Faulkner and Andrew Greg, *John Dobson: Architect of the North East*. Rev. edn. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Tyne Bridge, 2001); David Lovie, *The Buildings of Grainger Town: Four Townscape Walks Around Newcastle* (Newcastle upon Tyne: North East Environmental Education Forum, 1997); Ian Ayris, *A City of Palaces: Richard Grainger and the Making of Newcastle Upon Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle Libraries & Information Service, 1997).

<sup>42</sup> Grundy et al., *Northumberland*.

<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, the existence of a London architect also called William Newton also confused matters, with some commentators on the work of William Newton of Newcastle assuming that he was William Newton of London, see for example C.M. Vivian-Neal, 'Backworth Hall', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1933), 124-125.

<sup>44</sup> Margaret Wills, 'William Newton – An Elusive Architect', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, XXXVI (2006), 275-308; , Phoebe Lowery, 'William Newton – An Eminent Architect?' *Northern Architect*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 1 (Winter 1994/5), 15-17.

<sup>45</sup> *The Tyneside Classical Tradition: Classical Architecture in the North East, 1700-1850* (Tyne and Wear County Council Museums, 1980. Published to accompany the Exhibition Held in the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, 5 July – 17 August 1980).

<sup>46</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (eds.), *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 113 and 211.

critical to understanding his later success and his eminent position compared to younger practitioners in the final decades of the eighteenth century, despite the latter having the key professional characteristics of London training, European travel experience and the latest neo-classical designs.

One of the major impediments to this research was the absence of Newton's business papers, and those of many of his contemporaries. The papers of other north-east architects, including David Stephenson, John Dobson and Richard Grainger have also disappeared. However, biographers of Dobson and Grainger have recovered much of their careers from contemporary sources and documents in the family, estate and institutional papers of their clients, and this was the methodology followed in this thesis. A full outline of the methodology used to reconstruct William Newton's career is given in Appendix I.

This thesis reveals that, whilst a teenager, William Newton worked as a joiner with his father Robert (c. 1703-1789) on buildings designed by Lord Burlington's associate Daniel Garrett, including Fenham Hall (Newcastle upon Tyne, constructed 1743 to 1748) and Nunwick Hall (Northumberland, constructed 1750 to 1765).<sup>47</sup> Garrett's designs were based upon those of Andrea Palladio, the sixteenth-century Italian architect identified by Lord Burlington as the guiding star to remodel British architectural taste upon that of Ancient Rome. Palladio continued to influence designs by William Newton up until his death in 1798, influence that can also be seen in the

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<sup>47</sup> Peter Leach, 'Designs from a Practical Man, the Architecture of Daniel Garrett (1)', *Country Life*, 12 September 1974, pp. 694-697; Peter Leach, 'A Pioneer of Rococo Decoration. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (2)', *Country Life*, 19 September 1974, pp. 766-769; Peter Leach, 'In the Gothick Vein. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (3)', *Country Life*, 26 September 1974, pp. 834-837; Wilton-Ely, John, *Apollo of the Arts: Lord Burlington and His Circle*. Introduction by John Wilton-Ely. (Nottingham: Nottingham University Art Gallery, 1973); Rudolf Wittkower, *Palladio and Palladianism* (New York: G. Braziller, 1974); *Lord Burlington and His Circle: Papers Given at a Georgian Group Symposium at the Victoria and Albert Museum on the 22nd May 1982* (London: Georgian Group, 1982); John Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994).

work of Newton's contemporary rival provincial architects such as John Carr and Joseph Pickford.<sup>48</sup>

This thesis suggests that Newton's early commissions were critical in forming his client network, particularly the association with the Ords of Fenham Hall and their family, social, economic and judicial connections. Perhaps the most important commission was Robert Newton's appointment as Inspector, or executant architect, constructing the Newcastle Infirmary (1751-1753) to Garrett's designs.<sup>49</sup> William Newton worked as his father's assistant at the Infirmary.<sup>50</sup> This brought contacts with the élite sponsors of the Infirmary, leading to private commissions throughout the 1750s and 1760s for William Newton and facilitating his transition from provincial craftsman to architect. By 1774 Newton's pre-eminent position in the architectural life of the North East was confirmed and reified by his selection to design the foremost élite social space in the North East, the Newcastle Assembly Rooms, constructed 1774-1776. It will be demonstrated in this thesis that the Assembly Rooms commission expanded Newton's client network and brought more private and institutional commissions up until his death in 1798.

As well as bringing new discoveries on Newton's life and works to view, a key aim of this research has been to reveal as much of Newton's client network as possible, to demonstrate that the received narrative of eighteenth-century architecture nationally requires greater emphasis on the activities of rival provincial practitioners, their origins, capabilities, and the society, culture and economy in which they operated. This is particularly true of the North East, where John Dobson's version of the development of

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<sup>48</sup> Wragg, *John Carr of York*; Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby*.

<sup>49</sup> Margaret Wills, 'One of Its Kind: The Newcastle Infirmary', *Country Life*, 10 October 1991, p. 124. Although Wills noted that Garrett designed the Newcastle Infirmary she did not explore the choice of Robert Newton as Inspector of building work.

<sup>50</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1, Newcastle Infirmary collection: House committee minutes 1751-1753.

the architectural professional with himself in the starring role has held sway, to the detriment of many earlier architects and his contemporaries.<sup>51</sup>

Newton provides a valuable case study for analysing several themes in the history of eighteenth-century Britain. He was a provincial craftsman who became a professional architect, providing designs for the regional élite in styles employed throughout Britain. Critical questions addressed in this thesis are how provincial practitioners acquired knowledge of new styles and the extent to which architectural styles originated in London and were adopted by provincial élites through processes of emulation. As noted earlier, the ‘London origin’ model is an established part of architectural history, but it is questionable how accurate are Peter Borsay’s suggestion of a ‘London diffusion’ model of stylistic transfer to the provinces, or Dror Wahrman’s assertion that provincial élites had to choose between national culture and provincial culture.<sup>52</sup> Newton’s work and his client network provide an opportunity to assess these claims about the origins of architectural styles in provincial Britain and examine whether there were regional differences.

This thesis also proposes that a key determinant of stylistic conformity and success as an architect was economic stability. North-east England provides a context for analysing this hypothesis, as its economic and social history has been extensively and expertly analysed.<sup>53</sup> Despite many centuries of cross-border warfare, during the

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<sup>51</sup> Faulkner and Greg, *John Dobson*, p. 15; Lyall Wilkes, *John Dobson: Architect and Landscape Gardener* (Stocksfield: Oriel Press, 1980), pp. 99-110.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Borsay, ‘The London Connection: Cultural Diffusion and the Eighteenth-Century Provincial Town’, *London Journal*, 19.1 (1994), 21-35; Dror Wahrman, ‘National Society, Communal Culture: An Argument About the Recent Historiography of Eighteenth-Century Britain’, *Social History*, 17.1 (January 1992), 43-72.

<sup>53</sup> The economic history of north-east England has been expertly revealed in Norman McCord, *North East England: The Region’s Development 1760-1960* (London: Batsford, 1979); Joyce Ellis, ‘The ‘Black Indies: Economic Development of Newcastle, c.1700-1840’, in *Newcastle upon Tyne: A Modern History*, ed. by Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster, (Chichester: Phillimore, 2001), pp. 1-26; Edward Hughes, *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North East 1700-1750* (Oxford University Press, 1952); David Levine and Keith Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society: Whickham 1560-1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). For specific north-east industries see John Ulric Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, 2 vols. (London: G. Routledge & Sons Ltd, 1932); Joyce Ellis, ‘A Bold

eighteenth century a sustained period of political settlement meant that the north-east economy was able to provide its élite with reliable incomes for travel and expenditure on building work and consumer products. The region's economy was distinct from that of other areas of Britain, as incomes from coal and lead mining and related industries including glass, iron and chemicals, rather than agricultural profits, formed the major source of élite wealth.<sup>54</sup> A key hypothesis of this thesis is that the North East also experienced the benefits of agricultural improvement, but these were in many instances funded by mercantile and industrial success of urban élites who transformed wild and unproductive rural areas.<sup>55</sup> This created a 'rural renaissance' in north-east England, whilst (*contra* Borsay), many of the region's towns experienced little of the frequently-cited 'urban renaissance' as élite wealth was diverted to create exclusive rural enclaves in country houses and their estates.<sup>56</sup>

Section One of this thesis explores the establishment of the professional architect in Britain. It places this in the wider context of eighteenth-century developments in society and economy, as technological and financial advances demanded specialists able to

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Adventurer: The Business Fortunes of William Cotesworth, c.1668-1726', *Northern History*, 17 (1981), 117-32; Ernest Manns, *Carrying Coals to Dunston: Coal and the Railway* (Usk: Oakwood Press, 2000); Andy Guy, *Steam and Speed: Railways of Tyne and Wear from the Earliest Days* (Newcastle: Tyne Bridge Publishing, 2003); G. Bennett, E. Clavering and A. Rounding, *A Fighting Trade: Rail Transport in Tyne Coal 1600-1800* (Gateshead: Portcullis Press, 1990); Les Turnbull, *The History of Lead Mining in the North East of England* (Newcastle: Harold Hill, 1975); Roger Burt, *The British Lead Mining Industry* (Redruth: Dyllansow Truran, 1984); David Dougan, *The History of North East Shipbuilding* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1968); J. F. Clarke, *Building Ships on the North East Coast: A Labour of Love, Risk and Pain. Part 1. c. 1640-1914*, (Whitley Bay: Bewick Press, 1997).

<sup>54</sup> Dana Arnold, 'Living off the Land: Innovations in Farming Practice and Farm Design' in Dana Arnold, *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), pp. 152-166; Christopher Christie, *The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester University Press, 2000), chapter 1.

<sup>55</sup> S.A. Caunce, 'Agriculture in North-Eastern England, 1750-1914: Relic, Parasite or a Key Part of the Development?' in Faulkner, Berry and Gregory (eds.) *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, pp. 53-68; D.J. Rowe, 'The Culleys, Northumberland Farmers, 1767-1813', *Agricultural History Review*, 19 (1971), 156-174; A.W. Purdue, 'The Landed Estate and the Making of the Northumberland Landscape, 1700-1914' in Faulkner, Berry and Gregory (eds.) *Northern Landscapes*, pp. 41-52.

<sup>56</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770*. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989).

provide expertise as civil engineers, surveyors, bankers, midwives and surgeons, as well as architects. Chapter 2 examines the characteristics of these nascent professions, which sought recognition alongside the established professions of law, medicine and the church. Implicit in the drive to achieve professional recognition was social mobility, a contested process, particularly in the case of architects, who had to overcome aristocratic amateurs and artisan building experience to assert their skill as designers. A key attribute of many professions was the exclusive application of a body of knowledge, and leading artist-architects built their reputations upon their innovative designs. They sought to persuade potential clients that as artists they held a higher status than master-craftsmen or builder-architects, who could also design buildings. Chapter 3 assesses the work of these provincial builder-architects as challengers to the designer-architect. By defining themselves as designers distinct from the building trades, artist-architects relied upon others to turn their drawings into buildings, but these others, building craftsmen, were in many instances able to design and construct buildings without reference to a leading designer-architect. Some of these craftsmen were able to establish themselves as architects, though none were the leading innovators in architectural design. However, this chapter proposes that many clients did not want innovative design, but careful management of their financial investment in building by experienced craftsmen. This provided opportunities for social mobility for capable artisans to establish themselves as architects specialising in supervision and construction management, especially in the provinces at a time when leading artist-architects congregated in London seeking lucrative work from aristocrats and the wealthiest Britons. The careers of the Newcastle architect William Newton and his contemporaries in other provinces, including John Carr of York, Joseph Pickford of Derby and Anthony Keck of Gloucester, will be case studies to test this hypothesis of local reputation for reliability over design innovation.

Chapter 4 examines the hypothesis that a further critical factor in determining success for provincial builder-architects was their extensive network of social and business contacts among gentry and mercantile élites, who were able to use their judicial, political and social positions to ensure provincial architects gained building commissions. This chapter will draw upon new research to establish the extent of William Newton's practice, derived from a wide range of published sources and unpublished archival material located in record offices and private collections and represented in the catalogue of Newton's works in Appendix 2. As well as identifying buildings which could be analysed as evidence of architectural styles and economic aspects of building, the chapter demonstrates how Newton's client network provided a unique view of the family, business, social and political connections within the north-east élite.

Section Two considers the means through which building work was funded in the North East and the location of architects' work. Chapter 5 analyses the sources of élite wealth in north-east England, highlighting the long-term economic stability provided by coal and lead exports. These supported related industries of iron, glass, chemical and pottery production, and shipbuilding. Civil engineering projects constructed and maintained wagonways, ports and roads. A thriving import trade brought consumables and luxury goods into the region and provided incomes for a growing number of merchants and retailers. This economy required new professionals to provide specialist services, including banking and finance for the enormous investment required in extractive industries, engineers and surveyors for civil engineering, and critically for this thesis, architects to design buildings for industry, commerce, accommodation and élite enjoyment. Some previous authors have focused upon the coal industry and upon urban development, for instance seeking to prove the relevance of Borsay's 'urban renaissance' hypothesis to provincial towns in the region. In Chapter 6 this thesis

proposes that this previous focus, particularly to the economic dominance of Newcastle upon Tyne, has marginalised or omitted the continuing importance of the rural economy in the region. It will be shown that relatively little evidence exists in the built environment of the region's towns to support the key tenets of Borsay's theory (replanning of town layouts to encourage elite expenditure and leisure and municipal leadership of cultural enhancements). The chapter advances the alternative hypothesis that much of the wealth generated by the regional elite was diverted to industry, infrastructure and rural improvements to create both alternative incomes from land and the creation of private leisure environments in country houses and enclosed estates.

Section Three assesses the elite architecture of the eighteenth-century North East (namely country houses, urban squares, assembly rooms and churches). The sources of designs made by provincial architects are examined in Chapter 7, noting the widespread influence of designs by Italian Renaissance architects, including Sebastiano Serlio and Andrea Palladio. It proposes that provincial architects of the second half of the eighteenth century continued to rely upon these sources despite the growing importance of neo-classical designs from mid-century, because these were the prevailing sources promulgated by Lord Burlington during the formative years of these provincial practitioners, including William Newton. Newton's own classical designs will be shown to follow those of Palladio throughout his career, whilst he also continued to build in Gothic or castellated styles.

Chapter 8 highlights the range of identities and cultural allegiances that these neo-Palladian and Gothic buildings symbolised for their patrons. Much of the previous literature regarding architectural styles has promoted the assumption that classical architecture was superior to alternatives including Gothic or castellated styles and vernacular architecture, and that during the eighteenth century successive forms of

classical styles achieved greater and greater purity, from Baroque to neo-Palladian to neo-classical to Grecian. This thesis proposes that this assumption that Gothic was inferior to classical was not shared by north-east patrons, for whom Gothic architecture symbolised ancient landowner authority and recalled patriotic resistance to Scottish incursions. At the same time, the regional élite showed little enthusiasm for Greek forms of classicism, preferring instead the neo-Palladian models that recalled the region's history as a Roman frontier, holding at bay the 'barbarians' to the north. It is suggested here that when Grecian classical styles came to dominate north-east architecture in the nineteenth-century it was as a sign of how much the élite embraced national architectural styles and the successful creation of a distinct profession of architect by London-educated practitioners over the influence of both patrons and craftsmen in defining architectural styles.

Chapter 9 concludes this thesis with an examination of the state of the architectural profession and construction industry at the end of Newton's life in 1798. It challenges the perception that the artist-architect was the inevitable model of practice for the future. The chapter proposes that the very exclusivity sought by these professionals might have left them as dependent upon master-builders controlling every aspect of construction as the artisans whom they themselves had excluded from the design process. Ultimately, it was the increased social status of nineteenth-century London-based architects within the emerging middle class that enabled them to obtain Royal patronage for their claims of primacy in 1834, a position finally confirmed by Parliamentary legislation in the 1930s.

Appendix 1 outlines the methodology used in this research to compensate for the disappearance of William Newton's business records. Extensive reading of publications from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries identified élite buildings (country

houses, town houses, churches, and public works) constructed in the North East during Newton's lifetime and details of the clients and organisations who commissioned them. This led to investigation of available eighteenth-century archival sources, especially the estate papers of élite families and municipal and ecclesiastical authorities. The latter provided evidence of William Newton's involvement in élite building from the age of thirteen in 1743 until his death in 1798. Visual sources, notably the English Heritage *Images of England* database, revealed further buildings that share features of Newton's work, though documentary evidence has been lost.<sup>57</sup> Appendix 2 contains a catalogue of William Newton's confirmed works, a list of buildings which may be attributed to him, and finally work that stylistic evidence and client connections strongly suggest may have been by Newton, though at the time of writing no documentary corroboration has been found. The information in the Appendices provided the raw material for the analysis of Newton's career, particularly the patronage networks highlighted in Chapter 4. Much of this is new information, not published in previous histories of the North East and its architecture, representing the first comprehensive list of Newton's works.

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<sup>57</sup> English Heritage, *Images of England* <<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/>> [accessed 24 November 2012].

## Section I: Professionalism and Patronage in British Architecture

During the eighteenth century, the practice of architecture changed from a craft vocation and gentlemen's hobby to become an intellectual occupation for educated and relatively wealthy middling individuals, who increasingly viewed their work as a profession alongside those of the law and medicine. In 1700, there was little consensus about what was meant by the term architect and how this differed from other terms including builder, surveyor and engineer. Indeed a recent survey noted that only a small proportion of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings were constructed with assistance from an architect.<sup>1</sup> In many cases a combination of educated clients wishing to emulate their peers, pattern books and experienced local building craftsmen were responsible for fashionable houses and public buildings. By 1800, however, there was a growing expectation that for public works such as government and ecclesiastical buildings, and for large private houses, clients would employ a professional architect to draw up plans and supervise construction.<sup>2</sup> The building world was no longer dominated by craft-trained artisans, but by middling professionals increasingly strident in their disdain for those with manual skills. Architecture was one of several professions to emerge during the century, and Chapter 2 will examine why this increasing professionalism took place in British society, seek to determine the attributes of professions in the eighteenth century and to what extent these attributes were present in the work of those claiming the status of architect. The meaning of the term 'architect' developed throughout the eighteenth century, and the conflict to establish architecture as a profession for upper middling men by excluding master-craftsmen and gentlemen amateurs from this status, will be analysed. Chapter 2 proposes that the inability of its leading practitioners to act in concert to agree what distinguished architects from

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<sup>1</sup> Andor Gomme and Alison Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Jenkins, *Architect and Patron: A Survey of Professional Relations and Practice in England From the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 48.

master-craftsmen, the failure to isolate a body of knowledge that excluded craft and gentlemen-amateur practitioners, and an unwillingness to create a standardised system of training for new entrants, delayed the creation of an exclusive profession of architect until the end of the century. Having established the national context for the development of the professional architect in this period, Chapter 3 will examine William Newton's transition from artisan to architect as a case study of the development of the professional architect in the provinces.

## Chapter 2: The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain to 1800

Eighteenth-century Britons experienced major changes in their political, social and economic lives. The national scene was filled with the political trauma of the Hanoverian succession, the repulse of Jacobite claimants, and the institution of Prime Ministers and Cabinet government instead of direct monarchical rule. Internationally, the newly-formed Great Britain was involved in trade with countries in the expanding British Empire, and almost continuous warfare against Catholic countries on the Continent, in North America, India and the high seas. At home, urbanization, agricultural improvement, the introduction of new technologies such as steam power, medical and scientific advances, financial, legal and social developments, all demanded individuals with specialist skills and expertise.<sup>1</sup> The scale of these developments challenged traditional occupations to adapt or decline. This was particularly true in the middling ranks of society, a wide-ranging term for those between landed wealth and labouring poor. At the upper end of the 'middling sort' were those whose social status precluded manual work, but who required sources of income they lacked from land and

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<sup>1</sup> For examples of contemporary comment on national events in the eighteenth century see *Byng's Tours: The Journals of The Hon. John Byng 1781-1792*, ed. by David Souden (London: Random Century Ltd, 1991); Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, introduction by Pat Rogers, 3 vols. (London: Folio Society, 1983); John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley A.M., Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, Enlarged from Original MSs., With Notes from Unpublished Diaries, Annotations, Maps, and Illustrations*. 8 vols. ed. by Nehemiah Curnock (London: R. Culley, 1909-1916). For recent discussion, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1701-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1992); Peter Clark, (ed.) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain. Volume II 1540-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); H. T. Dickinson, *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002); Carl Estabrook, *Urbane and Rustic England: Cultural Ties and Social Spheres in the Provinces, 1660-1780* (Manchester University Press, 1998); Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (Oxford University Press, 1992); Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*. (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982); John Rule, *The Vital Century: England's Developing Economy 1714-1815* (London and New York: Longman, 1992). For cultural developments, see John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: HarperCollins, 1997).

property ownership.<sup>2</sup> Among the lower middling population, artisans focused upon specific trades were confronted with tasks requiring mastery of several crafts, a challenge to the guild system that had for centuries regulated activities between crafts and jealously guarded the specialized knowledge of each trade. Throughout the eighteenth century, professions developed as a response to many of these changing circumstances. It is suggested here that professions offered the intellectual occupational status required by upper middling individuals, and embraced the requisite expertise, sharing knowledge with fellow practitioners and collective identity previously held by guilds, creating opportunities for capable artisans to move beyond single trades, and offering a range of expertise to clients.

The increase in the number of professions in eighteenth-century Britain has been the subject of considerable investigation by historians. Among the first historians to investigate the national context of professionalism were Carr-Saunders and Wilson, who noted that many of the vocations that later became professions originated in the medieval church, including lawyers, doctors and teachers.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were three recognisable professions of the clergy, law and medicine, but the number of professions expanded during the eighteenth century, as practitioners of particular skills organised themselves into corporate entities. The Law Society (for solicitors) was formed in 1739; the Company of Surgeons in 1745, the Society of Civil Engineers in 1771, the Royal Veterinary College in 1791 and the Surveyors' Club in 1792. This trend continued apace in the nineteenth century. The Institute of Civil Engineers was formed in 1818, the Institute of British Architects in 1834, the Pharmaceutical Society and the Chemical Society in 1841, the Institute of Mechanical Engineers in 1847, the Institute of Actuaries in 1848, the Association of

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<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1994); Henry French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England, 1600-1750* (Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

Accountants in 1853, the Odontological Society for dentists in 1855 and the Institute of Surveyors in 1868.<sup>4</sup>

The development of professions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was seen by Penelope Corfield as part of the jostling for influence, and hence wealth and prestige, between that stratum of British society lying between the aristocracy and gentry at the top of the social pyramid and those at the bottom.<sup>5</sup> Between these social and economic extremes were what historians have called the ‘middling sort’, a very wide socio-economic group that encompassed merchants, artisans, yeoman farmers, lawyers, clergy, doctors and teachers.<sup>6</sup> The emergence of professions should not be seen as a unifying impulse among practitioners, however. It is clear from study of the existing and nascent professions of this period that division and exclusion were major characteristics, but also tactics deliberately employed by those seeking to carve out enhanced status for themselves and their class, as doctors sought to exclude non-educated providers of healthcare. Within professions there were also divisions, with barristers considering themselves superior to attorneys and physicians claiming superiority over apothecaries.<sup>7</sup>

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, several occupations were able to develop certain attributes that allowed their practitioners to claim enhanced social and economic status, negotiate with their social superiors for influence, and dominate their social inferiors. Perhaps the most significant attribute was the possession by practitioners of specialised knowledge, which they alone could reveal to the uninitiated. Such knowledge was acquired through education and vocational training, and examined

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<sup>4</sup> Barrington Kaye, *The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain: A Sociological Study* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1960), p. 12; John Wilton-Ely, ‘The Professional Architect in England’, in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. S. Kostof (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin Books, 1991, rev edn), p. 50.

by established members of the profession to ensure candidates met agreed standards. In addition, members of the profession had to persuade uninitiated potential clients that this knowledge was essential, what Corfield called ‘consumer reaction’ and Prest defined as the ‘balance of authority’, so that anyone lacking the specialised knowledge could be excluded from performing that particular set of tasks or services.<sup>8</sup> Other indicators of professional status included remuneration and standards of behaviour. Practitioners also charged some form of fee for employing this knowledge, signifying that they were independent of the patronage of social superiors and beyond the economic reach of the labouring poor, but in some circumstances this might be replaced by an annual salary, as was the case with county surveyors.<sup>9</sup> There had to be some form of ‘corporate self-awareness’, a consciousness between members that they were part of a profession, able to define standards of competence and so maintain the integrity of their practice, even if the practitioners were competing for employment opportunities.<sup>10</sup> Holmes suggested that a profession might also be seen as a vocation for the whole of a person’s life, might have a hierarchy of promotion and perhaps specialised attire, for example the gowns and wigs of barristers. Members would have the prefix ‘Mr’ and often have the status of gentlemen, in Corfield’s phrase ‘deemed to be parts of the “quality”’. Prest also noted that a profession was an occupation that implied heightened status. Kaye defined a profession as ‘an occupation possessing a skilled intellectual technique, a voluntary association and a code of conduct’.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p.21; Wilfred R. Prest, *The Professions in Early Modern England*. (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> N. Briggs, ‘The Evolution of the Office of County Surveyor in Essex, 1700-1816’, *Architectural History*, 27, *Design and Practice in British Architecture: Studies in Architectural History Presented to Howard Colvin* (1984), 297-307.

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), p. 7; Geoffrey Millerson, *The Qualifying Professions: A Study in Professionalization*. (London: Routledge, 1964), p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Holmes, *Augustan England*, p. 7; Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 11; Prest, *The Professions*, p.12; Kaye, *Development of the Architectural Profession*, p. 17.

These factors were not always sufficient to exclude other practitioners and it is noteworthy how many British professions ultimately resorted to parliamentary legislation or royal charter to codify and enforce their status and drive out the uneducated practitioners of their craft. Engineers had a royal charter of 1828 to regulate the conduct of members. Doctors had the 1858 Medical Act, which created the General Medical Council to impose a single authority across the profession, with the right to debar any practitioners who failed to maintain expected standards. Clergy of the Church of England had the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century legislation that created their church and enforced doctrinal unity. This legislative route was ultimately taken in the nineteenth and twentieth century by those seeking a distinct profession of architect, culminating in the Architects' Registration Act of 1938, which finally excluded craftsmen and builders from using the title 'architect'.<sup>12</sup>

Analysis of pre-eighteenth-century professions reveals common criteria that define an occupation as a profession, and these will be used later in this chapter to evaluate progress towards the creation of an architectural profession before 1800. Perhaps the most essential feature of earlier professions was the exclusive use of a body of specialised knowledge. The three established professions in existence by 1700, the clergy, law and medicine, had emerged as guardians of their knowledge. The clergy were the oldest of these, established by the early Christian belief in a spiritual vocation and life separate from the laity. Clergy were often seen as professionals, but the social status and opportunities for generating personal wealth were limited for many. Carr-Saunders and Wilson excluded the clergy from their study of the professions with the rationale that theirs was a spiritual vocation rather than the 'ordinary business of life'.<sup>13</sup> This rather spurious distinction would have seemed even stranger to eighteenth-century minds, as religion was an essential and very visible part of everyday life, and the

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<sup>12</sup> Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, p. 226.

<sup>13</sup> Carr-Saunders and Wilson, *Professions*, p. 3.

triumphs of the British armed forces against Catholic foes were seen as examples of Divine favour for Protestant Britons.<sup>14</sup> Wilfred Prest suggested that a Protestant theology emphasising the ‘priesthood of all believers’, and the laity’s direct access to the means of salvation through the vernacular Bible, stripped the clergy of their ability to claim exclusive knowledge. In Prest’s view, the inability of even the established church to ensure the quality of its clergy’s performance of their duties also detracted from any assertions that the clergy were a profession, but his views have been challenged. Corfield included the clergy in her study of professions, noting the education, status and belief in their role that ministers of the churches possessed as criteria for professionalism.<sup>15</sup>

The legal profession could also claim to be well-established by 1700. The law, embodying the will of government and community, had accumulated since Roman times and was codified and written down in Latin. The law was defined, so its practitioners could point out their specialised knowledge. Barristers traced their organisation as an organised group to the formation of the Inns of Court in the fifteenth century. In the legal profession, an attorney was inferior to a barrister, whilst senior barristers distinguished themselves in court from more junior barristers by the material of their black robes (‘silk for seniors, stuff for juniors’).<sup>16</sup> Barristers were expected to be graduates of the Inns of Court, and after 1762 were expected to follow a pupillage of three years for University graduates and five years for others. There was until relatively recently clear demarcation between the roles of barrister and attorney. Barristers specialised in litigation in court, leaving attorneys to deal with more minor, but often equally profitable, tasks including drawing up wills and contracts and advising local

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<sup>14</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 2; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Prest, *Professions*, p. 17; Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 102-136.

<sup>16</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 85, 90

government, businessmen and landowners. The requirements of study, pupillage and establishing oneself in practise ensured that only those with sufficient funds could enter the legal profession; only those with very generous funds and social connections could expect to become barristers.<sup>17</sup>

Medical practitioners could also define their knowledge, the techniques and medications intended to heal. Medical organisations were well-established: the Royal College of Physicians was founded in 1518 and the Society of Apothecaries in 1617. Like their legal counterparts, medical practitioners also sought to clarify their role and strengthen their status as professionals during the eighteenth century.<sup>18</sup> This was not so easy, as there were an increasing number of branches within medicine. Corfield noted the three ancient sections of the profession: ‘The physicians dealt in theory, diagnosis and prescription – at a physical distance from the patient; the surgeons studied anatomy and treated all external disorders; and the apothecaries were tradesmen who dispensed drugs.’<sup>19</sup> She also noted that this neat division had broken down by the sixteenth century and that by the eighteenth century the division was between general practitioners and specialist hospital consultants.

As in the legal profession, the distinctions between medical practitioners were related to status and education. The physicians, like barristers, took a fee in return for their expertise, which was gained through university training. Surgeons also received fees for their work, but their knowledge in the eighteenth century came primarily from

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<sup>17</sup> Christopher Brooks, ‘Professions, Ideology and the Middling Sort in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries’, in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People. Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), p. 114; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People; England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 72.

<sup>18</sup> Noel Parry and José Parry, *The Rise of the Medical Profession: A Study of Collective Social Mobility*. (London: Croom Helm, 1976); Anne Digby, *Making a Medical Living: Doctors and Patients in the English Market for Medicine, 1720-1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>19</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 149.

practical experience and skill with the knife and saw.<sup>20</sup> In the era before anaesthetics speed was essential, and the supply of criminal corpses provided the means to learn anatomy and techniques for surgery.<sup>21</sup> Apothecaries had traditionally dispensed drugs, but in the eighteenth century they also attended patients and charged fees, becoming today's general practitioners. Their fees were generally lower than physicians, leading to conflict with the latter body.<sup>22</sup> There were apothecaries' guilds in London and Dublin which sought to control entry to the profession and to fight through the courts attempts by the more prestigious physicians to take work from their members.

There was increasing specialisation in the field of medicine throughout the eighteenth century, another mark of increasing professionalisation. Dentists traced their origins to the teeth-drawing activities of medieval barbers, but Carr-Saunders and Wilson noted that dentistry was a distinguishable occupation by the early eighteenth century, including William Green who was 'operator for the teeth' to King George II.<sup>23</sup> By 1799, scientific books on dentistry were available, lectures were being delivered and a dental surgeon was employed by Guy's Hospital in London. However, there was a divergence between those with a medical education who chose to specialise in dentistry and 'a large group of uneducated and unqualified persons attracting clients by blatant advertising'. The educated practitioners did not separate from their medical origins to establish a new profession, preferring to be seen 'rather as surgeons specialising in dentistry than as dentists'. The British Dental Association was not founded until 1880, a

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<sup>20</sup> C. M. Morgan, 'Surgery and surgeons in 18th century London', *Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England*, 42 (1968), 1-37.

<sup>21</sup> Not all anatomized corpses were criminals. Excavation of the burial ground of the Newcastle Infirmary in 1995 revealed that many of the unclaimed corpses of poor patients were used illegally for anatomy and surgery practice by surgeons (Andrew Chamberlain, 'Teaching Surgery and Breaking the Law', *British Archaeology*, 48, October 1999 < <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/ba/ba48/ba48feat.html> > [accessed 25 November 2012], and pers. com. John Nolan of Northern Counties Archaeological Services).

<sup>22</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p.155.

<sup>23</sup> A.M. Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933), pp. 107-109.

sign perhaps that the Royal College of Surgeons was more prestigious for dentists up until that date.<sup>24</sup>

Another medical specialisation that emerged in the eighteenth century, and one that brought gender into the professional struggle, was that of midwifery. This had been a female role and for the great mass of the population would remain so, with experienced women supporting mothers using ancient knowledge. Carr-Saunders and Wilson noted that in the seventeenth century ‘successful midwives were considered little, if at all, inferior to doctors.’<sup>25</sup> Midwives were licensed by a bishop and recommended by parish priests. For élite women, however, the eighteenth century brought the option of a medically-trained man-midwife, complete with new scientific instruments such as forceps. Corfield noted the complaints of midwives about the scientific invasion of their work and that ‘by the 1820s, delivering babies had become one of the staples of ordinary practice. It did not pay well *but it brought even poor families into the orbit of the profession*’ [my italics].<sup>26</sup>

The practice of medicine provided further sources of conflict, as the official branches of medicine noted above vied for existence with age-old traditions of folk-medicine and self-help, and the armies of quacks promoting miracle potions and pills. Scientific knowledge, in the form of medical training, terminology and equipment, was the key factor in establishing the domination of medicine by professionals, to the exclusion of traditional providers. This specialised knowledge also shifted the power-balance in the relationship between medical professionals and their clients, since the need for treatment of their ills compelled even the wealthiest to submit to the

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<sup>24</sup> H. G. Forbes, ‘The Professionalization of Dentistry in the United Kingdom’, *Medical History*, 29 (1985), 169-81.

<sup>25</sup> Carr-Saunders and Wilson, *Professions*, p. 122. For a fuller coverage of the gender struggle between midwives and male doctors, see Jean Donnison, *Midwives and Medical Men: A Struggle for the Control of Childbirth* (New Barnet: Historical Publications, 1988).

<sup>26</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 146.

knowledge of doctors and to reimburse them for their intervention.<sup>27</sup> This submission provided the ‘consumer reaction’ noted by Corfield as a hallmark of professionalism. These occupations were able to define their knowledge and, given the serious legal, financial and even mortal consequences of acting outside this knowledge, insist on adherence from all practitioners. The use of Latin and French, particularly for instructional texts, also excluded all but the educated classes from access to legal and medical knowledge. Although the laity had access to the means of salvation through the vernacular Bible, the clergy retained considerable legal powers to limit preaching and insist upon conformity to religious doctrine, even if non-conformity increased throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>28</sup>

The armed forces were also recognised as a profession by the beginning of the eighteenth century, particularly as warfare became more scientific and technical. By the mid-eighteenth century, most officers in the Royal Navy could consider themselves to be professionals, based upon long training from their early teens.<sup>29</sup> This training, in particular the knowledge of navigational instruments and techniques that allowed the Royal Navy to map the Earth and build Britain’s seaborne empire, was examined regularly. If they survived wars and diseases, which in the Navy killed without concern for social status, those with ability could rise to the highest levels of the service, as shown by Cuthbert Collingwood (1748-1810), a near-contemporary of William Newton. Collingwood, the son of a Newcastle merchant, became an admiral and most famously led the British fleet to victory at the battle of Trafalgar after the death of Lord Nelson

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.143.

<sup>28</sup> For example the establishment of Methodist congregations from the mid-eighteenth century (Langford, *Polite and Commercial People*, p. 247).

<sup>29</sup> Though ‘the bulk of admirals, generals and diplomats were of landed birth’, Colley, *Britons*, p.191.

(the son of a Norfolk rector).<sup>30</sup> Another exalted contemporary of humble origins was the explorer Captain James Cook (1728-1779), the son of a Yorkshire day labourer.<sup>31</sup>

The army also provided opportunities for the sons of the élite, assuming that they survived battle and disease when on campaign. Gentlemen could buy commissions for their sons, who as officers would not be required to enlist and live with the common soldiery. When in barracks officers had more generous accommodation than their men and were able to take part in the social life of nearby towns. Whilst battle would see junior officers in the front rank leading their men, those who survived to be promoted would enjoy increasing comfort and many were able to use their status to marry into landed families and acquire a country house and small estate. Captain Bernard Shaw of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot, ‘a younger son of a respectable Irish family’, married the heiress Barbara Shields and acquired an estate at Usworth, near Sunderland. He confirmed his arrival in society by erecting a ‘handsome modern mansion’ called Usworth Place on the estate.<sup>32</sup>

Specialised technical knowledge assisted in the creation of the professional soldier and played an increasing role in land warfare. The Royal Military Academy was established at Woolwich in 1741 to train military engineers and artillery officers. Military engineers were expected to bridge rivers and to build fortifications for their own forces and overcome those of the enemy. Artillery became more reliable and longer-ranged, making it the major killer on the battlefield. The deficiencies of single-shot rifles were mitigated by the fitting of bayonets. The Government’s superior artillery and bayonets proved devastating when turned against the Pretender’s army at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. Senior army officers were expected to understand the

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<sup>30</sup> C. H. H. Owen, ‘Collingwood, Cuthbert, Baron Collingwood (1748–1810)’, *ODNB*, online edition; N. A. M. Rodger, ‘Nelson, Horatio, Viscount Nelson (1758–1805)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew C. F. David, ‘Cook, James (1728–1779)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>32</sup> Eneas Mackenzie, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham; Comprising an Account of Its Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical History* (Newcastle upon Tyne: 1834), p. 78.

applications of all branches of military knowledge and to ensure that logistics were capable of supporting long-range and long-term campaigns around the world. Although high birth was still a major factor in achieving high rank, this was no substitute for leadership and military skills, and in 1802 the Royal Military College was founded at Sandhurst to provide professional training for regular army officers.<sup>33</sup>

Military necessity, such as weaponry and fortifications, was one of the spurs towards the creation of the professional engineer, another occupation that emerged from craft origins to become an educated and organised profession in the nineteenth century. Of equal importance for the creation of the engineering profession were the tasks that the north-east élite required to sustain and develop their coal and lead mining income. The need to extract and move coal and lead (at greater depths and further from navigable rivers than in previous centuries) required hydraulics, steam power, railed wagonways, staithes, metalled roads, docks, canals, bridges, ironworks for tools, machinery, chains, anchors and equine equipment, not to mention associated industries that used great quantities of coal such as glass-making and chemical and salt production. Above all, specialists were required who could supervise and train the growing numbers of people involved in these industries, specialists whose knowledge tipped the ‘balance of authority’ in their favour and gave them the status of professionals. Those who achieved this enhanced status included the bridge-builder and architect Robert Mylne (1733–1811), the road and canal builder Thomas Telford (1757–1834), Thomas Newcomen (1664–1729) and James Watt (1736–1819), the inventors and promoters of the steam engine, and the man credited as the ‘Father of Civil Engineering’ in Britain, John Smeaton (1724–92).<sup>34</sup> Smeaton’s career as an engineer is

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<sup>33</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p.192.

<sup>34</sup> Roger Woodley, ‘Mylne, Robert (1733–1811)’, *ODNB*, online edition; Roland Paxton, ‘Telford, Thomas (1757–1834)’, *ODNB*, online edition; John S. Allen, ‘Newcomen, Thomas (*bap.* 1664, *d.* 1729)’, *ODNB*, online edition; Jennifer Tann, ‘Watt, James (1736–1819)’, *ODNB*, online edition; A. W. Skempton, ‘Smeaton, John (1724–1792)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

an example of how the efforts of one man could transform the perception of an occupation into a profession. Before Smeaton there was an ‘inchoate world of civil engineering’ in which millwrights, land surveyors, builders and amateurs worked on their own; after Smeaton there was a recognisable profession of civil engineer.<sup>35</sup> Buchanan noted that Smeaton ‘seems to have acquired remarkably early a clear conception of the professional role of the engineer as a consultant mediating between a client and a contractor, and to have acted according to this conception ... between 1759 and 1783.’<sup>36</sup> Skempton and Buchanan noted that Smeaton received early training in his father’s profession as a lawyer and that this may have been critical to his insistence on professional status in his dealings with landowners, investors, corporations and Parliamentary commissions. Smeaton achieved the ‘consumer reaction’ to his assertion of professionalism, not only for himself but for all those who joined the Society of Civil Engineers that he founded in 1771.<sup>37</sup>

For many occupations, the control of specialised knowledge enjoyed particularly by lawyers and increasingly by doctors was difficult to achieve, because there were alternative methods to perform their tasks, or there were some practitioners who insisted that their interpretation or application of their knowledge was superior to that of fellow practitioners. This was particularly true for those who wished to define the role of architect as a profession, especially one suited for middle-class men rather than aristocrats or craftsmen. Perhaps the most critical issue to address in assessing the state of the architectural profession in eighteenth-century Britain was the question of what contemporaries understood by the term ‘architect’. The architect, as a designer of élite buildings and supervisor of those craftsmen who erected them, was known in ancient

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<sup>35</sup> Robert Angus Buchanan, *The Engineers: A History of the Engineering Profession in Britain, 1750-1914*, (London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1989), p. 45.

<sup>36</sup> Buchanan, *The Engineers*, p. 38.

<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of the tensions between architects and engineers see Andrew Saint, *Architect and Engineer: A Study in Sibling Rivalry* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007).

Egypt and Greece, and in Renaissance Italy, but the word architect is derived from the Greek *architekton*, a term that originally meant ‘nothing more than a master-carpenter’.<sup>38</sup> The modern definition of the term architect, excluding builders, craftsmen and amateurs, dates not from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, but from the twentieth century. In 1938 the Royal Institute of British Architects finally persuaded Parliament to pass the Architects’ Registration Act. This legislation ensured that only those who had completed RIBA-accredited training and were listed on its Register of Members could use the occupational title ‘architect’.

There was no such restriction upon the use of the term ‘architect’ in the eighteenth century. There was not even agreement upon the term to use: job titles included architect, surveyor, engineer and artist. Dr. Johnson’s famous *Dictionary* of 1755 defined an architect as ‘a professor of the art of building’ and ‘a builder’, whilst a builder was defined as ‘an architect’.<sup>39</sup> The earliest Englishman to call himself ‘architect’ was John Shute, who published a book on the classical orders in 1563, but in his text he identified himself as ‘Paynter and Archytecte’, and as his biographer has noted this ‘need not imply that he ever practised architecture.’<sup>40</sup> The earliest identifiable practitioner of classical designs in architecture, Robert Smythson (c.1535-1614), was trained as a mason but described as a surveyor in most contemporary descriptions of his work and described himself as ‘Architector’ in his will and as ‘Architector and Survayor’ on his memorial tablet.<sup>41</sup> Inigo Jones, the first ‘man of genius to exercise the full functions of an architect in the modern sense’, began as a stage designer in the

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<sup>38</sup> Spiro Kostof, ‘The Practice of Architecture in the Ancient World: Egypt and Greece’, in Spiro Kostof (ed.), *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession* (Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 11-12.

<sup>39</sup> Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols (London, 1755-56).

<sup>40</sup> G. Beasley, ‘Shute, John (d. 1563)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>41</sup> Mark Girouard, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London: Yale University Press, 1983); Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 903; Wilton-Ely, ‘The Professional Architect in England’, p. 181-2.

Stuart Court.<sup>42</sup> For Sir Christopher Wren, the designer of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, numerous post-Fire churches, several country houses and Oxbridge colleges, architecture was only one of his occupational titles, which included scientist, mathematician and Member of Parliament.<sup>43</sup> Sir John Vanbrugh was a soldier turned playwright whose first architectural essay was the vast Castle Howard, with his swan song at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland. William Kent, Lord Burlington's protégé, was a painter and landscape gardener who also designed buildings and in particular their sumptuous interiors.<sup>44</sup> Jenkins noted that these eminent practitioners seemed to have 'entered the profession almost by accident'.<sup>45</sup> Others who dabbled in architecture included the astronomer, mathematician and landscape gardener Thomas Wright of Durham (1711-1786) and the renowned landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.<sup>46</sup> This diversity was a long way from the established paths to professionalism followed by lawyers, doctors and Anglican clergy.

A change occurred in the early eighteenth century, when James Gibbs went to Italy to study for the Catholic priesthood but transferred his studies to architecture under the tutelage of Carlo Fontana from 1704 to 1709. On his return, he began designing buildings as 'the first Briton to receive a professional architectural training abroad'.<sup>47</sup> Over forty years were to pass, however, before another leading architect in Britain received such training. Sir William Chambers was the son of a Swedish merchant and only turned to architecture after a successful career as a merchant in China. He used his

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<sup>42</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.31; Michael Leapman, *Inigo: The Life of Inigo Jones, Architect of the English Renaissance* (London: Headline, 2003). The adulation of Inigo Jones by early eighteenth-century promoters of Palladian architecture demonstrated the low regard they gave to craft expertise in the design of buildings, though craftsmen were essential for a client to erect a building designed by these aesthetes.

<sup>43</sup> Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale: The Outstanding Career of Sir Christopher Wren* (London: Harper Collins, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> Timothy Mowl, *William Kent: Architect, Designer, Opportunist* (London: Pimlico, 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, p. 40.

<sup>46</sup> For Thomas Wright as an architect see Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 1167-1169. For Lancelot Brown as an architect see Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 167-169.

<sup>47</sup> Terry Friedman, 'Gibbs, James (1682-1754)', *ODNB*, online edition.

wealth to pay for architectural training at the renowned *École des Artes* in Paris from 1749 to 1750, followed by five years of study in Italy, before returning to England in 1755 as a professional architect.<sup>48</sup> Robert Adam trained with the artists Clerissau and Piranesi during his extensive Grand Tour, funded by his inheritance from his father's successful career as the leading architect and builder in early eighteenth-century Scotland.<sup>49</sup> These men, the leading practitioners of the mid-eighteenth century, were able to learn and profit from training at respected Continental academies, but unfortunately only Chambers gave any support to the creation of such an institution in Britain, supporting the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768. Study of the careers of leading eighteenth-century architects reveals that, unlike doctors and lawyers who acted in accordance with an established code, leading British architects saw the code as their interpretation, not that of their rivals. Perhaps this was to be expected, as architecture was an art form dependent upon consumers' reception of the work. Those who aspired to lead taste needed to establish a reputation for innovation, but it is suggested here that this attitude prevented the concerted action required to create a distinctive profession.

The diversity of entry routes for those claiming to be architects was detrimental to the establishment of a profession. Although entry points and the functions performed by those calling themselves 'architects' differed widely, it is significant that all of these men should have called themselves architect, rather than their initial trade. Daniel Garrett and James Paine were described as architects by clients, not their respective original trades of draughtsman and carpenter, signifying the 'consumer reaction' critical

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<sup>48</sup> John Harris and Michael Snodin (eds.) *Sir William Chambers: Architect to George III*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996); Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 239.

<sup>49</sup> Robert's father was William Adam (1689-1748). For his career, see Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 55-59.

to professional status. William Newton was claiming this professional status when in 1760 he was described as an ‘architect’ rather than a builder or a joiner.<sup>50</sup>

Although Dr Johnson found little difference between architect and builder, Campbell in his *London Tradesman* gave a full description of the duties and knowledge expected in 1747:

An architect is one who draws the design and plan of [a building], where he describes in profile the whole building; all its proportional dimensions; every member of the building is exactly delineated... Besides this plan he generally forms a model in wood, with the same exactness as before... When the employer has fixed upon the plan they then agree upon the price and the architect either undertakes the whole work for a certain sum, or is paid for superintending the work only.<sup>51</sup>

Campbell, however, suggested that the architect should have other skills:

An architect properly ought to be of no other employ; but he must be a judge of work and how it is executed to his design. He must know the secrets of... all branches employed in building. His education ought to be liberal and his head mathematically and geometrically turned; he must be well-versed in the theory and practice of figures, but above all eminent in design and invention.

Campbell recognised that this knowledge of design was unlikely to be attained in Britain, as he suggested that it ‘must be improved by travel in countries where there

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<sup>50</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book 9, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p.380.

<sup>51</sup> R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman. Being a compendious view of all the trades, professions, arts, both liberal and mechanic, now practised in the cities of London and Westminster. Calculated for the information of parents, and instruction of youth in their choice of business*, (London, 1747), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale Group. <<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>> [accessed 23 November 2012], p. 157.

are better judges of architecture than we' but noted that many tradesmen practiced as architects without such ideal knowledge. He also stated that building craftsmen 'must pay court to the architect', recognition that these trades were subservient to the architect. His beliefs accorded with those of one of the leading Italian Renaissance architectural theorists, Leon Battista Alberti, who wrote in 1485:

It will not be improper to explain what he is that I allow to be an architect; for it is not a Carpenter or a Joyner that I thus rank ... the manual Operator being no more than an Instrument to the Architect.<sup>52</sup>

The craft origins of many architects were a source of dismay for those interested in establishing architecture as a profession for educated sons of upper middling families. Andrew Saint noted that

as fast as they could afford to, architects shed their less congenial tasks. Design was a literate and highly esteemed skill; it allowed close contact with the client rather than continual haggling with tenants and artisans, and it brought the promise of enhanced status, even perhaps of fame.<sup>53</sup>

Among the most influential figures seeking to define architecture as an art was Sir John Soane. The son of a bricklayer, Soane had added an 'e' to his father's surname and fabricated a more impressive genealogy, 'part of a deliberate programme of self-improvement, as he was extremely conscious of his humble social origins.'<sup>54</sup> In his view, the architect was an artist, not a mechanic, and he sought to exclude knowledge of building processes from the training of architects, stressing the need for classical education, travel to Italy, and superior design skills. Soane's views were in contrast to

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<sup>52</sup> Cited in Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Saint, *The Image of the Architect* (New Haven and London, 1983), p. 58.

<sup>54</sup> David Watkin, 'Soane, Sir John (1753-1837)', *ODNB*, online edition.

those of Sir William Chambers, who believed that a thorough knowledge of all aspects of building construction was essential for an architect.<sup>55</sup> Chambers wrote in 1757 that:

An Architect from the nature of his employment must have dependants among Artificers. His Bussiness is to penetrate into the Capacities of all & to Employ each according to his talents ... by which means he will serve his dependants without suffering in his reputation or doing prejudice to his patrons.<sup>56</sup>

Soane had no intention of having 'dependants' among craftsmen, and also adopted what at the time was an unacceptable stance for many of his fellow architects in condemning those who acted as builders. Crook noted that 'from the Bastards of Blandford, through Paine, Adam and Chambers, there is a respectable line of architects acting as contractors and speculative builders'.<sup>57</sup> Sir William Chambers, James Paine and Robert Adam dabbled in speculative building, particularly in the development of the west end of London to create more fashionable town residences for élite and middling families. Adam's disastrous Adelphi speculation of 1772 is the most famous of these, where his undoubted design skills were not matched by business acumen and his reputation in England never recovered.<sup>58</sup> For provincial architects such as William Newton, speculative building, as at Charlotte Square in Newcastle and Westoe (near South Shields), was an essential source of income when élite commissions were limited, but for Soane this speculation offered too many opportunities for dishonesty, as he made clear in his definition of professional responsibility:

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<sup>55</sup> Lubbock and Crinson, *Architecture: Art or Profession?* p. 26; The alternative attitudes to the role of the architect within the building industry are discussed in Brian Hanson, *Architects and the 'Building World' from Chambers to Ruskin: Constructing Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>56</sup> Hanson, *Architects and the 'Building World'*, p. 29.

<sup>57</sup> Crook, 'Pre-Victorian Architect', p. 63.

<sup>58</sup> John Wilton-Ely, "'Gingerbread and Snippets of Embroidery": Horace Walpole and Robert Adam', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 25:2 (2001), 147-69.

The business of an architect is to make designs and estimates, to direct the works and to measure and value the different parts; he is the intermediate agent between the employer, whose honour and interest he is to study, and the mechanic, whose rights he is to defend. His situation implies great trust; he is responsible for the mistakes ... of those he employs; he is to take care that the workmen's bills do not exceed his own estimates. If these are the duties of an architect, with what propriety can his situation and that of the builder, or the contractor be united?<sup>59</sup>

Despite the antipathy of his contemporaries, Soane's view of the artist-architect became the accepted model when the Institute of British Architects was founded in 1834. The reasons lie beyond the period of this study, but were due to the unregulated expansion of builders after the Napoleonic Wars which produced buildings of dubious quality, the impact of new technologies (including the structural use of cast iron) that required more specialised expertise at all levels of the construction industry, a growing moral reaction to the perceived laxity and paganism of the eighteenth century, and the success of the middling sort in redefining architecture as a liberal art rather than a craft vocation. Soane's role was also significant: he was appointed Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy in 1806 and so was able to educate aspiring architects in his design-orientated curriculum; knowledge of constructional techniques was not seen as part of an architect's training.<sup>60</sup>

There were several strands to Alberti, Campbell and Soane's definitions of an architect, and three of these strands require fuller analysis here to draw out the means through which the architect became a profession in the same sense that doctors and

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<sup>59</sup> Wilton-Ely, 'The Professional Architect in England', p. 194.

<sup>60</sup> Crook, 'Pre-Victorian Architect', p. 66. Though Donald Abramson noted that Soane 'lectured only intermittently' (Donald Abramson, 'Commercialization and Backlash in Late Georgian Architecture', in *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture*, ed. by Barbara Arciszewska and Elizabeth McKellar (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 143-161).

lawyers were understood to be professionals. These are the independence of the architect from client and craft influence, the supervisory role expected of an architect, and perhaps most critically of all, the architect as artist responsible for designs. Soane's view was that the architect should be independent, what he called 'the intermediate agent between the employer' and those he disparaged as 'mechanic'. He assumed that the architect was able to operate as an independent practitioner. This may have been possible for a handful of leading architects in London at the end of the eighteenth century, but was rarely the case earlier in the century or at all in the provinces. Independence from social superiors was one of the attributes of a profession noted above, but the continuing dependence upon patronage throughout the eighteenth century affected architects' aspirations for professional status.

Patronage remained an essential element in deciding the success or failure of architects' careers until a much wider acceptance of competition for commissions emerged in the early nineteenth century, especially at provincial level. Even Soane depended upon the patronage of William Pitt, one of his early clients, to secure the career-making Surveyorship of the Bank of England in 1788, against the candidacies of James Wyatt and Charles Beazely. Wyatt was by this date the most successful architect in Britain, whilst Beazely had worked as deputy to the previous Surveyor of the Bank, Sir Robert Taylor, and as Colvin noted 'was believed to "stand well with the governors"'.<sup>61</sup> It is difficult to see how Soane could have defeated these more experienced architects without Pitt's patronage; it would appear therefore that despite his high ideals about architects as intermediaries between client and crafts, even Soane knew and profited from patronage.

The issue of patronage indicated flaws in Alberti, Campbell and Soane's belief that the critical attribute of the architect was as the designer of buildings, an intellectual

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<sup>61</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 962.

task that did not require craft expertise to fulfil. It was difficult to prevent craftsmen acting as designers and even more difficult to prevent aristocratic and gentleman-amateurs from making designs, or criticising those of would-be professionals. This was because architecture was viewed as a liberal art, alongside music and painting, and gentlemen were expected to be proficient or at least discerning in their knowledge and discussion of these arts.<sup>62</sup> It is no coincidence that the leader of the neo-Palladian architectural movement was the aristocrat Lord Burlington, and that the compliment by Horace Walpole that Burlington was the ‘Apollo of the Arts’ referred to his leadership in architecture and the other liberal arts of painting, sculpture and music.<sup>63</sup>

Burlington’s mastery of architecture was well-known across Europe, but he was not the only aristocrat to make his own designs.<sup>64</sup> Sir Thomas Robinson of Rokeby Hall, near Barnard Castle, designed his new house based on Pliny’s description of a Roman villa. Burlington and Robinson used their extensive knowledge of classical and Renaissance literature and architecture as the basis of their designs, seeking to reconstruct ancient Rome from these sources.<sup>65</sup> Their desire for reconstruction, as accurately as available sources permitted, was a theme taken up by those architects, including Adam and Soane, who used their detailed first-hand observations of Roman and Greek remains as inspiration for their designs. Other gentlemen of more limited academic knowledge also sought to reconstruct their houses according to historical precedents, including Sir Francis Blake, who designed his own house at Twizel Castle

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<sup>62</sup> *A Passion for Building: The Amateur Architect in England 1650-1850* (London: Sir John Soane’s Museum, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Pamela Denman Kingsbury, ‘Boyle, Richard, third earl of Burlington and fourth earl of Cork (1694–1753)’, *ODNB*, online edition; Wilton-Ely, John, *Apollo of the Arts: Lord Burlington and His Circle*. Introduction by John Wilton-Ely (Nottingham: Nottingham University Art Gallery, 1973).

<sup>64</sup> John Harris, *The Palladian Revival. Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 31, noted that King Frederick the Great of Prussia was said to take a keen interest in Burlington’s designs.

<sup>65</sup> M. J. McCarthy, ‘Sir Thomas Robinson: An Original English Palladian’, *Architectura*, 10.1 (1980), 38–57; Dudley Harbron, ‘Sir Thomas Robinson’, *Architectural Review*, October 1936, p. 16; Giles Worsley, ‘Rokeby Park’, *Country Life*, 19 March 1987, pp. 74–79 and 26 March 1987, pp. 176–179 and 2 April 1987, pp. 116–117; Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 882–884.

in Northumberland in a unique interpretation of the medieval castles nearby.<sup>66</sup> His neighbour at Ford Castle, Sir John Hussey Delaval, was very critical of the architect James Nisbet's costs, going so far as to compare those of Nisbet's workmen with those of another builder.<sup>67</sup> Even a renowned architect such as Robert Adam did not escape Sir John's wrath, as Adam's work at Delaval's London house was also found wanting. With his reputation for mastery of detail and archaeological inspiration, Adam must have been mortified to read Delaval's criticism of the proportions of the classical pediments and pilasters in his designs for Delaval's drawing room.<sup>68</sup> Adam had little tolerance of patrons who meddled in his designs, writing:

All the gentry in this country are architects. They know, or think they know much more than any professional man be he ever so eminent; it has been my constant study to root out this absurd idea of theirs and I flatter myself that I am gaining ground on them.<sup>69</sup>

Adam's fury echoed that of James Paine, who notoriously criticised Sir Thomas Clavering in print for altering the designs of Axwell Park, County Durham.<sup>70</sup>

In noting the contribution of national figures including Burlington, Garrett, Paine, Chambers, Adam and Wyatt to the definition of the architect as designer, it must also be recognised that these men were famous because they provided services to the national élite. The majority of eighteenth-century buildings did not require the input of an architect; houses were constructed according to long-established practice. Even the

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<sup>66</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland*. (York: Jill Raines, 1996), pp. 63-4.

<sup>67</sup> Northumberland Archives, Delaval of Seaton Delaval Collection, 2 DE/18/1/9, Letter of Joseph Oxley to Sir John Hussey Delaval, 3 January 1772, 'Nisbet's prices are shameful'.

<sup>68</sup> Northumberland Archives, Delaval of Seaton Delaval Collection, 2 DE/23/2/16, Letter of Sir John Hussey Delaval to Robert Adam, 4 August 1782, 'a great deal of it imperfectly done'.

<sup>69</sup> Roderick Graham, *Arbiter of Elegance: A Biography of Robert Adam* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009), p. 320.

<sup>70</sup> James Paine, *Plans, Elevations and Sections, of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses, and also of Stabling, Bridges, Public and Private, Temples and Other Garden Buildings* (London, 1767), p. 16.

growing uniformity associated with Georgian towns and noted by Borsay was rarely the product of architects but more often the ability of building craftsmen (principally bricklayers, masons and carpenters) to adapt their experience to new post-Fire building regulations, and to the growing availability of brick across the country.<sup>71</sup>

Those craftsmen and gentlemen lacking design skills of their own could also use the growing number of texts available from the beginning of the eighteenth century as sources of designs.<sup>72</sup> Burlington's desire to make neo-Palladian architecture the national style was supported by an accurate translation of the book by Isaac Ware in 1742.<sup>73</sup> The irony of the reliance upon these publications, particularly Palladio, and the stifling of alternative styles suggested by James Gibbs and William Hogarth, was that the specialised knowledge the architect needed to achieve the professional independence of lawyers and doctors would always prove elusive.<sup>74</sup> Harris noted that Isaac Ware, one of Burlington's closest adherents and translator of Palladio's work at Burlington's behest, came in his *Complete Body of Architecture* of 1757 to 'condemn what he had perhaps unintentionally encouraged by publishing Palladio's treatise'. It would appear that Burlington's disciples, promulgating their lord's approved version of Neo-Palladian architecture, actually prevented the establishment of the architect as a source of specialised knowledge before the mid-eighteenth century. Although they might carry the new style to the provinces, as Garrett and Paine did to the North East, once it came to be known by provincial builder-architects such as William Newton it was no longer necessary to have an artist-architect who could produce innovative designs. There was a disparity, therefore, between theory and practice in eighteenth-century Britain, particularly at provincial level. This dissonance also exists in architectural

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<sup>71</sup> Peter Borsay, 'A County Town in Transition: The Great Fire of Warwick, 1694', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 108 (2002), pp. 151-70.

<sup>72</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 21

<sup>73</sup> Eileen Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers 1556-1785*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 363-365.

<sup>74</sup> Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers*, p. 472.

historiography, which emphasises the design ability of leading architects at the expense of the influence of patrons and the experience of provincial craftsmen<sup>75</sup>. It is proposed in this thesis that this emphasis upon design skills, and the attempts by some leading London architects such as Adam and Soane at the end of the eighteenth century to define architects as artists eschewing mechanical expertise, were not supported by clients who preferred craft-based competence and lower costs offered by provincial architects.

If architects were to emerge from this profusion of other occupations and amateurs able to produce designs, they had to break the reliance on capable master-craftsmen on the one hand and the ability of clients to pick designs from books on the other. What the artist-architects required was a form of specialised knowledge that most clients did not have and artisans could not achieve. This, it is suggested here, was direct knowledge of classical architecture through study abroad or in London academies providing this knowledge. Specifically, the knowledge was not the neo-Palladian designs of the first half of the eighteenth century, but the archaeologically-derived knowledge of Pompeian and especially Greek architecture that began to gather interest from 1754, when Stuart's *Antiquities of Athens* was published and the Society of Dilettanti threw its support behind Greek classical architecture as superior to Roman classical architecture.<sup>76</sup> By introducing substantial entry premiums for this training, vetting applicants for pupillage, and introducing written examinations in London academies, centralised control could be established by the artist-architect, thus defining

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<sup>75</sup> This over-emphasis upon leading architects, beginning with the lead role assigned by twentieth-century historians to Inigo Jones, is explored in Elizabeth V. Chew, "A Mockery of the Surveyor's Style"? Alternatives to Inigo Jones in Seventeenth-Century Élite British architecture', in *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture*, ed. by Barbara Arciszewska and Elizabeth McKellar (Aldershot, 2004), p. 59.

<sup>76</sup> Susan Weber Soros (ed.), *James 'Athenian' Stuart, 1713-1788: The Rediscovery of Antiquity*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006); Bruce Redford, *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2008); Jason Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti: Archaeology and Identity in the British Enlightenment* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

architecture as an occupation for upper middling candidates and excluding the craft-based claims of artisans.

Conversely, the struggle with the clients had a hierarchical aspect that saw the practice of architecture descend in social status. The principal instigators of the neo-Palladian movement were aristocrats, notably the earls of Burlington and Pembroke as designers, with the earl of Shaftesbury providing much of the intellectual assault on the previous Baroque architectural regime of Sir Christopher Wren.<sup>77</sup> These aristocrats were exercising their control of taste in defining designs, but they trod a narrow path of what was socially acceptable for them to know of the artisanal aspects of building. Lord Chesterfield's comment on Lord Burlington is perhaps the most revealing rebuke for one whom his peers felt had become too intimately involved. In 1749, Chesterfield advised his son:

You may soon be acquainted with the considerable parts of civil architecture, and for the minute and mechanical parts of it, leave them to masons, bricklayers, and Lord Burlington, who has, to a certain extent, lessened himself by knowing them too well.<sup>78</sup>

Such disdain from their peers, as well as the many calls upon their time through Parliamentary and government service and the *noblesse oblige* of social leadership, imposed restrictions on the ability of the aristocracy to lead the development of the architectural profession.<sup>79</sup>

These social limits upon aristocratic leadership provided the opportunity for middling practitioners to assume control. The deaths of the architect-earls in the mid-

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<sup>77</sup> James Lees-Milne, *Earls of Creation: Five Great Patrons of Eighteenth-Century Art* (London: H Hamilton, 1962).

<sup>78</sup> John Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (London: Yale University Press, 1994) p.19.

<sup>79</sup> This point was also made by James Ayres, *Building the Georgian City* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 8-9.

century also created a generational shift in the leadership of the nascent profession.<sup>80</sup> It must be noted that those who emerged as the leaders of the profession in the earls' wake came from relatively privileged backgrounds. Robert Adam was not born in poverty, but was the son of one of the most successful builder-architects of the early eighteenth century, William Adam, who had made a fortune from government contracts, particularly the construction of barracks and fortifications across Scotland to prevent any repeat of the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745, and from country houses for those Scotsmen keen to acquire the neo-Palladian symbols of their Hanoverian allegiance. This wealth enabled William Adam to buy an estate at Blair Crambeth, which he renamed Blair Adam, build a country house and improve the land. Yarwood noted that his father's prosperity enabled Robert Adam and his brothers to 'start their architectural lives on a fairly independent basis' and whilst Robert had rare abilities, his path to prominence 'would have been much longer without the financial security provided by his father'.<sup>81</sup> Not least, this family wealth enabled Robert Adam to go on the Grand Tour and finance his excursions to view Diocletian's palace at Split, the source of designs for his later work. Adam complained in letters to his brother about the time spent 'trudging doggedly from one nobleman's ante-room to another' in London for audiences with possible clients, but it was his status as a gentleman and landowner, as much as a successful designer, that ensured he was admitted and given the opportunity to present designs.<sup>82</sup> It is unlikely that a low-born craftsman turned-architect would have received such a reception. Adam's rival, Sir William Chambers, also enjoyed independent means as the son of a successful merchant and as a result of his lucrative first career as a merchant in China.<sup>83</sup> Like Robert Adam, Chambers' wealth

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<sup>80</sup> The earl of Pembroke died in 1750 and the earl of Burlington died in 1753 (Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 513 and p. 147).

<sup>81</sup> Doreen Yarwood, *Robert Adam* (London: J.M. Dent, 1970), p.25.

<sup>82</sup> Christopher Simon Sykes, *Private Palace: Life in the Great London Houses* (London: Chatus and Windus Ltd., 1985), p.199.

<sup>83</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 239.

secured access to the aristocracy and higher gentry, and he became architectural tutor to the Prince of Wales, the future King George III. For these men, family wealth funded travel and the opportunity to acquire new and specialised knowledge that the vast majority of potential clients could not rival: Adam's experience at Split and Chambers' observations of Chinese architecture gave these men the means to tip the 'balance of authority' in their favour against the claims of clients and craftsmen.

Where personal wealth was absent, a skilled youth could achieve high status through patronage. James 'Athenian' Stuart was the son of a mariner who died early in his son's life, leaving the family in poverty. Stuart trained as a painter, taught himself geometry, Latin and Greek, and aged 29 walked from London to Rome in 1742 to continue his artistic development. Such determination was rewarded with sponsorship from British *dilettanti* in Rome to undertake a study of Greek architecture.<sup>84</sup> This first-hand experience of architecture from sites beyond those on the traditional Grand Tour of Italy established Adam, Chambers and Stuart as the arbiters of taste from mid-century. Experience of Roman and Greek architecture became an important part of an architect's training from the final years of the eighteenth century, and when architecture schools were established in the nineteenth century the 'consumer reaction' and 'balance of authority' were achieved.<sup>85</sup> The young practitioner, through experience or education, could then claim superior knowledge over humble craftsmen-builders and many clients in the provinces, or to at least stand as an equal in discussion of designs with clients who had also completed the Grand Tour.

The ability to produce designs was only one of the skills that an architect might be expected to contribute; others included knowledge of the building trades, namely masonry, bricklaying and carpentry; financial management, the ability to organise and

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<sup>84</sup> Susan Weber Soros (ed.), *James "Athenian" Stuart 1713-1788: The Rediscovery of Antiquity* (London: Yale University Press, 2006).

<sup>85</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 21; Prest, *Professions*, p.16.

schedule the army of craftsmen, labourers and artists required to produce fashionable houses, and characteristics such as tact and patience. It should not be assumed that an eighteenth-century architect needed all of these skills, as shown by the career of James Wyatt. Although a genius in his designs of fashionable élite houses, Wyatt was notorious for his laxity and dissolute behaviour.<sup>86</sup> Many clients bemoaned the time wasted waiting for Wyatt's designs or for him to attend to the supervision of their new houses. One of his biographers wrote:

On the whole it was easier for Wyatt's employers to obtain plans from him than supervision for their execution. The designs cost little effort; but to have them carried out was more laborious.<sup>87</sup>

It is perhaps significant that the Henry Ellison of Hebburn Hall and Sir Henry Grey of Howick Hall obtained designs for plasterwork from Wyatt but employed William Newton, a trusted local architect, to design and supervise the construction of their new houses.<sup>88</sup>

The supervisory role claimed by architects could be performed by a master-craftsman working with the co-operation of workers in other crafts. Colvin noted that it was rare for medieval masters of one craft to direct the work of those in another craft or for 'any one individual to exercise that technical and aesthetic control over every component of a building which modern architects take for granted.'<sup>89</sup> Brooks noted that by the beginning of the eighteenth century the power of craft guilds was fast slipping

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<sup>86</sup> John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt, Architect to George III* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2012).

<sup>87</sup> A. Dale, *James Wyatt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), p.197.

