



Knighly News

The Grand Priory of the Knights Templar in England

Winter 2022

2022 and all that!

The best that can be said for 2022 is that it has been a year of highs and lows!

On the positive side, we have enjoyed two wonderful investiture ceremonies; the first at the magnificent Christchurch Priory in Dorset, and the second at the quaint St Luke's Church in Kingston-on Thames, with the Deputy Grand Prior admirably deputising for the Grand Prior. We celebrated Robbie Burns in January at the same time as holding our Annual General Meeting in Kettering, which was a night if much revelry and enjoyed by all.

On the downside, we have lost several members from the Order, who chose to resign after the Grand Priory was embroiled in a shocking attempted coup d'état over the summer months. In the spirit of optimism, all that is behind us now and we look forward to the new year with excitement and resolve to make 2023 a year to remember, for all the very best reasons!

Which is why it is sad that we have lost Chester Cathedral as the venue for our planned international event in May 2023. We have tried strenuously to find a sizeable venue to take on the International Convent with hotel accommodation to enable us to sleep so many guests, but it has proven an impossible task. *Consequently, we shall have to abandon the international element of the investiture and revert to it being a domestic event.* We are seeking permission to move the international convent to either the autumn or spring of 2024.

We know that this will be as disappointing to our members and postulants as it is for the senior officers, but the loss of Chester was beyond our control and very much regretted by all parties.

The Grand Prior has been extremely busy looking at the immense talent that we have within the Grand Priory and has promoted several of our members to new positions and ranks, so we start the new year with new post-holders and new positions. We are sure that all will support their colleagues in their new challenges.

Those who have been appointed to an office now have their own dedicated email address. Details of these email addresses will be forwarded to all members shortly. Please disregard any previous email address you may have had, and use only the Grand Priory's email for Templar matters.



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Compline

The ancient office of Compline derives its name from a Latin word meaning completion (completorium).

It is above all a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. It is most effective when the ending is indeed an ending, without additions, conversation or noise.

If there is an address, or business to be done, it should come first. As Chaplain. I have for nearly two years, once a fortnight, held a compline service online.

I invite you to join me - it lasts about 15 mins long, ending in silence.

Join the Knight Templars Compline - Time: 18th December, 2022 19:00hrs London, and every two weeks from this date.

Please contact the Chaplain, Chev. Les Fraser at chaplain@knightstemplar-england.org.uk for details of how to join in this time of reflection.



From the Grand Prior's Pen...

Knights, Dames and Fellow Templars, but most especially, friends,
We are now in 'Winter Quarters' and time for a spot of R & R before once again girding our loins and saddling-up to charge into 2023

2022 has been a year of very mixed emotions: the highs of excellent recruitment of superb members and the enjoyment of meeting old and new friends but a very sad and dark end to the year where a person or persons unknown circulated a



most damaging and vindictive anonymous email which has caused confusion, division and mistrust. Incorrect information has been posted and thankfully, older and more experienced members have seen through this and rejected it out of hand, but our newest members naturally do not know who or what to believe and will be greatly concerned.

By this Newsletter I ask you to remain steadfast and assure you that investigations are still ongoing into who sent out this disgraceful communication and to ask you to ignore any further such emails but to report them upwards to your local officers, details of whom are published later in this newsletter.

As Grand Prior I apologise for this inconvenience which has been created by someone with a grievance but who did not use the correct channels to rectify it.

I continue to maintain regular close communications with the Grand Master in Paris, the Grand Prior General of Scandinavia in Sweden and other senior members of the Order world-wide and I am also involved in establishing a new Priory in Wales. If

anyone has any friends or relatives in Wales who may be interested in joining us and assisting in forming a new Priory there, I will be delighted to hear from you or them.

