

# The Halliwell Manuscript



The MS is a very small quarto on vellum, and is No. 17, A1. in the Bibl. Reg., British Museum. It is described in David Casley's Catalogue of the MSS. of the Old Royal Library, 1734, page 259, as "A Poem of Moral Duties: here entitled, Constitutiones Artis Gemetrie secundem Euclidem. - *'Whoso wol bothe wel rede and loke.'*"

The existence of this MS. has been known for a long time, but its contents were mistaken until Mr. Halliwell-Phillips drew attention to it in a paper "*On the introduction of Freemasonry into England,*" read before the Society of Antiquaries in the 1838-9 session. He thereafter published two small editions of a work entitled "*The Early History of Freemasonry in England,*" giving a transcript of the poem.

"In the year 1757, King George II., under an instrument that passed the Great Seal, presented [the old Royal] Library to the nation. At that time it was deposited in the old Dormitory at Westminster, to which place it had been removed from Ashburnham House, at the time of the lamentable fire which broke out in that building on the 23rd October, 1731 from which it fortunately sustained but slight injury." [Sims's *Handbook to Library of Brit. Mus.*, 1854. p. 35.]

The *facsimile* is the exact size of the original. It bears the Royal arms stamped on both covers, and G.R.II., with the date 1757. The lettering on the back has also been reproduced. The MS. was bound in its present cover in or about the year 1838.

The age of the MS. has been variously estimated. Mr. Halliwell and the late Rev. A.F.A. Woodford supposed it to have been written about 1390, or earlier.

The MS. is admitted to be the oldest genuine record of the Craft of Masonry known. Mr. Halliwell pointed out that the writer of the poem was evidently a priest, from the words, "*And when the gospel me rede schal,*" on line 629. He also drew attention to line 143, which intimates a still older MS. must have existed when the poem was written.

Hic incipiunt constitutiones artis  
gemetrie secundum Eucyldem.

Here begin the constitutions of  
the art of Geometry according  
to Euclid.

1. Whose wol bothe wel rede and loke,
2. He may fynde wryte yn olde boke
3. Of grete lordys and eke ladyssse,
4. That hade mony chyldryn y-fere, y-wisse;
5. And hade no rentys to fynde hem wyth,
6. Nowther yn towne, ny felde, ny fryth:
7. A cownsel togeder they cowthe hem take;
8. To ordeyne for these chyldryn sake,
9. How they my[g]th best lede here lyfe
10. Withoute gret desese, care and stryfe;
11. And most for the multytude that was comynge
12. Of here chyldryn after here [g]yndynge.
13. (They) sende thenne after grete clerkys,
14. To techyn hem thenne gode werkys;

15. And pray we hem, for our Lordys sake,
16. To oure chyldryn sum werke to make,
17. That they my[g]th gete here lyvynge therby,
18. Bothe wel and onestlyche, ful sycurly.
19. Yn that tyme, thro[g]h good gemetry,

Whoever will both well read and look  
He may find written in old book  
Of great lords and also ladies,  
That had many children together, y-wisse; (certainly)  
And had no income to keep them with,  
Neither in town nor field nor frith; (enclosed wood)  
A council together they could them take,  
To ordain for these children's sake,  
How they might best lead their life  
Without great dis-ease, care, and strife;  
And most for the multitude that was coming  
Of their children after their ending  
They send them after great clerks,  
To teach them then good works;

And pray we them, for our Lord's sake.  
To our children some work to make,  
That they might get their living thereby,

20. Thys onest craft of good masonry  
 21. Wes ordeynt and made yn thys manere,  
 22. Y-cownterfetyd of thys clerkys y-fere;  
 23. At these lordys prayers they cownterfetyd  
 gemetry,  
 24. And [g]laf hyt the name of masonry,  
 25. For the moste oneste craft of alle.  
 26. These lordys chyldryn therto dede falle,  
 27. To lurne of hym the craft of gemetry,  
 28. The wheche he made ful curysly;  
 29. Thro[g]h fadrys prayers and modrys also,  
 30. Thys onest craft he putte hem to.  
 31. He that lerned best, and were of onesté,  
 32. And passud hys felows yn curysté;  
 33. [G]ef yn that craft he dede hym passe,  
 34. He schulde have more worschepe then the lasse.  
 35. Thys grete clerkys name was clept Euclýde,  
 36. Hys name hyt spradde ful wondur wyde.  
 37. Get thys grete clerke more ordeynt he  
 38. To hym that was herre yn thys degré,  
 39. That he schulde teche the synplyst of (wytte)  
 40. Yn that onest craft to be parfytte;  
 41. And so uchon schulle techyn othur,  
 42. And love togeder as syster and brothur.  
 43. Forthermore [g]et that ordeynt he,  
 44. Mayster y-called so schulde he be;  
 45. So that he were most y-worschepede,  
 46. Thenne sculde he be so y-clepede:  
 47. But mason schulde never won other calle,  
 48. Withynne the craft amongus hem alle,  
 49. Ny soget, ny servand, my dere brother,  
 50. Tha[g]ht he be not so perfynt as ys another;  
 51. Uchon sculle calle other felows by cuthe,  
 52. For cause they come of ladyes burthe.  
 53. On thys maner, thro[g] good wytte of gemetry,  
 54. Bygan furst the craft of masonry:  
 55. The clerk Euclýde on thys wyse hyt fonde,  
 56. Thys craft of gemetry yn Egypte londe.  
 57. Yn Egypte he taw[g]hte hyt ful wyde,  
 58. Yn dyvers londe on every syde;  
 59. Mony erys afterwarde, y understonde,  
 60. [G]er that the craft com ynto thys londe,  
 61. Thys craft com ynto Englonde, as y [g]ow say,  
 62. Yn tyme of good kyng Adelstonus day;  
 63. He made tho bothe halle and eke bowre,  
 64. And hie templus of gret honowre,  
 65. To sportyn hym yn bothe day and ny[g]th,  
 66. An to worschepe hys God with alle hys my[g]th.  
 67. Thys goode lorde loved thys craft ful wel,  
 68. And purposud to strenthyn hyt every del,  
 69. For dyvers defawtys that yn the craft he fonde;  
 70. He sende about ynto the londe  
 71. After alle the masonus of the crafte,  
 72. To come to hym ful evene stra[g]fte,  
 73. For to amende these defawtys alle  
 74. By good consel, [g]ef hyt myt[g]th falle.  
 75. A semblé thenne he cowthe let make  
 76. Of dyvers lordis, yn here state,  
 77. Dukys, erlys, and barnes also,  
 78. Kyn[g]thys, sqwyers, and mony mo,  
 79. And the grete burges of that syté,  
 80. They were ther alle yn here degré;  
 81. These were ther uchon algate,  
 82. To ordeyne for these masonus astate.  
 83. Ther they sow[g]ton by here wytte,  
 84. How they my[g]thyn governe hytte:  
 85. Fyftene artyculus they ther sow[g]ton  
 86. And fyftene poyntys they wro[g]ton.

**Hic incipit articulus primus.**

87. The furste artycul of thys gemetry:--

Both well and honestly full securely.  
 In that time, through good geometry,  
 This honest craft of good masonry  
 Was ordained and made in this manner,  
 Counterfeited of these clerks together;  
 At these lord's prayers they counterfeited  
 geometry,  
 And gave it the name of masonry,  
 For the most honest craft of all.  
 These lords' children thereto did fall,  
 To learn of him the craft of geometry,  
 The which he made full curiously;  
 Through fathers' prayers and mothers' also,  
 This honest craft he put them to.  
 He learned best, and was of honesty,  
 And passed his fellows in curiosity,  
 If in that craft he did him pass,  
 He should have more worship than the lasse, (less)  
 This great clerk's name was Euclid,  
 His name it spread full wonder wide.  
 Yet this great clerk ordained he  
 To him that was higher in this degree,  
 That he should teach the simplest of wit  
 In that honest craft to be parfytte; (perfect)  
 And so each one shall teach the other,  
 And love together as sister and brother.

Furthermore yet that ordained he,  
 Master called so should he be;  
 So that he were most worshipped,  
 Then should he be so called;  
 But masons should never one another call,  
 Within the craft amongst them all,  
 Neither subject nor servant, my dear brother,  
 Though he be not so perfect as is another;  
 Each shall call other fellows by cuthe, (friendship)  
 Because they come of ladies' birth.  
 On this manner, through good wit of geometry,  
 Began first the craft of masonry;  
 The clerk Euclid on this wise it found,  
 This craft of geometry in Egypt land.

