

Erastus P. Williams' Diary – 1834
Transcribed by Steven Kung

January 1834

1st Wednesday: Warm and pleasant in the forenoon, but cooler toward night. I have drawn one load of wood and one saw log to the house. Went to R. Flinn's this evening. His folks were gone to J. Wilson visiting.

2nd: It has hailed fast all day. Some rain this evening. I went to the sawmill with a log. This is the first hail storm that we have had this winter and it is a severe one. None last winter nor the winter before can compare with it. The hail is between three and four inches deep.

3rd: Clear, pleasant, and cool this morning. The snow is covered with ice about half an inch thick which shines very bright.

4th: Cold and clear. I have drawn nine loads of wood this week and three saw logs to the house and one to the sawmill.

5th Sunday: Clear and cool. A few days since a lady was reading in this book and joked me quite sharp for having so many cool Sundays in my book, but never mind she did not scare me and possibly next summer, Sundays may be warmer. I went to Church to meeting. Mr. Caswell preached from, "Old Israel: thou hast destroyed thy self but in me is thy help" in the forenoon and "Rejoice in the Lord and again I say unto you rejoice" in the afternoon," His manner of delivery is not easy his voice is weak and feminine, but his sermons were good. He was born and educated in England. He now spends his time traveling and preaching.

6th: This I believe is as cold a day as has been this winter. I drew three logs for rails to the house.

7th: Very cold and freezing This morning being full as cold as some "Sundays" that are past, but not quite so cold as yesterday. I drew one load of wood and fell a large elm tree and cut off two saw logs and the rest of the time I have been doing chores. It is now half past eight. The children have just got home from spelling school. I did go, was obliged to stay at home and take care of a pet lamb and do some other small chores. The weather is more moderate this evening, cloudy with signs of snow. The snow is now very deep and with a thick hard and glare crust which makes it very bad turning out when folks meet on the road. But the crust is the worst thing that travelers have to deal with. Most of the horses and almost every yard of cattle in this town and between here and Boston have got the tongueail or as it is sometimes called, the black tongue. None have died with it yet that I have heard of. Twelve years since this same disorder was prevalent among cattle and horses and a great many died with it south and east of here. Mr. Flinn's cattle have not got it yet but it is both sides of them and I expect every day they will be taken down with it but I hope not till he gets home from Boston, and I expect him every hour till he comes.

8th: A very little snow fell last night and the wind blew hard part of the night. Clear and colder this morning. I drew two loads of wood today.

9th: Clear and windy. I fell a large elm and drew one load of wood.

11th: Drew two loads of wood. Warmer with a little snow. r. Flinn came home from Boston. He has been gone 17 days and both horses came home sick. One with tongue ail and the other the horseail.

12th Sunday: Rainy. I went home this morning. Father read a letter from Hanover. Mr. Hazen from Hartford preached in Royalton. I went to Uncle David's this evening.

13th: Rainy with unusually high wind last night. Cold with very high wind today I went to East Bethel and settled with Patten and Davis. J. took up his note. I paid Mr Rice 4 dollars and Clap 14.

14th: Paid E. Parker for keeping my colt. Isabel, Henriett and I went to Mr. Rice's this evening. Lewis Clap and sisters Weather and Mary, and Mr. Patterson were there. Mr. Rice has lived in our neighborhood two or three years and this the first time I have been into his house to stay any length of time. Had a good visit and went home in good season.

15th: I went to Mr. Wheats with Isabel this morning. Mr. Adams mended my boot. Went to Spelling school with Geo Adams this evening. I tried to spell with them but missed so many words that I felt ashamed.

16th: Went to town meeting. A committee was appointed to examine our new and stout bridge and repair it or take it down or let it be and let the water carry it off. Very cold and windy but more moderate this evening.

17th: Rained most of the forenoon. I went to East Randolph with ____, but not matter who, I had a good ride. stopt at Mr. Adams and bought a pair of boots and sold him a horsehide. A quilting at Mr. A Joiner's this afternoon. I went after the girls this evening. Father and mother came home from Hanover. They went last Monday.

18th: Choped for E. Parker part of the day. He has been sick with the lung fever nearly a month. I went to Smiths store and bought a whiplash. Warm and rainy the roads are soft and slumpy. The committee commenced taking up the bridge. James worked for Henry chopping.

19th Sunday: The snow froze a little last night but the thaw is not over yet. I went with Mr. Claps folks. Mr. Washburn preached.

20th: I came back to Mr. Flinn's last evening. Have been gone all the week visiting settling with folks and racing about from place to place. Two of Mr. Flinn's colts are sick and have been all the week. I chopped at the door part of the day.

21st: Colder again. The thaw is over. The snow has settled more within a few days than it has for weeks before. I drew a load of wood, went to R. Flinn's schoolhouse, to a

spelling school this evening. After I came home, George and I skinned a colt and a cold time of it we had to get ready to go to bed about 1 o'clock.

22nd: Unusually windy and cold. I went to the sawmill with a log. Mrs. Flinn's friends from N. Y. came here this afternoon.

25th: Drewed a log to the mill. Have done but little this week, but chores. Mr. Flinn's water stopt running to the house the other day. We worked on the pipe all the evening and most of the next day. We got it a running again after a good deal of bother and trouble which have been avoided by half an hours work done at the spring in the first of it.

26th Sunday: Stormy. I went to Bethel to meeting. Mr. Whiting preached Ezekiel 33:31-2nd in the forenoon and 11th verse of same chapter, "As I live, saith, the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from the evil of his way and live; turn ye turn ye for why will ye die? Oh house of Israel." A protracted meeting at Barnard closed this evening. It commenced last Tuesday and recommences next Tuesday. Must be a very interesting meeting or they would not commence it again. I have not heard any thing particular from there yet.

27th: Cold and blistering. I drewed logs to the sawmill. went to spelling school this evening. The scholars spelt very very well. After they had finished spelling, 8 or 10 of them spoke pieces. Mr. Finley was there.

