

## CHAPTER 1

### MASONIC LAW, TRADITION, AND POLICY LANDMARKS AND CERTAIN LAWS OF FREEMASONRY

#### Constitutional Provisions

It being well known that for any concept, precept, or principle of Freemasonry to be recognized as being a Landmark, the same must be possessed of two principal attributes, namely, Antiquity, and Universality, the following definitions of those terms are hereby adopted:

“Antiquity: Those beliefs and those practices which were fixed at the time when Freemasonry emerged from its prehistoric era into the period of recorded Masonic history.”

“Universality: A suggested Landmark has universality when it is one of the practices, principles, or beliefs which Masons everywhere accept, believe, and practice and without which there would be no Freemasonry.” (Art. XIII, Sec. 1)

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida hereby recognizes, as being Landmarks of Freemasonry the following:

- (a) A belief in the existence of one ever living and true God.
- (b) A belief in the immortality of the human soul and a resurrection thereof to a Future Life.
- (c) The Volume of the Sacred Law, open upon the Altar, is an indispensable furnishing of every regular Lodge while at labor.
- (d) The Legend of the Third Degree.
- (e) Secrecy, which includes: The necessary words, signs, and tokens, whereby one Mason may know another to be such, in darkness as in light; that every regular Lodge must be Tyled while at labor; that every visitor seeking admission to the Lodge must be examined and prove himself a Mason, unless duly and properly avouched for; those other matters which cannot be written in any language.
- (f) The symbolism of the Operative Art.
- (g) Every candidate for Freemasonry must be a man, free born, of lawful age, being under the tongue of good repute, and well recommended, and unless Dispensation is granted by the Grand Master, having no maim or defect of body that may render him incapable of learning the art or of being advanced

to the several Degrees. (NOTE: Under our law, this language has been interpreted to mean that an artificial substitute will qualify a maimed applicant if by the use thereof he is capable of conforming literally to what is required of him by the ritual of the several Degrees of Craft Masonry.)

- (h) The division of Ancient Craft Masonry into three classifications, namely, Entered Apprentices, Fellow Crafts, and Master Masons, out of which classifications grew the present Three Degrees of Craft Masonry.
- (i) The government of the Fraternity by a presiding Officer who, since the advent of speculative Masonry, has borne the title of Grand Master and has been elected from the body of the Craft, and the prerogatives inherent in that office, among which are:

The prerogative of the Grand Master to enter into and preside over every assembly of Masons within his jurisdiction and, corollary thereto, to supervise and regulate the affairs of Masonry within that jurisdiction, between Communications of the Grand Lodge, subject to the Constitution and lawful Regulations duly enacted by the Grand Lodge.

The prerogative of the Grand Master to grant his Dispensation.

The prerogative of the Grand Master to make a Mason at sight in the body of a regularly constituted Lodge and by trial of the ballot.

- (j) The necessity for Freemasons to congregate in Lodges.

The recognition of the above as Landmarks shall not be construed to mean or imply that this Grand Lodge is in any wise prohibited from recognizing, from time to time, hereafter, by appropriate amendments hereto, other principles, precepts, practices, or tenets of Freemasonry as being Landmarks, nor is this Grand Lodge prohibited from reconsidering and, if deemed proper, withdrawing, this recognition of any of the above. (Art. XIII, Sec. 2).

Although not recognized as being Landmarks, this Grand Lodge recognizes the following as being fundamental concepts, principles, precepts, practices, and tenets of Freemasonry, possessing the qualities and characteristics of Ancient Craft Masonic precedents and law, but not possessed of the immutable qualities of Landmarks:

- (a) The government of the Craft, when congregated in a Lodge, by a Master and two Wardens.

- (b) The right of every Mason to be represented in all general meetings of the Craft and to instruct his representatives.
- (c) The right of every Mason to appeal to the Grand Lodge, from any decision affecting his status as a Mason.
- (d) The right of every Mason to visit and sit in every regular Lodge.
- (e) No Lodge can interfere with the business of another Lodge.
- (f) Every Freemason is amenable to the laws of the Masonic Jurisdiction in which he resides.
- (g) The equality of all Masons. (Article XIII, Sec. 3)

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Regulations

**1.01** The Constitution and Regulations of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida as set forth and contained in this Digest are hereby adopted, ratified, confirmed, and with the amendments, changes, alterations, and additions thereto which may hereafter be made by direction of Grand Lodge, are declared to be the supreme Masonic Law of this Grand Jurisdiction.

The Rulings and Decisions of this Grand Lodge set forth and contained herein are declared to be in full force and effect and all Rulings and Decisions in conflict therewith are hereby revoked, rescinded, and declared of no force and effect. (1985)

**1.02** Masonic Law is a rule of fraternal conduct, and applies only to the moral and fraternal rectitude of its members. It is based upon the law of Divine Revelation, therefore, any covenant, affirmation, declaration, assumption, prescription, or requirement derogatory thereto, or in conflict therewith, is void. Hence the precept, "a Mason is bound by his tenure to obey the moral law." It embodies an innate principle of right, whose footprints distinctly mark the path of virtue in all authentic antecedents' history, and whose plumbline of moral rectitude will guide its consistent votaries of all successive future generations through the vista of coming time to the verge of human demolition.

