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## A History of Bethany Commandery No. 28, K.T. (1868–1918)

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### Abstract

This work examines the activity of Bethany Commandery No. 28, an organization within the Masonic order of Knights Templar, over the first 50 years of its existence – from 1868 to 1918. The paper gives consideration to the composition and size of the commandery's membership.

The materials for the study included the reports of 50 annual conclaves of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois from the library of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial (Washington DC, USA).

The study's findings revealed that in the period from 1868 to 1918 Bethany Commandery No. 28 had a total of 274 members go through it, with 52 of those passing away while a member of the commandery. By 1918, membership in Bethany Commandery No. 28 reached an all-time high of 106. In the first 50 years of its existence, membership in the commandery included 10 Civil War and four World War I participants. In terms of profession, its membership included intellectuals (physicians and engineers) and farmers. The average length of service with Bethany Commandery No. 28 was approximately 11.8 years. In the first 50 years of its existence, Bethany Commandery No. 28 had 21 different commanders, with some of those holding the post for several years.

**Keywords:** Bethany Commandery No. 28, Masonic Order, Knights Templar, 1868–1918, history.

### 1. Introduction

In the period between the late 18th and the early 19th centuries, the United States witnessed the rapid development of the Masonic order of Knights Templar. As early as 1826, the organization's scattered Encampments, including those in the North, united into the General Grand Encampment. As the order developed through the 1850s and 1860s, it had its organizations created throughout the United States, including in the state of Illinois. On October 27, 1868, the town of Mendota in that state became home to a 28th commandery – Bethany Commandery No. 28. The present work is focused on detailing the activity of that commandery over the first 50 years of its existence.

### 2. Materials and methods

The materials for the study included the reports of 50 annual conclaves of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the state of Illinois from the library of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial (Washington DC, USA). Those reports contain information about the membership of Bethany Commandery No. 28 in the first 50 years of its existence, i.e. from 1868 to 1918.

With the study essentially being a historical-statistical one, it relied on the historical-chronological and statistical methods. The use of the historical-chronological helped present the history of Bethany Commandery No. 28 in chronological sequence, and the use of the statistical method helped analyze and interpret large amounts of statistical information and draw appropriate conclusions.

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### 3. Discussion

The history of Bethany Commandery No. 28 remains little researched. In fact, to date there has been no dedicated research on that subject. However, Bethany Commandery No. 28 is mentioned in a couple of works. For instance, Bethany Commandery No. 28 and its membership are mentioned in ‘The Past & Present of La Salle County, Illinois’, the town of Mendota being part of that county ([The Past & Present..., 1877](#)). The commandery is also mentioned in a later work – ‘Biographical and Genealogical Record of La Salle County, Illinois’ ([Biographical and Genealogical Record, 1900](#)).

### 4. Results

Mendota, Illinois, was incorporated as a town in 1859. A significant role in the development of that town was played by a railroad running through it. In 1865, Mendota had a population of around 2,000 ([The Past & Present..., 1877](#)).

Bethany Commandery No. 28 was chartered on October 27, 1868 ([Proceedings..., 1868: 434](#)), at Mendota, La Salle County ([Proceedings..., 1868: 404](#)), on the initiative of 10 members of the local community ([Proceedings..., 1868: 396](#)).

On a side note, at that time any commandery’s members were referred to as ‘knights’, with the word ‘swords’ also used. Commanderies were typically established in the following way. As a common practice at the time, a commandery would be formed from among members of an area’s local community, with the initial step being a visit to the area by a group of officers from the Grand Commandery of the state it was in. There was an election-based system. The highest officer positions would be occupied by the charter members, with the lower ranks filled by members of the local community. Officer elections would be held on an annual basis. All paperwork would be handled by an officer known as the Recorder, whose job was to capture any changes to the commandery’s membership in a special book known as the Register and who was responsible for all correspondence in and out of the commandery. Each commandery had a flag and badge of its own.

In 1868, Bethany Commandery No. 28 consisted of the following officers:

Frank Allen Hardin .....	Commander
George Emerson .....	Generalissimo
David Alpheus Cook .....	Captain General
Wilbur Fisk Bromfield .....	Prelate
George Frank Stannard .....	Senior Warden
Preston I. Davis .....	Junior Warden
John Hamilton Harris .....	Treasurer
Anthony Bennett Gould .....	Recorder
John Clark Corbus .....	Standard Bearer
James Alfred Church .....	Sword Bearer
Jason Martin Liscom .....	Warden
Jason Reed Liscom .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Proceedings..., 1868: 434</a> ).

The commandery had the following members from among the local community: George M. Black, John Clark Corbus, James Alfred Church, James B. Dawson, Alpheus Dean, Joseph W. Edwards, Robert L. Gilmore, William S. Harrington, Frederick H. Haskill, and Jason R. Liscom ([Proceedings..., 1868: 434](#)).

In 1869, membership in Bethany Commandery No. 28 grew to 23 (its local members only) ([Proceedings..., 1870: 453](#)).

Officers:

Frank Allen Hardin .....	Commander
George Emerson .....	Generalissimo
David Alpheus Cook .....	Captain General
Wilbur Fisk Bromfield .....	Prelate
John Clark Corbus .....	Senior Warden
Robert L. Gilmore .....	Junior Warden
James Brown Dawson .....	Treasurer
Frederick Henry Haskill .....	Recorder
Joseph William Edwards .....	Standard Bearer
Preston Irving Davis .....	Sword Bearer
Anthony Bennett Gould .....	Warden
Jason Reed Liscom .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Proceedings..., 1870: 530</a> ).

The commandery had the following members from among the local community: William Atkinson, W.F. Bromfield, G.M. Black, John C. Corbus, E.P. Cook, D.A. Cook, J.A. Church, Alpheus Dean, J.B. Dawson, P.I. Davis, J.W. Edwards, George Emerson, R.L. Gilmore, A.B. Gould, F.A. Hardin, W.S. Harrington, F.H. Haskill, J.R. Liscom, J.M. Liscom, Samuel Morrison, T.F.A. Newport, M.H. Panton, and William Truman ([Proceedings..., 1870: 531](#)).

In 1870, membership remained at 23 ([Fourteenth annual conclave..., 1870: 81](#)). In that year, the commandery appointed its first Representative – in the person of George Emerson, who was also appointed Eminent Commander that same year ([Fourteenth annual conclave..., 1870: 86](#)).

George Emerson .....	Commander
Joseph William Edwards .....	Generalissimo
David Alpheus Cook .....	Captain General
William Shaw Harrington .....	Prelate
Preston Irving Davis .....	Senior Warden
Robert L. Gilmore .....	Junior Warden
James Brown Dawson .....	Treasurer
Frederick Henry Haskill .....	Recorder
Samuel Morrison .....	Standard Bearer
William Truman .....	Sword Bearer
Anthony Bennett Gould .....	Warden
Jason Reed Liscom .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Fourteenth annual conclave..., 1870: 118</a> ).

In 1871, membership reached 30, with 11 individuals joining as created members and four members demitting ([Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 19](#)). George Emerson remained the commandery's Representative ([Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 27](#)). The practice of combining the positions of Representative and Commander would persist from then on.

George Emerson .....	Commander
Joseph William Edwards .....	Generalissimo
David Alfred Cook .....	Captain General
William Truman .....	Prelate
Preston Irving Davis .....	Senior Warden
Robert L. Gilmore .....	Junior Warden
James Brown Dawson .....	Treasurer
Frederick Henry Haskill .....	Recorder
Daniel Meisenbach .....	Standard Bearer
Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport.....	Sword Bearer
Jason Martin Liscom .....	Warden
Jason Reed Liscom .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 134</a> ).

There was one Past Commander – Franklin Allen Hardin ([Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 134](#)). The commandery had the following members: William Atkinson, Hiram Anderson, Wilbur F. Bromfield, John C. Corbus, David A. Cook, Edgar P. Cook, James B. Dawson, Preston I. Davis, Alfred Dean, Joseph W. Edwards, George Emerson, Anthony B. Gould, R.L. Gilmore, Samuel A. Gardner, Franklin A. Hardin, Frederick H. Haskell, William Hays, Elezer J. Hills, James Hastings, William H. Hale, Jason M. Liscom, Jason R. Liscom, Daniel Meisenbach, Samuel Morrison, James I. Metler, Thomas F.A. Newport, George F. Standard, William Truman, James L. Taylor, and Joseph Van Law ([Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 134](#)).

Demitted: James A. Church, Mathew H. Panton, George M. Black, and William S. Harrington ([Fifteenth annual conclave..., 1871: 134](#)).

In 1872, the position of Representative went to Robert L. Gilmore ([Sixteenth annual conclave..., 1872: 16](#)). Membership reached 31, with two individuals joining as created members and one member passing away ([Sixteenth annual conclave..., 1872: 19](#)).

Joseph William Edwards .....	Commander
Robert L. Gilmore .....	Generalissimo
David Alfred Cook .....	Captain General
William Truman .....	Prelate
Preston Irving Davis .....	Senior Warden
Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport .....	Junior Warden
James Brown Dawson .....	Treasurer
Frederick Henry Haskill .....	Recorder
Daniel Meisenbach .....	Standard Bearer
James Lewis Taylor .....	Sword Bearer
James Iliff Metler .....	Warden
Jason Reed Liscom .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Sixteenth annual conclave..., 1872: 107</a> )

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin and George Emerson. Created: George R. Barse and Henry H. Dean. Dead: Wilbur F. Bromfield ([Sixteenth annual conclave..., 1872: 107](#)).

In 1873, membership reached 35, with five individuals joining as created members and one member demitting ([Seventeenth annual conclave..., 1873: 32](#)).

Joseph William Edwards ..... Commander  
 Robert L. Gilmore ..... Generalissimo  
 Henry Hobert Dean ..... Captain General  
 William Truman ..... Prelate  
 Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport ..... Senior Warden  
 Preston Irving Davis ..... Junior Warden  
 James Brown Dawson ..... Treasurer  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder  
 Daniel Meisenbach ..... Standard Bearer  
 James Iliff Metler ..... Sword Bearer  
 Charles Albert Hawley ..... Warden  
 Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Seventeenth annual conclave..., 1873: 128](#)).

