

Extracts of interesting items from the First Minute Book of the Halas Abbey Lodge No 5407 which commenced on 11th May 1933 and ended on 13th April 1944.

These extracts have been made and vouched for by Worshipful Brother S. H. Davis.

The Lodge was founded by 22 Founders and was Consecrated on 11th May 1933 by the Rt. Wor. Bro. Gen. Sir Francis J. Davies, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., D.L., P.G.D., Prov. Grand Master.

Assisted by

Wor. Bro. W. T. Page, P.G.D., Dep. P.G.M., and 8 other Provincial Grand Officers.

21 of the Founders were present at the Consecration of the Lodge. Wor. Bro. H. Sowden was the first Master and bro. W. Merrick and Bro. A. T. Shuter were the first Wardens.

11 of the Founders have left the Lodge.

1 by death. 1 by exclusion and 9 by resignation.
2 of the 9 who resigned have since died.

8 of the Founders have occupied the Chair of the Lodge and have between them initiated 38 brethren as follows:

Wor. Bro. H. Sowden	10
" " W. Merrick	7
" " A. T. Shuter	4
" " L. Howles	4
" " J. H. Weinwright	3
" " G. A. Mansill	3
" " W. H. [unclear]	3
" " G. Greenfield	4

3 of the Founders have attained Grand Lodge Honours and 9 have received Provincial Grand Lodge Honours.

Three initiates of the Lodge have occupied the Chair and between them have initiated 11 brethren as follows:

Wor. Bro. S. H. Davis	4
" " F. B. Sheldon	5
" " E. B. Palmer	2

Thus 49 brethren have been initiated into the Lodge and there have been 5 joining members.

One Worshipful Master missed one meeting during his term of Office.

There have been 2 Worshipful Masters who have occupied the Chair of another Lodge during the year of Office in this Lodge namely Wor. Bro. G. A. Mansill and Wor. Bro. S. H. Davis.

The Minute Book covers 97 Meetings, being 87 Regular Meetings, 9 Emergency Meetings and 1 Special Meeting.

The Special Meeting was held to consider moving the Lodge from the Old Drill Hall to the new Masonic Hall.

The 9 Emergency meetings were held to expedite the completion of candidates degrees so that successive Masters should not have an accumulation of ceremonies to undertake for their Predecessors in Office.

During the period 76 Brethren have been members of the Lodge and at the end of the period there were 54 Subscribing Members and 4 Honorary Members.

3 Members have died, 17 have resigned or have been excluded.

1 Subscribing Member was made an Honorary Member.

1 Man was proposed, balloted for and declared elected but was never initiated.

The Total attendance of Lodge Members at the 97 Meetings was 2751 being an average attendance of 28 per meeting.

The Total attendance of Visitors at the 97 Meetings was 1123 being an average attendance of 11 per meeting.

The Total attendance of Visitors and Members at the 97 Meetings was 3874 being an average of 40 per meeting.

The Provincial Grand Master has visited the Lodge on 3 occasions.

The Deputy Provincial Grand Master has visited the Lodge 13 times and the

Assistant Provincial Grand Master 4 times whilst the Provincial Grand Secretary has been 3 times.

The Deputy Provincial Grand Master Wor. Bro. W. T. Page died during the first year of the Lodge and was succeeded by Wor. Bro. Alfred Allen.

No Meeting of the Lodge has been attended by the whole of the Members.

There are 4 Members of the Lodge with 100% attendance.

5 Brethren are serving in H.M. Forces.

Amongst the Members are a Father and two sons, a Father and one son and 3 pairs of blood brothers.

One W. M. has initiated his son, one W. M. has initiated his blood brother.

One Member of the Lodge proposed his Father. There have been 10 twin initiation ceremonies and every initiate has completed his 3 degrees.

Every Master of the Lodge except one has the Grand Lodge Charity Jewel. The Total of the Charity Box Collection over the 97 Meetings was £378. 7. 9d. being an average of £3. 18. 0d. per Meeting or 1s. 11½d. per Member present.

