

**PHOENIX COMMANDERY NO. 3
HISTORY
PRIOR TO 1912**

Sir Freeman Rickerson, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Phoenix, a most divine and an enthusiastic Knight Templar, a Past Grand Prelate of the jurisdiction of Illinois, published a call for a meeting of Knights Templar of the city for the purpose of assembling Sir Knights to arrange for holding Easter service for which he proposed to prepare an address on Templar Masonry.

Nineteen Sir Knights answered the call and Easter services were arranged for and held on Sunday evening, March 29, 1891. The number which responded suggested the idea of a new Commandery and the matter of Easter services having been arranged, the expediency of its organization was discussed and resulted in the adoption of a resolution offered by Sir Harry Budd Lighthizer that the Sir Knights present join in a petition to the Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment, there being no Grand Commandery of Arizona at that time, for a dispensation to organize and hold a Commandery of Knights Templar in the City of Phoenix.

The petition was prepared, signed by nineteen Sir Knights and directed to the Most Eminent Sir John Peter Shindel Gobin, of Pennsylvania, then Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment.

Sir Harry Bud Lighthizer was named for Eminent Commander, Sir Ephraim J Bennitt for Generalissimo, and Sir Prosper Powell Parker for Captain General.

The first Conclave was held June 15, 1891.

A Charter was received in due time and just at this point a peculiar thing occurred to the Commandery; the Charter after being received, disappeared and to this day its loss has remained a mystery. It became necessary to have a second charter issue, which was done, and the essential document was received and more carefully preserved.

On November 14, 1892, Phoenix Commandery No.3 was regularly constituted under the Charter, which is signed by Most Eminent Grand Master Sir John Peter Shindel Gobin of the Grand Encampment.

The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Arizona was constituted in 1893, and in the first eighteen years of its existence Phoenix Commandery No.3 furnished seven Right Eminent Grand Commanders to the jurisdiction as follows: R.E. Sir Prosper Parker, 1898; R.E. Sir Charles D Belden, 1901; R.E. Sir Thomas Armstrong, Jr., 1903; R.E. Sir John J Sweeney, 1906; R.E. Sir Nathan A Morford, 1910; R.E. Sir George H.N. Luhrs, 1911.