

Realms of Avalon Books of Ceremony



*Sample Scripts for
Formal Ceremonies.*

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PART ONE:

KNIGHTINGS

KNIGHTING: FIRST LEVEL, FIRST KNIGHTHOOD

(KNIGHT BACHELOR)

HERALD:

THERE IS ONE AMONG US WHO HAS THIS DAY COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE MADE A MEMBER OF THE CHIVALRY. _____ (name), COME FORWARD!

[Candidate approaches and kneels before the throne.]

HERALD:

AS A KNIGHT BACHELOR, YOU WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS SOMEONE WHO HAS WORKED WITH SKILL AND DILIGENCE TO ACHIEVE YOUR RANK. YOU WILL BE AN EXAMPLE TO NEW MEMBERS, AND A MENTOR TO THE SQUIRES YOU CHOOSE TO TRAIN. FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, YOU WILL REPRESENT NOT ONLY YOURSELF BY YOUR ACTIONS, BUT ALSO THE NOBLE ORDER OF CHIVALRY OF WHICH YOU ARE A PART.

THE PROPER GOALS OF A KNIGHT ARE SEVEN: THE THREE DIVINE VIRTUES OF FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY, AND THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES OF JUSTICE, PRUDENCE, TEMPERANCE, AND STRENGTH. DO YOU INTEND TO TAKE ON THE DUTIES AND GOALS OF A KNIGHT BACHELOR TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITIES?

CANDIDATE:

I DO.

HERALD *[To Crown]:*

DOES THE PLEDGE OF THIS CANDIDATE MEET WITH YOUR GRACE'S APPROVAL?

CROWN:

IT DOES.

HERALD:

THEN LET THE SPURS BE BROUGHT FORTH!

[The individual girding on the spurs approaches and straps them to the candidate's feet. While they work, the HERALD continues:]

THE SPURS OF A KNIGHT SYMBOLIZE DILIGENCE AND SWIFTNES, IN SERVICE AND IN PRESERVATION OF HIS/HER HONOR AS A KNIGHT. MAY THESE SPURS NEVER BE STRICKEN FROM YOUR HEELS IN DISGRACE!

[When spurs are strapped on:]

HERALD:

LET THE BELT BE BROUGHT FORTH!

[The individual girding on the belt approaches, and begins; as they work, the Herald continues:]

HERALD:

THIS BELT BINDS YOU TO THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY, AND IS THE SYMBOL OF YOUR PLEDGE.

**(If blue belt:)*

THE BLUE BELT SYMBOLIZES TRUTH, WHICH ALL WORTHY KNIGHTS HOLD IN HIGHEST ESTEEM.

**(If white belt:)*

THE WHITE BELT SYMBOLIZES PURITY OF THOUGHT AND ACTION, WHICH ALL WORTHY KNIGHTS WILL STRIVE TO ATTAIN.

MAY YOU EVER BE BOUND TO RIGHT ACTION AND FAIR DEALINGS!

[OPTIONAL REGALIA SECTION -- SWORD AND/OR BANNER]

HERALD:

LET THE SWORD BE BROUGHT FORTH!

[Individual girding on the sword approaches, begins to work; HERALD continues:]

HERALD:

AS A SWORD HAS TWO EDGES, SO THEY SYMBOLIZE CHIVALRY AND JUSTICE, FOR IT IS THE WORK OF CHIVALRY TO MAINTAIN JUSTICE. THE SWORD IS A TOOL OF JUSTICE,

AND SHOULD ONLY BE WIELDED AS SUCH. MAY YOU EVER USE IT WITH DISCRETION AND WISDOM!

HERALD:

LET THE BANNER BE BROUGHT FORTH!

[Individual acting as standard-bearer comes forward, positions self beside Candidate, facing audience so everyone can see the Candidate's device clearly; standard bearer should not block audience's view of the Crown and Candidate, however. HERALD continues while standard-bearer moves into position.]

