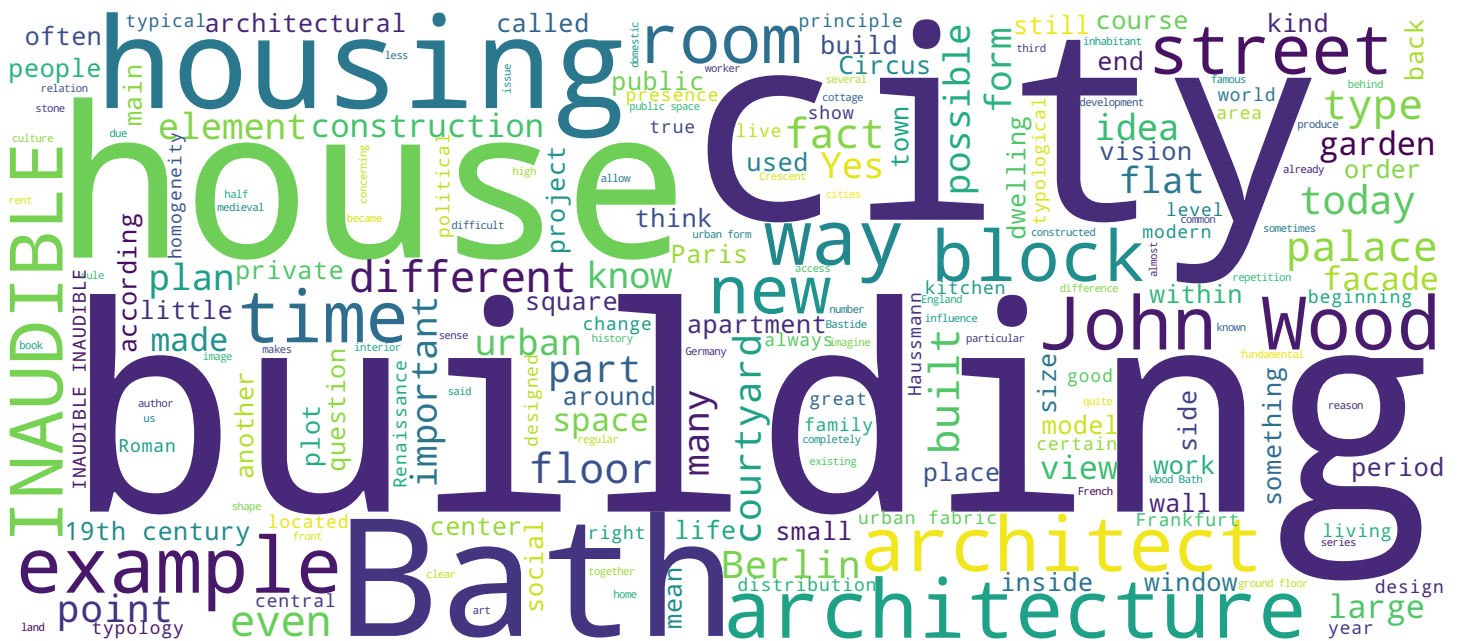


a Housing and Cities course video



EPFL

BENNO ALBRECHT
GIUSEPPE BELLAFIORE
LEONARDO BENEVOLO
MAURICE CERASI
VITTORIO FRANCHETTI PARDO
MAURO GALANTINO
GIOVANNI VRAGNAZ

