The Beauséant

Serendipity

By Michael Jenkins, Ottawa Preceptory

Serendipity = n. the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident (O. E. D.)

During 2002-03 I was gathering material for a history of Ottawa District 13 R.A.M. One of our Chapters—St. John’s 148 in Vankleek Hill—was of Irish origin and as I am a member of the Irish Lodge of Research, I wrote to the Irish Grand Lodge Library in search of any documents regarding the Chapter which might be in their archives. Back came a thick bundle of photocopies almost three inches thick, almost intimidating enough to be put aside and left to languish.

My interest was piqued by an email from the Library which referred to “St. John’s Encampment.” What Encampment? I wondered.

Sometime during 1842 or 1843 a number of Masons in the area of Hawkesbury and L’Orignal (on the Ottawa river) applied to Dublin for a Warrant for a Masonic Lodge. Warrant No. 169 (Irish) was issued on March 15, 1844 and named William Robinson, Andrew McCready and Patrick McKee as Master and Wardens. Between August 16, 1845 and December 27, 1859, a total of 104 brethren had been registered. Sometime during its first four years, members of the Lodge applied to Dublin for authority to establish a Royal Arch Chapter and Warrant No. 159, dated February 27, 1847, was issued to Patrick McKee, Andrew McReady, William Robinson, Hugh Lough, William Dickinson, Alexander McWilliam, James McWaters and Robert Hamilton “... to hold a Royal Arch Chapter to be attached to the Freemason Lodge No. 159.” These RA Companions were all members of Lodge No. 159.

In the thick pile were four documents—three of which were letters from “St. John’s Commandery, No. 159 (Irish)” requesting the issue of membership certificates for: Andrew W. Readif, William Robinson, Hiram Johnson, Simeon Shearman, William Kenneth MacKenzie, James Douglas Wells, Angus Urquhart (two letters dated 1856) and John Chitty (letter dated 1861)—and one annual return for 1864 showing nine officers, all of whom were members of the Lodge and most can be cross referenced to the Chapter. This return is interesting as it has a seal of the Encampment clearly shown (a smoke seal made by holding the metal seal over a smoking candle and applying to the page) and is reproduced below.

Why serendipity? A number of reasons came to the fore: (1) this reinforced the research of others indicating that Irish Lodges spawned RA Chapters and Chapters gave birth to encampments (the usual descriptor for a Preceptory); (2) it gave us some information on an Encampment (Preceptory) which is missed in the work of researchers in this area of interest; (3) the letters from Lodge, Chapter and Encampment were directed to the same “Lucius Deering” in Dublin.
Assistant Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge for many years and (4) interestingly some of the letters from Lodge and Chapter referred to the Encampment. On this latter point, it was the Lodge in its letter of February 2, 1852 which acknowledged receipt of the KT Warrant (irretrievably lost many years ago) and also requested RA certificates; and Lodge letter of October 16, 1871 which registered new members and requested MM certificates and also reported that the Encampment “has not been working for some time.”

Always take the time to read old letters and reports. There is more than meets the eye.

“CIVILIAN CRISP!

V. Em. Kt. John Pattison, Vallette Preceptory

Our ritual requires military behavior throughout. However, most members don’t have much military experience, as in earlier generations. Understandably, many fraters have little “military instinct” in terms of movement, command or parade square evolutions.

We are a military Order filled with civilian members.

One solution is to adopt the concept of “Civilian Crisp”, three examples of which are:

- Moving in Preceptory, stand straight, shoulders back, swing your arms a bit, taking positive, assertive steps. Step out with pride and confidence.
- Don’t amble around corners. Halt, executing your turn from the standing position.
- Officers giving orders, or forming a detail, as the Sub-Marshal in the opening, should rehearse military-like commands in proper tones, assuring themselves in advance that members to be involved are personally briefed in their precise role for that evening.

Individuals march off on left or right foot, execute “about turn” in different directions or hold the lowered sword blade from the Crusader Sign differently. Pending direction from Sovereign Great Priory, every member should do the same thing. It is better to be all confidently wrong together than to have individual variation. Uniformity is part of “Civilian Crisp”.

Rarely, practical considerations suggest ritual interpretation, usually because mental or physical constraints require a modified command sequence. Following prior discussion, departure should be minimal. “Civilian Crisp” means it is better to have movements made with uniform confidence than to risk embarrassment to the less than fully rehearsed.

For specific tasks, such as the Arch of Steel, create a specialized drill team.

FREEMASONRY

"Freemasonry has brought wondrous works into the world, and our duty is to see that is shall continue. We must guard against any faulty conception or material tendency, which would weaken its vitality and abridge its usefulness. The past eloquently proclaims to the present that Freemasonry is healthy and strong today because of its individuality, that is has a unique distinctive charm, in that it clings with determination to the claim of being steadfast and stable, against the modern mania for change and variation."

Victoria Centenary Preceptory #13, Victoria, Australia

Order of Merit
James W. Reid

Although Jim does not wish to proceed through the chairs in the Preceptory, he has been a tremendous contributor to the Order through his valued advise on matters concerning the welfare of our Order and his dynamic presentations of ritual have made him a great inspiration to our members, especially the Officers. He is not only active in our Preceptory but in many concordant bodies.

On September 7, 2001 a letter containing “14” signatures of Preceptors from Godfrey de Bouillon # 3 K.T., was sent to Sovereign Great Priory heartily endorsing his name for nomination for the Order of Merit. Sir Knight James W. Reid is and remains one of the most dedicated, sincere and influential Masons I know and is truly deserving of receiving this most prestigious award.

