

Ultimate Knights Templar Guide



RECLAIMING THE HOLY LAND

Everyone who has ever played a fantasy tabletop RPG has heard of the holy warriors known as paladins. Paladins are holy knights that wade into battle armed with sword, shield, and faith. They obediently go wherever they are needed to protect the faith and serve the faithful. They have great martial prowess and potent faith-based powers. In many games, paladins also observe a strict chivalric code while maintaining vows of poverty and chastity.

However, paladins aren't simply the stuff of legends. In actuality, paladins were very real. Following the First Crusade, knights banded together to serve the needs of the faith and the faithful. They lived the life of a monk while simultaneously following the path of a warrior. These warrior-monks formed a highbred of monastic life that was termed Military Orders. The most famous of these orders was the Knights Templar.

Ultimate Knights Templar Guide is a sourcebook for Savage Worlds that delves into the world of the Knights Templar from a historical and in-game aspect. The Knights Templar were the ultimate paladins during the Crusades who fought tooth and nail to reclaim the Holy Land. Their Order was shrouded in conspiracy and all of this results in excellent role-playing opportunities.

Ultimate Knights Templar Guide includes:

- A brief history of the Knights Templar.
- Ranks of Templar knights.
- A listing of grand masters.
- Options for creating Templar characters.
- Gear utilized by the Knights Templar.
- Non-player Characters.
- Templar adventures.
- ... and more!

Ultimate Knights Templar Guide is your source for building Templar knights like those from the Crusades, or building the foundations of an alternate history set in the backdrop of the Crusades and the struggles to reclaim the Holy Land.





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Ultimate Knights Templar Guide

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Ultimate Knights Templar Guide is a sourcebook that includes historical facts, theories, and speculation regarding the Knights Templar.

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Ultimate Knights Templar Guide is a sourcebook for the *Savage Worlds* role playing game, discussing the historical Crusaders known as the Knights Templar. The book includes a historical write-up of various aspects of the Knights Templar for in-game interpretation and inspiration and a collection of in-game mechanics for players and GMs. This allows for adventures and campaigns involving the Knights Templar set in the backdrop of the Crusades. It's time to reclaim the Holy Land!

History of the Knights Templar

Everyone who has ever played a fantasy tabletop RPG has heard of the holy warriors known as paladins. Paladins are holy knights that waded into battle armed with sword, shield, and faith. They obediently go wherever they are needed to protect the faith and serve the faithful. They have great martial prowess and potent faith-based powers. In many games, paladins also observe a strict chivalric code while maintaining vows of poverty and chastity.

However, paladins aren't simply the stuff of legends. In actuality, paladins were very real. Following the First Crusade, knights banded together to serve the needs of the faith and the faithful. They lived the life of a monk while simultaneously following the path of a warrior. These warrior-monks formed a highbred of monastic life that was termed Military Orders. The most famous of these orders was the Knights Templar.

When we look at the Knights Templar through our modern lenses, it doesn't always make sense why a small group of men mushroomed into one of the largest standing armies in the world. It baffles us as to why the powerful people of Europe would leave vast sums of money and large tracts of land to a relatively new religious order. To understand why, we need to look back.

Although today's society contains large religious organizations, none have the power to topple governments or have jurisdiction over entire countries. Sure, some of the current religious organizations in the world do have a great deal of power, but none of them galvanized the world like the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages.

While the Roman Empire was in decline, the Roman Catholic Church was in its infancy. Like any child, the church experienced growing pains. They tried to search for their own identity and suffered at the hands of those that found them to be good scapegoats. Through all the trials and tribulations, the Church remained strong, despite attempts by the Roman government to destroy the faith.

Things began to change dramatically for the Christian Church in the fall of 312 at the Battle of Milvian Bridge. The Roman Empire was fractured and war had broken out. Legend has it that Constantine received a vision from the Christian God to paint a Christian symbol on the shields of his troops to ensure victory. The subsequent defeat of Maxentius at the hands of Constantine ushered in a new era for Christians. In 313, Constantine and Licinius, rulers of opposite parts of the Roman Empire, signed the Edict of Milan which granted religious freedom to the Christians.

This doesn't mean that further persecutions didn't occur under future emperors. Quite the contrary! In fact, in 361, Emperor Julian took the throne and reinstated the old religion of Rome as the state religion and began persecuting Christians once again. There are several stories of saints who were martyred during this period. Julian succumbed to a battlefield injury and died. With his death, Christianity was restored as the normative religion in the Roman Empire with the rise of Jovian in 363. In 380, Emperor Theodosius I issued a proclamation known as the Edict of Thessalonica. This edict made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Why is this so important? Over the next 100 years, the Roman Empire fell into a death spiral. Scholars have debated the when and why for years, but what is fact is that the Roman Empire began to disintegrate. Much of what held the empire together was the might and massive bureaucracy of Rome. Without this, the empire fragmented and began to become introspective.

Without the Roman Empire, there was a power vacuum. Much of this was filled by tribal leaders. Groups like the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, and Franks rose up and established their own kingdoms. With the empire crumbling and chaos ensuing, the world slipped into a period known as the Dark Ages.

What happened to the Christian Church during this time? Simply put, it kept moving forward. The Christian Church didn't need the Roman Empire to survive. The fourth century saw the Christian Church move from a persecuted cult to a state religion under the reign of Emperor Constantine. As this shift developed and the Christian Church became more engrained in society, some Christians felt the need to retreat from society and worship God free from the shackles of church politics. These individuals lived in caves, forests, deserts, and other locations that afforded them the isolation necessary to live a life focused solely on solitary prayer and contemplation.

As time passed, certain hermits became known and admired for their way of life by other members of the faithful. Local communities near to these holy men often supported them with gifts of food and drink. As word of the dedication of these holy men spread, more and more people sought out well-known hermits in an effort to adopt a similar lifestyle.

As more and more people sought out religious recluses, divergent eremitic philosophies developed. Those hermits that strongly shunned contact with the outside world continued to live in strict isolation. Other hermits chose to live in communities, yet maintained a strong sense of personal isolation. These individuals banded together in simple communities such as a *lavra*, a cluster of caves with a shared church. This particular type of community was served by a priest and possibly a pair of deacons who were the community's only connection to the outside world.

Some hermits became well-known for their ascetic lifestyles. Hermits, such as St. Anthony of Egypt, balanced their ascetic existence with their role as teacher to create a lifestyle that eventually became a form of spiritual or internal asceticism that we now refer to as monasticism.

As communities developed, the need for regulations regarding conduct became evident. These regulations, termed Rules, shaped the community and helped their members operate on the same page, so to speak. Although the content of these Rules differ, the three core tenets are the same: chastity, poverty, and obedience.

Central to the monastic way of life was the concept of being in action. Contemplation wasn't enough. Their life was one of duality between the spiritual and physical. Farming, education, and manuscript creation were just a few of the things that monks regularly engaged in.

However, the sacred wasn't sacrificed. Eight separate prayer periods throughout the day were also proscribed in what was referred to as the Liturgy of the Hours. These framed the monastic life and helped center the work life of the monk in a spiritual grounding.

In keeping with the monastic tradition of action, many monks undertook outreach efforts into pagan parts of Europe. Members of monastic communities as well as hermits undertook active missions to convert the people of Western Europe. Their efforts bore fruit in the form of converts.

In the mid-400s, St. Patrick's work among the Celts of the British Isles led to the conversion of many of the clan rulers. As a result, the Celtic Christian church thrived as Christianity spread throughout the lands of now Britain, Ireland, and Scotland.

In 498, Clovis, who was ruler of the united Frankish tribes, converted to Christianity. Many Frankish noblemen and commoners joined him as was the

custom. Many local clergy celebrated this conversion as if Clovis was some sort of second Constantine.

As Christianity swept through formerly pagan kingdoms, the institutions of the Roman Catholic Church soon followed. The Catholic Church quickly became entrenched in societies where their message had been accepted by the masses. Since many of these conversions were of nobility, the Church became entwined with the political fabric of nations.

Monasteries sprung up in formerly pagan lands. Churches were erected by nobility and priests assigned to serve the needs of the growing Christian population. The Roman Catholic Church became integral to the fabric of medieval life.

However, the European Kingdoms and the Byzantine Empire were about to come face-to-face with another religious group born in the Middle East: Islam. In the early 600s, the Muslim faith was born. That faith quickly spread like wildfire among the tribes of the Middle East and led Muslim forces to capture Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land. Despite Muslim control of the Holy Land, Christian pilgrims enjoyed relative peace for a few centuries as they visited the area most sacred to their faith. The caliph who conquered Jerusalem made this promise to Christians:

"They shall be protected and secured both in their lives and fortunes, and their churches shall neither be pulled down nor made use of by any but themselves"

This peace was guaranteed by the caliphs who ruled over the area in exchange for the surrender of Jerusalem. As long as Christian pilgrims paid the appropriate tax, they were free to visit their holy sites free of molestation.

In contrast to the peace enjoyed by Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land, Muslim incursions into Europe were bloody and violent. As the Muslim tribes swept across the Holy Land and North Africa, they ran into the Byzantine Empire in the east and Spain in the west. In the west, Muslim forces swept across the narrow space between Northwest Africa and Southern Spain and up into Southern France. In 732, Muslim forces met the man credited with halting the Muslim invasion: Charles Martel.

At the battle of Tours, Charles Martel led a force of about 30,000 against the massive Muslim army estimated at 60-80,000. Through a combination of guile and strategic placement of his army, Charles defeated the larger force and effectively checked the advance of Muslim forces deeper into Western Europe.

This isn't to say that Muslim incursions into Western Europe ended. In fact, in 846 a force of about 15,000 landed in Italy and marched on Rome. The local forces were powerless to stop them and the Muslim invaders sacked the city. This led Pope Leo IV to build defensive walls to avoid this situation in the future.

Battles with Muslim forces in both the east and west continued for centuries. Despite the invasion and acts of violence against some Christian religious sites, such as the sacking of Rome and the burning of Christian churches a couple of years prior to the Battle of Tours, European kings never banded together to address this enemy.

In 1065, something happened that would eventually galvanize European Kingdoms toward a common cause. Turkish Muslims under the rule of Emir Ortok, took control of the Holy City. They were not as benevolent as the Caliph Omar and his descendants who previously ruled over this portion of the Middle East. Ortok is said to have slaughtered thousands of pilgrims and he

held many others for ransom. Accounts speak of him dragging pilgrims by their hair before tossing them in dungeons.

Around this same time, Muslim forces were making great strides in the East and threatened to swallow up the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantines eventually appealed to their Western European brethren for aid. In addition, this crisis gave the Pope the perfect opportunity to stop the infighting in Europe and focus them on a common enemy.

At the Council of Clermont in 1095, Urban II put into motion the events that would birth the Knights Templar. He urged all that could to take up arms and retake the Holy Land.

As one translation of his speech puts it, "Let those who have been fighting against their brothers and relatives now fight in a proper way against the barbarians." In exchange for their service, those that die fighting against the Saracens would receive full pardon of their sins.

Europe was swept up in the fervor to retake the Holy Land. The common cry that was heard throughout Europe was *Deus Vult* ("God Wills It"). This cry was used by clergy to fire up people in support of the Crusade and Europe was ablaze.

This campaign worked well; some might say too well. Men erupted out of Europe and spewed forth like hot lava destroying anything that came in their path. Many Jews and Christians in the east died along with Saracens since these European troops had difficulty distinguishing between these groups. The First Crusade was successful at liberating the Holy Land. Just like the tsunami that they were, most then receded back to Europe; most, but not all.

A pitifully inadequate force remained in the Holy Land charged with the defense of Jerusalem. King Baldwin knew that if the Saracens banded together like the Europeans did, they could again retake the Holy Land and purge the European forces. However, the Saracens didn't initially launch a massive offensive.

The Saracen forces remained broken, but not quelled. Unfortunately, many pilgrims to the liberated Holy Land found this out firsthand. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem was fraught with danger. Some danger was unavoidable such as storms and disease, but others were a bit more preventable. Pilgrims were often attacked by bandits or marauding Saracen forces that killed them and stole any belongings they possessed. Baldwin simply didn't have the forces necessary to stamp this out and protect pilgrims traveling to the east.

For example, one account speaks of hundreds of pilgrims slaughtered and dozens more sold into slavery as they traveled to the Jordan River at Easter in 1119. There are many accounts of pilgrims who were fearful to seek out known water sources and other areas of comfort because of a fear of the Saracens, who were known to ambush pilgrims at these sites.

In 1118, a small group of knights, who were former crusaders, realized the dangers facing pilgrims to the Holy Land and banded together to protect these travelers. They were a small force. Some accounts number them at as many as 30, but most historians agree that the original band numbered nine, including their leader, Hugh de Payne, who was estimated to be in his late 40s.

Although not a recognized order at the time, these brothers banded together in a sort of religious service organization dedicated to protecting the pilgrims while shunning worldly pleasures. It is from their shunning of worldly treasures that they took their original name: The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Jesus Christ.

One quick note about terminology: Saracen and Muslim are used interchangeably. The term Saracen was used much more than Muslim by writers and scholars, but both referenced Islamic fighters. Prior to the late Middle Ages, the term Muslim was not used.

Not much is known about the early days of the Templar. One of the questions asked is, "How could nine knights, some of who were advanced in age, protect much of anything?" Looking at a few different accounts sheds light on this. It is thought that instead of patrolling the Holy Land or escorting pilgrims, what Hugh and his group might have done was used some of the Saracen tactics against them. In other words, accounts from the late 1100s indicate that Hugh and his group would lie in ambush and wait for the Saracens who tried to use the same tactic against pilgrims. Through the use of the element of surprise, he was able to defeat a much larger force.

It wasn't long before these knights came to the attention of King Baldwin II who realized that he had a problem. Baldwin knew he didn't have enough troops to protect the steady stream of pilgrims flowing into the Holy Land. He also knew that pilgrims brought money to the Holy Land, which was valuable to the survival of the new crusader state. What Baldwin recognized was this small group of knights could be his potential salvation.

It is important to understand that these weren't just a group of men that carried swords and shields. In addition to being skilled combatants, they were also nobles. As such, they had connections in Europe that could be beneficial to Baldwin II, but this wasn't the only reason he took an interest in the order. Baldwin was impressed by the group's commitment and desire to serve the Lord by protecting pilgrims. In order to support their efforts, he gave them some of the best quarters in the Holy Land: space near the Temple Mount, the supposed sight of the Temple of Solomon and the holy site of the Saracens known as the Dome of the Rock. This led the group to change their name to The Poor Fellow-Knights of Jesus Christ and the Temple of Solomon, which later became The Knights of the Temple of Solomon, then The Knights of the Temple and finally The Knights Templar or simply Templar.

This was a game changer for these knights. In addition to a place to headquarter, both King Baldwin II and the Patriarch of Jerusalem gave them a small source of income so they could support themselves. The recognition of the order and arrangements for their support stems from a local council of ecclesiastic and secular leader in the Holy Land known as the Council of Nablus. At this council at the beginning of 1120, The Templar was recognized and became a sanctioned organization. They were not yet recognized by the Papacy as a religious order, but now served as more of an official religious service organization.

For the next few years, not much is known about what the order did. Presumably, the order undertook the day to day task of protecting pilgrims as they were able. There is evidence that other nobility, such as Fulk of Anjou, came to the Holy Land and enrolled in the group as an associate member for a time before returning to Europe.

The order secured their first gift of land, a church gifted to them by William of Marseille. This was to be the first of a plethora of gifts given to the order. To secure the financial means to do more in the Holy Land, they first had to become an official order. To do this they needed two things: a rule of conduct/structure and papal support.

To secure a rule of conduct and a champion for their fledgling order, they turned to a superstar in the Medieval Church: Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard was abbot of a Cistercian monastery, but more importantly, he was a well-respected figure both in church and secular circles. Why did Bernard even agree to meet this small group of knights? This goes back to the old adage: It isn't what you know, but who you know. Hugh de Paynes was well known and liked by the Count of Champagne, who was good friends with Bernard. In

addition, Andre de Montbard was a founding member of the Templars and Bernard was his uncle.

Bernard took up the cause of the Templar with a tremendous amount of zeal. He penned a famous letter, *On the New Knighthood*, where he sang the praises of Templar and compared them to secular knights. The thrust of this letter was both the praise of these individuals for taking up the cross and serving God in this manner. Bernard also stated the need for a formal order to continue this work.

The fruits of Bernard's labor was realized in 1129 at the Council of Troyes where the Knights Templar were officially recognized by the Church and their Rule, written by Bernard, was also approved as the official code of conduct for the fledgling religious order.



The Rule

The Rule, created by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, that guided every aspect of the Knights Templar was quite strict. It addressed every aspect of a brother's life including how often they could eat meat and how and when they communicated with family, friends, and even fellow knights. The Rule demanded strict obedience, poverty, and chastity. In reality there were two rules that were written.

The first Rule, called the Latin or Primitive Rule, consisted of several dozen articles or regulations. The Rule was crafted by one of the most influential church figures of the time, St. Bernard of Clairvaux. The Templar received this Rule in 1129 at the Council of Troyes, where they were also recognized as an official Order. This Rule was based on the Rule of St. Benedict.

The 75 portions that comprise the Latin Rule strike most readers as very harsh. Much of what this Rule does is to set the Order apart from traditional knights and ground them in the importance of their faith. Bernard understood that extreme measures must be undertaken to ensure the Templar could maintain a life grounded in poverty, chastity, and obedience. To be successful, members of the Order had to leave their life as a secular knight behind and become a warrior monk.

The first thing this meant was defining what a warrior-monk is. This was done by comparing the actions of the holy warrior to their secular counterparts and eliminating anything that might set the individual knight apart and cause them to become arrogant. For example, Rule 37 states that a knight shouldn't have gold or silver adornments on his armor or horse's barding, since they could be a sign of arrogance and set him above the other members of the order. It forbids the members of the order from flying pennants from their lances. This display of wealth was substituted with the equality of equipment and arms and the concept of each according to their needs.

The Rule also forbids falconry and hunting, unless that animal was predatory like a Lion. Most secular knights would have participated in hunting. This was a sport common among knights and other members of the upper class. The Templar was forbidden in Rule 55 from not only hunting, but participating in hunts purely as a spectator. It was feared that such actions might send the Templar down a slippery slope that led them back to their secular lifestyle and away from God. However, the ban on hunting also emphasized the seriousness the Order placed on their role as Knights of Christ. The ban also instructs the knights that force of arms is reserved for the enemy. Using your weapons for any other reason is frivolous.

They were ordered to have a sober character at all times and not be silly. They were not supposed to be jovial and gregarious, unlike their fellow knights who would drink and carouse. Silence and prayer replaced the frivolity that many knights had experienced while they served secular rulers.

Some portions of the Rule are simply logistical in nature. These portions of the Rule spell out things like how many horses are allotted to each knight (3) and how many squires a knight may have (1). These sections also explain the conduct of the knights towards their squires and the role of the sergeants and secular knights that worked with the order.

Most of the rule would seem oppressive to our modern sensibilities. Apart from certain leadership in the order, brother-knights were not allowed to have locked storage since everything the brothers had were the property of the order. Brother-knights couldn't wear animal skin cloaks in winter unless they were made of lamb skin. What they could wear while asleep and awake were also dictated by the Rule.

