



# Looking Toward the East



## *A Manual for the Senior Warden*



*Grand Lodge  
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons  
of Nebraska*

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# **Looking Toward the East**

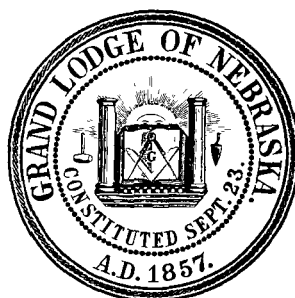
**A Manual and Planning Guide**

**for the**

**Senior Wardens**

**of**

**Masonic Lodges in Nebraska**



**Grand Lodge A.:F.: & A.:M.:**

**of Nebraska**

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## **A Special Message to the Senior Warden**

The Grand Lodge of Nebraska has established January as the time of the year when members of Masonic Lodges bestow upon their Senior Wardens the most precious gift within their power — installation to the exalted station of Worshipful Master. With rare exceptions, no higher honor can come to any man. To be worthy of that honor is the hope of every Warden.

"He that is master must serve," said a 17th century poet; and those six simple words spell out the rule and guide to success for the Master of a Masonic Lodge. "Serve" is the key, but to serve effectively requires a solid background of thorough preparation.

Every Senior Warden therefore may consider this an infallible maxim: "Your achievements as a Master will depend essentially upon the preparation you have made to discharge the many responsibilities of your ancient and honorable station."

The duties of the Master are numerous and extremely weighty. They extend far beyond the conferring of degrees and the conducting of the routine business of stated meetings. They reach beyond the Lodge room, into the life of each member and his family; into the community and, sometimes, beyond; as well as into the activities of neighboring Lodges. They also reach into all the affairs and deliberations of your Grand Lodge; and, even into circumstances which can effect our worldwide Craft. Such will be the broad scope of your responsibilities as a Worshipful Master.

Yet, every Master can meet any and all of those duties with confidence, and with credit to his lodge, the fraternity, and himself, if (1) he has captured the vision of this unlimited opportunity to serve his Lodge, his brethren, and mankind; and, then, (2) has diligently prepared himself for this dedicated service while he occupies the station of Senior Warden.

To help you prepare yourself for a joyous and rewarding year of service as Worshipful Master, and to uphold the time-honored traditions of your high office, is the purpose of this manual. The subjects covered and the suggestions made represent the combined experience of many a Brother, "who has gone this way before you."

But, heed this caution, for it voices the wisdom of a long, long succession of Masters. Go to work now! Do not delay "that preparation which it is wisdom to make and weakness to defer;" for (paraphrasing another familiar line), "Heretofore, you have had others to guide you. Now, you must guide yourself."

## **How to Use this Manual**

Many references are made to the Masonic Code of Nebraska, containing the Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge.

Every Master must have a copy of the Code; and every Senior Warden should have a copy (contact the Grand Lodge office). No Master can properly serve his Lodge, Grand Lodge, or the Fraternity, unless he is thoroughly familiar with the General Regulations of the Grand Lodge. The importance of this can not be emphasized too strongly! Amendments are made each year, so, be sure to read the supplements.

Study the "Table of Contents." It clearly shows the overall sections, as well as the general subjects covered; and refers directly to the page on which each subject is discussed.

Study the Code systematically. Read one section; and, then, review it, point by point, to make sure that you understand every detail. Then, read the next section; and review it, etc., etc., until every point has been mastered. But, don't try to digest the entire Code in one evening. It can't be done.

Take it slowly and systematically, giving careful consideration to what can or cannot be done to benefit your Lodge. Make notes as you read, recording the ideas that occur to you for better procedures, improved ritual work, increased attendance, special events for the year, special programs, Temple improvements, etc. Within a few weeks, you will be amazed at all you have learned, and at the numerous notes you have accumulated. Then, organize your notes and "plot your course" for the year ahead. Thus, will your Trestle Board be filled with designs that will mark your year of service as one long to be remembered.

# **Responsibilities and Essential Relationships of the Worshipful Master**

## **A. MASTER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HIS LODGE**

### **1. Powers and Authority of the Master**

#### **Presiding Over Meetings**

The hour of opening the lodge as specified in the bylaws (or as called if the communication is to be a special one) having arrived, the Worshipful Master will take his place in the East and proceed to open the lodge in accordance with the work of this Grand Jurisdiction. Care should always be taken to start every meeting on time.

The Code states: "At all regular meetings, eight Master Masons, members of the Lodge, must be present." The exception is when considering consolidation, when the meeting will be chaired by the Grand Master or his representative.

Any Master Mason in good standing may confer degrees when requested to do so by the presiding officer.

The Lodge may be closed with any competent Brother in the East, provided he has been invited to close by the presiding officer. The Lodge must be closed according to the regular form as given in the ritual.

#### **Motions Permitted and Not Permitted**

It is a cardinal rule that no motion is permissible which would result in a violation of the Constitution, Bylaws, and decisions of the Grand Lodge or the bylaws of the subordinate Lodge.

The Worshipful Master is the judge of all questions of order, and it is his prerogative either to present, or refuse to present, a motion to the Lodge. He may refuse to present any motion which he deems improper and prejudicial to the welfare of the Lodge.

The following examples may prove helpful. All are illegal!

1. A motion that officers be installed by a prominent Mason who is not a Past Master.
2. To hold a special meeting contrary to the orders of the Worshipful Master.
3. To fix the fees of the Lodge at less than \$40.00.

