

# Knight Templar

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#### Prominent Russian Mason.

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# Grand Master's Message

As you will recall, we announced our objectives and goals for 2019 in January of that year. Now it is time to report on how we did. Our first goal was to make the *Knight Templar* available electronically. This goal was accomplished with the launch of the mobile app in 2019. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to download the FREE *Knight Templar* mobile app from the Apple App Store or Google Play. If you like the mobile app, you can help us to maximize scarce resources by discontinuing delivery of the print version. You can do so by contacting the Grand Encampment office. All past issues are available on both the mobile app and the website. Our goal for 2020 is to make the supplements available on the mobile app as well.



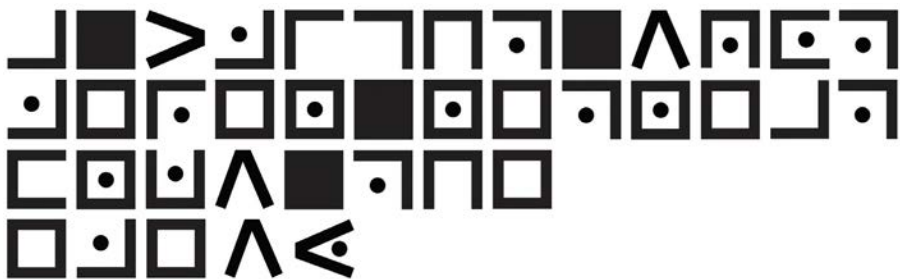
Our second goal was to launch the Templar Education and Development Course. This was accomplished in 2019 with the introduction of the Templar Ritualist study course. The problem is, we grossly underestimated interest in the course, and it was immediately oversubscribed. Just like any university, we have had to match enrollment to our available faculty. Once we have “cleared” the essays, we will reopen the course. Our goal for 2020 is to add a new module i.e. course. We anticipate that this course will be centered on the history of the medieval Knights Templar.

Another goal was to make the Order of the Temple available on DVD. This will be a companion to the Red Cross and Malta DVDs and used as an educational tool to improve conferral of the most impressive ritual in Freemasonry. The cast and venue have been finalized, and the filming has been scheduled. The next steps will be editing and final production, which we will complete this year.

Our fourth goal was to reprint the ritual in “clear text.” We have issued the new clear text ritual in both hardcover and spiral binding. These are now available through the Grand Recorder’s office.

We will continue our report next month.

Courteously,  
Jeffrey N. Nelson, GCT  
grand master



## ***Knight Templar* Magazine Available on Your Smart Phone**

The *Knight Templar* magazine is now available on your smart phone. Just download the application from either the Apple App Store at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/knight-templar-magazine/id1422046085?ls=1&mt=8> if you have an I-Phone or the Google Play Store at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.axiosdigital.KnightTemplar> if you have an Android based phone. Then each month, you will be automatically notified when the new issue of the magazine is available. One tap and you are reading the magazine!

If at some point in the future, you want to discontinue the delivery of your paper copy and save the Grand Encampment some printing and postage expense, the recorder of your local Commandery can have it stopped by updating the membership database.

Of course, the current issue of the magazine and all previous issues are still available on-line at <http://www.knightstemplar.org/KnightTemplar/>.

### IN MEMORIAM



George Leaming Eldredge  
Oregon  
Grand Commander 1998  
Born: October 13, 1930  
Died: December 14, 2019

Charles Thomas Bancroft  
Massachusetts/Rhode Island  
Grand Commander 1998  
Born: February 2, 1937  
Died: December 27, 2019

Archived issues of the *Knight Templar* magazine can be accessed on the web at <http://www.knightstemplar.org/>. Then click on the button "Knight Templar" at the top of the page and select "Archives." The archives include an index.

# Prelate's Apartment

by

Reverend Arthur F. Hebbeler, III,  
right eminent grand prelate of the Grand Encampment

*As [Jesus] passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:1-5 ESV)*

**F**irst, I recommend all to read John 9:1-41, the story of bringing sight to the blind man at Siloam. It is as close to a biblical mandate for our Knights Templar Eye Foundation as there can be. It is very personal to me as well, but that is for another time.

In ancient times, illness and disease were often attributed to sinfulness of the individual or one's parents. While today we understand that too much oxygen after birth can cause blindness or that some genetic conditions lead to tumors, our ancestors didn't have that luxury. If you became ill, clearly it was because you somehow offended God. If the serpent bit you, it was because you otherwise escaped judgment. If you were blind...well, you get the point.

However, Jesus used the interaction with the blind man and the question of his disciples as a teaching moment. The power of God, who sent Jesus into the world, needed to be demonstrated. Time was running short for his ministry, so Jesus wanted to do as much as possible to make the power of God known. Jesus also made the point that while God set apart the Sabbath for a day of rest and worship, it was proper to do the work of God, in this case to heal the blind man on the Sabbath.

The gift of healing and especially the giving of sight is one of God's greatest gifts to His people. Jesus and the disciples healed many. People today continue to do so. We, as Knights Templar, do so through our time, talents, and treasures. Through our work, the works of God are shown to the world, and we demonstrate the power, gift, and grace of God to the rest of the world.



