

## Benjamin Cole's 1728 *Constitutions*: a footnote to Masonic history

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The 1723 *Constitutions* feature prominently in the development of Freemasonry with many other versions of Masonic *Constitutions*, apart from *Ahiman Rezon*, reduced to little more than a footnote in Masonic history. Indeed, in 1731, the 1723 *Constitutions* was described in a contemporary newspaper as being 'ordained to be read as the only Constitutions of free and accepted Masons'.

While many of the papers marking the tercentenary of the 1723 *Constitutions* focus solely on the influence of that work, this short paper glances at Benjamin Cole's version of the *Constitutions*, published in 1729.

In this paper we outline known locations of Cole's book, the presumptive provenance of the copy held in the Library of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario ('GLCO'), the structure and contents of Cole's *Constitutions*, a suggestion as to why Cole's *Constitutions* did not find favour and a short biography of Benjamin Cole (1695/7-1783), and his family.

Cole's *Constitutions* is well-known to Masonic scholars with several articles in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* ('AQC'), including that of Douglas Knoop and G.P. Jones in *AQC* 53 (1940), among others. Copies of the *Constitutions* are held in the GLCO Library (catalogue number A31 C65e); at the Library & Museum of Freemasonry, London (BE 94 COL); and digitally (WorldCat: OCLC Identifier 560427879).

The GLCO copy was probably purchased by John Ross Robertson (GM, GLCO, 1890-2) when in London to attend the coronation of Edward VII. His Masonic collection was subsequently acquired by the Library.

Cole's *Constitutions* is organized into several parts. The first comprises 51 pages and offers a faux history of Masonry, alludes to the ancient charges, and concludes with 'The Master's Song', 'The Fellow-Crafts Song', 'The Enter'd Prentice's Song' and 'The Fairy Elves Song'. The second section is a transcript of a speech delivered at 'A Grand Lodge, held at Merchant's-Hall, in the City of York, on St. John's Day, December 27. 1726.' The print date is 1729. The third offers a transcript of a speech delivered at 'A Lodge, held at the Carpenters Arms in Silver-Street, Golden-Square, the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 1728. By the Right Worshipful Edw. Oakley, Architect, M.M. late Provincial Grand Warden in Carmarthen, south Wales'. And the final four pages announce a drama presented by Lord Kingston on 27 December 1728 including a Prologue 'Spoken by Mr William Mills' and an Epilogue by Mrs Thurmond 'Spoken by a MASON's Wife'.

In the GLCO copy, pages up to and including p.57 are printed in an ornate script from copperplate engravings. The remainder is in a more commonplace font and appears to be a letterpress printing on thinner paper.

The *Constitutions* is dedicated to James King, 4th Baron Kingston (1693-1761), the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (1728-1730) at the time of publication. A later version published in 1731 with Benjamin Creak is dedicated to Lord Lovell, the then GM. Both dedications are conventional means of Masonic 'validation'.

As an aside, while the volume is sometimes referred to as the '1728 *Constitutions*', Cole's *Constitutions* was in fact published and sold the following year – 1729 – the bulk of the book having been prepared in advance of Lord Kingston's installation as Grand Master in December 1728.

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Benjamin Cole is relatively well known. He was almost certainly born in Oxford and lived and worked in Oxford and London. He was the first of three generations of the Cole family to work not only as engravers and printers, but also as official engravers to the Grand Lodge of England.

Cole was also a surveyor, cartographer and scientific instrument maker, and his early work includes books on geometry and architecture, maps (including those for John Rocque), as well as reprinted Masonic songs and speeches, and various instruments used by scientific demonstrators and lecturers. This brought him into the circles of those then developing early modern Freemasonry, not least Dr Jean Theophilus Desaguliers.

In terms of his membership of freemasonry, a 'Mr Cole' appears in the 1725 register as a member of the lodge at the Red Lyon, Richmond, Surrey. In 1730, a Benjamin Cole is shown in the membership list of the lodge at the King's Arms, St Paul's Churchyard, and the same year another (or the same) Benjamin Cole was a member of the Queen's Arms in Newgate Street. Although we cannot be certain which, if any, is or are the engraver, as opposed to someone else of the same name, including a well-known linen draper living in the City of London, the balance of probability might suggest that Cole was, at the least, a member of the King's Arms in St Paul's Churchyard. Cole is known to have operated a workshop and retail outlet at London House Yard, St Paul's Church Yard, from at least 1725 until 1731. He was previously based at The Lock of Hair, next to Furnival's Inn, Holborn, an address that appears in an advertisement in the *Weekly Journal* in May 1721.