METAMORFOSI DELLA CITTÀ

a cura di Leonardo Benevolo

ESTRATTO

BATH. CRESCITA E MODIFICAZIONI
NEL CORSO DEL XVIII SECOLO
di Mauro Galantino



LIBRI SCHEIWILLER
MILANO MCMXCV

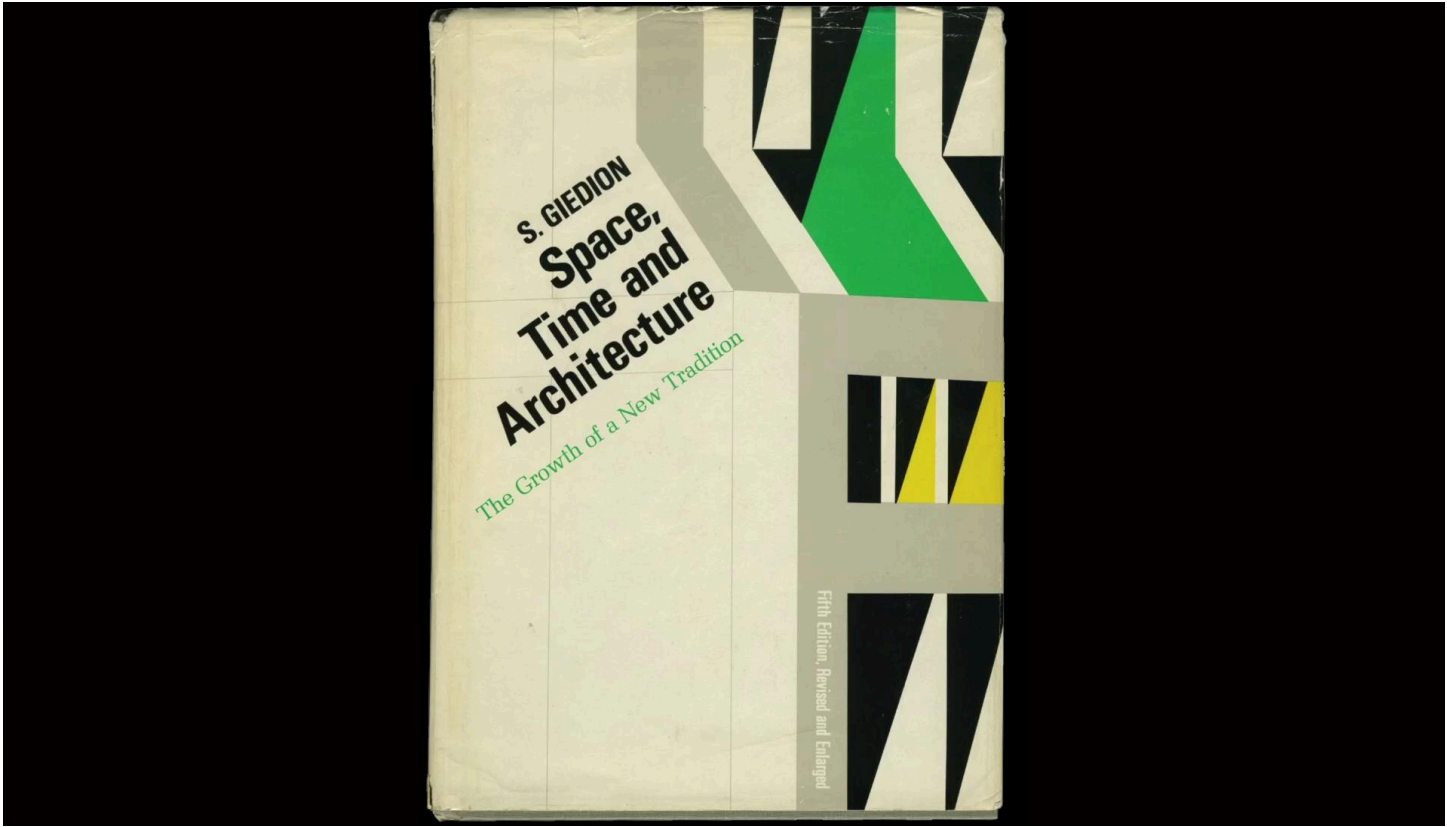
The Georgian development of the city of Bath that is during the 18th century and early 19th century clearly stems from a typological practice that made use of contiguity and homogeneity as its main strength. It is clearly a way of conceiving a city as an alternative between the blocks with a central courtyard and the blocks in a vertical slab formation. Bath is a city of Roman foundation near thermal sources. As suggested by its name, it is a city of thermal baths which still worked today. We can still visit the remainings of the Roman building with its neoclassical transformations. Joseph Gilmore's map portrays late 17th century Baths as a city still mostly enclosed in its medieval city walls. We can see that it was a very small town with nearly only the rest of the Roman establishment. And then the first building extensions to the northeast of the old walls. In the article, 'Bath, Development and Changes during the 18th Century', architect Mauro Galantino describes the significance of the transformation of Bath by saying: "In 1787, when the corporation of the city of Bath gave mystic information to build a timid extension outside the walls, there were only 2,000 residents.

Notes

Summary



0m 28s



90 years later, upon the opening of the reception room of the thermal complex of Kings Baths, the city had 28,000 residents. This exponential growth has several causes namely the largest demographic growth in Europe between mid 17th century and the end of the forthcoming century." In the Georgian era, Bath was planned and promoted as a holiday resort focusing on its spurs that used water from the adjoining springs. It is a theatrical town. Nevertheless, the buildings are not a decor. More than a holiday town, Bath is a real live town inhabited today by its year long residents. One of the authors that first mentioned the City of Bath was the historian Siegfried Gideon in the book 'Space, Time and Architecture'.