4. To omit the lectures "tonight" in conferring the degree work.
5. To hold a special meeting for the purpose of considering the sale of real estate belonging to the Lodge.
6. To grant a prominent member "Life Membership."
7. To discuss legal difficulties in business disputes between Brethren.
8. To hold the annual election at a date other than at the first regular meeting in November.
9. To participate, as a Lodge, in a civic parade, without permission of the Grand Master.
10. Any motion is illegal which, in the judgment of the Master, is concerned with private piques and quarrels and which might result in disrupting the peace and harmony of the Lodge.

Many more examples could be given. When in doubt, consult the Code.

Here are some examples of permissible or legal motions.

1. A motion to amend the bylaws, if made in proper form.
2. To remit the dues of one financially unable to pay.
3. To levy an assessment, which motion, after due and proper notification, is to be voted on at the next meeting.

### **Debate and Discussion**

The Worshipful Master is the sole judge of debate. He should not use his power arbitrarily, but keep the discussion within due bounds, and close it when he judges the moment appropriate.

### **Balloting**

The Worshipful Master should make sure that the reports of the investigating committee are properly made; and then, proceed with the ballot, according to the instructions adopted by the Grand Lodge.

### **Masonic Trials**

The Worshipful Master and Wardens should carefully study Part III, Discipline, of the Code; and, if a trial becomes necessary, cooperate with the Trial Commission to expedite the procedure for the benefit of everyone.

Procedure in the Code for preferring, presenting and acceptance of charges, should be followed carefully so that they will not need to be done over with consequent delay.

## **Calling Special Meetings**

A special meeting can be held only to confer degrees; examine for proficiency; install officers; or for other ceremonial observances. No other business can be transacted. A special meeting cannot be held on Sunday, except to install officers. An emergent communication may be held on Sunday to conduct a Masonic funeral service.

## **Appointing and Utilizing Committees**

### **Investigating Committees**

In many respects, this is the most important of all Masonic Committees, for it guards the West Gate. Meticulous selection of your investigating committees, therefore, is of the utmost importance. Select only those members who will do a conscientious and thorough job, and who will be present when their reports are to be made.

The Master also should make sure that the Lodge's new members receive complete instructions in how to investigate a candidate, and use the pamphlet, "Duties of Investigating Committee."

### **Standing Committees**

The Master has at least four obligations in reference to his standing committees: (1) to select the best men for the particular job; (2) to instruct them thoroughly concerning their duties; (3) to check frequently and see that their work is progressing as it should; and (4) to recognize and thank the committee members for their services.

### **Special Committees**

The Master may appoint special committees to facilitate the execution of a particular program, project, or meeting. He should observe the same precautions in the selection, administration and commendation of these committees as recommended above. Committee work is an excellent medium for creating and maintaining active interest among the membership so pass the "chores" around and give as many as possible something to do.

## **Enforcement of the Lodge Bylaws and the Code**

The Worshipful Master is responsible for the compliance of his Lodge and members with the laws and regulations of the Grand Lodge as well as the bylaws of his Lodge. These responsibilities fall into two general areas: (1) the business and administration of the Lodge, and supervision during Lodge meetings; and (2) the personal conduct and behavior of members of the Lodge, and also of sojourners who are within its jurisdiction. The latter area deserves special comment.

The Master should be deeply concerned about the good name and reputation of his Lodge, its members, and the Fraternity in general. Where it is clear that the conduct of a member or sojourner is reflecting discredit upon himself, his Lodge and the Fraternity, the Master should instigate appropriate action to remedy the situation, keeping constantly in mind his duty both to the Lodge and the erring Brother. Masonry provides an excellent "yardstick" for such situations – the "Five Points of Fellowship", particularly the fifth. If "reformation" fails, then the Master's duty to all concerned will be clear, and disciplinary measures must be taken which are consistent with the nature of the offense.

But, it is well to remember, always, the old adage: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The best way to avoid irregularities is to make sure that your membership understands our laws and regulations. Your Lodge Committee on Education can provide a few short programs pointed toward an understanding of those elements in our laws which need emphasis, or perhaps clarification. Such programs can be highly interesting as well as instructive.

Note, too, the Junior Warden's obligation if a Mason is convicted of a criminal offense involving moral turpitude.

Also, it is important to know that any changes or amendments to the bylaws of your Lodge must be made by the prescribed procedure and must be approved by the Grand Master or Grand Lodge before they can become effective.

### **Receiving Visitors**

Since time immemorial, the Fraternity has recognized the right of every Freemason to visit and sit in every regular Lodge. This right is qualified by two factors: first, the visitor must prove that he is a regular Mason, in good standing in a regular Lodge; and, second, the Master may, at his discretion, exclude any visitor who might seriously disturb the peace and harmony of his Lodge.

No visitor can be admitted to a Lodge while a single member present objects; nor, can an objecting member be required to assign his reasons therefore, but may do so if he chooses.

### **Avouchment for and Examination of a Visitor**

Careful, friendly, expeditious attention must be given to this duty. Make the visitor welcome.

## **2. Promoting Ritual Proficiency**

Accurate and impressive rendition of the entire ritual is a primary responsibility of the Master. The candidate has a right to expect the best the Lodge can give him; anything less than the best is "shortchanging" him. The degree work must be the pride and privilege of each officer, each member of the Craft and all who participate.

