

# Knight Templar Advancement



COMMITTEE OF KNIGHT TEMPLAR ADVANCEMENT OF THE SOVEREIGN GREAT PRIORY OF CANADA

**Newsletter - November 2002**

Motto: Every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar



**Our mission as Knights Templar is "The Support and Defence of the Christian Religion"**

## **WHITE GLOVES!**

By R. Em. Kt. Carl Sherwood

Most symbols can be traced back to a practical beginning. The apron was worn by priests in ancient times, to protect their clothes when offering animal sacrifices.

The operative masons of the middle ages wore aprons to protect their clothing and gloves to protect their hands from the harshness of their labours. Judges in the United Kingdom carry gloves, but do not wear them, to prove that they are not open to a "bribe" or "glove money". Masonically, white gloves are worn indicating cleanliness and purity.

A number of reasons could be given for removing one, or both gloves, during our ceremonies, BUT, a Grand Lodge of England regulation is quite specific on this point. "That if gloves are worn, they should be worn at all times except: 1. by the candidate for the three degrees, 2. by the Master-elect when actually taking his obligation on the V.S.L. Gloves would thus not be removed by the Master (or Wardens or any temporary occupant of their chairs or by any brother assisting them.) in the course of entrusting or examining candidates or when investing officers." – Extract from the Report of Board of Gen. Purposes, Adopted June 10, 1964

The practice of removing a glove seems to have arisen from the erroneous idea, that it is impolite to shake hands while wearing gloves. We have all seen officers in this Grand jurisdiction struggle to remove a glove prior to shaking hands, or when communicating knowledge to a candidate and then fumble to put the glove back on. How disorderly this looks!

Sir Knights, as we are a religious and military Order, I believe that gloves, if worn, become part of our uniform and should not be removed except when taking an obligation on the V.O.S.L.



## **FUTURE ASSEMBLIES - 2003**

**Saturday, August 9 to Monday, August 12**

Holiday Inn Harbourview Hotel  
99 Wyse Rd, Dartmouth N.S. B3A 1L9  
Halifax Regional Municipality, N.S.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING TEMPLAR HISTORY**

By Sir Knight Stephen Dafoe  
Past Grand Historian, Sovereign Great Priory of Canada

It was 695 years ago this past October 13th that the original order of the Knights Templar were arrested in France under charges of heresy by the King of France, Phillip Le Bel. As initiates to the order, we were instructed that these charges were trumped up ones arising out of the greed of that king. Unfortunately, for many in our Order, the lessons given in the historical lectures are the only lessons we may derive on the rich history of our order.

As Entered Apprentices we were charged to "...without neglecting the ordinary duties of your station to consider yourself called on to make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge."

Sadly, few of us take upon ourselves to follow the simple instructions of this charge. I think it is of equal importance if we are to understand the Order, of which we are now members.

The space in this newsletter does not permit me to outline so lengthy a topic as the history of the Knights Templar who held great influence in the Levant and throughout Europe for nearly two centuries.

However, I would like to state that the active Masonic Templar would derive a much greater understanding of the order and its rituals by taking the time to learn a bit about the original Order to whom we pay homage every time we don our mantle, star and chapeau.

In recent years, many books have been written on the Templars that are of a speculative nature.

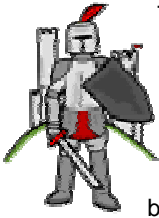
Great theories have been put forth as to their origins, treasure and mostly where that treasure may reside. And while it would not be Masonic to suggest that the Masonic Templar avoid such spurious theories, I would strongly urge that the reader of this short article first read some of the more traditional accounts of the Order's origins first, that he may have a firmer understanding of the order's history, upon which he can properly weigh the validity of such theories.

To this end, I highly recommend several books which will give an excellent overview on the Knights Templar:

Dungeon Fire and Sword by Bro. John J. Robinson  
The New Knighthood by Malcolm Barber  
The Trials of the Templars by Malcolm Barber  
Supremely Abominable Crimes by Edward Burman

The above list of books, while not light reading, is extremely informative and each is well indexed, allowing the reader an opportunity to glean that information which may be of particular interest.

## TODAY'S KNIGHTS TEMPLAR



The original Knights Templar were a fraternal Christian organization that was founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. Originally, the Knights Templar protected and defended Christian pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem. These men took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and were renowned for their fierceness and courage in battle. They professed a belief in the Trinity as Christian Brothers and warriors for Christ.

The present day Knights Templar are more properly extended into the United Religious and Military Orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem. Palestine, Rhodes and Malta. As can be seen, it actually embraces two orders, the second being necessarily preceded by an Order named Knight of Malta.

