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THE LIFE, WORK, AND  
INFLUENCE OF SIR  
CHRISTOPHER WREN.





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Edwin J. Hall



**SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN**





# THE LIFE, WORK, AND INFLUENCE OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

AN ESSAY

BY

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# CONTENTS.

## PART I.

### THE LIFE OF WREN.

His appearance and early years. University career and scientific attainments. Appointed assistant to Sir John Denham. His first Commission. Restoration of Old S. Paul's. Trip to France. The Fire of London. Plan for re-building London. Designs for St. Paul's. One Accepted. Sources of Income. Sheldonian Theatre. Greenwich Hospital. Chelsea Hospital. Temple Bar. The Monument. Wren Married and Knighted. Designs never Executed. Windsor Mausoleum. Winchester Palace. Whitehall Palace. Hampton Court. Treaty of Ryswick. Westminster Abbey. Troubles at S. Paul's. Wren's Salary Suspended. Dismissal from Office. Retirement and Death ... ..	I
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## PART II.

### THE WORK OF WREN.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTS OF THE WORKS OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN ...	22
Characteristics of the Early Renaissance. His Work as Influenced by the Times. His Genius. The Construction of S. Paul's. The City Churches. A General Classification according to Plan. Towers and Steeples. Interiors. Fittings. Galleries and Pews. Palatial and Domestic Work. Use of the Orders ... ..	27

## PART III.

### THE INFLUENCE OF WREN.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTS OF THE SUCCESSORS OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN, WITH THEIR CHIEF WORKS ... ..	44
Characteristics of his Successors. Influence felt immediately. Nicholas Hawksmoor. Sir John Vanbrugh. James Gibbs. Influence diminishes correlatively to lapse of time. Sir William Chambers. Our own eclectic times ... ..	48





## LIST OF PLATES.

I.	OLD TEMPLE BAR. As rebuilt	....	....	....	<i>To face page</i>	6
II.	GREENWICH HOSPITAL	....	....	....	,,	12
III.	THE WESTERN TOWERS OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY				,,	16
IV.	THE GREAT SCHOOLROOM, Winchester College	....			,,	29
V.	ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL	....	....	....	,,	31
VI.	THE CITY CHURCHES. Typical Plans, etc.	....			,,	34
VII.	Do. do. Towers and Steeples	....			,,	38
VIII.	THE HALL OF THE BREWERS' COMPANY, London				,,	42
IX.	THE CHIMNEY PIECE AND PANELLING IN THE BREWERS' HALL....	....	....	....	,,	42
X.	THE WORK OF GIBBS	....	....	....	,,	46

---

## BLOCKS IN TEXT.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.	Plan of Wren's favourite design	....	<i>Page</i>	9
Do. do.	Plan at the Crossing	....	,,	10
ELY CATHEDRAL.	Plan at the Crossing	....	,,	10
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.	Plans of old and new contrasted	....	,,	11
Do. do.	Plan of precincts as originally designed		,,	19
Do. do.	Section through the Nave	....	,,	32
Do. do.	Ground Plan	....	,,	33
CASTLE HOWARD, Yorkshire,	General Plan	....	,,	50



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

*THIS* Essay was awarded the Silver Medal of the Architectural Association, London, for 1896, and a limited Edition is now published at the request of many friends. No attempt has been made to expand it to the fuller development which the subject so well merits: it is necessary to state this, because the limitations imposed directly defined the length of the Essay, and are responsible for the curtailment of many trains of thought, and more especially for the brevity of the last part, and for the scant reference to the Domestic Work of Sir Christopher Wren.

For facilities offered me of studying original drawings, manuscripts, and standard works, I am particularly indebted to Mr G. H. Birch, Curator of Sir John Soane's Museum, London, and to Mr. Peter Cowell, Chief Librarian of the City of Liverpool, who have never failed to allow me full access to the very valuable collections of Architectural Works in their respective Libraries, and whose personal help and kindness I am glad to have this opportunity of acknowledging.

In many other ways, great consideration has been shown me, and I am greatly indebted to Mr. R. Anning Bell for the delightful set of chapter headings and tail-pieces which adorn these pages, and which were specially designed by him for this work. The same applies to the initial letters, which have been kindly contributed by Mr. O. W. F. Lodge, a Student in the School of Architecture. The preparation of the Plates of the City Churches entailed much study and investigation on the spot, and it is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the supplementary help rendered me by Mr. T. Geoffry Lucas, of Hitchin, and by Mr. J. P. Clark, of London.

Nor must I omit to thank all who have facilitated the publication by becoming private subscribers. Should my efforts some day stimulate someone to undertake a monumental work, in some degree worthy of the subject, they will not have been in vain.

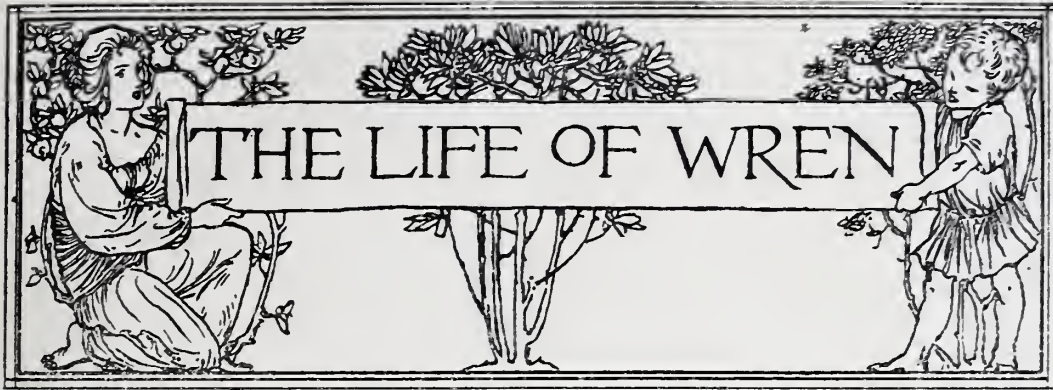
ARTHUR STRATTON.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,  
LIVERPOOL, FEBRUARY, 1897.

“SLIGHT THOSE WHO SAY, AMIDST THEIR SICKLY HEALTHS,  
THOU LIVEST BY RULE. WHAT DOTHTH NOT SO BUT MAN?  
HOUSES ARE BUILT BY RULE, AND COMMONWEALTHS.  
ENTICE THE TRUSTY SUN, IF THAT YOU CAN,  
FROM HIS ECLIPTIC LINE; BECKON THE SKY.  
WHO LIVES BY RULE, THEN, KEEPS GOOD COMPANY.”

—GEORGE HERBERT.





HE early years of the life of Sir Christopher Wren always seem to be enshrouded in a certain amount of mystery to an architect, because they were devoted to a study apparently so opposite to that with which his name is now universally associated.

He was about twenty years of age when his great fore-runner, Inigo Jones, died.

Inigo Jones fell upon evil times; frustrated, it would seem, at almost every move, his masterly designs were, for the most part, but idle dreams, doomed to be known to posterity as great possibilities only. He played his part, nevertheless, and was still playing—his last act, maybe—when one appeared on the scene who was destined to carry on his work, and to carry it on with such brilliancy that all the world should shade their eyes and yet be dazzled by the mere reflection which should suffice to keep his own name bright for all time. We might well picture Christopher Wren in those days as an enthusiast devoted solely to the study of Architecture, but he was known rather as a young man possessing altogether exceptional powers of acquisition, interested in anything intellectual, but especially addicted, not to the fine arts at all, but to the higher branches of science.

Born at the quiet country Vicarage of Knowle, in Wiltshire, on October 20th, 1632, he early exhibited great mental powers,

Inigo Jones,  
1572-1653.

Birth and early  
years of Wren.

apparently to the detriment of his physical strength, for we find that his father, Dean Wren, a man of high culture and understanding, deemed it advisable to supplement such attention as he could himself bestow upon his promising offspring by the services of a private tutor at home. However, in 1646, when in the fourteenth year of his age, he was at Wadham College, Oxford, astonishing everyone there with his bright intelligence and persistent study, having at that early age not only laid the foundation for a sound classical education, but also exhibited a strong bent for the experimental philosophy of the "New Learning."

University  
career and  
scientific  
research.

His university career was one succession of marked successes. He took his B.A. degree in 1650, followed in due course by that of M.A. in 1653, in which year he was also elected Fellow of All Souls. At this time, as well as for many years subsequently, we know him to have been deep in scientific research. writing learned tracts on the "Hypothesis and Theory of Comets" and patenting inventions of all sorts from "Diplographic Pens" and "Instruments of use in Gnomonicks" to "New Designs tending to Strength, Convenience, and Beauty in Building," whilst the discovery of Mezzotint engraving should probably be attributed to him rather than to Prince Rupert. Nothing seemed to dismay him, and before many years had passed away this "miracle of a youth," as John Evelyn called him, in his Diary of 1654, was known in scientific circles all over Europe. At home the highest honours were conferred upon him. He was Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College when only twenty-five; Savilian Professor of Astronomy in the University of Oxford in 1660, and elected both D.C.L. and LL.D. at Oxford and Cambridge respectively in the following year. In 1673, owing to pressure of other work, he was compelled to resign his Professorship, but he maintained his connection with the Royal Society, which had received its charter in 1662. His name as one of its originators occurs again and again in the Proceedings of the Society, together with those of all the leading



men of science of the day, to say nothing of the names of King Charles himself, the Duke of York, and Prince Rupert. In 1680, and again in 1681, he was elected to the Presidency, and we marvel that he found time to carry through his multifarious duties in that capacity to the satisfaction of all and apparently not to the detriment of other occupations which were rapidly increasing around him. President of the Royal Society.

Having hastily followed him thus far to the zenith of a scientific career, we must retrace our steps to glance at events which had been taking place outside the Universities; events which, in course of time, were to react upon him and to alter the course of his whole life to such an extent that it might seem that so far he had missed his true calling in life, if such a master mind can be said to be restricted to any one sphere alone.

All through the earlier years of his college life the country had been convulsed by civil wars; on one occasion, at least, it is recorded that the disorder actually affected his own movements, for in 1658 the Professors of Gresham College were driven from their class-rooms, and the place was garrisoned by the rebels. Amidst one long succession of tumultuous scenes and vicious uproar was his character firmly moulded. During these stirring times, for the Church and State alike, young Wren must many a time have turned towards the Tower, where for eighteen weary years lay his uncle, Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely, who was cast there for his supposed Popish tendencies, a victim along with Archbishop Laud in the wholesale demolition which was brought about by the temporary ascendancy of Calvinistic principles in the land. The Church was no less corrupt than the State, and as an outward sign of its inward baseness the erection of religious houses was not only stopped, but those which already stood were subjected to every infamy of abuse and disuse. Little reverence was shown to the great Cathedral of St. Paul, which was already tottering, whilst the work of Inigo Jones, as being associated with Laud, was undisguisedly hated by the Puritans. His uncle, the Bishop of Ely, cast into the Tower.

Desecration of  
Architecture  
during the  
Common-  
wealth, 1649-  
1660.

The peaceful arts could hardly flourish at a time when bands of marauders scoured the country wishing to destroy anything that could in any way be construed into an embodiment of the Papist religion,—no matter how beautiful, its profanity was only enhanced thereby.

Charles II,  
1660-1685.

The Restoration alone could produce order, and the people weary of self-rule, or no rule, and smarting under sores inflicted by themselves, gladly welcomed it. It was well for Art that in Charles II she found a patron at such a time; his long exile had not been spent in vain, and he came back alive to her claims and to the disgraces which had been inflicted upon the religious structures of his country. St. Paul's, as it then appeared, stung him to the quick, and one of his first acts was to appoint Wren, who, most likely, was well known as an amateur architect, assistant to Sir John Denham, the Surveyor-General; a man whose name is now rather associated with poetry in words than with poetry in stone. Thus, early in 1661, was Wren connected with the Metropolitan Cathedral, partly, no doubt, through the influence of John Evelyn.

Works to the  
mole and  
harbour at  
Tangier.

Charles, who had received the fortress of Tangier as part of the dower of Queen Catharine, wanted Wren, as one of the best geometricians of the day, to leave St. Paul's to Denham, and to go himself to Tangier to superintend extensive works there to the mole and harbour. Wren, however, excused himself, and we rejoice that he did not throw away some of the best years of his life, and possibly his life itself, for a mere caprice of his whimsical King. The works were never carried out; the whole place was a terrific strain upon the exchequer, and a few months before the close of the King's reign the work was abandoned and the garrison brought to England.

Wren turns his  
attention to  
matters  
architectural.

In spite of his high position in the scientific world, and the incessant demand upon his time which it occasioned, Wren now began seriously to turn his thoughts to matters architectural. That he had always an inclination that way, and that he was far from ignorant of its principles from his boyhood, no one will

doubt. We are told that his father, the Dean of Windsor, was not only a good mathematician, but that his knowledge of the art of architecture was by no means inconsiderable. He produced several designs, but it is now very difficult to prove that any were ever executed. His son would naturally have seen them, and, whether good or bad, they most likely whetted his appetite. In 1661, when he probably had no idea of the future which was before him, he suggested "Designs in Architecture" as part of his contribution towards a royal entertainment on the occasion of the King's visit to Oxford. Before long, however, he was to have an opportunity of showing that his knowledge of architecture was not merely theoretical. His uncle, the Bishop of Ely, who had been released from the Tower at the Restoration, bethought him to make some thank-offering, and to benefit his old college at the same time, by giving it a chapel. He consulted his nephew, and found him so ready to further the work that the old man lived to worship in the Chapel of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and to know that he had paved the way for the young architect's future career in giving him his first commission. The foundation stone was laid on May 13th, 1663, which was about four years prior to the death of his patron, and five years subsequent to the death of his father.

His father, the Dean, as architect.

Wren's first commission.

Further work at Oxford and Cambridge soon followed. It would be interesting to learn how his designs, strongly imbued with the Palladian spirit as interpreted to him by Inigo Jones, were regarded by the people at large at these centres of learning. At Oxford, Gothic traditions, owing to Laud's influence, had lingered later than anywhere else in England, and had produced the wonderful Christchurch staircase as late as 1640, and may still have been persistent in Wren's college days. In other parts, workmen were acquiring a sound knowledge of classic forms and details, and were speaking in stone the language of the time. In the course of his work at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1665, Wren, in a letter sent with his small scale plans and general directions, seems to half apologise for venturing to suggest detail drawings

Spread of classic influence.



