



A little Knight Templar news does you good

## Staying in touch

Dear Brother Knights

In a stirring and informative Address a few days ago, the Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master, Paul Raymond Clement, said:

“I do thank you for the loyalty shown to your various Preceptories and the encouragement you have given to your fellow Brother Knights. It has undoubtedly been, and continues to be, a difficult time for us all, but as someone once said to me,



‘It can’t rain forever’, and I know that we will remain true to the Order and firm in our Faith until we eventually emerge from this dark episode.”

To hear the full Address please go to <https://markmasonshall.org/orders/order-of-malta>

Referring to the meeting of the Great Priory of Malta which would normally have taken place last week, he said:

“Although we are prohibited from meeting today, nevertheless the wheels of Great Priory, and indeed, all the Mark Masons Hall Orders, have been turning much the same as ever and we owe the Great Vice-Chancellor and the staff at the Chancery our heartfelt thanks for continuing the work ensuring that the Order is functioning and, most importantly, will be there for us, as we would wish, when these troubled times are behind us”.

Regulations and restrictions come and go, as we know, and therefore all Preceptory Registrars are urged to consult with the Provincial office when considering the resumption of meetings, in order to ensure that they are fully compliant. We are very much here to help you and support you.

Meanwhile, I hope that this newsletter enables you to stay in touch with the Order - and with one another - and to enjoy the worldwide fascination of Knight Templar freemasonry.

Yours in the bonds of the Order

R E Kt Paul Calderwood



# The Churches of Gower and their Templar and Hospitaller connections

E Kt Henry Barnes of Holy Palestine Preceptory in Swansea was one of those who responded to the suggestion which I made earlier this year, that we explore Templar and Hospitaller links in South Wales, and the following interesting article is a most welcome result



Many churches in Gower were controlled by the Hospitallers:- Ilston, Llanrhidian, Landimore (Cheriton), Loughor, Port Eynon, Penmaen, Penrice and Rhossili and the one in Llanmadoc was owned by the Knights Templar, before passing to the Hospitallers after the dissolution of the Templars in 1312 by papal bull.

Sadly no obvious evidence remains in any of these churches of their 'Knightly' connection as many of them were heavily restored by the Victorians. Also none of them had the circular nave often associated with Knights Templar/Hospitaller churches, unlike Temple Church and the original Clerkenwell Priory Church, both in London, which were based on the round church in Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Despite this, it is fascinating to visit these Gower churches and learn of their history. As a taster I shall give a brief description of a few of them:

**Llanmadoc (St. Madoc's)** The church here is unique in the Gower in that it is not just dedicated to a Saint but was reputedly founded by one: St. Madoc in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The advowson <sup>(1)</sup> of the Church of St. Madoc together with the watermill and land was given to the Templars of Garway around 1156 by Margaret, Countess of Warwick. It passed subsequently to the Hospitallers of Dinmore (which was the third or fourth most important Commandery in the country).



**Cheriton (St. Cadoc's)** The present tiny 'Cathedral of Gower' was probably built in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century to replace the one at Landimore, abandoned due to the encroachment of the sea. The advowson of the Church of St. Cadoc was given to the Hospitallers of Slebech <sup>(2)</sup> by William de Turbeville c1165. He also gifted the churches of Llanrhidian (St. Rhidian and St. Illtyd's) and Rhossili (St. Mary's). The tower of St. Cadoc's, without transepts, is between the nave (where the congregation sit) and chancel (where the altar stands) an uncommon design in South Wales.



Eynon (St. Cattwg's)

The church was founded during the 6<sup>th</sup> century by St. Cattwg's missionary to Gower, St. Cennydd. The present building dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the advowson was given to the Knights of St. John by Robert de la Mare around 1165.



Why did these wealthy local land-owners give the churches and lands to the Knights Hospitaller/Templar? It was the belief at the time that by helping the Hospitallers in their work protecting Christians in the East and caring for the sick, they would receive God's blessing. Also by giving such charitable donations status and respect was achieved. Donations tended to be made by Knights who had been on crusade or by those salving their conscience for not going on crusade.

