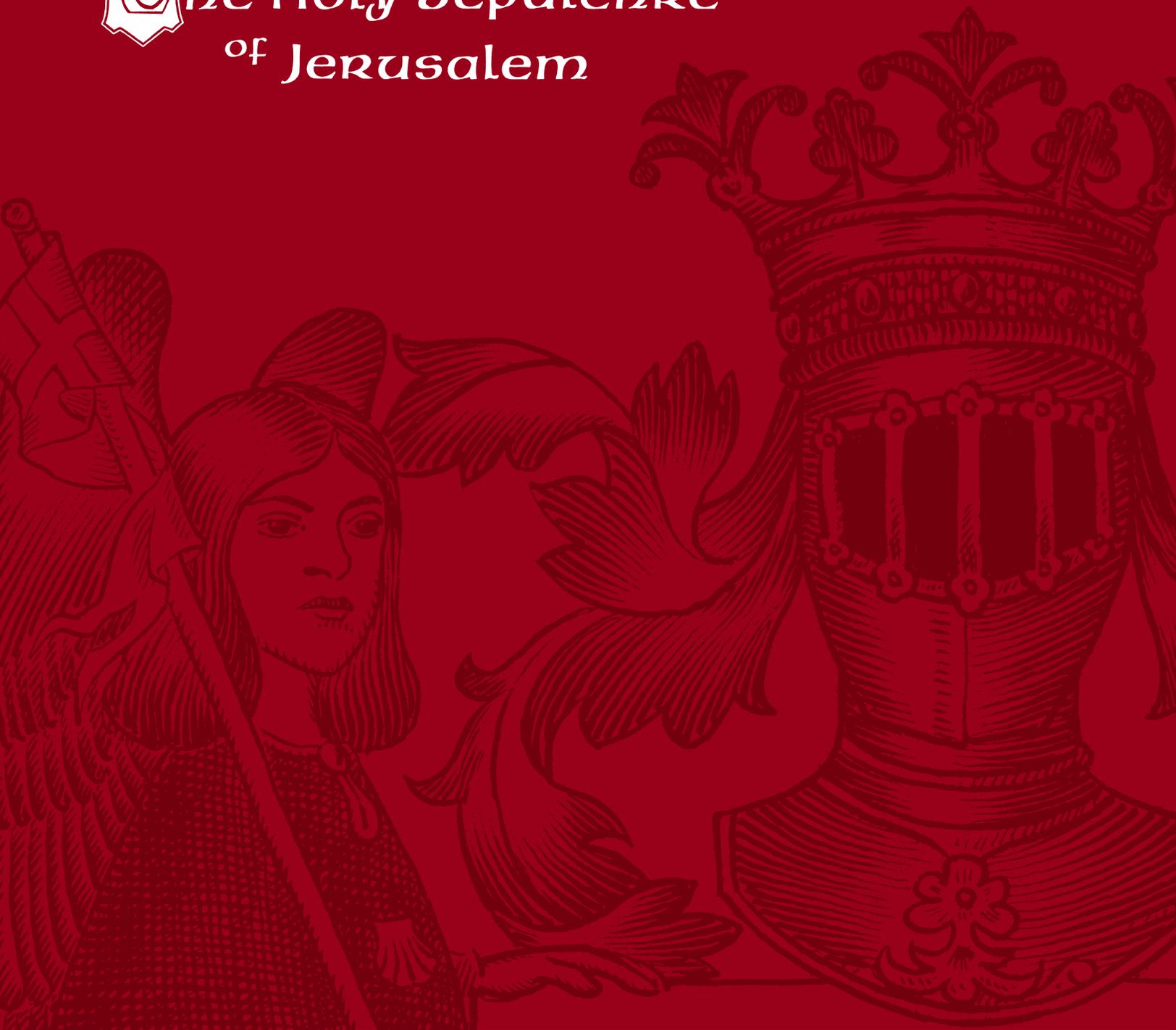


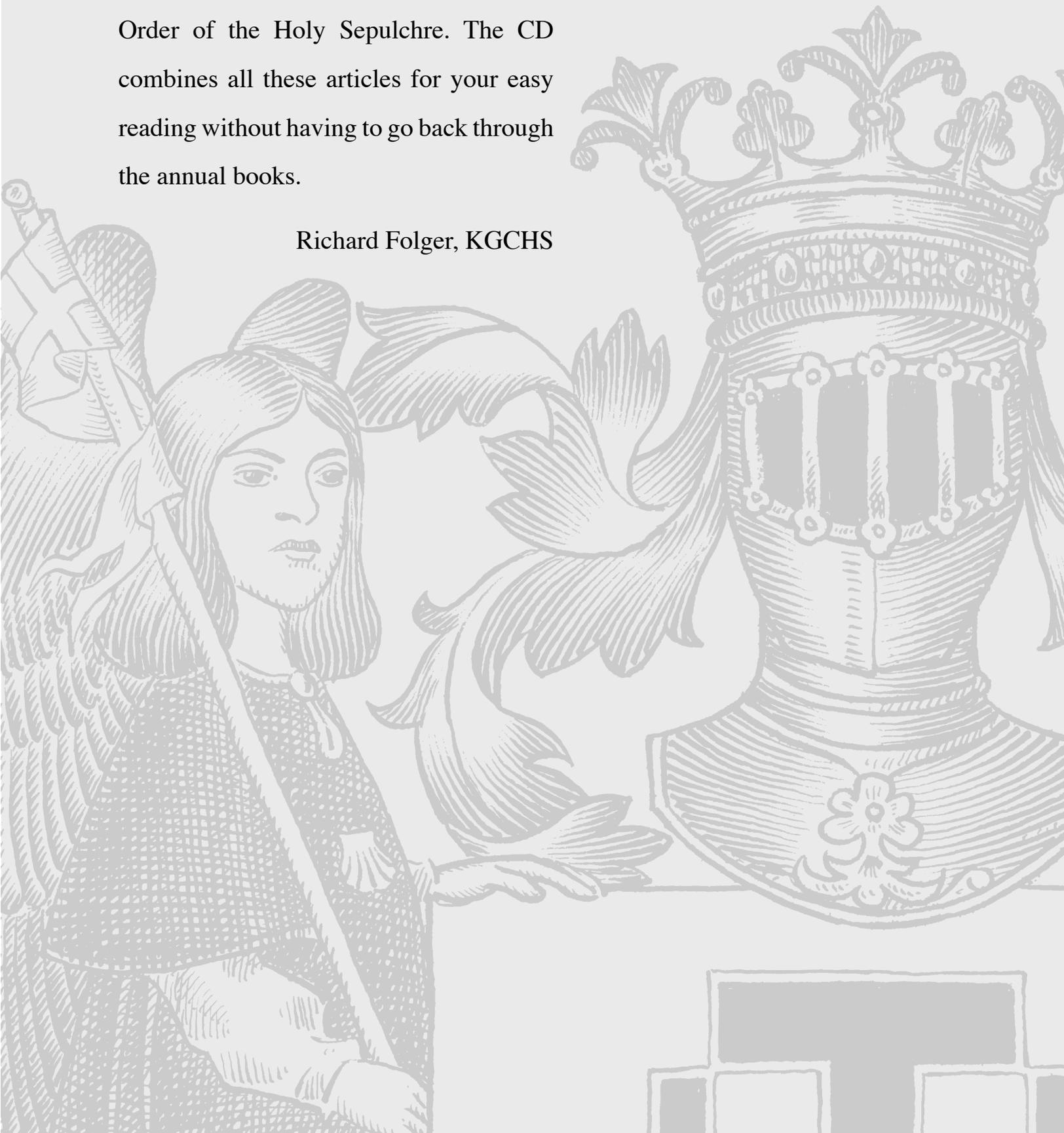
The
Equestrian Order of
The Holy Sepulchre
of Jerusalem



The History of The Order

During the last five years we have tried to bring to your attention the most outstanding articles on the history and purpose of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. The CD combines all these articles for your easy reading without having to go back through the annual books.

Richard Folger, KGCHS



THE ORIGIN OF THE ORDER

*Many of you have heard numerous different theories about when and how the Order of the Holy Sepulchre began, therefore I am extracting a complete chapter dealing with the history of the order from the book, *The Cross on the Sword* by Michael H. Abrahm D'Assemani. The author was the first lieutenant of the American Chapter of the Holy Sepulchre organized in 1926. He spent many years in the Middle East, was an honorary member of the Imperial Geographical Society of Persia and the official representative in America of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. I think the reading of this chapter will clear up a lot of questions regarding our order.*

—Richard Folger, KGCHS

Chapter V

Who founded the Order of the Holy Sepulchre? When was the Order founded? Should the honor go to Saint James the Less, called the Just, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, who could be considered a guardian and defender of the Tomb of Our Lord? Was the nucleus of the Knighthood in the association formed by Saint Helena to watch the Tomb by day and by night? Did Emperor Charlemagne found the Order?

Positive evidence is not to be had to prove that Charlemagne, the restorer of the Holy Roman Empire, founded the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. However, he did establish an Order of the Crown of Charlemagne, and many of his tenets were later adopted and observed by the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. Moreover, during his stay in Rome in 800, in the presence of Pope Leo III he received the representatives of the Patriarch of Jerusalem who delivered to him the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, of the Hill of Calvary, of the Holy City, and also a banner to testify to his suzerainty.

I

Abbot Bernard Giustiniani¹ wrote in 1692:

“Saint James, Apostle and bishop of Jerusalem, in the sixty-third year after the death of Christ (the ninety-sixth year after His Nativity), established this Order to guard the Holy Sepulchre of the Savior, and rallied a number of knights under the standard of the Cross.

“Some writers are of another opinion. Namely, that this Order of the Holy Sepulchre traces the beginning of its existence to the time when Godfrey of Bouillon set out to wrest the Holy City from the shameful occupation of the infidels. And it was under the auspices of Charlemagne (so they say) who reformed its statutes, that the knights of this Order took up arms. Against this opinion stands the chronology of the reigns of Charlemagne and Godfrey. The former ruled from 768 to 816, while Godfrey reigned in 1099. This is too great an interval to permit such a linking of events.

“The last variant opinion places the origin and institution of this Order about the year 1110, during the reign of Baldwin, brother of Godfrey the Great, glorious King of Jerusalem.

“While so many opinions exist as to their origin, all agree as to the insignia of these knights. This was worn on the breast and consisted of a red cross on a white background, with four smaller crosses placed one at each corner. The same device was worn on the arm and worked into the battle flag.

“It was not without significance that this form of cross was decided upon. According to the opinion of some, it represents the five wounds of our Savior from which, as from so many precious fountains, flows the stream of salvation for the human race. Others maintain that the four corners of the world are represented, to which the knights must travel for the honor of the cross depicted in the middle, preaching its discovery.

“These knights followed the rule of Saint Basil the Great. They made vows of conjugal chastity and of obedience; they pledged themselves to the defense of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Christian Faith, as well as to the protection of those who traveled through the territory of the Saracens in order to visit the Holy Sepulchre; they promised also to beg alms throughout the whole world to be used in the ransom of Christians, led into slavery by the Turks.

“Approbation of this Order was granted by his Holiness Pope Innocent III. However, because of the invasion of Jerusalem and the dispersal effected by enemies of the Catholics in the neighboring provinces, few of this Order persevered and these few betook themselves to the town of Perugia, in Italy. In order that further disruption might not follow, these knights still surviving were united, together with their possessions, privileges, and the right of immunity, which they enjoyed, with the Knights of Saint John of Malta. This was effected by Innocent VIII, but did not apply outside the confines of Italy as shall be seen in the course of this chapter.

“Apparently, Francis Mennenio is more scholarly than other authors in his manner of treating the origin and fortunes of this Order. He does not exclude the opinion of those who trace its origin to Saint James, Bishop of Jerusalem. He himself is inclined rather to believe that the Order owes its existence to the blessed and beneficent goodness of Constantine the Great. And

that this man, after having founded the Royal Order of Saint George and after the discovery of the Holy Cross of the Redeemer of the world, thanks to the efforts of the Empress Helena, his mother, intended to commemorate this magnificent discovery by the establishment of this Order. Hence it came about that Saint Helena, thrilled at such a noble foundation, at once dug deep into her treasury to provide for the erection of churches and other memorials in honor of our Savior...

“Don Giuseppe de Michieli subscribes to this opinion in his chapter of this Order, wherein he records the testimony of others.²

“In the memoirs preserved by the Crusaders of the Red Cross in Bohemia, they themselves stemming from this Order, the tradition of its origin is identical.³

“Listing the miracles wrought by the cross at that time, and recording the preaching of the saintly pastors to the people on the subject of the cross, the memoirs add the following:⁴

““This Order enjoyed a marvelous growth in the early centuries and also in the following centuries, preserving among its other prerogatives, that of standing guard at the Holy Sepulchre. But with the advent of Saracen barbarism in the east, this Order of knights suffered a severe setback. When tidings of their reverses, as well as of quarrels among the other Christians, reached the ears of Charlemagne, restorer of the empire in the west, he took steps to reestablish peace with their enemies. He held a conference with Haroun, King of the Saracens, in which freedom of divine worship according to the Catholic Rite was guaranteed the knights and all Christians, even under the reign of his royal successors.

““It was on this occasion, Mennenio thinks, that the Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre was restored by Charlemagne. Furthermore, its statutes were fixed by him, and later confirmed and renewed by the various kings and princes of French blood, and by Godfrey of Bouillon and Baldwin, his brother. The first few (of these rulers) when they assumed the crown, made a solemn vow to God to organize a crusade to overthrow the Saracen horde, and to recover the sacred kingdom of Jerusalem. In proof of this the author cites the revised statutes of 1099 which were preserved in the archives of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. We give here a summary of the principal ones, referring interested readers to page 197 of Mennenio’s work for the others; this we do so that the present chapter may not prove boring.

““

““Art.I. In the name of and to the honor of God, Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost; of the blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother; of the angels and archangels, patriarchs

and prophets of God, of the apostles, evangelists, disciples and all saints; as well as of all blessed in heaven.

““Art.II. Be it known and clear to all venerable and illustrious princes, nobles, military and all Christians, that in this year of Our Lord 1099, the illustrious, victorious and exalted leaders Saint Charlemagne, Emperor and King of all France; Louis VI, the Wise, also called the Pious; Philip, called the Wise, Magnanimous, and the Conqueror; Louis, the Holy and Magnanimous, the commander, Godfrey of Bouillon and other venerable kings and rules of Christendom, after having assumed power in their empire or realm, have freely offered themselves to God, pledging their own persons and goods to combat and to carry on war across the sea to the end that they may subjugate and destroy the ignoble and tyrannical nation of Saracen infidels, and to subject to their own power and authority the Kingdom of Jerusalem with its strengthening of the Christian Faith. They have also pledged themselves to the protection and defense of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and of other Christian churches against all attacks and persecutions; as also the protection and tutelage of the prelates of the church, of the poor, the orphans, the widows and other Christians against all enemies.

““Art.III. Be it also known that we, the above-named, have fulfilled our pledges in regard to these matters; we have by our efforts and diligence, and by the favor of God, obtained the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Saracen possessions, winning notable victories over them and furthering the Christian religion. Wherefore the name of most Christian Ruler was rightly bestowed on us, and deservedly conceded by other princes and by the Christians. Then we returned joyfully to our kingdom of France and to our territories and dominions, and to the other realms whose Christian rulers were most friendly toward us, helping us with men and money to discharge our vows and accomplish what we had set out to do. Wherefore, as reason itself dictates, that too shared in the honor which we enjoyed.

““Art.IV. Moreover, in honor of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and out of the reverence and obedience we owe to the Holy See, to His Holiness, the Pope, God’s vicar on earth, as well as to the bishops, we accepted in the city of Rome the holy crosses with which they signed us and our soldiers in memory of the five wounds of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. This in order that we might be strengthened the more against these infidels, and that we might recognize our own members and the Christians, whether living or dead, in the territories of these infidels.

““Furthermore, we took under consideration and decided to establish the Order of the Most Holy Sepulchre in the city of Jerusalem, to the honor and glory

of the Resurrection. And to our name of most Christian Emperor, we added the grand mastery of this Order. We desire that the knights of this Order wear the five red crosses in honor of the five wounds inflicted on our Lord Jesus Christ. We created many knights, signed them with these crosses against the infidels...

“.....

“These things were agreed upon and promulgated by us in the city of Jerusalem, the first day of January, 1099.”

“.....

“If we were to give full credence to these statements, it would undermine the authority of those historians who place the founding of this Order at a much earlier date. Hence there arises in the mind of the writer a very good reason for doubting the authenticity of these statutes, in view of the historical implications which cannot be reconciled.

“In the first place it is incomprehensible how they can say that they are founding this Order in the year 1099, when earlier they maintain that the statues and laws were fixed by the Emperor Charlemagne, whose reign as we saw above extended from 801 to 815. If he established the laws and if he was, as it is asserted, prince and grand master of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, the Order must necessarily have been in existence at that time. And if it did already exist, then they cannot say that it was founded in 1099. The second contradiction appears in the second article, where, listing the princes who were the authors of these statutes (supposed to have been drawn in Jerusalem), they place Louis VI, King of France, after Charlemagne in the title. Now in no history will you find that he ever visited Jerusalem. Louis VII, his son, did however, not in 1099, but in 1145. They also name Philip, King of France, and son of Louis VII, but he did not visit the Holy Land until 1189. The third mistake, and this still more inexcusable, is that in the article mentioned Saint Louis, King of France, is named; whereas it wasn't until 1215 that he was born (the twenty-fifth of April according to the genealogies of Albizzi and Retterschucio) that is, one hundred and sixteen years after said articles were drawn up! Consequently, he couldn't possibly have been in Jerusalem to sign the statutes of 1099...

