

history of the grange

The Rich History of the Grange: From Agricultural Roots to Community Hubs

history of the grange is a fascinating journey into one of America's most enduring agricultural and social movements. From its origins in the post-Civil War era to its continued presence in rural communities today, the Grange has played a vital role in shaping farming practices, rural advocacy, and community life. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a student of agricultural movements, or simply curious about American rural culture, understanding the history of the Grange offers valuable insights into how grassroots organizations can influence society.

The Origins of the Grange Movement

The story of the Grange begins in the aftermath of the Civil War, a period marked by significant upheaval and transformation in the United States. Farmers across the country were struggling with economic hardships, from costly railroads and middlemen to falling crop prices. Recognizing the need for collective action, a group of farmers and agricultural enthusiasts came together to form a cooperative movement that could give rural Americans a stronger voice.

Founding of the National Grange

In 1867, Oliver Hudson Kelley, a former clerk in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, founded the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry—commonly known simply as the Grange. Kelley's vision was to create a fraternal organization that would unite farmers, promote education, and encourage social and economic cooperation. The Grange quickly became more than just an agricultural society; it was a community where farmers could share knowledge, advocate for their interests, and support one another.

Core Principles and Early Activities

At its heart, the Grange emphasized education, cooperation, and political advocacy. Early members focused on improving agricultural techniques through lectures and demonstrations, fostering cooperative buying and selling to bypass exploitative middlemen, and lobbying for laws that would regulate railroad rates and grain elevator fees. This combination of practical help and political activism helped the Grange grow rapidly, reaching hundreds of thousands of members within a decade.

The Grange's Role in Agricultural Reform and Rural Advocacy

As the Grange expanded, it became a powerful force advocating for farmers' rights and rural

interests. This advocacy was crucial in a time when rural voices were often drowned out by urban industrial interests and large corporations.

Political Influence and Legislation

One of the most significant aspects of the history of the Grange is its involvement in political reform. Grange members lobbied for what became known as the “Granger Laws”—state laws designed to regulate railroad rates and prevent monopolistic practices that disadvantaged farmers. These laws marked some of the earliest attempts at government regulation of private industry in the United States and set important legal precedents.

Cooperative Enterprises

The Grange also promoted cooperative businesses, including stores, grain elevators, and insurance companies owned and operated by farmers themselves. These cooperatives allowed members to pool resources, reduce costs, and increase bargaining power. By working together, farmers could better withstand the volatility of markets and the pressures of large corporations.

The Social and Cultural Impact of the Grange

Beyond politics and economics, the history of the Grange is rich with social and cultural significance. The Grange halls became vital centers for rural communities, hosting events, educational programs, and social gatherings that helped reduce the isolation felt by many farmers and their families.

Community Building and Education

Grange meetings often included lectures on agricultural science, home economics, and rural health. These educational efforts not only improved farming practices but also raised awareness about important social issues. The Grange also encouraged youth participation through junior and young adult programs, fostering a sense of belonging and continuity within rural areas.

Fostering Equality and Inclusion

Interestingly, the Grange was one of the first rural organizations to welcome women as full members with voting rights. Women played active roles in leadership and programming, which was progressive for its time and helped promote gender equality in rural communities. This inclusive approach strengthened the organization and broadened its impact.

The Evolution of the Grange in the 20th and 21st Centuries

While the Grange's influence peaked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, its legacy has continued into modern times, adapting to changing agricultural landscapes and rural challenges.

Adapting to Modern Agriculture

As farming became more industrialized and rural populations shifted, the Grange faced challenges in maintaining membership and relevance. However, many local Grange chapters persisted by focusing on community service, preserving rural heritage, and supporting sustainable agriculture. They have also embraced new technologies and continue to provide educational resources to farmers navigating contemporary issues like environmental stewardship and organic farming.

Continued Community Engagement

Today, Grange halls remain important venues for community events such as fairs, craft shows, and civic meetings. Many Granges actively participate in disaster relief efforts and rural development projects. The organization also supports advocacy on behalf of small farmers, rural broadband access, and agricultural education.

Lessons from the History of the Grange

The Grange's history offers several valuable lessons about grassroots organization, cooperation, and resilience. Its success demonstrates how communities can unite around shared challenges and values to create positive change. The emphasis on education and inclusion helped the Grange navigate social and economic transitions, making it a model for other social movements.

