

OUR GRANGE.

Prepared and read by Mrs. Alfreda Woolley of Hamlet,
at the Annual Meeting of the Chautauqua County Historical
Society..... Mayville, New York, October 6, 1951.

c b s.

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OUR GRANGE.

By Alfreda Woolley. 9,6. 1951.

It seems appropriate to-day for us to get a better background upon which to base our thoughts that we review briefly a bit of Grange history.

We shall look back into the history of our country, and recall the year 1865 which brought to close the great Civil war, a conflict that had torn asunder this great land of ours and inflicted upon the people of the Southland great losses in property, as well as the strong feeling of hatred toward the people of the North.

In the year 1866 a man named Oliver Hudson Kelley, an employee of the Dept. of agriculture, was sent into the Southland by Isaac Newton, then U.S. Commissioner of agriculture, to investigate agricultural conditions and to report back to his chief as to the conditions of agriculture and its needs among the States that had suffered most severely from the woes of warfare.

After one year, Mr. Kelley returned to make his report to his chief.

Upon the return of this trip Mr. Kelley made suggestion to his friends that a fraternity of farm people might be organized embracing within its folds the North and South. Purposes to reunite the people, healing the wounds caused by war, in his many discussions with his friends, he interested six other men, whom with Mr. Kelley became known as the seven founders of the order of Patrons of Husbandry—"Our Grange."

It is interesting to note all of the seven founders, with the exception of one, were employed by the Federal government in Washington.

William Sanders; chosen the first Master of the National Grange was superintendent of government experimental gardens and grounds at Washington, one of the Nation's best landscape gardeners.

William M. Ireland, first treasurer was chief clerk in finance department of the Post Office department.

Dr. John Trimble, one secretary was an Episcopalian clergyman and engaged as a clerk in the treasury department.

Rev. Aaron B. Grosh—first chaplain was a retired Universalist minister who was clerk in agriculture department.

Oliver Hudson Kelley, clerk in same department and later in Post Office department.

John R. Thomson, veteran of Civil war, employed by Treasure dept.

Francis M. McDowell, the 7th founder who was only founder, not a resident of Washington, was a fruit farmer of Steuben county, interested in the Grange movement through Mr. Saunders attending a fruit fair near McDowell's home.

The first formal meeting of the founders was held Nov. 15, 1867. Many names for this organization was suggested.

It was decided on Patrons of Husbandry or the Grange, the name Grange being taken from the Old English farm estate known in that time as a grange.

Dec. 4, 1867, is now regarded as the birthday of the order.

The first grange to be organized by Father Kelley was Fredonia Grange No. 1, in our Chautauqua County in our own New York State Apr. 16, 1868.

Women were given equal participation in its mysteries, its instructions and its benefits.—Equal voice in its councils and share with her brother its most exalted honors.

Altho it was in April 1868 that the first subordinate grange was organized in N.Y. state, it was not until Nov. 8, 1873 that representatives of the 21 subordinate granges met at Syracuse to effect a state organization in N.Y. state.

First state grange was organized in Minnesota, Feb. 23, 1869.

You can readily see that Granges were being organized very rapidly as there were only 21 granges at a provisional meeting in November, and at the

first annual meeting following March the state Master George Hinkley reported 164 granges in the state.

It is interesting to note that Fredonia Grange holds the distinction No other grange in the Nation holds, that of furnishing Two state Masters, George D. Hinkley and Sherman J. Lowell and one National Master, Mr. Lowell.

The first state Master served for a little more than 4 years; At the end of his administration there were 12,000 members, 409 granges in the state.

It was during his term of office that the State grange became incorporated and plans were made to change the County Councils to our Pomona Granges. At the end of his term, there were 12 Pomona Granges organized in the state.

At present we have a total membership of 6,922 in Chautauqua County, with 34 granges and one Pomona grange, there are approximately 905 granges in the state, -53 Pomona granges in the state over this period of years.

The grange is unique among the institutions which seek the benefit of the open country.

