



# “A constant companion”: The 1860 School Diary of a Vermont Farm Girl

*Mid-century was a time of transformation for young women when education rendered them capable of earning wages in the larger world. This diary documents Alice Watts’s struggles for an education, balancing this goal with her mother’s labor needs on the Peacham farm and her brother’s preaching for her commitment to God. She records on these diary pages her Bible reading and describes her worries, complaints, and self-evaluation.*

*Edited and annotated by* LYNN A. BONFIELD

**W**hen fourteen-year-old Alice Watts journeyed in September of 1859 from her parents’ home in Peacham to attend Castleton Seminary, she hoped to trace her older sisters’ footsteps on the path to becoming an independent woman. Chastina, Sarah, and Clara, born from 1824 to 1830, were the first women in Alice’s family to earn money outside the farmstead. Sarah worked at the Lowell textile mills, and her more scholarly sisters became teachers.<sup>1</sup> They were representative of the mid-century transition that saw women

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expanding their role in the community. Because Alice was a quick learner, the family saw teaching as a goal for her as well, but her mother was adamant that training toward that goal did not relieve Alice of her family responsibilities.<sup>2</sup>

The Watts farm was located in the hill town of Peacham in Caledonia County in eastern Vermont. Settled in 1776, Peacham was mainly an agricultural community with a population in 1860 of 1,247. In the section called East Part, Lyman Watts, a Peacham native, purchased a farm in 1830, which by 1860 had grown to 125 acres with a good orchard. According to the town grand list, the farm had two horses, twenty-eight sheep, and twenty-two cattle. The cape-style house, twenty-eight by thirty-six feet, had a shed and back room added in 1846 and other improvements to the kitchen and the milk room a year later.<sup>3</sup> To maintain the farm required constant hard work from everyone who lived there. In 1860 the household consisted of Alice's parents, her grandmother, her older brother, her younger sister, the nine-year-old son of a deceased sister, several older brothers who stopped for short periods, various hired hands, and often the schoolteacher from the district school. The men worked long hours in the fields and barn; the women, in the house, dooryard, and dairy. Alice, the oldest girl still at home, was expected to help her mother keep the house clean and orderly, prepare and serve the meals, bake bread and other goods, make sausage, wash and mend the clothes, maintain the vegetable garden, milk cows twice daily, make butter and cheese for family use as well as sale, dip candles, cut out and sew clothes, knit socks, and perform countless other jobs. Alice's mother, Roxana Walbridge Watts, supervised all these tasks, but at age fifty-seven she tired easily and looked more and more to her younger daughters for help with the endless work.

For this reason Roxana found it difficult to agree to sending Alice away from the farm. Without her, the only help Roxana had was from her youngest child, Ella, age twelve. Roxana explained in an October 1859 letter to one of her older daughters how it happened that Alice was allowed to depart. She described the circumstances as starting with the plans set out by her stepson, Lyman, a graduate of Middlebury College, who had been offered a job earning four hundred dollars teaching languages and mathematics at Castleton Seminary, about ten miles beyond Rutland.

When he engaged to go, he made arrangements with the Principal that he could have Alice go with him and have her Tuition free and board for what it actually cost. This was all arranged before we knew anything about it and he then wrote to his Father to get his consent to have her go . . . It was quite an expense to rig her up to go so far

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from home, she will probably not stay more than 6 months but he wants her to stay the whole year She is a first rate scholar and Lyman thinks she must go to school until she can fit herself for a high school teacher but I dont mean to have her. So you see that it is not my lot to have any help and have to trudge alone and do the most of my work.<sup>4</sup>

The mother of nine children and two stepchildren, Roxana had always been eager to see all her children achieve a good basic schooling, first at the district schoolhouse located across the road from the family farm on East Hill and then at Peacham Academy at the Corner, the central village two miles west. She once described Alice, born in 1845, as “rather a wild girl, but she is an extra schollar and that is almost all she is worth for she dont want to work much.”<sup>5</sup> As Alice grew older and was expected to take on more of the house work, family tension mounted. From her mother’s point of view, a bright adolescent girl—moody and dreamy—was almost useless, and Roxana planned to correct this. But fate intervened and instead Alice went off to Castleton in the fall of 1859, leaving Roxana with all the work and little help.

Once Alice settled in at school, she resumed letter writing, one job her mother assigned her with success from an early age. She regularly wrote home and to relatives in California and in what was later called the Mid-west. In one of these letters, written in early November, she summarized her situation at Castleton Seminary to her almost same-age niece in Wisconsin:

I have been here four months; came here first of Sept. This quarter is seven weeks longer and so that time must elapse until I see Peacham again . . . I am studying Algebra Latin French and Music had the same studies last quarter. Mother does not know I am taking Music and if you write her before I go home, please say nothing about it. Perhaps you would like to know more particularly about Sem[inary] life. It is very pleasant in some respects and very vexatious in others. Pleasant because we feel that we are improving in some respects, and vexatious because everything is so annoying we have to go to our teachers for permission to do every little thing, to go down street, to leave the park, are marked if we whisper or enter other rooms in study hours and every little trifling thing. Are obliged to attend church all day Sunday except in sickness &c. There are 217 girls board in the Sem and more than that number of day scholars so we have jolly times occasionally of course. There are six teachers and all very good ones.<sup>6</sup>

One of these good teachers was her brother, Lyman S. Watts. All the teachers boarded at the Seminary, so he kept a close eye on Alice and daily conversed with her.<sup>7</sup> Holding strong evangelical beliefs and preparing for the ministry, he sought to encourage Alice in her religious commitment. Lyman may have decided that his lectures needed to be reinforced with daily reminders, and thus at the end of 1859, he gave

Alice a diary.<sup>8</sup> On January 1st, 1860, Alice began her almost life-long habit of keeping a diary. Lyman had begun a diary in 1857 when in his senior year at Middlebury College, and in his first entries, he clearly stated his purpose: “Commence this diary especially to promote growth in grace. I . . . desire that I may be honest with myself and God at all times. . . . Feel great need of self examination . . . am resolved to live more as one who expects to give account.”<sup>9</sup> He reported participating in prayer meetings, attending lectures, and listening to sermons. Lyman may have instructed Alice to follow this pattern, for in her first entry she announced her plan to “keep strict account of my progress” reading the Bible. She soon noted her desire to read three Bible chapters a day, two in the Old Testament and one in the New. At this rate she would read the entire Bible in one year.<sup>10</sup>

Many New England girls in the nineteenth century made it a daily practice to read the Bible, and they often kept track of their progress in their diaries. Some, like Alice, struggled with their religious convictions. Lyman, a Congregationalist, aimed to prepare Alice for “conversion,” meaning commitment to God and a complete reorientation of personality to acceptance of God. The conversion experience was deemed necessary before Christians could stand up before the congregation and attest to their religious commitment. Lyman’s continual lecturing to Alice exacerbated his sister’s guilt at being “a lost sheep” and her fear of missing salvation. A sensitive girl, Alice was hard on herself. She struggled, as recorded in her diary, to emphasize her spiritual progress and her attempts at improving her character.<sup>11</sup>

Another young Vermont woman whose diary reflected these religious conflicts was Nancy Taft of Barre. In the summer of 1838 she kept a brief diary while working at a teaching position. Like Alice, she castigated herself with phrases such as “sense of wickedness of my heart” and even called herself several times “the stupid creature.” She hoped “that I might spend my time wholly devoted to God.”<sup>12</sup> Both Alice and Nancy found a diary a good place to articulate their conflicts with religious beliefs.

The practice of keeping a diary, according to historian Jane H. Hunter, contributed to the development of the “enhanced sense of self.”<sup>13</sup> Alice accepted this purpose as she began her diary with the plan to have it describe her path of self-improvement, even progress toward becoming a Christian—the self she wanted to be. Instead, by the third day of diary keeping, she began to use it for more than character building. She saw it as a friend, “a constant companion,” with whom she could share worries, complaints, and self-evaluation, even self-criticism. Her sense of self was not only her religious struggle and search for identity but also

her desire for acceptance, even love, from the people around her. Her daily concerns rather than the path to improvement became the focus of her diary.

