



The History of the Founding

of

The HOWE Lodge

and its first 50 years

1851 - 1901

*Original Dedication*

*To the Brethren of the Howe Lodge,  
This Sketch of the History of the  
Lodge, compiled from the Minute books and  
contemporary records is inscribed in the  
hope that it may prove of some interest  
to them on the occasion of the Jubilee  
celebration of the Lodge.*

*A. D. BROOKS, JW  
7th January, 1901*



**Sir Arthur David Brooks GBE**

**Initiated 11th December 1895**  
Steward 1897  
Senior Deacon 1898  
Secretary 1899  
Junior Warden 1900  
Senior Warden 1901  
**Worshipful Master 1902**  
Lord Mayor of Birmingham 1917-1919  
Chairman Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund  
1919  
Received Freedom of The City of Birmingham  
1923

*The following is a faithful copy of the original booklet with the addition of the pictures of the  
Masters of the Lodge during the period.*

*Some of the appendices to the original booklet could not be scanned and converted so these  
have been faithfully reproduced using modern software*

*The Scan of the Grand Lodge Certificate for Bro John Treadwell, Raised 10<sup>th</sup> June 1861 and  
WM in 187,1 has been included. The original is in the Lodge archives along with his Past  
Master's Collar and leather pouch*

*W R Grigg JP PProv JGD*

*9<sup>th</sup> October 2009*

## HOWE LODGE

1851 – 1901

In the year 1850 there were four Lodges in Birmingham, namely - St. Paul's, Athol, Lodge of Light, and Faithful - and all held their meetings at the same hotel or tavern. This was a very general custom at that time, for the records of Grand Lodge show that more than one half of the Lodges on the Register met in licensed premises, the reason no doubt being that in many towns there were no other places which were so convenient or afforded the same accommodation. Many zealous Masons, however, were convinced that the custom was a bad one, inasmuch as it tended to place the Lodge under the control of the publican - to whom the Lodge was often in debt - and to interfere with the spirit of independence underlying the essential principles of Freemasonry.

Certain members of the before-mentioned Lodges in Birmingham, the foremost among whom were Bro. J. W. Lloyd (Athol), Bro. Bassett Smith (St. Paul's), and Bro. B. W. Goode (Lodge of Light), were so strongly impressed with these views that they resolved to take steps to form a new Lodge, the great principle of which should be that all money subscribed for purely Masonic purposes should be applied to those purposes only, and that no portion of the funds should be expended (as was the practice in most other Lodges) in upholding a system of banqueting. With this object, they applied in August 1850 to the Right Honourable Earl Howe, Provincial Grand Master of Warwickshire, to sanction their petition to Grand Lodge for a warrant for a new Lodge, to be called "The Robert Burns Lodge." The Provincial Grand Master replied that "he regretted very much that he must decline increasing the number of existing Lodges in Birmingham, as he could not help thinking that the four Lodges then in operation were amply sufficient, and that to increase them would not tend to the advantage or respectability of the Order of Freemasonry." The petitioners, undeterred by this want of success, presented another petition in November of the same year, accompanied by a memorial setting forth fully the principles on which they intended to work the proposed new Lodge, and were fortunate in securing the active encouragement and support of Wor. Bro. the Honourable J. W. Boughton Leigh, D.P.G.M., who himself undertook to submit the documents to the Provincial Grand Master and to draw his Lordship's attention "to the number, the zeal, the intelligence and high estimation of the Brethren who had attached their signatures and also the meritorious objects it was their wish and intention to establish in their new Lodge." This application proved successful, and on the 25th December 1850 the brethren had the great satisfaction of hearing from the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, "that Earl Howe had graciously acceded to the prayer of the petition and was pleased to sanction that the Lodge should be designated by his name."

Owing to the loss of the petition and other documents, some delay was caused while duplicates were furnished, but at length all difficulties were surmounted and on the 27th January 1851 the warrant for the Howe Lodge was issued by the Grand Lodge to the seven brethren whose names appear therein, the following brethren being nominated as the first officers:- Bro. J. W. Lloyd, W.M.; Bro. Bassett Smith, S.W.; and Bro. B. W. Goode, J.W.