It is a farmers organization, a social, educational and economic force plus a neighborly and community building agency.

It places emphasis on moral and spiritual idealism. It is a fraternity with a beautiful ritual, it builds, it helps, it defends rural life; It is truly the farmers best friend.

The grange is progressive, permanent, alert, always on the job; It is the oldest and largest farm organization in America, and the only farm fraternity in the world.

Since 1867 the grange has exerted a highly valuable influence in community development and improvement; This organization is interested in churches, schools, roads, playgrounds, Marketing facilities and every other agency that makes for a satisfying community life.

To carry this out, over 3800 grange halls have been built; These are the logical community centers where marketing associations, Dairy improvement, Poultry, Horticulture, Livestock and similar activities, 4H, Future Farmers and extension meetings & etc, where farmers meet to promote the interests of their calling.

Social and educational activities by the grange are invaluable; They promote stability, friendliness and pride; a live working grange has an actual money value to the community where it exists.

The grange is composed of courageous determined fighting souls, who are confident that rural conditions can be improved, who know how to improve them and who invite all interested in agriculture, in rural welfare in village and town improvement to get into the grange and build it into a still stronger organization.

The grange door swings inward to all who believe that farmer's home should be the brightest and happiest place on earth".

The grange was the first youth movement in America and has been a constant training school for young men and women, giving them confidence in themselves and assuring them the support of their elders.

Every well conducted grange gives its hearty support to the churches in its locality, regardless of creed, backs up the public school, aids in the training of youth.

Every grange meeting is opened with an invocation and a salute to the American Flag.

A portion of the dues paid by the local members goes to the state grange and a small amount to the National grange.

Thru economy and hardwork our organization has secured results of great value to farmers everywhere.

The grange has lived over 80 years, The grange springs from the grass roots and grows and serves from the bottom up, not from the top down.

There are five logical steps that make the grange ideally suited

to serve agriculture.

Juvenile grange takes care of the needs of those in community under fourteen years of age and is a valuable aid in the training of rural youth for maximum usefulness.

Subordinate men and women admitted on equal terms, boys and girls overfourteen years of age. Subordinate elects its own officers and controls its own affairs in local matters; the membership fee is small and the dues are light, compared with other organizations; subordinate is known as fourth degree members.

Pomona grange is usually made up by subordinate granges in given counties. It is next ritualistic step after subordinate and composed of grange members in good standing who have taken the Pomona degree, known as the fifth degree. This unit is primarily interested in County affairs and in developing ritualistic, social educational and legislative programs, in a county wide way.

State grange is a delegate body composed of representatives of subordinate and pomona granges; in addition to looking after the educational and fraternal interests of the organization, the state grange is the ideal agency to safeguard the farmers interests in taxation, marketing and legislation; At a annual session of state grange, the 6th, degree is conferred and state program for agriculture is adopted.

National grange is also a delegate body; It is the parent branch of the order of Patrons of Husbandry and one which defends the farmers interests in National legislation, besides proving agriculture leadership in the school, economic and cooperative aspects of rural life; As the spokesman of the millions of earnest people who dwell in the open country, the national grange is often and effectively heard.

The degree conferred is the seventh. The highest degree in the grange. In studying grange history, it reveals the fact that every President of the United States from Ulysses S. Grant to Franklin D. Roosevelt has been friendly to and endorsed the work of the grange.

Some of the granges accomplishments thru legislation have been Regulation of Public utilities, Department of agriculture, Rural mail Delivery, Parcel Post, Postal Saving banks, Agriculture College, Experiment stations and researches, Extension service and vocational agriculture, Pure seeds, control of contagious diseases, Protection of wild life, Agriculture in Public schools, Conservation and Forestry, Tariff legislation, Agriculture adjustments, Control of inflation, Farm credit, Better highways, Inland waterways, International institute of Agriculture, Rural electrification, Immigration, Federal crop insurance, Wool products labeling act, Livestock theft act, Preserving American Institutions, Soil conservation, Grange insurance, fire, lighting, wind life, Auto and Liability and many more.

