

# The Herald

COMMUNICATION OF THE ORDER OF SAINT JOACHIM



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*Fall, 2004*

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## Message From the Grand Chancellor

H.E. Chev. Leslie Rosan, GCJ  
Lord of Haverhill

I am pleased to welcome our new and long-standing members to a new issue of The Herald.

This has been an exciting year for The Order of Saint Joachim. In 2004 we have created a new website to serve our members better and to acquaint the wider public with our mission and work.

We continue to attract new members to our Order from all over the world. It is good to know that the ideals of charity, friendship and chivalry still have the same appeal in the 21st century as they did in 1755 when The Order of Saint Joachim was founded.

As you will read, we also have exciting plans to celebrate our The Order of Saint Joachim's 250th anniversary in 2005. We are creating a special commemorative medal for our members and are working on a special book about our history and mission as we look forward to our next 250 years.

## Appointment of New Grand Herald



Chev. Stephen Lautens, KJ

The Grand Chancellor is pleased to announce the appointment of *Chevalier* Stephen Lautens, KJ, as Grand Herald of The Order of Saint Joachim. As Grand Herald Stephen is responsible for our Order's communications, including The Herald and our new website.

Stephen is a Canadian lawyer who practiced in Toronto as a barrister for over 10 years. For the past six years he was worked as a technology executive and consultant, and is currently principal of *Ethics & Strategic Consulting*. Stephen also writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column for the Sun Media Group. He previously worked as a Special Assistant to a cabinet minister.

In 1997 he served as president of *The Lawyers Club*. He is a Governor of the *National Newspaper Awards*. He is also past president of the historic *Ontario Club*. Stephen earned his law degree from Queen's University at Kingston and a history degree from Victoria College at the University of Toronto. He is listed in the *Canadian Who's Who*.

Our new Grand Herald can be reached at [grandherald@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandherald@stjoachimorder.org).

## The Herald

~ Fall, 2004 ~

The Herald is published by The Equestrian, Secular and Chapterial Order of Saint Joachim under the authority of the Grand Master and the Grand Chapter.

Editor:  
The Grand Herald  
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Submissions, letters and comments are welcome.

1755

# Our New Website

[www.stjoachimorder.org](http://www.stjoachimorder.org)

The Order of Saint Joachim launched a new website this summer.

Our website includes information about our Order's fascinating 250-year history, famous members, insignia, past Grand Masters, and our charitable mission and work.

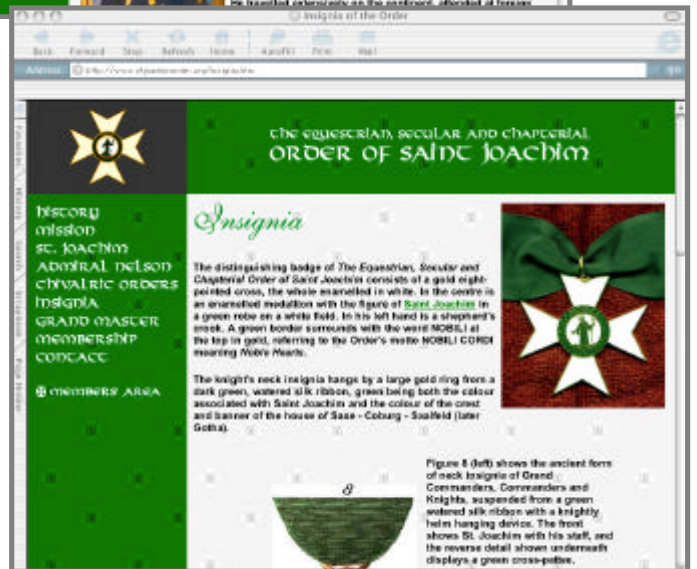
Also on the new website is a downloadable Petition for admission into our Order in PDF format for members of the public wishing to support our work or for members wanting to recommend friends or colleagues for admission to our Order.

Judging from the increase in membership inquiries we have received, the website appears to be an effective way to make The Order of Saint Joachim and its work better known. It is also an opportunity to dispel some of the incorrect information about our Order that sometimes appears on other websites.

With the creation of new email addresses for the Grand Prior ([grandprior@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandprior@stjoachimorder.org)) and the Grand Herald ([grandherald@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandherald@stjoachimorder.org)), we are able to reply to Petitions for membership and questions from both the public and our own members much more quickly than before.

The website also has a members area which includes contact information, a link for updating your address and contact information and a webstore where you can purchase on-line shirts, mugs and other items with the Order's insignia (see separate article for details about the webstore). You can also sign up to receive a copy of **The Herald** by email as a PDF. Send your membership particulars and email address to our Grand Herald to receive this and future copies by email: [grandherald@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandherald@stjoachimorder.org).

Future plans include creating a password-pro-



tected area for members, and a secure on-line payment system so oblations and advance- ment fees may be made directly by credit card.

Please take a moment to visit the website. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Be sure to take a moment to give us your current email address so we can continue to serve you better.

## 250th Anniversary Projects 1755~2005

### The 250th Anniversary Cross

June 20, 2005 will mark the 250th anniversary of the founding of The Order of Saint Joachim.

When fourteen members of the German nobility and military leaders gathered in Bohemia to create a new order of knighthood based on religious tolerance, mutual support, and charity towards the widows and orphans left behind by European wars, little did they realize they were creating an order that would last a quarter of a millennium and boast a membership spread all over the world.

To celebrate the occasion of our 250th anniversary our Order will be undertaking two exciting initiatives.

The first is the institution of a commemorative miniature medal to mark the event. The design of the commemorative cross is based on the design of our Order's original knights' insignia as shown in A.M. Perrot's 1821 classic book, *A Historical Collection of all the Knightly Orders of Different Nations*. The original gold and white enamel cross has had added to it a laurel wreath. The centrepiece is the green cross medallion from the reverse of the original cross.

The ribbon is green, being the traditional colour of our Order, taken from both the colour associated with St. Joachim and the heraldic colour of the noble house of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld, from which came our founder and first Grand Master. On the ribbon are three white stripes - two thick and one thin. The thick stripes represent 100 years each, and the thin one 50 years, for a total of 250 years.

The 250th anniversary cross is authorized to wear when in formal attire on a ribbon bar next to the current miniature Knight Expectant's insignia of the Order.



The 250th anniversary cross will be awarded by the Grand Chapter in early 2005. All members of The Order of Saint Joachim who hold the rank of Knight Expectant and above are eligible for this award, provided they are current in paying their oblations to Grand Chapter.

Qualified members may submit their application to be awarded this commemorative cross to Grand Chapter, care of the Grand Prior. A copy of the application is included in this edition of *The Herald* and is also available on our website.

### The 250th Anniversary Book

The Order of Saint Joachim is in the process of creating a book to mark the occasion of the 250th anniversary of our Order.

This professionally printed volume will include a history of our Order, famous personalities associated with it, anecdotes, insignia and other interesting and useful information documenting our past 250 years.

It will make for lively reading and is a must for the bookshelf of all our members and their families. It will be made available for purchase through our new webstore.

If you have anything you would like to contribute to the book (articles, anecdotes, photographs of events), please forward them by email to our Grand Herald at [grandherald@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandherald@stjoachimorder.org).



# Order of Saint Joachim Webstore

[www.cafepress.com/stjoachim](http://www.cafepress.com/stjoachim)

As part of the new Order of Saint Joachim website, we now have an on-line webstore where our members and friends can purchase a wide variety of items emblazoned with the insignia of the Order.

Some of the items include high quality tee, golf and sweat shirts, ceramic mugs, fridge magnets, gifts and paper products. They all feature the insignia of the order in full colour, and most of the shirts have the Order's ancient motto "Deo ~ Principi ~ Legi" across the shoulders on the back.

Any of the items can be ordered with confidence by credit card over a secure web server and will be shipped within 3 days. Your order will be shipped by express post to your door anywhere in the world for a very reasonable cost. Every item comes with a 30-day satisfaction guarantee.

Currently The Order of Saint Joachim webstore offers its products to our members almost at cost. Any profits made go to our Order's general charitable fund.

The Order's webstore can be accessed by clicking on the link in the "members' area" of our website, or directly at [www.cafepress.com/stjoachim](http://www.cafepress.com/stjoachim).

Check back at the webstore regularly, as we are constantly adding new items to our selection. Please let us know if you would like us to add something.



# St. Joachim and the Gospel of James

Who was the St. Joachim after whom our Order was named?

The only source of information about St. Joachim is the Gospel of James, sometimes known as the Infancy Gospel of James, but more properly called the The Protevangelion of James. The Gospel of James is an apocryphal gospel, meaning it is non-canonical and not accepted as true by the Church.

Joachim features prominently in this document from the very beginning:

*Chap.I: 1. In the history of the twelve tribes of Israel we read there was a certain person called Joachim, who being very rich, made double offerings to the Lord God, having made this resolution: My substance shall be for the benefit of the whole people, that I may find mercy from the Lord God for the forgiveness of my sins.*



The first five chapters of the Gospel of James tells how Joachim finds he is the only man in all the twelve tribes of Israel who has no children and has failed in his duty to produce offspring for the survival of his people, and is therefore prohibited from offering up sacrifices to God. Joachim then goes into the wilderness for a forty day fast, resolved to remain there until he receives God's blessing. Both he and his wife Anna, who fears Joachim has died in the wilderness, are visited by angels, who announce their piety and prayers have been rewarded and that Anna is pregnant. The child she bears is Mary, who becomes the mother of Jesus.

The document presents itself as being written by James: "I, James, wrote this history in Jerusalem." The purported author is James the Just, believed in some traditions to be the brother of Jesus Christ. Scholars have established that, based on the style of the language and the theological concerns, and the fact that the author is apparently not aware of contem-

porary Jewish customs, the work is almost certainly not the work of James, who is believed to have died in AD 64, but by someone of a later date who has appropriated his name.

Its content, emphasizing the continued virginity of Mary, would seem to make it an unlikely document to have been written by a brother of Jesus. In fact this is the earliest text that explicitly claims that Joseph was a widower, with children, at the time that Mary is entrusted to his care.

The general consensus is that the Gospel of James was actually composed some time in the 2nd century AD; probably written about 150 AD. The first mention of it is by 3rd century Christian theologian Origen, who relies on the text to demonstrate that the "brethren of the Lord" were sons of Joseph by a former wife. So the text was already old enough in the second quarter of the 3rd century to be taken as authentic by Origen.

The Gospel of James is one of several surviving Infancy Gospels that give an idea of the miracle literature that was created to satisfy the hunger of early Christians for more detail about the early life of their Savior. In Greek an infancy gospel was termed a protevangelion, a "pre-Gospel" narrating events of Jesus' life before those recorded in the four canonical gospels. Such a work was intended to be "apologetic, doctrinal, or simply to satisfy one's curiosity". The literary genre that these works represent shows stylistic features that suggest dates in the second century and later. Other "infancy gospels" in this tradition include *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, *The Infancy Gospel of Matthew*, *The Infancy Gospel of Mark*, and the so-called *Arabic Infancy Gospel*, all of which are considered apocryphal.

