

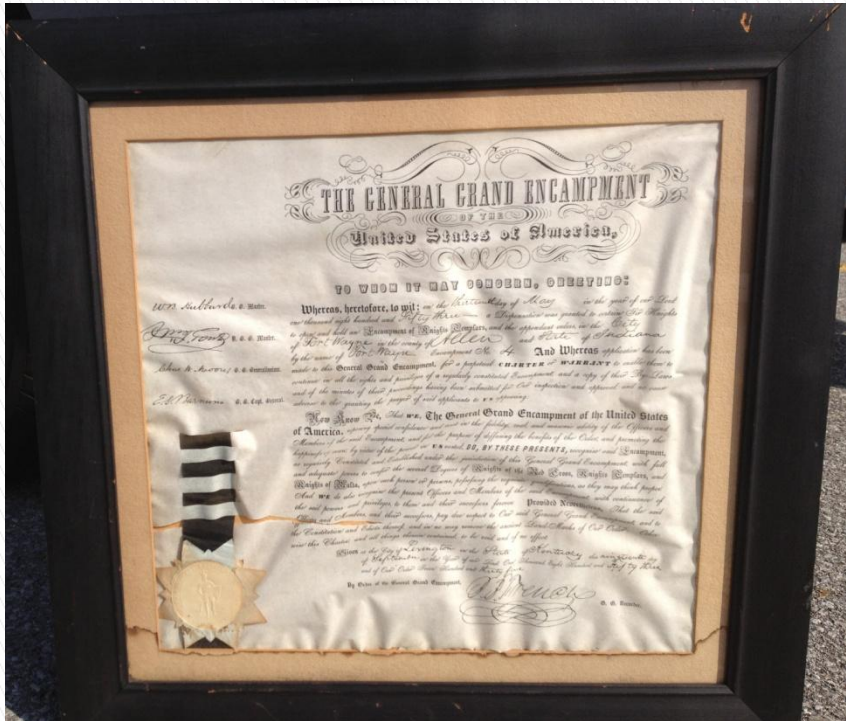
THE STORY OF NORTHEAST INDIANA KNIGHTS TEMPLAR HISTORIC DOCUMENT

William W. Pond, MD

Eminent Commander, Fort Wayne Commandery #4



1853 Charter Prior to Restoration

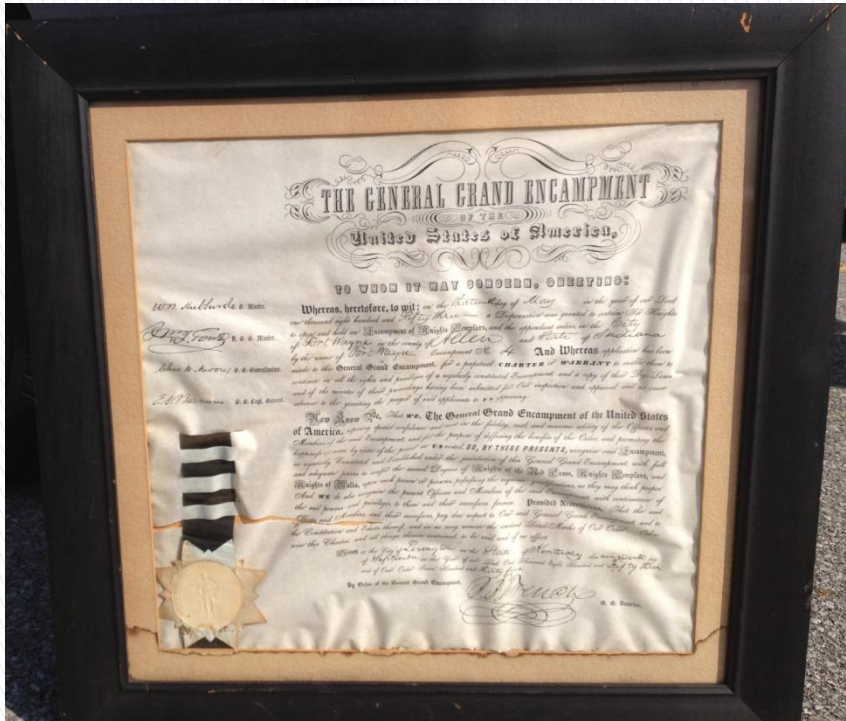


- ▶ To Whom it May Concern, Greeting:..."
- ▶ And so begins the life of the Charter of the Indiana Knights Templar Commandery No. 4 on May 13, 1853. Bespeaking the excellent care for seven generations through fire, moves and water damage. The Charter was again able to be tasked, now for the 2013 Encampment in Indianapolis under R.E.G C. Bobby J. Roberts.
- ▶ But the Charter, having served so valiantly for 160 years was showing signs of age and was in need of restoration.

