

Topic: **Use of Liquor**

Grand Master: M.W. Thomas S. Roy

Date Issued: December 9, 1953

Proceedings Reference: 1953: page 327

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Let me issue a word of warning to the Masters and Wardens on the conduct of their social affairs or ladies nights. Quite recently I was told that the word was being passed that the Grand Master had no objection to the serving of alcoholic liquor on such occasions. Just for the sake of the record, let me say that what I might have said was that I did not consider that I had the right to forbid it. My personal attitude toward liquor is well known. It has never been served at any function of any organization over which I have presided. I have never known any party to be improved by it. Apparently some Masonic parties have been spoiled by it. I would therefore enjoin all responsible officers to see to it that any use of alcoholic beverages is in moderation, that we may indicate that we have learned that the first of our four cardinal virtues is Temperance.

Topic: **Social Functions (Alcoholic Beverages)**

Grand Master: M.W. Laurence E. Eaton

Date Issued: December 14, 1960

Proceedings Reference: 1960: page 249

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

There has been a continued use of circulars and flyers in connection with Lodge functions which carry the Masonic emblem and the information that cocktails or other alcoholic beverages will be served, (my previous advice has been that this subject can be adequately covered without advertising it to the public; the mention of a social hour should convey a sufficient information) However, I now rule that no Lodge shall use its name or the Masonic emblem on any publication, circular, flyer, invitation or other material which refers to the use or sale of alcoholic beverages at a social dinner or any other function of the Lodge.

Topic: **Ladies Nights (Alcohol)**

Grand Master: M.W. Laurence E. Eaton

Date Issued: December, 1960

Proceedings Reference: 1960:

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

This early in the season I have seen several notices of Ladies Nights issued by Lodges, all in the Boston area. Each flyer or circular proudly displays the name of the host Lodge, so there can be no doubt in the minds of the public that these gatherings are Masonic in nature, and that they are held in public meeting places.

In each one of these announcements, special prominence was given to "cocktails" or "cocktail hour." This kind of advertising brings discredit to Freemasonry and to the Lodges which make use of it to promote the sale of tickets. It has been discouraged in the past but perhaps with insufficient vigor and only in individual cases.

I therefore direct that you call this matter to the personal attention of the Master of each Lodge in your District. He will be held responsible for the preparation of a proper circular of information, or paragraph in the Lodge notice, if his Lodge is to have a ladies night of any description, even though he may delegate the actual planning and publicity to another or to a committee. It should be a sufficient mention of this particular subject to say that there will be refreshments or a social hour. Any mention of cocktails, a cocktail hour, or any reference to bar privileges must be omitted.

Topic: **Gambling and Liquor**

Grand Master: M.W. Stanley F. Maxwell

Date Issued: March 12, 1975

Proceedings Reference: 1975: pages 31 - 32

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

On March 9, 1939, the following resolution was adopted by our Grand Lodge:

**RESOLVED:** That it is inconsistent with the professions and purposes of Freemasonry for any Masonic Body to promote, participate in or profit by any lottery, game of chance, door prize, or other device or activity whereby the individual participant may be able, through the element of luck or chance to win a greater value than he pays, and each Masonic Body within the Jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge is hereby enjoined to observe the letter and spirit of this resolution: and

Be it further resolved, that all so-called collateral bodies, clubs, or other organizations in Massachusetts whose Membership is related to or dependent on Masonic Membership or which in the public mind are likely to be regarded as Masonic Organizations, are requested, and all individual Masons owing allegiance to this Grand Lodge are enjoined, to respect the purpose of this Resolution.

On June 13, 1951, Most Worshipful Thomas S. Roy, the then Grand Master, reaffirmed that Resolution with the following statement:

"There can be no mistake in the meaning of this resolution. That word "enjoin" virtually means to prohibit, which means that every form of gambling is prohibited in Masonic bodies. This resolution has been disregarded both in letter and spirit. I am embarrassed in speaking about it because it may be thought that my profession inspires my condemnation of gambling. Believe me, Brethren, I am interested only in preserving the good name of Freemasonry, which cannot remain good with any taint of gambling upon it. In every problem, social or moral or political, we occupy one of two positions. We are either part of the problem or a part of the solution. If we insist upon trying to profit from gambling of any sort, then we are part of the problem. If we have no part nor lot in it, then we are part of the solution. By this action taken over twelve years ago, which I reaffirm today, the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts proclaims that it is part of the solution. In order that none may pretend ignorance of this resolution, I am ordering that it be carried on the September notice of every Lodge in the Jurisdiction."