# A Treasure in the Desert

## The Story of the Codex Sinaiticus

By

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC, KGC

### Introduction

**A**s Knights Templar, a significant portion of our ritual is drawn from the *New Testament*, more particularly that of the Order of Malta and the Order of the Temple. The *Codex Sinaiticus* contains the oldest complete copy of the *New Testament*, dating from the mid-fourth century A.D. Originally, it also contained the *Old Testament* as well, but most of that is now missing. The *Codex Sinaiticus* is one of three existing major fourth or fifth-century codices of the *Septuagint* (a Greek translation of the Hebrew *Bible*) that include the *New Testament* as well, these codices being styled the *Sinaiticus*, *Vaticanus* and *Alexandrinus*.<sup>3</sup> The hand-written text is in Greek. The *New Testament* appears in the original vernacular language (koine), and the *Old Testament* is the version that was adopted by early Greek-speaking Christians known as the *Septuagint*. In the *Codex*, the text of both the *Septuagint* and the *New Testament* has been heavily annotated by a series of early correctors.<sup>4</sup> This article will briefly relate the history of the finding of the *Codex Sinaiticus* and compare some passages from it to the same passages found in the King James Version of the *Bible*.



### Codex Versus Scroll

What is a codex and why did early Christians prefer it to the scroll (also known as a “bookroll”)? The word “codex” (plural codices) comes from the Latin, and it originally denoted a block of wood, split into two to five slices and bound on one edge with leather straps. Each slice was slightly hollowed on front and back; then the hollows were filled with wax, and words were inscribed on the wax using a stylus. A more permanent method of saving what was written was to use ink on papyrus or parchment sheets which were bound together and also known as a codex.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the codex was a primitive form of book.

During the first three centuries A.D.,

people overwhelmingly favored the scroll for literary texts, but from the earliest scraps of identifiably Christian manuscripts onward, Christians differed in preferring the codex, especially for those sacred texts that they most prized and used as scriptures. Let's examine some key data relative to existing manuscripts. Of all the second-century A.D. manuscripts (pagan, Jewish, and Christian) included in the Leuven Database of Ancient Books, 2,326 (about ninety-five percent) are scrolls, and 123 (about five percent) are codices. Among all manuscripts dated to the third century, the 1,522 scrolls comprise seventy-eight percent, and the 431 codices twenty-two percent.<sup>14</sup> Plainly, the scroll was the preferred manuscript form for literary texts in these centuries.

Why would the Christians prefer a codex to a scroll? In Roman times, books were expected to be read from beginning to end, with no skipping around. Large books would consist of a collection of several scrolls. A reader would choose the scroll containing material of interest to him, but it would be rare that he would skip around in it by a series of rolling and unrolling the scroll. Most early Christian writings contained a wide variety of subjects (for instance, the four Gospels) or were devotional guides in which the reader might want to go back and forth among different passages. Collections of psalms, hymns, and commentaries existed, and again, it was easier to flip from one page to another without having to roll through long sections of a scroll.<sup>13</sup> Another reason might be that the Christians were trying to demonstrate that they were something apart from the ancient Jewish religion, and thus preferred codices



as an additional mark of this separation to the traditional scrolls used by the Hebrews. Scholars continue to explore and debate why the Christian preference for codices was increasing over time.

### Discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus

The story behind the discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus* (hereafter referred to as the “*Codex*”) is an interesting one, which led to contentious debate in the world of archaeology and which still is an active topic for dispute among archaeologists. Adding to the confusion is the fact that the *Codex* is split up among three countries and a monastery. The major part (347 leaves) is at the British Library (formerly part of the British Museum) in London. A lesser part (forty-three leaves) is at



the University Library of Leipzig in Germany. A few fragments (parts of six leaves) are in St. Petersburg at the Russian National Library. Finally, the monks of St. Catherine's Monastery at Mt. Sinai, where it all originated, have discovered a few more pages. The monks would like it all back. Each page measures approximately sixteen inches tall by fourteen inches wide and is divided into four



Konstantin von Tischendorf

columns. Only about 400 of the more than 730 original leaves survive—A massive cooperative project is now underway at all four institutions that own parts of the *Codex* to accomplish the conservation and digitization of the entire extant manuscript.<sup>3</sup>

In 1844 a German scholar named Konstantin von Tischendorf made the long and dangerous journey down Egypt's Sinai desert to the world's oldest continuously inhabited Christian monastery, St. Catherine's. There he found "the most precious biblical treasure in existence," as he styled the *Codex* he had found. According to his own account, he first spotted some pages from the *Codex* in a basket of old parchment the monks were planning to burn. His excitement alerted the monks that what he had found might be very valuable, and instead of granting his request to allow him to take the entire *Codex* back to Europe for study, the monks, after some dickering, would only part with a few dozen pages.<sup>5</sup>

He returned to the monastery again knight templar

in 1853 in an attempt to acquire additional pages but left practically empty-handed. After traveling to Russia to present his case to the tsar, who was considered the "defender and protector" of the Eastern Orthodox Church, he returned in 1859 for the third and last time as the tsar's agent to the monastery and, as the monastery belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church, was successful in securing

the entire *Codex*, signing a pledge that he would return it once he had made some exact copies. Instead he delivered it to his royal sponsor in St. Petersburg.<sup>5</sup>

From thence the controversy alluded to above began and still goes on. Apparently, the monks realized that they had been duped by Tischendorf and tried to recover the *Codex* but were eventually obliged to "donate" it to the tsar. Whether they did so willingly or under imperial pressure is open to debate. In 1933, the Russian government, facing financial crises and famine, sold it to the British Museum for about half a million United States dollars.<sup>5</sup>

### Excerpts from *Codex* Compared to King James Version Excerpts

In the Commandery, the Lord's Prayer is always a part of our prayers. It seems appropriate then, to compare the King James Version (KJV) of this prayer with the *Codex* version. Both are found in Matthew 6: 9-13. There is not too much difference until we get to the last verse.

