

Holy Blood, Holy Grail Study Guide

Holy Blood, Holy Grail by Michael Baigent

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Plot Summary

The novel, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, begins as a simple assignment to find out what a country priest in France discovered that made him, among other things, suddenly wealthy. The assignment, however, turns into a discovery beyond all expectation. The authors exhaustively research their topic and find it impossible not to follow a path that will lead them to an explosive conclusion, one with the potential to astonish all of Christianity. As suggested by the book's jacket, this book is destined to be one of the most talked about books not only of the decade, but also of the century.

One of the authors, Henry Lincoln, worked for the BBC and was given the assignment of uncovering the truth behind a country priest's sudden accumulation of wealth during the late seventeenth century. As Lincoln researched the subject, he became aware of many secrets hidden in this priest's story that kept bringing him back to the legendary order of the Knights Templar. Lincoln then enlisted the help of Richard Leigh and Michael Baigent, both experts in the subjects of history and the Knights Templar, specifically.

The three men began their research with the small church where the priest once worked. They realized that they were imagining the many different types of treasure the priest could have found which could have caused him to become such a celebrity with both the cult culture of the time and with his supervisors within the Catholic Church. This line of thought led the investigators to other times in history when treasure had been stolen or lost in this particular region of France. Supposedly, a heretical religious group, The Cathars, had in their custody a great treasure. When the Cathars were besieged during the Albigensian Crusades, this treasure was smuggled from a sealed building surrounded by crusaders and mysteriously disappeared.

The story of the Cathars brought the researchers to the origins of the Knights Templar. The Knights Templar was a mysterious religious-military order initiated to protect a mysterious treasure. It became an influence on society that is still felt to this day. While researching this mysterious order, the authors came across yet another mystery; a secret society even more clandestine than the Knights Templar: their founding order, the Priory of Sion.

The Priory of Sion first came to the attention of the authors while they were conducting their research in France. A group of books, pamphlets, and articles came to their attention: some were popular novels by a man named Gerard de Sede, and most were privately published works donated to the national library in Paris. This collection of works appeared to be part of a conspiracy to expose some great secret: a secret the authors were unclear on. As the authors continued their research, they remained unsure if the order they were reading about really existed. However, after cross-referencing many of these documents with known, authentic documents and with recorded history, the authors soon came to believe in the existence of the order known as the Priory of Sion.



This research took the authors through the foundation of the Priory of Sion, the creation of the Knights Templar to be the Priory's military arm, the severance of that relationship, and the acknowledgement of the diverse men who became grand masters within the ranks of the Priory of Sion. The authors found it interesting that many of the priory grand masters were members of the same bloodline. This brought the attention of the authors to the mystery of the Merovingian Dynasty. The dynasty appeared to have died out thousands of years before with the death of Dagobert II. However, according the Prieure documents, which the authors had come to believe were genuine, the bloodline not only survived this distant assassination, it flourished and still exists to this day.

The authors' research into the Merovingian brought them to examine the question of the Holy Grail. The authors read and analyzed many Grail romances. Some were found to be pure fiction, and some had interesting coincidences that the authors could not disregard. The facts uncovered by the authors soon brought them to the story of Jesus Christ. To research Jesus, the authors turned to the Bible, although they acknowledged that many gospels in the New Testament have been edited and slanted to look favorably upon the Romans. Using their knowledge of the history of the time, of linguistics, and of biblical writings found separate from the Bible, the authors came to many surprising hypotheses.

First, the authors suggest that perhaps the secret the Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar fought so hard to hide had to do with Jesus' marital status. The authors believe that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and that he had children with her, resulting in the Merovingian bloodline with which the Priory of Sion seemed so closely entrenched. Second, by identifying many irregularities involved in retelling of the Crucifixion, the authors surmised that Jesus survived his Crucifixion and went on to live many more years.

The lack of true historical fact surrounding Jesus and the inability of the authors to get the existing members of the Priory of Sion to confess their long-held secret does not stop the authors from putting forth their theories. However, the authors conclude that although Jesus was likely married, his marital status does not take away from the idea that he was the Son of God, or served as the mortal form in which God took in order to discover what it was like to be human. The authors assert that it would have been expected of God to be married if his goal was to truly see what it was like to be human. The authors end their book by assuring the readers that these revelations should not shake the reader's faith. They posit that perhaps the world has never been more ready for the revelations they have made in the book, and that the exposure of the true heir to Jesus' bloodline might be like the second coming that many religious believers have been waiting for.



Part 1, Chapter 1, Village of Mystery

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The novel, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, begins as a simple assignment to find out what a country priest in France discovered that made him, among other things, suddenly wealthy. The assignment, however, turns into a discovery beyond all expectation. The authors exhaustively research their topic and find it impossible not to follow a path that will lead them to an explosive conclusion, one with the potential to astonish all of Christianity. As suggested by the book's jacket, this book is destined to be one of the most talked about books not only of the decade, but also of the century.

Rennes-le-Chateau and Berenger Sauniere. The authors begin to research the story of Rennes-le-Chateau and believe it to strictly be a local story. However, it quickly becomes clear to them that this mystery goes much deeper than any of them had originally believed. It begins with a small town parish priest, Berenger Sauniere. This priest was at one time highly ambitious. The authors speculate why the priest was assigned to this tiny parish, an assignment that, to any ambitious priest, would be considered punishment. However, it is understood that the priest grew up in this area and was deeply interested in the local history.

The authors elaborate on the history of the parish priest, Sauniere. Abbe Berenger Sauniere spent much of his free time studying Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. However, his special interest was history, especially the history of the region, of which much abounded the area. In this coastal area of France there are the ruins of a Knights Templar preceptory (a community of Knights Templar), the chateau of Blanchefort, the ancestral home of Bertrand de Blanchefort, fourth grand master of the Knight Templar, and the area itself is a pilgrim's path between Europe and Spain.

In 1891, Sauniere began a modest restoration of his church and found four parchments in a Visigoth column over which the altar rested. These parchments are said to have comprised genealogies, one dating from 1244 and the other from 1644. A former parish priest of Rennes-le-Chateau, the Abbe Antoine Bigou, apparently composed the other two parchments. These latter parchments appear to be Latin texts; excerpts from the New Testament. However, in one of the parchments, the words seem to run together intentionally, and, on the second parchment, the lines are indiscriminately truncated. It is believed that these are codes, some being codes too complex for even a modern computer to decipher and some being so simple they seem to leap off the page.

Sauniere must have realized he had found something very important because he immediately packed up and went to see his superior, the bishop of Carcassonne. From there, Sauniere was immediately sent to Paris with orders to go see certain important ecclesiastical authorities, including the Abbe Bieil, director general of the seminary of Saint Sulpice, and Bieil's nephew, Emile Hoffet. This meeting with Hoffet brought Sauniere into contact with various occult-oriented groups, sects, and secret societies as



well as people such as Stephane Mallarme, Maurice Maeterlinck, and Emma Calve, who was rumored at the time to be Sauniere's lover and with whom it is known Sauniere had a long lasting friendship. Also while in Paris, Sauniere spent a great deal of time at the Louvre where he collected reproductions of three paintings: a portrait by an unidentified artist of Pope Celestine V, an unspecified work by David Teniers (although it is not clear which David Teniers, the father or the son), and a painting by Nicolas Poussin, 'Les Bergers d'Arcadie,' translated as 'The Shepherds of Arcadia.'

Once back at Rennes-le-Chateau, Sauniere continued his restoration of the church and finds a carved flagstone dating from the seventh or eighth century, and a burial crypt underneath where purportedly skeletons were discovered. In the churchyard, Sauniere obliterated the inscriptions on the Marquise d'Hautpoul de Blanchfort's headstone that had been designed by Bigou. There were purposefully misspelled and miss-spaced words on the headstone that would reveal the same encoded message from one of the parchments Sauniere had discovered. What Sauniere did not realize when he defaced the headstone was that the message had already been copied.

Sauniere also began taking long walks with his housekeeper and longtime companion, Marie Denarnaud, during which he would collect rocks of no apparent value or interest. Sauniere also began exchanging letters with unknown correspondents throughout France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, and Spain. Until his death in 1917, Sauniere spent over several million pounds on postage, the remodel of the church, and various other expenses. The authors learn that Sauniere built a tower called Tour Magdala that overlooked the sheer side of a mountain. He also built a house called Villa Bethania and rebuilt parts of the church. He collected rare china and precious marble and created an orangery and a zoological garden.

The Church officials apparently turned a blind eye to Sauniere's spending habits. However, when Sauniere's former superior died, the new bishop attempted to check Sauniere's accounts. Sauniere refused repeatedly to accept the transfer the bishop ordered. Although Sauniere was suspended over this fight, the Vatican later reinstated him.

On January 17, 1917, Sauniere suffered a massive stroke. Although he was in good health and showed no signs of impending illness, Sauniere's housekeeper, Marie Denarnaud, ordered a coffin for Sauniere five days before the stroke. On his deathbed, Sauniere offered a confession to a priest from a neighboring parish. Although the priest never divulged the confession, the priest fell into a depression that lasted for several months and he refused to administer Extreme Unction to Sauniere. Sauniere died on January 22, 1917.

After his death, Sauniere was placed upright in a chair and many anonymous mourners walked past him in a ceremony that still mystifies the local parishioners. The greatly anticipated reading of Sauniere's will was shocking when it revealed that he was penniless. Apparently Sauniere had transferred the bulk of his wealth to Marie Denarnaud. Marie went on to live for the next thirty-two years in Villa Bethania. After World War II, when the French government issued new currency, Marie never



exchanged her money and was seen burning vast sheaves of old franc notes, presumably so that she would not have to divulge where she came by such wealth. Shortly after World War II, Marie sold Villa Bethania and promised the new owner that she would confide in him a secret that could make him rich and powerful. However, Marie suffered a stroke on January 29, 1953 and was unable to speak until the time of her death.

The Possible Treasures. The authors are curious about what the treasure Sauniere found could be. The treasure could be a reference to Rennes-le-Chateau as being a Celtic tribal sacred site in prehistoric times. The village, Rhedae, gets its name from one of these tribes. During Roman times the site was also considered sacred for its natural springs and mines. The area may also have been the capital of the Visigoth Empire. In the thirteenth century, an army descended on the area to stamp out the Cathar, or Albigensian heresy, and to claim the spoils.

The notion of treasure was interwoven in all these stories, especially the story of the Cathars. The Cathars were believed to have held a wondrous treasure that may have included the illusive Holy Grail. There was also the treasure of the Knights Templar. The grand master, Bertrand de Blanchefort, commissioned several mysterious excavations in the area. Other possible treasures also included the royal treasury of the reign of Dagobert II who was married to a Visigoth princess while the area was under the control of the Visigoths.

In A.D. 66, Palestine rose against Rome and in A.D. 70 Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus's armies. Titus and his men took the contents of the Holy of Holies, which may have included an immense gold seven-branched candelabrum and the Ark of the Covenant. In A.D. 410, the Visigoths invaded Rome. The Visigoths are rumored to have taken the treasure of Jerusalem.

The authors suspect that Sauniere did not simply find a treasure, but that he found a secret that someone wanted to keep quiet. Sauniere's odd behavior after finding the treasure, his unique relationship with Emma Calve, defying his bishop, and his housekeeper burning money rather than explaining its origin, are what lead the authors to this conclusion. The authors know that Sauniere received money from Archduke Johann von Hapsburg. Also, the help Sauniere appeared to get from the Vatican suggests to the authors that the secret was religious in nature.

The Intrigue. The first of the authors' three films, *The Lost Treasure of Jerusalem*, regarding Sauniere and the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau, is aired in February 1972. The authors receive many letters regarding the film, but one from a retired Anglican priest stands out. This priest states that Sauniere's treasure was not of gold. The treasure was irrefutable proof that the Crucifixion was a sham and Jesus was alive as late as A.D. 45.

The authors find this theory absurd. They go to see the man and find him reluctant to elaborate. The priest says that he had been told this by another Anglican cleric, Canon Alfred Leslie Lilley. The authors learn that Lilley was acquainted with Emile Hoffet, the



nephew of the director general of the seminary of Saint Sulpice, one of the persons Sauniere was ordered to present himself to upon finding the treasure in his church. This connection makes Lilley's story plausible, if still insane.

The authors also uncover puzzling facts when investigating Nicolas Poussin. The authors find a letter written from Abbe Louis Fouquet to his brother Nicolas Fouquet, the superintendent of finances, to Louis XIV of France. The letter was written shortly after the priest visited with Poussin and mentions topics the two discussed that are very secretive and can give those who know of the topics very powerful. Historians have never been able to understand what this letter refers to. Shortly after receiving the letter, Nicolas Fouquet was imprisoned for the duration of his life. It is possible that he is the Man in the Iron Mask. The king personally took possession of all of Nicolas Fouquet's correspondence after his arrest and spent the rest of his life trying to obtain the original Poussin painting, "Les Bergers d'Arcadie."

The Poussin painting depicts three shepherds standing outside a tomb inscribed with the phrase "Et in Arcadia Ego." The landscape is rugged and mountainous, and is regarded as mythical by many Poussin experts. In the early 1970s, a tomb was located not far from Rennes-le-Chateau, a tomb identical to the one in Poussin's painting. No one knows how old the tomb is, but the similarity to the Poussin tomb seems great. Until the 1950s, the land where the tomb sits was owned by an American from Boston. In 1920 the man opened the tomb in 1920 and found it empty. Later, his wife and mother-in-law were buried there.

The inscription on the tomb in the painting, "Et in Arcadia Ego" or "And in Arcadia I..." does not appear on the tomb outside Rennes-le-Chateau. This inscription fascinates the authors who do not understand the English translation or why the verb appears to be missing. They think perhaps it might be an anagram. A television viewer agrees and rearranges the letters into a Latin statement: "I Tego Arcana Dei," or, as translated, "Begone! I conceal the secrets of God."

Part 1, Chapter 1, Village of Mystery Analysis

Rennes-le-Chateau appears to be a minor setting at the beginning of this book. However, it became clear, not only to the reader but to the authors as well, that this quiet French village would play a major role in the biggest secret ever discovered. The authors began their pursuit of this mystery, touching on the theme of mysterious treasures, as an assignment for the BBC. Very quickly, however, Henry Lincoln discovered there was much more to this story.

The first part of the chapter tells the story of Sauniere as it had been told in Rennes-le-Chateau since the time of his residence in the small village. This introduces elements of the rest of the book, such as the type of investigation the authors would undertake and the themes that would follow from chapter to chapter. This first theme, mysterious treasures, is very important to the book. There would not have been a book if the BBC



did not assign Lincoln the story of Rennes-le-Chateau. There would not have been an assignment if not for the treasure Sauniere found.

The rest of the chapter illustrates the authors' ideas on where the treasure came from and what it could possibly be. It also shows how the authors puzzled out the mystery of the treasure in the course of their research. The behavior of the people at the time presented curious situations that the authors found unusual and suspect. The behavior of Sauniere after his discovery, for example, stands out as quite odd to the authors because he spent associates with people a man of his chosen profession and status most likely would not have associated with. The authors also found it odd that the Vatican would back up an insolent priest. This leads the authors on their path of discovery. Finally, the authors were compelled to discover the powerful secret when they discovered that the Poussin painting created many years prior directly related to the story of Sauniere and to the rumors surrounding him.



Part 1, Chapter 2, The Cathars and the Great Heresy

Part 1, Chapter 2, The Cathars and the Great Heresy Summary

The authors begin their research with the Cathars because they are already familiar with the story and know it fits in with the mystery surrounding Rennes-le-Chateau. Many of the Cathars resided in the area and were persecuted there and their legacy still thrives there. It was also known that Sauniere was a student of history and of local history particularly. Sauniere also had friends among a cultural society that dealt in Cathar teachings. Finally, there was a statement on one of the parchments Sauniere found that was clearly of Cathar origin.

The Albigensian Crusade. In 1209, armies from northern Europe descended on what is now southern France. During this war, the entire territory was destroyed, towns and cities demolished, and whole populations put to death. This war possibly was the first case of genocide in European history. The war lasted nearly forty years and is known as the Albigensian Crusade. It was a true crusade, called upon by the Pope. As with other crusades, the participants wore crosses on their tunics.

Christianity was corrupt in the south of France. Many parish priests ran businesses rather than preached to their congregation, and churches were built only to stand empty for years. However, the area had reached a peak of culture that would be unattainable until the Renaissance era many decades later. Unorthodox religious beliefs, called heresies, also flourished in the area. Deciding that this disrespect to the Church could not continue, the Vatican initiated the crusade.

The terms "Albigensian" and "Cathar" are generic terms that engulf many diverse sects, most of which had independent leaders. Their beliefs are unclear but appear to include a belief in reincarnation and recognition of the feminine principle in religion. The Cathars put stress on direct personal contact with God, which caused priests and their counterparts to be unimportant. Cathars also believed that all material creation regarding Jesus' death was evil and it implied that God was a usurper. Cathars also believed that Jesus could not be the Son of God. They saw him as a simple prophet, no different from any other mortal being. The Cathars also saw procreation as a sin and were believed to have practiced birth control and abortion. All of these beliefs enraged the Vatican.

The Siege of Montsegur. Many of the nobility in the Lanquedoc became Cathar priests, or "parfaits," in their old age because they liked the leniency of the Cathar ways and the lack of tithe such as the one Rome imposed. When sent to the Lanquedoc in 1145, Saint Bernard, Christianity's foremost spokesman at the time, found the Cathars to be more Christian than many of his own churches in the area. However, Rome became



increasingly concerned with the behaviors toward the church in the Languedoc. On January 14, 1208, anticlerical rebels murdered a papal legate. Although the rebels had no Cathar connections, Rome took this opportunity to persecute the Cathars and the Pope called for a crusade.

Simon de Montfort led the military operation. After his death in 1218, the crusade continued with only brief respites for the next quarter of a century. By 1243, all resistance ceased and all Cathar towns and bastions had fallen to the crusaders, with the exception of a small number, including the mountain citadel of Montsegur. For ten months Montsegur was besieged, eventually falling in March 1244, essentially ending Catharism in the south of France. Some small Cathar enclaves were able to remain in areas of the Languedoc, including Rennes-le-Chateau.

The Cathar Treasure. During this time, rumors of a Cathar treasure surfaced. These rumors have persisted to current time. To figure out the truth behind these rumors, the authors go back to the Cathars' beginnings. It was originally believed that the Cathars derived from the Bogomils, a sect active in Bulgaria during the tenth and eleventh centuries. However, there is evidence that the Cathar origins seem to be rooted in French soil during the advent of the Christian era.

Another mystery the authors find during their research is a letter written by an old man acquainted with Louis IX. He writes that the king informed him that the Cathars invited Simon de Montfort to a ceremony in which the body of Our Lord would become flesh in the hands of their priest. Yet another mystery the authors find is how wealthy the Cathars appear. Most Cathars at the time were nobility and wealthy landowners, so the wealth could be explained. However, rumors persisted of a Cathar treasure beyond comprehension.

During the assault at Montsegur, the attackers numbered in the tens of thousands and were able to completely surround the mountain retreat. However, many of the soldiers were locals with Cathar sympathies, so it was easy to move supplies to Montsegur. Three months before the fall of the fortress, two parfaits escaped with the bulk of the Cathar material treasure; gold, silver, and coins, to a cave in the mountains then to a castle stronghold. Soon after this, the treasure disappeared and was never heard of again.

The defense surrendered on the first of March, taking surprisingly lenient terms from their attackers. The fighting men of the surviving group would be allowed to go free with all their belongings and the parfaits would also go free as long as they gave up their heretical beliefs and confessed their sins. The crusaders agreed to the defenders' request of a two-week truce to consider the terms. When the truce ended, the parfaits refused the offer and two hundred parfaits were dragged down the mountain, placed in a large stockade and burned. However, four parfaits remained hidden among the garrison and escaped the night of March 16. Had they been caught the entire garrison would have been killed.



The authors wonder why these four parfaits would risk escaping since their oppressors would have freed them the next day. The authors do not think it was for a material treasure since it has been documented that the Cathar treasure had been smuggled out of the fortress months before. The authors think perhaps it was religious materials related to their beliefs that the parfaits stole away that night. However, the authors question the validity of that argument, as the religious materials could have been smuggled out at the same time as the Cathar treasure.

The authors realize that the delay the parfaits arranged with the truce occurred during the spring equinox and Easter. It was known that the Cathars had a kind of festival on March 14, the day before the truce expired. Was it possible that the materials smuggled out of the fortress had something to do with this festival and was that the reason the Cathars took such a great risk to keep these materials and sneak them out days later?

The Mystery of the Cathars. The mysterious behavior of the Cathars brings the authors to the rumors that the Cathar treasure included the Holy Grail. The authors are not prepared to investigate such rumors because they had believed that the Holy Grail was simply a legend. However, there a link did exist between the Cathars and the cult of the Grail, a link that grew in validity during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Some writers of Grail romances use Cathar thought and writings in their work. In one romance written by Wolfram von Eschenbach, the name of the Grail castle was Munsalvaiche, which was the German version of the Cathar term, Montsalvat. Also illustrating a link between the Cathars and the cult of the Grail, the lord of the Grail castle in one of Wolfram's poems is named Perilla; the lord of Montsegur was Raimon de Pereille, a name that in its Latin form was Perilla.

The authors believe if these coincidences stood out to them, they must too have stood out to Sauniere. The authors question if the treasure Sauniere discovered and the treasure smuggled out of Montsegur on March 16, 1244 could be the same and could the treasure actually be a secret rather than an object. The authors are unsure what this hypothesis might mean and are unable to fully investigate since information regarding the Cathars is limited. However, their research does bring them to another avenue of interest, the Knights Templar.

Part 1, Chapter 2, The Cathars and the Great Heresy Analysis

The authors' research leads them to the Cathars, a heretical sect that lived in the Rennes-le-Chateau area more than five hundred years before Sauniere. The reason the authors research the Cathars is because of the mysterious treasure that Sauniere found. Could it be possible that Sauniere found a treasure the Cathars left behind?

This chapter, besides further exploring the theme of mysterious treasures, explores a second theme, that of religious heresy. The authors explain that heresy was a belief that did not conform to Christian views. A heretical sect existed in the area of Rennes-le-Chateau. The Cathars were a civil group of people who simply did not believe that

Jesus Christ died on the cross, a view that brought the Vatican's wrath down on them and resulted in a war that presumably ended the Cathar existence. What interested the authors of the book most about this episode in history, however, was the existence of a secret treasure in the Cathar possession and what could have happened to this treasure after the Crusaders beat down the Cathars.

