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THE HISTORY, SIGNIFICANCE AND MEANING OF THE REGIUS MANUSCRIPT

by

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Introduction

Freemasons possess many old manuscript writings, some dating to about the fourteenth century, which throw much light upon the traditions, usages, and customs of the medieval operative masons. These manuscripts (MSS) are of fundamental importance for the study of the craft in the Middle Ages. But they have an additional importance as the earliest known members of a large group of documents generally called the MS Constitutions of Masonry, or the Old Charges. The various MS Constitution all contain the same two main elements, namely the history of the building industry and the regulations to be obeyed by masters, fellows, and apprentices.

The Regius Manuscript is one of almost fifty ancient manuscripts that relate to operative and speculative masonry. No two of the MSS are exactly alike, though there is a substantial agreement between them all, and evidently they had a common origin. just as they were designed to serve a common purpose.

At least one of these manuscripts, and possibly two, date before the introduction of the printing press. Of the remainder, the majority are over 200 years old, and all are copies of older documents.

In this paper, I wish to point out to you the uniqueness of the Regius Manuscript, as well as its historical connection and its significance to Freemasonry.

History and Description of the Regius Manuscript

The Regius MS is also called the Regius Poem because, unlike other MS, it is in written entirely in verse. It is impossible to determine by internal evidence exactly when the Regius MS was written, but examination of the handwriting suggests to the paleographical experts of the British Museum that the manuscript was written about 1390. It is in the beautiful Gothic writing of a priest of the period 1388- 1445.

Handwritten on vellum, thirty-three folios, size 5" by 3 ½", in gatherings of six leaves (last gathering eight leaves), it was presented by George II in 1757 to the British Museum. The manuscript was bound for George II in 1757 before presentation to the British Museum, and bears his coat-of-arms on the covers. It was rebound in 1838, probably after its discovery by J. O. Halliwell and entitled on the spine: "Poem on the Craft of Masonry, Mus. Brit. Bibl Reg. 1 7A.I. Theyer" The manuscript was formerly in the library of John Theyer (1597-1673), an antiquarian. We do not know if Theyer was a mason. He was born at Brockworth, Gloucestershire, but later lived at Cooper's Hill. Upon his death, Theyer left his library to his grandson Charles, who sold the collection to a bookstore where it was subsequently purchased by Charles II. It remained in the Royal Library until 1757, when it was sent to the British Museum by George II. We are told that the back cover is inscribed with Theyer's name and the words, "Poem on the Craft of Masonry" and that the book was bound with these words printed on the back in 1757.

The poem appears to have been completely overlooked until it was discovered by James Orchard Halliwell (reportedly a non-mason). Its importance as a Masonic document was not publicly noted

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until Halliwell (afterwards Halliwell-Phillips) read a paper on the "Early Introduction of Freemasonry into England" before the Society of Antiquaries on April 18, 1839. The MS was erroneously entitled A Poem of Moral Duties; and it was not until Halliwell described it in what is termed as "a most suggestive paper on the Introduction of Freemasonry into England," which was read before the Society of Antiquaries (and which can be found in the proceedings of that body, session 1838-9) that interest was rekindled in its ancient document. Since then it has been the most prized of Masonic treasures.

For a period of about 50 years the manuscript was known as the Halliwell MS, until on the suggestion of Bro. R. F. Gould it was re-named the Regius Manuscript, as being indicative of its preeminence as a Masonic document, and its previous ownership by the kings of England.

The MS is of prime importance to the Fraternity of Freemasons as being its oldest preserved document which affords evidence of a legendary history and an indication of a speculative origin. Although not by any means the oldest manuscript relating to the building craft, it has received the close attention of numerous students and much has been written and published concerning it. Bro. William James Hughan from time to time published in his numerous writings his ideas concerning the poem. The two greatest commentarists on the MS are said to be Bros. William Begemann and Robert Freke Gould, although I would suggest that the work of Knoop, Jones and Harrier is extremely enlightening.

Significance

There are two principal manuscripts that Freemasons have long regarded as an invaluable part of their heritage from medieval masonry. One is called the Cooke manuscript the other is the Regius. As I said earlier, these are by no means the only or the oldest mediaeval documents relating to masons. Numerous others exist in the form of building accounts, fabric rolls, contracts and regulations made by particular authorities and are of great importance for the study of operative masonry in the Middle Ages. But the Regius and Cooke Manuscripts are masonic in a special and complete sense, being documents not simply about masons, but for masons. They differ from building accounts and fabric rolls in relating to masons alone; from contracts in relating to masons as a body; and from regulations (such as the York Minster Ordinances of 1370) both in claiming a far wider applicability and represent the custom of the craft which gives to both MSS their value; they may be taken as an expression of the conscience and pride of the craft and of its claim to antiquity and status, to excellence in workmanship and to independence in government.

The importance of the Regius and Cooke MSS (and of other contemporary or older MSS which are now lost) as a link uniting mediaeval operative masonry and modern speculative masonry cannot easily be exaggerated. These early manuscripts show us that fourteenth and fifteenth century masons in Britain possessed a certain organization, that their trade was subject to recognized customs, embodied in so-called Charges, and that they were sufficiently interested in their occupation to encourage non-operative members of their organization or fraternity to set down the history of the building industry in writing. It is from that operative fraternity with its legends and its customs (which in the 16th and 17th centuries were incorporated in successive versions of the MS Constitutions of Masonry) that present-day Freemasonry claims descent, and it is

out of those legends and those customs that our rites and ceremonies have grown.

Who Wrote the Regius MS?

The author of the Regius MS is not identified. We don't know who he was or why he penned his poem. The best guess is that he was a monk. He may have been a master architect or a free stone mason. He may have written the free mason's story at their request. Or possibly he was just an aspiring writer who assembled material from various sources and fashioned them into a manuscript he could call his own.

Whoever he was, and whatever his reason, all we can conclude about him is that he was concerned with preserving a story for the future.

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We may well conclude that it was the old monkish scribe full of church lore and well acquainted with the building fraternity who gave us the early manuscripts - the Regius, the Cooke, and others, and that to some extent, large or small, the scribe was writing for the operative mason of the day, who, not actually in himself any more religious than men of later days, had at any rate a greater regard for religious observances. He was unlettered, as were the workers in all the other crafts, and as, indeed, were a proportion of his priests as well. He was superstitious and of vast credulity, and he accepted, probably without question, the highly imaginative craft history written for him by the learned priest and undoubtedly coloured to suit the ideas and purposes of the Church. The priestly historian when facts failed him, drew upon legend and sheer invention, but fortunately, too, he drew upon and preserved many noble traditions, for which, as freemasons, we must always be grateful.

The question may take it, more likely for those with ears than with eyes. On suitable occasion, when masons met together in will be asked as to why the learned priests wrote for men who could not read. The priests wrote, we assemblies or even in small gatherings in their ledges, these manuscripts may have been read to them by a priest or by an educated Master Mason, probably not to entertain them so much as to impress upon them the dignity of their calling and their duty to God, to their Masters, to one another, and to the world about them.

The writer of the poem apparently collected his material from different sources, as an analysis reveals that it is composed of a series of parts without either continuity or connection. Eight separate divisions have been marked out. There is also an indication that the first 592 lines of the poem were written by a different author than the latter part of the MS.

Through an analysis of dialect and writing style, it is thought that the original of the Regius MS came into the hands of a West Midland cleric, who was not as interested in the history of masonry as he was in religious and moral instruction, and gave a religious turn to his version. He inserted a long extract from Mirk's Instruction for Parish Priests, with a change of person from third to second, urging masons to be faithful members of the church, and instructing them on behaviour during service, on prayer, and on the mass. He also inserted the whole of the Urbanitatis poem to teach social manners.

So far as the date of the writing is concerned, authorities ascribe it to about 1390, or no later than 1420. We may fairly assume that the writing is of either the reign of Richard II(1377-1399) or Henry IV (1399-1413) and possible during the lifetime of Henry Yevley (1320 - 1400) who was master mason to both of these kings, as well as their predecessor Edward III.

As for the location of the writing, a study of dialects of the country place it at the south of Worcestershire or Herefordshire or even the north of Gloucestershire. Assuming this is correct, we find that great activity of building was proceeding at the time of the poem's writing. The cathedrals of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester as well as a number of abbeys and minor buildings were constructed during this time and it is not inconceivable that the poem was written for the benefit of the craftsmen who were thus engaged.

The Old Charges

Although we do not easily recognize in the Old Charges anything of an esoteric nature, we may regard them as a link between operative and speculative masonry. That does not mean that they contain a working basis for today's ritual; they do not, but undoubtedly our present traditions and ritual reflect many of the ideas and perpetuate many of the words and phrases of the old writings.

The charges contained in these manuscripts are not identical to the charges contained in the ritual of speculative lodges today, but it is suggested that these are largely based. Speaking generally, most

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or all of the Old Charges have descended from earlier writings. Any differences between them is due apparently to the mistakes, to the whims, and to the intentional deviations of the copyists, editors, and compilers through whose hands the writings have come down to us.

Of the Old Charges in general we can say that there must have been some early original or originals yet unknown to us, parts of which have descended through the series. This can be illustrated most simply by saying that the matter contained in the Regius and Cooke MSS may well have existed for a considerable period before it was incorporated into those writings. Perhaps the original matter was in trade ordinances or in some statement prepared by a learned monk well acquainted with the usages and conditions of the masonic trade. The Regius Poem contains more information on trade usages; but the Cooke MS tells more of the traditional or legendary history.

Brethren who are acquainted with the series of documents known variously as the MS Constitutions, the Gothic Constitutions, or more commonly nowadays as the Old Charges of the British Freemasons, will recognize that after an introductory prayer, they go on to relate how the science of geometry (or masonry) came to be founded. This same legend forms the same part of the poem we are now considering, and abundantly proves that the versifier had access to copies of the Old Charges which, unfortunately, are now lost to us.

The Regius MS in Outline

The Regius MS is a poem giving the Old Short History, and the Articles and Points, together with directions regarding an assembly, an account of the Ars Quatuor Coronatorum (the Art of the Four Crowned Martyrs), references to Noah's flood, a description of the building of the Tower of Babel, King Nebuchadnezzar, and to "the good clerk Euclid" teaching the "craft of geometry full wonder wide," an account of the seven liberal arts, portions of John Mirk's Instructions for Parish Priests, and the whole of the Urbanitatis, a metrical treatise on table manners.

