

Provincial Priory of London

*K*nighly *T*opics



Issue 17

Spring 2009

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Editorial

Bro Knights,
Thank you for your input this time and please keep the ideas, articles and news from your Preceptory coming.
I am happy to receive your contribution by disk, typed or by email.

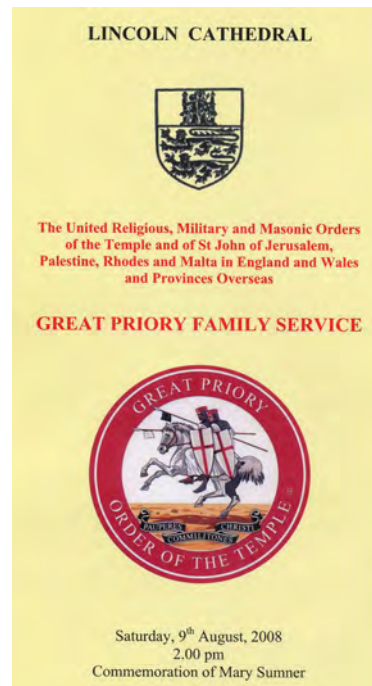
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Family Service - Lincoln Cathedral

The Great Priory Family Service was held on Saturday 9 August. Hundreds of Bro Knights and their families attended, arriving at Lincoln Show ground in the morning where buses were waiting to take them to the Cathedral. Once there the families took their seats at the front while Bro Knights were ushered to a changing room. Once dressed in regalia they were marched to their places in the rear seats, filling the enormous building. The service began at 14.00 hrs and included a reading of the Precepts of the Order by The Great

their regalia and the congregation re-held on Saturday 9 August. Hundreds of Bro Knights and their families attended, arriving at Lincoln Show ground in the morning where buses were waiting to take them to the Cathedral. Once there the families took their seats at the front while Bro Knights were ushered to a changing room. Once dressed in regalia they were marched to their places in the rear seats, filling the enormous building. The service began at 14.00 hrs and included a reading of the Precepts of the Order by The Great



ble event.
If you have not yet attended one of these services make sure you book in for the next one in four years time. If you don't want to stay overnight the timings ensure you are able to go home after the meal which ended at 19.00.

turned to the Show ground by bus where they enjoyed a Bucks Fizz beverage sitting down to a substantial three course meal with wine.

There were a few wine takings and toasts and after coffee people began to leave, buses being provided for those staying the night in Lincoln. The transport arrangements went without a hitch despite heavy rain at the time buses were being loaded in the morning. This was a well organised and enjoy-

Editor

Family Carol Service - December 3rd 2008

E Kt Michael Fox, P Gt Std B (B), Provincial Sub-Prior reports

(The photographs were kindly provided by E Kt Trevor Dutt)

For a number of years the Province has held a Carol Service, followed by a buffet reception, in London for Knights of the Province, their families and their friends. The Service in 2008 was held on the evening of Monday 3rd December, a little earlier in the month than usual – it is usually held during the week before Christmas, or thereabouts – owing to difficulties in arranging a date convenient for both the Church and the reception.

The regular venue for the Service is the Priory Church of St John, Clerkenwell, a splendid church owned by the Order of St John which, during 2008, had been the subject of renovation work and redecoration. So, on this occasion, this beautiful yet (to the outside world somewhat unobtrusive) church was in pristine condition and we are greatly indebted to the Order of St John for permission once again to hold the Service there. The Service follows the format of nine Lessons and Carols, with each of the Lessons usually being read by a Knight of the Province and the last two lessons being by tradition read by



the Provincial Prior R E Kt Eddie Goodwin followed by the Provincial Prelate E Kt Rev William Marston, who presided over the Service. Customarily, prominent Knights of the Province are invited to read the other Lessons. The Service on 3rd December was, as usual, a splendid event, but there were two departures from past custom on this occasion that added extra spice:

- In response to a not unreasonable suggestion for what is after all a *family* Service, the second Lesson was read by someone who is neither a member of the Province nor even a Knight – Mrs Jean Fox, wife of the Sub-Prior (lest there be any confusion with another E Kt “Fox”!).

- Between the third Lesson and the fourth Carol, the choir entertained the congregation by singing a traditional Basque Carol: *Gabriel’s Message*.