There is great significance in the existence of a secret Cathar treasure stolen away from Montsegur when it is connected not only to Sauniere's treasure but also to the Grail romances written around the time of the Cathars. It could hardly be coincidence that so many facts about the three treasures mesh so well together, having many similarities that are not limited to the location of all three treasures. The authors saw symbolism in the Grail romances that fit so well with recorded history that they could not help but assume these fictional Grail stories were based on fact. This symbolism led the authors to the next step, investigating another group also mentioned in the Grail romances, the Knights Templar.



Part 1, Chapter 3, The Warrior-Monks

Part 1, Chapter 3, The Warrior-Monks Summary

The authors discover a vast amount of information on the Knights Templar but are unclear on how much of the information is reliable. The Templars are well known for their part in the crusades as cross bearing soldiers. However, many writers have described the Templars as a mysterious, secret society intent on intrigue. In some writings the Templars are even betrayed as shamelessly abusive and who practice heretical rites. In other writings they are portrayed as custodians of wisdom. The authors begin their research with many unanswered questions. They find that as they work through acceptable accounts of the Templars, they form more questions with every new piece of information.

Knights Templar - The Orthodox Account. A Frankish historian, Guillaume de Tyre, wrote the first known accounts of the Templars between 1175 and 1185. By this time Palestine had been in Western hands for seventy years and the Templars had been in existence for over fifty years. The writings of Guillaume were therefore not based on personal accounts but learned from second or third parties. The authors do not regard Guillaume's writings as accurate, especially the dates, as Guillaume does not identify his sources.

Guillaume claims that Hugues de Payen, a nobleman from Champagne, founded the Templars in 1118. The order originally had nine members with their primary duty to protect the roads and highways surrounding the Holy Land. The authors question how only nine men were expected to protect such a large area of land. Guillaume also states that the Templars lived in the king's palace, and yet the king's own historian makes no mention of them in his records of the time. Also according to Guillaume, the Templars would not accept new recruits for nine years, approximately 1127.

The Templars enjoyed great celebrity in Europe and were officially incorporated as a religious military order in 1128. The Templars were sworn to celibacy, poverty, and obedience. They were not allowed to cut their beards and most aspects of their daily life were regulated in both monastic and military routine. The Templars were also required to dress in white to acknowledge that they had left their dark life behind. In 1146, the Templars adopted the red crosses across their mantles, a symbol that has become associated with the order. The Templars were also not allowed to surrender on the battlefield, beg for their own lives, or retreat unless they were outnumbered by more than three to one.

In 1139, the Pope declared that the Templars were to answer to only the Pope. This gave the Templars free reign. The Templar ranks grew in number after this time and the order became very rich in land and possessions, as potential recruits were required to give up all their material possessions to the order when they joined. As the order was not allowed to dispose of any possessions, the Templars soon became extremely wealthy, owning throughout Europe.



The Templars became mediators in political affairs, with the master of the Temple regularly being called to the king's Parliament. The order's political involvement was not confined to religious matters. The Templars are also credited with the creation of modern banking; they lent vast sums of money to monarchies, created interest rates, and transferred money from one city to another with the use of promissory notes.

The Templars also made use of the most skilled architects, engineers, and leatherworkers. The order owned their own shipyards and fleet, and they helped in the development of surveying, mapmaking, road building, and navigation. The Templars were knowledgeable in many medical advances and in the use of drugs, including the prevention of infection and the use of molds to make antibiotics.

Inspired perhaps by their own fame and wealth, the Templars grew arrogant and corrupt. In 1187, the grand master, Gerard de Ridefort, broke a truce with the Saracens and caused a battle that allowed Jerusalem to fall into Saracen hands. Soon the entire Holy Land fell to Muslim control. The Templars did show themselves to be heroic when Acre fell in 1291, staying on the battlefield even when it meant imminent death. The Templars then moved their headquarters to Cyprus. However, with the loss of the Holy Land, the order had essentially lost its purpose. In response to this loss, the Templars turned their attention to Europe.

In years past, the Templars had presided over the formation of another religious-military order, the Teutonic Knights. Now the Teutonic Knights held land in Prussia and in what is now known as Russia. The Templars envied the Teutonic Knights' independence and decided to copy it in the Lanquedoc. The Templars appeared to be sympathetic to the Cathars and helped to house many Cathar refugees during the Albigensian Crusade. Because of this sympathetic approach to the Cathars, and because the Cathars still held a strong base in the Lanquedoc, the Templars were able to easily make the transition to Lanquedoc. Cohabiting with the Cathars also introduced Gnostic dualism to the Templars, who were already influenced by Jewish and Islamic beliefs.

By 1306, Philippe IV of France wanted to eradicate the Templars. Not only did Philippe owe the Templars money, but he was also offended by their arrogant ways. Philippe had to enlist the help of the Pope in order to rid himself of the Templars. Philippe masterminded the kidnapping and death of one Pope, Boniface VIII, and possibly masterminded the murder of another, Benedict XI. Finally, Philippe had established a man of his own choosing, Clement V, as pope.

Philippe's armies in France were sent a list of charges and orders, to be opened simultaneously. The order was for all the Templars in France to be arrested and their belongings confiscated on October 13, 1307. Most of the Templars were caught and put on trial, many tortured into making bizarre confessions, and many put to death. However, the bulk of the Templars' records and immense wealth was never found and their entire shipping fleet disappeared. There was reason to believe that some of the Templars were forewarned and were able to escape.



Philippe ordered the eradication of the Templars throughout all Christendom. However, the wars between England and Scotland prevented the eradication of the Templars in Scotland. It is assumed that many Templars went to Scotland and helped Robert Bruce at the Battle of Bannockburn. Also, Edward II of England at first refused to follow Philippe's orders, and then enforced them halfheartedly. In Germany, the Templars were protected by the duke of the principality, or were found innocent in their trials, and others took refuge in local orders, such as the Teutonic Knights. In Portugal, the order was cleared by an inquiry and then changed their name. The Teutonic Knights turned their backs on the Church of Rome, and two centuries later, lent their support to Martin Luther.

Knights Templar - The Mysteries. During their research of the Templars, the authors discover many things appearing to be more elusive than the accepted history of the order. Many people during the time of the order believed that the Templars worshiped false gods and performed rituals that were Satanic in nature. However, writers of the time also romanticized the Templars; the Grail romances often included the Templars as protectors of the Holy Grail.

Part of the mystique surrounding the Templars began at the burning death of the last grand master, Jacques de Molay, in March 1314. De Molay reportedly called through the flames that those who brought him here, Pope Clement and King Philippe, would join him in death in less than a year. Pope Clement did pass away from a supposed case of dysentery and Philippe died from a means still unclear to this day.

The legend of the Templars is strong and widespread. By the eighteenth century, most Freemason orders claimed antecedents in the Templars. Many modern day groups claim Templar as part of their name, including the New Templars in Germany and Austria. The De Molay Society, named for the last grand master of the Templars, exists in the United States. In France the fame of the Templars is even more evident. There are hundreds of books on the subject, many which make outlandish claims about the Templars, including the ideas that they were mystics, that they had formed a great secret against Christianity, and that they were heretics. There are also claims that the Templars were guardians of the Holy Grail.

The authors of the book become intrigued not with the outlandish claims regarding the Templars, but with the contradictions that have become accepted in history. The authors begin their research with the destruction of the Templars in order to better understand these irregularities. What the authors first notice are references in the Inquisition interrogations of the imprisoned Templars; references to something called Baphomet. The authors infer that this reference had to have held significant meaning to the Templars to have had frequent mention by so many of the orders' members. The authors assume that Baphomet translates to "father," or "source," interpreted by the authors as supernatural or divine.

Next, the authors investigate the idea that the Templars performed some sort of secret ceremonies involving some kind of head. The authors find a reference to this ceremony in many of the Inquisition transcripts; however, the origin of the head remained obscure.



The authors find references that it may have referred to the head of Hugues de Payen, or to the Shroud of Turin. The authors also believe it could be possible that the head belonged to John the Baptist, whom the Johannite heresy believed to be the true messiah, and whom the Templars had come into contact with while in the Middle East.

Heads figure in Templar history in other aspects. While confiscating the belongings of a Templar preceptory, a box was found that contained a feminine head. While being interrogated, a knight said this head was unrelated to the bearded head that was used in the orders' ceremonies. There was also a story associated with the Templars that referred to a head. This story stated that a knight was in love with a great lady and when the lady died, the knight went to her grave, dug her up, and violated her. A voice told the knight to come back in nine months. When he did, he found a head resting on the lady's leg bone. The voice told the knight to keep it with him always and that it would bring him good things. The head protected the knight in battle by his act of holding it aloft and showing his enemies. Eventually the Templar order came to possess the head. The authors believe this story to be either a travesty of the Immaculate Conception, a symbolic account of a ritual of some sort, or an offshoot of the mysteries associated with Isis, Tammuz, or Adonis. There are also accounts in the Inquisition files of Templars wearing cords that had touched sacred objects, including an unidentified head.

The final item of interest to the authors about the Inquisition was the charges leveled against the Templars in reference to their treatment of the cross. There were claims that the Templars would spit on and deny the cross. There was also mention of a knight being told that the Christians believed wrongly in Jesus, that he was a false prophet. Another said he was told not to believe that Christ is God and that he could save the knight.

Knights Templar - The Hidden Side. The initiation of the Templars proved to be equally as confusing as their demise. The Knights Templar supposedly began in 1118 and admitted only nine members and would not admit any others for nine years. Therefore, no new members should have been admitted until 1127. However, there exists clear proof that the Templars admitted the count of Anjou in 1120. In 1124, the count of Champagne was also admitted. Therefore, the correct initiation date for the Templars would have been as early as 1111 or 1112.

There is also a letter the count of Champagne received from the bishop of Chartres as the count was preparing a trip to the Holy Land. The bishop mentions in the letter that he knows the count plans to join a religious military group. The letter is dated 1114. Since the bishop died in 1115, this is further evidence that the Templars must have been in existence before 1118.

The connections between the main players in the Templar order also catch the attention of the authors. The founding knights, including Hugues de Payen, lived within the same region, a region where the count of Champagne ruled. Yet, the count pledged his obedience to this order, an order run by people who were under his control. Champagne also donated land to the order that Saint Bernard, nephew of founding knight Andre de Montbard and patron of the Templars, built the Abby of Clairvaux. Another connection to



the Templar order is the location of Champagne's court, Troyes, at a Cabalistic school that had flourished in the area from 1070 and was also the location from which Chretien de Troyes composed one of the first Grail romances.

There were also rumors of treasure associated with the Templars. The Templars were given a section of the royal palace, the Temple Mount that was plundered by Roman legions in A.D. 70. It was suggested in one of the Dead Sea scrolls, in a reference to great quantity of gold, sacred vessels, and treasure of an indeterminate kind. Under Temple Mount were extremely large stables, the Stables of Solomon, which could have concealed great amounts of treasure. The authors believed the Templars might have undertaken great excavations underneath the temple during their time there.

In 1104, the count of Champagne had a conclave with high-ranking nobles, which included members of specific families. These families would later appear with Andry de Montbard and in other references. Saint Bernard joined the Cistercian order in 1112. Champagne then went to the Holy Land and remained there until 1108. In 1114, Champagne made another trip to Palestine and returned a year later. Upon his return he donated a tract of land to the Cistercian order upon which Saint Bernard built the Abbey of Clairvaux. In 1112 the Cistercian order was near bankruptcy. After the donation of land from Champagne, both the Cistercians and the Templars became very wealthy.

The discovery of this sequence of events causes the authors to surmise that something had been found in the Holy Land, either by accident or by plan. Not only was this mystery object a source of great wealth, it also appeared to be cloaked in secrecy. The authors are intrigued by the amount of influence wielded by the three main characters of these two groups that benefited from the Holy Land treasure. The authors posit that there may have been another order behind the Templars and the Cistercians who had the power to organize and execute these events.

The authors are puzzled over the question of what this treasure or great secret may have been. However, the question leads them to yet another conclusion. The Templars were supposedly completely eradicated throughout France although there was a group in the preceptory of Bezu, next to Rennes-le-Chateau, who were allowed to escape. To understand why these Templars were allowed to escape, the authors look to the activities of the Templars in this region.

The ancestral home of Bertrand de Blanchefort, one of the most influential grand masters of the Knights Templar, was located Rennes-le-Chateau and Bezu. The authors discover that while Bertrand was expanding the reach of the Templars and instituting more organizational control within the order, he also had brought a group of German miners into Rennes-le-Chateau in order to work mines which had been exhausted by the Romans thousands of years before. Modern excavations into the mines the Germans were not mining but were instead constructing something of metal, or were perhaps excavating a subterranean crypt.

There had been Templars in the Rennes-le-Chateau area since 1285. Yet near the end of the thirteenth century, the lord of Bezu and Rennes-le-Chateau invited a separate



detachment of Templars into the area. These Templars established themselves on the summit of the mountain of Bezu. It was believed this new regime was invited in to offer protection to the pilgrim route that ran through the area. However, they were not a large group and there were already men in the area capable of fulfilling this duty. It has been suggested that these Templars were there to act as spies and to protect some sort of treasure.

The new group of Templars in Bezu was the only group to have been completely immune to the Inquisition that destroyed most of the Templars. The authors are also intrigued that Clement V, a co-conspirator with Philippe, was a descendent of Bertrand de Blanchefort who had connections to Bezu through his mother, Ida de Blanchefort. All of this evidence leads the authors to believe there was indeed another organization behind the Templars. It is this assumption that leads the authors to the next line in their investigation.

Part 1, Chapter 3, The Warrior-Monks Analysis

This chapter again introduces an important element of the novel, a set of characters that perhaps play a vital role in the rest of the book. The Templars were an interesting group, shrouded in mystery from their very year of their inception, and become such an important facet in the politics of their time that a king had two separate Popes killed in order to find a sympathetic Pope who would help him eradicate this order. The Templars were a strong, brave group of religious men who also fulfilled the role of a military order, and fought bravely in many battles throughout their existence. The Templars have always served as a source of fascination, with novels and movies made about their role in the Crusades and about the idea of a treasure they guarded. However, despite all this notoriety, the truth about this group remains elusive.

The authors of this book have gone through many historical documents in order to tell the reader the traditional story of the Templars. The authors describe how the order of Templars was initiated to protect pilgrims in the promised land, and how the wrath of a jealous king eradicated the order. The theme of a mysterious treasure looms large in this story. It was through their research into the stories about treasure in connection to the Templars that the authors found many irregularities in the story that encouraged them to investigate further. The authors found it suspicious that the original nine Templars swore not to add more men to their ranks, and yet there is documented proof that the Templars did add members several years before their own self-imposed deadline. The authors were suspicious of other historical facts, as well. Why did the count of Champagne call together a group of men, including one of the founding fathers of the Templar, several years before the order began and then make a long pilgrimage to the Holy Land himself? What is the connection between the Templars and the Cistercian monks whose abbey is the nephew of the same Templar founding father? The theme of mysterious treasure comes out here as well when the authors discover that the Templars excavated in two distinct locations and yet no treasure of any significance was found during the raids that eradicated the Templars.

The authors research into these questions brought them to the conclusion that another order was involved with the Templars; a patristic type of order that had control for some time during the Templars' existence. This conclusion falls under another theme of the book, secret societies. Had this society been public, the authors would have found frequent historical references to its existence.

Part 1, Chapter 4, Secret Documents

Part 1, Chapter 4, Secret Documents Summary

In 1956 a series of books, articles, pamphlets, and other documents began to appear in public. Some of the work, primarily novels, were published in the mainstream press. However, most of the material had been published privately and donated to the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. The novels, most notably those by Gerard de Sede, seemed to be teasing the public about a secret hinted at but never revealed. The novelist, de Sede, implied in his stories that he knew more than he had revealed. This inference leads the authors of this book to believe that M. de Sede had an informant. The authors discover this informant was Pierre Plantard, a person who would play a key role in the authors' investigation.

Among these mass-market paperback books, there are also articles and pamphlets and interviews that clearly came from some source similar in affiliation with M. de Sede's source. However, the most comprehensive collection of documents that the authors discover regarding Rennes-le-Chateau, Gisors, the Templars, the Holy Grail, and the Cathars, among other topics, are cheap self-published works donated to the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. The information from each of these works, some simply mimeographed, typewritten pages, build on each other, repeating much of the same information and then building on it in some small fashion. The authorship of each document is questionable, as each seemed to be a pseudonym relating to some important figure in the subjects contained in the material. Also, the publishers' imprint in some of these works can be traced back to a well-known Masonic lodge in Switzerland, and although the works had been seen at the lodge by an independent researcher, the lodge denies all knowledge of the material.

The most important of these documents proves to be the *Dossiers secrets*, or Secret Dossiers. The dossier contains news clippings, letters, pamphlets, genealogical trees, and the occasional paper that appear to have been lifted from other works. The work is attributed to a man named Henri Lobineau; however, the authors believe this name is a pseudonym based on the street where Saint Sulpice is located in Paris. The authors also discover that a man named Leo Schidlof, an Austrian historian and antiquarian who lived in Switzerland, compiled the genealogies.

The authors attempt to learn more about Leo Schidlof. Since Schidlof died in 1966, the authors contact his daughter in 1978, and were told Mr. Schidlof was not a historian or antiquarian but an expert and dealer in miniatures. The daughter denies that her father could have written the genealogies but says she had received many phone calls and letters from other researchers who also believed her father compiled the genealogies. The authors are also informed by the daughter that Mr. Schidlof was refused a visa to enter the United States in 1946 because he was suspected of espionage. Although this matter was later cleared up, the connected to the assumption that Mr. Schidlof had



written the genealogies of the Merovingian bloodline in the *Dossiers secrets* seems clear.

Also in the *Dossiers secrets* is a reference to Mr. Schidlof's leather briefcase. This briefcase supposedly contained a number of secret papers relating to Rennes-le-Chateau from 1600 to 1800. Shortly after Schidlof's death, the briefcase was supposedly handed to a courier who was to give it to an agent in Germany. However, the courier was expelled from Germany and a few days later his body was found on the railway tracks at Melun. The briefcase had vanished. The authors investigate this story and unearth an article in a French newspaper of a man who died on the tracks at Melun on the day specified. However, the article makes no mention of Schidlof or a briefcase. The authors question if perhaps someone had made up the Schidlof briefcase story based on the story in the French newspaper in order to spur on the myths surrounding the Merovingian bloodline.

The authors are intrigued by another work in the Bibliotheque Nationale, *Le Serpent rouge*. In this work there was another Merovingian genealogy, maps, and several poems. Among the poems was a reference to the Poussin painting "Les Bergers d'Arcadie" and the tomb with the inscription of "Et in Arcadia Ego." Mary of Magdalene was also alluded to in the Bibliotheque Nationale works. It appeared that in these poems, the writer was changing the traditional mother figure in Christianity from the Virgin Mary to the Magdalene.

The authors of *Le Serpent rouge* also appeared to have met a fate similar to the courier who last had possession of Mr. Schidlof's briefcase. All three writers were reportedly found hanged. This coincidence is striking. The authors at first believed the hangings to be a hoax perpetrated by someone attempting to draw attention to these private works. However, the details of the hoax seemed so drawn out, so slowly executed, that the authors cannot see a purpose in perpetuating a hoax. They question whether the hangings were suicides or murders, which would have been much more sensational.

The authors encounter difficulties in conducting their research. One work by Antoine l'Ermite, *Un Tresor merovingien a Rennes-le-Chateau*, appears to be in use whenever the authors ask for it. When forced to leave Paris, the authors ask a friend to ask for and read the work. This woman was also unable to obtain the work. After the authors return to Paris they trick a librarian into showing them the piece. The librarian informs the authors that the work had been stolen by their own friend. The authors are able to have the national Central Library write the Bibliotheque Nationale and request an explanation. As a result of this letter, a photocopy of the work is sent to the authors, who are told to return the copy to the library as soon as possible. This request seems unusual since most libraries consider copies to be disposable. The work appears to be a plagiarized copy of a chapter of one of M. de Sede's novels.

Due to the sheer volume of all the work in the Bibliotheque Nationale, the authors are unable to summarize it all in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. The authors instead identify six important points. First, the authors note that there was a secret order behind the Knights Templar which created the Templar as its military and administrative arm. This order



appeared to be known as the Prieure de Sion, or Priory of Sion. Second, the Priory of Sion had been directed by a sequence of grand masters who include many notorious men in Western history and culture. Third, although the Templars were exterminated between 1307 and 1314, the Priory of Sion remained untouched and has continued to thrive until modern times. The Priory also had significant influence on certain Western historic events. Fourth, the Priory of Sion continued into modern times. The order appeared to be influential in both international and domestic affairs of certain European countries. The authors also believed that the Priory of Sion was responsible for the Prieure documents released since 1956. Fifth, the Priory of Sion's main objective was returning the Merovingian bloodline to the throne in France, and to other European countries as well. Finally, the sixth fact was that the Merovingian dynasty had a legitimate claim to the throne of France and to various other European countries.

With a deep sense of skepticism, the authors begin a deeper, more intensive investigation into the Priory of Sion and the Priory's curious assertions. The authors do not fully believe most of the claims the Prieure documents state were made by the order. However, the authors are unable to deny the connections between all the information they had found in these documents and the facts surrounding the Sauniere mystery.

Part 1, Chapter 4, Secret Documents Analysis

Ironically, the authors' best source of information regarding Sauniere and the Templars included novels written with a source within an order the authors still were not sure existed. These novels led the authors to the cheap, self-published works on the shelves of the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. While these publications shed more light on this mysterious order, the Priory of Sion, with pseudonyms and possible fake publication marks, the publications were just as shrouded in fiction as had been the novels. Just as fictional were the stories of the characters involved with the publications, the courier who died on the train tracks, and the writers who hung themselves. Even the authors appear confused about what was real and what might possibly be an elaborately designed hoax.

Although these publications generated more questions than answers for the authors, they were able to compile a list of facts drawn from these works. The Merovingian dynasty appeared to play an important role in the story, a bloodline that included such characters as Dagobert II and his son Sigisbert IV. This introduced another vein of the story as well as another set of characters whose role remains unclear to both the reader and to the authors.

