A SCOTTISH TRIUMPHAL PATH OF LEARNING
AT GEORGE HERIOT’S HOSPITAL, EDINBURGH

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George Heriot’s Hospital (begun 1628, and now known as George Heriot’s School) lies on a wide-open area just south of the Castle of Edinburgh, in a prominent position close to the Old Town (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Heriot’s Hospital – left, engraving of a view from Edinburgh Castle on Castle Hill. Source: Modern Athens (1829). Reproduced with acknowledgement to Peter Stubbs, www.edinphoto.org.uk.
Right, plan of the ground (bottom) and first floor [Scanned image of drawing taken from ‘Vitruvius Scotticus’, plate 105 by William Adam SC891865] © RCAHMS. Licensor www.rcahms.gov.uk.

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It is today approached by Lauriston Place, a busy east-west road separating the Old Town from the large public park known as the Meadows. The building has hosted an educational institution since its opening in 1659, and is named after James VI’s goldsmith George Heriot. A native of Edinburgh, Heriot left the majority of his fortune for the erection of a school for the impoverished sons of deceased Edinburgh burgesses. Here the boys were to be provided with education, accommodation, and either introduced to a profession or encouraged in undertaking higher education. The building itself has been extensively studied and its outstanding value appreciated, but surprisingly little work has been done to describe the relation between the Hospital and its natural and urban surroundings.¹

This article will focus on the outdoor organization of the Hospital’s grounds and on the traditional access to the building, which, I will demonstrate, took inspiration from the tradition of Renaissance triumphal entries, celebrating the monarch’s dynastic achievements and divine right to rule. I will show how the access to Heriot’s Hospital celebrated achievements of merit unconnected with birth-rights and class boundaries. Traditional triumphal themes were reinterpreted to celebrate both Heriot as munificent patron and the scholarly achievements of the students. Important connections with other similarly-structured educational buildings, such as the Caius College in Cambridge, will show how the outline of Heriot’s Hospital can be placed within an established culture. This article will also discuss the relationship between such an elaborate building and the city, its accessibility and its perception from the distance, and its symbolic importance as a celebrative landmark of both protestant charity and mercantile initiative.

George Heriot was jeweller to King James VI and Queen Anne of Denmark, and died in London on 27 February 1624. He left instructions in his will, dated 20 January 1623, for the bulk of his fortune to be
employed for the construction of a charitable institution for orphan burgesses’ sons in his hometown, Edinburgh. An appointed committee of Heriot’s most trusted friends was named in the will for the purpose. They were James Maxwell, member of His Majesty’s Bedchamber, Walter Balcanquall, Dean of Rochester, and Walter Alexander, Usher to the Prince of Wales, with the collaboration of the local authorities of Edinburgh. Although the untimely deaths of a succession of Master Masons meant frequent change of leads in the construction works, the design of the building is remarkably coherent. The design is a well-balanced mixture between local themes, such as the angular defensive towers and the inner courtyard with corner staircases seen in Linlithgow palace, and international flavours. The most recognizable foreign themes were the English chimneys, the strapwork and window decoration of Dutch inspiration, and the numerous Italianate elements inspired by well-renown architectural treatises of the time.

Originally, the Hospital was to be approached from the north side, from the very central Grassmarket, the city’s largest open public space and one of the main market areas, lying just underneath the Castle Rock. The

Figure. 2. Aerial view of the Hospital today; north and the Grassmarket are on top of the picture. The present south approach can clearly be seen on the south of the Hospital building [RCAHMS Aerial Photography SC702468] Crown Copyright: RCAHMS. Licensor www.rcahms.gov.uk
north entrance was redesigned by John Adam in 1762, and finally substituted by an entry from the south, avoiding the now unsafe Grassmarket area (Fig. 2).

The entry was completed by a gate imitating the style of Heriot’s Hospital in 1828-9. Today nothing remains of the north access as the development of the city and of the Hospital’s educational buildings cancelled any trace of it and of the structures connected with it. An analysis of the original approach is made possible thanks to the very detailed Gordon of Rothiemay’s map view referring to the situation in 1647 (Fig. 3).7

The pathway entrance on the Grassmarket started with a simple, unobtrusive-looking round arch of fairly big size cutting through the buildings facing the Grassmarket, and covered by a plain roof. The view shows only the internal part of the arch, and it is possible
that the majority of the decoration, if there was any at all, would have been on the external, public side, declaring the arch’s function as access gateway (Fig. 4).

This pathway, set between buildings and walls, ended in a second arch opening through the defensive wall built after the battle of Flodden in 1513. The arch had a square opening and marked the access into Heriot’s Hospital’s grounds and garden (Fig. 5).8

Although the drawing again allows a view of the internal part of the arch, the structure looks much more decorated than the previous one. In many aspects, this arch recalls triumphal archways built during the Renaissance as part of triumphal celebrations. As triumphal themes will be central in the analysis of the Hospital’s access, it is worth mentioning their importance within a European context, and in relation to Scotland in particular.