Some of you may be aware that there are other so-called Templar organisations 'out there' most of which claim to be the 'true and only legitimate Templar group' but which are in fact entirely bogus and are simply money-making scams for the owner of the web-page, or at best are the product of a fantasist who desperately wants to appear to be important and who has built an entirely fictional history around themselves. Both types will happily take your money and send you an A4 piece of paper which states that you are now a Knight Templar, without ever having met you or your attending any kind of ceremonial. There is, however, one particular group calling themselves OSMTJ, which is very similar to our OSMTH and which translates to the same in English. OSMTJ were at one time members of this (our) branch of the Order but many years ago a number of members broke away from this Order and formed their own group which became OSMTJ.

It has always been my earnest hope that one day we could reunite in fellowship but all of my efforts over the years have proven fruitless,...until now and I am delighted to advise the membership that I have received a communication offering the hand of friendship. I willingly accepted this offer, which was almost immediately followed by a communication from their Grand Master to me in which he asked me to arrange for a channel of communication to be opened between our Grand Master and himself. I therefore passed-on all details to our Grand Master in Paris who also welcomed this approach and has authorised me to maintain contact and to send an open invitation to their members to attend any of our events in the future.

I do not foresee a re-joining or reunification but I do have great hopes for a whole new relationship with even more good people who share our own core values.

Onto other matters: Can I please ask all members to advise the Grand Secretary of their email and postal addresses. We know that some members have moved-house but we do not have their new addresses in order to correctly communicate.

His email is: secretary@knightstemplar-england.org.uk

Which just leaves me the most pleasant task of wishing you all, each and every one, a very Merry Christmas, and a peaceful and prosperous 2023!



ADVANCEMENTS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members.

Dame Sandra Dunkley, Chevalier Michael Angeles,
Chevalier Zain Carter, Chevalier Paul Clarke,
Chevalier Andy Devaney, Chevalier Gareth Evans,
Chevalier John Mellor, Chevalier Christian Walbe,
Chevalier Prof Tim Wilson

Congratulations to the following on their appointments:

Dame Tina Walford-Stretton – Commander of the North
Dame Sally-Ann Hayes—Chair of the Ladies Committee
Chevalier Troy Close – Master-at-Arms and
Great Sword-Bearer
Revd Chevalier Les Fraser – Chaplain
Chevalier Albin Wallace – Warden of Regalia
Chevalier Ian Burwell – Deputy Grand Secretary
Chevalier Derek Granger-Brown – Commander of Hull
Chevalier Nicolai Webber – Senior Steward
Chevalier Bill Straub – Steward

Promotions

Chevalier Ian Burwell to be Knight Officer
Chevalier Troy Close to be Knight Officer
Revd Chevalier Les Fraser to be Knight Officer
Chevalier Albin Wallace to be Knight Officer
Chevalier Nicolai Webber to be Knight Officer
Dame Tina Walford-Stretton to be Dame Commander
Chevalier Mike Shepherd to be Knight Commander
Chevalier Mark Stretton to Knight Commander

DRESS CODE

DRESS: As an ancient and Chivalric Order with international standing and which conducts ceremonial at the highest levels, it is important that we have a formalised Dress Code, of which there are several styles, as follows:

White Tie: Full Evening Dress (white bow tie, wing-collared shirt, black tailcoat, white Marcella waistcoat and black patent leather shoes).

Black Tie: Black bow tie worn with a Dress-shirt, Dinner Jacket or Tuxedo and Evening Dress trousers.

Smart Casual: It is understood that not all members have the more formal styles of dress and that they are worn infrequently, however, those members who do have them are encouraged to wear them. All others are asked to wear a dark lounge suit with a white shirt. All male members should wear the KT tie, available from the Warden of Regalia, Chevalier Dr Albin Wallace.

Military uniform is permitted for those authorised to wear it. This may be Number 1 Dress Blues, Mess Dress or Service Dress and additionally, there is a military-style Templar uniform for those who wish to have one made.

Female members are requested to dress in keeping with the occasion or to wear the style agreed by the Ladies Committee.

The only official dress required is the mantle, neck cross and white gloves, with a surcoat being an optional extra.

