

Emile Clement Joseph Isaac Vandenberg

 The furniture maker from Mechelen having forced the 20th century international revival of the Knights Templar

Emile Clement Joseph Isaac [1][2] was born in Mechelen on August 7, 1895 as the only son of Ferdinandus Jozef Isaac and Joanna Elisabeth Keyaerts. In November 1921 he married Josefina Vandenberg and together with his father-in-law and brother-in-law he started a furniture factory in Mechelen under the name Vandenberg & Isaac. In the Nazi period, he used his wife's name because of his recognizable Jewish family name. Several later texts mention him as **Emile Clement Joseph Isaac Vandenberg** (sometimes spelled Vandenburg) or **Emile Isaac (Vandenberg)**. He reactivated and obtained the highest leadership of the *Ordo Supremus Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani*, the Sovereign Order of the Knights Templar of Jerusalem or, in short, the famous *Knights Templar*. [3] Doubts remained about the cause of his death in April 1943.

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World War I [edit]

Emile Isaac mastered the profession of carpet maker, but at the beginning of the First World War, he volunteered to join the [Red Cross](#) for the position of sick bearer. Classified with the Belgian Artillery, he was stationed in the [Fort of Antwerp](#) in October of that year. He was transferred to France, where he was injured by the explosion of a mine towards the end of the war. As an adjutant of the 7th Line Regiment, he left the army in December 1923.

The Order of the Temple [edit]

European political developments and disagreements between Catholic and Masonic order members had put the order into a long, deep hibernation. She owes her 20th century international revival to her Belgian branch, the *Grand Priory of Belgium*. Emile Isaac Vandenberg was one of the founders of the *Sovereign and Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem*, founded in 1932. [4]. The Council of Regency installed in 1934 and Joseph Vandenberg [N 1] were briefly succeeded in 1935 by Theodore Covias and then in August by Emile Isaac Vandenberg as [Regent](#) of the Order, which title he retained until December 1942. [5] During the Second World War, due to the German occupation of Belgium, he 'temporarily' left the leadership and the archive of the Order to the great priority of Portugal, Antonio de Sousa Fontes. The Nazis kept Emile Isaac Vandenberg locked up for six days in the [Dossin barracks](#) in Mechelen. [6]

His death [edit]

During a car ride in April 1943, a day after the heavy [bombing of Mortsel](#), the now prominent Jewish Templar dug into a narrow river, the Veste van Berchem, and drowned. It is uncertain whether this was the result of a flawed maneuver or was orchestrated by the Nazis. He was buried in Mechelen.

Confusion [edit]

About the vicissitudes about the leadership of the Order it is said that 'at the end of the war' Emile Isaac Vandenberg wanted to reverse his decision about the leadership and the archive. Emile Isaac Vandenberg died in 1943. Since the war lasted until 1945, perhaps people meant 'at the end of the (local) acts of combat'? Ground battles had soon ended and allied bombing (such as on Mortsel) would not have provided a safe location for the archive (or the leadership) here. Did the Sousa Fontes use that argument to refuse restitution, or did Emile Isaac Vandenberg's sudden death come just in time?

Aftermath [edit]

Temporary administration by successive regents since the mid-19th century lasted until 1970, when the Knights Templar finally elected their new Grand Master. The then regent Fernando, son of Antonio de Sousa Fontes, refused to recognize his master so that since then his *Ordo Supremus Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani* (OSMTJ) has been separated from the *Ordre Souverain et Militaire du Temple de Jérusalem* (OSMTJ). The Belgian Grand Prize, among others, recognizes the latter and its grandmasters.

There is no reason to suspect a connection between the aforementioned Antonio and Fernando de Sousa Fontes and the [Hof van Fontes](#) in Mechelen, in the [Nonnenstraat](#) near the [Jesus Gate](#).

External links [edit]

- [Freemasonry](#) . Wikipedia.
- [La Constantante Fidélité \(Mechelen\)](#) . Wikipedia.

Sources [edit]

- (en) [History of the Modern Templar Order](#) . The Knights Templar. Checked 2018-07-16.
- (en) [The years of the Regents \(Caretakers\), 1930-](#) . *History of the Order* . Ordre Souverain et Militaire du Temple de Jérusalem. Checked 2018-07-16.
- 1. [Up↑ Biography](#)
- 2. [Up↑ Templar Knight Filiation - Mgr Fra. Emile Clement Joseph Isaac Vandenbergh](#)
- 3. [Up↑ \(en\) OSMTJ Magisterial Council](#) . Ordre Souverain et Militaire du Temple de Jérusalem (OSMTJ). Checked 2018-07-16.
- 4. [Up↑ List chronologique des Dirigeants de l'Ordre du Temple](#)
- 5. [Up↑ \(s\) Elected Succession of Grand Masters](#) . Ordre Souverain et Militaire du Temple de Jérusalem (OSMTJ). Checked 2018-07-16.
- 6. [Up↑ 1932 - Ordre Souverain et Militaire du Temple de Jerusalem](#)

Footnotes [edit]

1. [Up↑](#)
" 1892 Joséphin Péladan (Regent)
1894 Secretariat International des Templiers
1934 Conseil de Regence - Joseph Vandenberg
1935 Theodore Covias (Regent)
1935-1942 Emile Isaac (Vandenberg) (Regent)
1942-1960 Dom Antonio de Sousa Fontes (Regent)
1960-1970 Fernando de Sousa Fontes (Regent)"

Was Joseph Vandenberg (perhaps chairman of that council of regency) Emile Isaac's father-in-law or brother-in-law?