

# Provincial Priory of London

## *K*nighly *T*opics



Issue 19

Spring 2010

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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 apologise to all those  
contributors who have not  
had their input published  
this time. I hope to fit  
them in the Autumn issue.

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## *Shadwell Clerke Preceptory No 154 Celebrates 125 Years*



**O**n 12 November 2009 Shadwell Clerke Preceptory No.154 was 125 years old; it was not until our next meeting in December 2009 that we celebrated the anniversary. The Preceptory decided to celebrate the occasion with the purchase of a Preceptory Banner which oddly enough the Preceptory had not owned since it was consecrated.

At the meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2009 in the Grand Temple at Mark Masons' Hall, the Right Eminent Provincial Prior, Edwin Bryant Goodwin, and the Dedicating Team were welcomed into the Preceptory

by the Eminent Preceptor and all the Members of Shadwell Clerke Preceptory. The Provincial Prior took the Chair and proceeded with the Dedication Ceremony of the Banner with his team which included the Provincial Sub-Prior Michael Fox, the acting Provincial Prelate Rev Frank Ward, the Provincial Sword Bearer, Banner Bearer, Provincial Deputy Marshall and a contingent of the Provincial Prior's Bodyguard.

The meeting was hailed as a great success by everybody that attended and a very proud moment for the members of the Preceptory.

**E Kt Roy Warman, Registrar**

# Seventeen Questions - A Response

## *An Open Commentary to Graham Illingworth in answer to his 17 Questions posed in an address to Londinium Preceptory No. 632 on Wed 17<sup>th</sup> December 2008.*

### **Birth**

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."*

Some 2000 years later we know that all biological life is determined by a language called the DNA Code. God created that DNA Code. God used that DNA Code to create the Immaculate Conception. Luke tells us that the conception was brought about by two agencies, The Holy Spirit and The Most High.

*"The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the Child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God.....for with God nothing will be impossible"*

Put simply, yet reverently, the Holy Spirit would supply, or re-code, DNA from God to entwine with Mary's own DNA Code. Thus combining the human and the divine which became the God-Man, Jesus Christ.

It was necessary for Jesus to be both divine and human. Because he was fully Man he was able to represent all mankind when suffering for our sins upon the Cross. Because he was fully divine he died for us as eternal God – a sufficient propitiation for all our sins and a demonstration of God's love for Man.

However difficult it is for us all to get our heads round the Trinity and Christ's Divinity it is necessary so to do, thus enabling us to remain true to our oaths as Knights of our Order.

### **Life**

The Canonical Gospels tell us little of Christ's childhood relative to the Apocryphal Gospels which tell us rather more, including that he had a somewhat mischievous disposition at times. Christ, in common with all male children born to Jewish parents, was circumcised. He was brought up in a close knit rural community; many of those closest to him in his ministry were family relatives and would have known him from childhood. Given the Jewish obsession with what was clean and unclean, were Jesus to have been at all blemished much would have been made of it at the

time, not least by the High Priests who were desperate to discredit him in any way possible during the closing months of his ministry.

Jesus is the Son of God. We have God's own words on the subject:

*"This is my beloved Son. Hear Him"*

Christ undertook his ministry so that:

*"all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished"*

Even though he knew that the ultimate outcome would be rejection by his own and death on the cross.

*"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was made flesh."*

Being divine as well as human Jesus had within him God's powers of creation. As such he encompassed all laws which go to make up God's creation including all scientific laws some of which are only beginning to be understood nearly 2000 years after his death. Those same laws existed during Christ's time on earth even though mankind had not yet discovered them. We who now know the hovercraft exists know that the use of certain physical laws and properties enable a craft to skim the surface of the water. Christ who controlled those laws could "walk on water". Similarly he could ascend whenever and wherever he chose to.

### **Death**

Invented by the Persians, developed by the Carthaginians and perfected by the Romans, Crucifixion was a method of punishment by which the Roman State enforced order thought the empire. Cicero called it "a most cruel and terrible penalty". Indeed so terrible was it that Roman law prevented any Roman Citizen having to undergo it, however heinous his or her crime.

Crucifixion was sufficiently commonplace throughout the Roman world that most major settlements had permanent execution sites, typically with the upright posts permanently in place beside a main thoroughfare just outside the city. Golgotha, for example, is believed to have been outside of the then City wall by the Damascus gate.

