

Erastus P. Williams' Diary – 1831
Transcribed by Steven Kung

January 1831

Jan 1st: Cooler with high winds, the ground froze hard before night, I went to David Adam's and got 15 bushels of grain.

2nd Sunday: clear, cold, and windy.

3rd: I worked from D. Williams thrashing.

4th: Rainy, I went to Parkers and had my books mended.

5th: E. Howard, J Parker and I started for Montpelier, went as far as Bethel and put up for the night, it began to rain about noon and rained until bedtime.

6th: Went to Middlesex, I staid at Uncle William's and they went to the tavern.

7th: I went to Mansfield today and to Mr. Dake's this evening to a meeting, cold and windy.

9th Sunday: Stormy.

14th: Mr. Paige [in some cases spelled Page] and his wife went to Middlesex.

15th: Mr. Paige went to Royalton.

20th: Very cold and windy, the snow flies in every direction.

22nd: Snowed fast, I drewed wood.

23rd Sunday: Cold and blistering.

25th: Mr. Paige came back from Royalton, very cold, sleighing and a good deal of bare ground.

26th: The snow fell 4 inches this evening, I have lived alone 12 days and kept house for Paige which he was gone to Royalton.

27th: I went to Middlesex.

28th: Went to Plainfield.

29th: Went to Royalton, in Brookfield, I overtook Isaac Parker on his way home from Potsdam, N.Y.

30th Sunday: I went to meeting.

31st: I drew bark for Uncle D, very poor sleighing, but very little snow.

February 1831

Feb 1st: the snow fell about 13 inches today.

4th: The snow fell 8 inches, cooler with some wind toward night.

5th: Cold and blistering, I went to the saw mill with a load of logs.

6th Sunday: Cold and blistering.

9th: Father and mother went to Hanover.

10th: Mrs. Dewey was buried today.

12th: The great Eclipse of the Sun, I finished drawing logs for Uncle David.

13th Sunday: Cold with flying clouds.

15th: Very warm and pleasant, Uncle David harnessed his grey mare today, Mrs. Patterson came to father's and stayed all night.

16th: Rained fast, the snow settled a good deal.

18-19th: I thrashed wheat for J. Parker.

22nd: Isabel and I went to Esq. Cleveland today and to a spelling school this evening, stormy this evening.

23rd: A quilting at R. [Ralph] Waldo's, snowed fast all day with a strong wind, I went to a spelling school at our school house this evening.

24th: Mr. Hunt was buried today.

26th: I went to Sharon and on my way back, I stopped at Aunt Flinn's and there I for the first time saw a puzzle key.

27th Sunday: I went to meeting, Mr. Wright preached from these words, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," C. Temple and others were published today. Mrs. Waldo had her sleigh broke, going home from meeting, clear and warm.

28th: I went to Plainfield with uncle David and arrived there at one o'clock P.M. in the evening. Wm. and I went to Middlesex. Mary Flinn was preparing to move to Lawrence, N.Y. She expects to go this week. Very warm and pleasant, the snow melts fast. Caleb Temple was married to Lucy Corbin.

March 1831

March 1st: I went to Mr. Goss' this morning and partly agreed to work for him this season from Mr. G's. I went to Barre and met Uncle David there. from here I went to Royalton and got home about sunset. Sleighing begins to be poor.

2nd: Last night the meeting house in Pomfret was burnt, I went to Mr. Wilber's.

3rd: I went to the village with John S. Storrs, and bought a hat, a quilting at Mrs. Waldo's this afternoon.

5th: I worked for Uncle D. chopping.

6th Sunday: cloudy but warm.

7^h: Town meeting day, I went to meeting.

8th: I worked for J. Storrs chopping.

9th: A lecture at Uncle David this evening, four of his children were baptized.

12th : Elisha Kent died this morning. Gardner Williams cut his foot.

13th Sunday: Cloudy with south wind. Some rain fell about noon. Elisha Kent was buried this afternoon.

15th: I worked for J. [John] S. Storrs chopping.

18th: Chopped for David Paige. Mr. Powel's child was buried today.

19th: Snowed fast all day, fell 7 inch. I went to the village this afternoon.

20th Sunday: Cool with thin flying clouds and high winds. The snow fell fast, four years ago today I went to work for George Flinn, the snow then was between 2 and 3 feet deep, now there has been no sleighing for some time. I went to uncle Nathan Davis's this evening and crossed the river on the ice.

21st: I began my summers work today, I have engaged to work for H. Davis. 8 months for 86 dollars in cash. Drawed hay from Mr. Woodbury today.

