

Provincial Priory of London

*K*nighly *T*opics



Issue 25

Spring 2013

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The Installation of our Provincial Prior

At 09.00 hrs on Monday 1st October 2012 members began to gather at Mark Masons Hall for the double whammy of a Provincial Prior Installation followed by the Sub-Prior installation. In the afternoon our new Prior conducted his first Provincial Priory as Prior.

Rehearsal for the installation and banner parade, held by the Great Marshall, Paul Clements, began at 09.30 hrs. and the main meeting conducted by the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master (M E & S G M) Timothy John Lewis and his team of Great Officers started at 11.00 hrs. The installations of Very Eminent Knight Michael Conrad Fox as Provincial Prior and Eminent Knight Victor Lawrence Parnis as Sub-Prior were conducted in time-honoured fashion with dignity and rich ceremony.

The Templars' Hymn was sung during the collection of alms and the M E & S G M then retired with the Officers of the installing team and the Provincial Prior adjourned the Chapter of Provincial Priory until the afternoon.

An excellent lunch was followed by a number of speeches. The Grand Master commented on the splendid array of banners paraded during the morning meeting and the Provincial Prior informed the assembled Knights that as the latest Provincial Prior to be installed, he assumes the title of Baby Prior.

At 16.00 hrs the Chapter of Provincial Priory was resumed and the usual Order of Proceedings followed. The address by the new Provincial Prior was eagerly awaited and is reproduced below.

Speech to the Knights of the Province of London

Brother Knights of the Province of London – having earlier addressed myself to our distinguished visitors I now have the opportunity to address you for the first time.

Today, in what is the 20th year in the life of this Province, we have turned over to a new page in our history – but it is exactly that: just another page. Do not expect many or great changes – I believe in the old adage: ‘if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’! The Province is certainly not ‘broke’ financially, nor is it ‘broken’ in any other sense. The Brother Knights whom I have appointed today to

the various Provincial offices and ranks provide ample evidence of my intention to follow my predecessors by continuing to identify and reward merit and ability whilst, where appropriate, retaining in one capacity or another, officers who have hitherto given outstanding service to the Province – and there can be no better example than my Sub-Prior! No-one who has not had the privilege of being Provincial Vice-Chancellor can really imagine all the work that goes into organising a day like this; it is quite daunting and special credit goes to Vic for getting through it in one piece – and for getting me through it with traces of sanity left.

We have in the Province a thriving and enthusiastic membership and there are already opportunities for social interaction. We have an annual Family Carol Service that is always well attended, the Provincial Registrars meet annually for dinner, during which matters of interest in the Province are discussed, and we have an as-yet fledgling Golf Society that is, I understand, open to all knights, not just those of this Province – I wonder, incidentally, if that includes Lady Knights! It is certainly my intention to look for and to promote ways in which we can expand our social activities while not forgetting that charity is a cornerstone of all Masonic life.

Brother Knights, there will no doubt be challenges ahead, but I am confident that together and with good will we will meet them as we ought.

Thank you all for your patience and support – and God bless you.

Rt E Kt Michael Conrad Fox, Prov Prior



Provincial Prior

Grand Master

Provincial Sub-Prior

Jack Lodewyk Charles Dribbell, KCT, P Prior of London

The death of Jack Dribbell on 3 October 2012 generated a real sense of loss in the Province of London and below is the Eulogy given at his funeral by his son David. Following that is a remembrance written by Alf Day the second Provincial Prior of London. Although I did not know Jack as well as those two I considered him to be a perfect Gentleman and I loved him for his total commitment and concern for the Province and those about him. I shall also miss his many informative and entertaining articles in Knightly Topics.

Editor

Born in 1922, as the only son of a well-to-do Waste Paper Merchant, he was educated at Westminster School – a contemporary of such figures as Peter Ustinov, Tony Benn and Sir William van Straubenzee.

Aged just 15, he had to deal with the sudden loss of his own father. Coupled with the advent of WWII, these factors prevented him from going to University. Destiny clearly had other plans for him.

After 2 years serving in the Home Guard, he joined the Royal Artillery and was Commissioned in 1943. He served in North Africa and this was followed by the Italian Campaign.

In the autumn of 1944 the Eighth Army was advancing on Ravenna (Giuliana's home town) from the south. He was chosen to be seconded to the anti-aircraft component of an Italian division called the 'Cremona', which the Eighth Army had formed to fight with the Allies against the Germans, as a British Liaison Officer and Instructor. Why did they select him? With the impeccable military logic of the British Army, he was picked because his records stated that he could speak French.

