September 1981

Long Ago Days

This church was built in 1781 on "common land" and is the oldest church building now standing in town. Although the oldest church body was the one on Granville Hill, its first building near the " Grate Rock" (a landmark often mentioned in old records, whose exact location is unknown, but in the vicinity of the Regan Rd) is long gone, having been some time before Dec. 1750, " by the Providence of God, consumed by fire. " Another was in use by the above date but survived but 52 years, at which time one record says it was taken down and in 1802 the present building, now the Historical Society was erected. It is approximately, therefore, 24 years younger than West Granvilles.

At first the W. Granville church stood near the road and faced East. It was no doubt a very plain barn-like affair with no steeple, bell, heat, etc., in fact not one of the comforts we expect in our houses of worship today. It is a wonder to me, with a war going on that they were able to build anything! Money was as scarce as hens teeth and times were hard not only then but for some time after the war ended.

Since that day, thirty full time pasters have served this parish, as well as a dozen or so part time ministers, mostly students from the Hart ford Theological Seminary, and one, the Rev. Joel Baker, 1797-1833 is buried here. The beautiful old house, which stood in my childhood where Richard Bruno's now stands, was his home. He preached for 36 years and was much beloved by his parishioners, which happy circumstance did not always prevail.

As I know of no personage as such, 1797 and after 1833, the Joel Baker place having been sold to the Sheppard family, I expect each minister lived where he could until after the Rev. Austin Gardner came in 1860. Around that time the present home of Mrs. Helen Owens was purchased from one, Samuel Colton, and remained the parsonage until after the last full time minister, George Damon, the first one I remember, left in 1918. Later it was sold to the late Mr. & Mrs. Porter Frisbie for a home. My grandparents, Major & Francena Reed Nelson were the first couple married in the new parsonage by the Rev. Gardner, with his wife as witness, town records not with-standing.

From 1918 on, services were held mostly in summer by supplies from other parishes and by student ministers. The last of those was the Rev. William Booth since then for many years a missionary in South Africa. He is now retired from the Congregational Church in Bar Harbor, Maine where he and his family still live. All of the student ministers boarded with my mother and father and many dear and lasting friendships developed with these

"Boys". One of them, the late Walter Couch always addressed his letters to my mother in later years as Mrs. Geo. Aldrich, M.M. When finally asked about it he said it stood for "Mother of Ministers"

Things have now boiled down, as it were, to a very few evening services in good weather, plus the annual Old Home Day and Special Christmas service. Like a good many others in small towns this church has lost ground- much of it in my lifetime and it is a pity for the building, in good condition, was beautifully restored for the Bi-Centennial in 1976.

Two periods of extensive alterations have occurred. At some time, probably during the pastorate of the Rev. Seth Chapin, 1833-1835, the building was moved. It was swung one-quarter way around to face South, and back to its present location. This major undertaking required 100 pairs of oxen! The steeple was added and a bell installed in it at this time. About the same time, one John Kent was hired as sexton. He rang the bell, swept the floors and built the fires, (so a stove or possibly two, had been installed) for $18.00 per year.

During the pastorate of Rev. Henry Coolidge, 1903-1907, again extensive repairs and alterations were made at a cost of about $700.00. The side gallerys were removed and the floor raised to its present level from its old level with the foyer. Steps then had to be installed to the sanctuary. New upholstered seats and new carpets were purchased. At some time the side "towers" were added and the beautiful memorial window of Rev. T. O. Rice was moved from the south front wall to its present location behind the pulpit. Its old framing is still to be seen over the front doors on the outside of the church. Pretty side memorial windows were also installed. Francis Cooley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Noah Cooley, (he once ran the W. Granville Store) whose names are on two of the windows, was the donor of a new organ and $250.00 towards expenses. Today there is a beautiful electric organ and a set of bells given by Mrs. Bert Hill in memory of her mother, which are played either manually or by tapes on important occasions and certainly add a great deal to them.

In the back of the sanctuary, the rear gallery now partitioned off, once held the remains of the old Dickinson Library, a private affair, now defunct. When I was a child only, two of three old members were still alive. This year I discovered that all that remains today are the bookshelves. All the books have been removed. There were some interesting(to me), old hymnals with just words and no music, as well as some sets such as Shakespeare, and story books of a more or less Victorian type! Most were in such fine print that they were just about unreadable, even to my excellent eyesight, but I tried now and again. Up there one also went to ring the church bell with the long rope

coming down from the belfry. After a time this bell was no longer rung, the whole structure which held it being considered unsafe, so the one in the academy was used.

At the time of the early 1900s renovations, the church was granted the use of the old Academy Hall next door(and a story in itself) for a parish hall and soon afterwards Mr. Nelson Frisbie built on the addition now used as a kitchen. In my mother's day the kitchen, such as it was, was all part of the main hall.

Membership in this church has suffered, as it has in many other places. It went from the original 28 in 1781 to 124 in 1804, thence back to 36 in the early thirtys, at which number it seems still to remain.

In olden days the church provided most of the social life of the community. There were morning and evening services, Sunday School and weekly prayer meetings. Quite often these were held in the various homes when I was small and to most of them we traveled on foot. There were church suppers, usually baked beans, with lots of Grandma Nelsie Sheets homemade rolls and homemade butter--these cost 10¢! The outstanding ones were the Oyster supper in the spring and the Chicken Pie supper in the fall. For a while dances were held after the suppers every two weeks with my dad doing the fiddling and prompting and my mother playing the piano. After a while I learned to fill in on that. How we did look forward to these occasions and it was a disaster, if for any reason we had to miss one!

The automobile has been to blame, in great part, for the " downfall" of many small country churches. Today people moving into town come from all areas and all faiths. They can easily commute, not only to work but to the church of their choice. It is also apparent that many people choose not to attend any church! However I am glad that this old church in which five generations of my family worshiped as best they could, is still there and in beautiful condition. It has served the community long and well, especially in the past, and who knows but that in days to come it may rise again as Phoenix from the ashes!!

Leona A. Clifford

October 1981

Long Ago Days

I have in my possession a dance program for one of the many dances my father played for in Vermont almost 100 years ago. He told me they often had such programs for dances following their oyster suppers and Grange and other Lodge dances. On it are listed Schottisches, Polkas (heel and toe variety), Quadrilles, Contra dances, Waltzes, etc. It was a far cry from anything I ever saw in my lifetime except for the Senior and Junior Proms I went to at the High School I attended in East Hartford, Connecticut, and their programs listed an entirely different variety of dances except for a waltz or two. Fifty years has dimmed my memory on the subject somewhat, and if I kept any of them, they are long gone.

My Grandpa Nelson considered many things, especially in the form of entertainment, such as dancing, playing cards and so on as sinful. In fact, he "bribed" his three oldest children with gold watches as they reached their twenty-first birthdays if they would shun such activities and also never smoke or drink. Somehow mother never got a watch--she lived with him until the end of his life, and after, so he could keep and eye on her! I give the others credit for they kept the promises they made him for their lifetime. Sometimes when we were little, he would arise from his chair and show us how to do the Schottische and Polka. I remember asking him on how come he didn't let his children dance and he replied that he had tried it as a youth and found out it led to evil! I suppose that went for the other things he considered sins too. Well, in any case he sure knew how to "cut the light fantastic", and very well too. He may have thought it wrong that daddy and mother played for dances a lot, and that my sister and I learned to dance at very early ages, but I never remember that he said anything about it. It brought them in, for those days, quite a bit of extra money, and I am sure he favored that! As for me, it was one of my favorite pastimes. When I was young, "I could have danced all night", as the old song went. How I hated to see midnight roll around! Then we had to go home. We never missed the dances in West Granville, Granville and Tolland, and quite often Albert Sheets and his wife, Lucy, and daughter Alice (now Peterson), would take us to the Fireman's Hall in Otis where we danced to the music of Sammy Spring. Once in a while, I got to his dances at Eastern States in the Storrowtown barn, and to Newgate Prison. I couldn't get enough of it and I was fortunate that I married a "dancing man". Dennis loved music and dancing and was exceptionally good at it. He said I was too good at it--always tried to lead, which upset him a bit. He got his love of it from his mother, I believe. Grandma Bridget Clifford could dance the old Irish jigs and

reels with the best of them until she was an old lady.

To regress--when we were young, we went to the church suppers and dances every two weeks along with our parents. As little children, we kept awake as long as possible and then joined the other little ones in the dining tables which had been stacked in the kitchen, one with its legs down and the other on top with its legs up--a natural crib!--where we slept the rest of the time. That ended shortly however, and we began to learn to dance. The late Fred Frisbie, son of Nelson and May Frisbie, taught me a lot about square dancing. He may have gotten real tired of me asking him to dance with me but he was a good sport and always followed through! The late Andrew Duris, Sr. held a few sessions at the Academy Hall to teach us round dancing. We had a wind-up victrola and he marked out the steps to the waltz on the floor with chalk. He also taught us to fox-trot. He was a marvelously smooth dancer himself and I liked to watch him. In those days, Joseph Kucznicki lived where Henry Turner does now. He married Polly Sermyszen of Tolland and when they did what my father called the old-fashioned German waltz, everybody watched them.

At one time, when I was about thirteen, we had a lot of kitchen dances. I remember going to the Farnham house on Beech Hill, which is now gone, to Austin Phelon's, Charles Treat's where we danced in the big barn, now belonging to Mr. Bliss. We danced at the Brunk place in Tolland which has just been torn down and a pity, for it supposedly was built by one of Tolland's first settlers, Thomas Hamilton. That family came, it is said, from Martha's Vineyard and how they ever found Tolland, or Granville as it was in those days, I would like to know! One time when several relatives of my fathers were visiting us from Vermont we had a "family" dance in our own kitchen.

In the last 50 years, dancing has changed a great deal--the Charleston, Black Bottom Boogie Woogie, Mashed Potato, Twist, and now Disco. People seem not to dance together so much anymore. Now they cover the floor alone, each doing his or her "own thing". I try it once in awhile but it's not the same. I think it was more fun by far to "cuddle up", if you will, with my sweetheart and dance.

I know now that my dancing days are about over, but I enjoy all the wonderfully pleasant memories of so many occasions way back when "I could have danced all night". It was my favorite pastime. I hope there will be a good dance band in the hereafter!

Leona Clifford

November 1981

Long Ago Days

"Being an account of the 100th celebration of the gathering of the first church body of the Congregational Church in West Granville, November 18, 1881". This is from the scrapbook of Benjamin Jones who lived where Ernie Sattler does now. He collected much interesting information about the town and at his death bequeathed scrapbook and all to my father. I still have them. This was a bit odd for my father had no connections with West Granville, being a Vermonter by birth, but Benjamin took a liking to him and William Jones, Benjamin's son, who lived in Pittsfield by the time I remembered him, visited my father on a pretty regular basis as long as he lived.

"Friday, November 18th was a joyous occasion in the west parish of the good old town of Granville, which has given birth to so many noted men and devoted women. The church, "set on a hill", whose light has been shining for a hundred years, celebrated that day, its centennial. At early dawn, the church bell was rung by Mr. James Goodwin, who, with 100 strokes, announced the completion of the century. At half past ten A.M., a fellowship meeting was held, and despite the unpropitious weather, a goodly number were present, including delegations from other places. The church was beautifully decorated by the ladies, and Miss Melvina Terrett, Miss Kate Terrett, and Miss Goodwin are to be complimented on their taste and skill. Above the pulpit were the figures 1781 and 1881, and the words, in large letters, arranged by Mr. James Goodwin, "In everything, give thanks". Underneath was an anchor and the words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life". On one side of the church was the motto, "Simply to Thy cross I Cling", on the other, "Faith, Hope and Charity". At half-past twelve, refreshments were served by the Ladies Benevolent Society.

