



THE CONSTITUTIONS OF STRASBOURG MASONS - 1459

(<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/strasb.html>)

These Statutes, which are undoubtedly based on the old customs and laws of the trade, were discussed and agreed at two Assemblies of Masters and Companions, in the form of a chapter, ("in Kappitelsweise"), the first in Regensburg in the Easter Day - 1459, and this second, shortly after, in Strasbourg, when they were definitively approved and promulgated. The spirit of the Imperial Constitution German can be seen clearly in all its characteristics. The expression "in Kappitelsweise" (in the form of a Chapter), which is not used by any other guild, originates in the convent meeting of Benedictine monks, who were called "Capitula" or chapters. Thus, also in the Old English Constitutions, and in the Law of the Parliament of Henry VI we find the meetings of the Freemasons called "Chapters, Congregations, Assemblies and Chambers." All the precepts of these statutes, which were kept secret from the profane, and were read at least once once a year in the Lodges, they refer especially to the moral obligation of the brothers towards others, and instills a spirit of brotherly love, strict integrity and morality.

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"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and our gracious Mother Mary, and also of his blessed servants, the four holy martyrs crowned with memory eternal: considering that true friendship, unanimity and obedience are the foundation of all good; therefore, and for the general benefit and free will of all princes, nobles, lords, cities, chapters and convents, who may wish in this now or in the future to build churches, choirs, or other great works in stone and buildings; that they can best be provided and provided, and also for the benefit and requirements of masters and companions ¹Masonry, and stonemasons in Germany, and more especially to avoid, in the future, among those of the trade, dissensions, differences, expenses and damages, due to such irregular acts many masters suffered seriously, contrary to the good old

customs and uses maintained and practiced of good coffee by the masters and patrons of the craft in ancient times. But, so that we can continue to respect in a true and peaceful manner, all masters and companions of the said profession, gathered in chapters in Spries, in Strasbourg, we define or not, then that such a master will not bring down the stones, even in Regensburg, on our behalf or on behalf of all other masters and companions of all of our aforementioned common craft, we renew and revise these uses ancient and kind and affable we agreed these statutes and the fraternity; and taking into account

¹ *(Translator's note) - The Compagnons du Devoir is the generic name of several French associations, heirs of the companionship movements born at the time of the construction of the cathedrals (around 13th CENTURY), which provide young people, from 15 years of age, with training in traditional professions, based on in learning, community life and the trip called the tour de France. After some time, they they also welcomed young women in learning. A very widespread legend quotes Mestre Jacques (from Molay), the King Solomon and Père Soubise as founders of the companions.*

Two common agreement defined the same, we also promise and swear, for ourselves and for all our successors, keep them faithfully, as written below:

- a. Firstly: If any of the articles in these statutes prove to be very strict and severe, or other very light and smooth ones, so those who belong to the Brotherhood may, by majority, modify, decrease or increase such articles, in accordance with the requirements of the time, country, or circumstance. The resolutions of those who will meet in chapters, according to the custom of this book, should be observed from here on, in according to the oath taken by all.
- b. Whoever, by his own free will, wishes to enter this fraternity, in accordance with the regulation, as written below in this book, will promise to keep all points and articles, because that is the only way it can be our business. Masters will be those who can design and construct such expensive buildings and works, for the execution of which they are authorized and privileged, and will not work in any other profession unless choose to do so. Masters, as well as fellows, must conduct themselves honorably, and not infringe on the rights of others, or may be punished in accordance with these statutes, on the occasion of each of such transgressions.
- c. Any work or regular building under construction at the moment for day work, namely, Strasbourg, Cologne, Vienna and Passau, and others of such works, and also in Stores that belong to them, and, according to custom, were closed due to the work of journey; such buildings and works as mentioned above will continue to be for work of journey, and in no way by contract, so that nothing is reduced from the work, to the detriment of the contract, as far as possible.
- d. If any craftsman who has had a regular job dies, then any craftsman or master, skilled in Freemasonry, and sufficient and capable for the job, can aspire to complete said work, so that the owners or superintendents of such construction can be supplied again with the requirements of the Masonry. Thus, so can any companion who understands such Freemasonry.
- e. Any master can, in addition to his own work, do work in the foreigner, or a master who does not have such a job can also undertake it, in which case he can provide that work or construction, in good faith, in work per day, and continue it as best as you can or should, so that the work and progress are not interrupted, according to the norms and customs of the Masonry. If a master fails to satisfy those people who have ordered the work

to it, and reliable information is given about it, then such a master may be called to account by the Order, corrected and punished, after having been condemned; but if you don't want to do it, then he can do it as way they choose, either by task or journey.