“.....

“With such evident contradictions, the statutes cannot be regarded as authentic. Of Mennenio, who is certainly a trustworthy historian, cites these statutes, he does not accept their observations as facts, for he must surely have recognized how improbable they were. The evidences are of antiquity attributing the origin to Constantine the Great, or to the holy Empress, his mother, are practically incontrovertible since they are so patent...

“The sovereign powers of the grand mastery of this

Order were bound inseparably to the empire from the time of Godfrey and Baldwin and were handed down to the royal successors. The father guardians of the Holy Sepulchre (of the Franciscan Order), named knights to this Order by permission of the Holy See, but this purely honorary. It has been said that supreme power (in the Order) was inseparable from the authority of the empire of Jerusalem. This is demonstrated by the insignia of the latter, identical with that of the knights save that gold was substituted for red. We know from historical writings, however, that Godfrey, in his battle flags which displayed the likeness of his crown of Jerusalem, preserved the five crosses depicted in red; so, too, did his successors. And as this Equestrian Order was founded in that empire, it would seem that the former is inseparably united with the realm and to its sovereignty, the symbol of the five crosses being common both to the Order and to the empire.

“The prince pretenders manifestly prove that the dignity of the grand mastery is identical with the powers of the empire of the Holy Land, for in their arms and emblems they insert the five crosses to lend weight as it were to their pretensions toward the crown of Jerusalem.”

After the din and battle died down upon their capture of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099, the Crusaders gave their first thought to an organization that should permanently guard and protect the Holy Sepulchre. Godfrey of Bouillon gathered his stout warriors for the purpose of organizing a religious-military Order.

The establishment of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem can be placed between the fall of Jerusalem, on July 15, 1099, and August 12, 1099. It must have been formally organized and instituted between the aforesaid dates and before August 12, 1099, for on that day a group of Knights, wearing the insignia of the Order for the first time, took part in the hard fought battle of Ascalon, Godfrey their leader. Although greatly outnumbered, the new Knights attacked with such fury and determination that they put the Mohammedan enemy to flight after the first encounter.

These first Knights were called *Milites Sancti Sepulcri* and were chosen from among the bravest and most valiant of the noble Christian warriors. Accustomed to the pursuit of arms, they took the oath to guard and protect the Holy Sepulchre; religious, priests and friars celebrated Mass or offered prayers constantly at the Tomb, as Canons of the Holy Sepulchre. The Knights having adopted the Rule of Saint Augustine for their communal life lived the same as the canons.

Before Godfrey's death, he not only gave the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre their first statutes in the adoption of the Rule of Saint Augustine, but he also gave them lands and fortified places.⁵

II

The Order, then, had its beginning at the time of the First Crusade. The founder was Godfrey of Bouillon, the uncrowned king of Jerusalem. His Knights were the guardians of the Tomb.

Other Knights had assignments. Their posts gave them their titles. For example, those ordered to live near the Temple were called Knights Templar. At first they were not a military Order. They followed the austere rule of the Cistercians, their habit white, to which a cross had been added.

The care of lepers was entrusted to the Knight of St. Lazarus or the Lazarists who lived a severe life under an adopted rule of St. Basil. The cross of their habit was green with eight points.

The volunteers for hospital labor — the caring for the sick, the poor and strangers in Jerusalem — were called Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. Their habit had a black mantle with a white cross, and their rule was that of St. Augustine. Later, after the Christians were driven from Palestine, they were known as the Knights of Rhodes; still later, as the Knights of Malta; and finally, their present name, as the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

According to Alphonse Courret:

“The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is born spontaneously out of the devotion to the Tomb of Christ, the struggle against the forces of Islamism, the militant piety of western knights, and the guard of honor around the Holy Sepulchre instituted by the Latin Kings of Jerusalem.”⁶

Sir Bernard Burke, in writing about the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, says:

“This Order may justly rival in antiquity that of St. Lazarus, credible authors dating its origin as early as the year 69, when St. James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, entrusted the guardianship of the Holy Sepulchre to a number of men, distinguished for piety and high birth. Some writers, however, consider that it originated with the Canons regular, whom St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, introduced into her new Church of Mount Calvary; while others again assert that the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre arose in the time of Godfrey de Bouillon, or his successor Baldwin, and that by the latter the Patriarch of Jerusalem was nominated first grand Master...”

“The Grand Mastership and the right of nominating Knights were originally vested in the Holy See, though the Pope ceded subsequently those rights to the Guardian Father of the sacred tomb. Noble descent was one of the

conditions of the reception. The duties of the Knights were to hear mass daily; combat, live and die for the Christian religion; to procure substitutes in the war with the infidels in case their own presence should be prevented by unavoidable circumstances, to grant protection to the servants of the Church; to prevent all sorts of unjust feuds, quarrels, disputes, and usury; to favour peace amongst the Christians; protect widows and orphans; to abstain from swearing and cursing; and to guard carefully against intemperance, lewdness, etc., etc. These heavy and severe duties were amply compensated for by the extraordinary privileges granted to the Knights. Among those privileges was the right conceded to members of the Order to legitimize, change their names, grant escutcheons, possess church property though married, to be exempt from taxes on salt, wine, beer...”⁷

In the year 1928 further data on the Order of the Holy Sepulchre were given the world by Count Michael de Pierredon, Minister Plenipotentiary and Bailli of the Sovereign Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem and a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, in his book entitled *The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem*:

“Almost all of the orders that witnessed the birth of the great epoch of the Crusaders have lost some of their usefulness and importance; but amongst those ancient and venerable orders there is one still engaged in the relief of misfortune and has become in some manner patrimonial for humanity. The Crusades have ceased to exist but misfortune and poverty shall always dwell on the earth and the charitable institution which devotes itself to such work, merits the kind protection of kings. It is thus that Father Lacombe de Cruzet wrote to Louis XVIII recommending to him the French Confraternity of the Holy Sepulchre, and even so, the same situation exists today concerning the Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Its history comes down through the corridors of time for nearly one thousand years. The state of the world today is somewhat different from that era in which the brave and noble Knights of the Cross lived; the Holy Sepulchre itself and the Holy Land are not demanding to be conquered, and yet the work of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre is not finished, the Christ, Jesus, still needs them as formerly.

“The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is the synthesis of the old Knighthood such as it existed in the Golden Age because, by its investiture, its aims and origin, united with the rites of the ancient Knighthood, the aspirations which formed it are at the base of that institution at the time of the Crusaders.”⁸

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE GRAND MASTERS OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

Historians list thirty-four crowned heads in hereditary succession as Grand Masters of the Military Order of the Holy Sepulchre, reaching to Charles II, King of Spain, Naples and Sicily (1625-1700), as follows:⁹

1. 1099 Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine and first King of Jerusalem.
2. 1100 Baldwin I, his brother.
3. 1118 Baldwin II.
4. 1134 Fulck of Anjou.
5. 1143 Baldwin III.
6. 1162 Amaury I.
7. 1173 Baldwin IV.
8. 1183 Baldwin V, son of Marquis William of Montferrat and of Sibylla, daughter of Amaury I.
9. 1184 Sibylla alone.
10. 1186 Guy of Lusignan.
11. 1188 Henry, Count of Champagne, assumed the grand mastery because of his wife, Isabella, daughter of Amaury I, and Henry was chosen King of Jerusalem in 1192.
12. 1195 John, Earl of Brienne.
13. 1208 Frederick II, German Roman Emperor.
14. 1250 Conrad, son of Frederick II.
15. 1252 Manfred, called the Tyrant and Usurper, son of Emperor Frederick II.
16. 1265 Charles of Anjou was named grand master by Pope Honorius III.
17. 1285 Charles II, his son.
18. 1309 Robert the Good and Wise, his oldest son, while the first born, Charles I, ascended the throne of Hungary, and the second oldest, Louis, became Bishop of Toulouse.
19. 1342 Joanna I, daughter of Robert, conferred the mastery on Louis, Prince of Taranto and brother of Robert, after having taken it from her husband Andrew (whom she had hanged); then she conferred it on James of Aragon and finally on Otto d'Este, duke of Brunswick.
20. 1382 Charles II, Duke of Durazzo.
21. 1386 Ladislaus, his son.
22. 1414 Joanna II ruled in the person of her husband James of Narbonne.
23. 1438 Various masters for the space of four years between Rene of Anjou and Alphonse of Aragon.
24. 1442 Alphonse V, the Wise, King of Aragon and Sicily, was confirmed master by the Pope.
25. 1458 Ferdinand, his son, succeeded him after a great deal of controversy with members of the house of Anjou.
26. 1493 Alphonse II, Duke of Calabria, his son.
27. 1494 Ferdinand, his son.
28. 1495 Frederick, uncle of Ferdinand.
29. 1501 Ferdinand II on taking over the Kingdom of Naples assumed the grand mastery.
30. 1516 Charles of Habsburg.
31. 1555 Philip II, his son.
32. 1598 Philip III, King of Spain.
33. 1621 Philip IV, King of Spain.
34. 1667 Charles II, King of Spain.

One must never confuse our Roman Catholic Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem with that of the Greek Orthodox Order of the Holy Sepulchre. There is nothing in common between the two nor any connection whatsoever. Of course Roman Catholics should seek membership in their own approved Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

It is claimed without any proof or acceptable evidence that the Greek Orthodox Order of the Holy Sepulchre was founded by the Emperor Constantine the Great in the year 312 A.D.; but, on the basis of statements by authoritative writers, this we can dismiss as fanciful imagination. Emperor Constantine the Great founded no such Order. Though the Greek Orthodox Patriarch claims the right to the Grand Mastership of it since 1453, only in the last few centuries was anything heard of the existence or activities of a Greek Orthodox Order.

- ¹ Bernardo Giustiniani *Historie Cronologiche dell'origine degli Ordini militari e di tutte Le religioni cavalleresche, &c.* Venezia 1692.
- ² "Some say that it owes its origin to the Emperor Constantine and Saint Helena, his mother, at the time of the invention of the Cross of Christ. She, after having found it, gave orders for the erection of magnificent churches, consecrating them to the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- ³ "The Order of Crusaders was founded by the Empress Saint Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great, after the invention and identification of the Cross of Our Savior on Mount Calvary — the year 326 after Christ's Nativity."
- ⁴ "The significance of this Cross was preached; the people were inspired by these words and some members of Helena's court, marvelling at the power of the Cross of christ, humbly asked the benefit of such powers in their own behalf... Consequently, they received of Saint Helena some sort of society whose members greeted each other with the sign of the cross. And while this society was still in its infancy, the Bishop of Jerusalem in the year 365 so perfected its laws that before long the society of Signers-of-the-Cross and of the Soldiers of Christ spread rapidly in various countries and provinces. And since Saint Helena had bountifully provided this community of Crusaders with numerous gifts, distributing them with seemingly endless resources at hand, providing for erection of hospitals and other buildings, it was her wish that the society should assume a more definite character. She appointed some of those signed with the Cross to the militia, others to carry out the sacred rites, and still others to minister to the poor, or to the ailing members among the military who were returning home."
- ⁵ G.P.R. James: *History of Chivalry and the Crusades.*
- ⁶ Alphonse Couret: *L'Ordre du Saint-Sepulchre de Jerusalem depuis ses origines Jusqu'a Nos Jours.* Orleans, 1887.
- ⁷ Sir Bernard Burke: *The book of Orders of Knighthood and Decorations of Honour of All Nations.* London, 1858.
- ⁸ Michael de Pierredon: *The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem,* 1928.
- ⁹ Bernardo Giustiniani: *Historic Cronologiche dell'origine degli Ordini militari, e di tutte Le religioni cavalleresche,* Venezia 1692.

In our 1999 book we reprinted a chapter from *The Cross on the Sword* by Michael H. Abraham D'Assemani called the Origin of the Order. This chapter started with the Godfrey of Bouillon, the first Grand Master and continued through 1667 with Charles II, King of Spain. From the very beginning the popes have played an equally important role in the life of our order and so we thought it important to show how protective and caring they have been to us over the centuries by extracting the following chapter from the same book.

-Richard Folger KGCHS

CHAPTER VIII

THE BENEVOLENCE OF THE HOLY SEE

I

THE POPES AND THE ORDER

The matter of antiquity looms large in the controversy between the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, otherwise known as the Order of Malta, each claiming priority in this regard. In order that we may better understand the situation, the facts are presented.

As Early as 1125, Pope Honorius confirmed the grants made to the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem by the Kings and Patriarchs of Jerusalem and called upon its members for support and aid in fighting the infidels. Pope Celestine II, in his Bull of January 10, 1144, ratified again the gifts made to the Order and granted to it and all its members special honors, pre-emptions, and privileges.¹

Popes Innocent II in 1130, Celestine II in 1144, and Eugene II in 1148 called upon and received the fullest cooperation from the Order and its members in their fight against the hordes of Islam.²

The famous Bull of Pope Innocent VIII (1484 - 1492) of March 28, 1489, *cum solerti meditatione*, gave rain, from obedience to the Order of Malta. By virtue of the aforementioned Bull, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem was formally united to that of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, originally known as Knights of Rhodes and subsequently of Malta.

This union was limited to Italy. The Knighthood of the Holy Sepulchre continued to flourish independently in Flanders, France, Germany, Spain, and elsewhere. It is to be observed that this amalgamation was an economical one, viz.: the possession of the Order, not the incorporation of the Order into the Order.³ Moreover, the amalgamation was not the creation of a new Order.

In 1496, Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503), who was a Franciscan, reserved to himself and his successors the title and the office of Supreme Head of the Order, but granted to the Custodian of the Holy Sepulchre the faculty of naming Knights.

At a later date Pope Leo X (1513-1521), acquiescing to the entreaty of King Ferdinand the Catholic, freed the Priorate of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of

Calatayud, Spain, from obedience to the Order of Malta.

Pope Urban VIII (1623 - 1644), in 1642, specified the qualities required of the new Knights and added strict instructions to the Guardian of the Holy Land; "The military habit of the Most Holy Sepulchre is not to be given indiscriminately, but solely to noble persons on the judgement of the Father Guardian."

In 1665 Pope Alexander VII (1655 - 1667) confirmed the instructions of Pope Alexander VI. Pope Clement XI (1700 - 1721), in 1708, confirmed the privilege of the Custodian to confer the Knighthood. Pope Benedict XIII (1724 - 1730) likewise confirmed the privilege. In 1746, Pope Benedict XIV (1740 - 1758) revised the rules of the Order, fixed the ceremonial by which the Custodian should be guided in bestowing the Knighthood, and imposed a tax on the Knights to help in the upkeep of the Holy Land.

Pope Pius IX (1846 - 1878), when he restored the Patriarchal See of Jerusalem, placed the Order under the jurisdiction of the Latin Patriarch with the right to bestow Knighthood, and at the same time withdrew that right from the Custodian. Further, His Holiness in an Apostolic Letter, *Cum multa sapienter* of January 24, 1868, created three ranks: Knights of the First Class - Knight Grand Cross; Knights of the Second Class - Commanders; and Knights of the Third Class - Knights.

Pope Leo XIII (1878 - 1903) authorized the conferring of the honors of the Order on women who were styled Dames or Matrons and who would wear the insignia on the left side. Thus to the courage of the Knight was added the bravery of the Matron. This Apostolic Letter was dated August 3, 1888.

Pope Pius X (1903 - 1914) dissipated all manner of doubt relative to the military spirit of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem when, in his Apostolic Letter *Quam multa te ordinemque* of May 3, 1907, he reserved to himself and his successors the title of Grand Master of the Order and appointed the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem his Lieutenant and Administrator with the renewed

power of awarding the Knighthood. His holiness also disclosed his Pontifical desire to affix on the Cross a Military Trophy, viz.:

“Therefore, in order to manifest our desires clearly to all, and to show our favor and fatherly interest, we decree that those chosen for this Equestrian Order may wear as insignia of the Order, the military trophy, to be placed above and suspended from it by a black ribbon of watered silk, the proper cross of the Order.” Furthermore, Pope Pius added to the costume a woolen mantle with a red Cross of Jerusalem on the left side.

Pope Benedict XV (1914 - 1922) approved and recommended the Work of the Preservation of the Faith in Palestine.

Pope Pius XI (1922 - 1939), in his Bull *Decessores nostri* of January 6, 1928, corroborated all the previous historical and legislative facts when he said: *Equites S. Sepulchri iam antiquiteta commendati*.

Then the dispute that had been raging between the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem was settled by the high Commission of Cardinals in a decision in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* of August 1931.

