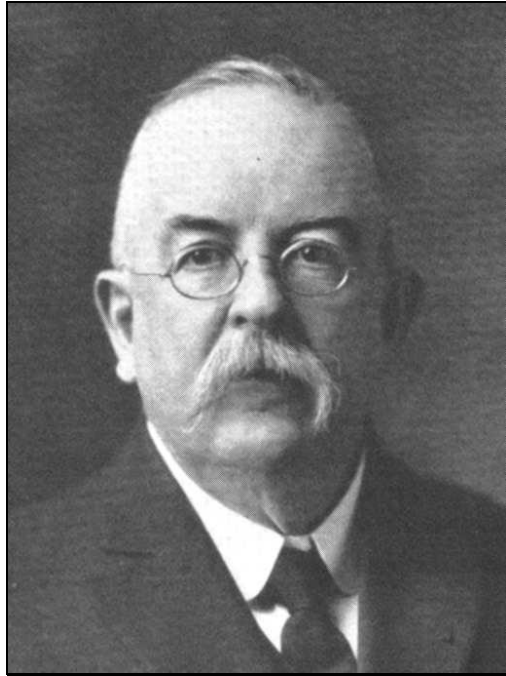


Celebrating 100 Years of Cannon Grange No. 152 P. of H.

Charles P. Gilliam¹

On April 27, 1899 a group of people met at the home William B. Smith in Cannondale to discuss organization of a new subordinate grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the National Grange.



Samuel J. Miller

First Master of Cannon Grange, 1899

Mr. Miller was later President of The Gilbert & Bennett Mfg. Co. of Georgetown.

The meeting was adjourned until May 4, 1899 and at that time, with 53 charter members and an assist from the established Norfield, Westport and New Canaan

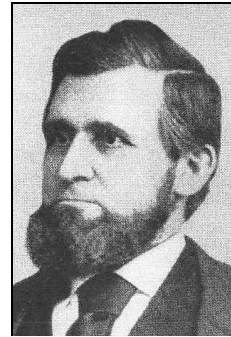
¹ A member of Cannon Grange. Copyright 1999 all rights reserved. *The historical quotations in the call out boxes in the National Grange portion of this book are all quotations from the 1874 Declaration of Purpose of the National Grange.*

Granges, Cannon Grange No. 152 of the Connecticut State Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry was established.

Cannon Grange was neither an original concept nor a new organization. By 1899 there were already 82 subordinate granges in Connecticut The National Grange had already made its most prominent marks in American history books, had been through its most turbulent years and was in the process of a long and slow recovery from its nadir.

To put this event in perspective it is useful to journey back in time to visit the origins of the national Order which these local people joined.

Founding of the National Grange



Oliver Hudson Kelley

In 1866 Oliver Hudson Kelley, a native of Massachusetts, received a commission from President Andrew Johnson to survey agricultural conditions in the Southern states because there was a dearth of reliable information following the War of 1861-1865.

What Kelley saw of conditions in the South and the advantage being taken by Northern carpetbaggers of beleaguered farmers, his work as a Minnesota farmer, his study and writings on agriculture and his association with the Masonic Order combined in the conception of a notion to extend a fraternal hand of friendship to farmers and rural people of the North, South and West to, as he wrote, “restore kindly feelings among the people.”

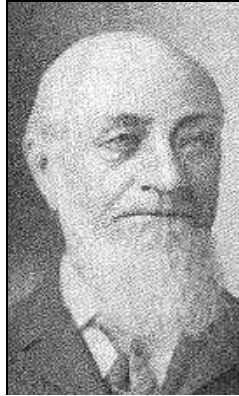
The late War Between the States had of course devastated the Southern farmer, but it had affected others as well. Many Northern rural people were cripples or lost members of their farm families as a result of the war. While carpetbagging was a regional issue there were also middlemen and rail road barons who, as many farmers saw it, were feasting on the life's blood of the working man of all regions.

“We cherish the belief that sectionalism is, and of right should be, dead and buried with the past. Our work is for the present and the future. In our agricultural brotherhood and its purposes, we shall recognize no North, no South, no East, no West.”

Kelley returned briefly to his Minnesota farm but never returned to farming in a substantive way. In the Autumn of 1866 he departed for Washington to accept a

position in the Post Office Department and it was from there that he set about to organize the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, the National Grange.

Kelley joined with six others, William Saunders (first National Master), Aaron B. Gosh, John Trimble, John R. Thompson, Francis McDowell and William M. Ireland who became the Seven Founders of the National Grange. Kelley was the first Secretary. Although there was an agricultural background among the Seven Founders, five were currently Washington government officials, one was a banker, one was a minister and none were active farmers. While much of the early history of the Grange was aimed at assisting farmers in the South and West (their West is now our Mid-West) all of the Seven Founders hailed from north and east of those regions (Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Scotland).



William Saunders

The National Grange was officially founded on December 4, 1867 in the office of William Saunders, Superintendent of Propagating Gardens in the Department of Agriculture.

In the very early years Kelley was practically a one-man crusade. There was a slow start and it was by no means assured the movement would ever get off the ground. But, it did and by 1874 (the first year for which there are records) there were 268,368 dues paying members.

Original Principles

It was a key principle of the concept for a National Grange that it was a fraternal organization for men and women. Although not all of the Seven Founders were Masons, the example of the Masonic Order was the model for much of the ritualistic and fraternalistic underpinning. Other precepts included that the Order was open equally to women and men, it was Christian but not sectarian and it was non-sectional, indeed anti-sectional.

In 1874 at the St. Louis session of the National Grange a “Declaration of Purposes” was adopted. This was done to proclaim the purposes of the fraternity

“In our noble Order there is no communism, no agrarianism”

of farmers in a constructive way. At that time there was great interest in the National Grange and a boom in its membership, but there also was concern among the national leadership that excesses were detracting from the true broad based purposes of the Grange and focusing attention on specific, albeit electrifying, issues. That year’s report of the executive committee said:

Unfortunately for our Order, the impression prevails to some extent that its chief mission is to fight railroads and denounce capitalists. It is a work of time to remove these erroneous impressions, and to prove that we do not wage a meaningless aggressive warfare upon any interest whatever. . . . While we aim to elevate ourselves, we avoid doing so at the expense of running down others.

The “General Objects” of the Order so adopted were two:

1. United by the strong and faithful tie of Agriculture, we mutually resolve to labor for the good of our Order, our country, and mankind.
2. We heartily endorse the motto: “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”

Excerpts from the Declaration of Purposes appear in the call out boxes on these pages. The full text of the Declaration of Purposes is reprinted in the final pages of this booklet.

1870s: Boom and Collapse

By the mid 1870s interest in the National Grange was intense and membership exploded. This was influenced by the financial panic of 1873 and also partly by a general awakening of the farmer to fight against the middleman, the railroads and others with inimical interests. In 1875 Grange membership was 858,050. State Grange organizations were being established in all regions of the country; membership was especially strong in the South. (The Connecticut State Grange was organized in 1875.)

Buying cooperatives were established, middlemen were eliminated and prices reduced. Other cooperative enterprises, such grain elevators and mills, were

“We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require.”

introduced. The Grange took on a more economic role than was originally envisioned. One might say that in some ways the Grange replaced the

“We must dispense with a surplus of middlemen, not that we are unfriendly to them, but we do not need them. Their surplus and their exactions diminish our profits.”

middleman rather than eliminated him. In principle economic involvement was a purpose of the Grange, but its rise in importance was rapid and for many in the movement the role of the Grange in commerce started to become pervasive to the detriment of other goals.

