

Jesse Green Priory Number 70, K.Y.C.H.

A chance Luncheon conversation, although perhaps more deliberate than some might wish to admit, at the June 1983 Annual Assembly of the United Grand Imperial Council of Knights of the Red Cross of Constantine and Appendant Orders for the United States of America, Mexico and the Philippines between John Harris Watts, Grand Master General of Convent General, Knights of the York Cross of Honour, and Henry G. Law, became the catalyst for the formation of a Priory in the State of Delaware.

Freemasonry, in the diminutive state of Delaware, traces its origin to the military lodges which came to this country from Europe and, in later years, the Grand jurisdictions of the neighboring states of Pennsylvania and Maryland. Once known as the lower three counties of Pennsylvania, three of the four founding lodges of the Grand Lodge of Delaware were initially constituted under the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. The fourth, from the lower part of the State, was constituted by the Grand Lodge of Maryland. The ties to these two states have remained strong over the 200 plus years of our Grand Lodge.

So it is also with the Priory of the Knights of the York Cross of Honour. Up until the mid 1980's, the leaders of the York Rite Bodies in Delaware were obliged to go to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or Frederick, Maryland, to be received into a Priory. The conversation in Baltimore, Maryland was sufficient incentive to motivate the Delaware members of Philadelphia Priory Number 12, to set forth on the establishment of a Priory in Delaware. On September 3, 1983 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Most Eminent Grand Master General John Harris Watts answered the prayers of the leaders of the York Rite Bodies of Delaware, led by Henry G. Law, and granted a Charter to Jesse Green Priory Number 70, located in the City of Wilmington, with the following as the first office-bearers:

Henry George Law	First Eminent Prior
Richard Harding Thomas	First Deputy Prior
Carl Ray Scarborough	First Registrar

The first meeting of the Priory was held at the Masonic Temple, 818 Market Street Wilmington, Delaware on October 22, 1983. On this occasion Most Eminent Albert S. Carney, Personal Representative of the Most Eminent Grand Master General Vernon R. Parks installed the following as Charter Officers:

Prior	Henry George Law, KYGCH
Deputy Prior	Richard Harding Thomas, KYGCH
Warder	John Simmons Proud, KYGCH
Registrar/Treasurer	Carl Ray Scarborough, KYGCH
Prelate	Paul Edward Hurter, KYGCH
Orator	Harry Vail Felmeay
Herald	Samuel Blank Rash, Jr.

The Most Eminent then presented the Warrant of the Priory to Prior Henry G. Law. Following the ceremonies, a dinner was held in the Bedford Club.

All 17 members of Philadelphia Priory Number 12, eleven who were present at this initial meeting, had consented to become members of Jesse Green Priory Number 70, whilst retaining their dual membership in Philadelphia Priory, and were its Charter members. These Charter members are so noted on the attached. The distinction of being named local member number 1 was afforded to Henry George Law, in recognition of all of his labors in obtaining the warrant for Jesse Green Priory. From that point on, almost without exception, the local membership number was based upon the individual's entry into the Priory.

On February 4, 1984 at the Masonic Temple, 818 Market Street, Wilmington, Delaware Most Eminent Grand Master General Vernon R. Parks, assisted by Most Eminent Grand Registrar General Stanley W. Wakefield, duly constituted Jesse Green Priory Number 70 and installed the aforementioned Charter officers. Present on this occasion were:

Right Eminent Harry N. Young, Personal Representative for District Number 4
Right Eminent William Schoene, Jr. Personal Representative for District 2A
and
Right Eminent Albert S. Carney, Personal Representative for District 2B.

Following the Constituting and installing ceremony, three new members, J. Norman Nicklas, Horace G. Patterson and Donald D. Thomas, were received into the Priory in full form by the above named officers. The Lectures were presented by:

Lodge	Knight James H. Hutchins
Chapter	Knight George A. McPhee
Council	Knight Walter D. Wagner
Commandery	Knight Harry M. Sullivan, Jr.

Following the close of the Priory, most of the Priory members, and their Ladies, enjoyed dinner together with the representatives of Convent General, and their Ladies, at the Towne Wharf Restaurant.

