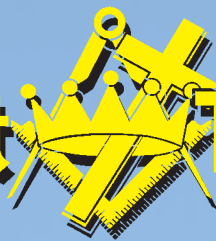


Knight Templar



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Grand Master

Jeffrey A. Bolstad
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**Cover photo of a Spanish
Templar castle by Sir Knight
Piotr Kalinowski.**

Grand Encampment web site: www.knightstemplar.org
www.knightstemplar.org/KnightTemplar/archive

Grand Master's Message

Greetings Sir Knights. We hope that each of you and your families are doing well and staying safe in these uncertain times. In July, we notified you of the significant enhancements made recently to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation's website. Now, we have just posted the latest edition of the Foundation's informational booklet.

The booklet's research grant section has been updated to reflect the grants issued for the 2020-21 grant cycle. This section highlights selected grant recipients and describes the exciting work they are doing to preserve vision and end pediatric blindness. The Seniors Eyecare section has been modified. It has also been a transformational year for the Scientific Advisory Committee's Physician's Advisory Committee panel. After serving on the panel for twenty years, the last eight as chairman, John Penn, Ph.D., has retired. The booklet contains a profile of the new chairman, Bela Anand-Apte, MBBS, Ph.D., a professor of Ophthalmology and Molecular Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University and interim chairman of the Cleveland Clinic's Cole Eye Institute. The booklet is forty-eight pages in length and available for download. It should answer any questions you may have concerning our great Templar philanthropy.

Speaking of the website, we are continually updating its various modules with the latest information. In fact, the Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee has just revamped its section of the website. Although we were forced to cancel both the Senior Pilgrimage scheduled for next month and the 2021 Pilgrimages for Ministers, we are planning for and eagerly anticipating resuming travel with the November 2021 "In the Footsteps of Jesus Holy Land Pilgrimage" and the Minister's Pilgrimages in 2022.

The committee has posted updated forms, brochures, and information sheets. The program description sheet, containing the guidelines for the selection of ministers, has been revised. The site contains the new nomination form for the 2022 pilgrimage, an information sheet clearly explaining the program's cancellation policy, the new 2022 pilgrim certification form, and the eleven day tentative itinerary. All forms are downloadable.

Courteously,
Jeffrey N Nelson, GCT

4 Grand Master



october 2020

Leadership Notes

Prioritizing To Get Things Done

Each of us have our own character flaws. As Masons, we look to our brethren for identification, counsel, and assistance in resolving the flaws and improving ourselves. As a group, Masons generally share many common traits and our one common character flaw — our recalcitrance to saying “No” to a request. As the old saying goes, “if you want to get something done, ask a busy person to do it.”

Masons tend to be busy people. The symbol of the beehive teaches us to be busy and industrious, so our actions are productive for ourselves and others. Because of this, we often get requests for assistance, or we seek out ways to be of service. As a result, we tend to end up double and triple booking our calendars and perhaps run late in meeting deadlines.

I chose this topic because this very morning, John Palmer, the editor of the *Knight Templar* magazine, emailed me and said, “Are you going to submit an article this month?” I thought I had. I had lost track of the schedule. With the many things I have committed myself to doing, I let this important duty slip my mind until it became absolutely **urgent** that I get it done.

One of the challenges a leader experiences, especially a Masonic leader, is prioritizing his time. To assist you in prioritizing your tasks and to remind myself of the importance of doing so, I introduce you to Covey quadrants. This simple and effective tool will help you prioritize your days, weeks, months, and years. An effective leader will spend the majority of his time doing the important things before they become urgent.

Get out a clean sheet of paper and divide it into four sections or quadrants. Label the top row “Important” and the bottom row “not important.” Now label the left column “urgent” and the right column “not urgent” You can now map out your activities and focus your energy where you need to get things done.

Quadrant one (top-left) is “urgent-important.” This is the stuff you must do right now. It is Firefighting and can lead to burnout.

Quadrant two (top-right) is “not urgent-important.” This is quality time, the green zone, and where you are personally and professionally effective. Working on activities in this quadrant is working smart. This is where you strive to spend most of your day. Be aware though, if you fail to give these activities their due attention, they will creep over to quadrant one.

Quadrant three (bottom-left) is “urgent-not important.” It is also known as the distraction zone. This may be meetings, phone calls, and even things you prefer to do over what you need to be focused on.

Quadrant four (bottom-right) is the bane of the leader. It is called “wasting time.” Things in this zone are neither urgent nor Important and do not deserve your time.

If you want to learn more about leadership principles, join the York Rite Leadership Training Program. Send an email to YRL@YorkRiteLeadership.org for more information.

Yours in Knightly Service,
S. Lane Pierce, KYCH

knight templar

Prelate's Apartment

by

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

²⁴ and [the angel] said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you. (Acts 27:24 ESV)

The twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of the *Acts of the Apostles* tell us of Paul's journey to Rome and the shipwreck that delayed them en route. I have no doubt that this story is familiar to most readers, so I'll skip the context and story so we can focus on the meat.

Paul and other prisoners were being taken to Rome for trial. Generally speaking, prisoners of Rome were not treated very well, but Paul seems to have gotten special treatment from the centurion. It was as if the centurion had an appreciation for whom Paul was — perhaps by reputation or by the power of the Holy Spirit. In any case, when Paul spoke, the centurion listened, even if he didn't follow Paul's advice or admonition.

The master and owner of the ship knew that the voyage was risky and recommended waiting out the storms until the waters were better for sailing. Paul told them and the centurion that the journey was going to be rough but that the only thing that was going to be lost was the ship and its cargo. No lives would be lost. The centurion said to press on, even with the risks. Long story short, ship's cargo was lost and the ship was wrecked off an island coast, but no one died. Paul's promise (given to him by God through the angel) was fulfilled.

This is a good lesson for us in 2020. There is a lot of rough water around us, and the danger is great. There are also a lot of folks trying to tell us what to do, what is going to happen, and how to do things. It's hard to tell who are the experts and who are the charlatans, and sometimes it seems like some of them move between the two roles. What are we do to?

I boldly suggest that we do what Paul did. Fear not, move forward, and place our trust where it rightly belongs—in God and the power of God. We are all together in this boat right now, whether we want to be or not. As Christians, we are called to live our faith and to place our trust in God, that all will work out as He intends. Let's do that together.



Notre Dame Cathedral Tempered by Fire, Will Rise Again by Faith

By

Sir Knight James A. Marples, K.T.

The horribly tragic news of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris being engulfed in flames, shocked the world. The sight of the magnificent tower with its unique spire being ablaze and eventually cracking-off and falling to the debris on the ground was heartbreaking.

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris (meaning "Our Lady of Paris") was built over a span of years, beginning in the year 1160. The foundation stone was laid by Pope Alexander III in 1163, and it was mostly complete by the year 1260. Thus, it took approximately 200 years to construct. The Cathedral was finally opened to the public in the year 1345. It is known as the most famous of the gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages and is renowned for its size, architectural design, antiquity, and notable events which occurred there throughout history.

