

Lansdowne MS. (C) - About A.D. 1560.

(C.) LANSDOWNE MS., BRITISH MUSEUM, A.D. 1560.
(No. 98. Art. 48. f. 276b.)

Masonic Sketches and Reprints, by William James Hughan, 1871. page 154.

http://books.google.com/books?id=pXEGAQAAlAAJ&pg=PA207&ipq=PA207&dq=%22Here+Begineth+the+True+Order+of+Masonrie%22&source=bl&ots=Q6kLsWc7UV&sig=Xfald36kAqze4p5D_y1IzLlyXo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=AbGIT4OMB4mJ6QHf4JSpBA&ved=0CEcQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=%22Here%20Begineth%20the%20True%20Order%20of%20Masonrie%22&f=false

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These "Free Masons Orders and Constitutions" are contained in the volume lettered "Burghley Papers," believed to have been part of the collection made by Lord Burghley, (Secretary of State, *temp.* Edward VI., and Lord High Treasurer, *temp.* Elizabeth) who died A.D. 1598.

They are written on the inner side of three sheets and a half of stout paper, 11 inches by 15, making in all seven folios. Many of the principal words are in large letters of an ornamental character. Mr. Richard Sims, (MS. Department British Museum) states that these "Orders" have never formed a Roll, but there are indications of the sheets having been stitched together at the top, and there is the mark of a square piece of vellum or paper having been used for additional protection. The MS. Has only been printed once, viz. :—in the "Freemasons' Magazine," (February 24th, 1858, p. 348). The anonymous contributor, who designates it "a clear MS. of the latter half of the sixteenth century" transcribed the document most faithfully, for on comparison with our exact copy, we were unable to detect any difference, beyond two or three manifest clerical errors. It was not printed in the "Freemasons' Magazine" for A.D. 1794. The one of that date said to have been the "Lansdowne" was Cole's Constitutions of A.D. 1728.

Mr. J. O. Halliwell, Mr. E. A. Bond, and other well known antiquarians date the MS. about A.D. 1600, and until the publication of MS. "B" It was thought to be next in importance in point of antiquity, to the Poem of the fourteenth century. The style of calligraphy, and other considerations seem to warrant so early a date being ascribed to it. The Historical Introduction is briefer than usual in Scrolls of that period. In other respects it resembles the ordinary versions, and is a manuscript well worthy of reproduction.

"Here Begineth the True Order of Masonrie.

"The might of the *Father* of the *Heavens* The *Wisdom* of the *Glorious Son*, And the goodnesse of the *Ho/y Ghost* three persons and one *God* be with vs now and ever *Amen*.

"Good Bretheren and Fellows our purpose is to shew you how and in what manner this *Noble* and *Worthy Craft of Masonry* was first founded and begun, And afterwards how it was confirmed by worthy *Kings* and *Princes* and by many other Worshipfull men, And also to all those the be heere, Weemnde to shewe you the Charge that belongs to every trew *Mason* to keep, for in good Faith if you take good heed it is well worthy to be kept for A worthy Craft and curious *Science*.