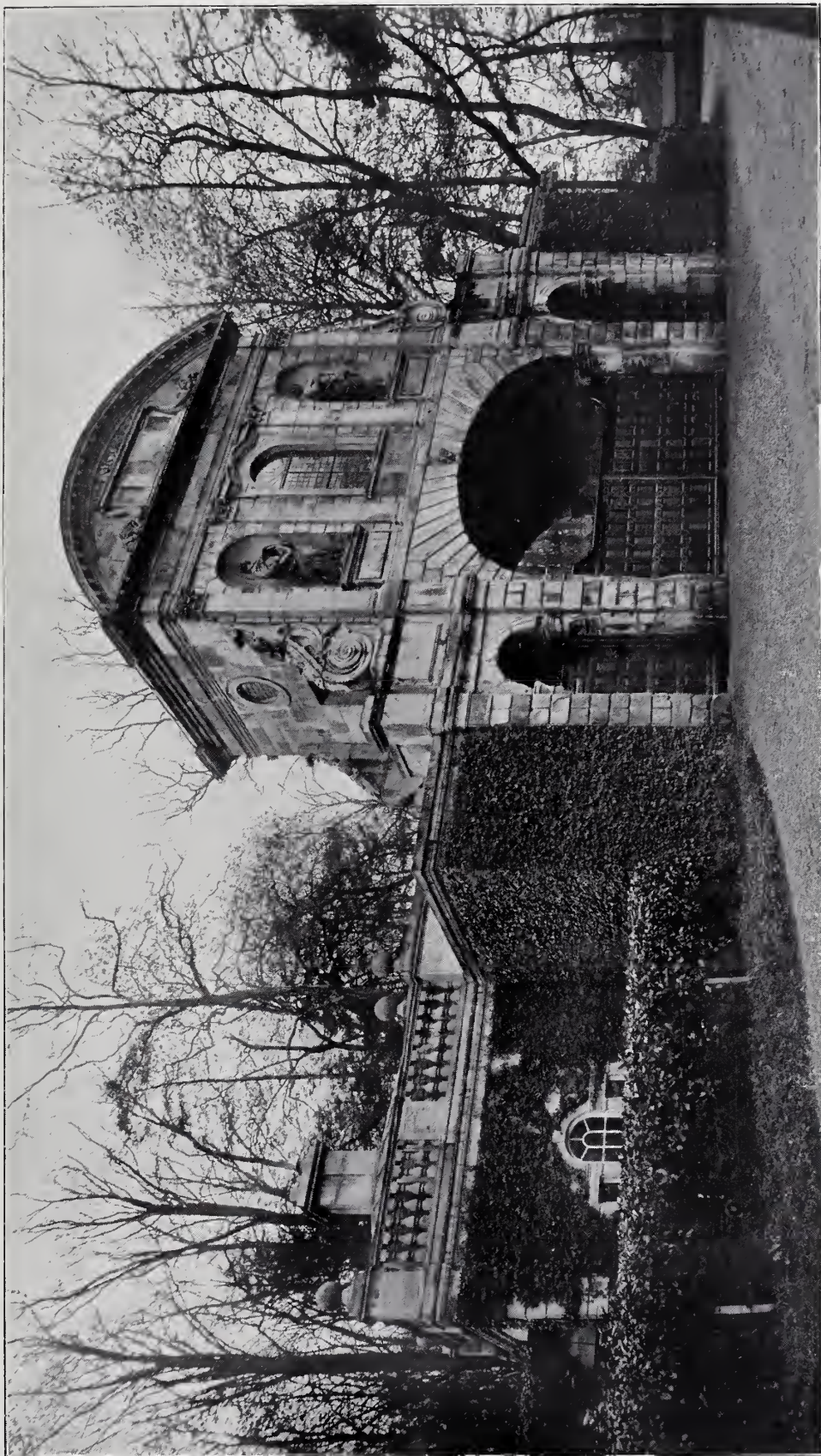
such as now-a-days it would be fatal to leave unsupplied. He says: "I suppose you have good masons; however, I would willingly take a further pains to give all the mouldings in great; we are scrupulous in small matters, and you must pardon us, the architects are as great pedants as critics and heralds."

Contemplated  
restoration of  
St. Paul's.

Charles had put the restoration of St. Paul's into Wren's hands since his refusal to go to Tangier, for he was anxious to remove all evidence of the havoc wrought there by the Puritans during the long years of the Commonwealth. The central spire had long fallen, and the fabric was much defaced, but Wren had no idea of pulling it down; he wished, rather, to carry on the work of Inigo Jones, whose portico he greatly admired, by the substitution of Italian for Gothic forms, and more especially by the addition of a central cupola. He early laid great stress upon the effect of a cupola, and we cannot doubt but that the possibilities of such a scheme were foreshadowed in his mind by the work of Alan-de-Walsingham, at Ely, with which he was well acquainted.

Wren makes  
his one  
Continental  
tour.

It was whilst this matter was engaging his attention, and whilst the buildings at Oxford and Cambridge were in progress, that he took his one foreign tour. Stimulated very likely by the prevalence of the plague which was then raging in London, and by a desire to study his art abroad, he took advantage of the interval of peace between France and England before the Wars of the Netherlands, to go to France. A glimpse of his doings there is afforded us by a letter to a friend in England: he met Bernini, who was busy on the Louvre, and was greatly impressed, not only with the magnitude of that work, but also with its excellence, and with the large number of crafts represented, "which make a school of architecture the best, probably, at this day in Europe." We may feel sure that he was far from lacking enthusiasm from the following: "Bernini's design of the Louvre I would have given my skin for, but the old reserv'd Italian gave me but a few minutes' view." He certainly made the most of his opportunities, and went wherever



OLD TEMPLE BAR, AS RE-ERECTED AT THEOBALD'S PARK.

*From a Photo. by Messrs. Valentine & Son.*





there was anything architecturally grand to be seen in the district. His sketch-book, too, must ever have been in use; he wrote to his friend, "That I might not lose the impressions of them, I shall bring you almost all France in paper." It is worthy of note that he never reached Italy; whether he intended to extend this journey is now unknown; certain it is that, as events turned out, he could never be spared from his native land again, and he had to be content with the descriptions which, no doubt, John Evelyn, and, in after days, his eldest son, were able to give him. This tour, without doubt, imbued him somewhat with the style of Louis XIV. He turned back to England either at the end of February or early in March, 1666, so that any alterations in his plans cannot be attributed to the Fire of London, as is so often erroneously stated.

Returns to England without visiting Italy.

On August 27th of that eventful year, he presented his design for the restoration of St. Paul's. It met with favour at once, and the order was given for its execution without delay—but a fate not so kind awaited the venerable pile. Within a week, the Great Fire had laid the City low; London, which had boasted its hundred and twenty churches and more, its stately mansions, and its picturesque streets, was but a smouldering ruin. The work of destruction was complete. Houseless and churchless, scarcely recovered from the horrors of the Plague, it is difficult even to imagine what must have been the dejection of the people when they awoke to their deplorable condition. It is at such times, however, that the indomitable English courage prevails; London was not to be deserted if human agency could set it up again. Never, perhaps, in the world's history have such calamities, one after the other, befallen a city; never has such an opportunity been afforded any master mind capable of grappling with them. The opportunity came, and Christopher Wren, nothing daunted, realised the immensity of it. The last smoke had scarce blown away, the smouldering débris was not yet disturbed, when he busily engaged himself with a survey in order to produce a plan for the rebuilding of

The Great Fire of London.

Wren presents his plan for the rebuilding of the city.



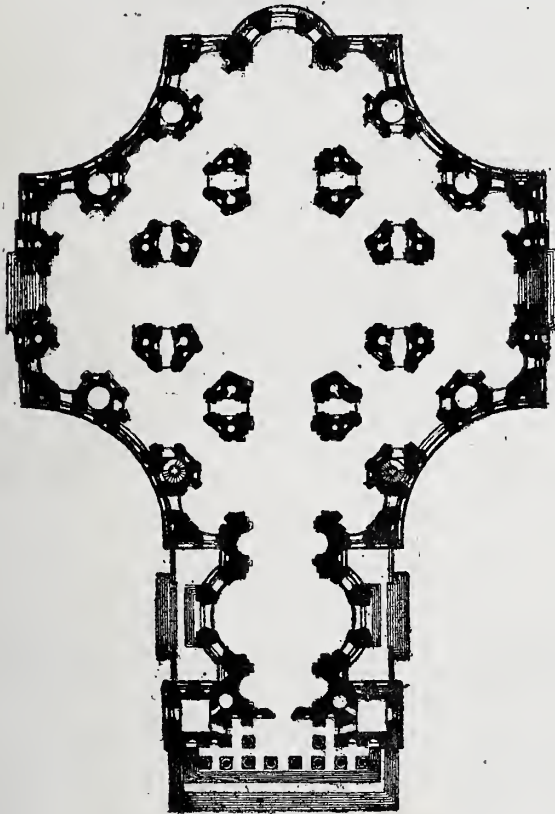
the city. This plan came in time, and shows us what a model city he would have given to the world, with its streets of uniform width, and "as near parallel to one another as possible, avoiding all acute angles;" its groups of public buildings, and its well disposed churches. Such a scheme was possible then, and only then, but already there were too many interests to be considered to make it practicable, and, in spite of Wren's efforts, the city gradually rose again on its old irregular lines.

Attempts to  
restore St.  
Paul's after the  
Fire.

With the return of quiet and order, attention was once more centred upon the great Cathedral, now, alas! a mere wreck of its former self. The design for the cupola, which was in the act of being carried out before the Fire, was now cast aside as quite out of the question, and for two years everything that could be devised was done to restore the structure, and to retain the work of Inigo Jones at the west end. The east end and the choir were patched up and made fit for divine service, but on April 25th, 1668, Dean Sancroft wrote to Wren, at Oxford: "What you whisper'd in my ear at your last coming hither, is now come to pass. Our work at the west end of St. Paul's is fallen about our ears." The uselessness of carrying on the work thus should then have been quite apparent, but tentative efforts till 1670 are recorded, by which time the necessity for either rebuilding altogether, or leaving the whole to its fate, was fully realised. We must ever be thankful that the former course was decided upon, and that Wren, who had been on the commission from the first, was appointed to make designs for a completely new structure. With what eagerness he must have set about them, full of hope and noble aspirations; but great trials and disappointments awaited him. Little progress seems to have been made till, for the more speedy procedure of the undertaking, the King issued his Letters Patents, under the Great Seal, in 1673, authorising Wren, who was then Surveyor-General of the Royal Works, to make a large model of one design which had met with special favour. This was Wren's favourite design, the

Wren  
commissioned  
to produce an  
entirely new  
design for St.  
Paul's.

one to which he would most willingly have set his name, but it survives only in the splendid model to be seen in the Cathedral to this day. The preparation of the site for its reception had actually commenced, but objections arose which outweighed



GROUND PLAN OF ST. PAUL'S, ACCORDING TO THE FIRST DESIGN (AFTER THE GREAT FIRE) OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN.

any probability of its ever being carried out. It will be seen from the plan that the long accepted Cathedral arrangement had been quite ignored—that features always before associated in England with the plan of a cathedral, and the outcome of her ritual, had been set at nought. The Court, in their inner conscience, looked forward to the day when this ritual might be recalled, and obviously to them such a cathedral would be ill-fitting for the saying of Mass and the ordering of Processions.

His favourite design.

Was it not possible to erect one which might answer all the purposes of the present by affording ample space for the gathering of congregations and the hearing of sermons; and yet, if ever the time came again, still be available for the change of ritual? The unfortunate architect found himself thus confronted, and there was no course but to turn his attention to the accepted type of plan, and to vest it as only he knew how.

His acquaintance with Ely Cathedral served him again, we may feel sure, for henceforth certain resemblances are quite noticeable in his plans about the crossing. Designs were produced one after another, but no one met with the approval of all parties concerned. At last Wren, who well knew that his critics were ignorant and worthless upstarts in matters architectural,

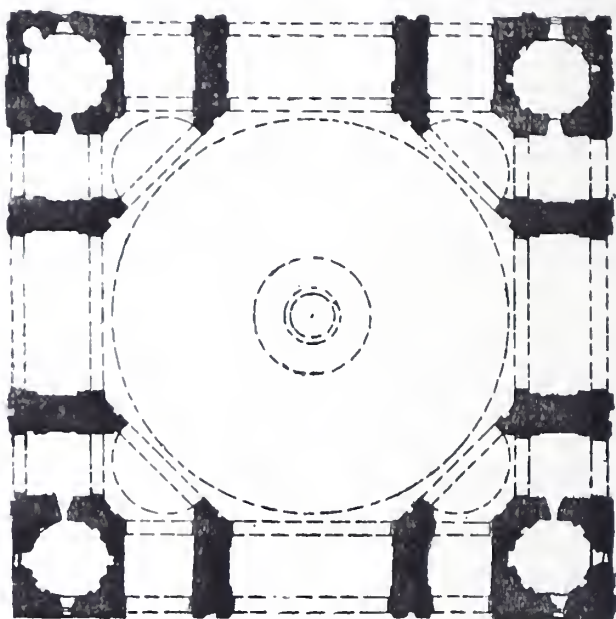
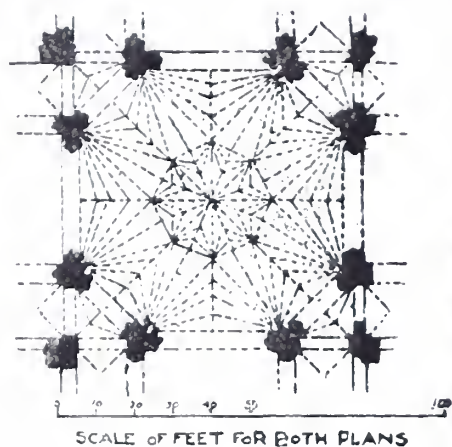
The arrangement at the crossing of the Cathedrals of Ely and St. Paul's contrasted.

produced a design which, to a cultured eye, is too fearful to be taken seriously; nevertheless, his critics fell into the trap thus skilfully laid. It was universally pronounced excellent, and on the 14th May, 1675, the King granted his Royal Warrant for the execution of this "very artificial, proper, and useful" design,

with permission to make certain small deviations as considered necessary from time to time. Wren no sooner saw himself thus in authority than,

A design  
accepted.

Plans of the  
Cathedrals of  
Ely and St.  
Paul about  
the crossing.



with admirable tact, he refused to publicly expose any further drawings or models, and proceeded to carry out the work after his own bent. Supplies had been gradually accumu-

lating, and, exclusive of other sources, the tax imposed upon sea-coal since 1670 had brought in a large sum of money.

Methods of  
raising funds.

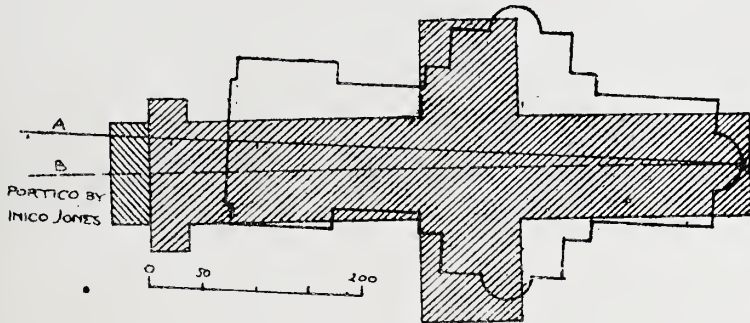
Every chance to raise funds was seized, and later, in 1678, Bishops on their Consecration, "instead of making great entertainments and feasts wherein much money was necessarily spent," were ordered to pay £50 towards the rebuilding of St. Paul's, and sometimes another £50 in lieu of gloves, which were given by the Bishops to all who attended the Consecration dinners.

Old St. Paul's  
cleared away.

The clearing of the site was no small matter, considering the masses of masonry yet left standing. Various means were resorted to for bringing down the walls, necessitating great expenditure of money and labour, till Wren very skilfully employed gunpowder with most satisfactory results. These difficulties



would soon have been at an end had he not been forbidden its further use, through a slight accident one day during his absence. His ingenious mind then suggested the battering-ram, and he watched its effect with keen interest. Large quantities of the stone were sold for building purposes and for road paving, and the excavations were proceeded with clear of the old foundations; at the same time the axis of the Cathedral was slightly altered for the better adjustment to the site. Much



Plans of Old and New St. Paul's contrasted. A axis of New; B axis of Old St. Paul's.

trouble was experienced at the north-east corner, where some six or seven feet of the walls unexpectedly came over an old pit long before dug out for its pot-earth. It was necessary to sink a shaft and to build up a solid pier of masonry, from which an arch, thrown across to the main foundation, carries the superincumbent load.

Trouble at the north-east corner.

Wren met with more than one surprise in the course of his underground work in London; in Cheapside he came across a solid Roman brick road, sufficiently sound for him to erect his famous tower upon.

Throughout the early years after the Fire, when so much controversy was going on about St. Paul's, Wren had his hands full enough with designs of all sorts, sometimes for completely new structures, ecclesiastical, palatial, monumental, and domestic; sometimes for rebuilding and repairs only. It is quite inconsistent to attempt to separate the life of such a man from the labours which played so great a part in it, and it will be well here to glance at a few of his works, confining all critical remarks and technicalities to the section of this Essay devoted to them.

Wren occupied with architectural work of every description.

Oxford had long been in need of a Theatre for public cere-

The Sheldonian  
Theatre,  
Oxford.

monies; the "Comitia" and "Encænia" had been held in St. Mary's Church, and the usual proceedings at such times ill became the sacred walls. By the munificence of a single donor, Archbishop Sheldon, the want was liberally met. Sheldon had many a time met Wren in conference at St. Paul's, and he willingly entrusted his scheme to the great scientist, though, as yet, inexperienced architect. The building, still known as the Sheldonian Theatre, was ready for a grand opening ceremony on July 9th, 1669, and pleased all concerned, not only for its design, which is said to be based upon that of the Theatre of Marcellus at Rome, but more especially for its construction. The roof, over a span of 70 feet, is accomplished without any intermediate supports, and unquestionably is a masterpiece of scientific construction.

