

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PEOPLE IN CADIZ LOVE TO PARTY

Information obtained from a letter written by Merlin Mead to his daughter Rhoda on January 10th, 1859:

Merlin Mead and his wife Polly did not drink or play cards so they were excluded from the parties given there. However, they did describe them. According to a Mrs. Philbrick, in Cadiz there was insufficient snow that year for traveling. The chores were done and the natives were restless. The "surprise parties" involving over a hundred guests (all unexpected by the chosen host) lasted until dawn with dancing downstairs and card playing upstairs.

Merlin's description:

What our neighbors say, I of course know but little. Judging of what they do, you may judge the conversation. Parties! Surprise Parties! Are or have been all the rage among a certain clique. A description of one will answer for all. Thus it was agreed to have one at Woodruff. John Seward says to Woodruff, we are going to have a party at Sexton's tonight so get ready. So he says to his wife, make preparations. So, a chicken pie is cooked, other fixings prepared, and just as they are ready to start the company began to come in and take possession of the kitchen and rooms (dancing and card playing occupy the time, but never at Meads) while eating and drinking till the morning.

Mr. William McNall's folks last week varied the program. They invited married people in the PM and unmarried in the evening. Mr. Clafin Weed, Cooley and many others were invited. Also Dye Sexton. And a host of others of that sort and all sorts. Your mother and I and Mr. Giddings were left out. The PM attendance was said was good, but the rush in the evening was powerful. 110 tis said took supper in the evening. Dancing was kept up till 4 o'clock next morning. All the family were dancing below and card playing upstairs. Button and his hired girl were there, while a surprise party took possession of his house. His wife was at home, and the next night was a surprise party at Stimsons, clapping the climax. Now you need not think that I am going to write all that those folks have said. You must apply to your "Spiritual Telegraph."

Submitted by: Maggie Fredrickson, Village of Franklinville Historian