Distribute the ritual duties as widely as practical. Any Brother who has a sincere desire to help the Lodge and to improve his own knowledge should be encouraged in every respect.

## **3. Securing Effective Candidate Instruction**

Merely receiving the degrees, however well presented, does not make a proficient Mason. The necessity for additional instruction is too apparent to require comment. To properly instruct we must have (1) competent teachers and (2) effective courses of study.

The best Masonic instructor, first of all, will be a consecrated Mason; one who is so devoted to the Craft that he really wants to assist in the important task of teaching his Brethren. It is not necessary for him to be a "scholar," but he should have the ability to communicate with others. The Grand Lodge "Standard Proficiency" manuals contain the information every candidate has to possess before proceeding to the next degree.

Every Brother raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason must be examined in open Lodge in order to receive his diploma. This examination should be within ninety days of receiving the degree; but, for good cause shown, may be within six months.

Until such Brother shall have received his diploma of proficiency, he shall not be allowed to hold office, or demit from his Lodge. He may not petition any other Masonic body for further degrees until he shall have received his diploma. He shall, however, be liable for payment of his Lodge dues and receive a dues card.

## **4. Proper Training and Use of Lodge Officers**

A one-man Lodge usually makes little progress over the years; therefore, it is necessary to use the talents of the entire staff of officers. Know each officer's duties and see that they are properly performed. These duties should be carefully evaluated. Every officer should know exactly what he is supposed to do, and then assume the full responsibility of doing it.

Regular and informative staff meetings can do much to prepare the line officer for future responsibilities. Such meetings will promote a continuing program and will

help to avoid too many abrupt changes with each new Master. The wise Master will avail himself of all the counsel and assistance his officers can give him, always remembering that he has the responsibility of final decisions.

The Senior Warden must be aware of how important it is for him to select his appointive officers with great care when he becomes Master. He must realize that it is not a Junior Steward or a Junior Deacon, but a future Worshipful Master, that he is selecting. The appointee should have the qualifications necessary to make the best-possible Master.

## **5. Administration of Lodge Funds**

To properly administer all Lodge funds, the Master must know the purpose of each fund, whether special or general. The special funds, particularly, will vary according to each Lodge's needs and customary practices.

The first step toward a sound, financial structure is the preparation of an annual budget which will underwrite any planned program of the Lodge. Any program, however desirable it may be, can succeed only if the necessary funds are provided for its promotion.

In addition to the special funds it may have established for a new Temple, new equipment, charity, etc., every Lodge should maintain an adequate working capital, with sufficient reserve to insure against emergencies.

The Secretary should make a financial report to the Lodge at the first stated meeting of each month.

A complete and accurate audit of all Lodge accounts is required at the close of each fiscal year. This audit must include any special funds in the hands of persons other than the Secretary and Treasurer. The welfare of the Lodge depends on the regularity of its accounts and the judgment used in the disbursement of its funds.

The Lodge's real estate and equipment are important assets and must be properly maintained. This is the responsibility of the Master in the absence of a Board of Trustees or Temple Craft.

Each Worshipful Master should ascertain that his Lodge is protected by adequate insurance coverage at all times. Partial or total destruction of Lodge property by fire, windstorm, or other natural forces, is an ever present danger.

## **6. Understanding and Encouraging Masonic Charity**

The diamond of Masonic Charity has many facets, but all may be classified within two general groups: (1) tangible charity, the giving of funds or material things; and

(2) intangible charity, or the rendering of help through service; and that service can assume many forms. It is almost trite to remark that these two groups overlap considerably in most instances and that, quite frequently, intangible charity is far more helpful than money or material gifts.

Every Mason has solemnly promised to "help, aid and assist all poor, distressed Master Masons, their widows and orphans," when they apply to him within the broad meaning of the obligation he has taken; and this applies equally to the Lodges. This responsibility never ceases and it is not restricted by any arbitrary or established boundaries.

A timely visit to the sick or bereaved; the proffer of a friendly hand; a word of encouragement or other service to the troubled; helping someone, especially a Brother, to find honorable employment; all of these instances, and many more, often are as important and as charitable as giving alms; though, it is not to be forgotten that there are times when the pocketbook alone can solve the problem.

The Grand Lodge of Nebraska has a Committee on Relief, in addition to the Masonic-Eastern Star Home for Children in Fremont and The Nebraska Masonic Home at Plattsmouth.

Masons, of all men, should understand every facet of Charity, and the wise Master will encourage his members to be charitable in all their relations with mankind; and, especially, with those to whom they are bound by fraternal ties.

The "Five Points of Fellowship" are not idle words. They might be called Masonry's "Five Commandments."

## **7. Planning the Lodge Program**

As you look toward the East, keep in mind that one of your primary duties as Worshipful Master will be to set the Craft to work and give them good and wholesome instruction for their labors.

A successful year will be assured if you start now to plan your program of events. Long-range, thoughtful planning will insure greater interest and participation by the members in your Lodge's activities. Try to schedule a special event for each month of the year. Aim at having a well-rounded calendar of activities throughout your term as Master.

You might start to plan your program by making a list of the special events you would like to feature. Then, decide on a specific date for each. For instance, you might want to schedule "Past Masters' Night" for January, "Old Timers' Night" for May, a "Family Picnic" for July, a "Lodge Workers' Party" for October, a "Ladies'

Night" for December. These are just a few of the activities that have developed interest and attendance for some Lodges. You will want to add other ideas of your own.