Wren repairs  
the spires of  
Salisbury and  
Chichester  
Cathedrals.

About this time the spire of Salisbury Cathedral was struck by lightning, and Wren was commissioned to repair it; he had many times to deal with the mediæval structures of England, and more than once found difficult problems to solve. He was fairly successful at Salisbury, but his treatment of Chichester spire could not save it ultimately from destruction; he suspended within it from the apex a huge balk of timber to act as a pendulum, and so restore equilibrium under great wind pressure, but it was blown down in 1861.

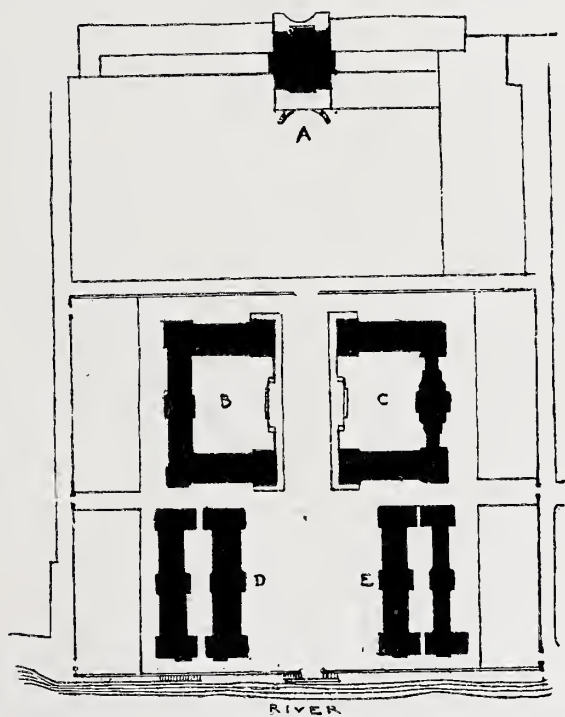
Greenwich  
Palace  
remodelled and  
converted into  
a Seaman's  
Hospital.

A large number of his more important works cannot be spoken of in strict chronological order, for they were spread over so many years of his life. Greenwich, for instance, was always more or less on hand. Originally a Tudor palace, it was quite transformed by Inigo Jones and Webb, and although very far indeed from completion, was at one time inhabited by Charles, who, early in his reign, placed it in Wren's hands. He was instrumental, in after years, in its conversion from a Royal Palace to the uses of a Seaman's Hospital, and, when called upon, he so adjusted his new portions as to conform to the work of his predecessors, and make one harmonious composition. The imposing river front, and the glitter of its two



GREENWICH HOSPITAL FROM THE RIVER.

*From a Photo. by Messrs. Valentine & Son.*



SKETCH PLAN OF GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

A QUEEN'S HOUSE BY INIGO JONES.

B QUEEN MARY'S BLOCK.

C KING WILLIAM'S BLOCK.

D QUEEN ANNE'S BLOCK.

E KING CHARLES' BLOCK.





domes, must ever keep in the minds of all who pass on that great highway of commerce the consummate talent and generous benevolence of the man who thus converted it to such good use, and gave those talents absolutely gratuitously for the innate love of doing good.

Another riverside institution of not unsimilar purport now, is also closely connected with his name. Chelsea Hospital, originally a Royal College, founded by James I, was afterwards acquired by the Royal Society, but abandoned about 1667; re-granted by Charles II, in 1680, for the purposes of a military hospital, Wren took it in hand in 1682, and by the simplest means possible produced a building which has never failed to charm all who ponder awhile to learn the great lesson it teaches so well.

The Custom House, the Royal Exchange, and Temple Bar, all now removed, were built shortly after the Fire; nor must the Monument be omitted, which the inhabitants thought fit to erect as a memorial of the great calamity which had befallen them. It took seven years in all to erect—a long time—but delays must have occurred owing to the difficulty of procuring stones of sufficient size from Portland. Evelyn contended, with reason, that it would have been most fittingly placed at a point where the Fire ceased, and not, as is the case, where it originated. It was intended, at one time, that a figure of Charles, a “Coloss Statue, in Brass Gilt,” should have crowned the summit, but the emblematical flaming vase found more sympathy with the people. To an astronomer, an erection over 200 feet high must have commended itself; and, certainly, Wren intended that it should have been at the service of the Royal Society, but the oscillation was found to be so great that the idea was abandoned eventually.

These must have been the busiest years in the life of one of the most energetic men who ever lived. The organisation necessary to start so many schemes, and to fill a post with such a complexity of details and demands to satisfy, must at times indeed have tried him sorely.

Wren married  
to Faith  
Coghill.

On December 7th, 1669, he was married to a lady of long acquaintance, named Faith Coghill, but he was not destined long to enjoy the solace of her society. For awhile she must have shared with him the joys attendant upon his numerous successes and the honours showered upon him in all directions, including that of Knighthood, which was conferred at Whitehall in 1673; but soon after the birth of his first son, Stephen—the compiler of the *Parentalia*—in 1675, she was taken from him, to his very great bereavement.

Greenwich  
selected for the  
site of the Royal  
Observatory.

In that same year, Wren was appointed on a Commission to determine a suitable place for the Royal Observatory. Greenwich had long commended itself to him for such a purpose, and, his suggestion being approved, he forthwith set about the design, working in conjunction with Flamsteed, the great astronomer. All this while, in spite of his enormous duties as Surveyor, he never seems to have abandoned completely his favourite science. Circumstances over which he had little control were combining, and forcing him into another sphere; had the Fire never happened, it is not improbable that he would have devoted his life almost entirely to scientific investigation. The mere fact, however, of his having appeared as architect before that event, points to his having naturally inherited broad sympathies with the art, but of his own free will he would scarcely have practised it ultimately, to the exclusion of all else. This trait, so strongly marked in his character, linked with the fact that his training—using the word as we know it now, or even to some extent as Inigo Jones knew it—was practically *nil*, could not fail to evince itself in his work in after years.

Wren's strong  
inclination to a  
scientific  
career, and his  
lack of training  
as an architect.

A glance at  
some designs  
which were  
never executed.

A few words must be said of some of the long list of designs prepared at large, which were either never completed, or not even commenced at all. Charles II, through his Commons, ordered that a Mausoleum should be erected at Windsor to the memory of his father, "The Royal Martyr;" and on January 30th, 1678, the sum of £70,000 was voted for the purpose. A design was produced, most magnificent, according

The Royal  
Mausoleum at  
Windsor.

to all accounts, circular, with a dome, after the fashion of the Temple of Vesta, and most ornate both within and without. It met with the King's approval, but nothing had been done at the time of his death, in 1685, when other matters pressed forward, and nothing more was ever heard of it.

Another undertaking, commenced under favourable auspices about the year 1683 also fell through. Charles had taken a great fancy to the glorious old city of Winchester, not only for its own sake, but for other considerations which possibly appealed more forcibly to him. Situated in the midst of peaceful, rural scenery, surrounded on all sides by undulating stretches of mossy down, and yet within easy reach of the New Forest, it seemed to him to be an ideal centre for a hunting resort. Wren produced a design for a large country seat, to be perched on the higher ground overlooking the city, and in an immediate line with the axis of the Cathedral. This was to have been made a special feature of, and the avenue of tall elm trees, which gives the cathedral so great a charm at present, would have given way to a still longer and statelier one. The works were pushed on, and the main wing was roofed in, within two years, when a sudden check was given by the death of the King, and none but tentative efforts were ever made afterwards to complete it. It has long been used as a barrack, but little has survived a destructive fire which wrought great havoc quite recently.

Whitehall must have been full of gloomy recollections, and after the experiences of Inigo Jones, can scarcely have had a favourable prestige for an architectural successor. Wren may never have looked for great things there; certain it is that his designs for the completion, produced about 1697, shared no better fate. That the talents of such men should have been so recklessly imposed upon is no credit to the times in which they lived. In the case of the first, it is little short of a national disaster that his life should have been so frittered away; in the case of the second, it is true that, with such a glorious list of completed works, the omissions are not of so

Charles II  
commences a  
Palace at  
Winchester.

Designs of  
Inigo Jones  
and Wren for  
Whitehall  
Palace.



great moment, but it points to a tendency so fully developed in our own day, to think lightly of, and to treat with actual indifference, the claims of the architect for support and consideration.

Wren's stipend for the whole of the city work.

The year before King Charles died, still another public appointment was conferred upon Wren. Already Surveyor-General, in succession to Sir John Denham, he was now made Comptroller of the Works, a post which required much attention, and which brought with it many harassing little disputes and the handsome remuneration of £9 2s. 6d. per annum. His stipend for the rebuilding of St. Paul's and the whole of the city churches had already been fixed at £200 per annum—a mere pittance really—conclusively shewing that he worked with the highest possible motives with which a man can work, for the ennoblement of his art and the welfare of his country, and not just for the sake of his own advancement and the glitter of his name.

Wren loses his second wife.

In the meanwhile he had suffered another loss in the death of his second wife, Jane Fitzwilliam, in 1679, after a married life of only two years.

St. Paul's in progress.

Although in Charles, Wren certainly lost a good and tolerant patron, he was so handicapped, and under such strict supervision that, at any rate, as regards St. Paul's, his decease must have come as rather a relief. Undoubtedly, he had quite exceeded the limits of the license granted him to depart from the approved design in small matters, but the work was not far enough advanced for any but a practised eye to detect the deviations, and nothing seems to have been remarked during the progress of the works. James II was careless of such things, and Wren was now free to follow out his own conceptions so long as the demands upon the exchequer were not excessive. The short reign of James passed away without leaving any monumental works to record his name. Restorations and rebuildings were going on all around him, and he issued a new commission for the continuation of the work at St. Paul's, but little heed did he pay, and, at least, cannot be blamed for interference.

James II, 1685-1689.





THE WESTERN TOWERS OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

*By permission of "Architecture."*





On the other hand, one of the first acts of William and Mary, on their accesssion, was to commission Wren to make extensive alterations and additions to Wolsey's Palace, at Hampton Court, in order to fit it for a royal residence. The delightful red brick and stone wing, facing the Home Park, and enclosing the Fountain Court, erected from his designs between 1689 and 1694, is deservedly well known, and has met with better treatment than Kensington Palace, built by the same sovereign, about the same time.

William and Mary, 1689-1702.

Hampton Court and Kensington Palaces.

After being released, as it would seem, from the ties imposed upon him whilst holding the Presidency of the Royal Society, Wren appeared as a Member of Parliament; firstly, for a borough in Devonshire, and, later, in 1689, he sat in the Convention Parliament, which ratified the ascendancy of William and Mary, as a representative of the borough of New Windsor. Nowhere is any mention made of his political opinions, but, considering the influence of his father, who was a staunch Royalist, and the school in which he was brought up, we may safely conclude that he too was a strong supporter of the crown.

Wren as a Member of Parliament.

Many a tower was ere this to be seen above the long dull rows of bricks and mortar which everywhere lined the city thoroughfares. St. Mary-le-bow, the queen of them all, was finished, and the graceful little St. Martin's, on Ludgate Hill, was already waiting for the great giant whose strength it was intended to emphasise by inviting comparison with its own subtle forms—a service fully reciprocated in due course. St. Paul's had been steadily progressing under the immediate supervision of the Master Builder, but records are scarce, and only a glimpse of his doings there is afforded from time to time. The coal tax, which was in force till 1700, still largely helped to defray the enormous expenses which, up to 1684 alone, had amounted to close on £100,000. In 1686 the old west end was entirely cleared away, and two years later the new choir was ready for roofing. An excellent opportunity for throwing this portion open, when quite completed, was afforded by the day of Thanksgiving,

The choir of St. Paul's opened.

December 2nd, 1697, appointed to commemorate the Treaty of Ryswick.

The city fast reappearing.

Two years more were spent in steady labour, during which the finishing touches must have been put to many of Wren's works. Productions of his own mind must have encountered his eye at every turn within the city walls, gladdening his heart, no doubt, but ever kindling bitter reflections at the recollection of the opportunities which had been denied him—of an ideal becoming, day by day, more and more remote from realization. Then the Morning Chapel, which is said to have caused him so much grief, was opened, and for a long time nothing is hinted at beyond the interest which was fast kindling, and the speculations which were becoming rife, as to the effect of the great dome now towering aloft, which was to excite the envy of the world for generations, in spite of ruthless criticism. How should it be covered externally was soon the question, with copper or with lead? Wren seems to have inclined to the latter, but there was much argument on the subject in 1708; it was probably on the score of expense that finally lead was decided upon, at a cost of £2,500, or some six hundred pounds less than it would have cost to execute in copper. We have no cause for regret; the beautiful silvery hue of this material lending itself more readily to the London atmosphere than the uncertain effect of copper under similar conditions.

The dome of St. Paul's.

Queen Anne, 1702-1714.

The Act for fifty new churches.

Another change of sovereign had meanwhile taken place, and Queen Anne's reign was destined to give much encouragement to the art of architecture. "The Act for fifty new churches" was passed in 1708, and Wren was placed upon the Commission to superintend their erection. Apart from the fact that so many years of hard, and, latterly, of unappreciated labour, were fast telling upon his physical strength, he could hardly, in his official capacity, have been eligible to carry out any himself. Accordingly, he addressed a lengthy epistle to certain of his brother architects, in which he endeavoured to give them such advice

with regard to church planning and arrangement as his exceptional experience enabled him to do with all discretion.

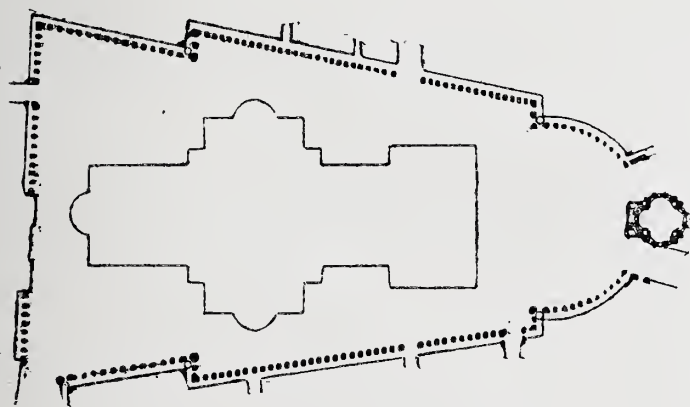
Westminster Abbey was, at this period, in his care; he would have done much there, and a design for a central spire, twelve sided, in "a truly Gothick fashion," was produced. He remodelled the North Transept Front, since pulled down, and, from his designs and models, the Western Towers were, for the most part, brought to their present state, but he was not directly responsible for them.

Wren and  
Westminster  
Abbey.

Living now in comparative retirement at Hampton Court, which he loved for its quiet peaceful situation beside the glistening Thames, he paid frequent visits to this saintly pile as well as to the new-born Cathedral. The busy throng of workers there at last showed some sign of cessation in their labours: the din and clamour gradually melted away, leaving the mighty structure, in all its fulness of repose and strength, most forcibly shadowing forth the approaching end of its Master Builder, whose long life of turmoil and strife awaited now its consummation at the hand of Death. But both were yet to be maltreated and harassed—the victims of a ruthless and ignorant monarchy. There was nothing now in which the narrow-minded Commissioners did not endeavour to thwart him. Firstly, they

Wren retires to  
Hampton  
Court.

Troubles at St.  
Paul's.



insisted that the "poor, mean, iron rail" of the architect should be supplanted by a heavy cast iron one, which sufficiently obscured the structure to materially affect its proportions.

Plan shewing  
the precincts of  
the Cathedral  
as originally  
designed.