In Egypt he taught it full wide,  
 In divers lands on every side;  
 Many years afterwards, I understand,  
 Ere that the craft came into this land.  
 This craft came into England, as I you say,  
 In time of good King Athelstane's day;  
 He made then both hall and even bower,  
 And high temples of great honour,  
 To disport him in both day and night,  
 And to worship his God with all his might.  
 This good lord loved this craft full well,  
 And purposed to strengthen it every del, (part)  
 For divers faults that in the craft he found;  
 He sent about into the land

After all the masons of the craft,  
 To come to him full even straghtfe, (straight)  
 For to amend these defaults all  
 By good counsel, if it might fall.  
 An assembly then he could let make  
 Of divers lords in their state,  
 Dukes, earls, and barons also,  
 Knights, squires and many mo, (more)  
 And the great burgesses of that city,  
 They were there all in their degree;  
 There were there each one algate, (always)  
 To ordain for these masons' estate,  
 There they sought by their wit,  
 How they might govern it;

Fifteen articles they there sought,  
 And fifteen points there they wrought,

88. The mayster mason moste be ful securly  
 89. Bothe stedefast, trusty, and trwe,  
 90. Hyt schal hum never thenne arewe:  
 91. And pay thy felows after the coste,  
 92. As vytaylys goth thenne, wel thou woste;  
 93. And pay them trwly, apou thy fay,  
 94. What that they deserven may;  
 95. And to her hure take no more,  
 96. But what they mowe serve fore;  
 97. And spare, nowther for love ny drede,  
 98. Of nowther partys to take no mede;  
 99. Of lord ny fellow, whether he be,  
 100. Of hem thou take no maner of fe;  
 101. And as a jugge stonde upry[g]th,  
 102. And thenne thou dost to bothe good ry[g]th;  
 103. And trwly do thys whersever thou gost,  
 104. Thy worschep, thy profyt, hyt schal be most.

**Articulus secundus.**

105. The secunde artycul of good masonry,  
 106. As [g]e mowe hyt here hyr specyaly,  
 107. That every mayster, that ys a mason,  
 108. Most ben at the generale congregacyon,  
 109. So that he hyt resonably y-tolde  
 110. Where that the semblé schal be holde;  
 111. And to that semblé he most nede gon,  
 112. But he have a resenabul skwsacyon,  
 113. Or but he be unbuxom to that craft,  
 114. Or with falsshed ys over-raft,  
 115. Or ellus sekenes hath hym so stronge,  
 116. That he may not com hem amonge;  
 117. That ys a skwsacyon, good and abulle,  
 118. To that semblé withoute fabulle.

**Articulus tercius.**

119. The thrydde artycul for sothe hyt ysse,  
 120. That the mayster take to no prentysse,  
 121. but he have good seuerans to dwelle  
 122. Seven [g]er with hym, as y [g]low telle,  
 123. Hys craft to lurne, that ys profytable;  
 124. Withynne lasse he may not be able  
 125. To lordys profyt, ny to his owne,  
 126. As [g]e mowe knowe by good resowne.

**Articulus quartus.**

127. The fowrthe artycul thys moste be  
 128. That the mayster hym wel be-se,  
 129. That he no bondemon prentys make,  
 130. Ny for no covetyse do hym take;  
 131. For the lord that he ys bonde to,  
 132. May fache the prentes whersever he go.  
 133. Gef yn the logge he were y-take,  
 134. Muche desese hyt mygth ther make,  
 135. And suche case hyt mygth befalle,  
 136. That hyt mygth greve summe or alle.  
 137. For alle the masonus tht ben there  
 138. Wol stonde togedur hol y-fere  
 139. Gef suche won yn that craft schulde swelle,  
 140. Of dyvers desesys ge mygth telle:  
 141. For more gese thenne, and of honeste,  
 142. Take a prentes of herre degre.  
 143. By olde tyme wryten y fynde  
 144. That the prenes schulde be of gentyll kynde;  
 145. And so symtyme grete lordys blod  
 146. Toke thys gemetry, that ys ful good.

**Articulus quintus.**

147. The fyfthe artycul ys swythe good,  
 148. So that the prentes be of lawful blod;  
 149. The mayster schal not, for no vantage,  
 150. Make no prentes that ys outrage;

Here begins the first article.

The first article of this geometry;-  
 The master mason must be full securely  
 Both steadfast, trusty and true,  
 It shall him never then rue;  
 And pay thy fellows after the cost,  
 As victuals goeth then, well thou woste; (knowest)  
 And pay them truly, upon thy fay, (faith)  
 What they deserven may; (may deserve)  
 And to their hire take no more,  
 But what that they may serve for;  
 And spare neither for love nor drede, (dread)  
 Of neither parties to take no mede; (bribe)  
 Of lord nor fellow, whoever he be,  
 Of them thou take no manner of fee;  
 And as a judge stand upright,  
 And then thou dost to both good right;  
 And truly do this wheresoever thou gost, (goest)  
 Thy worship, thy profit, it shall be most.

Second article.

The second article of good masonry,  
 As you must it here hear specially,  
 That every master, that is a mason,  
 Must be at the general congregation,  
 So that he it reasonably be told  
 Where that the assembly shall be holde; (held)  
 And to that assembly he must needs gon, (go)  
 Unless he have a reasonable skwasacyon, (excuse)  
 Or unless he be disobedient to that craft  
 Or with falsehood is over-raft, (overtaken)  
 Or else sickness hath him so strong,  
 That he may not come them among;  
 That is an excuse good and able,  
 To that assembly without fable.

Third article.

The third article forsooth it is,  
 That the master takes to no 'prentice,  
 Unless he have good assurance to dwell  
 Seven years with him, as I you tell,  
 His craft to learn, that is profitable;

Within less he may not be able  
 To lords' profit, nor to his own  
 As you may know by good reason.

Fourth article.

The fourth article this must be,  
 That the master him well bese,  
 That he no bondman 'prentice make,  
 Nor for no covetousness do him take;  
 For the lord that he is bound to,  
 May fetch the 'prentice wheresoever he go.  
 If in the lodge he were ty-take, (taken)  
 Much dis-ease it might there make,  
 And such case it might befall,  
 That it might grieve some or all.

For all the masons that be there  
 Will stand together all y-fere. (together)  
 If such one in that craft should dwell,  
 Of divers dis-eases you might tell;  
 For more ease then, and of honesty,  
 Take a 'prentice of higher degre.  
 By old time written I find  
 That the 'prentice should be of gentle kind;  
 And so sometime, great lords' blood  
 Took this geometry that is full good.

Fifth article.

The fifth article is very good,

151. Hyt ys to mene, as [g]e mowe here,  
 152. That he have hys lymes hole alle y-fere;  
 153. To the craft hyt were gret schame,  
 154. To make an halt mon and a lame,  
 155. For an unperfynt mon of suche blod  
 156. Schulde do the craft but lytul good.  
 157. Thus [g]e mowe knowe everychon,  
 158. The craft wolde have a my[g]hty mon;  
 159. A maymed mon he hath no my[g]ht,  
 160. [G]e mowe hyt knowe long [g]er ny[g]ht.

**Articulus sextus.**

161. The syxte artycul [g]e mowe not mysse,  
 162. That the mayster do the lord no pregedysse,  
 163. To take of the lord, for hyse prentyse,  
 164. Also muche as hys felows don, yn alle vyse.  
 165. For yn that craft they ben ful perfynt,  
 166. So ys not he, [g]e mowe sen hyt.  
 167. Also hyt were a[g]eynus good reson,  
 168. To take hys, hure as hys felows don.  
 169. Thys same artycul, yn thys casse,  
 170. Juggythe the prentes to take lasse  
 171. Thenne hys felows, that ben ful perfynt.  
 172. Yn dyvers maters, conne qwyte hyt,  
 173. The mayster may his prentes so enforce,  
 174. That hys hure may crese ful [g]urne,  
 175. And, ger hys terme come to an ende,  
 176. Hys hure may ful wel amende.

**Articulus septimus.**

177. The seventh artycul that ys now here,  
 178. Ful wel wol telle gow, alle y-fere,  
 179. That no mayster, for favour ny drede,  
 180. Schal no thef nowther clothe ny fede.  
 181. Theves he schal herberon never won,  
 182. Ny hym that hath y-quellude a mon,  
 183. Wy thylke that hath a febul name,  
 184. Lest hyt wolde turne the craft to schame.

**Articulus octavus.**

185. The eghte artycul schewt [g]ow so,  
 186. That the mayster may hyt wel do,  
 187. [G]ef that he have any mon of crafte,  
 188. And be not also perfynt as he au[g]te,  
 189. He may hym change sone anon,  
 190. And take for hym a perfyntur mon.  
 191. Suche a mon, thro[g]le rechelaschepe,  
 192. My[g]th do the craft schert worschepe.

**Articulus nonus.**

193. The nynthe artycul schewet ful welle,  
 194. That the mayster be both wyse and felle;  
 195. That no werke he undurtake,  
 196. But he conne bothe hyt ende and make;  
 197. And that hyt be to the lordes profyt also,  
 198. And to hys craft, whersever he go;  
 199. And that the grond be wel y-take,  
 200. That hyt nowther fle ny grake.

