

**THE SUPREME ORDER
OF THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH**



Province of East Kent

**HANDBOOK FOR
HOLY ROYAL ARCH
CHAPTER
DIRECTORS
OF CEREMONIES**

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Abbreviations used in this booklet

Executive Member – The Most Excellent Grand Superintendent, The Excellent Companions, the Deputy Grand Superintendent and the Second and Third Provincial Grand Principals.

Escorting PrGDC – The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, the Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies and the Acting Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies.

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1 Foreword

The Order of The Holy Royal Arch is an important part of Pure and Ancient Freemasonry, it is no less significant than the Craft and could be considered as the pinnacle of any Masonic achievement.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information and guidance together with some recommended procedures on occasions when a member or members of the Senior Provincial Executive or a Representative of the Grand Superintendent are to be present, for the benefit of experienced and newly appointed Chapter Directors of Ceremonies. The objectives being to raise the profile of the Order within the Province, to provide more enjoyable convocations for all Companions in attendance and to render the Order more attractive to the unenlightened Brethren of our Craft Lodges.

2 The Chapter Director of Ceremonies

Personal Attributes and Duties

The Director of Ceremonies is a much valued officer of the Chapter with an important role in the management of the ceremonies and other proceedings. He should, therefore, be competent in the ritual and ensure that the Laws and Regulations of Supreme Grand Chapter together with the By-laws of the Chapter are caused to be maintained and to observe the edicts of the Provincial Grand Chapter in order that the ceremonies are not compromised. He should further ensure that the proceedings within the Temple and at the Festive Board are monitored with propriety and expedience. His sound knowledge of the protocol involved will undoubtedly be appreciated by all Companions and add to the enjoyment of the convocations.

He should possess the trait of diplomacy in all aspects of man-management, particularly where the other Officers are concerned and be a good communicator; alongside the Scribe E, he is the person the Companions will turn to for guidance and advice. He will lend his support and assistance to the less experienced and newly appointed Officers and perhaps encourage those of ability to participate in any sharing of the Lectures. Most, if not all, Chapter Directors of Ceremonies will be accomplished Craft Masons, may have served as a Lodge Director of Ceremonies and already possess these attributes, however a dogmatic approach holds no respect within the informed Masonic society.

Ideally, the Director of Ceremonies should also be the Preceptor at any Chapter of Improvement or Rehearsal and should therefore, have a good knowledge of the Chapter workings. Mistakes will sometimes occur but if there is a good recovery from them, they are seldom noticed.

Dress Code

The Director of Ceremonies, in the course of his duties, should adopt an exemplary standard of dress and deportment which will, not only lend a sense of dignity to the occasion and add confidence of approach so as to enhance his performance, but will also quite likely influence others in their appearance and demeanour.

The Grand Superintendent, whilst aware that Supreme Grand Chapter permits the adoption of the 'Craft' tie, has expressed his preference that the Provincial tie or a plain black tie be worn by Companions of the Province within the Province of East Kent. This does not preclude the wearing of school or regimental ties where such dispensation has been granted. There is little one can do in respect of visiting Companions from another Province or District.

The Chapter Director of Ceremonies... continued

The wearing of jacket lapel badges, other than those awarded for meritorious service by the Grand Superintendent/Provincial Grand Master, should be discouraged; the best place to display these is in the wider community. On the subject of waistcoats, it has been noticed that a small number of starkly contrasting designs are being worn in some Chapters and for general guidance, Supreme Grand Chapter prescribes that waistcoats should match the same material as the jacket. If it is felt necessary, an instruction to this effect could be shown on the Chapter summons.

It has long been the advice of the Province that Companions who have achieved Provincial Grand Rank should wear only the Royal Arch Jewel. Past First Principals may wear a Past First Principal's Jewel but only in conjunction with the Royal Arch Jewel which should be worn closest to the centre line of the body. Founder's Jewels and Centenary Jewels should only be worn in the Chapter for which they were struck and have no relevance in any other Chapter assembly.

The wearing of current Festival Jewels is encouraged and permanently designated Charity Jewels may also be worn, however with a current Festival in progress they do become less significant.

