

# Provincial Priory of London

## *K*nighly *T*opics



Issue 11

Spring 2006

## *Editorial*

Dear Bro Knights,

I am delighted that this issue has had to be expanded - courtesy of Simon Brookman who arranges our printing - to eight pages!

This is however unusual and I am always hoping that you will send me news from your Preceptory and other features to include. Many thanks to all of you who are sending me such interesting contributions - please continue to do so.

We have a new series beginning on page 5 which discusses the scriptural relationship with our ceremonies. I am sure you will find it interesting as you will the Londinium article on page 7. The latter should be read by all Eminent Knights.

I am happy to receive your contribution by disk, mail or email.

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## *The Great Prior of Malta*



At the Great Priory Meeting held on 15 November 2005, V E Kt Edwin Bryant Goodwin, Provincial Sub Prior - affectionately known as Eddie - was appointed and invested as the Great Prior of Malta by the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master Leslie Felgate Dring, GCM. This honour firmly places him as head of The Order of Malta reporting directly to the Grand Master with a place on his Council. The Great Prior of Malta is a rank only within the Great Priory of Malta with no direct equivalent in the Order of the Temple. The Province, who hold Eddie in very high regard, rejoiced at his preferment.

***Editor***

# Baluchistan Preceptory No 188

*This is a shortened extract from the excellent History of Baluchistan Preceptory written and compiled by E Kt D L Davies, CBE, P G W of R. If it whets your appetite for more, please contact him for an opportunity to borrow the whole which makes fascinating reading.*

## The Past

In 1908 Sir Arthur Henry McMahon (the then Agent General for Baluchistan) and some others, mainly Army Officers in the British or Indian Army, submitted a petition to establish Baluchistan Preceptory at Quetta in the Indian Province of Bengal (now part of West Pakistan). The warrant was granted by the Great Priory of England and Wales and the first meeting held at Quetta on 7 November 1908 when the Preceptory was consecrated by E Kt G E Coates and Sir Henry installed as the first Eminent Preceptor. On that evening six candidates were installed as Knights and eight others two days later. By the end of the year the Preceptory had 26 members.

Quetta was a British Military station and the site of a Staff College attended by many famous military officers including Montgomery, Alexander and Wavell. The Preceptory continued to meet in Quetta through both world wars but the importance of the Garrison gradually faded and it became much smaller. After the Second World War independence became the main focus of the Indian sub-continent and in 1947 it was split into two dominions, Pakistan and India, the Pakistani Dominion being divided into two areas, one on the east coast and the other on the west coast.

East Pakistan was formed out of Bengal, and West Pakistan was formed out of Sind, North West Frontier, Baluchistan and half of the Punjab. Kashmir was to be part of Pakistan

but there was disagreement after partition so that today some of Kashmir is shown on Pakistani maps as disputed territory. The Preceptory started to lose members after the war when the garrison virtually disappeared and the 100 years of defending the frontier against potential attacks from the north, and in particular Russia, became history.

The furniture, regalia and records were transported to Karachi in the Sind Province, then capital of Pakistan, and the

Preceptory continued to meet there for 20 years. In 1970 it was transferred to London due to the dwindling expatriate community and the uncertainty of Freemasonry in Pakistan. Indeed, within four years Freemasonry was banned in the Sind Province.

Some items were disposed of after removal to London including the leather bound bible presented to the Royal Artillery Historical Trust at Woolwich. Regrettably only two minute books survived the moves and the Preceptory history prior to 1962 is lost.

## The Present

Once in London the Preceptory initially thrived, but there followed a time of dwindling membership. Eventually new candidates were found and today the membership is strong. Most candidates have no connection with India/Pakistan but all are intrigued with the Preceptory and its history.

## Preceptory Customs



**The Baluchistan Banner**



When the muster roll is called, the Knights indicate their presence with the word “adsum” (I am here).