Roman soldiers formed the execution squads, this being a regular and frequent part of Garrison duties. Christ is most

likely to have carried the Crosspiece (patibulum) to Golgotha rather than the entire Cross. At Golgotha he would have been laid out on the crosspiece and fixed to it by iron nails driven through his wrists. One of two things would then have happened. Either the upright would have been taken out of its hole and Jesus plus crosspiece nailed or roped to it before being returned to the upright position, or the crosspiece would have been raised by pulley and ladder before being bound or nailed to the upright. In either event Christ's feet would have been placed one over the other and, resting on a block of wood, nailed to the upright. In this way the full weight of the body was not supported by the nailed wrists alone.

In 1968 during excavations in Israel the skeleton of a man who had been crucified was found in an ossuary. He was a male in his mid twenties. His heel bones were pierced and joined together by a single large nail 17cms long and both wrists had been nailed to either end of a crossbeam. His name was Jehonanan and the archaeologists' speculation about his crucifixion are completely compatible with the description of Christ's crucifixion contained in John's Gospel.

The Roman perfection, if that is the right term, of Crucifixion as a punishment involved the introduction of the crossbeam to the stake. A single stake required the wrists to be nailed together above the head. This speeded up suffocation and victims died more quickly. Using a crossbeam extended the agony. Readers can check that statement for themselves by standing upright and extending their arms above their heads, crossing their wrists as though nailed to an upright. Holding that position for a minute and then moving the arms down as though placing them on an imaginary crossbeam will demonstrate the easing of pressure on the lungs.

The T shaped cross was used in a small number of Greek provinces. That was not the case in Jerusalem. The gospels all inform us that Pilate insisted on the mocking inscription JESUS OF NAZARETH KING OF THE JEWS being affixed to the cross **above his head**. An impossibility with a T shaped cross.

That Christ died in three hours should not come as too great a shock to those who remember what had gone before. The night before his crucifixion was spent by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane praying to his Father. Luke, the gentle physician, informs us that; *"being in agony he prayed more earnestly and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling on the ground"*

Unknown to medical science at that time is the medical condition known as haematidrosis, in which blood vessels rupture into the endocrine sweat gland, causing the patient to literally sweat blood. Christ's agony during this time, whether caused by frenzy or by fear, is beyond imagination. More and much worse was to follow.

There followed the betrayal, arrest, detention and trial resulting in a sentence which included a scourging before crucifixion. A scourging that has been described as follows:-*"The victim was stripped, bound to a post or pillar, and beaten by a number of torturers until the latter grew tired and the flesh of the victim hung in bleeding shreds. The scourge or whips which were used were of leather thongs fitted with a spike or several pieces of bone or lead joined to form a chain. Prisoners frequently collapsed and died during this procedure"*. In all probability Christ would have been scourged by the very same Roman soldiers who made up his crucifixion party.

After the scourging Christ had to carry his crosspiece to Golgotha. He no longer had the strength to do so. Simon of Cyrene was prevailed upon to assist on his behalf. Christ is crucified, dying within three hours of being nailed to the cross but just for good measure the still hanging corpse is speared by a Roman Soldier causing what looks like blood and water to gush from his pierced side. Medical science today knows that in cases of heart failure resulting from traumatic shock fluid gathers in the pericardial sac which, if pierced by a spear would effect the outcome witnessed by John. Whatever the cause of death, die he certainly did. Nor would the escort party have needed medical training to verify death. Those soldiers would have witnessed hundreds if not thousands of deaths by crucifixion serving, as they did, in a province addicted to turmoil, insurrection and, to the Roman mindset, terrorist outrages. Those soldiers on escort duty that day if not administering the scourging would certainly have witnessed it. We can be assured that they would have witnessed so much of death that they would know it when they saw it.

Luke tells us of a three hour darkness which descended over all the earth at Christ's demise – a three hour darkness which reached Rome itself as recorded by Thallus of that city.

## Resurrection

Pilate released the corpse to Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph supplied the tomb, Nicodemus supplied the embalming spices which generously laced the burial cloths and, acting in some haste because the Sabbath would



commence at sundown, the corpse was laid in the tomb. The tomb of a wealthy Jerusalem family at that time would typically have been a cave with shelves in the side walls to accommodate corpses. This particular tomb was unused and Christ alone occupied it. The tomb was sealed with a stone large enough to prevent grave robbers gaining access to it.

The next day a temple guard mounted watch over the tomb because the Chief Priests and the Pharisees were fearful of Christ's prediction that *"After three days I will rise."*

We know from Jewish records that a guard consisted of 10 men and that 24 such guards were on duty at 24 locations around the temple. It was essentially a night duty and discipline was tight.

Any guard found sleeping by the Officer of the Watch would be beaten at the very least and may even have had his *"raiment set on fire"*.

