



TEMPLARY IN DELAWARE

On August 19th, 1991, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, U.S.A., meeting at their fifty-eighth Triennial Conclave in Washington, D.C. granted a Charter to Trinity Commandery Number 3, stationed in Wilmington, Delaware. This set the stage for the first State to be honored by the establishment of a Grand Commandery. Many small steps by dedicated Christian Freemasons, over a very long span of time led to this truly momentous occasion.

A body of Knights Templars, known as Washington Encampment No. 1, was founded in the State of Delaware prior to 1814 and hence prior to the formation of General Grand Encampment. To anyone acquainted with Delaware Masonic History, we find once again, in the affairs of Christian Knighthood, familiar names participating in familiar capacities.

On August 4, 1806 John Sellars, a Wilmingtonian in the hatters business, and Delaware's fourth Grand Master, opened a meeting of the Grand Lodge of Delaware as Grand Master, Pro Tem. for the purpose of installing the honorable Gunning Bedford, Esq. as Delaware's first Grand Master. On February 15, 1814, Sir Knight John Sellars, presided, in a somewhat similar capacity, over a body of Knights Templars in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as a representative of Washington Encampment No. 1 in Wilmington. The purpose of said meeting was to form a 'Grand Encampment of Knights Templar in Pennsylvania, with Jurisdiction belonging thereto'. In May of the same year, the Sir Knights in Wilmington, petitioned this Grand Encampment for a charter of recognition as Washington Encampment No. 1. The first officers of this body included Sir Knight Archibald Hamilton as Eminent Grand Master, Sir Knight John Patterson as Generalissimo, and Sir Knight John Sellars as Captain General. Each of these Brethren, together with almost all the other members of this initial Templary body in Delaware, were distinguished Freemasons in the State. John Sellars would serve the Grand Lodge of Delaware as Grand Master from 1814 to 1816; Archibald Hamilton served as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge in 1829; and John Patterson served as Senior Grand Warden in 1809, just prior to the formation of this Templar body. The evidence suggests that Washington Encampment No. 1 was formed out of the nucleus of Washington Lodge No. 1 and its close associate, Washington Chapter No. 1, Royal Arch Masons - thus the

identical naming. Records for this body exist until 1823 and then the trail is lost. With the onslaught of the Morgan Affair commencing in 1825, and the anti-Masonic fervor that arose, the Pennsylvania Grand Encampment, founded in 1814, ceased to exist about 1824. From 1826 to 1840 Delaware saw a drop in Craft Lodges from 17 to 7, and membership from 365 to 150. It is reasonable to suggest that Washington Encampment No 1 and Templary in Delaware suffered its demise from this same assault.

Templary in Delaware would, as an organized body, remain in almost total darkness for about 44 years until March 14, 1868 when the first minutes of St. John's Commandery No. 1, U.D. appear. These minutes show Sir Knight S.A. Hodgeman as Eminent Commander, Sir Knight J. F. Mynich as Generalissimo, Sir Knight S.E. Kirkpatrick as Captain General, and Sir Knight George W. Moore as Recorder. A letter from Jacob Mynich to James B. Broad, High Priest of St. John's Chapter No. 4, dated April 27, 1911 provides some information on these initial days. To wit:

'St. John's Commandery as well as St. John's Chapter is indebted to G. W. Stone for the name as that was the name of his Chapter in New York (Buffalo, I think).

The idea to form a Chapter and Commandery occurred to me in Trenton one cold night while awaiting a train to take me to Wilmington. I called a meeting of the Knights Templar; there were present, Daniel McClintock, Geo. W. Stone, Cyrus E. Bradley and myself.'

In earlier correspondence from this same author, he yields credit to Palestine Commandery of Trenton, New Jersey as being a vital force in the establishment of St. John's Commandery. Although this initial meeting did not lead immediately to the formation of St. John's Commandery, the course was started and, we find later, in the same reference, identification of further meetings which led to St. John's formation.

