

Drawing by - T. Tyndale Daniell

SAVE *Temple Bar*

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Painting by E. Turck - 1860
Photograph by Jack Bostock

Sir Christopher Wren's famous archway, Temple Bar, now stands fifteen miles from London in neglect and ruin. From 1672 to 1878 it was located in the middle of Legal London, but then it had to be moved to widen the thoroughfare. Two years later it was taken to its present location. Now there is an effort under way to restore and return Temple Bar to a rightful place in the city of London.

by T. Tyndale Daniell

Still he that scorns and struggles
Sees, frightful and afar,
All they that leave of Rebels,
Rot high on Temple Bar.

—G.K. CHESTERTON

WHAT IS Temple Bar? Why should it be of interest to the legal fraternity on the American side of the Atlantic?

Temple Bar is an ancient gateway to the city of London, where the approach is made from the west—that is, in the area of Legal London at the Temple. In the seventeenth century, at the moment when Samuel Pepys was busy on the Thames rescuing his fine Cheshire cheeses from either the waves of the river, the lighthandedness of hired carriers, or the destruction of the Great Fire of 1666, Temple Bar also was in jeopardy. The importance of Temple Bar rests today in the fact that it was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and that it is still with us, albeit some fifteen miles from its proper site.

"High over roaring Temple Bar," to quote from Tennyson, may be seen the masterpiece of English classical architecture, Saint Paul's Cathedral. Sir Christopher, who lived from 1632 to 1723, submitted plans for a new Temple Bar in 1672 after the Great Fire had gutted an earlier gateway. The design may be described as English Renaissance. It is simple and perfect. The central arch, through which carriages and the like flow, is flanked by two lesser arches, symmetrical to the center. Above the central arch are a vestibule in which opens a grand window between Corinthian pilasters and two effigies (within niches). The thrust from this upper story is transmitted through buttresses, which are a motif of wing trusses and well-decorated with scrolls of ancient order.

The four effigies are approximately lifesize, are by John Bushnell, and are considered to be among his finest work. Charles I and II stand on one side, and James I and his wife Queen Anne of Denmark (or possibly Queen Elizabeth I) on the other elevation of the monument. Oddly enough, identical statues of the Kings Charles existed on another building to which Bushnell added statuary. These are now in the Old Bailey, removed there when the building was burned in 1831.



Beaverbrook Newspapers

NEGLECTED and run down, Temple Bar now stands in Theobalds Park, to which it was removed in 1880. The fencing is intended to protect it from vandalism.

Wren's life and achievements are too well known to need retelling. Suffice it to say that he came to a world that knew no professional architect, and he left it a far better place. In 1663, when he was appointed a member of the commission for the repair of Old Saint Paul's (and in the same year designed his first building, Pembroke College Chapel, Cambridge), he undertook the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford (1664–69), where he resolved some and many problems of structure and design, particularly that of the span, by his prowess as an inventor and mathematician. His one and only visit to the Continent, between July, 1665, and 1666, took him to Paris. He did not keep a diary, but it is doubtful that his tour took him further afield than Holland and Belgium. This important impression in his career revealed to him "modern" styles of architecture by architects of talent. The enormous impact this short visit made on him may be found in and judged by his later work.

Wren's Design Receives Financing

In 1669 Wren was appointed surveyor general of the royal works by King Charles II, and in this role he was given the responsibility to widen the streets and city gates on the western edge at the Temple. Wren's enjoyment and initiative is with us to this day, although he had a tough time gaining the approval of the city fathers for a costly redecoration of Temple Bar. It was the benign King Charles who rescued him from the city's reluctant attitudes. Charles ordered his Parliament to foot the bill of £1395, which they did like good lambs of a noble shepherd.

Temple Bar was rudely removed from the scene of London in 1878 when widening of the thoroughfare was deemed necessary for the building of the Royal Courts of Justice. To posterity's good account and fortune, the renowned brewer, Sir Henry Bruce Hedworth Meux,

Save Temple Bar

philanthropist, decided to accept Temple Bar into his safekeeping and removed it at his own cost, lock, stock, and barrel (as it were), to his seat at Cheshunt, Theobalds Park, where it was re-erected in 1880. It has stood there ever since.