During the Renaissance, public celebrations modelled upon Roman triumphs became popular all around Europe to welcome rulers arriving into a city.9 Although ceremonial welcomes of a ruler into a town had remained popular throughout the Middle Ages, it is during the Renaissance that an historical connection with all’antica celebrations was recreated.10 Existing antique ruins and city gates were decorated and made part of the
celebration, while the bond with antiquity was strengthened through the creation of temporary gateways made by timber and canvas and decorated in a more or less faithful classical style (Fig. 6).11

These real and ephemeral structures formed a succession of stations creating a triumphal route. Triumphal entries represented occasions for public dialogue between sovereigns and subjects, as the temporary decorations, as well as the tableaux vivants and speeches accompanying them, often referred to specific local issues.12 The decorative style varied too; while in Italy a correct classical language was often preferred, in northern Europe the style was more decorative and imaginative, taking inspiration from traditional decorative taste and local topics.13 This richer style often figures in the imaginary structures appearing in treatises and works on perspective from northern European scholars such as Hans Vriedeman de Vries’ (1527-1607).

In my opinion, it is from triumphal structures of
this kind that the second arch in the Hospital’s pathway takes inspiration. Its apparent two dimensions and its visual separation from the surrounding walls recall temporary structures working as theatrical sets during triumphal entries, being placed within an existing urban context with which they do not necessarily relate. The two vertical lines on the external side of the structure could represent decorative columns, a common element employed in triumphal gateways to add an all’antica flavour. The horizontal lines in the lower part of the arch could represent bricks, used in ephemeral decoration to give an appearance of permanence to low budget structures and to create a further connection with antiquity. The curved decoration on top of the lintel and the three decorative pinnacles remind one more of elaborate northern European triumphal decorations than of Italian classical rigour.

Triumphal language was well known in Scotland during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as eight triumphal entries were staged in Edinburgh by the Stewart dynasty between 1503 and 1633. They are Margaret Tudor’s triumphal entry in 1503, Mary of Lorraine’s entry in 1538, the celebrations for Queen Mary’s wedding in Paris in 1558, and the triumphal entry of Mary herself on her return from Paris in 1561. In 1579 James VI entered Edinburgh, and Queen Anne of Denmark was welcomed in 1590. In 1617 and 1633 two triumphs were organized to celebrate respectively James VI’s and Charles I’s short visit to Scotland.14

Both ephemeral and permanent gateways were built on these occasions. In 1503 “At the Entryng of the said Towne was maid a Yatt of Wood painted, with Two Towrells was, at the Windowe in the Midds. In the wich Towrells was, at the Windowes, rested Angells syngyng joyously for the Comynge of so noble a Lady; and at the sayd middle Windowe was in lyk wys an angell presenting the Kees to the said Qwene.”15 This timber gateway, probably mimicking a castle, might have
looked like the arches built for Charles V’s entry into Bruges in 1515. (Fig. 7, left). Two of the main gateways of Edinburgh, the West Port and the Netherbow (Fig. 7, right), were repeatedly decorated during nearly all the entrances. The Netherbow was decorated with a dragon, later set on fire, for Queen Mary’s triumph in 1561, and in 1617 James VI saw a representation of his own favourable horoscope, explained to him by an actor impersonating King Tholomeus.

Scotland was also well aware of continental trends about triumphal entries, especially of French ones, as Scottish rulers such as James V and Queen Mary had the opportunity to witness triumphal celebrations at foreign courts. In 1558, when organizing the local celebrations for the Queen’s wedding in Paris to the French Dauphin Francis of Valois, the local authorities in Edinburgh borrowed and simplified many of the themes previously employed during the Parisian wedding celebrations.
During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Scottish sovereigns and the city authorities of Edinburgh adopted an up-to-date triumphal language to celebrate the arrival of local rulers and foreign princesses. Triumphal gateways were well known decorative structures, employed in Edinburgh to ennoble the appearance of the city during the celebrations. Finding a gateway of triumphal flavour at Heriot’s Hospital is then not a surprising occurrence.

The third gateway proceeding from the Grassmarket to the Hospital led to the internal enclosed courtyard. It appears very similar to the previous gateway, also being a free standing, two-dimensional structure slightly protruding from the surrounding walls. It presents the same mixture of *all’antica* proportions and northern inventiveness, and stands on a raised platform and the opening of this archway is round, while that of the previous arch appeared square (Fig. 8).

![Figure 8. Gateway to the internal courtyard, extract from James Gordon, Edinodunensis Tabulam. 1647 - National Library of Scotland. Reproduced by permission.](image)

The pathway leads then to the main entrance to the building and the central quadrangle. The entrance to
the building is marked by a fourth, most elaborate gateway, which is on the wrong side of the building to appear on Gordon of Rothiemay’s map. The top part of the arch has a rich strapwork decoration of Dutch inspiration held up by two columns, and covering a sort of niche sculptured with George Heriot’s coat of arms. The articulated and flourishing top part appears unconnected with the more sober structure underneath, composed of two pairs of columns on high pedestals flanking the central opening, and connected together by a slim beam. This bottom part bears strong resemblances to triumphal arches of Renaissance tradition, as noticed by Deborah Howard, to whose remarks I will return later. The gateway as a whole appears as a two dimensional decorative structure simply pasted on to an independent building on which it also depends for support, so being similar in concept to ephemeral triumphal gateways (Fig. 9).