St. John's Commandery No. 1 was extremely active during its very formidable 'under dispensation' days with about a dozen Companions being dubbed Sir Knights in the short time of seven months that they operated under dispensation. On October 20, 1868, at a special meeting of the Commandery, St. John's Commandery No. 1 was duly constituted and its officers properly installed under the able tutelage of Sir Knight John W. Simmons of New York City, as acting Grand Master of Knights Templar of the United States, Sir Knight James M. Austin (then General Grand High Priest of the General Grand Chapter, Royal Arch Masons) of the same city as acting Deputy Grand Master, and Sir Knight George W. Stone of Wilmington as acting Grand Captain General, The following were installed as St. John's first officers:

Sir Knight S.A. Hodgeman	Eminent Commander
Sir Knight George W. Perry	Generalissimo
Sir Knight Alfred Gawthrop	Captain General
Sir Knight John H. Simms	Prelate

Sir Knight William Q. Moore	Senior Warden
Sir Knight William L. Springer	Junior Warden
Sir Knight J. D. Billings	Treasurer
Sir Knight George W. Moore	Recorder
Sir Knight James M. Jones	Standard Bearer
Sir Knight Isaac C. Pyle	Sword Bearer
Sir Knight William H. Jamar	Warder
Sir Knight Isaac C. Price	1st Guard
Sir Knight William Conner	2nd Guard
Sir Knight Charles C. Hagner	3rd Guard
Sir Knight George R. Gates	Sentinel

The minutes for this meeting note that present at the constitution/installation service were four Sir Knights of Monumental Commandery No. 3, Baltimore, Maryland.

During its tenure as the single Commandery in the State of Delaware, St. John's had a very illustrative history. The archives show that it was an active participant in all the affairs of Masonry in the State. In 1893, their first Ascension Day services were held in this very same building in which this Grand Commandery has been constituted. The services were conducted by Sir Knight Charles B. Lore, Chief Justice of Delaware, with the Right Eminent Leighton Coleman, Bishop of Delaware, participating. There were 1400 Sir Knights and friends in attendance.

The minutes of the Commandery over the years identify extensive involvement but in a separate volume entitled 'Minutes Drill Battalion St John's Commandery, No. 1, K.T.' do we find the story of times past, perhaps never again to return. These minutes, covering a time period of the early 1920's to 1930's, excite the heart with the active fraternalism of participation, commitment and service. Apparently founded by William J. Highfield, P.C., it is noted, on more than one occasion as being the backbone of the Commandery. Notes of Drills, dinners, a Delaware Masonic Band, Dances, Balls, Sports Field Days, participation at corner stone layings, dedications, a Commandery Band, trips to Lenape Park, and degree participation, leap with excitement from each page.

And it is from these same pages that we find the familiar names of: Chester R. Jones, Samuel H. Baynard, Jr, William H. Weeks, Marshall Carpenter, Charles J. Speel, Harry R. Loose, John Trowill, Reverend Park W. Huntington, Reverend Dr. Horace C. Broughton, Bishop Francis M. Taite and J. Robert Frederick, our senior Past Commander. The motto of the Drill Battalion from day one was, not at all unexpectedly:

"All for one and one for all".

Like all good and worthy endeavors, the formation of what we know today as St. Andrew's Commandery No. 2 did not come easily. For at least two years prior to the granting of their dispensation in 1962, Past Commander Rhey H. Smith tried in vain to

