

Brief Origins and history of Knights Templar.

by

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There are, as you probably know several Military Orders in Freemasonry e.g. The Knights Hospitalliers of St. John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta, The Knights of St. Paul or Mediterranean Pass: but by far the most important of the Military Orders was that of the Knights Templar.

From earliest times devout Christians desired to visit the Land which had been the scene of Christ's life on earth, and a journey undertaken for that purpose was considered an act of supreme piety.

One of the most famous of these early Christians was Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, A.D. 306-337. She claimed to have identified all the places mentioned in the gospels, including the site of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, 298 years after the death of Christ. She persuaded her son to erect the magnificent Church of the Resurrection, afterwards called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

She also claimed to have found the wood of the actual Cross upon which Christ was Crucified. All this gave a great stimulus to the pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

Jerusalem was captured by the Arabs from the Christians in the seventh century, A.D. 637, but they were remarkably tolerant and did nothing to prevent pilgrims from going to and from Jerusalem. And so from every country in Europe crowds of pilgrims equipped with little more than staff, wallet and scallop shell continued to find their way to Jerusalem.

But in the 11th century, 1071,- the Seljuk Turks of Central Asia burst into Palestine and conquered it. These fanatical and cruel conquerors treated the Christians with terrible violence and extortion. Those who managed to survive, brought back to their home countries lamentable tales of outrage and suffering. This gave rise to a mysteriousⁿ wave of spiritual indignation and enthusiasm which swept over Europe, and vast undisciplined masses of common people, under various leaders or none, set out for Palestine. The majority died miserably on the way, or perished at the hands of the Turks, or languished in the slave markets of the east.

Then follows the First Crusade in A.D. 1095, a military affair when disciplined forces restored the fortunes of the cause, and after capturing Nicea in 1097, Antioch in 1098, recaptured the Holy City itself in 1099 after besieging it for a month. Thus was founded the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem with Geoffrey de Bouillon as its first ruler. He declined the title of King refusing as it is said to wear a crown of earthly pomp where the Redeemed had worn a crown of thorns.

Although Jerusalem itself was cleared of the infidels, the Crusaders were not sufficiently numerous to occupy the whole of Palestine, and the Christian Pilgrims were still exposed to attacks of marauding infidel bands who had been driven out of Jerusalem, but who infested the roads between the seaports and Jerusalem. Thus it was that the pilgrims approaching the Holy City were exposed to daily hostility, to plunder and to death.

It was at this time that nine noble knights who had distinguished themselves in the siege of Jerusalem, led by a Burgundian Knight named Hugh de Payens and Godofroi de St. Omer, formed themselves into a holy brotherhood of arms and entered into a solemn compact to aid one another in clearing the highways of infidels, and in the protection of pilgrims as they passed through the passes of the mountains to the Holy City. They took an oath to the Patriarch of Jerusalem to guard the public roads, to forsake worldly chivalry of which human favour and not Jesus Christ was the cause. They renounced all earthly ambition and elected to live as ecclesiastics, embracing the threefold vow of chastity, poverty and obedience, and to fight with a pure mind for the supreme and true King, Jesus Christ. Filled with religious fervour and animated by the sacredness of the cause to which they had devoted their lives, they called themselves "The Poor Fellow Soldiers of Jesus Christ". They had no Church nor any permanent place of abode, but they rendered such good and acceptable service to the Christian pilgrims that Baldwyn the second, King of Jerusalem, in the year 1118 (19 years after the conquest of Jerusalem) granted them a place of residence within the sacred precincts of the Temple on Mount Moriah, close to the site of the ancient Temple of King Solomon. Henceforth the Order was known as "The Knights of Christ and of the Temple of King Solomon!"

Thus was founded in 1118 the famous brotherhood of Soldier-Monks- the Knights of the Temple or as we now call them the Knights Templar. Hugh de Payens was chosen as Superior of the new Order and Founder. At first their progress was very slow; few joined them in their humble task of protecting the poor pilgrims on their journey backwards and forwards from the seacoast to Jerusalem. At the end of nine years they had secured only seven recruits. Their clothing consisted of such garments as were given to them by the charity of the faithful.