In the original plan, those approaching the Heriot Hospital walked through a succession of arches increasing in size and decoration, culminating in a particularly elaborate, multi-storeyed gateway welcoming the visitors into the sheltered space of the quadrangle and into the building itself. The disappearance of all arches but the last one and the creation of a modern approach from the south meant the sense of movement and direction suggested by proceeding through a
succession of arches is now lost. The surviving arch is now perceived to be a remarkably elaborated part of the building’s decoration, instead of as one of the elements of a series. Instead, the succession of two-dimensional gateways accompanied the visitor’s approach to the building. The gateways acted as landmarks marking the overcoming of walls and boundaries which separated different areas of the grounds, and underlying the final, joyful arrival at the awaited destination.

A parallel can immediately be drawn between this ceremonial-like approach experience and the symbolic succession of arches employed in triumphal entries, which marked the ruler’s progression towards town and called their attention to urban landmarks. The ruler would have reached a main place of interest at the end of the triumph, usually a royal palace or a religious building where important ceremonies, such as coronations or weddings, were performed. The adoption of a triumphal route - traditionally identified with royalty, pomp and wealth - in an educational institution meant for “the maintenance, relief, bringing up, and education of so many poor fatherless boys, freemen’s sons of the town of Edinburgh” might seem out of place.21

Triumphal language was used, in sixteenth and seventeenth century Scotland, not just by rulers but by all those willing to permanently and publicly celebrate their achievements. Alexander Seton’s Fyvie Castle shows a gigantic arch-like structure on the façade (built around 1603), proclaiming Seton’s wealth and success as a courtier.22 Also inspired by triumphal arches were the façades of John Urquhart’s Craigston Castle, rebuilt 1604-7, and of Saltcoats Castle, built in 1592.23 Fame and immortality could be achieved by any person leading an active and moral life, and their triumph over death was celebrated in arch-like structures such as the Montgomery monument in Largs (1633)24 or, on a much smaller scale, the monument built for George Heriot’s father, who died in 1610 and was himself a successful and
wealthy goldsmith. The monument is an arch-like structure on a raised pedestal, with a decorated beam supported by two pairs of columns, and sustaining an elaborate composition of sculptured ornaments. They include the Heriots’ arms, some instruments of Heriot’s trade as a goldsmith, and reminders of human mortality such as a skull and an hour-glass. It portrays the triumph over death of a wealthy burgess, ostensibly based on his hard work and exemplary conduct (Fig.10). The monument acted as Heriot’s personal triumphal gateway from death towards eternal life, as remarked in a line of the inscription on the tomb: “Life, gate of death; Death, gate of life, to me.”

The use of triumphal language outside the royal circle was not an uncommon occurrence in Scotland. Humanistic pursuits as way to personal glory had already been suggested by the Scottish poet and courtier Sir David Lyndsay (c. 1490 - c. 1555). According to Lyndsay, the humanistic interests based on personal, intellectual, and moral development challenged traditional ideas of chivalry, founded on the class immobility of feudal society and on military training. Triumphal language was often employed in English educational buildings to celebrate the chance of personal improvement offered to ordinary people willing to seriously apply themselves to studies. Triumphal arches appear, for example, in the Fellow’s Quadrangle of Merton College, Oxford.
(1608-10), at the Front Quadrangle of Wadham College (1610-13) and at the Tower of the Five Orders in the Schools Quadrangle at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (1615-20). A ceremonial route of learning marked with triumphal arches was added by John Caius in the 1560s and 1570s to the Gonville and Caius College he had founded in Cambridge in 1558. Here the progress of the students towards academic success is expressed by their ceremonial moving through the college arches and spaces. The first one of the series was the simple Gate of Humility, followed by the slightly more elaborate Gate of Virtue, and then by an inner courtyard dedicated to Wisdom in a foundation ceremony of 1565. The last, most elaborate Gate of Honour, was to be gone through by the procession of graduating students during the graduation ceremony, and marked the end of the studies and the final, triumphal achievement of knowledge (Fig. 11). Taking inspiration from contemporary writers of pedagogical treatises based on Cicero, such as Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives, John Caius was extending the use of a triumphal language to an audience of benefactors, teachers, parents, visitors and students, independently from their situation in life.