HERALD:

THE HERALDIC DEVICE OF A KNIGHT SYMBOLIZES HIS/HER RENOWN, FOR GOOD OR ILL. AN INSIGNIA OF ARMS IS GIVEN TO A KNIGHT SO THAT HE/SHE MAY BE KNOWN FOR HIS/HER DEEDS. ALL HONOR OR INFAMY YOU MAY EARN WILL BECOME PART OF THIS DEVICE. MAY IT BECOME A TOKEN OF HONOR AND FAME, RECOGNIZED AND REVERED THROUGHOUT OUR LANDS!

[NOTE: Banner may be replaced with a shield if so desired, especially by combatants; Herald should substitute the word "shield" for "banner," obviously, but otherwise all is the same for wording, placement of shield-bearer, etc.]

[END OF OPTIONAL REGALIA SECTION]

[CROWN readies the Sword of State for the Oath.]

HERALD:

YOU HAVE BEEN GIRDED WITH THE VESTMENTS OF KNIGHTHOOD, AND BEEN TOLD THEIR MEANINGS. WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE, ARE YOU STILL PREPARED TO TAKE YOUR OATH?

CANDIDATE:

I AM.

HERALD:

THEN PLACE YOUR HANDS UPON THE SWORD AND REPEAT AFTER ME:

[One phrase at a time.]

HERE DO I SWEAR
BY MOUTH AND HAND
TO SERVE MY OFFICE
AS A KNIGHT OF THE CHIVALRY.
TO SUPPORT THE CROWN
IN ALL JUST ACTIONS,
TO IMPROVE MYSELF,
BOTH BODY AND SOUL,
TO BE A LAMP OF CHIVALRY
AND AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS.
TO TEACH THOSE WHO WISH IT,
AND LEARN WHAT I CAN.
TO SEEK JUSTICE AND MERCY,
TO DEFEND THE WEAK,
TO SPEAK WITH DISCRETION,
AND PUT HUMILITY
BEFORE PRIDE.
SO SWEAR I,

_____ *[candidate's name.]*

[The CROWN continues from this point on:]

CROWN:

HAVING FULFILLED THE REQUIREMENTS, BEEN GIRDED WITH YOUR VESTMENTS, AND HAVING TAKEN YOUR OATH, I HEREBY CREATE YOU A KNIGHT IN THE NAME OF:

SAINT _____,
[touches flat of sword to Candidate's left shoulder]

SAINT _____,
[touches flat of sword to Candidate's right shoulder]

AND SAINT _____.
[touches flat of sword to top of Candidate's head]

RISE, SIR/DAME _____ *[candidate's name]*, AND RECEIVE THE COULEE.

[Candidate stands, facing Crown, Crown delivers the coulee, the ceremonial blow to the shoulder, saying:]

CROWN:

LET THIS BE THE LAST BLOW YOU TAKE UNANSWERED!

[CROWN turns new Knight to face the audience.]

CROWN:

MY LORDS AND LADIES, I PRESENT TO YOU
SIR/DAME _____ *[name]!*

[CROWN leads audience in a round of "Huzzah!"s]

NOTES ON PERFORMING THE KNIGHTING CEREMONIES AS WRITTEN

This is designed to be a general Knighting ceremony for use in Court, with the Crown and Herald in attendance. It can be modified to suit personal tastes (see section below), but should be (I hope) an acceptable ceremony on its own as well.

Some thoughts on performing this ceremony (which will probably also be useful in personalized variations as well):

* Be sure to give portions of the ceremony a private run-through as necessary (think wedding). The person(s) strapping on the spurs should probably practice, since putting spurs on a kneeling individual isn't always that easy, and you don't want to be up there for 15 minutes trying to figure out how for the first time in Court. Ditto the vestment of the belt and sword. Figure out ahead of time where people will be standing if you are using the banner/shield, so that the standard-bearer can position themselves appropriately the first time.

* Make sure the various vestments, vestment holders, and any other necessary items (sword of office, etc.) are lined up and ready **before** you start the ceremony.

