



Provincial Grand Chapter of East Lancashire

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Dear Companion Scribe E

Royal Arch Changes

Following the Convocation of Supreme Grand Chapter on 10th November 2004, a Working Party under the Chairmanship of the 2nd Provincial Grand Principal, EComp Allan Bennion, has now reviewed the Grand Scribe E's Circular advice given to all Scribes E.

The Circular indicated a number of mandatory changes, together with a few optional changes, which were introduced by Supreme Grand Chapter.

All Companions are required to be made aware of the changes and to be given the opportunity to make observations. In some Chapters this means voting on their acceptance or otherwise.

To assist in your consideration / dissemination, the Working Party has made the following recommendations / observations:

“Mandatory Changes

1. The Reverential or Hailing Sign should only be given at the Opening and Closing of the Chapter, and by late arrivals when entering the Chapter for the first time.
The sign should not to be given when addressing the Principals.
2. In the (former) ceremony of Exaltation, the MEZ [or other Principal] addresses the candidate and informs him that the degree into which he has been Exalted is not a fourth degree but the Master Mason's degree completed. **All reference to this former wording must be removed from the ritual.**

We congratulate you on being exalted into Royal Arch Masonry, at once the foundation and keystone of the whole Masonic structure. When you were raised to the Third Degree you were informed that by the untimely death of our M.... H Ab the secrets of a MM were lost, and that certain substituted secrets were adopted to distinguish all MM's until time or circumstances should restore the genuine. These secrets were lost for a period of nearly 500 years, and were regained in the manner which has just been described to you, somewhat in dramatic form, the more forcibly to impress on your mind the Providential means by which those ancient secrets were regained. A perfect understanding of those secrets can only be gained by passing through the three Principals' Chairs, and we look forward to the day when you will occupy those high offices and complete your knowledge of this Order, Companions please be seated.

3. Chapters are now permitted, in exceptional circumstances, to elect to the Third Chair [J] Royal Arch Masons who have not previously been through the Chair in the Craft. They must have qualified in the usual way and would also be eligible for progression through the 2nd and 1st Chairs. [a suggested ritual attached.]
In consequence of this the sign and word of an Installed Master in the Craft **must not be used under any circumstances.**
4. Within the Historical Lecture there are three dates – these are to be deleted.
5. In the description of the Circle on the Plate of Gold in the Mystical Lecture the words, “endless life and everlasting bliss”, are to be deleted and replaced with the words, “eternal life”.

Optional Changes *[the details of which are included in the Supreme Grand Chapter Circular]*

1. Two, short, additional paragraphs are suggested to be added to that already said by the MEZ to the candidate after the restoration of the candidate to light. These additional paragraphs may be said by the MEZ or either, or both, of the co-Principals.
2. Every Chapter is strongly recommended to agree to introduce the explanation of the signs into its ritual. To assist in making this more acceptable, a new, shorter, version has been offered by Supreme Grand Chapter.
3. Supreme Grand Chapter offers a new, shorter, version of the Symbolical Lecture and suggests that this be used in place of the longer original.
4. Supreme Grand Chapter makes a very strong suggestion that the Mystical Lecture should be delivered at every Exaltation. Again, to encourage its acceptability, a new, shorter, version of the lecture is offered by Supreme Grand Chapter.
5. There are recommended alterations to the Scripture Readings for Installations, including shortening them. Although it is believed by many that the shortening does not materially alter the message, others take the view that it completely changes the story. These need to be read and carefully considered.
6. In exceptional circumstances when a Third Principal elect is not an Installed Master, he should be made aware of the Chapter’s desire that he should commit himself to progressing through to the Master’s Chair in a Craft Lodge. This would require adding a small sentence to the ritual to this effect.

Companions, the above information has been provided to assist all members of the Royal Arch to fully understand both the mandatory and optional changes which have been agreed by Supreme Grand Chapter.

A Royal Arch Demonstration team is to visit the various Royal Arch Areas of the Province to further explain and demonstrate these changes. In the meanwhile, you will be contacted by your Area Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals, who will provide you with the details and the date of the demonstration”.

Craft Summonses

Craft Secretaries are now being requested to include the following on their Summonses as part of their advice regarding joining the Royal Arch:

“The Supreme Order of the Royal Arch is the completion of a Mason’s journey through Pure Antient Freemasonry”.

Suggested Ritual for providing the passwords to a Third Principal designate

Companions retired.

After “DC escorts J Elect to W”

IZ (to DC) EComp (surname) You will communicate to Comp (surname), J Elect, the Password and the import of the Password leading to the Third Principal's Chair.

DC (to J Elect) The word is S..... and the import of the word is an O....

IZ (to J Elect) I now call upon you for the Password (given) and the import of the Password (given).

IZ (to J Elect) Before you retire I must inform you that to enable you to gain admission to a Conclave of Installed Third Principals a password is required. This password is B ... signifying a c ... and will be required of you by the Installing SN on your return. You will now retire.

Please do not hesitate to contact your Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals or your District Officer, Royal Arch, for any further advice / assistance with these latest changes.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Garne" followed by a stylized flourish.

Provincial Grand Scribe E.