Any gifts that were made to them were religiously spent on the poor pilgrims and none on themselves. In consequence, so great was their poverty that the two original founders of the Order, Hugh de Payens and Godfrei de Saint Omer, had but one horse between them. When the Order became prosperous and wealthy, this early experience of poverty was commemorated in the design on the seal of the Knights Templar which is two knights mounted on one horse.

Then the Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux gave them his powerful support and drew up for ^{their} their guidance rules of conduct which soon afterwards was embodied in a more elaborate code, and received the sanction of the Council of Troyes in 1128. By Pope Honorius they were given a distinctive habit of a pure white mantle, symbolical of innocence and purity, to which 20 years afterwards Pope Eugenius added the Red Cross- the seal and badge of martyrdom- thus proclaiming by the sign they bore the dedication of their lives to the defence of pilgrims and the Holy Land. Under Papal patronage the prosperity of the Order advanced by leaps and bounds. As their numbers increased the original object of the founders became merged in wider duties, and in addition to the protection of pilgrims to and from the seacoast, they made the defence of the kingdom of Jerusalem, and of all the Holy Places in Palestine a part of their Christian profession, and joining hands with the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, which Order had also been reconstituted on a military basis, they became the standing army of the Cross, and the bulwark in the east of the Christian faith. Their banner was of the black and white stripes called in old French Bauseant - an old French a piebald horse- which word became their war cry and bore the pious inscription - Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloria- "Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory"

The Bishop of Acre writing of the Templars Says " When the call to arms is given, they ask not the numbers of the foe but ~~only~~ where he may be found. Lions in war, they are docile as lambs in the cloister; stern soldiers in the field, in Church they are as hermits and monks.

To the enemies of Christ hard and fierce, but to Christians benign and gentle.

The battle flag which was borne before them which they call BEAUSEANT, is two-coloured white and black, proclaiming to the friends of Christ they are radiant and kindly, but to his enemies dark and terrible"

To an age which regarded knightly prowess very highly, the exploits of the Knights Templar made an irresistible appeal. The world saw in them the skill of the ~~accomplished~~ accomplished soldier united to the noblest religious enthusiasm. The popular mind regarded them as almost saints. Scions of the noblest houses flocked to join them. Prelates and Princes vied with one another to do them honour; wealth poured in upon them from the benefactions of the faithful everywhere. Enriched by the territories they had conquered from the unbelievers, they became possessed of landed estates in every country in western Europe, so that there was not a province in Christendom which did not contribute to their maintenance.

Their importance and status was further enhanced by a Papal Bull granted in 1162 by Pope Alexander III and reaffirmed ten years later.

This raised the Order of the Templars to a position of extraordinary privilege. They were made immune from all jurisdiction, lay and ecclesiastical other than that of the Holy See. They were regarded as totally independent, acknowledging no authority but that of the Supreme Pontiff.

For administrative purposes the area of the Order's operations was divided into Provinces, three in the East and eight in Europe. Each Province of the Order had a master of the Temple called a Prior. In England the master of the Temple the Provincial Prior sat in Parliament as a Peer of the Realm.

In each province there were a number of smaller houses of the Order controlled by Preceptors.

This word is used because the Master of the Temple in London when writing to the Preceptors began his letter with the formula Praecipimus tibi which means " We order you". That is why we call our local gatherings of Knights Templar " Preceptories" The Templars formed the nucleus of the Crusading armies during the whole period of the Crusades, i.e. 1100 - 1300. They were remarkable for their gallantry and indifference to death. " First in attack, last in retreat" is a true summary of their conduct. But their rashness was sometimes a cause of disaster as at the Battle Tiberias and Hittin in 1187 when they attempted to prevent the ~~Saladin~~ Saladin the Governor of Egypt under the Turks from taking Jerusalem.