f. If any master, who has had a work or construction dies, and another master comes and finds that such work, be it stone work in any way wasted or hewn and unsettled stones, without prior advice and agreement with other artisans, so that the owners and other distinguished people, who made with such a building to be constructed, not to be exposed to unfair expenses, and also the master who left such work is not defamed. But, if owners choose to this job be removed, then he may have performed it, as long as he does not seek thus obtaining an undue advantage.

g. Neither the master, nor those who have undertaken such work, will hire out any thing that relates to carved stones or belongs to them, be it stone, lime or sand; but to break or carve by contract or by day job, it can be allowed without risk.

h. If masons are required for mining and laying stone, the master can put them in this work, if they are able, so that you are not harmed, and those so employed should not be subject to these rules, unless it is of your own free will.

i. Two masters must not share the same work or building, unless it is small, that he can complete in the course of a year. He may have such work in common with one who is a brother.

k. If any master accepts a contract job, and makes a project for it, how it will be built, so it shouldn't cut anything short of the project, but he will execute it according to the plan that he showed to gentlemen, cities or people, so that nothing is changed.

l. Any master or companion he takes from another will be called to account. master of the Fraternity of artisans a job in which he is involved, or which is endeavor to take such work from you clandestinely or openly without the knowledge or authorization of the master who has such work, whether the same small or great. No master or companion should have relations with him, nor any fraternity companion will work for him as long as he dedicates himself to the work that thus acquired dishonestly, not until he asks for forgiveness, gives satisfaction to that one whom he took his job and was also punished in the fraternity by the masters, as ordered by these statutes.

m. If someone accepts, in whole or in part, any work that he does not know how to perform, having not consulted any craftsman about it, nor having asked the Lodge, he you must in no way undertake the work; but if he tries to do that, then none partner will work with you to prevent you from being exposed to expenses by such an ignorant master.

n. No worker, or master, or watchman, or professional companion, will instruct any one, whoever he may be, who is not in our profession, about any part, if he has never practiced Freemasonry

o. No artisan or master will accept money from a companion to teach him or her instruct you in anything that relates to Freemasonry, nor any Watchman or fellow worker will instruct anyone for money; but if someone wants instruct others, they can do it mutually or for fraternal affection.

p. A master who has a job or construction alone can have three apprentices, and you can also put companions from the same Lodge to work, that is, if your masters allow it; but if he has more than one building, then he will not have more than two apprentices in the aforementioned construction, so that he will not have more than five apprentices in all of his buildings. No craftsman or master will be received in the fraternity that does not go to Santa annually Communion or who do not maintain Christian discipline; or that you waste your goods on game; but if someone is inadvertently accepted into the fraternity that does these things as mentioned above, then no master or companion will befriend him until he gives up on it, and has therefore been punished by those in the fraternity. No artisan or master will live in adultery as long as he dedicates himself to Freemasonry; but if such a person does not give up on him, so no traveling companion or Freemason will work in his company, nor will he maintain a relationship with him.

q. If a Companion takes on work with a master who is not accepted in the fraternity of artisans, then the said companion cannot be punished for that. So too, if a partner takes on a job with a city master, or with another master, and is put to work, which he may well do, so that all companions can find work; but nevertheless such a companion will maintain the rules as written above and below, and will also contribute to your fee for the fraternity, although it is not employed in the fraternity lodges, or with his fellow brothers. But if a partner takes a legal wife for himself, and not being employed in the Loja, if he will establish in a city, and will be required to serve in a trade, he shall each holy week to pay four coins, and you will be exempt from the weekly coin, because he is not employed in the Lodge.

