

From: Bill Stephens <wstephens@sparrowhawk.org>
To:
Date: 8/22/2016 12:21:01 PM
Subject: De Molay reference in my 8/21/16 email: Jacques de Molay and the Knights Templar

All BCC 100+

A message from me this weekend referenced I was a chaplain in De Molay. Several people have asked what De Molay is. For those who are not familiar with De Molay:

DeMolay is essentially a Masonic youth organization; the organization employs accounts of the life, tribulations, and death of Jacques de Molay to illustrate and reinforce important virtues, including the importance of fidelity and integrity in the face of adversity – and particularly in the face of abuse and oppression by government agents and religious authorities.

Jacques de Molay was the last leader of the Knights Templar. From 1119 through 1312 the Templars operated as a military unit sanctioned, but not financially supported, by the Catholic church. The original name of the organization was “The Poor Order of the Knights Templar”; the knights were responsible for supporting themselves and their mission. Their means included contributions from individuals and proceeds from enterprises such as building and operating the world’s first international banking and travel security guard systems.

Among other missions, the Knights Templar successfully defended Jerusalem from Muslim onslaught for more than 100 years. The Knights Templar are thought by some to have rescued the Arc of the Covenant from Jerusalem before the Muslims captured it.

For centuries Christian pilgrims still were able to come and experience the Temple Mount, but escalating violence against pilgrims to Jerusalem instigated the Crusades. The Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099 and the Dome of the Rock was given to the Augustinians, who turned it into a church. The Knights Templar, who believed the Dome of the Rock was the site of the Temple of Solomon, later set up their headquarters in the Al-Aqsa Mosque adjacent to the Dome for much of the 12th century. The "Templum Domini", as they called the Dome of the Rock, featured on the official seals of the Order’s Grand Masters (such as Everard des Barres and Renaud de Vichiers), and soon became the architectural model for round Templar churches across Europe.

Jerusalem was recaptured by Saladin in October 1187, and the Dome of the Rock was returned to use as a Muslim shrine. The cross on top of the dome was replaced by the Islamic crescent, and a wooden screen was placed around the rock below.

The Catholic church turned on the Knights Templar during the French Inquisition in the early 1300’s and demanded (through the French government) the Knights surrender all belongings and property. The Catholic church conspired with the French government to secure false

confessions of knights of the Knights Templar to justify to the citizens the horrible abuse of the knights. When Jacques de Molay refused to surrender the property of the Order and renounced his false confession extracted through gruesome torture, he was imprisoned in dungeons for several years and ultimately burned at the stake on a tiny island in Paris constructed for the spectacle, as were several hundred other Templars. The knights Templar had few surviving members.

Jacques de Molay's strength of character and integrity has inspired millions in the past seven centuries. The example he provided in standing firm against government and religious abuse and persecution was legendary and was cited as inspiration for many who fled Europe to escape such abuse and oppression.

The sails of Christopher Columbus's three sailing ships that set off in 1492 to find "the New World" – the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria – were emblazoned with the Templar Cross. Symbols of the Knights Templar abound in American architecture and culture – and even in the design of Washington, D.C.

The Freemasons (Masons) are descended from the tradition of the Knights Templar. Many of the founders of the United States of America were Freemasons, as have been many of the Presidents of the United States.

- Signers of the Articles of Association: 10 confirmed Masons, 9 possible, 34 with no affiliation.
- Signers of the Declaration of Independence: 8 confirmed Masons, 24 possible, 24 with no affiliation.
- Signers of the Articles of Confederation: 7 confirmed Masons, 8 possible, 33 with no affiliation.
- Signers of the Constitution: 13 confirmed Masons, 7 possible, 19 with no affiliation.
- General Officers of the Continental Army: 33 confirmed Masons, 15 possible, 26 with no affiliation.
- George Washington's Aides and Military Secretaries: 6 confirmed Masons, 1 possible, 22 with no affiliation.

- Freemasons who played major roles in the founding of the United States included George Washington, Robert Paine, John Sullivan, John Hancock, James McHenry, John Glover, Henry Knox, Jacob Broom, John Fitzgerald, Richard Montgomery, Gunning Bedford, Daniel Carroll, William Whipple, John Dickson, and Benjamin Franklin, among others.