At two o'clock, the centennial services were held, consisting of reading selections of Scripture by the new pastor, Rev. Lyman Warner, singing by the choir, under the leadership of Deacon George H. Atkins and Goodwin G. Treat, prayer and an historical address by the pastor. Letters were also read from Rev. Austin Gardner of Birmingham, Connecticut, Rev. Augustus Alvord of Prescott, Massachusetts, Deacon L. W. Shepard of West Springfield, and Mr. Frank Cooley of Hartford, Connecticut, and remarks were made by Deacon G. H. Atkins, Deacon E. P. Jones of East Hartland, Connecticut, and Mr. Stephen Roberts of East Granville. Deacon Atkins referred to the late Deacon George W. Shepard, who was elected deacon in 1837 and held that office for twenty-eight years. He also spoke of Rev. Lemuel Haynes, the first acting pastor of the church and of the old house of Deacon Rose on Liberty hill, the only mark of

which in now the old cellar hole. Mention was also made of Deacon James Spelman. Deacon Jones spoke too in high terms of Deacon Shepard, referring to his honesty and integrity in business transactions. He knew him when employed in the postal service for 18 years, star routes not being in vogue in those days. Mr. Roberts urged the necessity of encouraging every member of the church in the Christian life, and looking after any that might be missing from the fold. All separated with the wish that the bicentennial of the church might be as pleasantly celebrated as had been its centennial. What with its new pastor, its rejuvenated church and parsonage and its united people, West Granville ought to be happy, enjoy itself religiously, and be at peace with all the world, "and the rest of mankind".

At this point, an able and interesting address was given by the new and popular pastor, Rev. Lyman Warner. As it is far too lengthy to copy, I will only say that he took note of the long line of pastors who had served the parish faithfully and well. He mentioned that, "of the deacons of the church as far as I know, only good can be said". He referred to the Ohio migration and its members who formed the First Congregational Church in Charleston, Ohio. He told of the "precious seasons of revival, in which more than two hundred, as the fruits, have been added to its membership". The Rev. Dr. Timothy Cooley related in regard to this parish: "With a population less than seven hundred, one had become a member of Congress, one a judge of the Superior Court and as many as fourteen have entered the office of the Christian Ministry".
The address ended on the following:

"The springs from these hills and these valleys have not failed to furnish the cool, sparkling water, to refresh the thirsty, since our ancestors first chose this region for their home. The hills have become less in size as the storms have beat upon their sides, and the floods have borne their richness down towards the great sea; so this church has been growing less as the stream of time has been bearing one or another of its members down to the shoreless ocean of eternity. What the future may have in store for this church is known only to Him who knows all things, and whose love for his people remains from age to age. To His care we may safely leave this church believing that He who first planted it, and has watched over and prospered and preserved it during the century that is past, can still preserve and prosper it for the century to come. "

NOTES: James Goodwin lived where Mrs. Hill does now. For many years, his wife's picture hung in Academy Hall. She was a dedicated member of the church and all its associations. A few years ago, it was given to her grandson, Franklin Mallison of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The Miss Goodwin of the decorating committee was his mother.

George Atkins lived on the State Forest Road where Lester Sattler lived when he was forester but moved to Amherst, Massachusetts. While he lived, he never missed Old Home Day.

Goodwin Treat was Richard Bruno's and Gilbert Earl Miller's great-great-grandfather and lived in the ancient house that stood where Richard Bruno's now does.

The Terretts lived in a beautiful house, long gone, on the east side of South Lane #2 just north of Rose Copeland. Malvina Terrett's son often accompanied "Willie" Jones on his visits to my dad but his last name escapes me. They both lived in Pittsfield where Willie was a locksmith all of his life.

Leona A. Clifford

December 1981

Long Ago Days

Whatever happened to the good old-fashioned Christmas season when money wasn't the King, when one could walk the city streets in safety and TV wasn't reminding you for hours on end that STYLE was what was most important--buy a Cadillac. That "jeans" (overalls to us) with some "in" designer's name plastered across the rear end was the only way to go. That if you didn't buy the kids a set of electronic games for the "boobtube" they would surely feel deprived! You hardly dare buy your smallfry anything because you can't afford what they have asked Santa Claus for. It is pretty frustrating. There is really very little true Christmas Spirit today. People seem to remember less and less that the whole purpose of our Christmas is to remind us of God's greatest gift to us, Jesus Christ. And that our gifts to each other were meant in the beginning as reminders of that fact.

When we were children, scurrying around buying small gifts--(we certainly weren't in the Neimann Marcus class)--for each member of the family it was the most exciting time-of-the whole year. Helpful salespeople waited on you and total strangers smiled at you and the whole world was wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It seemed certain that both were entirely possible. Ho! Ho! Ho!

We managed to accumulate enough small change as children to buy gifts for Grampa and Daddy and Mama and each other. We learned very early that one could find the most desirable gifts in our price range in Woolworth Five and Ten Cent Store. If we didn't make that, there was always good old reliable Sears Roebuck or Montgomery Wards catalog to depend on. We could buy Grandpa a bit of cut plug chewing tobacco in his favorite brand or some Canada peppermints--(his favorite which he also shared with us, one by one, when he thought we deserved it). There were plenty of work socks and bandana handkerchiefs that we just knew Daddy wanted more than anything. We could get Mama any kind of fancy dish for a dime, or a big box of writing paper for twenty-five cents.

There were handkerchiefs for her too, the best ones all embroidered or, best of all, bearing her initial. There were all kinds of games, books, puzzles and my favorite, paper dolls, on hand for a pittance! They sure helped while away many a long winter country evening!

The gifts we received were apt to be few and useful compared to today's expensive short-lived junk, but what a thrill it was to open each one to find new books and games--Uncle Wiggly and Authors come to mind--stockings, mittens and so on. Once mother had her niece knit us each a heavy

pullover sweater. Mine was red and lasted forever and I loved it. My cousin, Will Porter, sent us each a tiny silver mesh purse one year but such prizes didn't appear every year. There was always a bit of money from Grandpa too. I expect he considered his offering a magnificent gift and so did we. I feel sure that in his motherless childhood in a large poor family Christmas, as we knew it, was just non-existent (circa 1850-1860).

Before we fell heirs to all this munificence there was the school Christmas tree and the one at Sunday School. The first was usually held on the last day before vacation in the afternoon. Some of the bigger boys would get a nice hemlock tree and we would trim it as best we could. We made many paper chains from colored paper and strung popcorn garlands. Some people strung cranberries but I never remember doing that. They grew on our farm but we ate every one! What few "boughten" trimmings were used were furnished by our parents or the teacher and I don't remember many of those. Tree lights were nonexistent, electricity in our town becoming a reality in 1930, and we were about to graduate from-high school then. There were candles but they were far too dangerous and I never saw any on any trees, anywhere. I am sure that nowadays those trees would appear pretty drab to the present generation but we thought them absolutely gorgeous, and they smelled so nice! We each received a small gift from our teacher--I remember getting pencils with my name on once... Time dims the memory of many gifts on those occasions. Every pupil drew a name and brought a gift for that child, and we each bought one for the teacher. There was a decision of the greatest magnitude! She had to have the best we could afford. Again we resorted to handkerchiefs, pretty soap, "toilet water", or writing paper, much as we did for mama. In those days, with most teachers in our town being far from home, and not getting there often, writing paper was doubtless the most useful. Before we "had the tree" there would be a small entrainment of songs, poems, and skits for the assembled invited guests--our parents--in the most cases our mothers--who always came, not yet having been caught up in the business world of "nine to five" but only the home world of before daylight until after dark!

The Sunday School festivities followed the annual free Christmas church supper--an annual event in West Granville for many years. Everyone who came brought their tastiest food and everyone who attended partook of it. We didn't have to pay the 10¢, later 25¢ that we did at the other suppers. The men set up a very large tree in the church and again there were the usual carols, recitations and plays appropriate to the occasion, portraying the Nativity, the flight into Egypt, etc. I remember feeling a little proud and a lot scared to be part of these "entertainments". I remember the time that the late

Lena Yarmitsky Hunter, who was probably home from high school at the time appearing on stage and singing a special carol, O Tannenbaum. I only remember the tune but I had never heard it before. I was deeply impressed. It was life having a visiting celebrity would be today--pretty special.

As all this was coming to an end we would hear the jingle of approaching sleigh bells and the stamping of boots and down the aisle came jolly old Santa Claus. He distributed the gifts the Sunday School had purchased for each child in town (regardless as they say today, of race, color or creed). He asked if we had been good and minded our parents, and been kind to our brothers and sisters. I feel sure that many faint white lies issued from our little mouths at that point! Who could admit they had been a real little devil with old Santa standing there holding the most fascinating gift that was going to be ours if we convinced him that we had almost gotten to the point of sprouting wings in the year just past! As the tree became bared of presents off he went with a "Merry Christmas to All" reminding us that he and his reindeer had a long night ahead, and the ladies took over, handing out oranges and small net bags of candy and nuts. This part of Christmas was now over for another l-o-n-g year.

As we rode home, tucked snugly into the buggy or, more often, the sleigh depending on road conditions, drawn slowly along by "Old Pet" who had been patiently waiting out the evening in the old church carriage sheds along with several others of her kind, we felt that there could be nowhere in the world anyone happier or luckier than we, and there was still the tree at home waiting for Christmas Eve. Joy, peacefulness, and good will, at least in our small world, was a reality. We were richer than kings. No king could have been happier or more satisfied than we. What a pity that this seems to be no longer the case.

Leona A. Clifford

January 1982

Long Ago Days

With apologies for taking a small vacation from the usual old memories I will be back in the February issue! Another New Year will be here by the time this is read. How fast they fly by as we grow older!

It used to be time for looking back a bit and looking forward a whole lot. Remember the New Year's Resolutions? I never hear anyone mention them now but people talked about them a whole lot in my younger days. Today I don't think anyone makes any—probably just as well. They were seldom kept then wouldn't be now. We looked back on many happy events and some sad ones, and resolved to make the year coming up a lot better. Today most of us are pretty wary of that word "better". We worry about inflation, depression, almost world wide intolerable situations and WAR. I suppose the only consolation about that is, that if it comes it will be the last one and all our troubles will end instantly! If we try not to think too much about these things over which we have absolutely no control, then we get it morning noon and night from T.V. radio and every newspaper plus many magazines, so it is ever with us in spite of ourselves. It is a very sad state of affairs to my way of thinking.

Oh well, Ho Hum! I have resolutions for 1982. it is to try to not get too depressed by having to live in such times, to be thankful that I live in the best country in the world, and to wish all of you, with all my heart---HAPPY NEW YEAR!!(1982)

Leona A. Clifford

February 1982

Long Ago Days

These past few days remind me of an old "saw". "When the days begin to lengthen, then the cold begins to strengthen". That certainly is true this year and I suppose it's been true more times than not. There seems to be virtually no end to it!

