

Cooke Manuscript with translation

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 his 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 Antigrapha 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

<p>THonkyd be god[Fol. 4] our glorious ffadir and fo un der and former of heuen and of erthe and of all thyngis that in hym is that he wolde foche s aue of his glorius god hed for to make s o mony thyngis of d uers vertu for mankynd.[10] ffor he mader all thyngis for to be abedient & s oget to man ffor all thyngis that ben come s tible of holl s ome nature he ordeyned hit for manys s usty[Fol.4 b.] na n s. And all to be hath yif to man wittys and cony n g of dy ver s thyngys and craft tys 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. Wherefor I woll leue. but I s chall s chew you s ome that is to s ey ho and in what[Fol. 5] wyse the s ciens of Gemetry[30] fir s te be ganne and who wer the founders therof and of</p>	<p>Thanked be God, our glorius father and found- er and former of Heaven 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 di vers virtue for mankind; for He made all things for to be obedient and subject to man, for all things that are comes tible of wholesome nature he ordained it for mans suste- nance. 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 plea- sure, 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</p>
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othur craftis mo as hit is no
 tid in [the] bybill and in othur
 [s]tories.
 HOw and in what ma
 ner [th]at this worthy
 [s]ciens of Gemetry be gan I
 wole tell you as I sayde bi
 fore. ye [s]chall undirstonde[40]
 [that] [ther] ben vijij |liberall [s]ciens
 by the whiche vijij all [s]ciens
 and craftis in the world were[Fol. 5 b.]
 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 vijij sci
 ens ben called thus. as for the
 fir[s]t [that] is called fundament
 of sciens his name is gra[m]mer[50]
 he techith a man ry[gl]thfully to
 [s]peke and to write truly. The
 [s]econde is rethorik. and he te
 chith a man to [s]peke formabe
 ly and fayre. The thrid is
 dioletic[us]. and [that] [s]ciens techith
 a man to discerne the trowthe[Fol. 6]
 fro [the] fals and comenly it is
 tellid art or [s]oph'stry. The fourth
 ys callid ar[s]metryk [the] whiche[60]
 techeth a man the crafte of
 nowmbers for to rekyn and
 to make a coun[t] of all th[y]ge
 The ffte Gemetry the which
 techith a man all the met[t]
 and me[s]ur[s] and ponderat[o]n
 of wy[gl]htis of all mans craft
 The. vi. is musi[k] that techith
 a man the crafte of [s]ong in
 notys of voys and organ &[70]
 trompe and harp and of all[Fol. 6 b.]
 othur [p]teynyng to hem. The
 vijij is a[s]tronomy that techith
 man [the] cours of the [s]onne
 and of [the] moun and of ot[her]
 [s]terry[s] & planetys of heuen.
 OWr entent is princi
 pally to trete of fyrst
 fundacion of [the] worthe [s]cylen[s]
 of Gemetry and we were[80]
 [the] founders [ther] of as I seyde
 by fore there ben vijij liberall
 [s]cyens [that] is to [s]ay vijij [s]ciens or
 craftys that ben fre in hem
 selfe the whiche vijij. lyuen[Fol. 7.]
 only by Gemetry. And Ge
 metry is as moche to [s]ey
 as the me[s]ure of the erth
 Et sic dicit[ur] a geo [ge] q[ui]n [R] ter
 a latine & metro[n] quod [e][90]
 men[s]ura. U[n]a Gemetria. i.
 mens[ur] terre uel terra[rum].
 that is to [s]ay in englishe that
 Gemetria is I [s]eyd of geo [that] is
 in gru. erthe, and metro[n] [that] is
 to [s]ay me[s]ure. And thus is [this]
 nam of Gemetria c[om]pounyd

other crafts more, as it is noted
 in the Bible and in other
 stories.
 How and in what man
 ner that this worthy
 science of geometry began, I
 will tell you, as I said be
 fore. 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 sci
 ences 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 teach
 eth a man to speak formab
 ly 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.
 Our intent is princi
 pally to treat of [the] first
 foundation of the worthy science
 of geometry, and we were
 the foundes thereof, as I said
 before. There are 7 liberal
 sciences, that is to say, 7 sciences, or
 crafts, that are free in them
 selves, the which 7 live
 only by geometry. And geo
 metry is as much to say
 as the measure of the earth,
 "Et sic dicitur a geo ge quin R ter
 a latin et metron quod est
 mensura. Una Geometria in
 mensura terra vel terrarum,"
 that is to say in English, that
 gemetria is, I said, of geo that is
 in gru, earth, and metron, that is
 to say measure, and thus is this
 name of Gemetria comounded