How they should eat, what they should eat, and when was also proscribed. Meals were to be eaten in silence with another brother so they could make sure that everyone ate their meals. The Rule stated what days of the week you could eat meat and when you should abstain. For example, the Latin Rule states that meat should only be eaten three times a week with meals of vegetables eaten on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. On Fridays, fish was served. These meals were eaten in silence, except for the proscription in Rule 9 that says there should be readings from the Bible at meal times.

This early rule provided for sick brothers and elderly brothers. It is important to understand that one was a Templar for life. As such, the Order needed to care for their aging members. The Rule states, "Aging and weak brothers be honored with diligence and given consideration according to their frailty." In other words, elderly brothers were expected to do what they could, but they should not be physically taxed.

The same is true for sick brothers. They were also given special dispensation from the Rule so that they could heal. The Rule states "Brothers who are wretched should be treated quietly and with care." Members of the Order were expected to care for their fellow brothers who were sick and support them through their illness. It is also interesting to note that sick or "weak" brothers were not bound by the dietary rules. Quite the opposite was true. The Rule provided for the dietary needs of ailing brothers and allowed them to eat meat whenever their House could furnish it as a means of speeding healing.

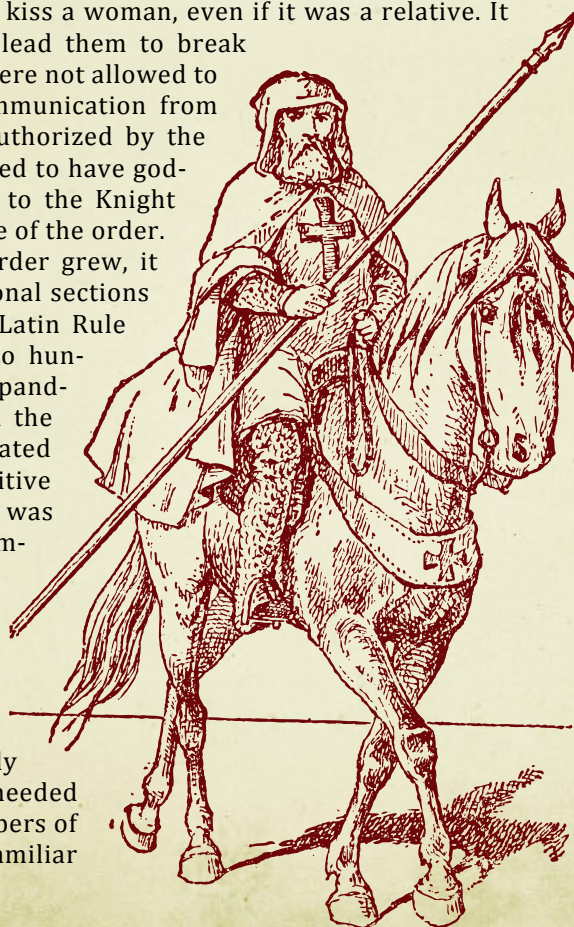
The Rule also dictated what should happen when a brother dies. When a Knight Templar dies, the Rule commands that a mass be sung for him and that his fellow brothers should pray for him. What is also interesting is that it dictates that "A pauper be fed with meat and wine for forty days in memory of the dead brother, just as if he were alive."

If this wasn't enough, it is important to remember that the Rule of the Knight Templar was based on the Rule of St. Benedict, an early monastic code. As such, the Rule also dictated the spiritual structure of the order. The brethren were expected to maintain the observations of the Hours, a common practice among monastic communities. The Hours consisted of several prayer times known as offices (Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline). This practice grew out of several different biblical mandates and stories, not the least of which is Psalm 119:164-165 ("Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous ordinances. Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble." NRSV) When not ill or on the battlefield, Templar were commanded to observe this worship discipline. Those brothers who were sick or old were exempt from observing the Hours. Even brother-knights engaged in active campaigns were instructed to maintain the Hours as best they could but not allow this or any other regulation to compromise their ability to function on the battlefield.

One of the other things the Rule did was to separate the members from any other worldly concerns. For a candidate to become a member of the Order, he had to swear that he had commitments to no one else. For example, he had to state that he didn't owe anyone else money and hadn't promised to join a different order. He couldn't be bound to someone else and had to be healthy. If the brother was married, he could join, but he wasn't permitted to wear the white mantle reserved for the rest of the brothers.

Brothers were also forbidden to have physical contact with women. This meant they could not hug or kiss a woman, even if it was a relative. It was feared that this might lead them to break their vow of chastity. They were not allowed to receive letters or other communication from family and friends unless authorized by the master. They were not allowed to have god-children as this would lead to the Knight having a commitment outside of the order.

As time passed and the order grew, it was necessary to add additional sections to the Rule. Eventually the Latin Rule mushroomed from dozens to hundreds of regulations. This expanded set of Rules was dubbed the French Rule, since it originated as a translation of the Primitive Rule into a language that was more accessible by the members of the order. The rule provided for everything necessary for daily living. The problem was that eventually there were so many components to the rule that most members only knew what they absolutely needed to know and few of the members of the Order were actually familiar with the entire Rule.



As the leader of the Order, the grand master was allowed certain privileges. He was allowed to choose his own armor, horses, and designated retinue. His personal retainers eventually included a chaplain, clerk, cook, blacksmith, interpreter, bodyguard, two footmen, and a sergeant. In addition to the equipment afforded all Templar Knights, he had four horses as well as a large round tent when in the field. The standard was always near the grand master. The right to ride near the standard was reserved for the upper echelons of the Templar: seneschal, marshal, and commanders of Jerusalem, Tripoli, Antioch, England, Portugal, Aragon, Hungary, and France.

Structure of the Knights Templar

Armies in the Middle Ages utilized small groups that banded together to form larger and larger units, just like our modern military. This organizational structure would be critical for a fighting force, such as the Templar, that relied on precision in their attacks to counter the relatively small numbers of knights they were able to field.

The Knights Templar would have certainly followed the standard medieval military structure. The smallest unit would be comprised of a modern squad-sized unit. This would have been 5-6 knights led by a single knight. Several of these small units would have formed a squadron. These squadrons would have consisted of about 50 knights and 4 to 6 of the squadrons would have formed a battle. Several battles would form the entire cavalry of any army. The battles were formed in different positions: Rearguard, Vanguard, Left and Right Wings as well as the Main or Center. This allowed for greater tactical use of cavalry forces on the battlefield than a single mass would.

Ranks in the Order

Grand Master: The grand master was the head of the order. He was never referred to as the grand master, but simply as the master of the temple of Jerusalem. Although he was responsible for many day to day decisions, his power was limited. In major matters affecting the order, such as planning a military campaign or changing the contents of the Rule, the brother knights all had a vote and the grand master only had one.

Visitor-General: These two knights were tasked by the grand master to oversee the vast Templar operations and serve as oversight for the order. They were controlled by the grand master and had incredible power. They would be the equivalent of our modern inspector general but with much more power. For example, these knights had the ability to remove knights from certain areas and even suspend provincial Templar masters.

Grand Commander or Preceptor: The grand commander was a provincial commander responsible for all the Templar holdings in his province. He was also responsible for delivering the collected annual income from the

provincial holdings at the meeting of grand commanders held biannually.

Seneschal: The seneschal was the second in command. When the master was absent, he acted on the master's behalf.

Marshal: The marshal was the third in command. He was very much a military man and a grand master would usually consult with him, as well as the seneschal and the turcopolier, before making any final decisions on tactics. He was in charge of all arms and horses. He was the military commander and as such had a strong hand in deciding tactics and strategy.

Under Marshal: Although the marshal was in charge of the arms and equipment of the Order, the practical discharge of this duty fell to the under marshal. He was the medieval equivalent of the modern quartermaster. This would be the duty of a sergeant-brother. He was afforded two horses and a squire to assist him.

Commander: These were Templar Knights who oversaw various Templar holdings such as fortresses and farms. They directly served the provincial commanders. They were re-

sponsible for delivering a portion of the income to the grand commander once a year. An example of a typical holding, called a Commandery, would be a large farm with associated structures.

Commander of the City of Jerusalem:

The commander of the city of Jerusalem was responsible for the health and well-being of the brothers. He was also responsible for the protection of pilgrims and safeguarding the Order's holy relics.

Commander of Houses: The commanders of houses were Templar Knights who oversaw various Templar holdings such as fortresses and farms. They directly served the provincial commanders. They were responsible for delivering a portion of

the income to the grand commander once a year. A typical holding, called a commandery, would be a large farm with associated structures.

Commander of Knights: The commanders of knights served as a sort of lieutenant to the marshal.

Commander of Tripoli and Antioch:

The commanders of Tripoli and Antioch were very powerful. In essence, they had the same power as the grand master within their regions.

Sergeant: Sergeants were the bulk of the Templar. They were of non-noble birth and filled various roles. On the battlefield, they served as both lighter armored cavalry and infantry.

Knights: Knights were the backbone of the Order.

One author also mentions "the guardian of the chapel." This group was in charge of safeguarding the portable worship space that was at the heart of the Templar encampment. The chapel is where the Templar would rally when in the field if the enemy broke into their camp.



A quick note about married brothers. It is important to note that married brothers could join the order. Married brothers and those that joined the order for a limited term were known as confrere. The best way to describe them is as associate members. They were not allowed to live in the same house as the full brothers as these members took a less strict vow that didn't include chastity. Since they were not full members, they were relegated to wearing the black or brown mantles, yet still functioned as knights. Married brothers were also expected to bequeath a portion of their estate to the Knights Templar. The other portion was given to their widow for her upkeep.

Standard Bearer: This sergeant had the honor of being at the head of the column and carrying the Templar banner. Like the under marshal, he was afforded two horses and a squire to assist him.

Drapier: The drapier was responsible for the brothers clothing and bedding. Although this sounds like a very menial assignment, he was afforded a very high rank in the order.

Turcopolier: The turcopolier was the commander of the light horseman attached to the Templar.

Turcoples: Turcoples were Christians of Middle Eastern descent that served as light cavalry and scouts for the Order. They wore much lighter armor and carried lighter weapons. They were invaluable fighters extremely familiar within the eastern fighting techniques of the Templar's main opponent. They were always commanded by a sergeant-brother known as a turcopolier.

Chaplain Brothers: Originally, the order did not have their own chaplains. Instead the Order was ministered to by various priests. This eventually changed and the Order was permitted, by the Pope, to have their own chaplains.

Initiation

As you can probably imagine, being accepted into the Knights Templar wasn't as easy as knocking on the door and asking to join. It was important that candidates understood how serious their request was. They needed to understand that they were literally leaving their old life behind and starting again. There was a concern that knights would be drawn to the Order based on myth and misconception and not understand the harsh reality of life as a member of the Order.

If a candidate wished to join the Order he was brought before the weekly meeting of the chapterhouse. At the chapterhouse meeting, the knights of the local house dealt with general business as well as the punishment of infractions. In addition, the brothers would use these meetings as an opportunity to examine potential candidates. If a majority of the brothers agreed, the candidate would be admitted to the Order.

Prior to consideration for admission, it was important for the candidate to understand what they were getting themselves into. In many respects, it was the role of the Order to try to dissuade candidates from joining. Why would they do this? It was because they only wanted those candidates who fit the ideals and core values of the Order.

The first question asked of every candidate was, "Do you wish to join this house?" It had the implied tone of, 'Really, you really want to join this house? Are you insane?' If a candidate indicated he wanted to join, he was then told that as a brother of the Knights Templar, he would be, for all intents and purposes, a slave for the rest of his life. He would need to be obedient, chaste, and poor. He was told of the difficulties of being a Knight Templar and how it was in vast contrast to the myth that people held about the order.

For nobility, this would be like being dunked in ice cold water. It was presumed that an austere life of servitude would be incredibly difficult for them to fathom. However, if they did get over the initial shock and decided they would still like to join the ranks, they were then asked a series of practical questions: Are you married? Are you committed to another religious order? Do you have any debts? Are you in good health? Another practical

issue surrounds station. To be a full member of the order, the candidate must be either a knight or the son of a knight. Anyone who wasn't either a knight or the son of a knight was barred from wearing the white tunic of the Order.

For commoners wishing to join the Order, it was fairly similar. Many would be drawn to the order due to the mystic that surrounded the Order. However, commoners would be told they wouldn't become knights, but sergeants. Their life would be filled with disgusting and menial tasks such as cleaning out horse stalls and racking out muck while only a select few would actually engage in battle against the Saracens.

If noble or commoner still agreed and didn't have any other commitments, they were then brought before the members of the chapterhouse where the Master would once again attempt to dissuade him from joining the order. If the candidate was still interested in joining the order after all of this, the brotherhood would decide if the candidate was a good fit for the Templar.

If the members agreed that the candidate should be granted admission, then the applicant was once again questioned to ensure there were no other commitments, conflicts, or health issues that might disqualify him from membership in the Order. He was also told that lying would only lead to expulsion.

If the candidate's answers were sufficient, he was invited to take the oath whereby he would swear obedience to the Master to fulfill his every order. He made an oath to live a life of chastity and poverty. He made a promise to protect the Holy Land and any Christians who were in need. He also promised to never leave the Order without permission. All of this was done by both God and the Virgin Mary.

After he completed the oath, the Master formally welcomed him saying among other things, "And so we promise you the bread and the water and the poor clothing of the house and more than enough of pain and torment." (Newman, 306) With that, Knights were given their white cloak, while sergeants or confreres were given a brown or black cloak. Finally, the brotherhood all offered him the kiss of peace. This wasn't a strange act for the time and didn't have any sexual connotation. The new brother was then dismissed after being read the Rule.

For confreres serving the Order for a limited time, these associate brothers were also required to bring their own horse and arms. These would become property of the Order for as long as the confrere served. If his horse died, the Order would purchase him a new one. If he decided to leave the Order at the end of his period, then his horse and arms were once again his. The confrere was also asked to leave a donation to the Order equal to 1/2 the value of his horse when he left.



Might of the Knights Templar

Banking

As mentioned earlier, the Roman Catholic Church permeated the culture of Western Europe. The Church became both a spiritual and political powerhouse as the number of converts grew, especially as the number of nobles who converted to Christianity steadily increased.

As the Church grew, there became a greater need for worship spaces. However, this meant that churches needed to be built to serve the needs of the newly minted faithful. In a feudal system of government, land is a major source of power. Those that controlled land had all the power. As rulers of a nation, kings controlled all of the land in their kingdom. The king doled out portions of land to members of the nobility who in turn gave portions of their land to lesser nobles and so on. This created an interconnected web of loyalty which is referred to as fealty. In exchange for land, the person would swear an oath of loyalty to the noble that granted that land to them.

Lords controlled everything that happened on their land. As nobles converted to Christianity, so too did their vassals and surfs. As these same lords built churches, they also gained the ability to dictate the spiritual practices of the surfs that served them. Because he owned the church that he built, the early practice was for a lord to hire or remove clergy serving the church that he owned in much the same way that a modern business owner hires and fires employees.

This led to a bit of a quandary for the early Catholic Church. Since lords built churches on their land, they controlled the church. This gave the lord a tremendous amount of power in the Church, especially since they also controlled tithes collected from these churches.

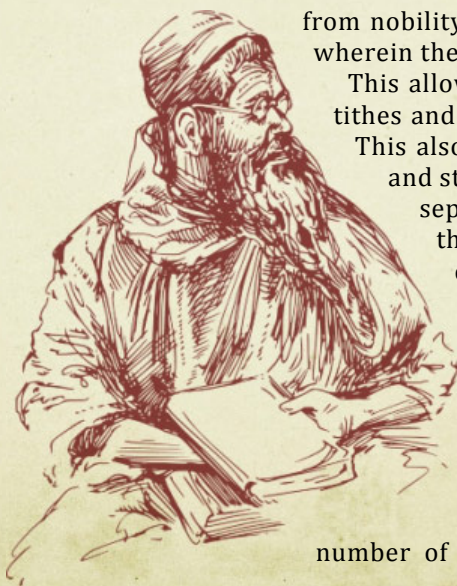
However, the Roman Catholic Church felt that spiritual matters were solely under their control. They felt that secular rulers were endowed with the right to rule by God and therefore the power of the church towered above that of the state. This eventually led to a separation of churches from nobility and the creation of the parish system wherein the church controlled their own holdings.

This allowed the Church to gain wealth through tithes and the acquisition of land through grants.

This also allowed the Church to build churches and staff them as they saw fit. In addition, the separation of the Church from secular authority theoretically allowed them to operate outside of the norm of financial obligation to the nobility.

Why is this important to understand? The Knights Templar had two main industries: warfare and banking. Everything they did supported these two industries and they were very good at both.

As the Knights Templar grew, so did the number of people looking to support the Order.



They became the rock stars of the Middle Ages and people wanted to be a part of this new phenomenon called a Military Order. Some financial support came from married knights who felt called to join the order. These knights were required to leave a portion of their estate to the Templar. They didn't leave their entire estate to the Order because the Rule dictated that a portion must be set aside to support their spouse and family. The Order didn't want to get a gift of land from a married member only to be saddled with the need to support his wife and kids. Gifts bequeathed to the Templar from married brothers and secular royalty generated a tremendous amount of wealth for the Order.

Why would someone give the Templar so much wealth? For some nobles, it was simply because they wanted to support the mission of the Templar. Nobles returning from the Crusades were awestruck with the way in which the Templar battled the Saracens in the Holy Land. They relished the idea of a group of holy warriors protecting pilgrims and battling the Saracens. These same nobles supported the ideal of a Christian Holy Land free of Saracen control and the Templar seemed to be the perfect vehicle to accomplish this.

In 1124, several years before being officially recognized by the Church, the Templar received their first donation of property. Granted, this was a very small gift, but this became the first of many such gifts that were granted to the Templar. The gift was a small church donated to the order by William of Poitiers.

Another reason for donating to Templars was the issue of indulgences. While an indulgence wasn't a "get out of jail free" card, what it did was mitigate some of the temporal punishment for committing sin imposed by the Church and helped a person build up credit on a heavenly ledger. This might sound a bit odd to our modern sensibilities, but you have to understand that this is many years before the Protestant Reformation. This is a time in history when the vast majority of people believed in demons and witchcraft as well as a literal Heaven and Hell.

In many respects, the Church served as the gateway to both. There was a strong belief during the Middle Ages that was held by both the Roman Catholic Church and their followers: "extra ecclesiam nulla salus" (There is no salvation outside of the Church). This caused the Church to be viewed as the gateway to salvation. Therefore many members of the Roman Catholic Church made a concerted effort to do whatever they could to avoid eternal punishment by following the penances proscribed by the Church. Since the Church held the keys to the Heavenly Kingdom so to speak, they felt superior to all of the nobility regardless of rank. This line of thinking eventually led to the doctrine of Papal Supremacy which held that the Church was the sole authority over both spiritual and secular matters since the power of kings and queens ultimately came from God.

Just because the Roman Catholic Church didn't maintain a standing army or police force doesn't mean they didn't have a potent weapon to punish offenders. One of the most potent tools the Church had was known as interdiction.