In those long ago days of old-fashioned, cold, snowy winters, life on the "one horse farm" which the majority of those in Granville were, simmered down. The harvest was in, house banked, either with dirt or, in some cases with sawdust from Bill Reeves planing mill, stove wood cup, butchering over--- outside of caring for the animals and hens, (mother's job), twice a day, chores were at a minimum. Daddy drew up the twenty one or more cords for wood he had cut as soon as there was snow enough to use his "wood shod" sled. It stayed in a long pile in the south door yard until about March when it was first sawed up into stove lengths, split and finally stacked in the two woodsheds to be nice and dry for the next year. We never burned a single stick of green wood, as some did, a common cause of chimney fires in those days, which quite often burned the house down--no efficient, conscientious fire department in one of Granville's greatest assets. The wood gathering, from start to finish, was hard work but it didn't fill in all the time available. In the house mother still had to do the usual weekly wash by hand on a wash board. It was hung in winter in the attic where it promptly froze but eventually dried. Then came the mending, a lot of which consisted of darning stockings--remember that job? There were still meals to get and baking to do--she made all our bread as well as many "goodies"--but there was still quite some time to kill, so to speak, there too.

My daddy loved to read and for such a meek, mild-mannered man he loved a good mystery or a western story. There was a Western Story magazine then which the late William F. Reeves must have subscribed to for he sent bundles of them to my father, which was most thoughtful of him. Daddy could do small repair jobs--I can still see him in front of the kitchen stove repairing tire chains with new links, or, if it wasn't too cold he could work in his dark room. It was then, the weather not being suitable for picture taking, that he made reprints of old pictures that we wanted copies of, and for which I will be everlastingly grateful.

Mother loved to crochet--all sorts of edgings for pillow cases, doilies and trimmings for garments, to which my yard long baby petticoats will attest. She like to make a quilt once in a while too, and I have one made from unbleached muslin, possibly flour bags, on which she appliqued and blanket stitched

butterflies cup from colorful pieces of cotton prints. On occasion she stripped up rags for rugs. She hooked two out for Aunt Anne Darlow's large black shawl and her red and black piano drape--not too pretty but she thought it a good way to save both "antiques" as they were not in the best of shape. Most "rag rugs" went to make scatter rugs for the floor beside the beds, and were woven on a loon by a lady in Tolland who either was a Deming or lived with them. They beat a cold bare floor, later linoleum, on a cold morning, "all hollow" as old times used to say, and all the bedrooms had them.

Another thing for which I will be everlastingly thankful, for, as you certainly know by now, I am deeply interested in old days and old ways, was the practice of keeping scrap books. Now clippings for these had to be saved up as they occurred but quite often they were finally pasted in the book itself during the winter, with mother making her own paste from boiled flour and water just as she did for wall papering, usually a spring house cleaning time job.

Over a period of some 140 years, there have been five of these handed down in the family. They contain, for the most part, newspaper clippings, plus trivia of interest to the compiler--pictures, poems, etc. One was my grandma Francena Reen Nelson's, one was my aunt Anna Nelson Clark's, one was mother's , of Benjamin Jones' and mine, still in the works. We also have the family Bibles of Anna Barlow and Isaac Aldrich, my Vermont grandma, with many family records of interest to me.

There being no telephones, T.V., radio or other such media, the only way one could keep track of town events plus those in neighboring towns, where one was apt to be pretty well acquainted in those days, and which were very well covered back then by the press, <u>was</u> the press and "word of mouth", sometimes long in coming, especial in winter if the road was drifted five feet or more deep. Therefore the newspapers were the prime source of scrap book material. There is a big change in them today--almost no local news, all politics, murder, mayhem and "fillers". The best you can hope for today is the accounts of deaths and sometimes they don't make it either. When John Beckman died a short time ago--our mailman for a long time-- I found not a single word, and when mother died the account of her death and Memorial Service was,--What did Marjorie Mills on a Boston radio station years ago, used to say?--an inexhaustible source of unreliable information? Well, certainly not the former but what a made they made of the latter. When I called the paper about it, they carried the idea that it make not a whit of difference. Well it did to me! If these conditions had existed "way back when", I wouldn't have a single scrap book of any interest to me at all!

This past year has seen, since last January 16, the demise of more of the

people that I knew of all my life in Granville than any other year I ever remember, and they are the ones who, each in his own way, helped shape our town, so that to me a bit of it died with each one of them.

Bertha Hunt lived a longer life than most of them and longer than any of use are likely to do. Back a ways when she was able to do so, I had some most interesting talks with her about her early days in West Granville, her long walks to school, the houses in that section of town, many long gone, as well as the folks that lived in them. Most of what she told me was no longer remembered by anyone. She reminded me of her mother who like to visit and no one or two occasions told me a lot of interesting stories about their part of town and its people.

It is sad that in her last years Bertha failed mentally as many as old person, and some not so old have done--sadder even more for her relatives and friends who loved her. I am glad that she is free at last from all earthly sorrows and problems. May the eternal light shine upon her and may she rest in peace.

Leona A. Clifford

March 1982

LONG AGO DAYS

Part 2. Back to Newspapers and Scrapbooks!

Mother told me that at one time Grandpa Nelson took five papers of one kind or another. One was probably the New England Homestead. Remember that one? It kept the farmers up on the latest farming methods and carried ads for all sorts of things---live poultry, livestock, machinery, "women's wants"--- mostly yarn, quilt pieces, (by the pound), sewing supplies, plus ads for farm products, maple syrup and sugar, honey, etc....After daddy no longer kept bees I sent to a Mr. Longfellow in Maine for my supply. He had an ad in N. E. H. excellent honey too as I remember it! That paper was in our home until the last day of its existence, and when it had a short period of revival I took it again until its final demise, though these couldn't compare to the "old timers". Grandpa's other papers were local---Westfield or Springfield having had several over the years. The Springfield Union, still going strong, was no doubt one of them---it was in my day, and the Westfield ones were many--- The News Letter, Daily Times, Valley Echo, Daily Journal, etc... For a short time Granville had at least one, The Granville Sun, put out by the Late William Snow, when he lived with his parents where Bill Heino does today---more about that next month---.

Grandpa had to walk to the Post Office at the West Granville Store to get his papers and mail in earlier days. That got him a two mile hike which was no doubt good for him--- took the place of the present jogging craze which has come up with a few problems not brought on by walking. This P.O. closed in 1909 but the old boxes are, or were, in Wiggins Tavern in Northampton.

With no radio, T.V. etc., these papers kept everyone informed, not only about world and national events, but about their neighbors and friends of, in most cases, a lifetime, as well as local affairs such as town meetings or church goings on. Not much moving about in those days. People stayed "put" for several generations except for lumbermen, a few of whom with their help, moved in and out again, transportation not being what it is today! You knew, in fairly short order, who had been "hatched, matched or dispatched." You found out who was ill or injured. In the first case--a new baby--what a surprise! The word pregnant was unheard of and unmentioned in the presence of "young folks." Until they were married some girls were barely aware of "how come?" My mother told me that the late Dr. White brought me which promptly induced me to write him a letter asking him to bring me a baby brother. He laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks---he was visiting my

sick sister at the time--- and I wondered whatever was so funny about my request, which, by the way, was never answered. When it came to weddings they were long detailed lists of guests, gifts, and refreshments. They were apt to pique to those who weren't invited and gave those who were the idea that they were the "creme de la creme" of society in the town. As far as funerals, not a soul left this vale of tears who had not assumed in his lifetime almost the status of saint-hood. Never speak ill of the dead and they didn't! Next they got down to the ill and injured. These were serious events on the small farm. It was time for neighbors to pitch in and help out all they possibly could. Neighbors really helped each other then. One time daddy took "Old Pet" our horse to get a shoe replaced at Wilbert Munn's Blacksmith Shop in Tolland. (This stood just west of the Tolland church and was the last one around to have an ox shoeing rig). Mr. Munn was in the midst of raking hay as fast as he could so as to beat a gathering storm and get the hay in the barn, so daddy raked and Wilbert shod! One of our student ministers making pastoral calls found the late Gladys Roberts knee deep in canning peaches so he pitched in and peeled peaches all afternoon-- just two of many such incidents in days gone by, that come to mind-- there were many <u>others</u>.

The news told of who had a litter of baby pigs-- get right down there and order two for next winters meat-- Gilbert Miller and William Cooley both raised some Chester Whites which we also preferred. Daddy picked those that were long of body with a good curl in their tails. I was pretty old when I discovered red, black, and spotted pigs and they still don't turn me on. Pure habit I guess for "pigs is pigs."

After all the news of every kind had been well read then came the clipping of those items that interested you. From all this wealth of material, sifted and sorted and pasted I am in debt today for our (priceless to me) scrapbooks. And I find from time to time that from them I have been able to help someone in their family research-- a job I love to do.

I am not a dedicated radio or T.V. fan. I still like to read a very few parts of my sisters Springfield Daily News-- editorials, Westfield page, obits, (sure sign of old age), but in all, it doesn't offer much, almost nothing for my scrapbook which will probably be mostly hand written as different events come to my attention. I usually wind up with comics. (I am not a fan of Spiderman or Star Wars) because Fred Basset, The Smith Family and other "funnies" take the taste of today's news of murder, mayhem and assorted violence world wide out of my mouth!

Leona A. Clifford

April 1982

The Granville Sun 1880-1881

This paper was printed and published in West Granville by William G. Snow. In 1880, Gamaliel Snow, a manufacturer from Meriden, CT. bought the place now owned in West Granville by William Heino, for reasons of health. He moved there in May that year and with him was his 17 year old son, William, who decided that as Granville had no paper of its own he would print one. A year later however, he went to New York where he stayed eight years, until 1889. He then returned to Meriden. Gamaliel Snow died in 1892 but the place in West Granville was their summer residence until 1904 when it was sold to James E. Downs of Chicago. In later years the Snows owned, as a summer place, the home of Jean Fuller. William Snow and his wife are buried in the West Granville Cemetery as is their son, Glover. I remember all of them as well as their daughter, Lucy.

The Sun carried short stories, ads, poems, train schedules, patterns, recipes and news! It was most interesting to me when I read it, for while I never knew most of the people mentioned in it, I had heard about so many of them so much that I felt as if I did.

Things were pretty well different in 1880 as you will see from the kinds of advertising printed that year in the Sun, some of which follows:

July 15, 1880: H.M. Parsons, Deputy Sheriff for Hampden County; Office at the Hotel in West Granville.

William Wells, Justice of the Peace, Land Surveyor and Conveyancer. Pension claims promptly attended to. Residence North Lane, East Granville.

James M. Goodwin, Trial Justice, Law Business promptly attended to. Office No. 2, West Main Street (Now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hill).

Compound Vegetable Alternative syrup, manufactured by Dr. E. Smith, West Granville, Massachusetts (Believe he lived in Hartland Hollow).

N. Fenn, dealer in Manufactured tobacco, etc., also clocks, watches and jewelry repaired at short notice. (He doctored also as see next item).

Nathan Fenn, Mfg. and distributor of Pure Vegetable Medicines. All kinds of fevers immediately broken up if the patient desires. Office, No. 5 West Main Street (The Fenns came from Meriden, Connecticut. They lived in the old house that stood where Albert Sheets built a new one, about 1916).

William Snow and Company. We hope to receive a fair share of public patronage. We do our work as Cheap as the Cheapest and in the highest style of the Art.

Wilbert Munn, horse shoer, wagon maker, etc., Tolland, Massachusetts. (His shop stood just west of the Tolland Church. He also shoed oxen of which,

at one time, there were many hereabouts).

CROCKERY; Having just received three crates of crockery which is more than I want to stock, I will sell for the next 60 days at about half the usual price. Come early as I have not half shelf room for it and must be disposed of at unheard of prices. All other goods very cheap. J.M. Gibbons, Granville Corners.