Cole moved from St Paul's Churchyard to the corner of King's Head Court in Holborn (*Daily Advertiser*, 30 September 1738), and was still at this address in April 1767 when his wife, Margaret, testified at the Old Bailey regarding the theft of their till. It was from this last address that the 'Engraved Lists of Lodges' were published.

In 1745 Cole became the official engraver to the Grand Lodge of England in succession to John Pine (1743-67). He retained the position until around 1767. His son, also Benjamin (1725-1813), took over from him having been apprenticed to his father in 1739. Another son, William, was engraver to the Bank of England and assumed responsibility for Grand Lodge's engraved lists in 1767. William's son, John, later extended the relationship with Grand Lodge by establishing a specialist Masonic Printing Office in London.

Like his father and grandfather, John Cole was also a freemason. Originally a member and PM of Friendly Lodge, No. 466, and a PM of lodges 113, 195 and 249, John was admitted to Globe Lodge, No. 23, a red apron lodge in 1797 but, two years later, requested that his membership be discontinued. He re-joined in 1806, was elected a Grand Steward in 1807 but, the following year, declined to serve. The cost of acting as grand steward with responsibility for organising and underwriting the annual grand feast was considerable, and the deteriorating financial position of his engraving business may have been at the root of his withdrawal. By the early 1880s, lithography, developed in Germany in the late 1790s, was rapidly replacing engraving. The introduction of new technique led to the collapse of John Cole's more traditional engraving business and in 1808 he switched to dealing in musical instruments, mainly pianos, to stave off bankruptcy.

In addition to the Engraved Lists and other Masonic commissions, Benjamin Cole also engraved the frontispiece to John Entick's 1756 *Constitutions*, one of the most elegant of all such engravings.



Cole's 1728/9 *Constitutions* were reprinted in 1731 but the book failed to achieve widespread acceptance. It is relatively easy to understand why. Cole's *Constitutions* harks back to the mediaeval Old Charges, including a duty 'to be true to the King and to the Lord that they serve', and a recital of principally operative obligations. It is in many respects at some distance from the Enlightenment principles and enjoynments expounded by

Desaguliers, Payne and Anderson in the 1723 *Constitutions*, and almost a regression towards the past rather than a pivot on which freemasonry turned to the future.

The rationale for the publication may have been financial. Cole (and Creake especially) were seeking to profit from the growing popularity of Freemasonry that had encouraged printers and publishers across Europe to pirate or paraphrase the 1723 *Constitutions*.

The addition of two lectures may have been designed to widen the appeal of the book, indeed, they are early examples of Masonic education. But the first lecture, by Francis Drake, connects the book to the (rival) Grand Lodge of all England at York. It was also delivered at a time when Charles Bathurst, a known Jacobite sympathiser, was Grand Master of that grand lodge.

