

BOOK OF
CEREMONIES



GRAND LODGE F. & A.M. OF CALIFORNIA

BOOK OF CEREMONIES

LAYING OF CORNERSTONES

CORNERSTONE REMOVAL

INSTITUTION OF NEW LODGES

CONSTITUTION OF NEWLY CHARTERED LODGES

PRESENTATION OF 50-YEAR PINS
(GOLDEN VETERANS AWARD)

PRESENTATION OF 50-YEAR (OR OTHER) AWARDS
ON BEHALF OF OTHER MASONIC JURISDICTIONS

PRESENTATION OF 75-YEAR PINS

DEDICATION OF MASONIC HALLS

LODGE ANNIVERSARY AND DEDICATION CEREMONY

DEDICATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUILDINGS

DEDICATION OF BURIAL PLOTS

MORTGAGE BURNING CEREMONY

[Material in brackets is optional.]

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**THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



Grand Secretary

Laying of Cornerstones

The Inspector, with the approval of the Assistant Grand Lecturer, should see that all details are arranged. This includes the inscription format and proofreading of programs and stone or facsimile.

The Prayer indicated by brackets is not to be used at a Public School. The other material in brackets is optional.

Consult Section 1050-J of the California Masonic Code relative to the form of request, which should be sent to the Grand Master as far in advance as possible, and no less than six months prior to the time at which the ceremony is desired.

The Grand Lodge may be opened in the nearest Lodge hall, or the ceremony may be performed without the opening of the Grand Lodge, at the discretion of the Grand Master.

The ceremony contemplates that a capsule containing memorials of the period will be placed in a cavity either under or behind the stone. This should be a waterproof sealed container prepared in advance of the ceremony. A list of the contents of the box should be prepared and be available to the Grand Secretary, or the brother occupying that office, during the ceremony.

The principal address of the occasion will be delivered by the Grand Master, the Grand Orator or some brother designated by the Grand Master.

A platform or podium should be provided, if possible, large enough to provide seating, without overcrowding, for the officers and brothers and special guests, who are participating in the ceremonies. Consideration should be given to the location of the platform in relation to the stone, those who will assemble for the ceremony and that the officers or participants may go easily and directly from the platform to the stone. A standing lectern with a good speaker system and microphones are needed in the respective places. A small covered table should be placed in front of the chair occupied by the Grand Master. The vessels of corn, wine and oil, together with a set of working tools (carpenter's plumb, square and level) shall be placed upon the table. The participating Grand Lodge Officers and Brothers will be seated on the platform as follows, from the point-of-view of the audience, from left to right: Principal Architect, Grand Orator, Grand Lecturer, Grand Treasurer, Senior Grand Warden, Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Junior Grand Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Chaplain.

Vocal or instrumental music adds greatly to the occasion and any provision therefor must be made by the local brethren with approval of the District Inspector. If it is desired that any local brother or public official speak, or in anyway participate in the ceremony, such arrangements must be submitted to the Grand Master, in writing, at least

two weeks prior to the date of the ceremony.

This ceremony is symbolic and not of a structural nature. The ceremony therefore should be held inside a building or structure, whenever possible, to protect those in attendance from the elements of weather. When a procession is used, the Grand Marshal shall form it in the following order and lead the procession:

	Grand Marshal	
White Aprons		White Aprons
Senior Grand Deacon	Grand Master	Jr. Grand Deacon (with Rods)
	Grand Sword Bearer (with Sword)	
	Deputy Grand Master	
Senior Grand Warden		Junior Grand Warden
Grand Treasurer		Grand Secretary
Grand Lecturer		Grand Chaplain
Grand Orator		Grand Standard Bearer
Principal Architect		Bearer of Corn
Bearer of Wine		Bearer of Oil
Assistant Grand Lecturer		Assistant Grand Lecturer
Assistant Grand Lecturer		Assistant Grand Lecturer
Assistant Grand Secretary		Grand Bible Bearer
Grand Pursuivant		Grand Organist
Senior Grand Steward		Junior Grand Steward
Assistant Grand Organist		Assistant Grand Tiler
	Grand Tiler (with Sword)	

The procession moves to the site by whatever route may have been designated. On arriving at the proper point the Grand Marshal stops the procession, turns about-face, and with his baton at eye level, comes down the center opening the lines of white aprons, to the right and left forming a corridor wide enough for three Grand Lodge Officers, walking abreast, to file by. When the Grand Marshal arrives at a point facing the Grand Master, he brings his baton to the carry position, bows to the Grand Master and goes to the right of the Junior Grand Deacon and proceeds to the end of the Grand Officer line. As the Grand Marshal leaves his position, facing the Grand Master, the Grand Sword Bearer assumes that position via the left side of the Senior Grand Deacon. As the Grand Sword Bearer faces the Grand Master, he salutes the Grand Master with his sword, brings sword to the carry position, turns right about face and leads the procession to a designated place. When the Grand Sword Bearer salutes the Grand Master, the Grand Deacons interlace rods over the head of the Grand Master and maintain this rod position as they process. As the Grand Lodge Officers process through the corridor, of Brothers with white aprons, these brothers, by direction of the Grand Marshal will fall in line of procession. When the Grand Sword Bearer reaches the designated place, he stops the procession, turns right about-face, salutes with sword and holds salute until all have passed by. As the Grand Sword Bearer gives this salute, the Grand Deacons unlace rods

to carry position and move forward to a place three steps past the Grand Sword Bearer. All others remain in place. When the Grand Deacons are at their point past the Grand Sword Bearer, they stop, turn right about-face and ground rods, leaving enough room between them so two abreast may file between them. Grand Master then leads procession going to the left side of the Grand Sword Bearer and between the Grand Deacons to his place on the platform. Deputy Grand Master goes to the right of the Grand Sword Bearer, between the Grand Deacons and on to his respective place. All others, walking abreast, would file on each side of the Grand Sword Bearer and between the Grand Deacons to their designated places. When all have passed by the Grand Sword Bearer, except the Grand Marshal, the Grand Sword Bearer returns his sword to the carry position and the Grand Deacons bring rods to the carry position, these three turn right about-face, followed by the Grand Marshal and continue to their designated seats.

GRAND MASTER: Friends and brethren, it has been a custom among the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, from time immemorial, to assemble for the purpose of laying the foundation stones of certain buildings, when requested to do so by those having authority. The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, having been invited to lay the cornerstone of this building, we have here assembled and will now proceed with that pleasant duty.

If ceremony is performed at a public school, this next paragraph and the Chaplain's prayer are not to be given in compliance with current laws. This prayer could be given at the Grand Lodge opening for this event.

In accordance with the teachings of our Institution, it is our duty, before entering upon any great or important undertaking, to invoke the aid and blessing of God. We shall, therefore, reverently unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Almighty and Eternal God! Who laid the foundations of the earth, we beseech Thee to look with favor on this our undertaking of laying the cornerstone of a material building. We look to Thee for guidance, and we pray that Thou wilt, on all occasions, give Wisdom to guide us, Strength to support us, and the Beauty of holiness to adorn our labors and to render them acceptable in Thy sight. Grant Thy blessing and watchful care to sustain and protect the workmen who are here to be employed. So order their lives and their work that no discord or confusion may disturb the harmony that should be theirs. And we pray that when the structure shall be finished, it shall be devoted to all that stands for good and the glory of Thy holy name. Also, we pray that when our labors on earth are ended, we may be received in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen.

-- OR --

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Almighty and Eternal God! We ask you to look with favor on this our undertaking of symbolically laying the cornerstone of a material building. We look to You for guidance and we pray that you will, on all occasions, give Wisdom to guide us, Strength to support us, the Beauty of holiness to adorn our labors, and to render them acceptable in Your sight. Grant us Your blessing and watchful care at all times and so order our lives and our work that no discord or confusion may disturb the peace and harmony which should ever prevail among us. And we pray that this structure may be devoted to the good of our community and to the honor of your name. We also pray that when our labors on earth are ended that we may be received into that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Treasurer: It has ever been the custom of the craft, upon occasions like the present, to deposit within a cavity beneath the stone certain memorials of the period in which this building was erected; so that, if, in the lapse of ages, the fury of the elements, the violence of man, or the slow but certain ravages of time, should lay bare its foundations, an enduring record may be found by succeeding generations, to bear testimony to the untiring, unending industry of the Free and Accepted Masons. Has such a deposit now been prepared?

GRAND TREASURER: Most Worshipful: It has, and the various articles of which it is composed are safely enclosed within the capsule now before you.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Secretary: You will read the record of contents of the capsule.

The Grand Secretary reads the list of contents of the capsule.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Treasurer: You will now deposit the capsule in its proper place; and may the Great Architect of the Universe, in His wisdom, grant that ages upon ages shall pass away ere be seen again.

The Grand Treasurer places the capsule appropriately.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Deputy Grand Master: What is the jewel of your office?

Deputy Grand Master goes to table, picks up square and responds at lectern. This instruction is applicable for the Grand Wardens with their respective jewels.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: The square, Most Worshipful.

GRAND MASTER: Then you will apply the jewel of your office to those portions of the stone which should be square.

The Deputy Grand Master goes down to the stone, tests it, returns to the lectern and responds. This instruction is applicable for the Grand Wardens with their respective jewels and responses.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: I have obeyed your order, Most Worshipful, and find that in that respect the craftsmen have done their duty.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Senior Grand Warden: What is the jewel of your office?

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: The level, Most Worshipful.

GRAND MASTER: Then you will apply the jewel of your office to the stone, and to see if it is laid in a manner creditable to our Ancient Craft.

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: I have obeyed your order, Most Worshipful, and find that the stone has been laid in a manner creditable to our Ancient Craft.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Junior Grand Warden: What is the jewel of your office?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: The plumb, Most Worshipful.

GRAND MASTER: Then you will apply the jewel of your office to the stone, and see if it has been properly adjusted.

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: I have obeyed your order, Most Worshipful, and find that the stone has been properly adjusted.

The Grand Master approaches the stone and gives it three blows from his gavel on the words: well formed, true and trusty.

GRAND MASTER: Our duty having been faithfully and skillfully performed, I declare this foundation stone to be well formed, true and trusty. May the edifice which is to rest upon it ever be devoted to the spreading of useful knowledge, to the practice of unceasing and unostentatious charity, and to the inculcation of fraternity and goodwill.

The Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, looking ever to the goodness and compassion of the Great Architect of the Universe, lays cornerstones with a symbolic offering of Corn, Wine and Oil.

The Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden and Junior Grand Warden rise, go to the table, and pick up their respective vessels. As Deputy Grand Master picks up his vessel of corn, he also picks up the tray, goes to lectern, pours corn on tray and recites

the explanation. Upon completion, he passes the tray to the Senior Grand Warden, who, in like manner, does his part. He then passes the tray to the Junior Grand Warden, who does his part and then gives the tray to the Grand Master. These three stand in line, holding their respective vessels, either in back of or off to the side and in back of the Grand Master.

