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KNIGHT TEMPLAR



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From Your Editor

Welcome to the September issue of the *Knight Templar*. If you are interested in contributing content, please email me at ben@knightstemplar.org. We are always looking for good material to fill these pages. Please note our *Submissions Guidelines* on the website (or email me for a copy).

If you would like to submit a photo for our cover, please email me a high-resolution image of some scene from your commandery or grand commandery. Please make sure the image is 300 dpi at 8.75" x 5.625" (live area of 8.5 x 5.5). Close ups of people are preferred. Please consider composition and lighting.

In this issue we have an interesting article about a bequest made to the Templars (and other Orders) by the king of Aragon and Castille in the twelfth century. It remains a mystery as to the true cause of this largesse. For some reason – contextual evidence suggests King Alfonso may have been gay – his marriage to the Queen of Léon and Castille, Urraca, failed to produce issue. As a result, perhaps to weaken the church, he left everything to the Templars, the Knights of St. John, and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. But his bequest failed to perfect – the establishment could not countermand their own interests in the lands. And for reasons obscured in history, – again, perhaps because of his homosexuality – King Alfonso was not afforded a public funeral. See *When the Crusading Orders Inherited a Kingdom* on page 7.

We also have an essay from the Grand Encampment Education Committee's *Templar Ritualist* course. This essay scored highly and sets forth a nice overview of the history of the island of Malta. Check it out on page 11.

Lastly, we have a thoughtful revisit to a

contested topic: *On the Templar Connection in Freemasonry*. Page 22. The author revisits the evidence that Templars may have founded the speculative Craft as a means to perpetuate their existence in secret and freely travel between the realms. The cause for a Jacobite Masonry – a Catholic Masonry arising in support of Prince Charles Edward Stewart (the Young Pretender to the British Crown) – continues to be intriguing. An understanding of the Enlightenment is incomplete absent a thoughtful review of the role Freemasonry played between the Tories and Whigs in Britain: the role of Masonry in establishing networks between Catholic and Protestant factions across eighteenth century Europe.

Lastly, this month marks the 100th anniversary of the cornerstone consecration of the Detroit Masonic Temple – once the largest building in the world. See ad on the inside back cover for more information and to get tickets to this historic event. I'll see you there – it looks to be a fun program, worthy of your support.

Of note, the Detroit Temple was saved from forfeiture in 2013 by none other than rock and roller Jack White (of the *White Stripes*), who anonymously paid \$142,000 in back taxes. He has some affection for the building: His mom used to work there.



Sir Knight Ben Williams
Editor

Grand Master's Message

Sir Knight David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



This month, the officers of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, together with administrative staff from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, will be proudly representing our Order at the Annual Assembly of the Supreme Assembly of the Social Order of the Beauceant.

We are immensely proud of the connection that exists between our two Christian Orders, and we celebrate the tremendous success of their Supreme Worthy President, Mrs. Charles Thames of Tennessee. Lady Susan and her Sir Knight, Charles ("Chucky Baby") Thames, Past Grand Commander of Tennessee, have covered our nation from border to border and coast to coast sharing the Christian message of love and service within our Orders.

These wonderful ladies of beauty and grace will once again share what each assembly has contributed to our shared philanthropy, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Every Sir Knight within the ranks of the Grand Encampment should be proud of the dedication and service of these fine examples of our Lord's directions for giving and sharing.

Most of you are now aware that the Grand Encampment has entered a new season with the Social Order of the Beauceant to promote our mutual programs and charities. Additionally, our sir knights will be engaged in strategies within their jurisdictions to better support their local assemblies and promote this beautiful Order.

May God bless our endeavors and may their ranks swell with increased spirit-filled members and leaders.

This month also begins the second year of the 69th Triennium and with it new and exciting opportunities to discuss the continuing evolution of our magnanimous Order. Please plan to attend one of the eight department conferences and share your opinions with our staff as together we move ahead.

Thank you all for your continuing support.

Our journey continues....

David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master

Prelate's Apartment

Reverend Sir Knight Terry L. Plemons
Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment



May the grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with His people!

We read in the Book of Ephesians, "For by Grace you have been saved through Faith."

I believe Faith to be absolute and total abandonment into the care of the Lord. In the gospel of Matthew, we read how the disciples were overtaken by a storm. In a boat rowing until weariness overcame them, all human power having failed them, they surely thought they must perish.

But in the midst of their storm, Jesus appeared and began speaking to them. His words are still relevant today, "Be of good cheer it is I, be not afraid."

Often, we discover the great mystery of God's love and His faithfulness to us hidden in the struggles of life.

1 Peter: 5 tells us to cast all our cares upon Him. In Psalms 46:10 God says, "be still and know that I am God." In other words, remember in whom our faith is founded.

The Psalmist writes, "Whence cometh my help"; "My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." Scripture is

full of "faith" stories that can strengthen us today.

By Faith Abraham took his son Isaac to the top of the mountain. By Faith Moses returned to Egypt and led the Children of Israel to the Promised Land. By Faith Stephen turned his eyes towards heaven as stone after stone struck him until he closed his eyes in death.

By faith, Jesus Christ got up from his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, having sweated drops of blood, praying that the cup of death might pass from him. It was by faith that He went to the cross where our sin might be cast upon Him; in faith He called out to His Father, to our Father, to "forgive them" for what they were doing.