The original entrance to Heriot’s Hospital also represented a triumphal pathway of learning, in this case publicly celebrating the achievements of both the founder and the powerful local middle class. It was also a celebration of Heriot’s protestant charity, substituting the traditional catholic institutions in taking care...
and educating the orphans. Heriot’s example inspired other charitable merchants to create similar institutions such as the Merchant Maiden Hospital, founded in 1695 for the maintenance and education of female relatives of merchant burgesses of Edinburgh, or the George Watson’s Hospital, founded in 1723 for the upbringing of sons of impoverished merchants. Other examples in Scotland are the Allan’s Hospital in Stirling (1724) and the Gordon’s Hospital in Aberdeen.

The creation of a pathway of learning for those approaching the Hospital would have required a particular care in the choice of the building site, suitable both in size and position. Dr. Walter Balcanquall Dean of Rochester inspected the first building site suggested by Heriot himself, at the foot of Gray’s Close and Todrick’s Wynd, and found it too small and partially cramped with existing buildings to be suitable. The purchase of “ane far larger and commodious parcel of ground … for setting and making of ane stance to the said Hospitall, and making of orchards, gardenis, and walkis fit for the same” was then thought necessary. Balcanquall found the present site “the most fit, commodious, spacious, and pleasant ground for Situation of and Hospitall,” and the Magistrates of Edinburgh resolved that “the same [Hospital] be Situat thairin, and Buildit, conforme to the paterne of the same given be the said Deane of Rochester to the Provost, Bailleis, Ministeris, and Counsell of the said Brugh.” The purchase of the building materials and the actual work were also “to be done conforme to the paterne and prescript maid be the said Deane of Rotchester.” The figure of Balcanquall Dean of Rochester seems dominant in the process of decision making, as he inspected and rejected the initial site, chose the final lot, provided the paterne and gave directions regarding the acquisition of building materials. The building site finally chosen well expresses the relationship between the Hospital and the local community, also represented in an engraving by Thomas Dick (Fig. 12).
The educational building meant for the welfare and improvement of the merchant class towers in the distance above the Grassmarket. The Grassmarket was one of the most important market places in town, and well represented the mercantile community of the city. The gentle slope leading up to the Hospital well represented the personal rising of “poor fatherless boys, freemen’s sons of the town of Edinburgh” from their difficult present situation to a brighter future. Thanks to the education and training the Hospital had provided, they would have grown into capable and morally sound persons, with an improvement for the mercantile community and the whole of Scottish society.

Balcanquall’s role in choosing a design and location for the building enterprise becomes even more important when considering the noticeable similarities between the entrance pathway at Heriot’s Hospital and that at Caius College, Cambridge. The Dean had in fact been a fellow at Pembroke-Hall College in Cambridge since 1611, and could have had a direct knowledge of Caius College’s pathway of learning. When later in life he had the opportunity to influence the design and
organization of the Hospital, he could have applied the idea of a pathway of learning to the Scottish situation, albeit more loosely and with some adaptation to local taste and situation. Heriot’s own interest in other charitable educational institutions is testified by one of the decorative panels on the main gateway of the Hospital. This shows a group of young pupils wearing the uniforms of Christ’s Hospital, promoted by Edward VI of England and which had welcomed its first pupils in 1552 (Fig.13). Another panel, showing Heriot working hard at his bench, portrays the respectable origin of his wealth and justifies his influential position as a courtier and the king’s jeweller. It also emphasizes how Heriot had at least nominally belonged to the same hard-working middle class which the Hospital was now benefiting.
When considering the actual appearance of the arches, the similarity between the pathway in Cambridge and that in Edinburgh appears even stronger. It must be noticed how the Grassmarket arch of the Scottish series appearing in the 1647 map may or may not have been part of the original design, as on 22 April 1644 some land “lyand under the Castell wall on the South syid of the hic streit, even from the said hie streit upone the North, to the towne-wall upon the sourth” was bought by the Governors to create a “mor commodious entrie.” Even leaving the simple archway on the Grassmarket out of the study for the sake of precision, what is left bears strong similarities to the pathway in Cambridge. Both pathways allowed access from the city into the grounds of an educational building and both have (at least) three decorated gateways marking the passage between neighbouring areas. The design of the arches in both pathways also presents an evolution from simple and small to decorated and grand. When analyzing the organization of the gateways in Cambridge, Tom Nickson describes how achieving Honour through the pursuit of Virtue was often described in literature as a journey through successive gateways. In sixteenth-century representations of the Tabula Cebeti, such as those by Hans Holbein the Younger (1521) or Johann Kramer (1551), the achievement of knowledge, virtue and truth is represented as the climbing of a mountain circled by walled enclosures. The openings are guarded by virtuous and wise figures who test those approaching and grant access only to a selected few. Similarly, in Bocchi’s Symbolicarum Quaestionum the dependant relationship between Virtue and Honour is represented by an emblem showing two gateways with sober, classical proportions; the passage between the former is there shown as necessary to achieve the latter. The gateways at Caius College are explicitly named and positioned to create a pathway of learning, and their increasing complexity celebrated the pursuer’s increased status. The Scottish gateways are not so explicitly named,
but present important similarities to the concept of a humanist pathway of learning. The role of the gateways in the ground’s organization was not eminently practical, as they were not part of any defensive scheme, and they marked the separation not between different properties, but between areas owned by the institution itself. The reasons for their outstanding appearance and importance in the organization of the grounds must then be symbolical and processional. They mark the visitor’s procession through walled enclosures towards a place of learning, increasing noticeably in decoration and complexity with the proximity to it. The style of two of them is not dissimilar from Bocchi’s gateways of Virtue and Honour, also recalling some of the classical doorways described in his *Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura* by Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1554) (Fig.14). The decoration at roof level adds a festive note reminiscent of the eclectic taste of northern triumphal entries.