22nd: Thomas went to Hancock

23rd: I went to Mr. Cogsdell's sawmill and got a load of timber for uncle N.

27th Sunday: Rainy.

30th: Rained for very fast all the afternoon and evening, the streams rise fast.

31st Thursday: The meadows are covered with water and the roads are very badly torn. Bethel river bridge has gone, this is the third time it has been carried off in 3 years, some lightning this evening, the first I have seen this spring, Calvin started for Boston today, James went to Hanover.

April 1831

1st: Fast day, cooler with high wind. I went home this morning, the roads are very muddy

2nd: Mr. Ketchum sugared off above 60 weight of sugar today.

3rd Sunday: About 30 flocks of Pigeons flew over in less than an hour this morning. I went to uncle N's this evening.

4th: Mr. Powell this evening died.

8th: Began to mend fence.

9th: Very cold with uncommon hard wind and some snow, five barns in Rochester were blown down.

10th Sunday: Cold but not so windy as yesterday.

16th: Rained fast all day, I carried potatoes out of the cellar.

17th Sunday: Rained all night, the branch is high this morning.

18th: Thomas went to Randolph to work.

22nd: I picked up stone on the Fisk lot; warm and pleasant.

24th Sunday: Cool and cloudy, I wrote to Adeline.

26th: Ploughed on the Fisk lot.

27th: Transplanted teasles, clear and warm.

28th: Cold and rainy, on the hills, snow.

29th: Rainy, I ploughed on the Fisk lot part of the day

30th: Esqu. Warner moved his barn

May 1831

1st Sunday: Cool and cloudy, John Waldo was published today

3rd: Mended fence on the line between this and Mr. Cleveland's farm.

4th: Began to plant potatoes.

5th: Drawed manure from Mr. Pierce's; cold for the season.

6th: The colt broke from the stable last night.

7th: Worked for Mr. Fiske with the cart and oxen; clear and warm.

8th Sunday: Rained fast this afternoon, I went to meeting, Mr. Noble preached from these words, "If we deny him he also will deny us," The Sunday school was organized today, Father went to Hanover last week.

9th: Very cold with some snow, I ploughed greensward.

12th: Began to plant corn.

14th: Col. Fowler's factory was raised this afternoon, Uncle Nathan made his will.

15th Sunday: I went home, Mr. Muxley [Moxley] preached at his son's house, Uncle N sent for Dr. Paige.

21st: A smart thunder shower this afternoon, the first this spring. Father and Mother came here this afternoon, I planted corn.

22nd: I went to Mr. Kent's and got half a dozen bottles of Saratoga Spring water; clear and warm, I went to Parker's shop and got a pair of shoes this evening.

23rd: Dustin Bowen came here today with orders to warn the [militia] company.

24th: Finished planting corn.

25th: Rainy, I warned the company for training.

26th: Made fence on the Fiske lot, very warm and showery.

27th: Washed sheep this morning, Patten went to Piermont, his wife's father died yesterday morning.

29th: I went to meeting, Mr. Morse was published today, clear and very warm.

30th: Sheared sheep.

June 1831

- 1st: Finished planting and began to hoe corn.
- 2nd: Sheared sheep for Mr. Richardson.
- 3rd: Sheared sheep for Mr. Fiske. father went to Middlesex.
- 4th: I went home this afternoon; warm and cloudy
- 5th Sunday: I went to hear Mr. Murphy, warm and rainy.
- 6th: Finished weeding corn on the Fiske Lot.
- 7th: Tuesday: [militia] Training and inspection day, S. Hix [Stephen Hicks] was chosen Capt, J. Davis lieutenant, D. [Dustin] Bowen ensign. clear and warm.
- 9th: Worked on the road.
- 11th: Finished weeding corn.
- 12th Sunday: Very hard thunder shower last night, uncommonly warm weather for a fortnight past with very little rain. Mr. Woodard's steer was killed by lightning this afternoon.
- 13th: Began to chop on the Fiske lot; a thunder shower this afternoon; cooler after it.
- 14th: Rained fast; I laid the barn floor
- 15th: Worked for J. Richardson this afternoon hoeing corn.
- 17th: Reuben Bloss chopped for Calvin today.
- 18th: Finished slashing today.
- 19th Sunday: A thunder shower today, Calvin went to Bethel.
- 20th: Calvin went to Hancock and bought a pair of oxen of Mr. Church, Mr. Marsh worked here today.
- 23rd: Mr. Woodbury came here and laid the waterwork.
- 24th: Mr. Richerson [Richardson] hoed corn here today; very cold for the season, some frost on the hills last night.
- 26th Sunday: I am 22 years old today; King George died 1830.
- 27th: Henriet went to Capt. Riceson's [Richardson's] last night, expecting at work there some time. Calvin sold his oxen to J. Woodard.
- 28th: Finished hoeing potatoes.