**Articulus decimus.**

201. The then the artycul ys for to knowe,  
 202. Amonge the craft, to hye and lowe,  
 203. There schal no mayster supplante other,  
 204. But be togeder as systur and brother,  
 205. Yn thys curyus craft, alle and som,  
 206. That longuth to a maystur mason.  
 207. Ny he schal not supplante non other mon,  
 208. That hath y-take a werke hym uppon,  
 209. Yn peyne therof that ys so stronge,  
 210. That peyseth no lasse thenne ten ponge,  
 211. But [g]ef that he be gulty y-fonde,

So that the 'prentice be of lawful blood;  
 The master shall not, for no advantage,

Make no 'prentice that is outrage; (deformed)  
 It is to mean, as you may hear  
 That he have all his limbs whole all y-fere; (together)  
 To the craft it were great shame,  
 To make a halt man and a lame,  
 For an imperfect man of such blood  
 Should do the craft but little good.  
 Thus you may know every one,  
 The craft would have a mighty man;  
 A maimed man he hath no might,  
 You must it know long ere night.

Sixth article.

The sixth article you must not miss

That the master do the lord no prejudice,  
 To take the lord for his 'prentice,  
 As much as his fellows do, in all wise.  
 For in that craft they be full perfect,  
 So is not he, you must see it.  
 Also it were against good reason,  
 To take his hire as his fellows don. (do)  
 This same article in this case,  
 Judgeth his prentice to take less  
 Than his fellows, that be full perfect.  
 In divers matters, know requite it,  
 The master may his 'prentice so inform,  
 That his hire may increase full soon,

And ere his term come to an end,  
 His hire may full well amend.

Seventh article.

The seventh article that is now here,  
 Full well will tell you all y-fere (together)  
 That no master for favour nor dread,  
 Shall no thief neither clothe nor feed.  
 Thieves he shall harbour never one,  
 Nor him that hath killed a man,  
 Nor the same that hath a feeble name,  
 Lest it would turn the craft to shame.

Eighth article.

The eighth article sheweth you so,  
 That the master may it well do.  
 If that he have any man of craft,  
 And he be not so perfect as he ought,  
 He may him change soon anon,  
 And take for him a more perfect man.  
 Such a man through rechelaschepe, (recklessness)  
 Might do the craft scant worship.

Ninth article.

The ninth article sheweth full well,  
 That the master be both wise and felle; (strong)  
 That he no work undertake,  
 Unless he can both it end and make;  
 And that it be to the lords' profit also,

And to his craft, wheresoever he go;  
 And that the grond be well y-take, (taken)  
 That it neither flaw nor grake. (crack)

Tenth article.

The tenth article is for to know,  
 Among the craft, to high and low,  
 There shall no master supplant another,  
 But be together as sister and brother,  
 In this curious craft, all and some,  
 That belongeth to a master mason.  
 Nor shall he supplant no other man,  
 That hath taken a work him upon,

212. That toke furst the werke on honde;  
 213. For no mon yn masonry  
 214. Schal no supplante othur securly,  
 215. But [g]ef that hyt be so y-wro[g]th,  
 216. That hyt turne the werke to nogth;  
 217. Thenne may a mason that werk crave,  
 218. To the lordes profyt hyt for to save;  
 219. Yn suche a case but hyt do falle,  
 220. Ther schal no mason medul withalle.  
 221. Forsothe he that begynnyth the gronde,  
 222. And he be a mason goode and sonde,  
 223. For hath hyt sycurly yn hys mynde  
 224. To brynge the werke to ful good ende.

**Articulus undecimus.**

225. The eleventhe artycul y telle the,  
 226. That he ys bothe fayr and fre;  
 227. For he techyt, by hys my[g]th,  
 228. That no mason schulde worche be ny[g]th,  
 229. But [g]ef hyt be yn practesyng of wytte,  
 230. [G]ef that y cowthe amende hytte.

**Articulus duodecimus.**

231. The twelfth artycul ys of hys honesté  
 232. To [g]every mason, whersever he be;  
 233. He schal not hys felows werk deprave,  
 234. [G]ef that he wol hys honesté save;  
 235. With honest wordes he hyt comende,  
 236. By the wytte that God the dede sende;  
 237. Buy hyt amende by al that thou may,  
 238. Bytwynne [g]low bothe withoute nay.

**Articulus xiiijus.**

239. The threttene artycul, so God me save,  
 240. Ys,[g]ef that the mayster a prentes have,  
 241. Enterlyche thenne that he hym teche,  
 242. And meserable poyntes that he hym reche,  
 243. That he the craft abelyche may conne,  
 244. Whersever he go undur the sonne.

**Articulus xiiijus.**

245. The fowrtene artycul, by good reson,  
 246. Scheweth the mayster how he schal don;  
 247. He schal no prentes to hym take,  
 248. Byt dyvers crys he have to make,  
 249. That he may, withynne hys terme,  
 250. Of hym dyvers poyntes may lurne.

**Articulus quindecimus.**

251. The fyftene artycul maketh an ende,  
 252. For to the mayster he ys a frende;  
 253. To lere hym so, that for no mon,  
 254. No fals mantenans he take hym apon,  
 255. Ny maynteine hys felows yn here synne,  
 256. For no good that he my[g]th wynne;  
 257. Ny no fals sware sofre hem to make,  
 258. For drede of here sowles sake;  
 259. Lest hyt wolde turne the craft to schame,  
 260. And hymself to mechul blame.

**Plures Constituciones.**

261. At thys semblé were poyntes y-ordeynt mo,  
 262. Of grete lordys and maystrys also,  
 263. That whose wol conne thys craft and com to  
 astate,  
 264. He most love wel God, and holy churche algate,  
 265. And hys mayster also, that he ys wythe,  
 266. Whersever he go, yn fylde or frythe;  
 267. And thy felows thou love also,  
 268. For that they craft wol that thou do.

**Secundus punctus.**

In pain thereof that is so strong,  
 That weigheth no less than ten ponge, (pounds)  
 but if that he be guilty found,  
 That took first the work on hand;  
 For no man in masonry  
 Shall not supplant other securely,  
 But if that it be so wrought,  
 That in turn the work to nought;  
 Then may a mason that work crave,  
 To the lords' profit for it to save  
 In such a case if it do fall,  
 There shall no mason meddle withal.  
 Forsooth he that beginneth the ground,  
 If he be a mason good and sound,  
 He hath it securely in his mind

To bring the work to full good end.

Eleventh article.

The eleventh article I tell thee,  
 That he is both fair and free;  
 For he teacheth, by his might,  
 That no mason should work by night,  
 But if be in practising of wit,  
 If that I could amend it.

Twelfth article.

The twelfth article is of high honesty  
 To every mason wheresoever he be,  
 He shall not his fellows' work deprave,  
 If that he will his honesty save;  
 With honest words he it commend,

By the wit God did thee send;  
 But it amend by all that thou may,  
 Between you both without nay. (doubt)

Thirteenth article.

The thirteenth article, so God me save,  
 Is if that the master a 'prentice have,  
 Entirely then that he him teach,  
 And measurable points that he him reche, (tell)  
 That he the craft ably may conne, (know)  
 Wheresoever he go under the sun.

Fourteenth article.

The fourteenth article by good reason,  
 Sheweth the master how he shall don; (do)  
 He shall no 'prentice to him take,

Unless diver cares he have to make,  
 That he may within his term,  
 Of him divers points may learn.

Fifteenth article.

The fifteenth article maketh an end,  
 For to the master he is a friend;  
 To teach him so, that for no man,  
 No false maintenance he take him upon,  
 Nor maintain his fellows in their sin,  
 For no good that he might win;  
 Nor no false oath suffer him to make,  
 For dread of their souls' sake,  
 Lest it would turn the craft to shame,  
 And himself to very much blame.

Plural constitutions.

At this assembly were points ordained mo, (more)  
 Of great lords and masters also.  
 That who will know this craft and come to estate,  
 He must love well God and holy church algate, (always)  
 And his master also that he is with,  
 Wheresoever he go in field or frythe, (enclosed wood)  
 And thy fellows thou love also,

269. The secunde poynt, as y [g]ow say,  
270. That the mason worche upon the werk day,  
271. Also trwly, as he con or may,  
272. To deserve hys huyre for the halyday,  
273. And trwly to labrun on hys dede,  
274. Wel deserve to have hys mede.

#### **Tercius punctus.**

275. The thrydde poynt most be severele,  
276. With the prentes knowe hyt wele,  
277. Hys mayster conwsel he kepe and close,  
278. And hys felows by hys goode purpose;  
279. The prevetyse of the chamber telle he no man,  
280. Ny yn the logge whatsoever they done;  
281. Whatsoever thou heryst, or syste hem do,  
282. Telle hyt no mon, wheresever thou go;  
283. The conwsel of halls, and [g]eke of bowre,  
284. Kepe hyt wel to gret honowre,  
285. Lest hyt wolde torne thyself to blame,  
286. And brynge the craft ynto gret schame.

#### **Quartus punctus.**

287. The fowrthe poynt techyth us also,  
288. That no mon to hys craft be false;  
289. Errour he schal maynteine none  
290. A[g]leynus the craft, but let hyt gone;  
291. Ny no pregedysse he schal not do  
292. To hys mayster, ny hys felows also;  
293. And that[g]th the prentes be under awe,  
294. [G]et he wolde have the same lawe.

