



VIRGINIA SUPPLEMENT

Editor: S.K. J. Jeffrey McClelland, KCT
652 Punchbowl Lane, Jamaica, VA 23079
804.240.7367, Jeff.of.Jamaica@outlook.com
www.vagckt.org/



Knightly Greetings!

As many of you undoubtedly know, I was not born in the United States, but actually in London, England.

Until the pandemic hit, I made yearly visits back to my home City, with my Virginian wife, Lady Sherry. Over the past 18 years it has become a tradition for me to act as a personal tour guide, around London, for my wife. A true labor of love! One of the most interesting sites we visited is a genuine Knight Templar Church, simply called Temple Church, situated right in that one square mile that is The City of London.



This is the first part of a brief history of that church:

In the mid-12th century, before the construction of the church, the Knights Templar in London had met at a site in High Holborn, in a structure originally established by Hugues de Payens (the site had been historically the location of a Roman temple in Londinium - now known as London. Because of the rapid growth of the order, by the 1160s the site had become too confined, and the order purchased the current site for the establishment of a larger monastic complex as their headquarters in England. In addition to the church, the new compound

originally contained residences, military training facilities, and recreational grounds for the military brethren and novices, who were not permitted to go into the city without the permission of the Master of the Temple.

The church building comprises two separate sections: The original circular church building, called the **Round Church** and now acting as a nave, and a later rectangular section adjoining on the east side, built approximately half a century later, forming the chancel.

After the capture of Jerusalem in 1099 by the Crusaders, the Dome of the Rock was given to the Augustinians, who turned it into a church (while the Al-Aqsa Mosque became a royal palace). Because the Dome of the Rock was the site of the Temple of Solomon, the Knights Templar set up their headquarters in the Al-Aqsa Mosque adjacent to the Dome for much of the 12th century. The *Templum Domini*, as they called the Dome of the Rock, featured on the official seals of the Order's Grand Masters (such as Everard des Barres and Renaud de Vichiers), and along with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher upon which it was based soon became the architectural model for Round Templar churches across Europe.

The round church is 55 feet (17 m) in diameter, and contains within it a circle of the earliest known surviving free-standing Purbeck Marble columns. It is probable that the walls and grotesque heads were originally painted in colors.

It was consecrated on 10 February 1185^[8] by Heraclius, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. It is believed that King Henry II (1154–1189) was present at the consecration.

More next month!

With All Knightly Courtesies,

Peter R. Spring, KCT
Grand Commander