**1.03** Masonic Law is of two kinds, viz: The unwritten and written. The unwritten law of Masonry comprises its mystic covenants and ceremonies which have been handed down by tradition from time

immemorial, and which no Mason, or set of Masons, is at liberty to violate or unlawfully reveal. The written law of Masonry is embraced in the Holy Bible, the Constitution and legislation of Grand Lodge, and the Laws, Rules, and Regulations of the Particular Lodges, respectively, to which every Mason in his proper sphere of fraternal jurisdiction should yield dutiful conformity.

**1.04** Freemasonry has for its guide in jurisprudence an array of “Ancient Landmarks,” from which, without the hazards of dissolution, it can never depart. They are from “time immemorial,” certain, continued, immovable, and easily discerned and comprehended through the medium of mystic intelligence. They form the circle of boundary lines of official prerogatives, Grand Lodge legislation, work of Particular Lodges, and the covenants, relations, rights, privileges, and duties of constituents.

**1.05** Lodges are recommended to establish libraries for the use and benefit of their members, and to place therein the various works on jurisprudence and other Masonic subjects, which they can obtain; but for Masonic Law in this Grand Jurisdiction they must be governed by the Constitution and Regulations of the Grand Lodge, which are by no means meager, and which may be enlarged from time to time, as the increasing necessities of the Craft may demand.

**1.06** Freemasonry professes to promote virtue, with which vice, of whatever shape or magnitude, is antagonistic. It is, therefore, incumbent upon every true Mason to conform and take counsel with his Brethren concerning any and all matters properly involving fraternal discipline.

**1.07** Masonic Law or jurisprudence is sufficiently large and comprehensive in area and application to need no special legislation to enable the Particular Lodges to correct, by discipline, the vices and irregularities of their wayward members.

**1.08** Officers of Lodges, Grand and Particular, are by the nature of their contract with the Fraternity, required to be prompt and faithful in the discharge of their official duties. Culpable negligence and dereliction on their part tend to discourage the Brethren, whereby the normal force or influence of the Lodge is weakened or destroyed. Such conduct is therefore censurable, and the Brethren should not be slow in seeking effectual fraternal remedy.

**1.09** It is not within the province of a Masonic Lodge to assume the functions of judicial courts. It cannot pass upon compensation supposed to be due from one Brother to another, but

when there are reasons to believe that a premeditated or intentional wrong has been done, the erring Brother should be disciplined.

**1.10** Masonry exercises no absolute control over the natural and civil rights of individuals, they being left to the law of the land. Masonic penalties, therefore, cannot be inflicted upon the person of any member, but may affect and deprive him of his fraternal rights and relations.

**1.11** Anderson's Constitution, 1722, the General Regulations of Thirty-Nine Articles, and the Charges of a Freemason, are in force in this Grand Jurisdiction, so far as they are not in conflict with the Constitution and Laws of this Grand Lodge.

GENERAL REGULATIONS  
FROM  
ANDERSON'S CONSTITUTION

Compiled first by Mr. George Payne, Anno 1720, when he was Grand Master, and approved by the Grand Lodge on Saint John Baptist's Day, Anno 1721, at Stationer's Hall, London; when the most noble Prince John Duke of Montagu was unanimously chosen our Grand Master for the year ensuing; who chose John Beal, M.D., his Deputy Grand Master; Mr. Josiah Villeneau and Mr. Thomas Morris, Jun., were chosen by the Lodge Grand Wardens. And now, by the command of our said Right Worshipful Grand Master Montagu, the author of this book has compared them with, and reduced them to the ancient records and immemorial usage of the Fraternity, and digested them into this new method, with several proper explications, for the use of the Lodges in and about London and Westminster.

I. The Grand Master, or his Deputy, hath authority and right, not only to be present in any true Lodge, but also to preside wherever he is, with the Master of the Lodge on his left hand, and to order his Grand Wardens to attend him, who are not to act in Particular Lodges as Wardens, but in his presence, and at his command; because there the Grand Master may command the Wardens of that Lodge, or any other Brethren he pleaseth, to attend and act as his Wardens pro tempore.

II. The Master of a Particular Lodge has the right and authority of congregating the members of his Lodge into a chapter at pleasure, upon any emergency or occurrence, as well as to appoint the time and place of their usual forming; and in case of sickness, death, or necessary absence of the Master, the Senior Warden shall act as

Master pro tempore, if no Brother is present who has been Master of that Lodge before; for in that case the absent Master's authority reverts to the last Master then present; though he cannot act until the said Senior Warden has once congregated the Lodge, or in his absence the Junior Warden.

III. The Master of each Particular Lodge, or one of the Wardens, or some other Brother by his order, shall keep a book containing their By-Laws, the names of their members, with a list of all the Lodges in town, and the usual times and places of their forming, and all their transactions that are proper to be written.

IV. No Lodge shall make more than five new Brethren at one time, nor any man under the age of twenty-five, who must be also his own Master; unless by a Dispensation from the Grand Master or his Deputy.