This altercation took place about 1711, or shortly after the last stone of the lantern crowning the cupola had been laid by his son Stephen, and Strong, his master mason, in his own presence. Then arose a quarrel about the balustrade: Wren never

Altercation  
about the  
balustrade.



intended that there should have been more than a blocking course, and he protested most strongly, declaring that such a feature would be contrary to the principles of Architecture, as he understood them. He admitted that something of the kind was admissible in Gothic work, and "ladies think nothing well without an edging." On the whole, it is difficult to see the force of his argument. This was in 1717, and the treatment which was now accorded him was equalled only in any measure by the gross insult and injustice proferred him a few years previously with regard to his stipend. As far back as 1697, a clause had been inserted in the "Act for the completion and adornment of St. Paul's," "to suspend a moiety of the Surveyor's salary until the said church should be finished," as the opinion was becoming general that Wren was prolonging the work for the sake of his paltry £200 a year. He protested again and again, in vain, that the delay was no fault of his, if, indeed, there can have been much delay at all. He petitioned the Queen later, for his salary was getting much in arrears, and he was paid in full by Royal Order on Christmas Day, 1711, and the building was declared finished so far as he was concerned.

Wren's salary  
in arrears.

It is almost incredible that such insults should have been showered upon him at the crowning point of his life. He had lived to serve five Sovereigns, and had passed through the troublesome years of the Commonwealth with still no stain upon his honour, when the climax was reached in his dismissal from office. It must have come as a great relief to him, nevertheless, when on April 14th, 1718, King George, to his everlasting shame, was induced to supersede his Patent in order to confer it upon a mere court favourite in the person of Benson. It is worthy of note that Wren, who was preceded in his appointment by a poet, was also succeeded by a poet, although one of very minor calibre, and one who lived to reap just retribution for his ill-adjudged pretensions to architectural skill.

George I, 1714-  
1727.

Wren  
dismissed from  
office.

Wren, now free from taunts, rose high above his ignoble persecutors, and his calm and dignified demeanour show us all



the more plainly what a truly noble character, what an ideal citizen, London had driven from her midst.

“*Nunc me jubet fortuna expeditius philosophari*” were the words which escaped his lips, and the good old man, full of righteousness and honour, betook him to his meditations from things of this earth, Earthy, to things of heaven, Heavenly,—in a few short years to pass away, and to be laid within the walls of the one temple which had cost him so much—his very life soul’s work. His retirement.

He died at his house in St. James’s, on February 27th, 1723, in the ninety-first year of his age, when on one of his periodical visits to London. Wren dies at St. James’s.

“Thin and low of stature” is a sufficiently full description of his personal appearance. We can imagine what force of character must have emphasised his every gesture; what purity of thought must have stamped his every word; well has it been said “His knowledge had a right influence on the Temper of his Mind, which had all the Humility, graceful Modesty, Goodness, Calmness, Strength, and Sincerity of a sound and unaffected Philosopher.” His personal appearance and character.

“HEROIC SOULS A NOBLER LUSTRE FIND,  
EVEN FROM THOSE GRIEFS WHICH BREAK A VULGAR MIND;  
THAT FROST WHICH CRACKS THE BRITTLE COMMON GLASS,  
MAKES CRYSTAL INTO STRONGER BRIGHTNESS PASS.”



THE EXECUTED WORKS,  
IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, OF  
SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN, 1632-1723.

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When two dates are given for any one work, they define the approximate period occupied in the erection of the same.

Those works printed with an asterisk against them have since been destroyed or removed from various causes.

Pembroke Hall Chapel, Cambridge.	Since enlarged	1663
Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford . . . . .		1664-1669
Trinity College Chapel, Oxford . . . . .		1665-1692
Trinity College, Cambridge, Library . . . . .		1665-1679
*The Royal Exchange . . . . .		1668
*The Custom House . . . . .		1668
Emmanuel College Chapel, Cambridge . . . . .		1669-1677
*Temple Bar. Removed 1878 . . . . .		1670-1672
The Monument . . . . .		1671-1677
*St. Christopher-le-Stocks. Rebuilt 1696; Repaired		1671
St. Mary-le Bow, Cheapside. Steeple 1680 . . . . .		1671-1673
St. Mary-at-Hill . . . . .		1672-1677
St. Michael, Cornhill. Tower 1721 . . . . .		1672
St. Stephen, Walbrook. Tower 1681 . . . . .		1672-1679
*St. Benet Fink, Threadneedle Street . . . . .		1673-1676
*St. Olave, Jewry . . . . .		1673-1676
*St. Dionis Backchurch, Lime Street . . . . .		1674 & 1684
St. George, Botolph Lane . . . . .		1674-1677
*Drury Lane Theatre . . . . .		1674

Greenwich Observatory . . . . .	1675
St. Paul's Cathedral . . . . .	1675-1710
St. Michael, Wood Street . . . . .	1675
St. Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge. Steeple 1705	1676
*St. Mildred, Poultry . . . . .	1676-1677
St. Stephen, Coleman Street . . . . .	1676
St. Lawrence, Jewry . . . . .	1677
St. James, Garlick Hithe . . . . .	1677 & 1683
St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey, Queenhythe . . . . .	1677
*St. Michael, Queenhythe . . . . .	1677
St. Mary, Aldermanbury . . . . .	1677
St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street. Repaired . . . . .	1677
St. Swithin, Cannon Street . . . . .	1678-1679
St. Michael, Bassishaw, Basinghall Street . . . . .	1678-1679
*St. Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange . . . . .	1679
St. Anne and St. Agnes, Aldersgate . . . . .	1679-1680
St. Bride, Fleet Street . . . . .	1680 & 1700
St. Clement Danes, Strand. Steeple 1719, by Gibbs	1680-1682
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford . . . . .	1681-1683
Christ Church, Campanile, Oxford . . . . .	1681-1682
*All Hallows, Bread Street . . . . .	1681-1684
St. Peter, Cornhill . . . . .	1681-1682
*St. Antholin, Watling Street . . . . .	1682
St. Mary, Aldermary. Roof 1705; Tower rebuilt 1711	1682
Chelsea Royal Hospital . . . . .	1682-1692
Winchester Palace. Never completed . . . . .	1683-1685
St. James, Piccadilly. Tower later . . . . .	1683
St. Mildred, Bread Street . . . . .	1683
St. Augustine and St. Faith, Watling St. Tower 1695	1683
St. Clement, Eastcheap . . . . .	1683-1686
*All Hallows-the-Great, Upper Thames Street . . . . .	1683
Queen's College Chapel, Oxford . . . . .	1683
St. Benet, Paul's Wharf . . . . .	1683-1684
Middle Temple Gateway, Fleet Street . . . . .	1684-1688
The Great Schoolroom, Winchester College . . . . .	1684

Fawley Court, Oxfordshire . . . . .	1684
St. Martin, Ludgate Hill . . . . .	1684-1685
St. Alban, Wood Street. Repaired . . . . .	1685
*St. Mary Magdalen, Knightrider Street . . . . .	1685
*St. Benet, Gracechurch Street . . . . .	1685
*St. Matthew, Friday Street . . . . .	1685
St. Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane . . . . .	1686
Christ Church, Newgate Street. Steeple 1704 . . . . .	1687
St. Margaret Pattens, Rood Lane . . . . .	1687
St. Andrew, Holborn. Tower refaced 1704 . . . . .	1687
*St. Michael, Crooked Lane . . . . .	1688
Windsor Town Hall . . . . .	1688
*Library for Arch. Tenison, St. Martin's Lane . . . . .	1688
*College of Physicians, Warwick Lane . . . . .	1689
St. Edmund-the-King, Lombard Street . . . . .	1689-1690
Hampton Court Palace. Additions . . . . .	1689-1694
St. Margaret, Lothbury . . . . .	1690
Kensington Palace, Banqueting Hall and Alcove . . . . .	1690-1706
*The Mint in the Tower . . . . .	1691
St. Andrew Wardrobe . . . . .	1692
All Hallows, Lombard Street . . . . .	1693
St. Michael Royal, College Hill . . . . .	1694
St. Mary, Warwick. Tower only . . . . .	1695
St. Vedast, Foster Lane . . . . .	1695
*St. Mary, Somerset. Tower remains . . . . .	1695
Greenwich Hospital . . . . .	1696-1705
Marlborough House . . . . .	1698
*North Transept Front, Westminster Abbey . . . . .	1698-1722
St. Dunstan-in-the-East. Tower only . . . . .	1698-1699
All Saints, Isleworth . . . . .	1701-1705
&c., &c., &c.	



## MISCELLANEOUS WORKS,

MOSTLY UNDATED.



- Greenwich Palace for Charles II. Additions . . . 1663  
 Ely Cathedral and Palace. Repairs . . . . . 1663  
 Tower of London, additions, including \*Store House  
 Tomb of the Princes, Henry VII Chapel, Westminster 1674  
 Lincoln Cathedral, Library in Cloister . . . . . 1674  
 Monument to Charles I at Charing Cross. Restored  
 with new Pedestal . . . . . 1678  
 \*Hunting Seat for Charles II at Newmarket.  
 The Deanery and Chapter House, St. Paul's . . . 1684  
 \*Chichester Cathedral. Repairs to Spire . . . . . 1684  
 Salisbury Cathedral. Repairs to Spire.  
 Lichfield Cathedral. Repairs to Spire.  
 \*A Marble Altarpiece for Whitehall.  
 Dartmouth Chapel, Blackheath . . . . . 1695-1702  
 Morden College, Blackheath.  
 Bohun's Almshouses, Lee.  
 Merchant Taylors' Almshouses.  
 Trinity Almshouses.  
 \*Sion College, London.  
 \*The Admiralty, Whitehall. Interiors remain.  
 Windsor Castle. Alterations, &c. . . . . 1698  
 Windsor. The Court House and one other house.  
 \*The Duke's Theatre, Salisbury Court.  
 Halls of the City Companies. Numerous, but much altered since.  
 House for Duke of Buckingham. St. James'.  
 Do. Lord Oxford. St. James'.  
 Do. Duke of Newcastle at Clumber.  
 Do. Lord Allaston, and another for Lord Sunderland.



- House for Madam Cooper, St. James'.  
 Nos. 35 and 36 Lincoln's Inn Fields.  
 Doric Court, Council Chamber, etc., St. James' Palace.  
 \*Easton Neston for Earl Pomfret. Wings only.  
 Chatsworth. Additions.  
 \*Royal Mews, Charing Cross.  
 \*Barrack in Hyde Park.  
 New Road from Hyde Park Corner to Kensington.  
 &c., &c., &c.

## DESIGNS NEVER EXECUTED, SURVEYS, TREATISES, ETC.



- Designs for the Restoration of St. Paul's, with Cupola,  
 before the Fire.
- Designs for the Rebuilding of the City of London after  
 the Fire.
- Designs for Royal Mausoleum at Windsor . . . . . 1678  
 Do. Theatre and Library at Trinity College,  
 Cambridge . . . . . 1678
- Designs for Winchester Palace. Part only executed.
- Do. St. Mary, Warwick. Tower only executed . 1694  
 Do. Whitehall Palace . . . . . 1697  
 Do Western Towers and Central Spire to West-  
 minster Abbey.
- Designs for Baldacchino, etc., St. Paul's.
- Survey of Salisbury Cathedral . . . . . 1669  
 Do. Audley End . . . . . 1695  
 Do. Westminster Abbey.
- Treatises on scientific research, very numerous.
- Do. Architecture (incomplete) published in *The  
 Parentalia*.
- &c., &c., &c.



IN all ages, the Art and the Literature, the highest expressions of feeling and thought of a People, have been the outcome of the conditions imposed upon them by the times in which they lived.

Inseparably interwoven as they are, a most sure index of the mental activity of an age is afforded by their several productions: any intellectual advance being simultaneously recorded in each. The great awakening in the minds of men to their high estate—to the divinity of man it may almost be said—which was an inevitable result of the Revival of Letters in the xvth and xvith centuries, could not fail to create a mode of expression commensurate to some degree in both arts: one, at least, more amenable to the strivings after a newly conceived human ideal, since the once powerful but now feeble efforts after a divine ideal no longer sufficed. The works of the Ancients afforded the only nucleus about which to generate the new movement, and forthwith attention was almost exclusively centred upon them.

The Renaissance of Art the result of the Revival of Letters.

The freer forms and aspiring spirit, however, of the indigenous art of our land, which, unrestricted, had progressed for so many centuries to an unknown standard of perfection—untrammelled by any save nature's laws—had become so firmly rooted in men's minds that strong influence was sure to be yet felt. Works, Gothic in spirit and Classic in detail, necessarily

Characteristics of the Early Renaissance.

followed, full of vigour it is true—as works of a transitional period always must be—but sadly lacking the purity of taste and refinement of expression which constitute the wealth of a fully developed artistic growth.

Such was the state of architecture in England when Inigo Jones turned his attention to other things than scene painting. Working at first on the lines of his contemporaries, his early works render him one of the latter Elizabethan architects; but, in after years, realising the debaseness of his art, he set himself to raise it from the mire into which it had fallen, and to free himself from being the slave to half lost traditions. With this end in view, he visited Italy a second time, in 1616, and sedulously studied her ancient architecture, his copy of Palladio ever by his side. Thus he laid in a stock of knowledge which was to produce a bountiful harvest in England—albeit he was not to know—for someone else to reap.

Inigo Jones visits Italy a second time to study architecture.

It was as a prime mover in the introduction of Palladian modes of design, which characterized the true Renaissance in England, that the influence of Inigo Jones was most felt.

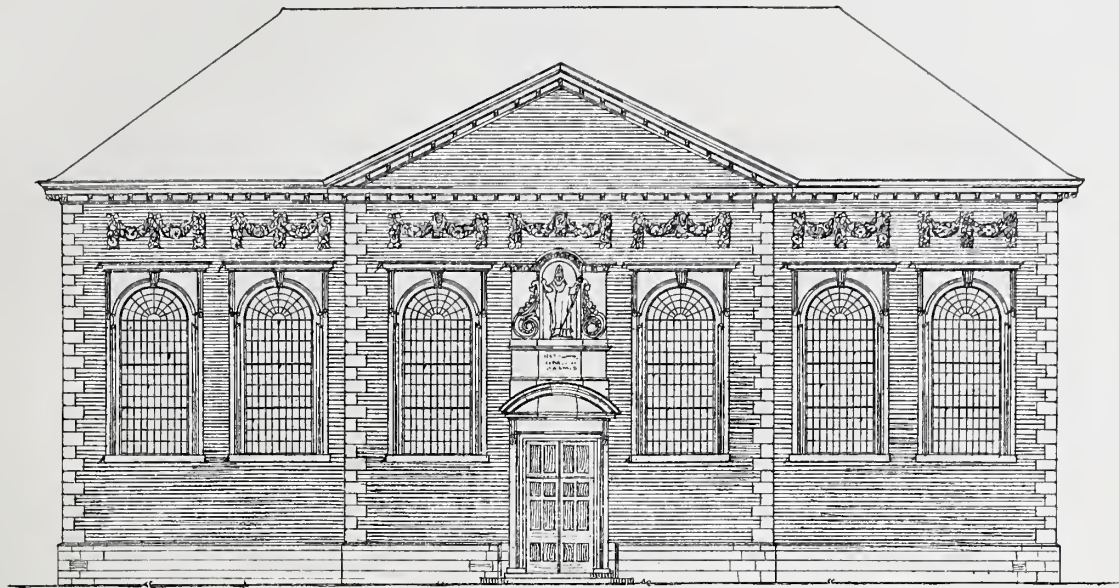
Sir Christopher Wren the direct successor of Inigo Jones.

Sir Christopher Wren did not willingly acknowledge his obligations, but he must be considered as the direct successor of Inigo Jones, not only in the school of design founded by him, but also in the methods in which that school worked: methods very far removed from those of the mediæval craftsmen who took part in the actual execution of their designs. By Wren's time they were so far remodelled that we may consider that he worked under conditions analogous to those with which we are acquainted to-day.

Wren's work as influenced by the times.