In the Decree of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation dated at Rome on August 5, 1931, the Preamble reads as follows:

“Their Eminences, the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregations of Ceremonies, named by our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, to carry out his wish to put an end to the dispute which has arisen between the Supreme Military Order of Jerusalem and of Malta, and the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, being aware that a public suit – which is truly regrettable – has been entered against the last-named Order by the Supreme Military Order of Jerusalem and of Malta and

“Having read and thoroughly studied the memorials and documents presented by the two parties, so that all the arguments which, having been drawn up in succession by the two parties, in support of their claims, have been advanced one against the other and

“Having examined the latest Pontifical documents on the question, especially the Apostolic Briefs ‘Cum Multa’ of Pius IX, January 24, 1868; ‘Venerabilis Frater Vincentius’ of Leo XIII, August 3, 1888; ‘Quam Multa’ of Pius X, May 3, 1907; and ‘Decessores Nostri’ of Pius XI, January 6, 1928;

“Relying mainly on the above-mentioned Brief of our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, now gloriously reigning, in virtue of which:

a) “The duties of the Grand Master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, duties defined by Pius X

and reserved ‘solely to the person of the Supreme Pontiff’ were declared to have ‘expired, and consequently, to be completely abolished;’

b) “The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre has been placed ‘under the benevolent custody of the Apostolic See;’

c) His Excellency the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem has been appointed, in view of present circumstances, ‘Rector and Perpetual Administrator of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre,’ with the right of naming new knights, but not only be delegation of the Sovereign Pontiff, but in virtue of the office and authority granted him in the above-mentioned Order.”

Thereafter the Decree recites the conclusions unanimously adopted by the Eminences, the Cardinals. Space prevents the quoting of the complete Decree and, therefore, only the most important and pertinent sections are herewith given for clarity:

“...On the other hand our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, in an audience granted to the undersigned Secretary on July 22, 1931, having heard the conclusions of their Eminences, the Cardinals of the Commission appointed to examine the questions, and fearing that usages may be continued which have lately been introduced contrary to all rights; but, desiring that the two Orders which have merited so well of the Church, each in its own sphere, should be continue to march along the path of their predecessors and to multiply their noble achievements in favor of the Church, has deigned to approve the conclusions of their Eminences, the Cardinals, and by his supreme authority has decreed and made obligatory the following prescriptions:

1) “To the official title of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, the words ‘of Jerusalem’ can be added, at the very end, by the gracious authorization of our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI; therefore, the legitimate title of the Order will be henceforth: ‘Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem’ (*ordo Equester S. Sepulchri Hierosolomytani*).

2) “His Excellency the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem will keep the title given to him in the Brief of Pius XI, mentioned above, viz.: ‘Rector and Perpetual Administrator of the Order.’

3) “.....

4) “Considering the services rendered to the Holy See by the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, and for the honor of the knights of their Order, to obtain more surely that their insignia be publicly recognized by the States in friendly relations

with the Apostolic See, it is enjoined that whenever His Excellency, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, nominated new knights, their names be transmitted to the Apostolic Chancery of Letters. If, on its part the Chancery has no objection to offer, it will register the nominations and place its seal on the diplomas at the same time as its 'visa'; all these formalities will be required for the public recognition of the title of Knight.

- 5) "To the representatives of His Excellency, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Rector and Perpetual Administrator of the Order, the Supreme Pontiff grants in virtue of his sovereign authority, the title of

'Lieutenants' and to these alone the further title of 'Excellency'.

- 6) "The Statutes of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem will be brought into conformity with this Decree and will be submitted to the approval of the Sacred Congregation of Ceremonies before being published.

"All to the contrary notwithstanding.

"Given at Rome, at the Place of the Sacred Congregation of Ceremonies, August 5, 1931.

"J. Card. Granito Pignatelli di Belmonte, Prefect.

"B. Nardone, Secretary.

II

THE EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM IS MORE ANCIENT THAN THE FOLLOWING CHIVALROUS ORDERS

	Founder:	Date of Foundation:
1. Order of the Knights of Malta, otherwise known as the Sovereign Military Order of St. John of Jerusalem		Founded about the year 1048, but recognized and confirmed by Pope Paschal II in 1113.
2. Order of the Knights Templar, called Brethern King of the Militia of the Temple		Originated about 1119/20 under Baldwin II of Jerusalem: completely suppressed in France in 1312/13 and later in all Europe.
3. Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George	Emperor Isaac II Angelus Comnenus	About 1190
4. Order of the Holy Ghost (Rome)	Pope Innocent II	1198.
5. Supreme Order of Christ	Pope John XXII	March 14, 1319.
6. The Most Noble Order of the Garter of Great Britain	King Edward III	1349.
7. The Most Noble Order of the Most Sacred Annunziata (Italy)	Count Amadeus VI of Savoy	About 1362
8. Order of the Golden Fleece	Philip le Bon, Duke of Burgandy and of the Netherlands	January 10, 1429.
9. Knightly Order of St. Hubert (Bavaria)	Duke Gerhard	November 3, 1444.
10. Order of the Elephant (Denmark)	King Christian I	1458.
11. Order of Our Lady of Bethlehem	Pope Pius II	1459; afterwards abolished, and never revived by any pope; consequently, the present existing Order of St. Mary of Bethlehem is a new and entirely private creation without any recognition from the Vatican or any nation.
12. Papal Order of St. John Lateran	Pope Pius IV	1560.
13. Order of the Holy Ghost of France	King Henry III	1578.
14. Papal Order of the House of Loretto	Pope Sixtus V	1587.
15. Order of St. Andrew (Russia)	Peter the Great	December 20, 1698.

	Founder:	Date of Foundation:
16. Constantinian Order of St. George of Parma and the Two Sicilies	Duke Francis I of Parma	About 1699; abolished by Joseph Bonaparte in 1806, revived by Empress Marie Louis on February 13, 1816.
17. Knightly Order of St. George (Bavaria)		April 24, 1729.
18. Order of St. Ann (Russia)	Duke Charles Frederick	February 14, 1735.
19. Order of Maria-Theresa (Austria)	Empress Maria-Theresa	1757.
20. Apostolic Order of St. Stephen (Hungary)	Empress Maria-Theresa	May 5, 1764.
21. Order of St. Vladimir (Russia)	Empress Catherine II	September 22, 1782.
22. Most Illustrious Order of Saint Patrick (Ireland)	King George III	February 5, 1783.
23. Order of the Black Eagle (Prussia)	Frederick I	January 17, 1791.
24. Order of Leopold (Austria)	Emperor Francis I	January 7, 1808.
25. Military Order of William (Holland)	King William I	April 30, 1815.
26. Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (Great Britain)		April 27, 1818.
27. Order of St. Gregory the Great (Papal)	Pope Gregory XVI	September 1, 1831.
28. Order of Leopold (Belgium)		July 11, 1832.
29. Order of the Redeemer (Greece)	King Otho	June 1, 1833.
30. Order of St. Sylvestre	Pope Gregory XVI	October 31, 1841.
31. Order of the Oaken-Crown (Luxemburg)		December 29, 1841.
32. Papal Order of Pius IX	Pope Pius IX	June 17, 1847.
33. Order of St. Olaf (Norway)	King Oscar	August 21, 1847.
34. Order of the Madonna of Guadalupe (Mexico)	Emperor Iturbide	November 11, 1853.
35. The Victoria Order (Great Britain)		January 29, 1856.
36. Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem, otherwise known as Order of St. Lazare of Jerusalem, established about the year 1119. In 1572, Duke Emanuel – Philibert of Savoy, as Grand Master of the Order, obtained the consent of Pope Gregory XIII to unite the Order of St. Lazare with that of the Order of St. Maurice of Sardinia. Thus came into existence the Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazare (which has been since and is now one and the same Order; it is now an Italian Government Order). This amalgamation was confirmed by Pope Gregory XIII by Bull of September 14, 1572. Therefore, the Order of St. Lazare of Jerusalem ceased having any separate existence in 1572 (for proof of this statement see Sir Bernard Burke's "The Booke of Orders of Knighthood" published at London in 1858, page 254) The Order of St. Lazare of Jerusalem was never revived by any Pope or Crowned Head. Therefore, the now existing Order of St. Lazare of Jerusalem is definitely a private and a very recent, as well as an entirely new creation, not a revival of the ancient Order. This new organization dates back only to about the year 1927/1928, when it was organized by Mr. Charles Otzenberger, of Paris, France, who, upon his marriage with a Miss Detaille, assumed the name of Otzenberger-Detaille as allowed by French law.		

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is rightly proud of its antiquity and its existence without any interruption since its creation in 1099 and its definite acceptance in 1103.⁵

¹ "Hojeada Historica," pp.31, 35

² Ibid.

³ F Pasini Frassoni: *Historie de L'Ordre Militaire du Saint-Sepulcre de Jerusalem*; Pastor; *Storia del Papi*

⁴ Bailli or Bailles is a very ancient title in the orders of Knighthood. A Bailli was procurator of the Order or a Lieutenant of the Grand Master of the order. A Bailli applied to the chief of a bailliage, – that means, of a province, a language, or a delegation. This title is not the property of the Order of St. John, like some people seem to credit. The Baillis, according to Du Cange, were formerly counts, delegated of the King of France, and were of great importance in the Middle Ages. The Republic of Venice used to give this title to its consults and representatives in the Orient, and up to the French revolution they used to call Baillis to be the chiefs of the Kingdom's territories.

⁵ Pierredon (de) M.: *L'Ordre equestre du Saint Sepulchre de Jerusalem*. Paris, 1928.

*It has been our objective during the last few years to find and present to the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre the most complete and definitive histories of our order, written by outstanding historians. In 2000 and 2001 we reprinted Michael H. Abrahm D'Assemani's chapters from his book, **The Cross and The Sword**. This year we include a third history entitled **History of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem** by A. Donnadieu. This history covers the Knights from their origin to the fall of St. John of Acre.*

-Richard Folger KGCHS

HISTORY OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM FROM THEIR ORIGIN TO THE FALL OF ST. JOHN OF ACRE

by A. Donnadieu

I

Well before the Crusades, the western Christians came in crowds to venerate the tomb of Christ.

Without going back to St. James or even to St. Helena, mother of Constantine, one can consider as certain, in any event, that it was St. Gregory the Great, at the end of the sixth century, who founded the first religious and hospitable establishments of Jerusalem.

We know that later the brilliance of the conquests and the power of Charlemagne having passed from Europe to Asia, Caliph Haroun al Raschid, one of the greatest powers of the East, authorized the Franks to own ten the Holy City a house where they might receive pilgrims. Eginhard, the most celebrated chronicler of the Carolingian epoch, reports that the patriarch of Jerusalem sent to the emperor, in the name of the Caliph, the keys of the holy Sepulchre and of the Church of Calvary with the banner, "sign of power and authority invested in the Christian prince by Haroun."

It is unquestionable that the great emperor's prestige was the basis for the "profound peace" spoken of in a letter of the patriarch Theodoseus addressed to Ignatius, patriarch of Constantinople in 869, and which lasted without obstacle until the ruin of the Holy Sepulchre by Hakem, in 1010.

An old song with gestures, less widespread than that of Roland, entitled "The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne," leaves on the Crusades to come, the outline of the shadow of the Emperor, a part of whose reign saw bitter combats against the Saracens. After having restored his large feudal lands "he announces to them that he is going to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and twelve peers announce that they will leave with him; eighty thousand men are going to join them." They take the pilgrim's staff at the Abbey of Saint Dennis where they receive it and, without taking off their arms cross Burgundy, Bavaria, Italy, Greece, and finally gain Constantinople. From this could one not imagine the history of the first Crusade? Arriving in Jerusalem, they go to adore the tomb of Christ.

A French monk named Bernard reports having seen in Jerusalem, about the year 870, a hospital for Latins and, in the same house, "a library assembled by the solicitude and the generosity of Charlemagne."

Finally, from the beginning of the eleventh century, the Holy Sepulchre appeared as a veritable *personne juridique* inspired by the *Universitates rerum* but with complete qualification and with this exceptional factor of being recognized internationally.

From the West came two kinds of subsidies: alms and revenues; these last generally being obtained directly.

The French national as well as state archives contain numerous charters of goods to the Holy Sepulchre; notably for the South of France: Maguelonne, Saint Sauveur-de-Rubro (near Montpellier), Saint-Sepulchre-de-Chorges (near Embrun); Saint-Pierre and Saint-Ponce-de-Seyne (near Digne), Saint-Jean d'Espinasse (High Alps), Saint Pierre d'Avancon, Neuvy-Saint-Sepulchre, etc.

Several charters even lead one to believe that the Saint-Sepulchre of Jerusalem became, with certain abbeys, co-sharer of the revenues mentioned in these donations.

"These abbeys used as depositories of those donations could benefit by them until the hoped-for nearly foreseen deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre. As time went on, these goods became absorbed in those of the Latin Holy Sepulchre organized by the crusaders.

One among all these charters merits particular attention. It is that which comes from the archives of the Abbey of Saint Victor of Marseilles, and by which the twenty-ninth of October, 993, Hugues, Duke of Tuscany, and his wife gave certain gifts:

1. to the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem,
2. to Abbe Guarin, superior of the monastery of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa in Roussillon who was entrusted by the Holy See with the management of several abbeys and with the surveillance of the Latin establishments of Jerusalem,

Count Riant, in a communication to the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres (published in the “Memoires do l’Institut de France) studies at length this precious document concluding that from before the year one thousand, the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem possessed not only “important non-taxable estates, but also the *political sovereignty of its domains* the superior rights of the Empire being, of course, clearly understood, tacitly reserved.” And Gislebert, third beneficiary of the duke of Tuscany, cousin of Abbe Guarin, would act, not only as “lay administrator of the granted revenues” but also as vicar performing the political sovereignty for the Holy Sepulchre.”

Let us cite yet another charter, dated 1053 and in which the Greek patriarch of Jerusalem figures in nature of member-elect of a donation made in Rouergue to the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

II

In what concerns more precisely the order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, there exist little revelatory work. The few authors who in the 18th and the 19th centuries have attempted to write the history of it have been unanimous in agreeing that its origin is very ancient, prior even to the Crusades, but they admit never having found the charter of its foundation.

Favyn, parliament attorney in Paris, wrote in 1612 in his *History of Navarre* that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre “is estimated the first and the most ancient of all those of Palestine,” that “Godfrey of Bouillon was very generous to the regular canons of St. Augustine and to the patriarch who had the care of the tomb of Our Lord,” and that his brother Badouin took these simple canons and monks who had formerly been guardians of the Holy Sepulchre and elevated them to men-of-arms and to knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

Another author, Hernant, in his *History of Religions or Military Orders* (Rouen, 1698) says “that there is nothing so uncertain among the authors who have treated of military orders, than the origin of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.” After having presented the three admitted theses of his time: foundation by St. James, by St. Helena, or by Godfrey of Bouillon, he offers a fourth or last opinion which presents Baudoin I, if not creator, at least as founder of the knights of the Holy Sepulchre, in 1103, reviving thus the thesis of Favyn.

The evasive style of these brief citations should not surprise us even if placed opposite the charters concerning the other chivalric institutions originated during the first half of the 11th century.

In fact, from the very beginning these experienced the necessity to establish firmly their judicial and canonical

framework, for the fact that they implanted themselves in a territory submissive to public power and one from which they understood themselves to be excluded obliged them to formulate definitely their statutes by precise constitutives recognized and accepted officially by the patriarchs and by the kings of Jerusalem: such was the case of the brothers Knights of the Temple and of those of the Hospital of St. John. But the situation of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre proved altogether different.

From the very plan of the Holy City in 1099, the Holy Sepulchre was the most vulnerable point of the enclosure of the city and at the mercy of all offensive returns of the enemy.

One could not leave this jewel of Christianity to the sole care of the clergy, also occupied with their offices, and it is not unwise to believe that the most valiant Christian knights came spontaneously to solicit the signal honor of keeping watch, weapon in hand, at the sepulchre of Our Lord.

Thus, from the first hour of the taking of Jerusalem, cohorts of knights settled there dedicated to the immediate defense of the tomb of the Savior subject to the patriarch and to the prior of the Sepulchre, and also to the sovereigns of Jerusalem.

Albert d’Aix tells us that “Duke Godfrey and all the other Christians deemed it proper to establish in the temple of the sepulchre – upon the conquest of the city – twenty brothers in Christ who would practice there the divine offices.” Five weeks later Godfrey undertook his first campaign, not without having entrusted the sepulchre “to the faithful defenders.”

In his turn, William de Tyr confirms that Godfrey of Bouillon “established canons in the church of the sepulchre” (as early as 1099) *specifying that hosts of knights share with them the honor of guarding the tomb of Christ*: “Duke Godfrey and the other baron had established in the church of the Sepulchre, when the city was conquered..., clergymen who had rich provisions and *through them and through their companies served the church well.*”

Thus appeared from the first moments of the conquest, and according to the beautiful expression of Joseph Calmette: “this nucleus of a permanent army, *this guard of the Holy Sepulchre, these professional crusaders* in some way always mobilized.”

Military in spirit, Godfrey do Bouillon, sensing the return if Islamism, made a pathetic appeal, from the first months of the conquest, to the Christians inhabiting the East adjuring them “not to fear to come visit the sepulchre of the Lord to unite with him and those of their companions living in exile, and on the contrary to come in large groups every day to assist them against such barbarous nations.”

Soon the enthusiasm of the Christians was revealed

by offerings to the Holy Sepulchre no only “for service of the brothers dedicated in this place to the service of God” and restored by Godfrey near the sepulchre of Our Lord since the taking of the city, but also for the knights “who would have lost their property and their weapons” in combat.

Albert d’Aix tells us about the splendid offering of an “illustrious knight,” Gerard d’Avesne, left as hostage at the time of the siege of Assur. Raised on a cross by the Moslems facing the Christians, he cries with all his strength in Godfrey’s direction: “O very illustrious Duke, remember now that it is through your orders that I came as hostage and exiled in the midst of barbarous nations and impious men. This is why I ask you to be touched with compassion in my behalf and not to permit me to perish in this cruel martyrdom.”