On January 3, Alice received a letter from her mother with the news that she was needed at home. By the end of January, Alice had packed her things, said tearful good-byes to her classmates at Castleton, and returned to Peacham. Once at home, as is so often observed in women's diaries, Alice made little mention of daily work around the house. She suffered from headaches, colds, and menstrual cramps; she took cough medicine and unidentified "little pills." Like many diarists of the time, her health was a constant theme, and she wrote of being sickly. To her family, she appeared moody and depressed. Maybe as a result of her unpleasant behavior, or perhaps simply due to the family's commitment to education, her father enrolled her in the Peacham Academy for the spring term. Chartered in 1795, the Caledonia County Grammar School, known as the Peacham Academy, had a good New England-wide reputation and was where Alice's older sisters and brothers had studied. Most weeks Alice left for school, two miles away, on Monday morning after helping her mother with the wash, and returned to the farm after Friday classes, giving her the weekend to help at home. When the term ended in May, Alice again fell under her mother's supervision, but even then she did not seem to devote full time to domestic chores. Amidst the summer's "cleaning house" and "lessons in cookery," she visited friends, climbed Devil's Hill, rode horseback, picked strawberries, read novels, played backgammon, and wrote letters to Castleton friends and family members. During the summer, Alice's entries show more intensity toward her religious struggle, maybe because she had fewer activities to report.

In addition, Alice served as scribe for her father, who was elected one of three listers who evaluated the real estate and personal property of the four hundred and sixteen taxable Peacham residents. Taking advantage of Alice's fine writing skills, her father had her record these figures as he prepared the town's grand list.<sup>14</sup> Writing as many as eight hours some days, Alice completed the task by the end of the summer, and her work can still be seen today in the annual grand lists available in the town office.

One of the summer's outings was a trip in August to St. Johnsbury, the county seat located about twenty miles from the farm, to attend the Vermont Teachers' Association meeting. The teachers passed a resolution that Alice surprisingly did not note in her diary: "That when qualifications are equal and equal services are rendered, male and female teachers should receive equal compensation."<sup>15</sup> Although Alice wanted

to be free of domestic duties, she had not yet recognized the fight for women's salary equality in her chosen profession.

By early September, she was back at the Peacham Academy where her brother, Lyman, had been appointed principal. Once classes began, she roomed during the week near the Academy with him and her younger sister, Ella. No longer did she have the valued companionship of her close classmates and favorite teachers who had graduated or left in the spring. Once more she was cocooned in her family and felt the loss of independence she had previously enjoyed at Castleton and, to a lesser degree, at the Peacham Academy.

In November, in one of the few entries noting affairs outside her immediate world, Alice predicted the election of Abraham Lincoln as the country's president. She showed little excitement, although the landslide vote in Peacham for Lincoln, 138 votes out of 186, must have been celebrated in the town.<sup>16</sup>

As the end of the year approached, Alice's entries became increasingly infrequent, fading out entirely in mid-December. In her final entry, she looked back asking, "Have I made any improvement in any thing this past year?" She answered, "I doubt not" and added that she felt she was still in a "slippery place." These closing comments may have been a recognition of her failure to keep her diary as a record of character improvement and Christian commitment rather than a description of daily activities and small concerns. She also might have been acknowledging that her unspoken desire for independence remained unfulfilled. She still faced the tugs by her mother for her to learn domestic duties, presumably for her future as a housewife and mother, and by her brother to follow Christian teaching and commit herself to God. The main theme of her 1860 diary was the struggle between her personal desire for an education and the family and cultural expectations she experienced daily. Alice Watts is representative of the transition farm girls made as they strove toward fulfillment and independence.

#### TRANSCRIPTION OF THE 1860 DIARY OF ALICE WATTS

In transcribing this diary, the editor has followed the standard documentary editorial practice of retaining the original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. To improve clarity, added words and names appear in brackets. Speculated words are in brackets with a question mark. The date line for each diary entry has been standardized to the left margin in brackets. See the Appendices for full names and vital dates for family members and students and faculty at Castleton Seminary and Peacham Academy.

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**[Sunday, January 1, Middlebury]**

At Castleton. Many friends, warm and true, I doubt not, have wished me “Happy New Year”—and may I so conduct myself that I shall not regret the actions of my life in 1860. Attended church this afternoon; for first time in five weeks. Have commenced reading the Bible again, and may this little book keep strict account of my progress. My Diary will be a constant companion for this present year (Providence permitting) and I expect to find much pleasure in writing upon its now unsoiled pages. May it not be a record of sorrow or shame, but of pleasure, happiness and improvement.

**[Monday, January 2]** My little book can receive the record of no very magnanimous deeds performed to day. I have recited in Algebra and French, after trying hard to get excused from the latter. Have written two letters,<sup>17</sup> and to morrow must write two more. Have omitted one thing, almost unpardonable; viz; to thank Sarah Perkins for her nice little New Year’s present.<sup>18</sup> Intended to go into my Latin class to morrow: but may not. How fast this term has gone! Only three weeks more, and then “Home again once more” for Alice.

**[Tuesday, January 3]** Have spent the most unhappy day, that I have known in Castleton. Mother wrote me to come home: Sadness was caused more by the suddenness of the request than any other reason; have written home to beg a few “days of grace” and I sincerely hope they may not want me. Have recited as usual to day: Miss Johnson a friend of last quarter called on us this evening. Second class in Shakspeare read to night Called on Miss [Sarah] Perkins to night: also assisted Lottie & Libbie in Arithmetic.<sup>19</sup> It is snowing fast this evening.

**[Wednesday, January 4]** Another day has passed as usual: the same dull routine. Attended exercises as usual; and the prayer meeting in Mrs. [Frances] Knowlton’s room.<sup>20</sup> It was fully attended: more so than generally as nearly all of the girls were present. Read Shakspear an hour in class. Had a new part assigned me; viz Polonius. Was Horatio at the last reading. Instituted a vain search for my lost articles of clothing A school girl’s life is monotonous unless



*Alice Watts, 1863, three years older than when she kept this diary. Photograph by Gage’s Portrait Gallery, St. Johnsbury. Private collection.*

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one can use books for fun and study likewise. Such chances will never come but once and it behooves us to “improve them well.”

**[Thursday, January 5]** There is a lamentable dearth of any thing to write in here. Must be rather egotistical to night and write entirely about myself. For one year I have told people my age as “Fourteen” but if I am spared until the morrow shall call myself “Fifteen.” Well, I only hope I may better improve the next year (should I live to enjoy it) than I have the past year “old 59.” A kind friend says “ ’tis the last time you’ll write in your fourteenth year” How true, yet sad it seems. She gave me a little ash leaf candlestick saying playfully “to light your path next year.” I’ll always remember her Lena [Ehle].<sup>21</sup>

**[Friday, January 6]** My birth day. Am fifteen. How short seems the time when I was but ten, and wished I was as old as I now am. Have been sick all day, and bodily, my birth-day has passed rather unpleasantly; but friends have been kind and I have spent the day more agreeably than otherwise. My dear friend and room mate presented me with a useful as well as valuable gift and a comical little toy—a whip—which has chastised me many times to day.<sup>22</sup> My brother [Lyman S. Watts] is at a party in the village at Mr. Moulton’s. Hope he may enjoy himself. Have been absent from school exercises of all kinds.

**[Saturday, January 7]** Attended exercises in chapel this morning. Several gentlemen from Middlebury were present, who frightened the lady readers nearly out of their wits. Mr. [Carlos] Sherman staid with my brother [Lyman S. Watts] last night, and to day I went down and saw him.<sup>23</sup> Mr. [Stephen] Knowlton talked like a saint in meeting to night. Have recd no letters to day; wanted some very much however. It is raining to night, and there is a prospect of a stormy day to morrow. Miss [Mary] Hawthorn (our nearest neighbor) is sick this afternoon.