At Tiberias the Knights of the Temple under the Grand Master, Gerard de Riderfort, and a few hundred Knights Templar provoked a hopeless ~~talk~~ ~~talk~~ with 7,000 Saracens, and all perished except four who cut their way through the Moslem host to Nazareth.

Judged by the accounts of contemporary writers, the courage and devotion to duty of the Templars was beyond all praise. In the early days few survived to die a natural death, but such was the splendour of their fame that fresh recruits were waiting to fill the vacant places in their decimated ranks.

The first settlement of the Order in England dates from the visit of Hugh de Payens, the Grand Master of the Order in 1128. He received grants from Henry 1 and King Stephen. He founded the Temple in England and left a Provincial Prior to look after the interest of the Order.

The Papal Bull referred to was called "Omne datum optimum" and was sent by the Pope to the then Grand Master of the Order Odo de St. Amand.

The original Temple in London was a modest building south of Holborn. Later on a more spacious building which still carries its ancient name was erected on the banks of the Thames.

Numerous manors, lands and advowsons were showered upon the Templars during the reign of Henry 11 and his sons, and many an English village today may be recognised as a former manor of the Templars or as the site of one of their houses by the prefix "Temple" for example- Temple Cowley in Oxfordshire, Temple Hurst or Temple Rowley in Leicestershire and numerous others. Matthew Paris, a monk of St. Albans in 1259, the historian, reckoned that altogether in his time the Templars possessed 9,000 manors and lordships in Christendom, and that the entire annual income of the Order was not less than 6 million pounds sterling.

All these vast possessions needed elaborate organisation. The Supreme authority rested with the Master of the Order in Palestine who ruled with almost unlimited power, and was regarded as the equal in status and dignity of any of the sovereigns in Europe.

~~In spite of St. Amand's gallant~~

Many instances of the gallantry of the Templars could be given, but in spite of St. Amand's gallant effort at Askelon, Jerusalem fell into the hands of Saladin. The whole of Syria then fell into his hands, and all that was left for the Christians was a narrow strip of land along the coast of Palestine. This was the starting point for a new effort. Then we see the romantic effort of Richard 1 King of England which resulted in him being imprisoned in a castle in the Tyrol.

Then we get three more crusades, and we read of the original spirit of the Knights Templar becoming obscured by less worthy motives. There are many hints that they sometimes sacrificed themselves to covetousness. However this may be the wealth of the Templars in the 13th century was immense, and when the cause of the Cross in Palestine began to wane, the Templars became the great international financiers and bankers of Europe.

The sudden and tragic suppression of the Templars in 1312 was, it is now generally agreed, due to their great wealth, and the hatred of them which had grown among the common people. Philip le Bel of France was largely actuated by a desire to secure their wealth, although he bestowed all the wealth and possessions of the Templars upon the Hospitallers.

He caused to be brought against the Templars 87 accusations of heresy, idolatry and unspeakable vice. The Pope Clement was now living at Avignon, in France, and entirely under the thumb of Philip le Bel was compelled to order the arrest of ~~King~~ Knight Templar all over Europe.

In France great numbers were put to the most fearful tortures, and compelled to confess themselves guilty of the most outrageous crimes. Those who confessed and then retracted were immediately burnt. 54 of them suffered this fate on Tuesday, 12th, May, 1310, and finally the Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was burned at the stake in 1314.

In England the fate of the Templars was not quite so terrible. Edward 1 at first refused to believe the charges brought against them, but in response to a Papal Bull on November 22nd 1307, the Templars all over England were suddenly arrested, and their property seized and passed into the king's Hands. The Master of the Temple in London and many of his order were confined to the Tower, and others imprisoned by the sheriffs of the counties in which they were found.

It is not certain that torture was used in England, but it is certain that out of 80 knights examined only 4 confessed.

The examination of the Templars is the longest and most interesting criminal trial of which we have any records in the Middle Ages.