S^{rs} there be *Seaven Liberall Sciencies* of which the *Noble Craft of Masonry* is one, And the Seaven be these, The first is *Gramer* and that teacheth A man to Spell and Write trewly. The second is *Rethorick* and that teacheth A man to speake faire and Subtill, The third is *Lodgick* and that teacheth A man deseme the trew from the false, The ffourth is *Arethmatick* and that teacheth A man to Reckon and Account all manner of Accompts, the fifth is *Geometry* and that teacheth A man . . . and Measur of Earth and of all things of the which this Science is called *Geometry*, The sixth is called *Musick*, and that teacheth A man to sing with Voyce and Tongue and Organ Harp and Trump, The Seaventh is called *Astronomy* and that teacheth A man to know the Course of the Sunn and the Moone and the Starrs, these be the *Seaven Liberall Sciencies* of the which all be founded by one which is *Geometry*, and thus a man, may prove that all the Seaven Sciencies be founde by Geometric for it Teacheth A man . . . and Measure Ponderation weight on all things on Earth, For there is noe Workman that Worketh any Craft but he worketh by some Mett or Measure. And every man that buyeth or Selleth they buy or Sell by some weight or Measure, And all this is *Geometry*, And the Merchants and all other Craftsmen of the Seaven Sciencies, and the Plowmen and Tillers of the Earth and Sowers of all manner of Graines Seeds and Vine plants, and Setters of all manner of ffruits: For *Gramer* or *Arethmatick* nor *Astronomy* nor none of all the Seaven Sciencies can no man finde Mett or Measure in without *Geometry* wherefore methinks that the said Science of *Geometry* is most worthy. And all the other be founded by it. But how this worthy Science and Craft was first founded and begun I shall tell you before
Noyes f flood there was A man which was called *Lameth* as it is written in the Bible in the 4th Chapter of Genesis, and this *Lameth* had 2 Wifes the one called *Ada* the other *Sella*, by the first wife *Ada* he begat a Sonne and a Daughter And these 4 Children found the begining of all these Crafts and Sciencies in the World ffor the Eldest Sonne *Gabell* found the Craft of Geometry and he fed f flocks of Sheep and Lambs in the ffeild: And first wrought houses of Stone and he and his Brother *Tubalt* found the Crafts of *Musick* song of mouth harp and Organs and all other Instruments. The third Brother *Tubalican* found the Smith Craft of Gold and Silver Iron and Copper and Steel, And the Daughter found the Craft of Webbing and these Children knew well that God would take vengeance for Sinn either by ffire or Water, wherefore they wrought the Scyences they had founded in 2 Pillers of Stone, that they might be found afterwards, and the one Stone was called Marble for that would not burne in the ffire, and the other Stone was called Latherne and that would not be drowned with water; *Our* Intent is to tell you how and in what manner these Stones were found that these Sciencies was written on the *Hermenerus* that was *Cubb* his Sonne, The which *Cubb. Semet.* Sonne the which Sonne was *Noaths* Sonne this same *Hermenerus* was afterwards called *Armes* the ffather of the Wisemen he found one of the 2 pillers of Stone and found the Science written therein

and he taught it to others, And at the making of the tower of *Babilon*, was *Masonrie* first made there much of, and the *King of Babilon* called Nemroth who was a Mason himselfe and loved well the rest as is said with the Masters of Stories, And when the City of *Ninevey* or the City of the *East Port* should have bin made *Nemroth the King of Babilon* sent thither Sixty *Masons* of his Region to the *King of Ninevey* his cozen, And when he sent them forth he gave them a Charge in this manner.

"The first was that they should be true to their *King* Lord or Master that they served and that they shoulde Ordaine the most wise and cunning man to be Master of the *King* or Lords worke that was amongst them, and neither for Love Riches nor favour to sett another that had little cunninge to be Master of that Worke whereby the Lord should bee ill served And the *Science* ill Defamed.

