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# JAMES SALISBURY'S LOST ARCHITECTURAL MODEL OF THE GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH

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*A previously unknown account of the making of a lost architectural model by James Salisbury of Robert Adam's General Register House in Edinburgh, has recently emerged in a Court of Session case from 1805. Representing Adam's full, unexecuted design of 1771, the model was also detailed enough to serve as a guide to those responsible for maintaining or extending the building. Constructed of mahogany to a scale of 1:38, it measured about 5 feet 3 inches square. Last recorded in 1930 in the basement of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, the model is now known only from a photograph published in 1915.*

New information on a lost architectural model of General Register House (Fig. 1) by James Salisbury (1733–98), architect, has recently come to light in proceedings of a seemingly unrelated action<sup>1</sup> against Salisbury's heirs for the payment of feu-duties in the Court of Session in 1805 by the Register House Trustees.<sup>2</sup> Today Salisbury's model is known only from the photograph published in John Swarbrick's *Robert Adam & his brothers* (1915), where it is wrongly attributed to Robert Adam (1728–92).<sup>3</sup> This mistake was corrected by Henry Paton in 1930 in his article 'The General Register

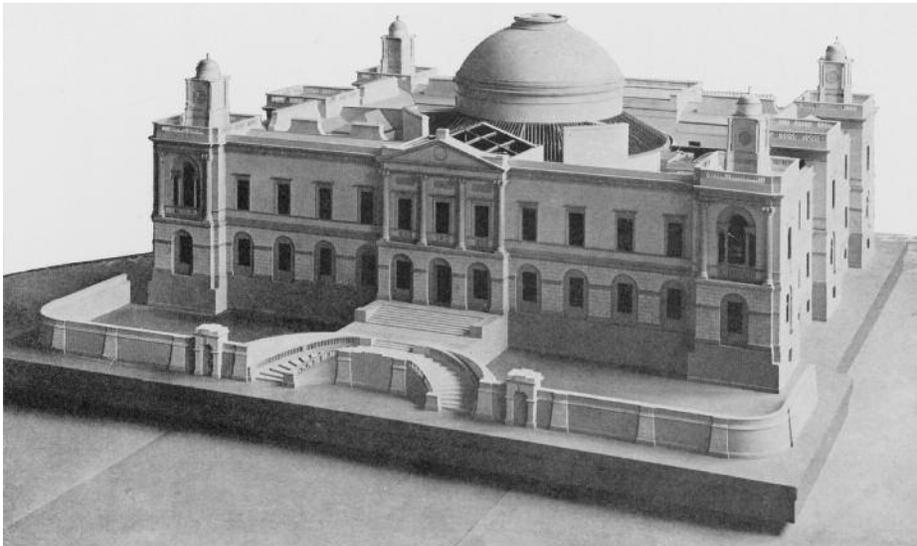


Fig. 1. James Salisbury, model of General Register House, c.1790–8, wood, 63 in. × 63 in. (160 cm × 160 cm). (presumed destroyed), from John Swarbrick, *Robert Adam and his brothers*, 1915.



Fig. 2. Robert and James Adam, General Register House, Princes Street, Edinburgh. 1774–89; extended to north by Robert Reid, 1822–7. (*Gordon Stocks*)

House’, where he notes that the model had been produced by Salisbury between 1790 and 1798 at the request of Lord Frederick Campbell (1729–1816), the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

In July 1772 the Register House Trustees approved a design by Robert and James Adam for a ‘Proper Repository for the Records of Scotland’, which Lord Frederick had commissioned on their behalf. As the first purpose-built public record repository in the British Isles, pre-dating both the Public Record Office of Ireland (1830s) in Dublin and the Public Record Office (completed 1858) in Chancery Lane, London, the Register House (Fig. 2) is one of the outstanding achievements of the Scottish Enlightenment. It also had the distinction of being the first public building in Edinburgh’s New Town, occupying a pivotal site at the north end of the North Bridge, which then formed the principal link between the Old and New Towns.

At the Trustees’ next meeting on 4 November 1772, Robert Adam recommended that James

Salisbury ‘in whose honesty, diligence, sobriety and capacity his Brother and he had already had great experience’, should be made clerk of works. Salisbury had not been the brothers’ first choice, but the young man they originally had in mind was by then engaged on other undertakings. Little is known of Salisbury’s career in England, although it seems that he already enjoyed a reputation as an experienced ‘measurer’ or surveyor.<sup>5</sup> Following his engagement on an annual salary of £100,<sup>6</sup> he moved from London to Edinburgh with his family in November 1772<sup>7</sup> in time to begin work on clearing the site at the east end of Princes Street the following year. Salisbury had trained as a carpenter and in 1776 the Trustees, again acting on Robert’s advice, gave him responsibility for all of the carpentry work in view of his proven ‘skill & fidelity’.<sup>8</sup> Work on the building itself had begun in 1774, but a shortage of funds led to construction being suspended between 1778 and 1785. After the completion of Register House in 1789, Salisbury was retained on a reduced

annual salary of £50 from 1790 until his death in 1798 to inspect the building and direct repairs, on the grounds that he was 'the fittest person for this employment as he knew accurately the form & mode in which every part of the building had been constructed'. At the same time, Lord Frederick commissioned Salisbury to make an accurate model of the finished building, in order that his knowledge of its construction might be 'preserved & transmitted to those who might fill his place after his death'.<sup>9</sup> Before the emergence of model-making as a specialised craft in the later nineteenth century, it was common for craftsmen employed on a building to be asked to undertake such a task.<sup>10</sup>