It is a handsome fact that 1976 saw the creation of a trust and charity to save Temple Bar. This was brought about because the present use to which Temple Bar—standing in some lovely grounds outside London—has been assigned is far from satisfactory. The Meux family ceased to reside at Theobalds Park some years ago, and the mansion has since been converted to institutional usage. Temple Bar has suffered the fate of neglect and geographical isolation. Too far for tourists to come, too onerous a burden for the locality to safekeep—out of sight is out of mind. Or is it?

The trustees of the Meux estate, the present owners, have offered this national monument to the city of London since 1948. They are delighted by the formation of the Temple Bar Trust and by the trust's positive proposal and appeal to save Temple Bar—an endeavor that it is hoped may be carried out in 1977, the silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Several moves have been made since 1948 to have this famous old relic of old London returned to a suitable site within the capital. In 1960 Lord Mottistone, then surveyor to the fabric of Saint Paul's Cathedral, produced a drawing, in concert with Lord Holford, showing it against the north elevation of the northwest tower of the cathedral and forming the entrance arch through which the public could walk into the churchyard on the north side. This would undoubtedly be a fine site for it, nestled beside Wren's great masterpiece, as the illustration, a superimposed photograph, shows to advantage.

Temple Bar Deserves to Return

Temple Bar, now a desolated waif, is a symbol of Legal London and deserves to return to those precincts—while traffic prevents its return to its original location, at least not far away, nestled next to another of Wren's masterpieces, Saint Paul's.

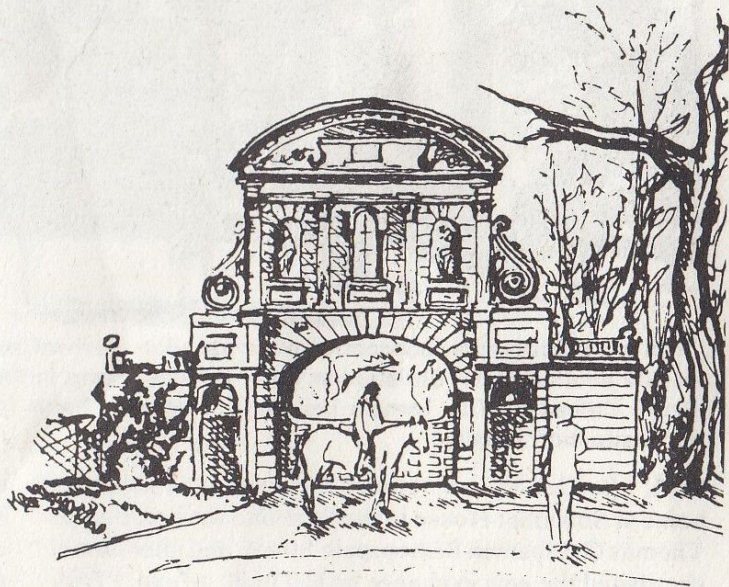
One is intrigued to think of those lively characters, enshrined in English literature, who passed through it. Many pilgrims in the Middle Ages would have begun their travels at Temple Bar on their way to Canterbury or into the city itself to visit the places and buildings associated with the martyr, Thomas à Becket, who was born in London in 1118 in a house at the corner of Ironmonger Lane. After his death the house was commemorated as a chapel dedicated to Saint Thomas of Acon. This title was taken from an order instituted in the Holy Land as a branch of the Templars, who had a house at Acre, and this chapel remained until the time of the dissolution by Henry VIII.

Among those passing through Temple Bar in about April, 1385, were the pilgrims who joined with Geoffrey Chaucer at the Tabard Inn and set off together for Canterbury. Chaucer gathered together the conversations of

the travelers in *Canterbury Tales*, which he wrote in about 1393.

