

**SECOND CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF  
THE EXPLORATION OF ANCIENT  
WOODBURY, AND THE  
RECEPTION OF THE FIRST INDIAN DEED,  
HELD AT WOODBURY, CONN., JULY 4  
AND 5, 1859**

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Second centennial celebration of the exploration of ancient Woodbury, and the reception of the first Indian deed, held at Woodbury, Conn., July 4 and 5, 1859 by William Cothren

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**WILLIAM COTHREN**

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SECOND

Centennial Celebration

OF THE EXPLORATION OF

ANCIENT WOODBURY,

AND THE RECEIPIION OF

THE FIRST INDIAN DEED,

HELD AT WOODBURY, CONN.,

JULY 4 AND 5, 1859.

EDITED BY WILLIAM COTHREN.

WOODBURY:

PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

1859.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE CELEBRATION.

At a meeting of some two thousand persons, from the several towns of "Ancient Woodbury," on the 5th of July, 1858, it was moved by William Cochren, and seconded by Rev. John Churchill:

"That a Committee of two from each of the towns once included, in whole or in part, in the ancient town of Woodbury, be appointed by the meeting, with power to add to their own number, and to appoint all necessary Assistant Committees, for the purpose of making efficient arrangements for the Historical Celebration of the Second Centennial Anniversary of the first Exploration of the Town, and the reception of the first Indian Deed, at Bethel Rock, on the 4th day of July, A. D. 1859, and also to invite gentlemen to deliver the various addresses, &c., of the occasion."

The motion was unanimously adopted, and the following named gentlemen appointed such Committee:

William Cochren, C. B. Phelps,\* W. T. Bacon,† P. M. Trowbridge,† *Woodbury*;

R. W. Frisbie, S. H. Mitchell, *Washington*;

T. B. Wheeler, A. B. Downs, Col. C. Hicock,† *Southbury*;

Abraham Beecher, H. W. Peck, *Bethlem*;

H. B. Eastman, F. W. Lathrop, *Roxbury*;

N. J. Wilcoxson, Alfred Harger, *Oxford*;

Dr. Marcus DeForest, Jr., Leonard Bronson, *Middlebury*.

### FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE.

On the 18th day of September, 1858, the General Committee held its first meeting, pursuant to written notice by letter, to each member thereof, from the chairman, William Cochren. This meeting was held at the office of the late Judge Phelps, but the chairman was

\* Judge Phelps died December 21, 1858.

† Gentlemen since added to their number by the Committee.

absent, attending to professional business in a neighboring town. What the action of the Committee was, will be seen by the following paragraph, which went the rounds of the Connecticut press:

WOODBURY SECOND CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

The General Committee having in charge the matter of the second centennial celebration of the discovery of the valley of ancient Woodbury, met at the office of Hon. C. B. Phelps, on the 18th inst., and gave an invitation to William Cothren, Esq., the "Historian of Ancient Woodbury," to deliver the historical address, and to Rev. William Thompson Bacon, the "distinguished native poet of our vales," to deliver the poem on the occasion of the celebration. These invitations have been accepted.

By a vote of the assemblage at the celebration on the 5th of July last, the proposed celebration is to be held on the 4th of July, 1859, at "Bethel Rock." Ample preparations will be made by the Committee to have the celebration worthy of the occasion, and of our historic old town.

All persons having facts or incidents connected with the history of the ancient town, are respectfully requested to communicate them to Mr. Cothren, or Mr. Bacon, who will endeavor to make a proper use of them.

W.

On the 17th of December, 1858, pursuant to a like written notice from the chairman to each member of the General Committee, a meeting was held, from which both Mr. Cothren and Mr. Phelps were absent, being engaged in the trial of a cause in which they were opposing counsel. Rev. Wm. T. Bacon, who had a short time previously been added to the General Committee, presided, and Philo M. Trowbridge, Esq., acted as secretary of the meeting. At this meeting, the following votes were unanimously passed, viz.

*Voted*, That the Centennial Celebration be held at Bethel Rock, in Woodbury, on the 4th and 5th days of July, 1859, pursuant to the vote of the 5th of July, 1858.

