

THE ORDER STILL LIVES

The fate of the Order of the Temple will always be a matter of dispute. What has survived is the Templar legend. They have always been portrayed as heroic Christian warriors fighting against evil and alien forces. As we are aware and know, Jacques de Molay cursed the French king and the Pope shortly before he was burned at the stake. Since his curse was against dictatorial authority people, it was resurrected at the time of the French Revolution. When the people rebelled against their overlords, they put King Louis XVI to death. This was seen by many as the fulfillment of de Molay's curse. Louis was the last king to rule over France.

Elsewhere in Europe, where many Templars escaped persecution, the Order adjusted its position. The Portuguese Templars simply changed their name. They became the Knight of Christ, who later became famous for their explorations in Africa and the West Indies. The famous King Henry the Navigator was a known Grand Master of the Order, and explorers like Vasco da Gama were members. Christopher Columbus' father-in-law was a Grand Master, and Columbus sailed across the Atlantic with the familiar Templar cross emblazoned on his sails. The Order of Christ survived until the 1830's. Similarly in Germany, Spain and other parts of Europe where the Templar purge was less severe, there is plenty of evidence that they just joined other Orders, the Hospitalers or Teutonic Knights in Germany, or one of the local military Orders in Spain.

More mysterious is the fate of the English, Scottish and Irish Templars. A good case has been made that a great many of them fled north to Scotland. The Scottish king, Robert the Bruce, was especially lenient towards the Templars and never formally dissolved the Scottish Temple at all. He was also in desperate need of skilled knights for his campaign against the English.

But if Scotland was the final destination of these knights, along with their fleet and possibly their treasures, what became of them? No doubt over the years some of them simply forgot their chivalric past. Others however may have helped to found Freemasonry. That semi-secret organization, which permeates society at all levels today, explicitly acknowledges a lineage stretching back to the Knight Templars. Scotland was one of the places where a particular kind of Masonry--- Templar in its rites and rituals; mystical in its orientation---first arose and flourished.

The Freemasons were not founded until the middle of the 17th century. But at the end of the 16th century, there were still over 500 locations in Scotland registered as Templar property. It looks as though the Templars and the Hospitallers merged in Scotland. And we know for certain that the Hospitallers survived, because they are still with us today as the Knights of Malta and St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

Apart from the Freemasons, there is one other mysterious organization that should be mentioned: the Priere de Sion. This French based cabal is investigated in the explosive best seller "The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail".

The authors claim that this organization, which undoubtedly exists, has a long history stretching back before the establishment of the Templars, as part of the ongoing aim to restore an ancient line of French kings known as the Merovingian dynasty. And this dynasty is claimed to have an astonishing lineage, its members are said to be descended directly from Jesus Christ himself.

The book published in 1982, offered new evidence to make this scenario plausible. This evidence was discovered in ancient documents they discovered in a French library vault which they claimed the authorities tried hard to prevent them finding.

Jesus they claim may not have died on the cross at all. Instead he survived; married Mary Magdalene and the couple had children. And from Jesus children the Merovigiam Kings-- and through them of other European royal families were descended.

No less astonishing was a claim that former heads of the Order of Sion included the famous British scientists Robert Boyle and Sir Isaac Newton, French writers Victor Hugo and Jean Cocteau, Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci, and a host of other distinguished Europeans.

Any Templar survival down to our own day would not be as direct as the survival of the Hospitallers, but it is still possible that there are people alive today who are in possession of the Templars heritage and secret traditions. They do not go around in knightly armour. They look no different than anyone else. They may be Masons. Or they may belong to some more esoteric lodge meeting perhaps once a month to practice magical rituals. Perhaps they are waiting a time when Christendom again needs defending from an alien threat.

What of their treasures? Do they still exist somewhere or has it been used up? Was it in fact a real treasure--money,--valuables--or was it merely a metaphorical treasure? Is it a great secret of some kind?

Perhaps it was a real treasure. It has been buried and lost, awaiting accidental discovery by a metal detector. Or perhaps it lies deep in the vaults of a secretive Swiss bank, waiting to be put to use when the time comes.

The real truth about the now legendary Knights Templar will probably remain forever as one of life's great mysteries.