

**Swearing in of Timothy John Le Cocq
as Bailiff of Jersey
17th October 2019**

Introduction

Your Excellencies, Chief Minister, my brother Bailiff of Guernsey, First Deemster, Members of the Court, Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. When I began to prepare this speech in my head it always started with the words “Mr Bailiff, Your Excellency...” etc. and it was only when I began to write it down this weekend that I noted the mistake and the reality of the situation came home to me.

2. This may seem to be an elevated place to sit....but truthfully it is a humbling seat surrounded as I am by the portraits and in some cases the physical presence of the talented, committed and courageous people who have sat here before me. It is humbling. And if it is also a little intimidating that would hardly be surprising. So I thank you all, Sir Stephen, Jurat Olsen, Chief Minister, Mr Attorney and Mr Batonnier for your kind and supportive words of welcome. I am grateful. I will try not to use my swords and armour too often.

3. According to the board at the States Members entrance the first Bailiff held office in 1277 and, as the Attorney General has said, I am, by my rough calculation, the 90th person to have held the office. It is a great honour and at this moment I am mindful of the weight of tradition that this ceremony carries with it. You have

heard the Letters Patent read out by the Attorney and that reminds us that the office of Bailiff is a Crown Appointment. It is fitting therefore that this ceremony should be honoured by the presence of Her Majesty's representative in the Island, and I am delighted formally to welcome His Excellency and Lady Dalton. I am also honoured by the presence of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey and Lady Corder.

4. Our links with the Crown through Her Majesty's Privy Councillors, are conducted through the Ministry of Justice and I am pleased to welcome Mrs Elaine Cobb and Mr Richard Mason who have come over from London to be here today. Thank you for your work on our behalves...we are grateful.
5. We of course have close links with our cousins in Normandy and those links have grown stronger in recent years. I am delighted that Monsieur Jean Morin has been able to join us. *Vous me faites et vous faites à l'île de Jersey un grand honneur d'être ici, et votre présence souligne les liens forts et l'amitié durable entre nos territoires respectifs. Merci.*
6. I am also very pleased that my counterparts in the other Crown Dependencies, the Bailiff of Guernsey, Sir Richard Collas and the First Deemster of the Isle of Man Mr Andrew Corlett and Mrs Corlett are able to be here. This is the second swearing in of a Bailiff of Jersey that Sir Richard has attended in an official

capacity and as he is retiring from office in May of next year I very much hope indeed *that it will be his last!!* I know how much my predecessors have valued his friendship and support over the years and I very much hope that that relationship will continue with both him and *his* successor and I look forward to such a relationship with Mr Corlett in the future. It is so important that the relationship between all the Crown Dependencies is a good one, we have so many challenges in common.

7. It is also a great pleasure to me to welcome Mr James McNeill, the senior judge of our Court of Appeal. We are as an island enormously fortunate that lawyers of the calibre of Mr McNeill sit on our court and we are grateful for their efforts.
8. I am delighted to have with us the Bishop of Dover and Mrs Willmott, the Dean and Mrs Keirle, Canon Dominic Golding, the Roman Catholic Dean, the Reverend Wheadon the Methodist Superintendent, Mr Stephen Regal, Head of the Jewish Congregation, and Dr Sarfraz Jamali, Head of the Muslim Community. That those of different faiths come together in this place, in friendship and in mutual respect for those with other beliefs and none, points to the inclusive community that Jersey is and can be ever more so in the years to come.
9. I am of course succeeding Sir William Bailhache as Bailiff and I am very pleased indeed to welcome him and Lady Bailhache.

Tributes have been paid to him and rightly so. We have been lucky to have him and I intend and trust that he will continue to serve both as a Commissioner and on our Court of Appeal. I look forward to administering both oaths to him when next we assemble the Superior Number. His portrait looks down over my left shoulder as his predecessor's, Sir Michael Birt's looks over my right. Both are *formidable* judges and so this is not necessarily a comfortable thought for a new Bailiff though I am going to take from that encouragement and support rather than anything else

Friends and Family

10. I am of course also conscious of the importance of friends and family and I am delighted that so many of them are here for this occasion.
11. Sadly, my mother is not well enough to be here to enjoy some of the fruits of her labour and I am of course in equal measure, sad that neither my father, nor indeed my uncle who passed away earlier this year, could be here witness this day. They would have been proud and I trust that they are not too far away.
12. My brother, Jonathan, has made the epic journey here from professorial duties New Zealand. He has given up the sunny spring in New Zealand to face the rain and wind of a Jersey October.....at least so he has told me at least 15 times over the last 6 days or so.