The text of the MS may be categorized as follows:

Line Number Subject

1-18 Ancient Egyptian "lords" wonder how their children will make a living
 19-30 They send for clerks of geometry
 35-36 Euclid, the founder of geometry
 37-42 Euclid orders even the simplest of wit to be taught
 43-46 He ordains the rank of master mason
 47-52 Those of less skill to be called fellows
 53-57 Geometry founded by Euclid in Egypt(I)
 58 Geometry taught in many lands thereafter
 59-62 Geometry comes to England in the reign of Athelstan (2)
 67-86 Athelstan ordains congregation and articles (Articles and Points)
 87-260 Fifteen Articles
 261-470 Fifteen Points
 471-496 An assembly to be held every year or third year
 497-534 Ars Quatuor Coronatorum(3)
 535-576 The Seven Liberal Arts (4)
 577-692 Mainly extracts from Mirk's Instructions for Parish Priests
 693-794 Urbanitatis Poem, including 789-94, the Closing Prayer
 793-794 Closing Prayer

(1) The art of geometry is said to have been invented first by the Egyptians, because through the covering of the land with mud by the inundations of the Nile, they first divided the land by lines and measures and gave it its name.

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(2) The legend that Athelstan, or an assembly convened by him, laid down charges for the masons does not agree with evidence that shows (a) that there was comparatively little building in stone in tenth-century England, and (b) that the regulations of industry, when first imposed by external authority, was local and not national in character.

(3) The commemoration of the Four Crowned Martyrs was fairly widespread on the continent in the Middle Ages, and they were the patron saints of the German stone masons. It is not clear how and when the Quatuor Coronatorum came to mean anything to medieval operative masons in England.

(4) The poem makes Nebuchadnezzar the builder of the Tower of Babel; he lived about sixteen centuries after the event.

The Articles and Points

The Articles and Points of the MS are a body of regulations with regard to masters, craftsmen, apprentices wages, and other matters.

The fifteen articles, mainly addressed to masters, are:

1 that the master shall, in fairness to his employer, not pay higher wages than is warranted by the cost of victuals.

2 that every Master Mason shall punctually attend the General Congregation (assembly), sickness being the only excuse.

3 that no master shall take an apprentice for less than seven years... "his craft to learn."

4 that the master must take no bondsman for apprentices, but only those who are free born, in case his lord should try to recover him.

5 that the apprentice must be 'of lawful blood' - not a thief, and 'whole of limb' - not maimed.

6 that the master must not take craftsmen's wages for his apprentice's work.

7 that a master shall not harbor a mason who is a thief, murderer, or robber.

- 8 that the master may change a poor craftsman for better to maintain a standard of efficiency
- 9 that the master not undertake any work unless he is capable of carrying it through to the end, and that the foundations of his buildings are safe.
- 10 that no master shall supplant another who has already begun his work.
- 11 that no mason should work by night except by "practicing of wit" - i.e. the pursuit of knowledge.
- 12 that no mason shall speak evil of his fellows' work. He should praise it worthy; if not, they should both try to improve it.
- 13 that the master must instruct his apprentices well and justly.
- 14 that the master shall not take an apprentice unless he can be certain of giving him full instruction or for whom he does not have sufficient labour.
- 15 that the master shall not claim to maintain more masons than he actually does, nor shall he maintain wrongdoers or false-swearers.

The fifteen points, generally addressed to journeymen (craftsmen), are:

- 1 that the prospective mason must swear to love God and the Holy Church, the saints, his master for whom he labours, and his fellows.
- 2 that the mason work as truly as he can to deserve his hire and reward.
- 3 that the apprentice must not disclose his master's secrets (teachings), or whatever "privities" he may hear or see done in the lodge.
4. that no man be false to his craft, nor do anything to the prejudice of his master and fellows.
5. that the mason shall accept his pay without dispute ("full meekly") and that the master warn the mason "lawfully before noon if he will not occupy him no more."
6. that if a mason quarrels with another mason, the investigation or resolution of the dispute should be postponed to a holiday or "loveday" (a day appointed for amicable settlement of differences), so as not to interfere with the progress of the work.
7. that the mason is enjoined to respect the chastity of his master's wife and daughter, and of his
5. fellows' wife and daughter.
8. that if appointed a warden, the mason must be true to his master and just to his fellows in every way.
9. that the masons take their turn in being stewards amiably and serve each one another "as though they were sister and brother" and do the work honestly.
10. that a mason should live "without care and strife" and not slander his fellows. If a mason brings discredit on his fellows, he shall be ordered to appear before the next Assembly. If he does not appear, he must forswear the craft.
11. that a skilled mason shall assist by instruction to prevent the loss of the work by a less skilled man about to make an error.
12. that any decision of the assembly of Masters, Fellows, and great lords shall be maintained in the craft.
13. that the mason must swear never to be a thief or a thief-maintainer
14. that the mason must swear a "good true oath" to his Masters and Fellows and is to be steadfast and true to this ordinance and his liege lord, the King.
15. that if any mason, after taking his oath, proves false and is unwilling to amend his ways, and the charges against him are proved, he shall forswear the craft forever. If he then be found working, it is the sheriff's duty to imprison the disobedient mason and confiscate his property.

History vs Symbolism

Symbolism had been largely used by the Church in the Middle Ages to assist in

inculcating moral lessons; on the other hand, there is little or no trace of it in either the Cooke or the Regius MSS, or in the later MS Constitutions of Masonry.

The cathedral builders of the Regius Poem took Euclid as the founder of their craft. They did not, as they may well have done, claim to be the direct descendants of King Solomon's builders. The ritual, on the other hand, bases its story on the events surrounding the building of King Solomon's Temple and much of the tradition of present day freemasonry recalls those early times. But the Hiram story is a cautionary tale. It is the stuff of fraternities, not of a group of operative craftsmen. Its absence in the Regius Poem suggests that it was not part of the operative craft. At least, it was not part of the face the craft shown to the public. If the story did exist in the fourteenth century, and if the free masons considered it part of their lore, its absence in their manual would indicate that it was part of their inner workings, something for the use of members only.

Another difference between the old manuscript and our ritual is that the history presented in the Regius Poem is not the fanciful sort of tale that was employed by the 18th century freemasons. The older version shows all indications that it was an honest effort to present the actual history of a working craft. This is important. Since the Hiram story is symbolic, there would be little point trying to find it in the pages of history. Conversely, since the Regius poem appears to be history, it would be wrong to treat it as mere fable and ignore the kernel of truth it must contain.

Some Miscellaneous Yet Noteworthy Points

It is the Halliwell MS which contains the instructions now accepted as groundwork for the title "Worshipful" as applied to Masters (45,46) and it also acknowledges the grade or rank of Master Mason (Mayster Mason).

In the Regius and Cooke MSS, the word "Freemason" does not occur at all, "mason" being used in all cases.

Certain numbers of boys and youths, after finishing their schooling, may have qualified as masons.

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If this were so, it would help explain the references in the Regius and Cooke MSS to the sons of lords and gentlemen becoming masons. It was probable from among these more educated masons that the mason-architects of the Middle Ages ultimately sprang.

The statement in the contemporary Regius MS (225-230) that the master mason was not to work at night, except in study, lends support to the view that the tracing board was utilized for the master mason to draw upon. It was the master masons who drew the plans for their structures, and it is known that early mason's lodges contained tracing boards.

The word "mote" is the third person singular of the present subjective of the Anglo Saxon word "motan" which means "to be allowed." Hence the phrase "So Mote It Be," which is regularly used by Freemasons in their supplications to the deity and in lieu of the word "Amen."

It is inconceivable that this particular trade was uncontrolled; some organization must have existed to supervise the activities of the masons. The probability is that assemblies of some kind were held. According to the Regius

MS, [415) they were to make ordinances for the craft In the Middle ages, "law" and "custom" were closely related, and laws were often declarations or statements of accepted custom. As customs gradually changed, new declarations or statements of custom might be called for. The business of the assembly would thus seem to have been to interpret and enforce the customs of the industry. Uniformity of customs (and thus the articles and points) would tend to be brought about partly by the influence of the King's Master Masons but principally by mobility amongst masons. The mason's customs, which served as a basis for the Articles and Points, may have existed and been transmitted orally long before they were first committed to writing.

Conclusion

The poem, as well as the old charges, support a theory that architecture, founded on geometry, was developed in Egypt and that its early practitioners were of gentle birth. They were the actual designers of the structures and must have worked in conjunction with the skilled craftsmen and manual laborers. A guild, composed of different grades of members, would thus be formed, possibly with different secret signs for each class, and from this guild, through different channels of development, would arise the present day speculative form of Freemasonry with its system of degrees. Further, that the legend of the founding of the science of geometry by the children of great lords and ladies, as related in the first part of the poem, is not myth but is founded on fact, for unlettered working masons could never have produced the temples and churches for the worship of the Great Architect of the Universe.

If it be true, as is highly probable, that our present rites and ceremonies were built up gradually in the later 17th and early 18th centuries by a series of elaborations of an early but simple admission ceremony, it is equally true that between the 14th and the 18th centuries numerous additions and modifications were made to the legend and to the Charges. Thus, for example, while there is no reference to King Solomon's Temple in the Regius Poem, there is a short reference in the Cooke MS, a longer account in the 16th and 17th century versions of the MS Constitutions of Masonry and a still longer account in certain early 18th century versions. That being so, the 18th century working has the same right to be regarded as the descendent of the 14th and 15th century versions of the MS Constitutions as the MS Constitutions have a right to be regarded as the descendants of the Regius or Cooke MS, or of some contemporary or older version which is now missing.

Space do not permit a more lengthy dissertation on this fascinating topic. Needless to say, there are countless references which deal with the history, significance and meaning of the Regius MS practice it today.

Some appear in the following list of references. There are many others, and brethren who choose to pursue this topic in greater depth will soon discover that there is not agreement among the

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various authors. Nonetheless, the message that all impart is that the Regius Manuscript does serve as tangible evidence that there is a link between the operative masons of the 14th century and speculative Freemasonry as we know and one cannot help but notice the remarkable number of instances in which phrases from the Regius MS have been introduced - although in different terminology - into our ritual, and in some cases its requirements have been incorporated into Masonic constitutions. Even the last stage of the document, which deals with manners at table and the presence of superiors and appears at first to be quite

irrelevant, may be accepted as evidence that our present custom of celebrating special Masonic events by banqueting and fraternizing was a feature of the Craft at the time from which the MS speaks.