In Faith, He closed His eyes in death entrusting His spirit to the Father, rising victorious on the third day calling all men to Faith.

In Christ's Love,

Terry L Plemons,
Grand Prelate

When the Crusading Orders Inherited a Kingdom...

Well, *Almost!*

by George Marshall

The Middle Ages revolved around births, marriages, and deaths.

Thrones and empires were passed down to the ruler's firstborn – preferably the oldest legitimate son – by the right known as *primogeniture*. With good luck and good genes, kingdom and dominion could be retained “in the family” for centuries.

But what about rulers who failed to have legitimate sons or daughters? How would the question of succession and ascension be decided? In a few cases, illegitimate offspring were successful in claiming the throne; in others, wars between ambitious nobles would ensue, with the victor claiming the crown. Sometimes succession was preserved when, in a last will and testament, the sovereign designated an heir to succeed him.

This article presents an example of this latter method of succession: when a childless ruler named three crusading orders to be joint rulers of his kingdom. The attempted bequest failed.

The ruler was Alfonso (c.1073-1134), knight templar



King Alfonso I of Aragon

By Francisco Pradilla y Ortiz (1879)

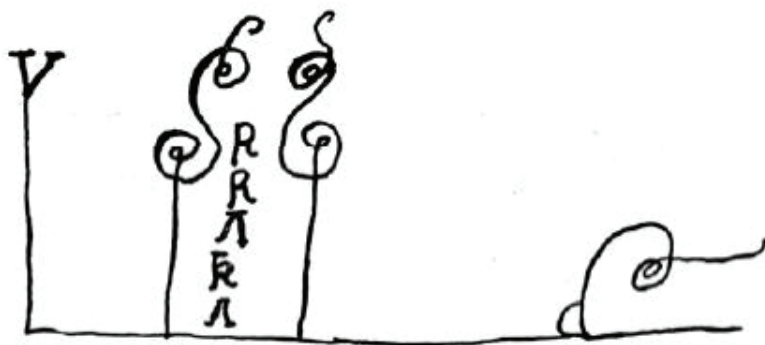
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known as “the Battler,” who was a crusader king of Aragon and Navarre in Spain from 1104-1134.

Quite often, when we hear the word “crusade,” we think of the conflict in the Middle East and Holy Land, but it is also true that crusades were ongoing in Spain (the *Reconquista*) to drive out the Spanish Muslims, or Moors.

Alfonso was a religious man. He spent the bulk of his years as king fighting the Moors and winning many

battles against them – most notably the conquest of the Muslim city of Zaragoza. His nickname, “the Battler,” was well-deserved. He even created two orders of Christian knighthood: The first was the Confraternity of Belchite, a community of knights founded in 1122 and lasting until shortly after 1136. Members could enlist permanently or for a set time, vowing “never to live at peace with the pagans but to devote all their days to molesting and fighting them.” The Order existed for “the defense of Christians and the oppression of Saracens.” It was a Christian order



Signature of Urraca, future Queen of León and Castille, in 1097. Detail of charter reproduced in *O Mosteiro de Santo Tirso de 978 a 1588: a silhueta de uma entidade projectada no chão de uma história milenária*, doctoral dissertation, University of Santiago de Compostela, 2008.

dedicated to holy war against Muslims; its impetus and development coincided with that of the international military orders and it introduced the concept of an indulgence proportional to length of service. It was the first of the military orders in Aragon. Years later, Alfonso organized a branch of the *Militia Christi* of the Holy Land at Monreal del Campo.

Unfortunately, Alfonso was not as successful in marriage as he was in battle. He was married (at well over thirty years old as a habitual bachelor) in 1109, to the ambitious Queen Urraca of León, widow of Raymond of Burgundy. Urraca was a passionate woman unsuited for a subordinate role. The marriage had been arranged by her father, Alfonso VI of León, in 1106 to unite the two chief Christian states against the Moors, and to supply them with a capable military leader. But Urraca was tenacious as queen regnant; husband and wife quarreled and came to open war – he even subjected her to siege at Astorga in 1112.

The marriage of Alfonso and Urraca had been declared null by the Pope in 1110: they were second cousins. But Alfonso ignored the papal pronouncement and clung to his childless union with Urraca

until 1114. During his marriage, he styled himself “King and Emperor of Castile, Toledo, Aragón, Pamplona, Sobrarbe, and Ribagorza” in recognition of his rights as Urraca’s husband; of his inheritance to the lands of his father (including the kingdom of his great-uncle); and to impel a duty to conquer Andalusia from the Muslims. He inserted the title of Emperor on the basis that he had three kingdoms under his rule.

Alfonso’s late childless marriage, and his failure to remarry and produce the heir that should have been a dynastic cornerstone of his aggressive territorial policies, have been cited as apparent of his lack of interest in women. The medieval Arab (or Kurdish) historian and biographer, Ibn al-Athir (1166–1234), described Alfonso as a tireless soldier who would sleep in his armor without benefit of cover, who, when asked why he did not take his pleasure from one of the female captives of Muslim chiefs, responded that the man devoted to war needs the companionship of men, not women. His only close male relative, a brother, Ramiro, had become a Cluny monk.

