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## walk notes

### The Inns of Court

The Inns' origins are, for all practical purposes, lost in the mists of the fourteenth century. The present-day Inns of Court are Gray's Inn, the Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and the Middle Temple. The typical Inn can be considered rather like a University College without an overarching University. Enclosed by a gated wall each contained residential blocks (called 'chambers') along with a library, chapel, yards, walks, gardens, and – the usual site for general entertainment as well as lectures and debates – a hall. For historical reasons the two Temple Inns are located on a single site without a physical barrier between them and share a chapel (the Crusader church). In the fifteenth century there were many more legal societies or Inns than the four Inns of Court that we know today. The majority of students were the sons of country gentlemen, not intended for the legal profession. The minority who pursued the severe study of the law were expected to keep the two learning vacations (Lent and Summer) each year, when courses of lectures were given on the old statutes. In term-time the students attended Westminster Hall, to watch the courts in action, and throughout the year they took part in lengthy, intricate moots when the hall of each inn was arranged to resemble a court, with a bar and bench. Scattered around the four Inns of Court

were also the Inns of Chancery. Some ten in all, these were attached to the senior Inns in unequal numbers: Staple and Barnard's Inns to Gray's Inn; Clement's, Clifford's, and Lyon's to the Inner Temple; Furnival's and Davy's to Lincoln's Inn; and New and Strand to the Middle Temple. However a 'lesser' Inn (e.g. Furnival's) might compete with the senior Inns in size and splendour. Whether technically within the bounds of London or not, all were generally exempt from the legal jurisdiction of the City of London. The sixteenth century was an age of expansion for the common law and its practitioners, and all the inns were substantially enlarged and beautified during the Tudor period. The characteristic late Elizabethan brick must have represented recent construction. Most building projects were carried out with private money, the investors retaining a freehold interest in the chambers. In 1567 there were 100 sets of chambers in the Temple, making it the second largest Inn (after Gray's Inn). The expansion of membership continued throughout the seventeenth century, apart from the four years of the civil war. The Inns of Chancery and other minor Inns were swept away, except as historical relics, by nineteenth-century legal reforms.

### A Lincoln's Inn Fields

Lincoln's Inn Fields is the largest public square in London. It was laid out in the 1630s under the initiative of the speculative

builder and contractor William Newton, greatly influenced by adjacent Lincoln's Inn as a fashionable residential area. An area approximating to that seems to have come into the hands of the Hospital of St John in 1431. In 1510 it was used for breeding rabbits, thereafter cattle grazing and turnstiles were placed around the square to enable pedestrians to enter without the animals escaping. Shops and other businesses developed along these footpaths and some of these alleys still exist – the Great and Little Turnstile. Some of the great houses still exist today.

### B Lincoln's Inn

The Inn has not always been located on this site, although it was certainly there by 1422. The Inn did not originally own the land it occupied, being held on a tenancy from the Bishops of Chichester. Lincoln's Inn is the only inn of court to possess records from the fifteenth century; the Black Books, beginning in 1422, contain much information about the daily life of the inns at this period. The benchers acquired the freehold in 1580. At that time the buildings comprised the Old Hall, the cluster chambers around it, and a Chapel, replaced soon afterwards. The main entrance being from Chancery Lane via the Old Gatehouse. The development of the remainder of the site continued as and when finances permitted and opportunities arose. This, with

the fact that the Inn did not lose any buildings in the two world wars, this has resulted in a picturesque variety of styles and periods. [However, Stone Buildings sustained major damage in a raid in 1941.] Thomas More was made a Bencher in about 1508. John Donne joined the Inn as a student in 1592, but left without being called to the Bar. He returned later as an ordained Anglican priest, as Reader in Divinity. The New Square was begun around 1690. Great Hall and Library - the Great Hall and the Library, built to the designs of Philip Hardwick were opened by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1845.

#### 🕒 **The Royal Courts of Justice**

In 1868 George Edmund Street, was appointed the sole architect for the Royal Courts of Justice and it was he who designed the whole building from foundation to varied carvings and spires. It was opened in 1882 by Queen Victoria.

It houses the High Court and Court of Appeal of England and Wales.

#### 🕒 **Founding of the Temple**

In 1128 the international Knights Templar established a 'Temple' in London on Holborn (where Southampton Buildings is now). Running out of space, they sold their Old Temple to the Bishop of Lincoln and moved to a larger site next to Fleet Street and the River Thames. The knights built their customary round church patterned on the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, consecrated to the Virgin Mary in 1185 and built with stone from Caen. (The nave was added in

1240.)

