

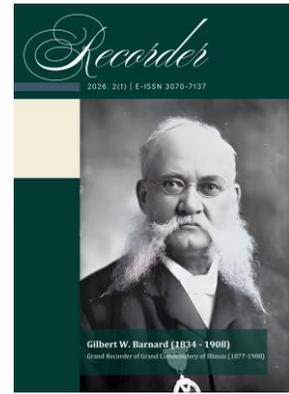
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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

The year 2026 marks a milestone in American history as the United States celebrates the 250th anniversary of its Declaration of Independence. On July 4, 1776, thirteen British colonies formally declared their separation from the British crown, establishing the foundations of a new nation. This anniversary invites reflection on the individuals, institutions, and spiritual traditions that shaped early American society, including the role of Freemasonry and the Knights Templar. In the January issue of *Recorder*, we honor this historical moment with the publication of “*Sir Peter Lauck (1753–1839): Soldier of the Revolution and Knight Templar*”, an article dedicated to a member of the revolutionary generation and an early participant in Templar Freemasonry in the United States.

This issue also completes a major editorial transformation of the journal. We have removed all reprint materials and redesigned the structure of *Recorder*, establishing it as a fully independent academic publication focused on the history of Freemasonry in the United States. The journal now addresses researchers, archivists, historians, and specialists in fraternal organizations, offering a platform for rigorous historical analysis. The main section, *Original Research*, is presented in chronological order, allowing readers to trace the evolution of Templar Freemasonry from the early to late nineteenth century. The issue includes biographical studies, institutional analyses, and source-based research, providing insight into the lives of individual Knights Templar and the functioning of regional Masonic structures.

The former *Uniform (Exhibitions)* section has been replaced by *Museum News*, which now features curated reports and analytical overviews of the activities of The Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar. This includes articles such as *The Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar Today* and detailed reviews of temporary and permanent exhibitions over specific periods, highlighting historical uniforms, regalia, and archival materials.

Additionally, we have introduced a new section, *Our Publications*, which systematically presents research conducted by staff members of Cherkas Global University on Masonic history. This section aims to consolidate contemporary scholarship, provide readers with direct access to original research, and foster engagement within the academic community. By highlighting ongoing research and scholarly contributions, *Recorder* seeks to strengthen the dialogue on the social, cultural, and institutional significance of Freemasonry in the development of American society.

We believe that the changes implemented in this issue position *Recorder* as a central resource for historians of American Freemasonry, while honoring the legacy of the country's formative generations and their enduring traditions. As we celebrate this historic anniversary, we remain committed to illuminating the past, supporting rigorous research, and contributing to the ongoing understanding of Freemasonry's role in American history.

We wish you a pleasant reading.

Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Alexander C. Cherkas