* Vestments may (and in fact are encouraged) to match the individual's persona, if possible -- in style, construction, materials, etc. There is no set form of, say, belt, so long as it is of a recognizable color (blue or white), and goes around the individual's waist. So, cording, sashes, etc. would be acceptable substitutes.

* In Caerleon, at least, it has become customary for the spurs to be girded on by the Candidate's prospective Squire(s), if any, and the belt to be girded on by the Candidate's significant other, if any. However, the vestments may be given by any willing individuals chosen by the Candidate - - including the Herald and Crown, who can break ceremonial "formation" as necessary.

* The Herald should be keeping an eye on the speed with which vestments are being girded onto the Candidate, and make the accompanying speeches with appropriate speed. This doesn't mean you have to talk like an auctioneer to get all the words in during the girding itself, if it goes quickly, nor that you have to stretch things out indefinitely if things are slow -- but a little pacing at this point will make the ceremony flow better.

* Make sure that everyone gets a copy of the version of the ceremony that will be used **ahead** of time, for a read-through, and make sure that enough copies are on-hand for those who will need them (the Herald and Crown at least will need copies of the above version).

* You don't have to memorize your entire "part" -- reading off the paper is OK. Memorizing it is much snazzier, but we are all mere mortalsPrinting it on parchment style paper is a nice way to make it look fancier for the ceremony and still have the convenience of the script.

* Sometimes, especially in low-light conditions, printing the ceremony out in a larger font can be

helpful -- 16 to 18 point type are good sizes.

* The choice of saints is up to the Candidate, and need not be actual Christian saints (though the latter are a diverse and interesting bunch, and well worth researching if you aren't familiar with them -- there's a saint for almost every activity, nationality, and topic). For example, in my own Knighting, I chose Saint Dorothy, Saint Jerome, and Arturus Rex (King Arthur) as my saints -- the first two are genuine saints (with great stories -- look them up!), but King Arthur is obviously not. Choose saints or other individuals/figures whom you admire and hope to emulate, or who are in some way related to your goals as a Knight.

When an individual cannot make up his/her mind about which three saints to choose, it is customary for the Crown to threaten to dub him/her in the names of Saint Lawrence, Saint Maurice, and Saint Curly. As a humorous motivator, it can really work! *Nyuk! Nyuk! Nyuk!* :)

* While described here as a physical blow to the shoulder, the coulee doesn't *have* to be such -- it can be a mark on the hand with a pen, or some other substitution, for those who do not wish to receive an actual blow. Also, if it is a physical blow, the Crown and Candidate should confer ahead of time and work out just how hard of a blow is appropriate.

KNIGHTING: FIRST LEVEL, ADDITIONAL SKILL AREA ***(KNIGHT BACHELOR)***

HERALD:

UPON THIS DAY, A MEMBER OF OUR POPULACE HAS EARNED THE TITLE OF KNIGHT BACHELOR A SECOND TIME, IN A NEW FIELD OF SKILL. SIR/DAME _____ *[name]*, PLEASE STAND FORTH!

[Recipient approaches, kneels, takes sword of office held by Crown.]

HERALD:

YOU HAVE ALREADY TAKED THE SOLEMN OATH OF THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY, BUT THOUGH YOUR WORK AND SKILL YOU HAVE EARNED THAT HONOR AGAIN, IN THE FIELD OF _____ *[name skill area]*.

AS YOUR HONOR IS INCREASED, SO IS THE WEIGHT OF RESPONSIBILITY YOU BEAR.

DO YOU SWEAR TO BE A LAMP OF CHIVALRY IN

_____ *[new skill area]*, AS YOU ARE IN _____ *[previous skill area(s)]?*

RECIPIENT:

I DO.

[Crown sets aside sword, takes Recipient's hands, raises him/her, saying:]

CROWN:

THEN ARISE, SIR/DAME _____ *[name]*, TWICE WORTHY!

