



**Grand Council
of
Allied Masonic Degrees
of the
United States of America**

RITUAL NUMBER 2

Red Branch and Royal Order of Eri

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Red Branch of Eri

(Knight of the Red Branch, and of the Royal Order of Eri)

Officers of the Order:

Commander or Chieftain - in the East
Ard Brehon - in the West
Ard Cruimthear - in the South
Ard Ollam - in the North
Ard Bard - in East, on Commander's right, near harp
2nd Bard - in West, on Brehon's right
3rd Bard - in South, on Cruimthear's right
4th Bard - in North, on Ollam's right
Master of Ceremonies - unstationed
Captain of the Guard - behind Brehon, Junior Deacon's station
Herald or Bollasain - Near Standard Bearer
Standard Bearer - left of Commander
Sword Bearer - in the East, behind the Commander
Sentinel - outside door, Tiler's station
Trumpeter - may be a Junior (2nd,3rd,4th) Bard, unstationed
4 Knights - unstationed

Regalia of Members of the Order

Man-at-Arms - Green Chapeau (beret) with a narrow red band.
Man-at-Arms- Sash blue and white sash
Man-at-Arms- Lance or spear; and small round shield with harp as a device (on it).

Esquire – Breast Jewel, Green Cross Pattee suspended from a crimson ribbon
Esquire- Green chapeau (beret) with a silver band above the red one;
Esquire- Sash blue, white and green sash;
Esquire-Lance or spear; dagger; oval shield with a Knight's crest above a harp as a device (on it);

Knight's- Breast Jewel, Nine pointed star surrounding a band with the motto "Erin-go-Bragh" engraved on it, surrounding a circle of 32 emeralds, surrounding a crowned Harp in the center.

Knight's- Neck Jewel, white Salem Cross with a Red Branch superimposed sinister, suspended by a green ribbon.

Knight's - Green Chapeau (beret) with a gold band and one eagle feather fastened by a gold shamrock

Knight's - Sash blue, white, green and yellow sash

Knight's- Mantle (green cloak) or lined in red, decorated on the left side by a Harp with the Red Branch badge above it, fastened by an Irish Broach

Knight's - Lance or spear with green pennon attached

Knight's- Sword and buckler; dagger

Knight's- Shield of standard heraldic type, blank for candidate, emblazoned with a knight's crest

Knight's- Golden Spurs

Knight's Commander- [Most Senior Knight or Chieftain of the Faslaire of the Red Branch of Eri]

Knight's Commander- Breast Jewel, Nine pointed Star same as Knight

Knight's Commander- Neck Jewel is an Irish Cross in red surmounted by a celestial crown, suspended from a Silver Chain

Knight's Commander- Breast Jewel in the form of an equilateral cross-made up of nine shamrocks (3 emeralds each) with a ruby in the center of the center shamrock. The Jewel may be suspended from a green ribbon below the star.

Knight's Commander- Sash blue, white, green, yellow and red

Knight's Commander- Chapeau with two eagle feathers

Knight's Commander- White Wand, no lance.

Knight's Commander- Mantle (green cloak) or lined in red, decorated on the left side by a Harp with the Red Branch badge above it, fastened by an Irish Broach

Knight's Commander- Golden spurs

Knight's Grand Cross –[Grand Officers]

Knight's Grand Cross - Breast Jewel, Nine pointed Star same as Knight

Knight's Grand Cross – Neck Jewel is a Patriarchal Cross in Red suspended from a Gold Chain

Knight Grand Cross - Sash blue, white, green, yellow, red and black

Knight Grand Cross - Knight's chapeau with three eagle feathers
Knight's Grand Cross- White Wand, no lance
Knight's Grand Cross- Banner
Knight's Grand Cross- Arms, and shield being carried by attendants
Knight's Grand Cross- Clothing as a Knight Commander

Supreme Grand Cross- [Grand Master/Past Grand Masters]
Supreme Grand Cross- Breast Jewel
Supreme Grand Cross- Neck Jewel gold chain, composed alternately of
Shamrocks and Harps with a Jewel
suspended is a Cross of Salem in Red
Supreme Grand Cross- Sash blue, white, green, yellow, red, black and
purple
Supreme Grand Cross- Clothing as a Knight Grand Cross

Equipment for Orders

Blindfold
Roll of Eolus
Post for stake - 81 inches tall
Short staff
Emerald cross (may be Knight's jewel)
Stone for Altar
Large, substantial shield
A representation of a round stone tower

Lodge Arrangements

A Faslaire of the Red Branch of Eri is supposed to represent an armed camp in the field. The Altar is to resemble a stone. In the West should be placed two columns having square pedestals, whose sides face E.W.N.& S., on the top of each column is a sphere, on which the Constellations are shown. One column is dedicated to Winds and the other to Fire. In the East is a model or drawing of a Round Tower, in the center of which is a pole 9 times 9 inches high. The Presiding Knight wears a gilt or gold chain, composed alternately of Shamrocks and Harps, in commemoration of the capture of Malachi from the Danish champion (Tornar) of his wonderful gold chain. The presiding Officer is armed with a curious sword (like a creese), to represent that captured by Malachi from the Dane (Calus) which is carried by the Sword Bearer. Each member wears an appropriate sash. The Knight's "stalls"

should be a single row of seats on the North and South sides of the room. The terms "Ard" and "Knight" are used synonymously, though "Ard" actually means "High".

Introduction

The history of this degree, as with others is shrouded with uncertainty. According to F.G.Irwin, the degree was in existence in Ireland prior to 1757 when it came to the US by means of immigrants and was passed down in the O'Donnell family until it was conferred on Irwin in 1858. Irwin took the degree to England and established it as a working body instituting Brian Boru Faslairt No. 1 in Bristol in 1872. Ermenion Faslairt No. 2 of London, Malachi No. 3 in Dublin, and Eamhuim No. 4 in New Zeland followed. It became dormant around the turn of the century and was revived in 1918 by members of the SRIA with a new ritual. It became an invitational body for SRIA V^o degree and above members of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. There are two Faslairts active, one in London and one in Australia. M.V. J.Ray Shute and M.V. William M.Brown obtained permission of the English authorities to establish this Degree in the US with the AMD. It was adopted in 1933 with every AMD member eligible for membership upon payment of the fee. The degree became an honor in 1937 when Grand Steward's Council "B" was established and local Councils were allowed to nominate one "Grand Steward" each year who would receive the degree as a consequence of membership. In 1940, the Grand Council allowed the local Councils to directly designate a limited number of members for this honorary degree each year. This practice still continues today. This ritual is the 19th century English ritual as copied from John Yarker's manuscript. It has been included in the general ritual since 1960. Prior to that time it was available only to Red Branch of Eri members as "Ritual #3". The emblem of the degree as used by the AMD in the US is a white Salem Cross with a red branch superimposed sinister. In England the emblem used by the Grand Mur-Ollamham is an Irish cross in red superimposed on a green circle. Both of these emblems are used by the AMD in Canada. For further information consult the Miscellanea Volumes I part 5, VI part 3, and XII part 6.

Procession

When the first trumpet sounds Men-at-Arms enter and range around the hall.

When the second trumpet sounds Esquires enter and take their post near the stalls of the Knights.

When the third trumpet sounds Knights enter and stand by their stalls.

When the fourth trumpet sounds Knight Commanders enter under their banners.

When the fifth trumpet sounds Grand Crosses enter, seniors first, and take their seats on either side of the dais.