Thinking of the choir – how lucky we are. For several years



now E Kt Glyn Harvey, Provincial Organist for the Province of Kent (KT), has kindly volunteered to assemble a small choir from among a group of his professional singing friends who, with the addition of our provincial Organist’s regular assistant, provide a marvellously tuneful and accomplished accompaniment and encouragement to the humbler but none the less heart-felt efforts of the generally less musically gifted congregation.

Sadly the Reception at the nearby Masonic Centre after the Service, in past years an excellent Buffet with wine, was very poorly provided for in the way of food. The wine – which, incidentally, is traditionally paid for out of Provincial funds as a thank-you to those Knights, their families and friends who attend – was reasonably plentiful. Although extra wine was ordered, this did not compensate for the immense disappointment caused by the failure of the Masonic Centre caterers to supply the Buffet that was ordered, in content or quantity. The Masonic Centre caterers have since apologised and have waived any charge for the very limited items of food that were provided. Since it is only for the food that Knights and their guests pay in attending the Reception, full refunds will by now have been sent to all those who paid in advance of the event or on the night. The Provincial Prior and his Officers deeply regret the disappointment and any inconvenience suffered by those who attended the Buffet – uplifted as they were by joyous Christmas feelings inspired by the Carol Service. On this occasion there was room, but little food, at the “inn”.

Eulogy for a Masonic Exemplar

E Kt Phillip F Brown, Prov Gd Marshal of London , P Prov 1st Const of Essex

Presented at a Memorial Service by E Kt Michael Fox, Provincial Sub-Prior

Phillip Brown was, undoubtedly, a dedicated Freemason and unceasing in the care and devotion to his family. He practised fraternal goodwill to all men (except, perhaps, to some of those whom he regarded as “foreigners”, for he was the quintessential “Englishman”), charitable, and an entertaining companion. But he was also a dedicated seeker after the mysteries and truths of Freemasonry and both a willing and a very able participant in the ceremonies with which those mysteries and truths are bound up.

He enjoyed nothing better than the marshalling of those ceremonies and it was perhaps inevitable that he should find himself most at home in the Masonic Orders of Knights Templar and of Malta, in which he could give full rein to his military bearing and sense of theatre. He was a big man and he wielded, with evident delight, a big sword. It was a combination that struck a measure of fearful, though always quite proper and controlled, surprise into unsuspecting candidates and sometimes even those of us who knew what to expect. He would, I think, have been truly fearsome on the battlefields of the knights of old.

As a Templar Knight and even more as a freemason in the broadest sense, Phillip was just and true in word and deed; he gave no willing cause of offence to anyone, he departed himself courteously and gently, and he raised his own standard of chivalrous honour. He was, in all these respects, an example to us all.

Reading Chaucer’s *The Knight’s Tale* recently, perhaps appropriately, I was struck by a couple of stanzas that

seemed particularly appropriate to Phillip and I would like to recite them for you now:

“Through all the circumstances and the scenes
Of life, namely good faith and knightly deed,
Wisdom, humility and noble breed,
Honour and truth and openness of heart,
For, as I hope my soul may have its part
With Jove, in all the world I know of none
So worthy to be loved ...”

“And it is honour to a man whose hour
Strikes in his day of excellence and flower,
When he is certain of his own good name
And never known in any act of shame.
And gladder should a friend be of his death
Where there is honour in the yielded breath.”

In his later years Phillip wrestled long and hard against those ailments of flesh and blood against which no armour, physical, metaphorical or spiritual, can ultimately protect us and finally he lost that battle which we are all destined in the end to lose. As Chaucer also wrote in *The Knight’s Tale*:

“This world is but a thoroughfare of woe
And we are pilgrims passing to and fro
Death is the end of every worldly sore”.

And so Phillip heard and obeyed the Great Captain’s word of command and departed on the pilgrimage which ends in the Holy City. For such a man and a Mason, there would surely have been a great welcome at the Gates of Paradise.



Sword Bearer David Wheeler escorting Regalia Bearer Ian Brooks displaying Phillip Brown’s regalia at the Memorial Service

Knights Beneficent of the Holy City in England & Wales

Most of us who heard the M E & S Grand Master talk about the Knights Beneficent at Great Priory were puzzled about it. Rt E Kt Jack Dribbell, KCT, Past Provincial Prior of London very kindly agreed to write a quick guide for the benefit of London knights in this issue of Knightly Topics.

