

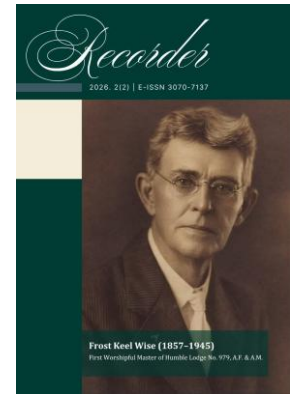
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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

The present issue of *Recorder* once again demonstrates the breadth and vitality of contemporary research devoted to the history of York Rite Masonry and, in particular, the Knights Templar in the United States. The materials brought together in this volume reflect both the diversity of approaches and the growing maturity of the field, which increasingly combines traditional documentary work with modern analytical and interdisciplinary perspectives.

A central place in this issue is occupied by studies grounded in primary sources. The article on Humble Lodge No. 979 reveals how local lodge history, when carefully reconstructed from Proceedings and periodical press, allows us to trace the interaction between fraternal life and global events such as the First World War. Similarly, the study of the Grand Commandery of Pennsylvania offers a rare attempt to systematize institutional data across more than a century, highlighting patterns of growth, geographical distribution, and the influence of historical circumstances on organizational development.

Equally important is the continued expansion of research into material culture. The article on the uniforms of the Knights of Malta and the study of commandery badges in Illinois demonstrate how artifacts—uniforms, insignia, and regalia—can serve as independent historical sources. These works remind us that the visual and symbolic language of the Order is not merely decorative but constitutes a structured system reflecting hierarchy, identity, and institutional evolution.

The historiographical study included in this issue is of particular significance. It shows that the history of commanderies has long been written within the Order itself, evolving from commemorative narratives into more rigorous academic analysis. This transition marks an important step toward integrating Masonic studies into broader historical scholarship.

Finally, the section devoted to the Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar illustrates the growing role of museum work in preserving and interpreting the heritage of the Order. The expansion of collections and the creation of new exhibitions reflect a conscious effort to preserve not only artifacts but also the memory and identity of generations of Masons.

Taken together, the contributions in this issue confirm that the study of American Templar Masonry is entering a new stage—one characterized by methodological diversity, source-based rigor, and an increasing awareness of the importance of material culture and institutional memory.

Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Alexander C. Cherkas