r. If a master has a complaint against another master, for having violated the regulations of the craft, or a master against a companion, or a companion against another companion, any master or companion who is involved in this will inform the master who presides over the fraternity, and the master who is informed of this will hear both parties, and establish a day when he will judge the cause: and in the meantime, before the fixed or appointed day, no companion will avoid the master, nor will the master partner, but will provide services to each other until such time as the matter is to be heard and right. This will all be done according to the judgment of the artisans, who will be properly observed. In addition, the case will be heard at the place where it emerged, before the closest master who keeps the Statute Book, and in whose district it occurred.

s. Each vigilante will honor his master, be true and faithful to him, according to the rule of Freemasonry, and will obey it with undivided fidelity, as is customary and in use old one. So too will a companion. And when the traveling companion wishes to travel further, he will part with his master and the Lodge so as not to be indebted to anyone, and that no one has any complaint against him, as is customary and appropriate.

t. An itinerant companion, in any Store where he may be employed, will be obedient to his master and the watchman, according to the old rule and use of Freemasonry, and will also comply with all regulations and privileges that are of ancient use in that Lodge, and will not criticize the work of his master, whether secretly or openly, no way. But, if the master breaks these rules, and acts contrary to them, then anyone can report this fact.

u. Every craftsman employing workers in the Lodge, to whom these are entrusted statutes, and that is duly vested with authority, will have power and authority on all disputes and issues concerning Freemasonry, to judge and punish in your district. All masters, watchmen and apprentices, will obey you.

x. A companion who has traveled, and is a practitioner of Freemasonry and who belongs to this fraternity, which wishes to serve a craftsman in part of the work, will not be accepted by that craftsman or master, in any case, for a period of less than two years.

Translator's Note: it was the companions who wandered from one construction site to another, looking for work.

y. All masters and companions who belong to this fraternity will maintain faithfully all the points and articles of these regulations, as written above and the follow. But if someone happens to violate one of the points and thus becomes punishable, if after he is obedient to the regulation having fulfilled what was sentenced to him, he will have done enough, and will be released from his vote in relation to the article for which he was punished.

z. The master in charge of the book, under the oath of the fraternity, will take care to that it is not copied, by him or any other person, or data, or borrowed, so that the book remains intact, according to the resolution of the artisans. But, if one of the artisans, belonging to the fraternity needs to have knowledge of one or two articles any master can give you in writing. Every master will make that these statutes are read every year to the companions in the Lodge

If a complaint is made involving greater punishment, such as expulsion from Masonry, he will not be judged or condemned by a master in his district; but the two closest masters who are in charge of copies of the statutes, and who have authority over the fraternity will be summoned by him, so that they are three. Also the companions who were at the place of work where the controversy must be called, and everything must be agreed with a single agreement between the three, together with all the companions, or by a majority of them in accordance with your oath and better judgment, which must be respected by the entire fraternity of artisans.

If two or more teachers belonging to the Fraternity are in disagreement or disagreement on matters that do not concern Freemasonry, they must not resolve these questions anywhere but in front of Freemasonry that will judge them and reconcile as far as possible, but in such a way that the agreement is made without prejudice to the gentlemen or cities that are involved in the matter,

1. Now, so that these regulations of the trade can be followed in the most honestly, with service to God and other necessary and appropriate things, each teacher who have artisans working in your Lodge, and practice Freemasonry and belong to this fraternity, and after each year he will pay four Blapparts (small silver coins), that is, in each holy week a Blappart or Bohemian to be paid to the cashier of the Brotherhood, and each companion will pay four Blapparts, and thus also one apprentice who has served his time.

2. All the masters and artisans who belong to this fraternity, who employ workers in their Stores, they will each have a box, and each companion must pay the cashier a coin a week. Every teacher will faithfully keep some money and whatever may come from other sources, and annually will hand it over to the fraternity at the most near where a book is kept, in order to provide for the worship of God and to provide the necessary for the fraternity.