### King James Version

"Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be  
done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we  
forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil: For thine  
is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen."

### Codex Version<sup>4</sup>

"Our Father who art in the heav-  
ens: hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be  
done as in heaven also on earth.  
Give us this day our needful  
bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we  
also have forgiven our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one."

We notice that the sentence beginning "For thine is the kingdom...." is omitted from the *Codex* version.

It is known that the *Gospel of Mark* was the earliest of the four canonical gospels, being written sometime in the decade before the destruction of Jerusa-

lem in 70 A.D. A major portion of the ritual of the Order of the Temple is devoted to the story of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Therefore, it may be of interest to compare part of the Crucifixion story as related in Mark 15:21-26 in the KJV with the same passages in the *Codex*:

### King James Version

"And they compel one Simon  
a Cyrenian, who passed by,  
coming out of the country, the  
father of Alexander and Rufus,  
to bear his cross.  
And they bring him unto the  
place Golgotha, which is, being  
interpreted, The place of a skull.  
And they gave him to drink  
wine mingled with myrrh: but  
he received it not.  
And when they had crucified  
him, they parted his garments,  
casting lots upon them, what  
every man should take.  
And it was the third hour, and  
they crucified him.  
And the superscription of his  
accusation was written over,  
THE KING OF THE JEWS."

### Codex Version<sup>4</sup>

"And they impressed one, Simon  
a Cyrenian, as he passed by com-  
ing from the country, the father  
of Alexander and Rufus, to bear  
his cross.  
And they bring him to the place  
Golgotha, which is, when trans-  
lated, the place of a skull.  
And they gave him wine mingled  
with myrrh; but he did not  
receive it.  
And they crucified him, and di-  
vided his garments among them,  
casting a lot on them what each  
should take.  
And it was the third hour, and  
they crucified him.  
And the superscription of his  
accusation written on him was,  
THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Here we see practically identical renditions. As a final comparison, I will

compare the Easter morning story as told in Mark 16:1-8:

#### **King James Version**

“And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid.”

#### **Codex Version<sup>4</sup>**

“And when the sabbath had passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early on the first of the week they came to the sepulcher, the sun having risen. And they said among themselves: Who shall roll away for us the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And looking up they see that the stone had been rolled away; for it was very great. And they entered the sepulcher and saw a young man, sitting at the right side, clothed in a white robe; and they were amazed. But he says to them: Be not amazed. You seek Jesus the Nazarene who was crucified; he has risen, he is not here: see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples, especially Peter, that he goes before you into Galilee: there you shall see him, as he said to you. And going out they fled from the sepulcher; for trembling and astonishment had seized them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.”

Again, we see the verses read very similarly in both the KJV and the *Codex*. Note: *The Gospel of Mark* ends at verse 8 in two of the oldest and most respected manuscripts, the *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus*. As the oldest manuscripts are known to be the most accurate because there were fewer generations of copies from the original autographs (i.e., they are much closer in time to the originals), and the oldest manuscripts do not contain verses 9-20, we can conclude that these verses were added later by scribes. The King James Version of the *Bible* contains verses 9-20 because the King James used medieval manuscripts as the basis of its translation. Since 1611, however, older and more accurate manuscripts have been discovered and they affirm that verses 9-20 were not in the original Gospel of Mark.<sup>16</sup>

### Conclusion

The most extensive and complete rendition and translation of the *Codex* is found at Source 4. That online site has the attractive feature of allowing the user to specify which books of the *Bible* and verses he wants to see translated into English as well as the original Greek of the manuscript. (Choose SEE THE MANUSCRIPT tab at the top of the web site page).

The *Codex Sinaiticus* Project provides a better understanding of the text of the *Codex* and of the subsequent corrections to it. This will not only help us to understand this manuscript better but will also give us insights into the way the texts of the Bible were copied, read, and used.<sup>4</sup>

By the middle of the fourth century, there was wide but not complete agreement on which books should be considered authoritative for Christian communities. *Codex Sinaiticus*, one of the two earliest collections of such books, is essential for an understanding of the content and the arrangement of the *Bible*, as well as the uses made of it.<sup>4</sup>

The *Greek Septuagint* in the *Codex* includes books not found in the Hebrew *Bible* and regarded in the Protestant tradition as apocryphal, such as *2 Esdras*, *Tobit*, *Judith*, *1 and 4 Maccabees*, and *Wisdom of Sirach*. Appended to the *New Testament* are the *Epistle of Barnabas* and "*The Shepherd*" of *Hermas*.<sup>4</sup>

I enjoyed perusing the *Codex* and comparing passages that I was familiar with in the KJV of the *Bible* with corresponding passages that were in the *Codex*. In many cases, the renditions were quite similar but in a few there were some divergences. I urge each Knight Templar to explore this oldest yet discovered complete copy of the *New Testament* for himself, this true treasure, found by the keen eyes of Tischendorf in a secluded monastery in the wilderness of Sinai.

Right Eminent Sir Knight Marshall is currently chairman of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar History Committee, a holder of the Knight Grand Cross of the Grand Encampment, and a frequent contributor to the *Knight Templar* and *Royal Arch Mason* magazines. He can be reached at [geomarsh@yahoo.com](mailto:geomarsh@yahoo.com).





St. Catherine Monastery

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## Greetings to the Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar!