I, again today, reaffirm the original resolution and ask that all Lodges govern themselves accordingly.

On the question of Liquor, let to be stated that liquor is not to be sold on Masonic

premises. A recent Lodge Notice indicated that at a planned social event, drinks would be available. Inasmuch as they asked for a volunteer bartender, I could only assume that the Notice referred to the sale and/or serving of liquor. This subject can cause us many problems. There is the question of licenses and taxes that could present problems and hardships. I therefore request that the rule, long ago set down, be followed rigidly and that all reference to liquor or cocktail parties be eliminated from all Lodge Notices, including flyers and travel folders.

Topic: **Alcoholic Beverages in Masonic Temples**

Grand Master: M.W. Stanley F. Maxwell

Date Issued: September 10, 1975

Proceedings Reference: 1975: pages 171 - 173

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

One of the most perplexing problems to confront your Grand Master in recent months has been the dispensing of alcoholic beverages in some of our Masonic Temples.

I am fully aware that many of our Blue Lodges, particularly on Ladies' Night or other social events, have forsaken their Masonic Homes to go to another establishment where alcoholic beverages are available. In many cases this action has deprived Masonic Associations or Trustees from revenue which they might otherwise have received. Conversely, it has also come to my attention that alcoholic beverages are, and have been, made available in some Masonic Temples in violation of present Masonic regulations.

It is my understanding that where this has been done, it has been to prevent Lodges from going outside for accommodations and thereby get an extra rental for the use of the Banquet Facilities. I am also well aware of the increasing costs of operation confronting Temple Association, especially for heat, utilities, and taxes where there are Temples not entirely tax exempt. Nor can I overlook the dilemma of shrinking Membership, and the attendant loss of revenue.

In view of the many problems facing our Blue Lodges at the present time, and taking into consideration the trend of the times, your Grand Master, after due consideration and the report of a Committee appointed to study this matter, hereby rules that alcoholic beverages may be dispensed in any Masonic Temple Apartments or Hall subject to the following restrictions and limitations:

1. At no time shall alcoholic beverages be introduced into a Lodge Room, except for authorized ceremonial purposes, or those rooms used directly in connection therewith, such as the preparation room, Tyler's Room, or corridors adjacent thereto.
2. At no time shall Officers of a Lodge partake of alcoholic beverages after a meal and before the opening of a Lodge which they are to attend. At no time shall any Member be admitted to a Lodge meeting while under the influence of alcoholic beverages.
3. At no time shall there be any area allotted to, nor construction of, a permanent servicing facility within any Masonic Temple under this jurisdiction.
4. The temperate use and dispensing of alcoholic beverages during exclusively social functions, Fellowship and Banquet Periods, always in the confines of the Social

Rooms, Banquet Room or Dining Halls, and always under the control of responsible persons, is not prohibited.

5. The foregoing is not to be construed as a mandate that the use and dispensing of alcoholic beverages must be allowed; whether such is allowed or prohibited, is for the local Masonic body and the Building or Temple Association, as the case may be, to determine.
6. All applicable laws and regulations, both of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and of the local authorities, shall be observed and complied with at all times.
7. No Lodge or recognized collateral body as such shall apply for or hold any license required by the foregoing laws or regulations.
8. Reference to alcoholic beverages, in any connotation, such as cocktails, bar, B.Y.O.B., etc., is not permitted in any Lodge Notice, or as an enclosure in the mailing of a Lodge Notice. The use of the phrases "social hour" or "social period" is not prohibited.

We must recognize that times change and it is easily demonstrated that in 1975 a substantial number of our Members use alcoholic beverages, always within the bounds of temperance, and the temptation is to leave our meeting places, or in connection with a social function, for an atmosphere and surroundings of a Lodge Building.

It is to devise a policy that recognizes that there are various points of view on this question, and at the same time to preserve our time-honored sacred places and ideals, that the above-related pronouncement is directed.

Topic: **General (Sunday Meetings and Alcohol)**

Grand Master: M.W. Stanley F. Maxwell

Date Issued: June 9, 1976

Proceedings Reference: 1976: page 170

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Two incidents have arisen recently that have been publicized to some extent, so the record should be made clear today.