It is important to state that, while there are many theories to the contrary, there is historical or ritual connection with the medieval military orders with similar titles. The Masonic degrees of the Templar Rite grew from the desire of the continental brethren to graft colourful ceremonies, with a Christian content upon Craft Freemasonry, which had become open to many faiths.

Admission is restricted to Royal Arch Masons who profess a belief in the CHRISTIAN Trinity. The regalia is elaborate and is based upon the costume of the medieval Templars and Knights of Malta.

The Orders worked are: The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, The Order of Malta, and the Order of the Temple, in this sequence. Although a profession of the Christian faith is essential to membership, The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross is based on an Old Testament incident.

The impressive uniform of the Order is a black double breasted uniform, white shirt, tie of the Order, a red hat with a cross emblazoned on it, a white mantle with red cross pattée worn over the left breast, white gloves. We also wear a sword with which we perform the ritual of the Orders.

Today's membership consists of men from all walks of life, all of whom profess a belief in Christianity.



### KNIGHT TEMPLAR EDUCATION

By V. Em. Kt. W. Bruce Miller

Help is on the way to assist you in improving your Preceptory and creating interest in Knights Templar Advancement. Three new publications that will be available from the Chancellor's Office at Sovereign Great Priory in January, 2003 are:

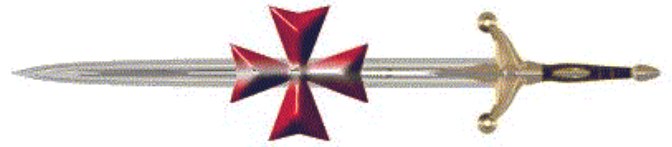
#### **A Guide to Preceptory Protocol & Conferring of Orders**

This booklet contains detailed instructions for the set-up of a Preceptory for each of the orders including a list of equipment required and a floor plan. In addition, it outlines protocol for the reception of SGP officers and illustrates all banners as graphics.

**Guidelines For Presiding Preceptors:** Protocol, procedures and points to consider while occupying the position of PP are the focus of this booklet.

**The Mentors Program:** This booklet is designed to assist every Preceptory to keep the attention of new initiates by proving letters and explanations of the symbolism, lessons taught and floor work in each of the Orders. It is also a valuable resource for an education night when addressing your Frates.

In addition, Sir Knight Stephen Dafoe, Past Grand Historian, has a **slide show and commentary** that is nearing completion and hopefully will be available in the new year. Our website [www.knightstemplar.ca](http://www.knightstemplar.ca) should be on the internet by the time you receive this newsletter.



### The Sword

One of the most important symbols used in the ceremony of investiture is the sword, sometimes called "the Sword of Godfrey". It recalls the origins of the Order with the Crusader conquest of the Holy Land and the protection of Christians and pilgrims. Today's society no longer appreciates the symbolism connected with weapons and is increasingly concerned for justice and peace. It is therefore important to stress the spiritual symbolism of the sword.

St. Paul tells us to vest ourselves for the battle against evil: "Therefore, put on the armour of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold fast as a shield, to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph 6:13-17)

A warrior knight in medieval times had to have: a horse, armor, shield, lance, and a sword. A sword defines what he represents. Swords hold a very high symbolic importance because oaths of honour were commonly taken on the sword. A knight's sword not only protects him in battle, but is also a symbol of his values and commitment to God.



Over time as the sword came to possess a very strong symbolic meaning, different virtues were assigned to the two edges of the sword.

"The two edges of the sword show that the knight serves both God and the people, and its point shows that all people must obey Him."

The cross or quillion (protects the hand) resembles a Christian cross.

Knights began to be drawn towards their Christian duties in the world, including the causes of the poor and the oppressed. The blessing of the sword obligated knights to protect widows and orphans. Whenever a knight takes his sword, he must think of his honour and the promise that he made to God through the blessing of his sword, that in order to cultivate knighthood he must protect those people that are unable to protect themselves.

Wearing gloves is not only the symbolism of purity and innocence, but, in addition, prevents the acid of our hands etching into the blade.

The sword is also an apt symbol of that important ideal of ancient knighthood, which is also part of the mission of today's Knight Templar, to defend the weak and those without protection. It also evokes another important aspect of the spirituality and life of the modern Knight, the courageous struggle for justice and peace.

The Grand Chancellor, R. Em. Kt. Edward Elcombe  
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Prepared by V. Em. Kt. W. Bruce Miller.  
Chairman of Knight Templar Advancement