

Robert Willis

Science, Technology and Architecture in the 19th Century

16-17 September 2016

This two-day conference explores the extraordinary life and work of the Cambridge academic Robert Willis (1800-1875). Willis was a famous Cambridge polymath. A Fellow of Gonville and Caius, he was Jacksonian Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy and taught engineering in the early years of that subject.

His research and teaching was spread over a wide range of interests. He was in particular a pioneer of the study of Medieval vaulting and did extensive research on Gothic Cathedrals and Medieval architectural nomenclature. In Cambridge, he is best known as the originator and author of *The Architectural History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge* which was put together from his papers and additional material by his nephew John Willis Clark.

This conference, set in the beautiful surroundings of Willis's own college, will look at the whole range of his interests, with lectures on the first day and tours of the buildings he discussed on the second.

Further details and booking:

www.robertwillis2016.org

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From the local to the global

James Campbell Willis and Cambridge architecture
Alex Buchanan Willis and his networks of knowledge

Willis and science

Jacques Heymann The teaching of engineering in Cambridge
Ben Marsden Willis and science
Robin Maconie Willis, speech, sound and music

Willis and archaeology

Chris Elliott Willis and Egyptian architecture
Martin Biddle Willis and the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem
Toby Huitson Circular stairs, Norman galleries and polychrome stonemasonry: Willis's work on Worcester Cathedral
Tim Tatton-Brown Willis and Chichester Cathedral

Willis, vaults and drawing

Santiago Huerta Willis and gothic vault studies before 1850
Antonio Becchi Drawing proofs: The tangible worlds of Robert Willis and Oliver Byrne
Javier Girón Willis and the constructive drawing in architecture
Nick Webb Digital re-presentation of Willis's work on medieval vaults

Willis's influence

David Wendland Robert Willis and Germany: Gothic Revival and research on mediaeval architecture
Simone Talenti Willis's influence in 19th-century Italy
Martin Bressani Willis and Viollet-le-Duc
Adrian Forty Willis and the Modernists

The programme will conclude with a celebratory dinner at Caius College. Day 2 will comprise a walking tour of sites with Willis interest in Cambridge and a coach trip to Ely.