

The History of Moor Hall

H. S. COCHRAN.



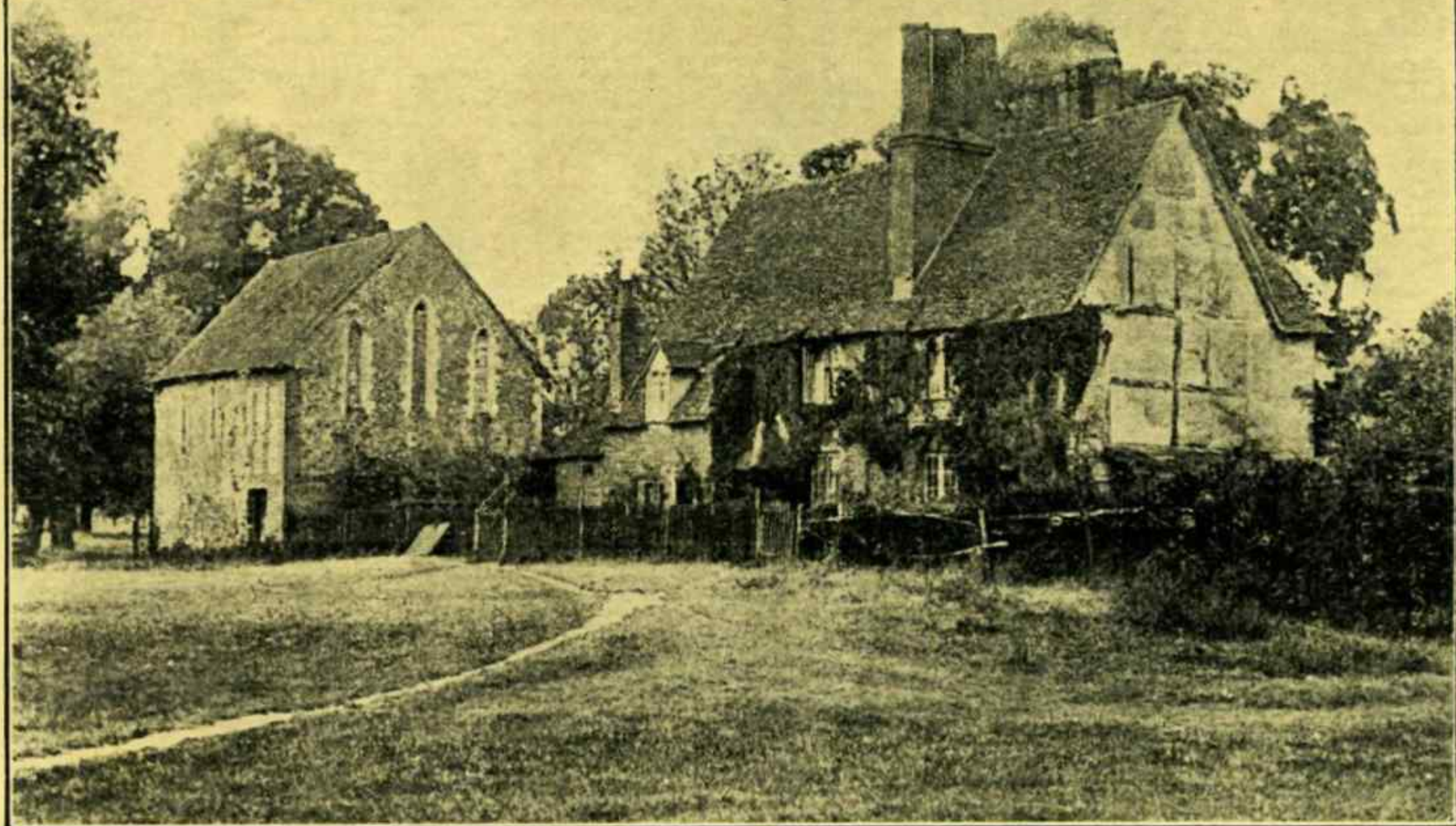
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This little account was written in April, 1928 and not published. I am now venturing to do so because the History of Moor Hall must be unknown to the people of Harefield and may be of interest to them. Any profit on the booklet will go to the upkeep of the building.

