

A poem written about the old grange hall

7-15-10

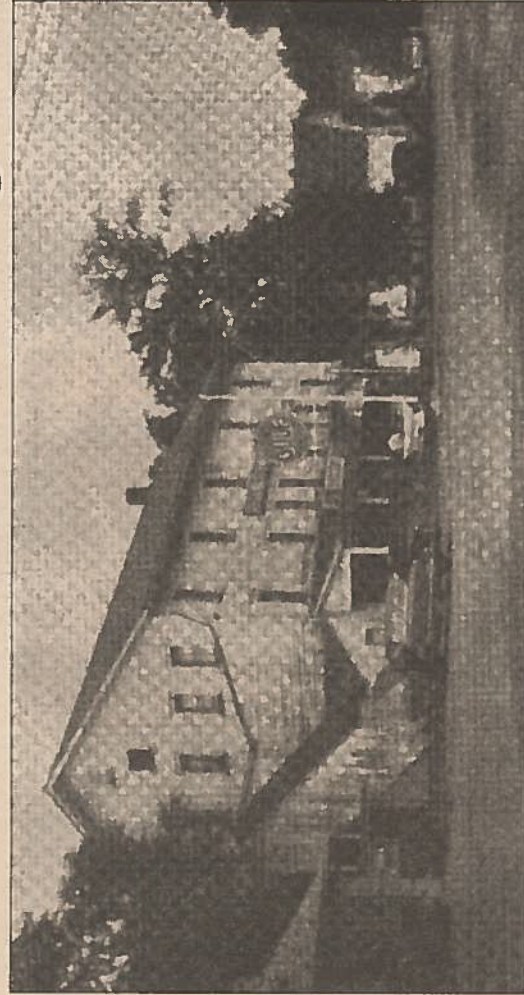
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The following poem is taken from a little booklet titled "Song Of An Orchardist" by Albert L. Mason (1906-1979). He grew up on the Zig Zag Road in the Town of Gaines.

Graduating from Albion High School in 1922, he then went to Cornell University. Graduating from there he returned to the family farm where he worked and made observations cleverly put into poetic words.

In perspective, his poem "The Old Grange Hall" gives us a sense of history going back to the second and third decades of the 20th century.

"Do you remember that old grange hall
Where you went when you were a kid?
Where a feller could steal an occasional kiss
And the girls didn't care if you did!



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'Cause at home they weren't that way at all!

If you sat by the stove in the corner,
Your face would get red as a beet!

If you didn't sit there in the winter,

You'd get chillblains in both of your feet!

Remember the length of that stove pipe?
As a kid I viewed it with awe!

If the wind and the Lord weren't on your side,
You never could get it to draw!

But we had some good times in that grange hall;
We'd argue, we'd laugh, and we'd play.

It still is a good place to gather
With your friends at the close of the day."

The accompanying photo taken in 1959 shows the old Grange Hall in Gaines.

rise from his chair
And pound on the table for order;

and the chaplain would open with prayer.

The men sat facing the ladies;

Each had their own side of the hall;

I can't understand their aloofness,

How well I remember those dinners.

When everyone furnished tureens.

Please pass the scalloped potatoes

And another helping of beans!

And the meeting after the dinner,

When the master would

laughter,
As their humor was slyly revealed.

The joke on your neighbor was funny;

How you squirmed when the joke was on you!

Sometimes the stories were shocking!

But I noticed the preacher laughed, too!

How we loved to put on a minstrel;

We built our stage out of boards;

And sometimes we had no piano;

And again it would only play chords!

Our chorus was joyful and lusty;

Our end men were tops in their field;

The rafters rang with our