The contents of the Gospel of James describe the birth and childhood of Mary, the mother of Jesus, her coming of age and betrothal to

Joseph, and the birth and early childhood of Jesus.

The Gospel of James is in three equal parts: the first eight chapters containing the story of Mary's own unique birth and childhood; the second eight chapters concerning the crisis posed by Mary's becoming a woman and thus her imminent pollution of the temple, her assignment to Joseph as guardian and the tests of her virginity; and the last eight chapters relating the Nativity, with the visit of midwives, the hiding of Jesus from Herod in a feeding trough, and even the parallel hiding of John the Baptist from Herod in the hills with his mother Elizabeth. These legends are embellishments upon the stories found in Matthew and Luke.

Among extra-canonical traditions recorded in the Gospel of James are the introduction of Joseph as a widower with several children who is merely Mary's guardian, the birth of Jesus in a cave, and the martyrdom of John the Baptist's father Zechariah during the slaughter of the infants. The Gospel of James also has the Nativity taking place in a cave rather than in a barn attached to an inn. Many early renaissance Sieneese and Florentine paintings of the Nativity show the baby Jesus not in a barn but in a cave.

The cave setting of the Nativity in the Gospel of James likely comes from a similar resurrection cult popular a few hundred years before and after the birth of Jesus. The cult of the man-god Mithra was a popular and venerated in Persia and Rome, with Mithra having been born in a cave to a virgin on December 25th, died, was buried in a cave and rose from the dead three days later. The cult of Mithra predates Jesus, and some scholars suggest that later Christian writers borrowed some of the Mithric traditions to either compete against this popular cult or make Christianity more acceptable and familiar to Roman converts.

Of 140 surviving Greek manuscripts, the fullest surviving text is a 10th century codex in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris and a more recently discovered early 4th century papyrus

in Geneva. The Gospel of James was translated into Syriac, Ethiopic, Coptic, Georgian, Old Slavonic, Armenian, Arabic, Irish and Latin and widely read throughout Europe, particularly in Eastern Europe.

Some indication of the popularity of the Infancy Gospel of James may be drawn from the fact that so many manuscripts containing it have survived. No early Latin versions are known, but it is relegated to the apocrypha in the Gelasian decrees. As with the canonical gospels, the vast majority of these come from the tenth century or later. The earliest known manuscript of the text, a papyrus dating to the 3rd century, was found in 1958, now in the Bodmer Library, Geneva.

Though the book is not an official part of Christian canon and hence "apocryphal", the Gospel of James may be the earliest document attesting the veneration of Mary and her continuing virginity. It also is the sole source naming and describing the lives of Joachim and Anna as the parents of Mary.

Even though not accepted as part of the Bible, the Gospel of James has been widely read and adopted by many Christians. It is particularly strong in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox faiths. Joachim was such a popular figure among ordinary Christians that even though apocryphal the Catholic Church felt compelled to acknowledge Joachim as a saint and recognize him with his own his feast day in the 1600s. St. Joachim appears with his wife Anne in many renaissance paintings.

Many medieval towns and villages bear his name, including St. Joachimsthal in Bohemia, where the famous silver coin, the *Joachimsthaler*, was minted. Numerous churches, schools and other religious sites can be found today named after St. Joachim.

*Chev. Stephen Lautens, KJ*

*Compiled and edited from various sources, including Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)).*

# The Abridged Version of the Statutes and Rules of the Equestrian Secular and Chapteral Order of St Joachim, 1793

By Chevalier Malcolm Davies, KJ, Ph.D

## The Preface

The chapter by Levett Hanson on the Order of St. Joachim in *Of the Equestrian Secular and Chapteral Order of Saint Joachim 1803*, must have been based on information that Hanson had in his possession as Vice-Chancellor of the Order, a post which he had held from 1800. Judging from the quotations which he gives, from letters and other documents, he must have had free access to the Order archives. A relatively small part of his text is a close and well-made translation of a standard handbook presented to all members of the Order: The *Abrégé des Statuts et Réglemens de l'Ordre Équestre Séculier et Chapitreal de St. Joachim*. This document, which I shall refer to as the *Abrégé*, is the subject of this article, a copy of which I have recently discovered in a library at The Hague.

The *Abrégé* is written in French and was published in Grunstadt in 1793. At this time French was the *lingua franca* of the aristocracy, the well-to-do and the diplomatic corps. The title page has a very nice cartouche of the official seal of the order. The same cartouche had already been used on the cover of the *Etat présent de l'Ordre* published in 1789 (which will be the subject of a future article) and was presumably a standard element which would be used in all the publications of the Order. The Order motto is on the reverse of the title page: *Junxit Amicus Amor!* (Love binds together friends).

The Preface briefly summarizes the history of the Order to date. This is interesting not because of any new details it adds, but because of its established and matter-of-fact tone. The Order was obviously a flourishing and respected institution. It was solemnly founded by members of the top nobility of Germany and by distinguished members of the army. This was on 20 June 1755. Those who were first decorated were named knights of the Order of Jonathan, Defenders of the Honour of Divine Providence.

Exactly a year later the chief founder, Christian Franz, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld was elected Grandmaster. In 1773 he resigned in favour of Franz Xavier, Count of the Holy Roman Empire and of Montfort who was elected unanimously as the second Grandmaster. He died suddenly on 24 March 1780. It appears that there was a

four-year interregnum by George Charles Louis, Reigning Count of Leiningen-Westerbourg who succeeded as official Grandmaster on 4 November 1784. He in turn died on 19 March 1787 and was followed by his son, Charles Gustav Reinhard Woldemar, reigning Count of Leiningen-Westerbourg. The last two names 'Reinhard Woldemar' are left out by Hanson in his English work published some 14 years later. Charles Gustav had been elected Adjunct Grandmaster at the same time as his father's official appointment. He



became Grandmaster on 16 May 1787.

Then the author of the *Abrégé* discusses the name of the Order. This section is translated almost verbatim by Hanson:

*It was in 1767 that the first GrandMaster, and the majority of the constitutional Representatives of the Order, were induced through a principle of devotion to suppress the Name of Jonathan, and in the Place thereof to substitute that of: 'in Honour of the Divine Providence'; of which this Order had till then borne the glorious Surname of 'the Defenders'. But it was not until 1773 that the second GrandMaster, and the general Chapter, unanimously thought proper, solemnly to confirm the same, in memory of the Day, rendered auspicious, by the Deliverance of his late Majesty, Stanislaus Augustus, King of Poland, who in 1771, was by the especial Interposition of Providence, miraculously rescued from the Hands of those execrable Assassins, who had conspired against the Life of the best of Princes, and of Men. In a word: Reasons of the utmost consequence having in a course of Time (1779–1785) rendered a Revision of the Constitution of this Order, a measure of indispensable necessity; to the end that such Changes, as were suitable to existing Circumstances, might be made, with regard to the Statutes thereof: in 1785 a decree of the general Chapter was the result of Its Deliberations: which, renewing and rectifying the Act of its first Foundation, constituted this Knightly Militia, under the name of: 'the Equestrian, Secular, and Chapteral Order of Saint Joachim, the blessed Father of the holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ!'*

The year 1787, when Charles Gustav became Grandmaster, seems to have marked a milestone in the development of the Order. It was then that the Order became more active and better run. There was a genuine intention to help those in need. A footnote in *Abrégé* which is not taken over by Hanson quotes at length from "The Philosophical and Political History of the French Islands in the West Indies" (*L'Histoire philosophique et politique des Isles françoises dans les Indes occidentales*) by the

Abbot Raynal (published in Lausanne). Apparently prior to 1787 the Order had become very lax in performing any real charitable works. It had not even been meeting its principal aim of providing for members of the Order who had fallen on hard times. The anonymous commentator who wrote the preface uses the word 'prevarication'. He is emphasising that the new Grandmaster and his officers, since 1787 have avoided the prevarication of which earlier governors of the Order had been guilty. Hanson leaves out this footnote - perhaps by then the Order was better fulfilling its ideals and the note was redundant.

The quotation from l'Abbé Raynal is a heartfelt account of a real case. A good citizen founded two institutions for men and women who were ill or who had fallen on hard times in the French American colonies. At this time such a venture was unique in the New World. It could never have been financed by the authorities, nor was this expected. When it was founded, it was easily able to exist, and to carry out its tasks by the generous gifts of many benefactors. However, these benefactors gradually reduced their gifts and no alternative funding could be found. At this point the author reverts to language which is a cry from the heart. He is being the eighteenth-century equivalent of an investigative journalist and a philosopher all in one: "In this way nothing good can exist between men! And the wealthy even attack the poor in their sanctuary of safety, if the gibbet does not already do it for them. Ill wishers! You do not know the full atrocity of your actions." Then he tries to provide an example that a wealthy person might understand. If a highwayman were to attack you and to steal all your possessions would you be guilty or would the highwayman be guilty? The answer is obvious and yet you would now have nothing, and would be punished as being poor and lazy. You yourself would be considered as being guilty. But would you deserve this inhumanity, cowardliness and prevarication? No, of course not.

If anything this quotation reminds us of how hard times were before the social provisions of the modern era. Societies like the Order of St. Joachim were often the only protection against poverty. There was no unemployment benefit or health care. Perhaps, as privatisation and as “giving back the responsibility to the people” becomes more popular we should see this as a warning for the future. It is certain that the work of charities, such as the charitable work of the Order of St Joachim and of many other charities is not finished or no longer needed. Small acts of charity, carefully chosen are immensely valuable even today. Perhaps members should also account to the Order on an annual basis for their contributions to good causes so that we can be clear about the charitable position of the Order today.

The preface finishes with a passage that is again literally reproduced in translation by Hanson. The author says that although the charitable works that have lightened the burden of some poor, and enabled others to benefit in other ways, still not enough is being done. However, magnanimous people from well-to-do families (which have many great and generous members who have the welfare of mankind really at heart) will continue to enlist themselves under the banner of this Order. And by their generosity they will make the order the kind of charitable institution that will be respected by others. It will be the kind of Order of which we can be justifiably proud.

This, almost poignantly, is where the preface of the *Abrégé* ends. It concludes with such optimism, and is so forward looking. But look once again at the year of publication: 1793. Hanson, writing almost a decade later, continues. What does he say about this date? As early as the month of February, 1793 the French army, under General Custine, had taken possession of all the States of His Highness Charles Gustav of Leiningen-Westerbourg, our 4th Grandmaster, which were situated on the west side of the Rhine. He was conducted a close prisoner to Paris, and was, until the hour of his death on the 17th of

June 1798 strictly confined in the Abbey of Saint-Germain, Paris. The writer of the preface of the *Abrégé* obviously could not know what was in store for that year when he wrote his hopeful and optimistic preface.

The Order continued with Ferdinand Charles, the eldest son Charles Gustav being unanimously elected Grandmaster on 27 June 1798 and installed on 7 September “in a manner suitable to the then existing State of Circumstances”. This probably means that it was a low-key event, without as much ceremony as members might have wished, due to the political upheavals taking place. The French Revolution was running its course throughout Europe.