DEDICATED TO THE CHILDREN OF
MOOR HALL :
THAT THEY MAY LEARN TO IMITATE
THE VIRTUES OF THE KNIGHTS—
COURAGE, GENTLENESS,
CARE FOR THE SICK
AND SUFFERING.

THE HISTORY OF MOOR HALL.



OF the interesting buildings in Harefield the Church and Breakspears naturally come to mind. There is, however, one other in the Parish of surpassing interest, the ancient building at Moor Hall.

I should like in these few pages to give a short description of it, its history and restoration, and of the noble foundation with which it was associated.

The building, as we see it to-day, is not less than 700 years old—going back to the early 13th century—far older than the present Church.

At that time we can picture to ourselves a very different England to the land we live in now. Instead of a vast population dwelling in cities, were a few inhabitants isolated from one another by vast tracts of forest, marsh and common; roads there were none, nor were there the well-trimmed hedges and highly cultivated country we see to-day.

The Middlesex Forest occupied a large extent of the present county.

A great moor once extended nearly as far as Uxbridge. In that lonely waste the one house to which travellers could turn would be the Moor Hall. The name has come down from the earliest times. Now the Moor Hall consisted of two buildings, the whole surrounded by a moat, as a measure of protection in that rude age. There are only slight traces left of where the moat was. Up to recently a pond was still there and a large elm tree.

Of the two buildings, there was first the Hall, the

dwelling-place of the Custos and his servants. It had a high-pitched roof with beautiful brick chimneys and consisted of an upper and a lower storey. The timbers, especially the roof timbers, were of enormous size and weight, taken, no doubt, out of the forest hard by and shaped with the adze. The outer walling was of wattle and daub. Alas! that this interesting relic of medieval days could not have been left as it was. The setting was quite charming with the pond and the old elm tree in front and meadows round it with few houses near it.

But many years ago it had been divided into three cottages, which were all occupied. Ugly modern grates had been inserted. It is believed that a spark from one of the grates set a beam smouldering. A fire started on New Year's Day, 1922. Once alight, nothing could save the building, which soon became a roaring furnace. The heat was appalling; nothing was left but the chimney-stacks. These stacks remained some time longer and were then pulled down, the carved mantelpieces having in the meantime been removed and taken away. One could for some time still see the great beams lying scorched and blackened. Now nothing remains to show where the place had been. Our photo provides a record. But we still have the remaining building which is possibly not so greatly altered after all the intervening centuries.

It is uncertain what its use was. We do not know whether it was a granary for storing the fruits of the earth as they were gathered year by year, or a chapel; or perhaps the lower part was used for storage and the upper for worship.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

It is a plain structure built of flints with stone for

the doorways and window-openings and at the four corners. Flints of large size are plentiful in the neighbourhood. It consists of one apartment divided into two floors. Before the restoration of the building, all that remained of the upper floor, as our photo shows, were the enormous mortised beams, which had sagged considerably towards the middle. The ends of these were fixed into the wall. There were no posts to support them and to hold up the floor.

Entering by the door, the whole place was in a terrible state. The windows and openings were boarded up with rough deal battens—on the floor the remains of a fire. Dirt and decay everywhere.

The place had been used as a barn and at one time was slept in by anyone needing a night's lodgings.

Except for some bad cracks the building was, however, structurally sound. Such was its condition when the new housing scheme came in 1926. The surrounding land, which belonged to the Newdegate Estate, had been bought by the Uxbridge Rural District Council and the building itself was included in the sale. What was to be done with the building? A proposal was made that it should be pulled down. Immediate action, therefore, had to be taken, if the building was to be saved.