At last in 1312 the Pope published the bull "ad Providam" transferring their goods and property to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John. The Order of the Temple was never definitely pronounced guilty, but was simply abolished. The transference of their property to the Knights of St. John meant that in France it would be under the control of Philip le Bel.

Knights Templar.

The Temple in London was granted by Edward 11 to the Early of Pembroke, from whom it passed to the king's most powerful and turbulent cousin, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. From him a number of students and Professors of Common Law gained a lease of the building, which they converted into the great Common Law University of England. From that time to this, the abode of the original Knights Templar has been devoted to a new kind of Templar, who as some humorist has quaintly observed - now defend one Christian from another as the old ones defended Christian from pagan. The question whether the Templars were really guilty of the charges brought against them has given rise to a historical controversy that has lasted for ~~nearly for nearly three~~ centuries. It is now generally agreed that they were not.

You will notice that I have said nothing about the connection of the original Knights Templar with the Masonic Order of that name today. Neither have I said anything about the influence of the Knights Templar on our Masonic ritual.

Was it they who brought the legend of Hiram Abiff from Jerusalem to England in the middle ages ?

It is very significant that some of the most important masonic symbols, the equilateral triangle, and the square surmounting two pillars, the level, the flaming star and the Tau Cross, the five pointed star in Salisbury Cathedral, the double triangle in Westminster Abbey, the circle and pentagon may be traced to the Knights Templar.

There is a masonic tradition that an alliance between the Templars and the masonic guilds in England definitely took place in the 4th century.

During the reign of Philip le Bel, seven Knights Templar escaped to Scotland in the guise of working masons and landed in the Island of Mull. Robert Bruce took them under his protection and seven years later they fought under his banner at Bannockburn against Edward 11 who had suppressed their order in England.

There is still controversy amongst masonic scholars whether Heredom, literally "The Mount of God" a name we meet with in the Rose Croix degree was not the name of a mountain in the Island of Mull.

Time does not allow me to deal with all these interesting problems which arise in connection with the Knights Templar degree, but I hope that I may have aroused a desire in some of you to attempt to make a further advancement in Masonic Knowledge.

Before A.D.1723 all Freemason's lodges were Christian Trinitarian as a matter of course.

Anderson's first charge in the Book of Constitutions in 1723 however opened wide the door to all good men and true provided that ' they were not stupid atheists nor irreligious libertines' This proclaimed a degree of toleration and freedom of thought quite incompatible with Roman Catholic doctrine and from then on the priests took a more and more hostile attitude to Freemasonry.

In 1738 the Book of Constitutions went further, and made the position even more clear and the Vatican took action in the form of a Bull ' In Eminenti Apostolatus Specula' issued by Pope Clement X11 on April 27th 1738. This sentenced all Roman Catholic Freemasons and those who assisted or sheltered them to excommunication unless they abjured their allegiance to Freemasonry.

Many chose the latter course but a considerable number remained active freemasons and defied the displeasure of the Vatican.

In the middle of the 18th century news was slow to travel, and the full force of the Bull was naturally felt by those countries nearest to Rome especially France, where masonry was strongly entrenched.

~~away~~ A way round the Papal edict was to graft colourful ceremonies with Christian ~~content~~ background and ritual content upon Craft Freemasonry, and escape condemnation by those who gave implicit obedience to the Bull.

As a result a number of degrees began to appear in France starting in 1740, among which two were especially prominent, viz.- a Masonic Templar Rite and a Rose Croix Degree, neither having any historical nor ritual connection with the old military Orders or the mediaeval Rosicrucians.

It is not possible to know when a chivalric knightly ritual was first introduced, the years 1730 and 1731 are mentioned as likely times for such a degree to have become known in France to the North of Paris, but there is no reliable evidence.

Baron von Hund, a wealthy landed nobleman of West Germany claimed to have been made a Knight Templar in Paris in 1743 and in 1751 he erected the first Templar Chapter on his own estate at Unwerde.

