



Kelley Farm

The Kelley Farm sits on the site of one of the earliest Donation Land Claims in eastern Pierce County. In 1853, one hundred sixty acres were granted to Reuben Ashford Finnell. By 1856 Finnell abandoned his claim after his cabin and barn had been burned during the Puget Sound Indian War. In 1864 William Barton Kelley and his wife Mary arrived by ox drawn wagon from Illinois, accompanied by William's parents, Nathan and Elizabeth, and his many siblings. Kelley purchased the former Finnell claim, along with an additional 40 acres. Kelley served two terms in the Washington Territorial Legislature, and went on to hold the post of Pierce County Auditor for a period of six years.

In 1889 Kelley donated one acre on the northeast corner of his property, and he and his sons built the one room schoolhouse known as Kelley Lake School. About that same year, Kelley built an ice house near his home, which still stands today, and is the oldest known structure in the Bonney Lake area.

Over the decades the farm and its orchard provided sustenance for the family. Not only did it produce food, but it also provided an income from logging, hop growing, dairy farming, and by the 1990's was leased to the Cartwright family who operated Bonney Lake's first microbrewery.



This Historic Marker was funded by a grant from Pierce County, with matching funds provided by the City of Bonney Lake.