**[Sunday, January 8]** Have not attended church to day; as it was rainy and very disagreeable walking. Attended Bible class this eve.<sup>24</sup> We have commenced to read Job. What a model man he was; “one who feared God and eschewed evil,” Yet “whom the Lord loveth, him He chasteneth.”<sup>25</sup> To night is the Monthly S[abbath] School Concert. Could not go, but would like to. Mr. [John] Williams is with my brother this eve.<sup>26</sup> Last night it rained quite hard, and it is very warm now Lena has gone to meeting and I am all alone. Must read my Bible and grow better. Would like to be at home to night. Imagine I would not talk but a little.

**[Monday, January 9]** Have’nt any thing to write to night; for to day has been more than usually melancholy and sober. Has been very warm all day and so pleasant. The little boys enjoy it; for they have coasted so much down the Sem[inary] Hill that a foot passenger’s life is hardly safe. Walked as far as the store to day. Enjoyed it very much. Mrs. K [Frances Knowlton] gave us of the second table a certain lecture on propriety Hope we shall all profit by it, but doubt it. Shall receive a letter from home to morrow, and then shall know whether or not I can stay the rest of the quarter.

**[Tuesday, January 10]** Got a little “fache” [French word meaning angry] in Algebra class to day, and therefore acted as I ought not, and in a manner that I am now ashamed of, and sorry for. My letter from home did not come to day, so I am still left in suspense as to whether I can stay “yet a little longer.” Assisted the girls in Arithmetic and Algebra some If to day is an index of

October, we certainly shall have a mild time for it has been very pleasant and warm. September will also. Have not walked out to day.

**[Wednesday, January 11, entry in schoolgirl French translated to English]** It was very nice today; yesterday it snowed and also rained. We read Shakespear to-night and Mr. Knowlton gave me the character of Hamlet. He criticized me very much, and I was quite upset and angry also at myself. I have been to all my classes today; but I did not have a single good lesson. I have not received any news from home today and I am afraid that my parents are ill. Mr. Charles sent me another letter and I was very glad to see it. I wish that I could see him but it is not possible now.<sup>27</sup>

**[Thursday, January 12, entry in schoolgirl French translated to English]** Tonight I received some news from my sister [Clara Walbridge Rogers] in California and her family.<sup>28</sup> She is fairly well but angry that she has [not] received any letters from home and has waited a long time to hear. I was in the park today and had a very good time. I am very sleepy and have to go to bed now.

**[Friday, January 13]** Have been writing a composition this evening, an imaginary one, in rhyme How I'll succeed is more than I know, but cannot do any better than "my best." Have been in Miss [Tavo] Baker[’s] room this evening and had some fun.<sup>29</sup> Had no letter from any one to day, guess I am about forgotten by every one. Quite cold to day and oh! what a wind. Cannot read my three chapters in the Bible to night as Lena is hurrying me to bed. She goes Monday. Dear girl, how sad it will be then for me especially.

**[Saturday, January 14]** My poor, little soiled book you are sadly neglected. Look at the oil upon the corners. "Accidents will happen" even to the most careful. Had very good chapel exercises this morning. Went to the book store got a little book for Lena. We of the "Third Hall" will miss her sadly. Sad for me for I never expect to see her again. Have had no letters to day. Think my friends must have deserted or forgotten me Must read in my Bible and retire.

**[Sunday, January 15]** Attended church this forenoon. Dr. [Willard] Child preached.<sup>30</sup> Sab[bath] S[chool] teacher was gone, and a stranger heard the lesson. Read in my SS book in the afternoon Went to Bible Class this evening. Lena, the dear girl goes at 6 o'clock to morrow morn How lonesome it will be. Could not read in the Bible to day for there were so many in to say "good by" that I could not consistently. Pretty way to ease conscience, that.

**[Monday, January 16]** As Lena said last eve, I must write in my diary "she's gone." Poor, dear girl! Oh! I so much hope she may have a pleasant journey and free from all trouble. I got her last kiss. Dear girl. I once thought it would be impossible to love any one as I do her. Have been the happiest with her, that I ever was. No letters, and no prospect of any. Must read 8 chapters to night Miss Newman, one of the girls stays with me to night. A little more than a week, and I'll see Peacham. It is all gas to talk of the "frailty of school-girl attachments" for I know it to be false.<sup>31</sup> Au revoir.

**[Tuesday, January 17]** Not much to write to day. Received the long looked for letter from home Mother is sick and Grandma has burned her hands by falling on her stove. Lib [Goodwin] is there yet or I do'nt know what they would do.<sup>32</sup> Answered Dustan's [Walbridge] letter to night. Miss [Emma] Lee got a letter from Lena; at Saratog[a.]<sup>33</sup> Got her Ambrotype copied, to day and now can see her. Have written Some on my composition, but it is not yet finished. Must read write and retire. Au revoir.

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**[Wednesday, January 18]** Read Shakespeare in class to night We finished the play. I read Laertes and Fortinbras. Attended prayer meeting this eve. No letters. Girls are all busy and fearful in expectation of examination days, which are close at hand. I was absent from class so much during my sickness, that I expect to fail, and shall be disappointed if I do not. Worked the dreaded 31<sup>st</sup> in Algebra on the board to day.<sup>34</sup> Poor Lena is riding now for dear life, I expect.

**[Thursday, January 19]** Have had some dispute with my brother [Lyman S. Watts] to night concerning keeping late hours. Told him I must study, and he as persistently said I should not. Have not decided whether to do right or go to studying. AAG's birth day.<sup>35</sup> Wrote to her a long time since, but have not yet received an answer. Walked with the girls to night down to the depot. Libbie & Sarah Perkins called on me this eve. Must go there Sat.<sup>36</sup> Examination has not yet excited any dread or fears in my mind, but some of the girls are nearly crazy.

**[Friday, January 20]** Am some tired to night, as I stood nearly two hours, listening to the rehearsal for the concert. Read Miss Heman[s]'s Poems<sup>37</sup> to night in Miss Baker's room. I suppose this is the last Friday night I shall spend in the Sem[inary] for some time, perhaps the last. Mrs K gave back my composition to day. Suppose I shall read to morrow morning. There were many corrections in it, and I was obliged to copy it. Not a letter yet. Six more nights in Castleton Girls apprehend mischief brewing, as they have seen enough to excite suspicion.

**[Saturday, January 21]** Miss [Carrie] Needham had my ambrotype taken to day; as she wanted it very much. Read my composition this morn in public. It has thawed rapidly to day, and is very bad in the streets. Roads are full of water. Went to Dr [Joseph] Perkins' this afternoon and staid in the evening. Had a very pleasant time; good supper nuts &c. Played dominoes. No letter from Warren B. yet; so we will go home by B[ellows] Falls. Took my ear jewel to Preston's to day, to have it mended.

**[Sunday, January 22]** Attended church all day, for the first time in many weeks. Dr Childe preached this morning from Psalm 51..13 In Matthew this afternoon. Had a very good Bible Class. Read the last chapter of Job. Commenced to write to Lena but have not finished. Mrs K, Carrie Adams, and Lyman talked with me concerning my religious feelings. Oh! if I was only half as faithful for myself as others are for me, I would be a Christian very soon Miss [Mary] Hawthorn stays with me to night. Au revoir.

**[Monday, January 23]** Have been to Mr. [Hervey] Higley's this evening with Lucy Blake.<sup>38</sup> Had a very pleasant and agreeable time. Ate corn, apples, &c Only two nights more in C[astleton]— French is examined to morrow. I fear that I shall fail, and so shall not be disappointed. Received a paper from Annie Hoxie to day, but no letters.<sup>39</sup> It has been very pleasant to day, warm and beautiful. I ought to write to Lena to night, but am now tardy as 'tis after bells.

**[Tuesday, January 24]** Can write but little here to night, only that I defer my three chapters, until I go home or, rather, until to morrow. Was examined in French to day Missed two questions. Went to Kimball's concert to night. Ticket .20 cts. Very pleasant sing. Wrote to Lena to night.