#### **Quintus punctus.**

295. The fyfthe poynte ys, withoute nay,  
296. That whenne the mason taketh hys pay  
297. Of the mayster, y-ordent to hym,  
298. Ful mekely y-take so most hyt byn;  
299. [G]et most the mayster, by good resone,  
300. Warne hem lawfully byfore none,  
301. [G]ef he nulle okepye hem no more,  
302. As he hath y-done ther byfore;  
303. A[g]leynus thys ordyr he may not stryve,  
304. [G]ef he thenke wel for to thryve.

#### **Sextus punctus.**

305. The syxte poynt ys ful [g]ef to knowe,  
306. Bothe to hye and eke to lowe,  
307. For suche case hyt my[g]th befallle,  
308. Amonge the masonus, summe or alle,  
309. Throwghe envye, or dedly hate,  
310. Ofte aryseth ful gret debate.  
311. Thenne owyth the mason, [g]ef that he may,  
312. Putte hem bothe under a day;  
313. But loveday [g]et schul they make none;  
314. Tyl that the werke day be clene a-gone;  
315. Apon the holyday [g]e mowe wel take  
316. Leyser y-now[g]th loveday to make,  
317. Lest that hyt wolde the werke day  
318. Latte here werke for suche afray;  
319. To suche ende thenne that hem drawe,  
320. That they stonde wel yn Goddes lawe.

#### **Septimus punctus.**

321. The seventh poynt he may wel mene,  
322. Of wel longe lyf that God us lene,  
323. As hyt dyscryeth wel openly,  
324. Thou schal not by thy maysters wyf ly,  
325. Ny by the felows, yn no maner wyse,  
326. Lest the craft wolde the despyse;  
327. Ny by the felows concubyne,  
328. No more thou woldest he dede by thyne.  
329. The peyne thereof let hyt be ser,

For that thy craft will that thou do.

Second Point.

The second point as I you say,  
That the mason work upon the work day,  
As truly as he can or may,

To deserve his hire for the holy-day,  
And truly to labour on his deed,  
Well deserve to have his mede. (reward)

Third point.

The third point must be severele, (severely)  
With the 'prentice know it well,  
His master's counsel he keep and close,  
And his fellows by his good purpose;  
The privities of the chamber tell he no man,  
Nor in the lodge whatsoever they don; (do)  
Whatsoever thou hearest or seest them do,  
Tell it no man wheresoever you go;  
The counsel of hall, and even of bower,

Keep it well to great honour,  
Lest it would turn thyself to blame,  
And bring the craft into great shame.

Fourth point.

The fourth point teacheth us also, (also)  
That no man to his craft be false;  
Error he shall maintain none  
Against the craft, but let it gone; (go)  
Nor no prejudice he shall not do  
To his master, nor his fellow also;  
And though the 'prentice be under awe,  
Yet he would have the same law.

Fifth point.

The fifth point is without nay, (doubt)  
That when the mason taketh his pay  
Of the master, ordained to him,  
Full meekly taken so must it byn; (be)  
Yet must the master by good reason,  
Warn him lawfully before noon,  
If he will not occupy him no more,  
As he hath done there before;  
Against this order he may not strive,  
If he think well for to thrive.

Sixth point.

The sixth point is full given to know,  
Both to high and even to low,  
For such case it might befall;  
Among the masons some or all,  
Through envy or deadly hate,  
Oft ariseth full great debate.  
Then ought the mason if that he may,  
Put them both under a day;  
But loveday yet shall they make none,  
Till that the work-day be clean gone  
Upon the holy-day you must well take  
Leisure enough loveday to make,  
Lest that it would the work-day  
Hinder their work for such a fray;  
To such end then that you them draw.

That they stand well in God's law.

Seventh point.

The seventh point he may well mean,  
Of well long life that God us lene, (lend)  
As it descrieth well openly,  
Thou shalt not by thy master's wife lie,  
Nor by thy fellows', in no manner wise,  
Lest the craft would thee despise;

330. That he prentes ful seven [g]ler,  
331. [G]jef he forfete yn eny of hem,  
332. So y-chasted thenne most he ben;  
333. Ful mekele care my[g]th ther begynne,  
334. For suche a fowle dedely synne.

#### Octavus punctus.

335. The eghte poynt, he may be sure,  
336. [G]jef thou hast y-taken any cure,  
337. Under thy mayster thou be trwe,  
338. For that pynt thou schalt never arewe;  
339. A trwe medyater thou most nede be  
340. To thy mayster, and thy felows fre;  
341. Do trwly al....that thou my[g]th,  
342. To both partyes, and that ys good ry[g]th.

#### Nonus punctus.

343. The nynthe poynt we schul hym calle,  
344. That he be stwarde of oure halle,  
345. Gef that ge ben yn chambur y-fere,  
346. Uchon serve other, with mylde chere;  
347. Jentul felows, ge moste hyt knowe,  
348. For to be stwardus alle o rowe,  
349. Weke after weke withoute dowte,  
350. Stwardus to ben so alle abowte,  
351. Lovelyche to serven uchon othur,  
352. As thawgh they were syster and brother;  
353. Ther schal never won on other costage  
354. Fre hymself to no vantage,  
355. But every mon schal be lyche fre  
356. Yn that costage, so moste hyt be;  
357. Loke that thou pay wele every mon algate,  
358. That thou hsat y-bow[g]ht any vytayles ate,  
359. That no cravyng be y-mad to the,  
360. Ny to thy felows, yn no degré,  
361. To mon or to wommon, whether he be,  
362. Pay hem wel and trwly, for that wol we;  
363. Therof on thy fellow trwe record thou take,  
364. For that good pay as thou dost make,  
365. Lest hyt wolde thy felowe schame,  
366. Any brynge thyself ynto gret blame.  
367. [G]jet good acowntes he most make  
368. Of suche godes as he hath y-take,  
369. Of thy felows goodes that thou hast spende,  
370. Wher, and how, and to what ende;  
371. Suche acowntes thou most come to,  
372. Whenne thy felows wollen that thou do.

#### Decimus punctus.

373. The tenthe poynt presentyeth wel god lyf,  
374. To lyven withoute care and stryf;  
375. For and the mason lyve amysse,  
376. And yn hys werk be false, y-wysse,  
377. And thorw[g] suche a false skewysasyon  
378. May sclawndren hys felows oute reson,  
379. Throw[g] false sclawnder of suche fame  
380. May make the craft kachone blame.  
381. [G]jef he do the craft suche vylany,  
382. Do hym no favour thenne securly.  
383. Ny maynteine not hym yn wyked lyf,  
384. Lest hyt wolde turne to care and stryf;  
385. But get hym [g]e schul not delayme,  
386. But that [g]e schullen hym constrayne,  
387. For to apere whersevor [g]e wyllle,  
388. Whar that [g]e wolen, lowde, or stylle;  
389. To the nexte semblé [g]e schul hym calle,  
390. To apere byfore hys felows alle,  
391. And but [g]jef he wyl byfore hem pere,  
392. The crafte he moste nede forswere;  
393. He schal thenne be chasted after the lawe  
394. That was y-fownded by olde dawe.

Nor by thy fellows' concubine,  
No more thou wouldst he did by thine.  
The pain thereof let it be sure,  
That he be 'prentice full seven year,  
If he forfeit in any of them

So chastised then must he ben; (be)  
Full much care might there begin,  
For such a foul deadly sin.

Eighth point.

The eighth point, he may be sure,  
If thou hast taken any cure,  
Under thy master thou be true,  
For that point thou shalt never rue;  
A true mediator thou must needs be  
To thy master, and thy fellows free;  
Do truly all that thou might,  
To both parties, and that is good right.

Ninth point.

The ninth point we shall him call,  
That he be steward of our hall,  
If that you be in chamber y-fere, (together)  
Each one serve other with mild cheer;  
Gentle fellows, you must it know,  
For to be stewards all o-rowe, (in turn)  
Week after week without doubt,  
Stewards to be so all in turn about,  
Amiably to serve each one other,  
As though they were sister and brother;  
There shall never one another costage (cost)  
Free himself to no advantage,  
But every man shall be equally free

In that cost, so must it be;  
Look that thou pay well every man algate, (always)  
That thou hast bought any victuals ate, (eaten)  
That no craving be made to thee,  
Nor to thy fellows in no degree,  
To man or to woman, whoever he be,  
Pay them well and truly, for that will we;  
Thereof on thy fellow true record thou take,  
For that good pay as thou dost make,  
Lest it would thy fellow shame,  
And bring thyself into great blame.  
Yet good accounts he must make  
Of such goods as he hath y-take (taken)

Of thy fellows' goods that thou hast spende, (spent)  
Where and how and to what end;  
Such accounts thou must come to,  
When thy fellows wish that thou do.

Tenth point.

The tenth point presenteth well good life,  
To live without care and strife;  
For if the mason live amiss,  
And in his work be false y-wisse, (I know)  
And through such a false skewysasyon (excuse)  
May slander his fellows without reason,  
Through false slander of such fame.

