

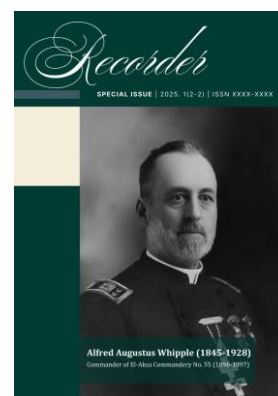
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Original Research

History of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, KT (Quincy, Illinois)

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Abstract

The present study examines the history of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, a Masonic body of the Knights Templar located in Quincy, Illinois. The research is based on the annual Proceedings of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Illinois for the period 1882–1911.

In retrospect, El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 maintained an institutional presence in the city of Quincy, Illinois, for twenty-nine years, spanning the period from 1882 to 1911. Over these nearly three decades, a total of 170 individuals were affiliated with the organization. The roster of members included several figures of regional and statewide prominence, among them Brigadier General Elisha Bently Hamilton (1838–1902), a veteran of the Civil War, and Alfred A. Whipple (1845–1928), who subsequently attained the office of Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Illinois. As the second commandery established in Quincy, El-Aksa No. 55 played a significant role in shaping the local Templar presence, and its officers undertook sustained efforts to secure wide recognition for the Commandery both within the city and across the state. Reports submitted by various Grand Officers of the Grand Commandery of Illinois throughout the 1880s and 1890s consistently testify to the high regard in which the Commandery was held, identifying it as one of the most active and well-managed bodies in Illinois.

One of the most striking institutional features of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was the exceptional continuity observed in the office of Treasurer. Throughout the entire lifespan of the Commandery, this position was held by a single individual, whose tenure extended from 1882 until his death in 1909. Under his long stewardship, the Commandery accumulated a considerable financial reserve. Deposited in a local bank at interest, these funds generated a steady annual income that materially contributed to the stability and routine functioning of the organization.

The remaining offices, by contrast, were characterized by a pronounced degree of rotation. This pattern can plausibly be interpreted as reflecting a deliberate policy on the part of the leadership to allow a larger number of Sir Knights to advance through the officer line, thereby broadening administrative experience within the membership. Yet such a practice—particularly in relation to the office of Recorder—introduced certain administrative complications. By the late 1890s, the accumulated difficulties associated with maintaining accurate membership records prompted a shift in policy, and from 1899 onward efforts were undertaken to reduce the frequency of turnover in this position.

In 1907, the Commandery reached its highest recorded membership, numbering 104 Sir Knights. Thereafter, a gradual decline ensued. At the same time, the city's older commandery, Beauseant Commandery No. 11, maintained a significantly smaller membership, estimated at approximately 60 Sir Knights. In view of the diminishing numbers and the overlapping constituencies of the two bodies, a decision was reached in 1911 to effect their consolidation. The merger was implemented the following year, resulting in the establishment of Quincy Commandery No. 77 in 1912. With this organizational restructuring, the distinct historical trajectory of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 came to an end.

Keywords: El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, Knights Templar, Quincy, Illinois, Grand Commandery of Illinois, 1882–1911, York Rite.

Historical Background:

The future city of Quincy was located on the picturesque bank of the Mississippi River, a position that largely predetermined its subsequent development. Its advantageous geographical location made the area attractive to early settlers, while the river itself served as a major natural transportation artery for the region. In 1834, Quincy officially obtained the status of a city, marking the beginning of the formation of municipal institutions and a period of active urban development¹.

By the 1850s, Quincy had emerged as one of the key transportation hubs of the Midwest. Important routes connecting the eastern and western parts of the United States passed through the city, making it a significant point for trade, transport, and migration. The expansion of river traffic, the construction of railroads, and the building of bridges all contributed to a rapid increase in commercial activity. New economic opportunities attracted growing numbers of settlers to the region, and Quincy gradually developed into a dynamically expanding center.

By 1880, the city's population had reached approximately 27,000 inhabitants. At that time, Quincy was for a period the second-largest city in Illinois after Chicago, reflecting its importance within the state and the broader region.

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the city's transportation infrastructure continued to develop actively. Improvements in railroad connections, the modernization of river ports, and the introduction of new transportation systems facilitated a further increase in passenger traffic and the inflow of labor. In turn, this stimulated industrial expansion, urban territorial growth, and the development of social institutions—from schools and hospitals to cultural organizations.

By 1910, Quincy's population exceeded 36,000, demonstrating the city's continued upward trajectory and its strengthening role as a regional economic and cultural center.

In early 1882, a group of Knights Templar from the city of Quincy—among them Thomas Austin, Edward E. Manson, and Evelyn C. Selleck—submitted a petition for a charter to establish another commandery in the city².

On April 13, 1882, El-Aksa Commandery was granted permission to receive the petition and to present it for consideration at the next Annual Conclave³. At the same time, the Grand Commander ordered the appointment of the following officers of the new commandery: Eminent Commander – Tomas Austin, Edward E. Manson – Generalissimo, Evelyn C. Selleck – Captain General⁴.

The Knights Templar chose a rather uncommon name for the commandery — El-Aksa, in honor of the ancient temple of the Knights Templar erected on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. Charles G. Addison's *The Knights Templar*⁵ includes an illustration of El-Aksa, which after the Crusades was converted by Muslims into a mosque. It is this general view of El-Aksa that we wish to present here (Fig. 1).

¹ Cherkas, A.C. (2025). History of Beauseant Commandery No. 11, KT (Quincy, Illinois). *Recorder*. 1 (2-1): 98.

² Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 24.

³ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 21-22.

⁴ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 24.

⁵ Addison C.G. (1874). *The Knights Templar*. New York: Masonic Publishing Company.



Fig. 1. El-Aksa — the former ancient temple of the Knights Templar in Jerusalem⁶

In the summer of 1882, the commandery numbered 26 members⁷. Thomas Austin was elected to the office of Eminent Commander, and William Evers to that of Recorder⁸.

On August 30, E. Sir Loyal Levi Munn, Grand Commander, personally visited the commandery and left the following account of his visit:

“August 30th, A.O. 764, I visited El-Aksa Commandery, U.D., stationed at Quincy. I arrived in the evening, as they were about to repair to the banquet hall, they having previously conferred the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross. After the banquet their commandery was open for inspection, rehearsal and review. There were present Eminent Sir O. C. Wheeler, the Grand Prelate of California; Eminent Sir Rev. F. D. Rickerson, Grand Prelate; Eminent Sir E. S. Mulliner, Grand Sword-Bearer; Eminent Preceptor E. H. Raymond, of Burleigh Preceptory, Knights Templar of Canada; and Eminent Sir John P. Norvell. The Order of the Temple was conferred upon two aspirants. This commandery starts out under very favorable auspices, and I have great hopes of its future usefulness”⁹.

This visit was also mentioned in the report of Grand Sword Bearer Sir Edward S. Mulliner: “It has been my privilege to visit El-Aksa Commandery, U.D., frequently since she received her dispensation. Your own recent official visit to this enthusiastic young Commandery, U.D., renders it unnecessary for me to say more than this: that in her personnel, she presents all the elements of knightly character, her officers and members created being chosen from a high grade of professional and business gentlemen; and that in respect to work,

⁶ Addison C.G. (1874). *The Knights Templar*. New York: Masonic Publishing Company. P. 144.

⁷ Twenty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1883. P. 36.

⁸ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 96.

⁹ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 30.

drill, equipments, records and financial condition, she is already the peer of most of the chartered Commanderies in this Grand Jurisdiction”¹⁰.

On October 24, 1882, the Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Illinois was held, and in his address the Grand Commander recommended supporting the proposal to issue a charter for El-Aksa Commandery¹¹.

At the conclave, the Report of the Committee on Charters and Dispensations was read, noting that the committee had examined the books and documents of El-Aksa Commandery and had determined that the work of the commandery was being conducted in accordance with the Statutes and Regulations of the Grand Commandery of Illinois. In conclusion, the Committee on Charters and Dispensations recommended issuing a Charter for El-Aksa Commandery No. 55¹².

The Committee on Templar Jurisprudence, having reviewed the By-Laws of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, recommended their adoption with minor amendment¹³.

On the same day — October 24, 1882 — El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was chartered¹⁴.

Organizationally, El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was incorporated into the Sixth District, for which Grand Sword Bearer Sir E. S. Mulliner was responsible¹⁵.

In 1883, the membership of the commandery increased to 31, with 5 Created during the year¹⁶.

The officers elected were:

Thomas Austin	Commander
Evelyn Charles Selleck	Generalissimo
Corydon Sheldon Hickman	Captain General
Lewis Benjamin Boswell	Prelate
George Wells	Senior Warden
Charles Willey Parker	Junior Warden
Edward Alpheus Rogers	Treasurer
William Evers	Recorder
Merry Walker Smith	Standard Bearer
Alfred Augustus Whipple	Sword Bearer
John Oliver Glenn	Warder
John Quincy Adams	Captain of the Guards ¹⁷ .

Past Commander: Walter Jay Hilton.

Members: John Quincy Adams, Thomas Austin, Samuel Adams Blasland, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, James Barton Bowles, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Albert Stewart Core, Henry Russell Corley, Henry Ernest Dickhurst, William Evers, John Oliver Glenn, Corydon Sheldon Hickman, Walter Jay Hilton, William Henry Konantz, Edward Everett Manson, Frederick Porter Moore, Richard Foote Newcomb, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, Charles Willey Parker, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Evelyn Charles Selleck, Merry Walker Smith, Edwin Julius Thompson, Carnahan Dwight Van Frank, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliney Bliss Williams, William Robert Johnson Woodard¹⁸.

Created: Samuel Adams Blasland, James Barton Bowles, Frederick Porter Moore, Carnahan Dwight Van Frank, Sidney Pratt Calkins¹⁹.

¹⁰ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 181.

¹¹ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 24.

¹² Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 78.

¹³ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 82.

¹⁴ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 96.

¹⁵ Twenty sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1882. P. 184.

¹⁶ Twenty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1883. P. 36.

¹⁷ Twenty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1883. P. 166.

¹⁸ Twenty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1883. P. 167.

¹⁹ Twenty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1883. P. 168.

In 1884, the membership of the commandery increased to 39. During the year, 5 were Created and 3 were Admitted²⁰.

Thomas Austin Commander

William Evers Recorder²¹.

Created: Henry John Smith, Thomas Lewis Gilmer, Bunhard Henry Miller, James Bradon Fox, James Pierce Montgomery²².

Admitted: Edgar Streeter Potter, James Nichols Welman, Frederick Wilms²³.

On February 22, 1884, the commandery was visited for inspection by E. Sir Norman T. Gassette, Grand Standard Bearer (Fig. 2), who wrote the following account of his visit: "EL-AKSA COMMANDERY has good reasons to be proud of its record. There is not a Sir Knight in arrears for dues in the command. Of its then thirty-five members, thirty-one were fully equipped and in line on the night of the inspection; and those who were absent were prevented from being present by unavoidable circumstances. The inspection and reception was public, and was attended by a brilliant audience, made up of invited guests, and the wives, daughters and ladies of the Sir Knights.

The address of E. Sir Knight Thos. Austin was a credit to him, El-Aksa Commandery, and the Grand Commandery; and the banquet which was served after the ceremonies was all that could be desired.

E. Sir Thos. Austin, Commander, and his council, Sirs Generalissimo E. C. Selleck and Captain General Corydon S. Hickman, have cause for congratulation, and I suggest that if the Commanderies in the state, bearing numbers in the first tens numerically, are not careful, that those bearing numbers in the fifties will excel them. At the date I inspected"²⁴.



Fig. 2. E. Sir Norman T. Gassette, Grand Standard Bearer

In addition to this, in his report Norman T. Gassette described one of the commandery's events: "El-Aksa Commandery made a pilgrimage to Danville, Ill., and participated in Ascension Day services with Athelstan Commandery, of that place, whose guest it was. Of the thirty-nine Sir Knights of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, thirty-three were in line, and "carried a most beautiful banner. It was greatly admired by everybody. A little of its history will be interesting to ladies, as it is the work of one of their sex. Mrs. Hilton, wife of Eminent Sir Knight Hilton, is the lady who executed the work. The front is composed of souvenir badges gathered from different Commanderies of the triennial conclaves since 1868. No two badges are alike. They

²⁰ Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 39.

²¹ Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 76.

²² Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 89.

²³ Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 90.

²⁴ Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 112.

are artistically arranged, and fastened upon the background with a feather stitch in different colored silk. In the center of the badges is a red cross bearing the name of the Commandery. The back is crimson satin, in the center of which is a black velvet maltese cross. A remarkable circumstance, and one that was not designed, is the fact that there are just fifty five pieces in the work, and 55 is the number of the Commandery. The banner is a gift to the Commandery from Mrs. Hilton, and the members are justly proud of it." After the religious ceremonies were concluded, at 8 o'clock P. M., an elegant banquet was served in the armory of Battery "A," and "Eminent Sir" Thomas Austin, of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, responded to the toast:

"Pilgrimage—The duty and joy of the Templar."

"He referred to this visit as an occasion for special rejoicing on the part of his Commandery. That El-Aksa Commandery had received sympathy and encouragement from Athelstan Commandery from its organization. His speech was full of beautiful thoughts, and clothed in appropriate words"²⁵.

In 1885, the membership of the commandery declined to 37. During the year, 1 was Created and 3 were Dimitted²⁶.

Thomas Austin Commander

Edgar S. Potter Recorder²⁷.

Created: Robert Chrestian Guenther.

Dimitted: James Barton Bowles, Walter Jay Hilton, William Robertt Johnson Woodard²⁸.

In 1886, the membership of the commandery rose to 46. During the year, 9 were Created, 1 was Admitted, and 1 was Dimitted²⁹.