Members are reminded that wherever possible our annual investitures are scheduled for weekend closest to 24th May each year (the anniversary of the death of Hugues de Payen, our first Grand Master) and the weekend immediately after the 13th October (Templar Remembrance Day) to facilitate planning and to maximise attendance.

PLEASE TRY TO KEEP THESE WEEKENDS FREE OF OTHER COMMITMENTS!

Companions of the Temple

The Order of the Temple historically always had supporters who donated time and finances. Some were well known families who, whilst not Templars themselves, became synonymous with the Templar name.

There may be people you know who are interested in our Order but would like to 'try us out' first: or who feel unable to commit to full membership, but are interested in the historic Templars and their modern-day counterparts.

With this in mind, you are encouraged to invite any friends who might fit the category to apply for membership as a Companion of The Temple.

For an annual sum of £25 the Companion will receive an annual membership card and be invited to participate in all the Order's activities, Church Services and social events.

In the first instance, direct them to the contact area on the website to express an interest and the Grand Secretary will make the necessary arrangements, and assure them that they will receive a warm welcome as a Companion member.

Interesting Reading

Dame Sara-Jayne Goldingham

The History of the Knights Templar is a fascinating one, from the formation of the Order in 1118 through to its dissolution in 1307 and beyond. In two hundred years the Order established Commanderies throughout the known world, became immensely wealthy, developed the origins of what became our current banking system, and were answerable to no-one but the Pope. They were noble men who gave up Land and Title to take monastic vows: they were willing to die to protect Christendom, and yet they apparently disappeared from history without trace.

Perhaps this, more than any other reason is why the Knights Templar have inspired so many myths. There is a huge gap for the imagination to fill, and there are a large number of books, films and videos produced each year purporting to have discovered the 'Secrets' of the Templars.

In the Grand Priory of England, we are also keen to know as much as we can about the history of the Order, of which we are the successors. Luckily there are well respected academics out there who have covered almost everything there is to know about the Templars and so we can benefit from reading books based on sound research.

Everyone loves the Da Vinci Code, and there are theories aplenty about hidden Templar treasure, The Holy Grail, the Shroud of Jesus and so on, and we are all free to have our own thoughts on such matters. In fact the interface between historical narrative and national mythmaking is in itself a legitimate area of study because what we believe about the past underpins what the members of an Institution believe to be their function to be today. Whilst all history is open to interpretation, some theories are based on a misunderstanding of the medieval world and its politics, and with that in mind, here is a reading list by some of the most respected historians today.

- * Barber, M. The New Knighthood. Cambridge University Press 1994
- * Barber, M. The Trial of the Templars. Cambridge University Press 2006.
- * Lord, E. The Knights Templar in Britain. Pearson Education Ltd 2004
- * Nicholson, H. The Knights Templar. Sutton Publishing Ltd 2001
- * Nicholson, H. The everyday life of the Templars. Fonthill 2017
- * Ralls, K. Knights Templar Encyclopaedia. The Career Press 2007
- * Upton-Ward, J.M. The Rule of the Templars. (English translation) Boydell & Brewer Ltd 1997
- * And for those who are interested in branching out into other areas relating to the Templars:
- * Frale, B. The Templars, The Secret History Revealed. Maverick House Publishers 2009
- * Frale, B. The Templars and the Shroud of Christ. Maverick House Publishers 2011
- * Griffith-Jones, R. Mary Magdalene, The woman whom Jesus loved. Canterbury Press 2008
- * Ralls, K. The Templars and the Grail. Quest Books 2003
- * Sevilla-Torres, M. The Kings of the Grail. Michael O'Mara Books Ltd. 2015

...and finally, whilst Scotland had a large Templar presence, myths have grown up around their story. A book published in June aims to set the record straight, with a chapter devoted to Rosslyn Chapel by Dr. Lizzie Swarbrick, it's called

