

## The Torgau Ordinances of 1462

<http://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/1462-torgau-ordinances.pdf>

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Concerning the worshipful Masters of Stonemasons of the Craft, the Wardens, and the Fellows of the Craft

All Articles and Statutes as they are written in the Book; how each and every one in his conduct and station in the craft shall demean himself, both here in Zwickau and elsewhere in all lands; as in the Book, so stands hereafter written, each article separately.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in the name of the blessed Virgin Mary, and in honour of the four crowned martyrs, we workmasters of the stonemasons make known: To all princes and lords, cities and burgers, and also peasants, of whatsoever rank they be, of the Church or of the world, that the several workmasters in the Oberland have assembled on two days at Regenspurgk and at Strasburgk, and have beheld such great evil and disorders in the work, and failings done in all lands of master, wardens, and fellows, therefore have they carefully sent into this land a book of the Ordinances and rules, and do exhort us therein, by the holy oath which we have sworn unto masonry, to accept and confirm these Ordinances in this land according to usage, as this Book clearly points out. This have we done, workmasters in all these lands of Meydeburgk and Halberstat, Hildeszlheim and Mullburgk and Merseburgk, and at Meihssen, Voitlandt, Duringen, Hartzlandt, the majority of us being present together, or our wardens on our part having full power, on the two days of St Bartholomew and St Michael at Torgau; as is usually written, after the birth of our dear Lord Christ, and in the one thousand four hundred and sixty-second year, have we confirmed the regulations of the Book and the contents thereof, and are at one therewith, and thereto have sworn by the saints.

These Articles are to be maintained in all lands, far and wide, be they of the Church or of the world, and we have enjoined upon all judges and overmasters to rule by such and to hold it in high esteem according to the usages and necessities of the land, and to keep watch over all that concerns masonry and buildings, and concerns not states nor cities; and to adjudge penalties in all matters relating to masonry; and it shall be done with consent of the lords who are the inheritors of the land, and to help the right. Therefore have we drawn up divers articles from the Book for the general good, and the Book shall remain in high honour in such places as we shall deposit it every year; and there will we hear once a year if any offence have been committed against master builders or fellows, that such be adjudged and atoned, and also if the lords of states, be they spiritual or temporal, have any cause of complaint as regards their buildings; and they shall submit them to such craftsmen as are chosen to be chief masters [literally Overmaster] in writing or by speech, and they shall be heard according to builders' usage. Therefore shall the overmasters that are there, and have taken the oath and have summoned them on the yearly day, whenever it be, give them hearing as is customary, for the sake of the building; and if the lords suffer any loss, make good such loss according to the judgment of the masters; but if he come not and answer not for himself, so shall he be proscribed and lay down all rule over his fellows, and none shall esteem or hold him true, nor shall he be true man.

And we before-mentioned masters, wardens, and fellows have taken and drawn up from the Book for brevity, divers Ordinances that are obligatory on all workmasters in authority and fellows; that the real Book remain intact, and be only read there when we hold our yearly assembly.

And when the lords will not have it so, then shall it not be so; and what the lords will not have, that shall be left undone of all such articles as are not of necessity and the masters in such lands are not bound to enforce, according to their oath, such articles as contents of the Book of the craft; to declare what shall be done for the service of God, and also for sustenance, this is not of necessity to write now; every master knows this well who has formerly heard it,

And all these articles have been drawn up from the letter of the ancient lodge rights, that were instituted by the holy worthy crowned martyrs, by name Claudius, and Christorius, and Significamus, to the honour and praise of the Holy Trinity and Mary the Queen of Heaven.

