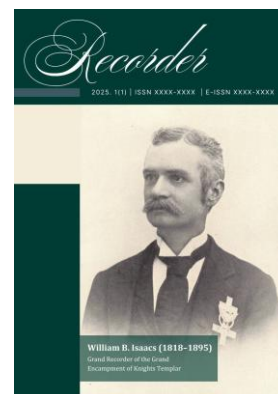


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Periodical Publications on the History of the Masonic Order of Knights Templar

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Abstract. This article explores the development of the printed heritage of the Masonic Order of Knights Templar in the United States. Beginning shortly after the establishment of the General Grand Encampment in 1816, official publications became central to documenting the Order's activities. Early reports were brief, but by 1835 the first volume of the Proceedings of the General Grand Encampment initiated a continuous documentary tradition. State-level Grand Encampments also issued annual proceedings, enriching the organizational record. By the late nineteenth century, souvenir photo albums of Triennial Conclaves emerged, providing unique visual insights. Together, these materials form a valuable historical resource on American Templar culture.

Keywords: Knights Templar, Masonic history, printed heritage, Triennial Conclaves, proceedings, American Freemasonry.

The history of the Masonic Order of Knights Templar in the United States is closely intertwined with its printed legacy. The first official publications appeared soon after 1816, when several independent Templar bodies united to form the General Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the USA.

These reports became the cornerstone of the Order's documentary tradition. The General Grand Encampment met every three years at gatherings known as Triennial Conclaves, during which officers were elected and current affairs discussed.

The proceedings of these meetings were recorded, and in the early years consisted of only a few pages. However, following the Sixth Triennial Conclave in 1835, the first volume titled "Proceedings of the General Grand Encampment of the USA" was published — marking the beginning of continuous documentation.

The General Grand Encampment included Grand Encampments (after 1856 — Grand Commanderies) of individual states. These met annually, producing their own reports, issued as "Proceedings of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the State of..."

The earliest publication in our library is the "Proceedings of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the State of Ohio", printed in 1844 (Third Annual Session).

In addition to these official records, by the late 19th century souvenir photo albums of the Triennial Conclaves began to appear. Today, these beautifully produced volumes are not only rare bibliographic treasures but also invaluable visual sources reflecting the life and culture of the Knights Templar in America.

This post is illustrated with photographs from our library collection.