I then, as Vicar of the Parish, wrote to the Council and offered to carry out the work of repair if the building was made over to the Church. The Council thereupon agreed to grant to the Vicar and Churchwardens of Harefield a 99 years' lease of the building at a yearly rent of 10s., provided the building was properly repaired within a year. The lease dated from January, 1927.

The work of repair then began. Mr. H. Farquharson,

F.R.I.B.A., Churchwarden, acted as Hon. Architect, and Mr. C. Brown contracted to do the work. The cost was estimated at £220, later increased to £283.

From the outset the aim was to restore the fabric with as little alteration as possible. The first work was to make the building thoroughly sound. There were some very bad cracks, especially at the four corners. Here the defective walling was pulled down and replaced with sound material—on the north side with stone. The stone, a soft stone, had in the course of years crumbled to powder. On the south side the original stone had at some period been replaced with brick during the work of repair. Brick was therefore again used here.

THE FLOOR.—There had been a floor originally, so we put one down, using the old beams. These beams, which had sagged in the middle, were jacked up and supported on two new oak posts. The floor-joists were inserted into the mortises of the old beams, rather a troublesome task, but worth doing. It was now found there were eight or nine feet of headroom on the ground floor. To reach the upper storey an inner staircase was made of oaken newel-posts. An outside staircase of oak was also made leading to the ancient doorway. In the doorway a plain oak door was fixed. Though there are no traces of this staircase we believe it was once there.

THE WINDOWS were intended to light the upper floor and it is only now that the floor has been put in that we see them in their right aspect. There are seven. First the three beautiful lancet windows at the east end, the centre one taller than the other two. They could only be seen from the outside, the openings on the inside having been entirely blocked. In

the process of uncovering them a large part of the walling fell down (fortunately without injuring the workmen) and had to be rebuilt. Some of the stonework of the arches was missing; it has not been replaced. At the west end there is a single light exactly similar to the centre light at the east end. The stonework was very badly decayed and part of the opening had been bricked up. The window was opened and stone-work renewed. On the north side was a little window entirely blocked on the inside. The window was opened.

On the south side there are two exactly similar window openings, one of which was blocked up; in uncovering this latter a smaller window was seen to lead off in an oblique direction from it. What was its purpose? It is possible to look on to the road from it in a way one could not do from the other window. Was it for defence? This window, opening from the other, could be seen from the outside.

The windows have been all glazed. Owing to the thickness of the walls, about three feet, they are all deep set.

THE ROOF is entirely open, there being no ceiling. Four great beams, brought from the forest hard by and smoothed with the adze, carry the rafters. They span the entire width of the building.

Two of them are set close to the east and west windows respectively, producing a curious effect. The second beam from the east end is set with mortise-holes, showing there was a partition at some time dividing the eastern portion from the rest of the room.

The beams and rafters, in fact the whole roof, are in splendid condition; no repairs were needed.

Where the rafters come down to the wall there is

an open space on both sides. Birds fly in and out of the building. This space was once filled in with wattle and daub, traces of which can still be seen.

Wattle and daub was a mixture of mud or clay and dried grass (this was the daub) laid on small sticks (the wattle). The sticks were laid on first and the wet mixture put on next, the whole forming an even surface on the outside.

At the eastern end, probably at a fairly early date, a large part of the south wall had fallen down from top to bottom of the building and the remains of an arch can be seen on the lower floor. Looking at the broken wall we find in places the daub jammed tightly in, also portions of stone. This part of the wall has been left as it was.

On the north side is what appears to be a chimney breast. A platform was inserted at the east end. Looking at the room as now finished, we have a wide, well-lighted chamber, with great beams and massive walls. There can be but few buildings of this period in existence. Its ecclesiastical character can be explained because buildings of that date were made in that style.

On the plaster of the wall red lines can be seen which were intended to represent ashlar, each of the squares on its east end bearing the additional adornment of a rose.