This manner and speed of growth was a matter of controversy and could not be sustained. Many who joined were interested only in enjoying supplier-direct discount pricing or in enjoying some other transient advantage. It appears that some joiners were even

secret supporters of middlemen, railroads and others aiming at stopping the Grange movement. D. Wyatt Aiken, a congressman and Master of the South Carolina Grange wrote:

Everybody wanted to join the Grange then: Lawyers, to get clients; doctors, to get patients; merchants, to get customers; Shylocks, to get their pound of flesh; and sharpers, to catch the babes from the woods.

Membership in the Grange soon collapsed. By 1879 membership was down to 246,383, the same as before the boom, but it fell by half from even that level and through the 1880s languished at barely over one hundred thousand.

By the end of the century the Grange was extinct in the Southern states. It was reborn, albeit in a modest way, in the outer South in the 1930s and 1940s, but to this day there is no Grange in the deep South. In New England and the West the Grange endured to revitalize, this time on sturdier foundations, through the first third of the Twentieth Century. Dues paying membership held steady at around six hundred thousand in the 1920s and 1930s and right after the Second World War was back to the levels of the mid-1870s.

After the 1870s the protest political movement exemplified by the *Granger Laws* was carried on by the Greenback Party, Farmers Alliance and Populist Party. Yet, after the 1870s the National Grange stayed ahead of its time on a number of controversial issues such as federal income taxation, direct election of United States Senators and women’s suffrage.

When Cannon Grange was founded in 1899 the National Grange was starting to re-emerge from a trial in the wilderness. The gradual re-emergence of the National Grange was based on the original precepts of a fraternal, social organization. This change probably suited most of the original Grangers well.

The National Grange and Public Policy in History

The National Grange has always been strictly non-partisan. Yet, political matters were part of the heart of its early existence and remain an important factor today. The National, every State and every Subordinate Grange has a legislative committee, adopts resolutions on matters of public interest and encourages involvement of members in matters of public concern. In history some of the policies of the Grange were ground breaking, before their time, even radical. Following are five exemplars. Famous, mundane, radical, conservative, futuristic.

“It is [every member’s] duty to do all he can do to put down bribery, corruption and trickery; to see that none but competent, faithful and honest men, who will unflinchingly stand by our interests, are nominated for all positions of trust; and to have carried out the principle which should always characterize every Patron that ‘The Office Should Seek the Man, and Not the Man the Office.’”

The Grange versus the Railroads

The Grange movement is perhaps best remembered in history for battles with the rail road magnates, or robber barons, depending on one’s point of view. The United States government gave the railroad companies vast amounts of farm land and, of course, railroads had monopolies on carriage of grain and other farm produce and supplies. The railroads were viewed as high handed, greedy and unscrupulous.

“We are not enemies of railroads, navigable and irrigating canals, nor of any corporation that will advance our industrial interests, nor of any laboring classes.”

War with the railroads was not an original purpose of the National Grange, but taking on the railroads turned out to be a natural extension of the theme of equal opportunity and condemning exorbitant profits taken by middlemen. Many state legislatures enacted what were known as the *Granger Laws* lowering freight rates and establishing state railroad commissions to regulate railroads and eventually other public utilities.

The railroads fought back and succeeded in repealing some legislation. The judicial challenge to regulation ultimately did not succeed. In *Munn v. Illinois* (1876) the Supreme Court approved public regulation of public utilities. The “final” outcome of the battle was the creation in 1887 of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

“We are not enemies to capital, but we oppose the tyranny of monopolies.”

Today, Grange policy concerning rail roads is comparatively subdued. Legislative policy includes addition of more commuter trains, warning reflectors on the sides of railroad cars, better integration of railroad and highway policy and support for “the development and maintenance of a strong and effective rail network that will efficiently transport agricultural products and passengers at reasonable freight rates.”

Rural Free Delivery

The National Grange in the 1870s initiated the campaign for rural free delivery (RFD) of the mail. At the time rural people had to drive into town to the post office to collect mail while city dwellers had mail delivered to their door.

In 1896 experimental routes were established and by the turn of the century RFD was wide spread. There was opposition to RFD and the legislation allowing it passed by only two votes in the United States Senate. Opponents of RFD said it was a waste of money and would destroy rural life. RFD turned out to be a great boom for farmers. An 1897 study by the Post Office Department estimated that the availability of RFD increased the value of farm land \$2.00 – \$3.00 and acre and resulted in improvement of many rural roads since post office patrons were required to bring roads up to standards to receive RFD.

In 1887 the National Grange proposed establishment of the parcel post system. At the time there were five express companies handling parcel delivery at what were contended to be high prices with poor service. These companies opposed the Post Office entering the parcel business. In 1912 a parcel post law was enacted.

Today the National Grange opposes first class mail subsidization of junk mail rates and opposes elimination of Saturday mail delivery.

Progressive Taxation

The National Grange was an early advocate of a progressive federal income tax. In 1880 the National Grange convention resolved:

We demand the immediate enactment of a graduated income tax, to the end that all wealth may bear its just and equal proportion of the expenses of government, and that productive industry be so far relieved from the burdens of taxation as shall be consistent with strict justice to all.

“We desire a proper equality, equity, and fairness; protection for the weak; restraint upon the strong; in short, justly distributed burdens and justly distributed power. These are America ideas, the very essence of American independence, and to advocate the contrary is unworthy of the sons and daughters of an American Republic.”

Tax Reform Act of 1986, elimination of the capital gains tax, elimination of the tax on social security and elimination of the marriage penalty.

Community Farming

The National Grange supported family farming and not corporate or large-scale farming. The Grange warned against over production, believing that production should be expanded only when new markets were at hand. It opposed government subsidization of large scale irrigation projects in dessert lands where they could not be economically justified. Of course many of these types of things which the Grange opposed did come to fruition and it is a matter of debate as to whether and to what extent they were fruitful.

The National Grange supported cooperative farm credit but not banking centralization which was seen as inapposite to the idea of local based institutions. Some government programs were lobbied for and won including the 1916 Federal Farm Loan Act and 1937 Bankhead-Jones Act which provided credit, including for farm purchases, supporting Grange policy of turning tenant farmers into farm owners.

In the 1930s the National Grange proposed a graduated land tax “to discourage excessive land holdings and to promote home ownership of the family-sized farm.”

The federal income tax became law in 1913 but proved to be somewhat too much of a good thing. Today, National Grange policy favors reductions in income taxes including return to the rates in the compromise

“We long to see the antagonism between labor and capital removed by common consent, and by an enlightened statesmanship worthy of the nineteenth century. We are opposed to excessive salaries, high rates of interest and exorbitant profits in trade. They greatly increase our burdens and do not bear a proper proportion to the profits of producers.”

“Community Farming” in Wilton as it were. Wilton photo believed to have been taken in the Belden Hill area.



Temperance and Tobacco

Today, anti-smoking is politically *de rigueur* but this is a recent phenomena. The National Grange historically was not a friend of tobacco products. For a hundred years curtailment of the cigarette business, education on the evil of smoking, increased cigarette taxation and restrictions on manufacture and sale (especially to minors) was urged. For example, at the 1929 National Grange convention a resolution was adopted urging local school boards to discourage smoking by teachers so they could set an example for children.

Current National Grange legislative policy can make a distinction between the tobacco farmer and tobacco use. The Grange supports efforts to diversify tobacco farmers into other products and to use some of the money from the pending “class action settlements” to ease dislocation in tobacco farming.

