

IN THE VILLAGE

From Temple Station to Gray's Inn

This route takes us along the Temple Section of Victoria Embankment Gardens to **2 Temple Place**, past the steps leading to Essex Street, through the side gate into Middle Temple, through Garden Court and up the steps to **Fountain Court**. From there we take Middle Temple Lane north and emerge on to Fleet Street, close to Temple Bar, with **Hoare's Bank** to the right along Fleet Street at No 37. We then head up Chancery Lane. To the left is the elegant building housing **ICLR** and its tenant Brasserie Blanc, while to the right is the imposing building that was formerly the **Public Record Office**.

Passing the Law Society, we turn left into Carey Street and call in at **The Seven Stars** before entering the curious 'time warp' passageway into Lincoln's Inn New Square, by Nexus Chambers – The Chambers of (Master) Michael Mansfield QC. Taking the main exit from Lincoln's Inn, we find ourselves in **Lincoln's Inn Fields** and from there pass through Great Turnstile onto Holborn. Crossing Holborn and turning up Brownlow Street, we reach the junction with Bedford Row – where the Treasurer has his Chambers – and see the old **Water Pump**. It is then just a short distance to enter Gray's Inn via **Jockey's Fields Gate**.

1 TWO TEMPLE PLACE



Built of Portland stone in 1895, in the Early Elizabethan style, this distinctive building has splendid carvings on the exterior stonework and a weather vane above the parapets representing the *Santa Maria*, in which Columbus discovered America. The iron gates lead onto a paved forecourt and lawn with an arcaded boundary wall on one side and a portico on the other and the balustraded stone steps to the main door are flanked by two bronze lamp standards featuring the figures of two small cherubs. Inside it is no less intriguing and decorative and is noted for its stained glass windows. The building was originally the Astor Estate Office and has had a number of corporate owners since being sold by the Astor family. Opened in 2011 as a public gallery, specifically to showcase publicly owned art from collections around the UK, its first exhibition featured William Morris and how he 'told stories through pattern and poetry'. The building is only open to the public during exhibitions.



2 FOUNTAIN COURT

Dickens' fascination with the legal world led him to house Pip (in *Great Expectations*) in Garden Court, through which we arrive at the fountain in Fountain Court, described so eloquently by Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. The large flagged courtyard contains the main entrance to the Middle Temple offices, and the fountain, which was constructed in 1681, is reputedly the oldest permanent fountain in London, though it now is a 20th century replacement – but the mulberry trees are original.



3 HOARE'S BANK

C. Hoare & Co is a British private bank – the oldest bank in the UK and the world's fourth oldest bank. Founded in 1672 by Sir Richard Hoare, it remains family-owned and is managed on an unlimited liability basis, allowing it to be 'independent, flexible and fair'. In the days before street numbering, businesses were identified by signs, and Richard Hoare traded at the 'Sign of the Golden Bottle' in Cheapside, moving to Fleet Street in 1690. Customers, archivists or historians are welcome to visit the bank's museum, where the collections include records from former customers such as Samuel Pepys, Lord Byron and Jane Austen, coins in mint condition and dating back centuries, and handwritten bank notes.

4 ICLR

The Incorporated Council for Law Reporting in England and Wales (aka 'The Law Reports') was founded in 1865 by the concerted efforts of all branches of the legal profession to establish reliable reports of the cases heard in the superior courts. The object was accurate and accessible reports that could be relied on with absolute confidence; and that still holds good today. ICLR is still run by the Council, which consists of two representatives from each Inn of Court, from the Bar Council and from the Law Society. The Attorney General, Solicitor General and President of the Law Society are ex officio members.



It acquired 119 Chancery Lane in 1999 and named it 'Megarry House' in honour of one of its most renown Chairmen. More recently, Master Nick Chambers chaired the Council through one of its defining periods (see *Graya News No 17*).

5 PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

In 1838 'The Public Record Office' was established, to reform the keeping of government and court records, and placed under the control of the Master of the Rolls. Its original premises were the mediaeval Rolls Chapel on Chancery Lane, but between 1851 and 1858 a purpose built archive repository was built next to the Rolls Chapel. So, the national archives of the UK were housed in Chancery Lane from 1838 until 1997, by which time the growing size of the archives and a growing interest in the records had led to a need to move, and in 2003 the PRO was merged with the Historical Manuscripts Commission to form 'The National Archives', based at Kew. The building in Chancery Lane became the Maughan Library of King's College, London, in 2001. Probably most notable among the PRO's many historical documents is the original manuscript of the Domesday Book, completed in 1068; and the original copy of William Shakespeare's last will and testament, dated 25 March 1616, which moved to the PRO in 1962.



6 THE SEVEN STARS

Familiar to lawyers and journalists frequenting the Royal Courts of Justice, this Grade II listed public house, dated '1602', survived the Great Fire of London. One of the few pubs in the area open on Sundays, its decor is difficult to place: caricatures of barristers and judges; posters of legal-themed films, big ceiling fans and checked tablecloths – quirky? One area was formerly the next door legal wig shop and retains its original frontage with a display of wigs in the window. Very good, interesting bar food, cooked according to the landlady's directions, is available. You can walk through the passage entrance left on photograph into New Square and then to the main gate of Lincoln's Inn.



7 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

The largest public square in London – and a popular lunchtime destination for local office workers – Lincoln's Inn Fields was laid out in the 1630s, before which cattle grazed on the 'fields', hence the 'Turnstiles' onto Holborn to prevent cattle straying. 'Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre' was located in the Fields from 1661 on and off until 1732. The original theatre, which was created by converting a real tennis court, was demolished in 1714 and replaced by a purpose built theatre. It was this theatre that presented the first paid public – and very successful – performances of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* in January 1728, featured in this famous painting by Hogarth. (That building was demolished in 1848 and the neighbouring premises of the Royal College of Surgeons extended onto the site.)



8 WATER PUMP

Before the introduction of the mains supply in London, Londoners had to rely on public water pumps, and this is one of several still to be seen in this area. More ornate than the elegant pump in Gray's Inn Square, once redundant, it was 'converted' into a street lamp. Constructed of cast iron in 1826, the pump features intricate strapwork, two spouts, a handle and the arms of St Andrew and St George on the base – it is Grade II listed.

9 JOCKEY'S FIELDS



Entrance to Gray's Inn from Jockey's Fields – the end of the Walk.