



# Knight Templar

VOLUME LI

FEBRUARY 2005

NUMBER 2



*Brother James Knox Polk at age 49, with symbols of his life; his career in law, his political adventures in finance, and the acacia to remind us of his premature demise. His story starts on page 23.*

## Grand Master's Message for February 2005

The end of February marks the halfway point of this triennium. Much has been accomplished, but there is still a lot to be done over the next 18 months.

We are moving towards getting out of the loan business in the Knights Templar Educational Foundation, and there has been progress in the Knights Templar Eye Foundation in the areas of fund-raising and public awareness.



I hope that all of the Grand Commanders are pursuing the Distinguished Service Award for their Grand Commanderies and themselves: It is achievable. In fact, it is easily achievable if you and your officers are working as a team. I look forward to recognizing those who achieve it. Let your Department Commander know how you are doing, and get his assistance. He will forward your record to me for approval.

Most probably know, by now, that the Holy Land Pilgrimage has been delayed for the time being. The US State Department still has a warning against travel in Israel and the surrounding area. As soon as that warning is lifted, we will move forward to the revival of these most worthwhile trips. Keep raising funds and remain in prayer for the advent of that day. It is easy to become discouraged with the problems in that part of the world, but as an old philosopher once said, "This too shall pass."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kenneth B. Fischer". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Kenneth B. Fischer  
Grand Master, KCT, GCT

# Knight Templar

## "The Magazine for York Rite Masons - and Others, too"

FEBRUARY: Our coverage for the 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation is extensive and begins on page 5. It includes available listings of the new members of the Eye Foundation's clubs. The Campaign has been in progress for more than two months by the time you receive this issue. No matter how worthy other charitable ventures may be, please do not forget our very own philanthropy, and do plan outreach events to raise money for the Eye Foundation and to educate your own community about this worthy cause. We thank you in advance! Pursue the Distinguished Service Award! Read about it in the Grand Master's message on page 2. This month we have news galore and articles by many distinguished Sir Knights, including a biography of President James K. Polk, featuring original artwork by Sir Knight Joseph E. Bennett. We hope you enjoy February's offerings!

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### February 2005

Volume LI Number 2

Published monthly as an official publication of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America.

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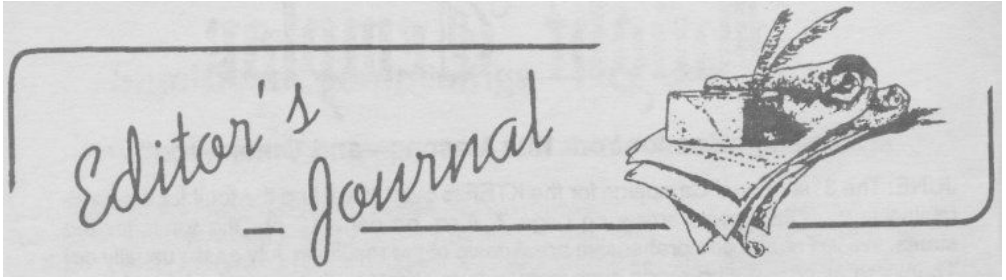
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Material for the Grand Commanderies' two-page supplement is to be directed to the respective Supplement editors.

Address corrections from members are to be sent to the local Recorders



When you order any of the items below, make check or money order payable to: the Grand Encampment, and send to: Grand Encampment, Knights Templar; 5097 N Elston Avenue, Suite 101; Chicago; IL 60630-2460.

**The Order of Malta** is now available on DVDs. Each informative DVD is only \$15.00 each plus \$3.50 for S & H (\$18.50). Also, **the Order of Red Cross** DVD is now really available at \$15.00 each plus \$3.50 for S & H. (\$18.50). Send in your order today!

**PLACE MATS APKINS:** The place mats have pictures of the Masonic Presidents of the USA, and the napkins have the Cross and Crown emblem. The cost of either one is \$15.00 per 250 in intervals of 250 (i.e. 250, 500, etc. - NO exceptions) PLUS S&H - UPS charges vary by location.

**62nd Triennial Memorabilia.** From the 62nd Triennial Conclave, we still have available the black carrying cases that were given at registration - \$20.00 plus \$6.00 S & H (\$26.00). See above for ordering information.

**Great Knights Templar Gifts:** Available is the 2-volume set of **History of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America** by Francis J. Scully, M.D., and **History of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America - Book II** by Lt. Col. Jacob C. Baird, Chairman, the Committee on Knights Templar History. As a set, the two books are \$25.00 plus \$4.00 S & H (\$29.00). Separately, each book is \$15.00 plus \$3.00 S & H (\$18.00).

**Knight Templar magazine Index,** including all previous indexes and covering the years, 1969-1999, is now available at a price of \$5.00, plus \$2.50 postage - total, \$7.50. This is your chance to invest at a bargain price in the index which covers main articles of the magazine from 1969 to the turn of the century.

**A Pilgrim's Path: Freemasonry and the Religious Right:** This is John J. Robinson's last book, and it is available as a hardbound copy. The book is available for \$15.00 each, plus \$2.50 S & H. **Born in Blood** The exciting book by John J. Robinson is available at the price of \$17.00, including S & H. **Dungeon, Fire, and Sword** This history of the Knights Templar by the late John J. Robinson is available for \$20.00 each, plus \$3.50 S & H (\$23.50).

An important and invaluable book/let entitled **The York Rite of Freemasonry - A History and Handbook** is available. It is authored by Sir Knight Frederick G. Speidel. This comprehensive, illustrated, 78-page booklet explains the degrees, history, symbolism, and benevolent programs of the Blue Lodge, the Chapter, the Council, and the Commandery. There is no limit on orders: \$1.50 each under 100 copies, plus S & H; \$1.00 each over 100 copies, plus S & H.

YORK RITE FREEMASONRY ON THE INTERNET - Official Web Site  
Grand Encampment, Knights Templar of the United States of America  
<http://www.knightstemplar.org>



## Message from the General Chairman of The 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign

by Dr. James N. Karnegis, Department Commander, North Central and  
General Chairman of the 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign

### Eyes Across America

#### Is The Road Long, Or Is It Short?

The 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF) began December 1, 2004. In order to continue the work that the KTEF has been doing every day of every week, the goal for this year's Campaign was set at \$1,000,000. The present Campaign ends April 30, 2005, so let's take a look at the road ahead.

**The road ahead is long:** The road ahead is long if we do not understand that:

- The KTEF is the principal philanthropy of the Grand Encampment and, therefore, is the principal philanthropy of each Sir Knight, his Commandery, and his Grand Commandery.
- The KTEF is a premier private philanthropy in the fight against eye diseases and is nationally recognized for its efforts to help those in need throughout the United States.
- The continued work of the KTEF depends on the success of the 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign and this means the continued generous support of each Sir Knight, his Commandery; and his Grand Commandery.



**The road ahead is short:** The road ahead is short if we step forward ourselves and do not wait for someone else to contribute to our cause.

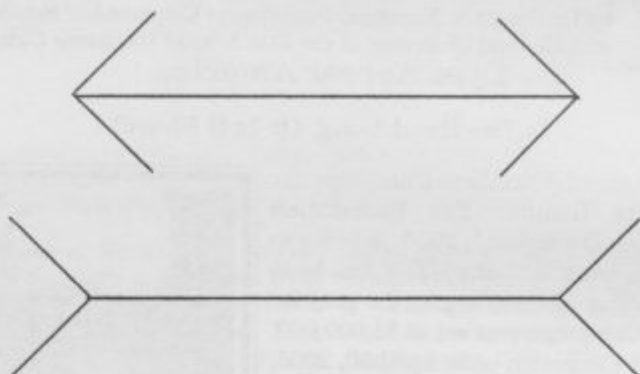
Sir Knights should be proud of all of the good that their KTEF has done in past years and that, with their on-going help, it can continue *to* do. Together we can reach our goal.

- \* Every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar.
- \* Every Knight Templar should support his Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

If you have not yet personally given to this year's Campaign, dear Sir Knight, **please send in your contribution TODAY to: Knights Templar Eye Foundation, 1000 East State Parkway, Suite 1, Schaumburg, IL 60173.** Make your check payable to the: Knights Templar Eye Foundation. All contributions are acknowledged with a receipt and are tax deductible.

### Is The Road Long, Or Is It Short?

Question: Which of the horizontal lines printed below is the longer? (Or, is this a trick question, and they are both the same length?)



Answer: If you don't believe it, measurement will prove to you that the upper horizontal line is the longer. The configuration of the terminal arrows causes the perception that the lower horizontal line is the longer.

Sir Knight James N. Karnegis, M.D., Ph.D., KCT, GCT, Right Eminent Department Commander of the North Central Department, Grand

Encampment, is the General Chairman of the 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign. He resides at 20975 Bonanza Boulevard, Elkhorn, NE 68022-1838.