May make the craft acquire blame.  
If he do the craft such villainy,  
Do him no favour then securely,  
Nor maintain not him in wicked life,  
Lest it would turn to care and strife;  
But yet him you shall not delayme, (delay)  
Unless that you shall him constrain,  
For to appear wheresoever you will,  
Where that you will, loud, or still;  
To the next assembly you shall him call,  
To appear before his fellows all,  
And unless he will before them appear,

**Punctus undecimus.**

395. The eleventh poynt ys of good dyscrecyoun,  
396. As [g]e mowe knowe by good resoun;  
397. A mason, and he thys craft wel con,  
398. That sy[g]th hys fellow hewen on a ston,  
399. And ys yn poynt to spyll that ston,  
400. Amende hyt sone, [g]ef that thou con,  
401. And teche hym thenne hyt to amende,  
402. That the l(ordys) werke be not y-schende,  
403. And teche hym esely hyt to amende,  
404. With fayre wordes, that God the hath lende;  
405. For hys sake that sytte above,  
406. With swete wordes noresche hym love.

**Punctus duodecimus.**

407. The twelthe poynt of gret ryolté,  
408. Ther as the semblé y-hole schal be,  
409. Ther schul be maystrys and felows also,  
410. And other grete lordes mony mo;  
411. There schal be the scheref of that contré,  
412. And also the meyr of that syté,  
413. Kny[g]tes and sqwysers ther schul be,  
414. And other aldermen, as [g]e schul se;  
415. Suche ordynance as they maken there,  
416. They schul maynté hyt hol y-fere  
417. A[g]leynus that mon, whatsoever he be,  
418. That longuth to the craft bothe fayr and fre.  
419. [G]ef he any stryf a[g]leynus hem make,  
420. Ynto here warde he schal be take.

**xiiijus punctus.**

421. The threnteth poynt ys to us ful luf.  
422. He schal swere never to be no thef,  
423. Ny soker hym yn hys fals craft,  
424. For no good that he hath byraft,  
425. And thou mowe hyt knowe or syn,  
426. Nowther for hys good, ny for hys kyn.

**xiiiijus punctus.**

427. The fowrtethe poynt ys ful good lawe  
428. To hym that wold ben under awe;  
429. A good trwe othe he most ther swere  
430. To hys mayster and hys fellows that ben there;  
431. He most be stedefast and trwe also  
432. To alle thys ordynance, whersever he go,  
433. And to hys lyge lord the kynge,  
434. To be trwe to hym, over alle thyng.  
435. And alle these poyntes hyr before  
436. To hem thou most nede by y-swore,  
437. And alle schul swere the same oght  
438. Of the masonus, be they luf, ben they loght,  
439. To alle these poyntes hyr byfore,  
440. That hath ben ordeynt by ful good lore.  
441. And they schul enquire every mon  
442. On his party, as wyl as he con,  
443. [G]ef any mon mowe be y-fownde gulty  
444. Yn any of these poyntes spesyaly;  
445. And whad he be, let hym be sow[g]ht,  
446. And to the semblé let hym be brow[g]ht.

**Quindecimus punctus.**

447. The fiftethe poynt ys of ful good lore,  
448. For hem that schul ben ther y-swore,  
449. Suche ordynance at the semblé wes layd  
450. Of grete lordes and maystres byforesayd;  
451. For thelke that be unbuxom, y-wysse,  
452. A[g]leynus the ordynance that ther ysse  
453. Of these artyculus, that were y-meved there,  
454. Of grete lordes and masonus al y-fere.  
455. And [g]ef they ben y-preved opunly

The craft he must need forswear;  
He shall then be punished after the law  
That was founded by old daw. (day)

Eleventh point.

The eleventh point is of good discretion,  
As you must know by good reason;  
A mason, if he this craft well con, (know,  
That seeth his fellow hew on a stone,  
And is in point to spoil that stone,  
Amend it soon if that thou can,  
And teach him then it to amend,  
That the lords' work be not y-schende, (spoiled)  
And teach him easily it to amend,

With fair words, that God thee hath lende; (lent)  
For his sake that sit above,  
With sweet words nourish his love.

Twelfth point.

The twelfth point is of great royalty,  
There as the assembly held shall be,  
There shall be masters and fellows also,  
And other great lords many mo; (more)  
There shall be the sheriff of that country,  
And also the mayor of that city,  
Knights and squires there shall be,  
And also aldermen, as you shall see;  
Such ordinance as they make there,

They shall maintain it all y-fere (together)  
Against that man, whatsoever he be,  
That belongeth to the craft both fair and free.  
If he any strife against them make,  
Into their custody he shall be take. (taken)

Thirteenth point.

The thirteenth point is to us full lief,  
He shall swear never to be no thief,  
Nor succour him in his false craft,  
For no good that he hath byraft; (bereft)  
And thou must it know or sin,  
Neither for his good, nor for his kin.

Fourteenth point.

The fourteenth point is full good law  
To him that would be under awe;  
A good true oath he must there swear  
To his master and his fellows that be there;  
He must be steadfast and also true  
To all this ordinance, wheresoever he go,  
And to his liege lord the king,  
To be true to him over all thing.  
And all these points here before  
To them thou must need be y-swore, (sworn)  
And all shall swear the same oath  
Of the masons, be they lief be they loath.  
To all these points here before,

That hath been ordained by full good lore.  
And they shall enquire every man  
Of his party, as well as he can,  
If any man may be found guilty  
In any of these points specially;  
And who he be, let him be sought,  
And to the assembly let him be brought.

Fifteen point.

The fifteenth point is of full good lore,  
For them that shall be there y-swore, (sworn)  
Such ordinance at the assembly was laid  
Of great lords and masters before said;  
For the same that be disobedient, y-wisse, (I know)  
Against the ordinance that there is,

456. Byfore that semblé, by an by,  
457. And for here gultes no mendys wol make,  
458. Thenne most they nede the crafty forsake;  
459. And so masonus craft they schul refuse,  
460. And swere hyt never more for to use.  
461. But [g]ef that they wol mendys make,  
462. A[glayn to the craft they schul never take;  
463. And [g]ef that they nul not do so,  
464. The scheref schal come hem sone to,  
  
465. And putte here bodyes yn duppe prison,  
466. For the trespasse that they hav y-don,  
467. And take here goodes and here cattelle  
468. Ynto the kynges hond, everyt delle,  
469. And lete hem dwelle ther full styлле,  
470. Tyl hyt be oure lege kynges wyлле.

#### **Alia ordinacio artis gematriae.**

471. They ordent ther a semblé to be y-holde  
472. Every [g]er, whersever they wolde,  
473. To amende the defautes, [g]ef any where fonde  
474. Amonge the craft withynne the londe;  
475. Uche [g]er or thrydde [g]er hyt schuld be holde,  
  
476. Yn every place whersever they wolde;  
477. Tyme and place most be ordeynt also,  
478. Yn what place they schul semble to.  
479. Alle the men of craft tehr they most ben,  
480. And other grete lordes, as [g]e mowe sen,  
481. To mende the fautes that both ther y-spoke,  
482. [G]ef that eny of hem ben thenne y-broke.  
483. Ther they schullen ben alle y-swore,  
484. That longuth to thys craftes lore,  
485. To kepe these statutes everychon,  
486. That ben y-ordeynt by kynge Adelston;  
487. These statutes that y have hydr y-fonde  
  
488. Y chulle they ben holde thro[g]h my londe,  
489. For the worsche of my ry[g]olté,  
490. That y have by my dygnyté.  
491. Also at every semblé that [g]e holde,  
492. That ge come to [g]lowre lyge kyng bolde,  
493. Bysechyng hym of hys hye grace,  
494. To stonde with [g]ow yn every place,  
495. To conferme the statutes of kynge Adelston,  
496. That he ordeydnt to thys craft by good reson,

#### **Ars quatuor coronatorum.**

497. Pray we now to God almy[g]ht,  
498. And to hys moder Mary bry[g]ht,  
  
499. That we mowe kepe these artyculus here,  
500. And these poyns wel al y-fere,  
501. As dede these holy martyres fowre,  
502. That yn thys craft were of gret honoure;  
503. They were as gode masonus as on erthe schul go,  
504. Gravers and ymage-makers they were also.  
505. For they were werkemen of the beste,  
506. The emperour hade to hem gret luste;  
507. He wylnd of hem a ymage to make,  
508. That mow[g]h be worsched for his sake;  
509. Suche mawmetys he hade yn hys dawe,  
510. To turne the pepul from Crystus lawe.  
  
511. But they were stedefast yn Crystes lay,  
512. And to here craft, withouten nay;  
513. They loved wel God and alle hys lore,  
514. And weren yn hys serves ever more.  
515. Trwe men they were yn that dawe,  
516. And lyved wel y Goddus lawe;  
517. They tho[g]ght no mawmetys for to make,  
518. For no good that they my[g]th take,  
519. To levyn on that mawmetys for here God,  
520. They nolde do so thaw[g] he were wod;  
521. For they nolde not forsake here trw fay,

Of these articles that were moved there,  
Of great lords and masons all y-fere, (together)  
And if they be proved openly  
Before that assembly, by and by,  
And for their guilt's no amends will make,  
Then must they need the craft forsake;  
And no masons craft they shall refuse,  
And swear it never more to use.  
But if that they will amends make,  
Again to the craft they shall never take;  
And if that they will not do so,  
The sheriff shall come them soon to,

And put their bodies in deep prison,  
For the trespass that they have done,  
And take their goods and their cattle  
Into the king's hand, every delle, (part)  
And let them dwell there full still,  
Till it be our liege king's will.