The use of scale models has a long, if not continuous, history, stretching from Antiquity to Renaissance Italy. While it has been observed that 'until the well into the second half of the eighteenth century the architect's patron was generally acquainted with at least the rudiments of architectural design, and was thus equipped to read plans, elevations and sections',<sup>11</sup> there is little doubt that in England in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the three-dimensional model, in wood, cardboard or plaster, came to be regarded as the most effective tool for demonstrating an architect's proposals to his client. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the often expensive and physically inconvenient model was losing ground to specialized drawings, such as the increasingly popular perspective view. Indeed, Adam appears not to have employed scale models to develop or promote his building designs,<sup>12</sup> choosing instead to rely on highly-finished drawings and his own presentational skills. A group of cut-paper models of Adam's Old College, Edinburgh University, which were once believed to have formed part of the design process, has now been discounted as the handiwork of enthusiastic amateurs.<sup>13</sup> Nor are any architectural models listed in the sales of Adam's library, pictures, antiques and casts in 1818, or of the remaining contents of the family house at 13 Albemarle Street in

London in 1821.<sup>14</sup> While the detailed building records of Register House frequently mention drawings and designs that were to be supplied by Adam for various features, architectural models are never mentioned. Adam did, however, provide full-size three-dimensional 'models' or patterns of details such as dressed stones, Corinthian and Ionic capitals, wooden doors and windows, and iron lamp posts and railings, which were supplied from London in order to exercise tight control over the work of the various local tradesmen involved in the construction of the Register House.<sup>15</sup>

In his pioneering study of architectural models *The architect's vision* (1966), John Wilton-Ely identifies five separate types:

'... the conceptual or visionary model, independent of practical considerations; the experimental model, chiefly concerned with such problems as structure and lighting; the display model, produced for the benefit of a client, a committee or a competition jury; the working model, produced either to guide the builder on specific aspects of the structure, or for the guidance of the designer's successors; and, finally, the site model, in which the arrangement of a group of buildings is demonstrated.'<sup>16</sup>

As will be seen, the Register House model combined elements of a display model, demonstrating the full design for the benefit of officials considering options for future expansion, with those of a working model for the guidance of those responsible for maintaining the building.

In their preliminary designs for the Register House, possibly dating from as early as 1769, the Adam brothers had proposed a centralised plan comprising a rotunda set within a quadrangle. However, by 1772 the overall plan had been reduced in scale with the north range being omitted altogether. From what can be observed in the photograph the model, rather than portraying Register House as built, appears to follow the proposals for the completion of the building through the addition of the north range in line with designs

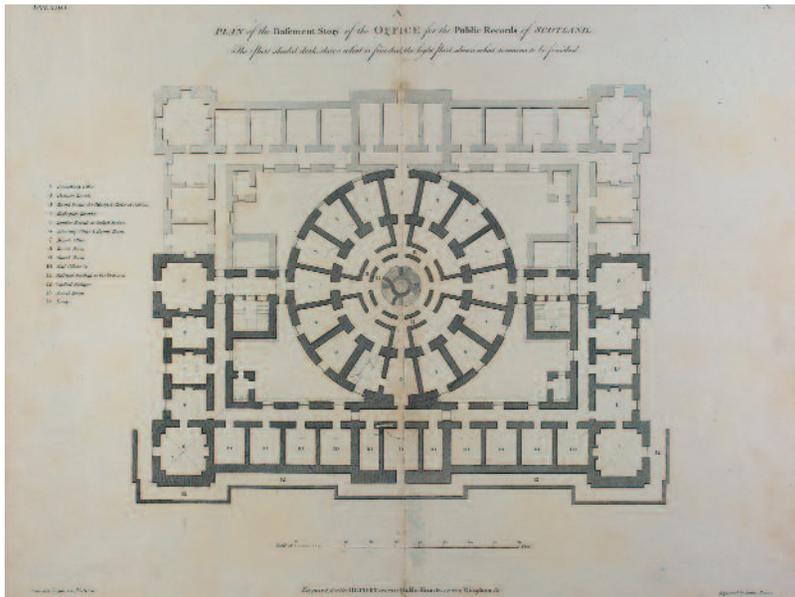


Fig. 3. Basement plan of General Register House. Engraved by James Basire from lost Adam Office drawing. *Report on the Public Records of the Kingdom &c*, 1800. Shaded dark and light to show what had been built and what remained to be added, respectively.

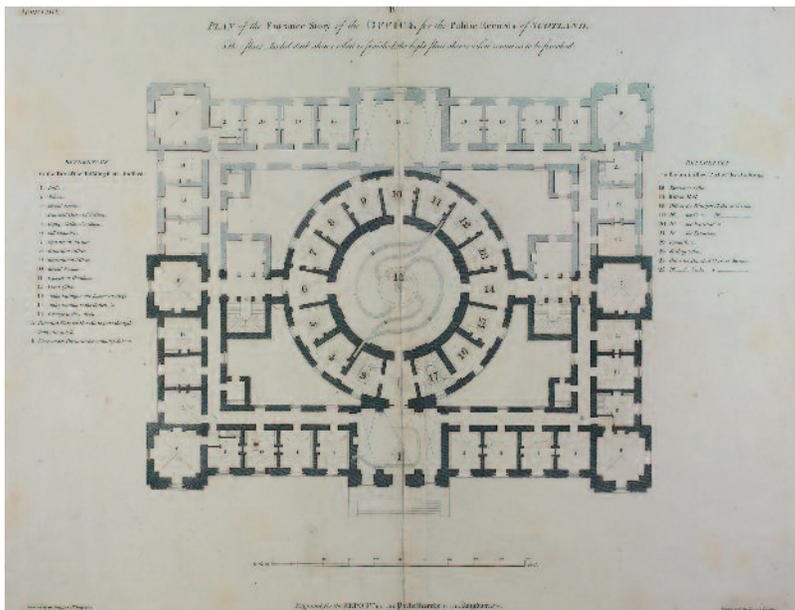


Fig. 4. Entrance floor plan of General Register House. Engraved by James Basire from lost Adam Office drawing. *Report on the Public Records of the Kingdom &c*, 1800. Shaded dark and light to show what had been built and what remained to be added, respectively.

