

Turn Of The Century Summers In Gilmanon Corner

We have just heard by our news seeking grapevine, that long-time Gilmanon resident, Jane Cumming, has recently written a book about her childhood memories of spending summers in Gilmanon Corner.

Back in the late 19th and early 20th century days when railroads were developing lines which made access to small scenic New England villages possible, Gilmanon had an active summer colony. Native residents with comfortable homes invited summer boarders. Inns and small hotels sprang up, either built or created from larger houses. "City folk" hungered for a stint of country living, a chance to enjoy New England's endless beauties - its mountains, hills, ponds, open fields.

As Mrs. Cumming (Jane) writes in her book, she and her younger sister, Betty, came with their parents, Alice and William Scriven, from Chicago by train via Boston, Tilton and Belmont. And their grandparents, Mollie Lougee and Charles Davis, did likewise, except that they came by train from Boston. In fact, the latter started summering in Gilmanon in the 1870's when the Mountain View Hotel, on the corner of the Province Road (Rte. 107) and High Street, was a flourishing summer estab-

lishment. The house Jane Cumming lives in was bought by her grandparents in 1906 and it was in 1908 that she, at the age of four, and her little sister Betty, a baby, came to Gilmanon for the first time.

"Gilmanon is just part of us" says Mrs. Cumming, "and my family, as I, have it tucked in our hearts."

It is because of the happy days they have had and still have, in Gilmanon that they urged her to jot down her memories of those "long ago days when you and Betty spent your summers in Gilmanon."

"So I took the bit in my teeth" Mrs. Cumming tells us, "and at intervals over the past two years I wrote little blurbs as they came to mind and selected some of our old photographs to illustrate this or that topic." I was ably encouraged as well as assisted by my daughter Barbara Donahue who put all my various scotch-taped bits of paper and pictures into the present legible form that the book has."

"At first" she continues, "our idea was to have the book just for the family, but in order to have a paper binding on it, which I insisted upon, rather than a spiral one, we had to order fifty copies. We soon discovered it has interest to others as well as to family

members with the result that we have had to order many more copies which will be ready about July 23rd."

"The book seems to have appeal for all ages. There are lots of pictures and a good dollop of Gilmanon history, its houses, its views, its treasures. The other day I was inscribing a copy for a ten year old lad who, although his parents had bought a copy, wanted one for himself to show to his friends in California where he also lives. In the

inscription I wrote something to the effect that perhaps 75 years from now, he might be writing of his memories for his family. But, rather than making notes about baths with bowls and pitchers and pumps, kerosene lamps, horses and carriages and listening to records played on a victrola, he would be describing luxurious saunas, electric lights, jet planes and video games on the TV!"

The book sells for \$15.00. Of this amount,

\$7.00 is donated either to the Gilmanon Historical Society, The Gilmanon Centre Congregational Church, The Gilmanon Women's Club, or the Smith Meeting House on Old Home Day. To order a copy please call 267-6384.



Betty and Jane Scriven

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