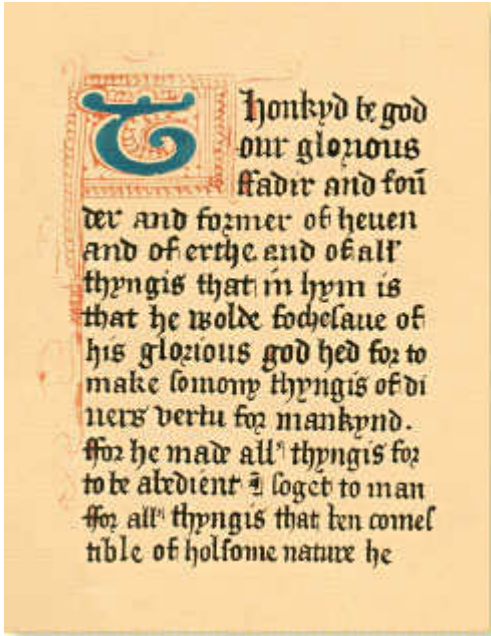


The Matthew Cooke Manuscript with translation



Next to the [Regius](#) the oldest manuscript is that known as the Cooke. It was published by R. Spencer, London, 1861 and was edited by Mr. Matthew Cooke, hence the name. In the British Museum's catalogue it is listed as "Additional M.S. 23,198", and has been dated by [Hughan](#) at 1450 or thereabouts, an estimate in which most of the specialists have concurred. Dr. Begemann believed the document to have been "compiled and written in the southeastern portion of the western Midlands, say, in Gloucestershire or Oxfordshire, possibly also in southeast Worcestershire or southwest Warwickshire. The 'Book of Charges' which forms the second part of the document is certainly of the 14th century, the historical or first part, of quite the beginning of the 15th." (A.Q.C. IX, page 18)

The Cooke MS. was most certainly in the hands of Mr. George Payne, when in his second term as Grand Master in 1720 he compiled the "General Regulations", and which Anderson included in his own version of the "Constitutions" published in 1723. Anderson himself evidently made use of lines 901-960 of the MS.

The [Lodge Quatuor Coronati](#) reprinted the Cooke in facsimile in Vol. II of its *Antigraha* in 1890, and included therewith a Commentary by [George William Speth](#) which is, in my own amateur opinion, an even more brilliant piece of work than Gould's Commentary on the Regius. Some of Speth's conclusions are of permanent value. I paraphrase his findings in my own words:

The M.S. is a transcript of a yet older document and was written by a Mason. There were [several versions of the Charges to a Mason](#) in circulation at the time. The MS. is in two parts, the former of which is an attempt at a history of the Craft, the latter of which is a version of the Charges. Of this portion Speth writes that it is "far and away the earliest, best and purest version of the 'Old Charges' which we possess." The MS. mentions nine "articles", and these evidently were legal enforcements at the time; the nine "points" given were probably not legally binding but were morally so. "Congregations" of Masons were held here and there but no "General Assembly" (or "Grand Lodge"); Grand Masters existed in fact but not in name and presided at one meeting of a congregation only. "Many of our present usages may be traced in their original form to this manuscript."

Reprinted from an [editorial by Bro. H.L. Haywood](#) in the September 1923 edition of *The Builder*

THonkyd be god
our glorious
ffadir and foinder
der and former of heuen

[Fol. 4]

Thanked be God,
our glorius
father and found-
er and former of Heaven

and of erthe and of all thyngis that in hym is that he wolde foche[s]aue of his gloriou god hed for to make [s]o many thyngis of diuers vertu for mankynd. ffor he mader all thyngis for to be abedient & [s]oget to man ffor all thyngis that ben come[s]tible of hol[s]ome nature he ordeyned hit for manys [s]usty na[n]s. And all to be hath yif to man wittys and cony[n]g of dy[ver]s thyngys and craftys by the whiche we may trauayle in this worlde to [20] gete [wit] our lyuyg to make diuers thingys to goddis ple[s]ans and also for our e[s]e and profyt. The whiche thingis if I [s]cholde reher[s]e hem hit wre to longe to telle and to wryte. Wherfor I woll leue. but I [s]hall [s]chew you [s]ome that is to [s]ey ho and in what wyse the [s]ciens of Gemetry fir[s]te be ganne and who [wer] the founders therof and of othur craftis mo as hit is no tid in [the] bybill and in othur [s]tories.

How and in what maner [th]at this worthy [s]ciens of Gemetry be gan I wole tell you as I sayde before. ye [s]hall undirstonde [that] [ther] ben vi[i] liberall [s]ciens by the whiche vi[i] all [s]ciens and craftis in the world were fyr[s]te founde. and in especiall for he is causer of all. [that] is to sey [the] [s]ciens of Gemetry of all other that be. the whiche vi[i] sciens ben called thus. as for the fir[s]t [that] is called fundament of sciens his name is grammer[er] he techith a man ry[g]htfully to [s]peke and to write truly. The [s]econde is rethorik. and he techith a man to [s]peke formably and fayre. The thrid is dioletic[us]. and [that] [s]ciens techith a man to discern the trowthe fro [the] fals and comenly it is tellid art or [s]oph[is]try. The fourth ys callid ar[s]metryk [the] whiche techeth a man the crafte of nowmbers for to rekyn and to make a coun[t] of all thy[ng]e The ffte Gemetry the which techith a man all the met[t] and me[s]u[r]s and ponderat[i]o[n] of wy[g]htis of all mans craft[er]. The. vi. is musi[k] that techith a man the crafte of [s]ong in notys of voys and organ & trompe and harp and of all othur [p]teynyng to hem. The vi[i] is a[s]tronomy that techith man [the] cours of the [s]onne and of [the] moune and of o[th]er [s]tarrys & planetys of heuen.

[10]

[Fol.4 b.]

[Fol. 5]
[30]

[40]

[Fol. 5 b.]

[50]

[Fol. 6]

[60]

[70]

[Fol. 6 b.]

and of earth and of all things that in him is, that he would vouchsafe, of his glorious God-head, for to make so many things of diuers virtue for mankind; for He made all things for to be obedient and subject to man, for all things that are comes tible of wholsome nature he ordained it for mans sustenance. And also he hath given to man wits and cunning of divers things, and crafts, by the which we may travel in this world to get with our living to make divers things to God's pleasure, and also for our ease and profit. The which things if I should rehearse them it were too long to tell, and to write. Wherefore I will leave (them), but I shall shew you some, that is to say how, and in what wise, the science of Geometry first began, and who were the founders thereof, and of other crafts more, as it is noted in the Bible and in other stories.

How and in what maner that this worthy science of geometry began, I will tell you, as I said before. Ye shall understand that there be 7 liberal sciences, by the which 7 all sciences and crafts, in the world, were first found, and in espwciall for he is causer of all, that is to say the science of geometry of all other that be, the which 7 sciences are called thus. As for the first, that is called [the] fundament of science, his name is grammar, he teacheth a man rightfully to speak and to write truly. The second is rhetoric, and he teacheth a man to speak formably and fair. The third is dialecticus, and that science teacheth a man to discern the truth from the false, and commonly it is called art or sophistry. The fourth is called arithmetic, the which teacheth a man the craft of numbers, for to reckon and to make account of all things. The fifth [is] geometry, the which teacheth a man all the metcon, and measures, and ponderacion, of weights of all mans craft. The 6th is music, that teacheth a man the craft of song, in notes of voice and organ, and trumpet, and harp, and of all others pertaining to them. The 7th is astronomy, that teacheth man the course of the sun, and of the moon, and of other stars and planets of heaven.

Owrentent is principally to treat of the first foundation of the worthy science of Geometry and we were the founders thereof as I say before there be seven liberal sciences that is to say, seven sciences or crafts that are free in themselves the which seven live only by Geometry. And Geometry is as much to say as the measure of the earth Et sic dicitur a geo quod est in R ter a latine & metron quod est mensura. Una Geometria in mensura terre uel terrarum. that is to say in English that Geometria is I say of geo that is in Greek earth, and metron that is to say measure. And thus is this name of Geometria compounded and is said to be the measure of the earth.

Marvel ye not that I say that all sciences live all only by the science of Geometry. for there is none artificial all no handicraft that is wrought by mans hand but it is wrought by Geometry. and a notable cause, for if a man work with his hands he worketh with some manner of tool and there is none instrument of material things in this world but it come of the kind of earth, and to earth it will turne again, and there is none instrument that is to say a tool to work with, but it hath some proportion, more or less. And some proportion is measure the tool or the instrument is earth. And Geometry is said to be the measure of the earth, Wherefore I may say that men live all by Geometry. for all men here in this world live by the labour of their hands.

