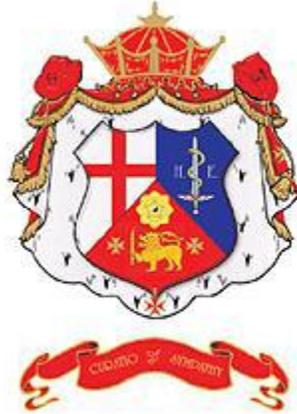


Ecumenical Royal Medical-Humanitarian Order

Knights of St John of Jerusalem

(Knights of Charity)



A HISTORICAL NOTE

PRESTIGIOUS ACCOLADES

Man has invented many accolades throughout history to recognize his fellowmen. Knighthoods are the honours most widely known and highly coveted.

The institution of knighthood has a meaning and history which spans centuries, continents and oceans. Many people have quaint notions on the subject. It is, therefore, necessary to give a clear picture of how the institutions of knighthood originated and spread all over the world, particularly for those who wish to bear this title with dignity.

Influenced largely by England, her history and literature, due more than anything else to the colonial years of British rule throughout the world, the picture that comes to one's mind is that of knighthood as a British institution, centred round its kings and queens, invested at Buckingham Palace. Sir Thomas Mallory's 'Morte d'Arthur' and, more especially, the poet Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' have shaped our thoughts on:- "The noble order of the Round Table, which was a conceptual image of the mighty world".

The legend of 'Excalibur', the magic sword, and the 'arm clothed in white Semite, mystic and wonderful' that arose out of the lake and how King Arthur rowed across and retrieved it and, not only 'wore it like a king', but created a band of knights to fight injustices and uphold knighted Sir Francis Drake in Plymouth when he returned from the historic wars after 'singeing the King of Spain's beard'. College history books describe vividly how Sir Walter Raleigh covered a puddle of muddy water with his brand new multi-coloured cape, for the Good

Queen Bess to walk over. That was a real knightly trait. Sir Philip Sidney, courtier, poet, states man, soldier who at the battle of Zutphen handed the cup of cold water meant for him, to a dying soldier with the classic humanitarian statement 'thy need is greater than mine'; another gentlemanly trait of a good knight.

When it comes to glory and sometimes to power, a piece of enamel and a stretch of ribbon goes a very long way. Yet, to reduce the honours system to a speck of metal and a yard of fabric is about as revealing as saying a human being is 90 percent water or the Sistine Chapel paintings are a few kilos of paint. There is more than an ego massage in these historic accolades, despite their shortfalls.

The significance and value of knighthoods today, is in fact, the subject of great debate. Like most of our "great debates", it is an institutionalised one. its boundaries were drawn up by the socialist historian and secular saint R. H. Tawney, and the classical scholar and Oxford wit Sir Maurice Bowra. Tawney, speaking for the handful that declines a decoration (about a mere 5 per cent), penned the tersest of refusals when offered a peerage by Ramsay MacDonald in 1933: "Thank you for your letter. What harm have I ever done the Labour Party?"

Sir Maurice, who, to his great delight, was made a Companion of Honour in his twilight years, simply said: "You should always accept an honour because of the pain it brings to your enemies" (1.).

Tony Benn, the British statesman who would like to sweep away the whole elaborate edifice and replace it with a system of "parliamentary medals", reckons that in Britain they endlessly discuss such matters as a surrogate for doing anything about them. He has a point; only scandal brings about change. The last time the Establishment in Britain sent in a "snatch squad" to rescue its beloved system from political taint was 50 years and 11 prime ministers ago.

When George V could endure no more the anguish caused by Lloyd George's sale of honours ([100,000 was the going rate for a peerage in 1919), a Royal Commission was summoned which in 1922 recommended the creation of a Political Honours Scrutiny Committee to protect the monarch (2.), This same committee, boosted by new members in the persons of Lords Shackleton, Carr and Franks, rode to the rescue again when Lord Wilson's Resignation Honours (the notorious "*Lavender Notepaper List*" of 1976) brought the system once more into ridicule and contempt, no less disrepute.

They insisted on more time to examine the names before they were borne across St. James' Park (3.) for final approval from the Queen.

They demanded and got more information from the Chief Whip on precisely why this person or that was being offered a change of status; or in some cases, the power to legislate over the rest of men as a member of the House of Lords.

