

Tennessee Knight Templar News

SIR KNIGHT RONALD J. COATES, RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER
GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

July A.D. 2025 / A.O. 907

Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



Murfreesboro Commandery #10 conferred the Order of the Temple on Ed Milner and Jon James. Congratulations to our new Sir Knights.

Murfreesboro Commandery has been extremely busy this year conferring the York Rite Degrees and Orders, and have many more scheduled in the coming weeks and months.

Please be sure to share any photos from your local conferrals or events so that they can be shared.

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If you are aware of any members who are not currently receiving this monthly newsletter, then please have them send an email to Jesse Harper with their name, email address, and Commandery number: jesssharp@comcast.net

Only about half of our membership is receiving this newsletter on a monthly basis. Assist us in getting this newsletter distributed to every Sir Knight on our rolls.

From the Right Eminent Grand Commander

RONALD JASPER COATES

RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

July Message from the Grand Commander



ANDREW JACKSON

Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States, was born on March 15, 1767. By birth, a North Carolinian, actually by only a quarter of a mile, migrated to Tennessee as a young man and was thereafter associated with the state. Jackson lived in Salisbury as a teenage boy, studied privately, and taught school. Although he had not gone any farther than some elementary grade work, he also studied law there.

We actually do not know in what lodge or jurisdiction Andrew Jackson first received Masonic Light. In a book entitled "Colonial Freemasonry," a mention is made of Old Cone Lodge #9 in Salisbury, North Carolina, which got its charter or warrant from Joseph Montfort, Provincial Grand Master, about 1775. This lodge was still in existence in 1786 when the Grand Lodge of North Carolina was formed.

There are in existence records of Old Cone Lodge, but they do not give us anything of value. They show who was present at a number of meetings, but the transactions were very trivial. We can only say that the records of Old Cone Lodge show that it was chartered by Montfort, got its start by the enthusiasm of Masons of the Salisbury area, and in some twenty-four years seems to have died of neglect or internal conditions.

To me, it is interesting to note that when Jackson was 21 years of age, the earliest age a man may petition a Masonic Lodge, this lodge had been in existence for thirteen years and was apparently thriving at that period in its history. If Jackson did not receive his Masonic degrees in this lodge, I feel that some of the men with whom he associated himself in Salisbury must have been members of this lodge and influenced him to become a member. Brother Jackson, who was also a Royal Arch Mason, served the Grand Lodge of Tennessee as its Grand Master for two terms, from 1822 to 1824. Like his political rival Henry Clay, who was Grand Master of Kentucky in 1820, he adhered to the fraternity throughout the anti-Masonic period, publicly associating himself with Freemasonry on all possible occasions.

Jackson distinguished himself as a national hero during the War of 1812. In March 1813, he led the Tennessee troops on a march to the south. In Mississippi, he received an order to disband his troops and send them home. Angered at the order, which would mean abandoning his troops and leaving them stranded with no money or provisions some 800 miles from home, he refused to disband and led his troops home. Thus, he gained the name "Old Hickory" for defying an order. Blunt, forthright, and unyielding, "Old Hickory" will always be remembered as one of the great figures in American history.

Jackson continued in the Army and again marched south. Arriving in New Orleans, he found the British in control. There, on January 8, 1815, he fought the Battle of New Orleans and won against overwhelming odds. What he did not know, and what the people of New Orleans did not know, was that the war had been over for 2 weeks. Nonetheless, he became an instant national hero. The people viewed his victory as ending the war in a decisive defeat of the British. Jackson distinguished himself

later in the Florida Territory by defeating the Seminole Indians, and Spain ceded Florida to the United States.

In 1819, Jackson was appointed Military Governor of this new Territory. By 1823, Andrew Jackson was back in the Senate. In 1824, he was nominated for president and actually received the most votes in the three-way race, but since no candidate received a majority, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives. In the ensuing contest, following what Jackson was to forever bitterly consider "A Deal" between Henry Clay and John Adams, the election went to John Adams as the sixth president.

Jackson began working on the campaign of 1828 immediately. Convinced that the people's will had been denied, he rallied everyone behind him to ensure a complete victory in the next election. In 1828, Jackson easily became the Seventh President of the United States. He termed it a "Victory of the People," and his inauguration was truly a celebration of the people. They came to Washington in throngs. The streets were so crowded, Jackson could hardly get through. The doors of the White House were thrown open, and the people poured in. Jackson's foes were horrified by the muddy boots on the White House carpets. Jackson's victory was tarnished by the death of his beloved wife, Rachel, after the election. A favorite target of criticism by his enemies, her death left him especially bitter. Every person who had ever condemned her was immediately replaced in the Jackson government.

A bitter states rights battle was brewing in the Senate when Jackson became President. Since he was from the South, it was assumed he was in sympathy with the Southern states rights. In 1832, when South Carolina threatened to secede from the Union, Jackson immediately sent federal troops into South Carolina to show how strongly he felt that the Union of States must be preserved.

