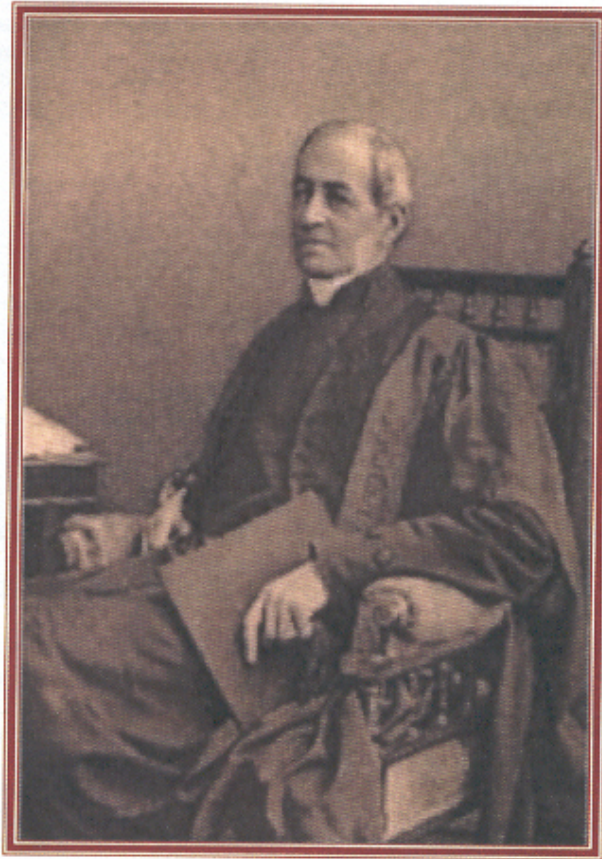




THE BURGON SOCIETY



ANNUAL 2001

THE BURGON SOCIETY

Founded to promote the study of Academical Dress

ANNUAL 2001

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Dr John Birch (honoris causa), President, Past President of Royal College of Organists, former Professor of Organ at Royal College of Music.

Sqd. Ldr Alan Birt (honoris causa), former editor of *"Hoodata"*

Mr Giles Brightwell (foundation), Archivist

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon. Richard Chartres (jure dignitatis), Patron, Bishop of London

Prof. Bruce Christianson (foundation), Member of Council, co-author of *"Academic Dress in the University of Hertfordshire"*

Dr Noel Cox (by submission), author of website *"Academical Dress in New Zealand"*

Mr Matthew Duckett (foundation),

Mr Peter Durant (foundation), Webmaster

The Revd Philip Goff (foundation), Chairman of Council, author of *"University of London Academic Dress"*

Mr Nicholas Groves (foundation), Director of Research, author of *"The Academical Robes of St. David's College Lampeter"*

Dr John Horton (foundation), Member of Council

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The Revd Harry Krauss (honoris causa), *Senior Curate of St. Thomas, Fifth Avenue, New York*

Mr Philip Lowe (by submission), *Member of Council, author of "The Origins and Development of Academical Dress at the Victoria University of Manchester"*

Br Michael Powell (foundation), *founder of Academic Dress eGroup*

Dr Robin Rees (foundation), *Member of Council, former editor of "Hoodata"*

Prof. Aileen Ribeiro (honoris causa), *Head of History of Dress Section, The Courtauld Institute*

Dr George Shaw (honoris causa), *author of "Academical Dress of British Universities", "Cambridge University Academical Dress" and "Academical Dress of British and Irish Universities", co-author of "The Degrees and Hoods of the World's Universities and Colleges"*

Prof. Graham Zellick (honoris causa), *Vice-Chancellor of the University of London*

Members of the Burgon Society

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 The Very Revd Dr Godfrey Brown
 Mr Arthur B. Casey
 The Revd Prebendary Ian Brian Cook
 Mr Philip Peter Corbett, FASC
 Dr Noel S.B. Cox, LLB LLM PhD (Auckland)
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 Mr Damien D.R. Gormley
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 The Revd Roger M. Sheppard, MBA (Aston) PGCE (CNAA) DipAppTh (Birm)
 The Revd Canon David W Skeoch, MA (Oxon)
 The Revd Douglas A Southward, LTL
 Mr Alan Martin Tait, MA BMus FTCL ARCO ARCM LTCL(CMT)
 Dr James P S Thomson, DM (Lambeth) MS (London) FRCS
 Mr Kenneth Waller, BA FRCO AKC
 Mr Terry Worrol, BA GTCL FCCM ARCO

Congregation 2001

On Saturday, 20th October, the first Congregation of the Burgon Society was held at Charterhouse in London. Two Fellows by submission were admitted: Mr Philip Lowe, a Foundation Fellow, for his work on the history of the robes of Manchester University, which we very much hope will be published in the near future; and Dr Noel Cox, for his work on the robes of the universities of New Zealand which he has generously published on the Internet.

