



The City of London National Guard Lodge

No. 3757

1915- 2015



Foreword

The aim of this history is to give an overview of the City Of London National Guard Lodge 3757, for the first one hundred years, it was commissioned for the Centenary Meeting held on 12th November 2015 at Freemasons' Hall.

The information was acquired from the Minute Books and other associated documentation held by the Lodge, plus related articles stored on the internet. Obviously over the period of one hundred years a vast amount of information has been gathered. To detail all this information is unnecessary as a lot of the work done by the Lodge was, in Masonic terms, routine i.e. ceremonies etc.

It is the intent to highlight the more extraordinary and outstanding events that have taken place, with direct reference to the brethren concerned, so that an insight may be gained into how and why the Lodge operates in the way it does today. Further it can be seen from where many of the traditions have emanated.

This History is dedicated to all the members of the City Of London National Guard Lodge 3735 whether past, present or in the future, so that the strong resolve and traditions of the Lodge may be passed from one generation to the next.

W Bro N MacLennan LGR

The National Guard

On the December 1914, the announcement of the formation of the National Guard, for men over military age, appeared in the press.

The National Guard was essentially the creation of the City of London. Its formation was due to the patriotism of its chief founder the then Lord Mayor, Sir Charles Johnston, Bart.

Boxing Day 1914 may be regarded as the actual birthday of the City of London National Guard, when at the Guildhall the Lord Mayor and Colonel Cobbett addressed the members, who then proceeded to practise the preliminaries of drill. Active drill started on the 1st January 1915 and within two weeks accommodation for drill practices had to be found for some fifteen hundred members. Eventually this would grow to three Battalions..

The purpose of the City of London National Guard Volunteer Corps was to defend London by digging trenches, guarding vulnerable points, prisoners of war, manning anti-aircraft guns plus many other duties. The volunteers were enabled to assist the prosecution of the war in two ways. Firstly, by taking on work previously done by regular soldiers, thereby releasing younger men for service abroad, and second, by themselves joining up, which nearly one thousand officers and men did.

· The men were issued with uniforms, but the officers had to buy their own. Greatcoats could be purchased from fifty shillings.

The City of London National Guard Volunteer Corps was commanded by Colonel Cobbett and came within the overall command of Lieutenant General Sir Francis Lloyd, General Officer Commanding London.

There was also a social side. New friendships were formed, new associations acquired and a new sense of esprit de corps. Part of this social side was to form the City of London National Guard Lodge as a permanent memorial to the work of the National Guard.

· As part of his address when the armistice was announced Lieutenant General Sir Francis Lloyd said, 'When the history of this Great War comes to be fully written the National Guard will have a page in that history'.

The National Guard was disbanded in 1920.

Further information on the National Guard can be found in *The National Guard in the Great War* by A E Manning Foster. Available online.

The Foundation of the Lodge

A Lodge Foundation Committee was formed at the Mansion House on 10 June 1915 of which Colonel Cobbett was a member along with eleven other brethren. W Bro George Hughes was credited with being the first brother to suggest the formation of the Lodge.

Various resolutions were proposed and seconded including: 'That the founders of the Lodge be restricted to members of the City of London National Guard'. Also, that the offices should be filled by Grand Officers with the exception of the office of Senior Warden which should be offered to Colonel Cobbett - Regimental Commander. The number of regular meetings should be three a year. Founder's fees should be E2-2-0 to include a founder's jewel. Subscription fees should also be E2-2-0 to include dinner at each meeting, but exclusive of wine, and all meetings should be held at Freemasons Hall.

At a further meeting a week later the subscription fees were reduced to E1-5-0.

By the end of September 1915 W Bro Sheriff H Cart de Lafontaine was elected as the first Master, the Lodge Warrant had been granted, the Lodge number to be 3757, and the final number of Founders was two hundred and eighty three, a record for those days.

The appointment of the Consecrating Officers was to be left entirely in the hands of the Grand Secretary. The Consecration dinner would attract a charge of 5/- or 6/-. Visitors would pay 7/6d. As part of the dining fees, cigars were included, but wine was not.

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MR. HENRY CART DE LAFONTAINE
First Master of the National Guard Lodge

Geo. S. Kapp

The Consecration: 12th November 1915

Freemasons Hall

The Lodge was opened in the First, Second and Third Degrees. The Consecrating Master, V W Bro Sir Edward Letchworth, Grand Secretary, consecrated the Lodge in accordance with ancient form.

W Bro Sheriff H Cart de Lafontaine was installed as the Worshipful Master and proceeded to invest his officers.

The Master stated that the Lodge greatly appreciated the honour, which W Bro General Sir Francis Lloyd had conferred on it by his presence, and he was immediately elected an Honorary Member.

During the usual business of the Lodge ten members of the City of London National Guard Volunteer Corps were proposed for initiation, plus one joining member.

The attendance at the meeting was fifty-nine Grand Officers and some five hundred other brethren.

Letchworth Lodge, which was the sponsor or mother Lodge for the City of London National Guard Lodge, was named after V W Bro Sir Edward Letchworth and held its own Centenary Meeting in September 2011.