Each time the candidate is asked to drink during the ceremony all Knights thrust their swords forward and loudly repeat the word “drink”.

At the Festive Board all toasts are proposed by the Eminent Preceptor, the speeches are limited to the formal toasts and to the candidate. Taking wine is not practised and it is customary to welcome visitors but not ask for a reply.

### The Future

In 2008 The Preceptory will be celebrating its Centenary. A tribute to all those Knights who have ensured the Preceptory’s survival through the 1914-1918 world war, the 1919 Afghan war, the Quetta earthquake in 1935, the 1939-1945 world war, the partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947, a move from Quetta to Karachi in 1949 and finally the move from Karachi to London in 1970 thus ensuring the continuing existence of Baluchistan Preceptory and Priory. There

are few Preceptories with such an interesting and somewhat turbulent history and this serves to create a special bond between all member Knights regardless of the fact that many of the new Knights, when joining, had never heard of Baluchistan.

### Afternote: The Emir of Afghanistan & Freemasonry

In 1906 on a visit to India, Habibullah Khan, the Emir of Afghanistan expressed a desire to Sir Henry McMahon to become a Freemason. When asked why, he said he had met so many good men who were Freemasons that he wished to become one himself. In 1907, after a special dispensation, he was initiated, passed and raised on the same evening by Lord Kitchener in Lodge Concordia in Calcutta.

This resulted in a life-long friendship with Sir Henry which played its part in the Emir supporting Gt Britain in the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and releasing British and Indian troops to other war fronts.

In 1919 the Emir was murdered. The new ruler turned

### Members shields

From the Consecration meeting all members’ names were recorded on a Crusader’s Shield. The first shield was made by Mappin & Webb and is made of hall-marked silver. The later shields are made in stainless steel and aluminium. Each shield is mounted in a self-supporting teak frame and it was the custom to display them at every meeting in Quetta and Karachi.



*The shields upon which each member had his name inscribed*

# Cressing Temple

*David Shennan visited Cressing Temple last year and was sufficiently impressed to write this feature with the help of a leaflet from the site.*

In 1137 Queen Matilda, the wife of King Stephen, gifted an estate at Cressing in Essex to the Knights Templar. It was the first rural estate granted to them in England and became the largest and most important estate in Essex. It functioned as a large estate farmed for profit to help the Order pay for the war effort in the Holy Land. The Knights Templar were to gain almost 7000 estates throughout Europe, making them rich, important and influential. The estate had resident knights and a chaplain and officers who ran it, and a compliment of craftsmen and labourers. In 1205 the Knights commissioned a huge barn to be built, and the 'Barley Barn' was created. Built with an aisled structure like a church, it was designed to be roofed by tiles of a somewhat larger size than those used today and they weighed over 70 tons! This was a major departure from the thatch of the day and reflects the superior quality of the design and the money which they had to spend. The Barley barn is the oldest timber barn in the world. In 1250 another known as 'The Wheat Barn' was completed. This barn shows the improvements in woodworking, which had developed over the intervening years and the joints, which interlace the framing, are quite wonderful. As Freemasons we hear much of the skill of the ancient stonemasons, yet the skills of the mediaeval carpenters are no less

to be admired. A modern framework with steps in the Wheat Barn allows one to climb up and view at close hand the wonderful skill of those carpenters. The two barns, which still stand today, are truly masterpieces and the largest such in Europe.

Evidence has been found on the site of a previous Roman occupation. After the suppression of the Templars in 1308 the lands passed to the Knights Hospitaller. The site was sacked during the Peasants' revolt in 1381 and similarly during the Civil War. A Tudor palace was built there during the fifteenth century, but all that remains of that period is the charming walled garden, which has been partially restored. A Georgian farmhouse and other more modern farm buildings occupy other parts of the site.

