

I, Edward Grey, knight of the society would speak for your Order of Chivalry.

Permission to address your populace?

As knights and masters, we are charged to be your exemplars of prowess. Martial prowess, chained to, and tempered by the virtues of courage, honesty, loyalty, generosity, faith, courtesy and franchise.

What is martial prowess? It was once explained to me as the capacity to stand in defense of the kingdom with whatever manner of arms presented. To do so as a virtuous combatant, is to bring honor to your crown, kingdom, order and chosen lady.

Your Majesties,

I have stood as champion for this kingdom, your predecessors, your populace and my chosen ladies. I have met worthy adversaries from many lands with all manner of arms and have honored my vow.

I have also stood within the rapier list and upon the field of war, with the fencers here assembled. I have done my duty and left my toll in bested foemen, but I have done so as a member of the chivalry, as an exemplary combatant - NOT, as a master of these more agile and precise blades. NOT as the three candidates you have called before you have done.

While we share knowledge of range and timing, of measure; I lack the sophisticated knowledge of a schlaguer's edge, balance, strength and yielding that enables a true master to gain and deny lines of engagement. The techniques specific to these arms, allude me. However, through careful study and dedication, these men may proceed through hostile engagements assured of their safety and certain in their victory. They do so with the grace of mastery.

It is the duty of the chivalry to advise the crown regarding the martial prowess of their populace. In the case of these combatants, we find that they display martial prowess to rival any knight or master of arms. Yet, as an order, we lack the expertise to properly distinguish between those of greatest merit.

Therefore, the companions of the Chivalry recommend unto Your Royal Majesties the formation of the Order of Defense, and will welcome any such new members of this order as our peers. Furthermore, we would advise this order to maintain such high standards of martial excellence, tempered by virtue, as are on display here today.

So say I, Edward Grey, knight of the society.

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I'm Alexandre, Master Alexandre d'Avignon and I speak today for the Laurel

There are some activities on which our current system does not sit comfortably. Among these for many years has been the practice of rapier. Many of its practitioners are very skilled, and skill, in general would seem to be the province of the Laurel, and yet ...

Is rapier an art? A science? We speak of martial arts, and yet ...

Rapier in the SCA, its practice and practitioners enrich our society, but does that make it a service? We value the people, to be sure, and in this Kingdom many of those who excel at rapier have been elevated to the peerage, and yet ...

There are those among us who exemplify what a peer should be, and who have spent long hours honing their skills, competing to serve their kingdom as champions, defending the East on the field of battle, and displaying great skill with their chosen weapons. And yet... And yet...

But no more "and yet." The tripartite division of bestowed peerage which has served us for several decades has proven flawed, and it is to our credit as a society that we have recognized that, and taken steps to correct it. Our society has changed, we have changed, but what has not changed is that the peerages exist to recognize excellence and to recognize persons who are exemplars of what we value as a society and a culture. This order must do the same, identify excellence and hold it up as an example.

Therefore, the companions of the Order of the Laurel recommend unto Your Royal Majesties the formation of the Order of Defense, and will welcome any such new members of the foresaid order as our peers.

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I am Master Thomas de Castellan, and I speak today on behalf of the Companions of the Pelican.

Before I was a companion of the pelican...before I even knew what a pelican was... I was a part of the rapier community. In the decades since, I have watched the rapier community grow into a vibrant and wonderful part of our Society. They have excelled in their art, but more importantly, they have enriched and given back to the Society. These are people who have grown, and helped others to grow and thrive in their art, and they have also embraced the virtue of giving back to the Society, so that all of us may benefit. This is the very essence of what it means to be a peer. It is with this in mind that we embrace these gentles as our peers.

To the new Order I would say this: it becomes your task to enrich others and lift them up to become what you have. Embrace this task with passion. We stand today lifted up on the

shoulders of those who came before us. May your shoulders be strong for those who are yet to come.

Therefore, the companions of the Pelican recommend unto Your Royal Majesties the formation of the Order of Defense, and will welcome any such new members of the foresaid order as our peers.

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I am Countess Marguerite inghean Lachlainn, and I speak today on behalf of the Order of the Rose.

As Roses of the Society we are not charged, at our release back into the populace, with many responsibilities. We are to be ongoing exemplars of Courtesy. Rather than speak about how the Rapier community does not fit into the Order of the Rose, as the rest of my fellow peers will do for their orders, I will speak instead of the Rose- like qualities that have led the community to this moment in time. The same ones which will serve the Order going forward.

May you continue to have Patience. It will take time to decide what this order will be, and time to find the right people to fill it's ranks. It will also take time for you to become what you are being elevated to be. May you have patience with the process.

May you continue to have Respect. Both the respect others have accorded you this day and also the respect of the Society. Additionally, may you continue to respect all the members of your community like the peers they will one day be, whether or not they ever receive the accolade.

May you continue to have Perseverance. A vision, a dream led the Society to this point. Let us in the glitter of ceremony not lose sight of that vision: A path to peerage for those who have been regarded as the fringe of the Society for a very long time.

May you continue to have Courtesy. I do not just mean gentle kindness, though we expect that of you too. Courtesy requires decorum, sophisticated conversation and intellectual skill. It requires listening attentively both to what is said and what is not said. Just as Courtesy is the foundation of a civilized society let it be also be invoked at the foundation of this Order. Let your actions and your words be in alignment with these virtues.

[Marguerite starts cracking up, mostly because she was supposed to come up with a transitional sentence and never did.] I feel like a fairy Godmother come to bless the cradle of this baby Order.

Therefore, the Order of the Rose recommend unto Your Royal Majesties the formation of the Order of Defense, and will welcome any such new members of the foresaid order as our peers.