For those interested in rural history, agricultural policy, or community development, exploring the history of the Grange provides a rich tapestry of stories about ordinary people working together for a common good. Whether through cooperative buying, political activism, or social events, the Grange's legacy is a testament to the power of collective action in shaping society.

As we look to the future, the ongoing relevance of the Grange reminds us that strong communities are built not just on individual effort but on cooperation, shared knowledge, and mutual support—principles that have guided the organization for over 150 years.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Grange and when was it founded?

The Grange, officially known as The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, is a fraternal organization in the United States that encourages families to band together to promote the economic and political well-being of the community and agriculture. It was founded in 1867.

Who founded the Grange and what was the motivation behind its creation?

The Grange was founded by Oliver Hudson Kelley and six associates in 1867. The motivation was to provide farmers with a collective voice to address economic hardships, promote education, and improve agricultural practices after the Civil War.

How did the Grange influence agricultural policy in the United States?

The Grange played a significant role in advocating for farmers' interests, including pushing for railroad regulation, fair pricing, and rural free mail delivery. It influenced legislation such as the Granger Laws, which regulated railroad rates and grain elevator fees.

What role did the Grange play in rural community development?

The Grange served as a social and educational hub for rural communities, organizing events, lectures, and cooperative purchasing to help farmers and their families improve their quality of life and strengthen community ties.

How did the Grange contribute to the cooperative movement?

The Grange encouraged farmers to establish cooperatives to buy supplies and market their crops collectively, which helped reduce costs and increase bargaining power against middlemen and large corporations.

What are some symbols associated with the Grange and their meanings?

The Grange uses symbols such as the owl (representing wisdom), the plow (labor), the cornucopia (abundance), and the rising sun (hope and a new day), reflecting its values and connection to agriculture.

How did the Grange evolve during the 20th century?

During the 20th century, the Grange expanded its focus beyond agriculture to include rural community issues, education, and advocacy, while membership fluctuated but remained an important voice for rural America.

Is the Grange still active today and what is its role?

Yes, the Grange is still active today, focusing on community service, agricultural advocacy, and providing a social network for rural families. It continues to promote education and support for farmers and rural communities.

What impact did the Grange have on women's involvement in agriculture and rural affairs?

The Grange was one of the first national organizations to allow women full membership and leadership roles, empowering women in rural areas to participate in agricultural and community decision-making.

Additional Resources

The History of the Grange: An In-depth Exploration of America's Agricultural Legacy

history of the grange traces back to a pivotal era in American agriculture and rural life. Emerging in the aftermath of the Civil War, the Grange movement, formally known as the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, played a crucial role in shaping the social, economic, and political landscape for farmers across the United States. This organization not only provided a platform for collective action among agrarians but also influenced legislation and community development. Understanding the history of the Grange reveals much about rural America's resilience and the ongoing dialogue between agriculture and society.

Origins and Early Foundations of the Grange

The inception of the Grange dates to 1867, at a time when American farmers faced significant challenges including falling crop prices, exploitative railroad rates, and limited access to credit. The founder, Oliver Hudson Kelley, a former Department of Agriculture clerk, envisioned an organization that would unite farmers to promote their interests and improve their social and economic conditions.

The Grange was distinctive in its approach, combining social activities, education, and cooperative purchasing. It was more than a trade association; it was a social fraternity that sought to empower rural communities through knowledge sharing and mutual support. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the organization rapidly expanded, with local chapters (called "Granges") forming across the Midwest and beyond.

Social and Economic Impact in the Late 19th Century

The Grange movement gained momentum during the 1870s, coinciding with widespread agricultural distress. Its members advocated for railroad regulation and sought to curb monopolistic practices that disadvantaged small farmers. This advocacy culminated in important legislative victories, such as the passage of the Granger Laws, which enacted state-level controls on railroad and grain elevator rates.

Beyond politics, the Grange provided a social network that was especially vital in isolated rural areas. Through meetings, lectures, and community events, farmers and their families found opportunities for education and camaraderie. The organization also pioneered cooperative buying and selling, helping farmers reduce costs and increase bargaining power.

The Grange's Role in Agricultural Reform and Education

Education was a cornerstone of the Grange's mission. Recognizing that knowledge was key to agricultural success, the organization promoted scientific farming methods and rural education. Agricultural fairs, publications, and lectures were common Grange activities designed to disseminate innovations in crop cultivation, livestock management, and soil conservation.

Advancement of Women and Youth in Agriculture

One notable aspect of the Grange was its inclusivity, particularly regarding women and young people. Unlike many contemporary organizations, the Grange welcomed female members and encouraged their active participation. This progressive stance fostered leadership opportunities for women in the agricultural sector.