Presidents who were Freemasons:

George Washington
James Monroe
Andrew Jackson
James Polk
James Buchanan
Andrew Johnson
James Garfield
William McKinley
Theodore Roosevelt
Howard Taft
Warren Harding

Franklin Roosevelt
Harry Truman
Gerald Ford

Abraham Lincoln withdrew his application for membership in the Freemasons shortly before beginning his campaign for presidency, fearing seeking Freemasonry membership would be seen as a political ploy to gain votes. He told the Lodge members he planned to resubmit his application to the Lodge after completing his role as President.

The Eye of Providence (or the all-seeing eye of God) is a symbol associated with Freemasonry. It has been employed in the Great Seal of the United States since 1782. Ben Franklin, a Freemason, played an important role in the design of the Great Seal. The Eye of Providence is on the reverse side of the one dollar bill.



Here is a brief summary of a few notable aspects of the Templar history and influence:





Templars artwork by David Saavedra

The Knights Templar

Bringing together the puzzling pieces of the widespread Knights Templar society has consumed many years of work by diligent researchers, and only recently has the full story of these influential knights come to light. Historians found it easy to look only at the years 1119-1312 when the Templars operated as a military unit, but then lamented that so much about the Templars remained a mystery. By probing the years before and after the church officially recognized the Templars -- that is to say their roots and their heritage -- the full story of the Templars becomes surprisingly clear.

The Templars were remarkable people drawn from the highest and lowest reaches of society....

Traditionally we hear people talk only about the white-clad knights among the Templars. It is true that they were very important and came from some of the richest and most powerful families in Europe. But only one out of every eight Templars was a knight from the noble class. Six out of eight Templars were skilled men dressed in brown or black robes with the red Templar cross. They served as soldiers around the knight, and as craftsmen who worked stone, iron, leather and farmlands to produce all the things needed by their society.

The last "one out of every eight" Templars was a well-educated cleric skilled in languages and business affairs. These men wore green robes with the red Templar cross, and were essential to building the famous Templar banking system and the Order's legendary wealth. Often overlooked in most Templar histories, many of these men were drawn from the Lebanese people in the Holy Land who were devoutly Christian, and were descendants of the well-educated Phoenician sea-traders. In King Solomon's day, the Phoenicians had helped build the Temple that became the namesake of the Templars.

The order of the Temple was at this period divided into the three great classes of knights, priests, and serving brethren, all bound together by their vow of obedience to the Master of the Temple at Jerusalem, the chief of the entire fraternity.

--Charles Addison

Third came the clerics -- priests who acted as chaplains to the order and, because they were the only group of the three with any claim to literacy, frequently acted as scribes and record keepers and were responsible for other duties of a nonmilitary character. The clerics also wore the Templar cross, on a green mantle.

--John J. Robinson



Templar Initiation

Then the Inquisition burned hundreds of Templars to death and forced others to live outside the law....

King Philip IV of France began to attack the Templars in 1307, hoping to enrich himself. But it was the pope put the Templars on trial, as we see in the Chinon Parchment and many other records. And he sent his inquisitors to torture the Templars into false confessions, resulting in hundreds of Templars suffering fiery death tied to a stake. This tragedy inspired Dante to begin writing his *Inferno* in 1308.

But kings outside of France delayed making any arrests of Templars in their lands, even though Pope Clement V ordered them to do so. That allowed many Templars to simply disappear. The surviving Templars found a champion in King Dinis of Portugal, who refused to arrest members of this knightly order in his country. He then founded the Order of Christ, gave all the Templar estates in Portugal to that new order, and accepted all Portuguese Templars into it. But it took so long for him to make these arrangements that few of the former Templars outside his country came to join it.

In most other lands the Templars were forced to survive on their own resources and live "underground" existences outside the law.

