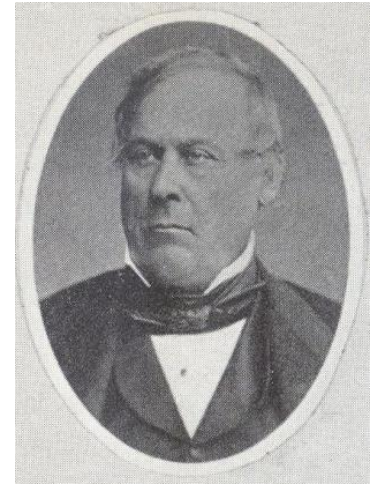


VICTOR E. PIOLLET

2nd MASTER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE GRANGE (1876-1880)



The Person:

- Victor E. Piollet was born June 24, 1812 in Wysox, Bradford County and was the first child in the family. Mr. Piollet was the son of Joseph M. Piollet, native of France, who came to this country as an agent for the sale of lands in northern Pennsylvania owned by a French Count.
- He married Jane Miller and they had two children, Emilie V. and Louis.
- He remained on the farm where he was born for his entire life.
- He served two terms in the State Legislature and was appointed by President Polk as a paymaster in the Army during the war with Mexico.
- He was the prime mover in the organization of Wysauking Grange #58 established December 26, 1873 and served as the first Master.
- He also served as State Lecturer from 1874-76 and following his term as Master he served for many years on the Executive Committee.
- He contributed toward making the Grange in Pennsylvania a force to be reckoned with and respected.
- He was regarded as the foremost citizen of Bradford County in his generation as well as one of the most successful farmers in the Commonwealth. A man with great financial ability, staunch integrity and a reliable name helped the Grange through adversity that threatened the organization's existence. He fought to defend and maintain the rights of the farm population.
- He died August 27, 1890.

Of Note:

- Approximately 500 Granges in the State were considered to be permanent at the time of the Annual meeting held at the Courthouse in Hollidaysburg on December 11, 1877 with only 64 Granges represented at that meeting.
- There were Granges in all but six counties in the State – Adams, Allegheny, Carbon, Juniata, McKean and Potter.
- At the December 10, 1878 Annual meeting at the Courthouse in Bellefonte 468 Granges had paid dues for more than one quarter.
- At the time of the Annual meeting at the Bloomsburg Opera House December 9, 1879 the Secretary reported as of the September 30, 1879 quarter indicated 410 Granges had paid dues. A total of 754 Granges had been organized since the beginning and nearly half had gone dormant.

Legislation:

- Began to promote legislative policies adopted by the Organization.
- Subordinate Granges circulated petitions in their respective localities and secured signers. The petitions were then sent to the Secretary of the State Grange which in turn was sent to the proper members of the Legislature.
- A state law was enacted to prevent fraud in the manufacture and sale of fertilizer.
- The Grange began to feel sharply critical of the Pennsylvania State College claiming that the teaching of subjects relating to agriculture was being neglected and that the primary purpose for which the College was established were forgotten. A resolution called upon the “Trustees of Pennsylvania State College to at once terminate the protracted and inexcusable deficiencies in the Department of Agriculture, and particularly that from now on they make the Department second to none in the attainments, industry and ability to teach possessed by the professor who shall especially represent it.”
- The Master and Executive Committee entered into an agreement in 1877 to improve workings of the State Grange Purchasing Agency in Philadelphia. H. F. Geyer was hired as the State Agent and the Executive Committee also hired William M. Brinker from Grange #252 to conduct business in the Western part of the State.
- The Philadelphia Purchasing Agency struggled financially due to the failure of the business agent to furnish a bond and failed to deal with the firms the Executive Committee had made arrangements with.
- State Lecturer Samuel Downing stressed the need for better business practices in Granges.
- Five Pomona Granges were organized making a total of 32.
- Western business agency conducting a large volume of business, but the Philadelphia Agency temporarily closed due to poor business management.
- Leonard Rhone, Centre County, reported Centre Pomona organized a mutual fire insurance company and established a livestock association.
- Centre County held an annual reunion/harvest home festival held at Pennsylvania State College in 1878. Had the largest attendance of its kind ever held in Centre County with over 40 acres covered with wagons and people.
- Crawford County had 32 Granges with 25 in good standing. Eight or nine Granges owned their own halls.
- Greensburg Annual Meeting, the \$10,000 note that had been given four years earlier to extricate the organization from financial difficulties had been paid in full.
- Leonard Rhone was elected Overseer in 1878-1880 and elected Master in 1880 serving until 1898.