

## **The Canynges Lodge of Mark Master Masons**

### **Time Immemorial Constitution**

#### **The Early Years of Mark Masonry**

A history of the Canynges Lodge of Mark Master Mason TI could not be considered complete without at least some brief reference to the history of Mark Masonry itself.

Probably the earliest recorded reference to the speculative mason's "mark" occurs in the "Schaw Statutes" dated 28 December 1598 of the Lodge of Mary's Chapel in Edinburgh, which are signed by William Schaw, Master of Work. The 13<sup>th</sup> item of these statutes is as follows:-

*"No Master or Fellow-of-Craft to be received or admitted except in the presence of six Masters and two entered apprentices, the warder of that Lodge being one of the six, the date thereof being orderly booked and his name and mark insert in the said book."*

There is no suggestion here, however, that this implied the working of a Mark degree. We have to move forward to 1723 when one of the first "exposures" of Masonry made reference to the Mark in the context of some form of ceremonial. There is no indication of what that ceremonial consisted.

The first definitive mention of the conferring of the Mark Degree occurs in a hand written note on one of the pages of a 1723 copy of the Book of Constitutions, at some stage the property of one Robert Salmon, Worshipful Master in 1759 of an unnamed lodge meeting at the house of John Kirton of Newcastle. The note, headed Newcastle 1756, reads

*"There being met part of the Body of the Lodge they taking in their serious consideration that no member of the saide lodge shall be made a Mark Mason without paying the fee of one Scots Mark that for the propagation of the Pedestal as witnessed the aforesaid date by John Maxwell, Master."*

The mention of a "Scots Mark" may have significance in relation to the geographic origin of the degree and its later prevalence as part of the Craft and the Royal Arch Chapter in Scotland could certainly be seen as some evidence of this. Whether or not this was the case, the degree had reached the south of England thirteen years later when, in September 1769, the recently formed Chapter of Friendship recorded in its minutes the following:-

*"At the Royal Arch Chapter held at the George Tavern in Portsmouth on 1.9.1769 ... Present Thomas Dunckerley Esq, William Cook 'Z', Samuel Palmer 'H', Thomas Scanville 'J', Henry Dean, Philip Joyes and Thomas Webb. The Prov Grand Master Thomas Dunckerley bro't the Warrant of the Chapter and, having lately received the Mark he made the brethren 'Mark Masons' and 'Mark Masters' ... He also told us of the mann'r of writing to be used in the degree w'ch we may give to others so they be FC for Mark Mason and Master M for Mark Masters."*

The Degree was thereafter worked continuously in the Chapter until 1844.

#### **Thomas Dunckerley and the Mark Degree in Bristol**

The name Thomas Dunckerley will be familiar to most masons as an ardent supporter of masonry in all of its aspects. The life and Masonic work of Dunckerley has been comprehensively covered in a number of books devoted solely to him and it would be far

beyond the scope of this short work to even attempt a synopsis so we shall address ourselves only to one very small part of his activities that relate to Bristol. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1784, Dunckerley was appointed as Provincial Grand Master for Gloucestershire, which Province at that time included Bristol. He was, at the same time, Provincial Grand Master for Essex and Dorsetshire and Grand Superintendent of 18 Royal Arch Provinces including Gloucestershire whose only Chapter independent of the Craft, Chapter of Charity, was in Bristol. At his request the following year, after consecrating a Lodge at Gloucester, Gloucestershire and Bristol were constituted as separate Provinces.

This truly was a man of immense energy and dedication to the services of Masonry and whilst there is no record or reference to the introduction by Dunckerley of the Mark Degree into the Bristol Chapter, it is almost inconceivable that he should not have done so at the earliest opportunity given his undoubted dynamism.

### ***The Mark, the Craft and the Royal Arch in Bristol***

Even following the Union of the two Craft Grand Lodges in 1813, it is clear that other degrees were being worked in Bristol in either Craft Lodges or Royal Arch Chapters. In 1815 a Commission was despatched to Bristol by the then MW Grand Master, HRH the Duke of Sussex to investigate a dispute between the Provincial Grand Master and the Brethren of the Royal York Lodge of Union. During the course of the investigation, the Commission discovered references to other degrees in the Minutes of Provincial Grand Lodge and thereupon confiscated the Minute Book, taking it back to London for further consideration. It was subsequently returned to Bristol with instructions for the minutes to be rewritten, with the offending references expunged.