<p>as is s eyd the me s ur of the erthe. MERvile ye not that I s eyd that all s ciens lyue [100] all only by the s ciens of Geme- try. for there is none artifi- all ne honcrafte that is wro g th by manys hond bot hit is wrou g ght by Gemetry. and a notabull cau s e. for if a man worche wit his hondis he wor- chyth wit so m e ma nner tole and ther is none in s trument of ma - teriall thingis in this worlde [110] but hit come of the kynde of erthe and to erthe hit wole turne a yen. and ther is n one [Fol. 8.] in s trument that is to s ay a tole to wirche wit but hit hath some p ro op r orcion more or la s s e And some proporcion is me s ure the tole er the in s trment is erthe. And Gemetry is s aid the me s ure of erth e Whe re fore I may s ey that men lyuen all by Gemetry. ffor all men here in this worlde lyue by the labour of her hondys. MOny mo pbacions I wole telle yow why that Gemetry is the s ciens that all re [Fol. 8 b.] sonable m e n lyue by. but I leue hit at this tyme for the l o ge pro ce s s e of wrytyng. And now [130] I woll prp cede forthe r on me ma- ter. ye s chall under s tonde that amonge all the craftys of the worlde of mannes crafte ma s onry hath the mo s te no- tabilite and mo s te par te of this s ciens Gemetry as hit is notid and s eyd in s toriall as in the bybyll and in the ma s t er of s tories. And in poli/cronico [140] a cronycle pri nyd and in the [Fol. 9.] s tories that is named Beda De Imagine m un di & Isodo rus ethomologia rum . Methodius epus & marti rus . And ot her meny mo s eyd that ma s on r y is principall of Gemetry as me thenkyth hit may well be s ayd for hit was the first that was foundon as hit is [150] notid in the bybull in the first boke of Genesis in the iii i chap ter . And all s o all the doc- tours afor s ayde acordeth ther to And s u me of hem s eythe hit [Fol. 9. b.] more openly and playnly ry g t as his s eithe in the by- bull Gene s is Adam is line linyalle s one de s cendyng down e [160] the vij i age of adam byfore noes flode ther was a ma n that </p>	<p>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 geome- try, for there is none [of them] artifi- cial. 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 wor- keth with some manner [of] tool, and there is none instrument, of ma- terial 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, Where- fore, 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 rea- sonable 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 notabil- ity 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] Policronicon a 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 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. Adam's line lineal son, descending down the 7th age of Adam before Noah's flood, there was a man that</p>
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was clepyd lameth the
 whiche hadde ij| wyffes |the|
 on hyght ada & a nother
 |s|ella by the fyr|s|t wyffe |th|at
 hyght ada |he| be gate ij| |s|onys
 |that| one hyght Jobell and the o|ther|
 height juball. The elder |s|one|[Fol 10.]
 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| habitanc|um| in tento|-|
 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|[180]
 he made |the| Cite of Enoch
 that was the fir|s|te Cite
 that was the fir|s|t Cite |th|at|[Fol. 10 b.]
 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|am|e
 of his |s|one and kallyd hit
 Enoch. and now hit is
 callyd Effraym and |ther| wa|s|[190]
 |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 all|s|o |this| ma|n|[Fol. 11.]
 Jobell was called Pa|ter|
 Pasto|rum|
 The mas|ter| of |s|tories|[200]
 |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|on
 of lond |that| e|ver|ly 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|ly man myght know hi|s|[210]
 owne |s|chepe and |s|o we may|[Fol. 11 b.]
 |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|long as pictogoras |s|eyth
 in policronycon and the
 |s|ame |s|eythe ylodou|re| in his
 ethemologi|i| in the v|i| boke
 there he |s|eythe that he was|[220]
 |the| fir|s|t foundere of my|s|yke
 and |s|long and of organ &
 trompe and he founde |th|at
 |s|ciens by the |s|ounne of pon/deracion
 of his brotheris hamers |that|[Fol. 12.]
 was tubalcaym.
 Sothely as |the| bybull