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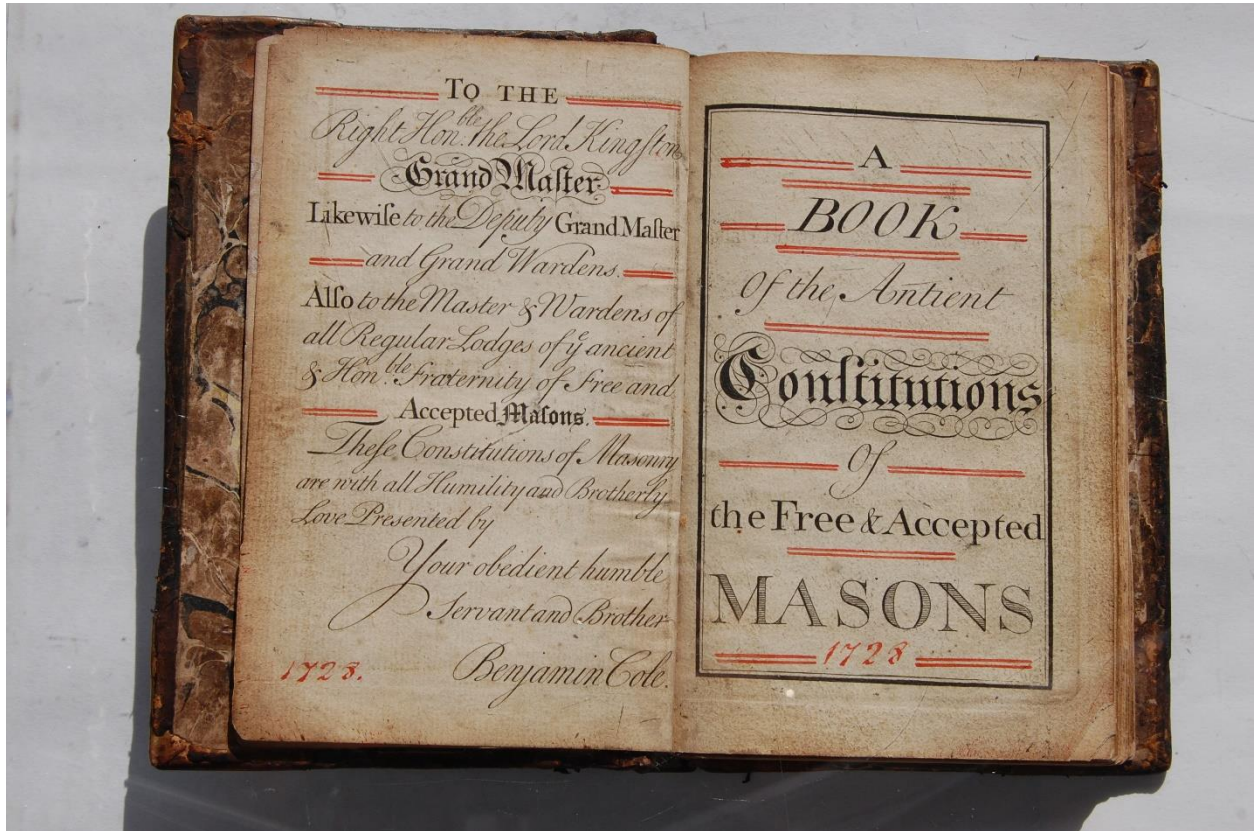
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Appendix One

Dedication / Title Page



57  
The  
Fairy Elves Song

*Where Masons Guarded stand,  
With naked Sword in hand,  
Under the door we Creep  
And there we slyly Peep.*

Chorus.

*And when they Drop it on their Thumbs  
They drink their Supernaculum*

II.

*The Art of Masonry  
Altho' we are not Free,  
In every Lodge we have been,  
The Secrets we have seen.*

Chorus.

*But such Love to the Craft we bear,  
The Secrets we will ne'er declare.*

A  
S P E E C H

Deliver'd to the

Worshipful and Antient SOCIETY

OF

Free and Accepted Masons,

AT

A Grand Lodge, held at Merchant's-Hall, in the City of York, on St. John's Day, December 27. 1726.

The Right Worshipful

CHARLES BATHURST Esq;

Grand-Master.

By the Junior Grand-Warden.

*Olim meminisse Jucabit.*

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year M.DCCXXIX.



peis that every Gentleman, who is called a Free Mason, shou'd not be startled at a Problem in Geometry, a Proposition in *Euclid*, or at least be wanting in the History and just Distinctions of the five Order of Architecture.

To sum all: Since we are so happily met to celebrate this Annual Selemnity, let neither *Dane* nor *Norman*, *Goth* nor *Vandal*, start up to disturb the Harmony of it; that the World may hear and admire, that even at this critical Time all Parties are buried in Masonry; but let us so behave ourselves here and elsewhere, that the distinguishing Characteristicks of the whole Brotherhood may be to be called good Christians, Loyal Subjects, True Britons, as well as Free Masons.



A  
S P E E C H

Deliver'd to the

Worshipful SOCIETY

OF


Free and Accepted Masons,

A T

A Lodge, held at the *Carpenters Arms* in *Silver-Street, Golden-Square*, the 31st of *December, 1728*.

By the Right Worshipful *EDW. OAKLEY*, Architect, *M. M.* late Provincial, Senior Grand Warden in *Carmarthen, South Wales*.