From the beginning the Grange espoused temperance. In 1905 the National Grange adopted a rule excluding from membership anyone engaged in the sale of intoxicating liquors. The National Grange supported the prohibition movement and when prohibition became the law of the land the Grange deplored resulting uneven and lax enforcement.

After repeal of prohibition the National Grange promoted temperance in the local communities including education of adults and children and opposition to use of intoxicants by youths.

Structure of the National Grange Community²

The National Grange is comprised of four distinct divisions built one upon the other in logical sequence: 1) The Subordinate Grange, 2) The Pomona Grange,

² Adapted from an official summary supplied by the National Grange.

3) The State Grange, and 4) The National Grange; plus a separate division for the Junior Grange.

The Subordinate (local) Grange

The local unit of the organization is built around the community. Men, women and youth are admitted on equal terms. Those who are 14 years of age are eligible for full membership. Each member has one vote. The local Grange elects its own officers and controls its own affairs in community matters. It confers the first four ritualistic Degrees: symbolic of the four seasons and life on the farm.

Although regular business meetings of the Subordinate Grange are for members only, the educational and literary programs are frequently open to the public. All Grange activities are for the purpose of developing leadership, improving community life, and expanding opportunities for all people.

Today, approximately three hundred thousand people are members of Subordinate Granges in 3,600 communities nationwide. Cannon Grange is a Subordinate Grange.

The Pomona (county or other region) Grange

Subordinate Granges within a given district are grouped together on a county or other regional basis into Pomona Granges that meet monthly or quarterly. The Pomona Grange offers the Fifth Degree of the Order, thus extending the lessons and opportunities of the Subordinate Grange. The Pomona Grange provides the leadership for educational, legislative, and business interests of the Subordinate Granges in its jurisdiction.

Members of Subordinate Granges are not required to receive the Fifth Degree but are encouraged to do so.

Cannon Grange is part of Fairfield County Pomona Grange which encompasses a total of eight Subordinate Granges from Brookfield, Fairfield, Monroe, Redding, Shelton, Trumbull, Weston and Wilton. There were once Subordinate Granges in Danbury, New Canaan, Stamford, Ridgefield and Westport as well.

The State Grange

The State Grange is a delegate body representing Subordinate and Pomona Granges. At their annual conventions, State Granges consider many important matters relating to legislation and public policy, with particular reference to

agriculture, other matters of concern to rural America and the general welfare of the state as a whole. Inasmuch as State Grange policies originate in the Subordinate and Pomona units of the Order and are conveyed through their delegates, this branch is, in a special sense, expressive of Grange thought and sentiment throughout the entire state.

Voting authority is vested in the delegate body, which in most instances, is composed of the Masters of Subordinate and Pomona Granges and their spouses, if also members, each having one vote.

The Sixth Degree of the Order is conferred at the state conventions and is open to all members of the Pomona Grange.

There is a State Grange in 37 states. The missing states are in the deep South and the less-arable regions of the far West.

The Connecticut State Grange was organized in 1875. There are 96 Subordinate Granges in Connecticut.

The Connecticut State Grange runs Camp Berger, a summer (July and August) camp for boys and girls ages seven to 14, in Winchester Center. *For more information write Camp Berger at Campberger@hotmail.com or by snail mail at 78 Laning 4-3C, Southington, Connecticut 06489.*

The Connecticut State Grange holds the Connecticut State Fair yearly at the Goshen fair grounds, Route 63 south of Goshen Center. In 1999 the fair is July 24-26. For more information contact the State Grange.

There is a Connecticut State Grange Federal Credit Union for members. Two Grange originated mutual insurance companies write insurance for the general public in Connecticut: National Grange Mutual and Patrons Mutual.

For more information visit the Connecticut State Grange web site at www.ctstategrange.org or write to 769 Hebron Avenue, P.O. Box 6517, Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033.

The National Grange

This is the parent branch of the Order which speaks with authority and understanding for the major branches of agriculture and rural America. All business sessions of the National Grange are open to any Subordinate Grange member in good standing. As spectators, they have no vote in the deliberations, but they do have ample opportunity to appear before committees and to testify.

As the supreme legislative body of the Order, policies are developed through the channels of Subordinate, Pomona and State units, and consequently embody the seasoned judgement of the membership.

At the annual convention of the National Grange, one day is devoted to the conferral of the Seventh Degree, the highest degree of Order. This degree is open to all members of a State Grange. Degree candidates and members gather from all parts of the nation for this annual ritualistic event.

The National Grange Headquarters is 1616 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 628-3507. One may visit its recently re-designed web page at www.nationalgrange.org for more information.

Cannon Grange

There has been a tradition of reading the minutes of the first organizational meeting of Cannon Grange at various anniversaries of its founding. The minutes were read at the centennial anniversary celebration held May 1, 1999 and are reprinted here.

An informal meeting was called to meet at the house of Mr. William B. Smith on the evening of April 27, 1899 to talk about organizing a Grange. Deputy I. C. Fanton and Brothers Pease and Blakeman of Fairfield County Pomona were present, also Brother Sipperly and wife of Westport Grange. They gave us such a glowing account of the Grange that we were unanimous to organize one then which we immediately proceeded to do by the election of master, Samuel J. Miller; lecturer, Mrs. Howard Stockwell; secretary Samuel Osborn.

We then received the obligation which brought it up to 12 o'clock so it was voted to adjourn the meeting one week, May 4, 1899 to the same place where the installation of officers took place. It was then voted the name of the Grange should be Cannon Grange. Our Grange starts with 53 charter members. Sixteen members of Norfield Grange were also with us at the installation. It was then voted to meet on the 17th of May at the schoolhouse. The meeting then closed in due form.

/s/ *Samuel Osborn*
Secretary

The charter officers of Cannon Grange:

Samuel J. Miller, Master

James B. Bedient	Overseer	Mrs. Howard Stockwell	Lecturer
James O'Donnell	Steward	Edward Henderson	Asst. Steward
Rev. William E. Hooker	Chaplain	Samuel Osborn	Secretary
George F. Brown	Treasurer	Charles Geoppler	Gate Keeper
Miss Isabella Folsom	Pomona	Mrs. Samuel J. Miller	Ceres
Miss Emma Partrick	Flora	Mrs. Edward Henderson	Lady
			Asst. Steward

Regular Grange meetings were then held at the home of George F. Brown until August 15, 1899 when the venue was changed to Cannon Hall, which had just been built. At the first regular meeting at Cannon Hall it was voted to hold regular meetings there on the first and third Thursdays of each month at 8:00 p.m. and that has remained unchanged to this day except for part of the period of the Second World War when meetings were scaled back to conserve fuel.

Wilton could not be described as a farming center, in fact the entire state of Connecticut is not so known unless one wants to farm rocks. However, one hundred years ago Cannondale and Wilton had a number of farm families and family farms. These family farms are gone today but many of the names live on as road names in Wilton. If one looks at a road map of Wilton one will see the family names of many members of Cannon Grange represented.



In times gone by a reasonable amount of produce and grain was grown locally in Cannondale and Wilton for local use and for market in the cities of Norwalk, Danbury and Bridgeport. Pictured here: Arthur Saunders.

The Lecturer's Hour

The Lecturer is responsible for a program at each regular meeting. The program could be serious or humorous, formal or informal. There could be a guest (recent guests have included congressmen and seeing eye dogs) or an outside program. At the end of each meeting it is traditional to enjoy refreshments and pleasant conversation around the table.