The Regius Poem in its entirety is appended to this paper. I have tabulated the original text and the modern translation in adjacent columns to facilitate reading and understanding this fascinating manuscript.

Acknowledgment: I am indebted to Bro. Edward Punt, of Lawton Lodge No.183 in Lawton, Oklahoma. Bro. Punt provided me with both the ancient and modern versions of the Regius Poem via the Internet, thus saving immeasurable hours of transcribing.

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Part II

THE HISTORY SIGNIFICANCE AND MEANING OF THE REGIUS MANUSCRIPT

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THE REGIUS MANUSCRIPT THE RECIUS MANUSCRIPT

A Poem of Moral Duties A Poem of Moral Duties

(Original text) (Modern Translation)

Hic inncipiunt constitutiones artis Here begin the constitutions of the art
gemetriac secundum Eucyldern.

Whose wol bothe wel rede and loke, 1	Whoever will both well read and loolt,
He may fynde wryte yn olde boke 2	He may find written in old book
Of grete lordys and eke ladyysse, 3	Of great lords and also ladies,
That had mony chydryn y-fere, y-wisse, 4	That had many children
together, certainly;	
And hade no rentys to fynde hem wyth, 5	And had no
income to keep them with,	
Nowther yn towne, ny felde, ny fryth: 6	Neither in town nor
field nor enclosed wood;	
A cownsel togeder they cowthe hem take, 7	A council together
they, could them take,	

To ordeyne for these chydryn sake, children's sake, How they myzth best lede there lyfe their life, Withoute grete desese, care and stryge; care and strife; And most for the multytude that was comynge multitude that was coming Of here chyldryn after here zyndynge. their ending. (They) sende thenne after grete clerkys, clerks, To techyn hem thenne gode werkys;	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	To ordain for these How they might best lead Without great disease, And most for the Of their children after They sent him after great To teach them then good works;
And pray we hem, for our Lordys take, Lord's take. To oure chydryn sum werke to make, make, 8. That they myzth gete there lyvngge therby, living thereby, Bothe wel and onestlyche, ful sycurly. full securely. Yn that tyme, throzgh good gemetry, geometry, Thys onest craft of good masonry masonry Wes ordeynt and made yn thys manere, this manner, Y-cownterfetyd of thys clerkys yfere; clerks together; At these lordys prayers they cownter-fetyd gemetry, lord's prayers they, counterfeited geometry, And zaf hyt the name of masonry,	15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	And pray we them, for our To our children some work to That they might get their Both well and honestly In that time, through good This honest craft of good Was ordained and made in Counterfeited of these At these And gave it the name of masonry,
For the moste oneste craft of alle. all. These lordys chydryn therto dede falle, fall, To lurne of hym the craft of gemetry, of geometry, The wheche he made ful curysly; curiously; Throzgh fadrys prayers and modrys also, mother's also Thys onest craft he putte them to. honest craft he put them to. He that lerned best, and were of honeste, of honesty, And passud hys felows yn curyste; fellows in curiosity; Zef yin that craft he dede hym passe, him pass, He schulde have more worschepe then the lasse. worship than the less,	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34	For the most honest craft of These lords' children did To learn of him the craft The which he made full Through father's prayers and This He learned best, and was And passed his If in that craft he did He should have more
Thys grete clerkys name was clept Eucllyde,	35	This great

clerk's name was Euclid,			
Hys name hyt spradde ful wondur wyde.		36	His name it spread hill
wonder wide.			
Zet thys grate clerke more ordeynt he		37	Yet this great clerk
ordained he			
To hym that was herre yn thys degre,		38	To him that was higher in
this degre,			
That he schulde teche the synplyst of wytte		39	That he
should teach the simplest of wit			
Yn that onest craft to be parfyttee;		40	In that
honest craft to be perfect;			
And so uchon schulde techyn othur,	41		And so each one shall teach the
other,			
And love togeder as syster and brothur.		42	And love
together as sister and brother.			
Furthermore zet that ordeynt he,	43		Furthermore yet that ordained
he,			
Mayster y-called so schulde he be;		44	Master called
so should he be;			
So that he were most y-worschepede,	45		So that he were most worshipped,
Thenne sculde he be so y-clepede:		46	Then should he
be so called;			
But mason schulde never won other calle,		47	But masons should never
one another call,			
Withynne the craft amongus hem alle,		48	Within the craft amongst
them all,			
Ny soget, ny servant, my dere hrother,		49	Neither subject nor
servant, my dear brother,			
Thazht he be not so perfirt as ys another;		50	Though he be not so
perfect as is another;			
Uchon sculle calle other felows by cuthe,		51	Each shall call
other fellows by friendship,			
For cause they come of ladyes burthe		52	Because they come of
ladies' birth.			
On thys maner, throz good wytte of gemetry,		53	On this manner,
through good wit of geometry			
Bygan furst the craft of masonry:	54		Began first the craft of masonry
The clerk Eucljde on thys wyse hyt fonde,		55	The clerk
Euclid on this wise it found			
Thys craft of gemetry yn Egypte londe.		56	This craft of geometry in
Egypt land			
Yn Egypte he tawzhte hyt full wyde,	57		In Egypt he taught it full
wide			
Yn dyvers londe on every syde;	58		In divers lands on every side;
Mony erys afterwarde, y understonde,		59	Many years afterwards, I
understand,			
Zer that the craft com ynto thys londe,		60	Ere that the craft came
into this land.			
Thys craft com ynto England, as y zow say,		61	This craft came
into England, as I you say,			
Yn tyme of good kynge Athelstonus day;		62	In time of good King
Athelstane's day;			
He made to bothe halle and eke bowre,		63	He rnade then both hall
and even bower,			

And hye templus of gret honowre, honour, To sportyn hym yn bothe day and nyzts, day and night, And to worschepe hys God with all hys myzt. God with all his might. Hys goode lorde loved thys craft ful wel, craft full well, And purposud to strenthyn hyt every del, strengthen it every part,	64	And high temples of great 65 To disport him in both 66 And to worship his 67 This good lord loved this 68 And purposed to
For dyvers defawtys that yn the craft he fonde; that in the craft he found, He sende about ynto the londe After alle the masonus of the crafte, the craft, To come to hym full evene strazfte, come to him full even straight, For to amende these defautys alle amend these defaults all By good consel, zef hyt myttth falle. might fall. Asemble thenne he cowthe let make Of dyvers lordis, yn here state, Dukys, erlys, and barnes also, Kynzthys, sqwyers, and mony mo, And the grete burges of that syte, city, They were ther alle yn there degre; degree;	70	69 For divers faults He sent about into the land 71 After all the masons of 72 To 73 For to 74 By good counsel, if it 75 An assembly then could let make 76 Of divers lords, in their state, 77 Dukes, earls, and barons also, 78 Knights, squires and many more, 79 And the great burgesses of that 80 They were there all in their
9. These were ther uchon algate, To ordeyne for these masonus astate. estate, Ther they sowzton by here wytte, How they mysthyn governe hytte: Fyftene artyculus they ther sowzton sought, And fyftene poyntys they wrozton.	81	81 There were there each one always, 82 To ordain for these masons, 83 There they sought by their wit, 84 How they might govern it; 85 Fifteen articles they there 86 And fifteen points there they wrought,

Hic incipit articulus primus. Here begins the first article.

The furste artycul of thys gemetry:- geometry:- The mayster mason moste be full securly full securely Bothe stedefast, trusty, and trwe, Hyt schal hum never thenne arewe: And pay thy felows after the coste, cost, As vytaylys goth thenne, wel thou woste; well thou knowest; And pay them trwly, apon thy fay, faith, What that they deserven may; And to ther hure take no more, hire take no more,	87	87 The first article of this 88 The master mason must be 89 Both steadfast, trusty and true, 90 It shall him never then rue: 91 And pay thy fellows after the 92 As victuals goeth then, 93 And pay them truly, upon thy 94 What they may deserve; 95 And to their
--	----	--

But what they mowe serve fore; may serve for;		96	But what they
And spare, nowther for love ny drede, nor dread,		97	And spare neither for love
Of nowther partys to take no mede bribe;	98		Of neither parties to take no
Of lord ny fellow, whether he be, fellow, whoever he be,		99	Of lord nor
Of hem thou take no manner of fee; fee;	100		Of them thou take no manner of
And as a jugge stonde upryzth;	101		And as a judge stand upright,
And thenne thou dost to bothe good ryzth, good right;		102	And then thou dost to both
And trwly do thys whersever thou gost, wheresoever thou goest,		103	And truly do this
Thy worschep, thy profyt, hyt shal be most profit, it shall be most.		104	Thy worship, thy

Aniculus secundus.

Second article.

The secunde artycul of good masonry, masonry,		105	The second article of good
As ze mowe hyt here hyr specyaly,	106		As you must it here hear specially,
That every mayster, that ys a mason, a mason,		107	That every master, that is
Most ben at the generale congregacyon, congregation,		108	Must be at the general
So that he hyt resonably z-tolde	109		So that he it reasonably be told
Where that the semble schal be holde; shall be held;		110	Where that the assembly
And to that semble he most nede gon, he must needs go,		111	And to that assembly
But he have a resenabul skwsacyon, excuse,	112		Unless he have a reasonable
Or but he be unbuxom to that craft, craft	113		Or unless he be disobedient to that
Or with falsshed ys over-raft,	114		Or with falsehood is overtaken,
Or ellus sekenes hat hym so stronge, strong,		115	Or else sickness hath him so
That he may not com hem arnonge;	116		That he may not come them among;
That ys a skwsacyon, good and abulle,		117	That is an excuse good and able,
To that semble withoute fabulle.	118		To that assembly without fable.

Articulus tercius.

Third article.

The thrydde artycul forsothe hyt uysse, is,		119	The third article forsooth it
That the mayster take to no prentysse, 'Prentice,		120	That the master takes to no
But he have good seuerans to dwelle	121		Unless he have good assurance to dwell
Seven zer with hym, as y zow telle,	122		Seven years with him, as l you tell,
Hys craft to lurne, that ys profytable; profitable;		123	His craft to leam, that is
Withynne lasse he may not be able	124		Within less he may no be able
To lordys profyt ny to his owne,	125		To lords' profit, nor to his own
As ze mowe knowe by good resowne.	126		As you may know by good reason.