Figure 14. Left, one of Serlio’s designs of doors (*Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura di Sebastiano Serlio Bolognese [...] Venise, Francesco de’ Franceschi, 1584. Book IV p.163v*) and a doorway in Spoleto (ibidem, book III, p.74v) – Centre d’Études Supérieures de la Renaissance.
The Hospital’s pathway and arches contribute to the creation of a connecting path between the town and the educational building. The prospective student, himself a member of the local community, was encouraged and accompanied by the arches onto a path of initiation, culminating in his admission into the Hospital as a place of learning and personal improvement.

The main difference between the organization of the English and the Scottish pathways lies in the role of the last arch. The Gate of Honour in Cambridge is crossed only by those on the way to their graduation ceremony, marking the completion of their studies. The gateway at Heriot’s Hospital is the main access to the school, to be crossed by all those entering the building. The different role of this last arch can be explained by the greater symbolic complexity of the Scottish example, which was to celebrate more than just the academic success of the students of the institution.

The gate of Honour at Caius’ College has been shown to derive from both the Spanish arch erected for Philip II’s entry into Antwerp in 1549, and by a related church façade published in Serlio’s *Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura*, book IV (fig. 15). The design of the main arch at Heriot’s Hospital can also in my opinion boast a similarly remarkable pedigree, with a double reference to a source related to Italian classical language and to a northern European triumphal celebration. The lower part of the arch is extremely similar to the Roman Arch of the Sergii in Pula (ca. 29 BC), as noticed by Deborah Howard. The Hospital’s arch could have been inspired either by a direct association, or by knowledge of its famous derivations such as the doorway of the Arsenal of Venice (1460), or the doorway of the Royal Chapel in Stirling (1595). Influential triumphal gateways were also inspired by the Arch of the Sergii, such as some of those built for James VI/I’s entry into London in 1603 and for Philip II’s entry into Antwerp in 1549, the latter being the same celebration mentioned as the source for the
Cambridge arch. The arch in Pula was also published by Sebastiano Serlio in his De Architectura, Book III (Fig.16); Serlio’s work provided an extremely similar literary source for both the Scottish and the English arch.

Figure 15. Left: Spanish arch built for Philip II’s entry into Antwerp in 1549 (Le triumpe d’Anuers, fait en la susception du Prince Philips, Prince d’Espaign[e], Antwerp 1550, p.39) – (c) The British Library Board. Shelfmark: C.75.d.15. Right: Serlio’s Church facade, (Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura di Sebastiano Serlio Bolognese […] Venise, Francesco de’ Franceschi, 1584, book IV, p.179v.) – Centre d’Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance.

Figure 16. Right: Arcus of Sergii in Pula (Tutte l’Opere d’Architettura di Sebastiano Serlio Bolognese […] Venise, Francesco de’ Franceschi, 1584, book III, p.110v) – Centre d’Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance.

The Scottish interest in the Arch of the Sergii, later remodelled in 1671-79 by Sir William Bruce for the new entrance to Holyrood Palace is explained by Deborah Howard in the wider context of a general Scottish interest in Venetian architecture. Pula was at the time an important Venetian colony, and the Arch of the Sergii was identified with Venetian influence. Venice was recognized in Europe as a maritime force keen to
safeguard its own independence from neighbouring states and from the Papacy, open to overseas influences and basing its own identity and wealth on a strong mercantile community. In these points, it presented noticeable resemblances to Scotland, or to the image of Scotland usually known abroad. An arch of Venetian flavour as the final landmark of a triumphal path towards success presented the beneficiaries of the Hospital, the Scottish mercantile class, with a symbol of the success of the mercantile class of a sister community. The Heriot’s arch encouraged Scottish burgesses to pursue similar achievements; all those willing to apply themselves in studies would have the opportunity to become successful members of the mercantile community.

While the arch in Cambridge makes little or no reference to Caius himself, and celebrates the academic achievements of the students in a rather impersonal way, the Hospital’s triumphal gateway is strictly connected with George Heriot himself and marks his fatherly relationship with the orphan boys of his home-city. The arch represents a celebration of the victory of George Heriot’s immortal Fame over Death and obscurity, thanks to the arch’s role as a permanent landmark. Celebrating this kind of achievement was perfectly in line with Renaissance triumphal culture, as expressed for example in the literary work *I Trionfi* by Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374). Among other humanized characters’ triumphal entries, Petrarch describes how Death can be conquered by Fame, through which virtuous and talented people could be perpetually Remembered.

