

“ALNWICK MS.” (R)

(A.D. 1701.)

THE MASONS' CONSTITUTIONS.

Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and dwell in the house of learning.—*Ecclesiasticus*, Cap. li. ver. 23.

In the hand of the Craftsmen shall the word be commended.—*Ecclesiasticus*, Cap. ix. ver. 17.

The might of the Father of Heaven with the Wisdom of his Glorious Son, through the Grace and Goodness of the Holy Ghost, Three Persons in one Godhead, be with us att our beginning; and Give us Grace soe to governe us here in o^e Liveing, Thatt we may come to his Bliss thatt never shall have ending. Amen.

Good Brethren and Fellowes, o^e Purpose is to tell you how and in whatt manner this craft of masonry was Begun and afterwards how it was Founded by Worthy Emperours and Princes and many other Worppll men, and alsoe to them that be here, we will declare them. The Charge thatt doth belong to Every true Mason is to keep in good Faith, and if you take good head theretoe it is well worthy to be kept, for a worthy Craft and a Curious Science; For there is Seaven Liberall Sciences of the which itt is one of them, and the names of the Seven Sciences be these—The First is Gramme and thatt teacheth a man to speak Truely; and to write Truely: The Second is Rhetoricke and thatt teacheth a man to speak fair and in subtil Terms. The Third is Logick thatt teacheth to Discern Trueth from falshood. The Fourth is Arithmaticke thatt teacheth to Reckon and number all manner of numb^{es}. The Fifth is called Geometry and it teacheth a man to mett and measure the Earth, and other things; of which Science is Masonry. The Sixth is Musick that teacheth the Craft of Songs, Organs and Harpe and Trumpett. The Seaventh is called Astronomy thatt teacheth a man to know the course of the Sunne moon and Starrs; These be the seaven Liberall Sciences which be all founded by that one science that is called Geometrie; For Geometrie teacheth a man mett and measure, Ponderation, and Weight of all manners of things on Earth, and there is noe man thatt worketh any craft but he worketh by some mett or measure, and noe man buyeth or selleth butt by some measure or weight, and all this Geometrie; And Craftsmen and Marchtt^s finde noe other of the seaven sciences, and Especially Plowmen, and Tillers of all manner of Graine, both corne, seeds, Vines, Plants, Setters of all other fruite, For neither Gramme nor Astronomy, nor none of all these can finde a man one measure or mett, without Geometrie, Wherfor I think the Science of Geometrie is to be accounted above any of the Seaven Sciences.

How this worthy Science was first begunne, I shall tell. Before
 Cap. 4th Noah's Flood, there was a man called Lameck as it is written in the 4
 Ver. 19th Chap. of Gen.: and this Lameck had two Wives. The one was called
 Adah, and the other Zillah; By the first wife Adah he gott two Sons, the one

Ver. 20th called Jaball, and the other Juball, and by the other wife Zillah he got
 Ver. 21st a Son and Daughter, and the four children found the beginning of all
 called Crafts in the world. This Jaball was the elder Son, and he found the
 Tuball Cain and Naamah Craft of Geometrie, and he parted flocks, as of Sheep and Lambs in
 the fields, and first wrought Houses of Stone and Tree, as it is noted in the
 Chap^e aforesaid, and his Brother Juball found the crafte of Musick, of Songs,
 Organs and Harp.

Tuball Cain The Third Brother found out Smith's craft to work Iron and steel,
 and their sister, Naamah found out the art of Weaving; These children did know
 thatt God would take Vengeance for Sinne, Either by fire or water, wherefor they
 wrote these Sciences which they had found in Two Pillars of stone, thatt they
 might be found after the Flood.

The one stone was called Marbell—cannott burn with Fire, and the other was
 called Laturus, thatt cannott drown in the Water :

Our intent is to tell you truely, and in whatt manner these stones were found
 that the science was written on.

