

Mark My Words

-- The Newsletter for the Mark Master Mason

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April 2005

THE MARK MASTER AND THE BUILDING OF KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

by R.W.Bro. Desmond Barnett, J.P., Provincial Grand Master

This is the first of two articles explaining the role of the Mark Master Mason in the building of King Solomon's Temple. It will also be of interest to Craft Freemasons since it explains how Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts were employed. Anyone who has had the experience of the organisation, structuring and management of very large numbers of people in order to produce efficiently working, happy and highly motivated groups cannot fail to be fascinated with the problems involved before the building of King Solomon's Temple could even commence. The challenge was to change what was potentially total chaos into a very finite and disciplined process. It is here that the concept of the Mark Master Degree and its implementation by King Solomon played a vital and very significant role in the resolution of this immense problem.

Over 100,000 workmen were involved in the building work. Reflecting a minute and remembering that the Temple was completed in seven years, the logistics of supplying these workmen with food and clothing and providing them with comfortable living quarters was in itself an immense problem. The size of ancient monuments does not itself indicate the kind of organisation required to build them, since their construction could have been achieved with different contributions of time and labour. Small labour working forces working over two or three generations or large labour forces working over a short time. The Egyptian pyramids were built by large numbers of men and pyramid building was an important factor in consolidating the state's control over labour and resources. Again populations were much smaller and people did not live very long. King Solomon died at 40 years of age in 931BC and Alexander the Great at 33 years of age in 323BC. Incidentally Alexander's very successful army was one the largest ever seen at that time and was 30,000 strong.

Let us return to Masonry. This is the art or skill or practice of a mason, and is defined as building work in stone or the art or process of erecting structures in stone. Some experts postulate that this skill is firmly based genetically in man. The Bible informs us that Adam taught it to his sons and that Cain built a city. Enoch prophesying that the final conflagration of the world would be the Day of Judgement and that the Deluge was the punishment of the world, erected two large pillars, one of stone and of brick, whereon the Liberal Arts and Sciences were engraved. Noah and his three sons were all Masons bringing with them from out of the Flood the traditions and Arts of the Antediluvians. In fact all important Biblical personalities were said to be Masons or experts in Geometry and Architecture. Moses became General Master-

Mason in Egypt so that when the Israelites left Egypt, they had become a kingdom of Masons well instructed and under the control of the Grand Master, Moses. A long time after, King David valued and cherished Masons not only paying them well but also giving

them the Charges and the manners as he had learned them in Egypt and Greece from Euclid. He had also accumulated much wealth and charged his son Solomon, that after his death to build the Temple. It is said that David could not start the building because his hands were stained with the blood of his many enemies killed in battle.

King Solomon was well respected by his neighbouring rulers. They recognised his wisdom and his prowess as a Mason. Hiram, King of Tyre, who was also an excellent Mason, offered Solomon the resources of the Tyre Kingdom. This act ensured that Solomon

was able to procure such timber as was essential to the construction of the Temple. Hiram, King of Tyre also provided Solomon with the supervising Architect or Artisan to direct the work. This was Hiram Abiff, a widow's son, who was especially distinguished for his knowledge of Geometry. These three Grand Master Masons met and sat in conference and perfected the design and directions for the building of the Temple as inspired by King Solomon. They then sent for Masons from all the neighbouring lands across the desert and over the mountains to come to Jerusalem. Well over 100,000 men responded such was the respect they had for Solomon. They came from different nations and tribes, spoke in different languages, were subject to different cultures and disciplines, and were endued with loyalty to their own native land. Great stores had already been accumulated for the work in stone and timber, in gold and precious stones. Workmen of every craft, skilled and unskilled, had made their way to Jerusalem and were assembled on the slopes of the surrounding hills. The three Grand Masters would meet regularly to agree the work in progress. They had already banished all women, both young and old, all old men and young men, men of unsound mind, unable to appreciate the wisdom or guard the secrets, and men who did not believe in God. They were left with some 110,000 men. It was now that men who had wisely served the interest of Architecture and Geometry came up to them for recognition, approval and acceptance as a superior group. We will return to this especial group later. Suffice it now to say that they became the nuclei of larger groups.