Although in Petrarch’s triumphs Fame is overcome by Time, meaning that everybody’s deeds are forgotten, this was not the case at Heriot’s Hospital, as Heriot’s fame was perpetuated through the grateful memory of generations of students. The perpetuation of fame through offspring and descendants is celebrated through the second source chosen as inspiration for Heriot’s gateway. There are marked similarities between the
gateway in Heriot's Hospital and one of the triumphal arches erected for the arrival of Princess Elizabeth Stuart and her husband Fredrick Elector Palatine in Heidelberg in 1613 (Fig. 17).44

The triumphal celebrations welcoming the couple were impressive, with many arches being built in the city on the way to the Elector Palatine’s palace.45

The arches and the accompanying ceremony were described in the pamphlet published for the occasion as Beschreibung Der Reiss: Empfahung dess Ritterlichen Ordens (Heidelberg 1613). The last and most impressive triumphal arch of the series, built under Frederick’s personal supervision, stood just outside the main entry. It represented an act of homage to the genealogy of the Palatine ruling dynasty, and celebrated the 1169 wedding between Henry the Lion and Matilda of England on one side, and the union between Louis Duke of Bavaria and Blanche of England on the other.46 The unions are portrayed by statues of the couples, represented hand-in-hand and in traditional dresses of their times, placed on the top part of the arch in decorated niche-like spaces flanked by columns. The bottom arch presents a structure similar to that of the Arch of the Sergii, with a round-arched opening flanked by two columns on each side, standing on high pedestals.
The decorative embellishments, such as the triangular tympani and the slender pinnacles, and the fanciful upper part are closer to the northern European taste for elaborate decorations. Experimentation with different decorative languages was quite common in triumphal architecture. The double nature of the design of the arch in Heriot's Hospital - more rigorous and classical in the lower part, heavily decorated and less structurally coherent on the upper section - could find its explanation in the influence of Heidelberg’s ephemeral architecture. The disturbing thinness of the central beam separating the lower and upper parts of the Heriot's arch can now be justified by its derivation from temporary, lighter structures made of painted timber, fabric, or cardboard.

The Heidelberg arch reminded Fredrick and Elizabeth of the importance of providing continuation to the dynasty, and of their responsibilities to parent healthy children later to become famous rulers and heroes. The two couples in the top niches were accompanied by four figures in the lower part of the arch, two on each side and placed between the paired columns. The four figures represented successful rulers of the Palatine line and descendants of Henry the Lion. The accompanying text in the triumphal chronicle praised the continuation of the line and underlined how from such highly capable progenitors - German-English matches recalling the wedding currently celebrated - descended a healthy, successful, strong offspring.47 According to the chronicle, the first meeting between the groom’s large family and Princess Elizabeth took place in the immediate vicinity of this arch, and almost a page is employed to describe everybody’s loving feeling.48 Dowager Electress Juliana, Frederick’s mother, impulsively came out of the palace to hug her daughter-in-law, and the two ladies shed tears of joy. Then Elizabeth was led forward to meet the whole female household, forming a double row including relatives of every age between old age and infancy.49 This would have once again underlined Elizabeth’s new
position within Frederick’s family, and her own responsibility in providing continuity to such an illustrious and fruitful dynasty.

The use of an arch expressing family values and continuity in Heriot’s Hospital would have recalled Heriot’s success in providing the city of Edinburgh with learned and well trained young burgesses, who would ensure continuity to the community and perpetuate Heriot’s own fame. The similarity between Heriot’s role and Frederick and Elizabeth’s one is emphasized by the placing of the founder’s arms and statue in the upper niches of the entrance gateway. This was the very position occupied, in the Palatine arch, by the statues of Frederick’s ancestors. By providing for the orphaned offspring of his fellow citizens, childless Heriot was successfully achieving continuation, trusting the fatherless boys to remember his name and honour his memory as benefactor, if not as ancestor and father.

This triumphal arch represented not only the achievements of Edinburgh’s middle class, but Heriot’s own triumph of charity. The dominant position of Heriot’s image and coat of arms recalls that of statues and insignia of sovereigns being celebrated during triumphs, marking Heriot’s role not just as patron, as Caius had been, but as triumphator. The motto \textit{Corporis haec anima est hoc opus effigies} which appears next to Heriot’s statue in the quadrangle, states how Heriot was to be remembered not only through a stone image, only good enough to represent his body, but through the institution, which perpetuates the memory of his charity. The triumphal arch leading the visitor into the quadrangle represents the gateway to Heriot’s real personal triumph and most permanent achievement. The whole hospital becomes Heriot’s triumphal structure, working for the improvement of the local community for hundreds of years, and promoting a timeless sense of admired veneration for its founder.