The First Full Year

Having decided that there would be three regular meetings a year, the volume of the work required to be completed necessitated dispensation to be sought for three emergency meetings.

At the first regular meeting on 24th February 1916 there were nearly three hundred brethren present who witnessed the initiation of five candidates. As well as the proposition for five joining members, including W Bro General Sir Francis Lloyd, and three further candidates for initiation.

During the remainder of the year there were eight initiations, eleven passings, and seven raisings. It was not uncommon for the Lodge to complete all three degrees in one meeting.

In this year, the Worshipful Master and Bro Burnett-Brown received hearty congratulations on their sons being awarded the Military Cross. However, at the next meeting the W M stated, 'half an hour before leaving home to start for the Lodge he received a message to the effect that his son had been killed

and were it not for his faith in God he could not have been present that evening'.

More positive news was that the Treasurer, W Bro Sir R Vasser Smith, had been appointed as the R W Provincial Grand Master for Gloucestershire.

The last meeting of the year in November was the installation of W Bro General Sir Francis Lloyd. The attendance for this meeting was in excess of five hundred and fifty. Just before the meeting was closed the W M announced that he had been summoned to a personal meeting with the Most Worshipful The Grand Master who had desired him to convey a personal message to the City of London National Guard Lodge expressing his appreciation of the loyalty of its members, and His Royal Highness' most sincere regard and good wishes to the Lodge.

1917-1925

It was usual that the Officers for the ensuing year were offered their positions by the Committee on their willingness to hold the office, their participation in Freemasonry, also where possible the W M be a mason of distinction and note. A natural progression through the offices was not the norm.

Emergency meetings continued during this period with the MW The Grand Master authorising the initiation of six candidates in one meeting. The By Laws were changed to allow for a fourth regular meeting to be held on the last Thursday of September. Further that the Master of the Royal Navy Anti-Aircraft Lodge 3790 be elected as an honorary member. This close association continues to the present day. The Master of Ad Astra Lodge was also made an Honorary Member.

When R W Bro Sir R Vasser-Smith was the W M it was proposed that the City of London National Guard Chapter 3757 be formed and four months later, in June 1919 the W M became the first 1st Principal.

Rising costs after the war were becoming a consideration. The fees for meeting in The Grand Temple were increased from E5-5-0 to E7-7-0. The Connaught Rooms, where the Festive Board was held, stated that the price of the meal was to rise. The brethren were faced with an increase of subscriptions by 10/- or a dropping of the dinner after the September meeting. It was decided to adopt the latter, with members having an informal meal if so desired.

With the cessation of hostilities and the imminent disbanding of The National Guard the by-laws were changed to the effect that Initiates and Joining members must have been a member of His Majesty's Armed Forces. Although no longer applicable, at present fifty percent of the Lodge membership still have this connection.

'Overseas' meetings were a highlight; with the brethren of the Lodge encouraged to invite many overseas visitors. These meetings regularly included notable brethren from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America.

In 1921 the Lodge was proud to sponsor the formation of Arbor Lodge 4318. The Master of the Lodge W Bro Colonel Cobbett became the first master of Arbor Lodge, which is still very active.

The General Purposes Committee, when deciding the list of Officers to assist the Worshipful Master Elect, decided that they would include suitable joining members and initiates providing that at least two thirds of those suggested were founders.

Notwithstanding Emergency Meetings to attempt to ease the volume of work, it was not uncommon for brethren to be passed and or raised by another Lodge. In one case a brother was passed and raised by The United Services Lodge of Cape Town, South Africa.

An amendment to the by-laws in November 1925 moved the installation meeting to February, commencing in 1926, which is still the case.

1926-1935

It was becoming usual for the Lodge to invite the Lord Mayor of London, if he was a member of the craft, to become the Worshipful Master. The usual practice was to propose the Lord Mayor as a joining member in September, ballot for him in November, elect him as Worshipful Master and Install the Lord Mayor in February.

Normally the Worshipful Master installed his successor, but in 1930 the R W Deputy Grand Master, The Rt Hon Lord Cornwallis, installed the Lord Mayor Bro The Rt Hon Sir William A Waterlowe as Worship Master. Indeed, the Lodge was honoured again in 1932 and 1934 when the R W Deputy Grand Master installed W Bro Colonel The Rt Hon Sir Maurice Jenks and W Bro Sir Gerald Woods Woolaston, respectively.

Frequently the Lord Mayor was also the Worshipful Master of the Guildhall Lodge 3116 and dispensation had to be sought to allow him to be Worshipful Master of two Lodges simultaneously.

It was the usual custom to present the Immediate Past Master with a token of gratitude, normally a silver salver, On occasion the Grand Secretary, R W Bro Sir Collville Smith, would make the presentation.

During this period, it was still usual to work all three degrees in one meeting, with two candidates for each degree. At the same time the usual business of the Lodge continued with the presentation of Grand Lodge Certificates, as many as six at the same time, ballots for initiates and joining members. Propositions for donating money to charities and help for some of the widows of the Lodge.

