

The British Isles



The British Isles Historic Society

History, Heritage, Traditions & Customs

**Special Fall Edition
September Equinox**



The September Equinox

(or Southward equinox) is the moment when the Sun appears to cross the celestial equator, heading southward.

Due to differences between the calendar year and the tropical year, the September equinox can occur at any time between September 21 and 24.

At the equinox, the Sun as viewed from the equator rises due east and sets due west. Before the Southward equinox, the Sun rises and sets more northerly, and afterwards, it rises and sets more southerly.

The equinox may be taken to mark the end of summer and the beginning of autumn (autumnal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere, while marking the end of winter and the start of spring (vernal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.

The traditional harvest festival in the United

Kingdom was celebrated on the Sunday of the full moon closest to the September equinox. Date and time for 2020-09-22, 13:30

The autumnal equinox in the northern hemisphere marks the time when the sunrise occurs later and the night begins to fall earlier each evening. Plants begin to die or go dormant for the winter and animals begin to hibernate.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_equinox

Harvest Festival

In Britain, thanks have been given for successful harvests since pagan times. Harvest festival is traditionally held on the Sunday near or of the Harvest Moon. This is the full Moon that occurs closest to the autumn equinox in September. The celebrations on this day usually include singing hymns, praying, and decorating churches with baskets of fruit and food in the festival known as Harvest Festival, Harvest Home, Harvest Thanksgiving or Harvest Festival of Thanksgiving.



Mell Harvest Festival

Thanksgiving is an American tradition. Canada also have a Thanksgiving feast, but the British historically they had a Harvest Festival.



Harvest time, 1954.

Image: Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.

Until the 20th century most farmers celebrated the end of the harvest with a big meal called the harvest supper, to which all who had helped in the harvest were invited. It was sometimes known as a "Mell-supper", after the last patch of corn or wheat standing in the fields which was known as the "Mell" or "Neck".



'Mell' was the dialect word for the last sheaf cut in the harvest field across the northern counties of England, and the Mell Supper was the Harvest Home gathering to celebrate.

This was 'harvest home' time again, a big event in the farming year, as it contributed significantly to the economic survival for another year of both farmers and farm workers.

It was traditionally followed, particularly if the harvest was good – and the farmer generous – by a Mell Supper, with much eating, drinking and dancing, to celebrate. The last sheaf of corn cut was often tied up with ribbons and flowers, and Mell cakes were also baked for the occasion. They were made into large plate-sized circles to be broken and shared out communally.

Mell Cakes

Ingredients:

- 1 lb (450g) plain flour
- 7 oz (200g) lard
- pinch of salt
- 4 oz (113g) currents
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 5 fl oz (quarter pint) of milk
- Sugar to garnish



Method:

Mix all the dry ingredients. Mix into a stiff dough with the milk

Roll out to ½" inch (1 cm) thick to the size of a plate and cook it on a greased baking tray in a moderate oven for about 25 minutes

When cooked, split and butter them, and sprinkle them with sugar

Best when served warm.

They were made into large plate-sized circles to be broken and shared out communally.

Nowadays the festival is held at the end of harvest, which varies in different parts of Britain. ...

The modern British tradition of celebrating Harvest Festival in churches began in 1843, when the Reverend Robert Hawker invited parishioners to a special thanksgiving service at his church at Morwenstow in Cornwall.

Crying The Neck is a harvest festival tradition once common in counties of Devon and Cornwall in the United Kingdom in Europe. The tradition declined following the invention of machines such as the combine harvester.





G. Alers-Hankey

was born in 1869 in **Bexley, Kent** and was educated in England. Emigrated from there in 1891 and arrived in Vernon in 1892 to open the city's first bank, a branch of Wulffson and Bewicke, a private bank.

