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The Hospitallers and the 'Peasants' Revolt' of 1381 Revisited

Helen Nicholson

On the evening of Thursday 13 June 1381 a large armed band broke into the Hospitallers' priory at Clerkenwell and set it and the many houses around it on fire, beheaded several people, and plundered documents, goods, and money from the house.[1] The leader of this band was one Thomas Farndon or

[1] For the sacking of Clerkenwell, see, for instance, PRO, KB 145/3/5/1 (5 Richard II): unnumbered folios: 'The jurors present that John Shakett … on the Friday after Corpus Christi went to the house of Clerkenwell and the Savoy in a multitude of other *proditores* and there feloniously and treacherously burnt it. … Ditto that Robert Gardiner of Middlesex … went to the house at Clerkenwell with the other malefactors and there he feloniously, callously and treacherously decapitated seven men and also he took *a calite* at Clerkenwell, feloniously and treacherously, to the value of 100 *solidi*. …' For Clerkenwell and Highbury, PRO, CP 40/490 (Trinity 7 Richard II) 1 dorse (the prior appeals against John Halingbury of Wandsworth), 333 recto (ditto). On Thomas Farndon, see the jurors' reports in PRO, KB 145/3/6/1, printed in André Reville, *Le Soulèvement des travailleurs d'Angleterre en 1381, études et documents publiés avec une introduction historique par Ch. Petit-Dutaillis*, Mémoires et Documents publiées par la Société de l'École des Chartes (Paris, 1898), ii, 194–95, no. 10; Charles Oman, *The Great Revolt of 1381*, new edn with an introduction by E. B. Fryde (Oxford, 1969), 211–12; and translated in R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (Basingstoke, 1970, 1983), 218–19; and see PRO, KB 27/484 rex 3r. On the revolt, see also Rodney Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of 1381* (London, 1973); E. B. Fryde, *The Great Revolt of 1381*, Historical Association Pamphlet (1981); *Studies towards a History of the Rising of 1381 in Norfolk*, ed. Barbara Cornford *et al*. (Great Yarmouth, 1984); *Essex and the Great Revolt of 1381: Lectures Celebrating the Six hundredth Anniversary*, ed. W. H. Liddell and R. G. Wood, Essex Record Office Publications, lxxxiv (1982); *The English Rising of 1381*, ed. R. H. Hilton and T. H. Aston, (Cambridge, 1984); Andrew Prescott, 'Judicial records of the rising of 1381' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Bedford College, University of London, 1984); Nicholas Brooks, 'The Organisation and Achievements of the Peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381', *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davis*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (London, 1985); David Crook, 'Derbyshire and the English Rising of 1381', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, lx (1987); Herbert Eiden, 'Joint Action against 'Bad' Lordship: The Peasants' Revolt in Essex and Norfolk', *History*, lxxxiii (1998), 5–30.