Opening of the Abad or Camp

Commander - Brave Knights of Eri, assist me to open this Faslaire of Knights of the Red Branch of Eri. Will our trusty Phrater, the Knight A... see that none but members of the Clanna Ruid Ruide are present, and that our encampment is securely guarded ?

Ard A - I find our camp secure.

Com - Trusty Knight Ard Ollam, who are privileged to attend our councils ?

Ard O - Knights, Brehons, Ollams, Cruimtheirs, Bards.

Com - Why are those of a lower order not represented ?

Ard O - Because the lower grades have not received the requisite education and proper training.

Com - Sir Knight Ard Ollam, who was the founder of our Order ?

Ard O - The King of Ulster, who in the year 93 B.C. appointed his nine sons, each as a Chief or Grand Cross of the Knights belonging to certain districts, permitting each to appoint nine Knights as his personal guard.

Com - Sir Knight Ard Ollam, what are your duties ?

Ard O - To study philosophy - to nourish the young mind with lessons of truth and wisdom, and thereby teach them to subdue their passions.

Com - Sir Knight Ard Cruimthear, what are your duties ?

Ard C - To wait on the moon, mark the seasons, note time, watch the motion of Sars Nase (in the constellation of Orion), guard the sacred fires, kindle the blaze on the chief altars, direct the traveler in the darkness of the night, to comfort the weary and afflicted beneath the shelter of our camp, and especially to invoke the blessing of Ab, the Lifegiver and Sustainer, on all our proceedings.

Com - Sir Knight Ard Cruimthear, you will invoke a blessing from the All Wise on the work now before us. [***]

(Ard Cruimthear rises, and Sir Knights drop on right knee.)

Prayer: Ard C - Almighty and Eternal Father, bless us, we now beseech Thee, all now here assembled, and grant that we may continue honest and loyal, brave and true, even as were our Royal Founders. Amen.

Com - Sir Knights (Ards), In the Name of God and of our Royal Founder, the good king Acremon, I declare this Faslairt duly opened and call upon all those present to take the usual oath. (all draw swords)

Oath (All together) - Upon Sun, Moon, and Stars, Sword and Spear, we swear ever to be true to Eri, our Sovereign, and our Phraters (at the words "Eri", "Sovereign" and "Phraters" all the Knights raise their swords in right hand to Heaven)

(Trumpets sound and all take their seats.)

Ard C - Trusty Knights, give ear to the writings of our Father

Eolus. (Reads a chapter. See O'Connor's chronicles.)

Knights - (Rising) Thanks be to our Father Eolus for his wise precepts.

(Ard Bard plays a national air on Harp, or he may instead sing one of the national melodies [like "O'Donnell Aboo!"], or the following:) –

[To the tune "Let Erin Remember The Days Of Old"]

Let Erin remember the days of old,
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her;
When Malachi wore the collar of gold,
Which he won from her proud invader.
When her Kings, with standards of green unfurled,
Led the Red Branch Knights to danger
And saved the Gem of the Eastern world
From being set in the Crown of a stranger.
On Lough Neagh's banks as fisherman shays,
In the clear cold eve's declining,
He sees the Round Towers of other days
In the waves beneath him shining.
Thus shall memory often in dreams sublime,
Catch glimpses of the days that are over.
And, sighing, look through the waves of time
For the long faded glories they cover.

(or)

["The Red Branch Knight"- [to the tune of "The Minstral Boy"]

The Red Branch Knight to the fight is gone,
In the battle's front you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on
And his wild harp slung behind him.
Land of song, said the Warrior Bard,
Though all the world assail thee,
One Knight at least thy right shall guard
One faithful harp shall praise thee.

Ceremony of Admission of a Man-At Arms 1

(A knock outside - * **) [CoG opens door]

Captain of the Guard - Who comes there ?

Ard - A son of Erin, who desires to become a champion of the Red Branch.

CoG - Let him enter, that his qualifications may be tested.

(Candidate enters, blindfolded.)

Com - (To Candidate) Who can vouch that you possess the following essential qualifications ?

1st A good moral character.

2nd A liberal education.

3rd Expert in the use of arms.

4th Quick of foot and agile of limbs.

(The Knight under whose pennon the new member is about to serve, rises and vouches that the Candidate is in full possession of the necessary qualifications.)

Com - (To Candidate) Backed by such a valuable recommendation we can have no hesitation in admitting you to our Order and at once administer the vows, which constitute you a member. Place your right hand in mine.

Obligation

I, _____, promise on my honor as a Man, and on my faith as a Freemason, to act as a true and faithful soldier of the Red Branch of Eri, to keep secret all its ordinances and mysteries, and to be in all things related to the Order guided by the Regulations of the same. All this I promise with the help of Aesir to perform.

[Blindfold removed](Sealed once on the Volume of Holy Law, and once on the Roll of Eolus, after which the following poem is recited:)

KINCORA

Lamentation of MAC LEAG for KINCORA, A.D. 1015 (This poem is ascribed to the celebrated Poet, Mac Leag, who was Secretary to Brian Boru. Kincora was situated on the banks of the Shannon near Killoloe.)

O where is Kincora, where Brian the great ?
And where is the beauty that once was thine,
O where are the Princes and Nobles that sat
At the feast in the hall, and drank the red wine;
Where, Oh Kincora ?

O where Kincora, are thy valorous Lords,
Oh, whither, thou hospitable, are they gone;
Oh where are the Knights of the Golden Swords
And where are Warriors Brian led on,
Where, Oh Kincora ?

And where is Corogh, the descendent of Kings,
The defeater of a hundred, the daringly brave
Who set hit slight store by jewels or rings,
Who swam down the torrent and laughed at its wave;
Where, Oh Kincora ?

And where is Donagh, King Brian's son
And where is Conding, the beautiful chief
And Knight of Champion, also they are gone ?
They have left me this night alone with my grief,
Left me Kincora.

And where are the Knights, with whom Brian went forth,
The Knights of the Red Branch, the sons of the brave,
The Grand Cross of Onaght, renowned for his worth,
And the hosts of Baskinn from the western wave,
Where, Oh Kincora ?

Oh where is the Knight of the swift footed steeds
And where is the Grand Cross, the son of Molloy,
And where is King Lonergan, the fame of whose deeds
In the red battle field no time can destroy;
Where, Oh Kincora ?

And where is that youth of mystical height,
The faithkeeping Prince of the Scots ? Even he,
As wide as his fame was, as great as his might,

Was a vassal and servant Kincora to thee.
 Thee, Oh Kincora.
 They are gone those Knights of Royal birth,
 Who plundered no churches, and broke no trust.
 'Tis weary for me to be living on earth,
 When they Oh Kincora are low in the dust.
 Low, Oh Kincora.
 Oh never again will such Knights appear
 To rival the Knights of the cleaving swords.
 I can never dream of meeting, afar or anear,
 In the East or the West, such Knights and such Lords.
 Never, Kincora.
 Oh, dear are the images my memory calls up
 Of Brian Boru, how he never would miss
 To give me a banquet, the first bright cup.
 Oh, why did he heap on me honors like this,
 Why, Oh Kincora ?
 I am Mac Leag and my home's on the lake,
 Thither often to that palace whose beauty is fled,
 Came Brian to ask me and I went for his sake.
 Oh, my grief that I should live and Brian be dead;
 Dead, Oh Kincora.

Com - I will now communicate to you the means by which Men-at-Arms recognize each other.

Sign - Raise your right hand, as if throwing a spear.

Grip - Sieze the wrist of a brother's right hand.

Word - "Ainching" meaning a champion. Answer, "Acremon", name of the Royal Founder.

