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A REVISED TIMELINE FOR SIR WILLIAM BRUCE'S HOPETOUN HOUSE, 1699–1707

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Hopetoun, overlooking the Firth of Forth to the west of Edinburgh, has long been recognised as one of the most important Scottish houses of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It was built in the parish of Abercorn, an estate that was purchased from Sir Walter Seton by the First Earl of Hopetoun's father, John Hope, in 1678.¹ Designed by Scotland's leading classical architect Sir William Bruce, it was greatly enlarged by William Adam in 1721–6. An article by Alistair Rowan published in 1984 established a timeline for the construction of the original building which has been accepted by recent scholars.² Recent archival research, however, has led to a revised dating, the evidence for which is set out here.

The original contract for the construction of Hopetoun House was signed on 29 December, 1698 between Lady Margaret Hope (in the name of her son, Charles Hope), Sir Archibald Hope of Rankeillor, Sir William Bruce, and the mason Tobias Bachope.³ It has recently been assumed that the house was built in two phases, the first between 1699 and 1702, the second begun in 1706 and finished before the publication of the second volume of *Vitruvius Britannicus* in 1717 (Figs 1 and 2), in which two engravings of the floor plan and elevation of Bruce's house were included. It now appears, however, that there was just one building campaign, lasting with variations of intensity from 1699 to 1707. A few modifications were made after 1707, but

there was no completely new phase of construction. This means that the house was finished fifteen years before William Adam began his extravagant enlargement, and helps to establish more concretely the nature of Bruce's designs, the original drawings for which no longer exist. Hopetoun House was a well-organised and well-funded project, and long pauses were not needed for lack of funds. This revised timeline will be explored first, with year-by-year subsections following.

1698–1701

The initial building contract of 29 December, 1698 described William Bruce's designs in great detail, much of it correlating with the images published in the second volume of *Vitruvius Britannicus* in 1717.⁴ Although some changes were made in the middle of its construction, Hopetoun House was, overall, a thoroughly planned and organised undertaking, not a piecemeal project. The building accounts for Hopetoun show that Tobias Bachope (who was the mason in charge of the construction of Kinross House and Craigiehall House) was paid his first £50 sterling (or £600 Scots) on 29 December 1698 (the day he signed the contract),⁵ and that the work was thoroughly under way by the end of March, 1699,⁶ with sixteen receipts of discharge being signed between 14 April, and 15 November 1699.⁷ The carpenter, Alexander Eizat, also received £124.7s

Fig. 1. Hopetoun House
 floor plan, *Vitruvius
 Britannicus*, vol. II, 1717.
 (© Dover Publications)

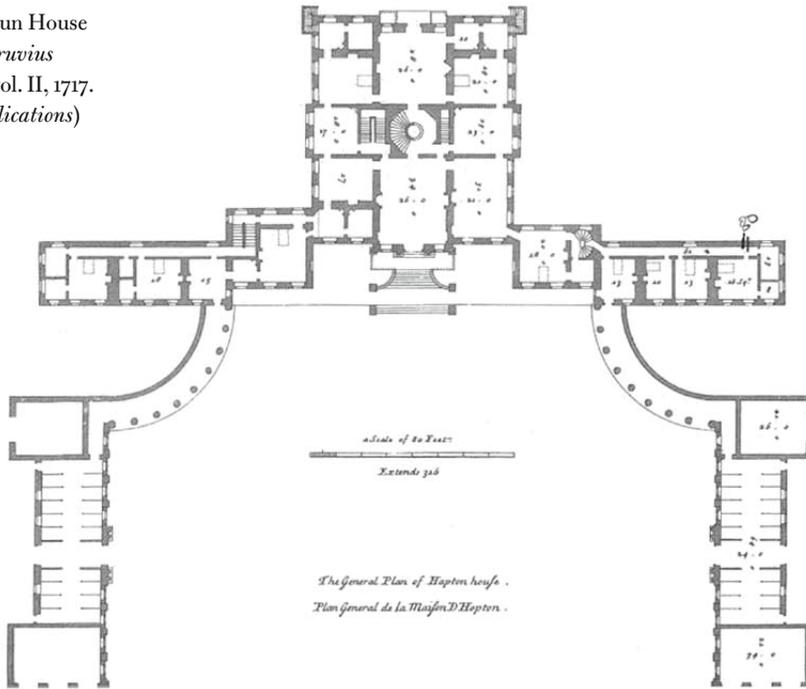
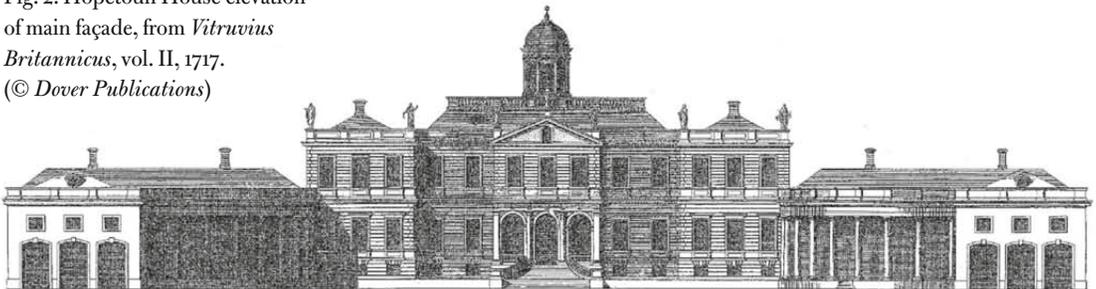


Fig. 2. Hopetoun House elevation
 of main façade, from *Vitruvius
 Britannicus*, vol. II, 1717.
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Scots on 22 November, 1699.⁸ Lady Margaret Hope paid approximately £9,571.0s.9d. Scots for construction work in 1699 (Table 1).

