

## From an interview with the late Edna Spring Messenger.

*Taken From the Granby Drummer Column titled Historic Footnotes by Carol Laun  
Dec 2013 "Christmas Past in Granby"*

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Edna Grace Spring c.1893, about 6 years old. SBHS photo

*Edna Grace Spring was born in 1887, one of five children of Louis and Flora (Griffin) Spring. She lived in the Hungary section of Granby and attended the Hungary Road School. Her father was a farmer. One of her happiest memories was visiting the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904. She attended Simsbury High School, boarding with a Simsbury family, and taking the train home weekends. Edna taught school for a year after graduation. In 1910, Edna Spring married William R. Messenger, raising eight children in the old stage coach stop on Messenger Road. She was a member of the Connecticut Botanical Society and a recognized expert on wildflowers and ferns. Will Messenger was Granby's first selectman from 1939 to 1961, the longest period in Granby history. He died in 1965 and Edna died in 1977.*

"I think we fussed more about Christmas in those days (c.1895). On Christmas Eve, Dad would hitch two horses to the bob sled and we would ride to church, the Copper Hill Methodist Church in East Granby. There was always a church entertainment-the children would recite appropriate pieces. We did not have a Christmas tree at home, there was a big tree set up at church for all the church families. All the families took their gifts to church and hung them on the tree. There was no fancy wrapping paper then, all the presents were in brown paper. They were the only trimming on the tree. The older men would then call off the names on the gifts. There was a sort of contest to see whose name was called the most times. One neighbor had no children, but used to try to have his niece's name called the most. We received gifts like sleds, skates, clothes, umbrellas and games like checkers, dominos and Pit. There was 'always an orange and a bag of candy for each child. "I think this was just the Methodist method of celebration. We had no big celebration at home, no big family dinner. We did hang up our stockings on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. I don't remember why we hung them up on New Year's Eve. We would find mittens and candy, nuts and oranges in our stockings. On Christmas Day we would play with our new toys."