On the early morning of the third day, events of such awesome and fearful nature took place that the 10 man guard deserted their post and reported back to the Temple authorities stating that Christ has arisen and the stone rolled back. Instead of punishing the guard the elders of the Temple bribed them with money and instructed them to give out the story that:

*"his disciples came in the night and stole him away while we slept"*

John is more interested in the Risen Lord than in the disappearing guard. He records a scene which is orderly and calm; lacking evidence of violence and disturbance which intervention by the authorities or by grave robbers would have created. Of great significance is the way in which the linen cloths previously used to bind the corpse are lying. The head turban is:

*"folded up by itself separate from the linen."*

Folded up could also be translated as twirled. In other words the cloths which had been wrapped around the body of Christ were lying, with the spices still adhering to them, as though Christ's body had simply passed through them. All this in contrast to Lazarus who had to be freed from his grave cloths.

As prophesised in the scriptures Jesus appeared 5 times on that day of resurrection. Over the next 39 days, again as prophesised, he appeared a further 7 times – starting with Doubting Thomas of *"My Lord and My God"* fame who should be close to our hearts.

The evidence of the Resurrection is so overwhelming that it is difficult to construct a case to the contrary which is remotely credible. Imagine cross-examining in court the Temple Guards who put about the story that they had all fallen asleep and Jesus' followers had stolen the Corpse away.

If asleep how did they know who had stolen the corpse?

If asleep how did they know all were asleep?

If they witnessed Jesus' followers why did they not intervene?

How did they account for the lack of punishment following their dereliction of duty?

I could go on.

The numbers of witnesses supporting the Resurrection are considerable and great legal minds have come to the conclusion that based on the rules of evidence both in the UK and the USA a court would find in favour of the Resurrection having happened. Indeed Frank Morrison, Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton all set out independently of one another to prove Jesus did not rise but, using the examination of the evidence by legal methods, each concluded the resurrection to be proved. Sir Edward Clark K.C. wrote *"As a lawyer, I have made prolonged study of the events of the first Easter Day. To me, the evidence is conclusive and over and over again in The High Court I have secured a verdict on evidence not nearly so compelling."*

For me two things stand out as compelling above all others. Firstly how to account for the change in mood and morale of those closest to Jesus. Distraught and demoralised at the time of crucifixion but a few days later triumphant and victorious having witnessed the Resurrection.

Dear Doubting Thomas goes off to preach through Persia and brings Christianity to India where he was martyred in Madras whilst kneeling in prayer in AD 68. Indeed John is the only apostle not to have been martyred. He is believed to have died at a ripe old age in Ephesus.

Secondly what became of the body? Christ's followers knew and rejoiced accordingly. So much so that the High Priests on several occasions forbade the disciples to say that Jesus had risen. If a body had been there to see the High Priests would have shown it.

## **Ascension**

Between Resurrection and Ascension Christ appeared hither and thither. In locked rooms in Jerusalem, at the Sea of Galilee coming and going, but notably only to those who believed. On his last visit he leads 120 men and women

disciples out of the “upper room” down into the Kidron Valley, past Gethsemane and up the hill to the top of Mt Olivet. There he gave them his final promise and instructions. They “*will receive powers when the Holy Spirit comes in you, and you will be witnessed in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*”.

Christ then ascended, not as a stunt nor as the only way for him to return to the Father but as a sign which would be readily understood by his followers that he had left them until such time as they and succeeding generations had fulfilled the purposes that were required of them.

The Pharisee Nicodemus was a follower of Jesus. We first meet him early on in John’s Gospel when he comes to Jesus by night and acknowledges Christ as a teacher come from God. Jesus responds to him by telling him that “*Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*” Poor earthbound Nicodemus can only see that statement in a

literal sense and asks how can a man enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born!

We must not allow ourselves to be so earthbound ourselves when following the Great Captain of our Salvation. The foetus in the womb has no conception of what life will be like following birth. Similarly our lives after death are beyond the comprehension of our all too earthbound souls. Let us remain true to our oaths of believing in the Trinity, of defending the Holy Christian Faith against all unprovoked attacks of its enemies and, in times of doubt or sorrow let us console ourselves with the beautiful symbolism of the closing words in our Malta Priory meetings.