The pressure of work continued with emergency meetings continuing on a regular basis. The last recorded additional meeting was held on 26th June 1930

Although the meetings must have been quite lengthy, they did not detract from attendance. Commonly there would be the Officers of the Lodge, Grand Officers, visitors and members totalling in excess of one hundred and eighty brethren.

In 1930 a Notice of Motion was put before the Lodge: 'To consider, and if thought fit, to take the necessary steps for the formation of a Lodge in liaison

with this The City of London National Guard Lodge, having as a principal object, the advancement in masonry of the Initiates of this Lodge'.

Also, to form a committee comprised of five members of the General Purposes Committee and five other Lodge members to report back to the Lodge as to the viability of the Notice of Motion. At the subsequent meeting, the Notice of Motion was not accepted. This could have been the germination of the idea that Initiates of the Lodge, of which there were plenty, were not advancing through the Offices of the Lodge let alone becoming the Worshipful Master. The formation of the proposed Lodge would have allowed advancement through the Chair. This idea would reappear in later years.

Even by the end of 1935 only the Senior and Junior Deacons and two Stewards were initiates of the Lodge. Worshipful Brethren, either founders or joining members, held all the other offices.

1936-1945

Having enjoyed a large attendance at Regular Meetings for twenty years, with many visitors of distinction, the number of Lodge members, quite reasonably, began to decline. Founder members and Initiates had to have been at least forty years old and many were in their fifties or more. Therefore, after twenty years a considerable number had decided to go on to the country list or resign, having retired and moved away from London. Regrettably at the beginning of a lot of meetings the brethren were advised of the death of one or more members. Although there were still a reasonable number of Initiates and joining members the overall numbers were falling. However, some of those initiated, twenty years after the Consecration, went on to become Worshipful Master.

In 1938 W Bro William Digby-Ovens, a founder member and secretary since 1929, was installed as Master. The Installing Master was the R W Bro Sir Kynaston Studd, Provincial Grand Master of Cambridgeshire, President of the Board of Benevolence, (Lord Mayor of London 1929), witnessed by the Deputy Grand Master and one hundred and forty other brethren.

The only reference to the new conflict which engulfed Europe in 1939, was one relating to the Air Raid Shelters at Freemasons' Hall and the procedure to be adopted during air raids. The subscription for those serving in His Majesty's Forces was reduced to half a guinea.

It is recorded that in May 1940 the Committee had received a letter from Bro R T Chapman, regarding the members of the Lodge succeeding in rotation through the different offices to the Chair. Bro Chapman had been initiated in 1921 and held the office of Steward in 1926.

Careful consideration of this request was given to the matter, but because of the unusual position of the Lodge during this time of conflict and the small numbers attending, it was decided to review the idea on an annual basis. This was subsequently changed and all the members canvassed as to their opinion of keeping the tradition of inviting the Lord Mayor to become Master or changing to allow for rotation through the offices. Very few replies were received of which only four were in favour of the change and twenty-three strongly opposed to the idea. It was unanimously decided to leave the suggestion until after the war.

Prior to the election of Master in 1943, the Lord Mayor was invited to occupy the Chair in 1944, but he declined. Again, in November 1944 the new Lord

Mayor was invited to become Master, but he regretfully declined, owing to the pressure of his Civic Duties.

W Bro Sir Frederick Rowland was elected as Master in November 1945, Installed in 1946, he became Lord Mayor of London in 1950. He was the last Lord Mayor to be Master of the City of London National Guard Lodge.

No further mention in the minutes is made to the requested rotation of officers, or that any invitation was proffered to any subsequent Lord Mayor. The great tradition which existed between The Mansion House and the Lodge had finally come to an end. The way was now open for everyone in the Lodge to proceed through the offices to the Chair.

1946-1955

At the third regular meeting in September 1946 W Bro Digby Ovens who had become the Treasurer in 1940, after his year as Immediate Past Master, was congratulated on attaining his ninety first birthday. This, unfortunately, was to be the last time he attended the Lodge. Due to ill health and his doctor's advice, he offered his resignation in May 1947. This was accepted with regret, but he was immediately elected an Honorary Member having been a founder who had held office continuously for thirty one years.

The Installation of W Bro William Butcher in 1947 was delayed due to the ill health of the Master Elect, until April, when an emergency meeting was held. W Bro Butcher was the last Master of Grand Rank to be recommended by the committee.

There was some discussion concerning the Lodge subscriptions. A proposal to raise them to £3-3-0 to include dining after all four meetings was deferred; dining at the September meeting had not been included since 1919. Eventually the Lodge settled on an amount of £2-12-6 to include all four dinners but not liquid refreshment. A fee of £1-1-0 to be charged for non-dining members.

In February 1949 Bro John Anderson, initiated into the Lodge in 1937, was installed as Master, the first 'home grown' master, and so a new era for the Lodge began.

At the very first meeting in May 1949 the Worshipful Master proposed that a Lodge of Instruction be formed. The matter was referred to a sub-Committee, which proposed in February 1950 that it be formed and this proposition was carried unanimously. The Lodge of Instruction first met in May 1950 and was scheduled to meet every Wednesday from September to May inclusive.

