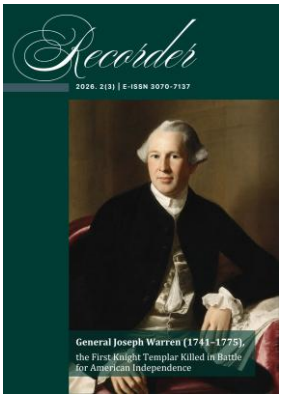
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Review of Exhibitions at the Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar (Expositions No. 031–034 Presented between November 22, 2025 and March 16, 2026)

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Abstract

This section examines a series of exhibitions held at the Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar between November 22, 2025 and October 2025, highlighting key aspects of the material culture of the Order in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Four exhibitions (Nos. 031, 027, 029, and 030) are analyzed, each focusing on distinct elements such as uniforms, ceremonial accessories, and antique swords. Particular attention is given to Monroe Commandery No. 12 (New York), whose artifacts—including swords, insignia, and rare photographic materials—illustrate the historical continuity of Templar traditions. The exhibitions also address specific components of uniform culture, such as cuffs differentiated by color according to uniform type, and the evolution of ceremonial swords from mid-nineteenth-century models. Special emphasis is placed on the exhibition dedicated to New Haven Commandery No. 2, centered on the personal belongings of Sir Walter Sherman Garde. These materials provide valuable insight into the distinctive features of certain commanderies, including the use of daggers and unique aprons, thereby contributing to a broader understanding of American Templar material culture.

Keywords: Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar, Exhibitions, Review.

Between November 22, 2025 and March 16, 2026, four exhibitions were presented at the Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar: November 22 — Exposition No. 031, December 30, 2025 — Exposition No. 032, February 24, 2026 — Exposition No. 033, and March 16, 2026 — Exposition No. 034. As in previous exhibitions, these displays were devoted to the uniforms of Knights Templar from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

Exposition No. 031 (November 22, 2025) was dedicated to the Uniform of St. Omer Commandery No. 6. In the early 20th century, commanderies within the Grand Commandery of North Dakota, as well as in several other Grand Commanderies, began adding patches to the collars of their uniforms so that Templars could determine from which commandery any given knight came. In the Grand Commandery of North Dakota, the approved patch format consisted of the commandery number and the letters “N.D.” The letters “N.D.” stood for North Dakota. On the uniform presented in the exhibition, we can see the collar marked: “6 N.D.”, which means Commandery No. 6, North Dakota. Another distinctive feature of the commanderies under the Grand Commandery of North Dakota was the use of buckle, which included the full name of the commandery. In addition, within this jurisdiction Templars were permitted to carry only a specific model of sword approved by the Grand Commandery of North Dakota.

Exposition No. 032 (December 30, 2025) was dedicated to The West Side of the Museum. The centerpiece of the exhibition is a portrait of Sir Knight Joseph William Edwards (1832–1925) of Bethany Commandery No. 28, who served as Eminent Commander from 1872 to 1873 and again from 1875 to 1877. Bethany Commandery No. 28 was chartered in 1868 and was affiliated with the Grand Commandery of Illinois of the Masonic Order of Knights Templar. To the left of the portrait is the uniform of another Sir Knight of Bethany Commandery No. 28. It belonged to Casper Ruedy, a Civil War veteran who also served as Eminent Commander in 1878. On the right side of the display is the standard-bearer figure representing one of the Commanderies of the Grand Commandery of Illinois. In the background are sword racks displaying Knights Templar swords. The rack on the right is equipped exclusively with swords that belonged

to military veterans, the majority of whom served in the American Civil War. Mounted above the display is the Salem Cross.

Exposition No. 033 (February 24, 2026) was dedicated to Fatigue Uniforms of the Grand Commandery of New York. The exhibition features the fatigue uniform of the Eminent Commander of Jamestown Commandery No. 61 and the fatigue uniform of a knight of St. Elmo Commandery No. 57. Fatigue uniforms were introduced in the American Order of Knights Templar at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. A distinctive feature of the Fatigue Uniforms of the Grand Commandery of New York was the inclusion of commandery information both on the headgear (the full name of the commandery) and on the collar of the tunic (K.T. and the commandery number). A complete set of such a uniform is a historical rarity today. At the center of the exhibition is a portrait of the Eminent Commander of Monroe Commandery No. 12, Sir Knight Frederick S. Rogers (1847–1908). It should be added that Monroe Commandery No. 12 was one of the largest Knights Templar commanderies in the state of New York. Below the portrait are swords from various New York commanderies.

Exposition No. 034 (March 16, 2026) was dedicated to Uniform of Malta Commandery No. 32 (Lamar, Colorado). The exhibition features the uniform of a Knight from the Grand Commandery of Colorado, specifically Malta Commandery No. 32 (Lamar, Colorado), dating to the early twentieth century. The uniform set includes: a headdress with protective cover (this model was patented in 1880), a dress uniform, a belt with a Commandery buckle, and gloves. The set is complemented by a sash, badge, sword, as well as a photograph of a Knights Templar in a similar uniform (early 20th century photograph).

Exposition No. 031 (November 22, 2025)
Uniform of St. Omer Commandery No. 6 (Grand Commandery of North Dakota)









Exposition No. 032 (December 30, 2025)
The West Side of the Museum









Exposition No. 033 (February 24, 2026)
Fatigue Uniforms of the Grand Commandery of New York









Exposition No. 034 (March 16, 2026)
Uniform of Malta Commandery No. 32 (Lamar, Colorado)