Brethren,

 S I have the Honour to assume the Chair, as Master of this Lodge, I do assure you, I will do my Endeavour to discharge my Duty, as far as my weak Capacity will conduct me.

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## Appendix Two

### Transcription

A book of the Ancient Constitutions of the Free & Accepted Masons.

*Dedication page*

To the Right Hon.ble the Lord Kingston

Likewise to the Deputy Grand Master and Grand Wardens.

Also to the Master & Wardens of all Regular Lodges of ye ancient & Hon.ble Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons.

These Constitutions of Masonry are with all Humility and Brotherly Love Presented by

Your obedient humble Servant and Brother

Benjamin Cole.

1728



*Title page*

A Book of the Antient Constitutions of the Free & Accepted Masons

1728

*Page 1*

The Beginning and first Foundation of the most worth Craft of Masonry, with the Charges thereunto belonging.

The Night of the Father in Heaven, and the wisdom of the Glorious Son, through the Grace and goodness of the Holy Ghost; they being three persons in one God, be with us at our Beginning, & give us Grace so to govern (us

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us here in our Living; that we may come to his Bliss that never shall have an end. Amen.  
Good Brethren and Fellows; our purpose is to tell you how, and in what manner this worthy Craft of Masonry was begun; & afterwards how it was kept up, and encouraged by worthy Kings and Princes, and by many other worshipful men.

And also to those that be here, we will charge by the charges that belong to every (Free

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Free-Mason to keep for in good Faith, Free Masonry is worthy to be kept well, it is a worthy Craft, and a curious Science.  
For there be seven Liberal Sciences, of which seven it is one of them, and the names of the Seven Sciences be these --

The first is Grammar, and that teacheth a man to speak and write truly.  
The second is Rhetorick, and that teacheth a man to speak fair, in soft terms.  
The third is Logick, (and

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and that teacheth a man to discern or know truth from falsehood.  
The fourth is Arithmetick, which teacheth a man to reckon or account all manner of numbers &c.  
The fifth is Geometry, which teacheth the Mensuration of lines, Superficies, Solids &c. which Science is the Basis of Masonry.  
The Sixth Science is called Musick which teacheth ye Proportions Harmony & Discords of Sounds &c. which qualifies a man (in

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in the Art of Singing; Composeing Tunes, and playing upon divers Instruments, as the Organ, Harp, &c.  
Lastly the Seventh Science is called Astronomy, which teacheth the motions of the Luminaries, Planets, Fix'd Stars, &c. & to Measure their Magnitudes, & Determine their Distances.  
Note that these seven Sciences, are contained under Geometry; which teacheth the Mensuration, Ponderation or weight of every thing in and upon the whole Earth. For tis well known. That every (Craftsman

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Craftsman works by measure as also the Husbandman, Navigator, Planter &c. for without Geometry, those arts can no more Subsist, then Logick can without Grammar.

The first Rise of this Science was before the general Deluge, which is commonly called Noah's Flood; there was a man called Lamech, as mentioned in the 4<sup>th</sup> Chap. Of Genesis, who had two wives, (the

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the one was called Adah, and the other Lillah, by Adah, he begot two sons, Jabal and Jubal, by Lillah he begot one Son, called Tubal, and a Daughter called Naamah; The four Children found out the beginning of all the Crafts in the World; Jabal found out Geometry, and he divided Flocks of Sheep, he first built a House of Stone & Timber.

His Brother Jubal found the Art of Musick, he was the Father of all Such as handle the Harp, and Organ. (Tubal

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Tubal Cain was the Instructor of every Artificer in Brass & Iron; and the Daughter found out the Craft of Weaving.

These Children knew well that God would take vengeance for sin, either by fire or Water; wherefore they wrote their Sciences that they had found out, on two Pillars; that they might be found after Noahs Flood. One of the Pillars was Marble, which will not burn with any Fires & ye other Pillar or Stone was called Laternes which will not drown in any Water. (Our

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Our Intent next is to tell you truly, how & in what manner, these Stones were found; whereon these Sciences were written.

