



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Read More About It:
Titles and Brevets

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INTRODUCTION



Field Marshal Sir Stapleton Stapleton-Cotton, 6th Bt, who became 1st Baron Combermere (1814) and 1st Viscount Combermere (1827).

Titles and Brevets

Traditional rank amongst European royalty, peers, and nobility is rooted in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Titles of nobility in Europe were originally bound up with land tenure, and if only for this reason Jews were automatically excluded from holding them in the Middle Ages.

Brevet is a form of military commission formerly used in the U.S. and British armies. Under the system in which an officer was customarily promoted within his regiment or corps, a brevet conferred upon him a rank in the army at large higher than that held in his corps. Frequently it carried with it the pay, right to command, and uniform of the higher grade. In the United States especially, brevet rank was widely bestowed as a reward for outstanding service; it became the subject of extensive confusion and controversy during the American Civil War. After 1865, U.S. brevet rank was gradually stripped of its benefits, and officers were rewarded instead by decorations. Commission by brevet was declared obsolete in 1922. Special commissions bearing some of the characteristics of the brevet have been used in other armies.

This publication reviews the titles and brevets in the Order and their proper use in communiques.

Background

An order of chivalry, order of knighthood, chivalric order, or equestrian order is an order of knights typically founded during or inspired by the original Catholic military orders of the Crusades (circa 1099–1291), paired with medieval concepts of ideals of chivalry.

Since the 15th century, orders of chivalry, often as dynastic orders, began to be created in a more courtly fashion that could be created *ad hoc*. These orders would often retain the notion of being a confraternity, society or other association of members, however, some of them were ultimately purely honorific, consisting of a medal decoration. In fact, these decorations themselves often came to be known informally as *orders*. These institutions in turn gave rise to the modern-day orders of merit of sovereign states.

The original ideal lay in *monachus et miles* (monk and knight), who in the order is dedicated to a Christian purpose.

The first orders of knights were religious orders that were founded to protect and guide pilgrims to the Holy Land. The knightly orders were characterized by an order-like community life in poverty, obedience and chastity, which was linked with charitable tasks, armed pilgrimage protection and military action against external and occasionally internal enemies of Christianity.

Examples are the Knights Templar, the Order of St. John, and the Order of Malta. These communities only became spiritual orders in the sense of canon law through papal recognition of their own binding rules of order and through the dissolution of ecclesiastical diocesan organizations.

In addition to the religious orders of knights, courtly orders of knights emerged in many European royal houses from the middle of the 14th century. This enabled the monarchs and princes to create a reliable household power independent of the church and to combine their court life with knightly virtues. During this time, the Burgundian court culture was leading and so the Order of the Golden Fleece, founded there in 1430, was for many a model in the sense of a princely order based on the ideals of Christian chivalry.

In the course of time, many orders of knights have been dissolved due to a lack of people or the field of activity has changed. So in many areas the charitable aspect and nursing came to the fore. There were also dissolutions for political reasons, such as the Knights Templar in 1312. While the Knights Templar was not re-established in their original form, some orders were reactivated after the end of World War II and the fall of the Iron Curtain.

There are numerous ways to classify orders of chivalry.

The Canadian heraldist D'Arcy Boulton classifies chivalric orders as follows:

- Monarchical orders
- Confraternal orders
- Fraternal orders
- Votive orders
- Cliental pseudo-orders
- Honorific orders

The **Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem** (SMOTJ), (Latin: *Ordo Supremus Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani*, **OSMTH**), is a self-styled order and international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). In 2020 it was recognized by the Augustan Society as a religious confraternity of knights.

Our Order asserts no direct lineage to the original Order but makes a moral and ethical claim to follow in the same spiritual path as the original Order of the Knights Templar.

Most multi-level European orders comprise five ranks or classes. The highest is usually called the Grand Cross, then descending with varying titles. Alternatively, the ranks are referred to by number (for example "1st class" instead of "Grand Cross").

Typical rankings are:

Class Common Names

- I Grand Cross, Commander Grand Cross, Grand Cordon, Grand Collar
- II Grand Officer, Commander 1st Class, Grand Commander, Knight Commander, Knight Companion, Commander with Star
- III Commander, Commander 2nd Class, Companion
- IV Officer, Knight 1st Class, Member 1st Class
- V Knight, Knight 2nd Class, Chevalier, Member

Rank and Post-nominal used within the Order

Our Order uses the following designations. Each has a post-nominal used within the Order to designate rank.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Knights & Dames</u>	<u>Chaplain Corps.</u>
Knight	KTJ	ACTJ
Dame	DTJ	ACTJ
Knight Commandeur	KCTJ	CTJ
Dame Commandeur	DCTJ	CTJ
Grand Officer (Knight/Dame)	GOTJ	SCTJ
Grand-Croix (Knight/Dame)	GCTJ	GCRTJ
 <u>Order of Merit</u>		
Companion (Knight/Dame)	OMTJ	OMTJ
Commander (Knight/Dame)	CMTJ	CMTJ
Grand Commander (Knight/Dame)	GCTJ	GCTJ
Grand Cordon (Knight/Dame)	GCMTJ	GCMTJ

Sir

is a formal English honourific address for men, derived from *Sire* in the High Middle Ages. Traditionally, as governed by law and custom, "Sir" is used for men titled as knights, i.e., of orders of chivalry, and later also applied to baronets and other offices. As the female equivalent for knighthood is damehood, the *suo jure* female equivalent term is typically Dame. The wife of a knight or baronet tends to be addressed as Lady, although a few exceptions and interchanges of these uses exist. The first possible word used for this meaning is "Senex sen", from Latin, literally 'older, older man', comparative of senex, sen- 'old man, old'. *Sir* derives from the honorific title *sire*; *sire* developed alongside the word *seigneur*, also used to refer to a feudal lord. The form 'Sir' is first documented in English in 1297, as the title of honour of a knight, and latterly a baronet, being a variant of *sire*, which was already used in English since at least c.1205 as a title placed before a name and denoting knighthood, and to address the (male) Sovereign since c.1225, with additional general senses of 'father, male parent' is from c.1250, and 'important elderly man' from 1362.