Mr Ian Johnson, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary was admitted to Fellowship of the Society *de jure*

Also admitted as Fellows *honoris causa* were: Dr George Shaw, author of several works on academical dress; Professor Graham Zellick, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London; Professor Aileen Ribeiro, Professor of the History of Dress at the Courtauld Institute of Art; Squadron Leader Alan Birt, a long-time enthusiast of academical dress and author of “Hoodata”; Professor John Baker QC, Professor of Law in the University of Cambridge, and author of several learned articles on the subject and The Reverend Canon Harry Krauss, Senior Curate of St Thomas’ Church, Fifth Avenue, Washington, and President of the Board of the College of Arms Foundation, London.

The Society’s first President, Dr John Birch was installed, and a message from the Patron, the Bishop of London, was read out. After the ceremony, in the Great Chamber, the Master, Dr James Thomson MS, FRCS, gave a talk on the history of Charterhouse and led Fellows and guests on a tour of the buildings.

Financial Report 20th October 2001

Income since Inception	Membership Fees and Donations	£652.93
Expense to date	Advertising	£84.40
	Printing and Postage	<u>£17.80</u>
	<u>£102.20</u>	
Surplus held at bank		£550.73
Bankers	NatWest, Great Portland Street, London W1A 1GA	
Auditors	be appointed	

Ian Johnson
Treasurer

Chairman's Speech to Congregation

President, Master, Vice-Chancellor, Fellows, Members and Guests:

As a schoolboy in the 1960's I was fascinated by the strange bits of silk, and sometimes fur, worn, at various times, by my teachers and clergy. Whilst a chorister, aged ten or so, in my local parish church, I would especially welcome the visit of any new clergyman to Sunday Evensong, not because I wished to hang upon his every word but solely because he would bring a new hood for me to spot. To my shame I can only recall one or two of the sermons which were preached during my teens but I can remember, down to the last detail, every hood.

In those days it was rare to find anyone else with the same interest: the occasional teacher; a sympathetic, but somewhat bewildered Curate; a class mate or two, bored for a time with stamps, coins, model aeroplanes or toy soldiers. In fact, it was mostly a solitary enjoyment!

Discovering the Pears Cyclopaedia list of University hoods was an enormous thrill and led me to write to every British University to ask them to send me details of their academical costume. Several Registrars replied to me, some at length, and gave me very helpful advice. I began to compile my own little book which became eventually part of my English GCE.

In 1966, when I was fourteen, Dr George Shaw's *Academical Dress of British Universities* was published and the book was given to me as a birthday present. I read, marked, learned and inwardly digested it and can still recall the excitement of opening it for the first time.

By the following summer I had pestered the various university robesmakers in London so much that one of them gave me a school holidays job. Although for most of my working life I have been occupied in doing other things, a curious set of chances, in 1995, put me back in touch with that company and I have kept an association with it ever since. This has allowed me to meet several people who share my interest in academical costume and the idea of forming some kind of association for ourselves, and those similarly afflicted, had been discussed amongst us from time to time.

It is however the Internet, through the inspiration of Brother Michael Powell and his e-Group, which has enabled the fraternity of academical dress enthusiasts around the world to be in daily contact. With nearly 200 members this unique electronic forum brings together a body of knowledge and interest which could never have been assembled before so effectively. Brother Michael has since become one of our Foundation Fellows.

From this group (as Nick Groves relates further on in the annual) was born the Burgon Society.

John William Burgon (Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, from 1846; Vicar of the University Church of St Mary from 1863; Gresham Lecturer in Divinity from 1868 and Dean of Chichester 1875-1886) was an unusual and rather quarrelsome man who has been described as being "conservative to the point of being reactionary." According to Chadwick he "devoted his life to maintaining the Church of England exactly where it stood about 1850"

Burgon's significance to us, as a society, concerns his modification of one the shapes of hoods used at Oxford, which he improved greatly. It has borne his name ever since.

Dean Burgon also opposed most university reform, and would probably have been aghast to witness the transformation of academical dress into the fancy dress worn at graduation ceremonies today. Nevertheless the movement of academical dress, away from the everyday university costume of the elite towards the celebratory costume worn to mark a rite of passage, and to give relatives a proud

thrill, has no doubt ensured its continuity in Mr Blair's Britain where other traditions are being abandoned.

The fact that a much wider section of society comes into contact with academical dress today is perhaps a full turning of the circle, for it has its origins in the everyday dress of medieval men and women in Europe. Retained by the universities, largely composed of clerics, the rest of society gave up the hood, having first tried it as a hat, a turban, a scarf or even something to dangle on the shoulder.

Meanwhile out on the streets of Britain, and indeed most of the Western world, the hood has made a recent comeback as part of youth, urban street dress. We await the Gap University BA in street cred!

