

(Collection 003)

Frederick Clarke Withers, 1828-1901

A Finding Aid for  
Architectural Drawings, 1874-1900,  
in  
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

## Archival Description

### Descriptive Summary

Title: Architectural Drawings, 1874-1900.

Coll. ID: 003.

Creator: Frederick Clarke Withers, 1828-1901, architect.

Extent: 64 architectural drawings, 8 blueprints, 3 photo-lithographs

Repository: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

Abstract: The collection comprises architectural drawings, blueprints and photo-lithographs, documenting Withers's buildings and projects spanning the years 1874-1900.

Cataloging: Collection-level records for materials in the Architectural Archives may be found in RLIN Eureka, the union catalogue of members of the Research Libraries Group.

The

record number for this collection is PAUP00-A2.

Publications: Kowsky, Francis R. *The Architecture of Frederick Clarke Withers and the Progress of the Gothic Revival in America After 1850*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1980.

[available in the Fine Arts Library, NA 737.W57.K68]

Withers, Frederick Clarke. *Church Architecture : Plans, Elevations, and Views of twenty- one Churches and Two School-houses*. New York: A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1873.

[available in the Fine Arts Library Rare Book Room, NA 4811 W5]

## **Biographical Sketch**

Frederick Clark Withers was born in Shepton Mallet, Somerset, England. He served a five year indentureship before entering the London office of Thomas Henry Wyatt (1807-1880) in 1849. In late 1851, he emigrated to the United States to accept a position with Andrew Jackson Downing (1814-1852), the influential American author and landscape architect. After Downing's sudden death in a steamboat accident, Withers worked for four years with Calvert Vaux (1824-1895), another Briton recruited by Downing. In the 1880s Withers worked in partnership (Withers and Dickson) with Walter Dickson (1835-1903), who was originally from Albany, New York. Withers is particularly known for his role in disseminating British High Victorian Gothic taste in the United States, and for his independent designs for the Jefferson Market and Courthouse (1874) in New York City and Gallaudet College, in Washington, D.C. (1867-1880).

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Withers Collection comprises 64 architectural drawings, 8 blueprints, 3 photo-lithographs documenting 14 projects, 1872-1900. The strength of the collection is its documentation of Withers's late ecclesiastical works, particularly Trinity Church, Hartford, Connecticut, 1891-1894, and the reredos and altar built in Trinity Church, Wall Street, New York, in memory of William Backhouse Astor. The collection includes some works of his partnership with Walter Dickson. The collection contains no materials related to his collaboration with Andrew Jackson Downing or Calvert Vaux.

The collection is arranged in one series; in chronological order by project. A full index to projects represented in this collection is found in Appendix A.

## **Access Points for Indexing (Controlled Vocabulary)**

Withers, Frederick Clarke, 1828-1901.  
Architects--Archives.  
Architectural design--History--19th century--Sources.  
Architectural drawing--United States.  
Architecture, Modern--19th century--United States--Designs and plans.  
Church architecture--United States.  
Gothic revival (architecture)--United States.  
Architectural drawings--American.  
Dickson, Walter, 1835-1903.  
Withers and Dickson.  
Astor, William B. (William Backhouse), 1792-1875, honoree.

## **Administrative Information**

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred citation: Frederick Clarke Withers Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: Gift of G. Holmes Perkins (prior to 1980)

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker, Emily Cooperman, Laura Stroffolino and Nancy Thorne, with the research assistance of Matthew Pisarski and August Ruhnka. Work was substantially completed in 2000, with additions and corrections in 2003.

## Container list

### Series I. Architectural drawings

Extent: 64 architectural drawings, 8 blueprints, 3 photo-lithographs  
Arrangement. Arranged by project in chronological order.

| Call # | Descriptive Title  |
|--------|--|
| 003.1  | St. Thomas Church, McConnell Memorial Altar and Reredos, 1 architectural drawing   |
| 003.1a | Trinity Church, William Backhouse Astor Altar and Reredos, 1 architectural drawing |
| 003.1  | Christ P. E. Church (Hartford, CT), 4 architectural drawings                       |
| 003.1  | Calvary Church (Memphis), 3 architectural drawings                                 |
| 003.1  | Church of the Advent, Altar and Font, 2 architectural drawings                     |
| 003.1  | Chapel of the Good Shepherd, 1 architectural drawing                               |
| 003.2  | Trinity Episcopal Church (Hartford, CT), 48 architectural drawings and prints      |
| 003.3  | Trinity Chapel (later St. Sava), 1 architectural drawing                           |
| 003.3  | Saint John the Evangelist (Zabriske Memorial Church), 3 architectural drawings     |
| 003.3  | Church of the Transfiguration (New York), 3 architectural drawings                 |
| 003.3  | Berkeley Divinity School, Library, 1 architectural drawing                         |
| 003.3  | City of New York Prison, "The Tombs", 1 photo lithograph of presentation drawing   |
| 003.3  | "Sketch for a New Spire": 1 architectural drawing                                  |
| 003.3  | Unidentified Church, 3 architectural drawings                                      |