#### New Contributors to the Grand Master's Club

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| No. 4,434—Warren J. Hook (MD)       | No. 4,451—James Edward Westbrook (GA)  |
| No. 4,435—Walter D. Hanisch (CA)    | No. 4,452—Alvin L. McMichael (GA)      |
| No. 4,436—Donald D. Lewis (PA)      | No. 4,453—Thomas H. Garr (MA/RI)       |
| No. 4,437—Glenn L. Knapp (KS)       | No. 4,454—Gregory A. Thomas (WA)       |
| No. 4,438—Lloyd G. Callwell (MO)    | No. 4,455—Bruce D. Mann (GA)           |
| No. 4,439—Robert B. Hodge, Jr. (OK) | No. 4,456—David A. Lovell (IN)         |
| No. 4,440—Robert B. Hodge, Jr. (OK) | No. 4,457—James P. Crouch (AR)         |
| No. 4,441—Wallace D. Mays (GA)      | No. 4,458—Donald E. Daume (NJ)         |
| No. 4,442—Wallace D. Mays (GA)      | No. 4,459—David A. Hardy (NY)          |
| No. 4,443—Kevin E. Weaver (MO)      | No. 4,460—George J. Knorr (NY)         |
| No. 4,444—Raymond C. Zummak (IA)    | No. 4,461—Dr. James N. Karnegis (NE)   |
| No. 4,445—John D. Millichamp (MI)   | No. 4,462—Jack Stephens (GA)           |
| No. 4,446—Wade Sheeler (IA)         | No. 4,463—Raymond F. Deane (PA)        |
| No. 4,447—Ronald M. Maslo (NJ)      | No. 4,464—H. Edwin Purchis (MI)        |
| No. 4,448—Herbert W. Spath (MD)     | No. 4,465—Walter G. Deprefontaine (PA) |
| No. 4,449—Charles W. Lane (GA)      | No. 4,466—Blair Dixon (WI)             |
| No. 4,450—William H. Whitten (GA)   | No. 4,467—James Janczak (WI)           |

#### New Contributors to the Grand Commander's Club

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| No. 102,046—Fred Kersting (KS)         | No. 102,052—Justin J. Stone (NY)      |
| No. 102,047—Stephen A. Nemeth (VA)     | No. 102,053—Lee Seagondollar (Alaska) |
| No. 102,048—Donald D. Lewis (PA)       | No. 102,054—William F. Perry (WV)     |
| No. 102,049—Edwin J. Filchner (PA)     | No. 102,055—Theron S. Edwards (GA)    |
| No. 102,050—Everett Kent Smith (NY)    | No. 102,056—C. Gary Fincher (GA)      |
| No. 102,051—Daniel J. Edmiston (MA/RI) |                                       |

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

No. 102,057—Frank D. Mattingly (KY)  
 No. 102,058—James B. Wall (KY)  
 No. 102,059—Ronald Lake Fine (TN)  
 No. 102,060—Thomas Courduff (PA)  
 No. 102,061—Albert W. Austin, Jr. (NC)  
 No. 102,062—George J. Knorr (NY)  
 No. 102,063—Ronald R. Day (TX)  
 No. 102,064—Robert B. Hodge, Jr. (OK)  
 No. 102,065—Don S. Holland (MT)  
 No. 102,066—Earl R. Phillips (AL)

No. 102,067—Paul Merighi (WA)  
 No. 102,068—George R. Zeevalk (NJ)  
 No. 102,069—Frederick R. Dixon (VA)  
 No. 102,070—Alan L. Moser (OH)  
 No. 102,071—Mark E. Megee (NJ)  
 No. 102,072—Gregory E. Hart (OK)  
 No. 102,073—Lloyd K. Hilliard (OH)  
 No. 102,074—William E. Hicks-Caskey (TN)  
 No. 102,075—James M. Scearce, Jr. (VA)

**How to join the Grand Commander's or Grand Master's clubs:** Any individual may send a check in the amount of \$100 or more specified for the purpose of beginning a Grand Commander's Club membership and made payable to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. This initial contribution will begin your Grand Commander's Club membership. In addition, members of the Grand Commander's Club pledge to make annual

contributions of \$100 or more. Once contributions total \$1,000, the individual is enrolled in the Grand Master's Club. Membership is open to individuals only, and there is Commandery credit given for participation. Information is available from: Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc; 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I; Schaumburg, IL 60173. The new phone number is: (847) 490-3838. The new fax number is: (847) 490-3777.

### New Contributors to the 33° Club

Rafael Hernandez (CA), 33°  
 Louis S. Vanslyck (OH)  
   in memory of John V. Cooper, Jr., 33°  
 Louis S. Vanslyck (OH)  
   in memory of Richard B. Ingham, 33°  
 Irvin H. Gatlin (MS), 33°  
   in honor of Don R. Wade, 33°  
 Bruce Work (CT), 33°  
 John M. Akkala (MI), 33°  
 David W. Parks (IN), 33°  
 William J. Burfitt, Sr. (AL), 33°  
 Vern Schneider (MO), 33°  
 George O. Braatz (OH), 33°  
 Lawrence E. Hood (NY), 33°

Harry J. Moosegian (TX), 33°  
   in honor of James N. Higdon, 33°  
 Harry A. Odden, Jr. (MT), 33°  
 Richard J. Suetterlin (MI), 33°  
 Larry G. Canada (TX), 33°  
   in honor of Leonard P. Harvey, 33°  
 Larry G. Canada (TX), 33°  
   in honor of Ronald D. Park, 33°  
 Larry G. Canada (TX), 33°  
   in honor of Orville L. O'Neil, 33°  
 Larry G. Canada (TX), 33°  
 Daniel J. Schultz (NJ), 33°  
 Harry J. Moosegian (TX), 33°  
   in honor of James N. Higdon, 33°

### Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. 37th Annual Voluntary Campaign

Campaign report by Grand Commanderies for KTEF Officers and Trustees for the week ending January 7, 2005. The total amount contributed to date is \$122,315.86.

Alabama .....	\$626.00
Alaska .....	130.00
Arizona .....	205.00
Arkansas.....	1,740.00
California.....	13,476.18
Colorado.....	240.00
Connecticut.....	953.00
Delaware.....	10.00
District of Columbia .....	197.00

Florida .....	2,058.50
Georgia .....	9,215.00
Idaho.....	538.50
Illinois.....	8,518.00
Indiana .....	2,344.00
Iowa .....	2,690.00
Kansas .....	805.00
Kentucky .....	875.00
Louisiana.....	1,950.00
Maine .....	185.00
Maryland .....	2,375.00
Mass./R.I.....	5,509.50
Michigan .....	2,166.00
Minnesota.....	1,228.00
Mississippi.....	541.34
Missouri.....	1,148.00
Montana .....	476.00

Nebraska .....	1,125.00
Nevada .....	10.00
New Hampshire .....	426.00
New Jersey .....	1,830.00
New Mexico .....	1,670.00
New York .....	2,978.00
North Carolina .....	3,613.69
North Dakota .....	220.00
Ohio .....	4,501.41
Oklahoma .....	5,268.53
Oregon .....	160.00
Pennsylvania .....	7,527.93
South Carolina .....	5,604.59

South Dakota .....	1,095.00
Tennessee .....	1,378.00
Texas .....	5,732.00
Utah .....	7,280.00
Vermont .....	236.00
Virginia .....	4,715.00
Washington .....	1,013.00
West Virginia .....	1,600.00
Wisconsin .....	3,821.69
Wyoming .....	210.00
Honolulu No. 1, Hawaii .....	50.00
Ivanhoe No. 2, Mexico .....	50.00



**THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR EYE FOUNDATION, INC.**  
**And**  
**THE GRAND ENCAMPMENT OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF THE U.S.A.**  
**In Association With**  
**THE MAYO CLINIC SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**  
**Offer**  
**PRESENTATIONS AND A SPECIAL PERSONAL TOUR**  
**OF THE EYE RESEARCH LABORATORIES**  
**OF THE MAYO CLINIC**

**2:00—4:00 PM**  
**Friday, October 28, 2005**  
**Reservations Required**

**This free event for members and their ladies**  
**will be held in conjunction with**  
**The North Central Department Conference 2005 of**  
**The Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the U.S.A.**  
**October 28 & 29, 2005**  
**Grand Kahler Hotel**  
**Rochester, MN**

**See future editions of The Knight Templar Magazine**  
**for further information**



*Use the forms below for 33° Club and Purple Cross Club donations!*

**Thirty-third Degree Club  
Contributions to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation**

Donor \_\_\_\_\_ Personal, 33°:

Address \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_ phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Commandery No. \_\_\_\_\_ (for campaign credit)  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Honoree \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed: \$33.00

Scottish Rite Valley \_\_\_\_\_ Other:   
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card: Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your check and the above form (or credit info on the form) to your Commandery Chairman or to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173.

**Order of the Purple Cross Club  
Contributions to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation**

Donor \_\_\_\_\_ Personal, OPC:

Address \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_ phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Commandery No. \_\_\_\_\_ (for campaign credit)  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Honoree \_\_\_\_\_ CK or OPC Enclosed: \$33.00

College No. \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

Credit Card: Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your check and the above form (or credit info on the form) to your Commandery Chairman or to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173.