Articulus quartus. Fourth article.

The fowrthe artycul thys moste be	127	The fourth article this must he,
That the mayster hym wel be see,	128	That the master him well be see,
That he no bondemon prentys make,	129	That he no bondsman 'prentice make,
Ny for no covetyse do hym take;	130	Nor for no covetousness do him take;
For the lord that he ys bonde to,	131	For the lord that he is bound to,
May fache the prentes whersever he go		132 May fetch the 'prentice
wheresoever he go.		
Zef yn the logge he were y-take,	133	If in the lodge he were taken,
Muche desese hyt myzth ther make,	134	Much disease it might there make,
And suche case hyt myzth befallle,	135	And such case it might befall,
That hyt myzth greve summe or alle.	136	That it might grieve some or all.
For alle the rnasonus tht ben there	137	For all the masons that be there
10.		
Wol stonde togedur hol y-fere	138	Will stand together all together.
Zef suche won yn that craft schulde dwelle,		139 If such one in that craft
should dwell,		
Of dyvers desesys ze myzth telle:	140	Of divers diseases you might tell;
For more zese thenne, and of honeste,		141 For more ease then, and of
honesty		
Take a prentes of herre degre.	142	Takes 'prentice of higher degree.
By old tyme wryton y fynde	143	By old time written I find
That the prentes schulde be of gentyl kynde;		144 That the 'prentice should
be of gentle kind;		
And so symtyme grete lordys blod	145	And so sometime, great lords' blood
Took this geometry that is full good.		146 Took this geometry that is full
good.		

Articulus quintus. Fifth article.

The fyfthe artycul ys swythe good,	147	The fifth article is very good,
So that the prentes be of lawlul blod;		148 So that the 'prentice be of
lawful blood;		
The mayster schal not for no vantage,		149 The master shall not for no
advantage,		
Make no prentes that ys outrage;	150	Make no 'prentice that is deformed;
Hyt ys to mene, as ze mowe here,	151	It is mean, as you may hear
That he have hys lymes hole alle y-fere;		152 That he have all his limbs whole
all together;		
To the craft hyt were gret scharne,	153	To the craft it were great shame,
To make an halt mon and a lame,	154	To make a halt man and a lame,
For an unperfyt mon of suche blod	155	For an imperfect man of such blood
Schulde do the craft but lytul good.		156 Should do the craft but little
good.		
Thus ze mowe knowe everychon,	157	Thus you may know every one,
The craft wolde have a myzthty mon;	158	The craft would have a mighty man;
A maymed mon he hath no myzht,	159	A maimed man he hath no might,
Ze mowe hyt knowe long zer nyzht	160	You must it know long ere night.

Articulus sextus. Sixth article.

The syzte artycul zet mowe not mysse,	161	The sixth article you must not
miss		
That the mayster do the lord no pregedysse,		162 That the master do the
lord no prejudice,		
To take of the lord, for hyse prentyse,	163	To take the lord for his

'prentice,			
Also muche as hys felows don, yn alle vyse.	164	As much as his fellows	
do, in all wise.			
For yn that craft they ben ful perfyt,	165	For in that craft they be full	
perfect			
So ys not he, ze mowe sen hyt.	166	So is not he, you must see it	
Also hyt were azeynus good reson,	167	Also it were against good reason,	
To take hys hure as hys felows don	169	This same article in this case,	
Juggythe the prentes to take lasse	170	Judgeth his prentice to take less	
Thenne hys felows, that ben fuI perfyt.	171	Than his fellows, that be full	
perfect.			
Yn dyvers maters, conne qwyte hyt,	172	In divers matters, know requite it,	
The mayster may his prentes so enforme,	173	The master may his 'prentice so	
inform,			
That hys hure may cese ful zurne,	174	That his hire may increase full soon,	
And zer hys terme come to an ende,	175	And ere his term come to an end,	
Hys hure may ful wel arnende.	176	His hire may full well amend.	

Articulus septimus.

Seventh article.

The seventhe artycul that ys now here,	177	The seventh article that is now	
here,			
Ful wel wol telle zow, alle y-fere,	178	Full well will tell you all together,	
That no mayster, for favour ny drede,	179	That no master for favour nor	
dread,			
Schal no thef nowther clothe ny fede.	180	Shall no thief neither clothe	
nor feed.			
Theves he schal herberon never won,	181	Thieves he shall harbour never one,	
Ny hym that hath y-quellude a mon,	182	Nor him that hath killed a man,	
Ny thylike that hath a febul name,	183	Nor the same that hath a feeble name,	
Lest hyt wolde turne the craft to schame.	184	Lest it would turn the craft to	
shame.			

Articulus octavus.

Eighth article.

The eghte artycul schewt zow so,	185	The eighth article sheweth you so,	
That the mayster may hyt wel do,	186	That the master may it well do.	
Zef that he have any mon of crafte,	187	If that he have any man of craft,	
And he not also perfyt as he auzte,	188	And he be not so perfect as he ought,	
Re may hym change sone anon,	189	He may him change soon anon, .1	
And take for hym a perfytur mon.	190	And take for him a more perfect man.	
Suche a mon, throze rechelaschepe,	191	Such a man through recklessness,	
Myzth do the craft schort worschepe.	192	Might do the craft scant	
worship.			

Articulus nonus.

Ninth article.

The nynthe artycul schewet ful welle,	193	The ninth article sheweth full	
well,			
11.			
That the mayster he both wyse and felle;	194	That the master be both wise and	
strong;			
That no werke he undurtake,	195	That he no work undertake,	
But he conne bothe hyt ende and make;	196	Unless he can both it end and	
make;			
And that hyt be to the lordes profyt also,	197	And that it be to the	
lords' profit also,			

And to hys craft, whersever he go; 198
And that the grond he wel y-take, 199
That hyt nowther fle ny grake. 200

Articulus decimus.

The tenthe artycul ys for to knowe, 201
Amonge the craft, to hye and lowe, 202
There schal no mayster supplante other,
another,
But he togeder as systur and brother,
brother,
Yn thys curyus craft, alle and som, 205
That longuth to a maystur mason. 206
Ny he schal not supplante non other mon,
man,
That hath y-take awerke hym uppon, 208
Yn peyne therof that ys so stronge, 209
That peyseth no lasse thenne ten ponge,
pounds,
But zef that he be gulty y-fonde, 211
That toke furst the werke on honde; 212
For no mon yn masonry 213 For no man
Schal no supplante othur securly, 214
But zef that hyt be so y-wrozth, 215
That hyt turne the werke to nozth; 216
Thenne may a mason that werk crave, 217
To the lordes profit hyt for to save;
save
Yn suche a case but hyt do falle, 219
Ther schal no mason medul withalle. 220
Forsothe he that begynnth the gronde,
ground,
And he be a mason goode and sonde, 222
For hath hyt sycurly yn hys mynde 223
To brynge the werke to ful good ende.
end.

Articulus undecimus.

The eleventhe artycul y telle the, 225
That he ys bothe fayr and fre; 226
For he techyt, by hys myzth, 227 For
That no mason schulde worche by nyzth,
night,
But zef hyt be yn practesyng of wytte,
Zef that y cowthe amende hytte. 230

Articulus duodecimus.

The twelfth artycul ys of hye honeste
honesty
To zeverly mason, whersever he be: 232
He schal not hys felows werk deprave,
deprave,
Zef that he wol hys honeste save; 234
With honest wordes he hyt comende, 235

And to his craft, wheresoever he go;
And that the ground be well taken,
That it neither flaw nor crack.

Tenth article.

The tenth article is for to know,
Among the craft, to high and low,
203 There shall no master supplant
204 But he together as sister and
In this curious craft, all and some,
That belongeth to a master mason.
207 Nor shall he supplant no other
That hath taken a work him upon,
In pain thereof that is so strong,
210 That weigheth no less than ten
But if that he be guilty found,
That took first the work on hand;
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,
218 To the lords' profit for it to
In such a case if it do fall,
There shall no mason meddle withal.
221 Forsooth he that beginneth the
If he be a mason good and sound,
He hath it securely in his mind
224 To bring the work to full good

Eleventh article.

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

Twelfth article.

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

By the wytte that God the dede sende;	236	By the wit God did thee send;
Buy hyt amende by al that thou may,	237	But it amend by all that thou may,
Bytwynne zow bothe withoute nay.	238	Between you both without doubt.

Articulus xiiiis.

Thirteenth article.

The threttene artycul, so God me save,	239	The thirteenth article, so God
me save,		
Ys, zef that the mayster a prentes have,	240	Is if that the master a
'prentice have,		
Enterlyche thenne that he hym teche,	241	Entirely then that he him teach,
And meserable poyntes that he hym reche,	242	And measurable points that he
him tell,		
That he the craft abelyche may conne,	243	That he the craft ably may know,
Whersever he go undur the sonne.	244	Wheresoever he go under the sun.

Articulus xiiiiis.

Fourteenth article.

The fowrtene artycul, by goode reson,	245	The fourteenth article by good
reason,		
Schewete the mayster how he schal don;	246	Sheweth the master how he shall
do;		
He schal no prentes to hym take,	247	He shall no 'prentice to him take,
Byt dyvers crys he have to make,	248	Unless diver cares he have to make,
12.		
That he may, withynne hys terme,	249	That he may within his term,
Of hym dyvers poyntes may lurne.	250	Of him divers points may learn.

Articulus quindecimus.

Fifteenth article.

The fyftene artcul maketh an ende,	251	The fifteenth article maketh an end,
For to the mayster he ys a frende;	252	For to the master he is a friend;
To lurne hym so, that for no mon,	253	To teach him so, that for no man,
No fals mantenans he take hym apon,	254	No false maintenance he take him upon,
Ny maynteine hys felows yn here synne,	255	Nor maintain his fellows in
their sin,		
For no good that he myzth wyne;	256	For no good that he might win;
Ny no fals sware sofre hem to make,	257	Nor no false oath suffer him to make,
For drede of there sowles sake;	258	For dread of their souls' sake,
Lest hyt wolde turne the craft to schame,	259	Lest it would turn the craft to
shame,		
And hymself to mechul blame.	260	And himself to very much blame.