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, Adam's 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
 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

|s|eyth in the chapitre
 |that| is to |s|ey the |iii|i| of Gene|s|'
 |that| he |s|eyth lameth gate apon[230]
 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
 YE |s|chul|le| under|s|tonde
 |that| |th|is |s|one tubalcaym[240]
 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|i|l|ver|
 as |s|ome docturs |s|eyn & his
 |s|ys|ter| neema was fynder of
 we|ver|s|craft. for by fore |that| time
 was no cloth weuyn but
 they did spynne yerne and
 knytte hit & made h|em| |s|uch|e|[250]
 clothyng as they couthe
 but as |the| woman neema
 founde |the| craft of weuyng[Fol. 13.]
 & |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[260]
 |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|ner| of
 |s|tonn of |s|uche |ver|tu |that| |the| one
 wolde ne|ver| brenne & |that| |s|to|ne|
 is callyd marbyll. & |that| o|ther| sto|ne|
 |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[270]
 |the| |s|ciens |that| |th|ey had ffunde 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|[280]
 and of la|tr|us and |that| he wold[Fol. 14.]
 write in the |ii|i|. pylers all|
 |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|nn|yng in
 |s|ciens for he fyr|s|t bygan
 & |per|formed the end by for
 noes flode.
 KYndly knowyng off[290]
 |that| venganns |that| god
 wolde |s|end whether hit

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 Jabal 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.
 Kindly knowing of
 that vengeance, that God
 would send, whether it

|s|cholde be bi fyre or by wa|ter|
 the bretherne hadde hit n|ot|
 by a ma|ner| of a |p|ro|phecy they[Fol. 14 b.]
 wi|s|t |that| god wold |s|end one |ther|
 of. and |ther| for thei wripen
 he|re| |s|ciens in |the|. ii|. pilers
 of |s|tone. And |s|u|me men |s|ey
 |that| |th|ey wripen in |the|. |s|tonis[300]
 all |th|e. vi|i| |s|ciens. but as
 |th|ey in here mynde |that| a ven
 ganns |s|cholde come. And
 to hit was |that| god |s|lentd ven
 ganns |s|o |that| |ther| come |s|uche
 a flode |th|at alle| |the| worl was
 drowned. and alle| men w|er|
 dede |ther| in |s|aue. vii|i|. |p|er|sonis
 And |that| was noe and his[Fol. 15.]
 wyffe. and his ii|i|. sonys &[310]
 here wyffes. of whiche. ii|i|
 sones a||| |the| world cam of.
 and here namys were na
 myd in this ma|ner|. Sem. Cam.
 & Japhet. And |this| flode was
 kalled noes flode ffor he &
 his children were |s|auey|d |ther|
 in. And af|ter| this flode many
 yeres as |the| cronycle telleth
 thes. ii|i| pillers were founde[320]
 & as |the| polycronicon |s|leyth |that|
 a grete clerke |that| calledede puto|-|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 |pri|nci
 pall wittenes of the makyn|ge|[330]
 of the toure of babilon and hit
 is wripen in |the| bibull Gene|sis
 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|[Fol. 16.]
 a grete Kyng. and the bygyn
 yn|ge| of his kyngdom was
 trew kyngd|om| of babilon and [340]
 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 policronicon and [350]
 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|leyth |that| a
 |s|ure |that| was nye kynne to
 CamNembrothe yede owt of |the| londe of
 |s|enare and he bylled the Cie

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]