**I**n this month, we will continue to examine several of the various grants that have lately been given out by the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF). A \$65,000 research grant was presented to Joseph Fogerty, Ph.D. with the Cole Eye Institute at the Cleveland Clinic. This grant will allow him to study Leber's Congenital Amaurosis (LCA). LCA is a disorder which can cause blindness in children. The infants are born already with severely impaired vision, and by their first birthday are almost blind. LCA affects the retina, which causes the rods and cells within the retina to die. You might be asking, what does the retina do? Well, it "...covers the back of the eye and converts the light entering the eye into a nerve signal that goes to the brain." (KTEF PR Booklet, p. 43, 2019)

Since the body is not able to replace these dead cells, Dr. Fogerty will be studying the zebrafish. This fish is commonly available and can be bought at most pet stores. They will be studying this fish because it has the ability to reproduce the neurons to replace the dead rods and cones in its retina (whereas humans cannot). (KTEF PR Booklet, p. 43, 2019)

What makes this specific type of zebrafish an impressive study case is that they do not replace all of their dying retina cells. "By comparing regeneration-deficient zebrafish to healthy zebrafish, they can identify the molecular signals they lack that are essential for complete regenerations. By determining what signals are required to trigger regeneration of the rods and cones in zebrafish, it may be possible to translate this information to humans where regeneration is not currently possible." Sir Knights, what an amazing research project this is, and truly something we should all be proud to support! (KTEF PR Booklet, p. 43, 2019)

Thank you for what you do for Templary, and may God bless you for continuing your support in this 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Knights Templar Eye Foundation Voluntary Campaign.

Courteously,

Jack M. Harper II, REDC-SC, KCT  
chairman, 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Voluntary  
Campaign





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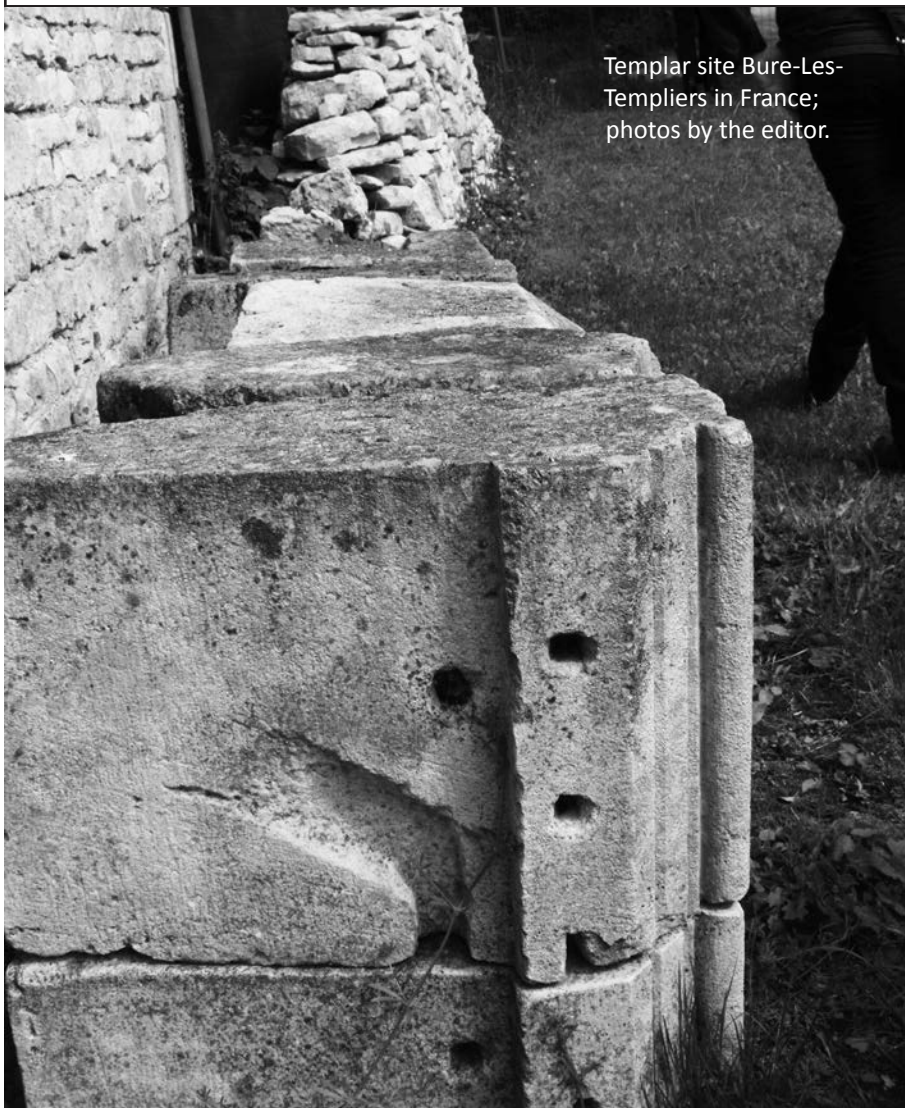
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# General Supplement

The space on these two pages is provided by the *Knight Templar* magazine to be used by the Grand Commanderies to communicate with the individual Sir Knights in their jurisdictions on a monthly basis. From time to time and for various reasons, we fail to receive any material from the editor of the state supplement for a given month. When this happens, we take the opportunity to offer you the information below. – The Ed.