In 1835, during Jackson's administration, the national debt was paid off for the first time, and there was a surplus of 35 million dollars in the Treasury. Speculation in Western Lands was high, and there was a general over-investment of money in business. It was the era of the first penny newspaper. During this time is when Brother Samuel Colt devised a new handgun, which he called the Colt Six-Shooter. In 1836, Arkansas was admitted to the Union and gained its independence after a long struggle. Michigan was admitted in 1837. In his farewell address on March 4th, 1837, Andrew Jackson warned the people against sectionalism and disunion. The states rights issue was already causing strong division in the Senate. Jackson retired to his home, The Hermitage, near Nashville, where he died on June 8th, 1845, at the age of 78, and was buried with Masonic honors.

The fact that many lodges are named in honor of Jackson is a fitting tribute to the esteem he has always been held in by his Masonic Brethren. America has always been a fortunate country. In spite of times of crisis, this nation has generally succeeded in developing good leaders who have been able to heal the wounds after critical failures and to inspire in their countrymen a re-dedication to the ideals of the Republic and a new effort to realize the American dream.

The influence wrought by Freemasons on the events that have led to the founding of this nation is tremendously significant, not just because patriots like Washington, Franklin, Hancock, Lafayette, Randolph, Clay, Jackson, and many others were Masons, but chiefly because of the moral importance that these men helped to infuse into the concepts of freedom and government.

Thank God for men such as Andrew Jackson, and thank God for the American dream.

Respectfully in your service,

Ronald J. Coates
Right Eminent Grand Commander
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

From the Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Dickie W. Johnson, PGC

Prelates Devotion for July

DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE

In the 14th chapter of Matthew's gospel, we find a story about Jesus. Jesus had just performed a great miracle by feeding 5,000 men, plus women and children, with 5 loaves and 2 fish. The Disciples were just as excited as the people. Jesus sent them off in a boat while He dismissed the crowd, then He went upon a mountain to pray.

The wind came up and blew the Disciples' boat out to sea. Jesus then came to them, walking on the water. The storm overwhelmed the Disciples, but Jesus walked right into the middle of it, and the storm was calmed. When the storms of life overwhelm us, Jesus wants to be close with us.

This passage raises a few questions: "Are we reluctant to let Jesus get close to us?" "Do we sometimes take our eyes off Jesus?" and "Do we realize that we can do the impossible?"

Jesus was always present with His Disciples in their troubles. We often induce our own troubles by not letting Jesus be a part of what we are doing. We frequently take on difficult tasks and do not ask Jesus for help. Are we afraid if we get close to Him that He will ask us to do something we might not want to do? The storm that night may have terrified the Disciples, just as the storms of life can terrify us, but we can always call on Jesus! Notice that Peter was the only one in the boat to react in faith. For a few moments, he experienced a great demonstration of the power of God. He walked on water, but when he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink.

We must keep our eyes upon Jesus. It is easy to look at our own shortcomings or the shortcomings of others, but when we take our eyes off Jesus, we are playing right into the hand of Satan. Satan will be a part of our lives if we allow him. Peter often spoke and acted before he thought. He boldly spoke of his support of Jesus at the Last Supper, and then later that night, just as boldly, he denied knowing him. But on this occasion, he asked Jesus for the impossible—to let him walk on water. And, while he had faith, Jesus gave him the impossible!

How can we do the impossible? For one thing, we must have staying power. Those who succeed in life are those who can hold on! It is important to remember what Jesus said about building our house upon the sand. We must have a good foundation of faith and a strong belief in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Peter cried out to the only one who could keep him from sinking. If we can keep our eyes upon Jesus, we may even be able to do the impossible.

Remember, though, we must get out of the boat. We must step up and be counted!

In His Service

Dickie W. Johnson, PGC
Eminent Grand Prelate

The Treasure of The Knight Templars

By: Gerry Reed, Eminent Grand Captain General

As most of us have heard or read, ancient Templars, at one time, were quite wealthy. Philip IV, King of France, was reportedly heavy in debt to the Templars due to his war with the English and desired their wealth for himself. This is a brief account of his heartless greed, leaving out details of the cruelty, tortures, and murders he inflicted on our ancient Companions. The king's unrelenting, bloodthirsty assault marked the decline and fall of the Order from the power it had once known.

Even though the French king plundered and confiscated the Templars' property, there are still people who believe that at least some of their treasure is hidden, yet to be discovered. Possible hiding places extend from Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland to Oak Island in Nova Scotia, Canada, and even a remote island in the Baltic called Bornholm. Fortune hunters have searched for many years in these areas, hoping to find the hidden treasure. Their search continues today.

Members of modern Knights Templar also hold a valuable treasure. This treasure we are willing to share with the world and, hopefully, never hide it. Our membership is restrictive; only Master Masons professing Christian faith are allowed to join. We carry with us the virtues learned in the Blue Lodge. We are to be upright in all our actions and faithful supporters of our brothers and their families. Further, we learned that we are part of a charitable institution obligated to help all in need if within our ability to give assistance.