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin and George Emerson. Created: Benjamin Napoleon Moss, Charles Albert Hawley, Martin D. Paxson, Ruggles B. Van Law, and John J. Short. Demitted: George R. Barse ([Seventeenth annual conclave..., 1873: 128](#)).

In 1874, membership reached 40, with six individuals joining as created members and one member demitting ([Eighteenth annual conclave..., 1874: 29](#)).

Robert L. Gilmore ..... Commander  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder ([Eighteenth annual conclave..., 1874: 107](#)).

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin, George Emerson, and Joseph William Edwards ([Eighteenth annual conclave..., 1874: 107](#)). Created: James W. Cornelius, Henry Dodge, Luke Goodwin, Oscar Lindstrom, Thomas D. Palmer, and Freedom M. Rice ([Eighteenth annual conclave..., 1874: 109](#)). Demitted: William Hays ([Eighteenth annual conclave..., 1874: 111](#)).

In 1875, membership reached 42, with three individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, one member demitting, and one passing away ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 22](#)).

Joseph William Edwards ..... Commander  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 47](#)).

Created: Stephen N. Fish, James E.J. Lytle, and George C. Schurtz ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 49](#)). Admitted: Casper Ruedy ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 50](#)). Demitted: Charles A. Hawley ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 51](#)). Dead: Joseph Van Law (Mar. 21, 1875) ([Nineteenth annual conclave..., 1875: 56](#)).

In 1876, membership remained the same, with four individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, and two being suspended ([Twentieth annual conclave..., 1876: 27](#)).

Joseph William Edwards ..... Commander  
 Casper Ruedy ..... Generalissimo  
 William Henry Hale ..... Captain General  
 Robert L. Gilmore ..... Prelate  
 James E.J. Lytle ..... Senior Warden  
 William Truman ..... Junior Warden  
 James Brown Dawson ..... Treasurer  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder  
 Daniel Meisenbach ..... Standard Bearer  
 George Cornat Schurtz ..... Sword Bearer  
 Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport ..... Warden  
 Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Twentieth annual conclave..., 1876: 81](#)).

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin, George Emerson, Joseph William Edwards, and R.L. Gilmore ([Twentieth annual conclave..., 1876: 81](#)). Created: George W. Tewksberry, Will C. Andress, Edgar W. Rice, and John Simminger. Suspended: Hiram Anderson and Henry H. Dean. Demitted: Samuel A. Gardner and Samuel Morrison ([Twentieth annual conclave..., 1876: 81](#)).

In 1877, membership increased by four, with one individual joining as a created member, three members demitting, two being suspended, one being reinstated, and one passing away ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 36](#)).

Joseph William Edwards ..... Commander  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 68](#)).

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin, George Emerson, Joseph William Edwards, and R.L. Gilmore. Created: William Jenkins ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 72](#)). Reinstated: Henry H. Dean ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 76](#)). Demitted: David A. Cook, Henry H. Dean, and Jason M. Liscom ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 78](#)). Suspended: F.A. Hardin and J.I. Metler ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 80](#)). Dead: Stephen N. Fish (Sept. 13, 1877) ([Twenty-first annual conclave..., 1877: 85](#)).

In 1878, membership increased by four to 42, with four individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, one member being reinstated, and two demitting ([Twenty-second annual conclave..., 1878: 65](#)).

Casper Ruedy ..... Commander  
 Frederick Henry Haskill ..... Recorder ([Twenty-second annual conclave..., 1878: 84](#)).

Past Commanders: Frank A. Hardin, George Emerson, Joseph William Edwards, and R.L. Gilmore. Created: Martin Olsen, George F. Watson, David V. Plaisted, and James Clark. Admitted: Arthur Cox McIntire. Reinstated: James I. Metler. Demitted: George Emersen and George F. Stannard ([Twenty-second annual conclave..., 1878: 90](#)).

In 1879, membership decreased by two to 40, with two members demitting ([Twenty-third annual conclave..., 1879: 59](#)). Despite the appointment of another person as Eminent Commander, Casper Ruedy stayed at Bethany Commandery No. 28, serving as its Representative ([Twenty-third annual conclave..., 1879: 69](#)).

William H. Hale ..... Commander  
 T.F.A. Newport ..... Recorder ([Twenty-third annual conclave..., 1879: 78](#)).  
 Demitted: Will C. Andress and James W. Cornelius ([Twenty-third annual conclave..., 1879: 84](#)).

In 1880, America's Knights Templar forces were divided between 20 divisions. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Divisions were wholly composed of commanderies from the state of Illinois, with Bethany Commandery No. 28 being in the 2nd Division ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 40](#)). The 1st Division had 2,010 members, the 2nd Division had 1,259 members, and the 3rd Division had 925 members ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 53](#)). Thus, in size, the divisions varied from battalion- to regiment-size.

In that same year, membership reached 48, with 14 individuals joining as created members, three members demitting, two being suspended, and one passing away ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 63](#)). Casper Ruedy continued in the position of Representative ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 74](#)).

William Henry Hale ..... Commander  
 Luke Goodwin ..... Generalissimo  
 Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport ..... Captain General  
 J.W. Edwards ..... Prelate  
 James E.J. Lytle ..... Senior Warden  
 Casper Ruedy ..... Junior Warden  
 D.V. Plaistead ..... Treasurer  
 James Ferguson ..... Recorder  
 A.C. McIntire ..... Standard Bearer  
 J.B. Simminger ..... Sword Bearer  
 William Jenkins ..... Warden  
 Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 113](#)).

The commandery had the following Past Commanders: William H. Hale, J.W. Edwards, and Casper Ruedy. It had the following members: William Atkinson, John C. Corbus, James Clark, E.P. Cook, E.S. Childs, W.F. Conkey, E.G. Cass, F.J. Burdett, J.B. Dawson, P.I. Davis, A. Dean, Henry Dodge, R.M. Dewey, S.B. Dix, J.W. Edwards, Henry F. Eckenbrecht, James Ferguson, Robert L. Gilmore, Luke Goodwin, William H. Hale, F.H. Haskell, William Jenkins, J.E.J. Lytle, Oscar Lindstrom, Daniel Miscenbach, J.R. McGregor, J.I. Mettler, B.N. Moss, A.C. McIntire, F.A. Mathews, T.F.A. Newport, Martin Olsen, T.D. Palmer, M.D. Paxson, D.V. Plaistead, Casper Ruedy, F.M. Rice, J.B. Simminger, George C. Scheurtz, John J. Short, James L. Shaw, F.P. Snyder, William Truman, James L. Taylor, G.W. Tewksbury, Lewis Taylor, Ruggles B. Van Law, and William Wylie ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 113](#)). October 18, 1879, saw the passing of J.R. Liscom ([Twenty-fourth annual conclave..., 1880: 140](#)).

In 1881, the commandery had 49 members, with three individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and one being suspended ([Twenty-fifth annual conclave..., 1881: 51](#)).

T.F.A. Newport ..... Commander  
 James Ferguson ..... Recorder ([Twenty-fifth annual conclave..., 1881: 68](#)).

Created: Frederick Edwin Cavell, James G. Ruff, and Charles William Van Vliet. Demitted: Martin Oleson. Suspended: James I. Mettler ([Twenty-fifth annual conclave..., 1881: 74](#)).



In 1882, membership sharply increased to 72, with 24 individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, one member being suspended, and one passing away ([Twenty sixth annual conclave..., 1882: 69](#)).

T.F.A. Newport ..... Commander  
 F.E. Cavell ..... Recorder ([Twenty sixth annual conclave..., 1882: 98](#)).

Created: George E. Wills, Bernard Kirk, Isaac N. Norman, Edward B. Carpenter, Samuel M. Heslett, James Clarkson, William H. Irwin, Haren C. Doan, Joseph James Pool, George Kelly, George W. Lindsay, Charles E. Rossette, Samuel Hastings, William Wilson, Berkley Gillett Barrett, John W. Blee, David A. Towne, Samuel C. Wiley, John Ezekiel Tibbetts, Philip Sine Pierce, John Henry Crance, Julius Hanson, Arthur E. Carpenter, and Edward Albert Reed ([Twenty sixth annual conclave..., 1882: 105](#)). Admitted: Peleg M. James. Suspended: John Baptiss Simmenger. Dead: John J. Scott (Dec. 4, 1881) ([Twenty sixth annual conclave..., 1882: 105, 116](#)).

In 1883, the commandery now had 77 members, with nine individuals joining as created members and four members demitting ([Twenty-seventh annual conclave..., 1883: 36](#)).

Thomas Fawcett Aaron Newport ..... Commander  
 Frank P. Snyder ..... Generalissimo  
 Thomas D. Palmer ..... Captain General  
 William Henry Hale ..... Prelate  
 Luke Goodwin ..... Senior Warden  
 Casper Ruedy ..... Junior Warden  
 D.V. Plaistead ..... Treasurer  
 William H. Irwin ..... Recorder  
 George Edward Wills ..... Standard Bearer  
 James Clark ..... Sword Bearer  
 Samuel Dix ..... Warden  
 Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Twenty-seventh annual conclave..., 1883: 121](#)).

Past Commanders: Joseph William Edwards, Robert L. Gilmore, Casper Ruedy, William H. Hale, and Thomas F.A. Newport. Created: Oliver Wetherbee, Frederick C. Chadwick, Lorenzo Wells Calson, Walter Herbert Packard, James R. Hoffman, Lafayette Carnahan, William W. Gilmore, James Buckingham, and Charles H. Ingalls. Demitted: Frederick J. Burdett, Edmund S. Childs, Daniel Meisenback, and Freedom M. Rice ([Twenty-seventh annual conclave..., 1883: 122](#)).

In 1884, membership was up by one to 78, with four individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, two demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away ([Twenty-eighth annual conclave..., 1884: 39](#)).

Frank P. Snyder ..... Commander  
 William H. Irwin ..... Recorder ([Twenty-eighth annual conclave..., 1884: 76](#)).