Thomas Austin Commander

Lewis Benjamin Boswell Generalissimo

Corydon Sheldon Hickman Captain General

George Wells Prelate

John Oliver Glenn Senior Warden

Sidney Pratt Calkins Junior Warden

Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer

Edgar Streeter Potter Recorder

Merry Walker Smith, Jr. Standard Bearer

Carnahan Dwight Van Frank Sword Bearer

James Nichols Wellman Warder

James Bradon Fox Captain of the Guards³⁰.

Members: John Quincy Adams, Thomas Austin, William Washington Berry, Ezra Best, Samuel Adams Blasland, James Bancroft Boyd, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Albert Stewart Core, Henry Russel Corley, Henry Cupp, Henry Ernest Dickhut, William Evers, James Bradon Fox, James Robert Gardner, Thomas Lewis Gilmer, John Oliver Glenn, Robert Christian Guenther, Corydon Sheldon Hickman, George Frazier Jasper, William Henry Konantz, Edward Everett Manson, Bernard Henry Miller, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, James Pierce Montgomery, Frederick Porter Moore, Richard Foote Newcomb, Israel Lewis Bentz Nichols, Levin Adams Hill Nickerson, Charles Wiley Parker, Edgar Streeter Potter, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Lewis Schen, Merry Walker Smith, Jr., Henry John Smith, Edwin Julius Thompson, Carnahan Dwight Van Frank, John David Warfield, George Wells, James Nichols Wellman, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Plinny Bliss Williams, David Franklin Wilcox, Frederick Wilms³¹.

²⁵ Twenty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., printers, 1884. P. 115-116.

²⁶ Twenty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1885. P. 36.

²⁷ Twenty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1885. P. 73.

²⁸ Twenty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1885. P. 86.

²⁹ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 26.

³⁰ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 129-130.

³¹ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 130.

Created: William Washington Berry, Ezra Best, James Bancroft Boyd, Henry Cupp, James Robert Gardner, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, Israel Lewis Bentz Nichols, Charles Lewis Schen, Henry John Smith, John David Warfield³².

Admitted: George Frazier Jasper. Dimitted: Evelyn Charles Selleck³³.

In 1886, 39 commanderies took part in the Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment in St. Louis. Some of them—for example, Apollo Commandery No. 1—arrived with a contingent of 128 Sir Knights, 20 ladies, and 43 members of the band³⁴. El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was also in attendance, represented by 30 Sir Knights³⁵.

On November 3, 1886, the Grand Commander issued General Order No. 1, according to which El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was transferred to the Second District (under the supervision of Sir Norman T. Gassette, Grand Generalissimo)³⁶.

In 1887, the membership of the commandery increased to 49. During the year, 3 were Created, 2 were Admitted, and 2 were Dimitted³⁷.

Lewis B. Boswell Commander

George F. Jasper Recorder ³⁸.

Created: Frederick William Meyer, Edwin David Smith, Stephen Palmer Barnes. Admitted: James D. Epperson, William L. Distin. Dimitted: Henry Russell Corley, William Evers ³⁹.

On April 28, 1887, E. Sir Norman T. Gassette, Grand Generalissimo, conducted the annual inspection of the commandery: "Thursday evening April 28th I made an inspection of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, K. T. By virtue of your Dispensation the inspection was public. There were gathered in the Asylum many eminent Sir Knights who came from different parts of this and other Grand Jurisdictions, (among the number the two distinguished Templars who went with me to Clayton), a large number of the most prominent citizens of Quincy, and a numerous concourse of ladies. The Banquet was excellent and the whole affair was as brilliant as one would expect anything to be, under the auspices of this exceptional Commandery. Eminent Sir Thos. Austin, its first Commander, his successor Eminent Sir L. B. Boswell and Sir Knights have every reason to be proud of the Command to which they belong. The opinion is offered, that in proportion to the total membership, a larger number of correctly equipped Sir Knights will be found in line upon ordinary, or special occasions, than in any other Commandery of which we have knowledge.

The Financial Statement of the Commandery is so unusual that it is appended.

TREASURY OF EL-AKSA COMMANDERY NO. 55, K. T.

Cash on hand (in general fund)	\$ 95 90
" " " (in sinking fund)	25 00
Bills receivable for money loaned at 7 per cent	700 00

\$820 90

Debt none, dues unpaid none.

Courteously, E. A. ROGERS, Treasurer.

To Eminent Sir N. T. Gassette, Inspecting Officer.

³² Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 130.

³³ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 130.

³⁴ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 146.

³⁵ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 147.

³⁶ Thirtieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington: Pantagraph Stationery Company, Printers, 1886. P. 162.

³⁷ Thirty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1887. P. 35.

³⁸ Thirty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1887. P. 69.

³⁹ Thirty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1887. P. 82.

Such a statement is common from El-Aksa Commandery I presume, a similar one having been made to me two years ago when I officially visited the Commandery. The hospitality of the Commandery is generous and hearty. El-Aksa observed Easter Sunday by attending divine service at the First Congregational Church as a body”⁴⁰.

On November 30, 1887, E. Sir Edward S. Mulliner, Grand Commander, visited El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, and left the following note in his report regarding this visit: “On the 30th day of November, 1887, I visited, as their guest, El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, stationed in my own city— they having tendered a complimentary reception and banquet to your Grand Commander.

It was wholly a social occasion participated in by the Sir Knights of the Commandery, their ladies and a few invited guests from abroad.

The cordial expression of personal regard and reference to local pride indulged in by the eminent Commander of this young and prosperous Commandery, in his address of welcome, were gracefully mingled with sentiments of loyalty and love to this Grand Commandery which, in its behalf, were courteously acknowledged”⁴¹.

In 1888, the membership of the commandery increased to 54. During the year, 8 were Created and 3 were Dimitted⁴².

Lewis B. Boswell Commander

George F. Jasper Recorder ⁴³.

Created: Carlot Eyskill Baker, John H. Rice, James W. Marshall, Albert Henry Schmidt, Samuel Henry Bradley, James Melville Bishop, John W. Heitz, Harvey Chatten. Dimitted: Edgar Streeter Potter, James Bradon Fox, Albert Steward Core⁴⁴.

On February 10, 1888, the commandery was visited by E. Sir George M. Moulton, Grand Generalissimo, who wrote the following about his visit in his report: “February 10th was the occasion of my first official visit, which was made to the Asylum of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, K.T., L. B. Boswell, Eminent Commander. The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross was conferred during the afternoon upon a class of six Companions, among whom was the Mayor of the city. This was the last opportunity I had to witness the work of the Order according to the old Ritual, as since April 1st, all of the Commanderies in the Second District have become proficient in the Ritual adopted at St. Louis, and are loyally, although hardly contentedly, exemplifying it.

The zeal for the Order, and the love and pride for their Commandery borne by the Fraters of El Aksa is so well known, that it is unnecessary for me to say that all which they did on the occasion referred to was well done. At 7 P.M. the Commandery formed the lines, fully armed and equipped as Knights Templar. After receiving the Inspecting Officer with honors, the Commandery went through the evolutions of inspection and review in a manner highly creditable, alike to themselves and the appreciative audience of fair ladies, who had been invited to attend a banquet which had been prepared for the occasion. The pleasant features of the evening, including singing, dancing, and social conversation, made a fitting conclusion to a very successful and gratifying Conclave. El-Aksa enjoys the uncommon honor of having no delinquents on her list of members, and has had none since her organization. Its cash assets, including sinking fund and bills receivable, are almost \$1,300.00, with no liabilities. Its membership is not large, but is making a steady and desirable growth.

They are pretty generally equipped according to regulation. It may be unhesitatingly affirmed that in all save the matter of scientific drill that El-Aksa Commandery is the peer of any in the State. This Commandery attended evening services at the Congregational (Unitarian) Church in Quincy on Easter Day, at which there was a large attendance of Sir Knights”⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ Thirty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1887. P. 93-94.

⁴¹ Thirty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1888. P. 25-26.

⁴² Thirty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1888. P. 41.

⁴³ Thirty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1888. P. 107.

⁴⁴ Thirty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1888. P. 120.

⁴⁵ Thirty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: Geo. K. Hazlitt and Co., Printers, 1888. P. 130.

In 1889, the membership of the commandery increased to 62. During the year, 7 were Created, 2 were Admitted, and 1 was Deceased⁴⁶.

George Wells Eminent Commander
 William Henry Konantz Generalissimo
 James Pierce Montgomery Captain General
 James Bancroft Boyd Prelate
 Stephen Palmer Barnes Senior Warden
 William Henry Cadogan Junior Warden
 Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer
 Chester Arnold Wilcox Recorder
 James Robert Gardner Standard Bearer
 John W. Heitz Sword Bearer
 James Melville Bishop Warder
 Egbert Halsy Osborn Captain of the Guards⁴⁷.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, Lewis Benjamin Boswell.

Members: John Quincy Adams, Thomas Austin, Calot Ezekiel Baker, Stephen Palmer Barnes, William Washington Berry, Ezra Best, James Melville Bishop, Samuel Adams Blasland, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, James Bancroft Boyd, Samuel Henry Bradley, William Henry Cadogan, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Warren Case, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Harvey Chatten, Henry Cupp, Henry Ernest Dickhut, William Langmeade Distin, James Dallas Epperson, James Robert Gardner, Thomas Lewis Gilmer, John Oliver Glenn, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Guenther, John W. Heitz, Corydon Sheldon Hickman, George Frazier Jasper, William Henry Konantz, Edward Everett Manson, James William Marshall, Frederick William Meyer, Bernard Henry Miller, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, James Pierce Montgomery, Israel Lewis Bentz Nichols, Richard Foote Newcomb, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, Egbert Halsy Osborn, Henry Clay Osborn, Charles Willey Parker, Frank Clifford Parker, John Henry Rice, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Lewis Scheu, Albert Henry Schmidt, Edwin David Smith, Henry John Smith, Merry Walker Smith, Jr., James Russell Smith, Edwin Julius Thompson, Carnahan Dwight Van Frank, John David Warfield, James Nicholas Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Chester Arnold Wilcox, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliny Bliss Williams, Frederick Wilms⁴⁸.

Created: Frank Clifford Parker, William Henry Cadogan, Chester Arnold Wilcox, James Russell Smith, Egbert Halsy Osborn, John George Notter, Henry Clay Osborn.

Admitted: William Henry Govert, Warren Case⁴⁹.

Dead: Frederick P. Moore (Jan. 20, 1889)⁵⁰.

On May 23, 1889, the commandery was visited by E. Sir S. O. Spring, Grand Captain General; we cite excerpts from his report on the visit: "May 23rd, in response to a request from Em. Sir H. H. Montgomery, Grand Sword Bearer, I visited El-Aksa Commandery, No. 55, stationed at Quincy. He having met with an accident which prevented him from fulfilling an engagement made for that date. The occasion being entirely of a social character no work was done and no formal inspection made, in fact the reports of the former inspecting officers were of such a character as to render it entirely unnecessary. Although not of a large membership, being comparatively a young Commandery, yet for courtesy, hospitality and the high social standing of its members it is not surpassed by any in this Grand Jurisdiction. The records of the Commandery are nicely kept, and the finances under the management of Sir Knight E. A. Rogers, Treasurer, are in excellent condition, assets aggregate about \$1,500.00 with no liabilities. The dues of the Commandery are payable semi-annually in advance, which rule should be the law in every Commandery. The Commandery being closed, the Sir Knights, their ladies and friends, which included the writer, spent a most enjoyable evening. The fraters of El-Aksa have reason to congratulate themselves that within their own membership they possess a Quartette equal to any in the land, who rendered several choice selections during the evening. The Grand Officer that inspects El-Aksa Commandery has a pleasant task, and I trust I may again have that

⁴⁶ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 39.

⁴⁷ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 161.

⁴⁸ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 161.

⁴⁹ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 161.

⁵⁰ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 161, 173.

privilege. I am under special obligations to Em. Sirs Wells, Boswell and others who spared no efforts to make my visit a pleasant one"⁵¹.

В 1890 численность командорства снизилась до 61 человека. В течение года 1 Created and 2 Dimitted⁵².

George Wells Commander

C.A. Wilcox Recorder⁵³.

Created: George McClellan Cadogan. Dimitted: S.A. Blasland, Thomas L. Gilmer⁵⁴.

On May 29, 1890, an official visit to the commandery was made by E. Sir Augustus L. Webster, Grand Sword Bearer, who noted the following in his report on the visit: "May 29, made an official visit to El-Aksa Commandery, No. 55, stationed at Quincy. An inspection of the records show the Commandery to be in excellent condition. The records and system of filing papers are as complete and systematic as any which have come under my observation. In the evening a "Reception" was tendered your Inspecting officer and invited guests at the "Newcomb." A royal banquet was enjoyed, and dancing indulged in till the "wee sma' hours." Eminent Sir Wells deserves great credit for the successful manner in which every detail was carried out. I can only reiterate the mooted words of praise bestowed upon El-Aksa, her officers and Sir Knights by former Inspectors. She is worthy the high place she occupies among the live Commanderies of Illinois. My visit to El-Aksa was made at the request of Very Eminent Sir Jos. E. Dyas, Deputy Grand Commander, in whose district it was. At his request I consented to visit El-Aksa and Galesburg, No. 8, in exchange for Bethany, No. 28, and Sterling, No. 57, it being inconvenient for him to visit those two Commanderies"⁵⁵.

In addition, the members of the commandery accompanied the Grand Officers during inspections of other commanderies. For example, on March 17, 1890, E. Sir S. O. Spring, Grand Generalissimo, visited Ascalon Commandery No. 49; during this visit he was accompanied by 15 Sir Knights from El-Aksa Commandery, led by Eminent Commander G. Wells⁵⁶.

