

## Officers of the lodge

There are two sets of officers of the lodge. In one set includes the *progressive offices*, those that brethren progress through on their way to Master - Inner Guard, two Deacons, two Wardens and ultimately the Master himself. Add in the Treasurer, Secretary and Tyler, and these are the *regular* or required offices. Brethren may only hold one regular office at a time, but they can, in addition, hold a non-regular office. These *additional offices* include the Chaplain, Director of Ceremonies, Almoner, Charity Steward, Mentor, ADC, Organist, Assistant Secretary and the Stewards. Additional offices allow brethren to double up to fill the offices and apart from the Almoner and Charity Steward, they do not have to be filled.

It would be a very unwise Master who decided *not* to appoint a DC, but he is actually an additional officer. In the early days, when the duties were much fewer, the IPM carried them out. The Emulation Lodge of Improvement continues this practice, and the Emulation ritual book mentions the DC only in the installation, and then only as an alternate to the *Installing Master*. Nevertheless, the DC is very much part of the Lodge *Civil Service*. A Lodge is essentially run by its Secretary, Treasurer and DC, guiding the Master.

In operative days, the Master was frequently known as the Master Mason and there was often just one Warden. The second Warden was introduced following guild practice and both originally sat in the West, in what has been described as the *triangular* lodge — the Master at the apex and the Wardens at the lower two corners. This may have been a Scottish practice. A diagram of Canongate Kilwinning, an Edinburgh Lodge warranted in 1677, shows this arrangement, while a 1762 English woodcut shows the Wardens placed as we know them, in the South and West.

A mid 18th century exposure suggests the Deacons carried black wands 8 foot long but until the merger in 1813, really only lodges of the Ancients Grand Lodge had Deacons. The Deacons' jewel today is a dove bearing an olive branch but earlier it was a figure of Mercury, the messenger of the gods, which seems to me more appropriate.

Guild practice also gave us Stewards, common to both Grand Lodges and dating back to 1720 - although sometimes they did what Deacons later did. The 1734 minutes of the Lodge of Industry, meeting in Gateshead across the Tyne from Newcastle, uses both names, referring to a *Senior Deacon or Steward*. The word *steward* is derived from the Old English *stig weard*, meaning, *guardian or keeper of the house*, and the collar jewel is the *cornucopia*, or horn of plenty — originally pictured as a goat's horn overflowing with goodies.

Before adopting his current name in 1814, the Inner Guard was known as the Door Keeper, the Inner Steward or the Inner Tyler and was armed with a trowel. He was the Tyler's assistant, and often the most junior EA. His jewel of two crossed swords dates from 1819.

The most colourful officer in our history was the Tyler or Outer Guard. George Bennett, in his 1869 *History of Bandon*, a town in Co. Cork, describes him:

*A huge red cloak covered him to the very toes; large sleeves hanging below his hands, terminating in cuffs of orange velvet, each with a skull and crossbones in lustrous black. He wore a blue collar embroidered with golden moons, stars and kabbalistic symbols,*

*and a gigantic cocked hat, surmounted with blue and red feathers, big enough to serve him for a boat. He was armed with a monstrous ritual sword [known as a flaming falchion] "Keep back!" said the terrible man, as the bewildered candidate stepped forward, "Before you can say, 'God save me!' I'll run you through the gullet!"*