N.P. Rockwood, undertaker, Granville Center. Dealer in Caskets, Coffins and burial cases. A fine hearse supplied for funeral occasions. Prices to suit the times. (July 1881, J.M. Gibbons has bought out the undertaking business of N.P. Rockwood).

V.E. Barnes and Brothers: Steam Mill Lumber Company are prepared to furnish all kinds of lumber at short notice and at reasonable rates. Lumber planed if desired. They are doing a large business and are fortunate in securing the services of H. L. Chase who is more than an ordinary mechanic.

Leona A. Clifford

May 1982

Long Ago Days
The Granville Sun 1880-1881(Continued)

The West Granville Church has purchased a new organ.

A runaway near Barnes mill last Sunday destroyed a carriage and the horse tried very hard to walk into V.E. Barnes' house, but we guess he was not welcome as Mrs. Barnes shut the door in his face.

H.C. Robinson expects to pick 300 barrels of winter apples this fall and Charles Treat 500 barrels.

Bennett Moore of Tolland is building a new mill in place of his old one for the Lumber and Shingle business.

Lewis Bush of West Parish traded off a glandary horse to Alfred Latham which we believe is against the law.

We hear that the selectmen paid Latham $12.00 to kill his glandary horse after they had obliged him to keep it in the stable 15 days. It is now reported that he wants damages!

Deacon J.W. Johnson has decided not to rebuild his Sawmill(the old one burned, on State Forest Road).

The reunion of the family of Truman Ives of Tolland took place a few days ago. Sixteen were present--all except his son-in-law, J. L. Hakes and son. (My mother went to school with the son for a short time--the little devil!) A picnic supper was held under an apple tree of the old gentleman's own planting. Everyone enjoyed it, especially the old gentleman whose face beamed with pleasure as he was surrounded by his nine grandchildren. (One of these Carrie Ives Cooley).

W.C. Hall found one of his oxen choked with an apple the other day and with the assistance of a neighbor and "hog fat" he was soon relieved. The next morning the other one was found drunk, the result of a night forage in the orchard. Mr. Hall thinks the drunk the worst. Sensible!

The first cattle drover that did not make the atmosphere blue with profanity passed through here on Friday. Nobody seemed to know who he was. He probably was from out of town. He should be presented with a leather medal!

There are seven persons in West Granville and three in Tolland over eighty years old.

The firing of cannons in Winsted, November 3rd in honor of the election of Garfield could be distinctly heard in this place.

Messrs. Noble and Cooley have just completed a new water wheel for their drum factory which gives them two strings to their bow?

There is a large tree standing in a thicket in West Granville which has been used as a house long years ago, but when and by whom is a mystery. Within is an old plank which has been used as a door and a rude fireplace bears marks of having given cheer to those within. A stranger probably would not find it by searching a year! (I heard from my folk years ago that it was on the Hayes place, south of Leroy Clinks.)

Nelson Harger is afflicted like Job was, but we trust he has a better wife. (He did) (We have just heard of the death of Albert Sheets who was Nelson's grandson and according to mother was the "spitting image" of him).

The Barnes Brothers a few days ago received a hemlock log which was five feet in diameter and when sawed, made nearly a thousand feet of boards.

A merry party gathered at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Major Nelson last Tuesday to celebrate the birthday of their daughter, Miss Annie. About 25 were present and a large number were prevented by the heavy snowfall of a few days before--all roads not being open. The genial and happy faces of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson made it very pleasant for the young people, who are always provided with all the good things the heart could wish. Miss Annie has a fine organ and understands music better than many older. Music, singing and games were kept up until the small hours, when the company departed after having spent a very pleasant evening.

Dwight Barnes and family have gone to Brockville, Ontario, Canada to live. (So did other families; most, if not all, returned).

A small article about the road from C.W. Ives Mill to Aaron Nelsons. It being better than the new road which would cost at least $10.00 to shovel out. For $25.00 the old road could be graded and it would be used much more than the new one. (Guess that was never done.)

H. H. Fenn, while moving a loaded gun Saturday, left the charge in the plastering just over his head, much to the surprise of the rest of the family that were in the room. A narrow escape is as good as a wide one and sometimes better!

Steers are plentiful this year. Aaron Nelson has 4 pairs. The Fenn boys have four pairs. Major Nelson has 5 pairs. H.C. Robinson has 3 pairs. G. G. Treat has 3 pairs and Gilbert Miller has a pair of two year olds that are beauties.

A.D. Williams and Charles Terrett have very fine double teams. They are the best in West Granville. Silas Noble and Ethan Dickinson have the best in the east parish.

Much praise is due Miss M.P. Terrett(refurbishing Ladies Aid Room). Her efforts have been untiring, her motto, Forward and Onward!

Mr. Goodwin Treat presented us with a cluster of apple blossoms on the

20th(August 1880). Mr. Treat will undoubtedly have some late apples!

Asa P. Rand made glad the heart of Mrs. Susan A. Searle last week by announcing that a pension had been awarded to her by the general government, dating back to the passage of the law covering her case, and amounting to $1586.00. Mrs. Searle is 62 and has an invalid husband 65. She lost three sons in the war (civil) by wound and sickness and seven years ago petitioned for a pension. She had about given up on it!

Chafee (mailman) is not to be envied. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday he was unable to get any further than East Granville with his team and had to walk from there to Tolland eight miles. (I think it was more like ten or twelve.) (Feb. 1881)

Dr. Swett, our new and popular physician, has so extensive a ride that he needs an assistant. Indeed, Madam Rumor has it that he will soon take a partner--one who will add to his joys, subtract from his cares, multiply his pleasures, and divide his sorrows. So might it be!

There has been some sales of tobacco in west parish, (May, 1881) to Dea. S. S. Notham of Westfield. Ariel Frost sold his for ten cents through. Henry C. Robinson sold about 2300 lbs. for five and fourteen cents, Franklin A. Robinson (Beech Hill) sold 2200 lbs. to Rice and Brown of Canton, Ct. for ten cents through.

July, 1881: FOR SALE:

The press, type, rule, dashes, etc; used in printing this paper. Cost when new $175.00. Will sell cheap for cash-- The office.

P.S. Will Snow did a mighty fine job for a seventeen year old. There is much more of interest in this Old Sun but I have been advised not to make my articles too long so here it endeth!

SIC TRANSIT GLORIA

Leona A. Clifford

July 1982

Long Ago Days

Last year I read Abe Hemingway's Gazeteer of Windham County, Vermont as I chased some elusive ancestors. She dealt at some length on foods of the early pioneers in that state. She wrote that bean porridge cooked up with a large amount of beans, water, meat, cured one way or another, and vegetables--most often turnips--was a staple and was eaten for breakfast as well as for supper. After milk became plentiful, that, with brown bread or johnnycake was often the evening meal. Pumpkins were a common article of food, usually baked. After removing all the seeds and pulp as we do for jack-o-lanterns they were filled with milk, the top was replaced and they were baked in the oven six to eight hours. Parsnips were also a common vegetable. There were very few potatoes and corn was scarce.

When my father was young-- he was born in 1865--potatoes had become common and so had corn in that same county. The corn was used mostly as cornmeal for corn bread, Indian puddings, etc. Buckwheat was raised for flour for "flapjacks". They had almost no white flour or white sugar. They used "yellow" sugar, molasses, maple syrup and "soft" maple sugar which was stored in large milk cans for the years's supply, for their sweeteners, probably some honey when available. There was very little "cash money" as he called it, but there was a great deal of bartering between neighbors---what you had most of for what they had most of!

In my childhood things had "improved" a great deal. We raised the greatest part of our food and there was much more variety but it was almost entirely seasonal. In the winters most of it was not fresh but cured, canned, dried, pickled, preserved, etc. In those long ago days, we welcomed spring as the beginnings of having many fresh vegetables, and at the top of the list for my folks were dandelion greens--John Houseman's t.v. ad to do with cholesterol notwithstanding! Cooked up with a big chunk or our own good salt pork--not the "desiccated" kind found in so many stores today-- some looks as if it had been around since the year one, as my mother often remarked about things whose course was run---and it tastes worse, but right out of the big crocks in our cellar that daddy had " put down" at butchering time. With it plenty of "plain" boiled potatoes and mother's homemade bread both slathered with homemade butter, made a meal fit for the gods! I will always remember coming home from Ore Hill School around 4:30 on a spring afternoon--school kept until four and we sort of dawdled our way home--and getting that first wonderful aroma of boiling dandelions. It was all one could do to wait until suppertime, and a great temptation to sneak a couple of bites when we were

old enough to do so.

After them came cowslips, milkweeds, lambs quarters and other assorted kinds of wild things followed by the first "garden sass" of lettuce, radishes, beet greens, peas and so on until another fall rolled around.

Nowadays, not living at the farm, and shortly after the peep frogs and robins put in their first appearance we get a call from our good neighbor, Mamie Lupinski, saying "the dandelions are ready if you ladies want to get some." At the first possible moment away we go across the road where the dandelions grow in profusion around their large garden plot. If we are lucky, we get in two or three "digs" before they get too big. They if I can make it, I can beg one more batch from one of my old neighbors over in West Granville, theirs being later than ours. This year while visiting Edith Phelon on Beech Hill for a bit of genealogical discussion I was made a present of a batch of cowslips Walter had picked which were so good and a couple of days later I found fiddleheads at the Granville Country Store. We have had some fine feasts this year and more to come very shortly.

We no longer have a garden but Lupinski's do and they have a stand on Loomis Street in front of their house. We get the very best, freshest, cleanest vegetables from them--one of the first being beet greens and one of the last winter squash with all sorts of good things in between.

When we had gardens there was another weed that comes to mind that loves gardens. That is purslane, a spreading plant with reddish stems and small green leaves. It makes delicious greens not too unlike beet greens. A friend of mine in Detroit, Ted Johnson, lets some of these weeds stay in an otherwise immaculate garden and when the stems are about as big as a pencil he pickles them as one would with whole green beans and they are good!

I am going to end this story on a bit different note. Desserts were rather scarce long ago but even until my early days dried apples were a staple in many homes. We had an apple drier with several screen trays which set in the back of the old kitchen range, filled with sliced apples, where it stayed until they got darker and rubbery. Then they were stored in a clean flour sack and hung from a nail in the attic. I loved dried applesauce and dried apple pie.

When my father was little he was in a school program in Londonderry, Vermont and he recited the following recitation. He remembered it as long as he lived.

"I loathe, abhor, detest, despise
Abominate dried apple pies
The farmer takes his knurliest fruit
'Tis wormy, bitter and hard to boot
Then on some dirty string 'tis strung

And from some attic window hung
And there it stays a roast for flies
Until it's ready to be made into pies
Give me the toothache or sore eyes
But don't pass me dried apple pie"!

Can you imagine that for a small child's recitation in a school program? I can't but I am sure, in some cases, it faced reality. I thank God for our "modern" apple drier!

How lucky we are today for all those old fashioned foods we were brought up with as well as all the wonderful new ones available 365 days a year. Nevertheless everything tasted best to me in its own season and gave us something to eagerly look forward to.

Leona A. Clifford

August 1982

Long Ago Days

From 1903-1907, the Rev. Henry Albert Coolidge preached in the West Granville Church and also in Tolland and he and his wife, Dora, whom my mother called "Lady", became life long friends. He was born and brought up in the country on a farm and never forgot what it was like. This month my article is a copy of one of his many poems that he wrote, some of which were published. It will, I feel sure, bring back a lot of memories to you, as it did to me, if you were lucky enough to be born and raised on a long ago country one horse farm!