Alas, it is impossible for Godfrey to attempt to save his cherished knight.

Having then the vision of “his brothers” mounting guard beside the sacred tomb men who would be tomorrow, as he himself had been, dubbed in this place, “seeing the futility of his prayers and of his tears, he instantly entreated the duke to *present his horse and his weapons before the Holy Sepulchre, saying that he wished to give them, for the redemption of his soul, to those who served God in this place.*”

The terms of “Knights of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre,” “Knight of the Order of St. John,” or “Knights of the Order of the Temple” which we use freely today, were not in common use by the great chroniclers of the crusades. The word “Order” – “Ordo” is more a rule of life enacted by a St. Augustine or a St. Benedict, and not by a formal government of a society in the narrow sense of the term.

Also, ancient historians frequently used the following expressions: the master of the Temple and his brothers (or simply the Temple), the master of the Hospital and his brothers (or simply the Hospital), lastly: *the patriarch and his brothers*, or, as well, *the patriarch and his knights*.

It is these last titles which, according to us, designated the knights of the Holy Sepulchre – religious or laity – whose patriarch was actually the “Master” and to whom can be joined equally the knights of the House of the King of Jerusalem, both receiving the Order of Knighthood on the tomb of Christ.

It was only after the fall of the Holy Land, after the collapse of the order of the Temple, and after the name of knight of Rhodes had replaced that of knight of St. John in the current language, that the title “Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem” appeared in the texts and, notably, in a judicial document of the highest importance, proving the high antiquity of that Order: the “Conclu” of

Lislebonne, in Normandy.

This charter will do no more than record – in forecast of new crusades – the history of the Order and the rules which, since time immemorial were known and perpetuated according to the principles of the Unwritten Law.

The celebrated Italian historian of the 16th century, Jacques Bosio, knight of St. John, seems to have had knowledge of it, since he points out that the Order of the Holy Sepulchre was founded by the French, and particularly by the king, Godfrey of Bouillon, after the taking of Jerusalem in 1099, and ratified by the other kings, his successors; which order had previously had some of the principles of the Crusades of Emperor Charlemagne, Louis VI, and Phillip Auguste, king of France, *which is verified by its rules and laws.*

In 1549, the charter, with all its judicial forms, was officially deposited at Jerusalem in the treasury of the Holy Sepulchre by the Ambassador of France, Gabriel de Luitz d’Aramon de Valabregue, he who had achieved the masterly stroke of uniting the Christian king with the Sultan of Turkey. The authenticity of the document had precisely for its aim the restoration of the ancient origins of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in order to declare openly, for the benefit of the Muslims from whom they had accepted aid, the very strongly Christian position of the kings of France – and to counterbalance, at the same time, the “symbolic vassalage” imposed on the Knights of Rhodes by Charles V.

The authentic copy compiled by Monsignor d’Aramon was put back into the treasury of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Rue de Saint-Denis, in Paris.

It was destroyed but fortunately it is possible to consult in the National Library in Paris, a transcription a bit more nearly contemporaneous to this copy, made by Pierre Pithou, whose knowledge and accuracy could not be doubted.

How far back does the original charter date?

In the text it is specified that the knights must deposit before their investiture, the sum of “thirty ecuscouronnes” which was to aid the poor pilgrims. Ecus Couronnes having been, under Charles VI, but a short time in circulation places this copy toward 1390.

It is, nevertheless, dated from 1099 for it is, let us remember, an “affidavit” that is to say, an account of precepts considered in force after judiciary investigation, and it was normal to center the history of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre on the event of the taking of Jerusalem.

The first and the principal articles of this charter begin with the words “Be it known and evident” or again, “Be it also known” etc. One would not wonder, then, at finding grouped in the preamble princes who, from Charlemagne to St. Louis, were considered as the

instigators and the propounders of the great epic. Under the force of publicity these great princes speak as though they were still living: “We have won great victories”... “When we went back to our kingdom of France and to domains which belong to us, we told the other Christian princes who had aided us of the honor we had achieved... which put us in the state of fulfilling our vows and of carrying out the undertakings we had already begun.”

The dead are also united to the living by the insignia of the Order, the five red crosses “in honor of the five wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ”; and, “that by this mark we (aforementioned Christian princes) may be able to recognize in their lands Christians whether alive or among the dead.”

In the rules it is prescribed to the “Reverend lords, archbishops, abbots, and other beneficiaries who have their privileges as much in the kingdom of France as in our other lands and domains... to give one-fourth of the third part of the revenue of their gains for the ransom of the captives,” by the care of the knights of the Order, and “to the honor of God and to obtain recompense of the pains which he suffered *in fighting against the infidels for the spread of the Faith, and the defense of Christian churches, and of their prelates.*”

But what is unique in the annals of the great orders of chivalry, and what to us is a proof of more than the high antiquity of that of the Holy Sepulchre, is that not only “the knights of the said Order of the Holy Sepulchre will be charged with the care of ransoming and delivering captives...” but that the Order had to use its goods in favor “of the poor pilgrims and other people of war who come every day in crowds to this place (the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem),” and “to the relief of the sick who are in the hospitals of the same Holy Sepulchre of the city of Jerusalem, of *St. John*, and of *St. Lazarus.*” Noble example of Christian charity including all the unfortunates whatever the order of chivalry to whom the hospital gives refuge.

After these few excerpts let us add still that the charter furnished long details on the reception of knight, the relations with the Church, and also churches or other cultural places; the services to which the knights are attached; the ceremonies, especially during Holy Week; the watch at the Holy Sepulchre, etc.

One cannot find better testimonies of the history of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre than among the Norman knights who, with the lords of Lillebonne, allies of Godfrey of Bouillon and of the earls of Champagne, were among the heroes of the first Crusade.

Even in this day, at five kilometers from Lille, on the sharp cliff forming a point opposite Quillebeuf, the castle of Tancarville – the city of Tancrede! – recalls to us the

celebrated William of Tancarville, companion of Richard the Lion-Hearted, fallen on the plains of Palestine in 1191, and whose seal represents him armed from head to foot, on his iron-covered steed. He is covered with the haubergeon, coat and hose of mail, girded with the sword having a very strong guard, holding in his hand a lance with pennant waving; carrying the large shield without arms. On his feet he wears enormous spurs ending in the lance head, symbol of chivalry.

It should not for a single instant enter our minds to compare chivalry to the Sacraments of the Church... but that it can at once be considered as a great military brotherhood and as an eighth sacrament one could have no doubt after an attentive study of the texts.”

Lambert d’Ardres, mentioned by Duchesne in his *Proofs of the House of Coucy*, expresses the same idea in analogous terms: “Et militarem... dedit alapam et militaribus eum in virum perfectum dedicavit Sacramentis.”

And if belonging to a military order does not confer chivalry and dispenses no one from being “knighted,” universal fame, even at the end of the Middle Ages still proclaimed: “Good knights are made at the Holy Sepulchre of Our Lord, through love and honor of him!”

To be armed knight on the distinguished stone where death was vanquished is, for a Christian soldier an inexhaustible source of courage! One readily imagines the silence of this solemn night of the watch of arms at the Holy Sepulchre, the neophyte kneeling, praying and meditating on the great duties of chivalry... One author calls to mind even the sublime distractions of the future knight during these long hours: dreams of valour and of honor, grandiose scenes of heroic devices, great sword thrusts, rapid riding of horses, splendid visions purpled with blood and traversed with rays of glory!

But the permanent guard about the Holy Sepulchre is the lot of only a small number of knights, “temporary servants,” and regular canons. So important is their authority that it is the chancellor of the Holy Sepulchre, Arnoul, accompanied by several knights who comes to offer the crown to Baudouin.

And it is to the canons of the Holy Sepulchre that it is given to elect the patriarch. William, archbishop of Tyr and his successors: Bernard, treasurer of the Abbey of Corbie and called “Bernard the Treasurer,” whose book was written and edited in Rome the year of the incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1295 and finally Ernoul, squire of Balian d’Ibelin (one of the first barons of Syria), confirm it unanimously: “... canons of the Sepulchre to whom remains the election of the patriarch...”

It is true the sovereign of Jerusalem has a choice to make between the two candidates who must be presented to him by the canons. But the time of his reflection is

quite limited: “if one is presented to him in the morning, he must accept him before the bell for vespers; if one is presented to him in the evening, he must accept him in the morning before high Mass.”

Between King Baudouin and the patriarch, serious quarrels broke out having specifically for their object the care of the Holy Sepulchre.

The king had clearly pointed out to the patriarch either to remit to him the necessary funds for the care of his men, or to take financial care of some of the knights.

Compelled a first time to comply, the patriarch promised an immediate deposit of 200 silver marks. Then after some further hesitation, and on the advice of the Pope’s legate, at that time near him, he decided to “take under his financial care thirty knights.” But he left them unprovided for, and Baudouin entered in a high rage pointing out at the same time, the wealth of the Holy Sepulchre and the poverty of the royal treasury, showing that “imperative necessity demands that the Christian knights be fed rather than to see the Saracens come take by force and divide among themselves the gifts offered by the faithful on the Sepulchre, without knight or priest being able to do anything about it.”

But these are only details. During nearly a century one sees the kings of Jerusalem and the patriarchs march together to battle, their knights often mixed in the same cohorts (quite distinct from the squadrons of the Temple, of the hospital, or the Teutonics, which were formed later).

From the taking of Jerusalem, Godfrey had not ceased to be constantly armed.

Baudouin I finds himself in an identical situation.

From the first shock of arms at Ramla, he did not hesitate to call the patriarch and his knights for aid: “Let us ask the patriarch and all our brothers to help us in our distress as quickly as it is conveniently possible.”

Stephen, count of Champagne and of Blois, together with several other knights, is cited among “those who became martyrs for Christ” in Ramla besieged by the infidels, and “where they fight to the death those who are in the place.”

That September 8, 1101, nearly all the knights that came to Jerusalem at the call of the king fell in battle around the “brothers carrying the cross” knights-religious of the Holy Sepulchre. The instant that the venerable wood appeared on the battlefield, King Baudouin jumped off his horse, and prostrated himself on the ground. Then, “leaving ten men around the one who carried the Holy Cross” he threw himself into the melee!

Alas! That first battle of Ramla was terribly costly. Let us listen to Albert d’Aix tell about that heroic day:

In the front lines of the Christian army we find Beluold, very noble knight who, from the beginning of

the battle perished with all his men in the middle of the gentiles...; Guillaume Charpentier, formidable knight who led the second group, threw himself into the middle of the enemy lines to carry help to his companions; but he died himself and all those who followed him, under the irresistible force of the enemy. Hugues de Tiberiade, young and brave warrior, fought long... had difficulty in saving himself, leaving dispersed or dead all his followers. Crushed by the number, the Christian knights were beginning to withdraw. As soon as the king saw them waver, he rushed to their aid (at the head of his fifth corps), engaging in a fierce struggle and charging repeatedly. At the end of the battle “there remained to the king only forty knights.” And Albert d’Aix put in the mouth of the king these words: “If we are destined to die, let us have confidence and hope that in delivering our bodies in this world for the name of Jesus, and for the holy places of Jerusalem, we will in the future be able to preserve our souls for life eternal with those of our brothers who fell in yesterday’s combat, slain for love of Christ.”

The great shadow of the brothers knight defenders of the holy places of Jerusalem – and above all of the Holy Sepulchre – hovers over these reports at the very beginning of the 12th century. Foucher de Chartres informs us that during the third battle of Ramla in 1105, the king Baudouin, “impatient, wrested from the hands of his squire his *white banner* and, at the head of his faithful, charged the Turks whom he dispersed.”

It is this same white standard, ornamented with the raised cross, and the four small crosses that is reproduced on an antique window of St. Denis, reported by Dom Bernard de Montfaucon, and which through the centuries has perpetuated the memory of the first *brother knights of the Holy Sepulchre* grouped about the patriarch and the king.

It is again Albert d’Aix who tells us that the King, on Easter, 1102, “having with him the patriarch and all his army, as well as the household of his brother the duke, Godfrey,” went to invest Cesaree, “the lord patriarch carrying in front of the Cross of the Lord.”

In 1137, the knights of the patriarch were besieged in the fortress of Montreal which the king Baudouin had constructed on the border of the desert of l’Arabie Petree: “Raoul, patriarch of Jerusalem, having learned of the misfortune of his brothers, was profoundly grieved and considered means of helping the imprisoned martyrs at Montreal.”

The monk Orderic Vital (celebrated historian of the 11th century), reports devoutly “these events concerning,” says he, “the faithful who, for Jesus Christ, exiled themselves in the East. For the information of posterity, I have put them in writing, simply and with veracious pen, as I learned

them from persons who were witnesses of them.” And he narrates how the patriarch obtained from the faithful permission to give the Sepulchre to the brothers who had perished. “They sought them, the bodies of their deceased brothers; they buried them carefully and honorably after having found them; but they were not able to take from their fingers the rings of gold.” According to the beautiful expression consecrated by the knights: “the rings were saved!” Death had not permitted that their hands be despoiled of them by the infidel. “Consequently they praised the Lord devoutly and respectfully buried with their ornaments (of knighthood) the martyrs of Christ.”

V

The illustrious army chiefs who after the first Crusades returned to their country had true veneration of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, inseparable at that time from the regular canons of St. Augustine whose existence was confirmed in 1122 by a grant of Calixtus II.

It is thus that the king of France, Louis VI, on his return from the Holy Land, brought back with him twenty religious of that order whom he established at Saint-Samson d’Orleans, where they remained for several centuries.

Another sovereign, Henry II of England, “before taking possession of his kingdom, made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Christ and, pleased by the services of the knights to the pilgrims, resolved at his return from the Holy Land, to found a chivalric order similar to that of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem” and June 24, 1158, he personally knighted William of Blois.

In Spain the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre were “ordered” by Gaston de Bearn, first Ricombre of Aragon upon his return from the first Crusade.

The life of this very great captain is admirably recounted to us by the celebrated historian de Marca, magistrate who became churchman, who died archbishop of Paris in 1662, and who has the distinction, rare for his era, of adding to his texts the copy in Latin of the original charters, naming its authors.

In Holy Land, Gaston de Bearn delivered his most famous combats at the side of the celebrated Tancrede, descendant of the family of norman lords of that name, and that Tasse, in *Jerusalem Delivered* represents to us at the personification of Chivalry.

We know that the direction of the siege of Jerusalem was given to Gaston de Bearn by Godfrey and the counts of Normand and of Flanders, “who entrusted this excellent and magnificent lord, called William de Tyr, to be willing to attend to it and to bring to it the application required.” We know the rest.

Returning to Bearn, covered with glory “and with palms of Palestine,” Gaston advised the bishop of Lescars in 1101 to establish a hospital attended by the regular

canons of Saint-Augustin.

Towards 1118 he persuades Alphonse d’Aragon to fight to the finish the war against the Moors in Spain and, in accord with him, has constructed the town of Montreal (in memory, apparently of the castle built on the edge of the deserts of Arabie Petree by Baudouin). “He chose a certain spot – says Marca – where he had built under the name of cite of Montreal, the place where he planned to establish a convent of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre in imitation of those of Jerusalem.

Jacques de Vitry (+1240) confirms this construction.

The historian and archivist of the order of the Holy Sepulchre, the Jesuit Zurita, in his marvelous annals of Aragon, affirms that this decision was made in common by Alphonse le Batailleur and Gaston de Bearn in 1120. But de Marca figures that it was rather Gaston de Bearn who was the initiator of this construction “because one could learn only from him the plan and the model of the knights of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem,” for Alphonse le Batailleur never went to the Holy Land, following in that the Roman orders asking that the Spanish fight Islamism first on their own soil.

From the beginning of their establishment on Iberian land the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre fought a great battle de Marca reports from what is told by Orderic Vital, more complete in that than the Spanish authors of the 11th century: “The conquest of Saragosse and the great progress made by Alphonse d’Aragon in the environs of Valence obliged the Moors of Andalusia and of Africa to make a notable effort to stop so powerful an enemy.” This battle which ends with the shining victory of Cutande was fought in 1120 near the town of Daroca, and Orderic Vital in his account refers to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre as *brothers of the palms*. This is another expression explaining clearly the antique tradition of the present-day “*palmes de l’Ordre*.”

And Marca continues: “Brothers of the Palms, no doubt, because they carried the insignia of the palm; being different from the Templars as is strongly verified by Briz-Martinez, and also some knights of St. John.”

According to Orderic Vital, Rotrou, Count of Montagne (cousin of Alphonse d’Aragon) with the French, Gaston de Bearn with the Gascony followers, and the *bishop of Saragosse with the brothers of the palms* (the bishop here replacing the patriarch apparently); fortified first the place of Pennacadel “where there were two impregnable towers” and remained there for six weeks.

“The day preceding the battle, Guarin Sancio, a man of great reputation went up the hills with the *brothers of the palms*, from where with great losses he made the king Alamin withdraw together with his whole army.”

An extraordinary number of pagans, said Orderic Vital “were lost whether by the firearms of pursuers, whether

among the ravines, whether by weariness, hunger, or thirst. And by these means the Africans who came to the aid of the Spanish idolaters perished miserably.”