- * The Modern Memory of the Military-Religious Orders (ed.) Dr. Rory McClellan

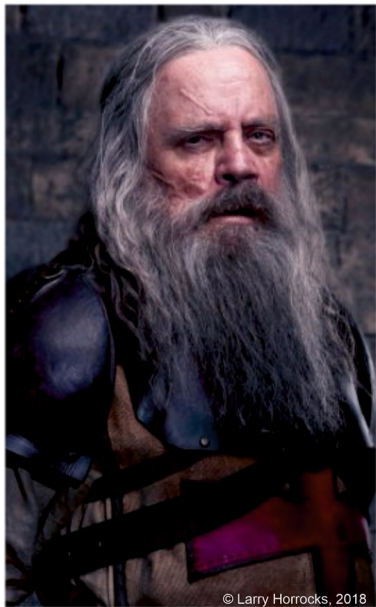
I hope you enjoy reading some of these books and you might be pleasantly surprised to find that sometimes historical facts are far more interesting than fiction.

Little known Templar facts...

Adapted from a SKY History article

Many people are still fascinated by the Knights Templar, even over seven hundred years since the original Order was disbanded. It has inspired films, including George Lucas when writing Star Wars – he even called the “Jedi-Warriors” Jedi-Templars in the original script!

In 1099, Christianity was re-established in Jerusalem after 450 years of Muslim control and pilgrims started to return to the Holy Land from all over Europe. Sadly, many were attacked and killed on the pilgrimage as they passed through countries still under Islamic rule. A religious order of knights (the Templars) was established to protect these pilgrims as they travelled eastwards.



Hugues de Payens together with eight other fellow knights who were all related by either blood or marriage, under the patronage of the influential French abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, established the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon. The Order was granted a papal sanction by Pope Honorius II, who said that the knights of the Order were an army of God.

The powerful symbolism of the Knights Templar seal is that of two knights riding the same horse, denoting the Order's poverty inasmuch that they could only afford a single horse between them! It is often said that the riders represent Hugues de Payens and Godfrey de Saint-Omer, two of the founding members.

To emulate the apostles, the Knights Templar wore their hair short, which was also logical in battle as long hair may have been hazardous, but they let their beards grow. The Templars were once described as the “Order of Bearded Brethren” by the Cistercian chronicler Alberic of Trois-Fontaines.

Not only were the Templars fearsome warriors, but they were also incredibly financially savvy. Indeed, they were so fiscally aware that they became almost a mediaeval bank. When attacked by infidels as they travelled to the Holy Land, the pilgrims were usually robbed of their wealth, so the Templars devised a method whereby pilgrims could deposit their money at the start of the pilgrimage and then withdraw it after arriving in Jerusalem by cashing in a letter of credit issued by the Knights Templar, thereby protecting their wealth.

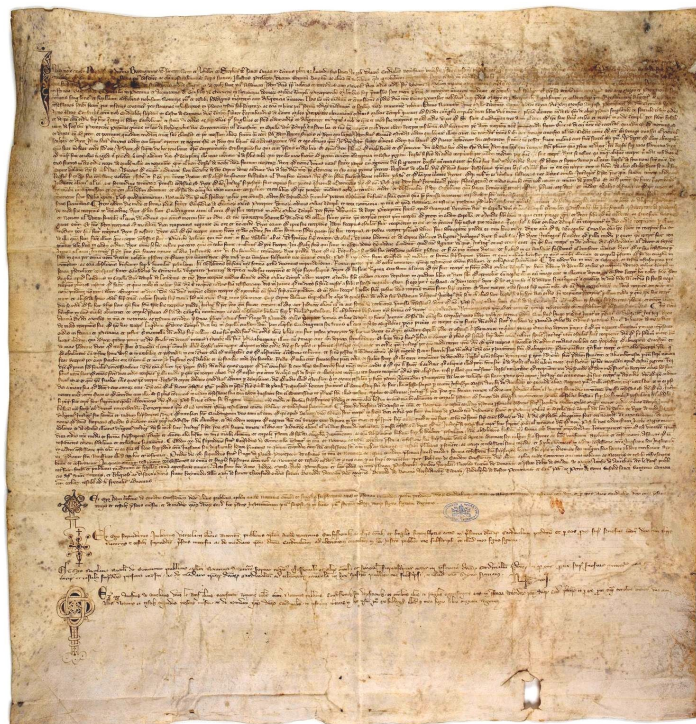
The Knights Templar had strict rules of governance, following the Latin Rule, which was also observed by Benedictine monks. It was honourable and demonstrated their deeply held faith, covering all aspects of their lives, including chastity. Some of the more ludicrous elements of Latin Rule meant that Templars could not wear lace-up shoes or napkins on Good Friday and even had to ask permission to adjust their stirrups when riding.