After the Bank of Montreal opened the following year, Mr. Hankey went into the real estate business for himself under the name of G.A. Hankey & Co. In 1913, he sold the business to A. Waring Giles, but retained wide business interests at the coast which he managed until his death in 1943"



The four-story Hankey block was designed by Thornton & Jones in 1911 and built by Purdy & Lonegan at a cost of

\$33,000. When it opened it became the Holborn Rooms.

G A Hankey developed the block – but he wasn't in Vancouver. Gerald Cramer Alers Hankey ran a Vernon company where he was a 'Notary Public, Financial, Land, Insurance and General Agent Mining Broker and Agent'. He was 41 when he developed the hotel. He arrived from England in 1891; his wife Mary was also English but had arrived in Canada in 1885. In 1911 they had three sons and a daughter (who died soon afterwards) in their Vernon home. The company also owned the Hotel Russell in New Westminster.



The Craigflower Manor and Craigflower Schoolhouse

are National Historic Sites of Canada located in View Royal, British Columbia (the

Manor) and Saanich (the Schoolhouse) near Victoria.

The centerpiece of each historic site is a 19th-century building — a manor and schoolhouse commissioned by the Hudson's Bay Company to provide education and lodging for their employees. Built as part of the agricultural community Craigflower Farm, the buildings served as a focal point for the community into the modern era; they remain open to the public today as museums devoted to the colonial history of Victoria

TRIVIA:

Queensborough, New Westminster:

Queensborough was the name originally chosen for the colonial capital by Royal Engineer commander Colonel Richard Clement Moody. When Queen Victoria designated New Westminster instead as her new capital's name, the name Queensborough became applied to New Westminster's portion of Lulu Island,

Sapperton:

Sapperton was originally a "suburb" of New Westminster, named for the Columbia Detachment of Royal Engineers ("Sappers"), whose camp was on the hill now occupied by the Fraserview neighbourhood. It is the location of the historic Fraser Cemetery, which rivals Victoria's Ross Bay Cemetery for the number of historically significant graves and monuments. Sapperton is the home of the first commercial brewery to operate in British Columbia known as the "City Brewery". Over the years the brewery changed hands and was operated by Labatts until it closed in 2005.

Harvest Festivals

are rooted in

History and Tradition





Mock Goose Pie

You have heard, of course, of 'Bangers 'n Mash'. This is a variation on this, but

a much more interesting, tasty and nutritious variation on this sausage and mash potato theme.

Ingredients

450g/1lb pack of good quality pork sausages, skinned

450g/1lb mashed potatoes

1 large onion, sliced and fried in a little butter

110g/4oz mushrooms, sliced to fry with the onions

Salt, freshly ground black pepper, mustard powder to season

Knob of butter

Dash of cold milk or double cream

Good handful of grated Cheddar cheese

Method

To make nice fluffy potatoes, start with good quality potatoes like Maris Piper or King Edward

Peel the potatoes, cut them into chunks placing them into a big saucepan

Start the potatoes off in cold salted water and bring them to the boil, then cook for 15 minutes until fork-tender

Strain and set aside to cool slightly before mashing by hand with a fork until fluffy

Season the potatoes with a good knob of butter, salt, black pepper, mustard powder and a dash of milk till you have the correct consistency you want, then set aside

Fry the sliced onions and mushrooms in a little butter till golden colour

Skin the sausages and squash them together before spreading over the bottom of a gratin dish or similar ovenware container

Place the fried onions and mushrooms on top of the sausage meat

Top with the seasoned potatoes, forking the top so it becomes crisp and brown

Sprinkle over a handful of grated Cheddar cheese on top of potatoes

Cook for around 60 minutes at 180c/gas mark 5 until the cheese is golden brown

Serve at once with some nice seasonal green vegetables and good gravy.

<https://traditional-yorkshire-recipes.info/2020/07/22/mock-goose-pie/>

Mock Goose. Image: Baker Mike/Keighley News



Daniel Loftus Beckinsale

First port doctor b. Nov. 18, 1846, **Isle of Wight**; d. c. Feb. 14, 1929, London, Eng. Graduated MB, CM (Edinburgh U., 1872); MD in 1874. Served on several London hospital staffs. Came to Vancouver in June 1886. First port doctor and early health officer.

