

Dublin Historical Society

DUBLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03444 • FOUNDED 1920

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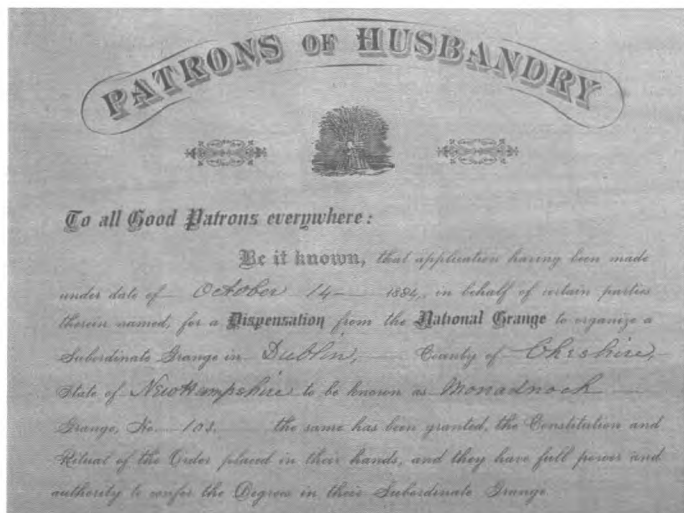
February 2017

The Grange: Dublin and Harrisville as Part of a Larger Movement

The formation of The Grange, a.k.a. Patrons of Husbandry, began after the American Civil War and became a revolt by America's traditional farming economy against the pressures of the Industrial Revolution and a widening divide between a new domination of America by Big Business. Dublin, Harrisville and the rest of agricultural America shared in this struggle, and today the records of Dublin's Monadnock Grange #103 and Harrisville's Silver Lake Grange #105 are preserved for posterity at the Dublin Historical Society and the Historic Harrisville archives. Dublin's chapter was organized October 14, 1884 with 16 people attending. Of particular note, 7 of the 16 founders were women, welcomed as full members. Harrisville's chapter had its first meeting just over two months later in December 1884.

Viewed as a unit, these local records offer an historic perspective to one of the great social revolutions to influence America after the Civil War.

The Grange formed in 1867. One of the seven founders of the Grange, Oliver Hudson Kelley, had toured the south as a representative of the Department of Agriculture, looking to find a way to fix the south's war-ravaged economy. The initial purpose of the Grange organization was to provide traditional independent and "stand alone" farmers a means to organize, particularly against rising railroad freight rates being charged by "big rail". Kelley dreamed of traveling lecturers speaking to audiences about new crops, and about new farming methods. He also saw a need to lessen the great isolation of post-Civil War rural America, and he wished to organize traveling rural libraries, lyceums and reading courses for those immersed in American ag-



Original 1884 application for organizing a subordinate grange chapter in Dublin.

The Winter Potluck Supper will be held at the Dublin Community Church at 6 p.m. on Friday February 17th, 2017 (Snow Date: February 18th)

Gordon Hayward, a nationally recognized author and lecturer on garden design, former president of the Latchis Arts in Brattleboro and author of *Greek Epic: The Latchis Family & the New England Theater Empire They Built*

Please bring a main dish, salad or dessert.

riculture in the late 1860s. Kelley may have been a gifted orator – we will never know – but he persevered in the promotion of his vision and his message.

The Grange got its first push toward a greater recognition in the early 1870s with the financial Panic of 1873, followed by the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. In the aftermath of the Panic of 1873 the U.S. Congress cut back on the issuing of “paper money”, the currency of most of America, in favor of building up the values of currency issued as gold and silver coins, or as specially marked currency exchangeable for gold or silver. Unable to get to banks, farmers were often unable to exchange their “paper” for gold or silver. Concurrently, the railroads began to raise freight prices which farmers were unable to challenge, because of their isolation and lack of political power.

Farmers reacted to Reconstruction and to post Civil War political corruption by embracing the Grange, which offered Kelley’s dream of organizing to consolidate economic power. By December 1873 the Grange had 1,235 chapters established; by December 1874 11,941 chapters had been established. By December 1875 the Grange had 858,090 individual farmers as dues-paying members.

The explosive growth of the Grange into a national membership organization necessitated grouping independent chapters as “Pomona” units, so that representatives of these groupings could attend large conventions, as well as state and county conventions. Because O. H. Kelley was

a Freemason, he structured local Granges as secret societies with passwords, secret rituals and the use of symbolic items, shown in the pins and roundel pictured here. Initially, membership was limited to farmers and their spouses.