Com - I now pronounce you a Man-at-Arms under the Banner of the Red Branch of Eri, and with this grip, I welcome you to our ranks, and charge you to be ever Brave, Faithful and True.

(Man-at-Arms is now conducted to a position behind his Knight.)

Clothing - Blue, white sash.

Arms - A spear and small round shield with harp as a device.[Arms and clothing may be invested by Knight.]

Ceremony of Reception of an Esquire 2

(Candidate with Man-at-Arms sash and is blindfolded, gives * ** **)

[CoG opens door]

Captain of the Guard - Who comes there ?

Ard - A worthy Man-at-Arms, who has been recommended by the Knight whose pennon he follows, as having merited advancement in our Order.

[CoG closes door]

(Captain of the Guard reports to the Commander.)

[CoG - Commander, a worthy Man-at-Arms, who has been recommended by the Knight whose pennon he follows as having merited advancement in our Order, awaits.]

Com - Let the worthy champion be admitted, that we may ourselves test his fitness for the rank of Esquire. (done)

Com - Soldier, I greet you. (Looks intently at Candidate) Sir Knights, I recognize this soldier as one, who, by his zeal has merited our approbation, we therefore shall have much pleasure in attending to the recommendation of the Knight under whose pennon he serves. I trust, brave soldier, that in your more exalted rank of Esquire, you will so conduct yourself as to warrant the favor we show. Esquires, you will attach our champion to the stake of honor (done by a scarf of three colors: blue, white and green).

Com - You will now take the vows which we require from all aspirants to the rank of Esquire. Place your right hand in mine and repeat after me:

Obligation

I promise on my faith as a champion of the Red Branch and on my honor as a gentleman to act as a true and faithful Esquire to the Knight whom I may

be appointed to serve, to defend and help my Phraters of the Red Branch,
and to assist, as far as my means will admit, all who are poor and oppressed,
if they merit my assistance, so may Aesir help me to keep this vow.

(Seals it twice on Volume of Holy Law and Roll of Eolus after which the
following poem is recited:)

ENTHRONEMENT OF AN IRISH KING

The King must have come from a conquering race,
The heir of their valour, their glory and grace;
His frame must be stately, his step must be fleet,
His hands must be trained to each warrior feat.
His face as the harvest moon, steadfast and clear,
A head to enlighten, a spirit to cheer.
While the foremost to rush, where the battle brands ring,
And the last to retreat, is a true Irish King.

Yet not for his courage, his strength, or his name,
Can he from the clansmen, their fealty claim.
The poorest and highest choose freely today
The Chief that tonight they'll as truly obey.
For loyalty springs from a people's consent
And the knee that is forced, were better unbent.
No people or nation such homage can bring
As the Irishmen's choice of a true Irish King.

Unsandalled he stands on the green Shamrock
Like a pillar stone fixed against every shock.
Round, round in the Path, on a far seeing hill
Like his blemishless honor and far seeing will
The greybeards are telling how chiefs by the score
Have been crowned on the Path of the King heretofore,
While crowded and ordered within the green ring,
Are the Dynasts and Priests round the true Irish King.

The Chronicles read him the laws of the clan
And pledged him to abide by their blessing or ban,
His skean and his sword are unbuckled to show
That they only were meant for a foreigner foe.

A white willow wand has been put in his hand
A type of pure, upright and gentle command,
While hierachs are blessing the slipper they fling
And O-CATHAIN proclaims him a true Irish King.

Thrice looked he to Heaven with thanks and with prayer.
Thrice looked to his borders with sentinel stare,
To the waves of Lough Neagh, to the heights of Shathban,
And thrice on his allies and thrice on his clan.
One clash on their bucklers, one, two, three, they're still,
What means the deep pause on the crest of the hill ?
In a shadow above him of a War Eagle's Wing.
Tis an omen. Hurrah ! for the true Irish King.

Com - Restore the aspirant to light, untie him from the stake of honor and
gird him with the self same sash with which he was
fastened to the stake. (done)

COM - I now pronounce you an Esquire under the Banner of the Red Branch
of Eri, and as such extend to you the right hand of friendship. I will now
communicate to you the means by which Esquires recognize each other.

Sign - Wind a handkerchief round your body like a sash, alluding to
attachment to a stake.

Grip - Form a triangle, by seizing the left wrist of a brother with your right
hand; the brother will seize your right wrist with his right hand and grasp his
own wrist with his left hand.

Word - **"Fadhla", one of the most ancient names of Ireland. Answer,
"Ainching", (Word of a Man-at-Arms).**

Clothing - Sash of three colors, blue, white and green. Sword, [daggar]
(Skein), Spear (Craiseach), Shield (Oval) with Knight's crest above harp. To
chapeau a silver band is added.

[Esquire is conducted to a place beside his Knight. Arms and clothing may
be invested by Knight.]

Ceremony of Exaltation of a Knight 3

(Candidate habited as an Esquire is brought to the door of the Faslairt [or Chapter], gives * ** ** *)

Captain of Guard - Noble Chieftain, outside our Faslairt stands a soldier of Eri whose deeds deserve commemoration by our Bards and who has served in our ranks as a Man-at-Arms, and as a soldier who deserves the honor of Knighthood.

Chief - True and Trusty Knight of Eri, know you aught of the soldier who stands without ?

A Knight - [stands]: Noble Chief, the warrior who seeks advancement in our Order has duly served under my banner, both as a Man-at-Arms, and as my immediate Esquire, and I can vouch that he is well skilled in the use of arms and the customs of Chivalry; wellborn, trusty and true.

Chief - Sir Knight Ard Cruimthear, have you ascertained that the warrior in question has a perfect command of all his faculties and members?

Ard C - I have.

Chief - Then if the Candidate be able and willing to undergo the necessary trials, let his eyes be covered, and bring him before us.

(Candidate is led in blindfolded, and tied by his [Knight's] sash to post in center of hall.)[This may be done by his sponsor]

Chief - Soldier, what seek thou ?

Cand - [prompted] Advancement to the rank of a Red Branch Knight, that I may be the better enabled to combat for the honor and glory of my native land.

Chief - Are you willing, as a proof of your valor, to take your place in our ranks and even as you now are, deprived of the free use of your limbs and of the sight of heaven, to fight to the death for Ireland's honor ?

Cand - I am.

Chief - Then prepare for the combat.

(A Knight takes post on either side of candidate, who is supplied with a short staff, these are attacked by three Knights. Those on right and left cut and guard thrice, and the candidate is directed to strike out with his staff straight to the front, a trumpet sounds, the struggle ceases.)

Chief - [***] After this trial of your courage and endurance in which you have acquitted yourself with courage, discretion and fortitude, I receive you as a true and faithful soldier of Eri and as a proof of our confidence, *I remove the veil,*

(Knights all standing and as light is restored, all raise swords in right hand and bring left foot down with a crash and cry "Eri")

Chief Continues: - which has hitherto shrouded your future companions from your gaze. I release you from the post of honor and decree that the scarf which bound you thereto, shall be worn by you at all future meetings of our Order as a badge of honor and in order to keep green in your memory, the deeds performed by our Brethren on the plains of Ossory. Before, however, admitting you to the full privileges of our Order, it is necessary that you should take a solemn oath to keep inviolate the secrets thereof, are you willing to do so ?

Cand - I am.