At the Siege of Bayonne in October, 1131, three years before his death, Alfonso published a will leaving his kingdom to

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Ramiro II of Aragon

By Manuel Aguirre y Monsalbe (c. 1851-1854)

three prominent religious orders based in Palestine. Each were largely politically independent – the Knights Templar, the Hospitallers, and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, whose influences might have been expected to cancel one another out. After listing the donations that would be made to different monasteries in his kingdom, this testament, first published by Moret in his *Anales* (Annals of the Kings of Navarre) states:

Therefore, after my death I leave as heir and successor to me the Sepulchre of the Lord which is Jerusalem and those who observe and guard and serve God there, and to the Hospital of the poor which is of Jerusalem, and to the Temple of Solomon with the knights who keep vigil there to defend the name of Christendom. To these three I concede my whole kingdom . . .

This testament, dictated in front of knight templar

the walls of Bayonne, was ratified shortly before the Battle of Fraga, in 1134, Alfonso's only defeat in the long years of the Iberian crusade. Fraga was the immediate cause of his death – probably due to wounds he suffered in combat.

The will has greatly puzzled historians, who have read it as a strange gesture of extreme piety, one that effectively undid his life's work. It might have been an attempt to neutralize the papacy's interest in a disputed succession – Aragon had been a fief of the papacy since 1068 – and to disinherit Urraca's son (from her first marriage), Alfonso VII of Castile, because the papacy would be bound to press the terms of such a pious testament. Generous bequests made to churches and abbeys in Castile roused noble churchmen as beneficiaries – incentivized by the will to countervail Alfonso VII's ambitions to succession – and yet among the persons witnessing the bequest in 1131 there is not a single cleric.

Upon his death, however, something unusual happened that broke with medieval custom: the funeral rites due a man of his rank were not rendered. His body was removed from any possible homage of his subjects and was hastily taken for burial, somewhat secretly, to a monastery. His will was ignored. His nobles refused to carry it out.

The general population did not hear of his death until his brother, Ramiro, who was bishop of Roda and Barbastro, was taken out of his monastery and made their sovereign. Everything surrounding this transfer of power was rushed: the papal dispensation that freed Ramiro – from that moment on, Ramiro II – from his vows and then his immediate wedding to a Catalan noblewoman, Inés de Poitiers. A daughter, Petronilla, was born the following year and was offered in matrimony in 1137

(before she was two years old) to the count of Barcelona, Ramon Berenger IV, who immediately became Prince of Aragon and regent of the kingdom. The former monk Ramiro happily returned to monastic obedience, after officially re-establishing the dynastic continuity of Aragon and the union of his kingdom and the county of Barcelona.

The Catalan-Aragonese crown had been created and the two realms would remain as one throughout the Middle Ages. As it turned out, Petronilla gave birth to a healthy baby boy in 1152 who became king after her. Prince Ramon was charged with dealing with the military orders, presumably the legacy of Alfonso the Battler, which he officially installed throughout the kingdom, giving them numerous fortified plazas in exchange for their renunciation of the rights conferred by the controversial will and testament barely three years earlier.

Had Alfonso's will been carried out, Aragon would have become the first kingdom to be run by crusading Orders of the type later exemplified by the Teutonic Knights in Prussia and the Hospitallers in Rhodes.

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Sir Knight George Marshall, KGT, is a Past Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Alabama. A member of the *Knight Templar* Editorial Review Board and chairman of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar History Committee, he is a frequent contributor to the *Knight Templar* and the *Royal Arch Mason*. He can be reached at geomarsh@yahoo.com.

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A History of the Island of Malta and its Significance to the Knights of Malta

by William E. McCraw



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Valetta, Capital of Malta

The historical record of the island of Malta begins around 5900 BC. During this neolithic period, fishing and farming communities migrated from Sicily and re-established themselves in the Maltese islands. However, due to poor agricultural methods and severe droughts caused by climate fluctuations, the islands were rendered uninhabitable.

A second period of Sicilian colonization began around 3850 BC. Over the following 1,500 years, the colonies would attempt the impossible: construction of monolithic temples devoted to fertility goddess cults of that age. We can only speculate why, or exactly when, after 2350 BC the civilization occupying Malta disappeared. An infant mortality rate of fifty percent or greater from 2600 BC to 2400 BC could have been knight templar

a catalyst. But archaeologists cannot say for certain.

Many peoples made similar attempts at settlement of the island, without more than moderate – even brief – success. Around the eighth century BC, Phoenicians (probably from Tyre) colonized the island. What started out as a Bronze Age settlement would eventually develop into a city state called Maleth. Maleth became a burgeoning administrative center of the island. Located on a high ground plateau in northern Malta, it was naturally defensible. They called the city “Safe Haven” or “Maleth”; or “Melita” in Greek. Soon, the entire island would assume the name Melita when the Greeks settled the island by 736 BC.

Another theory regarding the origin of the island’s name suggests that Malta



Grand Harbour, Malta

derives its name from the Greek word μέλι (*meli*), “honey.” According to this theory, the Greeks called the island Μελίτη (*Melitē*) meaning “honey-sweet” (which was also the name of a Nereid, one of the fifty to one-hundred daughters of the sea god, Nereus, and Doris, daughter of Oceanus, the god of the water encircling the flat Earth), possibly due to Malta’s unique production of honey. An endemic species of bee (*Apis mellifera ruttneri*) still lives on the island, hence the popular nickname, “land of honey”.