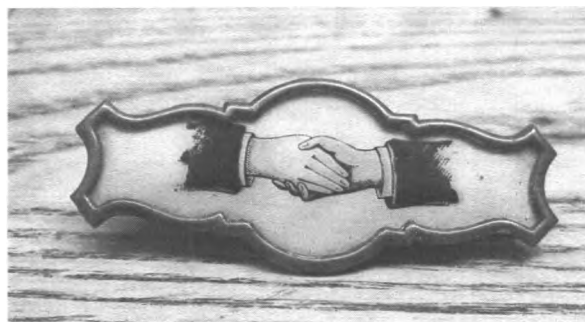
These efforts were successful nationally, and the Grange began to move into the New England states in the mid 1880s. This is when the Dublin and Harrisville chapters of the Grange were born. By 1890 New Hampshire’s legislators were feeling the heat, as the New Hampshire State House responded to new political pressures from the state’s agricultural sector.

In 1892 the Populist Party, championing free silver, an income tax, the 8-hour work day, government ownership of interstate railroads and a recall of land grants given to railroads after the Civil War, as well as national development of the telephone and telegraph, and direct election of U.S. Senators, became popular in the New England states. Nationwide, in 1892 the Populist a.k.a. People’s Party secured twenty votes in the Electoral College – the first time a third political party had gained as many Electoral College votes since 1856, when Dred Scott and other issues regarding slavery were major issues. In 1896, and again in 1900, the Grange and the Populist Party joined the Democrats in order to help fund an attack on the pro-Big Business, pro gold and silver Republicans. With Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, a champion of “the common man”, becoming president after President McKinley’s assassination, the Grange and the Populists, working with the Democrats, had an opportunity to take on Big Business at last, and an era of reform that had been percolating since the 1870s was finally being championed – carefully, but championed by the nation’s president.



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Pins like these carried oblong cloth badges stamped with the chapter name and number under the swag and roundel. These were probably worn by members at local, state and national meetings.



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During the 1920s-30s-40s the national Grange supported, among other items, a) creation of a Secretary of Agriculture post in the Cabinet; b) national highway construction and highways expansion; c) start-up of Rural Free Delivery and Parcel Post; d) creation of a national Farm Credit Bureau; d) creation of a national Rural Electrifica-



DHS owns 4 original staffs of office for Monadnock Grange #103. L to R: Owl (Gate Keeper) represents watchfulness and protection of crops; Shepherd's Crook (Lady Asst Steward) emblematic of care and guidance; Spud (Steward) a weeding tool emblematic of preventing or removing all causes of dissension; and Pruning Hook (Asst. Steward) the spear, beaten into a pruning hook is emblematic of peace.

tion Agency; e) promotion of Experimental Stations and Extension Services at land grant colleges; f) government regulation of public utilities and railroad freight rates; g) creation of national state police and fire protection legislation; h) support for passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and other consumer legislation; h) support for the creation of the Social Security Administration and for passage of the Wagner Act, both landmarks of the Great Depression era put in place by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration.

By the 1920s agriculture played a very small role in the Dublin and Harrisville economies. Exclusive Grange membership had expanded to include people with occupations such as telephone operator, carpenter, innkeeper, plumber and an artist – George de Forest Brush. Presumably, Grange programming mirrored the agenda of the national organization.

By the 1960s membership in the Monadnock Grange #103 had declined to 6, so the last meeting occurred on December 26, 1966; the Silver Lake chapter #105 dissolved one year later in January of 1968. For eighty years Dublin and Harrisville participated in social reform that remade the United States of America. The political reform fought

for the benefit of the early Grange's farmer members rivaled the fervor for change in America's 2016 national and state elections, and they helped reform and remake our country. A proud heritage indeed to come from two small New Hampshire towns!

For additional information on the Age of Reform the author recommends Stewart H. Holbrook's *Lost Men of American History* (1946), for there were other leaders of America's emergence as a world power. O.H. Kelley, and his vision of a new day for American agriculture through a new organization called the Grange, was not the only such individual who helped remake America!

- Russell Bastedo

Sources: *The Grange: Friend of the Farmer 1867-1947* by Charles M. Gardner (1949)

The Portrait Gallery: Governors and Early Leaders of New Hampshire by Russell Bastedo (2012)

Dublin Historical Society collections

COMPILING THE CENTENNIAL HISTORY "THE UGLIEST JOB"

If we in the DHS archives need general information about Dublin's early history and inhabitants, our primary source is Leonard and Seward's *The History of Dublin New Hampshire*, published in 1920. Its contents contain the 1855 *The History of Dublin N.H.* compiled by Reverend Levi W. Leonard which was amended and updated by Reverend Josiah L. Seward and published in one volume in 1920.