Chief - You will then kneel before the stone which represents the Lia-Fail, or Stone of Destiny, place your right hand on the Sacred Volume which lies thereon, and holding this emerald cross in your left hand, repeat your several names and say after me:

Obligation

I _____ being a true man, a Freemason, and a lover of truth and justice, do in the presence of Him who rules the universe, whether known as Baal, Adonia, God or Duille, do solemnly swear that I will in all future time conduct myself as a true and faithful Knight of the Order and that in my

warfare with the world I will not turn aside tho' three foes assail me, or nine oppose my progress.

I further pledge myself to aid, comfort and assist my Phraters of the Red or Royal Branch, whether it be in the calm of peace or in the storm of war. That I will at all times protect the widow and orphan, and those unjustly oppressed, and that I will never forget the allegiance I owe to the Sovereign Ruler of the Order, all this I swear by the Sun, Moon and Stars, and by my Sword, Spear and Battleaxe. So help me Aesir in my solemn vow as a postulate of this Knightly Order.

(Seals vow thrice on the Holy Volume, thrice on roll of Eolus, and again thrice on the Holy Volume.)

Chief - Having taken the solemn vows of our Order, I am now permitted to admit you as a member of the most ancient and noble Order of Knighthood in existence: I _____, by virtue of the power vested in me as a Chieftain in command of this Faslairt, in the name of Ruid-Ruide, our Royal Founder, and of Brian Boru, Malachi, and all the Royal and Valiant Champions of our Order, do make, create, and constitute you now and forever, a Knight of the Clanna Ruid Ruide, a Knight of the Red Branch and a Knight of the Royal Branch of Eri. (*Strikes thrice on left* [on "make"] *and right* [on "create"] *shoulders* and *head* [on "constitute"] with a sword.)

Rise Phrater and Sir Knight _____ [done] and receive a truly Irish welcome to our Order.

(All present strike swords on shields thrice and cry: "Eri")[*]

Chief - I now present and arm you with this sword, (done) in addition to the skein, or dagger, of an Esquire, charging you to draw it only in a just and noble cause and inform you that an Oath sworn thereon must be performed at a risk of life or fortune. A promise given on your Sword is equally binding with the Oath. I invest you with the sash (done). Woven from silk of four colors, for such you are now permitted to wear, with this sash you were bound to the stake or pole on your admission to the Faslairt, this was done for the purpose of commemorating the gallant deeds of our champions on the field of Ossory. Ever wear it as the highest Badge that can be bestowed on a Knight.

I arm you with this Beilt, or Shield, and charge you to use it at all times, more to protect your Phraters than to shield yourself. On it must be painted the Arms to which as a Knight you are now entitled. [done].

I place on your head this Asion, or Cap of Dignity, see that it ever surmounts a cool brain and a ready hand. (done).

Also, on your shoulders [I place] this green mantle (lined red), which must be worn at all regular meetings of our Order. It should be fastened to the right shoulder by the Irish Broach, which I also hand you. (done)

You will see that your cloak bears on its left side a crowned Harp, above which is the Red Branch Badge.

I arm your heels with these Golden Spurs in token that you are ever to press onward, with vigour and energy in the van of progress. The gold is the symbol of the sterling purity which should be the aim of all true Knights. [done]

I invest you with this **Star and Cross of our Order**, (done) charging you to look to it as the Star of all high and noble enterprise. The Star has 9 points (alluding to our first Grand Crosses,) springing from a circle of emeralds, having a crowned harp in the center. Round the circle is the Motto of our Order: "Erin-go-bragh".

[Knight Commander's]- Pendant from the star is the Irish Cross, having 9 Shamrocks formed of emeralds springing from a ruby. The 9 Shamrocks represent the first Grand Crosses and the ruby, our Royal Founder. This Cross may be suspended by a Green Ribbon from the neck, and the Star worn from the breast.

And, lastly, I commit to your charge this Spear, bearing your green pennon. (done).

Let the pennon be ever the point round which will rally good men and true, while the Spear should ever be used for the protection of all those who are weary and heavy laden.

List now while our Ard Bard chants you a lesson.

Ard Bard - [chanted to any convenient church chant melody]

Knight of the Red Branch, bold and free
Look well unto your vows
The cause of truth and Eri's land
No craven may espouse
Our Knights are just the leaven
In Erin's measure cast
They are the salt, what if
Its savour's lost at last.
Let it in sparkling characters
Upon your banners green
Grave it on your Knightly Shield
Which guards each Knight I ween.
Never had Knight so pure devoir
Or legend half so grand
Do right at what so ere the cost
And die for Eri's land.

Chief - Phrater and Sir Knight, you will now be conducted to the Ard Brehon in the West, to the Ard Cruimthear in the South, and to the Ard Ollam in the North, for instruction concerning our Ancient Mysteries and the Legend of our Order.

(Master of Ceremonies conducts the newly made Knight to the Ard Brehon in the West.)

Master of Ceremonies - I present to you, Sir Knight _____ for instruction in the Mysteries of our Order.

Ard Brehon - Sir Knight, permit me to inform you that I represent Moran, the Just Judge, who was son of the usurper Carbre Cat Can, King of Ireland. This just man, instead of accepting the Crown for himself, placed it upon the head of the rightful heir; [for this] the post of Chief Justice of all Ireland was bestowed upon him. As a badge of this office he wore a necklet, from which a breastplate was suspended. This plate was said to turn a blood red color, and the necklet to clasp his neck very tightly, should he ever be about to pronounce an unjust sentence. Let me charge you to endeavor to resemble Moran in the justness of your dealings and purity of life. I welcome you, my Phrater, to our ranks, and hasten to open up to you the wisdom of our sages.

[portions of the following may be read from a scroll.] Nourish the fire of your spirit and use your utmost endeavours to become enamoured of Justice, Truth and Mercy. Guard thy heart from the serpent, flattery, whose mouth is filled with deceit, and from the worm, envy, which consumeth all the precious parts, leaving the offal wherein to engender its pernicious kind. My Phrater, to your care we entrust a valuable treasure, even such as the Wise King gave to his sons, the first Chiefs of our Order. This treasure is the reputation of a good name even that of the Order which, if you act truly, will ever shield and protect you. But in nothing will you run so great a risk of loss of any portion of this treasure, as by suffering your passions to diminish the love that should be felt by each member of our Order for our native land. Learn to obey the law, for it is beyond the power of man to alter the unchangeable.

When man can mount into the air as doth a bird,
When he can dive to the bottom of the deep and sport in the waters as doth the fish,
When he can burrow in the earth and there abide as even the worm doth,
When he can endure the burning flame and dwell therein,
When he can refrain from food or sustenance, reject and live,
Then, my man, set aside the laws of the Almighty.

My Phrater, these are the teachings of the Sages of Eri, uttered more than 3000 years ago. Listen next to the music of her Bards, which carries us still further into the womb of time, the words however will be clothed in modern garb:

2nd Bard - [to the tune "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls"]

The Harp that once thro' Tara's halls
The soul of music shed
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were dead.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts that once beat high for praise
Now feel that pulse no more.

Ard Brehon - Sir Knight Master of Ceremonies, you will now conduct our Phrater to the Ard Cruimthear in the South. (Candidate is so conducted.)

Master of Ceremonies - Sir Knight Ard Cruimthear, I present to you our newly admitted Sir Knight for instruction in the history of our Order.