Then as to the lower part of the building. The earth floor has been left as it is. There were two windows boarded up with rough deal wood and a third opening, also boarded. The two windows were glazed and a new window made and also glazed.

For the doorway there was a plain stone arch: the door had long gone. A new oak door was made and

hung. By excavating a little it was possible to get six feet of headroom under the arch.

As to the cost of repair, the whole amount needed was collected. There was a Jumble Sale, which realised £90, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the Good Templars belonging to the Wesleyan Church who gave a Concert for the repair fund. The amount realised was £10 18s. 0d. This is an act of kindness which should not be forgotten.

The work of repair went on during the summer of 1927, and on September 25th of that year the Bishop of Kensington came to reopen and dedicate the building. The service was fixed for 3.30 p.m. It was a Sunday afternoon.

N.B.—Since this was written the Bishop has passed away.

Two of the Knights of St. John were present wearing black robes with the white eight-pointed cross on the left breast: Mr. Pirie Gordon, of *The Times* staff, and Mr. Fincham, Assistant Librarian of the Order. On the arrival of the Bishop a procession was formed, consisting of one of the Churchwardens, the Secretary of the Church Council, the two Knights, the Vicar and the Bishop, and proceeded to the building. The upper room was full, every available inch of space being occupied, also both staircases, and there were people standing on the lower floor. The Vicar was especially anxious that accommodation should be provided for the Moor Hall children.

Then the service began: there were just a few hymns and prayers, Mr. Pirie Gordon read a lesson, and the Bishop said dedicating prayers and gave his address to the people. It was all as simple as may be. So ended a memorable occasion, for on this day, after

nearly 400 years, a building was restored to the service of God.

It is intended to be used as a Mission Room and for Sunday School. It was very badly needed as the people in this part of the Parish had until a short time ago no building of any kind for Church use and it is quite outside the village. It will replace a small Mission Hut.

To mark the restoration a Tablet and Shield were fixed in the upper room. On the Tablet the following words were inscribed in white letters on a blue ground: "This ancient building, together with another house destroyed by fire, was formerly a camera of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Restored by the Vicar and Churchwardens, 1926. H. S. Cochran, Vicar of Harefield." The white eight-pointed cross on a red ground is introduced to the left of the lettering. The Shield is fixed above the Tablet; it has the Arms of the Order painted in the correct colours, a white cross on a dark red background.

Mr. C. A. Hindley, Master of the Painter-Stainers' Company, very kindly arranged for the work on the Shield and Tablet.

The Shield and Tablet are the gift of the Vicar. Various gifts were received for furnishing the room; a carved oak chair, an oak money-box, and a hymn-book were given.

A little book was published about Moor Hall in 1866. The title is: "The History of Moor Hall, a Camera of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem in the Parish of Harefield and County of Middlesex," by Thomas Hugo, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.S.L. London: Nicholson's, 1866.

Now to recount the history of the building so far as we know it. And here we have not to depend on legend and tradition. For deeds are still extant telling us of the gift of land, date when given, and by whom, and also the Gift of the Living. We go back 700 years and can picture the little community living and working here.

The first deed tells us how Beatrix de Bollers gave a grant of the advowson of the Church of Harefield with all its appurtenances into the hands of Richard Turcy, Prior at Clerkenwell (Richard Turcy was Prior between 1180 and 1195), also, in augmentation of the above gift, one virgate of land. The gift was in pure and perpetual alms for the soul of her husband, her own soul, the soul of her son Geoffrey and of her other children. It was then the custom for the rich to make gifts of land for the soul's benefit of those dear to them in accordance with the tenets of their faith, the Roman Catholic religion.