In February 1945 he moved his Italian Unit up to Ravenna. One lunch time he was waiting with his Italian comrades outside the Officers' Mess for lunch, when a stunningly beautiful girl rode up on her bicycle, propped it

against the railings, and disappeared to the top floor of the building. After some discreet enquiries, he met Giuliana, my Mother.

No doubt as part of their courting ritual, she compelled him to learn large tracts of Dante's 'Inferno' by heart. They sat by the light of a paraffin lamp while the windows were

rattled from time to time by the sound of the gunfire from the front line only a few miles away. So Dad learned Italian – *a task he thoroughly enjoyed!*

They were determined to get married but before he could obtain permission from the military authorities they had to wait until the Japanese War ended in case they wanted to post him out to the Far East. They married on 29th October 1945.

Later saw the arrival of two sons, myself and Peter, whilst he struggled to make a success of the family business. He embarked on many self-education courses, becoming a Fellow of the Corporation of Secretaries in 1953, a Fellow

of the Institute of Directors in 1956 and then a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries in 1970. In 1978 he became a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce.

In 1961, having been a Conservative Westminster City Councillor for 12 years, he was elected Mayor of the City of Westminster. At 40, he was one of the youngest elected to that office. His Past Mayor's Badge rests now upon his coffin. Although he had the abilities to stand for Parliament, he considered himself too much of an honest man to do so.

It was during these post-war years that he became a very active Freemason - *a task he*

thoroughly enjoyed! (Now I know where he was when I wanted help playing with my train set). The presence here today of so many Masonic Brethren, many of whom I know to be very senior, is testimony to the love and esteem in which he is held. He was immensely proud to belong to a charitable organisation which, second only to the National Lottery, is the largest charitable organisation in the King-



dom. Somewhere in the little blue book of Freemasonry there is an encouragement to “live respected and die regretted” – and this he has achieved in no small measure.

He sold the family business and joined Beecham. He was promoted within Beecham to become Managing Director of Findlater – the wine importing subsidiary. So Dad was forced to learn **all** about wine - *a task he thoroughly enjoyed!* Then he had to learn **all** about Whiskey - *another task he thoroughly enjoyed!*

On Sundays, he became an active regular attender of this very church – St Matthias, occasionally awaking the good people of Richmond by tolling the church bell.

For over 40 years, he assisted Giuliana with the annual Flag Day for the Lifeboats.

As his 60th birthday approached, he realised that he was burning the candle at both ends. He made a wise decision – to take early retirement – a decision which, arguably, enabled him to enjoy a further 30 years of active life.

So did 1982 the year of his retirement herald a “pipe and slipper” phase of life? Most certainly not. Despite the relentless and noisy arrival of 11 grandchildren, he enrolled in the Open University and learned about Art - *a task he thoroughly enjoyed!* In 1986, he gained his BA, three years later bolting an Honours on to it.

Using this new qualification, he taught Art History for many years at the Richmond College of Further Education, whilst Mum taught Italian at the same establishment.

Throughout all this, he was a Rock, a pillar of support and calming influence through various family crises.

Last December, Mother’s health began to take a slow decline. Dad visited her once or even twice daily, until she passed away in April this year. This took its toll on his own health. During August, he was diagnosed with an advanced Cancer of the Liver. After 6 days in hospital, he peacefully passed away.

During my Mother’s last days, she once said to me “Go – and lead a Good Life”.

I feel it my duty now to use this opportunity to pass on that message to all of Jack’s grandchildren “Go – and lead a Good Life” – just as he did.

The father of two sons, much-loved Father-in-Law, and grandfather to 11 grandchildren, he certainly left his mark on this planet.

He is now in the arms of the Almighty - and reunited with Giuliana - a task he will thoroughly enjoy!

***Let Light Perpetual shine upon him,
May he rest in Peace, and rise in Glory.***



Alf Day Shares Some Reminiscences of Jack Dribbell the First Prior of the Provincial Priory of London

Circumstances prevented me from attending the funeral of my good friend Jack Dribbell and so I determined to take time at the middle of the day on the 15th October 2012 and quietly remember him as best I could without being in his presence one last time.