The knights took advantage of their special privileges to make their sanctuary a safe place for depositing treasure, and the New Temple became a busy financial centre, King Henry II in 1185 using it as a bank and stored treasure there. Several kings stayed there, including King John in 1215. Many knights associated with the order were buried in the church, the most distinguished being William Marshal, regent of England. In 1312 their order was dissolved at the behest of King Philip IV of France and the London temple came into the ownership of the Hospitallers, who used it as a source of revenue rather than living there.

Subsequently the land north of Fleet Street was disposed of, (probably when the lawyers moved in, around 1340).

#### 🕒 **Lawyers move in**

In 1312, King Edward II divided the Temple into the Inner Temple and Outer Temple, according to whether inside or outside the boundaries of the City of London. The Inner Temple was in turn divided in two in 1337, the eastern part continuing to be called Inner Temple and the part in between becoming known as Middle Temple. They were leased to lawyers around 1346.

The courts returned to Westminster for good early in 1339, and the inns of court as distinct societies probably date from around then. The two halls in the Temple would have attracted two inns and it seems likely that, from the beginning, there were two legal societies in the Temple,.

The best-known incident in the history of the Much of the Inner Temple was rebuilt between 1830 and 1900, in Victorian stolidity. The most successful of the rebuilding projects, including a new Hall and Library, was designed in a perpendicular style by Sydney Smirke

The last hundred and fifty years have brought significant changes in the size and composition of all four inns of court. The membership was widened to include law students from every corner of the empire, and (after 1919) women. The number of benchers has risen from around 30 in 1850 to over 560 in 2019.

Almost half the Temple was demolished by bombing in the blitz. Some buildings were restored to their original appearance, but some of the courts were enlarged. The narrow Fig Tree Court disappeared, being incorporated into Elm Court as part of the Middle Temple; and the decision was taken to achieve a spacious Church Court by resiting Lamb Building, which had stood in its centre. The vista from the Gardens, between Harcourt Buildings and the Library, was completely redesigned in a Georgian style (in red brick faced with stone) by Sir Edward Maufe and Sir Hubert Worthington.

#### 🕒 **St Brides Church**

A Roman pavement can be seen in the much-restored crypts of the church. In the early sixth century the first stone-walled church was built here, founded either by St Bride or by a community of Celtic monks. It has been rebuilt many times since.

In 1205, the Curia Regis, was held here, a council of landowners and ecclesiastics charged with providing legislative advice to King John,

The church was completely destroyed by the fire of London despite St Bride's having its own fire engine, and houses about Fleet Bridge being pulled down. It was rebuilt by Christopher Wren in Portland stone. The tower is supposed to be the inspiration for the tiered wedding cake. The church was again destroyed in the Blitz. Godfrey Allen, an authority on Wren, produced a faithful recreation. He kept the clear glass, but did not rebuild the galleries, instead laying out the stalls in collegiate style.

In 1953, the crypts were found to contain thousands of human remains, many of them victims of the Great Plague of 1665 and the cholera epidemic of 1854. Parliament then decreed that there should be no more burials in the City. The crypts were sealed and forgotten. Also nearby is a medieval charnel house, estimated to include nearly 7,000 human remains. The church today has a light, open feel of symmetry; the floor is paved with black marble from Belgium and white from Italy.

As a result of a successful funding appeal, new side aisles constructed of English and European oak were installed in 2004, offering significantly better views for large congregations.

For the excellent, fuller history' visit

<http://www.stbrides.com/history/introduction.html#top>

### 📍 Fleet Street

The line of Fleet Street has for almost two thousand years, been the southerly of two Roman roads west from London across the Fleet River, this one by Ludgate, the other by Newgate. It subsequently became the main route between the City of London and the Court at Westminster.

A dangerously muddy track in 1315, Fleet Street gained a reputation at various times for highwaymen, prostitutes and entertainment. Geoffrey Chaucer, author of The Canterbury Tales, is also recorded as having once been fined two shillings for attacking a friar in the street. The street's prospects improved when the Royal court established itself at Westminster.

Following Caxton's death in 1492, Wynken De Worde took over his press and moved it to Fleet Street, beside the church of St Bride, presumably to obtain part of the thriving legal business. Nearby Ludgate Hill and Paternoster Row were associated with book publishers. John Ogilby the famous mapmaker had a shop in Fleet Street in 1649. From Tudor times it became renowned for its profusion of ale-houses and taverns and by 1700 there were also 26 coffee houses; the main street was lined with high-end shops and Fleet Bridge was "cluttered with grotty shacks where one-eyed men hawked nuts, gingerbreads, oranges and oysters".

The tavern culture is linked to Fleet Street's role in literary heritage; the playwright Ben Johnson, poet and pamphleteer John

Milton, and famed authors Mark Twain, Alfred Tennyson, P.G. Wodehouse and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Dr Johnson is also said to have spent much time in the Cheshire Cheese tavern.

