



Office of the Grand Commander
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July 27, 2011

March Decision # 1

Re: Pennsylvania Constituent Commandery Flag Ceremony

To: All Sir Knights subject to the Jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania within and without the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania wherever so dispersed; and more particularly the Officers and Members of the Grand Commandery of Pennsylvania.

Greetings:

We are now into year three of the ongoing debate regarding the Flag Ceremony to be used with the Short Form Opening of a Constituent Commandery in this Grand Jurisdiction. The indecisiveness ends with this Decision. Sir Knight John W. Hawk, REPGC, in his Decision Number 1 stated that the dialogue would not change “until the Drill and Tactics Committee reviews the ritual.” I am pleased to report that the Drill and Tactics Committee has completed its review, and attached at last, is the Flag Ceremony that will be used during the Short Form Opening for Constituent Commanderies under the jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of Pennsylvania. From this date forward this IS the ritual.

This revised Flag Ceremony Ritual is issued as March Decision Number 1.

This March Decision Number 1 shall be read *in full – including all dialogue* – at each of the three Stated Conclaves of a Constituent Commandery under the jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania immediately following its receipt by such

Commandery's Recorder, and the entire March Decision Number 1 entered in full upon or attached to the Records of such Commandery.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania this 27th day of July, 2011 Anno Domini / 893 Anno Ordinis.

S.K. John K. March, Grand Commander

ATTEST:

S.K. Douglas M. Rowe, Grand Recorder

[SEAL]

March Decision No. 1

Decision:

Effective immediately, the following shall be the Flag Ceremony tactics for all Constituent Commanderies under the jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania. The tactics and dialogue contained in this decision shall be used in place and instead of the Flag Ceremony in the Pennsylvania Tactics Manual and in place and instead of the tactics and dialogue contained in Hawk Decision Number 1. Hawk Decision Number 1 is hereby repealed in its entirety. This Decision shall remain in effect until the earlier to occur of (i) such time as a revised Flag Ceremony in form substantially similar to that contained herein and in compliance with Koon Decision No. 1 is adopted by the Grand Commandery of Pennsylvania into the Pennsylvania Tactics Manual or (ii) its repeal.

Beginning with the Captain General's dialogue after the Standard Bearer has secured the United States Flag and returned to his station.

C.G. *(When the standard bearer has returned to his station)* "ALL SIR KNIGHTS WHO DO NOT HAVE A DRAWN SWORD WILL HAND SALUTE WHEN THE COMMAND 'PRESENT SWORDS' IS GIVEN. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE WILL BE GIVEN AT HAND SALUTE OR BY PLACING THE RIGHT HAND OVER THE HEART."

(Note: Placing the right hand over the heart is an option for those in civilian dress.)

C.G. "SIR KNIGHTS, PRESENT SWORDS". *(C.+, G.+, C.G.+, and all others will either # or *.)*

(Note: While escorting the Flag, either in motion or at rest, the Standard Guard will remain at Carry Swords and not speak or sing. When the Standard Guard halts between the Senior and Junior Wardens, they (the Wardens) then become part of the Standard Guard and they will remain at Carry Swords and not speak or sing. They, the Senior and Junior Wardens, will revert to their normal station on the order of the Captain General to present swords at the end of the Pledge and National Anthem. (If sung.)

Sw. B. "STANDARD GUARD, FORWARD MARCH."

(Note: The Standard Guard advances to a position directly between the Senior and Junior Wardens.)

Sw. B. "STANDARD GUARD, HALT".

C.G. *(Comes to Carry Swords)* "SIR KNIGHTS, CARRY SWORDS", (pause) "RETURN SWORDS", (done) "JOIN THE EMINENT COMMANDER IN PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG", "HAND SALUTE."

(Note: ALL, including the Commander, return swords with the exception of the Standard Guard and Captain General. The Captain General "Presents Swords" during the pledge and/or anthem, but does NOT pledge or sing. He acts as part of the Standard Guard. Pledge is given. National Anthem MAY be sung or played.)

E.C. " I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE.....FOR ALL."

C.G. *(Comes to Carry Swords)* "SIR KNIGHTS, ORDER ARMS", (pause) "DRAW SWORDS," (pause) "PRESENT SWORDS."

(Note: The Senior and Junior Wardens will take the order of the Captain General to Present Swords and will cease to be part of the Standard Guard at this time.)

Sw. B. "STANDARD GUARD, FORWARD MARCH".

(Note: The Standard Guard marches to within two paces of the dais.)

Sw. B. "STANDARD GUARD, HALT". "SIR KNIGHT STANDARD BEARER, PLACE THE UNITED STATES FLAG." "STANDARD GUARD, PRESENT SWORDS."

(Note: Standard Bearer does NOT move until the Standard Guard is at Present Swords. There should be no hesitation between the above orders.)

(Note: When the Standard Guard has come to Present Swords the Standard Bearer then moves and ascends the dais, places the Flag in the holder, takes two steps backward, draws his sword and comes to "Carry Swords" and then to "Present Swords.")

C.G. *(Comes to carry swords)* "SIR KNIGHTS, CARRY SWORDS".

(Note: ALL Sir Knights, including the Standard Guard will take this order from the Captain General and come to "Carry Swords".)

From this point forward the tactics for opening the Commandery will follow those printed in the Pennsylvania Tactics Manual.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania this 27th day of July, 2011 Anno Domini / 893 Anno Ordinis.

S.K. John K. March, Grand Commander

ATTEST:

S.K. Douglas M. Rowe, Grand Recorder

[SEAL]