Construction continued in a similar manner in 1700, with Bachope signing ten more receipts of discharge between 29 March and 3 December.⁹ Meanwhile, Alexander Eizat was paid for his work on 15 February, 7 June, 21 August, and 15

October of the same year.¹⁰ Lady Margaret paid approximately £7,091.10s Scots that year for mason-work and wright-work combined. According to the stipulations set forth by the 1698 contract, Lady Margaret was to pay Bachope 2,500 merks (which amounted to two-thirds of a pound Scots or one shilling sterling) quarterly and that the shell of the main house would be completed by 11 November

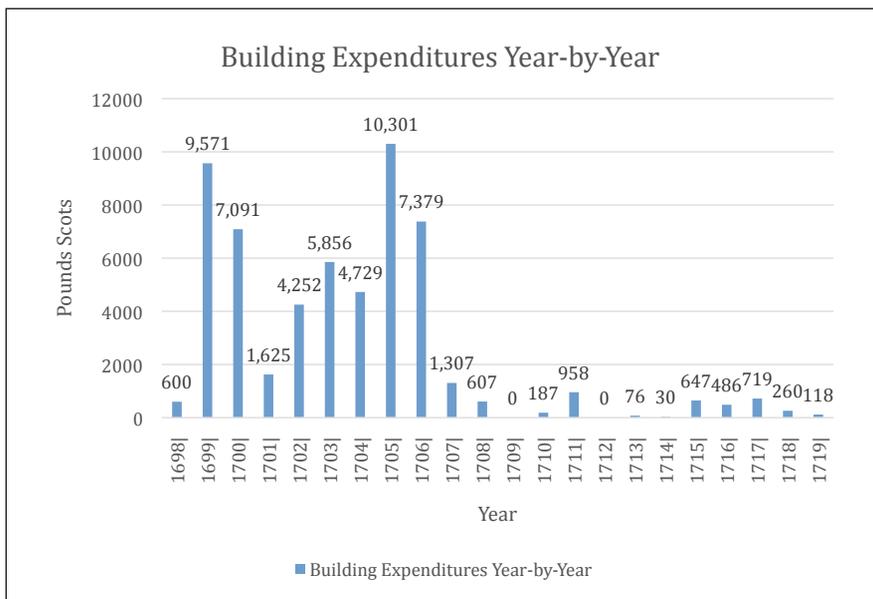


Table 1.

(Martinmass), 1700.¹¹ He must have completed the initial hurdle of construction by the end of 1700, judging by the significant drop in payments made out to him in 1701. He received five payments in 1701,¹² totalling £937.13s.9d Scots, after a seven-month pause between payments; suggesting that that time was taken to inspect and consider what had been completed before he resumed work.

Though the main house shell was mostly finished by the end of 1700, some adjustments were made the following year. An ‘Acct of Additionall Mason work at the houses of Abercorn not Contained in Contract all which is finished preceding the 1st 1701,’ lists extra mason-work projects not included in the contract.¹³ This document answers some of the questions posed by the disparity between the designs described by the 1698 building contract and the images published in 1717. The contract describes office houses that are considerably smaller than their *Vitruvius Britannicus* counterparts.¹⁴ Meanwhile, the first two clauses of ‘Acct of Additionall Mason work’ read as:

‘Imp[rimis] the South and north office houses being 3 foot longer and one foot Broader and 1 foot and ½ higher [sic] then what was Agreed upon as also The pends [Scots term for arch] Above the sd two office houses extending to in Measure – 4 Rood 7 el ½ at 30 pr Rood: £125.17s.3d Scots

It[em] of Aisler work [ashlar] in the spaces twixt the Main houses and office houses and pavilion extending to 888 foot small hunder [sic; hundred] at 8S pr foot: £355.4s¹⁵

So it appears that Bachope extended the size of the original office houses. Another item further down in the document confirms the expansion of the office houses: ‘It[em] of Additionall Ayler upon the two ends of the office houses that fronts the Court measuring 51 foot at 8S pr foot: £20.8s.’¹⁶ The second point indicates that the office houses were originally separate buildings (as suggested by Rowan) and that Bachope connected them to the main house. In a similar light, the pavilions

described by the contract were also much smaller than those shown in *Vitruvius Britannicus*, another clause stating: 'It[em] of Ayler upon the two pavilions they being 2 foot Larger each way then what was Agreed upon, extending 198 foot small hunder at 8S pr foot: £79.4s.¹⁷ In other words, Sherriff describes, in technical terms, the additional expansion of the pavilions.

The documentary evidence for these post-contract projects confirms the reliability of Colen Campbell's images of Bruce's Hopetoun and also shows that, although Hopetoun's patrons did not stick exclusively to the designs described by the 1698 contract, the adjustments that were made occurred early in the building process. Lady Margaret did not wait until Hopetoun was nearing completion before deciding to alter the original structure; she could see that the original design could be modified after the basic shell was constructed. It seems likely therefore that the basic structural aspects of the mason-work at Hopetoun House were completed by 1702. This, of course, has long been considered by historians as the house's initial completion date (before further projects began in 1706) based on Colen Campbell's brief description of the house in *Vitruvius Britannicus*.¹⁸ However, just because this portion of construction was finished by 1702 does not mean that it was anywhere near to being in a liveable condition. Indeed, there were yet a number of areas of construction yet to be achieved (including further mason-work).

