

# BLAIR CHRISTY MAYFORD, GCT Most Eminent Grand Master, 1994 – 1997

October 23, 1917 – March 28, 2015

Sir Knight Mayford began life's journey on October 23, 1917, in Wood River, Illinois, the son of Henry and Lucille (Garmley) Mayford. He graduated from Wood River Community High School and later attended Washington University. On June 14, 1941, he married the love of his life, Dorella Youngberg Mayford. Had he lived until June 14<sup>th</sup>, they would have been married for seventy-four years! Blair and Dorella have one daughter, Christy Ann Van Horn, a son-in-law, Michael Van Horn, two grandchildren, Angela Marie Vincent and Matthew Christy Van Horn, three great-grandchildren, Madeline Vincent, MacKenna Van Horn and Miles Van Horn. He completed life's toilsome journey on March 28, 2015, at the age of ninety-seven in St. Peters, Missouri.

Blair served his country in the United States Army and was proud to be a veteran. He worked thirty-five years until his retirement at John S. Swift Printing Company. Sir Knight Mayford was a Mason for sixty-seven years, and his Masonic resume is extensive as would be expected of any Past Grand Master.

Templary was particularly dear to his heart, and his contribution was immense. His service to the Grand Encampment began at Indianapolis, Indiana on August 16, 1979, when he was appointed by Grand Master Kenneth Culver

Johnson as Chairman of the Committee on Ritualistic Matters. On August 19, 1982, in Hot Springs, Arkansas, he was appointed Department Commander of the South Central Department by Grand Master Ned E. Dull. He was elected Grand Captain General of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 13, 1985. He was elected and installed as Grand Master on August 16, 1994, in Denver Colorado at the 59<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conclave. He served with distinction over the 60<sup>th</sup> triennium of the Grand Encampment.

The listing of Blair's Grand Encampment involvement gives the facts but falls far short of telling "the rest of the story!" Sir Knight Mayford in his candidacy for Grand Captain General faced a field of three very qualified, and in some cases better known Sir Knights. Further, Blair was literally the "dark horse" candidate in that he did not have the support of the old guard Grand Encampment power structure, but Blair ran with the zeal of a man late for his appointment with destiny. Blair and Dorella went everywhere in their quest. He appealed to the hearts and minds of the voting delegates, and it was those voting delegates who elected Sir Knight Blair Christy Mayford Grand Captain General on the first ballot! Blair's candidacy and election changed forever

the way prospective candidates sought to be elected. Blair was low key, but he and Dorella went everywhere, spent time getting to know the people, and he always put something in your hand.

Most who read this will likely never have known Sir Knight Mayford nor remember his accomplishments, but those of us who did will never forget that the greatness of the man was the equal of his accomplishments. During his administration, greater focus was placed on membership, both in retention and recruitment. He was an early advocate of in-



volving all branches of Freemasonry in partnering in the membership process. As President of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., he and several trustees met with the Charitable Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, resulting in a partnership that continues today as EyeCare America and providing free eye care to those over sixty-five. The number of patients served is over one hundred thousand. This partnership with the American Academy of Ophthalmology has expanded over the years, but it all began with the foresight of Blair Christy Mayford.

A quote from Paul J. Meyer sums up Blair Christy Mayford most effectively; “Whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusias-

knights templar tically act upon, must inevitably come to pass!” While not born in Missouri, he was a Missourian by choice and demonstrated the “get it done” tradition as well as “the Buck stops here” attitude attributed to those from the “show me” State. Additionally, those of us who knew Blair well can say unequivocally that we never had a better or more loyal friend than Blair. To have the love of one’s family, and the admiration of friends is all that anyone can ask. Blair had both.

“You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it.”