The first meeting of the Lodge was held on the 10th March 1851, in Rooms over the Old Coal Wharf in Newhall Street, at which certain brethren who had rendered much assistance in the establishment of the Lodge but had not been named in the warrant, were received as members, and Mr. Samuel Jabez Goode (brother of B. W. Goode, J. W.), had the honour of being the first candidate for initiation.

At the same meeting, the Right Hon. Earl Howe, P.G.M., was formally thanked for his fraternal kindness in allowing the Lodge to assume his name and also for recommending the prayer of its petition, and the Hon. J. W. Boughton Leigh, D.P.G.M., was also thanked for the very great interest he had at all times taken in the progress of the Lodge towards formation, and both were elected Honorary Members. At the next meeting, the valuable advice and assistance which had been received from Wor. Bro. W. H. Reece, Senior Past Master of St. Paul's Lodge, were acknowledged, and he was also elected an Honorary Member.

In 1852 the Rt Hon. Lord Howe retired from the position of Provincial Grand Master, and the Rt. Hon. Lord Leigh was appointed to succeed him. This is not the place to attempt to describe the valuable services rendered by Lord Leigh to the cause of Freemasonry during his long tenure of office. It is sufficient here to bear simple testimony to the universal regard and affection in which the Provincial Grand Master is held by the brethren on account both of his high personal qualities and his great interest in everything appertaining to the Craft in general, and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire in particular.

In furtherance of the principles on which the Lodge was founded, the brethren during the first year of its existence conceived the idea of erecting a Masonic Hall, and with this object succeeded in forming a Committee consisting of representatives from the six Lodges then meeting in or near Birmingham (including SL James's Lodge, of Handsworth, in the Province of Staffordshire.) Bro. C. W. Elkington (Lodge of Light), Bros. J. Cohen and W. H. Reece (St. Paul's), and Bros. B. W. Goode and Bassett Smith (Howe) were the chief promoters of the scheme. The support of the Provincial Grand Master and Deputy Provincial Grand Master was obtained, and in the following year the proposal had made such progress that a Sub-Committee was appointed to prepare plans and estimates for the erection of a suitable building. Considerable interest was taken in the project and a large sum was subscribed for in shares. Various sites were inspected and reported on by the Sub-Committee, and at length in 1854 a piece of freehold land in High Street and Crooked Lane was purchased. It transpired, directly after the contract was signed, that the owner of the adjoining land "contemplated building thereon in a manner which would render doubtful the expediency of erecting a Hall for Masonic purposes on the site acquired," and it was resolved that the land should at once be re-sold as advantageously as possible. This disappointment appears to have chilled the enthusiasm of the promoters, and the scheme was for the time being abandoned.

Meanwhile, the Howe Lodge had continued to prosper, and it became apparent that the original Rooms over the Coal Wharf were inadequate for the increasing membership. Efforts were, therefore, made individually and by advertisement in the Birmingham papers to obtain more commodious premises, and in November 1855 the Lodge secured a house No. 21 (now No. 75) Newhall Street, situate nearly opposite the then place of meeting, on a lease from Mr. Wigley for 38 years at a rental of £35 per annum. Extensive alterations were necessary to adapt the premises for Masonic purposes, and Bro. F. Empson, an Architect then practising in Waterloo Street, was engaged to prepare plans, which included the erection of a Lodge Room at the rear of the premises and other improvements, at an estimated cost of £825. To meet this expenditure debentures of £5 each bearing interest at 3% were subscribed for by members of the Lodge, and in this way £625 was raised, the balance being provided out of the general funds of the Lodge. A Building Committee was appointed and the work was duly carried out, and on the 8th December 1856 the Lodge held its first meeting in the new Rooms. The Committee in their final report "congratulated the brethren upon being in possession of the most commodious premises for Masonic purposes in the Province of Warwickshire."