Since the structure was mostly complete by this point, a number of craftsmen were employed at Hopetoun simultaneously. At the same time, because these crafts were not nearly as expensive as mason-work, Lady Margaret only ended up paying £1,625.12s Scots total (or £687.18s.3d Scots for every craft except masonry) in 1701. Alexander Eizat stayed on at Hopetoun from the previous year and was paid six times between 8 February and 27 December 1701.¹⁹ A blacksmith, William Aitken, and a plumber, Joseph Forster, also began working

in 1701. Aitken signed a contract on 11 March in which he agreed to provide brass- and ironwork for the main house and office houses,²⁰ conforming to 'the patterns given in be him to Ldy Margaret Hope of Hoptoun.'²¹ This suggests that Lady Margaret's role as patroness extended into the more intricate aspects of the house's design and construction, and that it continued into the first years of the eighteenth century, two years after her son got married. Aitken was to carry out a wide array of projects, ranging from tool repair to rails for staircases. The start of his work was accompanied by the start of Joseph Forester's plumbing work. Although no initiating contract has been found for Joseph Forster, he signed receipts of discharge on 3 July, 1 August, and 26 December, 1701.²² His work consisted largely of bringing water to Hopetoun.

1702

Only one person employed by Lady Margaret had so far completed at least part of what he had been hired to do. Bachepe signed a receipt of discharge on 24 December, 1702; though the entirety of Hopetoun House had not yet been built, the basic structure of the main house was complete.²³ As will come to be seen, he still had the ornamental mason-work (described by the contract) to do.²⁴ He also had to take care of the office houses and landscape structures. Therefore, the focus of Bachepe's projects would shift in the ensuing years. Meanwhile, other artisans' work began in earnest, which is noted by the spike in total building expenditures from £1,625.12s Scots in 1701 to £4,252.18s Scots in 1702. It is clear that Alexander Eizat continued working at Hopetoun House in 1702 based on the fact that he was paid on 4 February, 6 May, 29 July, and 12 November.²⁵ Joseph Forster's presence at Hopetoun can be confirmed based on the receipts of discharge he signed on 13 April and 31 October, 1702.²⁶ Over the course of 1701 and 1702, Forester was tasked



Fig. 3. A surviving bedchamber on the second storey of the southeast corner of the original block by William Bruce, c.1703. (Author)

with receiving the lead he was to use for pipes at Hopetoun, and then crafting and installing the house's basic plumbing work.

Some of his projects included installing pipes at 'ye funtoun head' (this was presumably the large fountain located in the oval pond in the parterre) and cleaning clogged pipes.²⁷ Moreover, he made 'four Lairg Squair pipes for bringen ye watter off ye Roffe both seides off ye hous.'²⁸ That he crafted and mounted gutters at Hopetoun's main house in *circa* 1702 indicates that it had begun to be transformed from a stone shell into a functioning country house. Another plumbing-work account specifies that these gutters were placed on Hopetoun's east and west façades.²⁹ That Charles Hope (who was not yet the First Earl) signed a contract with a plasterer, George Humphray, on 17 June, 1702 also indicates the main house was under steady development.³⁰ Humphray was charged with 'Work[ing] the hail plaister work

within the said Charles Hope his new house of Abercorne All of good sufficient tight and smooth plaister work.'³¹ Not only was Humphray responsible for plastering the walls and ceilings of the main house, laigh rooms, and office houses, he was also to craft Hopetoun's decorative plaster-work ('Cornish work,' 'Astragall moulding,' 'any smaller Cornishes in Low rooms & office houses').³² Despite the start of decorative work in the main house's interiors, there was yet a great deal to be done.

1703

The total building expenditures for Hopetoun increased again to £5,856.8s.8d Scots that year. Alexander Eizat was paid for another year's work on 4 February, 1 April, 9 July, and 6 September, 1703.³³ However, according to building accounts from 1703,

several craftsmen (including Forster) had shifted the main focus of their time and labour from the main house to the office houses and other functional spaces in 1703. Hopetoun's main house was in the process of becoming a liveable space. However, that does not mean that it was yet complete or an appropriate representation of the Hopes' wealth and status. Indeed, the remaining work yet to be carried out at the interior and exterior of the main house was decorative in nature. Bachope still worked on the windows for the main staircase (imbedded in the cupola) and the entablature on the east façade of the main house.³⁴ Another account lists paint-jobs carried out by Thomas Warrander at Hopetoun between June, 1701 and December, 1703. He painted 'the thre [sic] rooms' in the basement, the 'Great Vestible' in the ground storey, and 'ane bed Char; & ane Closet' in the first storey each an oak colour (Warrander probably just varnished these rooms: Figs. 3 & 4).³⁵ Although the basement must have

contained more than three rooms, the three rooms indicated in this document may have been separate from any work spaces. This clause also hints that the fireplace and entrance doorjamb in the vestibule (entrance hall) were painted to resemble marble. Though a marble mantelpiece resides there now, it evidently replaced a wooden one (Fig. 5). He subsequently painted 'the Capitalls & flowers of the Great dore piece of the Vestible wt English Gold.'³⁶ The vestibule was not austere but was rather fitted out to impress visitors.