1853 Document in Frame

The General Grand Encampment of the United States of America.

Search for Restoration Services

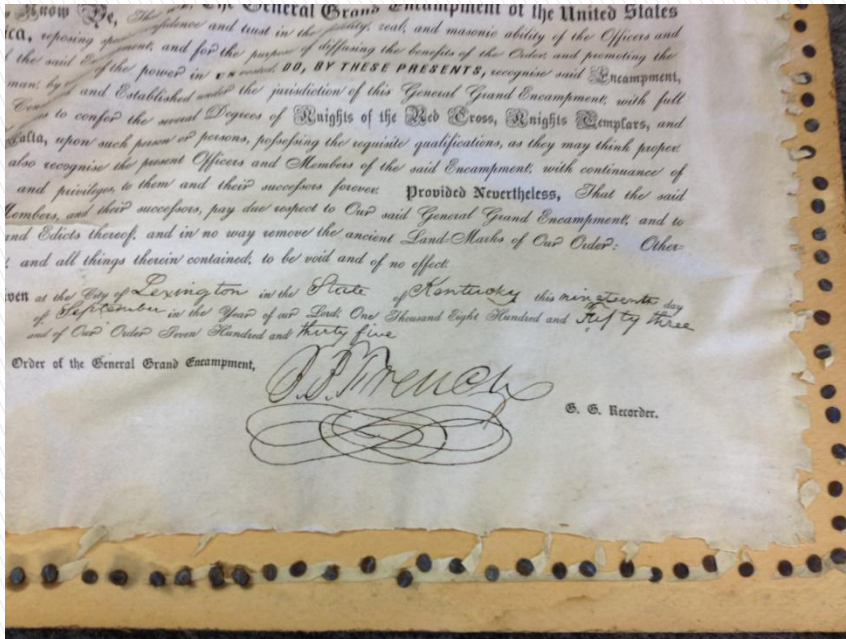


▶ Examination and assessment was accomplished by a Fort Wayne framing specialist, and then the conservator for the library and then a specialized rare books binder in Manchester, Indiana. Their conclusions were consistent: The 1853 Charter is a rare and important document that warrants specialized state of the art care. Nationwide research for such a specialized conservator led to Tahe Zalal, Senior Paper Conservator and Department Project Manager, Etherington Conservation Services in North Carolina.

Charter in Original Frame

Tahe Zalal, Senior Paper Conservator, Etherington

Nails Tacked Vellum

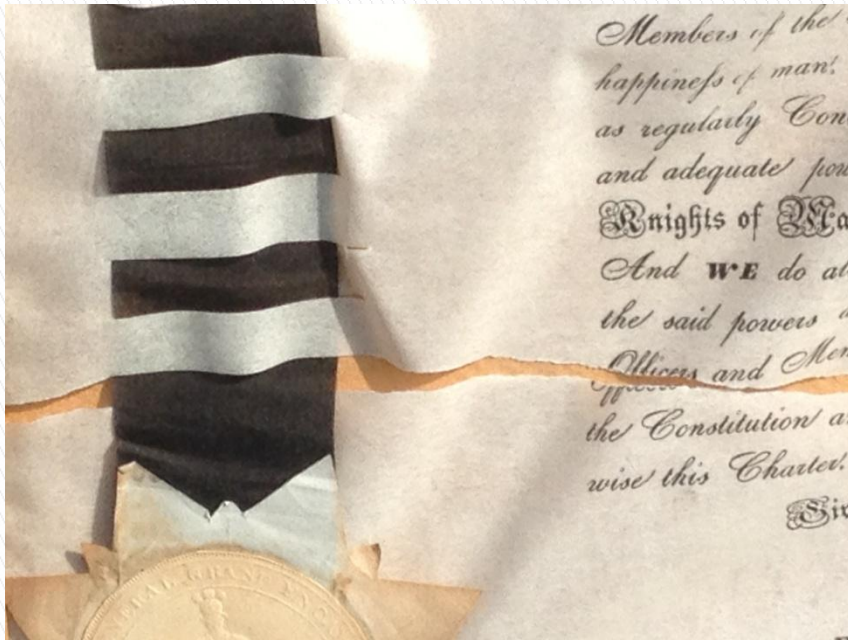


- ▶ The object is attached to a cardboard backing with 151 flat head nails along the perimeter leaving nail holes in the support. Originally used to tack vellum to cardboard.