In the concluding part of this article I will explain how these groups were organised into Lodges, and how their leaders were chosen. I will also relate how the Overseers or Mark Masters played a crucial role in the building of the Temple.

Desmond Barnett, J.P., P.G.M.

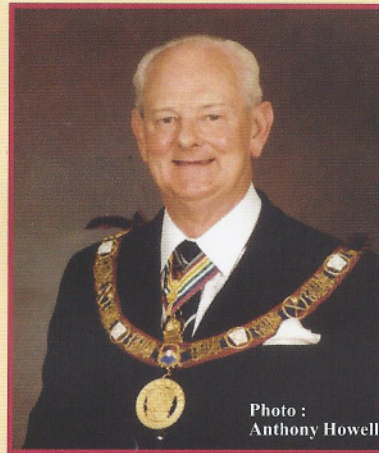


Photo :
Anthony Howell

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Distinguished Welshman makes his Mark in England.

On the 3rd May, 2001 "The Provincial Director of Ceremonies Lodge of Mark Master Masons No 1813" was consecrated at the Masonic Hall, King's Heath, Birmingham in the Province of Worcestershire. The qualification for membership was a prospective member had to serve his respective province in the office of Director of Ceremonies or Deputy Director of Ceremonies in the Mark Degree in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. It was decided Birmingham would be chosen for the February installation meeting as its geographic position was central to Great Britain and the second meeting would be held in October in the Worshipful Master's province.

At the consecration of the lodge, South Wales provided six founders, namely, V. W. Bro. Wing. Cdr. John I. Davies, C. B. E., the late W. Bro. Vernon W. J. Uppington, W. Bro. Noel O. A. Alleyne, W. Bro. Michael D. Howell, W. Bro. Alan R. Thomas and W. Bro. D. Martin Mogford (Founding Master Overseer).

All offices would be non progressive except those of Junior and Senior Warden respectively. Annually, the Lodge Committee would recommend a member for the position of Junior Warden and this recommendation would take into account the great service an individual had given not only to his province but also in the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

To give an idea of how worthy the first four masters were, I list below their names and qualifications:-

Founding Master, R.W.Bro. Michael G.W. Masters, P.G.J.W., G.D.C. (Worcestershire)
 Second Master, V.W.Bro. Michael J. Gutteridge, P.G.J.O., Dep.P.G.M. (Nottingham)
 Third Master, W.Bro. Philip J. Patrick, P.G.S.D., Dep.P.G.M. (Bristol)
 Fourth Master, V.W.Bro. Philip D. Williams, P.G.J.O., Asst.P.G.M. (Kent)

Brethren, on Saturday, the 5th February, 2005, the sun shone, cars were driven from South Wales by joyous mark men to witness the installation of our own worthy brother V. W. Bro. Wing. Cdr. John I. Davies, as fifth master of "The D. C.s' Lodge". John's past record of being Grand Steward in 1994, Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies in 1995 and Past Grand Junior Overseer in 1998 had been honoured nationally.

Eighty-one masons attended the Festive Board where they enjoyed a sumptuous meal, wine and a "free Bar". Notables, with no disrespect, were "ten-a-penny".

It was a proud moment not only for John but also for us, members



Left to Right R.W.Bro. Brian M. Batty, P.G.M. Yorks., W.Bro. Ron D. Gee, Dep. P.G.M. Worcs., R.W.Bro. Colin Woodward, P.G.M. Worcs., V.W.Bro. Wing. Cdr. John I. Davies, C.B.E., W.M. V.W.Bro. Peter D. Williams, Asst.P.G.M. Kent.

of the South Wales Province, to see him in "his" chair at the Festive Board. Among his many guests were the V.W.Bro. Anthony Francis Moore, M.B.E., Asst.P.G.M., V.W.Bro. S. W. Jeffrey Clarke, P.Asst.P.G.M., Prov. Secretary and R.W.Bro. Hywel Davies, P.G.M., S.W.E.D.