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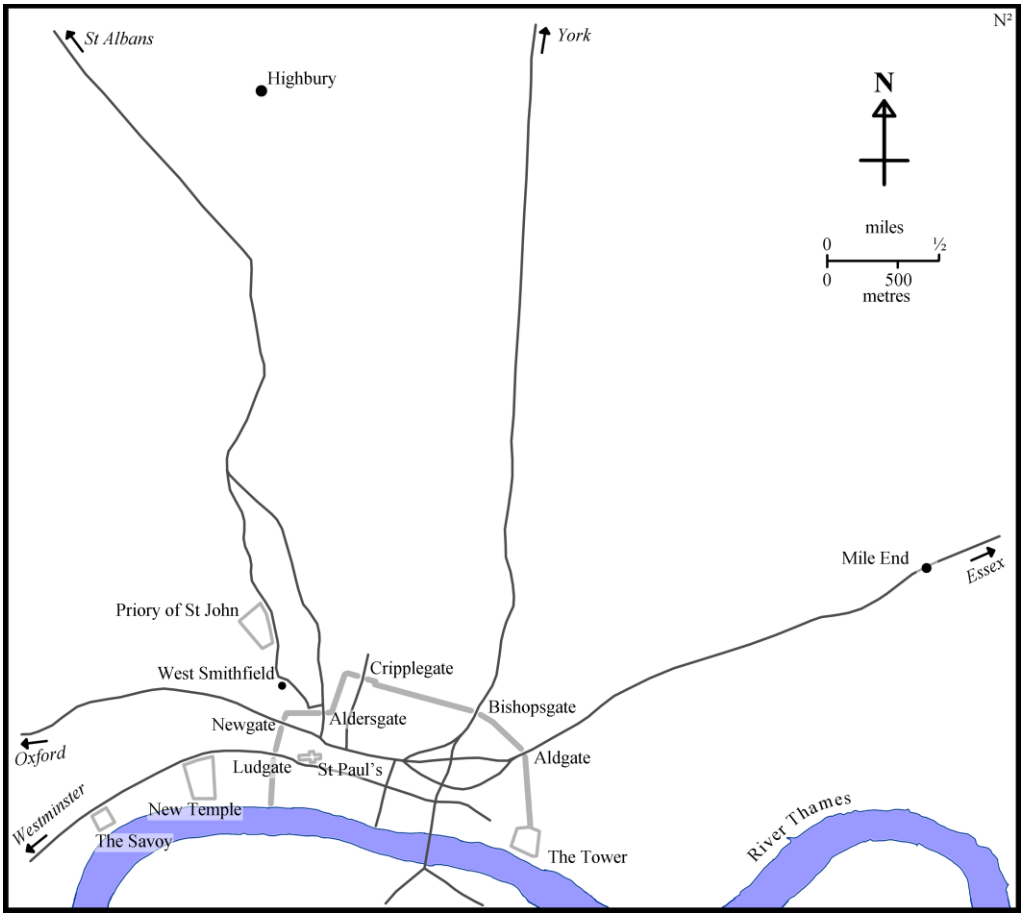

Figure 16.1 The City of London and its environs in 1381

Farringdon of London, one of the leaders of the rebels who had ridden down from Essex on the previous day after plundering and burning Temple Cressing and the house at Coggeshall of Sir John Sewale, sheriff of Essex (Figure 16.1). Earlier on that Thursday Farndon had led the rebels in an attack on the New Temple, London, which was burned; and on the Savoy Palace, the property of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster and uncle of King Richard II. The Savoy had been plundered and then deliberately blown up with gunpowder. After sacking Clerkenwell priory, Farndon and other rebels spent the night drawing up a 'black list' of those in the government that they wanted dead. On Friday 14 June Jack Straw and other rebels, including some of those who had attacked Clerkenwell, burned down Highbury Manor, the property of the prior of the Hospital in England, and looted it, taking from it and Clerkenwell 'rolls and other muniments and goods and chattels'. King Richard II (then aged fourteen) rode out to negotiate with the rebels at Mile End, where Thomas Farndon seized his bridle and declared: 'Avenge me on that false traitor the prior for my

property which he falsely and fraudulently stole from me. Do me justice because otherwise I will get justice done myself.' The king agreed to do him justice. Farndon and his associates then went to the Tower of London. The chancellor of the kingdom, Archbishop Simon Sudbury of Canterbury, the treasurer Robert Hales prior of the Hospital in England, John Cavendish the chief justiciar, and other leading royal officials were cowering in the Tower – their attempted escape through the postern gate opening on to the River Thames had been foiled by a woman who was keeping guard on it. Farndon and his associates seized Sudbury, Hales, and the other leading royal officials, marched them out to Tower Hill and beheaded them.

The following day the king met the rebels under Wat Tyler of Kent at West Smithfield. Wat Tyler was killed by the mayor of London, and the king assumed leadership of the rebels. The rebels then went home with the king's promise that their demands would be met. This was not done, and the legal investigations into the revolt occupied the king's bench for a long time afterwards. A large number of people were given pardons; only ringleaders of the revolt were executed. In March 1383 Thomas Farndon was given a personal royal pardon, which included both his surnames to ensure that there was no doubt over the matter.[2]

Robert Hales was not the first prior of the Hospital to die in the course of service for a secular sovereign; the prior of France had died at Crécy in 1346, fighting for the French king against the English king. Nor was he the last prior of England to be executed; Prior John Langstrother was executed on the orders of King Edward IV after the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471. Yet whereas it is possible to see Prior Langstrother's support for the earl of Warwick as having been the best course of action to defend his order's interests in the face of King Edward IV's policies, Robert Hales could be regarded as acting less in his order's interests and more as an ambitious politician. Certainly contemporary observers had little sympathy for his fate: Thomas Walsingham spent much ink bewailing Archbishop Sudbury's death, which he saw as martyrdom, but merely listed the other executions, describing Hales as a very active knight: *miles strenuissimus*.[3] He said nothing about Hales as a religious.