When I saw the video news reports of the recent fire (thus far, ruled accidental), I was awestruck at how fast the fire raced to the top of the tower. Experts were interviewed who said that 800 year old oak would not burn that quickly without a great deal of kindling. The tower of the Cathedral of Notre

Dame was often colloquially known as "The Forest," since it reputedly took approximately fifty acres of trees to supply the lumber in that massive tower. In other words, it is estimated that it took over 13,000 trees to supply the needed lumber. A breathtaking statistic is that to be tall trees able to be long enough to meet the carpenters' demands, the trees would have likely been 300 or 400 years old and would have sprouted out of the ground in the 8th or 9th century. That timeline is incredible to ponder.

In the aftermath, leaders have pledged money to rebuild, yet even the French president acknowledged that this kind of timber is getting scarce and France may have to look to other sources. The French-gothic structure has been a landmark in Paris for centuries. It had previously fallen into a decline and been restored but never to the magnitude of its future restoration.

Being Roman Catholic myself, I asked my retired Kansas archbishop if he had ever been in the Cathedral personally. He said, "Twice."

What strikes me is the obvious fact that Knights Templar and Rosicrucians have been setting foot inside that Ca-

thedral since the year 1160. Those old stonemasons knew what they were doing. They made an edifice to last! However, intense heat can compromise even stone. Yet, it is still a great testament to their skilled craftsmanship. The stained glass rose windows gave visitors additional inspiration. Unfortunately, there were no sprinkler systems installed near the roof, because it was believed that the risk of an electrical fire was a greater risk. The framework was wood as were the pews, and much of the interior was stone vaulting. The building had stood, after all, for centuries, and it was deemed an acceptable risk.

It would be nearly impossible to recite the names of the Templars, Freemasons, and Rosicrucians who entered the hallowed doors of Notre-Dame Cathedral, since such information is largely unknown or incomplete at best. Additionally, memberships weren't boasted about and generally only special events such as the death of Jacques DeMolay were recorded for posterity. In 2001, the *Chinon Parchment* was discovered by Professor Barbara Frale and showed that Pope Clement V indeed absolved DeMolay of any wrongdoing, and in 2007 the Vatican issued a formal apology which modern scholars largely ignore. It seems that the document was misplaced in the Vatican Archives for centuries. Yet, that apology is vital to accurate history. Sadly, it came 700 years too late. The public needs to be regularly reminded that the Templars were found innocent.

Various other interesting things happened in the Cathedral. On November 7, 1455, Isabelle Romee petitioned a papal delegation to overturn her daughter's Joan of Arc's conviction for heresy. On January 1, 1537, James V of Scotland was

married to Madeleine of France. On April 24, 1588, Mary Queen of Scots was married to the Dauphin Francis, later Francis II of France. On November 10, 1793, the Festival of Reason was held. Although most Kings of France were crowned elsewhere, Napoleon Bonaparte made sure he was crowned at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in 1804 and married there in 1810. In 1831, the famous novel *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, inspired by the Cathedral, was published by Victor Hugo. In 1970 the requiem mass of General Charles de Gaulle was held at the Cathedral. Therefore, the Cathedral has a prominent place in French social-life and ecclesiastical life.

I might reference one short passage in the 1831 novel, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, by Victor Hugo. The main antagonist, Claude Frollo, portraying the archdeacon of Notre Dame, was characterized with a dour personality, and among his depicted sins was failed alchemy.

In more recent years, a series of bizarre and tragic things occurred. In 2013, a historian placed a letter on the church altar and shot himself. In 2016, there was a bombing attempt. In 2017, various conspirators were arrested elsewhere in France with evidence that they planned to attack the Cathedral. In 2017, visitors were shut inside the Cathedral because of a deranged man wielding a hammer against a police officer. Finally was the recent tragic fire of April 15, 2019. Although the altar and historic organ were saved, it should be a qualified or conditional statement that they were saved from total destruction but had smoke and water damage.

The Cathedral was undergoing extensive renovation work at the time of

the recent fire. In fact, a mass was just ending when the first fire-bells sounded. Oddly enough, within hours, arson was ruled-out. In this writer's opinion, such a pronouncement was too hasty, especially in light of the fact that over 850 churches have been vandalized in France alone. To me, this seems odd and has a whiff of suspicion. I am relieved that over sixteen statues, including the stat-

contained at the Cathedral, including *Allegory of Alchemy* at the center portal.

Some authors maintain that this is a reference to Jacob's Ladder. In any case, it has special symbolic meaning to stonemasons and speculative Freemasons, alike.

The top of the building's roof had gargoyles. They were not installed for any sinister reason. Quite the reverse, the



Allegory of Alchemy carved in stone at the Notre-Dame Cathedral.

ues of the Twelve Apostles, had been removed before this fire, thus saving them.

In many ways, the thin spire at the tip of the tower breaking-off and falling to the ground was a visual cue that the building sustained severe damage. It jolted hearts around the globe. Regardless of whether it was arson or accident, we live in a very dangerous and uncertain world.

Many works of symbolic art were knight templar

gargoyles were designed for two reasons, to chase-off evil spirits and, more importantly, they are rain spouts to direct streams of water from the roof, far away from the building's walls and stone foundations, in order to prevent erosion. This illustrates that not everything should be viewed with a suspicious eye. Some things had a legitimate purpose.

Jacques de Molay, the last grand master of the ancient order of Knights

Templar, was taken to the great door of Notre-Dame Cathedral to learn his fate. This was because Paris did not have the population it has now and the Cathedral was the appropriate site for any such pronouncement. The parvis of Notre-Dame was the place where many such punishments were carried out.

In 1870, Freemason and Rosicrucian Hargrave Jennings wrote, "the old representations of the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame at Paris were symbols of the masculine divinity, such as the sun and some others, were placed over the right hand or masculine western tower, flanking the Galilee, or Great Western Porch. Over the left or female tower, were the crescent moon and other indications...." Brother Jennings also speaks of the Mosaic floor pattern inside the Cathedral. It is perhaps a sign of Almighty God's grace that left hanging on a wall was a glistening passion cross, which soothed the hearts of faithful Christians as a sign of God's love during all times, in times of crisis and in times of joy.

The Masonic publication, *The Builder*

in 1906 called the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris: "...perhaps the most remarkable medieval church...." The fact that Knights Templar, Rosicrucians, and Freemasons, as well as kings, queens, and presidents have stood in and around Notre Dame Cathedral gives it an aura of being a seat of spiritual and temporal gatherings. The fire tempered its validity as being special, sacred, and steeped in ancient traditions.