Interdiction basically cuts off connectivity to the Church by prohibiting the practicing of basic, but important, Church functions such as the celebration of the mass, offering of the sacraments, and burial by the Church. Since the Church was the gateway to salvation, the people in an area under interdiction were viewed as literally being doomed to an eternity of suffering. This differs from excommunication since interdiction doesn't remove those under the ban from the Church, but instead puts them in a kind of ecclesiastical "Time Out" where excommunication basically kicks them out of the house, to continue

the analogy. The order of interdiction could be and often was reversed, where excommunication was a permanent separation of an individual from the Church and access to salvation.

Unlike excommunication, interdiction was not reserved for a single person. Instead, local or regional areas were placed under interdiction. Even entire countries such as France and England were at one time placed under interdiction. Interdiction was commonly used as a political weapon to put pressure on nobility and was the most powerful weapon directly wielded by the Church. It is important to understand the concept of interdiction as we look at some of the privileges that the Pope gave the Knights Templar.

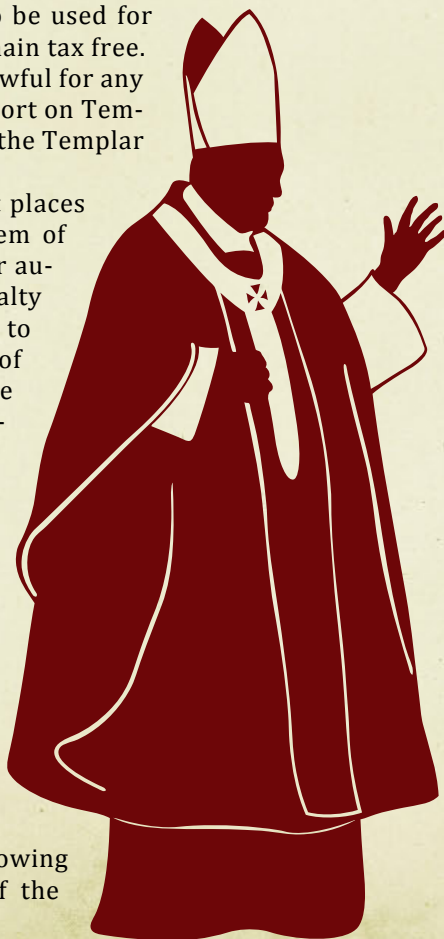
Papal Bull

The papacy paved the way for the Templar acquisition of wealth through a series of decrees that offered the Order some amazing privileges and strongly encouraged the faithful to donate. One of the earliest of these decrees was by Pope Innocent II in 1139 entitled, *Omne Datum Optimum*. Apart from the formal recognition of the Order in 1128 by the Council of Troyes, this is probably the most important decree for the Knights Templar.

This papal bull, or order, allowed the Templars to amass a tremendous amount of wealth. This bull does several things. The first thing this order does is allow the Templar to keep any plunder they take from the Saracens. This plunder is to be used for the support of the Order and is to remain tax free. In addition, it is decreed that it is unlawful for any secular authority to levy a tax of any sort on Templar holdings. However, it also allows the Templar to levy taxes on their own lands.

Another thing this decree does is it places the Templar outside the feudal system of government by forbidding any secular authority from extracting a pledge of loyalty from any Templar. They were free to work with nobility, but were outside of their control. The Bull also places the order under the direct and sole protection and authority of the Pope. This meant that no local clergy, not even a bishop, could punish the order in any way.

In 1144, Pope Celestine II encouraged members of the church to donate to the Templar by decreeing in the Papal Bull, *Milites Templi*, that whosoever donates to the Templar may ignore a portion of the penance issued by a priest. This was a great option for the nobility, who could easily afford to eliminate a portion of their penance simply by throwing some cash at the new rock stars of the Roman Catholic Church.



In 1145, Pope Eugene III issued another Papal Bull, *Milites Dei* that further bolstered the power of the Templar. In this Bull, the Order was granted the power to go into a land under interdiction and celebrate the mass while they collected tithes for their work in the Holy Land. It also gave the Order the ability to have their own clergy and bury their dead on their own land. This was HUGE for the order. They became the only ones, other than the Pope himself, that could ignore the order of interdiction by a bishop or cardinal. It was a no brainer that folks in lands under interdiction would flock to the Templar and give them their money. It is also easy to see this might build a little animosity between Templar and local clergy.

The Templar were accused by clergy of twisting this papal decree a bit. It is important to remember that if an area was under interdiction, they were separated from the services of the Church and therefore separated from God. This includes burial. What the Templar were accused of doing was treating certain individuals as “their dead” and giving them a “Christian Burial”, even for those who lived in a land that was placed under interdiction. Because the Templar only answered to the Pope, clergy were powerless to oppose the practices they saw as an affront to their authority.

Poverty and Wealth

It's very strange to talk of an order with a vow of poverty that amassed an incredible amount of wealth. However, this is not a phenomenon unique to the Templar. In fact, the Benedictine as well as the Cistercian, of whom Bernard of Clairvaux was a member, were also fairly wealthy. It's important to understand that the Order was wealthy and not the individual members. It was the role of the individual member to be good stewards of the resources that had been granted to the Order. It might be easier to think of this in terms of a bank teller who handles thousands of dollars each day. It isn't their money, but instead it belongs to a nebulous institution called a bank.

Like the Templar, the Cistercians and Benedictines emphasized both spiritual development and manual labor. They strove to be self-sufficient. The result was a community that became wealthy as their membership grew. Some of these monastic houses, such as the famous Benedictine Abby in Cluny, resembled fortified towns.

It is no surprise then that the Templar also developed a complex machinery to create wealth. As the order grew in popularity, they grew in wealth much the same as the Cistercians. Nobles at all levels of the feudal ladder gave the Order gifts of land and structures. This meant the Templar owned holdings such as farms, vineyards, mills, and castles.

Since they were a large producer of agricultural items and other raw materials and since they regularly moved people and equipment to and from the Holy Land, it was only logical that the Templar expand into trade. Trade led the order into building up a fleet of ships they used on a regular basis. The largest of the Templar ports was in La Rochelle, France and in Acre in the Holy Land. Even though legends tend to hint at a massive Templar fleet, the reality pales in comparison.

While it is accurate that the Templar maintained a fleet, this fleet has been estimated to number less than 20 and was mostly comprised of heavy transport ships that would ferry men, supplies, and trade goods. Interestingly, it seems the Templar ships operated like their own chapterhouses with ser-

geant-brothers with nautical experience commanding these vessels in the name of the Templar.

Their ships were easily distinguished by the large Templar Cross emblazoned on their sails. The French Rule specifically identifies the “commander of the shipyard in Acre” as a specific rank in the Templar and gives this sergeant-brother special equipment and privileges on par with other special ranks such as the standard-bearer.

Given their shipping interests, it’s not surprising that one historian also shares an account of a Templar sergeant engaged in privateering against Saracen targets. This legal piracy would have been both beneficial to the Templar coffers as well as the war effort. To the Templar, privateering would simply have been viewed as an extension of the powers they were granted in *Omne Datum Optimum*.

Another industry most don’t associate with Templars is mining. The Templar was gifted with land that contained active and inactive mines, such as Ponferrada in Spain, where they extracted gold, silver, and iron. These metals were extremely important and a valuable commodity in Medieval Europe. As such, mining became yet another avenue for the Templar to amass the wealth they needed.

Given all of this, it’s not hard to believe that at their height the Templar had over 9,000 holdings including hundreds of castles and fortified compounds under their control. One historian estimates that their annual income was 6 million sterling. It’s estimated that in today’s dollars the Templar would have an annual GDP of roughly \$183 trillion.

However, not all of the properties owned by the Knights Templar were simply donated. One historian points out that there are accounts of donations being made in exchange for services rendered. There is also evidence that property was actually purchased by the Order and disguised as a charitable donation. It seems that the Templar added real estate to the list of resources it collected in order to support their efforts in the east.

With income like this, the Order became the leading banker for royalty. However, this occurred by chance rather than design. In 1148, King Louis VII of France was on campaign in the Holy Land and ran out of money. Although he was able to secure some money from one of his vassals, he turned to the Templar for the balance.

The king was grateful for their assistance and wrote a letter in praise of the Order. Once he returned home, he placed the royal treasury into the hands of the Templar for safekeeping. This didn’t elevate the Templar to a royal position in King Louis’ court. Instead, the Templar simply became a storage and accounting firm holding the money for Louis and providing him and future kings with an account of current funds and creditors.

Once the nobility of Europe heard what the Templar had done for King Louis, they also felt comfortable having the Order safeguard their valuables and sought them out for loans. According to one historian, the Templar would offer the equivalent of “bank statements” three times a year. The Templar weren’t allowed to charge fees for loans; this would violate the rules the Church had against usury.

Yet, the Templar did make money. This was done very discretely. There’s evidence that the Templar did charge a holding fee. This was typically wrapped into some sort of donation to the order or some other arrangement designed to compensate the Templar for services rendered.

Another service the Templar was famous for was the issuing of letters of credit. Think of this as the earliest traveler’s checks. No one really wanted to

lug around huge sums of money when they traveled. The problem was that if you didn't have cash with you, you could run out of money and there were no Western Union branches where family could wire you money if you needed it or ATMs where you could get quick cash. Sure you could go to your local Templar compound and request a loan, but that would cost you.

To take advantage of this service, one would go to their local Templar banking branch and deposit money with the Order. Then the Order would issue a document that the person could take to another chapterhouse and get some or all of their money back. It wasn't like the Templar did this for free. They did make money on things like currency exchange rates and fees for handling the money.

So that brigands couldn't simply take the letters and exchange them for cash, the notes were encrypted using a highly guarded cipher. One historian added that there must have been a key, in the form of a phrase or passcode built into the document that would have personalized the letter of deposit. If you didn't have the passcode, the document was worthless. It is quite possible that the Templar actually learned this skill or at least improved their knowledge of cryptology based on some of the work of Saracen scholars who one historian indicates were much more advanced in this area than their European counterparts.

The largest center of banking for the Templar was Paris. This was a massive complex that some describe as a small fortified city within Paris. Hundreds of members of the Order worked in the Paris temple, yet very few would have been full brother-knights. Many were lay and clergy skilled in medieval accounting practices. Between the Paris and London temples, vast sums of money were managed. This begs the question, "What did they need all of that money for?" You have to understand that waging war in Medieval Europe wasn't cheap. As a matter of fact, many monarchs saw their coffers depleted by crusades to the Holy Land and other wars. This financial peril typically lasted into the reign of subsequent monarchs who were faced with the stark reality of a pitiful economic situation they didn't even create.

Still, with over 9,000 holdings, the Templar should have had money flowing like water, right? Yes and no. It did flow like water. One way of looking at this is that the Templar were cash poor, but land rich. Unfortunately, you can't spend land. Much of the wealth the order possessed was in the form of raw materials that needed to be converted into cash.

Where did the money go? The Templar waged a ceaseless campaign against the Saracens. This took men, transportation, equipment, and provisions, most of which had to be imported. Not everyone who served the Templar worked for free. In fact, the Templar employed mercenaries to fill out their ranks. In addition, the Rule was very specific about what each member was due in terms of equipment and food. One of the most expensive of these items was horses. As discussed earlier, brother-knights were entitled to several horses for their use, while even sergeant-brothers were issued a horse.

In addition to horses, brother-knights and sergeant-brothers needed to be armed in expensive mail and wield stout, well-made weaponry. None of this was cheap. Also, members of the order must be fed according to the Rule, which also dictated what and when they could eat. As time passed, their holdings also would need attention. There would be needed repairs to buildings as well as the need for additional buildings such as barns and stables to support their growing business interests.

All holdings contained herein can be used as the characters' base of operations, destination, launching point for a campaign, or just another checkpoint along the way during the course of crusading to the Holy Land.

Finally, the Templars were incredible builders. They commissioned the construction of magnificent structures such as the massive fortified compound in Peniscola, Spain, the so-called Pilgrim's Castle in the Holy Land, and the Templar port complex in La Rochelle. These incredible structures served both the spiritual and military needs of the Order, but didn't come cheap.

Holdings

The Knights Templar owned quite a bit of real estate. At the height of their prominence, it's estimated they had more than nine thousand holdings throughout Europe and the Holy Land. Some of these were quite small, such as a church or small farm, while others were quite large, such as the Paris Temple or the huge fortifications in the Holy Land.

These Templar holdings touched every facet of medieval life. They had mines, farms, castles, churches, ports, and early banks in nearly every Christian country in existence during the Middle Ages. Here are several of those Templar holdings.

CASTLE PILGRIM-LOCATED NEAR HAIFA ON THE NORTHERN COAST OF ISRAEL

Castle Pilgrim, also known as Château Pèlerin, was built in 1218 and everything needed to survive was contained within its walls. The massive structure boasted pastures, salt-mines, fresh water springs, gardens, and a natural harbor with a shipyard. Additionally, the compound also featured a magnificent church modeled after the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was said this massive fortress could accommodate four thousand people. As time passed, a town grew up around the castle and was later enveloped by the addition of a new outer wall.

The architecture of this castle was designed around the needs of the Templar. The chapel, living quarters, and other essential elements were segregated from the non-members of the order so that the brothers could continue their religious practices unimpeded.

The huge castle never fell in battle. Instead, it was abandoned after the fall of Acre in 1291 when the only hope of resupply was by sea.

CASTLE SAPHET (SAFED)

Castle Saphet was actual a fortress rebuilt on this particular site. It is easy to understand why this structure might give pause to any foes that would seek to breach its walls. One historian shares this description of the structure,

"The walls were 60 French feet in width, 170 in height, and the circuit of them was 2,255. They were flanked by seven large round towers, 60ft in diameter, and 72ft higher than the walls. The fosse surrounding the fortress was 36ft feet wide, and was pierced in the solid rock to a depth of 43ft."

This structure boasted a garrison of 1,700 in peacetime that swelled to 2,200 during times of war. The amount of money required to keep the castle operational was staggering. On top of the salaries for all of the mercenaries that garrisoned the keep and the cost of equipment, there was the cost of feeding the occupants both human and animal. Along with other foodstuff, it's estimated the occupants consumed 1,000 loads of corn and barley a month. Just outside the fortress were fertile fields and orchards as well as multiple mills and other vital resources the inhabitants of Saphet could take advantage of.

In 1266, the castle was besieged by a large force of Saracens. Despite withstanding the siege, it became evident that Saphet would not be resup-

plied. Faced with the desertion of some of his troops, the Templar Commander of Saphet decided to sue for peace. He sent a Turcopoles sergeant, named Leon Cazalier, to negotiate. Cazalier returned with guarantees of safe passage.

However, as the Egyptian forces took control of the fortress, they also backed out on their arrangement. The women and children were sold into slavery and the Templars were beheaded. As a warning to others, the heads adorned the top of the castle's walls.

CHASTEL BLANC

Chastel Blanc was a small Templar fortress with incredible strategic value. From high atop the mountain home to Chastel Blanc, numerous Templar and other Crusader fortresses could be seen. This structure is more tower than castle.

The ground where the tower was built also served as part of the structures' defense. Steep slopes to the tower served to slow down any attacker. Once the attackers ascended the slope, they were faced with two walls, each nine feet thick.

The tower was not large compared to many other grand fortresses owned by the Templar. The structure is only 59ft wide, 102ft long, and 92ft high. The tower itself had two stories and a massive roof. The ground floor was solely comprised of an enormous chapel. This worship space was very dark and gloomy as it was only lit by a few small windows placed very high up on the walls. The second floor housed a great room and the living quarters for the brothers. From the top floor or roof of the building, the Templar had a commanding view for miles.

The main function of this tower was to signal the surrounding citadels of impending danger. To signal a warning, the tower had two options. The first was a bell placed in the western wall of the keep. This bell could be heard roughly three miles away. The other option was the use of signal fires. Fire and smoke from the top of the tower could be seen for many miles away and would be used to signal the various fortresses visible from the top of the tower.

PARIS TEMPLE

The Templar headquarters in Paris was, in many respects, the heart of the vast Templar organization. At the very least, the Paris Temple was the financial center of the Knights Templar, if not Christendom. It served as the chief chapterhouse for France, Holland, and the Netherlands.

This grand compound was massive. Built on former marshland the Templar reclaimed using ingenious farming techniques, the Paris Temple complex was referred to by one author as "one of the strongest edifices in the kingdom." It is easy to understand that statement when you begin to examine the massive nature of the Paris compound.

The Paris Temple was not a single structure. The compound contained a beautiful chapel that morphed into an impressive gothic church over the years. Along with the church, the grounds housed numerous buildings such as a charnel house, dormitories, kitchens, and a jail. In addition, the compound boasted stables and gardens as well as the house for the Master of the Order in France.

The entire compound was sealed off by a massive crenelated wall estimated to have been 24 – 30ft tall, several feet thick, and had roughly 15 small towers along its length. The grounds were accessible by a single gate with a drawbridge and covered roughly 6 acres. (In modern terms, that would be the equivalent of over 6 football fields.)

The Templar compound in Paris housed an enormous staff. It was estimated that at its height, it had 4,000 Templars, many of whom were sergeant brothers. Only a handful of the Templars present wore the white mantle of a full Templar Knight. Where other compounds of this size in the holy land focused on warfare, this compound focused on banking. Among various pieces of collateral the Templar held, the Paris Temple once housed the Crown Jewels of England. After King Henry III was forced to take out a large loan from the Templar in the mid-1200s, the English Crown Jewels were transferred to Paris for a short time.

OTHER IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

Arwad Castle; Ruad Island, Syria: This castle off the coast of Syria gave the Templar a staging point near the Holy Land. The fort was manned by a force of nearly 1,000 men until 1302 when the castle was surrendered following a siege by Egyptian forces.

Temple Church Compound; London, England: The Temple Church Compound served as the headquarters for the Knights Templar in England. The massive church built within the compound was indicative of the round church design favored by the Templar. Like the Paris Temple, this compound was part sacred space, part bank.

Kolossi Castle; Limmasol, Cyprus: This was the headquarters of the Templar in the East following the fall of the Holy Land.

Port of La Rochelle; La Rochelle, France: This was the largest marine base for the Templar and where a significant portion of the Templar fleet was housed.

Beaufort Castle; Southern, Lebanon: This Templar stronghold was one of the last castles to resist Saladin following the Battle of Hattin in 1187.

Bagras Castle; Southern Turkey (Principality of Antioch during the Middle Ages): This castle was an important frontier castle.

Castillo de los Templarios; Ponferrada, Spain: The Knights Templar were given the city in 1178. The castle, a 172,000 square-foot structure, was the home of the Templar Master of Castille.

Castelo de Almourol; Portugal: This large castle, located on an island in the Tagus River, helped the Templar control the North-central portion of Portugal and served as a critical route to the country's capital.

Military Engagements

The Knights Templar are the embodiment of the saying, "Live by the sword, die by the sword." It's the sword that helped them rise to prominence and it's this same service that ultimately led to their suppression. No one ever questioned their bravery and commitment, but many questioned their tactical and strategic ability. This becomes more evident in later years.

The earliest history of the Templar consisted of protecting pilgrims in the Holy Land. As a small force of knights, they didn't undertake any major military campaigns prior to their official recognition by the Papacy. They instead engaged in hit and run attacks against bandits and Saracen marauders that sought to ambush pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land.