151 Flat Head Nails
Torn from Vellum

Probably to stretch out
after water damage?

Ribbon and Embossed Seal

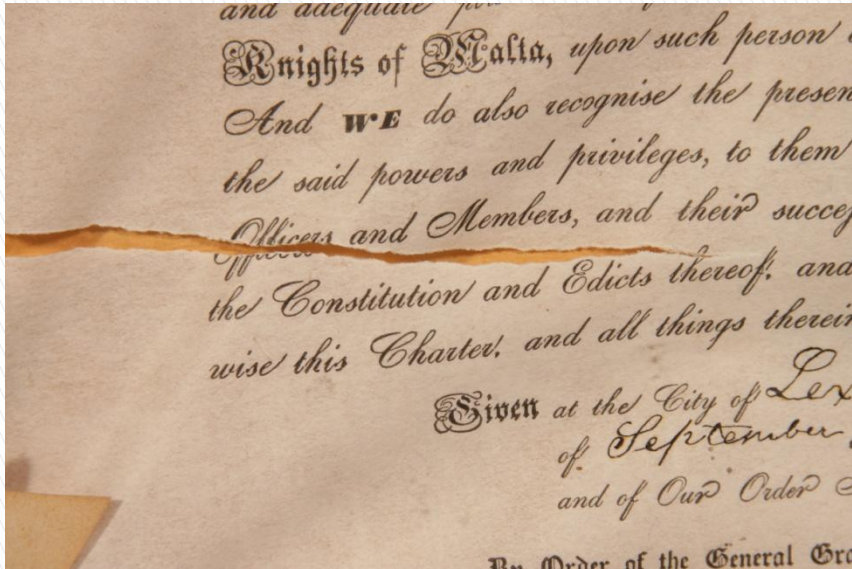


- ▶ On the lower left side, a black silk ribbon is laced through seven slits in the vellum and fastened with a three part embossed paper seal at the bottom. The ribbon is fragile and is slightly frayed at the ends.

Tear Through Ribbon

Waves and Tears

Vellum Cockled and Torn



- ▶ Vellum, being highly sensitive to fluctuations in temperature and humidity, has stretched and contracted over time and has become very cockled. The contraction of the vellum has resulted in numerous tears along the bottom and sides leaving vellum fragments still secured by the nails. A seven inch horizontal tear is present on the lower left side. The tear lines up with the bottom slit where the ribbon was originally laced.

7" Linear Tear

Thermal expansion and contraction over time.

Vellum and Cockled

A type of white leather, most commonly made from calfskin that has been treated, but not tanned, and used for bindings, and in medieval days, used for handwritten documents. Changes in humidity play havoc with this material, and vellum-covered boards often warp dramatically.



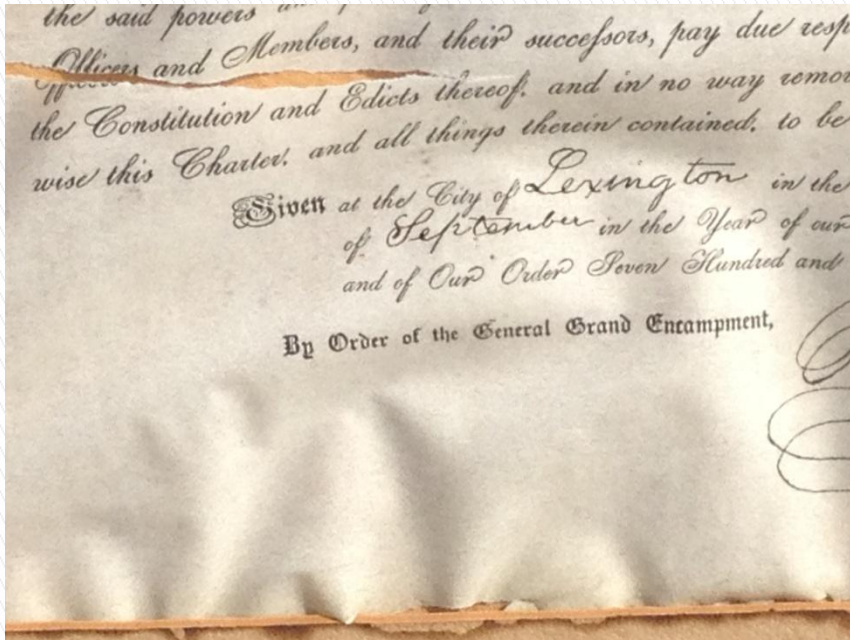
- ▶ Cockled refers to the condition of a book; the wrinkled, puckered, waving, or curling condition of a page or of the boards of a book, which is caused by non-uniform drying and shrinkage. If the cockled page is made of vellum, the condition is caused by humidity.

