

To-nights monograph is entitled Maynard Grange, however, I am going to take the liberty of going back to the year 1867 when the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry had its inception. This organization was formed primarily for the promotion of agricultural interests in the United States. Between that date and 1876, when the society reached its zenith, the number of lodges or Granges increased its number from 90 to 19,000. Grange means farm and the members of the society are known as Grangers. The discussion of political matters was strictly forbidden at their meetings but as the organization grew in strength its members became a considerable force politically. The political phases of their activity soon passed to the Farmers Alliance and later to the Populist party. The Grange was then free to return to its original purpose of social, educational, and industrial influence. Now that we have learned of the history and back ground of the National Grange let us return to Maynard Grange history. A small group of men who were interested in the Grange movement met in Masonic Hall, Dec 5th, 1913. F.E. Richardson of Millis, county commissioner and Chester D. Williams of Co. chituate gave a talk on the objectives of the Grange and later presented the charter with certain restrictions. The eleven people present signed the charter, however, the charter was void until fifty names were added. Linwood White was made sec'y of this meeting, the charter committee was composed of Albert Batley, and Mr. and Mrs. Linwood White; nominating committee Arthur Walker, Calvin Morse, and Alton White. On Dec. 19/19¹³, at Masonic Hall, the Grange membership increased to 35 members and it was at this meeting that Maynard Grange elected its first set of officers. Linwood White was elected Master, Alton White, overseer; Mrs. O.S. Fowler, lecturer; William Coulter, steward; Timothy Moynihan, ass't steward; chaplain, O.S. Fowler, George Morse, treas, Mrs. Linwood White, sec'y; James Farrell, gatekeeper, Pomona, Anita Walker; Ceres, Chloe Hobbs; Flora, Elizabeth Coleman; Lady Ass't Steward, Nellie Coughlin, Executive committee, Linwood White, Arthur Sullivan,

Albert Batley. There has always been some discussion as to who was the prime mover in obtaining a Grange charter for Maynard. Personally, I will always credit Mr. Walker with ^{that} ~~that~~ distinction. He was postmaster at that time and I can recall him saying "We now have the charter, who will volunteer to take an office? Tim Moynihan, Arthur Sullivan and I made up the office force at that time. We all selected an office, I chose the lowly gatekeeper. The Good Book says "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted". I had no desire to become exalted, I was quite satisfied with my humble rank. You see, many of the ladies could not recall the current password and they would implore me to divulge the magic words., otherwise they were greatly humiliated by being forced to advance to the altar or podium, where, after a few words of admonition, the Master allowed them to be seated. At this point, I would put on my little act. Sorry girls, I would say, but rules are rules and continuing I would say, of course I could be bribed, at the same time placing my angelic face in such a position that they knew just what I meant. It worked every time. I don't know if the girls on the outside heard about this routine, but I do know that in a comparatively short time our membership grew to 215 members. The membership consisted mostly of white collar workers, factory workers, and a few school teachers, and what we didn't know about farming would fill a good sized book. Nevertheless, we continued to grow and at one time we boasted of a membership of 250. For many years, Maynard Grange was the most active societies in the community. There were the annual fairs held at Naylor's or the Cooperative Hall, Fall exhibitions held at Maylor Hall, several dances, vegetable displays at different stores, and a minstrel show which was one of the best ever produced in Maynard. Colonial Hall was filled to capacity for two nights. Halloween parties, New Year celebrations, and mystery rides were also a part of the Grange socials. - Like most all other organizations the Grange has suffered a ^(noticeable) loss in membership due to television, radio,

and the automobile. At the present time, the Grange has fifty members, however, there are only fifteen or twenty active members. The Grange suffered an irreparable loss with the death of Mrs. Adelaide Sims last year. She was the very keystone of the society and it was mostly through her untiring effort that the Grange was able to weather many storms. There are still a few stalwarts left and they vow that they will continue to carry on as long as life exists. The older members have seen the location of their Grange home changed many times. Masonic Hall, ^{Kop. c. Hall} Odd Fellows Hall, Grange Hall, purchased from the Danish people. This hall was purchased in 1929, and is located at Lake Boon road, Stow. The present meeting place is Elk' Hall, Powder Mill Rd. Russell Naylor, until last year held the office of Master for eleven years which must be considered somewhat of a record. Raymond Jones is the present Master. Mrs. Grace Tucker will receive a gold certificate at the March meeting, representing fifty years membership. Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Whitney are the only other two members I recall receiving this honor. Thus we have seen how the Grange, once Maynard's most flourishing society, reduced to almost skeleton proportions. Its members may be consoled in the fact that almost all other organizations have suffered the same fate. This monograph pertains to Maynard Grange only. The Grange in other communities continue to flourish for the simple reason that the members are farmers at heart. But this I know, as long as this small but dedicated group remain, there will always be a Maynard Grange.

 READ AT THE MAY. HIST. Soc. MEETING
Jim Farrell
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