However, both major British political parties rely on what one student of honours, „John Walker, has called 'the mercenaries of the class war'

The unions and big businesses to keep them financially afloat it was Walker's researches, published in his book, "**The Queen Has Been Pleased**," which demonstrated that a senior industrialist effectively doubled his chances of a knighthood or a peerage after 1979, if his company had donated substantially to Conservative Party funds.

1. indeed, to the majority of "friends" as well!
2. This committee ended up by decorating themselves.
3. to Buckingham Palace.

CONNOTATIONS

A knighthood has three connotations. Above all, it is the common man's progress towards a place in society controlled through the ages by the aristocracy and vested interests.

This is the most important connotation to us living as we do in the age of the common man. Also, for true religionists who believe that it is not by birth that a Brahmin is made, but by merit won. In mediaeval society where aristocrats and so called blue-blood remained an unchanging caste, knighthood was the door, through which the common man could rise to an equity status with Princes, Earls and Lords. The second connotation of the institution of knighthood is the opportunity it gave the sovereign or government to reward those who make lasting contributions to humanity.

Thirdly, knighthood brought with it a code of honour, an education in chivalry, rudiments of which have passed down to this day.

Knighthood is at once both ancient and modern

Ancient because the conceptions can be traced back to the greater day of Rome Modern not only because, although shorn, of most of its ancient trappings, it continues to live in the sovereign's birthday honours as well as on the national days of governments. Since in the dark ages when 'life was rough, brutish and short', it upheld **'Fundamental and human rights'**

In Roman times, the Latin word 'miles' was the equivalent of knight. Some say that Rome borrowed the concept from the Franks and Teutons in the German forests.

Tacitus, the Roman writer, is almost sure that, the concept is Germanic. After the fall of Rome, the institution of Knighthood passed to the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne. There it got a Christian admixture. In Asia, similar honours existed from pre-Christian times. During the colonial era many such honours were suppressed.

Through Charlemagne's territories it entrenched itself in all the roman language speaking countries. With the Norman conquest of England in 1066, the institution was established there. Dr. Stubbs, J. H. Round, E. A. Freeman and other historians have documented well this period France, Spain, Portugal, Holland and Italy all adored the institution of knighthood throughout the ages.

When reading the history of the Crusades, the Holy wars against Islam, we read of Knight Templars, Teutonic Knights, Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights of St. Lazarus. So no one country could lay claim to these institutions. The Golden Age of Knighthood in Europe was the period of the Hundred Years War and the War of the Roses.

By the time of the Renaissance and Reformation it had become a state institution. One of the most important duties of a knight was to wage war in the services of his country. In peacetime the knight toured his

country redressing wrongs and upholding the rights of women, whom they delighted to call their 'lady-loves'. During holidays and holy days they engaged in games called tournaments and displayed their prowess in jousts and contests (5.).

5. *Particularly to delight the lady-loves.*

THE FIRST ORDER AND SECOND ORDER

The Knights of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, at the beginning of this century, has been splintered into three main sects. It is not difficult to say which the original order is. Count Sicluna of Malta (which is the headquarters of the original order) heads one order.

This order is the most liberal as it has admitted Africans and Asians, irrespective of caste, colour or creed into its ranks. Our Order, The Kings of Malta is derived from this first Order.

This knighthood is also called The Knighthood of Malta. The celebrated Maltese cross is its insignia.

The **first Order** (the hereditary order) is better known worldwide as the **international Grand Priory of the sovereign order of St. John of Jerusalem or KNIGHTS OF MALTA** for short. It is accepted worldwide. The Grand Master Vella Haber has the original documents of the Charter.



The Most **Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem** is the **Second Order**. It is a British Order with beginnings from Richard the Lion Heart and the Holy Crusaders. Her Majesty the Queen of England is the head of this Sovereign Order. It is a restricted Ethnic Order where Muslims, Asiatic (including Chinese) and Africans are not admitted. On account of this partisan bias it is quite an unpopular Order in the modern world (6). It is a colonial relic.

6. The British Government tries to posture that this Second order is the real Knights of Malta. Historically this is not so.