obtain a dispensation for a second commandery in Delaware. Believing their cause was just, Past Commanders Rhey Smith, Sam Wise, John McClearnen and Chester Coffin persevered in their belief that the time was ripe for the seeds of Christian Masonry to be planted in the fertile soil of lower Delaware. Their tender care, together with that of many other Sir Knights over the years, have proven the wisdom of that belief many fold over. Despite the lack of interest by the Grand Encampment in 1960 to form a second Commandery in Delaware, by 1962, times had changed and, in the personage of Most Eminent Sir Knight Paul Miller Moore, they found the receptive ear. This Grand Master agreed to meet with these dedicated Sir Knights at a visitation to St. John's No. 1 to discuss the matter. With the confidence of true believers of the Cross, Past Commanders Smith, Wise and McClearnen came away from that meeting in Wilmington with the assurance of the Grand Master that he was in favor of their receiving a charter. The Sir Knights of St. Andrews have always been faithful to participation in the Easter sunrise services in Washington. That occasion is special for them, since at that Service in 1962 they were advised that their dispensation would shortly be granted. True to their word, on May 1, 1962, the prayer of 35 Delaware Sir Knights was answered.

On May 18, 1962, St. Andrew's Commandery, U.D., held their first meeting. The officers were:

Sir Knight Rhey H. Smith	Eminent Commander
Sir Knight Samuel A. Wise	Generalissimo
Sir Knight John J. McClearnen	Captain General
Sir Knight Robert E. Osborne	Treasurer
Sir Knight Orestes J. Sevast	Recorder
Sir Knight Chester C. Coffin	Senior Warden
Sir Knight Joseph Miller	Junior Warden
Sir Knight Elwood Hawkins	Standard Bearer
Sir Knight C. Ray Scarborough	Sword Bearer
Sir Knight Wilson H. Nutt, Jr.	Warder
Sir Knight Willard Dickerson	Prelate

The labors to establish any new Masonic body are many and varied, the labors in the quarries are difficult, the expense in time, money, energy and dedication are very demanding. Even the name to be affixed to the body becomes a problem to be resolved--should it be Ascension, Crusade, Damascus? In the case of this new Commandery in Dover, the story is worth repeating.

Return for a moment to our namesakes "The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Jesus Christ". History records that the Knights of the Temple made possible the eight Crusades, their forces comprising the flowers of those vast armies. During the first Crusade the Christians became besieged in Antioch by the Turks. With hunger rapidly taking its toll, a young boy by the name of Peter Bartholomew, the servant of a Provencal pilgrim appeared before the princes of the Crusade with an account of a supernatural visitation

from a Saint. The Saint had revealed to him that the very lance which pierced Christ's side as He hung on the cross was buried beneath the Church of St. Peter in Antioch. Although many doubted the veracity of the vision, a search of the Church was ordered. Raymond of Aguilers recounts the story as follows. "After we had dug from morning to evening, the youth who had the vision of the lance disrobed and, taking off his shoes, descended into the pit in his shirt..... At length, the Lord was minded to show us His lance. And I, who have written this, kissed it when the point alone had appeared before the ground. Whatexultation then filled the city I cannot describe."

Shortly thereafter, the young servant Peter had another vision from the same Saint. The Saint urged the Christians to fast for five days and then attack. The fast was ordered and on June 28, 1098, the Christians marched out with Raymond of Aguilers carrying the Holy Lance. The Crusaders fought as men possessed, as indeed they were, and before them the whole Turkish army fled. Who was the Saint? -- he was one of the two pair of fishermen who forsook all, and followed Him. His brother was Simon called Peter and he was Andrew. This was the basis for the recommendation by Past Commander Chester Coffin for the name of this new Commandery; a name readily adopted by the Order; a name that they have held in high honor for many years.

By April 1963, although less than a year old, St. Andrew's was well underway. On April 5, 1963, the Sir Knights of St. Andrew's hosted a dinner in honor of the visitation of Most Eminent Grand Master Paul Miller Moore. Among the distinguished speakers for the evening was the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Delaware, William H. Cantwell. The following day the Commandery portrayed all three Orders before the Eminent Grand Master, in full ceremonial costumed form. Presiding over the respective Orders were Captain General John J. McClearnen--Sovereign Master of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, Generalissimo Samuel A. Wise--Prior for the Order of Malta, and Eminent Commander Rhey H. Smith--Commander for the Order of the Temple.