## **Words from Grateful Recipients of KTEF Assistance...**

I am writing to express my deep gratitude for your help in my two eye surgeries.

The day before July 4, 2003, I found out that my retinas had detached in both of my eyes. I couldn't have been more scared because this health crisis found me in a time of big transition. I had just graduated from college that May. I had just lost my primary health insurance on my 22nd birthday and my school health insurance upon graduation. I was offered a job that would start in September just three days before I found out my retinas were detached, and ironically enough, I had sent out an application for temporary insurance the very morning before I was diagnosed with detached retinas (thus making my detached retinas a preexisting condition ineligible for help from my insurance). Luckily, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation was able to help me when no one else would.

I feel so blessed to have your help. With the financial burden lifted, I was able to focus on recovery. I cannot tell you how helpless I would have felt to be stuck in recovery for 2 months without being able to look for a job or find a way to pay for the tremendous debt that would have resulted from the surgery.

I experienced so many things during this time: the fear of losing my sight at age 22, the fear of being paralyzed by a tremendous debt before I even began my adult life, and the fear of being forever changed. I have changed, but in a positive light. Out of these fears and problems with my eyes developed a new awareness. I saw tenderness and concern from family members, and I received it with more appreciation than ever before. I saw all the things than my sight allowed me to do; I find joy in the smallest tasks now because I will never take my sight for granted again. My eyesight means everything to me at 23. It means that I can continue with the hopes that I had before I graduated from college. To name just a few things, I can go to graduate school with no setbacks, I can read any newspaper or book I can get a hold of, and I have no disability or stigma that is a social setback.

I am happy to report that my eyes are healthy, I started my new job as a research assistant at the University of Denver, and I am living a "normal" life of a 23-year-old. I will always be grateful for the gift of sight that your foundation granted me and for your help during a really difficult time. Once I achieve better financial grounding, I hope that I can help support the great work you do.

Thank you, again, for everything!

**Liza Zolot  
Denver, Colorado**

This letter is in response to the recent help I have received for my eye surgery. My surgery, which was performed by Dr. James Fowler in Pueblo, Colorado, has been a great success. I had a cataract removal, lens implant, and was fitted for reading glasses. My last appointment will be on December 5, 2004, at which time my three-month follow-up will have been completed.

I would also like to mention the help I received from Mr. Rod McCoy, who is associated with your organization. His prompt and courteous attention helped the process to go smoothly. It is individuals like him that help organizations such as yours continue to serve people in a friendly manner.

I am writing this letter to show my deep gratitude for you help with this costly process. Without your support, I would not have been able to have this surgery. I would like to share my wonderful experience with you in order to help pass this on to others in need, like myself. I feel that because of your generosity, not only me but many other people will benefit from your program.

Because of my eye surgery, I can now spend more time with my children and grandchildren. Reading to my grandchildren has become easier, as it was a great strain on my eyes prior to my surgery. I can now read with ease. Thank you again for your help.

**Margie Montez  
Pueblo, Colorado**

## Grand Master Fischer Greeted Grand Commanders



All seven Grand Commanders of the North Central Department attended the October 2004, North Central Department Conference of the Grand Encampment, which was held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In their reports to the Conference, the Grand Commanders summarized the progress made in their respective Grand Commanderies during the past year and outlined plans for the coming months. Each report was given with enthusiasm, and it was clear that Templary in the North Central Department is briskly moving forward because of their leadership.

In the photograph are Sir Knights: front row, left to right: Robert E. Wunder, G.C. of Nebraska; Kenneth Bernard Fischer, M.E. Grand Master of the Grand Encampment; Richard L. Aldrich, G.C. of South Dakota; and Dale Robinson, G.C. of Iowa; back row, left to right: Brian J. Hudy, G.C. of Wisconsin; James E. Odland, G.C. of Minnesota; Dr. James N. Karnegis, Department Commander of the North Central Department, Grand Encampment, Knights Templar; Charles P. Beeber, G.C. of North Dakota; and John T. Riedas, Sr., G.C. of Illinois.

### News Release from South Carolina

The South Carolina York Rite Bodies will induct Brother and Companion Michael D. Smith, Sovereign Grand Inspector General for the Scottish Rite in South Carolina, into the York Rite on February 19 and 26, 2005.

A York Rite Class in Honor of the achievements of Ill. Michael D. Smith, S.G.I.G. in South Carolina, will be conducted at the Masonic Temple located at 190 W. Main Street, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

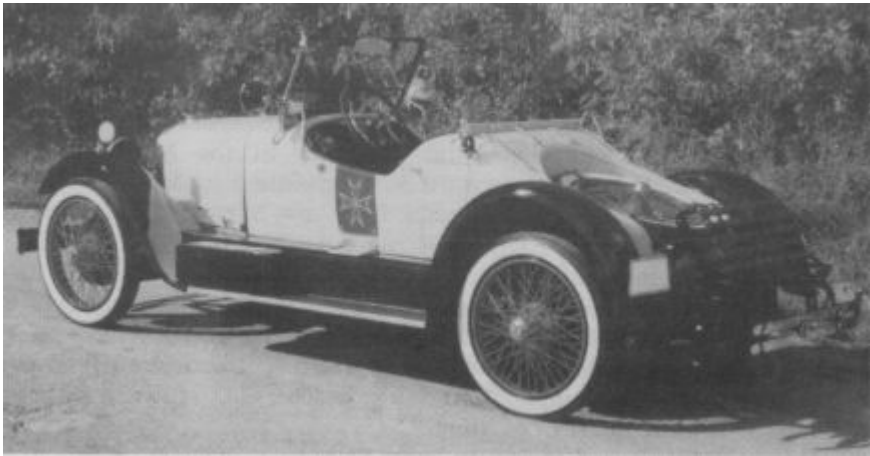
Anyone wishing information, contact Sir Knight Don S. Blair, P.G.C. of South Carolina, at 338 Indian Summer Lane, Boiling Springs, SC 29316; phone (864) 578-1708 or e-mail: [donsewardblair@cs.com](mailto:donsewardblair@cs.com)

**Remember. Every Christian Mason should be a York Rite Mason!**

## 1920 Templar Speedster

Below is a picture taken from the November 1997 AAA calendar by Sir Knight George A. Meidlinger, P.C. of Bethany Commandery No. 72, Knights Templar of Ohio. Sir Knight Meidlinger writes: "Several months ago our magazine showed pictures of an auto known as the Templar. Being the packrat of our family, as well as one to recognize beauty, I saved the picture of the 1920 Templar Speedster" (shown below).

The automobile is described: "The Templar was a remarkable automobile for its day. Powered by an innovative 3.2-litre 'top-valve' (ohv) four-cylinder engine, it had a full aluminum body and featured a number of trendy Roaring 20s accessories, like a Kodak camera, compass, grade indicator, spotlight, wire wheels, and rim-wind clock. The roadster shown is one of only five known to exist today. It was test-driven across the US by 'Cannonball' Baker for publicity." (Photo by Roy D. Query. Car owned by John L. Smith.)



### S.O.O.B. Assembly No. 39, Long Beach, California

In November 2004 the ladies of the Long Beach Assembly, Social Order of the Beauceant, treated their Sir Knights to a turkey dinner with all the trimmings. The dinner was served by Bethel No. 109 of Bellflower, Job's Daughters. Dad Advisor, Dr. Marvin Finnefrock, and chairman, Dana Vrsalovich, brought their fighting paraphernalia to demonstrate how the knights of old used their armor and swords in their fighting. The Beauceant banner which was black and white was displayed and explained. In the photo (next page) is Worthy President Vivian Gaskins and two knights.



During the Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee April 2004, Manchester Commandery No. 40 of Hillsboro, Tennessee, presented a check to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation for \$6,000. The primary source for the funds was from the sale of the late 1800's Knight Templar apron lapel pin (pictured third from left above). **The Commandery is very proud of its \$52.37 per capita donation to our worthy cause.**

The Commandery wishes to thank the more than 550 Sir Knights from all 50 states and the Virgin Islands for their generous contributions to these pin sales. They also want to let everyone know that the apron pin, along with five other pins, are still available for a cost of \$6.00 each, postage included. The pins offered are, from left: Mediterranean Pass, Knight Crusader of the Cross, 1800's Apron, Knight Commander's, Malta, and Knights Templar/Blue Lodge. Remember, **ALL profits go to KTEF.** Send check or money order payable to Manchester Commandery No. 40, C/O Garry L. Carter, Recorder; 424 Winchester Hwy; Hillsboro; TN 37342. All 6 pins can also be viewed at the website: [www.YorkriteUSA.org](http://www.YorkriteUSA.org)



### Membership Certificate to Benefit KTEF

This beautiful membership certificate, at left, was designed to keep a record of all 3 degrees of a person who reaches Master Mason. It is 11 x 14 inches and is 100-pound, antique white, parchment paper with 8 different colors and 3 blended colors. The price is \$3.00 each, plus \$3.50 for shipping

For every one sold \$1.00 will go to the KTEF. Send check or MO to: Sandra D. Knotts, PO Box 158, Trexlertown, PA 18087.