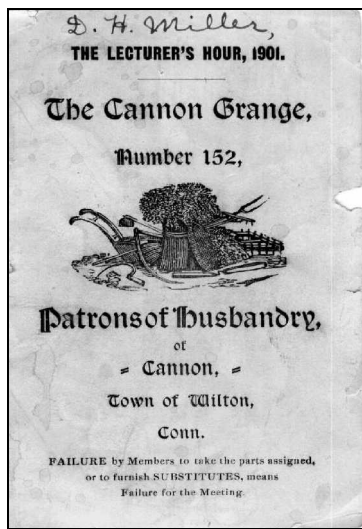


The Cannon Grange presents *Arrival of Miss Kitty*. This photo was taken at the first performance in 1927 at Cannon Grange. Shown here is the former stage which was dismantled in the 1960s. Pictured from left to right: John Goetjen, Lawrence Olmstead, unknown canine actor, Helen Smith, Walter Bassett, Ellen Wiley, Hubert Smith, Mrs. John Goetjen, Leonard Scribner and Mrs. Lloyd Scribner. Mr. Bassett, a former Master, still resides in Wilton and is the oldest known living past or present member of Cannon Grange.

In 1928 the play went on tour and was performed for Greenfield Hill Grange, Norwalk Odd Fellows Lodge, Georgetown School P.T.A., Metichewan Grange, Westport Methodist Episcopal Church, in Springdale (exact location unknown), High Ridge Church, Ridgefield Odd Fellows, Brookfield (exact location not known), Rippowan Grange, Norfield Grange and Mission Church Stamford.

A. D. Hemmelskamp, Mrs. Jane A. Smith.	
June 1	August 3
Music in charge of Mrs. C. M. Brown.	Debate. Which is the most inquisitive, man or woman?
The Cause and Cure of Matrimonial Strife.	Geo. Brown. Mrs. M. B. Hill,
Nelson Hurlbutt, Stanton Coley.	Peter Schubert, Mrs. Chas. Abbott
The Bringing up of Children, from a Single Woman's view. Josephine Hurlbutt.	Does it Pay to Pasture Cattle on the Meadows? Joel Godfrey.
Resolved, we read too little and send too much. Mrs. A. F. Chamberlain, Mrs. M. B. Hill.	Reading—Mrs. Jane Smith.
	Music in charge of Etta Sackman.
June 15	August 17
Night with the Gudeases.	An Evening with the Young People.
Rose Decorations.	Committee—
Strawberries and Cream.	Nelson Hurlbutt, Meta Willing,
	Robert Sturges, Etta Sackman,
July 6	Edward Gilbert, Helen Sturges,
Program to be arranged.	Amasa Mark, Elsie Sackman,
	Alice Williams.
July 20	September 7
CHILDREN'S NIGHT.	CORN BANQUET.
Committee—Mrs. C. M. Brown, Mrs. Chas. Abbott, Mrs. Stanton Coley, Elsie Willing, Helen Sturges.	Grange Chorus.
	Corn Raising. H. B. Cooke.
	Best Varieties of Corn for the Table.
	Chas. Eben Gilbert.

Representative page from the Lecturer's Program for 1911.



Cover of the 1901 Lecturer's Hour. This book bears the name of D. Henry Miller, later to be Master of Cannon Grange.

Grange meetings could include discussion of a range of weighty subjects as well as debates, sketches, practical home and farm advice and celebrations of holidays and events.

The Cannon Grange Hall



It is common for Subordinate Granges to own a building for meetings – called a Hall – and the building is often an old, interesting and historic structure. The Cannon Grange Hall is one of the best. It is located in the Cannondale section of Wilton at 25 Cannon Road just east off of Route 7 (Danbury Road). The Hall is a very short distance from Route 7 on the south side of Cannon Road between the railroad track and the Norwalk River.



Cannon Grange Hall the morning of the great Flood of 1955

Being nestled on the bank of the Norwalk River had its one time disadvantage. Cannondale Bridge was wiped out and the Hall flooded in the great Flood of 1955. Today, Cannon Grange provides park benches along the river for the enjoyment of trekkers

The Cannon Grange Hall was constructed in 1899, the same year Cannon Grange was organized, as a community building for Cannondale. The building was purchased by Cannon

Grange in March 1933. The mortgage was burned in 1939. Cannon Grange has met continuously in this building since 1899.



Cannondale Bridge as it were. Photo believed to represent construction typical of the turn of the last century.

Specifications for the 1899 construction of the new building in Cannondale included

Timber. Girder 6x8 Chestnut. Siles 6x6. Posts 4x[?]. Plates 4X6. Joists 3x8. Rafters 2x6. Trustes 4x6. Studding 2x4 set 18” to centers. Ceiling Joist 2x6 set 2’ to centers and spiked to Rafters. Rafters 2’ to centers. Ceiling Joist to be fastened to 4x6 Truses.

Sheathing. The Building to be covered with 8” Nor Col Matched.

Siding. All siding to be clear and well lapped.

Roof. Covered with Washington Red Ceder.

Flooring. To be 1¼ thick not more than 4” wide of first quality Georgia Pine.

Chimmes. To have 2 two chimmes 1”x16” of hard Brick laid in mortar and cement one part mortar one part cement.

Workmanship. All work done in a smooth and workman like manner and job left sound and complete.

Painting. All Wood work on outside to be Painted 2 coats of White lead and Linseed Oil in colors as may be directed. Inside to be finished with 2 coats of Hard Oil finish.”

In about 1927 the existing well was dug (prior to that water was ported in by hand) and in 1937 a kitchen was added to the west side of the Hall as well as a furnace and rest rooms. Originally the Hall was lit with kerosene lamps

suspended from the twenty foot ceilings. Later lamps were added to the side walls and now there is of course electric lighting.

In the 1960s the original stage was removed, extending the floor space by about one-third and bringing the Hall to its current configuration – sixteen hundred square feet in the main hall and a completely open floor plan, ideal for Grange meetings, banquets and other Grange and community activities.

In 1987 two old iron cook stoves were removed and a new gas range installed to meet government regulations. In 1990 a new kitchen floor was laid and rest room facilities upgraded. In 1993 the building exterior was sandblasted and re-painted white with green trim, the colors traditionally associated with the building. In 1975 the hardwood floors were refinished for the first time since the Great Flood of 1955. The floors were re-done again in 1994. In 1996, as another major capital project, layers of old roof was removed and the building was sub-roofed and re-roofed. The roofers affirmed that the roof timbers still measured true square, attesting to the fine craftsmanship of the original construction.

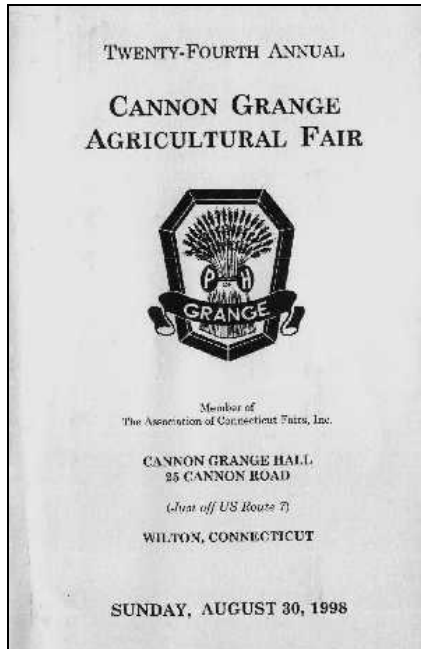
One of the main objectives and financial obligations of Cannon Grange is upkeep of this historic building. The recent capital improvements were funded from years of saving money obtained mainly by the support of local people through proceeds from the Grange’s annual agricultural fair and Hall rental.