Bro Joseph Littleton, co-author of “Freemasonry in Bristol – 1910” and Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Mark from 1911 to 1919, in an unpublished work dated 1902, tells us that around the time of the Commission’s investigation, a large portion of the second degree ceremony, which he quotes verbatim from an old Moira Lodge of Honour ritual book, was removed from the Bristol ritual. This is a short extract:-

*“ ... the FCs received their wages in money at the wicket gate of the inner or middle chamber of KST which they reached by ascending a winding staircase of 3, 5, and 7 steps. At the foot of the staircase stood the JW who demanded the PW and G leading to a FC Lodge which denoted that they were workmen of the T. Having ascended the staircase they were accosted by the SW who demanded the S, T and W of a FC which proved them to be duly entitled to their wages, which they received at the gate of the middle or inner chamber by thrusting their hand through an open wicket, thus -- . They received their wages weekly and were paid with the greatest regularity and if an unauthorised hand was stretched out to receive the remuneration of a FC, the punishment was both summary and certain, so strictly were the regulations of discipline enforced.”*

It is curious that what appears to be a relatively innocuous piece of ritual had been required to be removed. Perhaps the explanation lies in the ceremonial itself. Those familiar with the Bristol Craft ceremonies will be aware that the Candidate is often called upon to demonstrate his understanding and skill, such as what he is required to do during the explanation of the First Degree Working Tools. Could it be that the Mark ceremony conducted in the Second Degree included the Candidate having to demonstrate his knowledge of that part of the ceremony described above? If that were the case, then when the Mark ceremony was removed then it would be logical to remove the part of the ceremony that referred to it.

Because there is reference in the first minutes of the Canynges Mark Lodge itself to

the existence of what was known as “The Old Bristol (Mark) Lodge” which worked in Bristol until 1843, and at least three of the first members of Canynges were recognised as having belonged to it at that time, it seems probable that the degree, having been finally barred from the Craft and Royal Arch ceremonies, came to be worked separately in an independent Lodge in its own right in order to avoid further censure from the Craft authorities. We have mentioned above that the Chapter of Friendship also worked until 1844 and the coincidence of its cessation at about time as the “Old Bristol Lodge” in 1843 would bear further research to see if there were common factors which led to these two events.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1856, the long running saga of the relationship of the Craft and the Mark finally came to an end with the non-confirmation, at the Quarterly Communication, of a proposal made at the previous Quarterly Communication to recognise and incorporate the Mark Degree as a part of Craft Masonry. Although it may not have seemed so at the time, this may now be considered a narrow and fortunate escape, for it forced the issue of the independent establishment of the degree, which eventually resulted in the present popular and vibrant organisation we know today. However, it has not always been thus!

### ***Canynges under Scottish Rule***

The full history of the fierce competition and occasional skulduggery that ensued between the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland and the embryonic Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England would fill a book of its own. Suffice it to say that the Grand Lodge having been founded in 1856, both bodies hastened to establish themselves as the paramount authority of Mark Masonry in England. This was the context in which the Canynges Lodge of Mark Master Masons was born. In the event, probably because the new Grand Lodge had not as yet established itself as a convincingly viable body, Bristol turned its face towards Scotland. In early 1857, three Bristol Brethren from the Moira Lodge of Honour Craft Lodge, William Harris. John Linter and Gilbert Cobb Harris, William Harris’s brother, petitioned the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland for a Charter or Warrant to hold a Mark Masters Lodge in Bristol. This having been granted the Brethren referred to, together with William Hagley Bowden of the Beaufort Craft Lodge, travelled to London to be Advanced into the degree according to Scottish custom in the St Mark’s Lodge No 1 on the roll of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland, which had been itself warranted only the previous year on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1856. The Canynges Warrant was issued on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1857 and the Lodge was dedicated at Freemasons Hall, Bridge Street on the afternoon of Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1857. The actual minute recording the occasion reads:-

*“On the afternoon of which day, the Brethren assembled in the Hall at a quarter to four o'clock, and after the Charter or Warrant had been read by the RW Master Bro William Harris, with his brethren proceeded to dedicate the Lodge to the purposes of Mark Masonry according to ancient and immemorial customs. Corn, Wine and Oil having been appropriately used, the solemn prayer of dedication was made when the RW Master ascended his chair, declared in the name of the Almighty Architect and Grand Overseer of the Universe, the Canynges Lodge of Mark Master Masons opened.”*