By 528 BC, the Carthaginians assumed control of the island. Under the rule of Carthage, Melita became a prospering city of trade. As the hub of trade and commerce between the African and European continents, the island became a bridge of sorts, facilitating trade that stretched from the ancient region of Tripolitania, throughout the Mediterranean to southern Italy. Greek influence in Melita’s culture became evincible in the island’s architecture, and, ultimately, in the adoption of the Greek language.

War between Carthage and Rome broke out by 264 BC. In 255 BC, Rome would devastate Melita during the First Punic War. *Cathāgō delenda est* (“Carthage must be destroyed!”).

By the Second Punic War, Melita was surrendered to the Roman Consul, Tiberius Sempronius Longus. Melita was not in fact an intended target – the Consul Sempronius was *en route* to northern Africa to join forces with the Roman general Publius Cornelius Scipio. In 218 BC, while in Sicily to gather forces and supplies, Sempronius captured Melita from the Carthaginians without resistance. Melita now came under Roman rule.

Succumbing to Roman culture, Melita would prosper once more. Becoming a province of Sicily and a *civitas federata* (or allied state) of Rome, Melita (now Melite) would adopt Latin as its official language. The ancient religion of Rome – with her syncretized pantheon of gods and goddesses – became the official religion of Melite. Melite remained a part of the Roman Empire until 535 AD.

In 57 AD Saint Paul the Apostle (formerly Saul of Tarsus) was falsely accused by a riotous mob and subsequently arrested by the Romans. From 57 to 60 AD, Paul was brought before Chief Priests, Jewish Leaders, and Roman Governors alike – to stand trial. A centurion of the Augustan Cohort, known only as Julius, was appointed to take charge of Paul and several



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other prisoners. Julius showed kindness to Paul and allowed him to visit with friends. He even prevented Paul's murder at sea when a severe gale rent apart the ship Paul and the centurion were aboard. A contested topic among the archaeological community, accepted tradition nonetheless records Paul's shipwreck near a bay in Melite, which still bears the name *St. Paul's Bay*.

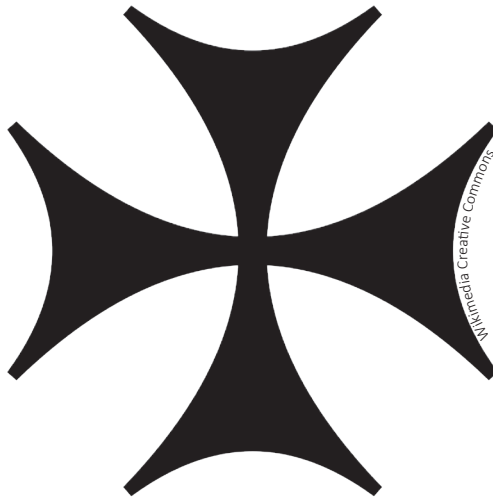
After the Roman occupation, Melite was conquered by the Vandals and ruled over by a kingdom in Northern Africa. Melite then passed from the hands of the Vandals to Flavius Odoacer, king of Italy. After his defeat in 493 AD, Melite was surrendered as tribute to Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths of Italy. In 535 AD, during the conquest of Italy, Melite passed to the Byzantine Empire. Henceforth, little attention is paid to Melite's history. Under the Byzantines, Melite is relegated to a port – and a place of exile.

Then, through the early eighth-century, Muslims began their conquests known as the Muslim Expansion. In 870, Aghlabid Muslims led by Halaf al-Hādīm sacked the city of Melite. Al-Hādīm was killed in battle but his successor, Sawāda Ibn Muhammad, continued the siege. By 1049 Melite had been rebuilt. The city was renamed *Medina*.

The Byzantines attempted to retake Medina in 1054, but failed to reclaim the city.

It wasn't until the Norman conquest in 1091 that the island assumed Christian rule. Leaders of the Muslim communities became vassals, serving Count Roger I of Sicily. By 1122, a Muslim uprising threatened Norman rule. Roger II of Sicily (Son of Count Roger I of Sicily) reconquered the island, fully establishing Norman rule in 1127.

For the next 440 years Malta remained under Norman/Sicilian rule. Over the centuries, Malta would be sold and resold to feudal peerage: but it remained a part of the kingdom of Sicily despite a strong Muslim community remaining on the island until 1224. In this era of Norman conquest, widespread romanization spread across the empire. Ultimately, Roman Catholicism would emerge as a key influence – a dominant power – over all empires who solicited the faith. By the time of the War of the Sicilian Vespers (1282-1302), Malta had changed hands several times. Count Charles I (of Anjou) held onto the island until 1283 when it fell to the crowns of Aragon and Castile. These two crowns eventually merged to form the Spanish Empire by 1479; thereafter, the Università



The Bolnisi Cross

handled governance and administration of Malta.

Malta became home to the Knights Hospitaller. Blessed Gerard (G  rard de Martigues), a lay brother in the Benedictine Order, became the founder of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem (Knights Hospitaller), in 1099. Adopting components from the Rule of St. Benedict and the Rule of St. Augustine, Pope Paschal II, in his papal bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis*, dated 15 February 1113, recognized the Order of St. John of Jerusalem as a new religious order. From its early beginnings, the newly established Order served as a hospice offering the sick, weary, and dying a place of rest and protection in the Christian quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.

In 1118, Raymond du Puy succeeded Blessed Gerard as the second Grand Master and Rector of the Order. Under Grand Master Raymond du Puy the hospice would expand operations into a fully functioning infirmary. Soon after, the new Grand Master expanded upon the purposes of the Order organizing the militant division of ranks.