Hall Rental

The Hall started as a community center and after acquisition by Cannon Grange remained available to diverse community groups and others. Popular uses currently include wedding receptions and anniversaries, birthday parties, bridal and baby showers. In 1987 the Hall was the setting for a *Country Time Lemonade* commercial that featured members and friends of Cannon Grange. Past uses included “the Ladies Aid Society and Woman’s Foreign Missionary society of the Zion Hill Methodist Episcopal church . . . for meetings, suppers and many other events” in the 1930s.

Enquiry’s about Hall rental can be made by contacting any Cannon Grange member, writing to Cannon Grange at P.O. Box 23, Wilton, Connecticut 06897 or visiting the Cannon Grange web site at www.geocities.com/cannongrange and following instructions on contacting the Grange by e-mail.

Annual Agricultural Fair



Cannon Grange has a tradition of holding an annual agricultural fair. The first annual fair was in 1933 and continued until suspended during the Second World War. The fair was reinstated in 1975 and has been held annually ever since.

In 1975 numbering of the fair was restarted as the "first annual" and that is why the 1999 fair will be billed as only the 25th annual.

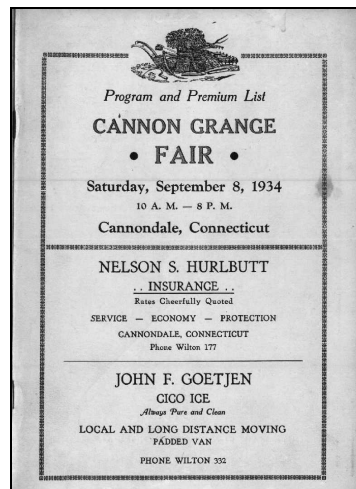
The fair is 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. always the last Sunday in August, rain or shine, at the Cannon Grange Hall. .

Fair admission is only one dollar for adults, children under twelve are free of charge. Where else can one get such value? An authentic agricultural fair complete with exhibits, farm animals,

entertainment and good safe fun for the entire family.

Fair attendance exceeds at least two thousand adults and children. The one in 1981 saw attendance of five thousand! Popular events include a working oxen show at around 2 P.M., live music all day long, face painting, children's games, educational exhibits, a tag sale (at which near the end one can buy a bag for one dollar and have for free everything they can fit in the bag) and a watermelon or pie eating contest for children and adults.

As one would expect of a small town country fair there is an exhibition of baked and canned goods, crafts and collections, vegetables, flowers, needlework, farm animals and photography, all



submitted by local citizens for fun and the hope of winning a blue ribbon or, failing that, a red, white or green one.

Children especially enjoy entering their exhibits. It delights Cannon Grange to see the excitement on the faces of children to see which ribbon they won. The fair is produced primarily with children in mind.

A refreshment tent serving hot food, featuring the Grange Burger (which defines a burger with "everything") is a featured attraction.

At 4 P.M., at the conclusion of the fair, produce, flowers and baked goods from the exhibits are auctioned for the benefit of Cannon Grange. Many times the prices rise skyward for a prize entry.

Space is rented to concessionaires for a moderate fee.

Proceeds from the fair are an important contribution to the cost of maintaining the Grange building in addition to philanthropic works.

The 1999 fair president is Douglas Shepherd, Jr. of West Redding.

In days gone by the emphasis for exhibits and entries was more on farm produce and larger farm animals.

Today, exhibits are submitted mainly by back yard gardeners and people with small animals, such as rabbits and chickens, which are often pets instead of farm animals.

Each year there are the same general departments of exhibits as well as special categories – such as a state baking contest or quilting contest -- that change every year.

CANNON GRANGE FAIR			
PREMIUM LIST			
I. Purebred Cattle			
Each animal must be tuberculin tested and have certificate of registry in a breeding association.			
No owner may show more than two animals in each class.			
A. Cows 3 Years and Older			
1. Grand Champion Cow			\$10
2. Holstein-Frisian Cow	1st.	2nd	3rd.
	\$2	1	Ribbon
3. Guernsey Cow	\$2	1	Ribbon
4. Jersey Cow	\$2	1	Ribbon
B. Calves			
5. Best yearling heifer dropped in Wilton			\$5
6. Best yearling bull calf dropped in Wilton			\$5
II. Small Livestock			
A. Goats			
1. Grand Champion Buck (1yr. & older)			\$2
2. Grand Champion Doe (1yr. & older)			\$2
3. Best Kid bred in Wilton			\$2
	1st.	2nd.	
4. Toggenburg Buck	\$1	Ribbon	
5. Toggenburg Doe	\$1	Ribbon	
6. Saanen Buck	\$1	Ribbon	
7. Saanen Doe	\$1	Ribbon	
B. Sheep			
8. Grand Champion Ram (1yr. & older)			\$2
9. Grand Champion Ewe (1yr. & older)			\$2
10. Best lamb bred in Wilton			\$2
			3

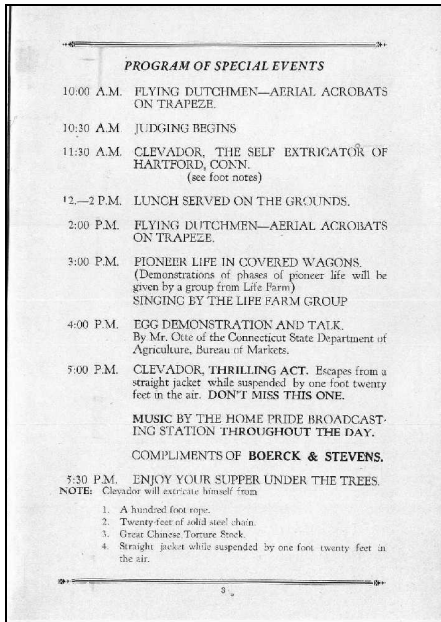
Page from the premium list for the 1933 fair.

exhibits submitted by the public are:

The general departments for

Baked and canned goods (cookies, brownies, bars, pies, decorated cakes, sponge or angel food cake, coffee cake, yeast bread, quick bread, muffins, jam, jelly, fruit butter, relish, pickles, canned fruit, canned vegetables);

Crafts and collections (this is a popular department for children);



Program of Special Events from the 1934 Cannon Grange Fair

Draft Cattle (not usually children with pets);

Photography (Color and black and white with a special category for a theme photograph which for 1999 is *In My Garden*. As 1999 is only the second year for the photography department the fair committee especially encourages interest.

Each year prior to the fair a premium book is distributed over the internet and to various public places in the community free of charge. The premium book may be consulted for more information or consult the Grange web page at www.geocities.com/cannongrange.

Vegetables and fruit (snap beans, beets, broccoli, carrots, cabbage, egg plant, cucumbers, onions, peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, melons, pumpkins, parsley, berries, corn, radishes, herbs);

Flowers (asters, cosmos, zinnias, marigolds, dahlias, sunflowers, gladioli, salvia, snapdragons, roses, arrangements and collections);

Sewing and needlework (clothing, quilts, hand knitting, crocheting, afghans, needlework, rugs, novelties and household items (e.g. pillows, toys, decorative aprons));

Poultry and fowl (large fowl, bantam, water fowl, exotic and game birds);

Rabbits (any breed) (popular for children with pets);

A CALL TO DUTY

By Cannon Grange No. 152, P. of H.

TO ALL THE PATRIOTS OF WILTON

Rally to the Country's immediate and pressing needs!

The world is crying for FOOD as never before. The distress of many nations appeals to all America to help.

Wilton's patriotism must be aroused to help feed our own nation and also our brethren of the world, irrespective of nationality.

If we cannot enlist for service at the front, let us all, every man, woman and child, raise a garden—a garden larger than is required to feed the home.