Many more probations I will tell you, why that Geometry is the science that all reasonable men live by, but I leave it, at this time, for the long process of writing. And now I will proceed further on my matter. ye shall understand that among all the crafts of the world, of mans craft, Masonry hath the most notability and most part of this science, geometry, as it is noted and said in history, as in the Bible, and in the master of history. And in the chronicle printed, and in the histories that is named Bede. De Imagine Mundi & Isodorus ethomologia. Methodius epus & martiris. And other men say that masonry is principall of Geometry as

[80]

[Fol. 7.]

[90]

[100]

[110]

[Fol. 8.]

[Fol. 8 b.]

[130]

[140]

[Fol. 9.]

Our intent is principally to treat of the first foundation of the worthy science of geometry, and we were the foundes thereof, as I said before. There are seven liberal sciences, that is to say, seven sciences, or crafts, that are free in themselves, the which seven live only by geometry. And geometry is as much to say as the measure of the earth, "Et sic dicitur a geo quod est in R ter a latin et metron quod est mensura. Una Geometria in mensura terra vel terrarum," that is to say in English, that geometria is, I said, of geo that is in Greek, earth, and metron, that is to say measure, and thus is this name of Geometria compounded and is said to be the measure of the earth.

Marvel ye not that I said, that all sciences live all only, by the science of geometry, for there is none [of them] artificial. No handicraft that is wrought by mans hand but it is wrought by geometry, and a notable cause, for if a man work with his hands he worketh with some manner [of] tool, and there is none instrument, of material things, in this world but it come[s] of the kind of earth, and to earth it will turn again, and there is none instrument, that is to say a tool to work with, but it hath some proportion, more or less. And proportion is measure, the tool, or the instrument, is earth. And geometry is said [to be] the measure of [the] earth, Wherefore, I may say that men live all by geometry, for all men here in this world live by the labour of their hands.

Many more probations I will tell you, why that geometry is the science that all reasonable men live by, but I leave it, at this time, for the long process of writing. And now I will proceed further on my matter. Ye shall understand that among all the crafts of the world, of man's craft, Masonry hath the most notability and most part of this science, geometry, as it is noted and said in history, as in the Bible, and in the master of history. And in the chronicle printed, and in the histories that is named Bede. "De Imagine Mundi;" et Isodorus "Ethomolegiarum." Methodius, Episcopus et Martiris, and others, many more, said that masonry is principal of geometry, as

me thenkyth hit may well
be [s]ayd for hit was [the] first
that was foundon as hit is
notid in the bybull in [the] first
boke of Genesis in the iii[i]
chap[ter]. And al[s]o all the doc
tours afor[s]ayde acordeth [ther] to
And [s]u[me] of hem [s]eythe hit
more openly and playnly
ry[ght] as his [s]eithe in the by
bull Gene[s]is

[150]

ADam is line linyalle
[s]one de[s]cendyng doun[e]
the vi[i] age of adam byfore
noes flode [ther] was a ma[n] [that]
was clepyd lameth the
whiche hadde i[i] wyffes [the]
on hyght ada & a nother
[s]ella by the fyr[s]t wyffe [th]at
hyght ada [he] be gate i[i] [s]onys
[that] one hyght Jobel and the o[ther]
height juball. The elder [s]one
Jobell he was the fists ma[n] [170]
[that] e[ver] found gemetry and
ma[s]onry. and he made how
[s]is & namyd in [the] bybull
Pa[ter] habitant[um] in tento[ri]
ris atq[ue] pasto[rum] That is to
[s]ay fader of men dwellyng
in tentis [that] is dwellyng
how[s]is. A. he was Cayin is
ma[s]ter ma[s]on and go[ver]nor
of all his werkys whan
he made [the] Cite of Enoch
that was the fir[s]te Cite
that was the fir[s]t Cite [th]at
e[ver] was made and [that] made
Kayme Adam is [s]one. [an]d
yaf to his owne [s]one. Enoch
and yaff the Cyte the n[ame]
of his [s]one and kallyd hit
Enoch. and now hit is
callyd Effraym and [ther] wa[s]
[s]ciens of Gemetry and ma
[s]onri fyr[s]t occupied and
c[on]trenyd for a [s]ciens and
for a crafte and [s]o we may
[s]ey [that] hit was cav[s]e & f[un]
dacion of all craftys and
[s]ciens. And al[s]o [this] ma[n]
Jobell was called Pa[ter]
Pasto[rum]

[160]

[Fol 10.]

[180]

[Fol. 10 b.]

[190]

[Fol. 11.]

THe mas[ter] of [s]tories
[s]eith and beda de yma
gyna m[un]di policronicon &
other mo [s]eyn that he wa[s]
[th]e first that made de[per]ce[s]ion
of lond [that] e[ver]y man myght
knowe his owne grounde
and labou[re] [the]re on as for
his owne. And also he de
[par]tid flockes of [s]chepe [that]
e[ver]y man myght know hi[s]
owne [s]chepe and [s]o we may
[s]ey that he was the fir[s]t
founder of [that] [s]ciens. And his
brother Juball. or tuball
was founder of my[s]yke &
[s]ong as pictogoras [s]eyth
in policronycon and the
[s]ame [s]eythe ylodou[re] in his

[200]

[210]

[Fol. 11 b.]

me thinketh it may well
be said, for it was the first
that was founded, as it is
noted in the Bible, in the first
book of Genesis in the 4th
chapter; and also all the doc
tors aforesaid accordeth thereto,
and some of them saith it
more openly, and plainly,
right as it saith in the Bi
ble, Genesis.

Adams line lineal
son, descending down
the 7th age of Adam before
Noah's flood, there was a man that
was named Lamech the
which had 2 wives, the
one hight Adah, and another
Zillah; by the first wife, that
hight Adah, he begat 2 sons
that one hight Jabal, and the other
hight Jubal. The elder son,
Jabal, he was the first man
that ever found geometry and
Masonry, and he made houses,
and [is] named in the Bible
"Pater habitancium in tento
ris atque pastorum," that is to
say, father of men dwelling
in tents, that is, dwelling
houses. And he was Cain's
master mason, and governor
of all his works, when
he made the city of Enoch,
that was the first city;
That was the first city that
ever was made, and that made
Cain, Adams son, and
gave to his own son Enoch,
and gave the city the name
of his son, and called it
Enoch. And now it is
called Ephraim, and there was
[the] science of Geometry, and ma
sonry, first occupied, and
contrenid, for a science and
for a craft, and so we may
say that it was [the] cause and foun
dation of all crafts, and
sciences, and also this man,
Jaball, was called "pater
pastorum."

The master of stories
saith, and Bede, *De Im
agine Mundi*, {the} *Policronicon*, and
other more say that he was
the first that made depercession
of land, that every man might
know his own ground,
and labour thereon, as for
his own. And also he de
parted flocks of sheep, that
every man might know his
own sheep, and so we may
say that he was the first
founder of that science. And his
brother Jubal, or Tubal,
was [the] founder of music and
song, as Pythagoras saith
in [the] *Policronicon* and the
same saith Isodore in his

ethemologi[i] in the v[i] boke
there he [s]eythe that he was
[the] fir[s]t foundere of my[s]yke
and [s]ong and of organ &
trompe and he founde [th]at
[s]ciens by the [s]oune of pon/deracion
of his brotheris hamers [that]
was tubalcaym. [220]

SOthely as [the] bybull
[s]eyth in the chapitre
[that] is to [s]ey the iii[i] of Gene[s]
[that] he [s]eyth lameth gate apon
his other wiffe [that] height [s]ella
a [s]one & a do[ou]c[ter] [the] names of
th[em] were clepid tubalcaym
[that] was [the] [s]one. & his doghter
hight neema & as the poli
cronycon [s]eyth [that] [s]ome men
[s]ey [that] [s]che was noes wyffe
we[ther] h[it] be [s]o o[ther] no we afferme/ hit nott [230]

YE [s]chul[le] under[s]tonde
[that] [th]is [s]one tubalcaym
was founder of [s]mythis
craft and o[ther] craft of
meteil [that] is to [s]ey of eyron
of braffe of golde & of [s]il[ver]
as [s]ome docturs [s]eyn & his
[s]ys[ter] neema was fynder of
we[ver]scraft. for by fore [that] time
was no cloth weuyn but
they did spynne yerne and
knytte hit & made h[em] [s]uch[e] [240]

clothyng as they couthe
but as [the] woman neema
founde [the] craft of weuyng
& [ther]fore hit was kalled wo
menys craft. and [th]es ii[i]
brotheryn afore[s]ayd had know
lyche [that] god wold take ven
gans for [s]ynne o[ther] by fyre
or watir and they had gre[ter]
care how they my[s]t do to [250]