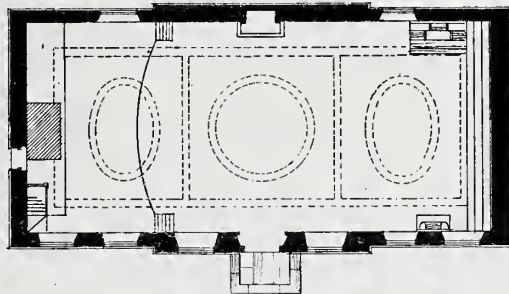
Individualism was henceforth to be deeply associated with art, and it was a very potent factor in the work of Wren. Profiting by a study, as complete as it was possible for him to make it, of all that had gone before, he nevertheless stamped everything with his own genius, and left it essentially English. The use of scale drawings and models, firmly established by his time, was indispensable to him, and already the race of men who





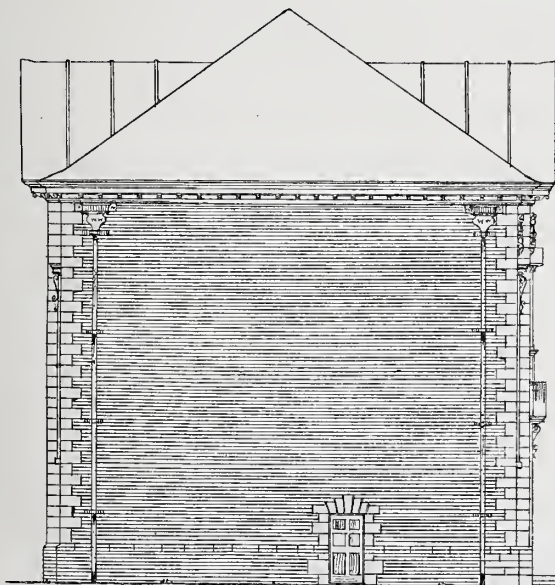
ELEVATION.

THE GREAT  
SCHOOLROOM.  
WINCHESTER.  
BY WREN. 1684.

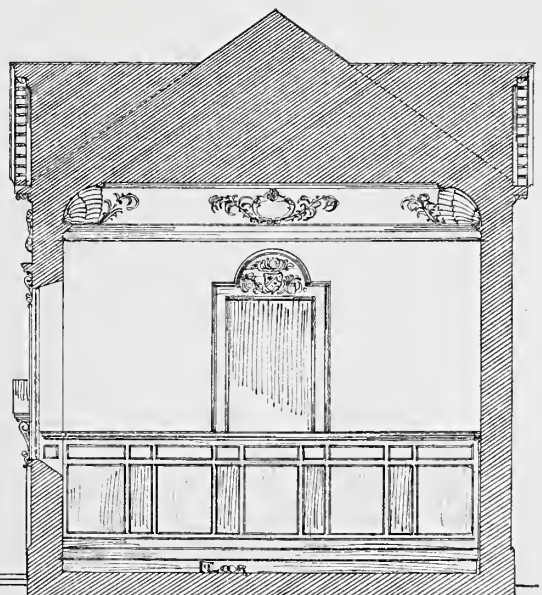


SKETCH PLAN.

THE MATERIALS  
ARE RED BRICK AND  
STONE.  
THE MAIN ROOF IS  
COVERED WITH RED  
TILES: PEDIMENTS  
WITH LEAD.  
INTERNAL PANELLING  
OF OAK.



END ELEVATION.



SECTION.

FEB 9 1895 9 19 29 39 49 FEET





contract to carry out other men's designs entirely from such drawings and models had sprung up. The knowledge of classic forms was fast increasing, but Wren practically had no traditions to work upon. He found plenty of mechanical labour at his command, but workers in the arts accessory to architecture had often to be sought out diligently. It was easy to build a wall, but to clothe it was often a serious matter. Accordingly, except when special facilities offered, Wren gave up the attempt, and, borrowing still from the ancients, fell back upon proportion, and beauty of line, and balance of mass, as a means to a no less noble end. His mathematical skill told him that such properties must be at the root of all good design: by making everything subservient to them, he produced designs which were readily executed from drawings by the ordinary artisan of the time, but which, nevertheless, must always rank high as works of art. When he came across such men as Grinling Gibbons and Tijoue, we have ample proof that he gave them every scope for the unfettered play of their genius; but it is all characteristic of his work that, although its value was greatly enhanced by their decorative treatment, yet, had their enrichments never been applied the architecture would still have remained intact, and still would remain intact were they swept away. Wren, of all men, best realised that an architect should ever strive after an ideal, but that it is most expected of him that he should achieve the possible. His genius owed much to his irrepressible faculty of painstaking; he never spared thought, but lavished it as freely upon the smallest undertaking as upon the most pretentious. Art, in fact, to him was a reality: he deduced the beautiful by a system of logical reasoning. The inspirations which had produced, and the sentiments which pervaded the art of the religious enthusiasts of the middle ages, could only be seen by him through a deep mist which nothing but an innate reverence for the works of the past helped him to pierce.

Proportion the key to all good design.

Enrichments not indispensable.

The genius of Wren.

His constant reliance upon his scientific knowledge has sometimes been considered to be sufficient ground for accusing him of

Wren  
essentially an  
Architect.

being an Engineer rather than an Architect: such an accusation, unquestionably, only reflects upon the minds of his accusers, who could in no way distinguish between mere construction and construction beautified.

His  
architectural  
career beset  
with obstacles.

If, sometimes, his architecture falls below a certain standard usually associated with his name, it should only be a wholesome reminder to us that he, too, was human. In the non-acceptance of his scheme for the laying-out of London after the fire, as well as in the countless obstacles placed in his way throughout his architectural career, we see plainly that he worked for the most part under very great difficulties: in no way dissimilar from those which beset the path of the more modern practitioner: a fact too often discredited.

Grinling  
Gibbons and  
Cibber.

He was particularly fortunate, however, in having such trusty and capable workmen under him as Strong, his master-mason, and Jennings, his master-carpenter; whilst in Grinling Gibbons and Cibber he had with him always the two most skilful sculptors of the day. They were both foreigners, the one a Dutchman and the other a Dane, but so great was their influence that they created quite a school of carving amongst Englishmen, still noted for its fanciful and luxuriant design and marvellous execution.

The principles  
of design as set  
forth in the  
*Parentalia*.

The principles which everywhere underlie the designs of Sir Christopher Wren are distinctly laid down in his few architectural treatises which remain to us. They resolve themselves into a few golden rules, safe for all time. "There are two causes of beauty," he says, "natural and customary. Natural is from geometry, consisting in uniformity and proportion. Customary beauty is begotten by the use of our senses to those objects which are usually pleasing to us for other causes, as familiarity or particular inclination breeds a love to things not in themselves lovely. . . . Geometrical figures are naturally more beautiful than other irregular. . . . The square and the circle are most beautiful, next, the parallelogram and the oval." These few aphorisms, chosen at random from the *Parentalia*.

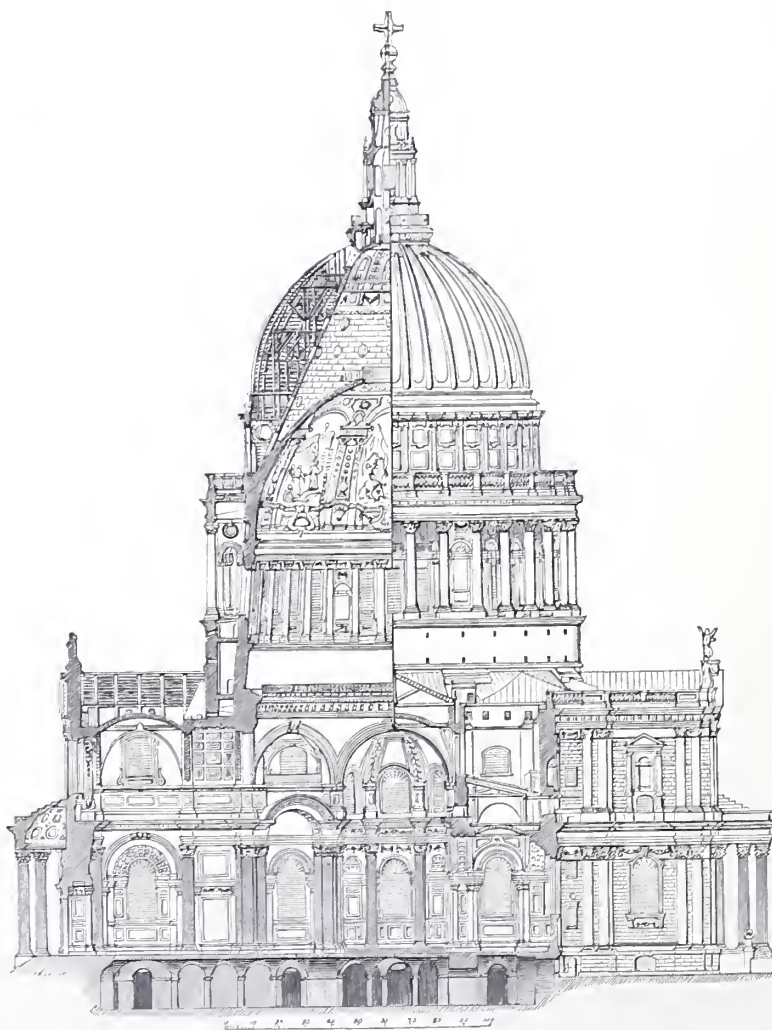






ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL FROM S.W., SHOWING THE DOME AND THE WESTERN CAMPANILI.

*From a Photo, by Messrs. Valentine & Son.*



SECTION AND ELEVATION OF THE DOME OF ST. PAUL'S.

*talia*, suffice to give some idea of the basis of his architectural creed.

He attached very great importance indeed to the study and application of perspective. To quote again: "An architect ought, above all things, to be well skilled in perspective. . . . The Romans guided themselves by perspective in all their fabrics, and why should not perspective lead us back again to what was Roman?" Words of deep significance, coming, as they do, from one who was essentially of a post-Roman type.

The study and application of Perspective.

His own work evinces abundant proof that when he designed in plan and elevation, the perspective representation was always uppermost in his mind's eye. This is quite apparent in the corrections made for foreshortening, and for the loss of height resulting from the use of projecting members when they occur considerably above the level of the eye. It was, however, above all in the reliance upon orderly horizontal repetition that he realised the inevitable laws of Perspective, and turned them to his own use with such marked success. We see this again and again, but perhaps nowhere so pronouncedly as in the Fountain Court at Hampton Court, where a simple composition assumes a constantly-varying and ever-satisfying series of forms, graduated and tempered by Nature's own peculiar laws.

So much has been said, and so much has been written, from time to time, about the group of churches and about the Cathedral of S. Paul to which they one and all owe deep relationship that, in a general Essay, such as this purposes to be, space will not allow of more than a few critical remarks, and a few heartfelt words of admiration.

St. Paul's and the City churches.

In considering, firstly, the construction of S. Paul's, we must uphold the rational though much maligned treatment of the central dome. Wren boldly accepted the fact that the same domical covering could not be made of pleasing proportions both internally and externally, and solved the problem before him with great common-sense and consummate skill. Whatever scruples may exist in the minds of many as to whether de-

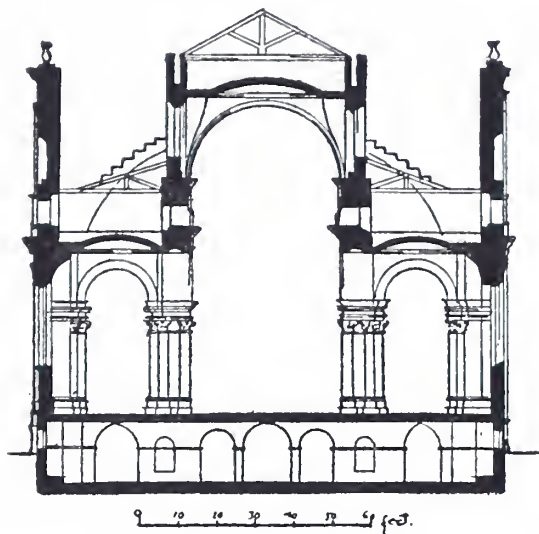
The construction of the Dome of St. Paul's.

ception is practised by the triple arrangement or no, all must agree that the result is one of the most perfect domes, at least externally, ever erected. For his own part, Wren contended that a lead-covered roof over a dome was no more deceptive than an outer roof over a vaulted nave, and, apart from sentiment, he felt justified in resorting to such a method of gaining increase of height and bulk, which the people clamoured loudly for, seeing that they had been long used to the lofty towers and spires of the mediæval cathedrals.

A comparison often enforced between the Dome of the Baptistery, Pisa, and S. Paul's Dome.

The actual construction of the inner dome of brick, of the cone, also of brick, which carries the stone lantern, and of the external dome built up around the cone, of carpentry, is too well known to require full description here, and their relative positions and shapes are shown by the section on Plate V.

Section through the Nave of S. Paul's.



It is not unusual to quote the Baptistery at Pisa as a precedent for, or, at any rate, as having suggested, the idea for this arrangement. Considering that Wren never visited Pisa,

and that in all probability he was quite ignorant of the construction of this particular building—for the facilities for the study of buildings in other lands then must not be confounded with those of the present day—it seems to detract from the credit due to him for having mastered the situation without extraneous aid, which is by no means incompatible with evidence deduced from the solution of many other equally difficult problems; and, surely, there is little need to go such length to vindicate what, after all, is no more than a perfectly sound and legitimate expedient!

The aisle walls as screens.

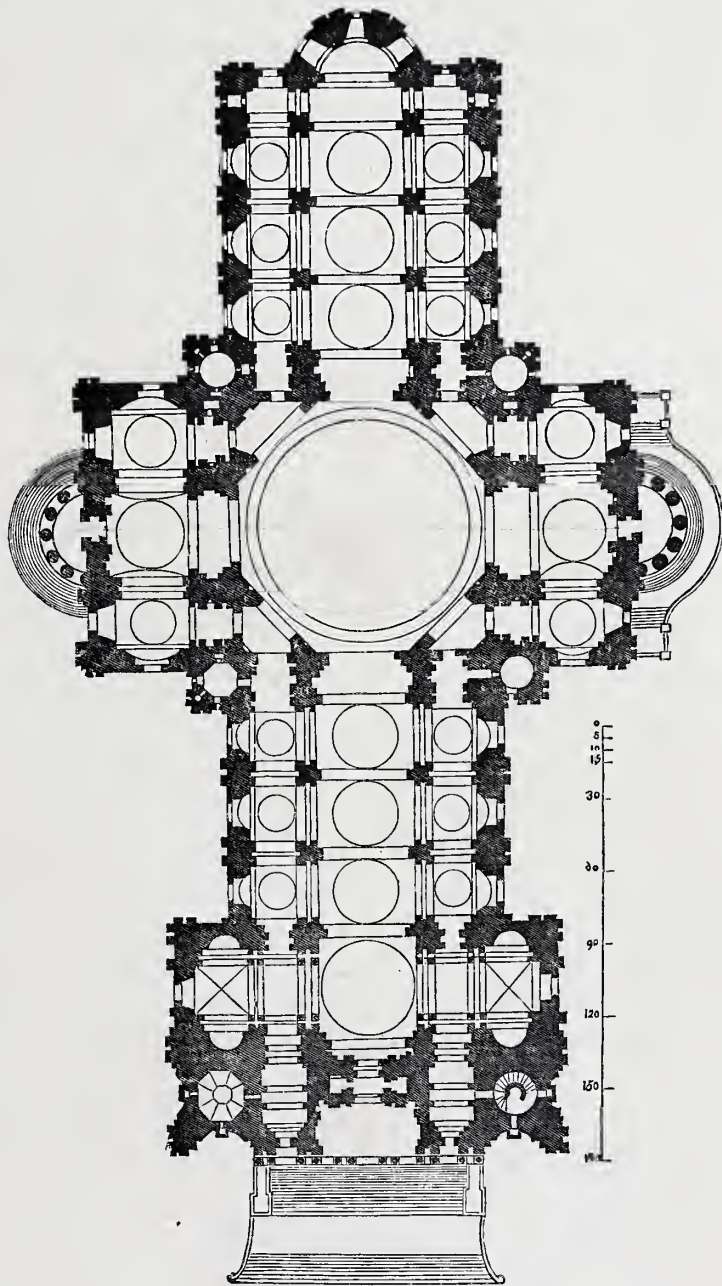
The flanking walls of the nave are possibly open to certain objections, for, on reference to the above section, it is plain that they are little more than huge screens to conceal from below the



clerestory windows, the flying buttresses which support the main vault, and the roof-covering over it, but it must not be ignored that by their weight they serve to counteract the outward thrust of the flying buttresses. We must remember, moreover, that it was part of Wren's teaching, that in buildings other than those of a "private" nature, "no roof can have dignity enough to appear above the cornice but the circular," *i.e.*, spherical; and most certainly his design required the solidity afforded by the extra mass and severity of line so easily obtained.