YOU CANNOT PLANT TOO MUCH!

Prices are high, and will remain high. Your surplus can be marketed at a profit.

If the war should cease to-morrow, the world would still have to be fed, and fed by the United States. No other country can do it.

The starvation of the old folks and of the dear little children across the ocean, must be stopped. **And WE must do our share.**

What shall we plant?

Plant, abundantly, anything and everything, but especially winter vegetables: ONIONS, POTATOES, BEETS, TURNIPS, CARROTS, PARSNIPS, CABBAGES. These can be stored away for your use next winter, and will not only save you money then, but will also relieve the market from your usual demand upon it.

Let there be NO WASTE. Conserve everything. CAN your surplus green stuff not needed for immediate use. And if your canning has not formerly been successful, send your name to the Secretary of Cannon Grange, Mrs. Lewis R. Ambler, Cannondale, Connecticut, to receive expert instructions and demonstrations free of charge, from a professor at Storrs Agricultural College.

Let us all rally to DO OUR BIT. As patriots, as Soldiers at Home, let us furnish the Munitions of Life!

Let us go at this service for our Country with a spirit to endure the hard work involved. Let this be OUR personal sacrifice for the great Cause our Nation is defending.

Only SLACKERS and invalids will recline at ease this season.

The weapon of the Home Patriot is the HOE. The common enemy is the WEED.

Upon this enemy a continuous attack must be sustained. Do not let it defeat YOU! Rout it early and often.

Keep the soil loosened around your plants by cultivation, and even a drought will not harm your crops.

But all this takes COURAGE and PERSEVERANCE. BACK-BONE! So let us go at it with DETERMINATION NOT TO BE OVERCOME BY DIFFICULTIES.

And get started at once! Now is planting time.

Consult freely, for advice or instruction, any member of this Committee. We want to help you.

CHARLES A. MARKS, Master, }
LOUIS R. HURLBUTT, } Committee.
NELSON S. HURLBUTT, }

The Second War was fought on the home front too. Food raised at home translates into better rations for the troops. Members of Cannon Grange who served in the armed forces during that war were Lawrence Olmstead, Robert Plassmann, Arthur Saunders, William Monroe, William Saunders, Daniel Sturges, Harry Winnewiser, Lowry Andrews, Charles Libonati, Allan Fuller, Alfred Slawson, Horace Shipman and William Goetjen.

Anniversaries

The first known anniversary celebration of Cannon Grange was the 15th on May 7, 1914. Invited guests were Worthy Master Sherwood of the Connecticut State Grange, Worthy Master Mrs. Mitchell of the Fairfield County Pomona Grange and Worthy State Deputy Northrop of the Connecticut State Grange.

There was a program of addresses and music and presentation of a play *My Turn Is Next*, a one act farce, enacted by Frederick S. Sturges, George Lillie, Nelson S. Hurlbutt, Samuel Sturges, Mrs. John W. Mace, Mrs. Nelson S. Hurlbutt and Mrs. Lewis R. Ambler.

A booklet was published for the occasion which contained a short history of Cannon Grange. That history follows.

In the early Spring of 1899, a few of the residents of Cannon who had heard of the interesting and useful work done by Granges in this vicinity, decided to ascertain public sentiment regarding the organization of a Grange in Cannon.

It was the ideal time to launch such a project, as the Cannon Real Estate Co., which had but recently been organized, was busily engaged in perfecting the plans for the erection of a hall. The need of an organization of this character which would be open to men and women alike had long been felt in our little community. Accordingly, an informal meeting was called to meet at the home of Brother William B. Smith to discuss the advisability of such an undertaking.

State Deputy Iverson C. Fanton, Brothers Pease and Blakeman of Fairfield, Brother and Sister Sipperly of Westport were in attendance. They gave such an interesting description of the grange work, that those present were unanimous to organize, which they immediately proceeded to do by the election of officers . . .

Directly after the election those present received the obligation, which, according to the words of the meeting, "brought it up to 12 o'clock, so it was voted to adjourn the meeting one week from to-night at the same place (the home of Brother William B. Smith), where the installation of officers took place."

At the meeting held May 4, 1899, Cannon Grange was the name adopted for the newly formed organization, which was formally organized with 53 charter members, whose names appear on another page in this booklet. It

was voted to hold the next meeting in the school house, on May 17th. This being the first regular meeting of Cannon Grange, No. 152, Brother and Sister Sipperly of Westport, who were present, aided materially in conducting the meeting. Mrs. B. F. Brown was appointed pianist, and has always been prominently identified with the musical part of our programs, which help to make any Grange a success. The second regular meeting was held at the home of Brother George F. Brown on June 7th, when it was voted to hold the meetings on the first and third Wednesday evenings of each month, at 8 o'clock. Brother Brown's kind invitation to meet at his home until the completion of the hall was accepted. The By-Laws of Cannon Grange were adopted August 16, 1899. An agreement was entered into with the Cannon Real Estate Company for the rental of the hall, beginning August 15, 1899. The first meeting held in the hall was on Wednesday evening, Aug. 16th. The time of meeting was afterwards changed from Wednesday to Thursday evening.

The Grange since its organization in Cannon fifteen years ago, has steadily grown in numbers and strength. It has filled an opening that no other organization could, and has helped the social life and those interested in agriculture, materially. We are glad to report on an occasion of this kind that Cannon Grange has 93 members, is free from debt and has a substantial balance in the treasury. The outlook for continued prosperity in our Grange is very bright. We have an enthusiastic set of officers and the members are all willing workers, and this combination, with few exceptions, makes a prosperous Grange. It is a fitting time to mention the hall in which we are meeting to-night. This Hall is the property of the Cannon Real Estate Co., and is without doubt the finest hall for a place the size of Cannon in the State.

We urge the recipients of this little booklet, if they are members, to attend the meetings regularly; if they are visitors, to visit us often, and thus foster the good fellowship of Patrons of Husbandry. It has been truthfully said that members will get as much out of the Grange as they put into it. We hand you this little booklet in the interests of good fellowship, and ask you to join us in the future prosperity of Cannon Grange.

Cannon Grange's twenty-fifth anniversary was in 1924. By that time there were 290 past and present members of Cannon Grange.³

³ In 1986 many of the ancient records of Cannon Grange were the victim of a casualty, thus there are gaps in the original historical archive record. Detailed information is not available for this period.



In 1935 Wilton celebrated the Tercentenary of the settlement of Connecticut and Cannon Grange played its part in the program.



Some of the members of Cannon Grange in a 1937 or 1938 group photo
 Front row kneeling – Eugene O. Olmstead, Gunnar Johnson, Andrew E. Monroe, William H. Monroe, Lloyd E. Scribner, Karl Ellmer, Hubert L. Smith, Lawrence S. Olmstead. Second row – Mary Watson, Jenette Butler, Grace Andrews (front), Grace Scribner, Elsie Ellmer, Suzanne Johnson, Myrtle Scofield, Phyllis Scribner (front), Estelle M. Andrews, Samuel M. Andrews, John F. Goetjen. Third row – Charles Tanner, Iva O'Neill, Doeothy Beck, Forothea D. Hubbard, Robert Plassmann.

By the time of Cannon Grange's fiftieth anniversary past and present membership totaled 497 souls.



In 1949 Cannon Grange celebrated its 50th anniversary. Here Mrs. Charles Scofield (left) and Mrs. Lewis R. Ambler receive their 50 year membership Golden Sheaf certificates from Master Stanley B. Gregory (center) and Overseer (later Master) Arthur B. Saunders. Mrs. Ambler was the daughter of the first Master, Samuel J. Miller.