The order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem had come to take root for always in Spain, and Alphonse I d’Aragon “Emperor of Spain, one of the greatest captains of his century, victorious in twenty-nine battles against the Moors, seeing himself old and without children, declared in a solemn will made in 1131, the Hospitaliers of St. John, the Templars, *and the canons or knights of the Holy Sepulchre* his heirs and his successors to the crowns of Navarre and of d’Aragon, and he disposed of it in favor of *these warriors* to encourage them to keep up the struggle against the Moors of Spain.” He renewed this will a few days before his death.

An old and sincere friendship had united Alphonse d’Aragon to Daimbert, patriarch of Jerusalem who, having been sent as a legate of the Pope to Spain, before his election, had been “welcomed with the greatest honors by Alphonse d’Aragon.”

However, from the death of Alphonse, the nobility of the two kingdoms planned to avoid “the rights of the *military orders*; the patriarch of Jerusalem, superior of the canons of the Holy Sepulchre, and the masters of the two orders” decides to send a mission to Spain.

Raymond Dupuy, master of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, had the upper hand of the mission, the order of the Temple having sent only deputies.

By a compromise it was decided that if the count of Barcelona, who had put his veto to the execution of the will, died without children, the crown of Aragon “would return to the military orders and to the canons of the Holy Sepulchre,” with the stipulation that each have a certain number of vassals in the places taken over by them from the Moors.

Finally, “it was decreed that the sovereigns of Aragon would never be able to make peace with the infidels without the participation of the patriarch of Jerusalem and of two military orders. This treaty was signed and ratified in the month of September, 1411, and Pope Adrian IV and Foulques, king of Jerusalem, gave it their approbation.”

Several original judicial instruments written between the years 1140 and 1156, and notably at the time of consecration of the prior house of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem at Calatayud, are found in the archives of Madrid and the archives of the Order in Spain.

It was also in the year 1156 that an act was signed in which is found an article having reference to *the participation of the mother house of Jerusalem* in the possessions and in the income belonging to the Order in Spain.

“Once the testamentary direction was decided it was entrusted to the *venerable canon and procuror general of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, especially sent to Spain by the patriarch with the title of delegate plenipotentiary*

– *and whose name was Giraldo* – he moved in the year 1156 to the town of Condal to take charge of the questions relative to the foundation and to the regulation of the houses of the Order in Catalogne among which was found later the monastery of St. Anne of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem at Barcelona.

In leaving Calatayud, Giraldo named as prior brother Dom Bernard de Ager (or Dager), descendant of the house of the counts of Urgel.

The precious archives of the Order at Calatayud possesses among other numerous documents a bull called “d’exemption de l’Ordinaire” by which the prior of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem at Calatayud was elevated to a rank equivalent to that of bishop, with full jurisdiction over his States. (Urbain IV, en Civitavecchia A.D. 1261 in arch. de l’O.S.S.J. a Calatayud, Man. A H N no. 59.)

Finally we add that all the documents cited in the Spanish work indicated by no. 56 in our references, are found in the national archives of Madrid, titled: “Archives of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre at Calatayud,” and under sixteen dossiers bearing numbers between 28 and 171.

VI

One of the most important documents concerning the Crusades is that which is known by the name of “Chroniques d’Ernoul et de Bernard le Tresorier.” Three manuscripts of it exist being found respectively in the libraries of the State of Brussels, Paris and Berne.

The oldest of the three is that in the royal library of Brussels entitled “Chronique d’Ernoul”; this is a parchment, small in-folio of two columns ornamented in miniatures of the 13th century.

It is this manuscript in which Ernoul is designated as squire of Balian d’Ibelin, whom we have followed by reason of his greater antiquity in relation to the other two.

This, then, is d’Ernoul’s report including the period 1099–1118 which we interpret in modern language, the entire text in old French being found in reference under the number 50.

“Before telling you who were the barons and the kings of Jerusalem, I want to inform you about the Templars, and to tell you what their origin was, for at this time (between 1099 and 1118) there were not any Templars.

“When the Christians had conquered Jerusalem, *many of the knights went to the temple of the Holy Sepulchre*, and many went there coming from all countries. *And they obeyed at that time the prior of the Holy Sepulchre.*

“Certain ones conferred among themselves and wondered: Have we left our lands and our friends and come here for the law of God?... (or else) have we stopped here to eat and to drink without doing anything worthwhile? If we do not take up arms – and there is need of that in the Holy Land... (the roads were unsafe

and the pilgrims were stopped and robbed).

“(So we) will decide and we shall name one of us leader with the permission of the prior who leads us in battle at the right moment.

“At this time the king of Baudouin reigned. They approached him then and said: Sire, for the love of God advise us in the naming of one of us as chief to lead us in battle to aid the Holy Land.

“The king was very happy about this (because of his frequent conflicts with the patriarch), and said that he would willingly advise and help them.

“Then the king notified the patriarch, the clergy, and the barons of the Holy Land in order that he might take counsel with them.

“They consulted and agreed that it was a good thing to be done. Then the King gave them lands, castles, and towns (for it is certain that the knights of the Holy Sepulchre possessed none of these things).

“Then the King and his vassals did so well *by the prior of the Holy Sepulchre that he dispensed them from obedience and they left the prior.*

“However, they continued to wear a part of the insignia represented on the Holy Sepulchre vestment.

“The insignia of the dress of the Holy Sepulchre is a vermillion cross with two branches. (It was certainly before the Crusades and preceded the cross of Godfrey of Bouillon which, according to the stained window of Sugar appeared toward the middle of the 12th century.) And those belonging to the Temple wore the *quite plain* vermillion cross.

“But I am going to tell you why they have the name of Templars.

“When they left the Holy Sepulchre, they had no manor.

“The King had three costly manors in the city of Jerusalem: one high up at the tower of David; and one below in front of the tower of David; and one below in front of the tower of David; and the third, in front of the temple, there where God was offered. This manor was called the temple of Solomon; it was the most costly.

“They beseeched the King to lend them this manor, until they could build one. The King lent them (then) this manor called temple of Solomon, from which they took the name of Templars because they lived there. It was there the King ate on the day he received the crown of Jerusalem.

“Then (later), the Templars built a beautiful and expensive manor nearby that the Saracens destroyed when they took the city...”

That is the way Ernoul explains in detail the origin of the knights of the Temple, “to whom the first charge and direction in pardon for their sins *was that they guard* (no longer the Holy Sepulchre, but) *the roads along which the pilgrims passed* (protecting them) from robbers and thieves

who did them great harm.”

In another text, William of Tyr recalls that the Templars “exempted themselves from *the authority of the patriarch of Jerusalem who had given them the first institution*” (prior to 1118) and that they “refused him *the obedience their predecessors had first pledged him.*”

At the time of the Council held at Troyes in 1128, William de Tyr continues, “A rule was established for the *new knights,*” but “nine years after they had made their first profession they were still only novices.” Later they had great wealth which was, “we are assured, equal to that of the kings. Since their residence is in the royal palace which is near the temple of the Lord, *we call them brothers knights of the Temple.*”

It would be difficult to picture the sinister shadow which surrounded the crumbling of the unfortunate order, without recalling with deep emotion this passage from the rule of the brothers knights of the Temple: “Our Lady was the beginning of our religion (our Order), and in her and in her honor, will be, if it please God, *the end of our lives and the end of our religion,* when it is pleasing to God that this be.”

VII

We again find Balian d’Ibelin beside the patriarch while the rumor is spread of the next offensive of Saladin against Jerusalem.

At the time of the great battle of Tiberiade (July 4, 1187) “that battle in which the Holy Cross was lost” the king had asked the patriarch of Jerusalem “that he send or bring the Holy Cross and the host. The patriarch took the Holy Cross and carried it out of Jerusalem. *He carried it to the prior of the Holy Sepulchre* and told him that he was carrying the host to the king...”

William of Tyr is still more precise and names a religious knight of the Holy Sepulchre “a certain canon of the Sepulchre of the Lord named Baudouin, treasurer of the same church, who, carrying the vivifying cross and not being able to endure the effect of the heat” fell lifeless. Then, “*another brother and canon of the same church*” that is to say, another warrior having the double classification of knight brother and of canon of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, “Geoffrey de Villeneuve, who had been assistant to Baudouin the canon, carried away by his zeal, was pierced with an arrow during battle and died likewise.” In spite of the intense heat, the iron-clad knights performed valiantly. Balian d’Ibelin, at the head of his squadron, threw himself against the infidel army saving thus those who had followed him without hesitation, but the King and the Christian army fell into the hands of the Moslems.

The end of the kingdom of Jerusalem was only a question of days.

Rapidly, Balian d'Idbelin attempted to organize the defense of the city. "In agreement with the patriarch he uses the money of the Holy Sepulchre" to create new companies of knights who, each day with men of arms "went through the countryside around the city, and sent in what they could of supplies, for they knew well that they would be besieged." The Holy Sepulchre feverishly attempted a last effort and armed anew knights for their defense.

Finding again the ardor of the companies of Godfrey of Bouillon, the Franks spurred by Balian d'Idbelin, prepared in haste to defend the Holy Tomb. From this very moment Balian "conferred knighthood on all the sons of the knights from 15 years" whose fathers had just fallen in the latest battles – and likewise on fifty young bourgeois of the city.

On September 20, the immense army of the infidels surrounded the holy city and the combats immediately took an unprecedented character of violence. Saladin meant to wipe out the city forcibly by storm and to impose on the Franks a capitulation without conditions. The chief Moslem had proclaimed very loudly that he wished to avenge the assault on Jerusalem in 1099 and the massacres which followed.

Balian d'Idbelin backed into a corner sent word to Saladin: when we see inevitable death "we shall massacre the five thousand Moslem prisoners that we possess; we will slaughter to the last all our beasts of burden and all our animals. Finally we will all go out to meet you. Then not one among us will be killed who had not first killed several of yours. We will die covered with glory or we shall conquer."

Before such pronouncements the chief of the Moslems wavered; ransom of the chiefs was considered; the Holy Sepulchre and the royal treasury offered to pay it. In order to free more Christians appeal was made to the wealth of the two great military orders: the Temple and the Hospital. Alas, their contribution was trifling compared to what the common people expected and more than fifteen thousand unfortunate Christians could not be ransomed.

Victory once achieved, however, Saladin, about 1192, gave permission to two priests, two Latin deacons, and a Syrian clergyman to take up limited adoration at the Holy Sepulchre.

It was at Saint-Jean-d'Acre that the order of the Holy Sepulchre and the other military orders established themselves in the hope of a great later conquest which, in spite of several spasmodic uprisings could not be achieved.

In 1194, the canons of the Holy Sepulchre who were settled in this city elected a new patriarch of Jerusalem in the person of Aymar le Moine, archbishop of Cesaree. The governor of the kingdom of Acre was right at this time Henri de Champagne, scion of that illustrious family deeply attached to the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Since the election had taken place without his previous consent, Henri de Champagne had the canons imprisoned for several days and "threatened to drown them in the sea..." Let us emphasize that this was only a threat, but the Holy See wished for the union of the kingdoms of Chypre and Jerusalem and frowned upon this discord.

Bernhard the Treasurer reports that the Pope "sent to the four companies of religious knights" in Acre a letter "in which he informed them that he wished that the two kingdoms would become but one." Brother Franciscus Quaresmius, of the order of the Friars Minor, in his work entitled: *Historia Theologica et Moralis Terrae Sanctae Elucidation*, published for the first time at Anvers in 1639, gives us this intricacy of powers which the government of Saint-Jean-d'Acre still shared in about 1275. Besides "the courts" of the kings of Jerusalem, of Chypre, of Naples, of the prince of Antioch and of the count of Jaffa, Brother Franciscus tells us in the text: "that of the patriarch of Jerusalem and of his knights of the Holy Sepulchre; that of the grand-master of Templars; that of the knights Hospitaliers; that of the grand-master of the Teutonic Brothers; that of the republic of Venice, etc."

Sensing the approach of serious events, "the Pope again sent help to the Holy Land, furnished new sums of money, and gave to the patriarch of Jerusalem the necessary powers to name the chiefs of the navy and of the army," in view of a final Crusade destined to prevent the imminent offensive of the Moslems.

Nicolas de Hannapes, patriarch of Jerusalem, at the head of his knights of the Holy Sepulchre was to become "the soul of the defense" and "to act as chief in the besieged place."

The siege had begun April 5, 1291. On May 18th at daybreak, the sultan El Achraf threw his strength against the accursed tower, center of the store of defense, the two extremities of which were held one by the Templars, the other by the patriarch and his knights.

After the frightful undercurrents of the street combats, the wave of infidels finally submerging the city, went to defeat the main fortress of the Temple overlooking the sea.

Refuge taken there, the last defenders of the city, survivors of the Hospital, of the Holy Sepulchre, or of the orders decided not to capitulate.

"Of those who remained at the Temple, in the care of God, we are told nothing for certain, except they dearly sold their lives as God knows.

"We learned later from the seamen, that the Saracens had destroyed the city of Acre to its foundations."

Christianity was definitely driven out of the Holy Land. It will never cease, however, to be present there, and the order of the Holy Sepulchre, founded for the safeguard of holy places and the preservation of the Faith in the land of the Savior, will continue its ideal across the centuries.

CHIVALRY AND HONOR

This sermon was preached at the Investiture of Carlos Eduardo Castaneda, Ph.D., L.L.D., as a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, by the late Francis C. Kelley, then Bishop of Oklahoma City and Tulsa and Grand Prior of the Western American Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, given at Austin, Texas, October 12, 1941. Carlos Castaneda was the author of the seven-volume history of Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936. This work has become the cornerstone of all Catholic history.

Richard Folger, KGCHS

When a great empire made by aggression reaches the time when it can no longer continue thus to expand and is forced on the defensive, its decline begins and its end is in sight. The most notable historical example of this fact was, of course, the Empire of Rome. It reached its peak of greatness under Trajan, wavered for a time in peace, and then slipped feebly, eagles half-lowered, down the slope of failure. Prosperity could not have saved it and there was no other great state from which military aid to it might have come. Alaric's forces were a devastating flood that burst over it. Attila marked his march to its capital with ruins that had to await our own day of machine-made wars to find their counterpart.

The throwing down of the Empire's ramparts, the leveling of its cities and the devastation of its rural life were not the only tragedies that followed its defeat. With the Empire fell also a civilization and a world culture. Cardinal Newman, in his *Idea of a University*, reproduces line for line and color for color a vivid picture of the fall's consequences made by no less an artist in words and thought than Gregory the Great: "The cities are destroyed, the military stations are broken up; the lands are devastated; the earth depopulated. No one remains in the country; scarcely any inhabitants in the towns; yet, even the poor remains of humankind are still smitten daily and without intermission. Before our eyes some are carried away captive, some mutilated, some murdered. She, herself, who was once mistress of the world, how fallen now, worn down by manifold and incalculable distressed; the bereavement of citizens, the attack of foes; the reiteration of overthrows. Where is her Senate? Where are her people? We, the few survivors, are still the daily prey of the sword, and of other innumerable tribulations. Where are they, who in a former day revelled in her glory?"

It was a different picture that Tertullian drew in the second century: "The world has more of cultivation every day and is better furnished than in times of old. All places are opened up now; all are familiarly known; all are scenes of business. Smiling farms have obliterated the notorious wilderness; tillage has tamed the forest land; flocks have put to flight the beasts of prey. Sandy tracts are sown; roads are put into shape; marshes are drained. There are more cities now than there were cottages at one time. Islands are no longer wild; the crag is no longer frightful; everywhere there is a home, a population, a state, and a livelihood."

All thus was changed at the thrust of the wild German spear. There was, however, one power on earth, though not a state, to face the forces of the northern conquerors and the terrors left in the wake of their invasions. It was the Church of Christ. Fortunately the first missionary effort that had triumphed for Him had not been too much weakened by success. Its field of conquest had been the wide Empire, with a common language known even in its distant provinces and roads everywhere. The fall of the Empire weakened these missionary advantages, for Europe broke up into many states warring against each other. The northern conquerors could fight but could not unite. They had brought with them all the tribal jealousies of the forests and were not able to benefit by the prizes saved out of the culture they had overthrown. Life in the invaded countries was lived in constant fear of robbery, torture, and death. Society was like a tossing and tempestuous sea at its wildest. Only spiritual power could bring peace and combat the Dark Ages that fell like a black pestilence over the world. Shelters for the treasures of faith and learning had to be built and defended. A learned caste had to be formed and sustained. Only when this was done could progress march, even at a snail's pace. The shelters of learning were made in monasteries; the saving caste found in the Christian priesthood, the road to be taken toward salvation ran through ruins, but it reached the glory of schools, of universities, of cathedrals and of the flowering of art and literature by the time the Middle Ages began. Not that there was ever a perfect peace. Changeful man of free will permits peace to come to his house but never yet to stay. But the Middle Ages did see a victory. It was not fated that it should be complete.

Out of that victory over the darkness and devastation that followed the downfall of the Empire two walls of strength and safety arose: one was scholastic philosophy, its roots grown in the garden of the brilliant intellect of the

Aquinas; roots which went down as far as the Ninth Century. From it sprang the Summa, the Cathedrals and the Divine Comedy. Understanding of man's relationship to God worked wonders in taming the beast in him, his responsible soul became more to man than the body seeking only physical satisfaction. The other wall was chivalry, which became not only the heart of romance but marked the change that led the world of the Dark Ages into the triumphs of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries.