[s]aue [the] [s]ciens that [th]ey fo[un]de
and [th]ey toke her con[s]el[le]
to gedyr & by all her wit[ts]
[th]ey [s]eyde [that] were. ii[i] ma[n]er[er] of
[s]tonn of [s]uche [ver]tu [that] [the] one
wolde ne[ver] brenne & [that] [s]to[n]e
is callyd marbyll. & [that] o[ther] sto[n]e
[that] woll not [s]ynke in wa[ter]. &
[that] stone is named la[tr]us. and
[s]o [th]ey deuy[s]yed to wryte all [260]

[the] [s]ciens [that] [th]ey had ffounde in
this ii[i] [s]tonys if [that] god wol[de]
take vengns by fyre [that] [the]
marbyll [s]cholde not bren[ne]
And yf god [s]ende vengans
by wa[ter] [that] [th]e o[ther] [s]cholde not
droune. & so [th]ey prayed [ther]
elder brother jobell [that] wold
make ii[i]. pillers of [th]es. ii[i]
[s]tones [that] is to [s]ey of marb[y]ll
and of la[tr]us and [that] he wold
write in the ii[i]. pylers all [270]

[the] [s]ciens & craf[ts] [that] all [th]ey
had founde. and [s]o he did
and [ther]for we may [s]ey [that]
he was mo[s]t co[n]nyng in
[s]ciens for he fyr[s]t bygan
& [per]formed the end by for
noes flode. [280]
[Fol. 14.]

Ethemologies, in the 6th book,
there he saith that he was
the first founder of music,
and song, and of organ and
trumpet, and he found that
science by the sound of pon-/deration
of his brother's hammers, that
was Tubal Cain.

Soothly as the Bible
saith in the chapter,
that is to say, the 4th of Genesis,
that he saith Lamech begot upon
his other wife, that hight Zillah,
a son and a daughter, the names of
them were called Tubal Cain,
that was the son, and his daughter [was]
called Naamah, and as the *Poli-*
cronicon saith, that some men
say that she was Noah's wife:
whether it be so, or no, we affirm/ it not.

Ye shall understand
that this son Tubal Cain
was [the] founder of smiths'
craft, and of other crafts of
metal, that is to say, of iron,
of brass, of gold, and of silver,
as some doctors say, and his
sister Naamah was finder of
weavers-craft, for before that time
was no cloth woven, but
they did spin yarn and
knit it, and made them such
clothing as they could,
but as the woman Naamah
found the craft of weaving,
and therefore it was called wo-
men's craft, and these 3
brethren, aforesaid, had know-
ledge that God would take ven-
geance for sin, either by fire,
or water, and they had greater
care how they might do to
save the sciences that they [had] found,
and they took their counsel
together and, by all their witts,
they said that [there] were 2 manner of
stone[s] of such virtue that the one
would never burn, and that stone
is called marble, and that the other stone
that will not sink in water and
that stone is named latres, and
so they devised to write all
the sciences that they had found in
these 2 stones, [so that] if that God would
take vengeance, by fire, that the
marble should not burn.
And if God sent vengeance,
by water, that the other should not
drown, and so they prayed their
elder brother Jabel that [he] would
make 2 pillars of these 2
stones, that is to say of marble
and of latres, and that he would
write in the 2 pillars all
the science[s], and crafts, that all they
had found, and so he did
and, therefore, we may say that
he was most cunning in
science, for he first began
and performed the before
Noah's flood.

KYndly knowyng of
 [that] venganns [that] god
 wolde [s]end whether hit
 [s]cholde be bi fyre or by wa[ter]
 the bretherne hadde hit n[ot]
 by a ma[n]er[er] of a [p]ro[p]hecy they
 wi[s]t [that] god wold [s]end one [ther]
 of. and [ther] for thei wryten
 he[re] [s]ciens in [the]. i[i]. pilers
 of [s]tone. And [s]u[me] men [s]ey
 [that] [the]y wryten in [the]. [s]tonis
 all [the]. vi[i] [s]ciens. but as
 [the]y in here mynde [that] a ven
 ganns [s]cholde come. And
 to hit was [that] god [s]entd ven
 ganns [s]o [that] [ther] come [s]uche
 a flode [th]at al[le] [the] worl was
 drowned. and al[le] men w[er]
 dede [ther] in [s]aue. vii[i]. [p]er[son]is
 And [that] was noe and his
 wyffe. and his ii[i]. sonys &
 here wyffes. of whiche. ii[i]
 sones all [the] world cam of.
 and here namys were na
 myd in this ma[n]er[er]. Sem. Cam.
 & Japhet. And [this] flode was
 kalled noes flode ffor he &
 his children were [s]auyed [ther]
 in. And af[ter] this flode many
 yeres as [the] cronycle telleth
 thes. ii[i] pillers were founde
 & as [the] polycronicon [s]eyth [that]
 a grete clerke [that] callede putol-/goras
 [f]onde [that] one and hermes [the]
 philisophre fonde [that] other. &
 thei tought forthe [the] [s]ciens [that]
 thei fonde [ther] y wryten.

Every cronycle and [s]to
 riall and meny other
 clerkys and the bybull in [p]ri[n]ci
 pall wittenes of the makyn[ge]
 of the toure of babilon and hit
 is wryten in [the] bibull Gene[s]is
 Cap[ter] [x] wo [that] Cam noes
 [s]one gate nembrothe and he
 war a myghty man apon [the]
 erthe and he war a stron[ge]
 man like a Gyant and he w[as]
 a grete Kyng. and the bygyn
 yn[ge] of his kyngdom was
 trew kyngd[om] of babilon and
 arach. and archad. & talan &
 the lond if [s]ennare. And this
 same CamNemroth be gan [the] towre
 of babilon and he taught and
 he taught to his werkemwn [the]
 crafte of ma[s]uri and he had
 [wit] h[ym] mony ma[s]onys mo [th]an
 [x]l [th]ou[s]and. and he louyd &
 chere[s]ched them well. and hit
 is wryten in policonicon and
 in [the] mas[ter] of [s]tories and in
 other [s]tories mo. and [this] a part
 wytnes bybull in the [s]ame
 [x]. chap[ter] he [s]eyth [that] a
 [s]ure [that] was nye kynne to
 CamNembrothe yede owt of [the] londe of
 [s]enare and he bylled the Cie
 Nunyve and plateas and o[ther]
 mo [th]us he [s]eyth. De tra illa
 & de [s]ennare egressus est a[s]u[re]

[290]

[Fol. 14 b.]

[300]

[Fol. 15.]

[310]

[320]

[330]

[Fol. 16.]

[340]

[350]

[360]

Kindly knowing of
 that vengeance, that God
 would send, whether it
 should be by fire, or by water,
 the brethren had it not
 by a manner of a prophecy, they
 wist that God would send one there-
 of, and therefore they wrote
 their science[s] in the 2 pillars
 of stone, and some men say
 that they wrote in the stones
 all the 7 science[s], but as
 they [had] in their mind[s] that a ven-
 geance should come. And
 so it was that God sent ven-
 geance so that there came such
 a flood that all the world was
 drowned, and all men were
 dead therein, save 8 persons,
 And that was Noah, and his
 wife, and his three sons, and
 their wives, of which 3
 sons all the world came of,
 and their names were na-
 med in this manner, Shem, Ham,
 and Japhet. And this flood was
 called Noah's flood, for he, and
 his children, were saved there-
 in. And after this flood many
 years, as the chronicle telleth,
 these 2 pillars were found,
 and as the *Pilicronicon* saith, that
 a great clerk that [was] called Pythag/oras
 found that one, and Hermes, the
 philosopher, found that other, and
 they taught forth the sciences that
 they found therein written.

Every chronicle, and his-
 tory, and many other
 clerks, and the Bible in princi-
 pal, witnesses of the making
 of the tower of Babel, and it
 is written in the Bible, Genesis
 Chapter x., how that Ham, Noah's
 son begot Nimrod, and he
 waxed a mighty man upon the
 earth, and he waxed a strong
 man, like a giant, and he was
 a great king. And the begin-
 ning of his kingdom was [that of the]
 true kingdom of Babylon, and
 Arach, and Archad, and Calan, and
 the land of Sennare. And this
 same Nimrod began the tower
 of Babylon . . . and
 he taught to his workmen the
 craft of measures, and he had
 with him many masons, more than
 40 thousand. And he loved and
 cherished them well. And it
 is written in [the] *Policronicon*, and
 in the master of stories, and in
 other stories more, and this in part
 witnesseth [the] Bible, in the same
 x. chapter [of Genesis,] where he saith that A-
 sur, that was nigh [of] kin to
 Nimrod, [and] went out of the land of
 Senare and he built the city [of]
 Nineveh, and Plateas, and other
 more, this he saith "de tra illa
 et de Sennare egressus est Asur,

& edificauit Nunyven & pla[-]
teas ciuiya[te] & cale & Jesu q[o]q[z]
in[ter] nunyven & hec [est] Ciuita[s]
magna.