The Grange also emphasized youth involvement, establishing juvenile Granges that cultivated the next generation's interest in farming and rural life. This intergenerational focus helped sustain the organization's relevance and contributed to the preservation of agricultural traditions.

The Decline and Resurgence of the Grange in the 20th Century

Despite its early successes, the Grange experienced a decline in membership and influence by the early 20th century. Factors such as urbanization, the rise of new agricultural organizations like the Farm Bureau, and changing economic conditions diluted its prominence. However, the Grange persisted, adapting to the evolving needs of rural communities.

Modern Functions and Continuing Legacy

Today, the Grange remains active in many states, though its role has shifted from direct political activism to more community-centered functions. Modern Granges often focus on rural advocacy, educational programs, and charitable activities. They continue to lobby for agricultural policies and rural development, maintaining their foundational commitment to supporting farmers.

Comparing the Grange with Other Agricultural Organizations

In the broader context of American agricultural history, the Grange stands out for its holistic approach to rural life. Unlike the American Farm Bureau Federation, which largely concentrates on policy and lobbying, the Grange integrates social, educational, and economic dimensions. This multifaceted model contributed to its early widespread appeal.

However, some critics argue that the Grange's fraternal structure and ritualistic aspects limited its adaptability in the face of modern agricultural challenges. Meanwhile, more specialized organizations emerged to address specific issues such as crop insurance, marketing, and technological innovation.

Pros and Cons of the Grange Movement

- **Pros:** Fostered community cohesion, advanced rural education, advocated for farmers' rights, promoted cooperative economics, inclusive of women and youth.
- **Cons:** Declined in influence with changing agricultural economy, sometimes seen as slow to modernize, limited appeal in urbanizing America.

The Grange's Influence on Rural Policy and Cultural Identity

The legacy of the Grange extends beyond its organizational lifespan. It significantly influenced rural policies by pressing for regulation of monopolies and improved infrastructure. Its efforts helped pave the way for later New Deal agricultural reforms.

Culturally, the Grange contributed to defining rural American identity during a period of rapid industrialization and urban growth. Through its emphasis on community, education, and cooperation, it fostered a sense of shared purpose that resonated across diverse farming populations.

The history of the Grange, therefore, encapsulates a broader narrative of rural empowerment and adaptation. While the organization's prominence has fluctuated, its foundational principles continue to echo in contemporary agricultural advocacy and community initiatives. Understanding this history not only sheds light on past struggles but also informs ongoing conversations about the future of rural America.

[History Of The Grange](#)

history of the grange: History of the Grange Movement James D. McCabe, 1873

history of the grange: Rich Harvest Dennis Sven Nordin, 1974

history of the grange: *A Brief History of the Grange Movement in Pennsylvania (Classic Reprint)* William Free Hill, 2017-11-18 Excerpt from A Brief History of the Grange Movement in Pennsylvania Fifty years ago there were about one thousand members in the Granges of Pennsylvania - now about one hundred thousand. It is proper to state here that because of 'the interrelationship of the State Grange With the National Grange the organized farmers of the U. S. Secured many victories that this state working alone could not have secured. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at www.forgottenbooks.com This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.

history of the grange: History of the Grange in Vermont Guy Bertram Horton, 1926

history of the grange: **History of the Grange movement, or The farmer's war against monopolies** James D. McCabe, 1874

history of the grange: **In Essentials, Unity** Jenny Bourne, 2017-02-15 The Patrons of Husbandry—or the Grange—is the longest-lived US agricultural society and, since its founding shortly after the Civil War, has had immeasurable influence on social change as enacted by ordinary Americans. The Grange sought to relieve the struggles of small farmers by encouraging collaboration. Pathbreaking for its inclusion of women, the Grange is also well known for its association with Gilded Age laws aimed at curbing the monopoly power of railroads. In *Essentials, Unity* takes as its focus Grange founder Oliver Kelley and his home organization in Minnesota. Jenny Bourne draws upon numerous historical records to present a lively picture of a fraternal organization devoted to improving the lot of farmers but whose legacies extend far beyond agriculture. From struggles over minimum wage, birth control, and environmental regulation to the conflicts surrounding the Affordable Care Act, and from lunch-counter sit-ins to Occupy Wall Street, the Grange has shaped the very notion of collective action and how it is deployed even today. As this compact book so effectively illustrates, the history of the Patrons of Husbandry exposes the classic tension between the desires for achieving overall economic success and determining how the spoils are split.