Nunyvye and plateas and o|ther|
mo |th|us he |s|eyth. De tra illa
& de |s|ennare egressus est a|s|u|re|[360]
& edificavit Nunyvven & pla-|
teas cuiya|te| & cale & Jesu q|o|q|z|
in|ter| nunyvven & hec |est| Ciuita|s|
magna.
RE|s|on wolde |that| we |s|chold[Fol. 17.]
tell opunly how & in
what ma|ner| 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|[370]
|s|chyll knaw well |that| hit told
and writen in policronicon &
in methodus ep|iscopu|s and mar|ter|
|that| a|s|ur |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.[Fol. 17 b.]
And nembroth |s|ende h|ym| |xxx|[380]
C. of masons. And whan |th|ey
|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|ure 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 |pro|fitable for
you & me.
WHen ye come to |that| lord|[390]
loke |that| ye be trewe to
hym lyke as ye wolde be to
me. and truly do your labour[Fol. 18.]
and craft and takyt re|s|on|-|
abull your mede |ther|for as ye
may de|s|erue and a|s|o |that| ye
loue to gedyr as ye were
bre|th|eryn and holde to gedyr
truly. & he |that| hath most c|on|ly|n|g
teche hit to hys felaw and|[400]
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 |th|ey re|s|/ceyuyd
the charge of h|ym| |that| was here[Fol. 18 b.]
mail|s|ter| and here lorde. and
wente forthe to a|s|ure. &
bilde the cite of nunyvye in|[410]
|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 nunyvye
And in this ma|ner| |the| craft
of ma|s|onry was fyr|s|t |pre|fer
ryd & chargyd 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|[420]
we haue now in owr char[Fol. 19.]
gys of |the| |s|tory of Enclidnis

Nineveh, and Plateas, and other
more, this he saith "de tra illa
et de Sennare egressus est Asur,
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 written 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 [s]eyn hem writ[en]
 in latyn & in Fre[ns]che bothe
 but ho [that] Enclyd come to ge[-]
 metry re[son] wolde we
 [s]cholde telle yow as hit is
 notid in the hybull & in other
 [s]tories. In [xii] Capitl[or] Gene[sis]
 he tellith how [that] abrah[am] com to[430]
 the lond of Canan and owre
 lord aperyd to h[ym] and [s]leyd I
 [s]hall geue this lond to [th]i
 [s]eed. but [ther] [s]y[ll] a grete hun[ger]
 in [that] lond. And abraham toke[Fol. 19 b.]
 [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[440]
 he was a wys[e] man and a
 grete clerk. And covthe all
 [the] [v]ij [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[Fol. 20.]
 was ocupied bifor hit had[450]
 no name of gemetry. But
 hit is [s]leyd of ylodour Ethe
 mologia[rum] in [the] v. boke. Ethe
 mologia[rum] Capitulo p[ri]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[460]
 [so] ferre in to [the] londe [that] men
 myght not dwelle [ther] [in]
 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 [470]
 awne [par]te [wit] walles and
 diches an [the]n hit be c[lam]e
 a plentuos c[on]untre of all
 ma[n]er 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[480]
 how they myght helpe her
 childeryn [that] had no lyflode
 c[om]potente & abull for to fyn[de]
 hem selfe and here childron
 for [they] had [s]o many. and
 a mong hem all in counsell
 was [this] worthy clerke Encli

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
 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-
 mologiarum, capitulo 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 diches to holde out the
 water; and he, by geometry,
 measured the land, and depar-
 ted it in divers parts, and
 made every man close his
 own part with walls and
 diches, 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,