What was this chivalry? It was the child of knightly honor.

One of the most pregnant sentences ever written flowed from the golden pen of John the Divine: "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was God." Probe the depths of meaning which those lines contain, and even human logic will lead you to the threshold of the kingdom of Christian truth. No wonder men say that the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John is a miracle-worker. It is in itself a miracle. It shows us Christ as the Word of the Fathers, the only Begotten, co-existent with the Eternal. And John's pregnant sentence presents to us the whole Christian dispensation—the Word of God made man. But have you realized the essential through finite greatness of the word of man; how it mirrors him in the ideal, how it is the ideal man? If you have, you know the true meaning of honor, out of which chivalry came. Ernest Hello, that most neglected of truth-tellers, wrote this sad indictment; "Humanity is an immense assembly of sinners; anyone who looks at it is shocked by what he sees and shrinks before the object that is shown him, the more man knows man the greater grows the abyss before his eyes. It is a frightful spectacle to see in any of its parts; because, wherever man has passed he has left his mark, and his mark is frightful."

But to the heart of man there is something worse even than the mask of sin. There is dishonor. "Everything" wrote Hello, "that dishonors is a fault but all faults do not contain dishonor." Dishonor is a blasphemy against one's own word. It is a blasphemy against man for him to violate his human word. Let honor rule the acts of men and the frightfulness one sees in the marks they make disappears. To keep one's work freely given to husband, to wife, to neighbor, to friend, to enemy, to the State, to God — that is dishonor; and chivalry is its offspring.

The heart of chivalry was honor, but honor, as chivalry accepted it, is difficult of definition. It is a sentiment and a sentiment is only known when given personality. "Rather death than the slightest stain," was Bayard's definition of honor. "I," he said to a traitor, "have lost my life but you have lost your honor." Dignity and power is not honor, or Roman Emperors like Tiberius, Nero, and

even Julius Caesar might have claimed it. Military glory is not honor, or young Alexander, dying in a debauch, would have merited it. Honor is not popularity, since for a while both Robespierre and Napoleon possessed popularity but had not honor. "honor," wrote one of its best eulogists, "is the splendor of the good." its measure is virtue. It is a sacred fire that lights the soul. It is love and generosity, eternally intolerant of evil and ever shrinking from baseness. It is democratic as well as Christian in that there is no barrier to the power of any soul to attain it. Aristocratic orders fostered it but recognized that it was not alone for them. Emperor or king, baron or peasant could and did reach it. Honor nerved chivalry and chivalry nerved the Sword of the Spirit as well as the sword of steel. It would have been only natural for the military orders to make grim war their sole objective, but they did not do it. Those who have been called the iron men began as religious men clad in the habit of fighting monks, known too as merciful men in the hospitals out of which they came. Chivalry did not first arise in the military orders. They came out of it. The iron men had their faults and their sins, for they were, after all, only human, but they knew Him Whom they were trying to imitate. What Boileau said later, they said in their time: "it is in God alone that true honor is to be found." what is the Christian life but a fight for man's union with Gods — with the Unstained and the Perfect Love Who keeps His Word? That is Honor Eternal.

It is not to be wondered at that chivalry as well as art and learning came out of the struggle of the Church to preserve the honor hard won by the martyrs from the ravages of the Dark Ages. Always there were and are devoted souls no matter how far mankind falls into sin and shame. "If the world ceased to pray for a single day," said a Saint. "it would that day fall to destruction." the iron men were not all saints, yet they did not cease to pray. We may smile at the spectacle of men of blood on their knees. But our own Washington on his knees at Valley Forge was, by the necessity of his leadership, also a man of blood, and yet one of our most treasured pictures shows him praying in the cold and snows of misery. Only God knows how much his prayers had to do with the results he obtained for us. No one would more willingly than he have confessed that he was a sinner. The great Bossuet said: "As evil has no nature and substance in itself, it follows that it cannot subsist alone; so that, if it is not helped by some mixture of good it will be destroyed by itself." the knights were men of blood, but honor was in them as sons of chivalry marked by the cross, but fighting in the habit of religion. They kept their word.

The military orders of knights, I said, came out of the hospitals. They can with some authority be called the

founders of hospitals; unless the legend of John Hyrcan, High Priest of the Jews, is more than a legend, but even if such it is, these warrior monks who continued his charity saved and sent the tradition of honor and love down the centuries to our own day. The Knights of St. John called themselves Hospitallers. The Knights of St. Lazarus were both lepers and nurses of lepers. It is significant that the Kings of both France and Russia were not ashamed in the face of that latter fact to become Grand Masters of an order founded for unclean men. Chivalry and honor had long life in those who kept and guarded the memory of their forerunners and of their own plighted word.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is at least as old as that of the Hospitallers. Its duty was to guard the tomb of Christ. Its early Grand Masters were Popes. Its Grand Masters even today is the reigning Pontiff. It is by his authority that its Rector, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, creates new Knights. It is royal too in its founder, the Crusader King of Jerusalem. It still guards the Holy Sepulchre by its alms and its devotion. But, above all, in a modern world into which it does not seem to fit, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre reminds, as does that of the Hospitallers, to keep alive the memory of days of greatness when, against the evils of barbarism, the cross was set; when honor and devotion gathered true men for the saving of Christian civilization.

Fifty years ago a man wrote: "Causes which gave rise to those days and deeds of romance will never come again. The lawlessness and disorder which began the chivalric spirit have vanished before the advance civilization... We must henceforth regard the mailed knight and his deeds of chivalry... as never again to be repeated." But the fifty years have passed and the undying ideal has not passed with them. Again there is devastation and ruin over the world. Again there hordes are on the march. Again lust for conquest fills the hearts of men. We may not now call for the mailed men of the past, but we do still call for iron men, knights who carry in their souls the chivalry that is born of honor.

This is the lesson of today's ceremony: in the person of a man of honor, honor is again being exalted and crowned. It is good that he was found in a fortress not of military might but of learning. The occasion as well as the ceremony is symbolical, for the seeds of chivalry blossom ever into all that a university should represent.

SERMON

Given at the Annual Pontifical Mass of Our Lady Queen of Palestine, by the late Frank A. Thill, K.C.H.S., then Bishop of Salina in Kansas. Giving to assembled members of the Western Lieutenancy of the United States Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, at Tulsa, Oklahoma, April 7, 1948.

SAINT BERNARD AND THE NEW CHIVALRY

“Virtue is a characteristic of the inner man, of the mind or soul: External marks, such as heraldic devices, cannot be expected to take account of anything more than virtue’s outward manifestation, in life and act.”

Maurice Keen, Chivalry

Knighthood was originally a title and social distinction granted to men of military bearing who were formed into a professional association composed of those who could afford to make the heavy capital investment required by mounted warfare (horse and armor). Up to the 11th century knights were regarded as lesser nobility. They were almost exclusively members of the great land-owning families of Europe which gave them a stake in the dynastic and religious wars of the middle age. Later, their ranks were supplemented by talented free men and craftsmen, even artists, whose ability and character offered advantages to the lord, King or other fons honoris (bestowing authority) granting them knightly status. But even in the early feudal era, the boundaries of knighthood were not precisely fixed. Any free man, who, by skill or valor managed to obtain the training and equipment to be a knight, could eventually enter that class. If he could not demonstrate noble lineage when called, the very act of receiving the honor ennobled him.

From the beginning, Knighthood was a very personal thing. Until the creation of military “Orders” which were first established by the Church at the start of the 12th century, a knight pledged himself as a vassal to a feudal lord who was often his sovereign. The relationship thus created became one of servant to master, defined by obedience and trust, for the mutual benefit of both parties. A Knight might also be a “Batchelor”, a “Knight errant” traveling from place to place on a mission or as a soldier of fortune without a particular allegiance to local authority. In either case his goals were personal, his professional demeanor was primarily secular and he was independent of a supporting community aside from whatever retinue accompanied him in the form of esquires or servants. All this changed with the great crusading orders which adopted a monastic administrative structure based on a Christian tradition of shared values. The Monarchical orders of the 14th to 16th centuries followed a similar pattern. A principal cause of this evolution was the Church’s intervention in medieval history.

The precise origins of the Holy Sepulchre Order as a corporate institution are unknown. Serious historians have never agreed on a date for its founding or the

circumstances surrounding the establishment of what today is generally regarded as the largest and most influential Roman Catholic order of chivalry under direct protection of the Holy See. This is due, in part, to the absence of a written instrument acknowledging its existence as an order before the year 1336 when a Flemish knight by the name of Wilhelm von Boldensel received the accolade of knighthood at Jerusalem, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. He took the occasion to ennoble two other “miles” at the same time. By then, of course, the conferring of knighthood at the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem had been a recognized and accepted practice for over two hundred years. It was performed first by the Chapter of Cannons, beginning in the year 1114 under the authority of the Patriarch, and later, after 1333, by the Franciscan Custody of Mount Sion.

Clearly, Boldensel was not the first, and as modern day members of the order can attest, he most certainly wasn’t the last to be ennobled by the Church in this manner. The timing and circumstances of his admission was typical, however. He was in Jerusalem on a pilgrimage, together with other European persons of rank, many of whom entered the Holy Sepulchre order upon swearing an oath “...to take up the sword in honor and devotion to God or the Virgin and Saint George, to guard and defend the Holy Church against the enemies of the Faith ..., to guard and defend God’s people and render justice, to keep faithfully [his] marriage vows, not to engage in treason against his rightful lord, and to defend and protect widows and orphans.” Today, over twenty thousand Knights and Ladies spread over fifty Lieutenancies in twenty-six countries around the world take on obligations little changed from those assumed by von Boldensel nearly 700 years ago. They, all of us, are the inheritors of a chivalric ideal that has its roots in medieval Europe even as the order has changed to reflect reality and the cultural mores of contemporary times.

Boldensel was one of several hundred nobles from Germany, France, England, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Italy who were invested as Knights of the Holy Sepulchre at the tomb of our Lord between the years 1336 and 1498. All of them undertook essentially the same vow and each was recognized as “a soldier of

Christ” (*miles Christi*), which collectively distinguished them from secular warriors (*miles Vulgaris*) who owed primary feudal allegiance to a King or local ruler. A Swiss pilgrim monk by the name of Felix Fabri, writing in 1483, described the many Knights he encountered from the order as a select elite, “...the superior of all other knights of the world”. Together with the three great Crusader orders that were comprised of professed knights, the lay, spiritually motivated (and often married), conferees of the Holy Sepulchre accolade considered their ennoblement a superior honor to any which might be granted by a medieval Duke or sovereign. They were intensely proud to be part of what St. Bernard of Clairvaux called “the new Chivalry” (*De laude novae militiae*).

Americans living in the 21st century can be excused for associating the word “elite” in this context with our national distaste for “elitism”, that most un-American trait of snobbery based on some perceived superior social distinction. But it would be a mistake to make that connection because the medieval mind thought differently. In describing his ennoblement at the Holy Sepulchre church, circa 1340, Albert (the fair) Hohenzollern, said it “crowned his knightly rank” because it was “good and true knighthood” instead of knighthood by class or social status. It mattered not that Albert was a powerful German noble and that he had been a secular knight before his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. What was more important to him was his investiture at the tomb of our Lord “in celestial Jerusalem” because he then joined the company of an elite few, composed of fellow Christians whose qualification for the honor was measured by service to others and faith in God. His view reflected the church’s emphasis that nobility owed more to virtue than to lineage. As Albert (the fair), von Boldensel and countless others who traveled on pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre understood, this also was at the core of Bernard’s teaching.

St. Bernard’s “new Chivalry” was the product of the most brilliant mind of the age. As the influential Abbot of Clairvaux, he had been commissioned to write “the Rule” by which the Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon (Templars) were to govern themselves. In the process, he conceived the notion of a warrior-monk, “...a fearless knight, and one secure from any quarter, since his soul is dressed in an armor of faith just as his body is dressed in an armor of steel.” Bernard challenged much of the conventional wisdom shared by the knightly class and he did so with a keen logic and blunt words. He asked, “What then is the end or issue of this secular chivalry, which I should probably just call wickedness outright, if its murderers sin mortally and its victims

perish forever?” The chroniclers report that no one had the courage to offer a response to this rhetorical question.

Twelfth century Europe was in the early stages of nation building and far along the road of perennial self-destruction through incessant warfare led by secular knights in the service of ambitious rulers. Papal decrees notwithstanding, life in the middle ages tended to be hard, brutal and short. Bernard’s call for a renewed sensibility was given greater weight than even he may have anticipated. Christians today certainly would reject some of what he wrote at the time for its lack of nuance in addressing a great many moral issues, some of which we face in contemporary times. It would be another century before St. Thomas Aquinas brought genius and subtlety of expression to a Christian view of “just war”, for example. But this does not detract from the power and pitch of Bernard’s message, directed as it was to military men of limited education and refinement. He attempted to bridge the seemingly limitless gap between a culture of war and the church’s mission of peace as reflected by Christ’s teachings in the New Testament. Some would argue he did not succeed, but few would fault the effort. Most would recognize his contribution to the advancement of a Christian ethic that was sorely needed at this time in history.

What emerged from Bernard’s rule was nothing less than a new concept of chivalry itself, one that sought to recognize and promote selected Christian virtues while at the same time preserving martial skills so long as they were placed in the service of humanity. Ultimately, the church’s influence over the knightly class prevailed in helping to curb a brutish culture. *Miles Christi* came to be respected not only for their military prowess, but also for their discipline and in many cases, their piety. Western mores began to reflect customs and ideas that today we take for granted and which arise from the fundamental proposition humans are indeed creatures made in the image of God, deserving of protection and respect. Even the latter day Monarchical orders adopted fundamental Christian virtues to guide their members. It was a slow evolution and not all progress can be attributed to Bernard or the ethos that emerged from a reform minded church. But there is little doubt that the introduction of Christian values as part of “the new Chivalry” was an important civilizing force in western culture.

Today, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre draws inspiration from its long history of faithful service to the Church and fidelity to its apostolate. As in the beginning, it attracts Roman Catholics in contemporary society who are willing to place themselves “at the service of a

noble and difficult cause, a pure and arduous ideal; fighting evil, promoting good, defending the weak and the oppressed against injustice.” In striving for “the new Chivalry” first proposed by St. Bernard nearly 900 years ago, Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre are called upon to embrace the characteristic virtues of the order, which include aid to the weak and those without protection, together with a courageous struggle for justice and peace.

May it always be so.

DEUS LO VULT

Gene Silva, KGCHS

THE SPIRIT OF KNIGHTHOOD

Breathes there a man with a soul so dead, who never to himself has said: This is my own, my native land?" Love of country is one of the marks of a man whose soul lives. The patriot is a man loved, the traitor is man pitied and despised. You are sons of a fair and mighty land, worthy to be named by the dearest words in your language, mother country and father land. You are citizens of an earthly city proud and strong, the City of Man, the American civilization that has risen in a few centuries from a primeval forest to bestride the world like a colossus, the shining hope of the poor and oppressed, the forbidding foe of tyrants, the most successful achievement in political, social and economic freedom in the history of man. The sight of its great plains and towering mountains makes your pulse beat faster, the sound of its songs makes your blood tingle and the taste of freedom makes your heart say, "Thanks be to God! This is my own, my native land," To America is my allegiance!

You have only one higher allegiance — to God. The God of your allegiance is not a vague remote abstraction. Your allegiance is to the God whom Jesus taught you to call Father. For you Jesus is not a wavering and fluctuating figure like a reflection on the waters of a lake. Your allegiance is to God in Christ Jesus Our Lord, as taught by the Roman Catholic Church through twenty centuries. For you the Church is not a countless variety of forms and an infinitude of opinions. It is one, as a rock is one, and strong as a rock is strong. Because of it you know where you are going and because of it you know the way.

In the City of God that is the Church you are an elite, you are a chosen band, you are knights and ladies. Knighthood rose with the rise of chivalry in Europe in the eighth century. The first meaning of chivalry is knights or horsemen equipped for battle, a courtly chivalry. It rose as a counter-attack against the mounted Saracens threatening Europe. Knighthood reaches its greatest glory during the Crusades, the religious wars of the 12th and 13th centuries waged against the Mohammedans for the recovery of the Holy Land. It was the faith and the spirit of chivalry that made such wars possible. Then Knighthood was determined by deeds of personal valor rather than by lineage and land. Around the time of the first Crusade knighthood's code of honor was born, The motto of the good Knight was: *La mia anima a Dio, la mia vita al Re, il mio cuore alla Dama, l'onore per me.* (My soul to God, my life to the crown, my heart to the Lady, my own honor.) Shakespeare gave stirring expression to this sense of honor in King Henry V. Before the battle the King addressed his soldiers:

*By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who dost feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires;
But if it be a sin to covet honor,
I am the most offending soul alive.*

During the Crusades there sprang up what Philip Hughes calls "the most striking of all the institutions of medieval Catholicism, the religious orders whose members were not priests, but soldiers, vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience and to defend with the sword the Holy Places." It was then owing to the Crusades that the Church took the profession of arms under her special protection, and from then on the ceremonies of initiation took on a religious as well as a martial character.