REs[on] wolde [that] we [s]chold
tell openly how & in
what ma[n]er that [the] charges
of ma[s]oncraft was fyr[s]t fo[un]
dyd & ho yaf fir[s]t [the] name
to hit of ma[s]onri and ye
[s]chyll know well [that] hit told
and writen in policronicon &
in methodus ep[iscopu]s and mar[ter]
[that] a[s]sur [that] was a worthy lord
of [s]ennare [s]ende to nembroth
[the] kyng to [s]ende h[ym] ma[s]ons
and workemen of craft [that] myght
helpe hym to make his Cite
[that] he was in wyll to make.
And nembroth [s]ende h[ym] [xxx]
C. of masons. And whan [they]
[s]cholde go & [s]ende h[em] forth. he
callyd hem by for h[ym] and [s]eyd
to hem ye mo[s]t go to my co
[s]yn a[s]sure to helpe h[ym] to bilde
a cyte but loke [that] ye be well
go[uer]nyd and I [s]chall yeue
yov a charge [p]ro[fitable] for
you & me.

When ye come to [that] lord
loke [that] ye be trewe to
hym lyke as ye wolde be to
me. and truly do your labour
and craft and takyt re[s]on[-]
abull your mede [ther]for as ye
may de[s]erue and al[s]o [that] ye
loue to gedyr as ye were
bre[th]eryn and holde to gedyr
truly. & he [that] hath most c[on]yng
teche hit to hys felaw and
louke ye go[uer]ne you ayen[s]t
yowr lord and a monge
yowr selfe. [that] I may haue
worchyppe and thonke for
me [s]endyng and techyng
you the crafte. and [they] re[s]ceuyd
the charge of h[ym] [that] was here
mai[s]ter and here lorde. and
wente forthe to a[s]sure. &
bilde the cite of nunyve in
[the] count[r]e of plateas and o[ther]
Cites mo [that] men call cale
and Jesen [that] is a gret Cite
bi twene Cale and nunyve
And in this ma[n]er [the] craft
of ma[s]onry was fyr[s]t [p]re[fer]
ryd & charged hit for a [s]ci[en]s.

ELders [that] we[re] bi for us
of ma[s]ons had te[s]e
charges wryten to hem as
we haue now in owr char
gys of [the] [s]tory of Enclidnis
as we haue [s]eyn hem writ[en]
in latyn & in Fre[n]che bothe
but ho [that] Enclyd come to ge[-]
metry re[s]on wolde we
[s]cholde telle yow as hit is
notid in the hybull & in other
[s]tories. In [xii] Capit[lor] Gene[s]is
he tellith how [that] abrah[am] com to
the lond of Canan and owre

et edificavit Nineven et Plateas
civitatum et Cale et Jesu quoque,
inter Nineven et hoec est Civitas
magna."

Reason would that we should
tell openly how, and in
what manner, that the charges
of mason-craft was first found-
ed and who gave first the name
of it of masonry. And ye
shall know well that it [is] told
and writen in [the] *Policronicon* and
in Methodius episcopus and
Martyrus that Asure, that was a worthy lord
of Sennare, sent to Nimrod
the king, to send him masons
and workmen of craft that might
help him to make his city
that he was in will to make.
And Nimrod sent him 30 [380]
hunred of masons. And when they
should go and [he should] send them forth he
called them before him and said
to them--"Ye must go to my cou-
sin Asur, to help him to build
a city; but look [to it] that ye be well
governed, and I shall give
you a charge profitable for
you and me.

When ye come to that lord
look that ye be true to
him like as ye would be to
me, and truly do your labour
and craft, and take reason-
able your meed therefore as ye
may deserve, and also that ye
love together as ye were
brethren, and hold together
truly; and he that hath most cunning
teach it to his fellow; and
look ye govern you against
your lord and among
yourselves, that I may have
worship and thanks for
my sending, and teaching,
you the craft." and they re-/ceived
the charge of him that was their
master and their lord, and
went forth to Asur, and
built the city of Ninevah, in
the country of Plateas, and other
cities more that men call Cale
and Jesen, that is a great city
between Cale and Nineveh.
And in this manner the craft
of masonry was first prefer-
red and charged it for a science.

Elders that were before us,
of masons, had these
charges written to them as
we have now in our char-
ges of the story of Euclid,
as we have seen them written
in Latin and in French both;
but how that Euclid came to [the knowledge of]
geometry reason would we
should tell you as it is
noted in the Bible and in other
stories. In the twelfth chapter of Genesis
he telleth how that Abraham came to
the Land of Canaan, and our

[Fol. 17.]

[370]

[Fol. 17 b.]

[380]

[390]

[Fol. 18.]

[400]

[Fol. 18 b.]

[410]

[420]

[Fol. 19.]

[430]

lord aperyd to h[ym] and [s]leyd I
[s]chall geue this lond to [th]i
[s]leed. but [ther] [s]yll a grete hun[ger]
in [that] lond. And abraham toke
[s]ara his wiff [wit] him and
yed in to Egypte in pylgre[-]
mage whyle [the] hunger du
red he wolde hyde [ther]. And A
brah[am] as [the] cronycull [s]eyth
he was a wy[s]e man and a
grete clerk. And covthe all
[the]vi[i] [s]ciens. and taughte
the egypeyans [the] [s]ciens of
Gemetry. And this worthy
clerk Enclidnis was his
clerke and lerned of hym.
And he yaue [the] fir[s]te name
of Gemetry all be [that] hit
was ocupied bifor hit had
no name of gemetry. But
hit is [s]leyd of ylodour Ethe
mologia[rum] in [the] v. boke. Ethe
mologia[rum] Cap[itolo] p'mo. [s]eyth
[that] Enclide was on of [the] fir[s]t
founders of Gemetry &
he yaue hit name. ffor [in]
his tyme ther was a wa
ter in [that] lond of Egypt [that]
is callyd Nilo and hit flowid
[so] ferre in to [the] londe [that] men
myght not dwelle [ther]in

[Fol. 19 b.]

[440]

[Fol. 20.]
[450]

[460]

Then this worthi
clerke Enclide taught
hem to make grete wallys
and diches to holde owt [the]
watyr. and he by Gemet'
me[s]ured [the] londe and de[par]
tyd hit in dy[ver]s [par]tys. &
mad e[ver]y man to clo[s]e his
awne [par]te [wit] walles and
diches an [the]en hit be c[am]e
a plentuos c[on]untre of all
ma[n]er[ly] of freute and of yon[ge]
peple of men and women
that [ther] was [s]o myche pepull
of yonge frute [that] they couth'
not well lyue. And [the] lordys
of the countre drew hem to
gedyr and made a counsell
how they myght helpe her
childeryn [that] had no lyflode
c[om]potente & abull for to fyn[de]
hem selfe and here childron
for [th]ey had [s]o many. and
a mong hem all in counsell
was [this] worthy clerke Encli
dnis and when he [s]a[we] [th]at
all they cou[th]e not btynge
a bout this mater. he [s]eyd
to hem woll ye take y[our] [s]on[ys]
in go[uer]nanns & I [s]chall tec[he]
hen [s]luce a sciens [that] they
[s]chall iyue ther by [j]entel
manly vnder condicion [that]
ye wyll be [s]wore to me to
[per]fourme the go[uer]na[n]n[s] [that]
I [s]chall [s]ette you too and
hem bothe and the kyng
of [the] londe and all [the] lordys
by one a[ss]ent gra[un]tyd [ther] too.

[470]

[480]
[490]
[Fol. 21 b.]

[500]

Reson wolde [that] e[uer]y m[an]

Lord appeared to him and said, I
shall give this land to thy
seed; but there fell a great hunger
in that land, and Abraham took
Sarah, his wife, with him and
went into Egypt in pilgrim-
age, [and] while the hunger [en]dur-
ed he would bide there. And A-
braham, as the chronicle saith,
he was a wise man and a
great clerk, and couthe all
the 7 science[s] and taught
the Egyptians the science of
geometry. And thid worthy
clerk, Euclid, was his
clerk and learned of him.
And he gave the first name
of geometry, all be that it
was occupied before it had
no name of geometry. But
it is said of Isodour, *Ethe-
mologiarum*, in the 5th booke *Ethe-
molegiarum*, capitolo primo, saith
that Euclid was one of the first
founders of geometry, and
he gave it [that] name, for in
his time that was a wa- [there]
ter in that land of Egypt that
is called [the] Nile, and it flowed
so far into the land that men
might not dwell therein.

