

“DEACON” J. H. KELLEY

The Syracuse Weekly Express, Syracuse, NY, Wednesday, June 27, 1888

PETER PARKER AND HIS PATENT PAINT SPECULATION

THE FARMER GIVES NOTES AMOUNTING TO SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO THE PROPRIETOR OF A ROAD HOUSE

Peter Parker, a farmer of the town of Schroepfel, Oswego county, thinks that he has been swindled by James H. Kelley, who has become well known in this city as former proprietor of Kelley's Boston restaurant and chop house in Warren street. According to Wednesday's Oswego papers, Mr. Parker says that several days ago a stranger, representing himself as Deacon Kelley of a Syracuse Baptist church, appeared with a fine span of horses and two other men. Mr. Kelley said that he was the patentee of "Kelley's Patent Shingle Slate Roof Covering." He dwelt on the merits of the patent covering, the large amount in use and the increasing demand, and finally induced the farmer to buy the right to handle the "covering" in Oswego, Oneida and Herkimer counties, paying \$7,500 in notes for this right. One of these notes for \$500 has shown up in the hands of Levi Rowlee of Phoenix, he having bought it. Mr. Parker says that the patent is worthless to him and denounces the proceeding as a swindle.

Mr. Kelley is now conducting the Road House, between this city and North Syracuse. He is said to have dealt extensively in his patent roof covering for a long time, and when he sold his Warren street restaurant to Thomas D. Lines he continued to push his patent.

This statement of the case was made by Mr. Kelley on Thursday: On June 5th Isaac Carlow, an agent for Kelley, saw Parker at his farm in Pennellville and took an order to put the slate-

roof coating on one barn for twenty-five dollars. On the 7th inst. Mr. Kelley and H. N. Hawkins, Kelley's partner, met Parker near his house. Parker decided to have all of his buildings coated. Kelley and Hawkins dined with Parker at his invitation. Parker said that he was sick of farming and would like to get into a business where he could make more money. Kelley told him that there was a big profit in the coating business, and that a man could by hustling sell from \$800 to \$1,000 a week. No stated price was given for the lease of the business. The next day Parker asked for figures for the lease of Oswego, Oneida and Herkimer counties. The reply was \$8,000. Parker offered \$7,500. The bargain was closed that day by Parker making out notes for \$7,500 running from one to six months. The deal was a ten-year lease of these three counties, good will, stock, tools and orders for that territory already taken. These notes were made on blank paper. Parker didn't like the blank paper, and at his request Kelley got some printed Phoenix bank notes which Parker signed the next day, the old ones being destroyed. The new notes were in amounts from \$200 to \$1,000 and running from one to six months. On Tuesday, June 12th, Parker came to the hotel at Phoenix and asked to have the time on half of the gross amount extended from one month to one year. This was done; the old batch of notes being destroyed. Messrs. Kelley and Hawkins agreed to stay with Parker three days and help him get orders. They stayed with Parker almost

seven days and took orders amounting to between \$800 and \$1,000. These orders were turned over to Parker for his men to fill. Parker said to many witnesses that the transaction with Kelley was more than fulfilled and that he was satisfied with the business.

Last summer and fall Mr. Kelley introduced his patent slate covering largely in this county, and among others who were induced to have it put on their roofs were Nathan Whiting, who lives near the Bridgeport, and whose bill amounted to \$300; Jebulon Weaver, near Cicero, \$400; Charles Stearns of North Syracuse, \$200; Charles Abbey of Cicero, more than \$200; A.D. Wright, near the Cicero plank road, \$210; Daniel Overacker [Overacre], \$400, and James M. Reese and George Bausenger of North Syracuse.

Mr. Wright owns a large dairy farm and said to an EXPRESS reporter Thursday that the "slate covering" was put on his barns and house last fall by Mr. Kelley's men. "The whole business is a swindle," said Mr. Wright, "and I would pay money now to have the roof of my house put back to its old condition. Mr. Kelley's agent came here with a sample of work three shingles, which were covered with a solid coating of the patent preparation. The coating was so thick that it seemed to hold the shingles together, and it was shown to illustrate the preparation that was to be applied to the roof. The roof of the house was to be fixed for nothing and the barn was to be done for thirty-six cents a yard. This made my bill \$210, but instead of putting on a thick coating, all the material that was used soaked into the shingles, leaving them black but bare, and the only effects produced seem to be a black color and a tendency to curl and split in the hot sun. The men said that they could give the preparation any desired tint, and a reddish color

was used on the tin roof of the house. This seems to be nothing more than an ordinary coat of paint now and the stuff that was put on the shingles of the house has continued to run and drip ever since." Mr. Wright showed his front steps, formerly white, but now badly blackened and spattered.

Mr. Overacker [Overacre] pronounced the patent covering a gigantic swindle. He said that instead of a thick coating, as represented by the advance agent, there was no coating on his shingles. He also complained of the drip from his house. A gentleman in North Syracuse, represented Mr. Weaver as saying that the covering seemed good for nothing, that it was warranted to withstand water, rot and fire for twenty-five years, and that he would not pay for the work without a bond. He said that Mr. Kelley had offered to sign such a bond but Mrs. Kelley's name to the bond had been refused.

One of the \$300 notes received from Mr. Parker is said to have been paid to a Mr. Suader for a valuable team of horses, which were shipped to New York. Mr. Kelley says that the horses were not shipped to New York or anywhere else. Mr. Kelley says that he was not introduced as a Baptist or any other kind of a deacon to Mr. Parker.

It is alleged that the horses and wagons of the Roofing company are held at the Windsor House at Phoenix for their bills to be settled. This is denied.