The ancient Templars were dedicated to their faith and military service. They were guided by honor and their desire to protect consecrated Christian sites.

Today, we proclaim that we are "founded upon the Christian religion and the practice of the Christian virtues." Our treasure is the truth we possess: "Our once crucified but now risen and exalted Redeemer..." lives!

We are mortal men, and we fail, but may we ever show forth the hope that lives within us to our new and potential members. That hope, that treasure, is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6 KJV)

Sincerely,
Gerry Reed, Eminent Grand Captain General
Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee

Ascension Day Service

Charles Martel Commandery No. 29, which is situated in Chickamauga, Georgia, held their Fourth Annual Ascension Day Service and hosted Lookout Commandery No. 14 from Chattanooga, TN.

The assembled Sir Knights, Past Grand Commanders, Past Grand Masters, and Master Masons marched in procession led by the Alhambra Highlander Pipes and Drums to Elizabeth Lee Methodist Church.

A wonderful message was brought by Donald Combs, Most Worshipful Past Grand Master and Grand Prelate of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Georgia. Assisting with the liturgy and readings were Associate Grand Prelates of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar USA, Robert Elsner and Terry Plemons, and Most Worshipful Past Grand Master Ben Polston of the Grand Lodge of Georgia.

The music was provided by a brass ensemble, with a choir under the direction of Sir Knight Tracy Wright of Charles Martel Commandery.

There were 65 Sir Knights, their ladies, and guests in attendance, with a total of 28 Sir Knights in uniform. Charles Martel Commandery and Lookout Commandery share a warm and strong fraternal relationship in the bonds of Christian Knighthood.



Following the service, the Eastern Star provided a wonderful meal and reception.

Plans are already underway for the Fifth Annual Observance.



Upcoming Events

July

Tuesday, July 8th -
Greeneville Commandery #43
Illustrious Order of the Red Cross
Conferral at 7 PM
Eat after Conferral

Tuesday, July 15th -
DePayens Commandery #11
Order of the Temple
Eat at 6 PM
Conferral at 7 PM

Monday, July 21st -
Greeneville Commandery #43
Order of Malta
Conferral at 7 PM
Eat after Conferral

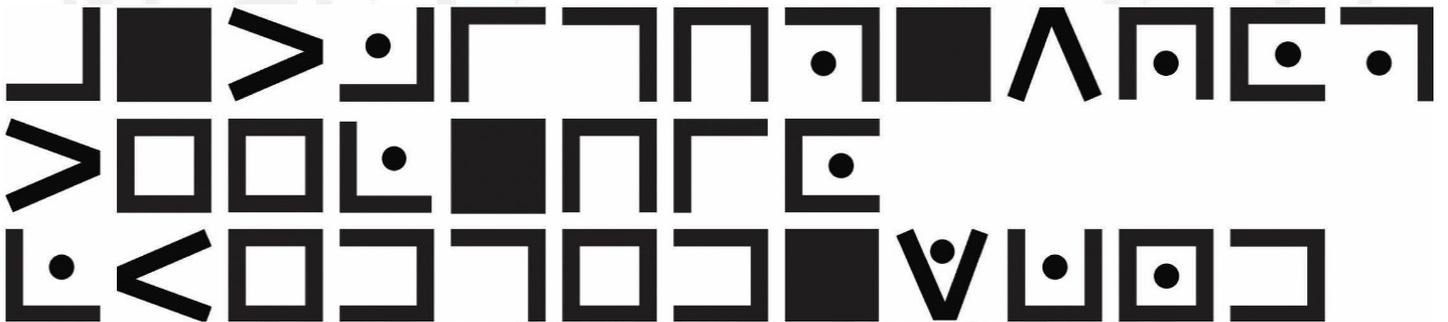
Wednesday, July 30th -
Murfreesboro Commandery #10
Order of the Temple
Eat at 6 PM
Conferral to Follow

August

Saturday, August 9th -
Murfreesboro Commandery #10
Ill. Order of the Red Cross and Order of Malta
Eat at 8 AM
Conferrals to Follow

Monday, August 11th -
Murfreesboro Commandery #10
Order of the Temple
Eat at 6 PM
Conferral to Follow

Something to Decipher





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MISSION

The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.

THE VISION OF THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

The Knights of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, exemplary character, a dedication to excellence and the service of others, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and in maintaining this standard of lifestyle and behavior.

Request for Submissions!

Sir Knights – We need submissions for the Tennessee Knight Templar News. Is your Commandery going to confer any of the orders soon? Did you have some sort of unusual or fun event? Send us an article to share with the other Tennessee Knights and include photos if you have them.

We would also like to have your thoughts and ideas about how we can make Tennessee Templary more fun and exciting. Send us an article!

Please send news and events going on in your Commandery to:

TNKTNewsEditor@gmail.com