The Charity Steward has collected £1479. 11. 4d. in General collections and £687. 12. 0d. in Tontines a Grand Total of £2167. 3. 4d. since the first Meeting to the end of the 97th Meeting which is an average of £40. 2. 6d. per member.

Wor Bro S.H. DAVIS 97 out of 97
Bro F. DRAMELY 18 " " 18
" J BONEHILL 12 " " 12
" W. KIMBERLEY 4 " " 4

These funds have been dispensed as follows;

Provincial Charity Organisation	£ 480.	18.	0.
Royal Masonic Institution for Girls	370.	13.	0.
" " " " Boys	192.	3.	0.
Worcestershire Prov. Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund.	170.	7.	0.
Royal Masonic Hospital	157.	1.	4.
Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution	151.	3.	0.
Midland Waifs and Strays League	90.	8.	0.
Charity Jewels and Stewards Badges	68.	5.	5.
National Deaf Blind Helpers League	49.	11.	0.
Royal Masonic Hospital Samaritan Fund	38.	11.	0.
Masonic Million Memorial Fund	31.	10.	0.
Worcestershire War Relief Fund	20.	0.	0.
Merchant Navy Comforts Fund	10.	10.	0.
W. T. Page Memorial Fund	10.	10.	0.
Lord Mayor of Birmingham War Relief Fund	5.	5.	0.
Mark Master Masons Festival	5.	5.	0.
Royal Orphanage Wolverhampton	5.	0.	0.
Royal Air Force Pilots and Crews Fund	4.	4.	0.
Warley N.S.P.C.C.	4.	2.	0.
Birmingham Mail Christmas Tree Fund	4.	2.	0.
Halesowen Committee for War Comforts	3.	3.	0.
Halesowen Church Restoration Fund	1.	6.	6.
Gresford Colliery Relief Fund	2.	2.	0.
Quetta Rebuilding fund	1.	1.	0.

A Lodge Building Fund was formed but this was eventually changed into the Halas Abbey Lodge 5407 Benevolent Fund and at the end of the period contained almost £1,000 which has not been reckoned in the foregoing Charity Collections.

The Lodge moved from the Drill Hall to the Masonic Hall on 10th of October 1935.

King George V died.

King George VI was invested as Past Grand Master and the Grand Master H.R.H. The Duke of Kent was killed on active service and was succeeded by the Earl of Harewood.

A Lodge of Instruction was formed in the first year and has functioned ever since.

The Ceremonies and Work of the Lodge have been given high praise by the Visiting Officers.

At installations Wor. Bro. A. T. Shuter has given the address to the Wardens on 2 occasions.

Wor. Bro. J. H. Wainwright has given the address to the Brethren on 1 occasion.

The Initiation Ceremony when not carried out by the Worshipful Master himself has been done by Past Masters on 3 occasions, once each by Wor. Bros. Sowden, Wainwright and Ward.

The 2nd Ceremony has been carried out by Past Masters on 17 occasions, by:

Wor. Bro. H. Sowden	5	Times.
" " E. Baildon	3	"
" " S.H. Davis	3	"
" " J. Jeffcoate	2	"
" " A.T. Shuter	2	"
" " W. Merrick	1	"
" " W.H. Ward*	1	"

The 3rd Ceremony has been performed by Past Masters 25 times as follows:

The first half by:

Wor. Bro. E. Baildon	10	Times
" " W. Merrick	5	"
" " A. T. Shuter	4	"
" " H. Sowden	2	"
" " J. Jeffcoate	1	
" " J. H. Wainwright	1	
" " G. F. Greenfield	1	
" " G. A. Mansill	1	

The second half by:

Wor. Bro. H. Sowden	10	times
" " A. T. Shuter	8	"
" " J. Jeffcoate	4	
" " E. Baildon	2	
" " J. H. Wainwright	1	

The first Tracing Board has been explained 11 times.

by Bro. Kirkby	1
" Edwards	1
" Davis	1
" Cowe	1

The second Tracing Board has been explained 8 times.

by Bro. Palmer	3	Times
" Hughes	2	"
" Edwards	2	"
" Davis	1	

The 1st Section of the 1st Lecture was rendered by Bro. S. H. Davis and Bro. E. B. Palmer.