[Presents Recipient to the crowd, leads a round of "Huzzah!"s.]

NOTES ON PERFORMING THE CEREMONY

This is an optional ceremony -- as written, it is to be performed in Court with the Crown and Herald, but can be performed when and where the recipient desires (as with the primary Knighting ceremonies), by the desired individual(s).

Note that in the last line of the ceremony, “twice worthy” may be replaced with “thrice worthy” in the case of a person with Knight Bachelors in two other skill areas, or “four times worthy” in the case of someone getting a Knight Bachelor in the last of the four skill areas.

KNIGHTING: SECOND LEVEL

Being Developed

KNIGHTING: THIRD LEVEL

Being Developed

THOUGHTS FOR PERSONALIZING A KNIGHTING CEREMONY

A knighting can be held at any time and place chosen by the Candidate, and may be a public or relatively private Ceremony; the Candidate might even wish to sponsor a separate event at which the Knighting can take place (e.g. hosting a tournament, party, or picnic centered around the Knighting). One's Knighting a special, personal, thing, and should be treated as such.

Along those same lines, the ceremony itself is fairly mutable -- the main things that should stay in it are: the presentation of the belt (the one required item of vestment), the Oath as written above, the dubbing in the saints' names, and the coulee. Consider the following ideas:

- * Customize your vestments to fit your persona -- one individual in Caerleon with a pirate persona was vested with a spyglass and sextant, in place of the spurs and sword.
- * You can add music, so long as it doesn't interfere with the reading of the ceremony itself (one Knighting I attended featured a flute player, with Persona-appropriate musical selections).
- * While the above is a fairly secular ceremony, religion played a great part in Period, and can be incorporated into an Avalon Knighting, if desired, so long as it is done respectfully of all involved.
- * You can add a bit of drama, if all parties are willing -- the roguish pirate mentioned above had his second Knight Bachelor ceremony (in a different subject area) take the form of an "enforced" Knighting, in which guards seized him, and, after a struggle, forced him to his knees for the ceremony to commence -- all very entertaining given the gentleman's persona of a complete rebel, who would not take such a "conventional" honor with pleasure (what would all the other pirates think?).
- * Any Knight can preside over a Knighting (it doesn't have to be the Crown); in the case of new groups, allowances can be made for the first few Knightings, though often Knights from a neighboring area are willing to visit and take part in such a first-time ceremony.
- * Similarly, the Herald's part can be taken by someone else, or even be taken over by the individual in the "Crown's" part, so that only one person conducts the entire ceremony.

SOME PERIOD KNIGHTING IDEAS TO CONSIDER

These are mostly here to serve as ideas; like large portions of the above ceremony, they are based on material found in Ramon Lull's *Book of Knighthood and Chivalry* (trans. Brian R. Price, Chivalry Bookshelf, 2001), originally written in the 13th Century. There are certainly other Period sources on Chivalry and Knighthood, which can also be consulted for ideas, but Lull is considered something of a standard.

Lull suggests the following, in relation to the ceremony of Knighthood:

- * That it be held on the occasion of a major holiday (Christmas, Easter, etc.) to do honor to the gravity of becoming a knight.
- * That the Candidate undergo a fast and vigil, to pray and contemplate the values of Chivalry.
- * That the Knighting be preceded by a mass and religious sermon.
- * That a new Knight ride through the town and show himself to the people, so that they know he has been made a member of the Chivalry.
- * And, that a new Knight host a feast and give gifts after the Knighting, to show largesse (a Knightly feature greatly respected in Period), and to celebrate the gift of Knighthood that has been received. However, I will note that in Caerleon, new Knights are often *given* gifts, as tokens of recognition by their friends and fellows; a homegrown tradition, if not necessarily Period.