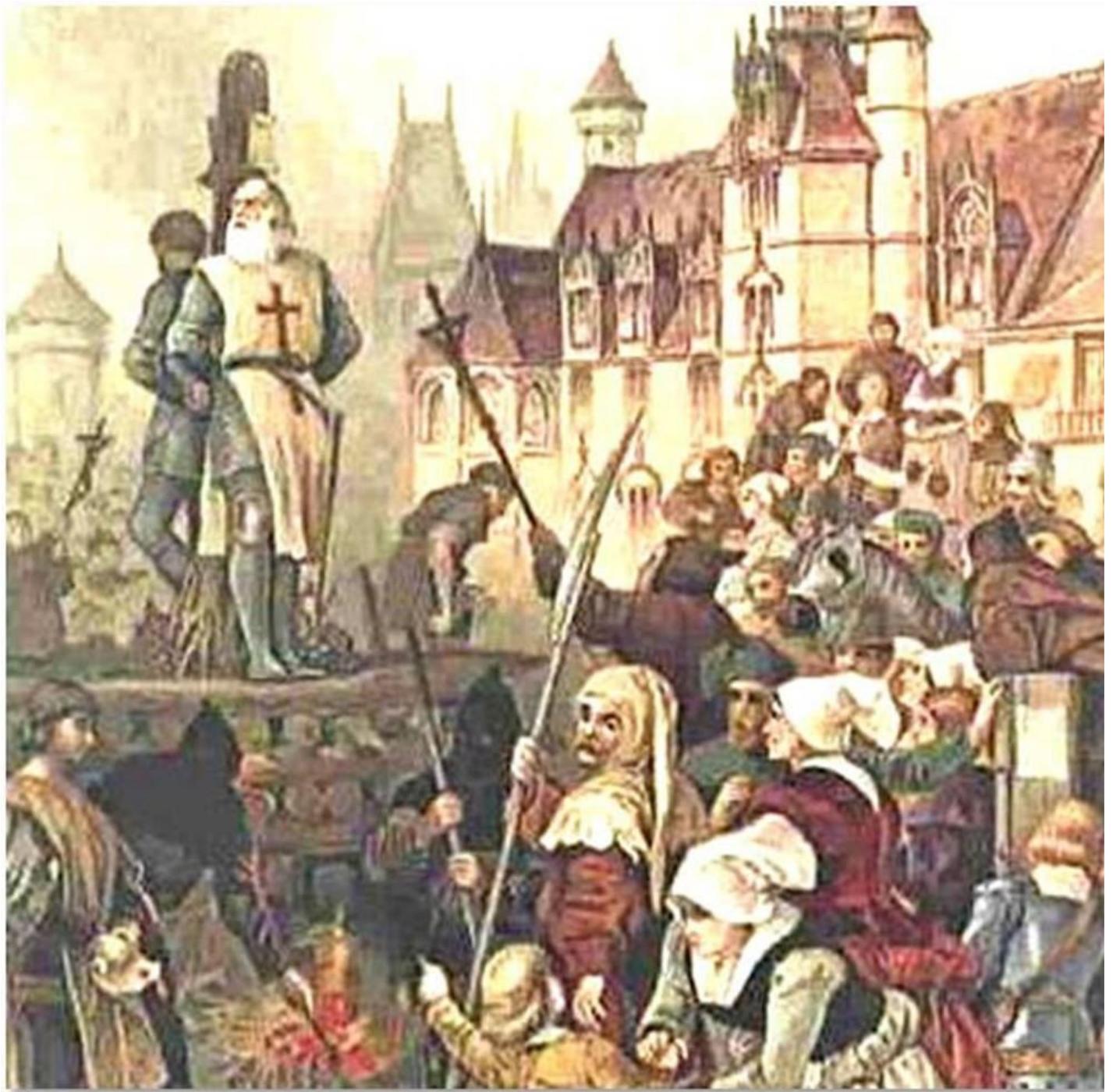
When the council of Canterbury met in London on 14 November therefore, the inquisitors began pressing for the use of torture, and on 9 December they asked the king if they could proceed "according to ecclesiastical constitutions", which meant the use of torture.

--Malcolm Barber

Being asked concerning the other brothers in Scotland, he stated that John de

Hueflete was Preceptor of Blancradok, the chief house of the order in that country, and that he and the other brethren, having heard of the arrest of the Templars, threw off their habits and fled, and that he had not since heard aught concerning them.

--Charles Addison



Jacques de Molay being burned at the stake

And surviving Templars helped cause the fall of kings and the weakening of the Vatican..

..
Having seen the inner workings of Templar society in all the events that happened before their disappearance, we are then able to follow the lives and actions of Templars in the years that followed.

One of the major accusations against them during their trials was the intense level of secrecy the Templars practiced in their affairs. They now put that to good use in helping each other survive outside the law.