29th: A very heavy thunder shower this morning, rainy all day.

30th: Calvin began to mow

July 1831

1st: I went home and to Mr. Howard's and bought some honey.

2nd: Went to Mr. Storrs and measured the wood I cut last spring, it measured 18 cords and 48 feet

3rd Sunday: very warm, I went back to uncle N this morning.

4th: Mr. [James] Murch worked today haying; I began to mow.

7th: Calvin went to Hanover today after Dr. Muzzy.

10th: Dr. Muzzy came here today.

11th: I built a hay stack.

12th: Mr. Wakefield worked here reaping.

17th Sunday: I went to hear Mr. Murphy preach.

18th: Very rainy.

20th: Finished reaping rye, I went home this afternoon after Isabel. Mrs. Barnett was buried today.

24th Sunday: I went to the Church to meeting this afternoon.

30th: Mrs. Harris died this evening, finished haying; we have cut 77 loads.

31st Sunday: warm and rainy.

August 1831

1st: Drained in drewed rye. finished reaping winter wheat.

2nd: Thrashed rye, rainy this afternoon.

4th: Worked for Capt. Richerson [Richardson].

5th: Mowed bushes on the Fiske lot.

7th Sunday: I went to Reuben Lewis to a prayer meeting this evening, Betsy Seakins died last night.

8th: Finished mowing bushes on the Fiske lot. Calvin cut teasles.

9th: Rainy, I thrashed rye.

10th: Mended fence on the line west of the branch.

13th: Mowed peas on the Fiske lot.

14th Sunday: Went to church to meeting, Bishop Griswold preached.

15th: Mowed rowen.

16th: Mother and Mrs. Parkhurst went to Tunbridge.

17th: I cut cornstalks this forenoon.

18th: Mowed hayseed on the Fiske lot.

19th: Went home and went fishing, Mrs. Huchinson died today, four children have died within a short time in town.

21st Sunday: I went to Barnard to a meeting, Mr. Fray preached from these words, "Thou art my portion O Lord."

23rd: Rainy, I thrashed rye, a camp meeting at Brookfield begins today

26th: Began to work on the burnt piece. Mr. Hibbard of Randolph died.

27th: Thrashed hayseed.

29th: Worked on the burnt piece.

31st: Yesterday the four days meeting commenced in this town, today I went down, the meeting house was almost full.

September 1831

1st: I gave Joseph Chase a note for \$7 on demand, the first note I ever signed.

2nd: The meeting closed today, I have attended three days and have seen such a sign as I never before witnessed, the house was crowded and many were anxiously enquiring what they must do to be saved and many rejoice in the hope that their sins are pardoned and I hope the number is increasing. this afternoon four were added to the church and the sacrament administered. I went to uncle Nathan's

3rd: Drawed logs to the sawmill.

4th Sunday: Went to West Randolph to meeting. Mr. Haskell preached.

5th: Worked on the black piece.

12th: Finished clearing.

13th: Sowed rye. Mr. Terry worked here.

15th: Began to dig potatoes.

16th: Picked corn on the meadow.

17th: I took my mare home this evening, very cool and clear.

18th Sunday: Went to meeting. Mr. O. Tracy preached from these words, "If the righteous scarcely are saved where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?"

22nd: Finished sowing rye on the Fiske lot, and gathered apples, rainy this evening.

23rd: Rained most of the time, a muster at Tunbridge. Colonel who was there died this evening in a fit of the apoplexy.

24th: Drawed logs to the sawmill, went to father this evening with Aunt Phebe who came in the stage

25th Sunday: A prayer meeting at Mr. Palmer's this evening

26th: Went to Randolph to muster this afternoon, rained most of the time.

29th: Calvin began to frame the corn house. Mrs. Hibbard and two others were baptized yesterday by Elder Kimball, Thomas went to Berlin.

30th: Mr. Dutton died today. Mr. Fowler's boy was buried this afternoon. I went to the saw mill after some [illegible] timber. Mr. Collins worked here, framing.

October 1831

1st: Mr. Greene bought a cow of Corbin. finished framing the cornhouse. Cooler for a few days past. there has been but two frosts this fall yet.

