

THE AMAZING KNIGHTS TEMPLAR
by David Hatcher Childress: Part Two

"On the whole, the Templar fleet was geared towards operation in the Mediterranean - keeping the Holy Land supplied with men and equipment, and importing commodities from the Middle East into Europe. At the same time, the fleet did operate in the Atlantic. Extensive trade was conducted with the British Isles and, very probably, with the Baltic Hanseatic League. Thus communities subordinate to the Templars (called preceptories in Europe), in England and Ireland, were generally located on the coast or on navigable rivers. The primary Atlantic port for the Templars was La Rochelle, which had good communication with Mediterranean ports. Cloth, for example, could be brought from Britain on Templar ships to La Rochelle, transported overland to a Mediterranean port such as Collioure, then loaded aboard Templar ships again and carried to the Holy Land. By this means, it was possible to avoid the always risky passage through the Straits of Gibraltar, usually controlled by the Saracens."³

When the Order was persecuted by Philip IV of France starting in 1307 and culminating in the burning at the stake of Jacques de Molay in 1314, the Knights Templar became an outlawed organization. Philip IV of France persecuted them because of their financial and political power, but to many historians the persecution was part of a continued campaign against early Christian heretics like the Cathars. Indeed, there is a great deal of evidence to show that the Knights Templar and the Cathars were strongly allied.

The Knights Templar were apparently part of a secret movement to restore the Merovingian kings, who had the Holy Blood of Jesus in their veins. The question is, what happened to the Templar fleet after they were outlawed? Traditional history has no answer to this question.

Baigent and Leigh in *The Temple and the Lodge*³ claim that the Templar fleet escaped en masse from the various ports in the Mediterranean and northern Europe and left for a mysterious destination where they could find political asylum and safety. This destination was Scotland.

The Mediterranean fleet had to sail through the dangerous Straits of Gibraltar and then probably stopped at various Portuguese ports that were sympathetic to the Templars such as Almourol castle, near the town of Abrantes. The fortress of Almourol was constructed by Gualdim Pais, Master of the Order of the Templars in 1171.

Baigent and Leigh go on to say that the Templar fleet sailed up the west coast of Ireland to the safe ports in Donegal and Ulster, where Templar properties were located and arms smuggling to Argyll was common.

The Templar fleet then landed in Argyll by sailing to the south of the islands of Islay and Jura into the Sound of Jura where the Templars unloaded men and cargo at the Scottish Templar strongholds of Kilmory, Castle Sweet and Kilmartin.

Robert the Bruce controlled portions of Scotland, but not all of it. Significant portions of the northern and southern Highlands were controlled by clans that were allied with England. Robert the Bruce had been excommunicated by the Pope in 1306, one year before the persecution of the Templars began. Essentially, the papal decree that outlawed the Knights Templar was not applicable in Scotland, or at least the parts that Robert the Bruce controlled.

The turning of the tide for Robert the Bruce, Scotland and the Knights Templar was the famous Battle of Bannockburn which took place on June 24, 1324.

While visiting Scotland I drove out of Edinburgh looking for the site of the Battle of Bannockburn. It is known to have taken place within two and a half miles of Stirling Castle.

On June 24 of 1324, Robert the Bruce of Scotland with approximately 6,000 Scots

miraculously defeated 20,000 English soldiers. Exactly what took place has never really been recorded. It is believed by some that Bruce did it with the help of a special force of Knights Templar. After all, June 24 was also a special day to the Knights Templar; it was St. John's Day.

Say Baigent and Leigh: "Most historians concur that the Scottish army was made up almost entirely of foot soldiers armed with pikes, spears and axes. They also concur that only mounted men in the Scottish ranks carried swords, and that Bruce had few such men..."³

Suddenly in the midst of the battle, with the English forces engaged in a three-to-one combat against the Scottish soldiers, there was a charge from the rear of the Scottish camp.