Following the establishment of the Knights Templar as an official order in the Roman Catholic Church, they began the process of recruiting new knights and sergeant-brothers to form the backbone of combat operations for the Templar. They also provided both rearguard and leadership for crusading armies due to their incredible dedication and skill. Here are some of their major military engagements.

1153 – SIEGE OF ASCALON

Ascalon was a thorn in the side of the Latin Kingdom. It was a fortress from which Saracen forces raided nearby Christian settlements. It was inevitable that the King of Jerusalem would have to deal with Ascalon once and for all.

In January of 1153, forces under King Baldwin II, as well as Templar forces under the command of Bernard de Tremelay, encircled the coastal fortress town of Ascalon held by an Egyptian force. They first hoped to starve out the inhabitants by destroying nearby crops and groves; however, the city was well stocked and able to be supplied by an Egyptian fleet the Christian army was powerless to stop. It became evident that the city would need to be taken by force.

Skirmishes occurred for several months, but no clear victor emerged. One day, a small party of defenders attempted to set one of the Christian siege towers on fire. They were successful and the tower was set ablaze. However, the heat from the burning tower caused a large portion of the wall to collapse. One legend states the Templar rushed through the breach and prevented any other forces from joining. They were driven by greed and pride so they sought to take the massive city with only a small force of 40 men.

Another account paints a much different picture. While the Knights Templar was a disciplined force, the other Christian forces were not. When the Templar forces entered the breach and made their stand in the city square, they expected support from the Christian forces. However, that never came. They were killed to a man and their heads were displayed on the walls for all to see. This didn't deter the Christian forces, who took the town four days later. Whether the Templars actually did try to take the city by themselves is uncertain.

1177 – BATTLE OF MONTGISARD

Saladin had launched an invasion of the Holy Land with a massive army. One account places the numbers at over 26,000 infantry and 8,000 cavalry. Saladin's forces met King Baldwin IV and his small army of less than 500 knights at Ascalon where he surrounded the city and hemmed in Baldwin's forces. Thinking the Christian king no longer a threat, Saladin continued on to attack several other areas while leaving a small force to deal with the Christians. Five hundred knights shattered the remaining enemy and rode to meet the grand master of the Knights Templar, Odo de St. Amand, and his 80 knights. This small band raced to meet Saladin before he could march on Jerusalem.

Thinking victory was at hand, Saladin's forces were allowed to fan out and pillage the countryside. This left his army dangerously thin. The Christian force exploited this to maximum efficiency. On November 25th, Christian cavalry and infantry surprised the much larger force. Spent from the long march, Saladin's forces were exhausted and vulnerable and easily fell to the Christian army. The small Templar force, led by their grand master, decimated Saladin's Mamluk guard and nearly captured Saladin himself, who was able to escape on a racing camel. In the end, the small Christian force destroyed nearly 90% of Saladin's army. This would be the last time a small Christian army would deal Saladin a crushing defeat.

1179 – BATTLE OF MARJ AYYUN

A year after his crushing defeat, Saladin once again launched an offensive strike against the Holy Land. The Christian commanders engaged what they thought were the main forces of Saladin and easily defeated them. However, they had only managed to beat a small raiding force that was returning. Thinking the day won, Odo de St. Amand, the grand master of the Templar, and Raymond III led their respective mounted troops onto a nearby hill while their infantry looted the battlefield and rested.

In a total reverse of events at Montgisard less than two years prior, Saladin's main army descended on the lax Christian army and crushed them. The Templar Grand Master was captured and imprisoned. The newly constructed Le Chastellet castle was destroyed and the blame for all of this was placed on the Templar and their inability to maintain order and discipline in the army.

1187 – BATTLE OF CRESSON

There was a truce between the Christian and Saracen forces at this time. Given the truce, Saladin's son asked permission for a portion of his army to travel south. The request was granted, but a warning was sent out that Saladin's forces were traveling in the area. Unbeknownst to the Christian forces, Saladin's son was leading a force into the Christian territory to avenge an attack on a Saracen caravan by one of the Christian nobility.

Upon receiving the warning, Gerard de Ridefort, grand master of the Templar, gathered a few dozen knights and joined a force of Hospitallers and

secular knights along with a small group of foot soldiers. They came across a large force of 1-2,000. The Templar marshal urged a retreat, given they found themselves at greater than 3 to 1 odds.

Instead, de Ridefort charged the superior force taking the suggestion of retreat as an affront. In the end, only a handful of men survived including de Ridefort. Both the Templar marshal and the grand master of the Hospitallers were killed in the battle.

1187 – BATTLE OF HATTIN

This epic battle marked the beginning of a slow decline for the Christian presence in the Holy Land. Since his catastrophic loss at the Battle of Montsigard, Saladin grew his power base. He assembled a massive army of around 30-35,000, half of which was cavalry. Incensed by the Christian loss at Cresson, competing Christian nobility ended their bickering and formed an army to meet Saladin. They assembled roughly 20,000 men, only about 5-10% of which were knights. The rest were made up of various foot soldiers and crossbowmen. The Christian army was comprised of just about every spare soldier available.

The force first made camp in a well-appointed area replete with water and other necessities. On July 3rd, Gerard de Ridefort, the Templar grand master, strongly urged the king to march forward. They were constantly besieged by archers and other skirmishers. When they arrived at the city of Lubiya, the well was dry. The army was miserable and men couldn't rest due to the heat and lack of water. Some were killed by Saracen forces as they wandered off to find water. During the night, Saladin increased their discomfort by setting fire to the brush. The smoke and heat only made things worse for the Christian forces.

On the morning of July 4th, Saladin's army surrounded the Christians. Seeing their precarious situation, the Christians charged. Instead of meeting the charge head on, Saladin's army parted and engulfed the Christian forces. De Ridefort never saw that coming.

Due to poor management of the ground forces, the crusader infantry were struck down quickly. Without the support of their infantry, the Christians were doomed. The knights held the high ground, but without the support of infantry, they were in a precarious position. Wave after wave of Saracens charged them. For a while, the Christian cavalry, including members of the Knights Templar, held out. However, the force was too large and they were defeated. It was in this battle that the True Cross of Christ, which had accompanied Christian forces into battle, was lost. Most of the Templars who survived were beheaded. One account states that some knights who weren't even part of the Order claimed to be so they would be killed rather than become a slave. Only the grand master of the Order was allowed to live.

1190 – SIEGE OF ACRE

Saladin had begun to tear through the Holy Land. Much of it fell under his control. With the Battle of Hattin, the native forces of the Christian kingdom in the Holy Land were depleted. It was for this reason that Pope Clement III called for a Third Crusade. Troops from all over Europe once again poured into the Holy Land.

The Siege of Acre was long and drawn out. It first began with a small native force hoping to secure a victory against the superior forces of Saladin. This wish was foolhardy at best. At the early part of this siege, de Ridefort was captured again after being released by Saladin. This time the Saracen leader killed the Templar grand master.

Just when it seemed the Christian forces would be swept away, waves of crusaders arrived to reinforce the beleaguered army. This new force came with fresh horses, men, and powerful siege equipment. Templar engineers created and maintained some of the siege equipment used.

The conflict stretched on for months. The battle raged on, yet neither force could dislodge the other. Saladin reinforced his army and his numbers grew as the conflict evolved. Eventually, the crusader army was able to breach the walls of Acre, but still victory eluded them. In the end, Saladin was given the opportunity to surrender the city which he took. Bad blood remained between the Christian forces and the Saracens as one of the Christian kings, thinking Saladin was not acting in good faith, killed thousands of Saracen prisoners. Saladin responded in kind killing all of his Christian prisoners.

In the end, the city was in the hands of the Christian kingdom. Since Jerusalem had fallen earlier, the Templars were in need of a new home. They established their headquarters at Acre where they would remain until expelled completely from the Holy Land.

1191 – BATTLE OF ARSUF

The Battle of Arsuf in many ways was a continuation of the conflict at Acre. After Saladin had surrendered Acre, the massive crusader army sought to destroy his army. Richard the Lionheart was now in command of the troops and he was set on recapturing some of the territory lost to Saladin. Saladin was content with falling back on the old tactic of baiting the crusader army to break ranks. With the Templars in the vanguard of the army and the Knights Hospitaller guarding the rear, the army was struck with multiple hit-and-run attacks from mounted archers, yet they never broke ranks. Seeing that this tactic wasn't working on the front of the army, he attempted to do the same at the rear.

Although the crusaders never intentionally broke ranks, the simple act of fighting while walking backwards caused the infantry in the rear to lose their cohesion and the enemy took advantage of that. Tiring of repeated hit-and-run attacks and seeing his infantry being decimated by mounted Saracen troops, the grand master of the Hospitallers and one of his knights charged into battle, the rest of the Hospitaller contingent quickly followed.

Just as it seemed his plan was about to unravel, King Richard committed his knights in a counterattack that rocked the enemy on their heels. The charging Templars and secular knights decimated the tightly packed enemy infantry and broke Saladin's army. The result was a badly beaten Saladin who was forced to destroy several key fortresses so Christian forces could not take advantage of them as he retreated. It's estimated that 700 crusader warriors died in contrast to nearly 7,000 of Saladin's troops. Despite this victory, Richard was unable to recapture Jerusalem.

1291 – SIEGE OF ACRE

This battle was the beginning of the end for the Knights Templar. Acre had served as their headquarters since the fall of Jerusalem. The identity of the Templars was now tied to Acre.

Although the Christian forces had defeated one of the greatest Saracen generals, it didn't mean they were out of the woods. In fact, the Christians were surrounded and it would only take one strong leader to once again unite Saracen forces.

Following a war between the Mamluk and Mongol forces, a Mamluk sultan emerged and began retaking various Christian held cities, such as Tripoli, where several Templars, including the commander of the city, were killed.

The king of Jerusalem, a largely symbolic title at the time, arranged for a truce between the Christians and the Mamluk forces.

Fearing the Mamluk forces, the papacy arranged for fresh European forces to travel to the Holy Land to reinforce the native Christian forces. However, these troops mistakenly killed a large group of Saracen peasants, who were on their way to Acre to trade with the city, as well as a group of Syrian men. The Mamluk sultan demanded justice. Instead of sending the men responsible for the murders, the Templar Grand Master William of Beajeau decided to send condemned men from the city's jail since they were already slated to die. The sultan was enraged and began assembling his troops.

The siege was not a quick one. Both sides engaged in skirmishes, yet neither could gain the upper hand. The Crusaders knew they were fighting a losing battle, yet they didn't seem to have a choice. Eventually, the walls fell and so too did most of the city. Seeing the battle was lost, many of the nobles in Acre fled along with Templars carrying the Order's riches, documents, and other items. Some Templars survived for ten days within their keep after the walls of fell. At this point, the Templar realized they needed to surrender, and asked for terms. They were guaranteed the safety of the women and children so long as they gave up the city. The Templar agreed; however, when a small Saracen force occupied the Templar keep and attacked the women and children there, the Templar killed the Saracen troops and instead fought to the death. 100 years to the day after Richard the Lionheart took Acre, the Saracens took it back. The Templar never again had a permanent base in the Holy Land.

RECONQUISTA

For hundreds of years, Saracen forces occupied a large part of the Iberian Peninsula. In the early 1100's, Pope Paschal II ordered the first crusade on the Iberian Peninsula. This drew knights from France and Spain and offered many of the same benefits offered by the Papacy to the participants of the first crusade in the east.

Unlike the crusades in the east, the crusaders were successful in taking back and permanently holding large portions of the Iberian Peninsula. Eventually the Saracens were expelled completely with Templar and other military forces taking place in the fighting. Most of the fighting consisted of liberating towns, such as the liberation of Santarem in 1147. Much of the lands and other structures donated to the Templars were liberated from the Saracens. They then occupied or built several castles and fortified structures throughout the peninsula, in similar fashion to the Holy Land.

1212 – BATTLE OF LAS NAVAS DE TOLOSA (AL-UQAB)

One of the greatest battles on the Iberian Peninsula was the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa or Al-Uqab in Arabic. This was a major battle in the Reconquista. Alfonso VII of Castile led a coalition of forces that included troops from the Iberian Peninsula as well as the international and national military orders in the region. The battle pits these forces against a much larger force of Saracen troops. On the morning of July 16th, 1212, Christian forces attacked. They were able to take the larger force by surprise and the Saracen army collapsed. Forces were able to penetrate the Saracen forces and reach the tent of Caliph Al-Nasir. They didn't capture the Caliph, but did score plenty of riches. It was recorded by Alphonso VIII that 100,000 Saracen were killed at the battle, but most believe this was an exaggeration. Templars suffered heavy losses, as did the other military orders involved. The commander of the Portuguese Templar died in this conflict.

The defensive walls of Acre were massive. One account indicates the city had two walls half a football field apart from each other, spanning over a mile. Several towers along the wall guarded the city. Inside the city were keeps, including the Templar's fortress. Nearly 100,000 troops were assembled and besieged the city. The Christian forces were bolstered by troops from Cyprus and a few other European knights, but didn't even come close to previous reinforcement sent to the Holy Land.

Fall of the Knights Templar

Following the fall of the Holy Land to Saracen forces, the Templars had effectively lost their reason for being. The expressed purpose of the Order and the reason for their complex machine was to protect the Holy Land, but this was no longer a possibility. The Order did champion a new crusade to retake the Holy Land following the loss of Acre, but this goal would never come to fruition.

With the loss of the Holy Land, the Church and monarchs of Europe were left with a huge military complex that only the Pope had jurisdiction over. Coupled with the fact that in the nearly two hundred years since their founding, they became the largest economy in the world and had grown arrogant in this knowledge, the writing was on the wall for the order. The only thing needed was a king with enough audacity to take advantage of these factors. King Phillip IV of France was the right man for the job.

King Phillip IV

Phillip IV had a bit of a problem. His country was desperately in need of cash and he had none. His country was still feeling the effects of years of warfare that drained the royal coffers. As a result, around 1297, he was forced to ask for a loan from the Templar. As was discussed earlier, this wasn't unusual. What was a bit unusual was the fact that he convinced the Paris Temple to also give him a second huge loan. This loan was so large that the final Templar grand master, Jacques de Molay, expelled the treasurer of the Paris Temple from the Order.

Loans, no matter how large, would not net the French king the funds he needed. Phillip IV turned to a tactic that earlier French kings used against their enemies: confiscation. In 1163, the Council of Tours declared the Cathars of the Languedoc region of France heretics and ordered their lands be confiscated and the Cathars imprisoned. However, Pope Innocent III didn't really ramp up efforts until 1208 when a papal legate was killed in the area.

The Albigensian or Cathar Crusade was a wonderful political opportunity for the French crown. What this crusade did was to bring the Languedoc region under the control of the French crown, add revenue to the coffers of France, and paint Phillip II as the defender of the Church. It is interesting to note that the Knights Templar refused to participate in this crusade.

In 1306, the French crown once again struck. This time their target was the Jews in France. For years prior, Jews had been charged with destroying the kingdom through the practice of usury and were also accused of not obeying the laws of the kingdom. These days we would consider this a trumped up charge with no merit, but such was not the case at the time. Like the Templars, they were arrested and their property was seized. However, unlike the Templars, the Jews were expelled from France and not murdered wholesale.

Phillip couldn't just seize the property of the Templar and arrest its members. He knew that he needed to take advantage of an environment that would support this move. The first step for Philip was to control the Papacy; the power of the Papacy was in decline as nationalism swept through European countries. Excommunication and interdiction weren't as powerful as they once were. The Papacy was relying more and more on secular rulers to bring

sacred justice to heretics and other lapsed groups. However, the Pope was still a fairly powerful figure.

During the late 13th and early 14th century, a war was brewing between then Pope Boniface VII and King Phillip IV of France. Phillip was faced with a crushing national debt from years of crusading by former French kings. He felt the resources of the Roman Catholic Church should be used to support France, especially since Phillip saw himself as the champion of the Christian faith. He had already started taxing his own clergy, much to the dismay of Boniface VII.

Pope Boniface vehemently disagreed with the king. The conflict escalated with the pope issuing bulls detailing the use of funds raised for the church as the property of the church alone and the need for secular rules to bow to the authority of the Papacy. Phillip was unimpressed and even went so far as to burn one of the papal decrees in public and call Boniface VII a heretic.

As you can imagine, the Pope was not too pleased with this and excommunicated Phillip and his chief advisor, Guillaume de Nogaret. However, the French crown would not allow this affront to stand. A sizable army led by Nogaret marched to Anagni, where the Pope had went to vacation. Nogaret's forces took control of the town, the army looted it, and imprisoned the Pope. He held the Pope for three days and allowed him no food or water. Nogaret added insult to injury as he publically struck the Pope. This would be the equivalent of our secretary of state slapping the Pope on National TV. Eventually Nogaret's forces returned to France. Boniface VII tried to put on a brave face, but was clearly shaken by the incident. He died roughly a month later.

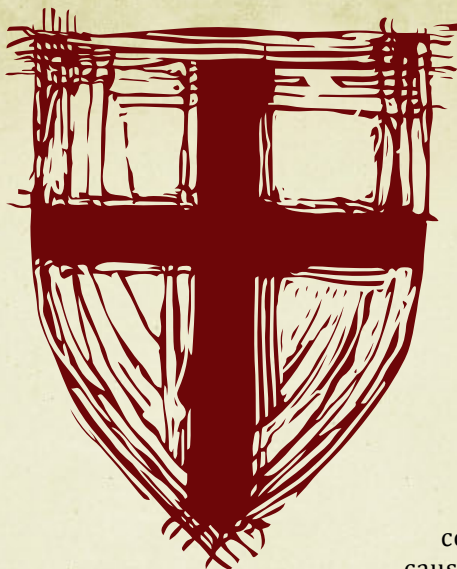
Following the death of Benedict IX less than a year after Boniface, Clement V was elected Pope. Clement, a French cardinal, did something that shocked the Church. Clement refused to move to Rome and instead elected to remain in France. This launched a period of schism in the Church known as the Avignon Papacy, so named for the location of the papal palace in France. As a result, Clement V was largely a pawn for Phillip IV, especially given his treatment of Boniface VII less than two years prior.

The other piece of the puzzle was public sentiment towards the Knights Templar. With the fall of Acre in 1291, the Holy Land was effectively lost. Many placed this defeat on the shoulders of the Knights Templar. This, combined with the unease by many monarchs of having a huge banking and military force in their land that they couldn't control, left the Templar in a very precarious position.

In 1306, Pope Clement V summoned the last grand master of the Order, Jacques de Molay, to Paris. By the response that de Molay sent, it's evident that he could guess the reason for the summons. Since 1274, there had been talk of combining both the Templar and Hospitaller military orders into one new order. Although originally aspiring to the highest ideals, the Templar had made a series of missteps that culminated in the loss of the crusader capital, Acre.

Ten years earlier, Pope Clement IV wrote the Templar and urged them to practice a bit more humility. It seems that the European monarchs and nobility were fed up with the actions of the Templars and with the prohibition of secular authorities to exact justice on them. Pope Clement wrote, "If the Church removed for a short while the hand of protection from you in the face of the prelates and the secular princes, you could not in any way subsist against the assaults of the prelates or the force of princes."

However, there is evidence that as early as 1160 that people reacted violently toward the Templar and only Papal decrees seemed to ease these



attacks. It makes one wonder how the Templar treated those surfs under their influence and the towns within their purview.