Warrander's painting projects in the main house were extensive and became more lavish and impressive the further into the house one went. The great stair enjoyed intricate paint-work (Figs. 6 & 7). The carved vegetation work 'of the Cupilla' were gilded 'wt true English Gold,' while 'all the timber & lead work' of the rest of the staircase were painted 'thre [sic] times over wt a stone colours in oyll & painting the 8 arches in imitation of Glass.'³⁷ Though

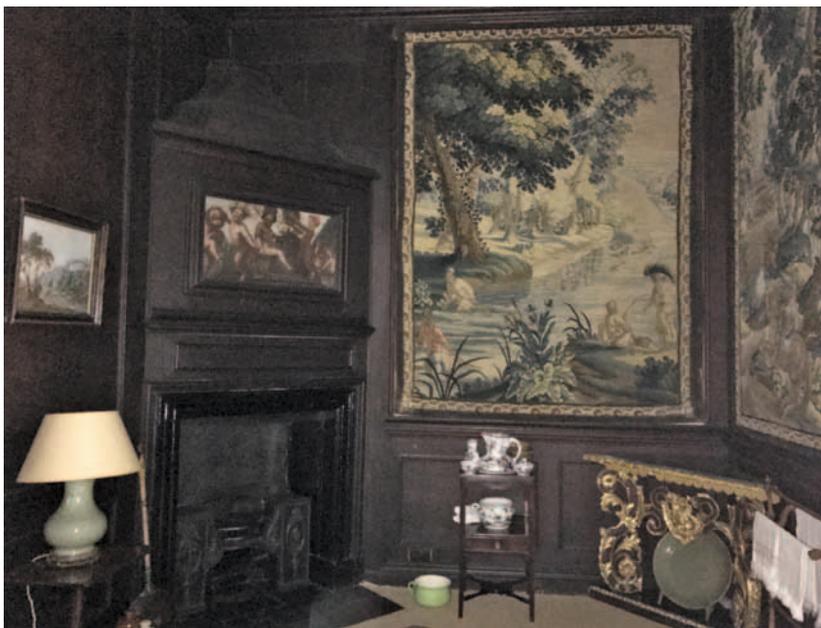


Fig. 4. A surviving closet on the second storey of the south-east corner of the William Bruce house, c.1703. (Author)

the bare oak of the staircase as it can be seen to day is sumptuous in and of itself, the gilded carving against the stone background would have been a lavish spectacle. The eight pendentives supporting the original cupola (which are now decorated with a Baroque mural) also were originally painted to resemble glass. This was intended as an extension of the sky above (Fig. 8). With the light shining through the cupola, the ambience given off by the main stair must have been like an otherworldly garden – with the gilded vegetation sparkling against a sort of *trompe l'oeil* courtyard. The notion of extending the outdoors into the interior was a motif elsewhere in the house.

In another item, Warrander describes ‘Collereing the Belcony roume in the 3d [first] Story three tymes over wt ane pearle colour in oyll & marbeling the Chimny.’³⁸ The balcony room is believed to have been the room directly above the Garden Parlour; it would have opened onto the balcony of the garden

façade portico and overlooked the parterre. The choice to paint this room a pearl colour would have made the room bright and airy – which was important for a room that was essentially an extension of the garden. Because this room has since been transformed into a hall and series of rooms, it is hard to picture how the balcony room would have looked (Fig. 9). Nevertheless, Warrander’s account provides further insight on the original layout of Bruce’s Hopetoun and continues to do so in the very next clause. Warrander states that he painted ‘the EARLES [sic] Bed Cham 116 ells & in the Ante char betwixt it & the Counteses Bed Cham’ a walnut colour, giving the fireplaces a marble effect in the process.³⁹ This is a very important piece of information: Warrander tells the modern reader the exact layout of the principal private apartments as they stood in 1703.

The three rooms in the southwest corner of the main house have long been believed to have been the



Fig. 5. A marble mantelpiece replacing a marbled wooden one in the vestibule of the William Bruce house, c.1703. (Author)



Fig. 6. First-floor view of Alexander Eizat's main staircase from the east, William Bruce, c.1703. The walls of the staircase would have originally been painted to resemble stone and the carved, floral decoration would have been gilded. (*Author*)

original location for Lord Hopetoun's bedchamber and closets (see Figure 1).⁴⁰ Using Warrander's description, it follows that the identical set of rooms in the southeast corner of the main house was Lady Hopetoun's suite of bedchamber and two closets. Both sets of rooms were subsequently divided in the centre of the southern enfilade by one chamber that could be accessed via the southern stair or the Lord's and Lady's bedchambers. This would originally have been the antechamber. This is in defiance of Macaulay's theory for the location of Lord and Lady Hopetoun's apartments, which he believed occupied the southwest and northwest corners of the house.⁴¹ In addition to stating the original layout of the main house, Warrander also describes the original ornamentation for Lady Hopetoun's suite. Lady Hopetoun's bedchamber

was fitted out with walnut-coloured panels that were to fit landscape paintings.⁴² These panels were given a black, japanned finish. Warrander also gilded and lacquered the dentils of the cornice in this bedchamber. Lady Hopetoun's dressing room was also fitted with panels intended to hold landscape paintings, which were subsequently painted 'in tortyshell on ane Gold ground.'⁴³ That Lady Henrietta's apartment was lavishly decorated, which suited her status, underscores Warrander's skills as a painter. Hopetoun made use of the best of Lowland craftsmanship.

However, other decorative work for Hopetoun House was imported from Holland. The Hopes imported 36 paintings that depicted scenes from Classic literature from the popular Dutch painter, Philip Tideman, in 1703 and 1704.⁴⁴ Three of these

paintings were destined for Lord Hopetoun's bedchamber in 1703: one depicted Scipio and the Carthaginian Bride; another depicted an allegory of youth forsaking lust; the last depicted the musical duel between Apollo and Pan.⁴⁵ The subjects of these paintings that Lord Hopetoun chose were suitable ones for the bedchamber of a wealthy, newly minted aristocrat and newly-wed groom. The first two, according to Basil Skinner, symbolised 'generosity and continence' and 'probity'.⁴⁶ In other words, these paintings signified marital faith and the proper behaviour of a good husband. Skinner states that the third painting was meant to symbolise patronage of the arts.⁴⁷ However, it is possible that this painting was meant to convey another meaning: humility. As the story goes, Apollo gave King Midas donkey ears as revenge for his choosing Pan as the victor of the musical duel. Although Lord Hopetoun had power and wealth, he subtly stated that he understood the consequences of overstepping hierarchical lines. More importantly within the context of this article is the fact that the character and function of individual rooms began to take shape in 1703.