Three such ranks emerged: namely Knight, Man-at-arms, and Chaplain. Forged in battle, the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem were granted a Coat of Arms – a silver (*Argenta*) Latin Cross in a field of red (*Gueulles*), by Pope Innocent II. Further campaigns during the Crusades in the Holy Land garnered the Hospitallers a charter of privileges granted by Frederick Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Emperor, in 1185.

In 1248, Pope Innocent IV granted his approval for a standard military dress for the Hospitallers. In battle the Hospitallers wore a uniform of a red, or black surcoat with a white cross emblazoned on it. This surcoat increased their range of motion and yielded an edge for victory: a closed cape, worn over a knight's armor, restricted movements and caused greater fatigue. The surcoat proved innovative.

Although revered for their courage and prowess in battle, the Order suffered losses in the Holy Land. After the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, Acre fell in 1191. Seeking refuge, the Order ultimately decamped to Cyprus in 1291. Foulques de Villaret became the

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Suleiman the Magnificent. Sultan of the Ottoman Empire from 1520 to 1566



Jean "Parisot" de la Valette. 49th Grand Master of the Knights of Malta, from 1557 to 1568

25th Grand Master of the Hospitallers in 1305 upon the death of his paternal uncle, the 24th Grand Master of the Order. It was Grand Master de Villaret who adopted an eight-pointed Bolnisi cross – which could be seen embroidered on his mantle – as his official seal. This cross was emblazoned on the reverse of coins of this era.

Cyprus had become a cesspool of politics and intrigue. Foulques de Villaret – seeing the need to remove the Order away from the political climate – followed his uncle's plan, and after campaigning four long years, the Knights Hospitaller moved to Rhodes – which surrendered to the Order on 15 August 1310.

In 1312, Pope Clement V issued his bull, *Ad Providam*, which handed over the entirety of the holdings and assets (with some limited exceptions) from the then-recently disbanded Knights Templar, to the Knights Hospitaller. By 1489 the uniform

knight templar

statutes began to require that all Knights of the Order of St. John wear a white eight pointed cross. Its peculiar symbolism has meanings inferred without authority, but which are nonetheless widely accepted. One suggests that each of the eight points stands for the eight ethno-linguistic administrative divisions called *Langues* (or tongues) once held by the Order. Yet another alleges the several points symbolize the eight obligations or aspirations of a soldier of Christ. It was considered a sacred duty or obligation of all Christian warriors, most especially a Knight of the Order of St. John to: 1. live in truth; 2. have an unwavering faith; 3. repent one's sins in accordance with the doctrine of the faithful; 4. give proof of humility through acts of contrition and other more corporal acts; 5. love justice above the sin of cowardice; 6. be merciful and compassionate; 7. be sincere and wholehearted in truth and justice; and, 8.

endure persecution and freely give up one's life in the name of Christ.

The "Maltese cross" would evolve in time to its current, more iconic arrowhead form, by the sixteenth century.

In the early sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire began to expand. Under Suleiman I, Caliph and Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, a campaign to rid central Europe and the Mediterranean of Christian influence, power, and rule began in earnest. The Knights Hospitallers ceded the island of Rhodes on 22 December 1523. Fearing that Rome would fall to the Ottoman Empire, Charles V and Pope Leo X agreed to grant the Island of Malta to the Knights Hospitaller.

On 21 August 1557, the 49th Grand Master of the Order was elected. Jean Parisot de la Valette, a French Nobleman, proved himself a heroic and illustrious leader. In establishing outposts throughout the Mediterranean, under la Valette's direction the Knights of Malta, as they had come to be known, had attained a pelagic mastery. Italian had now become the official language of the island. Having developed from a simple order that cared for the sick, weary, and dying – into a formidable military power – these knights began to transform the island into a cultural center filled with great works of art, palaces, churches, and breathtaking gardens – all fortified by military bases and outposts. The Knights of Malta had arrived.

Moving the headquarters of the Order to the Grand Harbour in Malta would prove one of the Knights' greatest strategies. From the harbors of Birgu, the knights would resume their attacks on all Ottoman shipping.

After failing to take Malta in 1551, Suleiman I returned 18 May 1565 in what history would record as "The Great Siege." Imbued with confidence from his victory

at Djerba in 1560, Suleiman became determined to take Malta and eradicate the Knights of Malta, vowing to wipe them from the face of the Earth.

But Grand Master la Valette had been apprised of the impending invasion via his network of spies operating through Constantinople. Heeding the warning, Grand Master la Valette called in reinforcements to assist him in rebuffing the Ottoman invasion. By the time the siege had begun, the Knights were ready. Five-hundred Knights Hospitaller (now, Knights of Malta) with an accompaniment of 8,500 soldiers, sailors, and citizens, succeeded in defending Malta for four months. Suffering a devastating and demoralizing loss of more than 35,000 troops, Suleiman I conceded on 11 September 1565.

The kingdoms of Europe were inspired by this valiant example. An alliance was formed against the Ottoman Empire. The significance of the Knights of Malta – and of Malta itself – had been revealed. The strategic location of Malta evinces its purpose and presupposes its power as an important staging post to either defend Europe against invading forces or from which to strike at foreign threats.