The next few years were difficult ones. Between 1948 and 1955 twelve brethren who had occupied the Chair had either died or resigned. One was particularly tragic inasmuch that W Bro W Burgess, who had only just been invested as Treasurer, was killed in the Willesden train accident. This left the Lodge very short of Past Masters, so that on several occasions it became necessary to invite visiting brethren to occupy the Wardens Chairs at Installation Meetings.

W Bro W R M Walker was installed as Worshipful Master in 1953; he was a founder member and had served the Lodge for thirty-eight years. The last founder to become Master.

In February 1955, the Lodge moved from Freemason's Hall to The Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly. No reason is given but it can be surmised that smaller attendance and rising costs were a major consideration. Indeed, the subscriptions were immediately increased to five and a half ; this, however, did include liquid refreshment at the Festive Board.

1956-1965

Changing venues appears to have had a beneficial effect on the Lodge. The number of initiates began to increase to two or three a year along with several joining brethren. Although there was not a requirement for extra meetings the workload was heavy, with it being usual to complete two ceremonies in one evening, with multiple candidates. Attendance of members and visitors also increased with as many as eighty brethren present for installation meetings. Possibly the passing of time since the end of the Second World War and a more stable lifestyle enabled this resurgence in Freemasonry.

The Lodge was honoured in 1960 with the presence of R W Bro Sir George Borg Past District Grand Master of Madras and R W Bro Guy Wodeman Past District Grand Master of Ceylon, although the minutes do not state who they were the guests of.

Honorary Membership was conferred on several members who had served the Lodge for long periods of time: W Bro Underwood who had been Tyler for many years, Bro Hicks initiated in 1929, W Bro Ellis and W Bro Cosby both Founder Members. Indeed, W Bro Cosby, the last known Founder, who was over ninety years old, was in regular communication with the Lodge and in 1965 wrote to the Worshipful Master in connection with the forthcoming Ladies' Festival, recalling how much he had enjoyed his own in 1913!

At a meeting in 1965 it was proposed that W Bro Cosby should be given assistance to attend the Jubilee meeting. The Almoner W Bro Blanchard stated that he was in regular contact with W Bro Cosby and would ask accordingly. However, unfortunately, he was not able to attend, but did send his apologies.

For the Jubilee meeting on 23rd November 1965 the history of the

Lodge for the first fifty years was written and presented by the Treasurer W Bro L Marshall. Unfortunately, there do not appear to be any original copies in existence, although there are copies of a reproduction presented by W Bro B Blackman, Worshipful Master in 1991.

During the meeting there were the usual elections for Master, Treasurer and Tyler, the ceremony of passing and the presentation of six Grand Lodge Certificates by W Bro E Newton the Prestonian Lecturer for 1965. There were one hundred and thirty five brethren present including ten Grand Officers, R W Bro Guy Wodeman being again in attendance.

The first fifty years had seen many changes in the operating of the Lodge. The most notable of which was the change in how the Worshipful Master was selected. There had been seventeen Masters who were Lord Mayors of London, which also included two Provincial Grand Masters, fifteen past Grand Wardens, three Past Grand Treasurers, a Lieutenant General and a Colonel.

During this period there were many members of the Lodge who were honoured by the Grand Master with appointments as Grand Officers or who were already Grand Officers and appointed to a Higher rank.

1966-1975

At the Installation Meeting in 1966 the Worshipful Master gave Notice of Motion that the Lodge should meet at the Devonshire Club, St Jame's, SW 1. This was accepted at the subsequent meeting, but a change in the dates of the Regular Meetings was defeated with the Worshipful Master having the deciding vote.

The new Treasurer for 1967 gave notice of motion that the subscriptions should be raised to £10.00, Initiation fees to £30 and visitors' fees be increased to £2-7-6. His reason was that the Lodge did not have the funds and was nearly overdrawn at the bank. The balance sheet for the end of 1968 showed that the Lodge was just about viable, although the Benevolent Fund was healthy.

The Installation Meeting in 1970 started on a sad note with the announcement of the deaths of W Bro G F Rawlinson, Initiated in 1935 and a Past Master of the Lodge. Even more poignant was the death of W Bro W Cosby LGR aged ninety-seven, the last surviving founder of the Lodge. In the last years of his life Freemasonry and the Lodge had helped him maintain a good quality of life.

It is noted in the minutes that The Devonshire Club was in financial difficulties and had sought a merger with The Junior Carlton Club. The Daily Telegraph reported in July 1971, that a meeting of Devonshire Club members to discuss the merger had ended with an 'ungentlemanly' row. The merger was off, and the Lodge subsequently moved to The Royal Commonwealth Society, Northumberland Avenue, WC2.

After fifty years continuous service, in 1972 Bro J Ryder was unanimously elected an Honorary Member, unfortunately he only lived for a further few months.

The 258th Regular Meeting in November 1973 consisted of one Brother being raised and two Initiations. One of the candidates to be Initiated was Mr E F Allingham. Bro Allingham was passed in 1974 and raised in 1975. W Bro Allingham became Worshipful Master in 1982 and is the longest serving member of the Lodge having been a member for forty-two years.

