

KNIGHTLY TOPICS



PROVINCIAL PRIORY OF LONDON

Issue 27

Spring 2014

In This Issue

<i>Provincial Prior</i>	2 & 3
<i>Family Carol Service</i>	3
<i>St. Front Le Vaillant Preceptory</i>	4
<i>Jacques de Molay</i>	5
<i>The Chinon Parchment</i>	5
<i>Medical Secrets</i>	6 to 9
<i>KT in Malta</i>	10
<i>Regalia</i>	11
<i>Diary Dates</i>	11



Editorial

So here is the first edition of Knightly Topics I have produced.

It includes a message from our Provincial Prior and a story about the Carol Service last year.

There are articles about the 700th anniversary of the execution of the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, in 1314 [by Louis Cattan], the Chinon Parchment, which shows that the Templars were not guilty after all and St. Front le Vaillant Preceptory in France.

Trevor Dutt, a medical man, had written about the medicinal secrets of the Templars and David Broxup tells us about the Waller Rodwell Wright Preceptory in Malta.

The next edition will be in the Autumn of this year. Please contact me if you have a story you would like included. Email: stuartdhenderson@btinternet.com

O mighty soldier, O man of war, you now have a cause for which you can fight without endangering your soul; a cause in which to win is glorious and for which to die is but gain.

Or are you a shrewed businessman, a man quick to see the profits of this world? If you are, I can offer you a splendid bargain. Do not miss this opportunity. Take the sign of the cross.

At once you will have indulgence for all the sins which you confess with a contrite heart. It does not cost you much to buy and if you wear it with humility you will find that it is worth the kingdom of heaven.

Bernard of Clairvaux





Provincial Prior

R.E.Kt. Michael Conrad Fox



The last year has been one of consolidation within the Province. There have been gains in membership, but these have been almost matched by losses – mostly due to resignations and those who have passed to the Holy City.

Brother Knights of the Province of London, I now have the opportunity to address you all – you who represent by your attendance the life-blood of the Province.

So the membership of the Province – the total of the memberships of all our Preceptories has remained at about 900.



This is hardly progress, but it may be a natural consequence of the economic climate in which we find ourselves. The fact remains that we need to recruit new members and retain those that we have.

These are the challenges that we face for the future and we share them with Freemasonry more widely, especially in London.

Nevertheless, I find the Province to be in good heart. We are members of an Order that is exciting and in no small measure theatrical. Indeed, I know of no other Order in which swords are waved with such gay abandon and controlled aggression.

A number of Knights of the Province have received Great Honours this year, either first appointments or promotions, and I would like to recognise them all.

Promotions were granted to V. E. Kt. Maj George Hodge, E. Kts. Les Fox, Vic Parnis and Roger Farley, while first appointments were granted to E. Kts. Keith Florence, Malcolm Burns, Leonard Hedworth, David Major, Jim Wire and Chris Weeks.

They have all earned their honours through services to their Preceptories and to the Province. Other Knights of the Province who received Great Honours through services to other Provinces were E.Kts. George Rodger and Roger Bathurst of Ascalon Preceptory. I congratulate them all.

One of the things that I have noticed during my first year in office is that our Preceptory of Improvement, held

under the auspices of the King Edward VII Preceptory, has not in the past been well supported by London Knights.

I am not too proud to say that I have joined the Preceptory and, even in what you might think of as my lofty position, I do find it instructive. I have therefore made it my duty to encourage all Knights in the Province, especially – but not only – those that have not yet been through the Chair in their Preceptories, to attend sessions whenever they can.

Details can be found on cards available in the Reception area on the ground floor; the Preceptory meets five times each year at MMH. I am pleased to note that attendance by London Knights has improved during the year, but I hope to see more of you there in future. But our Order is not all about Ritual; it provides, like all Freemasonry, a framework for social interactions.

The Family Carol Service was held in December, but a venue for the reception next year is still unsettled owing to the move of the London Masonic Centre from Clerkenwell Green.

With regards to our Golf Society. If we are to compete effectively against the quality of players that Somerset has fielded, then we need more players to make up a full team – we had to borrow one from Somerset last time! E. Kt. Roger Charter, Registrar of King Edward VII and Empress Preceptories, is the man to speak to.