In 1891, the membership of the commandery reached 70. During the year, 7 were Created, 5 were Admitted, and 2 were Dimitted⁵⁷.

W.H. Konantz Commander

J.O. Glenn Recorder⁵⁸.

Created: Thomas Dinner Gardner, Robert Adams Gardner, Frank Marshall McDavid, J. B. Shawgo, Edsin Henry Todd, John Batschy, Samuel Hopkins Emery, Jr.

Admitted: Edwin Freeman Bradford, Edward Starr Mulliner, Edgar Streeter Potter, Horner Milton Swope, John M. D. Davidson. Dimitted: J. M. D. Davidson, C. S. Hickman⁵⁹.

On 22 May 1891, the Commandery was visited by E. Sir Edward C. Pace, Grand Standard Bearer, who recorded his impressions of the visit in his official report as follows: "It goes without saying that the fratres of El Aksa and their ladies entertain well. On this occasion, if possible, they succeeded beyond their custom in ministering to the pleasure of their guests.

The charter members of El Aksa Commandery at the time of its organization erected a very high standard of excellence in respect to character of membership, social courtesies, ritualistic work, style of record, and management of its financial affairs, which has been steadily maintained, so that Inspecting Officers from year to year have been wont to refer to this Commandery as a sort of model.

⁵¹ Thirty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Chicago: H.S. Tiffany and Co., Printers, 1889. P. 182-183.

⁵² Thirty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1890. P. 76.

⁵³ Thirty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1890. P. 117.

⁵⁴ Thirty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1890. P. 130.

⁵⁵ Thirty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1890. P. 66.

⁵⁶ Thirty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1890. P. 47.

⁵⁷ Thirty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1891. P. 58.

⁵⁸ Thirty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1891. P. 111.

⁵⁹ Thirty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1891. P. 126.

I am pleased to say that I believe it has been unusually prosperous during the last few months under the command of Eminent Sir Konantz.

The present membership is seventy, all uniformed, but not so proficient in tactics and the manual as in years past.

The reports of the financial officers to May 11 of the current year gives this remarkable showing which we copy:

“Assets of Commandery, cash and bills receivable, \$1,940.98.

Liabilities of Commandery, nothing.

Due from members, nothing.”

The records are handsomely inscribed, and bear evidence of more than ordinary care”⁶⁰.

In 1892, the membership of the Commandery increased to 72 Sir Knights. During the year, 7 were Created, 3 Dimitted, and 2 Deceased⁶¹.

Officers:

W. H. Konantz Eminent Commander

J. B. Boyd Generalissimo

S. P. Barnes Captain General

C. A. Wilcox Prelate

H. C. Osborn Senior Warden

A. A. Whipple Junior Warden

E. A. Rogers Treasurer

J. P. Montgomery Recorder

E. H. Todd Standard Bearer

T. D. Gardner Sword Bearer

S. H. Emery, Jr. Warder

J. R. Gardner Captain of the Guards⁶².

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, L. B. Boswell, E. S. Mulliner, George Wells⁶³.

Members: John Quincy Adams, Thomas Austin, Calot Ezekiel Baker, Stephen Palmer Barnes, William Washington Berry, Ezra Best, James Melville Bishop, Samuel Adams Blasland, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, James Bancroft Boyd, Samuel Henry Bradley, William Morris Brewster, George McClellan Cadogan, William Henry Cadogan, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Harvey Chatten, William Thornton Coulter, Henry C. Cupp, Henry Ernest Dickhut, William Langmeade Distin, Samuel Hopkins Emery, Jr., James Dallas Epperson, James Robert Gardner, Robert Adams Gardner, Thomas Dimma Gardner, John Oliver Glenn, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Guenther, John W. Heitz, George Frazier Jasper, William Henry Konantz, Edward Everett Manson, Edward Irving Martin, James William Marshall, Bernard Henry Miller, James Pierce Montgomery, Edward Starr Mulliner, Frank Marshall McDavitt, Frederick William Meyer, Edwin Woodbridge McClure, Richard Foote Newcomb, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, Egbert Halsey Osborn, Henry Clay Osborn, Charles Wiley Parker, Frank Clifford Parker, Edwin Julius Thompson, Carnahan Dwight Van Frank, John David Warfield, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Frederick Wilms⁶⁴.

Created: William Morris Brewster, William Thornton Coulter, Edward Irving Martin, Edwin Woodbridge McClure, James Worth Wayland, Joseph Branch Whitley, James Mason Pringle.

⁶⁰ Thirty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1891. P. 43.

⁶¹ Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 73.

⁶² Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 211.

⁶³ Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 211.

⁶⁴ Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 211.

Dimitted: Warren Case, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, Israel Lewis Bentz Nichols⁶⁵.

Dead: James Melville Bishop (Mar. 14, 1892), Henry John Smith (May 12, 1892)⁶⁶.

In 1893, the membership of the Commandery rose to 73. During the year, 5 were Created, 1 Demitted, and 3 Deceased⁶⁷.

S.P. Barnes Commander

J.P. Montgomery Recorder⁶⁸.

Created: John M. Lewis, Loring B. Bartlett, Gustave A. Bauman, John M. Stahl, Walter F. Richards.

Dimitted: James R. Gardner.

Dead: William Henry Cadogan (Sep. 9, 1892), John Quincy Adams (Nov. 6, 1892), Edson Henry Todd (Jun. 28, 1893)⁶⁹.

In 1894, the membership of the Commandery decreased to 72. During the year, 1 Deceased⁷⁰.

Chester A. Wilcox Commander

Gustave A. Bauman Recorder⁷¹.

Dead: James R. Smith (Mar. 9, 1894)⁷².

In 1895, the membership of the Commandery increased to 75. During the year, 5 were Created, 1 Dimitted, and 1 Deceased⁷³.

Officers:

Chester Arnold Wilcox Eminent Commander

Alfred Augustus Whipple Generalissimo

Stephen Palmer Barnes Captain General

Edwin Woodbridge McClure Prelate

John Henry Rice Senior Warden

John Mooney Lewis Junior Warden

Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer

Gustave Adolph Bauman Recorder

Robert Adams Gardner Standard Bearer

James Worth Wayland Sword Bearer

William Hubert McMein Warder

- Captain of the Guards⁷⁴.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, L. B. Boswell, George Wells, W. H. Konantz, S. P. Barnes, E. S. Mulliner.

Members: Thomas Austin, Calot Ezekiel Baker, Stephen Palmer Barnes, Loring Bennett Bartlett, Gustave Adolph Bauman, John Batschy, Ezra Best, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, James Bancroft Boyd, Edwin Freeman Bradford. Samuel Henry Bradley, William Morris Brewster, George McClellan Cadogan, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Chauncy Harlow Castle, Harvey Chatten, William Thornton Coulter, Henry C. Cupp, Joseph Newton Carter, Henry Ernest Dickhut, William Langmeade Distin, Samuel Hopkins Emery, Jr.,

⁶⁵ Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 212.

⁶⁶ Thirty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Co, 1892. P. 212, 233.

⁶⁷ Thirty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1893. P. 40.

⁶⁸ Thirty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1893. P. 87.

⁶⁹ Thirty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1893. P. 101, 116.

⁷⁰ Thirty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1894. P. 72.

⁷¹ Thirty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1894. P. 119.

⁷² Thirty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1894. P. 151.

⁷³ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 79.

⁷⁴ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 217.

James Dallas Epperson, Robert Adams Gardner, John Oliver Glenn, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Guenthner, Thomas Dimma Gardner, John Heitz, George Frazier Jasper, William Henry Konantz, John Mooney Lewis, Edward Everett Manson, Edward Irving Martin, James William Marshall, Frederick William Meyer, Bernard Henry Miller, James Pierce Montgomery, Edward Starr Mulliner, Edwin Woodbridge McClure, Frank Marshall McDavitt, William Hubert McMein, George John McMein, Richard Foote Newcomb, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Nottey, Egbert Brooks Osborn, Henry Clay Osborn, Charles Wills Parker, Frank Clifford Parker, James Mason Pringle, John Henry Rice, Walter Franklin Richards, Albert Lennon Richardson, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Lewis Schen, Albert Henry Schmidt, Merry Walker Smith, Jr., J. B. Shawgo, John Meloy Stahl, Homer Milton Swope, Edwin Julius Thompson, Carnahan Dwight VanFrank, John David Warfield, James Worth Wayland, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Joseph Branch Whitley, Chester Arnold Wilcox, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliny Bliss Williams, Frederick Wilms, James Newton Wright⁷⁵.

Created: Joseph Newton Carter, William Hubert McMein, Geo. John McMein, Albert Lennox Richards, James Newton Wright. Dimitted: E. S. Potter.

Dead: William Washington Berry (May 6, 1895)⁷⁶.

In 1895, the Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar was held in Boston. In accordance with the order issued by R.E. Sir Samuel C. Lawrence, Chief Marshal, the Grand Commandery of Illinois was to form the Tenth Division for the parade. Each division was to consist of two regiments, each regiment of two battalions, and each battalion of six commanderies. El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was assigned to the Fourth Battalion of the Second Regiment⁷⁷.

The members of the Commandery continued to visit nearby commanderies on the days of their inspections. Thus, on 25 February 1895, during the inspection of Delta Commandery No. 48 by E. Sir Frederick C. Winslow, Grand Warder, thirteen Sir Knights from El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 were present⁷⁸.

In 1896, the membership of the Commandery declined to 74. During the year, 1 was Created and 2 Dimitted⁷⁹.

Alfred A. Whipple Commander

Gustave A. Bauman Recorder⁸⁰.

Created: John N. Evans. Dimitted: Carnahan D. Van Frank, Frank C. Parker⁸¹.

In 1897, the membership of the Commandery increased to 87 Sir Knights. During the year, 9 were Created and 4 Admitted⁸².

Alfred A. Whipple Commander

Chester A. Wilcox Recorder⁸³.

Created: Elisha B. Hamilton, Thomas F. Hastings, Robert A. Kiefer, Louis J. Klemme, Harry M. McMein, Joseph W. Wall, Thomas S. White, Charles H. Williamson, Frank S. Wood. Admitted: William R. Hamilton, William C. Hooker, William H. Bartels, Walter H. Moore⁸⁴.

In 1898, the membership of the Commandery decreased to 86. During the year, 3 were Created, 1 Admitted, 4 Dimitted, and 1 Suspended⁸⁵.

⁷⁵ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 217-218.

⁷⁶ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 218, 244.

⁷⁷ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 32-33.

⁷⁸ Thirty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1895. P. 68.

⁷⁹ Fortieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1896. P. 70.

⁸⁰ Fortieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1896. P. 127.

⁸¹ Fortieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1896. P. 127, 144.

⁸² Forty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1897. P. 76.

⁸³ Forty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1897. P. 117.

⁸⁴ Forty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1897. P. 204.

⁸⁵ Forty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1898. P. 61.

Officers:

John Henry Rice Eminent Commander
 John Money Lewis Generalissimo
 William Hubert McMein Captain General
 Loring Bennett Bartlett Prelate
 John Batschey Senior Warden
 George John McMein Junior Warden
 Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer
 John Oliver Glenn Recorder
 Joseph William Hall Standard Bearer
 Elisha Bently Hamilton Sword Bearer
 Robert August Kiefer Warder
 - Captain of the Guards⁸⁶.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, L. B. Boswell, S. P. Barnes, W. H. Konantz, E. S. Mulliner, George Wells, C. A. Wilcox, A. A. Whipple⁸⁷.

Members: Thomas Austin, Calet Ezekiel Baker, Stephen Palmer Barnes, Loring Bennett Bartlett, John Batschey, Gustave Adolph Bauman, William H. Bratels, Ezra Best, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Samuel Henry Bradley, William Morris Brewster, George McClellan Cadogan, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Joseph Newton Carter, Chancey Harlow Castle, Harvey Chatten, William Thornton Coulter, Henry Clay Cupp, Henry Ernst Dickhut, Samuel Hopkins Emery, jr., James Dallas Epperson, John Norton Evans, Robert Adams Gardner, Thomas Dimma Gardner, John Oliver Glenn, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Guenther, Elisha Bentley Hamilton, William Ransom Hamilton, Thomas Franklin Hastings, John W. Heitz, William Chillis Hooker, Edward Armstrong Ince, George Frazier Jasper, Robert Augustus Kiefer, Louis Julius Klemme, William Henry Konantz, Harry Gilbert Lawrence, John Mooney Lewis, Peter Beise Lott, Edward Everett Manson, James William Marshall, Edward Irving Martin, Frederick William Meyer, Bernard Henry Miller, James Pierce Montgomery, Sylvanus Bagby Montgomery, Walter Howard Moore, Edward Starr Mulliner, Edwin Woodbridge McClure, Frank Marshall McDavitt, George John McMein, Harry Morgan Melnich, William Hubert Mc Mein, Richard Foote Newcomb, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, Egbert Halsey Osborn, Henry Clay Osborn, Charles Willey Parker, John Henry Rice, Albert Lennox Richards, Walter Franklin Richards, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Lewis Scheu, Albert Henry Schmidt, Merry Walker Smith, John Meloy Stahl, Homer Milton Swope, J. B. Shawgo, John David Warfield, James Worth Wayland, Joseph William Wall, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Thompson Sharp White, Joseph Branch Whitney, Chester Arnold Wilcox, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliney Bliss Williams, Charles Henry Williamson, Frederick Wilms, Frank Stobie Wood, James Newton Wright⁸⁸.

Created: Edward Armstrong Ince, Harry Gilbert Lawrence, Peter Belse Lott. Admitted: Sylvanus Bagby Montgomery. Dimitted: E. T. Bradford, E. J. Thompson, J. B. Boyd, W. L. Distin⁸⁹.

