



A COMPLIMENTARY CHAPTER FROM WESTSTAR BOOKS

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

*Oak Island and the true story of how the stars revealed the Templars'
final secret*

CHAPTER NINE

The Self-Discovery Principle

By Conor Owens

If the Templars hid something on Oak Island, how were they supposed to
find it again?

The following chapter is reproduced unchanged from the first edition.

CHAPTER NINE

- THE SELF-DISCOVERY PRINCIPLE

Suppose, for a moment, that besides the facts, everything theoretically argued in Part I of this book is true. Suppose a Templar-sponsored expedition really did survey Mahone Bay sometime in the twelfth century, recognise Oak Island's peculiar advantages, and spend decades quietly re-engineering a natural, karst-riddled landscape into a concealment system beyond the reach of any king or pope. Suppose the Order really did have something worth that much trouble to hide. None of that, on its own, solves anything. It only sharpens the question underneath all of it, how would they ever recover it?

This is not a small problem. It is, in fact, the central design flaw in every buried treasure story ever told. A hiding place is only useful if it can be found again by the right people and by no one else, and everything Part I has already shown about the Templars argues against the two obvious ways of solving that problem. A map can be drawn, certainly, but a map can also be stolen, copied, misread, water-damaged, burned, or simply lost in the chaos of an arrest that came, as Chapter Four described, with almost no warning at all. A secret can be passed from Grand Master to Grand Master, from a handful of senior brothers down through the ranks, but people die, memories decay, loyalties shift, and, as October 1307 proved beyond any argument, entire chains of command can be arrested, tortured, and broken in a single coordinated morning. Whatever the Templars buried on Oak Island, if this book's argument holds, they buried it knowing that their own Order might not survive to come back for it. A map or a whispered chain of custody would not have been good enough. They needed something that did not depend on any single person, or any single object, surviving at all.

The solution this book proposes is what we will call the self-discovery principle: rather than record the treasure's location and

hand that record to someone trustworthy, instead, build the location itself into a form that only a genuinely trained member of the Order could ever read, using nothing but knowledge every Templar initiate already carried in his own head. Not a map to be memorised and protected, but a landscape converted into an instrument, legible only to someone who already spoke its language. Lose the map, lose the men, lose the entire institution, and the location would still be exactly where it always was, waiting for the next person qualified to read it correctly. This is a fundamentally different kind of security than a locked door or a buried chest. It does not ask you to protect a secret. It asks whether you are the kind of person capable of recognising one.

And what would that kind of person have needed to know? Strip away everything specific to this book's later chapters and the answer comes down to three bodies of knowledge, and every one of them was, by the account already given in Part I, ordinary equipment for a senior Templar rather than anything exotic. The first was Christian faith, not as a private devotion but as a trained, technical fluency: scripture, the symbolism of the Cross, the theological weight carried by particular numbers and shapes, the entire inherited vocabulary a medieval cleric used to read meaning into the physical world. The second was astronomy, and specifically the version of astronomy this book's earlier chapters have already shown the Templars had unusually direct access to: the sophisticated Persian and Arabic stellar tradition absorbed during their decades on the Temple Mount, in which the movements and positions of particular stars were never merely decorative but carried inherited layers of meaning. The third was navigation, the plain, practical seamanship that let a Templar-chartered ship cross open ocean and make landfall at a specific, predetermined point on a mostly featureless coast, a capability this book has already established the Order's Atlantic fleet possessed.

Any one of these three, on its own, is a fairly ordinary fact about medieval religious life. What makes them significant here is how completely they fuse together in exactly the tradition the Templars inherited. The doctrine of "As Above, So Below", the conviction that the

pattern of the heavens and the pattern of the earth were designed by the same hand and therefore mirrored one another, was not, for a thirteenth-century Christian, a piece of exotic mysticism bolted onto orthodox belief. It was closer to the load-bearing wall of their whole worldview. By the twelfth century it was accepted, mainstream Christian theology rather than a fringe idea, reinforced by exactly the kind of scholarly contact with Persian and Arabic astronomy this book's chapters on the Temple Mount have already described, and treated by the most sophisticated minds of the age as a single, continuous account of how God had organised reality, not two separate ones. Reading the stars correctly and reading scripture correctly were, to this way of thinking, the same discipline applied to two different texts. A landscape built to be read this way would not have looked like a puzzle to its intended reader at all. It would have looked like a devotional exercise: familiar theology, expressed in an unfamiliar medium.

If the self-discovery principle is correct, it follows that the system built into Oak Island cannot rely on anything a thirteenth-century religious order did not actually possess. No modern surveying equipment, no satellite positioning, no mathematics beyond what a well-educated medieval cleric could perform with a straight edge, a length of cord, and a working knowledge of the sky. This cuts sharply against the instinct, understandable after 230 years of drilling and steel caissons, to look for an answer sophisticated enough to justify two centuries of failure. This book's working assumption is closer to the opposite. A solution built by medieval hands, for medieval eyes, using medieval knowledge, is very likely to be a comparatively simple one once you are holding the right key, and the absence of that key, rather than any great complexity in the design itself, is the more probable reason it has stayed hidden this long. Where the evidence leads is not a matter of preference, and the chapters that follow will let the reader judge the fit for themselves rather than being told the conclusion in advance. But it is worth flagging now that the search that

follows is deliberately looking for the simplest design consistent with the physical evidence, not the most elaborate one.

So where does an investigation like this actually begin? Not with the Money Pit, tempting as that is, because the Money Pit is the one part of the island that 230 years of drilling, flooding, and collapse have already thoroughly disturbed. It begins instead with whatever the island offers that has not been drilled through, dug up, or argued over by a dozen competing treasure companies: a feature whose physical position is fixed, whose stones are undisputed, and whose basic shape already carries an unmistakably Christian signature. Chapter Eight introduced exactly such a feature in passing, five granite boulders and a sixth, stranger stone, arranged across several acres of the island in a pattern first mapped in 1981. It is called Nolan's Cross, and it is where this book's search properly starts.



CONTINUE THE INVESTIGATION

As Above, So Below

Chapter Nine is only the beginning of the book's investigation into the stones, the medieval sky and the evidence surrounding Oak Island.

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