Another ordinance of the art of geometry.

They ordained there an assembly to be y-holde, (hold)  
Every year, wheresoever they would,  
To amend the defaults, if any were found  
Among the craft within the land;  
Each year or third year it should be holde, (held)

In every place weresoever they would;  
Time and place must be ordained also,  
In what place they should assemble to,  
All the men of craft there they must be,  
And other great lords, as you must see,  
To mend the faults that he there spoken,  
If that any of them be then broken.  
There they shall be all y-swore, (sworn)  
That belongeth to this craft's lore,  
To keep their statutes every one  
That were ordained by King Athelstane;  
These statutes that I have here found

I ordain they be held through my land,  
For the worship of my royalty,  
That I have by my dignity.  
Also at every assembly that you hold,  
That you come to your liege king bold,  
Beseeching him of his high grace,  
To stand with you in every place,  
To confirm the statutes of King Athelstane,  
That he ordained to this craft by good reason.

The art of the four crowned ones.

Pray we now to God almighty, (almighty)  
And to his mother Mary bright,

That we may keep these articles here,  
And these points well all y-fere, (together)  
As did these holy martyrs four,  
That in this craft were of great honour;  
They were as good masons as on earth shall go,  
Gravers and image-makers they were also.  
For they were workmen of the best,  
The emperor had to them great luste; (liking)  
He willed of them an image to make  
That might be worshipped for his sake;  
Such monuments he had in his dawe, (day)  
To turn the people from Christ's law.

But they were steadfast in Christ's lay, (law)  
And to their craft without nay; (doubt)  
They loved well God and all his lore,  
And were in his service ever more.  
True men they were in that dawe, (day)  
And lived well in God's law;  
They thought no monuments for to make,  
For no good that they might take,  
To believe on that monument for their God,

522. An beyleve on hys falsse lay.  
 523. The emperour let take hem sone anone,  
 524. And putte hem ynto a dep presone;  
 525. The sarre he penest hem yn that plase,  
 526. The more yoye wes to hem of Cristus grace.  
 527. Thenne when he sye no nother won,  
 528. To dethe he lette hem thenne gon;  
 529. Whose wol of here lyf [g]let mor knowe,  
 530. By the bok he may kyt schowe,  
 531. In the legent of scanctorum,  
 532. The name of quatuor coronatorum.  
  
 533. Here fest wol be, withoute nay,  
 534. After Alle Halwen the eyght day.  
 535. [G]e mow here as y do rede,  
 536. That mony [g]eres after, for gret drede  
 537. That Noees flod wes alle y-ronne,  
 538. The tower of Babyloyn was begonne,  
 539. Also playne werke of lyme and ston,  
 540. As any mon schulde loke upon;  
 541. So long and brod hyt was begonne,  
 542. Seven myle the he[g]hte schadweth the sonne.  
 543. King Nabogodonosor let hyt make,  
 544. To gret strenthe for monus sake,  
  
 545. Tha[g]gh suche a flod a[g]ayne schulde come,  
 546. Over the werke hyt schulde not nome;  
 547. For they hadde so hy pride, with stronge bost,  
 548. Alle that werke therfore was y-lost;  
 549. An angele smot hem so with dyveres speche,  
 550. That never won wyste what other schuld reche.  
 551. Mony eres after, the goode clerk Euclide  
 552. Ta[g]ghte the craft of gemetré wonder wyde,  
 553. So he ded that tyme other also,  
 554. Of dyvers craftes mony mo.  
 555. Thro[g]gh hye grace of Crist yn heven,  
 556. He commensed yn the syens seven;  
  
 557. Gramatica ys the furste syens y-wysse,  
 558. Dialetica the secunde, so have y blysse,  
 559. Rethorica the thrydde, withoute nay,  
 560. Musica ys the fowrth, as y [g]low say,  
 561. Astromia ys the v, by my snowte,  
 562. Arsmetica the vi, withoute dowte  
 563. Gemetria the seventh maketh an ende,  
 564. For he ys bothe make and hende,  
 565. Gramer forsothe ys the rote,  
 566. Whose wyl lurne on the boke;  
 567. But art passeth yn hys degré,  
 568. As the fryte doth the rote of the tre;  
  
 569. Rethoryk metryth with orne speche amonge,  
 570. And musyke hyt ys a swete song;  
 571. Astronomy nombreth, my dere brother,  
 572. Arsmetyk scheweth won thyng that ys another,  
 573. Gemetré the seventh syens hyt ysse,  
 574. That con deperte falshed from trewth the y-wys.  
 575. These bene the syens seven,  
 576. Whose useth hem wel, he may han heven.  
 577. Now dere chyldren, by [g]owre wytte,  
 578. Pride and covetyse that [g]e leven, hytte,  
 579. And taketh hede to goode dyscrecyon,  
 580. And to good norter, whersever [g]e com.  
 581. Now y pray [g]low take good hede,  
  
 582. For thys [g]e most kenne nede,  
 583. But much more [g]e moste wyten,  
 584. Thenne [g]e fynden hyr y-wryten.  
 585. [G]ef the fayle therto wytte,  
 586. Pray to God to send the hytte;  
 587. For Crist hymself, he techet ous  
 588. That holy churche ys Goddes hous,  
 589. That ys y-mad for nothyng ellus  
 590. but for to pray yn, as the bok tellus;  
 591. Ther the pepul schal gedur ynne,

They would not do so, though he were wod; (furious)  
 For they would not forsake their true fay, (faith)  
  
 And believe on his false lay, (law)  
 The emperor let take them soon anon,  
 And put them in a deep prison;  
 The more sorely he punished them in that place,  
 The more joy was to them of Christ's grace,  
 Then when he saw no other one,  
 To death he let them then gon; (go)  
 Whose will of their life yet more know  
 By the book he might it show  
 In the legend of sanctorum (holy ones)  
 The names of the quatuor coronatorum.  
  
 Their feast will be without nay, (doubt)  
 After Hallow-e'en the eighth day.  
 You may hear as I do read,  
 That many years after, for great dread  
 That Noah's flood was all run,  
 The tower of Babylon was begun,  
 As plain work of lime and stone,  
 As any man should look upon;  
 So long and broad it was begun,  
 Seven miles the height shadoweth the sun.  
 King Nebuchadnezzar let it make  
 To great strength for man's sake,  
  
 Though such a flood again should come,  
 Over the work it should not nome; (take)  
 For they had so high pride, with strong boast  
 All that work therefore was lost;  
 An angel smote them so with divers speech,  
 That never one knew what the other should tell.  
 Many years after, the good clerk Euclid  
 Taught the craft of geometry full wonder wide,  
 So he did that other time also,  
 Of divers crafts many mo. (more)  
 Through high grace of Christ in heaven,  
 He commenced in the sciences seven;  
  
 Grammar is the first science I know,  
 Dialect the second, so I have I bliss,  
 Rhetoric the third without nay, (doubt)  
 Music is the fourth, as I you say,  
 Astronomy is the fifth, by my snout,  
 Arithmetic the sixth, without doubt,  
 Geometry the seventh maketh an end,  
 For he is both meek and hende, (courteous)  
 Grammar forsooth is the root,  
 Whoever will learn on the book;  
 But art passeth in his degree,  
 As the fruit doth the root of the tree;  
  
 Rhetoric measureth with ornate speech among,  
 And music it is a sweet song;  
 Astronomy numbereth, my dear brother,  
 Arithmetic sheweth one thing that is another,  
 Geometry the seventh science it is,  
 That can separate falsehood from truth, I know.  
 These be the sciences seven,  
 Who useth them well he may have heaven.  
 Now dear children by your wit  
 Pride and covetousness that you leave it,  
 And taketh heed to good discretion,  
 And to good nurture, wheresoever you come.  
 Now I pray you take good heed,  
  
 For this you must know nede, (needs)  
 But much more you must wyten, (know)  
 Than you find here written.  
 If thee fail thereto wit,  
 Pray to God to send thee it:  
 For Christ himself, he teacheth ous (us)  
 That holy church is God's house,  
 That is made for nothing ellus (else)