With over 9,000 holdings and a massive amount of wealth, the Templars were everywhere. It was fairly common to see Templar holdings and members throughout Europe, even though Templar Knights were actually a bit scarce comparatively. It seems that, while people appreciated the service of the Order in the Holy Land, they weren't well liked. This must have been exacerbated by the loss of the Holy Land. The secrecy of the Order couldn't have helped, either. It is because of all of this that the Pope sought to

hit the reset button by combining both the Templar and another military order, the Hospitallers, to create one large order. De Molay was adamantly opposed to joining the two orders. It was no secret that both orders were very competitive and didn't necessarily play well with each other. De Molay was afraid that joining the orders would create an incredible amount of animosity.

On Friday the 13th, October 1307, King Phillip IV's forces initiated a secret order he issued a month earlier and rounded up all Templars. They were jailed and charged with numerous crimes including heresy and sodomy. However, Clement V didn't issue an order for the suppression of the order until a month later. It was said that Clement was livid with the actions of Phillip IV and wished to do his own investigation.

Huge volumes have been devoted to studying the trial of the Templars. However, the charges really boiled down to a few items. They were charged with worshipping some sort of idol. Referred to as Baphomet in some accounts, it was apparently the head of a bearded man. Some believed this might have been an effigy of John the Baptist, who held a special place in the heart of the Order. Official accounts paint this as a demonic or idolatrous symbol of some sort that proved the Order were no longer Christians.

Along similar lines was the charge that members of the Order denied Christ and spit on the cross during their initiation. This was another charge that showed the order had separated itself from the Church. Yet another charge was homosexuality. It was charged that the vow of obedience the members took extended to performing sexual acts with other members of the brotherhood when commanded to do so.

Surely the brothers rounded up denied all of these charges, right? Not really. Phillip used the power of the French Inquisition to extract confessions from those Templars that were captured. It isn't like they had a trial where evidence was gathered, statements taken, and the accused had his day in court.

Instead, the Inquisition employed brutal tactics to confirm what they felt was already true. It has been said that when the Inquisition was finished, you would confess to anything and largely this is exactly what happened in France. As one historian puts it, the role of the Inquisition wasn't to prove

innocence, but to establish guilt. Even Jacques de Molay, who was estimated to be in his 60s, confessed his guilt.

The Templar languished in jail for what must have felt like an eternity. Finally, a papal commission was formed in late summer of 1308 to conduct their own investigation. In the winter of 1308, hundreds of Templars, including Jacques de Molay, recanted and indicated they only confessed due to torture that was used.

Through a legal trick, the Templars were tried by a French Archbishop, Philip de Marigny. Even though the commission had heard the testimony of the Templars, they were powerless to act. In May 1310, 54 of the Templars in France that recanted were found guilty and burned at the stake. This caused some of the remaining Templars to once again confess their guilt in an effort to avoid being executed in this manner. However, Jacques de Molay and the Visitor of the Temple, Hugues de Pairaud continued to declare their innocence and were burned at the stake on March 18th, 1314.

In the end, Phillip IV didn't realize his goal of seizing the Templar assets and fortune and making it his own. Instead, in 1312, Pope Clement V grows a spine and issues the bulls, *Vox in Excelso*, which dissolves the order, and *Ad Providam*, which transfers all Templar property to the Hospitallers. Phillip was able to secure some funds for his work in capturing and housing the Templars, but that was it. Not all the Templars in France were executed, either. Those found to be innocent or who had not confessed to the charges were able to either enter new monastic orders or receive a pension for their support from former Templar assets.

The Rest of Europe

In most of Europe, the news of the incredible charges leveled against the order was met with a great deal of skepticism. In what we now call Spain and Portugal, Templars in that part of Europe had been locked in a deadly conflict with Muslim forces for nearly 200 years. They had been extremely effective at staving the tide of the Saracen invaders, unlike their brethren in the Holy Land. They had been a great service to the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula. Templars in this part of the world heard of the treatment of their French brothers and became nervous. Phillip IV's son ruled Navarre, a Kingdom on the Iberian Peninsula, and suppressed the Order in a similar fashion to his father.

King James II of Aragon was not so quick to move against the order, but did feel compelled to honor the order of Clement V to arrest the Templar members. He did so, but treated them with great kindness, in contrast to Phillip. James did eventually allow some of the Templars to be tortured when pressured to do so by the Papacy, but only a handful were tortured and none confessed to the charges leveled against them. After the order was officially dissolved by Clement V, James II declared the Templars innocent of all charges.

James also resisted the efforts to give Templar holdings in Aragon to the Hospitallers, who were largely viewed as a foreign force. Instead, James was allowed to create a new order, The Order of Montesa, and all Templar holdings were transferred to them.

In 2001 an archivist in the Vatican Secret Archives discovered a lost document known as the Chinon Parchment. This document had been mentioned by previous historians, but had been lost in the vast archives of the Vatican. What the document records is the work of three cardinals charged with examining the Templars housed at Chinon. The document records the testimony of some of the Templars including Jacques de Molay. They listened to the testimony and the methods by which their confession was extracted and concluded that they were innocent. This document was presented to Clement V and absolved the Templars from the charges leveled against them. However, this document didn't stop Phillip IV from using the French church to destroy the Order, which he did quite effectively.

In Portugal, the Templars were found to be innocent of all charges. However, since the Order no longer existed, the Order of Christ was created. This Order took over the holdings of the Templar and many Templars actually joined the new order.

Much the same happened in England. The English king was well aware of the service of the Templars in England and the fondness upon which Richard the Lionheart looked upon the Order. He was very skeptical. Like James II, only the confession of Jacques de Molay caused him concern. He had members of the Order arrested, but torture was not initially used due to English law. However, Edward II did allow papal inquisitors to eventually torture a few of the Templars, but no confessions were elicited. Eventually, the Templars were allowed to go free and join new orders.

In Germany, the military orders were held in very high regard. There were very few Templar holdings in Germany as the major players were actually the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. The treatment of the Templars varied widely from being arrested to being ignored. Even those who were arrested were acquitted and some simply joined a different military order when the Templars were officially disbanded.

In Italy and the Papal States, the Templars didn't enjoy the mild treatment their brothers in Spain and England did. Many of the Italian kingdoms rounded up the Templars and tortured them. In the end, they were more concerned with accounting for all of the Templar holdings than the crimes they supposedly committed.

Templar Legends

If fact is the meat and potatoes of history, then legends are the chocolate covered nuts of history. There is sometimes a kernel of meat embedded within these stories, but that tends to be about it.

FRIDAY THE 13TH

It has been stated that the general dread of Friday the 13th has a Templar origin. On Friday the 13th, 1307, Phillip IV rounded up the Templars. This spelled the end for the Order. The members in France were tortured and beaten in an effort to extract the truth. Their lands were seized and their Order was disbanded without any protest from the Pope. It is pretty easy to see why people might dread this particular date. Friday the 13th was pretty unlucky for the Templars. However, it is important to note that the number 13 was generally thought to be unlucky even before the suppression of the Knights Templar. This event just acted to reinforce this mistrust.

THE SKULL AND CROSSBONES

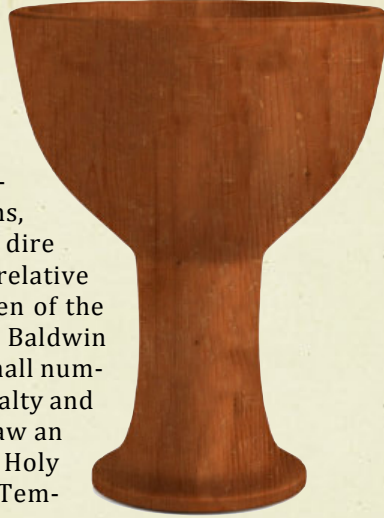
There are a couple of different stories related to the symbol of the skull and crossbones. One of the most plausible deals with a legend associated with the execution of Jacques De Molay, the last grand master of the Order. Following his execution by burning at the stake, a small number of Templar brothers stealthily approached the site of his death, sifted through the ashes, and spirited away the only relics that



were left: two long bones and a skull belonging to De Molay. These remains became a symbol of defiance for the remaining Templar who made it their mission to conduct a war on the fleets of Europe. The symbol also served to identify those former Templar who now took to the sea as their new home. Eventually the symbol of the skull and crossbones was co-opted by non-Templar seamen who made piracy their business.

THE HOLY GRAIL

This is a legend that has gained traction in the last few years given popular fictional books and movies. Following the first crusade, the level of European knights and foot soldiers receded dramatically from Jerusalem. This left the Holy Land in a very precarious position. The legend is that Hugh de Payns, a French noble, realized the Holy Land was in dire need of an infusion of military support. The relative of one of the most well-respected church men of the era, Bernard of Clairvaux, approached King Baldwin and offered the services of himself and his small number of men. Given that these men were all royalty and had strong connections in France, Baldwin saw an opportunity to draw more nobility to the Holy Land, so he gave them the best quarters: the Temple Mount to set up their headquarters.



However, as the legend goes, these nobles weren't just warriors, but also archaeologists. Either armed with acquired knowledge or just dumb luck, the group unearthed something in the years between when they arrived in the Holy Land and when they returned to Europe on a recruitment campaign that they would leverage to allow them to create a new kind of religious order with unprecedented freedoms. What was this? Some say it was the Holy Grail.

OAK ISLAND

The writing was on the wall. The Templars could see that Phillip the Fair was anything but and had his eyes on Templar holdings. To secure the treasures of the Templar, including money, religious relics, and their vast storehouse of knowledge, they used their fleet to spirit this to another nation who would be much more receptive to them. They found this ally in Robert the Bruce in Scotland.

Robert was battling England for independence and was no fan of the Papacy. In fact, he was excommunicated and much of Scotland was placed under interdiction by the Pope. While the Templars found refuge, they needed to find a permanent hiding place for their treasure trove. They found the answer with the Scots. Despite being welcomed with open arms by the Scots, the Templar knew that it was quite possible the Scots would once again reconcile with the Church and their European brothers. Therefore the Order needed to find a place to permanently hide their treasure.

Scottish sailors led them to a strange new place that would eventually be known as the "New World", specifically a small island near the southern shore of Nova Scotia. It was heard that the Templars used their knowledge of engineering to construct a pit to house their treasure. Those seeking to learn the truth of the pit are faced with overwhelming logistical nightmares such as flooding and other issues many believe are man-made and attributed to the Templar. To this day, the pit still hasn't surrendered its secrets to anyone.

BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN

The Scots were locked in an epic battle for independence from England. England boasted one of the most powerful land forces in Europe. They could field a vast number of heavy cavalry and infantry all seasoned by numerous campaigns in the Holy Land and battles in Scotland. Robert the Bruce, self-appointed King of Scotland, suffered numerous setbacks and the independence movement seemed doomed. Included in this was a lack of money. Twenty years of fighting had left Scotland in disarray with little money to speak of.

In the summer of 1314, Robert met the army of Edward II at Bannockburn. Robert was vastly outnumbered. According to historians, it's estimated that Edward fielded an army that was 2 - 2 1/2 times the size of Robert's. Despite overwhelming odds and a lack of money to adequately equip his army, Robert prevailed. Modern historians attribute Robert's victory to his cunning and willingness to take risks.

There is another possible explanation for Robert's victory: a group of Knights Templar. If Templars did arrive in Scotland with the Templar treasury, then they would have every reason to see Scotland independence realized. The Templars found refuge in Scotland and brought an infusion of capital to Robert's campaign, which he used to resupply his troops with well-crafted weapons and armor. It wasn't as if the Templars would have visited Scotland for the first time, like many areas of Europe, the Knights Templar already had holdings in Scotland, though few knights would have been present.

Why would the order choose Scotland as a refuge? The answer was simple. King Robert had already been excommunicated, so there was no love of the Papacy in Scotland. Even though the treatment of the Templars was mild compared to some European monarchs, they were still arrested. In Scotland, they wouldn't have that problem.

As legend has it, the Scots were outnumbered and faring poorly when a fresh force arrived on the field from the rear of the Scottish army. This force was instrumental in breaking the English and causing them to flee. Why would a seasoned force that outnumbered their enemy flee? They would if they saw the banner of the Templars as they prepared for one of their legendary charges. Not only were the Templars feared for their incredible combat abilities, but now accusations of vile dark practices also surrounded them. This site would have shocked, and demoralized the English and rallied the Scots.

Grand Masters

It is the nature of their service that little is known about some of the grand masters. In the eyes of the Knights Templar, glory was won for Christ and not for personal grandeur. Therefore, records of their grand deeds are not always available. Some grand masters even served terms where no major conflicts took place. What follows is a brief overview of each grand master.

HUGH DE PAYENS 1118-1136/37

Hugh was the first grand master of the Order, though many scholars have speculated he would have never claimed this title for himself. It is estimated that Hugh was around 40 when he and a group of fellow knights returned to the Holy Land following a stint as crusaders. It is believed he originally came to the Holy Land as a part of the retinue of the Count of Champagne during the First Crusade.

Hugh had seen first-hand the suffering that pilgrims were forced to endure and realized they needed protection. He and his small band of knights attempted to offer protection to the pilgrims and were eventually recognized as an official order at the Council of Troyes in 1129 following several years of service in the Holy Land. Unlike many of his fellow grand masters, Hugh died of old age.

ROBERT DE CRAON 1136/37-1149

Robert was from the Burgundy region of what is now France and may have been married prior to joining the order. Little is known about his life prior to joining the Templar. In 1133, records indicate he was listed as seneschal of the Order. In 1136, he became the grand master of the Templar.

His time as grand master is important because this is when the Papacy issued Papal Bulls, such as *Omne Datum Optimum*, which granted important privileges to the Order. One scholar notes that in 1139, Robert took part in a raid which marked the first time the Templar were involved in a major military conflict. Robert de Craon died in 1149.

EVERARD DES BARRES 1149-1152

Everard was grand master during the Second Crusade led by King Louis VII. When King Louis left the Holy Land, Everard followed him back to France. It is uncertain why, but Everard retired from the Templar after leaving the Holy Land, despite pleas from his brothers to return. One scholar suggested Everard actually joined the Cistercian Order, where he finished out his days on Earth.

BERNARD DE TREMELAY 1152-1153

Bernard followed Everard as grand master after the latter decided to retire from the Order. He was grand master during the Battle of Ascalon where, during the battle, one of the city walls was breached and the Templar rushed through the hole and into the city. It's uncertain whether the Templar blocked entry of other troops in order to keep all the glory for themselves or if the other commanders were weary of sending more troops through the breach. Whatever the reason, the effect was the same: all of the Templar, including Bernard, were killed.

ANDRE DE MONTBARD 1153-1156

Andre comes from a family well-versed in the monastic life and is most well-known for being the uncle of Bernard of Clairvaux. Two of Andre's brothers joined the monastery in Clairvaux and there might have been pressure by his family to follow in their footsteps. Instead, Andre joined a new monastic order: the Knights Templar. Andre probably joined the order in the early 1140s and eventually rose to the rank of seneschal around 1148 based on documents that mention his name. Besides keeping Bernard of Clairvaux abreast of some of the royal infighting in the Holy Land, not much is recorded of his time before or after gaining the rank of grand master.

BERTRAND DE BLANQUEFORT 1156-1169

Bertrand is another grand master of which little is known. It is noteworthy that both he and Odo de Saint-Amand, a future grand master, were both captured at the Siege of Banyas in 1157, but both were released in 1159. It is also noteworthy that his seal, two knights riding on one horse, was the earliest example of the iconic image of the Knights Templar.

Bertrand is most famous for his lack of support of King Almaric's expedition into Egypt to secure the port at Alexandria. Almaric had a treaty with Shawar, the sultan of Egypt, and Bertrand would not allow the members his Order to break it. Although Almaric did move forward with his expedition, it ultimately failed and caused Shawar to align with one of his enemies and make the situation even more precarious.

PHILIPPE DE MILLY 1169-1171

Philippe was born in the new Christian kingdom in the Holy Land to parents that most likely originated in the Normandy area of France. The court was a place very familiar to Philippe as his parents were active there. In 1144, Philippe married and had three children, although only his two girls survived. In 1161, Philippe gave Nablus to Baldwin III as part of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In exchange, he was named lord of the Transjordan region.

Eventually, Philippe's wife and remaining children died. In 1166, Philippe joined the Templar. It's possible that his connection to the King of Jerusalem caused him to be elected grand master. However, his reign was short lived. In 1171, Philippe resigned as grand master and became an envoy for King Almaric of Jerusalem. Shortly after taking that position, he died. Philippe was the first grand master born in the Holy Land.



ODO DE SAINT-ARMAND 1171-1179

Odo had a strong connection to the royal court in Jerusalem and served in the Court of King Baldwin III as his marshal. Along with Bertrand de Blanquefort, he was captured at the Siege of Banyas. However, the pair was later released.

Odo's time as grand master was quite busy. One of the problems he faced was from a man named Malih that one scholar calls a "renegade Templar". This man was the brother of the King of Cilician Armenia. When his brother died, Malih turned to the Saracens for help to expel the Templar from Armenia. If this wasn't enough, the sect known as the Hashshashins (Assassins) decided they would rather become Christian than continue to pay tribute to the Templars. King Almaric of Jerusalem welcomed this news and accepted their proposal. However, a group of Templars killed the Hashshashin envoy as he returned to his territory.

King Almaric became furious when Odo refused to turn over the leader of the band of Templar who committed the murder. Odo said the Templar could only be judged by the Pope. Odo planned to punish the man and send him to Rome for further sentencing. However, Almaric didn't accept this answer and stormed the location where Walter of Mesnil, the man in question, was being held. Almaric took him away to Tyre, where the Templar died. It was only due to the death of King Almaric that tensions decreased between the crown and the Order.

Odo ultimately met his fate in 1179 following a foolhardy charge during a battle with Saladin. It is recorded that Odo was captured during this battle and died in captivity in 1180.

ARNOLD DE TORROJA 1180-1184

Arnold was a Spaniard that hailed from Catalonia. He had been a member of the Templar for quite some time before achieving the rank of grand master in 1180. In 1167, it's recorded that he was the Master of Provence and parts of Spain, which he retained until 1179.

1179 is the year of the Third Lateran Council. Among other major issues facing the Roman Catholic Church was the purported abuse of power by the Knights Templar. Clergy complained bitterly about the abuse of the privileges the Papacy had given the Order. Being a Spanish Templar, Arnold fit the bill of a Templar not associated with the royal power in Jerusalem and was removed from the courts in most of Europe. In essence, he was fresh blood and an active participant in the Reconquista where the Templar was viewed quite favorably.

Arnold didn't really do much during his short stint as grand master. He joined others from the Holy Land on a tour of Europe to drum up more support for the Christian forces in the East, but he never did much to combat Saladin. He became ill during his tour of Europe and died late in 1184.

