HISTORY OF THE BRUSH CREEK TWP GRANGE NO. 1915

Hammondsville, Ohio

March 8, 1955

From the organization of the Brush Creek Twp Grange, it would appear that agitation for a Grange in this locality was begun in mid summer of the year 1913, and, with the energetic assistance of Deputy Elmer J. Gilkinson, Brush Creek Twp Grange No. 1915 was organized on February 11, 1914, with a list of Charter members numbering One Hundred and Sixty Two (162). A list of these Charter Members is attached to this report.

The first Master was S. G. Dorrance, first Lecturer D. M. McDonald, and first Secretary was Mrs. Frank Maple. Since then, 41 years have passed and the picture has changed considerably.

Charter is dated May 16, 1914.

The author of this report is not familiar with what transpired in the Grange between the years 1914 and 1922 because of not being a member.

Late in 1922, Mrs. Black and I joined the Grange talking all degrees up to and including the 7th at Cleveland on November 18, 1927, the date of our certificates.

All Brush Creek Grange meetings were held in Thompson’s school house located a short distance East of the Nannie P. and J. Clyde Smith farm house, and located on the main road about 2 miles East of Monroeville, Jefferson County, Ohio.

From 1922 to 1926 the Grange was very prosperous and attendance so great that some sat on desks and some in the school seats.

Early in 1926 one of our members suggested that as our Grange was growing arrangements should be made for a better place to meet. Some suggested an abandoned church on Brush Creek called “Berea Church”. Others said we should buy it and move to a suitable lot, but no agreement could be reached. Then at a subsequent meeting J. Clyde Smith said we have $700.00 in the Treasury and this money should be put to work and why not build a Grange Hall that will suit our needs and have a committee decide on where it should be built. This remark was put into motion and passed.

A building committee was appointed as well as a committee to determine where the building should be put.

I recall the building committee held several meetings to consider all the angles and came up with a report that with the small funds available no Grange hall could be built.

The committee to determine location of Grange hall considered several locations but no definite decision could be agreed upon.

In the Spring of 1926 the building question was again revived to put that $700.00 to work and by another motion by Mr. Smith that the building committee be reinstated and ask the members to donate materials for the building, provided a committee could determine where to put the hall.

The building committee was re-appointed and a committee to look after the location of the building was appointed and after considering several locations, again there was no agreement.

Then Nannie P. Smith said she would donate ½ acre on the West end of her farm for a Grange Hall. This offer was unanimously accepted. The Building committee staked out the ½ acre and found it to be inadequate on account of being on too sloping a hill. She then changed her offer to ONE acre of land. This acre was staked out by the committee and found suitable on which to put the building.

Before proceeding further a deed for the acre of land had to be procured and A Surveyor ran the lines of boundary, which description is noted in the Deed from Nannie P. Smith and J Clyde Smith to Brush Creek Twp. Grange No. 1915 and dated June 19, 1927 and recorded by S. C. Selah at Steubenville on August 6, 1928.

Title showed a mortgage on this portion of the Smith farm held by the Federal Land Bank of Louisville and release of partial mortgage covering this acre of land was executed by its President, James B. Davis and L. B. Gore, its Secretary on July 15, 1927, and is now attached to Grange property Deed.

To save time several preliminary matters were taken up before Deed was finally executed.

The size of the building was debated several times—some said 20x40ft., others 24x48ft. and some 36x60ft. Finally the 36x60f figure was decided on.

After size of building was decided on, specifications were drawn up by the Master on June 3, 1926 and submitted to several contractors and the lowest bid was for $12,000.00. This figure being far beyond our calculations and by a vote of the Grange the Master was appointed to oversee the construction and authorized to recommend a Contractor to do the work.

On a motion of the Grange a Mr. Sharp a prominent contractor in Salineville, and a helper were hired to do the work with donated help to assist when needed.

A list was made up of the length of logs needed to conform the frame-work specification requirements. Each member having standing timber was given a list of log lengths and each agreed to furnish what their trees would produce. These logs were hauled by members having stout teams and stout wagons to the Grange lot and when sufficient quantity of logs were on hand, the building committee contacted M. Mark Hoobler to do the sawing. Mr. Hoobler agreed to move his mill on the sight and do the sawing for $125.00. In all a total of 21,000 board feet of frame lumber was produced.

While all these other activities were going on, a cast was organized and a play was put on in various towns and Grange halls to earn money to help finance the building construction, and earning around $700.00 from these plays.

Other means of raising money was employed, such as having envelopes printed suggesting we contribute a “Mile of Pennies”, and two or three subscriptions were taken up as our funds in the Treasury were depleted.

As the frame-work progressed in 1926, some of the members donated 500ft of siding, some donated 500ft of flooring and others donated money for paint and roofing. Besides all this the Scott Lumber Co. at Wellsville furnished lumber for flooring, siding, doors and windows and roofing on a charge account basis.