Plures Constituciones

Plural constitutions.

At thys semble were poyntes y-ordeynt mo,	261	At this assembly were points
ordained more,		
Of grete lordys and maystrys also,	262	Of great lords and masters also.
That whose wol conne thys craft and com to astate,	263	That who will know
this craft and come to estate,		
He most love wel God, and holy churche algate,	264	He must love well God and
holy church always,		
And hys mayster also, that he ys wythe,	265	And his master also that he is
with,		
Whersever he go, yn fylde or frythe;	266	Wheresoever he go in field or
enclosed wood,		
And thy felows thou love also,	267	And thy fellows thou love also,

For that they craft wol that thou do. 268 For that thy craft will that thou do.

Secundus punctus. Second point.

The secunde poynt, as y zow say, 269 The second point as I you say,
That the mason worche apou the werk day, 270 That the mason work upon the
work day,
Also trwly, as he con or may, 271 As truly as he can or may,
To deserve hys huyre for the halyday, 272 To deserve his hire for the
holy-day,
And trwly to labrun on hys dede, 273 And truly to labour on his deed,
Wel deserve to have hys mede. 274 Well deserve to have his reward.

Tercius punctus. Third point.

The thrydde poynt most be severele, 275 The third point must be severely,
With the prentes knowe hyt wele, 276 With the 'prentice know it well,
Hys mayster conwsel he kepe and close, 277 His master's counsel he keep and
close,
And hys felows by hys goode purpose; 278 And his fellows by his good
purpose;
The prevetyse of the chamber telle he no man, 279 The privities of the
chamber tell he no man,
Ny yn the logge whatsoever they done; 280 Nor in the lodge whatsoever they
do;
Whatsoever thou heryst, or syste hem do, 281 Whatsoever thou hearest or seest
them do,
Tells hyt no mon, whersever thou go; 282 Tell it no man wheresoever you
go;
The counsel of halls, and zeke of bowre, 283 The counsel of hall, and even of
bower,
Kepe hyt wel to gret honowre, 284 Keep it well to great honour,
Lest hyt wolde torne thysel to blame, 285 Lest it would turn thysel to
blame,
And brynge the craft ynto gret schame. 286 And bring the craft into great
shame.

Quartus punctus. Fourth point.

The fowrthe poynt techyth us also, 287 The fourth point teacheth us also,
That no mon to hys craft be false; 288 That no man to his craft be false;
Errour he schal maynteine none 289 Error he shall maintain none
Azeynus the craft, but let hyt gone; 290 Against the craft, but let it
go;
Ny no pregedysse he schal not do 291 Nor no prejudice he shall no do
To hys mayster, ny hys felows also; 292 To his master, nor his fellow also;
And thatzth the prentes be under awe, 293 And though the prentice be under
awe,
Zet he wolde have the same lawe. 294 Yet he would have the same law.

Quintus punctus. Fifth point.

The fyfthe poynte ys, withoute nay, 295 The fifth point is without doubt,
That whenne the mason taketh hys pay 296 That when the mason taketh his
pay
Of the mayster, y-ordent to hym, 297 Of the master, ordained to him,

Ful mekely y-take so most hyt byn;	298	Full meekly taken so must it be;
Zet most the mayster, by good resone, reason,		299 Yet must the master by good
Wame hem lawfully byfore none,	300	Warn him lawfully before noon,
13.		
Zef he nulle okepye hem no more,	301	If he will not occupy him no more,
As he hath y-done ther by fore;	302	As he hath done there before;
Azeynus thys ordyr he may not stryve, strive,		303 Against this order he may no
Zef he thenke wel for to thryve.	304	If he think well for to thrive.

Sextus punctus.

Sixth point.

The syxte poynt ys ful zef to knowe, to know,	305	The sixth point is full given
Bothe to hye and eke to lowe,	306	Both to high and even low,
For such case hyt myzth befalle,	307	For such case it might befall;
Amonge the masonus, summe or alle,	308	Among the masons some or all,
Throwghe envye, or dedly hate,	309	Through envy or deadly hate,
Ofte aryseth ful gret debate.	310	Oft ariseth full great debate.
Thenne owyth the mason, zef that he may, may,		311 Then ought the mason if that he
Putte hem bothe under a day;	312	Put them both under a day;
But loveday zet schul they make none, none,		313 But loveday yet shall they make
Tyl that the werke day be clene a-gone; gone;		314 Till that the work-day be clean
Apon the holyday ze mowe wel take	315	Upon the holy-day you must well take
Leyser y-nowzgh loveday to make,	316	Leisure enough loveday to make,
Lest that hyt wolde the werke day	317	Lest that it would the work-day
Latte here werke for suche afray;	318	Hinder their work for such a fray;
To suche ende thenne that hem drawe, draw.		319 To such end then that you them
That they stonde wel yn Goddes lawe. law.		320 That they stand well in God's

Septimus punctus.

Seventh point.

The seventhe poynt he may wel mene,	321	The seventh point he may well mean,
Of wel longe lyf that God us lene,	322	Of well long life that God us lend,
As hyt dyscryeth wel opunly,	323	As it descrieth well openly,
Thou schal not by thy maysters wyf ly, wife lie,		324 Thou shalt not by thy master's
Ny by the felows, yn no maner wyse, wise,		325 Nor by thy fellows', in no manner
Lest the craft wolde the despyse;	326	Lest the craft would thee despise;
Ny by the felows concubyne,	327	Nor by thy fellows' concubine,
No more thou woldest he dede by thyne. thine.		328 No more thou wouldst he did by
The peyne thereof let hyt be ser,	329	The pain thereof let it be sure,
That he prentes lul seven zer,	330	That he be 'prentice full seven year,
Zef he forfeite yn eny of hem,	331	If he forfeit in any of them
So y-chasted thenne most he ben;	332	So chastised then must he be;
Ful mekele care myzth ther begynne,	333	Full much care might there begin,
For suche a fowle dedely synne.	334	For such a foul deadly sin.

Octavus punctus.

Eighth point.

The eghte poynt, he may be sure,	335	The eighth point, he may be sure,	
Zef thou hast y-taken any cure,	336	If thou hast taken any cure,	
Under thy mayster thou be trwe,	337	Under thy master thou be true,	
For that pynt thou schalt never arewe; rue;		338 For that point thou shalt never	
A trwe medyater thou most nede be	339	A true mediator thou must needs be	
To thy mayster, and thy felows fre;	340	To thy master, and thy fellows free;	
Do trwly alle that thou myzth,	341	Do truly all that thou might,	
To both partyes, and that ys good ryzth. good right.		342 To both parties, and that is	

Nonus punctus.

Ninth point.

The nynthe poynt we schul hym calle, call,		343 The ninth point we shall him	
That he be stwarde of oure halle,	344	That he be steward of our hall,	
Zef that ze ben yn chambur y-fere,	345	If that you be in chamber together,	
Uchon serve other, with mylde chere; cheer;		346 Each one serve other with mild	
Jentul felows, ze moste hyt knowe,	347	Gentle fellows, you must it know,	
For to be stwardus alle O rowe,	348	For to be stewards all in turn	
Weke after weke withoute dowte,	349	Week after week without doubt,	
Stwardus to ben so alle abowte,	350	Stewards to be so all in turn about,	
Lovelyche to serven uchon othur,	351	Amiably to serve each one other,	
As thawgh they were syster and brother; brother;		352 As though they were sister and	
Ther schal never won on other costage cost		353 There shall never one another	
Fre hymself to no vantage,	354	Free himself to no advantage,	
But every mon schal be lyche fre	355	But every man shall he equally free	
Yn that costage, so moste hyt be;	356	In that cost, so must it be;	
Loke that thou pay wele every mon algate, man always,	357	Look that thou pay well every	
That thou hast y-bowzht any vytayles ate, victuals eaten,	358	That thou hast bought any	
14.			
That no cravyng be y-mad to the,	359	That no craving be made to thee,	
Ny to thy felows, yn no degre,	360	Nor to thy fellows in no degree,	
To mon or to wommon, whether he be,	361	To man or to woman, whoever he be,	
Pay hem wel and trwly, for that wol we; that will we;		362 Pay them well and truly, for	
Therof on thy felow trwe record thou take, record thou take,		363 Therof on thy fellow true	
For that good pay as thou dost make, make,		364 For that good pay as thou dost	
Lest hyt wolde thy felowe schame,	365	Lest it would thy fellow shame,	
Any bryng thyself ynto gret blame.	366	And bring thyself into great blame.	
Zet good acowntes he most make	367	Yet good accounts he must make	
Of suche godes as he hath y-take,	368	Of such goods as he hath taken,	
Of thy felows goodes that thou hast spende, thou hast spent,		369 Of thy fellows' goods that	
Wher, and how, and to what ende;	370	Where and how and to what end;	
Suche acowntes thou most come to,	371	Such accounts thou must come to,	
Whenne thy felows wollen that thou do. do.		372 When thy fellows wish that thou	

Decimus punctus.

Tenth point.

The tenthe poynt presentyeth wel god lyf, 373	The tenth point presenteth well good life,
To lyven withoute care and stryf; 374	To live without care and strife;
For yf the mason lyve amysse, 375	For if the mason live amiss,
And yn hys werk be false, y-wysse, 376	And in his work be false I know,
And thorwz suche a false skewysasyon	377 And through such a false excuse
May sclawndren hys felows oute reson,	378 May slander his fellows without
reason,	
Throwz false sclawnder of suche fame	379 Through false slander of such
fame.	
May make the craft kachone blame. 380	May make the craft acquire blame.
Zef he do the craft suche vylany, 381	If he do the craft such villainy,
Do hym no favour thenne securly. 382	Do him no favour then securely,
Ny maynteine not hym yn wyked lyf, 383	Nor maintain not him in wicked life,
Lest hyt wolde turne to care and stryf;	384 Lest it would turn to care and
strife;	
But zet hym ze schul not delayme, 385	But yet him you shall not delay,
But that ze schullen hym constrayne,	386 Unless that you shall him
constrain,	
For to apere whersevor ze wylle, 387	For to appear wheresoever you will,
Whar that ze wolen, lowde, or style;	388 Where that you will, loud, or
still;	
To the nexte semble ze schul hym calle,	389 To the next assembly you him
call,	
To apere byfore hys felows alle, 390	To appear before his fellows all,
And but zef he wyl by fore hem pere,	391 And unless he will before them
appear,	
The crafte he moste nede forswere; 392	The craft he must need forswear;
He schal thenne be chasted after the lawe	393 He shall then be punished after
the law	
That was y-founded by olde dawe. 394	That was founded by old day.

