

Mark Masonry in Lancaster in 1826 !!

There are always 'more questions than answers !!

During my researches into the men behind the names on the Old Lodge and Chapter Warrants found in Lancaster Masonic Hall. I have 'discovered' a note fixed inside the back cover of the Minute Book (commencing 1826) for the Lodge of Fortitude No 527 (later No 281) which may be of interest as it states:

Lodge Night called for Mark Masonry

14th August 1826

Present:	T.D. W.M.	T.W. Ty ^{lr}
	J.H. S.W.	M.H. P.M.
	R.G. J.W.	Bro. Ed ^{wd} Evans No 659 Perseverance

In consequence of the desire of several brothers belonging to our Lodge (*Fortitude*) being wishful to take the degree of a Mark Master Mason. Bro. Edward Evans of No 659 Perseverance in Blackburn being over here at the assizes he kindly offered to officiate on the occasion. None of the brethren here considering themselves able to undertake that office.

The ceremony was then duly performed and Bro's T Woodburne, W Whalley and R^d Garndner took the degree in presence of the other brothers who were Mark Masons.

Mark of:	T Woodburne.	
	W Whalley.	
	R ^t Gardner.	(With three roughly drawn Marks)

Note the comment: 'in presence of the other brothers who were Mark Masons' ! The Mark Degree being 'outlawed' by Grand Lodge at the Union in 1813. News obviously travelled slow in those days (or did it !!). The first Mark Lodge in Lancaster was Moore now Garnett Mark No 146 which was consecrated in 1872 (or was it ?).

From the list of Fortitude members shown in the minute book I can deduce that the Officers were:

WM:	Thomas Dewhurst.	Tyler:	Thomas Woodburne.
SW:	John Hamilton.	P.M.:	Michael Harrison.
JW:	Robert Gardner		

We haven't always done it that way !! Group Chairman.