"Secondly that they should call the Governor of the Worke Master all the tyme they wrought with him and other many more Charges that were to long to write, and for the keeping of all those Charges he made them sware a great Oath which men vsed at that time. And ordained for them reasonable pay that they might live with honestie, and also he gave them in Charge that they should Assemble togather every yeare once to see how they might Worke best to serve the *King* or Lord for their profitt and their owne Workship, And also that they should correct within themselves those that had Trespassed against the *Science* or Craft, And thus was this Noble Craft first grounded there, And the worthy *Mr Ewclides* gave it the name of Geometry, And how it is called throughout all the World *Masonrie* Long after when the Children of Israeli were come into the Land *Berhest* which is now called the Countrey of Jerusalem where *King David* begun the Temple that is now called *Templu Dei*, and is named with us the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and the same King David Loved *Masons* then right well and gave them good pay, and he gave the Charges and Manners that he learned in Egipt which were given by that worthy Doctor Ewclid and other more charges that you shall heare after wardes; And after the decease of *King David*, then Reigned *Solloman* that was King Davids Sound and he performed out the Temple that his ffather had begun and he sent after *Masons* into Diverse Countreys and into Diverse Lands and he gathered them together so that he had 24000 Workers of Stone and were all named *Masons* and he Chosed out of them 3000 and were all ordained to be Masters, Rulers and Governors of his worke, and then was there a King of another Region which men called *Iram* and he loved well *King Solloman* and gave him Timber to his work and he had a Sonne that was called a man that was Master of Geometry, and was chiefe Master of all his *Masonrie* & of all his Graving, Carving and all other Masonry that belonged to the Temple, this is Witnessed in the holy Bible (in Libro Regium quarto et Tertio) and this same *Solloman* Confirmed both the Charges and the Manners which his ffather had given. And thus was the worthy Craft of *Masonrie* confirmed in that countrey of Jerusalem And many other Regions and Kingdoms men walked into Diverse Countreys some because of Learning to learne more Cunning, And some to teach them that had but little Cunning, and soe it befell that there was a Curious man named *Namas Greecious* who had beene at the makeing of Sollomans Temple And he came from thence into France and there he taught the *Science of Masonrie* to men of that Land and so there was one of the Royall Line of France called *Charles Marshall* and he was A man that loved well the said Craft and took upon him the Rules and Manners and after that BY THE GRACE OF GOD he was elect to be the *King* of ffrance and when he was in his Estate he helped to make those *Masons* that were now, and sett them on Work and gave them Charges and Manners and good pay as he had Learned of other *Masons*, and Confirmed them a Charter from yeare to yeare to hold their Assembly when they would and Cherished them right well, and thus came this Noble craft into ffrance and England, in that season stood void as fforagine Charge of *Masons* vntill St. Albanes and St. Albans was a worthy Knight and Steward to the King of his household and had Government of his Realme And also of the makeing of the Walls of the said Towne, and he loved well *Masons* and Cherished them much and made there pay right good for he gave them iijs vjd a week & iijd before that time all the Land a Mason took but one penny a day and his meat till St. Albones mended it and he gott them a Charter of the King and his Councill for to hold a Generall Councill and gave it to name Assembly. Thereat was he himselfe and did help to make *Masons* and gave them Charges as you shall heare afterwards, soone after the Decease of St. Albones there came Diverse Warrs into England out of Diverse Nations so that the good rule of *Masons* was dishired and put downe vntill the tyme of *King Adilsion* in his tyme there was a worthy King in England that brought this Land into good rest and he builded many great workes and buildings, therefore he loved well *Masons* for he had a Sonne called *Edwin* the which Loved *Masons* much more then his ffather did and he was soe practized in Geometry that he delighted much to come and talke with *Masons* and to Learne of them the Craft, And after for the love he had to *Masons* and to the Craft, he was made *Mason* at Windsor and he gott of the *King* his ffather a Charter and Commission once every yeare to have Assembly within the Realme where they would within *England* and to correct within themselves ffaults & Trespasses that weere done as Touching the Craft, and he held them an Assembly at *Yorke* and there he made *Masons* and gave them Charges and taught them the Manners, and Comands the same to be kept ever afterwards And tooke them the Charter and Commission to keep their Assembly and Ordained that it should be renewed from *King* to *King*, and when the Assembly were gathered together he made a Cry that all old *Masons* or young that had any Writeings or Vnderstanding of the Charges and manners that weere made before their Lands wheresoever they were made *Masons* that they should shew them forth, there were found some in ffrench, some in Greek some in Hebrew and some in English, and some in other Languages, and when they were read and over seen well the intent of them was vnderstood to be all one, and then he caused a Booke to be made thereof how this worthy Craft of *Masonrie* was first founded and he himselfe Comanded and also then caused that it should be read at any tyrae when it should happen *any *Mason* or *Masons* to be made to give him or them their Charges, and from that time vntill this Day Manners of *Masons* have been kept in this Manner and forme as Well as Men might Governe it and ffurthermore at diverse Assemblies have been put and Ordained diverse Charges by the best advice of Masters and ffellows (Tunc vnus ex Senioribus tentat Librum et ille ponent manam Suam Super Librum) [Then one of the elders and he tries to put the book became manifest in her book] Every man that is a *Mason* take good heede to these Charges, If any man finde himselfe guilty in any of these Charges we pray that he may amend himselfe or principally for dread of God you that be charged take good heede that you keep all these Charges well for it is a great perill to a man to forswear himselfe vpon a Booke.