The important thing to remember is that careful planning is necessary. The sooner you start, the better. Don't try to do all the work yourself. Designate other officers to help you. Appoint committees to work on plans for each event.

### **Planning a Broad and Varied Program**

You can build a higher degree of interest among your members if you inject some elements of novelty and showmanship in your special events.

If the menus for your Lodge dinners have traditionally consisted of fried chicken, peas and mashed potatoes, serve something else for a change. You may be surprised to find that your members would welcome a spaghetti and meatball dinner, or frankfurters and sauerkraut. If your dinners are usually served on white tablecloths, switch to red-checked coverings.

Strive for variety in your programs. If you schedule a light "home talent" entertainment for April, balance it with a solemn, reverent, memorial service in May, honoring your departed Brethren.

Your stated meetings need not be limited merely to routine business. Devote a few minutes of each stated meeting to stimulating the members' interest in Masonry. Encourage your Education Committee to plan a different stunt each month – a "TV Quiz show" type program; or a short talk on George Washington, in February, by a member dressed in Colonial costume; or a movie or video borrowed from the Grand Lodge; or an exchange of Masonic experiences by the members. A well-organized and rehearsed Table Lodge, using the ritual and format furnished by the Grand Lodge, is different and interesting.

### **Effective Use of Lodge Talent**

Your year as Master will be successful in direct proportion to the number of Brethren you can "set to work." In every Lodge, large or small, there are members who could and should take part in the Lodge's work. For one reason or another, they are content to sit on the sidelines or stay at home and watch while others do all the work. Make a special effort to induce these "sideliners" to participate in your Lodge activities. In many instances, you will find that, with some encouragement from you and the other officers, the sideliners will be glad to participate. You may even uncover some outstanding talent among them.

How can you get the sideliners to become active workers? It may take more than a general invitation from you in open Lodge. There is an innate shyness in many men that keeps them from volunteering for duty, even though they may have a deep desire to assist. Possibly, the most effective thing you can do is talk earnestly to the individual member. Tell him his Lodge needs his help. Ask him in what phase of the work he would be most interested. Pin him down to a definite promise to become a member of the Degree Team or to learn one of the lectures. Assign an experienced worker to coach him. As soon as he is ready to appear on the Lodge floor, give him an opportunity. Be sure to compliment him after his first performance. As he develops in interest and ability, give him additional assignments. One of your greatest thrills as Master can come from transforming sideliners into workers.

One Lodge adopted a questionnaire to uncover latent talent. Every member received a four-page questionnaire on which he was asked to indicate his interest in ritualistic work, committee assignments, music, sick visitations, etc. During the first year that the questionnaire plan was used, the number of active workers was more than doubled.

Committees can contribute greatly to the smooth operation of a Lodge. Don't appoint too many men on any one committee. Small committees often get more done than large ones. But be sure to appoint plenty of committees. Keep them busy, and give them fitting recognition for the work they do.

In addition to the required standing committees, your Lodge should have a Table Lodge and Entertainment Committee, a Funeral Notification Committee, etc. The chairmen of your committees should be experienced, capable Brethren upon whom you can rely.

But name one or two "new" men to each committee, so that they can "learn the ropes" of committee work through association with Brethren of experience.

If your Lodge membership is not over 100, you should be able to find committee assignments for every Brother. If your Lodge membership is large, appoint more committees to give more members a chance to serve.

### **Adequate and Appropriate Publicity**

Keep your membership fully informed about Lodge activities through adequate and appropriate publicity. At each stated meeting, be sure to announce future meetings and special events. Post a schedule on the Trestle Board in your Temple.

Many Lodges mail announcements, or a monthly or bimonthly "calendar of events" to their members. These range all the way from simple government postcards to more elaborate printed newspapers. The type of mailing your Lodge uses will depend on

the size of its membership and its financial condition. But, whether you use a postcard or something more elaborate, keep it informative, regular and prompt.

Tell your local newspaper about Lodge meetings and special activities. If there is a radio or TV station in your community, it too should be included in your publicity plans. The more frequently you inform members about your activities, the better attendance you can expect. Special events can be referred to the Grand Lodge office to be included in the Nebraska Mason.

Caution! Candidates' names must not be listed in your releases to newspapers, radio, or TV stations, or be publicized in any other manner. Publicity before initiation could prove very harmful.

## **8. Proper Conduct of Masonic Funerals**

Masonic funerals are the last measure of respect and devotion that your Lodge can pay to its departed members. One of your most solemn and serious duties as Master is to see that these funerals are conducted properly and impressively.

### **Responsibility of Master and Lodge to the Family**

As soon as you learn of the death of a Brother, you should call upon his bereaved family. Extend to them your personal condolence and the sympathy of the Lodge. Offer to help in any way you can. Determine if it is their wish, or the wish of the departed Brother, that the Lodge conduct a Masonic funeral.

A Masonic funeral is the right of every Master Mason in good standing. The Code permits a Brother to receive Masonic interment under the following conditions:

1. He must be a Master Mason.
2. He must be in good standing.
3. He need not be affiliated with the Lodge within whose jurisdiction he dies, for it is one of the most graceful acts of Masonic courtesy to gather as a Lodge and bestow these honors upon worthy sojourners at the request or approval of his Lodge.