In addition to the generous contributions on the part of the brethren to the Building Fund, the records show that a large part of the Lodge furniture and fittings and the general effects required for the new premises were presented by members. Still greater acts of generosity were to follow. In March 1857 Bro. J. Broughton, who had been Secretary and Treasurer of the Building Fund, stated in Lodge "that he was so confident of the future prosperity of the Lodge that he contemplated that the Lodge would soon be in a position to commence repaying the debt, and that as one step towards the desired liquidation he offered for the acceptance of the Lodge the sum of £200 which he had subscribed towards the new building." This handsome offer was gratefully accepted, and proved an example quickly followed by other brethren, for during the same year practically the whole of the debt owing on the debentures was voluntarily cancelled, and the new building with its enlargements and fittings became the absolute and unencumbered property of the Lodge.

The Howe Lodge at once evinced a willingness to extend the advantages of its new Rooms to other Lodges, and several almost immediately became its tenants, the Lodge in its desire to facilitate the spread of Freemasonry and the formation of new Lodges, charging only very small rentals, which in many cases were not more than sufficient to cover expenses. The Rooms rapidly acquired popularity among the brethren, and before many years had passed the majority of the Birmingham Lodges had entered into arrangements to hold their meetings there.

At that time, the Ritual rendered in the various Lodges contained many points of difference, and the members of the Howe Lodge were early impressed with "the desirability of imparting a complete and accurate knowledge of the principles and practice of Freemasonry and of securing uniformity of working in the Birmingham Lodges." A Lodge of Instruction had been founded in 1848 under the sanction of St. Paul's Lodge, and had met with some measure of success, but from various causes had gradually declined, and at the time of which we are now treating had become of little real value. In 1853 the members of the Howe Lodge seriously took into consideration the question of establishing a Lodge of Instruction in connection with their own Lodge. St. Paul's Lodge of Instruction was still in existence, and feelings of courtesy towards that Lodge prevented the taking of any active steps in the matter for a time, but eventually, in February 1854, a requisition from members of the Athol and other Lodges, urging the Howe Lodge to establish a Lodge of Instruction under its immediate sanction, brought the question to a head, and it was resolved to sanction the formation of a Lodge of Instruction to be governed by regulations to be from time to time made by the Howe Lodge. A Committee was appointed to draw up the necessary regulations for the government of the new Institution, and the Howe Lodge granted the free use of its Rooms and furniture. The Worshipful Master and Past Masters of the Howe Lodge were constituted a Board to impart instruction in rotation, but at a later date the system of having a permanent Instructor was adopted. The Institution has experienced many ebbs and flows in the interest shown by the members and was re-organised in 1870, and by degrees has attained the position of being the most important School of Masonic Training in the Province.

The Ritual worked in the Lodge during the early years was the same as that which had been used in St. Paul's Lodge of Instruction, and it is said that the Founders of that Lodge obtained it from Bro. Honey, who was a well-known Preceptor of the Ritual and visited Lodges in different parts of the country for the purpose of imparting the "Emulation" form of the Ceremonies and Lectures. At a later date it was found that many innovations had been introduced into the Ceremonies as worked in this Province, the chief of which was an addition to the Installation Ceremony. In 1888, Wor. Bro. J. T. Collins, D.P.G.M., issued a circular condemning any such departures from the ancient forms and ceremonies, and in

order to bring the working of the Ritual into harmony with that of the Emulation Lodge of Improvement (No. 256, London), he made arrangements in 1891, and again in 1892, for Wor. Bro. R. C. Sudlow, the Preceptor of that Lodge, to visit the Howe Lodge of Instruction and revise the working. Since 1892, the Ritual has been in accordance with "Emulation" working. The Lodge of Instruction for the last ten years has been under the able direction of Wor. Bro. A. W. Adams (P.M., Alma Mater; P.P.G. Swd. Br.), as Preceptor, and the membership has increased so rapidly during recent years that it has become necessary to hold two separate meetings on Friday evenings. A Royal Arch Chapter of Instruction was in existence for a few years down to 1889, but was then discontinued. A new Chapter of Instruction has been established within the last few months.

