

PROVING CHAPTER

RITUAL pg. 26-27, fine print, p. 83

LAW BOOK, Section 158, 166 – 170, pp. 76, 79 - 80.

Book of Instruction, pp. 15-17

REMEMBER:

- Visitors are called “**Visitors**” until they are vouched for; after they are vouched for, they are called a “Sister or Brother”.
- **Exact wording** should be used by the Associate Matron and Conductresses when Proving Chapter. (**Ritual pp. 26 & 27**) Please, learn and memorize the correct wordings.
- Conductresses should check to see if they know members present **before** the meeting begins. This can save a lot of work by checking and then having someone who can vouch for the person be ready to do so (and be seated to the East side of the person to be vouched for if possible and if is a visitor that is vouching).
- **When vouching, the member making the avouchment always and only addresses the Associate Matron and saying:**
 - “Sister Associate Matron, I vouch for Sister/Brother (Name – first and last), a member of (Name of Chapter and No.), (Town and State). BOI, page 16.
 - The avouchment is three parts:
 - 1) NAME
 - 2) CHAPTER
 - 3) LOCATION

HINT: It is like addressing an envelope -three lines, 1)Name, 2)Address,3) City
 - Even though the Conductresses have heard the avouchment they do not respond immediately, the Associate Matron should always instruct the Conductresses before either Conductress nods the Sister or Brother down.

Options to Prove Chapter:

The WM instructs the AM (Ritual pg. 26) and then the WM is seated.

1. If the AM can vouch for all present, she addresses the WM. (Ritual pg. 27).

2. If the AM is unable to vouch for all present, she instructs the Conductresses to determine that all are members. (Ritual pg. 26).

- a. Conductresses rise; they do not respond to the AM, but remain standing until the AM finishes speaking.
- b. The Associate Matron remains standing during proving of Chapter.
- c. The Conductresses march directly to the East, keeping opposite each other, turn toward the sidelines and face the West.
- d. The music is played while the conductresses march to the East and then ceases after they have stopped and turned toward the sidelines, facing west.
- e. The Associate Matron says: “**Will all visitors please rise?**” (BOI pg. 16)
- f. The Conductress and Associate Conductress work independently of each other in completing the proving of Chapter.

AVOUCHMENT:

- A member may vouch for a visitor if she/he has sat with the visitor in a ritualistic opening of a Chapter within one year or has examined the visitor as a member of the Examining Committee.
- Each year, a regular visitor to a Chapter, must present a Receipt for Dues or Certificate of Good Standing for the current or preceding year or a Demit issued within the last twelve months. (Law Book, Section 167, pg. 79)
- If the either of the Conductresses can vouch for the visitor, they nod to the visitor to be seated and continue to the next visitor.
- When the Conductress or Associate Conductress CANNOT vouch for a visitor she addresses the AM, (Ritual pg. 26).
 - If the Associate Matron cannot vouch for the visitor, she asks (using exact wording, Ritual pg. 26). **She does not say North or South at this time.**
 - If a member can vouch for the visitor she/he says responds with the proper wording found on pg 26 of the ritual.
- When vouching, the member making the avouchment always and only addresses the Associate Matron and says “Sister Associate Matron, I vouch for Sister/Brother (Name – first and last), a member of (Name of Chapter and No.), (Town and State). BOI, page 16.
 - The avouchment is three parts:
 - 1) NAME 2)CHAPTER 3)LOCATION
- When a member stands to vouch, she/he should vouch for all present in her/his group. She/He uses the wording found on page 26 of the Ritual.
- The Associate Matron addresses the appropriate Conductress using the exact wording (Ritual pg. 26)
- The appropriate Conductress nods the Sister/Brother or Sisters/Brothers down.
- **If the Chairman of the Examining Committee is vouching for a member who has been examined**, the wording is found on pg. 17 of the BOI (substituting Associate Matron for Worthy Matron at this time): **“Sister Associate Matron, the committee, has examined Sister/Brother (Name), a member of (Name of Chapter and No.) and (Town and State) and found her/him to be a member in good standing.”**
- The response from the Associate Matron is the same as for any other Visitor vouched for by a member. (Ritual pg. 26)

If no one can vouch for a visitor during the proving of the Chapter engage this procedure:

- It is necessary to examine the visitor.
- The AM addresses the WM: **“Worthy Matron, there is a visitor for whom no one can vouch.”**
- The WM appoints an Examining Committee.
- The WM instructs the Marshal to escort the visitor to the preparation room door where she/he meets the Examining Committee. When the Marshal meets the visitor, she/he should instruct the visitor to take their dues receipt with them for the Examination.
- The Worthy Matron directs the Examining Committee to retire into the Preparation Room. If necessary, the WM may need to call on members to serve as the Examining Committee for this moment and examination. The Opening Ceremony will continue

while the Examining Committee and visitor are outside of the Chapter Room, therefore the WM should consider who she asks to retire as the Examining Committee. Someone on the Examining Committee should take the Bible from the Secretary's desk to be used during the examination.

- The Examining Committee does not need to retire in form because the Bible is not yet open.
- The committee and the visitor retire into the Preparation Room and the Marshal returns to their station. **The committee must have a small Bible with them. The visitor needs their dues card with them.**
- Examining Committee examines the visitor in the Preparation Room and then moves to the area of the Warder's Door where the Sentinel is located and wait for the appropriate time to return to the Chapter Room.
- The Opening ceremony must be completed before the Sentinel causes the alarm to proceed with their return.
- Inside the Chapter Room, Proving of the Chapter continues, not waiting for the return of the Committee and visitor.

Complete the Proving of Chapter: (Examining Committee and member do not return to the Chapter Room until after the Flag Salute)

- All visitors are vouched for and seated.
- The Conductresses meet in the West in front of the AM and AP and face each other leaving a space between them.
- The Associate Conductress reports to the Conductress, (Ritual pg. 27).
- The Conductress and Associate Conductress both turn toward the West.
- The Conductress reports to the Associate Matron (Ritual pg. 27).
- The Conductress and Associate Conductress turn toward each other and face the east. Maintain a space between Associate Matron and the East.
- The Associate Matron responds to the WM (Ritual pg. 27).
- The Conductresses immediately return to their stations, keeping directly opposite each other and observing square corners.
- The Associate Matron, Conductress and Associate Conductress remain standing.
- The WM raps twice ** for the officers to rise for the opening.

WHEN THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE RETURNS:

- The Examining Committee examines the visitor.
- **The Examining Committee and the member return in form through the Warder's door, following the Flag Salute.**
- While standing back of Esther's station, The Examining Committee Chairman reports: **“Worthy Matron, the committee has examined Sister/Brother (Name), a member of (Name of Chapter and No.), and (Town and State) and found her/him to be a member in good standing.”**
- WM welcomes the member.
- They are then seated.