592. To pray and wepe for here synne.  
593. Loke thou come not to churche late,  
594. For to speke harlotry by the gate;  
595. Thenne to churche when thou dost fare,  
596. Have yn thy mynde ever mare  
597. To worschepe thy lord God bothe day and ny[g]th,  
598. With all thy wyttes, and eke thy my[g]th.  
599. To the churche dore when tou dost come,  
600. Of that holy water ther sum thou nome,  
601. For every drope thou felust ther  
602. Qwenchet a venyal synne, be thou ser.  
603. But furst thou most do down thy hode,  
604. For hyse love that dyed on the rode.  
605. Into the churche when thou dost gon,  
606. Pulle uppe thy herte to Crist, anon;  
607. Uppon the rode thou loke uppe then,  
608. And knele down fayre on bothe thy knen;  
609. Then pray to hym so hyr to worche,  
610. After the lawe of holy churche,  
611. For to kepe the comandementes ten,  
612. That God [g]af to alle men;  
613. And pray to hym with mylde steven  
614. To kepe the from the synnes seven,  
615. That thou hyr mowe, yn thy lyve,  
616. Kepe the wel from care and stryve,  
617. Forthermore he grante the grace,  
618. In heven blysse to hav a place.  
619. In holy churche lef nyse wordes  
620. Of lewd speche, and fowle bordes,  
621. And putte away alle vanyté,  
622. And say thy pater noster and thyn ave;  
623. Loke also thou make no bere,  
624. But ay to be yn thy prayere;  
625. [G]ef thou wolt not thyselve pray,  
626. Latte non other mon by no way.  
627. In that place nowther sytte ny stonde,  
628. But knele fayre down on the gronde,  
629. And, when the Gospel me rede schal,  
630. Fayre thou stonde up fro the wal,  
631. And blesse the fayre, [g]ef that thou conne,  
632. When gloria tibi is begonne;  
633. And when the gospel ys y-done,  
634. A[g]ayn thou my[g]th knele adown;  
635. On bothe thy knen down thou falle,  
636. For hyse love that bow[g]ht us alle;  
637. And when thou herest the belle ryng  
638. To that holy sakerynge,  
639. Knele [g]e most, bothe [g]yn[g]e and olde,  
640. And bothe [g]lor hondes fayr upholde,  
641. And say thenne yn thys manere,  
642. Fayr and softe, withoute bere;  
643. "Jhesu Lord, welcom thou be,  
644. Yn forme of bred, as y the se.  
645. Now Jhesu, for thyn holy name,  
646. Schulde me from synne and schame,  
647. Schryff and hosel thou grant me bo,  
648. [G]er that y schal hennus go,  
649. And vey contrycyon of my synne,  
650. Tath y never, Lord, dye thereynne;  
651. And, as thou were of a mayde y-bore,  
652. Sofre me never to be y-lore;  
653. But when y schal hennus wende,  
654. Grante me the blysse withoute ende;  
655. Amen! amen! so mot hyt be!  
656. Now, swete lady, pray for me."  
657. Thus thou my[g]ht say, or sum other thyng,  
658. When thou knelust at the sakerynge.  
659. For covetyse after good, spare thou nought  
660. To worschepe hym that alle hath wrought;  
661. For glad may a mon that day ben,

But for to pray in, as the book tellus; (tells us)  
There the people shall gather in,  
To pray and weep for their sin.  
Look thou come not to church late,  
For to speak harlotry by the gate;  
Then to church when thou dost fare,  
Have in thy mind ever mare (more)  
To worship thy lord God both day and night,  
With all thy wits and even thy might.  
To the church door when thou dost come  
Of that holy water there some thou nome, (take)  
For every drop thou feelest there  
Quencheth a venial sin, be thou ser. (sure)  
But first thou must do down thy hood,  
For his love that died on the rood.  
Into the church when thou dost gon, (go)  
Pull up thy heart to Christ, anon;  
Upon the rood thou look up then,  
And kneel down fair upon thy knen, (knees)  
Then pray to him so here to worche (work)  
After the law of holy church,  
For to keep the commandments ten,  
That God gave to all men;  
And pray to him with mild steven (voice)  
To keep thee from the sins seven,  
That thou here may, in this life,  
Keep thee well from care and strife;  
Furthermore he grant thee grace,  
In heaven's bliss to have a place.  
In holy church leave trifling words  
Of lewd speech and foul bordes, (jests)  
And put away all vanity,  
And say thy pater noster and thine ave;  
Look also that thou make no bere, (noise)  
But always to be in thy prayer;  
If thou wilt not thyself pray,  
Hinder no other man by no way.  
In that place neither sit nor stand,  
But kneel fair down on the ground,  
And when the Gospel me read shall,  
Fairly thou stand up from the wall,  
And bless the fare if that thou can,  
When gloria tibi is begun;  
And when the gospel is done,  
Again thou might kneel down,  
On both knees down thou fall,  
For his love that bought us all;  
And when thou hearest the bell ring  
To that holy sakerynge, (sacrament)  
Kneel you must both young and old,  
And both your hands fair uphold,  
And say then in this manner,  
Fair and soft without noise;  
"Jesu Lord welcome thou be,  
In form of bread as I thee see,  
Now Jesu for thine holy name,  
Shield me from sin and shame;  
Shrift and Eucharist thou grant me bo, (both)  
Ere that I shall hence go,  
And very contrition for my sin,  
That I never, Lord, die therein;  
And as thou were of maid y-bore (born)  
Suffer me never to be y-lore; (lost)  
But when I shall hence wend,  
Grant me the bliss without end;  
Amen! Amen! so mote it be!  
Now sweet lady pray for me."  
Thus thou might say, or some other thing,  
When thou kneelest at the sakerynge. (sacrament)  
For covetousness after good, spare thou not

662. That onus yn the day may hym sen;  
 663. Hyt ys so muche worthe, withoute nay,  
 664. The vertu therof no mon telle may;  
 665. But so meche good doth that syht,  
 666. As seynt Austyn telluth ful ryht,  
 667. That day thou syst Goddus body,  
 668. Thou schalt have these, ful securly:-  
 669. Mete and drynke at thy nede,  
 670. Non that day schal the gnedede;  
 671. Ydul othes, an wordes bo,  
 672. God for[g]eveth the also;  
 673. Soden deth, that ylke day,  
 674. The dar not drede by no way;  
 675. Also that day, y the plyht,  
 676. Thou schalt not lese thy eye syht;  
 677. And uche fote that thou gost then,  
 678. That holy syht for to sen,  
 679. They schul be told to stonde yn stede,  
 680. When thou hast therto gret nede;  
 681. That messongere, the angele Gabryelle,  
 682. Wol kepe hem to the ful welle.  
 683. From thys mater now y may passe,  
 684. To telle mo medys of the masse:  
 685. To churche come [g]et, [g]ef thou may,  
 686. And here thy masse uche day;  
 687. [G]ef thou mowe not come to churche,  
 688. Wher that ever thou doste worche,  
 689. When thou herest to masse knylle,  
 690. Pray to God with herte style,  
 691. To [g]eve the part of that servyse,  
 692. That yn churche ther don yse.  
 693. Forthermore [g]et, y wol [g]low preche  
 694. To [g]lowre felows, hyt for to teche,  
 695. When thou comest byfore a lorde,  
 696. Yn halle, yn bowre, or at the borde,  
 697. Hod or cappe that thou of do,  
 698. [G]er thou come hym allynge to;  
 699. Twyes or thryes, without dowte,  
 700. To that lord thou moste lowte;  
 701. With thy ry[g]th kne let hyt be do,  
 702. Thyn owne worschepe tou save so.  
 703. Holde of thy cappe, and hod also,  
 704. Tyl thou have leve hyt on to do.  
 705. Al the whyle thou spekest with hym,  
 706. Fayre and lovelyche bere up thy chyn;  
 707. So, after the norter of the boke,  
 708. Yn hys face lovely thou loke.  
 709. Fot and hond, thou kepe ful style  
 710. From clawynge and trypynge, ys sckylle;  
 711. From spytynge and snyftyngke kepe the also,  
 712. By privy avoydans let hyt go.  
 713. And [g]ef that thou be wyse and felle,  
 714. Thou hast gret nede to governe the welle.  
 715. Ynto the halle when thou dost wende,  
 716. Amonges the genteles, good and hende,  
 717. Presume not to hye for nothyngke,  
 718. For thyn hye blod, ny thy connynge,  
 719. Nowther to sytte, ny to lene,  
 720. That ys norther good and clene.  
 721. Let not thy cowntenans therfore abate,  
 722. Forsothe, good norter wol save thy state.  
 723. Fader and moder, whatsoever they be,  
 724. Wel ys the chyld that wel may the,  
 725. Yn halle, yn chamber, wher thou dost gon;  
 726. Gode maneres maken a mon.  
 727. To the nexte degré loke wysly,  
 728. To do hem reverans by and by;  
 729. Do hem [g]et no reverans al o-rowe,  
 730. But [g]ef that thou do hem know.  
 731. To the mete when thou art y-sette,