At that first meeting five candidates were advanced, Bro W A F Powell, Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Bristol (Craft), later Provincial Grand Master, Bro Samuel Bryant, of whom we shall hear more later, and three serving brethren - one Organist and two Tylers. On the same evening Bro William Gaylor, Grand Scribe 'E' of Scotland and three St Mark’s No 1 brethren, namely Henry George Warren, RW Master, Cornelius Jabez Hughes, Deputy RW Master and John Mott Thearle, Secretary were all elected honorary members of the Lodge. At an Emergency Meeting ten days later, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1857 Bro John Joseph Evans was advanced and at another Emergency Meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1857

Bro William Green was advanced. In the cases of Bros Bryant, Evans and Green, in accordance with a resolution passed at the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1857, each paid a fee of five shillings and sixpence so that they might receive a “*Diploma from the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland. The usual advancement fee of Two Pounds sterling in their respective cases being absolutely remitted*” on account of their previous introduction to the Mark Degree in or about the year 1843. It was largely due to this connection with the “Old Bristol Lodge” that Canynges was recognised as Time Immemorial on being received into Grand Lodge in 1874.

### **Why Canynges?**

The naming of the Lodge merits special mention at this point. The Canynges family had been long established merchants and benefactors of the City of Bristol. Evans in his Chronological Outline of the History of Bristol, says under the date 1380

*“Before this time there was a guild or fraternity called the “Fraternity of Canynges”. Deeds in the City Chamber mention a house called Canynges Lodge. In 1398 by a will dated the 25<sup>th</sup> of May John Vyell, (the first Sheriff of Bristol in 1373 and Mayor in 1388/9), gave Fraternitate de Canynges 40/- adding ‘fraternitate quae sum’.”*

William Harris was evidently influenced by this fact in choosing a name for the first regularly warranted Mark Lodge, for on one occasion he called the attention of the Lodge and especially of the newly advanced Brethren to the fact of a Canynges Lodge having existed 399 years before in this City composed of Brethren who were engaged in the restoration of St Mary Redcliffe Church who held their meetings in the old chapel of St Matthias. William Canynges, a great benefactor of St Mary Redcliffe, rebuilt this chapel in or around 1460 calling it Canynges Lodge and referring to it as “Freemasons’ Hall”.

### **The Business of the Lodge**

The Lodge continued working under its Scottish Warrant, admitting from time to time Bristol brethren who had taken the Mark degree in the original “Old Bristol” Time Immemorial Lodge. They had to be so 'regularly advanced' to comply with the precedent adopted from the Craft which, before the Union of 1813, required a brother who had been initiated under one Constitution to be 'remade' when joining a 'rival' body. The Lodge was also very active in advancing numerous other candidates, some times as many as fifteen in a single evening and having advanced thirty-four in the first seven months of its existence.

We have in excellent state of preservation a Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland certificate stating that Bro F R Geary was admitted a Mark Master in Canynges Lodge No 7 on 20 March 1862. In addition to the Hebrew and English letters these are given in French and Latin. Bro Geary became WM in 1893.

### **Daughter Lodges**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1858, six candidates, all residents of Cheltenham and members of Craft Lodge No 307 being the number then held by the Royal Union Lodge of the same town, were advanced into the Lodge. This was followed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October the same year by the consecration of our first daughter Lodge, Cheltenham & Keystone No 13. Several of our Brethren, among them William Harris RW Master, attended the meeting and assisted in the Consecration Ceremony. The Lodge was very quick to recognise the benefits of being a member lodge of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons and in 1861 it made application to affiliate. The application was granted and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1862 it received a Warrant of Confirmation and was allotted the reserved number 10 on the Roll of Grand Lodge.

A year after the consecration of Cheltenham & Keystone, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1859, a further six candidates, among them one Robert Francis Langley, all hailing from Cardiff and members of Craft Lodge No 43, were advanced into Canynges Lodge. This too was followed later in the year by the consecration of our second daughter Lodge, Langley No 16. Once again William Harris accompanied by several other Canynges brethren attended and assisted in the Ceremony. Langley held out rather longer than Cheltenham & Keystone and it was not until 1869 that it applied to join Grand Lodge. A Warrant of Confirmation was issued in 1869 and the first meeting held in January 1870.