Jesse Green Priory membership has long recognized that their service to the fraternity did not end with their reception into the Priory. Its members have continued to devote themselves to the betterment of Freemasonry. One of the primary projects of the Priory is sponsorship of 'An Evening of Masonic Enlightenment', where it brings to the Craft in Delaware, and surrounding jurisdictions, notable speakers. The program was initiated in 1992 by Prior Harry M. Sullivan, Jr., with John Robinson as the guest speaker. In 1996, under the able tutelage of Prior Richard A. Scarlott, Dr. Gary Leazer enlightened a large audience on his experience with the Southern Baptist Church and his study on the compatibility of the Southern Baptist Doctrine and Freemasonry. On February 29, 2000, Prior James A. Pletz made arrangements with Worshipful Brother Wallace McLeod of Canada to journey South to captivate a large group of assembled Brethren. On September 21, 2002, Prior Charles H. Lengel, brought our distinguished Brother Thomas Jackson from our sister jurisdiction of Pennsylvania to Delaware to entrance an audience with his

breadth of knowledge and wisdom. Lastly, Worshipful Brother Brent Morris joined us on October 22, 2005 and provided a captive audience a delightful evening of Masonic enlightenment.

On each of these occasions, a dinner preceded the evening's lecture enabling the Brethren to join together for fine food and fellowship. On each occasion, the events of the evening, including selling books by the speaker when available, has enabled the Priory to recognize a profitable evening. On all occasions, any profits realized have been presented to the philanthropy of Convent General, the Masonic Home of Delaware, or used to provide a copy of John Robinson's book 'A Pilgrim's Path' to every public library in the State of Delaware where there is a Masonic Lodge.

One cannot reflect upon the history of Jesse Green Priory Number 70 without taking a moment to reflect upon the namesake of this Priory. In the annals of the history of the formation of the Grand Lodge of Delaware, one name stands out above all others – Jesse Green, a prominent, wealthy land owner from Sussex County. He served the Grand Lodge of Maryland as both Junior and Senior Grand Warden. He also served as Master of three Lodges in Delaware. In the time period leading up to the actual formation of the Grand Lodge of Delaware in June of 1806, it was Worshipful Brother Jesse Green that led those assembled to form this Grand Lodge. He was elected as the first Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Delaware and, in June of 1809, installed as Grand Master serving a three year term. Jesse Green Priory Number 70 is proud to carry his name forth for all to remember.

Almost twenty-five years after its Constitution, Jesse Green Priory Number 70 has grown from a charter membership of 18 Knights to just over 50 members, 27 of whom are still with us of this date. It includes within its ranks many who have served as Grand Presiding officers including, at this time, four who have presided over all four York Rite Grand bodies. It continues its dedication to Service to Freemasonry.

Donald D. Thomas, P.P.
May, 2007

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Charter Members

Name	Local Number	National Number	Prior	Died	
Law, Henry G.	1	18187	1983		*
Cantwell, William H.	2	07932		4/19/87	*
Smith, Rhey H.	3	09979		4/04/84	*
Peterson, Gustave A.	4	09980		10/30/85	*
Coffin, Chester C.	5	11633	1979 (12)		*
Scarborough, C. Ray	6	12705	1983 (12)	10/06/94	*
Thomas, Richard H.	7	12706	1984	1/10/92	*
Hurter, Paul E.	8	13358	1986	1/21/91	*
Proud, John S.	9	13899	1985	12/25/97	*
Wootten, E. Paul	10	15773		11/03/89	*
Felmey, Harry V.	11	17048	1987	3/06/92	*
Rash, Samuel B.	12	18186	1988	2/21/89	*
Hutchins, James H.	13	18802	1989	10/22/05	*
Wagner, Walter D.	14	20073		6/19/96	*
McPhee, George A	15	20076		3/20/06	* d
Blackwell, Lewis J.	16	20077	1990	6/27/02	*
Sullivan, Harry M., Jr.	17	20078	1991		*
Howard, Raymond A.	18	09486		9/13/83	*

* Dual with Philadelphia Priory No. 12

d - Demitted from Chapter, Council and Commandery in October, 1990

N. B. Knight Raymond A. Howard signed the appeal for the formation of a Priory in Delaware but died on September 13, 1983, prior to the Constituting of the Priory, but after the issuance of the Charter. Convent General ruled that he should be considered a Charter Member of Jesse Green Priory so his Local number was added to the bottom on the initial list.