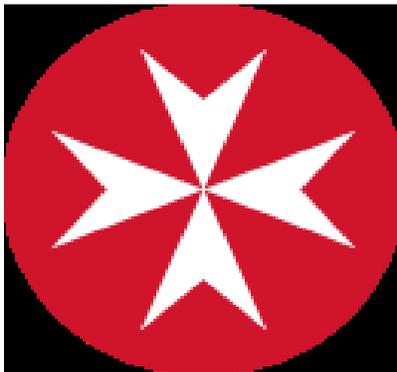
THE THIRD ORDER

The Third Order, known as the **Sovereign Military Order of Malta**, is also a partisan Order run from Rome by His Holiness the Pope with an ageing Cardinal as the proxy of His Holiness. This (Roman) Order admits only Catholics who have made hefty contributions to the Holy See. Although it wrongly uses the name Malta it has no connection with the original Maltese Order (7). The second and third Orders, which are unpopular, mutually recognize each other. Catholics are not however, admitted to the former and Anglicans not admitted to the latter. The recognition for Knighthood on religious and ethnic grounds of the British and Roman Orders respectively, has made them a mediaeval anachronism in the twentieth century.

Many right thinking, sane, sensible and prudent persons feel that these two Orders should become exhibits in a museum, together with the dinosaurs.

However, on account of their powerful infrastructure based on the British Empire, and the Vatican respectively, they wield a considerable influence in the arena of Knighthoods. Many people support them, ignorant of the background of their history.

7. The Knights of Malta cannot originate either from Rome or from London.



GOLDEN AGE

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With the geographical discoveries of the 16th & 17th centuries and the conquest of the New World, the institution of knighthood passed into the states of Latin America under Spanish and Portuguese influence. By the 18th century there were regular orders of knights in different countries. England had as its highest order the Order of the Garter. Austria and Spain had La Toison d'Or (the Golden Fleece). France; the Legion of Honour; the Papacy - the Order of Christ (8.); Central and South America the Order of Christopher Columbus; the Zoroastrians - Knights of the Order of Rainbows; the North Africans - **Royal Knights of Justice** 9)

Knighthood today is not a vanishing institution

Till 1823 knighthood by whomsoever conferred endowed the recipient with the same status and attributes in every country wherein chivalry was recognized. Countries even interchanged knighthoods. With the growth and expansion of the British Empire, regulations governing knighthoods came into force. After 1823 a British subject was precluded from receiving any foreign title without the sovereign's permission.

Where permission was granted a foreign title could not supersede the British title.

The British colonial lion had bared its teeth. It is, therefore, not surprising that subjects of the British Empire (later the Commonwealth) were brought up to believe that there were no other knights but British knights!

With the dawn of independence in Afro-Asia, the nationalistic fervour, forced the old colonies to put up their shutters. After 1956 the colonial governments frowned on British knighthoods and several recipients (particularly those who had, paid for the honours) handed back their honours, we, in Sri Lanka, however, did not throw the baby out with the bath water. We have had a tradition of knight hoods since the days of King Kavan Tissa. (BC 200).

King Dutugemunu (more than 2000 years ago) had the Dasa Maha Yodayas (10.). Nandimithra and Velusumana performed prodigious feats comparable to those of any knights in the fabled stories of Arthur's Round Table

8. Also known as *Knights of St. Gregory*.

9. There are several orders with this name. One registered in U.S.A. is, perhaps, the best known in the West.

10. Yohod meaning *Grand Master of Angampora*.

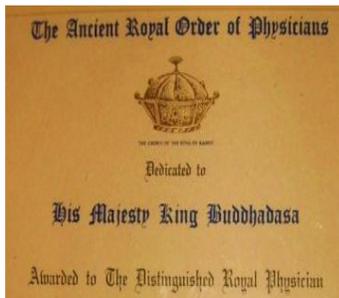
Ten War Lords, the equivalent of Knights, who lead the army in battle, from the front

AMALGAMATION

Today we have our own table of honours. We, however, have no legislation prohibiting Third World citizens from accepting foreign honours, only a formal approval is necessary. The Mudliyors, Maha-Mudliyors and the Veda-Mudliyors (akin to the Hakims of the Indian subcontinent) had great prestige for more than 2500 years in Asia. **The Hakims were in fact hereditary knighthoods** granted to select recognized healers of high calibre (11.).

With the spread of Tibb, the Greco-Arabian Medicines to Asia they amalgamated with the Middle Eastern honours to form **The Royal Knights of Justice** This order has spread' through the spice route westwards as well.