In 1854, it was suggested that a Royal Arch Chapter should be formed in connection with the Lodge. There were then two Chapters meeting in Birmingham – the Fortitude and the Athol – [a correction was made by hand to the effect that there was one in Birmingham – Fortitude and one in Warwick - Shakespeare] and doubts were expressed whether sufficient support would be given to a third. The brethren, however, with the same enterprise and determination which had hitherto characterised their actions, resolved to petition the Grand Chapter for the necessary warrant. The petition was granted, and the Howe Chapter was consecrated at the Masonic Rooms, Newhall Street, on the 10th May 1855, the first principal officers being Excellent Companions B. W. Goode, I. H. Bedford, and J. T. Goode, all members of the Howe Lodge.

The promoters of the Lodge, at the time they were taking steps towards its formation, also made arrangements to form a Mark Masters' Lodge, and their effort produced a curious state of confusion. The Grand Mark Masters' Lodge had not then been established, and it was customary to place every Mark Lodge under the superintendence of some regular Craft Lodge. As previously stated, the first petition for the Howe Lodge was presented in August 1850, and was not successful, and the warrant was granted in January 1851, on a second petition. The Mark Lodge was duly constituted on the 15th October 1850 by a deputation from the Newstead Lodge, No. 55 (Nottingham), and, as the Howe Lodge was not then in existence, it was necessary to attach the Mark Lodge temporarily to some other Lodge, and St. Paul's Lodge undertook to act in this capacity. No regular meeting was held until the 9th February, 1854 the apparent reason being that meanwhile the members were fully occupied in settling the working of the Craft Lodge – but on that date the union with the Howe Lodge was confirmed and the authority of the latter in the management of the Mark Lodge was formally recognised, and Wor. Bro. B. W. Goode, I.P.M., of the Howe Lodge was appointed Master. In 1878, the Mark Lodge became affiliated, as a "Time Immemorial" Lodge, with the Grand Mark Masters' Lodge of England.

An Encampment of Knight Templar's was founded by members of the Lodge on the 7th June 1861, and remained as a separate body until January 1894, when it was amalgamated with the Beauceant Encampment under the title of "The Howe-Beauceant Preceptory."

The Royal Arch Chapter, the Mark Lodge and the Encampment of Knight Templar's were all originally under the direct control and management of the Howe Lodge, which kept the accounts and received and paid all income and expenditure, and was virtually responsible for their working, and they did not assume the position of independent bodies until many years later, when the Masonic Hall in New Street was erected, and the Howe Lodge and its associated institutions removed there, of which mention will be made hereafter.

The motives which had actuated the founders of the Lodge became known and appreciated beyond the sphere of their immediate influence, as is evidenced by an interesting episode that occurred in September 1855. A deputation of members of the Silurian Lodge, Newport, Mon. attended the Meeting of the Howe Lodge in that month to ask for advice and assistance. They stated that they were anxious to establish a new Lodge on the principles of the "Howe" to be called the "Isca Lodge," in consequence of "the discipline of the Silurian Lodge being in every respect extremely lax, the constitutions of the Craft being entirely disregarded, and the Funds being squandered in banqueting." They further stated that they had been led to apply to the "Howe" for aid and sympathy, as they had been informed that the "Howe" had themselves undergone a similar ordeal. The "Howe" members expressed their full sympathy with the deputation, and passed a resolution "that the petition of the deputation to Grand Lodge should receive the support and recommendation of the Howe Lodge." The deputation, in expressing their gratitude for the reception they had met with, added their belief that the projected Isca Lodge would do credit to its parent, as they would ever consider the Howe Lodge to be. The Isca Lodge was consecrated on the 30th December 1856 and at the present time holds its meetings at the Masonic Hall, Dock Street, Newport.