<sup>88</sup> DULASC, GRE/X/P193, Lord Grey estate papers Box 135. William Newton's book of expenses for the new house at Howick, 1781-1788; Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison Collection, ZCE 19/1 Account book for Hebburn Hall 1789-93.

<sup>89</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.30.

away.<sup>90</sup> With declining apprenticeships, and hence limited guild control, a new form of supervisor emerged, the master-builder. This person often was a master of one craft but was able to gather together workers from other crafts to complete building works. By the nineteenth century, master-builders like Thomas Cubitt retained large teams of salaried craftsmen who were able to move from one building contract to the next.<sup>91</sup> In the North East, Richard Grainger was able to employ large numbers of craftsmen to quickly build his new streets in Newcastle, with sales from earlier premises paying for the construction of later buildings and the salaries of his workforce.<sup>92</sup>

Master-craftsmen were not the only group disputing the architect's claim to perform the supervisory role. As the ultimate authority, paymaster and the one who had to live in the finished building, the client had a very real interest in ensuring that work was done on time, to budget and to the highest standard. Much country-house construction was supervised by estate stewards, or even by the clients themselves. Sir John Vanbrugh's ordeal at Blenheim Palace between 1705 and 1716, where his designs and reputation were savaged at every opportunity she could find by Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, demonstrated the determination of some aristocrats to remain in control of the construction of what were ultimately their own houses.<sup>93</sup> There were examples in the North East where clients took a very active role in the design and construction of their houses, for example Count Horace St Paul acquired a farmhouse at Ewart Park near Wooler. From 1787 to 1792, he used his observations of medieval and Georgian buildings to convert this humble structure into a country house, drawing upon the

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<sup>90</sup> Christopher Brooks, 'Apprenticeship, Social Mobility and the Middling Sort, 1550-1800' in *The Middling Sort of People*, p. 54.

<sup>91</sup> Hermione Hobhouse, 'Cubitt, Thomas (1788-1855)', *ODNB*, online edition; Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.289-291.

<sup>92</sup> Ian Ayris, *A City of Palaces: Richard Grainger and the Making of Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle Libraries and Information Services, 1997), p. 60; Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 444, described Grainger as 'the Cubitt of the North'.

<sup>93</sup> Ophelia Field, *The Favourite: Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2002), pp. 172-3, 359; Vaughan Hart, *Sir John Vanbrugh: Storyteller in Stone* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 13-14.

advice of other country house owners (including Ralph William Grey of Backworth Hall and Bryan Burrell of Broome Park) for anticipated costs, and expert advice from James Paine and William Newton for constructional details for his craftsmen to follow. Newton supplied designs for the decoration of the principal rooms.<sup>94</sup> Another well-known example was Sir Charles Monck, who designed his new house Belsay Hall and oversaw its construction from 1807 to 1817 and also designed Linden House for Charles William Bigge, constructed 1812 to 1813.<sup>95</sup> This may have been because Sir Charles had first-hand and expert knowledge of Greek architecture from his Grand Tour, which few architects would have possessed at this time. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, it was rare for a client to be responsible for supervising construction work. Most preferred to avoid the vexations of building and they could rely upon architects, not their stewards or craftsmen, to supervise construction.

Attitudes towards architects changed during the long eighteenth century. At the beginning of the century Roger North considered ‘a profest architect is proud, opiniative and troublesome, seldome at hand... be your own architect, or sitt still’ whilst Sir Roger Pratt advised gentlemen to seek designs from ‘some ingenious gentleman who has seen that kind abroad’ rather than designs from ‘a home-bred Architect for want of his better experience’.<sup>96</sup> The success of eighteenth-century architects in reversing this apparent contempt shown by earlier gentlemen commentators was perhaps due to the attempts to improve training for new recruits, another of the attributes of a profession noted above. Initially, the diversity of entry routes into architecture – artists, scientists, aristocrats, gentlemen-amateurs, as well as craftsmen – made it impossible for any consistent

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<sup>94</sup> Northumberland Archives, Butler-St.Paul (Ewart) Collection, ZBU B5/3/3, Journal 1789; ZBU B5/6/5-6, Album no.1, designs for drawing room; ZBU B5/7/76-77, Extracts made by Horace St Paul from two estimates by William Newton, builder, of Newcastle, to Ralph William Grey of Backworth for buildings Backworth House, dated 25 March and 25 April 1778 respectively; ZBU B5/8 Album no. 3, including p. 74 letter from Bryan Burrell of Broome Park re cornices; p. 83 letter from William Newton re roof construction; p. 84 letter from James Paine re construction of foundations.

<sup>95</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 699.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

training to be offered, even if there was a willingness among practitioners to embrace one, which until the closing years of the eighteenth century there was not.

Attempts were made by those who believed that architecture was a liberal art to suggest that skills such as drawing, critical to represent design ideas to clients (assuming the client did not want a standard design from an architectural text), should be taught to prospective architects. There was no British equivalent of the French *Academie de l'Architecture* founded in 1671.<sup>97</sup> The St Martin's Lane Academy in London, founded in 1735 by the artist William Hogarth and supported by the designer Hubert François Gravelot, the sculptor Louis-François Roubillac, the author Henry Fielding and the architect Isaac Ware, provided instruction in drawing, particularly the human figure, showing the Academy's emphasis upon artistic training. Among the pupils at St. Martin's Lane were the artist Thomas Gainsborough and the architect James Paine.<sup>98</sup> Paine was a leading supporter of the Society of Artists founded in 1761, continuing to support this group after the founding of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768 by, among others, his fellow architect Sir William Chambers.<sup>99</sup> Although supportive of all arts the Royal Academy included some lectures by a Professor of Architecture and drawing classes. More importantly, through its collections of architectural fragments and in particular its library the Royal Academy provided the opportunity for aspiring London-based architects to develop design skills and absorb ideas from established architects.

Skills in drawing were not the only expertise required of an architect as the eighteenth century developed. The ability to organise craftsmen and labourers and supervise construction were also seen as essential. Whilst design skills could be learnt

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<sup>97</sup> Wilton-Ely, 'The Professional Architect in England', p.173

<sup>98</sup> Mark Girouard, *Town and Country: Essays on Buildings, Places and People* (London: Yale University Press, 1982), p.26.

<sup>99</sup> Peter Leach, *James Paine* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd, 1988), pp. 34-35; Wilton-Ely, 'The Professional Architect in England', p.191.

by study abroad or in the Academy, these organisational skills were learnt from experienced architects. Aspiring craftsmen served apprenticeships to learn from masters. As more recruits to the architectural profession were drawn from middling families, a suitable form of apprenticeship was required. This was the system of pupillage, believed to have been started by James Paine, Sir William Chambers and Sir Robert Taylor.<sup>100</sup> Lubbock and Crinson saw pupillage, alongside the creation of the Royal Academy, as a sign of ‘the emergence of the first model of professionalism in architecture’. In return for a premium, which by the late-eighteenth century could be anywhere between £10 and £200, an experienced architect agreed to train pupils in draughtsmanship and professional practice. It also became a means to limit entry into the profession to those with the initial wealth to pay the premiums, and so ensured that only sons of prosperous middling families, rather than humble craftspeople, could enter. For example, Soane, as a leading exponent of the artist-architect model, began charging a premium of £50 for his pupils, which rose with his increasing fame to 175 guineas, a sum well beyond the reach of any craftsman who sought to make the transition to architect.<sup>101</sup>

Soane was, however, more supportive of prospective architects than Robert Adam. Adam employed skilled draughtsmen in a drawing office to work up his designs into eye-catching presentations for clients. However, these men were obliged to sign agreements to work exclusively for Adam for seven years, or pay the unattainable sum of £200,000 if they breached this contract. When in 1758 one of these artists, Lauren Benoit Dewez, accused Adam of ‘indentured servitude’ he was sacked. Adam’s biographer suggested that this situation arose because Dewez was ‘showing demonstrably greater skill than Robert’ and noted that Dewez returned to his home

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<sup>100</sup> Jules Lubbock and Mark Crinson, *Architecture – Art or Profession: Three Hundred Years of Architectural Education in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 22.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

country to be the leading classical architect of the Netherlands'.<sup>102</sup> A similar situation occurred towards the end of Adam's career in 1791 with John Paterson, who was employed as clerk of works for Adam's projects in Scotland. Paterson was sacked by Adam, probably because he was too capable, and in Edinburgh 'the name of Paterson was becoming better known than his', which was hardly surprising since Adam had chosen London as a more lucrative base and rarely visited Scotland. Adam's ego could not tolerate anyone who might detract from his own sense of importance, and Paterson, who was paid £100 per year, despite the extensive work he did for Adam, was able to establish himself as an independent architect in Scotland and northern England.<sup>103</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, pupillage was seen as a means to provide training for aspiring architects, though the experience, as well as the cost, differed from one practice to another. Sir John Soane's pupillage is often held up as the ideal training, but J.M. Crook noted that even his training varied in consistency with some pupils also taking private tuition from another architect. As Crook observed, the system of pupillage was too dependent upon the abilities and time that the established architect could provide to his pupils and encouraged repetition, not variety of design. The need to protect the profession's integrity in the face of poor standards of training given by some architects was one of the reasons behind the formation of the Institute of British Architects in 1834. However, the provision of comprehensive and standardised training for all candidates was not provided by any architects' organisation: it was through the establishment in the later nineteenth century of schools of architecture or design in universities, a move opposed by many nineteenth-century architects who viewed themselves as born artists, not trained technicians.<sup>104</sup> This view was so entrenched by

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<sup>102</sup> Roderick Graham, *Arbiter of Elegance: A Biography of Robert Adam* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2009), pp. 184-185.

<sup>103</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 785-787.

<sup>104</sup> The development of architecture schools did not come until after 1840, which is beyond the scope of this research. J. M. Crook, 'The Pre-Victorian Architect: Professionalism & Patronage', *Architectural*

the 1830s that, as Andrew Saint noted, the ‘privileged end of the profession like C.R. Cockerill advocated dividing the profession between the Art Architect to design, and the practical architect [lower case, of course] to carry out and superintend’.<sup>105</sup> By choosing to emphasise design and eschew craft experience, the artist-architects created a problem for themselves, since they were reliant upon craftsmen to execute their wishes, just as Garrett’s clients in the 1750s had to find craft expertise to turn his drawings into houses. The success of the nineteenth-century master-builder Thomas Cubitt in winning commissions from clients, including in 1845 the highly-prestigious building of Osborne House on the Isle of Wight for Queen Victoria, painfully exposed this danger.<sup>106</sup> Nor did the nascent professional body the Institute of British Architects, set up in 1834 sixty-three years after engineers has established their Institute, win immediate support. Attempts to enforce examinations, a professional attribute adopted by doctors and lawyers many years earlier, led prominent nineteenth-century architects such as Richard Norman Shaw to resign their memberships.<sup>107</sup> The eventual need for Parliamentary legislation to force compliance with RIBA standards hardly suggests willing acceptance of the artist-architects’ position by builders or clients. This Parliamentary edict contrasts with the success with which engineers and surveyors (other eighteenth-century practitioners of architecture) established professional bodies and standards, and the esteem in which builder-architects such as William Newton had been held in the eighteenth century.

This chapter has examined the formation of the architectural profession in the long eighteenth century, in the context of a national expansion in the number of

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*History*, 12 (1969), pp. 64, 65 and 70; Lubbock and Crinson, *Architecture – Art or Profession*, p. 8; Kaye, *Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain*, p. 72.

<sup>105</sup> Saint, *Image of the Architect*, p. 61.

<sup>106</sup> Crinson and Lubbock, *Architecture - Art or Profession?*, p. 43.

<sup>107</sup> Andrew Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 315-319. The problems faced by the Royal Institute of British Architects in attempting to enforce training and standards are discussed in Mark Crinson and Lubbock, *Architecture - Art or Profession?*, pp. 38-72.

professions available to middling families and ambitious artisans. It has been shown how professionals were expected to have specialised knowledge, training to impart this knowledge to recruits, peer-assessment of competence, a code of conduct, awareness among practitioners that they were part of a profession, usually some form of organisation to ensure integrity and represent members' interests, recognition by non-members of the functions to be provided by the members of the profession, and a willingness to pay a fee for the provision of these services. The definition of the architect as a professional, encompassing control of specialised knowledge, comprehensive and standardised training, supported by an organisation safeguarding members' and clients' interests and professional integrity, was only beginning to develop by the end of the period covered by this thesis. It is proposed here that although eighteenth-century practitioners recognised that their role in building was distinct from that of craftsmen, the emphasis upon the architect as a designer separated from the building trades was not shared by many practitioners, including leading architects such as Sir William Chambers.<sup>108</sup> It will be suggested later that clients, especially in the provinces, were not motivated by innovative designs in their choice of architects, but by practical expertise and a reputation for competence. These were more important means of achieving what Corfield called 'consumer reaction' and Prest defined as the 'balance of authority'.<sup>109</sup> The next chapter will examine how the architectural profession emerged in the provinces, as evidenced by the career of William Newton in Newcastle.

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<sup>108</sup> Hanson, *Architects and the 'Building World'*, pp. 22-58.

<sup>109</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 21; Prest, *Professions in Early Modern England*, p. 16.

## Chapter 3: The Provincial Architect: William Newton and his Contemporaries

‘[Mr Newton] is very able in his business’.

Joseph Oxley to Sir John Hussey Delaval, 1772<sup>1</sup>

The previous chapter investigated the factors which led to the formation of a recognised profession of architect during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including the demand for non-manual careers for sons of the middling sort, the guardianship of specialised knowledge to alter the balance of power between professionals and their clients, the provision of training to achieve standardised levels of competence, and clients’ acceptance of practitioners’ enhanced social status. This chapter will examine the effects of these metropolitan developments upon building practitioners in the provinces, using the career of William Newton of Newcastle, and other contemporary provincial architects, as case studies.<sup>2</sup> It will challenge the view among art historians that innovative designs were the key criteria in establishing a reputation as an architect and suggest that the careers of many provincial architects were based upon constructional competence, expertise in supervising the range of crafts within the building industry, and careful management of financial matters to reassure clients that their money was being invested wisely. That provincial architects’ designs were often derivative may have been less important to contemporary clients than to twentieth-century historians.

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<sup>1</sup> Northumberland Archives, Delaval of Seaton Delaval Collection, 2 DE/4/10/63, Letter of Joseph Oxley [estate steward] to Sir John Hussey Delaval, 9 July 1772.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993).

Previous literature on the architectural history of north-east England is dominated by two phases: its medieval fortifications and defensible residences, and the early nineteenth-century rebuilding of central Newcastle upon Tyne by Richard Grainger. These phases have tended to obscure appraisal of the fuller range of architecture in the region. Some north-east buildings have been cited in general architectural histories, in particular the Norman majesty of Durham Cathedral (with its innovative vaulting) and the Grecian purity of the early nineteenth-century Belsay Hall. Despite the developing profession of the architect in the centuries between, these two buildings were created through similar processes. Durham Cathedral, raised by the Church to the glory of God, was designed and built through the collaboration of artistically-minded clerics (William of St Carilef, Ranulf Flambard and Hugh le Puiset, bishops of Durham) and experienced craftsmen able to convert their patrons' ambitions into stone.<sup>3</sup> That subsequent large churches, such as Kirkwall Cathedral in Orkney, incorporate features seen at Durham Cathedral was attributed to the influence of masons who had worked at Durham travelling along the North Sea coast, carrying details of designs from one job to the next. It is also a reminder that in architectural terms the North East has never been isolated from developments elsewhere and in some cases provided inspiration for architectural advances.<sup>4</sup> Belsay Hall was designed by its owner, Sir Charles Monck, working directly with experienced craftsmen to build his recreation of ancient Greek architecture.<sup>5</sup> Neither of these patrons employed an architect as an intermediary to realise their ambitions: the churchmen and Monck derived their designs from their own observations of Continental buildings and drew upon experienced

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<sup>3</sup> Lon R. Shelby, 'The Role of the Master Mason in Medieval English Building', *Speculum*, 39.3 (1964) 387-403.

<sup>4</sup> Malcolm Thurlby, 'Aspects of the Architectural History of Kirkwall Cathedral', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 127 (1997) 855-888, 884

<sup>5</sup> Despite his daughter's claims, repeated by Wilkes and many subsequent authors, there is no mention of John Dobson in the Middleton of Belsay archives; all of the 200 drawings for the construction of Belsay Hall are by Sir Charles (Northumberland Archives, ZMI/S/72, Sir Charles Monck's Plans and Elevations for Belsay Hall 1810-1820).

craftsmen's skills. In view of this survival of the patron and craftsmen model of construction this chapter will begin by examining building practices in the North East in the period up to mid-eighteenth century, when London-based artist-architects sought to exclude building craftsmen from the role of design, and several provincial builders (including William Newton) adopted the title of 'architect' and the social status that this entailed.

Although the names of bishops, noblemen and merchants who commissioned cathedrals, castles and other medieval buildings are often easily established, this is not the case with the master-craftsmen who also provided design knowledge. As John Harvey wrote, 'the most usual (even if not the only) designers were the master craftsmen'.<sup>6</sup> He noted that:

the inspiration of great works of art often stems from the patron. But this is not the same as design: the designers of the larger mediaeval buildings were perforce practical geometricians and accomplished draughtsmen, for before a complex and highly articulated building is erected its members must have been set out in advance, either to scale or full size.<sup>7</sup>

Some of these master craftsmen are known: Maurice 'the Engineer' worked at the royal castles of Dover and Newcastle upon Tyne in the late twelfth century.<sup>8</sup> In the fourteenth century, the master-mason John Lewyn provided designs for many castles and buildings in Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire and the English-held fortresses in the Scottish Borders.<sup>9</sup> The monks of Durham Priory contracted with the master-masons John de

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<sup>6</sup> John Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A Biographical Dictionary Down to 1550*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edn. (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1987), p. xli.

<sup>7</sup> Harvey, *English Medieval Architects*, p. xli.

<sup>8</sup> A. W. Purdue, *Newcastle: The Biography* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2011), p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Malcom J. B. Hislop, *John Lewyn of Durham: A Medieval Mason in Practice*. British Archaeological Reports, British Series, 438 (Oxford, 2007).

Middleton and Peter Dryng to build a new dormitory in 1398.<sup>10</sup> These men are isolated cases, however, and little is known about the designers of the many tower-houses and defensible manor houses in the northern counties, though analysis of these has often revealed sophisticated planning arrangements and similarities between the more elaborate towers, for example Chipchase Castle, Belsay Castle and the now-demolished Widdrington Castle in Northumberland.<sup>11</sup>

It is not until the seventeenth century that more information is available, often in unpublished estate records, for the names of building craftsmen in the North East. Jerard Salvin of Croxdale Hall, near Durham city, employed Christopher Shacklock, carpenter, and John Palmer, a slater, to extend his house in March 1651. The contract detailed the building work required and also included a ground plan of the L-shaped building and its new staircase.<sup>12</sup> These craftsmen did not claim to be architects, but Shacklock clearly could draw at least the outline of the new building and specify quantities of work required to execute it, suggesting that he could visualise the finished structure and convince his client to pay for it.

The experience that Shacklock brought to the extension of Croxdale Hall was not unique; it can be seen in the work of two other north-east practitioners in the 1650s and 1660s, John Langstaffe and Robert Trollope.<sup>13</sup> John Langstaffe was a mason from Bishop Auckland in County Durham, employed from 1650 to build a new house for Sir Arthur Hesilrige, the Commonwealth Governor of the North, at Auckland Castle from

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<sup>10</sup> Lon R. Shelby, 'Monastic Patrons and Their Architects: A Case Study of the Contract for the Monks' Dormitory at Durham', *Gesta*, 15. 1/2 (1976) Essays in Honor of Sumner McKnight Crosby, 91-96.

<sup>11</sup> Graham Fairclough, 'Meaningful Constructions - Spatial and Functional Analysis of Medieval Buildings', *Antiquity* 66 (1992), 348-366; Andy King, 'Fortresses and Fashion-Statements: Gentry Castles in Fourteenth-Century Northumberland', *Journal of Medieval History*, 33.4 (2007), 372-397; Anthony Emery, *The Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300-1500. Volume 1. Northern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> DRO, Salvin of Croxdale Collection, D/Sa/E 630: Extension agreements with Christopher Shacklock of Elvet, carpenter, and John Palmer of Esh, slater, and papers, including rough plan, 1649-1654.

<sup>13</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 632 and pp. 1053-4; Richard Pears, 'Battle of the Styles? Classical and Gothic Architecture in Seventeenth-Century North-East England', *Architectural History*, 55 (2012), 79-109.

1650, as a replacement for demolished parts of the medieval bishop's palace.<sup>14</sup> Hesilrige's house was demolished after the Restoration by John Cosin, bishop of Durham. Despite Langstaffe's association with the demolition of part of the bishop's palace and his work for a member of the Parliamentary and Puritan dictatorship, Cosin did not dismiss Langstaffe. On the contrary, Langstaffe was employed by Cosin to supervise rebuilding work at Auckland Castle, at the bishop's other fortress-palace Durham Castle, and for the buildings Cosin erected at Durham, including a new library and almshouses. In the latter instances, Cosin protected Langstaffe against complaints from the Durham building guilds that should have had preference for work in the city. If Langstaffe had merely been a stone-mason this would be inexplicable, as Cosin could have employed many other masons to supervise his rebuilding schemes. It follows that Langstaffe must have had expertise that Cosin required, possibly Langstaffe's knowledge of classical and Gothic designs. Several of Langstaffe's drawings survive, showing that he was not a passive reproducer of his patron's designs, though Cosin was closely interested in the progress of work and intervened in the design process on several occasions.<sup>15</sup>

Robert Trollope provided a similar example of a craftsman acting as designer, executor and supervisor of building work in the region. Trollope was said to be 'descended from a long line of stonemasons' in York.<sup>16</sup> He came to north-east England in 1655 at the request of the Puritan-dominated Corporation of Newcastle upon Tyne to construct a new Town Court (now called the Guildhall) and in 1657 he was made a

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<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry*, pp. 232-236

<sup>15</sup> DULASC, Mickleton and Spearman MS. 63 pp. 215-218: Agreement between Edward Arden and John Langstaffe of Bishop Auckland, freemason, for repairs, works and alterations at Bishop Auckland Castle, particularly to the new building lately built by Sir Arthur Haslerigg, endorsed with 2 memoranda of further work for Langstaffe, and notes of payments [to him], 1 September 1664; DULASC, Mickleton and Spearman MS. 91 No.2 Pen and ink drawing of a "draught" elevation and ground plan for the school and almshouse at Durham, by John Langstaffe and No.4. Pen and ink elevation of the outward court walls and gateway of Auckland castle by John Langstaffe.

<sup>16</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 1053-1054; A. A. Tait, 'Classicism in Eccentric Form: The Architecture of Robert Trollope', *Country Life*, 12 August 1965, 390-393.

Freeman of Newcastle, the Corporation noting that ‘he had carried out the building of the new Town Court to the satisfaction and good liking of the Mayor and Burgesses and that by reason of his skill in Architecture he might be a useful member of the Corporation and instruct and train others.’<sup>17</sup> This award, and the social status it provided, may have been recognition of the many problems with building the Guildhall. Financial problems plagued the Corporation throughout the build, and at one point they had to borrow money from Trollope to pay for work. Completed in 1658, the Guildhall had cost over £10,000, not the £2,000 of Trollope’s original estimate.<sup>18</sup> It is notable that in their commendation the Newcastle Corporation highlighted the possibility that Trollope could provide instruction for other craftsmen and was not merely another master-craftsman.

Despite his links with Commonwealth leaders, Trollope, like Langstaffe, was readily employed by the post-Restoration élite in the region. In 1671, Trollope obtained from Bishop Cosin a charter of incorporation for a Gateshead guild of building craftsmen, including stone-masons, brick-layers and sculptors.<sup>19</sup> He rebuilt the church at North Shields in 1663 and designed one of the first unfortified élite residences in the region, Capheaton Hall, constructed 1667-1670. Trollope must also have had unavoidable expertise, for Sir John Swinburne of Capheaton was not only a Royalist baronet who had gone into exile in France with Charles II, but was also a Roman Catholic, even less likely to employ a craftsman tainted by association with a regime that had done so much harm to his family. Trollope is thought to have built several other houses in Northumberland, including Netherwitton Hall in 1685 for Sir John

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<sup>17</sup> TWAM, 589/4, Calendar of the Common Council Book, Newcastle, 1656-1722, f.10 (25 September 1657); 589/5, Calendar of the Common Council Book, Newcastle, 1650-1659.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne: or, the Ancient and Present State of that Town* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1736), p. 125.

<sup>19</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 1054.

Swinburne' son-in-law, Eshott Hall and Bockenfield Hall, and made alterations to Widdrington and Callaly Castles in Northumberland.<sup>20</sup>

The control of building work from design to construction by master-craftsmen evinced by Shacklock, Trollope and Langstaffe can be seen in the early eighteenth century. The collapse of the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion ended much of the uncertainty about the permanence of the new Hanoverian monarchy and seems to have stimulated a period of new élite building in the region. In 1718-19, the joiner Thomas Shirley 'acted as architect' in the reconstruction of two houses belonging to the Liddell family: Ravensworth Castle, near Gateshead, and Newton Hall, near Durham City.<sup>21</sup> The Liddells were major colliery owners, and their influence may have led to Shirley's employment by the Bowes family, also colliery owners, whose Gibside estate was close to Ravensworth Castle. Shirley worked at the Bowes' original estate Streatlam Castle in south-west County Durham, from 1720 to 1726.

Shirley (or possibly his son) surveyed the castles of the Bishop of Durham in 1750, working with Kenton Couse.<sup>22</sup> Couse was a joiner, but his father was a London goldsmith and linen-draper who arranged an apprenticeship for his son in the office of Henry Flitcroft, a key associate of Lord Burlington. With these high level connections, Couse acted as architect for alterations to country houses around London and acted as Clerk of Works at royal palaces in London, which may have led to his employment by the bishop of Durham alongside Thomas Shirley. There is no suggestion that the Liddell, Bowes and other families who employed Shirley and Couse had any design knowledge. As with Shacklock, Langstaffe and Trollope, Shirley and Couse must have had design and supervisory skills that led to their recommendation to these clients.

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<sup>20</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp.1053-4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 921.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

These examples are important in assessing the development of the professional architect in the North East. Contrary to Colvin's claim that a master of one craft would not dictate to the master of another craft, Shacklock, Shirley and Couse were joiners responsible for designing and supervising major masonry work.<sup>23</sup> Before entering into a legally-binding contract with a client, the craftsman had to be able to obtain the agreement of other tradesmen to work to his design. This was true of medieval cathedrals and was true of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century country houses, since any stone or brick structure required large quantities of woodwork to erect, not only in the form of scaffolding, but also for major constructional work such as the centring of vaults and arches and for the roof. Although not a master of other crafts, a craftsman confident enough to enter into building contracts and provide the level of detailed estimates of costs required by clients must have had at least working knowledge and experience of how these crafts contributed to the construction of the whole building. *Contra* Colvin, the conceptualising element of the professional architect's role and supervision of all trades required in large building projects were already present in the master-craftsmen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In addition to their abilities as designers, these master-craftsmen were able to estimate materials and labour costs, supervise construction, and convince clients of their expertise and that their fees were just. These are the very criteria noted as the hallmarks of the professional architect that emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century, except for the emphasis among the latter on their own enhanced social status. Indeed, the creation of the artist-architect required patrons to accept many retrograde elements, particularly when dealing with self-aggrandising leading architects such as Robert Adam and John Soane: the artist-architect would not be present to supervise construction, so master-craftsmen would still need to be employed. Soane, who sought

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<sup>23</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 23

to separate architect from any involvement in the building trades, employed capable craftsmen as clerks of works to oversee the building of his designs whilst he remained in London, apart from occasional visits. That these men were more than capable of designing buildings themselves was illustrated by one of Soane's clerks of works who designed practical solutions to problems with a building when Soane did not reply to his letters.<sup>24</sup>

Clients employing an artist-architect would have to pay his fee in addition to the costs of the building work. Rather than the 'symbiotic relationship between ... patrons and architects' that Shelby suggested existed in medieval construction, the eighteenth-century architect would have the temerity to bestride social boundaries to speak to the client as an equal or even superior in matters of design.<sup>25</sup> In return, the client received a design that was, according to its creator, innovative and fashionable. As noted earlier, in the case of James Wyatt they could be lucky to receive even this within a reasonable time.<sup>26</sup> It is suggested here that these eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century changes in the processes of architecture were neither inevitable nor always positive, despite the favourable view expressed in architectural historians' work.

The first major artist-architect to work in the North East was Sir John Vanbrugh. In 1719 he visited Northumberland and Durham and made designs for Seaton Delaval Hall. He also designed alterations to Lumley Castle in County Durham in 1722.<sup>27</sup> However, Vanbrugh did not stay in the region to supervise construction nor even see the finished buildings: he relied upon regional craftsmen to do this, in particular William Etty and George Cansfield. Etty was, like Robert Trollope, descended from several

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<sup>24</sup> Margaret Richardson, 'John Soane, The Business of Architecture', in *Georgian Architectural Practice: Papers Given at a Georgian Group Symposium 1991*, ed. by Giles Worsley (London: Georgian Group, 1992), pp. 65-72, 69

<sup>25</sup> Shelby, 'Monastic Patrons', 91.

<sup>26</sup> A. Dale, *James Wyatt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), p.197.

<sup>27</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 1073.

generations of master-craftsmen in York, and according to Colvin ‘combined the functions of carpenter, carver and architect’.<sup>28</sup> Etty acted as the executant of many Vanbrugh buildings (including Castle Howard and Seaton Delaval Hall) since Vanbrugh as a playwright and former soldier had no practical building knowledge.<sup>29</sup> Cansfield also was capable of designing buildings, as he drew proposals for finishing the north front at Seaton Delaval Hall, for a new house at Gibside, and he also designed the tower of Gateshead church, as undertaking that was said to have ruined him.<sup>30</sup>

This practice of a London-based artist-architect visiting the region to secure commissions then returning to the capital and leaving master-craftsmen to interpret the designs and oversee construction continued throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. Although Adrian Green noted a 1727 newspaper advertisement for Ralph Wilson as ‘the advent of the professional (or jobbing) architect in the north-east’ there is no evidence that it brought him any success: Colvin had no information on Wilson or buildings he may have designed.<sup>31</sup> When James Gibbs, trained in an Italian academy as an architect, supplied designs for Gateshead Park for the Ellison family in 1730 and for the library and vestry added to St Nicholas’s church in Newcastle, he did not wait to see

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<sup>28</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 366.

<sup>29</sup> William Etty designed the church of Holy Trinity at Sunderland in 1719, and it was Etty, not Vanbrugh, who was paid for building the Town Hall in Morpeth, Northumberland in 1716 (DULASC, Howard Family Papers relating to Northumberland: GB-0033-HNP-N108/13 Book of accounts, Northumberland properties, 1717-1721). Despite his critical role in realising Vanbrugh’s designs, Etty receives little mention in biographies of Vanbrugh’s work: Hart mentions Etty twice, Downes mentions him four times and Beard twice.

<sup>30</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 238, note that Colvin repeated the misreading by Mackenzie that Cansfield was Causfield. See Richard Pears, ‘The Architectural Development of Blagdon Hall, Northumberland’, *Architectural History*, 2010, 53, 77-98. For Cansfield’s work at Seaton Delaval, see John Goodall, ‘A Local Triumph: Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland’, *Country Life*, 7 April 2010, pp. 46-53, and Northumberland Archives, Delaval of Seaton Delaval Collection, 1DE/10/3, Rent ledger for the account of the Hon. Admiral George Delaval, 1718-30; for Cansfield’s Gibside design see Gibside Hall (undated, DRO, D/St/E15/13/13); for St Mary’s church Gateshead in 1739 (DRO, EP/Ga.SM 5/1, p.439). Cansfield also built salt pans at Blyth for the Ridley family 1726-7 (John Wallace, *The History of Blyth From the Norman Conquest to the Present Day* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Blyth: John Robinson, 1867), pp. 149-150.

<sup>31</sup> Green, *Houses and Households*, p. 289; Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*.

them built, returning to his clients in Edinburgh and London.<sup>32</sup> His clients in the North East had to find craftsmen to supervise and construct the buildings.

Gibbs's limited intervention in the region may be explained by the developing rival practice of Daniel Garrett, supported by all of the patronage Lord Burlington could muster, from 1735.<sup>33</sup> Garrett made designs for Wallington Hall in Northumberland for the influential Sir Walter Blackett (who had paid for the library and vestry at St Nicholas's Church, Newcastle) and for stables and garden buildings at Gibside, County Durham, for the equally influential George Bowes. He designed Nunwick Hall (Northumberland) for Lancelot Allgood and possibly the new south range at Blagdon Hall for Matthew White, as well as the new Infirmary in Newcastle in 1751. When Garrett died in 1753, another Burlington protégé, James Paine, established a considerable practice in Yorkshire and the North East, designing Gosforth Park, Belford Hall and Bywell Hall and alterations to Alnwick Castle (all in Northumberland), Axwell Park, Gibside Chapel, alterations to Stella Hall and Coxhoe Hall and a major landscape and buildings at Hardwick Hall (all in County Durham) between 1753 and 1765.<sup>34</sup>

Blackett of Wallington, Bowes of Gibside, and the duke and duchess of Northumberland at Alnwick each employed substantial numbers of craftsmen on their extensive estates, and do not appear to have brought in master-craftsmen from elsewhere, but as the centre of Garrett and Paine's practice was in Yorkshire, their other clients in the North East had to find experienced master-craftsmen to execute their designs. William Etty had died in 1734 and Cansfield was ruined when work at

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<sup>32</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 420 and 422; Terry Friedman, 'Gibb's Library at St. Nicholas, Newcastle Upon Tyne', *Architectural History*, 41 (1998), 261-265.

<sup>33</sup> Georgian Group, *Lord Burlington and His Circle: Papers Given at a Georgian Group Symposium at the Victoria and Albert Museum on the 22nd May 1982* (London: Georgian Group, 1982); Peter Leach, 'Designs from a Practical Man, the Architecture of Daniel Garrett (1)', *Country Life*, 12 September 1974, pp. 694-697; Peter Leach, 'A Pioneer of Rococo Decoration. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (2)', *Country Life*, 19 September 1974, pp. 766-769; Peter Leach, 'In the Gothick Vein. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (3)', *Country Life*, 26 September 1974, pp. 834-837.

<sup>34</sup> Leach, *James Paine*.

Gateshead church went awry in 1740.<sup>35</sup> This was the opportunity for skilled individuals, based permanently in the region, to establish reputations as capable pairs of hands, able to start with Garrett and Paine's drawings but adapt them when required by clients' changing financial circumstances and bring together other experienced workers to provide the reassurance clients needed that their houses would be built. Into the gap stepped John Bell and Robert Newton.<sup>36</sup>

John Bell worked closely with James Paine and much of his career has been established in Peter Leach's biography of Paine and Martin Robert's history of the city of Durham, where Bell worked for the Corporation and designed a neo-Palladian front for the Guildhall in the Market Place. In the 1760s, Bell worked as executant architect for James Paine and Robert Adam at Alnwick Castle for the first duke and duchess of Northumberland.<sup>37</sup> Alastair Rowan has shown that, apart than the Brislee Tower, buildings on the Alnwick estate, including the Gothic garden house added to Hulne Priory and previously attributed to Robert Adam, were actually by John Bell.<sup>38</sup> Robert Newton's career, however, has gone unnoticed by previous researchers, but is the key to understanding how his son William came to be the 'eminent architect' of eighteenth-century north-east England.<sup>39</sup>

Having established that before 1750 élite buildings in the North East were generally designed and constructed by craftsmen, despite the emphasis in received scholarship on the work of Sir Christopher Wren, Sir John Vanbrugh, Nicholas

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<sup>35</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 366 and 238.

<sup>36</sup> John Bell of Durham (died 1784) acted as Paine's executant architect at Axwell Hall and Alnwick Castle, as well as designing buildings in his own right. Paine noted that 'several other of my designs were carried into execution by Mr John Bell' (Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 117); Roberts, *Durham*, p. 121.

<sup>37</sup> Colin Shrimpton, *Alnwick Castle, Northumberland* (Derby: Heritage House Group Ltd, 2008), p. 14.

<sup>38</sup> Alistair Rowan, 'The Duke of Northumberland's Garden House at Hulne Priory', *Architectural History*, 41 (1998), 265-273.

<sup>39</sup> Newton was first described by contemporaries as an architect in 1760, when he was engaged in the refurbishment of the old Moot Hall in Newcastle for the Northumberland Assizes (Northumberland Record Office: Quarter Sessions Order Book Number 9, Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p. 380).

Hawksmoor and James Gibbs, this chapter will now examine how the craftsman-architect came to be replaced by the professional artist-architect by examining the careers of Robert and William Newton, as they were the first north-east craftsmen to achieve the ‘consumer reaction’ noted by Penelope Corfield as an attribute of professional status.<sup>40</sup> This analysis will examine four distinct phases in William Newton’s career. These are firstly, his career in the years 1743-1751, when he worked alongside his father Robert learning his trade as a joiner through practical building experience on a succession of buildings for the north-east élite. At the end of this period, Robert Newton was awarded a key role that had far-reaching consequences for himself and his son, that of Inspector of works for the construction of the Newcastle Infirmary. This introduced William Newton to an extensive group of patrons, families that employed him in the second phase of his career from 1751 to 1760 in his transition from craftsman to craftsman-architect. During these years William and his father Robert established their reputation for competence and became known to patrons. Thirdly, William Newton’s early professional phase from 1760 to 1776, during which he asserted his professional status, established patronage networks and provided derivative designs based upon Garrett and Burlington’s works. In his final phase, the years 1776 to 1798, William Newton was a professional architect. He expanded his client group with commissions influenced by his success in designing the Newcastle Assembly Rooms. His social status as a professional was widely recognised by contemporaries and he achieved intellectual and cultural integration with the north-east élite, as evinced by his role as a founder of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne.

In the first phase of his career, from 1744 to 1751, William Newton worked closely with his father Robert Newton, and this was his introduction to the building industries. His experience as a provincial craftsman is at variance with the received

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<sup>40</sup> Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, p. 71.

narrative of professional development. As noted in the preceding chapter, one of the key attributes of a profession was the provision of training for recruits. Previous authors, focusing on the national, or rather the London-centric view of British architecture, have noted that the Office of Works offered practical training for those who passed through its ranks, including Nicholas Hawksmoor, William Kent and James Paine. From mid-century the London offices of major architects such as Robert Adam, Sir Robert Taylor, Sir William Chambers, George Dance and Sir John Soane provided, for a fee, a system of pupillage in which candidates could hone draughtsmanship and administrative skills.<sup>41</sup> There were also the many building projects, including government and ecclesiastical work, but also the rapid expansion of the west end of London with new terraces of town-houses and the ‘private palaces’ of élite patrons, all of which provided practical experience and the opportunity to acquire supervisory skills with the armies of building craftsmen employed in these developments.<sup>42</sup>

There is no evidence that Robert or William Newton were employed in the Office of Works or worked in London, nor is it clear what formal craft training they received. Robert Newton was identified as a shipwright in William’s baptismal record in 1730, and it is likely, therefore, that he had received some form of apprenticeship to become a shipwright, but Wills is mistaken to claim that he was apprenticed in 1699/1700, as he died in 1789 aged 86.<sup>43</sup> It is possible that Robert Newton was not apprenticed in Newcastle, or he may have been an example of the trend noted by Brooks of the decline in the take-up of apprenticeships after 1640.<sup>44</sup> Whether or not he completed a formal indentured apprenticeship, as a shipwright Robert Newton

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<sup>41</sup> Mark Crinson and Jules Lubbock, *Architecture: Art or Profession? Three hundred years of architectural education in Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Christopher Simon Sykes, *Private Palaces: Life in the Great London House* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985).

<sup>43</sup> Wills, ‘William Newton’, p. 276. Robert Newton’s death, aged 86, on 1 December 1789, in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, was recorded in the *Newcastle Chronicle* of 5 December 1789.

<sup>44</sup> Brooks, ‘Apprenticeship’, p. 63.

possessed what John Rule called ‘the property of skill’, and this enabled him to move from his original trade into another, building, as both involved the structural use of wood.<sup>45</sup> Robert used these skills as a building craftsman at Fenham Hall from 1743 to 1750, producing roof structures, staircases, sash windows, joists and floors, but gained expertise in producing more domestic items including furniture.<sup>46</sup>

It is not known what education and training William Newton received. Margaret Wills noted that Newton did not attend the Newcastle Free Grammar School, but he was certainly literate and numerate, as his letters to gentlemen and estate managers illustrate.<sup>47</sup> It is possible that he attended the parish school of St Andrew’s church in Newcastle, but the records do not survive from Newton’s youth.<sup>48</sup> No evidence has been found to suggest that William Newton was apprenticed in any of the Newcastle building guilds, which may suggest that his father may also have avoided a formal apprenticeship and felt it unnecessary for William to undertake one.<sup>49</sup> Brooks suggested that apprentices usually entered into formal apprenticeships ‘in their mid or late teens’.<sup>50</sup> From this point in his life, William Newton’s activities can be established with some certainty: in 1743 he was thirteen and working alongside his father at the Ords’ Fenham estate. William and Robert are named in the weekly wage book for Fenham from 1743 to 1748 as they were key craftsmen in the construction of the new mansion house.<sup>51</sup> Their work at Fenham included tasks normally undertaken by carpenters, including

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<sup>45</sup> John Rule, ‘The Property of Skill in the Age of Manufacture’, in *The Historical Meanings of Work*, ed. by P. Joyce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 99-118.

<sup>46</sup> Northumberland Archives, Whitfield Blakett-Ord Collection, 324/E/27, Fenham estate work book 1742-1747.

<sup>47</sup> Wills, ‘William Newton’, p.276.

<sup>48</sup> Northumberland Archives, EP 13/82, Newcastle St Andrew’s Parish Charity School.

<sup>49</sup> The following records were consulted to establish whether William Newton was apprenticed to one of the Newcastle Guilds: TWAM, Housecarpenters, Millwrights and Trunkmakers Collection GU/HMT 298 enrolment of apprentices 1624-1793; Joiners Collection GU/JO 298 apprenticeship indentures 1693-1824 and admissions 1723-1933; Shipwrights Collection GU/SH 298 enrolment books 1613-1945 and apprenticeship indentures 1694-1823. Also the records of the Gateshead Guilds of Dyers, Fullers, Locksmiths, Blacksmiths, Cutlers, Joiners and House Carpenters GU/DFL enrolment of apprentices 1675-1791; admissions 1676-1829.

<sup>50</sup> Brooks ‘Apprenticeship’, p. 53.

<sup>51</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/E/27, Fenham estate work book 1742-1747.

building the roof structure, and work normally undertaken by joiners, such as constructing doors. Campbell's *London Tradesman* of 1747 distinguished between the two trades.<sup>52</sup> A carpenter:

drives piles to support the building...places bearers where the chief weight of the building lies... he lays the joists, girders and rafters in flooring... he puts on the roof and prepares it for the slater... It requires a strong robust body. He must read English, write with a tolerable hand and know how to design his work. He must understand geometry.<sup>53</sup>

Whereas the joiner:

is employed making doors, making floors, preparing the scantlings for the plaisterer... in fitting the house with partitions... wainscoting the several apartments. As the joiner's work requires a nicer hand, and a greater taste in ornament, his business requires that he be acquainted with geometry and mensuration.<sup>54</sup>

Campbell noted that though both could be the same person 'there are few joiners who pretend to be carpenters so vice versa'.<sup>55</sup> It would appear that Robert and William Newton, far from the London building trades, were unaware of this separation. Nor were they unique: Saunders noted that Mayfair was a centre for builders and blacksmiths in eighteenth-century London, where they could operate outside the jurisdiction of the City of London's Worshipful Companies.<sup>56</sup> Newcastle possessed

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<sup>52</sup> R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman. Being a Compendious View of All the Trades, Professions, Arts, Both Liberal and Mechanic, Now Practised in the Cities of London and Westminster. Calculated for the Information of Parents, and Instruction of Youth in their Choice of Business*, (London, 1747), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* <<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>> [accessed 25 November 2012].

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p.160.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p.161.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Saunders, *Joseph Pickford*, p.11.

separate guilds of Carpenters and Joiners in the 1740s and it is difficult to see either guild tolerating its members ignoring craft demarcation in the way that the Newtons did. It may be that Robert Newton's freedom from guild control was an attractive asset for clients who could employ one man to do carpentry and joinery, rather than two guild members, and recalls the employment of the outsiders Trollope and Longstaffe by seventeenth-century patrons.

From 1748 to 1750, whilst working at Fenham Hall, and subsequently at Dunston Hill House (1750 to 1751), and at Nunwick Hall (1750 to 1757), the documentary sources indicate a new phase in Robert Newton's career. This change in status would ultimately enable his son's development as a professional architect. Robert Newton demonstrated his ability to supervise other craftsmen engaged in building work, in particular those outside his own craft, and to ensure that these men worked together to complete buildings. The craftsmen who worked alongside Robert and William Newton in the 1740s and 1750s appear to have tolerated a level of supervision from those outside their crafts, contrary to previous historians' emphasis upon craft demarcation. It was noted in the previous chapter that nineteenth-century master-craftsmen adapted to the development of the new architectural profession by forming building firms, as exemplified by Thomas Cubitt and his salaried workforce. There is no evidence for the existence of such retained multi-disciplinary teams in the eighteenth-century North East, although they were known in the capital from mid-century, several being noted in contemporary commentaries.<sup>57</sup> There is, however, evidence that between 1744 and 1757 Robert and William Newton were among a group of craftsmen who were employed by the north-east élite to construct buildings designed by the London architect Daniel Garrett. These craftsmen included George Sanderson, a master mason who worked at Fenham Hall (1744 to 1750), Nunwick Hall (1750 to 1757) and Blagdon

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<sup>57</sup> E. W. Cooney, 'The Origins of the Victorian Master Builders', *Economic History Review*, New Series, 8.2, (1955), 167-176.

Hall (c.1752 to 1757); Jonathan Scaife, a slater who worked at Dunston Hill (1750 to 1751), Newcastle Infirmary (1752 to 1753) and Blagdon (c.1752 to 1757); Robert and William Newton, carpenters/ joiners who worked at Fenham Hall (1744 to 1750), Dunston Hill House (1750), Nunwick Hall (1750 to 1757), Newcastle Infirmary (1751 to 1753, where Robert Newton was the Inspector, or clerk-of-works) and Blagdon Hall (c.1752 to 1757); Edward Marr, plasterer, who worked at Dunston Hill, Newcastle Infirmary and Blagdon. In addition, Alderman Ralph Sowerby, Mayor of Newcastle in 1750, was a timber merchant who supplied deals, scaffolding timber and ropes for Fenham, Dunston Hill, Newcastle Infirmary, Nunwick and Blagdon. William Ord Esq. of Fenham Hall, the Newton's life-long patron, supplied bricks to all of these building projects.<sup>58</sup> This tally of work suggests that these men were well-known to local land-owners as competent craftsmen able to execute Garrett's designs, even though he was far away in London or Yorkshire. The fact that they worked together on these buildings suggests at least an informal group. When one was unavailable, other craftsmen could be called upon, for example George Sanderson as the master-mason was fully occupied between 1744 and 1755 at Fenham, Nunwick and Blagdon, so the master-mason at Dunston Hill House (built 1750 to 1751) was Alex Lindsay, and at the Newcastle Infirmary (1751 to 1753) the master-mason was Thomas Maughan. The plasterer at Fenham, Nunwick and Garrett's work at Gibside was Philip Daniel.

It appears that Robert Newton emerged as the one able to undertake the supervisory role. At Fenham, Dunston Hill and Nunwick, he was paid large sums by the client to pay other workers, signs that he had perhaps engaged some of them as sub-

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<sup>58</sup> Regular payments to these individuals appear in the relevant family papers. For Blagdon Hall see Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/3 Cash book 1753-1761. For Fenham Hall see Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/E/27, Fenham estate work book 1742-1747; Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/E/12 Fenham Journal No.1 1745-1755. For Dunston Hill House see Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection, ZCE/12/5 Cash book 1749-1753. For Nunwick Hall see Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 (ZAL) Box 46.1 Journal 1745-6, Box 46.2 Journal 1746-7, Box 46.5 Journal 1748-9 and Box 46.6 Journal 1750-2. For the Newcastle Infirmary see TWAM, HO/RVI/2/1 Newcastle Infirmary collection, House committee minutes 1751-1753.

contractors, and that he was trusted by the élite. At the Newcastle Infirmary, Robert was appointed as Inspector to supervise this prestigious civic construction work. His appointment is remarkable because, unlike other contracts between the Building Committee and workers, he was appointed without competition. This suggests that his supervisory skills were recognized by élite patrons and that they were able to convince other subscribers that he was the right man for the job. The key patron was William Ord of Fenham Hall, where Robert Newton and his son first appeared in documentary sources as carpenters.

The Infirmary records make it clear that Robert Newton was not the master of all crafts; for example, he was sent to meet the Revd. Swinburn at Hebburn to be shown how to construct chimneys (why the Revd. Swinburn should have possessed this knowledge is not revealed).<sup>59</sup> However, as supervisor of construction work at the Infirmary, Robert Newton must have been able to rely on the co-operation of other craftsmen to ensure that their work was completed satisfactorily. His willingness to undertake a range of building work would have influenced his son William. While his peers may have entered formal indentured apprenticeships, William Newton gained comprehensive experience in all aspects of building civic and country house commissions, and by the age of twenty three was an independent craftsman able to supervise others, as he did at Blagdon Hall from c.1752 to 1757 and during the renovation of the Bowes family houses in the city of Durham from 1758 to 1760.<sup>60</sup> This constitutes the second phase of William Newton's career covering the period from 1751 to 1760, during which he and his father Robert developed from craftsmen to craftsman-architects, able to produce designs and supervise their execution.

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<sup>59</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1, House committee minutes 1751-1753, Building Committee 14 October 1751.

<sup>60</sup> For Blagdon see Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/3, Cash book 1753-61; for the work at the Bowes family houses in Durham see DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/E5/5/9 and D/St/E5/5/10, Cash books 1759-1761.

Robert Newton's supervisory skills, demonstrated at Dunston Hill House, Nunwick Hall and the Newcastle Infirmary, have already been noted. His work at the Infirmary, Nunwick and (highlighted here for the first time) at Capheaton Hall, reveal other skills expected of an architect: Robert Newton could draw architectural plans and interpret plans to produce scale models of buildings, and lay out a site ready for construction to begin. It is clear from analysis of the Newcastle Infirmary building committee minutes that Daniel Garrett designed the Infirmary, but never visited the site. He designed a building for a flat site, but the ground chosen sloped considerably from north to south, so much so that when Robert Newton inspected the terrain he informed the committee that it would be possible to build a basement storey under the south front of the building and move the doctors' and nurses' offices from the wing designed by Garrett into this basement. Newton redrew Garrett's plans and subsequently, when donations proved insufficient to construct another long service wing, redrew them again so that the building could be completed within the available funds.<sup>61</sup> It is possible that Robert Newton could have designed and built the Infirmary with his own skills and experience by 1751, but the subscribers wanted the kudos of Garrett's association with Lord Burlington attached to their philanthropy. At Nunwick Hall, again designed by the absentee Garrett, Robert Newton made a wooden scale model of the house from Garrett's two-dimensional plans, evidence of ability to conceptualise designs in three dimensions, an essential skill for architects.<sup>62</sup> Newton also interpreted Garrett's designs for the interior to make wooden moulds for the plasterers to use, demonstrating his ability to work with other craftsmen and guide them in their contribution to the overall building. Colvin's views on craft demarcation are challenged by Newton's abilities and the willingness of other crafts to accept his supervision.

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<sup>61</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1 Newcastle Infirmary collection: House committee minutes 1751-1753.

<sup>62</sup> Northumberland Archives, 43 (ZAL) Box 46.6, Journal 1750-1752, entries for 5 February 1751 and 21 April 1752.

Capheaton Hall was designed by Robert Trollope in 1667 for the Swinburne family, and is an early example for north-east England of a country house built with no defensible features and closely modelled upon Italian Renaissance designs, in this instance drawings by Sebastiano Serlio.<sup>63</sup> By the 1750s Capheaton Hall would have been viewed in poor light alongside the growing number of neo-Palladian mansions in the region. The Swinburnes were recusants, however, and lacked the opportunities to profit from government and county office and the connections within the north-east élite that would have provided income from business. Although they could not afford to construct a new house, the Swinburnes were, in three stages, able to renovate their seventeenth-century house to provide neo-Palladian decoration in the principal reception rooms and two substantial service wings to encompass offices, stables, kitchen and stores. These additions to Capheaton Hall were designed in 1754 by ‘Mr Newton, architect’ of Newcastle upon Tyne, and constructed between 1754 and 1758.<sup>64</sup> There were subsequent payments to Robert Newton in 1758 for bricks, suggesting that he was in business as a builder able to supply materials, as well as design buildings and supervise construction. This confirmation of Robert Newton’s status, not merely as a builder but as an ‘architect’ in 1754, reflects recognition of his abilities by patrons. Although little is known of Robert Newton’s later career, he designed new aisles for the church at Simonburn, Northumberland, in 1762, though these were superseded by designs by his son William in 1763.<sup>65</sup>

The second phase of William Newton’s career, during the 1750s, demonstrated increasing abilities as a builder. After working with his father at the Infirmary, William was employed by one of its leading supporters, Matthew White of Blagdon Hall in

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<sup>63</sup> Pears, ‘Battle of the Styles?’, 98.

<sup>64</sup> Northumberland Archives, Swinburne of Capheaton collection, ZSW 451/1-4 Accounts of Capheaton building work 1754-1758.

<sup>65</sup> Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 ZAL Box 83.15, Mr Newton’s estimate and plan for repairing Simonburn church 1763.

Northumberland. Although the relevant documents are missing, it appears that White commissioned a design from Daniel Garrett and employed many of the craftsmen associated with the architect's work in the North East to construct a new south front to the older hall from 1752 to 1757.<sup>66</sup> The new range bears a close resemblance to the façade of the Newcastle Infirmary. The highest paid craftsman was William Newton, working as a joiner. There may have been other work in the 1750s for which documentary evidence has not survived, but in 1758 William Newton was working for another Infirmary patron, George Bowes of Gibside, County Durham. Bowes had sought designs from Daniel Garrett for the new stables and banqueting house on his estate in the 1740s, but Newton's introduction to the Bowes family, for whom he was to work intermittently until his death in 1798, appears to have been via the Newcastle Infirmary, for William wrote a letter to Bowes' agent asking for permission for stone to be quarried on the Gibside estate for doorcases at the Infirmary.<sup>67</sup> In 1758, William was employed in rebuilding the little house or toilet close to Gibside Hall, but more substantial work followed in 1759 in the form of renovations at the Bowes family town houses in the city of Durham.<sup>68</sup> In both these instances William was working as a building contractor employing and supervising other craftsmen. This additional level of responsibility was the final stage in his development from craftsman to architect, for in 1760 the third phase of his career is evident: William Newton, architect.

In July 1760, William Newton, 'architect', was paid £105 and £10-8s 'for extraordinary work done' in renovating the medieval Moot Hall in the Castle at Newcastle in preparation for the meeting of the Northumberland Assizes. This

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<sup>66</sup> For Blagdon Hall see Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection: ZRI 47/3 Cash book 1753-61 and Pears, 'Blagdon Hall', 77-98.

<sup>67</sup> DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/C2/3/20 (2), Letter from William Newton to William Leaton, 27 March 1753.

<sup>68</sup> For Gibside little house see DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/C1/3/31, Letter of 1 Dec 1759 and for Durham houses see DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/E5/5/9 and D/St/E5/5/10 Bowes cash books 1759-1761.

recognition of his professional status came from long-established patrons in their roles as justices of the peace, including William Ord of Fenham Hall and Lancelot Allgood of Nunwick Hall.<sup>69</sup> Several other justices had been subscribers to the Newcastle Infirmary, including George Delaval, George Selby and Gawen Aynesley. The JPs' acknowledgement of his new status, the 'consumer reaction' identified by Corfield as a symbol of professionalism, introduces the third phase of Newton's career, in which he demonstrated other attributes of professionalism, including designing and supervising building work, employing intellectual rather than manual skills, and charging fees for his work. Newton was still reliant upon patronage, as were many of his London-based and provincial contemporaries, but he had achieved significant social mobility.

Newton's work throughout the 1760s built upon this recognition to elicit further commissions from patrons associated with the Newcastle Infirmary. These included Sir Walter Blackett, another Infirmary President, who commissioned drawings from Newton for buildings at Wallington Hall, his country estate in Northumberland, and employed Newton to refurbish bedrooms in the hall.<sup>70</sup> For Rowland Burdon, a Merchant Adventurer of Newcastle, Newton rebuilt the parish church at his country estate, Castle Eden (County Durham) and made designs for a new mansion there between 1764 and 1765.<sup>71</sup> William Ord, Newton's first patron, obtained estimates for a new country house at Whitfield (Northumberland), built a new parish church and parsonage to Newton's designs there, and paid Newton for new buildings at his estates in Benwell and Fenham (both to the west of Newcastle).<sup>72</sup> Lancelot Allgood of Nunwick Hall, recently built by Newton's father Robert, obtained designs from Robert and William Newton to rebuild

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<sup>69</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book QSO 9, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Michaelmas 1753 to Michaelmas 1763, p. 400.

<sup>70</sup> Northumberland Archives, ZWN/I/74, Designs for estate buildings at Wallington; Northumberland Archives, 672/E/1A/4, cash book 1747-1761; Leach, *James Paine*, p. 232.

<sup>71</sup> Phoebe Lowery, 'Patronage and the country house in Northumberland', in *Northumbrian Panorama: Studies in the History and Culture of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas E. Faulkner (London: Octavian, 1996), pp. 49-76.

<sup>72</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/W2/15, Whitfield estate papers 1745-1767; Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324 E16, Ledger 1759-68.

the aisles and beautify the parish church at Simonburn in Northumberland. It is probable that Newton worked for other Infirmary patrons in the 1760s, but documentary evidence has not survived. The Newcastle Corporation, which had contributed to the Infirmary corporately and by individual members, employed Newton to design and build the new St Ann's chapel to the east of the town between 1763 and 1767 and a lunatic asylum in 1765, and leased the land where Newton built Charlotte Square between 1769 and 1777. Newton's neighbours and tenants in Charlotte Square included an early patron Ralph Carr of Dunston Hill House, and a later patron Henry Ellison of Gateshead Park.<sup>73</sup> Newton may also have leased land to build houses in the Green Court, which formerly stood just within the town walls of Newcastle close to St Andrew's church, for he was listed as the owner of these properties for land tax from 1765 until his death.<sup>74</sup> Among his tenants was the musician Charles Avison. Mary Eleanor Bowes, daughter of George Bowes (another early patron), employed Newton to build a new green house or orangery at Gibside in 1772.<sup>75</sup>

These commissions strengthened Newton's position as the leading architect in Newcastle, Northumberland and Durham in the late 1760s, a status enhanced by the decision of James Paine, a nationally-renowned architect, to give up his practice in Yorkshire and north-east England and return to more lucrative opportunities in London and the Home Counties.<sup>76</sup> Newton's patronage network could now embrace former patrons of Paine, including the Brandlings of Gosforth Park, near Newcastle, whose daughters were to become important connections between Newton's clients. The most important former client of Paine to turn to Newton was the leading north-east nobleman, the duke of Northumberland. Between 1771 and 1775 Newton designed and supervised

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<sup>73</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison Collection, ZCE 8/22, Lease and plan of a house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, 1777.

<sup>74</sup> TWAM, G.TAX2/4/1-185, St Andrews Parish land tax records, 1765.

<sup>75</sup> Margaret Wills, 'William Newton and Gibside', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ser. XXVI, 105-114.

<sup>76</sup> Leach, *James Paine*, pp. 28-29.

the construction of Kielder Castle, a shooting lodge for the duke in the north-west of Northumberland.<sup>77</sup> Some idea of the importance of this commission to Newton can be gauged from his fourteen journeys to this still-remote location to check upon progress and quality of the construction.

These commissions, derived from the building of the Newcastle Infirmary in the early 1750s, enabled Newton to advance in social status, claim professional status, and to capture the most important commission of the late-eighteenth century in the North East, the building of the new Assembly Rooms in Newcastle from 1774 to 1776.<sup>78</sup> Whilst the Infirmary had been designed by Garrett, a London architect, the Assembly rooms were designed by Newton, a local man, and were intended to showcase the expertise of the North East (through examples of its industrial prowess such as the chandeliers in its ballroom) and its cultural aspirations as a centre of the arts and a beacon for polite society in the region.

For Newton, the Assembly Rooms were the most important commission in establishing his reputation as an architect and his enhanced social status. The period from Newton's design of the Assembly Rooms in 1773 to his death in 1798 formed the final phase of his career, during which he practised as a professional architect in making designs and supervising construction. The commissions began immediately, drawing upon his established patrons and new clients impressed by the Assembly Rooms. By 1777 Newton had designed and built The Castle, a mansion for Rowland Burdon of Castle Eden where he had rebuilt the church in 1764. Backworth Hall was designed for Ralph William Grey and completed in 1780. Sir Matthew White Ridley commissioned Newton to add castellated towers and a battlemented façade to his house at Heaton Hall, to the east of Newcastle upon Tyne, in 1779. Howick Hall was built between 1781 and

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<sup>77</sup> Alnwick MSS: MS 746 *Kielder Castle Game Book*. The building accounts, plan and elevation are reproduced in Brian Long, *Kielder Castle* (Kielder: Long Pack Craft Centre).

<sup>78</sup> Mackenzie & Ross, *History of Newcastle*, p. 231.

1788, with Newton making one hundred visits to oversee construction. This attention to the task was a further advantage of employing a provincial architect over leading practitioners, who might visit only once a year. In addition to country houses, Newton built houses of correction at Tynemouth and Morpeth.<sup>79</sup> He also continued to alter or rebuild churches, working at Jarrow, South Shields, Newbrough and Longbenton, and the church of St Nicholas in Newcastle upon Tyne (the latter in partnership with David Stephenson).<sup>80</sup> The final decade of Newton's life produced designs for Hebburn Hall, Hesleyside Hall, Dissington Hall and new gate lodges for the Gibside estate (completed in 1802).<sup>81</sup> In partnership with David Stephenson, Newton designed the new north front of the Newcastle Guildhall, and speculative house building at Westoe, near South Shields.<sup>82</sup> The web of patrons that ensured that these commissions went to Newton and not his rivals will be detailed in the next chapter. The extent to which Newton's career typified the provincial architect in Georgian England will now be assessed by reference to the careers of other provincial architects and contrasted with the experience of those architects of the following generation who benefited from the design education offered by the Royal Academy in London after 1768.

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<sup>79</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book 13, Northumberland Quarter Sessions pp. 344-418 and pp. 461-528.

<sup>80</sup> For rebuilding the nave at Jarrow in 1782 see DULASC, Faculties book, p.213, and DRO, EP/Ja.SP4/1, Jarrow churchwardens accounts 1768-83 which name William Newton as the designer. For South Shields, see DULASC, DDR/EJ/FAC/3/131 includes unsigned plan and DRO, EP/SH 5/7, South Shields St Hilda's churchwardens accounts. For Longbenton see G.W.D Briggs 'William Newton and Long Benton Church', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ser., 13 (1985), 217, and Northumberland Archives, 1875 A.88 Diocese of Newcastle faculties box 2: Longbenton 1790. For Newbrough chapel see Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection 43 (ZAL) Box 40.16 Correspondence re rebuilding of Newbrough chancel. For St Nicholas's church Newcastle see Mackenzie & Ross, *History of Newcastle*, p. 243.

<sup>81</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr Ellison Collection, ZCE 19/1 Cash Book 1789-93. Payments to William Newton for all building work at Hebburn Hall on 12 December 1792; Giles Worsley, 'Hesleyside Hall, Northumberland', *Country Life*, 18 May 1989, pp. 219-224; Folio of designs at Dissington Hall signed by William Newton; Payment for Gibside lodges in DRO, D/St/E5/5/44, Cash book 1802.

<sup>82</sup> For the Newcastle Guildhall see TWAM, 589/16, Calendar of the Common Council Book of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1785-1799. Meeting of Common Council 31 December 1794; TWAM, 589/16 Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-99, f.279, and drawings in TWAM, D.NCP/16/2 and TWAM, D.NCP/16/1/3. The *Newcastle Courant* (26 July 1794) carried an advertisement for 'newly built houses in Westoe' by Messrs Newton and Stephenson.

From 1760 until his death in 1798, William Newton was accepted as an architect, the ‘consumer reaction’ suggested by Corfield as an attribute of professional status, and affirmation of his mastery of building operations and the ability to design.<sup>83</sup> He achieved professional status through craft training and experience of major construction projects. His path to professionalism may be compared with two close contemporaries in other regions, Anthony Keck and Joseph Pickford. Anthony Keck (1726 to 1797) came from Gloucestershire, but there appears to be some doubt about his origins, as Colvin described him as ‘from a family of yeoman farmers’ whilst Whitehead noted ‘it seems likely that he was a member of a minor gentry family’, a reminder of the broadness of the term ‘middling sort’.<sup>84</sup> He described himself as ‘builder’ at his marriage in 1761 and ‘architect’ in 1768 when he became a Freeman of Worcester. He produced country houses, churches and public buildings in south Wales and the border counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. Colvin called Keck ‘a late Georgian provincial architect who had mastered the decorative style of the brothers Adam’.<sup>85</sup>

Joseph Pickford (1734-1782) provides an even closer match to the experience of William Newton.<sup>86</sup> Pickford was apprenticed to his uncle in London and worked on buildings designed by Lord Burlington’s designer William Kent, including Horse Guards in Whitehall, Lady Isabella Finch’s house at 44 Berkeley Square, the Library at Cambridge University, and one of the most influential neo-Palladian buildings, Holkham Hall in Norfolk.<sup>87</sup> Pickford set up practice in Derbyshire, acting as executant architect to build the Derby Assembly Rooms in 1763, designed by Earl Ferrers

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<sup>83</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book QSO 9, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p. 380.

<sup>84</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 601; David Whitehead, ‘Keck, Anthony (1726/7–1797)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>85</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 601.

<sup>86</sup> Maxwell Craven, ‘Pickford, Joseph (bap. 1734, d. 1782)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>87</sup> Saunders, *Joseph Pickford*, pp.12-13.

(another example of an aristocratic designer avoiding the stigma of too much technical knowledge).<sup>88</sup> Like William Newton, Pickford had gained his earliest direction in architectural styles from one of Lord Burlington's closest associates, which is apparent in Pickford's own buildings. Like Newton, Pickford had interests beyond architecture; Newton helped to found the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, whilst Pickford was a member of the Lunar Society and gained commissions from other Society members.<sup>89</sup>

Keck and Pickford are only two examples of eighteenth-century provincial craftsmen who were able to adopt the status of architects. Summerson noted that:

Most provincial centres at this time had one leading figure, usually a mason who had 'left off his apron', who led the way in design, who designed and built the bigger houses in the town and the district and whose manner was copied by lesser men.<sup>90</sup>

These men showed that it was possible with craft training to acquire sufficient knowledge and reputation to establish a localised area of influence in which they would be the first choice for regional élites seeking an appropriately-styled building at modest cost. As Thomas Lloyd noted, 'whether a carpenter or builder skilful enough to call himself architect depended on how he saw himself or was seen by others. The ability to produce proper measured drawings, from an office, did not seem to be a determinant.'<sup>91</sup> It is proposed in this thesis that for the majority of eighteenth-century architects 'consumer reaction' came through practical competence and recommendations from satisfied clients, not the provision of innovative designs that feature in many histories.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>89</sup> Jennifer Uglow, *The Lunar Men: The Friends Who Made the Future* (London: Faber, 2002), p. 116; Saunders, *Joseph Pickford*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>90</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1953) p. 222.

<sup>91</sup> Thomas Lloyd, 'The Emergence of the Architectural Profession in Wales', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 157 (2008), 1-8 (3).

The experience of provincial artisans like Newton, Keck and Pickford who assumed professional status in the 1760s may be contrasted with that of two younger men, Christopher Ebdon (1744-1824) and Newton's business partner David Stephenson (1757-1819). Christopher Ebdon was a native of Durham, where his elder brother Thomas was an organist and composer.<sup>92</sup> Their father was a cordwainer or shoemaker, but this relatively humble beginning did not affect either of the brothers' careers, for they clearly had talents in their chosen fields. Thomas rose from choirboy to organist and director of music at Durham Cathedral. With this foundation he took over the Durham Assembly Rooms, organised concerts at Durham and Newcastle and exploited the élite interest in music to move beyond his social origins. His brother Christopher Ebdon achieved similar success in architecture.<sup>93</sup> In 1761, aged 17, he was apprenticed to James Paine. Colvin offers no explanation for how this came about, but Paine was the most prominent architect in the North East from 1753 into the 1760s. He designed buildings for the Gibside estate near Newcastle and at Hardwick near Sedgfield.<sup>94</sup> However, it is possible that Christopher Ebdon was introduced to Paine whilst the latter was involved in alterations to the Bowes family houses in Durham in 1758, where William Newton was acting as contractor.<sup>95</sup> By 1767 Ebdon was working from Paine's London office and exhibited views of Durham Cathedral at the Society of Artists, which Paine had established.<sup>96</sup> He went on to work in the London offices of the architects Henry Holland and Sir John Soane. Henry Holland's commitments prevented his own

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<sup>92</sup> C. D. Watkinson, 'Ebdon, Thomas (*bap.* 1738, *d.* 1811)', *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>93</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.340.

<sup>94</sup> Leach, *James Paine*, *passim*.

<sup>95</sup> DRO, Strathmore Papers, D/St/E5/9, Cash book 1759.