Much of the world wept when the iconic Cathedral burned; we give thanks for what was saved, and we will rejoice when the magnificent Cathedral is rebuilt. Obviously, it is hoped that people from all walks of life, including future Masonic Knights Templar will again visit the restored Cathedral. Just like the Knights of olden times, setbacks occur, and notable earthly things may be damaged or destroyed. Perhaps this is a reminder that, with Almighty God's help, such precious items can be restored with a spirit of renewal. The Cathedral will hopefully be built, rising on a platform of faith.



James Eric Erickson
Colorado
Grand Commander 2005
Born: February 10, 1937
Died: July 21, 2020



Sir Knight James Marples is a life member of Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita, Kansas, and currently resides in Texas. He can be contacted at rosehillks@yahoo.com or 1300 Greenbriar Drive, Longview, TX 75604.

Sources and Recommended Readings

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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/>.



The Star of Bethlehem

“In the Footsteps of Jesus”

**a Pilgrim’s Journey
for Sir Knights, Ladies,
Friends, and Guests**

November 8 – 18, 2021

- **This pilgrim’s journey is sponsored by the Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee of the Grand Encampment.**
- **The itinerary will be similar to the annual pilgrimage for ministers. There will be 5 - 7 miles of walking some days.**



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Prayers at the Wailing Wall



Dome of the Rock



Sea of Galilee



Scale Model of the 2nd Temple



Garden of Gethsemane



Masada



Baptismal Renewal, Jordan River



Jaffa Gate at Dusk, Jerusalem



Beauceant News

Dear Beauceant Sisters,

I hope you enjoyed the long hot days of Summer with outdoor BBQs with family and friends. I'm looking forward to a little cooler weather. We all knew 2020 was going to be a memorable year to celebrate our 100th. We just didn't know how memorable it was going to be.

I would like to personally thank everyone for their love and support about honoring the decisions that were made for Supreme officers and Supreme Assembly. Please support the Jewelry committee by ordering items.



I'm so proud of our sisters keeping in touch with each other through video chats and small gatherings for games or lunch or dinner. Our sisters have been making masks and helping others in the community to spread our friendship to make our world a better place.

My travels so far have been wonderful for the first six months of my year. I can't wait to reschedule visits to the Assemblies that I haven't been to yet.

Stay safe and healthy, my sisters!

Love,

Mrs. Carl W. Wunsche
Supreme Worthy President



Official visit to Warren Assembly 77 in Ohio, (Mrs. Charles) Margo Hampton, president, on October 4, 2019.



Official dual visit to Cleveland Assembly 15, (Mrs. John) Janet Sutter, president, and Columbus Assembly 79 both in Ohio, (Mrs. Dan) Joyce Cogley, president, on October 5, 2019.

53rd Voluntary Campaign

News Release

Greetings Sir Knights,

It has been my privilege and pleasure to serve our fraternity over the past thirty years in many capacities. Whether it has been through election or appointment to a leadership position or helping with local fundraisers, I have invariably said “Yes!” when invited to serve. Last Christmas Eve, when our most eminent grand master phoned and asked if I would serve our Sir Knights as chairman for the 53rd Annual Voluntary Campaign, I hesitated for a few seconds. In my mind I wondered, “Why is he asking me?” It has been my honor to serve the Sir Knights in Ohio as state chairman for ten years, but I was not prepared for this question. I gathered myself and quickly said, “Yes!” because when the grand master calls upon you to serve, you say “Yes!” I pray that I can carry on the great work of those who have preceded me in this role.



During my tenure as Ohio chairman, the Sir Knights from our jurisdiction have been incredibly generous in their support of the Eye Foundation. We never miss an opportunity to remind them that their financial support is critical to the success in the research to prevent pediatric blindness. In 2018, our membership took on the challenge of becoming 100% vested as Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF) Life Sponsors. One year later, we reached our goal! I am incredibly proud of the Sir Knights and ladies who made it happen! We may have beaten our friends from Texas to the finish line, but the real winner was the KTEF.

A few short months ago, our world changed, but our obligation as Christian Masons has not. Whether we are assisting our shut-in brothers and neighbors with groceries or household chores or supporting doctors and scientists working to find a key that will allow a child who has never stared in amazement at a rainbow to see one for the first time, we always find a way to wrap others “in the broad mantle of a Mason’s charity.” There is no doubt in my mind that we will continue to do so.

Over the coming months, we will continue to share success stories of those working on the front lines of the critical research providing the gift of sight. Our support is truly life changing. I hope we will continue to inspire Sir Knights everywhere to continue to lift up those who need us most.

In His Service,

R. Thomas Starr, KCT
chairman, 53rd Annual Voluntary Campaign

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Grand Master's Club

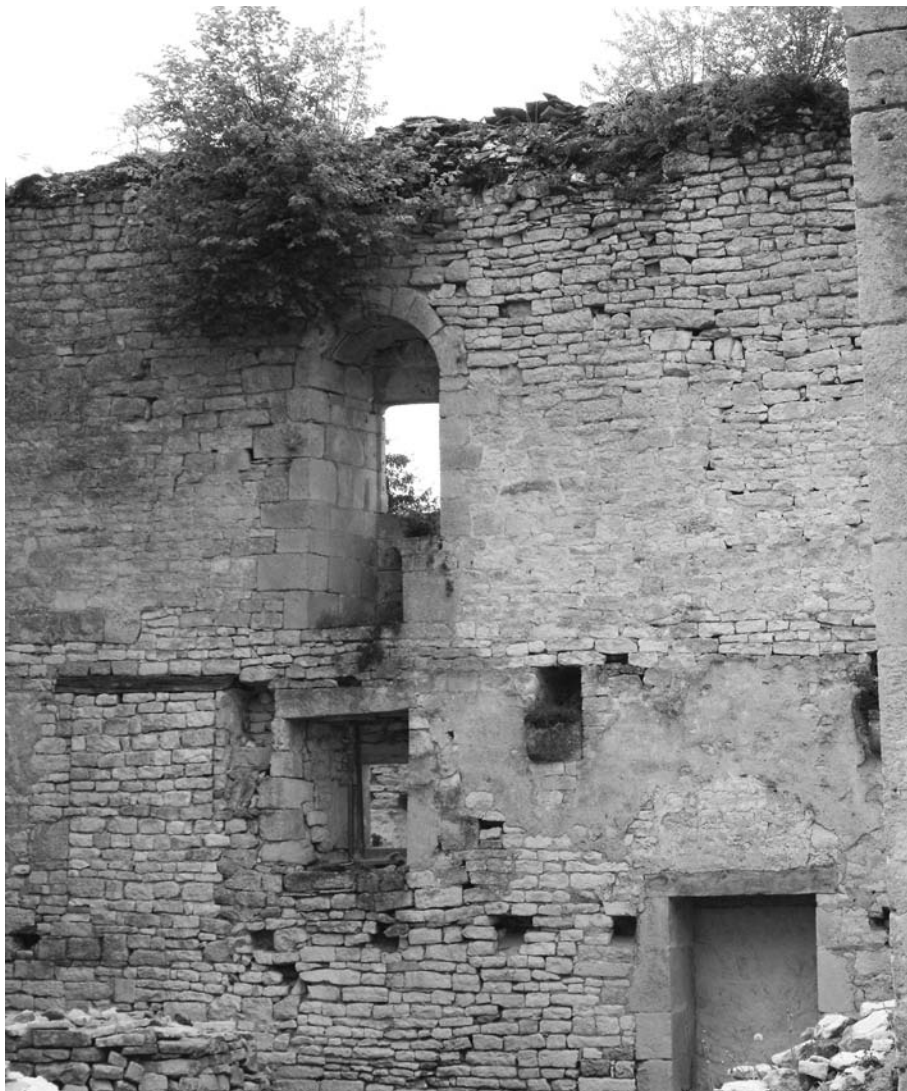
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General Supplement

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.



Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

How to join the Grand Commander's or the 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 Commandery Credit is given for participation.

Qualified Charitable Distributions Can Yield Big Tax Savings

Congress has now made the qualified charitable distribution (QCD) option permanent for those who wish to make direct contributions from their IRA to charity. The tax law allows individuals required to make minimum distributions due to age to transfer up to \$100,000 a year from their IRA to a qualified charity. This distribution counts toward their required minimum distribution but isn't added to their adjusted gross income the way a normal IRA distribution is. This can provide a tax savings of up to 40% depending upon an individual's tax situation. Please discuss with your tax professional whether this option could benefit you in your charitable and retirement planning.

Planned Giving – Create a Charitable Legacy

Your Foundation now has a full web site dedicated to Planned Giving which you can access from our web site, shown at the bottom of this page. So if you're thinking of ways to make a lasting legacy for yourself please check out the tab on the home page that says "Planned Giving". Leaving your mark on the future is so simple with a gift in your will. To leave a gift in your Will or Trust it is as easy as asking your attorney to include a sentence that says:

**I bequeath (lump sum) or (%) of my estate to:
Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. (address shown below)**

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A Knight's Guide to the Most Recent Research and Investigation Into The Knights Templar in the New World

By

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I read with a great deal of interest the short article by Sir Knight (Dr.) Donald J. G. Chiarella entitled, "A Hypothesis on the Templar Treasure of the Temple Mount,"¹ which recently appeared in the June 2020 issue of *Knight Templar* magazine.

Sir Knight Chiarella's article raised a number of pertinent questions with respect to the existence and current location of the so-called "Templar treasure." This all-encompassing treasure is what most Sir Knights recognize as the treasure purportedly discovered within a sacred vault or secret crypt below the Temple Mount by the original Knights Templar. It is also the origin of the mythical treasures portrayed in the blockbuster movies: *The Da Vinci Code* and *National Treasure*.

York Rite Freemasons relate the secret crypt to Royal Arch Masonry, including its ceremonial ritual of the crypt's discovery along with the Ineffable Word.² Interestingly, many modern-day Masonic researchers now suggest that both Royal Arch and Scottish Rite masonry evolved directly from the discovery of the sacred vault by the original Knights Templar. There is also a good case for assuming that much of the symbolism of Royal Arch Masonry was included in the Royal Arch ritual by the original Rosicrucian mystics, as some of the best-known symbols of Royal Arch Masonry bear a knight templar

close resemblance to those of alchemy.



The sacred vault, 18th century York Rite Royal Arch teaching board, origin unknown (image within public realm)

Dr. Chiarella certainly must be commended for the highly reasonable and logical development of his hypothesis. Questions surrounding the medieval Knights Templar and the true reason for

their existence are what makes modern-day Christian Masonry so unique within the fraternity of Freemasonry. The curiosity and dedication of all Sir Knights as to our true historical origins is, in part, what bonds our order. Like many others, though, Sir Knight Chiarella too quickly surmises that the Templar treasure currently lies in the possession of one (very important and very rich?) Knight Templar or Swiss institution.

Unfortunately, most of those who comment on the subject fail to heed the medieval Knight Templar mantra to “always look beyond.” Indeed, most commenters rely entirely on a “science-based” reasoning and logic, where they believe that proof through science alone can explain the fate of the Templar treasure, but one must understand that it was a deeply spiritual and mystical belief, supported by the very existence of a sacred treasure, which allowed the Knights Templar to so readily sacrifice their lives for the cause.

True, the medieval Templars were extremely successful in battle, because they believed in both religious and military discipline and order. This, in turn, prompted them to develop a remarkable series of castles and commandries across all of Europe in order to provide an unbroken communication and military network, but their beliefs absolutely went beyond the obvious. The moral here is that a Knight needs to always look beyond the next hill, beyond the next pinnacle, beyond the horizon. In other words, a Knight must always look for a higher degree of understanding.

The medieval Templars reasoned that God lay in their souls and not in their hearts. Thus, the soul emitted from the brain, in that the brain allowed one to

reason for oneself the very existence of God, the Supreme Being. Here was the real reason why the Muslims would look to cut off a medieval Knight’s head. It was to separate his soul from his body in order to prevent the Knight from going to Heaven.

At the time, this type of unorthodox thought would have been considered by the Church to be extremely heretical. It was the Church, and only the Church, which dictated that it was the only true conduit to God, and as a result, an individual could not talk directly to God. This task lay completely in the hands of the pope and the priests.

Strategically, the inner circle of the Knights Templar also understood the concept of time and space, where current events would surely have repercussions in the far future. This concept is much like the strategy behind the game of chess, the origin of which some have attributed to the Knights Templar. One player’s move may lead to several different strategic moves and counter-moves by both opponents some three or four additional moves throughout the game. There is even a special name applied to the knight’s move around the chess board, never falling on the same square twice. It is known as the *Knight’s Tour* and is said to take generations to complete successfully.

Native North Americans have always planned for seven generations, and what has become evident, to me at least, is that the medieval Knights Templar applied the same spirituality and inevitability to their secret endeavours. When the medieval Knights Templar arrived on the shores of North America, they were greeted as blood brothers (as opposed to the earlier Vikings), because

the indigenous elders recognized the ancient signs, seals, and tokens that were offered in peace. These signs were the same as those given by earlier, just as secretive, pre-Christian trans-Atlantic traders such as the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Jews.

The Knights Templar had certainly learned the senselessness of trying to defeat and impose their will over their formidable Muslim opponents. They also knew that if they had any chance of traveling across a vast Native North America, they would require the guidance and guardianship of the First Nations peoples.

One result of this life-long lesson of self-realization is that I believe this is now the right time and place to highlight the most recent research and investigation into the idea that modern-day Masonic Templarism can be directly traced back to our medieval ancestors and that the medieval Knights Templar in fact “re-assembled” the scattered Temple Mount treasure in a mysterious and magical “sacred vault” somewhere in North America, where it remains to this day. Here, both Templar and Rosicrucian beliefs intimate that the ultimate treasure awaits the proper time and space (As above, so below) to reveal itself. Only those who possess the sacred knowledge and understanding to gain the hidden wisdom will finally be able to access the vault.