Then this worthy
clerk, Euclid, taught
them to make great walls
and ditches to holde out the
water; and he, by geometry,
measured the land, and depart-
ed it in divers parts, and
made every man close his
own part with walls and
ditches, and then it became
a plenteous country of all
manner of fruit and of young
people, of men and women,
that there was so much people
of young fruit that they could
not well live. And the lords
of the country drew them [selves] to-
gether and made a council
how they might help their
children that had no livelihood,
competent and able, for to find
themselves and their children
for thy had so many. And
among them all in council
was this worthy clerk Euclid,
and when he saw that
all they could not bring
about this matter he said
to them-"Will ye take your sons
in governance, and I shall teach
them such science that they
shall live thereby gentle-
manly, under condition that
ye will be sworn to me to
perform the governance that
I shall set you to and
them both." And the king
of the land and all the lords,
by one assent, granted thereto.

Reason would that every man

woulde graunte to [that] thyng [that] were [prof]etable to h[im] [s]elf. and they toke here [s]o nys to enclide to go[uer]ne hem at his owne wyll & he taught to hem the craft Masonry and yaf hit [th]e name of Gemetry by cav[s]e of [th]e [par]tyng of [th]e grounde [that] he had taught to [th]e peple in the time of [th]e makyng of [th]e wallys and diches a for [s]ayd to claw[s]e out [th]e watyr. & I[s]odor [s]eyth in his Ethemologies [that] Enclide callith the craft Gemetrya And [ther] this worthy clerke yaf hit name and taught hitt the lordis [s]onys of [th]e londe [that] he had in his tech[ing] And he yaf h[em] a charge [that] they scholde calle here eche other ffelowe & no nother wise by cav[s]e [that] they were all of one crafte & of one gentyll berthe bore & lor[ds'] [s]onys. And also he [that] we[re] most of c[on]nyng scholde be go[uer]nour of [th]e werke and scholde be callyd mais[ter] & other charges mo [that] ben wryten in [th]e boke of char gys. And [s]o they wrought [with] lordys of [th]e lond & made cities and tounys ca[s]telis & templis and lordis placis.

WHat tyme [that] [th]e chil dren of i[s]rl dwellid [in] egypte they lernyd [th]e craft of masonry. And afturward [th]ey were dryuen ont of Egypte [th]ey come in to [th]e lond of bihest and is now callyd ierl[e]m and hit was ocupied & char gys y holde. And [th]e makyn[g] of [s]alomonis tempull [that] Kyng Dauid be gan. k[yn]g dauid louyd well ma[s]ons and he yaf hem ry[gh]t nye as [th]ey be nowe. And at [th]e makyng of [th]e temple in [s]alomonis tyme as hit is seyde in [th]e bibull in [th]e ii[i] boke of Regu in [ter]cio Regum Cap[itolo] quinto. That Salomon had iii[i]. score thow[s]and masons at his werke. And [th]e kyngi[s] [s]one of Tyry was [his] ma[s]ter ma[s]en. And other crony clos hit is [s]eyd & in olde bokys of ma[s]onry that Salomon c[on]firmed [th]e char gys [that] dauid has fadir had yeue to ma[s]ons. And [s]alomon hym [s]elf taught h[em] here maners byt lityll differans fro the maners that now ben u[s]yd. And fro thens [this] worthy [s]ciens was brought [in] to fraunce

[Fol 22.]

[510]

[Fol. 22 b.]
[520]

[530]

[Fol. 23.]

[540]

[Fol. 23 b.]

[550]

[560]
[Fol 24.]

[570]

would grant to that thing that were profitable to himself, and they took their sons to Euclid to govern them at his own will, and he taught to them the craft, Masonry, and gave it the name of geometry, because of the parting of the ground that he had taught to the people, in the time of the making of the walls and ditches aforesaid, to close out the water, and Isodore saith, in his *Ethemologies*, that Euclid calleth the craft geometry; and there was this worthy clerk gave it name, and taught it the lords' sons of the land that he had in his teaching. And he gave them a charge that they should call here each other fellow, and no other-wise, because that they were all of one craft, and of one gentle birth born, and lords' sons. And also he that were most of cunning should be governor of the work, and should be called master, and other charges more that are written in the book of charges. And so they wrought with lords of the land, and made cities and towns, castles and temples, and lords' palaces.

What time that the chil-drewn of Israel dwelt in Egypt they learned the craft of masonry. And afterward, [when] they were driven out of Egypt, they came into the land of behest, and is now called Jerusalem, and it was occupied and charges there hel. And the making of Solomon's temple that king David began. (King David loved well masons, and he gave them right nigh as they be now.) And at the making of the temple in Solomon's time as it is said in te Bible, in the 3rd book of Regum in tercio Regum capitolo quinto, that Solomon had 4 score thousand masons at his work. And the king's son, of Tyre, was his master Mason. And [in] other chronicles it is said, and in old books of masonry, that Solomon confirmed the charges that David, his father, had given to masons. And Solomon himself taught them there manners [with] but little [their ?] difference from the manners that now are used. And from thence this worthy science was brought into France

And in to many o[ther] regi[on]s

SUmtyme ther w[as]
a worthye kyng in
ffrauns [that] was clepyd Ca
rolus [s]'c[un]du[s] [that] ys to [s]ey
Charlys [the] [s]ecunde. And [this]
Charlys was elyte kyng
of ffrauns by the grace of
god & by lynage also. And
[s]u[m]me men [s]ey [that] he was
elite by fortune [the] whiche
is fals as by cronycle he
was of [the] kynges blode
Royal. And [this] [s]ame kyng
Charlys was a ma[s]on
bi for [that] he was kyng. And
af[ter] [that] he was kyng he louyd
ma[s]ons & cher[s]chid them
and yaf hem chargys and
ma[n]er[ys] at his deu[is]e [the] which[e]
[s]u[m] ben yet u[s]ed in fraunce
and he ordeynyd that [th]ey
[s]cholde haue a [s]emly onys
in [the] yere and come and
[s]peke to gedyr and for to be
reuled by ma[s]ters & felows
of thynges a my[ss]e.
AND [s]oo[n]e af[ter] [that] come
[s]eynt ad habell in to Englonde
and he c[on]uer[ty]d [s]eynt Albon
to cristendome. And [s]eynt
Albon lovyd well ma[s]ons
and he yaf hem fyr[s]t he[re]
charges & maners fyr[s]t
in Englonde. And he or
deyned c[on]uenient to pay
for [the] trauallye. And af[ter]
[theat] was a worthy kynge
in Englonde [that] was callyd
Athelstone and his yong
est [s]one lovyd well the
[s]ciens of Gemetry. and
he wy[s]t well [that] hand craft
had the practyke of [the] [s]ci
ens of Gemetry to well
as masons wherefore he
drewe hym [to] c[on]sell and ler
nyd practyke of [that] [s]ciens
to his [s]peculatyf. For of [s]pec
culatyfe he was a ma[s]ter
and he lovyd well ma
[s]onry and ma[s]ons. And
he bicome a mason hym
[s]elfe. And he yaf hem charg[es]
and names as hit is now
vsyd id Englonde. and in
othere countries. And he
ordyned [that] [th]ey [s]chulde haue
re[s]onabull pay. And pur
cha[s]ed a fre patent of [the] k[yn]g
that they [s]choulde make a
[s]emly whan thei [s]awe re[-]
[s]onably tyme a cu[] to gedir to
he[re] counsel[le] of [the] whiche
Charges manors & [s]emble
as is write and taught [in] [th]e
boke of our charges wher
for I leue hit at this tyme.

GOOD men for this
cau[s]e and [this] man[er]
ma[s]onry toke fir[s]te begyn[-]

[Fol. 24 b.]

[580]

[Fol. 25.]
[590]

[600]

[Fol. 25 b.]

[610]

[Fol. 26.]

[620]

[630]

[Fol. 26 b.]

[640]

[Fol 27.]

and into many other regions

Sometime there was
a worthy king in
France that was called Ca
rolus secundus, that is to say,
Charles the Second, and this
Charles was elected king
of France, by the grace of
God and by lineage also. And
some men say that he was
elected by fortune, the which
is false, as by [the] chronicle he
was of the king's blood
royal. And this same King,
Charles, was a mason
before that he was king, and
after that he was king he loved
Masons and cherished them,
and gave them charges and
manners at his device, [of] the which
some are yet used in France;
and he ordained that they
should have [an] assembly once
in the year, and come and
speak together, and for to be
ruled by masters and fellows
of all things amiss.
And soon after that came
Saint Adhabell into England,
and converted Saint Alban
to Christianity. And Saint
Alban loved well masons,
and he gave them first their
charges and manners first
in England. And he or
dained convenient [times] to pay
for the travail. And after
that was a worthy king
in England that was called
Athelstan, and his yong
est son loved well the
science of geometry, and
he wist well that hand-craft
had the practice of the sci
ence of geometry so well
as masons, wherefore he
drew him to council and learn
ed [the] practice of that science
to his speculative, for of specu
lative he was a master,
and he loved well mason
ry and masons. And
he became a mason him
self, and he gave them charges
and names as it is now
used in England, and in
other countries. And he
ordained that they should have
reasonable pay and purchas
ed a free patent of the king
that they should make [an] assem
bly when they saw a reason
able time and come together to
their councillors of which
charges, manners, and assembly,
as it is written and taught in the
book of our charges, wherefore
I leave it at this time.