Punctus undecimus

Eleventh point.

The eleventhe poynt ys of good dyscrecyoun,	395 The eleventh point is of
good discretion,	
As ze mowe knowe by good resoun; 396	As you must know by good reason;
A mason, and he thys craft wel con, 397	A mason, if he this craft well know,
That syzth hys fellow hewen on a ston,	398 That seeth his fellow hew on a
stone,	
And ys yn poynt to spylle that ston,	399 And is in point to spoil that
stone,	
Amende hyt sone, zef that thou con, 400	Amend it soon if that thou can,
And teche hym thenne hyt to amende, 401	And teach him then it to amend,
That the lordys werke be not y-schende,	402 That the lords work be not
spoiled,	
And teche hym esely hyt to amende, 403	And teach him easily it to amend,
With fayre wordes, that God the hath lende;	404 With fair words, that God
thee hath lent;	
For hys sake that sytte above, 405	For his sake that sit above,
With swete wordes noresche hym love. 406	406 With sweet words nourish his
love.	

Punctus duodecimus.

Twelfth point.

The twelthe poynt of gret ryolte,	407	The twelfth point is of great royalty,
Ther as the semble y-hole schal be,	408	There as the assembly held shall be,
Ther schul be maystrys and felows also,	409	There shall be masters and
fellows also,		
And other grete lordes mony mo;	410	And other great lords many more;
There schal be the scheref of that contre,	411	There shall be the sheriff
of that country,		
And also the meyr of that syte,	412	And also the mayor of that city,
Knyztes and ther schul be,	413	Knights and squires there shall be,
And other aldermen, as ze schul se;	414	And also aldermen, as you shall see;
Suche ordynance as they maken there,	415	Such ordinance as thy make
there,		
They schul maynte hyt hol y-fere	416	They shall maintain it all together
Azeynus that mon, whatsoever he be,	417	Against that man, whatsoever he be,
That longuth to the craft bothe fayr and free.	418	That belongeth to the
craft both fair and free.		
Zef he any stryf azeynus hem make,	419	If he any strife against them make,
15.		
Unto here warde he schal be take.	420	Into their custody he shall be taken.

Xiiiis punctus.

Thirteenth point.

The thretenth poynt ys to us ful luf.	421	The thirteenth point is to us
full lief,		
He schal swere never to be no thef,	422	He shall swear never to be no thief,
Ny soker hym yn hys fals craft,	423	Nor succour him in his false craft,
For no good that he hath byraft,	424	For no good that he hath bereft,
And thou mowe hyt knowe or syn,	425	And thou must it know or sin,
Nowther for hys good, ny for hys kyn.	426	Neither for his good, nor for
his kin.		

Xiiiiis punctus.

Fourteenth point.

The fowrtethe poynt ys fill good lawe	427	The fourteenth point is full
good law		
To hym that wold ben under awe;	428	To him that would be under awe;
A good trwe othe he most ther swere	429	A good true oath he must there swear
To hys mayster and hys felows that ben there;	430	To his master and his
fellows that be there;		
He most be stedefast and trwe also	431	He must be steadfast and true also
To alle thys ordynance, whersever he go,	432	To all this ordinance,
wheresoever he go,		
And to hys lyge lord the kynge,	433	And to his liege lord the king,
To be trwe to hym, over alle thyng	434	To be true to him over all
thing.		
And alle these poyntes hyr before	435	And all these points here before
To hem thou most nede by y-swore,	436	To them thou must need be sworn,
And alle schul swere the same othe	437	And all shall swear the same oath
Of the masonus, be they luf, ben they loght,	438	Of the masons, be they
lief be they loath,		
To alle these poyntes hyr byfore,	439	To all these points here before,
That hath ben ordeynt by ful good lore.	440	That hath been ordained by full
good lore.		
And they schul enquere every mon	441	And they shall enquire every man
On his party, as wyl as he con,	442	Of his party, as well as he can,

Zef any mon mowe be y-fownde gulty 443
Yn any of these poyntes spesyaly; 444
And whad he be, let hym be sowzht, 445
And to the semble let hym be browzht.
brought.

Quindecimus punctus.

The fifethe poynt ys of ful good lore, 447
lore,
For hem that schul ben ther y-swore, 448
sworn,
Suche ordynance at the semble wes layd 449
was laid
Of grete lordes and maystres byforesayd; 450
before said;
For the ilke that be unbuxom, y-wysse, 451
disobedient, I know,
Azeynus the ordynance that ther ysse 452
is,
Of these artyculus, that were y-moved there, 453
were moved there,
Of grete lordes and masonus al y-fere. 454
together,
And zef they ben y-proved opunly 455
Byfore that semble, by an by, 456

And for here gultes no mendys wol make, 457
will make,
Thenne most they nede the craft forsake; 458
forsake;
And so masonus craft they schul refuse, 459
refuse,
And swere hyt never more for to use. 460
But zef that they wol mendys make, 461
Azayn to the craft they schul never take; 462
never take;
And zef that they nul not do so, 463
The scheref schal come hem sone to. 464
And putte there bodyes yn deppe prison,
prison,
For the trespasse that they hav y-don, 466
done,
And take there goodes and there cattelle 467
cattle
Ynto the kynges bond, everyt delle, 468
And lete hem dwelle ther full style,
still,
Tyl hyt be oure lege kynges wylie. 470

Alta ordinacio artis gematriae.
geometry

They ordent ther a semble to be y-holde 471
to be hold,
Every zer, whersever they wolde, 472

If any man may be found guilty
In any of these points specially;
And who he be, let him be sought,
446 And to the assembly let him be

Fifteenth point.

The fifteenth point is full good
447
For them that shall be there
448
Such ordinance at the assembly
449
Of great lords and masters
450
For the same that be
451
Against the ordinance that there
452
Of these articles that
453
Of great lords and masons all
454
And if they be proved openly
455
Before that assembly, by and by,

And for their guilt's no amends
457
Then must they need the craft
458
And no masons craft they shall
459
And swear it never more to use.
460
But if that they will amends make,
461
Again to the craft they shall
462
And if that they will no do so,
463
The sheriff shall come them soon to,
464
And put their bodies in deep
465
For the trespass that they have
466
And take their goods and their
467
Into the kings hand, every part,
468
And let them dwell there full
469
Till it he our liege king's will.

Another ordinance of the art of

They ordained there an assembly
471
Every year, wheresoever they would,

To amende the defautes, zef any where fonde any were found	473	To amend the defaults, if any were found
Amonge the craft withynne the londe; 16.	474	Among the craft within the land;
Uche zer or thrydde zer hyt schuld be holde, should he held,	475	Each year or third year it should be held,
Yn every place whersever they wolde; would;	476	In every place weresoever they would;
Tyme and place most he ordeynt also, also,	477	Time and place must be ordained also,
Yn what place they schul semble to.	478	In what place they should assemble to,
Alle the men of craft thr they most ben, must be,	479	All the men of craft there they must be,
And other grete lordes, as ze mowe sen, must see,	480	And other great lords, as you must see,
To mende the fautes that be ther y-spoke, spoken,	481	To mend the faults the he there spoken,
Zef that eny of hem be thenne y-broke, broken.	482	If that any of them be then broken.
Ther they schullen ben alle y-swore,	483	There they shall be all sworn,
That longuth to thys craftes lore,	484	That belongeth to this crafts lore,
To kepe these statutes everychon,	485	To keep their statutes every one
That ben y-ordeynt by kynge Athelston; Althelstane;	486	That were ordained by King
These statutes that y have hyr y-fonde found	487	These statutes that I have here found
Y chulle they ben holde throzh my londe, land,	488	I ordain they be held through my land,
For the worsche of my rygolte,	489	For the worship of my royalty,
That y have by my dygnyte.	490	That I have by my dignity.
Also at every semble that ze holde,	491	Also at every assembly that you hold,
That ze come to zowre lyge kyng bolde, bold,	492	That you come to your liege king bold,
Bysechyng hym of hys bye grace,	493	Beseeching him of his high grace,
To stond with zow yn every place,	494	To stand with you in every place,
To conferme the statutes of kynge Athelston, King Atbelstane,	495	To confirm the statutes of King Atbelstane,
That he ordeydnt to thys craft by good reson. craft by good reason.	496	That he ordained to this craft by good reason.

Ars quatuor coronatorum.
ones.

The art of the four crowned
ones.

Pray we now to God almyzbt,	497	Pray we now to God almighty,
And to hys moder Mary bryzht,	498	And to his mother Mary bright,
That we mowe keepe these artyculus here, here,	499	That we may keep these articles here,
And these poynts wel al y-fere,	500	And these points well all together,
As dede these holy martyres fowre,	501	As did these holy martyrs four,
That yn thys craft were of gret honoure; honour;	502	That in this craft were of great honour;
They were as gode masonus as on erthe schul go, as on earth shall go,	503	They were as good masons as on earth shall go,
Gravers and ymage-makers they were also. were also.	504	Gravers and image-makers they were also.
For they were werkmen of the beste,	505	For they were workmen of the best,