Three years later he was largely instrumental in forming the Rite of the ' Strict Observance' a mixture of Craft and Templar degrees. After a slow start it spread rapidly over both France and Germany.

Communications between the Continent and England were easy, seeing that intercourse was by sea, it is reasonable to assume that the larger ports provided the main means of entry, and it seems ~~probable~~ ~~extensive~~ ~~likely~~ that Masonic Templarism came to us from France.

In the earliest days of English Templarism encampments were found concentrated in the vicinity of the ports. The N.W. was from the first a Templar stronghold having come from France via Ireland. Starting in Liverpool, the degree fanned out into the surrounding countryside, so that ~~the~~ of the first 40 numbered encampments 10 were in Lancashire.

In a similar way Bristol had close connections with Munster, especially the port of Youghal, and from Bristol the degree spread south west to the West country, and from Plymouth and Penzance north west to the same area.

In 1780 there came the first attempt to form an organised ruling body for Templarism in England.

By 1780 there was in Bristol a flourishing Encampment known as the Camp of Baldwyn. It had intimate connections with the Irish K.T. through the port of Youghal in Munster, so much so that Irish workings - not only in K.T. but in other Orders- were closely akin to those of Baldwyn.

Acting in consort with Antiquity No.1 of Bath, Baldwyn issued a Charter of Compact which it circulated to as many encampments as it could reach inviting them to join in supporting ^{the} The Grand Encampment of ~~England~~ 'Knights Templar in England' (a title they taken unto themselves). This met with no response because encampments working under the shelter of Lodges or Chapters under the Grand Lodge of the Ancients were averse to severing their contacts with men they knew in exchange for coming under the rule of those they did not know. They had no desire to submit to the jurisdiction of Baldwyn whom they regarded as too autocratic. Moreover they suspected that they would be required to adopt the Baldwyn ritual, which was very different from their own.

Lastly the Grand Lodge of all England at York was working K.T. and had been doing so for some time.

In 1791 Thomas Dunckerley was Grand Superintendent of the R.A. Province of Bristol, as well as many others.

The attempt of Baldwyn having failed, the Bristol Knights and many others from the surrounding districts approached Dunckerley with the suggestion that he should take the lead in forming a Grand Encampment of Knights Templar for England and Wales. He was successful in attracting the adhesion of eight encampments, and three years afterwards the number had grown to 28 and by 1812 45 encampments were on the roll.

But these by no means represented the full extent of Templar working in England as a number of Knights continued to meet under lodges and chapters, and went on doing so after the union in 1813.

Thomas Dunckerley died in 1795, and his influence continued until 1812 when the Duke of Sussex was elected Grand Master ~~and~~ Lord Rancliffe was Grand Master from 1795 until 1800. For four years no appointment was made, until 1804 when the Duke of Kent (father of Queen Victoria) became Grand Master.

In 1807 he resigned and assumed the title of Grand Patron, and in his place Walter Rodwell Wright was appointed Grand Master, an office he filled with distinction until the appointment of the Duke of Sussex in 1812.

One year after accepting this appointment the Duke of Sussex was installed as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England.

When in 1817 Grand Lodge and the newly formed Grand Chapter took their stand that genuine Freemasonry consisted of three degrees with the Royal Arch, thereby repudiating all other degrees, the Duke was placed in a most embarrassing position. There was tremendous opposition to the extra-craft degrees. The Antis were powerful in both numbers and influence, the Pros were fewer and not as well organised.

THE DUKE He could not risk a re-occurrence of the recriminations, controversies, and difficulties which had attended the birth of the United Grand Lodge in 1813 and his apparent neglect of the order has proved an enigma to historians.

However, whilst apparently taking no interest he kept a skeleton ~~staff~~ office in existence with John Christian Burckhardt as Deputy Grand Master, and Robert Gill as Grand Registrar, to whom he gave tacit and loyal support, and whilst he neither summoned Grand Conclave nor issued warrants, Burckhardt and Gill got over this by giving dispensations until formal warrants could be issued.