"The First Charge is that you shall be true to God and holy Church and to vse noe Error or Heresie you vnderstanding and by wise mens teaching, also that you shall be Leige men to the *King* of England without Treason or any ffalshood and that you know noe Treason or treachery but that ye amend and give knowledge there of to the King or his Councill also that ye shall be true to one another (that is to say) every *Mason* of the Craft that is *Mason* allowed you shall doe to him as you would be done to yo' selfe.

"Secondly and ye shall keep trueely all the Councill of the Lodge or of the Chamber, and all the Councill of the Lodge that ought to be kept by the way of *Masonhood* also that you be noe theeve nor theeves to yor knowledge free that you shall be true to the *King*

Lord or Master that you serve and truly to see and worke for his advantage also you shall call all Masons yor ffellows or yo^r Brethren and noe other names:

"*Fowerthly* also you shall not take yo^r ffellows wife in Villoney nor deflowre his Daughter or Servant nor put him to disworship also you shall truly pay for yo^r meat or drinke wheresoever you goe to Table or Board whereby the Craft or Science may be slandered. These be the charges Generall that belong to every true Masons both Masters and Fellows.

"Now I will rehearse other Charges single for Masons Allowed.

"First that noe Mason take on him noe Lords worke nor other mans but if he know himselfe well able to pforme the work soe that the Craft have noe Slander.

"Secondly also that noe Master take worke but that he take reasonable pay for it, soe that the Lord may be truly served and the Master to live honestly and to pay his ffellows truly also that no Master or ffellow suplant others of their worke (that is to say) if he have taken a worke or else stand Master of a worke that he shall not put him out without he be vnable of Cunninge to make an end of his Worke, alsoe that noe Master nor ffellow shall take noe Prentice for lesse than Seaven yeares and that the prentice be able of Birth that is ffree borne and of Limbs whole as a Man ought to be and that noe Mason or ffellow take no allowance to be maid Mason without the Assent of his ffellows at the least Six or Seaven, that he [that he] maide be able in all degrees that is free borne and of a good Kindred true and no bondsman and that he have his right Lirnbes as a man ought to have.

"Thirdly also that a Master take noe Prentice without he have Occupcon sufficient to Occupie two or three Fellows at least.

"Fowerthh also that noe Master or ffellow put away Lords worke to Taske that ought to be Journey worke.

"Fiftly also that every Master give pay to his ffellow* and Servants as they may deserve so that he be not defamed with false working.

"Sixthly also that none Slander another behind his back to make him loose his good name.

"Seventhly that noe ffellow in the house or abroad answere anotlier Vngodly or repravably without cause.

"Eightley also that every Master Mason reverence his elder also that a Mason be no Common player at the Dice Cards or hazard nor at any other Vnlawful playes through the which the Science and craft may be dishonerd.

"Ninthly also that noe Mason vse no Lechery nor have been abroad whereby the Craft may be dishonored or Slandered.

"Tenthly also that no ffellow goe into the Towne by night except he have a ffellow with him who may beare record that he was in an honest place.

"Eleventhly also that every Master and ffellow shall come to the Assembly if it be within 50 Miles of him if he have any warning and if he have trespassed against the Craft to abide the award of the Master and ffellows.

"Twelihly also that every Master Mason and ffellow that have trespass'd against the Craft shall stand in Correcon of other Masters and ffellows to make him accord and if they cannot accord to goe to the Comon Law.

"Ihirteenthly also that a Master or ffellow make not a Moulde Stone Square nor rule to no Lowen nor Sett no Lowen worke within the Lodge nor without to no Mould Stone.

"Fourteenthly also that every Mason receive or cherish Strange Fellows when they come over the Countrey and sett them on work if they will worke as the Manner is (that is to say) if the Mason have any Moulde Stone in his place on worke and if he have none the Mason shall refresh him with money vnto the next Lodge.

"Fifteenthly also that every Mason shall truly serve his Master ffor his pay.

" Sixteenthly also that every Master shall truly make an end of his worke taske or Journey whethersoe it bee.

"These be all the Charges and Covenants that ought to be had read at the makeing of a Mason or Masons.

"The Almighty God who have you & me in his keeping Amen."

(A certified Transcript from the British Museum.)