

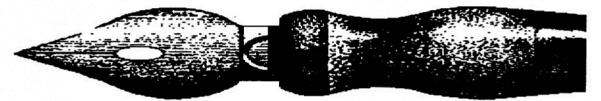


# MESSENGER

The Voice of the People - The Flavor of the People - The News of the People

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JULY 29, 1998

## Canaan's First Old Home Days - August 1899

It was nearly a century ago that Governor Frank West Rollins initiated a campaign to strengthen the Granite State's sagging economy.

The Governor encouraged each community to host a reunion in hopes that people would take an interest and return to their native town.

The idea of a festival known as "Old Home Week" met with an enthusiastic reception from the residents of Canaan.

On July 1, 1899, many interested citizens assembled in the Town House at the Street including: Congressman Frank D. Currier, R.F. Haffenreffer, Arthur Chase, William Wheat, William Hinkley, Joseph Stockbridge, Major Swett, Edwin M. Allen, Claude Murray, Walter Story, Grange members, selectmen, hotel owners, and businessmen.

After an evening of suggestions, several committees were chosen to carry out the plans for the various celebrations.

It was voted that the hotels, businesses and homes be decorated throughout the town.

Posters were displayed announcing the many events and excitement was in the air.

Canaan's first "Old Home Days" were ushered in with a torch-lit procession that hauled the old cannon to the summit of Mt. Cardigan. After an appropriate ceremony took place the cannon was fired three times and a large bon fire was lit which could be seen from Canaan Village.

Later that night a corn roast was held at David Whittier's farm on Dustin Road which is now Apple Blossom Lane.

On Tuesday by invitation of Mr. Joseph Stockbridge, a picnic was held at his cottage, the Earline, on the shore of Crystal (now Canaan Street Lake.)

The party which numbered over forth spent the day boating, fishing and swimming.

The photographer, Mr. Miller of Boston was present and took several photos of the group on the porch of the Stockbridge Cottage.

The evening brought a large party to the Sunset House where a pleasant musical and literary program was held.

On Wednesday, Canaan's baseball team played Enfield at Canaan and West Canaan at that place.

During the evening a novel and laughable entertainment called a Bonnet Trimming Party, took place at the Town House which was attended by many of the visitors on the Street.

Thursday was a busy day at the Mascoma Valley Fair Grounds. A parade of our fifty bicycles took place with horse racing throughout the afternoon.

The evening brought everyone to the Grange Hall where, after an interesting program was presented, an ice cream and cake and lemonade



Seated: Ed. C. Aldrich, Wilfred Smart, Frank Doten, Lloyd Doten, Ethel Doten, Ned Smith & Dell Smith, Mary Howe, Roxie Allen, Amy Stevens White, Ella Richardson, Ellen Barnard. Seated, 2nd row: Bertha Hadley, Geo. Davis, Hattie Pitcher, Lena Allen, Elizabeth Coburn, Esther Clark, Mrs. Cochran. Standing: Leon Davis, Dell Goss, Mrs. Jas. Dubia, Mrs. John Brown, Mrs. Geo. Davis, W.B. Richardson. Blanche Coburn, Burns M. Barnard, Mamie F. Day, C.O. Barney, Jennie Davis Taylor, Ola M. Wilson, Myra Davis Goodwin, Mr. Goodwin, Warren Wilson, Abbie Aldrich, Alvin Davis

social was enjoyed by nearly 100 people.

On Friday a grand carnival was held on the Street lake.

Through the efforts of William Wheat and Mr. R.F. Haffenreffer a fleet of boats spent the day entertaining people by going through varied maneuvers. Nearly all the boats on the lake were illuminated with lanterns and as the evening drew near Mr. Haffenreffer's launch was especially conspicuous in its tasteful decorations.

Later that night a large barn party was given by Mrs. George H. Goodhue at Elmhurst. Music was provided and the grounds were well illuminated by Chinese lanterns.

Saturday was a spectacular day at Camp Echo. A large delegation of members of Indian River Grange and their many family and friends met there for a most enjoyable outing. All carried baskets, but the hospitality of Camp Echo was most bounteously displayed. During the afternoon there was singing at intervals, and the social beneath the trees with lemonade and ice cream was enjoyed by 150 visitors.

Also, during the week other socials took place at the Lucerne Inn, the Pinnacle House, Grandview

House, the Cobb House, the Fairview House and the Jerusalem Spring Hotel. Several golf tournaments were held at the golf links which was located on the old Barber Farm between what is now John Roberts Road and Apple Blossom Lane.

The Canaan Band provided music for the various events and Sunday Services were held at

the old North Church on Canaan Street to a congregation of 160 in attendance.

The week-long festivities were brought to a close with fireworks displayed from atop the Pinnacle which could plainly be seen from Canaan Village.

### FROM THE CANAAN REPORTER AUGUST 31, 1899

It was a very enjoyable time they had at the corn roast at David Whittier's, down the Dustin road, on Monday night. By invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Whittier a host of their friends filed out into the street at about 7:30, and when the band commenced to play "There will be a hot time in the Old Town tonight," all started for the corn field, some followed the road, some crossed the fields and some were left behind, but all got there just the same in the fall of '99. Our host had provided two large bonfires with heaps of corn, and all were invited to pitch in and help themselves. In due time scores of ears of plump corn were roasting in the fire on points of peaked sticks and soon all were enjoying the toothsome sweetened fruit, while in the background beneath the sombre shade of an aged apple tree a wine press was extracting juice from golden apples which was passed around to all. Hand and salt shakes were much in vogue, and general sociability seemed to be the order. Soon after curfew three cheers were proposed for our host, which were given with a will. Then when the band improvised the song, "A kind good night," all took their devious ways homeward, voting it the best outing of the season.