

Seeking the State of Heaven: The German Templers

In the mid-19th century, a group of devout German Christians embarked on a bold experiment: to establish a utopian society in the Holy Land. These were the German Templers, a unique Christian sect that believed they were fulfilling a biblical prophecy by returning to the land of their ancestors.



Seeking a State of Heaven: The German Templers

by Phyllis A Unterschuetz

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Word Wise : Enabled
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The German Templers were founded in 1861 by Christoph Hoffmann, a Lutheran pastor from Württemberg. Hoffmann believed that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, and that the German people had a special role to play in preparing for it. He argued that by establishing a Christian colony in the Holy Land, the Templers could help to hasten Christ's return and usher in a new era of peace and prosperity.

Hoffmann's ideas resonated with many Germans, who were disillusioned with the industrialization and materialism of their homeland. Over the next few decades, thousands of Germans joined the Templer movement, and several colonies were established in the Holy Land, including Haifa, Jaffa, and Sarona.

The German Templers were a communal society, and their colonies were based on the principles of hard work, frugality, and religious piety. They established schools, hospitals, and orphanages, and they played a major role in the economic development of the Holy Land. The Templers were also known for their distinctive architecture, which featured whitewashed buildings with red-tiled roofs.

The German Templers faced many challenges during their time in the Holy Land. They were often persecuted by the Ottoman authorities, and they suffered from wars, famines, and disease. However, they persevered through these hardships, and their colonies continued to grow and prosper.

In the early 20th century, the German Templers began to experience a decline in membership. Many young people were drawn to the more modern and secular lifestyle of the West, and they left the colonies to seek their fortune in the cities. By the 1930s, the Templer population had dwindled to just a few thousand.

During World War II, the German Templers were interned by the British authorities as enemy aliens. After the war, they were allowed to return to their colonies, but their numbers had been further reduced. In 1948, the newly founded state of Israel confiscated the Templer colonies as part of its policy of expropriating Arab and German property.

Today, only a few hundred German Templers remain in the Holy Land. They live in small communities in Haifa and Jaffa, and they continue to practice their unique form of Christianity. The legacy of the German Templers is a reminder of the power of faith and the resilience of the human spirit.

Image Gallery





German Templar colony in Haifa



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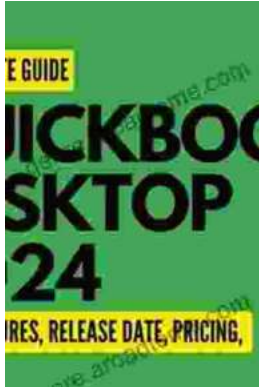
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