

FLASHBACK ~ 100 YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 1921

Big Fire at Millstone

Somerset Democrat, November 18, 1921

The historic village of Millstone, once the county seat of Somerset, and still the “Little Whitehouse” of the county, and the home of Rutgers College, one of the oldest communities in the county and the center of worship for the old Dutch settlers of the early days, narrowly escaped destruction by fire on Wednesday evening, when flames were discovered on the second floor of a three-story frame house formerly for many years used as a hotel.

Fire was discovered in the old hotel building at about 7 o'clock, when the flames became visible from the outside. The fire rapidly increased in volume and the necessity of prompt action was recognized. The first call was sent to the Manville Fire Department, the members of which quickly responded with their chemical apparatus....The Somerville Department was then called and sent the apparatus of Engine Company No. 1 and a few men [as well as] many other members of the department from various companies. The Somerville firemen were handicapped because of the absence of water and it was found necessary to take the big pumper to the river, 1,100 feet away, and the question of hose became an important one. The Bound Brook Department was called and sent all of their apparatus to the scene, joining determinedly with the other firemen in their efforts.

Sparks from the fire rose in the air and settled upon almost every building in the village, necessitating the constant use of water upon them **and the organization of many bucket brigades** [until] the arrival of rain made further work of this nature unnecessary. The flames were visible from Raritan, Somerville, Bound Brook, New Brunswick, Princeton, and Neshanic, and thousands of people came to the scene from every direction and by every means of transportation. Many joined in the work of preventing the spread of the destruction.

Armistice Day to Be Observed

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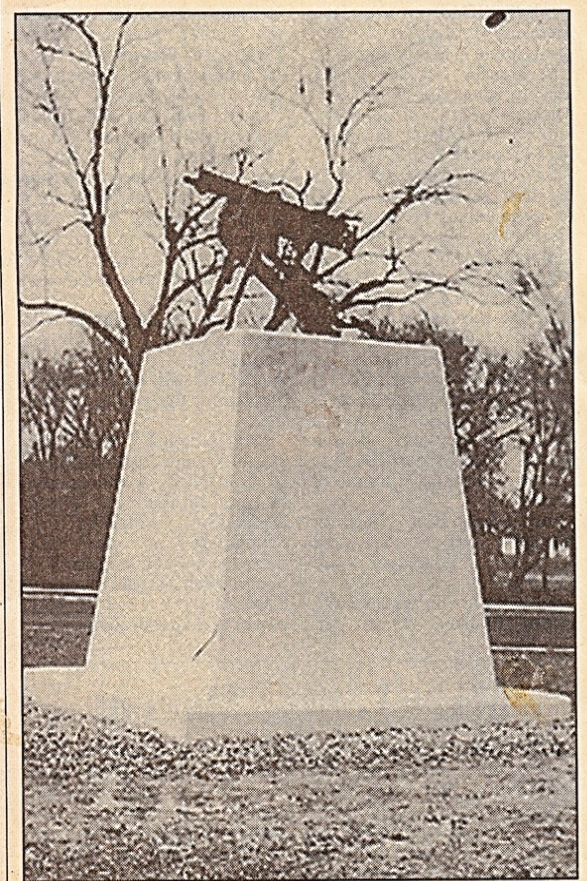
Armistice Day, to-day, will be generally observed as a holiday, the stores, post office, banks, and county offices will be closed all day. The morning will be devoted to a fitting observance of the day by the holding of a street parade and church services by the several denominations. The day has been declared a National holiday by action of Congress.

The sounding of the fire alarm whistle will mark the two minutes of prayer at noon, when all activities will cease in memory to and respect of the soldier dead, symbolized by the unknown soldier who at that hour will be interred in the National Cemetery at Arlington, Va. In the local cemetery a floral piece will be placed in memory of those of this community who lost their lives in the World War. All residences and business buildings are requested to display the National colors and all public buildings will fly their flags at half-mast.

First Steps Taken for War Memorial

Somerset Democrat, February 21, 1921

A new movement for the erection of a memorial to commemorate the work of the men and women of the community and to memorialize those who gave their lives in the great conflict was launched at the Court House Wednesday evening of this week when the World War Memorial Association was formed and an Executive Committee of ten members appointed to organize the project and present it later to the association. The Executive Committee will commence work at once....



Somerville dedicated its World War Memorial at the corner of Culver and East High streets on June 10, 1932. The memorial was erected through the efforts of the John R. Stevenson Post No. 12 of the American Legion. More than 5,000 people watched the parade which honored the 18 Somerville residents killed in what was then called The War to End All Wars.

1771 ~ 250 YEARS AGO Rolling Toward Revolution

November 1771 ~ The first classes of Queen's College (New Rutgers University) are held at the Sign of the Red Lion in New Brunswick. The first tutor is Frederick Frelinghuysen, who later serves as a Revolutionary War General. <https://www.revolutionarywarnewjersey.com/nj-revolutionary-war-timeline.htm>