Ard Cruimthear - Sir Knight, I welcome you as a member of that glorious band of heroes, of which the one mighty Monarch Brian Boru was an honored Chief. This honored Chieftain, in accordance with the teachings of our Red Branch Order, devoted the whole of his private fortune to works of public utility. He rebuilt the churches, schools and colleges (destroyed by the Danes), built forts for the protection of his people, constructed roads, bridges and massive causeways, to facilitate the passage of his troops and the conveyance of merchandise from point to point; he also erected Hospitals and Royal houses for the entertainment of travellers, and of the sick and needy. He was in fact Grand Patron and Grand Master of the Freemasons, and appointed Inspectors to superintend the Craft throughout the land. Feeling the pressure of the Danes to be intolerable, he collected a considerable army and, assisted by Malachi, who had already distinguished himself in battle against the Danes, met his country's enemy at Clontarf, on Friday 23 April, 1014, and altho' numerically inferior to the enemy, who were, alas, assisted by Irish auxiliaries, gained a complete victory. Hence, Good Friday has been ever since observed as a festival of our Order. The hero, through his age, 86, was unable to take part in the fight, but after reviewing his troops, riding along the ranks with a sword in his right hand and a crucifix in his left, pointing to Heaven with this sacred emblem, he assured them of victory if they were only true to themselves, and then retired to his tent, to pray to the God of Ireland for victory against their heathen oppressors. Alas, the aged monarch was slain in his tent by the Danish General, who, by this dastardly crime, sought revenge for the complete defeat of his countrymen. Listen, whilst our third Bard chants a modern version of Brian Boru's appeal to his army.

3rd Bard - [chanted to any convenient church chant melody]

Stand ye now for Erin's glory, Stand ye now for Erin's cause,
Long we groaned beneath the vigor of the Northmen's cruel laws,
What Brothers league against us, what tho countless be the foe,
Our Red Branch Knights gain honor, in their utter overthrow.

(here a long flourish of trumpets.)

Should I fall before the pennon, 'tis the death I seek today,
Should a thousand daggers pierce me, bear my body not away,
'Till this day of days be over, 'till the field is fought and won,
Then let hymns of thanks be chanted and the funeral rites be done.
Knights of Eri, Knights of Eri, grasp your battleaxe and spear,
Chase the northern wolves before you, like a herd of frightened deer.
Burst their ranks like bolts from Heaven, charge upon the heathen Crew,
For the glory of the Red Branch, and for Eri's glory too.

(Long burst of trumpets.)

Ard Cruimtheair - Thus ends, Sir Knight, my present teachings. You will now be conducted to the Ard Ollam in the North.

(Candidate conducted to North and presented.)

[Master of Ceremonies - Sir Knight Ard Ollam, I present to you our newly admitted Sir Knight for instruction in the history of our Order.]

Ard Ollam - My dear Sir Knight, I welcome you to our ranks, and as a high example to you, in your new career, will narrate a circumstance which took place immediately after the battle of Clontarf, which incident has already been commemorated in the ceremony through which you have passed. After the battle, the troops of Munster, principally composed of Red Branch Knights, with their Esquires and Men-at-Arms, were on their return journey refused a passage through the country of Ossory, by the Prince of that country, who had not been engaged in the late battle. This Prince left our Phraters the option of fighting their way through or giving hostages. "Battle, Battle, Battle," cried the champions, even tho' there were 800 wounded men amongst them, unable to take part in the conflict. Prince Douched tolled off a party of his bravest warriors to protect them, but the wounded heroes refused to thus weaken the force and all eagerly desired to take part in the combat, preferring death by their comrade's side to the comparative safety proposed to them. "Let stakes be cut," said they, "and driven into the ground, then to each let one of us be tied and place arms in our hands." This was accordingly done and each wounded warrior was tied with his sash to a stake and an unwounded comrade placed on either side of him. Thus prepared and in the forefront of their line, they waited the onset of the foe. But the men of Ossory, struck with admiration of such a strange and wonderful example of devotion, and fearing to contend with men thus pledged to battle to the

death, permitted the brave Dalgais to persue their march unmolested. Listen, my Phrater, to one of the songs of our Bards:

4th Bard - [sung to an Irish melody.]

Remember the glories of Brian the brave
Tho' the days of the hero are o'er
Tho, lost to Morionia, and cold in the grave
He returns to Rinhora no more.

That star of the field, which so often has poured
Its beams on the battle, has set.
But enough of its glory remains on each sword
To light us to victory yet.

Forget not our wounded companions who stood
in the days of distress by our side
While the Moss of the Valley, grew red with their blood,
They stirred not, but conquered or died.

The Sun that now blesses our arms with its light
Saw them fall upon Ossory's plain
O, let it not blush when it leaves us tonight
To find that they've fallen in vain.

Ard Ollam - You will now return to the presiding Chieftain in the East, who will doubtless communicate further information.

(Candidate presented in East.)

[Master of Ceremonies - I present to you, Sir Knight _____ for instruction in the Mysteries of our Order.]

Chieftain - Sir Knight, I greet you. From our Ministers in the West, South and North, you have learned much of the history of our Order and must therefore be aware that in the most ancient times Erin possessed a literature and a history equal to that of the most polished of the ancient nations. You will learn from our chronicles that, ere the greater part of Europe had emerged from barbarism, Ireland had attained to so high a degree of civilization as to be called the "Island of Saints". Her roads were so good,

and her people so virtuous, as to admit of a Noble Damsel, young and beautiful, clad in rich robes and adorned with valuable jewels, passing from one end of Ireland to the other returning to the place from whence she set out, safe and in good health. This event marks so clearly the honor, honesty, and highly civilized state of Erin at the time, that it has been considered a fitting subject to be immortalized by our Bards. List, I pray you, to what our Ard Bard will give you.

Ard Bard - [chanted or sung to an Irish melody] [may be sung to the tune of "Be Thou My Vision", Slane 10 10.9 10]

Rich and rare were the gems she wore
And a bright gold ring on a wand she bore
But oh, her beauty was far beyond
Her sparkling gems and her snow white wand.

Lady, dost thou not fear to stray
So lone and so lovely through the bleak way ?
Are Eri's sons so good and so cold
As not to be tempted by woman or gold ?

Sir Knight I feel not the least alarm
No son of Erin will offer me harm
For though they love women and golden store
Sir Knight they love honor and virtue more.

On she went and her maiden smile
In safety lighten her round the green isle
And blest forever is she who relied
Upon Erin's honor and Erin's pride.

Chieftain - You may gather from the utterances of our Ard Bard, how superior Erin was (in those ancient times) in civilization to all nations of whom history heeds. Let it be the earnest desire of our Phraters and Knights to raise our beloved Eri again to the proud position once held by her, and I am sure that you, my Phrater, will do your utmost to aid us in such a laudable undertaking.

Cand - [prompted] I promise to do so to the utmost of my power.

Chieftain - Then I will at once put you in the possession of those tokens by which we recognize each other.

Sign - Right hand pointing towards right front, all but index finger closed in a hand [fist], index finger of left hand pointing towards Heaven. This alludes to the position assumed by Brian Boru when addressing his army prior to the battle of Clontarf.

Grip - As if assisting a wounded comrade, grasp [the] right hand with [the] left [placed] to [his] back.

Pass Word - **"Brian Boru". Answer - "Clontarf Crove Rue".**

Word - **"Eolus". Answer - "Ruid Ruide".**

Chieftain - I now call upon all present to extend to our newly admitted Knight the greeting extended to Knights of Eri, to distinguish strangers and newly made Knights.