An interesting situation arose in Langley Lodge when, earlier in 1869 some six Newport brethren were advanced as a preliminary to the formation and consecration, in that town, of a Scottish Mark Lodge to be called Keystone probably with the number 23. Before the consecration could take place, Langley had been received into the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons. Almost immediately afterwards, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1870, Bro Thomas George South, one of the original Founders of Langley who had been advanced in Canynges, wrote to the Newport brethren advising them of the passage of events and inviting them, as members, to attend again for the purpose of being confirmed into the English Constitution. This offer was evidently taken up, for the Keystone Lodge was warranted by Grand Lodge on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1870; the first granddaughter lodge of Canynges.

Since Cheltenham & Keystone was the first Mark Lodge founded in Gloucestershire, Langley the first in South Wales and Keystone the first in Monmouthshire, there is a strong likelihood that Canynges is the matriarch not only of those lodges but also of a substantial proportion of the Lodges subsequently formed in the whole of the south of Wales and Gloucestershire.

Some five years after Keystone was consecrated, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1875 a Warrant was issued by Grand Lodge authorising the Ashlar Lodge to be formed and to meet at Abergavenny. In the event, sometime after June 1875, by an endorsement to the Warrant, the Lodge was empowered to change its meeting place to the Masonic Hall, Tredegar. It was there on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1875 that its first meeting was held, with Brethren from Langley and Keystone taking the principal Offices and who thereupon proceeded to advance eight candidates. The Lodge was then Consecrated by Bro Capt S George Homfray, son of the Mayor of Newport, both of whom were members of Keystone.

### ***Scotland under siege***

As the 1860s passed by, it became increasingly clear that the English Grand Lodge was here to stay. Lodges were being warranted and consecrated at an phenomenal rate and the Scottish Lodges were becoming ever more isolated, being themselves effectively prohibited from recognising the English Constitution Lodges and thus officially precluding any kind of visiting in either direction.

An interesting consequence of this isolation occurred in 1864. It was proposed that the Lodge should contribute ten guineas to the "Royal Freemasons' School for Female Children" and "The Royal Masonic Institution for the Sons of Indigent and Deceased Freemasons" but the IPM, Bro Joseph John Evans, who was presiding at the meeting decided that it would be illegal to put the motion, as the Lodge was under the Scottish Constitution and the schools were attached to the United Grand Lodge of England. Bro Bowden explained that he was in error in supposing that the Schools were under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of England, with which view the other brethren who spoke fully concurred, and requested him once more to put the motion, which again he refused to do. The brethren then turned to the Senior Warden to put the matter to the vote and this having been done the motion was then carried with only one dissident.

In Bristol, the increasing isolation of the Lodge led to a peculiar situation in which a number of Canynges Brethren were members of both the Scottish and the English Constitutions. The most prominent of these was Samuel Bryant to whom we referred earlier. He and William Augustus Frederick Powell, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Craft, were the first two advancees into the Lodge on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1857, the day of the Lodge Consecration and he had been an active member in the early years of the Lodge. He evidently joined an English Constitution Lodge, whilst remaining a subscribing member of Canynges, because by 1870 he had been appointed Grand Master Overseer of England, an office which he appears to have held for some years afterwards.

### ***The gradual move towards England***

His name and those of other subscribing Canynges brethren appear also as Founders of the Carnarvon Lodge No 119 at Keynsham, under the English Constitution. The Warrant was dated the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1870 and the Lodge was consecrated in December 1870 with Bro Samuel Bryant as the first Master. That close connection between Bristol and Carnarvon has remained a happy circumstance ever since then and fraternal visits to and from Keynsham continue to take place annually as well as the more informal interchange by individual members of the respective lodges.

No Masonic history could be regarded as complete without some reference to the occasional events or disagreements that arise from time to time within a Lodge. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1871 the Lodge met and four Brethren were advanced. Following the ceremony, Bro Bowden, whose is described as the then Treasurer and Secretary, reported that the funds of the Lodge stood at £34–15s–10d and proposed £25 be put towards the fund for purchasing the new hall at Park Street. This was ‘warmly seconded’ by Bro Gunning and on being put to the Lodge was carried unanimously. At the next meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1871 however, Bro Bowden reported that he had called on Bro Evans, the former Treasurer but had been unable to persuade him to deliver to him the balance in hand, Bro Evans having informed him that Bro Bowden had not been legally elected Treasurer. On hearing this, the Lodge immediately passed a resolution asking the RW Master to call upon Bro Evans and inform him that it was the unanimous wish of the Brethren that he pay the balance in hand to the RW Master. At the next meeting, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1872, the RW Master informed the Brethren that he had called upon the late Treasurer and that he had positively declined to give up the funds of the Lodge alleging once more “that the Secretary Bro Bowden had not been legally elected Treasurer”. There is plainly more than meets the eye to all of this, because it would be unusual for a Brother to occupy the Offices of both Secretary and Treasurer, indeed under the English Constitution a Grand Lodge dispensation would have been required. Perhaps there had been some previous disagreement which had resulted in Bro Evan’s departure, the same Brother, incidentally as had been associated with the “Old Bristol Lodge” and involved in the minor disagreement concerning the donations to the Masonic schools. One can almost hear the murmur “nothing changes”! How the affair ended is not known, but some accommodation must have been reached for there is no further reference to the matter in the subsequent minutes.