## Faith and good works

The preface to the *Abrégé* fills eleven pages. Forty-eight pages follow specifying the statutes, the rules and the duties of the Order. It would not be worthwhile translating this verbatim but there are several interesting features. The first section is about the duties of members.

The first duty is to profess the dogma of existence of the Trinity and of the supreme Providence. This idea of a ‘supreme Providence’ instead of using the word God is a parallel with the French philosophical concept of calling God the ‘Supreme Being’ in this period. However, someone seems to have put a slightly different, and perhaps more thoughtful slant on the idea. God is not just ‘there’, ‘being’ but doing nothing. Rather, He is the supreme provider. In Anglican churches after

the collection we often hear “All things come from you O Lord, and of your own have we given you”, which expresses a similar thought.

The second duty is also interesting. At a time when your profession of a different faith could still have you locked up, or in extreme cases executed, the members of the Order of St. Joachim must advance tolerance.

Then follow the temporal duties: The member should distinguish himself or herself in the highest degree of faithfulness towards their Sovereign. This does not only refer to loyalty towards the Grandmaster. In the many different countries in which members lived they would need to be loyal to their own rulers. This was asking for a major commitment in that turbulent time. Today we might translate this as meaning obeying the laws of the land.

After this, members were required to help the poor and needy. The ‘poor and needy’ include members who have fallen on hard times, but the concept is also extended to widows and orphans without taking into account their station in life given by birth or religious beliefs. Members were never to refuse to give alms to those who request them. They should also contribute to the costs of education. Finally they should respect the sacred duties of marriage.

With what is perhaps a slightly strange juxtaposition, these charitable duties are immediately followed by a summary of the dues to be received by the Grandmaster, 1000 Rhenish Florins to be presented as a free gift, a gift of obedience. Several others also benefit from annual gifts: the four eldest Knights Grand-Cross, 500 florins per year; the four which follow 400 florins per year; the two eldest Dames Grand-Cross 300 florins per year; and the two which follow 200 florins per year. This was a form of pension. The idea is that everyone contributes, year after year, eventually becoming one of the eldest, and therefore a beneficiary.

There was also a study grant. The three eldest

Expectants were to receive 200 florins in three successive years to help with their studies at a university or a military academy. For the eldest female Expectant there is also a gift: 500 florins, for once and for all, on the occasion of her marriage or on entering a convent.

Commanderies and other Benefices should expand in keeping with their revenue. Advancement in the Order should be through seniority and not through any favouritism.

According to the *Abrégé* the ranks are:

- 1) Knights Grand-Cross, Knights Commander, Knights and Expectants.
- 2) Ladies Grand-Cross, Ladies Little-Cross and Expectants.

Hanson uses different terms but means the same:

- A) Grand Commanders; Commanders; Knights immediate or junior Knights; and Expectants
- B) Ladies Grand Crosses; Ladies wearing the small Cross; and Ladies Expectants.

The requirements for membership ideally require hereditary nobility and the Christian faith (but without regard to denomination). However, military officers may also become knights. Ranks of Major and above may choose to be admitted as Knights Grand-Cross immediately. In civilian life those who have a position at court, the title of Councillor or possess lands may be created Commander and Grand-Cross. A member from any background who becomes head of a Commandery may proceed to the rank of Grand-Cross. The minimum age for becoming a knight of the Order is 20 years old. However, the children of Princes and Counts may become decorated immediately after baptism. Even so, they must then follow the same promotion routine and wait their turn together with the other members of the Order. Any gentleman may put his child forward as an Expectant between birth and the age of 19. Blasphemers, traitors and

deserters, and those who have violated good faith and honour can never become members of the order.

## **Medals, dress and other regalia**

The section which follows deals with the medals, dress and other regalia to be worn by the members. Hanson's version is very similar. The medals and dress are as he describes it, and the same as in other descriptions. (See previous issues of *The Herald*.) The secular Grand-Cross members wear their broad cordon from top right to lower left across the chest because it is derived from a sword belt. The religious Grand-Cross knights would not have carried a sword. They wear their cordon from top left to lower right to show their peaceful intent.

Knights were expected to have a small token of their membership on their lapel at all times under pain of a fine or, in extreme, exclusion from the order. In many countries the tradition of wearing a ribbon of an Order in the lapel still exists. In the Netherlands those who are knighted for services to the country or society have no title such as 'Sir' but they wear a ribbon in their lapel. The French *légion d'honneur* is a form of knighthood, again with no title but with a simple thread in the lapel. Knights of St. John usually have no title but can wear a small black and white knotted ribbon in the lapel or, on some occasions, a white octagonal cross about the same size as that received by members of the Order of St. Joachim.

The full regalia was only intended to be used on the solemn days, the special festival days, of the Order. Though not specified it was understood that members would be responsible for buying their own full dress uniforms. At this time even soldiers and sailors had to buy their uniforms out of their wages. You needed to be wealthy to be able to afford to be an officer and part of those costs included the many badges and different uniforms which would be needed. Usually the knight would

order the uniform from his tailor and the medals from a jeweller using the descriptions and perhaps drawings which were available. However, another document (to be reviewed in the next *Herald*) does give a price list of various medals, ribbons and epaulets which may be bought from Jean Gottlob Grellmann, banker of the Order, at Hamburg. Ordering a uniform or purpose-made medals might be unusual but there are still parallels today apart from in a military context; a priest who wears full dress on Sundays, a judge, academic dress, etc.

The main thing to remember, of course, is that it is what the dress stands for which is important; not the dress, medals or regalia itself.

## **The constitution**

The third section of the *Abrégé* deals with the constitution. The Grandmaster is the head of the Order for life, but this honour brings with it heavy responsibilities. He must look after the correct application of the statutes and must advance the interests of the Order. He must attend the meetings where he has two votes and a deciding vote. The Grandmaster was supported by many ecclesiastical and secular officers. There was a group of twelve ecclesiastical officers: three Prelates, three Provosts, three Grand-Almoners, and three Deacons.

In addition there were six more ecclesiastical officers, three sub-almoners, and three chaplains all of whom needed to be at least honorary associates of the Order. The Grandmaster had the final responsibility for the appointment of officers and there was to be no distinction as to whether they were Catholic or Protestant.

There were eleven secular grand officers. A Chancellor who directs the chapter in all general matters, Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, Master of Ceremonies, Four Prefects of four Departments of Correspondence, A directorate Councillor, a Councillor to the treasury, a Councillor of justice. The Chancellor, Vice

Chancellor and Treasurer must be knights Grand Cross. The Master of Ceremonies and Prefects are at least Commanders, the three councillors, at least knights of the Order.

In addition there are secular officers: a Master Receiver and a Secretary who must be knights, a Herald, advisors to the committee and secretaries to the committee who must be at least associated members of the Order.

The general chapter nominates all the secular officers, as well as six deputies for the three equestrian ranks and assessors of the four departments of correspondence about which we will say more later.

We should not be surprised at this long list of officers and assistants. The many societies and Orders which were developed in this period strove towards completely new ideas of responsibility and equal opportunities. In the Order of St Joachim, as in eighteenth-century society in general we are seeing the birth of democracy. The General, or Grand Chapter was made up of 32 people. This group was responsible for all new arrangements and for any changes to the statutes or rules. It was also responsible for examining the accounts, promotions, founding new Commanderies and Benefices and even for new appointments. They were also responsible for allowing honorary members to be received without contribution, settling differences between members, electing Grand officers, looking after the administration after his death and electing a successor. All grand officers are responsible for encouraging the Order to flourish. Solemn assemblies of the grand chapter and Order feasts are fixed for 20 June and 4 November annually at the house of the Grandmaster. Each member of the chapter has one vote, which may also be given in writing. The Grandmaster has an extra casting vote in the case of a non-decisive vote. The secretary must record everything accurately and the minutes must be signed.

It would not be possible for the whole general

chapter to meet more often but it is essential that there is continuity. Therefore a group of nine people called "the ordinary chapter" will be considered enough to prepare decisions. They will meet on 24 April and 8 September to decide and get ready the matters to be discussed at the general chapter.

The treasury will consist of a subcommittee of three to make sure that accounts are kept regularly and to minimise the possibility of fraud. The revenue will be kept in an iron safe with three separate locks. Each member of the subcommittee will have one key. Accounts will be checked every six months.

Because the Order is an international order it is not possible for the general chapter to keep in touch with each individual member. This is why the four Departments of Correspondence, each with its own Prefect and Assessor have been created. Within the committees of each department the Prefect has an extra casting vote in the case of equal voting for an issue. Votes in writing are also acceptable in Departments. Departments are also responsible for the accomplishments of their members and are to bring shortcomings to the notice of the general chapter. They are responsible for making sure that the orders of the general chapter are carried out.

The manner of electing a new Grandmaster is carefully described. A Grand-cross prior takes over ad interim. The Chancellor suggests three grand-crosses as candidates. At the time these rules were written only a Sovereign Lord, preferably of the Holy Roman Empire was to be grandmaster. It was possible to nominate someone who was not yet a member of the Order and to then create him a knight grand-cross before the election. A committee is formed of seven chosen knights who are to be electors for the day of the election. After they have chosen, the new grandmaster will be installed with all due ceremony. The Grand-prior is relieved of his interim responsibilities but is entitled to continue as the new Grandmaster's deputy.

A new candidate member must have his nomination supported by at least one knight. The Department where he lives tests his case and examines his application and then the Prefect draws up a report to the chapter who will decide, having been advised by the Chancellor, the Herald and the Master of Ceremonies, if the reception should take place or the candidate should be refused. The candidate must submit a birth certificate and armorials of his family painted on vellum. Proofs of legitimacy and any noble titles are needed going back two generations. Other members, received as honorary Associates, need the signatures of three supporting knights together with a certificate recognising the qualities recommending the candidate. Even so, none of these qualifications give the right to become a knight. Only the decision of the Grandmaster can grant that. The ceremony of investiture may be performed by the Grandmaster or by another member of the order placed in charge. It must be confirmed in writing. A copy, signed by the candidate must be kept in the archives of the Order.

### **The qualities and duties of Ladies**

Any lady (married or a widow) with irreproachable morals, hereditary nobility or married to a gentleman may enter the Order. It depends on the lady whether she enters the order as a lady small, or grand cross. She should be at least sixteen years of age (for the small cross). Ladies associated with a Commandery will be ladies grand-cross. A lady small-cross can request to be made a lady grand-cross on the occasion of her marriage. She may wear the marks of her distinction for the first time on the day of her wedding. A lady who is vicious, whose honour is equivocal or who is convincingly accused of having lost her honour will lose her title. Ladies have the duty to look after the education of their children and to set them a good example. Dancing is not forbidden, but any violent movements that could endanger the health of an unborn child or violates the honour of womanhood by excess will be expelled. Ladies

dress modestly and do not gamble in a way which might damage the fortune of the family.