**[Wednesday, January 25, Rutland]** Franklin House, at Rutland. Left the Town Hall at C[astleton]—about an hour ago, while [George] Mietzke and Abbie

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[Kent] were playing their duet. I hated to come and leave the girls very much, but the one is gone and so I did't care so much. Almost failed in Algebra this morn—yet not quite. Wish I could see Annie Hoxie to night. I guess we would have some fun. Have a cold to night and my throat is some sore. My Bible is packed away and I cannot read, but I can pray, which I feel as much like as anything.

[Thursday, January 26, Peacham] “Home again, once more”<sup>40</sup> Arrived here about three hours ago. Rode up in the cold, wind &c, and when I got here, was nearly starved and frozen. Left Rutland at 4½ o'clock this morning. Got to B[ellows] Falls at about 9. Took breakfast in the eating room at the depot. Left there at half past 12, and got to Barnet at 5 o'clock. Every body and thing seems old and familiar. I am sleepy and shall not read to night; so I am minus nine chapters.

[Friday, January 27] Attended a “spelling school” at our old school house, this eve.<sup>41</sup> It is sad to see how some of my friends and old schoolmates pay so little respect to a teacher as to have no decency in manners or language towards him. C[hables] Brown is dead and Father and Mother have gone to Cabot to funeral, and also to some business affairs.<sup>42</sup> Can not read to night but mean to make it all up tomorrow.

[Saturday, January 28] Went to “singing school” to night at the Hollow conducted on the do-re-me-fa-sol principle.<sup>43</sup> Got very tired and cold. Came home found Father & Mother here, back from Cabot, and Brown's (not John) funeral.<sup>44</sup> Father is to be one of the commissioners, I think. Our school has not kept to day. Lyman is practising chopping some, and I guess rather too much for comfort. Heard from Lena She gets to Homer to night I think Wrote from Covington, Ga.<sup>45</sup> Have read six chapters, so I am now minus nine, which I must read tomorrow.<sup>46</sup>

[Sunday, January 29] Went to church in “old Peacham” for the first time in six months. I always liked Mr. [Asaph] B[outelle]'s style of preaching, but it seems singularly stale and insipid now, after hearing Dr Child discourse theology so long. Dr Packer preached this afternoon.<sup>47</sup> His style was different from either of the above mentioned divines, but to day I could see nothing to admire in his discourse unless it was “the truth” which is more tasteful to me than formerly. What a brute I am! Worse even “than the heathen,” as Lyman truly said in S[abbath] S[chool].<sup>48</sup> Every one seemed glad to see me, and I did not know before, that I had so many friends. Am minus 3 now.

[Monday, January 30] Am glad that I shall not have to write that I am behind in reading the Bible, for to night I have caught up. Washing day. Helped do “house work” and am some tired to night. Went to the corner with Father to day; got a calico dress and some other fixings. Got more cold and am quite hoarse now. Fear I may have a cough, which I very much dread. It is very cold weather now, although there is poor sleighing. How my back aches!

[Tuesday, January 31] Seem bound to have a cold all this vacation, or at least, to try it. Am some tired to night yet I did nothing through the day unless to help Mother some. Father went to Cabot as commissioner to C Brown's estate. K Goodwin came out to day after Lib [Goodwin]. Aunt [Ruth Parker] is sick and so she was obliged to go home. There was a singing school to night at the Hollow but as it has snowed all day, thought I would not go, and so did not.

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**[Wednesday, February 1]** Went to Mr [Jacob] Way's this afternoon and took tea.<sup>49</sup> Isaac [Watts] Ella [Watts] & myself went to the Hollow, to Uncle's [Asa Sargeant].<sup>50</sup> Had a very pleasant time Lyman met us there. Jennie [Sargeant] was gone, but came in before we went home Read two chapters in the O[ld] T[estament] but omitted the one in the new [Testament] Got a new dress to day of a peddler.<sup>51</sup>

**[Thursday, February 2]** Just finished a letter to O[ctavia] G Baker Father has got home from Cabot. He brought home a good many things from [Charles] Brown's estate. It has been warmer and pleasanter to day than it was yesterday. Julian [Rix] has been quite unwell, so much so that Mother feared he would have a fever, as his symptoms seemed to indicate that.<sup>52</sup> Our German is back again to night.<sup>53</sup> Have four chapters to read and then must retire. Am very tired, more so than I have been for a long time. Sewed some on a skirt for myself. Prospects are rather dark as to going back to C[astleton]—

**[Friday, February 3]** Lounged about all the morn. Started for Harvey's in Bar-net at 2 o'clock. All were gone, and so Lyman and myself went to Wm Gilfillan's. They were all gone, also, and so we spent the afternoon at L[eonard] Varnum's.<sup>54</sup> Had a very pleasant visit. Intended to spend the evening at Uncle Elijah's [Sargeant] but the young folks near us got us up a "surprise party" and so we passed the evening pleasantly at home.<sup>55</sup> Dustan came home, and it is the first time I have seen him.<sup>56</sup>

**[Saturday, February 4]** Guess it is not decided to let me go back to C[astleton]—with Lyman, but stay at home. No one knows how much I love the dear place. Perhaps if my parents did, their decision would be different. That \$70. paid for my bills, will cause me more unpleasant thoughts than any other, save that dreadful ever-present overwhelming thought which causes me so much misery and which I do not get rid of.<sup>57</sup> If I could be rich, for two years only. Vain, fruitless, foolish wish! But I know the folly of getting riches, save for some good purpose. Have not read any chapters to day.

**[Sunday, February 5]** Have been almost sick to day. Have the head ache and in fact an ache all over. Did not go to church. Lyman is at the Corner, addressing a meeting. John Morse came here and staid to supper.<sup>58</sup> Dustan went to Water St. to night. Cold is no better, and if any thing worse.

**[Monday, February 6]** Cold no better; perhaps worse. Has thawed considerably to day and the roads are improved for travelling. Haven't done much, but there has been enough to do, in fact. Am afraid Mother has done too much. Dustan came home to night, to go to Danville with us in the morning.

**[Wednesday, February 8]** The opposite page [February 7] must remain a blank through the year; as I was at Danville and so did not write or read in the Bible. Have read the six chapters to night. I went out with Dustan and Ella with Lyman and we had a very good visit. Had honey, corn, chicken pie, bake chicken &c. Am having fine times coughing now, as it nearly uses me up. Pretty bad off. Came home to day and had a nice ride it was so warm and pleasant. Aunt is almost sick, Uncle [Thomas Parker] good natured as ever, and Lib the main spring of the whole.

**[Thursday, February 9]** Sewed to day on my dress. Canada folks have not come Lyman went to Temperance Lecture to night at the Corner Have written to Lucy [Blake] and Lib [Staples] and received a letter from M[ary]

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Hawthorn with my sash enclosed It is very warm to day, but my cold is no better, if anything it is worse.

[Friday, February 10] There has been a dress maker here to day, working upon our dresses<sup>59</sup> It has stormed and blowed all day, and to night is very blustering My cold is worse. Got a \$1.00 bottle of “Weeks Magic Compound” for my cold.<sup>60</sup> Hope it may do good but doubt it. John Morse came here to dinner. Have begun a letter to Carrie M. N[eedham]—but shall not finish it now, as it is time to retire.

[Saturday, February 11] To night am unwell bodily with my “old complaint” but mentally I feel much better only a little sad. Received a letter from Tavo. She wrote a very affectionate message, and it makes me feel that I have at least one friend. Sadness is caused by the thought that I can not go back to C[astleton]—with most of the girls. What a plague poverty is! Wish some good fairy would aid me just now. Have begun to take some Homeopathic medicine for my cough which is not better.