Preparation

It is the responsibility of the Director of Ceremonies to ensure that the Temple is correctly laid out, with all the appropriate furnishing in place and that the Charter is available for display according to Regulation 47 of the Royal Arch Regulations.

It is recommended in the light of the current fire regulations that the evacuation procedures be explained by a competent Companion before the Chapter is opened and that attention is drawn to the requirement that all sign the attendance book.

Generally, if at any time an unforeseen situation occurs or is likely to occur within the Chapter and the remedy is not apparent it is perfectly proper and right to draw advice from the Provincial Office or, if on ceremonial or ritual concerns, the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies.

Chapter Customs and Traditions

The Grand Superintendent is of the opinion that any established customs and traditions adopted by the older Chapters should be preserved and not be altered unless they become contrary to the Royal Arch Regulations. Some adjustment by a Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies to the traditions may become necessary on occasions when the Senior Provincial Executive attend.

Start Time, Duration of Proceedings and Ceremonial concerns

When determining the time of start, consideration should be given to the availability of the majority of the members to be present at such time. The Grand Superintendent is conscious that our membership and society as a whole, has changed over the past 25 years or so, where Companions are in some form of employment and would have domestic and family commitments. As a general guide, weekday convocations should not start before 5.30p.m. Equally, if a convocation starts late, inevitably it going to finish late. All convocations of The Holy Royal Arch should be enjoyable and if the proceedings are kept moving this will greatly add to the enjoyment of the Companions, especially so if the evening concludes at 10.00p.m. in order that they may return home at a reasonable hour.

Further consideration, therefore, should be paid in this concern by saving time not used in a purposeful way and in this Order where we do not 'call off' at Installation convocations, most of this can be achieved at the after proceedings which should be kept moving. Equally, unnecessary delays in the Temple should be avoided. There are benefits in the circulation of the previous minutes which not only saves time but also informs the Companions who were not present at the previous convocation.

The ceremonial for the Investitures at Installation convocations are much enhanced by these suggested procedures:-

- The Sojourners and Scribes could don the surplice before investiture and the Assistant Sojourners could be invested together.
- Officers who remain in office could just acknowledge the Principals with a court bow.
- There is no need to ballot for the Principals and Treasurer if the new provisions of Regulation 48 are complied with.
- The Principals should also be brief in their congratulations or thanks and they should be informed that it is correct to congratulate those they appoint to office and to thank those who are elected.
- The First Principal should also be guided on the use of the Sceptres for the 'knocks' when they should only be used where indicated in the Rituals and not for the mundane items on the agenda as they are not required and can lead to a de-valuation of their importance.

The Director of Ceremonies should make all his enquiries from the 'point of address' and to quote the reasons for the absence of appointed Officers for the information of the Principals, the Companions and the official Representative. It is inappropriate for him to say, "He is unavoidably absent, etc" as in most cases he will not know this is so. It is better to volunteer the reason, e.g. "He is in hospital at the moment, etc." Similarly, the words, "Be upstanding" are equally inappropriate as

The Chapter Director of Ceremonies... continued

they best apply to horses and “Please rise” is far more suitable. Avoiding handling the Companions to be Invested lends dignity to the occasion especially if space around the Ensigns is restricted. It is better to acknowledge them with a court bow before leading them to the East and to return them in a similar manner.

The length of the proceedings should be evaluated and the caterers informed of the time the meal should be started; allowing a reasonable interval between for drinks to be taken, 30 minutes should be enough, anything over that could invite complaint. If the Chapter utilizes this time for the Stewards to re-arrange the Temple, they could leave after the last Rising to obtain their drinks.

3 Official Visits by Senior Provincial Executive Members

Protocol

Within the Province of East Kent, the Grand Superintendent, the Deputy Grand Superintendent or the Second or Third Provincial Grand Principals will visit Private Chapters at their pleasure on an official basis at Regular convocations and occasionally at Installation convocations. On such visits they will be accompanied by Active Provincial Grand Officers and escorted by the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies or a Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies and will always be seated on the right of the Exaltee or on the right of the Second Principal at Installation convocations both within the Temple and at the Festive Board.