The Great Hermes, Surnamed Tresmagistus, or three times Great, being both a Priest & Philosopher in Egypt, found one of them, and lived in the year of the world 2076, in the reign of Ninus: & some think him to be Grandson of Cush, which was grandson to Noah; he was the first that began to leave off Astrology, to admire the other Wonders of Nature, he (proved

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proved there was but one God, Creator of all things; he divided the Day into twelve hours, he is also thought to be the first who divided the Zodiack into twelve Signes, he was Councillor to Osyris King of Egypt, and is said to have invented ordinary Writing & Hyrogliphicks, the first Laws of the Egyptians, and divers other Sciences; & taught them unto other men.

And at the building of Babilon, Anno Mundi 1810, Masonry was (in

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in very great Esteem, insomuch that the mighty Nimrod King of Babilon was a Mason himself, as is reported by ancient Histories; & when the City of Ninivie, and other Cites of the East were to be built; Nimrod the King of Babilon sent thither Masons, at the Request of the King of Ninivie his Cousin; & when he sent them forth, he gave them a Charge in this manner;

That they should be true to one another, & love truly (together

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together, and that they should serve the Lord truly for their pay, so that their Master might have Honour, and all that belong unto him; and several other Charges he gave them, & this was the first time that ever a Mason had any charge of his Craft.

Moreover, when Abraham & Sarah his Wife went into Egypt, & there taught the seven Sciences to the Egyptians (anno Mundi 2084) he had a worthy Scholar whose name was (Hermes

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Hermes & he learn'd right well, & became a great Master of the seven Sciences, and in his days it befell, that the Lords, & Estates of the Realm had so many sons, & they had no competent livelihood to find their Children. Wherefore they took Council together with the King of the Land, how they might find their Children honestly, and Gentlemen, but could find no manner of good way, and then did they proclaim through all the Land, that if there were any man that could inform (them

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them, that he should come unto them, and that he should be well rewarded for his Travel; & that he should hold himself well pleaser.

After this Cry was made then came this worthy Clerk Hermes, & said to the King & to the Lords; If you will give me your Children to Govern, I will teach them one of the seven Sciences, whereby they may live honestly as Gentlemen should, under Condition that you will grant them and that I may have power to (rule

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rule them after the manner ye Science ought to be ruled; and then the King and Council granted, and sealed his Commission. And then this worthy Clerk Hermes took to him these Lords sons, and taught them the Science of Geometry in practick, for to work in Stone all manner of worthy work, that belongeth to building of Churches, Temples, Towers, Castles & all other manner of Building; and he gave them as Charge in this manner:

First that they should (be

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be true to the King, & to the Lord that they serve, & to the Fellowship whereto they are admitted, and they should love, & be true to one another; and they should call each other his Fellow, or else Brother, and not his Servant of Knave, nor no other foul name, and that they should truly deserve their pay of the Lord or the Master of the work that they serve.

That they should ordain the wisest of them to be Master of the work, and neither for Love nor Lineages, Riches nor (favour

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favour, set another ye hath but little Cunning to be Master of the Lords Work, whereby the Lord should be evil served, and they ashamed, & also that they should call the Governour of the Work Master, in the time that they Work with him.

And many other Charges he gave them, that are too long to tell, and to all these Charges he made them swear a great oath that Men us'd at that time.  
And he ordained for them a reasonable pay, whereby (they

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they might live honestly, & also that they should come & assemble together every Year, once to consult on how they might work best to serve the Lord for his profit, and to their own Credit, and to correct within themselves him that hath tresspass'd against ye Craft.

And thus was ye Craft grounded there & that worthy Clerk Euclid gave it the name of Geometry, & now its called through all the Land Masonry.

Anno Mundi 2474 2 Samuel, 5.6. Sithence, (long

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long time after; when the Children of Israel were come into the Land of the Jebusites, which is now called Jerusalem, King David began the Temple, that is called Templum Domini, with us the Temple of Jerusalem, or the Temple of the Lodge.

The same King David loved Masons, and cherished them, and gave them good pay; & he gave them the Charges in the manner they were given in Egypt, & other Charges more, as you shall hear afterwards.

After the Decease of King David, (1<sup>st</sup>

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1<sup>st</sup> Kings 7 Chap. 13 Verse. Solomon sent to Hiram King of Tyre, for one who was a cunning workman, called Hiram Abif the son of a Woman of the line of Napthali, and of Urias the Israelite.