The first regular delegate session of the National grange was held at Georgetown D.C. January 1873, five years after the first definite steps toward the creation of the new farmers fraternity.

The voting body at that session comprised of 23 men and 4 women, and as previously enumerated eleven state granges had been organized.

Shall we first ask ourselves what is the grange? Who makes up its membership? What can we do to give the grange its proper place in the field of agriculture in future.

We you and I are the grange membership and we give its proper place in the field of agriculture.

The grange shows its interest in the affairs of the state and the Nation. It develops a workable and practical program that farm people follow and work for.

The agriculture is desperately in need of such programs as the grange can furnish.

There is no better place on earth than the farm home.

The grange as an organization represents the home, man, wife and their children; The foundation of our order wisely made this provision years ago and we still carry on to-day, with that same thought always keeping in mind that we need the teachings and the training of home life so important even yet today.

a great many granges have their own homes, others rent their meeting place.

Grange creates a better neighborly feeling among all people. Certainly it is a big problem all nations are facing today.

If nations continue to live together on this earth, they must be more neighborly than they have in the past and we can easily that same thought to ourselves.

The grange eventually leads to increased membership, which is another step in building for the future; a great many times appeals have been made to increase membership, but have often wondered if our membership felt we were doing so just for the sake of building in numbers; certainly there is strength in numbers and we shall continually strive to add to our membership, but the main purpose in promoting increased membership is not that of increased members alone, but to bring more farm people into our organization, so that they may receive the benefits of our order; We boast of a large membership in the Empire State, do we all realize that we only have about one member per farm in the whole state?

We take in consideration that a great many of our members live in villages, even some in cities; It is important that we work toward this goal, if we are to bring the grange to all farm people.

Thru the lecturers programs we are real service to agriculture, a good lecturer stimulates interest in each subordinate grange.

These leaders especially urge and encourage the young and the different to become readers, writers and speakers, develop and to direct to greater usefulness, the latent abilities of the fellow members.

It has been said "that more people have learned to think on their feet, in the grange than in any other organization.

The grange has been and will continue to be a school out of school and it seems to me, we have developed this, asking more & more individuals to participate in our meetings, that we have developed individual thinking people and will take part in building a better agricultural future.

We who are the leaders today, must bear in mind that our offices will be taken over by others in the future, someone else tomorrow with new ideas, will take our place; They will carry on where we left off and will, like us, make pages of grange history; what those pages will be and what they will contain, to a certain extent depends upon what we today gave to those who will be the leaders of tomorrow.

For a while today, I have attempted to bring ideas to you on our grange.

It is a pleasure to go back into our grange's past, and dig out the pages of accomplishment of those who have preceded us; It is an inspiration to know that years ago our members planned so wisely, for their future and for the present time, in which we now live.

We must not rest on past laurels, but press forward, squarely meet the conditions, we surely will meet.

We have leaders in almost every community, and it is up ^{to} us to train that leadership to advance the programs we desire to have put into actual operation.

Let us, again review the accomplishments of the founders of our order, keeping in mind the sacrifices they faced; they labored hard to make an idea a reality; We must make that reality a permanent institution in the life of rural America.

Hon. Walter Cornell Gifford.. of Busti Township.
born May 8, 1829. *D-1909 a.e.-80.*

Member N.Y. State Assembly,,, 1891 - 1892.
Charter Members Union Grange, Jast, Very active,
Master N.Y. State Grange. etc. Farmer.

Wife,.. Eliza Cornelia Robertson, Gifford. b. Aug 4,
1830. Married.. March 18, 1852.

Daut. Alice Gifford, wife of Orrin B. Hayward,
of Jast. son, Dr. W. Gifford Hayward, Jamestown.

Mrs. Gifford very active in Grange. Woman Suffrage,
WCTU, held many offices. Wrote many articles and
papers.

sorry, I have no record of the deaths of the
Walter Giffords.
cbsampson.

from C.B. Sampson

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