

"Pythagorian mysteries;" no doubt that Pythagoras was the most profound scholar of his time.

These Colleges of Constructors, or a detachment therefrom, always accompanied the Roman legions in their conquests, and were engaged in building roads, bridges, entrenched camps, monuments, and the like.

Rome extended her conquests through France and into England, and thus through these Colleges of Constructors the Masonic art was planted in Britain; architecture soon took root and steadily gained ground in the Island.

About the year A. D. 287, the Roman Admiral, Carautius, while on the coast of Belgium, severed his allegiance from Rome, sailed across to England and declared himself Emperor of Britian. He established his seat of empire at Verulam, an ancient city some twenty-five miles from the present city of London; he appointed Albanus, a Knight and architect, to be steward of his household and to preside over the Building Colleges, to whom he granted a charter, confirming to the Masonic corporations all the ancient privileges enjoyed by the Roman Colleges of Constructors. These corporations were now composed chiefly of native Britons.

After the death of Carautius, Britain was again ruled by Rome.

This Albanus adopted Christianity and was beheaded for promulgating the doctrine A. D. 303, in the tenth and last Christian persecution by the Romans under the Emperor Diocletian. The next Emperor, Constantine, is said to have favored Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire in the year 306. The first of these persecutions of Christians, "or say massacres," was about the year 64, when the Apostle Paul was put to death. In speaking now of Albanus, his memory is revered as St. Alban, the first Christian martyr in Britain; and the old city of Verulam is now known as St. Albans.

During the two first centuries of the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy, Masonry made but little progress, although some valuable manuscripts of events during that period are preserved. Tlien about the latter part of the sixth century, under Pope Gregory, Austin directed the Masonic work in England,—built Canterbury Cathedral A. D. 600, St. Paul's of London, 604, and several others.

During the reign of King Alfred, from 872, the Masonic craft prospered, and so continued under his son Edward, and grandson Athelstan, the first anointed King of England, who had the Bible translated into the Saxon tongue in 930.

The charter of St. Albans, before referred to, is the first *bona fide* record of the organization of the fraternity in Britain; this Charter was the ground-work of the Charter of York by King Athelstan in 926. This Charter of York, otherwise called the Gothic Constitutions, embodies all the fundamental principles of Freemasonry. Dr. Anderson's first Book of Constitutions, promulgated in 1723, takes this Charter as the basis of our present system.

This document was framed by the leading members of the craft, and sent to the king for his approval, and assuring the king of their fealty. The king required the services of these builders to re-build the convents, churches, monasteries, &c., which had previously been burned by the Danes, and sent his brother Edwin, as his commissioner, to carry the arrangement into effect. The Lodges of Builders throughout the kingdom were assembled at York; Edwin presided, and proclaimed this charter, which contains the basis of all our Masonic Constitutions and the charges of a Freemason.

The forms of recognition in those days consisted merely of signs, tokens, and words, with an OB. The ceremonies were brief. The lodges were not permanently located; but like the