Apart from my involvement with the Preceptory of Improvement, I have taken one other initiative.

In June, we held a luncheon for active officers of the Province and their wives and partners. Not all the officers were able to attend, but I understand from those that did that it was an enjoyable informal occasion.

It is my intention that it should become a regular event on our Provincial calendar. It is a way for officers to get to know each other better – and to get to know those at home who are likely to pick up the phone when we call.

And while I am thinking about the Provincial officers, it was during the 2011/12 year that we began to encourage them to participate in our Official Visits to Preceptories during each year.

This has been slow to take off, but I urge all the active officers that I have appointed today to take advantage of these opportunities whenever possible.

Those wishing to take part should contact our Past Deputy Marshal, E Kt John Bond.

Some members will be aware that the Central Records Department at Mark Masons' Hall is in the process of rolling out within Orders and Provinces an on-line database of members called Keystone Online.

This will change the way that Annual Returns are generated and over the next few weeks Registrars will be receiving – perhaps have already received – instructions for how those Returns are to be handled.

The changes are likely directly to affect only Registrars and Treasurers, but it will in future be more important than ever for Knights to keep their Registrars informed of changes in personal circumstances as early as possible.

While I am on the subject of on-line matters, I am aware that the development of our Provincial web site has not progressed as far as we would all have hoped. I must ask you to accept my assurance that this is being attended to, although I cannot yet put a date on the completion of a fully-fledged site.

Saint Front le Vaillant, the original Preceptory in the Province of Guyenne in Aquitaine, is now the senior Preceptory of Guyenne, has one meeting each year in the UK and at my invitation the next meeting is in London at Mark Masons Hall next year.

This promises to be a fairly grand affair, followed by a banquet strongly influenced by a Gallic style menu and wines brought over from France.

The meeting and banquet are open to all Knights of the Province and I believe it is the intention to open the banquet to Royal Arch Companions if they are prepared to sign a declaration, rather like our own Declaration Book, in the Temple just before it is closed.

There will be challenges ahead, but I remain confident that together and with good will we will meet them as we ought.

Thank you all for your continued and encouraging support – and God bless both you and your families.

Family Carol Service

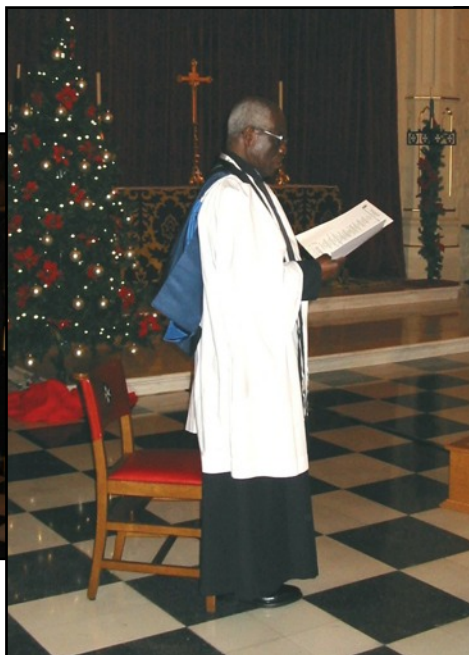
This was held on Monday 16 December at the Priory Church of the Order of Saint John at Clerkenwell Green. Some 130 Knights and guests joined in the celebration of Christ's birth in Bethlehem.

The traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols was led by the Revd. Frank Ward, Provincial Chaplain.



The Choir

Lessons were read by David Ashbolt, Stuart Henderson, Joan Henderson, Roger Farley, Mathew Hampson, Trevor Dutt, Bridget Whiting, Michael Fox and Frank Ward. The Choir [Janet Miller-Martin, Margaret Hicks, Margaret Plastow, Ken Miller-Martin and Toby Brown sang beautifully under the baton of Glyn Harvey, who is the Deputy Great Organist of France. John Gilbert, the Provincial Organist, played the organ. The service was organised by the Provincial Registrar, Leonard Hedworth.



Revd. Frank Ward



Roger Farley and others



Leonard Hedworth

St. Front Le Vaillant Preceptory No. 15

France

St. Front Le Vaillant is no ordinary Preceptory and although it is young, in its tenth year now, it has a fascinating history.