Details of the visit will be notified to the Chapter Scribe E well in advance of the convocation by the Provincial Grand Scribe E and the Chapter summons should outline such visit on the agenda immediately following the Opening. No further business is to be conducted until after the Provincial Executive member has entered the Chapter. Following the confirmation of the minutes and any obituaries it is customary for the Chapter Scribe E. to read brief details of the relevant letter from the Provincial Grand Scribe E, concerning the visit by the Executive member and this becomes the opportunity for the First Principal to welcome him formally, to which he will give a suitable response. It is also traditional for the Provincial Executive member to perform the I.P.Z's 'security act' at the conclusion of the proceedings.

When addressing or referring to the Provincial Executive member, it should be borne in mind that the title of Excellent Companion should be associated with his name and not his Provincial Grand rank and that 'Most Excellent' should only precede 'Grand Superintendent' and not his name. The Escorting PrGDC will contact the Chapter Director of Ceremonies to discuss the procedure involved in the visit and may elect to attend a Chapter of Improvement or rehearsal to advise on the protocol. He will designate seating in the Temple for the accompanying Active Provincial Grand Officers and himself and ensure that wand stands are placed by his seat and at the point of address. He will also select a deputation of Provincial Grand Officers from the Chapter which may also include any Officers of the Supreme Grand Chapter. He may consult on the presentation of any Supreme Grand Chapter certificates, reminding the First Principal that he should politely invite the Executive member to so present, ascertain that a well informed Companion of the Chapter has been asked to propose the Official Toast at the Festive Board and upon the provision of any special car parking arrangements.

Official Visits by Senior Provincial Executive Members... continued

Following the opening of the Chapter the procedure is thus explained:

The Janitor will knock once on the door and the Scribe N will announce the report to the Principals. He will then make his customary enquiry at the door and the Janitor, who will be provided with the details of his name and rank, will report that the Escorting Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies seeks admission. The Scribe N, who will also be provided with such details, will announce the same to the First Principal who should simply respond, "Admit him". The Escorting PrGDC will enter, place his wand in the stand at the point of address, show the Sign and announce the name, titles and rank of the Executive member who demands admission. The First Principal should respond with, "We shall receive him with great pleasure, Companion Director of Ceremonies." He will then ask the First Principal for his permission to form a deputation to escort the Executive member into the Chapter, to which the First Principal should respond, "You have my permission to do so with pleasure." The Escorting PrGDC will then call upon the Chapter D.C. who will take up his wand and move to the South West If the size of the Temple is such so as to allow entry on both sides of the Ensigns then the A.D.C. may also be called upon. He will then ask the designated Provincial Grand Officers to form the deputation behind the Chapter D.C., make an announcement concerning the entrance of the Executive member, to the effect that he will be received in silence until after he has shown the Sign, when the Companions should then applaud as he approaches the Principals. The deputation will leave the Temple and the Chapter D.C. will introduce them to the Executive member. The Companions will be called to order by the Escorting PrGDC for the deputation to return in reverse order, lead by the Chapter D.C. and maybe the A.D.C. and form, facing inwards, alongside the Ensigns in the South should only the Chapter D.C. be involved and on both sides of the Ensigns if the A.D.C is also employed. The accompanying Active Provincial Grand Officers will then enter, they will show the Sign and form behind the deputation. The Escorting PrGDC will announce the Executive member then lead him to the point of address where he will also show the Sign. The Companions, not those forming the deputation, should then applaud as he moves to the East to be greeted by the Principals with a handshake and brief words of welcome by the First Principal after which, the Principals and he will be seated.

It is an established practice at Exaltations for the Executive member to congratulate the Exalte immediately after he has been congratulated by the Principals.

After the Chapter has closed and following any closing ode and the National Anthem, if applicable, the Escorting PrGDC will form the recession by indicating to the Scribe N to attend the door and then to the Chapter D.C. and A.D.C. who will take up their wands and move to the South West. He will form the recession behind them and on his command 'Forward Companions' the Chapter D.C. and A.D.C. will lead them out.