1. Therefore have we made divers rules and statutes with the help of God. And every master shall on all acknowledged fasts cause four masses to be said. And on St Peter's Day, when he was raised at Antioch, shall he also cause four masses to be said. And the first mass of the Holy Trinity, the other of our dear Lady, the third of the four crowned martyrs, the fourth for all who have died in the guild, and for all who help our craft and labour therein.
2. And the other masters shall also cause four masses to be said every feast of our Lady, one for each of the aforesaid souls, and the money wherewith he pays for the mass, the same money shall he take from the box, and the remainder shall he give to the craft box. And for God's service shall every master of a work, be it great or small, give

on each fast of our Lady one old groat. And every fellow shall give every week to the box one penny for God's service.

3. And furthermore, no master shall undertake a work unless he have proved himself such to the craft, that the craftsmen be protected.

4. And should there appear a master that has not previously worked as master, then shall he have twain proven masters to speak for him, that he may be placed at the head of the work, and thus shall he be accepted.

5. And where it is intended to raise new and stately buildings, then shall the lords of the work choose them a master whomsoever they will, and are enjoined to take two or four workmasters, and shall inquire of them on their oath which they have sworn to the guild whether the master be truly able to undertake the work.

6. For, if lords or cities appoint one who has not formerly undertaken such work, for stately buildings and take not craftsmen, and loss occur thereby, thereof shall nor master nor fellows judge, neither punish.

7. And no master shall undertake a work unless he be able to accomplish it; and should it be that he fail herein, it is for the lords of the work to restrain him, and also for us craftsmen. And that must he rue with one and twenty pounds of wax, and to the lord must he make good the loss.

8. And every one shall keep his time according to the ancient traditionary usages of the land; if he do that he is free, and even if he do it not with counsel, according to the usages of the land and the craft,

9. And no master shall diminish or reduce the pay.

10. And every master shall be upright in all things. He shall incite neither warden nor fellow nor apprentice to evil, nor to aught whence harm may arise.

11. And every master shall keep his lodge free of all strife, yea, his lodge shall he keep pure as the seat of justice.

12. And no master shall bear false witness in his lodge, neither shall he defile it in any manner.

13. Therefore shall no master allow a harlot to enter his lodge, but if any one have aught to commune with her he shall depart from the place of labour so far as one may cast a gavel.

14. If other masters learn thereof, they shall fine him for each offence in five pounds of wax.

15. Natheless, it is not for the fellows to fine any master, but they are to withdraw from him and forbid other craftsmen his lodge, so that none consort with him, until he shall have been fined.

16. Whatsoever master shall rob any place, or take aught from any place of labour whereby any one suffer loss, or if he be murderer or outlaw, him shall ye altogether thrust from out the guild of the craft and suffer him in naught.

17. Whatsoever master shall summon another master before the law, or suffer him to be so done by, or do him evil or speak ill of him, he is empty of all honour, and fit for neither fellow nor master.

18. A master shall appoint his warden, master and warden being both present; and he shall appoint no warden unless he be able thereto, so that the craftsmen and he be supplied. He shall impress him with the wardenship, and receive his oath to the saints on square and gauge to prevent harm to the building or the master.

19. So shall neither master nor his wardens be illegally set over the fellows.

20. When a master has set a warden, the fellows shall swear to be obedient unto him as unto the master, and the warden shall pledge master and fellows.

21. And no master shall accept any fee from a warden or fellow on account of his requirements, nor any offering; for if he be not able to earn his wages then shall he be discharged on the Saturday.

22. No master shall out of goodwill accept any apprentice before he have served his time and won his right; that is not in the master's power to the extent of one week.

23. And the master shall appoint each week a treasurer, who shall make all payments, and account each week to the new treasurer, and shall be answerable to him [the master] for the contents of the box.

24. And the master has power, if he so will, to rest in the lodge at vesper tide.

25. And if a master or fellow come free of the craft or trade, and demand a mark of a workmaster, to him shall he grant his wish, and he shall give for the service of God that which shall be adjudged of master and fellows. And to master and fellows shall he pledge the mark doubly.

26. No master shall withhold his mark from his apprentice for a further space than xiiij. days, unless it be that the apprentice has wasted his master's time, he shall then first do his behest before that and the feast.