28th: Stormy and blistering. I drewed logs. Mr. Flinn went Gilead with his wife this evening. He must set more by her than I do or he would not go so far after her such an evening as this, but if he can take any pleasure in riding with her I am perfectly willing.

29th: Mr. Flinn and I skinned a calf last night. This is the second hide we have taken off after 10 o'clock PM and a cold job we had had of it too.

30th: Mr. Flinn, L. Lilley and P. Warren started from here this morning for Montreal loaded with Tallow. Yes, Mr. Flinn had left me in a pretty situation. I have one of "Jobs, Comforters" on my right leg, a frozen toe on my left foot, and they are both very troublesome and make me as cross as a bear, but Olive accounts for my being cross another way. she says that I got shabbed while I was at home last. I shall not dispute with her on that point until I know whether she is right or not. Add to the above named troubles, two sick colts, one of which has eaten nothing for almost a fortnight, but what we have turned down his neck, out of a small pail but he has ate a few oats today and I hope he is better. Again, I am a little homesick which added to the rest I think is enough to make me cross. If you are not satisfied with my reasons for being cross I will just add one item more. I have, naturally, a fiery disposition and am rash and headstrong and when everything does not go just right I am here fretful or sullen. There are some other folks "that know as much as I" and when our different interests or views meet if I have to yield, I do it with no better grace than I ought and then sometimes I am cross and do you wonder at it?

February 1834

1st Saturday: Very warm and pleasant for a day or two past. The past month has been a cold one but it closed with moderate weather. I have done nothing chores today. My leg has been very painful. Aunt and Olive have gone to Esq. Chase's visiting. There are some folks in the world that never go any where, and yet are going every few days. If I ever get married I hope I shall get a wife that is neither a vixen nor slut. One that has wisdom enough to know that there are others in the world that know almost as much as she does. And I hope that I shall love her as well as I do some other folks. Surely this is not a bad wish.

2nd Sunday: Warm and pleasant. I went to meeting with aunt. Mr. Whiting preached from Isa 45:11. "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." A text that the Universalists quote and preach from often but Mr. W. made something very different of it. Not the tribes of Israel but Christians of every land are meant by Israel. A child belonging to Mr. Seth Walker was Christened by Mr. Whiting.

3rd: I went home and Ryland came back with the horse, expecting to take my place at Mr. Flinn's till I am able to work again.

4th: Mr. Hall made us a short visit. Most of his conversation was about the land of "milk and honey" in Ohio. He spent last summer there, and is expecting to move his family next May.

5th: Cousin Mary Ann from N.Y. came to father. She has not been there above an hour when Ryland came home with an urgent request from Mrs. Flinn that I should go to Bethel immediately. Ah, this is vexing. I am very lame, have hardly been out of the house since I came home. I have just began to visit with my cousins. I expect father home tonight with Adeline, and furthermore, I have been planning a visit tomorrow. All these things considered, I feel rather cross about going, but go I must, and words about it are useless.

6th: I skinned another colt for Mr. Flinn.

7th: Aunt and I went to Royalton, visiting. Mr. Danforth Day was buried yesterday.

8th: Very warm and pleasant for a week past. Very cold this morning. I settled with Oscar Henry and paid him 2 dollars in full. Went back to Mr. Flinn's and found him at home. He has been to Montreal. Mr. P. Bowen had his leg cut off yesterday.

9th Sunday: Warm and pleasant. I went to Bethel to meeting. Mr. Whiting preached from 1st John 5:10.

10th: Mrs. Hatch was buried this afternoon. Her age was 68. Mr. Whiting preached. His text was Isaiah 55:6. Asa Flinn got home from Boston.

11th: Mr. Flinn went to Gen. Lilley's and put on a load of tallow, I suppose, and starts for Montreal tomorrow. I chopped wood at the door. Warm and pleasant.

13th: Cold with very high wind. I chopped part of the day. My foot pained me so this afternoon that I could not work. Surely if Job's biles [boils] pained him as bad as mine do, he had more patience and resolution than I have or he would grunt all the time, for he was covered all over with them, and I have but three of any considerable bigness on me now, but although I fret and groan because my foot aches I am not so bad off as some others are. Two of our townsmen have each lost a leg. That surely is worse, and whilst I enjoy so many blessings and suffer so light, in comparison with others, gratitude to God ought to fill my heart and stop my complaining, but this is not the case with me. Like other foolish men, I suffer trifles to vex and fret me. If I make so much ado about momentary troubles what shall I do when real trouble and misery present themselves?

14th: I chopped all day with but one boot on.

15th: Rained most of the night and part of the day. I combed bristles.

16th Sunday: Warm and pleasant. The snow settles fast. The morning looks too pleasant to stay at home but I cannot go to meeting because I cannot get my boot on, but my foot will soon be better. The sore on it broke last night and discharged very bountiful. It feels easier this morning.

17th: I went to Dr. Edon's with Mrs. Flinn this evening.

18th: I went to Spelling school this evening. Mr. Finley and others spoke several pieces after they finished spelling.

19th: Rainy this afternoon and evening. I chopped wood part of the day.

20th: Nancy and I went to Randolph to a protracted meeting. Mr. Wells, a Methodist preached in the forenoon from Romans 5-12 verses in the afternoon. Mr. Bowles, a free will Baptist, from the word, "Come". He said it could be found from one end of the Bible to the other. He is the oddest preacher I ever heard. His sermon was good but plain and simple. The meeting was solemn and interesting. Four came forward for prayer. I went to a temperance meeting this evening at Boswell Flinn's schoolhouse. Mr. Sanderson preached from Leviticus 19:17th. Mr. M. Finley and Mr. Wells gave short addresses. 11 persons joined the society this evening.

21st: Three months today since I began to work for Mr. Flinn. I have lost 13 ½ days. Have been sick some and played some and rode about some and spent money a good deal or at least all I could get and that is not a great deal.