### Knights Templar Afghan to Benefit the KTEF

The afghan is a tapestry throw of 100% cotton with 360 picks per square inch. It has 2 American flags, one from 1776 and one from the present day, plus our national bird, the bald eagle, the 9 battle shields for the 9 knights of Malta, who founded the Christian Crusaders and led to the Knights Templar period. These battle shields are from the original design, taken from historical artwork of the Grand Lodge of England. Also, there is a beautiful poem, "A Knight Templar," 4 pictures from the past to present of knighthood, and 5 Sir Knights at bottom, early to present, with the far right showing a Knighting.

If interested, please send check or money order for \$49.00 to: Stanley C. Buz, PO Box 702, Whitehall, PA 18052. \$5.00 from each afghan sold will go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.



### IN MEMORIAM



**Joseph Daniel Brackin**  
**Alabama**  
**Grand Commander-1980**  
**Born: August 19, 1929**  
**Died: November 27, 2004**

**William R. McKee**  
**Florida**  
**Grand Commander-2004**  
**Born: February 10, 1927**  
**Died: December 13, 2004**

**Ralph Selby**  
**West Virginia**  
**Grand Junior Warden-2004**  
**Born: February 2, 1942**  
**Died: December 17, 2004**



takes pleasure in inviting  
*you* to attend the celebration of

### **One Hundred Fifty Years of Templary in Texas.**

The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas was founded in San Antonio on January 19, 1855, when the representatives of San Felipe de Austin Commandery #1 (Galveston), Ruthven Commandery #2 (Houston) and Palestine Commandery #3 (Palestine) met and formed what has become this Great Grand Commandery.

We will celebrate our Sesquicentennial Year of Templary in Texas on **March 5, 2005 in San Antonio** at the Scottish Rite Library & Museum (Ave. E and Fourth Streets). The festivities begin at 6:00 P.M. with cocktails (donations benefiting the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and the South Texas Scottish Rite Learning Center), and dinner (NY Strip with stuffed potato and other delicious condiments) following at 7:00 P.M. Dinner will be followed by entertainment for the occasion by Sir Knight Gordon Downing. All this will be provided for **\$30.00**. Additional information about this and our Sesquicentennial Grand Conclave in April awaits you on the following websites: [www.texasorkrite.org/grcommandery.htm](http://www.texasorkrite.org/grcommandery.htm) **or** [www.yorkrite.albertpikedemolay.org](http://www.yorkrite.albertpikedemolay.org) This will be a very singular and memorable event in the life and history of our Grand Commandery. Celebrate with us in the Alamo City, the birthplace of Texas Templary.

To reserve your place at our Sesquicentennial Grand Celebration, send your check for \$30.00 made payable to San Antonio Commandery #7 to SK James N. Higdon, 10122 N. Manton Lane, San Antonio, Texas 78213-1948.

**"EVERY CHRISTIAN MASON *MUST BE* A KNIGHT TEMPLAR"**

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## **Knights Templar and the Movie, *National Treasure* A Tool for Masonic Recruitment**

by Dr. William H. Stemper, Jr., F.R.S.A.: London  
(reprinted with permission of the author)

The popularity of the film, *National Treasure*, offers Knights Templar an opportunity to present the teachings of the York Rite, including the Royal Arch, to the non-Masonic public in a positive, effective way.

The film, starring Nicholas Cage, depicts the idea that Templar symbolism and mission survived the suppression of the order in 1314 in Masonic form. It incorporates both Scottish Rite ceremonial legend from the 13th Degree, references to the Ark of the Covenant tradition, and references the legend that the Poor Soldiers of Jesus Christ, the medieval crusading Knights Templar, found the Ark of the Covenant and with it a great material treasure.

In specific, it is the restoration of this treasure linked to the preservation and restoration of ancient Christian mystical wisdom that defines the film in a thoughtful and useful way without falsification or embroidery and makes it of such interest to the Fraternity.

York Rite Masons in particular will appreciate the linkage with Trinity Church, Wall Street in New York City. This Episcopal church has deep and important ties to the founding of the Grand Encampment through the first Most Eminent Grand Master in 1816, DeWitt Clinton, whose many friends and fellow fratres identified Templar ritual with themes of Gothic cathedral architecture and symbolism.

Clinton was not an Episcopalian, but he worked closely with Trinity Church communicants and clergy, notably John Pintard and Episcopal Bishop Alexander Vliet Griswold. Both Pintard and Griswold were enthusiastic Knights Templar and leaders of New York and New England society when the Grand Encampment was established, and Encampments and Commanderies took up their practice of appearing and marching in public procession as both a Masonic and Christian order.

The film, therefore, introduces the viewer to the close relationship between the Templar legends and American Freemasonry in the period during which the early American Republic was established. It also describes in adventurous form the conceptual links between the medieval Knights Templar and the Revolution of 1776 in a manner which points Masons to uniquely Templar elements of patriotic symbolism not frequently addressed by scholars.

This linkage is important because there are obvious connections between the medieval Knights Templar order and modern 18th century Order of the Temple ritual but no concrete documentation of the precise relationship between the two, which is not open to textual criticism.

As a result, the narrative of the script and the visual film footage provide means to describe important developments in the history of Masonic ideas in the formation of the Republic, and this connects the ideal of citizenship to the

process of York Rite initiation. It is this parallel which pervades the film and which will surely cause much interest in the Fraternity from those who are not members.

Thus anyone who becomes a Mason and Knight Templar as a result of curiosity engendered by the story the film tells will have the opportunity to understand more sharply and constructively how the United States was conceived as a democratic republic, reconciling within one nation both equality and the distinction which is conferred through achievement.

Because of the relationship between the restoration of the treasure and Trinity Church, New York, the film also underscores how American religion has been shaped by

Christian Freemasons in the framing of the American Constitution. This complex question is addressed directly both by the film and by modern Knights Templar initiation through a symbolism of cooperation among civic, patriotic, Masonic, and Christian teaching in which emblems relate the Fraternity to the future of the nation. The film is very much about the creation of a Masonic nation in which the chief architectural and policy features of the national culture represent the operation of a lodge, chapter, council, or commandery.

York Rite Masons in general, and Knights Templar in particular, will *enjoy the film, National Treasure*, and find it to be a useful tool in explaining the nature of the Fraternity to non-Masons and their families.

## **The Beauty of an Outdoor Degree**

by Sir Knight James A. Marples, 32°

This past September 2004, I had the high honor and distinct privilege of witnessing an outdoor conferral of the Third Degree in which a young man was Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason.

I have seen outdoor degrees before; however, the beauty of tall and majestic pine trees, along with a beautiful sunrise in east Texas, made for an even more impressive conferral. It made me think back to the early days in Freemasonry before lodge halls became the norm.

Over a century ago, it was routine to do open-air conferrals. The dates of lodge meetings and degree work were based upon the full moon in order to give light for members to travel.

Back in bygone days, it was prior to automobiles with headlights. Masons either rode horses or just plain walked to meetings, often in cold and inclement weather.

When I attended this recent outdoor conferral, I was pleased to see an American flag gently moving in the wind. I looked at my white lambskin apron and felt an inner peace at seeing dozens of white lambskin aprons worn by the dedicated Master Masons who came for the occasion.

Lastly, I came away from that outdoor degree with a renewed sense of how Freemasonry is so important to today's world. It truly is an organization that takes good men and makes them better men.

I shared these thoughts in later days with my friends; some are Masons and some are not. One of my friends, Mr. George G. Liddy, is eager to join Masonry, and I look forward to the day when he will become a member of the Craft.

All in all, I believe outdoor degrees are beneficial to Masonry. Too often we are stuck behind four walls. Outdoor degree work gives us a chance to breathe fresh air, and best of all, such occasions provide meaningful memories for candidates and members alike.

Sir Knight James A. Marples, 32°, is a member of El Dorado Commandery No. 19, El Dorado, Kansas. He can be reached at PO Box 1542, Longview, TX 75606-1542

# Leadership of a Commandery

by Sir Knight Steven L. Guffy, P.G.C. of Washington State

There are five basics in presiding over the Commandery: planning, promptness, organization, inspiration, and encouragement. Using all of these will result in a Commandery that is harmoniously run and enthusiastically attended, and these basics can be used for Blue Lodge, York Rite, Scottish Rite, or any other Masonic group.

Planning is the first step and is the beginning of each endeavor. Planning the meetings sets the direction and destination. Without destination, we could never arrive, so without a plan we would not know where to go and what should be done. Planning should be for more than the next meeting. It should be for your whole term with the flexibility to change and adapt when needed.