<sup>96</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p .340.

travel to Italy, so he sent his younger assistants, including Christopher Ebdon, who visited Italy from 1774 to 1776.<sup>97</sup>

This support from a well-connected London architect gave Christopher Ebdon opportunities well beyond what his family could provide, being able to draw and measure Roman buildings in person, the specialised knowledge used by architects such as Robert Adam to establish their reputations as artist-architects. On his return to England, Ebdon exhibited designs of Roman temples at the Society of Artists. He moved to Cornwall in the 1780s, where his experience may have impressed some potential clients, for Colvin notes his designs for country houses and for assembly rooms at Truro.<sup>98</sup> Despite these credentials of foreign travel and London training, Christopher Ebdon appears to have struggled to establish himself in a province where he had no background. By 1789 he was working as a draughtsman in the office of Sir John Soane, where he received a salary of £200.<sup>99</sup> He decided to return to the North East in 1793 and was able to obtain the post of Surveyor of Bridges for County Durham, which he held until 1813. By 1793, however, there were other architects practising in the North East, including William Newton, David Stephenson, Joseph Bonomi and William and John Stokoe.<sup>100</sup> Ebdon's experience is revealing, since it shows how a talented but relatively poor provincial youth could exploit opportunities to train with nationally-renowned architects and gain the experience of foreign study. It also shows that even this experience did not lead to success in areas far from the metropolis such as Cornwall and the North East, and by the time he returned to his native region rivals had established themselves and effectively negated his metropolitan credentials. A comparison with his brother Thomas Ebdon, who was successful whilst staying in his

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<sup>97</sup> Frank Salmon, 'Storming the Campo Vaccino': British Architects and the Antique Buildings of Rome after Waterloo, *Architectural History*, Vol. 38, (1995), p. 147.

<sup>98</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.340.

<sup>99</sup> Michael McMordie, 'Picturesque Pattern Books and Pre-Victorian Designers', *Architectural History*, 18, (1975), 48.

<sup>100</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.141, 744, 981 and 988.

native North East, perhaps demonstrates that for relatively low-born practitioners these local networks were more important than metropolitan training.

David Stephenson, like William Newton, was the son of a Newcastle craftsman. David's father, John Stephenson, was a master carpenter and was clearly very capable, being employed to build a temporary wooden bridge between Newcastle and Gateshead to replace the stone structure washed away in the flood of 1771.<sup>101</sup> David Stephenson, born twenty-seven years after William Newton and thirteen years after Christopher Ebdon, was able to attend the Royal Academy in 1782, an intellectual polish to the craft training he received as an apprentice in the Newcastle Guild of Carpenters.<sup>102</sup> Despite Brooks' comments about the decline of apprenticeships, perhaps signified by the lack of such indentured training for William Newton, David Stephenson's father put his son through an apprenticeship and also through the training at the Royal Academy, an interesting combination of traditional and newer training methods. Colvin was unable to identify whether David Stephenson served as a pupil of a London architect but, unlike Christopher Ebdon, Stephenson chose to return to Newcastle, where he quickly began working alongside William Newton.<sup>103</sup> The two were responsible for the renovation of St. Nicholas's church, for re-fronting the Exchange, and for speculative building at Westoe, as well as their roles as two of the co-founders of the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society.<sup>104</sup> The loss of practice documents for both Newton and Stephenson makes it impossible to know the extent of their professional relationship, or

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<sup>101</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.981.

<sup>102</sup> TWAM, Housecarpenters, Millwrights and Trunkmakers Collection, GU/HMT 298, enrolment of apprentices 1624-1793, (20 January 1778) noted 'David, son of John Stephenson, a free brother of this company'.

<sup>103</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p.981.

<sup>104</sup> Eneas Mackenzie and W. Campbell, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne, Including the Borough of Gateshead*. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Mackenzie and Dent, 1827), p.242; For the Exchange see TWAM, Newcastle Council Plans Collection, D.NCP/16/1/2-8 Exchange and Town Clerk's Offices, plans and elevations 1794; TWAM, 589/16 Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-99, f.279; Mackenzie and Campbell, *Newcastle upon Tyne*, p. 215. For Westoe buildings see *Newcastle Courant* 26 July 1794. For Newton and Stephenson's role at the Literary and Philosophical Society see Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne: Annual Reports 1794-1800.

if Stephenson had ever been a pupil of Newton, but there is a suspicion that Newton was able, through his extensive networks of patronage, to neutralise the potential threat that the younger, better-educated Stephenson posed. Stephenson does not appear to have designed any country houses, a remarkable omission for an eighteenth-century architect, whilst Newton continued with his successful practice in this lucrative area until his death in 1798.

Newton's continued success in attracting clients for his country house practice contrasts with Stephenson's role in urban development schemes in Newcastle and Gateshead and for commercial buildings (warehouses on the Newcastle Quayside in 1791-1794, and constructing the duke of Northumberland's new quay and warehouses at North Shields in 1806-1817).<sup>105</sup> This strongly suggests an agreement between Newton and Stephenson to avoid competition (similar to the cartels in the coal industry among their clients). By the 1790s, this mutually-beneficial arrangement was formalised, with the Newcastle Corporation recording that the rebuilding of the Guildhall was by 'Messrs Newton and Stephenson'.<sup>106</sup> 'Messrs Newton and Stephenson' was also the phrase used for their speculative house-building at Westoe, South Shields.<sup>107</sup> Stephenson was able to win the competition to design the new All Saints Church in Newcastle, but this competition only came about after Newton's proposals for repairing the medieval church were rejected.<sup>108</sup> Despite Stephenson's success at All Saints Church, which might have led to his employment at other churches, he was not asked to work on any others. The parishioners of Longbenton (1790), North Shields (1792), Newbrough (1794) and Gosforth (1799) turned to Newton

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<sup>105</sup> TWAM, DX136/6/6, Building Accounts and associated papers concerning work done on a warehouse for Nathaniel Clayton by David Stephenson, 1791-1794.

<sup>106</sup> TWAM, 589/16, Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-1799, f.279.

<sup>107</sup> *Newcastle Courant*, 26 July 1794.

<sup>108</sup> Thomas Sopwith, *A Historical and Descriptive Account of All Saints' Church, in Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle: Printed by Edward Walker, 1826), p. 47.

and John Dodds, not Stephenson, for new churches.<sup>109</sup> Stephenson's work in Newcastle included the Cale Cross and the new White Cross, the first Theatre Royal on Mosley Street and a riding school. Colvin suggested that his early work in Newcastle was due to the patronage of Sir Matthew White Ridley of Blagdon, and it may be no coincidence that the decision to build a new church of All Saints was made by a building committee headed by Ridley.<sup>110</sup> Beyond these works, Stephenson appears to have taken (or perhaps was steered) to town planning, developing Mosley and Dean Streets and Albion Place in Newcastle, and Church Bank in Gateshead. He also widened the Tyne Bridge in 1801. Even Newton's death in 1798 does not appear to have created opportunities for Stephenson. John and William Stokoe, who had worked to Newton's designs at Trinity House in Newcastle, transformed themselves from craftsmen to architects after 1798.<sup>111</sup> They designed Hartford and Elswick Halls in Northumberland and the Moot Hall in Newcastle in the early nineteenth century. Stephenson ended his career as architect to the Duke of Northumberland, first designing and supervising developments at North Shields, then repairing Alnwick Castle, and finally overseeing renovations to farmhouses on the Duke's estates.<sup>112</sup> Despite his apparently modest number of commissions in his native North East, David Stephenson was respected as an architect by his contemporaries. The Duke of Northumberland described him as one of 'the most respectable professional persons in this part of the Kingdom'.<sup>113</sup> As one of the few professional architects in the region, he provided pupillage for aspiring recruits, the

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<sup>109</sup> For Longbenton see G.W.D Briggs, 'William Newton and Longbenton Church' *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 13, 5<sup>th</sup> series (1985), p.217; Church guide book 1985; Northumberland Archives, Faculties Collection, 1875 A.88 Diocese of Newcastle faculties box 2: Longbenton 1790. For Newbrough see Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 (ZAL) Box 40.16 Correspondence re rebuilding of Newbrough chancel; Northumberland Archives, Faculties Collection, A.103 Diocese of Newcastle faculties box 2 Newbrough Bundle 4. The plan of new church of 1864 has the outline of the previous building designed by Newton. There is a drawing of Newton's church in John Hodgson, *History of Northumberland*. For John Dodds, see Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 324-325.

<sup>110</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 981, Sopwith, *All Saints*, p.18.

<sup>111</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 999.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 981.

<sup>113</sup> Alnwick MSS, DP/D2/1/229, Letter from Duke of Northumberland to Mr Dormer and Wm Smith Esq. 25 February 1805.

most famous of whom was John Dobson, who was Stephenson's pupil from 1804 to 1809.<sup>114</sup> It is through Stephenson's provision of this training, rather than the craft-based training of William Newton, that the modern understanding of professional architectural training developed in the North East.<sup>115</sup>

The success of William Newton and David Stephenson in moving from their craft origins to professional status should not obscure the reality that they were only two of the many building practitioners available to the north-east élite. Many buildings continued to be constructed by craftsmen without the intervention of national or provincial architects. The 'opulent builder' George Anderson was responsible for the fashionable new houses constructed in Saville Row, Newcastle, in the 1770s, despite Newton's achievements at Charlotte Square.<sup>116</sup> Anderson amassed considerable wealth from his building work, so much so that when the Newe House, the Newcastle home of Sir Walter Blackett, came to the market in 1785, it was not the cash-strapped Corporation but Anderson who purchased this estate, which occupied twelve acres within the town walls. This private purchase precluded the commercial redevelopment of much of the old town until 1832, when the estate was purchased by Richard Grainger for the construction of his new streets.<sup>117</sup> When the re-planning of the centre of Newcastle occurred in the 1830s it was led not by the architects involved (John Dobson, John and Benjamin Green, John Wardle and George Walker), but by Grainger, a mere carpenter turned-builder and developer, assisted by John Clayton, the town clerk.<sup>118</sup> Reliance upon craft experience continued in the North East, even as the professional Institute of British Architects formed in 1834 to exert national control over architects.

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<sup>114</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner, 'Dobson, John (1787–1865)', *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>115</sup> Lubbock and Crinson, *Architecture – Art or Profession*, p. 8.

<sup>116</sup> John Sykes, *Local Records, Or Historical Register of Remarkable Events*, volume 2 (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1833), p. 311.

<sup>117</sup> Ian Ayriss, *A City of Palaces: Richard Grainger and the Making of Newcastle upon Tyne*, (Newcastle: Newcastle Libraries and Information Service, 1997) p. 29.

<sup>118</sup> Margaret Dobson, with the disparagement she showed to anyone who was not her father, described Richard Grainger as 'the speculator and builder' (Faulkner and Greg, *Dobson*, p. 131).

The importance of design skills has already been noted as the specialised knowledge which enabled nationally-renowned architects to assert their independence from élite and craft involvement in architecture. In the North East, however, late eighteenth-century clients continued to decide designs for their buildings, despite the professional reputations of Newton and Stephenson. The reliance upon Palladio for many of Newton's buildings may suggest that his clients were anxious to replicate the designs of the Italian master, and that they were less willing to trust the designs of a builder lacking the sophisticated polish of the Grand Tour or metropolitan education. It is difficult to see how brothers-in-law Ralph William Grey of Backworth Hall and William Ord of Whitfield Hall would have accepted an identical neo-Palladian design for their houses unless they had wanted this.

The attempts by London-based architects to act in concert and to seek a clear educational foundation for the profession were not replicated at the local level in the North East. In an area of relatively few lucrative commissions, architects were willing to use whatever means they could to obtain commissions, including criticising the work and reputations of rivals. When, in 1785, Newton gave his proposals for repairing the decaying medieval All Saints Church, Newcastle, he concluded that the western tower was sound and could be retained. David Stephenson and John Dodds countered with the claim that the mortar of the tower had disintegrated 'to dust' and that it was likely to fall at any time. Stephenson repeated this claim in his report to the parliamentary committee that scrutinised the bill to demolish and replace All Saints church.<sup>119</sup> This disintegrating mortar required two blasts with gunpowder to lose its grip on the stones of the tower, and an observer was killed by the resulting rain of masonry, suggesting that Stephenson and Dodds were not upholding the highest professional standards when they made their

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<sup>119</sup> Journals of the House of Commons, Sixteenth Parliament of Great Britain: third session (24 January 1786 - 11 July 1786), 10 May 1786, p.780. *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, online edn.

claim.<sup>120</sup> Conversely, Newton did not enter the competition to design the new church, perhaps to reinforce his view that the old structure could have been saved. Stephenson and Dodds had attacked Newton's competence to define building work. Newton's integrity may have obliged him to hold off from the competition. It would appear from his subsequent career that his stance did him credit and led to continued commissions, whilst Stephenson and Dodds were unable to use the fame of winning the competition to great advantage with other élite commissions, perhaps because their integrity and competence were challenged by the solidity of the old church. Furthermore, David Stephenson's winning design for the new All Saints Church, Newcastle, may have owed a considerable debt to the recently-completed St Andrew's Church in Edinburgh, which may also have led to doubts about his ability to produce designs.<sup>121</sup> This lack of professional solidarity had appeared in 1783 when Newton and Stephenson were awarded the contract to refit the interior of St Nicholas's Church. The unsuccessful bidder, John Dodds, launched an attack upon the quality and appearance of the work in the newspapers.<sup>122</sup> William Newton was not above such pettiness, disparaging a design for a house shown to him by Mr Bacon of Adderstone in Northumberland in a letter to William Ord.<sup>123</sup> It would appear that the scarcity of commissions in the North East did not engender solidarity among its architects. Whilst architects in London were meeting together at least informally by the 1790s to discuss standardisation of fees and training, there is no evidence of such professional groups in the North East. Nor did the London groups make much attempt to involve a wider circle of practitioners: John Carr of York

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<sup>120</sup> Sopwith, *All Saints*, pp.19-20

<sup>121</sup> St Andrew's Church in Edinburgh New Town has the same oval body as Stephenson's design for All Saints. It was completed with a short domed tower, which the subscribers disliked and had replaced with the present tall spire. Stephenson's design for All Saints had a similar short-domed tower until the subscribers demanded a more prominent and ornate spire. Terry Friedman (*The Georgian Parish Church 'Monuments to Posterity'* (Reading: Spire Books, 2004), chapter 7) noted that the building committee were very impressed with a design by Thomas Harrison of Chester, and features of his church may have been incorporated in the final building.

<sup>122</sup> *Newcastle Courant*, March 1785.

<sup>123</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) collection, W2.15 Whitfield estate papers 1746-1767. William Newton's estimates for Cupola Bridge, church and parsonage house, 4 March 1765.

was the only provincially-based architect invited to join the prestigious London Architects' Club, in 1791.<sup>124</sup>

Provincial practitioners in the second half of the eighteenth century were aware of their changing role and status as architects, rather than master-craftsmen or builders, as evinced by their adoption of the title 'architect' from the 1760s. This was clearly intended as a statement to their communities that they sought recognition as professionals, even if, as at the national level, there was still vigorous debate about the distinction between professionals and craftsmen. For all the high ideals of Sir John Soane, his vision was not accepted by many of his esteemed colleagues in London, despite the extensive new building and renovation work which could support a design and supervisory profession distinct from the building trades. There was little likelihood of Soane's model of professionalism, although accepted by the mid-nineteenth century, being sustainable in the eighteenth-century provinces where work was often limited. Provincial architects were able to achieve the 'consumer reaction', higher social status, bearing and material symbols of a profession, though they often lacked the solidarity and organisational oversight of their activities that historians have seen as the hallmarks of a profession. Instead we may see the careers of the provincial architects of this period, as exemplified by William Newton, Joseph Pickford and others who 'had left off their aprons', as a transitional stage in the development of the architectural profession that finally achieved the demarcation it craved in the 1930s.<sup>125</sup> During Newton's lifetime, success at the regional level was due to a combination of factors: favourable economic conditions, patronage, one's reputation for competence, and extensive networks within the community. The importance of these networks of patronage to the career of William Newton will be examined in the following chapter.

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<sup>124</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 221. The first architectural group in the region was the Northern Architectural Association, formed in 1851.

<sup>125</sup> Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830*, p. 222.

## Chapter 4: Patronage and the Provincial Architect

The previous chapters examined the development of the professions in eighteenth-century England and the establishment of the architectural profession in the provinces. William Newton was one of those provincial craftsmen able to make the transition to professional status, having the skills of design, supervision and logistical management required. However, these opportunities were available to other craftsmen, such as John Embleton and John Charlton, two of the many carpenters named in estate papers as working alongside the young William Newton in the 1740s and 1750s. They, rather than Newton, in theory may have been the subject of this study.<sup>1</sup> That their careers did not follow the same trajectory implies that Newton had something they did not, and so could transcend his origins.

It is proposed here that the major determinant of social mobility for Newton and his contemporaries who acquired similar professional status was their networks of patrons. Newton had ‘friends’, those on whom he could call for support in the form of a favourable word at the right time to those contemplating renovations to their houses.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate, through the patronage network of William Newton, the range of economic and social connections that enabled provincial craftsmen to achieve professional architect status and sustain their social mobility. Newton’s career provides a new case study to compare assumptions about professional developments in the national context, or rather a narrative of professional development largely based upon London examples, with provincial examples of social mobility

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<sup>1</sup> John Charlton, carpenter, worked with William Newton at Fenham Hall in 1745 (Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/E/27, Fenham estate work book 1742-1747) and John Embleton, carpenter, worked with Newton at Blagdon Hall from c.1752 to 1757 (Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) collection, ZRI 47/3, cash book 1753-61).

<sup>2</sup> Shani D’Cruze, ‘The Middling Sort in Eighteenth-Century Colchester: Independence, Social Relations and the Community Broker’, in *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800*, ed. by Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), p. 189.

within the emerging architectural profession. The connections between his patrons reveal much about the framework of society in provincial Britain. It will be suggested that, despite the assertions of Sir John Soane at the end of the eighteenth century, these networks of patronage and support were more important in deciding the success or failure of an architect in this period than an individual's skill or flair for design.<sup>3</sup>

Many of William Newton's contacts have disappeared from history, or (like Charlton and Embleton) they remain as minor entries in surviving documentation from the eighteenth-century North East. Newton's own personal and business papers have disappeared. However, as Shani D'Cruze has suggested, it is possible to reconstruct many of an individual's contacts through their involvement in parish and civic administration. In the case of an architect such as Newton, evidence can be found in the records of buildings that he created.<sup>4</sup> This includes papers of families who commissioned him to rebuild their country houses, and the subscribers to the Newcastle Infirmary (1751-3), the New Assembly Rooms (1774-6) and the remodelling of St Nicholas's Church (1784-5). Newton worked on each of these urban enhancements, and each was an opportunity to impress potential clients with his skills and confirm the esteem of existing clients. Further information to reconstruct his network of patrons can be drawn from members of the Newcastle Common Council with whom he contracted, and those who were his neighbours in the Green Court and Charlotte Square in Newcastle. Finally, Newton served as a vestryman and church-warden at St Andrew's church in Newcastle between 1764 and 1782, and at St Mary's church in Gateshead

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<sup>3</sup> John Wilton-Ely, 'The Professional Architect in England', in *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, ed. S. Kostof (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 194.

<sup>4</sup> D'Cruze, 'The Middling Sort in Eighteenth-Century Colchester', p. 190.

between 1784 and 1792, roles that brought further contacts with parishioners and ‘chief inhabitants’ and led to further architectural commissions.<sup>5</sup>

The starting point for this analysis of Newton’s ‘friends’ is not that of previous research, which concentrated upon William Newton’s career in the period after 1760 and his assertion of professional status.<sup>6</sup> It is necessary to look earlier. Some previous authors noted his father Robert Newton’s role as Inspector at the Newcastle Infirmary, but none addressed why Robert, with assistance from his son William, was selected for this position.<sup>7</sup> This chapter proposes that Robert Newton’s transition from craftsman to builder and architect was essential for his son William to become the leading architect practising in the North East in the second half of the century, since it was Robert who established the core of patronal families who supported his son. These patrons employed William in the rebuilding of four country houses, a clutch of town-houses and the Newcastle Infirmary, all before his thirtieth birthday, and provided him with demonstrable experience and a positive reputation with which to attract other clients.<sup>8</sup> However, before looking at Newton’s networks in more detail, it is necessary to examine the role of patronage and connections within the building world of eighteenth-century England.

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<sup>5</sup> Northumberland Archives, EP/13/77, Newcastle St Andrew Parish, Vestry Minute Book 1765 – 1810; DRO, EP/Ga.SM5/1, Gateshead St Mary Parish, Resolutions of vestry meetings, accounts, names of churchwardens and overseers, August 1681 - September 1807; H. R. French, *The Middling Sort of People in Provincial England, 1699-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 141. It was noted that the architect John Johnson was one of the ‘principal inhabitants’ of London St Marylebone Parish. Among his responsibilities as a member of the St Marylebone Association in the aftermath of the Gordon Riots in 1780 he and other leading parishioners agreed to buy themselves muskets and bayonets in case of future unrest (Nancy Briggs, *John Johnson 1732-1814: Georgian Architect and County Surveyor of Essex* (Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 1991), p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Margaret Wills, ‘William Newton – An Elusive Architect’ *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., XXXVI, (2006), 275-308.

<sup>7</sup> Phoebe Lowery, ‘Patronage and the Country House in Northumberland’, in *Northumbrian Panorama: Studies in the History and Culture of North East England*, ed. by Thomas. E. Faulkner (London: Octavian Press, 1996), p. 68.

<sup>8</sup> These core patrons were the Ords of Fenham Hall, the Allgoods of Nunwick Hall, the Whites (later White Ridleys) of Blagdon Hall, the Bowes of Gibside, and Ralph Carr of Dunston Hill House.

Patronage was an inherent part of a stratified society, with individuals in each layer looking to the one above for wealth, favour and office in return for loyalty and support. Although the limited monarchy that emerged from the Glorious Revolution and Hanoverian succession had ceded much power to Parliament, it remained the well-spring of patronage. The monarchy exercised formidable influence, if not actual power, through the right to bestow honours and appointments, and make grants of land and tax exemptions. The aristocracy vied for royal favour and in turn used patronage to secure profitable positions for their associates. Within the building world, positions such as the officers of the Office of Works, responsible for government-funded building, were intensely political appointments: an early casualty of the Hanoverian succession was Sir Christopher Wren, the Surveyor of Royal Works, ‘closely associated with the Tory cause’ and with the Baroque architecture of the Stuarts.<sup>9</sup> He was criticised by the earl of Shaftesbury in 1712, who claimed to have seen ‘the noblest publick Buildings perish ... under the Hand of one single Court-Architect’.<sup>10</sup> Wren was dismissed from the Surveyorship in 1718 after a sustained campaign by William Benson (1682 to 1754), a Whig MP and ‘a poet and pamphleteer with some slight knowledge of architecture’, who alluded to financial mismanagement by Wren.<sup>11</sup> Benson replaced Wren, but was so incompetent that even his powerful patrons could not prevent his dismissal in 1719 after only fifteen months in office; he had tried to persuade the House of Lords that the Houses of Parliament were so unstable as to need replacement by his own designs for a vast neo-Palladian palace.<sup>12</sup> Benson’s fall was the opportunity for Lord Burlington to demonstrate the power of his patronage.

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<sup>9</sup> Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale: The Outstanding Career of Sir Christopher Wren* (London: HarperCollins, 2002), p. 468.

<sup>10</sup> R. B. Levis, “‘Begin to Grow Rude and Clamorous’: English Politics and the Battle over Church Architecture, 1714-1760”, *Journal of Church and State*, 47 (2005), 845.

<sup>11</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (London: Penguin Books, 1953), p. 180.

<sup>12</sup> Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840*. 4th ed (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 120-121.

The establishment of neo-Palladian orthodoxy required patronage at the highest level of the state. Burlington used his influence at Court to fill posts in the Office of Works, ‘easily the most important source of architectural patronage’, with his disciples.<sup>13</sup> These included Henry Flitcroft, Daniel Garrett, William Kent and Isaac Ware.<sup>14</sup> However, these disciples were not restricted to government commissions but were encouraged to take the approved style to private clients. Each worked on numerous commissions for élite families. Daniel Garrett was given the role of Labourer in Trust at Kew, where the Royal accommodation and gardens were being remodelled, but he was sacked in 1737 for non-attendance; by this time Burlington had secured patronage for him in Yorkshire and the North East.<sup>15</sup> Garrett built up an extensive network in the North East, exploiting familial and political links between clients. These contacts provided further patronage and recommendation that expanded Garrett’s network. One of his clients in Yorkshire was Sir Thomas Robinson of Rokeby Park, near Barnard Castle. As well as assisting Garrett’s introduction to clients in Yorkshire, Robinson was a friend of George Bowes of Gibside, near Newcastle, and it has been suggested that whilst working at Gibside, Bowes introduced Garrett to other north-east clients.<sup>16</sup> This may be so, but Bowes was not the only north-east patron with links to Yorkshire. In 1739, shortly after beginning work at Gibside, Garrett began the transformation of Wallington Hall in Northumberland, home of Sir Walter Blackett (1707 to 1777). Wills suggested that Sir Thomas Robinson recommended Garrett to Blackett.<sup>17</sup>

Blackett was one of the most important men in the North East. He was originally Walter Calverley, heir of a family from Calverley, Yorkshire, until he married his

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<sup>13</sup> Giles Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain*, p. 124.

<sup>14</sup> Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 379-384, 410-412, 612-619, 1087;

<sup>15</sup> Peter Leach, ‘Designs from a Practical Man, the Architecture of Daniel Garrett (1)’, *Country Life*, 12 September 1974, pp. 694-697; Peter Leach, ‘A Pioneer of Rococo Decoration. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (2)’, *Country Life*, 19 September 1974, pp. 766-769; Peter Leach, ‘In the Gothick Vein. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (3)’, *Country Life*, 26 September 1974, pp. 834-837.

<sup>16</sup> Margaret Wills, *Gibside and the Bowes Family* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1995), p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

uncle's natural daughter and changed his name to Blackett to inherit a baronetcy. He was Sheriff of Northumberland in 1731, served as Mayor of Newcastle in 1735, 1748, 1756, 1764 and 1771, and was MP for Newcastle from 1734 until his death in 1777. As well as Wallington Hall and his other estates in Northumberland, Blackett lived in the largest private estate within an English town, the Newe House (later Anderson Place). From there he ruled over Newcastle, and his patronage extended to every civic undertaking. He paid for food for the poor of the town during harsh winters, founded and supported charity schools, was a major supporter of the Newcastle Infirmary, the Lunatic Hospital and the Assembly Rooms, as well as a member of the Common Council that approved William Newton's plans for Charlotte Square.<sup>18</sup> Sir Walter Blackett thus constituted a major patron for the establishment of Burlington's brand of neo-Palladianism in the North East, and for William Newton, who was its provincial standard-bearer after 1760.

Garrett died in 1753, but his practice in Yorkshire and the North East was taken up, and expanded, by another Burlington protégé, James Paine. Paine was instrumental in developing the neo-Palladian villa as the preferred style of country and suburban house in the region, and he extended Garrett's network to embrace wealthy business as well as landed clients.<sup>19</sup> After Paine's departure from the North East around 1760, many of these clients turned their patronage to William Newton, including Sir Walter Blackett of Wallington, where Newton made designs for estate buildings and refurbished some rooms in Wallington Hall from 1760.<sup>20</sup> Newton also added clients from professional and urban backgrounds to the neo-Palladian network. Thus Newton's circle of clients and the patronage on which he drew for commissions, had their origins in that created for

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<sup>18</sup> A.W. Purdue, *The Ship That Came Home: The Story of a Northern Dynasty* (London: Third Millennium, 2004), pp. 52-65.

<sup>19</sup> Marcus Binney, 'The Villas of James Paine', *Country Life*, 145 (1969) 20 February, 406-410; 27 February, 466-470; 6 March, 522-526.

<sup>20</sup> Northumberland Archives, ZWN/I/74, Designs for estate buildings at Wallington; Northumberland Archives, 672/E/1A/4, Wallington estate cash book 1747-1761.

Garrett, the earliest exponent of neo-Palladianism in the North East. Newton's employment as a craftsman executing Garrett's designs during the 1740s provided the circumstances in which he could build personal contacts upon his stylistic credentials, and it is in this earlier phase of Newton's life that the major source of his patronage developed.

Once Blakett and Bowes employed Garrett, other wealthy families in the region sought his designs throughout the 1740s to demonstrate their taste. Perhaps the most important family (for the career of William Newton) to commission work from Garrett were the Ord family of Fenham, Benwell and Whitfield. Indeed, the Ords were the key to William Newton's transformation, as their family, social, business and judicial network was the means through which he came to the attention of many patrons in the North East. The Ords were descended from John Ord (died 1721), who served as under-sheriff of Newcastle from 1685 to 1703.<sup>21</sup> His wife was Anne Hutchinson from Leeds, and her fortune enabled the Ords to buy their estates at Fenham near Newcastle, Newminster Abbey near Morpeth, and Hunstanworth near Hexham. His grandson, William Ord (William Newton's first employer), inherited Fenham Hall in 1745 on the death of his brother John. The new Fenham Hall, designed by Daniel Garrett, was under construction and Robert and William Newton were among the craftsmen employed there. William Ord married Ann Dillingham, 'heiress to a rich London apothecary' and this enabled the Ords to purchase the estates of the bankrupt Whitfield family at Whitfield on the River South Tyne.<sup>22</sup> William Ord's uncle, Robert Ord (1701 to 1778), was a solicitor who served as MP for Morpeth and eventually became chief baron of the Scottish exchequer. Robert's son John Ord (1729 to 1814) married Eleanor (1741 to 1818), daughter of John Simpson of Bradley Hall, near Ryton in County Durham. John

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<sup>21</sup> [Anon.], 'Ord, Robert (1700–1778)', rev. Anita McConnell, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>22</sup> Roz Southey, Margaret Maddison and David Hughes, *The Ingenious Mr Avison: Making Music and Money in Eighteenth Century Newcastle* (Tyne Bridge Publishing, 2009), p. 60.

Simpson was a merchant adventurer, Mayor of Newcastle in 1742 and a member of the Common Council supporting many of the building works executed by Robert and William Newton, including the Newcastle Infirmary. Peter Leach suggested that his house, Bradley Hall, may have been built by William Newton.<sup>23</sup> This may have been on the recommendation of his son-in-law's cousin, William Ord.

William Ord was elected Sheriff of Northumberland in 1747, a position which Phoebe Lowery noted was often conferred on 'new entrants to the élite ... shortly after, or at the same time as, they were engaged in building activity'.<sup>24</sup> With his own social position secure, Ord was able to provide patronage for others. Ann Ord proved to be an equally influential patron. Recent research highlighted her artistic patronage, particularly for the composer Charles Avison, whom she introduced to other élite families, including the Bowes of Gibside.<sup>25</sup> Saunders noted that 'every young architect dreamed of a patron who gave employment, or better still introductions to his friends.'<sup>26</sup> The Ords assisted the building careers of Robert and William Newton, using their family, civic and commercial networks to achieve this.

The construction of the Newcastle Infirmary, to Garrett's design, was one of the most important instances of Ord's patronage of Robert and William Newton. An army of craftspeople, labourers, traders and suppliers was required to build the Infirmary, and a building committee was established to contract with these workers. William Ord was the chairman of this committee. Among its first appointments was that of the Inspector, who was required as clerk-of-works to organise the workers and ensure that the Infirmary was constructed in time and within the funds raised by subscribers. In contrast to all of the other appointments, in which competing contractors submitted bids, Robert

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<sup>23</sup> Peter Leach, *James Paine* (London, Zwemmer, 1988), p. 232, n.19.

<sup>24</sup> Lowery, 'Patronage and the Country House', p. 65.

<sup>25</sup> Southey, Maddison and Hughes, *Ingenious Mr Avison*, p. 60.

<sup>26</sup> Edward Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 19

Newton was appointed as Inspector without any mention of competition. It is possible that Ord's support as chairman of the building committee was instrumental in securing this appointment, perhaps with additional support from Ralph Carr, whose house the Newtons had just completed, and Lancelot Allgood, whose house was being built by Robert Newton at the same time as the Infirmary. The significance of the Infirmary in launching the career of Robert Newton and his son William as the builders of first resort for the north-east élite cannot be over-stated.

As well as the many individual subscribers introduced to the Newtons by the Infirmary, William Ord's patronage brought them to the attention of one of the most powerful groups in the North East, as he was a member of the Newcastle Company of Hostmen. The Hostmen were a trading company whose charter from Elizabeth I made them the exclusive traders of coal on the River Tyne. As such they controlled the principal source of the town's economy and this economic power rapidly became political power as the Corporation was dominated by Hostmen. Brooks noted that members of the Company of Hostmen and the intertwined Merchant Adventurers became 'leading political figures'.<sup>27</sup> The Merchant Adventurers controlled all trade other than coal, and many merchants were members of both companies. The lists of members of these two companies are synonymous with lists of sheriffs and mayors, alderman, councillors and vestrymen of Newcastle throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>28</sup> To these men, there was little, if any, distinction between their own prosperity and that of the town. This fact must be recalled when examining the connections between the economic, social, political and cultural developments in the region. William Ord senior became a Hostman in 1748, the year after his service as Sheriff of Northumberland;

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<sup>27</sup> Christopher Brooks, 'Apprenticeship, Social Mobility and the Middling Sort, 1550-1800', in *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800*, ed. by Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), p. 60.

<sup>28</sup> *Extracts from the Records of the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle upon Tyne*, ed. by F.W. Dendy. Publications of the Surtees Society, 101 (1899); *Extracts from the Records of the Company of Hostmen of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, ed. by F.W. Dendy. Publications of the Surtees Society, 105 (1901).

perhaps membership of the Hostmen's company signified his intention to secure his status in the town as well as the county.

The Hostmen demonstrated their ability to organise matters in the town with the construction of the Infirmary between 1751 and 1753. William Ord I was the chairman of the building committee set up on 8 July 1751. Of the eleven men on the committee, seven were Hostmen and the Treasurer Thomas Airey was a Merchant Adventurer, a company closely related to the Hostmen, with several gentlemen holding joint membership. Of the House Committee for the Infirmary that met on 6 July 1751, sixteen out of thirty-six members were Hostmen (with another two Merchant Adventurers), as was one of the six Presidents of the General Consistory Court (Lord Ravensworth) and two of the Vice-Presidents (Matthew Ridley and Matthew White). The Hostman William Ord I was also the Chairman of the Court.<sup>29</sup> Kathleen Wilson noted the development of subscription hospitals in the eighteenth century as signifying a challenge to the 'customs and imperatives of patrician society', citing their emphasis upon equal voting rights for all subscribers, regardless of their social status.<sup>30</sup> However, her belief that these hospitals represented a challenge to the existing oligarchy is hard to marry with the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Newcastle Infirmary in 1751. Although as Wilson suggests generally the idea of a Newcastle Infirmary was conceived by medical men and supported by many clergymen, many of the subscribers were also deeply involved in the oligarchy controlling Newcastle Corporation and its Janus, the Hostmen's Company. Wilson's statement that voluntary hospitals challenged the existing order is also difficult to sustain: although the Newcastle Infirmary provided emergency care to accident victims, which was undoubtedly a humanitarian role, other patients were nominated by subscribers, a reaffirmation of traditional patronage and

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<sup>29</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1 House Committee Minutes 1751

<sup>30</sup> Kathleen Wilson, 'Urban Culture and Political Activism in Hanoverian England: The Example of Voluntary Hospitals', in *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Eckhart Hellmuth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 165-184.

patriarchy systems that compelled the afflicted to beg their social superiors for support. Those discharged from the Infirmary as beneficiaries of this patronage were obliged to thank the governors for their treatment, a reminder to the afflicted of who held the power and the purse-strings in their lives.<sup>31</sup>

It is clear from the minutes of the House and Building committees that the Infirmary was a money-making opportunity for the commercial subscribers, and those who were members of the Hostmen's and Merchant Adventurers Companies especially. Given their control of trade, it would have been impossible to build the Infirmary without their contacts, supplies and financial expertise. Bricks were bought from William Ord senior, chairman of the building committee, at 9s per thousand, whilst Captain Stephenson, another subscriber and Hostman who sat on the building committee, was paid for timber.<sup>32</sup> Examples of how funds were channelled among the subscribers' networks include the payment to William Ord senior of £213 for bricks on 20 November 1752.<sup>33</sup> George Bowes, one of the Presidents, and Ralph Carr and Dr Askew, also subscribers, gave access to their quarries at Whickham and Gibside for stone to be used at the Infirmary.<sup>34</sup> Carr also received £22 17s 3d for deals.<sup>35</sup> The Mayor of Newcastle (and Hostman), Alderman Ralph Sowerby, was paid £5 per 100 for 300 battings (battens), £31 2s 4d and £60 for deals and £29 17s 2d and £84 19s for scaffolding timber, contracts unimaginable today.<sup>36</sup> His fellow Hostman George Headlam was paid £17 1s for laths.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the clearest indication of the Hostmen's desire to avoid competition and share the profits between their members came on 19 February 1753 when four bids were received from subscribers to supply cast iron

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<sup>31</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1 House Committee Minutes 1751

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee meeting 8 July 1751.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee meeting 20 November 1752.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee meeting 25 November 1751.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee 22 January 1753.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee meetings 13 April 1752, 23 October 1752, 20 November 1752 and 22 Jan 1753.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, building committee meeting 3 August 1752.

weights for the sash windows. In all other contracts, where tenders were submitted by craftspeople and traders, one bid was chosen and the others rejected. With the sash weights, each of the four subscribers was permitted to supply a quarter of the weights required.<sup>38</sup>

Their work at the Infirmary was of crucial importance for the careers of William Newton and his father Robert. They were to work for five of the six Presidents (Lord Ravensworth, George Bowes, the Mayor of Newcastle, Sir Walter Blackett and the earl of Northumberland) and three of the six Vice-Presidents (Matthew Ridley, Sir Henry Grey and Matthew White), five of the families represented in the House Committee and five of the Building Committee. The Infirmary may have been the first opportunity for William Newton to meet a future tenant and neighbour, the famous composer Charles Avison. Avison gave the proceeds from a series of concerts to support the Infirmary and in 1763 moved into the Green Court, described as ‘a select square with good, roomy modern houses’. It is possible that Newton built the houses, as he lived in one and had seven tenants, including Avison.<sup>39</sup>

William Ord I, Newton’s first and most important patron, died in 1768, leaving his estates to his sons William II (1752 to 1789) and James (1761 to 1836). William Ord II served as High Sheriff of Northumberland in 1777, whilst his brother James took holy orders and succeeded to his father’s estates at Langton in Leicestershire. Their marriages provided further connections for William Newton, since both married daughters of Charles Brandling of Gosforth Park (1733 to 1802), whose house was built by James Paine between 1755 and 1764. In 1779 William Ord II married Eleanor Brandling and his brother James married Barbara Brandling in 1787. In 1777, their sister-in-law Elizabeth Brandling had married Ralph William Grey of Backworth Hall

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<sup>38</sup> HO/RVI/2/1 House Committee Minutes 1751: building committee 19 February 1753.

<sup>39</sup> Southey, Maddison and Hughes, *Ingenious Mr Avison*, p. 98.

(built by Newton). In 1780 another sister Margaret Brandling married Rowland Burdon II of Castle Eden, whose father had commissioned Newton to rebuild the church at Castle Eden and the new mansion house completed in 1777. Finally, Sarah Frances Brandling married Matthew Bell of Woolsington Hall in 1792.<sup>40</sup> A further beneficial link, possibly derived from Newton's relationship with the Ord family, was with Thomas Charles Bigge (1739 to 1794) of Benton House, Northumberland. In 1772 Bigge married Jemima Ord, sister of William Ord II and James Ord.

Thomas Charles Bigge was a proprietor of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms, built by William Newton 1774 to 1776.<sup>41</sup> On three occasions Bigge, acting in official capacities, was asked to recommend an architect, and each time he recommended Newton. The first was as a vestryman at St Bartholomew's church in Longbenton, rebuilt to Newton's designs in 1790.<sup>42</sup> The other occasions were in Bigge's role as a Justice of the Peace. In 1791 he was tasked by the Assizes to find a suitable architect for the House of Correction at Tynemouth, and in 1793 was tasked to find an architect for the House of Correction at Morpeth.<sup>43</sup> On both occasions he recommended William Newton; there is no evidence that any other architects were even consulted by Bigge. This consistent support suggests that Bigge had personal experience of Newton's abilities, certainly through his family connections and possibly because Newton had built Bigge's own house, Benton Hall. It would appear that William Newton was the first choice for any building work required by this extended family.

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<sup>40</sup> 'Charles Brandling (30 May 1733 to 29 June 1802)', *rootsweb*, <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cbye/brandling/brandling/charles/index.htm>> [accessed 25 November 2012] and DULASC, DPRI/1/1789/O3/1-6, Will of William Ord of Fenham, 20 October 1783.

<sup>41</sup> Newcastle City Library, Local Studies Library *The Proprietors of the New Assembly Rooms June 1776*. L942.825 N5370.

<sup>42</sup> G.W.D. Briggs, 'William Newton and Long Benton Church', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., XIII (1985), 217-220.

<sup>43</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book QSO 13, pp. 344-418 and pp. 461-528.

Another of the Newtons' earliest clients was Ralph Carr of Dunston Hill, near Whickham, in 1750. A new entrance front was added to the earlier house and once again Robert and William Newton supervised the construction.<sup>44</sup> No architect has been identified, but Dunston Hill is in the parish of Whickham, as is Gibside, George Bowes's estate, where Garrett designed additions to the hall and a new banqueting house. Bowes and Carr knew each other very well, so Garrett is perhaps the strongest candidate for the design of Dunston Hill. Carr was a subscriber to the Infirmary and the Assembly Rooms, and in 1777 he purchased a house in Charlotte Square from William Newton, becoming Newton's neighbour for the rest of the latter's life.<sup>45</sup> Carr was a Merchant Adventurer, with links to many merchants across Britain, the American Colonies and Europe, and also the founder of one of the oldest provincial banks in Britain, the Newcastle Bank, which he founded in 1756. He remained a partner in the bank until he resigned in 1787, though he continued to be involved until his death in 1806.

Carr's partners in the Newcastle Bank also had close links to buildings constructed by William Newton. The original partners were Matthew Bell of Woolsington, near Ponteland, (who was married to a daughter of Matthew Ridley of Heaton Hall, another Infirmary subscriber), John Cookson, who owned the Close Glassworks and was another Infirmary subscriber, and Joseph Airey, like Carr a Merchant Adventurer who had served as Treasurer during the construction of the Infirmary. During Carr's lifetime, the partners of the Bank changed several times: in 1762 Joseph Saint became a partner, Airey died in 1770 and was replaced by Carr's nephew John Widdrington; James Wilkinson and Thomas Gibson joined in 1784, Sir John Eden and Sir Matthew White Ridley (a proprietor of the Assembly Rooms and

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<sup>44</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection, ZCE/12/5 Cash book 1749-53.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, ZCE 8/22, Lease and plan of a house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, 1777, between William Newton and Ralph Carr.

subscriber to Newton's restoration of St Nicholas's church in Newcastle) became partners in 1786.<sup>46</sup> The latter employed William Newton at his house at Heaton in 1779, whilst Widdrington's country house, Hauxley Hall, was remodelled after 1783 in a style compatible with many others by Newton.<sup>47</sup> Some of the clients of the Newcastle Bank were also Newton's clients, including the Bigges of Benton, Lord Ravensworth of Eslington Park, Edward Collingwood of Dissington Hall, the Revd. Dockwray of Charlotte Square, and the Ellisons of Hebburn Hall and Charlotte Square.<sup>48</sup> Henry Ellison (1734 to 1795) was, like Ralph Carr, a Merchant Adventurer (from 1765) and a Hostman (from 1777).<sup>49</sup> As guardians of family and institutional finances, Carr and his partners were ideally placed as 'community brokers', able to introduce their clients to other services, such as architects, within the town.<sup>50</sup>

The third identifiable client of Robert and William Newton in the period before 1760 was Lancelot Allgood (1711 to 1782), who obtained designs from Garrett to rebuild Nunwick Hall. Construction started in 1750, and one of the chief craftsmen was Robert Newton.<sup>51</sup> Allgood employed the Newtons in 1762 to remodel Simonburn church, of which he was patron, and was one of the Proprietors of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms. His son James Allgood (1749 to 1807) also employed William

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<sup>46</sup> Maberly Phillips, "'The Old Bank'" (Bell, Cookson, Carr, and Airey), Newcastle upon Tyne', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, xvi (1894), 452-470; A. W. Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry in North-East England, 1650-1830* (Sunderland: University of Sunderland Press, 1999), pp. 164-168.

<sup>47</sup> 'Hauxley Hall, *Images of England* database,

<<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details/Default.aspx?id=236805&mode=adv>> [accessed 25 November 2012].

<sup>48</sup> Phillips, 'The Old Bank', p. 461.

<sup>49</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. 88.

<sup>50</sup> Shani D'Cruze, 'The Middling Sort in Eighteenth-Century Colchester: Independence, Social Relations and the Community Broker', in *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800*, ed. by Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (Hampshire: The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1994), pp. 181-207.

<sup>51</sup> Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 (ZAL) Box 46.1 Journal 1745-6, Box 46.2 Journal 1746-7, Box 46.5 Journal 1748-9, Box 46.6 Journal 1750-2, Box 47.1 Journal 1759-69, Box 48.2 Cash account 1779-1807.

Newton to make alterations at Nunwick Hall and in 1794 to supervise the rebuilding of Newbrough church.<sup>52</sup>

The building work of the 1740s and the Infirmary introduced Newton to the group of north-east families who had embraced the neo-Palladian style and patronised Burlington's protégés Garrett and Paine. By the 1770s, many of these patrons had died or were preparing to hand on their estates to their sons. Newton's network was strong enough, however, to secure a prize commission which would demonstrate his abilities and introduce a new generation of clients to his work; he was chosen to design the New Assembly Rooms on Westgate Road in Newcastle, the premier social space for the north-east élite. The Assembly Rooms were funded by subscription, and when they opened in June 1776 there were 123 Proprietors. Of these, 18 had or would have their property remodelled by Newton: the duke and duchess of Northumberland, Sir Walter Blackett, the Corporation of Newcastle, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Edward Collingwood, Andrew Robinson Stoney (married to Mary Eleanor Bowes), Rowland Burdon junior, George Colpitts, Ralph William Grey, Thomas Charles Bigge, John Erasmus Blackett, Sir Lancelot Allgood, Ralph Carr, Matthew Ridley, William Ord junior, Henry Ellison and Henry Hudson.<sup>53</sup> Many of the other proprietors had building work attributed to Newton, including Lord Ravensworth (Eslington Park), John Simpson (Bradley Hall), William Hargrave (Shawdon Hall), and Robert Lisle (Acton Hall).<sup>54</sup> Others were members of organisations that employed Newton, including James Moncaster of Wallsend Hall (a member of the Common Council of Newcastle and the Infirmary building committee), William Cramlington of Cramlington Hall (a co-founder

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<sup>52</sup> Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 ZAL Box 83.15 Mr Newton's estimate and plan for repairing Simonburn church 1763; Northumberland Archives, Faculties Collection, A.103 Diocese of Newcastle faculties Box 2: Newbrough Bundle 4 Plan of new church of 1864 has outline of old church; Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 (ZAL) Box 40.16, Correspondence re rebuilding of Newbrough chancel.

<sup>53</sup> *The Proprietors of the New Assembly Rooms, 1776*, Newcastle City Library, L942.825/N5370.

<sup>54</sup> John Grundy, Grace McCombie, Peter Ryder and Humphrey Welfare, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle), Gawen Aynesley of Littleharle Tower (the Newcastle Infirmary and a JP during Newton's work on the Moot Hall in Newcastle), and William Peareth of Usworth Hall (the Infirmary and Common Council).<sup>55</sup>

Helen Berry analysed the backgrounds of the 128 subscribers to the Assembly Rooms listed as Proprietors in 1776, noting that 42% came from the nobility and greater gentry and 30% from the 'wealthier members of the civic élite (the bankers, merchants and professional men).'<sup>56</sup> Further analysis of the Proprietors reveals that, as with the Infirmary twenty-five years earlier, the Newcastle Hostmen were prominent backers of the scheme. Thirty-two Hostmen were subscribers. Unfortunately, the accounts for the construction period of the Assembly Rooms have not survived, so it is impossible to ascertain if, as at the Infirmary, the Assembly Rooms provide opportunities for profit for the Proprietors. However, with the Rooms intended to demonstrate the commercial success of the town it would be surprising if this was not the case; certainly one of the most prominent features of the new Rooms, the seven cut-glass chandeliers of the principal ballroom, including the central one which was said to have cost 600 guineas, were made in the Close glassworks.<sup>57</sup> The success of the Assembly Rooms secured for Newton the patronage which provided building work until his death in 1798, and which was to assist him in neutralising threats from younger architects with more up-to-date training and styles, including David Stephenson and John Dodds.

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<sup>55</sup> Muncaster's house, Wallsend Hall, has features common to many of Newton's buildings including plain wall surfaces divided by horizontal bands. Peareth's house, Usworth Hall (demolished c.1900) also had these features (Peter Meadows and Edward Waterson, *Lost Houses of County Durham* (York: Jill Raines, 1993), p. 39 and back cover). Colpitt's house, Killingworth Hall, had wings added in the late eighteenth century which were attributed to William Newton (Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland* (York: Jill Raines, 1996), p. 53).

<sup>56</sup> Helen Berry, 'Creating Polite Space: The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 124-128; *Proprietors of the New Assembly Rooms*.

<sup>57</sup> Eneas Mackenzie, *Historical Account of Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Including the Borough of Gateshead* (Newcastle: Mackenzie and Dent, 1827), pp. 231-232.

The third major subscription-funded building that Newton worked upon was the controversial re-ordering of St Nicholas's Church (now Cathedral) in Newcastle, this time in partnership with David Stephenson.<sup>58</sup> Once again analysis of the subscribers shows a substantial number were Hostmen or Merchant Adventurers. Mackenzie listed 119 subscribers: there were four institutions (the Corporation of Newcastle, the Tyne Bank, the Exchange Bank and the Newcastle Bank), four women and five clergymen. Of the remaining subscribers, there were seventeen Hostmen and thirty Merchant Adventurers. Aristocratic subscribers were the earl of Bute, Sir Thomas Clavering, Lord Mount Stewart, Lord Ravensworth, and Sir Matthew White Ridley. However, there was little difference in outlook between the aristocrats and the other merchant subscribers: Clavering and Ridley were Merchant Adventurers and Lord Ravensworth was intimately involved in the coal trade. Even one of the clergymen, Revd. Henry Ridley, was a Merchant Adventurer. Subscribers also profited from the building work, as at the Infirmary: George Stephenson was paid £302 for the timber used in the renovation, and Newton and Stephenson also subscribed and they were paid for their plans and supervision of the work.<sup>59</sup>

The Hostmen and Merchant Adventurers were not the only influential group in the eighteenth-century North East whose members profited from Newton's work and who counted amongst his 'friends'; Freemasonry enjoyed widespread popularity and attracted powerful members from among the regional élite. Following the re-organisation of the craft in England by the Grand Lodge of London after 1717, Freemasonry embraced men of all backgrounds, occupations, religions and political beliefs, providing a forum, within a common ritualised environment, to socialise and make contacts. Jacob quoted a lecture to a Newcastle Lodge in 1776 by Revd. R. Green of Durham stating that the lodge was 'a place of safe of safe retirement where we may

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<sup>58</sup> Mackenzie, *Historical Account of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, pp. 235-255.

<sup>59</sup> Northumberland Archives, EP 86/120, Repairs to St Nicholas Church, Newcastle, 1783-1787.

securely enjoy generous freedom, innocent mirth, social friendship and useful instruction.’<sup>60</sup> Among the nobility, the duke of Montagu (the first Grand Master), the duke of Cumberland, the duke of Norfolk, the duke of Newcastle, the earls of Burlington, Pembroke, Chesterfield, Lord Cobham and Sir Robert Walpole (Prime Minister and later 1<sup>st</sup> earl of Oxford) were masons. Literary masons included Voltaire, Alexander Pope, James Addison and Richard Steele, and the antiquarians William Stukeley and William Hutchinson.<sup>61</sup> Linda Colley noted that ‘by 1800, almost all male members of the Royal Family were masons and the Prince of Wales [later King George IV] was Grand Master from 1790 to 1813’.<sup>62</sup> Sir Christopher Wren was a Freemason, as were many fellow members of the Royal Society.<sup>63</sup> Other architects who joined the Freemasons included Hawksmoor, Batty Langley, Sidney Smirke, Robert Brettingham and Sir John Soane.<sup>64</sup> These examples show the penetration of Freemasonry throughout eighteenth-century élites, and the national picture was repeated at provincial level.

There were many lodges in the North East during William Newton’s lifetime, some dating from the early eighteenth century.<sup>65</sup> There is no evidence to confirm that Newton was a Freemason, but a brief analysis reveals the extent of membership in the region and close links between Freemasonry and many of Newton’s clients. St John’s Lodge in Newcastle met at its own hall on Low Friar Street, situated between Newton’s two Newcastle addresses in the Green Court and Charlotte Square. Matthew White, a Vice-President of the Infirmary who later employed Newton in the construction of the

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<sup>60</sup> Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 59.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Walker, ‘Freemasonry and Neo-Palladianism’, *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 125, No. 969 (Dec., 1983), 746; Paul Langford A Polite and Commercial People, p. 242; Ophelia Field, *The Kit-Kat Club* (London: Harper Perennial, 2009), p. 372; Patrizia Granziera, ‘Freemasonic Symbolism and Georgian Gardens’, *Esoterica*, 5 (2003), 41-72; William Hutchinson, *The Spirit of Masonry in Moral and Elucidatory Lectures* (London, 1775).

<sup>62</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons*, p. 227.

<sup>63</sup> Lisa Jardine, *On a Grand Scale*, pp. 468-469.

<sup>64</sup> Vaughan Hart, *Sir John Vanbrugh*, p. 11; Eileen Harris, ‘Batty Langley: A Tutor to Freemasons (1696-1751)’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 119 (May, 1977), 327-335; Gillian Darley, *John Soane*, p. 222.

<sup>65</sup> J. Strachan, *Northumbrian Masonry and the Development of the Craft in England* (London: Bro. George Kenning, 1898); William Waples, ‘The State of Masonry in Newcastle upon Tyne, 1725-1814, Part 1’, *Transactions of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge*, 72 (1959), 12-26.

new south front at Blagdon from 1752 to 1757, was a member of St John's Lodge and served as its master in 1731. One of the doctors of the Infirmary, Adam Askew, was also a member of this lodge, as was Revd. Dr. Scott, vicar of Simonburn in Northumberland from 1771 to 1814.<sup>66</sup> Another member of St John's Lodge, John Rose, supplied 64,000 stock bricks for the Infirmary in 1751.<sup>67</sup>

Strachan noted that many lodges in the region met in inns, a sign that Freemasonry was not a hidden organisation in the eighteenth-century North East, but a visible part of the sociability noted by Borsay and other historians. In 1772, the Grand Lodge in London sent '£20 for the relief of three [Newcastle] brethren whose homes on the Tyne bridge were destroyed by inundation' the previous year, when many of the bridges on the Tyne were washed away.<sup>68</sup> The much-publicised 1774 laying of the foundation stone for the Assembly Rooms included Masonic ceremonies and soon after the Rooms opened in 1776, they were adopted as a lodge meeting place for the St Nicholas Lodge. In October 1777, an even more conspicuous sign of the pervasiveness of Freemasonry occurred when a new hall for St John's Lodge opened in Low Friar Street, and nearly 400 Freemasons dined in celebration at Newton's New Assembly Rooms in Westgate Road. The dedication ceremony included an oration by the Revd. Dr Scott and 'the best vocal performers from Durham Cathedral assisted' in the ceremonies.<sup>69</sup> The hall was a single-storey building but its principal façade had a pediment, sash windows and some classical detailing. It is possible that Newton was the designer, riding high after the success of the Assembly Rooms, which opened the previous year. Waples noted of the St Nicholas Lodge that 'the élite of the town were

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<sup>66</sup> Waples, 'State of Masonry', p. 13.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23; TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1 House Committee Minutes 1751: building committee meeting 7 October 1751.

<sup>68</sup> William Waples, *Newcastle upon Tyne Lodge No. 24 Bi-centenary 1766-1966* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Waples, 'State of Masonry', p. 17.

enrolled in its books'.<sup>70</sup> Among the most prominent was Sir Walter Blackett of Wallington Hall in Northumberland and the Newe House in Newcastle, who served as Master of the Lodge.<sup>71</sup> Blackett also owned the lease on the land occupied by the St John's Lodge in Low Friar Street, for it was noted that the Lodge closed shortly after he foreclosed on the lease after the lodge was 'ruined by extravagance and the introduction of politics'.<sup>72</sup> The Newcastle builder and purchaser of Sir Walter Blackett's mansion in Newcastle, George Anderson, was also a member of St Nicholas's Lodge.<sup>73</sup>

Other clients of William Newton with Masonic connections included Matthew Ridley, who served as Provincial Grand Master from 1734 to 1771, was a Vice President of the Infirmary from 1751, was Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers, four times Mayor of and five times Member of Parliament for Newcastle. Ridley died in 1778, but Newton rebuilt the Ridley family house, Heaton Hall, in 1779 for his son, Sir Matthew White Ridley. Sir John Edward Swinburne of Capheaton Hall (remodelled by Newton from 1788 to 1791) became the Provincial Grand Master in 1807.<sup>74</sup> Rowland Burdon II of Castle Eden (whose house was built by Newton) was a member of the Sea Captain's Lodge in Sunderland from 1790.<sup>75</sup> Over 200 brethren marched in procession for the laying of the first stone of Monkwearmouth Bridge, funded by Burdon, on 24 September 1793.<sup>76</sup>

The *Freemasons' Magazine* noted that the County of Durham 'has in a peculiar manner been favourable to the diffusion of Masonic principles and establishments'.

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<sup>70</sup> William Waples, *Newcastle upon Tyne Lodge No. 24 Bi-centenary 1766-1966* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>72</sup> Strachan, *Northumbrian Freemasonry*, p. 88.

<sup>73</sup> United Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Freemasonry: Sn 670/I List of Masons made in St Nicholas's Lodge, No. 248, Newcastle upon Tyne, 19 December 1787.

<sup>74</sup> Masonic History of Province of Northumberland  
<<http://www.northumberlandmasons.org/home/province/provincial-history.html>> 18 November 2012.

<sup>75</sup> United Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Freemasonry: Sn 411/vi Lodge No. 129 Sunderland Sea Captain's Lodge.

<sup>76</sup> *Freemasons' Magazine*, II (1794), p. 246.

Among the county élite, William Henry Lambton was installed as Provincial Grand Master by the Grand Master the duke of Cumberland on 6 October 1787 in the presence of over 150 brethren.<sup>77</sup> His fellow officers included George Nicholson, Surveyor to the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral, his brother John Nicholson, Grand Sword-Bearer,<sup>78</sup> and the Provincial Grand Architect Christopher Ebdon (made a Mason in Cornwall in 1793).<sup>79</sup> The latter's brother and fellow Freemason, Thomas Ebdon, was one of the Cathedral choristers. Southey noted of another Durham chorister Edward Meredith that 'he and many other musicians in the area were freemasons'.<sup>80</sup> The actor Stephen Kemble served a Worshipful Master of the Marquis of Granby Lodge in Durham after his retirement from the stage.<sup>81</sup> George Baker, whose father had transformed Elemore Hall, near Durham City, in the 1750s, was also a Freemason.<sup>82</sup>

It is notable how Masonic processions formed part of many civic occasions during the eighteenth century. As well as the major events such as the Assembly Rooms and Monkwearmouth Bridge noted above, Masonic processions accompanied the laying of foundation stones for St John's church in Sunderland in 1764, Wooler church in 1765, and new theatres in North Shields and Durham.<sup>83</sup> Freemasonry was therefore a vibrant part of urban life in the region. In contrast to Wilson's belief that 'ordinary citizens ... were relegated to the status of observers' in civic life Freemasonry provided, at least for men of varying social, economic, political and religious origins, an inclusive

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<sup>77</sup> *Freemasons' Magazine*, II (1794), p. 246.

<sup>78</sup> United Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Freemasonry: Sn 558/iii Members of Lodge No. 195 Old Elvet, City of Durham

<sup>79</sup> United Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Freemasonry: Sn 558/vi Lodge No. 166, Durham, 3 September 1793.

<sup>80</sup> Roz Southey, *Music-making in North-East England During the Eighteenth Century* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006), p. 103.

<sup>81</sup> Strachan, *Northumbrian Freemasonry*, p. 97.

<sup>82</sup> United Grand Lodge Library and Museum of Freemasonry: Sn 558/v Lodge No. 166, Durham, 26 July 1786.

<sup>83</sup> *Freemasons' Magazine*, II, (1794), p. 246.

and unified opportunity to display their connectedness with society.<sup>84</sup> Although there is no evidence that William Newton was a Freemason, he was closely-identified with them through the use of his buildings and his clients and friends.<sup>85</sup>

It is clear that Newton's career profited from the extensive contacts and subsequent patronage accrued from major public building works. However, Newton's network was local not national. He was not able to create a more extensive practice in the north of England to challenge that of John Carr of York, although the instance of Newton's work at Gosford House, East Lothian, may indicate that he had more success across the Border, where he would have challenged the practice of James Nisbet of Kelso.<sup>86</sup> The limits of his circle of patrons were illustrated by his lack of involvement in building the military barracks erected in Northumberland and Durham during the eighteenth century, as the government's Barracks Department employed its own architects, James Johnson and John Sanders, who made the designs.<sup>87</sup> Newton could win commissions using his local connections, but clearly had no sway in designing for central government.

Newton was able to develop a network including some aristocrats and long-standing north-east families, but mainly focused upon gentry, merchant and professional families around Newcastle upon Tyne. How Newton developed and maintained this network of 'friends' requires further explanation. The first factor may have been his residence in a major regional centre. Much has been written of the opportunities for the

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<sup>84</sup> Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 297; this point is also made more generally in C Pamela Graves, 'Civic Ritual, Townscape and Social Identity in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Newcastle upon Tyne', in *Archaeologies of the British: Explorations of Identity in Great Britain and its Colonies 1600-1945*, ed. by Suzie Lawrence, (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) pp. 31-54.

<sup>85</sup> Pers. com. Diane Clements (Director of The Library and Museum of Freemasonry) to Richard Pears, 14 February 2011.

<sup>86</sup> Gosford House guidebook: Newton designed the offices containing stables, coach-house, kitchen, dairy, ice-house, bottle-house, costing £3521. Payment of 1790 May 30 By £21 paid Mr Wm Newton Architect in Newcastle. Information kindly provided by Mr David Hide.

<sup>87</sup> John R. Breihan, 'Army Barracks in the North East in the Era of the French Revolution', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., XVIII (1990), 165-176.

élite of urban life, not least the continuing debate about an ‘urban renaissance’ projected by Borsay.<sup>88</sup> Relatively little research exists, however, about the opportunities for those in the artisan stratum, for whom towns provided access to large numbers of potential clients. For those dependent for their living upon daily wages or fees from individual building commissions, time spent petitioning the élite at their country houses for work was not an option, not least because they would not be granted an audience. In town, however, the élite were much more accessible, and word-of-mouth could ensure that a good job for one client could bring work from others, extending the network of patronage.

William Newton fitted into this model of a provincial craftsman basing himself in the principal town in the region, and through hard work and reputation making the connections that would ensure he gained commissions. When he was able to build a house for himself, he did not build a suburban villa or country house similar to those he constructed for his clients, but built a fashionable town-house and also owned another in close proximity, dividing his time between these two urban residences.<sup>89</sup> His social activities were exclusively urban, as a proprietor of the Assembly Rooms and churchwarden at St Andrew’s, his parish church in Newcastle, and at St Mary’s church in Gateshead, where he had been married.<sup>90</sup> Urban life provided for Newton what a country house could not: proximity to potential clients drawn to the social and economic life of the major regional centre. This was an efficient means of making and sustaining contact with as many potential clients as possible, in an urban landscape to which he had made prominent architectural additions. It also kept him in close proximity to the

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<sup>88</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town 1660-1770* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

<sup>89</sup> Newton lived in close proximity to long-standing clients, including Ralph Carr of Dunston Hill House and the Ellisons of Hebburn Hall, who had houses in Charlotte Square. Other clients, including the Ridleys of Blagdon and Heaton Hall and the Allgoods of Nunwick Hall, had houses nearby in Westgate Road.

<sup>90</sup> Northumberland Archives, EP/13/77, Newcastle St Andrew Parish, Vestry Minute Book 1765 – 1810; DRO, EP/Ga.SM5/1, Gateshead St Mary Parish, Resolutions of vestry meetings, accounts, names of churchwardens and overseers, August 1681 - September 1807.

River Tyne, the principal transport network for many of the raw materials he used in his buildings, such as Baltic timber, and the metropolitan refinements that his clients expected to see in their new homes, including marble fireplaces, wallpaper and even water-closets. For Newton, there were few if any advantages in joining other professionals such as Dr Adam Askew or the lawyer William Ord, in establishing themselves in the countryside or the suburbs.<sup>91</sup> On the contrary, removal from town life would have left Newton isolated behind the walls of his estate, rather than accessible to clients at all times. It may also have been a step too far in his assertion of higher social status for one born an artisan to invite comparison with those born to money and the landed life. Instead, Newton stayed in Newcastle, where he used his house in Charlotte Square as a showcase to impress his clients with his skill and the range and quality of the workmanship that he could command.



Figure 4.1: William Newton's house, 1 Charlotte Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1769

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<sup>91</sup> Dr Adam Askew owned four country estates: Redheugh Hall in Gateshead, Whickham Hall in Whickham parish (where his fellow chief inhabitants were Ralph Carr and George Bowes); Pallinsburn in Northumberland, and Middleton Hall in Cumberland, see Mackenzie, *Historical Account of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, p. 505; William Ord's estates at Fenham, Benwell and Whitfield are noted above.

Newton's preference for urban living mirrored that of other eighteenth-century architects. In Derby, Friargate was one of the most prestigious streets during this period and here, in 1770, the architect Joseph Pickford built a fine house for himself.<sup>92</sup> Outside and inside, the house was a fine example of Pickford's skills, featuring high-quality brick façades with stone details, including a fine doorcase, pediment at roof level and balustrades beneath the windows. Inside there were plaster plaques and fireplaces in the style of Robert Adam. It appears that, like Newton, Pickford asserted his social status by living as a neighbour of former and prospective clients, whilst the urban location enabled him to engage with and profit from developments in the county town. John Carr, the pre-eminent provincial architect of eighteenth-century England, also built himself a large house in Skeldergate, York. His engagement with the urban milieu was even more prominent than Newton and Pickford, for Carr twice served as Lord Mayor of York, as a magistrate for the town and for the West and North Ridings of Yorkshire. As Ivan Hall noted, Carr 'was thus exceptionally well placed to win those public or semi-public commissions put out to competition'.<sup>93</sup> Although Carr eventually built a small country house for himself, it was only after these affirmations of his place in urban society.

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<sup>92</sup> Saunders, *Joseph Pickford*, p. 19.

<sup>93</sup> Ivan Hall, 'Carr, John (1723–1807)', *ODNB*, online edition.



Figure 4.2: Joseph Pickford's house (right) and others constructed by him, Friargate, Derby, 1770-1771

It is also doubtful whether Newton would have been in a financial position to build a villa for himself and maintain his family in the lifestyle that would be expected of a country gentleman. This required a regular level of high income to support living expenses and expectations, as well as the high costs of building a country house.<sup>94</sup> To attempt this would have risked his finances and brought the shadow of possible bankruptcy. Newton's speculative ventures were relatively modest. Although Charlotte Square seems to have been projected as a unified entity, it was built in several phases, the land tax records showing that the number of houses increased at each assessment between 1770 and 1777.<sup>95</sup> It appears that Newton initially built two houses for himself with which to impress potential clients, and possibly two others which could be sold.

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<sup>94</sup> A comparable example of the problems experienced by professional families moving from urban to county spheres was that of John Marsh, an amateur gentleman-musician in Kent. He inherited a country estate but found himself unable to afford the rounds of 'expensive Dinners Fox-hunting & Cards' of his new peer group and moved back to his preferred social and cultural lifestyle in a town (Helen Berry, 'Sense and Singularity: The Social Experiences of John Marsh and Thomas Stutterd in Late-Georgian England', in *Identity and Agency in England, 1500-1800*, ed. by Henry French and Jonathan Barry (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 178-199.

<sup>95</sup> TWAM, G.TAX2/5/1-137, Land tax records for St John's Parish, Newcastle. Evidence in the brickwork suggests that some doors have moved and spoiled the original symmetry of the central block. Rather curiously, on Charles Hutton's map of Newcastle of 1769, Charlotte Square is shown in outline as complete, yet the western house belonging to Ralph Carr that was not completed until 1777.

The income from these sales provided the funds for construction of the other houses. If the documented case of Ralph Carr's house in Charlotte Square can be seen as evidence of Newton's method, it appears that he left the relatively expensive luxury fittings such as fireplaces, and even the form of the principal staircase, to be decided by the purchasers and paid for when they were required.<sup>96</sup> Newton thus avoided tying up his own funds in buildings waiting to be sold.

The positioning of his new development at Charlotte Square also showed Newton's appreciation (and ability to maximise his knowledge) of his urban environment. Charlotte Square was within one hundred metres of Westgate Street, the 'most fashionable street in Newcastle' in the eighteenth century.<sup>97</sup> It was the principal route into the town for those gentry families living to the west, and more convenient on occasion for those coming from Northumberland to the north as it avoided Newgate Street which was used as a market-place. Westgate Road contained the town-houses of élite local families including the Riddleys and Claverings. One of the houses served as the assembly rooms for the town in the early eighteenth century and Newton's showcase New Assembly Rooms were built on Westgate Road in 1776. The families who purchased Newton's houses in Charlotte Square were buying into this élite landscape and asserting their own social status alongside the more established leading families, as the architect had done.