27. And no master shall show any reluctance to pledge his apprentice's mark, and the several clericals whom he may bid thereto, with a penny wheaten bread of xv. gr., a loaf of xv. gr., meat, and two stoups of wine; and the apprentice shall not bid more than x. fellows, and if he bid more then shall he buy more, that the master suffer not thereby.
28. The master shall knock with three blows, the warden with two consecutively, and one for announcements at morning, noon, and eve, as is the old usage of the land.
29. The master may appoint an apprentice who serves for knowledge to the office of warden, if he be able to maintain it, in order that the building suffer not,
30. The master may lend his apprentice a mark to travel during his apprenticeship, if the master have no employment, and must let him travel.
31. No master shall allow his apprentice to pledge his mark, unless he have served his time.
32. No master shall lay snares for another and entice away his apprentice, so reads the letter.
33. No master shall employ any one who has brought himself to shame or dishonour either by word or deed; he is worse than a hound; him shall the master set down as void of honour, likewise also the fellows.
34. And no master or warden shall be held of good report who borrows and remains owing and is unwilling to pay. If this be brought home to him, he shall be warned and told to make it good by a certain time, and if he do this not, and do it not with the approval of him to whom he is indebted, then shall he be debarred from all employment until he comply with the wish of his creditor.
35. Also no master shall defraud or beslander the other, nor compete for his work unless it be that he have deserted it, or given it up, or permitted or prayed him so to do; so may he do it without fear. But should he do as aforesaid, the other masters shall cast him out.
36. Shame or dishonour one master the other by word or deed, and bring it not home to him, he shall be cast from out the craft.
37. Whatsoever master shall slight another's work, and is himself not able thereto, him shall ye proscribe.
38. And no master shall employ any fellow who has slandered another or doeth evil, and consorts with public women, and who in the hostelries or houses where they work, speaketh unchastely with maids or matrons, or is incontinent therein, who goeth not to confession or doeth that which is wrong; he shall be proscribed and held an evil-doer.
39. And a master may hold a general court. in his lodge over his own fellows, and he shall judge righteously by his oath, and not of hatred, or of friendship, or of enmity.
40. And furthermore, no master shall judge alone of that which touches honour or good repute; but there shall be together three masters who shall then judge such matters.
41. And farther, every master shall inquire of his fellows every quarter, on their oath, if any hatred or envy be amongst them that might disadvantage the building; such shall he judge and put aside, and whatsoever fellow fail to comply herein, him shall he discharge, that no strife be found amongst them; and even though it please not the lords or the master builder, yet shall the master do right and avoid wrong, that he may keep his oath.
42. And he shall every quarter-day hold a hearing of lords and craftsmen, whether any offence were, whether they have wasted their time, lived riotously, gamed or otherwise acted disorderly, whence harm might come to wardens or master, that shall they make known to the master that he may punish therefor as is meet; and if the lords declare it not to the master and forgive it the fellows, then shall the master not punish on account thereof; and if a lord of the building know thereof and the master punish not, then doth he not fulfil his oath.
43. Is aught to be judged amongst masters concerning good report, or which might drive away work, or cause a false state of affairs, whence injury might arise, concerning year work, or large buildings, that shall be judged where the Book of the Ordinances is deposited, and the masters assemble every year on the day as is aforesaid; then shall the masters elect them an over-judge, and the wardens and fellows shall elect Sheriffs to the judge, and they shall judge by plaint and answer on the oath as administered; and if they in anything disagree, they shall take to themselves arbiters, and take counsel together that justice be done to all men.
44. And masters and fellows shall punish each other amongst themselves, righteously for the best, that the lords may not interfere through their perjury.
45. Should the masters have one amongst them, be he master or fellow, and will not be in obedience, and set himself up against these ordinances, we pray all lords that none take his part or defend him on his petition; should he nevertheless, against all usage, be defended against us, we know well, according to the Ordinances, how we shall then demean ourselves.