history of the grange: **A Brief History of the Grange Movement in Pennsylvania** William Free Hill, 1923

history of the grange: **History of the Grange Movement** Edward Martin, 2023-08-15 Reprint of the original, first published in 1874.

history of the grange: **History of the Grange in York County** John Chick Murray, 1922

history of the grange: *In Essentials, Unity* Jenny Bourne (Professor of Economics), 2017 In *Essentials, Unity*, Jenny Bourne presents a lively picture of a fraternal organization--the Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange--devoted to improving the lot of small farmers but whose legacies extend far beyond agriculture, shaping the very notion of collective action and how it is deployed even today.

history of the grange: **History of the Pennsylvania State Grange** Frederick Charles Brenckman, 1949

history of the grange: **The Grange, Friend of the Farmer** Charles Milo Gardner, 1949

history of the grange: *Rich Harvest* Dennis Sven Nordin, s. Sven Nordin, 2006-11-30 *Rich Harvest* tells of the development and progress of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, beginning with Oliver Hudson Kelley's first activities on behalf of the farmer organization. It represents the first scholarly work devoted to the history of the Grange.

history of the grange: A Brief History of the Grange Movement in Pennsylvania [microform]

William Free Hill, 2021-09-09 This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. To ensure a quality reading experience, this work has been proofread and republished using a format that seamlessly blends the original graphical elements with text in an easy-to-read typeface. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

history of the grange: Outlines of Grange History Thomas Clark Atkeson, 1928

history of the grange: *History of the Grange Movement* James Dabney McCabe, 2018-10-20

This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. To ensure a quality reading experience, this work has been proofread and republished using a format that seamlessly blends the original graphical elements with text in an easy-to-read typeface. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

history of the grange: A Study of a History of the Grange in Texas Vestal Self Payne, 1936

history of the grange: *History of the Grange Movement* James D. McCabe, 1874

history of the grange: *History of the Grange Movement* Edward Winslow Martin, 2015-07-03 Excerpt from *History of the Grange Movement: Or, the Farmer's War Against Monopolies; Being a Full and Authentic Account of the Struggles of the American Farmers Against the Extortions of the Railroad Companies; With a History of the Rise and Progress of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, Its Object Among the many remarkable events of the present century, there are none more worthy of patient and careful study than the important movement among the agricultural classes, which has been popularly termed The Farmer's War Against Monopolies. The rapid and astounding growth of this movement, the formation of Farmers' Granges in every part of the Union, and the remarkable success which has attended every step of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, have made it the most closely and anxiously observed of any of the movements of the day. The people of the United States are deeply interested in it, and on all sides there is a growing desire to know more of it. Men cannot help regarding with a deep interest an organization which bids fair to embrace the whole agricultural population at an early period, and which proposes to exert the enormous strength and power of this class of our countrymen as a compact and united force for the accomplishment of a definite object. They naturally desire to know if this new and powerful element in our public affairs is to exert its power for good or for evil; whether it is to work for the good of the whole country, with a wise and generous regard for the welfare of all classes, or whether it seeks only the advancement of its own interests regardless of the rights or well-being of others. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at www.forgottenbooks.com This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.*

history of the grange: *History Of The Grange Movement, Or, The Farmer's War Against Monopolies* James Dabney McCabe, 2015-08-27 This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work was

reproduced from the original artifact, and remains as true to the original work as possible. Therefore, you will see the original copyright references, library stamps (as most of these works have been housed in our most important libraries around the world), and other notations in the work. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. As a reproduction of a historical artifact, this work may contain missing or blurred pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

Related to history of the grange

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history Your History lists the pages you've visited on Chrome in the last 90 days. It doesn't store: If you're signed in to Chrome and sync your history, then your History also shows pages you've visited

Delete your activity - Computer - Google Account Help Delete your activity automatically You can automatically delete some of the activity in your Google Account. On your computer, go to your Google Account. At the left, click Data & privacy.