*Voted*, That a sermon be added to the list of exercises already agreed upon for the celebration.

*Voted*, That we do invite Rev. Henry B. Sherman, of Belleville, New Jersey, to deliver said sermon.

*Voted*, That there be an Antique Procession on said 4th of July.

*Voted*, That there be a *Pioneer Encampment* from the several towns of Ancient Woodbury, during said celebration.

*Voted*, That a committee to carry out the last two votes, and the General Committee of Arrangements for the Celebration, be appointed by the General Committee for Woodbury.

*Voted*, That a Committee of Invitation for the several towns be appointed by the Woodbury Committee.

VOTED, THAT THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF WOODBURY BE INSTRUCTED TO SECURE SHORT ADDRESSES FROM RESIDENTS OF THE TERRITORY, AND OTHERS FROM ABROAD, WHO SHALL BE PRESENT AT SAID CELEBRATION.

*Voted*, That the Committee of Invitation be requested to secure the portraits of early, and other distinguished residents of Ancient Woodbury, for the Antiquarian Portrait Gallery during the celebration.

*Voted*, That a Committee in each town to collect funds for defraying the expenses of said celebration, including the publication of the proceedings, in pamphlet form, be appointed by the General Committee of each town.

*Voted*, That every person paying one dollar, or more, towards the expense fund, shall be entitled to a copy of said proceedings, when published.

*Voted*, That the poets of the territory be invited to furnish odes for the occasion.

*Voted*, That there be an Antiquarian Picnic each day of the celebration."

The substance of these votes was immediately published in the newspapers all over the State, and every body who reads had full opportunity to become informed of the action of the Committee. On their return, Messrs. Phelps and Cothren fully acquiesced in the action of the General Committee. They had left a paper in the hand-writing of Mr. Cothren, requesting action on all the above points.

Pursuant to the above votes, the General Committee of Woodbury appointed the following Committee of Invitation, with power in the Committee to add to its numbers, viz :

*Committee of Invitation.*

*Woodbury*—P. M. Trowbridge, Thomas Bull, Lewis Judd, N. B. Smith, Henry Minor.

*Southbury*—Charles Hicock, Dr. N. C. Baldwin.

*Washington*—D. B. Brinsmade, H. J. Church.

*Bethlem*—John C. Ambler, Wm. R. Harrison.

*Roxbury*—C. Beardsley, N. R. Smith.

*Middlebury*—Dr. M. DeForest, Jr.

*Oxford*—N. J. Witcoxson.



The chairman of the Committee of Invitation immediately drew a circular letter of invitation to the emigrants from Woodbury, submitted it to the General Committee of Woodbury, and it was approved. The first edition of the circular was issued Feb. 1st, 1859. This became exhausted, and a second edition was issued April 1st, 1859, a copy of which is as follows, viz :

WOODBURY, CONN., APRIL 1ST, 1859.

DEAR SIR :—

The citizens of Ancient Woodbury met on Monday, the 5th of July last, and celebrated the Eighty-second Anniversary of our National Independence. Near the close of the exercises of that day, on motion of WILLIAM COTIREN, Esq., it was voted by acclamation to celebrate on the 4th and 5th of July, 1859, the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the exploration of Ancient Woodbury; and to carry said vote into effect, a General Committee of two persons from each of the towns once included in Woodbury, was appointed, with full power to make the necessary arrangements.

The above Committee having appointed the undersigned a Committee to invite all persons who may have emigrated from among us, and all others interested, does hereby extend an invitation to you personally, and solicit you to be present and unite with us in the festivities of the occasion.

It is expected the exercises will occupy two days, and that they will be nearly as follows :

1. Antique Procession.
2. Historical Address by WILLIAM COTIREN, Esq., the Historian of Woodbury.
3. Poem by Rev. WILLIAM THOMPSON BACON, of Woodbury.
4. Sermon by Rev. HENRY B. SHERMAN, of Belleville, N. J.
5. Reading of Letters and Odes, with Speeches from distinguished Emigrants.
6. Mammoth Antiquarian Pic-Nic, both days.
7. Pioneer Encampment on Orenaug Rocks.
8. Amateur Indian Encampment on Castle Rock.
9. " Guards " and Sentinel service on the Cliffs.