22nd: I chopped wood at the door. Very warm and pleasant for some days past. The snow runs fast. Sleighing is very poor and in many places the ground is bare. The river cleared off ice last week.

23rd Sunday: Warm and rainy. The air feels like spring, but part of February and all of March lay between us and spring. We may expect more "cold Sundays" yet, but they may be pleasant if they are cold, windy, or stormy or all united.

“My days my weeks my months my years,
 Fly rapid as the whirling spheres
 Around the steady poll
 Time like a tide, its motions keep
 And I must launch through boundless deep
 Where endless ages roll.”

This is the second Sunday in succession that I have staid at home from meeting. Last Sunday my excuse was, a lame foot. Today it rains, is bad traveling and I am lazy. Poor excuses but I can make no other unless I say... I am not very anxious to attend meeting at the Church and Bethel meeting house is too far off to walk to it such traveling as this we can always frame an excuse to stay at home.

24th: Warm and pleasant I chopt wood as the door. Mr. Flinn got home from Montreal.

25th: Snowed fast all day. I drew logs to the sawmill, a temperance meeting at Bethel. Mr. Garfield delivered an address this is [the first] instance that I recollect ever hearing of, of a universalist advocating the cause of temperance but although singular, it may be productive of great good.

26th: Mr. Flinn started for Boston. I chopped wood. Mr. Mosely began to move. He has bought a farm in Gilead of Mr. D Ross; clear and blustering but not very cold. The snow has drifted more today, than it has all winter before.

28th: Snowed a little most of the day. I chopped at the door. Mr. Willard finished his school the last day of February. Yes this short mouth has gone and I am one month nearer Eternity - to Heaven or Hell? I fear to answer and yet the day is fast approaching, when Heaven or Hell will be a reality, when I as well as all others, will doubt and trifle no more. When we shall know by sad experience if we do not repent, what is meant by Hell and Eternity. Then why do I delay? Sin is sweet and unbelief is strong.

March 1834

2nd Sunday: Snowed moderately all day. Aunt and I went to meeting. Mr. Whiting preached from psalms 73:25 “Whom have I in haven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” Communion this afternoon. The wife of Mr. Samuel Cleveland of Royalton, was buried today. As I was going from the meeting house to my sleigh I met a gentlemen, who had the politeness, or whatever you please to call it, to give me an invitation to a ball, or spree as he termed it. Thinks I to myself, this is good business for Sunday, but before I judge him I can with a good deal of propriety ask myself one question. Have I never done anything worse on the Sabbath? Have I done nothing worse today? I cannot say that I have not. Have I done anything better? A hard question.

3rd: Very cold and blustering last night. Cold, clear and still this morning. A poor old man staid at Mr. Flinn's last night. He said he had been a sailor 40 years, was brought up in Scituate in Mass. His name is Bowker, has seven children living, has buried two and his wife, and is now going see his sister in Burlington. Perhaps he told the truth but he was ragged and dirty to be an object of pity if nothing more. Town meeting day. This is the first time I have neglected to attending or freemen's meeting this four years, but I guess they will do their business just as well without me, and I guess too, that they would or full as much business if 6 or 8 others stay at home. This is the day also that "they say" said I was to be married but I have been married to nothing, but a woodpile as I know of and a tough wedding it has been, for I have broke my axe helve. The reason why I broke it is doubtless because my mind was somewhere else, but no matter. I have put a new one in and it works very well, but it is not quite so good as the old one.

4th: Father and mother came here this afternoon. They told me Orville Clapp has broke his leg. He was carrying a basket of frozen pumpkins and slipped, fell, and broke his leg. This is to warn all those whose is carrying frozen pumpkins and especially those who are very tall, to be careful how they place their feet, unless they belong to the Temperance Society and then care is necessary. I went to R. Flinn's to spelling school this evening. Mr. Nickols died this afternoon. He was a young man from the south and has worked in Bethel a year or two. Was an infidel when he came but has generally attended an universalist meeting; he has been unwell a few weeks past. Some think he was crazy. Has made several attempts to kill himself. Once in Royalton with Opium and once with a penknife. Last night, while the other workmen were gone to supper, he hung himself in the shop, but was found before he was quite dead. He lay senseless until this evening, and then breathed his last. This is said to be the first suicide ever committed in Bethel, but two Bethel men have gone to Royalton and killed themselves.

5th: Very warm and pleasant, with a light south wind. I chopt wood at the house.

6th: Hazy with a south wind. Rainy this evening. Mr. Nickols was buried. Mr. Garfield preached his funeral sermon. His text was "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." I went to East Bethel to an exhibition.

7th: The exhibition closed about 2 this morning. Two of Shakespeare's tragedies called, "The Siege of Valencia and Abbelena, and a Comedy "She stoops to conquer" were acted on the stage several addresses, dialogues, and other short pieces were spoken and all in the end amounted to just nothing or worse, mere nonsense and vanity, not worth going half so far to see, yet I have been and spent yesterday and most of last night in looking at and listening to them. Today I [feel] just as if I had been to training or somewhere else and I guess that some of the actors feel as bad as I do and that some consolation for "Misery loves company." Staid the remainder of the night at J Davis' and went back to Mr. Flin's this afternoon. Very warm and pleasant. The snow melts fast.

8th: Rained very hard, with a strong south wind. This forenoon I shelled corn, but not much, for I have not got over exhibition yet. Three funerals in Royalton this week. Mr. Howard, Mrs. Cleveland and Mr. Denison, all living on the first branch and old people.

9th Sunday: Cold and blistering. The wind blew very hard all night. I went to Church. Mr. Zebine's text was, "Let your moderation be known to all men the Lord is at hand." His son preached in the afternoon. His text was, "How long halt ye between two opinions if the Lord be God serve him but if Baal, serve him" Mr. Mosely's child was christened. Her name is Harriet Abiah.