The use of the double order was necessitated by very practical considerations: stones could not have been obtained from Portland, or from any other suitable quarry in England, of sufficient size to carry out the portico and other portions in due proportions had one giant order been adopted.

Such objections as these only tend to strengthen the claims which the building has to greatness. The two faults which might have been most easily remedied originally are the most



The ground plan of St. Paul's.

The double order adopted for practical considerations.



The western  
chapels.

flagrant. The Western chapels may have been forced upon Wren, as is so often stated, but without doubt they give to the plan of the cathedral a proportion and beauty of form which it would have much lacked without them. The plan of Lincoln Cathedral affords a similar instance. They also were the means of procuring the grand treatment internally, in the shape of the narthex or vestibule, which so adds to the impressiveness of the principal entrance. Externally only are they to be regretted, because their outer walls are in the same plane as those of the campanili; had they been recessed ever so slightly, the vertical lines of the campanili would have been unimpeded, and much more interest would have been imparted to that portion of the structure, as seen in perspective. The one eyesore, however, will be found in the treatment of the oblique sides of the octagon carrying the dome: it is hard to imagine how Wren could have perpetrated such a medley, but one instinctively shrinks from too freely criticising such a masterpiece, and it must be looked upon rather as a freak of design than as a deliberate blunder when, in the "Kensington" Model, we see a similar difficulty so skilfully overcome.

The oblique  
sides of the  
octagon not  
satisfactory.

Mosaic  
decoration  
always  
intended.

Mosaic was advocated from the first for the decoration of the dome and roofs throughout, but the privilege of fulfilling Wren's desires has been left to our own day, and slowly, but adequately, is it being done. The organ, too, after more than one move, now stands in the position probably originally allotted to it. It stood for years upon a screen at the entrance to the choir, after the manner of the mediæval cathedrals, but the screen, and the columns supporting it beneath in the crypt, are clearly an insertion not provided for from the first. The columns still remain in the crypt, *in situ*, but the organ, with its screen, was removed in 1860.

The organ  
often moved.

The one chance  
of erecting a  
typical  
Protestant  
Cathedral lost.

In St. Paul's, through no fault of Wren's, the one chance of erecting a typical Protestant cathedral was thrown away. He planned to meet the requirements of the day, which necessitated that a church should be as much a place for preaching in as





anything else. In 1603, James I was asked, in the Millenary Petition, that none should be allowed ordination unless thoroughly competent to preach, and enough of the Puritan spirit yet remained to exert considerable influence. The churches which had been destroyed by the Fire were, of one accord, of the mediæval type, adapted to a certain ritual, and when the necessity arose for rebuilding them under the new dispensation, curious anomalies arose. The demand for broad processional aisles and unlimited altar accommodation no longer existed; it had given way to spacious central area and galleried aisles, primarily for the gathering of large congregations. In many instances, for practical reasons, Wren thought fit to build upon these old foundations, and, sometimes, to incorporate portions of the old walls, which then dictated the plan minutely. For the most part, the sites allotted to the new churches were of very irregular shapes, and many problems, which were ingeniously solved, were presented to Wren, for he always set himself to bring every foot within the roofing area. These were the main influences to govern the type of plan, and it is very instructive to notice the variety which he evolved: considering that they are a group of buildings erected by one man for one object, they are quite unique in this respect. He never lost sight of the requirements of the "preaching-house," with its large central space; and, when at liberty to make a choice, he adopted either the stunted Basilican plan, which is arranged along a central axis, or the Byzantine plan, which is arranged about a central point. It is quite impossible to draw hard and fast lines between certain types, but forty-one may be considered to belong to the first-mentioned class, whilst nine belong to the latter. These may be subdivided, as is shown in the annexed classification; and examples, drawn to the same scale, may be studied on Plate VI.

The plans of  
the City  
churches.

The  
"Preaching  
House."



## WREN'S CITY CHURCHES

GROUPED ACCORDING TO THE ARRANGEMENT OF PLAN.

The names of the Churches in each group are arranged in the order in which they were commenced. Churches repaired only, after the Fire, are omitted.

Those printed with an asterisk against them have since been removed or destroyed from various causes.

s. denotes Stone Steeple or Lantern.

L. ,, Lead Spire or Lantern.

T. ,, Tower only.

### CENTRAL AREA PLAN

DOMED.

- s. St. Stephen, Walbrook.
- \*T. St. Benet Fink, Thread-needle Street.
- L. St. Swithin, Cannon Street.
- \*s. St. Antholin, Watling Street.
- L. St. Mildred, Bread Street.
- L. St. Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane.

### GREEK CROSS PLAN.

INTERSECTING BARREL VAULTS.

- T. St. Mary-at-Hill.
- L. St. Anne and St. Agnes, Aldersgate.
- L. St. Martin, Ludgate Hill.

### SIMPLE APARTMENT. NO AISLES.

VAULTED OR CEILED THROUGHOUT.

- \*T. St. Olave, Jewry.
- L. St. Michael, Wood Street.
- \*T. St. Mildred, Poultry.
- s. St. Stephen, Coleman Street.
- L. St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey.
- \*T. St. Michael, Queenhythe.
- \*T. All Hallows, Bread Street.
- \*s. St. Mary Magdalen, Knight-rider Street.
- \*L. St. Benet, Gracechurch St.
- \*T. St. Matthew, Friday Street.
- L. St. Edmund-the-King, Lombard Street.
- T. All Hallows, Lombard St.
- s. St. Michael, College Hill.
- \*T. St. Mary, Somerset.

BASILICAN OR AXIAL PLAN,  
WITH SIDE AISLES.

VAULTED OR CEILED THROUGHOUT.

- \*T. St. Christopher-le-Stocks.
- s. St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside.
- T. St. Michael, Cornhill.
- \*T. St. Dionis, Backchurch.
- s. St. George, Botolph Lane.
- L. St. Magnus the Martyr,  
London Bridge.
- s. St. James, Garlick Hithe.
- L. St. Mary, Aldermanbury.
- L. St. Michael, Bassishaw.
- \*T. St. Bartholomew, Exchange.
- s. St. Bride, Fleet Street.  
St. Clement Danes, Strand  
(Apsidal).
- L. St. Peter, Cornhill.
- T. St. Mary, Aldermary.
- L. St. James, Piccadilly.

- L. St. Austin and St. Faith,  
Watling Street.
- s. Christ Church, Newgate  
Street.
- T. St. Andrew, Holborn.
- T. St. Andrew, Wardrobe.

BASILICAN OR AXIAL PLAN,  
ONE AISLE ONLY.

VAULTED OR CEILED THROUGHOUT.

- L. St. Lawrence, Jewry.
- T. St. Clement, Eastcheap.
- \*T. All Hallows-the-Great,  
Upper Thames Street.
- L. St. Benet, Paul's Wharf.
- L. St. Margaret Pattens, Rood  
Lane.
- \*L. St. Michael, Crooked Lane.
- L. St. Margaret, Lothbury.
- s. St. Vedast, Foster Lane.

The mode of roofing grew out of the necessities of each case, and it is in the manipulation of domes and vaults that the one charm of the interiors is often to be found. The fact of their being entirely of wood and plaster in several instances must not, in fairness to Wren, detract from their merits. It was through no fault of his that a more noble construction was not employed. The body of the church is often uninteresting, and the impression conveyed is far from elevating; but the exquisite handling of the fittings, and the delicate carving which bedecks them, go far towards relieving the depressing monotony. To quote a recent writer,\* "The churches were what is called 'ugly,' *i.e.*, they were built by Wren or by imitators of his style. The

The manipulation of domes and vaults always successful.

\* Sir W. Besant.

people sat in pews, each family to itself. All the churches had galleries, and the service was conducted from a three-decker." These remarks, which apply fitly enough to many of the pewed and galleried basilican churches, are altogether out of place with regard to those designed on the central area principle, or those in which the dome, or some modification of it, is the dominant note. It is impossible to describe in words the charms of St. Stephen, Walbrook, for instance. By simple means, an unrivalled variety of perspective and beauty of proportion is obtained—a work which alone would have established its designer for all time. Canova said that if ever he revisited England, it would be to see St. Paul's, Somerset House, and St. Stephen, Walbrook. The system, so successful here, and carried to such great length at St. Paul's, of carrying a dome on eight pendentives, is also found at St. Mary Abchurch and St. Swithin, Cannon Street; but whenever the necessities of the case demanded any other figure than the octagon, Wren freely evolved it. St. Benet Fink, and St. Antholin, Watling Street, once stood as admirable examples of geometrical skill applied to architectural design.

St. Stephen,  
Walbrook, a  
masterpiece.

The living  
charms of the  
City churches  
to be found in  
the Towers and  
Spires.

It is, without doubt, in the towers, with their great variety of superstructures, that the living charm of the City churches mainly lies. Owing to the irregular, crooked streets, and the chaos of brick walls everywhere lining them, Wren knew that in the majority of cases it would be simply throwing work away to lavish detail upon the lower portions of his designs, and he accordingly concentrated his whole attention upon the upper stages of the towers, and often surmounted them with elegant lanterns, or spires of wood or stone. He felt that the one opportunity left him of imparting individual interest, and, at the same time, of redeeming the city from the commonplace, was here. It was a stupendous opportunity, and, putting forth his whole strength, he made them burst into every exuberance of design, characteristic, to a remarkable degree, of the versatility of his own genius. Before his time, the highest development of the tower in







England was a square, surmounted by a spire, tapering to a point, and broken only by dormers and crockets. The much-felt awkwardness at the junction of the two forms was masked by the introduction of pinnacles of all sorts. The Ancients, content with the tremendous grandeur of the horizontal line, had never striven skyward. Wren, in spite of his strong classic predilections, could never free himself from the secret workings of the Gothic art of his native land within him. Seizing upon the perfections, and avoiding the defects of the works of the tower and spire builders of the Middle Ages, by a stroke of genius, at one step he advanced far beyond them. He did not return to a Romanesque style, but, taking the fully-developed Gothic one as a basis, he entirely remodelled its detail without attempting to obliterate its unmistakable origin. It must be claimed for him that, by the free use of Roman detail and by constant reliance upon his mathematical skill, he evolved an entirely new epoch in the history of spire building, as beautiful as it is strikingly original.

Wren's work  
unconsciously  
much  
influenced by  
Gothic Art.

The accompanying Plates, VI and VII, shew some typical examples of his designs for towers and spires, etc., together with the façades to which they belong. These are all drawn to the same scale, especially for the purposes of this Essay; it is hoped that, shewn thus, they will be of greater value, and will allow of their true merits being judged of better than would be possible by perspective sketches alone.

In St. Mary-le-Bow, a succession of cleverly-designed stages rise one above another in perfectly natural sequence, altogether making a composition absolutely unrivalled for elegant flow of line, and exquisite proportion of solids to voids, whilst a glance at the section exhibits the constructive skill displayed. St. Bride's spire lacks the spontaneity which gives the great charm to St. Mary's; it is more a result of deliberate calculation, and owes its success to the graduated rhythmical repetition of one composition. In St. Vedast, with great cunning, are solids of contrary curvature superposed, producing a daring and effective

St. Mary-le-  
Bow.

St. Bride,  
Fleet Street.

St. Vedast,  
Foster Lane.

St. Martin,  
Ludgate Hill.

play of light and shade. St. Martin's, especially, cannot be spoken of without reference to St. Paul's. One prevailing idea underlies the whole group of these spires: each is related to one or other of the remainder, and, directly or indirectly, leads up to the great centrepiece. Nowhere is this so strongly marked as in the case of St. Martin's, midway up Ludgate Hill. From base to summit it is one succession of graceful profiles and delicate proportions, made even more graceful and more delicate by the forced comparison with the grandeur of the mass hard by.

Neglect of the  
City churches.

Did space permit, a whole essay might easily be devoted to these specimens of the work of Wren. In spite of their just claims to a foremost place amongst the art treasures of England, they are day by day in peril, and already has their number been sadly diminished through pure vandalism and gross utilitarianism. It is impossible to over estimate what the City gains in picturesqueness of effect and in majesty of expression from this cluster of ever varying forms, gaining grace and beauty at every stage, shooting above the dull unbroken mass and piercing the sky, in the words of the late George Edmund Street, R.A., "so as to afford unending delight." Their construction, sound from the first, has stood the ravages of time unharmed; they defy all still but the ravages of men.

St. Dunstan-in-  
the-East

At St. Dunstan-in-the-East, Wren indulged his fancy, and gave us the well-known Gothic spire, which boasts resemblance to the original St. Mary-le-Bow spire and the much larger example, still extant, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. In this, as in nearly all, the safety largely depends upon the use of pendentives, which carry the thrust well down the walls, sometimes as low as the belfry floors. They are shown on the sections of the towers, in the Plates. Possibly the latest of all to be built was the tower of St. Michael, Cornhill, which strictly follows a Gothic type. Wren may have worked with ease and with pleasure after such models, but it cannot be allowed that he ever obtained such mastery over them as will entitle him to be considered a great Gothic architect; in fact, it is one of

St. Michael,  
Cornhill.

the main endeavours of this Essay to shew that the Spirit of the age was adverse to any such development on his part, and that he expressed the sentiments of the times in the phase of classic art which he made his own. His knowledge of Gothic forms was complete, but it can never be given to any man to excel at one and the same time in two diametrically opposite branches of art. He treated all examples which came in his way with reverence and with care, and, when circumstances demanded it, he deliberately laid aside his own convictions, but he would willingly have recased the best of them in "a good Roman manner," nevertheless. His details, not at any time over refined, owing to his lack of artistic training, quite miss the true Gothic spirit, as may well be expected. It is, however, only right to assert that the present excellent state of preservation of most of his work in London is largely due to discretion displayed in the design of external details,—a more delicate handling would surely have led to their decay through atmospheric influences.

Wren as a Gothic Architect.

Details generally coarse but suited to the climate.

None but the best of materials ever entered upon his works. The stone was nearly always from Portland, for Wren, as Surveyor of the Crown lands, had full control of the quarries there; the timber was sound English oak; and the roofs were covered with lead such as now-a-days is never afforded. The glazing remains intact frequently.

Materials always of best description.

A few words must be said as to the internal arrangement of the Churches. As the plan itself, so also did this grow out of the requirements. The chancel arch distinctly defining the limits of nave and sanctuary is lost sight of, and a screen fulfils its functions. The altar, or rather "table," was always enclosed within a rail: it was generally of wood, but occasionally of marble, raised a few steps only above the body of the church. Wren did not use lofty flights of steps within his churches. The greatest care and skill were bestowed upon the East wall, which was panelled in oak and elaborately enriched: the panelling often ran all round the church. The pulpit was

The internal arrangement of churches.



Ecclesiastical fittings.

naturally given great prominence, and with its sounding board was made an exquisite piece of ecclesiastical furniture. The fonts, too, with their covers, are unique specimens of the carver's skill, generally of the baluster type. The system of pews and galleries which was forced upon Wren never received the artistic handling which should have resulted from a necessary provision: in fact, with few exceptions, notably S. Bride, Fleet Street, they offend by their ugliness. He advocated benches, but the columns in so many cases standing high upon pedestals, shew that he had to design so that their bases would not be hidden by the high pews.

Galleries and high pews forced upon Wren.

Staircases.