The Deputy Grand Master pours the Corn.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: May our Heavenly Father strengthen and sustain the craftsmen while engaged in this important work. May He ever bountifully vouchsafe the Corn of Nourishment to all employed in honest and useful toil.

The Senior Grand Warden pours the Wine.

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: May the Great Giver of all good enable the craftsmen in due time to complete this edifice; and, during their intervals from labor, may they constantly be blessed with that refreshment of which this Wine is emblematical.

The Junior Grand Warden pours the Oil.

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: May the blessings of Heaven descend upon this and all good works. May our beloved Fraternity long exist to pour forth the Oil of Joy upon the hearts of the widowed, the fatherless, and the distressed.

If this ceremony is for a public school, the Junior Grand Warden's recitation would be:

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: May the blessings of Heaven descend upon this and all good works. May our beloved Fraternity long support our public schools. May this edifice be of lasting good to this community, as it serves to the benefit of its faculty but more importantly the students, of today, who will be the leaders of tomorrow.

GRAND MASTER: May the Great Architect of the Universe lend aid to those who have conceived and thus far carried on this goodly enterprise. May He protect the workmen employed upon this building from every accident, and long preserve it for the beneficent uses which it is destined to subserve. May He grant to us all an ever bountiful supply of the Corn of Nourishment, the Wine of Refreshment and the Oil of Joy.

The Grand Master returns tray to the Junior Grand Warden, who along with the Deputy Grand Master and Senior Grand Warden, returns tray and vessels to the table. The Junior Grand Warden then picks up the square, level and plumb and gives them to the Grand Master. The Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden and Junior Grand

Warden sit down together.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Principal Architect, I now confide to you these implements of Operative Masonry. May this undertaking be speedily accomplished; may there be no envy, discord or confusion among the workmen, and may you perform the important duties with which you have been charged, not only to the satisfaction of those who have entrusted you with their fulfillment, but in such manner as shall secure the approbation of your own conscience, and redound to the honor of our Ancient Fraternity.

The Grand Master hands the implements to the Principal Architect.

The Grand Master introduces the Grand Orator, or some other brother designated by him, to give the address of the occasion.

Appropriate music may be introduced here and, if thought desirable, a brief word of appreciation.

If this ceremony is conducted at a public school, the Grand Master will not call upon the Grand Chaplain for the benediction, but will conclude the ceremonies after the address. This is in compliance with current laws.

GRAND MASTER: The Grand Chaplain will now give the benediction, which will conclude the ceremony.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: May the blessing of Almighty God, Who made the heaven and the earth, and all who dwell therein, be with us all and remain with us, now and forevermore. Amen.

If Grand Lodge was opened, the brethren informally return to the Lodge hall.

Cornerstone Removal

When the Grand Officers are seated on the platform, the person having authority will request the Grand Master to proceed with the ceremony of removing the cornerstone.

GRAND MASTER: Friends and Brethren, the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, has from time immemorial, symbolically laid the foundation stone of certain buildings when requested to do so by those having authority.

The impressive ceremony of laying a cornerstone beautifully illustrates one of the basic principals of our Ancient Craft; that the building can only stand so long as it is supported by a firm foundation, be it Spiritual or Temporal.

The men of ancient times were not builders. They knew nothing of buildings or enclosures. They were, by the vicissitudes of climate, forced to shelter from the weather in dwellings which they built of twigs and branches, animal bones and hide. The passage of time, and experience improved their knowledge and ability, and with the coming of the civilized age, man began to plan, design and build. He raised stately edifices toward the sky, and today the progress of man is indelibly traced in the buildings which he constructed to the good of all mankind.

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, having been requested to do so, has assembled for the purpose of removing the cornerstone of one such edifice, and to restore to the sight of man, those items representative of the period of time at which the building was erected, and which has since been sealed within the cavity beneath the cornerstone.

We are taught that no man should ever engage in any important undertaking without first invoking the Blessing of God. Let us therefore, unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

(The Grand Master calls up all in attendance)

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Almighty and eternal God! We beseech thee to look with favor on this, our undertaking of removing the cornerstone of this building. We recognize in reverence that this cornerstone has withstood the fury of the elements, the violence of man, and the slow but steady ravages of time. May, after all these years, its contents, reveal the memorials placed therein. As this cornerstone has fulfilled its designated assignment - so we pray that when our own assignments on earth are ended, we may be received in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen.

(The Grand Master seats the attendees)

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Secretary, you will read from the Grand

Lodge record, the proceedings of the date on which this cornerstone was laid.

GRAND SECRETARY: Most Worshipful, it is recorded that on the date of _____ 1 _____, the Grand Lodge of California was opened in the Hall of _____ Lodge No. _____ at _____ for the purpose of laying the cornerstone of _____. This ceremony was presided over by Most Worshipful _____, Grand Master.

In the following section the Grand Officers will rise and display the working tool emblematical of their office as they answer the Grand Master.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Deputy Grand Master, what is the jewel of your office, and of what is it emblematical?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: The square, Most Worshipful. It is an emblem of morality and it teaches us well to regulate our every action and to let our conduct be governed by the principals of morality and virtue.

GRAND MASTER: To what important purpose was it used at the laying of this cornerstone?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: Its application offered visible proof that the craftsmen had done their duty, and that the stone was square for the builders to use.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Senior Grand Warden, what is the jewel of your office, and what important lesson does it promulgate?

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: The level, Most Worshipful. It is an emblem of equality and teaches that even though distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination, yet no eminence of station should make us forget that we are all brothers.

GRAND MASTER: To what purpose was it used?

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: Its application illustrated that the stone was laid in a manner creditable to our Ancient Craft.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Junior Grand Warden, what is the jewel of your office, and what important principal does it illustrate?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: The plumb, Most Worshipful. It is an emblem of moral rectitude. It teaches us to avoid all dissimulation and to pursue that honest and upright course in life which will tend to our elevation in the higher realms of immortality.

GRAND MASTER: To what purpose was it applied?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: Its application gave proof that the stone was properly adjusted.

(Grand Officers all replace working tools on the table in front of Grand Master and take their seats.)

GRAND MASTER: Through the ages has this building endured: in fair weather and foul; in good times and bad; in times of war and in times of peace. It has stood in silent tribute to the God given attributes of man's superior intellect. This building represents the combined wisdom of the ages - the mastery of the liberal arts and sciences, and man's unceasing quest for a oneness of God and man. As is the way of all things material, so now must this building too, return to the dust of its origin, having served its purpose well to the people of this community, and redounding to the glory of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

(Grand Stewards rise and remain at seats for Grand Master's instructions)

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Stewards, you will remove the casket from its repository beneath the cornerstone, that the articles therein contained, may once again be restored to the sight of man.

(The Grand Stewards, led by the Grand Marshal, retire to the cornerstone area. They remove the casket and carrying it between them, they are led by the Grand Marshal to the table in front of the Grand Master where they deposit the casket and return to their seats.)

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Treasurer, you will open the casket and remove the articles therein deposited, and after so doing, you will describe those articles so far as you may do so.

(Grand Treasurer removes the already loosened cover of the casket, removes the articles, describing each of them following their removal.)

GRAND TREASURER: Most Worshipful, I have obeyed your order, and the articles now before you are those which were deposited beneath the cornerstone of this building during its erection.

GRAND MASTER: The permanence and durability of the cornerstone, which lasts long after the building in whose foundation it was placed, has fallen into decay and so should remind us that when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall have passed away, we still have within a full foundation of eternal life; a cornerstone of immortality; an emanation from that Divine Spirit which pervades all nature, and which must survive the two, and rise triumphant and eternal above the decaying dust of all the works of man.

With the removal of the cornerstone of this material building, we now consign it to the ages, and we pray that in its place shall rise an edifice which will further demonstrate the good works of man, and to the glory of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

The Grand Master introduces the Grand Orator or some Brother designated by him to give the address of the occasion.

Appropriate music may be introduced here, and if thought desirable a brief word of a appreciation.

(The Grand Master calls up all in attendance)

GRAND MASTER: The Grand Chaplain will now give the benediction, which will conclude the formal ceremony.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: May the blessing of Almighty God, who made the heaven and the earth, and all who dwell therein, be with us all and remain with us, now and forevermore. Amen.

If Grand Lodge was opened for the ceremony, the Brethren informally return to the Lodge hall for closing.

Institution of New Lodges

The Inspector, with approval of the Assistant Grand Lecturer, should see that all details are arranged.

The Grand Master will designate the date for the ceremony, the place in which it will be performed, a brother to give the prayer and a brother to read the dispensation. The latter shall sit at the secretary's table.

The ceremony shall be open to all who desire to attend.

After the Brethren and guests are assembled, the Grand Master enters, escorted by the Master of the new Lodge, and assumes the East.

GRAND MASTER: Brethren: We are gathered for the purpose of formally opening a new Lodge in the city (or town) of _____, to be known as _____ Lodge, U.D., in order that Masons may lawfully assemble therein.

Let us ever remember the passage wherein it is written: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

"It is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments.

"As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore."

Let us pray.

The Grand Master calls up all in attendance.

A DESIGNATED BROTHER: O Thou Great Architect of the Universe! By Thy grace and infinite mercy we are entering upon the performance of a privilege devolving upon us as Masons in instituting this new Lodge to the service of Thee, our Country, and Freemasonry. May it please Thee, O God, so to set a guard over our hearts and lips that no evil thought may have utterance; so guide our minds that no act may be committed other than will reflect credit upon our Craft and glorify Thee, our Supreme Grand Master.

Give to the officers and members of this Lodge moral and physical strength toward the fulfillment of their duties as men and Masons, both within these sacred precincts and without, where men are judged by the lives they lead.

We pray Thee to keep us and bless us, one with the other, that this Lodge, and our great Craft whithersoever dispersed, may be worthy and prosper as the

years pass on toward eternity. Amen.

The Grand Master seats the attendees.

GRAND MASTER: Prior to the year 1717, any number of brethren might assemble at any time, and at any place, for the performance of "work"; and when so assembled were deemed authorized to receive brothers and fellows and to practice the rites of Masonry. The Ancient Charges were the only standard for the regulation of their conduct. Except in Lodges permanently established at particular places, the Master was elected for only the particular meeting over which he was to preside, and his authority terminated with the dissolution of that meeting. All the brethren were amenable to the General Assembly of the Craft held each year, and to that power alone.

With the formation of a Grand Lodge in the city of London in 1717, a regulation was adopted declaring that the privilege of assembling as Masons, theretofore possessed by all the brethren, to be exercised at their pleasure, should be vested in certain Lodges convened in certain places and that, with the exception of four old Lodges then existing, no Lodge thereafter should be convened without a Warrant from the Grand Master with the consent of the Grand Lodge. From that time Warrants of Constitution date their existence.

