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HISTORY OF FREEMASONRY

About the year 1118 A. D. a Burgundian Knight, Hugh de Paganis and eight comrades bound themselves by covenant to the representative of the Latin Christian Church at Jerusalem to fight for, defend and protect, the King of Heaven, as represented by his church upon earth.

Other members were added to the number and quarters were provided for the brotherhood in a Mohammedan Mosque, which was used as a palace of the Christian King of Jerusalem.

This palace is said to have been built on Mount Moriah, the supposed site of the Temple of Solomon, and came to be known as Templum Solomonici (Solomon's Temple). It was from this that the name Knights Templar was taken.

At a later date Hugh de Paganis went to England, where a number of English Knights were induced to become members of the brotherhood, and return with him to the Holy Land. Among these was the Count of Anjou, who was crowned King of Jerusalem in 1131.

It will thus be observed that the order of Knights Templars was not instituted until about one thousand years after the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem by the Roman armies, under the leadership of Vespasian and his son Titus, at which time the very foun-

dation stones were removed, as our Lord had declared that they should be. (Matt. 24:2.)

It is a historical fact that at the time of the taking of Jerusalem by the Roman army not one of the foundation stones of the Temple was left upon another.

If the Knights Templars had proper understanding of the ceremonies and ordinances of the Temple of Solomon, from what source was it obtained? Can this question be answered? Matthew Ramsey, a Scotch gentleman, and writer on the subject, believed that Freemasonry had its origin with the Knights Templars.

Between the date of its inception at Jerusalem, in 1118 and 1314, the Order of Knights Templars had become a powerful and wealthy organization. They recognized allegiance to no power above the Church, of which the Pope was the recognized head.

At this time Jacques de Molay was Grand Master of the Order. Pope Clement V and Phillippe-le-bel, King of France, fearing the growing power of the Templars, and coveting their immense wealth, resolved to destroy the Order. While Jacques de Molay was preparing an expedition to avenge the wrongs and disasters suffered by the Christians in the East, the Pope ordered him to come to France. On his arrival he was received with every mark of friendship, but soon after the king ordered his arrest together with other members of the Order, accusing them of most heinous crimes, denouncing them particularly because of the secret rites and oaths of initiation.

By order of the Archbishop of Sens, Jacques de Molay, Guy of Auverne, and others of the Order were burned at the stake, on March 18, 1314. The Pope had declared the Order of Knights Templars abolished throughout the world, and the execution of the Grand Master and his companions gave the *coup de grace* to the order.

The knights, scattered by the action of the Pope, took refuge in various countries. Some who had escaped to Portugal assumed the title of Knights of Christ. Before his death Jacques de Molay appointed Johan Marcus Larmenio his successor to the office of Grand Master. Some of the Knights, who fled to Scotland and took refuge at the court of King Robert Bruce, refused to recognize his authority, and under the patronage and protection of the king, pretended to reestablish the Order of the Temple under the title of Architects, and laid the foundation of the Order of the Free and Accepted Masons of the Scottish Rite. This was in 1314.

This society is said to have retained the execratory oath to avenge the death of Jacques de Molay and his associates upon those who were responsible for their execution, but after the death of Phillippelebel and Pope Clement V and others who were concerned in the death of their fellow members, this appears to have been discontinued, and the Order gave more particular attention to allegories and symbols, and extensive texts from the Bible were introduced into their ceremonies.

Little is known of the further activities of the Masons until the reign of Charles I of England. The enemies of Oliver Cromwell, seeking to restore the monarchy, created the Degree of Grand Master, to prepare the minds of the Masons for that event. King William III was initiated into the Order, and a great revival occurred. In February, 1717, the first Grand Lodge is said to have been established in London. The four lodges then existing in that city met at the Tavern of The Apple Tree, and appointed Anthony Sayer Grand Master. This is credited by many authorities as being the real origin of the craft. There are others, however, who claim that the craft did not originate with any order of chivalry, but in the building fraternities of the Middle Ages.

From the time of the organization of the Grand Lodge at the Tavern of The Apple Tree, Freemasonry spread rapidly throughout Europe, and in 1732 crossed the Atlantic to America. If the theory of Chevalier Ramsey is correct, that is, that modern Freemasonry had its beginning with the Society of Architects, founded in Scotland under the protection of Robert Bruce, and the title of Ancient and Accepted Masons of the Scottish Rite, then we may trace its origin to the Order of the Knights Templars, and through them to the ancient mysteries, practiced in Egypt, Chaldea, Greece, Etruria and other ancient nations from time immemorial.

It is well known that one of the charges made against Jacques de Molay and his associates was that

they used secret oaths and rites in their initiations. We are told that the aim of the Architects was to perpetuate the ancient order of the Temple, it is therefore to be presumed that they endeavored to observe the rites and ordinances practiced there.

The writer has no knowledge of the secrets of Freemasonry, or the rites and ordinances observed in Masonic Temples, if there are such, nor has he a desire to know. They are held sacred by Masons, and his respect for the Fraternity is such that he would not feel justified in exposing them to public criticism, even if he were fully informed, a courtesy which has not always been manifested by writers when treating the sacred ordinances administered in the temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He does, however, understand the ordinances administered in the temples of the church of which he is a member, and will discuss their relationship to Freemasonry before closing this treatise.