

**ARIZONA
SUPPLEMENT**

Peter H. Johnson, Jr., KCT, PGC, Editor
1501 Sunset Drive
Holbrook, AZ 86025
(928) 524-3248

johnson618@cableone.net



Bertrand de Blanchefort, Grand Master 1156-1169

Bertrand de Blanchefort (or Blanquefort), (c. 1109 – 13 January 1169) was the 6th Grand Master of the Knights Templar, from 1156 until his death in 1169. He is known as a great reformer of the order. He was born around 1109, although no exact date is recorded. The Obituary at Reims gives his death as 2 January 1169. He was the youngest of a family of boys, the children of Lord Godfrey de Blanchefort of Guyenne. He trained in combat from a young age, but during his time as Grand Master, placed more emphasis on reform and negotiation. This helped to foster the Templar's image as guardians, not brutes.

His earliest action as Grand Master was with Baldwin III of Jerusalem, with whom he fought against Nur ad-Din Zangi. However, he was taken prisoner after King Baldwin was defeated at Banyas in 1157. He was held in captivity for three years in Aleppo before being released to Byzantine emperor Manuel I Comnenus when the emperor made peace with Nur ad-Din.

Bertrand accompanied King Amalric I during the expedition against Egypt in 1163. The expedition ended in failure, despite the considerable numbers the Christians could draw upon. Bertrand refused to participate in a second expedition in 1168, as heavy losses were almost certain. He was succeeded by Philip of Milly.

Blanchefort petitioned the Pope to use the title, "Master by Grace of God," which fitted the Templar's position as rising stars in the church, a favor which Rome gladly granted. His internal reforms were more important, however. He wrote the "Retraits", which established structure within the order. This meant knights had clearer roles and protocols. He also established checks within the leaderships of the Order, which stopped future Grand Masters deciding the direction of the Templars without the backing of the knights. His work on creating negotiating roles within the Order is also worth noting. After the failed expedition to Egypt, it was the Templars that helped draw up a peace treaty.

Philippe de Milly, Grand Master 1169-1171

Philip of Milly, also known as Philip of Nablus (c. 1120 – April 3, 1171), was a baron in the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the 7th Grand Master of the Knights Templar. Philip was the son of Guy of Milly, a knight of uncertain origin, who witnessed a dozen of royal charters in the Kingdom of Jerusalem between 1108 and 1126. Guy held fiefs in the royal demesne around Nablus and

Jerusalem. Guy's wife was a Flemish noblewoman, Stephanie, according to the late 13th-century Lignages d'Outremer. The Lignages d'Outremer also claimed that Philip was a nephew of Pagan the Butler, but no other primary source refers to Pagan as Philip's uncle. The date of Guy's death is unknown, but he was most probably still alive in the early 1130's. Philip inherited his father's estates around Nablus. He married a noblewoman, Isabella, before 1144. Her name is the only known fact about her, but she may have been related to Maurice, Lord of Oultrejordain.

Philip first appeared in a royal charter in 1138 and was first mentioned as Lord of Nablus in 1144. Late in that year, the queen appointed Philip along with Elinand, Prince of Galilee, and Manasses of Hierges, to lead a relieve army to Edessa, but Imad ad-Din Zengi captured the town before they approached it. During the following years, he seized further fiefs, including lands in the hills near Nablus and Tyre. In 1148 Philip participated in the council held at Acre, where he and the other native barons were overruled and the ill-fated decision to attack on Damascus was made.

Along with the powerful Ibelin family, Philip was a supporter of Melisende during her conflict with her son Baldwin III. In 1151, Melisende gained control of its southern part, including Nablus. Despite this, Philip assisted Baldwin during the siege of Ascalon in 1153, granting estates to Order of Saint Lazarus in 1153. From 1155, Philip was regularly listed among the witnesses on Baldwin's charters. He participated in the relief of Banyas in June 1157, but he and his troops were not present at Nur ad-Din's subsequent ambush of Baldwin at Jacob's Ford. Philip exchanged the lordship of Nablus with Baldwin III for Oultrejordain on 31 July 1161.

Following the death of his wife, Philip joined the military order of the Knights Templar in January 1166, passing on to them a significant part of Oultrejordain. Philip joined Amalric's invasion of Egypt in 1167 despite the Templars refusal to support Amalric's invasion; the king blamed them for the failure of the expedition. After the death of Grand Master Bertrand de Blanchefort in January 1169, Amalric pressured them to elect Philip in his place. With the election of Philip, Amalric regained Templar support for the invasion of Egypt, although by the end of the year Amalric was forced to retreat. Philip resigned as Grand Master in 1171, and was succeeded by Odo de St Amand. Philip accompanied Amalric to Constantinople as ambassador to the Byzantine Empire to restore good relations with them after the failure of the Egyptian invasion. He probably died on April 3 before reaching Constantinople.

Philip's personal life is largely a mystery. William of Tyre describes him as one of the "brave men, valiant in arms and trained from their earliest years in the art of war" who accompanied Amalric to Egypt. With his wife Isabella he had a son, Rainier (who predeceased him), and two daughters, Helena and Stephanie.

Russell R. Sayre, Grand Commander 2020-2021