[Sunday, February 12] Did not arise “this morning” until afternoon. Have read and reread Octavia’s letter. What a good kind girl she is. Lyman has just been preaching to me concerning religion. I am terribly wicked and never expect to be any better No, I expect to, truly; but there seems no prospect. Could not go to church to day

[Monday, February 13] Feel better bodily this morn. My cold is no better but I do not cough any now. Mr & Mrs Nutt came here from Bradford this afternoon Have written a long letter to Miss Baker—little OG. Several girls owe me letters. Sewed on my dress some but not much. Mrs Brownell is coming to morrow again

[Tuesday, February 14] St Valentine’s day, according to ancient reckoning. Have been at home all day, and sewed considerable; so much that my finger is pretty well pricked Ike Ella and Julian went to the Hollow to a singing school. Lyman is also gone Father looked for a room for me to stop in this spring. Engaged one at Capt Blanchard for me and perhaps Arabella [Sargeant] will room with me.<sup>61</sup>

[Wednesday, February 15] O, were it possible now for me to do any thing to enable me to do as my wishes, speak any sacrifice would be comparatively easy. What a blessed thing a good education is! The prospects are not very bright in that direction yet “all is for the best.” Have sewed to day and one dress is done; the other nearly. Has been pleasant to day, but is much colder to night. My cold is much better thanks to Homeopathy doctrine.

[Thursday, February 16] Scolding and fretting from Mother; impatience from me; remonstrance on Lyman’s part and an insight into “how we got our education” by Father are the regular exercises of the day. Mrs Brownell has gone home and Mrs Wheeler is here in her place. It has snowed all day, and is blowing hard now. Rooms are secured at Blanchard’s for our accommodation this spring,<sup>62</sup> unless the folks scold so much there is no going any where, which is a very probable result. Have not read my chapters to day. Negligence!

[Friday, February 17] Went to Mr [Nathaniel] Hardy’s to night and spent a short time with Abbie.<sup>63</sup> From there went to Uncle Elijah’s where we had quite a pleasant visit. Francis [Sargeant] was up, alone, and I rode home with him. It is very cold and I got very chilly, tho’t I was freezing several

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times Lyman tipped over, and I came near being “spilled out.” Roads are drifted some and it is bad travelling

**[Saturday, February 18]** [ink spill] That looks neat I must confess! Carelessness! Helped bake to day. Dustan came home, to night, and I have done nothing. No letters Is snowing now, and there is the prospect of a storm.

**[Sunday, February 19]** It stormed so badly that none of us went to church but Lyman. Wind blows quite hard now. Lyman talked over old times with me, and I cried so that my eyes ache

**[Monday, February 20]** I’ve just been looking over my diary, at what I wrote in C[astleton]— See, now, the folly of acting as I have, about writing in it. It has seemed a task often and oftener acquitted as such. Hope I shall better improve, both communications and penmanship Cousins from Uncle A[sa Sargeant]—s came up and spent the evening with us. Have been packing and picking up things to go to the Corner tomorrow.

**[Tuesday, February 21]** Am, and have been cross and willful all day. Obstinate as a mad person CCGS. commenced to day its spring term.<sup>64</sup> Went out but exercises occupied but a short time. Have a much pleasanter room than I imagined. Weather has been warm. Went to singing school, to night. Were but few present, and had rather an uninteresting sing. Lyman goes to morrow Left my dress with Mrs Brownell to fix. Did not read my bible to day, so I have another –3 down.

**[Wednesday, February 22]** Room at the Corner; 9 o’clock Cousin Belle [Sargeant] is sleeping by my side now. Have been reading Corinne to night.<sup>65</sup> Studies for this term will probably be Latin French & Philosophy.<sup>66</sup> It has rained hard this eve, and did some through the day. It has seemed as long as three weeks to night and twice as lonesome. Lyman started for Castleton this



*Peacham Academy as it looked in 1843–1886. Private collection.*

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morning. Is in Ludlow probably at this time. Have minus six chapters to night.

**[Thursday, February 23, entry in schoolgirl French translated to English]** I am my father's very bad girl, and in fact the whole world's. I was at school today and I did all my lessons fairly well but not very well. I read five pages of Corinne this evening and I liked it very much. I hoped to read two pages in an hour, but it is very difficult. It rained today and the roads are full of water. I have not read in scriptures for three days. It is certainly very wicked of me. I read six chapters and I have only three more.

**[Friday, February 24]** At home: Have burned my fingers, and neglected to read my chapters so I am minus six now. It is very icy and the roads awful to travel. Was home to supper and it seemed good. It is ten o'clock and surely is my retiring hour.

**[Saturday, February 25]** Cousin William Watts and wife came here this afternoon<sup>67</sup> and I have not read or studied any. Guess my lessons will come out minus next Monday. Went up to Way's to night. Have not read in the Bible. I'm an awful wicked thing, not to. Minus 9 chapters ce soir.

**[Sunday, February 26]** Went to church all day. Mr B preached from Heb 11..30 in the forenoon. It was rather touched with slavery and politics. Went to Mr Way's this eve, with Cousin William & wife & Isaac. Had a pleasant visit but it was hardly a Sunday call. It has been very cold to day and I was nearly frozen when we got to the meeting house. Have only read my five regular chapters and am as before minus 9.

**[Monday, February 27]** Can hardly call this to day as the clock sounded 12 "midnight's holy hour" while I wrote the first word. It is awful wicked in me to "sit up" so late but I got engaged with "Corinne" and read late then learned my Latin lesson. Alice Packer was in here to night. Got my "express" from New York to night; Ella has the best prize 6.00 for which I am truly thankful. Have neglected the Holy Book to read a novel. What infatuation! Sad indeed. Minus 9.

**[Tuesday, February 28]** Warm all day and rainy at night. Wet under foot and is very bad travelling. Dustan came up from Water St and spent the evening with me. Belle is at home or rather at singing school to night. Have not studied much to night and therefore trust there may be clemency show[n] in classes to morrow. Minus six to night.

**[Wednesday, February 29]** Has rained to day as usual, and if it was bad under foot yesterday it is awful now. Went over to Mr Lee's with Miss [Mary] Ladd and we three got our French lesson out. Got a letter from Abbie Kent to day. It made me not homesick but almost sick of home. How much I love Castleton and long to be there. Have read six chapters to night and I have minus three, which I must make up to morrow.

**[Thursday, March 1]** Have read the amount that I was behind in reading in the Bible. Has rained to night hard. Got my French lesson but no other to night. Sent letters to LM Howard and Lyman this morning. Got a real loving forgiving kiss from Miss [Lucy] Perry to day. She is a dear good soul and I like her much. Wish I could hear from OGB[aker]—It seems to me that she might write me soon.

**[Friday, March 2]** Have but little to write and that little must be quickly written. Recited in Latin, only to day, as this afternoon the school was adjourned.

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to attend “preparatory lecture” in the church.<sup>68</sup> Alice Packer came here this evening. Belle has gone home, and I must stay alone. Got a letter from Tavo, and answered it a little while ago. She writes splendid letters and I wish I was only half as smart and good as she.

**[Saturday, March 3]** At home. It is cold and the wind blows very hard. Helped bake to day, after coming home Roads are awful from here to the Corner. Have not read my chapters to night and must put down -3 again. Had hoped that might not be again this year but I am at it again.

**[Sunday, March 4]** How poorly I have improved this Holy Sabbath—God and my own conscience hear abundant proof. Have read in the Bible as usual and some in “Sketches of Life,” but nothing in it has done me any good.<sup>69</sup> I am farther from being a child of God than I was one year ago. Then I was first awakened and for one year has the spirit of God striven with me. But I continually grieve it, and will not give up wor[l]dly pleasures for true and lasting happiness. God help me. If another Sabbath could but find our rejoicing in His love I shall be sufficiently happy.

**[Monday, March 5]** At our room again. Has snowe[d] some to day, but is cl[e]ar and the moon shines so brightly, making the snow sparkle. It seems as if I must be out and leave books and sleep to themselves Left word with [John M.] Martin to send for a Corinne and so perhaps I shall have one sometime.<sup>70</sup> Dustan came and said “good bye” as he leaves in the morn for down to B[rattleboro]—

**[Tuesday, March 6]** Exercises as usual to day. Such a beautiful night! Moon light has been, and is now, enchanting. Girls have been to singing school at the Hollow, but I dared not walk so far No letters, but perhaps there will be some in the morning Dustan left to day. It is nearly 11 o’clock and I must retire, but O how I want to hear from Lena.