The author of the 1855 history, Levi Washburn Leonard, was called to be minister in Dublin in 1820. In his 33 year ministry he was extremely influential particularly in regard to public education – establishing a juvenile library in 1822, a Sabbath School in 1823 and publishing three textbooks. Upon his retirement, he moved to Exeter, NH, where he undertook compiling Dublin's history. A good portion of the 1855 history reports the details of the town's centennial celebration of 1852. More importantly, Leonard collected and recorded information about the families of early settlers within 3 or 4 generations of their coming to Dublin. Data available includes family genealogies, where they lived, who served in positions of power in town, industries and professions.

We now know that he didn't find it a pleasant task. An eBay search flagged a letter dated April 4, 1854 to his son, William, a student at Dartmouth College. In it Leonard re-

ports, "Foster brings no special news from Dublin. Affairs there are after the former fashion, roads bad, and business dull." He closes with

I am trying to make progress with the Dublin history, but I make haste very slowly. It is the ugliest job that ever fell into my hands, and I have wished that the Grand Monadnock had been so big as to cover the whole town so that no inhabitant could have ever squatted there. If its base had been six miles in diameter & its height in proportion, it would have beaten Mount Washington.

Who among us hasn't taken on a frustrating project? We are extremely grateful that Leonard persevered and finished the project. Unfortunately, DHS was outbid in the auction for the letter. Nevertheless, we can quote the good reverend on his sentiments about recording early Dublin history.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Susan Stover and Charlie Collier
Dorcey and Chris Flynn
Pauline Metcalf
Margot and Christopher Sprague

DHS VOLUNTEERS

Our thanks to volunteers helping with projects at the archives and in the museum. Laura Elcoate is recording and researching the names carved into the bench which served as the Joseph Lindon Smith's guestbook at their homes on Loon Point. Rosemary Mack recently transcribed a travel journal written by Corinna Smith in 1903/1904 which includes a list of Joe Smith's paintings that year. Celeste Snitko finished transcribing Dr Henry Hilliard Smith's yearly diaries 1874-1876 describing visits to patients.

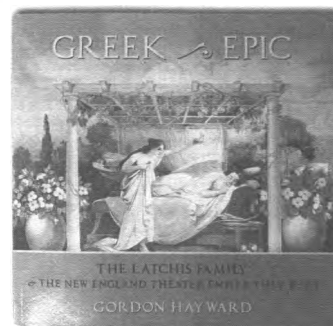
Sharron Monaghan is photographing barns in town built before 1920, as outbuildings were not listed in early tax records. Judy Knapp is managing membership data for us.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

We thank those members who have sent in their membership renewals and additional gifts. As a convenience we are enclosing membership envelopes as a reminder for those of you who have yet to do so. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our bottom line

POTLUCK SUPPER

Gordon Hayward, a nationally recognized garden writer, designer and lecturer, will be the guest speaker at the Dublin Historical Society's Potluck Supper on Friday, February 17th.



Author of *Greek Epic: The Latchis Family and the New England Theater Empire They Built*, Hayward will trace the story of three generations of the Latchis family from 1901 to the present. The 37 year old patriarch, Demetrios Latchis immigrated to America and settled in Hinsdale in 1901, leaving behind his family of five in the Greek Peloponnese. Once here he built a beautifully decorated hand-cart and peddled fruit for miles around. With the family reunited ten years later, and from their new home in Brattleboro, they began building a movie theater empire. By 1938 they controlled fourteen movie theaters in three states. Hayward will also discuss the Latchis' struggles with the arrival of television, drive-in movies and a constantly changing local economy. In the end the family loses all their theaters, but leaves behind a legacy for Brattleboro in the form of the Art Deco Latchis Theater and Hotel which flourishes today thanks to Latchis Arts.

Hayward will focus on the Latchis family and the two theaters which they owned in Keene, as well as Peter Latchis' residence, Owl's Nest, on Meryman Road in his presentation. His book will be available for purchase (with cash or checks only), proceeds to go to Latchis Arts to support advocacy for the arts.

We welcome all comers. Bring a main dish, a side dish or a dessert to share. We gather promptly at 6 pm in the Dublin Community Church Vestry to share the meal; the program will start shortly before 7 pm.

As winter weather can offer up surprises at the last minute, the snow date for the event is Saturday February 18th, same time, same place. If uncertain about conditions, please call 563-8545 to hear the recorded message on Friday.