

HISTORY OF STAR LODGE #115

MADRID, IOWA

1857 - 1958

The following history of Star Lodge #115, Madrid, Iowa, was compiled by Brother Geo. A. Nelson who read the minutes from the start of the Lodge up until the present time. These notes were used by Brother Sam Despotovich who gave an excellent recap of the history at the Centennial Celebration.

September 26, 1857

The first meeting was held at Swedes Point, now known as Madrid. The officers were as follows:

M. C. Wood	W.M.
R. K. Keigley	S.W.
J. Gowash	J.W.
E. Barrett	Treas. - Protem
S. Underhill	Secy. - Protem
W. Gowash	S.D.
J. T. Alexander	J.D.
J. Fritz	Tyler

Five petitions were read for acceptance at the first meeting. The Lodge rent was discussed and the meeting night was changed from Saturday to Thursday night.

January 28, 1858 - 5th Stated Meeting

Bought two cords of wood for \$3.00 and a blanket for use in the Lodge room. Two 3rd Degrees were performed. The first person raised was Levi McNeely.

February 3, 1858 - First By-Laws Read

It seems that it was necessary to ballot secretly on each entered apprentice to advance to a higher degree.

February 23, 1858

The Lodge allowed M. C. Wood, W.M., \$3.00 for a ballot box he had made for the Lodge. The Lodge also bought two pounds of candles for 70¢.

June 24, 1858

The first mention of "#115" was made at the heading of the minutes. Heretofore it was called "Star Lodge U.S." (Under Dispensation). The original officers under the Charter are listed below. They were elected at a special meeting on June 5, 1858, and were installed the same night.

M. C. Wood	W.M.
Wm. Gowash	S.W.
R. K. Keighley	J.W.
Zosiah Fritz	Treas.
A. Hallcraft	Secy.
W. M. Phipps	S.D.
A.B. Rogers	J.D.
J. Gowash	Tyler

Dues were \$2.00 per year plus 50¢ for the Grand Lodge.

June 9, 1859

The first mention of the Charter was made in the minutes when M. C. Wood, W.M., presented a bill for 75¢ for making a frame for the Charter.

Also a man was expelled for Un-Masonic conduct at this meeting ("divulging secrets of the order.") Also M. C. Woods, W.M., dues were remitted by the Lodge on this date.

A motion was also made for A. B. Rogers to make six spittoons for the Lodge at 15¢ a piece.

June 14, 1859

The Treasurer's report included paying out \$31.80 for expenses of attending the Grand Lodge and obtaining a Charter.

July 15, 1859

A joint public installation of officers was held in a grove of trees near town and M. C. Wood installed the newly elected officers of Mt. Olive Lodge #79 and Star Lodge #115.

January 28, 1860

The first mention of the Town of Madrid was made instead of "Swedes Point." It seems from the minutes that the Lodge was not closed on the highest degree that they had worked on, but whatever degree they happened to end up in. They took in many candidates always spreading the ballot between each degree on each brother.

They also had trouble getting Brethren to attend Lodge because on November 22, 1860, a stated communication could not be held because a quorum was not present.

November 14, 1861

A motion was made to discontinue the Charter but was voted down. No reason was given.

May 8, 1862

Times must have been hard for the Brothers were allowed to pay dues in small amounts at a time and those who couldn't pay before election of officers "were remitted for the time being" so they could hold office. Officers were installed in person or by proxy.

August 13, 1864

Lodge seal and Tylers sword were purchased.

October 15, 1864

Brother Church was paid 75¢ for making two columns. Twenty bushels of coal were purchased for 25¢ per bushel.

February 4, 1865

Masters carpet was purchased for \$22.00.

March 11, 1865

A Committee was appointed to inquire about building a Lodge Hall.

May 6, 1865

Several brethren were suspended for non-payment of dues including M. C. Wood, the First Master.

The Lodge generally opened on 1st degree, then called to refreshment, then the 2nd degree, etc.

May 21, 1868

Built and paid for Lodge Hall. They had been renting a hall heretofore.

July 24, 1870

Open in First Degree, then proceeded to the grove for public installation of officers and then returned to the Lodge and closed in 1st Degree.

July 29, 1871

A. Holecraft along with two other brothers applied thru Star Lodge to the Grand

July 29, 1871 (Cont'd.)