Solomon, To Hiram the King

Know thou, that my Father having a Will to build a Temple to God, hath been withdrawn from the performance thereof, by the continual wars (and

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and troubles he hath had, for he never took rest before he either defeated his Enemies, or made them Tributaries unto him, for mine own part I thank God, for the peace which I possess and for that by the means thereof I have opportunity (according to mine own desire) to build a Temple unto God, for he it is ye foretold my Father, that his House should be builded during my Reign; For such cause I pray you, send some one of your skillfulest men, with my servants to the Wood Libanus, to hew down Trees in ye place, (for

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for the Macidonians are more skillfull in hewing, & preparing Timber than our people are, & I will pay ye Cleavers of Wood according to your direction.

Hiram, to King Solomon

Thou has cause to thank God in that he has deliver'd thy Father's Kingdom into thy hands. To Thee, I say, who is a man wise and full of virtue for such Cause since no news can come unto me more gracious, (nor



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nor Office of Love more esteem'd than this, I will accomplish all that thou requestest; for after I have caused a great quantity of Cedar and Cyprus Wood to be cut down, I will send it to ye by Sea, by my Servants, whom I will command & furnish such convenient vessels of Burthen to the end they may deliver the same in what place of thy Kingdom it shall best please ye that afterwards thy Subjects may transport them to Jerusalem; you shall provide to furnish us with Corn, whereof we stand in need, because we inhabit an Island. S(olomon

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Solomon, King David's son to finish the Temple that his Father had begun, sent for Masons into divers Countries, and gathered them together, so that he had fourscore thousand workmen that were workers of Stone, and were all named Masons, & he chose three thousand of them to be Masters and Governours of his Work.

And Hiram King of Tyre, sent his servants unto Solomon, for he was ever a Lover of King David, and he sent Solomon Timber, and (Workmen

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Workmen, to help forward the building of the Temple, and he sent one that was nam'd Hiram Abif, a Widows Son of the Tribe of Naphtili, he was a Master of Geometry and was Master of all his Masons, Carvers, Engravers, and Workmen and Casters of Brass, and all other Mettals that were used about the Temple.

King Solomon confirmed both the Charges, and manners, that his Father had given to Masons; thus was ye worthy Craft of Masonry confirmed in Jerusalem, and (many

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many other Kingdoms, and he finished the Temple Annon Mundi 3000. Curious Craftsmen walked about full wide, in diverse Countries, some to learn more Craft and cunning, others to teach them yet had but little cunning.

Annon Mundi 3421

At the Destruction of the first Temple by Nebuchadnezer, after it had stood four hundred and thirty years.

The second Temple began in ye Reign of Syrus, seventy years after the destruction; (it

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it being hindered, it was forty six years in building, and was finished in the Reign of Darius.

Anno Mundi 3522.

In the Reign of Ptolome and Cleopatra anno Mundi 3812 Onias built a Jewish Temple in Egypt, in a place called Bubastis, and called it after his own name.

The Tower of Straton alias Cesaria, was built by Herod in Palastine, Anno Mundi 3942 and many other curious Works of Marble; as the Temple of Cesar (Agrippa

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Agrippa, to his Memory in ye Countrey called Zenodoras, near to a place called Panion.

Anno Mundi 3946.

He also pulled down the second Temple yet was finish'd in the Reign of Darius, and appointed one Thousand Carriages to draw stone to ye place, and chose out ten thousand cunning and expert Workmen, to hew and mould stone, and one thousand be chose out and clothes and made them Masters and Rulers of the Work; and build a New Temple Anno (Mundi

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Mundi 3846 on ye foundation which Solomon had laid, not inferior to the first, and was finished nine years before the Birth of our Saviour, Annon Mundi 3956.

After the Birth of our Saviour, Aururiagus being King of England, Claudius the Emperour came over with an Army, and he fearing to be overthrown, made a League with him, and gave him his Daughter in Mariage, and that he should hold his Kingdom off Romans, and so the Emperour returned in the year forty (three

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three after the Birth of Christ. Masons came into England and built a good Monastery near unto Glassenbury, with many Castles and Towers.