Ladies grand-cross wear a three-inch ribbon from right to left with a cross hanging in the middle. A silver grand-cross may be embroidered on the left breast. Ladies small-cross have a ribbon of two inches tied in a knot from which the cross hangs on the right breast. Expectants have the same cross on the left breast with "*Virtuti*" embroidered in silver on the ribbon. Although all ladies must always wear a sign of the Order on days which are not feast days this may be the small-cross and knotted ribbon on the left breast like an Expectant. Ladies may, of course, wear what they like and of any colour they choose, except on 20 June and 4 November when married ladies and widows must wear a black habit and unmarried ladies a white habit. The candidature of a lady should be supported by three knights who attest to her good character. Any lady who is an example to others, regardless of her state of nobility at birth, with nobility of soul by helping the poor, being a shining example of thrift and zealously furthering education can become an honorary Associate member. At the time when these regulations were formulated it was forbidden to accept a non-noble, bourgeois lady before she was married.

### **The foundation of the Order and its revenue**

This section of the *Abrégé* begins with an important phrase. The aims of the Order cannot be achieved without a proportional (financial) commitment by its members. As we know, the aims were ambitious and included a pension scheme, study scheme, marriage settlements, and monies for the less well off. Another aim was to establish an academy for the education of young gentlemen. The main income of the Order was derived from the fees of passage. This was invested to gain interest. New members who possessed lands could commit five percent percentage of the value of those lands as an annual gift instead of paying fees of passage. Other fees, to the chancellor

and gifts must be paid in cash. Lands would not be bought by the order unless a knight was prepared to run it as a hereditary farm from the moment of acquisition for an annual salary of five percent of the value of the land. It could be inherited by the son or daughter of the original proprietor.

## **The hierarchy of the Order**

The Knights Grand Cross from before 1790 are the most senior and have the first claim to a Commandery. Every Commander, Knight and Expectant who has fully paid their rights of passage to become a Knight Grand Cross will be put in this list at the higher rank, provided they do not use the title until they are fully promoted and until their age and civil estate permits. These Knights Grand Cross before 1790 have priority in all cases. Anyone may achieve any rank after that date, but the earlier knights have precedence. Ladies who gain a Commandery do so in the order of their reception irrespective of their rank of Ladies Grand Cross, Little Cross or Expectant. Commanderies are for life however, on the death of the commander the heirs receive a quarter of three months income in addition to their normal inheritance.

After this the provisions which are made for students are given in great detail. Expectants can begin to receive benefits from the age of 15. But they are not allowed to touch the money until they are 18 or 19. They may receive their grant for three years. Any Expectant who enters the church or military or civil service before the age of 20 also loses any rights to their grant. They may use it for one year to buy, for example, mathematical instruments. Less well-off Expectants can receive their grant for two years to purchase a military officers equipment or to further their religious or civil career. If the Expectant is given permission to stop studying by his Sovereign or Superior he may still receive his full grant for three years. If the Expectant dies, his parents may receive money equal to a quarter of three months of the grant.

Similar detailed thought has gone into the grants to be given to Lady Expectants, ecclesiastics, professors of the Order's own Academy (!) and members of the board. Nine short rules determine that contributions are non-returnable and that the grants should come out of the interest on the Order's capital and so on. In the case of losses all grants are to be reduced pro rata.

## **Other rules**

All documents are to be signed and sealed by the Grand Master and Chancellor. All the armorials of the family of the Grand Master may include the green cross of the Order on a silver background. All diplomas should be in Latin. The other two official languages of the Chancellery at this time were to be German and French.

All fines (not to exceed 20 Ducats) go to charity. Those neglecting to wear tokens of the Order are fined 1 ducat for the first offence and 2 for a repetition. There are maximum fines for an applicant not being truthful when applying for membership and for any member who publishes information about the Order without permission.

There are punishments of fines and suspension in store for those whose lives do not measure up to the ideals of the Order. Only blasphemers and traitors may be expelled. However, military members should treat their enemies as kindly as possible. Those who defame the honour of another member and ladies who are convicted of abandoning virtue or of violating their marriages may also be excluded. In all cases there must be a proper and impartial legal form of trial. The precise composition of the courts for each type of case is then outlined.

## **Miscellaneous rules**

Finally there is are several miscellaneous rules listed in the Abrégé. The academy for the edu-

cation of expectants should be situated in the residence of the Grand Master. The solemn days are 20 June and 4 November. Signs of mourning for members who have departed this life are worn for three days after 20 June. The feasts are 20 March (St Joachim) and 26 July (St Anne). Signs of mourning are to be worn for three months after the death of the Grand Master. Members of the Order are to be buried in their uniform, the hat and sword are placed on the coffin. The armorials of a deceased member are to be placed in the chapel of the Order at the Grand Master's residence. A list of all members and the state of the Order will be published annually. Rules can only be altered by the General Chapter. This document is an abridged version of the German rules and duties printed in 1787.

The *Abrégé* was signed at Grundstadt, on 20 June 1787 in the 33rd year of the Order by Charles Woldemar, Reigning Count of Leiningen Westerbourg, Elected Grand Master of the Order. It was countersigned by John Charles Baron of Ecker and Eckhoffen, Chancellor of the Order and finally by Phillip Christian Hoffman, Licenced in Law, Councillor of Justice of the Order and as Secretary. It was originally published with the approval of the Order at Bronsvic.

## Conclusion

The *Abrégé* teaches us several new things about the early days of the Order. It is an important addition to the Hanson document. It is earlier, in a different language (French rather than English) and gives a different slant on the Order. Hanson is interested in chivalry and knighthood for itself. There is no suggestion in the *Abrégé* that knighthood is to be desired as a non-functioning ornament to life. Knighthood is not the crowning of an achievement but a commitment to work continually towards achieving. The Order is a pension scheme, it offers education, it influences morality, it can provide funds for marrying, it can care for the sick and less well off. The Grand Master of the order provides accommo-

dation for the chapel and the academy. This was no sinecure! It was hard work, and in those revolutionary days could be dangerous.

Above all the charitable aims and intentions of the Order are emphasised. The tone is business-like, legalistic and at times possibly boring. But it is possible that the founders and the authors of the *Abrégé* saw the Order of St Joachim as having an immense potential for social good. They could see that a change was necessary. The old feudal order could be unjust and was under threat from many sides, but was a revolution really essential? Was it not possible for aristocrats, army officers, priests and gentlemen to form together a society which could look after each other, and after the poor and needy? Surely the aims of the Order as a charity are not so different today. These are aims to which the knights of the Order can relate to today. We can dispense with the pension, we can rely on our health service; a private academy would be something of a luxury but we can all donate towards the good causes of our choice. In this way there is a true continuity between the aims of the Order in 1755 and in 2004. In this way we can continue the name and tradition of the knighthood with justification. We can keep the ideals and aims of the Order of St Joachim alive in the 21st century.

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# Sir Levett Hanson at the Court of Gustavus Adolphus IV of Sweden

In 1808 our Vice Chancellor Sir Levett Hanson was presented to Gustavus Adolphus IV, King of Sweden. This event was recorded by John Brown, a representative of the British Crown to the Swedish court in his book, *“Original Memoirs of the Sovereigns of Sweden and Denmark”* [pp. 285-288].

Thirty years old at the time, Gustavus Adolphus IV would remain king for only a year after their meeting. History recalls him as a reactionary, a despot and mentally unbalanced, and was forced to abdicate in favour of his more liberal-minded uncle, Charles XIII in 1809. He was, however, a fierce opponent of Napoleon, whose troops overran Leiningen and imprisoned our Grand Master.

The pages reproduced below describe Sir Levett’s presentation at court. It was observed that “... at the time Mr Brown knew him, i e 1808, no one could conduct himself in a more gentlemanly manner. His company was much courted, and he was highly respected by all who knew him.” The humorous description of his personal appearance - counterbalanced with the respect for his dignity and courtliness - make this famous figure from our Order’s history come alive.

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When Mr. Thornton had his first public audience of Gustavus IV., he presented Brigadier-General Sir Levett Hanson, [1] quondam chamberlain to the Duke of Modena, a Commander and Grand Cross of the Equestrian Order of St. Joachim, &c. This presentation took place just as the march of the Russian troops towards Swedish Finland was officially announced to the unhappy King. Gustavus, who was very seldom cheerful, was this day peculiarly gloomy; and certainly there was nothing in the person or manners of Mr. Thornton to raise his

drooping spirits. He stood before the melancholy King more abashed, perhaps, than when he underwent his first public examination at Cambridge, previous to obtaining a degree. His figure and attitude were alike destitute of ease or elegance. His tremulous accent and doleful visage bespoke a man abashed and confounded; and he uttered a meagre speech in very bad French and the worst possible style of oratory. The King seemed too abstracted to notice half that he said; and the Countess L — — declared that if a stranger had seen him in a different place he might have supposed it was some serving-man equipped in his master’s gala dress amusing himself by aping the air of a courtier.

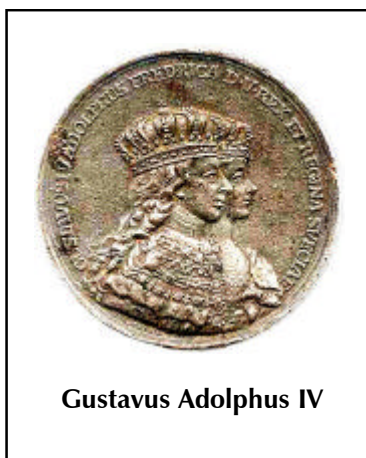
Not so with the gentleman whom he led up to the throne; it was the corpulent, convivial, equestrian knight, Sir Levett [sic] Hanson. He was clad in the identical suit in which, thirty years anterior to this period, he had been presented to the late Duke of Modena, as chamberlain of that small but polished Court. Of course, from the mere lapse of time, those once superb garments were much deteriorated. The ground-work was blue, the embroidery silver, the lace was much tarnished; but then anyone might see the suit was made to measure, for in the Duchy of Modena there probably was not another who could have worn it. His features were small, his face round, complexion very fair, his hair light red; but his small features were buried in a load of additional flesh, and he had grown so very corpulent that, if laid on his back, he would have cast a shadow as long as if standing erect. If his figure was uncourtly and unwieldy, his carriage was gentlemanly, his manner courteous, and his countenance prepossessing; in point of learning, taste, and humour he had few equals, and perhaps, in all Europe, there was not a gentleman who better understood the due performance of those important duties called the honours of the talk. It was not his extreme corpulency, nor the key of gold affixed to the buttonhole, nor the skirts of his embroidered coat, nor the cordon and the Grand Cross of the Order, worn lozenge ways, that attracted every eye, but his wig, which was certainly unique. Its

shape – if shape it had – resembled a porridge-pot; its colour, if ever it were uniform, had undergone a variety of changes, and there was every shade to be found between carrotty and scarlet! The hair seemed to resemble that which grows on cows rather than the spoil of human heads. It was a half sphere; the hair all of a length, and therefore it could not be said to have either a hind or fore part, and the facetious knight used to say he could dress himself in the dark, as far as his wig was concerned, without any danger of putting it on awry.