12th: Rainy this afternoon. I chopt wood part of the day. Mrs. Brooks came up in the stage. James came this afternoon and staid all night with me.

13th: Clear and pleasant, but cold and windy. James went home this morning. I chopt wood, finished my winter work, have been here almost 4 months and my wages amount to only \$31.

14th: Went to Randolph to a protracted meeting. Mr. Rockwell preached from these words, "Then said he to the man: Stretch forth thine hand: and he stretched it forth and it was restored whole like as the other." He was short, plain, spirited, and pointed. His remarks drew tears from many, and all felt that he was preaching to them, about 40 took the "anxious" seat, most of whom were under 15 yrs of age. Mr. Nichols preached in the afternoon. His text was, "The desire of the slothful man shall slay him."

15th: Cooler. Some snow felt this afternoon. I went to Royalton. Stopt at Capt. Days and saw a dog churn. I have heard of them frequently but never saw one before. Mrs. D put in a pail of water and churned, to show us the operation. I think it is quite an improvement. It saves a good deal of hard work, which is no small consideration when folks are as lazy as I am. It also provides a way by which dogs can earn their living.

16th Sunday: For the first time this spring I crossed the river in a boat, went to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from one text all day. He preached at our school house this evening. Hosea Pierce was published. Warm and pleasant. Yes, it has not been "cold and stormy" today and I hope for pleasant weather again.

17th: Took dinner with Daniel Davis today.

19th: Went to East Bethel with Henriett. Rainy this afternoon. Very muddy, hard travelling.

20th: Staid at J.J. Davis last night. Went home by the way of Bethel bridge. Showery all day. Mr. A. Billings left Royalton last Tuesday and has moved to Shaftsbury.

21st: Went to Geo Flinn's and settled with him. He gave me an order on Gen. May. I did not want it but took just to please him. Settled with Michael Flinn and took his note for 70.00.

22nd: Very cold and blustering. The ground froze hard last night. A heavy thundershower night before last, and it has been growing cooler ever since. I put my boot on this morning and was glad to take it off again. "Job's comforters" are not so comfortable at all times.

23rd Sunday: I went home this morning. Went to meeting and rode. P. Davis' mare. Mr. Washburn preached. His text in the forenoon was Luke 8:18th in the afternoon, "Watch" I went to Mr. T. H. Safford's this evening.

24th: Commenced my summer's work. Chopped Appletrees into stove wood. Yes I have got back to Safford's again and it seems like home.

25th: I cut and drew fence posts part of the day. Snowed fast all evening.

26th: Very, cold, and blistering. I went to meeting. The town voted to do just nothing about the bridge, not even to hear the proposals that some were prepared to make so our prospects for a bridge are again blasted but never mind. We can either stay at home or ford or ferry the river. I bought a stock of Smith and paid \$100.

27th: Drew mill logs, or rather, Truman drew and I cut, but the difference is not much for we are one as it respects work this summer.

28th: Broke two sleds and mended one of them.

29th: Began to cut and draw timber for a shed. T has not storage enough. Therefore he is tearing down the old and building anew. A severe snowstorm this afternoon.

30th Sunday: This is what some call a cold raw day. The sun shines, but the wind comes from a cold corner. I went to meeting. Mr. Washburn's text was, "As he thinketh in his heart so is he." He said that some people drew from this passage, that let a man do what he will or he believes what he will if he is but sincere he is right and accepted of God, but this is an error. If a man thinks right he is right, not if a man thinks he is right he is right for this would give countenance to all kinds of heresy and crime. For a man might think it his duty to kill or rob another and according to this doctrine he would do right he would be innocent. Mr. W went to Tunbridge to attend Mrs. Cushman's funeral this afternoon.

April 1834

1st Tuesday: Warm and rainy. Cut and drew timber. I have had a very narrow escape today. Never before did I feel that my life was in great danger from falling limbs and fragments but today had I stood a second longer I must in all probability have been killed. I had but just stepped aside when the top of a tree broke and fell exactly where I stood. Why did I move at the time? Why did I look up and see my danger? This is the reason. A kind and overruling providence watches over me in the woods, and in the field at home and abroad and why am I so wicked and ungrateful that [I] do not yield to the just requirements of Him who watches over me everyday and guards me through dangers seen and unseen. Wicked unbelief, doubt and a love of sin are my only excuse.

2nd: Clear, warm, and pleasant. Drew timber. Mr. Washburn preached at Mr. Benj. Parkhurt's this evening. I did not attend the meeting, being tired or lazy, or perhaps both.

3rd: I made a cart axle this afternoon. Went to Bethel in the afternoon. David Bowen was buried yesterday. He lived a drunkard's life and died a drunkard's death. An awful spectacle of the effects of hard drinking.

4th: George Adams worked here drawing timber. Drew three sticks 50 ft long.

5th: Finished drawing timber.

6th Sunday: I went to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from Matthew 13:28. "An enemy hath done this." The account of his discourse was to charge the misconduct of professors on themselves and not on religion showing that Religion instead of being the cause of war, confusion, and distress, has a contrary effect, producing peace, friendship, love. Warm and pleasant for a few days past. Mr. W. preached at Mr. Marshall's schoolhouse this evening. His text was, "But one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her."

7th: Began to mend fence. Have been settling posts in an old stone wall. T. began to plough. Warm and pleasant. Except a strong southerly wind this afternoon.

8th: Went to Mr. Davis and got a load of ashes and a pail of sugar, but I did not get a chance to eat half so much as I wanted.

9th: Nancy Mosier died of consumption.

10th: Town meeting. I did not attend. If they wish to tear down the meeting house, academy, schoolhouse, etc. just for the sake of will, they will do it without my assisting them.

