

Independent Order of Odd Fellows

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows was founded in England, and is one of the oldest fraternal organizations in the United States. This was at a time when it was odd to find people organized for the purpose of giving aid to those in need and of pursuing projects for the benefit of all mankind. The Patriotic Order in England was followed by the Union of United Orders and the Loyal Order. In 1813, various lodges of the Union Order organized the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows. American Odd Fellowship was founded as the Washington Lodge #1 in Baltimore in 1819, and the following year affiliated with the Manchester Unity. The three links of Odd Fellowship's symbol represent friendship, love, and truth. Odd Fellowship became the first national fraternity to include both men and women when it adopted the Rebekah Degree on September 20, 1851, and to establish homes for senior members and orphaned children. The Sovereign Grand Lodge is located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. No IOOF lodge exists in Laredo today.