At Cannon Grange's seventy-fifth anniversary there had been a total of 579 brothers and sisters. By now annual dues were up to five dollars. Today dues are still affordable at only twelve dollars.

A 75th anniversary celebration was held. According to the minutes of the meeting "a program was arranged by the Worthy Lecturer Sister Miriam Saunders and all officers were in their respective stations when Worthy Master, Brother Daniel Palmieri called the meeting to order at 8 P.M." The National Anthem was sung. Visiting dignitaries were introduced.

Brother Stan and Sister Pat Gregory gave the Grange a set of new sashes in appreciation for many years of pleasure and friendship enjoyed through their membership in Cannon Grange. These sashes are still in use on the occasion of the 100th anniversary.

“*The Rank and File*, a Danbury choral group under the able direction of Nancy Beazley entertained with a varied program of currently popular songs, presented in a most lively and enjoyable manner.”

Sister Phyllis Palmieri read a brief history of Cannon Grange from the booklet published for the 15th anniversary program.

Brother Gregory expressed appreciation on behalf of Cannon Grange to the many people, not members of Cannon, who have helped over the years.

The *Mighty Cannon Players* (aka Brother and Sister Gregory) presented a humorous skit concerning the ethics of a typical rural tradesman.

There was a candle lighting ceremony involving officers, past masters and Golden Sheaf (50 year) members. *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* was sung by all.

“Distinguished guests were introduced who responded with congratulations and remarks appropriate to the occasion. The entire assemblage joined in the singing of *Auld Lang Syne*.” “Following the meeting a pleasant hour of sociability and refreshments were enjoyed.” Present were 156 persons, including representation from 21 other granges.



In 1976 Cannon Grange hosted the Wilton Bicentennial Ball. Shown here are Stanley Gregory (seated) and Miriam (Mrs. Edward G.) Saunders co-chairman of the event and both past Masters of Cannon Grange with David P. Barry (left) and Daniel LaBella.

Cannon Grange Centennial Anniversary Celebration

The 100th Anniversary celebration was Saturday May 1, 1999 at Cannon Grange Hall. Donald Offinger, Master, headed up a committee to plan and organize the festivities for this milestone anniversary. There was a formal program at 4 P.M.

with distinguished guests from the Grange and town of Wilton making presentations.

Wilton First Selectman Robert Russell read and presented a proclamation declaring May 4, 1999 Cannon Grange Day in the town of Wilton. The minutes of the first meeting of Cannon Grange were read. The Drum Hill Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented a flag which had flown over the United States Capitol and the Wilton Historical Society made a presentation.

Membership certificates were presented to Sister Miriam B. Saunders, 65 years, Brother Donald J. Comes, 50 years, and Sister Betty R. Johnson, 25 years. Each officer of Cannon Grange took part in the program. Following splendid refreshments dancing went on from 7 P.M. until 11 P.M.

By May 1999 there were 867 past and present members of Cannon Grange. Currently members reside in Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Stamford, Westport, Wilton plus a few members outside the local area.

The longest serving member of Cannon Grange is Linda Davies with seventy years combined membership at Cannon and previously at Ridgefield Grange.



Cannon Grange Drill Team, Cannon Hall July 9, 1903.

Good Neighbors

Cannon Grange has enjoyed a good relationship with its neighbors occupying the lot and building directly behind the Grange Hall.

For many years until 1990 the building was owned and occupied by the Southwestern Connecticut Girl Scout Council. When the scouts moved a medical practice was established in the location. In 1992 DiagXotics, Inc.

(www.diagxotics.com), a producer of health care products for aquaculture and veterinary medicine moved into the building.

These good neighbors have graciously allowed Cannon Grange to use parts of their lot for the annual agricultural fair and other events.

Neighboring Subordinate Granges

The nearest neighboring Granges are Redding re-organized in 1939, located on Newtown Turnpike just south of Cross Highway, Greenfield Hill, organized 1893 whose hall is in the Greenfield Hill section of Fairfield at 1873 Hillside Road and Norfield, organized 1896, at 12 Goodhill Road, just east of Route 57, Weston.



In 1967 a commemorative postage stamp was issued for the centennial of the National Grange

Cannon Grange Activities

Public Events

In the course of a year Cannon Grange holds several meetings for invited guests or the public.

There are neighbors nights where supper is served for invited guests and especially to thank the non-members who have helped Cannon Grange. Among these are the many persons who assist with the annual fair and without whom the member's labors would be burdensome indeed. In addition there are fund raising suppers for which tickets are sold not too expensively.

Deaf Awareness

The main civic program of the National Grange is deaf awareness. The Grange provides a selection of materials to interested groups. It supports financially education and medical efforts related to deafness. At Cannon Grange this activity is lead by the lecturer Josephine DeMenna.

Adopt A Spot

Cannon Grange sponsors the adopt a spot "spot" at the corner of Danbury Road (Route 7) and Olmstead Hill, Wilton. This is primarily an on-going project of past master and professional horticulturist Donald Comes.

Sponsorship

Cannon Grange sponsors a Wilton little league baseball team and other causes and events as funds permit. For further information visit the Cannon Grange web site at www.geocities.com/cannongrange

Scholarship

Cannon Grange has established a college scholarship for graduates of Wilton and Norwalk high schools. For further information visit the Cannon Grange web site at www.geocities.com/cannongrange

Sources:

Gardiner, Charles M., *The Grange – Friend of the Farmer* (1948).
Saunders, Miriam B., *The Cannon Grange*, published in *Cannondale A Connecticut Neighborhood* pp. 142-54 (Wilton Historical Society 1987)
Publications of the National Grange.
Archives of Cannon Grange.
The living memory of members of Cannon Grange.
Special thanks to Carol Russell.



Past Masters of Cannon Grange

Samuel J. Miller	1899
Rev. William E. Hooker	1900-1903
Joel Godfrey*	1904-1905, 1908, 1912
D. Henry Miller	1906
Arthur Little	1907
William B. Fearn	1909
Henry B. Cooke*	1910-1911
Rev. Eugene L. Richards	1913
Nelson S. Hurlbutt	1914-1915
Rev. Charles A. Marks	1916-1917
James O'Donnell	1918-1921
Rev. J. Howard Fairchild	1922
John F. Goetjen	1923-1924
Lloyd E. Scribner	1925-1926
Lawrence S. Olmstead	1927-1928, 1941
Hubert L. Smith	1929-1930
Walter W. Bassett	1931
Earle N. Whitney	1932
Grace M. Scribner	1933-1934
Estelle Andrews	1935
Andrew E. Monroe	1937
Richard Cowham	1938-1939, 1948
Allan W. Fuller	1940
Edward G. Saunders*	1942-1943, 1980-1985, 1988-1989
Edith A. Bouton	1944-1945
Stanley B. Gregory*	1946-1947, 1949-1953, 1958-1962
Emily Plassmann	1951, 1955-1957
Arthur B. Saunders	1954
Robert H. Plassmann	1962
Patricia D. Gregory*	1963-1967
Ida Crowther	1968
Miriam B. Saunders*	1969-1972, 1992
Daniel F. Palmieri	1973-1976
Steven Meier	1977
Phyllis S. Palmieri	1978-1979
Philip J. Carvin	1986-1987
Donald A. Offinger (current master)	1989-1991, 1993, 1995-1999
Donald Comes	1994

* Denotes also a past Master of Fairfield County Pomona Grange.

Declaration of Purposes of the National Grange

Adopted by the St. Louis session of the National Grange, February 11, 1874.