11th: Nancy Mosier was buried. Her funeral was attended in Sharon by Mr. Bascom. She was in her 17th year. One year since she was as well for aught I know, as I am. Her prospects of life were as good, and she was as cheerful, gay, and thoughtless as I. And where is she now? In heaven I hope. But of this no mortal knows. This we know, sooner or later we must follow her, and shall we meet in Heaven or am I still in the road to death? It is a solemn thought.

"See the lovely blowing flower
Fades and withers in an hour."

Even so, youth and beauty sink in silence to the tomb, and while the youth are preparing for many years of happiness, and usefulness, death, with iron grasp, seizes them, prepared, or not, for eternity, and they are gone.

12th: I have been mending fence all the week and have not finished on the bank of the river yet. Went to the village this evening and paid Warren the postage due for the Magazine.

13th Sunday: Clear and pleasant. I went to meeting. r. Washburn preached from Ephesians 2:17.

15th: Mended fence. Warm, pleasant, and dry.

16th: Fast day. Instead of going to meeting as I ought, I have been playing in the boat, going to the neighbors etc. How much good will keeping fast in this manner do me? Just as much good as I got by going to Bethel Exhibition, last March, with this exception, fast has not, as yet, cost me so much time and money as the exhibition did, but they are both past and gone, and I would that they were forgotten. I went home this evening.

17th: "Seed time and harvest shall never fail," is an ancient promise but though thousands of years ago it just as good now, as when first made. I have sowed 8 bushels of oats. Warm and dry. Wind northerly and high.

18th: Went to Mr. Rice's and got a bushel of grass seed this morning. Sowed part of it. A very hard frost last night.

19th: Mended fence part of the day. Rainy this afternoon. The first rain that has fallen for nearly a fortnight. The grass looks brighter for it.

20th Sunday: Cool and cloudy. Yes, cousin N., I still experience 'cloudy Sundays' and they are not the only cloudy days that pass over me, but not exactly in the sense that you intimated if all my prospects were as bright as those you tried to represent dark, I should be a happy man. But Eternity has an awful sound to one who is unprepared for it. Went to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from Jonah 3:5. Mr. Fowler in the afternoon from these words, "Adam where art thou?"

21st: Began to lay a wharf wall back of the house. T. says it has been an eye sore to him for 2 or 3 years and I guess he will find something else sore, before we get it done and filled up.

23rd: Reverend C. Noble of Chelsea was buried today. Mr. Washburn attended the funeral.

25th: Mr. Davis Paige's youngest child died of the canker rash. This is the first death I have heard of this year of that disease. Although a good many have had it. Isabel came here and fixed my coat.

26th Have worked all the week on the wall and have finished, except shoveling on about fifty loads of dirt, instead of a day and a half doing the job as T. calculated. We have both worked hard all the week, and he one day last week and it is not done yet, but rain and snow hindered some.

27th Sunday: Cold and stormy. The ground is covered with snow 2 or 3 inches deep. Cold and stormy and frozen. Weather for a week past but today has been a more tedious day than any last week. Went to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from Romans 8:14th and in the afternoon from Acts 24:25th "When I have a convenient season I will call for thee."

30th: Mended fence. This has been my motto this three weeks and how much longer it may be is more than I can tell, but I hope for the sake of my fingers and breeches I shall get out of the brush soon, for they are badly scratched and torn.

May 1834

1st: Warm and pleasant days, but cool and frost nights. April has past and gone and I am still mending fence, but soon I hope to sing another song. Mending my life would be a much more pleasant song, but feeble are my exertions for this the most important thing in life while for mending fence I made strong exertions and so it is, I am careful about little things, which will soon pass away, while the vast concerns of eternity are suffered to pass unheeded, and but little thought of.

3rd: I ploughed on the meadow. This is the first time I have touched a plough this spring, and I find it a different song from mending fence.

4th Sunday: Warm and pleasant. I went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Luke 9:55. Communion Day. Mrs. Lovina Davis was taken into the church. Mr. W. preached at Mr. Marshall's schoolhouse this evening. Instead of going to meeting, I went home. Instead of hearing a good sermon, I heard a silly story about a quarrel between two neighbors. Instead of going to my lodging contented, I am uneasy and dissatisfied with myself. Instead of passing a pleasant hour with ____ (which would have been my good luck if I had staid and attended meeting) I have passed a tedious hour with a man almost raving, because a neighbor has talked insultingly to his wife. Instead of meeting my brother, as I expected, I meet such reflections as these. When I see her again, will she meet me with a smile? Instead of excusing me, will she not say "you went away because you did not wish for my company because you care nothing about me?" Instead of getting any good, I pay dear for the whistle. Instead of passing another Sabbath evening as I have this, under similar circumstances I hope I shall have wisdom enough to attend meeting, or at least, not get into just such company again but instead of being any wiser next Sunday, I shall, no doubt, if I live, have just the same propensity and just the same disposition that I have now. Instead of saying any more on the subject, I will drop it.

5th: Clear and pleasant this morning. Toward night, hazy with a strong south wind. I have worked in the garden, making poesy beds, sowing onions, beets, carrots, parsnips, cabbages, etc.

6th: Rainy. I have been doing new work today, and not so pleasant work as I done neither but anything to please the ladies. I have whitewashed three rooms and begun the fourth, and it makes my neck ache, not to say anything about arms.

7th: Finished whitewashing and made a shaving horse. Rainy. The river rises fast.

8th: Began to get out manure. This is my song now, and probably will be most of next week. Heard swallows for the first time this spring.

10th: Drawed manure. Went home this evening and found James at home. T. has been planting corn this three days. I guess, bleeding would do him good for he does not get along very fast.

11th Sunday: Clear and pleasant this morning. "Welcome sweet day of sacred rest." When all nature looks gay and smiling, how can man be gloomy and melancholy? When all nature, animate, and inanimate, are praising God, the great and common benefactor, how can man be silent, or if he speaks, only curse that God who made him? Would it be so if all men imitated the example of him, who left his seat in glory, and came to us, to set an example for us to follow? ----- Went to meeting. Mr. Whiting of Bethel preached.