*“He is gone before to open the Door of Everlasting Life; for He hath said - In My Father’s house are many mansions, but I go to prepare the way, and open the gates of Paradise, that where I am My servants may be also”.*

**Ian Savage**



## ***The Triennial Conference - September 2009***

***E Kt Rod Bancroft, TD, Provincial Marshal of Ox, Berks & Bucks was recently appointed Great Sword Bearer and was therefore deeply involved in the conference proceedings. He very kindly agreed to put his thoughts on the conference on paper for the benefit of our readers.***

**A**t the outset it must be stated that the activities laid on for those attending were both interesting and educational and the venue was most appropriate. My only minor disappointment was that the dining on the second evening had to be between two locations albeit a couple of hundred yards apart but the numbers attending made this unavoidable. The details provided for those knights requiring accommodation and the range of activities laid on for their partners was excellent. All credit must go to R E Kt Trevor Gulliver, Provincial Prior of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, his team and those from Mark Masons Hall. They all, without exception, worked diligently to ensure we were all suitably looked after the whole time.

### **Day 1**

The conference was formally opened with the Mayor of Winchester, Councillor Dominic Hiscock receiving our Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master and his entourage. The Mayor warmly welcomed all those attending the conference and hoped that whilst they were in Winchester they would explore the City and surrounding attractions.

The Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master took the opportunity to present two cheques, each of £5000, one to a representative from The Hospital of St Cross and The Almshouse of Noble Poverty, the oldest charitable institution, founded between 1132 and 1136. Legend has it that the Hospital’s foundation originated when Henry de Blois, a grandson of William the Conqueror, took a walk in the Itchen Meadows. The second cheque was presented to the Mayor in support of the two charities he is sponsoring during his year in office.

Once the welcoming formalities had been completed the assembled company received a most interesting talk by V E Kt Vivian Thomas entitled - Early Origins of Masonic Knights Templar. It is hoped that the content of this talk will become available for everyone to enjoy.

After lunch those attending were treated to a delightful demonstration of an English KT Ceremony as described by Richard Carlisle in his journal The Republican and afterwards in his Manual of Freemasonry circa 1825, performed by R E Kt. Trevor Gulliver and his team of thespians. This was extremely well executed and stage-managed, the cos-



*The Most Eminent  
and Supreme  
Grand Master is  
welcomed by the  
Mayor of  
Winchester.  
The Grand Sword  
Bearer, Rod  
Bancroft is in  
attendance.*

*This picture is very kindly supplied by W Bro Paul G Hurst, MA, FCIPD , G Stwd, PProvAGDC, Prov RAMGR who was the official photographer at the conference*

tunes were excellent and I am led to believe as authentic as possible. R E Kt Trevor Gulliver looked particularly dapper. The cast are to be commended for such a polished performance worthy of the West End stage.

In the evening all were entertained with a reception dinner and cabaret.

## **Day 2**

The formal conference began, attended by the representatives from our own and visiting Priories from overseas. Those not attending had the opportunity to visit the Jane Austen Countryside or take in the sights of Winchester.

After lunch one of the main events was to consecrate the Grand Master's Preceptory No.678. Membership of this Preceptory is by personal invitation of the Grand Master and is restricted to members of the Order who have attained the rank of Right Eminent or are Present or Past Great Constables. The Consecration was carried out by the Grand Master as Consecrating Officer, assisted by the Great Officers of the year. The Most Eminent and Reverend Grand Master of the Great Priory of Scotland, David A C Niven, GCT installed Leslie Felgate Dring, GCT as the primus Preceptor. The opportunity not only to witness the ceremony but also to participate was an extreme pleasure.

This was followed by a champagne reception and celebratory conference dinner, again with a cabaret. The choice of menu and wine were excellent and the enjoyable evening was a fitting end to a glorious day.

## **Day 3**

The third and final day began with a leisurely start followed by the choice of a steam train ride from Winchester to Alton or shopping in Winchester.

The grand finale was the Choral Evensong held in Winchester Cathedral. Brother Knights resplendent in their KT regalia and their ladies in fine dresses were able to witness the banners for the countries participating being paraded into the Cathedral along with the great and the good of KT Freemasonry. The ceremony in the Cathedral had a balance of grandeur, pomp and ceremonial coupled with a thoughtful and meaningful order of service, which enabled all to participate. This was followed by a high tea in a large marquee which enabled all to catch up on old acquaintances, make new friendships, generally socialise and reflect on the past three days events before making their ways home.

