

could besides make an extremely desirable correspondent for the St. Paul Press. Kelley wouldn't. He is too much like his own green corn." Ramsey heeded the words and bypassed Kelley for the Senate committee, but he got him a clerkship in the post office department instead — possibly for old times' sake.

Compared with the keen and cynical Wheelock, Kelley was in truth a simple man. Even then he was privately dreaming of a great brotherhood of farmers that would unite the depressed and isolated men and women who tilled the soil; "Encourage them to read and think; to plant fruits and flowers, — beautify their homes; elevate them; make them progressive." This vision he described in a letter to a friend and added: "I long to see the great army of producers in our country, turn their eyes up from their work; stir up those brains, now mere machines. . . . set them to thinking, — let them feel that they are human beings, and the strength of the nation, their labor honorable, and farming the highest calling on earth."<sup>26</sup> No one could have then predicted that this particular dream was the one to answer the wordless yearnings of thousands across the nation's farm belt — that promoted with the single-minded fervor of a man like Kelley, it would give birth to

a movement which in a few short years was to shake the social and political foundations of the Midwest.

From his quiet niche in the post office department Kelley worked throughout 1867, busily filling in the outlines of his grand scheme. Caroline Hall contributed many ideas, among them the vital one of including women in the organization on an equal basis with men. Kelley took into his confidence a select circle of sympathetic friends, mostly other government workers. Six of them, with him, became founders of the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the Grange, which was formally established on December 4, 1867.<sup>27</sup>

Kelley returned to Minnesota early in 1868, but thereafter his activities were centered on the Grange. He had at last found his life's work and an outlet for all the restless energy that over nearly two decades had contributed to the building of his adopted state.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Kelley, *Origin and Progress of the . . . Patrons of Husbandry*, 22, 24, 30.

<sup>27</sup> Kelley, *Origin and Progress of the . . . Patrons of Husbandry*, 15–48.

THE PICTURES on pages 331, 333, and 334 were taken from Kelley's account of the Grange; the one on page 336 is by Eugene D. Becker, and that on page 337 is from the National Park Service.

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## HENNEPIN COUNTY "RESURRECTIONISTS"

*THE EDUCATED* people among Minnesota's early pioneers were profoundly curious about the little-known past of the land they settled. This is evident in discussions held at early meetings of the Minnesota Historical Society and in the fact that digging "relics" from Indian mounds was a favorite Sunday afternoon pastime. Now and then a fantastic find was an-

nounced which proved on investigation to be either an honest mistake or a hoax. One report, however, has been of genuine interest to present-day archaeologists. On December 5, 1863, the Anoka Star published the following letter from Oliver H. Kelley, a pioneer settler well known in later life as the founder of the National Grange. It was written from Dayton in Hennepin County:

Some three years ago, Mr. George Slater, while clearing up some lots in this town for the purpose of making a garden, found indications that led him to believe a log cabin had at some previous time been burned on one of them. On digging about six inches below the soil he found a layer of ashes. Tracing this layer as the outside wall of a cabin, he found it to measure 25 by 50 feet. At one end were rocks, of which a fire place had been once made. Moving these, he found the fragments of an old fashioned China bowl. This induced him and Mr. Daniel Richardson to make further excavation among the ashes. The result was, their finding a piece of clay pipe, and a piece of looking-glass, the amalgam somewhat worn off. They also found some exceedingly well-made wrought nails and a knife, minus the handle. Finding another pile of stones near by, they traced another pile of ashes, and in one corner of this place they found cinders, pieces of charcoal, bits of iron and copper, and more nails, parts of buck horns, neatly sawed for handles; and this evidently was a blacksmith shop. A tree growing up here was cut down and the rings counted, which convinced them that the ruins were upwards of one hundred years old. Another building was traced out, and a lower human jaw found, with the teeth all perfect; also, an old-fashioned case knife and fork, an oval piece of glass about two inches by four, part of an ax and part of a gun lock, several old fashioned sheath knife blades, with the maker's name, "Pelon," stamped on them. These are of superior steel, and Mr. Slater sharpened one that presented an edge like [a] razor. Pieces of earthen ware were also found, and wrought nails are scattered among the ashes of each ruin. Another place was examined, and here the remains of the old puncheon floor, charred over, but not so much decayed as to forbid their feeling sure it was the floor of a dwelling. There are numerous other articles, all of which have been placed in my charge, to send to the Smithsonian Institute [sic]. In

the vicinity of several of these places are holes in the ground, that must have been excavated by human beings. . . . There are, opposite to the old ford, on Crow River, near where the uppermost of these ruins are found, several pits that appear to have been rifle pits, for the defense of the ford. . . . Having got sufficient interest excited among the residents in this vicinity, we have formed a club of "Resurrectionists" for the purpose of examining all the ruins, and send all the relics found to the Smithsonian Institute.

By human bones being found scattered so near the surface of the soil we are inclined to believe the inhabitants were attacked by an enemy and their houses burned. We are in hopes we may yet find some books, or papers, or inscriptions of some kind, perhaps a coin or two, that may give a clue to the nationality of these former residents, as it is evident by the articles already found that they were civilized beings.

*Kelley wrote to the Smithsonian, but whether he forwarded any artifacts is not known. All official records of the institution were destroyed by fire in 1865. More able historians than Kelley could have told him that there were indeed "civilized beings" in Minnesota more than a century before the arrival of Yankee farmers like himself. The year 1763, in fact, had seen the end of nearly a hundred years of French exploration, fur trading, and missionary activities in the region.*

*When in 1966 the Minnesota Historical Society undertook a survey of all fur trading posts known to have existed within the borders of the present state, the long-forgotten Dayton discovery took on new interest. An attempt was made to trace the artifacts, but without success. All that has survived is Kelley's detailed description. From this it was concluded that a French post may well have been located at the mouth of the Crow River. Early records mention several such trading settlements whose exact whereabouts are not specified.*



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