was secular in inspiration, he also intended it to be inspirational (269). The Gothic style and Christian imagery “cast the F.W. Woolworth Company as an ethical and benign capitalistic enterprise,” one that seemed to concentrate “the best of Western civilization” in one space (270).

Once completed, different publics invested the Woolworth Building with meanings. Frank Woolworth trademarked Gilbert’s design, but as a symbol it ultimately escaped his control. Some applauded the building as public architecture appropriate to the City Hall location. Others employed the rhetoric of the technological sublime and offered it as proof of America’s emergence as a world power. The public could see its floodlit tower from fifty miles away, and in 1916 alone 100,000 people paid fifty cents each to visit its fifty-fourth floor observation deck. John Marin painted the building, Alfred Stieglitz photographed it, and it became identified with modernity and “Americanism” (290).

Fenske concludes with a discussion of the Woolworth as a signature building on the New York skyline, before it was eclipsed in height and before champions of the International Style attacked the Gothic skyscraper as a contradiction in terms. The building’s public image since about 1925 thereby remains a topic for future research. But otherwise this beautifully illustrated volume, the result of decades of research, is definitive. All the relevant archives and collections have been consulted and digested into readable prose, framed by a broad understanding of the secondary literature. Fenske has created a highly satisfying fusion of architecture and cultural history that deserves the widest readership.

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Anthony Geraghty
The Architectural Drawings of Sir Christopher Wren at All Souls College, Oxford: A Complete Catalogue
Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2007, 296 pages, 487 color illus. $150.00 (cloth), ISBN 9780754640714

Over the last ten years, books on Sir Christopher Wren, both scholarly and popular in nature, have appeared on a regular basis. Engaging his architecture to varying degrees, they come at the end of a long line of publications that began in 1823.¹ The 1998 works by James Chambers (a “pocket biography”⁴ for the general audience) and by Margaret Whinney (her 1971 book reissued as part of a World of Art series)² were followed in quick succession by the lengthy “life” treatments of Adrian Tinniswood, His Invention So Fertile: A Life of Christopher Wren (London: Jonathan Cape, 2001), and Lisa Jardine, On a Grander Scale: The Outstanding Life of Sir Christopher Wren (New York: Harper Collins, 2002). These two authors depend heavily on specialized scholarly studies on Wren’s architecture and science, but also reexamine primary source documents and drawings. Also worth noting is the short 2007 publication of Kerry Downes, written originally for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, part of the Very Interesting People series of Oxford University Press.¹ Downes’s contribution is the latest testament to the existence of a large non-specialist audience fascinated with Wren. It reminds us that important architectural historians can and should have a critical role in engaging the popular audience directly, and not just conducting the foundational scholarship incorporated into biographical syntheses by non-specialists.

In contrast to this series of biographies stands this tightly focused study of the drawings produced by Wren and his office, a collection that has been critical to all research into the architect’s work. The Architectural Drawings of Sir Christopher Wren at All Souls College, Oxford: A Complete Catalogue is a welcome and long-needed addition to the Wren literature, directly engaging us with almost 500 drawings, mostly orthogonal in nature, produced by Wren and his draftsmen at the King’s Works from the early 1660s to 1722. They depict the royal buildings commissioned from Wren as Surveyor General, as well as the public and private commissions he received while employed in other capacities. The drawings have always been available for direct study, thanks to the Codrington Library at All Souls College and its excellent stuff. In addition, almost all were reproduced as high quality black-and-white plates in the twenty volumes of The Wren Society that appeared from 1924 to 1943. In neither case, however, has it been possible to easily browse the entire All Souls collection. Thanks to Anthony Geraghty’s handsome volume it is now possible to do so. Reproduced in color and in a range of sizes, all of the drawings are quite readable. Many readers will be delighted to see familiar images awash in gray, red, blue, and yellow. But in addition to the high-quality reproductions, of equal if not greater importance for our understanding is the clear and logical arrangement of the drawings and the informative text that accompanies them.

The book is divided into seven sections according to building type (the universities, St. Paul’s Cathedral, parish churches, royal palaces, town and country houses, designs in Westminster, and miscellany). Within each section the projects are arranged chronologically, as are the drawings associated with each one. Wren’s major works, or those represented by a large number of drawings, are provided with introductory texts discussing the chronology of the drawings, the changes in the design over time, and new conclusions based on the evidence of the drawn lines themselves. For example, a drawing of base moldings in Wren’s hand (no. 6) is correlated for the first time to a wooden model of Pembroke College Chapel, Cambridge, thus firmly documenting his authorship of that design. Among the over seventy drawings of Wren’s City churches, only two (St. Benet, Thames Street, nos. 136–37) can be firmly attributed to Robert Hooke, thus challenging the recent assertion that he had a significant design role in many of those projects. About forty sheets in the hands of Wren and his
draftsmen (nos. 305–42), depicting over twenty designs for country houses, indicate that he had more commissions of this type than previously thought.