They were also able to draw support and new members from other people who were wrongly attacked by kings or the Vatican. A secretive society that included knights, clerics and craftsmen sponsored the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

Manuscripts belonging to a secretive society of knights, clerics and craftsmen began being

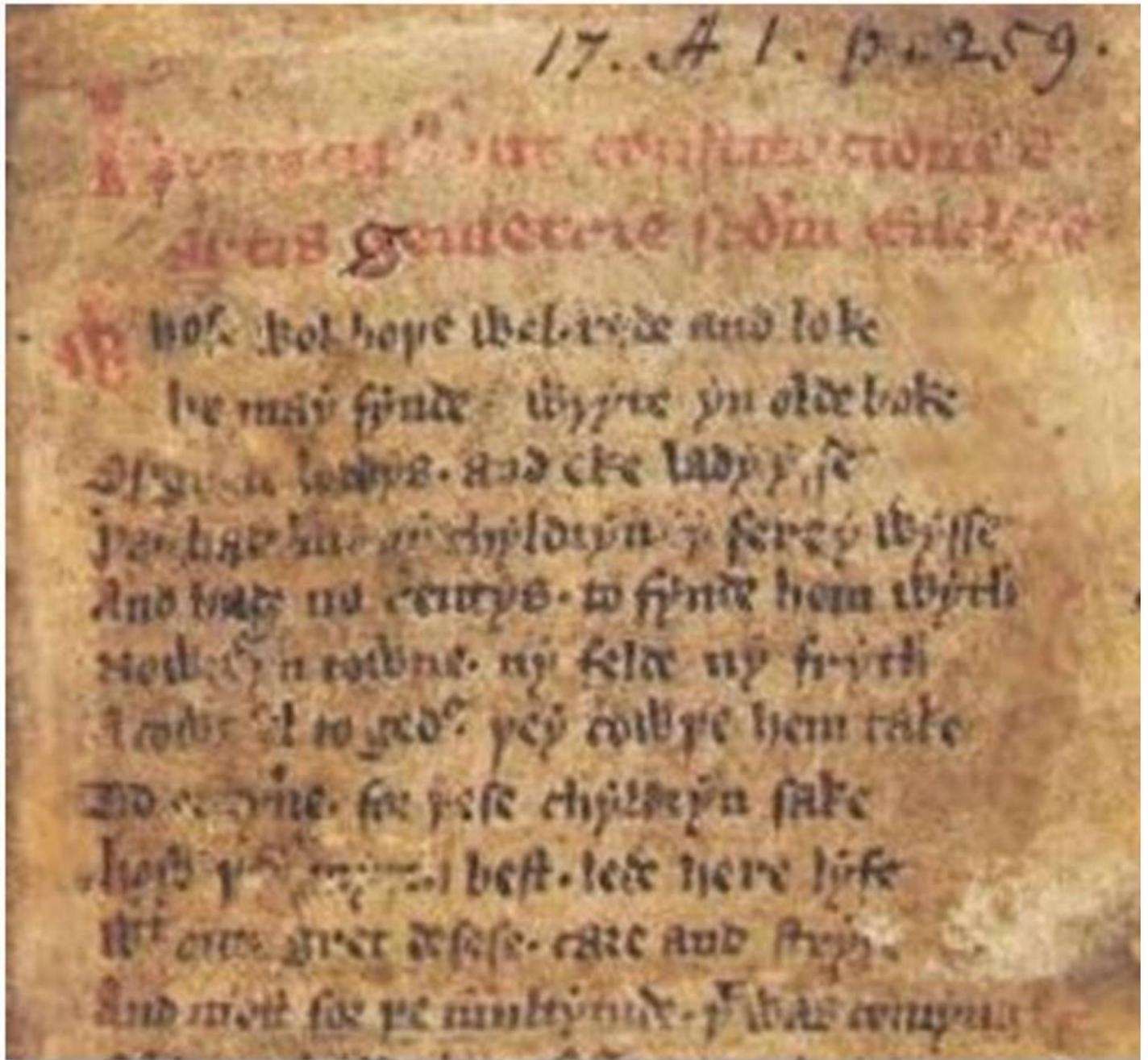
written at that time, and continued in an unbroken chain until the 1700s. Some leading members of that society are known by name, and were active in the stripping of powers from kings and the Vatican. Documentation exists for all these things.

Throughout the summer of 1381 there was a general ferment. Beneath it all lay organization. Agents moved round the villages of central England, in touch with a "Great Society" which was said to meet in London.

--Winston Churchill

This search for what the Templars did after leaving their Order comes at last to a manuscript older than Cooke. This is the Regius Manuscript written about 1390, which referred to a related document earlier in the 1300s.

--Sanford Holst



Regius Manuscript