Created: William B. Nolan, August Swanson, William Liscom, and Axel Gulbransen. Reinstated: John B. Siminger. Demitted: Arthur E. Carpenter and James Ferguson. Suspended: Edward Albert Reed. Dead: Oliver Wetherbee ([Twenty-eighth annual conclave..., 1884: 84](#)).

In 1885, membership increased by five to 83 ([Twenty-ninth annual conclave..., 1885: 36](#)).

Frank P. Snyder ..... Commander  
 William H. Irwin ..... Recorder ([Twenty-ninth annual conclave..., 1885: 72](#)).

Created: William Clarence Holdren, Charles R. Cross, Charles D. Jones, Charles L. Dodge, and David M. Vosburg ([Twenty-ninth annual conclave..., 1885: 81](#)).

In 1886, membership decreased by two to 81, with five individuals joining as created members, five members demitting, and two being suspended ([Thirtieth annual conclave..., 1886: 26](#)).

Thomas D. Palmer ..... Commander  
 Julius Hanson ..... Generalissimo  
 Samuel Dix ..... Captain General  
 William Jenkins ..... Prelate  
 George Edward Wills ..... Senior Warden  
 William Truman ..... Junior Warden  
 David V. Plaistead ..... Treasurer  
 William H. Irwin ..... Recorder  
 James Clark ..... Standard Bearer  
 Frederick E. Covell ..... Sword Bearer  
 Charles L. Dodge ..... Warden

Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Thirtieth annual conclave...](#), 1886: 99).

Past Commanders: Joseph William Edwards, Robert L. Gilmore, Casper Ruedy, William H. Hale, Thomas F.A. Newport, and F.P. Snyder ([Thirtieth annual conclave...](#), 1886: 99). Created: William McMahan, William Moffatt, Louis P. Cassic, William H. Edwards, and Levi W. Wheeler. Demitted: Charles W. Van Vleit, George W. Lindsey, P.M. James, Marion D. Paxon, and Charles D. Jones. Suspended: James L. Shaw and William Wilson ([Thirtieth annual conclave...](#), 1886: 100).

In 1887, membership was down by six to 75, with three individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, five demitting, three being suspended, and two passing away ([Thirty-first annual conclave...](#), 1887: 35).

Julius Hanson ..... Commander

William H. Irwin ..... Recorder ([Thirty-first annual conclave...](#), 1887: 68).

Created: Milton H. Everett, Samuel P. Prescott, and Matthew Buhler. Reinstated: James L. Shaw. Demitted: James L. Shaw, Walter H. Packard, John E. Tibbetts, Thomas D. Palmer, and Lafayette Cornahan. Suspended: James E.J. Lytle, James R. McGregor, and William B. Nolan. Dead: Fred A. Mathews (Nov. 18, 1886) and Henry Dodge (June 6, 1887) ([Thirty-first annual conclave...](#), 1887: 77, 88).

In 1888, membership was down by four to 71, with two members demitting and two passing away ([Thirty-second annual conclave...](#), 1888: 41).

S.B. Dix ..... Commander

E.B. Carpenter ..... Recorder ([Thirty-second annual conclave...](#), 1888: 106).

Demitted: Oscar Lindstrum and Milton H. Everett. Dead: James G. Ruff (Nov. 7, 1887) and William Atkinson (Jan. 31, 1888) ([Thirty-second annual conclave...](#), 1888: 115, 126).

In 1889, membership increased by three to 74, with eight individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, and three passing away ([Thirty-third annual conclave...](#), 1889: 39).

William Jenkins ..... Commander

William H. Irwin ..... Generalissimo

Julius Hanson ..... Captain General

Thomas F.A. Irwin ..... Prelate

George Edward Wills ..... Senior Warden

James Clark ..... Junior Warden

David V. Plaistead ..... Treasurer

E.B. Carpenter ..... Recorder

F.H. Haskell ..... Standard Bearer

William P. Wixom ..... Sword Bearer

Samuel P. Prescott ..... Warden

Benjamin Napoleon Moss ..... Captain of the Guards ([Thirty-third annual conclave...](#), 1889: 123).

Past Commanders: Joseph W. Edwards, Robert L. Gilmore, Casper Ruedy, William H. Hale, Thomas F.A. Newport, Frank P. Snyder, Thomas D. Palmer, Julius Hanson, and Samuel B. Dix ([Thirty-third annual conclave...](#), 1889: 123). Created: H.J. Cheesman, George Hensel, Abel W. McFarland, C.W. Wilson, Zimri Smith, Charles C. Strong, Thomas H. Stetler, and James W. Turner. Demitted: Isaac N. Norman and George W. Tewksbury. Dead: Luke Goodwin (Dec. 16, 1888), James R. Hoffman (Feb. 17, 1889), and Ezra G. Cass (Aug. 2, 1889) ([Thirty-third annual conclave...](#), 1889: 124, 173).

In 1890, the state of Illinois saw its commanderies divided between two districts. Bethany Commandery No. 28 was assigned to District No. 1 ([Thirty-fourth annual conclave...](#), 1890: 35). Its membership decreased by two to 72, with three individuals joining as created members, three members demitting, and two being suspended ([Thirty-fourth annual conclave...](#), 1890: 76).

William Jenkins ..... Commander

Casper Ruedy ..... Recorder ([Thirty-fourth annual conclave...](#), 1890: 116).

Created: John Eckert, D.E. Hapeman, and R.A. McBride. Demitted: A. Dean, R.M. Dewey, and L.P. Cassie. Suspended: B.G. Barrett and John H. Crance ([Thirty-fourth annual conclave...](#), 1890: 125).

In 1891, membership remained the same at 72, with two individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and one passing away ([Thirty-fifth annual conclave...](#), 1891: 58).

William H. Irwin ..... Commander

Casper Ruedy ..... Recorder ([Thirty-fifth annual conclave...](#), 1891: 110).

Created: Herbert H. Clark and Rev. George A. Pollock. Demitted: William H. Liscom. Dead: Robert L. Gilmore (May 31, 1891) ([Thirty-fifth annual conclave..., 1891: 119](#)).

In 1892, membership was up by one to 73, with six individuals joining as created members, three members demitting, and two passing away ([Thirty-sixth annual conclave..., 1892: 73](#)).

William H. Irwin .....	Commander
George Edward Wills .....	Generalissimo
David V. Plaisted .....	Captain General
T.F.A. Newport .....	Prelate
F.E. Cavell .....	Senior Warden
Samuel P. Prescott .....	Junior Warden
Samuel Hastings .....	Treasurer
Casper Ruedy .....	Recorder
John Eckart .....	Standard Bearer
George W. Andrew .....	Sword Bearer
James Clark .....	Warden
Benjamin Napoleon Moss .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Thirty-sixth annual conclave..., 1892: 168</a> ).

Past Commanders: Joseph W. Edwards, William H. Hale, Julius Hanson, T.F.A. Newport, William Jenkins, Casper Ruedy, and Frank P. Snyder ([Thirty-sixth annual conclave..., 1892: 168](#)). Created: Dermenas L. Harris, William E. Hess, Edward L. McCredie, George W. Andrew, Edward S. Morahn, and Abe A. Swearingen. Demitted: Samuel B. Dix, Charles L. Dodge, and George A. Pollock. Dead: E.B. Carpenter (Sept. 3, 1891) and David A. Town (Dec. 27, 1891) ([Thirty-sixth annual conclave..., 1892: 169](#)).

In 1893, membership was down by one to 72, with four individuals joining as created members, five members demitting, and one passing away ([Thirty-seventh annual conclave..., 1893: 40](#)).

T.F.A. Newport .....	Commander
Casper Ruedy .....	Recorder ( <a href="#">Thirty-seventh annual conclave..., 1893: 86</a> ).

Created: Harry S. Cooper, Robert N. Crawford, and Harry J. Lee. Demitted: Charles W. Wilson, W.H. Edwards, H.J. Cheesman, E.S. Morahn, and Julius Hanson. Dead: Lewis Taylor (June 10, 1893) ([Thirty-seventh annual conclave..., 1893: 95, 115](#)).

In 1894, membership totaled 68, with two individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, three demitting, one being suspended, and two passing away ([Thirty-eighth annual conclave..., 1894: 72](#)).

T.F.A. Newport .....	Commander
Casper Ruedy .....	Recorder ( <a href="#">Thirty-eighth annual conclave..., 1894: 118</a> ).

Created: Shannon T. Burke and Richard H. Cooper. Reinstated: Berkley G. Barrett. Demitted: H.H. Clark, Axel Galbranson, and John B. Siminger. Suspended: August Swanson. Dead: William McMahon (Feb. 4, 1894) and James Clarkson (Mar. 30, 1894) ([Thirty-eighth annual conclave..., 1894: 128, 149](#)).

In 1895, membership was up by six to 74, with six individuals joining as created members ([Thirty-ninth annual conclave..., 1895: 79](#)).

T.F.A. Newport .....	Commander
George Edward Wills .....	Generalissimo
David V. Plaisted .....	Captain General
Samuel P. Prescott .....	Prelate
R.N. Crawford .....	Senior Warden
F.E. Cavell .....	Junior Warden
Samuel Hastings .....	Treasurer
Casper Ruedy .....	Recorder
John Eckart .....	Standard Bearer
William Colson .....	Sword Bearer
A.A. Swearingen .....	Warden
Benjamin Napoleon Moss .....	Captain of the Guards ( <a href="#">Thirty-ninth annual conclave..., 1895: 175</a> ).

Past Commanders: Joseph W. Edwards, William H. Hale, William Jenkins, Thomas F.A. Newport, Casper Ruedy, Frank P. Snyder, and William H. Irwin. Created: Frank Frederick Fritz, Williston Franklin Colson, Emil John Kreis, Andrew Compton, Jonas Alfred Youngren, and Frederick Ralph Bailey ([Thirty-ninth annual conclave..., 1895: 176](#)).