The next deed tells us how Alice de Clare, daughter of Baldwin de Clare and granddaughter of Beatrix de Bollers, confirms the advowson of the Church and one virgate of land. "I have confirmed to God, Blessed Mary, and St. John Baptist and the Sacred House of the Hospital in Jerusalem and the brethren of that same Sacred House in the territory of Harefield." The deed is undated, but must be previous to the year 1221 as we have a statement as to the final concord between Hugh de Clahull, husband of Alice, and the Prior of the Hospital, with regard to 120 acres of land given to the Hospital; this is dated 18th of November, 1221. Two Bishops of London confirm the gift of the advowson of the Church to the Prior and his successors; they are to possess the Church, but provide a chaplain

with adequate maintenance. Confirmation by William, Bishop of London, of the confirmation by his predecessor, Gilbert, some time Bishop of London, of the Church of Harefield, at the instance of Geoffrey, son of Baldwin, and of his mother, Beatrix de Bollers, then vacant by the resignation of Robert, priest-rector of the same; that the Prior and his successors should possess the said Church, but providing a chaplain in the same with adequate maintenance. Here follow the names of the witnesses. Dated at London in the year of our Lord, 1219.

William, of St. Mary Church, was consecrated Bishop of London on the 23rd May, 1199, and resigned his bishopric on the 25th January, 1221.

Confirmation by Gilbert, Bishop of London, of the advowson of the Church of Harefield. Here follow the names of the witnesses, among whom was Nicholas, Archdeacon of London, who held office from 1181—1185, so this document must date to one of those years. Gilbert Foliot was Bishop of London from March 4th, 1162/3 to February 18th, 1187/8. Declaration of Gilbert, Bishop of London, that Richard, priest, parson of Harefield, had resigned the Church and that at his petition and that of the Lords of the Fee he had appointed the aforesaid Richard perpetual Vicar of that Church, with all its appurtenances, for his life; the said Richard to pay annually to the Hospital the sum of 10s., and the customary payments to the Bishop. Sealed, etc., in the presence of the same witnesses.

So we see how, about the year 1190, the Order of St. John first became owners of land in Harefield and at the same time received the Gift of the Living. From that date till the Dissolution of the Order in

1540—that is, for nearly 350 years—the Priors of the Order appointed the Minister of the Parish, who was known as Chaplain, except for the period when Rose Ashby and Rose Brown appointed as tenants. The Order was a Religious Order. Did the Order have a chapel at Moor Hall, and was the Custos in Orders, and did he serve the chapel and also the Church? These are fascinating questions we perhaps shall never solve. All we know is that the Prior at Clerkenwell was to possess Harefield Church but provide a chaplain with adequate maintenance. And so Harefield was connected with the Holy Land.

Now as to the house: it was a camera—"camera" is the Latin word for chamber and is used to denote the smaller houses of the Order. The greater houses were known as Commanderies or Preceptories. Everything centred in the great house at Clerkenwell; the other houses were subsidiary to it, just as the great house itself was subsidiary to the central organisation at Rhodes or Malta, of which the Grand Master was the Head.

It was known as *Domus Hospitalis de Harefield*, the House of the Hospital at Harefield. We know nothing of the life lived by the inmates—but they would work the land and gather in the fruits of the earth and the produce would go to support the work of the Order. Small at first, the property continually increased by various gifts of land until the Order had finally large possessions in Harefield.

Alice de Clare makes a grant of divers lands. There is also a grant by her of divers homages and services for the maintenance of a chaplain in Harefield. After the death of a chaplain, another was to be appointed within fifteen days. In 1315 Sir Richard de Bache-

worth, Lord of the Manor of Harefield, assumed the Habit of a Knight of the Order and his wife took the veil. Batchworth Heath still keeps the old name existing.

There is an inscription on a board in the Breakspear Chapel of the Church referring to a certain Edmund Gregory : "tunc in isto Hospital Manentis," then an inmate of this Hospital. "This Hospital" seems clearly to refer to the house at Moor Hall. His father, John Gregory, died at Lambeth in 1478. Here are the names of officers at Harefield: William de Sawston, Præceptor, 13th century; Simon de Askeby, Custos *circ.* 1265; Peter de Stanele (?); Nicholas de Dacombe, Præceptor *circ.* 1275; Simon de Myneworth, Capellanus 1338.