The earliest reference to Temple Bar is in a patent roll, "the Bar of the New Temple, London," in 1293, and it was again mentioned in 1301. In another patent roll of 1315 reference is made to a dangerous and muddy track that led from Westminster through "Charynge and St. Clement's" to Temple Bar, "the whole length" of which required repair.

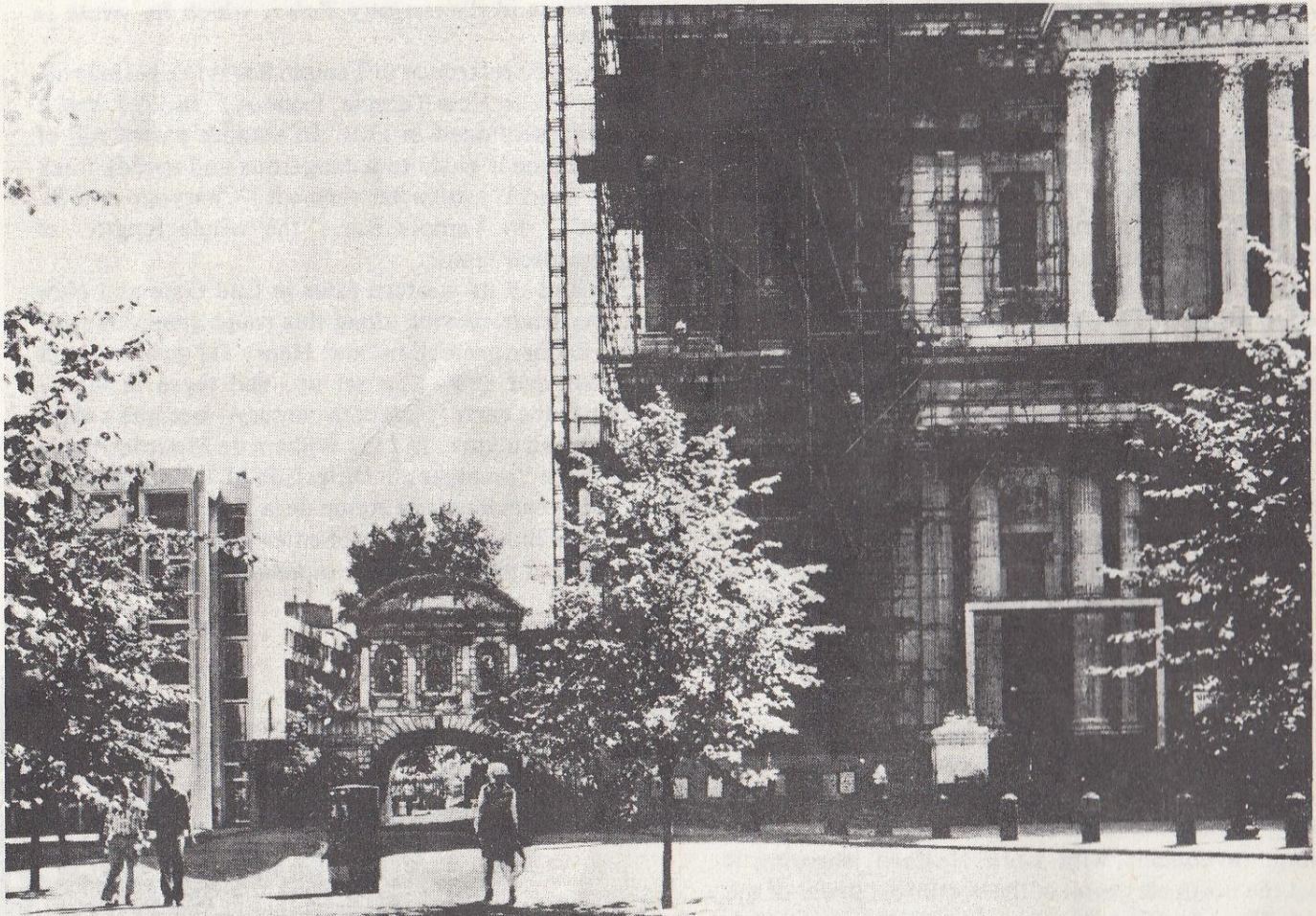
The city had its western gates in Lud Gate and New Gate, but trade moving along this rough riverside road needed further protection, and Henry III gave consent that posts and chains be set up, and these in turn—possibly in the early fourteenth century—became a more permanent structure. In 1351 William de Mourden made a bequest to "prisoners in the prison of Temple barre," and seven years later one Adam de la Pole made a similar bequest. In those days gates of cities were often used for that practical purpose, being of sound construction.