Gen^s 10th,
 Ver. 8th,
 alias Nimrod. The Great Hermem^{es} thatt was Son unto Cush, which was Son unto
 Shem, which was Son unto Noah : This same Hermem^{es} was after-
 wards called Hermes the Father of Wisdom, he found one of the Two Pillars of
 Stones, and found the Science written thereupon, and he taught to other men ; And
 att the makeing of the Tower of Babylon, there was the Craft off Masonry first
 found, and made much of : And the King of Babylon who was called Nimbroth
 was a Mason himselfe and loved well the craft, and is soe reported of by Mast^{es}
 of the Stories : And when the City of Ninevy and other Citties of the East
 should be Built Nimbroth the King of Babylon sent thither Sixty Masons att the
 desire of the King of Ninevey his cosen, and when they went forth he gave them
 a Charge on this mann^e (viz) :

Nimbroth's Thatt they should serve the Lord truely for his payment, and thatt
 Charge. they should be true one to another, and that they should Live truely
 together soe he might have Worship for sending them to him, and other
 charges he gave y^m. Moreover when Abraham and Sarah his wife went intoe
 Egypt, and there taught the seaven Liberall Sciences to the Egyptians, and he had
 a worthy Schol^e called Euclide, and he learned right well, and was Mast^e of all
 the Seaven Liberall Sciences. And it befell in his days thatt the Lords and State
 of the Realm had soe many Sons, thatt they had begotten, some by their Wives,
 and some by other Ladyes of thatt Realme ; For that Land is whole layd and a
 replenished Generation, and they had nott Liveing competent for their children,
 wherefor they made much sorrow. And the King of thatt Land Assembled a great
 Councill at a Parliam^t to know they might mentain their children, and they could
 finde noe good way, soe they caused a cry to be made throughout the Realm, if
 there were any man thatt could inform him, thatt he should come unto him, and
 he should be well rewarded for his Travell, and should hold himselfe well pleased.

After this cry was made, came this worthy Clark Euclide and said to the King
 and all his Greatt Lords—If you will give me yo^e children to govern and Teach
 them honestly as Gentlemen should be taught under condition thatt you will grant
 them and me a Commission thatt I may have Power to Rule them honestly, as
 thatt Science ought to be ruled, and the King with his Councill granted them anon
 and sealed them that Commission, and the worthy Doct^e took to him the Lord's
 sons and taught them the Science of Geometrie in practice for to work in stones

all mann^e of work thatt belonged to building of Castles, all mann^e of Courts, Temples and Churches with all other Buildings, and he gave them a Charge in this mann^e.

Euclides
Charge in
Egypt. First that they should be true unto the King—and to the Lord they served, and thatt they should live well together, and be true one to another, and thatt they should call one another Fellow, and nott servant nor his knave, nor other foul names ; and thatt they should truly serve for their Payment to their Lord, thatt they serve ; and thatt they should ordain the wisest of them to be Maist^e of the said Lord's work, and neither for Love great Lineage nor Liveing nor Riches to sett any other thatt had little cunning for to be Maist^e of the Lord's work, whereby the Lord should be ill served, and they ashamed ; and thatt they should call the Govern^e of the work Mast^e of the work while they wrought with him, and many other charges which were too long to tell.

And to all the Charges he made them swear thatt great Oath thatt men used att thatt time to swear, and ordered for them Reasonable paym^t thatt they might live by work honestly ; and alsoe thatt they come and assemble themselves together, thatt they might have Councill in their Crafte, how they might worke best to serve their Lord for his proffit and worship, and thus was the craft of Geometrie grounded there ; and thatt they correct themselves if they had trespassed, and that worthy Mast^e Euclide gave it the name of Geometrie, and it is called Masonry throughout all the land ever since. Long after the children of Israell were come intoe the land of Bless ; and it is now amongst us called the country of Jerusalem. King David began the Temple of Jerusalem, which with them is called *Templum Domini* ; And the same King David loved Masons very well and cherished them, and gave them good paym^t : And he gave them the charge and mann^{es} as he had it out of Egypt given by Euclide, and other charges thatt you shall hear afterwards.

And after the decease of King David, Solomon thatt was Son to David performed out the Temple thatt his father had begun, and sent after Masons of diverse Lands. and gathered them together,, soe thatt he had fourscore Thousand Workers of Stone. And they were named Masons, and three Thousand of them which were ordained to be Mast^{es} and Govern^s of this work.

