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History of Free and Accepted Masons, (Prince Hall) in Rhode Island 'From Whence We Came'

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HISTORY OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS, (PRINCE HALL)
 IN RHODE ISLAND
 "FROM WHENCE WE CAME"

Records show the first Grand Lodge in the craft of Free and Accepted Masons and the installation of a Grand Master, took
 6-24
 1717 -place in London on the 24th day of June, 1717 and was known as the Grand Lodge of England, the regular Grand Lodge which Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, etc., etc., and it was he, who granted the original charter of African Lodge, No. 459, September 29th, 1784 to Prince Hall, Thomas Sanderson and others.

Prince Hall was appointed a Deputy Grand Master by the same source, with the power to form new lodges, namely, Hiram
 6-25 -Lodge, No. 3 of Providence, R. I., instituted June 25th,
 1797
 1797 and African Lodge, No. 459 of Philadelphia, Pa., in-
 9-22
 1797 -stituted September 22nd, 1797, These were the first three subordinate Negro Masonic lodges in America which met and
 1808 -formed African Grand Lodge in 1808 making it a free and independent sovereign Grand Lodge with a jurisdiction absolute and entire throughout the United States and countries..
 Hiram Lodge, No. 3, F.& A.M., held regular communications,
 1813 but in 1813, lost quite a few of its members who left Rhode Island, under the auspices of the African Humane Society to make a settlement in Liberia. It was these Masons with others who were afterward granted a license to establish a Lodge in Liberia, which still existed in 1906.

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"October 30, 1826, A petition was received from our brethren in Providence, R. I., praying for a warrant to work as a lodge. A committee was chosen to act on said petition.

Voted: that the brethren in Providence shall receive their warrant, without paying, except their yearly tribute, granted and Harmony Lodge, No. 1, F & A.M. PH was instituted on December 11, 1826, in Providence, R. I., the second lodge of F. & A. C. Masons, PH in Rhode Island.

All Rhode Island subordinate lodges worked under African Grand Lodge of Massachusetts from 1797 to June 24th, 1847. Also in 1847, the only three Negro Grand Lodges; African Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, est. 1808; the First Independent African Grand Lodge of North America, est. 1815 in Pennsylvania; and Hiram Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, est in 1837, met in convention in June of 1847 and formed the National Grand Lodge of the United States of America, to be the Supreme Masonic Power (PH) in the United States.

African Grand Lodge, upon becoming a part of the National, Grand Lodge, surrendered its charter and received a charter under the title of Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, dated

December 11, 1847. Its life was from 12-11-47 to 10-7-57.

Celestial Lodge, No. 2, F. & A.M. PH, of Providence, R. I., received its warrant to work as a lodge, December 27, 1847 under the auspices of Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Mass.

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MERIDIAN SUN LODGE, No. 5, F. & A. M. PH of Providence, R. I.

Feb 2-received its warrant to work as a lodge, February 2, 1853
1853

under Hiram Grand Lodge of Delaware.

STONE MILL LODGE, No. 3 F. & A. M. PH of Newport, R. I. re-

Dec 27

1857 received its warrant to work as a lodge, December 27, 1857 un-

der the auspices of Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

RADIANT SUN LODGE, No. 4 F. & A. M. PH of Providence, R. I.,

Feb 22received its warrant to work as a lodge, February 22nd, 1858
1858

under Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

KING SOLOMON LODGE, No. 5, F. & A. M. PH of Providence, R. I.,

July was instituted and received its warrant to work as a lodge,
15,

1858 -July 15, 1858, under Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

On December 27th, 1858, a committee representing Harmony Lodge,

No. 1; Celestial Lodge, No. 2; Stone Mill Lodge, No. 3; Rad-

iant Sun Lodge, No. 4, and King Solomon Lodge, No. 5, ^{having} applied

to the M. W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts to be

set apart and ^{were} given a warrant to work as a Grand Lodge, en-

Oct 7

1858 -titled the Most Worshipful Harmony Grand Lodge of the State

of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, which reigned from

1858 to 1885.

