

Under the Grand Lodge of

Mark Master Masons

of England and Wales
and Its Districts and Lodges Overseas



Have You Made Your Mark

A Welcome to the Honourable Degree of

Mark Master Mason

In the Provincial Grand Lodge of
Mark Master Masons of Surrey



Origins

It is well known that operative stone masons indented the stones they had prepared with marks that identified the orientation and position of the stone within the building together with a personal mark to identify the mason who prepared it. Although earlier records of a brother having "received his mark" are known, the first records of a speculative Mark degree being worked in England are those of Royal Arch Chapter No 257 at Portsmouth in 1769.

Relationship between the Mark and the Craft

In the Act of Union between the Premier and Antients Grand Lodges in 1813 it was declared that "Pure Antient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely, those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch".

To achieve harmony, each of the two Grand Lodges had to concede certain principles and practices. As a result of this compromise the Mark and other Masonic Orders were left to their own devices.

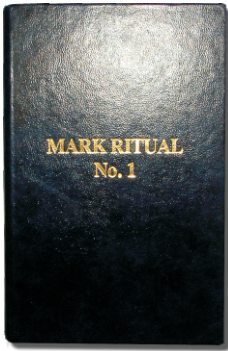
But the Mark Degree continued to flourish and was still worked (unofficially) in Craft Lodges and Royal Arch Chapters. The eventual establishment of a separate English Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons in 1856 came after an intriguing period of manoeuvring and negotiation.

Logically the Mark is part of pure Freemasonry and is so recognised by our Sister Grand Lodges of Ireland and Scotland and indeed by most other constitutions, where the Mark is a pre-requisite for the Royal Arch.



Mark Ritual

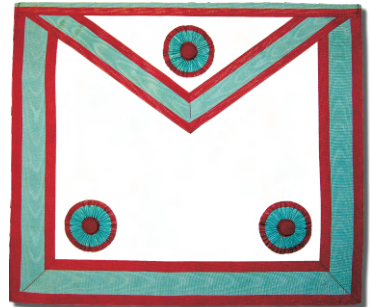
The Mark is sometimes said to be an extension of the Second Degree in the Craft. But this rather simple assertion belies the fact that the ceremony of admission, called Advancement, is comparable in length to the Third Degree.



The ceremony is based on the preparations for the building of King Solomon's Temple and follows the fate of an ambitious craftsman (the candidate) seeking promotion in his trade by demonstrating his skill and ability. In the early part of the ceremony his talents go unrecognised and his hopes are dashed but eventually he triumphs over adversity and is justly rewarded for his work. It is a wonderful ceremony containing elements of drama and humour, and, above all, strong moral lessons. The concept of Masons as "living stones" being built into a spiritual house, in parallel with the construction of the Temple, is a powerful theme in the Degree.

Mark Regalia

The regalia worn today was first designed for and worn by the members of the London Bon Accord Mark Lodge in 1856. A Mark Master Mason wears an apron similar to that of a Master Mason in the Craft except that the Mark apron is bordered with light blue with crimson edges. He also wears a breast jewel in the form of a keystone suspended from a ribbon of light blue and crimson.



Qualification for Admission

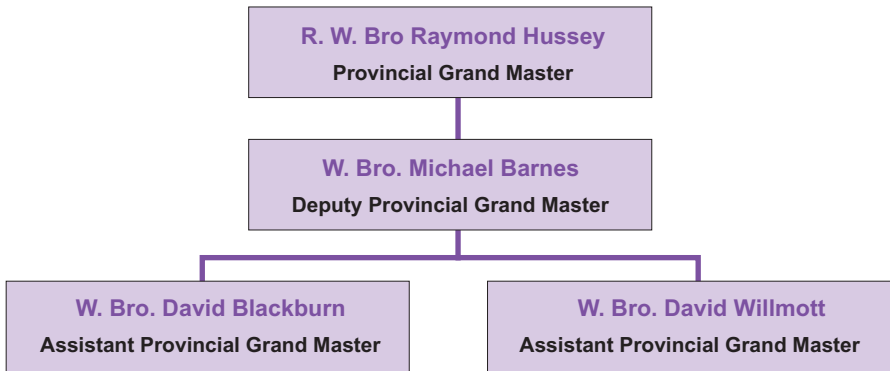
The Structure of Mark Grand Lodge is similar to that of the United Grand Lodge. In size of membership the Mark ranks third, after the Craft and Royal Arch. Admission to the Mark Degree in England requires that a candidate be a Master Mason of the English Constitution, or of a constitution recognised by the English Craft Grand Lodge.

Why Should a Craft Mason be a Mark Mason ?

Many reasons could be advanced but three are of special importance. Firstly, it enhances his knowledge of Craft Masonry. Secondly, it teaches, in a delightful way, many important practical lessons about life. Thirdly, it gives a greater appreciation of the Royal Arch and provides an essential qualification to certain other Orders in Masonry.



Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Surrey



The Mark Province of Surrey was constituted in 1857 and has responsibility for the Mark and RoyalArk Mariner Lodges in all parts of Surrey.

Where to find out more

Full details of the Executive and Administrative Officers together with a complete list of Lodges, their meeting places and dates, can be found in the Surrey Mark Provincial Year Book. Information about the Mark and Royal Ark Mariner degrees and about Provincial activities can also be found on the Surrey Mark Provincial website: www.surreymark.org The Province also publishes a magazine, called The Surrey Overseer, which gives current news about the Province and its Lodges. Copies are usually available at most Masonic centres in the Province or can be obtained from the Provincial Grand Secretary.

A Speaker for your Lodge

If you would like a member of the Surrey Mark Provincial Executive, or other senior officer of the Mark Province, to address your Lodge about the Mark Degree then please contact the Provincial Grand Secretary.

How to apply for Membership

The simplest approach is to ask any Mark Master Mason and he will arrange for you to receive application forms. Alternatively you may contact the Provincial Grand Secretary who will provide the necessary forms and any advice you may require about which Lodge to join.



Provincial Grand Secretary

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