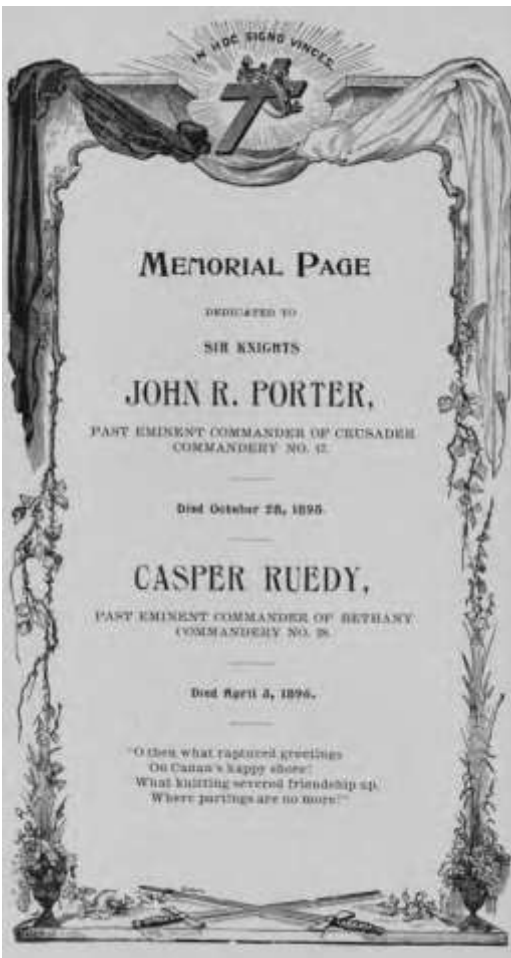
In 1896, membership remained the same at 74, with four individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, and two passing away ([Fortieth annual conclave..., 1896: 70](#)).

One of the deceased members was Casper Ruedy. Here is what is said in his regard in the proceedings of the 40th Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Illinois: “Bethany Commandery No. 28, K.T., Mendota, Ill., on last Easter Day committed to the tomb the mortal remains of one of its most faithful members, and a past Commander of that Commandery, Sir Casper Ruedy, who was called to his eternal home. His earthly pilgrimage ended on the 3rd of April. At the time of his death he filled the post of Recorder of his Commandery. For a long time he had been a devoted member of the Order, and a highly esteemed citizen of Mendota.” ([Fortieth annual conclave..., 1896: 88](#)).

T.F.A. Newport ..... Commander

John Eckart ..... Recorder ([Fortieth annual conclave..., 1896: 126](#)).

Created: Adelbert D. Gillett, Edward L. Watte, Howard B. Hall, and William N. Mitchell. Demitted: Hazon C. Doane and Berkley G. Barrett. Dead: James Clark (Sept. 27, 1895) and Casper Ruedy (Apr. 3, 1896) ([Figure 1](#)) ([Fortieth annual conclave..., 1896: 137, 158](#)).



**Fig. 1.** Memorial page for Past Eminent Commander Casper Ruedy ([Fortieth annual conclave..., 1896: 154](#))

The holdings of the Museum of the History of the American Knights Templar at Cherkas Global University include a couple of rare items that once belonged to Casper Ruedy – a full uniform and a presentation sword ([Figure 2](#)). He received that sword from Bethany Commandery No. 28 as its Past Eminent Commander.



**Fig. 2.** Uniform of Past Eminent Commander Casper Ruedy

C. Ruedy's personal effects which are in the museum's collection include his regulation trousers, coat, hat (Figure 3), commandery badge (Figure 4), belt, and sword.



**Fig. 3.** Uniform's coat and hat



**Fig. 4.** Commandery badge



**Fig. 5.** C. Ruedy’s gold sword

The inscription on the sword’s blade reads ‘Presented to C. Ruedy, P.E.C., by Bethany Commandery No, 28, K.T.’ (Figure 6).



**Fig. 6.** Inscription on the blade of C. Ruedy’s sword

In 1897, the Grand Commandery of Illinois was split into eight districts, with Bethany Commandery No. 28 being assigned to District No. 3.

In that same year, membership sharply dropped to 63, with two members demitting, eight being suspended, and one passing away (Forty-first annual conclave..., 1897: 76).

George E. Wills ..... Commander  
 John Eckart ..... Recorder (Forty-first annual conclave..., 1897: 116).

Demitted: John W. Blee and Charles C. Strong. Suspended: John C. Corbus, Frederick C. Chadwick, James B. Dawson, William H. Hale, Charles H. Ingles, George Kelly, James L. Taylor, and J.W. Turner. Dead: D.V. Plaisted (June 29, 1897) (Forty-first annual conclave..., 1897: 197, 218).

In 1898, membership was down by one to 62, with two individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away (Forty-second annual conclave..., 1898: 61).

George E. Wills ..... Commander  
 R.N. Crawford ..... Generalissimo  
 William F. Colson ..... Captain General  
 Samuel P. Prescott ..... Prelate  
 P.L. Harris ..... Senior Warden  
 T.F.A. Newport ..... Junior Warden  
 Samuel Hastings ..... Treasurer  
 John Eckart ..... Recorder  
 A.D. Gillett ..... Standard Bearer  
 F.F. Fritz ..... Sword Bearer  
 F.R. Bailey ..... Warden  
 - ..... Captain of the Guards (Forty-second annual conclave..., 1898: 114).

June 4, 1898, saw the passing of Benjamin N. Moss, the commandery’s longtime Captain of the Guards (Forty-second annual conclave..., 1898: 58).

Past Commanders: Joseph W. Edwards, William Jenkins, Thomas F.A. Newport, Frank P. Snyder, and William H. Irwin. Created: Warren Charles Griggs and Edward Freeman Hempstead. Demitted: Preston I. Davis. Suspended: James Buckingham. Dead: Benjamin N. Moss (Forty-second annual conclave..., 1898: 59).

In 1899, membership remained the same (62), with two individuals joining as created members, one member being admitted, one demitting, and two passing away (Forty-third annual conclave..., 1899: 59).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 Frank F. Fritz ..... Recorder (Forty-third annual conclave..., 1899: 98).

Created: Charles W. Hazard and Charles McFarlain. Admitted: G.W. Crowden. Demitted: Howard B. Hall ([Forty-third annual conclave..., 1899: 13](#)). Dead: William Jenkins (Aug. 29, 1898) and Samuel M. Haslet (Nov. 21, 1898) ([Forty-third annual conclave..., 1899: 116](#)).

In 1900, membership was up by five to 67, with nine individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, two demitting, and three passing away ([Forty-fourth annual conclave..., 1900: 53](#)).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 Frank F. Fritz ..... Recorder ([Forty-fourth annual conclave..., 1900: 92](#)).

Created: Edward R. Isaac, Henry W.F. Henning, John C. Corbus, Jr., Robert J. Hoteling, James B. Keeler, Xaviere F. Gehaut, Harry L. Fordham, Fred T. Davis, and William H. Davis. Reinstated: Charles H. Ingalls. Demitted: Harry S. Cooper and Frank P. Snyder. Dead: William Truman (July 10, 1899), Samuel C. Wiley (Feb. 13, 1900), and William W. Gilmore (May 12, 1900) ([Forty-fourth annual conclave..., 1900: 105, 132](#)).

In 1901, membership increased by two to 69, with five individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away ([Forty-fifth annual conclave..., 1901: 65](#)).

Robert Nelson Crawford ..... Commander  
 John Clark Corbus, Jr. .... Generalissimo  
 Adelbert Dennis Gillett ..... Captain General  
 Samuel P. Prescott ..... Prelate  
 Permanious L. Harris ..... Senior Warden  
 Frederick E. Covell ..... Junior Warden  
 Emil J. Kreig ..... Treasurer  
 Frank Frederick Fritz ..... Recorder  
 James Bradley Keeler ..... Standard Bearer  
 Henry William Ferdinand Henning ..... Sword Bearer  
 Daniel Charles Tower ..... Warden  
 Thomas F.A. Newport ..... Captain of the Guards ([Forty-fifth annual conclave..., 1901: 58](#)).

Past Commanders: William H. Irwin, George E. Wills, Thomas F.A. Newport, William Franklin Colson, and Robert N. Crawford. Created: Harry B. Brittian, Arthur G. Harris, Daniel C. Tower, William G. Cove, and Ulyses N. Thornton. Demitted: Alfred J. Youngren. Suspended: George W. Andrew ([Forty-fifth annual conclave..., 1901: 58-59](#)). Dead: Levi William Wheeler (Nov. 15, 1900) ([Forty-fifth annual conclave..., 1901: 139](#)).

In 1902, membership was down by one to 68, with two individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away ([Forty-sixth annual conclave..., 1902: 59](#)).

John C. Corbus, Jr. .... Commander  
 Frank F. Fritz ..... Recorder ([Forty-sixth annual conclave..., 1902: 116](#)).

Created: Orbed W. Briggs and Oscar P. Harris. Demitted: Arthur G. Harris. Suspended: Charles McFarlain. Dead: Charles R. Cross (Sept., 1901) ([Forty-sixth annual conclave..., 1902: 136, 164](#)).

In 1903, membership remained the same (68), with three individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and two passing away ([Forty-seventh annual conclave..., 1903: 76](#)).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 Oscar P. Harris ..... Recorder ([Forty-seventh annual conclave..., 1903: 130](#)).

Created: John C. Crowell, James B. Daugherty, and Herbert M. Rodgers. Demitted: Charles H. Ingles. Dead: Edgar P. Cook (Oct. 31, 1902) and Albert W. McFarland (Jan. 22, 1903) ([Forty-seventh annual conclave..., 1903: 153, 178](#)).

In 1904, membership decreased by one to 67, with one individual joining as a created member and two members passing away ([Forty-eighth annual conclave..., 1904: 77](#)).

Robert Nelson Crawford ..... Commander  
 Adelbert Dennis Gillett ..... Generalissimo  
 Frederick E. Covell ..... Captain General  
 Edward Freeman Hempstead ..... Prelate  
 Parmenas Leonard Harris ..... Senior Warden  
 Frederick Ralph Bailey ..... Junior Warden  
 John Clark Corbus, Jr. .... Treasurer  
 Oscar Porter Harris ..... Recorder  
 James Bradley Keeler ..... Standard Bearer  
 Albert Allison Swearingen ..... Sword Bearer  
 Henry William Ferdinand Henning ..... Warden



Thomas F.A. Newport ..... Captain of the Guards ([Forty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1904: 65, 124).

