

History of the Lodge

The United Industrious Lodge No. 31, Canterbury, was formed in 1819 by the union of the two lodges then existent in the City - the Industrious Lodge, whose number in that year, was 416, and Lodge 37, whose original number was 24.

Documentary evidence of these two lodges exists in the form of the Treasurer's account book of the Industrious Lodge; of the minutes of meetings of Lodge 24, from the year of its origin in Canterbury until its union with the Industrious Lodge in 1819., and of a complete record of the Minutes of this United Lodge up to the present date.

The Industrious Lodge was warranted on November 28th 1776, by the Regular Grand Lodge known as the Moderns, and held its first meetings at the Fleece Inn. Its original number was 498; four years later it became 403, in 1781-404; and in 1792 - 326. This number it retained until the Union of the Two Grand Lodges, when it became 416 on the united roll.

On March 24th, 1806, another Lodge was formed in the City under the Athol Constitution, its number being 24. This number originally belonged to a Bristol Lodge, which was warranted in October, 1753, and held its meetings at the Edinburgh Castle, Marsh Street, but which is stated to have lapsed about 1765. In 1813 the number of the Lodge in Canterbury became 37.

Both these lodges in the City had considerable periods of prosperity, but by 1816 their membership had considerably fallen, and Lodge 37 suggested to the sister Lodge that they might profitably join forces "owing to the decline of Masonry in the City with the view that it would greatly benefit the Craft." This proposition was considered by the Industrious Lodge, but was not then acceded to.

Three years later a joint meeting of the two lodges was held to reconsider the matter; it was then decided to form a union,

working under the Warrant of Lodge 37, and with the title of the United Industrious.

On April 8th 1819, the first regular meeting of the United Industrious Lodge was held at the Saracen's Head.

In 1832, the number of the Lodge became 34, and in 1863 intimation was received from the Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Earl of Zetland, ^{the Lodge would} that in future stand on the register as No. 31.

In January 1877, it was proposed, and carried: "That the Lodge cordially recommends that a Royal Arch Chapter should be attached to it"

About two years later permission for the members of the Lodge to wear the Centenary Jewel was granted by the Most Worshipful Grand Master, H. R. H. The Prince of Wales. The Centenary Warrant, dated Dec 16th 1878, stating that the two parent Lodges had united in 1819 "with the authority of Grand Lodge."

In the same year the members of the three Canterbury Lodges, the United Industrious, S^t. Augustine's, and Royal Military, decided to construct a Temple on their premises at 38, S^t. Peter's Street, and on March 14th, 1880, the foundation Stone was laid by the Mayor, Worshipful Bro. Bemery, a Past Master of Lodge 31.

On June 22nd, a Lodge was held by the Provincial Grand Master, the Viscount Colmesdale, for the Consecration and Dedication of the building to Freemasonry.

Unity continues to be a salient feature of the Lodge, and its members, which to-day, Dec. 2nd, 1926, number 75, may still be termed Industrious in all matters appertaining to the advancement of Freemasonry.