Preamble

Profoundly impressed with the truth that the National Grange of the United States should definitely proclaim to the world its general objects, we hereby unanimously make this Declaration of Purposes of the Patrons of Husbandry.

General Objects

1. United by the strong and faithful tie of Agriculture, we mutually resolve to labor for the good of our Order, our country, and mankind.
2. We heartily endorse the motto: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

Specific Objects

3. We shall endeavor to advance our cause by laboring to accomplish the following objects:

To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves; to enhance the comforts and attractions of our homes, and strengthen our attachments to our pursuits; to foster mutual understanding and cooperation; to maintain inviolate our laws, and to emulate each other in labor, to hasten the good time coming; to reduce our expenses, both individual and corporate; to buy less and produce more, in order to make our farms self-sustaining; to diversify our crops and crop no more than we can cultivate; to condense the weight of our exports, selling less in the bushel and more on hoof and in fleece, less in lint and more in warp and woof; to systematize our work, and calculate intelligently on probabilities; to discountenance the credit system, the mortgage system, the fashion system, and every other system tending to prodigality and bankruptcy.

We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require. We shall avoid litigation as much as possible by arbitration in the Grange. We shall constantly strive to secure entire harmony, good will, vital brotherhood among ourselves, and to make our Order perpetual. We shall earnestly endeavor to suppress personal,

local, sectional, and national prejudices, all unhealthy rivalry, all selfish ambition. Faithful adherence to these principles will insure our mental, moral, social and material advancement.

Business Relations

4. For our business interests we desire to bring producers and consumers, farmers and manufacturers, into the most direct and friendly relations possible. Hence, we must dispense with a surplus of middlemen, not that we are unfriendly to them, but we do not need them. Their surplus and their exactions diminish our profits.

We wage no aggressive warfare against any other interests whatever. On the contrary, all our acts, and all our efforts, so far as business is concerned, are not only for the benefit of the producer and consumer, but also for all other interests that tend to bring these two parties into speedy and economical contact. Hence, we hold that transportation companies of every kind are necessary to our success, that their interests are intimately connected with our interests, and harmonious action is mutually advantageous, keeping in view the first sentence in our declaration of principles of action, that "Individual happiness depends upon general prosperity."

We shall, therefore, advocate for every state the increase in every practicable way, of all facilities for transporting cheaply to the seaboard, or between home producers and consumers, all the productions of our country. We adopt it as our fixed purpose to "open out the channels in Nature's great arteries, that the lifeblood of commerce may flow freely."

We are not enemies of railroads, navigable and irrigating canals, nor of any corporation that will advance our industrial interests, nor of any laboring classes.

In our noble Order there is communism, no agrarianism.

We are opposed to such spirit and management of any corporation or enterprise as tends to oppress the people and rob them of their just profits. We are not enemies to capital, but we oppose the tyranny of monopolies. We long to see the antagonism between capital and labor removed by common consent, and by an enlightened statesmanship worthy of the nineteenth century. We are opposed to excessive salaries, high rates of interest and exorbitant profits in trade. They greatly increase our burdens and do not bear a proper proportion to the profits of producers. We desire only self-protection and the protection of

every true interest of our land, by legitimate transactions, legitimate trade, and legitimate profits.

Education

We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves, and for our children, by all just means within our power. We especially advocate for our agricultural and industrial colleges, that practical agriculture, domestic science, and all the arts which adorn the home, be taught in their courses of study.

The Grange Not Partisan

5. We emphatically and sincerely assert the oft-repeated truth taught in our organic law, that the Grange – National, State or Subordinate – is not a political or party organization. No Grange, if true to its obligation, can discuss partisan or sectarian questions, nor call political conventions, nor nominate candidates, nor even discuss their merits in its meetings.

Yet the principles we teach underlie all true politics, all true statesmanship, and, if properly carried out, will tend to purify the whole political atmosphere of our country. For we seek the greatest good to the greatest number.

We must always bear in mind that no one, by becoming a Patron of Husbandry, gives up that inalienable right and duty which belongs to every American citizen, to take a proper interest in the politics of his country.

On the contrary, it is right for every member to do all in his power legitimately to influence for good the actions of any political party to which he belongs. It is his duty to do all he can to put down bribery, corruption and trickery; to see that none but competent, faithful and honest men, who will unflinchingly stand by our interests, are nominated for all positions of trust; and to have carried out the principle which should always characterize every Patron that

The Office Should Seek the Man, and Not the Man the Office

We acknowledge the broad principle that difference of opinion is no crime, and hold that "progress toward truth is made by differences of opinion," while "the fault lies in bitterness of controversy."

We desire a proper equality, equity, and fairness; protection for the weak; restraint upon the strong; in short, justly distributed burdens and justly

distributed power. These are America ideas, the very essence of American independence, and to advocate the contrary is unworthy of the sons and daughters of an American Republic.

We cherish the belief that sectionalism is, and of right should be, dead and buried with the past. Our work is for the present and the future. In our agricultural brotherhood and its purposes, we shall recognize no North, no South, no East, no West.

It is reserved by every Patron, as the right of a free man, to affiliate with any party that will best carry out his principles.

Outside Cooperation

6. Ours being peculiarly a farmers' institution, we cannot admit all to our ranks. Many are excluded by the nature of our organization, not because they are professional men, or artisans, or laborers, but because they have not a sufficient direct interest in tilling the soil, or may have some interest in conflict with our purposes. But we appeal to all good citizens for their cordial cooperation and assistance in our efforts toward reform, that we may eventually remove from our midst the last vestige of tyranny and corruption.

We hail the general desire for fraternal harmony, equitable compromises, and earnest cooperation as an omen of our future success.

Conclusion

7. It shall be an abiding principle with us to relieve any of our oppressed and suffering brotherhood by any means at our command.

Last, but not least, we proclaim it among our purposes to inculcate a proper appreciation of the abilities and sphere of woman, as is indicated by admitting her to membership and position in our Order.

Imploring the continued assistance of our Divine Master to guide us in our work, we here pledge ourselves to faithful and harmonious labor for all future time, to return by our united efforts to the wisdom, justice, fraternity, and political purity of our forefathers.

Preamble to the Constitution of the National Grange

Human happiness is the acme of earthly ambition. Individual happiness depends upon general prosperity.

The prosperity of a nation is in proportion to the value of its production.

The soil is the source from whence we derive all that constitutes wealth; without it we would have no agriculture, no manufactures, no commerce. Of all the material gifts of the Creator, the various productions of the vegetable world are of the first importance. The art of agriculture is the parent and precursor of all arts, and its products the foundation of all wealth.

The productions of the earth are subject to the influence of natural laws, invariable and indisputable; the amount produced will consequently be in proportion to the intelligence of the producer, and success will depend upon his knowledge of the action of these laws, and the proper application of their principles.

Hence, knowledge is the foundation of happiness.

The ultimate object of this organization is for mutual instruction and protection, to lighten labor by diffusing a knowledge of its aims and purposes, to expand the mind by tracing the beautiful laws the Great Creator has established in the Universe, and to enlarge our views of creative wisdom and power.

To those who read aright, history proves that in all ages society is fragmentary, and successful results of general welfare can be secured only by general effort. Unity of action cannot be acquired without discipline, and discipline cannot be enforced without significant organization; hence we have a ceremony of initiation which binds us in mutual fraternity as with a band of iron; but, although its influence is so powerful, its application is as gentle as that of the silken thread that binds a wreath of flowers.

The Constitution of the National Grange was adopted on January 9, 1873. The Preamble to the Constitution has never been amended. The Constitution has been amended at various times.