The role of Caius’ pathway of learning in public
processions was mirrored by the use of the Hospital’s pathway with arches in solemn celebrations bonding the Hospital’s community with the urban environment and the citizens. In the same way a triumphal entry bonded the rulers and their city. After consultation with the city authorities, Balcanquall himself compiled the statute as Heriot’s testament had required him to do. On the first Monday of June, the Hospital and public authorities were to gather in the committee-chamber, proceeding in order of importance, “with all the solemnity that may be’, to the Greyfriars church to hear a sermon, after which they proceeded back to the Hospital ‘with the same solemnity and order they came from it.’ Noticeably, the entrance to the Greyfriar’s grounds from the southwest, on the likely route from the Hospital, also presents an arch of remarkable design (Fig. 18). A similar procession took place every Sunday, when the Hospital’s staff and the students “shall go solemnly, in order, in their gowns...to the Greyfriar’s church...and in that decent order, return back again.” Balcanquall also organized a yearly commemoration of

Figure 18. Greyfriar arch, extract from James Gordon, Edinodunensis Tabulam. 1647 - National Library of Scotland. Reproduced by permission.
George Heriot’s birthday, which even now is celebrated by current and previous students gathering at the School, and decorating the statue of their benefactor with flowers.

Compared to Caius’ enterprise, focused on the student’s learning achievements, Heriot’s pathway not only celebrates the students’ academic and moral successes, but Heriot’s own triumph of charity and of fame over death. The responsibilities of Cambridge-educated Walter Balcanquall in planning the Hospital as a tribute to Edinburgh’s strong mercantile class and to Heriot himself must be recognized. Through Balcanquall’s influence, the logic and appearance of the pathway of learning in Cambridge was probably known and appreciated, and a comparable plan applied to the Hospital. The position, role and appearance of the entrance gateway, the outdoor layout, the relation to the other arches and to the city, and the Hospital statute - all more or less influenced by Balcanquall - work together in creating the opportunities and the setting for a perfect triumphal celebration both of learning and of magnanimity. The two triumphal arches identified as the source of inspiration for the design of the entrance gateway embody these two realities. While the Istrian arch celebrated the opportunities for the burgesses to distinguish themselves by overcoming their origin as commoners, the 1613 Heidelberg arch celebrates the perpetuation of personal fame through offspring and descendants. Having worked successfully as an educational building in service of the local community for about 350 years, and still caring lovingly for the memory of its founder, it can be said that Heriot’s Hospital fulfilled the purposes it was created for. In Heriot’s case, Time did not obscure Fame’s triumph over Death.
Notes


2 George Heriot was the eldest son of a respectable goldsmith, and was born in Edinburgh around June 1563. From the 1590s he repeatedly acted as a city representative in the Convention of Estates and as a member of Parliament. He showed interest in the administration of the town and in the well-being of his fellow citizens. He was appointed royal jeweler by King James VI in 1597 and followed the king to London in 1603. At his death, he left provisions in his will for his relatives, siblings and half-siblings, for servants and friends, and for his two illegitimate daughters. The rest of his patrimony was left for the construction of an hospital “for the maintenance, relief, bringing up, and education of so many poor fatherless boys, freemen’s sons of the town of Edinburgh, as the means which I give, and the yearly value of the lands so purchased by the provost, bailiffs, ministers, and council of the said town, shall amount, or come to,” Constable, *Memoirs*, 24. The whole will is on pp. 67-102. The three appointees are named on p. 86.

3 William Wallace, Principal Master Mason to the Crown, was in charge from 1628 to his death in 1630, when his place was taken by William Ayton. John Mylne took over in the 1650s, only to be succeeded by his nephew Robert Mylne. The speculations about Inigo Jones’ paternity of the design are commented upon in Rowan, “George Heriot’s Hospital, Edinburgh- I,” 555.


5 The Hospital’s regular plan was inspired by the plan of a palace published by Serlio in his Seventh Book of Architecture (around 1550). The door of the refectory reminds one of the main portal of the Farnese Villa at Caprarola, published in Vignola’s Rules of the Five Orders. One of the Corinthian doors appearing in Francini’s Book of Architecture (1631) was probably used as source of inspiration for the chapel’s doorway. Rowan, “George Heriot’s Hospital, Edinburgh-I,” 555-557.
6 For a description of the Grassmarket’s role in everyday city life see J. Grant, *Old and New Edinburgh*, vol. IV (Edinburgh: Cassell, 1880s), 230-238.

7 The map’s full name is *Edinodunensis Tabulam*, Iacobus Gordinius P. Rothemayus, Amsterdam 1647. The mapmaker was James Gordon, minister of Rothiemay in Banffshire (c.1615-1686). The map can be found on the National Library of Scotland’s website, http://www.nls.uk/maps/joins/gord1647.html.

8 The erection of the Flodden wall and its perimeter is described in Grant, *Old and New Edinburgh* vol. I, 38.


11 The importance of triumphal arches as settings of both outdoor and indoor theatrical performances is explained in G. R. Kernodle, *From Art to Theatre, Form and Convention in the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), 90-93, 193-197.