Up to the Spring of 1929,, Grange member efforts supplied the money to keep our credit in fairly good shape, but debt was catching up with us and on being advised that The Farmers and Traders Life Insurance Company would loan money to Grange Halls, we applied to them on June 1, 1929 for a loan of $1800.00, sending information on location and other details. On June 6, 1929 Mr. T. O. Young, President replied that he would have past Master Harry A. Caton make the appraisal. Mr. Caton made this appraisal on June 24, 1929 giving a general description of the building, insurance, membership, meetings, means of raising money and appraising one acre of land at $50.00 and building at $3750.00.

Also in Mr. Young’s letter of June 26, 1929, he instructed us to send deed and abstract of title to his office and if we did not have them it would be necessary for the grange to secure them. On July 5, 1929 we sent Mr. Young the Deed and release of Mortgage, but abstract of title was delayed for some weeks and on August 1, 1929, Attorney Fred N. Coleman of Steubenville mailed us the abstract of title, which was promptly forwarded to Mr. Young, and on August 29, 1929 he advised that our guarantee of signers were insufficient. On Oct. 8, 1929 we reduced our loan application to $1200.00 and something was still not satisfactory for on Oct. 22nd I asked for reply to me letter of Oct. 8, and again on Nov. 6 when no reply was received, asked for return of deed and abstract of title.

Deed and abstract of title and release of partial mortgage was returned at some future time as all of them are in my possession now (March 12, 1955).

At this time the Scott Lumber Co. was pressing us pretty hard for the money we owed them—about $900.00 and on April 5, 1929, Mr. Dale Kessel, Mgr. of Wellsville Scott Lumber said if we could send him $100.00 it would be appreciated.

At this point one of our members suggested the Finance committee contact the Citizens Banking Co. of Salineville, which they did on a motion of the grange a note for $850.00 was signed by a dozen members of the grange, as follows: Clyde Russell, Larry Kessler, H. L. Glenn, Sanford Allmon, Clyde Smith, L. A. Black, Elmer Russell, John Griffith, James Allmon, and Ben Hudson. Note to Citizens Bank was paid off in a few years.

Heating the Grange hall was our next problem and the ladies of the Grange conceived the idea to have a fair to earn money for the heater. A committee was appointed to check on the various makes of heaters and they finally decided on a Holland, but the price installed would be $450.00. So with the ladies donating $5.00 each and the proceeds from fair sales netting around $500.00, the heater was installed during early fall of 1929, and paid for when installation was completed.

I have no record of the final payable of the note to Citizens Bank at Salineville but the Minute book should contain this information.

The Grange Hall was dedicated on June 21, 1929 with Bro Walter Kirk supervising the Ceremony.

Total cost according to my record was $3483.35

L. A. Black

On Committee and Master

then and Master now.

March 12, 1955

This is a copy of a letter sent to the State Grange by L. A. Black of Hammondsville, Ohio to Office of secretary John F. Dowler on Feb. 9, 1955.

Your letter of February 7th to the State Master Frederick has been referred to our office. In looking up our records we find that Brush Creek Grange No. 1915 was organized February 11, 1914 by Deputy Elmer J. Gilkinson. Following is a list of Charter Members.

S. G. Dorrance, Master Ella Russell Clifford Cline

D. M. McDonald, Lec. J. W. McIntosh Bertha Grimm

Mrs. Frank Maple, Sec’y Ella McDonald John Campbell

J. C. Wilson Mrs. Byron Hutson Mary McIntosh

Earl Cope Elizabeth McDonald Elmer Twaddle

T. F. Rose Leslie Griffith F. D. Allmon

Thomas Griffith John Howard H. L. Glenn

Ida Griffith W. N. Wilson Charley Rose

Nannie Smith Mrs. W. H. Wilson James Rose

Elizabeth Smith Eva Wilson Warren Grang

Samuel Cope Mrs. Nallie Dorrance Brady Rose

Wm C. Glenn Clara Wilson Wm S. Dorrance

Marguerite Grant Josephine Glenn Frank Maple

Carson Edson John Cope John N. Rose

Margaret Grant Mrs. John Cope R. H. Rose

Ernest Allmon Walter Cope Albert Dorrance

Albert Griffith Meda Cope John D. Martin

Clyde Smith Margaret Cope Olive Allmon

J. L. Griffith Mabel Cope Pearl Rose

Wm Moore Mrs. Samuel Cope Erma Rose

Ray Russell Ruby Cope Mary H. Rose

Emery Taylor Elmer Russell M. C. Dorrance

Merel Taylor Mrs. Bertha Russell R. C. Russell

Curtis Taylor Frank Downard N. L. Russell

May Taylor Lomer Downard C. B. Russell

Eva Griffith Forest Wilson Belle Russell

Byron Hutson Erma Wilson Mary M. Dorrance

Wm G. McBane Lena Wilson John Dallas

J. H. Russell John Rose John Elliotte

Mrs. Nettie Rose Etta McBane Mary Elliotte

Beulah Rose Edgar McBane Sara Griffith

Alex Rose Elmer Grimm Mary Griffith

Mrs. Francis McBane Harvey Grafton Grant Dorrance

1. Mrs. Annie Russell Ola Grimm Roy Wilson