Promptness is like setting the cornerstone for the meeting. It marks the beginning and brings all the parts to that point in time. Being on time shows that you care enough to put out the effort to do things well. Your effort in turn encourages others to strive for timeliness as well: Example is a gentle teacher. Being early gives you time to meet and greet your members and visitors as well as the time to go over your meeting notes before the meeting begins.

Just as every builder needs a trestle-board, the Eminent Commander needs organization. His knowledge of the correct usage of the ritual continues from cornerstone and follows the chosen course. Following the agenda gets the job done efficiently. It ensures that important things are given priority and that all things are addressed as needed. Some of the important tools of the Commandery are the Ritual (1979), Grand Constitution, Laws and Regulations for your State, Grand Encampment Constitution and Statutes, Grand Encampment Digest & Decisions book. Additional help is found in the experience of the Past Commanders and Records. Harmony results when of all these tools and materials are used together.

Inspiring others enriches your year as Eminent Commander or leader as well as enriching the members. You can inspire the Commandery members by giving each a job that is appropriate and meaningful to him. The Bible says that all workmen need not be ashamed, so every man needs a task to accomplish and the ultimate approval. Recognition is that approval that we all seek, and enthusiasm follows. Recognize your members by pats on the back at each meeting, by mention in the trestle-board, and by presenting them with certificates of appreciation.

Lastly, encouragement is the fertilizer that causes all of us to grow to our potential and the Commandery in turn to progress toward their goal of teaching the great principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. To encourage a Sir Knight may be as simple as speaking the polite response in your conversations. At other times it may mean that you will have to go out of your way to do something more substantial such as providing for a physical need.

**Planning, promptness, organization, inspiration, and encouragement are all the tools of leadership that can be used to promote the principles of Freemasonry!**

Sir Knight Guffy, P.G.C. (2003) of Washington State, is a KTCH, KCT, KYGCH, and a Past Commander of Columbia Commandery No. 14 in Wenatchee, Washington. He resides at 140 N.W. Lloyd Place, East Wenatchee, WA 98802. E-mail: [steveg@crcwnet.com](mailto:steveg@crcwnet.com)

## **Freemasonry and Faith**

I am grateful for a faith that makes the divine a part of my life and at the same time helps me to recognize the good in every other person's faith. There is no place in my religious faith for a narrow sectarianism that excludes those that do not happen to see God as I see Him nor for the kind of religious bigotry that blinds me to the good and precious in other people's faiths. I am grateful for a faith that enables me to embrace all men who believe in God. I am grateful for a faith that leads me to love all mankind and see through that love the means of bringing together all the nations of the earth in a brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. I am grateful for a faith that humbles me in the presence of position or power and compels me to live my life in service to others rather than to spend the days of my years seeking to climb the ladder of fame, fortune, or success, and perhaps thereby lose the faith that I had.

Freemasonry is not for me a religion, but it is an institution that has served to deepen my faith and enlarge my concern for the welfare of my fellow man. Freemasonry has served to make me a better man, for it has led me to see that Freemasonry and our faith, linked together, are the twin pillars of strength for the development of character and the enriching of one's spiritual life. Freemasonry has reached beyond creeds and cultures to make the eternal truths of all ages the property of all men who declare their faith in a Supreme Being. Freemasonry is a sacred thing, not because it is religious in nature, but because it is able to see the religious in all men's creeds and apply those values to the making of better men and a better world.

We dare not use our faith for what we get out of it, and we get many wonderful things from our faith, but we use our faith to bring us closer to God and to one another. We dare not use Freemasonry for personal gain, though we gain so much from Freemasonry, but we dare to use Freemasonry for the far more noble and glorious purpose of making Brotherhood a reality.

The Reverend Lansing B. Harmon, Jr.  
Chater Cosmo Transactions, Vol. 12  
taken from the Alabama Supplement, December 2004

## Summer Uniform Sale Aids Knights Templar Eye Foundation

Milford Commandery No. 11, Milford, Massachusetts, is offering a complete summer uniform and accessories (no pants or shoes) for \$135.00. (G.C. and P.G.C. add \$35.00 for gold decoration on cap visor.) The uniform includes white military style cap with insignia, short sleeve shirt, shoulder rank insignia, collar insignia, metal ribbon bar, name plate, plain black tie, tie clasp with cross and crown, and shipping and handling. Send us your cap size, shirt size, rank, Commandery name and number, choice of engraving on the tie clasp (plain/Knight Templary our state/Commandery name and number) to the address below. For further information request an order form for your state (include a stamped, self-addressed envelope) or e-mail: ccwinterhalter@aol.com Make checks payable to: Milford Commandery No. 11. Mail to: Milford Commandery No. 1, C/O Robert P. Winterhalter, P.O. Box 321, Ashland, MA 01721-0321. All profits go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

**Templars:** Any of you who have anecdotes (either funny or informational) about a Templar, a group of Templars, a Commandery, a Grand Commandery, or the Grand Encampment, which might be of historical interest; please write it (by hand, if you wish), and send it to me. I will see that it is "laid up among the archives" of the Grand Encampment, to be printed in this magazine at an appropriate time and in any history published in this century: Jacob C. Baird, Chairman of the Committee on Templar History; 1334 Royal Road, Norwood, MO 65717-9466; new e-mail: jcbaird@getgoin.net



**KCT and GCT Award Recipients:** A 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-inch diameter, embroidered emblem has been produced for use on mantles and blazers of KCT recipients. The emblem is to be centered on the Cross that adorns the left side of the mantle or ceremonial robe or on the left side (on pocket) of a dress blazer. The same use is required for the GCT emblem which is bordered with a wreath. The cost of the KCT emblem is \$8.50 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling, and the cost of the GCT emblem is \$10.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Contact: Jon Patrick Sweet, 7474 Benton Street, Westminster, CO 80003-7001, or phone (303) 430-8483

## How Will You Pay for Expenses That Medicare Doesn't Cover?

You owe it to yourself to find out about the Knights Templar Medicare Supplement Insurance designed for Sir Knights and their ladies.

With the high cost of health care today, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar Medicare Supplement Insurance Program is becoming a necessity for more and more of us. That's why it is good to know that you now have a choice of Medicare Supplement coverage under our plan at very affordable rates.

Under the Knights Templar Medicare

Supplement Plan, you will benefit in many ways: You have the freedom of choosing your own doctors and hospitals, there are no health questions or medical exams to qualify; there is no waiting period for pro-existing conditions if you switch plans or are about to turn 65, and there is hassle-free claims processing in about 7 days!

To make sure you can pay for the expenses Medicare doesn't cover, call (800) 749-6983 for the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar Medicare Supplement Insurance Plan information and enrollment kit.

## **Part I: James Knox Polk: Dedication Redefined**

by Sir Knight Joseph E. Bennett  
KYCH, 33°, FPS

Today, so little emphasis is placed on United States' history in the public school curriculum that a legion of great national figures have been expunged from its pages. Even the names of former presidents fade from public memory in two or three generations. Old and yellowing biographies on public library shelves are virtually the only surviving record of their lives and accomplishments. Those are seldom read today.

How many individuals walking the streets of our great nation would, if queried, recognize the name of James Knox Polk? Less than fifteen percent would probably be an optimistic estimate. Nevertheless, President James Polk was one of our most accomplished administrators, and his record survives as a beacon of personal service to this country.

Polk was our first presidential "dark horse." When elected as a candidate for that office, he announced he would serve one term only. During those years he confronted four self-imposed goals of major importance. He achieved them serving as our 11th president.

More than any other American president, James Polk defined the parameters of the executive branch of government. He demonstrated his personal conviction by example: that a public servant was obligated to labor diligently for the American people.

Polk was the first-born of Samuel and Jane Knox Polk, a prosperous farm couple raising tobacco, corn, and wheat on a bottom-land tract along Little Sugar Creek in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

The Polk homestead was situated just south of present-day Charlotte. Their home consisted of two log cabins connected by an enclosed passageway, with a common roof covering the entire structure. The "saddlebag cabin" was the mark of a successful farmer in Mecklenburg County.

Samuel was of Irish ancestry. His wife Jane was a descendent of John Knox, founder of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland in 1557. Jane was a devout member of the local Presbyterian flock, whose pastor was dictatorial Reverend James Wallis.

When their first child was born November 2, 1795, the proud parents named him James Knox Polk, in honor of Sarah's famous forebearer; however, they encountered a problem when they sought to have the infant baptized. Inasmuch as Samuel Polk was not a member of the church, Reverend Wallis refused to perform the ceremony.

His arbitrary refusal to perform the baptismal rite caused a rift in the congregation. Samuel's father, Ezekiel Polk, spearheaded a revolt against church policy. The conflict became so bitter that Ezekiel, a prosperous farmer on Little Sugar Creek, pulled up stakes in 1803 and moved west into Tennessee. The Samuel Polk family remained in North Carolina.

James (the family called him "Jamie") helped on the farm during his early years. The farm expanded into a plantation when his father purchased

an additional 400 acres to raise cotton, motivated by the widespread success of Eli Whitney's cotton gin.

