

TOMAR AND THE TEMPLARS



CARLOS TRINCÃO

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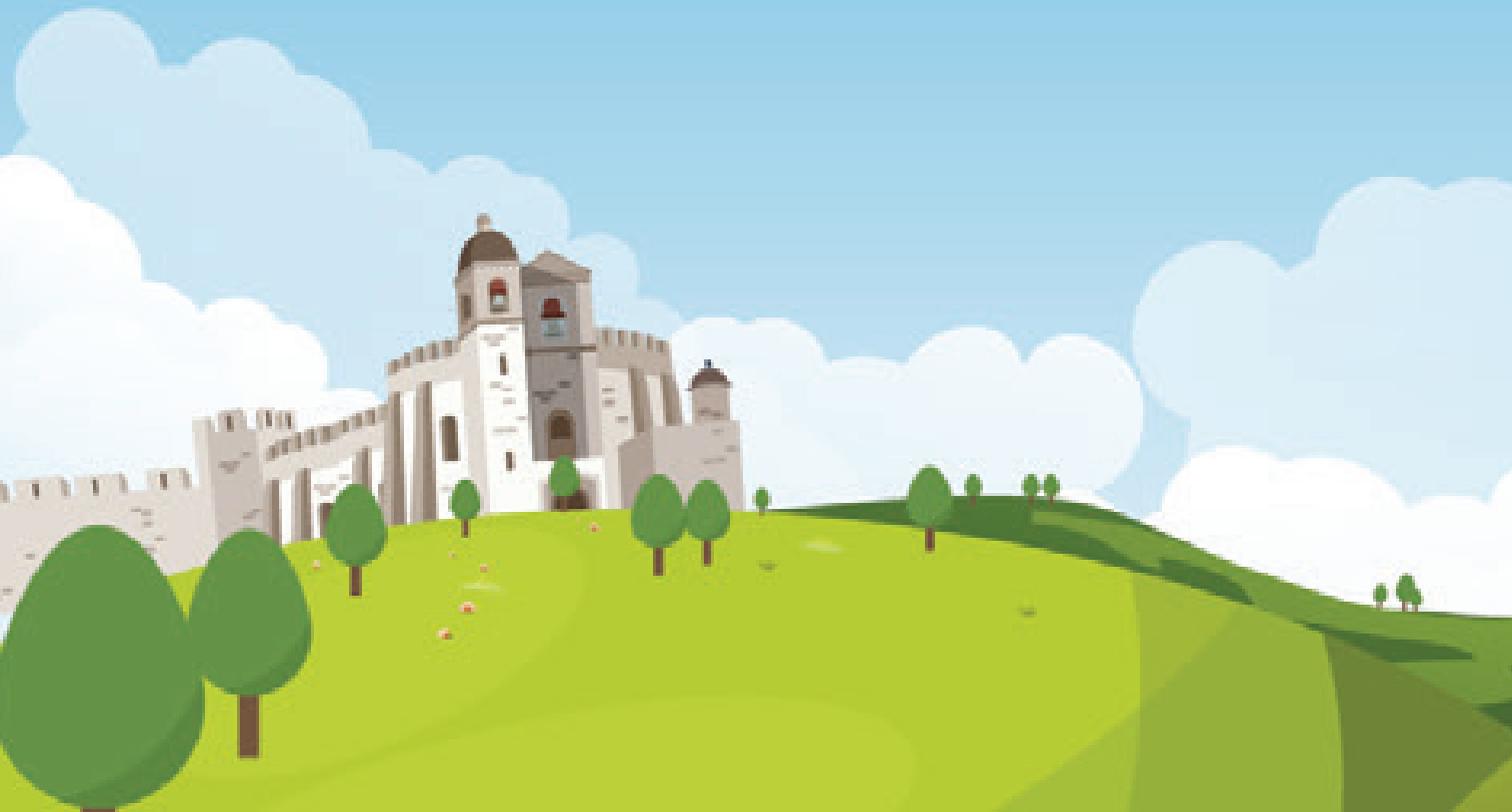
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Author: Carlos Trincão
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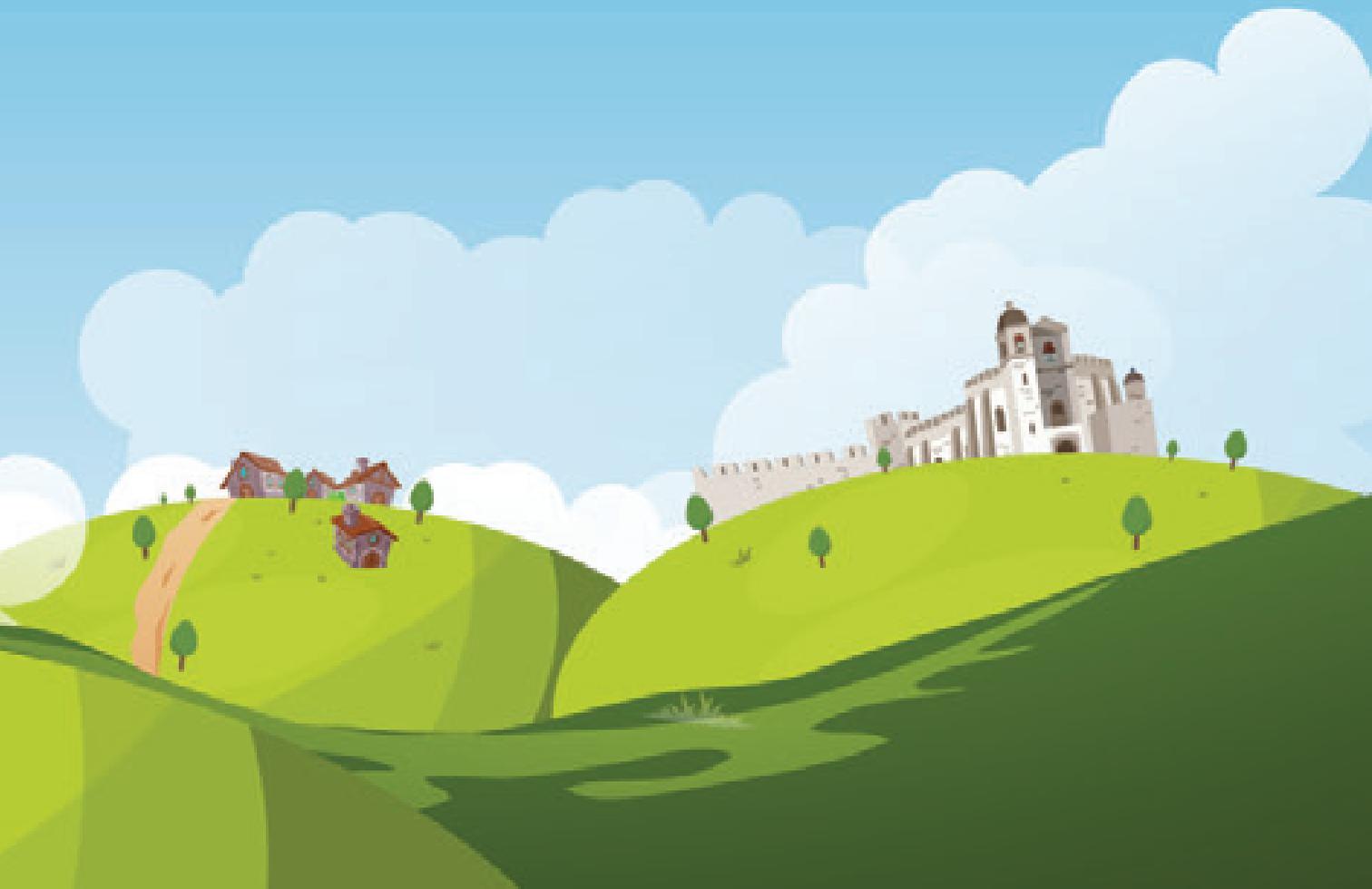






