

Arthur John Brogden Lodge No 1715

The Lodge meets at the Masonic Hall, Hampsfell Road, Grange-over-Sands at 7:15 p.m. on 2 Friday of each month from September to June inclusive.

Lodge Genealogy

Our Mother Lodge is the Lodge of Furness, No 995 which meets in Ulverston.

We have a daughter Lodge which is Carnforth Lodge No. 4951 and two granddaughter Lodges, namely Silverdale Lodge No 6926 and Warton Lodge No. 8411 which meets at Carnforth.

The Founders

The idea of forming a Masonic lodge in Grange over Sands originated in the minds of three resident brethren who were disturbed by the fact that the nearest lodges were in Ulverston to the West and Lancaster in the East.

These three founders appear to have been inseparable friends, who from their varied occupations might have been expected to have very different outlooks on many subjects, but in their love of freemasonry they were in perfect harmony. They were:

Thomas Ashley was the headmaster of the school in Kents Bank Road (now the Royal British Legion Club) and resided at the schoolhouse. He was initiated into the Lodge of Furness No. 995 in December 1875.

John Mossop was a partner in G & J Mossop the grocers in Main Street (now the Spar shop), above whose premises the Lodge was later to meet. He was initiated into the Lodge of Furness No. 995 in August 1875.

Thomas Westwood was hotel keeper at the Crown Hotel (now Crown Hill flats). He was a member of the Duke of Lancaster Lodge No 1353 which meets in Lancaster.

They sought the advice of Arthur John Brogden. He was the son of John Brogden junior and Ellen Brogden (formerly Garstang) and was born in Ulverston in on 5 April 1855 at Lightburn House Ulverston (where the Coronation Hall now stands). His grandfather was John Brogden who in 1846 had taken his sons John Brogden junior and Alexander into partnership as John Brogden & Sons who promoted the Ulverston & Lancaster Railway which, when it ran out of funds, was taken over by the Furness Railway.

He had been initiated into Isaac Newton University Lodge No. 859 in the Province of Cambridgeshire when he was a student at Downing College Cambridge. He was proposed in February 1875 and initiated by dispensation (being under the age of 21 years) on 1 March 1875. At the Installation meeting in October 1875 he was appointed and invested as Tyler. He appears not to have continued in office having gone down (from University).

Provincial records confirm that he was appointed Pr.G.D.C. in 1875. It was an annual appointment so that he would have been P.Pr.G.D.C. when he became a joining member of the Lodge of Furness No. 995 in January 1877 and when he was described as a gentleman residing at Yewbarrow Lodge, Grange-over-Sands.

With Brother Ashley doing the secretarial work four other Brethren became interested in the project:

H C Davies was a silk manufacturer with a mill at Galgate near Lancaster who was resident in the Grange Hotel. He was a member of the Lodge of Furness No. 995



William Postlethwaite was the station master at Grange. He was also a member of the Lodge of Furness No. 995.

J H Mathews was a school Master at Ulverston and a Past Master of the Lodge of Furness No 995.

There appeared to have been some difficulty with the petition and an amended petition was drawn up and signed at the meeting on 3 April 1877.

A Charter was granted dated 10 July 1877 and signed by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, HRH the Prince of Wales (later to become King Edward VII). The Lodge was given the number 1715 and named after one of the founders and the Master Designate.

Consecration

The Lodge was consecrated at 2pm on Wednesday 26 September 1877 in an old building between the railway and the foreshore nearly opposite to Berners Close. This building had originally been built as a store for the loading and unloading of ships which berthed at a wharf connected to it. W Bro. J D Moor P.G.Std.B. represented Lord Skelmersdale, Deputy Grand Master and Provincial Grand Master of West Lancashire. Fifty four Brethren were present, representing twenty Lodges.

Bro. H C Davies – Senior Warden

Bro. T Ashley – Junior Warden

Bro. W Postlethwaite – Secretary

Bro. J Mossop – Senior Deacon

Bro. T Westwood – Junior Deacon

W Bro. J H Matthews – Inner Guard

Bro. J Howarth – Tyler

After the officers were invested three candidates were proposed as Joining Members and four candidates for initiation were proposed.