And there was a King of another Region that men called Hiram, and he loved well King Solomon, and gave him Timber for his work : and he had a son thatt was named Ajuon, and he was Mast^e of Geometrie, and he was chief Mast^e of all his Masons and Mast^{es} of all his Graveing and Carving works, and of all other Mann^e of Masonry thatt belonged to the Temple, and this is Witnessed in the Bible in Libro Regum pri^o Cap 5th. And this same Solomon confirmed both charges and mann^{es} which his Father had given to Masons, and after this mann^e was thatt worthy Craft of Masonry confirmed in the country of Jerusalem and many other Kingdoms. Glorious craftsmen walking about intoe diverse countrys, some because of Learning more craft, and some to teach their craft, and soe it befell thatt there was a curious mason named Naimus Græcus thatt had been att the makeing of Solomon's Temple, and came intoe France, and he taught the craft of masonry to the men of France. And soe there was one of the Royall Lyne of France thatt was called Charles Martiall, and was a man thatt loved well such a craft, and drew to him this Naimus Græcus abovesaid, and learned of him the craft and took upon him the charges, and afterwards by the Grace of God was elected King of France, And when he was in his stall he took to him many

Masons and made Masons there that were none, and set them on work, and gave them both charges and manners which he had learned of other Masons and confirmed them a Charter from year to year to hold their Assembly, and cherished them much, and thus came the craft into France.

England all this time stood void of any charge of Masonry, untill the time of St Alban, and in his time, the King of England thatt was a Pagan and he walled a Town that is now called St Albons, and in thatt St Albons was a worthy Knight which was chief steward to the King and Govern^e of the Realm, and alsoe of making of the Town Walls and he loved Masons well, and cherished them, and he made their paym^t right good standing pay, as the Realm did require, for he gave them every week, Three shillings six pence, their double wages befor thatt time, throughout all the Land a Mason took butt a penny y^e day and meat untill the time that St Albon amended it, and gave them a chart^e of the King and his Council, and gave it the name of Assembly, and thereatt he was himselfe and made Masons and gave them a charge as you shall hear afterwards.

Right soon after the decease of St Albon there came great Warrs intoe England of Divers nations soe thatt good rule of Masonry was destroyed, unto the time of King Athelstone thatt was a worthy King in England, who brought the Land intoe great rest and peace, and builded many great works of Abbeys, Castles, and many other buildings, and he loved Masons well. And he had a Sonn that was named Edwine; and he loved Masons more then his Fath^e did, for he was full of Practice in Geometrie wherefor he drew him to common Masons to learn of them their Craft and after for the love he had to Masons and to the Craft he was made Mason himself, and he gott of his Father the King a Chart^e and Commission to hold every year an Assembly wherever he would within the Realm, and to correct within themselves faultes and Trespasses thatt were done within the Craft, And he held an Assembly att ~~Bork~~, and there he made Masons, and gave them charges and taught them the mann^e of Masons, and commanded thatt Rule to be holden for ever hereafter: and to them he gave the Chart^e and commission to keep and make ordinances thatt should be observed from King to King when this Assembly was gathered togeth^e he made a cry thatt all Masons both young and old thatt had any knowledge or understanding of the charges thatt were made in this Land, or in any other Land thatt they should shew them forth; and there was found some in Greek some in English, some in French, and some in oth^e Languages; and the Intent thereof was found and commanded thatt it should be read and told when any Mason was made, and to give him his Charge, and from thatt Day untill this present time Masons have been kept in thatt form and order; as well as men might govern it. And furthermore at diverse Assemblies there hath been putt and added certaine charges more and more by the best of advice from Mast^e and Fellows.

Then shall one of the most ancient of them all hold a Book that he or they may lay his or their hand or hands upon the said Book, and these precepts following ought then to be Read.

Every man thatt is a Mason take heed right well of this charge. If you find yo^eself guilty of any of these, thatt you amend you again, and especially yee thatt are to be charged: Take heed thatt you may keep this charge for it is a great Perill for a man to forswear himself on a Book.