Hales's fate was examined by Lionel Butler in an address to the St John Historical Society in 1981 – the year of the six-hundredth anniversary of the

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[2] This account is based largely on the account in the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, 1333 to 1381: From a MS written at St Mary's York, and now in the possession of Lieut.-Col. Sir William Ingilby, Bart., Ripley Castle, Yorkshire, ed. V. H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927), 135–51. See also the chronology of the revolt in *Peasants' Revolt*, ed. Dobson, 39–40. For Farndon's royal pardon, PRO, KB 27/484 rex 3r.

[3] *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani Thomae Walsingham quondam monachi S. Albani, Historia Anglicana*, ed. Henry Thomas Riley, 2 vols, Rolls Series xxviii (London, 1863–4), i, 459–61 on the death of Sudbury; on other executions, ibid., 462.

revolt. This is a useful study but it lacks references and bibliography, and its consideration of the revolt has been partly superseded by subsequent scholarship. Butler concluded that the treatment of the Hospital during the revolt indicated that it was not very popular in England at that time, and that Hales did not deserve such a humiliating and brutal death after strenuous service to the English monarchy and faithful service for the order in Rhodes, Corinth, Rome, and Alexandria.[4] The purpose of this article is to revisit the Hospitallers' place in the Great Revolt of 1381 and to ask whether events during the revolt did indicate that the order was unpopular, how far Robert Hales contributed personally towards his own fate, and how far he was a serious loss to his order.

The first point to note is that most of the rebels were not peasants.[5] The rebels included innkeepers, alewives, labourers, craftsmen (such as carpenters), widows carrying on a business, and clerics. Most were landholders, and some held large holdings. Some held positions of responsibility in their locality: one was a hundred juror, another was a bailiff, and another was a reeve. Some of them were from the alderman class in London, including Thomas Farndon himself. They all had in common a grudge against the *status quo*. Christopher Dyer has pointed out that many rebels held by disadvantageous customary or servile tenures; while they themselves were moving up in the world, they were still restrained by age-old, out-dated laws that attempted to restrict their lives. Others felt that they had been mistreated by the law of the land.[6] The rebels did not want to overthrow the king; in fact they claimed to have his support and to be acting on his behalf.[7] This seems to have been a significant factor in the king's decision to pardon the great majority of the rebels.

Ecclesiastical estates in general were experiencing considerable difficulties in enforcing the payment of customary services at this period. An examination of the common pleas and pleas before the king's bench of the 1380s reveals a high level of violence against the possessions and employees of religious orders, some of which resulted from officers of religious orders trying to enforce customary services and being resisted by the tenants.[8] The Church

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[4] Lionel Butler, 'The Order of St John and the Peasants' Revolt of 1381', *St John Historical Society Pamphlet*, no. 1 (1982). I am very grateful to Dr Theresa Vann of the Monastic Manuscript Library, St John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, for providing me with a copy of this pamphlet.

[5] See Eiden, 10; H. E. P. Grieve, 'The Rebellion and the County Town', in *Essex and the Great Revolt*, 37–54; Christopher Dyer, 'The Causes of the Revolt in Rural Essex', in *Essex and the Great Revolt*, 21–36.

[6] Dyer, 'Causes of the Revolt', 29–35; Eiden, 29.

[7] See the rebels' password: 'With whom haldes yow?' – 'With King Richard and with the true commons': *Anonimalle Chronicle*, 139.

