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THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

SEAN MARTIN

NEW IN PAPERBACK

SALES POINTS:

- There are over 350,000 freemasons in England and Wales alone, many of whom are interested in the organisation's historical associations with the Knights Templar
- One of the few books to give equal weight and balance to academic views and alternative theories, appealing to 'new age' interests and military history enthusiasts
- The Knights Templar share the same powerful crossover position between myth and history as the Arthurian legends
- Over 40,000 copies sold in hardcover

DESCRIPTION:

The Knights Templar were the most powerful military religious order of the Middle Ages. Formed to protect pilgrims in the Holy Land, they participated in the Crusades and rapidly gained wealth, lands and influence and were answerable to none save the Pope himself. In addition to having a fearful military reputation, they were also Christendom's first bankers, and invented the modern banking system that is still in use today, and were also involved in exploration and engineering. Seemingly untouchable for nearly two centuries, the Templars fell from grace spectacularly after the loss of the Holy Land: in 1307, all Templars in France were arrested on charges of heresy, homosexuality, denial of the cross and devil worship. The order was suppressed by the Pope in 1312, and Jacques de Molay, the last Grand Master, was burnt at the stake as a heretic two years later.

In the ensuing seven centuries the Templars have exerted a unique influence over European history: orthodox historians see them as nothing more than soldier-monks whose arrogance was their ultimate undoing, while others see them as occultists of the first order, the founders of Freemasonry, possessors of the Holy Grail and creators of the Turin Shroud. Sean Martin considers both the orthodox and conspiratorial version of events, and includes the latest revelations from the Vatican Library.

BIOGRAPHY:

Sean Martin is a writer and filmmaker. His books for Pocket Essentials include *The Knights Templar*, *Alchemy and Alchemists*, *The Gnostics*, *The Cathars* and *Andrei Tarkovsky*.