

## THE BEGINNINGS OF SPECULATIVE MARK MASONRY IN ENGLAND AND IN CHESHIRE (Pt.2 cont from Feb 2004)

It is interesting to note that the next sentence in article 2 reads; *But this Article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a Meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the Constitutions of the said orders.*

From then on, it was questionable whether the Mark was a 'legal' degree. It must have seemed to the Mark Brethren that they were entering a 'Dark Era'. It was argued that as the Union recognised the Knightly orders, it must therefore acknowledge the degrees prerequisite for membership of those Knightly Orders, i.e. The Mark!

As might have been expected, the Mark did not become stagnant. It continued to be worked, although haphazardly and without any formal control, in Craft Lodges and in Royal Arch Chapters throughout England during the first half of the nineteenth century. *"The effect of the Union of 1813 on the additional degrees including the Mark, many of which had been worked under Craft warrants, was disastrous. Some continued for a few years to work the Mark clandestinely, until they wilted under the cold eye of the autocratic Grand Master at the time, the Duke of Sussex, until his death in 1843".*

It must also have been a factor, that in 1799 the Government passed "The Secret Societies Act", requiring lists of members of all lodges to be sent to the local Justice and was therefore "Public" information. Mark Lodges could not comply as to have done so would have made their working obvious to United Grand Lodge as well!

In Trevelyan Lee's book entitled "Craft Freemasonry in Derbyshire", published in 1926, we find a mention of The Lodge of Union, a Craft Lodge now numbered 268, which moved in 1828 from its meeting place in Manchester to The Devonshire Arms in Mellor, a small Cheshire village between Marple in Stockport, Cheshire and Hayfield in Derbyshire. The Lodge, despite being a "Moderns" Lodge, worked several degrees beside the Craft, including the Mark, Ark and Link. This degree is sometimes referred to as the "Link and Wrestle", which alludes to the Angel wrestling with Jacob. The Lodge minutes contain frequent references to Brethren being given the "Ark, Mark and Link". Today this Lodge meets at Ashton u Lyne in the Province of East Lancashire!

and country Lodges stopped working them for years. The Knights Templar obtained their Charter from England in 1810, for instance, and Alex Deucher became Grand Master Supreme Grand Chapter for Royal Arch was formed in 1817 and two years later there was a "divvy-up" of the degrees controlled by the Royal Arch. Opening in a Council in the early days, consisted of one knock on the pedestal with the end of the axe that wasn't the sharp bit! Whether the then degree of "Ark Mason" was the same as or similar to our R.A.M. degree history remains silent.

As a point of interest upon regalia, the rainbow aprons or sashes are a relatively new innovation. Hitherto an undressed apron was required i.e. with the wool still on the lambskin! No sceptres, no porphyry stone, no nine steps, no perambulations.

Now from our Bible we learn that Noah had three sons. Nowhere in the English ritual is there a vestige of Ham. Yet, he appears in other Constitutions, both at the corner of triangles and in the ritual "...his second son, Ham, being expelled with the curse which fell on his posterity"

It must be understood that many of the changes that have taken place in our ritual over that past 170 years or so to some extent chart the differing attitudes of the rulers of Freemasonry. In England & Wales the R.A.M. is under the superintendence of the Mark Degree, in Scotland, the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter, in U.S.A. the Grand Council of Allied Degrees. Wherever it has found a home, resting place or mooring, this Degree has found a place in the hearts of the brethren who practice it.

### *Know Your Cheshire Mark Festival Jewel*

This series continues with the theme of Mark Festivals for the MBF held in Cheshire, following that in 1898 (see Feb 2004 edition) Cheshire held its next MBF Festival in 1929 as follows -