[8] For instance, compare PRO, CP40/490 (Trinity 7 Richard II, i.e. June 1384) fols. 1r, 1d., 15d, 25d, 54d (was 53d), 94r (was 92r), 106d (was 104d), 132r (was 122r), 273d (was

suffered badly in the revolt: religious houses were sacked and their abbots and priors assaulted. The prior of the mighty Bury St Edmunds abbey was beheaded; the prior and canons of Breadsall priory in Derbyshire were imprisoned.[9] The rebels burned the court rolls of these religious houses, which recorded what services tenants owed and what they had refused to perform. The court rolls of secular landlords were also burned, but religious houses were clearly being singled out for destruction. It is clear that the rebels regarded the terms by which land was held from religious houses as particularly restrictive and oppressive, and had determined to destroy the records of these terms.

As a religious order, the Hospital came under attack for the same reason as other religious orders in England: because it was a landowner and many of its tenants held by unfavourable terms. Its house at Temple Cressing was singled out largely because it was the local administrative centre of the Hospital and held the order's manorial court records; it was also full of food and wine for the English priory's general chapter, which the rebels carried off with other goods, money, and animals, pulling down the manor buildings and burning them.[10] The reasons why Essex was a centre of the revolt relate to the local social and economic situation and lie outside the scope of this chapter.

The Hospital was also attacked because of its association with royal government. The New Temple and Clerkenwell Hospital had long been used as depositories for government records and funds. The rebels destroyed the books, rolls, and memoranda at the New Temple. Here again an important factor in inspiring the rebels was the desire to destroy unfavourable legal terms.[11] But other records held at the New Temple were financial, in particular relating to the poll tax.

The poll tax was in theory assessed at the same rate on every person in England over the age of fifteen, whatever their income. Because of the financial problems of the English government there had been three poll taxes in four years: 1377, 1379, and 1380/1. The 1377 tax was 4d. on each adult; the 1379 tax was graduated, so that those on higher incomes paid more; but in 1380, although the rich were asked to help the poor, there was no graduation and the rate was one shilling for each person over fifteen. In a poor family with adult children still dependent on their parents, the results could be financially crippling. Moreover, the collectors of the tax made enquiries at each

257d), 333r: these all relate to violence against the Order of St John but not necessarily to the great revolt. In particular, 54d (was 53d), and 94r (was 92r), relate to violence which occurred when an official of the Order of St John attempted to levy services due *per consuetudinem et serviciis debitis*. See also Prescott, 73.

9 Prescott, 141, 155, 169, 221–4, 226, 339.

10 *Anonimalle Chronicle*, 135.

11 Ibid., 139.

community as to how many adults lived there, and caused much offence by the manner and detail of their investigations.

It was the opinion of the writer of the Anonimalle chronicle and of the Leicestershire chronicler Henry Knighton that it was the poll tax that prompted the revolt. The third poll tax had been decided at the Parliament of November 1380. The intention was to collect the tax quickly, two thirds by January 1381, but opposition to the collectors meant that the money was slow coming in. On 1 February 1381 a new royal treasurer was appointed, Robert Hales, the prior of the Hospital in England. Thomas Walsingham remarked that Hales was a great-hearted and active knight, but that his promotion to treasurer would not please the community of the realm. He did not explain his remark.[12]

Robert of Hales was from the new gentry class: of a non-knightly family, but rising in social status. As such he was typical of fourteenth-century English Hospitallers. Other examples are the Archer (L'archer) family, which supplied several prominent Hospitallers to the English tongue during the fourteenth century[13] and Hildebrand Inge, a leading English Hospitaller in the last three decades of the fourteenth century: the Inges were landholders and were involved in the royal administration, but were not of knightly origin.[14] Hales's precise origins are unknown. The Brother Nicholas of Hales, who appears as prior of Clerkenwell from the 1330s to the 1350s, may have been a relation.[15] A 'Robert Hales of Norfolk' is mentioned in the Close Rolls in 1331 standing bail for a Brother Martin de Belton or Bolton of the Hospital, but is not himself called 'brother'. This Robert Hales is unlikely to have been our man – if he

[12] CPR, Richard II: AD 1377–1381 (London, 1895), 589; *Chronica Thomae Walsingham*, i, 449–50.

[13] Peter Coss, 'Knights, Esquires and the Origins of Social Gradation in England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, v (1995), 155–178: here 175 and note 95; see also Anthony Luttrell, 'English Contributions to the Hospitaller Castle at Bodrum in Turkey: 1407–1437', *MO*, ii, 163–72: here 164.