Saint Front is Preceptory number 15 in the Great Priory of France. The Great Priory of France was itself constituted in June 2003 by the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master of the Great Priory of England, Leslie Felgate Dring. It was composed in the first days of three Preceptories, which were consecrated as English Preceptories, but which were then ceded to France to kick-start the Great Priory of France.

Saint Front was consecrated on 30 October 2004 and it owes its origins to the promoter and first Eminent Preceptor, Eminent Knight Adrian Leopard who was present at the constitution of the Great Priory of France and offered to form a Preceptory for them. It is to say that he did not really know what he was letting himself in for at the time, but he achieved this objective with the assistance of the English Province of Worcestershire, whose Provincial Prior at the time, Right Eminent Knight Graham Perkins, grasped the nettle and arranged for Worcestershire to help.

And it did – starting off by installing three French Royal Arch Companions into Worcestershire Preceptories, so that they could become founders of this new Preceptory to be stationed at Bergerac in the Aquitaine.

The help went further. Many Worcestershire knights were encouraged to participate so all but just a few of the founders were knights of Worcestershire. This is an important thing to know because visitors often wonder why there are references to the Province of Worcestershire, the Provincial Prior of the day is an acting member and his toast is saluted at the festive board. This is so that the Preceptory will never forget its roots.

The relation between what has since become the new Province of Guyenne and the Province of Worcestershire is very strong. Although R.E.Kt. Perkins has retired as Provincial Prior of Worcestershire, his successor, R.E.Kt. Stephen Wyer, has continued to support Saint Front and indeed it is one of Saint Front's customs that the address to the newly installed Eminent Preceptor is given by the Provincial Prior of Worcestershire, notwithstanding that he may have to do so in French.

Nine years later, Saint Front boasts a significant membership with English continuing to represent almost 50%.

The Preceptory was consecrated in the Château de Duras in the Lot et Garonne. The main reception hall is called La Salle des Trois Maréchaux - the Hall of the Three Marshals. There is significance to this name as the office of marshal under French law was a very senior one indeed. However, that is perhaps a story for another day but this particular hall is very large indeed and made a wonderful environment to set up a temple.

It is an environment in which any Preceptory would undoubtedly be pleased to meet although it must be admitted that in the winter the heating bill shared amongst 20 or so knights might be a bit steep!

There was, however, something particularly unusual about the consecration taking place in the Château de Duras and that relates to one of its former owners - one

Bertrand de Goth. All Knights Templar will know something of the fall of the Templars in 1307 when King Philip the Fair of France instructed the Pope, Clement V, to have them all arrested on Friday 13 October.



In fact, Pope Clement V was none other than Bertrand de Goth. When it became known that Saint Front was to be consecrated in a former residence of Pope Clement V, comments ranged from "Quel horreur" to "He who laughs last laughs longest"!

Saint Front is now a part of the Province of Guyenne and the most recent preceptory in Guyenne to have been consecrated. The installed Preceptors' Preceptory, is called Les Trois Maréchaux and is nominally stationed at Duras, although it has not yet held a meeting there!

Saint Front did not envisage holding its regular meetings at Duras and has largely operated from an hotel in Bergerac called La Flambée. It was felt that as the English knights were expected to travel significant distances and devote quite a lot of time to attending meetings that they would like to enjoy a little comfort and, not least, French cuisine.

It is for this reason that the meals, which are enjoyed at Saint Front are of a higher quality than would normally be expected in a French Masonic lodge.

The founders of Saint Front felt they wanted to maintain strong links with their mother Great Priory in England and as a result sought permission to hold one meeting a year in England or Wales.

Somewhat to their surprise this request was agreed and the first such meeting was in fact held in Worcester in January 2005.

Grand Master Executed in Paris in 1314

Pictures by E.Kt. Louis Cattan

On 18 March, it will be 700 years since the Templar Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was burnt to death in the Ile de la Cité.



Ile de la Cité



The Plaque



Knights Templar Not Guilty

The discovery of the Chinon Parchment has thrown a new light upon the trial of the Knights Templar. It is a contemporary account of the testimony of Jacques de Molay and other senior Templars at a secret Papal hearing held in the royal castle at Chinon from 17 to 20 August 1308.

