

History of Union Chapter No. 7 Royal Arch Masons

On the 26th of May, 1813, a dispensation was granted by the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States, to a number of Royal Arch Masons, to form a Chapter in Newark to be known as Washington Chapter, No. 1. On the 7th of August the Chapter was duly organized and the Officers installed.

In the early part of the year 1817, an invitation was extended by Washington Chapter to Brearly and Solomon Chapters to unite in forming a Grand Chapter for New Jersey. The invitation was declined by Brearly Chapter, which was working under a dispensation from the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania, unless the General Grand Chapter would modify the general regulations, which forbid any intercourse with the Chapters of Pennsylvania and Delaware. At the meeting of the General Grand Chapter in September of 1810, it was decided that no Grand Chapter could be legally constituted in this State until there should be three Chapters under this jurisdiction. No further action was therefore taken until the organization of Franklin Chapter in 1825, when delegates from Washington, Solomon and Franklin Chapters met in Elizabeth and organized a Grand Chapter and on the 9th of May the Grand Chapter Officers were duly installed in New Brunswick.

The Grand Chapter having failed to meet for five years due to the Morgan Affair, a dispensation was granted on the 8th of August, 1843, by the General Grand High Priest, to continue the work of Washington Chapter until the Triennial Convocation of the General Grand Chapter in September of 1844. The last records of this Chapter are dated March 28, 1844.

Union Chapter No. 1, was organized March 18, 1848, and received its warrant from the General Grand Chapter on the 17th of September, 1850.

Newark Chapter No. 2 was organized June 24, 1848. At the Regular Meetings of this Chapter the attendance was so small that frequently there was not a quorum present and at the Convocation of March 25, 1853, a communication was received from Union Chapter, extending an invitation to unite with them, whereupon, the invitation was accepted and Newark Chapter was dissolved.

The present Grand Chapter was organized at Burlington on the 30th of December, 1856 and the Grand Chapter Officers were installed at Jersey City on the 13th of February, 1857.

Union Chapter refused to recognize the Grand Chapter until the 25th of August, 1859, when it was resolved that the warrant, which was granted by the General Grand Chapter, be surrendered, and that application be made to the Most Excellent Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the State of New Jersey for a new warrant. The warrant was granted on the 7th of September, 1859 and as the Grand Chapter was composed at this time of six Chapters, Union Chapter, although the oldest in the State of New Jersey, was designated as No. 7.

There were 19 Charter members of the Union Chapter. In its first year 51 were received by affiliation, and 597 were exalted, making a total number on the roll of 667 as of December 1859.

During its history Union Chapter has merged with other Chapters, including Montclair Chapter No. 54, Orange Chapter No. 23, and Tristone No. 43.

Institutions are organized by men to aid him in the pursuit of his goals. The character of the institution developed is usually manifested by the caliber of the men who comprise its membership and the kind of leaders who govern its affairs. Union Chapter has always enjoyed a distinguished reputation for it has listed men of good report on its rolls and officers of high ideals and great ability in its positions of leadership.

This history is dedicated to their memory with the hope that their achievements will serve as an inspiration to the present and future Companions of Union Chapter.