As Mr. Thornton approached the throne, leading his jolly countryman, the absent King seemed to awake as from a dream, and in a moment became self-collected and attentive. Instantly every eye was bent on the two Englishmen and the non-descript wig of Sir Levet. The Duchess of Sodermanland (the last Queen-Dowager of Sweden), who was ever “a laughter-loving dame,” upon catching a glance of this matchless wig, was seized with such an inclination to laugh aloud that she had the greatest difficulty to suppress her inclination; and if she had indulged it, Gustavus would, no doubt, have sent her into perpetual banishment. Sophia Magdalena, the mother of the King, looked earnestly at the Duchess, and seeing on what object her sight was fixed, was herself seized with the same merry propensity, which, extending to the ministers and attendants behind the throne, had well-nigh caused a burst of laughter throughout the whole Court. A greater contrast in the human form could scarcely be imagined than was presented in the person of the King and that of Sir Levet. The former resembled a cylinder of small diameter, the latter a sphere! Within Sir Levet’s capacious vest half a dozen such striplings might with ease have been buttoned. After the levee was over, Sir Levet had the honour of a private audience. The King asked him, in German, if he were not the gentleman who had written a letter to him from Hamburg, requesting an account of all the Orders of Knighthood that had existed, or existed then, in Sweden? Bowing as profoundly as the rotundity of his figure permitted him, Sir Levet answered in the affirmative. “I replied to your letter,” said the King, “and sent you the information required.” Sir Levet smiled most graciously, moved his head reverently, and

bowed lower than before. “I read your book,” [2] continued Gustavus, “and admired it very much. I am happy to see you at my Court, and hope you will enjoy good health, and pass your time agreeably in this Northern metropolis.” Sir Levet, quite overcome with these extreme condescensions, bowed so low that, having lost his balance, he nearly prostrated himself at the feet of the King, who, rising to retire, looked, compared with our fat knight, like a greyhound on its hind legs. [3] From the moment Sir Levet Hanson appeared, his person and periwig furnished topics of general conversation, for that evening at least; and scarcely was he out of hearing before the Royal dames were enquiring of the nobility and pages who the fat gentleman was and from whence he came; and his presentation will be remembered and occasionally recited amongst the memorable events of Court history in Sweden as long as any of the persons who were then present shall be living.

#### NOTES FROM THE ORIGINAL TEXT



Gustavus Adolphus IV

[1] The history of this extraordinary character would, no doubt, be extremely interesting. What his conduct might have been in the early and more active part of his life the author cannot judge, neither can he elucidate the cause of his spending so great a part of his life in Italy, Germany, France, Denmark and Sweden; but at the time Mr Brown knew him, i.e. 1808, no one could conduct himself in a more gentlemanly manner. His company was much courted, and he was highly respected by all who knew

him. It was this gentleman who invested Admiral Lord Nelson with the Grand Cross of this Order. In return his lordship sent to Mr Rihls a large silver tobacco-box, enclosing a letter expressive of the gratification he felt on receiving the investiture! This Mr. Rihls was Sir Levet’s “man-of-all-work.”

[2] *A history of all the Orders of Knighthood in Europe; not forgetting that of St. Joachim*

[3] The King’s face was singularly formed, and rather narrow and long. Someone made a caricature of him, under the figure of a greyhound standing on its hind legs, with its face parallel with its chest.

# Mysteries and Mystics of The Order of Saint Joachim

By *Chev. Stephen Lautens, KJ*  
*Grand Herald*

The official history of The Order of Saint Joachim begins in 1755 when fourteen German nobles and military leaders banded together while campaigning in Bohemia and swore to promote religious tolerance, provide assistance to its members, support the military and their princes and relieve the suffering of widows and orphans created by the wars that raged throughout the German states in the 18th's century. They created a new knightly order to accomplish these goals and elected Prince Christian Franz - the 25 year old son of the ruling Duke of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld - to be their first Grand Master.

It is therefore a matter of some mystery that The Order of Saint Joachim has been described throughout its almost 250 year history in a wide variety of ways: as a creation of the 18th century mystic and alchemist the Count of Saint Germain; a successor of the disbanded Bavarian Illuminati or German "Gold Rosicrucians"; a "Swedish Order"; and even was accused by one early 19th century observer as having chosen for itself a "strange and blasphemous name".

## THE TIMES

The mid-18th century was an intellectually turbulent time. Great strides were only just starting to be made in chemistry, medicine and the natural sciences, but men of learning and education still believed in alchemy, necromancy and the search for the mystic forces that governed the universe. Moreover, they believed that these forces could be understood and controlled by adepts, mystics and self-proclaimed masters of ancient knowledge who ranged from sincere philosophers and scientists to outright frauds and charlatans. It has to

be kept in mind that these apparently bizarre beliefs were held not just by the gullible and uneducated, but by leaders like Frederick the Great, the King of France and Austrian Emperor Joseph II, and the most senior men of learning, including Newton, Goethe, and Voltaire.

There were three strong - and sometimes contradictory - factors at work in the last half of the 18th century that gave rise to the creation of a large number of orders and secret societies. The first was what is generally referred as "The Enlightenment," which emphasized a rational, secular philosophy. The second was a tendency towards an egalitarian society, where the traditional structure of rank and privilege in society was threatened. Many observers have suggested this spawned the creation of groups that replaced the old social status with claims of ancient nobility (like the Knights Templar) or transmission of ancient wisdom. At the same time, there was also a tremendous growth of irrationalism as a backlash against the "Age of Reason". This spawned a search and belief in mystical and magical powers, the occult and ancient hidden secrets that would reveal an intimate knowledge of the universe and God Him- (or Her-) self.

In the last half of the 18th century secret societies seemed to be everywhere, each claiming to have a unique knowledge of the key to enlightenment or spiritual "illumination", typically passed down from the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Greek mystery schools, Arab mystics encountered during the Crusades, the Knights Templar, the spirit world, or even the former inhabitants of Atlantis.

Following the founding of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, Freemasonry had taken hold

of the Continent and lodges sprang up everywhere. They boasted Kings, Dukes and Princes among their members. Variations and competitors to freemasonry began to emerge almost immediately. Some were a decidedly atheistic and pagan, while others incorporated a belief in a "Supreme Being" as a prerequisite for membership. Some lodges were hotbeds of revolutionary political agitation and others counted the ruling monarchs and princes among their members. Lodges also spawned or lived concurrently with a host of off-shoots, whether it was in the form of the Rosicrucians, Illuminati, "Strict Observance" Masons or a countless variety of others with grand and exotic names.

The Order of Saint Joachim was born during this time, and so it would be odd if it did not reflect one or more of these qualities. This is especially true since the Protestant German states (like Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld) were particularly receptive to these ideas, being freed from the religious restrictions their Catholic neighbours sometimes felt. The various German states also had been the home to mystics, heretics and alchemists for hundreds of years, giving rise to legends like Doctor Faustus.

It should be emphasized that this article is by way of examining a variety of clues and hints of evidence and probably raises more questions than it answers. It is a starting point for further research.

## THE NAME OF THE ORDER

When our Order was founded in 1755 it was originally under the name *The Knights of the Order of Jonathan, Defenders of the Honour of Divine Providence*, or simply the Illustrious Order of Jonathan (*The Illustrissimi Ordinis Equistris Ionthae* in Latin according to the Statutes and Rules written in 1767). In 1767 the Grand Master and a majority of the Grand Chapter decided to remove Jonathan from the name and it simply became *The Order of the Divine Providence*. Finally, in 1785 a further change was made, and the Order's constitution was revised by the General Chapter to

rename it *The Equestrian, Secular and Chapteral Order of Saint Joachim*, which it has remained.

Each name the Order has chosen through its evolution can have multiple meanings and associations, which can be seen as being partially responsible for some of the many misunderstandings and incorrect notions about our Order. It also may provide important clues about the genuine beliefs shared by our founders and early members.

## Jonathan

When founded in 1755 our order was originally called *The Knights of the Order of Jonathan, Defenders of the Honour of Divine Providence*. The name "Jonathan" came from a story in the Bible that illustrates the importance of friendship, and presumably reflected that the fourteen persons who founded our Order was an association of close friends. Original documents state that they were military comrades in arms, likely veterans of the Second Silesian War fought in Bohemia as part of the ongoing Wars of the Austrian Succession. Early documents state that our Order was in fact created while they were still in Bohemia, which explains why a large proportion of our 14 founding members are Bohemian nobles and soldiers.

The Bible story on which the Order's original name was based is the story of the friendship between David and Jonathan, as told in 1 Samuel XVIII,1-4:

*And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.*

This story is also the source of some confusion about our Order, because the same story is the basis for a Masonic degree that was founded during the same period. The Secret Monitor

Degree was originally called *The Order of Jonathan and David and Jesus Christ*. It can be found mentioned in a brochure published in 1773 in Amsterdam, called the *Rules, Statutes, Constitutions and Ceremonies of the Order of Jonathan and David and Jesus Christ*.

It is not surprising that *The Order of Jonathan and David and Jesus Christ* would be confused by some authors with our Order's original name of *The Order of Jonathan*. It has caused some historians to mistakenly assume that our Order is the same as this Masonic degree. It can be stated with confidence that the two bodies had no relation to each other, but some sources to this day still make the mistake of assuming they were one and the same. [See: E. G. Gregory, *Premier Metropolis, London, 1987, Century - A History of One Hundred Years of the Order of the Secret Monitor*.] Although not one of the principal degrees of masonry, this Masonic Secret Monitor Degree still exists and today has working chapters around the world.

### A Johannite Order?

Another charge stemming for our Order's original name is that it was originally founded as a "Johannite" group. One web resource contains the following quote:

*The Count of Saint Germain (not the one who is written of by the Theosophists, or by the Elizabeth Clare Prophet people) has been said to have been a disciple of Schroepfer, direct predecessor of Cagliostro, a member of the Golden Rosicrucians, and that the Order of Saint Joachim (i.e., Order of Saint Jonathan, therefore, another Johannite Group), was established either by him, or in his honor.*

See:

[www.antiquillum.com/texts/2\\_BS/2\\_BS\\_2\\_5\\_1.htm](http://www.antiquillum.com/texts/2_BS/2_BS_2_5_1.htm)

The Johannites were (and are today) a mystical Christian sect. A few quotes will briefly describe their belief:

*There existed at that period in the East a Sect of Johannite Christians, who claimed to be the only true Initiates into the real mysteries of the religion of the Savior. They pretended to know the real his-*

*tory of YESUS the ANNOINTED, and, adopting in part the Jewish traditions and the tales of the Talmud, they held that the facts recounted in the Evangels are but allegories, the key of which Saint John gives...*

### "Allocution of Pio Nono against the Free Masons"

*The early church father Irenaeus wrote around 150 AD that Jesus remained on earth as a teacher for twenty years after his crucifixion, and that John the Apostle served as a conduit for these teachings.*

### Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels*

*The actual historical legend of the Johannites is based on the Talmudic account of Jesus Ben Pandera. Supposedly Jesus was born illegitimately to Miriam, adopted by a Rabbi named Joseph who took him to Egypt. There he was initiated into the mysteries of Osiris and consecrated Sovereign-Pontiff before returning to Judaea.*

### Kenneth Mackenzie, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*

*The cosmos, in the ancient Gnostic tradition, is viewed as a hierarchy of intelligences. The part played by privileged initiation in the transmission of divine knowledge is central. Christ conferred the essential knowledge of this Gospel of John as the best-loved apostle, and it was transmitted thence through the Patriarchs of Jerusalem until the arrival of the Templars in 1118, after which the secret teaching was kept by the Templar Grand Masters.*

### Peter Partner, *The Murdered Magicians*

In effect, the Johannites believed that Jesus himself was a high priest of a school of ancient Egyptian mystical knowledge, and that the Gospel of John the Evangelist is the key to understanding the hidden, real meaning in the other three "allegorical" Gospels. Significantly, it has been observed that in the last half of the 1700s Johannitism grew best "in the half-noble, half-bourgeois atmosphere of the chivalrous lodges." [Peter Partner, *The Murdered Magicians*]

Aside from the use of the name “Jonathan” by our Order (and why that links us with Johannitism is unclear) are there any other indications that our Order's founders might have flirted with the Johannist sect?