The families who became Newton's neighbours and lessees in Charlotte Square also demonstrate close connections with Newton's major public buildings and are a further example of the benefit to Newton's career of these commissions. The Reverend Thomas Dockwray (died 1783) was a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge University and vicar of Stamfordham in Northumberland from 1761. He was also a

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<sup>96</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection, ZCE 8/22, Lease and plan of a house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, 1777.

<sup>97</sup> A.W. Purdue, *Newcastle: The Biography* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2011), p. 130.

subscriber to the Newcastle Infirmary, where William Newton's father Robert supervised the construction, and as the Lecturer at St Nicholas's Church in Newcastle from 1752, Dockwray preached sermons at the consecration of the Infirmary chapel in 1754 and at subsequent anniversary meetings.<sup>98</sup> He subscribed to Wallis's *Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland* (1769).<sup>99</sup> He was also listed as a trustee for the repair of the road from Newcastle to Belford in 1746 and as owning freeholds in Wallsend in 1748, at Wolviston in County Durham in 1761, and at Tynemouth in 1774.<sup>100</sup> At Stamfordham, the vicarage was refronted in 1764 in a simple neo-Palladian style. Dockwray also owned land at North Shields, where a large square of town-houses bearing his name was constructed from 1764. These houses had many features in common with Charlotte Square, and it may be, given these associations, that Newton was involved in Rev.d Dockwray's building activities at North Shields and at Stamfordham.

Another of Newton's neighbours, John Erasmus Blackett (1728 to 1814) was related to Sir Walter Blackett of Wallington Hall in Northumberland, who owned the Newe House in the centre of Newcastle, and who was known as the 'king of Newcastle'. John Erasmus Blackett had a dual life, serving as an estate steward for his nephew Thomas Beaumont Blackett, who inherited Sir Walter's estates in 1777, but John was also an alderman of Newcastle Corporation and served as sheriff of Newcastle

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<sup>98</sup> Thomas Dockwray, *A Sermon Preached at the Consecration of the Infirmary Chapel at Newcastle upon Tyne Oct. XVIII. M.DCC.LIV* (Cambridge, 1754); Thomas Dockwray, *A Sermon Preached at St. Nicholas's Church in Newcastle, Before the Governors of the Infirmary for the Counties of Durham, Newcastle, and Northumberland, on Wednesday, June 26. 1754* (Cambridge, 1754).

<sup>99</sup> John Wallis, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland*, 2 vols (London, 1769).

<sup>100</sup> *The Poll at the Election of Knights of the Shire for the County of Northumberland: taken at Alnwick ... October, 1774*, (Newcastle, 1774); *The Poll of the Freeholders of the County of Northumberland, Taken at Alnwick on the 18th, 19th, 20th, 22d, 23d, and 24th days of February, 1747-8* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1748); *An Act for Repairing the High Road Leading From the North End of the Cow Cawsey, near the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne, to the Town of Belford, and From Thence to Buckton Burn, in the County of Northumberland* (London, 1746); *The Poll for Knights of the Shire for the County of Durham. Taken at the City of Durham, on the 1st, 2nd, 3d, and 10th days of April, 1761* (Newcastle, 1761).

in 1756 and mayor of Newcastle in 1765, 1780 and 1790.<sup>101</sup> John was also related by marriage to Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, a native of the North East, who in turn was a relative of Edward Collingwood of Chirton Hall and Dissington Hall, the latter one of Newton's final and finest works. Newton's neighbour on the north side of Charlotte Square was Henry Hudson (1720-1789), who also owned Whitley Hall in Whitley Bay, Northumberland.<sup>102</sup> He was one of the first residents of Charlotte Square, being listed in the land tax records from 1776 until his death.<sup>103</sup> The Ellison family, who lived in the Square from 1778, were related by marriage to their neighbours Henry Hudson and Revd. Dockwray. The Ellisons also used their patronage to provide building work for Newton, including the rebuilding of their country house, Hebburn Hall, rebuilding of the nave of Jarrow church in 1782, and the addition of aisles to South Shields church in 1784.<sup>104</sup>

As well as rebuilding churches, Newton participated in the management of two parishes, St Andrew's church in Newcastle and St Mary's church in Gateshead. Henry French's analysis of the link between parish responsibilities and the fashioning of identity among middling men is directly relevant to Newton's social position. He noted that the vestry was 'the most obvious forum in which those with power and position in the parish coalesced into a visible group of "chief inhabitants"'.<sup>105</sup> Newton's involvement in parish affairs demonstrated that as a professional he was welcomed in these roles alongside other 'chief inhabitants' drawn from merchant, professional and gentry backgrounds. Between 1764 and 1782 Newton served as a vestryman and

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<sup>101</sup> Newcastle City Council, *Mayors and Sheriffs of Newcastle 1700-1799* <<http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/lm1700>> [accessed 26 November 2012].

<sup>102</sup> Faulkner and Lowery, *Lost Houses of Northumberland*, p. 65.

<sup>103</sup> TWAM, G.TAX2/5/1-137: Land tax records for St John's Parish, Newcastle

<sup>104</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison Collection, ZCE 19/1 Cash Book 1789-1793; TWAM, Ellison Hall Infirmary, Hebburn HO.EH/2/1-6 Plans, 1937 – 1938; DULASC, DDR/EJ/FAC/3/131 includes unsigned plan for South Shields church; DRO, EP/SS.SH 5/7, South Shields St Hilda's Parish, Accounts for Enlarging the Chapel, 6 July 1787 and DRO, EP/SS.SH 14/1 South Shields St Hilda's Parish, Parish Scrapbook, p. 33; DULASC, Faculties book, p.213; DRO, EP/Ja.SP4/1, Jarrow churchwardens accounts 1768-83 name William Newton as designer.

<sup>105</sup> French, *Middling Sort of People*, p. 127.

church-warden at St Andrew's church in Newcastle.<sup>106</sup> This may have been the connection between Newton and several fellow vestry gentlemen whose houses are attributed to Newton: Bernard Shaw, of Usworth Hall near Washington; Robert Lisle of Acton House in Northumberland, and William Hargrave, of Shawdon Hall in Northumberland. Newton also worked for other vestry members, including the Vicar of Newcastle, Revd. Richard Fawcett, upon whose garden the Assembly Rooms were built in 1774; John Erasmus Blackett, Mayor, Alderman, Assembly Rooms Proprietor and from 1783 Newton's neighbour in Charlotte Square; and William Ord II for whom Newton refronted Fenham Hall and built Whitfield Hall. At St Mary's church in Gateshead Newton was one of the churchwardens listed for 1792. Other members of the vestry included his neighbour in Charlotte Square Henry Ellison, for whom Newton would soon rebuild Hebburn Hall.

Newcastle's civic culture afforded many opportunities to socialise and build networks of friends. Wilson, Hellmuth and Clark have written of the 'associational world' available to middling men, particularly in towns.<sup>107</sup> The range of clubs and societies available in Newcastle provided William Newton with opportunities to meet and build relationships with potential clients. Newton's involvement as one of the founders of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne (commonly known as the 'Lit and Phil') suggests that he was known to have an interest in such pursuits and may have been a member of other organisations whose membership lists are now lost. The final group of 'friends' in this analysis are the eleven men who joined

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<sup>106</sup> Northumberland Record Office: EP 13/77 St Andrew's Church, Newcastle. Vestry Minutes Book 1765-1810.

<sup>107</sup> Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Eckhart Hellmuth (ed.), *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies c1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Newton at the meeting in the Assembly Rooms on 24 January 1793 to establish the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The 'Lit and Phil' was the brainchild of the Reverend William Turner (1761-1859), minister of the Unitarian Church in Hanover Square. Turner came to Newcastle in 1782, from Manchester where he had been a member of the Literary and Philosophical Society there.<sup>108</sup> The Unitarians were an influential group within Newcastle, and Newton's association with members of the church may have come through David Stephenson, one of the congregation. David Stephenson was Newton's professional partner from 1783 when they worked together on the refurbishment of St Nicholas's Church, Newcastle.<sup>109</sup> Although Stephenson had won the contract to rebuild All Saints Church in Newcastle, after doubting Newton's plans to save the medieval church, little damage appears to have been done to their relationship, as they worked together on speculative houses at Westoe, near South Shields, in 1794 and at the Guildhall in Newcastle the same year.<sup>110</sup>

Other founding members of the Literary and Philosophical Society had links to Newton and his patrons. Revd. Edward Moises was Master of the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle from 1787. His uncle, Revd. Hugh Moises, previously held this position and educated many boys who went on to fame, including Admiral Collingwood and Lord Eldon. Hugh Moises's wife, Edward's aunt, was the sister of Matthew Ridley of Heaton Hall, Mayor of Newcastle and Governor of the Merchant Adventurers.<sup>111</sup> Hugh Moises was well-known to Newton, as he had subscribed to the Infirmary in the

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<sup>108</sup> Stephen Harbottle, *The Reverend William Turner: Dissent and Reform in Georgian Newcastle upon Tyne* (Leeds: Northern Universities Press, 1997), pp. 53-57.

<sup>109</sup> Stephenson's father, the master-carpenter John Stephenson, worked on the construction of Newton's Assembly Rooms 1774-76 (TWAM, DT.OAR 160/1/82, Newcastle Old Assembly Rooms Bills and Receipts June 1781-June 1782 includes 1777 work done at new Assembly Rooms by John Stephenson and son).

<sup>110</sup> For Westoe houses see *Newcastle Courant* 26 July 1794; for the Guildhall see TWAM, D.NCP/16/2 and D.NCP/16/1/3; TWAM, 589/16, Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-99, f. 279.

<sup>111</sup> Thompson Cooper, 'Moises, Hugh (1722-1806)', rev. S. J. Skedd, *ODNB*, online edition.

1750s and Newton built a porch onto the medieval school buildings in 1782.<sup>112</sup> It is likely that Newton was familiar with Edward Moises through these connections. William Cramlington, another founder-member of the Lit and Phil, served as Mayor of Newcastle in 1787 and was Mayor again in 1796. He served as Sheriff of Newcastle in 1775, so provided a further link between Newton and his former employers the Corporation. Cramlington's house, Cramlington Hall, was rebuilt in the late-eighteenth century and incorporates features common to Newton's designs. Robert Hopper Williamson was the Recorder of Newcastle, the most senior administrator in the town and a further link with the Corporation. The year after the establishment of the Literary and Philosophical Society, Newton and Stephenson were employed by the Corporation to refront the Guildhall, and Williamson and Cramlington, as members of the Corporation, may have influenced this decision. Of the other founding members, John Anderson, Dr Pemberton, Dr Ramsay and Dr Wood were physicians at the Infirmary, of which Newton had a long association, whilst Thomas Gibson was a banking partner of Sir Matthew White Ridley, whose family were life-long patrons of Newton. Thus, towards the end of his life, Newton was still able to draw upon an extensive network of contacts to provide building commissions, a network whose origins lay in the twist of fate that saw him as a thirteen year old boy and his father, working as joiners on the suburban estate of a prominent Newcastle family.

Further indications of William Newton's integration into polite culture were his displays of cultural identity. He was an urbanite, and may be considered one of the 'urban gentry', a status derived from his profession, the consumer reaction of the clients who were also willing to be his tenants and neighbours in Charlotte Square and Green Court, and his buildings which demonstrated his 'wealth, taste and discernment'.<sup>113</sup> He

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<sup>112</sup> Mackenzie, *History of Newcastle*, p. 443.

<sup>113</sup> Jon Stobart, 'Who Were the Urban Gentry? Social Élites in an English Provincial Town, c. 1680-1760', *Continuity and Change*, 26.1 (2011), 89-112.

embraced parochial identity through service as a churchwarden at St. John's church in Newcastle, and in St. Mary' church, Gateshead, where he married in 1763.<sup>114</sup> He was of sufficient standing within Newcastle to provide surety for people seeking loans.<sup>115</sup> He closely identified himself with cultural life in the North East. As well as designing the Newcastle Assembly Rooms he was one of its proprietors, associated with the successful business and landed families among the membership. Rosemary Sweet noted the social kudos of subscribing to provincial histories in this period, and Newton demonstrated his urban identity by subscribing to John Brand's *History of Newcastle* in 1789.<sup>116</sup> As a subscriber to the town history, Newton fits closely with Brewer's identification of subscribers as advertising their largesse and taste, a cultural consumer, as well as identifying himself with the élite funders and patrons of such works.<sup>117</sup> As affirmation of his professional identity 'Mr William Newton, architect, Newcastle' subscribed to *A Treatise on Mensuration Both in Theory and Practice* by Charles Hutton in 1770, a text closely related to Newton's work as an architect.<sup>118</sup>

The subscription to two copies of *Letters from America, Historical and Descriptive; Comprising Occurrences from 1769 to 1777 Inclusive* by 'Mr Newton, architect, Newcastle' demonstrates his wider outlook and cultural identity.<sup>119</sup> Many of

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<sup>114</sup> Northumberland Archives, EP/13/77, Newcastle St Andrew Parish, Vestry Minute Book 1765 – 1810; DRO, EP/Ga.SM 5/1, Gateshead St Mary Parish, Resolutions of vestry meetings, accounts, names of churchwardens and overseers, August 1681 - September 1807.

<sup>115</sup> On 21 March 1763 he was one of several gentlemen providing surety for Joseph Barker, a butcher, who had loaned £25 of the late Sir Thomas White's money, administered by the Corporation (Newcastle Corporation Common Council Book 1743-66, F.375) and on 15 June 1791 Newton provided surety for Richard Hill, the Town's Marshall (Newcastle Corporation Common Council Book 1785-99, F.279).

<sup>116</sup> Rosemary Sweet, 'Provincial Culture and Urban Histories in England and Ireland During the Long Eighteenth Century', in *Change, Convergence and Divergence. English and Irish Provincial Towns in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Peter Borsay and Lindsey Proudfoot (Oxford 2002); John Brand, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of Newcastle on Tyne* (London: printed for B. White & Son, and T. & I. Egerton, 1789), p. xiv.

<sup>117</sup> John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. (London: HarperCollins, 1997), pp. 165-6.

<sup>118</sup> Charles Hutton, *A Treatise on Mensuration Both in Theory and Practice* (Newcastle upon Tyne, printed for the author by T. Saint, 1770).

<sup>119</sup> William Eddis, *Letters from America, Historical and Descriptive; Comprising Occurrences from 1769 to 1777 Inclusive* (London, 1792).

his patrons also subscribed to this text.<sup>120</sup> Written by the ‘late surveyor of the customs at Annapolis in Maryland’, the book chronicled the key events of the American rebellion. The large number of what might be called ‘establishment’ subscribers suggests that this was not a text sympathetic to the rebels, especially as it was printed in 1792, the darkest period of the French Revolution, which challenged the libertarian sentiments held by many British radicals during the American struggle for independence. By subscribing to this work, Newton associated his name with the patriotic reaction in favour of the British establishment at a most critical time, and this is one of the few indicators of Newton’s political identity.

Newton’s religious identity as a member of the established church did not preclude work for Catholic clients such as the Charltons of Hesleyside Hall and he was associated with Unitarians, including his fellow architect and business partner David Stephenson, and the Revd. William Turner of the Hanover Street Chapel. This Unitarian connection and his interest in provincial cultural development may account for his role in creating one of the region’s most enduring legacies of the Enlightenment-inspired interest in science and learning: the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne. Newton was one of the twelve founder members who met as a committee establishing the Lit and Phil on 24 January 1793, in the Assembly Rooms he had built two decades earlier.<sup>121</sup> As Kathleen Wilson noted, there was a lively cultural atmosphere in Newcastle towards the final decade of the eighteenth century, with

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<sup>120</sup> Subscribers included Gawen Aynesley of Little Harle Tower, Thomas Charles Bigge of Benton House, Viscount Barnard, the Bishop of Durham and Mrs Barrington, Sir Francis Blake, Charles Brandling, the earl of Darlington, several prebendaries of Durham Cathedral and many local clergymen, Dr Joseph Forster of Newton-by-the-Sea, Mrs Grey of Backworth, and Rowland Burdon of Castle Eden (10 copies!).

<sup>121</sup> The others were Revd. William Turner, minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Hanover Square Chapel, who put forward the idea of a Literary and Philosophical Society, William Cramlington (former Mayor of Newcastle), Robert Hopper Williamson (Recorder of Newcastle), Rev Edward Moises (Master of the Royal Grammar School), Doctors Pemberton and Wood of the Newcastle Infirmary, Doctor Ramsay (President of the Newcastle Medical and Philosophical Society), Robert Doubleday (secretary of the Newcastle Dispensary), Thomas Gibson (a partner in the bank of Ridley, Bigge, Gibson and Co.), and the architect David Stephenson. *The Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne: Bicentenary Lectures 1993*, ed. and introduced by John Philipson (Newcastle upon Tyne: The Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1994), p. 14.

debating libraries, circulating libraries, a medical society, concerts, theatres, dancing and elocution lessons and lectures by visiting speakers. The town also had strong radical traditions, including a Sydney Club, Constitutional Club, Revolution Society and a Philosophical Society, with many political groups meeting in the town's inns, as noted by Thomas Bewick.<sup>122</sup> Newton's membership of the Lit and Phil demonstrated his association with this burgeoning civic and Enlightenment culture.

William Newton and David Stephenson shared their membership of the new Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne with Ralph Beilby and Thomas Bewick, a reminder of the cultural interplay within the North East at the close of the eighteenth century. There have been attempts to portray Bewick as a radical, due to his realistic portrayal of social conditions, poverty and inequality, and his membership of discussion groups at Swarleys and the Blackie Boy taverns.<sup>123</sup> However, condemnation of social ills and calls for improvement were not the sole preserve of radicals. Bewick came to verbal and physical blows with Thomas Spence over the latter's radical views, and Bewick shared his membership of the Lit and Phil with members of the political and economic élite of Newcastle. It is not correct to assert as Brewer did that '[t]hese clubs which Bewick frequented were for men of business; few gentlemen of the leisured classes belonged to them.'<sup>124</sup> In Newcastle, 'men of business' were often 'gentlemen of the leisured classes' as well, such as the Blacketts, Riddleys, Ords and Allgoods.

Although many of the members of the Lit and Phil were Unitarians, and thus religious dissenters, this did not make them political radicals or republicans either. Several members of the Lit and Phil had, like William Newton, subscribed to *Letters*

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<sup>122</sup> Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 67-68.

<sup>123</sup> Simon Schama, *A History of Britain, Vol 3: The Fate of Empire 1776-2000* (London: Bodley Head, 2009); John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. (London: HarperCollins, 1997), pp. 499-530.

<sup>124</sup> Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 508.

*from America*, published the previous year, which contradicts any suggestion that all members were radicals. The Lit and Phil may have been an attempt to create a respectable outlet for intellectual investigation at a time of retrenchment in the face of the French abyss: Stephen Harbottle noted that Louis XVI was executed only three days before the initial meeting attended by William Newton on 17 December 1792.<sup>125</sup> Although many in Newcastle had supported the American colonists in their struggle against arbitrary taxation and unrepresentative government, these were live concerns for the landowners, merchants and professionals of the English provinces too; it should not be a surprise that a commercial town such as Newcastle would have sympathizers with the colonists, though remaining loyal to the established order. Newton's subscriptions to books and institutions provide further insight into his character, and suggest that he was interested, like many of his peers, in international as well as local affairs, and an active participant in the Enlightenment values of the British élite.

William Newton's career demonstrated the extent to which patronage from an early age and the assiduous cultivation of personal connections with members of the economic, social and political élite, could transform the fortunes of a capable individual in provincial England. His penetration of the networks of power within Newcastle ensured his consideration for almost every civic building work, as well as many private commissions, in the town and much of its hinterland between 1760 and his death in 1798. This was a remarkable achievement, especially as nationally-renowned architects such as Robert Adam, Sir William Chambers and James Wyatt were known to the regional élite, as were younger architects with more professional and metropolitan training, such David Stephenson and Christopher Ebdon. Newton's network of patrons and his professional ability provided regular employment, but another critical factor in

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<sup>125</sup> Harbottle, *William Turner*, p. 55.

determining the success of provincial practitioners was a stable economic environment, providing relatively stable incomes for those seeking to build new country houses and civic buildings. As Christopher Ebdon's experience in Cornwall demonstrated, having design skills and training from leading national architects was not always sufficient. The provincial architect needed patronage and also a favourable economic environment in which to thrive. William Newton and John Carr of York were able to thrive, perhaps because they had 'friends', especially those with sufficient wealth to pay for building work. The economic background to Newton's career in north-east England, and his role in the rural and urban development of the region, will be assessed in Section II.

## **Section II: Urban Sprawl and Rural Renaissance: Economy and Élite Expenditure in North-East England**

Architecture is an art, but a particularly expensive one. The artist could paint for little outlay and persuade a client to buy his work, but for the architect to realise his ideas persuasion was not enough: the client had to have the funds to sustain expenditure over several years. Section II will examine the economic context of eighteenth-century architecture, focusing upon the economy of north-east England where William Newton and other architects sought patrons. The distinctive advantages for north-east builders deriving from the coal trade and related industries are examined in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 assesses the spaces remodelled by the north-east élite, challenging historians' focus upon an 'urban renaissance' in the region.<sup>1</sup> Instead, evidence is presented for a 'rural renaissance', in which élite families developed their estates for profit and for more private displays of their cultural and financial accomplishments among peers and selected viewers.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

## **Chapter 5: ‘Newcastle is Peru’: Funding Construction in North East England<sup>1</sup>**

The career prospects of provincial architects such as William Newton were dependent upon a wide range of factors, including demand for fashionable buildings and those individuals with the skills to create them, acceptance of social mobility, and the support of influential patrons. However, the most important single factor was the economy of the region in which the architect practiced. Stable incomes were essential if élite families and groups were to fund construction within what Peter Borsay called the ‘English urban renaissance’, and the simultaneous refashioning of élite domestic spaces such as country houses and town houses.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will examine the influence of the economy of north-east England in the eighteenth century upon the building industries. It will assess the sources of élite income to suggest that the coal-based economy of the North East was a powerful and distinctive force in enabling the region to withstand fluctuations in the national economy in a period of almost continuous warfare on the Continent, in North America, and in the Far East. The analysis of the coal trade will show that, as well as direct economic benefits, ‘black gold’ fostered a shared sense of enterprise in the region that elided traditional social boundaries, with pitmen as keen to support the trade as the colliery owners, for whom investment in coal required taking considerable risks to family finances and reputation. After examination of these implications for the economy and character of the regional élite, the chapter will examine the use of coal profits to develop infrastructure, such as roads and ports in the region, and also to support other industries such as glassmaking, iron and chemical

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<sup>1</sup> John Cleveland, *News From Newcastle: Or Newcastle Coalpit* (Newcastle, 1650).

<sup>2</sup> Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770*. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989).

production, and also stimulating a flourishing export and import trade.<sup>3</sup> The demand for the region's products provided income for its élite to embrace new tastes, leisure pursuits and luxury products, so that consumerism was a major aspect of the economy by the end of the eighteenth century, bringing further opportunities for new professions to develop in the region, including that of the architect.

The economy of Northumberland and Durham was based upon many interdependent activities. These were heavily influenced by the topography of the counties. Between the areas of high ground to the west and the sea to the east, Northumberland and Durham had extensive areas given over to agriculture, as in previous centuries. Indeed, as Caunce has noted recently, 'agriculture could increase both production and profitability even whilst forming a steadily shrinking percentage share of the regional economy'.<sup>4</sup> New techniques, including crop-rotation and the growing of different crops, such as turnips, were introduced. The Tweed valley and its tributaries in north Northumberland, with the southern lowlands of Scotland, was a major source of grain, passing through the barracks town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, for shipment down the east coast to other ports and to the capital. Other grain ports included Amble and Hartlepool, the latter a gathering point for the crops of the Tees Valley. Along the fertile coastal strip of the two north-east counties, agriculture continued to provide incomes for established families, many of whom were able to invest some of their profits in consumer goods and in the ultimate statement of their taste and status: a new or refurbished country house. Examples include the Greys of Howick, and (slightly further

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<sup>3</sup> Judith Welford, 'Functional Goods and Fancies: The Production and Consumption of Consumer Goods in Northumberland, Newcastle upon Tyne and Durham c. 1680-1780' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Durham University, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> S.A. Caunce, 'Agriculture in North-Eastern England, 1750-1914: Relic, Parasite or a Key Part of the Development?' in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas E. Faulkner, Helen Berry, and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 53-68.

down the social scale) the Smiths of Togston Hall.<sup>5</sup> On the western uplands of Northumberland and Durham, stock-rearing was the major industry, with the animals brought via drove roads to market towns such as Wooler, Morpeth, Alnwick, Hexham and Barnard Castle. Throughout the eighteenth century, however, landowners made concerted efforts to enclose and improve these uplands as agricultural prices rose, and satisfy the increasing demand to feed the expanding populations of urban centres.

The most important economic force in the region, one that had national significance in facilitating urban growth in London and other towns, and in supporting industrial development throughout Britain, was coal. The main coal-producing area in the eighteenth century was located in the south-east corner of Northumberland between Newcastle and Blyth, and in the northern parishes of the Palatinate of Durham, particularly Whickham, Ryton, Gateshead and Sunderland. Coal mining dominated the north-east economy for nearly three hundred years before the rapid extinction of the industry in the late-twentieth century. The impact of income from coal and other industries upon the economy of north-east England, and in particular the relative steadiness of this income for élite families, enabled families and civic authorities to plan and fund building works throughout the eighteenth century, contrary to the fluctuations in building works noted by earlier historians.<sup>6</sup> There are extensive histories of the coal industry in Britain and the North East, including the work of Nef, McCord and Ellis, which highlighted the extent of the industry and its role in sustaining other enterprises in the region.<sup>7</sup> Levine and Wrightson have provided the definitive study of the impact of

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<sup>5</sup> For Howick Hall, see DULASC, GRE/X/P193, Lord Grey estate papers Box 135. William Newton's book of expenses for the new house at Howick, 1781-1788; E. Bateson, *A History of Northumberland. Volume 2, The Parishes of Embleton, Ellingham, Howick, Long Houghton and Lesbury* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1895), p. 337. For Togston Hall, see Northumberland County History Committee, *A History of Northumberland. Volume 5, The Parish of Warkworth, With the Chapelry of Chevington, the Parish of Shilbottle, the Chapelry or Extra-Parochial Place of Brainshaugh*, (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1899), p. 340.

<sup>6</sup> Giles Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1995), p. 223.

<sup>7</sup> John Ulric Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1932); Norman McCord, *North East England: The Region's Development 1760-1960* (London: Batsford, 1979).

coalmining at the local level with their research into Whickham parish, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the most important coal producing area of the country. The logistics of transporting coal from pit to port were also extensively analysed, as were the often-vicious rivalries between families engaged in the trade.<sup>8</sup>

During the eighteenth century, the output of the collieries of Northumberland and Durham dwarfed that of other areas in Britain. In the period 1750 to 1760, north-east coal accounted for 35.1% of all coal output in Britain (with Scotland producing 20.7% and Yorkshire 11.2%).<sup>9</sup> The percentage of national production for the North East fell to 28.5% by 1800, though this was due to the increase in production of Lancashire and Cheshire combined from 4% to 8% in the same period, and a major new source of coal, South Wales, which increased its share of national production from 1.8% to 8%. This expansion in other areas was matched by an increase in Newcastle coal exports from 700-800,000 tons per year between 1720 and 1763, rising to 900,000 tons in 1764, and reaching 1.6 million tons by 1799.<sup>10</sup>

Coal mining was not a business for the timid, either at the coal face or in the counting house. It was noted that no-one should invest in the industry unless he could 'afford to lose at least £3,000'.<sup>11</sup> Despite human and financial costs, the profits to be made from coal were a powerful incentive for the regional élite to invest in new technology such as steam engines to drain water from mines, wagonways to move coal

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Joyce Ellis, 'A Bold Adventurer: The Business Fortunes of William Cotesworth, c.1668-1726', *Northern History*, 17 (1981), 117-32.

<sup>8</sup> David Levine and Keith Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society: Whickham 1560-1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Ernest Manns, *Carrying Coals to Dunston: Coal and the Railway* (Usk: Oakwood Press, 2000); Andy Guy, *Steam and Speed: Railways of Tyne and Wear from the Earliest Days* (Newcastle: Tyne Bridge Publishing, 2003); G. Bennett, E. Clavering and A. Rounding, *A Fighting Trade: Rail Transport in Tyne Coal 1600-1800* (Gateshead: Portcullis Press, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Sidney Pollard, 'A New Estimate of British Coal Production, 1750-1850', *Economic History Review*, n.s., 33.2 (May, 1980), 212-235, (Table 15, p. 230).

<sup>10</sup> Joyce Ellis, 'The 'Black Indies': Economic Development of Newcastle, c.1700-1840', in *Newcastle upon Tyne: A Modern History*, ed. by Robert Colls and Bill Lancaster, (Chichester: Phillimore, 2001), p.5, Figure 1.3.

<sup>11</sup> Joyce Ellis, 'Risk, Capital, and Credit on Tyneside, circa 1690-1780', in *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism: Essays in Business and Industrial History in Honour of Peter Mathias*, ed. by K. Bruland and P. O'Brien (Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 93.

to ports and to pay relatively good wages to miners. Oldroyd calculated that George Bowes of Gibside, near Gateshead, made a profit from coal of £9,778 in 1735 and £10,588 in 1736. This income, and that from other ventures including agriculture and lead mining, ensured that his daughter Mary Eleanor Bowes inherited property worth more than £600,000 on his death in 1760.<sup>12</sup>

Coal provided a multi-layered connection between the North East and London. It sent fuel for the capital's houses and industries, the returning ships bringing raw materials for regional industries and consumer products from the capital to the homes of the regional élite, furthering the spread of polite and consumer society.<sup>13</sup> Colliers were also a secure means for cash and communications to pass between regional producers and their London agents. Organisations could also use the regular communication provided by colliers and other ships travelling along the east coast to and from London; for example, many sea captains were freemasons, and they provided a regular link between the Grand Lodge in London and lodges in the North East.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the region's connection to national economy and metropolitan culture, contemporary visitors noted distinctive features that they attributed to the influence of the coal trade. There was a shared belief that the coal trade was essential, not only for the élite, but also for the well-being of all social groups and occupations. In 1778 Judith Milbanke reported to her aunt in London that 'they reckon 48,000 mostly employed in the coal trade', a reminder of the importance of coal for employment throughout the

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<sup>12</sup> David Oldroyd, 'Through a Glass Clearly: Management Practice on the Bowes Family Estates c.1700-70 as Revealed by the Accounts', *Accounting, Business & Financial History*, 9. 2 (1999), 175-201 (p. 180).

<sup>13</sup> E. A. Wrigley, *People, Cities, and Wealth: The Transformation of Traditional Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

<sup>14</sup> United Grand Lodge of England Library and Museum of Freemasonry, London: Sn 411/vi Lodge No. 129 Sunderland Sea Captains Lodge.

region.<sup>15</sup> Contemporary historians such as Bourne and Hutchinson noted that pride at the success of the industry existed at all social levels, and outside commentators also noted the effects of coal on elite character.<sup>16</sup> As Elizabeth Montagu informed her blue-stocking friends, Newcastle had the amenities found elsewhere, such as promenades and assemblies, but the character of the participants was very different to that they were familiar with in London. Not only did aristocrats mingle with merchants at these events, but the commercial imperative was never far from participants' thoughts: 'the moment you name a man, you are told what he is worth, the losses he has had, or the profit he has made by coal mines'.<sup>17</sup> This shared belief in the value of coal was not limited to Newcastle. As other ports such as Sunderland and Blyth expanded to support the coal trade, so their hinterlands joined that of Newcastle in this dependence on 'black gold'. The example of Whickham, an ancient agricultural village close to Newcastle, transformed into an 'industrial society' serving the coal industry, was replicated in other settlements throughout the region as technology enabled mining at greater distances from navigable rivers to be commercially viable.<sup>18</sup> The importance of industry to the elite and to the creation of opportunities for advisory and technical contributions by middling men, and over the labour of the poorer social groups, was rarely seen elsewhere in England, except perhaps in other mining areas and towards the end of the century in the development of textile mills in the North West.

It is suggested here that the scale of investment required in coal-mining (both financial and reputational) may also have changed the character of the elite compared to their peers elsewhere in England. Coal-owners who risked thousands of pounds and the

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<sup>15</sup> Letter of 22 June 1778 Quoted in Malcolm Elwin, *The Noels and the Milbankes: Their Letters for Twenty-Five Years 1767-1792* (London, Macdonald, 1967), pp. 107-8.

<sup>16</sup> Henry Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne, or, The Ancient and Present State of That Town* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1736); William Hutchinson, *A View of Northumberland, With an Excursion to the Abbey of Mailross in Scotland*. 2 vols (Newcastle, 1778); William Hutchinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (Newcastle, 1785-1794).

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Helen Berry, 'Creating Polite Space: The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *Making of an Industrial Society*.

stigma of bankruptcy, not to mention their family reputations, to develop the industry were naturally wary with whom they did business, leading to reliance upon family, colleagues in trade organisations such as guilds, and upon professionals whose experience, both technical and legal, was crucial to maintaining the industry.<sup>19</sup> High profile philanthropic ventures, such as the construction of the Newcastle Infirmary from 1751 to 1753, drew upon the commercial strength of the Hostmen, those licensed to export coal from the River Tyne. The insularity of reliance upon a selected few had further effects upon elite character in the North East. There was recognition that competition impoverished local producers and increased the power of London coal merchants, a process which eventually drew rival coal barons into cartels to guarantee minimum prices and the income to continue in the trade.<sup>20</sup> This reliance on professionals in industrial affairs may have encouraged reliance on those artistic and architectural professionals with whom they or their peers were well acquainted, as evinced by William Newton and his more famous contemporary Thomas Bewick, each providing expertise to elite families.

Coal was one of several extractive industries in the eighteenth-century North East. Quarrying also provided income for landowners, particularly for millstones on the fells to the south of Gateshead. Before the development of coal exports in the sixteenth century millstones and wool were among the principal exports from the River Tyne.<sup>21</sup> For anyone contemplating building work, a ready supply of building materials was essential, and one of the major costs borne by clients was for 'leading', or transporting, stone, bricks, lead and timber to the construction site. With poor roads apart from the new turnpikes, river transport was used wherever possible, but even so transport could

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<sup>19</sup> Viewers were 'key figures in the managerial hierarchy of the coal industry', Levine and Wrightson, *Making of an Industrial Community*, p. 248; G. Bennett, E. Clavering, and A. Rounding, *A Fighting Trade: Rail Transport in Tyne Coal 1600-1800* (Gateshead: Portcullis Press, 1990), p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Joyce Ellis, 'Cartels in the Coal Industry on Tyneside, 1699-1750', *Northern History*, 34 (1998), 134-148.

<sup>21</sup> John Baillie, *An Impartial History of the Town and County of Newcastle and Its Vicinity* (Newcastle: Printed by and for V Anderson, 1801), p. 518.

add considerably to building costs. Quarries at Gibside and Whickham supplied stone for the Newcastle Infirmary in 1751, and the region's country houses were constructed from stone and brick-clay obtained on their owners' estates.<sup>22</sup>

The traditional building material of Northumberland and Durham was stone. Alec Clifton-Taylor noted 'Durham is a county very well provided with stone suitable for building and in Georgian times its use was almost ubiquitous', whilst John Grundy noted the use of hard igneous stone in the north of Northumberland and the Carboniferous stone that 'provided the stone for the vast majority of the county's buildings'.<sup>23</sup> Just a few miles from the major towns in the North East were stone buildings ranging from rubble-built farmhouses to the exquisite ashlar of mansions such as Dissington Hall in Northumberland. Stone was used for buildings until the beginning of the twentieth century. The majority of buildings constructed by William Newton and his contemporaries in the North East were also fabricated from stone. The sparing use of external ornament on façades may be interpreted not as a mark of frugality, but an affirmation of the skill of stonemasons such as George Sanderson, Thomas Maughan and William Gibson.<sup>24</sup>

Where good supplies of clay were located, brickworks were established, providing the region with the fashionable building material approved of by Celia Fiennes, who noted of Newcastle 'its buildings lofty and large of brick mostly or stone'.<sup>25</sup> The use of brick for external wall surfaces was initially limited to areas that had a good supply of clay, or ports such as Newcastle, where bricks might be imported,

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<sup>22</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1, House committee minutes 1751-1753; DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/C2/3/20 (2), Letter from William Newton to William Leaton, 27 March 1753 requesting permission to quarry stone for the Infirmary on the Gibside estate.

<sup>23</sup> Alec Clifton-Taylor, 'Building Materials', in Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: County Durham* revised by Elizabeth Williamson (London: Penguin Books, 1985), p. 69; John Grundy, 'Building Stones', in John Grundy, Grace McCombie, Peter Ryder and Humphrey Welfare, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), pp. 28-30.

<sup>24</sup> George Sanderson (fl. c. 1740-1760) worked at Fenham Hall, Nunwick House and Blagdon Hall; Thomas Maughan was principal stonemason during the construction of the Newcastle Infirmary 1751-3; William Gibson was the principal mason at Howick Hall 1781-1786.

<sup>25</sup> Celia Fiennes, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, edited and with an introduction by Christopher Morris, 2nd edn. (London: Gresset, 1949), p. 209.

often as ballast on colliers returning from London and the Low Countries. The Holy Jesus Hospital (1681), Alderman Fenwick's House (c.1690), the Mansion House (1691) and the Keelmen's Hospital (1701) were among the first to use this material.<sup>26</sup> By 1723, when James Corbridge produced his famous map of Newcastle, many more buildings, particularly élite houses on Westgate Road such as Lady Clavering's House and the Assembly Rooms (now 55-57 Westgate Road), were of brick.<sup>27</sup> Charlotte Square, Newcastle, constructed by Newton from 1769 to 1777, was made of brick, as were the houses laid out by David Stephenson along Dean and Mosley Streets in 1786. Bricks also formed the inner layer of many country houses, hidden behind the stone façades, or (as at Newton's Assembly Rooms of 1776) a stone entrance façade hid the other three brick-built sides from élite eyes. If bricks were made on site, a client could save on transport costs, as Sir Henry Grey did at Howick Hall (1781 to 1787). On 21 December 1782, Sir Henry paid John Richardson one pound and eleven shillings 'for levelling the brick ground and £139 'for making 557,000 bricks'. These were hidden beneath the beautiful golden ashlar that forms the outer skin of the house.<sup>28</sup> In 1751, a brick kiln was built at the site to the Newcastle Infirmary, though this was supplemented by supplies of bricks from some of the subscribers, including William Ord and the Bricklayers Company. The red bricks of Elemore Hall, Durham, were produced in a kiln on the site that had been constructed in 1747.<sup>29</sup>

Although building clay was available, the North East did not have sufficient fine-grade clay for the production of high-quality pottery. It was possible to use local

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<sup>26</sup> John Grundy and Grace McCombie, 'Architecture from 1550 to 1800', in John Grundy, Grace McCombie, Peter Ryder and Humphrey Welfare, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), pp. 71, 73.

<sup>27</sup> Raymond Frostick, 'James Corbridge and his Plan of Newcastle upon Tyne 1723', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., XXXII (2003), 170-178.

<sup>28</sup> DULASC, GRE/X/P193, Lord Grey estate papers Box 135. William Newton's book of expenses for the new house at Howick, 1781-1788.

<sup>29</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection, HO/RVI/2/1, House committee minutes 1751-3: Building Committee, 7 October 1751; John Gosden, 'Elemore Hall Transformed 1749-53', *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*. New Ser., 6 (1982), 31-5 (p. 31).

clay for coarse pottery, but for more the refined products, intended as luxury consumables, clay needed to be imported.<sup>30</sup> Here the potteries of Tyneside could profit from the coal trade in two ways. First, there was a seemingly inexhaustible supply of coal required for firing, and secondly, colliers returning from London to the North East after delivering coal could bring good-quality clay as ballast for the return journey.<sup>31</sup> Potteries were established on Forth Bank, close to the heart of the medieval town. These must have added to the trend towards élite families abandoning the previously-select enclave of the Close on the riverside below Forth Bank, due to the effect of smoke from the potteries on the gentler sort promenading at Forth Gardens at the top of the Bank. Rather imprudently, the Corporation spent over £6,000 in 1691 building a new Mansion House in the Close, in an area that was rapidly becoming industrialised, with the attendant pollution.<sup>32</sup> Other potteries opened in 1730 at Pandon Dean to the east of Newcastle, once again marring what contemporaries had considered a fine wooded area popular for promenading.<sup>33</sup>

Another industry contributing to the wealth of the north-east élite was glass-making, reckoned by Baillie as ‘next to the coal-trade ... the richest branch of the trade of Newcastle.’ He estimated that the Tyne glass trade provided £140,000 in government duty so the income of glassmakers in the North East must have been considerable.<sup>34</sup> By 1772, there were sixteen glasshouses on the River Tyne.<sup>35</sup> Sunderland and Seaton Sluice (the latter established by the Delaval family of Seaton Delaval Hall) also had major glassworks. Glass was not only an essential everyday product for bottles and windows,

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<sup>30</sup> Norman McCord, *North East England: The Region's Development 1760-1960* (London: Batsford, 1979), p. 44.

<sup>31</sup> Welford, ‘Functional Goods and Fancies’, p. 33.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland*. (York: Jill Raines, 1996), p. 26.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner, ‘Urban Landscapes’, in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by T.E. Faulkner, H. Berry and J. Gregory, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), p. 214. Jon Stobart noted a similar appropriation of social space for commercial activities in Liverpool, see Jon Stobart, ‘Culture Versus Commerce: Societies and Spaces for Élites in Eighteenth-Century Liverpool’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 28.4 (2002), 471-485.

<sup>34</sup> Baillie, *Impartial History*, pp. 512-513.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 512-517.

but also a luxury commodity for export in the form of drinking glasses decorated by the Beilby family.<sup>36</sup> One of the most expensive commissions for Newton's Newcastle Assembly Rooms in 1776 were the seven glass chandeliers lighting the main ballroom, one of which was said to have cost six hundred guineas, a tenth of the cost of the whole building.<sup>37</sup>

The iron industry also provided for local building needs and contributed to the national as well as regional economy. The region's industrial capacity attracted favourable reviews from observers, including the Swede R. R. Angerstein, who made a tour of ironworks in Britain from 1753 to 1755.<sup>38</sup> His diaries provided a valuable insight into the extent and methods of iron production in the region compared to other areas such as Coalbrookdale. Among the sites visited were the ironworks of Sir Ambrose Crowley at Winlaton and Swalwell on the northern edge of County Durham, ideally placed at the confluence of the rivers Derwent and Tyne. Crowley had introduced strict regulation, as well as employment benefits such as schools and an infirmary, for his workers, whose industriousness was recognised with major contracts to supply anchors, nails, chains and other iron products to the Royal Navy.<sup>39</sup> Other ironworks existed at Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland, whilst sword-makers were established along the River Derwent at Shotley Bridge.<sup>40</sup> The extensive commercial activities of the region had implications for the built environment, for production existed cheek by jowl with

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<sup>36</sup> James Rush, *A Beilby Odyssey* (Olney: Nelson and Saunders, 1987); Helen Berry, 'Regional Identity and Material Culture', in *History and Material Culture*, ed. by Karen Harvey (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 139-157.

<sup>37</sup> Mackenzie, *Newcastle*, vol. 1, p. 231.

<sup>38</sup> R. R. Angerstein's *Illustrated Travel Diary, 1753-1755: Industry in England and Wales from a Swedish Perspective*. Translated by Torsten and Peter Berg; with an introduction by Marilyn Palmer (London: Science Museum, 2001).

<sup>39</sup> Jacob M. Price, 'Crowley, Sir Ambrose (1658–1713)', *ODNB*, online edition; Michael W. Flinn, *Men of Iron: The Crowleys in the Early Iron Industry* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962).

<sup>40</sup> Baillie, *Impartial History*, pp. 502-507; David Atkinson, *The German Swordmakers of Shotley Bridge* (Durham: North East Centre for Education about Europe, 1987).

habitation. Even the most select residences in towns such as Newcastle and Gateshead were in close proximity to industry.<sup>41</sup>

A further form of metalworking that brought great wealth to some landowners was lead and silver.<sup>42</sup> Lead ore was present in the Pennines to the west of Durham and Northumberland and had been mined during the Roman occupation of Britain. Revived by the Prince Bishops of Durham in the twelfth century, the Teesdale and Weardale mines expanded in the sixteenth century, with Sir William Bowes of Streatlam Castle, near Barnard Castle in County Durham, owning mines and mills to process the ore in 1595. The Blakett family of Wallington Hall in Northumberland began lead and silver mining in Allendale from 1684 and in Weardale from 1698. The London Lead Company and the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital also mined in these areas.<sup>43</sup>

A key aspect of the north-east economy was the extent to which élite families were involved in several commercial ventures, as Norman McCord noted:

The intimate connection between ... industries was illustrated by a high degree of multiple ownership, with interested individuals participating in financing and control of firms in two or three related interests, with a view to the integration of control over vital supplies of fuel or other ingredients.<sup>44</sup>

Joyce Ellis sounded a note of caution about this multiple ownership, especially where many small-scale investors were involved, as it made decision-making a lengthy process, and also exposed these smaller players to potentially bankrupting liabilities if

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<sup>41</sup> For example, Gateshead Park, the home of Newton's patrons the Ellison family, was by the mid-eighteenth century surrounded by glass, chemical and coal production. This may have prompted Henry Ellison to commission Newton to rebuild another of their residences, Hebburn Hall, to the east of Gateshead, but within ten years it too was encroached upon by collieries, see A. W. Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry in North-East England, 1650-1830: The Carrs and the Ellisons* (Sunderland: University of Sunderland Press, 1999).

<sup>42</sup> Les Turnbull, *The History of Lead Mining in the North East of England* (Newcastle: Harold Hill, 1975); Roger Burt, *The British Lead Mining Industry* (Redruth: Dyllansow Truran, 1984).

<sup>43</sup> Turnbull, *Lead Mining*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>44</sup> McCord, *North East England*, p. 44.

the venture failed or defaulted on loans to creditors.<sup>45</sup> Ellis argues that only those with substantial family funds became established as merchants and bore the risks of mining speculation. However, north-east élite families were also heavily involved in commerce and industry, as analysis of the estate papers of the dukes of Northumberland and families such as the Ridleys, Blacketts, Ords, Baker-Bakers, Allgoods and Carrs demonstrates.<sup>46</sup>

These industries required substantial capital investment, as did the ports through which exports, and imports of non-native and luxury goods, came into the region. In 1763 the demolition of the medieval town wall along the Quayside in Newcastle, which provided much of the stone for the rebuilding of St Ann's church to William Newton's designs, removed a major impediment to the rapid transfer of goods between ship and shore. The demolition of the fortified gates in the rest of the town also improved transport conditions.<sup>47</sup> New warehouses and cranes were constructed on the Quayside.<sup>48</sup> Newcastle's foreign trade jumped from just under 40,000 tons in 1758 to 100,000 tons in 1791.<sup>49</sup> In addition to coal, these exports included glass, lead, tools, woollens and earthenware.<sup>50</sup> Imports included Baltic timber, used as deals for floors, panelling and for some decorative work. Baltic or 'Riga' timber was preferred in the north-east construction industry to home-grown softwoods. Mahogany was also imported and was the choice of the wealthiest clients for doors, for example the '£17 13s for mahogany plank' at Blagdon Hall in 1753.<sup>51</sup>

Other ports witnessed similar improvements and increased trade, which also intensified demand for skilled craftsmen and provided profits for élite investors. Tony

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<sup>45</sup> Joyce Ellis, 'Risk, Capital, and Credit on Tyneside, circa 1690-1780', in *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism: Essays in Business and Industrial History in Honour of Peter Mathias*, ed. by Kristine Bruland and Patrick O'Brien (Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 84-111.

<sup>46</sup> These family papers are at Northumberland Record Office.

<sup>47</sup> Baillie, *Impartial History*, p. 41.

<sup>48</sup> TWAM, DX136/6/6, Building Accounts and associated papers concerning work done on a warehouse for Nathaniel Clayton by David Stephenson, 1791-1794.

<sup>49</sup> Ellis, 'Black Indies', p.4, Figure 1.2.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>51</sup> Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/3, Cash book 1753-61.

Barrow noted the development of Seaton Sluice by the Delaval family between 1761 and 1764, to handle the export of glass products produced at the port, and for the export of coal from the Delaval collieries, which reached 80,000 tons in 1777.<sup>52</sup> A short distance up the coast, the Ridley family of Blagdon Hall developed the port of Blyth to handle exports from their collieries in south-east Northumberland.<sup>53</sup> New granaries were constructed in the grain ports of Amble and Alnmouth. On the River Wear, the harbour facilities at Sunderland were improved from the late-seventeenth century, especially after 1717 when the River Wear Commissioners were established. Gillian Cookson noted that between 1717 and 1738 the Commissioners spent £33,000 developing the port facilities at Sunderland, and even more, £420,000, between 1747 and 1830, 'huge sums of money which enabled the Wear to emerge as a serious competitor to the Tyne.'<sup>54</sup> Between 1725 and 1730 they constructed a new pier to deepen the channels at the river mouth, funded by a levy on each chaldron of exported coal.<sup>55</sup> This was a critical development, as up to that point access to the river was limited to smaller vessels, the main reason why Newcastle had previously dominated the coal trade.<sup>56</sup> The poor harbour retarded other industries: it was not until 1808 that the yards of the River Wear overtook those of the Tyne for regional leadership in shipbuilding.<sup>57</sup>

North-east exporters and importers required the means to transport their products, especially to and from London, and in an era of developing road systems the principal transport method was still by water. Shipbuilding and maintenance was therefore a major industry requiring investment by the élite. Defoe noted of Newcastle that 'they build ships here to perfection' and Clarke noted that 'South Shields was the

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<sup>52</sup> Tony Barrow, *Collingwood's Northumbrians: Old and Valuable Officers* (Rainton Edge: Business Education Publishers, 2010), pp. 8-9.

<sup>53</sup> John Wallace, *The History of Blyth From the Norman Conquest to the Present Day*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Blyth: John Robinson, 1867).

<sup>54</sup> Gillian Cookson, *Sunderland: Building a City* (Chichester, Phillimore & Co Ltd, 2010), p. 31.

<sup>55</sup> Maureen M. Meikle and Christine M. Newman, *Sunderland and Its Origins: From Monks to Mariners* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2007), pp. 170-172.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke, *Building Ships*, p. 21.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

rising shipbuilding centre on the River Tyne between 1787 and 1815'.<sup>58</sup> A major boost for the region's shipbuilding industry came with the secession of the American colonies in 1776, which had hitherto been a major supplier of ships employed around British coasts. John Rule noted that by 1790 the combined output of shipbuilders at Whitby, Newcastle, Scarborough, Sunderland and Stockton exceeded that of the River Thames.<sup>59</sup> By 1800, Newcastle was the third largest building port in Britain after London and Liverpool, and Sunderland the fifth.<sup>60</sup>

The increase in shipbuilding in north-east ports stimulated other industries, including ropeworks and timber merchants. Early maps of the region's ports, including James Corbridge's map of Newcastle of 1723, showing the Ropery Banks near St Ann's church to the east of the town, and Rain's Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth of 1790, show the long straight forms of the roperies, essential for making the lengths of rigging and mooring ropes required on sailing ships.<sup>61</sup> The huge quantities of timber required for ship-building, as well as for waggonways and the building industry, required storage yards and sawmills; Clarke noted that 'the banks of the Wear ..., more than six miles from the mouth of the river, were almost literally studded with wood yards.'<sup>62</sup>

As well as shipbuilding and exports, regionally-constructed vessels participated in the whaling trade after 1751, when the Newcastle Whale Fishing Company was established. Among its board of managers were several clients or subscribers to works by William Newton, including Sir Walter Blackett, John Simpson, Matthew Bell, Ralph

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<sup>58</sup> Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*. Abridged and edited with notes and an introduction by Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), p. 536; Clarke, *Building Ships*, p. 30.

<sup>59</sup> John Rule, *The Vital Century: England's Developing Economy 1714-1815* (London and New York: Longman, 1992), p. 127.

<sup>60</sup> David Dougan, *The History of North East Shipbuilding* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1968), p. 22.

<sup>61</sup> Ian Ayris and Stafford Linsley, *A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Tyne and Wear* (Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team, 1994), p. 54.

<sup>62</sup> Clarke, *Building Ships*, p. 21.

Sowerby, George Colpitts, John Cookson and Ralph Carr.<sup>63</sup> Defoe noted the salmon fisheries of the River Tweed, the fish brought to Shields for curing and export as ‘Newcastle salmon’ to London.<sup>64</sup> The small ports of the north-east coast were home to large numbers of fishing boats active in the North Sea. Further south, Whitby on the Yorkshire coast was a major fishing as well as whaling port; its trade was intimately involved with that of ports in Durham and Northumberland.

The development of the region’s ports went hand-in-hand with major improvements in the roads connecting ports with county towns, country estates and villages where grain was produced, lead and silver were mined and other goods were produced. Wherever possible, navigable rivers were used for transport, especially as at the beginning of Newton’s life road communications across the country were poor. Inadequate roads were one factor leading to the failure of the government army to relieve Carlisle during the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. This catastrophe, and the economic necessity of moving valuable products from the interior to towns and ports, provided a spur to central and local government and local landowners to develop better roads in the form of turnpikes. Between 1746 and the mid-nineteenth century over 800km of turnpike roads were constructed in Northumberland.<sup>65</sup> Turnpikes hastened communication between government and the provinces, and the diffusion of ideas and fashions within Britain.

Turnpike construction also assisted the assimilation of remote areas of the countryside into the economic and social life of the region. Local élites obtained parliamentary authority for the enclosure of barren moorland and its conversion to agricultural use. Small farms were merged into larger units to increase efficiency, aided by the introduction of new farming techniques and crops such as turnips to feed animals

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<sup>63</sup> Tony Barrow, *The Whaling Trade of North-East England, 1750-1850* (Sunderland: University of Sunderland Press, 2001), p. 13.

<sup>64</sup> Defoe, *Tour Through Great Britain*, p. 536.

<sup>65</sup> Richard Muir, ‘Communications and Routeways’, in *England’s Landscape: The North East*, ed. by Fred Aalen (London: Collins, 2006), p. 196.

throughout the year. William Ord of Fenham Hall, one of Newton's patrons, purchased an estate at Whitfield in the bleak hinterland of south-west Northumberland and then sponsored the construction of the Alston to Hexham turnpike, and of the Cupola Bridge over the River Allen, to speed the transport of lead from his estate to buyers in Newcastle.<sup>66</sup> Another of Newton's clients, Lancelot Allgood of Nunwick Hall, supported the so-called 'Corn Road' from Hexham to Alnmouth.<sup>67</sup> These transport improvements provided opportunities for trade, for cultural exchange, the transport of luxury goods to provincial towns, and non-native materials such as the marble and alabaster used at Howick Hall, Northumberland, in the 1780s that came by sea from Newcastle to Alnmouth and thence by road to Howick.<sup>68</sup>

The industries and developing infrastructure of the North East relied upon access to capital over long periods to fund the sinking of new collieries, the installation of new technology such as steam engines, cementation furnaces and looms, the terrific cost of wagonways that required frequent replacement, and not least the civil engineering expertise and labour to construct and maintain roads and bridges and embankments that were required for products of all kinds to be moved from source to market. Newcastle was a regional manufacturing and distribution centre, but it also had commercial links stretching from the Baltic to Boston, Massachusetts. This trade was only possible because merchants had created payment methods that extended beyond borders, such as credit notes, as well as letters of introduction and recommendation to cement confidence in new trading partners. As Jon Stobart noted of Chester, the cultivation of business networks and assiduous patronage were key to this confidence, especially when

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<sup>66</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/W2/15, Whitfield estate papers 1745-1767; Northumberland Archives, 324 E16 Ledger 1759-1768.

<sup>67</sup> A.W. Purdue, 'The Landed Estate and the Making of the Northumberland Landscape, 1700-1914', in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas E. Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), p.48.

<sup>68</sup> DULASC, GRE/X/P193, Lord Grey estate papers Box 135. William Newton's book of expenses for the new house at Howick, 1781-1788.

payment for a valuable cargo might take months to arrive.<sup>69</sup> As trade and industry became more diverse and complex, the availability of credit and capital for investment was crucial. John Rule highlighted that ‘Neither survival nor expansion was readily achievable without credit’, whether paying for raw materials or selling goods to customers.<sup>70</sup> In this respect, the close familial, social and economic ties within the regional élite were a distinct advantage. The North East remained a face-to-face society and credit may have been more forthcoming than in the relative impersonality of the capital.

One means of raising funds for industry or building was to seek loans between families. Estate records of north-east families contain many examples of this practice. For example, when Blagdon Hall was being rebuilt for Matthew White from 1752 to 1757, he paid interest on substantial loans from other north-east gentlemen, for example a half-year’s interest on loans totalling £9,000, paid on 29 July 1756.<sup>71</sup> Conversely, providing loans for relations, business partners or other members of the élite was a profitable means for those with spare cash to raise further income by drawing regular payments of interest from the borrowers. Ralph Carr was sufficiently wealthy that he could loan £30,000 to the government during the 1745 rebellion, and still afford to pay for the expansion of his family home between 1748 and 1751.<sup>72</sup> However, Steven Counce noted that kin-derived funds were no longer sufficient in the West Yorkshire textile industry, so that ‘what was needed was an extension of the assessment of credit-worthiness of individuals beyond traditional methods’. This observation applies equally

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<sup>69</sup> Jon Stobart, ‘Personal and Commercial Networks in an English Port : Chester in the Early Eighteenth Century’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 30.2 (2004), 277-293.

<sup>70</sup> Rule, *Vital Century*, p. 164.

<sup>71</sup> Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/3 Cash book 1753-1761.

<sup>72</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, pp. 152-155.

to north-east England in the second half of the eighteenth century, as its heavy industries expanded.<sup>73</sup>

Élite families could make use of the Bank of England, established in 1694 by merchants in the City of London, as a secure haven for their assets and to draw out when they were in the capital. Private banks soon followed, and several north-east families had accounts with the London Bank of Coutts, as did the architect James Paine.<sup>74</sup> These accounts provided the means to purchase luxury items such as furniture and porcelain in the capital using credit, which could be paid off later when the family had received income from rents or commercial profits. However, the country still lacked such financial mechanisms at the local level until 1756, when Ralph Carr established the first bank in the North East, the Newcastle Bank. It is clear from the early success of this bank that Carr had identified a need within the commercial life of the region. Loans from the Newcastle Bank, and from others established within a few years, provided the capital needed by north-east merchants and industrialists for new ventures, including rebuilding of their country houses.

Finance was not the only form of credit sought by individuals. Within society as a whole, and particularly in the sphere of local and parish affairs, credit, in the form of a good reputation (of which wealth was a key indicator), conferred upon wealthier citizens the responsibility and opportunity to lead others.<sup>75</sup> The *Newcastle Courant* stated that Carr's Newcastle Bank was established by 'a company of gentlemen of character and fortune'.<sup>76</sup> This link between good character and wealth was essential to convince potential depositors that their money would be safe. The emphasis upon appraising the credit-worthiness of potential clients and business partners also applied to

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<sup>73</sup> Steven Caunce, 'Banks, Communities and Manufacturing in West Yorkshire Textiles, c. 1800-1830', in *Industrial Clusters and Regional Business Networks in England, 1750-1970*, ed. by John F. Wilson and Andrew Popp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 114.

<sup>74</sup> Peter Leach, *James Paine* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd, 1988), p. 220.

<sup>75</sup> H. R. French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England, 1600-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 263.

<sup>76</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. 165.

the professionals that the élite relied upon for specialist advice. Professionals needed to convince potential clients that they possessed expertise that the clients did not have.<sup>77</sup> They also needed to establish a reputation for providing quality services or advice that would impress other potential clients, and would secure recommendations from previous clients. As Keith Thomas noted ‘[a] good name was vital: for traders building a business, for young people wanting marriage partners, for servants and craftsmen seeking work’.<sup>78</sup> This thesis proposes that reputation was one of the most critical factors in securing employment for provincial architects, including William Newton.

Joyce Ellis suggested that ‘Tyneside businessmen seem to have preferred to put their money to work for them in the local economy by investing directly or indirectly in landed property’.<sup>79</sup> Property not only brought income for the owner from rents and agricultural sales; it was also a low risk and ‘represented one of the few secure depositories of surplus funds at a time when trade was shaky’.<sup>80</sup> Many families sought to build a suitable house on their estates, if one did not exist already, as a centre for managing their economic affairs, as well as to impress other members of the élite that they were prosperous and had taste. Credit, in the forms of money and character, were vital aspects of the north-east economy and essential for members of the élite to participate in the consumer society. This personal credit also applied to those whom they commissioned to create fashionable houses and public spaces. The decision to employ a particular architect was often made after advice from relatives and friends who could speak for the architect’s ability.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.21.

<sup>78</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, p. 176.

<sup>79</sup> Ellis, ‘Risk, Capital, and Credit’, p. 104.

<sup>80</sup> Joyce Ellis, ‘Risk, Capital, and Credit on Tyneside, circa 1690-1780’, in *From Family Firms to Corporate Capitalism: Essays in Business and Industrial History in Honour of Peter Mathias*, ed. by K. Bruland and P. O’Brien (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 105.

<sup>81</sup> Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley, *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House* (London: Hambledon & London, 2000), p. 109.

The profession of architect was in slow formation throughout the eighteenth century, but a key requirement for architects and builders was a further form of credit-worthiness, reliability, in their work and in their familiarity with the latest architectural tastes. Once a design from a reputable architect was acquired, the client then needed reliable craftsmen to construct the new house. Established families with large estates such as Belsay, Wallington and Gibside had their own craftsmen available (though even they might require more specialised experts for finer work, such as the Lafranchini plasterers), but for merchants, lawyers and other professionals moving into land ownership this was not the case.<sup>82</sup> It was necessary for them to seek advice from associates about reliable masons and carpenters, and if necessary to wait for these craftsmen to finish one commission before starting the next. This appears to have been the case with buildings designed by the absentee architect Daniel Garrett in the 1740s.<sup>83</sup>

The decision to undertake substantial building works (either new buildings, re-fronting an earlier house or internal updating) could not be taken lightly and the survival of the internal structures of many earlier houses is a reminder of how few families could undertake major work, even if they had wished to. Financial and personal credit was at stake. Not only could thousands of pounds be lost, but over-spending or bankruptcy would bring shame and fatal damage to a family's reputation. Unfashionable designs would also invite derision from peers. In making what was for many the most expensive decision of their lives, it was vital to minimise the risk of financial and social damage by employing a 'safe pair of hands' to supervise the building work. Ideally, this would be someone known personally to the client, someone who could point to previous work to guarantee his ability. This thesis proposes that for the north-east élite in the second half of the eighteenth century, this was William Newton. His early clients, including the

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<sup>82</sup> Brian de Breffny, 'The Lafranchini Brothers', *The GPA Irish Arts Review Yearbook* (1988), pp. 212-221.

<sup>83</sup> Fenham Hall, Nunwick Hall, the Newcastle Infirmary and Blagdon Hall were started when key craftsmen, including the mason George Stephenson and carpenter Robert Newton, had completed the major parts of their work on the previous commission.

Ords, Bowes, and Allgoods clients, represented some of the most powerful and influential families in the region, and they were able to provide recommendations to others as Newton's career progressed. William Newton's practice of offering very detailed estimates for all of the building work required, and his willingness to offer several designs differing in size and sophistication, also provided clients with the option to choose a design to fit their available funds. Newton's buildings were all constructed within seven years: very few families in the North East could contemplate a long-drawn out building programme akin to the one undertaken in the construction of Castle Howard from 1724 to 1811.<sup>84</sup>

Improving economic conditions enabled the north-east élite to overcome the legacy of border warfare and to weather the effects of national events. In the twenty years after the defeat of the first Jacobite rebellion in 1715, a number of unfortified houses were constructed, including Hesleyside Hall, Blagdon Hall, Heaton Hall, Seaton Delaval Hall and Eslington Park, all in Northumberland, and Streatlam Castle, Gateshead Park and Newton Hall (Durham) in County Durham. These houses reflected the confidence of north-east élite families in their economic position following the confirmation of the Hanoverian succession, and coincided with a great era of country house rebuilding nationally.

Giles Worsley claimed that 'all forms of building slumped in the ten years before 1748', due to war, agricultural problems and lack of available capital.<sup>85</sup> This may be true of London-based architects, but national difficulties in the period 1738 to 1748 did not affect the north-east practice of Daniel Garrett. He was at work at Gibside (Durham) from 1735 to 1753, and his work in Northumberland began with the redesign of Wallington from 1735 to 1745. He also designed Fenham Hall, whose execution

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<sup>84</sup> The longest construction period was for Newton's largest building, Howick Hall, constructed from 1781 to 1788. This was preceded by the demolition of the old tower-house. For information about Castle Howard, see C. Ridgway and N. Howard, *Castle Howard, York*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, (Castle Howard Estate, 2005), p. 15.

<sup>85</sup> Worsley, *Classical Architecture*, p. 223.

from 1744 to 1748 launched the teenage William Newton into his building career, and Garrett was the most likely designer of Dunston Hill House and Usworth Hall (both in County Durham). These houses were built for prosperous businessmen and civic leaders in Newcastle. It may be that the north-east élite were less affected by national economic fluctuations, as their income came from coal, iron, lead and grain, essential products for a war economy, and any scarcity merely increased the value of their production in the north east. As John Brewer noted, ‘the fuel that glowed in London hearths was consistently more expensive when the nation was at war’.<sup>86</sup> This ensured that large houses continued to be built in the North East during the 1740s.

Worsley suggested that the period after 1748 saw a major increase in building, and this is reflected in the careers of Robert and William Newton, who were working at Dunston Hill House, Nunwick Hall, the Newcastle Infirmary and Blagdon Hall. During the 1750s, several north-east families were able to turn to the nationally-renowned architect James Paine, who acquired much of Garrett’s practice just before the latter’s death in 1753. Paine provided designs for Alnwick Castle, Belford Hall, Bywell Hall and Gosforth Park in Northumberland and Raby Castle, Coxhoe Hall, Stella Hall, Redheugh Hall, Gibside Chapel and column, and Axwell Park in County Durham.<sup>87</sup> Alnwick and Raby Castles were the homes of the principal aristocrats in Northumberland and Durham respectively, but the other houses were constructed for wealthy families with political, business and marriage connections, as country retreats from the source of their wealth and influence in Newcastle.

Styles noted that from the 1760s rising agricultural profits and the expansion of manufacturing across Britain gave landowners the means for greater expenditure on luxuries.<sup>88</sup> Initially this period saw few new houses constructed in the North East.

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<sup>86</sup> John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 195

<sup>87</sup> Leach, *James Paine*.

<sup>88</sup> Snodin and Styles, *Design and the Decorative Arts*, p. 30.

Established landowners such as the Ords and Riddleys had joined the neo-Palladian wave in the 1740s and 1750s. They undertook some modifications to their houses in the 1770s, when what is termed neo-classicism, exemplified by Robert Adam and James Wyatt, called for more refined interiors, as can be seen in the new dining room created by Wyatt at Blagdon Hall in 1778. It is clear that in the 1760s metropolitan architects continued to dominate what work there was on the region's major country houses, with Paine completing Bywell Hall in Northumberland, Gibside Chapel and the landscape features at Hardwick Hall in Durham, and Robert Adam at work on the Ducal palace at Alnwick Castle. There were also gentlemen-architects at work, including Sir John Hussey Delaval and Sir Francis Blake, who developed their homes as Gothick fantasies at Ford Castle and Twizell Castle respectively.

By the 1770s, new wealth, principally the expansion of the coal trade but also from the growing market for consumer goods and greater reliance upon fee-earning professionals in the region, created conditions to fund new houses. This renewed economic prosperity kept William Newton busy until his death in 1798, particularly building suburban villas for these merchants and professionals, and with clients among established landowners in Northumberland, such as the Greys of Howick and the Charltons of Hesleside. Even the war with Revolutionary France from 1792 does not appear to have affected spending on architecture by the region's élite, since their wealth derived from fuel and commodities most needed in a war economy: coal, lead, agriculture, ship-building and banking. This is in contrast to the fitful developments in other towns, for example the speculative building at Bristol and Clifton analysed by J. R. Ward.<sup>89</sup> In this analysis, it is clear that Worsley's picture of peaks and troughs in the national building industry is only partially true of the North East, with the coal trade

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<sup>89</sup> J. R. Ward, 'Speculative Building at Bristol and Clifton, 1783-1793', *Business History*, 20.1 (1978), 3-18.

almost certainly the capital-generating cushion to the economic misfortunes affecting the rest of the country.

This chapter has examined the economic context in which William Newton worked and demonstrated that the north-east economy, especially the continuing national demand for coal and the support this gave to related industries, enabled the region to avoid some of the worst dips in the national economy during the eighteenth century. The North East was an area of great contrasts, but these did not detract from its ability to fund commercial ventures, infrastructure improvements and consumer-driven production and imports. The region may have been geographically far from the capital, but in economic terms it was closely integrated into the national economy, supplying products essential for the metropolis. With relatively secure incomes, the north-east élite were able to fund new buildings for cultural enjoyment such as assembly rooms and theatres, and to afford the services of architects to transform their houses. The remodelling of élite space in town and country, and the extent to which there was an ‘urban renaissance’ or rural improvement in the eighteenth-century North East, will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 6: An ‘Urban Renaissance’ in North-East England? The Transformation of Élite Space in Town and Country

The provincial architect needed a reputation for competence, patrons willing to advance his career, and stable economic conditions to encourage commissions from clients. Much of the literature about the buildings of eighteenth-century Britain falls into the seemingly separate worlds of the country house and the urban arena, though the extent to which these were separate spheres for eighteenth-century Britons is debatable.<sup>1</sup> This chapter proposes that north-east England provides an opportunity to re-examine popular conceptions of élite creation and remodelling of urban spaces by provincial architects such as William Newton, in particular the oft-quoted theory of an ‘English urban renaissance’ in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It will suggest that north-east towns show little architectural evidence of such a renaissance and instead confirm the regional characteristic of maintaining the *status quo*, unless compelling commercial reasons obliged action. Although the élite dominated towns in the North East, their control was principally through local government oligarchy and the economic influence, rather than large-scale remodelling of the built environment. Their appropriation of urban space, such as new squares, promenades and assembly rooms, was limited, whilst the continuing appeal of processions affirmed allegiances of inhabitants from all strata to the towns. An alternative hypothesis explored here is that the north-east élite was unwilling to finance major rebuilding of the public urban environment, concentrating instead upon the manipulation of the rural economy and landscape as a backcloth for the display of their commercial ability and for performance of identity in private among trusted associates.