[14] Paul Brand, *The Earliest English Law Reports*, 2, Seldon Society, cxii (1996), pp. lxi–lxv on William Inge (d. 1322). William Inge came from Bedfordshire. I am indebted to Professor Peter Coss for his help in tracing the origins of the Inge family. By the mid-fourteenth century some Inges had achieved knightly status: CPR, Edward III, xiii: *AD 1364–1367*, 211, 402. Hildebrand Inge first appears in 1372 as an attorney of the prior of England (Robert Hales): CPR, Edward III, xv: *AD 1370–1374*, 188. In 1392 he was made turcopolier of Rhodes, the highest office available to a brother of the English tongue on Rhodes (below the office of master): Malta, Cod. 326, fol. 108r. He was still turcopolier in 1394–5: Joseph Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes (1310–1421)*, new edition with introduction by Anthony Luttrell (London, 1974), 302, n. 1. By 2 August 1396 he was dead, as Peter Holt was appointed turcopolier: Malta, Cod. 329, fol. 91r.

[15] *The Knights Hospitallers in England: being the report of Prior Philip de Thame to the General Master Elyan de Villanova for AD 1338*, ed. L. B. Larking and J. M. Kemble, Camden Society 1st ser., lxv (London, 1857), 101; CPR Edward III, xiii: AD 1364–1367, 404; in 1358: Malta, Cod. 316, fols. 198r–v (was 199r–v); *The Cartulary of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem in England, Secunda Camera, Essex*, ed. Michael Gervers (Oxford, 1982), 565 n. 956.

were still an active knight in 1381 he was hardly likely to have been over eighteen and eligible to stand bail for a man in 1331 – but he might have been a relative.[16]

Brother Robert Hales's career can be traced in part through the papal and Hospitaller archives. In February 1358 Robert Hales was on Rhodes when the chapter general of the order granted one Brother John Andaby the *bailies* of Eagle (in Lincolnshire), Bruer (in Lincolnshire), Beverley (Yorkshire), and Aslackby (Lincolnshire), with churches, manors, and mills. John de Pavely, prior of England, and Brother Robert Hales opposed this grant and claimed these properties from John Andaby. The matter was taken to the papal court.[17] By June 1358 Grand Master Roger des Pins (1355–65) was addressing Robert Hales as preceptor of Eagle, Sutton atte Hone (in Kent), and Bruer. He also granted him the *bailie* of Aslackby, which he was allowed to hold with the other three *bailies* by special dispensation of the convent. Later in the same year Robert was granted the preceptories or *bailies* of Sandford (in Oxfordshire) and Slebech (in south-west Wales) which had fallen vacant on the death of the previous incumbent (Brother Philip de Thame, prior of England until 1353) – and surrendered Eagle, Bruer, and Sutton in exchange. The Grand Master also gave him permission to return to England whenever he pleased.[18]

In July 1362 Robert Hales was back in England, and was admitted as one of the attorneys of the prior of England, John Pavely — his ally in 1358.[19] By 1365, however, he had returned to the East, as he was one of the hundred Hospitallers who went with four galleys and other vessels to accompany King Peter I of Cyprus in 1365 in his campaign to capture Alexandria. Later that year Grand Master Raymond Bereguer (1365–74) wrote to William of Middleton, turcopolier of the Order, and Robert Hales, whom he called his *socius* or personal aide, acknowledging their role in the campaign and their work on behalf of Christendom in the East, and granting Robert Hales the master's churches of Kirketon (Lincs.) and Donington (Lincs.) in the English priory.[20] Earlier in the year he had been confirmed as commander of Sandford, Slebech, and Upleadon (Bosbury in Herefords.), with Prene (Shrops.) and Kingsbury (Middx.).[21]

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[16] CCR, Edward III, ii: AD 1330–1333 (London, 1898), 385, 418.

[17] CEPRGI, *Petitions to the Pope*, ed. W. H. Bliss, i: AD 1342–1419 (London, 1896), 347. For the date of the general chapter, Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, 136.

[18] Malta, Cod. 316, fols. 198r (was 199r), 199 (was 200), 201r (was 202r), 202r (was 203r).