The emperour hade to them gret luste; liking;	506	The emperor had to them great liking;
He wyled of them a ymage to make, That mowzh be worsched for his sake; sake;	507 508	He willed of them an image to make That might be worshipped for his sake;
Susch mawmetys he hade yn hys dawe, To turne the pepul from Crystus lawe. law.	509 510	Such monuments he had in his day, To turn the people from Christ's law.
But they were stedefast yn Crystes lay, Christ's law, And to ther craft, withouten nay;	511 512	But they were steadfast in Christ's law, And to their craft without doubt;
They loved wel God and alle hys lore, lore, And weren yn hys serves ever more.	513 514	They loved well God and all his lore, And were in his service ever more.
Trwe men they were yn that dawe, And lyved wel yn Goddus lawe;	515 516	True men they were in that day, And lived well in God's law;
They thozght no mawmetys for to make, make,	517	They thought no monuments for to make,
For no good that they myzth take, To levyn on that mawmetys for there God, their God, They wolde do so, thawz he were wod;	518 519 520	For no good that they might take, To believe on that monument for their God, They would not do so, though he was furious;
For they wolde not forsake ther trw fay, An beyleve on hys falsse lay.	521 522	For they would not forsake their true faith, And believe on his false law,
The emperour let take them sone anone, anon, And putte them ynto a dep presone;	523 524	The emperor let take them soon anon, And put them in a deep prison;
The sarre he penest them yn that plase, in that place, The more joye wes to them of Cristus grace. of Christ's grace,	525 526	The more sorely he punished them in that place, The more joy was to them of Christ's grace,
Thenne when he sye no nother won,	527	Then when he saw no other one,
To dethe he lette them thenne gon; Whose wol of here lyf zet mor knowe By the bok he may kyt schowe,	528 529 530	To death he let them then go; Whose will of their life yet more know By the book he might it show
In the legent of scanctorum, The names of quatour coronatorum. Here fest wol be, withoute nay,	531 532	In legend of holy ones, The names of the four-crowned ones.
After Alle Halwen the eyght day. Ze mow here as y do rede,	533 534 535	Their feast will be without doubt, After Hall ow-e 'en eighth day. You may hear as I do read,
That mony zeres after, for gret drede dread	536	That many years after, for great dread
17.		
That Noees flod wes alle y-ronne, The tower of Babyloyne was begonne, Also playne werke of lyme and ston, As any mon schulde loke uppon;	537 538 539 540	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 brod hyt was begonne, Seven myle the hezghte schadweth the sonne. shadoweth the sun.	541 542	So long and broad it was begun, Seven miles the height shadoweth the sun.
King Nabogodonosor let hyt make,	543	King Nebuchadnezzar let it make

To gret strenthe for monus sake, 544 To great strength for man's sake,
 Thazgh suche a flod azayne schulde come, 545 Though such a flood again should
 come,
 Over the werke hyt schulde not nome; 546 Over the work it should not
 take;

For they hadde so hy pride, with stronge bost, 547 For they had so high
 pride, with strong boast
 Alle that werke therfore was y-lost; 548 All that work therefore was
 lost;
 An angele smot them so with dyveres speche, 549 An angel smote them so
 with divers speech,
 That never won wyste what other schuld reche. 550 That never one knew what
 the other should tell.
 Mony eres after, the goode clerk Eucllyde 551 Many years after, the good clerk
 Euclid
 Tazghte the craft of gemetre wonder wyde, 552 Taught the craft of geometry
 full wonder wide,
 So he ded that tyme other also, 553 So he did that other time also,
 Of dyvers craftes mony mo. 554 Of divers crafts many more.
 Throzgh hye grace of Crist yn heven, 555 Through high grace of Christ in
 heven,
 He commensed yn the syens seven; 556 He commenced in the sciences seven;

Gramatica ys the furste syens y-wysse, 557 So Grammar is the first science
 I know,
 Dialetica the secunde, so have y blysse, 558 Dialect the second, so I have I
 bliss,
 Rethorica the thrydde, withoute nay, 559 Rhetoric the third without
 doubt,
 Musica ys the fowrth, as y zow say, 560 Music is the fourth, as I you say,
 Astromia ys the V, by my snowte, 561 Astronomy is the fifth, by my snout,
 Arsmetica the VI, withoute dowte 562 Arithmetic the sixth, without doubt,
 Gemetria the seventh maketh an ende, 563 Geometry the seventh maketh an
 end,
 For he ys bothe make and hende, 564 For he is both meek and courteous,
 Gramer forsothe ys the rote, 565 Grammar forsooth is the root,
 Whose wyl lurne on the hoke; 566 Whoever will learn on the book;

But art passeth yn hys degre, 567 But art passeth in his degree,
 As the fryte doth the rote of the tre; 568 As the fruit doth the root of
 the tree;
 Rethoryk metryth with orne speche amonge, 569 Rhetoric measureth with ornate
 speech among,
 And musyke hyt ys a swete song; 570 And music it is a sweet song;
 Astronomy nombreth, my dere brother, 571 Astronomy numbereth, my dear
 brother,
 Arsmetyk scheweth won thyng that ys another, 572 Arithmetic sheweth one
 thing that is another,
 Gemetre the seventh syens hyt ysse, 573 Geometry the seventh science it is,
 That con deperte falshed from trewth y-wys. 574 That can separate
 falsehood from truth I know
 These bene the syens seven, 575 These be the sciences seven,
 Whose useh hem wel, he may han heven. 576 Who useh them well he may have
 heven.
 Now dere chyidren, by zowre wytte, 577 Now dear children by your wit,
 Pride and covetyse that ze leven, hytte, 578 Pride and covetousness that you

leave it, And taketh hede to goode dyscrecyon, discretion, And to good norter, whersever ze com. you come.	579	And taketh heed to good
	580	And to good nurture wheresoever
Now y pray zow take good hede, For thys ze most kenne nede, But much more ze moste wyten, Thenne ze fynden hyr y-wryten. Zef the fayle therto wytte, Pray to God to send the hytte; For Crist hymself, he techet ous That holy churche ys Goddes hous, That ys y-mad for nothyng ellus But for to pray yn, as the bok tellus; tells us;	581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589	Now I pray you take good heed For this you must know needs, But much more you must know Than you find here written. If thee fail therto wit, Pray to God to send thee it; For Christ himself, he teacheth us That holy church is God's house, That is made for nothing else But for to pray in, as the book tells us;
Ther the pepul schal gedur ynne, To pray and wepe for there synne. Loke thou come not to church late, For to speke harlotrey by the gate; Thenne to church when thou dost fare, fare, Have yn thy mynde ever mare To worschepe thy lord God bothe day and nyzth, both day and night, With all thy wyttes, and eke thy myzth. might. To the church dore when thou dost come, dost come Of that holy water ther sum thow nome, thou take,	591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600	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 gather in, To worship thy lord God With all thy wits and even thy might. To the church door when thou dost come Of that holy water there some take,
18. For every drope thou felust ther Qwenchet a venyal synne, be thou ser. sure. But furst thou most do down thy bode, hood, For hyse love that dyed on the rode. rood. Into the church when thou dost gon, go, Pulle uppe thy herte to Crist, anon; anon; Uppon the rode thou loke uppe then, And knele down fayre on bothe thy knen; knees, Then pray to hym so hyr to worche, After the lawe of holy church,	601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610	For every drop thou feellest there Quencheth a venial sin, be thou sure. But first thou must do down thy bode, For his love that died on the rood. Into the church when thou dost go Pull up thy heart to Christ, Upon the rood thou look up then, And kneel down fair upon thy knees, Then pray to him so here to work, After the law of holy church,
For to kepe the comandementes ten, That God zaf to alle men; And pray to hym with mylde steven To kepe the from the synnes seven, That thou hyr mowe, yn thy lyve,	611 612 613 614 615	For to keep the commandments ten, That God gave to all men; And pray to him with mild voice To keep thee from the sins seven, That thou here may, in this life,

Kepe the wel from care and stryve,	616	Keep thee well from care and strife;
Forthermore he grante the grace,	617	Furthermore he grant thee grace,
In heven blysse to hav a place.	618	In heaven's bliss to have a place.
In holy churche lef nyse wordes	619	In holy church leave trifling words
Of lewed speche, and fowle bordes,	620	Of lewd speech and foul jests,
And putte away alle vanyte,	621	And put away all vanity,
And say thy pater noster and thyn ave;	622	And say thy pater noster and
thine ave;		
Loke also thou make no here,	623	Look also that thou make no noise,
But ay to be yn thy prayere;	624	But always to be in thy prayer;
Zef thou wolt not thyselve pray,	625	If thou wilt not thyself pray,
Latte non other mon by no way.	626	Hinder no other man by no way.
In that place nowther sytte ny stonde,	627	In that place neither sit nor
stand,		
But knele fayre down on the gronde,	628	But kneel fair down on the ground,
And, when the Gospel me rede schal,	629	And when the Gospel me read shall,
Fayre thou stonde up fro the wal,	630	Fairly thou stand up from the wall,
And blesse the fayre, zef that thou conne,	631	And bless the fare if that
thou can,		
When gloria tibi is begonne;	632	When gloria tibi is begun;
And when the gospel ys y-done,	633	And when the gospel is done,
Azayn thou myzth knele adown;	634	Again thou might kneel down,
On bothe thy knen down thou falle,	635	On both knees down thou fall,
For hyse love that bowzht us alle;	636	For his love that bought us all;
And when thou herest the belle ryng	637	And when thou hearest the bell
ring		
To that holy sakerynge,	638	To that holy sacrament,
Knele ze most, bothe zyng	639	Kneel you must both young and
and olde,		
And bothe zor hondes fayr upholde,	640	And both your hands fair uphold,
And say thenne yn thys manere,	641	And say then in this manner,
Fayr and softe, with oute here;	642	Fair and soft without noise;
"Jhesu Lord, welcom thou be,	643	"Jesu Lord welcome thou be,
Yn forme of bred, as y the se.	644	In form of bread as I thee see,
Now Jhesu, for thyn holy name,	645	Now Jesu for thine holy name,
Schulde me from synne and schame,	646	Shield me from sin and shame;
Schryff and hosel thou grant me bo,	647	Shrift and Eucharist thou grand me
both,		
Zer that y schal hennus go,	648	Ere that I shall hence go,
And vey contrycyon of my synne,	649	And very contrition for my sin,
That y never, Lord, dye thereynne;	650	That I never, Lord, die therein;
And, as thou were of a mayde y-bore,	651	And as thou were of maid born,
Sofre me never to be y-lore;	652	Suffer me never to be lost;
But when y schal hennus wende,	653	But when I shall hence wend,
Grante me the blysse withoute ende;	654	Grant me the bliss without end;
Amen! amen! so mot hyt be!	655	Amen! Amen! so mote it be!
Now, swete lady, pray for me."	656	Now sweet lady pray for me."
Thus thou myzht say, or sum other thyng,	657	Thus thou might say, or some
other thing,		
When thou knelust at the sakerynge.	658	When thou kneelest at the sacrament.
For covetyse after good, spare thou nought	659	For covetousness after
good, spare thou not		
To worschepe hym that alle hath wrought;	660	To worship him that all hath

wrought;