### ***Park Street***

The move to the new Freemasons’ Hall in Park Street took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 1872. The Hall was dedicated by the Provincial Grand Master of the Craft, Lord Limerick, in the presence of some 400 Brethren. A procession was organised by the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, Bro Samuel Bryant, of whom much mention has already been made. After the consecration of the building, an eloquent oration was given by the Rev R J Simpson Past Grand Chaplain. At that time the building housed 7 Craft Lodges, 3 Chapters, Canynges Mark and the Baldwyn Encampment, only one more Lodge than at the

time of the consecration of Canynges in 1857. This compares with 36 Craft, 13 Chapters, 7 Mark, 2 Royal Ark Mariners and the Baldwyn Encampment in 2007. Notwithstanding the obvious pomp and circumstance of the building, the event seems to have passed Canynges by somewhat, for there is not a trace or reference to such anywhere in the Lodge Minutes!

### ***Negotiations with Grand Lodge***

Inevitably the abandonment of the Scottish warrant drew closer and the last meeting at which brethren were advanced under the Scottish Constitution took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1872. After the ceremonies a long discussion took place as to the desirability of affiliating to Grand Mark Lodge, and a further meeting attended by some older founder members was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 1872, at which it was finally decided to surrender the Scottish warrant, if terms for union with Grand Mark Lodge were agreeable.

The terms arranged having been considered fair and satisfactory, an English Warrant of Confirmation was therefore applied for and granted. The Lodge was denominated 'Time Immemorial' in recognition of the existence of "The Old Bristol Lodge" and given due precedence on the Roll of Mark Lodges.

The Canynges English Warrant of Confirmation was dated the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1874. It says that:-

*"It appears to the satisfaction of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons that the said petitioners, or some of them to wit the aforementioned brethren Samuel Bryant, Joseph John Evans, and William Green, with other brethren now deceased, had in time past both met and worked together as a Lodge of Mark Master Masons by time immemorial usage".*

It mentions the reception of the Scottish warrant of 1857 and the prayer for a warrant of confirmation. Bros William Harris, John Linter and Gilbert Cobb Harris, who were the first Master and Wardens under the Scottish warrant were named as the first Master and Wardens under the new Grand Lodge warrant, but Bro William Harris's health was such that he expressed a desire not to undertake the duties and the Grand Master gave consent for his brother Bro Gilbert Cobb Harris to be elected as Worshipful Master.

The election took place at a meeting on April 9 1874 at which meeting visitors could be and were received for the first time for many years. The Carnarvon Lodge sent fifteen visitors in addition to Bros Samuel Bryant, E T Inskip, GJD Eng, G F Tuckey, and J W Munro who were also 'Canynges' members.

Bro Gilbert Cobb Harris was regularly installed as Master on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1874 and Bro A Pearce who had been elected as Master at the last 'Scottish Constitution' meeting was introduced and installed to enable him to act as IPM. Bro W H Bowden was appointed an Installed Master by dispensation in recognition of the valuable service he had rendered for many years. He uniquely enjoyed the rank and privilege of a Past Master although not having presided in the chair. It was necessary at this meeting for Canynges members who had not already sworn allegiance to the Grand Mark Lodge to take the obligation, so then the Lodge was put into full working order under the English Constitution, which we have been doing harmoniously ever since. Shortly after the "regularisation" of Canynges, the rank of Past Grand Junior Warden was conferred on William Harris, Past Grand Senior Overseer on William Hagley Bowden and Past Grand Senior Deacon on William Cobb Harris, a most fitting recognition of the services rendered to Mark Masonry of these three brethren.