To the world, Malta was a key that unlocked the ambitions of conquerors. To the Knights of Malta, it was more than a mere *langue* or a military outpost. To them it was an island – the world they called home.

This article was originally submitted as part of the Grand Encampment's online *Templar Ritualist* course. To register and take the course, please visit templared.org. Sir Knight William E. McCraw is the Generalissimo of El Monte Commandery No. 2 in Ogden, Utah. He may be reached at beehive.mason@gmail.com.

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Meet Your Department Commanders

Sir Knight Timothy J. Robertson

Southwestern Department Commander

AZ • CA • HI • NV • NM • UT

Sir Knight "TJ" was born and raised on the Robertson family ranch in Price, Utah. He attended technical school in Phoenix, Ariz., and was a heavy truck technician for Peterbilt of Utah, in Salt Lake City, where he later was maintenance shop supervisor.

TJ was employed with The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources where he was the Assistant Manager of a shooting range in Salt Lake City. TJ has a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Phoenix.

TJ became a wildlife conservation officer with the State of Utah and was stationed in Moab and Price.

TJ is currently a sergeant for the Price City Police Department. TJ is the Use of Force and Defensive Tactics Coordinator for Utah State University, Peace Officer Academy.



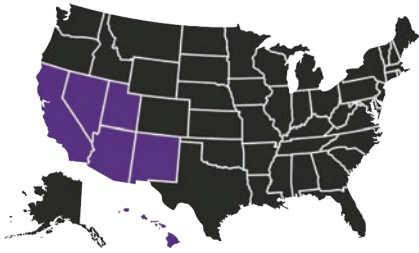
TJ served as Master Councilor of Castle Valley Chapter, Order of DeMolay. TJ was Raised in Carbon Lodge No. 16, Price, Utah. TJ is a member of Price Chapter No. 6, Royal Arch Masons, S o l o m o n Council No. 4, Cryptic Masons, and Charles Fred Jennings No. 6, Knights Templar, where he has served as High Priest, Illustrious Master, and Eminent

Commander respectively. He currently serves as Secretary/Recorder for those bodies.

TJ served as Worshipful Master of La Sal Lodge No. 30 in Moab.

TJ had a unique experience in the Grand Commandery of Utah: he followed his father through the Grand Commandery line.

TJ Served as Grand Commander in 2015, Illustrious Grand Master in 2016, and



as Grand High Priest in 2017. He served as Grand Treasurer for the three Grand York Rite bodies in Utah.

TJ served the Grand Lodge of Utah as an appointed officer, as well as District Deputy Lecturer.

TJ is a member of Camp Floyd College No. 190, York Rite Sovereign College; Behle-Simons Council No. 544, Allied Masonic Degrees; Bonneville Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine; and Utah Priory No. 57, Knights of the York Cross of Honor.

TJ served as Very Eminent Preceptor of Petra Tabernacle No. LXI, Holy Royal Arch Knights Templar Priests.

TJ resides on the family ranch in Price, Utah, with his Lady, Jen, and children, Tess and Bridger.

TJ was appointed and installed as Department Commander for the Southwestern Department at the 68th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America on August 18, 2021.

Editor's Note: In the August issue of the *Knight Templar*, we erroneously showed the islands of Hawaii as part of the Northwestern Department. Your editor, a Past Department Commander for the Northwestern Department, was probably hoping

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The Pinnacle Leaders

You can rely on a pinnacle leader for strength and encouragement through every challenge. More importantly, a pinnacle leader is there to show you how to overcome the barriers that come your way.

Reassuring and inspiring confidence, pinnacle leaders bring out the best in everyone. A pinnacle leader is your trusted friend – one who will never leave you behind no matter what happens. Pinnacle leaders care about the success of those around them.

The Council degrees are the degrees of conservation. This is most evident in the Select Master degree where we see our Grand Masters make the deposits to preserve Masonry for future generations.

Those Grand Masters had the intuition and foresight to know that a time would come when chaos might usurp the rites and secrets of Masonry, the Temple might be destroyed, and the secrets lost if acts were not taken to preserve them. But as we know, they were not alone in this venture. They were assisted by twenty-four other members of the Craft.

Leaders in their own right, these Select Masters had earned the trust of the Grand Masters. They had access to the Grand Masters. They had become highly skilled in the application of the Craft. They were selected for the leadership skills they had previously demonstrated. The Grand Masters trusted that they would keep the secrets with them and that they would

complete their tasks with beauty, strength, and integrity.

The Grand Masters recognized the prior accomplishments of these Select Masters and honored their contribution to the Craft.

They were selected because they had passed through all the levels of leadership; *they had become pinnacle leaders*. People would follow these Select Masters because of who they were and what they had accomplished, not just because they had a title. They spent their time in the quarries and had earned the permission of others to lead them. Their participation was valued, the production of their prior endeavors was noted; they helped develop the people around them and had helped everyone to succeed. This is the job of all leaders.

We should learn from this and strive to follow their examples. In Masonry, we typically start out with a title that presumes a leadership position. However, unless we work in the quarries and prove our value, we cannot attain the level of leadership that the Select Masters attained when they were set apart by kings as valued confidants.

Because they were the inner circle of the Grand Masters, because they had all learned from each other, and had held each other in mutual respect, they were all designated *ish sodi* – a “man of my choice.”

But once you become a pinnacle leader, your leadership journey is still not complete. The pinnacle leader, like the wise

– Pillars of Support



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man, knows there is always another level of improvement. He strives for constant self-development.

