

THE OLD CHARGES

ANCIENT MASONIC TEXTS AND OLD CHARGES

James Anderson's Constitutions (1723)

THE CHARGES OF A FREEMASON

Extracted from the Ancient Records of Lodges
beyond Sea, and 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.

I. Concerning God and Religion.

A Mason is oblig'd 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 charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis 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 distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance (6).

II. Of the Civil Magistrates supreme and subordinate.

A Mason is a peaceable Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concern'd 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 dispos'd to encourage the Craftsmen, because of their Peaceableness and Loyalty, whereby they practically answer'd the Cavils of their Adversaries, and promoted the Honour of the Fraternity, who ever flourish'd in Times of Peace.

So that if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State he is not to be countenanc'd 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 organiz'd Society of Masons, is call'd 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 annex'd. In ancient Times, no Master or Fellow could be absent from it especially when warn'd to appear at it, without incurring a sever Censure, until it appear'd to the Master and Wardens that pure Necessity hinder'd 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 despis'd: 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 qualify'd 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 pass'd 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 nobly 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 similar 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 chuse 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 obey'd 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 confirm'd by Custom, shall be observ'd. 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 call'd 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. The Master, knowing himself to be able of Cunning, shall undertake the Lord's Work as reasonably as possible, and truly dispend his Goods as if they were his own; nor to give more Wages to any Brother or Apprentice than he really may deserve.

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, or 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 finish'd.

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 employ'd 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 Behaviour, Viz.

1. In the Lodge while constituted. You are not to hold private Committees, or separate Conversation without Leave from the Master, nor 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 Pretense whatsoever; but to pay due Reverence to your Master, Wardens, and Fellows, and put them to worship.

If 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 referr'd, unless a Lord's Work be hinder'd the mean while, 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. Behaviour after the Lodge is over and the Brethren not gone. You may enjoy yourself 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 less any Quarrels about Religion, or Nations, or State Policy, we being only, as Masons, of the Catholick Religion above mention'd, we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages, and are resolv'd against all Politics, as what never yet conduct'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will.

This Charge has been always strictly enjoyn'd and observ'd; but especially ever since the Reformation in Britain, or the Dissent and Secession of these Nations from the Communion of Rome.

3. Behaviour when Brethren meet without Strangers, but not in a Lodge form'd. You are to salute one another in a courteous Manner, as you will be instructed, calling each other Brother, freely giving mutual instruction 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 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 deserv'd well of the Brotherhood, who must give Honour to whom it is due, and avoid ill Manners.

4. Behaviour 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. Behaviour at Home, and in your Neighbourhood. You are to act as becomes a moral and wise Man; particularly not to let your Family, Friends and Neighbors know the Concern of the Lodge, &c., but wisely to consult your own Honour, and that of the ancient Brotherhood, for reasons not to be mention'd 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 of Gluttony or Drunkenness, that your Families be not neglected or injured, nor you disabled from working.

6. Behaviour towards a strange Brother. You are cautiously to examine him, in such a Method as Prudence shall direct you, that you may not be impos'd 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 reliev'd: you must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employ'd. 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 recommended to you in another way; cultivating Brotherly-Love, the Foundation and Cape-stone, the Cement and Glory of this Ancient Fraternity, avoiding all Wrangling and Quarreling, 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 is 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 Fore-fathers 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 Law-Suits, so that 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 Law-Suit, without Wrath and Rancor (not in the common way) saying or doing nothing which may hinder Brotherly Love, and good Offices to be renew'd and continu'd; 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.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Compiled first by Mr. George Payne, Anno 1720, when he was Grand-Master, and approv'd by the Grand-Lodge on St. 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 compar'd them with, and reduc'd 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 enter'd 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 propos'd, and their Consent is formally askd 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 impos'd 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 recently to cloath the Lodge, that is, all the Brethren present, and to deposit something for the Relief of indigent and decay'd 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 lodgd with the Master or Wardens, or the Cashier, if the Members see fit to chuse one.

And the Candidate shall also solemnly promise to submit to the Constitution, 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 other 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, or own them as fair Brethren and duly form'd, 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 form'd Lodge; and if he will not refrain his Imprudence, and obediently submit to the Advice of the Brethren, and reform what gives them Offense, 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 afterward made.

X. - The Majority of every particular Lodge, when congregated, shall have the Privilege of giving Instructions to their Masters and Wardens before the assembling of the Grand Chapter or Lodge, at the three Quarterly Communications hereafter mention'd and of the annual GrandLodge, 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 Free-Masons, some members out of every Lodge shall be deputed to visit the other Lodges as often as shall be thought convenient.