(All Knights form a circle and draw swords. Four Knights, bearing a large shield, step into the center of the circle and place the newly made Knight on the shield; raise it to their shoulders, move and pass round the hall nine times. Trumpets sounding and pennons waving, at each round, all clash swords against [their] shield and cry "Eri". After the ninth round the shield is lowered, the Knight steps from it and is led by the Master of Ceremonies to the center of the Faslaire. The Herald sounds [trumpet] and proclaims:)

Herald - Know ye, all men, that our Phrater has this day been admitted a Knight of the Red Branch, of the Clanna Ruid Ruide, and of the Royal Order of Eri and as such I call upon you to greet him.

(Each member present commencing with the Junior, comes forward and says:)

Each Knight - I greet you, Sir Knight. (Gives him the grip.)

(The newly made Knight is then conducted to his seat and, if time admits, a lecture on history, etc., of the Order is given.) [from the Psalter]

Psalter

This system has been adopted in order to explain why certain portions of our Ceremonial have been arranged and to give Members of our Order a clearer idea of Irish History. [The independent Order had a Major Psalter, which was the ritual, and a Minor Psalter, which contained the rules and regulations. Shute retained the Major Psalter and this Psalter, discarding the Minor Psalter as inappropriate in this context.]

I

Q - By what names has Ireland been known in ancient times ?

A - It was first called "Inis na bford biode", which means "Island of the Wood", from the fact that the Island was found covered with trees by Ninus, son of Belus, when he visited it in 2000 B.C.

Second, it was called "Greerigh na vernnnga", which means "The End of Nations", for it was the most western isle of the then known world.

Third, "Innis Alga", "Noble Island", at the time it was conquered by Firbolgs.

Fourth, "ERIE", so named after Queen Erie.

Fifth, "Fodhla", after Queen Fodhla, the most beautiful, patriotic and virtuous of Irish women.

Sixth, "Bamber", after Queen Bamber. The above named three Queens were of the noble race of Tuatha de Danann who conquered the Firbolgs and ruled Ireland for 197 years; from Erie, the most celebrated of these three Queens, we derive "ERIN", in the Sanscrit "Iran", and it means "Sacred Land."

Seventh, "Innisfail", "Island of Destiny." From this was derived "Liafail", "Stone of Destiny" on which the Irish Kings were crowned.

Eighth, "Muie-inis", "Island of Fogs", which fogs were said to be brought about by the Magic of the Tuatha de Danann,

when the Sons of Melisius were about to land on the Island.

Ninth, "Scotia", after "Scota", the mother of Heber.

Tenth, "Hebernian", "Island of Heber".

Eleventh, "Ireland", "Island of Eire".

Twelfth, "Island of Saints".

Thirteenth, "The Emerald Isle", on account of its verdure.

Fourteenth, "Ogygia", "Old Land" or "Ocean Land" so called by Plutarch (See "Ogygia, or an account of Irish events", etc., by Rev. J.Healy, 1790, and "Ogygia", by O'Connor, 1775).

Fifteenth, "Island of the Sun", or "Sun Worshippers".

Sixteenth, "Land of Gold". It may be noted that a large quantity of golden ornaments have been found in the ruins and graves.

Seventeenth, "Ogugia", "The New and Pleasant country".

II

Q - What does Plutarch say about Ireland ?

A - He mentions that an envoy dispatched by the Emperor Claudius to explore the British Island, discovered an island in the neighborhood of Britain; an order of Priests or Magi, accompanied by the people as a Holy Race.

III

Q - What does Diodorus Siculus say of Ireland ?

A - He mentions an island close to Gaul, whose people practiced Sun Worship and built Round Towers for the celebration of this worship, who cultivated music and were well versed in Astronomy. These Round Towers had often seven small chapels or altars attached, similar to those we read of

in Scripture, when Balak led Baalim to a High Place where he erected seven altars.

IV

Q - What mention does Strabo make of Ireland ?

A - He mentions that sacrifices were offered there to Ceres and Proserpine in the same manner as in the Cabiric Mysteries, as Mariners went to Samothrace, the Sacred Isle of the East, to invoke the protection of the Gods, so in the West, they formed another Sacred Island where thanks could be returned.

V

Q - Who was the first Irish King of whom we have any record ?

A - King Heremon, who reigned with Heber, A.M. 2738.

VI

Q - What is known of the Stone of Destiny or Liafail ?

A - The Tuath-de-Danann brought it with them to Ireland. It was said to be enchanted, and to send forth a noise like thunder, whenever a member of the Royal Scythian race was crowned upon it. It was taken to Scotland by Prince Fergus, A.D. 513, where it remained until 1296 when it was taken to England by Edward. "If fate's decree be not pronounced in vain Wherein the Stone is found a Scot will reign."

VII

Q - Describe the origin of Knighthood in Ireland.

A - King Erminius or Ruid Ruide of Ullard, or Ulster, having reigned 45 years, called together the Princes and Nobles of the land to meet him in a special chamber called Aodmagromaca. The King also directed that those of their sons who "had put on the mantle", that is, who were 18 years of age, should attend with their Sires. These youths were formed in a circle round

the chamber of deliberation. When all were assembled with due ceremony, the King arose, and said, "What, if my sons chose out from among your sons, each nine youths to be companions of their steps through the rugged and uneven ways of life", and all the Princes and Nobles struck on their white shields and cried, "Eri." Then the King's sons went forth, and each chose nine noble youths, whom the King at once created Knights, calling them by his own family name of Ruid Ruide, and from this Order sprung the other orders of Knighthood in Ireland. The King directed each of the new made Knights to select nine youths as Esquires, and these in turn were directed to select from their Clansmen, each nine followers, whom we now term Men-at-Arms, and who were in time of war, placed in command of small squads of the common soldiers or Gallowgasses. Thus:

Each Man-at-Arms would command 9 Gallowgasses.

Each Esquire, a company of 81 foot and 9 horsemen.

Each Knight, a battalion of 820 of all ranks.

Each Grand Cross, a brigade of 7380 men.

And the whole army would number 66,420 of all ranks.

VIII

Q - By whom was the Palace of Emania near Armagh built and for what purpose was it intended ?

A - It was built by the order of King Kirnbaoth that it might serve as a military sentry for the Knights of the Kingdom.

IX

Q - How many Orders of Knighthood existed in Ireland in ancient times ?

A - Five, viz:

Knights of the Ruid Ruide

Knights of the Red Branch (Ulster)

Knights of the Collar of Gold (Neagh Nase)

Knights of the Golden Sword

Knights of the Royal Order of Eri.

X

Q - What qualifications were required from Candidates for the honors of Knighthood ?

A - We are informed by eminent Irish Historians, that each candidate was required to undergo a regular course of moral and physical training. At an early age each Novice was placed in the ranks of Men-at-Arms, where his military education commenced, from thence he was transferred to the ranks of Esquires, where he was instructed in the duties of chivalry, and only when the Irish gentleman merited the honor, was he elevated to the rank of Knight. It is stated that Richard II on his arrival in Dublin, offered to confer the rank of Knighthood on the Irish Chiefs, but they declined, stating that they were already Knights of the most ancient Order in existence.

XI

Q - What was the most common symbol that the Knights of ERI bore upon their shields and banners ?

A - That of Baal, the sun, and Re, the moon.

XII

Q - What modern Order of Chivalry is derived from the Clanna RUIDRUIDE ?

A - That of Baronet, created by James I of England.

XIII

Q - What King instituted the Irish Heralds College ?

A - OLLAM FODHLA. He appointed Heralds, whose duty it was to assign to each Chief and Knight certain emblems or figures which were in future to distinguish them and which figures were emblazoned on his shield, pennon and banner. These Heralds were clothed in white, and each was attended by a trumpeter.