The After Proceedings

Whilst The Festive Board is generally a time to relax and to enjoy the company of those present, it should always be conducted in a fine Masonic style, observing all the relevant protocol and to bear in mind that, in respect of any jokes, moderation is the order of the day. Within the Temple the Principals rule as Haggai the Prophet, Joshua the Priest and Zerubbabel the King and it is in order to refer to them as such but outside of the Temple they should always be referred to as the First, Second or Third Principal and not by the names they adopt in the Temple or, 'Z', 'H' and 'J', as they are presiding over a Festive Board and not a Grand Sanhedrin.

When the Companions have taken their places at the Festive Board, the Chapter D.C. should sound the gavel and the Escorting PrGDC will call the Companions to order to receive the Principals, the Exaltee or Guest Speaker if applicable, together with the Executive member. The Companions should applaud as he leads them in a clockwise direction to their seats, in front of those Companions he passes and then calls upon the Third Principal for Grace.

Raffles

There is no restriction on the drawing of a raffle or similar fund-raising efforts however it is recommended that raffles are not held at special convocations, e.g. the presentation of a Centenary Charter, the Dedication of Chapter furnishings, etc., including White Table events, where the Provincial Grand Chapter Executive are likely to be present. (A mention of this could be made in the Temple before the Alms collection so as to encourage larger donations by the Companions.)

The Taking of Wine

The Chapter D.C. first announces that the Principals will take wine with the Companions for which it is customary to invite the Companions to remain seated. The Escorting PrGDC will then announce that the Principals will take wine with the Executive member. He will then seek the permission of the First Principal for the Executive member to take wine with the Companions and again it is customary for the Companions to remain seated. Following this, there are many variations within Private Chapters concerning other wine taking under the direction of the Chapter D.C. It is a popular view that the number of these should be kept to a minimum, bearing in mind that there are Official Toasts to the Supreme Grand Chapter and Provincial Grand Chapter Officers as well as the Guests but the Exaltee, any Guest Speaker, any Companion receiving a Long Service Certificate and the Principals of other Chapters should not be overlooked.

At the appropriate time, the Chapter D.C. will call upon the Third Principal for Grace. The First Principal should then ask the usual questions of the Principal Sojourner before the Official Toasts.

Official Visits by Senior Provincial Executive Members... continued

The Official Toasts

The Chapter Director of Ceremonies should ensure that the latest Official Toast list is available as it does vary from time to time and these are regularly supplied to the Chapter Scribe E as the circumstances demand and there is no need for any honorifics to be quoted. It is equally important that no Royal Arch 'fire' is given in the presence of non-masonic members, e.g. the waitresses. For those Companions charged with proposing the toast to the Grand Superintendent and other Executive members or a Representative of the Grand Superintendent, it is important that he is referred to by his full Grand and Provincial ranks.

Following the Loyal Toast which in the Province of East Kent should always be linked with Royal Arch Masonry, the Companions should remain standing as the Principals announce the Toast to the Most Excellent First Grand Principal. All should then be seated before the announcement of subsequent Toasts. There will be no reply to the Toast to The Supreme Grand Chapter but there will always be a response to the Toast to the Grand Superintendent if he is present and to the Provincial Grand Chapter of East Kent when any other Executive member is present or a Representative of the Grand Superintendent. After the Exalte has replied to his Toast or following the response from the Principals to their Toast, the Grand Superintendent or Executive member may wish to retire from the Festive Board before any remaining Toasts; for this the Companions will be asked to rise by the Escorting PrGDC as they leave and it is courteous for the Scribe E. and the Chapter D.C. to accompany them off the premises as their further assistance might be sought. The Companions they pass on their way out should step back to allow them to walk in front.