So fearsome and ferocious were the Knights Templar, driven by their great religious faith, that death was preferable to dishonour. Their code of honour required them never to retreat or surrender. This had a unifying effect on other Crusader armies and often turned the tide of battle, as in the twelfth-century Battle of Montgisard, where the Christian forces defeated a Muslim army far superior in both numbers and experience.

Symbolism was fundamental to the Knights Templar. Following the Council of Troyes in 1129, the Templars wore a white mantle representing the purity of the Order, and if married men joined, they were forbidden from wearing the mantle. The white mantle became synonymous with the Knights Templar, who would wear it in battle and at prayer.

In short, the Knights Templar were 13th-century stormtroopers! They were exceptionally well-trained in combat tactics and always were at the forefront of any battle they fought. As cavalry, they fearlessly rode through the enemy lines, scattering, confusing and crushing their enemy without mercy.

In 1308, Pope Clement V exonerated the Knights Templars of all the charges laid by King Philip of France that had led to the execution of its leaders and the disbanding of the Order. The original Templars would never be reformed, and the modern Templars are a chivalric Order founded in 1705 by the Duke of Orleans in France.



The Chiron Parchment of 1308

Templar Fayre

LAMB'S WOOL WASSAIL

WASSAILING

Wassailing is a very ancient custom that is rarely done today.

The word 'wassail' comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase 'waes hael', which means 'good health'.

Originally, the wassail was a drink made of mulled ale, curdled cream, roasted apples, eggs, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and sugar. It was served from huge bowls, often made of silver or pewter.

Jesus College, in Oxford University, has a Wassail bowl, that is covered with silver. It can hold 10 gallons of drink!

Wassailing was traditionally done on New Year's Eve and Twelfth Night, but some rich people drank Wassail on all the 12 days of Christmas!

The Anglo Saxons gave a lovely toast to each other at Christmas-tide, "Waes Hael!", "Good Health!", while drinking a hot toddy of Ale and roasted apple. The pureed apple floated to the surface like lambs fleece and must have looked very festive in a pewter mug. Here is the recipe for 6 -8 people.

Bramley or Cox stewing apples 500g

Water 100ml

Honey/sugar 100g

Freshly grated nutmeg, 1 teaspoon

Ginger powder, 1 teaspoon

Ale or cider, 750ml

Firstly invite some Templars round to your house.

Peel and cut the apples into small pieces. Place in a pot with 100ml of water and the spices and honey. Stew until soft.

In the absence of an open fire and a poker to heat up your Ale, add the Ale to the apple puree, whisking to blend. Pour into an antique pewter tankard and watch while the puree floats to the surface.

Toast your friends with a "Waes Hael" and drink the warm Ale through the froth.