The overall premise to this mystery is that the Knights Templar looked to the “New World,” Native North America, hoping to establish a New Jerusalem, a sacred sanctuary where Solomon’s Temple could be re-constructed in all of its splendor. This symbolizes the Templar’s ultimate desire to establish a new spiritual center on earth, replac-

ing *that-which-was-lost*. This would allow the Templars to finally erase their humiliation at the hands of the Muslim Saracens and Mamelukes. Of course, the most sacred of historical relics and other religious objects would be required to sanctify the newly-constructed Temple and its inner sanctum.

All Freemasons will surely recognize the undeniable relationship between Masonic ritual surrounding the rebuilding of Solomon’s Temple and the deep spiritual objectives of the original Knights Templar. Many Freemasons, especially those who are also Masonic Rosicrucians, will also recognize the significance of the reference to a New Jerusalem, as highlighted by Sir Francis Bacon in his *New Atlantis*,³ which was originally published in Latin in 1627. Of course, Francis Bacon was one of the first of many remarkable Rosicrucians of the early 17th century and is reputed to have been the genius behind the writings of Shakespeare. It was Bacon who coined the phrase “*Scientia potential est*,” knowledge is power. For Rosicrucians, this sacred knowledge lies with the image of the wise old man who sleeps in a cave concealed within a mountain.

For Bacon, it was the additional hidden knowledge of the medieval Templars establishing a New Jerusalem in the New World which became his spiritual muse. Other well-known European mystics such as John Dee, Robert Fludd, John Locke, Johanne Kepler, and Isaac Newton who formed the basis for the Royal Society, had at least an inkling of the wisdom that awaited those who could unravel the clues as to where in the New World the Templar treasure lay. Some of the clues lay within the earliest forms of Craft Freemasonry, which many now believe evolved out of the earliest

history of Knights Templar and their secret rituals. Some of the clues also lie within the actual journals of Prince Henry Sinclair, which have recently been discovered and are slowly coming to light.

As we are all well aware, the Order of the Temple with its warrior-monks has a



The old man in the mountain, early 17th century Rosicrucian block print, dated 1604, origin unknown (image within public realm)

tangible spiritual relationship with nine hundred years of history. The problem is that a proven historical connection between the medieval Knights Templar and modern-day Christian Masonry is still tentative at best, although, as I've already indicated, a great deal of compelling historical documentation and other evidence has recently come to light. This

evidence coincides with other research being conducted by a group of dedicated individuals, who look to finally answer those questions raised by seekers of the Templar treasure.

This group, appropriately named *Templar Gold*, consists of (beside myself) my good friends and colleagues, Scott and Janet Wolter and Steve St. Clair. The name *Templar Gold* speaks to that golden knowledge and understanding that is derived from a clear understanding of the Knights Templar and not to physical treasure. The stated purpose of the group is to finally make known the true and unbroken "hidden history" of the Knights Templar, from their origin to the present day. In this manner, historical fact may help once again to balance the world's perception of the most famous chivalric order, the Knights Templar, and their true place in history.

If proven definitively once and for all, Freemasonry and Templarism could lay claim to a continuous nine hundred-year history of chivalry and craft brotherhood, as well as a priceless "treasure," consisting of the highest level of knowledge and understanding. On this level, the great wisdom that would derive from this discovery could very well change the world in so many different ways. It could even possibly, depending on its contents, finally bring the three great monotheist religious traditions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam together in mutual understanding and acceptance.

Scott Wolter, a professional geologist, is best known as the host of the History Travel Channel's hit show, *America Unearthed*, and is author of several books, including *The Kensington Rune Stone: Compelling New Evidence*,⁴ *The Hooked X: Key to the Secret*

History of North America,⁵ *Akhenaton to the Founding Fathers: The Mysteries of the Hooked X*,⁶ and most-recently, *Cryptic Code of the Templars in America: Origins of the Hooked X Symbol*⁷ (www.hookedX.com). Scott is a consecrated Sir Knight of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar U.S.A.

Janet Wolter herself is a force to be reckoned with. She is co-author of *America, Nation of the Goddess: The Venus Families and the Founding of the United States*⁸ (www.hookedX.com) with Templar historian, Alan Butler, and is a major proponent of the sacred feminine, as demonstrated throughout America in the form of the goddess, Columbia. Many Masons and non-Masons alike do not realize that the District of Columbia and its many elements are dedicated to the Goddess. This aspect has been far too long ignored along the different pathways leading to the sacred vault, in that the medieval Knights Templar definitely embraced the concept of dualism and the sacred feminine. Hence, the three-sided triangle signifying, on one level, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (the Mother?).

Although not a Mason, Steve St. Clair, has completed and continues extensive DNA research and genealogical documentation in relation to the Clan Sinclair. Steve St. Clair launched and has managed the Sinclair or St. Clair DNA study since 2004. The project is one of the more inventive and aggressive of all surname studies. Steve is using medieval land transfer records combined with living DNA connections to prove which of the living members today connect with those of the surname Sinclair or St. Clair who invaded England with William the Conqueror in 1066. Steve refers to the

DNA study's major discoveries so far as "a criterion of multiple independent connections." In 2019, Steve began a major initiative in England to research every scrap of document on medieval people carrying the surname. He has made great progress in the Counties Somerset and Essex records archives. All this research will be published in 2020 at www.StClairResearch.com.

As the author myself of several best-selling books on the matter, including *The Knights Templar in the New World: How Prince Henry Sinclair brought the Grail to Acadia*,⁹ *The Templar Meridians: The secret mapping of the New World*,¹⁰ *Templar Sanctuaries in North America: Sacred Treasure, Sacred Bloodline*,¹¹ and most-recently, the novel *The Last Refuge of the Knights Templar: The Ultimate Secret of the Pike Letters*¹² (www.innertraditions.com) and as a direct descendant of many of the central Knights Templar characters in this saga, I feel blessed to be so intimately involved in this quest. I also feel most fortunate to be able to disseminate the most-recent historical research and information on the subject to esteemed groups such as the Grand Encampment of the Knights Templar of the U.S.A.

I am also in the unique position; with my mother being full-blooded Algonquin Indian and myself being initiated into the Mide'win, the Grand Medicine Society of the Ojibwa-Anishinaabe; of being able to speak comprehensively to the native oral legends and traditions of the Algonquins. These are the legends and myths that tell of the intermarriages between the Knights Templar and the Native North Americans. Strategic intermarriage, as practiced by Old World royalty for thou-

sands of years, is a major central element that has become prevalent in the unravelling of how the medieval Knights Templar could have established sanctuaries or a refuge in North America. Indeed, my family is living proof of the concept of strategic intermarriage.