The founders of the Lodge, in their enthusiasm for the principles on which the Lodge had been established, discouraged any system of banqueting in connection with the Lodge, and it became known as a "non-banqueting" Lodge, and in consequence was subjected to a certain amount of ridicule, one satirical brother dubbing it the "Barley-Water" Lodge. Such criticism was alike unjust and un-Masonic. The efforts of the founders were directed not against banqueting *per se* but against the custom which then prevailed of holding Masonic meetings in public houses, and diverting Masonic funds from their proper objects. They were reformers, not fanatics. They recognised as reasonable men that social intercourse among the brethren within due and proper bounds was a help and not a hindrance to the furtherance of Masonic principles, but they held strongly to the view that the cost of social entertainments should not be paid out of monies contributed for Masonic purposes. The brethren always dined together on Installation nights at some convenient hotel as guests of the Worshipful Master, and later it was customary for them to partake of supper or light refreshment after the ordinary Lodge meetings, sometimes on the invitation of the Worshipful Master or one of the other officers, and sometimes by subscription among themselves. The matter continued on these lines till the year 1860, when what appeared at first sight to be a startling change was proposed by Wor. Bro. B. W. Goode – a founder of the Lodge and one of its most active and influential members. His motion was "that it is now desirable to have banquets after the Lodge Meetings." He supported it on the ground that, although the Lodge had been established as a non-banqueting Lodge, this was at a time when other Lodges were held at taverns and abuses were prevalent, but that now the Howe Lodge had secured Rooms of its own and had achieved the object of the founders, he saw no reason why refreshment after labour should not be provided at the expense of the Lodge funds, particularly as it was the custom in most other Lodges to invite visitors to the banquets, and he wished the Howe Lodge to be able to reciprocate such hospitality.

Bro. Goode's proposition was strongly opposed by many of the brethren, more especially the older members of the Lodge, as being a distinct departure from the principles of the founders, but the majority were in favour of the change, and after considerable debate extending over nearly twelve months, a compromise was effected by raising the annual subscription from £2 2s. 0d. to £3 3s. 0d, and providing that one-half the total income should form a General Purposes Fund for paying the expenses of the banquets, and that the other half should be devoted, as before, to purely Masonic purposes. It was found that this arrangement did not work satisfactorily, and in 1863 the subscription of members was raised to £5 per annum, of

which £3 was to be applied to banqueting and incidental expenses, and the remaining £2, which was equivalent to the original subscription, to strictly Masonic objects. On a revision of the bye-laws in 1867, the annual subscription was altered to £4 4s. 0d., with a proviso that not more than one-half should be spent otherwise than for Masonic purposes, and this rule has remained in force to the present time.

The introduction of banquets, though a radical change in the constitution of the Lodge, did not actually involve any sacrifice of principle, inasmuch as the amount of the original subscription remained intact for purely Masonic purposes, while it had the effect of bringing the Lodge into line with other Lodges in regard to the social side of Masonry; and looking back after the experience of forty years it does not appear that the status of the Lodge has suffered any injury or that its purely Masonic work has been in any way retarded.

As further evidence that the founders were not bigoted on the subject of banqueting, mention may here be made of an Institution called "The Convivium" which was established soon after the Lodge was founded. It consisted of members of the Lodge who used to meet and dine together daily in a room at the Lodge premises rented by them for the purpose, Mrs. Heeley, the wife of the Tyler, acting as caterer. The minutes record that this Institution was of great service to the Lodge, as the brethren who met together in this social way took the opportunity to discuss Masonic business and particularly the affairs of their own Lodge. It was hoped that the "Convivium" would develop by degrees into a Masonic Club, but this anticipation was not realised, and it was dissolved by mutual consent in the year 1865, when the Lodge purchased its furniture and effects.

In 1863 the numbers of the various Lodges on the Register of Grand Lodge were revised, and the vacant numbers filled up. By a strange coincidence the number of the Howe Lodge was only altered by the simple transposition of the first two figures - namely from 857 to 587.

The Lodges and other Masonic bodies occupying the position of tenants under the Howe Lodge continued to increase, and by the year 1863 had reached fourteen in number, namely, Howe Chapter, Howe Mark Masters' Lodge, Howe Encampment of Knight Templar's, Howe Lodge of Instruction, Grosvenor Lodge and Chapter, Fletcher Lodge and Chapter, Faithful Lodge, Temperance Lodge, Leigh Lodge, Bedford Lodge, Elkington Lodge, and Forward Lodge.