46. Should there be a master or fellow who would defend himself contrary to usage, ye are to call upon all cities and lords, and lay the matter before them, and enjoin them to help us maintain our right; for to him who shall help us to our right will we also be obedient when they require our services.
47. And thus shall be the wardens, and maintain thus the old traditionary lodge rights, according to ancient usage and the Book, and the Ordinances of the oath.
48. Every warden shall preserve his lodge, and all that he has sworn to, and all that is entrusted to him of the place of work, that shall he keep and maintain for the good of the building.
49. The warden shall show goodwill to the fellows, and show them, without anger and of go goodwill, what they shall ask of him. He shall use no more than right with any fellow or apprentice, he shall always prove level and plumb-rule, and all that pertains thereto, that -no, faults be therein, and if the master himself prove not or prepare suck then is it the warden's part; and should the master at any time learn thereof that he have neglected these articles, he thereby incurs a penalty of xij. kr. to the master.
50. The warden shall willingly choose and mark out stones for the fellows and apprentices, and inspect and see that they be well and truly made of the fellows; and if he do not so, and the master discover errors that anything be untrue, then shall he forfeit to the master viij. kr. and the fellow vj. kr.
51. And if a warden mark a stone because it is of no use, then shall he [the workman] lose his wages that he had otherwise earned on that stone, unless it be made of use.
52. Whatsoever warden shall levy a fine on account of negligence, or other offence, and shall not acknowledge and announce the same, he shall forfeit twice the fine that has been incurred.
53. No warden shall deprive his master of his building by word or deed; he shall not injure him behind his back with false words; as oft as he so does, shall he be declared worthless and of bad report, and shall no master, neither the fellows, suffer him, but whosoever shall stand by him shall like him be worthless.
54. A warden shall knock at the right time, and shall delay it on no one's account
55. Is a master not on the works, or absent therefrom, then has the warden full power to do or leave undone that which is right in the masters absence.
56. And the warden shall mark the underside of the stones of fellows and apprentices, should the fellows and apprentices fail to answer the knocks, and not appear to the right time at breakfast; and if he take not the fines so shall he pay them himself.
57. The warden shall not quarrel himself, or incite any thereto, either at meals or at work; he shall always comport himself right amicably and justly; he shall keep the fellows to their stones or work, be it what it may, that no harm may ensue to buildings or masters; and the master shall decide the fine, according to the loss he suffers thereby.
58. And no warden shall allow meals in the lodge during working hours, but only at the vesper rest.
59. Nor shall he suffer that more be spent at the vesper meal, but only one penny, unless there be a pledge feast, or that a travelling fellow be arrived; then is the warden empowered to cease work one hour earlier.
60. A warden has power to further a travelling fellow to the nearest work, also power to discharge on the pay-evening, even if he be not a builder or master.
61. He has power to allow every fellow or apprentice a reasonable time without loss.
62. And every warden shall be the first in the lodge of a morning, and after dinner at the opening; and the last to leave, be it at noon or at eventide, that all fellows may follow his example, and come to labour all the sooner. Should he fail herein, and the master come to hear thereof, whatsoever loss is thereby incurred, such loss shall the warden pay.
63. The warden shall help preserve all privileges of the lodges and places of labour.
64. And the warden shall make no overcharge on workshop fines, but according to the traditionary usages of the pay shall he levy them; and if he do otherwise, so. is he unworthy.
65. And he shall maintain all things appertaining to the place of labour, and keep them to use, even as the master. Of the Ordinances of the Fellows, how they shall comport themselves
66. Whatsoever fellow shall offer his services to another master before he shall have taken his discharge from the master with whom he serves, such fellow shall forfeit one pound of wax and be discharged.
67. Whatsoever fellow shall carry tales or create scandal between the master or other craftsmen, he shall. forfeit one-half his week's wages.

