

History of  
Gondemar  
Preceptory No. 16  
Brockville, Ontario  
100 Years  
Instituted March 8th, 1872  
to  
1972

Reproduced October 24, 2014  
R. Em. Kt. Kenneth M. Collard

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## **HISTORY OF GONDEMAR PRECEPTORY No. 16, K.T.**

Gondemar Preceptory and Raymond Dupuis Priory of Knights Templar and Knights of Malta was Instituted and organized on the 6 th day of March A.D. 1872, A.O. 754 at the Village of Maitland in the County of Grenville and the Province of Ontario by Most Em. Sir Knight W. J. B. McLeod Moore then Grand Prior of the Order for the Dominion of Canada and the Island of Newfoundland under the Banner of the Sovereign Grand Conclave of England and Wales, and the dependencies of the British Crown. His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales being Grand Master General.

The following Fraters, whose names are inscribed on the application, became the Charter Members:

George Langley - - - - - P. P.  
Robert Glasford Harvey - - - Registrar  
John Satchell - - - - - Capt. of Gaurd  
Septimus Fowler Ramsey - - - Sword Bearer  
Robert Ramsey - - - - - Treas.  
Charles Schomburg Elliott - - Sub Marshal  
Theodore H. Tebbs - - - - - Chaplain  
George H. Corbett - - - - - Organist  
John Dumbrille - - - - - Constable  
John Easton - - - - - Marshall

The Regular Conclaves were held four times a year, namely on the Thursday nearest the full moon in the months of January, April, July and October.

Minutes of each Conclave were regularly kept by Em. Frater George Longley, from the organization of the Preceptory up to the election and installation of Officers in 1880, when Frater Turner Koyle was elected Em. Preceptor and Frater John Moore elected and installed Registrar.

As before stated Gondemar Preceptory received its warrant and Charter from the Grand Conclave of England. Therefore, it may be proper to state the changes that have taken place in the Sovereign Grand Bodies since our Charter was issued, also since the introduction of Templarism into British North America.

Early in 1854 application was made to the Grand Conclave of Knights Templar in England and Wales for a warrant to establish a Knight Templar Encampment at Kingston, Ontario. This was granted and issued, dated Mar. 10, 1854, there being no other Templar body at that time in British North America. From this encampment, The Premier in Canada, sprang the Sovereign Great Priory.

A Provincial Grand Conclave was formed for the Provinces of Canada at Kingston on the 9th day of October A.D. 1855 with Supreme Grand Master Col. W. J. B. McLeod Moore as Provincial Grand Commander under the Grand Conclave of England.

In 1868 the name of the **Provincial Grand Conclave** was changed to that of Grand Prior of Canada, consequently in the political changes, constituting Canada a Dominion, the title of the Grand Commander was changed to **Grand Prior** with authority over the whole Dominion but still subordinate to the Grand Conclave of England and remained so until the changes in the name of the Order in England and the formation of a Convent General when on the 10th of August 1876, the **Grand Priory of Canada** became one of the Convention of Nationalities comprising the Convent General under the title of the **National Great Priory of Canada**, independent of the National Great Prior of England.

In July 1884 the Great Prior of Canada separated itself from Convent General and formed itself into the **Sovereign Great Priory of Canada** and was acknowledged as such by the Convent General of England and Grand Superintendent of the United States of America.

Col. W. J. B. McLeod Moore was appointed **Sovereign Grand Master** of the Order in Canada and held that exalted Office until his death in Sept. 1890.

In 1892-3 **Gondemar Preceptory** passed through a series of trials and financial difficulties which nearly extinguished it and during the year 1893 meetings were held after Jan. 26, 1893 until May 14, 1894 when a fresh effort was made by several Fraters assisted by Grand Master Shepherd of Toronto to put new life in the Preceptory in which they succeeded without much difficulty.

At a Regular Assembly of **Gondemar Preceptory** held in the Masonic Hall Maitland on the 20th of Nov. 1884, it was moved by Em. Sir Knight John Easten seconded by Em. Kt. V.H. Moore, that in compliance with the advice of the Grand Master General, the Gondemar Preceptory be moved from Maitland to Brockville and that a meeting be held monthly on the forth Thursday of each month.

At the last meeting held in Maitland on April 19, 1885 it was moved by Frater Geo. Gale, seconded by Frater John Easton that Frater Lafontaine be instructed to pack the furniture, Charter, etc. to be moved to the new quarters in Brockville.