V. No man can be made or admitted a member of a Particular Lodge, without previous notice one month before given to the said Lodge, in order to make due inquiry into the reputation and capacity of the candidate; unless by the Dispensation aforesaid.

VI. But no man can be entered a Brother in any Particular Lodge, or admitted to be a member thereof, without the unanimous consent of all the members of that Lodge then present when the candidate is proposed, and their consent is formally asked by the Master; and they are to signify their consent or dissent in their own prudent way, either virtually or in form, but with unanimity; nor is this inherent privilege subject to a Dispensation; because the members of a Particular Lodge are the best judges of it; and if a fractious member should be imposed on them, it might spoil their harmony, or hinder their freedom; or even break and disperse the Lodge, which ought to be avoided by all good and true Brethren.

VII. Every new Brother at his making is decently to clothe the Lodge, that is, all the Brethren present, and to deposit something for the relief of indigent and decayed Brethren, as the candidate shall think fit to bestow, over and above the small allowance stated by the By-Laws of that Particular Lodge, which charity shall be Lodged with the Master or Wardens, or the Cashier, if the members think fit to choose one.

And the candidate shall also solemnly promise to submit to the Constitutions, the Charges, and Regulations, and to such other good usages as shall be intimated to them in time and place convenient.

VIII. No set or number of Brethren shall withdraw or separate

themselves from the Lodge in which they were made Brethren, or were afterwards admitted members, unless the Lodge becomes too numerous; nor even then, without a Dispensation from the Grand Master or his Deputy; and when they are thus separated, they must either immediately join themselves to such other Lodge as they shall like best, with the unanimous consent of that Lodge to which they go (as above regulated) or else they must obtain the Grand Master's Warrant to join in forming a new Lodge.

If any set or number of Masons shall take upon themselves to form a Lodge without the Grand Master's Warrant, the regular Lodges are not to countenance them, nor own them as fair Brethren and duly formed, nor approve of their acts and deeds; but must treat them as rebels, until they humble themselves, as the Grand Master shall in his prudence direct, and until he approve of them by his Warrant, which must be signified to the other Lodges, as the custom is when a new Lodge is to be registered in the list of Lodges.

IX. But if any Brother so far misbehave himself as to render his Lodge uneasy, he shall be twice duly admonished by the Master or Wardens in a formed Lodge; and if he will not refrain his imprudence, and obediently submit to the advice of the Brethren, and reform what gives them offence, he shall be dealt with according to the By-Laws of that Particular Lodge, or else in such a manner as the Quarterly Communication shall in their great prudence think fit; for which a new Regulation may be afterwards made.

X. The majority of every Particular Lodge, when congregated, shall have the privilege of giving instructions to their Master and Wardens, before the assembling of the Grand Chapter, or Lodge, at the three Quarterly Communications hereafter mentioned, and of the Annual Grand Lodge too; because their Master and Wardens are their representatives, and are supposed to speak their mind.

XI. All Particular Lodges are to observe the same usages as much as possible; in order to which, and for cultivating a good understanding among Freemasons, some members out of every Lodge shall be deputized to visit the other Lodges as often as shall be thought convenient.

XII. The Grand Lodge consists of, and is formed by the Masters and Wardens of all the regular Particular Lodges upon record, with the Grand Master at their head, and his Deputy on his left hand, and the Grand Wardens in their proper places; and must have a Quarterly Communication about Michaelmas, Christmas, and Lady-Day, in some convenient place, as the Grand Master shall appoint, where no

Brother shall be present, who is not at that time a member thereof, without a Dispensation; and while he stays, he shall not be allowed to vote, nor even give his opinion, without leave of the Grand Lodge asked and given, or unless it be duly asked by the said Lodge.

All matters are to be determined in the Grand Lodge by a majority of votes, each member having one vote, and the Grand Master having two votes, unless the said Lodge leave any particular thing to the determination of the Grand Master, for the sake of expedition.

XIII. At the said Quarterly Communication, all matters that concern the Fraternity in general, or Particular Lodges, or single Brethren, are quietly, sedately, and maturely to be discoursed of and transacted; Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow Craft only here, unless by a Dispensation. Here also all differences, that cannot be made up and accommodated privately, nor by a Particular Lodge, are to be seriously considered and decided; and if any Brother thinks himself aggrieved by the decision of this Board, he may appeal to the Annual Grand Lodge next ensuing, and leave his appeal in writing, with the Grand Master, or his Deputy, or the Grand Wardens.

Here also the Master or the Wardens of each Particular Lodge shall bring and produce a list of such members as have been made or even admitted in their Particular Lodges since the last Communication of the Grand Lodge; and there shall be a book kept by the Grand Master, or his Deputy, or rather by some Brother whom the Grand Lodge shall appoint for Secretary, wherein shall be recorded all the Lodges, with their usual times and places of forming, and the names of all the members of each Lodge; and all the affairs of the Grand Lodge that are proper to be written.