A Warrant of Constitution, or as we term it, a Charter, in this jurisdiction emanates from the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California; and no Lodge may be constituted as such until it has received its Charter. The Grand Master, however, may issue a Dispensation authorizing and empowering the brethren therein named "to form and open a Lodge after the manner of Free and Accepted Masons, and therein to admit to membership and make Freemasons, according to the ancient custom and not otherwise."

While a Lodge may not be constituted until it has received its Charter, the phrase, "in a just and legally constituted Lodge," refers not only to a Lodge working under a Charter, but likewise to one working under a Dispensation from the Grand Master. So far as the regularity and legality of their "work" is concerned, Lodges under Dispensation and Chartered Lodges have the same standing. There are, however, certain restrictions imposed upon Lodges under Dispensation, and they do not possess all the powers of Chartered Lodges. A Lodge under Dispensation, for instance, is not entitled to representation in the Grand Lodge, although it may send delegates thereto who are admitted to seats and have a voice but no vote; furthermore, it exists subject to the will and pleasure of the Grand Master, who may at any time revoke the authority under which it has theretofore worked.

Our Constitution requires that new Lodges must work a time under Dispensation, as a test of the ability of the officers and brethren to properly perform

the duties incumbent upon them and exhibit satisfactory evidence of Masonic capability.

The authority conferred by a Dispensation continues only until the first day of the month in which the next succeeding Annual Communication is held. At that time, the Dispensation is returned to the Grand Secretary, together with the By-Laws, Book of Records and Returns; and a petition for a Charter may be presented. If, after an examination of its work and proceedings, it appears to the Grand Lodge that the petition should be granted, a Charter is issued and a number assigned to the Lodge; and within ninety days thereafter the Lodge is duly constituted. The petition may be refused without any further order being made and the Lodge ceases to exist; or, a Charter may be refused and the Dispensation continued in force until the next Annual Communication.

Thus, whether the Lodge to be opened this evening will eventually receive a Charter, depends solely upon the manner in which the brethren comprising it discharge the duties and responsibilities devolving upon them. Not only is it required that they shall in all things conform to certain rules and regulations, but it is likewise essential that they shall observe the spirit no less than the letter of the law.

It is, I trust, understood that there must be no departure from the esoteric work adopted by the Grand Lodge, and taught by the Grand Lecturer. This duty devolves upon the officers of the Lodge, and a petition would be denied if, upon examination, it should appear that the Master and his officers were not competent to confer the degrees of Masonry in accordance with the ritual.

There is, however, a further responsibility, which the brethren share with the officers of the Lodge. Upon each member of the Lodge devolves the duty of guarding its portals. The members of a Lodge working under a Dispensation should be particularly careful that a searching inquiry be made into the character and standing of those who present applications.

It too frequently happens that the organization of a new Lodge is hailed as an opportunity to obtain fellowship with us by some to whom it has theretofore been denied; and by others who have feared to seek it. They presume on the perhaps natural desire of the brethren of the new Lodge to increase the membership; and it is unfortunately true that the mistaken idea that numbers indicate success sometimes causes the brethren of a new Lodge to disregard the fundamentals upon which the membership of the Fraternity is recruited.

I hope I need not remind you that Masonry solicits no man for membership; he must come to us of his own free will and accord, soliciting the favor which we confer upon those whom we accept as members.

A member of a Masonic Lodge is not justified in giving his recommendation

to one who has signified a desire for the degrees of Masonry merely because he knows nothing detrimental to his character. More than this is required. He should refuse to recommend any man for the degrees of Masonry unless he has strong reasons to believe that the applicant will ultimately reflect honor on our Ancient Institution.

The Masonic capabilities of a Lodge working under Dispensation will be determined no less by the character of its members than by the character of its work. As the strength of a chain is tested by its weakest link, so the standard of a Masonic Lodge is set by its least desirable member.

However excellent might have been the work performed by the officers, and however exact had been the compliance with the rules and regulations, a Charter would not issue to a Lodge which had shown itself careless of its honor and reputation, so unmindful of its obligations, as to admit one not worthy and well qualified.

It is believed that those who have been instrumental in forming this new Lodge are not only conversant with their duties and responsibilities, but willing and eager to faithfully discharge them; accordingly a Dispensation has been issued to them, which will now be read by Brother _____.

The brother designated reads the dispensation, and following it the names of the Master and Wardens. As the names of the Master and Wardens are read, they form a line west of the Altar facing the East, with the Master at the north of the line.

GRAND MASTER: Brethren: You have been selected as officers to serve this Lodge while it continues under Dispensation. It is assumed that you are conversant with the duties of your respective stations. I deem it proper, however, not merely for your benefit but as well for the benefit of all here assembled, to call your attention to certain of those Ancient Charges and Regulations to which I have referred. In the ceremony provided for the installation of officers it is said they point out the duties of the Master of a Lodge; and before the Master can be installed his assent to them must be freely given. With two exceptions, they likewise express the obligations every individual Mason assumes upon his initiation into the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons. They are as follows:

I. You agree to be a good man and true, and strictly to obey the moral law.

II. You agree to be a peaceable citizen, and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which you reside.

III. You promise not to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against government, but patiently to submit to the decision of the supreme Legislature.

IV. You agree to pay a proper respect to the civil magistrate, to work diligently, live creditably, and act honorably by all men.

V. You agree to hold in veneration the original rulers and patrons of the Order of Masonry, and their regular successors, supreme and subordinate, according to their stations; and to submit to the awards and resolutions of your Brethren, when convened, in every case consistent with the Constitutions of the Order.

VI. You agree to avoid private piques and quarrels, and to guard against intemperance and excess.

VII. You agree to be cautious in carriage and behavior, courteous to your Brethren, and faithful to your Lodge.

VIII. You promise to respect genuine Brethren and to discountenance impostors and all dissenters from the original plan of Masonry.

IX. You agree to promote the general good of society, to cultivate the social virtues and to propagate the knowledge of the Art.

X. You promise to pay homage to the Grand Master for the time being, and to his officers when duly installed; and strictly to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge or General Assembly of Masons, that is not subversive of the principles and groundwork of Masonry.

XI. You admit that it is not in the power of any man or body of men to make innovations in the body of Masonry.

XII. You promise a regular attendance on the committees and communications of the Grand Lodge, on receiving proper notice, and to pay attention to all the duties of Masonry on convenient occasions.

XIII. You admit that no new Lodge should be formed without permission of the Grand Lodge; and that no countenance should be given to any irregular Lodge, or to any person clandestinely initiated therein, - being contrary to the ancient charges of the Order.

XIV. You admit that no person can be regularly made a Mason in, or admitted a member of, any regular Lodge, without previous notice, and due inquiry into his character.

XV. You agree that no visitors shall be received into your Lodge without due examination, and producing proper vouchers of their having been initiated in a regular Lodge.

As a Master at his installation is asked, I now ask each of you: Do you here, in the presence of your brethren, submit to these charges and promise to support these regulations? (Each answers in the affirmative.) You will then approach the East, receive your jewels and repair to your respective stations.

The officers proceed to the East, in a single column, receive their jewels, repair to their stations, put on their jewels and are seated as the Senior Warden sits down. The Master is at the left of the Grand Master and remains standing until the close of the ceremony.

GRAND MASTER: Worshipful Sir, the superintendence and government of the brethren who are to compose this new Lodge have been committed to your care. You should be mindful of the obligations which devolve upon you as their head and of your responsibility for the faithful discharge of the important duties appertaining to your appointment. Remember that the honor, reputation, and usefulness of your Lodge will materially depend upon the skill and assiduity with which you manage its concerns, and that the happiness of its members will be generally promoted in proportion to the watchful care with which you cherish the genuine principles of our Institution.

For a pattern of imitation, consider the great luminary of nature, which, rising in the East, regularly diffuses light and luster to all within its circle. In like manner, it is your province to spread and communicate light and instruction to the Brethren of your Lodge. Forcibly impress upon them the dignity and high importance of Masonry; and seriously admonish them never to disgrace it. Charge them to practice out of the Lodge those duties which they have been taught in it; and by amiable, discreet and virtuous conduct, to convince mankind of the goodness of this Institution; so that, when a person is said to be a member of it, the world may know that he is one to whom the burdened heart may pour out its sorrows; one to whom distress may prefer its suit; one whose hand is guided by justice, and whose heart is expanded by benevolence. In short, by a diligent observance of the By-Laws of your Lodge, the Constitutions of Masonry, and, above all, the Holy Scriptures, which are given as the rule and guide of your faith, you will be enabled to acquit yourself with the highest honors here and lay up a crown of rejoicing which shall continue when time shall be no more.

Brothers Senior and Junior Warden: You are too well acquainted with the principles of Masonry to warrant any distrust that you will be found wanting in the discharge of your respective duties. Suffice it to say, that what you have seen praiseworthy in others, you should carefully imitate; and what in them may have appeared defective, you should yourselves avoid. You should be examples of discretion and propriety; for it is only by a due regard for our laws and regulations as shown in your own conduct, that you can expect obedience to them from others. You are assiduously to assist the Master in the discharge of his trust; diffusing light and imparting knowledge to all whom he shall place under your care.

In the absence of the Master you will succeed to higher duties; your acquirements must therefore be such as will insure proper instruction to the Craft. From the spirit which you have hitherto evinced, I entertain no doubt that your future conduct will be such as will merit the applause of your Brethren, and the testimony of a good conscience.

Brethren of _____ Lodge only (gavel):

(Brethren of the new Lodge rise.)

You are now being congregated and formed into a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons which, until the next Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, is to be continued in existence subject to the will and pleasure of the Grand Master. As I have already indicated to you, whether the Lodge now being formed will receive a Charter depends solely upon yourselves.

Such is the nature of our Constitution, that as some must, of necessity, rule and teach, so must others, of course, learn to submit and obey. Humility in both is an essential duty. The officers who have been chosen to govern your Lodge are sufficiently conversant with the rules of propriety and the laws of the Institution to avoid exceeding the power with which they are entrusted; and you are of too generous disposition to envy their preferment. I therefore trust that you will have but one aim, to prove yourselves worthy of the confidence reposed in you, so that you may in due time receive your Charter.

The Grand Master calls up all in attendance.

And now, by the authority in me vested by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, I proclaim the brethren named in the Dispensation congregated into, authorized, and empowered to open and hold, a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons to be known and designated as _____ Lodge, U.D.

The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift upon thee the light of His countenance and give thee peace! Amen.