Some of the following chaplains mentioned in the Deeds may have been officers in charge of the estate: Richard, 1190-5; John de Oxford; Robert de Upton; Walter de Colchester; Robert de Takstede, 1221; Geoffrey de Berdefeld, 1221; Roger de Stokes, 1221; Walter de Chaurea, 1221; Richard, *circ.* 1265.

Legal proceedings in connection with the property in 1331 between the Prior of the Hospital and Sir Simon de Swanland, Lord of Harefield, resulted in clearing the title of the Hospital to a part of the domain, but did not add to the previous possessions of the house.

In 1338 we have the return of the Prior of England for that year to the Grand Master of the Order of every manor belonging to the Hospitallers. The document is still preserved at Malta in the public library of Valetta. It contained a strict account of profit and loss and showed at a glance what sum was

available for the general purposes of the Priory and the Order after all charges were deducted.

This is the account of the Camera of Harefield : Camera of Harefield in the County of Middlesex. Harefield.—There is there one messuage, three carucates of arable land, twenty acres of meadow, four pounds of annual rent, a church, appropriated pasture for twenty cows, twenty heifers, and three hundred sheep and the value is forty marcs. It is added that it nevertheless yields nothing, because in the time of Brother Thomas Larcher it was granted to Brother William Brex for the term of his life with no payment of rent. Three carucates is about 300 acres. The officer then in charge was Brother Simon de Myneworth, chaplain. Prior Thomas L'Archer was a notorious offender in this way and was deposed from his priorate for maladministration. He raised funds by granting leases for life, receiving no subsequent rent, but a sum of ready money as an equivalent.

Prior Leonard de Tybertis, by great self-sacrifice, paid off in a short time the most pressing debts and restored the Hospital in England to circumstances of ease and honour.

For a long time nothing further is recorded of the place and there are no names of the Heads of the Camera later than this period, and it seems just to have peaceably yielded its fruits year by year, which were sent to the house at Clerkenwell.

In the year 1516 the manor was leased by the Order to Rose Assheby, widow former. It was frequently the custom of the Order to lease their less important estates in this manner, thus the cost of the Custos and his servants was hereby saved, while the property was looked after with equal care and may have yielded a

larger return. According to the terms of the lease she was to hold the property for forty years, paying a yearly rent of nineteen pounds of lawful English money. it is computed that this sum should be multiplied by fifteen to give the corresponding value to-day, that is, £285. She and her assigns were to find also a fit and proper chaplain continually performing Divine Service in the Parish Church and fitly ministering the sacraments and sacramentals to the Parishioners during the term aforesaid. It is probable that the Chapel, if Chapel there was, was after this no longer served by the Chaplains of the Order as doubtless the Bailiff and other officials were withdrawn when the property was leased to a lay tenant.

George Ashby, Chief Clerk to the Signet and Counsellor to King Henry VIII, the owner of Breakspear, husband of Rose Ashby, had died two years before, in 1514. There is a brass on the floor of the Breakspear Chapel, with the figures of George and Rose Ashby and their children.

Six years afterwards apparently Moor Hall again changed hands. Rose Bown, widow, was granted a lease of the Manor of Moor Hall, Harefield, for 45 years, the date of the lease being 1522. The rent was twenty pounds sterling—the other terms of the lease being identical. In the year a value was taken of all the ecclesiastical property in the country. The entry which relates to Moor Hall says the yearly value of the property was £20. It is interesting to note that in the return the value of the estate at Hendon is set down at £4 0s. 12d., and of that at Hackney at £12 12s. 0d.

The Crown Officer notes in the margin that the

said manner is 111j mylys from the Kynges house called (Wind)sore.