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In April, 1357, the Black Prince, Edward, Prince of Wales, flushed with victory at Poitiers, rode through Temple Bar and into the city of London on a black pony leading his captive king, John of France, who was seated on a superb white horse. There he received a tumultuous welcome from his citizens. This was not the first historic event to be associated with the famous portal, however. The gate was pillaged during the Peasant's Revolt in June of 1381, and three days later—Friday, June 15—an escort of some two hundred soldiers and courtiers under Richard II passed through Temple Bar from Westminster Abbey en route to Smithfield where the young king met the enraged peasants and their leader, Wat Tyler.

England returned to a more peaceful era with the accession of Queen Elizabeth I. She passed regularly to and fro the gate during her reign of forty-five years, and several occasions are worthy of mention. On January 23,



Alistair G. F. Smith

THIS is a photographic conception of Temple Bar—revived, refurbished, and nestling beside another of Sir Christopher Wren's masterpieces in the City of London, Saint Paul's Cathedral. The Temple Bar Trust is seeking funds to make this move and reconstruction possible.

1570, attended by her retinue she journeyed from her home at Somerset House in the Strand, to the home of Sir Thomas Gresham in Bishopsgate Street, and after dinner she visited the new exchange he had built, where, "finding it very much to her liking, commanded the herald to proclaim it the Royal Exchange."

The defeat of the Spanish Armada gave rise to national rejoicing, and celebrations were held at Saint Paul's Cathedral, including one on Sunday, September 8, 1588, when eleven flags that had been seized from the enemy were displayed from the lower battlements. This jubilant mood culminated with the special service of thanksgiving at Saint Paul's on November 24, 1588.

The queen went to the cathedral in great splendor seated in a conveyance that resembled a triumphal chariot. Four pillars supported a canopy surmounted by an imperial crown, with a further two pillars on the front of the carriage supporting a lion and dragon with the arms of England. The vehicle was drawn by four white horses and presented a magnificent spectacle as it lurched through Temple Bar.

This event, it is believed, was the first occasion of the lord mayor's presenting the sword and keys of the city of London to the sovereign on entering the city. It is a

ceremony that has been enacted at Temple Bar on every subsequent occasion that the monarch has entered the city and continues to this day. It is worth signifying this traditional custom. As time went by the idea of an entrance to the city disguised itself in a pageantry of formal welcome of the monarch, and the idea crystallized into a ritual. The gates were shut against the sovereign, who asked leave to enter his own capital but, once inside, was dutifully presented with the keys and a sword in homage. Having touched them as a token of possession, they were then returned at once to the power behind the throne, in this peculiar case, the right worshipful the lord mayor.

Alas and alack, these scenes are forgotten, but the historic significance of Temple Bar survives as the site where London begins and Westminster, the royal city, ends.

Shortly after Wren's design for Temple Bar had been executed, and within the next few years, the arch was to be decorated with effigies of a very different kind, for in 1684, in the words of Walter G. Bell, "the Rye House Plot brought the first trophy to the Golgotha of Wren's Temple Bar." This referred to the gruesome custom of exhibiting the heads or private quarters of those executed over the gates or entrances. This served both as a



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warning to other citizens and as further degradation of the felon.

The first trophy was the forequarter of an unlikely candidate, Sir Thomas Armstrong, placed there after being boiled in pitch at Newgate. Sir Thomas's head was placed over Westminster Hall and the rest of the body sent for exposure to Stafford, his constituency in Parliament.