The various Committees are now in the active discharge of their duties, and from present indications, the occasion will be an honor to the descendants of the intelligent, virtuous, and noble men who planted the town, and who, in their characters, have left to their descendants a priceless legacy.

Come, then, our "hatch-strings are out," our hands are extended to greet you, and around our hearth-stones the "old arm-chairs" are waiting for the absent.

Very respectfully yours,

To this circular were attached the names of the Committee of Invitation, printed above, and one other, which was subsequently omitted for cause.

It had, from the beginning, been the earnest desire of every member of the General Committee so to arrange the parts and apportion the duties necessarily arising out of the celebration, that their action would meet the hearty approval and cordial co-operation of all interested in the objects of the occasion. This was frequently a matter of consultation in the casual meetings of the Committee. Not a word to the contrary was ever heard. It was in this spirit, with this view, after full consultation in the first regular meeting of all the members of the General Committee of Woodbury, which, for this purpose, had been invested with the full powers of the General Committee, that the following action and correspondence took place, viz:

WOODBURY, 25th March, 1859.

REV. J. CHURCHILL,

*Dear Sir:*—The General Committee were together to-day, arranging a little for the celebration next July, and were desirous of getting some one to make a little opening speech, on the first day of the celebration, after the prayer, and before the other exercises, "Welcoming back the sons of Woodbury, who return to join us in the anniversary." We also wish some Clergyman to speak in reply to the Sentiment—"The early Clergy of Ancient Woodbury." It is proposed that these parts be each twenty or thirty minutes in length, and we desire, thus early, to secure persons to take them, as whoever accepts them would require some time for a preparation satisfactory to himself.

It is our desire that you would take one of these parts, and the one you would prefer. Rev. Mr. Bacon and Mr. Trowbridge heartily join me in inviting and urging you to do this.

We are receiving letters from all parts of the Union, from the sons of Woodbury, who have gone out from us, expressing the greatest interest in the proposed celebration, and promising to attend. We believe that, with a little earnest effort on our part, it will be an occasion we shall long remember with pleasure.

Please write me a line soon, stating whether you will join us in the exercises as proposed.

Yours truly,

W. COTHREN.

MR. CHURCHILL'S REPLY.

MR. COTHREN—*My Dear Sir*—I received your letter of the 25th inst., on Saturday afternoon. In reply to it, I would say, that it would have been agreeable to me to have participated, not in any public services, but in such *other ways* as I might, in order to make the occasion to which you refer interesting and profitable. The occasion is one, which for some three or four years past, I have often contemplated, and conversed upon with different individuals in the Town with interest. But no matter for this now. As the programme is widely before the public, and the Gen'l Committee have prepared & sent it out with the Invitation, over the signatures of *another* committee expressly appointed for that purpose, it wd to the community at large seem at least much like an afterthought *now* to add two addresses to the occasion. Not only so, but your note gives me to understand that these additional matters are proposed by the General Committee for Woodbury, whereas, I had supposed the Gen'l Com. for Ancient Woodbury consisting of two from each Town to be the proper authority to make the arrangements. It would be *very fit* from my wish to speak or to have any public duty on that occasion, & I must respectfully decline your invitation.

Very respectfully,

JNO. CHURCHILL.

WOODBURY, March 28, 1859.

On the 16th of April, the Committee had another meeting, and made appointments for the exercises of the second day of the celebration, including the parts refused by Mr. Churchill, he having been the first man applied to after Mr. Sherman was appointed to preach the sermon. These appointees, with the exception of three, who were unable to fulfill on account of sickness in their families, were the same as appeared on the final order of exercises, which was as follows, viz :

WOODBURY SECOND CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

There will be a Historical Celebration of the Second Centennial Anniversary of the first Exploration of the Town, and the reception of the first Indian Deed, at Woodbury, on the 4th and 5th days of July, A. D. 1859, commencing at 10 o'clock, A. M.