### ***The Promise of a Province***

During the negotiations with Grand Lodge for Canynges to transfer its allegiance, an

understanding was reached that directly a second Mark Lodge had been formed in Bristol, that City should be created a separate Province. Accordingly, in 1875 a number of Canynges brethren petitioned for the formation of a further Lodge, to be called the Baldwyn Lodge of Mark Master Masons. The petition was granted and a Warrant issued on 23 February 1875. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1875 the Baldwyn Lodge was consecrated.

True to its word, Grand Lodge quickly moved to approve the creation of the new Province, perhaps helped by the fact that the MW Grand Mark Master Mason, the Earl of Limerick, was at that time the Provincial Grand Master for Bristol in the Craft. In the event, the Assistant Grand Master, the Rev Raymond Portal came to Bristol and on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1876 installed W Bro William Arthur Frederick Powell as RW Provincial Grand Master for Bristol. RW Bro Powell then appointed and invested VW Bro Samuel Bryant PGMO as his Deputy, W Bro Gilbert Cobb Harris as Senior Warden and VW Bro William Hagley Bowden as Junior Warden. With this appointment, RW Bro Powell was then the head of every Masonic order in the Province with the exception of the Craft, of which he was the Deputy Provincial Grand Master. This anomaly was rectified in 1889 when he became also Provincial Grand Master for the Craft. He continued to serve in those capacities, with distinction and the great affection of his brethren for a further seventeen years. He died in February 1906, at the age of 92, a fortnight after presiding over Provincial Grand Lodge.

### ***The Call of the Great Overseer***

Following the formation of the Province in 1876, age began to take its toll on the elders of the Lodge. In 1879, William Harris, founder and the first Master, and one of the driving forces behind the re-establishment of Mark Masonry in Bristol died. Samuel Bryant, of equal stature in that and the future development of the Lodge passed to the Grand Lodge Above the following year. William Bowden, who had held office in the Lodge since its foundation first as Secretary and latterly as Treasurer, died four years later in 1884. Gilbert Cobb Harris, brother of William Harris and one of the four founders, died the following year.

### ***A New Century Dawns***

The next event of significance was of course, the dawn of the new century and the death of the Queen in 1901. The Provincial Grand Master RW Bro W A F Powell passed away, as we have already said, in 1906, leaving every aspect of masonry in the Province as a whole, leaderless. For Mark Masonry, this situation was quickly rectified and on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May, the then Deputy Provincial Grand Master W Bro James Roger Bramble was appointed and installed as Provincial Grand Master. Sadly, his Installation was his last appearance among the Brethren of the Mark Degree for he died in 1908 without having held another Provincial Grand Lodge. RW Bro Bramble had appointed W Bro G W Pierrepont Harris, son of William Harris, as Deputy Provincial Grand Master. Bro Pierrepont Harris had held the office of Provincial Grand Secretary continuously from 1882 until then with the exception of 1886 when he held the office of Provincial Grand Senior Warden, a total of 23 years. It was a bitter blow to the Province when he, too, died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 1910, leaving the Province in the charge of the Senior Warden.

Later in 1910 stability came to the Province once more with the appointment and investiture of RW Bro Arthur Cecil Powell as Provincial Grand Master. His tenure was to last some 39 year and be marked with the foundation of three more daughters lodges of Canynges; two Mark and one Royal Ark Mariner.

## ***Dunckerley Lodge***

First of these was Dunckerley Mark Lodge No: 630 which was warranted on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1911, 36 years after the consecration of the Baldwin Lodge.

## ***The Reappearance of Royal Ark Mariner Masonry – Harris Lodge***

The second was the Harris Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners Time Immemorial which was warranted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 1912 and consecrated on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 1912. It is interesting that although Bristol was very late in taking up Royal Ark Mariner Masonry, there is evidence that the degree was being worked as far back as 1834. The minutes of Royal Clarence Craft Lodge No 68 show that on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1834 the Lodge was closed at 8.20 pm and that on the same day “The Ark Mariners or Ark Mark and Link Masons met at ½ past eight o’clock pm and renewed the objects of the order.”

## ***The Harris Name Honoured***

The origin of the name of the Lodge will, to any reader who has persevered in reading this history up to this point, be plain. The Harris family had served Mark Masonry zealously and faithfully for a period of over 50 years and there could be no better recognition of the service they had given than by giving the Lodge their name. One suspects that there may have been some competition with the name Powell, but since there was already a Craft Lodge by that name which had been founded in 1888, no doubt it was thought equitable that the Harris name be honoured on this occasion.