Notes

Summary

1m 56s





In this history of modern architecture, Gideon wrote a few pages concerning the city of Bath including some photographs. For those not familiar with the city, these are images with a great impact depicting the center of town where we can see the two main ensembles; the Circus and the Royal Crescent. These blocks are the most known to tourists, have the most impact and are in fact those that better represent this way of building a city.

Notes

Summary



Obsession John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath

The Building of Bath Museum



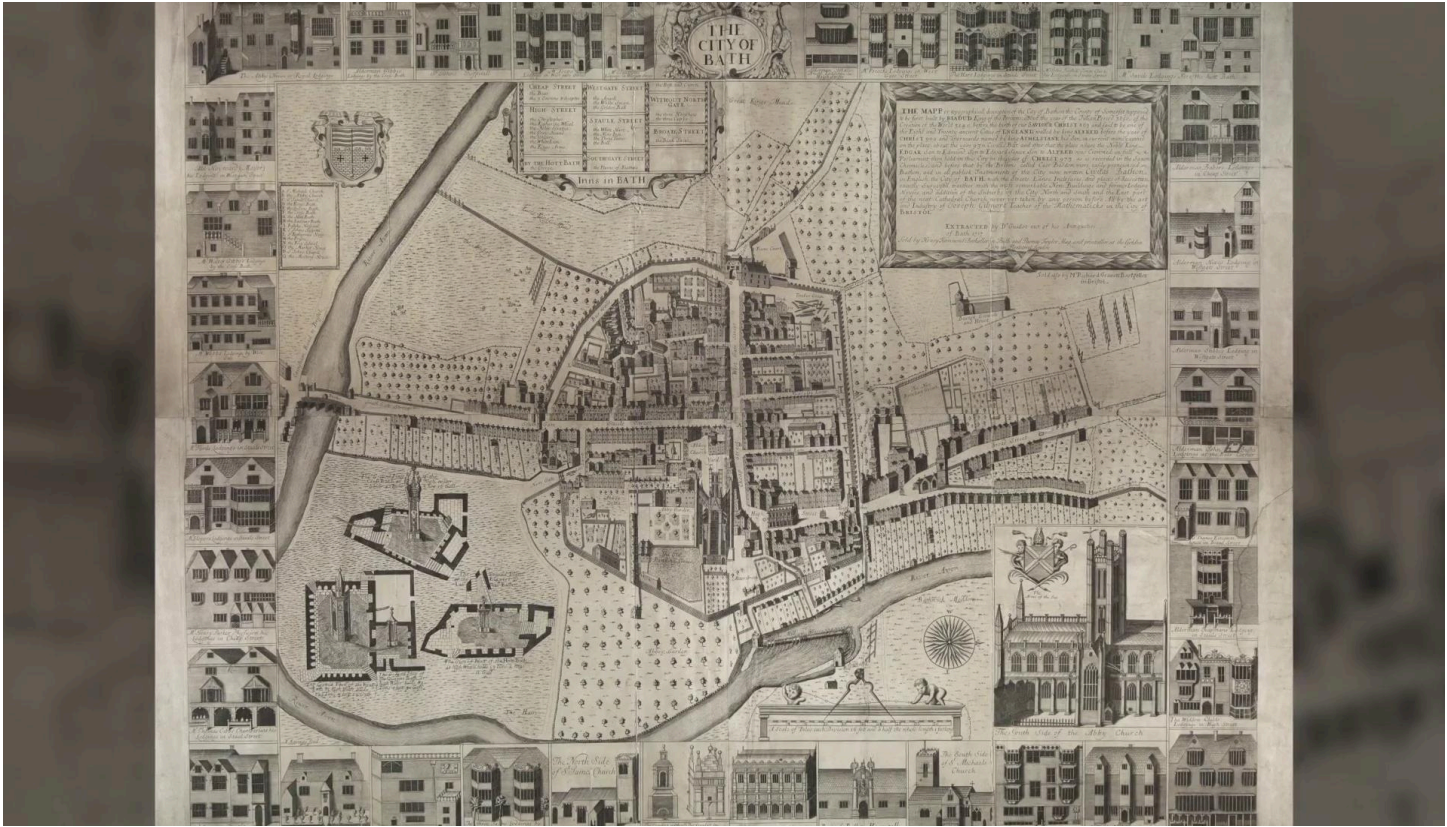
Georgian Bath as we know it today is chiefly the product of the collaborative endeavour of two men; entrepreneur Ralph Allen and architect John Wood who was later succeeded by his son John Wood the younger. The book entitled 'John Wood and the Creation of Georgian Bath' published in 2005 is a collection of thorough articles by several authors and the result of a year long investigation into the life and work of John Wood, Bath's most significant architect.