Of course, a short magazine article is the last place where all of the available research and information on this wide-ranging topic can be made available, so I encourage any Sir Knight who has an interest in the question of the Knights Templar in the New World to peruse the many internet websites which have been noted in this article and to read the books also noted. I must warn you though that the question of whether the Knights Templar did, in fact, intermarry with the Native North Americans and establish settlements and sanctuaries in North America in pre-Columbian times, bringing with them the Templar treasure, can be all-consuming.

That being said, Scott and Janet Wolter are currently conducting an in-depth investigation into a 12th century document that Scott has named the *C-Document*, or *Cremona Document*, because it first came to light in the mid-1900's in Cremona, Italy. This authenticated document, (actually two documents recorded by the learned monks of the Castrum Sepulcher in Serborga, Italy) provides the required historical connection between the nine original Poor Fellow-Soldiers (Knights) of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon (hence the name, Knights Templar); their early 12th century discovery (1108–1118) below the ancient site of the Temple of Solomon; the later 12th century mission (1177 – 1180) to America by an English Knight Templar, Sir Knight Ralph De Sudeley (one of my 25th

generation great-grandfathers); and the late 14th century mission (1398 – 1402) to America by the then-hereditary grand master of the Scottish Knights Templar, Prince Henry Sinclair (b. 1358), (one of my 20th generation great-grandfathers).

It was Prince Henry and his refugee Scottish Knights Templar who went on to establish a series of Templar sanctuaries across North America. With the guidance and fraternity of his Native North American “blood brothers” of the larger Algonquin Nation, it was the direct descendants of a holy bloodline established between the Templars and Native North Americans who were responsible for establishing the last refuge of the Knights Templar, along with establishing a final repository for the Templar treasure.

For an in-depth understanding of the *Cremona Documents* and their importance in relation to the overall question behind the Knights Templar in the New World, one needs to read *Cryptic Code of the Templars in America: Origins of the Hooked X Symbol*. For an in-depth understanding of the role that Prince Henry Sinclair and those Scottish Templars who followed him across Native North America play in this story, one needs to follow the path that I've discovered and written about in my three books, which I have identified and coined as a Templar trilogy.¹³

One cannot forget the underlying *raison d'être* of the early Knights Templar and the many royal families interspersed across Europe, the Middle East (mainly Turkey, Edessa, and Armenia), and Scandinavia, from which their ranks were continuously filled. Outwardly, the earliest Frankish-Norman-English Templar families were practicing Roman Catholics.

Inwardly many of these families secretly maintained older Judeo-Christian beliefs, having directly descended from the many Jewish (*Ivri*) High Priests of the 1st century and beyond.

This means, among many things, that they possessed direct knowledge of exactly where the sacred treasure of the Temple had been hidden during the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. In turn, this means that the stated purpose of the earliest Poor Fellow-Soldiers (Knights) of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon of protecting the pilgrims of Jerusalem was nothing more than a clever ruse. Conversely, their one and true purpose was to recover and subsequently protect at all costs the Temple treasure. Possession of the treasure, in whatever form, allowed the Knights of the Temple to successfully petition Pope Innocent II in 1129 to be formally recognized as a distinct religious and military order, only answerable to the pope himself.

Godfrey de (Boulogne) Bouillon (1061–1100), the defender of Jerusalem, and his brother, Baldwin I (1058–1118), who took the title that Godfrey denied, “king of Jerusalem,” were both from one of the exalted Crusader families (de Boulogne/Bouillon) who took Jerusalem for the first time. As was the custom, Baldwin de Boulogne dropped all other titles, including count of Edessa when he was crowned king of Jerusalem. The title, count of Edessa, was conveyed to his good friend, Baldwin of Rethel, a fellow Crusader.

Neither Godfrey nor Baldwin I had any children, so the de Bourgogne bloodline descends from their brother, Eustace III (1059–1125), *compte* (count) de Boulogne (one of my 27th generation knight templar

tion great-grandfathers). It was Hugues de Pay(e)ns (one of my 26th generation great-grandfathers), another of the original nine knights, who became the first grand master of the Knights Templar following their formal recognition during the Council of Troyes in 1129.

The House of Boulogne ruled Jerusalem between 1099 and 1118, with Godfrey assuming the title of “protector of the Holy Sepulchre” for only one year between 1099 and 1100, due to his death on July 18, 1100, at the age of forty. Then his brother, Baldwin I, assumed the title of king of Jerusalem until his death in 1118, with Warmund de Picquigny (1069–1128) assuming the position of regent of Jerusalem (1116–1118) after Baldwin I fell seriously ill in 1116.

The title of “king of Jerusalem” was the highest honor of the Holy Kingdom, and many of the kings and Latin patriarchs of Jerusalem (Crusaders themselves) paved the way for the Knights Templar and their clandestine activities. The title of king was in part hereditary in nature and in part determined by election or at least recognition by the *Haute Cour* (High or Supreme Court). As such, the story of the nine original members of the Knights Templar would not be complete without reference to Warmund de Picquigny. Known also as Guermond (one of my 25th generation great-grandfathers), Warmund was a fellow Crusader, who also became the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem (1118–1128).

The story of the formation of the Knights Templar suggests that Warmund de Picquigny was the one who was first approached by the group of Christian Knights requesting permission to elect a master to lead them to defend the kingdom. Upon receiving his consent, Hugues

de Payens was chosen as the first grand master of the Knights Templar. Warmund was the one who granted the stables of King Solomon to the original nine knights for their exclusive use. It was also Warmund who apparently charged the Knights Templar with the duty of keeping the roads safe from thieves and others who were routinely robbing and killing pilgrims in route to Jerusalem.

Warmund was also a half-brother to Geoffrey V Plantagenet D'Anjou (another 25th generation great-grandfather). In turn, Geoffrey V Plantagenet D'Anjou (1113–1151) was father to King Henry Plantagenet II (another 24th generation great-grandfather) of England (1133–1189), the first-ever Plantagenet king. The aforementioned De Sudeley family shared the same ancestral roots with both the House of Boulogne and the House of Anjou, thus providing the distinct familial connection between the first Knights Templar and those who sailed to America in 1178. The surname Plantagenet certainly suggests the growing branches of a familial vine, which is one way to describe the concept of strategic intermarriage.

Warmund de Picquigny's descendants also include Henri I, king of Navarre (1244–1274), and his daughter Jeanne, princess of Navarre (1271–1305), who married Philip IV "the Fair" of France (1268–1314). Given the theme of strategic intermarriage throughout this story and considering the "all in the family" scenario, it was surprisingly Philip IV (one of my 20th generation great-grandfathers) who conspired unsuccessfully with Pope Clement V to destroy the Templar order in 1307 in order to seize the Templar treasury. Although it begs the question as to whether the

king and pope also secretly desired the even more-valuable, more-secretive sacred treasure.