This chapter introduces the question of secret societies. The Priory of Sion was clearly a private order that remained shrouded in secrecy, since no other researchers had ever written about or even validated the group. Ironically, the authors are quick to discover that the very material which may prove the Priory's existence was material released by the order itself.



Part 2, Chapter 5, The Order behind the Scenes

Part 2, Chapter 5, The Order behind the Scenes Summary

In the *Dossiers secrets* there was a quotation from an opus on the crusades by Rene Grousset. This quotation suggested that Baudouin I, the first official king of Jerusalem, came by the throne through royal tradition founded on the rock of Sion. This is confusing as Baudouin and his descendents were all elected kings. The document also claims that Godfroi de Bouillon, the older brother of Baudouin I and the conqueror of Jerusalem, founded the Priory of Sion in 1090, or 1099 according to other Priere documents. The text associates the Abbey of Notre Dame du Mont de Sion in Jerusalem as the order's official seat.

The authors have never seen mention of the order in modern works regarding the Crusades or mention of the Abbey of Notre Dame du Mont de Sion. However, the authors discover that there is a high hill south of Jerusalem called Mount Sion. When Jerusalem fell to Godfroi de Bouillon, there were the ruins of an old Byzantine basilica on the hill where Godfroi commissioned the construction of an abbey. This abbey was called Abbey of Notre Dame du Mont de Sion.

The authors then wonder if the Priory of Sion might have taken up residence in this abbey since it was reasonable to assume the abbey was occupied. The authors find mention in some early writings of a group of Augustinian canons who lived in the abbey. The authors also uncover mention of a group of knights attached to the abbey who called themselves 'Chevaliers de l'Ordre de Notre Dame de Sion.' The authors also discover original documents from that time period signed by various priors of Notre Dame de Sion. The authors question whether the order came into being before or after the creation of the abbey.

The order may have been formed much earlier, perhaps as early as 1070 when a band of monks from Calabria in southern Italy arrived within Godfroi de Bouillons' domain. A man named Ursus, who within the Priere documents appeared to be associated with the Merovingian bloodline, led these monks. These monks obtained the patronage of Mathilde de Toscan, duchess of Lorraine and Godfroi's foster mother. Mathilde gave the monks the parcel of land on which they built an abbey, Orval. However, by 1108 the monks had disappeared and there has been no record of their whereabouts since.

A man named Peter the Hermit, Godfroi de Bouillon's personal tutor, was reported to have lived among the monks. It is reputed that Peter's preaching to take the Holy Land out of the hands of Muslims could have made him another chief instigator of the Crusades. The authors speculate if the Calabrian monks who disappeared could have been the same monks who took up residence at the Abbey of Notre Dame du Mont de



Sion. The authors question whether Peter the Hermit could have been the one who encouraged Godfroi to invade the Holy Land and reclaim Jerusalem.

Godfroi's was not the only army intent on reclaiming the Holy Land, though Godfroi was the only commander to give up his fiefs and all his belongings before embarking on the Crusades. In 1099, a group of anonymous figures gathered to choose a king for Jerusalem. This group offered the throne to Godfroi who instead assumed the role of Defender of the Holy Sepulcher. After Godfroi's death, his brother accepted the same post. It is Godfroi's brother who has been regarded as the first king of Jerusalem. Perhaps this anonymous group was the group of monks from Calabria, and perhaps they were at that time the Priory of Sion. If true, this attests to the power the Priory wielded from their earliest inception.

The Mystery Surrounding the Foundation of the Knights Templar. A list of the founding members of the Knights Templar was included in the *Dossiers secret*. This list included most of the individuals of whom the authors were already aware. The list also included the name of Andre de Montbard. He was identified not as a member of the Knights Templar but as a member of the Ordre of Sion. The significance in the name of Andre de Montbard mentioned in the *Dossiers secret* list suggests that the Priory of Sion predated the Templars and that the Priory had a role in creating the Knights Templar. The text also identified that Baudouin owed his throne to Sion and was obliged to negotiate the constitution of the Knights Templar at the site of one of the fiefs of the Priory of Sion. This implied that the Priory of Sion had the power to pressure the king of Jerusalem into doing their bidding.

With the information the authors uncover in both independent historical documents and publications and the Priore documents, they are able to put the pattern together through twelve evidentiary occurrences. First, late in the eleventh century an unknown group of monks was given patronage and land by Godfroi de Bouillon's aunt and foster mother. Second, a member of this group may have been Godfroi's tutor and may have instigated the First Crusade. Third, some time before 1108 the monks left Orval to a destination unknown, possibly Jerusalem. Fourth, in 1099 Jerusalem fell to Godfroi and his army and he was offered the throne by an anonymous conclave, the leader of which may possibly been one of the monks from Orval. Fifth, Godfroi built an abbey on Mount Sion that housed an order of the same name, which may have been the same monks who offered Godfroi the throne. Sixth, by 1114 the Knights Templar was already active, acting perhaps as the Priory of Sion's military and administrative arm. However, their constitution was not negotiated until 1117 and they were not made public until the following year. Seventh, in 1115 Saint Bernard became a member of the Cistercian order and became the preeminent spokesman for Christendom. The destitute Cistercians became one of the most influential and wealthy orders in Europe. Eighth, in 1131 Saint Bernard received the abbey of Orval, which became a Cistercian house. Ninth, certain obscure figures moved in and out of these events, including the count of Champagne who donated the land on which Saint Bernard built the abbey at Clairvaux. Tenth, Andre de Montbard joined Hugues de Payen in founding the Knights Templar and his two brothers joined his nephew's Cistercian order. Eleventh, Saint Bernard became a public relations promoter for the Knights Templar and helped write their rule, which



follows closely to his own order, the Cistercians. Twelfth, between 1115 and 1140 both the Cistercians and the Knights Templar began to acquire large amounts of money and land.

Louis VII and the Priore de Sion. There was no information regarding the activities of the Priory of Sion between 1118 and 1152 in the Priore documents. It was assumed the order remained active in Jerusalem during this time. On his return from the Second Crusade, however, Louis VII of France brought ninety-five order members with him without giving any reason. Sixty-two members were given the large priory of Saint-Samson at Orleans, with seven of these members reportedly incorporated into the fighting ranks of the Knights Templar. Twenty-six members were said to have entered the small Priory of the Mount of Sion situated at Saint Jean le Blanc on the outskirts of Orleans. The authors authenticate these events through charters that are still in existence today.

The 'Cutting of the Elm' at Gisors. In 1187 Jerusalem had been lost to the Saracens due in large part to the actions of Gerard de Ridefort, grand master of the Knights Templar. According to the *Dossiers secrets*, a perceived treason on the part of the grand master caused a rift between the Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar. Also according to the text, the following year saw a severing of relations between the two orders.

The actual events are obscure. However, history and tradition agree that something happened at Gisors involving the cutting of an elm, a reference the Priore documents used when referring to the separation between the two orders. According to medieval writers, there was a meadow with an ancient elm located beside the fortress at Gisors called Champ Sacre, the Sacred Field. This field was often used as a meeting place between the English and French kings. In 1188 there was a meeting between Henry II of England and Philippe II of France in which this elm became an issue.

As one story explained, this elm was the only shade in the field. During this meeting the French monarch was deprived of its cooling shade. The French became irritated and when their tempers flared due to the heat, they led an onslaught on the English. Outnumbered, the English hid within the walls of the fortress. The French cut down the tree then fled back to France. Another account explained that the English were aware of the French's decision to cut down the tree, and the English tried to protect the tree with bands of steel. A battle ensued in which many men were killed.

The authors encounter difficulty in finding proof that the events written about in medieval works related to either the Priory of Sion or the Knights Templar. The authors did learn that Gisors had been entrusted to the Templars thirty years previously and that members of the Templars often accompanied Richard I, Henry's oldest son.

Ormus. The Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar shared the same grand master until after 1188 when the two orders had their own grand master. The Priory of Sion underwent major changes after 1188, and changed their name from Ordre de Sion to the Priory of Sion. They also adopted the subtitle of Ormus, which was used until 1306,



a year before the mass arrests of the Templars. The name appeared to be related to both Dagobert II and the Merovingian dynasty and to Notre Dame.

The authors find no authentication of this name in relation to the Priory of Sion separate from the Prieure documents. However, there are references to this relationship in Gnostic texts and in Freemasonry pedigrees. According to Masonic teachings, Ormus was the name of an Egyptian sage and mystic who lived in the early years of Christianity. In A.D. 46 Saint Mark, one of Jesus' disciples, converted him and six followers to Christianity. This story could also not be authenticated. Ormus was said to have given to his new order of initiates an identifying symbol: a red or rose colored cross. At the time the Priory of Sion took the name Ormus, they also appeared to take the name l'Ordre de la Rose-Croix Veritas. The authors found all this to be questionable, especially when taking into account the Rosicrucians in California who had made claims of a pedigree harking back to antiquity when in reality the order dates from 1605.

In order to believe that Ormus and the Rose-Croix were valid, the authors must discount the appearance of inflammatory tracts by the Rosicrucians in 1614, 1615, and 1616, tracts later proven to be a hoax. Also stretching the authors' beliefs is the notion that a secret society existed a full four hundred years before its name became known publicly. In support of this notion, in 1629, a man named Robert Denyau, the cure of Gisors, wrote a history of Gisors and the Gisor family, which states that Jean de Gisors founded the Rose-Croix in 1188. Despite their difficulty in authenticating parts of the Prieure documents, the authors authenticated enough to find it impossible to disregard the documents.

The Prieure at Orleans. The authors wonder why small pieces of information are contained in the Prieure documents. There was information on how Girard, abbot of the small priory at Orleans, gave a tract of land at Acre to the Teutonic Knights, a fact that was easily verifiable. Another abbot at the same priory was also mentioned where this abbot, Adam, gave a tract of land near Orval to the Cistercians monks who occupied the abbey. Although this transaction could not be verified, the authors are interested in the appearance of Orval again. It was also of interest because the members of Sion were angered with Adam for giving the land and forced him to resign his position, after which Adam went to Acre and died in Sicily ten years later in 1291. Through two proclamations and two letters Adam signed in Acre, the authors were also able to authenticate the fact that Adam did travel to Acre.

The 'Head' of the Templars. Despite the clear split between the Templars and Sion in 1188, some kind of rapport appeared to continue between the two orders. This rapport was verified by the mentioned of a gift of a golden head to Guillaume de Gisors in 1307 by the Order of the Temple. The authors find a reference in Inquisition records to this same head that was among a group of possessions de Gisors along with Guillaume Pidoye and one Raynier Bourdon collected from the Templars. The authors are interested in this connection between Guillaume de Gisors and the persecution of the Templars because Guillaume de Gisors was grand master of the Priory of Sion at the time. Could this mean that the Priory of Sion was in collusion with Philippe to rid Christendom of the Templars, or did perhaps de Gisors serve as a double agent? If the



latter were true, then the authors speculate it might be possible that de Gisors was responsible for the destruction of Templar records and the disappearance of the Templar treasure before Philippe could obtain either.

The Grand Masters of the Templars. Included in the *Dossiers secrets* were also three lists. One was a list of the abbots who presided over Sion's lands between 1152 and 1281. Verifiable, this list proves to be more truthful and comprehensive than accepted historical records. The second list was of the grand masters of the Templars from 1118 to 1190. This list contained certain discrepancies from accepted historical record. Most accepted lists of the grand masters include ten names, but this one only contained eight, removing Andre de Montbard from the list. The list in the *Dossiers secrets* also moves Bertrand de Blanchefort from sixth grand master to fourth.

There was no true record of the Templars grand masters passed down through the decades because all the Templars records were destroyed or disappeared during the Inquisition. Most lists compiled since that time used the writings of people who lived in the time period and the charters that named the Templars and/or their grand master at the time. The authors surmise that it may have been possible that these discrepancies could be due in large part to the fact that both the grand master and the leaders of the smaller sects all signed themselves as master, causing confusion when a historian went back and saw such a signature on a charter. Through extensive research the authors verify the list in the *Dossiers secrets*, determining that someone with accurate information must have compiled the list. The authors now are confident in the validity of this list.

Part 2, Chapter 5, The Order behind the Scenes Analysis

The main objective of this chapter for both the authors and the reader was to verify the accuracy of the Priore documents. The authors began with a reference to a well-known and well-respected opus on the Crusades, one written within the pages of one of the Priore documents. Although the authors were confused by this quotation because of its obscure reference to an out-of-context bloodline, the authors finally decide the quote could have been symbolic. This chapter does not fully explain this question, yet foreshadows that the conclusion will be reached in later chapters.

There are other events that are spoken of throughout the Priore documents that the authors are able to authenticate with independent and reliable historical documents. The authors find that a group of monks from Italy are quite possibly the same who take up residence in the abbey where the Priory of Sion was later founded; they find that there was independent support for the notion that the Priory of Sion did exist during the time when members were taken to Orleans to set up priories; they find medieval stories about the 'cutting of an elm' which correspond with the break between the Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar as described in the Priore documents; and, finally, the authors find authentication of activities of the smaller priory at Orleans during the time in which it was supposedly occupied by the Priory of Sion. These events and possible verifications

spur the authors on in their investigation, and once again there is foreshadowing in what the authors may discover.



Part 2, Chapter 6, The Grand Masters and the Underground Stream

Part 2, Chapter 6, The Grand Masters and the Underground Stream Summary

The third list among the materials in the *Dossiers secrets* is a list of the grand masters of the Priory of Sion. This list includes many famous names, including Leonardo da Vinci, which causes the authors considerable skepticism. However, because the prior two lists also included in proved to be accurate, and the fact that some of the names included were obscure or untraceable, the authors were forced to investigate the veracity of this list as well.

The authors organized their research in a way to first answer several critical questions about each name on the list in order to prove the list was not a fraud. Could each name be connected to the names before and after his own? Was there any connection between the grand masters and their families with the families of the Merovingian dynasty? Was each grand master connected to Rennes-le-Chateau, Gisors, Stenay, Saint Sulpice, or any of the other sites that keep coming up in the investigation? Did each grand master display Hermetic thought or involvement with social societies? Surprisingly, most of the grand masters on the list did fulfill each question, although the grand masters before 1400 were difficult to research. The authors included at the end of the book a biography of each name that appeared on the list. In this chapter, they only listed the biographies of the grand masters who played a collective part in major social and cultural developments.

Rene D'Anjou. During his lifetime, Rene D'Anjou held a large array of titles including count of Bar, count of Provence, count of Piedmont, count of Guise, duke of Calabria, duke of Anjou, duke of Lorraine, king of Hungary, king of Naples and Sicily, king of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, and Sardinia, and king of Jerusalem.

Rene D'Anjou seemed to have been connected in some way with Jeanne d'Arc or Joan of Arc. Jeanne was born in Domremy in the duchy of Bar, making her one of Rene's subjects. When Jeanne began her divine mission to save France from England, she requested an audience with the duke of Lorraine, a man who was Rene's father-in-law and great-uncle. When asked what she wanted, Jeanne reportedly asked for Rene, a horse, and some good men to take her to France. Although most of the years between 1429-1431 of Rene's life have been removed from history, it is generally believed he accompanied Jeanne during her divine mission and that he was present at the siege of Orleans. It was also known that Yolande D'Anjou, Rene's mother, was Jeanne's greatest supporter and her patroness.

Rene and the Theme of Arcadia. Rene was an educated man who wrote prolifically, including poetry and allegories, promoted the advancement of knowledge, and at one



time employed Christopher Columbus. Rene was deeply interested in the Grail romances and he owned a cup that he claimed had been used at the wedding at Cana with the inscription: "He who drinks well will see God. He who quaffs at a single draught will see God and the Magdalen." It appeared that Rene influenced Cosimo de Medici to embark on projects destined to transform Western civilization, including beginning Europe's first public library and beginning a university of Pythagorean and Platonic studies.

The theme of Arcadia showed up quite often in association with Rene. Rene created a series of pas d'armes, tournaments in which the knights tilt against each other and, at the same time, perform a drama or play. Also, Arcadia was featured in his work, illustrated by a fountain or a tombstone, which were associated with an underground stream. This underground stream was in turn associated with the river Alpheus, a central river in Arcadia in Greece which flows underground and was said to resurface at the Fountain of Arethusa in Sicily. The authors noted that the underground stream seems to be symbolic and might allude to Gnostic, Cabalistic, Pythagorean, and Hermetic thought. It was also noted that it could allude to a secret bloodline.

The Rosicrucian Manifestos. As mentioned in a previous chapter, three tracts appeared in the years 1614, 1615, and 1616, attributed to the Rosicrucians. These tracts were greatly supported by the sixteenth Priory of Sion grand master, Robert Fludd. The first two tracts were released anonymously and promoted the story of Christian Rosenkreuz. The tracts mention a secret that would create a transformation of the world and human knowledge with Hermetic principles. The tracts also attacked the Catholic Church and the former Holy Roman Empire. It is possible that these tracts were written by the priory's seventeenth grand master, Johann Valentin Andrea.

There third tract, *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz* was also written by Andrea, who eventually came forward and called the tract a joke. In this tract a princess of royal lineage, whose rightful domain was stolen by the Moors, was washed ashore in a wooden chest. The lady marries a prince who will help her capture her heritage. The play contained an allegory within an allegory and was much like the Grail romances.

The authors are unable to connect Andrea with the genealogies contained in the Prieure documents, although there does appear to be a connection between him and Frederick, elector of Palatine of the Rhine, nephew of Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, duke of Bouillon, Godfroi de Bouillon's old title. Frederick was married to Elizabeth Stuart, great-granddaughter of Marie de Guise, a member of the house of Lorraine. This connection brought the Stuarts, if only in a minor role, in to the genealogies of the Prieure documents. After his marriage, Frederick established an esoterically based court in Heidelberg and accepted the crown of Bohemia, an act that greatly outraged the Catholic Church and led to the chaos of the Thirty Years War.

During this time, Andrea began a network of secret societies known as the Christian Unions that were supposed to preserve threatened knowledge that the Church considered heretical. These Unions also acted as refuges for people fleeing the inquisition and may be the basis for the Masonic lodge system. Some of the people



rescued by Andrea included Theodore Haak and Dr. John Wilkins. These men then went on to become personal friends of Robert Molay, whose induction into a Masonic lodge is one of the earliest on record.

The Stuart Dynasty. Charles Radclyffe, son of an illegitimate daughter of Charles II, was listed the Priory of Sion's grand master after Sir Isaac Newton, making him a member of the Stuart family. Radclyffe participated in the Scottish rebellion of 1715 and became his personal secretary to Bonnie Prince Charlie. In 1745, Radclyffe was captured in a French ship off the Dogger Bank while in route to join Bonnie Prince Charlie in the Prince's attempt to reinstate the Stuarts to the British throne. The following year, Radclyffe was beheaded at the Tower of London.

While in France, the Stuarts were deeply involved in the spread of Freemasonry, and had a particular form named after them, the Scottish Rite Freemasonry. The authors believe that Radclyffe, if not the founder of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, was the original promoter. Radclyffe is known to have founded the first Masonic lodge in Paris. The authors encounter difficulty in researching Radclyffe because he appeared to stay out of the lime-light and had several 'mouthpieces' working in the public eye for him. One of these mouthpieces was a man named Chevalier Andrew Ramsay.

Ramsay was a member of another Freemason group called the Philadelphians with several friends of Isaac Newton. In 1729, Ramsay returned to England and became a member of the Royal Society and a group called the Gentleman's Club of Spalding. The latter group included members such as Alexander Pope and Isaac Newton. When Ramsay returned to France, he became increasingly active in Freemasonry. In 1737, Ramsay presented an Oration on the history of Freemasonry and became its most prominent spokesman. However, the authors believe it was Radclyffe who fed Ramsay his words.

After Ramsay and Radclyffe's deaths, freemasonry continued to thrive, due in part to a German named Karl Gottlieb von Hund. Hund claimed at his initiation that unknown superiors confided a new mason system to him, men he believed included Bonnie Prince Charlie. However, the authors believe this unknown person was actually Radclyffe. This new system was called Strict Observance, a name derived from its oath demanding strict obedience to the superiors. It was rumored that the Knights Templar who survived the purge of 1307-1314 conceived this order. The authors accept this idea as plausible because it is well known that a group of Templars survived in Scotland and helped Robert Bruce at the battle of Bannockburn.

Hund was called a fraud because he could not produce substantial proof to his claims regarding his initiation and the unknown superiors who confided this new order to him. The authors find validity in Hund's claim when they become aware of a copy of the list of Templar grand masters these unknown superiors gave Hund. The list was consistent with the list the authors found in the *Dossiers secrets*, and Hund did not have access to this information. Hund found help in the ruling Holy Roman Emperor, Francois, duke of Lorraine. Francois was the first European prince to be a Mason and to make his relationship with the Masons public.



Charles Nodier and His Circle. Charles Nodier was a writer, an essayist, novelist, and short story writer. Nodier was appointed chief librarian at the Arsenal Library in 1824, a major French depository for medieval and occult manuscripts. The collection at the Arsenal Library included works taken from monasteries and the archives of the Vatican. Nodier had working with him Eliphas Levi and Jean Baptiste Pitois or Paul Christian, who wrote about the esoteric. One work by Pitois, *History and Practice of Magic*, has become a bible for students of the arcane.

While at the Arsenal, Nodier continued to write prolifically and was known to be a mentor for such pupils as Victor Hugo and Balzac. Nodier and his students often wrote about the Merovingian dynasty, Rennes-le-Chateau, and the Knights Templar. Nodier was also deeply involved in secret societies, including the Philadelphes, and he wrote a book about these societies entitled *A History of Secret Societies in the Army under Napoleon*. In this work he remained deliberately ambiguous about whether the piece was a work of fiction or non-fiction. A pathological fear of secret societies existed during Nodier's time, although secret societies flourished perhaps in large part due to the intrigue Nodier inspired.

Debussy and the Rose-Croix. Claude Debussy was grand master of the Priory of Sion during the time in which Sauniere found his treasure in Rennes-le-Chateau. Debussy was friendly with a large group of cultists, including Emma Calve and Marquis Stanislas de Guaita, founder of the Order of the Rose-Croix. Debussy was also associated with a close friend of Jules Doinel, the self-proclaimed Gnostic bishop of Mirepoix, which includes Rennes-le-Chateau. Another friend of Debussy was Josephin Peladan, a man who claimed to have found Jesus' tomb in the Holy Land under the Mosque of Omar, a former enclave of the Templars.

