

A Masonic Minute

Under The Wands

The established Protocol of our Grand Jurisdiction specifies those who, by right of Office, are entitled to be formally received '*under the wands*' and to assume the Gavel – the Grand Master, the Past Grand Masters, the Deputy Grand Master, and the District Deputy Grand Master in his own District. What does this custom symbolize? To answer this question, and many others like unto it, we should refer to the Ritual.

It should be noted that those Grand Lodge Officers entitled to be received formally '*under the wands*' gives us a clue to what the wands symbolize. Held in position by the Deacons, the wands spread with the points linked resemble a large Compasses.

In a similar gesture, the third movement of the Grand Honours accorded to those same Grand Lodge Officers cited above, might also be seen to represent the Deacons' Wands / Compasses held above the head.

The emblem on the Jewels worn by the Grand Master and Past Grand Masters is '*the compasses extended to 45 degrees.*'¹ This is explained in the Lecture given by the Junior Warden in the First Degree: "*The Compasses belong to the Grand Master, because, being the chief instrument made use of in the formation of all architectural plans and designs, they are appropriated to the Grand Master in particular, as an emblem of his dignity, he being the chief head and ruler of the Craft.*"

There is one further example when the wands are placed in this position – during the closing of the Lodge in the Third Degree, when the Senior Warden communicates the 'casual signs and words' to the Worshipful Master. Why is the Worshipful Master given this honour usually restricted to the Grand Master and his representatives? Again the justification may be found in the Ritual. After receiving the casual signs and words, the Worshipful Master returns to the Chair and says: "*I, as the Worshipful Master of this Lodge and therefore the humble representative of King Solomon ...*" Solomon, King of Israel was, according to our traditional history, the first Grand Master. So once again, the wands are accorded to '*the humble representative*' of a Grand Master.

RSJD 2015

¹ Book of Constitution