A fresh force with banners flying rode forth to do battle with the English. The English ranks took one look at the new force and in sheer terror of the new combatants, they literally fled the field, say Baigent and Leigh in *The Temple and the Lodge*, ... "after a day of combat which had left both English and Scottish armies exhausted... Panic swept the English ranks. King Edward, together with 500 of his knights, abruptly fled the field. Demoralized, the English foot-soldiers promptly followed suit, and the withdrawal deteriorated quickly into a full-scale rout, the entire English army abandoning their supplies, their baggage, their money, their gold and silver plate, their arms, armour and equipment. But while the chronicles speak of dreadful slaughter, the recorded English losses do not in fact appear to have been very great. Only one earl is reported killed, only 38 barons and knights. The English collapse appears to have been caused not by the ferocity of the Scottish assault, which they were managing to withstand, but simply by fear."³

In fact, what probably happened was a charge by the remaining forces of Knights Templar against the English army. These crusade veterans were like the Green Berets or Special Forces of the Middle Ages. All combatants suddenly stopped to witness the charging army of Knights Templar, in full regalia with white banners and red cross insignias flying high above the mounted Grail Knights.

The probable strategy behind the Templars' charge into battle would have been to ride through the thick of the battle and attempt to reach King Edward and his personal guards. Once engaged with the commanding officers of the English foe, these seasoned war veterans would have easily defeated King Edward's knights and possibly killed the King himself. As noted, King Edward and his special knights immediately fled upon witnessing the Templar charge.

The 1995 Oscar-winning movie, *Braveheart* concluded by depicting Robert the Bruce and his charge at Bannockburn.

My friend Lionel Fanthorpe back in Wales had told me that I should visit Rosslyn Chapel while I was near Edinburgh, so I headed south from the Bannockburn battle area. It was just about noon when I arrived at Rosslyn Chapel in the Lothian Hills south of Edinburgh.

I parked the car and walked around the small but ornate chapel. It was a Sunday and there was a church service going on inside, so I looked at some of the graves in the cemetery on the west side of the building. When the service finished, a tall, thin man in a tweed sport coat came out of the chapel and stood in the courtyard for a moment.

"Excuse me," I said to him, "but isn't Rosslyn Chapel associated with the Knights Templar?"

"Oh, yes indeed," the man said. "This chapel was built by William St. Clair, Grand Master of the Templars."

We stood there for a moment talking about the chapel and the Knights Templar, when he told me he had written several books on Rosslyn, the Knights Templar, the Holy Grail and the Spear of Destiny. "I co-wrote *Mark of the Beast* with Trevor Ravenscroft," he said, "plus these other books for sale at the chapel gift shop."

"I've read *The Mark of the Beast*," I said. "Are you Tim Wallace-Murphy?"

"Indeed I am," he acknowledged, a bit surprised that I knew who he was and had read one of his books.

"It's a pleasure to meet you," I said, and we talked a bit about the Battle of Bannockburn, since I had just come from the area of the battle field. "The charge of the Knights Templar at Bannockburn must have been quite a sight," I said. "Were any of the knights killed?"

"No, not a one," he said. "The English fled in total fear of the seasoned warriors. Not even one Knights Templar was killed."

"Well, that's the kind of statistic I like," I said. Privately, I wondered if this battle was the reciprocal battle to the last stand of the Cathars at Montsegur. At Montsegur everyone had been killed; at Bannockburn the Grail Knights had triumphed and not a man was lost.

Dr. Tim Wallace-Murphy took me into the gift shop where he showed me his other books on Rosslyn Chapel and its history. He also told me the story of Rosslyn, which is connected to the Orkneys and the taking of the Holy Grail to North America.

The builder of Rosslyn Chapel, William St. Clair, was the last Sinclair 'Jarl' of Orkney, who lived in the middle of the fifteenth century. Master Earl William, the 'Jarldom of Orkney' passed from the family to the Scottish crown as part of the dowry of Margaret of Denmark on to her marriage to King James III of Scotland. William was not only the grandson of Prince Henry and the last Jarl of the Orkneys, he also had the somewhat peculiar title of Knight of the Cockle and the Golden Fleece.