GOOD men for this
cause and this manner
Masonry took [its] first begin-

nyng. hit befyll [s]um tyme
 [that] grete lordis had not [s]o
 grete po[s]s[e]s[s]ions [that] they
 myghte not a vauunce here
 fre bigeton childeryn for
 [th]ey had so many. Therefore
 they toke coun[s]ell howe [th]ey
 my[gh]t here childeryn ava[n]ce
 and ordeyn hem one[s]tly to
 lyue. And [s]ende af[ter] wy[s]e
 mai[s]ters of [the] worthy [s]ci
 ens of Gemetry [that] [they] thorou
 here wy[s]dome [s]chold ordey/ne
 hem [s]um hone[s]t lyuynge
 Then on of them [that] had [the]
 name whiche was callyd
 Englet [that] was most [s]otell
 & wi[s]e founder ordeyned
 and art and callyd hit ma
 [s]onry. and so [with] his art ho
 nestly he tho[gh]t [the] childeren
 of get lordis bi [the] pray
 er of [the] fathers and [the] fre
 will of here children. [the]
 wiche when thei tau[gh]t [with]
 hie Cure bi a [s]erteyn ty[m]e
 [th]ey were not all ilyke ab/ull
 for to take of [the] for[s]eyde art
 Wherefore [the] for[s]ayde mai[s]ter
 Englet ordeynet thei were
 pa[s]s[ing] of conyng [s]chold
 be pa[s]s[ing] honoured. And
 ded to call [the] c[on]nyn[ger] mai[s]ter
 for to enforme [the] la[s]s[er] of c[on]
 nyng ma[s]ters of [the] wiche
 were callyd ma[s]ters of no
 bilite of witte and c[on]nyng
 of [that] art. Ne[ver] [th]e[re] [s]e [th]e[re] c[on]
 maundid [that] thei [that] were la[s]s[er]
 of witte [s]chold not be callyd
 [s]eruan[ter] ner [s]ogett but felau
 ffor nobilite of here gentyll
 n[ob]le. In this ma[n]e[r] was [the]
 for[s]ayde art begunne [i]n [the]
 lond of Egypte by [the] for[s]ayde
 mai[s]ter Englat & so hit went
 fro lond to londe and fro k[yn]g
 dome to kyngdome af[ter] [that] ma-
 ny yeris in [the] tyme of kyng
 adhel[s]tone wiche was [s]um
 tyme kyng of Englonde bi
 his co[un]n[s]el[er] and other gre[ter]
 lordys of [the] lond bi c[om]yn
 a[s]s[ent] for grete defavt y
 fennde amon[ger] ma[s]ons [th]e
 ordeyned a certayne reule
 a mongys hom on tyme of
 [the] yere or in ii[i] yere as nede
 were to [the] kyn[ng] and gret
 lordys of [the] londe and all [the]
 comente fro [p]r[o]y[n]ce to [p]r[o]y[n]ce
 and fro co[un]tre to co[un]tre
 c[on]gregacions [s]cholde be made
 by mai[s]ters of all mai[s]ter[s]
 ma[s]ons and felaus in the
 for[s]ayd art. And [s]o at [s]uche
 c[on]gregac[io]ns they [that] be mad
 ma[s]ters [s]chold be examined
 of [the] articuls af[ter] writen. &
 be ran[s]akyd whether thei be
 abull and kunnyn[ng] to [the] [p]r
 fyte of [the] lordys hem to serue
 and to [the] honour of [the] for[s]aid

ning. It befel sometime[s]
 that great lords had not so
 great possessions that they
 might not advance their
 free begotten children, for
 thet had so many, therefore
 they took counsel how they
 might their children advance
 and ordain them honestly to
 live. And [they] sent after wise
 masters of the worthy sci-
 ence of geometry that they, through
 their wisdom, should ordain
 them some honest living.
 Then one of them, that had the
 name which was called
 Englet, that was most subtle
 and wise founder, ordained
 an art and called it Ma-
 sonry, and so with his art, hon-
 estly, he taught the children
 of great lords, by the pray-
 er of the fathers and the free-
 will of their children, the
 which when they [were] taught with
 high care, by a certain time,
 they were not all alike able
 for to take of the [a]foresaid art
 wherefore the [a]foresaid master,
 Englet, ordained [that] they [who] were
 passing of cunning should
 be passing honored, and
 ded to call the cunninger master
 for to inform the less of cun-
 ning masters, of the which
 were called masters, of no-
 bility of wit and cunning
 of that art. Nevertheless they com-
 manded that they that were less
 of wit should not be called
 servant, nor subject, but fellow,
 for nobility of their gentle
 blood. In this manner was the
 [a]foresaid art begun in the
 land of Egypt, by the [a]foresaid
 master Englet, and so it went
 from land to land, and from king-
 dom to kingdom. After that, ma-
 ny years, in the time of King-
 Athelstan, which was some
 time king of England, by
 his counsellors, and other greater
 lords of the land, by common
 assent, for great default
 found among masons, they
 ordained a certain rule
 amongst them: one time of
 the year, or in 3 years as need
 were to the king and great
 lords of the land, and all the
 comonalty, from province to province,
 and from country to country,
 congregations should be made,
 by masters, of all masters,
 Masons, and fellows in the
 [a]foresaid art, and so, at such
 congregations, they that be made
 masters should be examined,
 of the articles after written, and
 be ransacked whether they be
 able and cunning to the pro-
 fit of the lords [having] them to serve
 and to the honour of the [a]foresaid

art and more o|uer| they |s|chulde
receyue here charge |that| they
|s|chuld well and trewly di|s|
pende |the| goodys of here lordis
and as well |the| lowi|s|t as |the|
hie|s|t for they ben her lordys
for |the| tyme of whom |h|ei take
here pay for here ceryce
and for here trauayle. The
fir|s|te article ys this |that| e|uer|y
mai|s|ter| of |th|is art |s|chulde be
wy|s|s|e and trewe to |the| lord |that| he
|s|eruyth di|s|pendyng his godis
trule as he wolde his awne
were di|s|pendyd. and not yefe
more pay to no ma|s|on than
he wot he may di|s|erue af|ter| |the|
derthe of korne & vytayl in |the|
c|o|ntry no fauour |with| stondy|g
for e|uer|y ma|n| to be rewar dyd
af|ter| his trauayle. The se|c|nd
article is this |that| e|uer|y ma|s|ter|
of |th|is art |s|cholde be warned
by fore to cum to his cogrega|t|
|that| thei com dewly but yf thei
may a|s|s|cu|s|yd by |s|ume ma|ner|
cause. But ne|uer|le|s|s|e if |they|
be founde rebell at |s|uche c|o|n|
gregacions or fauty in eny
ma|ner| harme of here lordys
and reprene of this art thei
|s|chulde not be excu|s|yd in no
ma|ner|e out take |per|ell of dethe
and thow they be in |per|yll of
dethe they |s|call warne |the|
mai|s|ter| |that| is pryncipall of |the|
gederyng of his de|s|s|e|s|e. |the|
article is this |that| no ma|s|ter|
take noprentes for la|s|s|e terme
than vi|i| yer at |the| le|s|t. by
caus|e| whi |s|uche as ben |with| |i|
la|s|s|e terme may not |pro|fitely
come to his art. nor abull
to serue truly his lorde to
take as a mason |s|chulde
take. The iii|i| article is |this|
|that| no ma|s|ter| for no |pro|fyte take
no prentis for to be lernyd
that is bore of bonde blode
fore bi cau|s|e of his lorde to
whom he is bonde woll tak|e|
hym as he well may fro
his art & lede hym |with| h|ym| out
of his logge or out of his
place |that| he worchyth in for
his felaus |per|auen|ter| wold help
hym and debte for h|ym|. and
thereoff man|s|laughter my|g|t
ry|s|e hit is forbede. And also
for a nother cau|s|e of his art
hit toke begynnyng of grete
lordis children frely beget|yn|
as hit is |i|seyd bi for. The
v. article is thys |that| no ma|s|ter|
yef more to his prentis in
tyme of his prenti|s|hode for
no |pro|phite to be take than he
note well he may di|s|s|erue
of |the| lorde |that| he |s|eruith |nor| not
|s|o moche |that| |the| lorde of |the| place
|that| he is taught |i|nne may
haue |s|um |pro|fyte bi his te|-|
chyng. The v|i|. article is