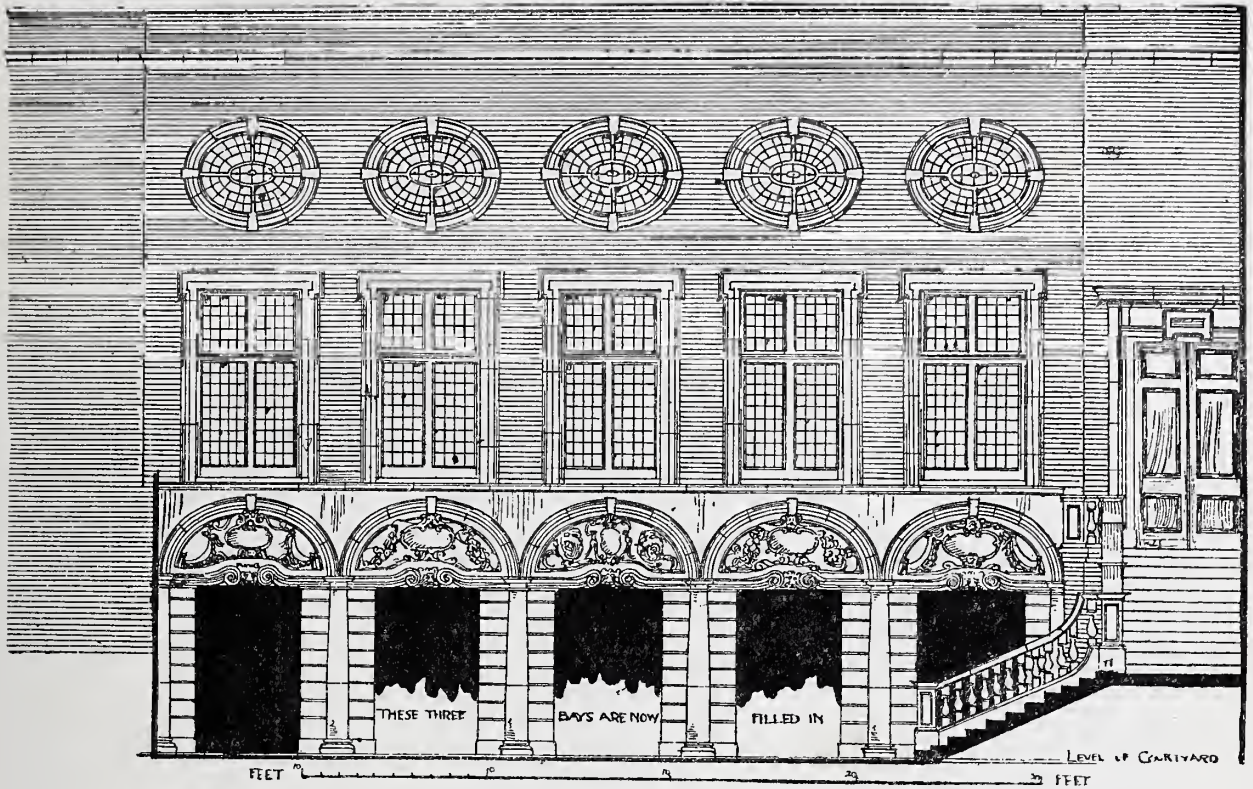
The staircases within the towers are very cleverly arranged and almost seem to suggest a study of conchology: they never appear as external excrescences. The line of the nosing of the treads always runs to the face of the newel, and not to its centre, giving the best tread. The open well staircase to the Library at S. Paul's is particularly beautiful, but many examples on a smaller scale are to be found in his works, both ecclesiastical and domestic.

Domestic Architecture.

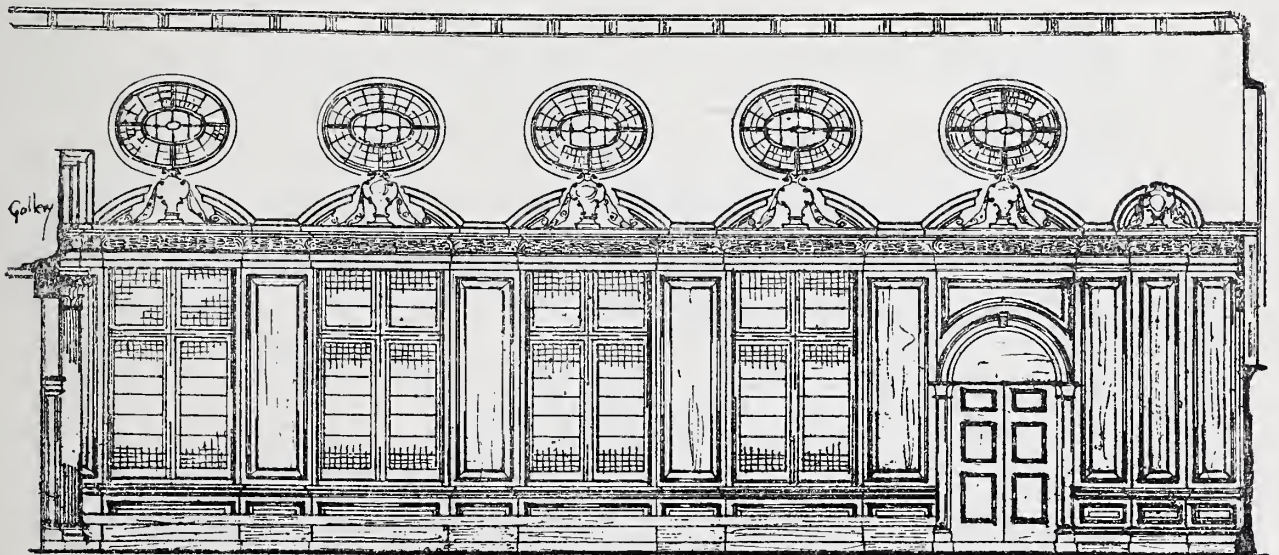
His domestic work is pervaded with a truly English feeling, and nothing can excel the quiet simplicity and homely character of all that is left to us: with the greatest diffidence only can many existing examples be directly ascribed to him, so scarce are authentic records, and so numerous have been alterations and demolitions, for these, too, like the churches, are in daily peril. In London the Halls of the City Companies were mostly rebuilt by Wren in conjunction with Jarman, after the Fire, but so many have since been entirely removed or altered that it is difficult to know now how much may safely be attributed to them. The Brewers' Hall, one of the most delightful, has escaped fairly well, and, if not the work of Wren and Gibbons themselves, sufficiently shows their influence to merit a place here. The date is about 1670.

Wren's "favourite Doric."

Wren's "favourite Doric" occurs again and again, sometimes with coupled columns as at Greenwich. He never allowed him-



ELEVATION OF PRINCIPAL FAÇADE.



LONGITUDINAL SECTION THROUGH THE HALL.

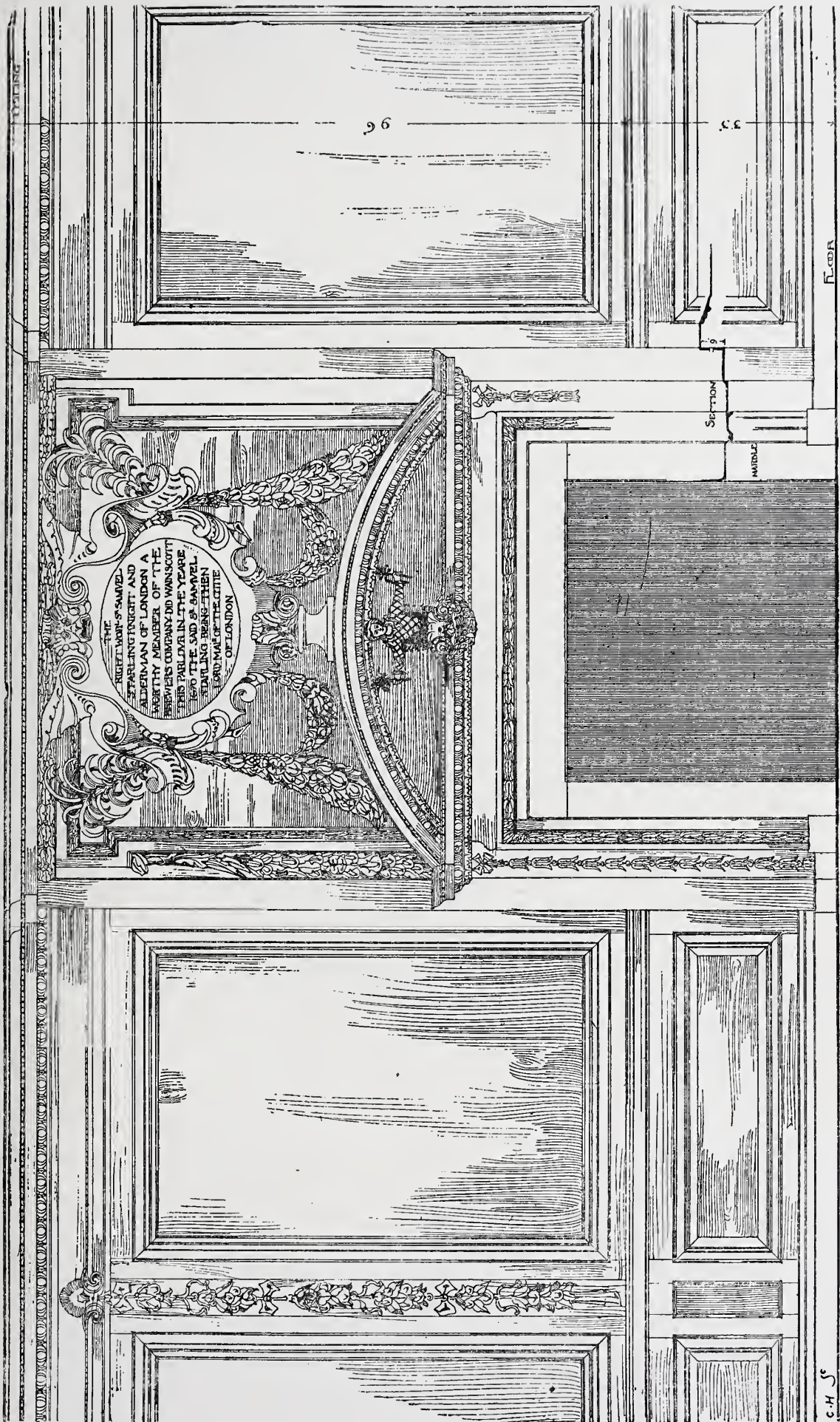
ARTHUR STRATTON. DEL.

THE HALL OF THE BREWERS' COMPANY, LONDON.

*By permission of "The Architectural Review."*







THE RIGHT HON. SAMUEL SPURLING, ESQ. AND ALDERMAN OF LONDON A WORTHY MEMBER OF THE BREWERS COMPANY DO WANSKOTT BEER PARLOR IN THE YEAR 1690 THE SAID SAMUEL SPURLING BEING THEN EARL MARSHALL OF THE CITY OF LONDON

THE CHIMNEY PIECE AND PANELLING IN THE COURT ROOM OF THE BREWERS' HALL,

ARTHUR STRATTON, DEL.

By permission of "The Architectural Review."

C.H. 5





self to be fettered by changeless rules of proportion in the use of the Orders, but evolved his own with a nicety which never fails to please. The sense of security is never lacking, and his knowledge of graphic statics always saved him from violating Nature's laws; on the contrary, he recognised them to the full, and never failed to turn her unerring precepts to good account. At all times his Architecture was dependent for its effect upon purely structural methods, and not merely upon applied enrichments, although he not in the least underestimated their value when properly used. It may be that many of his most striking compositions, which charm and fascinate us by their wondrous simplicity, were only produced after extreme mental effort. "Little trinkets are in great vogue: but building ought certainly to have the attribute of the eternal, and therefore the only thing incapable of new fashions," he once wrote, and "Architecture aims at Eternity" was always a maxim with him. We have but to study his handiwork, and to endeavour to unravel the great truths and to learn the great lessons embodied in it, to see how grandly he lived and worked up to an ideal, high amongst ideals, and far beyond the reach of the ordinary mortal.

Architecture  
should possess  
the attribute of  
the Eternal.



# THE SUCCESSORS OF WREN

## AND THEIR CHIEF WORKS.



NICHOLAS HAWKSMOOR,  
PUPIL OF WREN, 1661-1736.

Queen's College, Oxford, new quadrangle . . . . .	1710
*St. Anne, Limehouse . . . . .	1712-1725
St. George-in-the-East . . . . .	1715-1723
St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street . . . . .	1716-1719
St. George, Bloomsbury. . . . .	1720-1730
Christ Church, Spitalfields . . . . .	1723-1729
All Soul's College, Oxford, new quadrangle . . . . .	1734
Castle Howard, Yorkshire. The Mausoleum only . . . . .	1736
Easton Neston, Northamptonshire. Completion . . . . .	
Westminster Abbey. Western Towers after Wren . . . . .	
Beverley Minster. Restorations . . . . .	
Works at Greenwich Hospital . . . . .	

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH,  
1666-1726.

Castle Howard, Yorkshire . . . . .	1702-1714
Blenheim Palace . . . . .	1705-1722
*King's Theatre, Haymarket . . . . .	1705
Seaton Delaval Hall, Northumberland . . . . .	1707
Claremont, Esher . . . . .	1710
Clarendon Buildings, Oxford. . . . .	1711-1713
Duncumbe Hall, Yorks. . . . .	1713-1718
King's Weston, near Bristol . . . . .	1713
*Mansion, etc., at Eastbury in Dorsetshire . . . . .	1716-1718
Works at Greenwich Hospital and Two Houses . . . . .	1716-1726
Oulton Hall, Cheshire . . . . .	1716
Stowe, Buckinghamshire . . . . .	1719
Audley End, Essex. Alterations . . . . .	1721
Grimsthorpe, Lincolnshire . . . . .	1722-1724
Gilling Castle, Yorkshire. Additions . . . . .	

## JAMES GIBBS,

OF ABERDEEN, 1682-1754.

*Canons, Middlesex . . . . .	1712-1720
St. Lawrence, Whitechurch . . . . .	1715
St. Mary-le-Strand . . . . .	1713-1717
St. Clement Danes. Spire only . . . . .	1719
St. Martin-in-the-Fields . . . . .	1721-1726
St. Peter, Vere Street . . . . .	1721-1724
Fellows Buildings, King's College, Cambridge . . . . .	1724
All Saints Church, Derby . . . . .	1725
St. Bartholomew's Hospital . . . . .	1730
Radcliffe Library, Oxford . . . . .	1737-1749
Sudbrook, Surrey . . . . .	
Orleans House, Twickenham. Additions . . . . .	

## THOMAS ARCHER.

PUPIL OF VANBRUGH, DIED 1743.

Heythorpe, Oxfordshire . . . . .	1705
Garden Pavilion, &c., at Wrest, Bedfordshire . . . . .	1709
St. Philip, Birmingham . . . . .	1711-1719
St. Paul, Deptford . . . . .	1712-1730
St. John, Westminster . . . . .	1721-1728
Cliefden, House, Bucks, quadrant colonnade . . . . .	
Umberlade, Warwickshire . . . . .	1740

## WILLIAM KENT,

1684-1748. WITH THE EARL OF BURLINGTON.

Burlington House, Piccadilly . . . . .	1717
Kensington and Hampton Court Palaces. Additions . . . . .	1717-1727
Holkham Hall, Norfolk . . . . .	1729-1764
Design for rebuilding Houses of Parliament . . . . .	1730
The Treasury Buildings, Whitehall . . . . .	1733
Devonshire House, Piccadilly . . . . .	1734
The Horse Guards, Whitehall. With J. Vardy . . . . .	1742-1752
Stowe, Buckinghamshire. Additions . . . . .	
Published <i>Designs of Inigo Jones</i> . . . . .	1727



## THE EARL OF BURLINGTON,

1695-1753.

Burlington House, Piccadilly, with Kent . . . . .	1717
Dormitory, Westminster School . . . . .	1722
House for General Wade, Great Burlington Street . . . . .	1723
St. Paul, Covent Garden. Repairs . . . . .	1727
Villa at Chiswick . . . . .	1729
Assembly Rooms, York . . . . .	1731

## COLEN CAMPBELL,

DIED 1734.