GERARD DE RIDEFORT 1185-1191

Where Arnold was removed from the political dealings of the Eastern Christian Kingdom, Gerard was quite the opposite. Gerard was up to his neck in politics. It is believed that his motivation for joining the Templar might have been fueled by a political insult. One legend states Gerard faithfully served Count Raymond of Tripoli after arriving in the Holy Land to seek his fortune. As a reward for his faithful service, Gerard thought he was to be given a wife that fit his station. Instead, Raymond sought to appease a merchant whom Raymond owed money to by marrying the merchant's daughter to Gerard. This would have been a social boon to the merchant family's status,

but was an insult to Gerard. Gerard chose not to marry the woman. Instead of attempting to find a wife that would match his status, he joined the Templar.

Gerard carried his hatred of Raymond with him as he joined the Templar. He supported Raymond's political rivals and was deeply involved in the political intrigue of the region. The ultimate result of his mucking about in regional politics was the Battle of Cresson Springs in 1186. Saladin's son took advantage of the infighting and a peace treaty that he had with Count Raymond to sneak troops into the Holy Land.

While most of the knights involved in the Battle of Cresson Springs died, Gerard survived. The next year, the armies of Saladin and the Eastern Christian Kingdoms met at the Battle of Hattin. At this battle, Gerard was captured and spent the next year in captivity by Saladin's forces. One historian points out that he may have surrendered the Templar stronghold at Gaza in exchange for his freedom. However, his freedom was short lived as he died at the Battle of Acre in 1191.

ROBERT DE SABLE 1191-1193

One of the major figures during the Third Crusade was the larger than life Richard the Lionheart. Robert of Sable was from Anjou, a land under the control of Richard before he became king. It is only natural that Robert aligned himself with Richard and followed the King when he took up the cross and joined the crusade. Robert served the king in a variety of roles while on crusade, such as a treasurer to the king. As such, they enjoyed a good relationship.

The details of when Robert joined the Templar are a bit foggy. It isn't known how long Robert had been a member of the order before being elected to the office of grand master following the death of Gerard of Ridefort, but it is certain that King Richard had a hand in his ascension to the office.

King Richard also gifted Robert with an amazing opportunity. Following reports of unfair treatment of pilgrims, King Richard made a detour to Cyprus on his way to the Holy Land. There, he was angered by the Cyprian King and ultimately conquered the island. In turn, Richard offered the sale of the island to Robert at a ridiculously low price. Robert jumped at the opportunity, but it ultimately blew up in his face. The Templar expected to rule the island just like the rest of their territories. However, this was not the case. Unrest by inhabitants of the island made life difficult for the Templar and they gave back the island to Richard while retaining some property there.

Another important event during his term was the renewal of Templar privileges. In 1191, Pope Celestine III renewed all of the privileges assigned to the Templar by previous popes.

GILBERT ERAIL 1194-1200

Unlike most grand masters, Gilbert spent his life with the Templar, rising through the ranks and taking part in the Reconquista. In 1194, he was named grand master. During his time as grand master, he was involved in a property dispute with the Hospitallers that was so bitter it led to his excommunication by the Bishop of Sidon. It also didn't help that Gilbert advocated peaceful relations with the Saracens. Only the actions of Innocent III, who said only the Pope had the right to excommunicate a member of the Templars, saved Gilbert. Nothing else of note exists about the rest of his tenure.

PHILIPPE DE PLESSIEZ 1201-1209

Philippe took charge of the Order during a time of great difficulty both for the Holy Land and the Order in general. For the first three years of his ascension to the rank of grand master, he was forced to deal with the aftermath of a series of earthquakes, plagues, and a massive sandstorm that wreaked havoc across the Christian kingdoms in the East.

This was also the time of Innocent III's push for another crusade. The call for the crusade was not well received in Europe and this forced Innocent to use the stick when the carrot failed him. Innocent began wielding the hammer of interdict against cities and countries in Europe in an effort to force them to bend to his will. As this occurred, the Templar continued to conduct the business of the Church based on the privileges granted to them by previous popes. Since the Templar was given special dispensations by the Pope to conduct the business of the Church in lands under interdict, they still continued to celebrate the Mass and bury the dead. This caused a tremendous amount of money to flow in their coffers as inhabitants under interdictions turned to the Templar for access to the Sacraments. In turn, this caused Innocent III to condemn the order and their abuse of papal privileges.

Philippe was not warring in nature. With the exception of a dispute with the King of Armenia, he attempted to maintain the truce with the Saracens. However, the truce ended in 1209 and he died in battle.

WILLIAM DE CHARTRES 1210-1219

William came from a family deeply seized by the crusader spirit. William's greatest legacy was the construction of one of the most formidable castles in the Holy Land: Castle Pilgrim. He also focused a great deal of the Order's resources and attention on the Reconquista. As a result, efforts to drive the Saracens from the Iberian Peninsula were quite successful and the order received numerous gifts of territory and fortresses.

De Chartres was grand master during the Fifth Crusade which attempted to crush Egypt. This crusade was a horrible failure. Both William's father and brother fought and died in this crusade, but William died as a result of illness, not battlefield injuries during the Fifth Crusade.

PETER DE MONTAINGU 1219-1232

With William de Chartres dead, the order desperately needed a leader. Peter was elected quickly after William's death. Like grand masters before him, Peter was French, but he spent his early years with the Templar fighting in the Reconquista in Spain and eventually rose to the position of Master of Spain.

Peter was left with a precarious position: the Fifth Crusade had been a disaster. The crusaders were left with limited supplies and suffered heavy losses; Peter had the unwelcomed task of begging for more funds. If that wasn't enough, political infighting still plagued the Christians. One of the major players in the Fifth Crusade, Frederick II, was excommunicated by the Church. This led the Templars to refuse to follow him into battle after the defeat at Damietta in the fall of 1218. Frederick and Peter hurled charges of treachery and attempted murder at one another. This led the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II to confiscate Templar property and imprison the brothers in Italy, one of the countries under Frederick's command. The Templar's property wasn't restored when Peter died in 1231.

Peter's brother was the grand master of a rival Military Order: the Hospitallers. He also had an uncle that was an archbishop.

If running a historical Knights Templar game, it may be imperative to know who the current Grand Master is. Additionally, the promotion of a new Grand Master could be lead to a series of adventure hooks or serve as the basis for an entire campaign.

ARMAND DE PERIGORD 1232-1244

Armand was the grand master of an Order in decline. Born in central France in 1177, he joined the Order and was named the Master of the Province of Sicily from 1205 until his election as grand master in 1232. Although the Knights Templar still had vast amounts of revenue, they were quickly running out of manpower in the form of Brother Knights. Armand didn't seem to help the situation.

Armand remained true to the focus of the Templar and led offences against Muslim targets near the Sea of Galilee shortly after his election. These military actions were largely ineffective and only served to lower the Templar numbers further. Armand was also party to two crushing defeats in which the Templar participated. The first was in 1236 when he led a force of Templars and Tucopoles against a group of Muslim troops supposedly foraging in the area. However, the foragers were quickly reinforced and the Templar force was decimated. Of the original 200-250 troops Armand led, less than two dozen were able to make it back to the safety of one of the Templar strongholds.

In 1239, the scene repeated itself on a much grander scale. The Templar participated in what some called the French Crusade or the Barons Crusade. Whatever the name, it is difficult to call the campaign a success. Following a crushing defeat, the Crusaders, including Armand, were forced into a peace treaty with the Sultan of Damascus.

In 1244, the Sultan of Damascus, along with his Christian allies, met a large force of Egyptian warriors and Khwarezmian tribesman. Sensing they had superior numbers, Christian commanders demanded the attack take place, while their Muslim counterparts suggested they should wait. The commanders of the Christian forces won out and the attack took place. The result was a total rout of the allied Muslim and Christian army. Thousands were killed and Armand was captured, eventually dying in captivity. It was noted by one historian that the Battle of La Forbie, as this battle came to be known, marked the beginning of the end of Christian Kingdoms in the Holy Land.

RICHARD DE BURES 1244-1247?

It is believed that Richard was either elected as the grand master or simply filled this role since no one knew the fate of Armand. Little is recorded about his time with the Templar and it's debated whether he was actually elected to the office.

WILLIAM DE SONNAC 1247-1250

William had worked his way up through the ranks of the Templar. He served as the Commander at Auzon and was the Commander of Aquitaine before being elected to the office of grand master.

William was in a very strange position as no one knew what happened to Armand. However, another crusade was coming and the Templar needed a grand master to lead them. Like Richard, it is uncertain if William felt he was truly the grand master of the Order or simply filling the role until Armand returned, despite officially being elected grand master in 1247.

Whatever the situation, William accompanied King Louis IX on the Seventh Crusade, which was yet another expedition into Egypt. At the town of Mansourah, the king's brother, Robert, suffered a resounding defeat and was killed. In this battle it's estimated the Templar lost upwards of 90% of their knights while William was blinded and eventually died at the battle.

RENAUD DE VICHIER 1250-1252

Renaud was a leader with almost no army in the East following the defeat of the Templar at Mansourah. The number of Templar knights in Egypt was so low that there weren't enough to hold an election for grand master. Instead, Renaud, as Marshal of the Order, took the reins of leadership.

Given the Templar's commitment to safeguarding the deposits of their clients, it is noteworthy that Renaud authorized the theft of money from the deposits held by the Templar in order to ransom the freedom of King Louis IX and other noblemen captured during the Seventh Crusade. In return, King Louis strongly influenced the election of Renaud as grand master upon the return of the remnants of the crusader army to Acre.

Renaud drew the ire of Louis when he sent Hugh de Jouy to negotiate a treaty with the Sultan of Damascus for farm land without the King's permission. Hugh, the Marshal of the Order, was forced to return the treaty to the Sultan's envoy and loudly proclaim that he acted without the King's permission. Hugh was then exiled from the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1252. Renaud retired from the order and joined a monastery in 1252, where he died four years later.

THOMAS BERARD 1252-1273

Thomas was a grand master that found himself amidst the decline of the Order and the Christian kingdom in the Holy Land. In addition to threats from the Saracens, Thomas caught in the middle of increasing civil strife. In 1257, a civil war broke out in Acre. Known as The War of Saint Sabas, this conflict initially started as a land dispute, but devolved into a major conflict involving Venice and Genoa. Major hostilities ended in 1261, but skirmishes continued for several years after that.

Thomas was also faced with the possibility of an enemy greater than the others combined: the Mongols. The Mongols had continued the expansion of their territory under Hulagu Khan. The Mongols had begun to harass the Saracens, but also threatened to sweep into the Christian territories. If that wasn't enough, somehow the Templars were strapped for cash. They had simply spent so much fortifying, building, rebuilding, and equipping that they were impoverished. Despite the huge money making machine they employed, the Templar needed money. Thomas was forced to sell Templar land and work to collect debts owed to the Order, such as the tithes from land holdings.

In 1266, a series of Templar fortresses fell, starting with Safed, to Egyptian forces and included strongholds such as Chastel Blanc and Montfort. A truce was finally reached with Muslim forces in 1271. Two years later, Thomas died.

WILLIAM DE BEAJEAU 1273-1291

When William was elected grand master, following the death of Thomas Berard, the Order was plagued with overwhelming challenges. William had been a member for many years and presumably joined when he was quite young. It appears he was both a preceptor in Lombardy and a Master of the Temple in Sicily prior to his ascension to the rank of grand master.

Faced with the need for more money to combat an ever-increasing threat to the Holy Land, William spent a couple of years in Europe trying to raise funds. In the end, this effort proved futile.

Christian forces remained engaged by an aggressive Muslim force. Eventually, the last bastions of Christian strength in the Holy Land began to collapse. Forces that swept through the Holy Lands from Egypt proved too powerful. In 1291, William died at the last Siege of Acre.

THIBAUD GAUDIN 1291-1293

Thibaud was in a very bad position as he took control of the Order. He had previously served as a high ranking member of the Order, so he knew the situation was dire. He ascended to the rank of grand master following the death of William de Beajeau during the Siege of Acre. Prior to his ascension, he served as the Preceptor of Jerusalem. When Acre fell, Thibaud and a few of his fellow Templars managed to escape. He fled to Sidon where he was named grand master. From there he fled to Cyprus as the few remaining strongholds in the Holy Land fell. It is here that the headquarters of the Templar in the East was established.

Given the decimation of the Templar ranks, Thibaud set about reorganizing the Order. However, this task was never completed despite his efforts. It is reported that he actually died of exhaustion in 1292.

JACQUES DE MOLAY 1293-1314

What is known of the last grand master is what is recorded through his depositions. Jacques was probably in his fifties when he was elected as the last grand master of the Knights Templar. His own testimony indicates he had served the Order for over forty years. Given the decimation of the Templar ranks at the time, it is quite possible he was elected grand master because he was one of the few remaining Templar of high rank following the loss at Acre.

What he inherited was an absolute mess; the struggle had not ended. Jacques needed money and men if the order was to survive and attempt to recapture the territory they had lost. He spent several years, just like the first grand master, crisscrossing Europe to gather support. He sought support for more crusading troops to once again pry the Holy Land from the

hands of the enemy. In the late 1290s, a series of expeditionary forces all met defeat as they sought to engage the Saracen forces in the East. Meanwhile, the Templar still fought Egyptian forces, who sought to completely expel the Christian forces. Following the loss at Acre, the Templar managed to hold on to the island of Ruad until they were overrun by Egyptian forces in 1302.

There had been talk since 1274 of combining the Templar and the Hospitallers. This would effectively end the Templar Order as it was known. Still, Jacques de Molay continued to lobby for a new crusade as he desperately tried to gather men and money to fuel a new campaign. However, the Templar had effectively lost their reason for existing.

In 1308, everything came crashing down as King Phillip IV arrested the Templars and created a domino effect that would end the Order forever.



Templar Characters

Edges and Hindrances

Besides new Edges and Hindrances, what follows is list of guidance regarding existing Edges and Hindrances when playing a Knights Templar character. This guidance describes which options are appropriate or inappropriate and why.

EXISTING HINDRANCES

CODE OF HONOR

Since full members were drawn from secular knights, a code of honor is something these men would already possess.

ENEMY – SARACENS

Templar were both feared and hated by their eastern enemies. If they were captured on the battlefield, they would be killed instead of held prisoner. This is due in part to the Templar's vow never to be ransomed, but also due to the hatred of their enemy.

HEROIC

The origins of the Knights Templar lie with a handful of men that saw the need to protect innocent pilgrims. The roots of heroism run deep in the Order.

LOYAL

One of the reasons the Templar were feared and admired was their dedication to the brotherhood.

OVERCONFIDENT

There are numerous stories of Templar commanders that underestimate the enemy or overestimate the strength of their own position, much to their own detriment. It is a fact that, despite the humility that was preached, some brothers remained quite overconfident.

STUBBORN

Like overconfidence, stubbornness was born from a deep dedication to the Order. It plagued many members and proved to be fatal for some.

VOW – CHASTITY (MINOR)

The Templar shunned the company of women. Instead, they dedicated themselves to God and turned their back on the secular world. The vow to remain chaste was central in the lives of Templar knights.

VOW – CANNOT BE RANSOMED (MINOR)

It was very common during the Middle Ages for members of the nobility to be ransomed after being captured in battle. Some members of the Order took the command not to allow themselves to be ransomed more seriously than others.

VOW – POVERTY (MINOR)

Unlike the Poverty Hindrance, the hero has chosen to disdain money. It isn't that he has a problem hanging on to money; he has chosen not to have any wealth.

NEW HINDRANCES

DUTY (MINOR OR MAJOR)

The hero's life is not his own. As a Minor Hindrance, his obligation to an individual or organization only takes up a small portion of his time. However, this obligation still demands his presence.

As a Major Hindrance, the hero may have some free time, but for the most part his life is controlled by someone else. This is purely voluntary.

UNWAVERING DEDICATION (MAJOR)

The hero displays a commitment to a cause or religion that is so strong he blindly follows the orders of superiors, taking on dangerous tasks without hesitation. Among those who don't share his dedication, he suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma.

EXISTING EDGES

BRAVE

Knights Templars were known for their propensity for standing firm in the face of superior numbers.

COMBAT REFLEXES

The Templars were involved in numerous battles and often viewed as the best of the best.

ELAN

The Templars were much more than just knights that served God. They truly believed their salvation was secured through their service in battle. As such, they had an inner strength that many secular knights did not have.

FANATICISM (HORROR COMPANION)

Many of the regulations in place were designed to create cohesiveness and protect the Order in the field from raiding parties. Secular crusaders would often wander away from camp only to be killed by enemy marauders. During the Third Crusade, the leadership put the Knights Templar in charge of discipline on the march. They trained the secular members of the army to hold their positions if attacked.



KNIGHT (FANTASY COMPANION)

Full brothers of the Knights Templar were trained as knights before entering into the service of the Order.

LEADER OF MEN

Suitable for high ranking members of the Order as the Templar were incredibly disciplined and trained to support each other.

LEVEL HEADED

One of the things that many secular leaders admired about the Knights Templar was the fact they held fast even amidst impossible odds. They remained steadfast when other troops broke ranks and ran.

NERVES OF STEEL

Part of the Rule was that even if a Templar was wounded, they couldn't retreat without the permission of their master.

INAPPROPRIATE EDGES

The following Edges are deemed as inappropriate for Templar characters based on the history and structure of the Order.

ASSASSIN

Although they were a monastic order, they were an order that still followed the chivalric code of knighthood. As such, a Templar knight would never regularly skulk about and attempt to assassinate their foe.

BERSERK

Given the disciplined nature of the Order, members would not give in to barbaric rages.

LIQUID COURAGE

Given the strict dietary instructions proscribed by the Rule, a Templar knight would not be able to handle a significant consumption of alcohol.

RICH (AND FILTHY RICH)

Members of the Knights Templar all took a vow of poverty; personal wealth would not be something they would have.

TRADEMARK WEAPON (AND IMPROVED TRADEMARK WEAPON)

When a Knight joins the Order, they are required to surrender all of their personal possessions, including their armor and arms. In addition, members of the Order were expected to not be equipped in such a manner that it would distinguish them from the rest of their brothers.

NEW EDGES

BROTHERHOOD [LEADERSHIP]

Requirements: Veteran, Natural Leader

Those under the knight's command gain an additional +1 bonus to Spirit rolls to recover from being Shaken and a +1 bonus to Fighting rolls.

CHARGE [LEADERSHIP]

Requirements: Veteran, Fervor

The commander leads an incredibly disciplined group of soldiers skilled at charging the enemy. The result is an attack that instills fear into the hearts of those on the receiving end. Even the most seasoned troops may break and run.

Whenever troops under this commander initiate a charge, the opposition must immediately make a Spirit roll to avoid breaking and fleeing.

SPIRITED CHARGE [LEADERSHIP]

Requirements: Heroic, Charge, Spirit d10+

Like Charge, except this group is especially known for their ferocity. With this Edge, the Spirit roll incurs a -1 penalty.

FANATICAL DEDICATION [COMBAT]

Requirements: Seasoned, Spirit d8+, Improved Nerves of Steel

The hero has incredible dedication to a cause or belief. His dedication is such that it sustains him when faced with challenging situations that would break other people. He adds +1 to Toughness and ignores one level of Fatigue.

The concept of the Knights Templar or the activities they performed can be extracted from history and placed in the context of other role-playing game genres. **Role-playing Opportunities** provides guidance for placing the Knights Templar in non-historical settings.

GRIZZLED [COMBAT]

Requirements: Seasoned, Spirit d8+

The knight has waded through the bodies and came out the other side. The horrors of war simply don't faze him. He automatically passes any Fear Test caused by the horrors of war.