The last meeting in 1975 saw several changes to the By Laws to reflect the increase in annual subscriptions to £35.00 with effect from the following January. Also, that the preamble should read that 'It was formerly a tradition

that no Candidate shall be proposed for Initiation or Joining unless he is or has been, a member of the City of London National Guard Volunteer Corps or a member of Her Majesty's Armed Forces'. This change was no doubt brought about by the end of National Service and the many years since the end of the Second World War. There is no record of this change ever having been rescinded.

1976-1985

During this period although there were a reasonable number of initiates who were progressively passed and raised, for several reasons many of the brethren were not able to take progressive office. For the first time since 1925 a Past Master of the Lodge, W Bro W Parsons, was Installed as Worshipful Master for the second time.

At the initiation of Bro J F Hosking, in October 1978, the Charge to the Initiate was given by W Bro F J Hosking PPGW of the Harmony Lodge 156 (Plymouth), who was his father.

Financial concerns as to the increasing costs of remaining at the Royal Commonwealth Society were raised and after discussion by the committee the Worshipful Master presented a Notice of Motion that the Lodge move to the Tower Rooms, 23 Tower Place, Tower Hill EC3 with effect from February 1979. The meetings were to be on the 2nd Thursday in February, the 4th Thursdays in May and October and the 2nd Thursday in December- only six weeks later!

W Bro G Davies was singled out by the Worshipful Master in 1980 for his long service not only as Director of Ceremonies, but also Preceptor of the Lodge of Instruction, which still met every Wednesday from September until May inclusive. W Bro Davies had been Master in 1961, and had finally decided to retire, but hope to still attend on occasion.

Several long standing and hard working members of the Lodge were honoured by receiving London Grand Rank as again the Lodge went through a cycle of retiring Past Masters and senior brethren. When promoted it was usually the case that after due Notice of Motion and subsequent vote, the cost of the regalia was defrayed by the Lodge as an appreciation of that member's services.

For the second time in a few years a Notice of Motion was given 'That the permissive form of obligation shall henceforth be adopted'. The first time this issue was raised it was soundly defeated. This time the vote proved to be equal with eleven members for and eleven against, the Worshipful Master had the deciding vote- again the proposition was defeated. However, later The M W The Grand Master expressed a wish that all Lodges move to the new ritual.

The oldest member of the Lodge W Bro Ted Lodge attended the Installation Meeting in February 1985. The Worshipful Master acknowledged his presence

explaining to the brethren that W Bro Lodge would shortly be eight-eight years old and had been initiated into the CLNG Lodge forty-eight years earlier. W Bro Lodge had been Worshipful Master in 1958.

The last significant decision of this period was to elect three brethren to seek and visit new venues, as the rising costs of meeting in Inner London were becoming prohibitive. The members concerned to take an immediate decision, subject to the permission of Grand Lodge.

1986 1995

1986 started with the Lodge meeting at The Park Court Hotel, Lancaster Gate, London W2 3NN. Again, the dates of the meetings were altered but this time they remained unaltered until 2015.

The 310th Regular Meeting held in November 1986 was the first meeting at which a ceremony did not take place. Instead, the long explanation of the 2nd Tracing Board was given by the ADC. Afterwards W Bro P M Relf PPGStB Assistant Secretary of the Masonic Foundation for the Aged and Sick addressed the brethren with an interesting talk concerning The Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution.

The City of London National Guard Chapter 3757 wrote to the Lodge stating that as the links with the Lodge had become tenuous at best, and that no one from the Lodge had joined for years they were desirous of changing their name. A Notice of motion was announced and a subsequent vote was in favour of the change. With effect from the middle of 1988 the City of London National Guard Chapter became known as The Chapter of Kindness 5696.

There was some discussion in the Lodge concerning the attire for Installation Meeting. It was decided that dinner jackets should be worn where at all possible. This has now become tradition at installation meetings.

Although there is not mention made in the Minutes the Lodge of Instruction, which had met for many years, ceased to meet on a regular basis. It can be assumed that with a decline in brethren living in the immediate London area and the associated costs in hiring premises the Lodge of Instruction became a more informal affair with various brethren offering their homes for meetings.

Indeed, the decline of attending members, mirroring a decline in London Freemasonry, gave rise to some discussion, although informal, that merging with another Lodge in a similar situation may prove beneficial to all concerned. The consensus among the brethren was that the Lodge had a long and proud tradition and entering into discussion with another Lodge was not an option. Rather, a large effort should be made by all the brethren to recruit suitable new members and ensure that the Lodge yew to a sustainable number. A great reliance had been placed on visitors to help the Lodge with its ceremonies, who had always helped in true Masonic tradition. An immediate improvement was seen with several regular visitors becoming Joining Members and holding office, thus ensuring that the offices were filled by brethren of the Lodge.

No reason is recorded in the minutes, but the Lodge was on the move again. This time to the Central London Masonic Centre, The Old sessions House, Clerkenwell Green, London. This proved to be a very positive move with all the brethren enjoying the charm and history of the premises. The last meeting of 1995 was the first to be held in the new surroundings.