The 5th Section of the 1st Lecture was rendered by Bro. H. G. Pinner and Bro. H. Hughes.

The 6th Section of the 1st Lecture was rendered by Bro. W. Boughton and Bro. F. B. Sheldon

The Charge has been delivered 5 times by Brethren other than the Regular Junior Warden, by:

Wor. Bro. J. H. Wainwright	3	Times
Bro. H. Hughes	1	
Bro. W. Cowe	1	

The Working Tools of the 3 degrees have been explained by the following Brethren not occupying the Chair:

Bro. Davis	3	Bro. Davis	3	Bro. Sheldon	4
" Wilkes	2	" Kirby	3	" Hughes	3
" Penny	2	" Palmer	2	W. " Wainwright	2
" Wheldon	1	" Hughes	2	" Cowe	1
" Siviter	1	" Cowe	2	W. " Mansill	1
" Couch	1	W. " Sowden	1	" Staunton	1
" D. H. Robbins	1			" Davis	1
W. " Sowden	1				
W. " Shuter	1				
W. " Greenfield	1				
" Morris	1				

The Lodge was closed by the Worshipful Master and Wardens of our Mother Lodge the Perseverance Lodge No.573 on 2 occasions.

The Lodge made a gift of a Secretary's Desk to the Lodge of Perseverance and the

Lodge of Instruction made a gift of Candle Holders to the Lodge of Perseverance 573.

The undermentioned gifts have been received by the Lodge:

Freehold Land	from	Bro. A.T. Shuter
Kneeling Cushions	"	Mrs. Shuter
Kneeling Stool	"	Bro. Percy Towlin
£100	"	" W. Merrick
Enlarged Photograph of the Founders	"	" Greenfield
Community Song Books and Music	"	" Hickman
Volume of the Sacred Law	"	Mrs. Sowden
Ballot Box	"	Wor.Bro. h. Sowden
Meridian Clock	"	Bro. T. Gower King
Set of Gavels	"	Bro. G. Emery.
Set of Gavels	"	Mrs. Mansill

A Photograph of every Worshipful Master is mounted in the Minute Book also a copy of every Lodge Circular and a copy of each Receipt and Expenditure account.

Resolutions.

11. 3. 33.

Resolved that the By Laws of the Lodge be adopted.

12. 10. 33.

Resolved that a banking account be opened in the name of the Lodge at Bearwood Branch of Barclays Bank and that Bro. McWhirter be authorised to draw on same as required in respect to all Lodge Payments.

Resolved that the Secretary forward a letter to the Rt. Wor. Prov. Gd. Master (through the P.G. Secretary) expressing the congratulations of the Lodge on his successful journey to the U.S.A.

Resolved that the Secretary be instructed to write to the Secretary of the Perseverance Lodge offering our sincere thanks to the W.M. Wardens and Members of our Mother Lodge also telling them how deeply we appreciate their assistance for all they have done towards the forming of this Lodge.

The Secretary announced that the Past Masters and Officers of the Lodge had decided that the Visitors fee should be 7s. 6d.

The Past Masters had decided that the Wor. Master and his successors should be allowed an average of 2 Visitors at each regular Meeting and 6 at the Installation Meeting these Visitors to be at the expense of the Lodge.

11. 1. 34.

Resolved that when a Brother desired to propose anyone for initiation into this Lodge the proposer should notify the Secretary in writing of such proposition with full particulars and should also arrange to be in attendance in company with the seconder at a notified meeting of the Past Masters and Officers of the Lodge.

12. 11. 36.