They shall also consider of the most prudent and effectual methods of collecting and disposing of what money shall be given to, or lodged with them in charity, towards the relief only of any true Brother fallen into poverty or decay, but of none else; but every Particular Lodge shall dispose of their own charity for poor Brethren, according to their own By-Laws, until it be agreed by all the Lodges (in a new Regulation) to carry in the charity collected by them to the Grand Lodge, at the Quarterly or Annual Communication, in order to make a common stock of it; for the more handsome relief of poor Brethren.

They shall also appoint a Treasurer, a Brother of good worldly substance, who shall be a member of the Grand Lodge by virtue of his



office, and shall be always present, and have power to move to the Grand Lodge anything, especially what concerns his office. To him shall be committed all money raised for charity, or for any other use of the Grand Lodge which he shall write down in a book, with the respective ends and uses for which the several sums are intended; and shall expend or disburse the same by such a certain order signed, as the Grand Lodge shall afterwards agree to in a new Regulation; but he shall not vote in choosing a Grand Master or Wardens, though in every other transaction. As in like manner the Secretary shall be a member of the Grand Lodge by virtue of his office, and vote in everything except in choosing a Grand Master or Warden.

The Treasurer and Secretary shall have each a clerk, who must be a Brother and Fellow Craft, but never must be a member of the Grand Lodge, nor speak without being allowed or desired.

The Grand Master, or his Deputy, shall always command the Treasurer and Secretary, with their clerks and books, in order to see how matters go on, and to know what is expedient to be done upon any emergent occasion.

Another Brother (who must be a Fellow Craft) should be appointed to look after the door of the Grand Lodge; but shall be no member of it.

But these offices may be farther explained by a new Regulation when the necessity and expediency of them may more appear than at present to the Fraternity.

XIV. If at any Grand Lodge, Stated or Occasional, Quarterly or Annual, the Grand Master and his Deputy should both be absent, then the present Master of a Lodge, that has been the longest Freemason, shall take the chair, and preside as Grand Master pro tempore; and shall be vested with all his power and honour for the time; provided there is no Brother present that has been Grand Master formerly, or Deputy Grand Master; for the last Grand Master present, or else the last Deputy present, should always of right take place in the absence of the present Grand Master and his Deputy.

XV. In the Grand Lodge, none can act as Wardens but the Grand Wardens themselves, if present; and if absent, the Grand Master, or the person who presides in his place, shall order private Wardens to act as Grand Wardens pro tempore, whose places are to be supplied by two Fellow Craft of the same Lodge, called forth to act, or sent thither by the Particular Master thereof; or if by him omitted, then they shall be called by the Grand Master, that so the Grand Lodge may be always complete.

XVI. The Grand Wardens, or any others are first to advise with the Deputy about the affairs of the Lodge or of the Brethren, and not to apply to the Grand Master without the knowledge of the Deputy, unless he refuses his concurrence in any certain necessary affair; in which case, or in case of any difference between the Deputy and the Grand Wardens, or other Brethren, both parties are to go by concert to the Grand Master, who can easily decide the controversy and make up the difference by virtue of his great authority.

The Grand Master should receive no intimation of business concerning Masonry, but from his Deputy first, except in such certain cases as his Worship can well judge of; for if the application to the Grand Master be irregular, he can easily order the Grand Wardens, or any other Brethren thus applying, to wait upon his Deputy, who is to prepare the business speedily, and to lay it orderly before his Worship.

XVII. No Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary, or whoever acts for them, or in their stead pro tempore, can at the same time be the Master or Warden of a Particular Lodge; but as soon as any of them has honorably discharged his grand office, he returns to that post or station in his Particular Lodge, from which he was called to officiate above.

XVIII. If the Deputy Grand Master be sick, or necessarily absent, the Grand Master may choose any Fellow Craft he pleases to be his Deputy pro tempore; but he that is chosen Deputy at the Grand Lodge, and the Grand Wardens too, cannot be discharged without the cause fairly appear to the majority of the Grand Lodge; and the Grand Master, if he is uneasy, may call a Grand Lodge on purpose to lay the cause before them, and to have their advice and concurrence; in which case, the majority of the Grand Lodge, if they cannot reconcile the Master and his Deputy or his Wardens, are to concur in allowing the Master to discharge his said Deputy or his said Wardens, and to choose another Deputy immediately; and the said Grand Lodge shall choose other Wardens in that case, that harmony and peace may be preserved.

XIX. If the Grand Master should abuse his power, and render himself unworthy of the obedience and subjection of the Lodges, he shall be treated in a way and manner to be agreed upon in a new Regulation; because hitherto the ancient Fraternity have had no occasion for it, their former Grand Masters having all behaved themselves worthy of that honourable office.

XX. The Grand Master, with his Deputy and Wardens, shall (at

least once) go round and visit all the Lodges about town during his Mastership.

XXI. If the Grand Master should die during his Mastership, or by sickness, or by being beyond sea, or any other way should be rendered incapable of discharging his office, the Deputy, or in his absence, the Senior Grand Warden, or in his absence the Junior, in his absence any three present Masters of Lodges, shall join to congregate the Grand Lodge immediately, to advise together upon the emergency, and to send two of their number to invite the last Grand Master to resume his office, which now in course reverts to him; or if he refuse, then the next last, and so backward; but if no former Grand Master can be found, then the Deputy shall act as Principal until another is chosen; or if there be no Deputy, then the oldest Master.