After 1500 knighthood was no more, but the spirit of knighthood was not to die. It lived on in groups of chivalric orders which derive from the medieval military orders and came under the jurisdiction of the Church. Some of these orders go back to the age of chivalry, and one of them is the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. It is told that Godfrey de Bouillon created twenty knights of the Holy Sepulchre after the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, and it has been affirmed that the birthplace of all orders of knighthood was the Holy Land. How great the inspiration of your origins: chivalry and knighthood, the Crusades, the Holy Land and the Holy Sepulchre! Do you wonder now that I call you and elite?

The soldiers of the cross did not succeed in wresting the Holy Places from the hands of the infidels. In the thirteenth century the sons of St. Francis came, not with sword but with staff. In 1342 they were made the official custodians of the Holy Land by Pope Clement VI. For six centuries they have watched over the sacred shrines. One of my sweetest memories of the Holy Land is the little garden on the slopes of Mt. Olivet, tended by a friar moving gently beneath the centuries old olive trees. This is a garden of memories, memories of Jesus at prayer that night when his sweat became as drops of blood. Beside the garden is the lovely church, its low vaulted ceiling expressive of the weight of Christ's sorrow. Before the altar is a large natural rock which tradition says Jesus used as his prie dieu. Across the Kedron Valley stands Jerusalem and in the heart of the old city is the Crusader Church of the Holy Sepulchre. What spiritual inspiration it was to offer Mass there on the spot where the cross stood and in the tomb where the dead

Christ was laid! How many recollections rise as you stand in the old church, memories of the seven last words from the cross, memories of Mary and John standing by the cross, memories of the first Easter morning and the empty tomb, memories of Crusaders being dubbed Knights. This is in a spiritual sense our mother country and our fatherland.

Then there is Nazareth, high in the hills and alone, as Jesus was when he prayed through the night; and the Lake of Galilee; H.V. Morton wrote "Galilee, the loveliest word I know." It has in it the sound of rippling waters and the echo of the flowing words of the Master who preached the Sermon on the Mount with the hills of Galilee as his pulpit and the Lake of Galilee beneath his gaze. I recall coming to the top of Mt. Tabor at sunset. As I entered the Church golden light was flooding the stained glass portrait of Jesus transfigured. It took my breath away, so lovely was the moment and the place. It sent a chill through me at the realization that as He was close then, He is close now to that dear land men call holy. I remembered the words of St. Jerome, "The bishops and martyrs before us, from the Ascension of Our Blessed Lord to this very day, all come to Jerusalem, knowing that they would never reach the summit of Christian virtue until they had adored Christ in His Holy Places." Then one understood better the hearts of the Crusaders and the mind of the Church, whose foreign policy for six centuries was to take possession of the Holy places for herself. One understood better why the knights of the cross would give their blood to retake them, and why hundreds of Franciscans would die as martyrs to guard them.

The inspiration of the past must lead to the action of the present. You are charged with the action of the present, Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre! This is the charge of your charter "to revive in modern form the spirit and the ideal of the Crusades, with the weapons of the faith, the apostolate, and christian charity" . . . "to work for the preservation and the propagation of the faith in Palestine, assistance to and development of the missions of the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem, providing for its charitable, cultural and social undertakings and the defense of the rights of the Catholic church in the Holy Land, the cradle of the order."

The action of the present is clear from the words of Pope Pius XII of happy memory. In 1948 the Pope requested Christians of the whole world to use their rights as citizens to influence such international bodies as the United Nations. "Let all," he said, "who, in the highest councils have the grave responsibility of restoring peace among men, be persuaded that it is most opportune to set up an international regime over Jerusalem and its environs, where the venerable monuments of the life and death of the Divine Redeemer are preserved. Again in 1949 he urged his chil-

dren "to persuade the rulers of states and those in whose power it is to solve a problem of such moment, to grant to Jerusalem and its vicinity a juridical status, the stability of which, in these conditions, can be made firm and safe through the cooperation and solidarity of the nations." The Holy Father did not forget the pitiable plight of the homeless refugees. He called on "all of great and noble soul" to help and upon "those responsible" to see that justice is done.

Let the action of the present fit the needs of the present. A field of particular need in the present is the Holy Land, and the Holy Land is your particular charge and dedication, Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. In you must live on the spirit of chivalry and the good knight's code of honor: *La mia anima a Dio, My soul to God* — by the full Catholic spiritual life; *la mia vita al Re, My life to the King* — Christ the King, *il mio cuore alla Dama, My heart to the Lady* — Our Blessed Lady; *l'onore per me, my own the honor* — the ineffable honor that comes to him who calls America "My own, my native land," to him who called the Church my Mother, and to him who calls God my Father and strives to live like his Son.

Richard Folger, KGCHS

This article was written by H. Daniel-Rops and translated by H.R.H. Prince Xavier de Bourbon-Parme in 1957. Daniel-Rops is one of the most highly acclaimed Catholic historians of our times having written a definitive ten volume history of the Catholic Church.

-Richard Folger KGCHS

THE IDEAL OF KNIGHTHOOD AND THE DEFENSE OF THE SEPULCHRE¹

The name itself which the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre bear includes in its formula two of the highest spiritual contributions of the Middle Ages: the ideal of knighthood and the veneration of the Holy Sepulchre. Knights: they belong to the elite which the Church knew how to disengage from a society where force was sovereign—this elite which knew how to submit this force itself to superior concepts of charity and of justice. Attached directly, substantially to the Sepulchre, “guardians of an empty tomb,” to cite Reverend Father Riquet,² but of a tomb where dwells eternally present the other knights privileged witnesses established in fidelity. How were they born? Under what circumstances? How, in the course of time, first of all in Palestine, then after the catastrophe which wrested the land of Christ from the Christians, were they able throughout all Christianity to continue to assume the mission which had been assigned to them since their origin? How can this mission be transposed into our own time? To these questions the present work proposes to give an answer; to begin with, we shall try to establish historically the fundamental principles of the ideal which is theirs.

I

THE SUBLIME FIGURE: THE KNIGHT

The knight! Among all the types of representative of the Middle Ages, which have become immortalized, does there exist one that strikes our mind and moves our hearts more? All that man bears within himself of animal passion, of all the will to power, all that in the obscure zones of his conscience tends tragically to violence and to destruction is satisfied and transcended in this noble image of that just and righteous warrior with a halo of purity intact, and whose sublime end is sacrifice rather than victory, and blood offered rather than bloodshed.

It was not in a Christian land that knighthood was born, but in the traditions of the Germanic tribes where the young man did not bear arms unless he had received them—helmet, shield, and lance—from the hand of his father or of his Lord. With what slowness, what patience, did not the Church work to make sacramental-like the military investiture that was to become the dubbing ceremony! Centuries passed during which on all levels

the intimate fusion of the two traditions was accomplished— that of the barbaric North and that of the Roman baptized South, a synthesis of which knighthood was to become the most complete symbol. It was at the very height of the barbaric epoch that the Church began to realize this union by blessing the arms of those who were going to combat and by proposing to them directives. Toward the year one thousand, the priest prayed thus for the adolescent ready to become a warrior: “Grant, O Lord, our prayers, and bless with Your majestic Hand this sword with which your servant desires to be girded in order to be able to defend and protect churches, widows, orphans, and all the servants of God against the cruelty of pagans in order to terrify the wicked!” About the middle of the eleventh century, this ideal grew deeper and became more Christian still. At the threshold of the twelfth century, the institution was substantially established, and in countries of high civilization was loved almost universally.

What then was a knight? What qualities, what virtues were demanded of one who bore this title? He was a soldier, a horseman—for the combat on horseback was a privilege—a man of war whose first avocation was indeed combat; but he was a man to whom moral principles were proposed and in the service of which he was engaged by oath, a man who recognized that above force, there existed values to which he intended to consecrate himself. Thus the commandments which ruled his life bore the military and Christian mark indissolubly united. As a soldier, he was above all to be brave, to hold his ground, to affront the enemy everywhere his lords so desired. These were his duties of state and in order that he might be totally faithful there was demanded of him physical strength, perfect health, skill; no pygmies nor bandy-legs among the knights. But these indispensable qualities did not suffice.

“So upright a man is he that he seems to unite two things: valor of body and goodness of soul.”

What was meant by the expression, “goodness of soul”?—the whole scale of the highest virtues, religious as well as laic and social, at the top of which was found

faith which gave to the others their direction and import. Because he was a believer, the knight venerated the Church and on every occasion defended her, at the same time accomplishing something for God in each rude feat of arms. If ever there was a type of man living under the eye of God, it was the perfect knight, such as a Godfrey of Bouillon, a Baldwin, the Leper, a Saint Louis, each of whom exemplified the type—of soldier whose life and death were entrusted in advance to the hands of the Omnipotent.

All the qualities exacted of this man were found in the full observance of the Christian commandments. He was faithful, devoted to his lords, strict in the execution of his duties as a vassal. He was loyal, honest, looking trouble as well as the enemy in the face. He was just, and better still, a faithful servant of the ideal of justice, “in order that justice should have here below a support,” as Guillaume Durand’s pontifical of chivalrous liturgy used to say. He was charitable, dedicated to protecting the weak, clerics, women and children, and he was generous toward those whom he had under his orders, even towards the enemy. This was an admirable ideal which no civilization has been able to surpass, which has only rarely been attained, which human covetousness has frequently ruined, it is true; but it is also praiseworthy that an entire society has recognized it as good and has sought to propagate it.

The entry into knighthood was a minute and grandiose ceremony, the dubbing. Its properly religious character shows that the institution was really an Order; it constituted a kind of sacrament. The ceremonial — one could say the liturgy—simple in the eleventh century, continued to be perfected, to be enriched with symbols. The old Germanic rites, such as that of the purifying bath and the bestowal of the sword, remained, and were integrated into a mystic ritual, intended to make the postulant feel the extent of the responsibilities which he was going to assume before God.

It was night, a holy night, the vigil of Easter or of some great feast. Enclosed in the church in heavy silence, along with a few candles which prayed to God with him, the youth kept his watch and meditated.

He was twenty years of age, rich in courage and strength. For many years in the household of his liege lord, he had trained himself to mount horseback, to handle the sword, to overthrow with a thrust of the lance the stuffed mannequin representing the enemy, the “quintain.” The vigil ended, the knight, duly confessed, bathed himself ceremoniously in order that body and soul alike would be pure, and clothed himself in the long white tunic as for a second Baptism, for this indeed was the beginning of a new life for him.

On the morning of the great day, hour by hour, the long ceremony unfolded its pageantry. The witnesses came, ordinarily twelve distinguished knights, the family, and all in the vicinity. Some high dignitary of the Church celebrated the Mass, surrounded by an immense group of clergy. When Holy Communion confirmed the knight the resolutions of the pious vigil, the reception began. Opposite his sponsor, the postulant “asked for knighthood.” The witnesses clothed him in his new garments: two with the “hoqueton” of thick cloth, each lacing a sleeve; another the coat of mail, two more the mailed hose, and a last putting on the spurs. He was reminded at each step of the investing that this armament must “rightly serve justice” and he replied each time: “May God make me such a knight!”

Then the sponsor advanced, his sword bare. He held out the blade which the youth kissed; he then struck him a great blow with the flat of the blade on the shoulders, the accolade or slap, a souvenir of the ancient Germanic ritual. He then pronounced the formula of consecration with its preliminary invocation of Saints Michael and George, inducting the postulant into the order of chivalry. Girt with the sword, the new knight stood before the altar and with the right arm extended, took the oath.

Such was the solemn blending of military rites and of liturgy which constituted the dubbing; nothing indicates better how the Church has introduced its ideal in what, on the whole, was in substance only a formality of incorporation. Who could be admitted to this ceremony? Contrary to a widespread opinion, it was not the privilege of blood or of fortune. “No one is born a knight,” said the adage. Plebians could — in principle see knighthood conferred on themselves for their courage and their devotion; “knighthood confers nobility” and “the means to be ennobled without titles is to be made a knight.” Thus, indeed, the institution provoked the enthusiastic desire of youth. Francis Bernardone, son of a merchant of Assisi at twenty years of age dreamed of becoming a knight before Christ called him for another service, and the attraction of this title accounts for the fervor with which so many young men set out to become crusaders. Before the end of the twelfth century in certain countries (the first was Norman Sicily about 1160) it was decided that, except in rare cases, only the sons of knights could become knights; this was to falsify the very meaning of the institution, to fossilize it, to ankylose it, to take from it its essential character of an abiding renewal of the elite.

Knighthood could be lost in the same way that it was merited; he who showed himself traitorous, cowardly, or cruel risked seeing himself degraded in the humiliating ceremony where his spurs were cut off level with the heels. “Shamed be he who does not have nobility of

soul;” nobility of soul was on a par with valor in combat.

This type of superior humanity developed, in the course of centuries, a type of refinement, a sort of purification. The knight of time of Charlemagne, such as one sees in the Song of Roland (written about 1120 but their heir of a tradition much more ancient) was above all a redoubtable warrior who took great pleasure in cleaving an enemy asunder, or making his brains spurt out. His faith had for its foundation the tranquil assurance that to conquer the pagans was a most pious task. Nevertheless, an admirably Christian idea was dawning in this conscience still so rude—the idea of sacrifice, of life offered to God, such as the dying Roland so well expressed. The knight, according to the epic, exercised a profound influence. Then, more efficacious, more concerned with concrete reality, was the knight of the Spanish Reconquest, such as the Cantar del Cid describes for us; or again, that of the epic of Nibelungen where remained the memory of hard-fought battles against the pagan enemy. At that time, the knight wished indeed to sacrifice his life in order that Christianity triumph.

That Christianity might triumph was also the intense desire of the crusaders—that the Holy Land might be liberated. But through this concrete intention of military victory, was not a higher ideal dawning? For some among these heroes of the Cross, it certainly was. Instead of the accent being placed on military qualities, on attainment of temporal ends, it was placed by certain ones on spiritual greatness; the knight considered himself no longer as a Christian soldier but as a Christian above all things, even in battle. A type of the mystic knight is found in the Quest of the Grail, such as the Provençal Guyot and the German Wolfram von Eschenbach were to describe in the course of the twelfth century; around the mysterious chalice, the receptacle of (starting page 64) the Sacred Blood of Christ, which is definitely, according to the poet, only the “grace of the Holy Spirit,” assemble the figures of a Perceval, “toute candeur et toute nicete,” of a Bohort, who so fully expiates his sins that Paradise opens for him; of a Galahad, incarnation of perfect purity. There are sublime figures of knights living like monks, accepting religious rule, a holy militia, a sacred militia of which St. Bernard makes the unforgettable eulogy and which St. Louis epitomizes in one exceptional figure. For these soldiers of Christ – at least for the best among them—it was not a question only of lands to be taken, of fiefs to be constituted, but of very different conquests—that which the man accomplishes when he struggles against himself in the name of faith and sacrifice accepted.

II

THE APPEAL OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

It is necessary now to consider another of the major concepts of the spirit of the Middle Ages, such as is expressed in institutions and usages—the practice of the pilgrimage to the Sepulchre of Christ. For the medieval Christian there was upon the earth a certain number of places particularly venerated, because a saint has lived there or reposed there in the peace of Christ; because a striking miracle had been worked there; because first of all, the memory of God made man dwell there. It was toward these select places that the crowds went, certain of praying better there than elsewhere, happy to take part through their efforts and their sufferings in the sacrifice of the Crucified.

Likewise, the custom of going in great masses to a venerated spot as found in all religions and within all latitudes was as old as the Church. Israel, a wandering people, had had the habit of “going up to Jerusalem” to the great feasts, in long files singing the psalms. Christians had transposed this tradition; as early as the second century by what perilous stages travelers had been going to pray at the tomb of the apostles, Peter and Paul at Rome! In the fourth century the pilgrims to the Holy Land had been numerous; among them was the enterprising Spanish religious, Silvia Etheria who left such a curious account of his journey. The invasions, the barbaric times, even the Islamic tide, had not slowed down this urge. During this troubled period thousands of Christians had braved dangers in order to kneel at the Holy Sepulchre or near the “Confession” of St. Peter. When the times became less agitated, the pilgrimages took on an extraordinary importance.

One has difficulty in imagining these enormous displacements, these interminable caravans. The recorded figures are scarcely believable; a half million persons each year on the road to Compostella! In Rome at the time of the first “holy year” more than two million pilgrims and never less than two hundred thousand at a time in the city! And even towards far-distant Jerusalem still in the hands of Islam, Gunther, the Bishop of Bamberg, in 1064, led seven thousand pilgrims on a single tour! Not only was it considered an honor to make at least once in one’s life a great pilgrimage, but there were many who repeated this signal act of piety – such as the Blessed Thierry, Abbot of Saint Hubert of Ardenne who went to Rome seven times; or even better, Geoffroy of Vendome, who went no less than twelve times.

And why does one make a pilgrimage? Quite simply for God. Because one has something to ask of Him— such as the sick who make the trip to obtain a cure. Because one has a big sin to be pardoned, a penance to fulfill imposed by a confessor. Or to tell Our Lord of one’s faith, of one’s joy, and of one’s love, even of one’s great unrest as,

for example, that of Anne Vercors in the Tidings Brought to Mary (Paul Claudel, *L'Announce Faite a Marie*, Act I Scene 1). The pilgrimage is an act by which one places oneself for a time at the exclusive service of God. It is the eminent form of prayer and of penance.

The three Churches participate in it: the Church Militant, which suffers and merits en rout; the Church Suffering, that of the dead who have already followed the same way, while waiting for love of their children to assist them to gain heaven; the Church Triumphant, that of the saint whom one honors by this rude march.