The ancient royal order of physicians and Kings From King Ravana to King Buddhadasa amalgamated with The royal Knights of Justice and received its approval from Sovereign order of Saint John of Malta, our primary Order, which reorganized the accolades to appreciate our Kings and Healers with their heritage. The affiliated Centre of Medicina has an Act of Parliament 25 of 1992 which is established to restore the golden age of King Ravana from which we now derive further authority for our mandate.



KING BUDDHADASA AND EVEN BEFORE UP TO KING RAVANA

Ayurveda history of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka developed its own Ayurvedic system based on a series of prescriptions handed down from generation to generation over a period of 3,000 years. The ancient kings, who were also prominent physicians, sustained its survival and longevity. King Buddhadasa (398 AD), the most influential of these physicians, wrote the Sarartha Sangraha, a comprehensive manuscript which Sri Lankan physicians still use today for reference. It is said that King Buddhadasa had done a surgery to cure a snake.

Ancient inscriptions on rock surfaces reveal that organized medical services have existed within the country for centuries. In fact, Sri Lanka claims to be the first country in the world to have established dedicated hospitals. The Sri Lankan mountain Mihintale still has the ruins of what many believe to be the first hospital in the world. Old hospital sites now attract tourists, who marvel at the beautiful ruins. These places have come to symbolize a traditional sense of healing and care, which was so prevalent at that time.

Historically the Ayurvedic physicians enjoyed a noble position in the country's social hierarchy due to their royal patronage. From this legacy stems a well-known Sri Lankan saying: "If you cannot be a king, becomes a healer." Along with Buddhism, the interrelationship between Ayurveda and royalty continues to influence politics in Sri Lanka.

KING RAVANA

Rawana was a mighty Emperor and ruled over seven continents from Lanka. They were the modern South America, Southern Europe; Himalaya including the Hindukush mountain range and continents up to Madagascar (Dr. Suriya Gunasekara -Rivira 24.04.2007). Rawana's deadly flaw was his arrogance. When Brahma conferred on him a boon and Rawana asked that the Devas should not be able to inflict harm on him. He did not think it worthwhile to ask for protection from men or animals as he was so physically powerful.

As a result, Vishnu had to incarnate himself as Rama, a human being and it is an army of monkeys, led by Hanuman, which assists Rama in liberating Seetha from Rawana's clutches and vanquishing him. Rawana did not take Rama seriously, as he thought that no human being could pose a threat to him. Legend says that being a Brahmin, Rawana performed the necessary Vedic rituals (pujas) for Rama before the war between himself and Rama. This is just one of the perfect qualities he possessed.

When Rama and Rawana meet in battle, it is characteristic of Rawana to exhibit his skill, and to speak arrogantly of crushing Rama to bits. Meanwhile, Rama simply goes about his task and sends his final weapon, the "Brahmashtra" aiming at his heart. It was Vibishana's advice that made Rama to kill Rawana. However, Rama, in recognition of the fact

that he met his match and that Rawana was a Brahmin by birth, well-versed in the Vedas and boundless in his knowledge of Sanskrit, ordered that the funeral arrangements for Rawana be that appropriate for his greatness.

"Rawana was a globally reputed and valued great intellectual. He was the author of many books. However, parts of few books are found. They are the Samaveda, Nadi Prakasha, Kumara Tantra, Uddisha Tantra, Prakrurtha Kamadhenu, and Sivathandawa Sthothra and the Ayurvedic book 'Arka Prakasha'. His superior acquaintance in Sanskrit can be evaluated from Sivathandawa Sthothra and further he was a proficient Ayurvedic Physician. The art of distilling of Arka and the preparation of Asawa was his invention states Ayurvedic history. He invented the 'Varuni' machine to brew Arka. Rawana was the founder of SINDHURAM medicine. These medicine cured wounds instantly. He was known as Vaidya Shiromani as he rendered valuable service to Ayurveda. He was a divine pharmacologist and a Dhayana yogi". Rawana is the historical King of Heladiva.

Deha Dhamma Centre which is incorporated by Act of Parliament 25 of 1992 is affiliated to Medicina Alternativa to promote the ancient research and glory of King Ravana.

The general objects for which the Centre is constituted are hereby declared to be:

To restore King Ravana's golden age by practicing his methods, of self sufficiency in health, wealth, food, clothing, and of non-violent harmonious living in Sri Lanka.

To initiate, promote and conduct, research, into the efficacy of King Ravana's herbal remedies and to conduct lectures, seminars, other educational programmes and to publish information and educational material with a view same.