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<sup>1</sup> Jon Stobart, ‘Who Were the Urban Gentry? Social Élites in an English Provincial Town, c. 1680-1760’, *Continuity and Change*, 26.1 (2011), 89-112.

As far back as 1977, Peter Borsay suggested that an ‘English urban renaissance’ occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as increasingly urbanised élites sought to remodel towns as a stage on which to portray their collective identity.<sup>2</sup> Driven by the concept of taste, the élite remodelled buildings, introduced leisure and cultural spaces, supported the growth of shops providing luxury consumables and transformed declining county towns into centres of entertainment and business. New forms of towns, including spas, seaside resorts and ‘leisure towns’, developed to provide for increased élite sociability. This renaissance saw the creation of enclaves within older towns where street lighting, paving, assembly rooms and theatres were located close to fashionable town houses constructed for seasonal residence by wealthy landed families, and permanent homes for merchants and professionals who were on hand to provide goods and services to this growing consumer sector.

Borsay and subsequent historians cited examples of the urban renaissance in the North East, including Newcastle.<sup>3</sup> The existence of the urban renaissance is assumed in many investigations of élite culture, but it is suggested here that evidence of an urban renaissance in the North East during the eighteenth century has been overstated, at the expense of older cultural identities. There is an implicit assumption that whatever preceded this renaissance was inferior and declined in appeal, or became ‘provincial’ or plebeian, maintained by ‘cultural Luddites’ or the disenfranchised labouring populations

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Borsay, ‘The English Urban Renaissance: The Development of Provincial Urban Culture c. 1680-c. 1760’, *Social History*, 5 (1977), 581-603, expanded in Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989). Borsay’s theory was challenged by Angus McInnes, ‘The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Shrewsbury, 1660-1760’, *Past & Present*, 120 (1988), 53-87. Other contributions include John Beckett and Catherine Anne Smith, ‘Urban Renaissance and Consumer Revolution in Nottingham, 1688-1750’, *Urban History*, 27.1 (2000), 31-50; Robert Tittler, ‘Reconsidering the "English Urban Renaissance": Cities, Culture, and Society After the Great Fire of London’, *Journal of British Studies*, 40.3 (2001), 419-30; Jon Stobart, ‘Culture Versus Commerce: Societies and Spaces for Élites in Eighteenth-Century Liverpool’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 28.4 (2002), 471-485; Jon Stobart and Leonard Schwarz, ‘Leisure, Luxury and Urban Specialization in the Eighteenth Century’, *Urban History*, 35.2 (2008), 216-236; John Fripp, ‘Weymouth over the Long Eighteenth Century: Urban Renaissance, or New Leisure Town?’, *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*, 129 (2008 for 2007), 49-58; Emma Griffin, ‘The ‘Urban Renaissance’ and the Mob: Rethinking Civic Improvement Over the Long Eighteenth Century’, in *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History*, ed. by David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 54-73.

<sup>3</sup> Borsay, ‘The English Urban Renaissance’, p. 163.

of towns. As Jonathan Barry suggested, the ‘traditional view is that the culture of the townspeople themselves, their distinctive values and lifestyles, was of little importance’.<sup>4</sup> However, cultural matters in the eighteenth-century North East appear to contest this assumption: ‘polite’ activities were not replacements for earlier attitudes and *modus operandi*, but were employed alongside earlier models of élite identity.<sup>5</sup>

Judith Welford showed that there was a thriving market in consumer goods in the region. The élite acquired luxuries from Wedgwood and Boulton, Chippendale furniture, Eckhardt wallpapers, and ‘mod-cons’ such as Joseph Bramah’s water-closets, as quickly as their contemporaries in Yorkshire and Berkshire.<sup>6</sup> They followed their peers in other areas of Britain by going on the Grand Tour to gain the required polish to their education and familiarity with classical culture. They attended lectures on scientific and literary subjects, learnt to draw, dance and read novels. However, as Norman McCord has noted, one of the key features of the North East in the early modern period was continuity.<sup>7</sup> The guilds may have changed from guarantors of craft standards as they became sources of sociability, but guildsmen still marched through the towns for major civic occasions such as the processions.<sup>8</sup> Guilds were joined by other groups, including the Freemasons who fielded hundreds of members for the opening of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms and the Wearmouth Bridge.<sup>9</sup> Comparison of membership lists show that many Freemasons were the same people who had completed their guild-approved apprenticeships and who put their sons through the same training.

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<sup>4</sup> Barry, ‘Provincial Town Culture’, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup> Joyce Ellis, ‘A Dynamic Society: Social Relations in Newcastle upon Tyne 1660-1760’, in *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns 1600-1800*, ed. by Peter Clark (London, Hutchinson & Co., 1984), pp. 190-227.

<sup>6</sup> Judith Welford, ‘Functional Goods and Fancies: The Production and Consumption of Consumer Goods in Northumberland, Newcastle upon Tyne and Durham c. 1680-1780’ (Unpublished Durham University PhD Thesis, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> McCord, *North East England*, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Rebecca King, ‘The Sociability of the Trade Guilds of Newcastle and Durham, 1660-1750’, in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 57-71.

<sup>9</sup> *Freemasons Magazine*, II (1794), p. 246, noted that over 200 Freemasons processed from the Phoenix Lodge, Sunderland, to the ceremony of laying the first stone of Wearmouth Bridge on 24 September 1793.

The same families appeared in lists of mayors, sheriffs and justices at the opening and close of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> In the vital coal industry, control passed from one generation to the next, and whilst some old names fell away and new names occasionally entered the lists, the belief in how to conduct the trade for mutual advantage prevailed. These nascent urban and commercial empires mirrored the continuity of tenure in aristocratic and spiritual affairs monopolized respectively by the duke of Northumberland and the bishop of Durham.

This continuity is particularly true of the built environment, the subject of historical debate about ‘urban renaissance’ and ‘leisure towns’.<sup>11</sup> There is little doubt that the north-east élite wanted the new leisure and consumer facilities such as assembly rooms, promenades and the fashionable town houses modelled on those in the west end of London and at Bath. However, there was little large-scale rebuilding of north-east streets to facilitate the open spaces for commerce and polite activities noted by Borsay. The examples frequently cited by adherents of the ‘urban renaissance’ were often due to major fires, as at Warwick, Blandford Forum, and of course London following the Great Fire of 1666. In some towns, including Edinburgh and Dublin, new areas were created by extensive land-drainage, employing the technological advances involved in canal-building and agricultural improvement.<sup>12</sup> An alternative source of new streets of fashionable town houses was the development of land formerly in aristocratic urban estates, such as Lord Burlington’s lands in Piccadilly, or the new towns erected at Bath

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<sup>10</sup> Members of the Fenwick, Blckett and Ridley families were mayors of Newcastle for 24 years between 1700 and 1800. Newcastle City Council, *Mayors and Sheriffs of Newcastle 1216 to Date*, <<http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/your-council/lord-mayor/mayors-and-sheriffs-1216-date>> [accessed: 4 November 2012].

<sup>11</sup> Peter Borsay, ‘The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Or an Urban Renaissance?’, *Past & Present*, No. 126 (Feb., 1990), pp. 189-196; Angus McInnes, ‘The Emergence of a Leisure Town: Or an Urban Renaissance?: Reply’, *Past & Present*, No. 126 (Feb., 1990), pp. 196-202.

<sup>12</sup> A. J. Youngson, *The Making of Classical Edinburgh 1750-1840* (Edinburgh University Press, 1966); *James Craig, 1744-1795: The Ingenious Architect of the New Town of Edinburgh*, ed. by Kitty Cruft and Andrew Fraser (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1995).

and Edinburgh.<sup>13</sup> As their names suggest, however, these new towns were not on the same land as the old towns; the latter often descended into tenements, commercial or industrial use, and squalor. These rebuilt or newly-formed towns had the opportunity to abolish crowded plots and narrow streets, but for those without this opportunity, where life continued as before, it was not possible to undertake major rebuilding of existing properties.

There were no major post-fire opportunities for major rebuilding in the North East in eighteenth century. The region's corporations lacked the funds to undertake the purchasing of many individual properties required for large scale rebuilding, nor could established businesses accept the dislocation and loss of revenue that rebuilding would entail. In Newcastle, a scheme of 1783, promoted by Alderman Mosley and the Town Clerk Nathaniel Clayton, had some Corporation support. Mosley bought up adjoining properties and demolished them to create the space for Mosley Street, thus linking the older medieval road layout of Westgate Road and Pilgrim Street. A critical new development occurred by filling in the ravine of the Lort Burn to create Dean Street in 1787, an alternative to the older Side and Pilgrim Streets. Dean Street connected with Mosley Street to enable easier transit from the bridge and Quayside to the upper part of the town. The Newcastle Corporation were unable, however, to seize the greatest opportunity presented for large-scale urban development: the sale in 1777 of the eleven acre estate of Sir Walter Blackett, the largest private estate within a British walled town. This would have created a new town within the old walls in the 1780s, with William Newton and David Stephenson among the beneficiaries. The estate was bought instead by a prosperous builder, George Anderson, and it was not until 1827 that this opportunity arose again. Richard Grainger, again acting with the support of the Town Clerk, Nathaniel's son John Clayton, bought the site and through delicate financial and

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<sup>13</sup> Timothy Mowl and Brian Earnshaw, *John Wood, Architect of Obsession* (Millstream Books, 1988); Youngson, *Making of Classical Edinburgh*, *passim*.

legal management created an area that bears his name today.<sup>14</sup> Although the Corporation coffers were committed in 1777 to replacing the Tyne Bridge swept away in the flood of 1771, it is notable that they did not attempt to raise funds to purchase Blackett's estate through subscriptions, loans, lotteries or shares, as Chalklin and Grady suggested were used by other authorities.<sup>15</sup> They may have suspected that leading inhabitants were more interested in enhancing their country estates and private commercial enterprises than paying for shops and houses for the town. Other building work took place outside the town walls, such as New Street constructed outside the Sandgate in 1776 and George Anderson's building of Saville Row off Northumberland Street, or in empty areas within the walls such as the former Carmelite Friary land that became Hanover Square and the rather awkward angle of the town walls that William Newton turned into Charlotte Square. These were relatively small-scale developments within the reach of individual speculative builders, but the Blackett estate was too large for any of these individuals to contemplate, especially without the backing of the Corporation. Provincial builders, dependent upon their reputations for reliability and financial prudence, could not risk bankruptcy through over-reaching themselves. In other towns and villages, such as North Shields, local builders laid out new houses where land was available along principal roads, using what capital they could raise.<sup>16</sup> One significant Corporation-led redesign of an established street layout in the North East in the eighteenth century was the creation of Church Street, Gateshead, to the designs of David Stephenson in the 1790s.<sup>17</sup> Here, however, property owners and businesses could look to the example of the new streets on the Newcastle side of the

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<sup>14</sup> Ian Ayris, *A City of Palaces: Richard Grainger and the Making of Newcastle Upon Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle Libraries & Information Service, 1997), pp. 24-30.

<sup>15</sup> Christopher W. Chalklin, *English Towns and Public Building, 1650-1830* (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), pp. 64-66; Kevin Grady, *The Georgian Public Buildings of Leeds and the West Riding*. Publications of the Thoresby Society, volume LXII, no. 133 (Leeds: The Thoresby Society, 1989), p. 110.

<sup>16</sup> John Wright of Dockwray Square was described as 'founder of several elegant streets' in North Shields and Newcastle; see H. E. Craster, *A History of Northumberland. Vol. VIII: The Parish of Tynemouth* (Newcastle, 1907).

<sup>17</sup> TWAM, DNCP/25/1, David Stephenson's Plan of Gateshead, 1788.

Tyne Bridge (Dean Street and Mosley Street) as evidence that a new street layout would be of commercial advantage, especially with the compensation offered for compulsory purchase.

Although many historians have adopted Borsary's theory of the 'urban renaissance' to explain the introduction of new utilities and élite spaces, this appears to have been a rather slow, unguided process in the North East, possibly imperceptible to contemporaries lacking the hindsight of modern historians. In assessing the extent of an urban renaissance in the North East in the eighteenth century, we must be careful not to be diverted by the prestigious developments such as assembly rooms and theatres and retain the fuller picture. There were assemblies held in Newcastle from the early eighteenth century, but these were in private houses and inns, until William Newton designed the New Assembly Rooms, opened in 1776.<sup>18</sup> Other towns already had purpose-built assembly rooms, including York (1735), Norwich (1754), Beverley (1763), Dublin (1764) and Derby (1765). The building of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms may have been prompted by completion of new assembly rooms in Bath in 1771, a renowned centre of élite culture and one visited by many members of the north-east élite. Newcastle's first Theatre Royal was completed in 1785, after those of Drury Lane in London (1663), Bristol (1766) and Bath (1768). The Guildhall in Newcastle received its neo-Palladian front in 1794, more than fifty years after that of Bristol.<sup>19</sup> The Newcastle Infirmary was begun in 1751, after those in Winchester (1736), Bristol (1737), York (1740), Shrewsbury (1743) and Liverpool (1749).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> John Hodgson Hinde, 'Public Amusements in Newcastle', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, IV (1860), 241.

<sup>19</sup> More information on the buildings can be found in Dan Cruickshank, *A Guide to the Georgian Buildings of Britain and Ireland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985) and Christopher W. Chalklin, *English Towns and Public Building, 1650-1830* (London: Hambledon Press, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> Christine Stevenson, *Medicine and Magnificence: British Hospital and Asylum Architecture, 1660-1815* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2000).

Despite Borsay's emphasis upon streets remodelled for genteel visitors and élite customers, street lighting and paving came late to the major towns of the North East. Although the principal streets of Gateshead had some lights from 1737, Jones and Falkus noted that Newcastle, like Nottingham, was not illuminated by the end of the 1730s.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, Newcastle had to wait for an Act of 1763 to authorise street lighting within the town walls, but the area outside the walls was unlit until 1812. The same slow pace of improvement afflicted other towns. Paving Acts of 1773 and 1790 failed to resolve problems caused by the claustrophobic medieval layout of the city of Durham and a further Act was required in 1822. The formidable North Gate constricted the main road from the market place to the Cathedral until its demolition in 1820. Writing in 1799, John Fuller condemned the streets of Berwick-upon-Tweed as 'intolerably ill-paved ... the principal street is shamefully cramped by the town hall injudiciously placed in the middle of it' and with little light upon the streets at night. The rapidly-expanding town of Sunderland went without many polite facilities until the nineteenth century. It was unlit and unpaved until an Act of 1809, and its customs house was a converted mansion by the quay until a new exchange was built in 1814. It did, however have a theatre from 1778.<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the Corporation of Stockton-on-Tees ordered in 1718 the pavements widened and the whole town paved, and a new town hall was built in the centre of the marketplace between 1735 and 1744. In this instance, it may be that competition with the ancient parish of Norton spurred the burghers of Stockton to action, but competition seems to have had little impact on other towns in the region.<sup>23</sup> In

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<sup>21</sup> Malcolm Falkus and E.L. Jones, 'Urban Improvement and the English Economy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in *The Eighteenth Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1688-1920*, ed. by P. Borsay (Longman, 1990), pp. 150-99.

<sup>22</sup> George Garbutt, *A Historical and Descriptive View of the Parishes of Monkwearmouth and Bishopwearmouth, and the Port and Borough of Sunderland* (Sunderland, 1819), pp. 150, 420, 281.

<sup>23</sup> Martin Roberts, *Durham: 1000 Years of History*, p. 128; John Fuller, *The History of Berwick-upon-Tweed* (Edinburgh, 1799), pp. 39-40; Frank Manders, *A History of Gateshead* (Gateshead: Gateshead Corporation, 1973), p. 288; Jones and Falkus, 'Urban Improvement and the English Economy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in *The Eighteenth Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History, 1688-1820*, ed. by Peter Borsay (Harlow, Longman, 1990), p. 135; Tom Sowler, *A History of the*

the North East, the improvements cited by Borsay and others were isolated interventions, decades apart, amid apparent continuity of urban life. A major factor for this was that much of the region's income from coal, agriculture and other exports was invested in further commercial infrastructure improvements such as roads, mines and docks, not in the wholesale rebuilding of urban centres, as implied by followers of the 'urban renaissance' hypothesis. Although industries provided income for town leaders in the form of taxes and fees, much of the wealth was accrued by individual merchants and institutions such as the Merchant Adventurers and Hostmen, not the parish authorities responsible for urban improvements such as road maintenance. In the Palatinate of Durham, much wealth ended up in the hands of the bishop, frequently absent, and with his own aims of improving his castles at Durham and Bishop Auckland, or supporting church repairs.

In contrast to an urban renaissance, the immediate impression for visitors to many towns in the region would have been one of continuity.<sup>24</sup> The traveller coming into Newcastle across the Tyne bridge before 1771, when the medieval bridge was swept away by flooding, would have been hemmed in on both sides by shops, inns and houses that clung to the bridge sides. She would have passed through the fortified gate midway across and seen the town of Newcastle much as the same as in Tudor and Stuart times. On the hill high above stood the ruined medieval castle, the medieval church of All Saints would be visible to the east, with a little further east what appeared to be a Roman temple, but was in fact St Ann's Chapel, rebuilt by William Newton between 1764 and 1767. All along the riverside of Newcastle stood the jettied timber-framed houses of merchants, their lower parts hidden by the masts of ships at the quayside. The most modern buildings visible would have been the Mansion House of 1691 and the

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*Town and Borough of Stockton-on-Tees* (Stockton: Teesside Museums and Art Galleries Department, 1973), pp. 100-102.

<sup>24</sup> A.W. Purdue, *Newcastle: The Biography* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2011), p. 129

Guildhall, rebuilt on the site of its medieval predecessor by Robert Trollope in the 1680s, but both in styles that by 1770 would be distinctly odd to anyone familiar with classical architecture. Arriving on the Newcastle side of the Tyne, the visitor made a sharp turn to the right and begun to climb the steep road up past All Saints, or another equally steep climb up The Side, under the decaying ramparts of the castle. There was the occasional tall merchant's house recently encased in brick, but as early photographs show, most of the quayside buildings were timber-framed until their immolation in the Great Fire of 1854.<sup>25</sup> The first brick houses seen by the visitor for most of the century were not in the box-like form of London houses, but featured prominent 'Dutch gables', symbols of the North Sea focus of commercial life in the town and its extensive links with the Low Countries.<sup>26</sup> Only when the visitor reached Pilgrim Street or Westgate Street would brick houses similar to those in London be visible.<sup>27</sup> This ancient and unimproved impression is clearly given in Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's 'Prospect of the South-east View of Newcastle upon Tyne' in 1745 (Figure: 6.1).

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<sup>25</sup> The many timber-framed houses that lined the Quayside and up the Side into the centre of Newcastle are shown in Frank Manders, *Newcastle Upon Tyne: A Selection of the Earliest Photographs* (Newcastle: Newcastle City Libraries and Arts, 1995), particularly pp. 7, 9, 15-18, 20, 22-24.

<sup>26</sup> Les Turnbull, *Coals From Newcastle: An Introduction to the Northumberland and Durham Coalfield* (Oxford: Chapman Research Publishing, 2009), p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> These brick-built elite houses on Westgate Road are shown in the margins of James Corbridge's map of Newcastle of 1723 (TWAM: D/NCP/2/2-5).



Figure 6.1: Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, ‘The Prospect of the South-east View of Newcastle upon Tyne’ of 1745. With kind permission of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne.

This continuity of earlier urban forms was also true of Durham, where an early eighteenth-century painting showed the castle and cathedral dominating a town of tall houses on medieval burgage plots and with town walls surrounding the peninsula.<sup>28</sup> As at Newcastle, gate towers controlled bridges and roads into the town. At Durham, the only intrusion of the new classical style into the old market place was the neo-Palladian façade added to the medieval town hall in 1754.<sup>29</sup> The same picture of apparently medieval to Stuart stability occurred at county towns such as Alnwick and Hexham. This is not to disparage the ‘urban renaissance’, but elements noted by Borsay such as theatres, brick buildings, street lighting and paving were introduced slowly and as new patches upon the older fabric. Large-scale reconstruction only came to Newcastle in the 1830s with Richard Grainger’s new streets laid out on the site of Sir Walter Blackett’s former mansion, and along the Quayside after the devastating fire of 1854. In other

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<sup>28</sup> Martin Roberts, *Durham: 1000 Years of History* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), p. 38.

<sup>29</sup> Roberts, *Durham*, p. 123.

north-east towns, the surviving fabric often shows piecemeal replacement of individual buildings over many years, with nineteenth-century development of new areas marked by uniform terraces.<sup>30</sup>

This continuity is also evident in civic buildings. Despite Newcastle's commercial pride, William Newton was employed on several occasions to renovate the principal court-house, the Moot Hall, the former medieval great hall of the castle, from 1760 until his death in 1798. In between service as a court, the Moot Hall was used as a play-house and as an auctioneer's sale-room, not quite the gravitas that might be expected in a court building.<sup>31</sup> It was 1810 before a new Moot Hall was constructed on the site, decades after other towns had built fine classical court-houses to emphasise the majesty and power of the state. This contrasts with historians' generalisations about an urban renaissance. So too the parlous state of the Guildhall, damaged by rioters in 1740 and not fully repaired until Newton and Stephenson's alterations in 1794, hardly suggesting an authority needing to denote its power through architecture.<sup>32</sup> Sir Walter Blackett provided the elegant classical-style shambles in the market place at Hexham, close to his town residence in the former Abbot's house, symbolising the transfer of ecclesiastical power to the aristocracy at the Reformation. The new town hall at Morpeth was funded by the aristocratic Howards in 1714, who also controlled the town's MPs, a symbol of their power rather than that of the corporation.<sup>33</sup> In Alnwick, the duke of Northumberland provided a new building for assemblies and covered

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<sup>30</sup> For example, Northumberland Square in North Shields, dating from the first decade of the nineteenth century.

<sup>31</sup> Hinde, 'Public Amusements in Newcastle', 238.

<sup>32</sup> By comparison, Bristol had a new Palladian-style Exchange designed by John Wood the elder (principal builder of Bath) from 1741, whilst Beverley's Guildhall dates from 1762 and has plasterwork by the famous Italian plasterer Guisepe Cortese.

<sup>33</sup> Although frequently attributed to Sir John Vanbrugh, the Howard estate papers record payments to William Etty, who worked as Vanbrugh's executant architect at Seaton Delaval Hall and Castle Howard, (formerly DULASC, Howard Family Papers relating to Northumberland: GB-0033-HNP-N108/13, Book of accounts, Northumberland properties, 1717-1721, now at Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle.

market in 1826. In each case, the role of ancient hereditary paternalism was affirmed in the central urban space.<sup>34</sup>

These examples suggest that in many instances the region's urban élite were content to utilise existing structures for as long as possible, or rely on aristocratic patronage. Their funds might be employed in civic buildings that they would use, such as assembly rooms, or those that portrayed particular messages about their authority and social consciousness such as churches and infirmaries (and which brought them opportunities for profit), but (unlike in the metropolis) they were not interested in funding large-scale urban developments such as road layouts and lighting. William Newton's work in Newcastle, particularly his development of Charlotte Square and of the Assembly Rooms, continued the identification of Westgate Road as the élite space within the town. However, Newton's work, and that of his contemporaries, was relatively small scale in comparison to the greater changes wrought to the Newcastle townscape by Richard Grainger's developments in the 1830s.<sup>35</sup> The ability of many provincial architects, including Newton, to further an 'urban renaissance', if eighteenth-century Britons were aware that they were part of such a movement, was defeated by the unwillingness of their patrons to lead (and critically to fund) major urban change.

A key hypothesis of this thesis is that in the North East profits from urban commerce were employed not in major urban rebuilding but in buying land for mineral rights, sponsoring agricultural innovations that would also bring profits to élite families, and in creating private spaces for the demonstration of élite wealth and taste away from the prying eyes of lower sorts, especially in the exclusive and frequently rural world of

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<sup>34</sup> Shambles, Market Place, Hexham.. *Images of England* database  
<<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details/Default.aspx?id=239165&mode=adv>> [accessed 19 November 2012]; DULASC, Howard Family Papers relating to Northumberland: GB-0033-HNP-N108/13 Book of accounts, Northumberland properties, 1717-1721; Northumberland Hall (Assembly Rooms) Market Place, Alnwick. *Images of England* database,  
<<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details/Default.aspx?id=235774&mode=adv>> [accessed 19 November 2012].

<sup>35</sup> Ian Ayris, *A City of Palaces: Richard Grainger and the Making of Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle Libraries & Information Service, 1997).

the country house. This regeneration of the north-east countryside created a ‘rural renaissance’ that has gone largely unnoticed by historians who have focused their attentions on towns and on the pleasure grounds immediately around country houses intended for élite enjoyment. The rural renaissance has received much less analysis from historians than the ‘urban renaissance’. Indeed, the urban and the rural are often portrayed as separate worlds. How far this focus upon the urban and not the rural reflects eighteenth-century priorities is a moot point, since evidence shows that many élite north-east families lived in both spheres. M. H. Port noted that élite families relied upon agricultural produce of their country estates to feed them in their town houses, just as profits from urban commerce funded agricultural improvement and aesthetic aggrandisement of country houses.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, Jonathan Barry criticized historians’ debates centred on the mercantile urban élite. Analysis of north-east élites confirms his point that the supposed distinction between urban and landowning élites was ‘increasingly meaningless with the growth of suburban residences and weekly commuting by richer townspeople and of prolonged urban residence by the landed.’<sup>37</sup>

The creation of these country estates had profound social, economic and aesthetic consequences, as long-established villages were swept away and replaced by acres of greensward for élite promenading. The villagers were moved outside newly-built park walls, lodges constructed to control entry to the élite zone, roads diverted and plantations grown to hide the poor from élite view. This was not always a negative experience, as in many instances the villagers were re-homed in well-built houses, as at Milton Abbas in Dorset, and Capheaton and Belsay in Northumberland. It should be noted, however, that these new villages were often a means to display the landowners’ cultural pretensions: Belsay and Capheaton villages were modelled on Italian villages

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<sup>36</sup> M. H. Port, ‘Town House and Country House: Their Interaction’ in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), pp. 117-138.

<sup>37</sup> Barry ‘Provincial Town Culture’, p. 210.

seen on the Grand Tour.<sup>38</sup> Élite acquisition of common land and moorland through enclosure also had a major impact upon the independent economic life of villages, taking away sources of additional food such as forest and grazing land for villagers' animals. Their new houses may have been better quality than before, but the villagers were tied more securely to the interests of their landowners. New farmhouses constructed on these enclosed lands also reflected the landowners' standards of classical symmetry, rather than the vernacular architecture of earlier rural buildings. The architect Daniel Garret even published a book of farmhouse designs for improving landowners in the North East.<sup>39</sup>

Among the most famous of these pioneering landowners to regenerate rural areas in the region were the Culley brothers, Matthew and George, born in 1730 and 1734 respectively, exact contemporaries of William Newton.<sup>40</sup> Originally from Denton, near Darlington in County Durham, the brothers were sent to Leicestershire by their father to study the agricultural techniques of Robert Bakewell, a renowned improver. As the family farm in Durham was to be inherited by their eldest brother, Matthew and George moved to Felton in north Northumberland. As Rowe noted, this area was impoverished after the centuries of warfare against the Scots and rents for farms were relatively low. With their expertise the Culleys, kept up to date by tours to view successful farms in other areas of England and Scotland, were able to introduce crop rotation to Northumberland, which ensured the long-term productivity of the land, and could be used for arable and dairy farming, another example of diversification in the north-east economy. They also cross-bred varieties of sheep to create a breed that would flourish in the difficult upland terrain of the Cheviots. These innovations enabled the

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<sup>38</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, revised by J. Grundy, G. McCombie, P. Ryder and H. Welfare (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 2002).

<sup>39</sup> Daniel Garret, *Designs and Estimates of Farm houses &c. for the County of York, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland and Bishoprick of Durham* (London, 1747).

<sup>40</sup> D. J. Rowe, 'The Culleys, Northumberland Farmers, 1767-1813', *Agricultural History Review*, 19 (1971), 156-174.

Culleys to buy other farms in Northumberland and establish themselves as major landowners. This culminated in 1807 when George Culley purchased Fowberry Tower from Sir Francis Blake. This was a medieval tower rebuilt in 1776 by James Nesbit of Kelso, one of the nationally-famous architect Robert Adam's principal masons, and two years later the Culleys added a new façade to this house. George Culley highlighted the family's transformation from farmers to country house owners:

Whenever I am at Fowberry, I am struck with astonishment, when I reflect on our beginning in Northumberland 43 years ago. To think of my son, now inhabiting a Palace! altho' his father in less than 50 years since worked harder than any servant we now have, and even drove a coal cart!<sup>41</sup>

The possibility of profit from agricultural improvement also encouraged successful business families from Newcastle to buy land in these remote areas. For example, Abraham Dixon (1726 to 1782), a member of the Newcastle Merchant Adventurers, bought land at Belford in Northumberland. He employed James Paine to build a neo-Palladian mansion amid wasteland converted by Dixon's efforts into a model of agricultural improvement that brought praise from Arthur Young.<sup>42</sup> Some merchants used the wealth from their urban businesses to bring industry to declining rural areas. Rowland Burdon (1724-86), another Merchant Adventurer of Newcastle, purchased the Castle Eden estate in County Durham in 1758. The estate was described as 'waste and unenclosed', but Burdon rebuilt the church and mansion house to William Newton's designs and established a sail-cloth factory in the village, serving a ready market in the important port of Hartlepool five miles away.<sup>43</sup> Burdon and his son supported the development of turnpike roads to connect this renewed rural economy

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<sup>41</sup> Rowe, 'The Culleys', p. 174.

<sup>42</sup> Arthur Young, *A Six Months Tour Through the North of England*, (London, 1771, reprinted New York: A. M. Kelley, 1967), vol. 3, p. 38-44.

<sup>43</sup> 'Rowland Burdon', *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend*, May 1888, p. 201.

with markets in Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham.<sup>44</sup> This rural improvement absorbed considerable sums earned from coal and other commercial activities in the region's towns, preventing the wholesale rebuilding of urban areas. For example, the Ords of Fenham, William Newton's first patrons, bought the lands of the declining Whitfield family at Whitfield in south-west Northumberland for £23,063 in 1755. They had only recently paid £4,278 to rebuild Fenham Hall between 1743 and 1755, with additional expenditure to create all of the features of a country estate, including £105 for the south pond, £178 for a bath house, £89 for gate lodges, £71 for a classical temple and £817 for the landscaping and gardens around the new mansion.<sup>45</sup> Over the next half-century, with Newton's assistance the Ords rebuilt the church, the parsonage and the mansion house at Whitfield. The church cost £281, the parsonage £297 and the mansion house £1,769 (as this was a refronting of an older structure, though the cost did not include that of carriage of materials).<sup>46</sup> George Bowes of Gibside paid £10,000 to acquire the neighbouring Hollinside estate, 'to give me room to make new beauties by its happy situation'. One of these beauties, the Column of British Liberty (a prominent landmark in his Gibside estate visible for many miles around) cost over £2,000, and this did not include the cost of quarrying the stone on the estate.<sup>47</sup> Although these families were generous donors and subscribers to urban building works such as the Newcastle Infirmary, it is clear that their priorities were the creation, expansion and modelling of their rural estates. Tied to the interests and funds of their clients, the focus of many provincial architects' work was also rural, and not the urban regeneration beloved of historians.

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<sup>44</sup> The church was rebuilt in 1764 and the Gothick style mansion house, called The Castle, completed in 1777; see Richard Pears, 'Two Castles by William Newton', *Georgian Group Journal*, XVI, 132-140.

<sup>45</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/E/12, Fenham Journal No.1 1745-55, entry for December 1755.

<sup>46</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/W2/15, Whitfield estate papers 1745-67.

<sup>47</sup> Margaret Wills, *Gibside and the Bowes Family* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1995), p. 23; *Sir William Burrell's Northern Tour, 1758*. Edited and introduced by John G. Dunbar (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1997), p. 45.

At the centre of these estates was the country house. Each mansion required different levels of expenditure from the owner. The availability of building materials and the ease of transporting people, tools and materials to the building site varied in each case. In many cases earlier structures were retained, even if they were hidden behind new façades. It was often as expensive to remodel an existing house as it was to build anew, as ‘alterations were often finicky tasks requiring a great deal of skilled labour’.<sup>48</sup> New building works were designed as responses to specific situations, taking into account each client’s requirements, their funds, the landscape in which the house was to stand, or even a collection of sculptures or paintings that needed to be accommodated. When Thomas Worsley built his own mansion, Hovingham Hall in North Yorkshire (completed in 1776), he was so keen to display his love of horses that visitors entered his new house through the riding school.<sup>49</sup> With such variation, it is difficult to provide comparisons between the work of one architect and another, but some examples in this thesis show that William Newton’s designs were of comparable cost to those of other eighteenth-century architects. Newton’s estimate for a new house at Backworth Hall in 1778 amounted to £2,500. The now-demolished wings at Backworth, containing offices, cost an additional £889.<sup>50</sup> In 1788 Newton estimated that replacing the north front of Capheaton Hall, Northumberland, adding new three new rooms on the ground and first floors, new main and service staircases and replacing the roof would amount to £1,485. This sum was not paid out at once, but in four instalments of £300 in June 1789, £400 in November 1789, £500 in May 1790 and £285 when the

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<sup>48</sup> Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 256.

<sup>49</sup> Giles Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1995), p. 141.

<sup>50</sup> Lawrence H. Officer, *Purchasing Power of British Pounds from 1264 to Present*.

<<http://www.MeasuringWorth.com>> [accessed 25 November 2012] gives £246,045.18 as a present day comparison.

work was completed.<sup>51</sup> This allowed the Swinburnes to spread the cost of the work, but even so £500 was a huge instalment. Very detailed accounts survive for the construction of Howick Hall in Northumberland to Newton's designs. These included the demolition of the old tower house, Newton's site visits to draw plans and supervise building work, and for the building of the new house from 1781 to 1788. Table 1 shows the annual expenditure on his new house by Sir Henry Grey of Howick:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Expenditure on building work</b>
1779-81	£476
1781	£394
1782	£1,690
1783	£1,600
1784	£1,350
1785	£1,740
1786	£1,340
1787	£1,200
1788	£1,523
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£11,313</b>

Table 1: Annual expenditure in building Howick Hall, Northumberland. Source: DULASC: Earl Grey estate and legal papers Box 193: Howick Hall: William Newton's Book of Expenses for New House at Howick

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<sup>51</sup> Northumberland Archives, Swinburne (Capheaton) Collection, ZSW 452/6, Estimate for building the walls of the Butlers' pantry and to take down the said walls of the Butlers' pantry, the old staircase and the north front of Capheaton House, 2 June 1789.



Figure 6.2: Howick Hall, Northumberland, by William Newton, 1781-89. South front and one of the office pavilions

Howick Hall has a main block of nine by five bays, three storeys high, linked to two-storey pavilions five by five bays (Figure 6.2). For comparison, the cost of the very similar Denton Park, near Harrogate in North Yorkshire, constructed to the designs of John Carr from 1772 to 1778, was £9,459. This is a nine by seven bay main block of two storeys, linked to pavilions of three by four bays on each side (Figure 6.3). Sir James Ibbetson had married Jenny Caygill an heiress with a £5000 fortune, inherited considerable property in Leeds from his father and could draw upon the Denton Park estates' income of £1,100 per year and his wife's property worth £1,250 per year.<sup>52</sup> In more remote areas of the country, it may have been possible for the client to hold down building costs. Salle Park, in Norfolk, was built in 1763 for £2,470. It is a brick house of three storeys and seven bays wide, of a design similar to the south front of Blagdon Hall in Northumberland. A similar house in North Yorkshire, Ormesby Hall, cost around £3,480 in 1750.<sup>53</sup> All of these works were dwarfed by the estimated £70,000 to £80,000 spent by the duke and duchess of Northumberland on their restoration of Alnwick

<sup>52</sup> Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 237-239; Brian Wragg, *The Life and Works of John Carr of York*, ed. by Giles Worsley (York: Oblong, 2000).

<sup>53</sup> Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, p. 243.

Castle after 1755, but even their landed income was supplemented by substantial income from coal mining.<sup>54</sup>



Figure 6.3: Denton Hall, North Yorkshire, by John Carr, 1772-78.

These figures clearly show that new or rebuilding was an option only for the élite, and then only those secure in the knowledge that they would have sufficient income for anywhere between three to ten years it would take to have a habitable new house. Nor would this be the only expenditure for élite families. They would usually need alternative accommodation during the building period, either through renting or using their town-house, and the family would be expected to maintain other élite cultural activities such as the London and Bath seasons, concerts and assemblies. New houses required new decoration and furnishings: once their new house was completed the Ibbetsons of Denton Park spent £1,082 on furniture from Chippendale and Gillows.<sup>55</sup> Nor was a new house sufficient, for another essential building was a stable block for the horses that provided transport and sport. The new stable block built for Heaton House in Manchester in 1777 cost £2,225. The neo-Palladian stables designed by Daniel Garrett for the Gibside estate near Gateshead, not as elaborate as those for Heaton House, Manchester, still cost over £1,800, and money was saved here by using building

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<sup>54</sup> Norman McCord and Richard Thompson, *The Northern Counties From AD 1000* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 243.

<sup>55</sup> Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*, pp. 237-9.

materials recovered from the demolition of the old stables.<sup>56</sup> With the costs and disruption to family, social and business arrangements, it is not surprising that country house building was described as ‘a pleasure not to be envied’.<sup>57</sup> Families embarking on such costly statements of their social position and taste demanded some guarantee that those undertaking the work would be reliable and honest. This was not always the case, and estate stewards who were supposed to supervise building work were not always reliable either. The 2nd duke of Northumberland estimated in 1806 that some £23,904 was unaccounted for in money supposedly paid out for the upkeep of farms on the Northumberland estates. The duke’s former architect, Vincent Shepherd, and the former auditors were unable, or unwilling, to explain to the Board of Enquiry established by the duke where the money had gone.<sup>58</sup> Such questions were not raised of any works personally supervised by William Newton, and may account for his successful practice over half a century.

The development of major estates, such as Howick, Wallington and Belsay, affected nearby villages, which were demolished to create the ideal parkland and exclusive space sought by élite families. The rural renaissance, however, had implications for county towns and villages close to major towns, as seen in the remote areas of the region such as north-west and south-west Northumberland and the west of County Durham. The county towns provided focal points for wealthy merchants, industrialists and professionals, as well as minor gentry who wished to enjoy leisure pursuits such as theatres and assemblies, and socialise with those of similar standing and outlook. Whilst some in these social groups remained urbanites, others were able to

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<sup>56</sup> James Lomax, ‘The First and Second Earls of Wilton and the Creation of Heaton House’, *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 82 (1983), 58-101, (p. 63); Wills, *Gibside*, pp. 36-8.

<sup>57</sup> R. Wilson and A. Mackley, ‘A Pleasure Not to be Envied’. The Building of the English Country House’, *History Today* (July 2001), pp. 41-47.

<sup>58</sup> Northumberland Mss, DP/D2/1/229, Letter from duke of Northumberland to Messrs Dormer and Smith, (25 February 1806).

establish themselves as landowners living in country houses. In many cases, these dwellings could perhaps more accurately be described as ‘suburban houses’, since they were often dependent upon the local town for food and for the servants, craftsmen and labourers needed to run the estate. Caroline Knight and Elizabeth McKellar described the profusion of these properties around London, and they were found throughout the country wherever élite families sought comfortable living and fresh air away from the towns, yet were within easy reach of urban areas where the families’ business interests and sources of wealth were located.<sup>59</sup> In Northumberland, there were clusters of such mini-estates around Alnwick and along the River Aln and the River Coquet. Many were established in close proximity to Newcastle, including Fenham Hall and Gosforth Park. Similar clusters were found around the city of Durham, and as Sunderland developed as a major port in the second half of the eighteenth century, so did these small estates.<sup>60</sup>

One of the most disruptive impacts of this rural renaissance occurred in villages close to major towns. Élite families used the proceeds of their professional and commercial work to create clear symbols of their prestige and their gentility, in the process dominating established villages and displacing the labouring inhabitants to the peripheries. Urban historians frequently comment upon the creation of élite enclaves in eighteenth-century towns, but similar enclaves developed in villages within easy travelling distance of major towns as the élite and their professional and merchant providers sought comparable levels of comfort and display. Two villages close to Newcastle illustrate the transformation that took place in what were originally

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<sup>59</sup> Caroline Knight, ‘The Country Houses of Greater London’, Lecture to Society of Antiquaries of London, 26 November 2009 <<http://www.sal.org.uk/newsandevents/folder.2010-01-13.6340317245/document.2010-01-13.7833332027>> [accessed 25 November 2012]; Elizabeth McKellar, ‘The Villa’ in *Built From Below: British Architecture and the Vernacular*, ed. by Peter Guillery (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 49-73.

<sup>60</sup> Many examples are given in Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland* (York: Jill Raines, 1996) and Peter Meadows and Edward Waterson, *Lost Houses of County Durham* (York: Jill Raines, 1993).

agricultural settlements. The first example was Whickham, four miles south-west of Newcastle and in the Bishopric of Durham. Levine and Wrightson showed how the extensive coal reserves beneath the village led to its transformation into an ‘industrial community’.<sup>61</sup> Agriculture was damaged by the excavation of coal and the waggonways constructed across fields to take coal from pits to the River Tyne, where it was ferried downstream to Newcastle. The manor of Whickham was the basis of Newcastle’s coal industry and from the sixteenth century the merchant élite of Newcastle controlled the Grand Lease, a monopoly on the coal extracted from Whickham. Levine and Wrightson highlighted the effects of the coal industry on the agricultural life of Whickham parish during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but Bennett, Clavering and Rounding noted the effects of coal wealth and the growth of professionals to support it and service its élite on the built environment.<sup>62</sup> After the intensive working of shallow coal reserves in the seventeenth century, gentry, professionals and merchants bought up land in and around the village and built fashionable houses. The Bowes family developed the Gibside and Hollinside estates at the south-west of the parish. The Liddells acquired the Ravensworth Castle estate to the east of Whickham parish, developing the castle into a fashionable residence with work by James Paine in the 1750s and complete rebuilding into a vast Gothic mansion by John Nash in the early nineteenth century, all funded by coal wealth. To the west of Whickham parish, the Claverings built a new mansion to Paine’s designs and fought legal and physical battles with other élite families to secure transit routes to the River Tyne. In 1750, the merchant Ralph Carr extended his family’s residence at Dunston Hill House, immediately to the east of Whickham village, with a fine ashlar-fronted neo-Palladian range, built under the supervision of Robert and William Newton.

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<sup>61</sup> Levine and Wrightson, *Making of an Industrial Community*.

<sup>62</sup> G. Bennett, E. Clavering, and A. Rounding, *A Fighting Trade: Rail Transport in Tyne Coal 1600-1800* (Gateshead: Portcullis Press, 1990), p. 26.

Perhaps the greatest transformation took place in the centre of the village, to the detriment of the labouring people, as suburban estates were developed within the core of the settlement by professionals: a clergyman, a coal factor, a farmer, a doctor, a lawyer and a brewer (Figure 6.4):

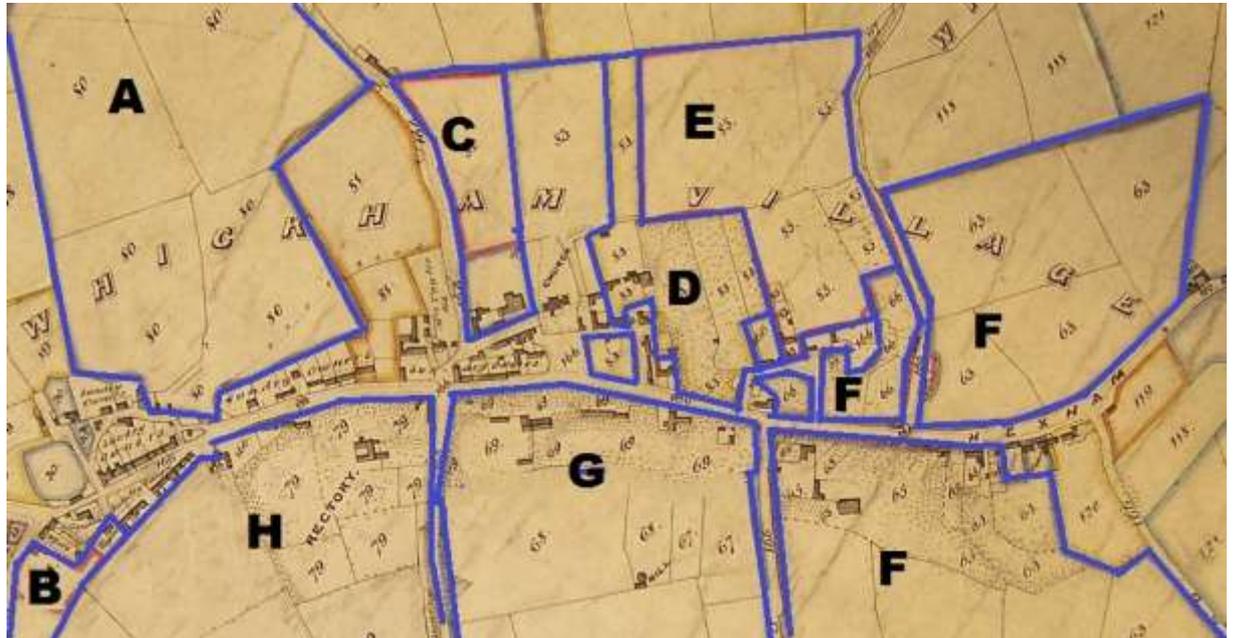


Figure 6.4: Whickham, c.1800 showing appropriation of village area by elite families. A – Marquis of Bute, B – Taylor of The Hermitage, C – Askew of Whickham Hall (former rectory), D – Harrison of Whickham Park, E – Dockendale Hall (Lord Ravensworth), F – Williamsons of Whickham Lodge (formerly Barras lands), G – Leatons of Whickham House (formerly Rawlings lands), H – The Rectory built by Reverend Thomlinson 1713.

The first suburban estate was that of the Rector, Revd. Robert Thomlinson (H in Figure 6.4). He abandoned the late-medieval rectory close to the parish church and with permission from the bishop of Durham, Lord Crewe, constructed a new house and gardens on glebe land at the edge of the village green in 1713. Shortly after this, Thomas Rawlings, a highly respected colliery viewer and one of ‘the coalfield’s great specialists in the sinking of new pits’, acquired a substantial stretch of land on the south side of the village and built a new house directly opposite the parish church (G in Figure 6.4). On his death in 1765, his mansion and estate passed to another family of colliery

experts, the Leatons.<sup>63</sup> Further east, John Barras owned an extensive area of farmland, but his agricultural profits were only part of his income. His lands were crossed by wagonways for transporting coal from pits to the river. For each wagon of coal crossing his land, Barras received a payment, called wayleave. In the 1740s Barras was able to build a fine mansion house, Whickham Lodge (Figure 6.5), clearly visible to everyone entering the village (F in Figure 6.4). These three houses, surrounded by gardens, occupied the entire southern side of the village.



Figure 6.5: Whickham Lodge, Whickham, County Durham, constructed c.1740 for John Barrass (architect unknown).

On the north side of the village, the Liddells of Ravensworth Castle owned a small estate centred on Dockendale Hall (E in Figure 6.4). To the west, between Dockendale Hall and the parish church, was the Whickham Park estate, owned in the second half of the eighteenth century by the lawyer Jasper Harrison (D in Figure 6.4). He built a mansion house, and by exchanging lands with the Clavering family Harrison was able

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<sup>63</sup> Bennett, Clavering and Rounding, *Fighting Trade*, p. 26. As Levine and Wrightson noted, the Leatons and other professionals involved in the coal trade considered themselves, and were considered by contemporaries, to be gentlemen and they built houses that affirmed this status (Levine and Wrightson, *Making of an Industrial Community*, p. 248).

to create a substantial estate, with gardens and even a vinery. At the entrance to his estate, next to the parish church where it could be seen by everyone attending divine services, was a prominent gatehouse.<sup>64</sup>

On the other side of the churchyard stood the former rectory, Whickham Hall (C in Figure 6.4). Although abandoned by Revd. Thomlinson and subsequent rectors in favour of the first suburban estate in the village, Whickham Hall was given a symmetrical new front with sash windows by another wealthy professional, the physician Dr Adam Askew (1694-1773). He came to the North East in 1725 from Kendal, where his father had practised as a physician. Askew served as physician to the Newcastle Infirmary from its inception in 1751 until 1771. Askew had ‘a genius for making money and great foresight in investing it’.<sup>65</sup> With his wealth he built a house in Newcastle in 1740, in 1748 he bought Redheugh Hall, across the Tyne from Newcastle, and purchased the former rectory in Whickham. When, in 1764, the churchwardens of Whickham needed to extend the churchyard, they bought land from Askew. In 1790, these earlier estates were joined by another at the western end of Whickham village, The Hermitage, created by the brewer Matthew Taylor (B in Figure 6.4).<sup>66</sup>

To the east of Newcastle upon Tyne, the village of Wallsend witnessed a similar transformation, one in which architectural styles and close links to landowners suggest the involvement of the architect William Newton.<sup>67</sup> The chief residence was Wallsend Hall, owned from the mid-eighteenth century by James Moncaster.<sup>68</sup> He was a Hostman, a member of Newcastle Common Council, a subscriber to the Newcastle Infirmary and a shareholder in the new Assembly Rooms. His house was surrounded by

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<sup>64</sup> TWAM, DT.BEL/1/12/18, A Sketch of Lands intended to be exchanged between Sir Thomas Clavering, Baronet and Jasper Harrison Esquire, c. 1800.

<sup>65</sup> Welford, *Men of Mark Twixt Tyne and Tweed*, volume 1, p. 112.

<sup>66</sup> William Bourn, *Whickham Parish: Its History, Antiquities, and Industries* (Carlisle: Wordsworth Press, 1893).

<sup>67</sup> Wallsend Hall, The Grange and The Red House had features common to Newton’s designs; see William Richardson, *History of the Parish of Wallsend*, (Newcastle: Northumberland Press Ltd, 1923) pp. 72, 87 and 97.

<sup>68</sup> James Moncaster (1715-1797) was a member of the Newcastle Infirmary building committee, subscriber to the Assembly Rooms, an alderman and Hostman (Richardson, *Wallsend*, pp. 74-76).

pleasure grounds, considered fashionable enough to be visited by the duchess of Northumberland, who commissioned the artist William Beilby to paint the scene.<sup>69</sup> Close by stood The Grange, the house of Charles Atkinson, Mayor of the Newcastle in 1775 and 1783, Moncaster's brother-in-law, a fellow member of the Hostmen's Company and of the Newcastle Corporation. Across the village green, like that of Whickham fast being cleared of labouring families' houses to create these estates, stood the Red House, owned by another Hostman Henry Waters. These men derived their incomes from urban commerce, but used it to develop rural areas. The acquisition of land in village centres to create suburban estates for merchants and professionals distorted the layout of these settlements, forcing labouring families to the peripheral areas, and denying them access to large areas of their own settlements. Their villages had been recreated as showcases of élite wealth. The labouring sort could pass through these élite landscapes on the main roads or on the way to church, but they were excluded from the inner élite zones by walls and lodges.

A key factor in the creation of these suburban estates was the demonstration of the status and taste of the owners. Although they could not stand comparison with major houses such as Alnwick or Raby Castles, or Castle Howard and Chatsworth, nor be sited in splendid landscapes such as Stowe, the owners of these suburban estates were asserting their position in the local frame where most of the population lived. Part of the trappings of élite status, along with parish and legal responsibilities as Justices of the Peace, was a substantial house and the image it conveyed. This was the opportunity for architects such as William Newton to promote their skills. As in London, these estates provided some of the trappings of landed society, and although the larger ones brought income from agriculture, those close to the Tyne and the Wear brought substantial income from coal, and from wayleave fees to permit other coal-owners to move their

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<sup>69</sup> Alnwick MSS, Duchess of Northumberland's Albums of Views 1774-8, illustration 03396/26.

coal wagons across land if it lay in the path of transport to the rivers.<sup>70</sup> This demonstration of urban and mercantile wealth was carefully contrived for the various ‘publics’ who viewed it, either excluded or favoured to enter, either as fellow members of the élite or as one of the many visitors to country houses admitted by letter or ticket.<sup>71</sup>

Business, in the form of trade and industry, was central to the income of landed and non-landed élite in the region. Many families prospered through a combination of mutually-supportive income streams, and many who bought country estates in the eighteenth century were not aristocracy but merchants, office-holders, lawyers and other professionals. The Ridleys of Heaton and Blagdon owned considerable lands in the south east of Northumberland, which gave them an income from agriculture, but below their fields was a growing network of coal mines, which provided further income and which enabled them to develop Blyth as a coal-port. The Ridleys were not opposed to the Tyneside oligarchy; however, as throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were leading members of the influential Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle, as well as MPs for the town in successive parliaments.<sup>72</sup> George Bowes of Streatlam Castle and Gibside in County Durham, with a lineage dating back to the sixteenth century, was a substantial landowner and major colliery owner, expending huge sums in developing his mines and the wagonways that took his coal to the Tyne, as well as laying out the pleasure grounds around his house at Gibside.<sup>73</sup> Purdue’s extensive research into the Carr and Ellison families (both patrons of William Newton

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<sup>70</sup> David Levine and Keith Wrightson, *The Making of an Industrial Society: Whickham 1560-1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 70.

<sup>71</sup> Dana Arnold, ‘The Country House and its Publics’, in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape, and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), pp. 20-43; Julius Bryant, ‘Villa Views and the Uninvited Audience’, in *The Georgian Villa*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1996), pp. 11-24. For country house visiting see Adrian Tinniswood, *A History of Country House Visiting* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

<sup>72</sup> Norman McCord, *North East England: An Economic and Social History* (London: Batsford, 1979), p. 60; Joyce M. Ellis, ‘Ridley, Sir Matthew White, second baronet (1745–1813)’, *ODNB*, online edition; Richard Welford, *Men of Mark ‘Twixt Tyne and Tweed*, 4 vols. (London and Newcastle, 1895), pp. 317-322.

<sup>73</sup> Jennifer Gill, ‘Bowes, George (1701–1760)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

for building work, as well as his neighbours in Charlotte Square) showed that by the end of the century, the merchant Ralph Carr owned estates at Whickham in County Durham, and at Hedgeley and Ponteland in Northumberland, whilst the Ellisons had estates at Gateshead and Hebburn. Both families also owned properties in Newcastle, the focal point of their trading wealth. Purdue noted that ‘the evidence suggests that there was no great gulf between land and commerce... the fact that coal came from landed estates was one important determinant of social familiarity between gentry (and even aristocracy) and trade’.<sup>74</sup>

Other merchants among William Newton’s clients were able to combine landownership with trade. Rowland Burdon (1724-86), Merchant Adventurer of Newcastle, transformed the Castle Eden estate near Hartlepool, rebuilding church and mansion house to William Newton’s designs and establishing a factory in the village, and transformed himself from merchant to landowning gentleman.<sup>75</sup> George Colpitts, a wholesale grocer, purchased the Killingworth Hall estate from John Williams in 1767, for the sum of 8,000 guineas, to establish himself as a landowner.<sup>76</sup> He extended his landholding with the enclosure of Killingworth Moor in 1793, gaining an additional 129 acres.<sup>77</sup> Colpitts may have commissioned William Newton to add wings to the Hall to create an even grander symbol of his wealth and status. Joseph Lamb (1732-1800), who purchased one of Newton’s houses in Charlotte Square, also combined trade with landownership. He was the fifth son of a Cumberland farmer who came to Newcastle in 1745, and became a linen-draper. In 1764 he moved up in the world when he married Ann Humble, ‘an amicable lady with a considerable fortune’.<sup>78</sup> Although Ann died in 1768, she brought her husband a country estate at Ryton, to the west of Newcastle, and

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<sup>74</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xviii.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Rowland Burdon’, *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend* (May 1888), p. 201.

<sup>76</sup> Madeliene Hope Dodds, *History of Northumberland*, vol. 13 (Newcastle, 1930), p. 428; Thomas Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland* (York, Jill Raines, 1996), p. 53.

<sup>77</sup> Dodds, *History of Northumberland*, p. 421.

<sup>78</sup> Mabel Lamb, *Some Annals of the Lambs: A Border Family* (Privately printed, 1926), p. 32.

he built a new house on the estate. He married again in 1772, his new wife Sarah Maude being the daughter of a wealthy Sunderland coal-fitter. The farmer's son-turned-merchant, buoyed by these advantageous marriages, lived the life of a country gentleman, with his country house at Ryton and a townhouse in Newcastle, first Cross House on Westgate Street and then in Charlotte Square.

These examples demonstrate that trade was a means of entry into land ownership and enhanced status, one actively pursued by many merchants in the period of this study. Trade could also be a means to resurrect the fortunes of a minor gentry family, as demonstrated by the Whitbread family of Bedfordshire. Their wealth from brewing enabled them (over two generations) to purchase thousands of acres in Bedfordshire, buy and rebuild a country house, and establish themselves as landowning gentry.<sup>79</sup> Some of their land was bought from declining nobility families. They continued, however, to maintain their links with industry, as this provided greater income than that from their landholdings. As Rapp noted 'by investing in land [Samuel Whitbread] was diverting capital from a less certain though more profitable brewery to land which he knew reaped a modest but more steady return.'<sup>80</sup> Purdue highlighted a similar reluctance to abandon trade income among north-east landowners. Several generations held 'an intermediate position of merchant-gentry or gentrified merchants before becoming exclusively landed.'<sup>81</sup>

Land ownership was viewed as a safe long-term investment for a family's wealth, but it was not simply a matter of impressing social superiors and peers with the number of green acres, but a very deliberate business decision. Land had to pay something back for the investment, even if over several generations, just as investment in new technology by industrialists was intended to increase income. Some examples

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<sup>79</sup> Dean Rapp, 'Social Mobility in the Eighteenth Century: The Whitbreads of Bedfordshire, 1720-1815', *Economic History Review*, 27 (3), 380-94.

<sup>80</sup> Rapp, 'Whitbreads', 385.

<sup>81</sup> Purdue, *Merchants and Gentry*, p. xviii.

from William Newton's clients illustrate this point. In 1783, Sir Matthew White Ridley was offered lands adjacent to his estate at Blagdon.<sup>82</sup> There was a possibility that if he did not purchase another landowner, John Hussey Delaval of Seaton Delaval, would buy the lands. This would limit any future growth of Ridley's estate, but he decided not to buy because it gave poorer-quality coal than his other lands. Moreover, he knew that the Delavals were experiencing financial difficulties, so were also unlikely to purchase. Similarly, George Bowes' acquisition of the Hollinside estate in 1750 enabled him to expand his Gibside estate and create a new entrance to the pleasure grounds he was laying out. More importantly, it also brought coal-bearing land and a substantial stretch of land along the River Derwent into his hands, at a time when wagonways passed through this area on their way to the River Tyne. Its acquisition gave Bowes additional wayleave income, which may have been more important than a new entrance to his estate. In each case, these landowners had the opportunity to buy lands that would increase the size of their estates, but their decisions were not based solely upon territorial aggrandisement, but upon very clear economic criteria.

Section II has highlighted the importance of economic factors in sustaining provincial architects. Chapter 5 showed that William Newton was fortunate to live in a region that enjoyed stable economic conditions and which provided its élite with incomes sufficient to undertake building work. Chapter 6 questioned the prominence given to theories of urban regeneration in the eighteenth century, in particular the extent to which these constituted an urban renaissance. Whilst north-east towns did experience cultural enhancements identified elsewhere in Britain, these appear to have been rather isolated occurrences in towns where the principal expansion was in industrial and mercantile infrastructure. In the North East, established landowning families and those enriched by

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<sup>82</sup> Northumberland Archives, ZRI 39/13, Estate correspondence 1783-1793, letter from Sir Matthew White Ridley (27 July 1783).

commercial endeavour chose to invest their profits in transport and industrial developments, or in the selective remodelling of élite meeting places. In towns, these venues included assembly rooms and theatres, but a major commitment of élite incomes was the development of rural areas as productive economic estates and spaces for private socialising, not least the country house. The form of these houses, the inspiration for their designs and the identities that the élite and their architects sought to portray are discussed in Section III.

### **Section III: Architectural Styles and Élite Identity in North-East England**

This Section examines the importance of design skills in the establishment of the professional architect in the eighteenth century through analysis of their buildings. The sources of designs made by provincial architects are examined in Chapter 7, noting the widespread influence of designs by Italian Renaissance architects, including Sebastiano Serlio and Andrea Palladio, rather than the contemporary neo-classical designs of Robert Adam and James Wyatt and ancient Greek examples published from the mid-eighteenth century. It proposes that provincial architects of the second half of the eighteenth century, including William Newton, continued to rely upon these sources despite the growing importance of neo-classical designs from mid-century, because these were the prevailing sources promulgated by Lord Burlington during the formative years of these provincial practitioners. Newton's own classical designs are shown to follow those of Palladio, whilst he also continued to build in Gothic or castellated styles. Chapter 8 examines the sources of élite taste in architecture and questions why clients in the North East, many of whom had experienced metropolitan culture and witnessed ancient classical architecture on their Grand Tours, continued to commission buildings inspired by neo-Palladian designs until the end of the eighteenth century. It suggests that neo-Palladian architecture survived because of William Newton's dominance in the region, and also because Roman architecture appealed to a regional élite who were increasingly aware of the classical Roman heritage of the North East through the work of antiquaries such as Bourne, Stukeley and Hutchinson. This antiquarian interest may also account for the continued interest in castellated architecture, as it denoted ancient lineage, patriotic resistance to foreign invasion and stable lordship.

## Chapter 7: Design and the Provincial Architect

Writing in 1747, Robert Campbell claimed that the ability to design buildings was the key attribute that separated the architect from the artisan.<sup>1</sup> Design was not only the ability to draw, but also the intellectual skills required to conceptualise a three dimensional structure complete in its external form, internal arrangements, and finished appearance. This contemporary focus upon design skills was taken up by twentieth-century historians who emphasised the superiority of classical architecture over vernacular and Gothic styles. Inigo Jones was hailed as the guiding star of classical architecture, portrayed as a ‘lonely genius’, a true architect in a world of craftsmen, in Summerson’s words ‘head and shoulders above the rest’.<sup>2</sup> Jones combined the first-hand knowledge of classical architecture in Italy with the ability to conceptualise and plan a building embodying the principles of classical architects, but the Civil War had cut short his career. Subsequent buildings, designed by craftsmen, were described as ‘artisan mannerism’, copying decorative details but lacking the overall mastery of design displayed by Jones. In this view of architectural history, architecture was revived in the late-seventeenth century with a roll-call of artist-architects leading the progression (a debatable point) of styles. This went from Jones in the 1620s to the Baroque of Sir John Vanbrugh and Sir Christopher Wren, the neo-Palladianism of Lord Burlington and James Paine, neo-classicism promulgated by Robert Adam (who has the distinction of an eponymous architectural style), Sir William Chambers, James Wyatt

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Campbell, *The London Tradesman. Being a Compendious View of All the Trades, Professions, Arts, Both Liberal and Mechanic* (London, 1747), p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> For Sir John Summerson, see *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (London: Penguin Books, 1953), p. 67). Summerson’s views have been challenged by later authors, including Timothy Mowl and Brian Earnshaw, *Architecture Without Kings* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Giles Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1995); Giles Worsley, *Inigo Jones and the European Classicist Tradition* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2007); Vaughan Hart, *Inigo Jones: The Architect of Kings* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2011).

and Sir John Soane, to the Regency style of John Nash. Finally, the nineteenth-century architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin was associated with the revival of Gothic architecture.<sup>3</sup> Design was personalised in the form of these practitioners, reinforcing the view that the production of distinctive and innovative architectural designs was the critical factor in defining the profession of architect. This chapter will contest the validity of this focus upon innovative design by analysing the work of provincial architects, where examination shows repetition of common designs. It is suggested here that the provincial practitioner could learn from two major sources: the widespread availability of printed architectural texts from the 1720s, and early career experience of working on neo-Palladian buildings designed by London architects with provincial practices. The focus of this analysis will be the works of the Newcastle architect William Newton, with comparisons to the buildings of more well-known designers, including James Paine, Robert Adam and James Wyatt (who each worked in the North East) and other contemporary provincial practitioners, including Joseph Pickford of Derby and John Carr of York. The repetition of common designs questions the motives of clients who commissioned these buildings, and these will be investigated in the next chapter. The present chapter will begin with an examination of the availability of architectural books in the eighteenth century, noting the influence of Italian renaissance architectural treatises in the formation of classical tastes in British architecture, and then assessing the impact in the North East of England of Lord Burlington's focus upon Palladio as the model for a national style in the work of William Newton and other architects. The chapter will conclude with an assessment of William Newton's major

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<sup>3</sup> See for example Summerson, *Architecture in Britain*, whose chapter titles follow this progression of leading names and styles. For Adam, see Steven Parissien, *Adam Style* (London: Phaidon, 1996). Each of these architects has entries in Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2008), with additional material in the *ODNB*, online edition. For Pugin, see Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain* (London: Penguin, 2008) and Alexandra Wedgwood, 'Pugin, Augustus Welby Northmore (1812-1852)', *ODNB*, online edition.

works, contesting the view that his buildings were inspired by the work of James Paine and Robert Adam.

For William Newton, and for other young men in the provincial building trades, who lacked the means for foreign travel and who worked far from London and frequently-cited iconic buildings, such as the Banqueting House in Whitehall, knowledge of fashionable buildings must have come from secondary sources, through either direct observation of other architects' work, clients' descriptions, or through access to illustrations of designs. It is suggested here that in the North East, the adoption of classical-style architecture was due to the influence of building designs published in architectural books, supported by the work of architects and craftsmen with experience of classical buildings outside of the region. These publications addressed two overlapping readerships: the élite patrons, and the artisans who created three-dimensional buildings and artefacts from drawings. The more lavish publications were intended to influence the taste of the social élite by illustrating acceptable buildings which potential patrons should emulate, for example Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1715-1721), William Kent's *Designs of Inigo Jones* (1727), James Gibbs' *Book of Architecture* (1728) and Isaac Ware's *A Complete Body of Architecture* (1756).<sup>4</sup> Gibbs, an Italian-trained Baroque architect, was aware of the problems of distance from London for provincial clients and claimed that his book was intended to be used by any 'gentlemen who might be concerned in Building, especially in remote parts of the Country, where little or no Designs can be procured.'<sup>5</sup> These publications also gave designs for furniture and fittings, such as fireplaces, to copy directly. Members of the élite would have recognised such copies when they visited houses and known that the

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<sup>4</sup> Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus, or, The British Architect: Containing the Plans, Elevations, and Sections of the Regular Buildings, Both Publick and Private in Great Britain, With a Variety of New Designs*, 3 vols. (London, 1715-1722); William Kent, *Designs of Inigo Jones* (London, 1727); James Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments* (London, 1728); Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture Adorned With Plans and Elevations, From Original Designs* (London, 1756).

<sup>5</sup> Gibbs, *Book of Architecture*, p. i.

owner had good taste. Illustrations from these publications were plagiarised in scores of titles providing advice and suitable designs for every architectural requirement, including palaces, villas, town houses, garden buildings, staircases, door-cases, fireplaces, plasterwork and furniture.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the century, major architects also ventured into print, including Sir William Chambers, James Paine, Daniel Garrett, Robert Adam and John Soane. Their books were expensive, but not beyond the reach of provincial craftsmen, as their lists of subscribers included not only aristocrats but merchants and artisans. By the time William Newton made the transition from craftsman to architect in the 1760s, a vast library of publications was already available and new publications appeared frequently that kept artisans up-to-date with the latest fashions.

Alongside the finely-illustrated works of prominent architects there were publications by craftsmen for craftsmen, intended to share knowledge of everything from the orders of classical architecture, through to carpentry, plasterwork and furniture. Other books gave costs for specific building works and wage rates.<sup>7</sup> A provincial architect such as Newton would have owned several such publications, especially at the start of his career when clients expected him to remodel houses to the prevailing national styles. Although it is not known for certain which books Newton owned, a sale catalogue survives of the books owned by David Stephenson, Newton's collaborator at St Nicholas's church, the Guildhall, and in speculative building around Tyneside.<sup>8</sup> Stephenson's son sold his library in 1842, which contained 455 books, many of them on

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<sup>6</sup> Eileen Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers, 1555-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) is the most thorough analysis of the huge volume of publications which supported the spread of conformity.

<sup>7</sup> Examples include Francis Price, *The British Carpenter, or, a Treatise on Carpentry Containing the Most Concise and Authentick Rules of That Art, in a More Useful and Extensive Method, Than Has Been Made Publick* (London, 1759); Batty Langley and Andrea Palladio, *The Builder's Director, or, Bench-Mate* (London, 1767); William Pain, *The Practical Builder, or Workman's General Assistant* (London, 1774).