As Dr. Wallace-Murphy points out in his book, *The Templar Legacy & the Masonic Inheritance within Rosslyn Chapel*,¹³ Sir William St. Clair was a member of a secret group that preserved important knowledge concerning the Holy Grail, the Holy Blood of the Merovingian kings, and the destiny of the new continent across the Atlantic. Wallace-Murphy speculates that the Knights of the Cockle and the Golden Fleece was the current Grail Order of which Sinclair was possibly Grand Master.

Clearly, the Knights Templar saw themselves as the inheritors of ancient knowledge that went back to Atlantis. They struggled for hundreds of years against the Vatican and the reign of terror known as the Inquisition. To the Templars, the true church, one that taught mysticism, reincarnation and good works, was being suppressed by a dark power that called itself the one true faith. Oppression of these other faiths was done with the familiar devices of torture, terror and extermination.

Did the Templars seek to rediscover and recreate Atlantis in America? Henry Sinclair of Orkney had risked all to make his voyages across the North Atlantic. Had he taken the Holy Grail and possibly even the Ark of the Covenant to America? Had these sacred relics helped spur on the creation of the United States, a land which Masonic founding fathers like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were to create partially on the Templar ideals of religious freedom?

According to Templar historians like Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Andrew Sinclair and Tim Wallace-Murphy, the Knights Templar had helped create an independent Scotland, then a "New Scotland" and finally an independent United States.

The Present Day Knights?

What of the Knights Templar today? While Masonry apparently sprang from the Templars, are there other surviving groups?

The "Knights Templar of Aquarius" existed in the 1940s and 50s in England, based in Canfield Gardens, London, and the Island of Jersey. The head of the order was an Englishman named H.C. Randall-Stevens. Randall-Stevens wrote several curious books, including one entitled *The Chronicles of Osiris*, and another entitled *Atlantis to the Latter Days*,²⁰ which was published in 1954. In this rare book Randall-Stevens discusses various topics including Atlantis, the Great Pyramid,

King Solomon's Temple and the Knights Templar.

Recent conspiracy literature has painted a dark portrait of modern day Masons, often putting the blame of an Orwellian nightmare New World Order squarely on the shoulders of a Masonic conspiracy. Murderous renegade Masonic groups like the infamous P-2 organization in Italy have made world headlines. The fact that many influential businessmen are also Masons is also seen as part of the exclusive club of the puppet-masters.

My own opinion is that, while the Masons were a powerful political group 200 years ago, their significance in modern power struggles is probably overrated. Furthermore, their doctrines are highly misunderstood, especially by fundamentalist Christians.

Knights Templar of their day, and the Revolutionary War Masons of their day, were free-thinkers who rebelled against any artificial thought controls or economic controls forced upon them by the controllers. The Knights Templar lost their final battle and escaped en masse to Scotland and possibly the New World. The Revolutionary War Masons of British/Scottish descent and the Rosicrucians of German and Dutch descent succeeded in defeating the British Crown and fending off encroachment from the Vatican (in the form of royal Spain) at the same time.

Power struggles, between religious, racial and political factions have occurred since the beginning of history. History records that the Knights Templar, and later the Masons, stood for philosophical and political freedom. It is difficult to believe that the founding fathers of America, virtually all members of secret societies linked to the Knights Templar, were trying to set up a nation that was meant to be led into a New World Order police state. Rather, they were attempting to set up a nation with special safeguards against such a possibility. The checks and balances, guarantees of freedoms and inalienable rights are part of the plan for a true "Nation Under God" - a utopian society where all citizens live in peace and freedom.

Yet, let us not be fooled. There is Christ and there is the Anti-Christ. There is the Buddha and there is the Anti-Buddha, and there is the Novus Ordo Seclorum, and there is the Anti-Novus Ordo Seclorum. All prophecies remind us that a golden age once existed in the past, and a new golden age is soon to come in the future. What shall we call this new era of light?

According to arcane lore, from many prophets as well as the Templars, earth changes will destroy many lands, including Europe, while new lands will rise in the Atlantic and Pacific. New countries, created by new pioneers, will settle these new lands. These same people will be escaping the devastation happening in their own countries. Perhaps the new golden age is still to come, occurring on a land that is not yet present.

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This article is extracted from the Introduction to the recently reprinted 1852 book *The History of the Knights Templar*, by Charles G. Addison.