XXII. The Brethren of all the Lodges in and about London and Westminster, shall meet at an Annual Communication and Feast, in some convenient place, on Saint John Baptist's Day, or else on Saint John Evangelist's Day, as the Grand Lodge shall think fit by a new Regulation, having of late years met on Saint John Baptist's Day; provided,

The majority of the Masters and Wardens, with the Grand Master, his Deputy and Wardens, agree at their Quarterly Communication, three months before, that there shall be a Feast, and a General Communication of all the Brethren; for if either the Grand Master, or the majority of the Particular Masters, are against it, it must be dropped for that time.

But whether there shall be a Feast for all the Brethren, or not, yet the Grand Lodge must meet in some convenient place annually on Saint John's Day; or if it be Sunday, then on the next day, in order to choose every year a new Grand Master, Deputy, and Wardens.

XXIII. If it be thought expedient, and the Grand Master, with the majority of the Masters and Wardens, agree to hold a Grand Feast, according to the ancient laudable customs of Masons, then the Grand Wardens shall have the care of preparing the tickets, sealed with the Grand Master's Seal, of disposing of the tickets, of receiving the money for the tickets, of buying materials of the Feast, of finding out a proper and convenient place to feast in; and of every other thing that concerns the entertainment.

But that the work may not be too burdensome to the two Grand Wardens, and that all matters may be expeditiously and safely managed, the Grand Master, or his Deputy, shall have power to

nominate and appoint a certain number of Stewards, as his Worship shall think fit, to act in concert with the two Grand Wardens; all things relating to the Feast being decided amongst them by a majority of voices; except the Grand Master or his Deputy interposes by a particular direction or appointment.

XXIV. The Wardens and Stewards shall, in due time, wait upon the Grand Master, or his Deputy, for directions and orders about the premises; but if his Worship and his Deputy are sick, or necessarily absent, they shall call together the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to meet on purpose for their advice and orders; or else they may take the matter wholly upon themselves, and do the best they can.

The Grand Wardens and the Stewards are to account for all the money they receive, or expend, to the Grand Lodge, after dinner, or when the Grand Lodge shall think fit to receive their accounts.

If the Grand Master pleases, he may in due time summon all the Masters and Wardens of Lodges to consult with them about ordering the Grand Feast, and about any emergency or accidental thing relating thereunto, that may require advice; or else to take it upon himself altogether.

XXV. The Masters of Lodges shall each appoint one experienced and discreet Fellow Craft of his Lodge, to compose a committee, consisting of one from every Lodge, to who shall meet to receive in a convenient apartment, every person that brings a ticket, and shall have power to discourse him, if they think fit, in order to admit him, or debar him, as they shall see cause; provided, they send no man away before they have acquainted all the Brethren within doors with the reason thereof, to avoid mistakes that no true Brother may be debarred, nor a false Brother, or mere pretender, admitted. This committee must meet very early on Saint John's Day, at the place, even before any persons come with tickets.

XXVI. The Grand Master shall appoint two or more trusty Brethren to be porters, or door-keepers, who are also to be early at the place, for some good reasons; and who are to be at the command of the committee.

XXVII. The Grand Wardens, or the Stewards, shall appoint beforehand such a number of Brethren to serve at table as they think fit and proper for that work; and they may advise with the Masters and Wardens of Lodges about the most proper persons, if they please, or may take in such by their recommendation; for none are to serve that day, but free and accepted Masons, that the Communication may be free and harmonious.

XXVIII. All the members of the Grand Lodge must be at the place long before dinner, with the Grand Master, or his Deputy, at their head, who shall retire, and form themselves. And this is done in order,

1. To receive any appeals duly lodged, as above regulated, that the appellant may be heard, and the affair may be amicably decided before dinner, if possible; but if it cannot, it must be delayed till after the new Grand Master is elected; and if it cannot be decided after dinner, it may be delayed, and referred to a particular committee, that shall quietly adjust it, and make report to the next Quarterly Communication, that brotherly love may be preserved.

2. To prevent any differences or disgust which may be feared to arise that day; that no interruption may be given to the harmony and pleasure of the Grand Feast.

3. To consult about whatever concerns the decency and decorum of the Grand Assembly, and to prevent all indecency and ill manners, the assembly being promiscuous.

4. To receive and consider of any good motion, or any momentous and important affair, that shall be brought from the Particular Lodges, by their representatives, the several Masters, and Wardens.

XXIX. After these things are discussed, the Grand Master and his Deputy, the Grand Wardens, or the Stewards, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Clerks, and every other person, shall withdraw, and leave the Masters and Wardens of the Particular Lodges alone, in order to consult amicably about electing a new Grand Master, or continuing the present, if they have not done it the day before; and if they are unanimous for continuing the present Grand Master, his Worship shall be called in, and humbly desired to do the Fraternity the honour of ruling them for the year ensuing; and after dinner it will be known whether he accepts of it or not; for it should not be discovered but by the election itself.

