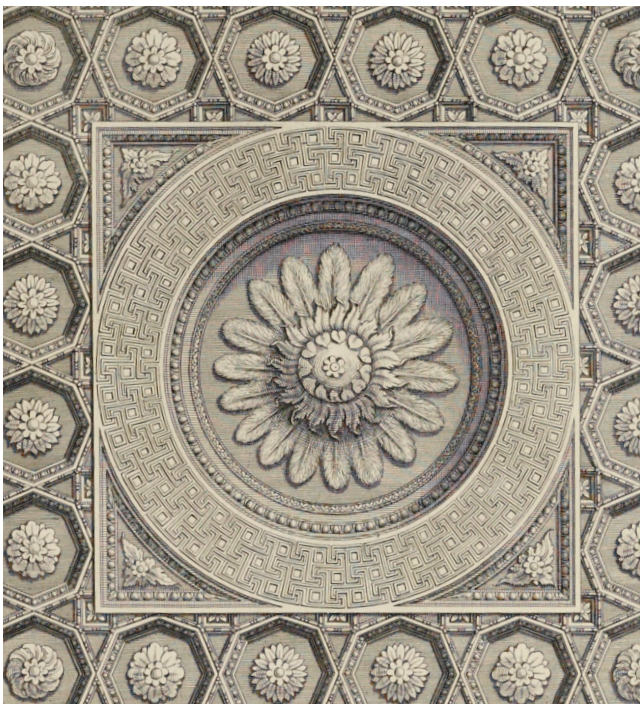


Influence on design

In Britain, 'the folio influenced the whole concept of architectural design and decoration' (Browning 1979: 95). Among the examples in greater London most important is Osterley House (Isleworth), extensively remodelled by Robert Adam, who drew on Wood and Dawkins' volumes throughout his career. The Drawing Room ceiling constitutes a subtle reworking of Plate XIX (the Temple of the Sun). Adam rebuilt the house round a courtyard of which the centre of the north-west side was left open and spanned by a great Ionic portico, inspired by Borra's images of the Temple of the Sun (elsewhere in the house Adam deployed a variety of different styles, notably in the Etruscan room). Syon House (Brentford) was also extensively remodelled by Adam, who drew on Palmyrene motifs derived from Wood and Dawkins' volume.



Further Afield

Stratfield Saye (near Reading, Berkshire): the dining room ceiling (added c. 1775) is directly inspired by Plate XIX in Wood and Dawkins, while the Library ceiling is inspired by a detail in Plate VIII.

West Wycombe Park (Buckinghamshire): as well as including some of the earliest Greek revival architecture in Britain (the west end portico, c. 1770), West Wycombe boasts an atrium with a painted ceiling copied from The Ruins of Palmyra.

Woburn Abbey (Bedfordshire): the ceiling of Queen Victoria's bedroom is attributed to G.B. Borra. This was part of the Flitcroft rebuilding campaign from 1747 (pretty much complete by 1761). The ceiling resembles more closely Borra's site drawings of the Temple of Bel, than it does the engraving published in the Ruins of Palmyra. According to Victoria Poulton, Deputy Curator, the 4th Duke makes a note in his memoranda book for 1753 (November 25th) to order another set of the *Ruins of Palmyra* (Woburn Estate, HMC 58).

Further Reading

Iain Browning *Palmyra* (London 1979)

A. Rowan 'Giovanni Battista Borra a Stowe: novità antiche nello sviluppo del parco inglese' in G. Dardanello ed. *Giovanni Battista Borra: da Palmira a Racconigi* (Turin 2013) 111-18

A. and M. Sartre *Palmyre: vérités et légendes* (Paris 2016)

Susan Tebby 'The Ruins of Palmyra: new research and some links with 18th century ceilings in England', in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Literary & Philosophical Society*, 98 (2004) 28-36

Paul Veyne *Palmyra: an irreplaceable treasure* trs. T. Fagan (Chicago 2017)

Olga Zoller 'Crossing borders: the pioneering role of the architect-engineer Giovanni Battista Borra between Piedmont and Britain' 263-78 in P.Bianchi and K.Wolfe eds. *Turin and the British in the age of the Grand Tour* (Cambridge 2017)

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Palmyra in London and Beyond

There are significant Palmyrene objects and traces of Palmyra's eighteenth-century impact scattered across London and beyond. We offer here a brief guide to some of them.



In 1751, Robert Wood and James Dawkins, accompanied by the Italian architect Giovanni Battista Borra, travelled to Palmyra (and to Baalbek), where they spent several days recording what they saw. These records formed the basis for a spectacular publication in 1753 (in both English and French and including 57 plates): *The Ruins of Palmyra, otherwise Tedmor in the Desert*. This work caused a sensation – and was to have a dramatic influence particularly on architects.

Hellenic and Roman library

The Library holds some of the notebooks in which Robert Wood recorded his observations. These are currently on view in a special display curated by Jen Baird (Birkbeck), Joanna Ashe (HARL) and Paul Jackson (HARL) to accompany the FIEC conference.



The British Museum

On display in room **G70** ('Rome and the Roman Empire') are 12 busts from Palmyra dating from c. 50 CE – C3rd, many with Palmyrene inscriptions e.g. funerary relief with man and woman 125036, shown here, c. 50-150 CE (1889); Palmyrene bust of Moqimu, son of Moqimu, C2nd (acquired 1895) 125031; Palmyrene bust of Aqmé, daughter of Habazi, C3rd (acquired 1884) 125024; limestone bust with funeral relief (man and woman), C3rd 132614 (1959).

On display in **G49** (Roman Britain) is a cast of a funerary monument with epitaph for Regina of the Catuvellauni. She is commemorated both in Latin and in Palmyrene Aramaic, the language of her husband Barates (identified as a *vexillarius* from Palmyra, who appears in another inscription for 50 km away at Corbridge). It was discovered in 1878 near the Roman fort at South Shields.

Royal Institute of British Architects

RIBA holds Borra's 1751 pen and ink drawings (in two bound volumes) based on the sketches he made in Palmyra (available via the study room of the V&A library).



Sir John Soane's Museum

Soane owned copies of the first edition of Wood and Dawkins' Palmyra book both in English and in French. The collection includes a number of architectural plaster models, representing restored monuments from Palmyra, e.g. Museum number: MR23, MR72, MR34, MR70 (made by François Fouquet 1787-1870). The model room can be visited as part of the Private Apartments tour: <https://www.soane.org/whats-on/tours/private-apartments-tour>