3. Each master who has a box, if there is no Book in the same Store, must deliver the money annually to the master in charge of the Book, and wherever the Book is there divine worship will also be performed. If a

master or companion dies in a Store where no Book is kept, another master or companion of that Store inform the master who has a Book, and when he is informed of it, he will arrange for a mass to be said for the rest of the soul of the departed, and all the masters and companions of the Lodge will attend the Mass and contribute to it.

4. If a teacher or companion is faced with an expense or disbursement on account of the fraternity, and information is given on how it happened, reimbursed to such a master or companion, his expenses, whether small or large with funds from the Fraternity fund; if someone also gets into problems with courts or other fraternity issues, then all, whether teachers or companions, will give him help and relief, since he is obliged to do so by oath of the Fraternity.

5. If a teacher or companion becomes ill, or a companion who belongs to the fraternity and has lived righteously in Freemasonry, is afflicted with prolonged illness and need for food and money, then the master in charge of the box will give you help and assistance from the box, if he can otherwise, until he recovers from his illness, and must then swear and promise to return it to the fund. But if he dies of the disease, so much should be taken of what he leaves in his death, be it clothes or other items, as a refund of what was lent to him, if there is so much there.

THESE ARE THE STATUTES OF THE VIGILANTS AND COMPANIONS

No artisan or master will give work to a companion who commits adultery, or who lives openly in illicit relationships with women, or who does not make a confession annual, and do not go to Holy Communion, according to Christian discipline, nor anyone to be so foolish as to lose your clothes in the game.

If a companion impetuously leaves a Grand Lodge or another Lodge, he you should not apply for a job at that store during the following year.

If a craftsman or master wishes to dismiss a traveling companion that he has employee, he will not do so, unless it is a Saturday or a pay night, so that the companion can know how to travel the next day, unless he is guilty of an offense. The same will be done by a fellow worker.

A traveling companion will submit a job application to someone who is not master or watchman, neither clandestinely, nor openly, without the knowledge and the will of the master. No craftsman or master will consciously accept as an apprentice who is not legally born, and must honestly inquire, before accepting it, and ask the apprentice under word, if his father and mother were properly united in legal marriage.

No artisan or master will promote one of his apprentices as a guardian to whom he took as an apprentice in his raw state, or who is still in his years of learning. Nor will any craftsman or master promote any of his apprentices to whom he took in his raw state as a vigilante, despite the fact that he served his years apprenticeship if he has not traveled within the space of a year.

If someone who served as a mason (Maurer) comes to a craftsman and wants to learn from he, said craftsman should not accept him as an apprentice, unless he serves as an apprentice for three years.

No craftsman or master will take an apprentice in its raw state for a period less than five years.

Translator's Note: Companions were required to travel for a year, serving different Masters, to learn the trade.

"If, however, it happens that an apprentice must leave his master during the years of his learning, without sufficient reasons, and not serving his time, so none master will employ such an apprentice. No companion will work with him, even in a will never maintain relations with him until he has served his legal time with the master whom he abandoned, and to his full satisfaction, and bring a certificate of his said master. "No apprentice will be freed from his master unless he intends to marry, with the consent of your master, or there are sufficient reasons to urge you, or your master to this extent.

If an apprentice considers that he was not justly treated by his master in any way so that they may have agreed, then the apprentice can take him before the artisans and the masters, who are in that district, so that an explanation and correction may happen as the case may be.

Every teacher who has a Book in the Strasbourg district will pay each year, at Christmas, half florin to the Strasbourg cashier, until the debt owed to that cashier is paid. And every master who has a Book, and whose construction is completed, and who has not more work where he can employ his teammates, send his book, and the money in his possession, belonging to the fraternity, to the foreman in Strasbourg. It was resolved on this day in Regensburg, four weeks after Easter, in the year counted from the birth of God of one thousand, four hundred and fifty-nine, on the day of São Marcos, that the Master of Works JOST DOTZINGER, of Worms, of the construction of Our Lady's ministry, the highest chapter in Strasbourg, and all its successors in the same work will be the supreme judge of our Freemasonry fraternity, and it was also later determined at Speyer, Strasbourg, and again at Speyer in the year of MCCCCLXIV, on April 9th.

