

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

Visit to Middle Temple Hall EC4 & the Frederick Parker Collection at London Metropolitan University E1. Thursday 13 January 2005 (repeat)

This visit has been organised by Geoff Cockett

En route to Middle Temple Hall, we will visit the Temple Church, built by the Knights Templars in 1185. The Templars were a powerful organisation with the avowed mission of protecting Christians going to Jerusalem. The original round plan modelled after the church of the Holy Sepulchre, was amended by the addition of a Norman nave, and later by Sir Christopher Wren. It serves as the main church for those in the legal profession. [http://www.britainexpress.com/London/Temple_church.htm]

Middle Temple Hall, the crowned glory of Tudor domestic architecture, is the focal point of Middle Temple, one of the oldest Inns of Court. Designed to impress, it is essentially a common room for members who both dine and entertain here. Opened by Elizabeth I in 1573, the interior remains largely as it was when *Twelfth Night* was performed here in her presence. The Hall is late Gothic in style with a rare double-hammer beam roof, second only to that at Hampton Court Palace. Other attractions include an elaborately carved 23 foot high screen, stained glass windows and minstrels gallery. Prior to having lunch in the Hall, there will be an informal tour. [http://www.online-law.co.uk/bar/middle_temple/hall.html]

After lunch, we take the tube from Temple to Aldgate East followed by a short walk to the London Metropolitan University site in Commercial Rd. The Frederick Parker Collection of chairs and settees is displayed there in the Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design.

A century ago, the Collection was built up by Frederick Parker for use by his firm's workmen as models and allowing them to acquire the skill of early craftsman. In 1997, the successor firm decided to sell the Collection, the major part being bought by a specially formed Frederick Parker Foundation*. It consists of over 170 fine examples of 17th - 19th century chairs and settees which are now on long term loan to the University. Mr Michael Legg has kindly agreed to give a talk about the history of the Collection. This will illustrate how the design of chairs changed over the years, its variation across Europe, and the detection of subsequent restoration and fakes. He is an entertaining speaker with an extensive relevant knowledge aided by experience in his own antique restoration firm. We will be able to view the Collection and pose questions.

Programme

- 10.50 - 11.20 Assemble in Seaman's Hall, Somerset House - coffee/tea.
- 11.20 - 12.10. Walk to Middle Temple Hall visiting Temple Church en route.
- 12.10 - 13.30. Lunch at Middle Temple Hall.
- 13.30 - 14.15. Walk to Temple station for tube to Aldgate East. Then short walk to London Metropolitan University.
- 14.15 - 15.45. Visit the Frederick Parker Collection with a talk by Mr Michael Legg.
- 15.45 Tea, then disperse.

The lunch at Middle Temple Hall costs £17.50 exclusive of wine. Barristers and other legal people will also be lunching in the Hall. We are requested to dress according to their custom, e.g. men with jacket and tie. Numbers are limited to 30. The cost of the talk etc at Metropolitan University is £4pp.

* Registered Charity