STRENGTH AND HONOR [LEADERSHIP]

Requirements: Veteran, Hold the Line!, Spirit d8+

Troops under this commander gain a +1 bonus to Spirit rolls for morale.

Role-playing Opportunities

HISTORY AND FANTASY

One of the most exciting role-playing opportunities is the chance to play a Knights Templar in a historical, fantasy, or historical fantasy role-playing game. This is your opportunity to play a member of one of the elite fighting forces in the Middle Ages. If you're playing in a historical setting, then adapting the Knights Templar to your campaign is pretty easy. The question to ask is when. If the campaign is set prior to the fall of the Order, then it wouldn't be unheard of to see a knight in various parts of Europe as well as within the Holy Land. Granted, there were far fewer knights than sergeants or servants, but seeing a full brother-knight would not be unusual.

If the campaign takes place after the fall, then the way that a Templar might be introduced is a bit different. For example, if your game is set in Scotland, then it's quite possible that you may find Templars who openly display who they are. If your game is set in other parts of Europe, you might learn of a Knights Templar's background by accident or it may be shared in confidence. Either way, this presents some exciting role-playing opportunities.

What about your standard fantasy RPG? Well, then the Knights Templar really become more of an inspiration. Much of the structure, attitude and other characteristics of the brethren can be ported in pretty easily. Even their service to a deity is easily imported, but the details must be changed to fit the campaign. However you envision this order slipping into your world, the structure of this organization would remain quite intricate and complex.

The founders of international banking serve as the holy servants of a deity of trade and commerce. Their role could be one of protection of trade guilds, merchant ships, and caravans in addition to maintaining banking centers throughout the known world. Their campaigns could be against evil humanoids that disrupt the trade routes. It could also be that the very structure of the Order serves as the structure of this entire church. Given that the Templars were masters at banking and even developed their own codes to protect their clients, this order is a great fit for such a deity.

If you wish to base your holy knights on both myth and fact surrounding the Order, then these knights seek out and possess a vast storehouse of artifacts and sacred knowledge. With this in mind, the Order could be the servants of the God of Knowledge. They could also be the defenders of valuable relics.

In melding fantasy with the historical tradition, Templars are historical fantasy demon hunters. If you wish to build on the Order's original stated mission of protecting pilgrims, make the leap to an order that defends the faithful by seeking out demons and undead and serving as frontline troops in campaigns against churches and organization known to have a strong rela-

tionship with demonic forces. Instead of a new version of the Inquisition, they serve much as they did in history. They would be employed when a threat was identified and used to support operations against that threat. In this role, they could be servants of a variety of gods such as the god of light, good, sun, etc.

MODERN

In 2007, the Vatican formally acknowledged that the Knights Templar were innocent of the charges leveled against them. However, the document that spurred this declaration, the Chinon Parchment, has a long history. As was mentioned earlier, this document was created by a papal commission who interviewed Templars in 1308 and found them innocent. The document was then either lost or suppressed. The parchment pops up again in the 1600s and is once again lost. Reasons for this abound.

What if the Papacy knew of the Chinon Parchment, and was helpless to act given the political climate in Europe at the time? Instead, what if the Papacy made the best out of a bad situation and gave the Templars a new role in the Church? Given that they were branded heretics and were excommunicated, Templars could become the perfect servants of the Church at a time when the political footing of the Church was becoming more and more rocky. They could do the things the Vatican could never get away with, but could be completely disavowed if ever caught.

Nationalism was on the rise and the power of the Roman Catholic Church was waning. The Order could still maintain their allegiance to the Papacy and serve as holy warriors. However, their new role is as a clandestine force in the service of the Church. They would serve the Church in much the same way as modern Special Forces undertake black ops missions.

In their role as a secret organization, they hid in plain sight. Earlier in history, their organization could have been merchants, guides, and bodyguards. Perhaps they are now an elite private security firm that guards their client list very closely. Just like their medieval counterparts, they could have "strongholds" throughout the world and be both one of the wealthiest security firms and one of the most enigmatic.

POST-APOCALYPTIC

The world is in shambles; the strong prey on the weak; what the world needs are heroes. Those heroes emerge from hiding after nearly a thousand years. The name of this group: the Knights Templar. They have preserved the old ways, learning to use the sword and shield while maintaining their proficiency with modern firearms and tactics.

A post-apocalyptic world is often depicted as experiencing a complete collapse of society. Might makes right is often presented as the social norm in this situation. Heroes are few and far between. An Order grounded in both austerity and chivalry would make a great counterpoint to this, especially when you add in their religious devotion. Given the Templar's proficiency with martial and economic affairs, they again draw converts to their cause and rebuild the Order stronger than it ever was.

Their collection of strongholds grows and begins to resemble the army cavalry units of the early west. Forts spring up and once again armed riders on horseback patrol the countryside offering peace, love, and justice to anyone in need. They become the order amidst the chaos.

Gear of the Knights Templar

The brothers of the Order were knights. As such, equipment was an important part of what they did and who they were. This is why there are portions in the Latin Rule specifically devoted to the issue of equipment.

When a secular knight joined the Order, they immediately became detached from their former lives. Once accepted into the order, they surrendered all personal possessions and wealth. This includes their personal arms and armor, which became the property of the Order.

However, secular knights who chose to join the brotherhood were not left with substandard provisions; quite the contrary. The Rule was very specific on what each knight should have with regards to equipment and all equipment was controlled by the marshal.

Mundane Equipment

The Rule dictated that each knight should have three horses and a pack animal. To assist him, the brother knight was issued a squire. Each brother knight was given food for his horses, toiletries, eating accoutrements, and a tent. Sergeant brothers were allowed one horse and no squire. The standard-bearer, who was a sergeant, was allowed two horses.

Horses were a precious commodity to the Order. Brother knights were expected to take good care of their horses by feeding them properly, not wearing them out, and not hitting them to test out their blades. While a brother couldn't request a specific animal, they could refuse a horse if they felt the animal was insufficient for their needs. If a brother injured or killed a horse, they risked harsh punishment, including expulsion.

Weapons

Brother knights were trained in mounted combat and the principal weapons of a knight at an early age. As such, these men would have been skilled fighters before joining the order. The Rule assumes these men were skilled in the use of the sword, lance, and other weapons common to secular knights.

According to the Rule, brothers would train and maintain their equipment between the proscribed periods of prayer known as the Hours. However, training wasn't actually dictated in the Rule, but some activities used to train knights were banned. Activities such as hunting and jousting were traditionally used to train secular knights in horsemanship and weaponry, but were forbidden in the Rule. This is due to two reasons:

- First is the fact that hunting and jousting were regularly enjoyed by secular knights. This could lead members of the Order to slide back into their old lives.
- Second is the risk of injury. Hunting and jousting, in particular, were violent sports that could lead to the injury of the knight or his horse.

Since both horses and knights were precious commodities to the Templar, these activities were banned. In addition, the brother didn't own his horse or

equipment, so he had no right to use them in any way he wished. Only a master can allow a joust to take place amongst Templars.

Brother knights were skilled with the use of a lance, a pole arm resembling a long spear of at least 9ft in length made of a stout wood. In the hands of a trained knight, this weapon could strike with incredible force. The sight of a heavily armored Templar charging with a lance was enough to cause some enemies to retreat.

Although European knights were skilled at charging an enemy on horseback with a lance, they were not known for their ability to charge in mass; the Templars were. The Knights Templars charged the enemy in tightly grouped squadrons. It was said that Templars were so tightly grouped when charging that if someone threw an apple into their group, it wouldn't hit the ground. Instead, it would hit either one of the knights or his horse. This ability, coupled with a Templar's tenacity, made them some of the most feared fighters of the Middle Ages.

The lance was really only usable a few times and only from horseback. Therefore, the knight also relied on other primary and secondary weapons. One of the most deadly of those weapons was the broadsword. This double-edged sword was 30 inches or longer and capable of severing limbs or necks with a single blow. A knight would have begun his training with this weapon at a very early age, making it the primary weapon of any Knights Templar.

Another weapon in the arsenal of the brother knights was the mace. Maces have a long or short shaft and a metal ball at the end that could be spiked, flanged, or smooth. This brutal crushing weapon was very effective against armored opponents. Typically, maces wielded by the Templars were light and short, making them easy to wield from horseback. For this reason, they were referred to as a horseman's or cavalry mace.

In addition to a lance, broadsword, and mace, the knight would also carry a dagger. This weapon served as the knight's combat knife and a last line of defense. If a knight was left with only his knife, he was in trouble. The dagger was a short bladed weapon, commonly double-bladed. This should not be confused with a bread and utility-type knives the Templars also possessed.



Although the equipment of the Knights Templar was similar to the equipment of many knights of the age, it was also predetermined. Templar knights did not bring their own equipment nor did they travel to the local blacksmith to obtain the greatest sword possible. They were assigned their equipment according to rank and expected to maintain it to the standards established by The Rule.

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Type	Damage	Weight	Cost	Notes
Broadsword	Str+d8	8	300	
Cavalry Mace	Str+d6	6	250	AP 1 vs. rigid armor
Dagger	Str+d4	1	25	
Heavy Mace	Str+d8	12	350	AP 2 vs. rigid armor, 2 hands
Lance	Str+d8	10	300	AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat
Long Sword	Str+d8	8	300	
Scimitar	Str+d8	8	300	
Spear	Str+d6	5	100	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands

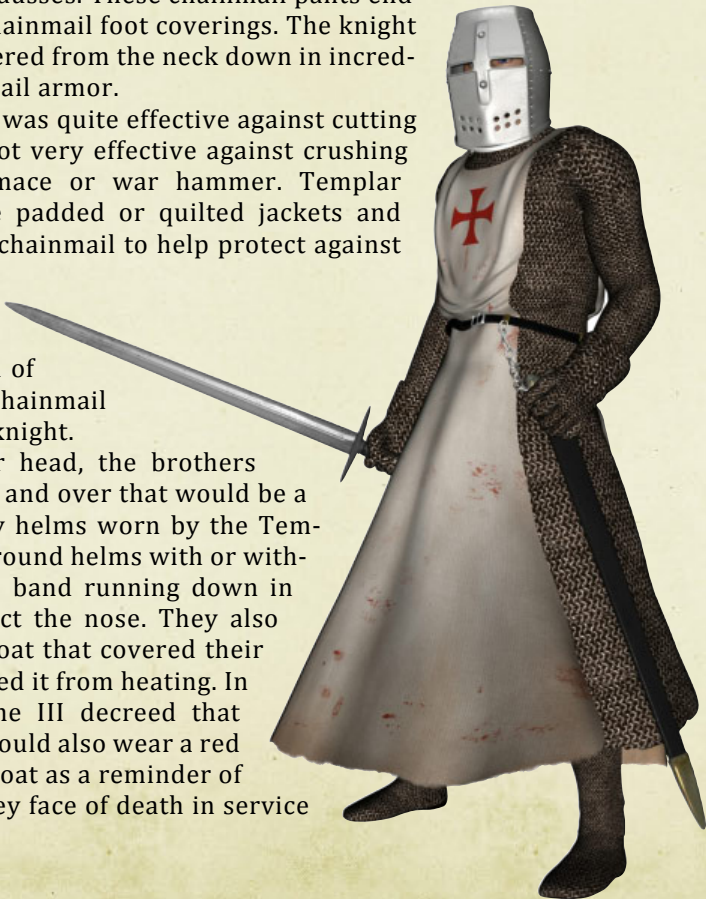
ARMOR

Brother knights wore very stout armor from head to toe. The knight would first put on a padded jacket known as a jerkin. Then he would don a long-sleeved shirt of chainmail specially designed to allow superior movement on horseback and spilt between the legs to allow for greater mobility. The long chain mail shirt, known as a hauberk, also included integral hand coverings.

Since the hauberk offered little protection to the legs, Templar knights also wore chainmail chausses. These chainmail pants ended with integral chainmail foot coverings. The knight was therefore covered from the neck down in incredibly strong chainmail armor.

While chainmail was quite effective against cutting weapons, it was not very effective against crushing weapons like a mace or war hammer. Templar knights also wore padded or quilted jackets and pants under their chainmail to help protect against attacks with crushing weapons and to offer an additional level of comfort wearing chainmail wouldn't afford a knight.

To protect their head, the brothers wore a chain hood and over that would be a simple helm. Early helms worn by the Templar were simple, round helms with or without a single metal band running down in the front to protect the nose. They also wore a white surcoat that covered their armor and protected it from heating. In 1146, Pope Eugene III decreed that brother knights should also wear a red cross on their surcoat as a reminder of the real danger they face of death in service to the Church.



As time passed, armor evolved and knights added a shirt that contained plates made from a few different materials, such as hard leather and metal. Their simple helms evolved into a full helm that covered the entire head. Also added were leather leggings, designed to protect the thighs, known as cuisses. Finally, knee protection, called poleyn, was added to the armor.

Additionally, each knight carried a medium-sized shield usable from horseback, either a kite or heater shield.

ARMOR TABLE

Type	Armor	Weight	Cost	Notes
Personal				
Chain Pants	+2	10	250	Covers legs
Chain Shirt	+2	10	250	Covers torso
Chausses (chain)	+2	10	250	Covers legs
Hauberk (chain)	+2	25	300	Covers torso, arms
Padded	+1	10	25	Covers torso, arms, legs
Iron Helm	+3	5	75	50% vs. head shot
Kettle Helm	+3	4	75	50% vs. head shot
Steel Helmet	+3	8	150	Covers head
Shields				
Heater Shield	-	12	50	+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots
Kite Shield	-	16	200	+2 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots

Role

Templar sergeants were armed very similar to the Templar knights, but not quite as heavily. This is due, in part, to their role as both a mounted and foot soldier in the Order. Sergeants wore a chainmail shirt that offered neither long sleeves nor hand coverings, nor did their chainmail pants include foot coverings. It would have been more common for them to wear a kettle helm, a metal hat with a wide metal brim, versus a full helm like their knightly counterparts.

Not specifically armed by the Templar, but a part of their fighting force were the turcoples. These were led by a brother sergeant known as the turcopolier. The turcoples were sometimes referred to as Turkish fighters, but many historians have stated they were most likely eastern fighters from a mixture of nationalities. The turcoples served the Order as light calvary. As such they wore much lighter armor, such as a padded jerkin and a simple conical metal helm, carried lighter weapons and rode much lighter horses. However, despite this, they often fought alongside heavy cavalry.

Non-Player Characters

Sir Sébastien De Roquefort†

Sir Sébastien is the fifth son of **Seigneur** Henri Du Rocford, a minor French noble. Sébastien and his brothers were trained at an early age in the weapons and tactics of knighthood by his father, who had cut his teeth in combat at a very early age.

Sébastien always knew his brother, Guillaume, would inherit the manor and the surrounding land, so it was up to Sébastien to make a name for himself; this led him to join the Third Crusade and help retake the Holy Land. Sébastien would never forget the day that he left his home and set sail for the Holy

Land. His father wore a broad smile as each of his sons boarded the vessel that would whisk them from France to wage war against the Saracens.

Sébastien thought he would find his fortune in that holy place. Instead, all he found was death and darkness. Two of his brothers were killed in the ensuing campaign and a third would never walk again. The only light amidst the darkness were the white cloaked warriors known as the Knights Templar. They waded into battle without joy or fear and fought with the heart of a lion. When he congratulated one of the members of the order following a particularly brutal victory, the brother looked at him stoically and simply said, "Not I, but to Christ be all the glory." With that the warrior of Christ turned and rejoined his band. It was then that

Sébastien knew he wanted to leave his old life behind, join the ranks of Christ's warriors, and serve The Lord.

Mannerisms: Sébastien is a very sober individual. His face is often a mask of stone and his piercing blue eyes reveal a steely determination. He never displays joviality, but instead seems to shun it. He approaches all aspects of life with the same unwavering determination. It is for this reason that Templar leadership has noticed him and begun to groom him for command. Many of the younger members of the Order seek his council and find strength from his confidence.

Not everyone in the Order is fond of Sébastien. Some find his lack of joviality annoying at best and insulting at worst. Some have even sought to derail his career in the Order before it begins.

Distinguishing Features: Sébastien is 5' 8" tall and weighs roughly 175lbs. He has steel blue eyes and sandy blonde hair. An ugly, long scar travels the length of his right forearm and is the result of a riding accident when he was seven years old.

SIR SÉBASTIEN DE ROQUEFORT



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Latin) d6, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d4

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Vow [Chastity], Vow [Poverty]

Edges: Command, Knight, Natural Leader, Noble

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), pot helm (head +3, 50% vs. head shot), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), dagger (Str+d4), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), long sword (Str+d8)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

Osbert of Kent

Osbert is the oldest son of Lord William of Kent. As his oldest son, Osbert stood to inherit his father's substantial holdings in England and eventually become the next Earl of Kent. However, he shared his father's proclivity for always trying to prove himself. This led Osbert to seek out glory by joining the English forces who answered the Pope's call for a second crusade.

Storms forced the army to land in Portugal, where they were persuaded to engage Saracen forces and aid in capturing the city of Lisbon. Following a protracted siege, many of the English crusaders stayed in Lisbon and took advantage of the land grants given to them by the King of Portugal. However, Osbert had a longing for more.

Osbert eventually made his way to the Holy Land and joined the efforts of the Second Crusade to take back the Holy Land. As he battled both the inhospitable climate and the ruthless Saracen warriors, he was amazed by the Knights Templar who fought with incredible tenacity and skill. He was in awe of their prowess and their satisfaction despite the harsh conditions.

Osbert knew he wanted to join the ranks of the elite Knights Templar. He wanted to be one of the best of the best. However, this meant renouncing his title and giving up his wealth for a life of poverty and servitude. At first, it wasn't easy for him to go from prince to pauper, but he felt a calling to serve God and become one of Christ's warriors. Now, he knows he has finally found a place he can truly call home and this knowledge has brought him inner peace.

Mannerisms: Osbert is a good-humored man who seems to find joy in everything he does. It doesn't matter if he is engaging in the daily offices or swinging a sword, Osbert always wears a smile. Unlike most of his brethren, the mantle of Brotherhood never seemed to chafe him. Instead, the mantle feels more like a comfortable old shoe that he never wants to lose. He greets every brother as an old friend with an embrace and smile that is infectious.

The best place to find Osbert is among the younger brethren where he serves as a mentor helping those who find the transition from rich noble to poor brother much more difficult. However, not all of the brothers like Osbert. Some feel he doesn't live his life with an appropriate amount of soberness while others are simply unnerved by his constant cheerful mood, even during the darkest times.

Distinguishing Features: Osbert is 5' 11" and 170lbs with a boyish face constantly plastered with an infectious smile. His hazel eyes communicate peace and happiness, even amidst the chaos of war. He has a small scar above his left eye, the result of a dagger during battle.

OSBERT OF KENT



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d10, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d10, Persuasion d6, Shooting d4

Hindrances: Duty [Knights Templar] (Major), Vow [Chastity], Vow [Poverty]

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Elan, First Strike, Knight, Nerves of Steel

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), dagger (Str+d4), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), long sword (Str+d8)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

Diego Zavala

Diego had no need to travel to a dusty land a thousand miles away to meet the Saracens head on. That is because Diego, like his father before him, waged war against the Saracen forces that had invaded his home. For hundreds of years, Spanish and Portuguese warriors engaged Saracen forces in a struggle to expel the Saracen invaders from their land.