Beginning in 1899, the name of the Commandery ceased to be written with a hyphen in the official records and thereafter appeared as El Aksa.

In 1899, the membership of the Commandery remained unchanged at 86. During the year, 2 were Created, 2 Admitted, and 4 Dimitted⁹⁰.

John E. Rice Commander
 Frank S. Wood Recorder⁹¹.

Created: Michael E. Daugherty, David M. Knapp. Admitted: Edward J. Brown, Benjamin F. Porter. Dimitted: Harvey Chatten, John W. Heitz, Edward E. Manson, John D. Warfield⁹².

⁸⁶ Forty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1898. P. 100.

⁸⁷ Forty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1898. P. 100.

⁸⁸ Forty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1898. P. 100-101.

⁸⁹ Forty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1898. P. 101.

⁹⁰ Forty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1899. P. 59.

⁹¹ Forty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1899. P. 99.

In 1900, the membership of the Commandery increased to 87 Sir Knights. During that year, 3 were Created and 2 were Deceased⁹³.

William H. McMein Commander

Frank S. Wood Recorder⁹⁴.

Created: John W. Cassidy, Henry L. Whipple, William D. Hollister. Dead: Chester A. Wilcox (Jul. 20, 1899), Frederick W. Meyer (Aug. 13, 1899)⁹⁵.

In the same year, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Grand Sword Bearer and assigned responsibility for the Seventh District, which included Al Aksa Commandery No. 55 within its jurisdiction.

In 1901, the membership of the Commandery rose to 90. During the year, 4 were Created, 2 Admitted, and 3 Dimited⁹⁶.

Officers:

William Hubert McMein Eminent Commander

Loring Bennett Bartlett Generalissimo

John Batschy Captain General

Walter Howard Moore Prelate

George John McMein Senior Warden

Robert August Keifer Junior Warden

Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer

Frank Stobie Wood Recorder

Julius Louis Klemme Standard Bearer

Harry Gilbert Lawrence Sword Bearer

Henry Learned Whipple Warder

John Henry Rice Sentinel⁹⁷.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, L. B. Boswell, S. P. Barnes, W. H. Konantz, J. H. Rice, George Wells, A. A. Whipple⁹⁸.

Members: Thomas Austin, Calot Ezekiel Baker, Stephen Palmer Barnes, William H. Bartels, Loring Bennett Bartlett, John Batschey, Gustave Adolph Bauman, Henry Phillip Behrensmeyer, Ezra Best, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Samuel Henry Bradley, William Morris Brewster, Edward John Brown, George McClellan Cadogan, Sidney Pratt Calkins, Charles Enoch Carley, Joseph Newton Carter, John Warren Cassidy, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Henry Eugene Chubbuck, William Towert Coulter, Henry Cupp, Henry Ernest Dickhut, Samuel Hopkins Emery, Jr., James Dallas Epperson, John Norton Evans, Thomas Dimma Gardner, Robt. Adams Gardner, John Oliver Glenn, Wm. Henry Govert, Robt. Christian Gunther, Elisha Bentley Hamilton, Thos. Franklin Hastings, Wm. Dayton Hollister, Wm. Chellis Hooker, Edward Armstrong Ince, James McClelland Irwin, Robert August Kiefer, Julius Louis Klemme, David Murton Knapp, William Henry Konantz, Henry Gilbert Lawrence, John Mooney Lewis, Peter Belse Lott, James William Marshall, Edward Irving Martin, Edwin Woodbridge McClure, Frank Marshall McDavitt, George John McMein, Harry Moran McMein, William Hubert McMein, Bernard Henry Miller, James Pierce Montgomery, Sylvanus Bagley Montgomery, Walter Howard Moore, Edwin Starr Mulliner, Richard Foote Newcombe, Levin Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, Egbert Halsey Osborn, Henry Clay Osborn, Charles Wiley Parker, Franklin Jacob Penick, Benjamin Franklin Porter, John Henry Rice, Albert Lennox Richards, Walter Franklin Richards, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Lewis Scheu, Albert Henry Schmidt, J. B. Shawgo, Merry Walker Smith, John Meloy Stahl, Homer Milton Swope, James William Wall, James Worth Wayland, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Henry Learned Whipple, Thomas Sharp White, Joseph

⁹² Forty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1899. P. 21.

⁹³ Forty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1900. P. 53.

⁹⁴ Forty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1900. P. 93.

⁹⁵ Forty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1900. P. 112, 134.

⁹⁶ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 65.

⁹⁷ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 99.

⁹⁸ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 99.

Branch Whitley, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliney Bliss Williams, Charles Henry Williamson, Frederick Wilms, Frank Stobie Wood, James Newton Wright, James William Yeast⁹⁹.

Created: Henry P. Behrensmeyer, Franklin J. Penick, George H. Stahl, James M. Irwin. Admitted: Henry E. Chubbuck, James W. Yeast. Dimitted: George F. Jasper, Michael E. Daugherty, William R. Hamilton¹⁰⁰.

During the Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar held in Louisville in 1901, Al Aksa Commandery No. 55 did not participate in the parade; the Commandery was represented by only a single delegate¹⁰¹.

In that same year, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Grand Senior Warden¹⁰².

In 1902, the membership of the Commandery declined to 88. During the year, 1 was Created, 1 Dimitted, 1 Suspended, and 1 Deceased¹⁰³.

Loring B. Bartell Commander

Frank S. Wood Recorder¹⁰⁴.

Created: Harry H. Charles. Dimitted: Henry E. Dickhut. Suspended: Frank M. McDavitt. Dead: Elisha B. Hamilton (Mar. 20, 1902)¹⁰⁵.

In 1902, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Grand Captain General¹⁰⁶.

In 1903, the membership of the Commandery declined to 85 Sir Knights. During the year, 1 was Created, 1 Admitted, 4 Dimitted, and 1 Deceased¹⁰⁷.

John Batschy Commander

Frank S. Wood Recorder¹⁰⁸.

Created: George W. Govert. Admitted: Otto A. Mohrenstecher. Dimitted: Charles L. Seben, John M. Stahl, Henry C. Osborn, Lewis B. Boswell. Deceased: William Morris Brewster (Mar. 3, 1903)¹⁰⁹.

On 19 February 1903, E. Sir Holman G. Purinton issued Special Order No. 3, appointing E. Sir John Durham Cleveland as responsible for the inspection of El Aksa Commandery No. 55¹¹⁰.

In the same year, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Grand Generalissimo¹¹¹.

In 1904, the membership of the Commandery further decreased to 83. During the year, 4 were Created, 4 Dimitted, and 2 Deceased¹¹².

⁹⁹ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 99-100.

¹⁰⁰ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 100.

¹⁰¹ Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 43.

¹⁰² Forty-fifth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1901. P. 3.

¹⁰³ Forty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1902. P. 59.

¹⁰⁴ Forty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1902. P. 117.

¹⁰⁵ Forty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1902. P. 143, 166.

¹⁰⁶ Forty-sixth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1902. P. 3.

¹⁰⁷ Forty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1903. P. 76.

¹⁰⁸ Forty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1903. P. 131.

¹⁰⁹ Forty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1903. P. 160, 179.

¹¹⁰ Forty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1903. P. 45.

¹¹¹ Forty-seventh annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1903. P. 3.

¹¹² Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 77.

Officers:

George John McMein Eminent Commander
 Robert August Kiefer Generalissimo
 Henry Learned Whipple Captain General
 Walter Howard Moore Prelate
 Julius Louis Klemme Senior Warden
 James Worth Wayland Junior Warden
 Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer
 Frank Stobie Wood Recorder
 Charles Enoch Carley Standard Bearer
 George Daniel Roth Sword Bearer
 George Wood Govert Warder
 John Ratschy Sentinel¹¹³.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, Stephen Palmer Barnes, John Batschy, Loring Bennett Bartlett, William Henry Konantz, William Hubert McMein, John Henry Rice, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple¹¹⁴.

Members: Thomas Austin, Stephen Palmer Barnes, Loring Bennett Bartlett, William H. Bartels, John Batschy, Gustave Adolph Bauman, Henry Philip Behrensmeyer, Ezra Best, Samuel H. Bradley, Edward J. Brown, George McClelland Cadogan, Charles Enoch Carley, James Newton Carter, John Warren Cassidy, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Harry Herbert Charles, Henry Eugene Chubbuck, William Towert Coulter, Henry Clay Cupp, Samuel Hopkins Emery, James Dallas Epperson, John Norton Evans, Robert Adams Gardner, Thomas Dimma Gardner, John Oliver Glenn, George Wood Govert, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Gunther, Thomas Franklin Hastings, Walter August Heidebreder, William Dayton Hollister, William Chellis Hooker, James McClelland Irwin, Robert August Kiefer, Julius Louis Klemme, David Murton Knapp, William Henry Konantz, Harry Gilbert Lawrence, John Mooney Lewis, Peter Belse Lott, James William Marshall, Edward Irving Martin, Edward Woodbridge McClure, George John McMein, Harry Moran McMein, William Hubert McMein, Bernard Henry Miller, Otto Adolph Mohrensettner, Walter Howard Moore, James Pierce Montgomery, Sylvanus Bagby Montgomery, Edward Starr Mulliner, De Lafayette Musselman Jr., Levi Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, George Cochran Osborn, Edward Halsey Osborn, Charles Wiley Parker, Franklin Jacob Penick, Benjamin Franklin Porter, John Henry Rice, Walter Franklin Richards, Albert Lenox Richards, Edward Alpheus Rogers, George Daniel Roth, Albert Henry Schmidt, J. B. Shawgo, Merry Walker Smith, George Henry Stahl, Homer Milton Swope, John William Wall, James Worth Wayland, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Thomas Sharp White, Joseph Branch Whitley, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Henry Learned Whipple, Daniel, Franklin Wilcox, Frederick Wilms, Pliny Bliss Williams, Charles Henry Williamson, Frank Strobic Wood¹¹⁵.

Created: Walter Augustus Heidebreder, George Daniel Roth, De Lafayette Musselman Jr., George Cochran Osborn. Dimitted: Sidney P. Calkins, Edward A. Ince, James Newton Wright, James W. Yeast¹¹⁶.

Dead: Calot E. Baker (Sep. 6, 1903), Richard F. Newcomb (May 15, 1904)¹¹⁷.

In 1904, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Deputy Grand Commander¹¹⁸.

In 1905, the membership of the Commandery increased to 91 Sir Knights. During the year, 9 were Created, 3 Admitted, 2 Dimitted, 1 Suspended, and 1 Deceased¹¹⁹.

George J. McMein Commander
 Frank S. Wood Recorder¹²⁰.

¹¹³ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 110.

¹¹⁴ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 110.

¹¹⁵ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 110-111.

¹¹⁶ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 111.

¹¹⁷ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 111, 153.

¹¹⁸ Forty-eighth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1904. P. 3.

¹¹⁹ Forty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905. P. 62.

¹²⁰ Forty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905. P. 113.

Created: Samuel W. Eldred, David P. Strickler, Anson McL. Brown, Edward Morton, Thomas Burrows, George M. Reeves, William C. Fick, William D. Best, Joseph Selby. Admitted: B. Mendenhall, Harvey Chatlen, John J. Howard. Dimitted: Edward I. Martin, George McC. Cadogan. Suspended: James O. Glenn. Dead: Benjamin F. Porter (Jun. 22, 1905)¹²¹.

In the same year, Past Eminent Commander Alfred Augustus Whipple was elected Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Illinois (Fig. 3)¹²².



Fig. 3. E. Sir Alfred Augustus Whipple, Grand Commander

In the 1906 Proceedings, a biography of the most distinguished Templar associated with El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was published in full. It reads as follows: "ALFRED AUGUSTUS WHIPPLE.

Closely allied to the principles upon which is based the Brotherhood of Freemasonry—charity, unselfishness, the fraternal relationship between men, and a confidence in the good and mercy of a Supreme Being—are the qualities necessary to the successful practice of the medical profession. Brought daily face to face with the sterner side of life in constant juxtaposition with sickness and suffering, the physician must possess a character consistent with the duties inseparable from his life and whose predominating attribute must necessarily be a generous consideration for his fellow men. For nearly one-third of a century Dr. Whipple has followed the noble calling which in his youth he determined to devote his future career, and that he has succeeded in his laudable ambition is amply attested by his present honorable standing in the medical world; and now, in the prime of life, he can look back upon the unrecalable past with a calm sense of having conscientiously performed his duty to his God and to humanity in general.

Brother Whipple's connection with the Masonic fraternity dates back thirty-eight years. Appreciating the fact that by becoming associated with a society which had for its object the mental and moral elevation of the human race, he would be more fully equipped for the exigencies of his profession, he applied for admission in Cattaraugus Lodge No. 239, and after receiving the first two degrees was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on May 30, 1868. He received the Capitular degrees in Olean Chapter No. 150, New York, May 12, 1871, and was Principal Sojourner soon after in Salamanca Chapter U.D., R.A.M. Subsequently he removed to Quincy, Ill., and affiliated with Quincy Lodge No. 296, A.F. and A.M., and Quincy Chapter No. 5, R.A.M. He has served in the East in both above named bodies. He is a member of Quincy Council, R. & S. M., in which he served as Thrice Illustrious Master. On August 30, 1882, he was admitted a Companion of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross in El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 at Quincy, and was created a Knight Templar therein the 14th of September following. In this latter body he served as Eminent Commander in 1897–98, after having filled many of the subordinate official positions therein.

¹²¹ Forty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905. P. 136-137, 161.

¹²² Forty-ninth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905. P. 3.