Resolved that the subscription to Prov. Grand Lodge Benevolent Fund be raised to 5s. per Member per annum.

11. 2. 37.

Resolved that the Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407 join the Worcestershire Associated Masonic Lodges Group 4.

11. 11. 37.

Resolved that in future Visitors fees at Installation shall be 10s. 6d. and at ordinary meetings 7s. 6d. The Worshipful Master shall be allowed 6 Visitors at the Installation Meeting and 2 Visitors at Ordinary Meetings free of all fees.

11. 11. 37.

Resolved that a sum of money sufficient to cover the Lodges Contribution towards the expenses of entertainment of Provincial Grand Lodge at Dudley on 30th October 1937 by Group 4 of the Worcestershire Associated Masonic Lodges be paid from the Lodge funds.

14. 11. 40.

Resolved that the Building Fund of the Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407 be closed and the Monies transferred to form a Benevolent Fund of Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407.

12. 12. 40.

Resolved that Wor. Bro. Henry Sowden P. P. G. P., Wor. Bro. A. T. Shuter P. J. G. D., and Wor. Bro. W. C. Howard, P. P. G. T., be appointed trustees of the Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407 Benevolent Fund.

13. 2. 41.

Resolved that the signature of the Treasurer only would be sufficient on all cheques made out on behalf of Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407 in accordance with the provisions of Rule 153 of the Book of Constitutions 1940.

10. 7. 41.

Resolved that By Law No. 4 be amended by the substitution of the sum of £3. 3. 0d. for the sum of £10. 10. 0d. in respect of the re-joining of a former member.

Resolved that in future owing to increase costs of M. M's Regalia all candidates would be required to pay for their own Regalia.

14. 5. 42.

Resolved that the Subscription of Brethren serving with H.M. Forces be reduced to £1. 10. 0d. per annum, a dining fee to be payable when attending.

8. 3. 34.

Resolved that no one shall be proposed in open Lodge either as a candidate for initiation or as a joining member unless he has been visited by at least one Past Master and one Warden of the Lodge or two Past Masters of the Lodge and such visitation to be reported upon to the Past Masters and Officers at their next meeting after such visitation, the references approved of at that meeting and the Confidential Circular forwarded to the whole of the Brethren.

Resolved that an Official Lodge of Instruction be formed in connection with this Lodge.

10. 5. 34.

Resolved that the Founders account at Barclays Bank Pearwood Branch be closed and the balance handed over to Wor. Bro. W. C. Howard, Temple Steward to open an account at the same bank in the name of Halas Abbey Lodge Building Fund.

8. 11. 34.

Resolved that £150 be transferred from the Lodge fund to the Building Fund and that the Temple Steward be requested to invest the amount standing to the credit of the Building Fund in Trustee Stock and that the Wor. Master for the time being and the Treasurer confer with him on this matter.

14. 3. 35.

Resolved that the land belonging to the Lodge at Quinton be sold to the highest bidder and the proceeds paid into the Lodge Building Fund account.

18. 10. 35.

Resolved that the Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407 transfer the Lodge from the Masonic Rooms Halesowen Drill Hall to the Masonic Hall Newfields Halesowen.

9. 1. 36.

Resolved that the words "any brother being in arrears at the Regular Lodge Meeting held in April shall not be appointed to any Office in the Lodge" be added to paragraph No. 4 of the By Laws.

1. 12. 36.

Resolved that £150 be transferred from the Lodge funds to the Building Fund.

16. 5. 36.

Resolved that Right Worshipful Bro. General Sir Francis Davies K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., D.L., P.G.D., P.P.G.W. Deputy Grand Master and Prov. Grand Master Worcestershire, and Worshipful Bro. Alfred Allen P.G.D., P.P.G.W., Deputy Prov. Grand Master.

The Very Worshipful Bro. Seth S. Somers Past Grand Treasurer, and Worshipful Bro. W. D. Abbiss Past A.G. St.B., be elected as Honorary Members of this the Halas Abbey Lodge No. 5407