As Master of the Lodge, you cannot deny a Masonic funeral if the departed Brother is entitled to it, and you should not discourage the family from requesting a Masonic funeral.

If affiliation or standing can not be determined, for whatever reason, always err on the side of charity.

## **Securing Attendance at Funerals**

As an expression of the Lodge's respect and love for the departed Brother, it is desirable to obtain the largest possible attendance of members at the funeral. It is not as easy to obtain good attendance as it once was. Many members, working on salaried or hourly rated jobs, find it impossible to attend funerals except at a financial sacrifice. Business and professional men are not always able to get away from their stores or offices. Farmers are sometimes prevented from taking part by the demands of their crops and the whims of the weather. Nevertheless, it is essential that you make every effort to obtain maximum attendance at funerals.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Make a list of Lodge members who are retired, or whose work will permit them to attend funerals.
2. Appoint a Funeral Notification Committee whose duty it will be to phone or contact every Brother on the funeral list.
3. Ask the local newspaper to include a mention of the Masonic funeral in its obituary column.
4. If time permits, send a postcard notice to every local or nearby member.

## **Making Proper Public Impression**

Make certain that the Masonic funerals conducted by your Lodge are as perfect and impressive as possible. Remember, Masonic funerals are among the few occasions when the public has an opportunity to see the Craft at work. The impression your Lodge makes at Masonic funerals can go a long way toward winning public esteem and prestige.

Familiarize yourself with every word of the funeral ritual. The funeral oration as printed in the Ceremonies is the only recognized form by Grand Lodge law. Study it, over and over, until you are letter perfect and can give it without prompting or faltering. Practice the oration out-of-doors.

Giving the oration in a cemetery is far different from reciting it in your bedroom.

Make sure the Funeral Committee understands what is expected of it. Check every detail of the equipment needed; clean aprons, officers' jewels, Bible; and don't forget the Sprig of Acacia.

Finally, when you deliver the oration, speak clearly and distinctly. Give it slowly and impressively. Remember the solemnity of the occasion. Bear in mind that many non-Masons may form their opinions of Masonry on the basis of the manner in which you conduct the funeral service.

## **9. Relations Between the Master and The Past Masters**

During the year ahead, you may be faced with problems and emergencies of many kinds. When you come face to face with such serious matters, just keep in mind that the counsel of the Lodge's Past Masters is always available to you. Call on them for help, with the full assurance that they always will be ready to assist you.

The Past Masters of your Lodge represent an accumulation of many years of Masonic experience. They may not thrust themselves forward. Many of them may feel that you, as Master, should have every opportunity to preside over your Lodge as you see fit. But, when you need them, you can count on them.

Early in your year as Master, or even before your year begins, it would be wise to call the Past Masters of your Lodge together for a meeting. Tell them of your plans for the coming year. Invite them to participate with you in the program of the Lodge. Ask them for their suggestions and advice.

Make a careful note to extend every Masonic courtesy to your Past Masters. Whenever they are present at a meeting of the Lodge, invite them to have a seat in the East. Permit them to help in conferring degree work. Nothing is more impressive to a candidate than to hear a charge or lecture delivered by a Masonic veteran.

Your Lodge calendar should include a Past Masters' Night. In many Lodges, it is traditional, at this event, for the Past Masters to fill all the chairs and take all the parts in conferring the Master Mason Degree.

Your Past Masters are your Lodge's greatest asset. Your year in the East will be more successful and rewarding if you include them in your planning.

## **B. MASTER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE GRAND LODGE**

### **1. Relations to the Grand Master or His Deputy**

The Worshipful Master will come in contact with the Grand Master at the annual communication of the Grand Lodge. The important relationship between them stems from the fact that the Worshipful Master is a member of the Grand Lodge. As the Grand Lodge representative in his Lodge he must be certain that the Grand Lodge Constitution, Bylaws, and Decisions of the Grand Master are obeyed in every respect. The Grand Master will hold him accountable when any question arises concerning the actions of his Lodge or its members.

The wise Master will not render hasty decisions from memory but will consult the Code before rendering judgment on any point of Masonic law. If, after diligent search

of the Code, the Master is still uncertain as to what section applies or what should be done, then he should ask the Grand Master for an interpretation or ruling.

It is the Master's duty to see that all correspondence between his Lodge and any official or committee of the Grand Lodge is answered courteously and promptly. Also, that all reports due the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary, and the Grand Custodian are fully prepared and mailed promptly.

If the Grand Master, or his Deputy, finds it necessary to investigate any situation that has developed in your Lodge, it will be the Worshipful Master's duty to facilitate his investigation. Fortunately, such cases are infrequent; but, when they do occur, the Grand Master must have all the evidence in order to take such action as will be consistent with Masonic justice.

Customarily, the Grand Master visits a Lodge by invitation and for purposes far more pleasant. His presence at one of your Lodge's events might well be the highlight of your year in the East.

If you wish to invite the Grand Master to a special occasion, by all means do so, for he will be happy to accept if his schedule permits. Remember, however, that he is an extremely busy Mason. There are approximately two hundred Lodges in Nebraska, and only one Grand Master. As a courtesy to him, and, incidentally, to increase the probability of his acceptance, make certain that your invitation reaches him several weeks, or preferably months, before the date of your event.