In his address to the brethren the Provincial Grand Master of Worcestershire, R.W.Bro. Colin Woodward, stated how delighted he was that the prestigious "D.C.s' Lodge" had been consecrated in his province, he deemed it an honour and as it was his last year as P.G.M. he congratulated John on his installation and wished him and the lodge well for the future. One of the crowning moments for John was when R.W.Bro. Hywel Davies, our craft P.G.M., eloquently replied on behalf of the visitors and as both of them were conversant with the language of heaven - Welsh, it added a Welsh flavour to the afternoon.

At the end of the proceedings the South Wales Masons travelled happily back to Wales just in time to arrive at their respective homes to switch on their televisions to view Wales versus England. What a satisfactory result ---- and we saw R.W.Bro. Desmond Barnett, J.P., P.G.M. slipping away from his Past President of the Welsh Rugby Union's seat. He was most disappointed he was unable to attend John's installation but had previously promised to attend "The D.C. Lodge's Meeting" to be held in Cardiff on Saturday, 1st October, 2005.

LODGE NEWS

Ysgolion Lodge

Well, here we are well into the year 2005, and heading towards W.Master Denis Tucker's last Advancement Ceremony and an Election Night. Unfortunately, the best laid plans of mice and Masons being as they are, our November meeting turned out to be a little disappointing. In the unusual absence of a Candidate, we had originally planned to have a rehearsal, which we changed when it was thought that two of our Brethren had offered to give a Lecture on the Mark Degree. It transpired that neither had thought that his offer had been taken up, and we ended with the proverbial egg on our faces! Still, our January meeting more than compensated for our going for an early After-proceedings, with

a cracking Advancement of a Harlequins Craft Lodge member in the shape of Bro. Ariel Isaac Roqué (pronounced Rockay). Bro Ariel is the son-in-law of Past Master David Yeates, and has shown himself to be a very keen Mason, having explained the First Degree Tracing Board within a few months of having been Raised in the Craft!

We were especially delighted that our Provincial Grand Master, Rt. W.Bro Desmond Barnett JP has accepted the offer of Honorary Membership of the Lodge, and look forward to seeing him whenever his busy schedule permits.

We are also glad to announce that we have candidates for our last Ceremony of this Masonic year and a few for the next session. We are more than fortunate in having a regular crop of visiting Brethren who grace our proceedings with their presence, and who add an extra dimension to our enjoyment of the evenings. Please keep coming!

I am still quite surprised that we have not

heard from Old Boys of Penarth Grammar School wishing to join. While there is no Old Penarthians Craft Lodge, I am sure that there were sufficient capable students to join the ranks of Freemasons, and who would be eligible to form a group within Ysgolion to offset the influences of Old Boys of the likes of Howardian, Cantonian, Monktonian, and Barrian Lodges. I call upon some Old Penarthian to gather a cohort around him, and enter the Fray! (I promise that you will enjoy our Mark ambience as well!) In the meanwhile, The Master and Brethren of Ysgolion Lodge offer to all readers of "Mark My Words" a continued welcome to Pontyclun, and further enjoyment in Mark Masonry.

Barry Mark Lodge

Hope to have their Jubilee Jewel presented by the PGM soon. The Barry Lodge Mark token is now available. Contact Alan F. Thomas who will be pleased to supply (for a small fee).