Musical Chivalry

Chev. Stuart Millson

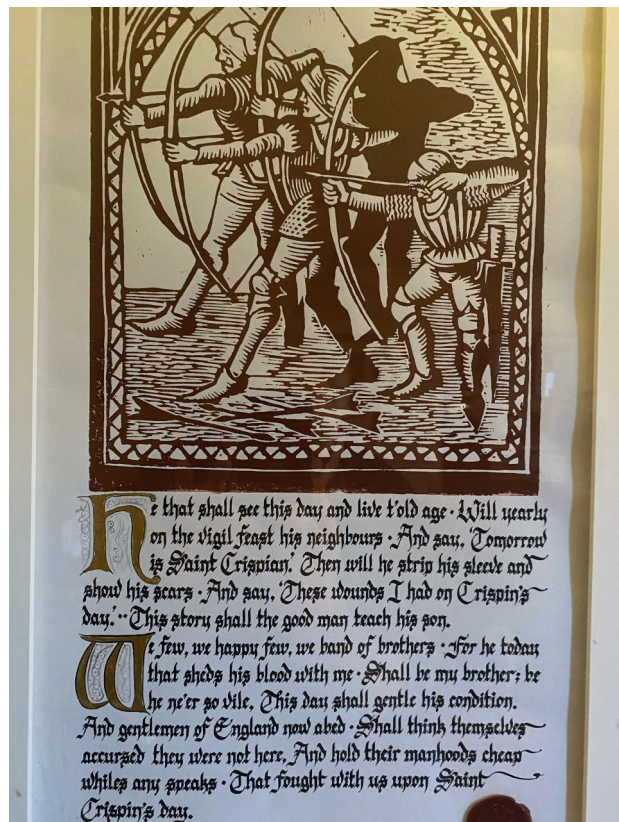
The English composer, Walter Leigh (1905-42), may be one of the most unsung and neglected English composers of the 20th century. He deserves to be honoured and listened to, and performed on a much greater level than is presently the case ~ as his work bears the imprint of a true symphonic craftsman.

Leigh studied with the German modern master, Paul Hindemith. Those familiar with Hindemith will know that his music can be intense and astringent, but also bursting with visionary light, especially in his orchestral work, *Nobilissima Visione* ~ 'the most exultant vision.' Elements of the teacher's work are found in the pupil's compositions, from Leigh's light-of-touch music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to his stirring *Agincourt* overture of 1935.

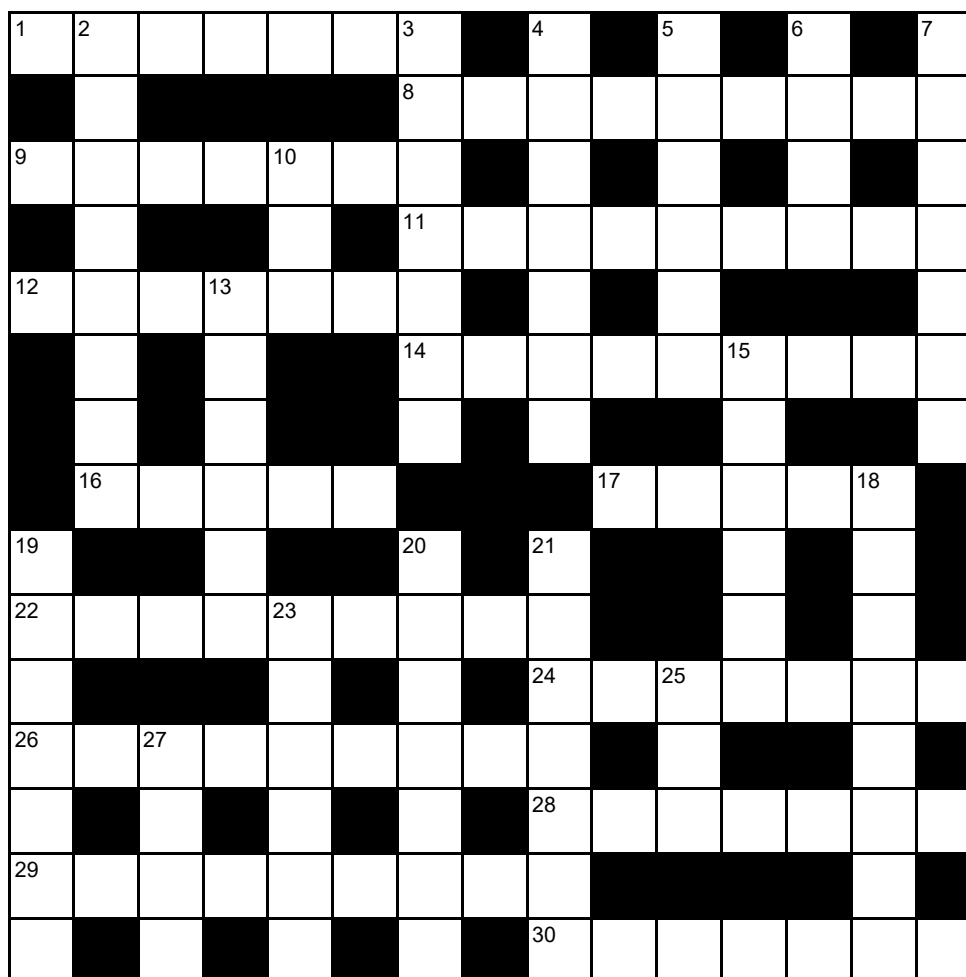
The full panoply of English mediaeval might is to be found in this work: a sweeping scene of a King in muddy armour accompanied by his 'band of brothers'; of all the activity of an encampment on the morning of battle; and then ~ just before the work's thrilling, triumphant peroration ~ the slow rising, like a mist, of the famous *Agincourt Song*. The listener may well see, in his or her's mind's eye, the monks chanting the song on the battlefield; or giving thanks for Henry V's victory at a later service in an English (or French!) cathedral. It is a tune very much like our own, *Non nobis...*