NOSTALGIA

I'm homesick for childhood's free gladness
In life as a boy on the farm.
Its sights and its scents and its flavors
My memory constantly charm
The songs of the birds that awaked me
From sleep that was blessed with pure air,
Their love for their young 'neath my window
Gave joy just to know they were there.
The call of the pigs needing feeding
The cry of the calf in his stall,
The fact that we shared in the choring
Gave life a full value to all.
The food, which was plain and yet wholesome,
The appetites gained by real toil,--
The eating together communion,---
A picture no banquet can spoil.
The tree by the lane to the pasture
Where apples were juicy and sweet,
Made driving and getting the cattle
At morning and evening a treat.
The berries from spring until autumn,
The wintergreen found 'neath the snow,
We ate in the fields in spring sunshine,
I taste their fresh flavor e'en now.
The strawberries first in their ripening,
The raspberries, blueberries, black,--
Dessert, which we ate from the bushes
Made up for all etiquette's lack.
Eating bulks large in the picture
Of life as a farm boy still bright,
From carrots we ate with out washing
To peaches we ate out of sight.

TO BE CONTINUED IN SEPTEMBER EDITION

Leona A. Clifford

September 1982

Long Ago Days (Cont'd)

We worked and worked hard in the hay-time.
We hoed and pulled weeds 'mong the corn.
Grew strong by the work which we dreaded,
Yet viewed idle weakness with scorn.

The holiday salting the cattle,
A walk of three miles to the hill.
A half-day of unhurried pleasure
Gave work-days expectancy's thrill.

We sang as we rode on the ox-cart
When driving back home from the mill.
The words were a "la-da-da-da-da".
Its harmony haunteth me still.

The animals oft were our playmates.
One kind steer we rode as our steed.
There's something a city-boy misses
Who never gave bossy her feed.

The home-folks are somehow much nearer
When neighbors are farther apart.
And toiling together is dearer
When paying the bills is an art.

For life on the farm is no picnic
To those who think labor a curse;
But poverty in the big city
For children is very much worse.

The boots which we blacked up for Sunday
Were strong for our use other days.
And bare-foot we went through the summer
For saving we learned all the ways.

The slow horse and jingling work-harness,
The rattling old buggy we rode.
Gave pain to my pride as a youngster
When fine rigs drove past on the road.

My hat, counting years up to seven,
Which cost full ten cents for each year,
Was one of the things, which hurt sorely;
But we paid our bills, never fear.

My memory bids me look backward
While gratitude colors the skies
And trust is begotten within me
Toward life that before me still lies.
And while I am homesick for childhood—

For things which are still out of sight—
The wealth of the gifts to my boyhood
Give hope for the glad final light.

Leona A. Clifford

October 1982

Long Ago Days

A couple of days ago a neighbor of ours began harvesting a large plot of field corn rather late in the day. With a rig consisting of a tractor, some sort of side reaper and blower, and two trucks the whole field was down, chopped, blown into first one truck and then the other, carted away and stored! All of this in a matter of hours and before darkness fell!

Memory took me back right then to all the year's daddy got in what corn we raised, mostly sweet corn, and always Golden Bantam, for eating but also some field corn. Compared to our neighbors modern method he certainly did it the hard way but I don't suppose he gave it much thought for all the farmers were in the same boat, as the old saying goes. Cutting the corn was about the last harvesting job from the garden. As soon as the ears were sufficiently hardened they were gathered and stored to be later run through what today would be considered a very primitive corn sheller to be used as food for our small flock of laying hens. Our eggs had nice yellow yolks and even now I can't stand pale washed out looking ones! I think the credit went to the corn they ate. Armed with a corn knife, daddy then tackled the stalks. He gathered as many as he could with one arm and cut them down. Then, when he had several hills cut, he bound them into what he called a "stook". Possibly this was his Vermont-ese, as others call them by different names including, "Shocks". When all were finished and standing the field surrounded by many bright orange pumpkins for they usually planted amongst the corn, it was a pretty sight for a Hallowe'en picture! Shortly these "stooks" followed the ears up to the big cow barn floor. Here they were run through another old fashion tool, a cutting machine into which the talks were fed one by one, until there was enough cut to give each cow a share. While this operation was going on the manger boards so called, were usually up for it was feeding time and the cows would stand, albeit very impatiently, bugging our their eyes, running out their tongues and drooling in anticipation. It was a welcome addition to their steady diet of hay. The milking cows got a ration of grain (commercial) but the others didn't so the chopped fodder was a real treat. What a lot of slow hard work I thought my father did in those long ago days, as I watched the operation across the road!

In days before I remember them, farmers with large corn crops often held husking bees. These were real parties when all ones neighbors and friends gathered to husk the corn and share in plenty of refreshment. Besides the work, if one was lucky enough to find a red ear, he got the collect a kiss from the person of his or her choice. By the time I came along that custom had ceased, at least in West Granville, but it must have been fun in an age when there wasn't anywhere near as much for amusement to be had.

There was another reaping job that daddy quite often, but not always had taking care of the buckwheat crop. He liked to keep honeybees and bees love the buckwheat flowers, which made a particularly <u>good</u> type of honey, or so it was thought in those times. This was cut with a sickle, an instrument that looked like a large scythe only with many blades, one above the other in the snath. As soon as it was cut and dried it too went onto the big barn floor and there it was thrashed by hand with a flail made from two hard round poles fastened together loosely with a piece of leather strap. It was long, exhausting work to separate

the kernels from the straw, the later winding up as bedding for the farm animals. In days before curs many people raised buckwheat for flour to cook with but we used ours for chicken feed along with the corn, the old time gristmill having about vanished.

In the earliest days Granville as elsewhere, had them. They were an absolute necessity and it was fairly easy to get to one of them, but none was near by and people had gone to using milled white flour from the store instead of cornmeal, buckwheat, rye, etc. at least for the most part.

Nathaniel Hubbard admitted a settler by 1759, built a gristmill and a fulling mill on the Mill, (Now Hubbard) River almost as soon as he arrived. There may have been others. He did no doubt, a thriving business until at a fairly young age he was killed in an accident at one of his mills, and they went to other people, they were in business for a long time.

Today it is hard to "Keep Up" with living! Everything moves fast and furiously, fun and work included, and I know more is accomplished, but often at the cost of stomach ulcers and shattered nerves. Those long ago days were composed of lots of hard work and done in a hard fashion but the "doing" was at a much slower pace, and lives, I think, were healthier and happier.

Leona A. Clifford

November 1982

Long Ago Days

As I write this, October 16, we are about at the height of my favorite days of this year – the red, golden and green days of fall. This year I think they are extra pretty. People are out on their annual foliage tours and the Mohawk Trail, as usual is bumper to bumper traffic which would turn me off even though I know the Trail and love it in all its other seasons. To me no other drive can beat that of winding one's way through the Granville Gorge right now where there are several varieties of trees that tend to turn very golden in hue so that, even on cloudy days, the place fairly glows and on sunny days it is almost blinding in its beauty. When it comes time, as it must, for my trip to my last resting place in the old West Granville cemetery I trust it will be over that road, which to me always has a lot of beauty, even in winter, and if there's something to come hereafter I know my soul will be rejoicing as I go - one last fond memory of this earth to accompany me to wherever and whatever is to be.

As I am surrounded by all this splendor it vividly recalls so many fall activities that it is hard to know where to begin, but Granville is still quite an apple town - So:

Grandpa Nelson had three orchards on his farm. One was there when he moved in, and of the other two he may have planted both but certainly one. The old orchard, which in my day as a child had a very few ancient, gnarled trees left in it and had been put into pasture for the cows, still had some apples which we somehow managed to salvage as almost no spraying had to be done then they were fairly good. I particularly liked Snow apples – bright red smallish fruit, snow white inside with flecks of the same bright red scattered through their flesh. They were tart and juicy – qualities I still want in any apple I am going to eat. I think most old orchards had them and they were one of the kinds in Gilbert Miller's which stood about where Earl Miller's house now stands. We went there quite often in this season to get some of the drops during noon recess at Ore Hill School.

The next oldest stood in the house lot and to the north of it as far as Cyrus Ives south line. Over the stone wall on its western edge was the "new" orchard, the largest of the three. Most of the trees were Baldwins but there were one or two of such as Hurlburt Stripes, Red Astrakans, Early Harvest – they made the BEST green apple pie!! all fairly early to ripen. Then there were later ones such as Russets, Northern Spies – one of my all time favorites, Seek-no-furthers, and one Sheep nose that straddled the wall between his farm and Ives, so that each family had a share. Grandpa liked the latter two but to me they were rather flat and rubbery in texture. There was, in the "new" orchard one fairly long row of Opalescents and I remember when they started to bear. Grandpa had seen an ad for them someplace and the description therein prompted him to order some. As I recall it, they were a Western variety and they bore absolutely gorgeous large dark red apples that caught everyone's eye and had all the texture and flavor of a piece of blotting paper! They were about as tasty as the two Wolf Rivers that stood on the old Alfred Latham place which, before my day, had become part of the farm. There was no orchard on that place with my memory but, besides the Wolf Rivers, there was a tree of Golden

Sweets standing about in the middle of the garden lot, so called, (even in real old deeds of this place I have seen). These Mother used for baked apples. I liked mine filled with raisins but guess I was in the minority on that. They were delicious served alone or with a little cream poured over, or as my dad loved them, cut up in a bowl of bread and milk.

By this date most of our crop was already picked and we had had a very busy time. Uncle Olin would bring up one or two men who worked with him at the New Departure Mfg. Co. in Bristol, CT. each weekend, and things really flew, if you could call the methods used in those days "flying"! Our old horse made many trips with a full farm wagon load from the orchards to the barn and cellar, depending on which were to be sold and which were to be kept for our use. One of the regular buyers was a Mr. Sack from East Hartford, CT. He was a tremendously fat man – broad in the beam – and the only way he could make it through the narrow farmhouse doors was to go sideways which always tickled me! In the barn the apples were graded on a long board with holes of different sizes bored in them, although I am sure most of them were graded by eye.

Mother made good use of all the bounty in the cellar. Some of every variety of winter apples were down there. From them she made delicious pies, apple dumpling (with brown gravy sauce made from brown sugar) which is now called pan dowdy and a lot of other names, apple sauce and apple sauce cake, a dark spice cake, with raisins. Today I am no longer a lover of sweets but her applesauce cake was one of my favorites and it could still tempt me to eat more than one piece! I know I've mentioned many times the quantities we consumed "as is", cold and crisp from the cellar on winter evenings as we read, played games, or, much later on, listened to the radio. Quite often a plentiful supply would be dried and I liked the pie made from them almost better than the one made from fresh fruit. Some old timers made boiled cider applesauce and there was nothing wrong with that either!

By the time my Grandfather died in 1930 the cost of maintaining those orchards had become excessive due to all the spraying that was required, plus the fact that most orchards were becoming much larger and his was really a small operation. Everyone knows by now that small farming operations of any kind are more of a liability than an asset, and so the orchards went, one by one, mostly to fire wood. It was a sad ending of many of my fond childhood memories.

Leona A. Clifford

P.S. In regard to my articles in the last Country Caller, I really do know a "cradle", which my dad used to harvest buckwheat, from the sickle I mentioned which he didn't.