In 1820 Robert Gill's house in Soho Square was burnt to the ground and all his records lost. This disastrous event is responsible for the loss of evidence of the ~~history~~ early history of several Orders, including K.T. Ark Mariner and others.

Burckhardt

Two years later Gill died, and for the next 24 years kept the Templar flag flying.

About 1830, the Duke ~~thereupon~~ openly assumed autocratic control, and whilst he allowed Grand Conclave to remain in a state of dormancy, he broke all precedent by issuing charters to Preceptories and by appointing Provincial Grand Commanders, without reference to the nearly defunct Grand Conclave.

This situation still holds good today, whereby the issue of warrants and patents resides solely in the hands of the Grand Master.

The Duke died in 1843 and Burckhardt automatically became Acting Grand Master and in that capacity he warranted two Preceptories Viz. Holy Cross at Axminster and Royal Gloucester at Southampton. These he signed

" In the absence of the M.E. and Supreme Grand Master"

J.C. Burckhardt. P.D. Grand Master and
Grand Sub- Prior

Burckhardt's next move was to summon Grand Conclave from its prolonged slumber and appoint new officers to it. At its meeting on 27th February, 1846 Colonel Charles Kemeys Tynte, a personal friend of the Duke of Sussex was elected Grand Master and installed by Burckhardt, who then resigned his office of Deputy Grand Master, but retained the office of Grand Sub- Prior until his death in 1848.

For the next ten years Grand Conclave relapsed into its old state of coma, although things did improve, and in 1853 a full revision of the statutes was issued, and an attempt made to set out a standard ritual, a draft of which was circulated to the encampments and met with general approval.

In 1864 the Statutes allowed knights to dispense with the apron and this was soon accepted throughout the order. In the same year it was suggested that the Royal Arch qualification be dispensed with, but this was defeated and the R.A. remains obligatory.

The practice arose from the fact that when the K.T. order was introduced into England it was always shown first in Royal Arch Chapters, but there is no logical reason for its retention, on the contrary why should a Christian Order of Masonic Chivalry have any association with a purely Jewish ceremony.

The only discordant note in this period of consolidation came from the Baldwyn encampment at Bristol. At some time in the Sussex era Baldwyn had broken away from Grand Conclave and assumed its original independent status, closely allied with Antiquity No.1 of Bath. Prolonged and far from fraternal correspondence passed between London and Bristol, and in 1857-1858 Baldwyn warranted five new encampments. This was gross provocation and was met by energetic action on the part of Grand Conclave.

Sufficient pressure was brought to bear that a 'Charter of Compact' was signed in 1862.

Under the compact it was agreed that:-

- 1) The City and County of Bristol should be a self contained Province.
- 2) Baldwyn to take precedence of all encampments on the Roll.
- 3) The other five to rank according to their warrant dates.
- 4) Existing members to be registered without fee.
- 5) They should continue to work the special Baldwyn ritual.

Of the five encampments warranted by Baldwyn only three survive, Baldwyn itself, Antiquity No.1 Bath, and Percy No.57 at Adelaide, South Australia, which last still uses the Baldwyn ritual.

Once this controversy had been settled the progress of the Order was satisfactory up to 1872, and there were 130 encampments on the roll. Friendly relations had been established with sister jurisdictions and with the Ruling Bodies of other Orders, and the Grand Encampment of the U.S.A. had opened negotiations for a treaty. Even Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter, if not exactly enthusiastic, were at least beginning to turn a blind eye- in view of the membership they could hardly do otherwise.

At this time a number of Knights conferred together and suggested that it would be advantageous to amalgamate the Grand Conclaves of England, Ireland, and Scotland into one Convent General, with a ritual common to all. Scotland withdrew from the discussions but England and Ireland went ahead with the scheme and produced a draft of new Statutes, which was ratified in 1872, and at its first meeting in 1873 H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was elected and installed Grand Master of the United Orders of Ireland and England. Each country was to have its own National Great Priory to govern its domestic concerns, and the Grand Master appointed the Earl of Limerick, Grand Prior of England. Each National Priory was subject to the over-riding authority of the Convent General.