The document reveals that the Pope found no heresy amongst the Templars and granted absolution to its leaders. He fought with some determination to protect the Templars from the French King. No royal officials attended the hearings as it was entirely a Church affair.

The testimony of the Templar leaders was heard by three Cardinals who reported to the Pope. He accepted the explanation of Jacques de Molay and the other leaders that the charges against them of sodomy and blasphemy were due to a misunderstanding of the orders arcane rituals intended to prepare a

Knight for the humiliation and torture he might be subjected to, if captured.

Subsequently, the Chinon Parchment was wrongly labelled and misplaced among the labyrinthine files of the Secret Archive, until found and later published in 2004.

799 facsimiles of the The Chinon Parchment were published by the Vatican in 2007.

By early May 1310 nearly 600 Templars were defending their Order and denied their previous confessions. This worried the French King, who instructed the Church to find the Knights guilty. The Church washed its hands of the Templars and handed over to the secular authorities for punishment.

54 Templars were burnt outside Paris in 1310 and in March 1314 the Grand Master himself, then in his seventies, showed great courage as he was burnt to death.

Translation of part of the Papal Examination of Jacques de Molay at Chinon Castle on 20 August 1308.

...Jacques de Molay, Grand Master of the Order of Knights Templar appeared personally and having sworn in the form and the manner indicated above said that it has been forty-two years or thereabouts since he was received as a brother into the said Order...

Concerning the way of his initiation into the Order, he said that having given him the cloak the Preceptor showed him the cross and told him that he should denounce God whose image was depicted on that cross and that he should spit on the cross. Which he did, although he did not spit on the cross, but near it according to his words. He said that he performed this denunciation in words, not in spirit.

Regarding the sin of sodomy, the worshipped head and the practise of illicit kisses he, diligently questioned, said that he knew nothing of that.

After this we decided to extend the mercy of absolution for these acts to brother Jacques de Molay ... who had denounced in our presence the described and any other heresy and swore in person on the Lord's Holy Gospel, and humbly asked for the mercy of absolution, restoring him to unity with the Church and reinstating him to communion of the faithful and the sacraments of the Church.

Medical Secrets of the Knights Templar



By E. Kt. Surgeon Commander Trevor Dutt RNR RD FRCOG P Gt Herald

There has long been popular interest in the *Pauperes commilitones Christi Templique Salomonici*, better known as the Knights Templar. That interest was greatly increased by the publication of Dan Brown's best-selling novel *The Da Vinci Code*.

Consequently there are vast numbers of books about the Templars, which range from carefully researched historical works to blood and guts sensationalism. It is, however, of note that very few contain even a passing reference to a subject that must have been very dear to the heart of every warrior knight – their medical care.

In addition to the illnesses and diseases that afflicted the general population, the rigors of medieval battle must have resulted in numerous injuries, so it is no surprise that almost every Templar commandery and castle was provided with an infirmary, the organisation of which was entrusted to the Infirmarer.

The Templar Rule, the equivalent of our Masonic *Constitutions and Regulations*, which was first promulgated in 1129, ten years after the Order was formed and later amended and expanded, includes the following injunction (Rule 61):

Let sick brothers be given consideration and care and be served according to the saying of the evangelist and Jesus Christ: Infirmus fui et visitastis me. That is to say: 'I was sick and you visited me'; and let this not be forgotten. For those brothers who are wretched should be treated quietly and with care, for which service, carried out without hesitation, you will gain the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore we command the Infirmarer to studiously and faithfully provide those things which are necessary to the various sick brothers, such as meat, flesh, birds and all other foods which bring good health, according to the means and the ability of the house.

However the Infirmarer's role seems to have been to ensure satisfactory accommodation and victualling standards for the sick and injured rather than to provide medical care because Rule 197 states:

The Commander of the Land, or the Master, should find a doctor for the sick brothers so that he may visit them and advise them on their illnesses.

Nevertheless, in some areas the Templars seem to have had much more advanced ideas than most practitioners of medieval medicine. For example, in hospitals outside the Order the spread of infectious diseases was often facilitated by accommodating two or more patients in the same bed whereas in the Templar infirmary, although they can have had no knowledge of the causes of the diseases, Rule 194 stipulates:

But those brothers who suffer from dysentery, or a serious wound, or vomiting, or delirium, or any other grave illness which the other brothers cannot tolerate, should be given a room as near as possible to the infirmary until they are fully recovered and the other brothers can tolerate their presence.