#### **1929 Annual Festival**

Stewards - 1,104

Chairman -

R.W.Bro.Maj.Cuthbert Leicester -Warren,

PGM Cheshire

Raised - £13,810.7s.9d



## Joppa Lodge of Mark Master Masons No.11 TI

Born 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1856 in Birkenhead, and pre-dating the formation of Grand Mark Lodge by about 8 weeks, Joppa Lodge can claim a rare pedigree of having two Mother Lodges, perhaps better termed a Mother and a Step-Mother. Originally Inducted (Advanced) in 1856 by Mark Masons of the travelling Mark Lodge of Dukinfield, now known as Ashton District TI, the founding members of Joppa accepted a Warrant from the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, after being Re-Inducted in St. Johns Mark Lodge of Bolton, just a year later in 1857. There is little doubt that Joppa No.5 (now 11TI), received invitations to accede to the two other Grand Lodges issuing warrants during that period, i.e. the new Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and from The Honourable United Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Ashton-u-Lyne District (as Ashton District TI were known at the time), but they chose to stay with Scotland, until 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1872 that is, when they agreed to transfer to the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England.

Joppa continued successfully although it went through hard times in the 1880s, often meeting with Egerton Mark Lodge No.165 to make up numbers and finally arriving at its jubilee celebrations on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1922.

Having survived both world wars, Joppa once again hit hard times in the 1950s, being very near to handing in its warrant, but thankfully, a number of zealous Mark Masons rescued it and in 1972, it celebrated its Centenary, having existed for 100 years under the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges oversees, although in reality it was 114 years old!

Joppa can boast a number of eminent Mark Masons throughout its history, not least Cheshire's first RW Provincial Grand Mark Master The Hon Wilbraham Egerton (later Earl Egerton of Tatton), Charles Matier (Grand Secretary 1889 -1914) and John Armstrong (Masonic Researcher and Author).

Joppa has also sponsored a number of Mark Lodges and is Mother to Gough Mark Lodge No.45 (Staffordshire & Shropshire) in 1861, Earl of Chester No.196 (Cheshire) in 1876 and The Wilbraham No. 523 (Lancashire) in 1900. It can also claim a first in that it sponsored a Craft Lodge, the Joppa Lodge No. 4586, whose founders were all Joppa Mark members, although a Craft Lodge of necessity was its "official" sponsor!

Nowadays, as Joppa approaches its actual 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Lodge continues to prosper and work so well for the Charities. We wish the members of Joppa Mark Lodge No.11 TI well for the next 150 years.

## Notable Lodge Meetings - for your diary

### Lodge RAM meetings 2005

26th Jan	Cestrian RAM	Centenary
12th Feb	Cheshire Prov Stewards Mark	Prov Banner Dedication
14th Feb	Composite Mark	Presentation of Mauls
17th Feb	Staley Mark	PGM / DPGM visit
22nd March	Macclesfield Mark	50th W.Bro.Pyatt
27th April	Mersey Mark / Weaver RAM	50th W.Bro.Shepherd

### Provincial Grand Mark Meetings

<b>2nd April 2005</b>	<b>Mark AGM</b>	<b>Chester College</b>
TBC May 2005	Mark Masters' Dinner	Middlewich
TBC June 2005	Mark GLO Dinner	Chistleton

### *Brethren,*

*Please note the date of the Provincial AGM, whilst several summons will be sent to Lodge Secretaries individual tickets will not be sent to each Mark Master Mason.*

### Grand Mark Meetings

7th June 2005

Mark Investiture London

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### *Congratulations on another good edition of "The Cheshire Mark Mason"*

May I make one or two observations ? Regarding the Cheshire Mark Token (Spring Edition 2004), I was the instigator, in 1992 W.Bro.Bill Davies, Mike Stratton and I had a meeting in Chester. A design was suggested and I was appointed Secretary and Treasurer! The first batch of tokens had the incorrect design on the obverse, the delivery was rejected! (they can now be obtained in London at £8 each).

The first Lodge to order the "correct" design was Ashton TI, since then 909 tokens have been sold and I am still receiving orders. Regarding the Masonic Cipher on the front page of the issue, this is not the Thomas Dunckerley cipher, which if you have it to hand can be compared to our token. Having done so you will read 'JOPPA, KEYBRIOTH, MARKWELL with the exception of the fifth letter in KEYBRIOTH which is given as an 'A'.

*W.Bro.J.Malcolm Clerc*

*Brethren, Malcolm can be contacted on 01565 631 721 if you would like to order stock of the Cheshire Mark Token (Editorial Team).*