Past Commanders: Joseph William Edwards, George Edward Wills, Thomas F.A. Newport, John Clark Corbus, Jr., and Robert Nelson Crawford. Created: Edward James Staten ([Forty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1904: 65). Dead: Arthur Cox McIntire (Mar. 2, 1904) and Joseph J. Pool (June 7, 1904) ([Forty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1904: 151).

In 1905, membership remained the same (67), with three individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and two passing away ([Forty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1905: 62).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander

Oscar P. Harris ..... Recorder ([Forty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1905: 112).

Created: Andrew C. Harris, William H. Carnahan, and Nels Bean. Demitted: Richard H. Cooper. Dead: David M. Vosburg (Mar. 5, 1905) and George Hensel (June 15, 1905) ([Forty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1905: 129, 159).

In 1906, membership was up by four to 71, with seven individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away ([Fiftieth annual conclave...](#), 1906: 47).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander

Henry W.F. Henning ..... Recorder ([Fiftieth annual conclave...](#), 1906: 118).

Created: John M. Harris, Stephen M. Perkins, Rudolph W. Witte, William H. Kidd, Leroy P. McMillan, George D. Tower, and Lorrin I. Graves. Demitted: William Wylie. Suspended: William C. Holden. Dead: Bernard Kirk (Apr. 5, 1906) ([Fiftieth annual conclave...](#), 1906: 136, 165).

In 1907, membership increased to 79, with eight individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, and one passing away ([Fifty-first annual conclave...](#), 1907: 77).

Robert Nelson Crawford ..... Commander

Adelbert Dennis Gillett ..... Generalissimo

Frederick E. Covell ..... Captain General

Edward Freeman Hempstead ..... Prelate

Parmenas Leonard Harris ..... Senior Warden

Frederick Ralph Bailey ..... Junior Warden

Rudolph William Witte, Jr. .... Treasurer

Henry William Ferdinand Henning ..... Recorder

James Bradley Keeler ..... Standard Bearer

Albert Allison Swearingen ..... Sword Bearer

Oscar Porter Harris ..... Warden

Thomas Faucett Aaron Newport ..... Sentinel (Captain of the Guards) ([Fifty-first annual conclave...](#), 1907: 72).

Past Commanders: John Clark Corbus, Jr., Robert Nelson Crawford, Joseph William Edwards, William Harry Irwin, Thomas F.A. Newport, and George Edward Wills ([Fifty-first annual conclave...](#), 1907: 72). Created: Benjamin Horace Smith Angear, Walter Edwin Annable, Alman Andrew Clapsaddle, William R. Foster, Ira S. Geft, John Henry Hoffman, Benjamin Dean Mosher, and John J. Thomassen. Reinstated: William Charles Holdren ([Fifty-first annual conclave...](#), 1907: 73). Dead: Nels Bean (Aug. 23, 1906) ([Fifty-first annual conclave...](#), 1907: 154).

In 1908, membership increased to 81, with five individuals joining as created members, one member being reinstated, two demitting, one being suspended, and one passing away ([Fifty-second annual conclave...](#), 1908: 41).

Adelbert D. Gillett ..... Commander

John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-second annual conclave...](#), 1908: 102).

Created: John Malcolm Aitken, Frank Edward Blakeslee, Alfred James Foot, Theodore Ward, and George Samuel Wiley. Suspended: Philip Sine Pierce. Demitted: William George Cove and Xavier Francis Gehart. Reinstated: Philip Sine Pierce ([Fifty-second annual conclave...](#), 1908: 150). Dead: William Fitch Conkey (Sept. 27, 1907) ([Fifty-second annual conclave...](#), 1908: 129).

In 1909, membership decreased to 79, with two individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and three passing away ([Fifty-third annual conclave...](#), 1909: 118).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander

- ..... Generalissimo

John Clark Corbus, Jr. .... Captain General

John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-third annual conclave...](#), 1909: 120).



Created: Ezra Grant Hoffman and Fred Blair Keeler. Demitted: Robert J. Hotaling ([Fifty-third annual conclave..., 1909: 146](#)).

Dead: Frederick Henry Haskell (July 21, 1908), William Harry Irwin (Mar. 23, 1909), and Edward Lilly Watts (Oct. 14, 1908) ([Fifty-third annual conclave..., 1909: 111](#)).

In 1910, membership grew to 86, with 14 individuals joining as created members, five members being suspended, and two passing away ([Fifty-fourth annual conclave..., 1910: 140](#)).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 Frederick Edwin Cavell ..... Generalissimo  
 John Clark Corbus, Jr. .... Captain General  
 Frederick Ralph Bailey ..... Senior Warden  
 John J. Thomassen ..... Junior Warden  
 Edward Freeman Hempstead ..... Prelate  
 George Daniel Tower ..... Treasurer  
 John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder  
 William H. Kidd ..... Standard Bearer  
 Albert Allison Swearingen ..... Sword Bearer  
 Theodore Ward ..... Warden  
 Thomas Faucett Aaron Newport ..... Sentinel ([Fifty-fourth annual conclave..., 1910: 75](#)).

Past Commanders: Robert Nelson Crawford, John Clark Corbus, Jr., Joseph William Edwards, Thomas Faucett Aaron Newport, George Edward Wills, and Adelbert Dennis Gillett ([Fifty-fourth annual conclave..., 1910: 75](#)). Created: Willard Signor Alyea, George Eslie Blanchard, James Jay Dunbar, Robert Ingersoll Fischer, Benjamin Jacob Feik, Frank Wellett Graves, Harrison Lee Graves, Stephen Arthur Hopps, Clifford Crossman Hopps, Harace Oscar Kelly, Charles Christian Kohl, Louis Frank Knauer, Charles Frederick Lathrop, and Louis Dewitt Smith. Suspended: Orbed W. Briggs, Andrew Compton, Charles D. Hazard, Samuel Hastings, and Edward R. Isaac ([Fifty-fourth annual conclave..., 1910: 76](#)). Dead: William Moffatt (Sept. 9, 1909) and George C. Schuetz (Dec. 19, 1909) ([Fifty-fourth annual conclave..., 1910: 135](#)).

In 1911, membership decreased to 85, with two individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, and one passing away ([Fifty-fifth annual conclave..., 1911: 116](#)).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-fifth annual conclave..., 1911: 118](#)).

Created: John D. McRea and William S. Matteson. Demitted: Ulysses N. Thornton and LeRoy P. McMillan. Dead: Willard Signor Alyea (Oct. 28, 1910) ([Fifty-fifth annual conclave..., 1911: 130, 159](#)).

In 1912, membership decreased to 84, with four individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, one member being reinstated, four demitting, two being suspended, and one passing away ([Fifty-sixth annual conclave..., 1912: 116](#)).

Robert N. Crawford ..... Commander  
 John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-sixth annual conclave..., 1912: 118](#)).

Created: John O. Andrews, David L. Barnett, Charles D. Laraber, and Edward A. Miller. Admitted: George H. Yule. Reinstated: Edward A. Reed. Demitted: Zinni Smith, Edward A. Reed, Harry J. Lee, and George W. Crowden. Suspended: Lorin I. Graves and William C. Holdren. Dead: Philip S. Pierce (Feb. 15, 1912) ([Fifty-sixth annual conclave..., 1912: 130, 159](#)).

In 1913, membership increased to 88, with four individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, and one member demitting ([Fifty-seventh annual conclave..., 1913: 170](#)).

Robert Nelson Crawford ..... Commander  
 Frederick R. Bailey ..... Generalissimo  
 John Clark Corbus, Jr. .... Captain General  
 Stephen M. Perkins ..... Senior Warden  
 George E. Blanchard ..... Junior Warden  
 George H. Yule ..... Prelate  
 George Daniel Tower ..... Treasurer  
 John Henry Hoffman ..... Recorder  
 William H. Kidd ..... Standard Bearer  
 Rudolph William Witte ..... Sword Bearer  
 Williston F. Colson ..... Warden  
 Edward A. Miller ..... Sentinel ([Fifty-seventh annual conclave..., 1913: 262](#)).

Past Commanders: R.N. Crawford, J.C. Corbus, Jr., W.F. Colson, J.W. Edwards, T.F.A. Newport, George A. Wills, and A.D. Gillette. Created: Charles F. Bowers, Robert C. Finley, Forrest Lee Tower, and Arthur C. McIntire. Admitted: Edward B. Tabor. Demitted: John J. Thomassen ([Fifty-seventh annual conclave..., 1913: 263](#)).

In 1914, membership grew to 92, with four individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, and one member demitting ([Fifty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1914: 184).

Edwin F. Hempstead ..... Commander  
 John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1914: 186).

Created: James H. Browning, Albert William McIntire, George James Their, and Charles Whitney McCray. Admitted: John Hepburn Walker. Demitted: William P. Wixom ([Fifty-eighth annual conclave...](#), 1914: 207).

In 1915, membership increased to 94, with five individuals joining as created members, one member demitting, and two passing away ([Fifty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1915: 232).

Frederick R. Bailey ..... Commander  
 John H. Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Fifty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1915: 234).

Created: Warren Atwood Prescott, Robert Hallenberg, Washington Wallace Dunbar, Charles Clark Case, and Harry Dunrith Conkey. Demitted: Charles Christian Kohl. Dead: Thomas F.A. Newport (Aug. 1, 1914) and George Wills ([Fifty-ninth annual conclave...](#), 1915: 197, 255).

In 1916, membership remained the same (94), with six individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, three being suspended, and one passing away ([Sixtieth annual conclave...](#), 1916: 2).