Worshipful Sir: The Brethren are now authorized to assemble as a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. Upon their recommendation you have been appointed to be their first Master. You are now empowered to open your Lodge. The emblem of your power is the gavel. In the hands of the Master, it may be made the instrument of great good, or of greater evil. With it the Master governs his Lodge; and the welfare and prosperity of this new Lodge materially depend upon its judicious use. In your hands, I am confident, it will be wielded for the best interests of your Brethren. You are now formally empowered to open your Lodge in due and

ancient form at an appropriate time in the near future, having given due notice thereof to your Brethren.

The Master puts on his hat, seats the brethren and remains standing.

He may express his appreciation to the Grand Master, but all other remarks should be deferred.

The Master fills the various places, appointing the Treasurer, Secretary and other officers. As the Master announces each appointment, the brother designated approaches the East, receives his jewel and repairs to his proper place; he remains standing until all have been appointed and reached their respective places. The Master sounds his gavel to seat these officers. The gavel is the cue for the officers to put on their collars and jewels.

When the Lodge is subsequently opened, the Master orders the Secretary to enter upon his record book the minutes of the several preliminary meetings held for the establishment of the Lodge and the various official documents connected therewith.

The uniform By-Laws should be adopted upon motion, and the Master should order a copy to be forwarded to the Grand Secretary for the approval of the Grand Master.

The Lodge may proceed with the transaction of any other business properly before it.

When concluded, the Lodge must be closed in due form.

Constitution of Newly Chartered Lodges

The Inspector, with the approval of the Assistant Grand Lecturer, should see that all details are arranged.

The Grand Master will decide whether to open Grand Lodge and if it is opened, it can either be called down to refreshment or closed prior to inviting the public to observe this ceremony.

The Lodge room is prepared to accommodate the seating of the Grand Lodge Officers. A small table is placed directly east of the Alter upon which the emblem, vessels and candles are placed.

The emblem should be a light wooden box, 1 foot high, by 2 feet wide, by 3 feet long, and covered with a white cloth. Three candles should be placed upon the emblem, in triangular form. Upon the emblem and also in triangular form, are placed a golden vessel containing Corn, at the apex, a silver vessel containing Wine, on the north side, and a silver vessel containing Oil, on the south side of the triangle, and a silver tray (vessels should not be placed upon tray). A linen spread or other cloth should cover the emblem and vessels.

The officers of the Lodge about to be constituted are seated in the first row of seats on the northeast of the Lodge in rank, the Master nearest the East. They wear the jewels and aprons of their offices. The members of the Lodge about to be constituted are seated directly behind the officers of the Lodge.

The Assistant Grand Lecturer is responsible for assuring all Grand Lodge stations are filled. The Grand Officers form outside the Lodge room and enter in the same manner as they enter at Annual Communication:

Grand Marshal	
Grand Master	Deputy Grand Master
Senior Grand Warden	Junior Grand Warden
Grand Treasurer	Grand Secretary
Grand Lecturer	Grand Chaplain
Assistant Grand Lecturer	Assistant Grand Lecturer
Assistant Grand Lecturer	Assistant Grand Lecturer
Grand Orator	Assistant Grand Secretary
Grand Standard Bearer	Grand Bible Bearer
Senior Grand Deacon	Junior Grand Deacon
Senior Grand Steward	Junior Grand Steward
Grand Sword Bearer	Grand Pursuivant
Assistant Grand Organist	Assistant Grand Tiler

Grand Tiler

(The Flag is presented.)

The Master of the Lodge about to be constituted rises to address the Grand Master, but does not approach the East.

MASTER: Most Worshipful: Upon the request of a number of brethren, the Grand Master of Masons in California was pleased to grant them a letter of dispensation, bearing date the _____ day of _____, authorizing them to form and open a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in the city (or town) of _____. Since that time they have regularly assembled and have conducted the business of Masonry according to the best of their abilities. Their proceedings have been examined by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, and having been approved, a Charter has been granted to them. The brethren are now desirous that their Lodge should be consecrated in accordance with the ancient usages and customs of the Craft. In behalf of my brethren, I now respectfully request that you perform that important duty. (He sits down.)

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Secretary: You will read the Charter.

Grand Secretary reads Charter.

GRAND MASTER: Worshipful Master and Brethren: We accept with pleasure the important and interesting duty which you have requested. In doing so, permit us to express to you our hearty congratulations upon this happy occasion. The establishment of a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in any community is an event of vital and far-reaching importance. It indicates a desire upon the part of its members to cultivate and practice the noble attributes of brotherly love, relief and truth. It means the inculcation of all those sentiments which constitute a higher morality and a nobler manhood. It contemplates the encouragement of all the virtues which elevate and ennoble man; making better husbands, better fathers, better sons and brothers, better citizens, a better and more prosperous community. Trusting that you appreciate the import of this occasion, we shall cheerfully comply with your desire.

The Grand Master rises.

In accordance with the teachings of our Institution, it is our duty, before entering upon any great or important undertaking, to invoke the aid and blessing of God. We shall, therefore, reverently unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

The Grand Master calls up all in attendance.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Supreme Grand Master! Great Architect and Ruler of the Universe! We would reverently invoke Thy blessing at this time. Grant us Thine aid in our present undertaking, that all we may do shall be done with an eye single to Thy service and to the good of our Fraternity. Bless the brethren of the Lodge now about to be constituted; impress them with a proper comprehension of their duty to Thee, and to one another. May this Lodge become a means of lasting good in this community; may its members be continually guided by the unerring counsels which Thou hast given them in the great book of nature and revelation. Make them faithful to the obligations which they have assumed. Bless and prosper them in all their interests. Bless and prosper our beloved Order. Lengthen its cords and strengthen its endeavors for ourselves and our fellowmen; and to Thee we shall ascribe all honor and glory. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone, and is seated.

GRAND MASTER: Brethren of _____ Lodge, No. _____, we shall now proceed, according to ancient usage, to constitute you into a regular Lodge. Brother Grand Marshal, you will present the brother who has been designated in the Charter to be the Master of the Lodge.

The Grand Marshal conducts the Master to the East, facing the Grand Master.

GRAND MARSHAL: Most Worshipful, I take pleasure in presenting to you Brother _____, who has been designated in the Charter to be the Master of this Lodge.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Marshal, you will severally present the Senior and Junior Wardens.

The Grand Marshal conducts the Senior Warden to the East, north of the Master and facing the Grand Master.

GRAND MARSHAL: Most Worshipful, I take pleasure in presenting to you Brother _____, who has been designated in the Charter to be the Senior Warden of this Lodge.

The Grand Marshal conducts the Junior Warden to the East, south of the Master and facing the Grand Master.

GRAND MARSHAL: Most Worshipful, I take pleasure in presenting to you Brother _____, who has been designated in the Charter to be the Junior Warden of this Lodge.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Marshal, you will prepare the emblem and conduct the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior and the Junior Grand Wardens, the Grand Lecturer and the Grand Chaplain to their respective places around the

emblem and cause the Master and Wardens to face the West.

The Grand Marshal lights the candles and uncovers the emblem. He then conducts the Grand Chaplain to the Altar, the Grand Lecturer northeast of the emblem, the Junior Grand Warden southwest of the Altar, the Senior Grand Warden northwest of the Altar, the Deputy Grand Master southeast of the emblem and the Grand Master to the center and east of the emblem. The Master and Wardens face west. The Grand Marshal returns to his seat.

The Grand Master calls up all in attendance.

(The Grand Master leaves hat at his station.)

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Great Architect of the Universe! Maker and Ruler of all worlds! Deign from Thy celestial temple, from realms of light and glory, to bless us in all the purposes of our present assembly. We humbly invoke Thee to give us Wisdom in all our doings, Strength of mind in all our difficulties and the Beauty of harmony in all our communications. Permit us, O Thou Author of Light and Life! Great Source of Love and Happiness! to solemnly consecrate this Lodge to Thy honor and glory. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it.

And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein, and shall hallow it, and all the vessels thereof; and it shall be holy. I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn and thy wine and thine oil. The first fruit, also, of thy corn, of thy wine and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.

And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.

GRAND MASTER: This golden vessel contains grain, referred to in the Scriptures as the corn of nourishment.

The Grand Master pours the Corn upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: Honor be to God on high!

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.**

GRAND MASTER: **This silver vessel contains the wine of refreshment.**

The Grand Master pours the Wine upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: **Glory be to God on high!**

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.**

GRAND MASTER: **This vessel contains the oil of joy.**

The Grand Master pours the Oil upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: **We do solemnly consecrate this Lodge to the honor and glory of God!**

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.**

The Grand Master calls up all in attendance.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: **Grant, O Lord, our God, that those who are now about to be invested with the government of this Lodge may be endued with wisdom to instruct their brethren in all their duties. May Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth always prevail among the members of this Lodge; may this bond of union continue to strengthen the Lodges throughout the world. Bless all our brethren whithersoever dispersed; and grant speedy relief to all who are oppressed or distressed. We commend to Thee the members of this Lodge and of this great Fraternity. May they increase in grace, in the knowledge of Thee, and in love for one another. Finally, may we finish our work here below to Thy satisfaction, and have a blessed transition from this earthly abode to Thy heavenly temple above, there to enjoy light and life eternal. Amen.**

The Grand Master stretches forth his hands over the emblem.

GRAND MASTER: **To the memory of the Holy Saints John we dedicate this Lodge. May all who gather here revere their character and imitate their virtues.**

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.**

GRAND MASTER: **The Grand Officers will return to their stations; the officers of the Lodge will face the East.**

GRAND MASTER: In the name of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, I now constitute and form you, my beloved brethren, into a regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. Henceforth, you are empowered to meet as a regular Lodge, constituted in conformity with the rites of our Order and in accordance with the charges of our ancient and honorable Fraternity. May the Great Architect of the Universe prosper, direct and counsel you in all your doings.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Marshal, You will cover the emblem and make proclamation.

The Grand Marshal covers the emblems, extinguishes the candles and goes to the Altar to make proclamation.

GRAND MARSHAL: By order of the Grand Master, I now proclaim that _____ Lodge, No. _____ has been duly consecrated and dedicated.

The Grand Master seats everyone and the Master and Wardens of the Lodge return to their seats in the northeast.

Any additional program is under the direction of the Grand Master, after which the Grand Lodge is closed, if it was at refreshment.

PRESENTATION OF 50-YEAR (OR OTHER) AWARDS ON BEHALF OF OTHER MASONIC JURISDICTIONS

MASTER: Brethren and friends. On behalf of the Masonic Grand Lodge of _____, we have been asked to present a Fifty Year Award (or Other Award) to a brother who is celebrating Fifty Years (or other) as a Master Mason. This honor is presented only to a select few who have reached this point in time by their own volition, and at the will and pleasure of our Great Creator.

In a few moments we will have the pleasure of bestowing upon him a visible token of love and appreciation of the Craft. However, in accordance with the teachings of our Institution, let us first invoke the blessing of God.