Vellum

“Cockled”



General Condition



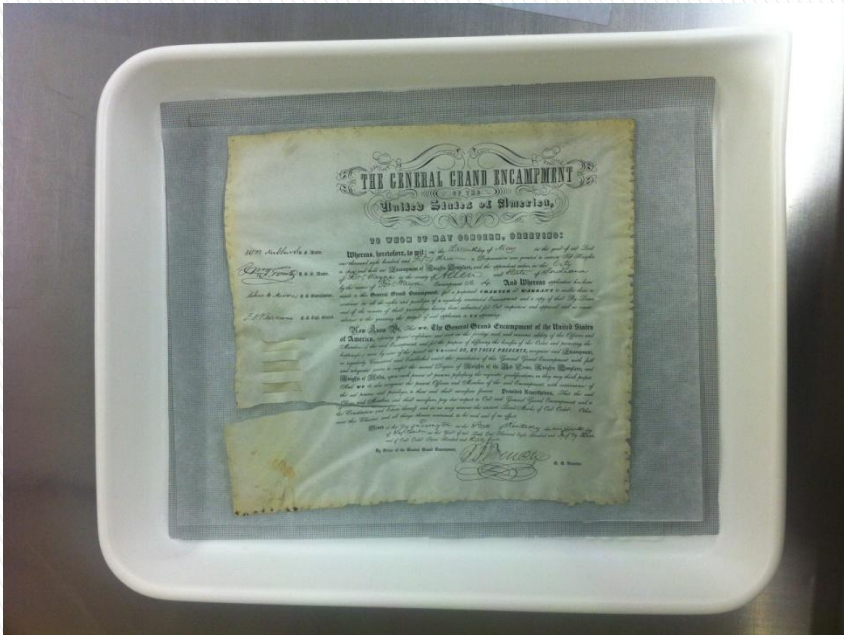
- ▶ The paper seal is stained and discolored and the points are curled and bent. The margins have yellowed slightly and there is some minor staining from the silk ribbon but the tone of the vellum is light and even with no severe discoloration. Surface dirt is moderate.

Edge Brown from Acid
Paper Backing

Overall Color Good

Vellum Cleaned & Prepared

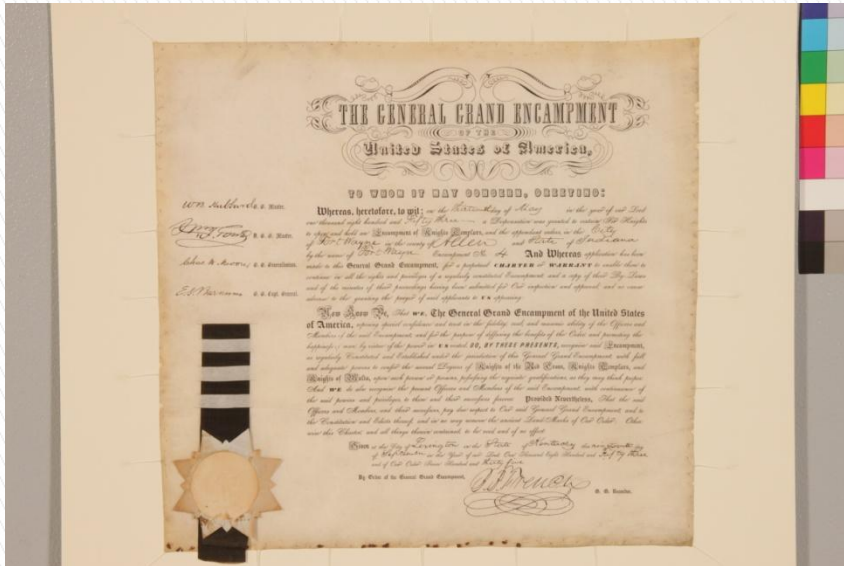
- ▶ I removed the document first, then removed the ribbon and seal, cleaned vellum with an expanded latex sponge to remove surface dirt and then gently humidified it in a humidity chamber. Once it was adequately humidified