TOMAR AND THE TEMPLARS

A book written by Carlos Trincão



TOMAR: The Templar Capital of Portugal

The first King of Portugal, *D. Afonso Henriques*, had to fight a great deal to increase the size of Portugal, conquering many lands from the Muslims during his reign.

He succeeded in making Portugal an independent Kingdom in 1143. At the time the Knights of the Order of the Templars were already in Portugal and were commanded by Gualdim Pais, their Master, that is, their Commander General.

The King was very close to Gualdim Pais and had great confidence in him. That is why he asked for help in the defence of the country, which was growing in size every day.



Gualdim Pais could not let his King and friend down. Thus, he organized a kind of border along the Tagus River defended by many castles and fortresses and chose Tomar to build his most important castle, which also served as the Headquarters of the Order of the Temple.

This was what happened on March 1, 1160. Tomar became the Templar Capital of Portugal and that is why the

1st of March is a public holiday in Tomar.



The Legend of the name of TOMAR

Gualdim País was wondering with his men on the look for a good place to build his new and powerful castle.

At one point, because they were hungry, they decided to go hunting. Suddenly one of his knights saw a wild boar close by, easy to reach, and shouted,

There... a boar!
TAKE IT! TAKE IT!
(which means the same as "Tomar").



Already after having eaten grilled wild boar, they noticed that the mountain where they were was very good to build a castle and Gualdim Pais made his decision.

The problem was to find it a name. Then he remembered that cry

“TAKE IT (Tomar)”. So he decided that the name was great for that place. And so the name of TOMAR was born!

Of course this is a legend, but it's very funny.

Now, what is even funnier is that this legend is carved in stone at the top of the second column on the right side of the Church of St. John the Baptist, here in Tomar.

Isn't that cool?



The Templar castle of TOMAR

Gualdim Pais decided to build the castle in that place using even older stones, from the time of the Romans and the Visigoths.

It all began on March 1, 1160, and in those days, the day marked the beginning of the year, because it is the month of Spring, when Nature is reborn. When we say the names of the seasons, by which one do we start?

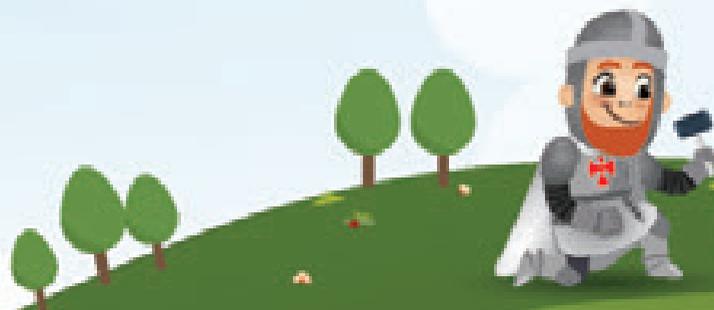
The castle had a novelty:

The Alambor, which is a very strong, ramp-shaped reinforcement outside of the main walls and is considered one of the most powerful fortresses in Europe.