True leadership is not about titles, fortunes, or power. Nor is it about how many followers you have. It's about having an honest impact on the lives of others. And the best leaders will achieve their objectives no matter what the situation.

It is not about quantity. It's about quality. A true leader doesn't sell himself short nor compromise. A pinnacle leader is willing to take blame and give credit. He is an authentic role model to his followers.

Be confident in your abilities and

strengths. Never become a victim of circumstance.

If you want to learn more about leadership principles, join the York Rite Leadership Training Program. Visit the website at YorkRiteLeadership.org for more information and to register for the program.





The **Templar** Connection in M

Some of the earliest traces of the Masonic-Templar connection may have come from Albert Mackey. Mackey forwarded the theory that “Freemasonry originated in the Holy Land during the Crusades, and was instituted by the Knights Templar, was advanced by Chevalier Ramsay, for the purpose, it is supposed, of giving an aristocratic character to the association,”¹ referring to Andrew Michael Ramsay’s oration of 1737. Mackey might have made a slight mistake in this statement, as Ramsay’s oration never mentioned the Templars by name, although careful analysis of the oration reveals its purpose was to attract French aristocracy into Masonry. It downplayed the *operative* stonemason origin and claimed a much older antiquity – European Freemasonry came about from an interaction between crusader Masons and the Knights of St.

John (which is probably why early Masonic Lodges were called Lodges of St. John).² The Templar element was clearly not mentioned, though the original ideas contained in Ramsay’s oration were repeated in the earliest known Moderns ritual – the *Berne manuscript* – written in French between 1740 and 1744. It wasn’t until 1749, years after Ramsay’s death, when his work *The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion* was published, wherein he stated that “every Mason is a Knight Templar.”³ This is perhaps a more likely origin – or at least an earlier instance – of the Masonic-Templar connection.

It should be noted that Ramsay may have had a hand in creating or developing many of the *Haut Grades* in France such as the *Ecossais* or *Scots Masters* degree. He was a Scotsman and a known *Jacobite* adherent of the Stuart Royal family. Just shortly after his

Masonry



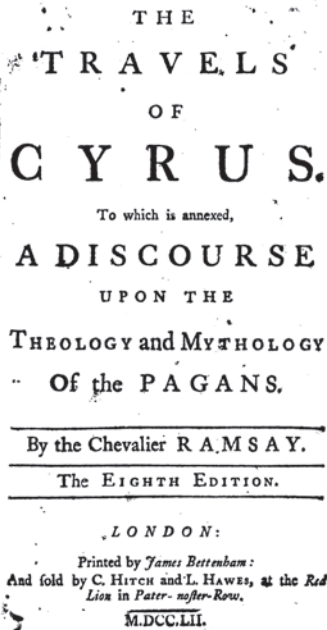
by Giovanni A. Villegas

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death in 1743, his protégée Charles Edward was exiled to France. Theories abound that, while in France, Charles Edward was said to have developed a Masonic system to aid and rally the cause of the exiled Stuarts, with one of the degrees being *Knight of the Temple*, and that he was said to have created Knights Templar in Scotland during his visits there. The Templar degree, or perhaps a variant of it, became occasionally conferred in *Antient* lodges in Great Britain during the middle of the 18th century. Encampments were formed in London, York, Bristol, and Salisbury.⁴ This form of Templary was merged into the Masonic system around 1780 when the *Antients* asserted their authority over five degrees or Orders – the *Entered Apprentice*, *Fellow Craft*, *Master Mason*, *Royal Arch*, and *Knight Templar* – the very same degrees and Orders later assumed by the York Rite of American

Freemasonry.

It is true that the Templar influence on Masonry is undeniable, but theories still abound of a possible *direct* connection between the two. For instance, it is entirely possible that the Templars indeed may have created the brotherhoods of builders – the precursor of modern *speculative* Masonry. Being protectors of the Holy Land and guardians of their Christian inhabitants, the Templars were heavily involved in the building of fortresses and churches.⁵ But they were also engaged in the building of bridges, hospices, and hospitals, and so established relationships with corporations of construction workers,⁶ employing some of them in their service as *servant brothers*. With this assimilation, and having the Templar rights of franchise, it is possible that the Templars themselves played a prominent role in the formation of European “master



Frontispiece of Eighth Ed. of Ramsay's *Travels of Cyrus* (1752)

associations" or *craft guilds* of stonemasons, or what would eventually be called *operative* Masonry – a sought-after trade due to the exemptions and privileges it enjoyed under the Templars' influence.

The last interaction the Templars may have had with the builders' associations was their infiltration into these groups following the destruction of their Order. Certain authors have taken this idea further by maintaining the theory that DeMolay himself, foreseeing his execution and the tragic end of the Order, charged his nephew, Beaujeu, to create four great lodges in Paris, Edinburgh, Stockholm, and Naples.