December 1982

Long Ago Days

Part I

About this time of year, long ago, my father was well into his annual trapping season. It began in October and lasted until about Thanksgiving, or until the ground froze enough so it was impossible to set traps. He learned the "art", for it is one if you can catch extremely wary animals such as the red foxes, in his first thirty-five years or so in his native Vermont. There, for many falls he and his cousin Charles Aldrich of Londonderry, ran their trap lines with spectacular results, and I have photos to prove it. When, at the instigation of the Fenn "boys" who went regularly to Vermont to hunt, and had previously lived on Albert Sheet's place many years, he came to West Granville, then an area with many fur bearers and no dedicated trappers. He did very well at his "hobby", as it were, catching himself a wife to boot!

As a child I enjoyed the whole operation and at every opportunity I tagged along. First of all came the boiling of the steel traps. The huge iron kettle, also used for heating water for butchering and for cooking up messes of left over pumpkins, squashes and "pig potatoes"---(these are the little ones you get in your bags of spuds from the supermarkets now-a-days!) for the hogs, was filled with all the traps plus a goodly supply of tallow, which kept them from rusting, and lots of hemlock twigs which destroyed any human scent clinging to them. The pot was then filled with water and boiled for some time over an open fire. Soon daddy packed his trapping basket with a goodly supply of them plus a tiny, long-handled spade and a "sifter" to cover the sets with fine dirt—no lumps or stones allowed—they could keep the traps from performing its job. To these he added pieces of bait—scraps of raw meat or fish which he purchased from a market in Westfield. Once in an emergency when he felt the bait called for was fish, he proceeded to catch one with a hook and line, plus a worm or two, carried in a metal Williams shaving cream can in his jacket pocket. Then armed with a good stout cane plus his revolver, in case he found a wildcat in one of hit traps, away he went. I no longer remember how many traps were on each line there were two of them, possibly 60 or 75 apiece. One was "tended" one day, one the next, all through the season of a month or so, depending on the weather.

Good open pastures, of which there were many at that time, though most are woods today, were the best places to set fox traps. He put them at the base of any small hummock with which said pastures abounded. A rather high one was best, for foxes are curious and will stand on the highest ground near them to get a good look around. Especially good were the ones on regular fox runs, which after a winter or so were easy to determine by their tracks in the snow. Like many wild animals, while they range to some extent, they tend to have definite paths that they travel a great deal--to and from their dens or favorite hunting spots--. Skunks could be caught in most any location and one kept an eye out for the innumerable small holes they dig looking for grubs, or for small rocks they overturn for the same reason—signs they were in the neighborhood. Daddy always had "spring" sets too, some on our farm and others far afield. In them he stood the best chance of catching raccoons and also, for some reason that escapes me, a wildcat now and then. "Coons" like frogs, plentiful in the

spring, and like to wash other food items they have found—a neighbor, who had a pet one gave it a doughnut, which it immediately washed to crumbs in its water bowl--. The river was a good place for a mink or a muskrat to meet his doom, as well as for, on rare occasions, an otter. It would have been good beaver territory too, except that in those days we had no beavers in the area. For many years until 1938, the huge foundations of Johnson's Mills stood just west of the Hubbard River Bridge on our road, now the State Forest Road. They set to the edge of the water and now and again a mink would be seen playing around in their nooks and crannies. I especially remember an especially fine one caught there with a piece of chicken for bait. One of our old hens had gone to hen heaven and wound up as bait! I also remember very well that it was on this occasion that I found out, if you will pardon the expression that MINKS STINK! Give me a good strong skunk smell any day—it clears your sinuses—minks smell like burning rags—suffocating!

Leona A. Clifford

January 1983

Long Ago Days, Part II

Meanwhile, back to skunks, which made up the biggest amount of the "catch". At trapping time they had accumulated huge amounts of fat for protection from the cold ahead, especially along their backs. Daddy saved every scrap of it and tried it out for its oil, liberal doses of which were applied to our chests for colds. Over it went a piece of wool flannel. Once a local minister's wife, who suffered from rheumatism and had heard about the wonderful properties of the stuff in regard to same, wrote to my father and ordered a pint of "oil of skunk", which tickled him no end, never having heard it referred to in that way, but he immediately obliged! I don't know the results she got from it but it seemed to work wonders on a congested chest.

A trapped animal was quickly dispatched and the trap reset. Then some distance away, daddy would look for a comfortable place to sit and skin it, the skins being much easier to carry home than the bodies. It was skinned from tail to nose in a tubular fashion and scraped clean of any bits of fat, flesh or hair.

At home all were stretched on long narrow boards of appropriate sizes fur side in, and hung in the attic. I no longer remember how long they stayed there but he took them down and turned them fur side out; they resembled a rather pliable piece of parchment and made a crisp crackly sound.

Soon came the fur dealers. There were many places in those days where the furs could be shipped, the Howe Fur Co. for one, but I remember mostly a dealer, Mr. Austin from Suffield who came to the house. He would check each one out and grade them – prime, good, etc. He knew his job well and paid fair prices. One year, -- about 1920-21, he paid $20.00 each for prime red foxes. Daddy was absolutely astounded though none the less pleased. Minks, though small, were very valuable and I remember the best bringing $12.00, a very good price in those days. Grey foxes didn't bring much as they tended to have coarse fur. Skunks did well the less white they had on them. A good black one with just a bit of white on his head was the best. Then they went to half stripe, (part way down their backs). Full stripes (all the way down), and white ones which were hardly worth carrying home - - might bring $0.25. Coons did pretty well as did muskrats although we seemed not to be in very good muskrat country. Bobcats sold cheap. I think it was a case of another predator being done away with more than the value of its hide! Once in a while he caught an otter, a superbly beautiful animal with thick almost black fur. I think it was most often used on the collars of men's expensive overcoats. I have a picture of daddy holding an otter in one hand and a bob cat in the other and he had to hold his hands high to keep their feet from dragging!

About 1936 he did his last trapping. He was 71 and the laws, becoming more strict each year, made the whole business unprofitable considering the hard work and long trips it took. In that last year he gave me a beautiful red fox which I had made into a "fur piece". Aunt Mayme Nelson had one, probably the most unusual one he ever caught, made into a shawl type collar. It was a "cross" fox, having a stripe of dark hair the length of its back and across its shoulders. It was the only one I ever saw and I still have it packed away with

mine somewhere, my "belongings" being pretty well dispersed in various placed now.

In those long ago days trapping never struck me as being cruel. Daddy considered it to be the easiest way he knew of earning a considerable amount of money, and he had a way of putting things across in their very best light. As we started the days rounds, his description of the good dinner of roast coon with stuffing we were going to have if he was lucky enough to get one fairly made my mouth water with anticipation! I looked on the whole affair as I did on the demise of our pigs each fall—more along the lines of pork chops, ham, bacon, etc. plus a supply of that scarce commodity, surplus cash, rather than to the actual killing.

Today we have a wonderful variety of "fake" furs—some extremely hard to tell from the real thing. It is just as well. I like to think of the comparatively few wild native animals we have now as being free from the disaster of the steel trap. Hunters are about but outside of deer, I don't seem to hear of many catches. I will never forget one party of three or four men and as many beagles that asked grandpa for permission to hunt rabbits across from the house in his ox pasture. Having got that, off they went in high spirits. After a few minutes shots rang out and in a few minutes more back they came, one of them having seen the bushes move and shot and wounded one of the dogs! Over the years a few sad affairs in town attest to the fact that some people will shoot at anything!

I am sure it seems strange to you that a small child like I was, would enjoy accompanying my father on those long treks after fur whenever I possibly could, but I did. I'm sure it helped to supply quite a few extra pleasures in our lives as well as necessities, and it was good healthy exercise as well.

Leona A. Clifford

February 1983

Long Ago Days

The 1983 Lions Club Calendar is out and when Bert Parker returned the picture of Gibbon's store he had borrowed from me he brought one and asked me to write what I remember about it.

All the early towns had to sooner or later have a store and Granville has had several, the oldest probably being the one in West Granville. I am not sure. The store in the picture began in 1851, when Carlos Gibbons, grandson of Peter, first of the name in town, whatever else he had been up to, decided to open a store and he did so on the site where Frank A . Tinker had run a store and hotel, and site of the present Country Store. Carlos had married Almira Tinker and possibly Frank was a relative but I have never found out anything about him except that Tinker's Hall was used for meetings and singing school. I would like to know a lot more about it. It might have been a "swinging" place!

Carlos had several children and one of them, John Murray, went into the business when he was 16, was manager and assistant post master at 17, and postmaster at 21, a job he held for about 47 years. Quite a record I'd say! Later it came down to the Gibbons "boys". I remember so well-- Eddie Murray who died when I was seven or eight but I remember him faintly, and Ben, Fred, and Will. I can shut my eyes and in my mind I can clearly see each of their faces and hear each of their voices. I also will never forget the treats of candy they presented us with on the rare occasions when we stopped by.

Over the years the building burned twice, the original in 1884 and the one in the photo in 1934, but it arose each time as Phoenix from the ashes and is still in business. As time went by it changed hands twice, first to Paul Nobbs in 1945 and then to Roland Entwhistle, present owner in 1971.

But to return to the picture---there was an apartment in the building where people, still in town, lived at one time or another and there was a hall upstairs. All or part of this was used for a schoolroom some of the time. When I graduated from grammar school in 1927 it was being so used.

The post office was in the store itself, partitioned off by a half wall on two sides and on the corner of these was the largest, perfectly round wall of tinfoil which he "boys" had built and they were still at it when I was little. I always looked to see how much bigger it had grown between our visits on the scarce occasions when I got inside--didn't go to the store every five minutes in those days--- more like three or four times a year. Tinfoil wrapped a great many things then--no plastic. I have often wondered if it was destroyed in the 1934 fire. I would like to know. It was one of my seven wonders of the world back then! Benjamin Gibbons was postmaster in those days, later succeeded by

Randy Peterson.

In our childhood most of our groceries came from this store in exchange for fresh eggs, by stage, along with the mail and once in a while a passenger. I remember that the one thing that couldn't be sent in summer was molasses. We sent our gallon stone jug over but it had to wait for a cool day to come back for on a hot one molasses "boils" over.

On those rare visits I was also pretty much interested in their large case of nickel and penny candies and their store cheese which was, and still is famous. The Gibbons bought the cheese, possibly in the beginning from the local farmers, for tons of cheese was made here, but later from the large companies, and cured it by their own method. I suppose that is still the case. My dad was partial to it and I remember that when we took old Pet to Mr. Marcotte's blacksmiths shop to get new shoes, we would go along and daddy would stop at Gibbons store and buy a piece of the cheese, some birch beer and some crackers and "store" cookies sold by weight from a carton. Then we would leave the horse at Marcottes, next house east of the present school, and walk down to the bridge on the Gorge Road and have a picnic, and believe me those picnics were an event!

It would be nice to know whose surreys and other conveyances are in the yard in the picture. The surreys with their fringe on top were the Cadillacs of their day I suppose. Mr. J. E. Downs in West Granville had two before he moved on to Pierce Arrows, etc. One my father bought for a school bus to use in good warm weather and one was still in the barn at his summer home when Bill Heino bought the place in the 1940s. Well, we will probably never know. Surreys, horses and owners have all faded into the past. However it is still nice to know that Gibbon's Store itself still lives on after so may years---at least 150.

Leona Clifford

March 1983

Long ago days

The snow had begun in the gloaming
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.
James Russell Lowell

Well, we sure had a real blizzard last weekend and after all our nice unwintry weather too, when we had begun to think spring really was around the corner! There was only one good thing about it to my way of thinking it came now when it won't last too long instead of in December when it might have. According to Channel 3 T.V. it was one of the "BIG FOUR" snowfalls since the U.S. Weather Bureau started keeping records.