Of course there are many aspects of medieval medicine that we regard as bizarre today. Many conditions were regarded as the judgement of God or the visitation of a devil. Blood letting or the application of leeches were the mainstays of many therapeutic procedures but stranger still were some of the diagnostic techniques which often relied on astrology and numerology. Even as late as the end of the fourteenth century, over 150 years after the Templar Order had been disbanded, John Mirfield, a clerk at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, advised assessing the patient's prognosis as follows:

Take the name of the patient, the name of the messenger sent to summon you, and the name of the day upon which the messenger first came to you; join all their letters together, and if an even number result, the patient will not escape; if the number be odd, he will recover.

Juliet Faith has written “it is believed that they [*i.e.* the Templars] may also have used some crude form of *antibiotic*, but unfortunately she gives no reference for this and I have been unable to find the suggestion elsewhere.

There is some evidence that the occupants of the Templar establishments in Europe derived benefit from medical knowledge brought back by knights returning from a tour of duty in Outremer (see *Arabic Medicine* below), but the period spanned by the Templars also coincided with the early development of Western medicine through the study of Greek and Arabic texts in schools of medicine, such as that at Salerno, Italy which, although founded in the IXth Century, began its rise to fame after 1077.



Medieval medicine was largely based on the teachings of Galen, which attributed illnesses to an imbalance of the four humours - heat, cold, dryness and moisture as represented in the body by blood, phlegm, black bile and

yellow bile. Diagnosis was mainly based on assessing the rate and rhythm of the patient's pulse as well as the colour, smell and even taste of the patient's urine, although, as already noted, astrology and numerology could also play a part. Treatment was intended to correct the humoral imbalance.

Surgical procedures were still fairly primitive but could be effective and pain relief, and even anaesthesia, could be obtained by the administration of cannabis, opium or hemlock, often in combination with other substances.

Battle Injuries

A wide variety of weapons were used in medieval battle but they can be divided broadly into three categories. Piercing weapons including lances, arrows and crossbow bolts, crushing weapons such as maces, warhammers and quarterstaves and cutting weapons like swords, battle axes and scimitars.

The injuries resulting from piercing weapons (a long bodkin arrow from a long bow could pierce

plate armour at over 250 yards) were not necessarily immediately fatal unless a vital organ was struck.

The danger lay in the fact that the arrow would carry dirt and fragments of clothing deep into the tissues thereby creating an ideal environment for infection and consequent fatal sepsis. Richard I of England, Richard the Lionheart, died in 1199 after being shot by a crossbow bolt, not from the bolt itself but, eleven days later, from the gangrene which resulted.

There is a parallel in modern warfare where the tissue damage caused by the shock wave from a high velocity rifle bullet necessitates wide excision of the wound, a fact better appreciated by the British military surgeons than the Argentines during the Falklands War of 1982.

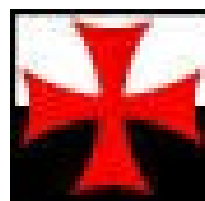
Significant crush injuries to the head and torso are usually almost immediately fatal either from the injury itself or the resulting shock but crushed limbs would often have been dealt with by amputation and the stump sealed by cauterisation with a red-hot iron.

If the victim survived the operation they would have had a reasonable chance of recovery since the cauterisation would have sterilised the exposed tissues. Such injuries were probably relatively rare amongst the knights being more frequently incurred by the foot soldiers who fought with them.

Although the knights were equipped with a lance for use in the initial cavalry charge, it was too unwieldy for close-quarter fighting which would have been predominantly with swords and daggers both on horse-back and on foot. Their adversaries often used the curved sword or scimitar for the same purpose.

A skilfully wielded sword or scimitar could remove an opponent's limb or even his head with a single stroke but deep cuts were probably much more common. These could result in severe, sometime quickly fatal, blood loss.

