

Degree has never been lost but it has been practised from the earliest time in distinct and independent Mark Lodges, which have never acknowledged the jurisdiction of either the Craft Grand Lodges of 1717 or 1813, or of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of 1813.

In the Colonies much difficulty has been encountered from the establishment of Lodges under different jurisdictions, some recognizing the Mark Degree, and some altogether ignoring it. To remedy this state of confusion, an attempt was made in the year 1855, to obtain its recognition as a separate Degree by "The United Grand Lodge of England;" and a Committee consisting of members of that Grand Lodge and of members of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of England was appointed to investigate and report upon the subject of the Mark Degree.

Some members of this committee were already Mark Masters; those who had not taken the Degree had it conferred upon them in the Albany Lodge (time immemorial), Isle of Wight, and in other old Lodges, and in the Bon Accord Mark Lodge, then recently established in London, under a charter received from the Bon Accord Royal Arch Chapter of Aberdeen.

The Report of the Committee approved by the M. W. Grand Master, pronouncing the Mark Degree, as in their opinion, "not positively essential, but a graceful appendage to the Degree of Fellow-Craft," was presented to the "United Grand Lodge of England" at the Quarterly Communication in March, 1856, and was unanimously adopted.

Owing however partly to the conscientious objections of some of the leading members of Grand Lodge, including the M. W. G. M., who maintained that Grand Lodge was pledged by the Articles of Union only to acknowledge the three Craft Degrees, as then worked by the Lodge of Reconciliation (including the Royal Arch) and partly to the disapproval of many Mark Master Masons of the position, it was proposed to assign to the Mark Degree at the next Quarterly Communication of "The United Grand Lodge of England," on special motion, duly proposed and seconded, that portion of the minutes of the previous Quarterly Communication referring to the Mark Degree was non-confirmed, and the *status in quo ante* was resumed.

"The United Grand Lodge of England" having thus formally declared its inability in accordance with its Constitutions, to adopt the Degree into its system, a declaration which has since been repeated on various occasions, several earnest masons, anxious for its propagation, in place of having recourse to the old English Mark Lodges, applied for and received Charters from the Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland, under the authority of which they opened Lodges and conferred the Degrees of the Mark Master in London, and other parts of England.

Other Mark Masons, who had taken the Degree in various old (time immemorial) English Lodges, together with the Members of the Bon Accord Lodge, gladly welcoming the increasing appreciation of the Mark Degree, but not approving this attempt to introduce a foreign supreme masonic authority into England, resolved to constitute a Grand Lodge with jurisdiction over the Mark Degree held in this country and its dependencies, in the establishment of which they at once received the adhesion of the following (time immemorial) Lodges:—

The Northumberland and Berwick,  
 " Royal Cumberland,  
 " Kent,

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
 Bath.  
 London.