**[Wednesday, March 7]** Sleepy, oh how sleepy. Have caught myself dozing over this stupid Latin verb every other minute for an hour or so This eve and last present a great contrast. Last eve it was beautiful moon light Now the wind howls, it snows and is otherwise disagreeable. Well, good night to lessons, and I am so sleepy I cannot read—

**[Thursday, March 8]** About 11 o’clock and I have only studied enough to read three or four Latin sentences. Have sewed on my sack all the evening, since the Misses [Margaret and Marietta] Clark went home.<sup>71</sup> A peddler down below bothered us an hour or so and so I am behind with every thing. My hopes for to morrow are all centered upon waking early in the morning. Minus 6— Recd a letter from Lyman

**[Friday, March 9]** Can just see enough to say that I am alive but very sleepy. Corinne came to night Went to a second Congress at the Academy.<sup>72</sup> Awful going and I am sick. Didn’t get any letters. Must go to bed. Finished my sack, and learned some poetry, and am minus 9—chapters.

**[Saturday, March 10]** At home. Folks all in bed and I ought to be. Walked over from the Corner to day, and I am some tired as I have not used my pedestrian powers much lately. Recited some of Mrs Heman[s]’s poetry “No more” in the Academy.<sup>73</sup> Have not read to night and am minus 12— Have studied some and tried to write on the discussion but could not do much

**[Sunday, March 11]** Dear little book! truly my duty to you is and has been much neglected. You show marks of haste and ill storing. Could not go to

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church to day, so I staid at home and listened to an animated discussion of conscience and evil genius, as to whether I must read some stories. Conscience conquered and to night it has again although it seems as if there was no other time for the exercise “Remember the Sab. day to keep it holy” saved me, I trust. Have read in the Bible and am now on a level with time again.

**[Monday, March 12]** Almost 11 o’clock. How this evening has gone. Messrs [Roney and William] Harvey brothers and [Clark] Bovee came up here staid an hour or so. Were all perfect strangers. Such impudence! Great fools! Am very sleepy and have not got a single lesson but I have studied some on Latin Can not read to night.

**[Tuesday, March 13]** Have written to Abbie Kent to night and also a note to Lyman. Had poor lessons and have a prospect for more to morrow, as I have not studied a word to night. Must however Minus 9—

**[Wednesday, March 14]** Went to first meeting of Literary Society.<sup>74</sup> Did not enjoy it for I thought of other things. Great God! Will thou not bless me this night. Minus 5—

**[Thursday, March 15]** Beautiful day! So pleasant and I have been happy. Strange word for me and sounds unfamiliar. I can hope just a little that I am a child of God and beloved by him. I shalt be happy I am confident. Went to see Hattie [Guy] this evening.<sup>75</sup> Had a very good visit, and Hattie is my friend She said so—and I believe it. Eyes ache badly to night and I am sick. Am minus 3 chapters now.

**[Friday, March 16]** Have lounged about on the little settee in the corner, all day. Could not go up to school and have been down stairs only once. Have been pretty miserable but feel much better to night. I have some kind good friends yet, for to day got a letter from Lena and this evening Isaac has just brought me two more—one from Miss Lee and from Sarah Perkins. Good letters both of them It was kind for them to write Jennie Cowles and “my mother” came to see me to night.<sup>76</sup> “Second Congress” met as usual Am minus 3.

**[Saturday, March 17]** At home. Feel pretty smart to night but had trouble in going up to school it made my head ache so badly. Such a beautiful day. Walked to the school house tonight and really admired Nature very much. Had some sap and intend to “sugar off” enough to eat to morrow.<sup>77</sup> Am minus 6 chapters—going down hill again.

**[Sunday, March 18]** At home as usual. Did not go to church to day Has been a beautiful day but I have illy improved it. Am well to day, and have had some sugar—first in 1860. Hope I may get up early to morrow as my lessons will be minus if I do not. Have read my portion in advance and also those in arrear to night.

**[Monday, March 19]** Have studied hard all the evening but my lessons are unlearned Well, I do’nt wonder that memory refuses to perform her office and that I dont “get crazy.” Is very bad travelling now. Lizzie [Way] & Augusta [Martin] called in the evening—Belle has gone out. I must write a composition before Friday. Wish I might dream out a good one. Drooping eyelids and dull lamps warn me to retire.

**[Tuesday, March 20]** Have written to Dustan to night. Got a letter from Lyman to day. No news. Eunice is married to night<sup>78</sup> A friend is staying with me. Have got my lesson and read

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[Wednesday, March 21] Literary Society met again to night. I recited some poetry—and next week must read the paper. Had a very good meeting—discussion was quite interesting. Milton [Blanchard] died to day—at about 10 o'clock this forenoon.<sup>79</sup> I cannot realize it. It does not seem possible yet so it is. Skeptical and proud! Poor fellow! May he be happy hereafter is my earnest prayer. Did not read to night and am minus 3

[Thursday, March 22] Got a letter from Tavo and a note from Kittie to day Gould Whitelaw & cousin Joseph [Sargeant] called in this eve. Has been very cold and snowy—and the wind blows.

[Friday, March 23] Got a letter from Dustan to night Went to Congress and staid long enough to hear myself appointed one of the “Editresses” for the next week. More work. Have written to Lena to night and have not read in the Bible so again Minus 3

[at bottom of the page] X<sup>80</sup>

[Saturday, March 24] Went to singing school to night. It was a perfect bedlam and put me in agony some of the time Abbie [Hardy] came up to see me this afternoon—had a very good visit. Came home to day in a sleigh. Have not read in the Bible to night and am again Minus 6

[Sunday, March 25] Poor Milton's funeral. The unfriendly cold earth has a new treasure and a dear one is forever removed from the sight of his friends. God comfort the mourning Could not go to funeral and did not wish to either. Can feel his loss just as much. Have read in the Bible to night and wish I could say “My Lord and my God.”

[Monday, March 26] Went to a Panorama of New York City to night, in the chapel<sup>81</sup> Had such times. Pretty good however. Rode over this morning from home. Roads are very bad. Can not read tonight. Minus 3—

[Tuesday, March 27] Has been very pleasant to day Wrote the editorial for the Literary Society this evening. Girls came for assistance and so I must help them. Have not studied a word and my Latin lesson remains to be learned, if it is nearly 10 o'clock. Bother on that Society. Now for Latin. Minus 3—as usual

[Wednesday, March 28] Just finished a letter for Lyman. Read a paper at the Literary Society which met as usual to night. Head aches—am nearly used up—but must go to bed. Minus 6—

[Friday, March 30] Read the “North Room Echo”<sup>82</sup> at the Academy to night, and soon as possible went to see Jennie Cowles and Miss Perry. Had a nice visit, got home 9½ o'clock. Doors were locked and I start[l]ed Belle from pleasant slumbers to let me in. Came from Uncle Asa's this morning. Is very warm and the roads are bad. Have not read to night. Last night I forgot to write in here so another blank page.

[Saturday, March 31] At home. Came over on foot this morning. Roads are better than one week ago. Am tired and have written over two hours for father this evening.<sup>83</sup> Ache all over and my throat is sore. Got a letter from Abbie Kent to day. Returned my library book. Can not read to night.

[Sunday, April 1] It is wicked for me to spend Sabbath as I have this one. O God! forgive it though I ought not to be forgiven. “April fool” Has rained and snowed Did not go to church. Have read 8 chapters in Acts to night but am still minus a number of chap.

[Monday, April 2] Have written two letters to night. Augusta [Gregory] and

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Dustan will be happy recipients Had good lessons to day for a wonder! Have a bad cold Has been very cold to day worse than winter. Am alone Belle is not coming after this and I am “Monarch of all I survey”<sup>84</sup> Eyes ache Can not read.