Find & erase your Google Search history Tip: Your search history isn't saved to your Google Account when you search and browse in Incognito mode. Erase your search history automatically Important: If you set your search

Manage your Google data with My Activity Customize privacy settings to best meet your needs. Devices that use Google's services when you're signed in to a Google Account Access and manage your search history and activity in

Access & control activity in your account - Google Help Under "History settings," click My Activity. To access your activity: Browse your activity, organized by day and time. To find specific activity, at the top, use the search bar and filters. Manage

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history - Google Help Websites you've visited are recorded in your browsing history. You can check or delete your browsing history, and find related searches in Chrome. You can also resume browsing

View or delete your YouTube search history - Google Help You can manage your search history by deleting individual searches or clearing or pausing search history. Learn more about your data in YouTube and managing your YouTube activity

Last account activity - Gmail Help - Google Help You can see your sign-in history, including the dates and times that your Gmail account was used. You can also see the IP addresses which were used to access your account. See your

Manage your Timeline data - Google Account Help Delete Timeline data You can manage and delete your location information with Google Maps Timeline. You can choose to delete all of your history, or only parts of it. Learn how to manage

Delete browsing data in Chrome - Computer - Google Help Delete browsing data in Chrome You can delete your Chrome browsing history and other browsing data, like saved form entries, or just delete data from a specific date

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history Your History lists the pages you've visited on Chrome in the last 90 days. It doesn't store: If you're signed in to Chrome and sync your history, then your History also shows pages you've visited

Delete your activity - Computer - Google Account Help Delete your activity automatically You can automatically delete some of the activity in your Google Account. On your computer, go to your Google Account. At the left, click Data & privacy. Under

Find & erase your Google Search history Tip: Your search history isn't saved to your Google Account when you search and browse in Incognito mode. Erase your search history automatically Important: If you set your search

Manage your Google data with My Activity Customize privacy settings to best meet your needs. Devices that use Google's services when you're signed in to a Google Account Access and manage your search history and activity in

Access & control activity in your account - Google Help Under "History settings," click My Activity. To access your activity: Browse your activity, organized by day and time. To find specific activity, at the top, use the search bar and filters. Manage

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history - Google Help Websites you've visited are recorded in your browsing history. You can check or delete your browsing history, and find related searches in Chrome. You can also resume browsing

View or delete your YouTube search history - Google Help You can manage your search history by deleting individual searches or clearing or pausing search history. Learn more about your data in YouTube and managing your YouTube activity

Last account activity - Gmail Help - Google Help You can see your sign-in history, including the dates and times that your Gmail account was used. You can also see the IP addresses which were used to access your account. See your account

Manage your Timeline data - Google Account Help Delete Timeline data You can manage and delete your location information with Google Maps Timeline. You can choose to delete all of your history, or only parts of it. Learn how to manage

Delete browsing data in Chrome - Computer - Google Help Delete browsing data in Chrome You can delete your Chrome browsing history and other browsing data, like saved form entries, or just delete data from a specific date

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history Your History lists the pages you've visited on Chrome in the last 90 days. It doesn't store: If you're signed in to Chrome and sync your history, then your History also shows pages you've visited

Delete your activity - Computer - Google Account Help Delete your activity automatically You can automatically delete some of the activity in your Google Account. On your computer, go to your Google Account. At the left, click Data & privacy.

Find & erase your Google Search history Tip: Your search history isn't saved to your Google Account when you search and browse in Incognito mode. Erase your search history automatically Important: If you set your search

Manage your Google data with My Activity Customize privacy settings to best meet your needs. Devices that use Google's services when you're signed in to a Google Account Access and manage your search history and activity in

Access & control activity in your account - Google Help Under "History settings," click My Activity. To access your activity: Browse your activity, organized by day and time. To find specific activity, at the top, use the search bar and filters. Manage

Check or delete your Chrome browsing history - Google Help Websites you've visited are recorded in your browsing history. You can check or delete your browsing history, and find related searches in Chrome. You can also resume browsing

View or delete your YouTube search history - Google Help You can manage your search history by deleting individual searches or clearing or pausing search history. Learn more about your data in YouTube and managing your YouTube activity

Last account activity - Gmail Help - Google Help You can see your sign-in history, including the dates and times that your Gmail account was used. You can also see the IP addresses which were used to access your account. See your

Manage your Timeline data - Google Account Help Delete Timeline data You can manage and delete your location information with Google Maps Timeline. You can choose to delete all of your history, or only parts of it. Learn how to manage

Delete browsing data in Chrome - Computer - Google Help Delete browsing data in Chrome You can delete your Chrome browsing history and other browsing data, like saved form entries, or just delete data from a specific date

Related Articles

- [troy bilt 4 cycle trimmer carburetor diagram](#)
- [diet for kids with autism](#)
- [deliver us from evil david baldacci](#)

[Back to Home](#)