dnis and when he [s|a|we] [th|at]
 all they cou[th|e] not btyng
 a bout this mater. he [s|eyd][490]
 to hem woll ye take y[our] [s|on|ys][Fol. 21 b.]
 in go[uer|nanns] & I [s|chall] tec[he]
 hen [s|uche] 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|nn]s [that]
 I [s|chall] [s|ette] you too and
 hem bothe and the kyng
 of [the] londe and all [the] lordys[500]
 by one a[ss]ent gra[un]tyd [ther] too.
 REson wolde [that] e[uer]y m[an]
 woude graunte to [that]
 thyng [that] were [pro|fetable] to h[im]
 [s|elf]. and they toke here [s|o][Fol 22.]
 nys to enclide to go[uer]ne
 hem at his owne wylle &
 he taught to hem the craft
 masonry and yaf hit [th|e]
 name of Gemetry by cav[s|e][510]
 of [the] [par|tyng] of [the] grounde [that]
 he had taught to [the] peple
 in the time of [the] makyng
 of [the] wallys and diches a
 for [s|ayd] to claw[s|e] out [the]
 watyr. & I[s|odor] [s|eyth] in his
 Ethemologies [that] Enclide
 callith the craft Gemetrya
 And [ther] this worthy clerke[Fol. 22 b.]
 yaf hit name and taught[520]
 hitt the lordis [s|onys] of [the]
 londe [that] he had in his tech[in]g
 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[530]
 go[uer]nour of [the] werke and
 scholde be callyd mais[ter] &
 other charges mo [that] ben[Fol. 23.]
 wryten in [the] boke of char
 gys. And [s|o] they wrought
 [with] lordys of [the] lond & made
 cities and tounys ca[s|telis]
 & templis and lordis placis.
 WHat tyme [that] [the] chil
 dren of i[s|rl] dwellid[540]
 [in] egypte they lernyd [the]
 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 ier[le]m
 and hit was ocupied & char[Fol. 23 b.]
 gys y holde. And [the] mak[yn]g
 of [s|alomonis] tempull [that]
 Kyng Dauid be gan. k[yn]g[550]
 dauid louyd well ma[s|ons]
 and he yaf hem ry[gt] nye

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
 would grant to that
 thing that were profitable to him-
 self, 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 a-
 foresaid, 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 char-
 ges. 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-
 dren 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 char-
 ges 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 [th]ey be nowe. And at [the] making of [the] temple in [s]alomonis tyme as hit is seyde in [the] bibull in [the] iij| boke of Regu in [ter]cio Reglum| Cap|itolo| quinto. That Salomon had iij|i|. score thousand masons at [560] his werke. And [the] kyng|s|[Fol 24.] [s]one of Tyry was [his] ma|s|ter ma|s|en. And other cronyclos hit is [s]eyd & in olde bokys of ma|s|onry that Salomon c|on|firmed [the] charges [that] dauid has fadir had yeue to ma|s|ons. And [s]alomon hym [s]elf taught h|em| here maners byt lityll|[570] differans fro the maners that now ben u|s|yd. And fro thens [this] worthy [s]ciens was brought [in] to fraunce And in to many o|ther| regi|on|s|[Fol. 24 b.] SUmtyme ther w|as| a worthye kyng in ffrauns [that] was clepyd Carolus [s]'c|undu|s [that] ys to [s]ey Charlus [the] [s]ecunde. And [this]|[580] Charlus was elyte kyng of ffrauns by the grace of god & by lynage also. And [s]u|mm|e 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 Charlus was a ma|s|on|[Fol. 25.] bi for [that] he was kyng. And|[590] af|ter| [that] he was kyng he louyd ma|s|ons & cher|s|chid them and yaf hem chargys and ma|ner|ys at his deu|s|e [the] which|e| [s]||um| ben yet u|s|ed in fraunce and he ordeynyd that [th]ey [s]cho|de| haue a [s]emly onys in [the] yere and come and [s]peke togedyr and for to be reuled by ma|s|ters & felows|[600] of thynges a my|ss|e. AND [s]||oo|ne af|ter| [that] come [s]eynt ad habell in to Englonde|[Fol. 25 b.] and he c|on|uer|tyd [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 ordeyned c|on|uenyent to pay|[610] for [the] trauayle. And af|ter| [theat] was a worthy kyn|ge| in Englonde [that] was callyd Athelstone and his yongest [s]one lovyd well the [s]ciens of Gemetry. and he wy|s|t well [that] hand craft|[Fol. 26.]