CHAPLAIN: Supreme Grand Master, Ruler of Heaven and Earth! We thank Thee for the many years which Thou hast granted to our Brother. We thank Thee for life, for health and strength, and for the daily provisions of Thy Providence. Grant to our Brother many additional years of life. Be ever near to him, sustaining and comforting him as he travels the rough and rugged road. Lead him also in Thy ways, that he may have happiness and friendship all the days of his life. Amen.

RESPONSE: So Mote It Be!

MASTER: Brother _____ was initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason on _____ in _____ Lodge No. _____, passed to the degree of Fellow Craft on _____ and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on _____. He is now a member of _____ Lodge No. _____.

Brother Marshal, you will conduct Brother _____ to the East.

Marshal conducts Brother to the East.

MASTER: Brother _____, in recognition that you have been a Master Mason for fifty years, and at the request of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of _____, I am honored and privileged to present to you this visible token of the Fraternal love and appreciation of your Brethren.

This token is but a small indication of the esteem in which you are held, and the affection with which you are regarded. It will remind you of that more important Badge of a Mason, with which you were once presented so long ago.

That Badge is emblematical of that purity of life and conduct which should be displayed by Masons whithersoever dispersed. It is a badge of merit and distinction, a badge which you have worthily worn for half a century or more (or other).

**All Masons will please rise. Brethren, please join me in according to Brother
_____ the Public Grand Honors of Masonry by Three Times Three.
Together Brethren!**

**Brother _____, do you have any remarks to share with us at this
time?**

Brother may make remarks.

MASTER: Thank you, my Brother. Please take a seat in the East.

Presentation of 50-Year Pins (Golden Veterans Award)

Because of the large number of veteran awards presented each year, it is impracticable for the Grand Master, or other Principal Officers of the Grand Lodge, to make all of the presentations. However, the importance of the occasion to the recipient should cause care to be exercised in selecting the person who is to make the presentation and in planning the program. Presentation by the Inspector is recommended. If, because of the infirmities of age or otherwise, the recipient cannot attend a Lodge meeting, the presentation may be made at his home in the presence of his family and friends.

The District Inspector will provide the Lodge a biographical sketch form which is to be filled out from information given by the Brother or a member of his family. Part of this information may be used as material for a newspaper article. This completed sketch form must be returned to the Inspector at least 2 weeks before date of award presentation. Necessarily, the material on this form will have to be placed in readable form, and not read directly from the questionnaire. This Biographical material will be delivered at the designated place in the ceremony by the Inspector or the Secretary or the person who has been designated to make the presentation.

It is suggested that these presentations be made at dinner meetings preceding regular Lodge meetings, or in open Lodge, in order that the family and friends of the recipient may be present. It is also suggested that the actual pinning of the button be done by the recipient's wife, daughter, son, granddaughter, grandson or some close friend.

The use of appropriate music is suggested.

The event should be publicized well in advance of the ceremony through the use of trestleboards, meeting cards and the local press.

At an appropriate juncture the person who is to make the presentation (designated herein as the Master) shall begin as follows:

MASTER: Brethren and friends. It has been a custom of the Grand Lodge of California to present to those brothers who have attained a minimum of 50 years of membership in good standing, the Golden Veterans Award. This honor is presented only to the select few who have reached this point in time by their own volition, and at the will and pleasure of our Great Creator.

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California has noted with gratification that Brother _____ has been a member of a regular Lodge of Masons for 50 years; at this time, we shall have the pleasure and privilege of bestowing upon him a visible token of our Fraternal love and appreciation.

In accordance with the teachings of our Institution, let us first invoke the

blessing of God.

(The Master calls up everyone.)

CHAPLAIN: Supreme Grand Master, Ruler of Heaven and Earth! We thank Thee for the many years which Thou has granted to our Brother. We thank Thee for life, health and strength, and daily provisions of Thy providence. Grant to our Brother many additional years of life. Be ever near to him, sustain and comfort him. Lead him in Thy ways, that he may have happiness and friendship all the days of his life. Amen.

(The Master seats everyone.)

Brother _____ was initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason on _____ in _____ Lodge, No. _____, passed to the degree of Fellow Craft on _____, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on _____. He is now a member of _____ Lodge, No. _____.

(Here his Masonic history will be given)

MASTER: Brother Marshal, you will conduct Brother _____ to the East.

(The Marshal goes to the Brother and escorts him to an appropriate point between the Altar and the East.)

MASTER: Brother _____, in recognition of your having been a member of a regular Lodge of Master Masons for more than half a century, and by direction of our Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, I am honored and privileged to present to you this visible token of the fraternal love and appreciation of your Brethren.

(Hold pin for all to see.)

This Golden Veterans Award is but a small token of the esteem in which you are held and the affection with which you are regarded. The gold in this pin is used to signify 50 years of membership. The blue face alludes to a righteous conduct, as limitless as the vast expanse of the sky, which is so necessary to maintain that membership. The square and compass and the letter “G” etched on its face, are recognized as an emblem or insignia of our Masonic Fraternity.

(Attach pin to lapel.)

It is emblematical of that purity of life and conduct which should be displayed by Masons whithersoever dispersed. It is a badge of merit and distinction

which will cause your Brethren to recognize you as one who has long been devoted to the ideals of this Institution. This beautiful pin, we know, will be worn with pride. We sincerely hope that you will wear it with pleasure and honor to yourself and to the Fraternity.

(At this point the information contained in the biographical sketch referred to in the instructions, except for recipient's Masonic history, should be utilized as follows:

The recipient may be escorted once around the Lodge room by the Master, stopping at various points while his complete biography is read or recited by the Master or Secretary, concluding with recipient standing where he stood when button was affixed to his lapel. Master then returns to his station and says:)

MASTER: Brother Marshal, you will escort Brother _____ to a seat in the East.

(As an alternative procedure, the biography may be given while the recipient is seated in the East. If recipient is to be seated in the East while biographical sketch is being given, Master returns to his station after stating "..... We sincerely hope that you will wear it with pleasure and honor to yourself and to the Fraternity," and says:)

MASTER: Brother Marshal, you will escort Brother _____ to a seat in the East.

(Biographical sketch is then given.)

(For either procedure, Master then continues as follows:)

(Master sounds gavel for all Masons to rise.)

MASTER: Brethren: You will join with me in saluting our Brother by the battery of three times three.

(Master seats the Brethren.)

(At this point the recipient may be called on to speak, if asked previous to the ceremony to do so, after which the Master may invite those in attendance to personally congratulate the recipient.)

NOTE: If award is to be presented in a place other than the Lodge room, improvisation of floor work will be required.

Presentation of 75-Year Pins

General Instructions

The advanced age of most Seventy-five year Masons will require that the ceremony be conducted in the recipients home. All arrangements should be made with the family well in advance of the ceremony. Care should be exercised not to inconvenience the Brother and his family by an overly large attendance or ill timing.

A complete biography of the recipients life should be obtained from some member of the family or close friend. This should be done sufficiently in advance of the ceremony that the Grand Master may become familiar with it.

The recipient will remain seated throughout the entire ceremony, and provision should be made for the Grand Master and Chaplain to be seated on either side of him.

The Grand Master should stand as he makes the presentation.

GRAND MASTER: On this happy and important occasion, as we meet to honor 75 years of devotion to the Masonic Fraternity, we may seriously reflect upon those years - fraught with kindly reminders of diligence in duty; liberal benevolence and diffuse charity, but above all, 75 years of constancy and fidelity to the ideals of our ancient and honorable Fraternity.

It may interest you to know that since the institution of the Seventy-five year Veterans award, only a very few such presentations have been made by our Grand Lodge. For this reason we feel an extra measure of pride at being privileged to participate in this presentation ceremony.

Realizing then, and trusting that you all comprehend and appreciate the great import of this occasion, we shall now most cheerfully proceed with this very pleasant duty.

It is written: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the Heaven. A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance." The Supreme Architect of the Universe has seen fit to grant us this time in which to pay special tribute to Brother _____ who has been a member of a regular Lodge of Masons for 75 years, and we are most pleased to present this Veterans award to our Brother as material evidence of our admiration and warm Fraternal love.

The first duty of Masons is to God; let us therefore, unite with our Chaplain in an address to the throne of Grace.

(Grand Master will ask all present to please rise.)

CHAPLAIN: Supreme Architect of the Universe, our Father and our God; Thy Prophet hath said, "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." Thou has given such renewed strength to our Brother making possible his seventy-fifth anniversary in Freemasonry. For this accept our sincerest gratitude. Continue now to bless him with the presence of Thy Spirit. Grant him the deepest joy and friendship in the years before him; may he continue his usefulness with honor to himself and to our beloved Fraternity. Amen.

(Grand Master seats all present.)

GRAND MASTER: Brother _____ was initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason on _____ in _____ Lodge No. _____, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft on _____, and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason on _____. He is now a member of _____ Lodge No. _____.

Here may be added any other Masonic honors and offices which the Brother may have held. If music is available, the hymn, "Faith of our Fathers" is appropriate, or some favorite of the Honoree.

GRAND MASTER: It is said that with knowledge comes understanding and with understanding comes love. In order that we may all have a better understanding of our Brother's life, it will now be my pleasure to share with you a biography, or brief history of the past _____ years in the life of Brother _____.

Here, the Grand Master will utilize the biographical material which has been previously obtained.

GRAND MASTER: Brother _____, on behalf of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, I am pleased to acknowledge that you have been a member of a regular Lodge of Masons for three quarters of a century, and it is now my pleasure and privilege to present to you, not only its expressed good wishes, but also a material evidence of the respect and admiration of your Brethren.

Grand Master should bend and place pin on recipients lapel.

This button is especially significant of your many years in Masonry. The gold of which it is cast is sufficiently significant of that purity which marks the life and conduct of all Masons, and prominently displayed upon its face is a diamond; one of man's most precious gifts; fired in nature's cauldron of time, it is emblematic of long life and perseverance.

In addition to its intrinsic beauty, it will serve as a constant reminder that

you are deeply loved and greatly appreciated by all Masons. Let it be not supposed that you have here labored in vain, nor spent your strength for naught, for your work is with the Lord and your recompense with your God.

GRAND MASTER: This concludes the formal presentation. All present may now come forward and congratulate Brother _____.

(NOTE: Should the presentation be made within a Lodge room, the public Grand Honors may be given at the direction of the Grand Master just before congratulations.)

Dedication of Masonic Halls

The Inspector, with the approval of the Assistant Grand Lecturer, should see that all details are arranged.

This may be either a tiled or public ceremony. If it is to be a public ceremony Grand Lodge will be at refreshment during the ceremony. The preparation of the hall and other preliminaries shall be carried out in the same manner as prescribed in the ceremony of constituting a newly chartered Lodge. The Principal Architect is present with the working tools.

Grand Lodge is opened.

(The Flag is presented)

The Master of the Lodge rises, but does not approach the East.