The nature of your special occasion may be such that you also desire to invite the other Grand Lodge officers, and perhaps their wives. This also applies to the Past Grand Masters. All of these Brethren are receptive to such invitations; but they, too, are busy men and should be informed as far in advance as possible.

In any combination of circumstances which concern an invitation to the Grand Master or other official representatives of the Grand Lodge, bear in mind that you and your Lodge are the hosts. Your guests should be fully informed about the nature and important details of your event, the time it is scheduled to begin, and where it is to be held.

Some of your guests may come from distant sections of the State and will require overnight accommodations. They should be informed about the accommodations available, including names and phone numbers of local motels.

## **Reception and Entertainment of Grand Lodge Officers and other Distinguished Guests**

Now, suppose we assume that the Grand Master and other distinguished guests have accepted your invitation and that you have fully informed them concerning the essential details of your meeting, including the fact that it is open to the public, or is for Masons only, as the case may be. How should these visitors be received? Much embarrassment will be avoided if you are familiar with the proper procedure.

The Grand Master, Grand Officers and Past Grand Masters should be received into a Lodge according to the formal ceremony prescribed in the Ceremonies. These instructions should be followed in every detail.

Here is one further suggestion, and it is extremely important! If you want your members, and their ladies, or guests, to enjoy themselves so completely at your special events that they hope the next one will come along very soon, plan your entire program so it progresses smoothly and promptly, without awkward and tiresome delays. Do not attempt to crowd too many features into one evening. Give your audience something worthwhile to remember, then stop. An old maxim of the theater is appropriate: "Always leave your audience wanting more."

A late start, wasted time, boring delays, and late hours have sabotaged countless Masonic meetings. Don't be a saboteur!

When a number of distinguished guests are present, and introductions are in order, handle the situation as systematically and as briefly as possible. Often you can introduce your guests by groups, requesting the audience to withhold its applause until the entire group has been introduced. If the Grand Master is present, he may make many of the introductions himself.

Also, the wise Master will not ask each of his guests for remarks. This really "eats up" time, and it serves no useful purpose. When several distinguished visitors are present, the necessary courtesies and formalities can be accomplished completely by requesting one of your guests to speak for the entire group. No one will be offended and much precious time will be saved.

If a Masonic address is the principal feature of your event, plan the program so the speaker will have a fresh and receptive audience. Too many preliminary "acts," which delay his speech until a late hour or until the audience is restless, not only is unfair, but actually is rude to the speaker. Give him a chance to do the job he came to do!

## **Dispensations from the Grand Master**

What is a "dispensation?" Adapting a definition from the learned Masonic scholar, Dr. Mackey, a dispensation is "a permission to do that which, without such permission, is forbidden by the Constitution, Bylaws, regulations and usages of the Grand Lodge as set forth in Nebraska Masonic Code."

Who can issue a dispensation? Only the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge, when in session. All requests for dispensations should be addressed to the Grand Lodge office. In due course, they will reach the Grand Master; and, at his discretion, he will grant or deny the request.

The Grand Master will not grant a dispensation to do anything that is contrary to current Masonic law. It is futile to request him to do so. Therefore, before asking for a dispensation of any kind, a Lodge or Master should first carefully review the Masonic Code and be governed accordingly.

Nebraska Masonic Law requires that a dispensation from the Grand Master is necessary before a Lodge or Master can proceed in any of the following situations:

1. To hold a lodge meeting elsewhere than its Temple.
2. To hold a special election of officers, if the Lodge has failed to elect on the date specified by the Masonic Code.
3. To fill a vacancy in the office of Worshipful Master, or any elected officer, by special election, except the Secretary and Treasurer.
4. To organize a new Lodge.
5. To hold an installation of officers at any location other than the Masonic Temple.

The above is only a partial list. Various other situations may arise which will require a dispensation. Before you send a request to the Grand Lodge office, always consult the Masonic Code and be governed accordingly.

## **2. Duties of the Master as a Member of Grand Lodge**

### **Attendance**

One of the specific duties of the Worshipful Master is to see that his Lodge is properly represented in all meetings of the Grand Lodge, either in person or by proxy appointed by him from among the members of his Lodge.

The Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge is an extremely important event, for it affects the entire Fraternity in Nebraska. If at all possible, the Worshipful Master, and the Senior and Junior Wardens of every Lodge should be present in person

rather than by proxy. The Grand Lodge Communication is held on the first Friday in February, at such time and place as the Grand Master may select, with the approval of the Grand Lodge.

Credentials for the Worshipful Master, and the Senior and Junior Wardens are mailed to the delegates by the Grand Lodge office, along with other communications regarding the Grand Lodge session. If the officers find it necessary to appoint a proxy, it is their prerogative to appoint any member of their Lodge who is in good standing. The Master, himself, should attend if he can; but, in any event, it is his duty to be certain that his Lodge is represented, and that a report of the Grand Lodge proceedings is made to his Lodge at its next stated meeting.

### **Committee Service**

The Worshipful Master, as a member of the Grand Lodge, may be called upon to serve on a committee of that body. If so appointed, he will be notified by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge Office as to when and where the committee will meet.

### **Voting at Grand Lodge Annual Communication**

There are three items of primary interest in relation to voting during the Grand Lodge session: (1) the election of Grand Officers; (2) the manner of voting on resolutions or motions; and (3) the responsibility of each delegate to vote on such resolutions or motions according to the dictates of his own conscience and best judgment, so that the welfare of the Fraternity as a whole may best be served.