Em. Kt. Gary P. Humes, P.P., Godfrey de Bouillon # 3, K.T.
The Cross

Knights Templar wear a Cross on their Mantle over the heart, as a symbol of purity, and are invoked to wear it within their heart as well as without and keep it without soil or stain. Christ the great Captain of our Salvation said, “Whosoever will come after Me, let him take up his Cross and follow Me.

If the Cross on the uniform is not worn in sincerity as a symbol of His sacrificial crucifixion it means nothing. If Knights Templar have not dedicated their lives to the service of Jesus Christ, then the Cross on their uniform is only a meaningless decoration, and we are just basking in the sunshine of the accomplishments of the Crusaders in the 13th and 14th Centuries. If the extent of our contribution to the Christian Order of the Temple consists of only attending a Meeting of the Preceptor, and then going home and forgetting all about it until the next time, with never a thought for the sick, or the welfare of those less fortunate than ourselves, then have we wasted our time, and spent our strength for nought.

Take up thy Cross, the Saviour said,
If thou would'st my disciple be,
Deny thyself the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me.
Take up thy Cross and follow Christ,
Nor think till death to lay it down.
For only he who bears the Cross, May hope to wear the glorious crown.

ENTERED APPRENTICE TO KNIGHT TEMPLAR

All Masons have been admonished to improve themselves by seeking further light in Masonry. By continuing to grow through advancing our Masonic knowledge we are insuring that we will continue to practice those principles that our Fraternity and all Masonic bodies stand for.

Your search for Masonic knowledge and principles, in the first three degrees allows you to discover that the cardinal virtues are: Temperance, Fortitude and Justice. You were taught the truths of The Fatherhood of God, The Brotherhood of Man, and the Immortality of the Soul at the same time.

When you decide that finding the lost word and completing the circle of the legend is important, join the York Rite for further light and education. You will advance through the three York bodies, Royal Arch, Knights Templar (and Cryptic Rite) and be taught valuable lessons. The Royal Arch will provide you with the Lost Word and teach you the great lesson of charity, moderation, industry and humility.

The Preceptory takes you into the New Testament where you complete the Christian part of your Masonic education, God and the Truth That His Son Revealed. This is where Templar Masonry goes beyond the morals and philosophy of the rest of Masonry. Templar Masonry is the only Masonic body in which its teachings are based strictly upon the Christian Religion."

Feb., 2000 summons, Acre Preceptory #66

Yes, It’s True!

“You cannot pray the Lord’s Prayer From the beginning to the end of it And even once say, “I”.
You cannot pray the Lord’s Prayer And even once say, “My”.
You cannot pray the Lord’s Prayer And not pray for another.
For when you ask for daily bread You must include your brother For others are included In each and every plea From the beginning to the end of it It does not once say, “Me”.
-Anon

The Beauséant
A publication of the Sovereign Great Priory of Canada.
R.Em. Kt. W. Bruce Miller, Editor Chairman of Knights Templar Advancement
Templarism Now…

By Sir Knight Michael Millard

In the past couple of years there has been a resurgence of Knight Templarism in the public media. Probably, the biggest cause is Dan Brown’s book, *The Davinci Code*, which tells a fictional story of the Knights Templar’s possession of the Holy Grail, and a modern day who-dun-it mystery and quest to find the elusive Grail. There is Masonic and Templar lore spread throughout the story, and has been of particular interest to Masons who see the history and symbolism tied up in an engrossing novel. It is an excellent novel when read as fiction, but as to the historical accuracy…well there lies the debate.

Another prominent Templar story is in the movie *National Treasure*. It tells the story of one man’s quest to find the legendary treasure of the Knights Templar while protecting it from an unscrupulous treasure hunter. It stars Nicholas Cage and Sean Bean and was a box office smash. There are all sorts of Masonic and Templar symbolism throughout and it portrays both in a positive light. Saying more would give too much away so I recommend if you haven’t seen it, check it out when it comes out on DVD in May.

Both of these have caused a renewed interest in Knight Templarism and are worth checking out if you haven’t already. They both have engrossing stories and will be a point of discussion for quite some time to come. It only remains to be seen if we will see more Templarism in 2005 in the public media. We can certainly hope…..

RENEWING YOUR VOW

R. Em. Kt. Carl Sherwood

Renewing your vow is intended to be the most solemn of occasions in the ceremonies of the Temple. It is to recall to your mind and heart those vows you took concerning the Order and your Fratres. Accordingly decorum should be maintained by: 1. giving the Fratre ahead of you time to renew HIS vow; 2. observing a respectful silence; 3. having one line that remains facing forward until ordered to turn inward.

In today’s world such a simple thing as remembering our Bonds to the Order and to one another is both a comfort and a renewal in the Great Captain of our Salvation.

May it build and sustain your Faith!

They Stayed at Home

"The Lodge meets tonight," said Brother Brown, But I don't care about going down, I'm tired, and it's pretty cold tonight, "The Lodge meets tonight," said Brother Gray, "But I think I'd rather stay away, Thus on and another began to say, What the difference was if they should be Away from the Lodge on a meeting night, An the Officers of that Lodge, And the faithful few who would not dodge About their duties, and try to shirk, But did both their own and other's work, Grew discouraged at last, and in dismay The Grand Lodge took the Charter away Because all stayed home from the Meeting.

-Unknown