



THE HISTORY OF MAINE IN THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

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Chapter FORTY SEVEN: First Council In Maine Formed

Council #101 Portland, Maine August 12, 1894

It was in July of 1894, only twelve years after the incorporation of the Knights of Columbus in Connecticut, that the Catholic gentlemen of the City of Portland made repeated requests to the Supreme Council that a subordinate council be established in the Forest City of Portland. As a result, the Supreme Council sent National Organizer Thomas Harrison Cummings, of Boston, to investigate the possibility of such action. The interest was high, and sincere, is shown by the fact that the following month, August 12th, thirty-four Catholic men had filled out applications and completed arrangements for the institution of the new council. During the prior twelve years there had been one hundred councils organized, so that Portland was given the number 101.

It was a memorable day for the Catholic men, not only of Portland, but of the whole state of Maine, for on this occasion five hundred Knights from Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island had chartered the special ship "City of Portland" and had travelled from Boston Harbor to Portland to participate. The initiation and installation exercises was held in the City Hall under the direction of State Deputy James F. Hayes of Massachusetts, assisted by a staff from Lowell Council No. 72 and Bunker Hill Council No. 62 of Boston. These exercises took place following mass, which was held at the Cathedral of St. Dominics. And thus Columbianism had taken root in the Pine Tree State. The first officers elected at a meeting held a few days previous at the Kavanagh Hall in Portland were:

Grand Knight: Joseph A. McGowan
Dep. Gr. Knight: James T. State
Physician: Edward J. McDonough
Rec. Secretary: P. F. Bradley
Financial Sec.: William H. Dougherty
Treasurer: Dennis P. Kelley
Trustees: Florence F. Driscoll, John A. McGowan, Richard E. Bradley,
William J. Kerrigan and John M. Burke.

And from this suspicious start the council has continued down through the years. Like many other councils there have been periods of great success and periods of great retrenchment; of feast and famine. No one will admit the cause of this but it appears that it has always been due to internal strife of one form or another; the ins against the outs, the Irish against the French, the new element against the 'old guard', the East Side against the West Side. While probably no one of these factions was the determining factor, yet it did not make for harmony and added together did not make a closely knit, homogeneous group. It was due to this fact that the Monsignor Houlihan Council No. 2983 was formed which did not heal any breaches.

When the council was first organized it met somewhere on Congress Street. It moved to the home on Pearl Street in the early 1900's and remained there until the building was taken over by the United Service Organization during World War Two, for the armed forces. After the war the council returned to the home and have continued to meet here ever since.

During World War One, the council opened its home to the servicemen with the familiar slogan "EVERYBODY WELCOME, EVERY-THING FREE". Following the war the council conducted a free school for returning veterans.

Another sign of the change of the times is the fact that the council sponsored a dance in 1920 at the City Hall, attended by 500 people and the music was furnished by a 12 piece "harmonica orchestra". In the year 1944-45 the council made the CENTURY CLUB, having taken in over 100 members. A project that was consummated and which gained a great deal of publicity was the promoting the Limestone Air Base be renamed in honor of Major Charles L. Loring of Portland who gave his life in the Korean War.

CHARTER MEMBERS OF COUNCIL 101, PORTLAND, MAINE, CHARTER DATE AUGUST 12, 1894

Baker, Edward G. ***	Flaherty, Thomas J.	McGowan, T. T.
Bradley, Patrick J.	Gauthier, Louis	Maloney, William H.
Bradley, Richard E.	Kelly, Dennis P.	O'Brien, Edward H.
Broe, James A.	Kerrigan, William J.	O'Connor, John J.
Burke, John M.	Kohling, Charles A.	O'Connor, Peter
Butler, Joseph W.	Lannegan, J. W.	State, James T. ***
Cogan, D. S.	Logue, James	Stone, Byron C.
Donahue, Bernard C.	McDonough, Brian E.	Sullivan, J. D.
Dougherty, William A	McDonough, Edward J.	Walsh, William E.
Driscoll, Florence F. ***	McGowan, Edward G.	Whalen, William E.
Driscoll, William H.	McGowan, Joseph A.	Young, Edward T.
Dunn, JoHn W.		

Future Grand Knights OF Council #101 ***