XII. - The Grand-Lodge consists of, and is form'd 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 allow'd to vote, nor even given his Opinion without Leave of the Grand-Lodge askd and given, or unless it be duly askd 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 Masters that concern the Fraternity in general, or particular Lodges, or single Brethren, are quietly, sedately and maturely to be discoursed 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 collection 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 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 rais'd 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 sign'd, as the Grand-Lodge shall afterwards agree to in a new Regulation: But he shall not vote in chusing 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 chusing a Grand-Master or Wardens.

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 allow'd or desird.

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 Officers may be farther explain'd 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 be both absent, then the present Master of a Lodge, that has been the longest a Free Mason, 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 supplid by two Fellow-Craft of the same Lodge, calld forth to act, or sent thither [there] by the particular Master thereof; or if by him omitted, then they shall be calld 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 refuse 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 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 dischargd his Grand Office, he returns to that post or station in his particular Lodge, from which he was calld to officiate above.

XVIII. - If the Deputy Grand-Master be sick, or necessarily absent, the Grand-Master may chuse 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 Case before them, and to have their Advise 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 chuse another Deputy immediately; and the said Grand-Lodge shall chuse 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 honorable Office.

XX. - The Grand-Master, with his Deputy and Wardens, shall (at least once) go around and visit all the Lodges about Town during his Mastership.

XXI. - If the Grand-Master 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, in his Absence, the Senior Grand-Warden, or in his Absence, the Junior, or in his Absence any three present Masters of Lodges, shall join to congregate the Grand-Lodge immediately, to advise together upon that 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 St. John Baptist's Day, or else on St. John Evangelist's Day, as the Grand-Lodge shall think fit by a new Regulation, having of late Years met on St. 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 Brethren: For if either the Grand-Master, or the Majority of the particular Masters, are against it, it must be dropt 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 St. John's Day; or if it be Sunday, then on the next Day, in order to chuse 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 Custom of Masons, then the

Grand-Wardens shall have the care of preparing the Tickets, seal'd with the Grand-Master's Seal, of disposing of the Tickets, of receiving the money for the Tickets, of buying the 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 burthensome 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 among them by a Majority of Voices; except the Grand-Master or his Deputy interpose by a particular Direction of 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 summons 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, 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 Reasons thereof, to avoid Mistakes, that so no true Brother may be debarr'd, nor a false Brother, or more Pretender, admitted. This Committee must meet very early on St. John's Day at the Place, even before any Person 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 before hand 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.

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 Benefits of this ancient Fraternity: Provided always that the old Land-Marks be carefully preserv'd, 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 installd, be solemnly desird; as it was desird and obtained for these Regulations, when propos'd by the Grand-Lodge, to about 150 Brethren on St. John Baptist's Day, 1721 (7).

POSTSCRIPT.

Here follows the Manner of constituting à New Lodge, as practis'd by is Grace the Duke of Wharton, the present Right Worshipful Grand Master, according to the ancient Usages of Masons.

A New Lodge, for avoiding many Irregularities, should be solemnly constituted by the Grand-Master, with his Deputy and Wardens; or in the Grand-Master's Absence, the Deputy shall act for his Worship, and shall chuse some Master of a Lodge to assist him; or in case the Deputy is absent, the Grand-Master shall call some Master of a Lodge to act as Deputy pro tempore.

The Candidates, or the new Master and Wardens, beiung yet among the Fellow-Craft, the Grand-Master shall ask his Deputy if he has examin'd them, and finds the Candidate Master well skill'd in the noble Science and the royal Art, and duly instructed in our Mysteries, &c.

And the Deputy answering in the affirmative, he shall (by Grand-Master's Order) take the Candidate among his Fellows, and present him to the Grand-Master; saying,

Righ worshipful Grand-Master, the Brethren here desire to be form'd into a new Lodge; and I present this my worthy Brother to be their Master, whom I know to be of good Morals and great Skill, true and trusty, and a Lover of the whole Fraternity, wheresoever dispers'd over the Face of the Earth.

Then the Grand-Master, placing the Candidate on his left Hand, having ask'd and obtain'd the unanimous Consent of all the Brethren, shall say: I constitute and form these good Brethren into a new Lodge, and appoint you the Master of it, not doubting of your Capacity and Care to preserve the Cement of the Lodge, &c. with some other Expressions that are proper and usual on that Occasion, but not proper to be written.