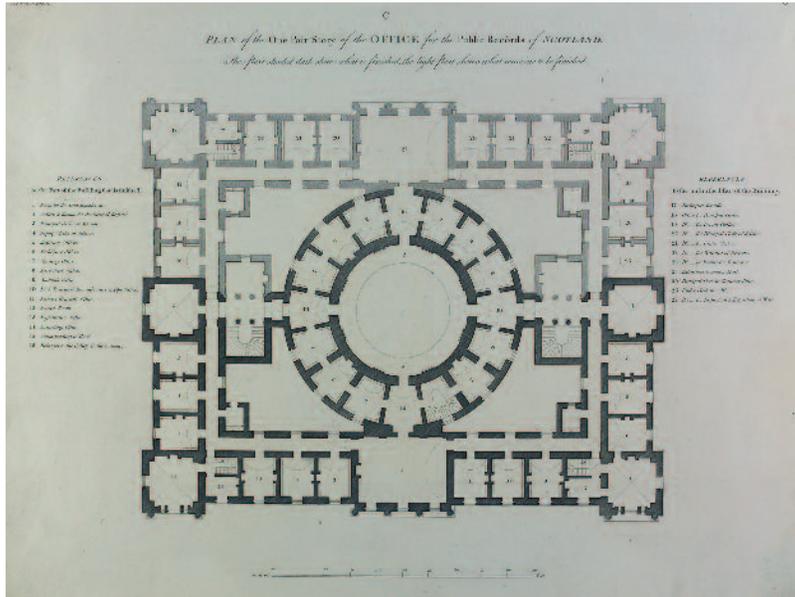


Fig. 5. First floor plan of General Register House. Engraved by James Basire from lost Adam Office drawing. *Report on the Public Records of the Kingdom &c*, 1800. Shaded dark and light to show what had been built and what remained to be added, respectively.

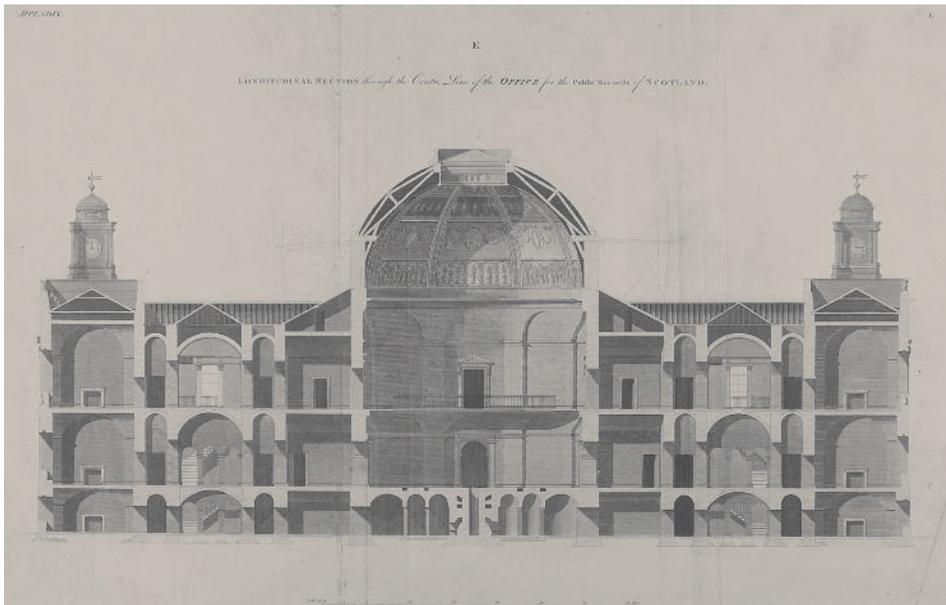


Fig. 6. Longitudinal section of General Register House. Engraved by James Basire. *Report on the Public Records of the Kingdom &c*, 1800.

which were published by Adam in 1771 and again, after his death, in 1800 (Figs. 2–6).<sup>17</sup> In both versions, which differ mostly in their designs for the rotunda, the area to the north of the central towers is shaded to show how the building might be developed on a quadrangular plan should additional funds become available. Indeed, the model may well have been seen by Lord Frederick as a means of strengthening the case for the future extension of the building by presenting the potential benefits to officials more effectively than a series of drawings.

From the extant photograph, we know that Salisbury's model showed the principal elements of the exterior such as the Corinthian order, the windows and the complicated roof features, together with the parapet wall which originally formed a terrace in front of the building.<sup>18</sup> It would also seem that the roof and individual floors or sections might be removed to reveal the arrangement of rooms, staircases and passages together with services such as the flues and drains.<sup>19</sup> Adam's design drawings reveal that at its fullest extent the building was to have had 149 rooms spread over three floors. The ability to inspect every room individually as well as important services such as drainage, heating and ventilation, would have made the model of great practical value to those responsible for the building. Following the convention adopted in presentation drawings of the period, the windows and doors are rendered as voids, emphasising the interplay of surface, space and shadow. These features suggest that it had much in common with other contemporary models, such as those in the extensive collection of Sir John Soane. Constructed out of mahogany to a scale of 1:38, Salisbury's model was a large one, measuring 5 feet 3 inches square,<sup>20</sup> as befitted a public building of national importance. Hardwoods, such as mahogany or pear wood, were often used where a greater definition of detail was required. Its comparatively large size, however, is perhaps more typical of earlier productions, such as William Kent's impressive model of a proposed royal palace for

Richmond, made in the 1730s and measuring 7 feet 6 inches in length.