XXX. Then the Masters and Wardens, and all the Brethren, may converse promiscuously, or as they please to sort together, until the dinner is coming in, when every Brother takes his seat at table.

XXXI. Some time after dinner the Grand Lodge is formed, not in retirement, but in the presence of all the Brethren, who yet are not members of it, and must not therefore speak until they are desired and allowed.

XXXII. If the Grand Master of last year has consented with the

Master and Wardens in private, before dinner, to continue for the year ensuing; then one of the Grand Lodge deputed for that purpose, shall represent to all the Brethren his Worship's good government, etc. And turning to him, shall, in the name of the Grand Lodge, humbly request him to do the Fraternity the great honour (if nobly born, if not the great kindness) of continuing to be their Grand Master for the year ensuing. And his Worship declaring his consent by a bow or a speech, as he pleases, the said deputed member of the Grand Lodge shall proclaim him Grand Master, and all the members of the Lodge shall salute him in due form. And all the Brethren shall for a few minutes have leave to declare their satisfaction, pleasure, and congratulation.

XXXIII. But if either the Master and Wardens have not in private, this day before dinner, nor the day before, desired the last Grand Master to continue in the Mastership another year; or if he, when desired, has not consented; then,

The last Grand Master shall nominate his successor for the year ensuing, who, if unanimously approved by the Grand Lodge, and if there present, shall be proclaimed, saluted, and congratulated the new Grand Master, as above hinted, and immediately installed by the last Grand Master, according to usage.

XXXIV. But if that nomination is not unanimously approved, the new Grand Master shall be chosen immediately by ballot, every Master and Warden writing his man's name, and the last Grand Master writing his man's name too; and the man, whose name the last Grand Master shall first take out, casually or by chance, shall be Grand Master for the year ensuing; and if present, he shall be proclaimed, saluted, and congratulated, as above hinted, and forthwith installed by the last Grand Master, according to usage.

XXXV. The last Grand Master thus continued, or the new Grand Master thus installed, shall next nominate and appoint his Deputy Grand Master, either the last or a new one, who shall be also declared, saluted, and congratulated as above hinted.

The Grand Master shall also nominate the new Grand Wardens, and if unanimously approved by the Grand Lodge, shall be declared, saluted, and congratulated, as above hinted; but if not, they shall be chosen by ballot, in the same way as the Grand Master; as the Wardens of private Lodges are also to be chosen by ballot in each Lodge, if the members thereof do not agree to the Master's nomination.

XXXVI. But if the Brother, whom the present Grand Master

shall nominate for his successor, or whom the majority of the Grand Lodge shall happen to choose by ballot, is, by sickness or other necessary occasion, absent from the Grand Feast, he cannot be proclaimed the new Grand Master, unless the old Grand Master, or some of the Masters and Wardens of the Grand Lodge can vouch, upon the honour of a Brother, that the said person, so nominated or chosen, will readily accept of the said office; in which case the old Grand Master shall act as proxy, and shall nominate the Deputy and Wardens in his name, and in his name also receive the usual honours, homage, and congratulation.

XXXVII. Then the Grand Master shall allow any Brother, Fellow Craft, or Apprentice to speak, directing his discourse to his Worship; or to make any motion for the good of the Fraternity, which shall be either immediately considered and finished, or else referred to the consideration of the Grand Lodge at their next Communication, Stated or Occasional. When that is over,

XXXVIII. The Grand Master or his Deputy, or some Brother appointed by him, shall harangue all the Brethren, and give them good advice; and lastly after some other transactions, that cannot be written in any language, the Brethren may go away or stay longer, as they please.

XXXIX. Every Annual Grand Lodge has an inherent power and authority to make new Regulations, or to alter these, for the real benefit of this ancient Fraternity; Provided always that the Old Landmarks be carefully preserved, and that such alterations and new Regulations be proposed and agreed to at the Third Quarterly Communication preceding the Annual Grand Feast; and that they be offered also to the perusal of all the Brethren before dinner, in writing, even of the youngest Apprentice; the approbation and consent of the majority of all the Brethren present being absolutely necessary to make the same binding and obligatory; which, must, after dinner, and after the new Grand Master is installed, be solemnly desired; as it was desired and obtained for these Regulations, when proposed by the Grand Lodge, to about one hundred and fifty Brethren, on Saint John Baptist's Day, 1721.

**THE CHARGES  
OF  
A FREEMASON**

Extracted from  
The Ancient Records of Lodges Beyond the Sea, and of  
Those in England, Scotland, and Ireland, For  
the Use of the Lodges in London  
To be Read at the Making of New Brethren, or when the  
Master shall order it.

THE GENERAL HEADS, VIZ.:

- I. OF GOD AND RELIGION.
- II. OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE, SUPREME, AND SUBORDINATE.
- III. OF LODGES.
- IV. OF MASTERS, WARDENS, FELLOWS, AND APPRENTICES.
- V. OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CRAFT IN WORKING.
- VI. OF BEHAVIOR, VIZ.:
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  - 3. WHEN BRETHREN MEET WITHOUT STRANGERS, BUT NOT IN A LODGE.
  - 4. IN THE PRESENCE OF STRANGERS NOT MASONS.
  - 5. AT HOME AND IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.
  - 6. TOWARDS A STRANGE BROTHER.