1996 2005

The beginning of this period saw a steady increase in the number of Candidates for initiation and the continuance of joining members. It was usual to have thirty or more brethren present at a meeting, with all the offices and duties being completed by Lodge members. Sadly, three or four of the most senior brethren were finding it increasingly difficult to attend, mainly because of health reasons or having retired and moved away from the London area.

From the brethren joining during the late nineties, many have progressed through all the offices to the extent of having become Worshipful Master and are still active Past Masters of the Lodge, holding senior offices and attending meetings.

In a period of eight years from 1995 to 2003 there were only four different Worshipful Masters, all four being in the Chair for two years each. Whilst this was somewhat unusual it did allow the more junior brethren to steadily progress through the offices and gain a better understanding of Masonic Ritual.

A local Lodge of Instruction was introduced, operating in East Kent where a number of the Past Masters and Officers lived. This proved to be quite successful, especially with a rehearsal being held in a local Masonic Temple immediately prior to the Regular Meeting. All brethren were urged to find a Lodge of Instruction in their immediate area, and to this day some are still actively involved.

The Lodge managed to attract a number of Past Masters as Joining Members, several of whom passed through the Chair, filling unforeseen gaps in the progression of the officers as some of the brethren requested that they 'stand still' or be taken off the Officers List, mainly because of work or family reasons. Pleasingly all those who did so continued their progression at a later date. The reason for this was that the average age of Initiates into the Lodge was becoming younger, and therefore these brethren were still developing their careers and raising families.

Having been at Clerkenwell for some years and noting the rising costs of holding meetings and dining it was decided that the lodge would buy a Share in Central London Masonic Centre Limited. A number of the brethren loaned the Lodge sufficient funds to complete the purchase. There were two main effects of becoming a shareholder, in that the costs were immediately

reduced, and that the Lodge had a greater say in the management of the Centre. The purchase of the share was to reap great dividends in later years

Metropolitan Grand Lodge was formed as an independent administrative body under a Metropolitan Grand Master in 2003. The City of London National Guard Lodge was proud to become a Founder Member; to commemorate this event a Founder Lodge jewel was appended to the Master's Collar.

2006 2015

With the advent of Metropolitan Grand Lodge, the Lodge was placed into the Devonshire Group and regularly received visits from a Senior Visiting Officer and Visiting Officer. These proved to be very informative and provided a useful link and understanding of how London Masonry and Masonry in general were developing.

The number of Initiates began to increase, with their average age decreasing, to the extent of the Lodge Initiating two brethren in one meeting. The membership was beginning to increase and the attendance at meetings began to rise.

In 2011 W Bro Andy Christofi, Worshipful Master 2007, initiated his son, Bro Paul Christofi. Further in 2014 he initiated his second son, Bro Peter Christofi. W Bro Christofi also conducted their ceremonies of Passing and Raising. This was the first time recorded in the minutes of the Lodge that a father had initiated and progressed his sons in Freemasonry.

In 2014 W Bro Ernie Walker became the only the second Master to occupy the Chair for the third time, having first attained the Chair nearly twenty years earlier

Having resided at Clerkenwell for some thirteen years the Lodge was moved to Lever Street ECI when Central London Masonic Centre Limited sold the building and took over the new premises. Unfortunately, this only lasted a year and the Lodge had to move again this time The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, Russell Square WCI.

The Centenary Festival, the 426th Regular Meeting, was held at Freemasons' Hall, on 12th November 2015. The Guest of Honour was V W Bro Stephen Fenton, Assistant Metropolitan Grand Master. The Festive Board was held at The Imperial Hotel, Russell Square.

During the meeting, a short history of the Lodge was given. An Illuminated Centenary Warrant was received by the Worshipful Master on behalf of the Lodge. The Assistant Metropolitan Grand Chaplain, W Bro Rev John Hughes gave an Oration. V W Bro Stephen Fenton was presented with a cheque for £1 500 on behalf of The Metropolitan Masonic Charity (London Air Ambulance). The meeting was very well attended by both the members of the Lodge and their guests.

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The City of London National was an evidence of oneness of sentiment existing among older men of their desire to unite with more agile and younger brethren in 'doing their bit' for the common good. It is, therefore, not altogether surprising that the affiliated Lodge has been successful.

The early policy of the Lodge was to bind together in a wonderful fraternity all its members, by regularly selecting for the Chair some great dominating and outstanding personality, who could by his personal position draw to himself the appreciation and devotion of all the members. Latterly, as the Chair has been occupied by ordinary masons, its aim has been the same. To further the principles of brotherly love, relief and truth; not only the pledge to practise the charity of hand and heart and tongue, it embraces more than these, but to fulfil to the very utmost of his powers, his duty to God and his duty to Man.

Charity

Since its formation in 1915 the Lodge has been heavily involved with charity. The Lodge became a Grand Patron of The Royal Masonic Hospital, a Patron Lodge of The Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution, a Patron of the Masonic Trust for Boys and Girls, and a Patron Lodge to the New Masonic Samaritan Fund.

It was traditional that before every Installation Meeting Notice of Motion was given that a sum of anything up to four hundred guineas was to be donated equally amongst the charities of which the Lodge was a patron.

