

O. E. S. GRAND
CHAPTER LIBRARY

#4
Folder 30

From June Roberts
Bismarck Ch. No.

A-67.

THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST.

This ceremony honors all Past Matrons and Past Patrons, and specially honors a Past Grand Matron. It is put on for the Good of the Order. When Guests are introduced, these Past Officers are seated on each side of the room, toward the East. The Past Officers selected to act through this ceremony have been informed beforehand.

Worthy Matron: Tonight our meeting honors those,
Who served in our past years, -
Who did all duties willingly,
And shared our hopes and fears.
For each one strove to serve us well,
With head, and hands, and heart;
And in our Chapter's glowing past,
Each had a leading part.

As well as honoring our Past Matrons and Past Patrons, we are paying special tribute to Sister -----, Past Grand Matron of -----, who is a treasured Member of this Chapter, and this ceremony is dedicated to her. (She will be seated in the East). (Two raps call up Chapter.) Sister Officers, you will retire and escort selected Past Matrons to your stations.

The Past Matrons and Past Patrons are in lines East and West, West of Chaplain and Marshall. In the front lines are the Past Matrons who are to assist in this ceremony, in the following order... in the South from East to West, are the Associate Matron, Marshall, Ruth, Secretary, Adah and Conductress; in the North from East to West are Esther, Chaplain, Martha, Electa, and Associate Conductress. Worthy Patron, Associate Patron, Warder and Sentinel do not leave their stations.

Conductresses lead lines East down honor line, down center aisle, then down inside aisle, with Officers falling in line as they go along. They stop in front of Past Matrons and offer arms, Conductress right arm, and Associate Conductress left arm, and continue march abreast down inside aisles West, down outside aisles to stations, as in regular opening march.

Worthy Matron: The words of honor spoken here tonight,
Are but a fraction of what each heart holds;
And as the weeks merged into years,
Your faithful service the whole world beholds.
Each heart is happy that we have you here,
And every year we share, you grow more dear.

Worthy Patron: Past Patrons, Brothers, I must add a word,
To echo the sentiments just heard;
I would not leave one thought unsaid....
You followed where these Sisters led.
Loyally and willingly, year by year,
You served with hope, and zest, and cheer.

Beginning with Conductress, each Officer says a few words, as she pins badge on selected Officer.

Conductress: God gave you understanding,
And through the years you share
Our joys and plans, our hopes and fears,
The burdens that we bear.

The Last Shall be First.- page 2.

Associate Conductress:

Your records are an offering,
We know you gave your best;
Service was our foundation,
Your love made manifest.

Adah:

The sweed and veil are my tribute
To obedience to right and duty;
Past Matrons showed Fidelity,
And made of their service beauty.

Ruth:

The sublime example of Constancy
Was left by each honored Guest;
And to brighten this foundation
This emblem will shine its best.

Esther:

The sparkle of this emblem
As a white foundation stone,
Reflects the courage and the joy
That through each year was shown.

Martha:

To pay a fitting tribute
To the faith and trust serene,-
Shown by these earnest Members,
I add this emerald green.

Electa:

~~They served in love, and in that love~~
I add this emblem fair;
My red made bright by sacrifice,
By love and service rare.

Secretary:

A story fair in my records I claim,
A foundation fair, it will always remain.

Treasurer:

As Keeper of the Chapter's gold and treasure,
I give you tribute, and love's full measure.

Marshall:

This emblem now is a tribute fair
From our present security, -
To these honored Guests who laid our plans
On foundations of purity.

Chaplain:

The pearls of wisdom I now add,
The wisdom of God's holy word;
That guided these dear Members safe,
As always His blest promise heard.

Associate Matron:

The jewel of authority
Was shared by each in that one's year;

The Last Shall be First.- page 3.

From East and West, again tonight,
Comes tribute for these Members dear.

Officers then retire to seats vacated by Past Matrons, as Soloist sings to tune "I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover," the words:

Sing, sweet and glorious, for Members victorious,
In our Chapter's morning light;
They saw a vision within their heart,
Each volunteered, and each took a part.
And our foundation is their creation,
It shines in Star radiance bright;
So, sing to Past Matrons and to Past Patrons,
We honor them here tonight.

Worthy Matron: The Officers will now form a prayer circle around our Altar.

This is the same as in Initiatory, except that Chaplain stands in circle. Star Points carry flowers appropriate to station, and others carry colored candles. While soft music is played, Marshall lights the candles. When Officers are in position Conductress and A. Conductress approach the East, (and invite Past Grand Matron,) and Worthy Matron to join the circle.

Conductress: Worthy Matron (and Past Grand Matron,) we invite you to enter our circle.

The four join circle at East of Altar.

Conductress: This is our sacred circle. When it is formed at Initiation it is in honor of a new Member. Tonight, formed by Past Matrons, it is in honor of Sister ----, (who has achieved the highest honor given to any Star in our State.)

A voice of inspiration, and a light,
A living strength for everything that's good;
In sacred fellowship you showed the way,
In justice, love, and blessed Sisterhood.

Marshall places blue candle on Altar, saying,

Marshall: The blue light of Fidelity ever reminds us that you were faithful to your trust.

Secretary places yellow candle on Altar, saying,

Secretary: The yellow light of Constancy is a token of your patience and industry be your station humble or high.

Associate Matron places white light on Altar.

A. Matron: The white light burns ever brighter for the way your pure and upright life brings light and joy wherever you are.

Chaplain places green candle on Altar.

Chaplain: The green light of faith reminds us that your trust and hope have been as a prayer throughout the years.

Treasurer places red candle on Altar.

Treasurer: The red light of love reflects the love that has blossomed in your faithful service, and it finds an echo in every heart.

The Star Point Officers offer their flowers to the Past Grand Matron, saying,

Adah: The courage and self-sacrifice that Adah ever showed,
Your matched from day to day, throughout a lifelong road.

Ruth: The Constancy of widowed Ruth, the love she showed another,
This was the pattern of your love to Sister and to Brother.

Esther: As Esther loved her people and kept her honor bright,
You scattered joy along your way, and purity, and light.

Martha: The green of Immortality, this fair and living green,
Reflects your faith, and hope and trust, that made your day serene.

Electa: The red of fervency I give, and hospitality,
The love reflected back to you, for your sweet charity.

Worthy Matron steps forward with narrow ribbon, preferably the Matron's purple.
She ties flowers together, saying,

Worthy Matron: This tribute from Past Officers,
Comes from the heart of each;
I add a word from here and now,
And other lessons teach.
And as I tie this tribute fair,
Uniting in its beauty...
I tie our present to your past,
Saluting all your duty.
And so we dedicate to you
This service with our love,
As our Conductress with the Book
Salutes our God above.

Chaplain kneels.

Chaplain: Most gracious Lord, we kneel before Thy throne,
To ask that Thou wilt make Thy plan our own;
Bless this dear Sister, and bless each one here,
That we may serve in love and without fear.
And with Thy pattern in our hearts to teach,
In humble adoration may we strive to reach.

Chaplain returns to circle as Soloist sings, tune "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing",
You have scattered golden sunbeams,
And, in giving, made them ours;
You have made a firm foundation,
And have added treasured hours.
For the treasures of tomorrow,
Are the gifts of yesterday;
And the memories most cherished,
Beautify our Star's pure ray.

They leave Altar as usual and return to stations. As Chaplain goes to kneel at Altar, Worthy Patron calls Chapter up, and he seats it when she has returned to circle.

The regular Officers reverse opening to retire selected Past Matrons, and take their stations for closing of Chapter.

This concludes ceremony.