

BEWDLEY LODGE OF ANTIENT MASONS.

No. 107

The Lodge was formed on 27th. December 1762 to meet at the Wheatsheaf, Bewdley.

The Wheatsheaf was situated in Load Street on the left of the Church and today is used as the Bewdley Club and Institute. The front of the building is possibly Victorian, but the rear is still part of the antient building.

At the time of the formation of the Lodge the Inn was a well known Coaching House and one can still see the remains of the Stables and I believe that the rooms now used as a workshop by W. Bro Geddie were harness rooms.

In 1762 Bewdley was one the most thriving Boroughs in the Midlands as it was then used as the main port for the shipment of goods from the Midland industries to the Severn ports.

You will notice from the attached letters from the Grand Lodge Librarian that by the 1790s the Lodge had ceased to function. This was without doubt due to Brindley's Canal using Stourport. The trade of Bewdley was therefore transferred to its neighbours the result being that many of the business houses closed and many influential residents moved from the town. Those who remained were unable to keep a Masonic Lodge. 1797 was the end of the third oldest Lodge of Worcestershire.

The revival of Masonry in this Antient Borough came about with the foundation of The Ribbesford Lodge No. 7696 in 1960 and now meeting at Stourport.

J. B. Jewell



UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND,
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM.

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FREEMASONS' HALL,
GREAT QUEEN STREET,
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23rd November 1973.

Dear Sir and Brother,

In reply to your letter of the 17th November I regret that there are no further details available in the records here of Joseph Bradley.

Warrant No. 107 (Antients) was issued on the 27th December 1762 for a lodge to meet at the Wheatsheaf, Bewdley. The last payment of dues to Grand Lodge was made in 1788 and from correspondence preserved in the Grand Lodge Library it is apparent that by the 1790s the lodge was in difficulties and it went out of existence altogether about the middle of 1797. The Warrant itself appears to have been retained by the Secretary and it was not until 1805 that he got around to returning it to Grand Lodge where it was received on the 27th December 1805.

In accordance with practice at that time (the Unlawful Societies Act of 1799 being for some years interpreted as precluding the issue of new warrants), Warrant No. 107 was in December 1806 issued to a group of brethren to form a lodge at Newark in Trent, Nottinghamshire. It was finally returned to Grand Lodge early in 1813 and is still preserved in the archives in the Library. It bears on the reverse an endorsement recording its reissue to the brethren at Newark.

I am sending herewith transcripts of two letters preserved here which throw some light on the disappearance of the lodge at Bewdley.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

Librarian and Curator.

W.Bro. F.C. Perrett, P.A.G.D.C.,
30 Trimpley Lane,
Bewdley, Worcs.

R. Worshipful Bror.

Bewdley 7th September 1797.

I am directed by Bror. George Perry, to acknowledge the receipt of yours under date 7th. June last, but did not come to his Hands until the 24th ultimo, I am also desired to express to you his thanks for the repeated informations received from you relative to the state of the Grand Lodge of A.M.

We should not have continued so long silent upon the Business, but Lodge No. 107 has been gradually diminishing in its Members for some Years, which, (together with the many demands that have been made upon it) has put ~~it out of~~ it out of our power to make any contribution to the Grand Lodge.

We have at times entertained hopes that our Lodge would increase in numbers, and enable us to make suitable contributions, but alas! (owing to a recent misunderstanding) it has been discontinued upwards of three Months, and I am truly sorry to say there is no probability of meeting again; thus circumstanced, I am with great regret obliged to say, any further correspondence with Lodge 107, will be unnecessary.

With best wishes for the prosperity of the Craft, I remain,
Worshipful Bror. Your affectionate Bror.

John Lewis

late Secretary.

Sir,

I am under the painful necessity of enclosing to you the Warrant of Lodge 107 as, (owing to the Death of some of the Members and others leaving the Town to reside at too great a distance from us) the Lodge has not been attended for several Years past.

This information I understood was transmitted to you long since, if it was not, I must beg your forgiveness for the omission.

With best wishes for the Prosperity of the Craft, I remain most respectfully,

Sir, Your Obedt. Servant,
John Lewis.

Bewdley 23rd December 1805.

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At the January 1937 meeting the W.M. was presented with a Masonic Million Memorial Special Collector's Jewel, making the fourth held in this Lodge, which was unique in the Province. The Lodge had subscribed £1,050 (one thousand guineas). Also at this meeting the silver salver which had been presented to Bro. W. Littler in 1934 on his retirement as Tyler, was presented by Bro. Littler to the Lodge, and this was subsequently handed to the Moseley Masonic Hall Co., who agreed to find a suitable place to exhibit it.

The W.M. of the Mother Lodge, Hope and Charity presented to the Lodge a copy of the original circular of the Consecration Meeting of the Lechmere Lodge in 1881.



On 1st September 1937 the Moseley Masonic Hall, Alcester C.D. Eaton had, in June, 1937, Worcester in the Mar where the sum of £11,000 personal list of £1,604 was.

At the November meeting donated to the Equipment for W.M., S.W., and J.W. and name tablets of the Lod

At the December meeting, with six silver Stewards' C photograph was presented to S.E. James, Asst. G.Std.B. ector for the Million Mem given to him by the Brethr such high honour.

In March 1939, the Treasu rising cost, to increase the s £1.10.0. for Country Membr

In April the Festival of Gro of the Lodge, with the W.I Patria No. 4144, St. Nichol No. 5224, James Watt No J.W., S.D., J.D., I.G. respec Wor. Prov. Grand Master, G K.C.V.O., V.L., delivered th The dining cost was 8/6d. e: Grand Lodge Clothing (une W. Bro. F. Wilde and W. Br oured with Grand Rank.

In May 1939 at an Emergen conducted with members o offices.