In 1987 Essex County Council took over the management of the place and built a visitor centre and tea-room, which offer all the usual facilities. Various local events are staged there. Cressing Temple is well worth a visit if you are nearby. Turn off the A12 for Witham and from the crossroads in the centre of the town head north for 3 miles on the Braintree road (B1018), alternately turn south off the A120 at Braintree. Details from [www.cressing.temple.org.uk](http://www.cressing.temple.org.uk)

*David Shennan - Guild of Freeman Preceptory.*



*The Wheat Barn circa 1250 AD*

# Scriptural Musings on the KT Ceremony

*E Kt Ian Savage, Prov A-de-C, Marshal of Britannic of Madeira Preceptory No 282, reflects on the relationship between the bible content and our ceremonies. His articles will appear on a regular basis for the next few issues.*



**N**ot being able to read in either Greek or Hebrew I have no pretensions as to biblical scholarship. Recently, however, I have begun studying the Bible and am indebted to scholars such as David Pawson and William Barclay, whose writings make that study easier and prompt, in part, these musings.

## Beginning and End

“Christ our prophet, Christ our priest, Christ our king” is a singular way to describe the great Captain of our Salvation but is nonetheless apt for its singularity.

The Jews, God’s chosen people, were led by prophets, starting with Moses for some 500 years following the Exodus from Egypt. After the prophets came roughly 500 years of leadership by kings, starting with Saul and ending with Zedekiah. Finally, priests provided leadership for the near 500 years leading up to the time of Christ. From Joshua, who returned to Judah from Babylonian exile, to Caiaphas at the time of Christ.

None of these styles of leadership were successful for any length of time. God’s people needed a leader who was prophet, priest and king and were given such in Christ.

## The Gospel according to John

Our ceremonies are conducted with New Testaments opened at the first chapter of the Gospel according to John. Appropriate you might think because our Crusader forebears were

Knights of the Hospital of St John and of the Temple of Solomon. Except that the Crusaders’ St John was St John the Baptist rather than St John the Evangelist, so there has to be another reason why the Gospel according to John is the Gospel of choice.

Scholars now generally agree that the first Gospel to be written was that of Mark. Mark’s is the shortest of the Gospels; it sees Jesus as the Son of Man; it is written for unbelievers and is aimed at exciting readers with the good news of Jesus that they might have faith in Him.

Both Matthew and Luke used Mark’s Gospel as a source. Matthew, a Jew, wishes to reinforce the message that Christ is King of the Jews. He opens his Gospel by tracing Christ’s ancestry through the male line which includes the royal line of David. Matthew writes for new believers, most of whom would have been born Jews.

Luke is the only Gentile author in the Bible. He sees Christ as the Saviour of the world; he, too, gives us a genealogy of our Lord but his is drawn from Mary’s side and extends right back to Adam. Luke wants fellow Gentiles to know about Christ.

Possibly around AD95, some 30 years after Mark’s Gospel, John’s Gospel was written. John sees Christ as the Son of God and writes for older believers, indeed mature Christians in order to encourage them to hold onto their faith and to go on believing in Christ in the face of any doubt and persecution that they might suffer. Hence the appropriateness of the

## Regalia Shop

**P**lease remember that the Province provides you with the facility to buy new regalia at less cost, a swap shop for mantle badges and a chance to buy and sell pre-owned regalia. Provincial ties are also available singly or in bulk at a discount to Preceptories. Your Regalia Officer is E Kt Stephen Neville, he

can be contacted at: 77 Harrow Drive, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1NT.

Telephone: 01708 446 618. Email: [steve-neville@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve-neville@ntlworld.com)



# Letters - The Order of St John

*John Mitchell of Annus Mirabilis Preceptory challenges Dave Phythian's statement on the origins of the Order and adds a fascinating history of that time.*

**Dear Kt George,**

**T**he article by Kt David Phythian in the Autumn 2005 issue is of great interest. Unfortunately there is an error in the first sentence: "*The Hospital can trace its origins to the eleventh century when the Order of St. John was first formed to protect pilgrims in the Holy Land at the time of the first Crusade*": The Order was originally formed as an Order of Hospitaller monks, which later became a Military Order.