AS GUALDIM PAIS WAS VERY CAUTIOUS,

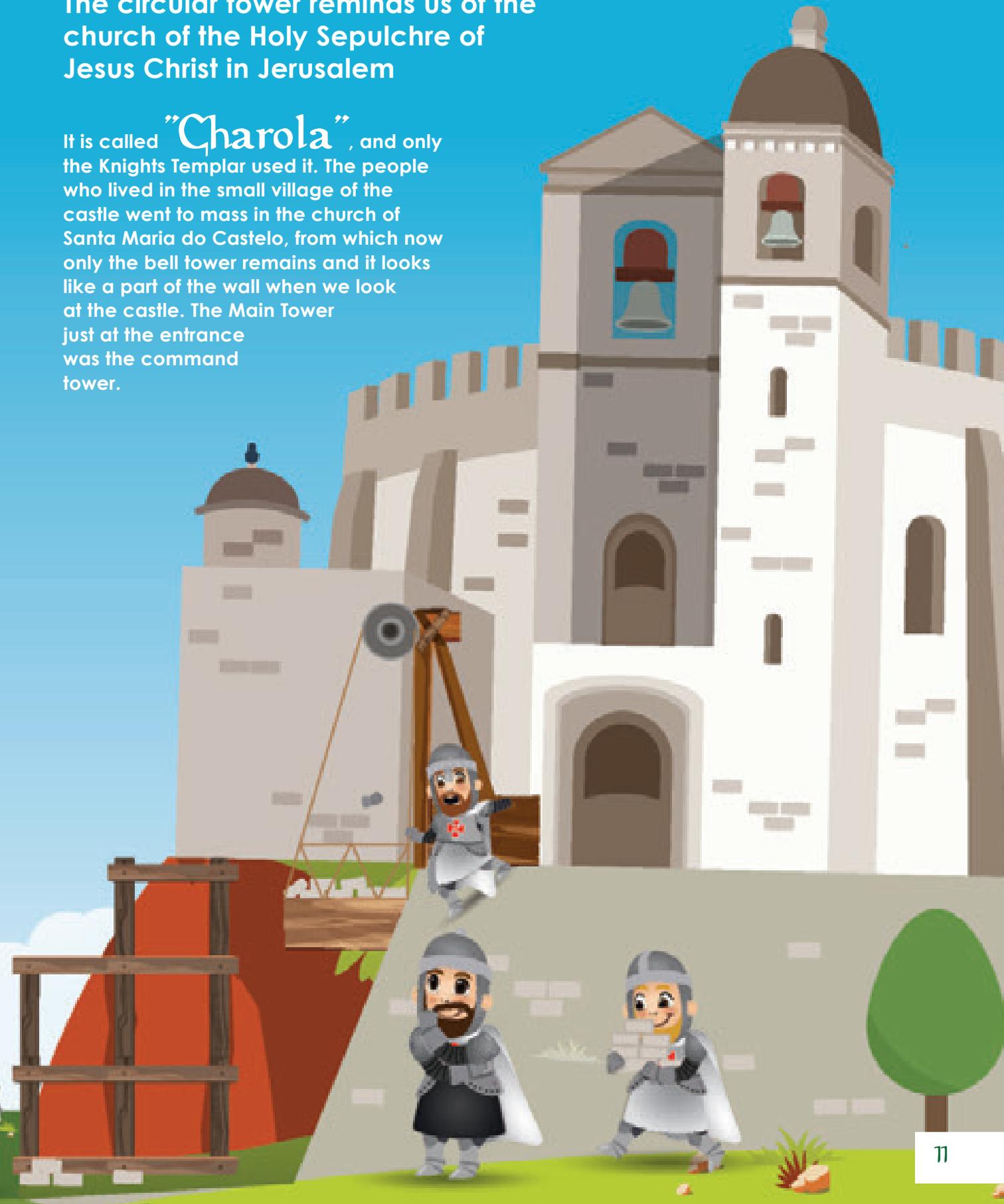
he built two more walls inside to protect the people who lived there.

As a Result: the castle, even when attacked, it was never taken by the enemies!



The circular tower reminds us of the church of the Holy Sepulchre of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem

It is called "Charola", and only the Knights Templar used it. The people who lived in the small village of the castle went to mass in the church of Santa Maria do Castelo, from which now only the bell tower remains and it looks like a part of the wall when we look at the castle. The Main Tower just at the entrance was the command tower.



Who was GUALDIM PAIS

Gualdim Pais was the Founder of Tomar.

He was born in the North, but it was so long ago that there are doubts about the exact location or even about the year of his birth: maybe he was born in Amares in 1118.

He was a friend of Dom Afonso Henriques and he was the 1st Portuguese Master of the Templar Province of Portugal. There were three or four Masters before him, but they were foreigners.

He was also a Crusader, a soldier who fought in the Crusades to defend the Places where Jesus Christ had lived and died and where people would go to pray.

Gualdim Pais always wanted the best for the people of Tomar, so he gave them two “Forais” in 1162 and in 1174.



A “**Foral**” was a Law that allowed people to organize life in their villages, which was a sign of great importance and trust.

He died on October 13, 1195

and was buried in the Church of Santa Maria dos Olivais, like all subsequent Masters. The church is also known as the Templar Pantheon, because a Pantheon is a place where important people are buried. The tombs no longer exist, but the engraved tombstones of Gualdim Pais and two other Masters can still be seen on the walls.