The First charge is Thatt you shall be a True man to God and his holy Church and thatt you use noe heresy nor error to your understanding, or to desert discreet or wise men's Teaching, Alsoe you shall

Edwine's
Charge.

be a true Liege man to the King without Treason or falshood, and thatt you shall know noe Treason, but thatt you mend it and you may, or else warne the King or his Councill thereof: Alsoe you shall be true one to another (that is to say) to every Mast^e and Fellow of the Craft of Masonry thatt be Masons allowed. Thatt you would do to them, as you would they should doe to you. Alsoe thatt every Mason keep true Councill of Lodge of Chambe, and all other Councill, thatt ought to be kept by way of Masonry :

Also thatt noe man shall be Thief, nor Thief's see soe far as you shall know. Alsoe thatt you shall be true to yo^e Lord and Mast^e thatt you serve, and truely to see his Profit and Advantage. Alsoe thatt you shall call Masons yo^e Fellows and Brethren ; and by noe other Foul Name, nor you shall nott take yo^e Fellows wife in Villany' or desire ungodly his daught^e or his servant to his Villany, Alsoe you shall pay truely for yo^e Table and meat and drinke where you goe to Board, and alsoe thatt you doe noe Villany in thatt house whereby the craft should be slandered, These be the charges in Generall thatt a Mason should hold both Mast^es and Fellows.

Rehearse I will now other charges singular for Masters and Fellows. First thatt noe Mast^e shall take any work of a Lord, or any other work butt thatt he know himself able and cunning to performe the same, soe thatt the craft have noe disworship, but thatt the Lord may be well and truely served ; Alsoe thatt noe Mast^e take any work, but thatt he take it reasonably, soe thatt the Lord may be truely served with his own goods, and the Mast^e to live honestly, and pay his Fellows truely their pay as the mann^e of the craft doth require ; Alsoe thatt noe Mast^e or Fellows subplant others of these works (thatt is to say) if he hath taken a worke or stand Mast^e of a Lord's work ; you shall nott putt him out, if he be able and cunning of craft to end the work ; Alsoe thatt noe Mast^e or Fellows take noe Apprentice to be allowed his Apprentice butt for seaven yeares, And thatt Apprentice be able of his Birth and Limbs as he ought to be. Alsoe thatt noe Mast^e or Fellows take noe allowance to be made without the assent of his Fellows, and thatt att the least Five or Six. And thatt he thatt shall be made Mason be able over all Sciences—(thatt is to say) thatt he be free born, and of good Kindred, and noe Bondman, and thatt he have his right Limbs, as he ought to have : Alsoe thatt noe Mast^e putt noe Lord's work to task, thatt was wont to goe to Journey.

Alsoe thatt every Mast^e shall give to his Fellows, butt as he may deserve, soe thatt he be nott deceived by false worke. Alsoe thatt noe Fellow slander one falsly behinde his back to make him loose his good Name or his worldly goods.

Alsoe thatt noe Fellow wth in the Lodge nor without misanswer another neither ungodly or irreverently without reasonable cause. Alsoe thatt mason preferr his Elder and put him to worshipp. Alsoe thatt noe Mason should play att Hazard or any othe unlawfull game whereby they may be slandered : Alsoe thatt noe mason be a common Rebell in leachery to make the craft to be slandered and thatt noe Fellow goe intoe the Town in the Night time, where is a Lodge of Fellows, without a Fellow thatt may bear him witnesse thatt he was in an honest place : Alsoe thatt every mason and Fellow come to the Assembly if it be within Fifty miles about him ; if he have reasonable warning and stand there att the award of Mast^e and Fellows : Alsoe thatt every Mast^e and Fellow if they have Trespassed one to another shall stand the award of Mast^e and Fellows to make them accord if they may ; and if they may not accord, then to goe to Common Law ; Alsoe thatt noe mason make moulds, Square or Rule to any Rough Layers, Alsoe thatt noe Mason sett any Layer within a Lodge or without to Hew or mould stones with noe mould

of his own makeing—Alsoe thatt every mason shall cherish and receive strange Fellows, when they come over the countrey and sett them on work as the mann^e is (thatt is to say) if they have mould stones in place, he shall sett him a fortnight att the least on work, and give him his hyre : And if there be noe Stones for him to work, he shall refresh him with money, to bring him to the next Lodge. And alsoe you and every mason shall serve truely the workers, and truely make an end of your work, be it Task or Journey; if you have your pay, as you ought to have.

These Charges thatt we have reckoned, and all other thatt belongeth toe Masonry you shall truely keep and well observe, so helpe you God and Holy-dooome; and this Book, to the uttermost of your Power.

FINIS.

Gra : Loquitz : Lo : vera docet : Rhe : verba solorat : Mu : canit. Ar :
Numeratt : Ge : Ponderat

Ast : capit Astra.

Transcribed from the original Scroll by W. J. Hughan.