<sup>8</sup> Newcastle City Library, Local Studies Collection: Local Tracts, Volume 11 (Misc.) L.042. *A Catalogue of Valuable Books Forming the Library of Captain Stephenson, Who is Now Leaving This Neighbourhood and Which Will be Sold by Auction on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8, 9 & 10 June 1842* (Newcastle: Pattison & Ross, 1842).

architecture and carpentry. The list includes translations of Palladio's *Quattro Libri* by Leoni (published 1715-1720) and Ware (1738), Ware's *Complete Body of Architecture* (1756), Morris's *Rural Architecture* (1750), Batty Langley's *Gothic Architecture* (1747) and his *Builder's Treasury* (1747), Paine's *Plans of Buildings* (1767), Chambers' *Chinese Architecture* (1757), and his *Oriental Gardening* (1772), Riou's *Grecian Orders of Architecture* (1768), Chippendale's *Cabinet Designs* (1755) and Sheraton's *Cabinet Maker's Drawing Book* (1793).<sup>9</sup> This collection represented the working library of David Stephenson and his father John, a master carpenter who built the temporary wooden Tyne Bridge at Newcastle following the great flood of 1771.<sup>10</sup> It is possible that Newton would have owned a similar collection of titles, and perhaps that some of these books may have been given to Stephenson after Newton's death in 1798. This range of architectural publications is a reflection of the advanced state of bookselling in north-east England by the eighteenth century. The bookshops of Newcastle were well-equipped to provide provincial architects and craftsmen with the design sources they required to satisfy their clients' aspirations.<sup>11</sup> Ian Mitchell noted that 'It would be hard to overstate the importance of the book as one of the engines of modernity. The printed

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<sup>9</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The Architecture of A. Palladio; in Four Books* (London, 1715-1720); Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Andrea Palladio's Architecture* (London, 1738); Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture*. (London, 1756); Robert Morris, *Rural Architecture: Consisting of Regular Designs of Plans and Elevations for Buildings in the Country in Which Purity and Simplicity of the Art of Designing are Variously Exemplified* (London, 1750) ; Batty Langley, *Gothic Architecture Improved By Rules And Proportions* (London, 1747); Batty Langley, *The Builder's Director or Bench-Mate* (London, 1747); James Paine, *Plans, Elevations and Sections, of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses, and also of Stabling, Bridges, Public and Private, Temples and Other Garden Buildings* (London, 1767); Sir William Chambers, *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, and Utensils* (London, 1757); Sir William Chambers, *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* (London, 1772); Stephen Riou, *The Grecian Orders of Architecture* (London, 1768); Thomas Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* (London, 1755); Thomas Sheraton, *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book* (London, 1793).

<sup>10</sup> B. I. Bagnall, 'David Stephenson at Waldrige', *Durham Archaeological Journal*, 1 (1984), 79-88.

<sup>11</sup> C. J. Hunt, *The Book Trade in Northumberland and Durham to 1860: A Biographical Dictionary of Printers, Engravers, Lithographers, Booksellers, Stationers, Publishers, Mapsellers, Printsellers, Musicsellers, Bookbinders, Newsagents, and Owners of Circulating Libraries* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Thorne's Students' Bookshop for History of the Book Trade in the North, 1975); Helen Berry, 'Promoting Taste in the Provincial Press: National and Local Culture in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle upon Tyne', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 25 (2002), 1-18.

book revolutionised the transmission of knowledge and the circulation of ideas.’<sup>12</sup> This chapter will now examine the influence of architectural publications, particularly Palladio, in the work of William Newton and his contemporaries.

William Newton’s first experience of building work was at Fenham Hall, where he began work aged thirteen alongside his father Robert. Fenham Hall was designed by Daniel Garrett, whose designs Robert and William Newton executed at Nunwick Hall, the Newcastle Infirmary, and Blagdon Hall. As a protégé of the third earl of Burlington, Garrett’s designs were inspired and derived from those of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio. Garrett was not the first architect practising in north-east England to seek inspiration from Italian sources. Robert Trollope (*fl.* 1655-1686), responsible for several public buildings and country houses in the region between 1655 and 1686 appears to have used designs published in Sebastiano Serlio’s *Tutte L’Opere D’Architettura et Prospetiva* (1619).<sup>13</sup> Serlio (1475-1554) was an Italian stonemason who was employed by King Francis I of France. He wrote seven books of architecture, intending that they would form a treatise, but only five books were published during his lifetime.<sup>14</sup> His great innovation was to include scaled drawings of his designs, so that those craftsmen who could not translate his text could use the illustrations as guides to build from. Copies of his illustrations were in circulation in England from the 1540s.

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<sup>12</sup> Ian Mitchell, ‘“Old Books – New Bound”? Selling Second-Hand Books in England, c. 1680-1850’, in *Modernity and the Second-Hand Trade: European Consumption Cultures and Practices, 1700-1900*, ed. by Jon Stobart and Ilja Van Damme (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 140.

<sup>13</sup> For Robert Trollope, see Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, 4th edn (New York and London, 2008), pp. 1053-54; A. A. Tait, ‘Classicism in Eccentric Form: The Architecture of Robert Trollope’, *Country Life*, 12 August 1965, pp. 390-93; For a wider discussion of the influence of Italian renaissance architectural texts in seventeenth-century north-east England see Richard Pears, ‘Battle of the Styles? Classical and Gothic Architecture in Seventeenth-Century North-East England’, *Architectural History*, 55 (2012), 79-109.

<sup>14</sup> An English translation of Serlio’s first five books was published in 1611 by Robert Peake. This does not contain the *Libro Straordinario* (dealing with portals), which was originally published in Lyon in 1551, or Book Seven, which included designs for residences and advice on *accidenti* or how the builder could disguise earlier structures with new façades, which was published in Frankfurt in 1575. These are both included in Sebastiano Serlio, *Tutte L’Opere D’Architettura et Prospetiva* (Venice, 1619).

Throughout the eighteenth century, the most appropriate forms of classical architecture for Britain were debated. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the architecture of Sebastiano Serlio was influential, as seen in the work of Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Sir John Vanbrugh and James Gibbs, but the association with Baroque architecture meant that from the early eighteenth century Serlio was overshadowed by the most important architectural publication, Andrea Palladio's *I Quattro Libri Dell' Architettura (The Four Books of Architecture)*, (1570).<sup>15</sup>

Palladio (1508–1580) claimed in his books to have studied surviving Roman buildings in Italy, measured and then redrawn them, not as ruins but reconstructed examples of houses, villas and public buildings.<sup>16</sup> His designs offered a purer form of classicism, directly inspired (or so it was believed) by Roman examples before the adulteration of classical architecture by Baroque architects. Palladio's influence in Vanbrugh's work can be seen at Seaton Delaval Hall, where two designs, the Villa Angarano and the Villa Thiene (side-by-side in Palladio's second book) were combined. The ground plan of Seaton Delaval Hall appears to be related to that of Villa Angarano, particularly the large *salla* or hall extending from the entrance through the house and joining with the room immediately behind it with another entrance. (Figure 7.1) By moving the staircases into the towers on either side of the façade, as in the Villa Thiene illustration, Vanbrugh arrived at the ground plan of Seaton Delaval Hall. Note that in both designs the stables were located in the wing on the left of the plan and the kitchens in the wing on the right of the plan (Figure 7.1):

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<sup>15</sup> Worsley, *Inigo Jones and the European Classicist Tradition*, pp. 40-43 and p.72; Geoffrey Beard and Anthony Kersting, *The Work of Sir Christopher Wren* (Edinburgh: J. Bartholomew, 1982), p. 17; Vaughan Hart, *Sir John Vanbrugh: Storyteller in Stone* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 159; Terry Friedman, *James Gibbs* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984). For Serlio's influence in British architecture see Andor Gomme and Alison Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008); Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry, 1480-1680* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999); Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain*; Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro Libri Dell' Architettura* (Venice, 1570).

<sup>16</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture*. Translated by Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1997), p. 5.

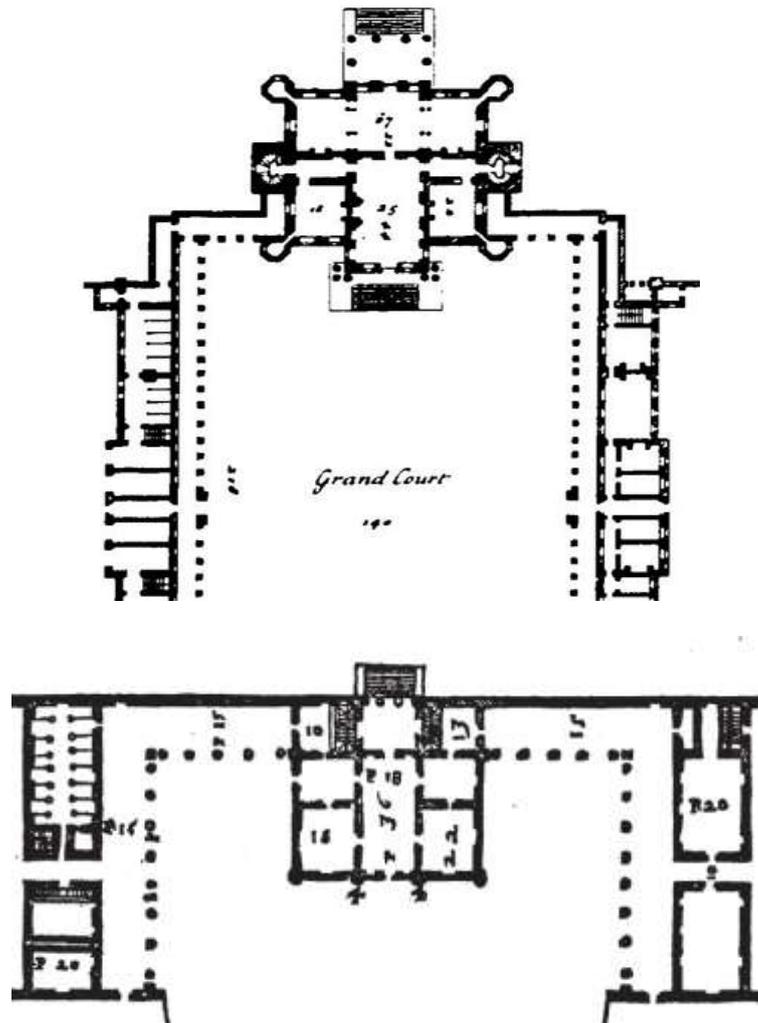


Figure 7.1: Comparison of the plan of Seaton Delaval Hall, 1728, by Sir John Vanbrugh (published in Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, vol. 3 (London, 1767)) and Villa Angarano in Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro Libri Dell' Architettura* (Venice, 1570), Book 2, p. 63.

Vanbrugh was the only architect to replicate the layout of a neo-Palladian villa in the North East, as a design suited to the warm climates of Italy was unsuitable for the coast of Northumberland: Seaton Delaval Hall was a notoriously cold house, as the wind blew in one door, through the house and out of the other, whilst the staircases funnelled cold air into the bedrooms.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Several attempts were made to make the house more habitable, including John Dobson's alterations in the 1817, without success. Lyall Wilkes, *John Dobson: Architect & Landscape Gardener* (Stocksfield: Oriel Press, 1980), p. 17. The through-draft may have been a significant factor in the rapid burning of the central house in 1822. Thereafter, the family lived in apartments constructed over the kitchen wing.



Figure 7.2: Comparison of the Villa Thiene in Andrea Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 62, and Seaton Delaval Hall, 1728, by Sir John Vanbrugh.

The north elevation of Seaton Delaval Hall, although infused by bulging columns derived from Serlio and rooflines acknowledging Elizabethan architecture (noted by Worsley), is very similar to that of Palladio's Villa Thiene, which appeared on the page opposite the Villa Angarano in Palladio's book (Figure 7.2).<sup>18</sup> However, Vanbrugh's death in 1726 meant that his amalgamation of these earlier forms into a national style did not seize the public mood, and Seaton Delaval Hall, completed in 1728, had little influence even in a region studded with castles. By this date, Richard Boyle, third earl of Burlington, had seized the reins of architectural taste. Burlington believed that it was necessary to replicate the architecture of ancient Rome, not merely be inspired by it, and determined that Palladio and other Renaissance architects whose drawings he had collected provided the guide to create this new Rome for Augustan Britons.<sup>19</sup> An important aspect of Lord Burlington's scheme to redefine architectural taste was his sponsorship of publications, including illustrations drawn from Burlington's collection of Italian drawings such as *Fabbriche Antiche* (1730) and most importantly Isaac

<sup>18</sup> Giles Worsley, 'Sir John Vanbrugh and the Search for a National Style' in *Gothic Architecture and Its Meanings 1550-1830*, ed. by Michael Hall (Reading: Spire Books Ltd, 2002), pp. 99-135.

<sup>19</sup> Levis, 'English Politics and Church Architecture', p. 842; Pamela Kingsbury, *Lord Burlington's Town Architecture* (London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1995), p. 12; Howard Colvin, 'Introduction' in *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life*, ed. by Toby Barnard and Jane Clark (London: Hambledon Press, 1995), p. xxiii; John Harris, *The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994).

Ware's 1738 translation of Palladio's *Four Book of Architecture*.<sup>20</sup> As well as his 'authorised version' of Palladio, Burlington shaped the ideal of what that national style should be by using his patronage to place his adherents in the Office of Works, the government building agency, including William Kent, the draughtsman Henry Flitcroft and Daniel Garrett, his clerk of works.<sup>21</sup> By securing patronage for these disciples from his network of aristocratic and gentry friends, Burlington had a profound effect upon British architectural taste.<sup>22</sup> Burlington was one of the key figures in defining architectural taste in the North East through the work of William Newton and his early work on buildings designed by Garrett.

Burlington's own designs drew inspiration from Palladio, though not exclusively. The design of Burlington's house at Chiswick (London) was derived from a range of ancient sources that were illustrated in his collection of drawings, and features by Palladio and other Italian architects.<sup>23</sup> One building that reflected Burlington's obsessive desire to replicate Palladio, and that would have been familiar to many members of the north-east élite, was the Assembly Rooms in York. The Assembly Rooms were designed by Burlington in 1732 as a recreation of the 'Egyptian Hall' illustrated in Palladio's second book (Figure 7.3).<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, it was discovered that the columns that dominated the interior were too close together for ladies in their hooped dresses to reach the dance floor from seats in the aisles, and so seats had to be

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<sup>20</sup> Andrea Palladio, *Fabbriche Antiche Disegnate' Da Andrea Palladio Vicentino E' Date in Luce' Da Riccardo Conte di Burlington* (London, 1730); Isaac Ware, *The Four Books of Architecture by Andrea Palladio* (London, 1738).

<sup>21</sup> John Harris, 'William Kent', *ODNB*, online edition; T. P. Connor, 'Henry Flitcroft, (1697–1769)', *ODNB*, online edition; Rudolf Wittkower, *Palladio and English Palladianism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 212-3, notes 24 and 48; Peter Leach, 'Daniel Garrett, (d. 1753)', *ODNB*, online edition; Howard Colvin, 'Lord Burlington and the Office of Works', in *Lord Burlington and His Circle. Papers given at a Georgian Group symposium at the Victoria and Albert Museum on the 22nd May 1982* (London: Georgian Group, 1982), pp. 96-100.

<sup>22</sup> P. Rogers, 'The Burlington Circle in the Provinces: Alexander Pope's Yorkshire Friends', *Durham University Journal*, 67.2 (1975), 219-26; Ann-Marie Akehurst, 'Wandesford Hospital, York: Colonel Moyser and the Yorkshire Burlington Group', *Architectural History*, 51 (2008), 111-135.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Hewlings, 'Chiswick House and Gardens: Appearance and Meaning', in *Lord Burlington: Architecture, Art and Life*, ed. by Toby Barnard and Jane Clark (London: Hambledon Press, 1995), pp. 1-150.

<sup>24</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 42.

provided in front of the columns, marring the architectural effect that Burlington had sought.



Figure 7.3: Comparison of the interior of the Assembly Rooms, York, 1735, by Lord Burlington and the interior of the Egyptian Hall in Andrea Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 42.

Burlington's friend, Sir Thomas Robinson, used Palladio as a source to recreate the ideal Roman villa described by Pliny as the mansion on his estate at Rokeby, North Yorkshire (Figure 7.4).<sup>25</sup>

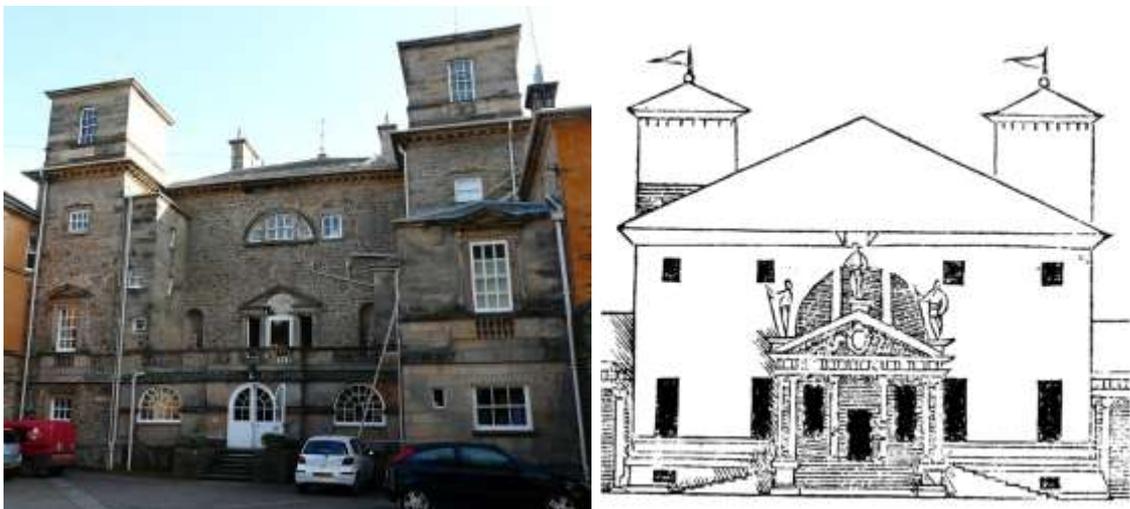


Figure 7.4: Comparison of Rokeby Hall (North Yorkshire), 1735 by Sir Thomas Robinson and design for Villa Bagnolo (Italy) by Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 48.

<sup>25</sup> M. J. McCarthy, 'Sir Thomas Robinson: An Original English Palladian', *Architectura*, 10.1 (1980), 38-57; Dudley Harbron, 'Sir Thomas Robinson', *Architectural Review*, (October 1936), p. 16; Giles Worsley, 'Rokeby Park', *Country Life*, 19 March 1987, pp. 74-79 and 26 March 1987, pp. 176-179; 2 April 1987, pp. 116-117.

William Newton's first impressions of architecture were defined by the designs of Daniel Garrett. Garrett's buildings show connections to the designs of Palladio, as might be expected of one of Lord Burlington's closest associates. Newton's earliest documented work was at Fenham Hall, for the Ord family, where he worked from 1744 to 1747, a building originally designed by Garrett in 1743.



Figure 7.5: Fenham Hall, Newcastle upon Tyne, by Daniel Garrett, 1744-7: the south façade.

The principal façade of Fenham Hall was on the south (Figure 7.5). The triple arches, the slightly advancing three bay centre and the roofline pediment may have been derived by Garrett from a design by Palladio for the Villa Saraceno, near Finale, Vicentino (Figure 7.6).



Figure 7.6: Villa Saraceno (Italy) by Andrea Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 56.

Garrett had used these features for the stable block at Temple Newsam House, near Leeds in 1742 (Figure 7.7) and in 1746 he provided a similar design for the new stables

at Gibside, County Durham, for George Bowes, another family that supported Newton throughout his career (Figure 7.8).<sup>26</sup> Although used for stables, Garrett designed these buildings to resemble country houses standing close to and in sight of earlier Jacobean mansions that the families retained as their principal residences. William Newton, the Ords of Fenham and the Bowes of Gibside remained attached to the designs of Palladio throughout the eighteenth century, despite their knowledge of authentic classical buildings seen on their Grand Tours.



Figure 7.7: The Stables, Temple Newsam (Leeds), by Daniel Garrett, 1742: south façade facing the Hall.



Figure 7.8: The Stables, Gibside estate (County Durham), by Daniel Garrett, 1746-51: the east front facing the Hall

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<sup>26</sup> John Lomax, *Temple Newsam* (Leeds: Leeds City Council, no date), p. 86; Margaret Wills, *Gibside and the Bowes Family* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1995), pp. 35-9.

Peter Leach suggested that before his death around 1753, Garrett passed on much of his northern practice to another Burlington associate, James Paine.<sup>27</sup> In the introduction to his book of designs, *Plans, Elevations and Sections, of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses* (1767), Paine noted that he had ‘received some real advantages from Palladio and other Venetian masters’ but complained that ‘experience daily convinces us, that the houses built by that great master, are very ill adapted to our climate, still worse to our present mode of living, and consequently are not proper models for our imitation.’<sup>28</sup> Despite this claim, both of Paine’s biographers, Marcus Binney and Peter Leach, have demonstrated that many of Paine’s designs were derived from Palladio.<sup>29</sup> Binney stated that Paine’s work ‘derives directly from [William] Kent and Burlington, and supports the conclusion that however unorthodox Paine may have seemed on occasion, he was in fact held very firmly on a Palladian leash.’<sup>30</sup> This can be seen in Paine’s work in the North East. His design for Bywell Hall (Northumberland, c.1760) takes as its centrepiece the façade of Palladio’s Design for Signor Giulio Capra in Vicenza (Figure 7.9).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Peter Leach, ‘Designs from a Practical Man, the Architecture of Daniel Garrett (1)’, *Country Life*, 12 September 1974, pp. 694-697; Peter Leach, ‘A Pioneer of Rococo Decoration. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (2)’, *Country Life*, 19 September 1974, pp. 766-769; Peter Leach, ‘In the Gothick Vein. The Architecture of Daniel Garrett (3)’, *Country Life*, 26 September 1974, pp. 834-837.

<sup>28</sup> James Paine, *Plans, Elevations and Sections, of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses, and also of Stabling, Bridges, Public and Private, Temples and Other Garden Buildings* (London, 1767), p. ii.

<sup>29</sup> Marcus Binney, ‘The Villas of James Paine’, *Country Life*, 20 February 1969, 406-410; 27 February 1969, 466-470; 6 March 1969, 522-526; Peter Leach, *James Paine* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd, 1988).

<sup>30</sup> Binney, ‘Villas of James Paine’, p. 526.

<sup>31</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, book 2, p. 20.

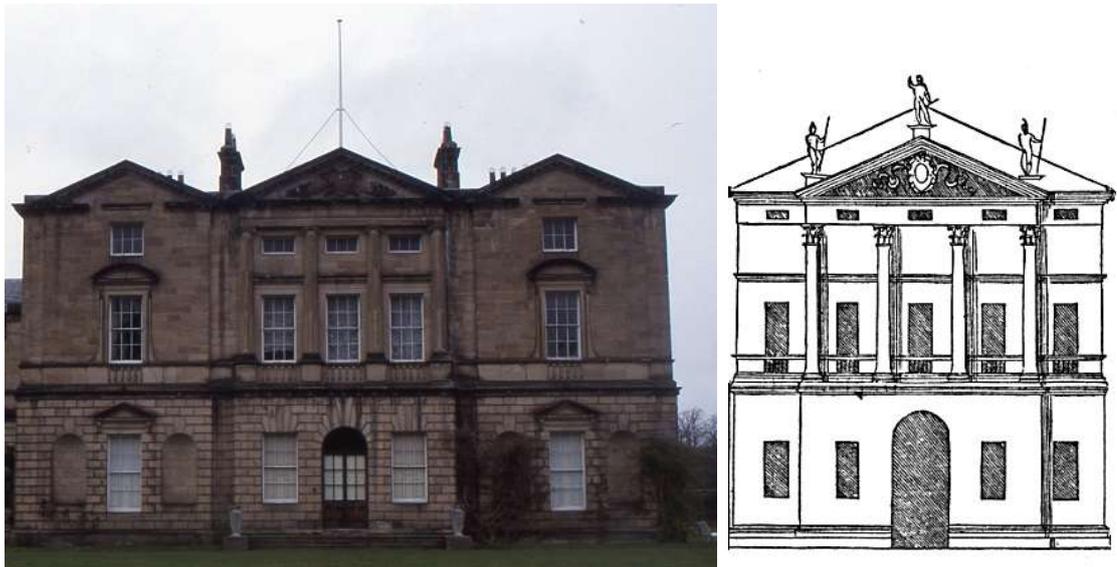


Figure 7.9: Comparison of Bywell Hall (Northumberland) by James Paine, c. 1760 and Villa Capra by Andrea Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 21.

Peter Leach has also shown that Paine's design for the Chapel at Gibside (County Durham), where Paine succeeded Garrett as architect, was derived from Palladio's design for the Tempietto at Maser (Italy).<sup>32</sup> Although there is no evidence that William Newton worked directly for James Paine (though both were working for the Bowes family at the same time, Paine at Gibside and Newton at the Bowes family houses in Durham), the continued derivation of designs from Palladio and other sources close to Burlington's cause may have influenced Newton's own stylistic preferences. When Newton began designing buildings in the classical style after his adoption of the title 'architect' from 1760, he continued to draw upon Palladio. His chapel of St Ann, situated in fields to the east of Newcastle (1764-1767), followed the example set in London by James Gibbs at St Mary le Strand, London (1714-1723) and St Martin in the Fields (1720-1727). These featured a rectangular nave and small apsidal chancel, with rooms either side of the pedimented portico at the western entrance for a baptistery and

<sup>32</sup> Leach, *James Paine*, pp. 125-130.



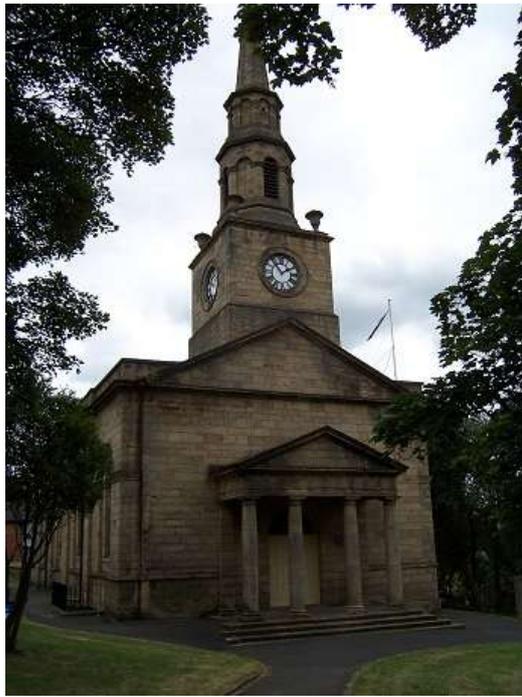


Figure 7.11: Chapel of St. Ann, Newcastle by William Newton, 1764-1767. View from the west.

In 1773, Newton returned to his first place of work, Fenham Hall.<sup>33</sup> His first patron, William Ord, had died in 1765 and his son William Ord replaced the northern façade of the house with a design by Newton. This new front was rather oddly built of brick, despite the stone fronts on the south and east sides. The new north front had a wide pediment supported by four sandstone Doric columns. The ends of the façade were brought forward as one bay wide pavilions. This feature is at odds with many other country houses which tended to emphasise the centre of the façade, and raised this feature higher than other elements of the design. Building the narrow pavilions would have been more expensive than simply continuing a flat façade. The derivation may again be Palladio, continuing the use of a neo-Palladian design for the south façade in the 1740s. Palladio illustrated his Villa Pisani at Montagnana, which has a pedimented centre with columns rising through two stories and a prominent horizontal band

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<sup>33</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, E22 Fenham Journal 1769-1773, entries for February–July 1773.

between ground and first floors.<sup>34</sup> Palladio's design was for a town house with roads running either side of the main block, hence the arches at ground floor level which carried corridors at first floor level to the pavilions on either side. Adapting this to a free-standing country house, Newton filled in the arches but retained the projecting pavilions (Figure 7.12).

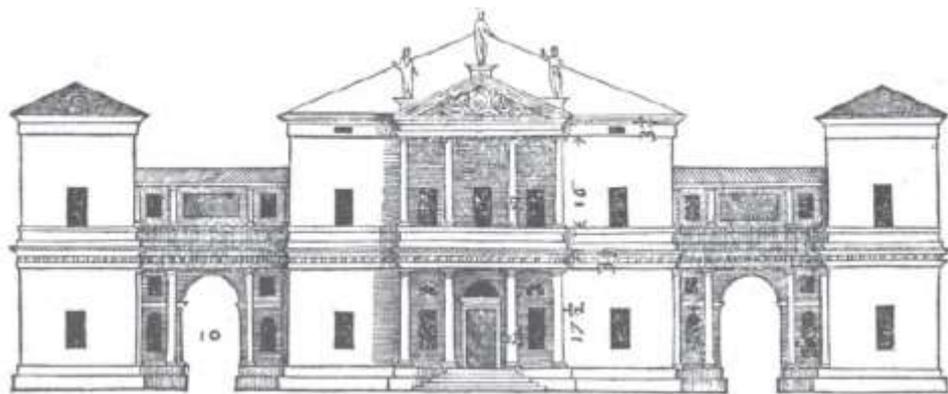


Figure 7.12: Comparison of Fenham Hall, north elevation rebuilt by William Newton, 1770 and Villa Pisani (Montagnana) by Andrea Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 52.

Newton's most important commission, the new Assembly Rooms in Newcastle, constructed 1774 to 1776, shows similar inspiration from Palladio. Just as Lord Burlington turned to Palladio for an ancient model for the York Assembly Rooms, Newton sought similar authority.

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<sup>34</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 52.

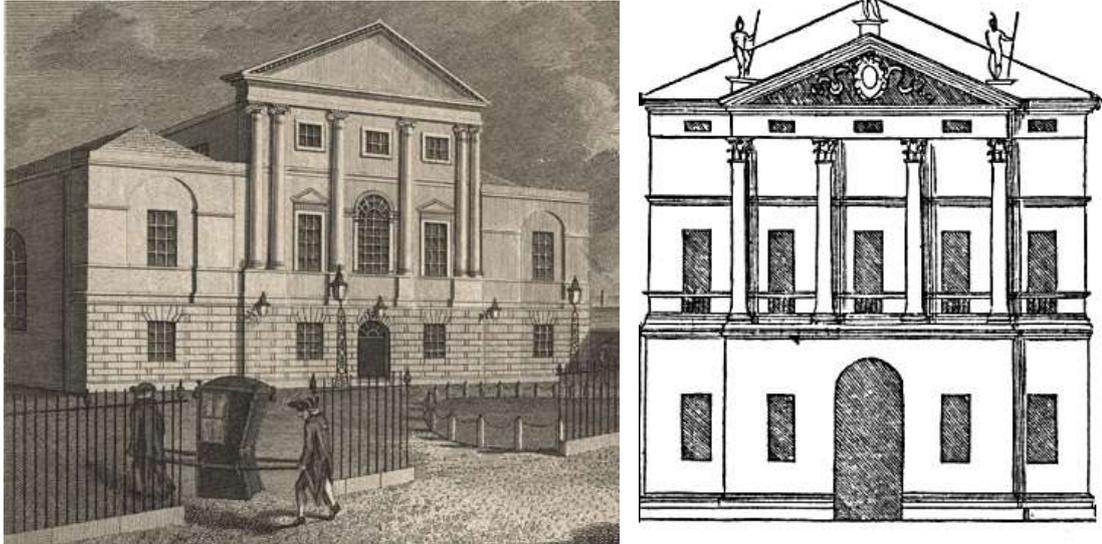


Figure 7.13: Comparison of façade of Old Assembly Rooms, Newcastle, by William Newton 1774-1776 (from John Brand, *Newcastle upon Tyne*, 1789) and Palladio's design for the Villa Capra (*Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 21)

The façade (Figure 7.13) is derived from Palladio's Villa Capra, used by Paine at Bywell Hall, but for Newton and his patrons this design may have seemed particularly appropriate, since in the accompanying text Palladio wrote that the design was intended by the client 'For the beautification of his homeland ... on a beautiful site on the main street of the city. Its shape will be beautiful and varied, and this gentleman will certainly have a house which will be much praised and magnificent, as his noble character deserves.'<sup>35</sup> The Assembly Rooms stood on Westgate Road, the most important street in eighteenth-century Newcastle, where many élite families, including the Riddleys and Claverings, had their town residences. The subscribers spared no expense in the creation of the Assembly Rooms, intending that the building would beautify their town and in Palladio's words 'be much praised and magnificent'. Newton adapted Palladio's design, inserting a round-headed window at first floor level and giving extra emphasis and verticality to the façade by pairing the columns at the sides of the pedimented

<sup>35</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, pp. 20-21.



Entering the building through an entrance hall with an apsed end (as at the York Assembly Rooms), the visitor enters a supper room or banqueting hall extending through the depth of the building and ending in another apse, a plan similar to that of Palladio's basilica. This room has on each long side a row of columns with Doric capitals. As well as the apse and columns the dimensions of the room are related to Palladio's model, as it is 70 feet long and 36 feet wide, a ratio of 2:1, the dimensions conforming to Palladio's instruction that the room be 'two squares long'.<sup>37</sup> Meeting rooms line the long sides of the Assembly Rooms. As Palladio noted 'In antiquity those places where judges met under cover to administer justice and where very important business was conducted were called basilicas'.<sup>38</sup> The dual identity of the many in the north-east élite, as justices of the peace and businessmen, was embodied in the selected design for their chosen meeting place. Mrs Montagu noted the important business transacted even during dances in the ballroom above.<sup>39</sup>

The Palladian derivation is even stronger in the principal room, the great ballroom on the first floor of the Assembly Rooms. As with the room below and the York Assembly Rooms, the visitor first passes through an apsed room before entering the room. This room is 81 feet long and 37 feet wide, again ending in an apse of radius 11 feet. The side walls provide a further Palladian comparison, as the round arched recesses with Doric capitals are separated by pilasters with Ionic capitals on the first floor. These support a deep dentilled cornice from which rise pilasters with Corinthian capitals, supporting another deep dentilled cornice. Between these pilasters and above the first floor arches are rectangular windows. This arrangement of decorative details,

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<sup>37</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 3, pp. 38-39.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Helen Berry, 'Creating Polite Space: The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 132.

taken with the Doric capitals on the ground floor columns, replicates the side elevation of another Palladian design, that for the Convent of the Carita (Figure 7.16).<sup>40</sup>

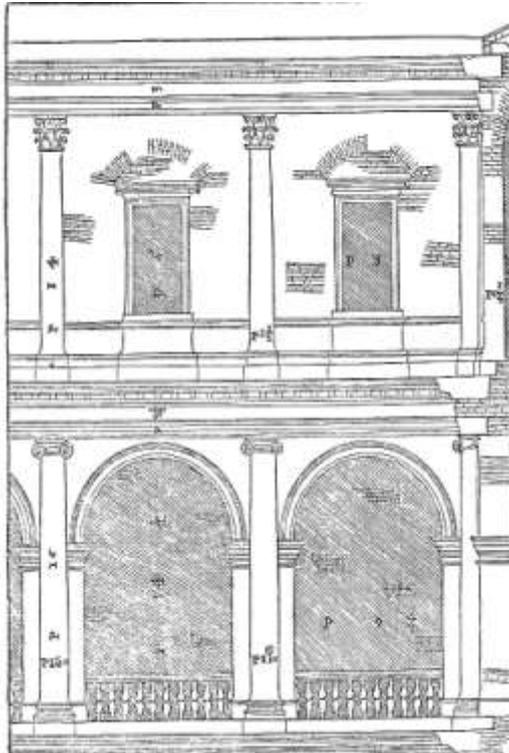


Figure 7.16: Comparison of Palladio's wall of the internal courtyard of the Convent of the Carita (*Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 32) and William Newton's internal wall of the ballroom of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms, 1776)

The plan of the first floor, with the double-apsed vestibule and the arrangement of apse and side columns, is also similar to one half of the double-ended Temple of the Sun and the Moon illustrated in Palladio's Book 3.<sup>41</sup> The tall, round arched window on the exterior symbolizes a door into this the principal room of the *piano nobile*, a feature also seen in contemporary country houses, a further instance of the 'fictive domesticity' of the Assembly Rooms noted by Helen Berry.<sup>42</sup> The Villa Capra façade remained popular for private and public clients. Newton employed it as the centrepiece of Howick Hall built for Sir Henry Grey between 1781 and 1789, and he used it again for the new

<sup>40</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, Book 2, pp. 29-32.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, Book 3, p. 37. The three doors in the side walls of the ballroom correspond to the round-headed niches in Palladio's illustration.

<sup>42</sup> Helen Berry, 'Fictive Domesticity in the Georgian Assembly Rooms' (unpublished paper).

façade of the Guildhall in Newcastle built for Newcastle Corporation in 1794 (Figure 7.17).



Figure 7.17: Comparison of Villa Capra centrepiece used by Newton at Howick Hall (1781-1789) and Newcastle Guildhall (1794-1796)

The Villa Capra design was popular with other provincial architects: Joseph Pickford incorporated it in the façade of St Helen’s House in Derby (1768) and Robert Adam had adapted this façade by replacing Palladian details with neoclassical features at Lansdowne House in Berkeley Square, London, in 1767.<sup>43</sup> John Johnson built Terling Place, Essex (1772) and the Shire Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (1789) to a similarly neoclassical modification of the basic design.<sup>44</sup>

Palladio was the inspiration for two closely-related houses designed by Newton for related families, the Greys of Backworth and his longstanding clients, the Ords of Fenham Hall, both in Northumberland. In 1778 he designed Backworth Hall, drawing upon Palladio’s Villa Pojana. Ralph William Grey’s son, also Ralph William Grey, had

<sup>43</sup> Edward Saunders, *Joseph Pickford of Derby* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 84.

<sup>44</sup> Briggs, Nancy, *John Johnson 1732-1814: Georgian Architect and County Surveyor of Essex* (Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 1991), pp. 21 and 93.

married Elizabeth Brandling of Gosforth Hall the previous year and her sister Eleanor who married to William Ord of Fenham Hall, who in 1785 commissioned Newton to rebuild their country house in south-western Northumberland, Whitfield Hall (Figure 7.18).



Figure 7.18: Comparison of Backworth Hall (Northumberland, 1778) and reconstruction of original elevation of Whitfield Hall (Northumberland, 1785) with Palladio's Villa Pojana (*Quattro Libri*, Book 2, p. 58).

As well as utilising complete house designs from Palladio, Newton made use of certain Palladian features in other commissions. The door set in a recessed Serliana surround, seen in the Villa Pojana design and at Backworth Hall and Whitfield Hall, was reused by Newton at Hebburn Hall in 1791, and appears at two Northumberland houses attributed to Newton, Shawdon Hall (c.1779) and Acton House (c.1781), as well as Lorbottle Hall (near Rothbury, Northumberland) which has many features in common with other Newton houses (Figure 7.19).



Figure 7.19: Serliana doorcases at Backworth Hall (Northumberland, 1778) and Hebburn Hall (Durham, 1791)

Newton used the Serliana as an internal screen to the principal staircase at Backworth Hall, and identical features appear at houses attributed to Newton, including Acton House and Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea, in Northumberland (Figure 7.20).



Figure 7.20: Comparison of Serliana staircase screens at Backworth Hall (1778) and Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea (attributed to William Newton).

In other buildings, including Howick Hall, Dissington Hall and Hesleyside Hall, Newton employed a feature he had first seen at Blagdon Hall in 1752, a two storey screen of columns at the base and top of the principal staircase (Figure 7.21).

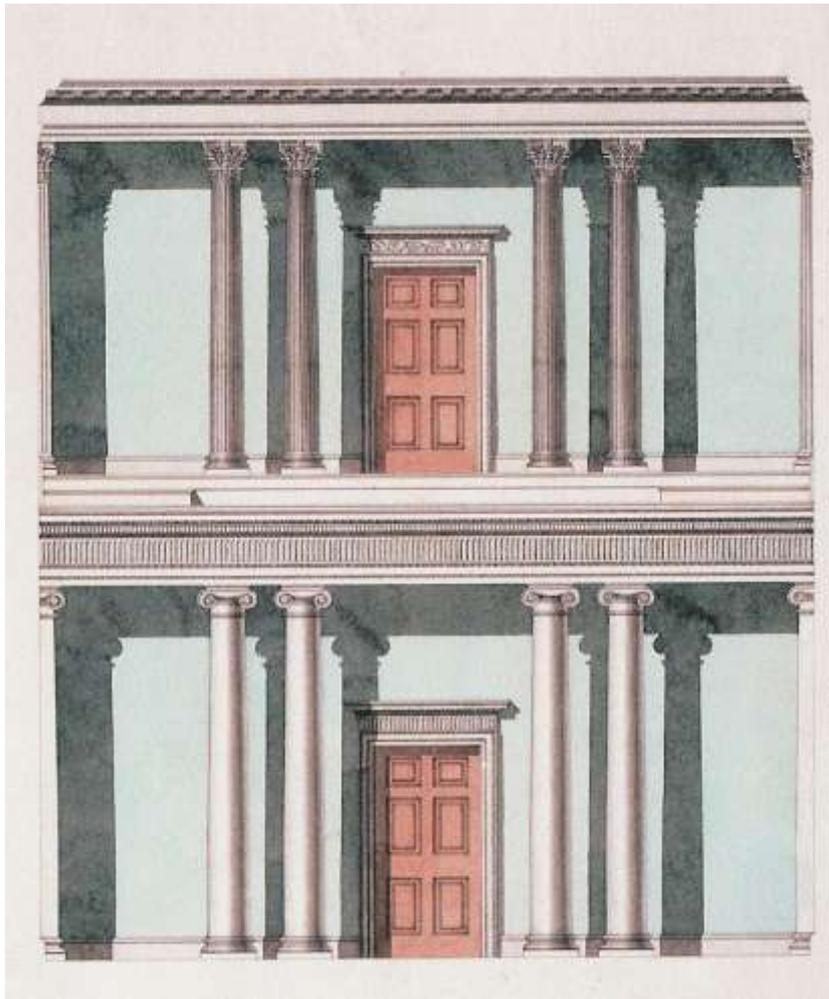


Figure 7.21: Dissington Hall, 1794, by William Newton. Two storey screen of columns to principal staircase

One of the most elegant features of Newton's designs was the Serliana window, often lighting the main staircase. Giles Worsley noted the Roman and Renaissance lineage of the Serliana window, and its use in the architecture of Inigo Jones and John Webb (Jones's assistant whose work many neo-Palladians, including Burlington, assumed to be that of Jones).<sup>45</sup> Worsley believed that the Serliana window symbolised sovereignty, and its adoption by the neo-Palladians in a time of constitutional monarchy may be seen as an assertion of aristocratic and landowner authority through Parliament, as the Senate had ruled during the Roman republic. Serliana windows appear at Chiswick, Lord Burlington's house and were used by Garrett and Paine in their designs

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<sup>45</sup> Worsley, *Inigo Jones*, chapter 9.

for buildings in the North East. There is a (now blocked) Serliana window on the main staircase at Dunston Hill House, where William and Robert Newton worked from 1748 to 1750; the chapel at the Newcastle Infirmary had a Serliana window, and there is a Serliana window lighting the staircase at Blagdon Hall, where Newton worked from 1752 to 1757. In buildings designed by William Newton, Serliana windows appear at his own house at Charlotte Square, Newcastle and at Dissington Hall (Figure 7.22).

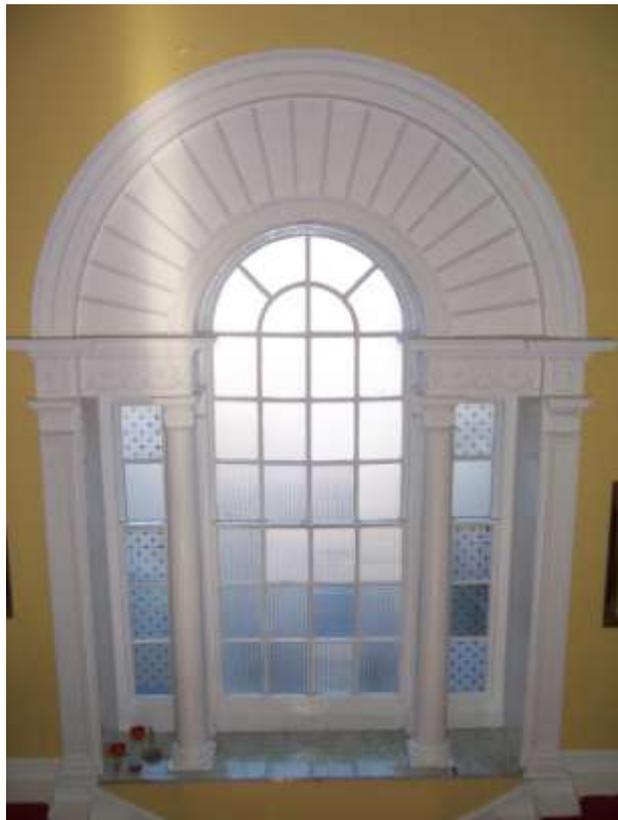


Figure 7.22: Serliana window, Dissington Hall (Northumberland) by William Newton, 1794.

The Serliana window was used extensively by other eighteenth-century architects, including Robert Adam and John Carr. From 1770, however, the architects Samuel and James Wyatt popularised a new form of tripartite window with a continuous flat lintel

and a semi-circular tympanum or a fanlight above.<sup>46</sup> These can be seen in many of the Wyatts' buildings, including the Radcliffe Observatory (Oxford) and Tatton Hall (Cheshire). Robert Adam adopted this 'Wyatt window' in some of his later work, including Charlotte Square in Edinburgh. There are no examples of its use by John Carr who, like Newton, continued using Serliana windows throughout his career. The 'Wyatt window' does appear in one Newcastle building, however: David Stephenson's All Saints church of 1786-96, where many of the ground floor and tower windows are of this type (Figure 7.23). All Saints Church also included Coade stone panels and swags of flowers, features of Adam and Wyatt's works but entirely absent in Newton's buildings. It may be that Stephenson was determined to show that he knew of the popularity of these neo-classical motifs from his training at the Royal Academy, but his failure to design any country houses precluded their acceptance as features of north-east country houses.<sup>47</sup>



Figure 7.23: All Saints Church, Newcastle, 1786, by David Stephenson. 'Wyatt window' in the nave wall.

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<sup>46</sup> James Stevens Curl, 'Wyatt window', *A Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Terry Friedman, *The Georgian Parish Church 'Monuments to Posterity'* (Reading: Spire Books, 2004), p. 142.

<sup>47</sup> Friedman, *Georgian Parish Church*, p.142, plates 39, 40, 42 and 44.

Newton's reliance upon neo-Palladian designs and features from the first half of the century rather than the neo-classical period after 1760 is demonstrated by his use of the canted or three-sided bay window, in preference to the curved bow windows that are features of Robert Adam and James Wyatt's work. Newton may have derived the canted bay used as an entrance at The Castle, Castle Eden and Dissington Hall from plates 42 and 49 of Isaac Ware's *Complete Body of Architecture* (another mid-eighteenth-century text owned by David Stephenson).<sup>48</sup> The canted bay was used extensively by Newton. It first appeared in his designs for garden buildings on the Wallington estate in the early 1760s, including the Garden House of 1765, with two storey canted bays on the east and west elevations.<sup>49</sup> His Orangery at Gibside, County Durham (c.1772), the Duke of Northumberland's shooting box at Kielder Castle, Northumberland (1771-5), The Castle, Castle Eden, County Durham (c.1777) and two houses attributed to Newton, Wallsend Hall, Northumberland (c.1780) and Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea, Northumberland (c.1780), also featured canted bay windows. Finally, Newton's accepted design for Dissington Hall featured a canted bay with a ground floor entrance and fine views from the upstairs rooms. By the time he designed Dissington in 1794, Newton must have been aware that the bow was more fashionable than the canted bay, as of the three designs he submitted, that with the bow is used as the basis for the floor plans. It may be that Edward Collingwood, Newton's aging client, preferred the more established canted bay.<sup>50</sup> Worsley suggested that the canted bay, used throughout his career by Newton, was an architectural feature of the 1760s, one which Adam and other architects replaced with a curving bow in their designs to create a more subtle flow of

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<sup>48</sup> Isaac Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture. Adorned with Plans and Elevations, From Original Designs* (London, 1768). Newton's façade for the north front of Capheaton Hall, built 1788-90, may relate to an unexecuted design for a parsonage at Rokeby (North Yorkshire) published as plate 37 in Ware's book. This would provide a link to the work of a key Burlingtonian in the north, Sir Thomas Robinson of Rokeby Hall.

<sup>49</sup> Margaret Wills, 'William Newton – An Elusive Architect', *Archaeologia Aeliana* 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 36 (2006), 281-2.

<sup>50</sup> The folio of Newton's designs is preserved at Dissington Hall. The author is grateful to Mr Michael Brown for permission to view this evidence.

the eye across a façade. The lineage of the canted bay is even older than this, for one was proposed for the façade of ‘a house proposed for a merchant’ of Bristol in 1724.<sup>51</sup> The Bristol house had its main entrance located in the front of the canted bay, so Newton’s use of this feature at The Castle, Castle Eden, and Dissington Hall was following established precedent.

These examples demonstrate Newton’s adherence to the stylistic canon of Palladio, Daniel Garrett and Lord Burlington, acquired during his formative years in the building industry, despite the adoption of more archaeologically-based classicism by leading architects including Robert Adam and James Wyatt. Another characteristic of Newton’s buildings is the very sparing use of ornament and plain wall surfaces (known as astylism). This also derived from his early experience of working for Garrett, whose designs shared this feature with his patron Lord Burlington. Rudolf Wittkower and Cinzia Sicca noted the ‘staccato’ effect created in Burlington’s designs by the placing of classical features such as Serliana windows and classical doorcases in blank wall surfaces, with horizontal bands linking the functional elements together in the way that musical notes are arranged along the staves.<sup>52</sup> It is these bands that hold Newton’s façades together, and why they are retained in otherwise completely astylar designs such as Dissington Hall, where all other window and doorway decoration is absent (Figure 7.24).

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<sup>51</sup> John Bold, ‘Design of a House for a Merchant, 1724’, *Architectural History*, 33 (1990), 75-82.

<sup>52</sup> Rudolf Wittkower, *Palladio and English Palladianism* (New York: G. Braziller, 1974); Cinzia Sicca, ‘The Architecture of the Wall: Astylism in the Architecture of Lord Burlington’, *Architectural History*, 33 (1990), 83-101.



Figure 7.24: Dissington Hall by William Newton, 1794-1797

This astylar architecture, seen at Burlington's house, Chiswick Hall (London), was very different from the 'massing' of architectural features (including towers, columns, blocks of buildings and heavy surface detailing) by Baroque architects, as exemplified by Vanburgh's work at Castle Howard and Seaton Delaval Hall. Although Timothy Mowl criticised the 'chillingly pure staccato' of Burlington's architectural style, it was embraced wholeheartedly by his countrymen.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps the plain façades of Burlington's architecture appealed to the Protestantism of eighteenth-century Britons, a secular mirror to the whitewashed interiors of their Protestant churches. Newton's astylar designs conform to the ideas of the architectural theorist Robert Morris, a contemporary of Burlington, who wrote:

Redundancy of members, ornament, and dress are the productions of unthinking Geniuses. Undecorated plainness... in a well proportioned building will ever please... Simplicity, plainness and neatness, with just proportion, is now all that is necessary to be understood by the designer, when that is in view, rather appropriating the structure to use and

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<sup>53</sup> Mowl, *William Kent*, unnumbered plate opposite p. 234.

convenience than to show and ornament...Your structure must answer the end to which it was erected and the ornament be suited to the dignity of the inhabitant; but all such additional embellishments should be rather the intent of internal than external gaiety.<sup>54</sup>

Many of the building designs shown in Morris's book were astylar façades carrying little decoration beyond doors and windows, and in some examples even these are reduced to punctures in the plain wall surfaces, broken only by horizontal bands, anticipating the astylism of Newton's work at Dissington Hall. Isaac Ware, another Burlington associate, was equally forthright on the subject of ornament, writing 'there is a nobleness in simplicity which is always broken in upon by ornament: therefore no ornament should be admitted but what is reasonable.'<sup>55</sup> Here, in books widely used by British builders, (and certainly available in Newcastle as David Stephenson owned copies of both Morris and Ware's texts, possibly even Newton's own copies passed to his business partner after his death), is the aesthetic underpinning of Newton's designs. Perhaps even more influential than these texts in forming Newton's views on design were the sentiments of Daniel Garrett himself, who wrote 'ornament is rather a profusion than a useful branch'. This is apparent in his designs of the 1740s and 1750s, and in Newton's designs right up to his death.<sup>56</sup>

The astylar façades of Newton's buildings also highlight another feature of his work that stands in contrast to more illustrious contemporaries; Newton's use of the highest quality ashlar stone. In his self-congratulatory address to the Northern Architectural Association in 1859, John Dobson claimed that the construction of Belsay Hall in the early nineteenth century 'introduced a style of masonry previously unknown'

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<sup>54</sup> Robert Morris, *Rural Architecture: Consisting of Regular Designs of Plans and Elevations for Buildings in the Country in Which Purity and Simplicity of the Art of Designing are Variously Exemplified* (London, 1750), Introduction.

<sup>55</sup> Ware, *A Complete Body of Architecture*, p.136. On the same page Ware also condemned fluting of columns as "lacking in reason" and "false ornament".

<sup>56</sup> Daniel Garrett, *Designs, and Estimates, of Farm houses, &c. for the County of York, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Bishoprick of Durham*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (London, 1772), Introduction.

in north-east England.<sup>57</sup> However, many of Newton's buildings demonstrate that Northumbrian craftsmen of the mid- and late-eighteenth century were more than capable of producing high-quality stonework long before Belsay Hall or Dobson existed. The quality of the stonework at Dissington Hall is such that the building shines in the sun, a beacon in the landscape visible to everyone approaching the house and an instant symbol of the wealth of the owner. This exterior finish refutes the suggestion that Newton's buildings were constructed cheaply. It would have been quite possible to build brick houses and cover them with coats of painted stucco lined to resemble stone, as is so often the case with the work of more prominent architects such as Robert Adam and John Nash (Figure 7.25).



Figure 7.25: Park Crescent, London, by John Nash, 1806, showing stuccoed brick scored to imitate stone construction.

Newton did not stucco his buildings, nor did he cover the façade in superfluous ornament. There are no recorded examples of Coade stone, a key feature in the neoclassical detailing of Adam and Wyatt buildings, in any of Newton's buildings.

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<sup>57</sup> Wilkes, *John Dobson*, p. 108.

Instead, Newton's clients demonstrated their wealth and taste by paying for stonework of the highest quality, as seen in the 'Simplicity, plainness and neatness, with just proportion' that characterise Newton's work.<sup>58</sup>

In his astylarism, Newton distinguished himself from more prominent architects and other provincial architects. Certain Palladian features, including the flowing stone aprons at the lower edges of windows and stone balustrades in front of windows, which appear in the work of Daniel Garrett, James Paine and John Carr of York, are entirely absent in Newton's work.



Figure 7.26: Constable Burton Hall (North Yorkshire), by John Carr. Top: west side with entrance. Above: south and east sides.

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<sup>58</sup> Morris, *Rural Architecture*, Introduction.

Figure 7.26 shows three sides of Constable Burton Hall (North Yorkshire), designed by John Carr and completed in 1768. Carr designed a compact villa with kitchens in the lower ground floor, the entrance on the west through a columned portico-in-antis (recessed into the body of the house) and family rooms along the south side. On the east side a canted bay window with round windows overlooked the steep and wooded descent to a stream. Carr's design had a very large staircase at the entrance, dominated by the columns, balustrades below the windows on the entrance side, blockwork around the ground floor windows on the west and south sides, pediments at the roof line on the west and south, pediments over windows on the west, flat cornices to windows on the south and no features around windows on the east side, where the bay window drew attention on an otherwise plain surface. Each side was given a different level of decoration, with the ensemble held together by the horizontal bands and prominent cornice at the roof line. At Castlegate House in York (Figure 7.27), also by Carr, window balustrades and prominent arches across the first floor animate the main elevation. In Derby, the architect Joseph Pickford's house in Friargate had subtle surface animation, a prominent pediment at the roofline, stone arch over the central first floor window and stone window surrounds (including balustrades on the first floor). Another house designed by Pickford, further along the street (left in Figure 7.28) had the row of stone arches over the first floor windows seen in Carr's design for Castlegate House in York. These arches recall the triple arches in Garrett's designs for the stables at Temple Newsam, Gibside and at Fenham Hall, all inspired by Palladio.



Figure 7.27: Castlegate House, York, by John Carr, 1765.



Figure 7.28: Friargate, Derby. A town house by Joseph Pickford showing first floor arches similar to those at Castlegate House, York.

These architects and their clients preferred a fuller range of decorative motifs than seen in Newton's buildings. Newton's approach to decoration followed the advice of Robert

Morris: ‘all such additional embellishments should be rather the intent of internal than external gaiety.’<sup>59</sup>

The plainness of Newton’s designs also differs from the work of leading designers. Although some of his work has been described as ‘Adam-style’, an examination of Newton’s buildings suggests his design philosophy was decided in his formative years from 1744 to 1760.<sup>60</sup> In particular, Newton’s work eschewed the ‘movement’ created by Paine, Adam and Wyatt in their classical designs. Adam described ‘movement’ as ‘the rise and fall, the advance and recess, with other diversity of form... so as to add greatly to the picturesque of the composition.’<sup>61</sup> Adam and Paine made full use of light and shadows and combined decorative elements, such as columns and window pediments, to create this animation. An examination of the façade of Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, completed by Adam in 1763, shows the difference in their approach to that of William Newton, Burlington and Garrett (Figure 7.29).



Figure 7.29: Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, south front by Robert Adam, 1763

<sup>59</sup> Robert Morris, *Rural Architecture*, Introduction.

<sup>60</sup> Phoebe Lowery, ‘William Newton – An Eminent Architect?’ *Northern Architect*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 1 (Winter 1994/5), 15-17; Phoebe Lowery, ‘Patronage and the Country House in Northumberland’ in *Northumbrian Panorama: Studies in the History and Culture of North-East England*, ed. by T.E. Faulkner (London: Octavian Press, 1996), p. 69.

<sup>61</sup> R. Oresko, *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam* (London: Academy editions, 1975), p.46.

Rather than the blank surfaces of Newton's designs, the Kedleston façade is alive with features, from the rusticated ground floor, the curvaceous double staircase sweeping upwards, niches containing life-sized statues, the window pediments on the first floor so close together as to appear linked in a line of waves across the façade, Coade stone panels with classical scenes, cornice swags, the richly-carved Corinthian columns of the triumphal arch forming the centre (based upon the Arch of Constantine in Rome) and the whole topped by the dome of the saloon. James Wyatt replaced Robert Adam as the leading arbiter of neo-classical taste after 1772, and (unlike Adam) Wyatt was able to attract commissions for work in the North East beyond the duke and duchess of Northumberland. Wyatt worked for the bishop of Durham at Auckland Castle, Sir Matthew White Ridley at Blagdon Hall and supplied designs for plasterwork at Howick Hall for Sir Henry Grey and Henry Ellison at Hebburn Hall. Wyatt's building designs also failed to make an impression on Newton's own designs, as can be seen by comparing Newton's work with Heaton Hall, Manchester (Figure 7.30) where Wyatt employed the full range of neo-classical detailing and 'movement' seen in Adam's work at Kedleston Hall.



Figure 7.30: Heaton Hall, Manchester, by James Wyatt, 1772.

There is little in Newton's architecture that shows any embrace of Adam and Wyatt's styles, though he and more importantly his clients were undoubtedly aware of the

change in national style from neo-Palladianism to this archaeologically-inspired neo-classicism from the 1760s. Instead Newton and many of his clients preferred restrained exteriors and continued to employ designs common throughout Britain from the first decades of the eighteenth century. Giles Worsley described the archetypal Georgian house that continued to be built by Newton into the 1790s:

a plain tripartite block, with only an astylar pediment for decoration... This was probably the most economical way to build a substantial dignified house and as a result was in great demand from country squires [and] prosperous inhabitants of small towns. It was a design of considerable flexibility which could be built with no more decoration than a pediment and a couple of string courses, or alternatively dressed up with a rusticated ground floor, Serlian window, blind relieving arch, decorated frieze and balustrade.<sup>62</sup>

Newton first encountered this design at the Newcastle Infirmary, which was intended to resemble a country house standing just to the west of the town walls. The new south range of Blagdon Hall, where Newton worked after the Infirmary, also employed this design (Figure 7.31).

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<sup>62</sup> Worsley, *Classical Architecture in Britain*, p. 294.



Figure 7.31: Comparison of Newcastle Infirmary (1751-1753) and Blagdon Hall (1752-1757) by Daniel Garrett

Newton used this design at Hebburn Hall (1790-1793) and Hesleyside Hall (commenced 1796 and completed after Newton's death), and it was used at Close House (c.1779), attributed to Newton. He provided variety in his core designs by expanding dimensions and making use of other architectural features. Retaining the three storey, three bay projecting centre of this design, Newton added extra bays on each side, according to the requirements and the finances of his patron, so Close House is 1:3:1 bays, Hesleyside is 2:3:2 bays and Hebburn is 3:3:3 bays (Figure 7.32).



Figure 7.32: Comparison of Close House (top), Hesleyside Hall (middle) and Hebburn Hall (bottom) showing Newton's expansion of common design to suit clients' requirements

Giles Worsley noted that by the time the design would have been fashionable in the 1760s 'but was distinctly old-fashioned by the mid-1790s' when it was applied to Hesleyside in 1796.<sup>63</sup> The three houses share other features, for example the straight stair from ground to first floor at Close House and Hebburn and the three arched windows lighting the staircases at Hebburn and Hesleyside. The three-bay projecting centre seen at these houses had already been used by Newton as the rear façade at Backworth Hall of 1777-1779 and Howick Hall of c.1780.<sup>64</sup> Nor was Newton alone in copying this design: Ormesby Hall in Middlesbrough, the Dundas mansion in Edinburgh New Town (now the Royal Bank of Scotland) by Sir William Chambers, and

<sup>63</sup> Giles Worsley, 'Hesleyside Hall, Northumberland', *Country Life*, 18 May 1989, p.221

<sup>64</sup> The Howick north façade was rebuilt to a different design following the fire which destroyed much of the interior on 2 February 1926. The original form is captured in post-fire photographs of Howick in the RIBA Library, *Howick Hall, Northumberland, rebuilt (1928) by Sir Herbert Baker and A. T. Scott*. Reference 20248-20248/13.

Fairfax House in York are also derived from this common design. The design also appears as Plate XI in Robert Morris's *Rural Architecture* of 1750.<sup>65</sup>

The interior plan and decoration of Newton's houses also continued his reliance upon earlier models, in contrast to those of Adam and Wyatt. Newton's plans of Hebburn Hall and Hesleyside, both of the 1790s, continued the arrangements of Daniel Garrett's houses (including Wallington Hall and Blagdon Hall) in the 1740s and 1750s, with a suite of three reception rooms on the ground floor of the principal (usually south-facing) elevation, and a large staircase hall to the rear of these rooms giving access to bedrooms on the first floor. Although there were doors from the central room into the garden, in each of these examples the main entrance was in the east wall, with a corridor running behind the south-east reception room to the staircase hall. To the west of the main staircase hall was an enclosed secondary staircase, for servants use but also the only means of access to the second floor bedrooms.

Another aspect of interior planning that distinguished Newton's work from that of contemporaries, whether national architects such as Paine and Adam, or provincial practitioners such as Carr, was Newton's tight, economical use of internal space. These other architects made full use of the dramatic effect that different room shapes could offer, designing oval, octagonal and circular rooms, whilst Newton's interior planning was characterised by rigid use of square and rectangular rooms, other than the rooms featuring canted bay windows which were sometimes octagonal (as at Dissington Hall) or oval (as at Wallsend Hall). This maximised internal space, but denied the drama of spacial transition created by his contemporaries. This should not necessarily be interpreted as a penny-pinching device by Newton or his clients, even if it was cheaper: examination of Palladio's designs shows a similar insistence upon square or rectangular

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<sup>65</sup> Morris, *Rural Architecture*, p.2. Morris was a friend of Daniel Garrett, designer of both the Newcastle Infirmary and Blagdon Hall, and he dedicated plate VIII, 'an adytum' in *Rural Architecture* to his friend after Garrett joked that Morris's designs for rural buildings omitted any trees.

rooms.<sup>66</sup> Newton also followed the advice of Palladio and Burlington's associates by separating family rooms from service areas. In some instances, such as Backworth Hall and Howick Hall, kitchens and domestic offices were sited in pavilions attached to the sides of the houses. These pavilions were expensive, Ralph William Grey noting that the offices at Backworth Hall cost £889 on top of the cost of the house. In other houses, Newton placed the offices in a sub-basement. This had the advantage of a compact design, since heat from the kitchens warmed the house above (though increased the risk of fire) and the principal family rooms were raised above ground level on a *piano nobile*, similar to Palladio's designs and practice in greater houses such as Harewood Hall (Yorkshire). Where offices were incorporated in the house, it was necessary to separate areas for services and servants from those of the family and their guests. This can be seen in the reconstruction of the *piano nobile* and upper floor of Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea (Northumberland) attributed to William Newton (Figure 7.33). The basement floor appears to have been used for services and the attics for servants' accommodation (Figure 7.34).

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<sup>66</sup> Palladio, *Quattro Libri*, book two.



Figure 7.33: Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea (Northumberland). Villa with services in basement (note windows at ground level), family rooms on *piano nobile* with canted bay window looking towards the coast, upper floor for family bedrooms and servants' accommodation in attics.

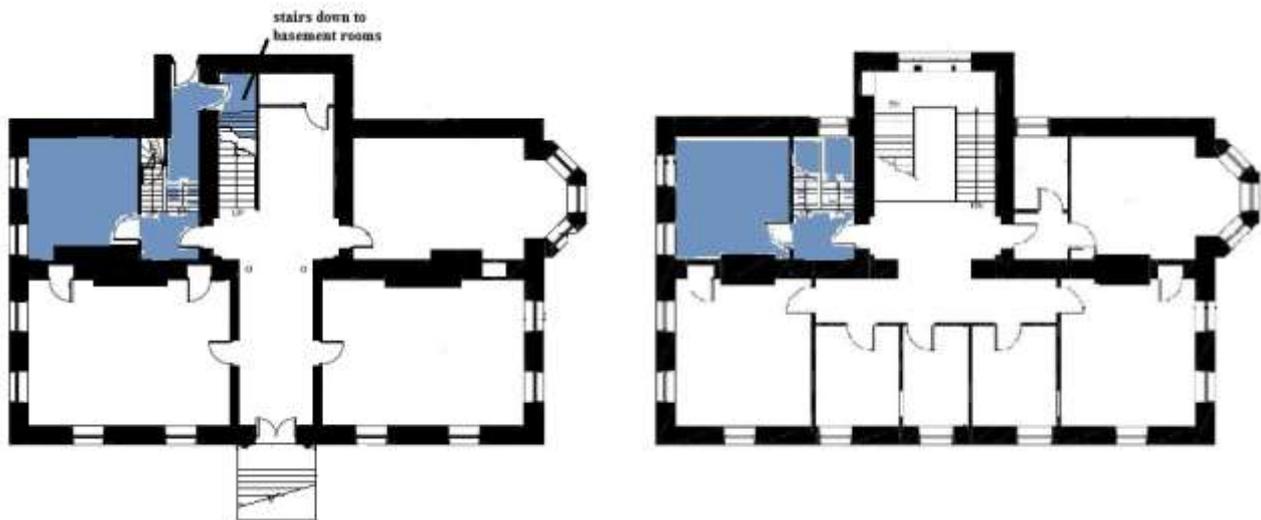


Figure 7.34: Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea (Northumberland), conjectural plans. Left: *piano nobile*, Right: upper floor. Shaded area show service zone with entry from rear yard and giving access to service stair to upper floor and stairs to basement rooms containing kitchens, cellars and servants' hall. Adapted with permission from plans supplied by Mr Duncan Fisher of Newton Hall.

The interior decoration of Newton's buildings also differed from those of leading architects. Newton's interiors had neither the heavy decoration favoured by

Burlington's friend William Kent, nor the co-ordinated designs embracing ceilings, wall plasterwork and carpets created by Robert Adam.<sup>67</sup> Interior surfaces, where they survive, are usually plain with decoration limited to cornices, fireplaces and isolated ceiling features such as rosettes. The exceptions to this were Howick Hall and Hebburn Hall (Figure 7.35) where the clients obtained designs for more ornate cornices and ceilings from James Wyatt and plasterwork by Joseph Rose & Co., and the Newcastle Assembly Rooms (Figure 7.36).



Figure 7.35: Hebburn Hall, 1791. Neo-classical ceiling by Joseph Rose and Co. in centre ground floor room.

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<sup>67</sup> See examples in Ian Bristow, *Architectural Colour in British Interiors 1615-1840* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 1996).



Figure 7.36: Newcastle Assembly Rooms, ceiling, 1776.

The Assembly Rooms were a unique case, because the subscribers were willing to pay for opulence; their intention was to replicate the sumptuous interiors of the larger country houses and display the wealth and pride of the town.<sup>68</sup> As noted above, Newton appears to have taken the façade from Palladio, but it is possible that the interior was a combined design by Newton and the gentlemen of the committee overseeing the building on behalf of the subscribers. It is likely that these gentlemen would have wanted a deciding role in fitting out the most important élite social space between York and Edinburgh, hence the more ‘Adam-style’ plasterwork.

Newton’s designs for the interiors of several houses survive, including Ewart Park, Capheaton Hall and Dissington Hall (all in Northumberland). These drawings complement surviving features at other buildings, including the interiors at Castle Eden and Newton-by-the-Sea. They show that ornamentation, often incorporating anthemion leaves, was limited to the cornices, doorcases and fireplaces. Walls were painted a flat

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<sup>68</sup> Berry, ‘Creating Polite Space’, p.131.

pastel colour (blue, red or yellow in surviving illustrations) with white below the dado rail (Figures 7.37 and 7.38).