In 1890, Peladan founded a new order, the Order of the Catholic Rose-Croix, the Temple, and the Grail. The Catholic Church did not condemn this institution. Peladan used this organization to promote idealist art as well as music and theater. Peladan began his own theater company, with one of his major patrons being Claude Debussy.

Jean Cocteau. Born into a powerful political family, Jean Cocteau ran away at fifteen to become entangled in the artistic subculture of Marseilles. Cocteau became involved in the esoteric alongside the great-grandson of Victor Hugo, Jean, and became acquainted with Claude Debussy through the theater. Cocteau was very conscious of his public persona and liked to surround himself with rich and powerful people, although his private life was reported to include drug addiction and homosexual relationships. Later in his life, Cocteau spent much of his time redecorating churches. In one Catholic Church, Notre Dame de France, Cocteau painted a rendering of the Crucifixion that shows only the lower half of the cross with a rose beneath the feet.

The Two John XXIII's. The list of the Priory of Sion grand masters ended with Cocteau, as the list was compiled during his reign. Due to the fact that all the Priory grand masters adopted the name of Jean or Jeanne when they become grand master, the authors now are able to make the assumption that the name was in homage to John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, or perhaps John the Divine.



The authors also note at this point that Jean Cocteau would have been Jean XXIII during his reign as grand master. During this time, in 1959, a new Pope was elected. This Pope, Cardinal Roncalli, chose the name of John XXIII. This caused considerable concern at the time because an Antipope had already used that name.

In 1976, thirteen years after his death, a book was published claiming to be the work of John XXIII. This book was filled with prophecies supposedly written by John XXIII and claimed that John XXIII was a member of the Rose-Croix. That John XXIII revised the Church's position on Freemasonry in pronouncing that Catholics may become Freemasons, and because of an apostolic letter that released some of the significance the Catholics held of the blood on Jesus, the authors surmise that John XXIII was a member of the Priory of Sion and that he chose the name John XXIII in honor of his grand master.

Part 2, Chapter 6, The Grand Masters and the Underground Stream Analysis

The purpose of this chapter was to express to the reader the importance of each grand master of the Priory of Sion who has contributed to society in significant ways. There are many people listed among the grand masters who are well known figures in history; therefore, the authors chose to only represent in this chapter the grand masters who were not well known, but who did contribute to society in some important fashion in order to underscore the power and importance of the Priory of Sion on world culture.

The first grand master the authors chose to discuss in the chapter is Rene D'Anjou. Among his many accomplishments, D'Anjou was noted here for his creation of the metaphor of the underground stream that the authors believe may denote a way of thinking, such as Gnostic thought, or of a secret bloodline the Priory of Sion protects. This latter idea often appears in authors' research, and serves to foreshadow the revelation of a secret later in the book.

Next the authors discuss Robert Fludd and the Rosicrucian Manifestos. These manifestos, although proven to be works of fiction, once again introduce the idea of the Grail romances and the influence of the Knights Templar on later generations, thereby foreshadowing a possible treasure associated with the Holy Grail. With Charles Radclyffe, the authors introduce another branch in the genealogies, which appears to have played a crucial role in the Priore documents. Freemasonry is also introduced to the research by Radclyffe and foreshadows the role it will play in later chapters. The authors elaborate on how Nodier introduced modern esoteric thought into the investigation, as did Debussy and his group of friends.

In discussing Cocteau, the authors introduce the tradition of the grand masters taking the name Jean as related to an historical figure named John, although which John served as the source of reference the authors have yet to reveal. The authors also discuss the possible revelation that, during 1959, the Priory of Sion's arm of rule reached clear to the pontiff. This idea illustrates the power the Priory of Sion had and

once again foreshadows an explosive secret that the Priory of Sion kept for thousands of years.



Part 2, Chapter 7, Conspiracy through the Centuries

Part 2, Chapter 7, Conspiracy through the Centuries Summary

Although the authors' investigation into the list of Priory of Sion grand masters proves that this group of individuals was either related to or was known to associate with members of families listed in the genealogies, the investigation does not prove that the Priory of Sion continued to exist beyond the Middle Ages. The fact that many of the persons listed were made grand master as young as five or eight years of age also called the list into question. The authors explore history to find inarguable proof of the order's existence throughout the centuries, beginning with the fortunes of the house of Lorraine and some of the other families listed in the Priere documents.

The Priere de Sion in France. In 1481, the Priory of Sion, according to the Priere documents, held twenty-seven commanderies. The most important were situated at Bourges, Gisors, Jarnac, Mont-Saint-Michel, Montreval, Paris, Le Puy, Solesmes, Stenay, and Beth-Ania at Rennes-le-Chateau. The commandery at Gisors dated from 1306. At its location a subterranean chapel or crypt existed that had housed the archives of the Priory of Sion. When Germany occupied Gisors in 1944, a special military mission was sent from Berlin to excavate under the fortress. The invasion of Normandy stopped the excavations, but in 1946, a French workman excavated on his own and found thirteen sarcophagi of stone. By the time he received approval to excavate further, the sarcophagi were gone. Since the underground chapel was mentioned in two old manuscripts, one from 1696 and one from 1375, the authors assume the workman had told the truth about what he found, which lent credibility to the idea that the Priory of Sion existed for at least three centuries after the crusades.

The authors find documents from the fourteen through early seventeenth centuries that discuss the Priory of Sion's base in Orleans at Saint-Samson. Apparently, the order had displeased the Pope and the king of France by flouting their rule and refusing to live in common. Later, the order was again accused of refusing to obey the Pope and the king by boycotting divine services and refusing to rebuild ruined walls in their house. In 1619, the order was evicted from Saint-Samson. However, the authors are unable to successfully reconcile the members of the Saint-Samson order with the Priory of Sion they had come to know. The authors assume that perhaps the members at Saint-Samson had a minor role in Priory activities.

The Dukes of Guise and Lorraine. In the sixteenth century, the house of Lorraine and the house of Guise attempted to remove the Valois dynasty from France and claim the throne. This attempt came close to success many times, the most notably in the 1550s and 1560s under the guide of Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, and his brother Francois, duke of Guise. Important to the authors' research is the fact that Charles and Francois



were related to Charles de Montpensier, grand master of Sion until 1527, and by marriage to Ferrante de Gonzaga, grand master until 1575. Known throughout history as fanatic Catholics, the authors believe Francois and Charles were opportunists who used both Catholics and Protestants to their own benefit. For example, Francois and Charles attempted to restore the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Catholic Church to what it had been during Merovingian times. By 1563 Francois was king, except he was assassinated before his coronation.

The fight for the throne continued after Charles and Francois' deaths when, in 1584, the new duke of Guise and the new cardinal of Lorraine teamed up with Louis de Gonzaga, duke of Nevers, who was grand duke of Sion at the time. By the end of the century, the Valois dynasty was extinct. However, there were no viable candidates from the house of Guise to take the throne. The authors believe that there was a secret society helping the houses of Lorraine and Guise in their fight, and that one of the main agents working with them was Nostradamus, as stated in both M. de Sede's novels and in the Prieure documents.

At the time of the struggle for the French throne, Nostradamus was an astrologer to the French court, privy to the court's intimate details. The authors theorize that Nostradamus used his prophecies as code to tell the Guise and Lorraine houses when it would be best to attack, and also relayed other information important to their fight. Through M. de Sede, the authors also discover that Nostradamus was initiated into a secret, and after spending a period of probation, he spent time in Lorraine prior to becoming a prophet. During his initiation, Nostradamus was supposedly shown some great book at the Abbey of Orval on which he based a number of his prophecies.

The Bid for the Throne of France. In the mid-1620s, Louis XIII occupied the French throne, but the true leader of France appeared to be the king's Prime Minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Richelieu brought France into the Thirty Years War in 1633, not on the side of the Catholic forces, but on the side of the Protestants in order to establish French supremacy in Europe. The authors interpret this tactical action as a Rosicrucian attitude or an attempt to win Rosicrucian favor.

At the same time, Gaston d'Orleans, younger brother of Louis XIII and husband to the duke of Lorraine's sister, made unsuccessful attempts to take the throne of France from his childless brother. Shortly before his death, Louis XIII's wife, after twenty-three years of a sterile marriage, gave birth to a boy. It was believed that the child was a result of an affair Anne of Austria had with a protygy of Richelieu's, Cardinal Mazarin.

After Louis and Richelieu both died four years later, the several attempts to oust Mazarin and keep Louis XIV from the throne became a civil war, called the Fronde, which lasted ten years. The instigators of this war, beside Gaston d'Orleans, included several grand masters of Sion, and the duke of Bouillon. The headquarters of the frondeurs was Stenay.

The Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement. The Prieure documents stated that the Priory of Sion spent most of his reign trying to oust Mazarin. This statement, along with names



associated with the genealogies within the Prieure documents, allow the authors to compare history with the documents. The authors are able to surmise that the members of the frondeurs were actually the members of the Priory of Sion at that time.

During this time there was another secret society operating in opposition to Mazarin, called the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement. This order was highly organized and efficient, working in a mode that the authors come to associate with the Priory of Sion, and of which the authors believe were one and the same. This group was well known in France at the time and still continues to enjoy a sense of mystique. The order began between 1627 and 1629 by an associate of Gaston d'Orleans and a group of anonymous men. Only the lower order of men associated with the group were known publicly, including Jean Jacques Olier, founder of the seminary of Saint Sulpice where the order was suspected to have housed their headquarters.

The order's organization and activities echoed the Knights Templar and Freemasonry. There was one central group with many provincial branches. These branches remained unaware of the director's identities and were forbidden to contact other branches except through Paris. The group's heart was unknown, though it was believed that their core was based on some sort of secret.

The public purpose of the order was charitable work in areas devastated by the religious wars, including the Fronde. However, it was believed that this charity work was a cover to give the order access to gather intelligence and to infiltrate the important offices of the land. It was believed that through Vincent de Paul, confessor to Louis XIII and his son, the order was able to infiltrate as high as the royal council. It was also believed that the order infiltrated the judiciary, the police, and the parliament.

No adequate explanation of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement has ever been established by either modern or medieval historians. Many thought the group was a militant arch-Catholic group. Others thought they were devoted to weeding out heretics. The authors do not accept these claims since many heretics were members of the order and, if they were Catholic, they would have supported Mazarin. It was also known that in 1651 the bishop of Toulouse charged the order with impious practices and irregular acts in their induction ceremonies, and threatened excommunication to some of its members.

In 1660, the king ordered the dissolution of the compagnie. For five years the compagnie ignored this order. In 1665, the compagnie voluntarily dissolved and sent all their documents to Saint Sulpice where they would have been available two centuries later to people like Emile Hoffet, an associate of Saunier's. The compagnie seemed to have survived their demise, however. In 1667 Moliere wrote a play that openly attacked the group, a play the compagnie managed to suppress for two years. The compagnie also had writers of its own who wrote satires against the throne, including the writer La Fontaine whom Louis XIV openly disliked. The authors postulate that, due to the way the compagnie operated, the compagnie, even if not an open branch of the Priory of Sion, was indeed run by the Priory of Sion.



Chateau Barberie. Chateau Barberie was the home of the Plantard family, another branch traced in the genealogies, which stemmed from a 1548 marriage between Jean des Plantard and Marie de Saint-Clair. The authors suggest that Mazarin ordered the total destruction of Chateau Barberie on July 11, 1659 in retaliation for Priory of Sion action against him. The Plantard family was said to have lost all their possessions.

Nowhere in history had there been an explanation as to why this event took place; therefore, the authors decide to investigate the matter further. The authors find a charter from 1506 in the area of Chateau Barberie that does mention someone named Barberie. Another charter from 1575 mentions a hamlet called Les Plantards. Most importantly, there were excavations in 1874-75 in the area once called Les Plantards where a small fortified town and a chateau that appeared to have been burned down were uncovered. The authors question whether Mazarin did burn down the chateau as stated in the Priore documents and, if he did so, why?

Nicolas Fouquet. Nicolas Fouquet was the superintendent of finances for Louis XIV beginning in 1653. It was rumored Fouquet had aspirations to make Brittany an independent duchy and make himself its presiding duke. Fouquet's mother was a member of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement, as was her brother Charles, archbishop of Narbonne in the Lanquedoc. Nicolas also had a younger brother, Louis, as reported in Chapter One, whom Nicolas sent to Paris to meet with Poussin in Rome and whom later wrote Nicolas a letter speaking of a secret Poussin referred to. Subsequently, Nicolas was arrested under vague charges. The king later confiscated all his papers himself.

During the trial, which persisted for four years, Nicolas's mother and surviving brother mobilized the compagnie in Nicolas's support. Although the king wanted death for Nicolas, the court ordered perpetual banishment. Still demanding death, the king removed the judges and replaced them with ones who would obey him. However, it appears the compagnie influenced the new judges as well. Finally, in 1665, Nicolas was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. Nicolas was refused writing implements, all communication, and all soldiers were forbidden to talk to him. That same year Poussin died and Louis XIV spent the next twenty years trying to take possession of his painting, "Les Bergers d'Arcadie." When the king finally obtained the painting, rather than put it on public display, he kept it in his private apartments where no one was allowed to view it without the king's permission.

Nicolas Poussin. Poussin was born in 1594 in a small town just a few miles from Gisors. Poussin left France as a young man and lived the remainder of his life in Rome, with the exception for one return visit in the early 1640s at the request of Cardinal Richelieu. Poussin was also intimately involved in the Fronde, which was revealed in his correspondence with many influential frondeurs.

In researching Poussin, the authors make an attempt to uncover some reason or explanation for the inscription "Et in Arcadia Ego," believing that it was connected to the underground stream Alpheus and Arcadia. The phrase first appeared in a painting by Giovanni Francesco Guercino, a painting in which two shepherds are portrayed who



enter a clearing where they find a sepulcher bearing the now famous phrase. According to the Priere documents, the phrase was an official device of the Plantard family, as noted by an abbot of Mont-Saint Michel around 1210. The authors judge the actual date to be somewhere around 1154-86. The authors make the assumption that the phrase was some sort of symbolic or allegorical statement meant to convey secret meaning between two enlightened persons.

Rosslyn Chapel and Shugborough Hall. Through their research, the authors discover connections between grand masters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and European Freemasonry, as well as other links that had little to do with the grand masters. Among these connections were repeated reference to the Sinclair family whose domain was Rosslyn, a few miles from the Scottish headquarters of the Knights Templar. The Rosslyn Chapel, built between 1446-86, has long been associated with Freemasonry and Rose-Croix. According to the earliest known Masonic documents, the Sinclair's had declared themselves as the hereditary grand masters of Scottish Masonry. They claimed that James II, who ruled during the time of Rene d'Anjou, had conferred this mastership upon them.

Another link the authors discover relates to the earls of Lichfield. Charles Radclyffe's cousin was the earl of Lichfield in 1714. However, after his death, there were no heirs and the bloodline died out. Later, in the nineteenth century, the Anson family bought the title. The present seat for the earl of Lichfield is Shugborough Hall in Staffordshire, formally a bishop's residence that the Anson's had purchased in 1697. This was also the residence of the brother of George Anson, a famous admiral. When he died in 1762, a poem was read in Parliament that refers to Poussin's painting and the phrase "Et in Arcadia Ego." Also, on the grounds of Shugborough, commissioned between 1761 and 1767, is a mirror image of Poussin's "Les Bergers d'Arcadie" with an undecipherable inscription below.

The Pope's Secret Letter. In 1738 Pope Clement XII pronounced all Freemasons enemies of the church and ordered them all excommunicated even though the majority of Freemasons at the time were Catholics. No one was ever sure why this order had been placed until a letter was released in 1962. In the letter, the Pope calls the Freemasons heretics, says that they deny the divinity of Jesus and that they were behind the Lutheran Reformation.

The Rock of Sion. In the late eighteenth century there were many different Masonic systems. During this time the Oriental Rite of Memphis first made an appearance. In this rite the name Ormus was used, the same name by which the Priory of Sion referred to itself from 1188 to 1307. According to the Oriental Rite, Ormus was an Egyptian sage who, around A.D. 46, combined pagan and Christian mysteries, which created the Rose-Croix.

Also in other eighteenth century Masonic rites there were frequent references to the Rock of Sion. In the Priere documents, this same phrase was used when speaking of some royal tradition established by Godfroi and Baudouin de Bouillon. The authors at first assumed this Rock of Sion referred to Mount Sion. However, the Masonic sources



state that the Rock of Sion was an overlooked stone that had become the Temple's keystone during construction. There are several references to Bible passages that confirm this idea. There is also a Bible passage that refers to the keystone as Jesus himself. The authors remain unsure of what to make of this.

The Catholic Modernist Movement. Charles Nodier's former associate at the Arsenal Library, Jean Baptiste Pitois, was an official in the ministry of public education in 1833. In that year, the ministry assigned two committees to preside over the publication of all suppressed documents pertinent to the history of France. These committees included Victor Hugo, Jules Michelet, and an expert on the crusades, Baron Emmanuel Rey. Among the works published was a work by Rey that was an exhaustive compilation of Inquisition records regarding the trials of the Templars. Rey also published several works that included original charters regarding the Priory of Sion.

In 1875 Rey co-founded the Societe de l'Orient Latin based in Geneva. This group devoted itself to archaeological projects and published its own magazine, which is a primary source for modern historians. During this time period there was a crisis of faith occurring and new historical research came out of Germany that relied more on fact than supposition. During this same time, a written investigation into the Bible, *Life of Jesus*, by Ernest Renan, presented more scientific research techniques with results that greatly embarrassed the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Modernist Movement formed in order to use experts trained in the German tradition to defend the truth of Scriptures. However, these experts found so many inconsistencies and discrepancies that many abandoned the Church in favor of heretical beliefs, an abandonment which was the largest threat the Church had experienced since Martin Luther. The most important hotbed of the Modernist movement was Saint Sulpice in Paris. The members of the Saint Sulpice Modernists believed that the Bible texts were to be understood in the specific context of their time. They rebelled against the centralization of ecclesiastical power, especially the doctrine of papal infallibility.

Many modernists were excommunicated, their books placed on Index. In 1903 Pope Leo XIII established the Pontifical Biblical Commission to monitor scriptural scholars. In 1907 Pope Pius X condemned Modernism and on September 1, 1910 the Church demanded their clerics take an oath against Modernism. The movement continued to spread, even as far as Britain where the Anglican Church welcomed it.

The Protocols of Sion. The most persuasive testimonial to the existence of the Priory of Sion came from the late nineteenth century and was not seen as a testimonial but as something sinister, although the authors believe the testimonial has been misunderstood. In Russia during the 1890s and 1900s, an enclave formed itself around an man named Monsieur Philippe and his mentor, Papius, a French esotericist who associated with Jules Doinel, Peladan, Emma Calve, and Claude Debussy. However, Grand Duchess Elizabeth, whose own choice for the role was Sergei Nilus, opposed Monsieur Philippe and Papius in their role as confidants to the Russian czar and czarina. Nilus, in an attempt to discredit Philippe and Papius gave the czar a document meant to



discredit them. The czar called the document a fraud and threw Nilus out of his court in disgrace.

This document was published first in 1903 and then again in 1905 and became one of the most infamous documents of the century. The document called *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* is believed to be of Jewish origin and has been used for many years by those intent on justifying mass Jewish extermination, including persons within Hitler's army. The authors, as well as many other historical researchers, present the *Protocols* as a forgery. The *Protocols* are a blueprint for total world domination. The *Protocols* outline a conspiracy to topple certain regimes, infiltrate Freemasonry, and seize absolute control of the Western world's social, political, and economic groups.

Supposedly the *Protocols* were written at a Judaic congress in Basle in 1897. However, the earliest copies of the *Protocols* were written in French and were in circulation as early as 1884 at a Masonic lodge, one where the tradition of Ormus first appeared, and where Papus was a member and subsequently the grand master. Modern scholars have also established that the *Protocols* are based on a satirical work written in 1864 by Maurice Joly, meant to attack Napoleon III.

Although the *Protocols* were not written by a Judaic congress, they are also clearly not anti-Semitic because they contain many clear Jewish references in them. The *Protocols* also included the statement that the representatives of Zion of the 33rd Degree signed it. However, the authors wondered why an anti-Semitic forger would attribute the work to so narrow a group. The *Protocols* included many references to the Masonic kingdom, the King of the blood of Zion, and the dynastic roots of David. The authors found this unusual because there was no king in Judaic tradition and a king would have been meaningless to Jews. Also, the *Protocols* mentioned the king of the Jews, which was Jesus according to Christian beliefs. Why would there be Christian overtones in a Jewish work?

Based on these irregularities, the authors identify four conclusions regarding the *Protocols*. The first conclusion is that the *Protocols* were originally published in an authentic form that issued from a Masonic organization. Second, the original text would have included a plan to gain power, infiltrate the Freemasonry, control social, political, and economic groups without having been written in such inflammatory language. Third, the authors believe Nilus came into possession of the original copy of the *Protocols* and doctored the language in order to discredit Philippe, Papus, and their associates as well as to fuel anti-Semitic thought. Finally, the authors believe the *Protocols* as they are today are not totally fabricated, only altered, including the Bible references that the authors later come to realize are of great importance to the Priory of Zion.

The Hieron du Val d'Or. The authors find that more Priore documents have surfaced. In some of these works it was said that Sauniere did not find the parchments in his church by accident, but was told where they were by members of the Priory of Zion and that in 1916, the year before his death, Sauniere had a falling out with these people. Ten days before his death, Sauniere was in perfect health, and yet Sauniere's housekeeper ordered a coffin for him. These accounts also claim that Sauniere's friend, Abbe Henri



Boudet, cure of the adjacent village, Rennes-les-Bains, was the real force behind the activities at Rennes-le-Chateau.

Boudet was said to have given Sauniere all his money and to have guided Sauniere in all his restoration and new building projects. It was also stated that Sauniere remained ignorant of the truth behind his treasure until March 1915 when Boudet confided it to him on his deathbed. Also stated in the newly discovered Prieure documents was the fact that Sauniere's housekeeper and the bishop of Carcassonne were both agents of Boudet. Another work, *Le Tresor du triangle d'or* by Jean-Luc Chaumeil, claimed that all the clerics involved at Rennes-le-Chateau, including Boudet, Sauniere, and the bishop of Carcassonne, were involved with a Freemason group based less on freethinkers and atheists and more on religion and magic. This group was also associated with the Priory of Sion.