MASTER: Most Worshipful: The brethren of _____ Lodge, No. _____, animated with a desire to promote the honor and the interest of the Craft, have erected and furnished this hall for their convenience and accommodation. If it meets with your approval, they are desirous that it be dedicated according to ancient form and usage.

GRAND MASTER: Worshipful Master and Brethren: The building has our unqualified approval and it gives us great pleasure to comply with the request of the brethren and to discharge the important and interesting duty which devolves upon us. I express to the brethren our hearty appreciation of the enterprising spirit which has actuated them in the erection of this structure, an edifice which is not only a credit to the Fraternity but an ornament to this city.

The Grand Master rises.

In accordance with the teachings of our Institution, it is our duty, before entering upon any great or important undertaking, to invoke the aid and blessing of God. We shall, therefore, reverently unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Supreme Grand Master! Source of light and love! Enable us to properly comprehend and practice the precepts of this sublime Institution. Give us strength to overcome temptation, to subdue our passions, and to practice virtue. Fill our hearts with reverence for Thee and with love for our fellow men. Make us faithful to our friends and charitable to our opponents. Dispose our hearts to receive light and truth from Thee, that our steps may be directed in the paths of virtue. Enable us to prove to mankind by our actions that

our lives are sincerely dedicated to Thee, and to the relief and well-being of our fellow creatures. And when our pilgrimage of life is ended, receive us into that sublime and eternal Lodge where Thou dost forever preside. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

GRAND MASTER: We read in the Holy Writings that when all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished, he assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel; and then the house which was erected to God was dedicated to His Holy Name.

We have gathered in imitation of the children of Israel to dedicate this building to Freemasonry, Virtue and Universal Benevolence, thus perpetuating the custom which has come down to us from time immemorial.

Among the ancients, every temple, altar and statue was dedicated to some divinity. The Hebrews extended this ceremony even to their private houses; and it was a custom in Israel to dedicate a new house to God with prayer, praise and thanksgiving. This was done in order to secure the Divine presence and blessing; for it was believed that no pious or sensible man would expect to dwell safely in a house which was not under the immediate protection of God. A distinction, however, was made between consecration and dedication; for sacred things were both consecrated and dedicated, while profane things, such as private dwelling houses, were only dedicated. This distinction has been observed among other nations, many of whom consecrated their churches to the worship of God, but dedicated them to, or placed them under, the especial patronage of some particular saint.

You will remember that a similar practice prevails in our Institution; and that while we consecrate our Lodges to the honor and glory of God, we dedicate them to the memory of the Holy Saints John; and the building itself is dedicated to Freemasonry, Virtue and Universal Benevolence.

You may be interested in knowing that this is the form of dedication of the first Masonic hall of which we have authentic information. The ceremony of that first dedication, in 1774, was in all its essentials identical with that which will be performed today. To those unmindful of its symbolism, it will be nothing but an unmeaning form; but in truth and fact the ceremony is fraught with significance.

In devoting anything to religious purposes, the anointing with oil was considered by the ancient Hebrews as a necessary part of the ceremony. The tabernacle in the wilderness, and all its holy vessels, were, it is said, by God's express command, anointed with oil. Masonic halls are dedicated to the sacred purposes for which they were built by strewing corn, wine and oil upon the emblem.

The corn alone is carried in a golden pitcher, the wine and oil being contained in silver vessels. It is to remind us that the first, as a necessity and the staff of life, is of more importance and more worthy of honor than the others, which are but comforts.

These should also remind us of our duty to share our bread with the hungry, cheer the sorrowful and pour the healing oil of consolation into the wounds which sickness has made in the bodies or affliction has rent in the hearts of our fellow men.

The Grand Master is seated.

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT: Most Worshipful: Having to the best of my ability accomplished the task assigned me, I now beg to return to you the implements committed to my care when the cornerstone of this structure was laid, humbly hoping that the result will be crowned with approbation.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Principal Architect, you and those who worked upon this building are to be commended for having kept in mind the purposes for which it is to be used, and for having erected an edifice which is an ornament to this city. The skill and ability displayed receive our entire approbation; and it is our hope that his edifice may continue as a lasting monument to the genius of our Institution.

Brother Grand Marshal: You will prepare the emblem and conduct the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior and Junior Grand Wardens, the Grand Lecturer and the Grand Chaplain to their respective places around the emblem.

The Grand Marshal lights the candles, uncovers the emblem and conducts the officers to their proper places in the same manner as prescribed in the ceremony of constituting a newly chartered Lodge.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

(The Grand Master leaves hat at his station.)

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Great Architect of the Universe! Maker and Ruler of all worlds. Deign from Thy celestial temple, from realms of light and glory, to bless us in all the purposes of our present assembly. We humbly implore Thee to give us at this, and at all times, Wisdom in all our doings, Strength of mind in all our difficulties, and the Beauty of harmony in all our undertakings. Permit us to dedicate this Hall to Freemasonry, Virtue and Universal Benevolence; and to consecrate our lives to Thy service. Amen.

GRAND MASTER: Glory be to God on high; on earth peace, good will to men.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: And Solomon determined to build a house for the name of the Lord, and a house for His kingdom.

And Solomon told out three-score and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and four-score thousand to hew in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.

And Solomon sent to Hiram, the King of Tyre, saying: As thou didst deal with David, my father, and didst send him cedars to build him a house to dwell therein, even so deal with me.

Behold, I build a house to the name of the Lord, my God, to dedicate it to Him, and to burn before Him sweet incense.

Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign. Also, he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.

And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished.

The Deputy Grand Master advances, takes the Vessel of Corn, and presents it in conjunction with the following:

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: Most Worshipful: Corn, the emblem of nourishment, has been used from time immemorial in the dedication of Masonic halls. I, therefore, present to you the Vessel of Corn, to be employed by you according to ancient usage.

The Grand Master pours the Corn upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: In the name of the Great Jehovah, to whom be all honor and glory, I do solemnly dedicate this Hall to Freemasonry.

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel.

And he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands; and said:

Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let Thy word be verified, which Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant David.

Have respect, therefore, to the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord, my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee:

That Thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof Thou hast said that Thou wouldest put Thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant prayeth toward this place.

Hearken, therefore, unto the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place; hear Thou from Thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when Thou hearest, forgive.

The Senior Grand Warden advances and presents the Vessel of Wine.

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: Most Worshipful: Wine, the emblem of refreshment, having been used by our ancient brethren in the ceremonies of dedication and consecration, I present to you this Vessel of Wine, to be used by you according to ancient Masonic form.

The Grand Master pours the Wine upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: In the name of the Holy Saints John, I do solemnly dedicate this Hall to Virtue.

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

And the priests could not enter unto the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.

And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying: For He

is good; for His mercy endureth forever.

The Junior Grand Warden advances and presents the Vessel of Oil.

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: Most Worshipful: I present to you, to be used according to ancient custom, this Vessel of Oil, an emblem of that joy which should animate every bosom on the completion of any important undertaking.

The Grand Master pours the Oil upon the tray.

GRAND MASTER: In the name of the whole Fraternity, I do solemnly dedicate this Hall to Universal Benevolence.

GRAND OFFICERS (around the emblem): As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be! Amen.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: And may the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, bless the brethren here assembled, in all their lawful undertakings, and grant to every one of them, in needful supply, the Corn of Nourishment, the Wine of Refreshment, and the Oil of Joy. Amen.

GRAND MASTER: The Grand Officers will return to their stations and places.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Marshal: You will cover the emblem and make proclamation.

The Grand Marshal covers the emblem, extinguishes the candles and then goes to the Altar to make proclamation.

GRAND MARSHAL: By order of the Grand Master, I now proclaim the Hall in which we are assembled to be dedicated in due and ancient form.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

Address by the Grand Master, or some brother appointed by him for that purpose.

The Grand Lodge is closed.

Lodge Anniversary and Dedication Ceremony

The Inspector, with the approval of the Assistant Grand Lecturer, should see that all details are arranged.

The request and existence of the framed Anniversary document, from Grand Lodge, should be in the Lodge's possession two weeks prior to the event.

GRAND MASTER: Brethren and Friends: Today, your Grand Master, together with Grand Lodge Officers, the Master, Wardens, Brethren and friends of _____ Lodge No. _____, have met for the purpose of celebrating the _____ Anniversary of this Lodge.

In _____, a number of Brethren assembled with a vision of forming a new Lodge, a Lodge that would be a means of lasting good in this community.

In accordance with the teachings of our institution, it is our duty before entering upon any great or important undertaking, to invoke the aid and blessing of God. We shall, therefore, reverently unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

The Grand Master asks everyone to rise.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Great Architect and Ruler of the Universe! We most reverently invoke Thy blessing on this memorable occasion. We remember and thank Thee, for the vision of our Brethren, who pledged their faith, dedication and integrity to the obligation of the formation of this Lodge. Thou hast said in Thy word, "The integrity of the upright shall guide them."

Thou, O God, hast been their guide and today we honor those men of integrity and we rejoice with all our Brethren in the honorable fulfillment of the obligation that was assumed in the beginning and continues to this day. May the pledges of our Brethren in the past and present inspire those in the future.

Continue to bless this Lodge in all its commendable undertakings and to Thee we shall ascribe all the honor and glory forever. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone.

GRAND MASTER: From the beginning of time men have been builders and Freemasonry is no exception. Freemasons were builders of not just material things, but of character and morality. The purpose of Masonry is "self-improvement" – not in the material sense, but in the intellectual, moral and philosophical improvement of the individual.

Freemasonry has given many things to mankind and society. It helped pave

the way for freedom of speech. It has ever been the enemy of any power that suppressed free thought and enslavement of the mind. It rejects bigotry, superstition and persecution; and the ignorance and fanaticism that invented torture and deprivation. It points out to man that free thought and free speech, and the study of the sciences, are necessary for mankind's mental and intellectual emancipation; that the study of nature brings man's soul nearer to his Creator; and that knowledge drives out ignorance and superstition. It has taught mankind that, after he has emancipated himself from the vices that tyrannize and oppress, he must learn to govern himself wisely by practicing the Cardinal Virtues of Freemasonry: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice.

The establishment of a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, in any community, is an event of vital and far-reaching importance. It indicates a desire upon the part of its members to cultivate and practice the noble attributes of brotherly love, relief and truth. It means the inculcation of all sentiments which constitute a higher morality and a nobler manhood. It contemplates the encouragement of all the virtues which elevate and ennoble man; making better husbands, better fathers, better sons and brothers, better citizens and a better and more prosperous community. Our sincere gratitude is extended to the Brethren who had the foresight in the formation of _____ Lodge No. _____ and to all its Officers and members who have dedicated their support for its continuance.

I now call upon Brother _____ who will share with you more of the history of this Lodge.

Grand Master picks up framed Anniversary Document for presentation to the Master of the Lodge.