art. And, moreover, they should
receive their charge that they
should well and truly dis-
pend the goods of their lords,
as well the lowest as the
highest, for they be their lords,
for the time, of whom they take
their pay for their service
and for their travail. The
first Article is this,--That every
master of this art should be
wise and true to the lord that he
serveth, dispensing his goods
truly as he would his own
were dispensed, and not give
more pay to no mason than
he wot he may deserve, after the
dearth of corn and victual in the
country, no favour withstanding,
for every man to be rewarded
after his travail. The second
Article is this,--That every master
of this art should be warned,
before, to come to his congregation,
that they come duly, but if they
may [be] excused by some manner [of]
cause. But, nevertheless, if they
be found rebel[lious] at such con-
gregations, or faulty in any
manner [of] harm of their lords,
and reproof of this art, they
should not be excused in no
manner [with]out taking peril of death,
and though they be in peril
of death, they shall warn the
master that is principal of the
gathering of his decease. The
[third] Article is this,--That no master
take no [ap]prentice for [a] less term
than 7 year[s] at the least, be-
cause such as be within [a]
less term may not, profitably,
come to his art nor able
to serve, truly, his lord [and] to
take as a mason should
take. The 4th Article is this,--
That no master, for no profit, take
no [ap]prentice, for to be learned,
that is born of bond blood,
for, because of his lord, to
whom he is bond, will take
him as he well may, from
his art and lead him, with him, out
of his lodge, or out of his
place, that he worketh in, for
his fellows, peradventure, would help
him and debate for him, and
thereof manslaughter might
[a]rise, it is forbid[den.] And also
for another cause of his art,
it took beginning of great
lords' children, freely begotten,
as it is said before. The
5th Article is this,--That no master
give more to his [ap]prentice in
time of his [ap]prenticehood, for
no profit to be take[n], than he
note[s] well he may deserve
of the lord that he serveth, nor not
so much that the lord, of the place
that he is taught in, may
have some profit of his teach-
ing. The 6th Article is

this [that] no ma[s]ter for no coue-
ty[s]e ne[r] |pro|fite take no p[re]n-
tis to teche [that] is un|per|fyte [that]
is to [s]ey havynge eny ma|ym|
for [the] whiche he may not
trewely worche as hym
ought for to do. The vi[i].
article is this [that] np mai[s]ter| be
y founde wittingly or help
or |pro|cure to be maynte|ner| &
|su|s|tey|ner| any comyn ny|g|twal-
ker to robbe bi the whiche
ma|ner| of ny|g|twalkin|g|
thei may not fulfyll [ther] day[s]
werke and traueyell thorow
[the]c|on|dicion he[r] felaus my|g|t
be made wrowthe. The vii[i].
article is this [that] yf hit befall
[that] any ma[s]on [that] be |per|fyte and
c|on|nyng come for to |s|eche
werke and fynde any vn|per|fit
and vnkunnyng worchyng
[the] ma[s]ter| of [the] place |s|chall re-
ceyue [the] |per|fite and do a wey [the]
vn|per|fite to [the] |pro|fite of his lord
The ix. article is this [th]at
no mai[s]ter| |s|chall supplant
a nother for hit is |s|eyd in [the]
art of ma[s]onry [that] no man
|s|cholde make ende |s|o well
of werke bigonne bi a no-
ther to [the] |pro|fite of his lorde
as he bigan hit for to end
hit bi his maters or to wh|om|e
he |s|cheweth his maters.
This counsell ys made bi dy-
uers lordis & mai[s]ters of
dyvers |pro|vynces and di|uer|s
c|on|gregacions of ma[s]onry
and hit is to wyte [that] who [that]
covetyth for to come to the
|s|tate of [that] for|s|eyd art hit be-
hoveth hem fyrst |pri|ncypally
to god and holy chyrche &
all halowis and his mas|ter|
and his felowis as his a|wn|e
brotheryn. The |s|econde poynt
he mo|s|t fulfyll his dayes
werke truly [that] he takyth for
his pay. The. ii[i]. |poynt| he can
hele the counsell of his felo|ws|
in logge and in chambere
and in e|uer|y place [ther] as ma[s]on|s|
beth. The iii[i]. poynt [that] he be
no di|s|s|eyver of [the] for|s|eyd art
ne do no |pre|judice ne |s|u|s|teyne
none articles ayen|s|t [the] art
ne a yen|s|t none of [the] art
but he |s|chall |s|u|s|teyne hit
in all honovre in as moche
as he may. The. v. poynt
whan he schall take his
pay [that] he take hit mekely
as the tyme ys ordeynyd bi
the mai[s]ter| to be done and [that]
he fulfyll the accepcons
of trauayle and of his re|s|t
y ordeyned and |s|ette by [the]
mai[s]ter|. The. v[i]. poynt yf
eny di|s|corde |s|chall be bitwe-
ne hym & his felows he
|s|chall a bey hym mekely &
be styll at [the] byddyng of

[Fol. 32 b.]
[800]

[810]

[Fol. 33.]

[820]

[Fol. 33 b.]

[830]

[840]

[Fol. 34.]

[850]

[Fol. 34 b.]

[860]

this.--That no master for no coveteous-
ness, nor profit, take no [ap]pren-
tice to teach that is imperfect, that
is to say, having any maim
for the which he may not
truly work as he
ought for to do. The 7th
Article is this.--That no master be
found wittingly, or help
or procure. to be [a] maintainer and
sustainer [of] any common night wal-
ker to rob, by the which
manner of night-walking
they may not fulfil their day's
work and travail, [and] through
the condition their fellows might
be made wroth. The 8th
Article is this.--That if it befall
that any mason that be perfect, and
cunning, come for to seek
work and find an imperfect
and uncunning working,
the master of the place shall re-
ceive the perfect, and do away the
imperfect, to the profit of his lord.
The 9th Article is this.--That
no master shall supplant
another for it is said, in the
art of masonry, that no man
should make end so well
of work begun by ano-
ther, to the profit of his lord,
as he [that] began it, for to end
it by his matters, or to whom
he sheweth his matters.
This council is made by di-
vers lords and masters of
divers provinces and divers
congregations of masonry
and it is, to wit, that who that
coveteth for to come to the
state of the [a]foresaid art it be-
hoveth them first, principally,
to God and holy church, and
all-halows, and his master
and his fellows as his own
brethren. The second Point.--
He must fulfil his day's
work truly that he taketh for
his pay. The 3rd [Point].--That he can
hele the counsel of his fellows
in lodge, and in chamber,
and in every place there as Masons
be. The 4th Point.--That he be
no deceiver of the [a]foresaid art,
nor do no prejudice, nor sustain
no articles, against the art,
nor against none of the art,
but he shall sustain it
in all honour, inasmuch
as he may. The 5th Point.--
When he shall take his
pay, that he take it meekly,
as the time is ordained by
the master to be done, and that
he fulfil the acceptations
of travail, and of rest,
ordained and set by the
master. The 6th Point.--If
any discord shall be be-
tween him and his fellows he
shall obey him meekly, and
be still at the bidding of

his ma[s]ter or of [the] wardeyne
of his ma[s]ter in his ma[s]ter's
absens to [the] holy day fo[-]
lowyng and [that] he accorde
then at [the] di[s]pocion of his
felaws and not upon [the] wer
keday for lettyng of here
werke and [pro]fyte of his lord
The. vii. poynt [that] he covet
not [the] wyfe ne [the] doughter
of his ma[s]ters no[ther] of his
felaws but yf hit be in ma[-]
tuge nor holde c[on]cubines
for dy[s]cord [that] my[ght] fall a-
monges them. The. viii
poynt yf hit befall hym
ffor to be wardeyne vndyr
his ma[s]ter [that] he be trewe mene
bitwene his ma[s]ter & his
felaws and [that] he be besy in
the ab[s]ence of his ma[s]ter to
[the] honor of his ma[s]ter and [pro]-
fit to [the] lorde [that] he [ser]ueth
The. ix. poynt yf he be wys[er]
and [s]tellere [th]an his felawe
worchyng [with] hym in his
logge or in eny other place
and he [per]s[eyue] hit [that] he [s]chold
lefe the stone [that] he worchyt a[-]
pon for defawte of c[on]nyng
and can teche hym and a
mende [the] [s]tone he [s]chall en/forme
hym and helpe h[im] [that] the more
loue may encre[s]e among h[em]
and [that] [the] werke of [the] lorde be not
lo[s]t. Whan the ma[s]ter and [the] fe
lawes be for warned ben y
come to [s]uche c[on]gregac[on]s
if nede be [the] Schereffe of [the]
countre or the mayer of [the]
Cyte or alderman of [the] town[e]
in wyche the c[on]gregac[on]s ys
hold[en] [s]chall be felaw and so
ciat to [the] ma[s]ter of the c[on]gre
gacion in helpe of h[ym] ayenst re
belles and vpberyng [the] ry[ght]
of the reme. At [the] fyrst begyn
nyng new men [that] ne[uer] we[re]
chargyd bi fore beth charged
in [th]is manere that [s]chold
neuer be theuys nor [th]euys
meynteners and [that] [s]chuld
tryuly fulfyll he[re] dayes
werke and truayle for he[re]
pay that [th]ey [s]chull take of
here lord and trewe a count[er]
yeue to here felaws in th[is]
gys [that] be to be a countyd of
hem and to here and hem
loue as hem [s]elfe and they
[s]chall be trew to the kynge
of englond and to the reme
and that they kepe [with] all [ther]
my[ght] and all the articles
a for [s]ayd. Af[ter] that hit [s]chall
be enqueryd if ony ma[s]ter or
felaw that is y warnyd haue
y broke ony article be for[s]ayd
the whiche if they haue done
hit schall be de termyned [ther].
Therefore hit is to wyte if
eny ma[s]ter or felawe that is
warnyd bifore to come to