We shall return to the third Lodge, Brunswick Mark, shortly.

## ***Park Street Destroyed***

The tribulations of Masonic Lodges through the war years have already been well chronicled. The Hall at Park Street was destroyed by fire in consequence of enemy action in November 1940. Today the loss seems but an unpleasant memory but this would be to ignore the dreadful blow suffered by Bristol masonry as a whole, which was the loss of the priceless records and artefacts within the building on that fateful night. W Bro Thomas (Tommy) P Langford, a member and distinguished Past Master of Canynges was appointed as Salvage Officer to see what could be recovered from the disastrous ruin of Freemasons' Hall. There was, of course, little to be found but he, together with W Bro Arthur (Scotty) Scottorn, another Canynges Past Master and W Bro Stanley Exon of Dunckerley Mark, retrieved a number of items including a silver collar jewel bearing the inscription 'Canynges Lodge No 7,' it was badly burned but was restored and is now worn by successive Masters.

The Lodges themselves, ever resourceful decamped to other meeting places. Canynges moved to the Masonic Hall at Downend for about five years before coming back to Bristol to the Brunswick Chapel premises acquired by the Province in Brunswick Square. A plaque on the wall in the hall of the Downend premises records the time spent there by Canynges and there are periodic visits by the Lodge to express the gratitude of the Lodge for the hospitality extended to it at that difficult time. Baldwin Mark moved to the Hawthorns Hotel and thence to Brunswick Square. Dunckerley Mark moved to the Constitutional Club and then in 1946 to Brunswick Square. The Harris Royal Ark Mariner Lodge moved to Yatton for about two years before returning to Bristol to the Constitutional Club and thereafter to Brunswick Square in 1946. In memory of its safe deliverance by the Yatton Brethren, Harris pays a fraternal visit to the Yatton Masonic Hall there in June each year as guests of the Lodge of Agriculture whose property it is. Links with the past are still maintained, the Masters of the Bristol Lodges keeping contact with each other and by visits to Langley, Carnarvon and Ashlar being made on a regular basis.

## ***Brunswick Square/Brunswick Mark***

In 1946, the year the premises in Brunswick Square were acquired and brought into use as a Masonic Hall, the third Lodge referred to above, Brunswick Mark was founded. The Warrant was dated the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1946 and the Lodge was consecrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1946, 35 years after the last Mark consecration, Dunckerley, in 1911.

RW Bro Arthur Cecil Powell retired in 1949 and a new era commenced with the Installation that same year of RW Bro Major Ernest John Dunscombe. The Dunscombe family were respected opticians in the City and the Dunscombe name can still be found on an optician's premises in the City Centre. It was during his tenure, in 1957, that the rebuilding and restoration of the premises at Park Street was completed and the move back to there from Brunswick Square took place. 2007 therefore not only marks the Sesquicentenary of Canynges but also the Jubilee year of the reopening of Park Street.

## ***Scottish Centenary?***

It is a mystery why, in 1957, the Lodge chose not to celebrate its Centenary under the Scottish Warrant. It is hard to believe that it was simply overlooked, but stranger things have happened. What is clear is that life and the business of the Lodge continued as normal. One Reginald John Cavill was proposed as a Candidate and was advanced into the Lodge on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1957. We shall hear more about him later.

RW Bro Dunscombe retired from office in 1959 after 10 years as Provincial Grand Master. His family had been involved in the history of Canynges since 1889. When he died on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 1963 he had been a member of Canynges for over 66 years.

His successor was, RW Bro Philip William Hort, an accountant and member of Baldwyn Mark, whose family name is likely to be better remembered in Bristol for its connection with the restaurant of the same name in Broad Street, Bristol. He was installed in 1960 and appointed Bro William Percy Mapowder as his Deputy. On W Bro Mapowder's sudden death in 1972, an Especial Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in the Canynges Lodge on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1972 for the purpose of installing his successor W Bro Arthur Aubrey Hitchin, a signal honour for the Lodge particularly since W Bro Hitchin was a Canynges member.

## ***Ernest Dunscombe Lodge***

One of RW Bro Hort's final acts before retiring from office in 1975 was the consecration of Canynges fourth daughter lodge which was founded in 1974 and commemorated in its name the previous Provincial Grand Master, RW Bro Dunscombe. The Ernest Dunscombe Lodge of Mark Master Masons was warranted on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1974 and consecrated on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1974.

