

Minutes, September 1, 1913

Chapter General of the Knights of Malta held on Monday, September 1st 1913 at 4:00 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City.

Meeting called to welcome the Grand Duke Alexander, Grand Master designate and to elect him to this high office as the 71st Grand Master of our Order, also for such other business of the Order as may be heard.

Chairman-President: Wm. Sohler Bryant.  
Secretary-Grand Chancellor: Wm. B. Stites.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

At 4:15 p.m. H.I.H. the Grand Duke Alexander of Russia accompanied by his friend Mr. B. H. Warburton and the Committee, arrived at the convocation. The Lieut. Grand Master Bryant welcomed H. I. H. on his own and the Knights behalf and surrendered the Chair to H. I. H. to act as Chairman while he, the Lieut. Grand Master made the nominating speech on behalf of the grand master elect. In seconding the speech the Grand Chancellor praised the rare distinction of securing the descendant of the 70th or last elected grand master as the grand master of this, the truly international and interconfessional Order and predicted a bright future under his guidance and mastership.

The question being put to a vote was unanimously passed, the 71st Grand Master being greeted with much acclamation.

The membership as a body arose and swore fealty to the elected 71st Grand Master of the Order.

H. I. H. the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich in his acceptance speech called the attention of the knights to the fact that while the circumstances in which he was elected the 71st Grand Master may have lacked the pomp and pageantry that customarily accompanies such an election, yet as the world moves and conditions change, it is not always the outward form that has value but the inner compulsion for good deeds and noble acts that makes now and will in the future determine the value of the Order to the human family. He reminded us that never did the world see the need or have the opportunity to serve humanity with greater zeal than in its present condition. He told the knights that they should live up to the motto of Noblesse Oblige and that the door to elevation is always open to those who deserve.

Here it may be well to quote part of the speech: "The first founders of our illustrious Order judged it necessary to frequently call a Chapter General to maintain vigor in our laws and recall to their duty, those who may have wavered from their duties.

"My intention is to follow the good intentions and works of my predecessors.



"With great satisfaction, I see that it is the desire of our Brethren to put into practice the wise rules laid down by our historical Order.

"The sentiments of these true Religious Brethren allow me to hope that with the same zeal they will be able to put aside personal interest and seek only the benefit and success of our Sacred Religion and the security of our Order.

"I believe it is the outward duty of our Order to defend the altars and estates of Christendom and to secure to Christians their rights and privileges, and inwardly to preserve justice and unity, peace and piety. Also to remember the strict bounds of the hospital, with its duties of a careful attendance upon the sick and poor.

"By means of our precepts and example, our rules and our statutes we will prevent any abuses from creeping into our administration, and in reminding our Brethren of the historical examples of the three virtues- poverty, chastity and obedience- which many have promised God, Church, and our great protector, Saint John the Baptist, it would follow that we will reach the happy end set before us in this and future chapter generals."

H. I. H. expressed much satisfaction with our Constitution and By-laws which he said he had previously studied and approved and praised the knights for preserving the traditions of the Order.

In his concluding remarks H.I.H. the 71st Grand Master of our Order requested that for the present and due to the strained international situation that all publicity be avoided and that the deeds of the Order be conducted under a cover of discreet silence.

The 71st Grand Master also suggested that the members act wisely in the selection of a Lieutenant Grand Master as his life was a series of continuous travels which prevented him from attending all the meetings. In order to deal with contingencies, the Grand Master gave the Grand Chancellor express permission to use his signature in fac simile reproduction on any necessary documents of the Order.

The Grand Master received a standing vote of confidence and loyalty from the membership body.

The Grand Master discharged the Committee which selected him and thanked them for their efforts and confidence.

The Officers of the Order tendered their resignations to the Grand Master, which were accepted.

The knights then proceeded to the election of the other two officers essential for the functioning of the Order, that is, a lieutenant grand master and a grand chancellor.

Commander William Schier Bryant was elected Lieutenant Grand Master and Grand Prior of the American Grand Priory, while Dr. Joseph G. B. Bulloch was elected as Grand Chancellor of the Order.



The Grand Master praised the elections as wise and essential for the progress of the Order.

It was also voted and seconded that the Grand Master be considered as Grand Prior of the Russian Grand Priory.

The Grand Master advised that he would from time to time send to the Grand Chancellor the names of such appointive officers as he would deem necessary for the proper function of the Order.

The Grand Master asked the Primate of the Russian-Orthodox Church to lead the knights in a prayer of thanks and hope for the future of the Order.

The Chapter General was declared dissolved at 10:30 p.m. by the Grand Master, to be convened at the call of the Grand Master or the Lieutenant Grand Master.

Respectfully submitted

(Signed) J. G. B. Bulloch,  
Grand Chancellor.

