

Moslah Shrine History

Did you know your Moslah Shrine Temple is approaching its **100th** anniversary? Actually, Moslah will be celebrating this anniversary on two dates. The first, May 14, 2014, will commemorate that Moslah was given a special dispensation to operate on May 14, 1914. The second date, July 13, 1915 reflects that Moslah was granted a permanent charter on July 15, 1915, at the Imperial Session in Seattle. This is the first of a series of articles of Moslah history leading up to these celebrations.

Perhaps a quick review of Shrine history is in order at this point but before we do so here is a question for you. Please answer quickly, true or false. “George Washington was a Shriner.”



KNICKERBOCKER COTTAGE ON
SIXTH AVENUE IN MANHATTAN

In 1870 a group of Masons gathered frequently for lunch at the Knickerbocker College on Sixth Avenue in New York City. At a special table on the second floor, a fun-loving group of men met regularly and often discussed the idea of a fraternity for Masons in which fun and fellowship would

be stressed more than ritual work. Two of the members, Walter M. Fleming, M.D. and William J. Florence took this idea seriously enough to do something about it.



WALTER FLEMING AND WILLIAM FLORENCE
IN 1872

Billy Florence had been on tour in France and been invited to a party given by an Arabian diplomat. The entertainment was something in the nature of an exotic Arabian themed musical party which inspired him to suggest this as a theme for the new fraternity. Dr. Fleming agreed and built upon Florence’s ideas. He used his knowledge of the fraternal ritual to convert those ideas into what would become the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (A.A.O.N.M.S.). It is probably more than a coincidence that these initials, when rearranged, spell out the words “A MASON.” Fleming drafted the ritual, designed the emblem and costumes and declared that members would wear the Red Fez. On September 26, 1872, Mecca Temple and the Shrine were born.

(George Washington was a Mason and I’m sure he would have loved to have been a Shriner. However, George died in 1799, the better part of a century before the birth of the Shrine.) *Al Kaelin/Captain Al Productions*