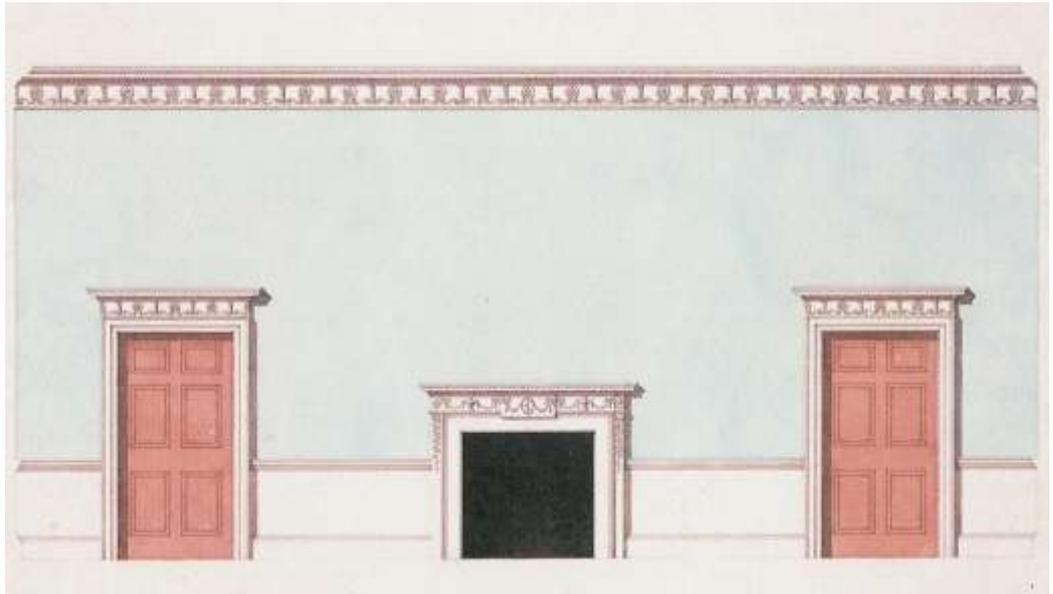


Figure 7.37: Dissington Hall, 1794, interior design by William Newton showing classical cornice, doorcases and fireplace and blank walls to display paintings. Reproduced by kind permission of Mr Michael Brown of Dissington Hall.



Figure 7.38: Capheaton Hall, 1790, interior design by William Newton showing plaster frames to display paintings. Source: Northumberland Archives, Swinburne (Capheaton) Collection, 661-14. Reproduced by kind permission of Mr William Browne-Swinburne.

These blank wall surfaces had several advantages, not only cost, as they allowed the delicate detail of cornices, doorcases and chimneypieces to stand out, true to the

staccato principles of Burlington's architecture. Furthermore, blank walls were needed to display (often now lost) collections of paintings and prints, which Lorna Weatherill suggested were a further demonstration of the family's taste.<sup>69</sup> The highly decorated and expensive suites of interiors designed by Robert Adam (Figure 7.39) and James Wyatt (Figure 7.40) were symbols of wealth and visually overwhelming, but also left rooms at a fixed point in taste, with little opportunity to incorporate acquisitions by later generations. The importance of contemporary paintings to establish the cultural identity of each generation has been widely noted; the returning Grand Tourist could not impress peers with his portrait by Pompeo Batoni if the only available space to hang it was in a corridor.<sup>70</sup>



Figure 7.39: Nostell Priory (Yorkshire), the Saloon decorated to designs by Robert Adam, 1770.

<sup>69</sup> Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>70</sup> John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. (London: HarperCollins, 1997), p. 207; French, *Art Treasures in the North*, plates 1, 2, 7 and 9 are examples of north-east Grand Tourists painted by Pompeo Batoni, 'the greatest Italian portraitist of the eighteenth century' (p. 2).



Figure 7.40: Heaton Hall (Manchester). The Cupola Room, designed by James Wyatt, 1772

Other walls were needed to accommodate equally important displays of élite intellectual identity: at Dissington Hall, Newton designed bookcases for the library, a reminder that families could also demonstrate their taste and social status through extensive book collections.<sup>71</sup> He also designed a library for Nunwick Hall in 1783.<sup>72</sup> As John Brewer noted, ‘by the late eighteenth century a house without a library was almost unthinkable.’<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Jon Stobart, ‘Who Were the Urban Gentry? Social Élites in an English Provincial Town, c. 1680-1760’, *Continuity and Change*, 26.1 (2011), 98;

<sup>72</sup> Dissington Hall folio of designs by William Newton, 1794; Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, ZAL Box 482, Cash account 1779-1807, entry for 3 August 1783.

<sup>73</sup> John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), p. 184. Analysis of book-collecting by élite families has shown the range of cultural interests, see for example Adrian Green, ‘“A Clumsey Country Girl”: The Material and Print Culture of Betty Bowes’, in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 72-90.

This chapter has examined the attribute most prized by those wishing to establish the profession of architect and the skill frequently highlighted by previous authors as the most important in defining the architect's role within the building world. It has found that, rather than experiment with designs, provincial architects employed a palette of designs and features attributable to Andrea Palladio. This was most likely due to the availability of Palladio's designs in the many architectural publications of the eighteenth century, but also to the early experience of some provincial architects, including William Newton, as craftsmen executing designs by Lord Burlington's protégés. Lacking the funds for foreign travel and in the absence of approved training for prospective architects in a national academy, at least until the last quarter of the eighteenth century, this reliance upon earlier precedents by provincial architects is unsurprising. However, clients who had been on the Grand Tour to see authentic classical architecture, who had seasoned in London and leisure towns such as Bath, and who had relatively stable incomes from coal mining and other ventures to pay for new country houses, continued to employ provincial architects such as Newton and Pickford. This is surprising, because after 1768 Royal Academy-educated architects, including David Stephenson were available, but clients still chose designs over half a century old for their new houses. This contradicts the previous emphasis in scholarly analysis upon the chronological succession of ever-superior designs. It suggests that clients had particular reasons for conformity to older forms of classical architecture, and also had specific reasons to reject classical designs in cases where they chose castellated or Gothic buildings. The aspirations of provincial clients, and the identities they projected through architecture, will be examined in the next chapter.

## Chapter 8: Architecture and Élite Identity in North-East England

‘[T]he venerable remains of ancient *Rome* ... which, from our cradles, we have been taught to adore.’

Samuel Sharp, 1766.<sup>1</sup>

The previous chapter demonstrated that in north-east England many eighteenth-century elite buildings, including those built by William Newton, were influenced by the designs of Andrea Palladio. This contrasts with the emphasis placed by historians upon the neo-classical work of Robert Adam and James Wyatt, and the impact of Grecian architecture promoted by James Stuart, the Society of Dilettanti, and Sir John Soane after 1762.<sup>2</sup> This chapter proposes that this dissonance arose because historians’ focus upon architects as artists obscured the aspirations of their clients. Architecture is an art form in which the artist is obliged to temper his ideals with those of the people who fund the building. The clients’ functional requirements and financial abilities must be incorporated in a design, as must the messages that they wish the building to convey about themselves. As Dana Arnold noted, architecture ‘gave the ruling elite the freedom to express individual and national identity’.<sup>3</sup> This chapter will examine the identities projected by the north-east elite in the buildings they commissioned and propose that successful provincial architects had to be attuned to and, indeed, share in the

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Sharp, *Letters From Italy* (London, 1766), p. 55. Also cited in Vicky Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique: Neoclassicism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See Damie Stillman, *English Neo-Classical Architecture* (London: Zwemmer, 1988), pp. 28-29, who identified the discovery of Herculaneum in 1738 and that of Pompeii in 1748, and the art and architecture revealed by their subsequent excavations, as the spur to the more accurate recreation of antiquity. James Stuart, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated by James Stuart F.R.S. and F.S.A. and Nicholas Revett Painters and Architects* (London, 1762); Susan Weber Soros (ed.), *James ‘Athenian’ Stuart, 1713-1788: The Rediscovery of Antiquity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006); Bruce Redford, *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2008); Jason Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti: Archaeology and Identity in the British Enlightenment* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Dana Arnold, ‘The Illusion of Grandeur? Antiquity, Grand Tourism and the Country House’, in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), p. 116.

performance of these identities. An essential attribute of élite identity was taste, of which buildings were the most visible and expensive indicators. This chapter will examine the design influences in the creation and transmission of architectural taste. These included classics-based education, the Grand Tour and increasing interest in the Antique, not only the architecture but also the literature, values and political systems of Ancient Rome, which was seen as the height of human civilisation and a model for the expanding British Empire to emulate.<sup>4</sup> The chapter will also note the increasing popularity of visits to country houses and leisure towns during the eighteenth century, which promoted acceptance of architectural styles. As proposed in the previous chapter, one of the most significant means for moulding architectural styles in the region was the availability of architectural publications, especially those of Palladio, and this chapter will examine why his *Quattro Libri*, the sixteenth-century treatise by an Italian Catholic builder-architect, had such long-standing appeal in north-east England. Although classical-style buildings were the most prolific in the century, there was a continuing and distinctively north-eastern tradition of building in Gothic or castellated styles, supported by increasing antiquarian research into the history of the region, the writing of county and town histories, and the genealogy of long-established county families.<sup>5</sup> This chapter proposes that in north-east England castellated style had a particular appeal for élite families since it emphasised lineage and good lordship, as well as recalling the military history of the north. Perhaps the most significant factor, however, may have been the reliance upon provincial builder-architects, including William Newton, after 1760, not the artist-architects who feature so prominently in architectural histories. It is proposed that eighteenth-century clients did not share twentieth-century historians'

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 110; Coltman, (*Fabricating the Antique*, pp. 12-13) notes that twenty-one hours (88%) of lesson time at Eton College was devoted to the classics in the 1760s.

<sup>5</sup> Rosemary Sweet, 'Provincial Culture and Urban Histories in England and Ireland During the Long Eighteenth Century', in *Change, Convergence and Divergence. English and Irish Provincial Towns in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Peter Borsay and Lindsey Proudfoot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 223-240.

obsession with the ‘progress’ of design, but sought other attributes that the builder-architects provided and the artist-architects did not: proven practical experience, frequent supervision, peer group recommendation or personal knowledge of the architect, as well as fiscal responsibility. Evidence is presented showing a high level of emulation in country house designs for gentry, mercantile and professional families, suggesting conformity was a high priority for these clients. William Newton’s integration with the north-east élite, in a shared cultural identity as well as patronage networks, will demonstrate why he remained the ‘eminent architect’ of choice, despite the allure of Adam and Wyatt and the rivalry of Royal Academy-educated younger architects such as David Stephenson, Christopher Ebdon and Thomas Harrison.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the élite enclaves created in town and country were distinguishable from earlier buildings and those of the middling and labouring sorts by the quality and styles of their construction. The costs of constructing, decorating and equipping élite houses were considerable, but established families and new entrants to polite society were willing or obliged to fund building work. This was not due to structural problems with their houses, but to dissatisfaction with cosmetic factors, including the external appearance, internal decoration and the suitability of existing residences for contemporary living and entertaining. This dissatisfaction, or awareness of other people’s disdain, was derived from the concept of taste. Taste was defined by one contemporary, James Barry, as ‘that quick discerning faculty or power of the mind by which we accurately distinguish the good, bad or indifferent’.<sup>6</sup> This ability to comment with knowledge and discernment on any facet of élite culture was a sign that a person had taste. Taste created a social and cultural barrier between the élite stratum and those below, but also served as a yardstick to measure the

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<sup>6</sup> James Barry, cited in Helen Berry, ‘Promoting Taste in the Provincial Press: National and Local Culture in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle upon Tyne’, *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 25 (2002), 1-17.

accomplishments, and particularly the failures, of those with pretensions to gentility. Taste was signified by clothes, language, deportment, and possessions such as furniture, tableware, paintings and sculpture, but one of the most visible and most expensive demonstrations of a family's taste was their house, the 'most permanent monuments to the wealthy Englishman's taste'.<sup>7</sup> The style in which the house was constructed, its internal decoration and contents symbolised the family's taste. Travel writers including Celia Fiennes, Sir John Penicuik, John Byng and the first duchess of Northumberland mentioned the interiors of houses they were able to view directly, but also commented upon the *external* appearance of houses they passed by.<sup>8</sup> The duchess complimented some families for having a 'magnificent convenient' home but damned others for houses she described as 'ugly', 'in a hole, very old' or 'in a frightful country'.<sup>9</sup> These commentators made judgements based on exterior views, and a poor façade would deter them from entering to explore any luxuries within; the worth of a family could be measured in a glimpse of their home from a speeding carriage.

Élite families could learn about fashionable architectural designs through several means, including visiting buildings such as country houses, or resorts such as Bath. As Mark Girouard noted, Bath's reinvention from declining medieval textile town to the leading social venue of eighteenth-century England was very much the creation of Richard 'Beau' Nash, master of ceremonies at the Assembly Rooms from 1705. Other key figures were Ralph Allen, owner of the quarries that provided the golden stone used in the construction of the new town from the 1740s on the heights above the medieval

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783*. The New Oxford History of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 312.

<sup>8</sup> Celia Fiennes, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, ed. and with an introduction by Christopher Morris, 2nd edn. (London: Gresset, 1949); Clerk, John, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet, Baron of the Exchequer, Extracted by Himself from his Own Journals, 1676-1755*, ed. from the manuscript in Penicuik house with an introduction and notes by John M. Gray (Edinburgh, 1892); John Byng, *Byng's Tours: The Journals of The Hon. John Byng, 1781-1792*, ed. by David Souden (London: Random Century, 1991); Alnwick MSS, diaries of the duchess of Northumberland 1752-63, 121/62.

<sup>9</sup> Alnwick MSS, diaries of duchess of Northumberland 1752-63, 121/62.

core, and the builders John Wood the elder and John Wood the younger.<sup>10</sup> Beau Nash's criteria for entry to the Assembly Rooms, 'for private gentleman upwards', were based upon conformity to standards of behaviour and dress, not rank, a powerful unifying ethos and one with far-reaching consequences as more élite families visited Bath and took this philosophy back to assembly rooms in their own areas.<sup>11</sup> In Bath, and other leisure towns, classical architectural style was intrinsically linked with politeness. The architecture of Bath created by the Woods was also influential throughout Britain, its classical crescents and terraces the models for new developments in Edinburgh and many other towns.<sup>12</sup> However, Bath's architecture had little influence upon the built environment of the eighteenth-century North East: as suggested above, there was little interest and no funding for large-scale developments until the 1830s. Bath was to be enjoyed in Bath, not transplanted to the North East.

Visits to country estates also provided direct experience of tasteful architecture and new ideas of landscape gardening.<sup>13</sup> The first duchess of Northumberland recorded in her diaries visits to élite houses and landscapes such as Strawberry Hill and Stowe.<sup>14</sup> Other northern families visited these sites and relayed their experiences to relatives and friends. Kathryn Airey visited Strawberry Hill in 1768 and wrote to the Ellisons of

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<sup>10</sup> Mark Girouard, *Cities & People: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 196-197.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Girouard, *The English Town: A History of Urban Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 78-79; A similar willingness to embrace all willing to behave correctly and able to afford the subscription was implemented at the new Newcastle Assembly Rooms in 1776, see Helen Berry, 'Creating Polite Space: The Organisation and Social Function of the Newcastle Assembly Rooms', in *Creating and Consuming Culture in North-East England, 1660-1830*, ed. by Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 136.

<sup>12</sup> Girouard, *Cities & People*, p. 198; Carol Watts, A 'Rarie-shew System of Architecture': Bath and the Cultural Scenography of Palladianism', in *Articulating British Classicism: New Approaches to Eighteenth-Century Architecture*, ed. by Barbara Arciszewska and Elizabeth McKellar (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 110-141; Andor Gomme, 'Wood, John (bap. 1704, d. 1754)', *ODNB*, online edition. The religious iconography incorporated by Wood in the buildings of Bath has also been noted, see Peter Borsay, 'New Approaches to Social History. Myth, Memory, and Place: Monmouth and Bath 1750-1900', *Journal of Social History*, 39.3 (2006), 867-889.

<sup>13</sup> Adrian Tinniswood, *The Polite Tourist: A History of Country House Visiting* (London: National Trust, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Victoria Percy and Gervase Jackson-Stops, "'A Jovial Heap of Contradictions'". The Travel Journals of the 1st Duchess of Northumberland, 1', *Country Life*, 31 January 1974, 192-95; "'Exquisite Taste and Tawdry Ornament'". The Travel Journals of the 1st Duchess of Northumberland, 2', *Country Life*, 7 February 1974, 250-52; "'From Parterres to Precipices'". The Travel Journals of the 1st Duchess of Northumberland, 3', *Country Life*, 14 February 1974, 308-10.

Gateshead Park and Hebburn Hall that ‘my eyes were never so feasted in my life... I could not examine everything that merited admiration.’<sup>15</sup> This willingness to appraise fashionable locations and express comment was seen as a demonstration of personal taste, but also affirmed architectural styles appropriate to those wishing to belong to polite society, a point emphasised by Richard Wilson:

The increasing stock of new and extensively rebuilt houses after 1700 made visiting them a regular and essential part of the landowner's experience. This phenomenon of serious appraisal, well before it became more general practice, was crucially important in the dissemination of architectural style in the provinces.<sup>16</sup>

Dana Arnold's analysis of country house ‘publics’ is an important reminder that élite houses and landscapes were intended to demonstrate the owner's taste and wealth, provide opportunities for visitors to display discernment and to interpret political and social messages implicit in statues, temples and imagery.<sup>17</sup> They were meant to be seen by all strata of society, including the labouring classes who were excluded from enjoyment of these élite spaces, and whose only view of the élite world might be a high wall or lodge guarding entry. Exclusion could be achieved by charging for tickets (though this might allow in wealthy merchants and artisans) and by demanding letters of introduction, which only those with the necessary quality, connections and taste could obtain. Successfully overcoming these restrictions to gain entry to a house was a sign that the visitor was a member of the ‘club’, whilst the owner affirmed their own status by controlling entry. The country house was a powerful means to demonstrate the owners' taste and accomplishments, being a venue for the display of paintings,

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<sup>15</sup> TWAM, Ellison MSS, Bundle A.9 Letter from Kathryn Airey to Henry Ellison, 7 June 1768. See also Stephen Clarke, “‘Lord God! Jesus! What a House!’; Describing and Visiting Strawberry Hill”, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 33.3 (2010), 357-380.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Wilson, ‘Novelty and Amusement? Visiting the Georgian Country House’, *The Historian*, 70 (2001), 4-9.

<sup>17</sup> Dana Arnold, ‘The Country House and its Publics’ in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1998).

sculpture and furniture. These precious possessions, and fashionable objects purchased in the burgeoning consumer society, were themselves affirmations of taste but presented together in a substantial house amplified the impression made upon visitors.<sup>18</sup> The design of the country house and its landscape offered opportunities for political messages. At Stowe (Buckinghamshire), the gardens were laid out in ‘a carefully conceived iconographical programme that incorporated political illusions’, including a Temple of Liberty and Elysian Fields. A very clear indicator of the owner Lord Cobham’s political views was a headless statue of the prime minister Robert Walpole, erected in front of the mock ruin of the Temple of Modern Virtue, in contrast to the pristine statues of classical heroes on the Temple of Ancient Virtue and Temple of British Worthies.<sup>19</sup> In Durham, the most prominent feature of the Gibside landscape created for George Bowes was the Column to British Liberty, visible far beyond the estate to those who would never enter. Adrian Green has suggested that as well as the Whig message of the Column, Bowes ensured that visitors within his estate could see the colliery wagonways that provided much of his wealth.<sup>20</sup>

Visits to country houses offered gentry and middling families examples of appropriate styles for their own houses. These British buildings often supplemented the direct experience of many young men and a growing number of women who had been on the Grand Tour to Italy. The Grand Tour was the final polish to the classically-

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<sup>18</sup> There is a very considerable literature on consumerism in the eighteenth century and the impressions conveyed by ownership of fashionable items, see for example Neil McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982); Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800. Image, Object, Text* (Routledge, 1995); Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760*, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge, 1996); Helen Berry, ‘Prudent Luxury: the Metropolitan Tastes of Judith Baker, Durham Gentlewoman’ in *Women and Urban Life in Eighteenth-Century England: “On the Town”*, ed. by Rosemary Sweet and P. Lane (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 131-56; Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Christopher Christie, *The British Country House in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 130.

<sup>20</sup> Margaret Wills, *Gibside and the Bowes Family* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1995), pp. 43-47; Adrian Green, ‘Houses and Landscapes in Early Industrial County Durham’, in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 136-138.

orientated education of élite children. Grand Tourists visited the remains of Roman and Greek civilisations, honed their knowledge of foreign languages, and learnt to consort and converse with other members of the élite.<sup>21</sup> They returned with portraits of themselves in classical settings and *capriccio* paintings of Roman scenes, lifelong reminders of this cultural identity and a symbol to visitors of their hosts' classical taste. Plinths and wall niches displayed real and fake examples of Roman statuary shipped home from Italy. Some, such as William Weddell of Newby Hall (Yorkshire), required major extensions to their country houses to house these collections. Members of the north-east élite, including clients of William Newton such as the Ords of Fenham, the Ridleys of Blagdon, and the Crasters of Craster, made the Grand Tour during the eighteenth century, signifying their membership of polite society.<sup>22</sup>

The architectural impact of these continental travels is less certain, however. Although many of these Tourists commissioned classical-style houses, they employed architects who supplied neo-Palladian designs rather than the more archaeologically authentic neo-classical designs of Robert Adam and Sir William Chambers.<sup>23</sup> It is noteworthy that Adam worked for only one client in the North East, the duke of Northumberland, and this was in Gothic style, not his favoured neo-classical forms, whilst Chambers had no commissions in the region.<sup>24</sup> This was despite the first-hand experience these architects gained on their own Grand Tours and extended studies in Italy, an essential qualification for their claims to cultural parity and even superiority to

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<sup>21</sup> Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 2003); Christopher Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (London: Spring Books, 1969).

<sup>22</sup> Anne French, *Art Treasures in the North: Northern Families on the Grand Tour* (Norwich: Unicorn Press, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> For example, among Newton's buildings Backworth Hall (constructed 1778-1780), Howick Hall (constructed 1781-1789) and Whitfield Hall (constructed 1785) are all derived from Palladian examples, despite the publication of Sir William Chamber's *A Treatise on Civil Architecture* in 1759 and Robert Adam's *Ruins of the Emperor Diocletian's Palace at Spalatro* in 1764 and his *Works in Architecture* of 1773-1779.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Adam's redecoration of seven rooms at Alnwick Castle for the duke and duchess of Northumberland was obliterated in the nineteenth-century alterations to the castle by Anthony Salvin. Adam's designs are in the Sir John Soane Museum Library, London, Soane Museum 39 and reproduced in black and white in David King, *The Complete Works of Robert and James Adam and Unbuilt Adam* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2001), plates 343-5.

their clients. It was not until the last quarter of the century that north-east patrons began to employ leading neo-classical architects for decoration in their houses, but it was James Wyatt, not Adam nor Chambers, who made designs for Auckland Castle and Blagdon Hall. At Auckland Castle, however, Wyatt worked in Gothic style, altering a medieval fortified building, whilst at Blagdon Hall in the 1780s he worked on one room. His external contribution to the house was to make the appearance even plainer by removing the Baroque pilasters from the entrance façade to accord with the neo-Palladian façade of the 1750s.<sup>25</sup> Wyatt's stable block of 1782 was also astylar, conforming to the regional preference established by Garrett and Newton (Figure: 8.1).



Figure 8.1: Stables, Blagdon Hall (Northumberland) by James Wyatt, 1789.

Only the entrance lodges by Wyatt show his preference for more decorated neoclassical motifs seen at Heaton Hall (Manchester). The lodges have floral swags, arched niches for statues and screens of columns leading to the gatepiers capped by white bulls, the Ridley family symbol (Figure 8.2):

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<sup>25</sup> Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/5 cash book 1777-1795; John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt, Architect to George III* (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2012). Wyatt's designs for the dining room at Blagdon Hall are retained at the house, viewed by the author with the kind permission of Viscount M. W. Ridley. For further information on Wyatt's alterations to Blagdon Hall see Richard Pears, 'The Architectural Development of Blagdon Hall, Northumberland', *Architectural History*, 53 (2010), 77-98. Wyatt's designs for Auckland Castle are in DULASC, DDR/BP/EST, AUC/85.



Figure 8.2: Blagdon estate (Northumberland), one of a pair of entrance lodges by James Wyatt, 1787.

For established families, the remodelling of their ancestral home and estate demonstrated their mastery of contemporary taste, whilst a substantial country or town house in fashionable style signified that new entrants to the *élite* were members of polite society.<sup>26</sup> Thus, a building was a vehicle for the expression of identity by architect and client, but this mutual dependency is often lost in architectural histories that eulogize the artist-architect. It is unlikely, however, that provincial architects would have forgotten the needs of their clients, and it significant that London-based artist-architects had little involvement in the design of new buildings in the North East after 1760. New buildings in the region were designed and constructed by local men, trusted builder-architects such as William Newton who were intimately linked through their patronage networks to their *élite* clients.

An education dominated by the Classics and the Grand Tour provide some explanation for the gentry and nobility's national preference for classical architecture in country houses, churches, public buildings and new terraces of town-houses, but the association with Ancient Rome also contained a political message. Rome stood for

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<sup>26</sup> Jon Stobart, 'Gentlemen and Shopkeepers: Supplying the Country House in Eighteenth-Century England', *Economic History Review*, 64.3 (August 2011), 885–904 (899).

order, civilisation, learning and prosperity, and for superiority to the rest of Europe.<sup>27</sup> The Roman Empire was seen as the most advanced civilisation in history, with the largest empire the world had known. Eighteenth-century Britons identified the expanding British Empire with that of Rome: Roman legions had conquered the lands of indigenous tribes and brought order and prosperity; in the eighteenth century British Redcoats were repeating this in America and India. This comparison may have been very clear to Border families. The constitutional monarchy of Britain placed political power in the hands of hereditary landowners, elected to Parliament, a similar political system (or so it was believed) to that of the Senate of ancient Rome. Thus the symbols of the antique were appropriated at a national level in the veneration of the Rome as the model of élite identity and culture, at the local level by landowners displaying artefacts imported from Rome or acquired locally, and in the architectural styles of the new Rome, with classical façades and a form of residence, the villa, modelled on that of Roman ancestors.<sup>28</sup> The self-images portrayed by clients and architects also emphasised their immersion in classical culture, even in death. Philip Ayres drew attention to the prevalence of classical motifs in funerary monuments, including classical urns or sarcophagi, rather than Christian symbols of previous generations.<sup>29</sup> North-east examples include the monuments in St. Nicholas's cathedral, Newcastle, to Matthew Ridley and Sir Matthew White Ridley, who chose to perpetuate themselves not as leading local politicians and businessmen, nor as fashionable Georgian gentlemen, but as Roman senators, surrounded by antique symbols of landowner, political and military

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<sup>27</sup> Richard Hingley, *The Recovery of Roman Britain: A Colony So Fertile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 193.

<sup>28</sup> Arnold, 'The Illusion of Grandeur?', p. 107. See also Philip Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Bruce Redford, *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2008); Jason Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti: Archaeology and Identity in the British Enlightenment* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome*, pp. 64-69.

authority.<sup>30</sup> Classical dress was a common feature of eighteenth-century statuary, and appeared in other symbols of personal identity. William Newton participated in this imagined classical identity, as shown by the seals on his letters and other documents. The earliest version from his seal, surviving on letters to William Ord in the 1760s, shows the head of a young man, his head crowned with a victory wreath of laurels. The seal he used in later years, as attached to his will, shows the profile of an older man's head and shoulders, dressed not as an eighteenth-century professional but in robes resembling a classical toga (Figure 8.3).<sup>31</sup>



Figure 8.3: William Newton's seal, from his Will. Source: DULASC: DPRI/1/1798/N4

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<sup>30</sup> Richard Pears, 'Image, Identity and Allusion: The Ridley Monuments in St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne', *Newcastle University School of Historical Studies Postgraduate Forum E-Journal*, 6 (2008) <[http://www.societies.ncl.ac.uk/shspgf/Ed\\_5/pears.pdf](http://www.societies.ncl.ac.uk/shspgf/Ed_5/pears.pdf)> [accessed 26 November 2012].

<sup>31</sup> DULASC: Durham Probate Records: pre-1858 original wills and inventories (1776-1799), DPRI/1/1798/N4, Will of William Newton, architect, of the Borough and County of Newcastle upon Tyne, will dated 8 August 1793.

Newton's adoption of these motifs demonstrated his embrace of the classical identity of the north-east élite, seen in the Roman statues of the Riddleys. That Newton's clients accepted his pretensions and emulation of élite culture showed that he had achieved the 'consumer reaction' that Corfield suggested was a sign of professionalism.<sup>32</sup> The interest in classical culture among the north-east élite and their associates received further encouragement through the work of antiquarians and historians.

The growth of antiquarian research in Britain provided a rich seam of publications highlighting the country's Roman heritage and making specific comparisons with political developments in Britain and her expanding empire. Although it was believed that direct experience of Rome on the Grand Tour helped to shape the cultural character of new generations of the élite, a growing body of research and publications sought to emphasise that it was not necessary to sail overseas to experience Roman heritage. Indeed, the full title of *Vallum Romanum* (1753) by John Warburton included the assertion that his book was '*an Inducement to the Young Nobility and Gentry of Great-Britain, to Make the Tour of their Native Country, Before They Visit Foreign Parts*'.<sup>33</sup> Camden's *Britannia* (1610, re-issued 1722), Horsley's *Britannia Romana* (1732) and Drake's *Eboracum* (1736) drew attention to the remains of Roman civilisation and placed the northern counties of England centre stage, not on the periphery to which they had been relegated by centuries of centralisation upon London.<sup>34</sup> In Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland and Westmorland, Rome was not a foreign country. It could be seen in the gardens of landowners in the form of Hadrian's Wall and Roman altars and gravestones were built into houses, themselves

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<sup>32</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 21.

<sup>33</sup> John Warburton, *Vallum Romanum: or, the History and Antiquities of the Roman Wall* (London, 1753).

<sup>34</sup> William Camden, *Britannia: Or a Chorographical Description of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1610); John Horsley, *Britannia Romana: or the Roman Antiquities of Britain* (London, 1732); Francis Drake, *Eboracum or, the History and Antiquities of the City of York, From its Origin to This Time* (London, 1736).

frequently built of reclaimed Roman stones.<sup>35</sup> Hadrian's Wall was much more prominent in the eighteenth-century landscape than today, and buildings in the forts along its length were inhabited by border reivers in the sixteenth century and by farmers in the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> William Hutchinson's publications noted the Roman remains in detail, including sketch plans of some of the forts he visited.<sup>37</sup> John Brand described the line of the Roman Wall through Newcastle, noting that it ran under the garden of the vicarage in Westgate Street (close to the neo-Palladian Assembly Rooms). He suggested that the medieval bridge wrecked by the flood of 1771 had contained Roman work and that Roman coins were found within its piers when it was demolished to make way for the new bridge. He also informed his readers that the remains of another Roman bridge could be seen at Corbridge.<sup>38</sup> Henry Bourne noted a local belief that the church of All Saints in Newcastle was on the site of a Roman temple to all of their gods, a pantheon, hence the original name Pampendon for the area of the town in which it stood (mutated to Pandon by the eighteenth century).<sup>39</sup> Drawing upon this interest in the region's Roman heritage, the north-east élite compared their own endeavours to those of their Roman forbearers, including George Bowes of Gibside, who compared his wagonways to the Via Appia in Rome.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> As William Stukeley noted at Hexham : see William Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum: or, an Account of the Antiquities, and Remarkable Curiosities in Nature or Art, Observed in Travels Through Great Britain* (London, 1776), vol. 2, p. 62).

<sup>36</sup> H. G. Ramm, R.W. McDowall and Eric Mercer, *Shielings and Bastles* (London: HMSO, 1970), pp. 82-83, 90.

<sup>37</sup> William Hutchinson, *A View of Northumberland, With an Excursion to the Abbey of Mailross in Scotland*, 2 vols. (Newcastle, 1778); William Hutchinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (Newcastle, 1785-1794). For a detailed discussion of Hutchinson's antiquarian activities see Helen Berry, 'Landscape, Taste and National Identity: William Hutchinson's View of Northumberland (1776-8)', in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 247-260.

<sup>38</sup> John Brand, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne, Including an Account of the Coal Trade of that Place and Embellished with Engraved Views of the Publick Buildings* (London, 1789), vol. 1, pp. 37-38, 105.

<sup>39</sup> Cited in Terry Friedman, *The Georgian Parish Church 'Monuments to Posterity'* (Reading: Spire Books, 2004), p. 139. Henry Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne, or, The Ancient and Present State of That Town* (Newcastle upon Tyne: J. White, 1736).

<sup>40</sup> Edward Hughes, *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North East 1700-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 154.

Throughout the eighteenth century, these antiquarian authors highlighted the image of the Wall as the frontier between Roman civilisation and barbarism. This analogy was not lost on eighteenth-century northern English landowners, who had so recently witnessed two incursions from Scotland in support of the Catholic Stuart claimants to the throne, invaders who it was thought would have destroyed the freedom, and prosperity prized by the élite. The monument in St Nicholas's Cathedral in Newcastle to Matthew Ridley, who as Mayor of the town had refortified its ancient walls (built to resist Scottish attacks), includes an inscription noting his role in opposing the 'Enemies of the House of Brunswick', and a panel showing him as a warrior defending the cowering female figure of Newcastle against an attacker, 'Rebellion', bearing the 'flame of sedition'.<sup>41</sup> Although the crowned female figure was identified as Newcastle, it may also have had a more direct comparison with the British monarchy, upon whose symbols of crown and sceptre the attacker is standing (Figure 8.4).

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<sup>41</sup> Eneas Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Including the Borough of Gateshead* (Newcastle, 1827), pp. 259-260.



Figure 8.4: St Nicholas's Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne. Panel on monument by James Bacon to Matthew Ridley (1712-1778). Ridley is the warrior on the right, Newcastle is the cowering figure and the Jacobite Scots are represented by the warrior on the left.

This thesis proposes that the North East's Roman heritage was highly influential in the adoption of classical architecture, based upon Roman models, by the regional élite in the eighteenth century. The question remains, however, why the north-east élite, with their classical education and experiences, wealth from coal and other industries and willingness to spend money on spaces for their entertainment and fine living, chose Palladio and not the designs of Robert Adam or Sir William Chambers for their houses, contrary to the prominence of these men in architectural histories. It is proposed in this thesis that this stylistic preference was due to the views Palladio claimed to offer of the buildings of Ancient Rome, and in particular to the only surviving architectural treatise of ancient Rome, *De Architectura*, written by Vitruvius.

Marcus Vitruvius Pollo was a Roman architect who, around 20 B.C., wrote ten books describing the purpose, philosophy and attributes of a Roman architect in the reign of the Emperor Augustus. His volumes included a history of architecture, drawing upon lost Greek sources, supplemented by example of the principal building types of his own day: villas, temples, baths, theatres and forums, as well as advice upon construction methods and town planning.<sup>42</sup> A manuscript of his text was rediscovered in 1414 in a Swiss abbey by a Florentine scholar, copied and eventually printed in 1486. Vitruvius had a profound effect upon Renaissance architecture, inspiring Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci. Fra Giocondo edited an illustrated edition in Latin, published in 1511, providing greater access to the architect's theories than the original Latin. Copies of Vitruvius in Latin, Italian and French were available in England during the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>43</sup> When eighteenth-century British architectural theorists, led by Burlington, looked for a source to provide a 'purer' form of classical architecture than Baroque as their national style, Vitruvius's link to the architecture of Augustan Rome was irresistible. In his desire to recreate Augustan Rome in Georgian Britain, Burlington was described as 'that truly English Vitruvius'.<sup>44</sup> However, Vitruvius's text was heavy with technical details, and at times confusing. No original illustrations survived with the rediscovered manuscript. It is suggested here that this was where élite obsession with Palladio lay, for in his *Quattro Libri*, he claimed that his illustrated reconstructions of Roman buildings were done with 'Vitruvius as my master and guide'.<sup>45</sup> Thus, as Curl noted, Vitruvius's principles were 'perfectly enshrined in the works of Andrea Palladio.'<sup>46</sup> Throughout *Quattro Libri*, Palladio cited Vitruvius as the inspiration for his designs. For Burlington and the north-east élite, seeking to

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<sup>42</sup> Mark Wilson Jones, *Principles of Roman Architecture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 33-34.

<sup>43</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (London: Penguin Books, 1953), p.29, n.2.

<sup>44</sup> Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome*, p. 119.

<sup>45</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture*. Translated by Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1997), p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> James Stevens Curl, *Georgian Architecture* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 2002), p. 21.

reconstruct Roman buildings, Vitruvius, as revealed in Palladio, was indispensable. Viewing the Roman ruins in the region, they could with Palladio's assistance imagine these buildings complete and inhabited by themselves as the heirs of Roman civilisation (evidence of whose existence could be seen on their lands and recalled in antiquarian publications). Dana Arnold described this as an 'invented memory', but it provided extremely powerful elision of north-east history and elite cultural allusions.<sup>47</sup> This may explain the continuation of neo-Palladian forms by Newton's north-east clients and the slow adoption of designs by Adam and Wyatt: the artist-architects' designs were inspired by Roman examples, but theirs was the heresy of artistic interpretation, not the desired reconstruction. A client had only Adam's self-aggrandising word for how closely his designs matched those of ancient Rome, but the Augustan-era designs of Vitruvius and Palladio provided 'not just Roman, but golden-age Roman'.<sup>48</sup>

The identity of the northern counties as a frontier zone continued with the Saxons, the Norman Conquest and right up to the Union of the Crowns in 1603.<sup>49</sup> It is suggested here that this frontier status from AD 69 to 1746 had a significant impact on elite identity in Northumberland and Durham. This frontier status made the gentry self-reliant, and as Maureen Meikle highlighted, '[b]efore 1603 the affinity of many lairds and gentlemen was to their families and the Borders, with little regard to whether they were Scots or English'.<sup>50</sup> Meikle also noted that the gentry of Northumberland and the Scottish Borders were well-educated and literate, but suggested that any allegiance to a

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<sup>47</sup> Dana Arnold, 'The Illusion of Grandeur? Antiquity, Grand Tourism and the Country House', in *The Georgian Country House: Architecture, Landscape and Society*, ed. by Dana Arnold (Stroud: Sutton, 2003), p. 110.

<sup>48</sup> Philip Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 111. Some clients, including Sir John Hussey Delaval who questioned the proportions of Adam's columns in his London home, were willing to display scepticism about Adam's designs.

<sup>49</sup> Rosemary Sweet, '“Truly Fertile Ground”: Antiquarianism in the North', in *Northumbria: History and Identity 547-2000*, ed. by Robert Colls (Chichester: Phillimore, 2007), pp. 104-125 and Helen Berry, 'Landscape, Taste and National Identity: William Hutchinson's View of Northumberland (1776-8)', in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 247-260.

<sup>50</sup> Maureen Meikle, *A British Frontier: Lairds and Gentlemen in the Eastern Borders 1540-1603* (Phantassie: Tuckwell Press, 2004), p. 278.

British state came with the Act of Union in 1707, not the Union of the Crowns in 1603. It may be that full integration did not begin to occur until the defeat of the first Jacobite rebellion and really took hold after the defeat of the second rebellion in 1746. In this regard, architecture played an important role as a unifying force, as the élites of both regions embraced a common language of classical architecture which had already infused their peers in southern England. Richard Hingley has noted the ambivalence of Scottish lowland élites who were on the ‘wrong’ side of Hadrian’s Wall, but who could point to the remains of the Antonine Wall to their north as evidence that their ancestors had been on the side of civilisation. Sir John Clerk of Pennicuik (eight miles from Edinburgh) demonstrated this cultural identity in 1722 by constructing a villa and displaying Roman altars and statues he had excavated or bought, as his friend Sir Thomas Robinson did at Rokeby in North Yorkshire in the 1730s.<sup>51</sup>

The resonance of the militarised northern frontier saw a continuing attachment to castellated architecture.<sup>52</sup> Whilst their peers in the south of England abandoned castles for unfortified residences throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, no north-eastern families dared to do so. These families had in their towers and castles, proof in stone of their role as guardians of England against threats from Scotland, just as Roman forts had formed the bulwark between civilised and savage in earlier times. Even the principal town, Newcastle upon Tyne, retained its medieval walls and towers into the eighteenth century, refortified to be ‘literally a fortress against Jacobitism in 1715 and 1745’.<sup>53</sup> Antiquarians published extensive genealogies of leading county families as part of their narratives on medieval history. The founding of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1707, and subsequently many local organisations of similar

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<sup>51</sup> Hingley, *Recovery of Roman Britain*, pp. 118-122.

<sup>52</sup> The term ‘castellated’ is used here rather than Gothick, because the inspiration for eighteenth-century work was the fortifications of the Border counties, not the ecclesiastical connotations embodied in buildings in the south of England. There were no eighteenth-century ‘abbeys’ in Northumberland and Durham, but several new ‘castles’.

<sup>53</sup> Jeremy Black, *Culture in Eighteenth-Century England. A Subject for Taste* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005), p. 203.

intent, provided a means for research to be shared and ideas about the history of medieval Britain and its monuments aired. Despite a questionable toleration of damage to major churches for much of the eighteenth century, including the support Charles Lyttelton (bishop of Carlisle and President of the Society of Antiquaries from 1765 to 1768) gave to his nephew's alterations to Carlisle Cathedral, the Society became a means to challenge what antiquaries saw as the erosion of British heritage in the rebuilding of ancient cathedrals in the two decades before 1800.<sup>54</sup> Horrified by James Wyatt's 'improvements' at Salisbury, Hereford and Lichfield cathedrals, the Society halted the proposals by Wyatt and the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral to demolish the medieval Galilee Chapel at the west end of the cathedral. They intended to replace it with a carriage road around the west end of the cathedral to the canons' houses in The College to the south of the church. The antiquarians were alerted to the threat by the demolition of the medieval chapter-house in 1795.<sup>55</sup>

This more sympathetic attitude to church architecture had been preceded in the North East by awareness of the historical and cultural value of medieval fortifications. It has been suggested that castellated designs demonstrated patrons' desire to be seen as the inheritors of the ideals of the Magna Carta.<sup>56</sup> In the North East, castles and towers may, like the Roman Wall, have been seen as symbols of resistance to Scottish invasion, with the Jacobite rebellions serving to emphasize that this threat was all too recent. Such houses also portrayed their owners as a long-standing feature of country life (which many of the newly-enriched land-owners were not).<sup>57</sup> Many classical houses featured castellated ruins in their grounds, including the 'castle' in the gardens at

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<sup>54</sup> Cumbria Record Office: Dean & Chapter papers: 1751-1792, p.115, 116, 131; D.W.V. Weston, *Carlisle Cathedral History* (Carlisle: Bookcase Ltd, 2000); Bernard Nurse, 'Lyttelton, Charles (1714–1768)', *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>55</sup> Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 288-297; Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Scrape and Anti-scrape' in *The Future of the Past*, ed. by Jane Fawcett (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), p. 38; Jane Fawcett, 'A Restoration Tragedy: Cathedrals in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in *The Future of the Past*, ed. by Jane Fawcett (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), p.78.

<sup>56</sup> Ayres, *Classical Culture and the Idea of Rome*, p. 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Hardwick Hall, County Durham, and the ‘chapels’ close to Capheaton Hall and Blagdon Hall in Northumberland. These contributed to the image of longevity of tenure, but may also have emphasised the more positive attributes of eighteenth-century society in which castles were no longer needed.<sup>58</sup>

Castellated architecture was a style of particular regional significance and not a throwback beloved of provincials far from London and ignorant of fashion. It was employed by the leading inhabitants of the region, the first duke and duchess of Northumberland, some of the most important ‘cultural carriers’ in the country.<sup>59</sup> The duke and duchess were national figures, acting as officials at Court, ambassadors to European courts on behalf of the British Crown, and as Lord Lieutenants of Ireland. They entertained lavishly at their London homes, Northumberland House and Syon Palace, both of which were refurbished by a succession of leading eighteenth-century architects to display the Northumberlands’ command of taste.<sup>60</sup> The duke and duchess displayed an international identity, travelling extensively through Europe on Grand Tours and official business, acquiring cultural artefacts of the classical world and bringing these back to their British houses as stage scenery for the performance of their cultural leadership.<sup>61</sup> Their restoration of Alnwick Castle (the Percies’ ancestral home and a site encapsulating the valour of the northern élite against Scottish invaders), demonstrated their willingness to embrace the castellated style as a symbol of their regional identity.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, the retention of medieval towers as part of many country houses in the region, along with the upgrading of Alnwick, Raby, Ravensworth, Witton

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<sup>58</sup> Berry, ‘Landscape, Taste and National Identity’, p. 257; Steven Desmond, ‘A Walk Through Hardwick Gardens’, in *Northern Landscapes: Representations and Realities of North-East England*, ed. by Thomas Faulkner, Helen Berry and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 69-82.

<sup>59</sup> Peter Borsay, ‘The London Connection: Cultural Diffusion and the Eighteenth-Century Provincial Town’, *London Journal*, 19.1 (1994), 21-35.

<sup>60</sup> They employed Daniel Garrett, James Paine and Robert Adam, and in the North East John Bell, William Newton and Vincent Shepherd.

<sup>61</sup> R. Kennedy, ‘The Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, aristocratic patrons’ in Michael Snodin and John Styles, *Design and the Decorative Arts: Georgian Britain 1714-1837*, p. 70.

<sup>62</sup> The castellated architecture of the eighteenth-century North East owes little if anything to Horace Walpole’s house at Strawberry Hill and for this reason the use of the term Gothic is avoided here

and Lumley castles, was in several of these cases a conscious decision, not always driven by financial hardship.<sup>63</sup> It is perhaps more accurate to view this retention of castellated features as ‘Gothic survival’ in the North East, rather than the ‘Gothic Revival’ of southern England, as the surviving crenellations on northern castles and towers were for defence, not frippery. Peter Ryder noted that when a classical house was added to the side of the medieval Cresswell Tower ‘there was no attempt to disguise the old tower as part of the new house; on the contrary its parapet was reconstructed ... to regain its ‘medieval’ appearance.’<sup>64</sup> In a similar instance, Craster Tower was given lancet-style tripartite windows and renewed battlements and its garden enclosed by battlemented walls, but the new mansion added to the tower was classical (Figure 8.5).<sup>65</sup>



Figure 8.5: Craster Tower (Northumberland). Fourteenth-century tower with lancets of 1780s and classical south range, c.1770.

The new house that James Paine constructed between two of the medieval towers of Ravensworth in the 1750s carried a battlemented parapet to respect the medieval

<sup>63</sup> For example the towers at Belsay, Benwell, Chipchase, Coupland, Craster, Cresswell, Fowberry, Halton, Little Harle, Scotswood and Shortflatt.

<sup>64</sup> Peter Ryder, ‘Cresswell Tower’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, XXXII, 86.

<sup>65</sup> Grundy *et al*, *Northumberland*, p. 249.

structures.<sup>66</sup> These north-east examples stand in contrast to the work undertaken on many Scottish castles, particularly by Robert Adam.<sup>67</sup> One of his most famous works, Culzean Castle (Figure 8.6), contains a genuine medieval tower house, but Adam wanted to create his own castellated style so the medieval building was decapitated, gutted and re-skinned. What remained of the medieval building was completely hidden beneath Adam's view of what medieval buildings should have looked like. Wedderburn Castle, near Kelso, and the demolished Barnton Castle near Edinburgh were further examples of medieval towers hidden beneath Adam's castellations.<sup>68</sup>



Figure 8.6: Culzean Castle (Ayrshire), by Robert Adam, 1777-1792. The original medieval castle is the taller rectangular section in the centre of the façade.

Another form of historical allusion employed by north-east élites was heraldry. Attention has been drawn to the schemes of Lord Lumley (1533-1609) to collect memorabilia of his families lineage, which went so far as to fill the north aisle of the church at Chester-le-Street with fourteen effigies, some newly made, with plaques claiming these warriors as his ancestors, 'an early case of self-conscious

<sup>66</sup> Alnwick MSS, *Views*, 03397/81 'A south view of Ravensworth Castle, Jan 8<sup>th</sup> 1777'.

<sup>67</sup> Stephen Astley, *Robert Adam's Castles* (London; The Sir John Soane's Museum, 2000).

<sup>68</sup> King, *Complete Works of Robert & James Adam*, chapter 5.

medievalism'.<sup>69</sup> When Robert Adam was employed to redecorate the interior of Alnwick Castle in 1777, he included a painting of an elaborate family tree in the medieval chapel.<sup>70</sup> Jon Stobart noted that 'few could argue with the status conferred by a coat of arms'.<sup>71</sup> Many funerary monuments in the region's churches incorporate coats of arms, even where the deceased had obtained their status through commerce rather than soldiering. William Newton embraced this form of élite identity by acquiring a coat of arms, which was carved on his gravestone in St Andrew's church, Newcastle.<sup>72</sup>

These claims to antiquity and interest in castellated buildings were part of the propaganda adopted by élite families (particularly the *nouveaux riches*) to assert their cultural credentials in a martial land. There were country houses (such as Castle Eden, Heaton Hall and Stella Hall) with castellated exteriors but classical interiors, a layering of tastes that allowed patrons to subscribe to both Roman and medieval allusions (Figure 8.7).

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<sup>69</sup> Pevsner, *Durham*, p.127; John Cornforth, 'The Backward Glance' in *The Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting*, ed. by Gervase Jackson-Stops (London: National Gallery of Art and Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 60-69.

<sup>70</sup> David King, *The Complete Works of Robert and James Adam and Unbuilt Adam: Built and Unbuilt*, 2nd Rev edn (London: Architectural Press, 2001), p. 244 and illustration 344.

<sup>71</sup> Jon Stobart, 'Who Were the Urban Gentry? Social Élites in an English Provincial Town, c. 1680-1760', *Continuity and Change*, 26.1 (2011), 89-112 (90).

<sup>72</sup> John Robinson, 'Monuments in the Athol Chantry, St. Andrew's Church, Newcastle', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser. 18 (1896), 37-48, notes 'a coat of arms bearing a chevron bearing 3 escallops, between 3 goats' heads erased, surmounted by a crest and helmet, and surrounded by rich mantling'.



Figure 8.7: The Castle, Castle Eden, County Durham, c.1777 by William Newton. Castellated exterior to suit the place name, classical-columned interior of a contemporary country house.

In 1779, Sir Matthew White Ridley of Blagdon Hall employed William Newton to add a castellated front and corner towers to his brick Queen Anne-era house at Heaton (a suburb of Newcastle). Ridley's immersion in contemporary classical taste and the neoclassical alternatives to Palladio has already been noted. It is inconceivable that he would have committed a stylistic *faux pas* with this 'wonderful example of pastry-book Gothic'.<sup>73</sup> The additions were clearly intended to convey a particular identity, perhaps to conform to the perception that north-east landowners needed a castle to demonstrate their martial ancestry and their own military career (Sir Matthew was a colonel in the militia). Other north-east houses, including Hauxley Hall and Beadnell Hall in Northumberland, had some classical and some castellated façades, a bizarre appearance on a single building that can only be explained by this dualistic approach to the prevailing architectural styles.<sup>74</sup> These houses are considered odd by modern commentators and at first glance they appear to suffer from stylistic confusion, but the

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<sup>73</sup> Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/5 cash book 1777-1795; Heaton Hall was illustrated in Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland* (York: Jill Raines, 1996), p.21 and cover illustration.

<sup>74</sup> Castle Ward, near Strangford, Northern Ireland, has a similar mix of classical and castellated façades, perhaps a reminder that in Ireland the ancestors of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy had also required fortifications to maintain their hegemony.

influence of the North East's Roman and medieval history may explain the duality of their owners' stylistic choices, something which would be apparent to contemporary observers but is lost to modern writers.

The architectural tastes of the north-east élite were influenced by regional history, antiquarian publications, country houses visits, classical education and Grand Tour experiences, but it is proposed here that these experiences did not support the innovation in design claimed by 'artist-architects' and architectural historians. Only the wealthiest clients of proven taste were willing to embrace real innovation and the majority of élite families chose conformity, continuity and emulation of earlier designs. The extent to which families sought to emulate taste shown by social superiors is contested by historians, but evidence suggests that in architecture emulation occurred. The remainder of this chapter presents examples that demonstrate the scale of emulation in north-east country houses, as clients sought a shared model of residence in which to entertain their peers and invited guests, a more select performance than urban display.

The selection of designs from Palladio was one instance of this emulation, but there are also several north-east smaller country houses of near-identical appearance. Most were constructed for merchant and professional families as suburban retreats rather than self-contained country estates, but they gave the appearance of landed gentility even if the income had been from trade, legal fees or military salaries. Others were the residences of wealthy farming families of some longevity, seeking to emphasize their membership of polite society through these architectural trappings. Palladio's designs were appropriate for these individuals too, since his villas were intended as substantial farmhouses in the Italian countryside.<sup>75</sup> It is unfortunate that the papers relating to the construction of most of these houses have not survived, but the common features of the

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<sup>75</sup> Paul Holberton, *Palladio's Villas: Life in the Renaissance Countryside* (London: John Murray, 1991).

design, their plain astylar façades and what is known of the family connections of their owners, strongly suggest that these houses were designed by William Newton and represented his solution of a smaller country house to deliver the clients' desired cultural identity.

Newton's houses had several characteristic features, including the astylar surfaces, the horizontal bands and also the positioning of fireplaces in internal walls, which ensured that heat remained in the house, and provided another characteristic of Newton's buildings: the pleasing effect of the slopes of the side roofs meeting the chimneys, suggesting height even in two-storey buildings. These features can be seen in the north elevation of Capheaton Hall (Northumberland), designed and added to an earlier house by Newton from 1788 to 1791 (Figure 8.8).



Figure 8.8: Capheaton Hall (Northumberland) refronted by William Newton 1788-1790

These features can also be seen at Benton House (Northumberland), owned by Thomas Charles Bigge (1739 to 1794). As noted above, his family and social connections provide further evidence to link William Newton to the construction of Benton House. (Figure 8.9).



Figure 8.9: Benton House (Northumberland), home of Thomas Charles Bigge, architect unknown

The five bay, flat elevation of Benton House had an open-base pediment over the central three bays and a floating cornice above the central window. There was no decoration around the windows, which like Dissington Hall (Figure 7.24) were rectangular voids in the stone surface. A similar urban building called Singleton House formerly stood at the northern end of Northumberland Street in Newcastle.<sup>76</sup> (Figure 8.10) Charleton stated that it was built by Alderman Hedley.<sup>77</sup> John Hedley (died 1797) was Sheriff of Newcastle in 1766-1767, elected an alderman in 1777, served as Mayor of Newcastle in 1777-1778 and 1788-1789, was a coal fitter and partner in the Tyne Bank (established 1777).<sup>78</sup> His service as a councillor, subscription to the refurbishment of the church of St Nicholas and the Assembly Rooms brought him into frequent contact with William Newton. Although the floating cornice was not included, other features on his house on Northumberland Street were very similar to those of Benton House. The attached slightly lower single bay wings (with pediments) provided

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<sup>76</sup> Singleton House was illustrated in *The Monthly Chronicle of North-Country Lore and Legend*, vol. 3 (Newcastle: Walter Scott, 1889), p. 158.

<sup>77</sup> John Charleton, *Newcastle Town: An Account of Its Progress, Its Struggles and Triumphs and Its Ending* (London, 1885), p. 363.

<sup>78</sup> Maberly Phillips, *A History of Banks, Bankers and Banking in Northumberland, Durham and North Yorkshire* (London: Effingham Wilson and Co., 1894), p. 160.

additional accommodation, whilst Capheaton Hall and Benton House had recessed wings which were lower than the central block.



Figure 8.10: Singleton House (Newcastle, demolished), Togston Hall (Northumberland).

In Northumberland, Togston Hall had a similar five-bay façade, horizontal bands, roof apex chimneys and a pediment over the central bays. The house was owned between 1772 and 1812 by William Smith, who had income from land.<sup>79</sup> This was a new house added to an earlier structure, a similar example of which was Bank House, near Acklington (demolished 1950).<sup>80</sup> Bank House was formerly owned by the duke of Northumberland, but was purchased by his private secretary, Robert Tate, who added the front range of similar appearance to Togston Hall. Further up the Northumberland coast, Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea, was built for Dr. Joseph Forster of Alnwick as a grander form of this design, raised on a sub-basement and with a canted bay window. Dr. Forster was a frequent visitor to the duke and duchess of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle: his new house symbolised his professional status (Figure 8.11).

<sup>79</sup> Northumberland County History Committee, *A History of Northumberland. Vol. 5: The Parish of Warkworth, With the Chapelry of Chevington, the Parish of Shilbottle, the Chapelry or Extra-Parochial Place of Brainshaugh* (Newcastle: A. Reid, 1899), pp. 340-341.

<sup>80</sup> Faulkner and Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland*, p. 34. Northumberland Archives, 05391/1, Tate Family of Bank House, Guyzance, Northumberland Records, Journal of Sarah Tate, 1817, includes a plan of Bank House showing the new front range added by her father Robert, completed 1799. Faulkner and Lowery suggested that Newton may have designed the additions just before his death in 1798.



Figure 8.11: Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea (Northumberland).

In Alnwick, the building at 1 Clayport was attributed to William Newton. It now has a carriage entrance incorporated, and has more elaborate window surrounds, but is similar to others illustrated here.<sup>81</sup>



Figure 8.12: 1 Clayport, Alnwick (Northumberland)

In the very north of Northumberland, the house of Sanson Seal, belonging to Burnet Roger Grieve (1725-1812), a brewer and ship-owner of Berwick-upon-Tweed and a

<sup>81</sup> J.C. Hodgson, 'Two Eighteenth-Century Newcastle Worthies, Samuel Hallowell, surgeon, and William Newton, architect', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ser. 6 (1913-1914), 29. The carriage entrance may be later as there is a patch of rectangular masonry above the arch that suggests that there was originally a window in this position. The 1860 Ordnance Survey map does not show a passage through the house. There was a yard behind the house leading to a long garden.

subscriber to the Newcastle Assembly Rooms, appeared like Newton Hall to have had a sub-basement below the house.<sup>82</sup> Unfortunately, the pedimented doorcase was removed, but marks in the masonry show this too was similar to the one at Newton Hall. An earlier property belonging to William Grieve was East Ord House, with the five-bay south front added to an earlier building but again raised over a sub-basement (Figure 8.13).<sup>83</sup> It is similar to 1 Clayport, Alnwick.



Figure 8.13: Houses of the Greive family of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Sanson Seal (left) and East Ord (right)

South of the River Tyne in County Durham, there were houses of very similar appearance to these examples (Figure 8.14). The north elevation of Heworth Hall was rebuilt in the late-eighteenth century in a very similar style to the examples above. It was owned by William Russell, owner of the Wallsend Colliery and a partner in the Russell, Allen and Maling Bank. He was one of the richest commoners in England, who in the early nineteenth century bought Brancepeth Castle, near Durham. The castle was the former home of the medieval Neville family, earls of Westmorland, and Russell's purchase was a clear statement of his wealth and status.<sup>84</sup> His house at Heworth was closely related to Scots House (near Boldon) and Usworth House (near Washington). Scots House was built for Robert Wade (died 1803), who had been involved in mining

<sup>82</sup> John Fuller, *A History of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Including a Short Account of the Villages of Tweedmouth and Spittal* (Edinburgh, 1799), p. 57 and p. 383; TWAM, DT.OAR 160.58, Newcastle Old Assembly Rooms, Committee and Accounts 1779-1781.

<sup>83</sup> Fuller, *Berwick*, p. 344.

<sup>84</sup> Phillips, *Banks, Bankers and Banking*, p. 363.

with William Russell.<sup>85</sup> Usworth House was the home of Captain Bernard Shaw, an army officer who married an heiress Barbara Shields and built the mansion house before 1782.<sup>86</sup> Barbara Shields's sister Catherine married William Hargrave of Shawdon Hall in Northumberland, a house attributed to William Newton, and whose side elevation is very similar to the main façades of Usworth Hall, Heworth Hall and Scots House. Scots House and Usworth House had a round window in the pediment, a feature seen in Newton's north façade at Capheaton Hall. In South Shields, a town house called Thompson's Hall (demolished) also had the plain five-bay façade, horizontal bands and central pediment seen at these country houses.<sup>87</sup>



Figure 8.14: Heworth Hall, Usworth Hall, Scots House in Boldon (all County Durham).

<sup>85</sup> Eneas Mackenzie and Marvin Ross, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham; Comprising an Account of Its Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne: 1834), p. 73.

<sup>86</sup> Northumberland Archives, 3410/Wat/29/36, Estate plan of Usworth, the Property of Bernard Shaw, Surveyed by J. Fryer, 1782; Eneas Mackenzie, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham; Comprising an Account of Its Natural, Civil, and Ecclesiastical History* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1834), pp. 77-78.

<sup>87</sup> P. Meadows and E. Waterson, *Lost Houses of County Durham* (York: Jill Raines, 1993), p. 36.

Hussey complemented the elevation at Shawdon Hall, stating that the designer ‘knew what he was about, and that was not just plagiarising Adam or anybody else’.<sup>88</sup> Two houses shown in a painting of Sunderland in 1784 had features similar to these examples (Figure 8.15). Thornhill House rather oddly had a cupola over the roof, which may have survived from an older phase of the building, but it had a Serliana doorcase and a round window in its pediment. This doorcase and the triple arched wings on the side recalled identical features of Backworth Hall (Northumberland) built by Newton for Ralph William Grey in 1777. Thornhill House was the residence of John Thornhill, leader of Sunderland Corporation, chief inhabitant, a major landowner and benefactor and head of the Freemasons in the town.<sup>89</sup>

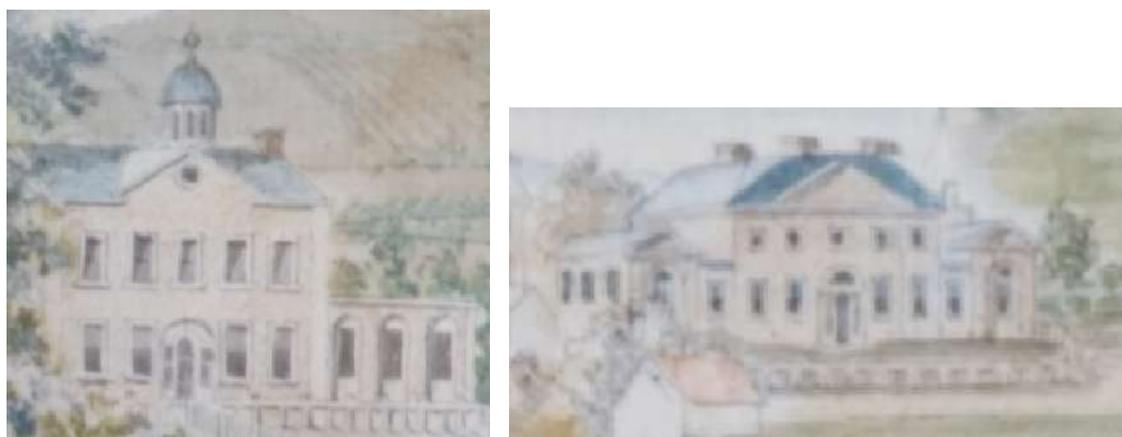


Figure 8.15: Thornhill House and The Grange, Bishopwearmouth, illustrated in Francis Gablon, *Sunderland From Bainbridge Holme* (Watercolour), 1784, loaned to Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens. Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.

The other Sunderland house, The Grange at Bishopwearmouth, was of closer appearance to Backworth Hall, with half-height windows on the first floor and Serliana doorcase, but it had lower single bay pedimented wings as at Singleton House in Newcastle. The Grange was owned in 1784 by John Maling, partner in the Russell,

<sup>88</sup> Christopher Hussey, ‘Shawdon Hall, Northumberland’, *Country Life*, 5 March 1959, p. 461.

<sup>89</sup> Jeremiah Summers, *The History and Antiquaries of Sunderland, Bishopwearmouth, Bishopwearmouth Panns, Burdon, Ford, Ryhope, Silksworth, Tunstall, Monkwearmouth, Monkwearmouth Shore, Fulwell, Hylton and Southwick* (Sunderland: Joseph Tate, 1858), volume 1, pp. 164-165.

Allan and Maling Bank, owner of the eponymous pottery company and another leading inhabitant of Sunderland.<sup>90</sup> The partnership with Russell of Heworth House may have led to the employment of the same architect for their houses. Another Sunderland mansion of similar appearance to Usworth Hall and Thornhill House was High Barnes. It was recorded that William Ettrick ‘built the High Barnes mansion at a cost of £10,000’.<sup>91</sup> Ettrick was a former Royal Navy purser and a Justice of the Peace, but he ‘carried on feuds with many local families, including the Thornhills’. His new mansion, of similar appearance to Thornhill House, may have been built as part of his rivalry with John Thornhill. The scale of replication in these houses, and the adherence to designs by Palladio noted in the previous chapter, demonstrates that many clients sought conformity to standard designs, rather than seeking a bespoke creation.

This chapter has examined the intentions of north-east clients in commissioning building work, the forms of influence upon them, and the identities, often imagined, that they sought to project through architecture. The architectural styles preferred by the north-east élite evoked the specific historical context of the region and differed from those of more famous artist-architects, particularly in their willingness to display contrasting classical and castellated styles. The palimpsest nature of many élite houses emphasised the longevity, and thus the rightful lordship, of many families. The chapter has also challenged earlier historians’ focus upon designs by artist-architects based in London as the critical attribute in creating an architectural profession. The replication of standard designs suggest that many clients in north-east England, particularly those with commercial and professional wealth, sought conformity, not experimentation, and chose to put their funds into the safe hands of builder-architects with craft expertise and high

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<sup>90</sup> Phillips, *History of Banks, Bankers and Banking*, pp. 362-364.

<sup>91</sup> Moses, E. Watts, ‘The Ettricks of High Barnes’, *Antiquities of Sunderland*, 20 (1951), 9-15 (11). The Grange and High Barnes were illustrated in Gillian Cookson, *Sunderland: Building a City* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2010), pp. 150-151.

local reputations. These, together with other factors highlighted in this work, have implications for study of the practice of architecture in the eighteenth century, summarised in the concluding chapter.

## Chapter 9: Conclusion

This thesis began as an attempt to discover work by the architect William Newton of Newcastle upon Tyne (1730 to 1798). It expanded into a wider analysis of the development of the architectural profession in eighteenth-century Britain, focusing particularly on an oft-overlooked figure in architectural history, the provincial architect. This in turn has revealed much about the society and economy of north-east England and the cultural aspirations of its élite families. The architecture of the North East demonstrates close awareness of national tastes, but also willingness to create and maintain architectural styles that represented the cultural identities of the region.

Research in archival sources has revealed a much greater picture of William Newton's activities than previously recognised, as detailed in Appendix 2. Although previously eclipsed by historians' focus upon John Dobson and Richard Grainger in the architectural history of north-east England, and by the regional interventions of London-based architects, Newton must now be seen as a key figure in the establishment of an architectural profession in north-east England. His career bridged the period in which architecture changed from the practice of skilled master-craftsmen, educated gentlemen and amateur artists, to a distinct profession within the building world of eighteenth-century Britain. Newton's father Robert, a master-craftsman who entered the building industry as a second career from shipbuilding, has been shown to have enjoyed considerable respect and authority among the north-east élite in the 1740s and 1750s. His success laid the foundations for his son's career, particularly in securing the confidence of important local families who were willing to use their connections to further Robert and William's careers. It is notable that the Ord, Carr, Bowes, Swinburne and Allgood families employed William Newton for over forty years.

This research has used the considerable primary sources available to historians in north-east England, in public repositories and private archives. These provide valuable raw material for further region-specific analysis of issues such as consumerism, economic diversification, and cultural associations. The North East has many country estates that have remained in the hands of the same families for six or seven hundred years, including the Percies at Alwick, but also lesser-known families such as the Charltons of Hesleyside, the Swinburnes of Capheaton, and the Salvins of Croxdale. An example of the further research that could be addressed is that these three examples were also families that remained loyal to Roman Catholicism throughout the Reformation and paid recusancy fines, but they also managed to rebuild their country houses twice during the eighteenth century, keeping up with their Protestant neighbours. Further research could compare the socio-economic concerns of the north-east élite with national perspectives and analysis in other provinces, in order to determine how far provinces followed London trends, or if there were regional variations.

The extent of the economic and social connections between the north-east élite are shown in this work to have extended far beyond coal-mining, a source of much previous research. North-east society was an intimate web of family, business and politics, one that outsiders such as Mrs Montagu struggled initially to comprehend. It was, however, as A.W. Purdue and Joyce Ellis have emphasised, a dynamic economy, 'far from a mere precursor of the industrial economy established in the mid-nineteenth century'.<sup>1</sup> Within this society, economic factors were to the fore, as demonstrated in the analysis of the building of the Newcastle Infirmary from 1751 to 1753. This was cited by previous historians as an example of philanthropy, but must also be seen as a clear-headed business decision by many of the subscribers seeking profits from the building

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<sup>1</sup> Joyce Ellis, 'A Dynamic Society: Social Relations in Newcastle upon Tyne 1660-1760', in *The Transformation of English Provincial Towns 1600-1800*, ed. by Peter Clark (London, Hutchinson & Co., 1984), pp. 190-227; A.W. Purdue, *Newcastle: The Biography* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2011), p.103.

work.<sup>2</sup> This elision of public good and personal gain was a hallmark of north-east society. As noted in this work, architecture was an economic activity and a strong economy enabled architects to prosper and elite aspirations to be made real. Analysis of surviving records for other public works such as the Assembly Rooms of 1774 and the Theatre Royal of 1788 may reveal further examples of this economic theme. It would be particularly useful for future research to compare this analysis of Newcastle buildings with practices in other provincial towns such as Liverpool, Glasgow and Bristol to establish whether this was a common feature of eighteenth-century society.