Footnotes

<sup>(1)</sup> *Advowson: the right to appoint the parish priest but also to retain the tithes (e.g. corn, wood, livestock) and the church fees.*

<sup>(2)</sup> *Slebech (Pembs): was the headquarters of the Hospitallers in West Wales. It was the richest Commandery outside Clerkenwell and at one time had no less than 31 churches attached to it.*

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**Knights of the Far East**

Kt Gary Lillywhite of Menevia Preceptory in Aberaeron recently sent me another interesting item for the newsletter. Part of his message reads as follows



*Here is another K. T. item from my personal collection of regalia that I would like to share with you. A 1970s Provincial Constable's mantle badge from The Provincial Priory of The Far East. This mantle badge was owned by E.Kt. A H Carter, who served in 1973 as Preceptor of Victoria Preceptory No.78. Hong Kong, then as Past 2nd Provincial Constable, Far East Priory.*

*In 1990 he was Preceptor of St. Peter & St. Paul Preceptory No.379 Marlborough Wiltshire. This mantle badge is some 50+ years old, probably made in England, travelled to Hong Kong, then back to England and finally coming to rest in my personal collection in Wales. I suppose in a way that by my sharing a photo of this item with you, it is still travelling.*

**This message prompted me to ask E Kt Barry Stubbings of Reynoldston who belongs to several Preceptories in and around Swansea for some additional background (Barry first became a member of KT in Hong Kong). On the next page is his most illuminating reply.**



## **An Oriental First Constable's Mantle Badge**

This Constable's Mantle Badge for the Province of The Far East is thought to date back to the 1970's and to have been worn by Eminent Knight A. H. Carter, a past Preceptor of Victoria Preceptory no 78 meeting in Hong Kong. The 1985 Year Book of the District of Hong Kong and the Far East indicates that Brother Carter was a prolific and prominent mason in Hong Kong in the 1970's. Carter was a member of United Services Lodge no 1341 whilst in Hong Kong and wrote a history of that Lodge to celebrate its centenary in 1970. He received the distinct honour of being appointed President of the Hong Kong District Board of Benevolence in 1973 and 1974. Besides this mantle badge his outlay on regalia in one year would have been considerable. All masonic regalia at that time was sourced in Britain and often brought to Hong Kong by the kind services of masonic air crew working for Cathay Pacific Airways and British Overseas Air Corporation.

Masonry in the then colonies of India, Hong Kong, Singapore and in the treaty ports of China was largely introduced by Royal Navy and Army detachments at those locations, often in conjunction with resident employees of The East India Company. Craft masonry was established in Hong Kong in 1844 with the consecration of Royal Sussex Lodge no. 501 under the English Constitution. This was followed in 1845 by Zetland Lodge no. 525 and in 1864 by Victoria Lodge 1026, my mother Lodge. In 1848 Royal Sussex Lodge transferred to the treaty port of Canton, and then again in 1863 to Shanghai.

Templar Masonry in the Far East began with the Celestial Encampment in Shanghai in 1863 Followed by the Victoria Encampment in Hong Kong in 1864. The Victoria Encampment went on to become Victoria Preceptory & Priory No. 78 which has met continuously in Hong Kong apart from the period of occupation by the Japanese. The Celestial Encampment in Shanghai ceased to operate in 1900 possibly to facilitate the opening of an encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America. This however did not come to fruition and after several unsuccessful petitions to America, a petition was made to London in 1911 to re-form the Shanghai Preceptory and Priory with interestingly, a majority of the petitioners being senior Masons in the American jurisdictions. This Preceptory met in Shanghai until 1954 when all masonry ceased on account of the unsettled local conditions. The warrant and readily movable artefacts of the Preceptory were transferred to Hong Kong where meetings continued, initially under the banner of Victoria Preceptory.



*The Zetland Masonic Hall, Hong Kong 1865–1944  
(destroyed by American bombing)*

But what of Brother A. H. Carter? Records show that he served as Preceptor and Prior for Victoria Preceptory in 1973, becoming a Provincial Officer in 1975. He eventually returned to Great Britain and went on to become Preceptor and Prior of St. Peter & St. Paul Preceptory No 379, Marlborough, Wiltshire in 1990 and, a 1<sup>st</sup>



Provincial Constable in the Provincial Priory of Dorset and Wiltshire. With a certain degree of licence and taking account of most long-term employees in the Far East benefitting from retirement around the age of 55, it is possible that Brother Carter was born in the 1920's. There are records of an Anthony H Carter, an accountant, born in 1924, married with two children travelling between Singapore and Great Britain by steamer in 1957 and 1959. Finally, Anthony Carter appears in the electoral roll for Salisbury, Wiltshire in 2003/04. Is this the same Brother A.H. Carter, who possibly relocated or was relocated with his work from Singapore to Hong Kong and who proudly wore this mantle badge.

***Em. Kt. Barry J. Stubbings P. Gt. Aide de Camp***