This sumptious Art of Geometry it being profest by Emperours, Kings, Popes, Cardinals, and Princes innumerable, who have all of them left us the permant Monuments of it in their several place, of their Dominions, nor will this I presume be denied, when well considered, that renowned Example, the Trajan Column (it

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it being one of the most superbe Remainders of the Roman Magnificence to be now seen standing and which has more immortalized the Emperour Trajan, than all ye pens of Historians; it was erected to him by the Senate, and people of Rome, in memory of those great services he had rendered the Countrey, and to the end the Memory of it might remain to all succeeding Ages, and continue so long as the Empire it self.

Annon Domini 300

In St. Albans time the King of England, that (was

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was a Pagan, did wall ye Town about yet was called Verulum, and St. Alban was a worthy Knight, and Steward of the Kings Household, and had ye Government of the Realm, and also of making ye Town Walls; and loved Masons well, and cherished them much, & he made their pay rightgood, standing as the Realm did. For he gave them two Shillings a week and three pence to their Chear, for before that time thro all the Land, a Mason had but a penny a day, and (his

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his meat until St. Alban amended it.

And he gave them a Charter of the King and Council for to hold a general Council & gave it the name of an Assembly and was thereat himself & helped to make Masons & gave them Charges as you shall hear afterward. It happened presently after the Martyrdom of St. Alban (who is truly termed England's proto Martyer) that a Certain King invaded the Land & destroyed most of ye natives by Fire and Sword. That the (Science

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Science of Masonry was much decayed until the Reign of Ethelbert (anno Dom 616) King of Kent Gregory the first surnamed Magnus sent into the Isle of Britain a Monk with other learned men to preach ye Christian faith for this Nation as yet had not fully received it; this said to Ethelbert built a Church in Canterbury and dedicated it to St. Peter and St. Paul, and as is supposed to have built or restored the Church of St. Pauls in London he also built the Church of St. Andrews in Rocester. (Sibert

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Sibert King of ye East Saxons, by persuasion of Ethelbert King of Kent, having received ye Christian faith, built the Monastry at Westminster, Anno Domini 630 to ye Honr. of God and St. Peter.

Sigebert King of ye East Angles began to erect the University of Cambridge Anno Dom 915

Athelstane began his Reign, he was a man beloved of all men, he had great devotion towards ye Churches, as appeared in ye building, adorning & endowing of Monastries, he (built

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built one at Wilton in the Diocess of Salisbury, and another at Mitchelney in Somersetshire, besides these there were but few famous Monastries, in this Realm, but yet he adorned the same either with some new peice of building, Jewels, Books, or portions of Land; he greatly enriched ye Churches of York.

Edwin Brother to King Athelstane lov'd Masons much more than his Brother did, & was a great practitioner of Geometry, & he drew him much to commune (and

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and talk with Masons to learn of them the Crafts, & afterwards for the Love he had to Masons and to the Craft he was made a Mason and he got of the King his Brother a Charter and Commission to hold every year an Assembly where they would within the Realm, and to correct within themselves faults & trespasses that were done within the Craft & he held an Assembly himself at York and there he made Masons, & gave them Charges & taught them the manners & Commanded that Rule to be kept for ever (after

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after, and he gave them the Charter and Commission to keep and made an Ordinance that it should be renewed from King to King; And when the Assembly was gathered together he made a Cry that all old Masons & young that had any Writing or understanding of the Charges and manners that were made before in this Land or any other that they should bring and shew them, And when it was proved, there was found some in French, some in Greek and some in English, and some in other Languages and they (were

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were all to one Intent & purpose and he made a Book thereof; how ye Craft was founded and he himself order'd & commanded, that it should be read and told when any Mason should be made, and for to give him his Charges, and from ye day until this time manners of Masons have been kept in that form as well as men might govern it. Furthermore at diverse assemblies, certain Charges have been made by the best Advice of Masters and Fellows. (Every

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Every man yet is a Mason, take right good heed, to these Charges, and if any man find him self guilty in any of those Charges, yet he ought to pray to God for his Grace to amend, and especially you that are to be charged, take heed that you may keep these charges right well, for it is a great peril for a man to foreswear himself upon a Book.

The first charge is that you shall be true Men to God, and the Holy Church, and that you use no Error or heresy by your understanding or discretion, but be you wise discreet men, or wise (men

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men in each thing.

