### Summary

**Size:** Approximately 1 linear foot.

**Geographic Locations:** New Orleans, Louisiana.

**Inclusive Dates:** ca. 1895 to 1955.

**Bulk Dates:** 1895 to 1955.
Summary: Records and memorabilia of the Grand Grove of Louisiana and its auxiliary groves 19, 28, 33, 35, 49, 51, 52, and 59. Consists mainly of membership rosters, by-laws, convention programs, ceremonial pamphlets, recitation cards, minutes, bank statements, and correspondence.

Related Collections:

Source: Gift, 1968.

Access: No Restrictions.

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Citation: United Ancient Order of Druids Collection (MSS 3), Louisiana and Special Collections Department, Earl K. Long Library, University of New Orleans

Historical Note

According to the Grand Grove of California, “this fraternal and benevolent society takes its name and nomenclature from the history of the Druids of ancient Gaul and Britain. They were the religious guides of the people, and the chief guardians and expounders of the law. They taught the immortality and transmigration of the soul. Their chosen retreats were groves of oaks, and the remains of their temples are circular cromlechs and dolmens of immense stones. They attained their greatest influence in Britain shortly before the Roman invasion, during the last century before Christ. They were believed to have incited the patriotic revolt of the Britons against Roman rule, and Agricola, when Governor of Britain, cut down their sacred groves and destroyed their temples; when the Druids who escaped fled to the Island of Iona. Upon conversion of the Britons to Christianity, Druidism became only a venerable memory and tradition. Its nomenclature and traditions form the picturesque background of the ceremonies of the modern order of the fraternity and benevolence.”
“The modern order was formed in England in 1781, and its centennial was celebrated in America by enthusiastic meetings and addresses in a number of cities.

“It was introduced into the United States about 1830, but the earliest society died out. A permanent beginning, however, was made in George Washington Lodge, No. 1, instituted in New York in 1839.

“In the nomenclature of the Order the name Grove is used commonly as the name lodge in other orders, signifying a local body working under a regular dispensation. The higher body, which issues the dispensation, is called a Grand Grove, and different (State) Grand Groves are under the Supreme Grove, which is the head of the Order, though in full union with the Order in England, Australia, and Germany, with full power to make laws for its own government and for the government of its State, Grand, and Subordinate Groves.

“The Order is a moral, social, and beneficial society. Its principles do not conflict with any of the established systems of religion, and are perfectly compatible with the peace and welfare of the State. No oaths are administered by the Order binding its members to any creed or faction. Its object is to unite men together, irrespective of nation, tongue, or creed, for mutual protection and improvement; to assist socially and materially by timely counsel and instructive lessons; and to foster among its members the spirit of fraternity and good fellowship. Its well-regulated system of dues and benefits provides for the relief of the sick and destitute, the burial of the dead, and protection of the widows and orphans of deceased members.”

The United Ancient Order of Druids was one of the first fraternal orders founded in Louisiana. Like most benevolent groups formed at the time, it was probably established to provide for the welfare of its members and their families in cases of sickness and death. Funds for such purposes were generated by membership dues and various socials. In 1897 the Order held its first Mardi Gras ball, and from 1921 to 1934 it staged annual parades. The Grand Grove of Louisiana was headquartered in New Orleans. From 1911 until about 1957 it occupied the building at 834 Camp Street.

Sources: Gambit Weekly (April 30, 2002).

List of Series and Subseries

Series I:  American Grove No. 19
Series II: Stonehenge Grove No. 28
Series III: Ben Hur Grove No. 33
Series IV: Groves No. 35, 37, 48, 51, 52
Series V: Imperial Grove No. 49
Series VI: Apex Grove No. 59
Series VII: Grand Grove of Louisiana

Container List

Series I. American Grove No. 19

3-1 Membership rosters and related correspondence, sick relief forms, 1921. Membership applications, 1895-1941.

3-2 Miscellany (by-laws, blank forms, dues receipts), 1895-1941.

Series II. Stonehenge Grove No. 28

3-3 Recitation cards; roster of officers, 1936.
Series III. Ben Hur Grove No. 33
3-4 By-laws; membership roster, 1913-1922.

Series IV. Groves No. 35, 37, 48, 51, 52
3-5 By-laws for Groves No. 35 and 51; recitation cards for Groves No. 37, 38, and 52.

Series V. Imperial Grove No. 49

Series VI. Apex Grove No. 59
3-8 Minutes, 1915-1917, 1921-1926 (2 bound volumes).

Series VII. Grand Grove of Louisiana
3-9 Circulars, 1940, 1946, 1949; constitutions, 1917, 1928; instruction pamphlets and notes, 1903, 1919; correspondence, [1918]; blank application forms.
3-10 Convention programs, 1915-1949.

Index Terms

Druids

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United Ancient Order of Druids