A model of this size and complexity would have been a significant undertaking, as the level of detail extended beyond structural elements to include under floor heating vents in the rotunda and hall, flues for fireplaces heating the many rooms, and the drains. In October 1794 Salisbury reported to Lord Frederick that 'The expence laid out in making an exact model of the building [is] £75', adding that while it was not yet complete, 'The model is now in such forwardness as to shew every part of the building except the drains'. On 24 June 1795 Lord Frederick wrote to Salisbury expressing his hope that the model and plans of the drains had by then been completed, and directing him to submit his accounts for final settlement.<sup>21</sup> On the same date he also wrote to George Home, one of the Principal Clerks of Session whom the Trustees had appointed to act as their Clerk or Secretary, asking him to call for Salisbury's accounts.<sup>22</sup> When Salisbury next reported on progress to Lord Frederick on 19 August 1795, work on the model appeared to be nearing completion:

'The model is now just on the finish the Plan of the Drains is also done so that when Mr Home comes to Town I trust every thing will be settled to your Lordship's satisfaction and I flatter myself the model will meet your approbation it being so constructed that every part of the Building which is concealed may be seen so that any future repairs or alterations in any part may be discovered & repaired without the least difficulty by examining the Model.'<sup>23</sup>

When the Trustees settled their final account of £5704 3s 1½d with Salisbury for building the Register House on 14 July the following year, the sum of £100 was included in terms of the Lord Frederick's letter of 24 June 1795 'in part payment of a model of the Register House, not yet finished'. The settlement also made provision for any further allowance to which he might be entitled on finishing the model, which he undertook to complete by

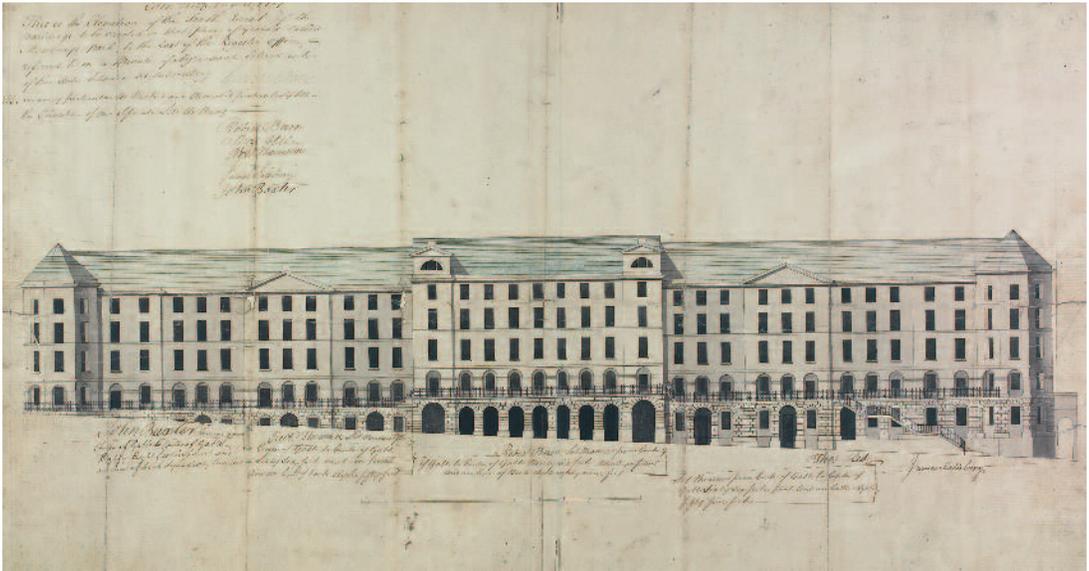


Fig. 7. Unattributed, South elevation of Leith Street Terrace, Edinburgh, 1787.  
(*National Records of Scotland RHP6080/11*)

February 1797.<sup>24</sup> While the figure of £100 is broadly in line with the outlay of £75 mentioned in 1794, there is no record of the work that remained to be done, or – as Salisbury’s heirs would later argue – of any intention to make the model even more elaborate. Indeed, there is no hard evidence of any further progress being made on the model after Salisbury received his interim payment in July 1796.

Around this time Salisbury adopted the strategy of linking payment for the model to a speculative building project involving himself, the Trustees and a number of other local builders. The Trustees were proprietors of a piece of ground on the east side of Register House on which they proposed to construct Leith Street Terrace. At their request, Robert Adam had produced two alternative elevations for this project in 1785, one ornamented and the other plain.<sup>25</sup> However, their first attempt to auction the land in October 1785 failed when even the simpler design was rejected by the prospective builders as too expensive for the class of people who would likely occupy the dwellings.<sup>26</sup> Following their adoption of

‘a new elevation, plain and unornamented’ in which only the elevation facing the east end of Register House was now required to follow Adam’s design, the Trustees successfully auctioned the land in five lots in March 1786. The feuars were required to build the tenements within four years.<sup>27</sup> While Colvin (2008) attributes this new elevation to Salisbury,<sup>28</sup> the advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* for 18 February 1786 merely names him as the contact for interested parties, as had been the case with Adam’s design the previous September. When in 1787 the builders objected to the Trustees that this design was also too expensive an even plainer alternative was agreed upon (Fig. 7).<sup>29</sup> The latter design was subsequently altered by John Baxter, architect, to correct a ‘disunion’ between the west and south fronts before it too was abandoned in favour of the executed version with its sloping terrace (Fig. 8).<sup>30</sup>

Lots one and five had been acquired by Salisbury, who quickly sold the first and then delayed until 1792 before building two large



Fig. 8. Leith Street Terrace, Edinburgh (demolished 1969), from the south east, c.1910. James Salisbury built the octagonal tower and part of the tenement immediately to the west in the 1790s. (Photograph © *Country Life*)

tenements on the other.<sup>31</sup> The annual feu-duty of £25 10s on this property was, however, to remain unpaid. In a letter to Home dated 24 June 1795, Lord Frederick had stated that he understood that Salisbury wished 'to sink the money due to him [for his work on the model] in payment of the feu duty owing to the Trustees'.<sup>32</sup> He also appeared to sanction this arrangement in a separate letter to Salisbury of the same date.<sup>33</sup> The accounts for the building of Register House for June 1798 noted that by then Salisbury owed the Trustees nine years' feu-duty for his houses in Leith Street, totalling £229 10s. (Even if he claimed a reduction on account of the fact that the houses were not built until some years after the feu-duty became payable, he would still have owed £153.) It was also noted that he might have a claim beyond the £100 already paid for the model 'when it is finished, which it is not likely to be'.<sup>34</sup>

