

R.W. Bro. David Nigel Hanson
Provincial Grand Master

**Report of the Provincial Grand Secretary
to the Provincial Grand Lodge of
Mark Master Masons of Durham**

Brethren, I present my sixth Report to the Mark Provincial Grand Lodge of Durham. As you will see from the items listed below, the return to Masonic Meetings after the lockdowns due to Covid has continued, with a healthy number of advances during the last 12 months. As usual, I can announce that the general administration of the Province has continued to the normal set deadlines, and I rely on the various Lodge Secretaries to assist me in those matters, and I thank them all for their support over the last year.

Lodge Visits (20).

The Provincial Grand Master very much appreciates the support from his Team of Active Provincial Officers which has enabled him to accept invitations to make Provincial Team Visits to the following Mark Lodges:

Eclectic 39; Darlington Steadfast 250; Dunelm 356; Auckland 596; Bede 605; Harte 740; Hackworth 761; Unity 827; St. Andrew's 854; Bernard Gilpin 860; Ernest Dixon 1015 (Return of Warrant; Penshaw 1055; Walton 1106; Elevation 1112; Cestria 1151; Ambrose Crowley 1269; Durham Lodge of Installed Mark Masters 1492; Ferryhill 1560 (Wardens Night); George Washington 1626; Ryton 1714.

Installations.

Over the last 10 months, numerous Lodges have held their Installation Meeting, at which the Provincial Grand Master has been represented by a cohort of willing volunteers from amongst the Provincial Wardens and the Grand Lodge Officers. I am indebted to them all for completing their Report Forms conscientiously, speedily, and to a high standard.

Visits to other Provinces.

Since our last Annual Meeting, the Provincial Grand Master has attended, or has been represented by members of his Senior Team, at the Annual Meetings of other Provinces as listed below:

West Yorkshire (MBF Festival Dinner); Northumberland; North & East Yorkshire; Cheshire; Lincolnshire; Nottinghamshire; Derbyshire; West Yorkshire; West Lancashire; East Lancashire; Worcestershire; North Wales; Cumberland & Westmorland.

In addition, there have been 4 trips to Grand Lodge (London), all of which were attended by many members of the Province; the Provincial Secretary has represented the Province at both meetings of the Provincial Grand Secretaries' Lodge (Warwick & Wokingham); and there has been a large Durham presence at both meetings of the Grand Stewards' Lodge (London).

Mark Grand Lodge Honours.

With effect from Tuesday, 11th June 2024, the Most Worshipful Grand Master has been pleased to make the following appointments to Brethren from this Province:

Deputy Grand Sword Bearer	Russell Wayne Rumley, Bede Lodge 605
Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies	Ronald Calderwood Black, Ambrose Crowley Lodge 1269
Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies	Robert John Donmall, Penshaw Lodge 1055
Past Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies	Ian Heaviside, Bernard Gilpin Lodge 860

With effect from Tuesday, 10th September 2024, the Most Worshipful Grand Master will be pleased to promote the following Brethren from this Province:

Past Grand Master Overseer	Roy Norman Neville, Ravensworth Union Lodge 124
Past Grand Junior Deacon	Robin Francis Knight, Hackworth Lodge 761
Past Grand Junior Deacon	Michael James Wilkinson, Hackworth Lodge 761

Congratulations are extended to all the above, with the wish that they have good health to enjoy their preferment, and the determination to continue to work hard for the betterment of the Order.

Other Events.

Several presentations of 50 year Certificates were carried out during the year, and we congratulate the recipients on their long service to the Order.

In September, a good number of members of the Province visited Grand Lodge the Promotions meeting, and it was very pleasing to see such support for the recipients. Again, we were well represented at the Grand Lodge business meeting in March, and we again finished with a tremendous turn-out of members at the First Appointments' meeting in June.

Saturday, 2nd December saw the Grand Officers' Dinner (Mark & RAM) held at Ferryhill. It was very pleasing to see this event so well supported, and a thoroughly enjoyable and most convivial evening was had by all. March again saw the Annual Wardens' Dinner held at Ferryhill Masonic Chambers. A good number of Past Wardens of the Province were in attendance, showing that this continues to be a very popular event. Both of these events were excellent evenings organised by John Dodds and John Nye, to whom we are most grateful.

Membership (all figures are taken as at 31st December 2023).

As of 31st December 2023, the number of memberships has fallen from 929 to 915 during the calendar year. During 2023, we have lost a net total of 14 memberships as compared to 53 in the previous year. This represents a decrease of 1.51% over the last year. However, the loss of memberships is higher than the number of members lost, as many of the 36 resignations listed were from members withdrawing from multiple memberships due to age and financial constraints. Indeed, we do have signs for optimism – with 45 new advances having joined the Order since our last Annual Meeting.

Clearly, however, 'resignations' continue to be an issue. All resignations are supposed to be followed up by contact from either the Deputy or the Assistant P.G.M., and it is imperative that details of all intended resignations are sent to Province as soon as Lodge Secretaries are informed of them – a follow-up phone call is useless several weeks later.