Our Order's original oath taken from the 1756 Rules of The Order of the Divine Providence reads:

*I swear by God and the Saint [John the] Evangelist, to conform completely to the Laws and Regulations of the Illustrious Order of the Honour of the Divine Providence...*

Our Order clearly felt Saint John was of special significance to its first members, as did the contemporary Johannite sect. Of course this was a view also held by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem and various other religious and chivalric orders of the time.

## DIVINE PROVIDENCE

In 1834 book, *A Review of the Chandos Peerage Case 1803*, author G.F. Beltz describes the review process The Order of Saint Joachim went through by the British authorities before Admiral Horatio Nelson was allowed to accept the award of the Cross of a Knight Grand Commander. The Order of Saint Joachim passed the strict scrutiny and requirements for a knightly order set down by the British Royal College of Arms. However, even though the College of Arms deemed The Order of Saint Joachim to be a valid order of knighthood and confirmed it by the King's Warrant in 1802 which granted Nelson permission to accept and wear the honour, Beltz makes the following curious statement:

*As a result of an official enquiry into the history and nature of the fraternity it became apparent that it was formed in 1755 by an association of young members from some princely and noble families in Germany who originally gave it the so strange and blasphemous title of 'Knights of the Order of the Defenders of the Divine Providence. [p. 224]*

On close examination, Beltz's book *A Review of the Chandos Peerage Case 1803* has an ulterior motive in making disparaging remarks about

The Order of St. Joachim. The Chandos Peerage Case was an examination as to whether English genealogist and writer Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges (1762-1837), who was a Knight of The Order of St. Joachim, was entitled to the hereditary title of Baron Chandos of Sudeley. He claimed the right to the title *per legem terrae* - that is, by common law, rather than by the normal criteria of the college of arms. He was ultimately denied that title amidst rancorous accusations and politics, but was finally made an English baronet in 1814. Beltz, the Lancaster King of Arms, in justifying denying Brydges the title of Baron Chandos felt it necessary in the process to also tarnish Brydges' other accomplishments and honours, including his knighthood from The Order of St. Joachim.

But this deliberate mudslinging for ulterior political purposes doesn't explain the curious choice of words used by Beltz. The question is, why would the name Knights of the Order of the Defenders of the Divine Providence be accused of being “strange and blasphemous”? Clearly the charge was that the phrase Divine Providence had a very different meaning from the one in accepted use by the Church, and was one the Church found offensive and heretical.

In normal Christian usage, *Divine Providence* means the care exercised by God over the universe. It appears in the Bible and is a common enough phrase in both Catholic and Protestant devotional works. However, the phrase Divine Providence has also been appropriated by numerous mystical and occult societies.

Hermeticism is an influential mystical tradition and body of teachings which repudiates the need and authority of priests and emphasizes the first-hand, personal experience of the sacred. It is not a Christian doctrine, although it incorporates part of ancient Christian and Jewish Kabbalistic belief. It has a history that likely extends back to before the Christian era to ancient Greece and Egypt. It has been observed that “by the end of the sixteenth century, a spate of German princelings has

espoused Hermetic teachings.” [Baignent and Leigh, *The Elixir and the Stone*: p. 138.] In fact Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1576-1612) established a Hermetic court, inviting celebrated mystics, alchemists and Hermetic philosophers to join him at his court in Prague to conduct experiments, study astrology and explore the nature of the Divine. Its teachings were embraced through Rosicrucianism and Illuminism by a number of German rulers, including the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha and the Duke of Wurttemberg.

In Hermeticism the Divine Providence is frequently invoked, not in the Christian sense, but rather in calling on the pagan Mother Goddess or Hermes Trismegistus, the quasi-divine, mystic founder of Hermeticism. One Hermetic prayer reads: “An immense acknowledgement rises, from all the readers and true disciples of Great Wisdom, to the Divine Providence for Her Great Grace and to the one whom She has sent.”

Many Hermetic beliefs incorporate Jesus as a magi or high priest, or even one of the reincarnations of Hermes Trismegistus. Other reincarnations in this line of magi include Apollonius of Tyan, Confucius, Lao-Tsu, Buddha, Nostradamus, Cagliostro, and the Count of Saint Germain (of whom we will hear more later in relation to our Order). It is clear why sentiments like this would be considered “strange and blasphemous”. A simple web search will reveal a large number of Hermetic websites, as well as a vast number devoted to combating the Hermetic blasphemy and alleged “satanism”.

If our Order's use of the name *Knights of the Order of the Defenders of the Divine Providence* is somehow derived from (or mistakenly associated with) Hermeticism or its related bodies such as Rosicrucianism or Illuminism, then it

is understandable why Beltz chose to level the criticism that our founders' choice in naming our Order was “strange and blasphemous”.

### SWEDEN & SWEDENBORG

The phrase *The Divine Providence* is also related to another contemporary of the founding of our Order. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was an accomplished Swedish scientist philosopher and mystic. Up to middle age Swedenborg was a scholar, a scientist, a practical administrator, a legislator, and a man of affairs. But a profound change came over him, which led him to leave the domain of physical research for that of psychical and spiritual inquiry. After a life devoted to scientific rationalism, he felt that nothing he had done had helped to explain the spiritual principles that governed the universe. In 1745 he believed he experienced a direct and ongoing communication directly with God who revealed to him the true nature and interpretation of the Holy Scripture. One of the results of those revelations was a widely circulated book published in 1762 called *The Divine Providence*.



Emanuel Swedenborg

The Swedenborgian theology is too complex to review in detail here, but it attracted a great many followers in Europe and England and was taken seriously by many prominent individuals. Without Swedenborg's consent or participation, his mystic revelations began being incorporated into the rites and rituals of various secret societies. For example, a group called the *Rite of the Philalèthes* was created in 1773 out of Swedenborgian, Martiniste, and Rosicrucian mysteries. Others combined Freemasonry with alchemy, theosophy, Martinism, and Swedenborgianism to create groups that defied classification. Some observers have also seen Swedenborg as part of the mystical Christian tradition that traces itself back to Joachim of Fiore, the 12th centu-

ry Italian mystic theologian who had apocalyptic visions and some credit with creating "Illuminism".

Even today Swedenborgianism constitutes a widely spread and considerable society with a regularly constituted ecclesiastical organization, however to orthodox and fundamentalist Christians it too would be and still is considered "strange and blasphemous" by traditional Christian churches.

There appears no connection however between our Order and Swedenborg or his beliefs, although they would have been certainly known to early founding members. His was a philosophy or brand of mystical Christianity that was discussed in courts and smart salons all over Europe.

It may also be that an erroneous connection with Swedenborg has prompted some writers to misidentify our Order as a Swedish order. This erroneous association and description of us as a "Swedish Order" has been repeated by several 19th and 20th century authors. This ongoing confusion likely arises from the fact that Sir Levett Hanson, our Order's Vice-Chancellor from 1800 to his death in 1814, administered our Order's affairs while serving at the court of Gustavus VI of Sweden from 1807 to 1811. This mistake has been repeated many times, including by the custodian of his papers following his death:

*The Hansons succeeded the Levetts and the last male heir, Sir Levett Hanson, a Knight of St. Joachim in Sweden, died at Copenhagen 22nd April, 1814, aged 58.*

**W.S.Banks, 1868, quoted in  
"Normanton Past and Present"  
by Walter Hampson**

In a more recent article about the English genealogist and writer Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges (of the Chandos Peerage Case fame) who was a Knight of the Order of St. Joachim, the author refers to Brydges' incorrect use of the prefix "Sir" as "a privilege conferred by the Swedish order of St. Joachim..." [*The Times of the Signs: Adrian Johns*]

## WHY SAINT JOACHIM?

At first glance it is difficult to understand why a group of predominantly Protestant noblemen and soldiers would change the name of their knightly order in 1785 to The Order of Saint Joachim.

St. Joachim was a reasonably well known but minor saint in the Catholic tradition. He is not mentioned at all in the Bible, and only source of information about St. Joachim is the non-biblical Gospel of James, an apocryphal book that was nonetheless widely read. Known as the father of the Virgin Mary, he traditionally represents humour, wisdom and humanity. He encourages the use of human traits for higher intentions. These are all noble sentiments, but it remains difficult to understand why the Order took its name from him. St. Joachim is the Patron Saint of fathers, grandfathers, grandparents, married couples, cabinet makers and linen traders, again none of which seem to be particularly applicable to a secular German charitable order of chivalry.

A simple explanation would be that the Order's members in 1785 had some connection to the Bohemian town of St. Joachimsthaler, which drew its own name from the saint. History is rarely that neat, and there doesn't seem any apparent connection between our Order's Bohemian origins or members and that particular Bohemian town, so other explanations have to be explored.

## The Jachin Pillar

In addition to the saint, the name "Joachim" is also associated with several mystical traditions. The name Joachim is from the Hebrew meaning "God erects" or "God establishes". Any Freemason - modern or 18th century - would recognize this to be the same word as "Jachin". In the Masonic tradition Jachin (sometimes shown as Joachim) is the name given to the right hand pillar that stood at the entrance to King Solomon's temple at Jerusalem, and is named after the first High Priest of the Temple. Masonic ritual teaches new initiates that the word Jachin means "God

will establish". The twin pillars appear in the description of Solomon's Temple at 1 Kings 7:15-22 and 2 Chronicles 3L14-17.

Jachin is revered as the symbolic "priestly pillar", paired with Boaz the "kingly pillar" on the other side. Together they represent the kingly and priestly aspects of creating and maintaining the Kingdom of Heaven. [See: *The Hiram Key*: pp. 270-71.] These pillars have tremendous symbolism and significance as a mystical source of earthly power and stability that extends through the Jews, the Kabala, the Knights Templar, and the Freemasons as well as Rosicrucian, Illuminati and Hermetic thought. The now famous temple at Rosslyn contains a celebrated example of the Jachin Pillar.

The Jachin (Joachim) pillar is also found in Tarot symbolism. In the High Priestess Card, The High Priestess sits between the two pillars of the Temple of Solomon. Boaz, the black pillar represents the negative life force while, Jachin, the white pillar, represents the positive life force. They are also said to represent "severity" and "mercy" respectively. As if deliberately tweaking the nose of conspiracy theorists, the High Priestess Card which shows the Jachin pillar also traditionally means "hidden influences are here at work."