This unsatisfactory state of affairs prompted Home to write to Lord Frederick on 10 June 1798:

'There is still an account to be settled with Salisbury, not from any dispute or difficulty, but from my having found it impossible to prevail upon him to finish, or indeed for some time past, to make any progress in the model of the Building. The truth, I am afraid, is the

poor man is not able to pay the arrears of his feu duty, and he thinks the claim for the model remaining unsettled serves as an excuse for his not paying up that arrears.'<sup>35</sup>

In his reply to Home, dated 26 June 1798, Lord Frederick enclosed the following copy letter to Salisbury expressing his growing impatience over the model and, perhaps unwisely in view of subsequent legal proceedings, acknowledging a link between it and the unpaid feu-duties:

'Mr S[alisbury]. Having long since directed that £100 should be advanced to you towards making a compleat Model of the Genl. Re:r House. It gives me concern upon Inquiry to find that the Model is not yet compleated. In looking over the Accounts of the Trustees which have been lately sent me I observe that you are nine years in arrears for the Feu Duty of your houses in Leith Street. If you expect any Indulgence upon this head, to which perhaps you have some Claim you may be assured I shall not bring this Claim forward till the Model is compleated - Which is a work you owe to the Trustees and to the Publick- & which you ought to be impatient to finish. I am &c FC.'<sup>36</sup>

Salisbury, who appears to have had little other significant work,<sup>37</sup> was probably dependent on his employment by the Register House Trustees for a

regular income. Indeed, he was warned in May 1798 that payment of his salary as surveyor of the building would be stopped if he did not settle his outstanding feu-duties.<sup>38</sup> There is no doubt that Register House had been a lucrative contract for Salisbury as clerk of works, earning him a total of £1745 5s 11d in salary and allowances between 1772 and 1789,<sup>39</sup> excluding payments for undertaking the carpentry work. Salisbury continued to be paid by the Trustees during the years when work on the Register House was suspended. This did not prevent him from undertaking work elsewhere, and between 1783 and 1785 he was employed on Dunira House, in Comrie, Perthshire, by Henry Dundas, who as Lord Advocate had been one of the Trustees.<sup>40</sup> As an experienced sworn measurer or surveyor, his expertise was also in demand as an independent arbiter in disputes between patrons and their architects or builders over costs.<sup>41</sup> By 1793 Salisbury was residing with his wife, Elizabeth Blatch, and daughters in a house he had built for himself on half an acre of land on the east side of Leith Walk leased from the Edinburgh architect, Robert Burn (1752–1815). His only son, also James, was in business by 1793 and may possibly be identified with the James Salisbury, architect, who married one Christian Foreman in Edinburgh in 1786.<sup>42</sup> Salisbury Senior died of a 'slow fever' on or around 6 November 1798, aged 65, and was buried in South Leith churchyard.<sup>43</sup> He seems to have been in growing financial difficulties shortly before his death. When in 1798 Salisbury was ordered to repay a loan of £1400, which was secured over his newly-built properties in Leith terrace in 1792,<sup>44</sup> interest and penalties had increased the original sum to £1820.<sup>45</sup> Within a few weeks of his death the remainder of the lease of Salisbury's house, workshops, woodyard, hot-house, garden and stables was advertised for sale, along with his stock of wood and several tool chests.<sup>46</sup> He had also retained ownership of several flats built by him at 16 Leith Terrace, which were sold in 1800.<sup>47</sup>

Salisbury died leaving the feu-duties unpaid and the model unfinished. His family, at Lord Frederick's behest, instructed the joiner, William Cowan, to continue working on the model for more than a year,<sup>48</sup> paying him £40. On learning that the probable expense of completing the model would be a further £40, Campbell finally lost patience with the project and ordered that work should stop, directing that the unfinished model should be delivered to Mr Robertson at Register House.<sup>49</sup> The fate of the architectural drawings to which the model-maker must have had access is not mentioned.

The Trustees continued to demand the recovery of the outstanding feu-duties from Salisbury's heirs and their agent, Salisbury's son-in-law, Thomas Mason, writer in Edinburgh. Mason responded by presenting an account for £204 14s 4d made out by John Weir, Salisbury's foreman, who had kept the books for work on the model.<sup>50</sup> This figure represented workmen's wages and materials, but a further unspecified allowance was also expected for Salisbury's trouble in supervising the project. The Trustees vigorously disputed the claim that a joiner had been employed for no less than 1790 days on making the model. An unnamed 'architect of some eminence', appointed by them to provide a valuation of the unfinished model, had advised that it was worth only £45.<sup>51</sup>

Demands for payment of the outstanding feu-duties under threat of legal action failed in 1804, when Salisbury's heirs insisted that their claim for the model should be settled in full. In 1805, therefore, the Trustees raised an action in the Court of Session against Salisbury's daughters Sarah, Elizabeth, Ann and Deborah, as his heirs-portioners, Sarah's husband, Thomas Mason, and certain other named persons 'all pretended vassals or tenants' for the reduction of the title deeds to the two tenements in Leith Terrace and recovery of feu-duties, now totalling £318 13s 8d, less interest. The Trustees in whose names the action was raised (Ilay Campbell, Lord President of the Court of Session, Robert Dundas, Lord Chief Baron of the Court of

Exchequer in Scotland, and Charles Hope, Lord Justice Clerk, along with Sir James Montgomery of Stanhope, Lord Advocate), represented the Scottish legal establishment of the day.<sup>52</sup> In their defence, Salisbury's heirs admitted that they had never paid any feu-duties from 1790, arguing that they had been allowed to offset the latter against the expense of the model. Any such understanding was dismissed by the Trustees as an 'indistinct and unbusinesslike mode of proceeding'.<sup>53</sup> Salisbury's heirs also submitted an additional account for £9 9s 3d due to their father for repairs to the Register House.<sup>54</sup> In a further attempt to bolster their claim, the defenders then demanded compensation which they alleged was due to them for their late father's final measuring of the completed Register House on behalf of the Trustees.<sup>55</sup> The latter was also rejected by the Trustees, this time on the grounds that measuring was part of Salisbury's duties as clerk of works and that he had submitted no separate claim for such work in the final settlement of accounts in July 1796.<sup>56</sup>