68. Whoever takes another's tools without leave shall forfeit ij. kr.

69. Whatsoever fellow shall falsely apply his templet, or put it by before he have proved his work, and that without leave or before the master or warden shall have inspected his work, or shall leave his square hanging on the stone, or allow the level to lie about and not hang it up though it be furnished with a hole thereto, or lets his stone fall from the bench, or forces the pick iron from off the handle, or leaves his gauge otherwise than in the place appointed therefor, or closes not the window near his bench,--whoever shall do anything of the aforementioned articles, he shall forfeit iij. kr. for every such offence.

70. Whatsoever fellow shall speak the other ill, or call him liar in ill-will or earnest, or is foul-mouthed in the place of labour, he shall pay xij. kr. to forfeit.

71. Whatsoever fellow shall laugh another to scorn, or jeer at him, or call him by a nickname, he shall pay 15 kr. to forfeit.

72. Whatsoever fellow shall not offer assistance to turn his stone this way or that, to fetch it or to turn it over when necessary, or places his mark thereon as if it were truly made, and that before it shall have been proven, so that it be passed unproven to the store, or improperly finishes his work, he shall stand to forfeit one half pound of wax.

73. Whatsoever fellow shall drink or eat to excess, so that it become known, he shall forfeit one weeks wages and j. pound of wax.

74. Whatsoever fellow shall use force in places of labour or of refreshment, or shall consort with or treat notorious females in the presence of godly women, he shall be discharged, and the weeks pay that he has earned that same week shall be retained and given to the box.

75. Whatsoever fellow shall squander lodge moneys, or pilfer, or murder, or steal, or commit any other crime, or disports himself in the land with ungodly women, and goeth not to confession and doeth not God's will, he shall be cast out from the craft and proscribed for ever.

76. Whosoever shall slander another and spread evil report of him, and justifieth it not, he shall make atonement to the satisfaction of masters and fellows.

77. Who shall accuse another and bring it not home to him, him shall ye severely punish, that he be careful of his speech another time; but if he prove it to the satisfaction of the fellows, according as the offence is shall ye judge, and no fellow shall ye judge out of malice.

78. And no fellow shall lord it over an apprentice, but he shall lay his plaint before the master, wherein the apprentice have offended him, and he shall punish him therefor.

79. And no warden, nor fellow, nor apprentice shall be his own judge, for if they do that, which of right belongs to the master, then are they deserving of a fine; and the master shall be judge and none other.

80. And the fellows shall not fine each other without the knowledge of masters and wardens.

81. And no fellow shall hew stones with a proscribed fellow, unless it be that he have made amends on that day of the year, when the masters do assemble.

82. And no fellow shall lead a woman of evil report into the lodges or places of labour, neither shall he take her where masters are together; who so doeth shall pay iij. pounds of wax.

83. Whatsoever fellow shall make unto himself holy days in the week when he should be at labour, they are not holy, and he shall not be instructed.

84. And whatsoever fellow is absent when he should be at work, even after the breakfast is eaten, he shall not be paid for his time till noon; and if he remain absent all day and come to supper, then shall he not be paid for the whole day.

85. Whatsoever fellow shall not, for his master's honour, accompany him to church on Sundays and the greater fasts at high mass, but remains without, and without leave, he shall pay iij. kr. to God's service.

86. Whatsoever warden or fellow be not with his master at the stroke of one on the Monday afternoon, and keep with him the vesper rest, and hear what he shall do on that Monday, he shall pay the supper bill; if he set himself up against this he shall be discharged that Monday for disobedience, but if he pray excuse at his entrance, so shall he pay nothing and is free.

