Training Day to Feature Pelham’s Old Home Day

50 Volunteers to Show How New England Towns Made Plans For Armed Protection Century ‘Ago

PELHAM, N. H., Aug. 5—The sound of the fife and the drum will be heard and marching feet will raise the dust around this town Wednesday, because the committee making plans for Old Home Day has decided to make the celebration a little different.

The whole town is expected to return to the days of the 1800’s, and many a dusty trunk will be gone through in search for appropriate clothes because everybody is expected to dress for Training Day.

Training Day originated in pioneer days. The observance of the day came into being from the custom of calling all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45 to the town square once a day out of the year, sometimes three times, for a day of military tactics or merely rollcall.

All work was halted on that day and the farmers streamed into the country to watch the proceedings. The day grew in popularity and in time ranked with Thanksgiving. Small boys saved their pennies and the mothers baked gingerbread and cookies to sell at the square. Fakirs and fakers, shooting matches, discharge of gunpowder and all manner of side shows were among the attractions. Hard cider and sometimes whisky added to the appeal for those who enjoyed a wee nip.

The square where the young men drilled and where the spectators gathered to watch was called the “parade” in those days. The towns of Barrington and Deerfield still boast parades within their limits.

Louis A. Hinde is chairman of the Old Timers’ committee which instigated the revival of Training Day, and other members of the committee are Mrs. Frank Carlton, Miss Helen Morris and Ernest Bigelow, chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

This committee has announced a list of added attractions which will be headed by the old-fashioned drill with 50 volunteers taking part. As there were no rehearsals the gathering should be as genuine as the woodsmen who did it in the old days.

Other features on the program will be a band concert by the Lowell Temple band, a ball game, a greased pig race, and a doll carriage parade. There will be a firemen’s muster by the Pelham Fire Department, assisted by firemen from surrounding towns.

A parade of novelties headed by the Ancient, Honorable and Horrible, will be on the card. The parsonage green should be popular as an old-fashioned country dinner will be served there. A country fair and an antique doll exhibit will bring the day to a close.

“A group of the “Pugwash” town officials who took part in the Pelham Old Home Day held Wednesday in that town are shown in the photo. They are, left to right, Emory F. Simard, James Doberty, Joseph Ackerman, H Ackerman, N. A. Butterfield, Eugene H. Anderson and E. A. Robinson.”