By 1807 it was becoming clear that the cost of the model was emerging as the principal issue in dispute between the parties. Salisbury's heirs denied that the sum of £100 advanced to Salisbury in 1796 had been intended to cover the whole expenditure on the model and even questioned whether or not Salisbury had ever actually received payment. They also advanced the rather weak argument that when Salisbury had reported on 19 August 1795 that work on the model was nearly finished, it had not yet been decided 'to make it so complete & perfect as it afterwards was desired to be'.<sup>57</sup> It is not clear, however, what additional refinements they might have had in mind, as Salisbury had boasted to Lord Frederick of the extent and sophistication of the original commission. The fact that he had been employed to construct the model without any estimate being required was not unusual at a time when such costs were often included in general bills without separate mention. While his heirs conceded that the model would be worth little to

anyone other than the Trustees, they argued that any knowledgeable person would recognise it as a 'work of great ingenuity which could not be produced without much expence of time and labour'.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the model's level of sophistication was such that: 'Every beam and cist in the building is displayed. The vents, flues, drains &c are all distinctly shown and each apartment can be examined separately'.<sup>59</sup> In view of its uniqueness, 'as it is not customary in Scotland to execute pieces of art of this sort', they argued that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find someone qualified to assess the quality of the model.<sup>60</sup> There appears to be some substance to their claim, as architectural models of this date are rare in Scotland, perhaps due to the relative scarcity of large public commissions. A notable exception is the wooden model produced by James Craig (1744–95) of his design for the Physicians' Hall (completed 1781) in Edinburgh, a building which was intended to rival the Register House as the city's major public edifice.<sup>61</sup> As MP for the Glasgow Burghs from 1761 to 1780, Lord Frederick would almost certainly have known of the fine model of the west facade of the Glasgow Town-House, dated c.1756 or 1758, attributed to the Glasgow wright and cabinet-maker, Allan Dreghorn (1706–64).<sup>62</sup>

Lord Armadale, the Lord Ordinary, ignored the defenders' nomination of Robert Burn, architect and Salisbury's former landlord, as a suitable arbiter,<sup>63</sup> and remitted the examination of the model, the vouchers of expenditure and time books to Robert Reid (1774–1856), the recently appointed King's Architect and Surveyor in Scotland, on 8 February 1809.<sup>64</sup> Reid duly examined the three time-books kept by Salisbury from 15 September 1792 to 3 March 1798 and a fourth book which *inter alia* included men's time from 10 March to 9 June 1798, and found that the sum of £93 9s 10d had been expended on the model during that time.<sup>65</sup> As the timber charged for was allegedly from Salisbury's stock, no vouchers were produced in evidence by the defenders.<sup>66</sup> On the orders of the judge, Reid resumed his



Figs. 9–10. Photo-realistic rendered model of General Register House in 2012. Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation, Historic Scotland and the Digital Design Studio, Glasgow School of Art, 2012.

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investigations the following year and concluded that following Salisbury's death his heirs had spent an additional sum of £48 8s 8d on the model in wages and materials. He also added £30 1s 6d in recognition of Salisbury's 'trouble and other circumstances attending the execution of the model'. In total, he reckoned that expenditure on the model amounted to £172, of which £100 had already been paid, which represented 'full and liberal compensation for the model as it now stands'.<sup>67</sup>

In view of the weakness of their case, Salisbury's heirs were foolish to take on the legal establishment of their day and it was to cost them dear. Their arguments were denounced by Lord Armadale, who complained on 14 November 1809 that the lawsuit had been 'protracted and conducted so irregularly and imperfectly as to become extremely harassing to the Court'.<sup>68</sup> In his interlocutor of 12 May 1810 the judge decided against the defenders for the feu-duties owed by them, with a deduction of £72 as the



Figs. 11–12. Photo-realistic rendered model of General Register House in the 1790s. Centre for Digital Documentation and Visualisation, Historic Scotland and the Digital Design Studio, Glasgow School of Art, 2012. .  
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outstanding balance for the model as recommended in Reid's report.<sup>69</sup> The subsequent decret or final judgment of the Court of Session in favour of the Trustees, dated 9 March 1811, reduced the title deeds of the properties in Leith Terrace and found that the ground and buildings thereon belonged to the pursuers etc and that the balance of the arrears of feu-duty due by Salisbury's representatives amounted to £552 7s 5d, with interest on £374 3s 8d. The defenders were also ordered to pay £40 as the modified expenses of the action and £1 14s ½d as the fee for extracting the decret.<sup>70</sup>

In 1822 Commissioners were finally appointed for completing General Register House, 'according to the

original plan or design thereof, part of which only had been finished, or according to such other plan or design as should appear. . . best adapted, in the present state of the public Records of Scotland, to the purposes of such a Repository'. However, rather than following Salisbury's model, the Commissioners decided on a modified version of Adam's design for the north range by Robert Reid, which was to be completed between 1822 and 1827. While Adam had proposed to repeat the front elevation with its Corinthian order at the rear, Reid substituted a simpler design based on the side elevations. Internally, Reid followed Adam's general plan, but created much larger central rooms on the ground and first floors and

inserted a heavy, double stair into three compartments at the back of the rotunda rather than enlarging the east and west stairs.<sup>71</sup> Salisbury's model was therefore made largely redundant as an accurate record of construction or design by the addition of Reid's north range and his modifications to the existing building, which followed earlier alterations undertaken after Lord Frederick's death in 1816.