87. And every master may discharge a fellow from the building without causing anger, if it seem right to him.

88. And every fellow may take his discharge any pay evening if it please him, for none is bound to the other.

89. Whatsoever fellow takes service of a master for the winter ' he shall be with him till St John's Day, when the crown is hung up; unless it be that the fellow have aught serious against the master, whereby the work may sustain injury, then may he justly leave him. And if the fellow know aught to the master's dishonour, and keep silent, and hold his peace winter and summer, and denies it, that fellow keepeth not good faith, and is meet for no fellow.

90. And no fellow shall give master or warden any offering for the sake of work; with him shall no fellow work until he have been fined.

91. And no fellow shall do another's work for money, but he shall do one piece for another, or do it for him to his honour.

92. No fellow shall speak against either warden or master.

93. And no fellow shall carry about with him any knife or other weapon other than one knife of half an ell in length, be it at work or refreshment; if it be longer, then shall he pay vij. kr. as fine, and also lay it aside.

94. If a fellow have not served his time, or have bought his mark and not honestly earned it, or if a hired servant or help establishes himself and teaches to work in stone, with him shall no man take service.

95. And no fellow shall speak M of his master or warden unless he wish to make it known to those who stand in that master's service.

96. And no fellow shall fleece or maltreat the master builders, but they shall willingly do as the in builders instruct them if the master or warden be not on the works; but if they be there, so shall they tell the master or warden what is necessary to be said.

97. And no fellow shall complain of another fellow to the master builder, but to the workmaster.

98. And no master builder shall correct any strife amongst the fellows unless he be desired to do so of the master.

99. And no fellow shall take service with those who employ a master builder without the master's consent.

100. Whatsoever fellow shall be treated by the master builder, with him shall no fellow consort.

101. Whatsoever offence the master builder commit, either against warden or fellow, that shall they lay before the master, and have strife with none.

102. And no warden or fellow shall secretly take pay without the master's knowledge, and though the master builder should wish to punish, it is for the master only to decide how he will arrange with his fellows.

103. And no fellow shall go with another to the closet, but one after the other, that the place of labour stand not empty; or one shall bear the other into the lodge, or pay ij. kr.

104. And no fellow shall do aught, or take stone for aught, or go out from the lodge, without the master's leave; and the master shall decide what he shall pay.

105. And when a fellow travels, then when he comes to a new lodge shall he leave his master in friendship, and not in anger.

106. And if a travelling fellow come before work is knocked off, he shall earn his day's wages. And every travelling fellow, when he has received the donation, shall go from one to the other and shall thank him therefor.

107. And this is the greeting wherewith every fellow shall greet; when he first goeth into the lodge, thus shall he say: " God greet ye, God guide ye, God reward ye, ye honourable overmaster, warden, and trusty fellows;" and the master or warden shall thank him, that he may know who is the superior in the lodge. Then shall the fellow address himself to the same, and say: "The master" (naming him) "bids me greet you worthily;" and he shall go to the fellows from one to the other and greet each in a friendly manner, even as he greeted the superior. And then shall they all, master, and wardens, and fellows, pledge him as is the custom, and m is already written of the greeting and pledge; but not to him whom they hold for no true man, he shall be fined one pound of wax, xxiiij. kr.

108. And every fellow when he returns thanks, if he wish for employment, shall ask of the master, and the master shall employ him till the next pay day, and deny him not, that the fellow may earn his living; and should the master have no more work than he can perform alone, the master shall help him find work.

109. And every travelling fellow shall ask first for a pick, thereafter for a piece of stone, and furthermore for tools, and that shall be lent to him of goodwill.

110. And every fellow shall pray the other fellows, and they shall not turn a deaf ear; they shall all help; "help me that God may help ye;" and when they have helped him he shall doff his hat, and shall say, God thank the master, and warden, and worthy fellows."

111. And if any fellow be in need on account of sickness. and have not wherewithal to live because he lieth sick he shall be assisted from the box and if he recover he shall pay it.

112. And if any fellow shall make a journey for the guild in that that concerns the craft his expenses also shall be paid him out of the box.