13th: Finished carting manure. Planted corn this afternoon. Fixed the dooryard.

15th: Cold and blustering. Snowed fast all day. The snow this evening is very near a foot deep. For a number of weeks the weather has been cold and chilly. Yesterday, I planted corn with gloves on, and then my fingers ached with the cold. Today I have threshed corn and worked comfortable with my coat on. Several sleighs have passed, a sight I have never saw before, in the middle of May.

16th: Drawed wood. Good sleiding this morning, but poshy toward noon. Very cold last night. Ice froze half an inch thick.

17th: Began to plough on the hill. The snow is so deep that it bothers a good deal but the sun shines bright and pleasant and the snow runs fast. The leaves on the trees look black and withered and make the woods look gloomy and I feel gloomy, but why should I? The sun shines bright. The birds sing merrily. The grass looks green and pleasant, and why do I indulge such feelings as have swelled my breast today? Who has injured me. No one. Who has insulted me or tried to? No one. Who do I hurt the worst? Myself. To be sure, who do I please the most? God is not pleased with such feelings. I am not pleased and my friends (if I am so fortunate as to have any), if they could read my thoughts, would be disgusted and offended. Who then is pleased? Surely none but the devil. And shall I destroy my own happiness and the happiness of my friends, without any profit but merely pleasing his Satanic Majesty? Oh that I could heartily answer no but_____.

18th Sunday: Some frost last night. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Daniel 6:10. Mr. Kinney from Barre, in the afternoon, from Psalms 89:15. On our away to meeting, met the corpse of Mr. David Bean. He started for Conn with horses last week. Went as far as Sunderland and dropt dead on Friday morning. His son 12 or 14 years was with him. What will be the feelings of his family when the news reaches them? Not a week since he left them in health, now he is a corpse.

19th: Mr. Bean was buried today. Finished planting corn. Warm and pleasant.

20th: Finished planting potatoes on the meadow. Planted the garden, etc.

21st: Finished ploughing on the hill. Very warm. A thundershower this afternoon. Capt. Davis made me a short call. His errand is not so pleasing as it might have been. On the

other hand, it is rather silly disgusting business. But I was fool enough to accept a paltry office, and now I must go it, if it is repugnant to my feelings.

23rd: Finished planting potatoes, washed sheep, and wrote orders for warning the company. Rainy this afternoon. Uncle David got home from Montpelier. He has been as a delegate to an Antimasonic meeting. Guess he will find full as profitable to stay at home and finish planting.

24th: Well, I have been my round and got home again alive and well and tired but not so hungry, as I do sometimes feel, after such a jaunt, for I sponged a dinner at Cousin Kent's. What a fine thing it is to have relation on the road, when I want to stop and bait my horse or get a dinner for myself and I'm short for money. But relations are not always the best friends. They are selfish sometimes as well as myself.

25th Sunday: I went home last night and settled with father. Went to Safford's this morning and from there to meeting. Mr. Wilde preached from Ex 20:3. "Thou shalt have no Gods before me." And Zeck 4-6 "Not by might nor power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Very warm at noon, but cooler and showery toward night.

26th: Cyrus Safford began to hew timber for the shed. Very warm and pleasant. Vegetation is flourishing, but late. Appletrees are in full bloom. Last Saturday, I saw several trees blowed full. The first I have seen this spring.

27th: Ralph Day was killed by a falling tree. He was 10 yrs old last winter. Was living with Ralph Waldo. I scored timber.

28th: Sheared sheep. Mr. Barnes scored and Cyrus hewed timber. B. did not drink more than 6 quarts of cider, of course he was not very noisy.

30th: Finished hewing.

31st: Took the old barn and sheds down.

June 1834

1st Sunday: Cloudy, but warm and pleasant. Went to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from Psalms 16:8-9-10 and 2nd Cors [Corinthians] 1-12. Went to our schoolhouse this evening. Mr. Moxley said a few words and was answered by Mr. Clap.

2nd: Began to shingle the swillhouse. A thundershower this morning. Cold and windy after it.

3rd: Very cold for the season and wind high. Annual Training and inspection day. Oh! The pleasure, the fun, the satisfaction, the humor, the profit I take in being a paltry officer, in the first place. I meet a red faced private. He says "well are you going to treat?" Another says "my foot is lame will you excuse me?" A 3rd, "I've lost my canteen

but you must return me equipt” A 4th, “I was not warned, but here are my equipment.” A 5th, “I want a little more wine.” A 6th, “I am hungry.” A 7th, “did you return equipt?” An 8th, “Return me to uncle Isaac.” A 9th, “you didn’t call my name right.” Without number, again, why do they come to me? Why not go to the Capt but all these vexations are nothing in comparison with making out and collecting the bill. One wont pay because he did not train. Another is gone. A 3rd cant pay till he has seen his brother, but the bill must be met and I must do it if I do it alone but I wont complain. I wanted to be an officer. Thought it would be something great. I am satisfied now, and well I may be, for I have paid between 4 and 5 dollars, besides, I had the pleasure of carrying 2 or 3 gallons of rum to the village this morning, an honor that but few have nowadays.

5th: Finished shingling the swill house. Mr. Garvin was buried today. His dead was occasion by falling into the cellar and breaking his skull last Tuesday morning. This is the 3rd sudden death in town, within a fortnight.

6th: Began to hoe corn. Mr. Wilcox preached at our schoolhouse this afternoon. His text was, “Be thou perfect.” Gen 17-1 He says any pride is not only useless, but sinful, but why did an all wise God bestow upon man a passion that would not if properly cultivated and managed, be useful to him? If he will convince me that he has no pride, and that he has lived without committing a single sin as long as some of his (self righteous) brethren pretend they have, and will answer my question, then I will try to banish pride from me.