Tarot cards are believed to have existed from at least the 12th century. Modern theories hold that tarot cards were not originally intended as a form of divination, but were a covert tool for the teaching of arcane and mystic knowledge. They were effectively the PowerPoint presentation of the 12th century. Theories also abound as to the nature of the mystic knowledge they were intended to convey. Some suggest it was to pass on pagan worship of Venus, the Eternal Goddess, or the true history of the Celtic church, and even a belief in the survival of the children and descendents of Jesus (made

popular today by the books *The Da Vinci Code* and *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*).

Although revered as a Catholic saint, Saint Joachim has also been appropriated by some versions of mystic Hermetic belief as being one of their "ascended masters".

## Joachim of Floris

Another significant instance of the name Joachim was in the person of the mystic Joachim of Floris (1145-1202), named for the monastery of San Giovanni in Fiore where he was founder and abbot. Joachim of Floris was of noble birth and was brought up at the court of Duke Roger of Apulia. After traveling in senior political and ecclesiastic circles, he founded his own monastery. The pope and the Holy Roman Emperor supported this work. He largely withdrew from the world and had a series of apocalyptic visions. Joachim of Floris divides the history of the world into three great epochs, successively inspired and dominated by a different person of the Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Ghost. In his vision, each of these epochs reveals, in history, a new dimension of the divinity which allows humanity to perfect itself progressively until finally, in the last phase - which he wrote would begin in 1260 - it arrives at absolute spiritual freedom.

After his death in 1202 many additional prophetic and spiritual writings were attributed to him, some of which were critical of the Church. The cult of Joachimism went from being supported to being formally condemned by the Pope within sixty years of his death. A further review by the Church of writings wrongly attributed to him resulted in him being "rehabilitated" as a genuine Christian mystic several hundred years later.

For our purposes, Joachim of Fiore is also identified by some writers as having created a sect of "Illuminated Ones" at his monastery. The Illuminati active at the end of the 1700s claimed him as one of their own past masters. The present day "New World Order" cranks also maintain the far-fetched notion that they can trace the history of the Illuminati back to

Joachim of Fiore as its founder.

As will be seen, our Order counted Freemasons, Rosicrucians, and members of the Illuminati among its members, and so their choice of Joachim as a name cannot be overlooked as possibly having one or more hidden meanings.

## **FOUNDING FATHERS: FREEMASONS, ROSICRUCIANS AND ILLUMINATI?**

The names of the fourteen men who founded our Order in 1755 are recorded in our history. They are usually simply described as German nobles and military leaders. But if our Order had any connection to contemporary secret societies or was a vehicle for people with similar interests in mystic knowledge, one would also expect to find evidence of their involvement in these groups.

The fourteen founding members of our Order were:

Prince Christian Franz von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld

Duke of Württemberg-Oels

Prince Piccolomini

Count von Clary und Aldringen

Baron D. Eib

Ritter Fachner von Trauenstein

Keck von Schwarzbach

Count von Kollowrat-Krakowsky

Baron von Milchling

Baron Moser von Filseck

Count von Nostitz

Baron Reichlin von Meldegg

Wiedersperger von Wiedersperg

Zobel von Giebelstadt

At present there are only three connections known between the founding members of our Order and any of the various secret societies and mystery schools present in Europe at the time:

### **Prince Christian Franz von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld**

Prince Christian Franz von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld was our Order's first Grand Master. He was the son of Franz Josias Herzog (Duke

von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld. The Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfelds were closely related to the Saxe-Gotha-Altenberg family, which ruled the Duchy of Gotha. When the Elector of Bavaria issued edicts for the suppression of the Bavarian Illuminati in 1784 and again in 1785, its founder, Adam Weishaupt, was banished. He fled Bavaria and finally found welcome in Gotha, where he was offered refuge by Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha-Altenberg, cousin to our first Grand Master's father. Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha-Altenberg was in fact already a member of the Bavarian Illuminati. However, aside from the family connections there is no direct information as to whether Prince Christian Franz shared the family interest in the Illuminati. Regardless, he stepped down as Grandmaster in 1773, a full seven years before the Bavarian Illuminati was founded, although Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism were already very active in Germany.

### **Duke of Württemberg, Graf Franz Xaver von Montfort**

In 1773 Prince Christian Franz turned over the position of Grand Master to another founding member of the Order - Graf Franz Xaver von Montfort, Herzog (duke) of the neighbouring Duchy of Württemberg. The Dukes of Württemberg are also closely related to the Saxe-Coburgs. The Dukes of Württemberg were known as patrons of the arts, but also were key figures in the beginnings of Rosicrucianism. In the late 1500s and early 1600s, the court of a previous Duke of Württemberg was well known as a centre of alchemical and occult activities, with Simon Studion and Johann Valentin Andreae as its most notable Rosicrucian figures.



### **Count von Kollowrat-Krakowsky**

Leopold Reichsgraf von Kollowrat-Krakowsky (1727-1809) was a prominent Bohemian statesman. He was the Bohemian-Austrian High Chancellor and President of the Court Chamber. He is also one of the few clear

connections between the founding members of the Order, the Freemasons and the Illuminati. In 1783 he became Master of a Masonic Lodge in Prague and Deputy Master of the "Zur wahren Eintract" Lodge in Vienna. In 1786 he joined the "Zur Wahrheit" Lodge in Vienna and between 1782 and 1788 he was a member of the Parisian Lodge "Les Amis Réuni". In 1788 he became a member of the Gold- und Rosenkreuzer. In 1782 he was recruited into the Bavarian Illuminati by Baron von Knigge at the *Wilhelmsbader* Convention of Masons and in 1784 became the national leader of the Illuminati for Austria.

Although these are the only three obvious connections discovered between our original founding members and the various secret societies, there is a good likelihood that there are additional connections that are unknown. Their relative youth and the level of society that they represent make it likely that more of them were involved in the Freemasons or the various Rosicrucian bodies that thrived at German and Bohemian courts. What those connections might be, we may never know for sure.

**Sir Levett Hanson**

More definite is the later connection between The Order of Saint Joachim and Sir Levett Hanson, the energetic Vice-Chancellor of our Order between 1800 and his death in 1814. During that time Hanson took care of all the administrative functions of our Order, carrying our archives and documents with him on his many travels. He also made our Order

famous in his 1802 book, *A History of all the Orders of Knighthood in Europe*.

Hanson was born in England in 1754. In 1776 he visited the continent and lived there the rest of his life with only a few brief trips back to England. He visited and was a friend to many foreign courts and became a councillor to Prince Philip of Limbourg, Duke of Holstein, who made him a knight of his Order of St. Philip (from which Levett Hanson received the entitlement to use "Sir" and not from our Order, as is sometimes wrongly stated). He was very active in the service of the Duke of Parma and the Duke of Modena, where he achieved the rank of Brigadier General.

By 1794 Hanson had already "incurred the suspicion of the Austrian government" and was compelled to leave Modena. On arriving in Innsbruck that year he was arrested and kept in confinement

for 11 months. He was tried in Vienna and on his release took refuge in Germany. It was there in 1800 that he became acquainted with our Order and became our Vice-Chancellor. He was the motivating force behind the conferring the Cross of a Knight Grand Commander on his public school friend Admiral Horatio Nelson in 1802.

Hanson's official biography does not mention why he "incurred the suspicion of the Austrian government" in 1794. In an article titled: *Levett Hanson of Normanton (1754-1814): Un agente segreto fra logge massoniche e club giacobini*, (AA.VV., *Formazione e controllo dell'opinione pubblica a Modena nel '700*, a cura



**Count von Kollowrat-Krakowsky**

di A. Biondi, Modena 1986, pp. 165-276.) author Giuseppe Orlandi writes that Hanson incurred the wrath of the now anti-Masonic Austrian empire for his work as a “secret agent” of the Masonic Lodges and radical so-called Jacobean Clubs. He is alleged to have used his positions at court and his frequent travels to help organize Masonic and radical Jacobean opposition to the Austrian government in Italy.

Hanson was clearly an active Freemason, and almost certainly used his contacts and travels as opportunities to visit other masons and their lodges. Considering his relationships with many of the noble families of Europe, it would appear to be out of character for him to have any interest in radical Jacobean causes. Quite the contrary, his friend Admiral Nelson whom he personally arranged to receive our Order's Grand Cross of a Knight Commander put down a local radical and Jacobite rebellion with some savagery in 1794. However, the persecution of rebels and the suspicion of Freemasons by Austria's secret police in the late 1700s did not require much proof of actual wrongdoing - lodge membership and the association with the wrong people was enough, especially for foreigners. Hanson spent the last fourteen years of his life representing our Order and enjoying the hospitality of the more free-thinking Protestant monarchs of northern Europe.

### **Baron von Ecker**

The *Gülden und Rosenkreuzer* (Gold Rosicrucians), was founded in 1777, and like many mystical societies had Hermetic and Masonic roots. The Gold Rosicrucians drew heavily on Eastern and Islamic mysticism. The Gold Rosicrucians was at one time headed by J. C. von Ecker, who served as a Chancellor of The Order of St. Joachim. Information is sparse about J. C. von Ecker (also referred elsewhere as Baron Ecker von Eckhoffen), although his name appears in several texts. One anonymous and undated text on the Rituals of the Fratres Lucis (another secret society) states:

*Baron Ecker is said to have been also a member of*

*the Christian Masonry of Bohemia, 1756, altered to St. Germain's Order of Joachim, 1786. Findel states that he was a member of the Golden Rosycross before he joined the Ritters des Licht, 1767, or Asiatic Brethren, and after that the Fratres Lucis.*

An association with von Ecker provides yet another link between our Order and the various mystic and secret societies that sprang up all over Germany in the last half of the 18th century. While von Ecker may have been our Chancellor, parts of this statement are clearly inaccurate. Our group was never officially known as the “Christian Masonry of Bohemia”, although this may be a tantalizing indication of how our original founders thought of themselves. However, Baron von Ecker was not one of the original founders of our Order, but joined sometime later.

### **The “Supreme Being”**

A further hint about our Order's roots in Freemasonry can be found in our Order's statement of purpose. As reported by A.M. Perrot in his 1821 work *Historische Sammlung aller Ritterorden der verschiedenen Nationen* (A Historical Collection of all Knight Orders of Different Nations) our Order's “mission statement” reads:

*The Knights solemnly vow to worship the Supreme Being, show tolerance towards all religions, loyalty towards their princes, support the needs of their military, the poor, widows and orphans.*

The use of the phrase “Supreme Being” (*des höchsten Wesens*) is of particular interest, since it is how Freemasons refer to God. It is also an inclusive term used by some other Enlightenment secret societies that were considered heretical by the Church. Typically they believed (as Freemasons do today) that in essence all religions worship the same Supreme Being, regardless of what we call Him (or Her) in our own faiths.

It is also worth pausing to note two other things this statement tells us about our Order's early values. The first is that it did recognize the existence of a Supreme Being, in contrast to

the atheistic French Freemasonry. German Freemasonry incorporated a belief in God that made it acceptable to Protestant states and less offensive to Catholic ones. Secondly, our founding fathers also vowed to show tolerance to all religions, which is perhaps a lesson they learned during the ongoing struggle between the Catholic and Protestant powers in Bohemia during the Wars of Austrian Succession.