As I remembered Jack and the times and events we shared at the beginning of the life of the Provincial Priory of London I recalled that I had many times tried to prevail upon him to write down something of the events which occurred at that time as it seemed to me to be of great importance that these matters should be somewhere recorded.

If Jack did indeed go into print then I have not seen the document and if he did, his recollections must be taken in

preference to my words, for Jack was there and he was a man of letters and far more eloquent than I could or ever can be.

There were three great men driving the Order before the Province came into being - namely the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master Harold Devereaux Still GCT, the Great Vice Chancellor Right Eminent Knight Peter Glyn Williams GCT and the Great Marshal John Tuckey KCT.

At that time London was the only part of the Order of Knights Templar governed from Mark Masons Hall that was not covered as a Provincial Priory, a fact I remember Jack recounting in his acceptance speech at the Festive Board which followed the Consecration of the Province.

A few years earlier, probably two at the most, the Grand Master decided to make changes and had formed London

into two Groups each roughly of the same size, namely the Duke Group and the James Group and these were to be headed by Jack Dribbel and David Ivor Williams.

It must be appreciated that I was not involved in any way in these events being but the humble and very inexperienced Eminent Preceptor of the Bard of Avon Preceptory no.127 at that time. London housed a large number of unattached Preceptories at this time and when it was consecrated a Province it immediately became the second largest Province in the Order.

Jack was appointed by the Grand Master to be the first Provincial Prior of London with a patent for 5 years. He quickly appointed David to be his Sub

Prior and a mighty task was presented to both of them in shaping the Province and in it's governance.

It has long been my belief that the Province could be viewed as a mighty oak tree – the part above ground was quite visible but to become viable roots had to be put down and that was the task loaded onto Jack's shoulders. I would hazard a guess that apart from David Williams, with experience in the London Mark Province, there were not many people in London who could have taken on such a task.

The Preceptories in London had been left largely to their own devices prior to the formation of the Province and several were not at all receptive to working under the Provincial wing.

Slowly but surely Jack won them round to his way of thinking and it is to his eternal credit that the roots of which I spoke earlier became firmly established.

It should be remembered that no form of funding was offered to the Province by Great Priory and the Province started with an annual due of £1 per member for the first several years, another aspect that was handled with great care and understanding.

I was privileged to be asked by Jack to assume the duties as his Provincial Vice Chancellor after just one year into the



Rt E Kt Alfred John Day

life of the Province and so saw at first hand the hard work and quiet expertise with which he managed it's affairs. The introduction of the Provincial Malta meeting, the Carol Service, the establishment of the Provincial Priors' Bodyguard and the infrastructure which had to be developed to ensure that all the Knights of the Province should have equal opportunities to progress in Provincial Rank and Great Rank were but some of the matters over which he presided.

These words cannot be complete without mention of the huge interest shown by the Great Marshal Right Eminent Knight John Tuckey KCT. Whilst we were watched from afar by the Grand Master and the Great Vice Chancellor

it was the Great Marshal who watched us more closely and quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) and urged direction and gave advice in those early years.

It seems to me that these events may not be very well known to many of the Knights of London in the present day and how much their enjoyment of our wonderful Order has been created for them by our first Provincial Prior.

Jack was a man of many talents outside masonry and his many achievements will, I'm sure, be remembered and recorded elsewhere. However, I remember him for the great responsibilities he undertook in the Provincial Priory of London and what he did for the many Knights who were committed to his charge.

He will be remembered more readily by the older generation with affection and gratitude whilst the younger ones may come to acknowledge his great contribution to London masonry in due course.

MAY HE REST ETERNALLY IN THE PEACE OF HIS GOD.

Rt.Em.Kt.Alfred John Day, KCT

Past Provincial Prior and Vice Chancellor.

15th October 2012

An Illustrated Guide to Sword Drill - Part 3

The Eminent Knight Rodney L A Bancroft, TD, PGtSwdB, Marshal of The Provincial Priory of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, felt the need to improve the sword drill in the Province. To achieve this he decided to produce a Guide Book to teach all the aspects of sword drill and so enable Brother Knights to practise alone.

Rodney has graciously given permission to publish the contents of his guide in Knightly Topics and over the next few issues I will include a section of drill movements until the whole guide has been covered - from the method of drawing the sword to the investiture of an Officer, and a Preceptor's use of the baton.

Editor

Salutations



Bring the sword to the Recover



Raise the sword to the right front once and then a second time further still



On the third movement raise to the full extent of the right arm.