Procedure at Installation Convocations

A representative of the Grand Superintendent, in the person of a Supreme Grand Chapter Officer or the Provincial Grand Scribe N, will always attend the Installation convocations of Private Chapters and a letter to this effect will be forwarded to the Chapter Scribe E well in advance. He is not entitled to demand admission or to be escorted into the Chapter by a deputation but should be similarly escorted by the Chapter D.C. before the Principals enter. If a member of the Provincial Grand Chapter Executive or Past Provincial Grand Chapter Executive is present then they should also enter before the Principals. The Chapter Scribe E should read the appropriate letter from the Provincial Grand Scribe E immediately following the confirmation of the previous minutes and any obituary announcement when this becomes the opportunity for the First Principal to welcome the Representative. It is also customary for the Representative to be invited to perform the I.P.Zs 'security act' after the Chapter is closed and on the recession, the Chapter D.C. should place him directly behind the three Principals.

The After Proceedings

It is protocol for only the Representative to accompany the Principals into the Festive Board and he should be seated to the immediate right of the Second Principal. He will respond to the Toast to the Provincial Grand Chapter which should be proposed by a well informed Companion possibly the next in line for a Provincial First Appointment, (especially if he is informed that he is in the frame for such) as this may encourage his contribution in this respect. At the conclusion of the Festive Board, the Chapter Scribe E and the Chapter D.C. should also escort the Representative as he leaves, in the event that he may require further counsel.

4 Presentation of a Long Service Certificate

Long Service Certificates are granted by the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent with the arrangements for presentation co-ordinated well in advance by the Provincial Grand Scribe E. and presented by a Companion of the Provincial Executive who will be escorted by a Provincial Grand D.C. On some occasions, especially when it forms the main item on the agenda, most of the Provincial Executive may well be present. For such events, the recipient will always be seated to the immediate right of the Executive member within the Temple and at the Festive Board.

When the relevant item is announced by the First Principal, the Escorting PrGDC will rise, collect the certificate from the Scribe E. and hand it to the Executive member for his scrutiny. Following this, he will then instruct the Escorting PrGDC or the Provincial Grand Scribe E, if present, to read the Certificate to the Companions and under the direction of the Escorting PrGDC all will rise, except the recipient and the Executive member. Following the citation, the Companions will be instructed to sit and the certificate is then returned to the Executive member who will address the Companions on certain attributes concerning the recipient, then present it to him. The recipient should be afforded the opportunity to respond. It may well occur that at some time, either within the Temple or at the Festive Board, a further presentation from the Chapter will be made to the recipient and the procedure for this should be agreed with the Escorting PrGDC. At the conclusion of the convocation, the recipient will accompany the Executive member in the recession.

5 White Table Convocations

When attended by the Provincial Executive or an Executive Member

When the Ladies, families, friends and guests of the Companions are invited to attend any special convocation of the Chapter it is usual that they assemble in the bar whilst the business of the Chapter is being conducted. It is also considered desirable that a couple of Stewards or other Companions of the Chapter entertain them until the conclusion of the business.

The Chapter is opened in the customary manner with only Royal Arch Masons present and no business will be conducted until after the Executive member or the Provincial Executive has entered under the direction of the Escorting PrGDC according to the current protocol. If the convocation is held under a dispensation from the Province, this should be read by the Chapter Scribe E. as soon as all the Companions are seated. The Provincial Executive or Executive member will then be formally welcomed by the First Principal. Should it be a Regular convocation, the previous minutes will be confirmed, any obituaries announced and other agenda items dealt with. The Chapter will then be closed, with the I.P.Z's 'security act' performed by the Executive member. It is best that any closing ode be sung at this point and first verse of the National Anthem, if applicable, be postponed until the conclusion of the proceedings. All Companions will remain in the Temple, clothed in their regalia. The Escorting PrGDC, together with the Chapter D.C. will then escort the guests into the Chapter for which the Companions will be called upon to rise. They will enter in two columns, passing either side of the Ensigns and with this in mind, it is best that they occupy the seating in the front rows, but the Principal's Ladies, the I.P.Z's Lady and the Lady accompanying the senior Executive or Executive member, if accommodation allows, should always be seated in the East. At the recession, those Ladies will be escorted from the Temple by their respective partners under the direction of the Escorting PrGDC.

The Provincial Grand Organist will be called upon to assist if the occasion is to be for the Dedication of new Chapter furnishings, a Long Service Presentation or Centenary Celebration involving Prayers and the singing of Hymns (these will always conclude with 'Amen').

