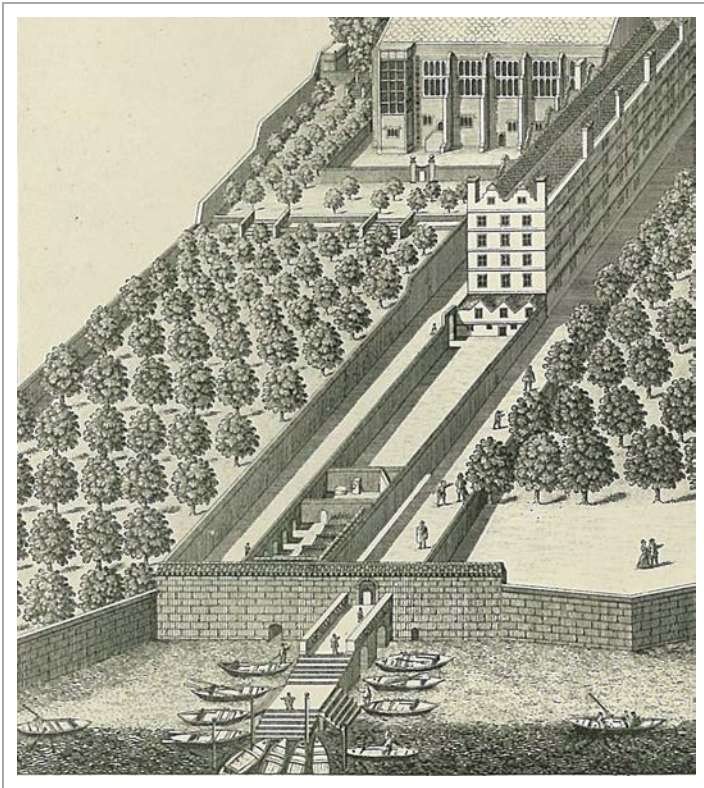


Found on the Thames!

A joint exhibition between
Middle Temple Library &
Tideline Art



JANUARY - MARCH 2016

Introduction

Middle and Inner Temple enjoy a privileged position on the Thames and throughout their history shared a pier on the river, in order to make travel to and from the Temple easier. This exhibition highlights the Thames, its hidden treasures and some of its interesting features.

Treasure or Trash?

The Thames is a treasure hunter's paradise and has slowly been revealing its riches for centuries- from Roman bronze forceps to tiny buttons and beads. The 1996 Treasure Act outlines the meaning of treasure and its ownership. "The Port of London Authority and the Crown Estate are the largest owners of Thames foreshore and jointly administer a permit which allows metal detecting and digging" on the Thames foreshore. All finds which could be of archaeological interest must be reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer at the Museum of London.

Mudlarking

Mudlarking has traditionally been the preserve of the very poor, who would "prowl about, at low water, under the quarter of West India ships ... under pretence of grubbing in the mud for old ropes, iron ... but whose chief object was to receive and conceal small bags of sugar, coffee etc. [i.e. stealing goods from the ships coming into harbour]". Later in the 19th century, mudlarks, many of whom were children, came to be defined as "people who grovel about bays and harbours at low water for anything they can find." By the 20th century however, mudlarking became a more affectionate term for amateurs and archaeologists who comb the foreshore for hidden treasures. On display in this exhibition are some of Nicola White's finds, including a medieval retainer's badge, Victorian bottles, pipes and ginger beer bottles. The latter bring to mind the famous (infamous?) Donaghue v Stevenson case, or the 'case of the snail found in ginger beer'. Neither of these bottles has a snail, but one does have a cork!

Embankments

The Thames is a tidal river, rising in the Cotswolds and measuring 338 km in length. Many attempts since the pre-Roman era onwards have been made to embank it. In the 17th century, Sir Christopher Wren drew up plans to build a 'quay' that would stretch from Tower to Blackfriars, as part of his post-great fire plans for rebuilding London. Sir John Evelyn (admitted 1636) proposed a plan that would have used rubbish piles to build up the shore and create an embankment that would run from the Tower to the Temple. Neither plan was successful. From 1767-1784, the Corporation of the City of London undertook works to embank the area between Paul's Wharf and Milford Lane. The work carried out enabled Inner and Middle Temple to reclaim some additional land along the riverfront. In 1864 work commenced on building a full-scale embankment which now runs from Westminster to Blackfriars. Further embankment runs from the Lambeth end of Westminster Bridge to Vauxhall and from Millbank to the Cadogan Pier at Chelsea, close by Battersea Bridge.

Art Works

The art works on display alongside the exhibits were made by Nicola White using items that she has uncovered along the Thames foreshore, including brass, nails, driftwood and glass amongst many other materials. The works are for sale, and can be reserved by speaking to a member of staff. The prices are:

Blue and yellow glass fish: £75

Clay pipe in river pottery: £75

Printer's tray: £250

Three racing boats: £65

Train: £150

Tugboat: £150

Two red boats: £65

More details on Nicola's work, including further art works, can be found at:

www.tidelineart.com.

Selected Items on Display

Alan Bell, *The said noble river*, 1937

Roberto Francesco Romolo Bellarmino, *De arte bene moriendi libri duo*, 1634

John Chandler, *Coasting directions for the north and south channels of the River Thames ...*, 1778

A complete guide to all persons who have any trade or concern with the City of London, and parts adjacent, 1749

Federico Delfino, *De fluxu et refluxu aquae maris*, 1559

John Henry Forshaw, *County of London plan*, 1943

Johann Neander, *Tabacologia: hoc est, tabaci, seu nicotianæ descriptio medico-cheirurgico-pharmaceutica*, 1622

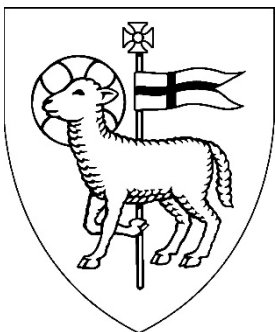
Gregor Reisch, *Aepitoma omnis phylosophiae. alias. margarita phylosophica*, 1504

Rules and Bye-laws for the regulation of the Watermen and Lightermen of the River Thames, 1828

Willem Schouten, *Journal ou relation exacte du voyage ... dans les Indes*, 1619

Sketches of the works for the tunnel under the Thames, from Rotherhithe to Wapping, 1828

Various items from the Archive (MT/5/TSE): Proposal regarding embankment of the Thames; Order of Parliament 1796; Printed plan of the proposed 1843 embankment



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