The authors understand that this order as Chaumeil described, could possibly have been the original Scottish Rite initiated by Charles Radclyffe. Chaumeil also claims that this order had another order operating in the shadows, also run by the Priory of Sion. This other order was called Hieron du Val d'Or, which seems to be another stating of the word Orval. This group appeared around 1873 and believed in such things as Gnostic truth, the origins of men, races, languages and symbols, and in the Sacred Heart.

According to Chaumeil, the purpose of this group was to create a new Holy Roman Empire in which Rome would become a heavenly kingdom on earth and would have been ruled by the Hapsburg family, akin to the Messiah anticipated by Jews at the dawn of the Christian era. The authors surmise that the First World War interrupted these plans. The authors find themselves wondering, however, how this group could believe that the Hapburgs had any right to become priest-kings of this new Holy Roman Empire. This line of research is shelved for the time being.

Part 2, Chapter 7, Conspiracy through the Centuries Analysis

The purpose of this chapter was to prove the existence of the Priory of Sion throughout the centuries, to find authentic proof of the statements made within the Prieure documents regarding the existence of the Priory of Sion, and to find evidence of the modern existence of the Priory of Sion. The authors line out their research from the twelfth century when the Priory of Sion was believed to have come into existence, and advance forward through new documents discovered while the authors have been researching this elusive order, a secret society as outlined by one of the main themes of the book.

The first connection the authors made with the Priory of Sion in accepted history was the possible discovery of thirteen sarcophagi found under a fortress, a location suggested as one of the main commanderies of the Priory of Sion according to the Prieure documents. This report fit well with what was written in the *Dossiers secrets* about this location. However, the sarcophagi later disappeared, a fact that only seemed



to increase the author's belief in the workman's story. The authors then continued their search of documents in this specific area, Gisors, and found a group of monks in Orleans that were publicly admonished by the local law many times and reportedly associated with the Priory of Sion through these admonitions. The authors believed this proved the existence of this secret society during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Next the authors investigated a well-known power struggle in France; a struggle that took place within two dynasties, Lorraine and Guise, which were already connected to the mystery of the Priory of Sion. This struggle for power intrigued the authors because it included many famous members of history who are mentioned again within the pages of the Priore documents.

The Priore documents then took the authors to a well-known struggle for the French throne in the 1600s that again included many people associated with the Priory of Sion, and the mysterious genealogies included within the documents. This led the authors to the discovery of an already well-known order, the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement. The authors found obvious connections with this order to the Priory of Sion. The burning of a chateau brought to the authors' attention to another family also listed within the Priore documents' genealogies. A close examination of two Nicolas' revealed more information on a certain painting that interested many of the characters of this story, as well illuminating the ambiguous statement written within that painting. Finally, the authors came across several more orders that seem to be puppets of the Priory of Sion and encounter new information regarding the original mystery, that of Sauniere and Rennes-le-Chateau.

All of these facts, some presented in a symbolic form and others in a literal form, have been interpreted by the authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* to prove the existence of an invisible secret society that has wielded incredible power through hundreds of years. Their investigation also brought them to a point where they were beginning to believe the impossible: that the society not only continued to exist, but that it existed in order to protect a secret that would blow the power of the Holy Roman Empire off its feet. This fact served to foreshadow the remaining chapters of the book as the authors continued to share with the reader their research and the conclusion they eventually reached.



Part 2, Chapter 8, The Secret Society Today

Part 2, Chapter 8, The Secret Society Today Summary

The French *Journal Officiel* is a weekly publication in which all groups, societies, and organizations must announce themselves. A declaration for the Priory of Sion was mentioned in a copy of this publication for the week of July 20, 1956. This appears to the authors to be definitive proof that the Priory did exist, at least up to this date. The address provided proves to be untraceable. When inquired, the police, with whom the Priory registered, provide the authors with a copy of the Priory's statutes, a bland and uninformative document with twenty-one articles. The document seems based almost on Catholic values which confuses the authors since the Priory of Sion seems to have been working at cross purposes with the Catholic Church since its inception. The document also states that the Priory published an internal magazine called CIRCUIT, an abbreviation of the subtitle by which the order functioned.

The document, when compared to the *Dossiers secrets*, seemed to state that since 1956, the Priory of Sion had expanded its membership fivefold. The structure of the Priory of Sion was pyramidal, with the grand master at the top and three grades below him and nine grades below them. Each grade below that was three times bigger than the one before, culminating in seven total grades with the first three grades consisting of the thirteen Rose-Croix. The statutes, however, state that the pyramid consisted of nine grades rather than seven, bringing the membership total from 1,093 to 9,841. All members were divided into two groups and the hierarchy within which they belonged divided each grade. Also listed in the statutes the author received from the police was a list of the names of council members. Included on this list was Pierre Plantard as Secretary-General, the anonymous source of de Sede's novels.

Alain Poher. In the 1970s the Priory of Sion had become a cause celebre among many people in France and, as a consequence, many articles had been written about the Priory. Included in one feature published in the *Midi Libre* was an article on Sion, Sauniere, and Rennes-le-Chateau. In this article the author spoke of the survival of the Merovingian bloodline and the possible claimant to the throne of France as being a man named M. Alain Poher. Poher was a minor celebrity in France, winner of the Resistance Medal and the Croix de Guerre. Poher was provisional President of France from April to June 1969, then again from April to May of 1974. Although Poher never acknowledged this article and its claims, the authors did discover that his ancestor, Arnaud, count of Poher, married into the Plantard family between 894 and 896.

The Lost King. More Priore documents continued to appear during this time. The authors note that, although at first appearing to be a very elaborate hoax, the documents now appear to be a method of preparation to get the public prepared for the release of some secret of prodigious proportion. This secret appeared to include the



perpetuation of the Merovingian bloodline and some unspecified kingship. The authors discover a passage among the writings of the Prieure documents that assert that the members of the Merovingian bloodline continue to rule simply by the fact of who they are.

Curious Pamphlets in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. In 1966 an exchange of letters occurred about the death of Leo Schidlof who was falsely accused of writing the genealogies that appear in some of the Prieure documents. The first was dated October 22, 1966. This letter defends Leo Shidlof against an attack that supposedly appeared in a Catholic bulletin. The letter also eulogizes Shidlof and says that ten years before, Shidlof created a remarkable study on the genealogy of the Merovingian kings and the episode at Rennes-le-Chateau. The letter also claimed that the Merovingian interest continued to be furthered, using as an example the logo of a French oil company. This emblem supposedly embodied a Merovingian emblem and was used to spread information about the Merovingians. The authors, however, are unable to authenticate the accusations due to the fact that the writer never identified the bulletin in which the first attack occurred.

The author of the first letter died in a car accident shortly after the publication of his letter. Before he died, a response was published in the form of a pamphlet. The pamphlet appeared to reissue the same attack as the Catholic bulletin the first letter responded to. It went on to chastise the writer of the first letter for being young, naive, and over-talkative. It also confirmed that Schidlof was a member of the Swiss Grand Loge Alpina and whose imprint was on many of the Prieure documents. This pamphlet also went on to make insane assertions, including the idea that everyone knew the oil emblem was a call to return the Merovingians to power, that there would be sweeping changes in France, Germany, and Austria, and mentioned a Franco-Russian accord as if everyone knew about it. The authors decided that his pamphlet was another Prieure document and that it confirmed that the secret they were hunting extended all the way into high-level international politics.

The Catholic Traditionalists. In 1977 another new Prieure document appeared that furnished new details concerning the order. This document listed the grand masters of the Priory of Sion from 1801 until 1963, names the authors already had. However, the new document then identified that, in 1963 the Abbe Ducaud-Bourget, a hero during World War II and a writer who wrote biographies of many important French Catholic writers, had become grand master. It also associated Monsignor Lefebvre, an extremely conservative Catholic who had blatantly opposed the Pope to the point of threats of excommunication, with the new order.

Abbe Ducaud-Bourget also had extreme Catholic views and openly defied the Pope. In 1977 the Abbe led an occupation of the Church of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet in Paris. Monsignor Lefebvre also had strong political views, associating himself with extreme right politics. The authors, upon studying this new document, assume at first that the document might be some sort of joke created to embarrass these two men by associating them with a group that went against all they appeared to believe. However, the authors quickly come to believe that the two men were actually attempting to create



turmoil in order to threaten the Pope's pontification. The two men did manage to make the Pope appear to be a liberal, the opposite of what he was. Lefebvre also managed to survive a possible excommunication by somehow forcing the Pope to back down, perhaps by convincing the Pope that he had an explosive secret that he would make public if excommunicated.

The Convent of 1981 and Cocteau's Statutes. In the early 1980s the Priory of Sion had found itself in the center of attention due to many articles written in French publications, among which was an article about Rennes-le-Chateau and the Priory of Sion. This article linked both Ducaud-Bourget and Lefebvre to Sion. The authors attempt to reach Ducaud-Bourget and, in response, receive a letter that was later published by the same magazine. This letter states that Pierre Plantard de Saint-Clair had been elected grand master on January 17, 1981, who was a direct descendant of Dagobert II.

The authors also contact another spokesman for the Priory of Sion, M. de Cherisey. Cherisey declared that Ducaud-Bourget had never legally been elected grand master of the Priory and that Ducaud-Bourget had denounced his membership in the order. He then sends the authors a copy of the orders statutes authentically signed by Jean Cocteau. The statutes consisted of twenty-two articles that defined the purpose of the order and the rules by which the members would be governed.

These statutes put the membership of the Priory of Sion at 364 with only five grades, rather than the 1,093 or 9,841 with seven or nine grades as previous documents had illustrated. The differences were explained by the fact that there had been a dissention in the ranks in the years 1956-58 that resulted in the release of the statutes the authors received from the police. This dissention was smoothed over by Plantard. Also from the statutes, the authors understand more clearly how Ducaud-Bourget had ended his affiliation with the order by publicly denying his membership, a breach of article twenty-two. The statutes also clarify for the authors why some of the grand masters became grand master as children as they were given the role due to their place in the Merovingian decent, and why some became grand master as adults because the rightful grand master had declined his post.

M. Plantard de Saint-Clair. M. Plantard de Saint-Clair's name appears frequently in the authors' research in several contexts: as the informant for de Sede's books, as a direct descendant of both Dagobert II and the Plantard family that owned Chateau Barberie which was burned down, as the grandson of a personal acquaintance of Sauniere's, and as the owner of land in the area of Rennes-le-Chateau.

Through their research of Plantard, the authors learn that he worked for the resistance during World War II by publishing the magazine *Vaincre*. Plantard also appeared to be a personal acquaintance of General de Gaulle and, in 1958, helped him to return to the French presidency by convening the Committees of Public Safety. After this assistance Plantard was thanked personally by de Gaulle and asked to publicly disband the committees, which he did.



Unable to find Plantard, the authors send a journalist living in Paris to search for Plantard. While researching the Priory of Sion, the journalist is told that the Priory existed in the past, but not now, that it existed now but never in the past, and that people who looked too closely at the order often were killed. The reporter makes contact with Jean-Luc Chaumeil who had interviewed Plantard at one time. The reporter learns from Chaumeil that the priory was not a secret society, that it was instead simply discreet. Chaumeil also tells her that defecting members wrote the entry in the *Journal Officiel*. Chaumeil confirms that the order did have ambitious political plans for France: they are paving the way for a Merovingian to regain the throne.

Chaumeil also tells the reporter that the Priory's priorities were not confined to the Merovingian bloodline. Chaumeil refers to a Prince of Lorraine, and, while there was no prince of Lorraine at the time, Chaumeil could be referring to the titular duke of Lorraine, Dr. Otto von Hapsburg. Chaumeil also promises to get Plantard in contact with the authors. In March of 1979 a meeting is arranged between the authors and Plantard.

Plantard, a soft spoken man, tells the authors from the beginning of their first meeting that he will not talk about the order's current activities, but he is quite open about the history of the order. Plantard states that the order has possession of the treasures from the Temple of Jerusalem and that they intend to return the treasures to Israel when the time is right. Plantard also confirms what Chaumeil said about the planned political upheaval in France. However, all three meetings with Plantard give the authors little additional knowledge regarding the Priory of Sion. Matters are confused regarding Plantard's insistence that the Merovingians are the true heirs to many thrones throughout Europe. There are many families who can claim the same thing and the authors remain unsure why Plantard and the Priory of Sion seem so set on this one family.

The Politics of the Priore de Sion. In 1973 a book was published that recounts the authors' attempt to investigate the Priory of Sion. The author, Mathieu Paoli, interviewed a member of the order for his book; however, the interviewee did not seem to be as high up in the organization as Plantard. Paoli researched his book in much the same manner as the do authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, speaking with many of the same people and organizations.

Paoli found a copy of the Priory of Sion magazine, *CIRCUIT*, that listed Pierre Plantard as the director. However, the magazine neither claimed a connection with the Priory of Sion, nor was the address listed on the publication page valid. Many of the articles within the magazine were of an esoteric nature and Plantard and his first wife, Anne Lea Hisler, wrote most of the articles. There were also many articles that dealt with viticulture, the grafting of vines that the authors decide refer to nurturing a bloodline. Again, Paoli also ran into the purported intention to of the Priory to return the Merovingian dynasty to the French throne, and did not find an explanation why the Merovingian dynasty was the chosen one.



Part 2, Chapter 8, The Secret Society Today Analysis

This chapter examines the character of the Priory of Sion as it had existed and behaved in modern times, and focuses specifically on the time during which the book was researched and written. The authors relate a registration of sorts that the Priory made in the 1950s as required by French law. The authors later learn that this registration was made by an unhappy group of members who had separated from the order for a short time. Within this registration, however, the authors see their first glimpse of a set of statutes regarding the Priory, statutes that yet again confirm assertions made by the mass of Priore documents the authors had been in previous chapters attempting to prove or disprove. These statutes eventually lead the authors to what they believe is an authentic set of statutes clearly defining the organization of the order.

Several social groups and public people are mentioned in this chapter who behave in such a way that the authors interpret these behaviors as being associated with the Priory of Sion. The authors evaluate the Modernist Movement within the Catholic Church. This movement saw many clerics changing their beliefs and becoming heretics because research into the Bible proved many of the Gospels to be unreliable. The authors also examine the actions of two clerics who were, according to yet more Priore documents, reportedly high-level members of the order. The authors are at first confused by the actions of these individuals until they realize that these clerics acted as puppets for a larger cause.

Finally, the authors meet the reported current grand master of the Priory of Sion. Although the man does not adequately answer their questions, he does generate more questions, which the authors are compelled to answer. This sets up foreshadowing for the rest of the authors' research and for the subsequent chapters to this book. This chapter examines the development of the character of the Priory of Sion and the theme of secret societies. The chapter touches lightly on the other two themes of religious heresy through the rebellious clerics who strove to defy a Pope, and examines the mention of mysterious treasures by discussing the effects of the mystery at Rennes-le-Chateau on the modern day Priory of Sion and their current activities.



Part 2, Chapter 9, The Long-haired Monarchs

Part 2, Chapter 9, The Long-haired Monarchs Summary

The authors research into the Merovingian dynasty finds it shrouded in more mystery than the Knights Templar and the Cathars. The Merovingians originated from the Sicambrians, a tribe of Germanic people known as the Franks. The Merovingians ruled large parts of what is now France and Germany during between the fifth and seventh centuries, during the time of King Arthur and the Grail romances. This period was called the Dark Ages, an era that the authors believe someone, perhaps the Roman Church, deliberately attempted to edit and remove from history for one reason or another.

Legend and the Merovingians. Most dynasties throughout history have come to the throne through some sort of violent upheaval or through the extinction of a prior dynasty. However, the Merovingians appear to have always been rulers of the Franks since before they received their name from one particular member of the family, Merovee. The legend surrounding Merovee was that his mother was already pregnant by her husband, King Clodio, when she went swimming in the ocean and was raped or seduced by a marine creature. This action resulted in Merovee, the child of both fathers. The authors assume this story to be allegorical, masking a co-mingling of dynasties through the mother and the father.

Merovee was reportedly capable of magic, an aura that continued to surround his descendants. These descendants are reported to have magical qualities: they can heal by laying on hands, they were capable of telepathic communication with beasts and the natural world, they were supposedly granted longevity, and they were all marked with a birthmark in the shape of a cross either on their chest or between their shoulder blades. The Merovingians were also reluctant to cut their hair for an unknown reason.

Merovingian kings were not considered kings in their time, but priest-kings, serving as if a living embodiment of God's grace. It was a practice that upon the death of a Merovingian king, a hole was drilled into his skull to allow his spirit to escape and be in direct contact with God. It was believed by the authors that the Tibetan Buddhists who also practiced this ritual might have incorporated the Merovingians' ritual.

When Childric I's tomb was found in 1653, esoteric objects such as a bull's head made of gold and a crystal ball were found along with the typical treasures normally found in a king's tomb. The bee was one of the Merovingian's most sacred symbols and hundreds of miniature bees made of gold were found in his tomb. In 1804, at his coronation, Napoleon had some of the gold bees affixed to his robes. Napoleon appeared to have had a large interest in the Merovingians. Napoleon commissioned a genealogy of Abbe



Pinchon to discover if the Merovingian bloodline had survived beyond Dagobert II, and it was on this work that most of the genealogies in the Prieure documents were based.

The Bear from Arcadia. The authors encounter difficulty in tracing the true origins of the Merovingians who claimed to be descendant from Noah and Troy. Many historians have also traced them to Arcadia in ancient Greece and moved from there to what is now western Germany. The authors believe both theories to be probable since it was said that many people from Arcadia were present at the siege of Troy and that perhaps settlers from Arcadia founded Troy. In Arcadia, the bear was sacred and it was also considered sacred to the Merovingians.

The Sicambrians Enter Gaul. In the fifth century, the invasion of the Huns caused many European tribes to move, including the Sicambrians who are the ancestors of the Merovingians. The Sicambrians moved across the Rhine to Gaul, in what is now Belgium and northern France near the Ardennes. A century later this area would be called Austrasie, the center of which is now Lorraine. Although pagans, the Sicambrians assimilated into the Roman civilization without any trouble. When the Roman Empire collapsed at the end of the fifth century, the Sicambrians moved into an administrative role without upheaval. Therefore, the early regime of the Merovingians was fairly close to that of the Romans.

Merovee and His Descendants. The authors investigate two Merovee's in history, father and son, and could not be sure which one was the Merovee of the Merovingian legend. The father was a Sicambrian chieftain who fought under the Romans and died in 438. It was possible that the senior Merovee visited Rome at some point, since there was a record of a Frankish leader visiting the city. In 448 the son was crowned king of the Franks and was perhaps the first king of a united Franks. Through this fact, the authors postulate that he might be the Merovee from whom the Merovingians took their name. Under the Merovee successors, the kingdom of the Franks flourished. The Franks, while brutal, were a highly educated group of people who encouraged literacy. The Frank kings were also very wealthy, minting their own gold coins that bear an equal-armed cross.

Blood Royal. The Merovingians did not create kings but simply became king on their twelfth birthday. Merovingian kings ruled but did not govern. Most of the day-to-day government tasks went to the Mayor of the Palace who was essentially a chancellor. Merovingian kings were polygamous even though polygamy was outlawed for their people after they converted to Christianity.

Clovis and his Pact with the Church. Clovis I reined between 481 and 511. Clovis is known throughout France as the king who converted the Franks to Roman Christianity. By 496 the Roman Church was beginning to fear for its very existence. The Roman Church's authority was weak at the time and knew it would need to assert more power if it were to survive. At that time Clovis expanded his empire to include several nearby kingdoms and principalities, including Troyes, Reims, and Amiens. In 496 an accord was ratified between Clovis and Saint Remy that ensured the survival of the Roman Church and gave Clovis the title of Novus Constantinus, or New Constantine. This gave



Clovis the power to reign over a Holy Roman Empire similar to the one created under Constantin, which was destroyed by the Visigoths and Vandals. This accord also bound the church not only to Clovis but to his successors as well, which meant the entire bloodline.

Clovis invaded and occupied most of what now is France and Germany in the name of the Holy Roman Empire. Clovis's largest enemy was the Visigoths. Clovis finally defeated the Visigoths in 507 at the Battle of Vouille, and shortly thereafter he took Aquitaine and Toulouse. The Visigoths were driven from Carcassonne and moved their capital to Razes, at Rhedae, now the village of Rennes-le-Chateau.

Dagobert II. In 511 when Clovis died, his empire was divided in four parcels for his sons as tradition dictated. In the decades following Clovis's death, fighting occurred between kingdoms and lines of succession became blurred. Soon the Mayors of the Palace wielded greater power, due in part to kings who were too young to rule, a practice which would eventually contribute to the downfall of the dynasty.

When Dagobert II was born in 651, he was heir to the kingdom of Austrasie. However, upon his father's death five years later, the mayor of the palace, Grimoald, kidnapped Dagobert. Dagobert was then given to the bishop of Poitiers who sent him to Ireland. Dagobert grew up in an Irish monastery, eventually marrying a Celtic princess and moving to York. In 670, Dagobert's wife died giving birth to their third daughter. Within a year Dagobert remarried a Visigoth princess in a marriage arranged by Dagobert's friend, Saint Wilfrid. Saint Wilfrid wanted Dagobert to return to the throne, hoping Dagobert would be able to enforce the law of the Holy Roman Empire and expand the Empire's territory much like Clovis had done.

Dagobert lived in Rennes-le-Chateau for a time before returning to his throne in Austrasie. However, Dagobert did not rule for the Roman Church as Saint Wilfrid had hoped; rather, Dagobert curbed Church growth within his kingdom's boundaries. By the time Dagobert had been on the throne for three years, he had gathered many enemies within the church. On December 23, 679, Dagobert was hunting on his palace land in Stenay when he was murdered by one of his servants. History claims that the servant also returned to the house and killed the rest of Dagobert's family. However, the Prieure documents maintained that Sigisbert, Dagobert's son, survived.

After his death, Dagobert's body was buried at Stenay in the royal chapel of Saint Remy. In 822 Dagobert's remains were moved to a new church, the church of Saint Dagobert, and he was canonized. No one is certain why Dagobert was canonized; however, the authors speculate that it may have been out of guilt for his murder. Later the church of Saint Dagobert came under the protection of the duke of Lorraine and was placed in the care of the abbey of Gorze. When the church was later appropriated by a few businessmen, in 1093 Godfroi de Bouillon mobilized an army for the sole purpose of retaking the church. The church was later destroyed during the French Revolution and the relics dispersed. The death of Dagobert II signaled the end of the Merovingian dynasty's reign.