Like his father, Diego has a deep devotion to his family and God and saw waging war against the Saracens as fulfilling his commitment to both. Joining the Knights Templar was a good fit for his desires, and Diego was drawn to their single-minded dedication and incredible skill.

Diego excelled in the Order and quickly proved himself as a strong leader. He was allowed to remain in the Iberian Peninsula where he skillfully commands a small Templar Garrison in their efforts to expel the Saracens.

Mannerisms: Diego is a fiery man of steel. His hawkish features seem to constantly radiate sheer determination and tend to intimidate the younger brothers under his command. His hazel eyes are unnerving to most. Those that meet him for the first time often feel the seasoned brother can see through them into their very soul. His sheer hatred for the Saracens is legendary.

DIEGO ZAVALA



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Riding d10, Shooting d4

Hindrances: Duty [Knights Templar] (Major), Stubborn, Vow [Chastity]

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Elan, Inspire, Knight, Nerves of Steel

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), dagger (Str+d4), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), long sword (Str+d8)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

On the battlefield, Diego's single-minded determination is incredibly inspirational. This coupled with a strong grasp of tactics and formidable combat prowess has made him an incredible leader. However, his stubborn hatred for the Saracens and his determination to destroy them has led him down a dark path more than once that nearly cost him his command.

Distinguishing Features: Diego is an incredibly handsome man, despite his hawkish features. His dark hair, olive skin, and sharp hazel eyes instantly mark him as a native of the Iberian Peninsula. He has no scars or other distinguishing marks, despite years of combat.

Gaston De Bourdon

It's hard for Gaston to remember his life before joining the Templar. For the last fifteen years, he has called the arid region of the Holy Land his home. He has waded through bodies and blood all in an effort to push the Saracens back from the Holy Land. He vaguely remembers when he was a young knight and participated in hunts and engaged in other frivolous pursuits with his father and brothers in France.

Now his life is much more serious. After joining the Knights Templar nearly twelve years ago, Gaston rose up the ranks thanks to his competence in battle, his tactical mind, and his unwavering commitment to the Templar. He distinguished himself as a squadron commander in several conflicts in the Holy Land and was eventually placed in charge of a small fortified garrison. Now he is the commander of Chastel Blanc, a fortified tower keep that serves as a signal tower.

Mannerisms: Gaston exudes a quiet strength. He is pleasant without being overly jovial. He is kind, yet is tough on everyone under his command. He constantly demands excellence from his subordinates. He knows everyone under his command by name, including sergeants, turcoples, and servants, and greets everyone with muted affection regardless of their rank. His love for those under his command is only second to his overall love of the Order. His aquiline nose and dark hair, now streaked with gray, hint at his family's ancient Roman heritage while his gray clear eyes reveal a sharp mind constantly in motion.

In battle, Gaston is like a gravitational force that pulls men toward him. He is a brilliant tactician that inspires everyone around him to be more than themselves. He seems equally at home commanding the battlefield and entering the fray. His success has earned him many enemies among the Saracens who wish this skilled commander dead as well as the unwavering loyalty and love of his men.

GASTON DE BOURDON



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Notice d8, Riding d10, Shooting d4

Hindrances: Duty [Knights Templar] (Major), Enemy [Saracens], Vow [Chastity]

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Elan, Fanatical Dedication, Inspire, Knight, Nerves of Steel, Tactician

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), dagger (Str+d4), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), long sword (Str+d8)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

Templar Adventures

Outremer

BACKSTORY

Things in Outremer have become tense. The year is 1174 and King Amalric of Jerusalem has died. This has left Baldwin IV as king, however he is only a child and far too young to rule. Therefore, someone must serve as regent until the King is of age to rule on his own. Whoever serves as regent becomes the real power in the kingdom.

As seneschal of Jerusalem, Miles De Plancy has claimed the role of regent. Raymond II of Tripoli has recently arrived in Jerusalem and has also claimed the role of regent. Since Raymond II is the first cousin of King Amalric and the closest male relation to the deceased king, he has a strong claim to assume the role. Raymond II is supported by several powerful barons in Outremer, such as Baron Reginald of Sidon.

ASCALON

The commander of the Templar stronghold in the port city of Ascalon calls the Templar knights into his private quarters. As they enter, they find him tightly clutching a scroll. He turns and speaks. "Since the beginning of this order, we have been charged with safeguarding the pilgrims that travel the road from Ascalon to Jerusalem." He turns and faces the window. "We are charged with a similar task today."

As he turns to face the brothers, the concern on his face is apparent. "Arnaud of Toulouse, nephew of Baron Reginald of Sidon, is missing and we have been asked to find him." Then, he adds, "quietly."

Brother Sicard continues. "We are not an Order concerned so much with the affairs of men, but with service to our Heavenly Father. However, the kingdom is fractured by the squabbles of nobility. If Arnaud is not found, I fear this may be the catalyst that breaks the kingdom apart. Find him and bring him and the person responsible for his kidnapping here. If Arnaud is not alive, bring his body and his killer back. I do not wish a large force of Templar to attend to this quest as this will draw unwelcome attention that might jeopardize your mission. You will need to hire and equip men that can help in your quest. You may, draw from the turcoples in our service if you wish. You have 5,000 gold coins to hire who you will and purchase needed supplies.

Brother Sicard can also offer the following:

- Arnaud arrived in Ascalon about 10 days ago.
- The journey from Ascalon to Jerusalem takes about 5 days.
- Baron Reginald received a ransom note from a man known as "The Iron Fist" 3 days ago. (Common Knowledge roll to know this is the name of the leader of a bandit group by the same name known to rob pilgrims from time to time). His demands are simple: Baron Reginald must deliver 50,000 gold coins and a pledge to return to France and never return. He must provide both of these within 5 days or Arnaud will be killed.

- Baron Reginald doesn't have enough money to pay the ransom.
- If Reginald leaves, it will weaken Raymond's position and civil war could ensue.

The PCs can approach the quest in multiple ways. Here are a couple examples:

1. Dress as pilgrims, travel the route from Ascalon to Jerusalem, and hope to get attacked by bandits. If this route is chosen, the knights are attacked by a group of bandits (four bandits per character, plus one more). Any member of the bandit group can lead the Templars to the camp of the Iron Fist.
2. Go to the place indicated in the ransom note to drop off the ransom. If this route is chosen, a group of bandits (four bandits per character, plus one more) attacks before arriving at the drop off location, attempting to steal the treasure chests. This group can also lead the PCs to the camp of the Iron Fist.
3. Gather info in the city and attempt to find the location of the camp of the Iron Fist. If this route is chosen, the heroes are attacked by a group of bandits (four bandits per character, plus one more) as they travel throughout the city.

Even if the PCs decide to kill all of the bandits when they encounter them, at least one remains alive long enough to tell them where the Iron Fist's camp is.

BANDIT KING OR MIDDLE MAN

The Iron Fist has 25 men, but not Arnaud. If captured, he reveals that the boy is being held in the ruins of an ancient fortification known as the Stone Table. He is being held by an infidel, Sir Lambert of Cales. If pressed, he states that Sir Lambert offered him 1,000 gold coins to take possession of the ransom money. He was to contact the Christian knight at his camp at the Stone Table after taking possession of the chest. Arrangements would then be made for the boy to be brought to whoever paid the ransom.

- Iron Fist
- Bandits (twenty-five)

STONE TABLE

Stone Table is the name given by the locals to a large flat stone area atop a small hill where an ancient fortification once stood. The Stone Table is located about 20 miles west of Ascalon and about 10 miles south of the Iron Fist's camp. The man who has taken Arnaud is Sir Lambert of Cales, a minor noble. Lambert is a vassal of Milon De Plancy, Lord of Montréal, seneschal of Jerusalem and claimant to the title of regent. Lambert is a tall, wiry man of about 21

IRON FIST

The Iron Fist is the self-proclaimed "king of the bandits" and serving as a middle man for the abduction of Arnaud.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6, Throwing d8

Edges: Brawny, Command, First Strike

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy, Mean

Armor: Leather (torso, arms, legs +1)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), short sword (Str+d6), spear (3/6/12, Str+d6, Reach 1, 2 hands)



SIR LAMBERT OF CALES



Sir Lambert of Cales is a minor noble and a vassal of Milon De Plancy, the seneschal of Jerusalem plying for the title of regent.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Riding d10

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Fervor, Frenzy, Level Headed, Noble

Hindrances: Arrogant, Duty, Mean

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Broadsword (Str+d8), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), dagger (Str+d4)

Gear: War horse

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

years with brown hair and dark eyes. His face looks young, but his eyes are hard and cruel.

Milon has ordered Lambert to capture the boy and keep him hidden. He is to keep Arnaud safe unless instructed to do otherwise. Arnaud has been kept blindfolded and has no clue that his captor is a Christian knight.

Sir Lambert has set up a camp at the Stone Table. Arnaud is present and unharmed, but bound and gagged.

- Sir Lambert of Cales
- Knights (ten)
- Archers (five)

AFTERMATH

If Lambert isn't killed in the final battle, the Templar may take him back to their master. A few days later, it's reported that Sir Lambert has died from a blow to the head sustained after being thrown by his horse. Milon doesn't fare any better after being poisoned by an unknown assassin and dying.



ADVERSARIES

ARCHER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Armor: Leather (torso, arms, legs +1)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), short sword (Str+d6), short bow (12/24/48, 2d6, 20 arrows)

BANDIT

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Armor: Leather (torso, arms, legs +1)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), short sword (Str+d6), short bow (12/24/48, 2d6, 10 arrows)

KNIGHT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d4, Notice d6, Riding d8

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Broadsword (Str+d8), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), dagger (Str+d4)

Gear: War horse

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

Barrow

The Templar knights come across the small town of Barrow, England where a gruesome event took place. A few of the small buildings in town have been burned and still smoke while the bodies of several townsfolk lay in the street, slain by black shafted arrows, crushing skull wounds from a mace or club, and slashes from a sword. A small Templar farmstead nearby has also been robbed of its annual revenue one week before it was due to be sent to the London temple. Two Templar knights and six sergeants are dead. The small Templar house and all other structures on the property have been razed. In total, twenty are dead, including townsfolk.

The serfs remaining at the Templar holding and the surviving townsfolk can provide the following details:

- There were twenty men on horseback.
- Five wore strange light armor and wielded curved swords and strange light bows. They all had olive skin and looked very out of place.
- Five men were dressed in chainmail armor and wore kettle helms.

- One of the men in chainmail, who was giving orders, wore a tattered black surcoat with the red cross of the Knights Templar (the dress of a Templar sergeant).
- Ten others were dressed in simple leather armor and weapons.
- The man with the black surcoat with the red cross was older and had a scar running from his left eye across his nose and down his cheek.
- The men left with a locked chest with Templar markings. This is easily identifiable to any Templar as a chest holding the farm's revenue.

Based on the descriptions, the party can discern the following (a Common Knowledge roll for Templar characters and those serving in the Holy Land): the five with bows and curved swords sound like turcoples given the fact the leader was wearing a Templar cross. However, they could be Saracens in disguise.

Here are three options for how the PCs can proceed:

Contact the Feudal Lord of this town. The farm is under the administration of the Knights Templar, as is this entire town, and has been for 40 years. If the characters insist on seeking out the local lord and asking for his assistance, they find a man in his late 60s who is of ill-health. He only has a handful of retainers and the rest are in the Holy Land on crusade. He is cold to the Templar presence and suggests this is a Templar matter. He says it as though he's made this statement in the past.

Contact the nearest Templar stronghold and request support. Although small holdings are numerous in England, many are staffed by a miniscule number of Templar sergeants and even fewer knights. Most of the Templar knights in rural assignments haven't seen combat in quite some time and are very reticent to leave their post.

Go it alone. This may be the best of the poor options.

CHURCH OF ST. SEBASTIAN

It has been two days since the Templar discovered the attack at Barrow and the trail for the men responsible has gone cold. The group settles in for the night in a barn at a small church, the Church of St. Sebastian, in the tiny village of Dunn.

That morning, they are awakened by shouts and general commotion as two men, armed with long swords and plain leather armor, burst into the barn. Expecting to find only livestock, the pair is completely stunned to find a group of knights has taken up residence in the barn.

Sixteen men have entered the village and begun to plunder. Ten are dressed in simple leather armor and armed with long swords. They are scouring the village while one man, dressed in chainmail, wearing a black surcoat with a red cross, and mounted on a war horse, sits watching. He is encircled by five strangely dressed men riding smaller horses. Each wears well-made padded armor, a pointed iron helm, and a plain circular shield. A curved sword is sheathed at their side, a small mace is attached to their saddle, and a small curved bow is slung over their backs. These look like the men described by the townsfolk of Barrow.

If the Templars examine the man in the black surcoat a bit closer, they see brown hair streaked with gray peeking out from underneath his kettle helm. They should also be able to identify the scar running from his left eye across his nose and down his cheek. If the man in the black surcoat spots a Templar

knight, he screams and charges. His turcoples follow him into battle.

- (Former) Templar Sergeant Singer
- Turcoples (six)
- Brigands (ten)

If the former Templar sergeant or any of the turcoples are taken alive, they reveal nothing. However, the brigands that accompany them are a different story. They know very little, but it might be enough to direct the search for the mysterious former Templar in the right direction. The former Templar sergeant does have a crude map in his pocket of the area with a few places marked. Two of them are additional Templar hold-ings within a day's ride.

The PCs can use Persuasion or Intimidation on the turcoples or Templar sergeant, but must achieve at least one Raise in order for any information to be provided. They are members of the Templar force at the Battle of Hattin who were abandoned and left to die. Three hundred were captured that day. Forty managed to escape, including one Templar knight who was scheduled to be executed the next day, but not before being mercilessly tortured. They decided to band together and find their own way.

Using Persuasion or Intimidation on the brigands provides information with only a success. They were hired by the man in black (referring to the Templar sergeant) to grab loot and provide muscle. They heard the foreign soldiers address the man as Singer. The foreigners spoke with a strange accent.

If the knights succeed against the brigands with a Raise, they can learn even more. About a day ago, their group was met by another band, of about twenty, about a day's ride from Ellemont (south of Barrow). The bandits were told they were waiting for their lord. A man arrived who wore chainmail and a grimy white surcoat with a red cross. The brigand confirms that it looked identical to the one the Templar in the party wear. Unlike the cross emblazoned on the shields of the Templar, the man's round shield had a stag head on a field of deep blue. He also remembered the man had a scar across his forehead and was missing an ear. Four men in chainmail joined the arriving band and headed north. The bandits overheard the lord jokingly say they'd be back home at the Sow in no time and wished the man with the scar luck.

With a Knowledge (Heraldry) roll, the Templars can discern the Stag head on a field of deep blue is the heraldic symbol for Sir William Falkirk. Falkirk was presumed dead at the Battle of Hattin along with the men under his command. Since he had no living heirs, his lands were reclaimed by the crown when he was presumed dead.

Anyone from the area can make a Common Knowledge roll to know the Sow is a nickname for a strange rock formation that looks like the profile of the head of a pig. The rock formation is located in a wooded clearing known as St. Patrick's Bluff. It's deep in the woods away from any town and is a good place to set up a fairly large camp. St. Patrick's Bluff is about a day's ride south of Dunn.

(FORMER) TEMPLAR SERGEANT SINGER



Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Tactics) d6, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Survival d4, Throwing d6

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Elan

Hindrances: Arrogant, Loyal [Sir William Falkirk], Mean

Armor: Chain shirt (torso +2), chain pants (legs +2), kettle helm (head +3, 50% vs. head shot), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), spear (3/6/12, Str+d6), long sword (Str+d8), short bow (12/24/48, 2d6, 20 arrows)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

ST. PATRICK'S BLUFF

The camp is not hard to find with help from either the residents of Dunn or any of the villagers from Barrow that joined the quest. Nestled in the middle of the dense forest is a large clearing. On the northern edge is a massive boulder that rises about 15ft. The formation doesn't really resemble anything in particular. Two sets of tents are arrayed in a circle at either end of a large fire pit. This gives the camp the appearance of a figure eight.

At one end of the figure eight stand seven small tents anchored by a much larger tent. Standing by the front flap of the largest tent is a single man dressed in dark padded armor, a pointed iron helm, and a plain circular shield. A curved sword is sheathed at his side and a small curved bow is slung over his back. In his hand is a spear with a dark wooden shaft. A guard stands watch here at all times, unless the group is out on campaign.

At the other end of the figure eight are eight small tents.

SIR WILLIAM FALKIRK



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d10, Shooting d4

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Command Presence, Elan, Inspire, Knight, Nerves of Steel

Hindrances: Duty [Knights Templar], Stubborn, Vow [Chastity]

Armor: Chain hauberk (torso, arms +2), chain chausses (legs +2), steel helmet (head +3), round shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Dagger (Str+d4), lance (Str+d8, AP 2 when charging, Reach 2, only usable in mounted combat), cavalry mace (Str+d6)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

DURING THE DAYTIME

The camp is abuzz with activity. It is quickly apparent that the group consisting of the leader of the bandits, the strange foreign soldiers, and five men dressed in chainmail stay separated from the rest of the local muscle. They are all dour and reserved. It is easy to notice that each has the bearing of a professional soldier. The group of local brigands that resides in the second circle of tents is loud and gregarious.

DURING THE NIGHTTIME

The area containing the knight, former Templar sergeants, and the turcoples is quiet. One of the turcoples stands guard in front of the tent of the knight at all times. The

local brigands on the other side of the camp are a bit more subdued compared to during the daytime, but are still rowdy. One man staggers out behind one of the tents to relieve himself. As he finishes, he lifts a jug to his mouth, takes a long drink, and staggers back within the ring of tents.

Two of the former Templar sergeants stand as sentries at either end of the camp. They are cloaked in shadow and stand vigilant. Half-way through the night, two more Templar sergeants are awakened and take their place as sentries.

ENGAGE

The revenue from the Templar holding in Barrow, along with four other chests with Templar markings that hold various coins, can be found in the camp. Additionally, there are a few sacks filled with coins and other precious treasures presumably belonging to the towns that have been ransacked.

- Sir William Falkirk
- (Former) Templar sergeants (five)
- Turcoples (six)
- Brigands (twenty)

ADVERSARIES

TEMPLAR SERGEANT

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Survival d4, Throwing d4

Armor: Chain shirt (torso +2), chain pants (legs +2), kettle helm (head +3, 50% vs. head shot), heater shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), spear (3/6/12, Str+d6), long sword (Str+d8), short bow (12/24/48, 2d6, 20 arrows)

Encumbrance Penalty: -1

TURCOPOLES

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d8

Armor: Leather armor (torso, legs, arms +1), pointed iron helm (head +3), round shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), cavalry mace (Str+d6, AP 1 vs. rigid armor), spear (3/6/12, Str+d6), curved long sword (Str+d8), short bow (12/24/48, 2d6, 20 arrows)

BRIGAND

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Armor: Leather armor (torso, legs, arms +1)

Weapons: Knife (3/6/12, Str+d4), short sword (Str+d6)

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