XIV

Q - Give an instance of the Hospitality of the ancient Irish.

A - A Brehon law forbade the breaking up suddenly of a party or feast, lest the traveller should be disappointed of his expected refreshment.

XV

Q - Have any traces of Freemasonry been observed amongst the ancient Irish ?

A - Yes, King Teuthal instituted Lodges of Architects with a peculiar ceremonial derived from the Druids, one of whom was a member of each Lodge, which was presided over by an Ollam Architect, whilst the ordinary members occupied a position similar to the modern Fellow Craft Mason, and in regard to whom all other Artizans were considered as Apprentices, who could only attain to membership in the Architects Lodges, by having proved themselves to be good men and true, and proficient in their Craft.

XVI

Q - What feasts were observed by our ancient Brethren ?

A - Four principle ones, dedicated to the Gods who rule over the elements. These are to:

1st. GE, or the Earth. At the time of this feast seed were committed to the earth. They also sacrificed to the Sun, whose rays dispel the dreary cold of winter, beautifies the face of nature, and with his vivifying power imparts the great life principal to all vegetable creation. This feast was held on the 1st of March.

2nd. UR, or Fire. At this festival of BAALTINE all fires were put out and not relighted until the one on TARA which was kindled by the Druids, blazed forth again. This was held on the 24th of June.

3rd. AER, or Rain. It was called the feast of SANHEIM or Heaven, and was held when the crops were gathered, and thanks returned for a plentiful harvest.

4th. DUOR, or Water. This feast was held on Christmas day, when sacrifices were made to Baal, praying that he would dispel the cold and fogs of winter. These were called the festivals of the four Seasons.

XVII

Q - What minor festivals were held ?

A - Those of FOS; Light, Birth; Life, NUO; Death. Later festivals were the following:

1st. The Anniversary of ST.PATRICK on the 17th of June, on which every member of our Order, whether an Irishman or not, is expected to wear a sprig of Shamrock, at his breast or in his hat.

"Like Hope, to him that's friendless,
Where no Rose or Thistle's seen,
By our graves, with love that's endless
Grows the Shamrock, evergreen."

2nd. The Anniversary of the battle of Clontarf, Good Friday, on which day members are expected to wear a green ribbon in their buttonhole.

XVIII

Q - What was the chief Reard of Ireland called ?

A - The Psalter or ANNALS of TARA in which every important event which occurred in Ireland was entered. There was also the Psalter of the Red Branch Knights, and of each Order of Knighthood which contained a roll of the members of the Order and a record of their deeds.

XIX

Q - Who were the Chief Officers of the Orders and what their duties ?

A - First - The Brehons or Judges, who saw that the laws were properly administered, and pronounced sentence on culprits.

Second - The Cruimthears or Priests, who offered up prayer and sacrifices, and attended to the religious and moral education of the people.

Third - The Ollams. These were learned men who assisted the Brehons in preparing the laws, attended to the sick and wounded, and to the civil and military engineering of the Kingdom.

Fourth - The Bards. These were the historians of Eri and preserved to posterity the memory of the gallant deeds and noble acts of our ancestors.

Fifth - The Heralds. These were an Order more recently introduced. A college was established at TARA, similar in most respects to the Heralds Colleges of modern days. These learned men met thrice a year at TARA and there proposed and discussed discoveries in the Arts and Sciences, and how best to apply them for the general good. The whole of their proceedings were regularly entered, indeed portions of their ancient records are frequently discovered in the present day.

XX

Q - Relate the circumstances which attended the death of BRIAN BORU.

A - As mentioned in the Ritual, the King, on account of his great age, retired to his Tent, after having inspected his troops, and given his order for the action to commence. Having spent the day in prayer, towards evening, his guards heard the victorious shouts of their own people and ran to the brow of a hill to witness the rout of the Danes, leaving the King unattended save by a single Page, who shortly afterwards reported to the King that people were coming towards them from the wood. "What sort of people are they," asked the King. The Page answered, "Grey people, without clothes." "They are the Danes in armour," cried the King. Shortly after this Broder, the Danish Admiral, entered the tent. The King, who had seized his Battleaxe, gave Broder a blow which deprived him of a limb and struck down another Dane

behind him - but alas, Broder had sufficient strength to strike the good old King a blow with his battleaxe on the skull. As the King sank to the ground, he exclaimed, "The strong hand is the highest," meaning, probably, that he submitted to the will of God. At that moment, but too late to save, his guards rushed in, in time, however, to avenge the murder of the Hero.

XXI

Q - What do you know of the deeds of King Malachi, who assisted Brian Boru at the battle of Clontarf ?

A - At the seige of Dublin, he tore off the Golden Collar from the Danish King Tornar, and bore off in triumph the Golden Sword of Calus the Dane. In both instances, he was seperated from his own men and surrounded by Danes. Malachi succeeded Brian Boru as ARD KIGH, or sole Monarch of Ireland.

XXII

Q - Relate an instance of coolness and self-possession shown by a Dane at the battle of Clontarf.

A - THORSTEIN, a Danish Commander, when retreating before the Irish Prince MURCHAD, stooped down suddenly to tie the thong on his sandal. "Why dost thou not run with the rest," asked the Prince. "Because I shall not be able to reach my home in Iceland this evening," replied Thorstein. This answer so pleased the Prince that he spared the Dane's life, and caused the incident to be noted in the Psalter of Tara.

XXIII

Q - What do ancient historians report as to the proficiency of the ancient Irish in the Arts and Sciences ?

A - That Ireland in her palmy days, and before the beginning of the eighth century, outstripped every other country of Europe in miniature painting and in ornamentation of metal and wood. Scotland expresses the opinion that its literature is the most valuable in Europe. It is noteworthy that each letter of the Irish alphabet bears the name of a tree.

XXIV

Q - What is known of the history of the Irish Orders of Chivalry, since the occupation of Ireland by the English ?

A - They appear to have been almost entirely superseded by the English and Continental Chivalric Orders. The memory of them was, however, preserved by a few lovers of their country, who revived them from time to time only to be promptly suppressed by their Rulers. At the time of the invasion of Cromwell, two of the Orders appear to have been used by the rival religionists; The Golden Sword by the Catholics and the Red Branch by the Protestants. There is little doubt that these Orders were in full use down to the time of the battle of Boyne, after which the Red Branch appears to have been adopted by the Freemasons and the Orangemen, who at that time practically formed one body. About the year 1757 Brother James O'Donnell, who held the rank of District Master, accompanied by nearly all the brethren of his Lodge, emigrated to New York taking with him the books and papers of their branch of the organization. Amongst the O'Donnells, the Red Branch Degree appears to have been handed down from father to son in regular succession. In the year 1858, Brother J.P. O'Donnell, who commanded an American vessel trading to the Mediterranean, visited the Inhabitants Lodge No. 178, Gibraltar, and communicated the Degree with the above mentioned particulars, to the then W.M. of the Lodge, BRO. FRANCIS GEORGE IRWIN, who restored and reorganized it in this country (England).

XXV

Q - Please repeat the Nine Ancient Laws of Erin.

A - 1st. Commit no murder.

2nd. Steal not.

3rd. Utter no falsehood.

4th. Give Glory, Thanks and Honor to Baal [God], author of Light and Life.

5th. Honor thy father, cherish thy mother, protect thy sister.

6th. Live in unity with thy brethren.

7th. Be kind and tender to the widow and fatherless.

8th. Minister to the Strangers far from their Kindred.

9th. From the Needy and Distressed, turn not thy face away.

