

William Saunders:

William Saunders was a horticulturist by trade. One of his accomplishments in that area was the introduction of navel oranges to this country. Another one of his ideas was using fixed glass roofs for greenhouses, a valuable benefit for florists and gardeners. Early in his profession his outstanding skill as a horticulturist enabled him to establish an outstanding reputation in his field. Because of this, he was called upon to design the Gettysburg National Cemetery. This allowed him to be seated on the platform during its dedication, just a few feet from where President Lincoln delivered his immortal Gettysburg Address.

His government position in Washington, DC, provided valuable contacts for the Grange's organizing efforts. His government office was the meeting place, not only for the Grange's pre-organizational gatherings, but also the site of the Grange's actual organization, December 4, 1867.

Upon the request of his fellow Founders, Saunders wrote the preamble to the National Grange constitution. This preamble, unchanged to this day, has long been considered the guiding star of Grange intentions and is highly regarded for its literary quality. He also wrote much of the first four degrees.

He was known as the planner, a clear thinker, and a man of action. No doubt that, because of these traits, his fellow Founders elected him to be the first National Grange Master.