The Minutes of the first meeting held in Salem Lodge Rooms, Tompkins Block, Brockville on Thursday Evening, July 2nd, 1885 contains the following records:

\*\*The Preceptory was opened in due form at 7 p.m. with the following Officers present

Rt. Em. Sir Knight S. S, Lazier, Provincial Prior, in the chair  
Em. Sir Knight David Taylor, - Preceptor  
Em. Sir Knight V. M. Moore, - Marshal  
Sir Knight Geo. Gale, - - - Constable  
Em. Sir Knight John Easton, - - Sub-Marshal  
Em. Sir Knight Amos Chatfield, - Registrar.

The notice calling the Assembly was made.

The Minutes of the last Regular Assembly held on April 19, 1885 at Maitland were read and confirmed.

Applications were received from Companions

George Henry Weatherhead ;  
Charles Harding Fitzsimmons ;  
Edward A. Buckmait ;  
Thomas Kearns ;

All members of Sussex and Salem Lodges and Sussex Chapter, recommended and vouched for by Em. Sir Knights V. H. Moore and John Easton.

The Em. Preceptor appointed, Em. Sir Knight V. H. Moore and Sir Knight Geo. Gale on the above applications to report at the next Regular Assembly.

An account was presented by Frater Lafontaine amounting to \$6.50 for services in packing furniture etc. which on being found correct was on motion ordered paid out of the first funds received by the Preceptory.

It was moved by Frater John Easton, seconded by Frater Geo. Gale that the thanks of the Officers and Members of **Gondemar Preceptory** were due and were hereby tendered to the Officers and Brethren of Salem Lodge for their great kindness in giving Gondemar Preceptory the use of their rooms free of charge for one year."

During the years that followed up to 1891 **Gondemar Preceptory** had considerable difficulty both financial and through lack of members in getting enough Officers to hold meetings. At the assembly held on March 26th, 1891 they decided to start drilling on Meeting nights that there was no work and from this the Preceptory started to uniform.

During the year 1894 the Preceptory began to pick up, a number of new candidates presented themselves and from this date on the Preceptory seemed to gain new life.

On April 10th, 1895 Gondemar received a visit from Deputy Grand Master W. H. Whyte.

Moved to new **Quarters** in the Metropolitan block in April 1st, 1899. The first meeting in the new quarters being held on Thursday the 27th day of April 1899.

At the regular Assembly of Gondemar on Dec. 26th, 1901 Sir Knights Dewey, Kyle and Brown were made a committee to make inquiry as to the purchase of uniforms.

During the year 1901, fifteen new members were added and the annual report of Jan. 23, 1902 showed a balance in the Bank of \$340.38 from this time on the Preceptory continued to flourish and at this Assembly Sir Knight Geo. K. Dewey was appointed drill instructor and regular drills commenced.

The first Field Day or Chapter of Instruction was held in Brockville on Feb. 25th, 1902, which was called on command of the Supreme Grand Master, Most Em. Sir Knight David L. Carley, who was accompanied by the Provincial Prior, Rt. Em. Sir Knight Wm. Bowden. At this Assembly the following Preceptories were represented by Hugh de Payens, Premier No. 1 Kingston 7, King Baldwin Preceptory, No. 6 Belleville, 10, Ottawa Preceptory - No. 32 Ottawa 5, Richard Cour de Leon No. 7; Montreal 6, Ogdensburg Commandery No. 54, Ogdensburg 19, and Gondemar Preceptory No. 16 Brockville 30.

The Sir Knights of Gondemar Preceptory, accompanied by the Sir Knights of Ogdensburg Commandery, attended Church Service on the Sunday of Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1902, in the George Street Methodist Church, this being **Gondemar Preceptory's** first appearance in uniform.

The members of Gondemar Preceptory attended in a Body in uniform the meeting of Great Priory held at Ottawa in Aug. 1902.

Attended Church Service with Ogdensburg Commandery in Ogdensburg in April 12, 1903.

Attended Meeting of Great Priory in Sarnia Aug. 1903, took part in drill competition, extended invitation to Great Priory to meet in Brockville in 1904.

Assisted at the Institution of Cornwall Preceptory No. 47 in Cornwall on May 11, 1907.



Field Day of Gondemar Preceptory on May 3, 1922,  
attended by the following:

Most Em. Sir Knight E. A. Evans,	Deputy Grand Master
Rt. Em. Sir Knight E. C. Garbutt,	Provincial Prior of Kingston and Ottawa District
Em. Sir Knight Wm. Clarke,	Pres. Preceptor of Ottawa Preceptory
Em. Sir Knight John Maher,	Pres. Preceptor of St. George's Preceptory, Picton
Em. Sir Knight R. A. Backus,	Pres. Preceptor, King Baldwin Preceptory, Belleville
Em. Sir Knight V. W. Bryant,	Pres, Preceptor, Hugh de Payens Preceptory, Kingston.

also 153 Sir Knights at the Assembly, 7 Companions received the Order of the Red Cross, 10 the Order of the Temple and 35 the Order of Malta. It was after this meeting that Most Em. Sir Knight Abraham Shaw took a heart attack and died at the station.