The lodge managed to achieve this by maintaining its own benevolent fund, investing in bonds as well as having a good supply of cash.

Over the years many members of the Lodge and their dependants have benefited directly, and it was not unusual for requests for aid to appear in the minutes, and on occasion to be passed, with approval of the Lodge, to the appropriate Masonic Charity.

The benevolent fund was closed in 1994, when the bonds were sold and all the money was transferred to The Grand Relief Chest. The Almoner W Bro Mark Vernazza having advised the Lodge that this was a more pragmatic approach in investing the Lodge Funds. To this day the Lodge still operates and contributes to the Grand Relief Chest.

Consecrating Officers

V W Bro Sir Edward Letchworth FSA Grand Secretary	Consecrating Master
W Bro The Rt Hon Sir Charles Wakefield PAGDC Lord Mayor of London	Senior Warden
V W Bro Sir Alfred Robbins PGD President of the Board of General Purposes	Junior Warden
W Bro The Rev W P Beasley MA PAGChap Sub Dean of St Paul's	Chaplain
V W Bro J S Granville Grenfell MA Grand DC	DC
W Bro G Woods Wollaston, Bluemantle MA Dep Grand DC	Asst DC
W Bro W Resbury Few PAGDC Asst Grand Secretary	IG
W Bro William Yeo Grand Tyler	Tyler

Officers 1915

W Bro Sheriff Henry Carte de Lafontaine PGD	WM
W Bro Sir Edward E Cooper PGD	IPM
Bro Colonel G T B Cobbett VD	SW
W Bro A Burnett Brown GSuptWorks	JW
W Bro R V Vasser Smith PGD	Treasurer
V W Bro Rev Honeyl G Rosedale	Secretary
V W Bro J S Granville Grenfell Grand DC	DC
W Bro R S Chandler PAGStB	SD
W Bro W O Wellsford PAGStB	JD
W Bro Dr William Hammond PGD	ADC
W Bro R J Goodson PAGStB	Almoner
W Bro F H Hawkins PGOrg	Organist
W Bro L G Cook PGP	Asst Sec
W Bro William Yeo Grand Tyler	IG
W Bro R J Bennett	Tyler

Officers and Members 2015

W Bro Kevin Westall	WM
W Bro Ernie Walker LGR PPAGDC (EK)	IPM
W Bro Barry Chamberlain PAGStdB (EK)	SW
Bro David Cavender	JW
W Bro Mark Vernazza SLGR	Chaplain
W Bro Laurie Shore	Treasurer
W Bro Doug Philips SLGR	Secretary
W Bro Mac MacLennan LGR	DC
Bro Phil Jones	Almoner
W Bro Andy Christofi LGR	Charity Steward
W Bro Mike Willett LGR PPDGR (EK)	SD
Bro Gim Ooi	JD
W Bro Andy Christofi LGR	ADC
W Bro Colin Brown	Asst Sec
Bro Paul Christofi	IG
Bro Lyndon Jones	Steward
Bro Damion Morphy	Steward
Bro Peter Christofi	Steward
W Bro Morris Delew SLGR SLGCR PPGSoj	Tyler

W Bro Ted Ailingham LGR
W Bro John Chamberlain
W Bro Aime Kamba
W Bro Leslie Wills
Bro Trevor Emes
Bro Nicolas De Lacroix De Lavalette
Bro Garry Latcham
Bro John Phillips Bro Sean Wilson

Honorary Members

W Bro Gordon Wilson PDepGSupWks PGSoj

Honoured Guest

The Worshipful Master Royal Naval Anti-Aircraft Lodge 3709

Centenary Festival Officers

V W Bro Stephen Fenton PGSwdB	AMetGM
W Bro David Nunn PJGD	MetGIInsp
W Bro Rev John Hughes MBE SLGR	AMetGCh
W Bro Ron Mumford PAGDC	Rep of MetGSec
W Bro Dominic Hawes AGDC	MetDepDC
W Bro Robert Curson PAGStB	SVO
W Bro Albert Francis SLGR	VO
W Bro David Bywater LGR	MetGStwd
W Bro Phillip Salama LGR	MetGStwd