To worship him that all hath wrought;  
 For glad may a man that day be,  
 That once in the day may him see;  
 It is so much worth, without nay, (doubt)  
 The virtue thereof no man tell may;  
 But so much good doth that sight,  
 That Saint Austin telleth full right,  
 That day thou seest God's body,  
 Thou shalt have these full securely:-  
 Meet and drink at thy need,  
 None that day shalt thou gnedede; (lack)  
 Idle oaths and words bo, (both)  
 God forgiveth thee also;  
 Sudden death that same day  
 Thee dare not dread by no way;  
 Also that day, I thee plight,  
 Thou shalt not lose thy eye sight;  
 And each foot that thou goest then,  
 That holy sight for to sen, (see)  
 They shall be told to stand instead,  
 When thou hast thereto great need;  
 That messenger the angel Gabriel,  
 Will keep them to thee full well.  
 From this matter now I may pass,  
 To tell more benefits of the mass:  
 To church come yet, if thou may,  
 And hear the mass each day;  
 If thou may not come to church,  
 Where that ever thou dost worche, (work)  
 When thou hearest the mass knylle, (toll)  
 Pray to God with heart still,  
 To give they part of that service,  
 That in church there done is.  
 Furthermore yet, I will you preach  
 To your fellows, it for to teach,  
 When thou comest before a lord,  
 In hall, in bower, or at the board,  
 Hood or cap that thou off do,  
 Ere thou come him entirely to;  
 Twice or thrice, without doubt,  
 To that lord thou must lowte; (bow)  
 With thy right knee let it be do, (done)  
 Thine own worship thou save so.  
 Hold off thy cap and hood also,  
 Till thou have leave it on to do. (put)  
 All the time thou speakest with him,  
 Fair and amiably hold up thy chin;  
 So after the nurture of the book,  
 In his face kindly thou look.  
 Foot and hand thou keep full still,  
 For clawing and tripping, is skill;  
 From spitting and sniffing keep thee also,  
 By private expulsion let it go,  
 And if that thou be wise and felle, (discrete)  
 Thou has great need to govern thee well.  
 Into the hall when thou dost wend,  
 Amongst the gentles, good and hende, (courteous)  
 Presume not too high for nothing,  
 For thine high blood, nor thy cunning,  
 Neither to sit nor to lean,  
 That is nurture good and clean.  
 Let not thy countenance therefore abate,  
 Forsooth good nurture will save thy state.  
 Father and mother, whatsoever they be,  
 Well is the child that well may thee,  
 In hall, in chamber, where thou dost gon; (go)  
 Good manners make a man.  
 To the next degree look wisely,  
 To do them reverence by and by;  
 Do them yet no reverence all o-rowe, (in turn)

732. Fayre and onestelyche thou ete hytte;  
 733. Fyrst loke that thyn honden be clene,  
 734. And that thy knyf be scharpe and kene;  
 735. And kette thy bred al at thy mete,  
 736. Ry[g]th as hyt may be ther y-ete.  
 737. [G]jef thou sytte by a worththyur mon.  
  
 738. Then thy selven thou art won,  
 739. Sofre hym fyrst to toyche the mete,  
 740. [G]jer thyself to hyt reche.  
 741. To the fayrest mossel thou my[g]ht not strike,  
 742. Thaght that thou do hyt wel lyke;  
 743. Kepe thyn hondes, fayr and wel,  
 744. From fowle smogyng of thy towel;  
 745. Theron thou schalt not thy nese snyte,  
 746. Ny at the mete thy tothe thou pyke;  
 747. To depe yn the coppe thou my[g]ht not synke,  
 748. Thagh thou have good wyl to drynke,  
 749. Lest thyn enyn wolde wattryn therby\_

750. Then were hyt no curtesy  
 751. Loke yn thy mowth ther be no mete,  
 752. When thou begynnyst to drynke or speke.  
 753. When thou syst any mon drynkyng,  
 754. That taketh hed to thy carpyng,  
 755. Sone anon thou sese thy tale,  
 756. Whether he drynke wyn other ale.  
 757. Loke also thou scorne no mon,  
 758. Yn what degré thou syst hym gon;  
 759. Ny thou schalt no mon deprave,  
 760. [G]jef thou wolt thy worschepe save;  
 761. For suche worde my[g]ht ther outberste,  
  
 762. That myg[h]t make the sytte yn evel reste,  
 763. Close thy honde yn thy fyste,  
 764. And kepe the wel from "had-y-wyste."  
 765. Yn chamber amonge the ladyes bryght,  
 766. Holde thy tonge and spende thy syght;  
 767. Law[g]e thou not with no gret cry,  
 768. Ny make no ragyng with rybody.  
 769. Play thou not buyt with thy peres,  
 770. Ny tel thou not al that thou heres;  
 771. Dyskever thou not thyn owne dede,  
 772. For no merthe, ny for no mede;  
 773. With fayr speche thou myght have thy wylle,  
 774. With hyt thou myght thy selven spylle.  
  
 775. When thou metyst a worthy mon,  
 776. Cappe and hod thou holle not on;  
 777. Yn churche, yn chepyns, or yn the gate,  
 778. Do hym revera(n)s after hys state.  
 779. [G]jef thou gost with a worthy or mon  
 780. Then thyselven thou art won,  
 781. Let thy forther schulder sewe hys backe,  
 782. For that ys norter withoute lacke;  
 783. When he doth speke, holte the stylle,  
 784. When he hath don, sey for thy wylle;  
 785. Yn thy speche that thou be felle,  
 786. And what thou sayst avyse the welle;  
 787. But byref thou not hym hys tale,  
 788. Nowther at the wyn, ny at the ale.  
 789. Cryst then of hys hye grace,  
 790. [G]jeve [g]low bothe wytte and space,  
 791. Wel thys boke to conne and rede,  
 792. Heven to have for [g]lowre mede.  
 793. Amen! amen! so mot hyt be!  
 794. Say we so all per charyté.

Unless that thou do them know.  
 To the meat when thou art set,  
 Fair and honestly thou eat it;  
 First look that thine hands be clean,  
 And that thy knife be sharp and keen,  
 And cut thy bread all at thy meat,  
 Right as it may be there y-ete. (eaten)  
 If thou sit by a worthier man,  
  
 Then thy self thou art one,  
 Suffer him first to touch the meat,  
 Ere thyself to it reach.  
 To the fairest morsel thou might not strike,  
 Though that thou do it well like;  
 Keep thine hands fair and well,  
 From foul smudging of thy towel;  
 Thereon thou shalt not thy nose smite. (blow)  
 Nor at the meat thy tooth thou pike; (pick)  
 Too deep in cup thou might not sink,  
 Though thou have good will to drink,  
 Lest thine eyes would water thereby-  
  
 Then were it no courtesy.  
 Look in thy mouth there be no meat,  
 When thou beginnest to drink or speak.  
 When thou seest any man drinking,  
 That taketh heed to thy carpyng, (speech)  
 Soon anon thou cease thy tale,  
 Whether he drink wine or ale,  
 Look also thou scorn no man,  
 In what degree thou seest him gone;  
 Nor thou shalt no man deprave,  
 If thou wilt thy worship save;  
 For such word might there outburst.  
  
 That might make thee sit in evil rest.  
 Close thy hand in thy fist,  
 And keep thee well from "had I known".  
 In chamber, among the ladies bright,  
 Hold thy tongue and spend thy sight;  
 Laugh thou not with no great cry,  
 Nor make no lewd sport and ribaldry.  
 Play thou not but with thy peers,  
 Nor tell thou not all that thou hears;  
 Discover thou not thine own deed,  
 For no mirth, nor for no mede: (reward)  
 With fair speech thou might have thy will,  
 With it thou might thy self spylle. (spoil)  
  
 When thou meetest a worthy man,  
 Cap and hood thou hold not on;  
 In church, in market, or in the gate,  
 Do him reverence after his state.  
 If thou goest with a worthier man  
 Then thyself thou art one,  
 Let thy foremost shoulder follow his back,  
 For that is nurture without lack;  
 When he doth speak, hold thee still,  
 When he hath done, say for thy will,  
 In thy speech that thou be felle, (discreet)  
 And what thou sayest consider thee well;  
 But deprive thou not him his tale,  
 Neither at the wine nor at the ale.  
 Christ then of his high grace,  
 Save you both wit and space,  
 Well this book to know and read,  
 Heaven to have for your mede. (reward)  
 Amen! Amen! so mote it be!  
 So say we all for charity.\*



[Facsimile of the first page](#)

# Colophon

The introductory notes and original text are reproduced from *Constitutiones Artis Geometriae Secundum Euclidem*. Introductory remarks by [H.J. Whympers](#). Spencer & Co., Great Queen Street, London: 1889. A copy of this edition is in the archives of the Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon [Library](#).

This transcript incorporated several corrections made in the original Halliwell transcript published in 1840 as noted on the chart.

The character [g], is derived from the Anglo-Saxon  $\mathfrak{g}$ , a character commonly used to express the letters g and y.

The modern English translation was made by Roderick H. Baxter, Past Master of Quatuor Coronoti Lodge, No. 2076, and is reproduced by Mackey in his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. Note that the punctuation in the 1966 edition does not always reflect the 1889 Halliwell transcript.

LINE NO.	HALLIWELL's WORD	WORD NOW GIVEN
100	shal	schal
263	wyth	wythe
266	fryth	frythe
279	prevystye	prevetyse
329	lyt	hyt
338	schal	schalt
363	an	on
379	lame	fame
402	hole	lordys
451	unbuxon	unbuxom
547	han	hav
620	wordes	bordes
688	(word omitted)	ever
718	comynge	connyng
737	worthyour	worththyur
754	taket	taketh
781	schuld	schulder
782	not	norter
791	wels	wel

\* The last hundred lines are believed to be based upon Urbanitatis (Cott. MS. Caligula xx, fol. 88, c. 1460). Urbanitatis used the word "for" rather than "per", but "per charyte" was a mild oath or exclamation in the fourteenth century, less strong than "by God!" The argument can be made that properly translated the word order should be retained and the line read: "Say we so all, by Charity!"