Following Baldwin I's death in 1118, the House of Rethel assumed the throne of Jerusalem, with Baldwin II of Rethel (one of my 28th generation great-grandfathers) the-then count of Edessa, becoming king of Jerusalem between 1118 and 1131. Baldwin I had actually bequeathed Jerusalem to his younger brother, the aforementioned Eustace III of Boulogne, stipulating that the throne was to be offered to Baldwin of Rethel if Eustace III failed to come to the Holy Land. Baldwin of Rethel had initially accompanied Godfrey de Bouillon and Baldwin I to the Holy Land prior to the First Crusade. He had also fought alongside Baldwin I against the Seljuk Turks during the battle of Harran (1104) and was also present in Jerusalem when Baldwin I died.

Somewhat suspiciously, the highest-ranking prelate at that time, Arnulf of Chocques (d. 1118), the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem (1112–1118), and Joscelin I of Courtenay (d. 1141) who held the largest fiefdom in the kingdom, convinced their peers that Baldwin of Rethel should be elected without delay to avoid an interregnum (an interruption in royal title). Joscelin I would be rewarded by Baldwin II for his support with the County of Edessa, receiving the coveted title, count of Edessa.

When Eustace III learned of his brother's death, he left Boulogne for Jerusalem, travelling as far as Apulia, Italy, when he was informed of Baldwin II's ascension to the throne. The delegates accompanying him tried to convince him to continue his journey, saying that Baldwin II's election was illegal, but it is said that Eustace preferred to return home.

This is not however the end of the story by any means. It appears that the titles of king and queen of Jerusalem tempted over the next 200 years even the most solemn and pious members of the multi-generational Christians native to the Holy Land.

Following Baldwin II's death in 1131, it was his oldest daughter Melisende (1105–1161), who would be crowned Queen of Jerusalem, since there was no male heir to the throne. Just before Baldwin II died, he was determined to strengthen Melisende's position by marrying her to a powerful Lord, Fulk V count of Anjou (another one of my 25th generation great-grandfathers). Fulk (or Fouques) V (1092–1143) was a wealthy Crusader and experienced military commander and a widower. Part of the marriage contract was the stipulation that Fulk would receive the title of king of Jerusalem, after renouncing all of his previous titles.

Baldwin II acquiesced to the condition and thus the House of Anjou would go on to rule Jerusalem following Melisende's death in 1153 until 1205. In 1153, Baldwin III of Anjou (1130–1163), son of Melisende and Fulk, would take over the reign until his death in 1163, to be followed by Amalric I (1136–1174), another son of Fulk and Melisende, and then by Baldwin IV, the Leprous (1161–1185), son of King Amalric (another of my 24th generation great-grandfathers) and Agnes of Courtenay, and then along with his nephew, Baldwin V (1166–1185) son of Sibylla (1157–1190) and her first husband, William of Montferrat, both jointly ruled until their deaths (rather coincidently?) in 1185.

Neither Baldwin IV nor Baldwin V had produced heirs, so Sibylla, daughter

of King Amalric and Agnes of Courtenay, assumed the position of queen of Jerusalem in 1186, along with her second husband, Guy of Lusignan (1150–1194), son of Hugh VIII (another of my 24th generation great-grandfathers) of Lusignan (1106–1165) and Bourgogne de Rancon (1120–1169). Sibylla died in 1190, but Guy continued to rule until his death in 1194.

Many of those reading this article will recognize the backstory to the epic 2005 historical drama, *Kingdom of Heaven*, starring Orlando Bloom and Eva Green. The movie is roughly based on the turmoil during the period leading up to the Third Crusade (1189–1192) in the Holy Land and the folly of the Knight Templar, King Guy Lusignan. It was through Guy's arrogance and stupidity that Jerusalem fell in 1187 to the great Saladin. Orlando Bloom plays Balian, a blacksmith who becomes knighted due to his bravery, becoming the defender of Jerusalem and eventually leading those Christians who survived the Muslim siege out of the conquered city. During the movie, while not fighting, Sir Balian of Ibelin strategizes not only with the leper king, Baldwin IV, and the Templar grand master, Gerard de Ridefort, but becomes the lover to Queen Sibylla, King Baldwin IV's sister, mother of Baldwin V and wife of Guy Lusignan.

Hopefully, you get the overall picture. 12th century Jerusalem and the Holy Land was certainly a time of highly-charged political and court intrigue and strategic intermarriage, with the title of king and queen of Jerusalem constantly being contested. However, the lead-up and political manipulations to the disastrous Third Crusade provided the perfect diversion for a voyage to America

between 1177 and 1180 by the English Templar, Sir Ralph De Sudeley, and five other trusted Knights with the purpose of consolidating a portion of the scattered Temple treasure.

As previously noted, approximately 200 years later, Henry Sinclair, prince of Norway and the Orkneys, along with his group of refugee Scottish Knights Templar, would make their clandestine voyage to Native North America with the additional purpose of establishing secret sanctuaries across the vast expanse of the “New World” continent. It would be at the last North American refuge that the descendents of this Templar mission deposited the Templar treasure, leaving its guardianship to the native Blackfoot *Mide’win*, who by this time were their brothers through several generations of intermarriage.

When coupled with the DNA work by Steve St. Clair, along with the extensive genealogical work compiled by Steve and myself and the in-depth research of Scott and Janet Wolter that this rather sublime story is starting to be completed. Yet we all realize that we all need to heed the mantra to “always look beyond.” We constantly need to always look beyond what we have discovered or surmised to date. We also need to always look beyond where we believe the final resting place of the vault lies. Finally, we also need to always look beyond the pure speculative and apply both the speculative and operative sides of the equation.

As indicated previously, the inner circle of the Knights Templar consisted of highly spiritual, almost mystical, warrior-monks whose main purpose was to protect at all costs the Templar treasure. They realized however the practical aspect of that task, that in order to

physically build a Temple of Solomon in a New Jerusalem worthy of housing the Templar treasure, three major elements were required – stone (limestone), timber (great cedars), and (huge amounts of) gold. The *Bible*, in fact, tells us that over sixty tons of gold were used in gilding the original Solomon’s Temple.

The question is then, “Where in North America are there vast quantities of limestone, giant cedars, and gold, which could readily be mined and refined?” Where then are the lost gold mines of King Solomon? A cursory internet search will quickly provide the answer – the great state of Montana – the Treasure State. Montana has provided to date over eighty percent of America’s gold, but identifying the precise location of the sacred vault is like finding a needle in a haystack.

It can generally be said that the two main principles upon which Freemasonry is based are sacred geometry and moral allegory, as it applies to the rebuilding of Solomon’s Temple, but from where and when did these two principles derive? In terms of Christian Masonry, from where and when did the concept of the Ineffable Name and the Holy Trinity derive? Many Masons understand that they derived from the philosophical teachings of the Antients, those who preceded Christ. They derived from the teachings of Greek mathematicians and philosophers such as Pythagoras and Euclid, from Plato and Aristotle. They also derived from the concept of the sacred feminine, encompassing an earlier veneration of the goddess, Mother Earth.

