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Relic from the Inner Temple

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Relic from the Inner Temple

DECEMBER 6, 2018 BY [PAMELA G SMITH](#)

185
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In 1949, the Dickinson School of Law was presented with one of the most treasured items in the Archives Collection: a stone from the ruins of the Inner Temple, one of England's great Inns of Court, which had been largely destroyed during World War II.

Sometime during the 12th Century, the Military Order of the Knights Templar built a church along the River Thames, which became known as the Temple Church. Sometime after the abolition of the Order, the Church, along with its surrounding buildings, was occupied by lawyers, and this space evolved into two of the Inns of Court, the Inner Temple and the Middle Temple.



Inner Temple Stone

Several early American lawyers attended the Inns of Court, including nine signers of the Declaration of Independence. John Dickinson, from Pennsylvania, who became known as the "Penman of the American Revolution" and for whom Dickinson College was named, also attended the Inns of Court. Robert F. Boden, *The Colonial Bar and the American Revolution*, 60 Marq. L. Rev. 1, 3-4 (1976).

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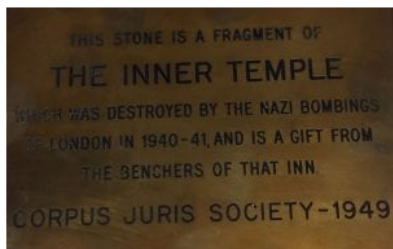
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Both the Inner Temple and the Middle Temple sustained significant damage during World War II. Both Temples were struck by German bombs several times during the War. Fortunately, for the residents of the Temples, preparations had been made, and air raid shelters constructed in 1939, in anticipation of such attacks. The first bomb struck on September 9, 1940. This bomb fell into the Thames River, and caused damage to pedestal ornaments and windows. The first significant damage occurred on September 19, 1940, when the Clock Tower of the Library was struck. Additional air raids occurred on September 26, October 8, October 16, November 16, December 8, and December 29, 1940. Attacks continued in 1941 on January 1, January 11, January 15, March 14-15, and May 10-11. Sir Francis MacKinnon described the attack of May 10-11 as, "London's worst ordeal of the war. A huge number of bombs, both high explosive and incendiary, were showered down, and the Temple had its full share of them." Sir Francis MacKinnon, ed., *The Ravages of the War in the Inner Temple* 19 (1945). The destruction of the Inner Temple was now complete.



Inner Temple Stone Plaque

The stone from the ruins of the Inner Temple was presented, in 1949, by the Masters of the Bench of the Honorable Society of the Inner Temple to the Corpus Juris Society of the Law School. The Master of the Rolls, the Rt. Hon. Lord Greene, had assisted the Corpus Juris Society

in obtaining the stone. The gift was accompanied by a privately printed copy of *The Ravages of the War in the Inner Temple*, edited by Sir Frank MacKinnon. T. Edward Munce, Jr., Note, *Inner Temple of London Presents Relic*, 53 Dick. L. Rev. 283 (1949). The Inner and Middle Temples were subsequently rebuilt.

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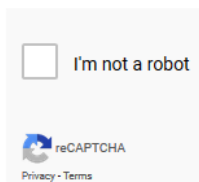
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