XXVI

Q - At what date were these NINE COMMANDMENTS promulgated ?

A - At about the period when Moses died.

XXVII

Q - What other allusions have we to the Number 9 ?

A - The Nine points of the Star of our Order, refer to the Nine Provinces of Ulster, over which our first Grand Crosses were called to rule. The four Shamrocks in the Jewel of a Knight Commander refer to the four chief provinces of Ireland. The twelve emeralds in the Shamrock of the crosslet of Knight refer to the twelve provinces in Leinster. The ruby in the center of the crosslet, added to the four Shamrocks refers to the five provinces of Munster. The six points in the Patriarchal Grand Cross, refer again to the six provinces in Connaught. The thirty-two emeralds forming the circle of the Star refer to the thirty-two provinces collectively. Thus you see that the Jewels of the Order, worn by each Knight Grand Cross, apply individually and collectively to every Province and County of Erin. Again the thirty-two emeralds of the Star indicate the area of Ireland in square miles, 32,000 as well as the length and breadth 300+200 miles.

XXVIII

Q - Give the five qualifications for the Royal Order of Eri ?

A –

1. When disposed to marry, to choose a lady for her virtue, her courtesy and her good name, and not for her fortune.
2. Never to offer violence to a woman, nor attempt to ravish her against her will, even in times of war.
3. To relieve and be kind to all poor persons, providing them with meat and drink, as far as our abilities will permit.
4. Not to turn our backs to, or refuse to fight with nine persons if opposed to us, and to assist a brother, or other hard pressed person, duty calling for our aid in like odds.

5. To admit no person to the highest rank unless he can compose verses, and is well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry.

XXIX

Q - Give some additional particulars of the ancient Military training of the Irish people.

A - There are allusions in the very earliest annals of Ireland to Champions and Militia, or armed warriors as an existing body.

The "ANNALS OF THE FOUR MASTERS" inform us that in the year of the world 3502, answering to 1697 B.C., EAMHIUM (pronounced AVEN) King of Ireland, appointed his eight sons, with himself as King, or the ninth, to be head over the Champions of Eri, and directed that each should appoint nine Knights of the Collor (NIAGH NASR) under themselves. He gave this authority over the four Provinces of Ireland as follows:

The Militia was known as CRAET-NAATH CREEVERVE MUNSTER, to four sons of EAMHIUN FUIN.

The Militia was known as CLANNA DEAGNA, CONNAUGHT, to UN and EADIM.

The Militia was known as CAMBRANA JOIUAS, LEINSTER, to CUUNITHUIM of the DAMONIANS.

The Militia was known as CLANNA DIRSCHICE, ULSTER, to ERNEHIUM son of IR.

From this it appears that the Order was founded in 1697 B.C. We read further that it was in the "year of the world 3872" or 1327 B.C. that NURMANHOU caused chains of gold to be worn on the necks of Kings or Chieftains in Ireland. These dates, it will be seen differ slightly from those of our Certificates, which date the foundation of the Order 1712 B.C. and that of the Collor of Gold as 1342 B.C., but these few years of divergence are of little importance. The Keepers of the public Records were the Bards, and we find that OLLAM FODLAH (OLLAO FOLA) that is, Chief or Great Poet existed as a lawgiver 1277 B.C. The date of his death when compared with

Lawgivers of other nations is as follows; Moses died 1451 B.C., Lycurgus 559 B.C., Confucius 479 B.C. Ireland is full of circular structures called Forts, Raths, Maughts, etc., inside of most of which the wooden structures or houses stood when the Militia assembled, the circular earth affording shelter from weather, and protection from enemies. MAYBURGH, near Penrith, is of this nature, and near it is the hollowed out circle now called King Arthur's Round Table, which is supposed to have been used for chariot races, and our own Assemblies ought to be arranged by a strip of green carpet, horseshoe pattern. In these times the King's Court was held at or near the town of Armagh, and a very celebrated palace existed there between the years 300 B.C. and 332 A.D. when it was destroyed by fire, and the Court was then transferred to TARA. The Palace of FAMHUIN, latinized ERNHINA, contained houses and quarters which were appropriated to each of the four Provinces, and the defenses of the Kingdom were regulated from these headquarters. In a great many Irish records, The FIVE RULES of the Militia or Knights, are either given in full, or otherwise referred to as also the manner of admission to their ranks as a warrior. Such receptions were always made during the annual summer trainings of the Militia. Every summer, for three months, the members of the four branches of the Militia were called out from their homes for warlike training and compelled to live in the Forest, then abundant in Ireland, and support themselves by the chase, receiving as an acknowledgement of their services, certain specified contributions of grain, payable to them by their own district. These bodies used to assemble in their own Provinces, make themselves Booths of the branches of trees or wickerwork, and cook in the open air, and in very many places in Ireland, their "hearths" are readily discernable, even now, owing to the great accumulation of ashes and stones on the spot where they were usually built. It was during these trainings that candidates sought admission to their ranks. The Aspirant was to be placed in a level field encompassed with green sedge up to his knees; he was to have a target by him, and a hazel stick in his hand, the length of a man's arm. The nine experienced Champions were drawn out and appointed to stand a distance of nine ridges of land from him, and to throw all their javelins at him at once. If he could defend himself with the stick and target, so as to come off unhurt, he was admitted, if not, he was rejected. In some of our modern Rituals, a representation of this is used as the trial for a Man-at-Arms. Also, he was required to run well, and in flight to defend himself from the enemy without halting; he had his hair plaited and was obliged to run through a wood pursued by his comrades, being given only the start of the breadth of a tree, and if he was surrounded or caught, he was rejected. When he ran his hair

should not get untied that he should be so swift and light of foot, that in running he should not break a rotten stick; he should jump over a stick the height of his forehead, stoop under a stick as low as his knee, and take a thorn out of his foot without slacking his pace. Some rituals allude to these trials, making them the signs of an Esquire. ("Touch the forehead with open hand, grasp the knee and lift right foot as if to take a thorn from it"). After the introduction of Christianity, it would seem that the old Irish Gods were turned into Christian Saints, and it is remarkable that about eight Saints were connected with all the "Holy Wells" and Holy Places in Ireland. The Irish also designate the four Cardinal points as the same was as the Indians and Hebrews. These names express their positions with regard to a person standing with his face to the East. Thus OIR (ur,ir) is East, this is "in front"; IAR (eer) is West, "behind or back"; THAITH (tova) is North, "the left hand", and DEAS (dase) is South, "the right hand". About the year 250 A.D. FIN-MAC-CUMHALL (the FINGAL of OSSIAN) was the head of the Leinster branch of the National Militia, known as FENII or FENIANS and resided at the Palace of ALMHIM in Leinster. But the Ulster branch of this, even then, ancient Order of Irish Chivalry, was termed CENAIDHE NA CRAIOBHE SUAAN, or Knight of the Red Branch from their chief seat in EMANIA, near the Palace of the Ulster Kings called TEAGHNA CRAILOHE RUHR, or Academy of the Red Branch, adjoining which was a Hospital called BROUTHEAGER or House of the Sorrowful Soldier. The reason of the more popular survival of the Ulster Branch of the National Organization is owing to a special cause. After Ireland had been disorganized, year after year, by the incursions of the Danes, some of the Knights of Ulster, with their followers, made an incursion into Connaught, and settled in Mayo, and Galway, where they retained their Organization for mutual protection against those tribes or families from whom they had taken the district and driven them off to other parts of the Province. Our Order continues, as much as compatible with modern civilization, to correspond with the organization of the Ancient Knights.