In 1791 Thomas Dunckerley established the Grand Conclave which was the predecessor of our present Great Priory of the United Orders of the Temple and of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta. (V. E. Kt. Frederick Smyth wrote an admirable account of the first two hundred years of our Orders in his book “*Brethren in Chivalry*” ISBN 0 85318 181 0).

Twelve years before that, in August 1779, the Convent of the Chapters of Burgundy, which practised the rite of Knights Beneficent of the Holy City, held a meeting in which it agreed to cede complete sovereignty over the Degree to the Independent Great Priory of Helvetia, with power to create Prefectures and Commanderies, and to advance brethren in the Order. In 1828 the Provincial Chapter of Burgundy and in 1830 the Province of Auvergne respectively gave up their similar powers to Helvetia.

In April 1937 the Independent Great Priory of Helvetia granted by Letters Patent to the Great Priory of England and Wales the exclusive right to govern and operate, within its jurisdiction, the Interior Order of the *Chevaliers Bienfaisants de la Cité Sainte* of the Rectified Scottish Rite. The Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master is *ex officio* the Most Eminent and Reverend Grand Master of the Order.

Successive Grand Masters have sparingly bestowed the KBHC degrees on a very few high-ranking members of the United Orders; at the beginning of 2001 the Order consisted of only seven members. In September of that year, assisted by three *Chevaliers* from the Order in Belgium, the Grand Master conferred the Fifth Grade of Squire Novice on ten senior members of the United Orders; in a further and profoundly moving ceremony on the same day these Brethren were all advanced to the grade of Knights Beneficent of the Holy City. In each subsequent year the Grand Master admitted further high members of the United Orders until, after the March meeting in 2007, the muster roll had risen to thirty four.

In November 2007, at the Great Priory of Malta held in Birmingham, the Grand Master reported that 102 Brethren had been received into the Fourth Grade, that of Scottish

Master of St Andrew. (This is not to be confused with another Degree with a slightly similar name, *viz.*, the Knight of St Andrew or *Grand Ecossais* which is the 29th Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Rite). In December 2007 the Grand Master consecrated twelve lodges of Scottish Masters of St Andrew, following which he formed four Prefectures governing London and the South East, the Midlands, the South Western and Northern regions of the country. Each Prefecture was awarded three lodges. Finally, the Grand Master, exercising the powers conferred by the Letters Patent of 1937, erected and inaugurated the Grand Priory of Knights Beneficent of the Holy City on 28th May 2008.

When the Great Priory of Malta met in November 2008 at Birmingham the Grand Master again referred to the KBHC but said that he was doing so for the last time in Great Priory; he explained that KBHC was now a “stand alone” Sovereign body, with the implication that further fostering by the United Orders was no longer needed.

The Rulers of the Order are:

The Grand Master - Most Eminent & Reverend Knight Leslie Felgate Dring

Grand Prior & Deputy Grand Master - Right Reverend Knight M. E. Herbert

Anglo-Saxon Prefecture:

London & South East Regional Prefecture - Right Reverend Knight E. B. Goodwin

Heart of England Prefecture:

Midlands Regional Prefect - Right Reverend Knight P.M. Collins

Avalon Prefecture:

South Western Regional Prefect - Right Reverend Knight K. B. Jackson

Brigantes Prefecture:

Northern Regional Prefect - Right Reverend Knight M.C. Moreland

The aims of the Order are to attract men who have a strong commitment to the Christian Faith, personal integrity and brotherly love. The Rite comprises six grades; the first



Rt Rev Kt Jack Dribbell, KCHC, followed by Rt Rev Kt M E Herbert, Grand Prior & Deputy Grand Master during the Family Service in Lincoln Cathedral.

(Picture taken by Dr Paul Mason - it is included in a DVD of the Family Service available from Mark Masons Hall)

three are worked in Craft Lodges. In the fourth grade the transition to the Inner Order is achieved through Lodges of St Andrew.

The aspirant to the Fifth Grade, that of Squire Novice, the first in the Inner Order, has to be a Scottish Master of St Andrew of two years standing and to be nominated by a Knight Beneficent of the Holy City of his Prefecture. Advancement to Squire Novice is subject to the approval of the Grand Master.

After a minimum of two years in the novitiate, during which he has set an example of irreproachable conduct, he may - again subject to the Grand Master's approval - enter

the Sixth Grade and be dubbed a Knight. To make sure he is under no illusions about the commitments required of him the serious enquirer should refer to the Statutes of the Order, obtainable from Mark Masons' Hall.