Notes

Summary



3m 19s



In this book, historian Catherine Spence describes the crucial collaboration between Ralph Allen and John Wood: "Through their respective interests, Woods and Allen capitalized on the ownership of stone production, the means and control of its distribution and the provision of the markets. Only the combination of both men in Bath at the same time could have resulted in this celebrated city of architecture in stone." John Wood the elder was the main instigator, developer and architect of the fundamental development of Bath at this time. Still in the same book, Amy Frost depicts John Wood's life and vision. In the article 'The vision of John Wood, Bath as an imaginary city', she says: "In his essay towards a description of Bath, Wood informs his reader that in 1725, at the age of 21, he asked for a plan of Bath to be sent to him while working in Yorkshire. He studied the form of Bath, the residue of the ancient city still sitting within the medieval walls and claimed that - "I began to turn my thoughts towards the improvement of the city by building." - He goes on to state where in the city his building will take place and what it will include.

Notes

Summary

3m 58s





Wood proposed to construct not simply individual structures but entire spaces that would redefine not only the appearance but also of the entire shape and size of the city.

Notes

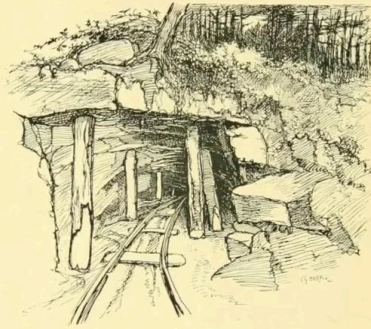
Summary

5m 12s



in the fact of the man not sleeping the night in the village. At any rate, he would not perform the ceremony until the Bishop (of Gloucester) compelled him to do so.

At Box we are well within the stone district whose quarries have rendered building-stone from the times



ENTRANCE TO BOX QUARRIES.