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A Festive Occasion

On Sunday, the 5th December, 2004 the South Wales Provincial Mark Grand Officers' Mess held its Sunday Lunch at the Bishop's Meadow Motel, Brecon. The Vice President of the Mess, W. Bro. Capt. David J. M. Morris and his wife Mrs. Mary Morris received members, wives, partners and guests. This popular event is held on the first Sunday in December at a venue decided by the Vice President of the Mess and is much appreciated as a start to the festive season of Christmas. The function was attended by the Patron of the Mess, R. W. Bro. Desmond Barnett, J. P., his wife Mrs. Elaine Barnett, the President of the Mess W. Bro. John Beddoe and Mrs Pauline Beddoe, V. W. Bro. Paul Raymond Clement, Dep. P. G. M., and Mrs Molly Clement, members and guests totalling one hundred and eight persons.

The weather was fine - it never rains in Brecon - and the view of the Beacons was a joy to all.

To say that this event is enjoyed is an understatement and the generosity of those attending supplied the raffle with more than sixty superb prizes. W. Bro. W. J. Lewis Groom and W. Bro. Edward G. Bolton, Mess Stewards - some say bandits - relieved the diners of £400.00 for Masonic Charity. Their photograph shows their great delight in "robbing the rich" to give to the poor, whilst the "rich" are seen trying to puzzle out how Lewis and Eddie did it.

The highlight of the afternoon was the informal speech made by the P. G. M., W. Bro. Des relating "true" and extremely funny



anecdotes which he had come across during his many years involvement with rugby. The day ended with everyone appreciating our involvement in the Mark degree.



Mrs. Christine Ellis, Des Barnett P.G.M., Mrs. Elaine Barnett, David Morris, Mrs. Mary Morris, & Ron Fellows

For the readers information the Mark Provincial Mess had its inaugural meeting on the 22nd September, 2000 in Bridgend. W. Bro. Anthony J. Greedy had noticed that a number of the "Provincial Teams" had dinners at the end of their respective years as active officers and suggested to the P. G. M. a Mess be formed and he, Tony, became

its founding Secretary.

The Mess has four aims:-

1. To encourage continued friendship and camaraderie amongst Provincial Grand Lodge Officers.
2. To support the Provincial Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of South Wales and to encourage other Mark Master Masons by our example.
3. To provide a forum of experienced and dedicated Brethren.
4. To uphold the principle of Charity and to assist in supporting Charitable events throughout the Mark Province of South Wales.

To qualify for membership a brother had to serve as an active officer in the Provincial Mark Team and pay a lifetime fee of £15.00 (Mess fee inclusive of the lifetime fee)

The next function of the Mess will be the President, W. Bro. John Beddoe's and Mrs Pauline Beddoe's dinner dance to be held at the Ghyndyfach Hotel, Longford, Neath on Friday, the 6th May, 2005.

Re Election of the Grand Master

At the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge, on Tuesday 8th March, our Province was afforded the honour of proposing the re-election of the Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent, G.C.V.O. This task was undertaken by our Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, W. Bro. Michael David Howell, P.G.A.D.C. who ensured that all present heard the proposition, which was received with acclaim. We are also pleased to report that the Province was well represented by the Provincial Grand Master, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, the Assistant Provincial Grand Master, the Provincial Grand Secretary and a good number of Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge Officers.

Congratulations

This is the time of year for appointments and promotions in all orders of Freemasonry. At the time of going to press, not all of the names of brethren have been released into the public domain, however we extend hearty congratulations and fraternal greetings to all so honoured.

The Mark Master Masons and the Royal Ark Martyr Degrees in Spain W. Bro. John Pring, P.A.G.Swd.B.

Brethren, I thought it might be useful to produce an information sheet on Mark Masonry in Spain which could be of use to anyone spending a holiday here or coming out here to live.

Firstly let me tell you that Mark Masonry is alive and thriving here with 16 Lodges and 7 RAM Lodges with another 3 soon to be consecrated.

Spain is a District of the Grand Lodge of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas. The ceremonies and regalia are all the same as we have in South Wales, so bring your regalia with you and visit the nearest Lodge to wherever you are staying. You can be sure of a great welcome. I have compiled a list of all the present Lodges in the district with the towns where they meet together with the days on which they meet. I will be quite happy to give you this information should you require it and can be reached by:

Telephone - 0034 96 069 8462