Warrander's documentation also serves another very important purpose in that it helps piece together what else of the house had been completed by 1703. Although this author has found no building accounts detailing the wright-work performed by Eizat between 1699 and 1704,⁴⁸ the decorative projects described above can help explain some of the projects he did complete. In addition to the panels, door jambs, and wooden wall-linings of the balcony room, bedchambers, and vestibule, Eizat was also undoubtedly responsible for the elaborate wood-work of the main staircase. Not only did this include the baluster, panels, and wall-linings, but also the intricately carved vegetation. Since Warrander managed to decorate these rooms in 1703 indicates that Eizat had completed these spaces before then. Similar woodwork that survives in the Garden Parlour and second-storey bedchambers



Fig. 7. Carved work (originally gilded) by Alexander Eizat on the main staircase, c.1703. (*Author*)

are, according to James Macaulay, the result of his handiwork.⁴⁹ Hopetoun's main house took shape as a symbol of status, wealth, and taste in 1703. However, work on the main house continued in 1704.

1704

Bachope's work at the main house resumed in 1704, and his main focus was on the east (entrance) façade and the staircase leading up to the portico. He and two masons were employed to 'doun tak[e] of the stair that entred to the vestable' (which probably linked the portico and the terrace) and to help carve the portico arches.⁵⁰ Another mason, David Mather, was 'at the stair that goes down to the [vestibule] and at the helving of the turns of the porteigou [sic].'⁵¹

John Andreu and John Smith also helped polish and carry out the ornamental work of the portico.⁵² Work on the terrace (the façade-platform) was also carried out in 1704. Bachope billed the First Earl £1,049.10s.4d Scots for laying pavement in the terrace and ‘at the stair that goes up to the wastable [sic].’⁵³ A great deal of work took place around the main house’s east façade. Once again, Bachope had finished the basic structural shell of Hopetoun’s main house by 1702 – which is what consequently allowed other craftsmen to begin working to make the edifice functional and liveable. Although the mason-work was nearly complete, there was clearly some remnant decorative work left to be done. This was not all that occurred at the main house, though. These masons were, of course, accompanied by other craftsmen working towards finishing the main house.

Alexander Eizat was paid for carrying out wright-work projects on 19 January and 12 September, 1704.⁵⁴ George Humphray, who signed his contract with the First Earl in 1702, accompanied Eizat in carrying out plasterwork for the main house between March, 1703 and May, 1704.⁵⁵ Humphray’s building account does not detail where he conducted plasterwork, but simply states that he generally plastered ‘Roofs Cornises wall And Walls, yr frieses’; he most likely carried out these projects throughout the house.⁵⁶ Aside from Eizat and Humphray, Warrander was also still present at Hopetoun in 1704 and was subsequently able to continue his paint-jobs for the main house. That year, he varnished ‘all the wanscot [oak] linyng in the Earles Closet.’⁵⁷ The First Earl’s bedchamber and closet were decorated in a dark, natural manner compared to the elegant opulence of Lady Hopetoun’s apartment described above. He also painted five oak mantelpieces in oil in addition to the ones in the Earl’s and Countess’ bedchambers.⁵⁸ In other words, the fireplaces throughout the main house (not just in the vestibule) were originally wooden rather than marble.

Warrander not only painted the decorative – and panel-work of walls, but also furniture. He

painted eight chairs destined for Lady Hopetoun’s bedchamber, and applied some ‘colouring work’ to her blue bedstead.⁵⁹ While many other pieces were simply oiled to protect the original wood, he also painted two bed cornices white and silver.⁶⁰ What this also tells modern readers is that furniture had been moved into the main house – particularly the private apartments – by 1703 and 1704. Furthermore, Warrander’s account gives the modern reader an idea of the entire original decorative schemes for certain rooms. This is further helped by the fact that an additional 24 paintings by Philip Tideman, also depicting scenes from Classic literature and mythology, came to Hopetoun over the course of 1704. Although Tideman’s account does not include the destined room for every painting, the ones with known destinations nonetheless provide helpful insight.

The landscapes of Lady Hopetoun’s bedchamber were to be accompanied by three of Tideman’s paintings. Two symbolised marital faith: one depicted Penelope and the suitors from *The Odyssey*, while the other depicted Lucretia’s suicide.⁶¹ Meanwhile, the third painting signifies the importance of producing a male heir: it depicted Jupiter, disguised as Amphitryon, preparing to rape Alcmena.⁶² The product of this encounter was, of course, Hercules. The paintings chosen for Lady Hopetoun’s room embodied the pillars of contemporary noble femininity. Still in their early twenties, it was hoped that Lady Hopetoun’s steadfast faith and loyalty to the First Earl would produce a strong and virile male heir. The decorative scheme for Lord and Lady Hopetoun’s bedchambers were therefore gendered. It should be remembered that the Tideman paintings in the First Earl’s bedchamber conveyed nobility and marital faith – all important tenets to a young nobleman. Tideman’s paintings in Lady Hopetoun’s bedchamber symbolised marital faith and feminine duty, which were both the chief responsibilities of a young noblewoman. These bedchambers were thus

constant reminders of Lord and Lady Hopetoun's respective roles. Decorative schemes extended beyond Lord and Lady Hopetoun's apartments.