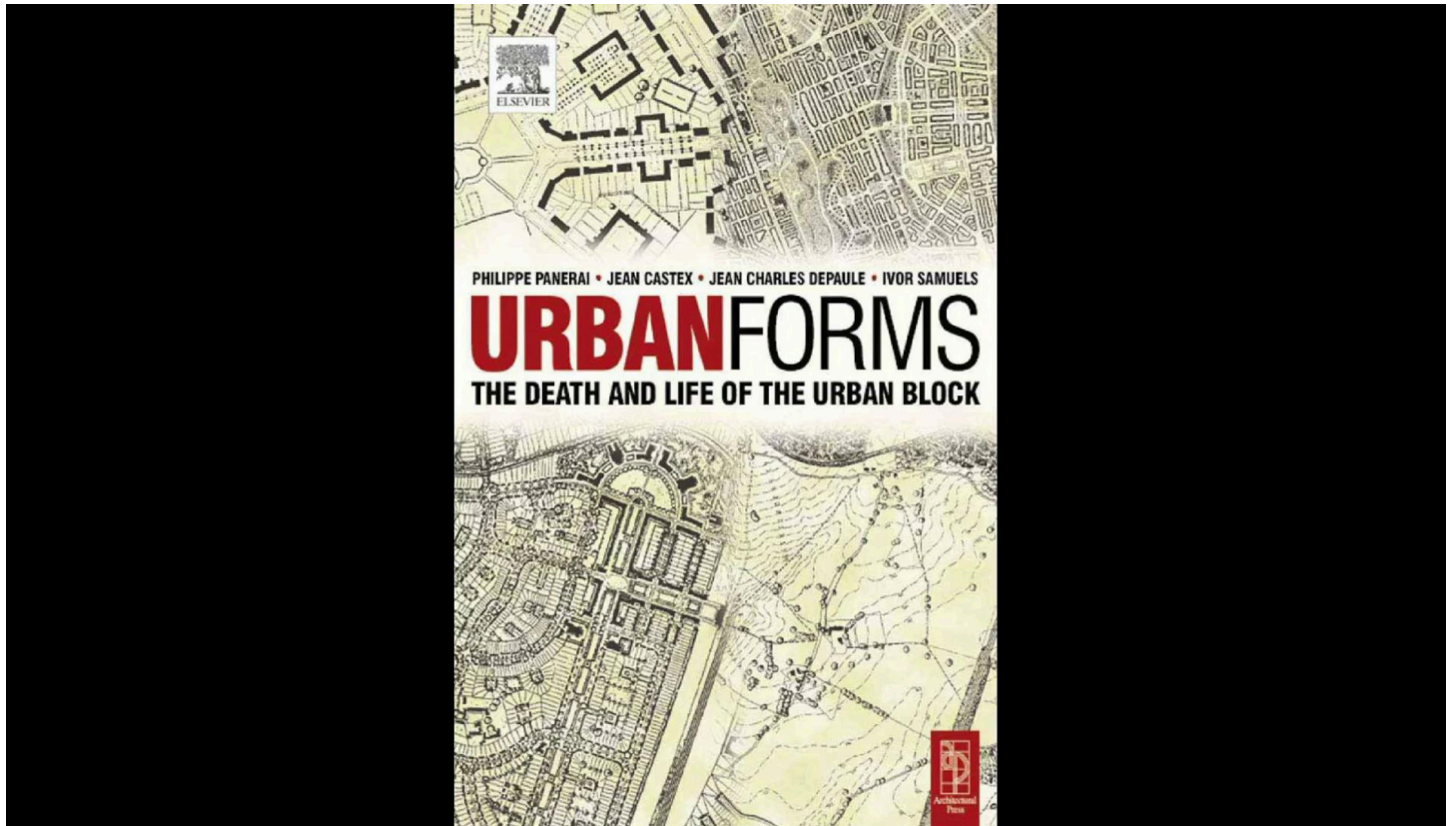
of the Roman occupation until the present day. The oolite which comes from here and from the Corsham quarries is a fine grained stone, easily worked, and of a rich cream colour when freshly wrought. As "Bath stone" it is famous, and has made Bath exclusively a city of stone-built houses. In addition, it is sent to all parts of the country, and even exported. The quarries of Corsham and Box are, therefore, the centres

Amy Frost goes on to say: "In 1735, 10 years after his vision for Bath was conjured up, Wood published a map of the city as if to illustrate his progress and indicate the areas upon which he had decided his master plan would be realized. Queen Square is immediately recognizable and the plan of its central garden is the most prominent feature on the map." The architecture of Bath is as homogenous as it could ever be. One of its defining elements is the constant use of the same stone. Ralph Allen was an extremely wealthy entrepreneur. By the age of 28, he had amassed great wealth from privately reorganizing the United Kingdom's postal service and proceeded to acquiring the bath three stone quarries. Most of the houses designed by John Wood in Bath, were built using the stone from the quarries Allen bought up and combed down.

Notes

Summary





In this way, the homogeneity of the town is not only typological; not only connected to the device of contiguous houses but also to the same material and even to the repetition of identical windows. The buildings of bath have a type of window that is very common in England; the sash window made up of two panes with a vertical movement. The city of Bath is located on quite a steep slope. The center of town is in the lower area. As we look through the aerial views of the city, an important aspect becomes quite clear. Each block is not equivalent to one building or palace. Each block is in fact composed of several contiguous houses; these houses take advantage of the homogeneity of repetition to assert their presence and to build an urban space. 'Urban Forms, The Death And Life Of The Urban Block' is a well known book by Philip Panerai, Jean Castex and Jean Charles Depaul, first published in French in 1977.