The arena of architectural practice has also been investigated in this thesis and this has challenged the focus upon the ‘English urban renaissance’ posited by Peter Borsay and subsequent historians. Continuity in political and social affairs in the North East extended to the region’s towns, and it is difficult to reconcile the emphasis upon substantial urban redevelopment with the limited rejuvenation of older fabric in the principal towns in the region. New buildings were created, there is no doubt, but the opportunities for major interventions seen elsewhere as part of the ‘urban renaissance’ did not occur in the eighteenth-century North East, and when they did (as in the sale of Sir Walter Blackett’s estate in the centre of Newcastle in 1777) they were not taken up. Instead, this thesis has highlighted a rural renaissance in which profits for mercantile and industrial urban endeavours were used to create exclusive spaces for elite entertainment in the countryside. This also had a commercial benefit in several instances, so that families added rental and agricultural income to their industrial profits. The creation of country estates by the north-east elite provided opportunities for provincial architects, particularly William Newton.

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<sup>2</sup> Kathleen Wilson, ‘Urban Culture and Political Activism in Hanoverian England: The Example of Voluntary Hospitals’, in *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Hellmuth Eckhart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 165-184.

William Newton represented a very different concept of architect to that of more famous practitioners, such as Sir John Vanbrugh, Robert Adam and Sir John Soane. Rather than dispense designs from London and expect clients to find skilled craftsmen to execute the designs with minimal supervision from the architect, Newton and his fellow-provincial architects, such as John Carr and Joseph Pickford, provided designs for buildings but also close supervision of construction, based upon their own formative craft experience. Provincial architects, along with Sir William Chambers, were ‘among builders’, whilst Adam and Soane were ‘above builders’.<sup>3</sup> The existence and high esteem of these provincial builder-architects challenges the rhetoric of these eighteenth-century architects and later historians who portrayed the architect as an artist, not a mechanic.<sup>4</sup> As engineers showed, however, mechanical expertise does not exclude aesthetic appeal. It is salutary to note that the eighteenth-century engineer John Smeaton could turn his hand from canals and steam engines to designing lighthouses and churches, whilst in the nineteenth century, as architects argued over which styles had precedence over others and resigned from their professional institution at the prospect of mandatory training and examinations, Isambard ‘Kingdom’ Brunel could design and build ocean-going iron ships, bridge huge natural features such as the Clifton Gorge, and link the nation by railways.<sup>5</sup> The success of engineers in creating a distinct profession in the eighteenth century stands in contrast to architects, who did not found a professional institute until 1834 and required parliamentary legislation over a century later to exclude other practitioners. This is the opposite of the ‘consumer reaction’ and ‘balance of authority’ achieved by engineers.<sup>6</sup> It is suggested here that the artist-architects’ desire to divorce themselves from manual aspects of architecture may have

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<sup>3</sup> Brian Hanson, *Architects and the 'Building World' from Chambers to Ruskin: Constructing Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 22 and 37.

<sup>4</sup> Sir John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530-1830* (London: Penguin Books, 1953), p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> A. W. Skempton, ‘Smeaton, John (1724–1792)’, *ODNB*, online edition; R. Angus Buchanan, ‘Brunel, Isambard Kingdom (1806–1859)’, *ODNB*, online edition.

<sup>6</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain, 1700-1850* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.21; Wilfrid R. Prest, *The Professions in Early Modern England* (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 16.

compromised their standing with many clients who wanted exactly this practical expertise, expertise that was evident in the professional engineers and builder-architects whom they encountered.

Newton's relationship with David Stephenson ('the first Newcastle architect to study at the Royal Academy') is shown to much more complex and nuanced, with some rivalry (at All Saints church, Newcastle) but frequent collaboration in civic and speculative building.<sup>7</sup> Their partnership, and the lack of commissions faced by Christopher Ebdon in Cornwall, challenges the emphasis in general architectural histories that London training was the hallmark of the successful late eighteenth-century architect. Analysis of William Newton's career suggests that provincial builder-architects were able to resist the intrusion of these London-trained architects through their extensive networks of patronage and close association with the interests of their clients. A full assessment of Stephenson's career is also due, particularly as he provided pupillage training for the most famous 'architect of the North East', John Dobson.<sup>8</sup>

The architectural styles favoured by the north-east élite have also been shown to be distinct from those in standard architectural histories. The reliance upon Palladio may have been a conservative action, but the growing astylarism of buildings contrasts strongly with that of national practitioners such as Robert Adam and James Wyatt, indeed it prefigures the more austere styles favoured by late eighteenth-century architects such as Sir John Soane. However, this thesis suggests that neo-Palladian buildings were constructed in the North East because they mirrored antiquarian interests in the Roman heritage of Britain, in which the region had considerable advantages over other parts of the country. Similarly, the use of castellated styles demonstrates 'Gothic survival' not 'Gothic Revival', with the refurbishment of medieval castles (not the

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas E. Faulkner and Andrew Greg, *John Dobson: Architect of the North East*, rev. edn. (Newcastle: Tyne Bridge, 2001), p. 122.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

easiest task for the eighteenth-century architect) undertaken because of historical allusions that also supported the construction of new buildings in castellated form.

This research has also emphasised that provincial architects such as Newton were not only first ‘among builders’ but also among their clients. William Newton and Joseph Pickford of Derby lived as neighbours and landlords of families who provided architectural commissions. This demonstrates that the social mobility of these practitioners was recognised by contemporaries, the ‘consumer reaction’ that Penelope Corfield identified as a sign of professionalism. Through memberships of clubs and societies and subscriptions to publications, the provincial architect shared the cultural, social and economic priorities of their clients. The native-born provincial architect was a source of pride to their town and county, witnessed by the description of Newton as an ‘eminent architect’ in his lifetime and by his obituaries that emphasised his integrity, diligence, amiability and affable manners.<sup>9</sup> In these characteristics lie the reasons for the successful careers of provincial architects such as William Newton, who achieved the ‘consumer reaction’ recognising his skills and status without the heavy hand of Parliament. They were skilled in design and construction, reputable, recommended and willing to work with clients, not arguing about the primacy of their designs over clients’ requirements. The model of architect that they represented has been largely written out of architectural histories highlighting the work of artist-architects. This research, alongside publications recovering the careers of other provincial architects, has, it is hoped, enabled one of these ‘eminent architects’ to step from the shadows.

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<sup>9</sup> *The Monthly Magazine and British Register*, 1 (1798), p. 390; *Newcastle Courant* (5 May 1798); Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne Library, *Sixth Year’s Report of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1799).

## APPENDIX 1. RECONSTRUCTING AN ARCHITECT: SOURCES FOR THE CAREER OF WILLIAM NEWTON

William Newton is at the heart of this thesis and it was essential to establish the extent of his career and connections. This appendix outlines the methodology employed to reconstruct Newton's career and establish the detailed catalogue of his known and attributed works listed in Appendix 2. This list of works also includes details of his clients, whose papers confirm Newton's work, and whose family, business and social relationships provide strong evidence to suggest, alongside stylistic details of buildings, Newton's hand in other designs. Many of these works have eluded previous researchers of north-east architecture.

The greatest impediment to this task was the loss of Newton's personal and business papers. However, as Eric Fernie noted 'architectural historians have at their disposal three main tools: documentary or written evidence, archaeological or physical investigation of the fabric, and visual or architectural analysis of the design.'<sup>1</sup> The following strategy was adopted to compensate for the absence of Newton's papers: searching eighteenth and nineteenth-century publications and later secondary sources to identify work known to be by Newton, and establishing his clients and connections between them; investigating primary sources relating to élite, civic and ecclesiastical building in the North East from 1730 to 1800 to identify possible work by Newton and other architects; comparing details of known buildings by Newton with other buildings sharing these features, and searching for links between Newton's clients and owners of these other buildings. The buildings identified as Newton's work attributable to Newton by client affiliation or architectural features are listed in Appendix 2.

Any investigation of a British architect's work begins with Colvin's majesterial *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*, which provided an initial list of William

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Fernie, 'Archaeology and Iconography: Recent Developments in the Study of English Medieval Architecture', *Architectural History*, 32 (1989), 19.

Newton's work.<sup>2</sup> Colvin noted Newton's involvement in civic, ecclesiastical and private building. This provided pointers to major building work on churches, country houses and civic buildings in Northumberland and Durham during Newton's lifetime (1730-1798). Eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century publications were searched for further information about these buildings and the clients who commissioned them. The *Buildings of England* series, initiated by Niklaus Pevsner, are another useful introduction. His *Buildings of England: Northumberland* was revised in 1992, whilst the volume for County Durham was last updated in 1983.<sup>3</sup> Although such county-wide surveys are necessarily selective, it is fair to note that Pevsner had favourite types of buildings, particularly parish churches, and omitted others that might be equally interesting to another reader. History requires a fuller picture than this if conclusions are to be drawn about 'urban renaissances' and élite architecture. More worrying than Pevsner's understandably subjective selection is the tendency of other bodies and authors to take the *Buildings of England* volumes as gospel, even when a fairly rudimentary search in archives provides primary evidence to the contrary. Research for this thesis in estate papers showed that Pevsner's dating for Blagdon Hall, Wallsend Hall and Dunston Hill House was incorrect, but these errors had been repeated rather than corrected by subsequent authors, rather than checking archival sources.

The *Images of England* Internet database also proved an invaluable resource.<sup>4</sup> Although the descriptions, based upon English Heritage's Listed Buildings database, appear to repeat dating errors found in the *Buildings of England* volumes for Northumberland and Durham, the descriptions of buildings provided information on external appearance, internal features, the original client, architects and craftsmen

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<sup>2</sup> H.M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. (New Haven and London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Yale University Press, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> John Grundy, Grace McCombie, Peter Ryder and Humphrey Welfare, *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992); Niklaus Pevsner, *Durham*, revised by Elizabeth Williamson, *Buildings of England Series*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983).

<sup>4</sup> English Heritage, *Images of England*, online database.

employed, and many entries had photographs. As this research developed, characteristic features of Newton's work emerged, including the horizontal bands and astylar surfaces, to identify buildings that required further investigation.

This research was aided by the availability of many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century local histories and topographical works.<sup>5</sup> These were searched to identify eighteenth-century building and gather details on the client families. Hodgson's *History of Northumberland* and the volumes of the Northumberland County History and the *Victoria History of the County of Durham*, though incomplete in their coverage of the two counties, were also valuable sources and their genealogical information proved very important in establishing connections between Newton's clients.<sup>6</sup> Some eighteenth-century travellers also proved useful. The oft-quoted Celia Fiennes and Daniel Defoe give useful descriptions of the North East in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, picturing the world in which William Newton's formative experiences were gained, but were not so relevant to this research as they predated his career.<sup>7</sup> However, Jane Harvey's *Sentimental Tour Through Newcastle* (1794) provided an insight into Newton's world at the end of his life, and is a reminder of the high regard Newton enjoyed in his native town during his lifetime, which was apparent even to visitors.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Henry Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: J. White, 1736); John Brand, *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne*, (London, 1789); John Brand, *Observations on Popular Antiquities* (London, 1777); William Hutchinson, *A View of Northumberland, with an Excursion to the Abbey of Mailross in Scotland*, 2 vols. (Newcastle, 1776); Eneas Mackenzie, *An Historical, Topographical, and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland, and of Those Parts of the County of Durham Situated North of the River Tyne, with Berwick Upon Tweed, and Brief Notices of Celebrated Places on the Scottish Border*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 2 vols (Newcastle, 1825); Eneas Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Including the Borough of Gateshead* (Newcastle, 1827); Eneas Mackenzie, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*, 7 vols (Newcastle, 1834); James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham* (London, 1852); Robert Surtees, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (London, Durham, 1816-1840).

<sup>6</sup> John Hodgson, *A History of Northumberland, in Three Parts* (Newcastle, 1820-1858); *A History of Northumberland*, issued under the direction of the Northumberland County History Committee, 15 vols. (Newcastle, 1893-1940); *Victoria History of the County of Durham*, 4 vols (various publishers, 1905-2005).

<sup>7</sup> Celia Fiennes, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, edited and with an introduction by Christopher Morris, 2nd edn. (London: Gresset, 1949); Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, introduction by Pat Rogers, 3 vols. (London: Folio Society, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> Jane Harvey, *A Sentimental Tour Through Newcastle; By a Young Lady*. (Newcastle, 1794).

The county-focused work of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century local historians was complemented by studies of individual towns and villages in the twentieth century, these works providing more detailed information of families and their associations and crucially an increasing number of illustrations, particularly photographs, to recall buildings now lost. These included Richardson's *History of the Parish of Wallsend*, Dixon's *Glanton Village*, Tate's and Davison's histories of Alnwick and Hodgson's *History of Morpeth*.<sup>9</sup> Later historians also added to the list of Newton's buildings, including Lyall Wilkes in *Tyneside Classical*, *Lost Houses of Northumberland* by Faulkner and Lowery, *Lost Houses of Durham* by Meadows and Waterson, and Whittaker's *Old Halls and Manor Houses of Durham*.<sup>10</sup> Phoebe Lowery questioned Newton's claim to eminence, whilst Faulkner, McCombie and Lovie have drawn attention to Newton's work in their publications on Newcastle upon Tyne.<sup>11</sup> Articles in local and national journals, including *County Life*, *Architectural History*, *Northern Architect*, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne*, *Durham Archaeological Journal*, *Northumbrian* and *Tyne and Tweed* have investigated individual properties and these were read for any information on Newton and the eighteenth-century élite, as were guidebooks to individual properties.

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<sup>9</sup> William Richardson, *History of the Parish of Wallsend* (Newcastle, 1923); Wills Dixon, *Glanton Village: A Study in Village Settlement* (Berwick-upon-Tweed, 1978); George Tate, *The History of the Borough, Castle, and Barony of Alnwick* (Alnwick, 1865-1866); William Tate, *A Descriptive and Historical View of Alnwick, the County Town of Northumberland; and of Alnwick Castle, Alnwick Abbey, Hulne Abbey, the Borough of Alnwick, &c.* (Alnwick, 1822); John Hodgson, *A History of Morpeth*, with introduction by T. H. Rowland (Newcastle, 1832).

<sup>10</sup> Lyall Wilkes and Gordon Dodds, *Tyneside Classical: The Newcastle of Grainger, Dobson & Clayton* (London, 1964); Thomas E. Faulkner and Phoebe Lowery, *Lost Houses of Newcastle and Northumberland* (York: Jill Raines, 1996); Peter Meadows and Edward Waterson, *Lost Houses of County Durham* (York: Jill Raines, 1993); Neville Whittaker, *The Old Halls and Manor Houses of Durham* (Newcastle: Frank Graham, 1975).

<sup>11</sup> Phoebe Lowery, 'William Newton: an Eminent Architect?', *Northern Architect*, 5th ser., 1 (winter 1994-5), 15-17; Thomas E. Faulkner, Peter Beacock and Paul Jones, *Newcastle and Gateshead: Architecture and Heritage*, (Liverpool: Blue Coats Press, 2006); Grace McCombie, *Newcastle and Gateshead* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009); David Lovie, *The Buildings of Grainger Town: Four Townscape Walks Around Newcastle upon Tyne* (Newcastle: North East Environmental Education Forum, 1997).

The most comprehensive published details of Newton's work prior to this study are two articles by Margaret Wills, the first investigating Newton's work at Gibside, County Durham, the estate of the Bowes family, the second a biographical essay focusing on Newton's career as an architect.<sup>12</sup> Wills also wrote an article for *Country Life* magazine about the Newcastle Infirmary, concentrating upon the links between George Bowes of Gibside and the architect Daniel Garrett.<sup>13</sup> These articles are useful guides to some of Newton's work, but Wills did not discover the involvement of Robert and William Newton in building work before the Infirmary of 1751, and she did not recognise the significance of the links between William Newton and the Ord family of Fenham and Whitfield. This research demonstrated that the formative years from 1744 to 1760 were crucial in establishing his reputation and architectural styles, as well as his relevance to issues of social mobility and the development of the architectural profession in the region.

The strategy pursued in this research focussed upon the literary sources noted above to establish an overall picture of eighteenth-century élite, civic and ecclesiastical construction, then to locate primary material in regional and national archives and public, private and academic libraries which, it was hoped, would provide evidence of William Newton's involvement. As William Newton's personal and business papers were unavailable it was necessary to look for evidence in the records of those élite families, corporate bodies and civic and ecclesiastical authorities who commissioned building work during his lifetime. The Northumberland Record Office, Durham Record Office, Durham University Heritage Collections, Tyne and Wear Archives Service, the Local Studies Libraries at Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside, the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne Library, the

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<sup>12</sup> Margaret Wills, 'William Newton and Gibside', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 26 (1998), 105-114; Margaret Wills, 'William Newton: an Elusive Practitioner', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 36 (2007), 275-308.

<sup>13</sup> Margaret Wills, 'One of its Kind: the Newcastle Infirmary', *Country Life*, 10 October 1991, p. 124.

Literary & Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team reports contained invaluable material used in establishing the extent of William Newton's practice and the world of the eighteenth-century architect. Other material was located in the Royal Institute of British Architects' Library, the Freemasons' Library, and the Sir John Soane Museum. Several north-east families retain significant private archives, accumulated over centuries of adaptation and prosperity, including the duke of Northumberland's Archives at Alnwick Castle, the records of the Charltons of Hesleyside and collections of drawings of the Riddleys of Blagdon. These archives were also searched as part of this research. It soon became apparent that these documentary sources revealed not only building histories, but also information about the other major themes of this research, including patronage, taste, the frequency of stays in London for leisure and business, the availability of luxury consumables in the North East, and the family, social, economic and political networks that connected the region's élite and made Newton's career so successful.

Of critical importance in establishing William Newton's early building activities are the collections of the Ord, Allgood, Carr-Ellison, Grey of Backworth, Ridley, Grey of Howick, and Bowes families.<sup>14</sup> These papers provided evidence for Daniel Garrett's contacts with the north-east élite and the craftsmen employed to execute his designs from c1740 to 1757, including Robert and William Newton. These collections were consulted thoroughly, as each of these families employed Newton for over forty years, a record of service broken only with his death in 1798. The duke of Northumberland's Archive at Alnwick Castle yielded useful information, particularly the diaries of the first duchess (1716-76) and the albums of watercolour miniatures painted for her by William Beilby, John Bell and others. These albums give an unparalleled view of the sights

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<sup>14</sup> Northumberland Archives: Allgood (Nunwick) Collection; Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection; Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection; Grey (Backworth) Collection and Ridley (Blagdon) Collection; for the Greys of Howick: DULASC, GRE/X/P193, Lord Grey estate papers Box 135. William Newton's book of expenses for the new house at Howick, 1781-1788; for the Bowes family: Durham Record Office: Strathmore Estate and Family Records.

enjoyed by the leading arbiter of taste in the North East for much of Newton's lifetime. Her interest in the houses of élite families is reproduced in these images, so we can see buildings now lost, including Paine's additions to Ravensworth Castle in County Durham and the great medieval tower house at Howick, Northumberland, demolished in the creation of Newton's neo-Palladian mansion. Other pictures provided evidence to correct the published dates of houses such as Wallsend Hall, which has been described as early nineteenth century but is shown in a watercolour painting of 1774.<sup>15</sup>

Despite these very useful examples of family papers, many of the papers relating to Newton's known and possible clients among the north-east élite have been lost. The Bigge family of Benton were Newton's patrons in the late-eighteenth century, being related to the Ords of Fenham, the Greys of Backworth and the Burdons of Castle Eden, but all of their papers are lost, as are those of George Colpitts of Killingworth, who employed Newton at Killingworth Hall and was also a patron through his involvement in the restorations of Longbenton church and St. Nicholas church in Newcastle.

The north-east élite did not confine their architectural interests to their own country and town houses; as patrons and lay rectors they were instrumental in the rebuilding of parish churches. For example, Robert and William Newton's designs for altering Simonburn church are in the Allgood (Nunwick) papers, not with the faculty documents in Durham.<sup>16</sup> Henry Ellison's funding of the rebuilding of Jarrow and South Shields churches is documented in the Carr-Ellison papers in Northumberland Record Office, to complement the churchwardens' accounts and faculty documents in Durham.<sup>17</sup> Documents relating to the rebuilding of churches in Northumberland and Durham include church wardens' account books, vestry minutes, archdeacon visitation

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<sup>15</sup> Alnwick MSS, 1<sup>st</sup> duchess of Northumberland's Albums of Views 1774-1778.

<sup>16</sup> Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 ZAL Box 83.15, Mr Newton's estimate and plan for repairing Simonburn church 1763

<sup>17</sup> DULASC, Faculties book, p.213; DRO, EP/Ja.SP4/1, Jarrow churchwardens accounts 1768-1783 name Newton as the designer of the new nave; DULASC, DDR/EJ/FAC/3/131, includes unsigned plan of St Hilda's church, South Shields; DRO, EP/SH 5/7, South Shields St Hilda's churchwardens accounts names Newton as the designer of the alterations to the church.

reports and, as noted above, records in family papers. Perhaps the most useful sources for this research, however, were the faculties raised with the Bishop of Durham, seeking permission to modify churches. Many of these involve the erection of galleries, as parishes sought to accommodate the increasing population within the limits of medieval structures. This provides a counter-point to the perception given in many nineteenth century accounts of the eighteenth century as a period of ‘pagan’ classical obsession and religious sterility. Preambles in faculty documents often made clear that new structures were a reaction to over-crowding rather than wishful anticipation of new attendees. The concern of élite families to secure prominent positions for themselves and their servants is reflected in the renting and selling of pews.

Faculties provided extensive information on the state of parish churches in the North East, many of them medieval edifices reaching the end of their sustainable life or crumbling after decades of neglect. The visitation records of the Archdeacons of Northumberland and records of the Dean and Chapter in Durham provided confirmatory evidence. The struggles of parishioners to raise funds to amend the structural problems or to build anew were reflected in records of payment of the parish cess and the attendant arguments from those members of the élite anxious not to be saddled with the cost of rebuilding several churches at once. Historical anomalies were revealed, including the refusal of Balliol College, Oxford to pay for the rebuilding of their chancel at Longbenton church, in defiance of the parishioners’ plans to rebuild the nave to Newton’s designs.<sup>18</sup> Many faculties are very detailed, noting the reasons for building work, dimensions of new buildings, materials used, key individuals in the local gentry acting as sponsors, architects and builders consulted and a good number of faculties include plans and elevations. Given the destruction wrought by nineteenth-century architects who demolished medieval work that did not suit their own view of how

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<sup>18</sup> G.W.D. Briggs, ‘William Newton and Long Benton Church’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5<sup>th</sup> ser., XIII (1985), 217-220.

medieval buildings *should* have appeared, these faculties are often our last glimpse of pre-Reformation churches and the variety of schemes adopted in the period 1600-1800 to create suitable places of worship for a Protestant liturgy.

William Newton modified or designed several public buildings during his career, and records survive for a number of these. Perhaps those of greatest relevance to this research were the House Committee papers relating to the construction of the Newcastle Infirmary 1751-1753 and information relating to the Newcastle Assembly Rooms 1774-1776.<sup>19</sup> These two public works were key points in the career of William Newton. The Infirmary established William and his father Robert Newton as skilled craftsmen able to superintend major civic building operations. The Assembly Rooms established William Newton as the foremost designer of classical buildings in Northumberland and Durham and provided a flow of commissions that ceased only with his death in 1798.

The Infirmary records proved highly significant for a number of reasons. In establishing the role of Robert Newton as the Inspector, or clerk-of-works, executing and modifying Daniel Garrett's designs, the records posed the question 'why Robert Newton?' Wills, in her Infirmary article, answered the question 'why Daniel Garrett?' but did not investigate why the Building Committee sought tenders for all work from masonry to sash weights, but appointed Robert Newton apparently without competition.<sup>20</sup> This suggested to this author that Robert Newton was already known to the north-east élite as an experienced builder and could call upon sufficient patronage to exclude other builders. By examining the family papers of the gentlemen of the Building Committee Robert and William Newton's roles in the construction of Fenham Hall 1744 to 1748, Dunston Hill House 1748 to 1751 and Nunwick House 1750 to 1757

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<sup>19</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary Collection HO/RVI/2/1, Newcastle Infirmary collection: House committee minutes 1751-1753; TWAM, DT.OAR 160.58, Newcastle Old Assembly Rooms, Committee and Accounts 1779-1781; DT.OAR 160/1/82, Newcastle Old Assembly Rooms Bills and Receipts June 1781-June 1782.

<sup>20</sup> Wills, 'Newcastle Infirmary', p.124

were revealed. This in turn led to investigation of those houses constructed for gentry involved in the Infirmary construction, revealing William Newton's role in the construction of Blagdon Hall from c.1752 to 1757 and work for the Bowes family from 1758 to 1798.<sup>21</sup>

The Infirmary records also provided detailed information about the building process, names of craftsmen and elite merchants providing materials from bricks to bed linen. The elite desire to demonstrate their taste with this civic project was apparent from the involvement of Daniel Garrett, who provided designs conforming "to the rules of Architecture" and the lists of subscribers all wishing to be identified with the project.<sup>22</sup>

The records of the Northumberland Quarter Sessions provided details of Newton's involvement in the sporadic renovations of the Moot Hall of the Castle from 1760 until his death and his designs for the Houses of Correction at Morpeth and Tynemouth in the 1790s. The names and connections of the Justices of the Peace who commissioned these public works provided further information on the network of patronage William Newton had cultivated. The Corporation of Newcastle's archives provided more evidence of patronage leading to Newton's authorship of the Lunatic Asylum in Newcastle and work upon the Guildhall.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> For Fenham Hall see Northumberland Archives, Whitfield Blackett-Ord Collection, 324/E/27, Fenham estate work book 1742-1747; 324/E/12 Fenham Journal No.1 1745-1755. For Dunston Hill House see Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection, ZCE/12/5 Cash book 1749-1753. For Nunwick House see Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 (ZAL) Box 46.1 Journal 1745-1746; Box 46.2 Journal 1746-7; Box 46.5 Journal 1748-9; Box 46.6 Journal 1750-2; Box 47.1 Journal 1759-69; Box 48.2 Cash account 1779-1807; Box 89.17 'Plan of proposed stables for Mr Allgood' may be Garrett's design. For Blagdon Hall see Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/3 cash book 1753-61; Drawings at Blagdon Hall showing Garrett's design for south front and two designs for adapting the earlier east front; Richard Pears, 'The Architectural Development of Blagdon Hall, Northumberland', *Architectural History*, 53 (2010), 77-98; For the Bowes family commissions see DRO, D/St/E5/5/9 and D/St/E5/5/10 Bowes cash books 1759-61; DRO, D/St/C1/3/31 Letter of 1 Dec 1759; DRO, D/St/E5/5/44 Cash book 1802.

<sup>22</sup> TWAM, Royal Victoria Infirmary collection House Committee Minutes 1751 to 1753.

<sup>23</sup> For Newton's work at the Moot Hall in Newcastle see Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book number QSO 9, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p.400; Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book number QSO 10, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Christmas 1764-Easter 1772, p.146, p.326 and p.554; Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book number QSO 11, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Midsummer 1772 -

These documentary sources provided vital information to establish Newton's career, but to understand Newton's career as an architect and appraise stylistic sources he employed it was essential to study his designs. Unfortunately, few examples of Newton's own drawings survive. Some are in private hands, including the beautiful folio of designs for Dissington Hall fittingly kept there by Mr Michael Brown. Given that much of Newton's work involved country houses the Dissington folio is regrettably the only surviving complete set of such designs. The designs for the interior of Ewart Park complement the Dissington folio for examples of Newton's colour schemes.<sup>24</sup> His drawings of estate buildings at Wallington are available at the Northumberland Record Office, as are his drawings of the proposed school-house at Capheaton, derived from the Tower of the Winds at Athens.<sup>25</sup> Newton's sketch plan 'without closets' of Backworth Hall in Northumberland survives alongside his estimates for the new house.<sup>26</sup> The plan of Ralph Carr's house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, one of Newton's most prestigious developments, shows how a gentry town house had to be crammed into a narrow triangular site adjacent to the medieval town walls.<sup>27</sup> Some of Newton's drawings for public buildings survive, including those for the Lunatic Asylum and the north front of the Guildhall in Newcastle.<sup>28</sup> There is a slightly better picture with his churches, as some of the designs, including those for Longbenton, have been kept with the faculty documents from the Bishop of Durham's records at Durham University

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Midsummer 1779, p.150. For his work at the Houses of Correction at Tynemouth and Morpeth see Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book number QSO 13, Northumberland Quarter Sessions pp.344-418 and pp.461-528. For the Newcastle Lunatic Hospital see TWAM, 589/14, Calendar of the Common Council Minute Book 1743-1766, and for the designs for the Guildhall see TWAS Newcastle Council Plans Collection D.NCP/16/2, D.NCP/16/1/3 and TWAM, 589/16, Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-1799 ,f.279.

<sup>24</sup> Northumberland Archives, Butler-St.Paul Collection, ZBU B5/6/5-6, Album no.1, designs for drawing room.

<sup>25</sup> Northumberland Archives, Wallington Collection, ZWN/I/74, Designs for estate buildings at Wallington; Northumberland Archives, Swinburne (Capheaton) Collection, Drawings for the house and estate buildings are in ZSW 661.

<sup>26</sup> Northumberland Archives, Grey of Backworth Collection, 753 Box 1 bundle K, Papers concerning Backworth House 1778; St Paul Butler (Ewart) Collection, 229 ZBU B5/7/76-77

<sup>27</sup> Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection, ZCE 8/22, Lease and plan of a house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, 1777; Northumberland Archives, Blackett (Matfen) Collection, ZBL/269/69, Sketch of a ground plan of an Hospital for Lunaticks.

<sup>28</sup> TWAM, D.NCP/16/1/2-8 Exchange and Town Clerk's Offices, plans and elevations 1794.

Library Archives and Special Collections, the Northumberland record Office and Durham Record Office. Unfortunately his drawings for St. Ann's Chapel, the first classical temple-style church in Newcastle were lost. These would have recalled what eighteenth-century Protestants really wanted their churches to look like.

With so few of Newton's own designs surviving, it was necessary to locate plans by later architects seeking to alter his buildings for new purposes or install conveniences such as hot water and gas. These include the unexecuted proposals for Hebburn Hall in County Durham to expand its facilities as an infirmary in the 1930s which would have obliterated the fine Venetian doorway.<sup>29</sup> Plans from the 1940s show details of Hesleyside, Dissington and Charlton Halls in Northumberland.<sup>30</sup> Nineteenth-century plans of Whitfield Hall show the house before the two serious fires and nineteenth-century additions, as well as illustrating the rather strange relationship between the house and the service court linked only by an umbilical corridor.<sup>31</sup> A plan and elevation of 1785 show Kielder Castle in Northumberland with the now-demolished full height canted bay and an overall symmetrical Gothic appearance.<sup>32</sup> Modern and early twentieth century plans of The Castle, Castle Eden can be compared with the sketched floor plan in one of Sir John Soane's notebooks to imagine the now-lost imperial staircase as part of a three-storey columned and dome-lit atrium.<sup>33</sup>

With no collection of William Newton's own records surviving, some of the most important sources for analysing his work are surviving buildings. The list of élite

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<sup>29</sup> TWAM, Ellison Hall Infirmary, Hebburn HO.EH/2/1-6. Plans, 1937-1938.

<sup>30</sup> Northumberland Archives, Northumberland County Council Drawings Collection, 535.

<sup>31</sup> Northumberland Archives, Blakett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection: 324/H/8/1 Architectural plans and sketches of houses.

<sup>32</sup> Alnwick MSS, MS 746 *Kielder Castle Game Book*. The building accounts, plan and elevation are reproduced in Brian Long, *Kielder Castle* (Kielder: Long Pack Craft Centre). William Beilby's view of the Castle is reproduced in William Watts, *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in a Collection of the Most Interesting and Picturesque Views*. (London, 1779), plate LVIII.

<sup>33</sup> DRO: Castle Eden Deposit: D/CE 214 Plans of alterations to The Castle, Castle Eden by H.T. Gradon of Durham and Hicks and Charlewood of Newcastle, 1896; Sir John Soane Museum. Volume 80 *Downhill Notebook*, 27 July to 2 September, plan of Castle Eden facing page 20. The Soane sketch is reproduced in Richard Pears, 'Two Castles by William Newton', *Georgian Group Journal*, 16 (2008), 132-140.

buildings erected in the North East during Newton's lifetime compiled during this research included buildings with little or no documentary evidence, but which can be dated on stylistic evidence to the second half of the eighteenth century. These buildings are a treasury of information in themselves and a reminder that even when documentary evidence is missing, material culture, in the form of buildings, has much to tell the historian and provide clues to designers. Chapters 7 and 8 demonstrated the conformity to common designs in Newton's work and reliance upon Palladio, as well as the astylar façades and horizontal bands. When taken with other evidence, including the original owners and their connections within eighteenth-century society, similarities in appearance and decoration between one building and another can point to the most likely designer.

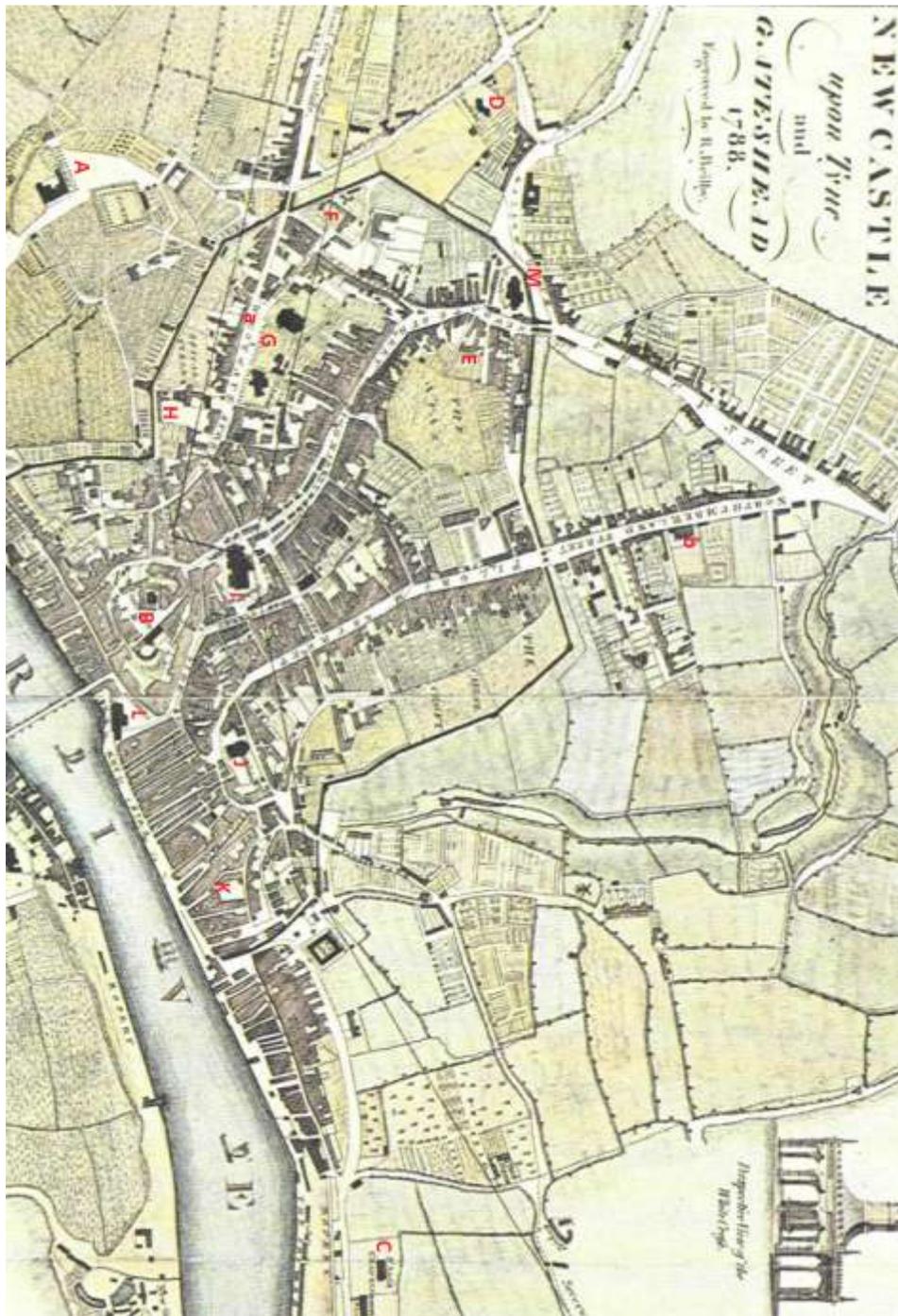
## APPENDIX 2. ROBERT AND WILLIAM NEWTON CATALOGUE OF WORKS

### A. MAP OF WILLIAM NEWTON'S WORKS IN NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

**KEY:**

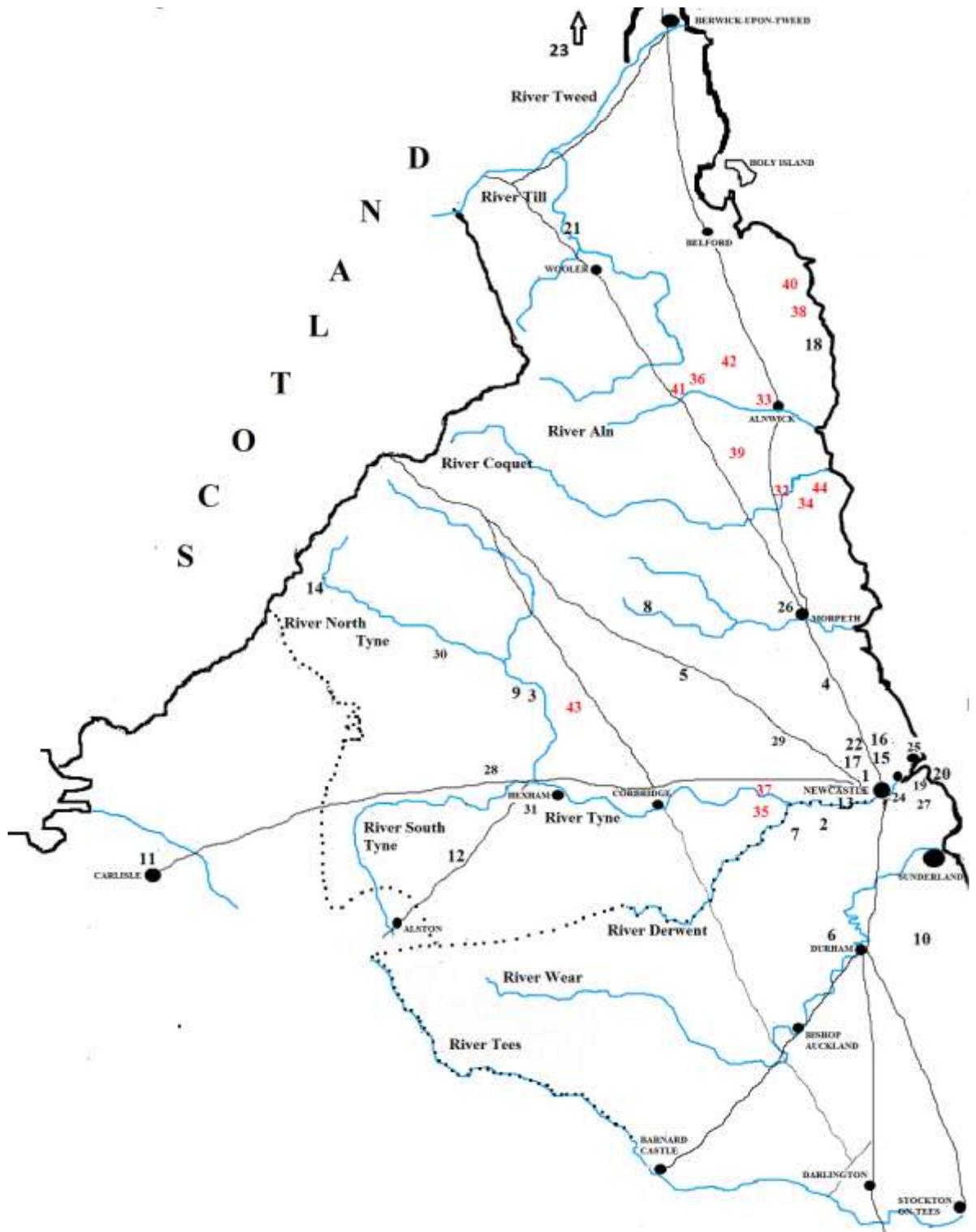
A – Newcastle Infirmary, B – Moot Hall, C – St. Anne's Chapel, D – Lunatick Hospital, E – Green Court, F – Charlotte Square, G – Assembly Rooms, H – Royal Free Grammar School, I – St. Nicholas's Church, J – All Saints Church (estimates and assessment), K – Trinity House, L – Guildhall.

Possibilities: a – 55-57 Westgate Road, b – Singleton House.



Map source: R. Beilby's Map of Newcastle and Gateshead. Reproduced with kind permission of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne.

**B. MAP OF WILLIAM NEWTON'S WORKS OUTSIDE NEWCASTLE**



**KEY:**

Numbers relate to C. Documented Buildings by William Newton (below). Black numbers are documented work, red numbers are attributed buildings.

### C. DOCUMENTED BUILDINGS BY WILLIAM NEWTON

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
August 1743 to October 1747	<b>Fenham Hall</b> for William Ord I	1	Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection: 324/E/27 Fenham estate work book 1742-1747; Northumberland Archives, Blackett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection: 324/E/12 Fenham Journal No.1 1745-1755.
April to July 1750	<b>Dunston Hill House</b> for Ralph Carr	2	Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison (Hedgeley) Collection: ZCE/12/5 Cash book 1749-1753
1750 to 1765	<b>Nunwick Hall</b> , for Lancelot Allgood	3	Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection: 43 (ZAL) Box 46.1 Journal 1745-1746, Box 46.2 Journal 1746-1747, Box 46.5 Journal 1748-9, Box 46.6 Journal 1750-1752, Box 47.1 Journal 1759-1769, Box 48.2 Cash account 1779-1807, Box 89.17 Plan of proposed stables for Mr Allgood may be Garrett's design.
July 1751 to March 1753	<b>Newcastle Infirmary</b> , for Subscribers	A	TWAM, HO/RVI/2/1 Newcastle Infirmary collection: House committee minutes 1751-1753; DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/C2/3/20 (2), Letter from William Newton to William Leaton, 27 March 1753.
March 1753 to November 1756	<b>Blagdon Hall</b> , new south range for Matthew White	4	Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) collection ZRI 47/3 cash book 1753-1761; Drawings at Blagdon Hall.
1754 to 1758	<b>Capheaton Hall</b> , east and west wings and internal decoration for Sir John Swinburne	5	Northumberland Archives, Swinburne (Capheaton) collection: ZSW 451/1-3, Accounts of Capheaton building work 1754-8.
1757 to 1759	<b>Dunston Hill House</b> , new east range for Ralph Carr	2	Northumberland Archives, ZCE 12/7, Cash book 1757-86.
1758 to 1761	<b>Old Elvet House (now part of Royal County Hotel) and 5 South Bailey, Durham</b> , internal alterations for Elizabeth Bowes	6	DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/E5/5/9 and D/St/E5/5/10 Bowes cash books 1759-1761.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1 December 1759	<b>Gibside Estate: Little House</b> for George Bowes	7	DRO, Strathmore Collection, D/St/C1/3/31 Letter of 1 Dec 1759.
1760	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle</b> , internal decoration for Justices of the Peace	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 9 Northumberland QS Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p. 380.
1760	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle</b> , internal decoration for Justices of the Peace	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 9 Northumberland QS Michaelmas 1753-Michaelmas 1763, p. 400.
c.1760 to 1769	<b>Wallington Hall</b> , designs for lodges, lakeside buildings and new dressing rooms in Hall for Sir Walter Blackett	8	Northumberland Archives, ZWN/I/74 <i>Designs for estate buildings at Wallington</i> ; NRO 672/E/1A/4 cash book 1747-1761 P. Leach, <i>James Paine</i> , p. 232; Images of England website
1762 to 1763	<b>Simonburn Church</b> , rebuilding of aisles and internal decoration for Henry Wastell, vicar, and Lancelot Allgood, patron	9	Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection, 43 ZAL Box 83.15 Mr Newton's estimate and plan for repairing Simonburn church 1763; Guide book to church.
1764	<b>Castle Eden Church</b> , rebuilt for Rowland Burdon I	10	DRO, EP/CE1, Note on the rebuilding of Castle Eden church by Rev. John Todd; Pevsner, <i>Durham</i> , p.122; Macauley, <i>Gothic Revival</i> , p.276; McKenzie & Ross, <i>History of Durham</i> , p. 403.
After 1764	<b>The Castle, Castle Eden</b> , unexecuted designs, formerly at Sotherans of Piccadilly for Rowland Burdon I	10	Book of designs attributed to William Newton, formerly at Sotherans of Piccadilly, photographed courtesy of Mr Jonathan Clark.
1764	<b>Carlisle Cathedral</b> , arbitrator in refurbishment of choir, for Dean and Chapter	11	Cumbria Record Office: Dean & Chapter papers: 1751-1792, p.115, 116, 131; D.W.V. Weston, <i>Carlisle Cathedral History</i> (Carlisle: Bookcase Ltd, 2000); Bernard Nurse, 'Lyttelton, Charles (1714-1768)', <i>ODNB</i> , online edition.
1764 to 1767	<b>St Ann's Chapel, Newcastle</b> , for Corporation of Newcastle	C	Pevsner, <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 427.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1765	<b>Lunatic Hospital, Warden's Close Newcastle</b> , for Corporation of Newcastle	D	Northumberland Archives, ZBL/269/69, Sketch of a ground plan of an Hospital for Lunaticks; McKenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 525.
1765	<b>Green Court, Newcastle</b>	E	TWAM, G.TAX2/4/1-185, St Andrews Parish land tax records 1765.
1765 to 1768	<b>Estimates and payments for rebuilding Whitfield church, parsonage and bridge</b> for William Ord I	12	Northumberland Archives, Blckett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, 324/W2/15, Whitfield estate papers 1745-1767 Northumberland Archives, 324/E16, Ledger 1759-1768;  John Hodgson, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , vol. 4 (1840), p. 107;  Illustration in Frank Graham, <i>Old Halls and Manor Houses of Northumberland</i>
1765 to 1767	<b>Benwell estate: Designs and work for estate, including farmhouse, gateway, lodge and walls</b> for William Ord I	13	Northumberland Archives, Blckett-Ord (Whitfield) collection, 324/E/14, Fenham journal 1761-1768.
1766	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle</b> , internal decoration for Justices of the Peace	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 10 Northumberland QS Christmas 1764-Easter 1772, p.146.
1769	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle for Justices of the Peace</b> , internal decoration for Justices of the Peace	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 10 Northumberland QS Christmas 1764-Easter 1772, p.326.
1769 to 1771	<b>Charlotte Square</b> , for himself and tenants on land leased from Corporation of Newcastle	F	TWAM, <i>Calendar of the Newcastle Common Council Book 1766-85</i> ; Deeds in Northumberland Archives, 660/1/3-4; Newcastle City Council Design and Construction Services, <i>1 Charlotte Square Newcastle upon Tyne Condition Survey Report</i> (Nov 2004) gives floor plans of house.
1773 * (1800-5, Pevsner)	<b>Fenham Hall</b> , new north façade, for William Ord II	1	Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , p. 410; Blckett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, E22 Fenham Journal 1769-1773.
1771	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle</b> , internal decoration for Justices of the Peace	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 10 Northumberland QS Christmas 1764-Easter 1772, p.554.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1771 to 1775	<b>Kielder Castle for Hugh, 1st Duke of Northumberland</b>	14	Alnwick Castle MSS: MS 746 Kielder Castle Game Book. The building accounts, plan and elevation are reproduced in B. Long, <i>Kielder Castle</i> (Kielder: Long Pack Craft Centre, no date). Beilby's view is reproduced in W. Watts, <i>The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in a Collection of the Most Interesting and Picturesque Views</i> (London, 1779), plate LVIII.
1772	<b>Gibside Estate: Green house for Mary Eleanor Bowes</b>	7	M. Wills, 'William Newton and Gibside' <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i> , 5 <sup>th</sup> Series, XXVI, 105-114.
1773 to 1776	<b>Assembly Rooms, Newcastle, for Proprietors</b>	G	<i>The Proprietors of the New Assembly Rooms June 1776</i> , Newcastle Public Library Local Studies Collection L942.825; Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 231; TWAM, 160/1/217-219, Plans of Assembly Rooms.
1774	<b>Moot Hall, Castle Garth Newcastle, internal renovations for Justices of the Peace</b>	B	Northumberland Archives, QSO 11 Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book Midsummer 1772 - Midsummer 1779, p.150.
c1770s, before October 1780	<b>The Castle, Castle Eden for Rowland Burdon I</b>	10	Rainwater head dated 1777. Sir John Soane Museum and Library (London), Volume 80 <i>Downhill Notebook</i> , 27 July to 2 September 1780, facing page 20  DRO, Castle Eden Collection, D/CE 214 Plans of alterations to The Castle, Castle Eden by H.T. Gradon of Durham and Hicks and Charlewood of Newcastle, 1896;  P. Lowery, 'William Newton: an eminent architect?', <i>Northern Architect</i> , 5th ser., 1 (winter 1994-5), 15-17.
1777	<b>8 Charlotte Square, Newcastle, house for Ralph Carr of Dunston Hill.</b>	F	Northumberland Archives, ZCE 8/22, Lease and plan of a house in Charlotte Square, Newcastle, 1777.
Before 1778	<b>Killingworth House alterations for George Colpitts</b>	15	Newton quoted carpentry details in Backworth estimates; Faulkner and Lowery, <i>Lost Houses of Northumberland and Newcastle</i> , p. 53.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1778-80	<b>Backworth Hall</b> for Ralph William Grey I and Ralph William Grey II	16	Northumberland Archives, 753 Grey of Backworth papers, Box 1 bundle K, Papers concerning Backworth House 1778; St Paul Butler (Ewart) Collection, 229 ZBU B5/7/76-77; Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , p. 415; P. Lowery, 'William Newton: an eminent architect?', <i>Northern Architect</i> , 5th ser., 1 (Winter 1994-5), 15-17.
1779	<b>Heaton Hall, new front, and Temple for Matthew White Ridley (Assembly Rooms Committee)</b>	17	Northumberland Archives, Ridley (Blagdon) Collection, ZRI 47/5 cash book 1777-95; Faulkner and Lowery, <i>Lost Houses of Northumberland and Newcastle</i> , p. 21.
1781-8	<b>Howick Hall for Sir Henry Grey</b>	18	DULASC, Earl Grey estate and legal papers Box 181: Howick Hall: plan of proposed dome 1838 and plans and elevations of the house; DULASC: Earl Grey estate and legal papers Box 193: Howick Hall: William Newton's Book of Expenses for New House at Howick; <i>Northumberland County History</i> , p. 337; <i>The Times</i> (1 Feb 1927), pg. vi; RIBA Library photographs. 20248-20248/13. Howick Hall, Northumberland, rebuilt (1928) by Sir Herbert Baker and A. T. Scott. 15 photoprints: b&w; 15 x 20 cm. or smaller.
1782	<b>Royal Free Grammar School, Newcastle</b> , alterations including battlemented porch	H	Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 443.
1782	<b>Charlotte Square</b> , alterations to house of Henry Ellison	F	Northumberland Archives, Carr-Ellison MSS ZCE 12/12, Cash book 1775-86.
1782	<b>Jarrow church</b> , rebuilding of possibly Anglo-Saxon nave.	19	DULASC, Faculties book, p. 213; DRO, EP/Ja.SP4/1, Jarrow churchwardens' accounts 1768-83 name Newton as designer.
1783	<b>Nunwick Hall</b> alterations for James Allgood	3	Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection: 43 (ZAL) Box 48.2, cash account 1779-1807.
1783-7	<b>St Nicholas Church Newcastle</b> , alterations for clergy and subscribers	I	Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 243.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1784	<b>St Hilda's church, South Shields,</b> Widening nave and aisles for Rev Richard Wallis, curate	20	DULASC, DDR/EJ/FAC/3/131, includes unsigned plan; DRO, EP/SH 5/7, South Shields St Hilda's Parish Scrapbook.
1785-89	<b>Whitfield Hall,</b> rebuilding of house for William Ord II	12	1785 estimate for Whitfield Hall in Northumberland Archives, Blckett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, E24/W/2/5 amounting to £1679-3-0. Multiple payments to Newton in Blckett-Ord (Whitfield) Collection, E24 Cash Book 1785-1789; Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , p. 323; Hodgson, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , vol. 4, 1840, p.105
1785	<b>All Saints' Church Newcastle,</b> estimates for repairs to medieval church	J	T. Sopwith, <i>A Historical and Descriptive Account of All Saints' Church in Newcastle upon Tyne</i> (Newcastle, 1826); Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 292; <i>All Saints Church</i> guide book; Design of All Saints discussed in T. Friedman, <i>The Georgian Parish Church: Monuments to Posterity</i> (Spire Books Ltd, 2004).
1788-91	<b>Capheaton Hall,</b> new north front and internal alterations for Sir John Edward Swinburne	5	Northumberland Archives, Swinburne of Capheaton collection, ZSW 453/1-4, 452/8/1-7, 452/5-6. Drawings in ZSW 661.
1787-92	<b>Ewart Park, near Berwick,</b> internal decoration for Count Horace St. Paul	21	Northumberland Archives, Butler-St.Paul MSS ZBU B5/6/5-6, Album no.1, designs for drawing room. Newton's advice on slates, probably 1786, date of letter from Paine in ZBU B5/8/83 Album no.3. Plan of Ewart Park House in 1847 in B5/5/90.
1790	<b>Longbenton Church</b> for vicar and churchwardens (including TC Bigge and George Colpitts), new nave and tower	22	G.W.D Briggs 'William Newton and Long Benton Church' <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i> , 5th series, XIII (1985), 217; Church guide book 1985; Northumberland Archives, 1875 A.88 Diocese of Newcastle faculties box 2: Longbenton 1790
1790-2	<b>Gosford House, Longniddry, Scotland:</b> stables and domestic offices for Earl of Wemyss and March	23	Incorrect listing at <a href="http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/sc-6547-gosford-stables-aberlady">http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/sc-6547-gosford-stables-aberlady</a> , website at <a href="http://www.gosfordhouse.co.uk/">http://www.gosfordhouse.co.uk/</a> ; photos at <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/architec/215317828/lightbox/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/architec/215317828/lightbox/</a>

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1790-3	<b>Hebburn Hall for Henry Ellison (died 1795)</b>	24	Northumberland Archives, ZCE 19/1 Carr Ellison Collection Cash Book 1789-93; TWAM, Ellison Hall Infirmary, Hebburn HO.EH/2/1-6 Plans, 1937 – 1938. Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Durham</i> p. 15; W. Fordyce, <i>The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham</i> (London, 1857). F.R. Wilson, 'Discoveries at Hebburn Hall', <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle Upon Tyne</i> , vol. II, no. 25 (1886), p.249.
1791	<b>Trinity House, Newcastle, alterations to Passage between Green Room and Hall, and alterations to the Election Room, for Master and Brethren</b>	K	Grace McCombie, 'The Buildings of Trinity House, Newcastle Upon Tyne'. <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i> , 5th series., XIII (1985), 163-85.
May 1791	<b>Tynemouth House of Correction for Northumberland Assizes</b>	25	Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book 13 Northumberland Quarter Sessions, pp.344-418. Advert by John Davidson, Clerk of the Peace for Northumberland in <i>Newcastle Courant</i> May 1791 for builders
1793	<b>Morpeth House of Correction for Northumberland Assizes</b>	26	Northumberland Archives, Northumberland Quarter Sessions Order Book 13 Northumberland Quarter Sessions, pp.461-528.
1794	<b>Westoe houses, Speculative building with David Stephenson</b>	27	<i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 26 July 1794
1794	<b>Newbrough chapel for James Allgood of Nunwick Hall</b>	28	Northumberland Archives, A.103 Diocese of Newcastle faculties box 2: Newbrough, Bundle 4 Plan of new church of 1864 has outline of the old church; Northumberland Archives, Allgood (Nunwick) Collection 43 (ZAL) Box 40.16 Correspondence re rebuilding of Newbrough chancel.
1794	<b>Guildhall, Newcastle upon Tyne, new north front and alterations for Corporation of Newcastle</b>	L	TWAM, D.NCP/16/2 TWAM, D.NCP/16/1/3 TWAM, 589/16 Calendar of Common Council Book of Newcastle 1785-1799, f.279. Mackenzie & Ross, <i>History of Newcastle</i> , p. 215.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>POSITION ON MAPS</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
1794-1797	<b>Dissington Hall</b> for Edward Charlton	29	Folio of designs at Dissington Hall; Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 253.
1794-1798	<b>Hesleyside Hall</b> , new east range for William Charlton	30	Giles Worsley, 'Hesleyside Hall, Northumberland', <i>Country Life</i> , 18 May 1989, pp. 219-224.
1797	<b>Hexham - Abbey House</b> , internal alterations for Colonel Thomas Wentworth Beaumont-Blackett	31	Northumberland Archives, ZBL 226
29 April 1798	Death of William Newton "of complication" Buried in St Andrew's 2 May 1798	M	St Andrew's parish register; .C. Hodgson, 'Two Eighteenth-Century Newcastle Worthies, Samuel Hallowell, surgeon, and William Newton, architect', <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> Series 6 (1913-1914), 29.
12 Oct 1801	<b>Backworth Hall</b> , unspecified work at Backworth Hall amounting to £3-1-0 <b>for Ralph William Grey II</b>	16	Northumberland Archives, 753 Grey of Backworth papers: Box 1 bundle K Papers concerning Backworth House
22 Nov 1802	<b>Gibside Estate for Bowes family</b> , possibly for the lodges at the Snipes Dene entrance to the Gibside estate	7	DRO, D/St/E5/5/44 Cash book 1802

D. **BUILDINGS PREVIOUSLY ATTRIBUTED TO WILLIAM NEWTON**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b>	<b><u>POSITION ON MAPS</u></b>	<b><u>REFERENCES</u></b>
c1781	<b>Acton House</b> , for Robert Lisle	32	Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 124.
late C18th	<b>Alnwick, 1 Clayport</b> , for Farquhar, Dawson or Drysdale	33	J.C. Hodgson, 'Two Eighteenth-Century Newcastle Worthies, Samuel Hallowell, surgeon, and William Newton, architect', <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ser. 6 (1913-1914), 29.
1798-9	<b>Bank House, Acklington</b> , for John Tate	34	Similar to Heworth Hall, Togston Hall and Benton Conservative Club. Faulkner <i>Lost Houses of Northumberland</i> p34
c.1750-1760	<b>Bradley Hall</b> , near Ryton, for John Simpson	35	Said to be by Paine, but Leach thinks by WN. Eleanor, daughter of John Simpson, married 3 October 1762 John Ord, William Ord's cousin. Pevsner, <i>Durham</i> , p.113. Peter Leach, <i>James Paine</i> , p. 232.
c1780 definitely built by 18 June 1793	<b>Broome Park</b> , for Bryan Burrell	36	Faulkner and Lowery, <i>Lost Houses of Northumberland</i> , p. 38; Northumberland Archives, Butler-St.Paul Collection, ZBU B5/8/74 Album no.3 Letter from Mr Burrell of Broome Park to Horace St Paul 18 June 1793.
1779	<b>Close House</b> , for Calverly Bewicke	37	Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 311. Cadwallader J. Bates, 'Heddon-on-the-Wall: The Church and Parish', <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i> , New Series XI (1886), 258.
1769	<b>Craster Tower</b> , classical range for George Craster	38	Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 248
late C18th	<b>Lemmington Hall</b> , for Nicholas Fenwick	39	J.C. Hodgson, 'Two Eighteenth-Century Newcastle Worthies, Samuel Hallowell, surgeon, and William Newton, architect', <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ser. 6 (1913-1914), 29; Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 374.
late C18th	<b>Newton Hall</b> , Newton-by-the-Sea, for Dr Joseph Forster	40	Similar to Togston Hall, Heworth Hall. Pevsner, <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 520.
1779	<b>Shawdon Hall</b> , for William Hargrave	41	Christopher Hussey, 'Shawdon Hall, Northumberland', <i>Country Life</i> , 5 March 1959, pp. 460-463.
Late C18th	<b>South Charlton Hall</b> , for Robert Cay, member of Newcastle Infirmary Building Committee	42	'In a style favoured by William Newton', Grundy <i>et al.</i> <i>Northumberland</i> , p.574.
C1770	<b>Swinburne Castle</b> , canted bay wings and orangery for Thomas Riddell II	43	John Martin Robinson, 'Swinburne Castle, Northumberland', <i>Country Life</i> 27 Feb 2003, pp. 72-77. Mid-eighteenth century house (c.1760) was identical to Nunwick Hall.
late C18th	<b>Togston Hall</b> , for William Smith	44	Very similar to Heworth Hall. Northumberland County History Committee, <i>History of Northumberland</i> , vol. V, p. 340; Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 532.

## E. POSSIBLE BUILDINGS BY WILLIAM NEWTON

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
	<b>Benton Hall</b> (now Benton Conservative Club) for Thomas Charles Bigge (1739-1794)	Bigge married Jemima, daughter of William Ord I of Fenham 6/11/1772. Brother in law to William Ord II (Fenham, Whitfield) RW Grey (Backworth), Rowland Burdon II (Castle Eden). JP for Houses of Correction at Morpeth and Tynemouth, churchwarden at Longbenton Very similar to North Togston Hall, Bank House and Heworth Hall. Richardson, <i>History of Wallsend</i> , p. 58.
	<b>Benton North House</b>	South facing façade with Newton features (central pedimented doorway, sill bands) lower two storey wings on each side. Similar to Cramlington Hall.
	<b>Benwell Hall.</b> William Surtees, son of Aubone Surtees of Newcastle.	Newton features. Faulkner and Lowery, <i>Lost houses of Northumberland and Newcastle</i> , pp. 12-13.
Before 1784	<b>Bishopwearmouth Grange</b> , for John Maling	Very large mansion, similar to Backworth. Centre block of 5 bays with centre 3 bays projecting beneath pediment. Pedimented single bay wings. Appears in 1784 painting in Sunderland Winter Gardens and Art Gallery.
	<b>Cramlington Hall</b> , for William Cramlington, Mayor of Newcastle, with Newton co-founder of Lit & Phil	Mid-18 <sup>th</sup> century house, Newton-style features include 3 sill bands, central south facing door, lower 2 storey wings. Similar to Benton North House. Grundy <i>et al.</i> , Northumberland.
1789	East Ord, <b>Ord House</b> , for William Grieve	Early 18 <sup>th</sup> century house for the Orde family, new facade and front rooms added 1789 for William Grieve. Very similar to Backworth, etc. Now club house for caravan park. Images of England database.
1748, extended 1767	<b>Etal manor</b>	L-plan house with angle quoins and sill band. Also has Venetian style door similar to that at Lemmington and North Charlton. Images of England database
c1790	<b>Hauxley Hall</b> , for John Widdrington	Classical front and Gothick bow windows. Grundy <i>et al.</i> , <i>Northumberland</i> , p. 334.
	<b>Heworth Hall</b> , for John Russell	New north front added to early 18 <sup>th</sup> century house. Very similar to North Togston Hall and Benton house (now Conservative Club)
1770	<b>Hamsterley Hall</b> , for Henry Swinburne (brother of Sir John Swinburne of Capheaton)	Pevsner, <i>Durham</i> , p. 299.
1784	<b>High Buston Hall</b>	Wide five bay façade added to earlier structure, sill bands to ground and first floors, columned and pedimented doorcase.
c.1770	<b>Horncliffe House</b> , for William Alder	Palladian mansion, 3 storey, 2:3:2 with wings. Images of England website. DRO: Q/R/HD/Q/2 is request on 30 April 1770 to divert road, showing Alder resident at this date – forming estate?

<b>DATE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>
1785	<b>Jarrow Hall</b> , for Simon Temple	Images of England website. Brick building with horizontal bands and bow window.
c.1790	<b>Lintzford House</b> , for James Bell, merchant of Newcastle, or John Annandale paper mill company	Pevsner, <i>Durham</i> , p. 355; Jean Stirk, <i>The Lost Mills: A History of Papermaking in County Durham</i> (Sunderland: Sunderland University Press, 2006), pp. 24-27.
c. 1790	<b>Lorbottle Hall</b> , for Adam Atkinson	5 bays, central venetian door in arched recess, sill bands.
c.1750s <b>a</b> on Map A	<b>Newcastle, 55-57 Westgate Road</b> , remodelled interior and new façade, possibly for Christopher Fawcett	A neo-Palladian stone front, with Doric pilasters, was added to an earlier group of buildings in the 1750s. The interior was remodelled with ornate plasterwork. This may have been done by Robert and William Newton and other craftsmen from Newcastle Infirmary. Christopher Fawcett was Recorder of Newcastle, 1746-53 and 1769-94, a member of the Infirmary building committee 1751-53.
<b>b</b> on Map A	<b>Newcastle, Singleton House</b> , Northumberland Street	Similar to Heworth, etc. Illustrated in <i>The Monthly Chronicle of North-Country Lore and Legend</i> , vol. 3 (Newcastle, 1889), p. 158; John Charleton, <i>Newcastle Town: An Account of Its Progress, Its Struggles and Triumphs and Its Ending</i> (London, 1885), p. 363.
	<b>Newcastle, St Anthony's</b> , house for Sir Henry Ibbetson	Northumberland Archives, SANT/PLA/3/1/2/3-4 show Plan of Sir Henry Ibbetson's mansion at St Anthony's surveyed by John Dodds, 1781. The elevation shows a two and a half storey red brick house with slate roof, stone cill and floor bands and sash windows with wedge-edged lintels. The central door had a pediment and columns. On the east side was a stone fronted canted bay window. This elevation was similar to that of the slightly larger Wallsend Hall, whilst the stone-fronted canted bay window recalls the same feature on the north side of Wallsend Hall.
1772	<b>Newton Hall, Newton on the Moor</b> , for Samuel Cook 1725-96	Samuel Cook was step-brother of Thomas Smith of Togston Hall.
late 18thC	<b>Pallinsburn, for Dr Askew</b>	3 storey 3 bay centre block with canted centre bay, linked by single storey bays to slightly higher pavilions with Venetian windows, hall has screen of Tuscan columns with acanthus necking. Apple store west of house and joiners shop east of house have blank Venetian window with round window above, cf tithe barn in Whickham, also an Askew property. Redheugh Hall had Venetian windows in end bays.
	<b>Sanson Seal</b> , near Berwick, for Burnet Roger Grieve (1725-1812), a brewer and ship-owner of Berwick-upon-Tweed and Newcastle Assembly Rooms subscriber.	Similar to Heworth Hall, Bank House, Togston Hall. John Fuller, <i>A History of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Including a Short Account of the Villages of Tweedmouth and Spittal</i> (Edinburgh, 1799), p. 57 and p. 383; TWAM, DT.OAR 160.58, Newcastle Old Assembly Rooms, Committee and Accounts 1779-1781.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>REFERENCES</u>
	South Shields, <b>Thompson's Hall</b>	Similar to Singleton House. Meadows and Waterson, <i>Lost Houses of County Durham</i> , p. 36
before 1784	Sunderland, <b>High Barnes</b> , for William Etrick	Very similar to Newton by the Sea. William Etrick "built the High Barnes mansion at a cost of £10,000". Married 27 Jan 1752 Catherine, daughter of Robert Wharton of Old Park, nr Bishop Auckland. Moses, E. Watts 'The Etricks of High Barnes' <i>Antiquities of Sunderland</i> , 20 (1951), p. 11.
	<b>Usworth Hall</b> , for Bernard Shaw	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> century house identical to Scots House, Heworth Hall, Bank House. DRO, Bowes Museum Collection, Thomas Bell and Sons, surveyors, D/Bo/G 35/xi Estate plan of Usworth, property of Bernard Shaw, surveyed by J. Fryer, scale 4ch: 1", 1782.
	<b>Wallsend Hall</b> , for James Moncaster to 1790 (Infirmity building committee, Assembly Rooms subscriber, alderman, Mayor, Hostman), then William Clark, who moved to Little Benton	Newton-style features, similar to Charlotte Square. Fine woodwork and plasterwork in upper oval room overlooking former gardens. Pevsner, <i>Northumberland</i> claims Wallsend Hall is early 19 <sup>th</sup> century, but a 1776 watercolour illustration by William Beilby of "A View in Mr Moncaster's walks at Wallsend" clearly shows rear of present house. Alnwick Castle MSS, duchess of Northumberland's Albums of Views 1774-1778, illustration 03396/26; Richardson, <i>History of Wallsend</i> .
	<b>Wallsend: The Grange</b> , for Charles Atkinson, Mayor of Ncle 1775 and 1783.	Richardson, <i>History of Wallsend</i> . Atkinson married Frances Moncaster, sister of James Moncaster above.
	<b>Wallsend: Red House</b> , for Henry Waters, Hostman.	Newton features. Richardson, <i>History of Wallsend</i> .
1798	West Boldon, <b>Scots House</b> , for Robert Wade	Very similar to Usworth Hall, Heworth Hall, Bank House, Togston Hall, side elevation of Shawdon Hall. Pevsner, <i>Durham</i> , p. 498; Mackenzie, <i>Durham</i> , p. 73.
	<b>Woolington Hall</b> , Late 18 <sup>th</sup> century wings added to house for Matthew Bell	Images of England website. Matthew Bell married Sarah Frances Brandling. Bell was brother in law to R. W. Grey, T. C. Bigge, Rowland Burdon II.

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