GRAND MASTER: On behalf of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, I am honored and privileged to present to you and your Lodge this Anniversary Certificate for _____ years of member dedication and lasting good to this community.

Grand Master reads inscription on Anniversary Document. Concludes with "Congratulations."

The Grand Chaplain will now give the Benediction which will conclude the ceremony.

Grand Master asks everyone to please rise.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: May the blessing of Almighty God, who made the heaven and the earth, and all who dwell therein, be with us all and remain with us, now and forevermore. Amen.

Dedication of Public School Buildings

Due to present legislation concerning prayers at public schools, the prayer in this ceremony should be deleted. It could be used during a Grand Lodge opening if appropriate.

This ceremony is performed only in response to the request of authorized school authorities. The seating and entrance are not prescribed in order that they may be adapted to the particular occasion

There may be preliminary remarks by local authorities before the Grand Master takes charge. When the ceremony has started, it shall be completed without interruption except for musical selections and the optional address noted hereinafter. If an address is to be given during the ceremony, it shall be by some Master Mason designated by the Grand Master.

A school official should speak to publicly request that the Grand Master proceed to dedicate the building.

GRAND MASTER: Friends and My Brethren: It is with pleasure that we accept the invitation of the school authorities of this community to dedicate this school building.

As it is one of the cardinal teachings of the Masonic Fraternity that we should never enter upon any great important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of God, let us rise and reverently unite in prayer.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Great Architect of the Universe! We humbly implore Thy blessing as we dedicate this building to the service of this community and mankind. We thank Thee for the vision of the founding fathers of our nation from which hath come the public schools of our land. We thank Thee for the resolution of those who pioneered our state government, from which hath come our educational system, and for the labors of all who have protected and maintained it. Bless those to whose charge is committed the administration of this School. Sustain them in the performance of their sacred trust. Grant them wisdom for the realization of the opportunities afforded to them. Especially, we ask Thy blessing upon the young people who shall gather here. Thou, who art the source of all knowledge, lead them in the paths of truth. Grant that they may daily grow in knowledge and stature, that they may, in time, go forth from academic halls to lead our nation in the ways of freedom and righteousness. Bless all assembled here, and may we walk with Thee all the days of our lives. Amen.

GRAND MASTER: In order to give you a better understanding of our participation in this program, permit me to go back into history.

The Masons of California have on many occasions demonstrated their interest in the public schools of this state and nation. Among the demonstrations of that interest, we may point to the annual observance of Public Schools, which was conceived and inaugurated by one of our Grand Masters shortly after World War I. During that week, all Masonic Lodges throughout the state refrain from all other activities, and devote their efforts to focusing public attention upon our public schools. Governors, mayors and other officials have proclaimed the observance, and join in urging visitations to our public schools and public interest in their work and needs. The observance, as was intended, has become a community affair, but the impetus and certain arrangements come from our Lodges.

This association of public schools and the Masonic Fraternity did not originate with Public Schools Week, but has its roots in a far earlier period of American history.

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere and scores of others who worked and fought to achieve our national independence were officers of Masonic Lodges. They, and those who came after them, built this nation upon a cornerstone of universal public education. Our founding fathers realized that if the nation they launched was to survive and become strong, it must rest upon adequate and widespread education.

Freemasons and other Americans of succeeding generations have been aware that the continued growth of our beloved country, and the continuance of our freedom likewise depend upon our public education system. It has been truly said that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, and this statement would apply with equal truth to the preservation of our public school system.

As further historical background, you may be interested in knowing that from earlier centuries has also come the custom of requesting Freemasons to lay the foundation stones of important buildings. The cornerstone of our National Capitol, the White House, countless state capitols, and public buildings, including public school buildings, have been laid with the ceremonies provided for such occasions. From these early traditions and associations has come the custom of Masonic participation in this ceremony. We consider it a privilege to assemble to dedicate this building to the purposes for which it has been erected.

GRAND MASTER: It was a custom among ancient peoples to dedicate or consecrate the work of their hands. Temples, altars and statues were commonly dedicated or consecrated to some divinity. In some lands, the custom was not limited to public edifices, but was extended to private houses. It was believed that no pious or sensible man would expect to dwell safely in a building that was not under the immediate protection of God. A distinction, however, was frequently made between consecration and dedication. Sacred things were consecrated and dedicated, while others were dedicated only.

This building is to be used for the education of our youth, and thus for the building and preservation of our great country. It is only by free public education that we are prepared to govern ourselves and maintain our freedom.

I therefore dedicate this school building to TRUTH (gavel), EQUALITY (gavel), and FREEDOM (gavel).

It is dedicated to TRUTH, the daughter of Almighty God, because Truth is knowledge and must ever be the object of true education. Truth is, because it is; not because men say so. It does not emanate from the declaration of any man or group of men of those things which they wish to believe. It emanates from the act of creation by the Great Architect of the Universe. The ascertainment of Truth, regardless of the effect upon preconceived beliefs, and regardless of creeds and dogmas, must ever be the goal of all true seekers after knowledge. Whenever the search for Truth, or its declaration, is made secondary to religious creeds or dogmas or any other limitations, then is youth led from the broad highway of truth and tolerance into bypaths.

This building is dedicated to EQUALITY, not merely because Equality is one of the principal tenets of Freemasonry, but because it is one of the foundation stones of our republic. Our founding fathers wrote in their Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal..."

Universal public education is a manifestation and preserver of that equality. In our public schools, youth of every race and creed are brought together without distinction as to their beliefs. All, regardless of material wealth, are offered the same knowledge, the same opportunities. The doors of this building are open to all without discrimination, a true reflection of our national dedication. Equality unites; inequality divides. Through the equal opportunities offered to all, our public schools draw our people together and build a better America.

This building is dedicated to FREEDOM, because Freedom can be maintained only by an enlightened citizenry. Ignorance is the weapon which tyrants and demagogues use to destroy liberty. Such men know that mental darkness makes a people a blinder, more ready tool and instrument for their purposes. The unbiased knowledge spread by the public schools constitutes public education the foundation and the guarantor of our liberty. Within these walls will be taught no divided allegiance, but an allegiance to our nation, and our national ideals. May those who come here in search of knowledge go forth to make our country forever "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

(If the Grand Master has designated someone to give an address, now is the appropriate time.)

GRAND MASTER: Once more may we express our appreciation for the

opportunity of participating in this dedication ceremony. We congratulate you upon the completion of this beautiful school. Other nations may have more land, others may have more people, others may have greater natural resources, but we have the highest standard of living and greater freedom, because we have a long history of public education, the largest and best public school system in all the world and teachers and administrators dedicated to the teaching of our youth. But most important are the students, the young men and women who will determine the future of America. For them we build our schools. Freemasonry is solidly behind our public schools.

Let us rise for the benediction.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: May the Lord be with us. May His blessing rest upon this edifice. May Truth, Equality and Freedom dwell here and be with us, now and forever. Amen.

GRAND MASTER: This concludes the dedication ceremony.

Dedication of Burial Plots

Brethren may assemble by permission of the Grand Master, with or without Masonic clothing, and repair in procession or otherwise, to the cemetery. Seats may be provided for the assemblage, but unnecessary expense should be avoided. Music, vocal or instrumental, may be a part of the ceremony. The officiant should be one who is a good reader. When all interested are present, the officiant says:

(Sacred music may precede the ceremony.)

Brethren and Friends:

"This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."

Believing and trusting in the love of an Almighty God, and as true Masons having a firm reliance in the immortality of the soul, we are gathered here today for the purpose of dedicating this plot of ground, to be used as a resting place for the hallowed earthly remains of those of our friends and dear ones who may lay them down in their last sleep. Here will peacefully lie---

"The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes In the full strength of years, matron and maid, And the sweet babe and the gray-headed man."

Here we will from time to time deposit all that is mortal of our friends and dear ones; here will we leave our chaplets of flowers; here will we drop our wreaths of rue - for remembrance.

Here will we on occasion dismiss the fleeting pleasures of life, the demands of business, and all the cares incident to man's earthly pilgrimage, and indulge in the sacred duty of depositing the hallowed remains of those who have gone to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns.

On this spot, which we today dedicate, we may well ponder on the mystery of death. And what a mystery! We are told by men wise in the philosophy of olden days that God never gives to man the key to the Golden Gate of Eternity until his time shall come to enter there. The only proof they give us of immortality is that the desire to live again is implanted in every human breast; that the brown children of the forest and plain see God in clouds and dream of happy hunting grounds beyond the starry-decked sky. But our faith requires a better and firmer foundation. The philosophy of thousands of years has not probed the inner chambers of the human soul. Reason leaves us in the chilling atmosphere of doubt. Intellect is not our highest endowment. Imagination is not our crowning faculty. Every form of genius is inferior to conscience, to faith, to sympathy and love. Man became a living soul

when Almighty God breathed into him the spark of life. The Soul, then, is divine, a part of the Infinite Life. If God is the Infinite Spirit of Life, then clearly our life, as individualized spirits, is continually coming from that Infinite Source by divine inflow.

The human soul is God's highest creation, and from the border line of light where history begins there comes to us the great question of the ages, "If a man die shall he live again?" Are we ready with the answer? "I have asked that dreadful question of the hills that look eternal, of the purling streams that rippling flow forever; of the stars amid whose fields of azure my rapt spirit hath trod in glory - all were dumb. But now as we gaze upon the living face and feel that the love which kindles through its beauty can never wholly perish," we believe, we know, that we shall live again. And as surely as we have faith in the existence of God the All-Father, we believe that we shall live to join the loved and lost in realms of light beyond the confines of this earthly existence; there will be an unbroken reunion out beyond life's sunset where earth's shadows never fall.

Let us pray.

CHAPLAIN: Our Heavenly Father! We humbly ask Thy blessing in all the purposes of our present assembly. Support us, O Lord, through the long day of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen, and the busy world is hushed, until the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then of Thy compassion grant us a safe and peaceful rest at the last, for Thy mercy's sake. Amen.

(Sacred music may be introduced at this point.)

OFFICIANT: Among the ancients, every temple, altar and statue was dedicated to some divinity. The Hebrews extended this ceremony even to their private homes; and it was a custom in Israel to dedicate a new house to God with prayer. This was done to secure the Divine presence and blessing, for it was believed that no pious or sensible person could expect to dwell safely in a house which was not under the immediate protection of God. They made a distinction between consecration and dedication; for sacred things were both consecrated and dedicated, while profane things, such as private dwellings, were only dedicated. This distinction has always been observed among nations generally, many of whom (and in early ages, all) consecrated their churches to the worship of God, but dedicated them to, or placed them under the special patronage of, some particular saint.

A similar practice pertains to the Institution of Masonry, wherein Lodges are consecrated to the honor and glory of God, but are dedicated to the memory of the Holy Saints John; and Masonic buildings are dedicated to the purposes for which they are set apart.