This is part of the ancient knowledge that lies in the secret crypt which most probably includes priceless relics from the Jewish Temple, ancient scrolls from

the Library of Alexandria, and possibly even records from a time before the Great Flood, as recorded on the pillars of the First Temple. There may even be genealogical records, sacred relics, and artifacts relating to the purported Holy Family of author Dan Brown and *The Da Vinci Code* fame. Did the Jewish rabbi Jesus take the high priestess, Mary Magdalene, as his wife and produce a holy family? The key is to remember that this may not be the ultimate secret. The key is always to look beyond what you think is the ultimate treasure and search your soul for the truth.

Looking beyond, looking further back in time, Hermes was a Greek god gifted with the forbidden knowledge of the Universe. A quote from the *Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus* translates into the phrase, "As above, so below," which in turn suggests that one should look beyond the established Christian tenets to at least the beginning of Judeo-Christian thought. One must surely look beyond the Christian tenets accepted by those who, at the urging of Holy Roman Emperor Constantine, during the First Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, established the basis for the Christianity practiced today.

The rather enigmatic 19th century American Knight Templar and Scottish Rite Sovereign Grand Commander Albert Pike and his Canadian counterpart, W. J. B. MacLeod Moore, apparently shared at least an inkling as to where the last refuge of the Knights Templar lay. Based on authenticated correspondence that I uncovered some six years ago within the Sovereign Great Priory's Grand Chancellery while the Sovereign Great Priory's grand historian and archivist, I have been able to discern through

knight templar

the letters that Pike, at the very least, spoke directly of both the goddess and the hidden vault to MacLeod Moore, the first Supreme grand master of the Sovereign Great Priory.

Rather surprisingly, given his extensive background as a Confederate brigadier general and probable membership in the Knights of the Golden Circle, Pike had earned the undying allegiance of the Algonquin people (Cherokee and Choctaw), who initiated him into their secret society. However, it appears that Pike both accepted yet despised the knowledge that he came to possess, much like the old man of the mountain. His was most certainly a heavy burden, which lay deeply in his soul until his death in 1891.



Albert Pike dressed in Knight Templar Uniform, black and white photo, c. mid-19th century, origin unknown (image within public domain)

(Take note of both the Royal Arch and Scottish Rite collar and jewels on Pike's chest.)

In conclusion, once the time and space continuum is set, then what is left, assuming the proper application of sacred geometry and moral allegory, is for the all-encompassing “sacred vault” to finally be located, along with the “key” to unlocking the vault, but before one may even have the opportunity to make the choice as to whether to open the vault, again one must look beyond. Is the discovery of the sacred vault or secret crypt the end of the journey, or is it the start of another, higher journey? Should we awaken the old man of the mountain? Only the proper time and place will give us the answer.

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Articles Needed!

Did you know that almost all the articles in the *Knight Templar* magazine are written by our readers?

Our magazine publishes articles dealing with the history, philosophy, and symbolism of Freemasonry, Christianity, and Templary. We have published articles that have been carefully researched and documented and also articles that are simply someone's opinion.

Many of you have presented programs or papers to your Lodge, Lodge of Research, Allied Masonic Degrees Council, or Rosicrucian College. Maybe you would consider sharing your paper or speech with a wider audience!

Here is how you submit an article for consideration:

The article should be single spaced and in either Microsoft Word or plain text format if possible. No special formatting is required, that's my job. Send it to me via E-Mail to ktmagazine@comcast.net. Please do not send me handwritten articles or typed articles through the mail.

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When I receive articles, I submit them to the Editorial Review Board who votes whether or not to publish them, and I will get back to you either way. This may take some time. I look forward to hearing from several of you!

John L. Palmer, Managing Editor



Knights



at the Bookshelf

By

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

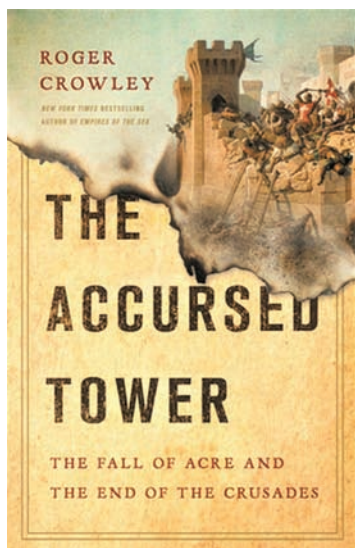
Roger Crowley, *The Accursed Tower: The Fall of Acre and the End of the Crusades*, Basic Books, 2019, Hardbound, 254 pages, ISBN: 978-1-5416-9734-8.

I had the pleasure of reading and reviewing one of Mr. Crowley's books, *Empires of the Sea*, which review appeared in the August 2011 issue of this magazine. As I thoroughly enjoyed his very readable, yet well-researched style, I was anxious to acquire the present book when I read of its imminent publication in the *BBC History Magazine*, to which I subscribe, and my expectations were not disappointed.

The May 1291 siege of Acre was the death knell of the Christian Crusades — the final bloody battle for the Holy Land. After a desperate six weeks, the beleaguered city and its citadels were overrun by the Mamluks, bringing an end to Christendom's two-hundred-year tenure in Outremer.

In this book, Mr. Crowley presents a vigorous narrative of the events which led up to the siege and then a vivid, blow-by-blow account of the final climactic battle. Beginning with Louis IX's failed crusade of 1249-50, he examines the rise of the Mamluks in Egypt and their conquests under the sultans Baybars, Qalawun, and al-Khalil in the Holy Land leading up to the siege of Acre. Drawing on contemporary Arabic, French, and Latin primary sources throughout the book, he eventually sets the stage for the final battle with a detailed description of the implements used in siege warfare by both sides and by taking us on a tour of ancient Acre and its fortifications.

The siege and battle are related in vivid and often bloody detail, with accounts largely drawn from the eyewitness notes of the anonymous "Templar of Tyre" as related in the *Les Gestes des Chiprois*. Mr. Crowley presents an extraordinary picture of the conflict, notable for its individual heroism and savage slaughter on both sides. He



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also presents in detail the valiant conduct of the Templars and Hospitallers in their attempts to defend the city.

The last two chapters serve as an epilogue, describing the fortunes and fates of the major participants on both sides as well as that of the physical structures of the city of Acre itself.

The book has an extensive bibliography of both contemporary and modern sources and footnotes where appropriate. It is well-written, certainly not dry and tedious, and should be of interest to every Sir Knight who has an interest in the era of the Crusades.



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We publish letters and articles from a variety of sources and points of view. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Grand Encampment, the *Knight Templar* magazine, or the Editorial Review Board.

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