Frederick Ralph Bailey ..... Commander  
 Stephen Manson Perkins ..... Generalissimo  
 George Eslie Blanchard ..... Captain General  
 Rudolph William Witte ..... Senior Warden  
 Charles Whitney McCray ..... Junior Warden  
 Robert Hallenberg ..... Prelate  
 George Daniel Tower ..... Treasurer  
 John Henry Hoffman ..... Recorder  
 William H. Kidd ..... Standard Bearer  
 Louis Frank Knauer ..... Sword Bearer  
 Eddie Tower Moore ..... Warden

Corbus Plumer Gardner ..... Sentinel ([Sixtieth annual conclave...](#), 1916: 80).

Created: Henry Tower, Eddie Tower Moore, Oscar T. Wills, Christian W. Von Ohlen, Albert Dow Van Ormun, and William James Swisher. Demitted: John Orville Andrews and James Bertis Daugherty. Suspended: Frank W. Graves, Charles W. Griggs, and Herbert Monford Rogers ([Sixtieth annual conclave...](#), 1916: 81). Dead: John Eckart (Oct. 6, 1915) ([Sixtieth annual conclave...](#), 1916: 164).

In 1917, membership increased to 102, with nine individuals joining as created members, one joining as an admitted member, one member demitting, and one passing away ([Sixty-first annual conclave...](#), 1917: 218).

Stephen Manson Perkins ..... Commander  
 John Henry Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Sixty-first annual conclave...](#), 1917: 220).

Created: Clarence Willard Hubbard, George Lewis Swartsley, Gustav Fritz, William Samuel Andrews, Clyde Arthur Moorhead, Aden Adair Danilson, Glen Dee Grogan, Lester John Morrison, and John Stoldorf. Admitted: Henry A. Buel. Demitted: H.F. Eckenbrecht. Dead: S.T. Burke (Jan. 29, 1917) ([Sixty-first annual conclave...](#), 1917: 241).

The following members of the commandery served in the American army during World War I: Louis Dewitt Smith, William James Swisher, Roy Philip Hoffman, and Newton Franklin Shipper ([Sixty-second annual conclave...](#), 1918: 229).

In 1918, membership grew to 106, with eight individuals joining as created members, two members demitting, and two passing away ([Sixty-second annual conclave...](#), 1918: 250).

George E. Blanchard ..... Commander  
 John Henry Hoffman ..... Recorder ([Sixty-second annual conclave...](#), 1918: 252).

Created: Roy Phillip Hoffman, Harry Elmer Martin, Jesse Edgar Wixom, Walter Scott Aitken, William W. Wylie, Ralph Abraham Hess, Newton Franklin Shipper, and Raymond W. Jones. Demitted: R.A. McBride and James H. Browning. Dead: Samuel Plumer Prescott (Feb. 28, 1918) and George Daniel Tower (Apr. 24, 1918) ([Sixty-second annual conclave...](#), 1918: 271).

**Table 1.** List of members of Bethany Commandery No. 28 (1868–1918)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
1	Aitken, John Malcolm	(1908–)
2	Aitken, Walter Scott	(1918–)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
3	Alyea, Willard Signor (Sept. 13, 1883–Oct. 28, 1910)	(1910–1910 dead)
4	Anderson, Hiram	(1871–1876 suspended)
5	Andress, Will C.	(1876–1879 demitted)
6	Andrew, George W.	(1892–1901 suspended)
7	Andrews, John Orville	(1912–1916 demitted)
8	Andrews, William Samuel	(1917–)
9	Angear, Benjamin Horace Smith	(1907–)
10	Annable, Walter Edwin	(1907–)
11	Atkinson, William (Dec. 4, 1806–Jan. 31, 1888)	(1869–1888 dead)
12	Bailey, Frederick Ralph	(1895–)
13	Barnett, David L.	(1912–)
14	Barrett, Berkley (Burkley) Gillett	(1882–1890 suspended, 1894 reinstated, 1896 demitted)
15	Barse, George R.	(1872–1873 demitted)
16	Bean, Nels (1849–Aug. 23, 1906)	(1905–1906 dead)
17	Black, George M.	(1868–1871 demitted)
18	Blakeslee, Frank Edward	(1908–)
19	Blanchard, George Eslie	(1910–)
20	Blee, John W.	(1882–1897 demitted)
21	Bowers, Charles F.	(1913–)
22	Briggs, Orbed W.	(1902–1910 suspended)
23	Brittian, Harry B.	(1901–)
24	Bromfield, Wilbur F. (abt. 1815–1872)	(1869–1872 dead)
25	Browning, James H.	(1914–1918 demitted)
26	Buckingham, James	(1883–1898 suspended)
27	Buel, Henry A.	(1917–)
28	Buhler, Matthew	(1887–)
29	Burdett, Frederick. J.	(1880–1883 demitted)
30	Burke, Shannon T. (Mar., 1854–Jan. 29, 1917)	(1894–1917 dead)
31	Calson, Lorenzo Wells	(1883–)
32	Carnahan (Cornahan), Lafayette	(1883–1887 demitted)
33	Carnahan, William H.	(1905–)
34	Carpenter, Arthur Eugene (Jan. 20, 1861–Aug. 14, 1942)	(1882–1884 demitted)
35	Carpenter, Edwin Burnham (June 13, 1819–Sept. 2, 1891)	(1882–1891 dead)
36	Case, Charles Clark	(1915–)
37	Cass, Ezra G. (Oct. 14, 1858–Aug. 2, 1889)	(1880–1889 dead)
38	Cassic (Cassie), Louis P.	(1886–1890 demitted)
39	Cavell (Covell), Frederick Edwin (Oct. 3, 1850–Apr. 21, 1927)	(1881–)
40	Chadwick, Frederick C.	(1883–1897 suspended)
41	Cheesman, H.J.	(1889–1893 demitted)
42	Childs, Edmund S.	(1880–1883 demitted)
43	Church, James Alfred	(1868–1871 demitted)
44	Clapsaddle, Alman Andrew	(1907–)
45	Clark, Herbert H.	(1891–1894 demitted)
46	Clark, James (1840–Sept. 27, 1895)	(1878–1895 dead)
47	Clarkson, James (Dec. 29, 1829–Mar. 30, 1894)	(1882–1894 dead)
48	Colson, Williston (William) Franklin	(1895–)
49	Compton, Andrew	(1895–1910 suspended)
50	Conkey, Harry Dunrith	(1915–)
51	Conkey, William Fitch (May 3, 1833–Sept. 27, 1907)	(1880–1907 dead) Captain, Civil War
52	Cook, David Alfred	(1869–1877 demitted)
53	Cook, Edgar Pumphrey (May 2, 1833–Oct.	(1869–1902 dead)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
	31, 1902)	
54	Cooper, Harry S.	(1893–1900 demitted)
55	Cooper, Richard H.	(1894–1905 demitted)
56	Corbus, John Clark (Sept. 30, 1833–Mar. 17, 1909)	(1868–1897 suspended)
57	Corbus, John Clark, Jr. (Aug. 3, 1862–Sept. 16, 1933)	(1900–)
58	Cornelius, James W.	(1874–1879 demitted)
59	Cove, William George	(1901–1908 demitted)
60	Crance, John Henry	(1882–1890 suspended)
61	Crawford, Robert Nelson	(1893–)
62	Cross, Charles R. (1855–Sept. 1, 1901)	(1885–1901 dead)
63	Crowden, George W.	(1899–1912 demitted)
64	Crowell, John C.	(1903–)
65	Danilson, Aden Adair	(1917–)
66	Daugherty, James Bertis	(1903–1916 demitted)
67	Davis, Fred T.	(1900–)
68	Davis, Preston Irving	(1869–1898 demitted)
69	Davis, William H.	(1900–)
70	Dawson, James B.	(1868–1897 suspended)
71	Dean, Henry Hobert	(1872–1876 suspended, 1877 reinstated and demitted)
72	Dean, Alpheus (Alfred)	(1868–1890 demitted)
73	Dewey, R.M.	(1880–1890 demitted)
74	Dix, Samuel B.	(1880–1892 demitted)
75	Doan (Doane), Haren (Hazon) C.	(1882–1896 demitted)
76	Dodge, Charles L.	(1885–1892 demitted)
77	Dodge, Henry H. (Aug. 11, 1823–June 6, 1887)	(1874–1887 dead) Maybe Civil War
78	Dunbar, James Jay	(1910–)
79	Dunbar, Washington Wallace	(1915–)
80	Eckenbrecht, Henry F.	(1880–1917 demitted)
81	Eckert (Eckart), John (1860–Oct. 6, 1915)	(1890–1915 dead)
82	Edwards, Joseph William	(1868–)
83	Edwards, William H.	(1886–1893 demitted)
84	Emerson, George	(1869–1878 demitted)
85	Everett, Milton H.	(1887–1888 demitted)
86	Feik, Benjamin Jacob	(1910–)
87	Ferguson, James	(1880–1884 demitted)
88	Finley, Robert C.	(1913–)
89	Fischer, Robert Ingersoll	(1910–)
90	Fish, Stephen N. (Sept. 20, 1835–Sept. 13, 1877)	(1875–1877 dead)
91	Foot, Alfred James	(1908–)
92	Fordham, Harry L.	(1900–)
93	Foster, William R.	(1907–)
94	Fritz, Frank Frederick	(1895–)
95	Fritz, Gustav	(1917–)
96	Gardner, Samuel A.	(1871–1876 demitted)
97	Geft, Ira S.	(1907–)
98	Gehaut (Gehart), Xaviere (Xavier) Francis	(1900–1908 demitted)
99	Gillett (Gillette), Adelbert (Albert) Dennis	(1896–)
100	Gilmore, Robert L. (1844–May 31, 1891)	(1868–1891 dead)
101	Gilmore, William W. (1836–May 12, 1900)	(1883–1900 dead)
102	Goodwin, Luke (May 4, 1826–Dec. 16, 1888)	(1874–1888 dead)
103	Gould, Anthony Bennett	(1868–1880 suspended)
104	Graves, Frank Wellett	(1910–1916 suspended)
105	Graves, Harrison Lee	(1910–)
106	Graves, Lorrin I.	(1906–1912 suspended)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
107	Griggs, Warren Charles	(1898–1916 suspended)
108	Grogan, Glen Dee	(1917–)
109	Gulbransen (Galbranson), Axel	(1884–1894 demitted)
110	Hale, William Henry	(1871–1897 suspended)
111	Hall, Howard B.	(1896–1899 demitted)
112	Hallenberg, Robert	(1915–)
113	Hanson, Julius	(1882–1893 demitted)
114	Hapeman, D.E.	(1890–)
115	Hardin, Franklin (Frank) A.	(1868–1878 suspended)
116	Harrington, William Shaw	(1868–1871 demitted)
117	Harris, Andrew C.	(1905–)
118	Harris, Arthur G.	(1901–1902 demitted)
119	Harris, Parmenas (Permanious; Dermenas) Leonard	(1892–)
120	Harris, John M. (1866–1955)	(1906–)
121	Harris, Oscar Porter (Nov. 15, 1870–Oct. 29, 1933)	(1902–)
122	Haskell (Haskill), Frederick Henry (Dec. 11, 1832–July 21, 1908)	(1868–1908 dead) Maybe Civil War
123	Hastings, James	(1871–1880 demitted)
124	Hastings, Samuel	(1882–1910 suspended)
125	Hawley, Charles Albert	(1873–1875 demitted)
126	Hays, William	(1871–1874 demitted)
127	Hazard, Charles W. (D.)	(1899–1910 suspended)
128	Hempstead, Edward (Edwin) Freeman	(1898–)
129	Henning, Henry William Ferdinand	(1900–)
130	Hensel, George (July 20, 1833–June 15, 1905)	(1889–1905 dead)
131	Heslett (Haslet), Samuel M. (July 29, 1826–Nov. 21, 1898)	(1882–1898 dead) Captain, Civil War
132	Hess, Ralph Abraham	(1918–)
133	Hess, William E.	(1892–)
134	Hills, Elezer J.	(1871–1880 demitted)
135	Hoffman, Ezra Grant	(1909–)
136	Hoffman, James R. (1843–Feb. 17, 1889)	(1883–1889 dead)
137	Hoffman, John Henry	(1907–)
138	Hoffman, Roy Phillip	(1918–) WWI
139	Holdren (Holden), William Clarence (Charles)	(1885–1906 suspended, 1907 reinstated, 1912 suspended)
140	Hopps, Clifford Crossman	(1910–)
141	Hopps, Stephen Arthur	(1910–)
142	Hoteling (Hotaling), Robert J.	(1900–1909 demitted)
143	Hubbard, Clarence Willard	(1917–)
144	Ingalls (Ingles), Charles H.	(1883–1897 suspended, 1900 reinstated, 1903 demitted)
145	Irwin, William Harry (–Mar. 23, 1909)	(1882–1909 dead)
146	Isaac, Edward R.	(1900–1910 suspended)
147	James, Peleg M. (July 14, 1850–Jul, 23, 1932)	(1882–1886 demitted)
148	Jenkins, William (1846–Aug. 29, 1898)	(1877–1898 dead)
149	Jones, Charles D.	(1885–1886 demitted)
150	Jones, Raymond W.	(1918–)
151	Keeler, Fred Blair	(1909–)
152	Keeler, James Bradley	(1900–)
153	Kelly, George	(1882–1897 suspended)
154	Kelly, Harace Oscar	(1910–)
155	Kidd, William H.	(1906–)
156	Kirk, Bernard (Dec., 1833–Apr. 5, 1906)	(1882–1906 dead) Civil War
157	Knauer, Louis Frank	(1910–)
158	Kohl, Charles Christian	(1910–1915 demitted)