In the Scottish Rite, Dr. Whipple attained to the ineffable degree of Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret in Quincy Consistory, January 19, 1887, and was subsequently elected Commander-in-Chief, serving in that capacity during the years of 1893, 1894 and 1895.

At the session of the Supreme Council held in Providence, R. I., September, 1902, he was elected to receive the Thirty-third and last degree of the A.A. Scottish Rite, and the same was conferred on him at the annual session of the Supreme Council held in Boston, September 15, 1903.

His earnest zeal and great activity in the interests of the Masonic fraternity soon made him prominent in our Grand Bodies and caused his promotion to office in Grand Chapter as Grand Master of the First Veil in 1893, and Grand Sword Bearer in the Grand Commandery K.T. of Illinois in 1899. Having been promoted through the line of official chairs in both bodies, he was elected Deputy Grand High Priest, October 24, 1901, and in a few weeks he was, through the lamentable death of Grand High Priest Charles H. Patton, called to fill his position. The duties of Acting Grand High Priest were so well performed by him that he received the highest gift in the Grand Chapter by being elected Grand High Priest October 30, 1902, and Grand Commander Knights Templar of Illinois October 24, 1905, presiding as Grand Commander at the Semi-Centennial Conclave, October 23 and 24, 1906.

R. E. Sir Whipple was born in the town of Mansfield, Cattaraugus county, N. Y., October 31, 1845, and was educated in the public schools until the breaking out of the civil war, when his father enlisted in the Union army, leaving to him the care and support of his mother and five younger children. By the fortunes of war his father never returned, having been taken prisoner at Gettysburg, Pa., July 1, 1863, and died at Andersonville, Ga., a little over a year later, and it was long after the close of the war before his family knew anything of him more than that he was in some Confederate prison or had passed beyond the reach of suffering.

He was married October 6, 1869, at Salamanca, N. Y., to Miss Lydia E. Learned (daughter of Dr. Henry Learned), who in every sense of the word has been a help-mate and mother of five children, four sons and one daughter, the daughter dying in 1876 at the age of four years.

He studied medicine with his father-in-law at Salamanca, and after a three-years course graduated from the Eclectic Medical Institute of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1876. After a few years of practice at Randolph, Cattaraugus county, and Cuba, Allegany county, N. Y., he entered Hahnemann Medical College and hospital of Chicago, Ill., for post-graduate course, receiving his degree from that institution in March, 1880, and in April of that year located at Quincy, Ill., where he has since been in active practice¹²³.

In 1906, the membership of the Commandery increased to 100 Sir Knights. During that year, 12 were Created, 2 Admitted, 3 Dimitted, and 2 Deceased¹²⁴.

Robert A. Kiefer Commander

Frank S. Wood Recorder¹²⁵.

Created: Julius Kespohl, Jr., Albert M. Suhler, William B. Finlay, Henry W. E. Kreitemeyer, Frank W. Osborn, Charles H. Achelpohl, William A. Pfeiffer, Timothy P. Castle, Charles R. Henderson, Charles H. Ganshell, Harry J. Heidbreder, Frank C. Miller.

Admitted: Charles S. Rose, Haucy G. Riggs.

Dimitted: Henry E. Chubbuck, Ed. J. Brown, Thomas F. Hastings¹²⁶.

Dead: Samuel H. Emery (Jan. 21, 1906), James D. Epperson (Apr. 19, 1906)¹²⁷.

In 1907, the membership rose further to 104. During the year, 6 were Created, 2 Admitted, 1 Suspended, and 3 Deceased¹²⁸.

Officers:

Robert August Kiefer Eminent Commander

Henry Learned Whipple Generalissimo

Frank Stobie Wood Captain General

Edward Woodbridge McClure Prelate

George Wood Govert Senior Warden

¹²³ Fiftieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1906. P. 113-114.

¹²⁴ Fiftieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1906. P. 47.

¹²⁵ Fiftieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1906. P. 119.

¹²⁶ Fiftieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1906. P. 144.

¹²⁷ Fiftieth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1906. P. 144, 167.

¹²⁸ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 77.

DeLafayette Musselman, Jr. Junior Warden
 Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer
 William Herbert McMein Recorder
 Henry William Emil Kreitermeyer . Standard Bearer
 Virgil George Musselman Sword Bearer
 George Milton Reese Warder
 George John McMein Sentinel¹²⁹.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, Stephen P. Barnes, Louis B. Bartlett, John Batschy, William H. Konantz, George J. McMein, William H. McMein, John H. Rue, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple¹³⁰.

Members: Charles Henry Achepohl, Thomas Austin, Stephen Palmer Barnes, William H. Bartels, Loring Bennett Bartlett, John Batschy, Gustav Adolph Bauman, Henry Phillip Behrensmeyer, Ezra Best, William David Best, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Samuel Henry Bradley, Anson McLean Brown, Thomas Burrows, Charles Enoch Carley, Joseph Newton Carter, John Warren Cassidy, Chauncey Harlow Castle, Timothy Parker Castle, Harry Herbert Charles, Harvey Chatten, William Melvin Coble, William Thornton Coulter, John Williams Cruttenden, Henry Clay Cupp, Samuel Wilson Eldred, John Norton Evans, William Charles Fick, William Bell Finlay, Robert Adams Gardner, Thomas Dimma Gardner, Charles Harper Gaushell, George Wood Govert, William Henry Govert, Robert Christian Gunther, Henry John Heidbreder, Walter August Heidbreder, Charles Robert Henderson, Corydon Sheldon Hickman, William Dayton Hollister, Herman Henry Holtman, William Chellis Hooker, John Jay Howard, James McClelland Irwin, Julius Kespohl, Jr., Robert August Kiefer, Julius Klemme, David Murton Knapp, William Henry Konantz, Henry William Emil Kreitermeyer, Harry Gilbert Lawrence, John Mooney Lewis, Peter Belse Lott, Edward Woodbridge McClure, George John McMein, Harry Moran McMein, William Hubert McMein, Benjamin Henry Miller, Frank Charles Miller, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, Sylvanus Bagby Montgomery, Walter Howard Moore, Edward Morton, Edward Starr Mulliner, De Lafayette Musselman Jr., Virgil George Musselman, Levi Hill Adams Nickerson, John George Notter, Egbert Halsey Osborn, Frank Wesley Osborn, George Cochran Osborn, Charles Wiley Parker, Franklin Jacob Penick, William Andrew Pfeiffer, George Milton Reeves, John Henry Rice, Albert Lenox Richards, Walter Franklin Richards, Harvey Gilbert Riggs, Edward Alpheus Rogers, Charles Sumner Ross, George Daniel Roth, Albert Henry Schmidt, Joseph Selby, J. B. Shawgo, Kirk Shawgo, George Henry Stahl, David Percy Strickler, Albert Morgan Suhler, Homer Milton Swope, William Cornelius Volk, John William Wall, James Worth Wayland, James Nichols Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Henry Learned Whipple, Thomas Sharp White, Joseph Branch Whitley, David Franklin Wilcox, Plincy Bliss Williams, Charles Henry Williamson, Frederick Wilms, Frank Stobie Wood¹³¹.

Created: Herman Henry Boltman, Kirk Shango, Virgil George Musselman, William Cornelius Volk, William Melvin Coble, John Williams Cruttenden¹³².

Admitted: Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Corydon Sheldon Hickman. Suspended: James Pierce Montgomery¹³³.

Dead: J. W. Marshall (Apr. 14, 1907), Benoni Mendenhall (Apr. 27, 1907), Merry W. Smith (Dec. 20, 1906)¹³⁴.

In 1908, the membership declined to 100. During the year, 1 was Created, 2 Dimitted, 1 Suspended, and 2 Deceased¹³⁵.

Frank S. Wood Commander
 William H. McMein Recorder ¹³⁶.

¹²⁹ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 122.

¹³⁰ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 122.

¹³¹ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 122-123.

¹³² Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 123.

¹³³ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 124.

¹³⁴ Fifty-first annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1907. P. 124, 156.

¹³⁵ Fifty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1908. P. 41.

¹³⁶ Fifty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1908. P. 103.

Created: Elmer Herbert Miller. Dimitted: Samuel Henry Bradley, Joseph Selby. Suspended: William C. Hooker¹³⁷.

Dead: John George Notter (Dec. 13, 1907), Robert Adams Gardner (Jun. 17, 1908)¹³⁸.

On 10 December 1908, 28 Knights Templar of Illinois submitted a petition to establish Ingevere Commandery in Carthage, Illinois. The petition was approved by El Aksa Commandery No. 55 and other commanderies¹³⁹.

In 1909, the membership of the Commandery declined to 96 Sir Knights. During the year, 1 was Created, 1 Reinstated, 5 Dimitted, and 1 Deceased¹⁴⁰.

Henry L. Whipple Commander

Frank S. Wood Recorder ¹⁴¹.

Created: Herbert Mayo Turner. Reinstated: William Chellis Hooker. Dimitted: William H. Bartels, William Bell Finley, William Chellis Hooker, Walter Howard Moore, James William Wall¹⁴².

Dead: Chauncey Harlow Castle (May 2, 1909)¹⁴³.

Beginning in 1909, the official records of the Grand Commandery of Illinois began to reflect the correct name of the Commandery as El-Aksa Commandery.

In 1910, the membership decreased further to 91. During the year, 4 Dimitted and 1 Deceased¹⁴⁴.

Officers:

Henry Learned Whipple Eminent Commander

George Wood Govert Generalissimo

George Milton Reeves Captain General

Edward Woodbridge McClure Prelate

William Andrew Pfeiffer Senior Warden

James McClelland Irwin Junior Warden

Edward Alpheus Rogers Treasurer

Frank Stobie Wood Recorder. В списке представлены не все офицеры¹⁴⁵.

Past Commanders: Thomas Austin, S. P. Barnes, John Batschy, L. B. Boswell, R. A. Kiefer, W. H. Kauntz, G. J. McMein, W. H. McMein, J. H. Rice, George Wells, A. A. Whipple, H. L. Whipple, F. S. Wood¹⁴⁶.

Members: Charles Henry Achelpohl, Thomas Austin, Stephen Palmer Barnes, John Batschy, Gustav Adolph Bauman, Henry Phillip Behrensmeyer, Ezra Best, William David Best, Lewis Benjamin Boswell, Anson McLain Brown, Thomas Burrows, Charles Enoch Carley, James Newton Carter, John Warren Cassidy, Timothy Parker Castle, Harry Herbert Charles, William Melvin Coble, William Towert Coutles, John Williams Cruttenden, Henry Clay Cupp, Samuel Wilson Eldred, John Norton Evans, William Charles Fick, Thomas Dimma Gardner, George Wood Govert, Robert Christian Gunther, Henry John Heidbreder, Walter August Heidbreder, Charles Robert Henderson, Corydon Sheldon Hickman, William Dayton Hollister, Henry Herman Holtman, John Jay Howard, James McClelland Irwin, Julius Kespohl, Robert August Kiefer, Julius Louis Klemme, David Menton Knapp, William Henry Kauantz, Henry William Emil Kretermeyer, Harry Gilbert Laurence, John Mooney Lewis, Peter Belse Lott, Eduard Woodbridge McClure, George John McMein, Harry Moran McMein, William Herbert McMein, Bernard Henry Miller, Elmer Herbert Miller, Frank Charles

¹³⁷ Fifty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1908. P. 160.

¹³⁸ Fifty-second annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1908. P. 131, 160.

¹³⁹ Fifty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1909. P. 15.

¹⁴⁰ Fifty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1909. P. 118.

¹⁴¹ Fifty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1909. P. 121.

¹⁴² Fifty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1909. P. 154.

¹⁴³ Fifty-third annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1909. P. 114, 154.

¹⁴⁴ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 140.

¹⁴⁵ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 128.

¹⁴⁶ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 128.

Miller, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, Samuel Bagley Montgomery, Eduard Morton, Eduard Starr Mulliner, DeLaFayette Musselman, Virgil George Musselman, Levi Hill Adams Nickerson, Egbert Halsey Osborn, Frank Wesley Osborn, George Cochran Osborn, Charles Wiley Parker, Franklin Jacob Penick, William Andrew Pfeiffer, George Milton Reeves, John Henry Rice, Albert Lenox Richards, Walter Franklin Richards, Harvey Gilbert Riggs, George Daniel Roth, Charles Sumner Ross, Albert Henry Schmidt, J. B. Shango, Kirk Shango, George Henry Stahl, Albert Morgan Suhler, Homer Milton Swope, Herbert Mayo Turner, William Cornelius Volk, James Worth Wayland, James Nichol Wellman, George Wells, Alfred Augustus Whipple, Henry Learned Whipple, Thomas Sharp White, Joseph Branch Whitley, David Franklin Wilcox, Pliny Bliss Williams, Charles Henry Williamson, Fred Wilms, Frank Stobie Wood¹⁴⁷.

Dimitted: Loring Bennett Bartlett, Harvey Chatten, Charles Harper Ganshell, David Percy Strickler.
Dead: Edward Alpheus Rogers (Nov. 1, 1909)¹⁴⁸.

On 27 April 1910, E. Sir John Durham Cleveland issued Special Orders No. 5, appointing E. Sir William H. McMein, Recorder of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, as Special Inspector for the inspection of Ascalon Commandery No. 49 on 17 May 1910¹⁴⁹.

In 1911, the membership of the Commandery declined to 90. During that year, 1 Dimitted¹⁵⁰.
The list of officers for the Commandery was not published in 1911.
Dimitted: James Worth Wayland¹⁵¹.

In 1911, the members of El Aksa Commandery No. 55 and Beauseant Commandery No. 11 submitted a petition to merge the two commanderies in the city of Quincy. The petition specifically noted: «REPORT—Committee on Charters and Dispensations.