Also that you shall be Leigemen to ye King, without Treason or any other falsehood, and that you know no Treason or Treachery, but you amend privily, if you may, or else warn the King or his Council thereof.

Also you shall be true to one another, that is to say to every Mason of ye Craft of Masonry, that be Masons allowed, you shall do unto them as you would they should do unto you.

Also that you shall keep all ye Councils of your Fellows (truly

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truly, be it in Lodge or in Chamber and all other Councils yet ought to be kept by way of Brotherhood.

Also that no Mason shall be a Thief, or Thiefs fellow, or conceal many such unjust action, so far as he may will or know.

Also you shall be true each unto other, and to the Lord or Master yet you serve, and truly to see unto his profit and his Advantage.

Also you shall call Masons your Fellows or Brothers and no other foul name.

Also you shall not take (Brother

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Brother or Fellows Wife in villainy, nor desire ungodly his Daughter, nor his Servant nor put him to no disworship.

Also that you pay truly for your Meat and Drink where you go to board,

And also that you shall do no Villiany, whereby the Craft may be slandered.

These be the true Charges in general that belong to every true Mason to keep, both Masters and Fellows.

Rehearse I will other Charges, in singular for (Masters

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Masters and Fellows.

First that no Master or Fellow shall take upon him and Lords Work, nor any other mans Work unless he know himself able and sufficient of skills & ability to perform the same, so that the Craft have no slander, nor disworship thereby but that the Lord be well and truly served.

Also that no Master take no Work, but that he take it reasonable, so that ye Lord may be well served with his own good, and ye Master to live honestly and to pay his fellows. (Also



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Also that no master nor Fellow shall not supplant any other of their work yet is to say if he have taken a work in hand, or else stand Master of ye Lords Work, he shall not put him out except he be Incapable o finish the same. Also that no Master or Fellow, take no Aprentice but for the Terme of seven years and yet the Aprentice be able of Birth, yet is to say, free born, and whole of Limbs as a man ought to be.  
Also that no Master or fellow, take no allowance from any to be made masons, with (out

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out the assent and Council of his fellows, and yet he take him for no less terme than five or seven years, and that he that is to be made a Mason be able in all manner of Degrees, yet is to say free born, come of good Kindred, true and no Bondman, and also, that he have his right Limbs as a man ought to have.  
Also that no Mason take any Aprentice, unless he have sufficient Occupation to sett him on, or to set three of his Fellows or two of them at the least on Work. (Also

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Also that no Master nor Fellow, shall take no mans work to Task, that was desireous to go a journey.  
Also that every Master shall pay to his Fellow, but as they deserve, so that he be not deceived by false Workmen.  
Also that no Mason slander another behind his back to make him lose his good name or his worldly goods.  
Also that no Fellow with in the Lodge, or without, misanswer another ungodly or reproachfully without a reasonable Cause. (Also

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Also that every Mason shall reverence his Elder, and put him to Worship.  
Also that no Mason shall be a common Player at hazard or at Dice, or at any other unlawfull plays, whereby the Craft may be slandered.  
Also that no Mason shall use no Letchery, nor be a Pander, or Bawd, whereby the Craft may be slandered.  
Also that no Fellow go into the Town in the night time, except he have a Fellow with him that may bear him (Witness.

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witness, that he was in honest Company.  
Also that every master and Fellow, shall come to the Assembly if he be within fifty miles about, if he have any warning, and if he has trespassed against the Craft, then to abide the award of ye Masters and Fellows.  
Also that every Master and Fellow, that have trespass'd against the Craft, shall stand to the award of the Masters and Fellows, to make them accorded if they can, and if they may not accord them, then to go to (the

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the Common Law.

Also that no Master or Fellow, make, mould, square, nor rule, to no Leyer, nor set no Leyer within the Lodge nor without, to hew nor mould stones.

Also that every Mason receive and cherish strange Fellows when they come over the Countries, and set them to Work, if they will as the is; that is to say, if they have mould stones in their place or else he shall refresh him with money unto the next Lodge.

Also that every (Mason

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shall truly serve the Lord for his pay, and every Master truly to make an end of his Work, be it Task or Journey if he have his demand, and all that he ought to have.

These Charges that we have now rehearsed unto you and all others that belong to Masons you shall keep, so help you God, and your Hallidon.

Amen