Gondemar Preceptory moved to the new Masonic Memorial Temple, George Street, Brockville and held their first meeting in the new rooms on Mar. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1923 and towards the building and fitting of which they had in Sept. 1922 donated the sum of \$3,000.00 out of the funds of the Preceptory.

Since 1940 we have had the pleasure of receiving many Grand Masters, on their official visits—

March 30, 1940-41,	M. Em. Kt. F. Davey Diamond;
April 14, 1945,	M. Em. Kt. Ross L. Dobbin;
April 12, 1946,	M. Em. Kt. J. Stanley Hoyt;
April 22, 1949,	M. Em. Kt. B. Bailey;
Oct. 10, 1952,	Rt. Em. Kt. Fred G. Mann, Deputy. Grand. Master and Acting Grand Master;
April 23, 1956,	M. Em. Kt. P. S. Cochrane;
April 27, 1964,	M. Em. Kt. J. W. Carson;
May 20, 1972,	M. Em. Kt. William Stanley Wright; plus M. Em. Kt's. J. H. Eydt and W. E. Montgomery who came to our Christmas Observance Ceremonies.

We held our *first Christmas Observance Ceremony in 1950* and also in 1951- 1952-1953, then a lapse until 1958 and in 1959 M. Em. Kt. J. H. Eydt was our guest speaker.

Again another lapse of a few years until 1966 and it has been observed each year since. The late M. Em. Kt. Walter E, Montgomery came and addressed us in his term of Supreme Grand Master.

It should be noted that through the untiring efforts of the late Rt. Em. Kt. G. Harold Armstrong, he was instrumental in reviving interest and having the observance become an annual ceremony.

May 7th, 1947 we celebrated our 75th Anniversary by holding a well attended Field Day and on May 2nd, 1953 the Provincial Grand Prior held a successful Field Day with 90 members present.

**Gondemar Preceptory** have had a number of Fraters who have been very active and the considerable success is due to the great interest taken in the work by these men.

It would be impossible to name all the fraters who contributed so much as we had many who became Provincial Priors, Presiding Preceptors and ritualists of the highest order, assisted by many Sir Knights all of whom were a credit to Knight Templarism in Brockville and District.

Since 1910 the following fraters of Gondemar Preceptory have been Provincial Grand Priors of the Kingston-Ottawa District

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- \*Rt. Em. Kt. J. A. Derbyshire
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. H. B. Smith
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. T. Dowell
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. G. H. Armstrong
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. G. W. Morrison
  - Rt. Em. Kt. C. H. Bell
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. E. A. MacKenzie
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. E. L. McMullen
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. F. J. Edwards
  - Rt. Em. Kt. G. H. Gilmer
  - \*Rt. Em. Kt. G. E. Board A
  - Rt. Em. Kt. G. B. Carlev
  - \* Deceased

Gondemar Preceptory has been fortunate in its selection of Registrars and the following is a list of those who served in this capacity —

- \*1885-1908 Em. Kt. John Easton
- \*1908-1914 Sir Kt. W. H. Albery
- \*1914-1942 Rt. Em. Kt. G. W. Morrison
- \*1942-1945 Sir Kt. John R. Bell #
- \*1945-1946 Em. Kt. A. J. Newark
- 1946-1948 Sir Kt. G. C. Markell
- 1948-1958 Rt. Em. Kt. C H Bell
- \*1959-1960 Sir Kt. F. J White
- \*1960-1964 Rt. Em. Kt. E. L. McMullen
- 1964-1970 Sir Kt. J. P. Mephram
- 1971- 1978 V. Em. Kt. R. H. Wallace
- 1978-86 V. Em.Kt. H Tesselman
- 1986 - Em. Kt. H.F. Warren

\* Deceased

In closing, a few lean years (which seem to go in cycles) **Gondemar Preceptory** has been very fortunate in having good officers, candidates in goodly numbers with an average of better than 15 per year for the next 10 years, and a good attendance at all Assemblies, and to hope is that the next 100 years will be as fruitful and beneficial to all Knight Templarism.

## NOTES

### ORDER OF MERIT

Sir Kt. Harold Blanchard May 26/80  
R. Em. Kt. George Patterson 1979  
R. Em. Kt. Harold Wallace 1984  
\*R. Em. Kt. Harold Warren 1990-92

\* First member (in district to hold office for two terms in over 100 years.