James was a sturdy boy, below medium height, but suffering chronically fragile health; nevertheless, he learned to ride and shoot but was unable to engage in physical sports. James suffered severe pain in the groin when he tried to run or bend over. The pain remained undiagnosed for several years.

Tutored by his parents, he learned to read and write without the benefit of formal schooling. His informal education left him devoid of mathematical and spelling skills, but that did not deter the youngster from committing numerous Bible verses to memory.

Samuel Polk decided to move his family to Tennessee in 1806. They traveled 500 torturous miles over the Blue Ridge Mountains into central Tennessee, eventually homesteading land near his father Ezekiel. The old man was farming in the Duck River country (later known as Maury County). Samuel settled on a site south of present-day Columbia.

An expert and prosperous cotton farmer, Samuel eventually became one of the wealthiest men in Tennessee and the father of seven children. Samuel had fathered five children by the time the family migrated to Tennessee.

Early in life, James Polk established a personal goal - to become a lawyer. During his teenage years, he realized the dream was an impossibility unless he enjoyed stable health.

By the time James reached his 17th year, the chronic ailment was diagnosed as gall stones. A renowned local surgeon, Dr. Ephriam

McDowell, offered surgery as an option. The Scottish physician also explained the great risk involved. In 1812, anesthetics were unknown, thus the pain would be excruciating, and surgery posed enormous risk from post-operative infection. Survival chances were less than 50 percent. Undaunted, James agreed.

He was strapped to a table and given a glass of brandy to dull the pain. While two men stood on either side to help immobilize the patient if necessary, Dr. McDowell began the procedure. James beat the odds and survived.

After several weeks of recuperation, he returned home carrying the offending gall stones in a glass jar, delighted to be free of the chronic pain.

James' driving ambition to become a lawyer impressed his father. Soon after he had recovered from the operation, Samuel enrolled his son in nearby Presbyterian Academy, a private school operated by Reverend Robert Henderson. For James the local school represented the beginning of the educational road leading to a career in law.

From the outset, he proved to be a diligent and brilliant scholar, excelling in Greek and Latin, skills essential in the study of law or medicine.

After a year Samuel Polk decided to enroll James in a larger school. In 1814 he entered Bradley Academy at Murfreesboro, in order to take advantage of a more comprehensive curriculum.

James plunged into the study of additional courses; specifically: mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, literature, and the history of religion. He also found time to dabble



in school dramatics.

He conquered his introverted nature to the degree that he became proficient in public speaking and was recognized for his leadership qualities. He was chosen to deliver the class oration at the end of the academy year. James Polk was ready for college.

By virtue of his father's wealth, James was able to attend the college of his choice. He was enrolled for the winter term at the University of North Carolina in 1816, pending an interview by the faculty board.

James retraced the route his family had followed in 1806, when they made the long and difficult journey from North Carolina. He arrived at Chapel Hill for his interview without incident.

James so impressed the faculty board that he was enrolled as a sophomore at the university, beginning in the January term. He was 21 years old, the same age as the University of North Carolina.

It was a staunch Presbyterian school, modeled after the Presbyterian College of New Jersey (later to become Princeton University). The Presbyterian influence dictated mandatory religious services on a daily basis, in addition to academic studies. Both the president and the only other professor were ministers.

Rounding out the faculty were several tutors and graduate students, all serving as instructors. The tuition was \$10 per term.

James became a distinguished debater at the university and an important member of their "Dialectic Society." He was elected president of the student body each of the three

years he attended the university and was selected to deliver the salutatory address at commencement exercises in May 1818 - all in Latin. Polk graduated with honors in mathematics and classic literature. His formal education completed, James hurried home to continue the pursuit of a legal career.

The economy was booming in Tennessee. There was a great deal of immigration in the area, and a thriving cotton and tobacco commerce flourished on the waterways from Memphis to New Orleans.

Samuel Polk had prospered impressively; however, the economy was about to suffer a serious downturn, which would impact all of Tennessee, including the Polk family.

Samuel's standing in the community was helpful in launching James' legal training. One of his close friends was attorney Felix Grundy, considered to be Tennessee's best criminal lawyer. Grundy agreed to take James into his law offices as a legal clerk and to act as his mentor in reading the law.

The aspiring legal trainee proved to be extremely diligent in his clerical duties and equally skilled as a student, rapidly mastering the contents of Grundy's extensive law library.

When Grundy was elected to the Tennessee State Legislature in the summer of 1819, James went along as a clerk in the state senate. In a short time, he was fully conversant with the workings of the Tennessee Legislature. His tenure as clerk continued through four legislative sessions.

In June 1820 Polk appeared before the Tennessee Supreme Court for his bar examination, under the sponsorship of Felix Grundy. He

passed the examination and was admitted to the Tennessee bar.

James immediately departed for home, planning to start a private practice in the town of Columbia, the county seat of Maury County.

As it turned out, his first client was his father. Samuel had struck another man during an argument and was charged with assault. James handled his father's defense so deftly that Samuel's

sentence was example of attorney Felix Grundy. He petitioned Columbia Lodge No. 21 and was immediately approved.

Polk received his Entered Apprentice Degree on June 5, 1820; his Fellowcraft on August 7, 1820; and was Raised to the Sublime Degree on September 4, 1820. A month later, James was elected Junior Deacon of the lodge. The archives confirm that he was elected to the position of Junior Warden on

"Polk received his Entered Apprentice Degree on June 5, 1820; his Fellowcraft on August 7, 1820; and was Raised to the Sublime Degree on September 4, 1820. A month later, James was elected Junior Deacon of the lodge. The archives confirm that he was elected to the position of Junior Warden on December 3, 1821, but due to pressing professional matters, he never continued in the line.

"Polk received the Royal Arch Degrees in LaFayette Chapter No. 4, in Columbia on April 5, 22, and 24 in 1825. He remained a devoted and active member of the Craft for the balance of his life."

a mere one-dollar fine and payment of court costs.

Samuel was so delighted with James' performance in court that he built a small office building for his son, complete with a new law library, total cost: \$360.00.

Although Polk's initial case load consisted primarily of private debt collection and small claims, his father and family friends soon provided more rewarding legal duties. The young lawyer prospered as the economy faltered.

During 1820, James decided to

become a Freemason, inspired by the December 3, 1821, but due to pressing professional matters, he never continued in the line.

Polk received the Royal Arch Degrees in LaFayette Chapter No. 4, in Columbia on April 5, 22, and 24 in 1825. He remained a devoted and active member of the Craft for the balance of his life.

The busy young attorney was actively courting Sarah Childress by 1822. She was a native of Rutherford, Tennessee, and the daughter of Joel Childress, a successful Murfreesboro merchant. The 20-year-old girl was well-educated,

intelligent, and schooled in the social graces. James Polk was eight years her senior.

The sister of a classmate, he first met Sarah when attending Bradley Academy at Murfreesboro.

They were married on New Year's Day, 1823. The gala wedding and reception at the Childress mansion lasted a week, a major social event in middle Tennessee.

The newlyweds made their home in Columbia, eventually purchasing a house across the street from James' father, Samuel Polk.

James purchased a pew in the Presbyterian Church and attended regularly with Sarah and his own mother but did not join the church.

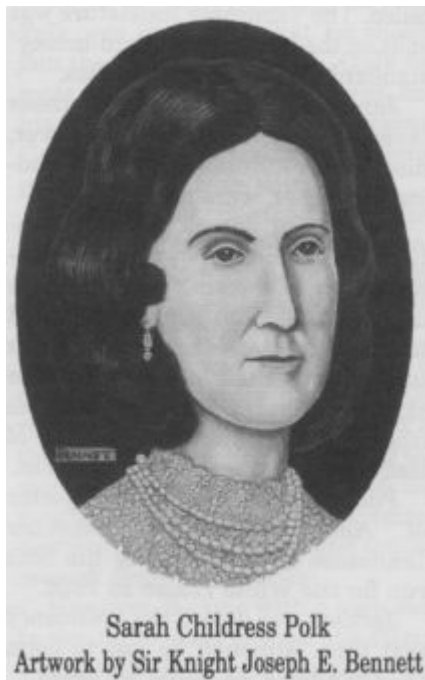
Polk launched his political career in 1823 when he announced as a candidate for the Tennessee House of Representatives. He conducted an exhaustive campaign against a well-entrenched incumbent, visiting each farm and residence in his district.

James spoke at every opportunity, providing cider and whiskey at each stop. The record reveals that he paid for 23 gallons of distilled spirits during the course of the campaign.

Polk's tenacity, persuasive speech, and omnipresence among his constituents produced a victory for the fledgling office-seeker, albeit a narrow one. He was seated in September 1823.

Tennessee was a liberal state by the standards of the time. A citizen was not required to be a property owner to vote, and free black men were permitted to cast a ballot.

Granted statehood in 1796, Tennessee citizens were firm believers in strong state's rights and a federal



government with only the most limited central authority.