One theory, on the other hand, claims that DeMolay, sometime before his death, designated Jean-Marc Larmenius as his successor as Grand Master, having patriarchal authority and magisterial power to perpetuate the Order by virtue



Portrait of Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender by William Mosman (1750)

of a charter of transmission given to him in 1324.⁷ This charter still exists today and is kept at the Mark Masons Hall in London. Though the document listed the twenty-two supposed Grand Masters succeeding DeMolay, analysis of its deciphered code by scholars and experts, including the circumstances of how the document itself was found in the first place, suggest it is a forgery.⁸

Another theory propounds that, after the fall of the Templar Order, the alleged Provincial Grand Master of Auvergne, Pierre D'Aumont, fled from France with two commanders and five knights. To avoid recognition, they disguised themselves as *operative* stonemasons and took refuge on a Scottish island where they found the high commander, George Harris, and several other brothers. Together, they resolved to preserve the ancient traditions of their soon-

to-be defunct Order by creating a new one: They formed a chapter on Saint John's Day of 1312 with D'Aumont as Grand Master. To avoid persecution, they adopted secret signs and passwords like those of the *operative* stonemasons and called themselves "*Franç Maçons*," using the Mason name in homage of their new disguise. This theory suggests the origin of speculative Freemasonry was to save and spread the Templar Order.⁹ When the Order later travelled to England, its members were more commonly referred to as the "*Free Masons*."¹⁰

Mackey traces the origin of this D'Aumont theory of Templar perpetuation within Masonry back to Ramsay's oration of 1737 when he wrote:

The Chevalier Ramsay was the real author of the doctrine of the Templar origin of Freemasonry, and to him we are really indebted (if the debt have any value) for the D'Aumont legend. The source whence it sprang is tolerably satisfactory evidence of its fictitious character... Without a particle of historical evidence for its support, it has nevertheless exerted a powerful influence on the Masonic organization of even the present day. We find its effects looming out in the most important rites and giving a Templar form to many of the high degrees. And it cannot be doubted that the incorporation of Templarism into the modern Masonic system is mainly to be attributed to ideas suggested by this D'Aumont legend.¹¹

Perhaps there is some truth after all that the Masonic-Templar link may have been influenced by Ramsay's oration, though no explicit mention of the Templars was made by him whatsoever. The fact that, in 1738, a year after the oration, Pope Clement knight templar

XII issued his papal Bull *In Eminenti Apostolatus Specula* – the first of a series of papal Bulls and encyclicals directed against Masonry¹² – could suggest that the Vatican itself possibly knew of a Masonic-Templar connection.

This, of course, is mere conjecture.

Endnotes

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3. Andrew Michael Ramsay, *The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, unfolded in a geometrical order* (Glasgow, 1749).
4. Stanley Warner, *A Short History of the Masonic Knights Templar* (2008), in www.masonicdictionary.com/templarh.html.
5. Paul Naudon, *The Secret History of Freemasonry: Its Origins and Connection to the Knights Templar* (Inner Traditions, First US Edition, April 2005).
6. François-Timoléon Bègue Clavel, *Histoire pittoresque de la Franc-Maçonnerie et des Sociétés Secrètes Anciennes et Modernes* (Paris, 1843).
7. Thory, *Acta Latomotum ou Chronologie de l'histoire de la Franche-Maçonnerie française et étrangère* (Tome I-II, 1815).
8. Christopher Hodapp and Alice Von Kannon, *The Templar Code for Dummies* (2007), 176.
9. Jean Marie Ragon, *Orthodoxie Maçonnique, suivie de la Maçonnerie occulte et de l'initiation hermétique* (Paris, 1853), 223-224.
10. Stephen Dafoe, *The Compasses and the Cross* (Lewis Masonic, 2008).
11. Albert Mackey, *The History of Freemasonry* (Masonic History Company, New York, 1898).
12. John Robinson, *Born in Blood: The Lost Secrets of Freemasonry* (M. Evans and Company, USA, 1989), 183.

Joe Villegas may be reached at joevillegas@yahoo.com

BEAUCEANT

Kingsport Assembly No. 244, Tenn., welcomed Supreme Worthy President (Mrs. Charles M) Susan Thames and Sir Knight Charles home in stately fashion at the Park Vista in beautiful Gatlinburg, Tenn., the gateway to the Smokey Mountain National Park.

A reception and ice cream social were held on Friday evening. On Saturday guests and honorees enjoyed activities in the park and city followed by a banquet and social time where Mrs. Thames was showered with gifts from the Assembly. Among the honored guests present were Past Supreme Worthy Presidents (Mrs. Keith W) Sandy Dean and Ms Kimberly Burnett, as well as Tennessee's Most Worshipful Grand Master of Free and Accepted Masons, Sir Knight Robert Waldron, who is also currently serving as Southeast Department Commander for the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar.

Deputy Grand Commander of Tennessee, Sir Knight Robert Beam, referred to Galatians 6:9 to encourage each guest to: "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season, we shall reap if we faint not" at the Sunday morning Vesper service.



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Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

Sword of Merit Presentation



On April 4, 2022, David Studley, Grand Captain General of The Grand Encampment, who is also the Grand Commander of California and Trustee of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, presented a Sword of Merit on behalf of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation during a reception honoring Sir Knight Studley at Marysville Commandery No. 7. Receiving the sword was Sir Knight Stephan Parnow, Commander of Marysville Commandery.

This sword was presented in recognition of a \$25,000 contribution made by Marysville Commandery to the Foundation.

Also present for this presentation was Sir Knight D. Michael Edwards, Grand Standard Bearer of California, Past Commander and Recorder of Marysville Commandery along with Sir Knight William McBroome, Past Grand Commander of California and the Eye Foundation State Chairman.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

May 1, 2022 – May 31, 2022

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d. 6/15/2022
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