Master LORENZ SPENNING, from Vienna, will also be the main judge in Vienna. And so, a Grand Master or his successors in Strasbourg, Vienna and Cologne, these three will be the chief judges and fraternity leaders; they will not be removed without just concerned, as determined, on this day in Regensburg, 1459, and at Speyer, in 1464.

This is the district that belongs to Strasbourg; the whole country below the Moselle and Franconia to the Thuringian forest; from Babenberg to the episcopate at Eichstatten; from Eichstatten to Ulm; from Ulm to Augsburg to Adelberg; and even Italy; the countries of Misnia, Thuringia, Saxony, Frankfurt, Hesse, and Swabia, these will be obedient.

To Master LORENZ SPENNING, Master of Construction of St. Stephen, in Vienna, belong to Lampach, Steiermarch, Hungary, and the Danube down.

Master STEFFAN HURDER, architect of St. Vincent, in Bern will have the district of Helvetic Confederation.

To CONRAD Master of Cologne, master of the chapter there, and to all his successors equally, the other districts will belong down, whichever exists of constructions and stores that belong to the fraternity, or that may belong to it.

If any master, guard, trade partner, or apprentice acts contrary to any of the points or articles written below, and do not keep them collective or individually, and reliable information is obtained from it, then he or they will be summoned to the fraternity on account of such violation, and shall be called upon to accountable, and must obey the correction or punishment to which they are condemned, in name of the oath and vow that was

made to the fraternity. And if they escape the summons without honest reason, and do not show up, they will still be sentenced to them imposed as a sanction for their disobedience, although they are not present. But if they do not do so, they may be brought before the civil or ecclesiastical courts, in the place where they take place, and can be judged according to what can be right on the subject.

Whoever wants to enter this fraternity, will always promise to keep all these articles written above and below in this Book; unless our good lord the Emperor, or the king, princes, lords, or any other noble, by force or right, oppose the their belonging to the fraternity; this will be a sufficient excuse for there to be no harm in that. And as to what he owes to the Fraternity, an agreement will be reached on that with the artisans who are in the fraternity.

Although by Christian discipline, each Christian is obliged to provide his own salvation, yet it must be duly remembered by the masters and craftsmen to whom the God Almighty graciously endowed with art and skill to build houses of the Lord and other expensive buildings, and honestly making a living like that, out of gratitude for their hearts are just true Christian sentiments, to promote worship divine, and so to deserve the salvation of their souls. Therefore, for praise and honor of Almighty God, His worthy Mother Mary, of all his blessed saints and, in particular the four crowned holy martyrs and, especially, for the salvation of the souls of all people who are in this fraternity, or who may come to belong to it, the craftsmen of Freemasonry stipulated and ordered, for us and all our successors, have a divine service prayed annually, at the four holy festivals and on the of the four crowned holy martyrs in Strasbourg, in the Ministry of High Chapter, in chapel of our dear Virgin, with vigils and masses, in the form to be instituted.

It was thus determined on this day in Speyer, on the ninth day of April, in the year counted from of the birth of God in 1464 that the Master of Works, JOST DOTZINGER, of Worms, Strasbourg high-level master builder will have an assembly of artisans in his district, when three or four teachers will be chosen to meet in one certain day that they will wake up, and that is determined by a majority of those gathered in chapters, and that are present, and how they can increase or decrease some articles, which will be maintained by the entire Fraternity; "The day will be on the day of Saint George in the sixty-ninth year; These are the masters who were present on the day at Speyer, on the ninth of April 1464.

JOST DOTZINGER, of Worms, Master of Works of the ministry of Our Lady from above Strasbourg chapter; Master HANS VON ESSELINGEN; Master VINCENCIE VON CONSTANTZ; Master HANS VON HEYLTBUTRN; Master PETER VON ALGESHEIM, Master of Nuhausen; WERNER MEYLON de Basle, on behalf of Master PETER KNOBEL de Basle, etc., etc.

This document concludes with a long list of names of Masters and Companions, the dates of receipt, etc., which is not necessary to reproduce here.