2nd Sunday: Mr. Dutton was buried. Mrs. True and Mrs. Fowler were baptized by Elder Kimball today. Mr. H preached from these words "and Elijah came into all the people and said, how long halt ye between two opinions. If the Lord be God follow him, but if baal then follow him." very warm and pleasant for the season.

4th: Raised the cornbarn.

8th: I dug potatoes north of the house and went home this evening.

9th Sunday: Began to rain last night and rained until 5 oclock this afternoon, I went back to uncle Nathans.

10th: Rainy, the Woodstock Artillery Company went to Montpelier.

15th: Finished picking corn on the Fiske Lot.

16th Sunday: Mr. Helping preached today, I went to hear him this forenoon.

20th: Finished digging potatoes.

21st: Finished picking corn.

22nd: I drewed logs to the sawmill for Patten; warm and cloudy.

23rd Sunday: Mr. Muxly [Moxley] preached at the schoolhouse in father's district. I went to hear him. Charles Spaulding was published.

24th: Drawed timber for Pattern.

26th: Began to plough.

28th: Went to Capt. Richerson's [Richardson's] and got a load of apples.

29th: The ground froze hard last night, the first time this fall that it has frozen any of consequence, I went to Mr. Jersey's and got three barrels of cider. Patten raised his shed. I went to a prayer meeting at the village school house this evening. the house was full. had an interesting meeting .

30th Sunday: I went to hear Mr. Kimbal preach this afternoon.

November 1831

1st: Finished husking.

4th: Began to plough on the Fiske lot.

5th; The Bridge across the river near meeting house fell this morning with 32 heard of cattle on it. 6 were killed.

6th Sunday: Father and mother and 12 others taken into the church today and 9 were baptized by Elder Kimbal in East Bethel.

8th: Finished ploughing on the Fiske lot.

9th: Drewed logs to the sawmill.

11th: Ploughed for Patten.

13th Sunday: I went to hear Mr. Bartlett preach. his text was Jude 21st and 22nd verses; Mr. Correns [probably Corwin] was published today. I went to Mr. Clarke's to a prayer meeting this evening.

14th: This morning the ground was covered with snow. I drewed logs and boards.

15th: Finished ploughing. Thomas came home from Sharon this evening.

16th: Thomas paid 30 dollars to uncle Nathan for me. went to School meeting this evening.

17th: Began to work on the dam.

20th Sunday: I went home this afternoon, cool and cloudy

21st: Worked on the dam.

22nd: The snow fell 5 or 6 inches today. a protracted meeting at the Baptist meeting house in East Bethel begins today. I thrashed wheat.

24th: Went to meeting.

26th: Drewed wood down the hill on the Fiske lot.

27th Sunday: Cool and stormy, Lucy Flinn was buried today.

29th: I thrashed rye; Austin of Bethel was buried.

30th: Went to town meeting.

December 1831

1st: Thanksgiving day; stormy; the ground is frozen hard and covered with snow. a week ago the ground was not frozen any.

4th: Snowed fast all day.

5th: Very cold and windy. I helped Patten halterbreak his colt.

6th: Finished thrashing rye.

8th: I helped Calvin kill his hogs. finished my 5 months work for Thomas J. Davis and took his note for 86 dollars on demand, very cold weather for the season, there has been sleighing for a week past

10th: Went to Bethel and bought some cloth of May and carried an order sign by Ketchum.

11th Sunday: Mr. Muxly [Moxley] preached at our school house, I went to Mr. Woodworth's this evening.

12th: Began to thrash for Mr. Woodard.

17th: Finished thrashing for Mr. W. I have thrashed and cleaned 114 bushels of oats this week. very cold for some time past.

19th: Davis brought my chest home.

22nd: Very cold and blistering. I threshed rye for Mr. Rix.

23rd: The coldest morning this winter toward noon, the weather began to moderate.

24th: Stormy; James came home from Hanover. Phinehas Gould died the 2nd day of the month.

25th Sunday: Went to meeting. 11 persons came forward to join the church.

26th: Sally Waldo came here and cut a shurt [shirt] for me.

29th: Mr. Martin Tuller was buried today. Mr. Gaffield probably [Garfield] preached his new sermon; his text was, "But we preach Christ and him crucified."

31st: Went to Gilead to a watch meeting this evening. Mr. Kimbal and Mr. A. Stevens preached. went to R. Flinn's and stayed the rest of the night. Snowed fast most of the evening and cleared off about midnight. There has been 26 deaths in town this year, last year there were but 19. There has not been a warm day this month and has been very cold most of the time.