Of all the venerable places towards which the pious columns march, one has primacy over all others. The first pilgrimage, first by its dignity, by the merits to be gained, is the Holy Land, Jerusalem. One saw this pilgrimage begin in the fourth century during barbaric times. It did not cease even when the terrible Hakim, in a crisis of fanaticism, destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and it became extremely dangerous to risk one's life in Palestine. Some of the audacious, such as the terrible Foulques Nerra, Count of Anjou, even made the devout journey several times in order to implore forgiveness, which one must admit was very necessary! In the eleventh century, the pilgrimage to the holy places remained difficult, for the Seljuk Turks were not at all disturbed when seized by the mood to massacre or make slaves of the pilgrims. The anger provoked by the sufferings inflicted on the pedestrians of God was one of the causes which urged the Papacy to launch the Crusade. Even after 1088 when the Frankish princes were in Jerusalem, the pilgrimage continued to constitute an exploit.

By the AEmilian Way the pilgrim first crossed Italy, then embarked at Brindisi—not without having saluted the Archangel St. Michael at Mount Gargano—and even, if he had chosen as his port of departure Pisa, Genoa, or Venice, he still had many stops before arriving there. Following that, there were weeks of sailing of boats where the pious cargo was crowded to the maximum. After this, having disembarked at some Syrian port, he still had many days of marching to reach his goal. What did that matter? The joy was great when he knelt at the places called sacred by the exact spot—no one doubts it—of the Nativity! At the edge of the beautiful lake which heard the Word resound! Especially at the Sepulchre which sheltered the adorable Body for three days! Upon one's return to relate a thousand astonishing things, to evoke memories of Basilica whose Frankish master workmen set up tiers to display the precious souvenirs gathered there: a little dust from the tomb, a small branch of the olive tree cut from the Garden of Agony, a medal, a statue, and especially a palm like that fixed on the collar of the “palmer” ---- what Glory for all the rest of ones days!

It is the strong sentiment that one must evoke to comprehend the ideal of the Crusades and how chivalry found its fulfillment in serving them. In the soul of the Middle Ages a constant, imperious appeal reechoed: the call of the Holy Sepulchre. Can a believer whose faith is founded upon the certitude of the resurrection behold without emotion this diminutive bit of earth, this treasure of such modest dimensions where the body of the living God reposed for a few hours in a state like to that which awaits the body of every man, but wholly for the purpose of proving to the world and to history that death can be conquered and that by faith the believer will conquer it? It is this substantial truth of Christian doctrine which was at the root of this devotion toward the Sepulchre to which the pilgrims gave witness. Imposing itself on chivalry and proposing to it an end worthy of itself, this devotion was to give birth to that type of sublime humanity, doubtlessly the purest which the Middle Ages produced, as is incarnate in a Godfrey of Bouillon; a Baldwin IV, the little Leper King; a St. Louis of France; that of the warrior ready to sacrifice all, even life itself in the service of the purest, the most disinterested ideal one can know: to guard for religion and for faith a tomb where there is nothing!

Since Christianity conquered the ancient world, devotion to the Holy Sepulchre never ceased to be manifested. One sees in the work of Donnadieu, “*Histoire des chevaliers du Saint-Sepulchre de Jerusalem*,”³ that Christianity succeeded in spite of adverse circumstances to maintain a guard of prayer and of charity around the tomb of Christ, that as a veritable moral entity the Holy Sepulchre was closely associated with the practical life of the Church, that this organization succeeded in maintaining itself under Moslem domination. It was when the pilgrimage to the Holy Places was no longer possible and when the most eminent of Christian fidelities was menaced with annihilation by fanatical oppression, that Christian society reacted and in order to defend a few square meters of earth more than holy, the Crusade suddenly came forth.

Let us go back to that November day of 1095 when in the Cathedral of Auvergne in Clermont the prodigious idea was launched. On the eighteenth a Council had opened there, presided over by Pope Urban II. For nine days bishops, abbots, prelates, had studied the questions⁴ dealing with the German Emperor, the disquieting Henry IV. Suddenly on the tenth day, as if he had wished to wait until his plan had completely matured, the Vicar of Christ rising, spoke on a completely different subject; he spoke of the Sepulchre where Jesus for three days remained buried before the glory of His resurrection burst forth in the light of Easter; he described this place, sacred above all others towards which so many pilgrims had directed their

wearily hopeful steps—in the hands of the infidel, profaned, almost inaccessible. Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Would the city of holy fidelities remain captive? The Pope concluded in a voice which must have expressed the fervor of his soul: “Men of God, elect and blessed above all, unite your forces! Take the route to the Holy Sepulchre, assured of imperishable glory which awaits you in the Kingdom of God. Let each one renounce himself and take up the Cross.”

Does one realize the truly sacred audacity needed by Urban II to launch such an appeal? To propose to these men to abandon their lands—which enemies far and near doubtlessly coveted—to undertake an adventure full of perils! To find financial means, political support, to bring to a successful issue such an enterprise! That was enough to make the less strong hesitate. In such an audacious attempt would Christianity follow a pope whom an anti-pope contested under the patronage of the most powerful sovereign of the time? But for Urban II it was a question of something different from a piece of land; it was a supernatural appeal like that of the last trumpet to which no Christian can remain deaf.

Urban II was not the first who had more or less conceived the grandiose project. On the day following New Year's in the year 1000, had not Sylvester II cried out: “Soldiers of Christ, rise!” Then when the awful Hakim had in 1010 destroyed the Holy Sepulchre, had not Sergius IV launched an appeal which presaged that of Clermont? On the eve of his death had not the great Gregory VII spoken of establishing a league of Christians against Islam and had he not proffered this advice, which had the value of a pledge: “I would prefer to expose my life to deliver the Holy Places than to command the universe!” But at the end of the eleventh century, circumstances had become such that it was no longer a question of speaking, but of acting.

The event which was to determine the Papacy to act—and, more than in any other event it did so prudently, having weighed carefully the pros and cons—was the Turkish invasion. Since the four centuries that the Arabs held the Promised Land, a *modus vivendi* had been established between them and Christianity. Without being too much disturbed the pilgrims were able to go to the Sepulchre where the representatives of the Christian clergy lived. After the year 1000 the situation had changed. A revived atmosphere of holy war had succeeded a climate of easy tolerance. The entry of the Seljuk Turks on the scene was the cause; not that these people were more cruel and less civilized than the other Moslems—the crusaders recognized their generosity and chivalric character—but it was a young nation in a full expansion, wholly attached to the faith of Islam and ignorant of the

tacit rules of making settlements with the adversary. When in 1076 Jerusalem fell into their hands, the terrible rumor spread that the pilgrimages had become impossible, that a poll-tax was imposed by the Turks on visitors to the Holy Land, that many were molested, despoiled, even reduced to slavery. A certain Pierre of Achery, on his return from this difficult journey, never tired of giving --dreadful accounts.

Undoubtedly the imperious desire to save the tomb, to permit Christians to return there to pray was not to the only reason which could have determined the Papacy to undertake the Crusade. In his wisdom Urban II could have also thought that the moment had come to mend the breach which the defeat at Manzikert in 1071 had opened in the definitive disposition of Byzantium. It could also be said that to turn the violence of Western Christians toward the holy war against Islam was to work effectively in eliminating, or at least in diminishing, the private wars which in spite of all the efforts of the Church continued to make Europe flow with the blood of the baptized. Perhaps there were even precise political and economic intentions in the background of this vast undertaking. But it is beyond doubt that the primary, capital, decisive motive which drew so many men into the adventure of the Crusade was none other than the will to save the Sepulchre.

One is familiar with the scene which can be reconstructed through various witnesses. The entire assembly arose at the voice of the Pope; acclamations of “Gods will it” re-echoed under the vaulted roofs making it the rallying cry of the enterprise. Immediately the cross of red material, cut from mantles and curtains, was sewed on the right shoulders of those who had decided to leave. Today's impressive mass movements, political gatherings, and world pilgrimages can give one an idea of the great tide of faith. On the evening of November 27, with red material unavailable at Clermont, some had a cross tattooed on their shoulder, nay even had it branded with a red-hot iron! “One saw,” says Michelet, “men suddenly take a distate toward all that they had loved—barons abandoning their chateaux, artisans their trades, peasants their fields, to consecrate their sufferings and their lives to preserve from sacrilegious profanation the ten square feet of earth which for a few hours had harbored the earthly remains of their God.”

III

THE KNIGHTS FOR THE TOMB

Thus, the ideal of chivalry found in the Crusade its highest peak of endeavor; it offered to those who took it to heart the most disinterested end that one could imagine—sacrifice for a truth of faith. Quite naturally by

the very logic of events this joining of the ideal of knighthood with that of fidelity to the Sacred Tomb grew into an institution.

After Jerusalem had been wrested in furious assault from its Moslem defenders on July 19, 1099, the problem arose: What was to be done with it? Evacuate the Holy City and Palestine? That was out of the question. There was needed a man who would agree to remain to direct the country—a Palestine incompletely conquered—and an organization which would prevent the return of the Crescent. The man? Who would have been better qualified for so difficult a role than Godfrey of Bouillon whose bravery had been sublime, whose kindness and steadfastness were well known, and who was moreover, a perfect Christian? In spite of the surly reticence of Raymond of Saint Gilles, he was elected by the barons. According to tradition, he refused the title of king, not wishing to be encircled with a crown of gold in a place where Jesus had worn a crown of thorns. The true King of Jerusalem was Christ in his Vicar; for him the modest title of “*avoue du Saint-Sepulcre*: [“Defender of the Holy Sepulchre”] would suffice. This noble humility sealed the portrait of the great crusader; but one year later, when he died on July 18, 1100, his brother, Baldwin, had fewer scruples; with him the Frankish kingdom had a king.

This kingdom was to last amid changes of fortune for more than two centuries. That duration in itself was a rather extraordinary thing, for this little kingdom was from the beginning, and became more so in the course of years, a fragile island more and more threatened in the midst of Islam ready to throw its waves against it. The feudal system copied from the West, but in quite a different context rendering it anarchical and fragile, the moral degradation to which, alas, too many of the Crusaders gave sad example, did not dispose the Frankish kingdom to be the hard unencroachable block which it would have to be before its enemies. This young kingdom was going to be a prey to innumerable difficulties. The most serious was the lack of men. Those of the Western World never constituted more than a thin commercial stratum dominating the indigenous mass. By a tragic fatality none of the “Crusades of the Common People” were able to reach the Holy Land. The most important, that of 1101, which Raymond of Saint Gilles had taken in hand when it arrived at Constantinople, was massacred on the plateaus of Anatolia. Baldwin I had the ingenious idea of drawing to Palestine every Christian, Greek and Syrian dispersed in the country; that was not as good as a steady stream of French immigration which always remained small. Actually, the Latins held only the cities, the desert being in the hands of the Saracens who came to pillage the fields of subdued peasants and to insult the defenders

of the ramparts on the squares. The country has to live in an atmosphere of war. It bristled with vast strongholds where garrisons could at all times face the “raids” of Islam.

To this absolute numerical inferiority was added the handicap of the mode of recruitment. The principle remained feudal; the king was to call his vassals who, convoking the “*ban*,” came or did not come to place themselves at his command. A regular army seemed indispensable to thoughtful minds, but how meet the expense? The King of Jerusalem was far from being rich. At most, he could support a few squadrons of Turcophiles.

It was in response to this urgent need that the original institution of religious Military Orders arose. Who had this admirable idea of constituting men as Knights of God, ready to serve Christ by arms unto the sacrifice of life, and live at the same time as veritable monks, pure and chaste, faithful and poor? Had this idea been borrowed from the “*ribats*” of Islam? One does not know. But what is certain is that this idea was profoundly Christian; that it was born only in souls filled with faith. St. Bernard was not mistaken in extolling in these “Sacred Militia” the purest ideal of Christianity. In founding the soldiers of Christ., established to defend by arms the Holy Sepulchre, soldiers who would thus accept to live according to the rules of the strictest faith, the masters of the Frankish kingdom of Jerusalem realized the creative synthesis of the ideal of Knighthood and of fidelity to the dead and risen Christ—incontestably, they herein attained the summit.

One knows that the two most renowned of these religious Military Orders are the Templars and the Hospitallers; both received their organization from Baldwin II, the third ruler of the Holy Land. “The Order of Hospitallers,” Rene Grousset tells us, “took its origin from a beneficent establishment that was both hostelry and hospital, founded even before the Crusade in 1070; for the poor pilgrims by merchants of Amalfi and established in Muristan, between the street of the Bazaar and the Holy Sepulchre. At the time of the arrival of the first Crusade, the hospital had at its head a certain Gerard, a person without doubt of Amalfi origin, who rendered great services to the besiegers by procuring for them precious information in the stronghold. The conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders naturally transformed the institution. To the original group which Gerard placed at their disposal they joined new recruits whose charitable zeal was no longer content with the modest and poor community which he directed. Under their impetus hospitality was reorganized and developed. Gerard’s companions became independent of the Benedictine’s obedience which up to this time they observed and, under the name of Hospitallers constituted a religious order,

having a proper life.

“Gerard, having died between 1119–1120, was replaced by a Frenchman, Raymond of Puy, a native Dauphine it seems, who during his long Grand-mastership (approximately between 1120 and 1158) completely modified the character of the order. Without easing to be Hospitallers, it became under his impetus primarily military. In 1126, Delaville le Roulx called attention to the presence of a Lord High Constable in the Hospital and, after 1137 the Hospitallers were seen taking an active part in the struggles against the Moslems.

“The Order of the Temple was, from the beginning, a Military Order. It was founded in 1118 by the Knight of Champagne, Hugo of Payens, who gave it place in a part of the Royal Palace, called the Temple of Solomon, Mosque al-Aqsa (Masjid al-Aqsa). The Militia of the Temple, as this Brotherhood was called, took on the task of watching over the security of the pilgrimage routes between Jaffa and Jerusalem. Baldwin II appreciating the work of Hugo of Payens sent him to France and to England to implore Christian princes to send help. Hugo thus attended the Council of Troyes in 1128. There he received approval of his rule of Benedictine inspiration so similar to that of the Hospitallers. The order comprised the Knights who were all of noble birth, the Sergeants taken from the middle class, squires or intendants, the clerics who served as chaplains. All pronounced the three monastic vows; they were to have strong arms, but without any ornament or gilding; their coat of mail was covered by a uniform mantle, white for the Knights, black for the Sergeants. Pope Eugene III added the red cross, while the Hospitallers had the white cross. They had their hair close-cropped (cut close) and wore a short beard “in order to be able to see before and behind.” Prolonged abstinences were forbidden them; on the contrary, they were to be well fed in order to maintain their vigor. At the head of the order was a real governing body composed of the Grand Master and of officers, but the important decisions could be made only by the chapter of the Knights.”

Here is not the place to say what became of these two illustrious orders. Rene Grousset in severe terms speaks of their rapid decadence, of the lack of discipline among them and of other weak points. “As long as the French royalty remained strong,” he says, “the Military Orders which took the place of a permanent army and whose heroism was without equal, were its most precious auxiliaries. But after the decline of the kingship reckoning from about 1173, and especially after its actual disappearance in 1185, these churches within the Church became likewise so many states within the State. Henceforth without restraint, without the vigilant control

of the kingship these powerful military brotherhoods, depending on a banking organization which backed them, too often pursued their own policies without consideration for the common good.

At the outset as an element of force in the service of the monarchy, the orders would become one day, in the absence of the monarchical institution, an element of dissolution. The fall of the Frankish colony of Syria in 1187 proceeded from them.

At least at the supreme moment, they knew how to show themselves worthy of their glorious past as seen at the time of the famous battle of St. John of Acre where the last Christian bastion (fortification) of the Holy Land fell. Reconciled before approaching death, the Knights of the two orders who so often had allowed their sordid rivalries to be seen, conducted themselves heroically. When on May 18, 1291, the Arab trumpets sounded the final assault, one saw the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, Jean of Villiers, the Grand Master of the Templars, Guillaume of Beaujeu, fall side by side defending the gate of Saint-Antoine. One saw also the Marshall of the Temple, Mathieu of Clermont, as the flood of assailants rose and fell, cutting and thrusting about him, opening up a path strewn with the dead, until he was captured. There remained only by a handful of survivors in both orders.⁵

But there also exists a third Order, the history of which was perhaps less sensational, but whose role, authentically Christian, also was more indisputable. Its Knights bore the very title of the “Holy Sepulchre,” of that Holy Sepulchre which all the Military Orders had the duty to defend, as if they had a mission, a privileged vocation. What their origin was and how they differed from the others is a subject of other studies. It was important first to place the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre in the framework of events and in the spiritual climate from which they sprang.

¹ A translation of Daniel-Rops, “Idéal de chevalerie et défense du tombeau,” in Xavier de Bourbon’s *Les chevaliers du Saint-Sépulchre* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1957), pp. 13–28.

² “Gardens d’un Tombeau vide!”, *ibid.*, p. 153

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 29–56

⁴ Here the original French text omits a line of print. However, the meaning is obvious.

⁵ It is known how at the end of the fourteenth century, the Templars were exposed to the hostility of Phillip the Fair who after an iniquitous trial destroyed the order and burned a number of its members. The Templars survived in Portugal under the title of “The Militia of Christ” but a remnant were absorbed by the Order of Hospitallers who under the name of the Order of Malta are in existence today.