

Chandler Lodge #138 F &AM
Lodge Education Program

Subject: The York Rite: Commandery

Date: _____

The third concordant body of the York Rite is the Knights Templar. The organization is known as “Chivalric” masonry. The degree lessons in chivalric masonry are known as “orders” out of respect for the original Christian knights on which this organization is based. The term “Commandery” refers to the local chapter or group of knights, and again alludes to the military intent of the order. The Commandery body of masonry is the only body which does not require a belief in any supreme being, but instead is limited to those who are a professed Christian and believe in the trinity, again this is in respect to the ancient order of medieval knights, known as the poor soldiers of Christ of the Temple of Solomon; or “Knights Templar”

The degrees or orders of Commandery consist of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, Order of Malta, and The Order of the Temple. These degrees teach the story of birth, life, death, and resurrection and ascension. They are taught in relation to the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel. Commandery, like Royal arch Chapters are first known in the American colonies, before traveling back and becoming popular throughout Europe. The first documented Knight Templar was in The St. Andrews Royal Arch Chapter on August 28, 1769 in Boston. The Masonic knights Templar connection to the ancient Templars of Solomon is highly debated, but what is recognized is the divine influence their story played on the creation of this body, and its method of conveying the story through the orders. Commandery did not originally possess the uniforms, and military precision it is known for today. The medieval knights were known for their black boots with blazon white robes ornated with the scarlet cross, while modern knights wear more military style pants & jackets with the sword, proper badgeing and widely recognized feathered chapeau. The military style drills and marching were added after the civil war with veterans returning home, and bringing a large membership boon for the fraternity.

The first Ohio encampment was Mt. Vernon chartered on September 16, 1819, which predated the formation of the Ohio Grand Encampment in October of 1843. Willis Commandery #82 is the local Commandery based in our London Temple. It was chartered October 9, 1951 and falls under the jurisdiction of the 5th Division of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar Ohio.

Source: Grand Commandery Website
Chandler 138 website
Everything freemasons book
Idiots guide to Freemasonry