Templar knights were not permitted to withdraw from the fight while the Beauceant still flew on the field of battle but, if the injured knight survived



long enough to reach medical help, the major blood vessels would have been sealed by cauterisation and the wounds cleaned, often with vinegar, before being dressed with mint, myrrh, still sometimes used for this purpose especially in veterinary practice, or yarrow, which

promotes blood clotting and therefore reduces bleeding. Later, during the period of recovery, the dressing would have been changed to one containing extract of aloe.

Internal Medicine

Despite their warrior traditions, as with other military organisations the Templar knights were probably more likely to suffer from illness than injury. However, in contrast to surgical problems, it is much more difficult to be specific about the medical ailments of past times.

For example, if we are told that the patient is *bleeding from a sword wound to the thigh* there is no doubt as to the nature of the problem; if, however, we are informed that he has been *coughing up blood* the possible causes are legion and the true diagnosis cannot be established. Nevertheless, some specific illnesses can be identified.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, dysentery seems to have been a significant problem, no doubt exacerbated by the lack of present-day hygiene and, of course, an ignorance of the causes of infection. It is likely that typhus was also widespread although the first reliable identification is not until the late XVth Century.

Cholera, which had long been endemic in India and which became such a problem in later years in societies with poor hygiene, had probably not reached the Holy Land in the XIth and XIIth Centuries and the ravages of the *Black Death* or plague were also still to come.

Dysentery

The fact that, in medieval times dysentery was often called *the bloody flux* gives the clue to its usual presentation, which is severe diarrhoea often associated with the passage of blood and mucus.

It is due to inflammation of the large bowel and is spread by the ingestion of any of a number of causative organisms in infected water or food. The sufferer is usually febrile, may vomit copiously and usually experiences bouts of severe abdominal pain.

The mainstay of modern management is the maintenance of an adequate fluid intake to compensate for the fluids lost by the vomiting and diarrhoea although anti-microbial therapy also has a place.

Rule 194 of the Templar Code (quoted above) makes it clear that the Templars did practice some degree of isolation in the management of cases of dysentery, but a common medieval treatment was the administration of purgatives which can only have exacerbated the fluid deficit and jeopardised the patient's chances of recovery.

Leprosy

Leprosy was certainly widespread and its prevalence led to the formation of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, which was founded in about 1098 and therefore pre-dates the Templars by about 22 years.

The origins of the Order of Saint Lazarus are poorly documented, but it was probably an offshoot of the Knights of Saint John with whom it shared administration for a time. Both Orders began as hospitallers but later added military functions. In battle the Lazarite knights were often subject to command by the Templar officers. Whereas the Knights of Saint John cared for all manner of sick, the Knights of Saint Lazarus initially confined their activities to providing long-term care for those affected by leprosy. Indeed, for much of their early history, many of the Lazarite knights were, themselves, sufferers from the disease and members of the other Crusading Orders, who fell victim to the condition could be transferred to the Order as was laid down in Rule 443 of the Templar Code:

When it befalls any brother that, by the will of Our Lord, he contracts leprosy and the thing is proven, the worthy men of the house should admonish him and ask him to request permission to leave the house and go to Saint Lazarus, and take the habit of a brother of Saint Lazarus; and the sick brother, if he is a good man, should obey them, and yet it would be better if he requested the said permission himself before being admonished and asked.

And if the brother asks for the said permission, the Master or the one it concerns should give the said permission, but he should do so with the advice of the brothers; and afterwards the Master and the worthy men of the house should look after him and help him until the habit of Saint Lazarus is given to him. And so they should studiously take care of such of our brothers, that he becomes a brother of Saint Lazarus in such a way that he does not lack any of the things he requires for his meagre upkeep for as long as he lives.

Nor was any level of society exempt from the disease and King Baldwin IV was diagnosed to be a sufferer at the age of nine years. He nevertheless succeeded his father to the throne of Jerusalem at the age of thirteen and survived for another eleven years.

In emphasis of the observations in the previous section of this paper, it is worthy of note that Baldwin's father, Amalric I of Jerusalem, died of dysentery at the age of 38 after the administration of

purgatives. Early treatments for leprosy included the administration of arsenic, creosote or mercury none of which would have been of any benefit. As the most frequent visible effect of leprosy is the development of skin lesions, the first two were probably examples of the application of the *doctrine of signatures*, whereby illnesses were treated by the use of agents, which could produce similar effects since both arsenic and creosote cause skin rashes. Mercury and its compounds were popular, though toxic, medicines for many conditions.