The blacksmith, William Aitken, also provided iron – and brass-work for Hopetoun House. Much of what he crafted were still tools and general repairs, as well as keys and locks for the entire house. For example, he created a brass lock and key for the 'back entrie in the gardin room.'⁶³ He also worked at various fireplaces and chimneys around the house, such as those in one of the dining rooms, drawing rooms, and bedchambers.⁶⁴ More importantly, Rowan has also long proposed that it was Aitken who crafted the iron baluster for the southern staircase (Fig. 10).⁶⁵ In August, 1704, Aitken provides the following item in one of his many blacksmithing accounts: 'the stair in the intrie being 60 Ston & 2 pond weght at siven pond a Ston.'⁶⁶ This most likely refers to the iron rail that was intended for the sweeping staircase linking the portico to the terrace. It should be noted that any blacksmithing accounts

Aitken recorded between 1701 and 1703 have been lost (either within the archives themselves or to time). However, Warrander can return with some more context and clues to the order of operations at the main house. In his account dating from June, 1701 to December, 1703, Warrander records that he painted 'twise oer wt ane pearle Coller in oyll the Iron rails of the back stair case & the two stairs of Communication betwixt the princll House and office houses.'⁶⁷ While the latter two staircases would have been in the main house's pavilions, the former most likely refers to the southern staircase next to the main staircase, thereby confirming Rowan's theory. Not only does Warrander tell modern readers that it was originally painted a pearl colour, it also would have had to have been completed between 1701 and 1703 in order to be painted in that period. Once again, it is clear that the main structural features of the house were completed by 1702 or 1703, and the ensuing years were devoted to decorative work or finishing touches. This type of work continued in 1705.



Fig. 8. Cupola of the main staircase, c.1699–1707. It has since been painted over with Baroque *trompe l'oeil* imagery, but was originally painted to resemble glass. (Author)

1705

Work at Hopetoun spiked again from £4,729.16s.10d Scots in 1704 to £10,301.12s.7d Scots in 1705. Part of these expenses were again from Eizat, who received two more payments on 22 January and 18 June, 1705.⁶⁸ An account has finally surfaced detailing what jobs he performed that year, as well. Not only did he craft some furniture for Hopetoun, he also created and installed the moulding for the north (or great) dining room, and removed stains from Lady Hopetoun's closet floor.⁶⁹ Another craftsman still employed at Hopetoun was Joseph Forster, who installed more gutters on the west side of the main



Fig. 9. The western side of the main staircase, c.1699–1707. This area was originally the ‘balcony room’ but has since been transformed into a small corridor and bedrooms. Without further documentation, images, or a floor plan of the first storey, it is impossible to know exactly how it was laid out or how it looked. (*Author*)

house roof to direct rainwater away from the portico balcony.⁷⁰ Although Forster had continued working at Hopetoun in 1704, he was focused mainly on the office houses rather than the main house.⁷¹ It was also in this year that he began installing large pipes that connected a large ‘bason’ to the sea.⁷² Tobias Bachope also had a hand at crafting this basin, in which he laid ‘pethment in the bottom.’⁷³ In fact, this account later clarifies that there were two basins – one in the wilderness and one in the ‘kenell yard.’⁷⁴ These large vessels must have been Hopetoun's main water sources and would have been essential for the main house and office houses. While this was not ‘decorative work,’ it must have been a very extensive project that took a long time to complete. It also, again, provided water for the entire house, and so was also a hugely important task. Other jobs carried out by Bachope and his men in 1705, meanwhile, could constitute as finishing touches.

Bachope worked on the terrace and vestibule staircase at the east façade in 1705, as well.⁷⁵ Another building account from the same year specifies that Bachope laid down pavement for the ‘tarras walk,’ measured to be 2,114’ 6”’, and carried out ‘Hewin work’ on the vestibule staircase.⁷⁶ This staircase presumably linked the terrace platform to the portico. That same year, John Scott (perhaps in the employ of Bachope) wrought door and window jambs on the east façade and in the roof cornice.⁷⁷ He also helped build walls for the inner and outer courts, which would have contained the main entrance gate.⁷⁸ David Mather's jobs were even more intensive. One project required him to level ‘the fot [sic] of the main stair’ and to replace it with marble.⁷⁹ He was also required to lay the stairs for the west entrance with marble.⁸⁰ In addition to final touches, this spike in work at Hopetoun's main house seems to be due in part to the fact that some areas had to be redone. Work continued at only a slightly slower pace in 1706, during which time building expenditures came to £7,379.14s.3 2/3d Scots.

1706

Bachope and other masons in his employ did an extensive number of masonry projects in 1706. By this point, their work definitely dealt mostly with the office houses and functional spaces, as well as with the areas pertaining to Hopetoun's landscape. Nevertheless, surviving accounts from 1706 record that they were still working at the main house. David Mather and James Brown unfortunately had to re-do Bachope's work on the terrace and entrance staircase in March, 1706; Mather also cemented the stairs leading up to the 'taras [sic] walk' in May, 1706.⁸¹ It is uncertain whether these were either the sets of stairs



Fig. 10. South stair, with ironwork by William Aitken William Bruce, c.1703. (Author)

leading to the colonnades or the longer set of stairs leading to the platform. Another mason, William Conburgh, worked on the two sweeping staircases leading from the courtyard to platform and platform to portico on the east façade in July, 1706.⁸² These building accounts hammer in the notion that the convex colonnades were part of Hopetoun's original design and were to be built within the first few years of the eighteenth century. However, masonry-work did not only take place on the east façade in 1706.