Sir Knight Holman G. Purinton, P.G.C., submitted the report of the Committee on Charters and Dispensations. It was adopted.

To the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois:

Your Committee on Charters and Dispensations has had placed before it for its consideration a petition for a charter for a Commandery to be located at Quincy, Illinois, to be known as Quincy Commandery. It is in regular form and signed by 135 Sir Knights, of whom fifty are members of Beauseant Commandery No. 11, and eighty-one are members of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, and four dimitted Sir Knights. Accompanying this petition are four dimits and 131 receipts for dues, and conditional dimits for same. The petition is in pursuance of a proposed consolidation of the two Commanderies mentioned, both of which are located at Quincy, Illinois, all of which is set forth in duly authenticated copies of resolutions adopted by said Commanderies agreeing to surrender the charters now held by them, and to turn over all property and obligations now held by them to the new Commandery. After carefully considering this petition we recommend:

First — That a charter for a Commandery be granted the petitioners, to be known as Quincy Commandery No. 77.

Second — That in view of the fact that Beauseant Commandery No. 11 and El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 each having previously paid their charter fees, that the charter fee for the new Commandery be remitted.

Third — That the properties and obligations of the existing Commanderies be vested in and assumed by Quincy Commandery, and

Fourth — That the surrender of the charters of Beauseant Commandery No. 11 and El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, and the transfer of their properties take place at the time Quincy Commandery No. 77 is constituted»¹⁵².

In 1912, neither El Aksa Commandery No. 55 nor Beauseant Commandery No. 11 existed in the Grand Commandery of Illinois; instead, Quincy Commandery No. 77 was established, with a total of 134 Knights¹⁵³.

¹⁴⁷ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 128-129.

¹⁴⁸ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 129, 137.

¹⁴⁹ Fifty-fourth annual conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1910. P. 24.

¹⁵⁰ Fifty-fifth annual conclave the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1911. P. 116.

¹⁵¹ Fifty-fifth annual conclave the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1911. P. 138.

¹⁵² Fifty-fifth annual conclave the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois. Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1911. P. 93-94.

Let us now summarize some conclusions. In Table 1, we compiled data on the members of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 for the period from 1882 to 1911, indicating changes in their status within the commandery. If no entry follows the date of joining the commandery, it means that the Knight continued to serve as of 1911.

Table 1. List of members of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 (1882–1911)

No.	Name	Year joined/ status changed
1.	Achelpohl, Charles H.	1906-
2.	Adams, John Quincy	1882- 1892 Dead
3.	Austin, Tomas	1882-
4.	Baker, Carlot Eyskill	1888- 1903 Dead
5.	Barnes, Stephen Palmer	1887-
6.	Bartels, William H.	1897- 1909 Dimitted
7.	Bartlett, Loring Bennett	1893- 1910 Dimitted
8.	Batschy, John	1891-
9.	Bauman, Gustave A.	1893-
10.	Behrensmeyer, Henry P.	1901-
11.	Berry, William Washington	1886- 1895 Dead
12.	Best, Ezra	1886-
13.	Best, William D.	1905-
14.	Bishop, James Melville	1888- 1892 Dead
15.	Blasland, Samuel Adams	1883- 1890 Dimitted
16.	Boltman, Herman Henry	1907-
17.	Boswell, Lewis Benjamin	1882- 1903 Dimitted – 1907 Admitted
18.	Bowles, James Barton	1883- 1885 Dimitted
19.	Boyd, James Bancroft	1886- 1898 Dimitted
20.	Bradley, Samuel Henry	1888- 1908 Dimitted
21.	Bradford, Edwin Freeman	1891- 1898 Dimitted
22.	Brewster, William Morris	1892- 1903 Dead
23.	Brown, Anson McL.	1905-
24.	Brown, Edward J.	1899- 1906 Dimitted
25.	Burrows, Thomas	1905-
26.	Cadogan, George McClellan	1890- 1905 Dimitted
27.	Cadogan, William Henry	1889- 1892 Dead
28.	Calkins, Sidney Pratt	1883- 1904 Dimitted
29.	Carley, Charles Enoch	1882-
30.	Carter, Joseph Newton	1895-
31.	Case, Warren	1889- 1892 Dimitted
32.	Cassidy, John W.	1900-
33.	Castle, Chauncey Harlow	1882- 1909 Dead
34.	Castle, Timothy P.	1906-
35.	Charles, Harry H.	1902-
36.	Chatten, Harvey	1888- 1899 Dimitted – 1905 Admitted – 1909 Dimitted
37.	Chubbuck, Henry E.	1901- 1906 Dimitted
38.	Coble, William Melvin	1907-
39.	Core, Albert Stewart	1882- 1888 Dimitted
40.	Corley, Henry Russell	1882- 1887 Dimitted
41.	Coulter, William Thornton	1892-
42.	Cruttenden, John Williams	1907-
43.	Cupp, Henry	1886-
44.	Daugherty, Michael E.	1899- 1901 Dimitted
45.	Davidson, John M. D.	1891- 1891 Dimitted
46.	Dickhurst, Henry Ernest	1882- 1902 Dimitted
47.	Distin, William L.	1887- 1898 Dimitted
48.	Eldred, Samuel W.	1905-
49.	Emery, Samuel Hopkins, Jr.	1891- 1906 Dead
50.	Epperson, James D.	1887- 1906 Dead

¹⁵³ Fifty-sixth annual conclave the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois. Bloomington, Illinois: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1912. P. 62.

51.	Evans, John N.	1896-
52.	Evers, William	1882- 1887 Dimitted
53.	Fick, William C.	1905-
54.	Finlay, William Bell	1906- 1909 Dimitted
55.	Fox, James Bradon	1884- 1888 Dimitted
56.	Ganshell, Charles H.	1906- 1910 Dimitted
57.	Gardner, Robert Adams	1891- 1908 Dead
58.	Gardner, Thomas Dinner	1891-
59.	Gardner, James Robert	1886- 1893 Dimitted
60.	Gilmer, Thomas Lewis	1884- 1890 Dimitted
61.	Glenn, John Oliver	1882- 1905 Suspended
62.	Govert, George W.	1903-
63.	Govert, William Henry	1889-
64.	Guenther, Robert Chrestian	1885-
65.	Hamilton, Elisa B.	1897- 1902 Dead
66.	Hamilton, William R.	1897- 1901 Dimitted
67.	Hastings, Thomas F.	1897- 1906 Dimitted
68.	Heidbreder, Harry J.	1906-
69.	Heidbreder, Walter Augustus	1904-
70.	Heitz, John W.	1888- 1899 Dimitted
71.	Henderson, Charles R.	1906-
72.	Hickman, Corydon Sheldon	1882- 1891 Dimitted – 1907 Admitted
73.	Hilton, Walter Jay	1882- 1885 Dimitted
74.	Hollister, William D.	1900-
75.	Hooker, William C.	1897- 1908 Suspended – 1909 Reinstated – 1909 Dimitted
76.	Howard, John J.	1905-
77.	Ince, Edward Armstrong	1898- 1904 Dimitted
78.	Irwin, James M.	1901-
79.	Jasper, George Frazier	1886- 1901 Dimitted
80.	Kespohl, Julius, Jr.,	1906-
81.	Kiefer, Robert A.	1897-
82.	Klemme, Louis J.	1897-
83.	Knapp, David M.	1899-
84.	Konantz, William Henry	1882-
85.	Kreitemeyer, Henry W. E.	1906-
86.	Lawrence, Harry Gilbert	1898-
87.	Lewis, John M.	1893-
88.	Lott, Peter Belse	1898-
89.	Manson, Edward Everett	1882- 1899 Dimitted
90.	Marshall, James W.	1888- 1907 Dead
91.	Martin, Edward Irving	1892- 1905 Dimitted
92.	McClure, Edwin Woodbridge	1892-
93.	McDavid, Frank Marshall	1891- 1902 Suspended
94.	McMein, George John	1895-
95.	McMein, Harry M.	1897-
96.	McMein, William Hubert	1895-
97.	Mendenhall, B.	1905- 1907 Dead
98.	Meyer, Frederick William	1887- 1899 Dead
99.	Miller, Bunhard Henry	1884-
100.	Miller, Elmer Herbert	1908-
101.	Miller, Frank C.	1906-
102.	Mohrenstecher, Otto Adolph	1886- 1892 Dimitted – 1903 Admitted
103.	Mongomery, James Pierce	1884- 1907 Suspended
104.	Montgomery, Sylvanus Bagby	1898-
105.	Moore, Frederick Porter	1883- 1889 Dead
106.	Moore, Walter Howard	1897- 1909 Dimitted
107.	Morton, Edward	1905-
108.	Mulliner, Edward Starr	1891-
109.	Musselman, DeLafayette, Jr.	1904-
110.	Musselman, Virgil George	1907-

111.	Newcomb, Richard Foote	1882- 1904 Dead
112.	Nichols, Israel Lewis Bentz	1886- 1892 Dimitted
113.	Nickerson, Levin Hill Adams	1882-
114.	Notter, John George	1889- 1907 Dead
115.	Osborn, Egbert Halsy	1889-
116.	Osborn, George Cochran	1904-
117.	Osborn, Frank W.	1906-
118.	Osborn, Henry Clay	1889- 1903 Dimitted
119.	Parker, Charles Willey	1882-
120.	Parker, Frank Clifford	1889- 1896 Dimitted
121.	Penick, Franklin J.	1901-
122.	Pfeiffer, William A.	1906-
123.	Porter, Benjamin F.	1899- 1905 Dead
124.	Potter, Edgar Streeter	1884- 1888 Dimitted – 1891 Admitted - 1895 Dimitted
125.	Reeves, George M.	1905-
126.	Rice, John H.	1888-
127.	Richards, Albert Lennox	1895-
128.	Richards, Walter F.	1893-
129.	Riggs, Haucy G.	1906-
130.	Rogers, Edward Alpheus	1882- 1909 Dead
131.	Rose, Charles S.	1906-
132.	Roth, George Daniel	1904-
133.	Selby, Joseph	1905- 1908 Dimitted
134.	Selleck, Evelyn Charles	1882- 1886 Dimitted
135.	Schen (Seben), Charles Lewis	1886- 1903 Dimitted
136.	Schmidt, Albert Henry	1888-
137.	Shango, Kirk	1907-
138.	Shawgo, J. B.	1891-
139.	Smith, Edwin David	1887-
140.	Smith, Henry John	1884 (1886)- 1892 Dead
141.	Smith, James Russell	1889- 1894 Dead
142.	Smith, Merry Walker	1882- 1906 Dead
143.	Stahl, George H.	1901-
144.	Stahl, Stahl, John M.	1893- 1903 Dimitted
145.	Strickler, David P.	1905- 1910 Dimitted
146.	Suhler, Albert M.	1906-
147.	Swope, Horner Milton	1891-
148.	Thompson, Edwin Julius	1882- 1898 Dimitted
149.	Todd, Edsin Henry	1891- 1893 Dead
150.	Turner, Herbert Mayo	1909-
151.	Van Frank, Carnahan Dwight	1883- 1896 Dimitted
152.	Volk, William Cornelius	1907-
153.	Wall, Joseph W. (James William)	1897- 1909 Dimitted
154.	Warfield, John David	1886- 1899 Dimitted
155.	Wayland, James Worth	1892- 1911 Dimitted
156.	Wells, George	1882-
157.	Welman, James Nichols	1884-
158.	White, Thomas S.	1897-
159.	Whitley, Joseph Branch	1892-
160.	Whipple, Alfred Augustus	1882-
161.	Whipple, Henry L.	1900-
162.	Wilcox, Chester Arnold	1889- 1899 Dead
163.	Wilcox, David Franklin	1882-
164.	Williams, Pliney Bliss	1882-
165.	Williamson, Charles H.	1897-
166.	Wilms, Frederick	1884-
167.	Wood, Frank S.	1897-
168.	Woodard, William Robert Johnson	1882- 1885 Dimitted
169.	Wright, James Newton	1895- 1904 Dimitted
170.	Yeast, James W.	1901- 1904 Dimitted

According to the data presented in Table 1, a total of 170 individuals were affiliated with El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 over the period from 1882 to 1911. It was not uncommon for Masons to join the Commandery as entire families. For example, the Osborn and Smith families each had four members in the Commandery, while the Miller, McMein, and Gardner families each had three members.

By 1911, many of the organization's senior members were still active, reflecting the fact that the Commandery had been established only twenty-nine years earlier. Among these long-standing members were Alfred Augustus Whipple, David Franklin Wilcox, and others who had been admitted as early as 1882. The oldest deceased member of the organization was Benoni Mendenhall, who was born in 1827.

Statistical data on membership changes over the 29-year period are presented in Table 4.

Table 2. El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 membership statistics, 1882 to 1911

Years	Members	Created	Admitted	Reinstated	Demitted and Expelled	Suspended	Deceased
1882	26	26	-	-	-	-	-
1883	31	5	-	-	-	-	-
1884	39	5	3	-	-	-	-
1885	37	1	-	-	3	-	-
1886	46	9	1	-	1	-	-
1887	49	3	2	-	2	-	-
1888	54	8	-	-	3	-	-
1889	62	7	2	-	-	-	1
1890	61	1	-	-	2	-	-
1891	70	7	5	-	2	-	-
1892	72	7	-	-	3	-	2
1893	73	5	-	-	1	-	3
1894	72	-	-	-	-	-	1
1895	75	5	-	-	1	-	1
1896	74	1	-	-	2	-	-
1897	87	9	4	-	-	-	-
1898	86	3	1	-	4	1	-
1899	86	2	2	-	4	-	-
1900	87	3	-	-	-	-	2
1901	90	4	2	-	3	-	-
1902	88	1	-	-	1	1	1
1903	85	1	1	-	4	-	1
1904	83	4	-	-	4	-	2
1905	91	9	2	-	2	1	1
1906	100	12	2	-	3	-	2
1907	104	6	2	-	-	1	3
1908	100	1	-	-	2	1	2
1909	96	1	-	1	5	-	1
1910	91	-	-	-	4	-	1
1911	90	-	-	-	1	-	-
Total		146	29	1	56	5	24

An analysis of Table 2 reveals a slight discrepancy when compared with Table 1. In Table 1, 170 names are recorded, whereas in Table 2 the columns for Created and Admitted include 175 names. This difference appears to result from two distinct types of errors in the membership records.