*Rolls House, Chancery Lane . . . . .	1718
*Wansted House, Essex. Towers . . . . .	1720
Houghton Hall, Norfolk . . . . .	1722
Mereworth, in Kent . . . . .	1723
Works at Greenwich Hospital . . . . .	
Published <i>Vitruvius Britannicus</i> . . . . .	1715-1725

## JOHN JAMES,

OF GREENWICH, DIED 1746.

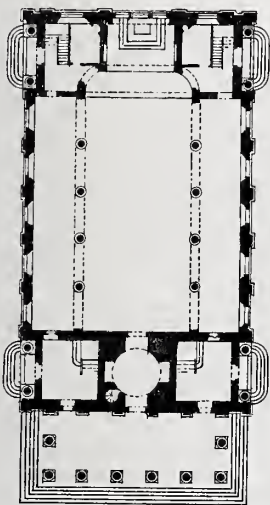
St. Alphege, Greenwich . . . . .	1711-1718
St. George, Hanover Square . . . . .	1713-1724
*Mansion at Blackheath . . . . .	
Orleans House, Twickenham. Additions . . . . .	

## THOMAS RIPLEY,

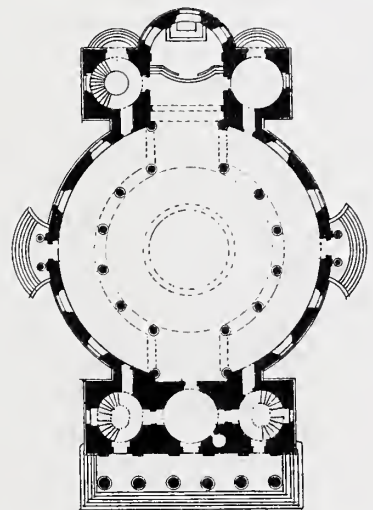
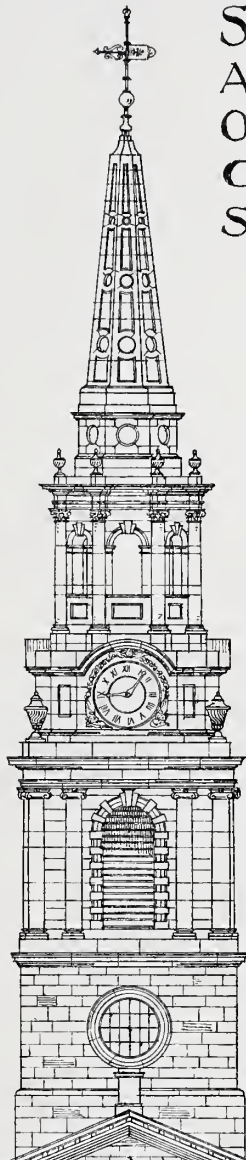
DIED 1758.

Houghton Hall, Norfolk in conjunction with Campbell . . . . .	1722-1735
The Admiralty, Whitehall. Screen by Robert Adam . . . . .	1724-1726
Wolferton House, Norfolk . . . . .	1724-1721
Works at Greenwich Hospital, &c. . . . .	

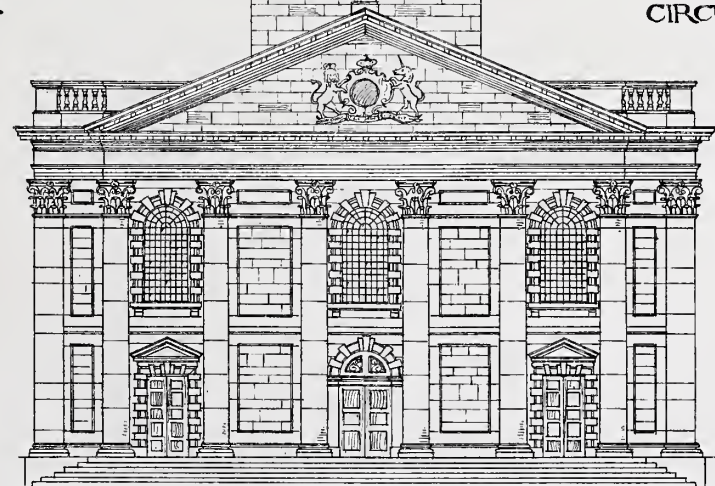
THE WORK OF GIBBS.  
SUCCESSOR OF WREN  
A TYPICAL EXAMPLE  
OF HIS TREATMENT OF  
CHURCH FACADES AND  
STEEPLES: WITH PLANS.



PLAN OF ST MARTIN-  
IN-THE-FIELDS.



PLAN OF A PROPOSED  
CIRCULAR CHURCH.



ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS.

SCALE OF FEET 10 20 30 40 50 FOR PLANS.  
SCALE OF FEET 10 20 30 40 50 FOR ELEVATION.



## HENRY FLITCROFT,

1697-1769.

St. Giles-in-the-Fields . . . . .	1731-1733
St. Olave, Southwark . . . . .	1737-1739
St. John, Hampstead . . . . .	1745-1747
Wentworth House, Yorkshire . . . . .	
Wimpole Church, Cambridgeshire . . . . .	
Prepared Drawings for Kent's <i>Inigo Jones</i> . . . . .	

## GEORGE DANCE, SENIOR,

1695-1768.

St. Luke, Old Street . . . . .	1732-1733
St. Leonard, Shoreditch . . . . .	1736-1740
The Mansion House . . . . .	1739-1753
St. Botolph, Aldgate . . . . .	1741-1744
Guy's Hospital . . . . .	1764

## GEORGE DANCE, JUNIOR,

1741-1825.

All Hallows, London Wall . . . . .	1765-1767
Newgate Prison . . . . .	1770-1778
St. Alphage, London Wall . . . . .	1774-1777
St. Luke's Hospital . . . . .	1782-1784
St. Bartholomew-the-Less. Rebuilt . . . . .	1789
The Mansion House. Alterations . . . . .	1795-1796
Stratton Park, Hampshire . . . . .	1803-1804

## JOHN WOOD,

OF BATH, 1704-1754.

Queen's Square, Bath . . . . .	1729
Prior Park, Widcombe . . . . .	1736-1743
The Exchange, Liverpool . . . . .	1748-1755
Published <i>Baalbec and Palmyra</i> with Dawkins . . . . .	





At the time of the death of Inigo Jones, and even later, when the Great Fire laid London low, it is quite probable that there was not one man to be found within the City seriously following the craft of Architecture.

The influence of Inigo Jones brought about no immediate results. Wren, on the other hand, owing to his exceptional opportunities, and the unflagging energy with which he availed himself of them, became the centre of a body of men willingly acknowledging him as their master, and eager to carry on the traditions which he, single-handed, had firmly established.

A school of vigorous and consistent design, unequalled in the pages of history alike for its productions and for the period of its duration, was the natural outcome.

In common with his predecessor, Wren assimilated more nearly to the great Italian masters than any who had preceded them in this land, in the blending together of the sister arts and the welcoming of the craftsman into the one great fold of Architecture.

We now find a brilliant succession of *savants*, who were possibly attracted more by the prosaic than by the poetic aspect of architecture, vying with one another in emulation of their master's works. For a long time great similarity is noticeable in their methods, but a lack of refinement and nice artistic feeling is evident, and certainly no one of them can be said to

The influence of Wren immediately felt.

The union of the Arts fostered.

Characteristics of the successors of Wren.

have excelled his master, whilst few approached within measurable distance of him.

Wren had far from built all that was required, and the "Act for 50 New Churches" gave ample scope for the display of their originality and individuality.

Hawksmoor, who must have enjoyed exceptional facilities, came in for a share of them, and in S. George, Bloomsbury, one of the best, set the fashion for huge porticoes to churches, which long prevailed. He was born in 1661, not 1666 as is often stated, and was articled to Wren when in his 17th year. He became a skilful mathematician, and besides working for years with Wren as "Domestic Clerk," he was employed as "Supervisor" on several important buildings, and it fell to his lot to complete certain works after Wren's death. Thus were the Western Towers of Westminster Abbey remodelled. He set his churches high upon crypts, and entered by imposing flights of steps which alone vest them with a degree of dignity. His numerous works include the Mausoleum at Castle Howard, which is said to be "the earliest specimen of sepulchral splendour in England unconnected with an ecclesiastical building."

Nicholas  
Hawksmoor.

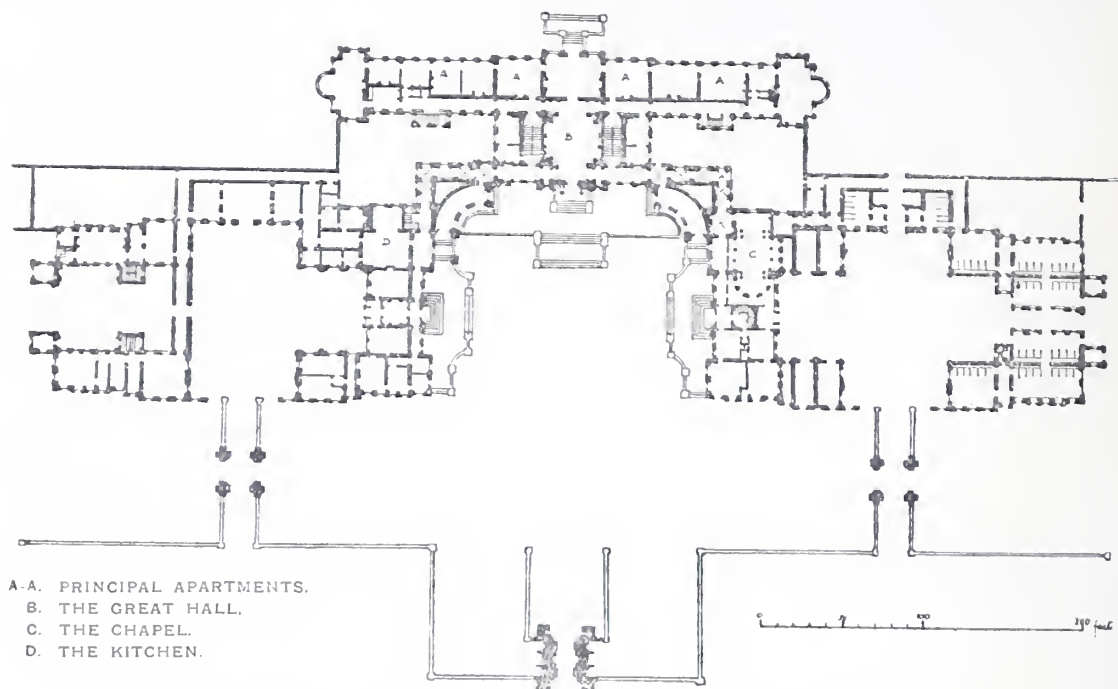
Gibbs was very successful as a designer, and in his beautiful S. Clement's spire, and in the Church of S. Martin's-in-the-Fields has done much to beautify the outskirts of the city. He made the one fatal mistake which Wren always avoided, of impeding the vertical lines of his towers so that they appear to rest upon the porticoes or other features. He is famed for his conception of the Radcliffe Library at Oxford, which, however, bears close resemblance to Wren's design for the Windsor Mausoleum, which was never executed.

James Gibbs.

The most powerful and original of the trio was Sir John Vanbrugh, dramatist and architect, "a man of wit and a man of honour." He is said to have refused the Surveyorship "out of tenderness to Sir Christopher." His practice was almost confined to domestic work, and he fostered the type of mansion-design in which symmetry must be attained at all

Sir John  
Vanbrugh.

costs. He deliberately set accepted rules at defiance in his attempts to Anglicise foreign modes of composition: his window treatment is particularly obtrusive, and a cumbrous impression generally pervades the whole of his larger works. This has



GROUND PLAN OF CASTLE HOWARD, YORKSHIRE.

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH, ARCHT.

been construed into a legitimate striving after a sense of Eternity, but called forth the bitter epitaph—

“Lie heavy on him, earth, for he  
Laid many a heavy load on thee.”

Sir Joshua  
Reynolds  
eulogises  
Vanbrugh.

It was left for Sir Joshua Reynolds to first discern the true merits of his work, and to proclaim them unstintingly to a people already prejudiced against them by the taunting quips of Pope and Swift. Had he been called upon to erect religious monuments it is highly probable that his genius would have far outshone its present lustre. Churches were still building in all quarters, and at the hands of Archer, “the groom porter” as Horace Walpole called him, James, Flitcroft, Hakewill—to whom we probably owe St. Anne, Soho—and the Dances, father and son, they assumed all manner of forms, often more

Wren’s later  
successors as  
church  
builders.



remarkable as grotesque and inconsistent adaptations than as praiseworthy efforts after perpetuating sound precepts.

To treat at all fully of the long succession of men who were influenced directly or indirectly by Sir Christopher Wren would unnecessarily extend this Essay. It must suffice here to refer to the foregoing schedule, wherein the more prominent are duly classed, together with their chief works. The influence of Wren diminished correlatively to the lapse of time after his

Influence  
diminished  
correlatively  
to lapse of  
time.

decease, but is discernable to the end of the 18th century, when Sir William Chambers gathered the scattering threads and gave us the fine river front of Somerset House. Other Palladian designs would surely have resulted from this fresh impetus but for the divergence of the Brothers Adam, followed soon after by a powerful movement essentially Grecian in *motif*.

“An architect,” Wren said, “should think his judges as well those that are to live five centuries after him as those of his own time.” Not half that period has yet passed away since his hand ceased to work, and through widely differing epochs his influence, however slight, has scarcely been quite unfelt, whilst in these, our own eclectic times, there are manifest strong classic tendencies on all hands which it is not altogether unlikely may some day culminate in faithful and fervent allegiance to Wren and his work once more.

Our own  
eclectic  
times.





THE FOLLOWING AUTHORITIES AND WORKS OF  
REFERENCE HAVE BEEN CONSULTED.

Manuscripts and Original Drawings in Sir John Soane's Museum

John Stow. <i>Survey of London</i> ... ..	Published	1633
John Evelyn. <i>Architects and Architecture</i> ... ..	do.	1706
James Gibbs. <i>Designs</i> ... ..	do.	1728
Colen Campbell, Woolfe, and Gandon. <i>Vitruvius Britannicus</i>	do.	1731-1771
James Gibbs. <i>Bibliotheca Radcliviana</i> ... ..	do.	1747
Stephen Wren. <i>The Parentalia</i> ... ..	do.	1750
George Richardson. <i>The New Vitruvius Britannicus</i> ...	do.	1802-1808
<i>Londina Illustrata</i> ... ..	do.	1819-1825
James Elmes. <i>Memoirs of Wren</i> ... ..	do.	1823
Britton and Pugin. <i>Public Buildings of London</i> ... ..	do.	1825-1828
John Clayton. <i>Parochial Churches of Sir Christopher Wren...</i>	do.	1849
Longman. <i>Three Cathedrals of St. Paul</i> ... ..	do.	1873
Publications of the Society for Photographing Relics of Old London ... ..	do.	1875-1886
<i>The Dictionary of the Architectural Publication Society</i> ...	do.	1881-1887
Andrew Taylor. <i>Towers and Steeples</i> ... ..	do.	1881
Miss Phillimore. <i>Sir Christopher Wren</i> ... ..	do.	1881
Arthur Macmurdo. <i>City Churches</i> ... ..	do.	1883
W. J. Loftie. <i>Windsor</i> ... ..	do.	1887
Kitchin. <i>Winchester</i> ... ..	do.	1890
Fergusson. <i>Modern Architecture</i> ... ..	do.	1891
Sir W. Besant. <i>London</i> ... ..	do.	1892
W. J. Loftie. <i>Inigo Jones and Wren</i> ... ..	do.	1893
Gwilt. <i>Encyclopædia</i> ... ..	do.	1894
G. H. Birch. <i>London Churches of the XVII and XVIII Centuries</i> ... ..	do.	1896
<i>Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects</i> ... ..	...	...
Numerous articles, papers, &c., in <i>The Builder</i> , <i>The Portfolio</i> , <i>The Contemporary Review</i> , <i>The Art Journal</i> , etc., etc. ... ..	...	...







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