Two building accounts record that these masons continued working on the garden entrance staircase from the year before.⁸³ In addition, Bachope and his men worked on the west façade as a whole (Fig. 11), such as on the 'Easler and plints of the Court,' as well as the 'Astrigalls of it.'⁸⁴ Within the context of this document, it is believed that the term 'court' denotes façade as the thought of an actual courtyard containing plinths and astragals is frankly hard to picture. As an aside, the possibility that a "court" encompassed a building's façade and the space in front of it (the courtyard) in the early eighteenth century suggests that they were not thought of as separate entities. Instead, they must be thought of in the present mind as a single, three-dimensional entity; they were designed with the physical experience of real people in mind. In any case, it makes sense to think of the two aforementioned items as one of the main house façades.

Because they are listed in conjunction with the hewn work on the west entrance staircase, it is likely that these projects were done to the west façade. The fact that this account then states that Bachope and his men wrought the 'the bases of the pillars [columns],' the column shafts, and the 'Capitalls of it' reinforces this notion.⁸⁵ Bruce's east façade contained pilasters in the portico, but not stand-alone columns. The west façade portico, meanwhile, still does contain free-standing Ionic columns that support a balcony (or what is now simply an entablature without a pediment) (Fig. 12). Finally, he finished the 'Architrive in the balconie

that goes betwixt the pillars.⁸⁶ Thus, in addition to hewing the basic Classical details of the west façade, he also spent part of 1706 erecting the west façade portico. David Mather, William Conburgh, and John Brown were also employed at performing various tasks at the west portico's balcony, such as 'polishing the Cornish of the west balconie and Cutting the astrigalls of it.'⁸⁷ They (as well as some other, more minor masons) also worked on the carving work around the west façade door.⁸⁸ Although elements pertaining to the balcony had been built around the portico (such as the balcony room or gutters), it took until 1706 for the main house to reach a state of completion that it could support this decorative feature. Bachope also worked on the 'Squier and Rustik Easler [ashlar] of the parts with the Astrigalls,' which presumably meant he tried to emphasise the rustication of the basement storey.⁸⁹

Although the bulk of construction on the main house centred around mason-work in 1706, glasswork and blacksmith-work were also carried out

in this period. David Burton, the glazier, installed new windows and mended old ones. He fitted the Garden Room, cupola, and a pavilion with sash windows.⁹⁰ Another account specifies that two cupola windows were fitted with new, leaded glass.⁹¹ He also installed French glass in a window in the vestibule.⁹² He put in two casement windows on the north and south sides of the terrace.⁹³ It is difficult to know where these windows were placed exactly, but they could have been the ones encasing the ends of both colonnades (two fronting the platform and two on the edge of the stables). Meanwhile, he also put in old-fashioned lozenge windows in unspecified locations in the main house and pavilions.⁹⁴ This varied use of window-types implies that, even though Hopetoun was designed to be the height of fashion and sophistication, lozenge windows were probably cheaper alternatives that were suitable to less public parts of the house. Meanwhile, based on the image of the main house in *Vitruvius Britannicus*, the sash windows would have been installed in key areas of



Fig. 11. The west façade of William Bruce's house, c.1699–1707. (Author)

display. William Aitken continued to carry out iron – and brass-work for the entirety of the Hopetoun house complex, but much of it still consisted mainly of nails, tools, and locks and keys. Of interest is that he made a new key for Lady Hopetoun's closet; the lock for this room must have already been crafted.⁹⁵ However, the flurry of activity at the main house described above essentially tapered off after 1706. Although some projects were clearly still carried out at the main house, Hopetoun House's office houses and landscape (both organised and agricultural) became the chief focus of these craftsmen from about 1704.

1707-1719

The total amount spent on construction projects was only £1,307.2s.8d Scots in 1707, and little of that was spent on the main house itself. The only project of note was that David Burton installed a number of lozenge windows around the main house



Fig. 12. West façade doorcase. (Author)

– some with French glass.⁹⁶ William Aitken also continued crafting iron – and brass-work around the Hopetoun House complex.⁹⁷ Most projects carried out at Hopetoun thereafter were mainly in the nature of repairs and maintenance. Otherwise, Lord Hopetoun's architectural focus had shifted away from Hopetoun's main house to the office houses, landscape buildings, and other such structures. One significant project was the expansion of the parish church, Abercorn Kirk. Indeed, the fact that Lord Hopetoun signed a contract with David Mather on 11 March, 1707 to initiate the construction of the new family aisle, designed by William Bruce, indicates that the main house essentially finished by that date.⁹⁸ David Mather signed another contract with the First Earl for the construction of the gardener's house on 7 September, 1711.⁹⁹ Both parties signed another contract for the construction of oxen byres next to the dog kennel yard on 3 April, 1714.¹⁰⁰ This notion is hugely important in helping to confirm the revised timeline for the construction of Hopetoun's main house. It shows that the basic structure and layout was done around 1703 and that some spatial re-organisation and decorative schemes were complete by 1707. The question remains as to why this revised timeline is significant.

CONCLUSION

This article has demonstrated that the construction of Hopetoun House constituted a single project that lasted from 1699 to 1706. The shell of the house was completed by the end of 1700, and some modifications to the initial design were made in 1701. These changes help to bridge the gap between the commission described in the 1698 contract and what appears in Campbell's second volume of *Vitruvius Britannicus* (published 1717). Alexander Eizat began carpentry work at the main house in 1699. Although none of his accounts from before 1705 have been found, it can safely be assumed that he completed

the wood panelling and carved decorative work of the balcony room, some bedchambers, the vestibule, and the main staircase by 1703. Thomas Warrander carried out varnishing – and paintwork in those rooms by 1703. It can also be assumed that William Aitken wrought the iron rails for the south staircase by 1703 because Warrander painted them that same year. George Humphray plastered the entire house and crafted the interior Classical ornamental work by 1704. Lord and Lady Hopetoun's bedchambers and the second storey guest suites were fitted out with Philip Tideman paintings, depicting scenes from Classical literature, during 1703 and 1704. Joseph Forester installed gutters and established Hopetoun House's water supply by 1705, and David Burton installed windows and glasswork around the main house during the same period. Tobias Bachope and other masons were responsible for completing the east façade portico in 1705 and the west façade portico in 1706. They also made modifications to both façades during this time. The 'terrace' – the colonnades and the east façade-platform – was also part of those finishing touches. It can safely be assumed that, aside from some minor projects and repairs, the main house was essentially completed by 1707, since the chief focus of the first Earl and the craftsmen in his employ shifted to Abercorn Kirk and the office houses between 1707 and 1719. The main house was completed well before Campbell published engraved images of it in 1717.