[19] CPR, Edward III, xii: AD 1361–1364, 233.

[20] Malta, Cod. 319, fols. 177–178r (were 171–172r).

[21] Malta, Cod. 319, fol. 175r (was 169r). Brother Thomas of Burley, prior of Dinmore, claimed that Upleadon was subject to Dinmore (Herefords.), but on investigation this was found not to be the case: ibid., fol. 176r (was 170r).

In spring 1366 the grand master wrote to Brother Richard of Overton, collector of responsions in the English priory, and John of Ycle, commander of Dalby, to have the English responsions ready to hand over to Brother Robert Hales, his *socius*.[22] Hales was in England again by November 1370, when he was appointed one of the attorneys of Prior John Pavely. By July 1372 he was prior himself. As prior, King Edward III expected him to contribute troops to the defence of England against possible French and Spanish invasion.[23] In 1375–76 he supported King Edward III in a bitter dispute with the grand master on Rhodes over the question of whether the Scottish priory of the Hospital was subject to the English prior; Edward III and Hales maintained that it was, and Grand Master Robert de Juillac (1374–77) was forced to concede the point.[24]

According to the sixteenth-century historian of the Order, Giacomo Bosio, the prior of England was in the Morea in 1377–78 trying unsuccessfully to secure the release of Grand Master Heredia, but Delaville le Roulx showed that this whole account is a myth. Heredia was in fact released, yet the prior of England was not one of the hostages; it was the English Brother Richard Overton, turcopolier of Rhodes, who went to the Morea with this mission in 1377–78. Hales was in the West throughout 1377 and 1378, playing a leading role in English political events. By 1 May 1377, before the death of Edward III, Hales had been appointed admiral of the fleet to the westward. After the old king's death he was made a member of the 'continual councils' governing for the young King Richard II. In December 1377 he was due to go overseas as admiral of the westward on the king's business, but had not yet departed; in May 1378 he was appointing attorneys for himself. He is recorded as being present at Parliament in 1378 and 1379.[25]

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[22] Ibid., fol. 179r (was 173r).

[23] Charles Tipton, 'The English Hospitallers during the Great Schism', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, iv (1967), 91–124: here 96, 99–100; CPR, Edward III, xv: *AD 1370–1374*, 4, 8 (acting as attorney for Prior John Pavely, November 1370), 188 (as prior, July 1372); CCR, Edward III, xiii: *AD 1369–1374* (London, 1911), 568. I am grateful to Prof. Jürgen Sarnowsky for allowing me to see his forthcoming biography of Robert Hales for the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

[24] On 5 June 1381 Grand Master Heredia (1377–96) confirmed to Hales that the English prior had authority over the Scottish priory: Malta, Cod. 321, fol. 145r (was 136r). For the dispute, see also Malta, Cod. 346, fols. 121r–v, 236r–v. See also: CEPRGI: *Papal Letters*, ed. W. H. Bliss *et al*., iv: *AD 1362–1404* (London, 1902), 135, 140–2, 146, 205, CCR, Edward III, xiv: *AD 1374–1377*, 297–8, 330; Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, 192–95; Charles Tipton, 'English and Scottish Hospitallers during the Great Schism', *Catholic Historical Review*, lii (1966), 240–45: here 241; *The Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Scotland*, ed. Ian B. Cowan, P. H. R. Mackay, and Alan Macquarrie, Scottish History Society, 4th ser., xix (Edinburgh, 1983), p. xxxiv.

[25] Delaville le Roulx, *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes*, 203–206, esp. 204–205, n. 4; CCR, *Edward III*, xiv: *AD 1374–1377*, 495; CPR, *Richard II, AD 1377–81*, 75; Tipton, 'English Hospitallers', 96.