THE TEMPLARS IN PORTUGAL

The Iberian Peninsula was occupied by the Muslims until the Christians began to reconquer it and to create small Realms. Meanwhile, in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, the tomb of the Apostle St. James was discovered and the pilgrims began to pray there, but they could be attacked. The Templars came to their aid and so they arrived at the Portucalense County in 1125 or 1126, it is not known for sure.



NOW D. TERESA, THE MOTHER OF DOM AFONSO HENRIQUES, IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED THEIR IMPORTANCE AND GAVE THEM THE CASTLE OF SOURE AND THE TERRITORY BETWEEN COIMBRA AND LEIRIA.

The Templars built other castles and help in the fight against the Muslims. As a reward, they received more territories. These territories were called "commanderies".

With time and more victories, they built Tomar and made it their Capital. It was in Tomar, because of the battle they lost in 1190, that the Muslims retreated once and for all. It is even said that during the fight at the Almedina Gate (a very narrow gate overlooking the village inside the castle walls) the blood flowed like a river... That's why it is known as "The Blood Gate"! But... it's more legend than reality.

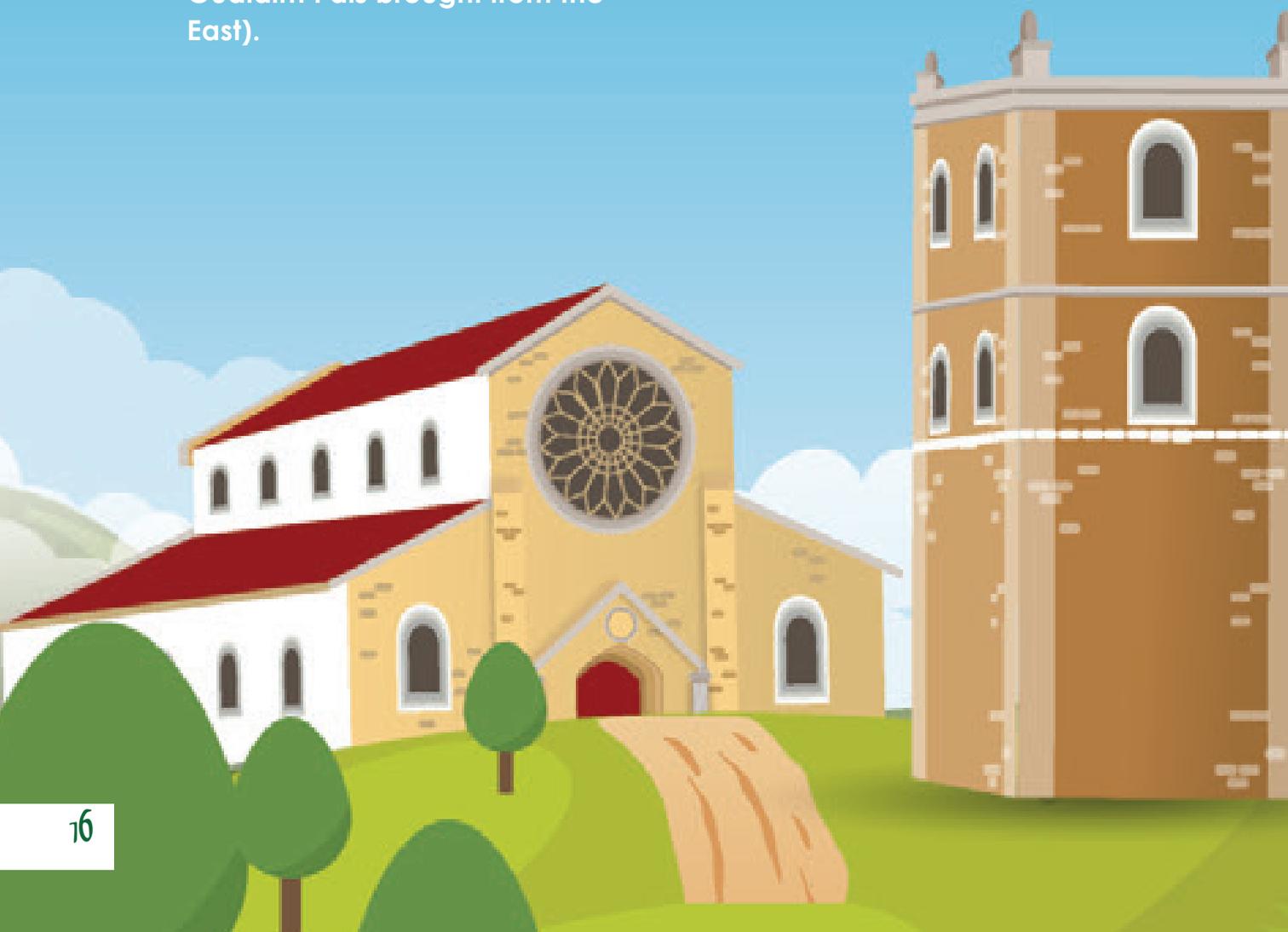


THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DOS OLIVAIS

It is the oldest church of Tomar. It was built or rebuilt, in the early thirteenth century. There are still doubts whether the current church is the result of a reconstruction of the remains of an earlier Visigothic temple, or of the remains of a convent or whether it is a temple built from scratch by the Templars.

IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

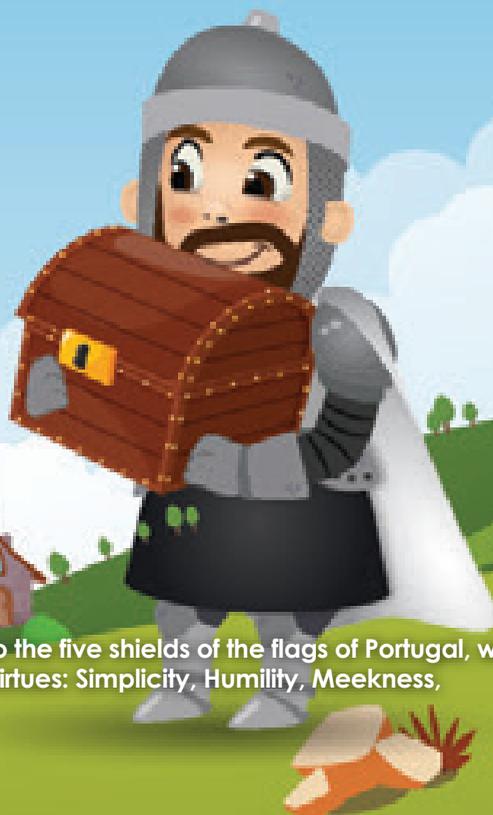
- A. It was the Pantheon of the Templars. This means that the Masters of the Order were buried there.
- B. It was a Bailia, because it was the seat of the Commandery.
- C. It was a Basilica (as the Convent was) because in the church were kept the Relics of a Saint (the hand of St. Gregory Nazianzus that Gualdim Pais brought from the East).
- D. And it was the Cathedral because it had authority over all the lands Beyond-the-Sea.



There are some very interesting things that you can discover when visiting the church. Beneath the large rosette and above the portico you can see a circle with a rose overlapping the Star of Salomon, a pentagram¹. Above it there is the Greek letter, "tau"². That also was a Templar mark. It has eight steps and eight columns (the number 8, horizontally, is the symbol that represents infinity). And it seems to lead us down into bowls of the earth. There is also the believe that a tunnel connects it to the castle up above. You can see what is perhaps the oldest Templar engraved cross of Tomar on a slab, or perhaps even the only one. There is also an engraved slab that "resembles" a chalice reminding us of the Grail. The position of the hands of the image of St. Mary Magdalene seen from below shows us the shape of a key lock, the key lock of the Gates of Heaven! And the key ... it's you!

IT IS A SIMPLE CHURCH, OF THREE NAVES, THAT SERVED AS MODEL TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF MANY OTHER CHURCHES.

The outer bell tower is older than the church and served as a watchtower, having been increased in height. You can see the tombstones of Gualdim Pais and two other Masters. You can also see the tomb of D. Diogo Pinheiro, the first Bishop of Funchal and the seventeenth-century tiles of the Chapel of Simão Preto.



¹The number 5 of the five points of the pentagram has links to the five shields of the flags of Portugal, with the five senses, with the five Stigmata of Christ, with the five virtues: Simplicity, Humility, Meekness, Mortification and Zeal for Souls.

²It looks like a "T".

WHAT WERE THE COMMANDERIES?

The Commanderies were territories given to someone of importance as a reward, to be administered, defended and developed for the good of all who lived there. In this case they were territories given to the Templars.

SOME COMMANDERIES WERE MORE IMPORTANT THAN OTHERS.

Some could have a small old stronghold, others only had a fortified house, some had a farm and some only land and some houses.



When **Gualdim Pais** came to Tomar, he was given the "Endings of Ceras", which meant it was a territory far away but extended around a settlement, in this case, Ceras.

As this area was not very good for the defence of the territory, Gualdim Pais chose Tomar which was, in fact, the best place to build the castle.

In reality, it became a great "Commandery" because Gualdim Pais and the Templars were charged with the defence of this territory. And they've done it so well that Tomar grew and gain more and more importance until it became what we know today.



Who were The TEMPLARS?

The Templars were a group of Knights and other persons attached to them who belonged to the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ, founded in Jerusalem in 1119 by a Frenchman called Hugo de Payens, and eight Companions.

They began to be known as Templars, because their first headquarters were some buildings in a mount of Jerusalem where, centuries before, the Temple of Solomon had been built.

Therefore, from the word "Temple", came the name "Templars."

This Order protected the pilgrims who were going to pray to the Holy Land and defended these Holy Sites from the attacks of the Muslims, who had another religion but considered that Jerusalem was also their Holy City.

The Order of the Templars was the first to be, at the same time, a religious and military order. Therefore the Knights Templar were warriors and monks authorized to fight against the enemies of the Catholic Religion.



THE ORDER OF THE TEMPLARS, OVER TIME, SPREAD THROUGHOUT MOST OF EUROPE, BECOMING A GREAT FORCE WHICH ALL KINGS RESPECTED AND TO WHOM THEY SOUGHT HELP.



The Knights' equipment equipment consisted of a chain mail with a white robe with a red cross on the side of the heart, a helmet, iron footwear, shield, spear, war hammer or mace, daggers (or long daggers) and sword. The Sergeants (a word that meant "servants of the Knights") fought on foot dressed in black with the same red cross.



WHY DID THE CRUSADES HAPPENED?

Jerusalem was always a Holy City: first for the Jews, then for the Christians, and finally for the Muslims.