**I. CONCERNING GOD AND RELIGION**

A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious libertine. But though in ancient times Masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was, yet it is now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is, to be good men and true, or men of honour and honesty, by whatever denominations or persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby Masonry becomes the center of union,



and the means of conciliating true friendship among persons that must have remained at a perpetual distance.

## II. OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE, SUPREME, AND SUBORDINATE

A Mason is a peaceable subject to the civil powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against the peace and welfare of the nation, nor to behave himself undutifully to inferior magistrates; for as Masonry hath been always injured by war, bloodshed, and confusion, so ancient kings and princes have been much disposed to encourage the Craftsmen, because of their peaceableness and loyalty whereby they practically answered the cavils of their adversaries, and promoted the honour of the Fraternity, who ever flourished in times of peace. So that if a Brother should be a rebel against the State, he is not to be countenanced in his rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy man; and, if convicted of no other crime, though the loyal Brotherhood must and ought to disown his rebellion, and give no umbrage or ground of political jealousy to the government for the time being; they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his relation to it remains indefeasible.

## III. OF LODGES

A Lodge is a place where Masons assemble and work; hence that assembly or duly organized society of Masons is called a Lodge, and every Brother ought to belong to one, and to be subject to its By-Laws and the General Regulations. It is either particular or general, and will be best understood by attending it, and by the Regulations of the General or Grand Lodge hereunto annexed. In ancient times, no Master or Fellow could be absent without it, especially when warned to appear at it, without incurring a severe censure, until it appeared to the Master and Wardens, that pure necessity hindered him.

The persons admitted members of a Lodge must be good and true men, free-born, and of mature and discreet age, no bondmen, no women, no immoral, or scandalous men, but of good report.

## IV. OF MASTERS, WARDENS, FELLOWS, AND APPRENTICES

All preferment among Masons is grounded upon real worth and personal merit only; that so the lords may be well served, the Brethren not put to shame, nor the royal Craft despised; therefore no Master or Warden is chosen by seniority, but for his merit. It is impossible to describe these things in writing and every Brother must attend in his

place, and learn them in a way peculiar to this Fraternity; only candidates may know, that no Master should take an Apprentice, unless he has sufficient employment for him, and unless he be a perfect youth, having no maim or defect in his body, that may render him incapable of learning the art, of serving his Master's lord, and of being made a Brother, and then a Fellow Craft in due time, even after he has served such a term of years as the custom of the country directs; and that he should be descended of honest parents; that so, when otherwise qualified, he may arrive to the honour of being the Warden, and then the Master of the Lodge, the Grand Warden, and at length the Grand Master of all the Lodges, according to his merit.

No Brother can be a Warden until he has passed the part of a Fellow Craft; nor a Master until he has acted as a Warden, nor Grand Warden until he has been Master of a Lodge, nor Grand Master unless he has been a Fellow Craft before his election, who is also to be noble born, or a gentleman of the best fashion, or some eminent scholar, or some curious architect or other artist, descended of honest parents, and who is of singular great merit in the opinion of the Lodges. And for the better, and easier, and more honourable discharge of his office, the Grand Master has a power to choose his own Deputy Grand Master, who must be then, or must have been formerly, the Master of a Particular Lodge, and has the privilege of acting whatever the Grand Master, his principal, should act, unless the said principal be present, or interpose his authority by a letter.

These rulers and governors, supreme and subordinate, of the ancient Lodge, are to be obeyed in their respective stations by all the Brethren, according to the old Charges and Regulations, with all humility, reverence, love, and alacrity.

#### **V. OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CRAFT IN WORKING**

All Masons shall work honestly on working days, that they may live creditably on holy days; and the time appointed by the law of the land, or confirmed by custom, shall be observed.

The most expert of the Fellow Craftsmen shall be chosen or appointed the Master, or overseer of the lord's work; who is to be called Master by those that work under him. The Craftsmen are to avoid all ill language, and to call each other by no disobliging name, but Brother or Fellow; and to behave themselves courteously within and without the Lodge.

Both the Master and the Masons receiving their wages justly, shall be faithful to the lord, and honestly finish their work, whether

task or journey; nor put the work to task that hath been accustomed to journey.

None shall discover envy at the prosperity of a Brother, nor supplant him, nor put him out of his work, if he be capable to finish the same; for no man can finish another's work so much to the lord's profit, unless he be thoroughly acquainted with the designs and draughts of him that began it.

When a Fellow Craftsman is chosen Warden of the Work under the Master, he shall be true both to Master and Fellows, shall carefully oversee the work in the Master's absence to the lord's profit; and his Brethren shall obey him.

All Masons employed, shall meekly receive their wages without murmuring or mutiny, and not desert the Master till the work is finished.

A younger Brother shall be instructed in working, to prevent spoiling the materials for want of judgment, and for increasing and continuing of brotherly love.

All the tools used in working shall be approved by the Grand Lodge.

No labourer shall be employed in the proper work of Masonry, nor shall Free Masons work with those that are not free, without an urgent necessity; nor shall they teach labourers and unaccepted Masons, as they should teach a Brother or Fellow.