Well, I didn't keep any but I imagine the first one was the blizzard of '88. My mother was two at the time and didn't remember it but heard plenty of tales about it from the family, mostly about what a job it was to get to the barns and other farm buildings to take care of the horses, cows, etc. They weren't worried about their own food supply. The old stone cellar was fully "equipped" at that time of year, I believe it was in March, to sustain them for a long period and staples such as white flour and sugar were bought by the barrel in the case of the first, and in large sacks in the case of the second, in the fall so as to be ready for any bad weather that might come along. Their worst worry was probably sudden illness or accident but the old fashioned home town doctors had a way of getting through like the U.S. mailman going his "appointed rounds"---any old way he could.

My father was much older than my mother and in '88 he was employed in his brother Albert's bakery on Spring Street in Springfield, Massachusetts. He made all the pies as well as other things including his homemade molasses and cream candies. I am glad he knew how to do <u>that</u>! His molasses candy was the best I ever ate and his Vermont marble candy slab is still around but I never learned the art sad to say. The storm just about buried the bakery so that they dug tunnels out from the doors of the various shops and homes so as to get anywhere at all. The entire city came to a standstill. However coming as late as it did the snow disappeared fast. While it lasted however, it gave people living at the time many life long memories. I heard considerable about it as a child -- it being only 24 years older than me and still pretty fresh in the oldsters minds.

I don't remember or know about <u>four</u> memorable storms but I

remember very well that most big snows seemed like blizzards to me when I was small. I skied to school across the tops of snowbanks piled high by the men shoveling the roads by hand -- much more fun than walking in the road itself -- and every winter back then seemed to bring us its full share, and more of the white stuff! About all that could be done while snowed in was to keep the fires burning and do the barn chores, eat and sleep and wait for things to improve! Small jobs of mending could be done as well as lots of sewing and reading-- then came shoveling and more shoveling. We had a small dog named Mitzi and she seemed to like to see my father begin that job. She would jump in ahead of him and dig like mad looking back every once in a while to see how he was doing!

In or about 1945 or 46 we got a "Lulu"! Dennis and I were living in Westfield and the snow was, I think, the worst I ever saw. I have a picture of Daddy's Plymouth four door sedan sitting on North Lane in West Granville and it looks like a midget. At that time I have heard the Town of Granville called for help and big rotary plows came from Westover Field to clean it away. They left the sides of the roads looking like perfectly flat walls very many feet high. No one was at the farm that winter for mother and daddy were staying with us and there was no way we could get out to see how things were out there but everything survived. Some of those old buildings had been around for 150 years -- a blizzard was nothing new I'm sure.

Our latest "visitor" was a surprise after all the projections of a few flurries. When I got up in the morning and looked out I could hardly believe my eyes even though I admit I was more asleep than awake. My faithful old car which has stood in the yard here for five years now was gone! I always felt it would be stolen someday but on a fully awake second look it wasn't stolen, it was buried alive. So was everything else. The boy who shovels our driveway and his sister worked hard to get one lane out to Honey Pot Road after a couple of days but the town of Southwick was so busy with the main roads that they don't do much for Honey Pot and it turned to packed down, (practically glare) icy snow. We couldn't get out of our yard shoveled or not. Finally a big plow came and did the road and our GOOD neighbor, Billy Lapinski, chopped off some corners of the snowbanks at the end of the driveway. Yesterday, Feb. 16, I got to Westfield. I really didn't mind being house bound but still, in these times, cabin fever comes on faster than it used to. It was nice to visit the outside world again.

Leona A. Clifford

April 1983

Long Ago Days

I have been enjoying the loan of three books of old and older pictures of Granville. After I wrote about the Gibbon's store on the 1983 Lions Club calendar, wishing I could know more about the carriages and people in it, I received a call from Wilhelmina Tryon, who with her husband, Willard, owns the Country Store on Granville Hill. She told me the couple standing on the steps were Fred and Prudence Seymour and that they lived in the apartment on the east side of the building. They were relatives of Wilhelmina's mother, the late Mrs. William Hansen, who lived where Ruth Hansen does now. As for the carriages---John O. Roberts lived where Ray Nestrovich does now in the big house, and he rented out horses and conveyances--- what amounted to a small "livery stable" operation, and Fred and wife had no doubt rented one of them. I wish so often to know more about old times, places and people but seldom get my wish as in this instance. I was most grateful!

Since the call, Wilhelmina brought me several books of photos to look at. Many were postcards my father took to sell in various places in the area, but some were taken years ago by Ellis Goodrich and some more recently by Wallace Huntington who is "Butsy" Boughton's nephew. No doubt Ray Noble took some. I have heard that he photographed many local scenes.

I was especially interested in one of the old carriage shops that stood between the homes of Stillman Humphrey and Roswell Rowley, now Pugh and Oleksak. Albion Wilson says Simon "painter" Henry, who was a wheelwright owned it, also Charles Barnes, who moved his business there from South Lane. It burned February 19 ,1903. There was also an interesting picture of a horse drawn load of drums. There is a picture of Thomas Jensen, who died from injuries received when he stopped a run-a-way team in Westfield in 1913 -- a real hero for he saved the lives of a woman and two children. A lot of you remember, as I do, the big watering trough in the Gorge where we often stopped to drink from the pipe running alongside for that purpose. It was a dandy place to "water" the old Ford as it began to heat up on its climb towards home. Though it doesn't seem so, that road is a gradual uphill grade all the way. There was the old Moore place, many of the Spelman homes on South Lane, six or seven at one time I believe, also the home of Orson Gibbons, now gone, with the old gentleman in the doorway. It stood near the junction of South Lane and the East Hartland road. He was Roland Oveson's grandpa. There is a good picture of Bert Robert's stage, a four seater wagon, horse drawn. Woman are picking cranberries in the old bog off the Old Westfield Road. There is a picture of the Holcomb brothers shop on Water Street near

the Joseph Peterson home, which has long since burned. I have one taken in about the same vicinity, which is labeled "Pitman and Drums Factories", Granville, Massachusetts-- sure would like to know about that! There is a picture of a small boy with a team of oxen standing in front of Deganos, now Tryon's store, also one of the interior of the old church on the hill with its gallery, seats, organ and stained glass window. I am very glad that mother had one of those too. It may have been taken about the time of the 1895 Jubilee. The Hartley family and the family horse stand or sit in front of their home on Granville Hill. Very often old photos show the family dog as well! This place was for years the home of Ovilla Blakesley, though I am ancient enough to remember visiting the Hartleys with my mother.

It seems to me every town had for sale comic postal cards and Granville was no exception--- one shows a pair of mules drawing a gigantic cucumber on a stone boat, and one is a farm wagon load of winter squash-- about four of them-drawn by a horse. The caption reads -- "How We Do Things In Granville, Massachusetts." I mustn't leave out Dickinson's Mill and mill pond. Oh, the trips we made to it with cider apples, although in its earliest days it was not a cider mill but was used for various industries, including the manufacture of powder kegs, according to Albion Wilson, Historian.

I could "carry on" a lot longer but many of the pictures are of places known to most of you. Seeing the old ones was for me a most interesting trip into the Long Ago Days.

Leona A. Clifford

May 1983

Long Ago Days

Another Memorial Day approaches when "limited nuclear war", -- heaven forbid, -- is being discussed, when the world is full of "hot spots" and when any kind of brotherly love is sadly lacking. It seems to me that we should stop to consider lessons that, as a country, we should have learned from history but never have!

When this town was settled in 1738, our country was still involved in the French and Indian Wars, which from the onset of Queen Anne's War in 1702, until 1763, SAVED England and us from the "red menace" and the French.

In our older cemeteries rest several veterans of that conflict. Albion Wilson lists only James Burt of Tolland, then Granville, as the only one but there were others including Phineas Pratt, Edmund Barlow, and several of the Spelmans and I am sure there are others if one could research the records of all our earliest families.

In 1775, along came the Revolution to SAVE us from the heavy burdens (taxes), laid on us by the England we had just helped to SAVE from the French, etc. I often wonder if the 200, more or less, men who are credited by Mr. Wilson to that war -- incidentally the largest number from Granville who ever went to <u>any</u> war--could rise from their final resting places, what they would think of today's taxes. They underwent <u>so</u> many excruciating hardships and deprivations. They learned about hard times after the war was over and how to make do with what was at hand or do without. They must be spinning in their graves!

1812: There are no exact figures for this one but Granville is credited with around 90 soldiers.

After once more showing England a thing or two about life on the high seas and getting, at least, a treaty that settled little or nothing, we had a "breather" until 1861. By then slavery was being hotly discussed. There was much disagreement and rivalry between the industrial North and the agriculture South. Slavery seemed a good point to home in on, Granville sent 110 men. The huge plantations in the South kept most of the countries slaves, but from America's earliest days affluent and prestigious people throughout the land had them too. This war is said to have been the cruelest on earth and until W.W. II, the one in which more lives were lost than any other. Many died in the hell holes that were prisoner of war camps, of disease. Neither side had the where-with-all to care for their prisoners, nor for their troops, for that matter. In the long run however, from 1861-1865, the slaves were freed, but to a life in which <u>they</u> suffered, many of them worse than they had in slavery,

not all owners were Simon Legrees. It has been a long hard road to real freedom and many still walk that road!

I know of no one who went to the Spanish American War from here but as it only lasted a very short time there probably was not time to get organized!

In 1917, we got involved, overseas this time, in World War I. Thirty names grace the Memorial stone at the Town Hall. This was the war to end all wars almost 70 years ago. After it was over the late great Will Rogers said he hoped everyone would remember that the future of American youth lay on top of American soil, not underneath European mud! It was a pipe dream! In 1941 ,73 or our town's finest were again on their way overseas--worldwide this time. In rapid succession came Korea and Vietnam. No real peace has come in either case. God only knows where it will all end. One way about it to my way of thinking is that the limited nuclear war I mentioned in the beginning will truly be the one that ends all wars and civilization as well--a pretty drastic cure all!

This year on Memorial Day, more and more flags will fly over veteran's graves worldwide. Parades and speeches will be the order of the day. We can do no less, considering all their sacrifices, which to me seem to have been oft in vain, BUT, a lot of prayers for peace should be rising to the Almighty and every American should become involved in every way he can to try to see to it that wars will truly come to an end before they end us!

Leona A. Clifford

June 1983

Long Ago Days

Most of the time every weekday, if we are so inclined, we watch a steady procession of "soap operas" with their multitude of soap advertisements. It is amazing to contemplate all the trials and tribulations of the former and all the bald-faced deceptions of the latter which are quite apparent to me after a seventy year acquaintance with many kinds of soap.

It is best to skip the "opera"(I watch Guiding Light myself when I'm home though whom or what it is guiding it.. is hard to say. I just hope it isn't being taken for the best way to live by any of my grandchildren!)and get down to the "ads". What is "clean, honest soap"? This one is for Ivory, 99&99/100% pure, but pure what? Another one is silly to the point of being ridiculous. They are using slivers of their favorite soap so small(four people are bathing with it by the way) that most of us would have, once upon a time, 1). put it in a soap shaker along with other slivers to be used in helping with dishes, etc. or 2). do what we probably would do now, throw it out!