Formed the Vancouver Reading Room, predecessor of the first public library. In 1887, the Reading Room opened at 144 West Cordova Street. In 1894, the Free Reading Room and Library moved to a larger (46 ft²) room in the new Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Building at 151 West Hastings Street. Moved to Interior because of ill health, residing in Nelson in 1894. Lived in San Francisco (1905-06) and survived the big earthquake. In 1916, he was practising in Wales.



1748: Fine porcelain developed by Thomas Frye (c. 1710–1762), of Bow porcelain factory, London

Irish Culture and Customs

Lughnasa - Celebrating the Harvest

Putting out the hare, putting on the harvest knots, by Bridget Haggerty



Small animals retreated from advancing harvesters by hiding in the remaining crop, and in the old days, every farmer went to great lengths

to ensure that his last field would be harvested before a next door neighbor or other man in the village. Thus the call..."Have you put the hare out yet?"

How it worked was that a small portion of the crop - usually enough to make one sheaf - was left standing while the rest of the last field was finished. Before the final piece was cut, the workers raised a shout or made a noise to "put out the hare." If a farm nearby still had a standing crop, the workers would then say : "we sent you the hare."

According to ancient folklore, there was a tale of an old hag who turned into a hare to steal the cow's milk. This story also mentions putting out the hag who was driven from field to field until she reached the last field of the last man in the village to cut the last sheaf. The hag could go no further and it was the unfortunate lot of the tardy farmer that he must support the hag or hare for a year.



Interestingly, in many parts of Ireland, the last sheaf itself was called the cailleach or hag.

Traditions surrounding the cutting of the last sheaf varied from region to region. In places as far apart as Antrim and Down in the north-east and Limerick and Tipperary in the south-west, the workers stood back a short distance and each took a turn at throwing their reaping hook at it. According to Kevin Danaher in his book, The Year in Ireland:

"To cut it in this way needed both luck and skill and the worker who succeeded on cutting the last stalks was loudly cheered. "

<http://www.irishcultureandcustoms.com/ACustom/AfterHarvest.html>



New Caledonia, District of Hudson's Bay Company

Capital: Fort St. James

- Established 1805
- Dis-established 1858

The central region was given the name of "New Caledonia" ("New Scotland") by explorer Simon Fraser. To avoid confusion with Colombia in South America and the island of New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean, Queen Victoria named the area British Columbia when it became a colony in 1858.

New Caledonia was a fur-trading district of the Hudson's Bay Company that comprised the territory of the north-central portions of present-day British Columbia, Canada. Though not a British colony, New Caledonia was part of the British claim to North America. Its administrative centre was Fort St. James. The rest of what is now mainland British Columbia was called the Columbia Department by the British, and the Oregon Country by the Americans. Even before the partition of the Columbia Department by the Oregon Treaty in 1846, New Caledonia was often used to describe anywhere on the mainland not in the Columbia Department, such as Fort Langley in the Fraser Valley.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Caledonia_\(Canada\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Caledonia_(Canada))

*The Greatness of a Culture
can be found in its
Heritage Festivals.*



Bilberries & Yorkshire Pudding

The bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) is a round, flat-topped, delicious tiny fruit that grows in the wild. It is

seldom cultivated. The berries grow profusely on small, wiry shrubs, mainly on high ground in the north and west of the British Isles. Due to its small size and blue color, it is often mistaken for a blueberry.

Ingredients:

Yorkshire Pudding batter, (option: made from 4 oz (113 g) plain flour, medium egg, and a half pint of milk & water (50/50)

8 oz (225 g) bilberries, washed (substitute Blueberries)

4 oz (113 g) white sugar

Method:

Combine the berries with the sugar, then mix into the batter

Heat a little vegetable cooking oil or lard in either one large round or square baking tin, or two medium-sized tins, in a hot oven until the fat is very hot

Add the batter and berry mixture and cook for around 20 minutes for two tins, or 30 minutes for one large tin, until the batter is crispy and golden.