## **VI. OF BEHAVIOR, VIZ.:**

### **1. In the Lodge While Constituted**

You are not to hold private committees, or separate conversation, without leave from the Master, not to talk of anything impertinent or unseemly, nor interrupt the Master or Wardens or any Brother speaking to the Master; nor behave yourself ludicrously or jestingly while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; nor use any unbecoming language upon any pretence whatsoever; but to pay due reverence to your Master, Wardens, and Fellows, and put them to worship.

Any complaint be brought, the Brother found guilty shall stand to the award and determination of the Lodge, who are the proper and competent judges of all such controversies (unless you carry it by appeal to the Grand Lodge), and to whom they ought to be referred, unless a lord's work be hindered the meanwhile, in which case a particular reference may be made; but you must never go to law about

what concerneth Masonry, without an absolute necessity apparent to the Lodge.

## **2. Behavior After the Lodge is over, and the Brethren not Gone**

You may enjoy yourselves with innocent mirth, treating one another according to ability, but avoiding all excess, or forcing any Brother to eat or drink beyond his inclination, or hindering him from going when his occasions call him, or doing or saying anything offensive, or that may forbid an easy and free conversation; for that would blast our harmony, and defeat our laudable purposes. Therefore no private piques or quarrels must be brought within the door of the Lodge, far lest quarrels about religion, or nations, or state policy, we being only, as Masons, of the catholic religion above mentioned; we are also of all nations, tongues, kindreds, and languages, and are resolved against all politics, as what never yet conduced to the welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will. This Charge has been always strictly enjoined and observed; but especially ever since the Reformation in Britain, of the dissent and secession of these nations from the communion of Rome.

## **3. Behavior When Brethren Meet Without Strangers, But Not in a Lodge Formed**

You are to salute one another in a courteous manner, as you will be instructed, calling each other Brother, freely giving mutual instructions as shall be thought expedient, without being overseen or overheard, and without encroaching upon each other, or derogating from that respect which is due to any Brother, were he not a Mason; for though all Masons are as Brethren upon the same level, yet Masonry takes no honour from a man that he had before; nay, rather it adds to his honour, especially if he has deserved well of the Brotherhood, who must give honour to whom it is due, and avoid ill manners.

## **4. Behavior in Presence of Strangers Not Masons**

You shall be cautious in your words and carriage, that the most penetrating stranger shall not be able to discover or find out what is not proper to be intimated; and sometimes you shall divert a discourse, and manage it prudently for the honour of the worshipful Fraternity.

## **5. Behavior at Home and in your Neighborhood**

You are to act as becomes a moral and wise man; particularly, not to let your family, friends, and neighbours know the concerns of the Lodge, etc., but wisely to consult your own honour, and that of the

ancient Brotherhood, for reasons not to be mentioned here. You must also consult your health, by not continuing together too late, or too long from home, after Lodge hours are past; and by avoiding gluttony or drunkenness that your families be not neglected or injured, nor you disabled from working.

### **6. Behavior Towards a Strange Brother**

You are cautiously to examine him, in such a method as prudence shall direct you, that you may not be imposed upon by an ignorant false pretender, whom you are to reject with contempt and derision, and beware of giving him any hints of knowledge.

But if you discover him to be a true and genuine Brother, you are to respect him accordingly; and if he is in want, you must relieve him if you can, or else direct him how he may be relieved; you must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employed. But you are not charged to do beyond your ability, only to prefer a poor Brother, that is a good man and true, before any other poor people in the same circumstances.

Finally, all these Charges you are to observe, and also those that shall be communicated to you in another way; cultivating brotherly love, the foundation and capstone, the cement and glory of this ancient Fraternity, avoiding all wrangling and quarrelling, all slander and backbiting, nor permitting others to slander any honest Brother, but defending his character, and doing him all good offices, as far as consistent with your honour and safety, and no farther. And if any of them do you injury, you must apply to your own or his Lodge; and from thence you may appeal to the Grand Lodge at the Quarterly Communication, and from thence to the Annual Grand Lodge, as has been the ancient laudable conduct of our forefathers in every nation; never taking a legal course but when the case cannot be otherwise decided, and patiently listening to the honest and friendly advice of Master and Fellows, when they would prevent your going to law with strangers, or would excite you to put a speedy period to all lawsuits, that so you may mind the affair of Masonry with the more alacrity and success; but with respect to Brothers or Fellows at law, the Master and Brethren should kindly offer their mediation, which ought to be thankfully submitted to by the contending Brethren; and if that submission is impracticable, they must however carry on their process, or lawsuit, without wrath and rancor (not in the common way), saying or doing nothing which may hinder brotherly love, and good offices to be renewed and continued; that all may see the benign influence of Masonry, as all true Masons have done from the beginning of the world, and will do to the end of time. Amen, so mote it be.

### **Rulings and Decisions**

Just as a candidate for Freemasonry must be a man, so it follows that to remain a Mason, he must not become a woman or portray himself as a woman. This portrayal may be by gender change, name change, identification, attire, or accouterment. (2008 Proc. 106)