## HINTS AND MISSES

A number of modern and contemporary writers have also made questionable or plainly wrong connections between the Order of Saint Joachim and various secret and mystical societies.

### The Count of St. Germain

Curiously, the same text that mentions Baron von Ecker above also suggests that in 1786 our Order was "altered to St. Germain's Order of Joachim". Our final name change to the Equestrian, Secular and Chapterial Order of Saint Joachim was actually made in 1785, but of more interest is the alleged association with the 18th century mystic known as the Comte de St. Germain.

The story of the life of the man known as the Count of St. Germain (1710?-1784?) would fill whole volumes. While considered a charlatan and a fraud by many, he was welcomed into numerous courts and salons as a remarkable alchemist, seer and mystic. His honour and abilities were staunchly defended by such people as Louis XV and Marie Antoinette, Duke Ferdinand of Braunschweig and Duke Karl August of Hessen.

He led people to believe he was well over a hundred years old when he appeared to be in his fifties, and spoke of his friendships with historical figures long dead. He did indeed travel to India at least twice (including once in 1755 when our

Order was founded) where he claimed to have learned the secrets to working wonders with jewels and precious metals. He was also reported to be a skilled artist and composer. He did gather around him during his extensive and frequent travels students and admirers who sought to learn more about his powers and methods.

The name of our Order is mentioned in several sources as owing something to the Count of St. Germain:

*According to the well-known writer Eliphas Levi [45 Histoire de la Haute Magie, pp. 419. 420. Paris, 1860.], M. de St. Germain was a Catholic in outward religious observance. Although he was the founder of the Order of St. Joachim in Bohemia, he separated himself from this society as soon as revolutionary theories began to spread among its members.*

**I. Cooper-Oakley, *The Comte De St. Germain*, 1912: Milan, p. 62**

This same writer repeats but softens this alleged connection between our Order and the Count of St. Germain:

*According to Cadet de Gassicourt, he [The Count of Saint Germain] was a traveling member for the "Templars," going from Lodge to Lodge to establish communication between them. M. de St. Germain is said to have done this work for the Paris Chapter of the "Knights Templar." Investigation proves him to have been connected with the "Asiatische Bruder," or the "Knights of St. John the Evangelist from the East in Europe," also with the "Ritter des Lichts," or "Knights of Light," and with various other Rosicrucian bodies in Austria and Hungary; and also with the "Martinists" in Paris.*

*He founded, according to Eliphas Levi, the Order of St. Joachim, but this statement is not supported by any historical evidence at present forthcoming, though many of his students and friends were members of this body. Everywhere, in every Order where real mystic teaching is to be found, can we trace the influence of this mysterious teacher."*



Comte de St. Germain

I. Cooper-Oakley, *The Comte De St. Germain*, 1912: Milan, p. 69

The connection drawn between the Order of St. Joachim and the Count of St. Germain by 19th century occult writer Eliphas Levi and repeated by Cooper-Oakley may or may not have had any basis in fact. Cooper-Oakley plainly states that she knows of no evidence to support Levi's claim. As an "occult authority" Levi's report of the connection may be the source of other later writers repeating the same claim:

*The Count of Saint Germain (not the one who is written of by the Theosophists, or by the Elizabeth Clare Prophet people) has been said to have been a disciple of Schroepfer, direct predecessor of Cagliostro, a member of the Golden Rosicrucians, and that the Order of Saint Joachim (i.e., Order of Saint Jonathan, therefore, another Johannite Group), was established either by him, or in his honor.*

[[www.antiquillum.com/texts/2\\_BS/2\\_BS\\_2\\_5\\_1.htm](http://www.antiquillum.com/texts/2_BS/2_BS_2_5_1.htm)]

History does not record the Count of St. Germain as having been a guest at the court of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld, or of any of the other founders of our Order, and was in fact reported to be in India in 1755. It is impossible to say whether he may have met any of our founders during his extensive travels. It is however safe to say our Order was not founded by him and there is no evidence that it was founded "in his honour".

### Albert Pike

In 1883 Albert Pike wrote *A Historical Inquiry In Regard To The Grand Constitutions Of 1786* - a work on Masonic history. Pike was a controversial but influential American freemason and American Civil War Confederate general, but is now widely regarded as careless with historical fact and did great violence to the development of Freemasonry by revising Masonic ritual without any real understanding of its actual significance. He is mostly known for having established a revised "Scottish Rite" masonry in the United States.

In *A Historical Inquiry In Regard To The Grand Constitutions Of 1786* Pike examined what he believed to be the historical development of masonry in the context of other European Enlightenment societies. In discussing the influence and breakup of the Bavarian Illuminati, Pike attempts to trace its former members to the various branches of the Rosicrucian Order, including the Gold Rosicrucians, the Order of Perfect Initiates of Asia, or the Asiatic Brethren, and the various Orders of Light. Pike then goes on to include "The Order of Saint Joachim (St. Jonathan)" as one of the many successor groups to the Illuminati. He is clearly referring to our Order. Pike however overlooks the fact that the founding of The Order of Saint Joachim in 1755 predates the founding of the Bavarian Illuminati in 1776 by more than twenty years, and so could not have grown out of it.

At most a few of our Order's members were also members of the Illuminati - including founding member Leopold Reichsgraf von Kollowrat-Krakowsky, mentioned above - during the overlap before the Bavarian Illuminati finally disbanded in 1790. As has already been noted, when Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Bavarian Illuminati, was banished from Bavaria he sought and found friendly refuge with Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha-Altenberg, a member of the Bavarian Illuminati and first cousin to Prince Franz Christian of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, our Order's first Grand Master. Although there is no evidence to support a connection, some might question the coincidence that the change in our Order's name to "The Order of Saint Joachim" took place in 1785, the same year as the King of Bavaria passed an edict outlawing the Bavarian Illuminati.

To build theories upon theories, it could be also tentatively suggested that other former Illuminati members also came north and took refuge in our Order where they knew they already had a few members and the protection of a sympathetic Protestant nobility. If that was the case then the Joachim in our name may not even refer to the Catholic saint, but

rather is a hidden tribute to Joachim of Floris, believed to be the founder of “the Illuminated Ones” from which the Illuminati drew their inspiration.

## Inconclusive Conclusions

One of the greatest problems is the relatively poor information we have about these groups, and how the same names keep popping up every time a new one is formed. For example, in this quote from the anonymous *Rituals of the Fratres Luis*, we meet a half dozen of the people we have been discussing:

*Amongst these were members of the Golden Rosicrucians, Asiatic Brethren, &c.; and Pasquales, Swedenborg, Cagliostro, St. Germain, Mesmer, St. Martin, Eliphas Levi, Baron Ecker von Eckhoffen and Henrick his brother, and their uncle Dr. Schleiss von Lowenfeld of Salzbach, known as Phoebron in the Rosicrucian Order... Baron Ecker is said to have been also a member of the Christian Masonry of Bohemia, 1756, altered to St. Germain's Order of Joachim, 1786. Findel states that he was a member of the Golden Rosycross before he joined the Ritters des Licht, 1767, or Asiatic Brethren, and after that the Fratres Lucis.*

Here we have Swedenborg, St. Germain, Eliphas Levi, and Baron Ecker von Eckhoffen all mentioned in the same sentence as part of this short-lived secret society. Incestuous to say the least. It is no wonder following the thread of who influenced whom in secret mystical societies is so difficult.

Confirmation of a person's genuine connection to an “occult” or secret society is notoriously difficult to prove with any certainty. Such bodies routinely kept few records (for obvious reasons) and also liked to claim both their influence and membership was far greater than it really was. They liked to claim descent from the great mystical figures of both their own time and the past, and their enemies were more than happy to tar them all with the same brush. One only has to look at the many rantings of present-day conspiracy kooks and right-wing Christian fundamentalists to see how they make all the leaps from possibility to

hard fact to draw conclusions that we hesitate to make here.

The possibility that our earliest members shared in some of the more esoteric beliefs of the time is not difficult to imagine in the context of how common they were, especially among the German nobility. These mystic beliefs may initially seem odd to us until we look at our current culture of widespread New Age beliefs. Eastern philosophies and the Kabala are now espoused by rock stars and housewives. The Freemasons now have about six million members worldwide. Wiccans are gaining official recognition as simply another valid religion. Psychics help the police solve cases and have their own television shows where they summon up the spirits of the dead for audience members to answer personal questions, find lost objects and diagnose illnesses. There is a renewed interest in everything from the Holy Grail and Knights Templar to the “hidden” meaning of the Bible, lost religious texts and the historical Jesus.

Until more and better information comes to light, at most we can say our Order was created in an atmosphere ripe with mystical traditions and secret brotherhoods devoted to discovering the ultimate truth of the ages. There are clearly some connections to the Freemasons, Bavarian Illuminati and other such groups that are based in fact, and a great deal more that are either mistaken or unclear. That our founders may have had more in mind than creating an order devoted to mutual support and friendship is not difficult to believe. That they had connections to the Masons, the Illuminati, St. Germain or heretical Christian beliefs would not be unusual given the spirit of the times and the people involved in the early years of the Order of Saint Joachim. In some ways, it would be more remarkable if they did not.

*Chevalier Stephen Lautens. KJ*



# St. Joachim Order Blazer Crest Now Available!

This fine, hand-embroidered blazer crest is now available in limited numbers to members of The Order of Saint Joachim.

Each four inch tall crest is completely made by hand in gold and silver wire bullion on a navy wool background. It features the insignia of the order in silver trimmed in gold, with a gold figure of St. Joachim in the centre, surrounded by a green band and the motto "NOBILI" at the top. The whole has our Order's name at the top and the motto "Junxit Amicos Amor" (Love Hath United Friends) around the bottom in gold bullion embroidery.

The Order of Saint Joachim blazer crest can be ordered directly from our Grand Herald. The cost is either \$35 US or £20, including shipping anywhere in the world.



Quantities are very limited, so to obtain your blazer crest please first reserve one by email to our Grand Herald ([grandherald@stjoachimorder.org](mailto:grandherald@stjoachimorder.org)), and then fill in and send the attached form with the cost in the currency of your choice. The order form is also available in the private members' area page of our website: [www.stjoachim-order.org/memberdownloads.htm](http://www.stjoachim-order.org/memberdownloads.htm).

## St. Joachim Order Blazer Crest

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Please allow 5-8 weeks for delivery



## Application for Award of 250th Anniversary Cross

To The Grand Master and Grand Chapter of the Equestrian, Secular and Chapterial Order of Saint Joachim:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby petition the Grand Chapter of  
name of applicant  
The Order of Saint Joachim to receive the award of the 250th Anniversary Cross of the Order.

I confirm my eligibility for the above award by certifying:

- My oblations to Grand Chapter are current and paid in full;
- I am of the rank of Knight Expectant or above.

All of which I humbly submit,

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

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Return this completed Application to the Grand Prior with the fee of £25 (English Pounds) in an international money order payable to The Order of Saint Joachim.

Most Rev. Douglas Lewins, GCJ  
Grand Prior  
St James House  
58 Capel Road  
Forest Gate  
London, England E7 0JP