Centenary Festival Committee

W Bro Andy Christofi LGR
W Bro Mac MacLennan LGR
W Bro Kevin Westall

Past Masters and Subscribing Masters of the Lodge

1915 W.Bro H Cart De La Fontaine M.A. (Sheriff of London 1914) PGD
1916 R.W.Bro Lt-Genera1 Sir Francis Lloyd GCVO, KCB PGW
1917 R.W.Bro Sir Charles Hanson Bt, MP (Lord Mayor 1917) PGW
1918 R.W.Bro Sir Richard Yasser-smith, Bt, (Chair Lloyd's Bank) PGM (Glos)
1919 R.W.Bro Sir Edward E Cooper, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1919) PGW
1920 R.W.Bro Colonel G T Cobbett V D GSwdB
1921 R.W.Bro col & Aid The Rt Hon Viscount Wakefield GCVO CBE PGW
1922 R.W.Bro Sir Edward C Moore Bt (Lord Mayor 1922) PGW
1923 R.W.Bro Colonel Sir Louis A Newton, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1923) PGW
1924 V.W.Bro Sir John Ferguson KBE, MP PG Treas. PGW ofNova Scotia
1925 R.W.Bro Sir William R Piyke Bt (Lord Mayor 1925) PGD
1926 R.W.Bro Sir William R Piyke Bt (Lord Mayor 1925) PGD
1927 R.W.Bro The Rt Hon Lord Ebbisham GBE (Lord Mayor 1926) PGW
1928 R.W.Bro Sir Charles Albert Batha, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1928) PGW
1929 R.W.Bro Alderman Sir Kynaston JE Studd, Bt, PGW PGM Cambs.
1930 V.W.Bro Sir William A Waterlow,Bt, KCB (Lord Mayor 1930) PG Treas
1931 W.Bro Sir W Pheneneal, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1931)
1932 R.W.Bro Alderman Sir Maurice Jenks, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1931) PGW
1933 R.W.Bro Aid Sir Percy Walter Mayor 1933) PGW
1934 R.W. Bro Sir Gerald Woods Collaston MA KCB, KCVO PGW
1935 W.Bro Sir Francis Hayden Green, Bt, CC PGD LGR
1936 W.Bro Sir Francis Hayden Green, Bt, CC PGD LGR
1937 W.Bro The Rt Hon Lord Broadbridge PGD (Lord Mayor 1937)
1938 W.Bro W Digy Ovens PGD LGR
1939 R.W.Bro G. Emmerson PGW Past President Board of General Purposes
1940 R.W.Bro Sir William George Coxen, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1940) PGW
1941 W.Bro Joseph Ritson PGD LGR

1942 R.W.Bro Colonel Sir John Dawson Laurie Bt (Lord Mayor 1942) PGW
1943 W.Bro Sir Samuel Joseph ,Bt, (Lord Mayor 1943) PGD
1944 W.Bro Henry Gledhill PGStdB LGR
1945 W.Bro Walter James Searles PAGDC LGR
1946 R.W.Bro Sir Frederick Rowland, Bt, (Lord Mayor 1950) PGW LGR
1947 W.Bro William Henry Buthcher PG stB PPGD (Middlesex
1948 W.Bro H C A Elithom OBE
1949 W.Bro J B Anderson
1950 W.Bro G F Robinson LGR
1951 W.Bro W F Burgess
1952 W.Bro F M Walker LGR
1953 W.Bro W R M Walker PPGD (Surrey)
1954 W.Bro F O Blanchard LGR
1955 W.Bro Boxall
1956 W.Bro F L Fenn
1957 W.Bro A W Davies LGR
1958 W.Bro E G Lodge LGR
1959 W.Bro L H Marshall LGR
1960 W.Bro A E C Jones
1961 W.Bro G O Davies LGR
1962 W.Bro R T Browning
1963 W.Bro J H Healey
1964 W.Bro L J G Hutt
1965 W.Bro O E S Daters LGR
1966 W.Bro AD Roberts
1967 W.Bro R C Davies PZ
1968 W.Bro T R Kirby
1969 W.Bro E D Kingham LGR
1970 W.Bro W D Parsom LGR
1971 W.Bro D W Weston
1972 W.Bro D H Kirby LGR
1973 W.Bro W E Hussey
1974 W.Bro A R Rivett SLGR
1975 W.Bro C A Wynne LGR LGCR
1976 W.Bro J W Murphy LGR
1977 W.Bro T C Strokes
1978 W.Bro W D Parsons LGR
1979 W.Bro B N O Hart
1980. W.Bro M P Kirby LGR
1981 W.Bro J W MurphyLGR
1982+ W.Bro E F Allingham LGR
1983 W.Bro J M Barrett
1984 W.Bro C H Pearson
1985 W.Bro D H Kirby LGR
1986 W.Bro P H Camigan
1987 W.Bro O G Dunne
1988 W.Bro L Furmidge
1989 W.Bro E F Allingham LGR
1990+ W.Bro M Vernazza SLGR
1991 W.Bro B L Blackman

1992 W.Bro E D Kingham LGR
1993 W.Bro E D Kingham LGR
1994+ W.Bro M Vernazza SLGR
1995+ W.Bro E W Walker LGR PADC(E.K.)
1996+ W.Bro E W Walker LGR PADC(E.K.)
1997 W.Bro V E Nichols LGR
1998 W.Bro V E Nichols LGR
1999+ W.Bro M Willett LGR PPDGR(E.K.)
2000+ W.Bro N MacLennan LGR
2001+ W.Bro N MacLennan LGR
2002+ W.Bro M Willett LGR PPDGR(E.K.)
2003 W.Bro J E Turner
2004 W.Bro M. Holden LGR
2005 W.Bro M Holden LGR
2006 W.Bro C. Riddlestone
2007+ W.Bro A Christofi LGR
2008 W.Bro L Wills
2009 W.Bro C Brown
2010+ W.Bro L Shore
2011+ W.Bro L Shore
2012 W.Bro J Chamberlain
2013 W.Bro J Chamberlain
2014+ W.Bro E W Walker LGR PPADC(E.K.)
2015+ W.Bro K J Westall