In the year 324 the tomb of Jesus Christ was discovered and soon the pilgrimages began throughout the centuries.

The Muslims, in 638, conquered it and dominated it for many centuries.

As it was not possible for the Christians of that zone of the World to reconquer it, the Kings in Europe and the Popes had the idea of launching the Crusades, that is, expeditions of Christian warrior identified with a cross on the chest to recover Jerusalem.



Christians who fought and died in the Crusades in the service of God would have their reward: their sins would be forgiven and they entered directly into Heaven.

THE FIRST CRUSADE WAS LAUNCHED IN 1099 AND WAS THE ONLY THAT WAS VICTORIOUS. IT MANAGED TO CREATE THE CHRISTIAN KINGDOMS OF THE EAST. AFTER THIS, THERE WERE ONLY DEFEATS ONE AFTER THE OTHER. THE LAST CRUSADE WAS THE EIGHTH, IN 1270. THERE WERE PREPARATIONS FOR A NINTH CRUSADE, BUT IT NEVER HAPPENED.



THE TEMPLAR ORGANIZATION

IN LARGE ORGANIZATIONS IT WAS NECESSARY FOR EVERYTHING TO BE VERY WELL PREPARED, BECAUSE EVEN AS THE TEMPLARS WERE AN INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF CAVALRY IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO GOVERN IT IF THERE WERE NO WELL-DEFINED POSITIONS AND FUNCTIONS.

SO IT WAS LIKE THIS:

In the central government of the Order there was:

Grand Master: he was the highest authority as if he was a Prince or a Bishop, or a representative of the Pope next to the Kings or the Clergy.

Seneschal: he was a counsellor, a diplomat and substituted the Grand Master in his absences.

Marshal: he was the chief commander of the troops.

Banner-bearer: he carried the flag during battle or displacements.

Commander of the Militia.



THE MASTERS OF THE SPECIAL REGIONS AND PROVINCES WHO, ON THEIR LANDS, HAD THE SAME HELPERS AS THE GRAND MASTER:

Master of the Holy Land and Kingdom of Jerusalem, admiral, treasurer and administrator.

Master of the city of Jerusalem, guardian of the True Relics.

Master of the Holy Land.

Masters of Antioch, Tripoli and other Provinces: Iberian Peninsula [ruled by Portugal, except Aragon and Catalonia] France, England, Italy, Poland, Hungary and Cyprus.

EACH MASTER HAD UNDER HIS COMMAND:

Chaplain: responsible for the religious services.

Drapier: responsible for recruiting troops.

Caretaker: responsible for supplies and organization.

Commander of the Knights: auxiliary of the Marshal.

Ensign: armorer and guardian of the standard until the attack.

Gonfaloneiro: in charge of the discipline.

Turcopolo (chief) of sergeants and light cavalry.

Sergeants and Squires (auxiliaries): Troops on foot.



THE SYMBOLS



Their Motto, said: "Non nobis domine non nobis sed nomine tuo da gloriam". Now, since it is Latin, here is the translation: Not for us, Lord, not for us, but for the glory of Thy name.

The Templar flag, here in Tomar, on certain days, is still hoisted in the Castle and in the Town Hall. Because it is square, it is called the **Standard, Balsa or Balsão**. It is divided vertically into two halves, one white and one black (meaning that it is necessary to be aware of Evil to do Good), with the Templar Cross in the centre. All around, in very beautiful letters, the motto.

Baucent was the name they gave to their flag; this word was also a battle cry so strong that caused fear even before the battle had started!



OF TEMPLARS



The Templar Cross, red with rounded arms is of Eastern origin and the Templars began to use it in 1146.



Finally...

the circular **Templar Seal** with the inscription "Sigillum Militum Xpisti" (Seal of the Militia of Christ) surrounding two knights in a single mount, which symbolized the vows of poverty that the Knights should swear and fulfil.



The wealth of the **TEMPLARS**

The **Templars** got richer and richer in lands, money, livestock, and agricultural products. That was a way of payment and reward that was given to important organizations and even to important people.

All this wealth was not used for their own personal benefit.

The resources were used to equip their troops, build castles and fortresses and help the people and pilgrims who were going to pray to the Holy Land and to Santiago de Compostela.



They were so rich they even helped Kings and kingdoms by lending them money. It is even said that the Templars invented the banks. For example, a pilgrim who deposited his money with the Templars in Portugal could collect it in the Holy Land, thus avoiding being robbed on the way. In those days the trips were long and dangerous because they could only be done on foot, on horseback or in carts and carriages.

IT WAS ALSO OFTEN THE CASE THAT IF SOMEONE DIED ON THE WAY AND THERE WAS NO ONE IN THE FAMILY WITH THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT TO COLLECT THE DEPOSITED MONEY, the money remained with the Templars who would invest it in the defence of other travellers.



And were there **TEMPLAR** women...?

There have always been **nuns** in convents, even before the time of the Templars, but our first idea is to say no. No Sir, there were no Templar women. How could there be!

We say this because the Order of the Templars was the first Religious and Military order. An order which, in addition to prayer, had also the duty of fight. Moreover, the Templar Rule (the set of norms) did not allow women to be part of the Order as combatants, nor the presence of women was foreseen.



BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT THEY EXISTED EVEN THOUGH IT WAS ONLY NUNS OR RELIGIOUS WOMEN WHO COULD NEITHER FIGHT NOR WEAR THE TEMPLAR UNIFORM, EVEN IF ADAPTED. IN FRANCE THEY WERE CALLED SISTERS OF THE TEMPLE, WHICH I THINK IS A GOOD NAME.