12 For the use of Tableaux Vivant in street theatre see Kernodle, *From Art to Theatre*, 52-110. The politicized dialogue between the Archduke Ferdinand and the city of Antwerp during the sovereign’s entry in 1635 is described in Strong, *Art and Power*, 49.


14 For descriptions and modern interpretations of Scottish triumphs see L. O. Fradenburg, *City, Marriage, Tournament: Arts of Rule in late Medieval Scotland* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), esp. 84-149; D. Gray, “The Royal Entry in Sixteenth-Century

15 The fiancels of Margaret, eldest Daughter of King Henry VIIith to James King of Scotland … Written by John Younge, Somerset Herald … Reby’s anglicanis Opuscula Varia, 1770, in John Leland, Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de rebus britannici collectanea, Londini 1770, v.III. 289.


17 For an historical outline of the Netherbow see S. Harris, The Place Names of Edinburgh: their Origins and History (Gordon Wright: Edinburgh 1996), 455. The decoration of the Netherbow during the Queen’s entry in 1661 is analyzed in MacDonald, Mary Stewart’s Entry to Edinburgh (1991), 107, and Kipling, Enter the King (1998), 352-356. A description of the Netherbow station during James VI’s entry in 1579 can be found in Mill, Mediæval Plays, 194.

18 James V visited the Valois court at the end of 1536 for a few months for his engagement and marriage to Madeleine of Valois. Queen Mary resided at the French court between 1548 and 1561. James VI visited the Danish court of Christian IV between November 1589 and May 1590.

19 S. Carpenter and G. Runnalls, “The Entertainment at the Marriage of Mary Queen of Scots and the French Dauphin


21 From Heriot’s testament, see Constable, *Memoirs*, 88.


24 As noted in Glendinning, MacInnes, and MacKechnie, *A History of Scottish Architecture*, 35.

25 The tomb is still visible nowadays in the Greyfriars cemetery, just a stone throw from the Hospital itself. The whole inscription reads: *Viator, qui sepia, unde sis, quid sis, quidque/ futuris sis, hinc nosce/ Vita mihi mortis, Mors vitae janua facta est;/ Solaque mors mortis vivere posse dedit,/ Ergo quisquis adhunc mortali wesceris aura,/ Dum licet, utpossis vivere, disce mori.* – Traveller, who art wise, hence learn whence thou art/ What thou art, and what thou art to be./ To me life has become the gate of death, and death the gate of life; and only the death of death has given me the power to live, Therefore, whosoever thou art that now breathest the air of mortals, learn to die whilst thou mayst, that thou mayst be able to live. Transcription and translation can be found in Steven, *History*, 3.


Educational institutions such as the Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and the University of Edinburgh were founded in 1583 on the lands of dissolved religious communities. The Trinity College, Cambridge, was established in 1546 with the precise purpose of extirpating false beliefs and promoting piety and knowledge. P. Clark, ed., *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 305-306.


Heriot referred to the Christ’s Hospital as a model when first imagining the founding of a Hospital in Edinburgh. See Steven, *History*, 28. On the decorative panel see A. G. McKinnell and Waddies (produced and designed by), *Heriot’s Hospital* (Edinburgh:
Waddies, date unknown), pages not numbered.

38 Record of Heriot’s Hospital, vol. I, 323-324: cited in Steven, History, 65. The alteration was carried out in the outer part of the pathway, lying between the Grassmarket and the towne-wall (meaning the Flodden-Telfer wall) marking the Hospital’s courtyard.

39 Examples from Nickson, Moral Edification, 57-58.

40 The triumphal structure was probably a derivation of Serlio’s design. Nickson, Moral Edification, 49-55.

41 Howard, Reflexions of Venice, 124.

42 Howard, Reflexions of Venice, 124.

43 On Francesco Petrarch as a humanist and literate, see T. G. Bergin, Petrarch (New York: Twayne Publishers., 1970) and M. G. Bishop, Petrarch and his World (London: Chatto & Windus, 1964). It is interesting to note that a translation of some of Petrarch’s triumphs by Mrs. Anna Hume was published in Edinburgh in 1644, with a dedication to Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia, eldest daughter of Elizabeth Stuart and Fredrick Elector Palatine. See M. A. Scott, “Elizabethan Translations from the Italian,” PMLA 11, no. 4 (1896), 428-429.


45 A description of Elizabeth and Fredrick’s entry into Heidelberg in Bergen, Memoirs, 187-205.

46 A description of the arch in Bengen, Memoirs, 195-197.

47 The arch is described in Beschreibung Der Reiss: Empfahung dess Ritterlichen Ordens (Heidelberg 1613), 150-154.

48 Beschreibung Der Reiss, 150-154.

49 For a description of the familiar welcome see Bengen, Memoirs, 195.

50 Heriot had no surviving offspring from his two marriages. He died leaving two illegitimate daughters from two different women; they both lived elsewhere but were provided for in his will. See Steven, History, 34.

51 Constable, Memoirs, 106.

52 Constable, Memoirs, 110.

53 Constable, Memoirs, 144-145.