## Appendix A

### Chronological Project Index

#### **St. Thomas Church, McConnell Memorial Altar and Reredos**

9 West Wheelock Street, Hanover, NH

(1872); built

Frederick Clarke Withers, Architect

#### holdings:

[003.1] 1 architectural drawing [1 construction drawing titled "Altar and Reredos / Memorial to Mrs. Walter E. McConnell"]

#### **Trinity Church, William Backhouse Astor Memorial Altar and Reredos**

Broadway at Wall St., New York City, New York

1876; built

F. C. Withers, Architect

#### holdings:

[003.1] 1 architectural drawing [1 presentation drawing]

#### **Christ P. E. Church, alterations, pulpit, sedilia, and reredos**

45 Church Street, Hartford, Connecticut

1879-1897; (built)

Withers and Dickson, Architects

#### holdings:

[003.1] 4 architectural drawings [1 design drawing, 3 construction drawings]

#### **Calvary Church, Altar and Reredos**

102 North Second St., Memphis, Tennessee

1884-1885; [1893-1900]; built

F. C. Withers, Architect

#### holdings:

[003.1] 3 architectural drawings [3 design drawings]

#### **Church of the Advent, Altar and Font**

Louisville, Kentucky

1887; built

Frederick Clarke Withers, Architect

#### holdings:

[003.1] 2 architectural drawing [2 construction drawings]

### **Chapel of the Good Shepherd**

Roosevelt Island [formerly Blackwell's Island], New York, NY,  
[1888]; built (extant 2000)

Withers and Dickson, Architects

#### holdings:

[003.1] 1 architectural drawing [1 construction drawing titled "Detail of Chancel Arch, Organ Chamber, etc., #33"]

### **Trinity Episcopal Church**

120 Sigourney Street, Hartford, Connecticut

1891-1892; built (extant 2000)

Frederick Clarke Withers, Architect; Withers and Dickson, Architects

note: All original architectural drawings are signed or monogrammed by Withers.

#### holdings:

[003.2] 47 architectural drawings and prints [2 presentation, 37 preliminary construction drawings, 8 construction drawing prints, 1 photo-lithograph of perspective]

### **Trinity Chapel, Reredos** (renamed 1944, Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sava)

16-20 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, New York

1892[-1897]; built

Frederick C. Withers, architect (signed).

note: Chapel built 1852-1855; Richard Upjohn, architect; Trinity Church, Wall Street, client. Sold 1944 (extant 2003, with interior alterations).

#### holdings:

[003.3] 1 architectural drawing [1 presentation drawing]

### **Saint John the Evangelist (Zabriske Memorial Church)**

61 Poplar Street, Newport, Rhode Island

[1893]-1900; built

F. C. Withers, Architect; John Hardman and Co., Artists (London)

#### holdings:

[003.3] 3 architectural drawings [1 design drawing, 1 presentation drawing, 1 photo-lithograph]

### **Church of the Transfiguration, Reredos**

29<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City, New York

1894-1895; built (reredos extant 2003, altered)

F. C. Withers, Architect

#### holdings:

[003.3] 3 architectural drawings [1 photo lithograph 1 design drawing, 1 presentation drawing]

**Berkeley Divinity School, Library**

Washington Street, Middletown, Connecticut

(1896); built (demolished)

Frederick C. Withers, Architect

note: original perspective rendering by E. Eldon Deane

holdings:

[003.3] 1 architectural drawing [1 original perspective rendering]

**City of New York Prison, "The Tombs"**

Center and Leonard Sts., New York, New York

(1896); built (demolished)

Withers and Dickson, Architects

holdings:

[003.3] 1 photo lithograph of presentation drawing

**"Sketch for a New Spire"**

Unlocated

n.d.

Withers and Dickson, Architects

holdings:

[003.3] 1 architectural drawing [1 design drawing]

**Unidentified Church**

Unlocated

n.d.

(Frederick C. Withers?)

holdings:

[003.3] 3 architectural drawings [3 design drawings]