Responsibility for General Register House was transferred from the Trustees to the newly-formed HM Board (later Office) of Works in Edinburgh in 1855. The model is next recorded on 22 April 1907, when it was loaned to the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh by HM Office of Works.<sup>72</sup> It was then photographed at some point between 1907 and 1909.<sup>73</sup> No more is heard of the model after 1930, when Paton reported that it was stored in the museum's basement.<sup>74</sup> The model's subsequent fate remains a mystery, as repeated searches of the museum's records by curators at the National Museum of Scotland in recent years have failed to find any reference to its disposal.

At the time of writing this article the National Records of Scotland is collaborating with Historic Scotland and Glasgow School of Art to undertake a high definition three-dimensional survey of General Register House, on to which will be mapped high resolution photographs to generate a photo-realistic, rendered model (Figs. 9–10). This innovative technology has been developed by Historic Scotland in partnership with the Cyark foundation. The new digital model will perform similar building maintenance functions as Salisbury's model but with the advantages of twenty-first-century technology. Moreover, when combined with original architectural drawings, building records, contemporary engravings and paint research, the digital data will enable an objective and historically accurate model to be created of General Register House as it would have appeared in the 1790s (Figs. 11–12), before Reid's addition of the north range in the 1820s, and the alterations to the parapet wall in 1850 and 1890.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to Tim Knox for allowing me to see the text of his unpublished lecture, 'Buildings in miniature: the creation, collection and display of architectural models in Europe c.1600–1900'.

I should also like to thank Hugh Cheape for information on the Glasgow Town-House model, and Helen Dorey and Eileen Harris for their advice and encouragement.

#### NOTES

- 1 National Records of Scotland, formerly the National Archives of Scotland (hereafter NRS), Court of Session. Register House Trustees v James Salisbury's heirs, CS36/3/19. Summons of reduction, improbation, declaratory for non-entry and mails & duties, 1805; CS35/3, No 19, pp. 1–7. Decree for bygone feu-duties, the trustees for building a repository for the records of Scotland v the representatives of the deceased James Salisbury, architect, Edinburgh, 11 June 1811.
- 2 In Scotland a feu-duty is a perpetual annual rent paid by the owner of land, houses, etc, to the feudal superior.
- 3 J. Swarbrick, *Robert Adam & His Brothers*. (London, 1915), p. 262 & fig. 197.
- 4 H. Paton, 'The General Register House', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, XVII (1930), p. 160.
- 5 NRS, Papers of the Gordon family, Dukes of Gordon, GD44/ 49/16/12. Copy letter from 'AF' to the Duke of Gordon, Edinburgh, 4 July 1783.
- 6 NRS, SRO4/1. Register House Trustees' minutes, 4 November 1772, pp. 43–4.
- 7 NRS, SRO4/7. Accounts for the building of the Register House, 1765–98, p. 17. Salisbury had visited Edinburgh in October 1772 at the invitation of the Trustees.
- 8 NRS, SRO4/2. Duplicate minute book of the Register House Trustees, 1765–89, pp. 78–9.
- 9 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for James Salisbury's heirs, 1808, pp. 3–4.
- 10 J. Wilton-Ely, 'The architectural models of Sir John Soane: a catalogue', *Architectural History*, 12 (1969), p. 10.
- 11 F. Jenkins, *Architect and Patron*. (Oxford, 1961), pp. 209–10.

- 12 Wilton-Ely, *loc. cit.*, p. 7.
- 13 A. Fraser & I. Gow, 'An academic pursuit', *Robert Adam. Architectural Heritage Review*, IV (Edinburgh, 1993), pp. 101–6.
- 14 A. Bolton, *The Architecture of Robert and James Adam*. (London, 1922), 2, appendix C, pp. 327–37.
- 15 NRS, SRO4/1, Register House Trustees' minutes. Pattern stones were lodged with Mr Salisbury, 12 October 1773; a pattern door and two pattern windows one of mahogany and another of wainscot to be supplied by Mr Salisbury, pattern both of the rail on parapet wall and the lamp posts to be supplied from some of the London workmen, 27 December 1784; SRO4/14, pattern Ionic capital, Corinthian capital and truss supplied by John Douglas, 1777. Certain of these patterns are the 'models' listed among the outstanding building accounts, SRO4/7, p. 31.
- 16 J. Wilton-Ely, *The Architect's Vision*. (University of Nottingham, 1965), unpaginated.
- 17 R. & J. Adam, *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, v I, No IV (London, 1771–2), nos 29–31. *Reports from the Select Committee, appointed to inquire into the state of the Public Records of the Kingdom etc.* (4 July 1800), Appendices A–E. (SRO3/1/1).
- 18 The earth behind the parapet wall was excavated in 1820 in order to allow windows to be inserted into the ten basement rooms at the front.
- 19 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 4.
- 20 J. Swarbrick, *Robert Adam & His Brothers*. (London, 1915), p. 262 & fig. 197.
- 21 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Register House Trustees, 1808, pp. 8–10.
- 22 NRS, SRO4/77. Letter from Lord Frederick Campbell to Mr Home, Shrewsbury, 24 June 1795.
- 23 NRS, SRO4/78/1. Extract from a Letter from James Salisbury to Lord Clerk Register, 19 August 1795.
- 24 NRS, SRO4/80/1. Fitted Account between Mr James Salisbury and The Trustees for building a Repository for the Records, [1796]; GD267/5/32. Draft of foregoing account.
- 25 NRS, RHP6080/13. South East Front of a plain design for ten houses proposed to be built in Leith Street, Robert Adam, 1785; RHP6080/8 & 10, 1785–6. London, Sir John Soane's Museum, Adam vol 38/45 for ornamented design, 1785; Adam vol. 38/46–9, for plain design, 1785.
- 26 NRS, SRO4/1. Register House Trustees minute book, minutes of meeting on 25 August 1785. *Caledonian Mercury*, 3 September 1785.
- 27 NRS, Court of Session, CS232/R14/22/1. Feu contract between the Register House Trustees and Thomas Hill, 1791.
- 28 H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600–1840* (4th ed., New Haven and London, 2008), p. 893.
- 29 NRS, SRO4/1. Register House Trustees minute book, minutes of meetings on 11 February 1786 & 21 August 1787; RHP6080/11, Elevation of south front of buildings in Leith Street, August 1787.
- 30 NRS, SRO4/65/10. Discharge by Thomas Hill to Register House Trustees, 1797.
- 31 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answers for the Register House Trustees to the condescence for Salisbury's heirs, 1807, p. 2. RS27/364. Particular register of sasines for Edinburgh, 1 February 1792.
- 32 NRS, SRO4/77. Letter from Lord Frederick Campbell to Mr Home, Shrewsbury, 24 June 1795.
- 33 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Register House Trustees, 1808, pp. 8–10.
- 34 NRS, SRO4/29/7. State of the funds expended by the Trustees, June 1798, p. 3.
- 35 NRS, SRO4/78/4. Copy letter from [Mr Home] to Lord Register, 10 June 1798.
- 36 NRS, SRO4/78/5. Draft letter from Lord Frederick Campbell, Arlington Street, London, to James Salisbury, 26 June 1798, enclosed with letter to Mr Home.
- 37 Colvin, *op. cit.*, p. 893.
- 38 NRS, SRO4/78/2. Copy letter from [Thomas Thomson] to James Salisbury, Edinburgh, 15 May 1798.
- 39 NRS, SRO4/7. Accounts for the building of the Register House, 1765–98, p. 17. Salisbury was paid £750 in salary between Martinmas 1772 and Whitsunday 1780. SRO4/28/62. Note of payments made by Mr Home to Mr Salisbury from 1784 to 1791, Salisbury was paid £450 in salary for the 4.5 years from 1780 to 1784. SRO4/80/1, Fitted Account between Mr James Salisbury and The Trustees for building a Repository for the Records, [1796]. Salisbury was paid a total of £500 in salary for the years 1785–9.
- 40 NRS, Papers of the Dundas family, Viscounts Melville, GD51/12/14/1.
- 41 NRS, Papers of the Gordon family, Dukes of