No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
159	Kreis (Kreig), Emil John	(1895-)
160	Laraber, Charles D.	(1912-)
161	Lathrop, Charles Frederick	(1910-)
162	Lee, Harry J.	(1893-1912 demitted)
163	Lindsay, George W.	(1882-1886 demitted)
164	Lindstrom (Lindstrum; Lindstrome), Oscar	(1874-1888 demitted)
165	Liscom, Jason Martin	(1869-1877 demitted)
166	Liscom, Jason Reed (Feb. 11, 1808-Oct. 18, 1879)	(1868-1879 dead)
167	Liscom, William H.	(1884-1891 demitted)
168	Lytle, James E.J.	(1875-1887 suspended)
169	Martin, Harry Elmer	(1918-)
170	Mathews, Fred A. (1851-Nov. 18, 1886)	(1880-1886 dead)
171	Matteson, William S.	(1911-)
172	McBride, R.A.	(1890-1918 demitted)
173	McCray, Charles Whitney	(1914-)
174	McCredie, Edward L.	(1892-)
175	McFarlain, Charles	(1899-1902 suspended)
176	McFarland, Abel (Albert) W. (Aug. 21, 1834-Jan. 22, 1903)	(1889-1903 dead) Civil War
177	McGregor, James R.	(1880-1887 suspended)
178	McIntire, Albert William	(1914-)
179	McIntire, Arthur C.	(1913-)
180	McIntire, Arthur Cox (June 19, 1836-Mar. 2, 1904)	(1878-1904 dead) Colonel, Civil War
181	McMahon, William (Jan. 17, 1829-Feb. 4, 1894)	(1886-1894 dead)
182	McMillan, Leroy (LeRoy) P.	(1906-1911 demitted)
183	McRea, John D.	(1911-)
184	Meisenbach (Miscenbach, Meisenback), Daniel	(1871-1883 demitted)
185	Metler (Mettler), James Iliff	(1871-1877 suspended, 1878 reinstated, 1881 suspended)
186	Miller, Edward A.	(1912-)
187	Mitchell, William N.	(1896-)
188	Moffatt, William (1837-Sept. 9, 1909)	(1886-1909 dead)
189	Moore, Eddie Tower	(1916-)
190	Moorhead, Clyde Arthur	(1917-)
191	Morahn, Edward S.	(1892-1893 demitted)
192	Morrison, Lester John	(1917-)
193	Morrison, Samuel	(1869-1876 demitted)
194	Mosher, Benjamin Dean	(1907-)
195	Moss, Benjamin Napoleon (1835-June 4, 1898)	(1873-1898 dead) Civil War
196	Newport, Thomas Faucett Aaron (Dec. 1829-Aug. 1, 1914)	(1869-1914 dead) Civil War
197	Nolan, William B.	(1884-1887 suspended)
198	Norman, Isaac N.	(1882-1889 demitted)
199	Olsen (Oleson), Martin	(1878-1881 demitted)
200	Plaisted (Plaistead), David V. (1832-June 29, 1897)	(1878-1897 dead) Civil War
201	Packard, Walter Herbert	(1883-1887 demitted)
202	Palmer, Thomas D.	(1874-1887 demitted)
203	Panton, Mathew H.	(1869-1871 demitted)
204	Paxson (Paxon), Martin (Marion) D.	(1873-1886 demitted)
205	Perkins, Stephen Manson	(1906-)
206	Pierce, Philip S. (1848-Feb. 15, 1912)	(1882-1908 suspended and reinstated, 1912 dead)
207	Pollock, Rev. George A.	(1891-1892 demitted)
208	Pool, Joseph James (Nov. 16, 1839-June 7,	(1882-1904 dead)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
	1904)	
209	Prescott, Samuel Plumer (Oct. 14, 1844–Feb. 28, 1918)	(1887–1918 dead)
210	Prescott, Warren Atwood	(1915–)
211	Reed, Edward Albert	(1882–1884 suspended, 1912 reinstated and demitted)
212	Rice, Edgar W.	(1876–1880 suspended)
213	Rice, Freedom M.	(1874–1883 demitted)
214	Rodgers, Herbert Monford	(1903–1916 suspended)
215	Rossette, Charles E.	(1882–)
216	Ruedy, Casper (1835–Apr. 3, 1896)	(1875–1896 dead) Civil War
217	Ruff, James G. (Sept. 2, 1846–Nov. 7, 1887)	(1881–1887 dead) Civil War
218	Schurtz (Scheurtz; Schuetz), George Cornat (abt. 1830–Dec. 19, 1909)	(1875–1909 dead) Civil War
219	Shaw, James L. (1848–)	(1880–1886 suspended, 1887 reinstated and demitted)
220	Shipper, Newton Franklin	(1918–) WWI
221	Short, John James (Apr. 15, 1840–Dec. 4, 1881)	(1873–1881 dead) Civil War
222	Simminger (Simmenger; Siminger), John Baptiss	(1876–1882 suspended, 1884 reinstated, 1894 demitted)
223	Smith, Louis Dewitt	(1910–) WWI
224	Smith, Zimri (Zinni)	(1889–1912 demitted)
225	Snyder, Frank P.	(1880–1900 demitted)
226	Stannard, George Frank	(1871–1878 demitted)
227	Staten, Edward James	(1904–)
228	Stetler, Thomas H.	(1889–)
229	Stoldorf, John	(1917–)
230	Strong, Charles C.	(1889–1897 demitted)
231	Swanson, August	(1884–1894 suspended)
232	Swartsley, George Lewis	(1917–)
233	Swearingen, Albert (Abe) Allison	(1892–)
234	Swisher, William James	(1916–) WWI
235	Tabor, Edward B.	(1913–)
236	Taylor, James Lewis	(1871–1897 suspended)
237	Taylor, Lewis (Oct. 2, 1834–June 10, 1893)	(1880–1893 dead)
238	Tewksberry (Tewksbury), George W.	(1876–1889 demitted)
239	Their, George James	(1914–)
240	Thomassen, John J.	(1907–1913 demitted)
241	Thornton, Ulysses (Ulyses) N.	(1901–1911 demitted)
242	Tibbetts, John Ezekiel	(1882–1887 demitted)
243	Tower, Daniel C.	(1901–)
244	Tower, Forrest Lee	(1913–)
245	Tower, George Daniel (Oct. 31, 1853–Apr. 24, 1918)	(1906–1918 dead)
246	Tower, Henry	(1916–)
247	Town (Towne), David A. (July 12, 1827–Dec. 27, 1891)	(1882–1891 dead) Civil War
248	Truman, William (Apr. 16, 1833–July 10, 1899)	(1869–1899 dead)
249	Turner, James W.	(1889–1897 suspended)
250	Van Law, Joseph (1822–Mar. 21, 1875)	(1871–1875 dead)
251	Van Law, Ruggles B.	(1873–)
252	Van Ormun, Albert Dow	(1916–)
253	Van Vliet (Vleit), Charles William	(1881–1886 demitted)
254	Von Ohlen, Christian W.	(1916–)
255	Vosburg, David M. (1827–Mar. 5, 1905)	(1885–1905 dead)
256	Walker, John Hepburn	(1914–)
257	Ward, Theodore	(1908–)

