

did exist between the two bodies. Those warrior monks, when assisting at the erection of the magnificent Churches and Cathedrals that still remain, and constructing their houses and Preceptories, employed the fraternity of Freemasons skilled in Ecclesiastical architecture, not the mere builders of walls or stone masons, but the scientific leaders of the Craft, many of whom were of high rank and great learning, and whose chief patrons were the order of Benedictine Monks, who had also drawn up the RULE for the Templars, this affinity between them probably tended to promote a feeling of sympathy at the time of the persecution of the Templar Order, when its members, denounced and dispersed, sought refuge and concealment amongst those they had at one time employed in their service. Although the rules of the Order required the Knights to be of noble birth, men of all professions and ranks of society were to be found, who had allied themselves to the Order, either by affiliation, or by joining the class of "Freres Servientes," such as the Squires, Men-at-Arms, Artisans, &c., &c., to whom in common with the Knights, the confiscation of the property of the Order had brought utter ruin and desolation.

The Masonic Fraternity, no doubt, were glad and proud to assist men who had belonged to an Order so famous as the Templars, and who were still capable and anxious to render themselves useful to the secret Fraternity of Builders, whose intercourse (from their wandering life) with people of various nations, views, and beliefs, disposed them to offer shelter to a body of men persecuted for the more liberal opinions they had entertained in advance of the age.

By this connection of the Templars with the skilled architects and workmen of the Masonic Fraternity, who were patronized and constantly employed in the architectural services of the religious houses, until about the period of the Reformation. We may infer that the usages and ceremonies of the Templar Order were preserved from complete annihilation.

This is the theory of the origin of the present Templar Society, known as the "direct descent theory," to distinguish it from that of the Masonic origin of Templary, so frequently and incontestably shown to be a mere fiction.

It certainly bears the mark of reason and probability that some of the members of the Great Order of the Temple at its dissolution found refuge and protection by joining a secret society, with the leading members of which they had been formerly intimate.