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 into many other regions Sometime there was a worthy king in France that was called Carolus 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 ordained convenient [times] to pay for the travail. And after that was a worthy king in England that was called Athelstan, and his youngest son loved well the science of geometry, and he wist well that hand-craft

had the practyke of [the] [s]ci
 ens of Gemetry to well
 as masons wherefore he[620]
 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 charges
 and names as hit is now
 vsyd id Englund. and in[630]
 othere countries. And he[Fol. 26 b.]
 ordyned [that] [th]ey [s]chulde haue
 re[s]onabull pay. And pur
 cha[s]ed a fre patent of [the] k[ing]
 that they [s]choulde make a
 [s]embly whan thei [s]awe re-
 [s]onably tyme a c[on]gredir to
 he[re] counsel[le] of [the] whiche
 Charges manors & [s]emble
 as is write and taught [in] [th]e[640]
 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 27.]
 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 vauce here
 fre bigeton childeryn for[650]
 [th]ey had so many. Therefore
 they toke coun[s]ell howe [th]ey
 my[g]t here childeryn avai[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] [th]ey [thorou
 here wy[s]dome [s]chold ordeyn/he
 hem [s]um [honest] lyuyng[Fol. 27 b.]
 Then on of them [that] had [the][660]
 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[g]t [the] children
 of get lordis bi [the] pray
 er of [the] fathers and [the] fre
 will of here children. [the]
 wiche when thei tau[g]t [with][670]
 hie Cure bi a [s]erteyn ty[me]
 [th]ey were not all iylke ab[un]d
 for to take of [the] for[s]eyde art[Fol. 28.]
 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[680]
 were callyd ma[s]ters of no
 bilite of witte and c[on]nyng

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-
 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. Ne|ver|[th]e|s|s|e [th|ei c|om] maundid [that] thei [that] were la|s|s|e of witte |s|chold not be callyd |s|eruan|ter| ner |s|ogett but felau ffor nobilite of here gentyll[Fol. 28 b.] n|ode. In this ma|n|e|r| was [the] for|s|ayde art begunne |i|n [the] lond of Egypte by [the] for|s|ayde[690] 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|e|l|ler| 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|ei[700] ordeyned a certayne reule[Fol 29.] a mongys hom on tyme of [the] yere or in ii|i| yere as nede were to [the] kyn|g| and gret lordys of [the] londe and all [the] comente fro |pr|oynce to |pr|o|yn|ce and fro co|u|ntre to co|u|ntre c|on|gregacions |s|cholde be made by mai|s|ters of all mai|s|ter|s ma|s|ons and felaus in the[710] for|s|ayd art. And |s|o at |s|uche c|on|gregac|o|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[Fol. 29 b.] abull and kunnyng|g| to [the] |pr| fyte of [the] lordys hem to serue and to [the] honour of [the] for|s|aid art and more o|uer| they |s|chulde receyue here charge [that] they[720] |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 cervyce 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[730] |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|n|try no fauour [with] stond|y|g for e|uer|y ma|n| to be rewardyd af|ter| his trauayle. The se|c|nd article is this [that] e|uer|y ma|s|ter|[740] of [this] art |s|cholde be warned by fore to cum to his cogrega|t| [that] thei com dewly but yf thei[Fol. 30 b.] may a|s|s|cu|s|yd by |s|ume ma|ner| cause. But ne|uer|e|s|s|e if [th|ey be founde rebell at |s|uche c|on|gregacions or fauty in eny

of that art. Nevertheless they commanded 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 kingdom to kingdom. After that, many years, in the time of King-Athelstan, which was some time king of England, by his councillors, 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 profit of the lords [having] them to serve and to the honour of the [a]foresaid art. And, moreover, they should receive their charge that they should well and truly dispend 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, dispending 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 congregations, or faulty in any