To summarise the early history as recorded in available records:

During the second century BC John Hyrcanus (of the Maccabees) founded a Hospice for Lepers outside the walls of Jerusalem. Towards the end of the fourth century AD an Order of Hospitaller monks was formed under the rule of St Basil to operate the Leprosy Hospice. The Hospice was dedicated to St. Lazarus and located just outside what is now known as the St. Lazarus Gate. The gate is now the location of a non-sectarian Children's Hospital.

During the eleventh century AD the citizens of Amalfi restored the Hospital of St. John the Almsgiver within the walls of Jerusalem. The restored hospital displayed the Arms of the City of Amalfi; a white eight pointed cross (now called the Maltese Cross) on a red field. It was arranged for the Hospitaller monks under the rule of St. Basil to manage the restored hospital. The monks adopted the white Amalfi cross as their badge and wore it on their black mantles. As all lepers wore green, to warn others of their condition, those serving at the St. Lazarus hospital wore a green Amalfi cross edged with white.

The two hospitals continued under single management until the end of the eleventh century. The Crusaders conquered Jerusalem on 15th July 1099, killing all inhabitants, regardless of their religion. Because of the large increase in the number of military personnel and pilgrims requiring medical treatment, many with leprosy, the Blessed Gerard

Tenque (the last person to be Master of both hospitals

simultaneously) split the Order into two: The Hospitaller Order of St. John The Baptist to continue managing the Hospital of St. John, and The Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus to continue managing the Hospital of St. Lazarus. Both orders have celebrated their 900th anniversaries.

Whilst both orders date their foundation to 1099, their separate existence was not formally recognised for some years. Pope Paschall II formalised the creation of the Order

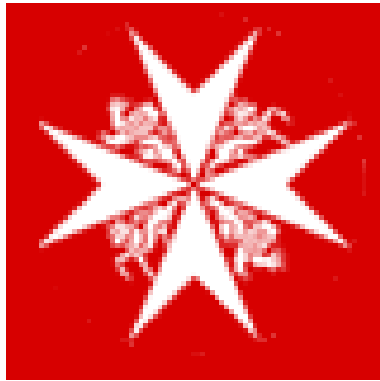
of St. John the Baptist in 1113 and of St.

Lazarus in 1115.

Gerard Tenque's immediate successor as Master of the St. John Hospital, Raymond de Puy, subsequently contracted leprosy and was transferred to the St. Lazarus Hospital. When the Master of the St. Lazarus Hospital, Hughues de Saint-Pol died, Raymond was appointed Master and was the last person to serve as Master of both hospitals, although at

different times. By then the Germans had established the Teutonic Hospital of St. Mary in Jerusalem, run by another order of monks.

In 1119, the Order of the Poor Knights of the Temple was founded as the first Military Order of Monks, ostensibly to protect pilgrims visiting Jerusalem. Because of the continued warfare over the following years, the three hospitals realised that they needed military protection and recruited knights and other personnel, thus forming themselves into military and hospitaller orders. During this period any Knight who contracted leprosy was immediately transferred to the Order of St. Lazarus. It was also during the crusades that the English Order of St. Thomas Acon was formed as an Order of Military monks dedicated to collecting bodies after the many battles, and arranging Christian burials. The five orders fought alongside each other until they were eventually driven out of Palestine.







## *Preceptory News*

### *Londinium Preceptory No 632*



**T**he youngest Preceptory in the Province, Londinium No 632, has already established an instructive and unique pattern of working. At the December meeting, before installing his successor, each outgoing Preceptor provides an "event". The first preceptor prepared a Paper called "Cruelty and Avarice - the Collaboration of Clement V and Philip the Fair". The paper has since been delivered by the author, or on his behalf, in several other preceptoreries, including two in other provinces.