Ballots for the annual election of the Grand Officers will be received when you file your credentials. Do not lose them, for no others will be available. The Grand Master will call for the ballots at the proper time. In voting, remember that the elective officers are: Deputy Grand Master (goes to Grand Master automatically), Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, and Grand Secretary. All other Grand Lodge officers are appointed by the incoming Grand Master.

When the Grand Master places any question or motion before the Grand Lodge, he usually calls for the usual voting sign of a Mason when voting. If the vote is so close that a decision is difficult, he may call for a show of hands or a standing vote, in which case an actual count is made. If he deems it necessary, the Grand Master can call for a written ballot. Except in rare instances, however, one of the first two methods usually suffices to settle the issue. A roll call shall be ordered at the request of three members.

Should you desire to present a resolution to amend the Constitution or Bylaws, you should prepare it in writing, have it signed by four other members of Grand Lodge, and present it to the Grand Secretary before the close of Grand Lodge.

When a question is put, it shall be the duty of every member of Grand Lodge to vote, unless excused by the Grand Lodge. Previous reference has been made to each delegate's responsibility to consider only the best interests of the Fraternity, as a whole, when casting his vote on any question. Personal or local preferences should be laid aside in favor of what is best for Freemasonry. Otherwise, our Fraternity might easily become a hodgepodge of self seeking individuals or groups, and we must continue to avoid that at all costs.

It is significant that no Lodge can instruct its Master or Wardens as to how they must vote on any question or issue that is to come before the Grand Lodge. The Master and Wardens are the only officers of the Lodge who are members of the Grand Lodge. When they attend an official Grand Lodge session, what they do and how they vote is their own personal responsibility; and they are accountable to no one, except the Grand Lodge, for their action.

The wise Master is always receptive to advice and good counsel, and he frequently seeks competent guidance from his membership, or perhaps elsewhere. He should know the predominant sentiment of his Lodge concerning every issue, and should give that sentiment due consideration before arriving at any important decision. But the final decision is his, and his alone, to make.

The Master of a Masonic Lodge is a Master in every sense of the word; and it is one of the glories of Masonry that rarely, indeed, has a Master abused his power.

### **3. Master's Relations to the Grand Lodge Office**

The Worshipful Master is responsible for certain reports and payments which must be made by his Lodge to the Grand Lodge office. These include:

The annual report, which is due by the 10th of February.

Payment of Grand Lodge per capita tax by April 10th.

Happy is the Master who learns, upon inquiry, that the reports have been made and the checks forwarded long since. Usually, the Secretary can be counted on to discharge all these duties before the deadlines. The actual responsibility rests with the Worshipful Master. Should any of the required reports fail to arrive, should payment of per capita tax not be made by the final date, it will be the Worshipful Master who will be called for an accounting.

### **Services and Materials Available from the Grand Lodge Office**

The Grand Lodge office does more than require reports and demand payments. It also offers and makes available to Lodges certain services and materials. Some of them

are free, and others have a nominal fee to cover the cost of production. Among these are the following:

- List of Regular Lodges recognized by the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.
- Copies of various handbooks and educational material.
- The Constitutions and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge.
- Fifty, Sixty, and Seventy Year Pins.
- Printed forms for Lodge reports.
- Dues cards.
- The Monitor and Ceremonies.
- Standard Proficiency Manuals.
- Cipher or Code Book.

#### **4. Master's Relations to the Grand Custodian**

The Grand Custodian is an officer of the Grand Lodge. He has certain duties which he must perform each year. He must certify to the Grand Master that every Lodge can open and close, in all three degrees, using only their elected and appointed officers, within ninety days following their installation.

It is the responsibility of the Worshipful Master to see that the GC 1 and GC 2 forms are completed and sent to the Grand Custodian during January.

The Grand Custodian will hold central schools of instruction in various Lodges, and you may be called upon to provide one or more Brothers to fill the several stations or places. You may even be asked to host such a school. The wise Master will be certain that his officers and members are completely prepared.

During his visitation, the Grand Custodian will expect the highest degree of accuracy in the wording and floor work of the ritual, but that will not handicap any Lodge which constantly strives toward the perfection that is every ritualist's goal. Accuracy alone, however, is not enough; for accuracy is barren unless it is accompanied by an impressive rendition.

The objective of Masonic ritual not only is to impart "wise and serious truths" to the candidate, but to implant them in his mind and heart so effectively that they henceforth will be the "rule and guide" of his daily conduct. A mumbled, singsong, parrot-like and, often, too-rapid recital of mere words cannot possibly accomplish that objective. Those same words will come alive with soul-stirring meaning if they are spoken clearly at a moderate tempo, with modulated inflection.

Such a rendition of the ritual not only will earn a "well done" from the Grand Custodian, but even more important, it will present those "wise and serious truths" upon a level consistent with the objectives and ideals of Masonry.

When you occupy the Oriental Chair, remember well that the candidate has high expectations; and he is entitled to receive the degrees in a manner consistent with their dignity and beauty. It is the Master's responsibility to see that the candidate is not disappointed. Anything less than impressive ritual is a fraud, and Masons do not "cheat, wrong or defraud."