Upon this the Deputy shall rehearse the Charges of a Master, and the Grand-Master shall ask the Candidate, saying, Do you submit to the Charges, as Masters have done in all Ages? And the Candidate signifying his cordial Submission therunto, the Grand-Master shall, by certain significant Ceremonies and ancient Usages, install him, and present him with the Constitutions, the Lodge-Book, and the Instruments of his Office, not all together, but one after another; and after each of them, the Grand-Master, or his Deputy, shall rehearse the short and pithy Charge that is suitable to the thing presented.

After this, the Members of this new Lodge, bowing all together to the Grand-Master, shall return his Worship Thanks, and immediately do their Homage to their new Master, and signify their Promise of Subjection and Obedience to him by the usual Congratulation.

The Deputy and the Grand-Wardens, and any other Brethren present, that are not Members of this new Lodge, shall next congratulate the new Master; and he shall return his becoming Acknowledgments to the Grand-Master first, and to the rest in their Order.

Then the Grand-Master desires the new Master to enter immediatley upon the Exercise of his Office, in chusing his Wardens: And the new Master calling forth two Fellow-Craft, presents them to the Grand-Master for his Approbation, and to the new Lodge for their Consent. And that being granted,

The senior or junior Grand-Warden, or some Brother for him, shall rehearse the Charges of Wardens; and the Candidates being solemnly ask'd by the new Master, shall signify their Submission thereunto.

Upon which the New Master, presenting them with the Instruments of their Office, shall, in due Form, install them in their proper Places; and the Brethren of that new Lodge shall signify their Obedience to the new Wardens by the usual Congratulation.

And this Lodge being thus compleatly constituted, shall be register'd in the Grand-Master's Book, and by his Order notify'd to the other Lodges.

NOTES

1. - Title of the second edition (1738) - The New Book of Constitutions of the Antient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, containing their History, Charges, Regulations, &c. collected and digested by order of the Grand-Lodge from their old Records, faithful Traditions and Lodges-Books, for the use of the Lodges. This edition has been signed by its author.

2. - James Anderson - Pastor of a Presbyterian church in London, he was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, to a father and glass maker who was also a Mason – Secretary of his own Lodge. As a profane, Anderson published several books, including one (Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity) for the defense of the Holy Trinity. At the end of the first edition of the Constitutions figures, page 74, a list of twenty Lodges then existing in London; Anderson is quoted as one of the Lodge Masters.

3 - The date of the creation of the World has been established according to the Biblical Chronologies, by Jose Ben Halafta in 3761 before Christ, by Bede in 3952 B.C., by Isaac Newton in 4000 B.C., by James Ussher in 4004 B.C.

4 - Anno Domini: In the year of the Lord; Anno Mundi: In the year of the World, or In the year after the creation; Ante Christum: Before Christ.

5 - According to Masonic tradition, Queen Elizabeth, having heard of Masons' meetings, sent anonymous inquirers into several Lodges who let her know that Masonry was safe and peaceful for the kingdom.

6 - Evolution of the writing in the first paragraph of Anderson's Charges:

- In the edition of 1723 - A Mason is oblig'd, 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 charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis 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 distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

- In 1738, when the Grand-Lodge of London became the Grand Lodge of England - A Mason is obliged by his tenure, to observe the moral Law; as a true Noachide; and if he rightly understands the Craft, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertin, nor act against Conscience. In ancient Times the Christian Masons were charg'd to comply with the Christian Usages of each Country where they travell'd or work'd: but Masons being found in all Nations, even of divers

Religions, they are now only charged to adhere to that Religion in which all Men agree (leaving each Brother to his own particular opinions), that is to be good Men and true, Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever names, religions or persuasions they may be distinguish'd: for they all agree in the three great Articles of Noah, enough to preserve the cement of the Lodge. Thus Masonry is the Center of their Union, and the happy Means of conciliating Persons that otherwise must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

- In 1815, after the creation of the United Grand-Lodge of England: A Mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understand the art he will never be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine. He, of all men, should best understand that GOD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but GOD looketh to the heart. A mason is, therefore, particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience. Let a man's religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the order, provided he believe in the glorious architect of heaven and earth, and practise the sacred duties of morality. Masons unite with the virtuous of every persuasion in the firm and pleasing bond of fraternal love; they are taught to view the errors of mankind with compassion, and to strive, by the purity of their own conduct, to demonstrate the superior excellence of the faith they may profess. Thus masonry is the centre of union between good men and true, and the happy means of conciliating friendship amongst those who must otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

7. - For a complete reading, including the Masonic songs reproduced by Anderson, the reader may refer to The Constitutions of the Free-Masons, printed in facsimile by Forgotten Books and to Anderson's Constitutions by Kissinger Publishing (2010)