That dictum was reflected in James Polk's political philosophy, also; however, the dominating consideration facing James as he began his new career was the state of the economy. That would linger for a long time and carry over to his national political career.

The cotton and tobacco market had collapsed across the entire country. The situation was aggravated by the national banking practices of the day. Many banks issued their own paper currency, far beyond the value of their assets.

Congress passed a law requiring all banks to pay their obligations in gold or silver, and the result during an economic depression, was disastrous for private banks. Many of them

failed. The Tennessee legislature was split on the issue of the "hard-money" standard mandated by Congress.

James was on the side of those favoring the mandate; however, most of his affluent friends, including his father, were not.

In spite of James' difficult position, he exhibited powerful oratorical ability in working a compromise in Tennessee. The legislature voted to allow the state's banks two years to liquidate their obligations. The skillful compromise elevated the freshman legislator to a position of leadership in the state government.

Polk became an ardent supporter of Andrew Jackson, another Tennessee citizen, making his first run for the White House in 1824.

Jackson was denied the presidency that time. Although he lost to John Quincy Adams, he would try again.

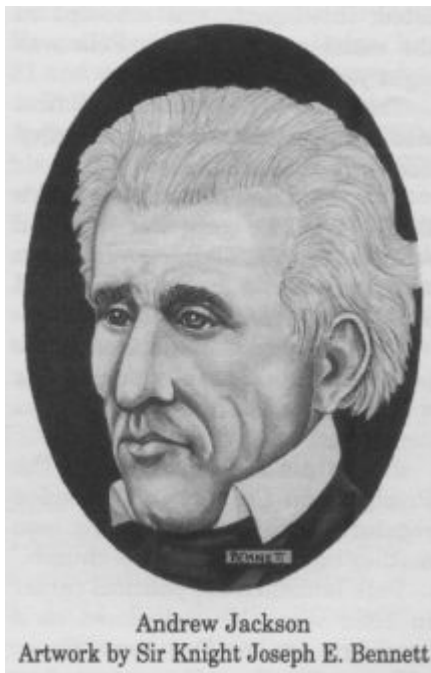
In 1825 James Polk was a candidate for the U.S. Congressional House. Following a grueling campaign, he was elected.

Seven years after graduating from the University of North Carolina, James was a member of Congress.

Sarah came to Washington with Polk during his second year in the House. She proved to be an invaluable asset as James' hostess, directing their social agenda in Washington. Sarah's skillful and tasteful entertaining provided the setting for many political alliances.

The pleasant hospitality in the suite at Mrs. Ann Peyton's boarding house on Pennsylvania Avenue helped the Polks become one of Washington's prominent social couples.

The year 1827 was a sad one for James Polk personally. His father died at Columbia in November, leaving



James as his principal heir. Samuel left enormous acreage, along with 50 slaves.

A number of James' younger siblings contested the will, prompting prolonged litigation, which was eventually arbitrated. In the process, James became a surrogate father to several undisciplined brothers who were incapable of handling their private affairs. It became a constant and demanding task.

In Congress Polk was once more confronted with the banking problems of the country. The Federal Government conducted its monetary transactions through a privately-operated bank functioning under a congressional charter. The government deposited all receipts in the Bank of the United States, without receiving any interest. It was a lucrative arrangement for the bank, as well as a powerful

political tool. The bank was permitted to loan deposited government funds to private individuals, including individual members of Congress. The U.S. Bank enjoyed the influence of a lobbyist with powerful clout.

Andrew Jackson was elected president in 1828 by an overwhelming majority. Congress was also controlled by his supporters.

Polk had campaigned tirelessly for Jackson and was firmly behind his platform. It had been one of the dirtiest campaigns on record.

There was also internal conflict within Jackson's official family. Vice-President John C. Calhoun and Martin Van Buren, the Secretary of State, were fierce political enemies.

Jackson inherited several major controversies when he was inaugurated in March 1829, and James Polk became his point man and confidant in the House of Representatives. The boundary dispute in the Oregon Territory and national banking instability were two of the most pressing problems for Jackson's administration.

Polk had an extremely demanding year in 1832. He was obliged to campaign simultaneously for both his own reelection in the House, plus that of President Andrew Jackson for a second term. Happily, both were returned to their respective offices. Those obligations required an enormous effort.

Polk was mired down with extensive probate problems in Tennessee, too. Three of his brothers had died recently, and two of them left heavy indebtedness. All of their widows and children required financial help.

Never in robust health, Polk was teetering on the edge of physical exhaustion by year's end.

While home in Columbia in 1833, Polk was convinced that he should join the Methodist Church. Only the most determined effort by Sarah and his mother, motivated by personal Calvinistic Presbyterian convictions, prevented him from doing so.

Nevertheless, Methodist Bishop John B. McFerrin and Polk became fast friends. It was the bishop, who baptized James on his deathbed several years later.

In 1836 Polk was a major factor in convincing Congress to deny the renewal of the charter for the Bank of the United States, finally defusing the long-standing monetary crisis in the country. The Treasury Department now had immediate access and control over all government funds.

However, it came with a high cost to the Jacksonian Democratic Party. They split into two factions; one supporting the views of New Englander Martin Van Buren and the other aligned with Vice President John C. Calhoun, a confirmed pro-slavery Southerner.

Van Buren would be Jackson's chosen successor for the presidency in 1836.

On December 7, 1835, Polk was elected Speaker of the House, adding to his influence in Congress. James had turned 40 years of age in November.

### **Don't miss Part II of the Polk story in the March 2005 issue!**

Sir Knight Joseph E. Bennett, KYCH, 330, FPS, and P.D.D.G.M. of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, is a member of Holy Grail Commandery No. 70, Lakewood, Ohio. He resides at: 734 Providence Avenue, Middleton, ID 83644.



To place your "Knight Voices" item on the waiting list for publication, type or print it and send to "Knight Voices," The Grand Recorder, 5097 N. Elston Avenue, Suite 101, Chicago, IL 60630-2460. Items submitted to Knight Templar that refer to Templar or Masonic subjects will continue to be printed free of charge. All other items should be accompanied by a \$5.00 remittance made payable to the Grand Encampment. Any submission may be subject to editing. You must submit a written request and check, if applicable, for each time you want your ad to run. Each request must be separate and at monthly intervals, not several at the same time. All other requests for repeat ads will either run just once or will be returned to sender.

For sale: lapel pins. The 64th Triennial Conclave Committee is offering a lapel pin (2 knights on horseback) for \$6.00 each, including S & H. Checks payable to 64th Triennial Conclave Committee, CIO E. K Longworth; 502 Wentworth Avenue, NE.; Roanoke; VA 24012-3545. This is a fund-raiser for the 64th Triennial Conclave.

Fund-raiser for the Grand Commandery of Maryland: All proceeds go to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Raffle tickets available for handmade, split-cane, bamboo fly rod (4 wt.) with appropriate reel. One (1) ticket for donation of \$5.00; six (6) tickets for \$25.00. Checks payable to Knights Templar Eye Foundation and sent to Patrick Curtis, 9409 Gwynndale Drive, Clinton, MD 20735. Drawing to be held in May 2005

Temple Commandery No. 41, Temple, Texas, celebrated its 100th anniversary in April 2004. Gold-look commemorative coins are being sold as a fundraiser for the Commandery. The face has a Sir Knight, dates, and name of the Commandery. Back side has cross and crown. \$10.00 each with a portion to the KTEF. Checks or MOs to Temple Commandery No. 41. Mail to C. O. Jones, 2204 Patriot Drive, Logo Vista, TX 78645, (512) 267-1388

Sword slings available in 2-inch or 1-inch wide, white or black nylon straps with black, fine grade leather sword holder and with heavy duty black clips. They are adjustable to fit all sizes - \$19.00 each plus \$3.50 shipping and handling. For further details or brochure, write Tom Stares, 3357 River Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30044, (678) 923-6776 or e-mail tonawsta@bellsouth.net. Checks to KT Enterprises. % of net profits to KTEF.

For sale: gold-finish sword lapel pins: men's pin: 1 and 1 1/4 inches long, with red stone in the center of the hilt, \$7.00 each, and ladies' pin 2 and 1/2 inches long, with clear stone at the top of the hilt and a red stone in the center of the hilt, \$12.00 each, prices include S&H. Check or MO to Melrose Commandery 159th Grand Conclave, 17120 Them Mail Road, Spring, TX 77379. E-mail becky@abercrombiacademy.com 10% to KTEF The pins are a special project for the Grand Commandery of Texas 159<sup>th</sup> Conclave.