Although not, of itself, necessarily fatal, a less obvious effect of leprosy is to cause nerve damage resulting in parts of the body becoming completely insensitive. This abolishes the normal protective pain reaction rendering the victim subject to wounds and burns which would have readily become secondarily infected, a potentially life-threatening complication.

Tuberculosis

Despite certainly afflicting human-beings since pre-historic times and endemic in much of Western Europe in the medieval period both in its pulmonary form *phthisis* and as adenitis of the neck [*scrofula*], tuberculosis does not seem to have been as common among the Templars as it was in the general population. This may have been because of the generally better diet in Templar commanderies and also the fact that the knights and their ancillary staff were comparatively isolated from the rest of the population around them.

Minor Ailments

Of course the medieval knights would also have been subject to the usual variety of minor ailments such as coughs and colds but these were presumably considered too trivial to warrant any specific mention - although a bad attack of hay-fever when wearing a steel helmet cannot have been a pleasant experience!

Arabic Medicine

As well as care from their own European physicians and surgeons, the Templar Knights in the Holy Land would also have sometimes been treated by Arabic doctors, whose medical knowledge was generally of a higher standard.

The Arabs had preserved and supplemented much of ancient Greek understanding most of which had been lost to the West where medical opinion was largely controlled by the theology of the Catholic Church.

This is well illustrated by a tale told by Usamah ibn Munqidh:

They brought before me a knight in whose leg an abscess had formed and a woman

who was stricken with a dryness of humours. So I made a small poultice for the knight and the abscess opened up and he was healed. For the woman I prescribed a special diet and increased the wetness of her humours.

Then a Frankish physician came to them and said, 'This fellow doesn't know how to treat them.' He then said to the knight, 'Which would you like better, living with one leg or dying with both?' 'Living with one leg,' replied the knight. The physician then said 'Bring me a strong knight and a sharp axe.' A knight appeared with an axe and the physician laid the leg of the patient on a block of wood and said to the knight with the axe, 'Strike his leg with the axe and cut it off with one blow.' So he struck him with one blow but it didn't chop the leg all the way off. So he struck him a second time, but the marrow flowed out of the leg and he died instantly.

Then he examined the woman and said, 'This woman, there is a demon inside her head that has possessed her. Shave off her hair.' So they shaved her head. The woman then returned to eating their usual diet - garlic and mustard. As a result her dryness of humours increased. So the physician said, 'That demon has entered further into her head.' So he took a razor and made a cut in her head in the shape of a cross. He then peeled back the skin so that the skull was exposed and rubbed it with salt. The woman died instantaneously.

In this instance at least, the ministrations of the *Frankish physician* do not seem to have proved of much benefit to the patients!

Nevertheless, Usamah ibn Munqidh is not always critical of *Frankish* medicine as he goes on to describe two other instances when European treatment was successful when Arabic attempts had failed - the treatment of leg wounds with strong vinegar and a cure for scrofulous sores.

Conclusion

The Knights Templar and the other Crusading Knights did enjoy higher standards of medical care than most of the medieval population but that must be seen in the light of what was, by modern standards, very poor general care.

Despite the attractions of Templar life as sometimes portrayed by Hollywood film-makers, if time travel ever became a reality perhaps this is one era that would be better avoided!

Celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the Waller Rodwell Wright Preceptory

How the Knights Templar returned to the island of Malta

Based on an interview by John Lee with E.Kt. David Broxup, Registrar of the Waller Rodwell Wright Preceptory.

Adieu, ye joys of La Valette! Adieu, sirocco, sun, and sweat! writes Byron in the opening verse of “Farewell to Malta”.

The Knights Templar similarly bid farewell to an independent Malta in 1979, ending a 164-year association that was established by Byron’s contemporary Waller Rodwell Wright.

This is the story of how the Knights Templar were restored to the Mediterranean idyll of Malta and the gala dinner celebrating the tenth anniversary of their return.

On 6th October last year, members of the Waller Rodwell Wright Preceptory attended a gala dinner to celebrate the tenth anniversary of bringing the Knights Templar back to Malta.

