

Fraternal Organizations in Manchester, CT, Excerpts from
 "The History of Manchester, Connecticut"

by Mathias Spiess and Percy Bidwell, published 1924 by the Centennial Committee of the Town of Manchester. The book in its entirety is available online in the Vintage Reprints section of www.manchesterhistory.org

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The organization within the past half-century of forty-five or fifty societies, clubs and associations with a wide variety of interests and purposes is one of the most striking characteristics of the social development of our community. It illustrates perhaps better than any other fact the wide difference between the simple life of a rural town and the complexity of interests in a modern civic unit.

Here follows the table:

TABLE VIII

LODGES, CLUBS AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

Name	Date of Organization	No. of Charter Members	Present Membership
Manchester Lodge, A. F. and A. M.	1826	7	574
So. Manchester Division, Sons of Temperance	1848	38	30
Washington, Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 117	1875	6	165
Manchester Division, Ancient Order of Hibernians	1877	13	200
Women's Christian Temperance Union	1880	17	55
Manchester Grange, Patrons of Husbandry	1885	27	187
Manchester Tent, The Maccabees Society Seger	1888	17	95
	1889	18	155
King David Lodge, I. O. O. F.	1890	10	578
Froshinn Lodge, Sons of Hermann	1891	35	57
Woman's Benefit Association of the Maccabees	1893	17	216
Sunset Rebekah Lodge	1894	24	320
Court Manchester, Foresters of America	1896	34	250
Scandia Lodge, Order of Vasa	1900	98	400
Campbell Council, Knights of Columbus	1901	51	350
Memorial Lodge, Knights of Pythias	1901	29	89
So. Manchester Camp, Modern Woodmen of America	1901	35	240
Manchester Chamber of Commerce	1901	100	310
Temple Chapter, Order of Eastern Star	1902	31	318
Daughters of Liberty, L. O. L.	1903	27	90
Cosmopolitan Club	1904	17	40
American Insurance Union	1904	35	300
Camp 2640, Royal Neighbors	1906	20	...
Linne Lodge, Knights of Pythias	1907	18	152
Educational Club	1909	...	150
Manchester Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 99	1911	42	...
Miantonomah Tribe, Red Men	1912	45	150

¹ Reorganized 1855 and 1888.
² Originally Manchester Business Men's Association.
³ Originally known as Fraternal Benefit League.

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Name	Date of Organization	No. of Charter Members	Present Membership
Sub-Alpine Athletic Club	1912	7	100
So. Manchester Lodge, Loyal Order of Moose	1914	...	265
Franco American Club	1914	20	40
Sons of St. George	1915	25	56
Polish American Club	1916	20	38
Manchester Country Club	1917	200	467
Mothers' Club	1920	29	110
Daughters of Scotia	1920	29	56
Clan McLean, Order of Scottish Clans	1921	18	40
Zipsper Club	1921	30	60
Court 8843, Royal Neighbors	1921	50	...
League of Women Voters	1921	200	150
Lady Roberts Lodge, Order of Daughters of St. George	1921	45	49
Women of Mooseheart Legion	1922	25	...
Chapman Court, Order of Amaranth	1922	80	88

In Table VIII the more important local associations have been listed in order according to the dates of organization. Only one society, the Masons, can boast of a continuous existence going back before 1870. Manchester Lodge No. 73 was chartered in 1826, only three years after the incorporation of the town. Like the town, it was an offshoot of East Hartford, its seven charter members having been members of Orient Lodge of that town. The Sons of Temperance, although first organized in 1848, was not permanently established until 1886. The Orangemen, organized in 1875, and the Hibernians, organized in 1877, both came into existence during the industrial depression which followed the business crisis of 1873. During the seventies, also, the Irish immigration was particularly strong. The local Grange came into existence in 1885, at a time when the Patrons of Husbandry were at the height of their power.

Orford Parish Chapter — Daughters of the American Revolution.

"Home and Country"

The years 1888-1893 marked the beginnings of non-sectarian fraternal benefit organization in Manchester, with the establishment of the Maccabees, the Odd Fellows, the Swedish Society Seger and the Sons of Hermann. It is notable that two of these earliest benefit societies were organized along racial lines, an indication of the wave of German and Swedish immigration which was contributing to Manchester's population in the eighties.

The "hard times" of 1893-1896 temporarily interrupted the growth of all kinds of associations and no new lodges were founded. A similar period of interruption is observable after the Crisis of 1907. The World War absorbed all the energies of Manchester's people and diverted to war work much of the funds which otherwise might have flowed into miscellaneous social organizations. Consequently but few lodges or other associations were formed in the years 1915-1919. A new wave of organization came in 1920, resulting in the founding within three years of no less than eight new societies.