In Portugal, only in Tomar existed a small monastery or house in the castle dedicated to their daily life and prayer. There are some very old documents that tell us that several ladies donated to this convent houses that they had inside the castle. And they also existed in other parts of the Iberian Peninsula and in France, at least.

The explanation is that a nobleman could be admitted to the Order as a Knight, even if he was already married and with family. Then the admission was accepted under the condition that he give up their possessions and live and pray separately. Single women and widows could also be admitted under this condition.



The end of the **TEMPLARS** and start of the **ORDER OF CHRIST**:

After several Muslim attacks, the Templars were finally defeated in the Holy Land after the loss of their last city in 1291, the city of St. John of Acre.

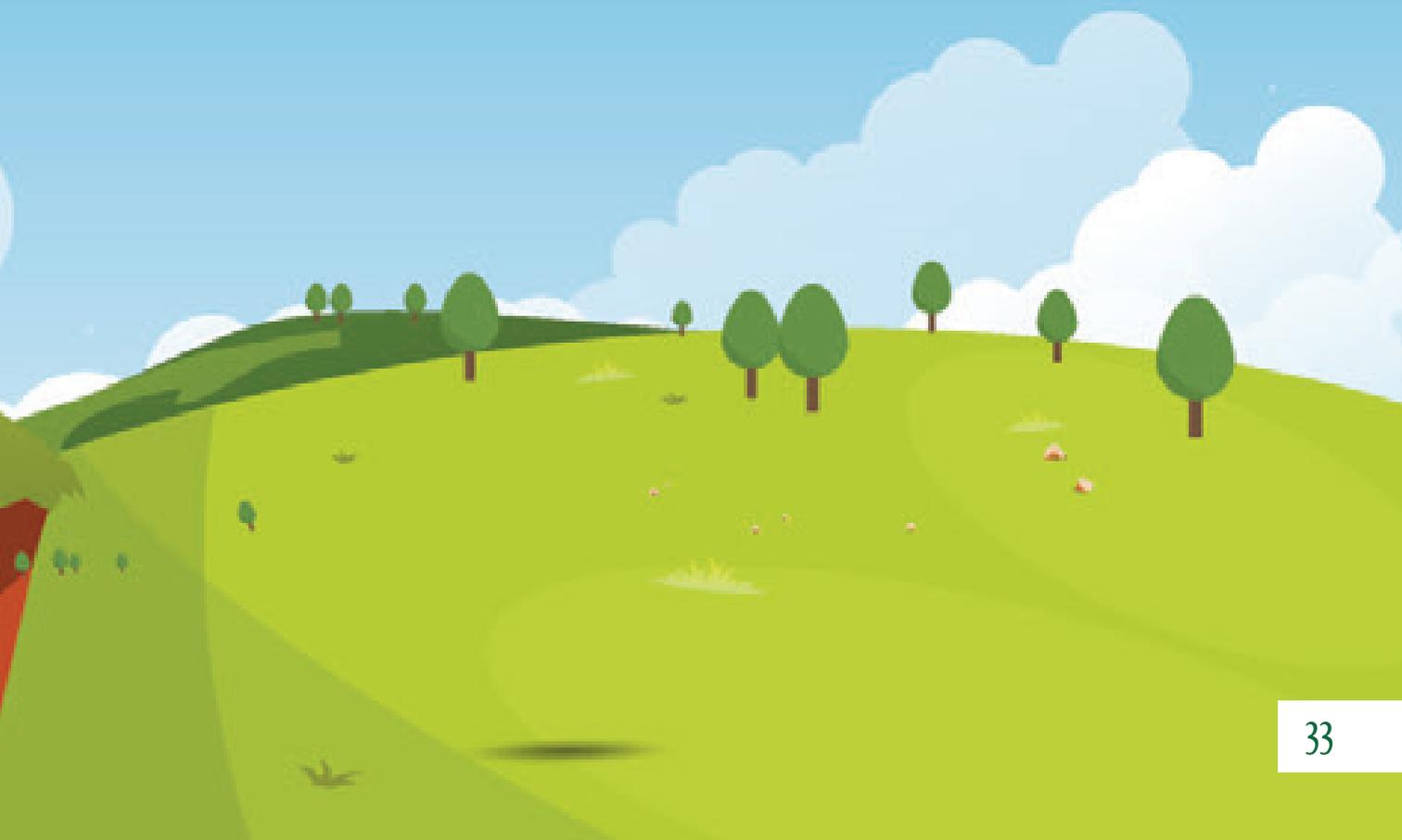
AS THE ORDER WAS VERY RICH IN LANDS AND MONEY, MONEY THAT THEY OFTEN LENT TO KINGS, THIS DEFEAT GAVE A MOTIVE TO THE KING OF FRANCE AND THE POPE, WHO WAS ALSO FRENCH, TO FINISH THEM AND THUS GETTING RID OF THEIR OWN DEBTS.



And so it happened: The French King arrested them, killed some, and gave their property and territories to another Order. This Order was friendlier to the King and did what he asked: the Order of Hospitallers.

But in Portugal, King Dinis, who was well aware of the importance of the Templars, arranged things in such a way that he succeeded in creating a new Order, which the Pope approved. He passed to his new Order all that belonged to the Templars. Territories, wealth, knights and every other who worked with the Templars. And so the Order of Christ was born in 1319.