Finally, Lull gives a *long* list of vestments (essentially a Knight's entire kit) and their symbolic meanings. For reference, here is his list, barring those items already covered in the ceremony above. These can serve as inspiration, or can be used to add extra vestments to the ceremony:

- * The spear or lance - truth
- * The helmet - fear of shame
- * The hauberk - strength against vices
- * The chausses (leg armor) - holding to the ways of Chivalry
- * The gorget - obedience
- * The mace - strength and courage
- * The misiracorde or dagger - trust in God

- * The shield (separate from heraldic device) - defense of one's lord
- * The gauntlets - protection against injury, and "from touching evil."
- * The saddle - surety
- * The horse - noblesse
- * The reigns - to be led by duty
- * The bardings - worldly goods necessary to Chivalry
- * The surcoat - hardships to be faced
- * The banner (separate from heraldic device) - duty to defend

PART TWO:

SQUIRINGS

SQUIRE: ACCEPTANCE OATH

HERALD:

THE PATH TO KNIGHTHOOD IS LONG AND DIFFICULT, WITH MUCH TO BE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY. BECAUSE OF THIS, IT IS THE CUSTOM OF KNIGHTS TO TAKE AS SQUIRES INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO BECOME KNIGHTS, THAT THESE SQUIRES MAY BE TRAINED IN ALL ASPECTS OF KNIGHTHOOD BY ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS CHIVALRY WELL.

KNIGHT:

ON THIS DAY, I HAVE CHOSEN TO TAKE _____
[candidate's name] AS MY SQUIRE.

[Candidate approaches, kneels before Knight.]

KNIGHT:

THE PATH OF CHIVALRY IS A LONG ONE, AND THE HONOR OF KNIGHTHOOD NOT EASILY WON. ARE YOU WILLING TO DEVOTE YOURSELF TO THIS CAUSE?

CANDIDATE:

I AM.

[Knight sets the sword point-down in front of Candidate, Candidate grasps quillions with both hands, Knight covers Candidate's hands with his/her own -- reserving a free hand to hold reading copy of ceremony, as necessary.]

KNIGHT:

THEN REPEAT AFTER ME:

HERE DO I SWEAR

BY MOUTH AND HAND

IT IS MY INTENT

TO BECOME A KNIGHT.

TO LEARN THROUGH SERVICE

TO ACT WITH HONOR
BEFITTING MY KNIGHT
AND TO HEED THE TEACHING
I RECEIVE.
TO DEVOTE MYSELF
TO LEARNING THE SKILLS
I MUST HAVE,
AND TO FOLLOW THE VIRTUES
OF FAITH AND HOPE,
OF CHARITY AND JUSTICE,
OF PRUDENCE, TEMPERENCE, AND STRENGTH.
SO SWEAR I,
_____ *[candidate's name.]*

KNIGHT: *(continues)*

IN RETURN FOR YOUR SERVICE, AND DEVOTION TO CHIVALRY,
I IN TURN SWEAR TO TEACH YOU WHAT I CAN, AND FIND YOU
INSTRUCTION IN WHAT I CANNOT TEACH. I WILL AID YOU IN
OBTAINING EQUIPMENT, AND SEE TO YOUR UPKEEP AS
NECESSARY. I WILL TREAT YOU ALWAYS AS MY STUDENT,
AND NOT MY SERVANT. AS MY HONOR REFLECTS UPON YOU,
SO YOUR HONOR REFLECTS UPON ME, AND WHOSOEVER
DEALS WITH YOU, DEALS WITH ME AS WELL.

[Knight sets sword aside, girds Squire with a red belt.]

KNIGHT:

THE RED BELT OF A SQUIRE SIGNIFIES YOUR PLEDGE TO
CHIVALRY. WEAR IT WITH HONOR!

[Knight vests Squire with Knight's badge.]

BY WEARING MY BADGE, YOU DECLARE YOUR SERVICE TO ME,
AND MY SPONSORSHIP OF YOU.

*[Knight takes Squire's hands, raises him/her to his/her feet, turns Squire to face
audience.]*

KNIGHT:

MY LORDS AND LADIES, I PRESENT TO YOU MY SQUIRE,
_____ *[name]*.