Though the Howe Lodge was desirous, as far as possible, of providing for the meetings of these various bodies, it was apparent that the accommodation at the Rooms in Newhall Street was insufficient for the purpose. The recognition of this fact caused the scheme for the erection of a Masonic Hall, which had remained dormant since 1854 to be revived, the idea again originating with the members of the Howe lodge after one of the ordinary meetings. The matter was taken up enthusiastically, and in February 1864 a Committee of influential Masons in the Province was formed at the instigation of Bro. George Beech, the present Deputy Provincial Grand Master, with Bro. C. W. Elkington, D.P.G.M., as Chairman. The scheme took the shape of a Limited liability Company, under the title of the "Masonic Hall and Club Company, Limited," formed for the purpose of erecting a suitable Hall and also premises to be used as a Masonic Club. A site was "acquired at the corner of New Street and Ethel Street, on building lease from Lord Howe, and on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 1865 the foundation stone of the new building was laid by the Right Hon. lord Leigh, P.G.M. It is interesting to note that five members of the Howe Lodge were appointed original Directors of the Company, and that Bro. S. L. Foster was elected, and continued to act for many years, as

Deputy Chairman, and that down to the present time the lodge has always been represented on the Directorate.

The Company approached the Howe Lodge in April 1864 as to acquiring its property and furniture with a view to the removal of the Lodge and its tenants to the new Hall, and in the following June the transfer was definitely agreed upon, subject to certain preliminary arrangements as to valuations and the fixing of rentals. Difficulties, however, arose in regard to the completion of the buildings, owing to the scheme being extended by the addition of shops and other premises and the cost being consequently much more than originally contemplated, and the transfer of the Howe Lodge remained in abeyance till November 1868, when the negotiations were re-opened on a new basis.

A deputation consisting of the three trustees of the Lodge property, namely, Bros. B. W. Goode, S. L. Foster, and Geo. Jones, together with Bro. E. Ratcliff, W.M., Bro. J. V. Solomon and J. Treadwell, Wardens, and Bros. Thos. Naden, Secretary, were appointed to negotiate with the Directors of the Company as to the terms of the transfer, and in July 1869 an agreement was arrived at and duly confirmed by the Lodge. The organ, furniture and effects belonging to the Lodge were sold to the Company for the sum of £300 (determined by valuation), two-thirds to be paid in cash and one third in shares of the Company. The Newhall Street premises were to remain the property of the Lodge, and no rent was to be charged to the Lodge in respect of its tenancy in the new Hall until the premises were let or disposed of, provided the period did not exceed two years [the premises were, in fact, sold to Bro. W. C. McEntee in March 1871 for £125]. A scale of rentals to be paid by the Howe tenants to the Company was also fixed. The Lodge did not part with any of its furniture or effects which had been presented by the members. An inventory of these articles was prepared and it was arranged that the Company should have the use of them for the nominal sum of £1 1s. per annum, on the condition of keeping them in proper repair. The articles in question comprised the furniture now used in the Lodge Room, Secretary's Office, and Tyler's Room at the Masonic Hall, and so familiar to the brethren attending meetings there. A list of gifts w the Lodge is appended.

In September 1869, a letter was received from the Secretary of the Company stating that, in consideration of what the Howe Lodge had done for the promotion of Freemasonry in Birmingham, the Directors had reserved for its members the privilege of holding the first meeting in the new Masonic Hall. The Lodge accepted the honour so graciously proffered, and held its next meeting on the 11th October 1869 in the new Hall.

The property of the Lodge had been vested in Trustees for some years prior to this date, and the payment of the monies produced by the sale to the Company and the disposal of the old rooms in Newhall Street necessitated certain alterations in the Trust deed. A new deed was prepared accordingly in 1871, under which Bros. B. W. Goode, S. L. Foster, and George Jones were again appointed Trustees. Subsequent changes have been caused by death or retirement, and the present Trustees of the Lodge are Bros. H. Denne and W. A. Bindley.