Templar site Bure-Les-Templiers in France;  
photos by the editor.



knight templar

# *Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.*

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## **How to join the Grand Commander's or the Grand Master's Clubs**

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# THE TEMPLAR SEAL

By

Sir Knight Bill Miklos

**T**he Knight Templar Seal is the most enigmatic symbol of the famed Knights. We still use the seal today, but how many of us have considered its meaning, let alone its importance?

The most prominent, most utilized, and best-known symbols of the Knights Templar are the Cross, Lamb of God, two Knights riding a single horse, and the Dome of the Rock.<sup>5</sup> Each of the grand masters of the Knights Templar utilized at least one, if not all four, of these seals throughout their history. Although the actual relics of the Knights Templar are lost in antiquity, they still hold a powerful sway over the imagination of every Sir Knight, both past and present.



Knight Templar Seal

The image above demonstrates perhaps the most famous and recognized symbol. However, look at the image below.



knight templar

The Knights also used a double-sided seal from 1158 until 1312 as pictured on the previous page, the dome of the rock and two Knights on a single horse.

Do these two different seals have anything in common?

The easy answer is: yes, the two Knights on a single horse is clearly visible. However, note that both Knights are armed as if ready for battle.

Foremost, let's deal with the two men on a horse issue. The *Templar Rule* 379 states that "two brothers should not ride on one horse."<sup>1</sup> I submit that many historians omitted the other possible connection as outlined below, as it was easier to promulgate the existing myth. This possible new connection could be a more powerful symbol and does not distract us from the fact that the Knights were from humble beginnings, but rather points us to something greater.

The *Templar Rule*, however, may provide us with an additional clue. There are multiple rules that require the presence of "two brothers." For example, rule 153, describes how meat is to be divided between two brothers,<sup>2</sup> while in the original *Latin*

*Rule*, it is stated that "The Master should have two Knights as companions...."<sup>3</sup>

Why is the number two so important?

The number two is usually related to harmony, balance, and cooperation. It is also a symbol of adaptability, consideration, faith, and relationships. This interpretation offers a thesis that the Knights were demonstrating their trust in one another and their trust and faith in God.

After all, Jesus did say, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them."<sup>4</sup>

As Masonic Templars, are we not taught the same thing? We are continually reminded that we can rely on our Lodge brothers without regard to religious beliefs, economic status, or educational achievements. A true spirit of friendship exists.

Sir Knight Bill Miklos, a past commander of Auburn 4 and grand orator of the Grand Commandery in California can be contacted at [billmfreemason1@gmail.com](mailto:billmfreemason1@gmail.com).

## Notes

1. *The Rule of the Templars*, J.M. Upton-Ward, the Boydell Press, Woodbridge published in 1992, ISBN 085155707. Page 104
2. *The Rule of the Templars*, J.M. Upton-Ward the Boydell Press, Woodbridge published in 1992 ISBN 0851157017. Rule # 153 page 57 (the French rule).
3. Ibid Rule #79, page 40
4. *The Holy Bible*, Matthew 18.20 Revised Standard Version, 1952, Thomas Nelson Inc.
5. *Knights Templar Encyclopedia* (The essential Guide to the People, Places, Events, & Symbols of the Order of the Temple), Karen Ralls, PH.D. 2017, Page;173 Paragraph Title "Seal", New Page Books ISBN-13: 978-156414-926-9.

# Alexander Pushkin, (А.С. Пушкин), Classic Russian Poet, Prominent Russian Mason.

By

Sir Knight Douglas Rowe

(Note: This work was originally presented as a talk at the Alabama College of Masonic Rosicrucians in May of 2018.)

*“On January 29, 1837, classical poet and prominent Russian Mason, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, was shot and killed in a duel with a wronged husband.”*

Versions of that sentence can be found in many published works, however, very little of it is totally accurate. In full disclosure, I am not Russian, neither am I a Russian apologist or sympathizer. However, my wife Nina is from Moscow. I speak on Russian Masonry frequently, and Nina usually insists that I include a disclosure to the effect, that “The opinions expressed herein, do not necessarily represent those of management.” In researching this article, I used several Russian-only language Web Sites and printed reference material, which Nina translated, so in this case, any differences of opinion are the responsibility of the translator.

I have been going to Russia on business and lately on vacation since 1992. Over that quarter century, I have come to the realization that reality often clashes sharply with American perceptions of understanding of Russia, Russians, and things Russian.

The simple opening sentence is one specific example of reality and perception being largely in disagreement. I have parsed the individual

phrases and will correct and clarify specific disagreements.

First the simple date, Pushkin may or may not have been shot on January 29, 1837, depending upon which calendar we choose to utilize. While Russian secular organizations use the Gregorian calendar, the Russian church and certain other non-governmental organizations cling to the Julian calendar, which is offset by fourteen days. Therefore, Pushkin was shot either on January 29<sup>h</sup>, or February 10<sup>th</sup>. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the church rather than the state was the primary recorder of births and deaths, the January date is generally accepted. This calendar discrepancy continues today and explains Russians celebrating secular New Years on January 1<sup>th</sup>, while celebrating the religious Christmas holiday on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

The most accurate phrase in the opening sentence is “classical poet.” Few today would dispute that Pushkin was a towering early 19<sup>th</sup> century literary figure. His works have been translated into scores of languages and remain on university reading lists around the

world. Many literary scholars consider the novel *Yevgeny Oнеgin* (Евгений Онегин), which is written entirely in verse, his signature work. The work is a love story dedicated to one of his many paramours and is widely regarded as the definitive chronicle of life in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia. My wife can recite numerous passages verbatim.