- Gordon, GD44/ 49/16/12. Copy letter from 'AF' to the Duke of Gordon, Edinburgh, 4 July 1783.
- 42 NRS, Books of Council and Session, RD2/281. Trust disposition and settlement by James Salisbury to Elizabeth Blatch, his wife, 23 December 1793 & November 1798, pp. 326–33. NRS, Edinburgh marriage registers, 14 January 1786, OPR685/1/510, p. 328.
- 43 NRS, Old Parish Registers, South Leith, OPR692/020. 6 November 1798.
- 44 NRS, Books of Council and Session, RD2/271, pp. 327–36.
- 45 NRS, RS27/443, fols. 248–54.
- 46 *Caledonian Mercury*, 22 November 1798. Advertisement of sale of lease etc of house in Leith Walk, Edinburgh.
- 47 *Caledonian Mercury*, 30 January & 6 February 1800. Advertisements for public auction of houses at No 16 Leith Terrace, Edinburgh.
- 48 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answer minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 9.
- 49 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Defences for Salisbury's heirs, 1805, pp. 4–5; Condescendence for heirs, p. 7. The model was probably delivered to William Robertson (1740–1803), one of the deputy keepers.
- 50 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answer minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 7.
- 51 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answers for Register House Trustees, 1807, pp. 6–7, 14–6.
- 52 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Summons of reduction, improbation, declaratory for non-entry and mails & duties, 1805, pp. 1–3.
- 53 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answers for the Register House Trustees, 1807, pp. 8–9.
- 54 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Defences for Salisbury's heirs, 1805, p. 5.
- 55 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Condescendence for Salisbury's heirs, 1807, pp. 12–3.
- 56 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Register House Trustees, 1808, pp. 12–3. SRO4/80/2. Fitted Account between Mr James Salisbury and The Trustees for building a Repository for the Records, [1796]. Salisbury reserved his claim for measuring the building from the discharged account.
- 57 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 8.
- 58 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Replies for Salisbury's heirs, 1807, pp. 11–4.
- 59 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, pp. 4–5.
- 60 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Replies for Salisbury's heirs, 1807, pp. 11–4.
- 61 A. Lewis: 'A history of James Craig's hall for the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh', *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh*. 38. (Edinburgh, 2008), p. 174. The model survives in the RCPE collection.
- 62 The Glasgow Town House model ( wood, 100 × 60 cm) was acquired by the National Museum of Scotland in 1990.
- 63 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 10.
- 64 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 17.
- 65 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Report by Mr Robert Reid, architect, 12 May 1809; Inventory of productions by Salisbury's heirs, 1809.
- 66 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Minute for Salisbury's heirs, 1808, p. 11.
- 67 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Report by Robert Reid, 1810.
- 68 NRS, Court of Session, CS36/3/19. Answer minute for Salisbury's heirs, 14 November 1809. Cover sheet.
- 69 NRS, Court of Session, CS319/3/19. Objections for the Register House Trustees to the Auditor's report, 1811, pp. 5–6.
- 70 NRS, Register of Acts and Decrees, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, Durie's Office, 1<sup>st</sup> Division (Nos 1–111), 1 May 1811–29 August 1811, CS35/3. No 19, pp. 1–7.
- 71 *First report of the commissioners for completing and fitting up the buildings of His Majesty's General Register House at Edinburgh* (8 May 1826), pp. 2–3. (SRO4/121/1).
- 72 J. Dobbie: *Royal Scottish Museum. Annual report for 1907*. (HMSO, 1908), p. 10. I am indebted to George Dalgleish for confirming from the museum's loan registers that the 'Model of Register House, Edinburgh', Museum Loan Number 168, was loaned by HM Office of Works on 22 April 1907.
- 73 A number of photographs were apparently taken, but staff of the National Museum of Scotland have been unable to trace the glass plates.
- 74 H. Paton, 'The General Register House', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, XVII (1930), p. 160.