The Usurpation by the Carolingians. Merovingians did continue to rule after Dagobert, but these members of the family were not directly descended from Clovis and Merovee and they were all extremely young and weak. Charles Martel earned the right to take over the throne yet he refused. Ten years after Charles died in 741, his son Pepin III, mayor of palace to King Childeric III, the last Merovingian king, asked the church to help him make a formal claim to the throne. With the Pope's support, Pepin deposed Childeric and confined him to a monastery, officially ending the accord established between the Church and Clovis I.

A year before Pepin took the throne, a document became public, 'Donation of Constantine,' that later was proved to be a forgery. In this document, Constantine declared the Pope the Vicar of Christ, giving him supreme authority of Christendom and the right to create or depose of kings. With this document the Vatican instated the right of the Pope to coronation and anointment, and gave the Pope alone the right to create a king and anoint on him divine grace. This made the Pope a mediator between God and kings. Named after Charles Martel, the Carolingian dynasty began when Pepin III was coronated in 754.

The authors suspect that many of the Carolingians were uncomfortable with the idea of having usurped the Merovingians. Many of the Carolingian successors married Merovingian princess before their coronation. Charlemagne, perhaps the best known of the Carolingians, was so uncomfortable with his coronation and anointment that he had to be tricked into attending the ceremony.

The Exclusion of Dagobert II from History. Apart from the Prieure documents, there is not historical evidence as to what happened to Sigisbert, Dagobert's son. It also appears, as the authors research both Dagobert and Sigisbert, that all information regarding Dagobert had been deliberately edited from history until 1646, and the authors can find no clear reason for this. The authors assume the editing took place to hide Sigisbert from history. The authors can only speculate and assume that this was due to something special about the Merovingian bloodline.

Prince Guillem de Gellone, Comte de Razes. According to the Prieure documents, Sigisbert was smuggled out of the palace by one of his sisters and taken to the Languedoc. In the Languedoc, Sigisbert took the titles of his uncle, duke of Razes and Count of Rhedae and changed his name to Plantard, thereby perpetuating the bloodline. While there is little in history to confirm these claims, the authors discover a few clues to support this hypothesis.

In 742 a kingdom sprung up in the south of France, recognized by many governments including the Carolingians, to whom they pledged themselves a vassal. This kingdom included the Razes and Rennes-le-Chateau and was ruled by a man named Theodoric or Thierry who is thought to be have been of Merovingian descent. Theodoric's son was Guillem de Gellone, the count of Razes.

Guillem de Gellone was famous in his time with many epic poems written about him, the most notable called *Parzival*, a Grail romance that claimed that Guillem was part of the



Grail family. Guillem was a close friend of Charlemagne, whose son was married to Guillem's sister. The authors are unable to find any genealogies or proof that Guillem descended from Sigisbert or members of the Plantard family as is asserted in the Prieure documents. However, the authors do find enough evidence to believe that Sigisbert did survive and adopt the name Plantard.

Prince Ursus. According to the Prieure documents, Prince Ursus was said to have been Sigisbert IV, the grandson of Sigisbert VI. In 877-879 Prince Ursus attempted to usurp Louis II of France and reclaim his throne. The authors authenticate these facts, and although the name Sigisbert was never mentioned, the name Prince Ursus was. The insurrection failed and the Plantard family was said to have lost all their possessions but retained their titles, and eventually fled to England.

The Grail Family. One of the most popular medieval myths was Lohengrin. Lohengrin is linked with the Grail romances which suggested that one day while he was in the Grail castle, a lady called to him begging for his help. Lohengrin rescued her and married her, begging her to never ask about his past. When the lady finally gave in to her curiosity, Lohengrin left her and their child forever. This child was said to be the father or the grandfather of Godfroi de Bouillon.

Godfroi, as the instigator of the crusades and rescuer of Jerusalem from the Saracens, had a cult following during his time and long thereafter. In researching the genealogy of Godfroi stated in the Prieure documents, the authors authenticate most of the genealogy through historical records. Godfroi, through a marriage between his grandmother and Hugues de Plantard, was a Merovingian descended from Dagobert II. The authors determine that Godfroi was the rightful heir to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire or the Holy Land.

The Elusive Mystery. Still, the authors remain unable to understand why the Merovingian bloodline remains so important in modern times, although they had found many connections in the past that explain the Merovingian's right to act as they did.

Part 2, Chapter 9, The Long-haired Monarchs Analysis

Once again the chapter's purpose is to more completely introduce another set of characters and to allow the authors to show how the Prieure documents could be authenticated with accepted history. The authors describe the character of these kings as well educated, strong rulers, and curiously pagan despite their conversion to Christianity. The dynasty's involvement with the Catholic Church under Clovis proved to be beneficial for both as well as for Clovis's ancestors until the death of Dagobert. This further confirms the information in the Prieure documents and solidifies the hypothesis the authors have developed to this point.

Ironically, the authors soon discover that upon the death of Dagobert, the direct link between the original Merovingians, Merovee and Clovis, among others, has died. This would suggest that the Merovingian bloodline, at least in its purest form, died out at the



hands of the Church, the same entity that made such a lucrative deal with them decades earlier, which adds another touch of irony. However, the Prieure documents claimed that Dagobert's son survived, a fact the authors can neither prove nor disprove. Due to rumors, some of which could be proven, the authors come to believe that Dagobert's son survived and changed his name to Plantard. Now, in a touch of foreshadowing for future chapters, the authors wonder if the bloodline did survive in the Plantards, and if so, why they were still so special, and what was their claim to some of the thrones in Europe.



Part 2, Chapter 10, The Exiled Tribe

Part 2, Chapter 10, The Exiled Tribe Summary

In their search for why the Merovingian bloodline was so special, the authors turned their attention to the *Dossiers secrets* and the Merovingian pedigree before Troy. Certain Bible passages mentioned in the *Dossiers secrets* refer to the twelve tribes of ancient Israel, specifically, the Tribe of Benjamin. These passages deal with the mention of a birthmark between the shoulder blades of Benjamin, the gift to the Tribe of Benjamin land that included Jerusalem, and a disagreement between two tribes, the Benjamites and the Levite, which stemmed from the attack of a Levite by Benjamites and that lead to a war and a refusal of the other tribes to allow their women to marry Benjamites.

Soon after this battle with the other tribes, the Benjamites went into exile to Arcadia in Greece. According to their travels and the Priore documents, the Benjamites are direct antecedents of the Merovingians. The authors attempt to authenticate this idea and cannot find direct proof; however, they believe there are some facts in history that support the idea. The Benjamites take up arms in behalf of followers of Belial, and possibly were worshipers themselves, which relates to a painting of a golden calf in one of Poussin's paintings. The Benjamites also could have traveled from Israel to Greece by use of Phoenician ships, such as King Belus did, a king whose name could be traced back to a clan of Benjamites called Bela.

Part 2, Chapter 10, The Exiled Tribe Analysis

In this chapter the authors research the possibility that the Merovingians were descendants of a tribe of ancient Israel as claimed within the Priore documents. The importance of this research was to find a reason why the Merovingian bloodline appears to be so important to the Priory of Sion. Although the authors are not able to prove or disprove this theory, it does appear that the possibility exists. Now, in more foreshadowing, the authors must find out if this is the only importance related to the Merovingians that the Priory has been trying to protect thousands of years, or if there is another secret even larger and more important than this.



Part 3, Chapter 11, The Holy Grail

Part 3, Chapter 11, The Holy Grail Summary

The Legend of the Holy Grail. Most of the early romances regarding the Grail tend to revolve around agriculture cycles and fertility. It was not until later that the Grail became associated with Christianity and Jesus. From 1188, the Grail Romances were voluminous despite Church disapproval, then disappeared for more than a hundred years after the Templars were disbanded, only to begin again and to stay around until modern time. By the fifteenth century the Grail was believed to be a cup; the cup used at the Last Supper and the cup in which Joseph of Arimathea caught Jesus's blood in at the Crucifixion. The cup was then taken to Marseilles with the Magdalene after the Crucifixion, although early stories do not refer to the Grail as a cup.

One of the first genuine Grail romances was written around 1188 by Chretien de Troyes who was associated with the court of the count of Champagne. In his romance, Chretien claims he wrote it based on a story Philippe d'Alsace told him. The story revolves around a man named Perceval who leaves his widowed mother to sail forth and win his knighthood. On his travels he meets a fisherman who allows him to stay the night in his castle. That night the Grail appears to Perceval and Perceval is supposed to ask it a question but he does not. The next day the castle is empty because Perceval's lack of questioning has led to a blight on the land. It turns out that Perceval is a member of the Grail family and that the fisherman is his uncle.

Although Chretien's poem was unfinished, the motif spread through Western Europe, resulting in many more poems of its kind. Another poem by Robert de Baron was credited with making the Grail a Christian symbol. In this version, the Grail is the cup from the last supper and it has fallen into the protection of Joseph of Arimathea and his descendants, one of whom is the fisherman from Chretien's story, the Fisher King.

Another Grail romance, *Perlesvaus*, possibly written by a Templar, links the Templars with the Grail. In this poem, Perceval happens upon a castle where a conclave of initiates lives. The master at the house says that he has seen the Grail and that he knows of Perceval's lineage, a theme that seems very important within this poem. This poem appears to be more magical than the others and deals with such topics as abuse of the cross and eating of children, which are crimes the Templars were once accused of. In this account, also, the description of the Grail is of something that changes images, suggesting the Grail may be many different things.

The Story of Wolfram von Eschenbach. The most famous Grail romance is *Parzival* by Wolfram von Eschenbach. At the start of his poem, Wolfram states that Chretien's version is wrong. Wolfram supposedly got his version of the story from Kyot de Provence who got it from one Fegetanis. In the passage dismissing Chretien's version, Wolfram states that the story is from a family of Mazadan, that the house of Anjou is



important to the story, that the story came from Muslim Spain, and that the story is Judaic in origin.

The authors research the possibility that Kyot de Provence and Fegetanis were real people. Unable to prove Fegetanis existed, the authors do find a person who seemed to fill the role of Kyot, Guiot de Provins who was a monk and spokesman for the Templars. Wolfram had a fascination with the Templars and he would have been in a position to meet Guiot at the knighting of the Holy Roman Emperor's sons in 1184. Within his poem, Wolfram made the Templars the guardians of the Grail. This implied that the Grail existed during the Crusades when most of the romances were composed.

Wolfram does not directly identify the Grail in his poem; rather, he is elusive and suggests that the Grail is something more than a physical object and that it actually conceals some sort of large secret. Wolfram then goes on to suggest the Grail has magical powers and that it is composed of some sort of stone. There is a suggestion that the Grail is a stone that fell from heaven and is associated with the phoenix, a symbol of death and rebirth. Then Wolfram associates the Grail with the Crucifixion and the Magdalene. Wolfram also suggests that, although the Grail's guardians are the Templars, the custodians are members of a specific family, most who are scattered around the world but some who are inhabitants of the Grail castle of Munsalvaesche, which the authors believe to be the Cathar fortress of Montsegur.

When the Fisher King is wounded and unable to have children, Perceval becomes king and people from the outside world are called into service. The Grail, according to Wolfram's poem, also sends people out into the world to become kings. The Grail family apparently has been cursed, which suggests that they are of Judaic origin. However, the curse is gone by the time Parzival becomes heir to the Grail castle. The family has to maintain secrecy about their origins, although the women are encouraged to marry and share with their husbands who they are. The men, on the other hand, must keep their heritage secret, which possibly explains the story of Lohengrin.

Wolfram's main theme seems to be concerned with the bloodline of the Grail family. A genealogy of Percival appears to lead back to Lazarus, Magdalene's brother. It is also believed that Percival's descendants included Godroi de Bouillon and that Kyot found the story in a house of Anjou, of which Percival is supposed to be descended. The authors also investigate the geographical location of the poem. Most historians believe it took place in Camelot and that Perceval was born in Scaudone. By popular belief Camelot would have been in Nantes and Scaudone in Snowdonia. However, because of the travel the characters take part in, the authors decide that the actual locations were Sinadon or Sion, Valais, Switzerland for Scaudone and that Arthur's court was in Brittany.

The Grail and Cabalism. In *Perlesvaus* it was suggested that the Grail is some sort of experience. The authors believe this notion can be traced back to Cabalistic thought, which was prevalent in the time. Cabalism is of Judaic origin and incorporates exercises in which the individual is supposed to transcend his ego. This exercise is associated



with certain symbols - children, a cube, a rose cross - some symbols that appear in the Grail romances.

The Play on Words. Most of the Grail romances have several things in common including lineage, genealogy, pedigree, heritage, and inheritance. The authors also note that in some of the romances the Grail is called Sangreal, which, when translated, means royal blood. This discovery leads the authors to wonder if they themselves were chasing the Grail and if the Grail was related to blood, was it an individual's blood or a bloodline?

The Lost Kings and the Grail. The authors discover a number of romances written during the time period of Arthur and the Merovingians, romances that primarily deal directly with the Merovingians. These romances lead the authors to wonder what was so important about this time and this family. Many romance writers put emphasis on British locations, but the authors question if perhaps the true locations were actually France. Many of the romances also echoed events that really took place to members of the Merovingian bloodline. This leads the authors to believe that the Grail family and the Merovingian bloodline were one and the same. The authors begin to question why most of the Grail romances center on the blood of Jesus.

The Need to Synthesize. The authors notice where all their investigation had led them and question why no other historians had put the pieces together. They conclude that most historians are very compartmentalized. In order to come to their conclusions, these authors had to search many different disciplines, a process in which other historians have rarely engaged.

The Hypothesis. The authors develop a hypothesis about the information they had uncovered. First, they suggest that perhaps the Magdalene was the wife of Jesus and perhaps they had born children or a child. This child was then taken to Gaul where it grew up to begin the Merovingian bloodline. That means the Merovingian bloodline would have been directly linked to Jesus. This hypothesis would have explained many things for the authors, including the importance the Magdalene received during the crusades, the secrecy surrounding the Merovingian bloodline, and aspects of behavior attributed to the Church regarding the members of the Merovingian bloodline.

Part 3, Chapter 11, The Holy Grail Analysis

Throughout this chapter the authors investigate the Grail romances, epic poems most of which were written during the time of the Templars between 1188 and 1307. The authors first note the similarity between the stories, including the use of a similar protagonist, the son of a Widowed Lady and either the nephew or grandson of the Fisher King, head of the Grail castle. The authors also feel it important to note that the Grail was not a religious symbol or associated with Jesus within the first few romances. When it was associated with Jesus, the theme of blood was of utmost importance according to the authors' hypothesis. Finally, it appears that all the Grail romances placed great importance on the idea of family lineage and bloodlines. This importance

appears to relate back to the Merovingian bloodline. This is the fact that triggered the authors to generate a hypothesis that would consolidate all the information they had accumulated to this point.

A great deal of symbolism existed in the works the authors studied in the course of their investigation and the hypothesis they based on these symbols seems to explain every unexplainable account they had encountered so far. First there was the symbolism of viticulture spoken about in the Priory magazine, *CIRCUIT*, and in the Grail romances. This, the authors concludes, meant the survival of a particular bloodline. Then there was the story of the child born of two fathers, one mortal and one of the sea. The authors decided that this was symbolic of a child of human birth who descended from Jesus. Along with the other symbols the authors had encountered, this led them to believe that the Merovingian bloodline might have been directly descended from Jesus. This hypothesis foreshadows the next chapter, which explores this hypothesis in more detail.



Part 3, Chapter 12, The Priest-King Who Never Ruled

Part 3, Chapter 12, The Priest-King Who Never Ruled Summary

In order to investigate their hypothesis, the authors turn to the New Testament in the Bible. There are four main Gospels that deal directly with Jesus: Matthew, Luke, Mark, and John. Of these four, only Matthew and Luke deal with Jesus' death, and like many other parts of these four Gospels, they tend to disagree with each other. Matthew says that Jesus was an aristocrat who descended from David via Solomon, and Luke says that Jesus hailed from the house of David but was of lesser stock. Also according to Luke, Jesus family was from Nazareth; however, Matthew said that Jesus' family had always resided in Bethlehem.

None of the Gospels agree with the timing of the Crucifixion or even the personality of Jesus. The Gospels also cannot agree on Jesus' last words while on the cross. The authors, based on this and other knowledge of the time in which Jesus lived, agree that the Gospels are not a definitive, unimpeachable source regarding Jesus and the time in which he lived. The authors believe that the Gospels were heavily edited before being placed in the New Testament and that much of the work has been slanted in order to present the Romans in a more favorable light. However, because documentation about this early time in history was scarce, the authors decide to use the New Testament, although with prejudice.

In 1958 a letter was found in a monastery. The letter contained a missing piece of the Gospel of Mark. This piece had apparently been purposefully kept out of the Bible at the suggestion of Bishop Clement of Alexandria. This passage was a description of the healing of Lazarus that differs from the account in the Gospel of John. In this new version, it appears that Lazarus was already alive before the stone was rolled away from the tomb because a cry was heard. It also suggests that Jesus and Lazarus spent the night together, perhaps involved in some sort of initiation that included the symbolism of rebirth. This mysterious Gospel that clearly had been left out of the Bible was another reason why the authors could not trust all the Biblical works.

Palestine at the Time of Jesus. Little more than half a century before Jesus' death, Palestine fell to the armies of Pompey. Rome established a line of puppet kings to rule since Rome was too overextended to do conduct this rule. This line consisted of the Herodians, which were Arab rather than Jewish rulers, as the majority of Palestinians were. Palestine was divided in two and became Judea and Galilee. Judea, where the religious capital was, fell directly under Roman rule. The Romans were harsh and crucified thousands of rebels at the start of their control. This did not improve under Pontius Pilate who was procurator from A.D. 26 to 36.



Not all Palestinians were pleased with this new rule. Some, like the Sadducees, collaborated with the Romans, although many opposed the Romans. The Pharisees protested quietly while others, such as the Zealots, a militant revolutionary group that included many members of the different Jewish sects living in Palestine at the time, actively protested Roman rule. The Zealots instigated a revolt in A.D. 66 that resulted in a massive exodus from the Holy Land, although another rebellion took place in A.D. 132 that ended with the Roman emperor ordering the removal of all Jews from Judea. Jesus lived through the first 35 years of this turmoil.

The History of the Gospels. Most of the Gospels were not written during Jesus' lifetime but were written thirty to forty years later, and some were written as much as a century later. Most, however, are based on earlier writings, many of which were most likely destroyed during the revolts, and were based on oral traditions passed down between individuals. The earliest Gospel is that of Mark, composed between 66 and 74. Mark was not a disciple of Jesus but he was a native of Jerusalem and his gospel appears to have been written for a Greco-Roman audience. It was this reason that the authors believe the Gospel appeared to be friendlier toward the Romans than would have been accurate, in order to assure the Gospel's survival. The Gospel of Luke was written around A.D.80 for a Roman official. The Gospel of Matthew was written in A.D. 85 in Greek by what appears to be a Jewish Palestine refugee, although not the same Matthew who was one of Jesus' disciples. These three Gospels are known as the Synoptic Gospels because they all seem to have been written using a single source.

The Gospel of John, however, does not have the same characteristics of the other three Gospels. The Gospel of John appears to have been written around A.D.100 and seems to have been written through an independent source that had some intimate knowledge of the time in which Jesus lived. However, even this Gospel appears to have suffered from heavy editing by the Romans.

The Marital Status of Jesus. There was nothing in any of the Gospels that ever addressed the marital status of Jesus, although there was frequent mention of the marital status of the various disciples. The idea that Jesus was not married would have been very remarkable in his time since it was very important for a Jewish man to have a wife, especially a Rabbi, as the authors believe Jesus was. When reviewing passages in the Gospel of John regarding the wedding at Cana, the authors realize that this must have been Jesus' own wedding. If it was not, why then was Mary so concerned about the guests and the fact that they had run out of wine? If just a guest herself, it would not have been any of her business. However, as the mother of the groom it would have fallen to her to provide the refreshments. Not only this, but the servants immediately do what Mary orders of them and the governor of the feast calls to the bridegroom and Jesus answers.

The Wife of Jesus. The authors believed there were only two women who could have been Jesus' wife, the Magdalene or Mary of Bethany. The Magdalene or Mary of Magdala in Galilee appears in both the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Matthew at the Crucifixion. However, in the Gospel of John, Magdalene is mentioned while Jesus is preaching in Galilee. The Magdalene was traditionally believed to be a prostitute.



However, nowhere in any of the Gospels does it say that Magdalene was a prostitute; instead, it says seven devils had been cast out of her. The authors believe this related to an initiation of some sort.

The Magdalene also appeared to be a woman of means who was friends with the wife of a high dignitary in Herod's court. Magdalene also appears to be the sinner who anointed Jesus' feet in several of the Gospels. Magdalene is also highly regarded by Jesus throughout the Gospels, and she was one of the first to learn of his resurrection. It also appears to the authors that there was an effort to damage the Magdalene's reputation after her death by implying she was a prostitute.

Mary of Bethany was Lazarus' sister. When Jesus comes to Bethany to resurrect Lazarus from the dead, he is greeted by Martha, another sister. Apparently, according to the missing Mark passage, Mary also comes out and is rebuked by the disciples. The authors see this as proof that Mary was sitting shivah and would only be allowed to leave the house at the request of her husband. There are also passages within the Bible that suggest Jesus has some form of control over Mary. A passage exists in which Mary anoints Jesus' feet after Lazarus' resurrection. This, coupled with the suggestion that the Magdalene also anointed Jesus' feet at some point, leads the authors to believe that Mary of Bethany and the Magdalene are the same person.

The Beloved Disciple. Although Lazarus was never mentioned in the first three Gospels, the authors find reason to believe he may have been a disciple of special position. Lazarus was to be arrested and put to death along with Jesus, and there was evidence that Lazarus was closer to Jesus than many of the other disciples. The authors also puzzle over the fact that Jesus did not rush to Bethany when told that Lazarus had died. The authors believed this was because this act was a planned event and that Lazarus had not died but was taking place in some sort of rebirth ritual. It also appeared that this ritual was done with Lazarus before any of the other disciples, showing him special consideration. There are also passages within the Gospel of John that suggest perhaps the speaker was Lazarus himself; therefore, the writings may have been based on writings Lazarus made.