7th: Hoed in the garden this afternoon. I went to the Village on listing business. Very warm and pleasant. The ground is getting rather dry. Corn and everything else grows fast.

8th Sunday: Warm and pleasant. I have lain on the bed most of the day. Too lazy to read, write, or anything else of consequence. Yes, Cousin N., instead of cold and stormy, pleasant, but a dead calm to me. Mr. Fox was published and married this evening. Mr. Garfield preached over the river.

9th: Pleasant and very warm. Hoed corn.

10th: Began to frame the shed. C. Safford and S. Davis worked here.

13th: Showery. I recorded the Militia roll and certificates this afternoon.

15th Sunday: Cool this morning, but warm and pleasant this afternoon. I went to meeting. Mr. Tailor preached from Numbers 23:10. “Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his.” And Revelations 22:17. “Whosoever will let him partake of the waters of life freely.”

21st: I have worked on the frame all the week and have not finished framing yet. Instead of 3 hands doing it in a week, we have been a fortnight.

22nd Sunday: Went to meeting. Mr. Hopkins of Montpelier preached. His text was Phil 2:12-19 verses and Jeremiah 18:6. His sermons were anti Methodist in full.

23rd: Truman raised his barn. One bent fell, but luckily no one was hurt by it. Clear and very warm. I have been going ever since 4 this morning and I am very tired besides being almost melted. For 10 days past, I have worked as hard as I could, and now I hope there will not be quite so much fretting, driving, scolding and finding fault, twitting folks of being lazy, etc. but I ought not to blame anyone, for had those who have fretted most, known how much work there is in such a frame, they would not began it, or they would hold their tongues___ but enough.

24th: Began to shingle the barn.

26th: I am 25 years old today. Yes, time, you have taken another year from me and while it has been passing, how have I acted? Have I not wickedly and carelessly slighted my Creator. and Redeemer? Shall I have another year in the same manner? "Oh that I was what I should be."

28th: We have worked on the barn all the week and it is not half covered yet, but for all that, some folks don't fret and drive so bad, as last week, or at least, not in my hearing.

29th Sunday: Cool, rained steady, but not past all day. I went to meeting. Mr. W preached from Daniel 3:16 and 18th verses and Revelations 6:17. An appointment for Mr. Scott at the meeting house this evening.

30th: Worked on the barn.

July 1834

4th Friday: Warm and pleasant. Whilst hundreds have spent the day in festivity and sport, I have been laying shingles on the south side of a roof in a hot sun, and no air stirring. But I envy them not their feelings tomorrow. The timber of our far famed plank bridge was sold at auction. It cost over 500 dollars, and went for 80 a clear profit.

5th: The warmest day this season. Finished shingling the barn. Cyrus hung the first door. If he should work another fortnight and have help enough, he would finish it. 5 weeks he has worked on it since he began to hew, and has had 2 or 3 with him most of the time and has not finished clabboarding yet ---- T began to halfhill corn.

6th Sunday: Very warm and pleasant. I went to meeting. Mr. Asahel Washburn preached from Exodus 24:11. Also, they saw God and did eat and drink. Communion day; a collection for the American Colonization Society was taken. Unfortunately, I had no money but my credit is good for 25 cents. Mr. W preached at the schoolhouse this evening, but I was so lazy I did not attend.

7th: Hoed corn.

8th: Geo and Cyrus Davis worked here hoeing. Father and mother came home from Mansfield. They went up last week.

11th: Ryland worked for me hoeing. I went to Middlesex. Settled with Perlman and found him Debtor 10 dollars. Charles Sanford hung himself last Wednesday. The cause, Intemperance!

12th: 7 o'clock PM. I have got home again, tired. Lame, cross and sleepy with sore eyes and without money. The next journey I take horseback in hot weather, I will go in a carriage or stay at home if I cant do better.

13th Sunday: Warm and pleasant. The ground is getting very dry. No rain of consequence for a fortnight past. Mr. Boardman preached in Royalton.

14th: Finished hoeing potatoes on the meadow. Last Saturday, the dead body of Mr. James Fletcher of Woodstock was carried through town. He died in Jericho.

15th: Rained all the forenoon. Hoed potatoes on the hill in the afternoon.

17th: Warm and rainy. Two as hard showers as we have had this spring. Finished hoeing.

18th: Cyrus carried his tools home tonight. He has been here 6 weeks and has not yet finished the barn.

19th: I finished the cart body, picked up rubbish, bought two new scythes and ground them, went to mill, etc. Warm and pleasant. The best hay day this week. Bowen's corpse was brought home to be buried last Thursday. He died in Chelsea and was sick about 12 hours.

20th Sunday: A cool foggy morning but the sun shines pleasant now (8 o'clock.). Mr. Winslow from Boston preached in the forenoon.

24th: Mr. Root was buried today.

26th: Warm and dry. Good hay weather all the week and we have improved it too. Have got in 17 loads of hay this week. Drawed one load today and should have drawed two more, but a smart thundershower between 1 and 2 PM prevented.

27th Sunday: Very warm and pleasant. I am so lazy that I did not go to meeting. I have spent the day in reading, talking, lounging, and must I say it? Vanity. Mr. Washburn preached at our school house this evening. His text was John 6:68. "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." His sermon was plain spirited and pointed, showing that at the hour of death, if not before, we would gladly fly to him, and the folly of turning from him now. Shall this sermon, like many others be like seed sown among thorns and thistles to me. Oh! Shall I always be found fighting against God? Will my hard heart never yield to him who died for me? Sin, why am I thy willing slave?

28th: Clear and pleasant but not so warm as the week past, drawed in two loads of hay. Turned over one load. Who was to blame, the driver, the one that loaded, or the oxen? I know which I think, but perhaps I am selfish.