Notwithstanding these tribulations, I hope that he is enjoying this little entertainment that I have laid on for him.

13. Nobody who is even partly in the public eye can be there comfortably without the support of family and friends. I am so proud and grateful to have all four of my children *Thomas, James, Jacob and Rebekah*, here with me today together with *Ruth, her parents, Frank and Judy, my cousin Kevin and his wife Olive*, and *Kathryn and Lydia*. My children are today unusually all together at the same time, and I look forward to spending time with them all after the formal part of the day is over.

14. There are others to whom I owe an enormous debt of gratitude for their love and friendship and support now and over the years. I could not have been here without them. They know who they are and how grateful I am,

Looking Forward

15. Now is however a time to look forward.

16. In preparing this speech I asked myself what I wanted to say. I worked out what that answer was and then I looked through my speech when I became Deputy Bailiff to find that I had already said it! Perhaps that is not surprising.

17. I was born in Jersey, it is in my blood, and I am grateful to be a son of this island.
18. I am grateful for its natural beauty, its coastline, cliffs, and countryside. I could imagine no better place.
19. I am grateful for our traditions and history. Our story, from the least known people of prehistory to the events that have given us our unique constitutional position and culture.
20. I am grateful for our community, how we so often care for one another and how we reach out to extend our caring, outside our shores through overseas aid or otherwise. How we give out time in honorary service in the parishes, the courts and elsewhere and how we commit ourselves to charitable causes with energy and enthusiasm.
21. And I am grateful for our prosperity that allows us to look after our community in a way that many places are not fortunate enough to be able to emulate.
22. Do I think that we are perfect and cannot be improved? Of course not! We can always do better. We should always be vigilant to protect our freedoms, environment and the openness of our society and those who are vulnerable in it.

23. *But we have a lot to be grateful for and much that is worth defending.*
24. The office of Bailiff is one of the focal points for the life of the island and its people, not only in ensuring the administration of Justice and presiding over the Assembly, but also as Civic Head, in representing the people of Jersey both to themselves and as one of the symbols of who we are and our unique identity in the world.
25. I am deeply proud of Jersey. For all our sometime faults and mistakes, so many in the States Assembly, in Government, in the parishes, in the faith communities, in the community at large work hard to improve the lives of our people.
26. I am proud of the talent both professional and otherwise that we find in this island, the skills and abilities that come together to help make this place.
27. And I am proud of our allegiance to the Crown and our participation in its armed services and the sacrifice that some of our people have made.
28. So you can see why I said that to sit here is both humbling and a little intimidating.
29. I also said when I became Solicitor General, then in my speech as Attorney General, and latterly when becoming Deputy Bailiff,

that I fully expected that I would make mistakes. *I clearly have the gift of prescience.....* as indeed the Court of Appeal has on occasion confirmed! That is as it should be. I confidently make the same prediction again, but my mistakes will not be for want of trying and at least I know, in making those mistakes, I will be able to rely some of the time on the submissions of the members of the Bar to help me do so!

30. I very much look forward to my time as Bailiff. I know that I can look forward to the complete support of the Bailiff's Chambers. They have been marvellous and I know how committed they are to supporting the Bailiff in his various official roles. I hope in my time and with help of government to oversee the digitalisation of the courts to make them more efficient and accessible and to have at the end of it state of the art court system whilst, at the same time, preserving the traditions and culture that has given us a judicial system to be proud of.

31. So thank you all for coming and sharing this day with me. I have sworn to uphold the laws and customs of the island and its ancient privileges and freedoms and to administer justice without favour or partiality. I am honoured indeed to have been given the opportunity to serve in this way. There will be challenges but I will do my best to fulfil the duties that I have taken up to the best of my abilities.

Thank you.