Pushkin was born in Moscow in 1799 into a minor noble family and exposed to literature and similar artistic disciplines from early childhood. He proved to be a prodigy, publishing works while a teenager and attending St. Petersburg's Lycee at Tsarskoye Selo, a school of no particular distinction and typically attended by lower tier noble children.

After graduating from the Lycee, Pushkin spent years pursuing the proverbial "wine, women, and song," all which were plentiful around café society of the era. He supported those pursuits by writing light-hearted poetry and prose. It was during his late teens and early 20<sup>s</sup> that he also began his lifelong association with liberal activist groups.

During this period, Pushkin's already well-established reputation as a notorious philanderer flourished. He participated in a number of open affairs with ladies, spanning the spectrum from court ladies-in-waiting to common house servants, with little regard to the potential consequences. This behavior would be a hall mark of his entire life and, as we will see later, would contribute an ironic factor in his untimely demise at age thirty-seven.

As his writing matured, Pushkin rapidly became a favorite of St. Petersburg's liberal intelligentsia, while simultaneously drawing the attention of the conservative aristocracy whom

he delighted in jabbing in eye with his sarcastic glib pen and shrill tongue. In 1820, his pen and tongue led to the first of several exiles from the capital. Just a brief comment on 1820 style Russian exile; while banishment from the indulgent capital life was a punishment itself, Pushkin was accompanied in exile by a full time military body guard, living with various wealthy families and generally free to do as he wished. Today, many might view such exile as an all-expenses paid holiday in the mountains. During this exile in the Caucasus Mountains and Crimea, he continued to publish, although details of how he accomplished this, considering the state of communications, remains a puzzle. Regardless, his work began taking a more serious tone and included, *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and *The Robber Brothers*, two of his more political works.

The 1825 Decembrist Revolt against Tsar Nicholas I significantly changed Pushkin's life trajectory. While not directly personally involved, he was still in exile physically far removed from St. Petersburg, and many of his liberal ideas were adopted by revolt leaders. While ultimately unsuccessful, the 1825 revolt led to a conservative imposition of strict censorship and draconian limits on publishing anti-tsarist material. Learning that he was implicated even from afar, Pushkin personally petitioned Tsar Nicholas for his release, and after a personal interrogation in the spring of 1826, he was freed and permitted to return to the capital. In a concession of sorts, Pushkin promised to temper his political opinions and agreed to travel limitations and to curtail his public association with agitating groups fostering insurrection or political turmoil.

After returning to St Petersburg, Pushkin generally abided by the tsar imposed restrictions, and while quietly chaffing under the imposed travel limitations, completed the above cited *Yevgeny Onegin* in 1829 and *Boris Godunov* (Борис Годунов) in 1831. Most literary scholars consider these post-exile years his most productive, and his celebrity and personal fame and fortune flourished.

Inexplicably, considering his decades of romantic ambivalence, Pushkin began a successful pursuit of one of the acknowledged beauties and highly sought-after belles of Russian society. An accomplished serial dater in her own right, Natalia Goncharova, (Наталя Гончарова), was no stranger to romantic flings. A cynical opinion would consider the marriage to be one of mutual advantage, Lady Natalia gained a famous husband and implied credibility, while Pushkin gained additional access and favor of the reigning court aristocracy. A modern parallel of a super model marrying a rock star.

During the first years of the marriage, both Pushkins continued their pattern of illicit affairs, albeit while exercising a bit more discretion.

Even Pushkin's fortune proved to be no match for Natalie's extravagant tastes, and coupled with other financial setbacks involving his inherited estate, he was plagued with debt issues for years. Critics cite these personal issues as distractions from literary efforts during the final years of his life.

Pushkin is both revered and somewhat reviled. There is no question that he is revered as a towering literary talent but reviled for squandering part of that talent and depriving the world of additional knight templar

works of the caliber of *Yevgeny Onegin*.

Now it is time to turn to the next phrase in my opening sentence, the phrase most relevant to a Masonic publication. When I began researching this article, my intent was to chronicle Pushkin's Masonic career. As I cautioned above, Russian things are rarely as they appear. I started from the premise that Pushkin was a prominent Russian Mason and that it would be possible to trace his Masonic career and report on his accomplishments. My assumption, while erroneous, was based on several bits of convincing although circumstantial evidence.

First, Nina's family all know that I am





a Mason, and while they don't really attach any particular significance to that fact, they are mildly amused that I travel ten hours to attend a Moscow Lodge meeting instead of going to the Bolshoi Ballet or Moscow theatre with Nina. They routinely refer to my Lodge as a meeting of Pushkin's brothers.

Second, I know of two Pushkin monuments in Moscow, and there are likely more. The one in Pushkin Square is two subway stops or a ten-minute walk from Nina's apartment on a major street leading into Red Square.

The base of the statue has a small square and compass, although it is not visible in the photo on the previous page. The second monument depicts Pushkin and Natalie on their wedding day and is

located in downtown old Moscow.

The third piece of evidence and the most relevant is that the Moscow Lodge I belong to is named Pushkin 11, and his likeness appears on much of their regalia.

Pushkin is typically depicted with an unruly mop of curly hair and large mutton-chop sideburns. His official portrait hangs in the Tretikov Art Gallery in Moscow and is generally considered to be an accurate depiction.