*E Kt R L A Bancroft, TD, Great Sword Bearer*



# ***Knights Templar - An Entertainment!***

***Stuart Henderson, Registrar of Mount Calvary, concludes his feature with The Disappearance of the Templars***

**T**he arrest of the Templars took place once the sealed orders were opened throughout France. It is suggested that the Templars had been tipped off about the proposed coup. The Treasurer escaped and the extensive fleet, which was based in France, disappeared. Not one ship is listed in the list of Templar property. John of Châlons, a Templar sergeant, giving evidence at the trial, said that Gérard of Villiers had been tipped off about the arrests and managed to escape with eighteen galleys, which he filled with Templar treasure. Where did they go? There is a tale that when John Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, fell at the battle of Killiecrankie in 1689, he was found to be wearing the Grand Cross of the Order. Whether that story is myth or truth, it is documented in court records that an individual described as a Templar was in a court appearance in Scotland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, there is the famous story of the camp followers appearing over the hill at a crucial stage in the battle, which at that time by dint of their superior numbers the English were winning. The Scots army almost entirely consisted of foot soldiers armed with pikes, spears and axes. Only a small number were mounted and carrying swords. The English about 20,000 and Scots about 7,000 to 10,000 with 500 lightly armoured mounted nobles. Not a sufficient mounted force to undertake a mounted attack on the English archers as is reported by a 14<sup>th</sup> century chronicler. The story of an improvised advance by camp followers does not ring true as there was no confusion amongst the Scottish ranks yet the English took flight at the sight of a further contingent of foot soldiers. King Edward and 500 of his knights promptly left the field. One explanation is the sight of the Beauceant at the head of a fresh mounted force. It was well known as the battle flag of the Templar and the arrival of such a force would have struck immediate fear into the English ranks. Which is what appears to have happened. But why no mention in the Chronicles of a Templar part in the victory which created an independent kingdom in Scotland for the next 289 years. King Robert the Bruce was still excommunicated, but now did not wish to further anger the Pope and risk a crusade against Scotland as had been the case in the Languedoc.

The story of the camp followers might well have been a convenient adjustment of what happened. After the battle one of Bruce's vassals, a Macdonald, was rewarded with the right to the place of honour in the Scottish battle line. Any Templars that had settled in the Royal and Macdonald lands would have fought under the nominal command of MacDonald. It appears that the fleeing Templars may well have found a safe haven in Scotland. Bruce was already excommunicated and had no love of France or the Papacy and there had been a Templar presence in Scotland since David I granted the order lands. Temple in Midlothian was the main Scottish House of the Templars. The founder of the Knights Templar, Hugh de Payens, is said to have embarked upon a tour of Europe shortly after the establishment of the Templars, and did visit Scotland. The purpose of the trip was to raise money and support for the Temple. There is evidence of their presence well after the dissolution in 1312. The land and property of the Templars passed to the Hospitallers by decree in 1312. In practice in England it took until 1340 for some of the transfers to be effected. In Scotland Bruce confirmed by charter some six months after Bannockburn the Hospitallers' holdings, but there was no mention of any Templar properties. Replying to the Grand Master of the Hospitallers in 1338 the English Prior wrote that there was nothing of value amongst Templar possessions in Scotland as they had all been destroyed due to the enduring wars. However, the Hospitallers at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century recorded some 519 sites quite separately in the inventory as *terrae templariae* (Templar land). It was therefore more a merger than a takeover as the records refer to the Order of St John and the Temple. The Templars continued to be a presence in Scotland.

## **Conclusion**

So what really became of the Templars?

What connection is there, if any, with freemasonry?

They are questions for another time.

***Stuart Henderson***

## ***Used Regalia - Another Exchange System***

***Kt Tony Coles of Annus Mirabilis Preceptory, No 206, raises funds for Charities***

**K**t Tony Coles an IT professional has come up with an idea for raising money for charity by creating a web site selling second hand regalia at affordable prices. In the case of Knights Templar all the profit goes to St John's Eye Hospital in Jerusalem. Regalia sales from other Orders go to their mainstream charities. The web site has been up and running since last December and it has had hits from afar as Australia.

Tony says "Dig out all of that old regalia, or memorabilia that you no longer use (anything is considered). This might even score some brownie points with 'er indoors. Anything usable will be cleaned and sold on, and every penny will benefit those who need it most".

Details of where to send donations are on the website, [www.Hallstones.com](http://www.Hallstones.com), or you can call Tony directly on 07879 444150 for more information.



## ***Provincial Warden of Regalia***

**B**ro Knights a reminder that our Provincial Warden of Ragalia , Steve Neville, whose details are below in the Contact List also arranges sales of unwanted second hand regalia and the profits from this go to our Provincial funds. He also arranges the purchase of new regalia at a discount from new prices, half benefiting you as the purchaser and half going to Provincial funds.

***Editor***

## ***Diary Dates***

***2010***

Great Priory (Temple)	Wednesday 19 May
Londinium Preceptory	Friday 2 July
Provincial Priory (Temple)	Wednesday 29 September
Great Priory (Malta)	Tuesday 16 November
Provincial Carol Service	To be Announced

## ***Contact List***

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