For glad may a mon that day ben,	661	For glad may a man that day be,
That onus yn the day may hym sen;	662	That once in the day may him see;
Hyt ys so muche worthe, withoute nay,		663 It is so much worth, without
doubt,		
The vertu therof no mon telle may;	664	The virtue thereof no man tell may;
But so meche good doth that syht,	665	But so much good doth that sight,
19.		
As seynt Austyn telluth ful ryht,	666	That Saint Austin telleth full right,
That day thou syst Goddus body,	667	That day thou seest God's body,
Thou schalt have these ful securly;-		668 Thou shalt have these full
securely:-		

Mete and drynke at thy nede,	669	Meet and drink at thy need,
Non that day schal the gnedes;	670	None that day shalt thou lack;
Ydul othes, an wordens bo,	671	Idle oaths and words both,
God forzeveth the also;	672	God forgiveth thee also;
Soden deth that ylke day,	673	Sudden death that same day
The dar not drede by no way;	674	Thee dare not dread by no way;
Also that day, y the plyht,	675	Also that day, I thee plight,
Thou schalt not lese thy eye syht;	676	Thou shalt not lose thy eye sight;
And eche fote that thou gost then,	677	And each foot that thou goest then,
That holy syht for to sen,	678	That holy sight for to see,
They schul be told to stonde yn stede,	679	They shall be told to stand
instead,		
When thou hast therto gret nede;	680	When thou hast thereto great need;

That messongere, the angele Gabryelle,		681 That messenger the angel
Gabriel,		
Wol kepe hem to the ful welle.	682	Will keep them to thee full well.
From thys mater now y may passe,	683	From this matter now I may pass,
To telle mo medys of the masse:	684	To tell more benefits of the mass:
To churche come zet, zef thou may,	685	To church come yet, if thou may,
And here thy masse uche day;	686	And hear the mass each day;
Zef thou mowe not come to churche,	687	If thou may not come to church,
Wher that ever thou doste worche,	688	Where that ever thou dost work,
When thou herest to masse knylle,	689	When thou hearest the mass toll,
Pray to God with herte stylle,	690	Pray to God with heart still,

To zeve the part of that servyse,	691	To give thee part of that service,
That yn churche ther don yse.	692	That in church there done is.
Forthermore zet, y wol zow preche	693	Furthermore yet, I will you preach
To zowre felows, hyt for to teche,	694	To your fellows, it for to teach,
When thou comest byfore a lorde,	695	When thou comest before a lord,
Yn halle, yn bowre, or at the borde,	696	In hall, in bower, or at the
board,		
Hod or cappe that thou of do,	697	Hood or cap that thou off do,
Zer thou come hym auynge to;	698	Ere thou come him entirely to;
Twyes or thryes, without dowte,	699	Twice or thrice, without doubt,
To that lord thou moste lowte;	700	To that lord thou must bow;

With thy ryzth kne let hyt be do,	701	With thy right knee let it be done,
Thyn owne worschepe thou save so.	702	Thine own worship thou save so.
Holde of thy cappe, and hod also,	703	Hold off thy cap and hood also,
Tyl thou have leve hyt on to do.	704	Till thou have leave it on to put.
Al the whyle thou spekest with hym,	705	All the time thou speakest with him,
Fayre and lovelyche bere up thy chyn;	706	Fair and amiably hold up thy

chin;

So, after the norter of the boke, 707 So after the nurture of the book,
Yn hys face lovely thou loke. 708 In his face kindly thou look.
Fot and hond, thou kepe ful styлле 709 Foot and hand thou keep full still,
From clawynge and tryppyng, ys sckylle; 710 For clawing and tripping, is
skill;

Frm spyttng and snyftyng kepe the also 711 From spittind and sniffing keep
the also

By privy avoydans let hyt go. 712 By private expulsion let it go,
And zef that thou be wyse and felle, 713 And if that thou he wise and
discrete,
Thou hast gret nede to governe the welle. 714 Thou has great .ieed to govern
thee well.
Ynto the halle when thou dost wende, 715 Into the hall when thou dost
wend,
Amonges the genteles, good and hende, 716 Amongst the gentles, good and
courteous,
Presume not to hye for nothyng, 717 Presume not too high for nothing,
For thyn hye blod, ny thy connyng, 718 For thine high blood, nor thy cunning,
Nowther to sytte, ny to lene, 719 Neither to sit nor to lean,
That ys norther good and clene. 720 That is nurture good and clean.

Let not thy cowntenans therfore abate, 721 Let not thy countenance therefor
abate,
Forsothe, good norter wol save thy state. 722 Forsooth good nurture will save
thy state.

Fader and moder, whatsoever they be, 723 Father and mother, whatsoever they be,
Wel ys the chyld that wel may the, 724 Well is the child that well may thee,
Yn halle, yn chamber, wher thou dost gon; 725 In hall, in chamber, where thou
dost go;

Gode maners maken a mon. 726 Good manners make a man.
To the nexte degre loke wysly, 727 To the next degree look wisely,
To do hem reverans by and by; 728 To do them reverence by and by;
Do hem zet no reverans al o-rowe, 729 Do them yet no reverence all in turn,
20.

But zef that thou do hem know. 730 Unless that thou do them know.
To the mete when thou art y-sette, 731 To the meat when thou art set,
Fayre and onestelyche thou ete hytte; 732 Fair and honestly thou eat it;
Fyrst loke that thyn honden be clene, 733 First look that thine hands be
clean,
And that thy knyf be scharpe and kene; 734 And that thy knife be sharp and
keen,
And kette thy bred al at thy mete, 735 And cut thy bread all at thy meat,
Ryzth as hyt may be ther y-ete. 736 Right as it may be there eaten,
Zef thou sytte by a worththyur mon. 737 If thou sit by a worthier man,
Then thy selven thou art won, 738 Then thy self thou art one,
Sofre hym fyrst to toyche the mete, 739 Suffer him first to touch the meat,
Zer thyselv to hyt reche. 740 Ere thyselv to it reach.

To the fayrest mossel thou myzht not strike, 741 To the fairest morsel thou
might not strike,

Thaght that thou do hyt wel lyke; 742 Though that thou do it well like;
Kepe thyn hondes, fayr and wel, 743 Keep thine hands fair and well,
From fowle smogynge of thy towel; 744 From foul smudging of thy towel;
Theron thou schalt not thy nese snyte, 745 Thereon thou shalt not thy nose
blow,

Ny at the mete thy tothe thou pyke; 746 Nor at the meat thy tooth thou pick;
 To depe yn the coppe thou myzght not synke, 747 Too deep in cup thou might
 not sink,
 Thazgh thou have good wyl to drynke, 748 Though thou have good will to
 drink,
 Lest thyn enyn wolde wattryn therby- 749 Lest thine eyes would water
 thereby-
 Then were hyt no curtesy 750 Then were it no courtesy.

Loke yn thy mowth ther be no mete, 751 Look in thy mouth there be no meat,
 When thou begynnyst to drynke or speke. 752 When thou begins to drink or
 speak.
 When thou syst any mon drynkiynge, 753 When thou seest any man drinking,
 That taketh hed to thy carpynge, 754 That taketh heed to thy speech,
 Sone anonn thou sese thy tale, 755 Soon anaon thou cease thy tale,
 Whether he drynke wyn other ale. 756 Whether he drink wine or ale,
 Loke also thou scorne no mon, 757 Look also thou scorn no man,
 Yn what degre thou syst hym gon; 758 In what degree thou seest him gone;
 Ny thou schalt no mon deprave, 759 Nor thou shalt no man deprave,
 Zef thou wolt thy worschepe save; 760 If thou wilt thy worship save;

For suche worde myzht ther outberste, 761 For such word might there
 outburst.
 That myzht make the sytte yn evel reste, 762 That might make thee sit in evil
 rest.
 Close thy honde yn thy fyste, 763 Close thy hand in thy fist,
 And kepe the wel from "had-y-wyste." 764 And keep thee well from "had I
 known."
 Yn chamber amonge the ladyes bryght, 765 In chamber, among the ladies
 bright,
 Holde thy tonge and spende thy syght; 766 Hold thy tongue and spend thy
 sight;
 Lawze thou not with no gret cry, 767 Laugh thou not with no great cry,
 Ny make no ragynge with rybody. 768 Nor make no lewd sport and ribaldry.
 Play thou not buyt with thy peres, 769 Play thou not but with thy peers,
 Ny tel thou not al that thou heres; 770 Nor tell thou not all that thou hears;
 Dyskever thou not thyn owne dede, 771 Discover thou not thine own deed,
 For no merthe, ny for no mede; 772 For no mirth, nor for no reward;
 With fayr speche thou myght have the wylie, 773 With fair speech thou
 might have thy will,
 With hyt thou myght thy selven spyle, 774 With it thou might thy self
 spoil.

When thou metyst a worthy mon, 775 When thou meetest a worthy man,
 Cappe and hod thou holle no on; 776 Cap and hood thou hold not on;
 Yn church, yn chepyns, or yn the gate, 777 In church, in market, or in the
 gate,
 Do hym reverans after hys state. 778 Do him reverence after his
 state.
 Zef thou gost with a worthy or mon 779 If thou goest with a worthier man
 Then thyselven thou art won, 780 Then thyself thou art one,
 Let thy forther schulder sewe hys backe, 781 Let thy foremost shoulder follow
 his back,
 For that ys norter withoute lacke; 782 For that is nurture without lack;
 When he doth speke, holte the styлле, 783 When he doth speak, hold thee
 still,

When he hath don, sey for thy wylie,		784	When he hath done, say for thy
will,			
Yn thy speche that thou be felle,	785		In thy speech that thou be discreet,
And what thou sayst avyse the welle;		786	And what thou sayest consider
thee well;			
But byref thou not hym hys tale,	787		But deprive thou not him his tale,
Nowther at the wyn, ny at the ale.	788		Neither at the wine nor at the ale.
Cryst them of hys hye grace,	789		Christ then of his high grace,
Zeve sow both wytte and space,		790	Save you both wit and space,
We thys boke to conne and rede,		791	Well this book to know and read,
Heven to have for zowre mede,	792		Heaven to have for your reward.
Amen! amen! so mot hyt be!	793		Amen! Amen! so mote it be!
Say we so alle per charyte.	794		So say we all for charity.