his master, or of the warden
of his master, in his master's
absence, to the holy-day follow-
ing, and that he accord
then at the disposition of his
fellows, anot upon the work-
day for letting of their
work and profit of his lord.
The 7th Point,--That he covet
not the wife, not the daughter,
of his masters, neither of his
fellows, but if it be in mar-
riage, nor hold concubines,
for discord that might fall a-
mongst them. The 8th
Point,--If it befall him
for to be warden under
his master, that he be true mean
between his master and his
fellows, and that he be busy in
the absence of his master to
the honour of his master and pro-
fit of the lord that he serveth.
The 9th Point,--If he be wiser,
and subtler than his fellow
working with him in his
lodge, or any other place,
and he perceive it that he should
leave the stone that he worketh up-
on, for default of cunning,
and can teach him and a-
mend the stone, he shall in-/form
him and help him, that the more
love may increase among them,
and that the work of the lord be not
lost. When the master and the fel-
lows be forewarned [and] are
come to such congregations,
if need be, the Sheriff of the
Country, or the Mayor of the
City, or Alderman of the Town,
in which the congregations is
holden, shall be fellow, and [as] soci-
ate, to the master of the congre-
gation, in help of him, against re-
bels and [for the] up-bearing the right
of the realm. At the first begin-
ning new men, that never were
charged before, be charged
in this manner,--That [they] should
never be thieves, nor thieves'
maintainers, and that [they] should
truly fulfil their day's
work, and travail, for their
pay that they shall take of
their lord, and [a] true account
give to their fellows, in things
that be to be accounted of
them, and to hear, and them
love as themselves. And they
shall be true to the King
of England, and to the realm,
and that they keep, with all their
might, and all the Articles
aforesaid. After that it shall
be enquired if any master, or
fellow, that is warned, have
broke[n] any Article before said,
the which, if they have done,
it shall be determined there.
Therefore, it is to wit, if
any master, or fellow, that is
warned before to come to

|s|uche c|on|gregac|on|ns and be
 rebell and woll not come or
 els haue tre|s|pa|s|s|ed a yen|s|t
 any article befor|s|ayd if hit
 may be |pro|uyd he |s|chall for|
 |s|were his ma|s|onri and |s|chal
 no more v|s|e his craft. The
 whiche if he |pre|s|ume for to do
 |the| Sc|her|efe of |the| countre |in| |the| which
 he may be founde worchyn|ge|
 he |s|chall |pri|s|on h|im| & take all
 his godys |in| to |the| kynges hond
 tyll his |gra|ce be |gra|ntyd h|im| & y |s|che
 wed for |this| cau|s|e |pri|ncipally w|her|
 |th|es c|on|gregat|on|ns ben y ordeyned
 that as well the lowist as
 as the hie|s|t |s|chuld be well
 and trewely y |s|eruyd in
 his art bifore|s|ayd thorow
 owt all the kyngdom of
 Englund. Amen |s|o mote
 hit be

[Fol. 37 b.]

[950]

[Fol 38.]

[960]

such congregations and be
 rebell[ious], and will not come, or
 else have trespassed against
 any Article before said, if it
 may be proved, he shall for-
 swear his Masonry and shall
 no more use his craft; the
 which, if he presume for to do,
 the Sheriff of the Country, in which
 he may be found working,
 he shall [im]prison him and take all
 his goods into the king's hand
 till his grace be granted him and shew-
 ed. For this cause, principally, where
 these congregations ordained
 that as well the lowest, as
 the highest, should be well
 and truly served in
 his art, before said, through-
 out all the kingdom of
 England. Amen: So
 Mote it be.



*Quatuor Coronatorum
Antigrapha*

Colophon

These texts are transcribed from:

The History and Articles of Masonry; (Now first published from a MS. in the British Museum,). Dedicated, by permission, to, The W. Bro. John Havers, Esq., P.S.G.D., President of the Board of General Purposes, by the Editor, Matthew Cooke. London: Bro. Richard Spencer, 26 Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C., and of the editor, 78, George Street, Euston Road, N.W., 1861. Printed by Bro. J.H. Gaball, at the office of "The Freemasons' Magazine," Salisbury Street, Strand, W.C. [163 pages plus 10 page Preface and a list of subscribers.]

The facsimile and sketch are the work of Mr. F. Compton Price, accompanying [G.W. Speth's corrected version](#), as printed in *Quatuor Coronatorum Antigrapha* Vol. II, 1890.

Additional notes:

In both Speth's and Cooke's published editions line 899 has been numbered 900, so that there are in fact only 959 lines in the poem. Either this was an error, or both copyist chose to count the appended line at the bottom of Fol. 35 b. as a full line. If this was the case, it was inconsistent with the numbering of earlier appended lines.

The original handlettered manuscript made use of a

Additional notes

The following description of the original MS. may be interesting to many readers:—

It is written on vellum, is in a good state of preservation, and is protected by its original binding of two oak covers, at a former period secured by a clasp, the ends of which only remain. Its height is 4 3/8 inches, by 3 3/8 inches in width.

On the first folio, which is fastened down to the inside of the wood cover, are three portions of writing by modern hands. The first has been considerably obliterated, but the word "war" is still visible. The second, quite legible, is "William K." The third, in the neat hand of Sir Frederick Madden, Knt., Keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, shows how it came into the library of that institution by a memoranda stating it was "Purch^d of Mrs. Caroline Baker, 14th Oct., 1859."

On fol. 2 is written, in a large bold hand, "Jno. Fenn, 1786," and engrossed across the leaf is "Printing in Germany, 1548. In England, 1471, Robert Crowe, MDCCLXXXI." There is also the British Museum press mark, "199g," in pencil.

The verso fol. 2 is stamped with an impression of the Museum book mark.

On fol. 3 is the number of the MS., viz, 23,198, inscribed by the Museum officer whose duty it is to number the books. There is also, in the same bold hand as that of Jno. Fenn's name on fol. 2, "The Seven Sciences. Geometry. A History of Masonry. Its Articles, Points, &c."

The verso of fol. 3 is blank, and the MS. itself commences on fol. 4.

The book extends over 34 folios, i.e., 68 pages, and concludes on fol. 38, six lines down.

Fol. 39 again bears the Museum stamp, after which a leaf of the vellum has been cut out, or the side of a smaller leaf left, so that the binding threads should retain a firm hold. It has also been written upon, but the words are obliterated by rubbing; yet there are still sufficient marks left to enable any one to distinguish the name "William K." in a diamond-shaped border.

Fol. 39b. has some traces of writing, but they are wholly illegible, and the same holds good with regard to fol. 40, which latter is fastened down to the wooden cover at the end.

The History and Articles of Freemasonry are not put forward as entirely new to Freemasons. Various versions of them are to be found in our public libraries, and, during the last hundred and fifty years, in print. The Editor's friend, J.O. Halliwell, Esq., printed a *Poem on Masonry*, which has the same common features, and sets forth much of the same history; but until the present book appeared, there was no prose work of such undoubted antiquity, known to be in

number of abbreviations and characters not found in current usage. These are highlighted in the text above with line brackets. Cooke had custom letters cut for his edition, some of which have been reproduced [here](#).

existence, on the subject. It is this special circumstance that called forth the present publication, and that the same might go out to the world as near as possible to the original, has been one of the chief reasons for introducing it in its existing form.

Excerpted from the preface to the original 1861 edition.

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