



PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE ESSENTIALS

Prepared by the Grand Lodge P. & E. Committee
Issue No. 11 – March 2011

Greetings from Your P. & E. Committee

Welcome to the eleventh issue of "*P&E Essentials*". It is anticipated that these informative and easy-to-read newsletters will be published several times a year.

"*P&E Essentials*" is intended to be an interactive instrument, designed to help you make a daily advancement in Masonic knowledge. The Committee welcomes questions and/or suggestions for topics that could be addressed in future issues. Questions or suggestions not related to Protocol and Etiquette will be forwarded to the appropriate Grand Lodge Committee for response.

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Committee Members

The current Protocol & Etiquette Committee members are:

Gordon Crutcher (*Chairman*); William Elliott; Dennis Hawman; Terry Hornibrook; Jacques Lacourse Jr.; George McCowan (*Secretary*); Bryan Middleton; Jack Mittleholtz; Richard Morreau; James Pearson; Garnet Schenk (*Editor of P&E Essentials*); Brian Seaborn; David Stevens; and Terrance Van Horne.

With appropriate advance notice – and subject to travel constraints – any member of the Committee would be happy to make a presentation about P&E in your Lodge, or at a District Meeting.

WHY IS THE MASTER CALLED "WORSHIPFUL"

"Worshipful" is an old English word signifying "worthy of respect." Masonically it is a title of respect for the office of the presiding officer, the Master, who the brethren believe possessed of sufficient knowledge, wisdom, and integrity to preside over them in a proper manner. We use the word in its ancient sense – not in its modern sense of denoting awe and humility before a Supreme Being. Indeed, English and Canadian mayors are still addressed as: "Your Worship."

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

What do the following Masonic titles have in common?

- Grand **MASTER**
- Past Grand **MASTER**
- Deputy Grand **MASTER**
- District Deputy Grand **MASTER**
- Installing **MASTER**
- Past **MASTER**
- Immediate Past **MASTER**
- **Worshipful MASTER**

Hopefully this will help you to remember that the official title of the presiding Officer of a Lodge is "Worshipful **Master**". He should always be addressed as "Worshipful **Master**", (unless otherwise specified in the ritual).

The titles of "*Sitting Master*" and "*Ruling Master*" are superfluous and improper.

SALUTING THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

The Book of the Work directs that the only times a brother shall salute the Worshipful Master are:

- When entering the Lodge;
- When leaving the Lodge;
- When addressing the Worshipful Master; and
- When called for in the Ritual.

It follows therefore that a salute is **NOT** required:

- After you have received instructions from the Worshipful Master. (The Wardens will, of course, be guided by the Book of the Work.)
- After you have finished speaking. (**AVOID THE "SECOND SALUTE"**.)

Please remember that salutes are only given to the Worshipful Master, (or to the brother who is in possession of the gavel in Lodge).

Please share this newsletter with other members of your Lodge – and your Masonic friends

Wardens therefore do not salute each other. Neither does a Junior Warden salute an Inner Guard.

As salutes go upward, (not downward), it is quite proper for the I.G. to salute when reporting that the Lodge is properly/closely tyled, or that there is an alarm. While it may appear that he is saluting the J.W., the I.G.'s salute is really being conveyed through the J.W. to the W.M.

A similar situation can be found when the Deacon(s) and the candidate are perambulating. When the Deacon is on the left of the candidate, (i.e. between the candidate and the Worshipful Master), both the Deacon and the candidate salute when passing the Worshipful Master. The candidate's salute is presumably being transmitted by the Deacon to the Worshipful Master.

TAKE THE PROPER STEP BEFORE SALUTING

The Floorwork in each Degree instructs us that salutes can only be given AFTER we have taken the proper step. Please make it a point to first take the proper step **before** you salute, (EXCEPT while perambulating in front of the Worshipful Master). (Read "Salute In Passing" in Harry Carr's essential reference, *The Freemason At Work*, for more information about why we do not salute when perambulating in front of the Worshipful Master.)

SALUTING

Salutes are a formal gesture of respect. The Masonic etiquette of saluting the Worshipful Master is your renewed pledge of fealty and service. It is your public display of decorum before all the other brethren.

It shows your courteous and heart-felt respect for all that a Worshipful Master stands. It shows that you acknowledge his authority and our traditions.

The salute to the Master is your pledge of honor and service, your publicly-shown obligation. A lazy, sloppy or improper salute is to be Masonically impolite and, thus, to exhibit poor Masonic etiquette.

Give salutes that are accurate and precise. A sloppy salute not only looks out of place, it also reflects poorly on the individual doing it. That brother is failing to give the office of Worshipful Master the respect which it deserves.

The "limp wristed", the "droopy elbow", the "short stroke", and the "half-hearted" salute will not merit the respect and esteem of your fellow brethren.

If you've forgotten how to make a proper salute, pay attention the next time you witness the Floorwork in any

of the Degrees. 99% of the time, the candidate is instructed properly. Observe and remember.

The actions of our more experienced brethren can greatly influence the behavior of our newer members. If you salute in a sloppy way, you are teaching them to do the same. Improper acts can be contagious.

QUESTIONS

1. Q: Should you hold the salute until it is acknowledged by the Worshipful Master?

A: While the Worshipful Master SHOULD return all salutes, the brother giving the salute does not hold his salute until the W.M. responds. Unlike the military, we simply give the salute and then drop it.

Sometimes a busy or distracted Worshipful Master can fail to immediately return a salute. Please do not embarrass him, or unduly delay the meeting by waiting for him to acknowledge it.

2. Q: Can a salute be given while seated?

A: Obviously this how a Worshipful Master returns most salutes. Everyone else, however, should be standing before they salute, as they must first take the proper step.

3. Q: What if a brother is elderly, infirm, or has an injury which makes it extremely difficult for him to stand and salute?

A: In such cases, the brother should simply sit there without making any sign. (It is better to make no sign than to give one improperly.)

The Worshipful Master (and most of the members) will be aware of that brother's special circumstances. Here is a case when common sense should prevail over protocol. The first consideration of the Worshipful Master is for the welfare of the brethren.

4. Q: In a similar vein, what should an elderly, infirm, or injured brother do when the Grand Honours are being accorded to a distinguished visitor?

A: Once again, the brother should simply sit there without making any sign. As HE is not receiving the Grand Honours, HE should not assume the S of F.

5. Q: Is it permissible for an elderly, infirm, or injured brother to give the S of F while remaining seated for OBs and prayers?

A: Yes. As no step is required before assuming the S of F, such a brother could remain seated for OBs and prayers, while giving the S of F at the appropriate time.

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