31st: Finished mowing the new mowing lot and calculated to have cleared the field, but a heavy thundershower stopt us and closed our haying works for the day. "Vain are human endeavors when Providence sees fit otherwise to direct." What are our passions like? Like the fleet Arabian Courser when under the influence of a steady rein and curb. Submissive, docile, harmless, and useful in promoting our comfort, easy and happiness, but when once the rein is slipped, wild, fiery, impetuous, and uncontrollable. When once the rein is dropped, and nature is free from the restraint of reason and justice - where are we? We are like a ship on a stormy sea without a rudder - at the mercy of the waves. And if we succeed in again recovering our hold, with what perseverance and care should we watch lest we again let them slip and we find ourselves in a seven fold worse situation than before. "Let him that standeth, take heed, lest he fall." Let him that has the reins of his passions in his hands be very cautious how he holds them, or he will find himself in the whirlpool of folly, if not of destruction. Experience.

August 1834

1st Friday: began to cradle rye and finished drawing hay from the new mowing lot. Drewed 11 loads this week.

2nd: Finished cutting rye. T went to Lybrary meeting this afternoon. I went to Bethel. Genl. May paid 300 dollars on his note. Stop at Adams, and contracted for a table, or at least, Aunt Sena did, and I stood and looked on. Went to Paul Flinns, and took tea, found him drawing his last load of hay whilst we are not half done. Is he so much smarter than other folks, or have we so much more work to do? Let him answer that.

3rd Sunday: Clear, warm, and pleasant. I went to meeting. Mr. W preached from Psalms 49-8 and 76-10. Uncle S Williams was at meeting today.

4th: Bound the rye. T went a visiting this afternoon. I wish I could get time to go once.

5th: Began to cradle oats. I drewed in the rye.

9th: Finished cradling oats. Drewed in three loads this afternoon. Mr. Eastman and Dewey came here a visiting. The next time they come in a fair day when we are in a hurry, I hope they will stay away.

10th Sunday: Mr. Halleck read two sermons. Mr. W preached in Chelsea.

11th: Drewed in oats. Very warm and pleasant. Wind southerly with signs of a storm.

12th: I worked for father cradling rye and oats, a heavy thunder shower this afternoon.

13th: I finished reaping oats.

14th: Commenced mowing again. A fortnight today since I have mowed any. Have been harvesting.

16th: Dog Day weather in good earnest now it has rained most every day this week. Showery this morning but we have got in two loads of hay. I got the horses shod this morning. Commencement is coming, but what good will that do me?

17th Sunday: Mr. W preached to the Sabbath school children. This afternoon, his text was, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment." A report by Mr. Lawrence and short addresses by Judge Collamer and Esq. Sprague. Showery this afternoon.

18th: Truman turned a load of hay over. I suppose he was thinking about commencement.

19th: Drewed in 3 loads of hay and 1 of oats. T. and Miss P started for Hartford and Commencement.

20th: Finished drawing in oats.

22nd: C. Adams worked here haying. I have heard today that there was a wedding in town last week. Mr. Rogers aged 17 and Miss. Button aged 16 were married. An aged couple today! But necessity is the mother of invention. Truman came home this evening and brought his lady with him. Surely he never will marry young!

24th Sunday: Cool and foggy. This morning I went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Matthew 7:12. A light shower this afternoon.

26th: Finished haying this forenoon. T. has gone to the village on listing business. I think of going a berrying this afternoon, but ---- well, we have been a berrying, and have got home again. Three of us have picked almost four quarts. A good afternoon's work, truly!

27th: Threshed oats and Hopson went to mill with them. Instead of the old song of haying, we have a new one composed of all sorts. The reason why we did not finish haying was not because I have been lazy, but 1st because we have had a good deal of it to do (have cut 45 loads), 2ndly other work has been crowded in, and 3rdly Commencement and its attendant harmony, etc. "If ever I marry again, I'll."

28th: Drewed home bridge plank.

29th: Finished drawing plank for the present, and went to mill this afternoon.

30th: Have been puttering about, all day. Mending fence, moving another piece, picking old rubbish, drawing stone, rigging a plough, etc.

31st Sunday: The last day of the month. Yes this short month is past and another will soon follow, but before another shall close, how many that are now alive, and enjoying as good health as I, will be in their graves? What assurance have I, that I shall live to see that time? And am I prepared for death? If I mean to be eternally miserable, I am but if not, who is more unprepared? And who is to blame that I am not ready to die? Alas, I can blame none but myself, though frequently warned of the uncertainty of life, by the death of schoolmates and friends, by sudden deaths all around me and by a faithful minister.

Still I am calculating on long life and am living in sin too! But God is able to bend the stoutest heart and Oh! That mine might be humbled before him.

1834 July 20th; I have attended meeting this day. Mr. Washburn preached a most excellent discourse this afternoon. His text was, "Broad is the way that leads to death." Oh that this sermon might be the means of awaking some poor sinner to a sense of their situation. I feel for one as though it was high time for me to be awake. Time is short. Eternity is without end, and what ever is done must be done quickly.

On last page of diary:

When I review my early days,
And look far back to youthful prime
Alas! I cry, I've not been wise
I've hid instruction from my eyes.
And wasted half my time
A thousand keen reflections fill
The gloomy regions of my breast
I see I've broken many a vow
I see I've lived I know not how
And robbed my soul of rest
Alas I see my mental powers
Were bent on trifles vain and light
I've not improved my shining hours
I've fooled and toyed till evening lowers
And tells the approach of night.
Oh! Could I once drive back the spheres
And those dear lapsed hours recall
Methinks I'd form new hopes and fears
Wisdom should guide my growing years

And virtue guide them all.
But what avails a wish so vain?
Or what relief can hence ensue?
As soon shall time put back the sun
As I recall the race I've run
Or what I've done undo
The laws of unrelenting fate
Admit of life no second stage
The scythe of time (an awful truth)
Admits but one improved youth
And one declining age,
One comfort now alone remains
One hope alone through grace is given.
If yet some future life is lent
I may improve it to repent
And fit my soul for Heaven.