

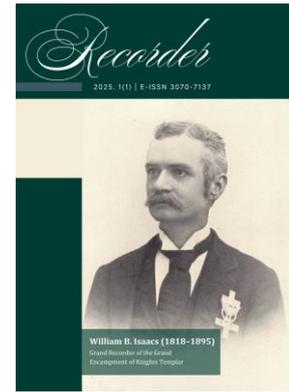
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The materials of the General Grand Encampment of Knights Templar serve as a statistical source for the number of Knights Templars in 1856

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Abstract. This article analyzes the earliest statistical records of the General Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, first published at the 13th Conclave in 1856. Until that time, no official data on membership had been made available, although the organization at its founding in 1816 likely included no more than 300 members. The 1856 report introduced two tables detailing the size of both Grand Encampments and Subordinate Encampments, though several jurisdictions lacked complete numerical information. Using average membership indicators derived from documented Encampments, the study reconstructs missing data and provides corrected estimates. The total number of Knights Templar in 1856 is assessed at approximately 4,826 members. The article highlights inconsistencies in the original statistical summaries and offers a refined understanding of the organizational structure and demographic scale of the American Knights Templar in the mid-nineteenth century.

Keywords: Knights Templar, General Grand Encampment, membership statistics, 19th century Freemasonry, Commanderies, historical demographics, United States.

As is known, the General Grand Encampment of Knights Templar was established in 1816. At that time, the organization consisted of seven Encampments and one Council, and the total number of their members, according to researchers, was no more than 300 people. For a long time, no statistical information was published about the size of the organization. The situation changed only in 1856 at the 13th conclave of the General Grand Encampment. This conclave was known for the fact that the Grand Encampment act Encampments, which were part of the organization, were renamed in Grand Commanderies and Commanderies. At the same conclave, the statistical information on the size of the General Grand Encampment was given for the first time.

This statistical data was consolidated into two tables: Table of Grand Encampments Under the Jurisdiction of the General Grand Encampment of the United States and Table of Subordinate Encampments Under the Jurisdiction of the General Grand Encampment of the United States. The total number of Templars was estimated at 4,710, of which 2,744 in the Grand Encampments;

1,366 in the Subordinate Encampments and 600 unaccounted for.

The first table listed eleven Grand Encampments, specifically: Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Texas. It provided details on the number of Encampments and knights in each. The highest number of Encampments was in New York, with 20. This was followed by Ohio and Pennsylvania, with 13 and 12 Encampments, respectively. The most populous Encampments were in Ohio, averaging 50 knights per Encampment. In contrast, the least populous Encampments were in Kentucky, averaging only 20 knights per Encampment.

According to this table, there were 95 Encampments in 11 Grand Encampments, and the number of knights, according to incomplete information, was 2,744 people. It is important to note that the table provided the number of Encampments for Maine (3) and Massachusetts and Rhode Island (9) but did not include the number of knights in these states. To estimate the approximate number of knights in these

Encampments, we used statistical data from the remaining 83 Encampments, which accounted for 2,744 knights. This has allowed us to find the average value per Encampment – 33 people. Based on this average, the estimated number of knights in Maine was approximately 99, while Massachusetts and Rhode Island likely had about 297 knights. As a result, the most accurate estimate for the total number of Knights Templar in the 11 Grand Encampments was approximately 3,140 knights.

Now let us examine the second table (*Table of Subordinate Encampments*). This table lists individual Encampments that, as of 1856, had not yet been organized into Grand Encampments. The list includes 42 Subordinate Encampments, but the number of knights is not specified for 8 of them. In the remaining 34 Subordinate Encampments, the number of knights ranged from 9 (Palestine No. 2) to 104 (Washington No. 1), with a total of 1,366 knights. The average number of knights per Encampment was 40. Using this average, we can estimate the number of knights in the 8 Subordinate Encampments (with unknown membership) at approximately 320.

Thus, the total number of knights across all 42 Subordinate Encampments was approximately 1,686.

In total, 716 individuals (99 from Maine, 297 from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and 320 from the 8 Subordinate Encampments) were unaccounted for in the first and second tables. However, at the end of the second table, the General Grand Recorder estimated that 600 individuals were unaccounted for across both tables. Since no explanation or calculation method for this figure of 600 was provided, we deemed it possible to use statistical indicators to clarify this estimate.

Thus, the total number of Knights Templar in 1856, as recorded in official documents, was likely underestimated rather than overestimated. In our view, the following data were the most likely: the eleven Grand Encampments included 3,140 knights, while the 42 Subordinate Encampments comprised 1,686 knights, bringing the total membership of the organization to 4,826 knights.

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