KNIGHT leads the audience in a round of "Huzzah!"s

NOTES ON THE SQUIRING CEREMONY

As with a Knighting ceremony, the Squiring ceremony can be “personalized” by the participants -- for example, some other relevant item may be substituted for the sword in administering the oath (an Arts-related tool, an arrow, etc., depending on the Knight’s skill area or areas).

As with a Knightly belt, the Squire’s belt need not be of any particular style -- it need only be definitely red in color, and be worn around the waist -- sashes, cords, etc. are all acceptable, especially if relating to the Squire’s persona.

The Knight’s badge may be on a surcoat, pin, pendant, etc., as desired.

The above ceremony is intended to be used in Court, where a Herald is present, but, like Knightings, Squirings may be held anywhere, and anyone may substitute for the Herald -- or the Knight may conduct the ceremony alone.

It has become something of a Caerleon custom for any new Knight who had a prospective Squire or Squires to conduct the Squiring ceremony immediately following his/her own Knighting. while not required, this does have the bonus of concentrating all the ceremony in one time and place, and giving extra reasons for celebrating!

Note that the Squire/Knight relationship is a strictly personal one, and may be dissolved by one or both parties for just and stated cause, at which point the former Squire shall return his/her belt and badge to the Knight.

In the case of individuals who desire service to a Knight, but who are too young or otherwise unable or unwilling to be held to a formal Squire’s oath, it is recommended that they be made Pages or apprentices, and wear the Knight’s badge or favor without taking any specific formal oath, until they are old enough for a more formal relationship, and become squires.

SQUIRE: RELEASING A SQUIRE

Being Developed

PART THREE:

MINISTERIAL

MINISTERS: GENERAL OATH FOR AN OFFICE

[Herald calls Minister candidate before the throne.]

HERALD:

YOU HAVE THIS DAY BEEN OFFERED THE TITLE OF
_____ *[title]*. DO YOU ACCEPT THIS POSITION?

CANDIDATE:

I DO.

[Crown sets sword of office before Candidate, Candidate grasps quillions.]

HERALD:

THEN REPEAT AFTER ME:

[One phrase at a time]

HERE DO I SWEAR

BY MOUTH AND HAND

TO FULFILL THE DUTIES

OF MY POSITION

TO GIVE GOOD COUNSEL

AND TO REPORT REGULARLY

ON THE ACTIVITIES

OF MY MINISTRY.

I WILL ACT ALWAYS

IN GOOD FAITH,

AND WITH FAIR JUDGEMENT

TO ALL.

SO SWEAR I

_____ [name]

[Crown sets sword aside.]

CROWN:

ARISE, _____ ! [title.]

MAY YOU GO IN HONOR AND NEVER BE FORSWORN.

[Crown turns Minister to face the crowd, leads a round of “Huzzah!”s.]

[A Warrant of Office is presented to the new Minister at this point.]

NOTES ON PERFORMING THE MINISTER'S OATH

This is designed to be a simple and straightforward ceremony. It should be performed in Court, by the Crown and Herald, since this involves an official position. If a Herald is unavailable, the Crown may perform the entire ceremony alone.

When giving the title of the Minister, be sure to be specific -- "Minister of Joust and War for the Canton of Thatuna," "Marshal of Caerleon," etc.

Assistant Ministers appointed by the chief Minister in their area (Range Masters appointed by the Minister of Archery, Field Heralds deputized by the main Herald, etc.) need not take the Oath in Court to be "official" and earn points for their work, though they certainly may take the Oath if they so desire, especially in the case of continuing positions.

Likewise, individuals who have formally accepted Ministry positions and begun work before the next scheduled Court are considered "official" for purposes of points earned, etc., though they should take the Oath as soon as possible after accepting their position.

In the case of Subdivision-level Ministers, the Oath is administered by the Leader of the Subdivision, who takes the Crown's role, and the Subdivision's heraldic officer acting as Court Herald.