Titles and Brevets in Correspondence

All members of the Order should bear in mind that Americans have no nobiliary titles and recognize none. However, while with each other in our own groups, we do identify a title of honor denoting our chivalric status, having achieved that title through membership and service in our Order.

Because our nation does not recognize nobiliary titles, all members, regardless of rank or office within the Order, may be simply addressed upon envelopes passing through the U.S. Postal Service as Mr. or Mrs. John Doe or Miss Jane Doe. If an individual has a recognized professional or military title, that may be used on the envelope as well.

Examples

SGM John Q. Public, Jr.
Dr. Jane Doe
Mr. John Doe, Esq.

Any *inside* address in such a mailing, however, may contain the rank or office of an individual member of the Order. These post-nominals, which we bear within our organization, serve as recognition of merit, or good work by our members, and hopefully, serve as a spur to continued endeavors to advance the Order. They should not in any way be construed as nobiliary titles.

It must be remembered that the rank of Grand Officer in the Order has nothing to do with the title or office of a Grand Officer, as such, in the Grand Priory of the United States.

Salutation

The salutation used in correspondence in front of a name should be "Chevalier" (abbreviated Chev.), "Chevaleresse" (abbr. Chvse.) (preferred) or "Knight" or "Dame."

In the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and in Commonwealth countries, the title "Sir" or "Dame" connotes a person who has been knighted by the Sovereign.

Templars in those lands use "Chevalier" or "Lady" as the favored salutation, since the use of the "Sir" or "Dame" titles by anyone who is not so dubbed by the Sovereign is outlawed; and they view any such use by individuals elsewhere who have not been dubbed as presumptuous.

Grand Priors, current or past, and Priors, current and past, hold the highest positions of honor in our Grand Priory; hence they are addressed as "Your Excellency," as is the common practice in all chivalric Orders. In addition, current Chivalric practice recognizes all persons holding the distinction of Grand Croix (Grand Cross) as an "Excellency" as well, and this practice is encouraged in correspondence in our Order.

Closings

Before time management became the buzzword of modern business and keyboards replaced quills, the complimentary close really was complimentary. Going as far back as the Bible, the Epistle of Paul in the Apostle to the Colossians closed: "This salutation by my own hand-- Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen." "Your most obedient and most humble servant," as used by Thomas Jefferson to the newly elected President, George Washington. Emily Post said in her book, "Etiquette, 1922": "Ever since the 18th Century, the English speaking have been busy pruning away all ornament of expression, even the last remaining graces, 'kindest regards' . . . leaving us nothing but an abrupt 'Yours truly.'"

Closing

The complimentary close of all Order correspondence may end with the following:

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine

(Signature)

Military/Religious/Professional Rank Chev. (Chvse.) Name, Order Rank
 Position

Examples

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine



Chev. James Doe, KTJ

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine



LTC Chvse. Pauline Smith, GOTJ
 Secretary – Priory of St. James

The current and former Grand Priors are entitled to place a three-barred patriarchal cross in either red or black to the left of their signature. Serving or former Priors may place the modified two-bar patriarchal cross to the left of their signature in either red or black while serving in that capacity. They are not entitled to use the cross when they leave the position. Elected Grand Officers of GPUSA are also entitled to use the modified two-bar patriarchal cross to the left of their signature in either red or black for the term of their office and thereafter during their lifetime. Commanders and other appointed Commandery Officers may use the single-bar cross during the term of their office.

Cross	Term of Office & Lifetime	Only while in Office
		Priory Officers, Commanders and Commandery Officers
	Priors and Elected Grand Officers	Acting Priors not subsequently elected to Office
	Grand Priors	Acting Grand Priors not subsequently elected to Office

Grand Prior's relative rank and position in the Order are designated by a Roman Numeral following their title.

Examples

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine



Chvse. Marguerite, Orr, GGCTJ, GMTJ
Grand Prior XXX

Fraterrnally Yours,
Non nobis Domine



Dr. Chvse. Anne Miller, DCTJ
Prior – Priory of St. Joseph

Fraternally Yours
Non nobis Domine



Chev. Paul Smith, Esq., KTJ
Commander – Commandery of St. Sebastian

The GPUSA brand is a visitor experience represented by a collection of images and ideas; it serves to create associations and expectations among visitors to the National Organization as well as the individual priories. The GPUSA brand includes an explicit logo, fonts, color schemes, and symbols developed to represent implicit values, ideas, and even personality.

GPUSA uses several fonts in its communications. Font styles should be consistent across all communication materials: letterhead, business card, envelope, memo, etc. Correspondence materials from Priors/Commanderies and their Officers should mirror those of the Grand Priory.

Templates for letterhead, memos, agendas, minutes, envelopes, business cards etc. can be obtained from the Office of the Grand Secretary.

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