Humidification Chamber

Humidified

Pressing



- ▶ I secured the large horizontal tear with painter's tape to hold it in place and then placed it between blotters to put it in the press. There are four total pressings.
- ▶ The first is very light and quick, pretty much to lock the vellum in place in case there are areas that want to curl or distort and to remove the majority of the moisture. If the pressure is too heavy the excess moisture in the vellum could affect the collagen causing translucency to occur. After the first pressing, the tapes are removed.

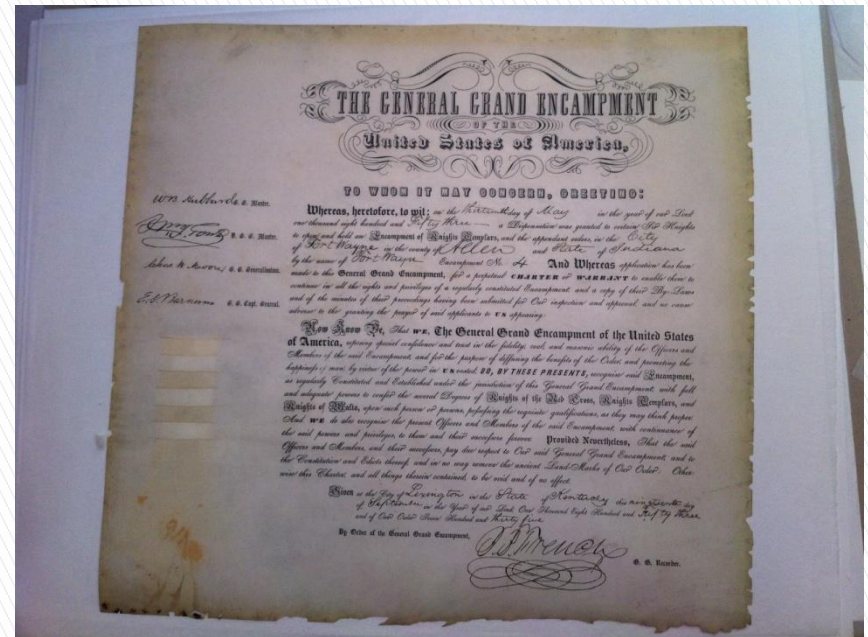
Pressing Flat

Repairing of the Tear

Mending Tears

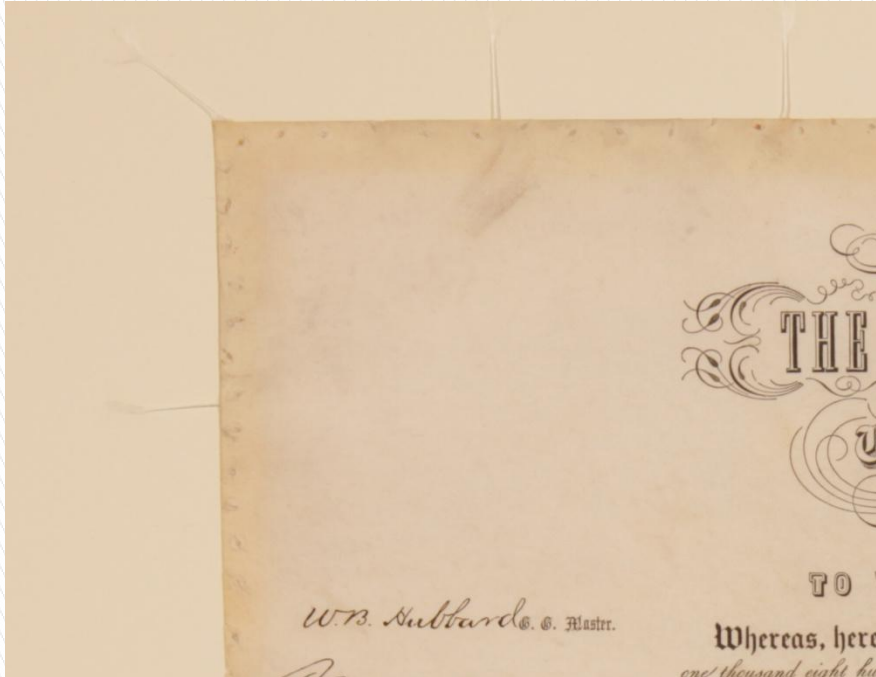
- Once removed from the press, it is time to mend tears and fill losses. I was able to clean and flatten all of the fragments caught under the nails and reinsert them using Japanese paper and wheat starch paste. Losses without the original fragments were filled with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste. The large horizontal tear was mended on the back with Japanese paper and wheat starch paste. Unfortunately, as vellum is prone to do, there was some distortion that had occurred over time and I could not fully marry the tear back together.