Notes

Summary

6m 21s





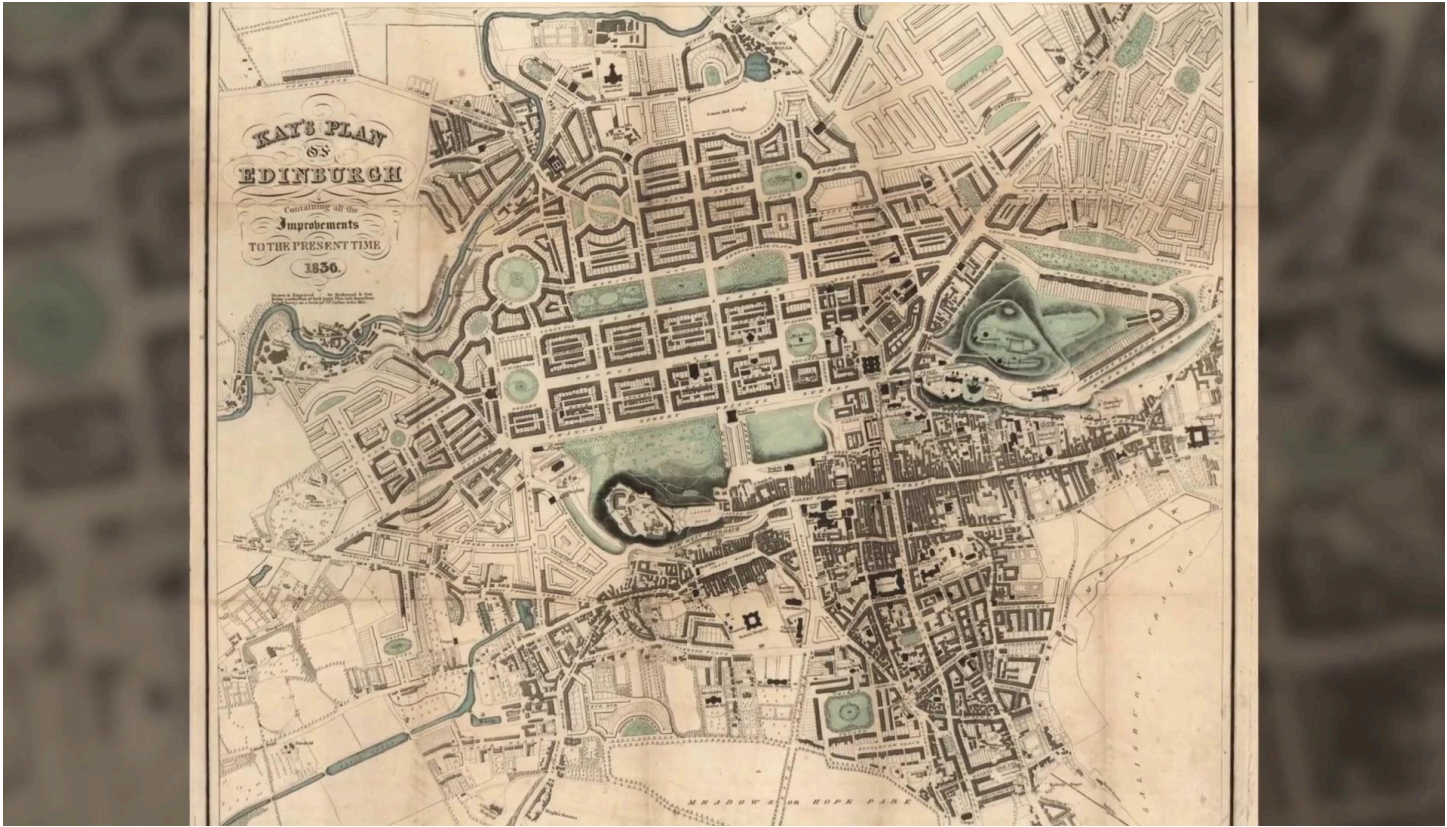
It describes the changes in urban form that took place in several European cities. Moreover, it shows if only briefly the city of Bath thus introducing a fundamental concept row housing as an element producing urban fabric. In Bath, the row of houses is the element that makes up the urban fabric. What is most remarkable here is that unlike modernist or rationalistic options, here, the block in a slab formation can be folded, adapted to the existing morphology while respecting building principles of unparalleled efficiency. These principles continue to be applied by John Wood's son and the next generation of architects. In the conclusion to the book, 'John Wood And The Creation of Georgian Bath', the authors say: "The most obvious legacy left by John Wood was the influence he had upon his own son; he completed the circus and constructed the Royal Crescent. From a very young age, John Wood the younger had been involved in his father's business. As the streets laid out by the elder Wood defined the direction of the city's expansion, the method he established the Townhouse Terrace was elaborated on by his son.

Notes

Summary



7m 36s



The next generation of Bath architects emerged and continued to shape the streets and terraces of the city throughout the 18th and into the 19th century. The influence of John Wood's Bath was far reaching heralded by many as the most perfect example of town planning in England. Bath became the model for towns and cities built of squares circles and crescents."

Notes

Summary



8m 58s