On April 10, 1696, John Evelyn wrote, "The quarters of Sir William Perkins and Sir John Friend, lately executed on the plot, were set up at Temple Bar, a Dismal Sight which many pitied. I think there never was such at Temple Bar till now except once in the time of Charles II, namely of Sir Thomas Armstrong."

It is said that when the head of the young Earl of Derwentwater was placed on Temple Bar in 1716, his young widow conspired to retrieve it. At dusk that day she was driven under the arch in a cart while her hired henchman threw her husband's head down to her from the parapet above.

Among the heads added to Temple Bar as a result of the Jacobite Rebellion were those of Colonel Townley and his fellow officer, one Fletcher. The head of Lord Fraser of Lovat—the last person to be executed on the block in England—was placed on the bar in 1747 and when taken down, it is said to have been kept for some years in the room above the gateway, which at the time was used by Child's Bank. The last head to be placed on the bar fell down on March 31, 1772, and the spikes on which the heads and other gruesome remains were placed were removed at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a number of political riots caused the habitual closure of Temple Bar, and the gates were locked. The John Wilkes mob on May 10, 1768, attempted to stop a procession of citizens on their way to Saint James's with a petition asking for the crown to put down sedition. The city marshal and sheriffs were even pelted with mud when they attempted to open the gate. In 1830 a riot ensued over the Reform Bill and the gate was locked. In 1832 the crowds rose up and chased their national hero, the Duke of Wellington, through Temple Bar and up Chancery Lane. Temple Bar was closed during the Gordon Riots because it was feared that the Bank of England

would be attacked. From that time and until its demolition, sentries from a detachment of Foot Guards would march through Temple Bar every night to take post at the bank.

The festive season of Yuletide brings to mind the glorious descriptive powers of Charles Dickens. His fictional heroes knew and lived with Temple Bar. Mr. Tulkinghorn, well-known to readers of *Bleak House*, often passed through the Temple on his way to his gaunt chambers, 58 Lincoln's Inn Fields, the scene of so many skirmishes that beset the great lawyer with the improvised actions of his very respectable clients, and he doubtless passed under the great portals of the bar. Perhaps he wished on Fagan of *Oliver Twist* (we may presume that Mr. Tulkinghorn's extensive practice did not preclude him from enjoying a good novel or two) the same fate as from time immemorial had been meted out to other felons of the realm: their heads hung high on Temple Bar.

Sad it is that this historic gate through whose portals have passed the crowned heads of state and their families, the great citizens of the commonwealth, and which has shared with the people of England the joys and sorrows, ceremonies, pomp, and pageantry, and which stood for two hundred years as the symbol of the independence of the city of London, now stands roofless and derelict, yet ever proud, behind an enclosing fence of concrete, beer bottles, and barbed wire.

The Temple Bar Trust is now active in its effort to raise the funds necessary to save Temple Bar. In the summer of 1977, when the American Bar Association holds its annual meeting in Chicago, a special exhibition is being planned at the Chicago Public Library, of which the theme will be "Temple Bar: London, Literature, and the Law." I hope that American lawyers, who share the common heritage and ancient links of our two professions, will help save a great piece of England's heritage and enable it to be restored beside its architect's masterpiece, Saint Paul's, wherein one finds the inscription: *Si monumentum requiris, Circumspice*. "Ye who seek his monument, look around you."

Let it be true of Temple Bar in our lifetime. ▲

THE TEMPLE BAR Trust has been organized to restore Temple Bar and return it to the city of London at a site in the churchyard of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The location follows the plan proposed in 1960 by Lords Holford and Mottistone. The trust is seeking £500,000 for the project.

Chairman of the trustees is Sir Hugh Wontner, a former lord mayor of London. Other trustees are Sir Edward Singleton, a former president of the Law Society; Sir David Floyd Ervin, registrar-receiver of Saint Paul's; Lady Donaldson, J.P.; and T. Tyndale Daniell, who also acts as administrator of the trust.

An American trust fund is being organized, to which contributions are expected to be tax deductible, under the chairmanship of Charles A. Bane of Chicago. Inquiries may be directed to Mr. Bane at Suite 4200, One First National Plaza, Chicago, Illinois 60670.