Japanese Paper and
Wheat Starch Paste



Mended Voids

Secured with Gelatin Strings

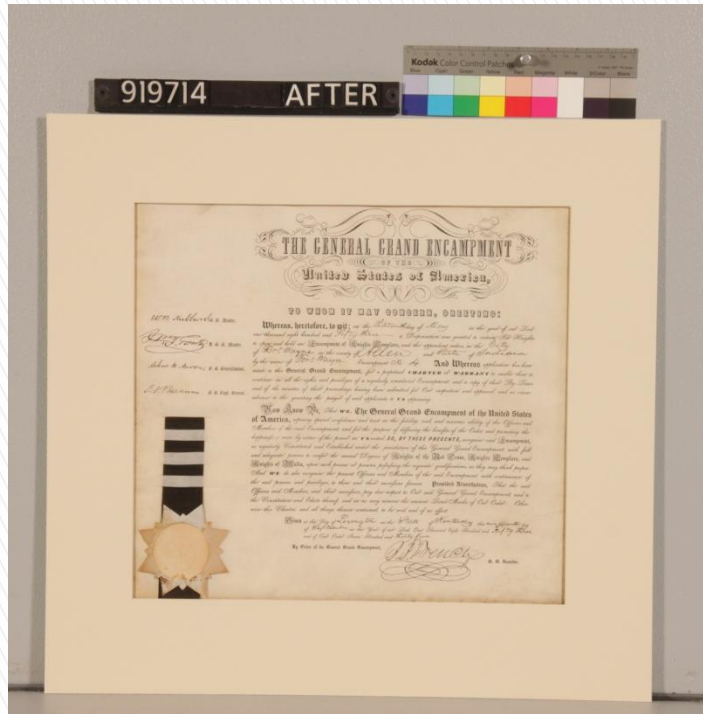


- ▶ After everything was mended, I repaired the tear on the fragile silk ribbon with thin Japanese paper and wheat starch paste and reinserted it in the slits. A window mat was cut and the vellum was secured to the backing board with linen strings and gelatin. The vellum will continue to expand and contract but not too much as long as it is in a stable environment. If, for some reason, the vellum does contract, the strings in that area will pop off but will not cause the vellum to tear again.

Fully Mended Document

Secured with Gelatin
Strings

Matting and Sealing



- ▶ The matted certificate was glazed with UV filtering glass, backed with Marvel Seal vapor barrier and then taped around the edges with metalized frame sealing tape to create a sealed package.
- ▶ Once framed it is recommended that it be hung away from a direct light source. Prolonged exposure to direct or bright light can cause fading even though the glass filters out 99% of UV rays. The relative humidity should be between 45–55% and the temperature should be between 65–70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Repaired Document
Mounted

UV Filtering Glass

Charter Returned Home



- ▶ The 1853 Charter was returned home to the Fort Wayne Masonic Temple by special delivery, just in time for presentation by Fort Wayne Commandery No. 4 Commander Ed Fodrea to Right Eminent Grand Commander Jack Wallace on Inspection Day, October 26, 2013.

Ancient Charter Returns

SK Jack F. Wallace, REGC