To sum up then, I assure those zealous and senior Knights of the Temple who are inspired to enter this illustrious Order, and to persevere so far as to become Knights Beneficent of the Holy City, that they will be pursuing their lifelong masonic journey in High Country.

Jack Dribbell
Knight Commander of the Holy City

The Order of The Temple (Chivalric)

With thanks to Freddie Smyth from whose Reference Book for Freemasons this is extracted

After the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders in 1099 some French Knights constituted themselves into an Order for the defence of pilgrims on their way to the Holy Sepulchre. In 1118 King Baldwyn II presented them with a house near the site of the Temple and from this was derived their name. From these simple beginnings the Order developed. It was endowed with lands in various countries and preceptories were established thereon to administer them. The English province of the Templars (which comprehended Scotland and Ireland) was inaugurated in 1128 and many others came into being.

The Order became wealthy and, alas, some of its members lost sight of the noble aims of their predecessors. King Philip IV of France - with the connivance of Pope Clement V, and with an eye on the riches of the French Province - relentlessly persecuted the knights there. The Temple Grand Master and many others were burnt at the stake in 1314 and the entire Order was dissolved by a Papal Bull.

Editor

The Crusader Knights in the Early 14th Century

This concludes the excellent article by E Kt Trevor P Dutt

As the Masonic ritual tells us, the Order of St. John was divided into “Langues” or “tongues”. In 1300 there were seven langues which, in order of seniority were – Provence, Auvergne, France, Italy, Aragon, England and Germany. The eighth langue, Castille, was created in 1461 by the re-designation of part of Aragon.

These langues were divided into preceptories under the command of a prior and the preceptories were, in turn, sub-divided into commanderies headed by a commander who was a knight with at least three years’ service with the Order. In some militarily critical areas the term “castle” was substituted for “commandery” and these were commanded by a chatelaine or castellan who was required to have had at least five years’ experience.

Membership of the Order consisted of the knights, who were all of noble birth, and chaplains and sergeants who were freemen but not usually from noble families.

The supreme authority in the Order lay with the Chapter General which was composed of all the officers but only met at intervals varying from three to fifteen years. The head of the Order was the Grand Master who was advised by a Council which, from 1320, consisted of the heads of the Langues. The Grand Commander was the Grand Master’s Deputy and second in command while historical authorities vary in their opinions as to whether the Marshal was the military commander or only responsible for military supplies. The Hospitaller was in charge of the Hospital and its activities in which he was assisted by the Infirmarer and a Pharmacist and Physicians visited twice daily. The Draper supervised all matters of clothing and uniform while the estates and stores manager was the Baillie. The post of Admiral dates from the end of the XIIIth Century and his duties, like those of the Treasurer, are self-evident. The Turcopolier was originally a junior officer in charge of the light cavalry made up of Turkish mercenaries but the post was upgraded in 1304. The Grand Chancellor, who took care of records and documents, was a much later appointment not appearing until 1461.

So what of the question with which we began, the date of the capture of Rhodes?

Just to summarize the background, in 1304 the Byzantine Emperor, Michael VIII, had put the Island of Rhodes in the charge of two Genoese privateer brothers, Andrea and Ludovico Moresco. The Grand Master of the Order of St. John in 1300 was William de Villaret who was succeeded on his death in 1305 by his nephew, Foulques de Villaret. Following the fall of Acre in 1291, the Order, together with the Templars and probably also some of the Teutonic Knights, had taken up residence on the Island of Cyprus but this was not ideal as the King of Cyprus, Henry II, was wary of the military knights – and not without reason because the Templars, though not the Hospitallers, assisted in his deposition in 1306 by his brother Amaury. Foulques de Villaret was keen to proceed with attempts to re-capture the Holy Land but, in order to do so, wanted to establish a secure base for the Order. The chance came in 1306 when he was approached by Vignolo di Vignoli, the uncle of the Moresco brothers, with a proposition to capture the Island of Rhodes which would then be shared between Vignoli and the Order.

The first attack, later in 1306, failed to take Rhodes itself though the Castle of Filermo did fall to the Order in the November of that year. de Villaret then travelled to France to enlist aid from Pope Clement V and one wonders whether, perhaps being more “street wise” than his Templar counterpart, de Molay, de Villaret may have already had some suspicion of what was about to befall the other Order and wished to forestall similar accusations against the Hospitallers.

