

Is Knights' buried treasure lost forever?

Cathedral denies historian's request to search for prize

DISAPPOINTED treasure hunter Callum Jensen has been told he cannot seek out legendary Knights Templar gold under Lincoln Cathedral – because staff are unable to accompany the search.

The Da Vinci Code enthusiast believes that a huge stash of ancient treasure is hidden under the cathedral.

He had planned to spend more than £1,000 searching for it.

But now cathedral bosses have turned down his request as they cannot spare the staff to help him in his search.

Mr Jensen, a former TV researcher, spent two years studying the Masonic symbols in the cathedral.

He concluded that treasure is buried in the crypt of the old St Margaret's Church, which was demolished in 1781, although there is no documentary evidence of this.

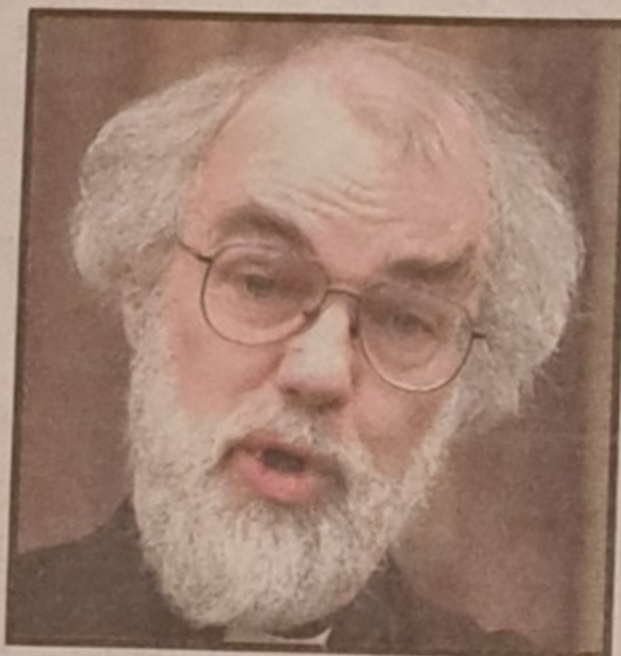
He said: "My daring deductions were based on a decoding of parchments allied to the globally famous mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau in France.

"The results are presented in my book *The Lincoln Da Vinci Code*."

Mr Jensen (50) of Waddington, near Lincoln, was prepared to pay £1,200 to hire ground-penetrating radar to search for the hidden crypt.

Although the cathedral had no problem with the actual project, cathedral chief executive Roy Bentham told Mr Jensen: "The proposal is not worthy of the commitment of our scarce staff resources."

Mr Jensen said: "I find it most bemusing that a scan that wasn't going to have cost the cathedral a penny or cause any structural damage has been overthrown by a lack of staff."



APPEAL: The Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams

by Emma Pearson

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"The decision has moved me to attempt to relay my disappointment to Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury."

But his appeal was unsuccessful as Dr Williams has no authority in the running of Lincoln's cathedral.

Mr Jensen added: "We will never know if anything of value actually lies hidden at St Margaret's, so my hypothesis can neither be confirmed or denied."

He believes the treasure comes from the hoard of the Knights Templar, a very wealthy order of monks who were suppressed by King Edward II (1312-1377).

Many were imprisoned in Lincoln Cathedral.

Although they set up the first European banks and were generally believed to be very wealthy, very little treasure was found after the monasteries were disbanded.

This led many to speculate that a huge hoard of gold and jewels had been hidden.

However, author Dan Brown posits a different theory in *The Da Vinci Code*. He maintains that the 'treasure' was metaphorical, a reference to the direct descendents of Jesus whom the Templars guarded.



SEARCHING: Callum Jensen with the Tennyson statue and inset, the Echo's front page in July last year. Below, an artist's impression of a Knight. Picture: Roy Ealden. Picture reference: 5-4361_14.



What could the treasure be?

AUTHOR Simon Brighton, who grew up in Temple Bruer, near Wellingore, has a different theory about the Knights Templar treasure.

He believes that the Templars hid the treasures in Lincolnshire because its largest and most efficient Orders were concentrated in different parts of the county.

They built preceptories at Temple Bruer and Willoughton near Gainsborough and Mr Brighton believes that this would be a good place to start in the search for the treasure.

Temple Bruer is one of the only Templar sites never to have been properly excavated as it was waterlogged at the time raids were made on most Templar properties.

Preceptories were also built at South Witham and Aslackby, near Sleaford.

There are Templar-related buildings at Eagle and Mere, near Lincoln, although they were not full preceptories, and the Angel Inn at Grantham was built by Templars.

They also owned investment property throughout the county, such as Lincoln's Jews' House, which was actually owned by Templars and leased to Aaron the Jew in 1159.

SHOULD MR JENSEN BE ALLOWED TO SEARCH?

Write to Your View, Lincolnshire Echo, Brayford Wharf East, Lincoln, LN5 7AT. Or e-mail yourview@lincolnshireecho.co.uk



TREASURE HUNT: Callum Jensen who claims he knows where the treasure of the Knights Templar is buried. Picture: Chris Vaughan. Picture reference: 5-4361_14.