Throughout the Gospel of John there are references to the Beloved Disciple. The authors note that this disciple was continuously mentioned throughout the Gospel but never named. This beloved disciple appeared to have a home in Bethany, was entrusted the care of Jesus' mother and the Magdalene upon his death, and was ordered to wait for Jesus' return after the Crucifixion. There was also a passage in which Jesus arranged for an ass from a man in Bethany upon his triumphant return to Jerusalem the week before the Crucifixion, which the authors again believe was Lazarus and the fact that the other disciples knew nothing of the plan meant that Lazarus had special significance, perhaps because he was Jesus' brother-in-law.

The Dynasty of Jesus. According to Matthew, Jesus was not a poor carpenter, but from an affluent family and a direct heir to the throne passed down through David. The wedding at Cana was a glorious affair, and the Gospel refers to the money the family of the bride and groom must have had. This would lend fact to the idea that Jesus was



affluent if it were indeed his wedding. Jesus was also well educated, something else that would have taken money and position. There was also evidence that Jesus, a member of the Tribe of Judah, married a member of the Tribe of Benjamin, Mary Magdalene, in order to appease the Benjamites who had been ousted from Jerusalem by David.

The Crucifixion. The idea that the Romans were reluctant to crucify Jesus seems unrealistic to the authors, although they are aware that the Gospels were written for a Roman audience and as such it was prudent to make the Romans the heroes and the Jews the villains. The idea that the Sanhedrin, Council of Jewish Elders, condemned Jesus and took him to Pontius Pilate to crucify was also unrealistic since the Sanhedrin could have handled a death sentence as well as Pilate. Also, the story of when Pilate supposedly offered a crowd the right to choose which prisoner to release, Jesus or Barabbas, seemed unrealistic as well. Pilate had no reason to offer such a choice, no matter what holiday it might have been.

Who was Barabbas? None of the Gospels clearly define who Barabbas was. The name Barabbas however could be a misunderstanding or mistranslation of a traditional name a child of someone may have had at the time. To denote the child of a rabbi, one would be called bar Rabbi. Barabbas was called Jesus Barabbas in the Gospel of Matthew. Could it be possible that the name was really Jesus bar Rabbi, denoting Barabbas as the son of Jesus? It was also traditionally believed that Barabbas was a thief. However, the term *lestai*, used to refer to Barabbas, could also be translated to mean Zealot. The tradition of releasing a prisoner for Passover did not exist in Jesus' time as suggested by the Gospels. Therefore, why would Pilate release Jesus or Barabbas? Further, why Barabbas over Jesus unless he was the child of Jesus and therefore the future of the Jews?

The Crucifixion in Detail. Roman crucifixions kept to specific guidelines. However, Jesus' crucifixion appeared to have gone against many of these guidelines. First, the crucifixion itself appeared to have taken place in a private garden on the property of Joseph of Arimathea. Second, Jesus' knees were not broken as would have been merciful in speeding up his death by causing his chest to collapse on itself. Finally, the body of a crucified person was never released to the family. Instead, the body was kept on public display in order to discourage other people who might commit a similar crime. Jesus' body was released to Joseph within hours of his death.

Also during the crucifixion it was common for the victim to be offered a sponge soaked in vinegar in order to help keep him conscious. However, when Jesus asked for such a sponge, he died immediately thereafter. The authors suspect that perhaps he was given a sponge soaked in opium or belladonna in order to fake his death. To further this line of thought, the authors discover that when Joseph went to ask for Jesus' body, he used the word for a living body, not for a corpse.

The Scenario. The authors put together a scenario with all their accumulated information. Obvious to them, Jesus had faked his death in order to fulfill the scriptures. Where he went, no one was quite sure, although the authors do not believe that



mattered. However, the authors are also certain that Jesus and the Magdalene had children together and that when she fled to France with Lazarus, she took the children, the Holy Grail, with her, and from there the children perpetuated the bloodline.

Part 3, Chapter 12, The Priest-King Who Never Ruled Analysis

This chapter satisfied some of the foreshadowing set out by the hypothesis at the end of the last chapter. In this chapter, the authors turn to the Gospels in order to get a better feel of the life of Jesus. Despite finding the first three Gospels unreliable due to Roman influence, the authors examined the fourth Gospel, John, closely and found many passages that either metaphorically or symbolically answer many of the questions the authors had set out in their hypothesis.

In the authors' examination of history they realize it would have been highly unusual for Jesus not to be married and, if that were the case, surely it would have been mentioned within one or more of the Gospels. However, no direct mention had been made. If Jesus were married, the authors had to find a suitable candidate for his wife. Through the Gospels again, especially John, the authors identify many references to the Magdalene, or to the person who they believe was the Magdalene. From the information provided somewhat elusively in these passages and through Jewish tradition, the authors realize that the Magdalene must have been Jesus' wife. Finally, if Jesus was married, he must have had children since that too was Jewish tradition.

The idea of Jesus' marriage and progeny fills the holes left unexplained within the Priore documents regarding the Merovingian bloodline as well as the Grail romances if one connects Magdalene and her children with the Holy Grail or Holy Blood. The suggestion that Jesus did not die on the cross does not come from the authors' hypothesis but from information gleaned from the Gospel of John. This, more than the idea of Jesus having children, fulfills the explosive secret the Priory of Sion has been protecting for thousands of years, once again fulfilling the foreshadows that have been hovering over this book from the first chapter, as well as answering the question put forth to the authors in the letter they received from a retired priest at the beginning of the book.



Part 3, Chapter 13, The Secret the Church Forbade

Part 3, Chapter 13, The Secret the Church Forbade Summary

If Jesus were in line for the throne, he would have required a large following. Jesus offered hope to the poor and disenfranchised. By the time of his death, Jesus would have gathered a large following, those who wanted to promote his message and those who were more concerned with preserving the bloodline. The development of Christianity more than likely developed from members of the group who wanted to promote his message. To do this, not only was the role of the Romans in Jesus' death changed, but also Jesus had to be deified. In deifying Jesus, most human qualities attributed to him, such as a wife and children, were removed from the Gospels and the popular mentality. In order to protect this editing of Jesus' life, those who were devoted to perpetuating the bloodline were made to appear less than credible, such as suggesting that the Magdalene was a prostitute.

Heresies began to grow during the early years of Christianity with the help of Jesus' followers who were not promoters of the message. Constantine, despite popular belief, might have been one of these heretic followers. Constantine needed the help of the Christians in order to defeat his rival Maxentius. Constantine supposedly converted to Christianity in order to appease his new allies. However, the authors believe that Constantine's true beliefs lay with Sol Invictus, the Invincible Sun. In fact, many traditional holidays fall on Sol Invictus holidays as set by Constantine. For example, Jesus' birthday was January 6th, but it is celebrated December 25, which happens to be the birth or rebirth date of the sun. Constantine also has churches built in the name of Christianity; however, these churches included statues devoted to Sol Invictus.

In 303, the pagan emperor Diocletian had all Christian writings destroyed, effectively causing all Christian documents to disappear from Rome. In 331, Constantine financed new versions of the Bible. Adherents of the message who could edit and write almost anything they wanted in order to further their own interests wrote this new version.

The Zealots. There are books that were kept from the Bible that express information contrary to what is common knowledge to most modern Christians. One is the Gospel of Peter that suggested Joseph of Arimathea was a friend of Pontius Pilate. Another, predating from the second century, called the Infancy of Jesus Christ, portrays Jesus as a spoiled, human child. This latter Gospel also claims that an old woman took the circumcised part of Jesus' anatomy and put it in a box, which later shows up as the box in which the Magdalene kept her anointing oil.

Jesus appeared to have been crucified as a Zealot. Jesus' connection with the Zealots was not clear; however, it does appear that many of Jesus' disciples were members of



the Zealot group, including Judas whose descendant was involved in the uprising of A.D. 66. The Zealots did not appear in any of the Gospels, which the authors found striking. Another group that did not appear in the Gospels were the Essenes. The Essenes were a large, respected sect in Palestine. The authors believed that John the Baptist appeared to have been an Essene and that many of Jesus' teachings appeared to be Essene in nature.

The Essenes believed in the power to heal and they often wore white. Incidentally, two men in white were seen at the tomb of Jesus the day of the resurrection, further supporting the authors' assertion that Jesus survived the Crucifixion. In the writings of Josephus ben Matthias regarding the insurrection of A.D. 66 and 74, Josephus wrote about the fall of Masada, a Zealot fortress that, like Montsegur, survived long after all the other strongholds had fallen. When the end was within sight, the 960 people inside the fortress committed suicide. From the speeches Josephus attributed to the leader of the people in Masada, the authors have concluded that the leader was an Essene.

The Gnostic Writings. One of the most important early heresiarchs was Valentinus, who promoted secret teachings of Jesus. The second was Marcion who developed a canonical list, which is the basis of the Bible as it is now. Basilides was a scholar who claimed the Crucifixion was a fraud and that a substitute, Simon of Cyrene took his place.

In 1945, an Egyptian peasant found a group of papyrus that turned out to include the now famous Gospel of Thomas. All these writings appeared to be of Gnostic character and may be older than the four standard gospels of the New Testament. These writings appeared also to have been written based on first hand witness testimony and to have been written for an Egyptian audience. Among these writings are passages in which Peter appeared jealous of the Magdalene and Jesus' attention to her. Also included was a passage that suggested that Jesus liked to kiss the Magdalene, further supporting the authors' claim that Jesus was married to the Magdalene. There was also a passage that spoke of the son of the Son of Man, suggesting the birth of a child of Jesus' bloodline.

Part 3, Chapter 13, The Secret the Church Forbade Analysis

In this chapter the authors satisfy yet more foreshadowing by answering the questions about why the general public had no knowledge of the scenario the authors were able to find with apparent ease. The first reason appears to be obvious if the reader takes into account the idea that the Gospels were all slanted in order to allow the Romans a more innocent appearance. Those who wanted to promulgate the message Jesus promoted in his attempt to make himself king and take his inheritance instead made Jesus a deity in order to keep his message divine.

Throughout history there have been others who believed as the Priory of Sion and the authors believe. Christian officials, however, considered these groups to be heretics because their beliefs go directly against Christian beliefs. The authors point out each of



these heretical beliefs in order to underscore the idea they have promoted throughout the book. There are also writings that appear to be Gospels excluded from the Bible that specifically discuss a relationship between Jesus and the Magdalene that also support the theories the authors have promoted. This too fulfills foreshadowing in earlier chapters, which had dealt with these heretics and their origins. The chapter also touches lightly on the themes of secret societies and mysterious treasures.



Part 3, Chapter 14, The Grail Dynasty

Part 3, Chapter 14, The Grail Dynasty Summary

The authors look at the Nag Hammadi scrolls as definitive history rather than theology and the fact that almost all the heretics in the two hundred years after Jesus included similar properties, including the belief that Jesus was human. This theory appeared to be more history than theology and serves as a strong basis on which to support their theory. One of the most radical heresies of this time was Manichaeism, based on the Gnostic and dualist teachings of Mani. Mani was later imprisoned by order of the king and brutally killed with his body put on display. However, his teaching continued to gain popularity and might possibly have been the basis on which the Cathars were founded.

Another heresy was Arianism, based on the teachings of Arius who believed that Jesus was not divine but human. Constantine's son, Constantius, became an Arian and drove Christianity out of his kingdom. The Visigoths, Goths, and Burgundians were also Arians and possibly so were the Merovingians before Clovis. Later Merovingians also might have been Arian, including Clovis's son Chilperic and possibly Sigisbert IV. The Arian view was quite similar to that of the Koran.

Judaism and the Merovingians. At first the authors could find no connection between the Merovingians and Jesus' bloodline, so they went back to examine the dynasty once more. The Merovingians appeared to be sympathetic to Jews, employing them as magistrates and administrators. The Merovingian reluctance to cut their hair appeared to connect them back to the Nazorites, of which Samson and Jesus were members. There were numerous Jewish names in the Merovingian bloodline. Salic Law appeared to be based on Teutonic tribe law of which the Franks were a member, though there are sections that recently have been identified as Judaic law.

The Principality in Septimania. In southern France there was a domain known as Septimania that had a large Jewish population. During the reign of Pepin and his father before him, the Moors had invaded and, in 752, the Moors held Septimania and were prepared to begin striking north as far as Lyons. In order to stop them, Pepin made a deal with the Jews of Septimania promising them that if they would destroy the Moors and back Pepin for his claim to a biblical succession, they could have Septimania as their own principality and he would give them a king of their own. The new king, called the King of the Jews, was Theodoric or Thierry, the father of Guillem de Gellone. Most researchers believe him to be of Merovingian descent. Theodoric married Pepin's sister, Alda. When Guillem took the throne he created an academy at Gellone that served as an esteemed center of Judaic studies and was subsequently turned into the monastery, Saint-Guilhelm-le-Desert. Gellone was also known as a major seat of the cult of the Magdalene.

The Seed of David. The bloodline of Guillem de Gellone produced Hugues de Plantard and Godfroi de Bouillon, who created the Priory of Sion. Although Godfroi and his



descendants were Catholic, the authors believe the reason for their Catholicism was an attempt to survive in a Christian world.

Part 3, Chapter 14, The Grail Dynasty Analysis

Although the authors felt their research successfully proved the majority of their hypothesis, they had yet to find evidence that proved the connection between Jesus' bloodline and that of the Merovingians. To do this, the authors looked again at certain heresies popular in the early years of Christianity and discovered once more that these heresies had many things in common, including the assertion that Jesus was a mortal and that major members of the Merovingian bloodline appeared to have been followers of one of these heresies, Arianism. Then the authors looked at history to find a connection between the Merovingians and Jews since Jesus was a Jew. The authors successfully found a connection stemming from a small Jewish domain in which Guillem de Gellone was king.

This chapter dealt with the themes of secret societies and religious heresy, taking from history what appeared to be proof of a connection between the seed of David and the Merovingians. This chapter also finally finished all the foreshadowing that had been presented in previous chapters concerning the apparent fascination the Priory of Sion had with the Merovingian bloodline. The proof here may have been all symbolic and allegorical, or it may be fact. The authors leave that interpretation up to the reader.



Part 3, Chapter 15, Conclusion and Portents for the Future

Part 3, Chapter 15, Conclusion and Portents for the Future Summary

The authors take a moment to explain that it was not their purpose to prove or disprove anything regarding Jesus or anything else and admit that they were all agnostics at the time of their research and writing. Their hypothesis includes the children of Jesus fleeing to France and marrying into the Frank royal line, thereby engendering the Merovingian dynasty. Although the Church attempted to eradicate all knowledge of Jesus' bloodline, it survived to produce some of the most notable people in European history. Their hypothesis also includes an idea that the Holy Grail was two things, the Royal Blood of Jesus and the vessel that carried them, the Magdalene.

It appeared that the Merovingian dynasty attempted all throughout its existence to attain what Jesus must have desired, to be king. At times they succeeded for a while, and at other times they suffered severe setbacks. In modern times it appears the Priory of Sion is still working toward that end.

As for the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau that initiated this book, the authors believe that the parchments Sauniere found that but that were never revealed to the public may have contained instructions to find a buried treasure, one that might possibly be located under a pool near Rennes-le-Chateau. The authors were unable to trace these documents, which are reportedly in a safe deposit box in a Lloyds' bank in London. Sauniere's money appeared to have come from Henri Boudet, cure of Rennes-les-Bains. Boudet appeared to be an agent of the Priory of Sion but if the money came from the order, again, the authors were unable to trace it.

The authors understand that many Christians would view this book as heretical in its own. However, the authors feel that because so many questions in history are answered with this theory that they could not ignore the facts. The authors also feel that even if Jesus was the son of God or was God himself attempting to experience the world as a human, it would not take away from his deity status to say he was married and had children. After all, how can someone experience humanity without knowing love and procreation? The authors also cannot say who might be the lineal descendant of Jesus now, but they feel that the world has never been more ready for a second coming, which could possibly happen through the embodiment of a modern day member of the Merovingian bloodline.

Part 3, Chapter 15, Conclusion and Portents for the Future Analysis

The authors summed up the hypothesis and the research they have presented throughout the book with this chapter. Their conclusion seems to say that the reader should take this information and do with it as they please. There was historical fact for what they have stated in their hypothesis, but again, much of the fact was wrapped up in allegory and symbolism. Also, a great amount of the research was suggested by the Priore documents, whose authorship the authors are still unclear. However, there was some historical fact included in this research that was irrefutable. So, it is up to the reader to take those facts to whatever conclusion they desire.



Characters

Berenger Sauniere

Berenger Sauniere was a poor yet ambitious priest of the small French village of Rennes-le-Chateau, located in the area of Languedoc. Sauniere could not have been happy relegated to such a small congregation which could keep him unnoticed by his superiors. . Many ancient people, including the heretics known as the Cathars, the Visigoth, and the legendary order, the Knights Templar, had called Languedoc home. Sauniere had a great interest in the colorful history of the area, which ultimately earned him the attention of his superiors.

After beginning a remodeling project inside the church, Sauniere found four parchments hidden in a Visigoth column. Very secretive about whatever else he may have found, Sauniere went to his superiors and was immediately sent to Paris to speak to many people of power, including Emile Hoffet, the nephew of the director general of the seminary at Saint Sulpice. After this fortuitous trip, Sauniere apparently came into a large sum of money, some that can be traced back to the Archduke Johann Hapsburg.

Sauniere used this money to make extensive repairs to and remodeling of the church, to build himself a house, and to collect many rare objects such as china and precious fabrics. Sauniere also made friendly acquaintance with many diverse people, especially people associated with a specific religious cult. After his death, it was discovered that Sauniere had transferred all of his wealth to his housekeeper. After World War II, the housekeeper chose to burn her fortune rather than report its origins to the French government, which was required after a change in currency. The mystery of Sauniere was the catalyst that initiated the authors' quest to find out the truth behind Sauniere's treasure.

Merovee

Merovee was the name on which the dynasty name, Merovingian, was based. There were two Merovees who lived in the mid-fifth century. The first Merovee was a Sicambian chieftain who fought under the Romans. The second Merovee, the son of the first, was the first official king of the Franks and was most likely the Merovee the Merovingian dynasty was named after. The second Merovee was a strong and intelligent leader, more educated than history allowed due to his people's reputation as vicious fighters.

Saint Bernard

Saint Bernard was a Cistercian monk who joined the order in 1112 and built the Abbey de Clairvaux on land donated by the Count of Champagne. Saint Bernard was greatly admired and revered by Christians as the Abbe of Clairvaux. The authors of this book



believe that Saint Bernard's uncle, Andre de Montbard, was involved with the Count of Champagne in a conspiracy to find either a treasure or a secret buried under a temple in the Holy Land. Andre de Montbard then apparently included his nephew by arranging for him to join a fledgling monk order. He then turned the order prosperous by using wealth accumulated by both the Cistercian and Templar orders through unknown means. The authors also suspect that the Cistercian monks were the original members of the Priory of Sion.

Bertrand de Blanchefort

Bertrand de Blanchefort was grand master of the Knights Templar from 1153 to 1170. Bertrand de Blanchefort was the most influential grand master of his time. He transformed the unorganized order into the well-disciplined institution it became known as. Bertrand also involved the order in international politics and high-level diplomacy, and created interest in them in Europe, especially France.

Bertrand's ancestral home was on a mountain overlooking Rennes-le-Chateau. His mentor, and possibly the grand master preceding him, was Andre de Montbard, the uncle of Saint Bernard. Under Bertrand, a group of German miners were brought to Rennes-le-Chateau to work gold mines in the mountains of Blanchefort although the mines had been exhausted nearly a thousand years before by the Romans.

Bertrand de Blanchefort was the ancestor of Marie de Blanchefort, whose tombstone was changed by Sauniere after he found his treasure. Bertrand was also the ancestor of Clement V, whose mother was called Ida de Blanchefort, and who conspired with Philippe to destroy the Templars.

Dagobert II

Dagobert II, the last documented member of the Merovingian Dynasty, was born in 651. Upon his father's death in 656, Dagobert II became king of Austrasie. However, the mayor of the palace, in an attempt to steal the throne, kidnapped Dagobert and convinced the court that the child had died. Dagobert was sent into permanent exile in Ireland. Dagobert grew up in a monastery of Slane, not far from Dublin, and received an education he would not have been able to receive in France at that point in time.

In 666, Dagobert married a Celtic princess. Dagobert and his new bride then moved to England and became friends with Saint Wilfrid, the Bishop of York. Wilfrid encouraged Dagobert to return to France and reclaim his throne in order to bring the Celtic churches under Roman control. In 670, Dagobert's wife died and left him with three daughters. Wilfrid quickly arranged for Dagobert to marry the daughter of the count of Razes and niece of the king of the Visigoths.

Dagobert lived for several years in Rennes-le-Chateau with his wife's family. In 676 he returned to Austrasie to reclaim his throne with the help of his mother and her advisors. Although considered a good king, Dagobert incurred the wrath of the Roman Catholic



Church when he curbed its spread within his realm. In 679, while on a hunting trip, Dagobert was murdered by his own mayor of the palace and his entire family was supposedly killed as well. However, the authors of this book have found some evidence that Dagobert's son survived and continued the Merovingian Bloodline. Dagobert was canonized several hundred years later in what the authors believe to be an assuaging of guilt by the Catholic Church.

Guillem de Gellone

Guillem de Gellone was believed by the authors to be a descendent of Dagobert through Dagobert's son, Sigisbert. Guillem was the subject of many epochs related to the Crusades, including *The Divine Comedy* by Dante and the epic romance, *Willehalm*, by Wolfram von Eschenbach. In these epic poems, Guillem is part of the Grail family and lives in the Grail castle. The poems locate the Grail castle in the Pyrenees, exactly where Guillem lived during the ninth century.

Guillem was a close friend of Charlemagne and his sister was married to one of Charlemagne's sons. Guillem was one of Charlemagne's most important commanders in the wars against the Moors. Shortly after Charlemagne's coronation in 803, Guillem captured Bacerlona. Charlemagne gave Guillem his principality as a permanent institution.

