

Taylor, Robert 1714 - 1788



Robert Taylor [also known as Sir Robert Taylor] was born in Woodford, Essex, England in 1714. His father, also known as Robert Taylor (?-1742), was a master mason and monumental sculptor. Robert Taylor, junior was apprenticed to the sculptor Henry Cheere (1703-1781) in 1732. In 1741, following the completion of his apprenticeship, he travelled to Rome to continue his studies, however, in 1742 his father died and he was required to return home. He discovered that his father was bankrupt. Despite this, with the help of family friends, he was able set up in business as a sculptor, and within two years, by dint of hard work, was commissioned by Parliament to create and erect a monument to Captain Cornwall in Westminster Abbey. On 4 August 1744 Taylor was admitted to the freedom of the Mason's Company and that year was also commissioned to carve the pediment of the Mansion House in London.

It is unclear when Taylor switched to architecture. His first significant work was a house he designed for himself at 66 Charing Cross, London in 1745 and interiors at 14 St James's Square (1748-50) for Peter du Cane. Within a decade he was well established in the profession. His clients came from the newly emerging prosperous middle classes, including bankers, company directors, merchants, traders and commissioned officers in the army and navy, for whom he would design large country and town houses. It has been calculated that he designed over 50 country houses alone. He also designed or made alterations to some 15 public buildings, including extensive additions to the Bank of England (1766-88) and a number of bridges. In 1755 he designed a mausoleum for Robert Colebrooke at Chilham Church, Kent.

So successful was Taylor's architectural practice that when he died in 1788 he left an estate of £180,000. In comparison, Christopher Wren estate was valued at £50,000. He died in London on 27 September 1788.

Worked in

UK

Works

For a detailed list of architectural projects by Taylor see:

Colvin, pp. 1024-1028; see also [British Listed Buildings](#)

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Links

- British Listed Buildings <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/site-search/?q=%22Robert%20Taylor%22>
- John Harris and Malcolm Baker, 'Taylor, Sir Robert (1714–1788)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2013 [Subscription service] <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27077>
- Roger White. Sir Robert Taylor. *Grove Art Online*. Oxford Art Online [Subscription service] <https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T083541>
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Taylor_\(architect\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Taylor_(architect))
- ART UK <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/sir-robert-taylor-17141788-216418>
- The National Archives <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F59732>
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- Country Life Picture Library <https://www.futurecontenthub.com/search/keyword:%22Robert%20Taylor%22>