This reminds me to mention the characters in David Gentleman's wonderful scenes from medieval life, which adorn the subterranean platforms of Charing Cross station. They could be straight off the streets of today and have much to offer anyone interested in the origins of university costume.

Founded as a serious learned society, we seek to promote the study of academical dress. Of course we wish to enjoy gowns, hoods and caps and derive as much pleasure from identifying them as those curious people in anoraks at railway stations do in seeing a familiar locomotive. But our interest goes deeper than that. A forensic study of academical dress yields untold historical treasures concerning people, places and fabrics, - a kind of textile archaeology if not anthropology. We are keen to be linked to the departments of dress at universities and to the historic dress collections at our museums. We want to encourage research and to raise the profile of academical dress. The Fellowship of our Society is the vehicle for this.

Through our **Fellowship**, *honoris causa*, we can enjoy the privilege of associating our Society with those who have had a long association with the subject, such as our President, Dr John Birch; those who have keen antiquarian interests and who, despite many grave and pressing matters can share our enthusiasm, such as our distinguished Patron, the Bishop of London; those who have written extensively on the subject, such as Dr George Shaw; those actively engaged in teaching the history of dress, such as Professor Aileen Ribeiro, of the Courtauld Institute; and those with responsibility for preserving an interest in such matters at our universities, such as Professor Graham Zellick, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, whom we must thank for seeing that Higher Doctorates at the University of London have not yet been completely abandoned.

Through our **examined Fellowship** we increase the body of knowledge that is available in this field and it is a particular pleasure to mention our first two Fellowships by submission during the year which were awarded to Dr Noel Cox and Mr Philip Lowe for their works, (extracts from which may be found elsewhere in this annual). Philip Lowe delighted the Council by being the first to read in his work to the Society and it is a pleasure to see him here today.

Our **Foundation Fellows**, who form the Council of the Burgon Society, bring together not only a shared interest in the subject but very detailed knowledge of the history of academical dress in particular universities.

We have decided to move ahead slowly and prudently, building firm foundations. Nevertheless I think that most of us have been surprised by the mixture of keenness and expertise that we possess as a body. Our growth out of the original Internet forum has much to do with our excellent web presence and I am delighted to acknowledge the skill and commitment of Mr Peter Durant our Webmaster and Member of Council.

In addition to thanking all the Members of Council I would particularly like to thank Mr Nicholas Groves, our Director of Research; Dr Stephen James, our Registrar; and Mr Ian Johnson our Treasurer and Membership Secretary for their support and hard work in this first year of our existence. I also acknowledge the contribution made by Mr Matthew Duckett our first Membership Secretary.

Together, as a Council we have tried to keep ourselves focussed on making our Society credible and worthwhile. We have even forsaken the temptation to go ahead with official robes, for Council members, until more important goals have been achieved. However our FBS hood must, in the words of one of the greatest and most cantankerous experts in our field “rank as one of the most beautiful and dignified hoods in the world.” If he were still alive, Dr Charles Franklyn would continue to delight and infuriate us with his writings, and we should acknowledge him as one of our venerable forebears. Venerable also was the late Dr Hugh Smith who died in September in South Africa. He shared with Franklyn, a surgeon, a similar obsessiveness which attracted him to the lists and details associated with our subject. But the similarity ended there. Whist Franklyn, a Convocation Bedell in the University of London, was a ferocious defender of all that was correct and proper in academical dress, Smith was a most courteous and gentle man and his great 3 volume work, “*Academical Dress and Insignia of the World*” has never been surpassed. It is a great pity that the revised version of this work was never completed and this may be a task to which we, as a Society, could turn our attention.

As we look to the future it is becoming clear that we need a place to hang our hat, and our gown and our hood – a geographical location for literature on academical dress and a place for some of our archive robes. For the present we are very grateful to have been offered hospitality by Dr James Thomson, the Master of Charterhouse and thank him for his generous welcome. James, amongst many other things, is secretary of the Lambeth Degree holders Association and shares with us an interest in academical costume. We look forward to his continuing association with us.

We are fortunate indeed to be able to meet in this holy place so alive with the heritage of the martyred Carthusians whose home this was. Their daily dress, of course, was directly related to the costume that so interests and fascinates us.

The installation of our President today is a very important step for us. We have in John Birch someone, as we have heard, who has had a long association with academical dress: as an interest from boyhood; as someone who has worn in on a daily basis for most of his professional life, at Margaret Street, the Temple Church, Chichester Cathedral, the Royal College of Music and the Royal College of Organists; and who has championed its use. He has also designed new academical and official dress including a robe for the Prince of Wales at the Royal College of Music. Dr Birch is also Curator of the organ at the Royal Albert Hall and I look forward to the time when our Membership is so vast that he will be helping us to hold our meetings in that great place.

PFMG



From left to right: Registrar; Director of Research; President; Chairman