**[Tuesday, April 3]** 10 o'clock. Dear little book—so many pleasant yet sad memories are connected with its purchase. I have not fulfilled my duty with it. Will reform however, with help. Got a letter from Lyman this morning. Is well Has been very cold to day. Studied this evening on Latin but have not learned my lesson. Copied a piece for LS [Literary Society]. Have been reading some to night—and now have –9 chapters in the Old T[estament] to make up while I am +7 in advance in the New. Bon soir.

**[Wednesday, April 4]** Literary Society met again this eve. Went up, but the meeting was not interesting as some of the others have been. Have not studied this evening and shall have poor lessons for morning Trust to wake earlier. Wrote to Sarah Perkins to night Warm and pleasant to day and it has seemed almost a task to study in doors. –9 +6 X

**[Thursday, April 5]** At home. Went to Congress to night came home through the mud and water with Isaac<sup>85</sup> No school until next Monday—Good! Has rained and is very foggy now but worse –11 +5 Got letter from Carrie Needham

**[Friday, April 6]** Is hardly proper for me to write in this to day for it is now tomorrow Annual Fast Day.<sup>86</sup> Went to Uncle's [Sargeant] this afternoon and to Varnum's in evening Had a pretty good time So pleasant as it was coming home! Such beautiful moonlight. –13 +4

**[Saturday, April 7]** Went to the woods and enjoyed a “sugaring off.” Was very pleasant. Miss [Lucy] Perry called—rode up to the door this afternoon. Have learned two lessons for a wonder but that composition. Made some cake to day—my first attempts in culinary business for a long time. –15 +3 I am very negligent not to read but—

**[Sunday, April 8, Easter Sunday]** Has rained and snowed, and I could not go to church to day. But worse than staying at home is the manner in which I have spent the day viz reading newspapers—trashy flimsy concerns O I am so wicked. To spend this holy day in such a way, and not take time to read the Bible. May God help me to do differently is my sincere prayer. Enable me to live more holy and “nearer to Thee.”<sup>87</sup> –10 +1

**[Monday, April 9]** Aching almost sightless eyes—a brain minus any lessons for tomorrow—a tired body and an uneasy conscience will be my description of Alice to night. It is 10 oclock Went to Miss Perry's room with some other members of the “LS”. Made some assignments for the last meeting. Came from home this morn—Is very bad going. If I could dream out another composition. Trust I shall. Will read then I am –9 OT [Old Testament].

**[Tuesday, April 10]** Have finished that much-dreaded composition and can retire with an easier conscience but ever so much shame. I make a fool of myself every day but dont see as I can well avoid it. What a windy night. This morn it was beautiful the sun rise birds &c. But now the wind howls and seems as desolate as I feel. “I do not care to sleep” but it is nearly 11 and I must Got no letter to day, but some papers for father. Must read –9 OT.

**[Wednesday, April 11]** Came home from a “sugar party” at 10—read those fables in an hour and am now ready to retire. Wrote to Miss Lee to day, and

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took it to the P[ost] O[ffice]. Handed my composition to Miss Perry to day. Have had good lessons for me.

**[Thursday, April 12]** Just finished a letter to day Went to “Literary Society” this eve. Had a not very good meeting but passed however. Were interrupted by some boys from without. -5

**[Saturday, April 14]** At home came from Mr Hardy’s this morn. Is very cold and the wind blows hard Have written six hours or more for Father— Did not write yesterday, nor read and do not to night

**[Sunday, April 15]** At home. Have written to Clara [Walbridge Rogers] to day—the first letter on the Sab[bath] for a long time Did not go to church to-day Has been very windy indeed Will [Brown] & Lyman [Brown] were here to supper<sup>88</sup> -2 -2

**[Monday, April 16]** 8¾ o’clock. Have partly learned my Latin lesson, read in the Bible and am now about to finish a letter to Kate at C[astleton]. Begun it this eve and must finish. Did not have a letter last week—something unusual Came from home this morning Has been very cold and windy to[o] windy. Eyes are some tired to night but better than last week.

**[Tuesday, April 17]** Attended a concert by the brass band from Marshfield held in the Academy. Was pretty good. I have not read to night but will in the morning if I live

**[Wednesday, April 18]** Went to the Literary Society Got engaged—angry—excited &c Did nothing but dispute No letters either— Am sleepy and must retire Trusting the Providence to awake me early tomorrow.

**[Thursday, April 19]** Have just finished a letter to Lyman— Went to lecture at the Academy by Dr. Crosby from Wells River.<sup>89</sup> Subject birds. Was very good Has been very beautiful to day—so warm and pleasant Striking 10 o’clock

**[Friday, April 20]** At home. Went to congress and read Jennie’s [Cowles] part of the paper—she being sick Came home with Isaac Did not attend examination but read the Atlantic Monthly with Miss Perry & [C. O.] Thompson.<sup>90</sup> Went to Dea. C’s [Chamberlain] to night.<sup>91</sup> Have not read.

**[Saturday, April 21]** Frank [Gould] and Miss Perry called up to day while I was writing for my life. Have written 8 or 9 hours to day for Father. Em Harvey came over—went back Got two letters from Lib Staples & Dustan— Did not read to day -2 days

**[Sunday, April 22]** Attended church to day Heard two good sermons from Jn [John] & Hebrews Feel sick almost and must soon retire Have read 6 O[ld] T[estament].

**[Monday, April 23]** Did not go out to school this morning as Mother was sick and I staid at home to help. Have written on that old [Grand] List again until it is nearly done. Went up to Mr Way’s a while Studied Latin some— Do not read to night

**[Tuesday, April 24]** At the corner again. Have been to the rehearsal to night performed my lot poorly, rest did well. Am kind of sick and shall soon retire even if my paper is unfinished and my lesson unlearned— Do not read to night

**[Wednesday, April 25]** Literary Society met again grand parade. Fiddlestick [Esdy’s?] the fair attended Stay at Dea C’s with Laura to night. Head aches and am sick—vraiment Do not read Heathen. [Four crosses pencilled across bottom of the page]

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*Alice's Peacham Academy classmates. Daguerreotype, ca. 1857. First row: Augusta Martin, Joseph Merrill. Second row: Jennie Cowles, Francis Cowles, Tirzah Guy, Hinkley Hamilton. Third row: Flora Blanchard, Elsie Choate, Martha Stevens. Fourth row: Francis Sargeant, Frank Gould. Private collection.*

[Thursday, April 26] Have been to ride with Frank Went by the pond to Mr. Abbott's. Such a beautiful road The prospect is enchanting. Is pretty cold to night and I am not very sick but some Have read four fables. I am a wicked wicked girl to study all the time and neglect reading but I must retire now—eyes ache Do not read.

[Friday, April 27] Have just got home from a ride with Frank & Elsie [Choate].<sup>92</sup> Went to "Congress," heard the paper got the key and went to music room where Elsie played some for me. Started for home and met Frank who took us to ride. Such beautiful moonlight. Enchanting! Had pretty good lessons to day for a wonder. It has been windy but is pleasant to night. One week more, and the term closes. Shall be sorry after all Get no letters from anyone Should think Tavo might write. -4+7

[Saturday, April 28] At home again. Had a horse back ride to night. Have written two letters—to Carrie Needham, and Martha [Way]. Came home this forenoon. Has been a beautiful day—warm Do not read to night.

[Sunday, April 29] Staid home from church to day—all the rest went. Has been a very beautiful day so still and quiet. How good the Lord is to give us

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Sabbaths But I do not improve them, I do so wickedly. God help me to do better. Got a letter from Miss Lee to day. I read 13 chapters in O[ld] T[estament] –3 N[ew] T[estament] now

[Monday, April 30] At the Corner again. Have been down to Water St. to night—called on Mrs. [Eliza] Lynds—had a pleasant chat.<sup>93</sup> Went to the P[ost] O[ffice], but no letters. Well I ought not to complain. It is beautiful out to night—so warm and pleasant. Would like to ride Shall probably in the morning Have been collecting Got \$6.50—pretty well. Do'nt read to night.