The second preceptor enlisted the help of many members of the preceptory, each of whom had to learn and deliver a section of Masson's Lectures, dating from the 1850s. It was hugely enjoyable, as well as instructive, to be immersed in the ritual practices of the mid-nineteenth century

The third preceptor delivered a most informative Paper entitled "The Knights of St John of Jerusalem; their successors and their Masonic namesakes" which, among other features, traced the personal masonic connections of many of the leading figures of the Venerable Order of St John.

In December 2005 the fourth preceptor provided a deeply-researched Paper, "The Crusader Knight in the Early XIVth Century - with particular reference to the Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem". During his talk the author expressed himself trenchantly on the controversial dating of the conquest of Rhodes.

At this stage we do not know what the present, fifth, Preceptor is planning for his event; but the fact that, in his younger days, he served in the Middle East suggests that we can look forward to a very personal contribution.

The July meetings are also unusual. The preceptory holds a short meeting in which formal business (including the choice of preceptor-elect) is transacted. After it is closed there is a brief interval and then the Londinium Priory of Knights of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta is opened in ample form. The great majority of those present are clothed as Malta knights. There is much to be said for Malta clothing; it is light and more comfortable to wear than KT kit, and it does not require expensive alteration or addition on promotion.

Candidates from London preceptoreries which do not do their own Malta ceremonies are admitted in the Guard Room to the Knighthood of St Paul and receive the Mediterranean Pass. After due election they are then received in the Chapter House and the full Malta ceremony (which requires 28 active officers!) is worked. Before the closing of the priory, which is also worked in full, the outgoing prior installs his successor in the chair.

Membership of Londinium Preceptory is open to present and past preceptors of and in London preceptoreries at an annual subscription of £35. Knights wishing to do so dine afterwards at the Royal Overseas League for the customary dining fee. Enquiries should be addressed to the registrar, E Kt David Morris, P Gt A de C, at 177 Ramsden Road, London, SW12 8RG, 020 8673 0931.

Whether recently installed as Preceptor or an "old hand" every London preceptor is very cordially invited to join Londinium Preceptory. Present members consider the two Londinium meetings to be among the best in the Masonic calendar.



## *Provincial Priory*



**T**he meeting on Monday 30 January 2006 was held under the Banner of Golden Square Priory No 219 and a Priory of Malta was opened during which 26 candidates were admitted as Knights of St Paul and subsequently admitted to the Order of Malta by the Great Prior of Malta, the V E Provincial Sub-Prior, V E Kt E B Goodwin. The accolade was given to the candidates by the R E Provin-

cial Prior and the copy of the New Testament on which they took their obligation was retained by each candidate as a gift. After this very successful meeting the Knights retired to dine in the dining room on the first floor of Mark Masons Hall. The dining accommodation was fully booked resulting in a delightful evening during which we were addressed both by The R E Provincial Prior and his Sub-Prior.

# *Preceptory News*

**Britannic of Madeira Preceptory No 282**



**At our installation meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2005 we were delighted to have our Provincial Prior present. The picture shows him with the new Preceptor E Kt Ron Shannon and the Marshal E Kt Ian Savage.**



## *Dates to Meet - 2006*

Great Priory (Temple)	Wednesday 17 May
Londinium Preceptory	Friday 7 July
Provincial Priory (Temple)	Friday 29 September
Great Priory (Malta)	Tuesday 21 November
Provincial Carol Service	Monday 18 December

## *Contact List*

*This list is to enable you to contact the correct person for any query you may have.*

Provincial matters, rules etc	Mike Fox, Prov Vice Chancellor	01322 864 299
Provincial finance	Peter Brassett, Prov Treasurer	01277 227 742
Provincial Priory history	Simon Brookman, Prov Archivist	07970 951 371
Provincial Regalia Shop	Stephen Neville, Regalia Officer	01708 446 618