Lodge for a dispensation to start a lodge at Polk City. It was granted and he was W.M. of this Lodge (Operative #4 U.D.) (See January 20, 1872, when he visits Lodge and is listed as a visitor from a new lodge).

1872 (No month shown)

Two trials for Un-Masonic conduct were held at the meeting.

June 12, 1875

The first time the Lodge opened on Third Degree for a regular meeting. Heretofore they opened in 1-2-and third degrees and closed in 3-2-1 degrees. Lots of work before the Lodge with installations, generally having a big picnic with another Lodge and it was an all day affair. They even had a band play on one installation.

April 21, 1877

After the election of officers which resulted in a big turnover of new officers, the Secretary ended his minutes with this note: "Peace and harmony not prevailing!"

July 21, 1877

In several instances a special meeting was called for trials on Un-Masonic conduct (non-payment of dues). The trial was held and voted on; the Brother was found guilty or not guilty as the case may be.

1877 (No month)

Bought a building for \$100.00 and a lot for \$25.00 and proceeded to move a building onto the lot for the new Lodge hall (north of Sundberg Funeral Home).

October 5, 1878

Voted to send surplus money in treasury to G.M. to help the yellow fever sufferers in the south.

September, 1890

First mention of buying a carpet for the Lodge hall. Also a motion was made and carried unanimously in favor of "dissolution of corporation of Star Lodge #115." No further comment was made as to what was meant by the motion.

October, 1890

Again a vote was taken on dissolution of incorporation of Star Lodge #115 with a note that 25 members were present and this was more than 3/4 majority of membership - voted for unanimously.

May 19, 1894

At a regular meeting a committee consisting of H. S. Farr, H. M. Graves and Geo. A. Young was appointed to contact the Worthy Grand Matron of Eastern Star to organize an O. E. S. in Madrid.

June 16, 1894

A communication was read from Worthy Grand Matron, Sarah E. Woods, and a motion was made and seconded to let O. E. S. have use of Masonic Hall, the rent to be fixed hereafter.

November 10, 1894

Motion made and carried that O. E. S. have use of hall without expense provided they contribute to having the hall cleaned and repaired.

April 6, 1895

Furniture and middle chamber pillars bought. \$190.23.

May 21, 1896

Masonic trial. Full details in minutes. A brother was expelled for patronizing a house of ill fame in Des Moines.

December 19, 1896

It was moved and seconded that the Secretary be instructed to purchase a new sword and belt for the Tyler and new working tools for the Lodge - motion carried. Also that the old sword and working tools be laid up among the archives of the Lodge.

On several occasions the Lodge elected new officers and they were then installed the same night.

July 10, 1897

A committee was appointed to draw up plans for the 40 Year Celebration of the Anniversary of the Lodge. No record of any meeting being held.

September 24, 1898

W.M. F. F. Graves ordered the tin roll to preserve the Charter.

December 15, 1898

A committee reported that Crary Bros. & Co. offered to install gas lights in the hall and furnish gas. Meters: \$9.00; two single chandeliers: \$1.30; burners: \$2.50; piping: \$10.00; and four chandeliers: \$8.00. The committees' report was placed on file. The lodge was still burning wood and lighting with kerosene and candles at this time.

March 25, 1899

Robes were ordered for second section of 3rd degree. Total cost: \$71.66.

April 22, 1899

Bill allowed to A. M. Sundberg for three dozen oak cane chairs for \$60.00.

December 14, 1899

Contracted with light company to wire hall and install electric lights (\$26.89).

November 1, 1900

Star Lodge sent \$10.00 to the Masons of Galveston, Texas to help them out due to the great hurricane that struck there at that time.

December 5, 1905

Moved and passed that an extension be added on the rear of the Lodge Room on S. B. Williams' property, with his consent, for a new kitchen. This is the back end of the I.O.O.F. Hall or Vets Club as we know it and the property that we recently purchased.

February 2, 1906

A letter was sent to Peaceful Lodge #454 at Woodward demanding that they stop infringing on Madrid's territory and demanded fees and penalty which totaled \$45.00. The brother that Woodward took in was W. E. Gearhart.

February 28, 1907

City water was installed in the Lodge Room.

November 27, 1907

Celebrated the 50th Anniversary with a banquet and a program. There is nothing in the minutes on this date because it was for the entire family. In the

November 27, 1907 (Cont'd.)

minutes of November 14, 1907, it was moved by J. S. Lucas and seconded by F. H. Graves that members of this Lodge be entitled to issue an invitation to one person to attend the anniversary in addition to his own family. Motion carried.

A vote of thanks was given the Odd Fellows and Modern Woodman for their courtesy of letting the Star Lodge use their lodge rooms during the anniversary meeting, November 27, 1907.

July 9, 1908

A communication from Fredrickburg, Virginia Lodge asking for contributions for the Washington Monument. No action taken.

January 4, 1912

Discussed purchasing new lodge rooms and a committee was appointed.

March 28, 1912

Building Committee reported that lodge rooms could be built for \$3,850.00 and a committee was appointed to secure pledges to raise the money.

April 25, 1912

The Building Committee reported that after a general canvass they were able to raise \$5.25.

December 19, 1912

Committee appointed to investigate the grave of brother Crawford Cole who was buried west of town. (See letter of committee).

June 12, 1913

A committee was appointed to purchase a second-hand safe for the Lodge. A safe was purchased for \$50.00. A committee was appointed to arrange for honoring F. H. Graves who was appointed Senior Grand Warden of Iowa.

November 13, 1913

Committee reported on fixing Crawford Cole's grave. Put up new railing and otherwise cleaned up. See letter by H. S. Farr.

December 11, 1913

H. M. Graves presented gavel from Lookout Mountain.

April 9, 1914

Madrid invaded Polk City jurisdiction and Polk City wanted fees plus penalty. Madrid paid fees but no penalty.

July 22, 1915

Trustees' instructed to close the deal between Brother J. M. Carlson and the Lodge: trading the Lodge Hall for a new Lodge Hall and give him \$1800.00. This is the present lodge as it is now (216½ South Water Street).

September 23, 1915

Brother Allen Adams presented a gavel he made from the wood of the old Lincoln flag pole which was erected in 1860.

February 17, 1916

Demits granted to A. Coffen, E. R. Burkett, Wm. Andrews, C. M. Snyder, D. W. Grigsby and Wm. Lytle for the purpose of organizing a lodge at

February 17, 1916 (Cont'd.)

Granger, Iowa, with Brothers A. Coffeen, H. E. Bagley, and E. E. Fitzsimmons nominated as the three principle officers and petitioned the G.M. for a dispensation.

July 5, 1922

A picnic was held at Nicolet Park, west of Boone, with Pilot Mound, Ogden, Boone and Madrid Lodges participating. Boone and Madrid Lodges challenged Ogden and Pilot Mound Lodges to a tug-of-war using the Des Moines River as a centerline. Also, a bathing beauty contest was held.

Several Masonic trials were held in the 1900 to 1924 era.

One of the older Brothers, Charles Adams, told of a man petitioning the Lodge several times before he was finally admitted to receive the degrees and when he was taking his 3rd degree, the Master told him, "Nor do I know that you ever will become a Master Mason," and the new man turned around and said, "who the hell is kicking about me now!"

The minute books from 1916 to 1937 have been misplaced but on talking to several of the older brethren, all agreed that this was sort of a quiet period, or leveling off period.

As might be expected, during the war years - 1942 - 1945, attendance was poor and officers were held over on several occasions.

In 1953, a new gas heating system was installed at a price of \$1300.00.

Heretofore heat had been supplied by the store downstairs.

1956-57

New Linoleum was laid throughout the lodge thus making it one of the best looking in this area and easier to keep clean. Also, theater chairs were purchased and installed and the straight backed chairs were retired. These were probably the cain bottom chairs purchased from Sundberg in 1899.

The building next door to the west was purchased from the Veterans of Foreign Wars for \$200.00. This is the building that the Masons traded to Carlson in 1915 for our present lodge rooms. It was purchased for extra room and storage space.

The building on the outside was in need of repairs so the complete outside was sandblasted, remortared and waterproofed at a cost of \$1400.00.

On May 20, 1958, the Lodge celebrated its 100th Anniversary. The Grand Master was present. A dinner was served after which the Lodge was opened, guests were introduced, the history was given, a speaker was introduced and the Grand Lodge officers closed the Lodge.

Living 50 Year Masons - 1958

Allen F. Adams	1902
Otho H. Darby	1905
Harry C. Graves	1896
S. W. Lessel	1888
H. D. Lucas	1902
J. G. Lucas	1903

Membership of Star Lodge 137