The government of the young Richard II presented an opportunity for a proven, able, and ambitious man of lesser birth to win wealth and power through taking on onerous and responsible but essential offices. The government was in financial crisis after years of war with France, which was currently going badly. But holding office under the child King Richard II was not a quick route to popularity. It was believed in the kingdom that the king was being badly advised by his ministers.[26]

As noted above, Thomas Walsingham reported that the appointment of Robert Hales as treasurer was not popular in the country. Walsingham's description of him as a great-hearted and active knight recalls his military career in the East but gives no indication that he was a pious man. In the country his military reputation seems to have increased the distrust felt towards him: on 8 July 1381 the jurors at Hadleigh Castle in the Hundred of Rochford, Essex, presented that one John Buck had told the people of Great and Little Wakering and North Horbury that Robert Hales was coming with a hundred lances (i.e. a hundred men-at-arms) to kill all the people of the Hundred.[27] The fact that some of Hales' own servants (including one of his grooms) were among those who pillaged and burnt Highbury house and Clerkenwell priory and participated in the murder of Hales does not suggest that he was a well-loved master.[28] His behaviour during the revolt did not improve his popularity: he was blamed for preventing King Richard from going out to talk to the rebels when they first arrived in London, describing them as people without reason who did not know how to act sensibly.[29]

He may also have been disliked as a *parvenu*. Thomas Farndon was a member of a prominent and ancient London alderman family. The Farringdons or Farndons were goldsmiths. In 1313, 1320, and 1323 Nicholas Farringdon was mayor of London. A Thomas de Farndon was Member of Parliament for Middlesex in 1377; this may not be the Thomas Farndon involved in Hales' murder, but it may have been.[30] For Farndon, Hales was a 'new man' of no particular family who had, as Farndon told a gathering of rebels in Essex, unjustly expelled him from his rightful inheritance. The details of this case are

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[26] For the government of the young Richard, Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London, 1997), 27–32, 44–52, 58.

[27] PRO, KB 145/3/6/1, unnumbered membranes: hearings in Essex; Prescott, 115. A Hundred was an administrative division of a shire.

[28] PRO, KB 145/3/5/1, unnumbered membranes: Richard Mory of Essex, *serviens* of the prior, John Webbe, *serviens* and *palefridarius* of the prior and Thomas Notman; Prescott, 207.

[29] *Anonimalle Chronicle*, 139.

[30] W. J. Loftie, *A History of London*, 2 vols, (2nd edn., London, 1884), i, 159, 201; ii, 308, 395; see also Reville, p. lxxii; Dobson, 213. Thomas Farndon's father was of illegitimate birth, and Thomas had recently lost two lawsuits 'one certainly, and the other possibly' because of this: Ruth Bird, *The Turbulent London of Richard II* (London, 1949), 54 and n. 3. Perhaps this was also the origin of his problems with the Hospital.

not known, but the fact that Fardon received an individual royal pardon for his actions against Hales is persuasive evidence that he was telling the truth. So far as Thomas Farndon was concerned, he had been deprived of his rights by a man who had come from nowhere, a man who misled the king, and a thief.

To conclude: the Hospital suffered in 1381 as a religious order and a landowner, alongside other religious orders and landowners. This is not surprising. It also suffered because of its role as a sort of government financial office. However, the Hospital itself was not disliked any more than any other religious order; it was its prior who was thoroughly hated. While it was known that Robert Hales was an active knight, he was not respected as a religious man but regarded as a danger to ordinary people, the sort of knight who would misuse armed power. His role as treasurer had given him a reputation for being greedy and power-hungry.

What of his order? Did it lament his death? The Hales who had served in Rhodes and was rewarded in 1365 for services at Alexandria (but had never gone to Rome or Corinth) had gone on to defy the grand master and convent in 1375–76 over the priory of Scotland. The grand master apparently made no comment on the death of Hales. A lieutenant-master was appointed by the English brothers: the experienced Hildebrand Inge, whose family was better than Hales's and had a long record of royal service. On 18 November 1381 John Radington was appointed prior of England by the grand master and convent. He had previously acted as turcopolier of Rhodes.[31] The Order did not insist on the punishment of the murderers of Hales. Perhaps the grand master and convent felt that for all his past service on Rhodes, in view of Hales's activity since he became prior of England, he was no great loss to the Order.

[31] Malta, Cod. 321, fol. 145 (was 136); Tipton, 'English Hospitallers', 10.

ABBREVIATIONS [Please confirm correctness]

CCR	Calendar of the Close Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office, prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records
CEPRGI	Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland
CP	(in footnote 1)
CPR	Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office prepared under the superintendence of the deputy keeper of the records
KB	King’s Bench records
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew