

Freemasonry in the United States

It appears reasonable to assume that there were many Masons among the early settlers of this country. There is no reason to doubt that they did meet, hold meetings, and initiate candidates under the "prescriptive right" meaning that they formed Lodges without Warrants, acting upon their "right from time immemorial."

There is evidence that a deputation dated June 5, 1730, was granted to Daniel Coxe, of New Jersey, by the Duke of Norfolk, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England, appointing him Provincial Grand Master of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Moreover, there is evidence that Brethren meeting in Philadelphia applied to him in 1730 and received authority to continue to meet as a regular Lodge.

However, no records of such a Lodge are available to indicate that it continued or was even ever established.

The earliest authentic records of such a Lodge available to indicate that it continued on was from "The First Lodge of Boston" in 1733. This was warranted under a Provincial Grand Master.

On April 30, 1733, this Provincial Grand Master Henry Price, who had received his appointment a short time before from Viscount Montague, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England convened a number of Brethren into a Provincial Grand Lodge, and then formed and constituted a subordinate Lodge on Boston. This Lodge, later consolidated with two others, still functions in that city.

On the following year Bro. Henry Price's commission was extended to cover all of North America.

Many of Patriots of the American Revolution were Masons including George Washington, Ben Franklin, James Hamilton, and even the Marquis de Lafayette to name just a few. There were enough Masons in the Continental Army to establish traveling military Lodges, which allowed them to continue to enjoy the warmth of fraternal fellowship. American Union was just such a Lodge and was attached to the Connecticut Line of the Army. The minute books of this Lodge show that General Washington attended meetings of the Lodge on several occasions.

By the year 1800 there were Lodges established in nearly all of the states east of the Mississippi except in Illinois and Wisconsin, and Grand Lodges had been formed in most of them. As an example, Kentucky formed her Grand Lodge in 1792 and was instrumental in forming Lodges in Indiana and the other states around her.

By 1892 there were fifty Grand Lodges in the United States, including one in the Indian Territory which later became the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma. There are now fifty one Grand Lodges in the United States. The Grand Lodge of Alaska even helped to establish the Grand Lodge of Russia after the fall of communism.