The Consecration Ceremony was extensively reported in the Lancaster Gazette and a copy of the report is appended to the front of the original Minute Book. The report includes the names of those present and deals at length with the ceremony of consecration and installation (25 members were present for the Installed Board). It also includes in full the address of the acting Provincial Grand Chaplain and reports in full the main toasts and speeches (after the removal of the cloth) at the Banquet at the Working Mens' Institute in Main Street.

Joining Members

It was reported that the Hon F A Stanley MP and A Brogden MP were proposed as joining members. The minutes show that Arthur John Brogden was their proposer and they were elected in October 1877.

W.Bro. Frederick Arthur Stanley was Deputy Provincial Grand Master of West Lancashire from 1872 until 1888 when he became the Governor General for Canada. In 1893 he became the Earl of Derby on the death of his brother and returned from Canada. He was the father of the Honourable Sir Arthur Stanley who was the Provincial Grand Master of West Lancashire from 1910 to 1919. An end piece in the original Minute Book shows that as at June 1896 he was the Earl of Derby of Knowsley Hall Prescot and still a member.

Bro. Alexander Brogden was a member of the Lodge of Furness No. 995. He was a partner in John Brogden & Sons who constructed the Furness Railway. He lived on Holme Island. He was the liberal MP for Wednesbury for 17 years from 1868 but was obliged to give up his seat when he became bankrupt in 1884 with debts of £724000. He had resigned as a member of the Lodge in March 1879.

Life and Times

The Lodge initially struggled financially and from lack of support from some of its founders. In the early years it would appear that its existence was due solely to the enthusiasm and devotion of its three promoters ably assisted by Bro. Postlethwaite. They each succeeded to the Chair. The minutes record that they had to call on outside assistance to work the ceremonies of the Lodge.

Arthur John Brogden had made it known at his installation that he would be away from Grange on business for some time and his attendance at Lodge was irregular until he resigned in July 1882.

At the meeting on 9 July 1879 it is recorded that Bro. A J Brogden I.P.M. by the permission of the W.M. addressed a few words to the Brethren in the course of which he expressed his great gratification at being so prominently connected with this Lodge and his sorrow at bidding the brethren farewell as he was leaving this part of the country. The 1881 census shows him as a landowner living at 13 Hereford Square London with his wife and three staff.

In May 1883 the Lodge had to relinquish the premises where the Consecration was held and moved to rented accommodation above the shop in Main Street where it met until June 1892 Temporary premises thereafter were Devonshire House in Main Street and Greenbank House in Kents Bank Road.

In March 1893 it was resolved to purchase a plot of land to build a Masonic Hall. Conveyance of the land was completed in April 1894 and as soon as the plans were accepted building commenced under the direction of a Lodge committee. The Masonic Hall in Hampsfell Road was opened on 9 October 1895.

The room below the Lodge was not completed until 1897 whereupon it was let as a furniture store and cabinet maker's shop. Possession of this room was regained in 1909 and it was converted into a social room.

Following his installation as W.M. at the meeting on 8 December 1916 Bro Henry Ernest Croft presented to the Lodge a framed portrait in oils of the Founder of the Lodge, the late Arthur John Brogden, which now hangs on the stairs leading from the lodge room to the social room.



Arthur John Brogden

The beautiful temple, which has been enlarged since it was first built, the facilities we enjoy and the high regard in which the Lodge is held is due to the zeal and ability of the founders and those who followed.

We are now a small but thriving Lodge with about fifty members. We have a full programme of ceremonies and lectures which is supported by an equally enthusiastic social programme. We regularly hold quiz nights, treasure hunts, carol concerts and other social events. A highlight of the social programme is the annual Ladies Evening held on the Saturday after the third Friday in November.

We welcome visiting Masons to our meetings who can be assured of a warm welcome and hospitality at our Festive Board. Non masons and friends are welcome to attend our social events.