

The Weekly Journal
Lewiston, Thursday, June 19, '90 (1890)

Flag Presentation in Leeds

There was a large congregation at the Center Church in Leeds, Sunday, to hear a peace sermon from Rev. R. B. Howard. At 4PM the Otis schoolhouse was packed and about as many stood outside. The edifice was festooned with evergreens, and a large flag, the gift of Gen Oliver O., Rev. Rowland B., and Gen Charles H. Howard, who were born and commenced their education and school-teaching there, floated over the entrance. Judge Cyrus Knapp of Livermore Falls, a former pupil and teacher, presided, and appropriate music was rendered. The main address was by Rev. R.B. Howard, who presented the flag. To that, Judge Knapp suitably responded for the district (No. 5). Whittier's beautiful and appropriate poem, "Our State" was finely read by Miss Lena H. Foss, who is teaching here her third term.

The singing was lead by Cyrus B. Lane, a former pupil, now one of the selectmen of the town. Mr. Howard gave early reminiscence of the schoolhouse, and teachers and scholars as he knew them. He first attended the school in 1840, and taught it two winter terms while in Bowdoin College, 1854-5. He was also a pupil in the High Schools which were often held here in the autumns long ago. He read a graphic description of the first schoolhouse, written by Mr. J.H. Otis of Auburn from whose father, Ensign, and grandfather, Oliver Otis, the house takes its name. A brief and cordial letter was read from Gen. O.O. Howard accompanied by the following list of soldiers in the Civil War who were either from or now reside in this district: Joseph Lamb, Lt. Dexter W. Howard, Gen. Charles H. Howard, Gen. O.O. Howard, Henry Millett, Herbert Millett, Charles Millett, Orpheous Leonard, Capt. Charles Hutchins and George Pearie.

A brief history of the stars and stripes was given. It was declared to be a symbol not only of bloody battle fields but of those victories of peace which the United States have won. In the long list of male and female teachers read were many names of local repute. The occasion was pronounced educational, patriotic and religious. Judge Knapp gave a sketch of the early settlers of Leeds who were among the ancestors of the donors. The occasion was non-partisan and unsectarian and a very pleasant one. It is proposed to follow the presentation by the erection of a suitable flag staff and it was also suggested that a small park be set apart on the summit of the great Otis Hill near by, on which there should be a monument of native granite rocks with a tablet inserted, inscribed with the names of the Leeds soldiers and the legend "In memory of the peace 1865." The whole to be surmounted by the country's flag. This would look down upon the lake and rivers and over the streams and all the cemeteries where sleep the sailors and many of the soldiers of the old town.