An ancient pagan wrote in his native tongue, "In media vita, in morte

sumus," which, translated, reads "In the midst of life we are in death," a sentence found in all civilized languages and among the choicest gems of universal literature. In terse expression it speaks the truth. None can know what a day may bring forth. Every moment one of us passes to the silence of death.

Our time is in God's hand. When He taketh away our breath, we die, and our bodies turn to dust, but our spirits pass to life abundant in the glory of immortality.

Such is the teaching of Freemasonry, and it is only the reiteration in symbolic instruction of that which is taught in the Great Light of Masonry - God's Holy Word.

It has been beautifully said that "It cannot be that the earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a mere bubble cast up by eternity to float a moment on its waves and then sink into nothingness. Else why is it that the glorious aspirations which leap like angles from the temple of our hearts are forever wandering unsatisfied?"

"Why is it that bright forms of human beauty presented to our view are taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts?" Our answer is that "There is a realm where the beautiful beings which now pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence forever."

The word Cemetery is from the Greek, "a sleeping place," and may mean any place for the deposit of the dead. In ancient times it was the name of consecrated ground attached to a church yard which was used as a burial place. In modern times the term has acquired a special meaning applicable to extensive burial grounds, which have come into use since the practice of burying within and around churches was generally abandoned, and many of them are dedicated to the memory of particular and prominent personages.

We, however, do now dedicate this ground to those near and dear to us, of whatever station in life, as a measure of love; a sentiment it is true, but not an idle one. Without love, life would be bereft of joy and the future be deprived of hope. It is the light that guideth every human being from the day he is born of woman, sending its radiance along the path so that he may safely walk during his allotted days. It is the inspiration of every noble impulse, and the palliative of every grief. It closes the curtain of this earthly temple, and speeds the departing spirit on its way to the Great Beyond, speaking the word of final illumination, which is - PEACE.

(Sacred music.)

CHAPLAIN: The Lord bless us and keep us! The Lord make His face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us! The Lord lift upon us the light of His

countenance and give us peace! Amen.

Mortgage Burning Ceremony

This ceremony is open to all Masons, their families, friends and other interested persons.

The Lodge room is prepared by placing a small table directly east of the altar upon which should be placed a burning crucible in the center, three small vials of burning fluid, one on the north side of table, one on the south side and the other on the west side. A candle in a candlestick holder should be placed on the east side of the table.

Prior to the ceremony, the Grand Marshal should designate someone to dim lights immediately upon lighting contents of crucible. Lights are turned on again immediately after "Bless This House" and when fire dies down.

The officers of the Lodge are seated in the first row of seats on the north east of the Lodge in rank, the Master nearest the East. They wear the jewels and aprons of their stations.

If the Grand Master fills all the stations and places, the Grand Officers form outside the Lodge room and enter in the same manner as they enter for a Grand Lodge opening; regalia is worn. The Master of the Lodge will raise those present by three raps of the gavel as the Grand Officers enter the Lodge room, then retire to his position in the northeast.

When all the Grand Officers are in their stations, the Grand Master will ask all present to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, after which he will seat the Lodge.

MASTER: Most Worshipful: Since the date of its completion, the Brethren of _____ Lodge No. _____ have been privileged to assemble and conduct the business of Masonry within the peaceful walls of this temple.

As is the case in many worthy undertakings, the establishment of this edifice was assured with the funds of the Brethren, and assisted by additional finances obtained through the mortgage of this building.

Through the dedicated efforts of all the members of _____ Lodge No. _____, that mortgage has now been punctually and honorably retired.

In behalf of my Brethren, I now respectfully request that you do proceed with the ceremony of burning the mortgage of _____ Temple.

GRAND MASTER: From the beginning of time men have been builders. The earliest man first lived in natural caves but eventually he built his own dwelling of stones, of hide, of twigs, and branches. Through the centuries man became more adept and experienced. His buildings grew in height and stability and eventually in

beauty. As man became more civilized and began to reason, he realized that there were forces and phenomena beyond his comprehension and understanding.

It became his nature to fear that which he could not understand and finally fear turned into a form of worship by which the forces he experienced but did not understand would be appeased and pleased. Sacrifices of food and other important worldly possessions were offered - first on altars in the open and then enclosed in temples.

And so it is that over thousands of years man has constructed temples and cathedrals, palaces and public buildings, and these have taken major space in the history of art. Even from the dawn of history the art of building has so consistently touched and mingled with human life in the home - in the shop - in the temple - that it has often become the best history and commentary of the times.

Today, your Grand Master, together with the Grand Lodge Officers, the Master, Wardens, Brethren and friends of _____ Lodge No. _____, have met for the purpose of celebrating the completion of a resolve which originated _____ years ago.

In _____, the leaders of this Lodge had a vision of a Masonic Hall of great beauty - erected to God and dedicated to the true purpose of Freemasonry.

That dream began to take form and substance in a site - in sketches and then in working designs - in steel and concrete - in stone and glass - in fine wood - and in skilled workmanship. Contributions made by the Brethren of this lodge were converted into brick and mortar, and Lodge funds were put to use as this structure rose from the soil of the land. Finally, certain lending institutions, as a great example of faith in the promise and integrity of the members of this Lodge, completed the financing of this Temple with the dollars of their investors.

Now _____ years after the dedication of a dream accomplished, we meet to commemorate the fulfillment of a pledge - a promise made earlier that the faith and confidence represented by the extension of credit would be justified.

The Grand Master rises.

In accordance with the teachings of our Institution, it is our duty before entering upon any great or important undertaking, to invoke the aid and blessing of God. We shall, therefore, reverently unite with our Grand Chaplain in an address to the Throne of Grace.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: Great Architect of The Universe, Supreme Grand Master! We most reverently invoke Thy blessing on this memorable occasion. We

remember the vision of our Brethren who pledged their faith and their integrity to the obligation which they assumed. Thou hast said in Thy word, "The integrity of the upright shall guide them."

Thou, O God, hast been their guide and today we honor those men of integrity and we rejoice with all our Brethren in the honorable fulfillment of the obligation they assumed. As the physical evidence of this obligation is destroyed, may the pledges of those who have guided and shown the way be graciously remembered.

Continue to bless and prosper this Lodge in all its commendable undertakings and to Thee we shall ascribe all the honor and glory forever. Amen.

The Grand Master seats everyone, and he is seated.

GRAND MASTER: Worshipful Master, we would be pleased if you would read a summary of the events which have brought this Temple through the stages of planning, building, completion, financing, and to the fulfillment of the pledge to retire all debt.

Worshipful Master reads summary.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Treasurer, you will provide the Grand Marshal with evidence indicating that the debt impressed during the building and erection of this Temple has been fully discharged.

GRAND TREASURER: Most Worshipful, I have facsimile copies of notes of indebtedness all recorded as paid in full.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Treasurer, you will deliver to the Grand Marshal for deposit in the crucible evidence which represents that all debt has been retired.

Grand Treasurer meets Grand Marshal on the level in the East, and hands document to the Grand Marshal. Grand Treasurer returns to his place and is seated. Grand Marshal then crumples document and places same in crucible. Grand Marshal then returns to his place and is seated.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Deputy Grand Master, what are the prerequisites for the building of a Temple?

When Deputy Grand Master is addressed, he rises and recites ritual at his station.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: Most Worshipful, before the cornerstone of a building can be laid, the architect must provide the plans which the Master Craftsman will use as his rule and guide. Before the architect can conceive the

character and scope of the structure, one man or a group of men must first experience the desire, dream the dream, and then with enthusiasm and determination devise the work to be done.

These were the prerequisites to the building of _____ Temple, and I now symbolically add the fuel of enthusiasm, determination, and desire to the crucible.

Deputy Grand Master approaches table and stands on the east side of same, pours contents of vial on the document in the crucible, then returns to his station and is seated.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Senior Grand Warden, what are the ingredients which become the adhesive mortar in the founding of a firm foundation, in the erection of strong and sturdy walls, and the covering of the superstructure with a sound roof?

When Senior Grand Warden is addressed, he rises and recites ritual at his station.

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: To stand firm and tall a building must rise from a proven base. Cement, sand and rock combine to become concrete. Stone and brick, steel and aluminum, glass and wood, are molded together to provide structure, utility, and beauty. The ingredients which provide the instrumentality for the erection of a building are development, progress and production, of which this fuel is emblematical.

Senior Grand Warden approaches table and stands on the north side of same, pours contents of vial on the document in the crucible, then returns to his station and is seated.

When Junior Grand Warden is addressed, he rises and recites ritual at his station.

GRAND MASTER: Brother Junior Grand Warden, what are the elements which signify the completion of this Masonic Temple?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: "Great is the art of beginning, but greater is the art of ending." After an idea has been conceived with enthusiasm and determination, after the plans have been drawn on the trestle board, after stone has been set on stone, and the apex of the Temple has reached toward the warm sunshine and the cooling rains, only then comes the day of fruition. The dream has become reality. The plan has been accomplished. The Temple is dedicated to Freemasonry, Virtue, and Universal Benevolence.

To the fire of fulfillment I add symbolically, the fuel of accomplishment and dedication.

Junior Grand Warden approaches table and stands on the south side of same,

pours contents of vial on the document in the crucible, then returns to his station and is seated.

Grand Master approaches table and stands on east side of same, lights candle and then proceeds with ritual. Grand Master lights document (lights are turned off or dimmed if possible) and remains in place until conclusion of "Bless This House." He then extinguishes candle and returns to his station and calls on the Grand Chaplain for the benediction.

GRAND MASTER: All of the performances of human art at which we look with praise and wonder are the result of the resistless force of perseverance. By this virtue the quarry becomes a pyramid. The first turn of a spade is overwhelmed by the final result, yet each petty and seemingly insignificant operation, incessantly continued in due course of time, surmounts the greatest difficulties.

Thus, through the continuing and determined efforts of the Masons of California, the quarry has supplied the demands created by the first turn of the spade.

Dreams and ideas have manifested themselves in development and labor. Earth has produced stone and iron to which the architect and builder applied the sciences of geometry, chemistry and physics. Thus this Masonic Temple arose, dedicated to God and to the service of Freemasonry.

The faith which the business community had in the integrity and honor of the members of this Lodge has now been justified. The debt has been paid in full. The pledge of these good men and dedicated Masons has been redeemed.

"We have fought the good fight; we have finished the course; we have kept the faith."

Music: "Bless This House"

At completion of music, lights are turned on.

GRAND MASTER: The Grand Chaplain will now give the Benediction which will conclude the ceremony.

The Grand Master calls up everyone.

GRAND CHAPLAIN: May the blessing of Almighty God, who made the heaven and the earth, and all who dwell therein, be with us all and remain with us, now and forevermore. Amen.