In early 1308 the Order petitioned the Emperor Andronic II offering military assistance if he would surrender Rhodes to them. The offer was rejected in April 1308 and the Emperor then sent a supply ship to assist the besieged city. A storm forced the ship to shelter in the Cypriot harbour of Famagousta where it was arrested by a Cypriot Hospitaller knight, Pierre le Jaune. Contemporary sources then relate that the Rhodien master of the ship was taken before the Grand Master of the Order outside the walls of Rhodes where the captain agreed to negotiate the surrender of the City which took place on 15th August.

The difficulty with this account is that Foulques de Villaret is known to have been with the Pope in Poitiers from 8th

August 1307 until 12th August 1308 and that he was then travelling in France and Italy until finally returning to the east from Marseilles after 5th September 1309. This means that if the ships captain was indeed “taken before the Grand Master” at Rhodes as the story goes, it can only have been in 1306, which is clearly wrong, or in 1310.

The other conflicting piece of historical evidence is that contemporary accounts state that the siege of Rhodes lasted

for two years so, putting it all together, it seems likely that the Rhodien captain was not interviewed by Foulques de Villaret himself but by his Deputy and that the Hospitallers gained control of the City of Rhodes on 15th August 1308. However, the eradication of pockets of resistance in the countryside will have taken some time so that our ritual may, in fact, be reasonably accurate when it states: “*In 1310 the Island of Rhodes became the property of the Forces of the Order.*”

Royal British Legion - Pedal to Paris

Martin Bevan recently Preceptor of two London Preceptorries took part with his wife and daughter in the Pedal to Paris event. He has raised more than £13,000 for the British Legion in the last 6 years.



The start – General Wolfe’s statue
Greenwich 07:30 Thursday 4 September 2008



Alice taking a well earned breather at the top of Capel-le-Ferne Hill. 70 miles from Greenwich

Entertaining our French hosts at Auchy sur Montagne. No – Martin did not cycle in a kilt – an army style quick change was required. What you cannot see are the cycling shoes.



What we had all been aiming for. A cyclist’s eyes view as we approach the Arc de Triomphe. The traffic was excluded for the occasion
15:23 ‘precisely’ Sunday 7 September 2008



440 km according to the program but we recorded 284 miles (454kms), one bust knee but not a puncture between us – the whole ride recorded some 300 punctures due to the weather which was unusually foul.



Elizabeth collects her 5th P2P medal from the National Chairman of the Royal British Legion

Letters to the Editor

Howard Beber, Treasurer of Londinium Preceptory, writes to all London Knights

Dear Sir and Bro Knight,

In case you have not heard of us and might be interested in joining I should like to bring to your notice LONDINIUM PRECEPTORY which was founded on the 19th December 2001. Membership is open to all installed preceptors who are, or have been, members of a preceptory within the Province of London.

We meet at 10 Duke Street on the 1st Friday in July and the 3rd Wednesday in December each year and presently dine at the Royal Overseas League. We are all Joiners of course - apart from the Founders - and the joining fee is £35 and the annual subscription presently £35.

As an installed preceptors preceptory we usually have an interesting paper presented by the Preceptor at our December meeting (See the concluding article of The Crusader Knights in the Early 14th Century on page 6 - Editor) and a full Malta meeting with candidates at the July meeting.

The quality of the meetings is quite good - not withstanding the galaxy of heavyweights who usually gather in the east - and we do enjoy ourselves immensely.

Please give the thought your attention and we shall be absolutely delighted if you decide to join us. If you do please ask for an application form from myself or our Registrar, David Morris. I look forward to hearing from you.

With kindest regards

Yours sincerely and fraternally

Howard A Beber, P Gt W of R

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Treasurer - Howard A Beber, 4 Carlton Mansions, Randolph Avenue, London, W9 1NP. Tel: 020 7328 1193



Bro Knights, to see the quality of the papers presented by Londinium Preceptors take a look at the Spring 2008 issue of Knightly Topics and read Peter Taylor's paper Templar Myths and Legends and also Trevor Dutt's paper in this and the previous issue. In the Autumn issue I hope to publish Graham Illingworth's Seventeen Questions on the circumstances surrounding Christ's death and resurrection as well as a response to it from another Knight.

Editor

Diary Dates 2009

Great Priory (Temple)	Wednesday 20 May
Londinium Preceptory	Friday 3 July
Provincial Priory (Temple)	Tuesday 29 September
Great Priory (Malta)	Tuesday 17 November
Provincial Carol Service	To be Announced

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