From 1702 at premises beside the Kings Arms on Fleet Bridge, Elizabeth Mallet launched her newsheet, the Daily Courant, England's first national newspaper.

Censorship laws were relaxed and within months a prolific newspaper press had burst into life. By the mid-1730s, 31 papers - six dailies, 12 tri-weeklies and 13 weeklies - were being hawked on the streets of London, with an average combined weekly circulation of 100,000.

St Bride's church became associated with the newspaper industry and a special service is still held in the church each year, attended by top newspaper chiefs. Murdoch ironically held his recent wedding there.

By the 20th century, most national newspapers in Britain operated from here, several building impressive offices, the Grade II-listed Art Deco Daily Express building, with its cinematic lobby, being the most impressive. All but The Times' had their offices and adjacent printing presses in Fleet Street. The newspaper trade continued to dominate until the 1980s when media mogul Rupert Murdoch moved The Times and The Sun to Wapping, to escape the influence of the powerful print unions. Most other papers followed suit. The old offices of the 'Daily Telegraph', 'Daily Express' and 'Reuters' are now listed

buildings, in use for other purposes. The printing offices have been replaced by blue plaques (including one for the Courant). The street's journalistic history is immortalised in several statues along its length.

A little known claim to fame is that Britain's first men's public flushing toilets opened on 1852 in Fleet Street. They no longer exist.

#### 📍 **Dr Johnson's House**

<http://www.drjohnsonshouse.org/johnson.html>

Samuel Johnson was born in 1709 in Lichfield. The son of a bookseller, he rose to become one of the greatest literary figures of the eighteenth century, most famously compiling A Dictionary of the English Language. Johnson lived in 17 different places in London, but moved to Gough Square in order to work on the Dictionary, which was finally published in 1755.

Johnson is said to have spent much time in the Cheshire Cheese tavern. A statue of his most famous cat, Hodge, sits outside his house, just around the corner from the tavern. The house is a remarkable remnant of Georgian London.

#### 📍 **The Mitre**

A gem of a pub Ye Olde Mitre was built in 1546 and extended in 1782. The pub was built on what was originally the garden of the Bishop of Ely's palace, 'commandeered' by Elizabeth for Hatton, her favourite, and the cherry tree marked the dividing line between the Bishop's part and Hatton's. Henry VIII was married in St. Ethelredas

next door and his daughter, Queen Elizabeth, is said to have danced around the cherry tree with Sir Christopher Hatton.

#### 📍 **Gray's Inn**

Gray's Inn dates from at least 1370, and takes its name from the 1st Baron Grey de Wilton, as the Inn was originally his family townhouse within the Manor of Portpoole. During the 15th and 16th centuries, Gray's Inn grew in size, peaking during the reign of Elizabeth I. The Inn was home to many important barristers and politicians, including Francis Bacon. Queen Elizabeth herself was a patron. As a result of the efforts of prominent members such as William Cecil and Gilbert Gerard, Gray's Inn became the largest of the four Inns by number, with over 200 barristers recorded as members.

#### 📍 **Red Lion Square**

**1685** Property speculator Nicholas Barbon saw the possibilities of developing the 17-acre site of Red Lion fields for housing and the area was laid out in 1684. It was hotly contested by many, including nearby Gray's Inn lawyers, who complained of their loss of 'wholesome air'. A pitched battle broke out between the workmen and around 100 lawyers armed with sundry building materials, resulting in many injuries. The workmen won and the building work continued; the houses in the new square were highly successful in attracting 'men of quality' such as the very same lawyers, as well as doctors and other professionals. The surveyor Edward Hatton, in 1708, described

the Square as 'a pleasant square of good buildings, between High Holborn south and the fields north'. Only the 18th century buildings to the south remain.

#### 📍 **Liberty of the Rolls**

The first record of a building on the site was in 1232. In 1377 Edward III annexed the house and chapel (originally for former Jews converted to Christianity), to the newly-created office of Custos Rotulorum, or Keeper of the Rolls [of the Chancery of England]. The magnificent Rolls House and Chapel was a place where the rolls and records of the Court of Chancery were kept until the erection of the Record Office in Fetter Lane. The Rolls of the Chancery were kept in presses ranged along the walls of the chapel, under the seats of the pews, and behind the altar. It was the official residence of the Master of the Rolls, who also kept his court here. He was deputy to the Lord Chancellor. One notable Master of the Rolls who enjoyed living at The Rolls was Thomas Cromwell. The Rolls Court was removed on the opening of the Royal Courts of Justice.

The medieval chapel was demolished in 1895 and a new chapel was built within the new Public Record Office. The chapel retains a few monuments and some stained glass from the former building. The former Public Record Office building in Chancery Lane is now the Maughan Library and Information Services Centre of King's College London.