TO GIVE IT THE APPEARANCE OF A NEW ORDER, he set them for a few years in Castro Marim, in the Algarve, with the excuse that they were needed there to confront the Moors of North Africa. Which was even true! In 1357, the Templars returned to Tomar, which was always their capital, this time under its new name... The Order of Christ.



List of PORTUGUESE MASTERS

First Procurator:

Guilherme Ricardo 1127-1139

Hugo Martins 1139

Hugo de Montoire 1143

Pedro Arnaldo 1155-1157

First Portuguese Master and Founder of Tomar:

Gualdim Pais 1157-1195

Lopo Fernandes 1195-1199

Fernão Dias 1199-1206

João Domingues 1206-1209

Gomes Ramires 1210-1212



Master of the Three Kingdoms with Portuguese Master

(Portugal, Leon and Castile):

Pedro Alvito 1212-1221

Pedro Anes 1222-1224

Martim Sanches 1224-1229

Estêvão Belmonte 1229-1237

Pedro Nunes 1237-1239

Guilherme Fulcon 1240-1242

Martim Martins 1242-1248

Pedro Gomes 1248-1250

Paio Gomes 1250-1253

Martim Nunes 1253-1265

Gonçalo Martins 1265-1271

Beltrão Valverde 1272-1280

João Escriptor 1280-1282

João Fernandes 1282-1288

Afonso Gomes 1288-1290

Lourenço Martins 1291-1295

Last Master:

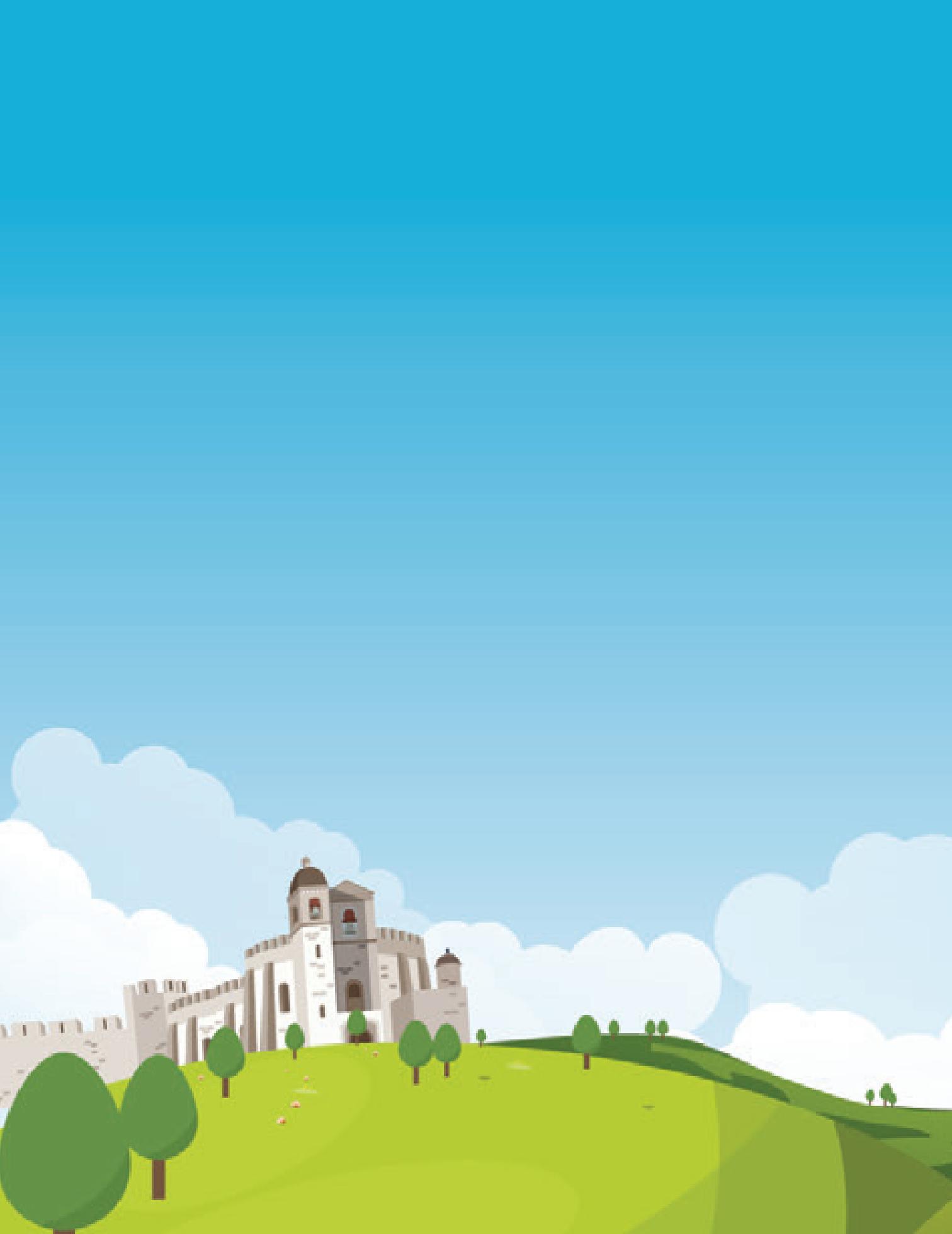
Vasco Fernandes 1295-1314





The end









 **TOMAR**
CIDADE TEMPLÁRIA