No.	Lodge	Installation 2022	Adv.	Join	Res.	Died	Exclud.	Hon Mem.	Total Members Installation 2023
M39	Eclectic	23	1	1	1	0	0	0	24
M122	Percy	19	2	0	0	1	0	0	20
M124	Union	24	2	0	2	0	0	0	24
M250	Darlington Steadfast	30	3	3	3	2	0	0	31
M293	Industry	20	1	0	0	0	0	0	21
M356	Dunelm	37	1	0	3	0	0	1	34
M362	Wouldhave T.D.	32	1	1	0	1	1	0	32
M596	Auckland	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	16
M605	Bede	21	4	1	0	0	0	0	26
M701	Jarrow	26	1	0	6	0	0	0	21
M718	Ravensworth	20	0	1	0	0	0	0	21
M740	Harte	21	3	0	1	2	0	0	21
M761	Hackworth	32	0	2	1	0	0	0	33
M778	Barnard Castle	21	0	1	0	0	0	0	22
M827	Unity	17	0	2	0	0	0	0	19
M854	St Andrews	28	0	4	0	1	0	1	30
M860	Bernard Gilpin	23	1	2	1	2	0	2	21
M896	Clavering	24	0	1	4	1	0	0	20
M925	Moseley	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
M929	William Todd	25	1	1	2	4	0	0	21
M981	Spennymoor	21	0	0	0	1	0	1	19
M1055	Penshaw	14	0	0	1	1	0	0	12
M1093	St Lawrence	13	2	2	0	1	0	0	16
M1106	Walton	24	0	1	1	0	0	0	24
M1112	Elevation	16	0	2	0	0	0	0	18
M1145	St Aidan	13	0	0	0	1	0	0	12
M1151	Cestria	46	2	2	1	0	0	1	48
M1269	Ambrose Crowley	31	1	0	2	2	0	0	28
M1271	Sportsman's	39	2	0	0	0	0	1	40
M1492	Durham Lodge IMM	38	0	2	1	1	0	0	38
M1551	Stanhope	26	0	0	1	1	0	0	24
M1560	Ferryhill	25	1	2	1	3	0	0	24
M1626	George Washington	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
M1714	Ryton	29	0	0	0	3	0	1	25
M1806	Chief of the Builders	68	1	3	2	1	0	2	67
M1820	DLPGStewards	17	0	0	1	2	1	0	13
M1936	Indaba	18	1	1	0	1	0	0	19
	Totals	929	31	35	36	32	2	10	915
			Adv.	Join	Res.	Died	Exclud.	Hon Mem.	

Conclusion.

Brethren, I present my report for your information and consideration. As is usual in these Reports, my grateful thanks go to all the Lodge Secretaries for their help and assistance during the last 12 months, and I am sure they will continue the good work in their Lodges.

Particular thanks go to my Deputy Provincial Secretary W.Bro. Graham Wharton, my Assistant Provincial Secretary, W.Bro. Ian Heaviside, and the Provincial Registrar, W.Bro. David Battensby. They have all executed their roles most efficiently, and I am indebted to them all. Sadly we bid farewell to W.Bro. Ian. We wish him well in his new role within the Province, and we look forward to welcoming W.Bro. Stephen Newell to the 'team'.

Brethren, our annual expedition to the Lancastrian Suite in June is fast approaching. I am sure it will again prove to be a great success, and I look forward to seeing a great number of you there. I am confident that everyone will have a most enjoyable day. So, for now, Brethren, I wish you all well, and may the Great Overseer of the Universe look kindly upon you all, and grant you good health throughout the coming year.

Obituary.

The Province has suffered the loss of many Mark Brethren, whose names are recorded below. We acknowledge the service they gave to the Order in general, and to this Province in particular.

W.Bro. Ralph Lightfoot	P.P.G.J.W.	William Todd Lodge 929
W.Bro. John Iddon Smiles	P.A.G.St.B.	Castle Eden Lodge 930
W.Bro. Geoffrey Whiteman	P.G.J.D.	Bernard Gilpin Lodge 860
W.Bro. William Duck	P.P.G.M.O.	Darlington Steadfast Lodge 250
W.Bro. Alan Willis	P.P.G.J.W.	Clavering Lodge 896
W.Bro. Louis Maurice Keats	P.G.J.D.	Chief of the Builders Lodge 1806
W.Bro. John Barnett	P.P.G.M.O.	Moseley Lodge 925
W.Bro. Langton Woodhouse	P.A.G.D.C.	Bernard Gilpin Lodge 860
W.Bro. William Hall	P.P.G.Stwed. (Bucks)	Ravensworth Union Lodge 124
W.Bro. William Brass	P.P.G.I.G.	Unity Lodge 827
Bro. Thomas Iles	P.P.G.Swd.B.	Dunelm Lodge 356
Bro. Hugh Dorans		St. Andrew's Lodge 854
W.Bro. Ronald Beedle	P.P.G.S.W.	William Todd Lodge 929
W.Bro. Frederick Alan Peat Beales	P.G.J.D.	Wouldhave Tyne Dock Lodge 362
W.Bro. Ronald Leslie Bean	P.P.G.J.W.	Cestria Lodge 1151
W.Bro. John Phelps Hodgson		Spennymoor Lodge 981
W.Bro. John Reginald Bayles	P.G.J.D.	Barnard Castle Lodge 788
W.Bro. William Norwood	P.A.G.St.B.	George Washington Lodge 1626
W.Bro. Frederick John Francis Rooney	P.P.G.J.O.	Eclectic Lodge 39

**“THEY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS, AND THEIR GOOD WORKS DO
FOLLOW THEM. THANKS BE TO GOD, THEY HAVE MARKED WELL”**

**Allan Gurney P.G.J.D.,
Provincial Grand Secretary, 1st June 2024**