No.	Name	Year joined/status changed
258	Watson, George F.	(1878–1880 demitted)
259	Watts (Watte), Edward Lilly (May, 1866–Oct. 14, 1908)	(1896–1908 dead)
260	Wetherbee, Oliver (1817–Oct., 1883)	(1883–1883 dead)
261	Wheeler, Levi William (June 16, 1837–Nov. 15, 1900)	(1886–1900 dead)
262	Wiley, George Samuel (Mar. 15, 1879–June 27, 1950)	(1908–)
263	Wiley, Samuel C. (Nov. 11, 1833–Feb. 13, 1900)	(1882–1900 dead)
264	Wills, George Edward (Mar. 22, 1834–Sept. 14, 1914)	(1882–1914 dead)
265	Wills, Oscar T.	(1916–)
266	Wilson, Charles W.	(1889–1893 demitted)
267	Wilson, William	(1882–1886 suspended)
268	Witte, Rudolph William (Jr.)	(1906–)
269	Wixom, Jesse Edgar	(1918–)
270	Wixom, William P.	(1889–1914 demitted)
271	Wylie, William	(1880–1906 demitted)
272	Wylie, William W.	(1918–)
273	Youngren, Jonas (Alfred) Alfred (Jonas)	(1895–1901 demitted)
274	Yule, George H.	(1912–)

As evidenced in [Table 1](#), Bethany Commandery No. 28 had whole families serve it during the period 1868–1918. Specifically, there were the four Hoffmans, the two Gilmore brothers, the three Liscoms, and the four Towers. The commandery’s membership included at least 12 American Civil War participants (another two believed to have served too) and four World War I participants. Of all those, the highest in rank was Colonel Arthur Cox McIntire (1836–1904).

[Table 2](#) summarizes the changes in membership in Bethany Commandery No. 28 in the period under review.

**Table 2.** Bethany Commandery No. 28 membership statistics, 1868 to 1918

Years	Members	Created	Admitted	Reinstated	Demitted	Suspended	Deceased
1868	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
1869	23	13	-	-	-	-	-
1870	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
1871	30	11	-	-	4	-	-
1872	31	2	-	-	-	-	1
1873	35	5	-	-	1	-	-
1874	40	6	-	-	1	-	-
1875	42	3	1	-	1	-	1
1876	42	4	-	-	2	2	-
1877	38	1	-	1	3	2	1
1878	42	4	1	1	2	-	-
1879	40	-	-	-	2	-	-
1880	48	14	-	-	3	2	1
1881	49	3	-	-	1	1	-
1882	72	24	1	-	-	1	1
1883	77	9	-	-	4	-	-
1884	78	4	-	1	2	1	1
1885	83	5	-	-	-	-	-
1886	81	5	-	-	5	2	-
1887	75	3	-	1	5	3	2
1888	71	-	-	-	2	-	2
1889	74	8	-	-	2	-	3
1890	72	3	-	-	3	2	-
1891	72	2	-	-	1	-	1
1892	73	6	-	-	3	-	2
1893	72	4	-	-	5	-	1

Years	Members	Created	Admitted	Reinstated	Demitted	Suspended	Deceased
1894	68	2	-	1	3	1	2
1895	74	6	-	-	-	-	-
1896	74	4	-	-	2	-	2
1897	63	-	-	-	2	8	1
1898	62	2	-	-	1	1	1
1899	62	2	1	-	1	-	2
1900	67	9	-	1	2	-	3
1901	69	5	-	-	1	1	1
1902	68	2	-	-	1	1	1
1903	68	3	-	-	1	-	2
1904	67	1	-	-	-	-	2
1905	67	3	-	-	1	-	2
1906	71	7	-	-	1	1	1
1907	79	8	-	1	-	-	1
1908	81	5	-	1	2	1	1
1909	79	2	-	-	1	-	3
1910	86	14	-	-	-	5	2
1911	85	2	-	-	2	-	1
1912	84	4	1	1	4	2	1
1913	88	4	1	-	1	-	-
1914	92	4	1	-	1	-	-
1915	94	5	-	-	1	-	2
1916	94	6	-	-	2	3	1
1917	102	9	1	-	1	-	1
1918	106	8	-	-	2	-	2
Total		266	8	9	85	40	52

As evidenced in Table 2, in the 50-year period from 1868 to 1918 Bethany Commandery No. 28 had a total of 274 individuals go through it (266 created and eight admitted members). It is worth noting that its admitted members included members of the local community who had performed acts of special merit in society – like, for instance, having fought in the Civil War (e.g., Casper Ruedy). Over that 50-year period, 84 members of the commandery demitted for varying reasons and 40 were suspended, with nine of the latter being reinstated afterwards. Fifty-two of the knights passed away while a member of the commandery. The commandery’s 137 deceased and demitted members combined had a total of 1,627 years of service between them, i.e. an average of 11.8 years per person. Of its deceased members, the knight with the longest record of service was Thomas F.A. Newport – 45 years, and the one with the shortest was Willard Signor Alyea (died in an accident) – 1 year. Of the commandery’s demitted members, the knight with the longest record of service was Henry F. Eckenbrecht – 37 years, and the one with the shortest was Edward S. Morahn – just 2 years. The commandery’s deceased members, on average, served much longer than their demitted counterparts.

Figure 7 illustrates the changes in Bethany Commandery No. 28 membership size in the period under review.

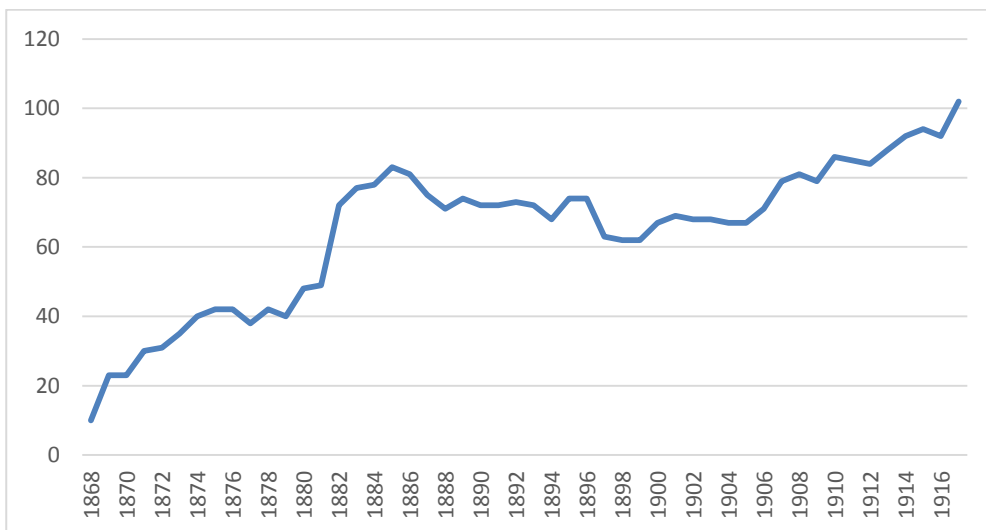


Fig. 7. Changes in Bethany Commandery No. 28 membership size in 1868–1918

As evidenced in [Figure 7](#), membership in Bethany Commandery No. 28 increased briskly on three occasions – in 1876–1877, 10 years later in 1886–1887, and in 1917–1918, when it exceeded 100.

In the period 1868–1918, Bethany Commandery No. 28 had 21 different Eminent Commanders. Here they are in chronological order: Frank Allen Hardin (1868–1869), George Emerson (1870–1871), Joseph William Edwards (1872–1873; 1875–1877), Robert L. Gilmore (1874), Casper Ruedy (1878), William H. Hale (1879–1880), Thomas F.A. Newport (1881–1883; 1893–1896), Frank P. Snyder (1884–1885), Thomas D. Palmer (1886), Julius Hanson (1887), S.B. Dix (1888), William Jenkins (1889–1890), William H. Irwin (1891–1892), George E. Wills (1897–1898), Robert N. Crawford (1899–1901; 1903–1907; 1909–1913), John C. Corbus, Jr. (1902), Adelbert D. Gillett (1908), Edwin F. Hempstead (1914), Frederick R. Bailey (1915–1916), Stephen Manson Perkins (1917), and George E. Blanchard (1918).

At that time, major commanderies typically appointed their Eminent Commander for a term of 1 year. By contrast, Bethany Commandery No. 28, which must have experienced talent shortages, often let one person occupy this position for 2 years and more, with the record belonging to Robert N. Crawford at 10 cumulative years.

## 5. Conclusion

Bethany Commandery No. 28 provides a case in point for how to establish a commandery in a thinly populated area – it was set up in Mendota, a tiny town in the state of Illinois. By the start of the 1870s, the town had a population of just around 2,000, with this proving to be a key factor behind the organization’s relatively low membership numbers.

In the period from 1868 to 1918, Bethany Commandery No. 28 had a total of 274 members go through it, with 52 of those passing away while a member of the commandery. By 1918, membership in Bethany Commandery No. 28 reached an all-time high of 106. In the first 50 years of its existence, membership in the commandery included 10 Civil War and four World War I participants. In terms of profession, its membership included intellectuals (physicians and engineers) and farmers. The average length of service with Bethany Commandery No. 28 was approximately 11.8 years. In the first 50 years of its existence, Bethany Commandery No. 28 had 21 different commanders, with some of those holding the post for several years.

## 6. Acknowledgments

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