The first type of error involves duplication of the same information across different years. For example, Henry John Smith is reported as having joined the Commandery twice, in 1884 and again in 1886. The second type of error concerns the inclusion of Dimitted members within the Admitted category upon their reinstatement, rather than listing them under Reinstated. By contrast, membership records for Bethany

Commandery No. 28¹⁵⁴ and Beauseant Commandery No. 11¹⁵⁵ did not follow this practice. Such recording practices led to duplications in the data for admitted members. According to Table 1, examples of this phenomenon include Corydon Sheldon Hickman, Otto Adolph Mohrenstecher, Harvey Chatten, and Lewis Benjamin Boswell. Taken together, these five names account for the discrepancy between Table 2 and Table 1.

Table 2 enabled the compilation of data suitable for visualizing the membership of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 over the period from 1882 to 1911. For convenience, these data have been represented in Chart 1.

Chart 1. Membership of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, 1882–1911

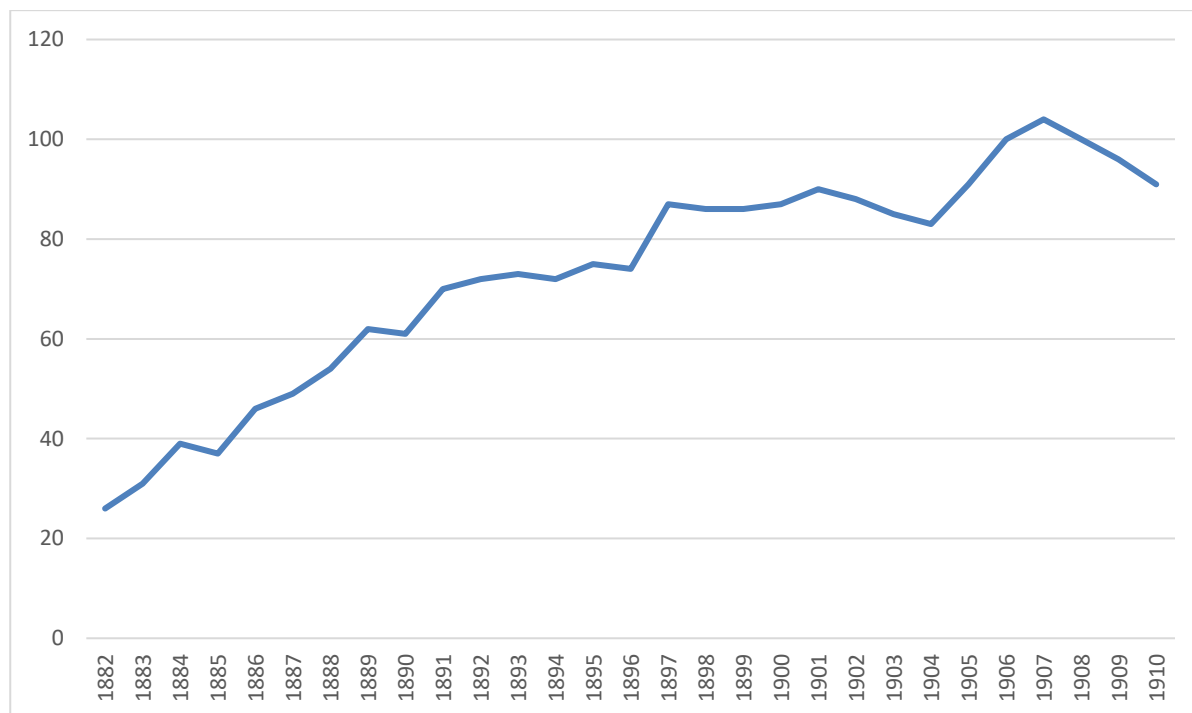


Chart 1 illustrates that throughout nearly the entire period of its existence, El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 experienced active growth, reaching a membership threshold of over 100 Sir Knights in 1907. Notably, there was no significant decline in the size of the Commandery during its years of operation.

We also present brief biographical data for members of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 who remained affiliated with the organization at the time of their deaths. This list is arranged in alphabetical order.

Adams, John Quincy (1845 – Nov. 9, 1892)

John Quincy Adams was born in 1845, in Quincy, Adams County, Illinois.

He was married to Mary Josephine Homan.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 10th Illinois Infantry with the rank of Private. Adams joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1882 as one of its founding members. In 1883, he was elected to the office of Captain of the Guards. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on November 9, 1892.

¹⁵⁴ Cherkas, A.C. (2025). History of Bethany Commandery No. 28, Knights Templar (Mendota, Illinois). Houston: Cherkas Global University Press. P. 152-163.

¹⁵⁵ Cherkas, A.C. (2025). History of Beauseant Commandery No. 11, KT (Quincy, Illinois). *Recorder*. 1 (2-1): 137-142.

Baker, Calot Ezekiel (Apr. 21, 1844 – Sep. 6, 1903)

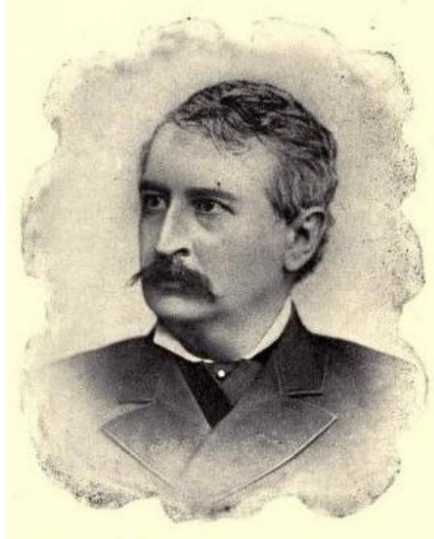
Carlott Eyskill Baker was born on April 21, 1844, in Troy, New York.

He was married to Isabella A. Brown.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in a New York Cavalry Regiment. Baker joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1888. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on September 6, 1903.

Berry, William Washington (Feb. 22, 1836 – May 6, 1895)



William Washington Berry was born on February 22, 1836, in Harford County, Maryland.

He was married to Georgia Berry.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 5th Kentucky Infantry Regiment with the rank of Colonel.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1886. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on May 6, 1895.

Bishop, James Melville (Jun. 24, 1835 – Mar. 14, 1892)



James Melville Bishop was born June 24, 1835, in Readfield, Kennebec County, Maine.

He was married to Elizabeth Noble Bishop.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1888. In 1889, he was elected to the office of Warder. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on March 14, 1892.

Brewster, William Morris (Oct. 17, 1854 – Mar. 3, 1903)

William Morris Brewster was born on October 17, 1854, in Norwalk, Ohio.

He was married to Lillie Brewster.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1892. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on March 3, 1903.

Cadogan, William Henry (Jan. 27, 1855 – Sep. 9, 1892)

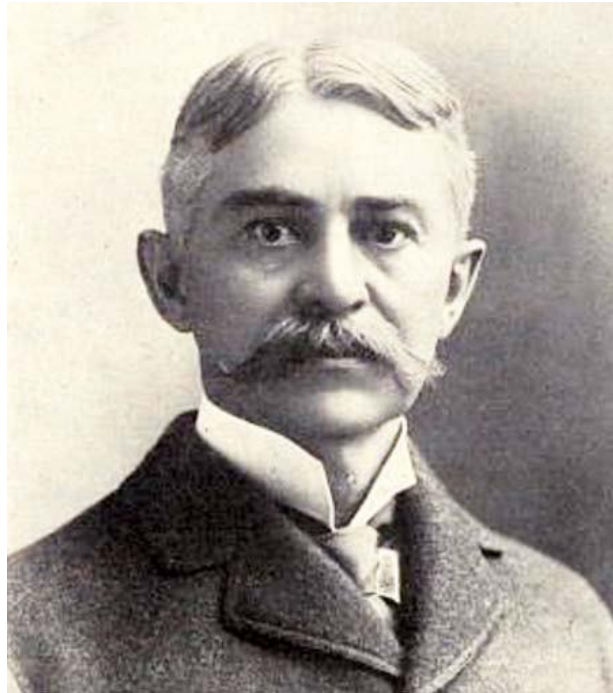
William Henry Cadogan was born January 27, 1855, in Quincy, Adams County, Illinois.

He was married to Sarah Jane Herr.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1889. In the same year, he was elected to the office of Junior Warden. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on September 9, 1892.

Castle, Chauncey Harlow (Jul. 10, 1843 – May 2, 1909)



Chauncey Harlow Castle was born on July 10, 1843, in Columbus, Adams County, Illinois.

He was married to Mary Elizabeth Parker.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 73rd Illinois Infantry Regiment with the rank of Private.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1882. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on May 2, 1909.

Emery, Samuel Hopkins, Jr. (Aug. 3, 1840 – Jan. 21, 1906)



Samuel Hopkins Emery, Jr. was born on August 3, 1840, in Taunton, Bristol County, Massachusetts.

He was married to Mary Mindwell Emery.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1891. In 1892, he was elected to the office of Warder. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on January 21, 1906.

Epperson, James Dallas (1846 – Apr. 19, 1906)

James Dallas Epperson was born in 1846, in Indiana.

He was married to Lydia Epperson.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1887. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on April 19, 1906.

Dr. Gardner, Robert Adams (Sep. 1, 1861 – Jun. 17, 1908)



Robert Adams Gardner was born on September 1, 1861, in Battle Creek, Calhoun, Michigan.

He was married to Mamie Emma Oertle.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1891. In 1895, he was elected to the office of Standard Bearer. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on June 17, 1908.

Gen. Hamilton, Elisha Bently (Oct. 5, 1838 – Mar. 20, 1902)



Elisha Bently Hamilton was born on October 5, 1838, in Carthage, Hancock County, Illinois.

He was married to Mary Emma Hamilton.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 118th Illinois Volunteer Infantry with the rank of 1st Lieutenant and concluded his military service with the rank of Brigade General.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1897. In 1898, he was elected to the office of Sword Bearer. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on March 20, 1902.

Marshall, James William (Dec. 28, 1842 – Apr. 14, 1907)

James William Marshall was born on December 28, 1842, in Cass, Illinois.
He was married to Saloma Anna Colpetzer.
He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1888. He did not hold any officer positions.
He dead on April 14, 1907.

Mendenhall, Benoni (Nov. 6, 1827 – Apr. 27, 1907)

Benoni Mendenhall was born on November 6, 1827, in Highland, Lake County, Indiana.
He was married to Margaret L. Phillips.
A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 78th Illinois Volunteer Infantry with the rank of Corporal.
He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1905. He did not hold any officer positions.
He dead on April 27, 1907.

Meyer, Frederick William (Dec. 9, 1836 – Aug. 13, 1899)

Frederick William Meyer was born on December 9, 1836, in Germany.
He was married to Eleonora Meyer.
He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1887. He did not hold any officer positions.
He dead on August 13, 1899.

Dr. Moore, Frederick Porter (Sep. 22, 1853 – Jan. 20, 1889)

Frederick Porter Moore was born on September 22, 1853, in Hume, Allegany County, New York.
He was married to Alice Medora Rogers.
He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1883. He did not hold any officer positions.
He dead on January 20, 1889.

Newcomb, Richard Foote (Sep. 20, 1837 – May 15, 1904)



Richard Foote Newcomb was born on September 20, 1837, in Bernardston, Franklin County, Massachusetts.

He was married to Eliza Ann Bowman.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1882 and was one of its founding members. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on May 15, 1904.

Notter, John George (Dec. 1849 – Dec. 13, 1907)

John George Notter was born in 1849, in Quincy, Adams County, Illinois.

He was married to Emma A. Schultheis.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1889. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on December 13, 1907.

Porter, Benjamin Franklin (Jan. 8, 1859 – Jun. 22, 1905)

Benjamin Franklin Porter was born on January 8, 1859, in Canton, Fulton County, Illinois.

He was married to Anna B. Porter.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1899. He did not hold any officer positions.

He died on June 22, 1905.

Rogers, Edward Alpheus (Aug. 2, 1845 – Nov. 1, 1909)

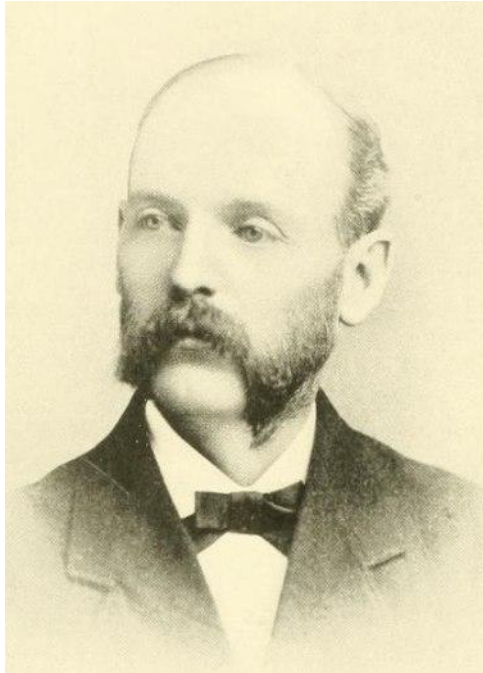
Edward Alpheus Rogers was born on August 2, 1845, in Quincy, Adams, Illinois.

