THE LADDER OF ROSES

A ceremony to be used to honor the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron together. With very little change, it can also be used for any two honored guests, or even for one, if desired.

Have a Drill Team of 16, more or less, in formats, dressed alike, if possible, or in white. Each one is to carry a sword or cane. This may be a lath with a narrow crosspiece at the handle for ease of handling. It should be about a yard long, and covered with roses, real or artificial.

WORTHY MATRON: Tonight we honor our Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron within our Chapter room, and our hearts are warm with love and pride for each of them. Sister Marshal, you will proclaim our Chapter room a Temple of Virtue.

MARSHAL, raising right hand, palm outward: By order of the Worthy Matron, I now proclaim this Chapter room a Temple of Virtue; where Faith, Hope and Charity, as Patron Saints, exemplify what is in each heart tonight. And, now, let the doors of the Temple be opened. (If this is for the Good of the Order, the Bible will have been closed, or a recess declared.)

The doors are opened.

WORTHY MATRON: Sister ——— , and Brother ——— , your visit means much to us; for in living the virtues mentioned by our Marshal, you have grown in beauty of service and have climbed the ladder of love and achievement. For this and for many other things, we honor you tonight.

Drill Team enters, eight by each door. The two lines march due east, each sister holding her cane (or sword) horizontal, forward and above the head, with one hand on each end. In front of Adah and Elect a, respectively, the lines turn square corners, and march toward each other. They continue in golden chain formation across the room. This is: No. 1 on the south side passes No. 1 on the north side to the right, then crosses behind her to pass to the left of No. 2. then she crosses behind No. 2, to pass No. 3 on the right; and so on. No. 2 of the south side passes No. 1 on the left, crossing behind to pass No. 2 on the right. Each one takes the opposite side in crossing, to the one immediately in front. (The grand chain of a square dance.) Thus lines reach other side. Lines continue east and again face each other.

WORTHY MATRON, while chain is being created:

The golden chain of friendship
Is forged on nights like this;
While in your gracious presence
We share a moment’s bliss.

The two lines meet and, forming pairs, with canes doubled, as doubled rungs of a ladder, march due west toward Altar. They halt when the lines are straight. There are eight rungs of ladder if 16 are in the march. Worthy Matron offers her arm to Worthy Grand Matron, and Worthy Patron offers his arm to Worthy Grand Patron, and each is escorted through the ladder. Each rung forces a halt, then canes are raised to form a pointed arch under which
the four pass, two by two. This can be worked out to the rhythm of "step, step, halt," in "1, 2, 3, 4," time. As this is being done, CHOIR or SOLOIST sings to tune, "Moonlight and Roses," the following words:

Ladder of roses  
Will show what you mean to each one;  
Your Starry virtues  
Shine as an effulgent sun.

Faith, Hope and Charity  
Are shown in our Temple tonight;  
And may these roses  
And to your delight.

As honor guests pass through the last rung of the ladder, Sisters turn right (to the north) and Brothers to the south. They stand in front of Adah and Electa, respectively, about halfway to the east. Ladder lines now break formation, north line turning north, south line turning south, each line circling one couple. Canes are dropped and held horizontal, waist high, until lines begin to circle the two standing. Then canes are held toward them, still horizontal. Worthy Matron takes the ends of the canes for north circle, four in each hand; and Worthy Patron does the same for south circle. The canes now form spokes of two wheels, with honored guests forming the hub of each. The eight forming the rims keep spaced as evenly as possible. Slowly and continuously, they make the complete circle. As they do this, Marshal again raises her right hand, palm outward, and speaks.

**MARSHAL:** The Wheels of Time are ever turning in our Temple of Virtue. Your achievements and your loving efforts in our behalf will keep them from hesitating, will keep them as wheels of progress, with a destiny far beyond our knowing. As Hubs in our Wheel of Time, we salute you!

Chapter rises spontaneously, and claps.

Chapter and Marshal are seated. Circular lines break at northeast and southwest, canes over right shoulders. Lines turn, form quarter circles to meet due east of altar. The two lines form a half circle behind the four standing (together). Canes are now held out in front, at a slant, to form a canopy of flowers over the heads of the four.

At this time, make the presentations, if any are to be made. Children may be used for this, if satisfactory, or any member desired.

Then to march music, honored guests are seated in the East, as lines break where they came together, east of altar. Then, in double lines, march west, circling altar with square corners; then, northwest and southwest, they retire as they entered.

This ceremony gives ample theme for any decorations desired. A floral arch for table center, dressed dolls with canes, or wheels, or ladders. And, of course, roses everywhere. (The Grand Matron's flower can effectively be substituted in place of roses.)