LONE STAR LODGE No. 14, F. & A. M. PH were instituted and

Dec 27

1870 -warranted, December 27, 1870 in Providence, R. I., under

Hiram Grand Lodge of Delaware.

BOYER LODGE, No. 15, F. & A. M. PH of Newport, R. I., insti-

Dec 16

1873 tuted and given a warrant to work as a lodge, December 16,

1873.

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Dec 27 1874 MT. MORIAH LODGE No. & F. & A. M. PH of Providence, R. I., was instituted and given a warrant to work as a lodge, December

27th, 1874 under the auspices of the M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. It was dissolved and relinquished its charter in 1889.

Dec 2 1875 UNION LODGE No. 9 F. & A. M. PH was instituted and received a warrant to work as a lodge, in Providence, R. I., December 2nd, 1875, under the auspices of M. W. Sovereign Grand Lodge of Rhode Island.

June 24th 1874 Having labored in a subordinate capacity in the State of Rhode Island for nearly 25 years, on June 24th, 1874, Radiant Sun Lodge, No 5; Lone Star Lodge, No. 14, and Boyer Lodge, No. 15, represented by its officer, met in convention to form a Grand

UNION GRAND LODGE - Grand Lodge "by the name, style and title of UNION GRAND LODGE, F. & A.M. of the State of Rhode Island.

On June 23rd 1875, a convention was called by the M. W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts (the mother) for the purpose of bringing about a consolidation of the M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge of Rhode Island and the M. W. Union Grand Lodge of Rhode Island.....many were present both for counsel and action.....were of no binding force.....until they separately, each by itself made it so by action. In November, of 1875, the members of each Grand Lodge met.....to form a complete union, a consolidation was made and each of the subordinate lodges were given a new charter by the auspices of the ,? W? Sovereign Grand Lodge, with in-

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structions to return their old charters into the Sovereign Grand Lodge.....A large number of the members of the M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge, claiming they had not been properly represented at the consolidation Convention, refused to send in their charter and the subordinate lodges under her, and continued to work as the M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge of Rhode Island.....From 1875 to 1885, they both met as separate bodies, each having subordinate lodges under their control. The craft in Rhode Island can claim and prove a continuous line of Free and Accepted Masons, PH, from Hiram Lodge, No. 3 of Providence, the first subordinate lodge in the state, up to the present. (Hiram Lodge No. 3, F. & A. M. of Providence, R. I., was given a license on the 25th day of June, 1797, by Prince Hall, Master of African Lodge, No. 459 of Boston, Massachusetts, to assemble and work as a Lodge, the second Negro Lodge created in the United States.) Rhode Island subordinate lodges worked under two Massachusetts Grand Lodges: M. W. African Grand Lodge, 1797 to 1847; M. W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge, from 1847 to 1858, when three subordinate Rhode Island lodges petitioned to form M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1858 to 1885; M. W. Eureka Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, 1885 to 1914 back to the name, M. W. Harmony Grand Lodge, 1914-1944; Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, 1944 up to the present.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Preceedings of the Most Worshipful Eureka Grand Lodge, F. & A. M., of the State of Rhode Island, from 1902 to 1906, including a historical sketch, Mercury Publishing Company, Newport, R. I., 1907.

Roster of the Most Worshipful Harmony Grand Lodge of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. M. W. Walter W. Williams, Grand Master. pp 13-14-15 a historical sketch.

B. Albert Ford, PGM telling me about the legal name, registered with the State of Rhode Island as Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, not Most Worshipful, as told to the craft about 1951 by PGM Joseph G. LeCount.

Compiled from the above sources by Carl R. Gross, in March of 1971 for submission to William B. Baptista, M.W.G.M., Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, for corrections, additions, etc.

It is hoped that the Grand Master, the Grand Historian and other knowledgeable members of the craft meet to bring up to date, a printed pamphlet of one hundred seventy four years of Prince Hall Masonry in the State of Rhode Island.

Providence, R. I.
1971