For sale: Knights Templar shoulder straps, pairs, finest quality available, all ranks, embroidered in extra fancy gold and silver bullion on velvet

with Velcro backs: Past Commander (red); serving Commander, Generalissimo, Captain General, Prelate (green): \$40.00; Emeritus ranks: Generalissimo, Captain General and Prelate (red): \$45.00; Honorary Past Commander with H.C. in Old English silver lettering at foot of cross, \$50.00; Grand Commanders Grand Rep. (red), \$50.00, and Past Grand Commander (purple): \$60.00. Also: chapeaux crosses: Sir Knight, \$35.00; Commander/Past Commander, \$40.00; Grand Commandery (red), \$50.00; Past Grand Commander (purple), \$55.00. Embroidered bullion sleeve crosses: Sir Knight (silver) and Commander or P.C. (gold), \$35.00. Metal lapel crosses (a pair) in silver, \$35.00; gold, \$40.00. Grand Commandery lapel crosses (red): \$45.00 (pair); Past Grand Commander (purple), \$50.00. Cap crosses in metal: silver, \$32.00; gold, \$38.00. Past Commander's jewel (gold plate), \$45.00. All plus shipping, handling, and insurance: 1st item, \$5.00 each additional item, \$1.00. Percentage to York Rite and Masonic charities. Checks to and mail to Jacques N. Jacobsen, Jr., P.C.; 60 Manor Road; Staten Island; NY 10310-2698.

For sale: C.P.O. coats, poly-wool, summer weight; size: 46 short. \$23.00 includes shipping and handling. 10% of all sales will be donated to KTEF. General Merchandise Company; 13690 Broad Street, SW; Pataskala; OH 43062, (740) 927-7073.

For Sale: Middle Georgia Chapter No. 165, R.A.M., the first R.A.M. Chapter to be chartered in Georgia in 25 years, is selling their newly minted mark/penny for \$10.00 each or 2 for \$15.00, postpaid. Each coin is accompanied with a certificate of authenticity. Checks or MOs to Middle Georgia York Rite Bodies; Charles E. Smith, Chairman; 6559 Cypress Drive; Eastman; GA 31023; e-mail chuck.e.smith@us.army.mil

Fund-raiser: Lodge auto tags with blue vinyl letters on white, 6 x12-inch aluminum, include lodge name and number, square and compass, F & AM (AF & AM, AAFM, etc.), city and state: \$8.00 each plus S & H: 5 at \$5.00, 10 at \$7.00, 20 at \$10.00 shipped to same address in US - minimum order of 5. One free tag with each ten ordered. 25% of proceeds to the Georgia Masonic Children's Home Endowment Fund, Send info, check or money order to Ernest P Gentry, 893 Brookside Drive, Winder, GA 30680-2848, e-mail: tagmaker@att.net

Coin collectors: St. John's Lodge No. 1, A.F. & A.M., Wilmington, North Carolina, is celebrating its 250th anniversary (1755-2005). To commemorate this occasion a finely struck coin has been produced (size 1 and 3/4 inches-38.1 mm) with reeded edge and bright gold color. The obverse has a replica of the lodge building, which is standing and is one of the oldest buildings (1803) in the City of Wilmington. The reverse side has a replica of the original seal of the lodge. This coin will surely be a collector's item. Checks or MOs for \$11.00 each, including S & H, payable to St. John's Lodge No. 1, 4712 Oriole Drive, Wilmington, NC 28403.

For sale: peel-off, vinyl, royal blue square and compass decals designed to fit on your license plate or window, 2 inches high, 1 inch wide. 6 vinyl decals for \$5.00, postpaid. Also, approx. 4-inch reflective-chrome, vinyl square and compass Past Master or Shrine decals to fit on your taillights, only \$5.00 per set of 2, postpaid. Also, black vinyl square and compass decals, 3/4 by 3/4 inch, designed to place on the photo or list of your Past Masters who have gone on to that Celestial Lodge Above. 10 decals for only \$5.00 postpaid. All profits go to our Masonic Widows' fund. Joe Allen, PM., Sec.; Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217, F & AM.; PO Box 732; Cochran; GA 31014.

Cochran Lodge No. 217, F. & A.M., Cochran, Georgia, is continuing its long-term charity project: In addition to the Masonic square and compass jewelry boxes we are now offering Shrine jewelry boxes that are 5.5 x5.5 x2.5 inches in size and the shape of the Shrine logo, constructed of exotic woods from Central America, and hand-crafted with an interlocking design. 10% going to the Shrine hospitals of North America: a portion will go directly to the Georgia Masonic Children's Home Endowment Fund, and the rest will go to the charity work of the Lodge The Shrine box is \$30.00 each and \$6.00 shipping in US. The Masonic square and compass box is still \$20.00 each with \$6.00 S & H. Check or MO to Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217 and mail to Harry A. Bruno, Chairman; Cochran Masonic Lodge No. 217, F & AM.; P.O. Box 732; Cochran; GA 31014; or e-mail [harry217@bigfoot.com](mailto:harry217@bigfoot.com)

2008-200th anniversary of Masonry in Ohio: Now, you can help insure that this celebration will be a great success by purchasing a beautiful 200- piece jigsaw puzzle depicting Brother George Washington opening his lodge in 1788. This 16 x22- inch art reproduction is an exact copy of the painting that hangs in many Ohio lodges. Help us get ready for the 2008 bicentennial, and own a real piece of Masonic history: price \$15.00 plus \$3.00 S & H. Each puzzle is packaged in a round, airtight can. To order call (614) 855-1401, or send payment and request to P Pat Davis, 8.359 Morse Road, New Albany, OH 43054; online at [www.ppdaisi@earthlink.net](http://www.ppdaisi@earthlink.net) Proceeds to benefit the 2008 Bicentennial Fund.

Wanted: Masonic Chapter pennies by avid collector. I have been building this collection for 30 years and still need many pieces as I am collecting all varieties. These one day will end up in a Masonic museum. Why not find a home for your mark? I will gladly send you a check for one piece or will buy your collection. If you collect, I will gladly exchange. I will answer all letters. Especially needed are Iowa, Michigan, and Alaska pennies. Maurice Storck, Sr.; 775 W. Roger Road, No. 214; Tucson; AZ 8.5705; (520)88.8-758.5.

Planning a Rusty Nail Degree? We have pins and certificates available at \$35.00 per unit. (A unit consists of 5 pins and 5 certificates, S & H included.) Please include your lodge name and number with your order if you wish to have them printed on your certificates. Make check out to Tom A Stevens, 5 Old Duxbury Court, Fairfield, OH 45014. Phone (513) 942-2490; fax (513) 272-2830. Proceeds go to the John Hayes Gerard Masonic Scholarship Fund and 10% to KTEF.

Sprig of Acacia pin: each handcrafted pin is sterling silver with a 24K gold vermeil; it will make a nice gift for the newly raised Brother; price is \$10.00 each, including S & H. Also available is the four immortal chaplains lapel pin, a beautiful pin honoring the chaplains who sacrificed their lives by giving up their lifejackets in order to save the lives of others. The price per pin is \$8.00 ea. including S & H 10<sup>0</sup>/c to KTEF. New item: Sept. 11 Memorial Masonic lapel pin, \$8.00 each, including S & H - to commemorate members who lost their lives in terrorist attack - proceeds to KTEF. S. Kenneth Baril, 6809 Main Street, Apt. 2 West, Cincinnati, OH 45244-3470, (513) 272-2815, fax (513) 272-2830

For sale: The Medal of Honor The Letter G in Valor, a 268-page digest with the names, congressional citations, and Lodge membership of all Masons who have received our nation's highest military award for bravery. Books may be obtained by contacting Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., PO Box 9759, 3011 Old Dumbarton Rd., Richmond, VA 23228-0759, (804) 262-6551. The price is \$16.95 plus S & H. Author's portion of profits donated to KTEF.

For sale: custom made gavels from God-given, beautiful hardwoods or four different, laminated hardwoods. Excellent gifts and treasured inheritance. All proceeds for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. \$45.00 each, postpaid. The Gavel Man, 117 Derriere Oaks Circle, St. Simons Island, GA 31522, (912) 634-0818.

For sale: reasonably priced custom die cast coins and lapel pins: If you or your lodge needs something to raise funds, signify your year, or to present to special guests throughout the year, you can represent Masonry with pride with beautifully custom imprinted items. You will be the envy of every Mason when you choose from a wide variety of custom imprinted items which include but are not limited to impressive custom designed lapel pins, coffee mugs, ink pens, die cast coins, belt buckles, and more. These items are the perfect way to proudly display your organization's name and logo. Simply hand sketch your design idea on a piece of paper and send it to me. For more information call/write Frank Looser, PM.; 408 Ashlar Circle, Nashville, TN 37211, (800) 765-1728, [webwww.cnfinteractive.com](http://webwww.cnfinteractive.com) Percentage to KTEF.

Help!: A retired Past Master, school teacher, and grand officer asks your help in attempting to complete a wheat penny collection he has been working on for a number of years. If you wish to get rid of some old "wheaties" or other coins lying around in your closet, or trade duplicates, I'd like to correspond with you. No dealers need write as this is only a hobby. All notes, letters, e-mails will be faithfully answered. Write soon! Warren A Williams, 258 The Ledges, Craftsbury, VT 05826-9502, (802) 586-2825, or [awaw@kingcon.com](mailto:awaw@kingcon.com)

