

The First Black Mason

If **John Pine** (born 1690, died 1756) was not the first Negro made a mason in England he was not far behind. He was a member of the lodge at Globe Tavern, Morgate in 1725 where his name was spelled 'Pyne'. He was an engraver and a close friend of the painter Hogarth. He became famous in his day by being the engraver who produced the beautiful frontis-piece to Dr. James Anderson's Constitutions of 1723. The same engraving was used again in the 1738 edition of Anderson's Constitutions.

Beside the art work in the Constitutions Bro. John Pine engraved the annual List of Lodges from 1725 to 1741. They were done in the form of a packet of loose cards rather than being bound in a book. These lists showed the sign of the tavern or inn where the lodge met ; the address of the inn ; and the time and night of meetings. The first page of the 1725 List of Lodges pictured the engraved signs of the Goose and Grid Iron, Queens Head at two locations, Horn, King's Head, Griffin, Three Compasses, and Fountain Tavern.

The Book of Constitutions came about when the Grand Lodge, organized in London in 1717, requested Rev. Anderson DD to digest the old Constitutions into a new and usable system . The work was completed and published in 1723 and the House of the Temple in Washington has two copies of the original 1723 edition as well as copies of the 1738 edition .

Bro. John Pine served as Marshall of the Processions on January 29th, 1730 when Lord Kingston, GM escorted the Duke of Norfolk, GL-Elect, from the Duke's house in St. James Square (London) to Merchant Taylor's Hall. "*The Marshall, Mr. Pyne , is to bear a Truncheon painted blew and tipt in gold* "

John Pine who was described as fat and jovial, was born in London, and spent his entire life there. Other than his Masonic engravings, he produced an unbelievable quantity of art, chiefly in the form of book illustrations. John Pine, like Hogarth, trained as a silversmith's engraver and became London's finest heraldic and decorative engraver. This led to an appointment as Bluemantle Pursuivant in the College of Heralds in 1743 where he took up residence.

A monumental work was an exquisite edition of "**Horace**" in which the whole text was engraved and illustrated with ancient bas-reliefs and representations of gems. Known as "**Pine's Horace**," this was published in two volumes in 1733 and 1737 and is now a collector's item of considerable value.

The "Dictionary of National Biography" whose approximately 70 volumes list the most important British personages through the years, devotes about two full columns to John Pine and almost as much to his son, Robert Edge Pine, who was also an artist. The son migrated to America after the signing of the Declaration of Independence with the intention of painting the important persons involved in the Revolution as well as scenes of interest. Robert Pine spent three weeks at Mt. Vernon painting George Washington and his family. ❖