Here, when a Lodge is named after an individual, that individual was almost certainly a Mason of some accomplishment. While I never specifically asked about the name, I transferred that inference to Russia, naively expecting to find a trail of Masonic involvement and accomplishments. After hours of fruit-

less web-site searching, I realized that I was possibly on the wrong track. The grand high priest of Russia, Archil Ebaldize (Арчил Ебралидзе), is a good friend of mine and a former author in this publication in April of 2018, and one e-mail exchange confirmed my error. The entire Masonic career of А.С. Пушкин, as far as we can document, consisted of receiving the degrees while in exile in the Caucasus Mountains. The Lodge itself disappeared from the record shortly thereafter. I have drawn the conclusion that his brief association with our fraternity was little more than one endeavor on his lifelong list of quixotic whims.

march 2020





This brings us to the final phrase that Pushkin was killed in a duel. This is historically documented and for the most part accurate, albeit with an ironic twist. Despite his incalculable long list of affairs and similar number of an-  
 knight templar

gry, wronged husbands, the truth has a somewhat even more sordid backstory. A French-Dutch military attaché with the tongue-twister name Georges-Charles de Heeckeren d'Anthès pursued and eventually captured Lady Natalie's af-



Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

fections, causing a public scandal among the St. Petersburg court. Adding to the tawdry scandal, d'Anthès was already married to Mrs. Pushkin's sister. Perhaps due to his own romantic engagements, Pushkin chose to ignore rumors of Natalie's recreational amorous activities. In the fall of 1836, Pushkin was publicly

named "Co-Adjutor of the International Order of the Cuckolds," and a whimsical certificate proclaiming such circulated among St. Petersburg society salons. Pushkin attributed the public humiliation to d'Anthès' efforts and in late 1836 issued a formal notice that honor must be served and challenged his brother-in-



law to a duel. While dueling had been officially outlawed by Czar Peter the Great a century before, *mano a mano* combat remained a common court for resolving amorous disputes. After several delays, honor was served in January of the following year at Chernaya Rechka on the outskirts of St. Petersburg. The actual duel, despite being officially illegal, was staged with ceremonial pistols, proper seconds, and concession and souvenir vendors and was reportedly witnessed by a large crowd. By custom in many such staged confrontations, the parties mutually agreed in advance to fire in the air and therefore live to love another day. Whether such a pact was made remains in dispute, but regardless, d'Anthès fired first, striking Pushkin in the abdomen, a wound which proved fatal, while d'Anthès suffered a minor wound of no consequence. In a perhaps appropriate and certainly ironic twist, after decades at risk of being a duel defendant, Pushkin died as a plaintiff at the hands of his brother-in-law.

Lady Natalie and d'Anthès seem to have lived out their respective lives in quiet, if not monogamous, romantic

bliss as neither appears in the record following the fatal shooting.

This brings us back to my original, simple sentence. I have read short translated portions of Pushkin's works. However, literature translated into a second language rarely has the same impact as in the original. This is particularly true when the work appears in verse form. I can never appreciate the genius of Pushkin in English that my wife claims is present in Russian. Despite not fully appreciating his work, I found Pushkin an enigmatic and complex personality to say the least. Interpreting history written in a foreign language and viewed through a two-century long telescope is a challenge by definition; however, having a native speaker as my translator eased the task. Nina gladly provided assistance and contributed antidotal comments about her personal favorite writer.

Sir Knight Douglas M. Rowe is grand recorder of the Knights Templar of Pennsylvania, a member of the Editorial Review Board of the *Knight Templar* magazine, and a Pennsylvania Master Masonic Scholar. He can be contacted at [gndrec1@verizon.net](mailto:gndrec1@verizon.net).

### Sources

[Pushkin.elink.ru](http://Pushkin.elink.ru) (English Version quite crude)  
[Britannica.com.ru](http://Britannica.com.ru)

Subscriptions to the *Knight Templar* magazine are available from the Grand Encampment office at a rate of \$15.00 per year. Individual issues in quantities of less than ten can be obtained for \$1.50 each from the office of the managing editor if available. Inquire via e-mail to the managing editor for quantities in excess of ten. Some past issues are archived on our web site. <http://www.knightstemplar.org>.

## Grand Encampment

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# Leadership Notes

## Purpose

 Organizations that know who they are and have a defined mission and vision perform better than those that don't. It is not enough to just do "stuff." What is done must be done for a purpose, with each person understanding how they contribute.

By now you have seen the announcement from Sir Knight Jeff Nelson, our grand master, that the Grand Encampment has published mission and vision statements. Your elected grand officers spent weeks preparing for a very intensive two-day workshop to define and hone the mission and vision of the Grand Encampment. More importantly, you need to know that the mission of the Grand Encampment is their covenant to you and to the world. It defines the lighthouse which guides the decisions and activities the Grand Encampment undertakes now and perhaps for the next 100+ years.

The Grand Encampment's Mission is, *"To provide every Christian Freemason the opportunity to extend his Masonic journey through the chivalric experience."*

While it may seem an obvious statement of what the Grand Encampment should do, this mission is well-crafted to provide guidance for generations on what the Grand Encampment must do.

Thinking about your Commandery now, do the Knights of your Commandery know who they are? Do they know their purpose? Is there a vision of achievement that your leaders are pursuing? If you cannot answer in the affirmative for each of these questions, now is the time to gather the officers and come to a consensus. The Knights of your Commandery need to know who they are and where they are going. This creates purpose, and from that, you will create activities that fulfill the purpose.

To get started on defining the mission or purpose of your Commandery, let's presuppose that we all start from the same root, a social identity if you will. We are all Freemasons, and as Knights Templar, I think we have something special we can start with. Borrowing from John Palmer's original Leadership 101 class, "To be a Knight Templar is to be a Gentleman." You, Sir Knight, are expected to uphold yourself as a gentleman and to act gentlemanly in all your deeds. Civil discourse, fairness, and critical thinking are all hallmarks of a Knight Templar. This will be the first stepping-stone in creating your Commandery's purpose.