From the date of the removal to the Masonic Hall the minute books record no events of special importance. The Lodge had accomplished the great aim of the founders, and had seen the majority of the other Lodges in Birmingham follow' its example in regard to holding their meetings in rooms specially set apart for the purpose. It had further witnessed the completion of the scheme, which had originated among its own members, for the erection of a Masonic Hall. Henceforth, the work of the Lodge lay exclusively in the fulfilment of ordinary Masonic duties - the making of new brethren and the inculcation of the great principles on which

Freemasonry is based. It has been said that the life of most individuals is made up of small duties and that success depends upon whether or not these duties have been faithfully discharged, and the same test may be applied with equal truth to Masonic and other Institutions. Judged by this standard, the Howe Lodge has reason to be satisfied with its record. The early years were more eventful than the later ones, but throughout the whole period there has been the same steady purpose in the management of the Lodge and the same earnest endeavour to promote the welfare of the Craft.

In 1887, the Howe Lodge took part in the Assembly of Freemasons, held at the Royal Albert Hall, on the 13th June, under the Presidency of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Grand Master, for the purpose of testifying the loyalty of Freemasons in all parts of the British Empire to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of the Jubilee of Her Reign. Ten years later, another great Meeting of Freemasons was held in the same Hall, to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, at which the Howe Lodge was also represented by five of its officers, being the number allowed to each Lodge.

In 1898, the Centenary of the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys was celebrated at the Royal Albert Hall, under the Chairmanship of the Grand Master. When contributions amounting to £141,203 were raised in order to build a new Orphanage and extend the work of the Institution. The Right Honourable Lord Leigh was Treasurer of the Fund, and the Lodges comprised in his own Province of Warwickshire supported him by contributing no less a sum than £5,179, the donation from the Howe Lodge amounting to £105.

In July 1900, a Festival was held in Stoneleigh Park in connection with the Warwickshire Benevolent and Pupils' Aid Fund, with the object of increasing the amounts granted for the relief of distressed brethren and the widows and orphans of brethren in the Province. The sum raised was £3,275. towards which the Howe Lodge made a contribution of £105 10s. 6d,

Two severe losses sustained by the Lodge in recent years must not be omitted from this sketch, otherwise an injustice would be done. On the 4th November 1896, Wor. Bro. B. W. Goode died, having been a member of the Lodge since its formation. He was one of its founders, and occupied the Chair during the three years 1853. 1861 and 1868. He always took the deepest interest in its affairs, as is proved by the continual mention of his name on the minutes, and rendered most faithful and valuable services during his long membership. The brethren, to mark their gratitude and esteem, elected him an honorary member on the 11th March 1895. In October 1900. the Lodge lost by death Wor. Bro. George Jones, at the ripe age of 86 years. He was initiated in the Lodge on the 13th April 1857, and was Worshipful Master in 1862. His active work, and particularly the part he was accustomed to take at the Installation Meetings until within two or three years of his death, as well as his unflinching geniality, will also be gratefully remembered by the Lodge

These two brethren. were typical officers - energetic enthusiastic and loyal. Nothing could have exceeded the zeal of those who held office during the years when the foundations of the Lodge were being laid on a firm basis, and those who have succeeded them have not been behind them in this respect. It is a notable and gratifying fact that the Past Masters have not fixed their retirement from the Chair as the limit of their responsibilities to the Lodge; but with few exceptions have continued as active members for many years afterwards and have always been ready to give counsel and assistance to the younger and less experienced brethren in the working of the Lodge. As a proof of this maintenance of interest on the part of older members, it may be stated that one brother held the office of Secretary for ten years,

another for five years, and another for four years, while the present Treasurer. Wor. Bro. Henry Denne, M.D., has acted in that capacity (or twenty-five years. In January 1896, on the occasion of his investiture for the 21st consecutive time, the brethren presented him with a Treasurer's Jewel to mark their appreciation of his valuable services.

Half-a-century has brought many inevitable changes in the membership of the Lodge and in its methods of working, but its energy has not abated, while experience has added to its strength. It still maintains its average number of members and is served by true and faithful officers, and the success that has attended its work in the past is the best augury for the future. That it may continue to prosper will be the heart-felt wish of every Mason, at the close of its fiftieth year of existence.

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