White Table Festive Board

The seating plan will always be formulated by the Companion of the Chapter responsible for such arrangements under the guidance of the Escorting PrGDC, who will also direct the entire after proceedings which will conclude with an abbreviated Toast List but there will always be a Toast to the Ladies and Guests, proposed by a Companion of the Chapter. The Royal Arch Grace is to be used, there will be no questions to the Principal Sojourner and no 'fire' on these occasions.

6 General Guidance

Dedication of Chapter Furnishings and Centenary Celebrations

Full ceremonial details for Banner Dedications, the Dedication of other new Chapter furnishings etc., including the format for the summons and Order of Proceedings for such event, may be obtained from the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies and it is quite important that the Chapter Scribe E. notifies the Provincial Grand Scribe E. well in advance of such occasions.

Principals Continuing in Office

Subject to the provisions of Regulation 51 of the Royal Arch Regulations, when a Principal has been elected for a second year in succession, no ceremony applies. Suitable remarks could be made by the First Principal or the I.P.Z. bearing in mind any other provision prescribed in the adopted ritual.

Exaltation of Two Candidates

The Candidates are prepared by the Janitor. P.S. retires and entrusts the senior Candidate. (It is the responsibility of the Janitor to ensure that the second Candidate does not witness this)

The ceremony proceeds to “You will now read the scroll, etc.”

The Candidate is then seated in the N.W. of the Chapter.

The P.S. retires to entrust the second Candidate, taking the hoodwink with him.

The ceremony proceeds as before to “You will now read the scroll, etc.”

After the second Candidate has read the scroll, the first Candidate is conducted to the point of address by the A.Soj. who then takes a seat in the N.W. of the Chapter. The two Candidates and the P.S. stand in line at the point of address, P.S. to the right of the first Candidate who stands between the P.S. and the second Candidate.

The ceremony proceeds as for a single Candidate.

At the point where the P.S. and Scribes retire to share The Name, the A.Soj. will take charge of the two Candidates who remain at the point of address, facing East.

The ceremony proceeds to “You will advance, etc.”

At this point, the P.S. conducts the first Candidate to the E. by the prescribed steps. The A.Soj. then conducts the second Candidate to the E. in a similar manner. The A.Soj. remains in the E. to assist in the investitures.

The ceremony proceeds with the M.E.Z. addressing the two Candidates simultaneously, “The robes with which you have been invested, etc.”

At the time he invests the first Candidate, the D.C./A.D.C. invests the second Candidate. When entrusting the Candidates with the Staff of Office, it is held by both Candidates, one with his left hand and the other with his right hand, During the sharing of The Sacred Name it is not necessary for the Second Principal to assist – the second Candidate forms the third point of the triangle.

General Guidance... continued

The Candidates, P.S. and A.Soj. return to the point of address. The A.Soj. takes a seat in the N.W. of the Chapter. The ceremony continues with the P.S. standing between the Candidates. At the point of “Be seated” the P.S. sits on the right of the Candidates.

The ceremony proceeds with the Lectures.

The A.Soj. assists the second Candidate when displaying the signs, after which he resumes his seat in the N.W. of the Chapter.

The Mystical Lecture

At the words, “into regular form, etc.” the P.S. and A.Soj. escort the Candidates to the S. of and in line with the Altar. P.S. on the right of the Candidates and the A.Soj. on the left.

At the words, “His mighty, etc.” the P.S., A.Soj. and Candidates return to the W. in front of their chairs. The A.Soj. takes a seat in the N.W. of the Chapter.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the P.S. conducts the first Candidate and the A.Soj. the second Candidate to the E. to receive the By-laws, etc. All then return to the W. and resume their seats, P.S. in the centre. The A.Soj. resumes his seat in the N.W. of the Chapter.

The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies expects this booklet not to be visible during the proceedings of the convocation.

There are no salutes in the Order of The Holy Royal Arch although some Ritual Associations incorporate the Craft Master Mason’s salute in the Exaltation ceremony. It should also be borne in mind that there is no longer a requirement to show the Sign when addressing the Principals but should be shown on entering or leaving the Chapter.