If you want to join the York Rite Leadership Training Program or would like more information on how to create a mission and vision statement for your organization, send an email to [YRL@YorkRiteLeadership.org](mailto:YRL@YorkRiteLeadership.org).

Yours in Knightly Service,  
S. Lane Pierce, KYCH



Lane Pierce is the coordinator for the excellence in leadership training effort of the Grand Encampment.



# Beauceant News

## Early Beginnings of Some Of Our Business

The early beginnings of the S.O.O.B., according to Mrs. Fred C. Shaw, the worthy president of Denver 1 in 1913, were fostered from a “desire of the wives of Knights Templar to enjoy the pleasure of membership in a group of women allied in some manner with their husbands’ Templar activities.”

The ladies met on the third Thursday of the month, with the first official meeting being held on February 20, 1890, with initiation fees of \$1.00 and annual dues of \$.45. The official refreshments were tea and wafers, for which, if omitted, the hostess would be fined \$5.00. In July of that year, the refreshment rules changed, and the ladies had ice cream and little tea cakes.

Nothing about a ritual appeared until July of 1890 when the secretary recorded that the ritual was presented. The title page reads: “Denver Lodge 1” then there is the scimitar with broom and the letters “Denver, Colorado,” and it contained the opening, initiatory, and installation ceremonies.

Just as a point of interest, it is my understanding, based on conversations with P.S.W.P. Mrs. Esther K. Offen, that the first ritual was written by a Sir Knight J. M. Rhoads.

The original letters S.O.O.B. stood for Some of our Business, and what was it?

“It is Some of our Business to make this society an attractive center from which shall radiate bright, joyous, and happy influences.”

“It is Some of our Business to fleck the pathway of life with sunshine and strew flowers in waste and desolate places.”

“It is Some of our Business to slumbering chord with lightsome touch and thrill the heart with soothing melody.”

“It is Some of Our Business to be helpful, hopeful, and inspiring and put to flight the phantoms of despondent minds.”

“In short, it is Some of Our Business to make life purer, better, and sweeter under the benign influence of S.O.O.B.

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# Knights



## at the Bookshelf

By

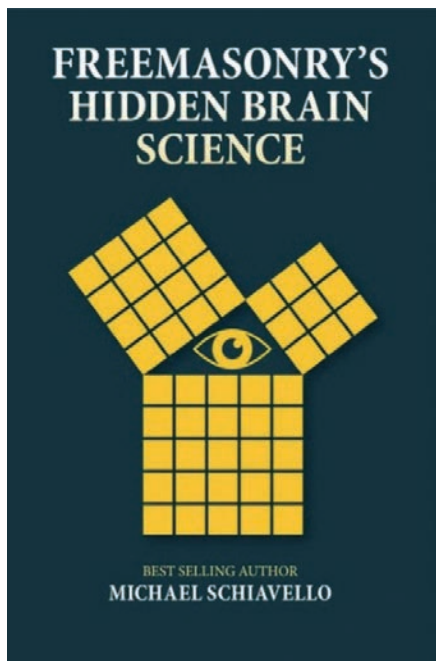
Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC

Michael Schiavello, *Freemasonry's Hidden Brain Science*, Lewis Masonic, 2019, Softbound, 230 pages, ISBN: 978-0-85318-565-9.

This is a most fascinating book in that it presents the concept of God, Solomon's Temple, Masonic ritual, and symbolism using a variety of neurological, psychological, physiological, and metaphysical interpretations. I do not necessarily agree with everything the author espouses, but his ideas do make for interesting reading and are certainly thought-provoking.

The book is divided into two parts, Part 1 deals with esoteric interpretations and Part 2 with exoteric interpretations. (Before starting Part 1, I strongly advise first reading Chapter 25, "God and Supreme Consciousness, a Synonymity," for a better understanding of this part.) Part 1 uses as its leitmotif Proverbs 25:2, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but it is the glory of a king to discover it." With this in mind, the author then uses allegory, symbolism, numerology, and spirituality to interpret Biblical events and passages and Masonic philosophy and ritual. Chapter 8 is particularly intriguing, where the author argues that the ritual is a "neurological handbook" and proceeds to compare the structure of the Lodge and its various officers to an assortment of bodily organs and bones.

Part 2 is more concerned with the author invoking the philosophic and didactic aspects of Freemasonry. Here he presents his ideas concerning such things as the cable tow, why the desire to become a Mason is important, the divine spark and the moral law, the need for purging the Lodge, the winding staircase and the spiral of life, managing your time effectively, avoiding suspicion, the ethic of reciprocity, caution in one's





thoughts and conduct, riding the goat, understanding the 47<sup>th</sup> Proposition of Euclid, and the past master's jewel.

In summary, the book challenges many of our preconceived notions and reveals hidden (and often perplexing but stimulating) concepts within Freemasonry's ritual, forms, and symbols and seeks to go far beyond their literal and mundane interpretations to present a wider panorama of spirituality and relevance to that consciousness within those of us who seek to attain "further light" in Masonry and become "kings" by discovering it.



Model of the temple in Jerusalem. Photo by the editor.

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Knight Templar

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“I have spread out my  
hands all the day unto a  
rebellious people, which  
walketh in a way that  
was not good, after  
their own thoughts...”  
Isaiah 65:2

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