Serve hot with cream.

<https://traditional-yorkshire-recipes.info/2020/07/22/bilberries-yorkshire-pudding/>



1790: Sewing machine for leather invented by Thomas Saint.

In 1804, a sewing machine was built by the Englishmen Thomas Stone and James Henderson, and a machine for embroidering was constructed by John Duncan in Scotland

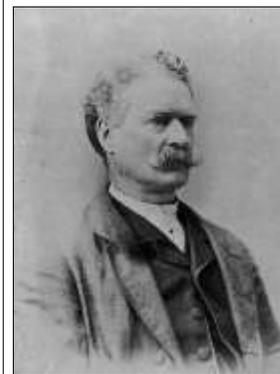


Granville Street

Sir Granville Leveson

-Gower, 2nd Earl Granville was the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs of the **United Kingdom** in the mid-19th century. Granville Leveson-Gower, 1st Earl Granville, GCB,

PC (12 October 1773 – 8 January 1846), styled Lord Granville Leveson-Gower from 1786 to 1815 and Viscount Granville from 1815 to 1833, was a British Whig statesman and diplomat from the Leveson-Gower family.



Robson Street

John Robson

 (14

March 1824 **Perth** – 29 June 1892 **London**) was a Canadian journalist and politician, who served as the ninth Premier of the Province of British Columbia.



Cambie Street

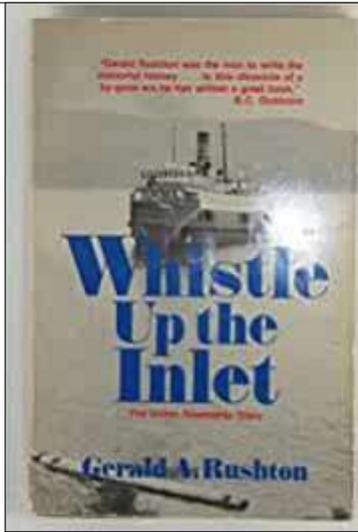
Henry John Cambie

Born: October 25, 1836, County **Tipperary, Ireland**,
Died: April 23, 1928, Vancouver. Henry John Cambie was a Canadian surveyor, civil engineer, and a notable figure

in the completion of that country's transcontinental railway. He was also a notable pioneer resident of Vancouver. Cambie was educated in England, and emigrated to the Province of Canada as a youth, where he learned to be a surveyor.



1605 Bacon's cipher, a method of steganography (hiding a secret message), is devised by Sir Francis Bacon



Gerald Arnold

Rushton Author, historian b. July 20, 1898, **Liverpool, Eng.**; d. Nov. 12, 1993, Tsawwassen, B.C. His interest in marine history began in 1913 after winning a scholarship to Liverpool Collegiate

School. Took officer training (1915-19), learning world trade shipping. Of the 12,000 students who trained with him, 9,000 died in WWI.

After working with his father, a senior manager in Liverpool's J.H. Welsford Co., Gerald emigrated to B.C. in 1920 and joined a subsidiary, Union Steamship. His 38-years with the company and knack for research made him a sought-after expert on the coast's maritime heritage. Married Margaret Rushton in 1930. Biblio: Whistle up the Inlet; Echoes of the Whistle.

Margaret Elinor Rushton

Holiday Theatre founder b. Sept. 28, 1907, Wigan, Eng.; d. Aug. 13, 1977, White Rock. Came to Canada in 1930. Joined Vancouver Little Theatre, serving as president (1949-54). Her interest in children's theatre led her to Holiday Theatre, where she was tour coordinator. When Holiday Theatre became part of the Playhouse Theatre Centre, Margaret was public relations officer and organized B.C. tours. Member, Dominion Drama Festival national executive; president, B.C. Drama Association. Retired in 1971. Wife of Gerald Rushton.