There could not have been a more perfect or salubrious setting for the gathering than the 5-star surroundings of The Hilton Hotel, Malta. Situated a 15-minute drive from the UNESCO world heritage city of Valetta, the hotel overlooks the picturesque Portomaso waterfront, home to millionaire yachts. It is little wonder that E.Kt. David Broxup, Registrar of the Waller Rodwell Wright Preceptory, announced what a great pleasure it was to welcome the 85 guests attending the gala dinner.

A pleasure indeed, as the anticipated storm stayed away, giving way to a warm and balmy evening, allowing old friends to become reacquainted over pre-dinner drinks, while soaking up the panoramic view of the waterfront from the 4th floor balcony of the Hilton. The dinner itself was no less sumptuous to behold, with people commenting on the delightful manner in which the tables had been so delicately and expertly dressed. The food and wine matched the setting and occasion.

Short speeches and thanks were the order of the day. This was a gathering of brethren and friends. As has been the case for the past ten years, the atmosphere lent itself to an evening in which conversation flowed and the air of good humour and laughter proved contagious.

Dedication & determination

The 10th anniversary gala dinner stands as a tribute to the vision of the Preceptory’s founding members and the dedication that was needed to restore the 164-year lineage of the Knights Templar on Malta after an enforced exile of nearly a quarter of a century. In acknowledging this, in his brief opening remarks, David Broxup (pictured) paid tribute to “the dedication and determination of the founding Knights, installed Knights and joining members of the Waller Rodwell Wright and La Valette Preceptories, also to Broadly, Sanct Elmo and the Red Cross of Constantine.” It was on a visit to the Maltese capital Valletta in 1999 to attend a craft meeting that David Broxup discovered that the latter-day Knights Templar had a longstanding association with the island.

A history that stretched back to 1815 had been brought to an untimely end in the years following Maltese independence in 1971, a period that coincided with Dominic [Dom] Mintoff’s tenure as Prime Minister. Restoring the legacy of the Knights Templar on Malta fired David Broxup’s imagination. The year following his visit to the island, he was installed in the Knights Templar.

The same year, he contacted the United Grand Lodge of England to inquire about the craft on Malta and was introduced to the then Grand Inspector of Malta Eric Stuart. Consecutive visits followed in 2001 to speak with Eric Stuart and, following retirement, his successor Jack Spencer, to discuss bringing the Knights Templar back to the island. Jointly the initiative was embraced as a means to strengthen masonry in Malta and the decision taken to establish a Preceptory and restore the long line of Knights Templar on Malta.

To be continued

Regalia

I am pleased to say that in the last eight months or so business has been good, so much so that I am almost out of stock for recycling.

I have sold caps, mantle badges, a belt, Malta tunic and mantle, gloves etc. A KT mantle was even collected by motor bike one evening at MMH by a keen initiate. Mantle badges are urgently needed, as new ones now cost £75.60; beautiful works of art that they are.

- **So Brother Knights do you really want that mantle from when you were a mere knight and are now a proud Past Preceptor or Prior?**
- **Has your girth increased so that you need a new belt?**
- **When I have successfully sold your unwanted kit, there is a sale price passed on to you.**

Finally, London Province has an arrangement with a supplier to provide garments, regalia, swords, books etc. with a 10% reduction. Half of this goes to London Province and half to the knight. There is no postage charge, a growing consideration these days..

So, email me at renrag2320@btinternet.com or phone me on 01647 440673.

Eric Garner *Warden of Regalia*

DIARY DATES 2014

Great Priory [Temple]	Wednesday 21 May in London
Londinium Preceptory [Malta]	Friday 4 July
Provincial Priory [Temple]	Monday 29 September
Great Priory [Malta]	Tuesday 18 November in London
Provincial Carol Service	TBA

CONTACT LIST

Provincial Matters	Roger Farley: Provincial Vice Chancellor	01953 888 344
Provincial Finance	Mathew Hampson: Provincial Treasurer	01277 823 667
Provincial Ceremonial	Richard Roberts : Provincial Marshal	020 8567 3657
Provincial Regalia Shop	Eric Garner: Regalia Officer	01647 440 673
Knightly Topics	Stuart Henderson: Editor Knightly Topics	01844 344960