

Walking Among Templars in London

by
Sir Knight Sanford Holst



Temple Church in London; photo by author.

In the heart of London stands the old Knight Templar preceptory. From here, the Knights ruled their estates all across England. This is perhaps the easiest Templar site to visit and one of the most rewarding. On this vast estate stands the magnificent Temple Church they built in 1185. Its famous round tower and the neighboring chancel building are still open regularly for services and visitors.

The most popular entryway to these Templar grounds is by the gate on Fleet Street near Chancery Lane. It leads south down a narrow walkway to the front entrance of Temple Church. Going inside, you experience the round church with its high arched ceiling. Embedded knight templar

in the floor are the well-known effigies of fallen Knights. Along the curved walls were seats for the living Knights.

Returning outside, you turn left and go 150 feet south to where the main Templar hall once stood, now replaced by the Inner Temple hall. At the western end of that building we see another original Templar artifact — the weathered stone walls of the “buttery” section in their dining hall. It not only still stands; it is still being used.

Temple Barristers

As for the Templars themselves, it is common knowledge that the Knights

dressed in white robes with a red cross, and their “servingmen” in black or brown robes marked by the same cross. Yet most people overlook the Templar clerics in their green robe with the red cross. These men could read and write, while most of the other members of society at that time could not. The green-robed men became the barristers or lawyers of the Templars, among their other duties.

When the Templars were attacked in 1307, they left their large properties and went into hiding. Oddly enough, when the king took back this massive Templar estate in London, there were a number of lawyers in those Templar buildings who claimed to have leases. They were allowed to stay. Eventually this property known as Temple was given to the lawyers who have continued to occupy it to the present day.

It is not known if any of those original lawyers had once worn green Templar robes.

Grand Lodge

Perhaps it is a coincidence, but the United Grand Lodge of England is an easy half-mile walk northwest from the Templar preceptory. Grand Secretary Nigel Brown was quite welcoming when I went there to do Masonic research, and Librarian Martin Cherry was exceptionally helpful in providing valuable materials.

To Get There

The nearest Underground or “Tube” station is appropriately called “Temple.” From there just go east along Victoria Embankment to Middle Temple Lane. Enter the



Original Templar dining hall;
photo by author.



Templar statue at the preceptory;
photo by author.

gate and you are on Templar property. Zig-zag between the buildings in a northeasterly direction to reach Temple Church. This is a great place to enjoy being a Knight Templar.

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Sir Knight Dan Pushee, KCT, Webmaster for the Grand Encampment (left) was awarded the prestigious National Award during the Triennial Conclave. Congratulations, Dan! Well deserved!



knight templar



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