This revised timeline has additionally put to rest some of the apparent discrepancies that have worried past historians. The office houses and pavilions were expanded in 1701, defying what was originally commissioned in 1698. These alterations occurred, however, when the main house was still a stone shell, and so would not have posed any major difficulties in the order of operations for the building's construction. The colonnades continue to be an enigma: the period when they were constructed – and even their very existence – has been questioned since McWilliam's analysis of Hopetoun in 1978.

However, since no masonry accounts have been found between 1699 and 1701, it is very possible that they were constructed in this period. Furthermore, while the colonnades were not mentioned by the building contract for Hopetoun's main house and office houses, any building contracts relating to the stables are yet to be found. It is possible that the formal commissioning of the colonnades can be found in that document, as well.

This article has also been able to re-establish something of the house's original layout. By 1703, Lord and Lady Hopetoun's private suites occupied the southwest and southeast corners of the main block and were separated by a single antechamber. Lady Hopetoun's suite was probably moved to the south pavilion (considered part of the south office house) by 1706. This allowed the large room to the south of the vestibule (what was once Lady Hopetoun's bedchamber) to become the private dining room, and the former antechamber to become the private withdrawing room. What were once Lady Hopetoun's closets may have become small service rooms, as proposed by Deborah Howard. Suddenly, the house's layout became like that of a Continental palace, with Lord Hopetoun's and the state *enfilades* lining the grand central suite. This spatial floorplan was paired with flashy ornamentation and furniture (gold, silver, and other metals make regular appearances). The fickleness of the layout and the grandiosity of interior decoration speak to Lady Margaret Hope's and Lord Hopetoun's taste and ambition. They also foreshadow the enormous renovations that were later to occur under William Adam. In short, the revised timeline has not only created a much better picture of Bruce's Hopetoun House; it has also thrown new light on the Hope family's aspirations and mentality.

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- 2 A. Rowan, 'The Building of Hopetoun House,' *Architectural History* 27 (1984), pp. 183-209; J. Macaulay, *The Classical Country House in Scotland: 1660-1800* (London, 1987), pp. 19-22.
- 3 National Register of Archives for Scotland (hereafter NRAS), NRAS/888 Bundle 626 (Hopetoun House Papers Trust). Thomas Pringle (Writer to the Signet), George Sherriff, and George Keith were witnesses.
- 4 Bruce, 'Hopetoun House Floor Plan,' scanned from Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, Volume 2 of 2 (London, 1717), C. 2, PL. 75.
- 5 Thomas Pringle, 'Receipt of Discharge by Tobias Bachope,' receipt of discharge, 29 December, 1698, NRAS/888 Bundle 626, HHPT. Also, see: Macaulay, *The Classical Country House in Scotland: 1660-1800*, p. 23.
- 6 'Receipt of Discharge, Nidrie the 28th of March 1699 years by Tobias Bachope,' receipt of discharge, 28 March, 1699, NRAS/888 Bundle 626, HHPT.
- 7 NRAS/888 Bundle 626.
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- 13 George Sherriff, 'Acct of Additionall Mason work at the houses of Abercorn not Containd in Contract all which is finished preceeding the 1st 1701,' building account, *circa* 1701, NRAS/888 Bundle 626, HHPT. Also, see: Rowan, 'The Building of Hopetoun House,' pp. 185 and 199 (footnote 6); Macaulay, 'Sir William Bruce's Hopetoun House,' pp. 7 and 13 (footnote 60).
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- 18 Colen Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus* Also, see Rowan, 'The Building of Hopetoun,' p. 187. In addition to stating that Hopetoun House was completed in 1702, Campbell also notes that Hopetoun was built with French rustication. Other scholars who have written about Hopetoun (Alistair Rowan, Deborah Howard, James Macaulay, Konrad Ottenheim, and John Lowrey) have noted that Bruce designed a floorplan centralised around an octagonal staircase, which was unusual at this time. For more information regarding Bruce's design for Hopetoun House, see Rowan, 'The Building of Hopetoun,' pp. 183-209; D. Howard, 'Chapter 5: Sir William Bruce's Design for Hopetoun House and Its Forerunners,' in I. Gow and A. Rowan (eds.), *Scottish Country Houses: 1600-1914* (Edinburgh, 1995), pp. 53-68; J. Macaulay, *The Classical Country House in Scotland: 1660-1800* (London, 1987); J. Macaulay, 'Sir William Bruce's Hopetoun House,' *Architectural Heritage* 20/1 (2009), pp. 1-14;; K. Ottenheim, 'Dutch Influences in William Bruce's Architecture,' *Architectural Heritage*

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- 24 Hopetoun Contract, NRAS/888 Bundle 626.
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- 26 Joseph Forester, 'Receipt of Discharge, Joseph Fforester Plumber 13 April 1702,' receipt of discharge, 13 April, 1702, NRAS/888 Bundle 627, HHPT; Joseph Forester, 'Receipt of Discharge Joseph Fforester plummer, Oct 31 1702,' receipt of discharge, 31 October, 1702, NRAS/888 Bundle 627, HHPT.
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