Editors note: I had the great privilege of knowing Bro. Rushton. I have both a copy of his book "Whistle up the Inlet" and a recording of a talk he gave at Lodge one night on his experiences with "The Union Steamship Company"



The Union Steamship Company of British Columbia

was a pioneer firm on coastal British Columbia. It was founded in November 1889 by John Darling, a director of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, and nine local businessmen. The company began by offering local service on Burrard Inlet near Vancouver and later expanded to servicing the entire British Columbia coast.

The Union Steamship Company began operations in 1889, with cargo steamers Comox, Coquitlam and Capilano servicing the camps, canneries and settlements of the BC Coast. Operations extended into Alaska when gold was discovered in the Klondike in 1896.

By the turn of the last century, "the Union", as it was affectionately known, was the lifeline of the Pacific Northwest. Settlements and camps far more numerous and larger than today's depended completely on the company for news, mail, supplies and transportation. The arrival of every boat drew a cheerful crowd.



In 1917, with an influx of English capital, the company ventured into the excursion and resort business with the acquisition of 7 acres at Sechelt and the steamers Chasina and Chilco. "Selma Park" at Sechelt was its first destination resort.

The Union Steamship Company was bought out by the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company in 1948. The SS Noronic fire in Toronto forced the Federal Maritime Department to change marine regulations regarding wooden passenger vessels, cont. page 8.



... while the nature of the BC coastal fleet changed more to freight and a tug and barge

operation. The Union Steamships ran until 1956 when a strike finished the fleet.

<https://>

www.bowenheritage.org/the-union-steamship-company.



The Harvest, The word

'harvest' comes from the Old English word hærfeſt meaning 'autumn', aptly the season for

gathering the food of the land. This was a vital time of year, when success was a genuine matter of life or death. A prosperous harvest ensured that a community would be fed throughout the potentially barren winter months. It's therefore no surprise that it was also a time steeped in superstition and, if successful, much celebration. Many of these traditions even pre-date Christianity.

The church festival that is the most common harvest celebration still held today originated in Morwenstow, Cornwall in 1843, when Reverend Robert Hawker invited the parishioners of his church into his home to receive the Sacrament in "the bread of the new corn." Whether from the Divine, the elements or the mystical, all help was gratefully received.



Thanksgiving in Canada

Thanksgiving was first observed as an annual event

in Canada on 6 November 1879. ... It was not until 31 January 1957 that Parliament proclaimed the observance of the second Monday in October as "a day of General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed."



Edgar George Baynes

was born to Harriet Amelia and George Baynes on Fens Farm in **Brocking, Essex England**. He had 5 brothers and sisters: Hetty, Kate, Alfred, Jim, and Lila. He and his family moved to Stisted Hall, Essex in 1874 and were educated at

Braintree Board School.

Edgar ran away from home in 1883 and joined a firm of builders in 1884. He spent 5 years learning the building trade.

On April 4, 1889, he left for Liverpool on the S.S. Sarnia for Halifax as an apprentice to Mr Joseph Franklin. He arrived in Halifax on the 14th, took a train to Vancouver, and arrived in Vancouver on the 22nd.

On March 7, 1890, he left for Squamish from Vancouver at age 19 with his friends Harry Judd and A.J. (Bert) Crysler and their friend Drummond. They left in a sailboat that Crysler and Judd had made. He pre-empted on an island in the Squamish River, now known as Baynes Island (in the area of an Indian graveyard).

In 1892, Edgar left Squamish to become a carpenter in Vancouver. During his time he placed long firm beams in the Christ Church Cathedral.

In 1893, he established Baynes and Horie Construction Company with William Horie. The office was in the Baynes house at 634 East Georgia. They would build many of the early buildings on Water and Cordova Streets and more schools than any other contractor in the province. His company also got a contract to erect Entrance Island Lighthouse near Nanaimo (paid \$2308).

