

(1827-1911)
Norman J. Colman



1870-1871: *President, Missouri Press Association*
First US Secretary of Agriculture

Colman moved to St. Louis in 1852 after practicing law in Indiana. He bought a farm, established a nursery and acquired an interest in a publication he renamed Colman's Rural World. Through 56 years of publishing "for Midwestern and southern farmers and livestock breeders," Colman became known as the "dean of agricultural journalism." He called for cooperation between government, academic researchers and farmers to improve crop production. The weekly publication became the nation's most influential proponent of applying scientific ideas and management to agriculture. Colman served as Missouri lieutenant governor in 1874. He was appointed U.S. Commissioner of Agriculture in 1885. President Grover Cleveland elevated that office to cabinet level, making Colman the nation's first Secretary of Agriculture. At his funeral, the minister said Colman "had done more than any other to lift the calling of farmers to the level of learned professions."