For minor projects, such introductions are not provided in the catalog. But for every drawing there is detailed data, including a new cataloging number that supersedes the old All Souls system. (A concordance at the end of the volume correlates the AS volume numbers, the new catalog numbers, and the Wren Society plates, making it easy to cross reference all three systems.) Most significantly, every drawing, whether alone or part of a small group, is given a deliberately brief but extremely useful commentary addressing a variety of possible issues: the subject depicted, the context for the project, the chronological development of the design, major published sources, and related drawings at other locations. By citing all of the primary and major secondary sources for each building, Geraghty has created an excellent starting point for the researcher.

Furthermore, Geraghty's commentary format invites new insights on the designs depicted in the drawings. Not intended to be definitive, it leaves the way open for scholars to add their own nuggets. For example, to Geraghty's note that the project for replanning the city of London (nos. 395–96) can be linked to Vitruvius's treatise and to Palladio's reconstructions of ancient buildings, this reviewer can add that the two drawings were generated using Richard Newcourt's 1658 map of London as a base or template. The accessibility of the All Souls drawings provided by this volume is sure to stimulate more such discoveries about familiar as well as lesser known projects by Wren.

The clarity and usefulness of the catalog, particularly in establishing new chronologies and attributions for the drawings, would not have been possible without Geraghty's expertise in the analysis and characterization of drawing styles. The introductory essay, “The Drawings: Technique and Purpose,” traces the history of the drawings that emerged from Wren's office. Reflecting the older Italian concept of disegno, Wren understood design and drawing to be the same thing. As a result he drew throughout his entire active career, making small freehand sketches in pencil or ink, large and precise presentation drawings, as well as large-scale construction drawings. At the same time, due to the demands of his prolific practice, he employed a succession of draftsmen from the 1670s on—Edward Woodroffe, John Oliver, Thomas Laine, Robert Hooke, Nicholas Hawksmoor, and William Dickinson—whose varying roles in the design process has been long debated. By identifying different hands, Geraghty concludes that the primary role of these draftsmen was to make copies, to complete Wren's drawings, and to make presentation drawings—Wren always retained his role as designer. The only possible exception is Hawksmoor, who transformed Wren's practice from the late 1680s, as seen in the potent and expressive qualities of over 120 drawings at All Souls. Taking the form of highly-developed pen-cil preparatory drawings, inked presentation drawings, and the wash perspective sketches, these sheets indicate a sympathy with his employer's intentions, if not a direct role in the design. Collectively the numerous drawings at All Souls reveal Wren's control of his designs; viewing sheet after sheet, we can also conclude that it was the drawings that made this control possible. Different kinds of draw-

ings communicated his ideas at various stages of the design and construction process, but they also could be rendered to heighten the aesthetic qualities of a project. All of these drawing types and their visual possibilities ensured that Wren's intentions were clearly expressed and that he maintained design control in the course of actual building.

The only criticism of the book that could be voiced relates to the scale at which the drawings are reproduced, which seems to have been determined more by the exigencies of page layout than respect for the relative sizes of the drawings themselves. Original drawings made at the same scale, but on paper of different dimensions, are at times reduced in the catalog to the same height or width and consequently appear at different scales. For example, the plan and elevation of the pre-fire design for St. Paul's are reproduced at the same scale, but the section is not (nos. 45–47), while in the case of the Warrant design, its west and south elevations and its longitudinal section each end up at a different scale (nos. 73–75). This limits the reader's ability to correlate design elements from one drawing to another.

Nevertheless, the book provides a rich venue for first encounters with the drawings at All Souls. Ultimately, however, these sheets must be studied first hand to be truly understood and appreciated. In a time when architecture students design buildings by tapping a mouse to create a three-dimensional model on a computer screen, and see little or no value in either drawing by hand or in making plans, sections, and elevations, Geraghty's book reminds us of the power of the architectural drawing. With pencil and paper, a deft hand, and an imaginative mind, Wren was able to design complex buildings and clearly represent them by means of this relatively simple but richly informative and highly personalized medium.

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Notes

When she compiled Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture, Barbara Miller Lane had several goals in mind: to remedy the dearth of thoughtful teaching texts for the history of housing, to present differing perspectives from