Bring the sword from the Carry to the Recover. By three distinct movements of the wrist, raising the sword to the right front saying "A. Bct" at each movement.

The Salutation is given in threes, the sword being raised higher each time, the third being the full extent of the right arm.

The number of Salutations to be given is to be stated by the Marshal when calling the Knights to order for that Salutation.

Do not cross legs or feet in a Preceptory when sitting



In Case You Missed it the First Time

*This article called **Get it Right - A Marshal's Guide** was published in the Spring 2007 issue and was written by Jack Dribbell although at that time he wished to remain anonymous. Now 6 years later it remains as fresh as ever.*

Get it Right - A Marshal's Guide

- **Check the room!** The Marshal is well advised to check the ballot box and balls, alms dishes, cushions, regalia, S.e, and accoutrements. It is disconcerting to arrive almost at the end of the ceremony only to find that there is no quill pen in place: not many of us carry them nowadays.
- **Get some help!** A wise Marshal will "come to an arrangement" with the Chaplain: the latter is likely to have his ritual book open throughout the ceremonies. If the Marshal is in doubt about "what comes next" he should give an enquiring glance to the Chaplain who can indicate the cue with a discreet, minimalist gesture.
- **Lay it down!** When opening the Bible the Marshal should lay his sword down briefly on the S.e while he does so. (The Registrar should do the same when calling the Muster Roll). He should not carry his sword when, for example, taking the Minute Book or Declaration Book to the Eminent Preceptor. When the Marshal's sword is returned to him after the Accolade he should sheathe it before removing the kneeling stool. One Marshal of my acquaintance forgot this and was in a fair way to skewering the First Standard Bearer, the Candidate, and the Provincial Sub-Prior all on the same kebab.
- **No kissing please!** The sword drill rubric is perfectly clear; "It is not correct to kiss the hilt or touch it with the lips in this position" i.e., at the recover.
- **Put it away!** It is not unusual to find a tatty bit of paper used in the Bible to mark the place. It is respectful neither to the Good Book nor to the Candidate to allow it to remain in place after opening.
- **Do it together!** The easiest way to avoid catching fire when placing the veil on the cross is for the Marshal and his Deputy to do it together with the points of their swords from opposite sides of the S.e. A moment's practice before the preceptory is opened will make it easy.
- **Take them off!** It is a truism in Masonry that "the Candidate never wears gloves". Some Outer Guards are apt to send the Candidate in for the second part of the ceremony wearing gloves. Likewise, the Marshal should ensure that the Preceptor-elect has taken off his gloves before presenting him to the Installing Preceptor.
- **Leave him alone!** The Marshal should not hold the Candidate's hand (or anyone else's). If steering is needed, it should be done by pointing and/or a gentle touch on the elbow.
- **Wear it yourself!** The Marshal must advise the Standard Bearers to present each item of accoutrement (i.e., breastplate, helmet, shield) as if he, the Standard Bearer were about to wear it; but the spurs should be presented so that the Candidate sees the rowels. The spikes on the rowels are meant to remind us of the sufferings of our Lord.
- **Uncross those legs!** It is a convention of the Order that knights do not cross their feet or legs when in the Chapter House. This may be only for regimental neatness but other explanations can be offered. As the Candidate at one point reverentially crosses his feet, it may be thought irreverent to cross them at other times. In many Templar churches, both here and on the Continent, there are medieval effigies of armoured knights lying on their

tombstones. Very often the right knee is drawn up and the right foot rests on the floor, crossed over the left thigh; if this position is appropriate for departed knights, perhaps we who are still in the land of the living should avoid it. Lastly, it is suggested that as Knights may have to spring to military action at any time they should avoid any posture which slows them down.