One Lodge sent out a Notice that a Special Communication would be held on **SUNDAY AFTERNOON** and two candidates would be raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. **WE DO NOT PERMIT THE CONFERRAL OF DEGREES ON A SUNDAY.** Therefore, the Worshipful Master was obliged to send a notice cancelling the meeting. It is my understanding that the District Deputy had not been consulted on this point of error and thus the cancellation cost the Lodge additional money for mailing the second notice. Further, the notice called for a picnic to follow the Degree work. We have no objection to that, but no reference of any kind should be made in any notice regarding alcoholic beverages.

We have an established set of rules regarding this subject, and if the privileges now permitted are to continue, then great care must be taken to live within those regulations.

Another incident occurred when a Lodge was to hold a meeting and no notice again had been sent to the Membership. Here the meeting had to be postponed because our Constitutions clearly call for adequate notification to the Membership.

We are not particularly happy to have to make such decisions, but we must live within our Constitutions.

Topic: **Alcoholic Beverages**

Grand Master: M.W. Stanley F. Maxwell

Date Issued: March 9, 1977

Proceedings Reference: 1977: page 45

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Last September, 1976, we established certain rules whereby alcoholic beverages could legally be served on or in Temple property. As always, questions arise that call for clarification.

**Rule No. 6 states clearly** that the matter of use of alcoholic beverages is solely a matter of local option and no Lodge nor Building Association is required to either accept or reject the matter. It is simply a permissive ruling.

**Rule No. 2 states that**, if used, alcoholic beverages shall not be served prior to a meeting. It has been reported that one Lodge opened in the early evening, transacted some business and adjourned for dinner, at which time beverages were served. Following the dinner, the degree work was exemplified. This is a violation of the intent of the specific rule and request is made that alcoholic beverages if used at all, be at the close of the entire Lodge meeting.

Topic: **Alcoholic Beverages and Liquor Licenses**

Grand Master: M.W. Stanley F. Maxwell

Date Issued: June 8, 1977

Proceedings Reference: 1977: pages 101 - 102

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Last year, we granted permission to serve alcoholic beverages in Masonic Temples under very specific rules, one of the most important being that final permission must be granted by the Lodge involved and/or the Temple Building Association.

This relaxing of regulations regarding the use of liquor in Masonic buildings was intended to make it available following Masonic functions, or in connection with purely social functions.

One of the nine rules established was that no Masonic Lodge was to apply for a liquor license. It now comes to our attention that a Masonic Building Association has applied for a license in one of our local communities, and there has been a considerable protest from neighbors in the immediate area involved.

It was not our intention to sanction such use of the liquor serving privilege, and if a Building Association wishes to rent their property to outside parties serving alcoholic beverages than a one day license should be applied for such use.

The unauthorized extension of privileges already approved can bring a total review of the regulations and could result in a cancellation of the present arrangements. All Lodges and Temple Associations are required to take due notice of the intent expressed last year in authorizing the use of liquor.

I am reminded of a message delivered by Most Worshipful Conrad Hahn, Past Grand Master of Connecticut, when he spoke at the Northeast Education Conference in 1971, when he said, quoting from a New York Times column, "We have had guilds bind us together, but they are losing their credibility because their purpose seems to be so narrow, and too often motivated by selfishness."

Most Worshipful Brother Hahn continued his message by asking the questions: "Is our order losing its moral credibility? . . . Is it motivated in any way by selfishness? . . . Is our purpose too narrow? . . ." And he closes his paper by saying, "Freemasonry is fundamentally an educational institution. As such, it would be seeking the truth of life in every sphere of human activity, and because of the disparity of men's experiences and the clash of their opinions, it should be trying to harmonize their points of view. As such, it has to appeal to the intellect, and not to the blood, where lie the passions that a civilized man must learn to subdue. If you would communicate Freemasonry in the broadest sense of that word, you must be like Chaucer's scholar. 'For gladly would he learn, and gladly teach'."

Topic: **Grand Lodge Building Ruling**

Grand Master: M.W. Jeffrey B. Hodgdon

Date Issued: June 13, 2007

Proceedings Reference: 2007: page 102

Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Effective this date the consumption of alcoholic beverages is authorized in the following areas of the Grand Lodge only:

- Sub Basement
- The third floor, with the exception of Corinthian Hall
- The ninth floor
- Private rooms leased on a full-time basis to Masonic tenants

Under no circumstance may alcoholic beverages be consumed by minors or in any of the Lodge rooms in the building. All Lodges and tenants are fully responsible and liable for the manner in which it is served and the conduct of the users. Any misuse of alcoholic beverages by any Lodge or Building tenant will result in termination of their rights for further use and possible eviction from the building.