The house at Harefield was dissolved in 1538—two years before the suppression of the Priory at Clerkenwell. In 1542 King Henry VIII granted to Robert Tyrwhitt the Manor of Moor Hall and the Rectory and Church of Harefield with all its rights, members, and appurtenances. Also the advowson and right of patronage of Harefield Church and all tithes, oblations, etc., belonging to the same. Nothing is said about the provision of a fit and proper chaplain. The same year he conveyed them to John Newdegate and John, his son.

In the year 1585 John Newdegate, Esq., exchanged the Manor of Harefield with Sir Edmund Anderson, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, for the Manor of Arbury in Warwickshire.

In 1601 Sir Edmund Anderson sold the property to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper, his wife, the Countess of Derby, and her daughters.

In 1675 George Pitt, Esq., who had married Lady Chandos, widow of Sir William Sedley, and granddaughter of the Countess of Derby, sold the manors of Harefield and Morehall to Sir Richard Newdegate, Bart., Sergeant-at-Law. Thus the property was restored to its original owners and Sir Richard became Patron of the Living.

Except for this period of 90 years from 1585—1675, the living has been held by the Newdegate family from 1542 and is still held by them.

For nearly 400 years, from 1540 till 1926, the building was used for farming purposes. The property had been forcibly taken from its rightful owners and was no longer used for religious purposes. It was

during this period that the windows were blocked up and the nasty patches put in in various places. Nothing mattered so long as the building would serve. Thus it was more and more roughly used until it reached the ruinous condition in which it appeared in 1926.

The Ratebooks have frequent references to the bridges over the Moor—the moor-ditch, to repairing the moor-gate and its rails and palings.

So it is with a feeling of real thankfulness that we look on the restored building and pray that it may have a renewed course of usefulness.

May the work done here in His Name be blessed of God.

I close with a short History of the Order :—

The Order was founded at Jerusalem under the patronage of St. John the Baptist. It was there that in 1092 the first Crusaders found the poor Brethren working under Brother Gerard, the first recorded Head of the Brotherhood. Their work was to care for the sick. The Order grew rapidly in importance and wealth. Donations and privileges were showered on it from all over the Holy Land and Europe. At the time of Brother Gerard's death in 1120 it had become a great power throughout Christendom and gradually, with the work of healing, went also defence and protection. With the sanction of the Pope Pascal II, Raymond de Puy, who succeeded Brother Gerard, established the Brotherhood as an Order of Knighthood and assumed the title of Grand Master. The armed defence of pilgrims to the Holy Land was at that time one of the duties of the Order, but a renewal of activity on the part of the Saracens caused the healing Brotherhood to assume a still more military

character. The Order took for arms the white cross on a red ground which at once became and for centuries continued to be a sign of protection to the weak and a terror to wrong-doers throughout the Mediterranean. A black robe was the distinctive dress in times of peace, but in time of war this garment was changed for one of bright red. The Knights wore as a badge on the left breast the white eight-pointed cross in silver. This cross was to put the wearer ever in mind of bearing in the heart the Cross of Jesus Christ, adorned with the eight virtues that attend it. The virtues were associated with the points of the cross.

There were also the four cardinal virtues: prudence, temperance, justice and fortitude. The Knights still wear the black robe and cross.

In 1187 Saladin drove the Christians from Jerusalem and the Knights repaired to Acre. In 1291 the Christians were wholly driven out of Palestine and the Order found a temporary resting-place in Cyprus. Nineteen years later the Order settled in the Island of Rhodes. Here the Knights built a fortified city so strong as to be able to withstand a terrible assault by the Turks under Muhammed II in 1480 and for 40 years there was comparative peace. But in 1522 the Turks, under Suleiman the Magnificent, again attacked and after a fierce siege and heroic defence of six months the Knights were compelled to surrender. Their leader was Grand Master De L'Isle Adam, one of the most famous of the Knights. As a tribute to their bravery they were allowed to leave in their own galleys and with their arms and property. But they had to find another home. In 1530 they were able to settle in the Island of Malta, which they fortified. Here, in 1565, they withstood an attack by a large army of the

Turks. Their power declined in the Mediterranean in the 17th and 18th centuries, though they were able to maintain a fleet to suppress corsairs. In those days piracy was rife and often ships were seized and plundered and the crews sold into slavery. The Knights rescued the Christian slaves chained to the rowing-benches.