ma|ner| harme of here lordys
 and reprene of this art thei
 |s|chulde not be excu|s|yd in no[750]
 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 princypall 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[Fol. 31.]
 than vij|j| yer at |the| le|s|t. by
 caus|e| whi |s|uche as ben |with| |ij|
 la|s|s|e terme may not |pro|fitely[760]
 come to his art. nor abull
 to serue truly his lorde to
 take as a mason |s|chulde
 take. The iii|j| 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[770]
 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
 thereof 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|[780]
 as hit is |ij|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[Fol 32.]
 note well he may di|s|serue
 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 tel|[790]
 chying. The vi|j|. article is
 this |that| no ma|s|ter| for no coue
 ty|s|e nel|r| |pro|fite take no |pre|n
 tis to teche |that| is un|per|fyte |that|
 is to |s|ey havng eny ma|ym|
 for |the| whiche he may not
 trewely worche as hym
 ought for to do. The vij|j|. article
 is this |that| np mai|s|ter| be[Fol. 32 b.]
 y founde wittyngly or help[800]
 or |pro|cure to be maynte|ner| &
 |s|u|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 viii|j| article
 is this |that| yf hit befall
 |that| any ma|s|on |that| be |per|fyte and[810]
 c|on|nyng come for to |s|eche
 werke and fynde any vn|per|fit

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 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 vnkunnyng worchyng[Fol. 33.]
 |the| ma|s|ter| of |the| place |s|chall re
 ceuye |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[820]
 |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[Fol. 33 b.]
 uers lordis & mai|s|ters of
 dyvers |pro|vynces and di|uer|s
 c|on|gregacions of ma|s|onry[830]
 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 fulfyller his dayes
 werke truly |that| he takyth for[840]
 his pay. The. iiij|. |point| he can[Fol. 34.]
 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 iiij|. 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[850]
 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[Fol. 34 b.]
 the mai|s|ter| to be done and |that|
 he fulfyller the accepcions
 of trauayle and of his re|s|t
 y ordeyned and |s|ette by |the|
 mai|s|ter|. The. vi|. poynt yf[860]
 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
 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
 felaus and not upon |the| wer[870]
 keday for lettyng of here
 werke and |pro|fyte of his lord
 The. viij|. poynt |that| he covet
 not |the| wyfe ne |the| daughter
 of his ma|s|ters no|ther| of his
 felaws but yf hit be in ma|-
 tuge nor holde c|on|cubines

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 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 dy[s]cord [that] my[gt] fall a
monges them. The. vii[i]
poynt yf hit befalle hym[880]
ffor to be wardeyne vndyr
his ma[s]||ter| [that] he be trewe mene
bitwene his ma[s]||ter| & his[Fol. 35 b.]
felaws and [that] he be be[s]y 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 |s|erueth
The. ix. poynt yf he be wy[s]er
and |s|otellere [th|an his felawe
worchyng |with| hym in his[890]
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[900]
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|ns
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[910]
belles and vpberyng |the| ry|gt|
of the reme. At |the| fyrst beg|yn|[Fol. 36 b.]
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
truly fulfyll he|re| dayes
werke and truayle for he|re|
pay that |th|ey |s|chull take of[920]
here lord and trewe a coun|t|
yeue to here felaus in |th|yn|
gys [that] be to be a countyd of
hem and to here and hem
loue as hem |s|el|fe and they
|s|chall be trew to the kynge
of englond and to the reme
and that they kepe |with| all |ther|
my|gt| and all the articles
a for |s|ayd. Af|ter| that hit |s|chall[930]
be enquiryd 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
|s|uche c|on|gregac|on|ns and be
rebell and woll not come or[Fol. 37 b.]
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|-

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 beforesaid,
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
such congregations and be
rebell[ious], and will not come, or
else have trespassed against
any Article beforesaid, if it
may be proved, he shall for-

<p> [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] c[oun]tre [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[950] 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]g[regat]on[ns] ben y ordeyned that as well the lowest as[Fol 38.] as the hie[st] [s]chuld be well and trewely y [s]eruyd in his art bifore[s]ayd thorow owt all the kyngdom of Englond. Amen [s]o mote hit be[960] </p>	<p> 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. </p>
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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 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 at <http://freemasonry.bc.ca/Writings/cookelegend.html>.

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 "Purchd 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, know to be in 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.