Godfroi de Bouillon

Godfroi de Bouillon was the man who inaugurated the Crusades. Godfroi then captured Jerusalem from the Saracens and rescued Christ's sepulcher from the infidels. Godfroi was also mentioned in many of the early Grail romances as a member of the Grail family. Godfroi was believed to have founded the Priory of Sion either in 1099 shortly after he captured Jerusalem, or perhaps as early as 1090 before the capture of Jerusalem. The authors of the book found evidence that Godfroi was directly descended from the Merovingian Bloodline through Dagobert and Sigisbert, and therefore was the true king of Jerusalem, assuming that the Merovingian Bloodline was in direct descent with Jesus. Although Godfroi was not made king of Jerusalem, upon his death, his younger brother, Baudouin I, was elected to the position.

Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany, or The Magdalene

Mary Magdalene was a figure in the Bible as a follower of Jesus. She was believed to be a prostitute whom Jesus reformed. Mary of Bethany was the sister of the biblical figure Lazarus, whom Jesus brought back from death. Mary of Bethany was believed to also be the woman who washed Jesus's feet with anointing oil and her hair. The authors of this book suggested that Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany are the same woman.



The authors of this book also suggest that there was a deeper relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene than previously assumed. The authors believed that Mary Magdalene was the wife of Jesus. This belief is based on obscure passages in the Bible and on writings found among the Nag Hammadi scrolls. There was one passage written by Peter in which he claims that Jesus kissed Mary Magdalene often and seemed to enjoy her company above the other disciples. If Mary Magdalene were Jesus' wife, the authors hypothesize that she could have been the Holy Grail. The words used for the Holy Grail in ancient times could have been misinterpreted by translators, and the authors believe originally the term should have been translated as Royal Blood. If this were true, then Mary Magdalene could have been the Holy Grail, not only because her uterus carried Christ's child and therefore could have been considered a cup full of Christ's blood, but also because she had possession of Christ's children, or his royal bloodline.

Jesus

Jesus was a man who lived in biblical times, and who was purported to be the Son of God. Jesus traveled throughout the Holy Land teaching about God, performing miracles such as turning water into wine, walking on water, and raising the dead, and organizing the Jewish people against their Roman oppressors. The Christian Church is based upon the belief that Jesus was the Son of God and that he was a deity in his own right.

Traditional beliefs state that Jesus was celibate, just like current Catholic priests, and that he only wanted to spread the word of God. However, the authors of this book believe it would have been very uncharacteristic for Jesus to have been celibate. In the Jewish religion, it was quite common for the Jewish man to be expected to marry and have children, especially if he were a Rabbi, as the authors of this book believe Jesus was. Further, the authors believe that Jesus was in fact married to Mary Magdalene, that he had children, and that Barabbas was Jesus's own son.

The authors of this book also believe that Jesus staged his crucifixion. The authors say that Jesus' crucifixion was handled on private land which was highly unusual at the time, that his body was buried which again was improbable at the time, and that the land he was crucified on belonged to a friend of his who was also a great friend of Pontius Pilate, Jesus' executor. The authors also believe that Jesus' children survived in the south of France and married into a Frankish family dynasty that still survives until this day.

Pierre Plantard de Saint-Clair

Pierre Plantard de Saint-Clair was a direct descendant of Dagobert II and the Merovingian dynasty and the Plantard family whose home, Chateau Barberie, was destroyed by Cardinal Mazarin in 1659. The authors believe Pierre Plantard to be the informant by whom M. de Sede wrote so many teasing books related to Gisors and Rennes-le-Chateau. M. Plantard was listed as the secretary general of the Priory of



Sion in the early 1970s. The authors of this book have several chances later on to interview M. Plantard. M. Plantard spoke openly to the authors about the Priory, although he did not give them any information on many of the subjects on which they most wanted answers. M. Plantard did assure the authors that the true heirs to the French throne would soon, quietly, be allowed to reclaim their rightful place.

Prieure de Sion or Priory of Sion or Order of Sion

The Priory of Sion appears to be a secret order whose purpose is to protect a secret about the bloodline of Jesus Christ. The Priory of Sion believes that Jesus was married to the Magdalene and had children with her, resulting in a bloodline that married into Frankish royalty and became the Merovingian dynasty. The Priory was established early in the twelfth century, possibly by a small order of Cistercian monks led by Saint Bernard. This group then created the Knights Templar in order to be their military and administrative arm.

The Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar shared the same grand master until their split in 1188. From that time, both orders worked separately, the Templars in a public facade and the Priory of Sion in a more private one. Pierre Plantard claims the Priory is not a secret organization, but a quiet one that prefers to avoid public scrutiny. The authors of this book were not sure the Priory even existed until they began to investigate the Priory Documents. The authors quickly made connections between the information in the Priory Documents and other sources and came to believe that not only does the Priory exist, but it is still in existence today.

Knights Templar, Order of the Poor Knights, Order of the Temple

The Knights Templar began as a group of nine men given the duty of protecting pilgrims on their way into the Holy Land. However, they quickly grew in rank and became one of the biggest religious-military orders and the most romanticized in history. The authors of this book later come to realize that the Knights Templar was created in order to be the military arm of the Priory of Sion. What their function was has never become clear, although the authors of the book theorize that they were created in order to protect the treasure of the Priory of Sion, which they suspect contains proof of Jesus's surviving bloodline and the fact that Jesus did not die on the cross.

The Knights Templar were a celebrated group in their early days, taking on the roles of learned scholars, pioneering doctors, researchers, financial lenders, and royal mediators. However, due to their annexation from all rule except for Rome, the Templars became arrogant and corrupt. The authors of the book suspect that the Templars and the Priory of Sion severed their connections to each other in 1188 as a result of this new attitude. Then, in 1307, the king of France became so unhappy with the Templars that he ordered the complete extermination of all Templars in Christendom. Despite this

successful campaign against the order, the authors believe there was proof that many of the Templars survived and thrived for many years after this date, albeit in secret.



Objects/Places

Rennes-le-Chateau

Rennes-le-Chateau was a church in France where the Abbe, Berenger Sauniere found several parchments that appear to be the source of a great, secretive fortune the Abbe came to own.

The Cathars

Cathar, or Albigensian, was a generic term related to diverse sects of people who practiced heresy in the early thirteenth century in the southern part of what is now France.

Prieure Documents

The prieure documents are a group of documents that have been released for public viewing since 1956, some through novel publication, private publication, and donation to the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, France.

Dossiers Secrets (Secret Documents)

The dossiers secrets is the most important document published and deposited in the Bibliotheque Nationale in relation to the Priory of Sion. The document is a compilation of papers including news clippings, letters, pamphlets, numerous genealogy trees, and the odd page apparently taken from some other work.

Stables of Solomon

The Stables of Solomon are extremely large stables situated under the temple of Jerusalem, said to be capable of housing two thousands horses. It is rumored that the Templar treasure resided here in the earliest days of Templar history.

Merovingian Dynasty

The Merovingian Dynasty is a group of Frankish kings who ruled areas of modern-day France and Germany from the fifth to the eighth centuries. The authors of the book have reason to believe that heirs of Jesus married into and became a part of the Merovingian Dynasty, and that the family still exists in modern times.



Abby of Notre Dame du Mont de Sion

The Abby of Notre Dame du Mont de Sion is believed to have existed south of Jerusalem on a high hill of Mount Sion. The abbey was built on the ruins of a Byzantine basilica by the expressed orders of Godfroi de Bouillon after Jerusalem fell to his crusaders. It is believed that it is at this abbey that the Priory of Sion first began and where the first members of the order lived.

Rose Croix

Rose croix means red or rose cross. The rose cross is an important symbol to the Priory of Sion. It is so important that the Priory of Sion once referred to themselves as l'Ordre de la Rose-Croix Veritas. It is also said that Ormus gave this identifying symbol to his order of initiates. There is also a society called the Rosicrucians, which is believed to have roots in ancient history.

Carolingian

The Carolingians is the dynasty who took over the throne of the Franks after Dagobert II was assassinated.

Tribe of Benjamin

The tribe of Benjamin is from the Old Testament in the Bible and is believed to have been given lands in and around Jerusalem, and which has direct ascendants of the Merovingian bloodline.

Essenes, Pharisees, Sadducees

The Essenes, Pharisees, and Sadducees are sects of Jews who occupied the Holy Land during the time of Jesus. The Essenes are believed to be a peaceful people who were great healers. The Pharisees were a progressive group which brought much reform into Judaism in their time and were passive resisters to Roman rule. The Sadducees were landowners who collaborated with the Romans.

Zealots

The Zealots were a group comprised of various Jewish sects who actively rebelled against Roman control in the Holy Land. It is believed by the authors that Jesus participated, if passively, with this group and that both the men crucified alongside Jesus and Barabbas were also members of this group.



Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea scrolls are leather and papyrus scrolls found near Qumran in 1947 that date to the first century. Some of these scrolls are believed to have been written by members of the Essene sect.

Nag Hammadi Scrolls

The Nag Hammadi scrolls are scrolls discovered by a peasant in 1945. Included in these scrolls is a collection of biblical texts dating from around A.D. 400.

Arianism

Arianism is a heresy begun by a presbyter named Arius who believed that Jesus was not a deity, but was instead a mortal person and an inspired teacher.

Septimania, Narbonne

Septimania was a region in southern France and Narbonne was its capital. In 752, while at war in Septimania with the Muslims, Pepin made a deal with the Jews of Narbonne, who up to this time had been helping the Muslims, that if they would get rid of the Muslim occupiers, Pepin would give them a principality and a king of their own. The Jews agreed.

The Lanquedocs

The Lanquedocs is the mountainous northeastern foothills of the Pyrenees in what is now southern France. It is in this area where Rennes-le-Chateau is located, where the Cathars lived, and where many crucial characters associated with this book lived or owned land.

Champ Sacre

Champ Sacre means sacred field. This field is located on land in Gisors, an important location in the research regarding the Knights Templar and the Priory of Sion. It is believed that the disillusion of the relationship between the Priory of Sion and the Knights Templar happened on Champ Sacre.



Themes

Mysterious Treasures

The most obvious theme of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* is that of mysterious treasures. The book begins with a mysterious treasure that a priest had found in an obscure church in a tiny French village. This treasure leads the authors to consider other treasures reported throughout history, including the treasure of the Cathar heresies which was supposedly protected by the Knights Templar, the treasures of the many monarchies that ruled the area, and the treasure owned by the Visigoths. It is delving into these possibilities that lead The authors are led to their surprising conclusions when they research these possible treasures.

What could be more intriguing to the modern reader learning of a treasure lost thousands of years ago and suddenly discovered by a poor parish priest? It is this question that takes the authors of the book to France. However, it is not the physical treasure itself that grabs the intention of the authors, but the possibility of a shattering secret included with the treasure. Secrets are even more exciting than treasure. To uncover what this secret might be the authors must search for years to find possible candidates. The solution, however, is greater than anything anybody thought they might find. First the authors are pointed in the direction of a group of heresy sects called the Cathars who reportedly did not believe Jesus was the Son of God or that Jesus died on the cross. Then the authors are directed toward a secret order of military monks who were not so secret after all, the Knights Templar. From there, the authors discover yet another secret society, this one so secretive that the authors are not even sure the society existed when they first begin their search. Imagine their surprise when they found not only did the society exist, but it was still in existence today.

All of these societies and heresies may seem to have nothing to do with a small parish priest until the authors realize that all of the treasures the various groups supposedly have protected over the years are actually one and the same. The authors could still only guess what this treasure may be. However, their guess is an educated one that is backed by a letter from a priest who has first-hand knowledge of the secret Sauniere discovered in the Rennes-le-Chateau church. Is it possible that Jesus did not die on the cross? This question may be the most mysterious treasure ever known to man.

Secret Societies

Another theme of the book is the idea that secret societies exist. There have been secret groups since the beginning of time, including religious groups that were not safe to practice their beliefs in public, male groups that allowed the men to participate in activities considered to be inappropriate to conduct in the company of women, and political groups which conspired to create their desired political climate. The groups that



are investigated in this book are two particular orders of extreme secrecy and with hidden agendas.

The Knights Templar were a religious-military order in which the members made it their personal mission not only to fight the battles of the Christian church, but also to encourage political beliefs that bettered their idea of society, to spread knowledge, and to protect until death their secret treasure. The Knights Templar was believed to have been formed by another society, the Priory of Sion. The Priory of Sion has been in existence since late in the eleventh century. Their reason for existence is not completely clear, although the authors of this book believe that the Priory was created in order to protect and further a specific bloodline which could possibly date back to Jesus and the tribe of Benjamin.

These societies are the core of the book with their mere existence lending credibility to the hypotheses of the authors, especially to the idea that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and had children, and that these children survived to have descendents of their own. If not for the mystery treasure at Rennes-le-Chateau, if not for the Cathars, if not for the Grail romances featuring the Knights Templar, if not for the fact that the Knights Templar were organized by the Priory of Sion to protect some mysterious treasure, the authors never would have investigated this story and never would have come to their conclusion. This fact alone is what makes the secret societies of the Knights Templar and the Priory of Sion such a key theme in this book.

Religious Heresy

Religious heresies were quite common in the early days of Christianity and proved to be a thorn in Rome's side throughout much of Rome's history. Heresy is defined as religious beliefs that go against the teachings of the Bible. There have been many heresies throughout history and some of the core beliefs of these heresies have led credence to the authors' conclusion.

The Cathars do not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, but was instead a mortal prophet. They also did not believe that Jesus died on the cross, an assertion made by a retired priest the authors shortly after their BBC program on Sauniere and Rennes-le-Chateau aired. There are other heresies mentioned throughout the book that also lend some credence to the story. The Essenes believe in the singular experience with God and the idea of healing. Jesus was believed, by the authors of this book, to have been associated with the Essenes. There were groups who worshiped other gods such as the god of the sun, and those who worshipped the feminine. All of these heresies allowed the authors of the book to see past the gospels in the Bible and become aware of some of the truths of the time in which Jesus lived. This leads the authors to an understanding of the behavior of the people who had come into contact with the Priory of Sion's secret treasure. Some of these heresies also help the authors to see some of the intensive editing the gospels of the Bible received before being included in that holiest of books.



Style

Point of View

Although *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* is written by three people, the narrative is a collective of their voices blending together to sound like the first person point of view in fiction; although the pronoun often used is "we" rather than "I." The book is written as though the writers are writing down their memoirs about their research for this book. There are often passages throughout the book in which the writers tell the reader what questions they had when they reached a certain place in their research and what they decided to do in order to answer these questions. The mystery is enhanced when the authors include short tales of their struggles during their research, including the description of a period when they found it difficult to get a hold of a certain book they needed.

From the beginning, the book is presented in the same way in which the authors must have approached their research. The book begins with the mystery at Rennes-le-Chateau and moves slowly through the Templars, the Priory of Sion, and the many hypotheses the authors formulate during their research. There are places when the authors introduce information that is later disregarded, where the authors tell of their disbelief of certain facts they cannot disregard, and an explanation of the authors' personal beliefs. This description helps the reader to understand why the authors are the first to come to their conclusions if the conclusions had been so obvious. The point of view of the book is personal, like a quiet conversation between co-conspirators, and lends an air of mystery to a book that is all about solving mysteries buried in the past.

Setting

Since *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* is not a fictional work; it does not have a setting traditional in fiction. However, the research that the authors conducted and write about in the book led them to certain places throughout Europe. The first, and seemingly most important, is the Languedoc area of France, where the tiny village of Rennes-le-Chateau is located. It is in here that the priest, Sauniere, found a treasure, and it is the story about this treasure that initially catches the attention of the authors. The Languedoc is also the area in which the Cathars, a group of heretic sects, called home, and where the Visigoths lived at one time. The Languedoc also housed members of the Merovingian Dynasty at various times throughout their history. This is the bloodline that the authors discover could be direct descendents of Jesus and the tribe of Benjamin.

Jerusalem is another setting important to this book is Jerusalem. The events surrounding this area during Jesus' time and many centuries afterward play an important role in the story outlined in this book. Jerusalem is not only the supposed birthplace of the Christian savior, but it also was the target of many religious and territorial struggles throughout history. Many of these battles involved persons or groups directly related to the mystery the authors of this book were trying to unravel.



There are also many homes, churches, and castles that play an important role in this book. These include the church at Rennes-le-Chateau where Sauniere found his treasure, the house he built with his mystery fortune, the fortress Montsegur where the Cathars met their fate, the Abbey of Notre Dame du Monte de Sion where the Priory of Sion is believed to have been created, and the home in Bethany where Mary of Bethany lived and where Jesus came often to visit her and her brother, Lazarus.

This book follows the movements of many different sets of people over many different parts of Europe including France, England, Germany, and Scotland. There is a cemetery in Scotland that is believed to have been a burial place to the Templars, which gives credence to the idea that some of the Templars survived the 1307 attempt to eradicate them. A tomb in Rennes-le-Chateau is possibly depicted in a Poussin painting. Many places mentioned in this book lend a feel and a sense of mystique to the story the authors are presenting to the reader. However, although there are too many locations to mention individually, every location is important to the book and each is clearly defined through maps and pictures added by the authors.

Language and Meaning

Holy Blood, Holy Grail is written in proper, crisp English. There are many phrases in the book that are presented in their original language with the predominant language being French as well as some Latin phrases. While some of these foreign phrases are translated, many are not. The text does, however, tend to aid in the reader's comprehension of the meaning even if the text is not translated. There are also many unusual and difficult words sprinkled throughout the text, but again the surrounding text does supports the reader's comprehension of the meaning.

This book was meant to educate perhaps more than it was intended to entertain. Therefore, the language of the book tends to lean toward the educated side of the authors' backgrounds. The book was written by two men who were born and raised in England, and one who lived most of his adult life in England; therefore, there are many English references that an American reader might not immediately recognize. There are also many French references that a reader may have difficulty understanding without the few textual explanatory passages added. Despite the language and cultural differences, this book remains an easy and fascinating read.

Structure

Holy Blood, Holy Grail is divided into fifteen chapters, which in turn are divided into multiple subchapters. There is an introduction at the beginning of the book that describes Henry Lincoln's assignment to investigate the Sauniere and Rennes-le-Chateau mystery. Lincoln was intrigued by what he learned while doing the early research for a BBC film about the mystery, and enlisted the help of two Templar scholars, Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh. Together, this introduction continues, the three researches took the information they already had researched and began an

exploration that took them into areas of history they never expected to find themselves exploring.

The book also includes an extensive bibliography, notes and references, and an index. There is also an appendix that outlines the lives and contributions of all the known grand masters of the Priory of Sion. This appendix includes information on men such as Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton, and Victor Hugo. Also included throughout the book are pictures of various artifacts and locations important to the authors' research and photos of Pierre Plantard Saint-Claire, the current assumed grand master of the Priory of Sion. Throughout the chapters there are also maps that depict the areas of France and Europe that are referenced to aid the reader's comprehension of the locations and how the locations are significant to the subject of that particular chapter.



Quotes

"Our quest began with a more or less straightforward story." Part 1, Chapter 1, Village of Mystery, p. 3

"We were not prepared to regard the Grail as anything more than myth. We were certainly not prepared to assert that it ever existed in actuality. Even if we did, we could not imagine that a cup or bowl, whether it held Jesus' blood or not, would be so very precious to the Cathars - for whom Jesus, to a significant degree, was incidental." Part 1, Chapter 2, The Cathars and the Great Heresy, p. 34

"We supposed that something was discovered in the Holy Land, either by accident or design - something of immense import, which aroused the interest of some of Europe's most influential noblemen." Part 1, Chapter 3, The Warrior Monks, p. 64

"The Ordre of Sion, which had created the Knights Templar, now washed its hands of its celebrated protygys." Part 2, Chapter 5, The Order Behind the Scenes, p. 92

"In the meantime, we turned our attention to the present - to determine whether the Prieure de Sion existed today. As we quickly discovered, it did." Part 2, Chapter 7, Conspiracy Through the Centuries, p. 173

"Unless, in short, there was something very special indeed about the Merovingian blood royal." Part 2, Chapter 8, The Secret Society Today, p. 207

"The ruler from whom the Merovingians derived their name is most elusive, his historical reality eclipsed by legend." Part 2, Chapter 9, The Long-haired Monarchs, p. 209

"Could there be something special about the Merovingian bloodline - something more than an academic, technical legitimacy?" Part 2, Chapter 10, The Exiled Tribe, p. 242

"Jesus could well have sired a number of children prior to the Crucifixion." Part 3, Chapter 12, The Priest King Who Never Ruled, p. 325

"It is worth noting the tenacity, even in the face of the most vigorous persecution, with which most of the heresies - and especially Arianism - insisted on Jesus' mortality and humanity." Part 3, Chapter 14, The Grail Dynasty, p. 361

"We had not, in the beginning, set out to prove or disprove anything, least of all the conclusions to which we had been ineluctably led." Part 3, Chapter 15, Conclusion and Portents for the Future, p. 372

"There are many devout Christians who do not hesitate to interpret the Apocalypse as nuclear holocaust. How might the advent of Jesus' lineal descendant be interpreted? To a receptive audience, it might be a kind of Second Coming." Part 3, Chapter 15, Conclusion and Portents for the Future, p. 387



Topics for Discussion

Discuss religious heresy. What is the definition of heresy? Who were considered heretics at the time of the crusades? Why were they considered heretics? Why was Rome threatened by these heretics? Were the heretics a danger to Christianity?

Discuss the Knights Templar. What was their original purpose? Did they deviate from their purpose? Did the Knights Templar become too arrogant? Why did Philippe have such a strong desire to eliminate the Knights Templar? Was Philippe within his right to destroy the Knights Templar?

Discuss the Priory of Sion. What was their purpose? Do you believe they hide the true story of Jesus? Why do you think they are not allowed to reveal their secret? What do you think it would do to society if they did come forward with their proof? Do you believe the authors of this book are right in their hypotheses regarding the Priory of Sion's secret?

Discuss the Holy Grail and the Holy Grail romances. How many of the romances do you believe hide some sort of truth? Do you believe it is a coincidence that almost all of the romances involve the Templars as protectors of the Grail? Do you believe the authors of this book have interpreted the romances correctly, or do you believe they are trying to see connections that do not exist?

Discuss the possibility of Jesus's marriage to Mary Magdalene. Is it possible Jesus was married? Would this fact change Jesus's status as a deity? Why do you think the Bible implies that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute if she was Jesus's wife?

Discuss the crucifixion. Could Jesus have survived the crucifixion? If so, where did he go after his 'death'? Why would Jesus fake his own death?

Discuss Christianity. Do you believe Christianity is based on well edited half-truths as suggested by this book? Do you believe the status of Jesus as a mortal alters the core beliefs of the Christian religions?