On August 26, 1964, at the 49th Triennial of the Grand Encampment in Philadelphia, St. Andrew's Commandery No. 2 was granted its charter. On Friday evening August 28, 1964, the new Grand Master Wilbur M. Brucker, accompanied by a most distinguished entourage of Sir Knights, journeyed to Dover for the purpose of Constituting the Commandery and installing its officers. The latter event taking place in a public ceremony in the Senate Chamber of the Legislative Hall in Dover. The officers installed were:

Sir Knight Rhey H. Smith	Eminent Commander
Sir Knight Samuel A. Wise	Generalissimo
Sir Knight John J. McClearnen	Captain General
Sir Knight Robert E. Osborne	Treasurer
Sir Knight Orestes J. Sevast	Recorder
Sir Knight Elvin Phillips	Assistant Recorder
Sir Knight Chester C. Coffin	Senior Warden

Sir Knight Joseph P. Miller	Junior Warden
Sir Knight Elwood Hawkins	Standard Bearer
Sir Knight C. Ray Scarborough	Sword Bearer
Sir Knight Wilson H. Nutt, Jr.	Warder
Sir Knight Carl C. Baker	Guard
Sir Knight Nathaniel D. Elliot	Guard
Sir Knight Billy B. Landing	Guard
Sir Knight John Manahan	Guard
Sir Knight James H. Lewis	Sentinel
Sir Knight Willard Dickerson	Prelate
Sir Knight Charles W. Barkins	Quartermaster

Fortunately the Sir Knights of Delaware have not had to wait another hundred years for the rise of another Commandery in the State. Thoughts along this direction serviced in the 70's but the seed lay dormant in the ground waiting to blossom until the spring of 1988 when fourteen Sir Knights petitioned the Grand Encampment for a charter. Most Eminent Grand Master Donald Hensley Smith, being favorably disposed to their plea, issued that dispensation, and the Grand Encampment Triennial meeting two months later in Lexington, Kentucky saw fit to extend it for three more years, through the term of Most Eminent Grand Master Marvin Fowler. The fourteen Sir Knights praying to advance the teachings of our Lord and Savior were:

Sir Knight Charles Barkins	Sir Knight Henry G. Law
Sir Knight William J. Little	Sir Knight C. Granville McVey
Sir Knight J. Norman Nicklas	Sir Knight Horace G. Patterson
Sir Knight James A. Pletz	Sir Knight Samuel B. Rash
Sir Knight Richard A. Scarlott	Sir Knight C. Ray Scarborough
Sir Knight Charles C. Shilling	Sir Knight Harry M. Sullivan
Sir Knight Donald D. Thomas	Sir Knight C. William Tulloch

Under the sterling leadership of P.C. Henry G. Law, Trinity Commandery No. 3, U.D. set the working tools to motion with a passion exemplary of those valiant Knights of old. Well skilled in the workings of the York Rite they were immediately prepared to open their folds to all who would come forth, working diligently with the two other Commanderies in the State. Being housed in Wilmington, they had the distinct advantage of being able to share the property of St. John's Commandery for Order conferral. Always ready to demonstrate their proficiency, the Sir Knights had the distinct pleasure of welcoming Right Eminent Sir Knight Richard M. Strauss, Chairman of the Committee on Dispensations and Charters, to their Asylum on Saturday, January 12, 1991 when they received into the Order of the Temple, Sir Knights Robert McDowell and James Watson. Sir Knight Strauss was well pleased with the work of Trinity Commandery and offered very welcomed positive advise and suggestions. During its three years of service under dispensation, Trinity Commandery maintained a very unique position under the banner of the Grand Encampment - it was the number one subordinate Commandery in per capita

giving to the Knight Templar Eye Foundation annual Voluntary Campaign for each of those years.

On August 19, 1991, Sir Knight Richard Strauss moved to the Grand Encampment that Trinity Commandery No. 3, be granted a Charter. A motion that was granted without dissent by those present in Washington, D.C. That same evening, duly appointed representatives from the three Commanderies in Delaware, met in the Masonic Temple, Dover, Delaware to move for the establishment of the Grand Commandery of Delaware, an action granted by the Grand Encampment on August 20th.