He was married to Ellenora Payne Rogers.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1882 as one of its founding members. In 1883, he was elected to the office of Treasurer, a position he held for more than twenty-five years until his death.

He died on November 1, 1909.

Dr. Smith, Henry John (Mar. 17, 1840 – May 12, 1892)



Henry John Smith was born on Mar. 17, 1840, Huntington, Huntington County, Pennsylvania. He was married to Cornelia Keyes. He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1884. He did not hold any officer positions. He died on May 12, 1892.

Smith, James Russell (Feb. 10, 1847 – Mar. 9, 1894)



James Russell Smith was born on February 10, 1847, in Jacksonville, Morgan County, Illinois. He was married to Ella Wells. He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1889. He did not hold any officer positions. He died on March 9, 1894.

Smith, Merry Walker (May 5, 1833 – Dec. 20, 1906)

He was born on May 5, 1833, in Adams, La Salle, Illinois.

He was married to Ann Eliza Watson.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1882 as one of its founding members. In 1883, he was elected to the office of Standard Bearer and remained in this position through 1886.

He died on December 20, 1906.

Todd, Edson Henry (Jul. 2, 1842 – Jun. 28, 1893)

Edson Henry Todd was born on July 2, 1842, in Agawam, Hampden County, Massachusetts.

A veteran of the Civil War, he served in the 46th Infantry Regiment with the rank of 1st Sergeant.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1891. In 1892, he was elected to the office of Standard Bearer. He did not hold any other officer positions.

He died on June 28, 1893.

Wilcox, Chester Arnold (Allen) (Nov. 8, 1847 – Jul. 20, 1899)
(Past Commander)

Chester Arnold Wilcox was born on November 8, 1847, in Harford Mills, Cortland County, New York.

He joined El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 in 1889. In the same year, he was elected to the office of Recorder and continued in this position through 1890. In 1892, he served as Prelate. In 1894 and 1895, he was elected to the highest office of Commander. From 1896, he held the title of Past Commander. In 1897, he was again elected to the office of Recorder.

He died on July 20, 1899.

In total, the list comprises twenty-four brief biographies, including one of a Templar who held the status of Past Commander. Among these members, the most prominent was Civil War veteran Brigadier General Elisha Bently Hamilton (1838–1902). Overall, among the deceased members of the Commandery, there were seven Civil War veterans, representing approximately 30% of the membership in this category.

Information regarding the officer corps of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 is of particular importance for this study. These data have been compiled and are presented in Tables 3–5.

Table 3. List of Eminent Commander, Generalissimo, Captain General, Prelate (1882–1911)

Years	Commander	Generalissimo	Captain General	Prelate
1882	Thomas Austin	Edward E. Manson	Evelyn C. Selleck	-
1883	Thomas Austin	Evelyn Charles Selleck	Corydon Sheldon Hickman	Lewis Benjamin Boswell
1884	Thomas Austin	-	-	-
1885	Thomas Austin	-	-	-
1886	Thomas Austin	Lewis Benjamin Boswell	Corydon Sheldon Hickman	George Wells
1887	Lewis B. Boswell	-	-	-
1888	Lewis B. Boswell	-	-	-
1889	George Wells	William Henry Konantz	James Pierce Montgomery	James Bancroft Boyd
1890	George Wells	-	-	-
1891	William Henry Konantz	-	-	-
1892	William Henry Konantz	J. B. Boyd	S. P. Barnes	Chester Arnold Wilcox
1893	S.P. Barnes	-	-	-

1894	Chester A. Wilcox	-	-	-
1895	Chester Arnold Wilcox	Alfred Augustus Whipple	Stephen Palmer Barnes	Edwin Woodbridge McClure
1896	Alfred A. Whipple	-	-	-
1897	Alfred A. Whipple	-	-	-
1898	John Henry Rice	John Money Lewis	William Hubert McMein	Loring Bennett Bartlett
1899	John Henry Rice	-	-	-
1900	William Hubert McMein	-	-	-
1901	William Hubert McMein	Loring Bennett Bartlett	John Batschy	Walter Howard Moore
1902	Loring B. Bartell	-	-	-
1903	John Batschy	-	-	-
1904	George John McMein	Robert August Kiefer	Henry Learned Whipple	Walter Howard Moore
1905	George John McMein	-	-	-
1906	Robert August Kiefer	-	-	-
1907	Robert August Kiefer	Henry Learned Whipple	Frank Stobie Wood	Edward Woodbridge McClure
1908	Frank Stobie Wood	-	-	-
1909	Henry L. Whipple	-	-	-
1910	Henry Learned Whipple	George Wood Govert	George Milton Reeves	Edward Woodbridge McClure
1911	-	-	-	-

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that frequent rotation occurred among this group of officers. In contrast, the office of Commander was often held for two or more consecutive years.

Table 4. List of Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer, Recorder (1882–1911)

Years	Senior Warden	Junior Warden	Treasurer	Recorder
1882	-	-	-	William Evers
1883	George Wells	Charles Willey Parker	Edward Alpheus Rogers	William Evers
1884	-	-	-	William Evers
1885	-	-	-	Edgar Streeter Potter
1886	John Oliver Glenn	Sidney Pratt Calkins	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Edgar Streeter Potter
1887	-	-	Edward Alpheus Rogers	George F. Jasper
1888	-	-	-	George F. Jasper
1889	Stephen Palmer Barnes	William Henry Cadogan	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Chester Arnold Wilcox
1890	-	-	-	Chester Arnold Wilcox
1891	-	-	-	John Oliver Glenn
1892	H. C. Osborn	A. A. Whipple	Edward Alpheus Rogers	James Pierce Montgomery
1893	-	-	-	James Pierce Montgomery
1894	-	-	-	Gustave Adolph Bauman
1895	John Henry Rice	John Mooney Lewis	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Gustave Adolph Bauman
1896	-	-	-	Gustave Adolph Bauman
1897	-	-	-	Chester Arnold Wilcox

1898	John Batschey	George John McMein	Edward Alpheus Rogers	John Oliver Glenn
1899	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1900	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1901	George John McMein	Robert August Keifer	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Frank Stobie Wood
1902	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1903	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1904	Julius Louis Klemme	James Worth Wayland	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Frank Stobie Wood
1905	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1906	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1907	George Wood Govert	DeLafayette Musselman, Jr.	Edward Alpheus Rogers	William Herbert McMein
1908	-	-	-	William Herbert McMein
1909	-	-	-	Frank Stobie Wood
1910	William Andrew Pfeiffer	James McClelland Irwin	Edward Alpheus Rogers	Frank Stobie Wood
1911	-	-	-	-

Table 4 demonstrates that within this group of officers, only the office of Treasurer exhibited notable continuity. El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 provides a particularly unique example in this regard, as the Treasurer's office remained unchanged throughout the Commandery's entire twenty-nine-year existence.

By comparison, occupants of the other offices were subject to almost constant turnover. It was not until 1899 that the Commandery made a concerted effort to appoint a permanent Recorder—Frank Stobie Wood—in order to streamline administrative recordkeeping. Even he experienced a hiatus in 1907–1908, owing to his assumption of the highest office of Commander in 1908.

Table 5. List of Standard Bearer, Sword Bearer, Warden, Captain of the Guards (1882–1911)

Years	Standard Bearer	Sword Bearer	Warden	Captain of the Guards
1882	-	-	-	-
1883	Merry Walker Smith	Alfred Augustus Whipple	John Oliver Glenn	John Quincy Adams
1884	-	-	-	-
1885	-	-	-	-
1886	Merry Walker Smith, Jr.	Carnahan Dwight Van Frank	James Nichols Wellman	James Bradon Fox
1887	-	-	-	-
1888	-	-	-	-
1889	James Robert Gardner	John W. Heitz	James Melville Bishop	Egbert Halsy Osborn
1890	-	-	-	-
1891	-	-	-	-
1892	E. H. Todd	T. D. Gardner	S. H. Emery, Jr.	J. R. Gardner
1893	-	-	-	-
1894	-	-	-	-
1895	Robert Adams Gardner	James Worth Wayland	William Hubert McMein	-
1896	-	-	-	-
1897	-	-	-	-
1898	Joseph William Hall	Elisha Bently Hamilton	Robert August Kiefer	-
1899	-	-	-	-
1900	-	-	-	-
1901	Julius Louis Klemme	Harry Gilbert Lawrence	Henry Learned Whipple	John Henry Rice
1902	-	-	-	-
1903	-	-	-	-
1904	Charles Enoch Carley	George Daniel Roth	George Wood Govert	John Ratschy

1905	-	-	-	-
1906	-	-	-	-
1907	Henry William Emil Kreitermeyer	Virgil George Musselman	George Milton Reese	George John McMein
1908	-	-	-	-
1909	-	-	-	-
1910	-	-	-	-
1911	-	-	-	-

The data presented in Table 5 indicate that frequent rotation was typical among this group of officers, with personnel rarely remaining in the same office for an extended period.

For the convenience of working with the history of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, this study also includes a list of all Eminent Commanders, arranged in chronological order.

Thomas Austin (1882-1886)
 Lewis B. Boswell (1887-1888)
 George Wells (1889-1890)
 William Henry Konantz (1891-1892)
 S.P. Barnes (1893)
 Chester Arnold Wilcox (1894-1895)
 Alfred A. Whipple (1896-1897)
 John Henry Rice (1898-1899)
 William Hubert McMein (1900-1901)
 Loring B. Bartell (1902)
 John Batschy (1903)
 George John McMein (1904-1905)
 Robert August Kiefer (1906-1907)
 Frank Stobie Wood (1908)
 Henry Learned Whipple (1909-1910)

Over the twenty-nine years of the Commandery's existence, a total of fifteen individuals served as Eminent Commander. The majority of these, eleven in total, held the office for two or more years, while four served for a single year only.

During the research for the history of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, only two photographs of Knights Templar from the city of Quincy were discovered. The first photograph depicts Past Commander of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55, E. Sir Alfred A. Whipple, who in 1906 became Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Illinois. His photograph was selected for the cover of this special issue of the Recorder journal. Typically, the cover features images of individuals who, at various times, held the office of Recorder; however, Alfred A. Whipple never occupied that position. Among the nine individuals who served as Recorder in El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 between 1882 and 1911, no photographs have been located.

The second photograph pertains to Quincy Commandery No. 77, whose members participated in the annual parade during the Grand Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Illinois in 1930 (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Members of Quincy Commandery No. 77 in the 1930 Parade¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ Seventy-Fourth Annual Conclave the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Illinois. Bloomington, Illinois: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1930. P. 207.

In Fig. 4, the Knights Templar are depicted wearing the official White uniform, consisting of the Dress Coat, Sash, Belt, Sword, Gloves, and Chapeau. Only a single insignia is visible on the chest.

Using methods of historical reconstruction, The Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar at Cherkas Global University has recreated the uniform of a Knight from El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 (Figs. 5–8).



Fig. 5. General view of the uniform



Fig. 6. Upper portion of the uniform



Fig. 7. Belt and sword



Fig. 8. White Chapeau

In conclusion, it should be noted that El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 maintained an institutional presence in the city of Quincy, Illinois, for twenty-nine years, spanning the period from 1882 to 1911. Over these nearly three decades, a total of 170 individuals were affiliated with the organization. The roster of members included several figures of regional and statewide prominence, among them Brigadier General Elisha Bently Hamilton (1838–1902), a veteran of the Civil War, and Alfred A. Whipple (1845–1928), who subsequently attained the office of Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Illinois. As the second commandery established in Quincy, El-Aksa No. 55 played a significant role in shaping the local Templar presence, and its officers undertook sustained efforts to secure wide recognition for the Commandery both within the city and across the state. Reports submitted by various Grand Officers of the Grand Commandery of Illinois throughout the 1880s and 1890s consistently testify to the high regard in which the Commandery was held, identifying it as one of the most active and well-managed bodies in Illinois.

One of the most striking institutional features of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 was the exceptional continuity observed in the office of Treasurer. Throughout the entire lifespan of the Commandery, this position was held by a single individual, whose tenure extended from 1882 until his death in 1909. Under his long stewardship, the Commandery accumulated a considerable financial reserve. Deposited in a local bank at interest, these funds generated a steady annual income that materially contributed to the stability and routine functioning of the organization.

The remaining offices, by contrast, were characterized by a pronounced degree of rotation. This pattern can plausibly be interpreted as reflecting a deliberate policy on the part of the leadership to allow a larger number of Sir Knights to advance through the officer line, thereby broadening administrative experience within the membership. Yet such a practice—particularly in relation to the office of Recorder—introduced certain administrative complications. By the late 1890s, the accumulated difficulties associated with maintaining accurate membership records prompted a shift in policy, and from 1899 onward efforts were undertaken to reduce the frequency of turnover in this position.

In 1907, the Commandery reached its highest recorded membership, numbering 104 Sir Knights. Thereafter, a gradual decline ensued. At the same time, the city's older commandery, Beauseant Commandery No. 11, maintained a significantly smaller membership, estimated at approximately 60 Sir Knights. In view of the diminishing numbers and the overlapping constituencies of the two bodies, a decision was reached in 1911 to effect their consolidation. The merger was implemented the following year, resulting in the establishment of Quincy Commandery No. 77 in 1912. With this organizational restructuring, the distinct historical trajectory of El-Aksa Commandery No. 55 came to an end.

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