Walter Leigh's *Overture, Agincourt* has a further resonance. The composer was killed in action in North Africa in 1942 ~ a modern knight, in all but name, fighting for King and Country. And so, when we hear 'Agincourt', we may imagine not just the battlefield of 1415, but the dust of Tobruk, the sands of the D-Day beaches, the turf of Tumbledown Mountain.

Walter Leigh's *Overture, Agincourt*, may be found on the following record labels: Lyrita (performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Braithwaite) and on Chandos (with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, conducted by Rumon Gamba).



The Knightly News Crossword #5



© Chev Dr Robert Webber, 2022

ACROSS

1. Rider puts his foot in it (7)
8. Doesn't drink or vote. (9)
9. He who checks the accounts. (7)
11. Colonial termination in 1833. (9)
12. Planning the way when touring? (7)
14. Elite governance? (9)
16. Legal passing? (5)
17. Brief role of an engraving. (5)
22. He paid through the nose for his pork pies! (9)
24. Exhibiting tiredness or boredom. (7)
26. Time for giving? (9)
28. Rule of a despot. (7)
29. Famous for his relief work. (9)
30. Young nuns without bad habits. (7)

DOWN

2. Known as "La Vie Rose" in SW France. (8)
3. A model of excellence. (7)
4. Moss is absorbing water, perhaps? (7)
5. Discolouration but not by a paint. (6)
6. Ain't otherwise opposed (4)
7. Scottish islands. (7)
10. The start of TNT (3)
13. Love apple (6)
15. European marine wants to stay. (6)
18. Regulated munitions (8)
19. Funeral ode about deep ice? (7)
20. Sewer's protection from pricks (7)
21. Hertfordshire Templar site. (7)
23. Del Boy feels great! (6)
25. It is waged. (3)
27. South African bread? (4)

OSMTH ENGLAND WHO'S WHO

for the benefit of our new members, the

Officers of our Order are as follows:

(*) Denotes Chapter Member

GRAND PRIOR *

H.E. Chev. Paul Grant

GRAND TREASURER and DEPUTY GRAND PRIOR *

Chev. Ian Bates

GRAND SECRETARY *

Chev. Dr. Robert Webber

GRAND SENESCHAL *

Chev. Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL

GRAND CONSTABLE *

Chev. Danny Gill

GRAND MARSHAL *

Chev. Paul Tredgett

CHAPLAIN

Revd. Chev. Les Fraser

MASTER-AT-ARMS *

Chev. Troy Close

COMMANDER OF THE NORTH *

Dame Tina Walford-Stretton

COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH *

Chev. Warren Cruickshank

WARDEN OF REGALIA *

Chev. Dr Albin Wallace

WARDEN OF BENEVOLENCE

TBA

DEPUTY GRAND SECRETARY

Chev. Ian Burwell

CHAIR OF THE LADIES CTTEE *

Dame Sally-Ann Hayes

HISTORIAN/ARCHIVIST

Dame Sara-Jayne Goldingham

CHIEF STEWARD

Chev. Nicolai Webber

MAGISTERIUM

Chair:

Grand Prior

Members:

Grand Secretary

Grand Seneschal

Grand Treasurer

In the absence of the Grand Prior, the Grand Secretary will take the chair.

The Grand Priory of England holds two investiture services each year, that are fixed as the Saturday immediately after the 13th October

(Templar Remembrance Day)

each year and the Saturday closest to 24th May each year, being the anniversary of the death of Hugues de Payen, our first Grand Master.

A Templar Christmas

Dame Sara-Jayne Goldingham

If you thought that people start preparing for Christmas too early these days, spare a thought for our Medieval ancestors. Christmas-tide lasted from Martinmas until Candlemas, in other words from November 11th until February 2nd!

Of course it wasn't the over indulgent binge-fest that has sadly become normal in today's commercial world, but a series of holy days marking the Advent, the Nativity, the Epiphany of Our Lord, and his presentation to the world at Candlemas. The Twelve Days of Christmas between Christmas day and the visit of the Three Kings on January 6th were especially important and known as Twelfthtide. This was a time outside of ordinary time and we still have a sense of that with holidays from work being taken until the New Year and normal activities suspended as much as possible. As a Christian Order, we have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas in a very similar way to our Medieval Templar forbears.

By the time of the midwinter solstice on about December 21st, daylight hours have decreased to just a few hours a day, and the little Ice Age from the 1100s to 1870 made Winters much colder than today; people generally lived at subsistence level, and yet something truly wonderful was coming! 'Advent' means 'The Coming', and the Christ-Mass was so important to the Medieval Christian world that even living at subsistence level, food would be kept aside for the Christmas feast.



We are told in the Gospel of Luke 2:

8-20 that the first sign that Christmas had arrived was the presence of Angels in the night sky and the great 'Star of Bethlehem' (Matthew 2:2) is being observed already by Magi in far off lands. Today we can brave the cold night and attend Midnight Mass, looking up into a frosty sky at the same stars that the shepherds saw 2,000 years ago. Christmas has begun!

In a Medieval household there won't be a Christmas Tree, but there will be Holly, Ivy and Bay decorating your er....Halls. There won't be a turkey, but there will be a goose, or if you were wealthy, a Boar's Head. King Richard II had Peacock one Christmas. Thanks to the Crusaders we have marzipan and spices, and a hot toddy called 'Lambs Wool Wassail' made with Ale and roasted mashed apples that features as our Medieval Recipe on page six.

The giving of gifts at Christmas time was briefly banned by the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages as being too pagan, but the feast was so popular that the ordinary folk overrode it!

Although the Midwinter solstice has been celebrated for thousands of years by pre-Christian religions, it has been called Christmas since 1038 and going to Church on Christmas Day was obligatory. You would hear very different Carols from today's, but the medieval carols are incredibly beautiful and you can find some of them online. Some of my favourite are 'The Byzantine Carol' (11th century) 'Orientis Partibus'(13th century) 'Verbum Caro Petrus Josephus' (14th century) and my absolute favourite 'Stella Splendens' from the 14th century.

For details of our Order, please visit our website: www.knightstemplar-england.org.uk

Or contact our Secretary at: secretary@knightstemplar-england.org.uk