- **Keep it cool!** The ceremony is a dramatic one at certain points but the Marshal should not allow enthusiastic officers (e.g. the Past Preceptor in the South East or himself when preparing the Candidate to prove his devotion to the Order) to over-dramatise the action.
- **Move the furniture!** It is very easy to forget to move out the eastern kneeling stool before Part II of the ceremony. If the Standard Bearers are the least bit unsure of their positions, the Marshal should rehearse the procession and recession before the Candidate is re-admitted.
- **Use both hands!** The Candidate must hold the cup of m.y in both hands.
- **Present the token!** For this duty the Marshal must stand to the south of the Candidate (so that the latter can see what is happening); the Marshal's sword is held neither vertically nor horizontally but inclined down at an angle of 45°.
- **Use your Deputy!** The Marshal needs to make sure that his Deputy is thoroughly familiar with his duties. There is a lot of "fetching and carrying" to be done and the Marshal has enough worries without having to nurse the Deputy. In particular, the latter must be thoroughly familiar with his part in the cubic stone part of the ceremony. After the ceremonies are over and the Closing gets under way, the Deputy Marshal should make it his business to stand directly facing the new Companion-in-Arms at the appropriate point and show the Candidate how to do the movements when the Chaplain says "Let us pray", and after the "Amen". (Note: In preceptories where no Deputy is appointed it is the duty of the First Herald to assist the Marshal throughout.)

Provincial Warden of Regalia

Eric Garner asks you to use his services

May I introduce myself as Provincial Warden of Regalia? We have the following stock, pre-owned, but in good condition:

A sleeveless Malta tunic, a leather sword belt, small Malta cap and metal cap badge, gauntlets, black gloves, 3 black sashes, (knight and prior), 2 KT mantles and the following London Provincial mantle badges - standard bearer, banner bearer (V.B.), chancellor, 3 ADC.s and one Malta Baillie badge only. These are £25 each; a new mantle badge is £63, This, as you see is a very small amount of stock. It relies on you brother knights returning discarded badges to me for sale on your behalf. Can I encourage you to do this please?

There is the further useful fact that London Province can supply new kit with a discount of 5%, a useful sum on new full regalia at £300 plus. This is of special value to new Knights but it relies on Registrars or Proposers informing the candidate. Finally, I've sold a lot of Provincial ties but still have several dozen available.

Mark Masons Hall Shop

Even senior members of my priory did not know there is a small shop on the top floor at MMH open Friday to Monday, 11 till 5. This is very handy for small last minute items as I recently found myself.

E Kt Eric Garner

Note: Eric will be back from holiday on 19 February
Editor

A Knight of Renown

E Kt Roger Farley, Provincial Vice Chancellor, previous Registrar and Treasurer of Preceptories 173 & 178 writes of their founder and first Preceptor - Imre Kiralfy.

The brief reference to Imre Kiralfy in the June issue of Freemasonry Today leaves much unsaid about this Knight of renown. He was installed in Faith and Fidelity Preceptory No. 26 in 1898. He was a founder, and the first Preceptor, of both King Edward VII Preceptory No. 173 in 1902 and of Empress Preceptory No. 178 in 1903. He remained a member of both Preceptories until his death.

Imre Kiralfy, the eldest of seven children of Jacob and Anna Konigsbaum, prosperous Jewish clothing manufacturers in Pest (Austria/Hungary) was born on 1st January 1845. He had a precocious talent for music and dancing and made his stage debut at the age of 4 under the name Kiralfy which was later adopted by the family, whose business had been ruined in the Hungarian revolution of 1848. The family moved to Berlin and then to Paris. It was in Paris during the 1867 International Exhibition that he first became interested in staging dance based spectacles.

He and his brothers sailed to “the land of opportunity” and Imre married one of the dance extras, Marie Graham, an Englishwoman in New York in 1872. He started to produce ever more extravagant shows featuring large female chorus lines, high quality sets and costumes, and innovative special

effects. Many of these shows had more than 1000 performers.

He colluded with Phineas T Barnum and they brought the Barnum and Bailey circus to Olympia.

Imre settled in London and in the 1880’s became Director of the Earls Court exhibition grounds, which he was responsible for redeveloping, and where the Empire of India exhibition of 1895 became the first of many international exhibitions. He was later approached by those who wished to stage a British Empire exhibition and games. He already had in mind a suitable stadium. He wanted to change from spectacular gold, silver and colours and therefore called it The White City. It would eventually stage the exhibition and the 1Vth. Olympiad in 1908.

He continued to stage exhibitions until his death in Brighton on 27th. April 1919. He was buried at

Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn, where there is an impressive mausoleum. A further mausoleum was erected by his widow, in his memory, and for his children and grandchildren in Kensal Green Cemetery.

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Editor



Diary Dates 2013

Provincial Priory (Malta)	Tuesday 29 January
Great Priory (Temple)	Wednesday 15 May
Great Priory (Malta)	Tuesday 19 November
Provincial Carol Service	TBA December
Londinium Preceptory	Wednesday 18 December

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