In every town in its beginning, soap was pretty much a necessity, and one of its components was potash. There were many small potash operations in Granville. I find reference to many of them in old deeds. One of them was on what is now Bill Heino's property near where Potash Brook still runs. Potash, sometimes referred to as pearl ash, or if your scientifically minded, potassium carbonate was obtainable in those days by leaching or running water through the ashes of burned wood and boiling down the solution in large open kettles. The residue-- a white solid, was called potash because it was made from ashes in pots. This type, made from leaching, was used in the preparation of crude soap. It was extremely strong stuff and its manufacture had many hazards. In 1770 or 1780-- the record varies-- Ephraim Munson died from being scalded in a potash kettle. There were probably others. Like lye, it was hot even when cold. Several scaldings are recorded in "Granville Vital Records to 1850", but the cause is only given in Mr. Munson's case. Potash kettles were a very likely cause of others.

I remember when people still made soap, although powders, such as Rinso, and bars, such as Octagon for household chores and Ivory for personal use had pretty well taken over. My mother made it a few times--probably hot 99&99/100ths pure but it <u>was</u> honest and it worked. It would clean the house, the occupants and the laundry. Sometimes a mild solution was used to "de-bug" house plants.

Women were apt to have rough hands from all the scrubbing jobs but there was always old fashioned rose water and glycerine which you could also

make yourself if need be and it probably worked as well, if not more, than the fancy creams of today. These concoctions, in endless variety, are touted as magic cure-alls for roughness, dryness, age spots or whatever suffered by pampered ladies in satin nighties lying on satin sheets with hands that " don't tell my age" -- hands so perfect you know darned well the only work they've done is to lather on more cream!

To get back to soap making-- In the winter women saved all the kinds of grease around the house, and not being aware of cholesterol, and cooking lots of meat from the fall butchering there would be a considerable accumulation of it. In the spring this would be dumped into a kettle of cold water and brought to a boil. When it was strained and set aside to cool a large cake of clean white fat would rise to the top. This was melted, a certain amount of lye was added and it was stirred until well mixed. Mother's recipe also called for a mixture of 1/2 cup of ammonia, 1/4 cup of borax, 1/4 cup of sugar and 1/4 cup of kerosene which was stirred until well blended and added to the grease and lye when they first joined forces, why I don't know. Some of it could be put into a tub for soft soap. The rest was poured into pans, scored into bars and left to harden. If you liked, a few drops of perfume oil could be mixed in for hand soap. The whitest batches were the ones usually given this treatment. The household variety had no perfume or deodorants. It was just about as plain a soap as you could get. A large cake stood beside the kitchen sink in an old fashioned soapdish with holes in its top "rest" where it could drain into the bottom and keep itself dry. The soft soap accumulating there could be used for any purpose. It really cleaned things. Some folks accused it of cleaning the skin off your body and the paint off the walls but anything scrubbed with it smelled clean and good. Talk about April Fresh!

Leona A. Clifford

National Aldrich Family Association

On July 16 and 17 this group will be holding its twentieth annual meeting here in Granville. They will be served dinner at the Federated Church Saturday evening and will attend services there Sunday morning. The Firemen's Auxiliary will serve a buffet lunch for them on Sunday and it will be followed by the annual business meeting before adjourning until July, 1984. Anyone with Aldrich "connections" is welcome and we are always interested in new members. We will visit the Historical Room in the Library, the old churches on the hill and in West Granville, Noble and Cooley, etc., time permitting. If any of you run into any of us during these two days say Hi! We're a friendly group.

Leona A. Clifford, President

July 1983

Long Ago Days

In Benjamin Jones scrapbook, which I refer to often there are two letters written by Elizur Moore of Tolland to a newspaper, the Litchfield County Leader, in August,1881. I think, not only Tolland people but all of us might be interested. He wrote:

To the Editor:

I see occasionally in your columns, something about Tolland, and being the oldest inhabitant born in town nearly 81 years ago, I thought I would tell your readers something of the early history of Granville and Tolland, they being one town until 1810. Town meetings were held in the middle parish, (West Granville now). East Granville, I think, had the first Meeting House. It stood north of the road that turns south after coming up the east mountain, (Barnard Rd.). It is said that women walked from the west parish to the east parish to church. There were no wagons in those days, men and women both rode horseback if they had horses. Women rode double, a pillion being fastened on behind the side saddle, which made a very comfortable seat. The roads were made by simply digging out the stones, no turnpikes being made. About four roads were laid out called the old Proprietors roads, two running north and south, and two east and west, no matter how rough the ground, some of them over the steepest hills in town. The first scraper I ever saw used was a slab with a sled neap fastened to it. My father and brothers got the first iron scraper, the first cart, and the first wagon in our part of the country. The hay was all got in on an ox sled or rolled in.

The three parishes settled ministers about 1795--1797. (?). East parish, Dr. Cooley, born and settled in the parish; Rev. Joel Baker in the middle parish; Roger Harrison in the west parish. Mr. Harrison had a $200.00 salary. Dr. Cooley and Baker a little more. It was raised by an equal tax on all the parish same as the town tax. Dr. Cooley was a remarkable good sermonizer. Mr. Baker a remarkable man in prayer, and Mr. Harrison a remarkable singer who could sing anything in sight. He delighted in singing alto and treble. It is said at one time when he exchanged with Dr. Cooley, he sang the Judgment Anthem and it so charmed one of the Dr's scholars that he fell into his arms!

Middle Granville had a very enterprising class of inhabitants. Col. Timothy Robinson, one of the First, lived where R. Fenn now lives. (Albert Sheets place, old house). Hezekiah Robinson, shoemaker (and Justice of the Peace many years). The Parsonses, Levi a blacksmith, Dea. Parsons, Sam Parsons, Joel Parsons.; John Phelps, lawyer, also first Sheriff of Hampden County, a gentleman who would never pass a school child without making a

bow or speaking pleasantly(lived where Bert Hill does). Levi Curtiss was a mechanic, Noah Cooley ran the store, Patrick Boise was a lawyer. Dea. Adkins was a hatter, and there were many more prominent men.

Our grist mill was where or near where James Johnson's sawmill was burned on the east side of the bridge, (State Forest Rd.) on the Hubbard river. All our rye, corn, provender and salt was carried there to be ground, in summer by a boy on horseback with four or five bushels at a time. Oh; how sleepy I have been riding to mill on a hot summer day! Most everybody but mechanics raised their own grain. Sometimes we raised summer wheat so as to have some to make a chicken pie for Thanksgiving. We raised our own flax, spun it and wove it. Every town had a nail-maker. Nails were about a shilling a pound and calico was a shilling a yard.

All agree that we have had a hard winter all over the world. It was said by our fore-fathers that 1780 was a terrible hard winter, the snow above all the fences. A great many deer were killed, as the snow being soft and deep they could easily be killed by men on snow shoes. By the first of April the snow was so hard that ox teams could go across lots and woods anywhere with full loads. It went off by sun; at the first of May cattle could live well, there being no frost in the ground. I will write more about Tolland next week.

Respectfully,
Elizur D. Moore

Mr. Moore was the son of Marvin Moore and the great uncle of Florence Sussmann of West Granville.

NOTE

I wish to thank all my friends, especially the Granville Seniors, for the many beautiful cards, plant and candy that I received while I had my small vacation at Noble Hospital, also for the many telephone calls from concerned citizens. I deeply appreciated them all.

Leona A. Clifford

August 1983

Long Ago Days

SECOND LETTER OF ELIZUR MOORE: 1881

The Hamiltons in the east part of town, large land owners and a large family are gone from town and dead except Kate, widow. (They had three houses including the Brunk place, one a bit further west, same side and one or two further west on the north side of the road.) Next was Stephen Goff whose wife was a woman doctor. Next lived the Pomeroys where Daniel Spring lives. (Now Maurice Carr.) Next was Mr. Handy, a farmer who always went barefoot as soon as the snow was off. Philip Parsons was a shoemaker and John Hamilton a weaver by trade; Gail (?) Hamilton, a large family went to Illinois. One of the girls made the shroud of Joseph Smith, the Mormon leader, who was shot a Navoo, Illinois. Of the Rogers family, Martin, John, two of Martins and one of---, are all that are living.

Titus Fowler, my grandfather, moved into town just before the Revolutionary War. He said he heard the cannon all day at the battle of Bunker Hill, from his place near the center. He was a Justice of the Peace and a prominent man and had three sons and three daughters. At the time of Shay's Rebellion, Esq. Fowler and Col. Robinson started for Springfield. Mr. Shay took them at East Granville, kept them overnight and let them go on to Springfield. The next day they had the decision at Springfield on State St. General Shepard, Grandfather of Dea. George Shepard of Granville had charge of the militia.

Rev. Roger Harrison built the house on the corner. (Now Bonadies) Dea. Gates blacksmith shop was a little east of it. Solomon Cowles lives on the south corner, the chimney was on the outside of the house. One day he whipped a colt which he had in the barn. The colt kicked him in the head and broke his skull. The doctors took out one quarter of the brain over his eye but he got well and lived a good many years, a great reader and quite an intelligent man. Next was David Wright, nailmaker, then Archibald Wright on the old road north, Joel Glason, Dr. Wright, Solomon and Thomas Rogers. Then we come to the Twinings. Dea. Thomas Twining had two sons, Stephen and William. Thomas and son William owned the grist mill at New Boston. Elijah Twining had four boys. They came from Cape Cod (Eastham), as also the Hardings, Higgins, and Rogers. (The latter descendants of the Mayflower). They were all good inhabitants. It is said, how true I don't know they had heard of tapping trees for sap and tried one. It did not run so they put a log chain around, put in a lever and twisted, but it would not run. North of Hardings was Wm. Freeman, Ephraim Snow, Jonathan Amisse and Eli Clark. Most are gone. Now nobody farms it as we did when I was young; then we cleared a new piece for

grain every year, made some stonewalls, but now it is a rare thing to see a stonewall well built or bushes cut on mowings and pastures. The latter do not keep 1/4 the stock they used to.

Burt Hill was named for a first settler, Caleb Burt. He and his sons built the tannery at West New Boston. Clark Dorman dressed cloth for a while on Colebrook River. Soloman Freeman married Rebecca Torrey, a widow--had five children. He complained she was crazy--if so it was because of his unfaithfulness to her, which was not generally known. He finally committed a rascally act and fled. Giving his note for all the cattle he could buy, he sold them and escaped with the proceeds, taking another man's wife with him! Some of this creditors had demanded security and my father, Marvin Moore, signed a note for him for nearly a thousand dollars to Curtis Parsons(By the way he had paid $40.00 for the wife.) Mr. Freeman's farm was attached but few of his creditors got anything. My father had to mortgage <u>his</u> farm to pay the note and in the end I had to pay 1/3 of it. (A neighborly deed backfired as sometimes still happens.)

You may copy this paper if you wish for Mrs. Bates and Calvin. (It was apparently written to his grandson in Winsted, Connecticut) This is all they published, yet there is more about the South Quarter, but they have left out some and made a good many blunders. END.

(The South Quarter generally considered by my folks to be in the area where John Battistoni lives, also Ronald Messenger and others.) Many houses are now gone, some of which were standing in my day. This is true of a lot of both Tolland and Granville now. Some new construction goes on but so <u>much</u> acreage, where once were many homes, has gone to the State Forests and the Springfield, Hartford and Westfield Water companies plus private camps, etc. that our towns will never be the same again. The old neighbors of my family's five generations in West Granville, 99% in their graves, are being replaced by an entirely different type of people. (Not too interested in the town if the turnout at town meetings is any example) To me it is sad!

Leona A. Clifford