## ***English Centenary***

That year also marked the Centenary of the Canynges English Constitution Warrant and was accompanied on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 1974 by a great celebration. The Order of proceedings included a service of thanksgiving in the Lord Mayors Chapel, College Green, followed by the Centenary meeting of the Lodge at the Hall in Park Street which was followed by a centenary banquet.

The following year, as we have already said, RW Bro Hort retired from office. The same year, 1975, RW Bro Eric Goodwin Simmonds MBE, a member of Canynges, was appointed and invested as Provincial Grand Master. He re-appointed W Bro Hitchin as his

Deputy.

### ***Goodwin Lodge***

1981 saw the founding of Canynge's next daughter Lodge or perhaps more strictly its granddaughter Lodge, Goodwin, for a number of the Founders came from other Lodges, particularly Brunswick. In the unwritten rules of Grand Lodge there is one which prohibits the naming of a Lodge after a living individual. How the Brethren managed to manoeuvre this one past Grand Lodge is presently a mystery, but the founding Secretary, the then W Bro Ronald Thomas Bates may in due course decide to throw some light on the matter. The Goodwin Lodge of Mark Master Masons was warranted on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1981 and consecrated on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September.

W Bro Hitchin sadly died in office in 1982 and was replaced briefly by W Bro Robert Lawson Martin and who was himself succeeded by VW Bro Alan Lloyd Fowler as Deputy two years later in 1984.

In the latter stages of his term of office, RW Bro Simmonds suffered from ill health and eventually retired from office in 1988.

### ***Dunckerley Lodge of Royal Ark Mariners***

The Installation of RW Bro Ronald Thomas Bates in 1988, who had previously served as Provincial Grand Secretary for some years, heralded a change of direction for Mark Masonry in Bristol. Under his leadership, the Mark showed a substantial increase in popularity due partly to the introduction of social events involving the wives and families of the Brethren and partly to a resurgence of interest in the Mark ritual and ceremonial. In April 1989 a second Royal Ark Mariner Lodge, Dunckerley, was formed, the Warrant being dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 1989 and the Consecration in No 1 Lodge Room on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April.

### ***Bristol Installed Mark Masters Lodge***

This was closely followed by the Bristol Installed Mark Masters Lodge which was warranted on Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1994 and consecrated the same day. In a radical departure from the past, membership of the Lodge was thrown open to Brethren of our neighbouring Provinces. A further feature, novel for its time, is that its meetings are always held on a Saturday morning followed by lunch with the ladies. This Lodge meets four times a year and apart from the Installation Meeting, speakers are invited to deliver talks of Masonic interests. Where circumstances permit, ladies and non-masons are invited to be present at the talk.

In 1996 RW Bro Bates retired in favour of RW Bro Ronald Stanley Smith his Deputy, under whose rule the Lodges in the Province continued to prosper. In 2002 his place was taken by his Deputy, RW Bro Norman William Cavvell who continues the good work of his predecessors in promoting the interests of Mark Masonry in general and of course, the Lodges in the Province of Bristol in particular.

### ***Lodge Records***

Whilst many of early minute books have been lost, we still have the first two and we also have preserved the original by-laws. All these records are meticulously written in Copperplate and the prose, particularly that of William Harris, our founding Master, is an example to us all of the beauty that can be achieved in our language. We are still using the original Register of Members and from this book we can see that since our formation we have advanced over 700 brethren. It is fascinating to study the complete list as it contains the

names of the many who gave and continue to give loyal and generous service particularly to our Lodge, Canynges, but also to Masonry in general.

### ***Epilogue***

We have found that research into the history of an ancient Lodge tends to result in ever more avenues of approach opening up as each byway is explored. Canynges is no exception to this rule. The dilemma for us was more often what to leave out rather than what to put in. There are, too, periods in our history when nothing much of note seemed to happen, leading to what some may consider a lopsided view of our subject. In presenting this history we have taken the deliberate approach of trying to leave out what is not interesting and focussing our attention on what is. We are not historians but rather chroniclers, or raconteurs of matters of common interest. We hope you have enjoyed reading what we have written and if you have then we are satisfied that we have achieved what we set out to do.

VW Bro John Platts PGJO DepProvGM of Bristol  
W Bro George Paskins PPrGMO Secretary  
Canynges Lodge of Mark Master Masons – Time Immemorial Constitution  
19<sup>th</sup> of September 2007

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