On October 5, 1991 at a special assembly convened at the Masonic Temple in Wilmington, Delaware, Most Eminent Past Grand Master Marvin Fowler assisted by Sir Knight Richard Strauss consecrated Trinity Commandery No. 3 and installed the following elected and appointed officers:

Sir Knight Henry G. Law	Eminent Commander
Sir Knight Charles W. Barkins	Generalissimo
Sir Knight Richard A. Scarlott	Captain General
Sir Knight Harry M. Sullivan, Jr.	Treasurer
Sir Knight C. Ray Scarborough	Recorder
Sir Knight James A. Pletz	Senior Warden
Sir Knight Charles C. Shilling	Junior Warden
Sir Knight Donald D. Thomas	Standard Bearer
Sir Knight C. Granville McVey	Sword Bearer
Sir Knight William J. Littel	Warder
Sir Knight Charles W. Tulloch, II	Guard
Sir Knight Robert V. McDowell, III	Guard
Sir Knight G. Thomas Taylor, III	Guard
Sir Knight Horace G. Patterson, Jr.	Sentinel
Sir Knight C. William Tulloch	Prelate

Immediately following this installation, Most Eminent Past Grand Master Fowler, again assisted by Sir Knight Richard Strauss and Sir Knight Thurmond C. Pace of New Jersey, constituted the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in the State of Delaware and installed as:

Grand Commander	Sir Knight Henry G. Law
Deputy Grand Commander	Sir Knight C. Ray Scarborough
Grand Generalissimo	Sir Knight Donald D. Thomas
Grand Captain General	Sir Knight Harry M. Sullivan, Jr.
Grand Treasurer	Sir Knight Harry V. Felmey
Grand Recorder	Sir Knight C. Granville McVey

With the constitution of the Grand Commandery of Delaware, the state now was entrusted with a complete complement of Grand York Rite Bodies. Characteristic of the diminutive size of the Diamond State, all four Grand York Rite officers in the personage of:

M.W.G.M.
M.E.G.H.P.
M.I.G.M.
R.E.G.C.

James A. Pletz
T. Eugene Womach
Richard A. Scarlott
Henry G. Law

all Past Commanders and all members of Jesse Green Priory No. 70, Knights of the York Cross of Honour were in attendance. Following the festivities of these Constitutions, the Sir Knights were joined by their ladies for a festive banquet on the fourth floor of the Masonic Temple.

As you review the history of Christian Masonry in the State of Delaware, you find woven through the pastoral splendour of that fabric, a multitude of beautiful threads of silver and gold, and precious white twined linen. It reveals an unfolding of a sublime rhapsody of heavenly choruses, as you trace this beautiful story back through many outstanding men and women, bound together by a thread of love, which no cord nor cable can so forcibly draw, or hold so fast.

The dream of a wonderful New Love came to Mary in her lowly cottage in Nazareth. The Babe was born, rose to manhood, and fulfilled His mission. His disciples spread His gospel among the nations, His Knights of the Temple, in helmets, breast plates, and with swords of steel, waged war in His defense, to spread His influence and preserve His teachings for posterity. Knights of the Commandery are symbolically His fraters; their armor blazons forth the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity; their swords vowed to be drawn only in the cause of Truth, Justice, and Liberty, and their lives, by vows voluntarily taken, devoted first, last and always to the spreading of His gospel among the nations of the earth.

We, the Sir Knights of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templars of Delaware have presumed much, for we have presumed to be co-workers with God. We are committed, therefore, to improve the remaining span of our lives, and let our lights shine among men, that this presumption of ours may indeed become a glorious reality.

Non Nomis, Domine, Non Nobis: Sed Nomi Tuo Da Gloriam.

Donald D. Thomas, P.C.
October 5, 1991