

Freemasons in Leominster and Royal Edward Lodge

The first record of a Freemasons Lodge in Leominster was in October 1742, when a Lodge bearing the number 191 was formed and meetings were held at the Three Horseshoes Inn, Corn Square. At that time, Lodges were identified by number only and they did not assume names until much later. This early Lodge number was changed to 125 in 1755 but due to lack of support, it was closed and removed from the Roll of Lodges (The Moderns) in January 1768. There are no surviving Minutes of that Lodge.

In 1793, another attempt was made to re-establish Freemasonry in Leominster and a new Lodge was formerly Constituted under the number 533 with meetings being held at the Red Lion Hotel, Broad Street, Leominster. The origins of that Lodge are somewhat vague but it has been suggested that the name Royal Edward was chosen from King Edward the First who had contact with the town of Leominster during his reign in the 1200"s. The first Minute of that Lodge refers to the Service of Consecration held at the Priory Church on 7th February 1795. In the year 1800, the meeting date was changed from the second Monday in each month to a Thursday "on or before the full moon" to suit the convenience of members who travelled from Ludlow - either on foot or by horse.

In 1805 however, the Ludlow members opted to resign and became joining members of a Lodge in Ludlow. The result was that Lodge No. 533 became unsustainable and it was eventually erased from the Roll of Lodges in March 1828.

An entirely new Lodge, bearing the number 1194, was formed and Warranted in December 1861 and meetings were held at the Royal Oak Hotel, South Street, Leominster. Records show that one member was in fact a member of the earlier Lodge No.533 (closed some 33 years earlier) and it is possible that he was instrumental in

the transfer of the name of "Royal Edward" to this new Lodge. In 1863, the Lodge was renumbered 892 as part of a Grand Lodge initiative to rationalise numbers throughout England. With the advent of improved transportation into and around Leominster and acceptance that travelling only on a moonlit night was no longer an issue, the meetings were changed in February 1915 to the second Thursday in the month. Those meeting dates continue to the present day.

In March 1929, the decision was taken to purchase "The Old Malthouse" in South Street, Leominster and after major modifications to the building, the first Lodge meeting was held on 10th October 1929. Those premises were used continuously until May 2006 when the site was sold for redevelopment.

In December 2006, Royal Edward Lodge No. 892 moved to Brook Hall, Broad Street, Leominster on a temporary basis.

We moved into our newly purchased premises, again in South Street in October 2013 in the hope that Freemasonry, introduced into Leominster in 1742, will continue to flourish for present and future generations.