In 1792 their revenues were seized by the French and six years later Napoleon appeared before the island. The Grand Master capitulated without fighting and the Knights were dispersed to their native lands.

Malta, taken by the British Fleet after the Battle of the Nile, became a British colony. We owe it to the Knights that Christendom was preserved, threatened so grievously as it was by the Mohammedan Power.

Now the Knights belonged to various countries; they were known as Langues, or Tongues, of which there were originally seven, namely, Auvergne, Aragon, England, France, Germany, Italy and Provence. But later an eighth, known as Castile, was formed, of which Portugal was a part.

The English Langue. In the early part of the 12th century Jordan de Briset, of Eltham, gave to the Langue ten acres of land in Clerkenwell. Here the Knights built their chief home in England. It was a pleasant country place, with brooks and streams. The group of buildings would include the Church, which was dedicated by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1145. These buildings were largely destroyed by rebels under Wat Tyler in 1380.

In 1504 Sir Thomas Docwra, Prior of the Order, rebuilt much of the Priory and erected a new gate-house. This gate-house still remains and part of the

Church—all that is left of the once extensive buildings of the Order. And the pleasant country has become a rather squalid part of modern London.

In 1540 the Order was suppressed by King Henry VIII Dissolution of the Religious Houses. It was the last to be so suppressed. After the Dissolution the English Langue still survived. Deprived as it was of all property, it could not for several centuries afford the assistance it used to give to the Headquarters in Malta. Still, it was always represented there. Early in the 19th century the Venerable Ordinary Council of the Order, sitting in Paris, consisting chiefly of the French Knights who had survived the expulsion of the Order from Malta, decreed the revival of the Order in England, and agreed that admission might be extended to members of the Protestant Church.

Prior Docwra's Gate-house is the Headquarters of the Order. In a visit I was privileged to make I saw the Library full of books dealing with the History of the Order. Then there is the Chapter Hall, a fine modern chamber, adorned with pictures of the Knights and scenes in the History of the Order. Here the Chapter meets. The Museum has many objects of historic interest. It contains a nearly complete collection of coins of the Order; here are the jars which contained healing drugs, marble cannon balls, used in the sieges, and many other things. The Church, a short distance away, and now separated from the Gatehouse, is still the Church of the Order, though largely rebuilt. The ancient Crypt, with the tombs of the Knights, can be seen, and the original round nave is traced on the pavement outside. The Knights come to service here every year on St. John Baptist's Day.

The day is also observed at the Hospital in Jerusalem. The Church is used by the Parish.*

The work of the Order is so well known to-day that it is hardly necessary to speak of it. Especially has its usefulness been shown in ambulance work. In 1877 the St. John Ambulance Association was formed. Its members are trained to render first aid in case of emergency and accidents. On great ceremonial occasions they are always on duty in the streets. In time of war they act in conjunction with the Red Cross in supplementing the work of the military authorities in caring for the sick and wounded. They did a noble work in the Great War, setting up and maintaining the great hospitals at Etaples, France, throughout the War.

In 1882, in order to revive the ancient association of the Order with the Holy Land, the Ophthalmic Hospital was built and maintained by the Order in Jerusalem, and is crowded with patients.

Thus the Order has ever lived up to its proud motto, *Pro Fide Pro Utilitate Hominum*—for the Faith, For the Service of Man. The work of healing has gone on for seven hundred years, and still goes on to-day.

*N.B.—The Order has now taken over the Church as the Church of the Order, and it belongs to them entirely.

In 1927 the Order acquired a contemporary black-letter copy of the Act of Parliament of 1540, confiscating Moor Hall and the other property of the Order in this country.