### **C. MASTER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY**

Civic and community relations are important to the Lodge and to the Fraternity. They are maintained most effectively by the individual Mason who reflects his Masonic training in his daily life and who does his duty as a good citizen.

As a Lodge, we also need to be good citizens in our communities. As a Lodge, define a need in your community, and then determine what it is that you, as a Lodge, can do to satisfy that need.

#### **Permissible Public Functions**

There are certain Masonic Ceremonies to which the public may be invited. They include installation of officers; fifty, sixty, and seventy year pin presentations; memorial services; funerals; and cornerstone and dedication ceremonies, to name a few. Some of these ceremonies may be held in the Temple, or at other locations, but afford good opportunities to expose the public to Freemasonry.

#### **Relationship of the Lodge to the Church**

The Lodge is not a substitute for the Church. The individual Mason should be encouraged to fortify his religion and his Masonry by active worship in the church of his own choice.

#### **Relationship to other Masonic and Appendant Bodies**

The Worshipful Master should extend fraternal courtesies and cooperation to other Masonic and appendant bodies. He should remember that the welfare of the Symbolic Lodge must be his first consideration. When Temple facilities are shared with other bodies, all meetings should be scheduled to the best advantage and by mutual agreement of the representative of each body. Proper use of all Temple facilities also should be mutually understood.

## **D. THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

The Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of Nebraska, often referred to as the Blue Book, or the Code, is the Worshipful Master's "rule and guide." Few questions will arise during your year in the East which cannot be settled by diligent searching.

## **E. PROPER PROTOCOL WHEN IN A LODGE**

The Master of a Lodge and all Past Masters are always addressed as Worshipful Brother. It is a sign of respect.

A member should always rise when addressing the Worshipful Master in an open Lodge.

None may pass between the Worshipful Master and the Altar when the Lodge is open unless directed by the Worshipful Master or as a part of the ritual.

When the ballot box is used, all must rise to vote.

Everyone must vote on petitions.

No one may enter or leave the Lodge during balloting.

It is a Masonic offense to discuss a petition following balloting or to express an opinion that a particular brother cast a black ball.

Only the Worshipful Master may be covered in open Lodge.

The Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens never leave their stations except as a part of the ritual.

It is a Masonic offense to discuss religion or politics in Lodge.

Three raps of the gavel raises the entire Lodge. Two raps raises the elected officers. One rap congregates the Lodge, raises an individual Brother, seats the Lodge, opens or closes an order of business.

After a Lodge is properly opened the Worshipful Master may, if he desires, turn the maintenance of the door over to the Senior Warden. Any Brother then wishing to enter or leave the Lodge would salute the Senior Warden.

It is the duty of the Tyler to inform the late arriving Brethren of the degree in which the Lodge has been opened.

Aprons should always be worn on the outside of any clothing as a badge of Masonry and also that everyone may see, at a glance, the manner in which it is worn.

A brother must be vouched for by one with whom he has sat in Lodge, or be examined before he can be admitted as a member of a lodge.

## **Masonic Books of Value to the Master**

### **Masonic Jurisdiction**, by Albert G. Mackey

Explains the written and unwritten laws of Freemasonry. The most widely-used book of its kind.

### **The Builders**, by Joseph Fort Newton

Probably, the most popular of all Masonic books. Written by one of the foremost Masonic authors of all time, it presents a vivid picture of Masonic history, philosophy and symbolism. Should be in every Mason's library.

### **The Great Teachings of Masonry**, by H. L. Haywood

A clear, concise, and authentic, explanation of the principal lessons and purposes of Freemasonry.

### **Short Talks on Masonry**, by Joseph Fort Newton

Masonic "light", but in small and effective doses. Instructive, inspirational, and written by a master craftsman.

### **The Newly-Made Mason**, by H. L. Haywood

History, philosophy and symbolism, and other Masonic essentials for the new Brother, told by one of the leading authorities of our day.

### **More About Masonry**, by H. L. Haywood

A companion book to the "Newly-Made Mason," it completes the Masonic story, explaining the Craft's origins, history, form and organization, general philosophy, and the York and Scottish Rites. These two books might be called a "Miniature Masonic Library."

### **Famous Masons and Masonic Presidents**, by H. L. Heywood

A fascinating book, telling the life story of many famous men who were members of the Craft.

### **Freemasonry and Roman Catholicism**, by H. L. Haywood

A frank, unbiased, and nonargumentative, discussion of the record.

**Where Your Treasure Is**, by Carl H. Claudy

This is a collection, under one cover, of Brother Claudy's 12 Masonic plays, many of which have become popular.

**Freemasons Guide and Compendium**, by Bernard E. Jones

This book was written for the Mason who feels a definite need for instruction, but who has neither time nor facilities for systematic study. It is a comprehensive guide to the Craft, explaining its growth, multiplicity of practices and rites, and answers practically every question commonly asked by the inquiring Mason.

**Encyclopedia of Freemasonry**, by Albert G. Mackey

For years this has been the world's standard Masonic authority. Its 1,570 pages cover practically every phase of our Craft.

**Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia**, by Henry Wilson Coil

A new and up-to-date publication. It is well written, a sound investment, compact yet complete, including history and chronology.

**History of Freemasonry**, by Robert Freke Gould

Standard throughout the Masonic world. Widely quoted, it is the most up-to-date and complete history now available. Indispensable to the student and researcher, it is equally valuable to the casual reader. A sound investment.