When the Provinces and the Preceptories had had time to realise the full implications of the changes, they combined to fight them tooth and nail, and the Headquarters was flooded with protests all couched in much the same terms.

The principal objections were:-

- 1) The omission of the word 'Masonic' in the title of the Order, which would have brought it within the scope of the Secret Societies Act of 1799.
2. The claim that the modern Order derived directly from the Mediaeval Military Knights Templar.
3. The wholesale changes in nomenclature, e.g. Encampments into Preceptories, Commander into Preceptor etc.,
4. The abolition of 'Past Ranks' which meant a Great or Provincial Officer reverted to Knight or Preceptor at the end of his term of office, to say nothing of the expense of his regalia being altered twice.

5. The creation of Knights Grand Cross and Knights Commander being in the sole discretion of the Grand Master.
6. The effect of concentrating all executive power in a small caucus in London.
7. The failure to indicate that the new Constitution was to be presented, passed and put into operation on December 13th, 1872 without opportunity for discussion and consideration. Past Commander Richard Woof of St. Amand Preceptory was one of the four Commissioners selected for the purpose of co-ordinating.

During the next ten years, many drastic amendments were forced through National Great Priory, but the machinery of Convent-General was so cumbersome that there was the greatest delay in getting the necessary confirmation. An example of the contempt in which Preceptories held Convent-General was the reception given to its official ritual. In England it was entirely cold shouldered and each Preceptory continued to use the ritual to which it was accustomed.

In spite of the widespread opposition and of the many protests some of the unpopular changes by Convent-General were adopted and have so remained.

The word 'Masonic' was dropped from the title, and surprisingly not restored until 2-3 years ago. Changes in nomenclature have persisted and the term 'Encampment' is now no longer used.

On July 19th, 1895 Convent-General quietly expired and was heard of no more.

A Concordat was signed between the three ruling bodies in 1930 agreeing to similar action to be adopted by each in certain fundamental principles affecting the order.

The Duke of Connaught was Grand Maater for 39 years from 1901 until 1939.

After the death of the Duke of Sussex, Burkhardt revived Grand Conclave from its long sleep and one of its first efforts was to establish a 'Working Party' to study the various workings then in existence.

The working party scanned the whole field, but eventually modelled the new ritual upon that which had been in use for many years by the T.I. Chapter of Observance, The Royal Naval Encampment (now No.2) and the Cross of Christ Encampment (now No.6). These three went back to before 1791, and apart from redrafting the opening and closing, it is identical with the form used today. This ritual is quite unlike any ritual of any Order anywhere else in the world.

It embodies almost all the features of a complete Rite of ~~Initiation~~ Initiation.

~~Ritual Garments~~

Tyling.

Proper Preparation.

Ritual Garments.

Pilgrimage.

Warfare.

Penance.

Death.

Rest and Refreshment.

A new name.

Rebirth.

Enthronement and Proclamation and the long journey 'Home' across the mystical 'Middle Sea'.

V.D.S.A. Initials which are graven upon the rings have at least two interpretations one "Veut Dieu Sainte Amour" that is the Will of God Divine Love. The other 'Volonte Dieu Soit Accompli' the will of God must be accomplished.

Beauceant. Spelt this way the word is peculiar to the Order of the Temple and has no real meaning. There are a number of different spellings, with different meanings. Bantant and Beaucant are two, both meaning a black horse with white socks; another similar to the former is known in Scotland also being applied to a horse or other four legged animal with white legs. This combination of black and white presumably explained the use of Beauceant as a name for one of the Temple banners. The top half implies death to the enemy and the lower half means victory to the soldiers of the cross. It is said to have been the battle cry of the old military knights when they cried "Beauceant".

Vexillum Belli. In classical Latin the word Vexillum meant a flag consisting of a piece of cloth fixed to a cross bar on a staff. The strict translation therefore is a War flag.