

## A little Knight Templar news does you good

### Staying in touch



Dear Brother Knights

It is a special pleasure to write to you and share some good news.

As you know, it is customary during September for the Province to send to each Preceptory a request for the payment of its annual dues.

However, in view of the special difficulties which we have all had to face during 2020 I have asked the Provincial Treasurer to refrain from sending out any such request this year - at least so far as the Provincial Capitation fee is concerned. (Great Priory fees will of course still need to be paid).

The Provincial Capitation fee, as you know, is the Province's principal source of income. However, our outgoings this year have been reduced because of the pandemic and I am well aware that all Preceptories are facing additional challenges at the present time.

I therefore hope that this reduction in the expenses of each Preceptory will be welcomed by the members and that it will give each Treasurer a little more elbow room in his work of trying to hold subscriptions down as much as possible.

Next year, I pray that we will be operating more normally and - if that is the case - the province will need your support once again in the usual manner but for the moment I hope that you will enjoy this small respite.

Yours in the bonds of the Order  
R E Kt Paul Calderwood



#### QUIZ QUESTIONS

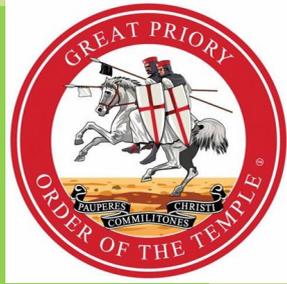
**PROVIDED THIS WEEK**  
BY our Provincial Marshal  
E Kt Carl Davies :-

1. In the KT installation of a Knight ritual 2000 edition, what small portion was removed for the 2007 edition?
2. What were the cardinal virtues of the Original Knights Templar?
3. How many Rules were set to which the Knights Templar were governed at the council of Troyes in January 1129?

The Answers are supplied on the last page.

Become the compiler of our next Quiz.

# Covid and the Masonic response



This month an article was published, describing the way in which local Knights Templar had responded to the pandemic.

It was published in a special edition of "Y Dalaith" (the Magazine circulated to all members of the Craft in the Province of South Wales). It is reproduced here for the benefit of Brother Knights who will not have received a copy because they live in either of the neighbouring Craft Provinces of Monmouthshire or West Wales.

This special edition of "Y Dalaith" highlights many of the Masonic actions that took place in southern Wales in response to the Covid emergency and it includes the following article which reflects the Templar brethren in all three of the Craft Provinces that comprise the over-arching Templar Province :

*At the centre of the Seal of the Great Priory of the Knights Templar is a depiction of two Knights astride a single horse. This 800-year-old design is a vivid reminder that "care for one another" is at the heart of all that we do as members of the United Orders. The importance of this message was very much at the forefront of our minds in South Wales during the pandemic.*

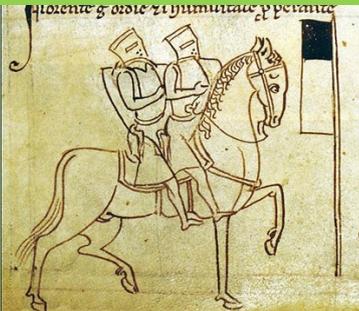
*It was expressed in various ways – not least by the support given by many Brother Knights to the vital charitable initiatives undertaken by the Craft which are described in this special issue of Y Dalaith and that (as you will have read) has included delivering meals and shopping to those in isolated and vulnerable circumstances.*

*Another important expression of that concern was the effort that went in to staying in touch with people and reassuring them that they were not really alone. Knights Templar found numerous ways of doing that important work using the telephone, emails, and social media as well as traditional greetings cards and letters.*

*One unexpected offspring of the emergency was the development of a weekly newsletter that was sent to members of the extensive KT province, which covers the whole of southern Wales from Milford Haven to Chepstow.*

*Providing a variety of interesting and topical material about the United Orders and their members it contained many photographs and colourful reminders of happy days spent together - and it added to our understanding, providing a genuine daily advancement in Masonic knowledge.*

*Its aim was to ensure that our members did not feel alone and that they were very much part of a caring community that was determined to stay together.*



*The title of the newsletter (now in its 15th edition) was especially appropriate. It was the battle cry used by the Crusaders "A Beauceant" - a shout to rally round their Standard at a time of distress and stay together.*

**A drawing of two knights on a horse, the emblem of the Knights Templar, with a Beauceant, from the Chronica Majora of Matthew Paris. 13<sup>th</sup> century.**

# Travellers' Checks

By R E Kt Dr Vivian Thomas

No, Bro Kts, the title is not a mis-spelling. My aim in this article is to outline some of the wealth of the Templars and how they became recognised as trustworthy bankers of personal as well as national wealth.

There is no doubt concerning their wealth. Indeed, one of the key factors leading to their downfall was the debt owed to them by the king, Philip le Bel. But, once the order was given to arrest Jacques de Molay and the rest of the Templars in France, the expectation was that the King would be able to seize all the treasures that had been accumulated.

This never happened. Were the Templars simply asset-rich but cash-poor? After all, we know they possessed vast tracks of farmland, many stately dwellings, thousands of livestock, bequeathed to them across the continent, as well as England and Wales, from north Lincolnshire to the Gower. Their exportation of wool through east coast ports such as Kings Lynn, to outlets in the Low Countries, as part of the Hanseatic League, almost mirrors the activities of the Common Market.

They were absolved of taxation by the Pope. It was inevitable that they would gain great wealth. But, like many entrepreneurs, they ploughed the money back in to obtain even more lands and chateaux. But, did they have untold treasures of gold, or other currencies - questions that have simply remained unanswered for centuries. We know that a large portion of their holdings were given directly to their rivals, the Hospitallers, but that still leaves the question of any other riches.

We have it on record that during the retreat from Acre the unscrupulous Kt Roger de Flor was caught trying to "liberate" some of the city wealth, but that was only one vessel. There are, of course, many romantic myths. I suspect you all will have heard or read about Oak Island on Nova Scotia. This mysterious area - where the famed "money pit" was found - has, over the years, said to have been the repository of the treasures of the pirate Blackbeard, the manuscripts that proved Francis Bacon wrote the Shakespeare plays, and, of course, the Templar treasure. Despite the various and expensive attempts to excavate the pit, even down to 250 feet, nothing of any consequence has ever been found.

What happened to the legendary fleet of ships kept at La Rochelle? Did they sail away laden with treasures? The question is rightly raised, of course, as to whether the Templars actually had a fleet of vessels. They were not natural sailors and it is more likely they hired or leased ships, rather than owning them. That they did have great wealth is not in question and travellers to distant lands could deposit funds at a home Priory, journey in safety - with a promissory note - and obtain the same sum at their destination, saved from the danger of having to carry large and bulky sums of money - the first travellers cheques.

But, the demise of the Templars raises so many questions. Would it really have been possible for Jacques de Molay, the head of the largest and richest society then in Europe, not to have been aware of the greed of the King and the possible move against the Order? Why has so much research been pursued around Rennes-le-Chateau, with so much mystique evident when one walks around the tiny village? And, of course, there is always the age-old question of the mysteries buried (or not) at Rosslyn Chapel. There's more!!

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The answers to the Quiz Questions on Page One are:

1. *Page 38 of the 2000 ritual which reads, "further more than to moisten the pen with your lips"*
2. *Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.*
3. *They were called the 73 clauses. However much more were added later.*