[Wednesday, May 2] I see another blank page—to continue so through the year Yesterday I went to Jennie's [Sargeant] wedding at Uncle's—from there to Barnet and saw them off.<sup>94</sup> Got home at noon—well tired out. Went to ride at night and staid with Elsie after attending meeting Went to Convention this afternoon<sup>95</sup> then “collected.” Have seen all but three— Had lots of calls to night— Frank G has just gone. It is a splendid evening—clear moonlight, would like to ride. Have not read to day.

[Thursday, May 3] Am as tired as I care to be to night. Have been to “Devil's Hill.”<sup>96</sup> Splendid prospect but not so good as “Bird Mountain” in Ira. Have got \$10.00 from the girls—and must start at 5 o'clock to morrow if I can be ready— Must prepare for it. Do not read.

[Friday, May 4] Went to Montpelier with Frank to day and selected a present for Miss Perry. Got very tired on the way, but got ample paid for going To night bade “good-bye” to scholars and teachers. Mr. T[hompson]—talked so nobly—it is too bad we must leave him—or he leave us Was very sorry to say “good bye” to Miss P—but it could not be avoided. I am very weary and will retire. Got a letter from Tavo. Do not read.

[Saturday, May 5] Came home this morning at 11 o'clock. It has been very lonesome and I know what is my destiny for the summer—to work and bear scolding. I am very hasty and impatient but I can not stand such talk and long for companionship Dustan came in to night Is Mother's birthday<sup>97</sup> Have not read any.

[Sunday, May 6] Attended church to day. Mr. B[outelle] preached from Rev. 6.2. Good sermon. Was communion to day. Solemn ceremony! I wanted to join with them to show to the world my faith and hope in Christ—but was not fitted.<sup>98</sup> Heaven help me I will be—want to feel that I am a christian and have a share in that great love which he showed for all. It was very warm to night and very pleasant. How I would like to see Miss Perry. Read 7 chapters O[ld] T[estament]—

[Monday, May 7] Have been out to the Corner this afternoon—it hardly seemed natural. I was so lonesome, but after all I'm at home and must stay contented. Went up to Mr. [Simon] Blanchard's to night.<sup>99</sup> I have worked a little to day—just enough to know how it will seem all summer. Well, my lot is an easy and happy one compared with many others and I must strive to do good and see if home cannot be made a little more pleasant and fewer scenes of disagreement occur! Have read three chapters O[ld] T[estament].

[Tuesday, May 8] Have just got a letter from Augustus [Walbridge]—short, and full of business. Began a pair of stockings to day. We have been washing and I worked until I was tired enough any way. Got some sleeve buttons—and had my head examined. My motto (according to Will [Brown]) is to “hold

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back” for I progress too rapidly.<sup>100</sup> [French words translated to English] I have read four chap[ters]—O[ld] T[estament].

**[Wednesday, May 9]** Wrote to my brother this morning Have been sewing to day and reading Longfellow a little Got very much interested in his writings. Have nothing to write to night—but I have just read “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.”<sup>101</sup> God help me to ever remember & feel that. 4 chapters read.

**[Thursday, May 10]** Why am I so weak, and delaying always the important subjects of which I think so much. I feel to night as if I could give up every thing—renounce all for Christ—at least I think so—but if I could repose this freely to night—I should but mock such feelings on the tomorrow. I do want to be good, and I know my behavior is very displeasing to dear Savior who loves me so tenderly. God help me to live for thee 4.

**[Friday, May 11]** Got a letter from Miss [Laura] Tenney and one from Lyman to night. May God bless the instruction given in each to my dismal welfare 5.

**[Saturday, May 12]** Not much to write, only I am tired as it is 9½ o’clock must retire. Have been writing to Lyman to night. Made some pies to day. Warm and pleasant I do not succeed as well as I had hoped in my efforts at self control, but will hope for the best. Have succeeded better than usual though. Have read but not by course so am –3 again.

**[Sunday, May 13]** Attended church to day. Mr. Bradford preached from 1 Cor. 13.1–3 and 2 Cor.<sup>102</sup> Have been thinking to night and I will not live in this way longer—I must feel differently. Augustus came to day.<sup>103</sup> Read for to day.

**[Monday, May 14]** Dustan and Augustus left this afternoon. Have sewed some to day. Went down to see Elvira [Sargeant] to night with Abbie [Hardy]. She is sick and I am too, feel pretty miserable. Have read one fable and so neglected my Bible –3 to day. Am 21 chapters behind in all

**[Tuesday, May 15]** Am trying to solve some of the mysteries of house keeping now. Have tried it some to day and feel its effects in almost every bone. It has been cooler than for some time, to day, but no rain. Have not heard from the P[ost] O[ffice] this week, and owe so many letters, I am ashamed to wait for more. Am trying to live differently, to lead a better life and thus feel “nearer My God to Thee.” I need strength from Him to do it, and dear Savior grant me that strength. –20

**[Wednesday, May 16]** Am tired to night. “Cleaning house” does not agree with me, I know. Have been out to the Corner and called on Elsie, Hattie [Guy], and Ellen [Cowles] saw none of them, but had good chats with the rest of the folks. It has almost rained to day, but not quite succeeded. Have read my fable and am getting to like Latin very well. –20

**[Thursday, May 17]** Have worked in the yard nearly all day, and am pretty well tired out, now Rode off with Abbie [Hardy] to night and did not get back in very good season. Have not read my fable to day, and none in the other Book. –23. Just two weeks ago to night I was on “Devil’s Hill” How fast the weeks pass, and to me they are the most important of my life, and yet filled with indecision— Terrible! Fearful!

**[Friday, May 18]** Another day gone! Have wrought some, read and studied some, and thought more. Frank & Elsie came over tonight and stayed a short time. Elsie leaves to morrow. Have read a fable “and so forth.” –20

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[Saturday, May 19] Went to “quilting” this afternoon.<sup>104</sup> Had a pretty good time. It has rained some to day, and all Nature seems to profit by it. Every thing is fresh green and beautiful. -23 My little book fares hardly now. I must not so neglect it, for it has been a faithful companion of '60.

[Sunday, May 20] Mr. Wellington preached two excellent discourses from Heb. 11..4 and Matt 5..16.<sup>105</sup> Saw Elsie again and said “good-bye” for the last time.<sup>106</sup> I will not (so help me God) live all my life an alien from Thee. I will come and accept one for the love which Christ bore for me, Suffering and dying that I might live. God aid me by thy Spirit to live near and for Thee, and help me to control my fiery passions is and shall be my earnest prayer -19

[Monday, May 21] It has been cold to day. Was quite a frost last night so that this morning many plants and other fresh things were touched by it. Have worked some to day and am tired. Dustan came home to day. Elsie went this morning. -22

[Tuesday, May 22] Made some pies to day; am getting to be quite a cook Finished the fable this eve and shall begin History soon Like latin better than I ever expected to. Has been pleasant to day—but not warm yet. Told stories with Dustan to night -25

[Wednesday, May 23] Have written to Tavo to night. Head aches considerably on account of varnish<sup>107</sup> Very pleasant to day. I can not think what to write in my book to night so I must give you my benediction and retire. -24

[Thursday, May 24] Had a horseback ride to night short but stirring. Nellie went admirably. Stopped to see Lu and Lib. Has been pleasant as usual to day. I have taken to knitting as if my life depended on it.<sup>108</sup> -21

[Friday, May 25] Wrote to Miss Perry to night Got my ambrotype. Is very late. Do not read.

[Saturday, May 26] Went out to the Corner on foot, this morning. Got a letter from Lyman to night. It is cold and windy now, and seems like rain Have begun to take little pills again. Hope they may do me good. -12

[Sunday, May 27] My God, Thou who aidest us poor weak sinful mortals to abide by resolutions made in Thy fear, and with reference to Thee, help me, and strengthen me to live more to and for Thee. Increase my faith and love, remove all lingering doubts, and enable me to control my passions so that I may bear patiently with the errors and weaknesses of others. Bless me, even me, O my Saviour, and grant me more of Thy Spirit for Christ's sake. Wrote a note to Lyman.

[Monday, May 28] Am tired enough at least to go to bed. Washing days are sore times for me. Make me sore at least. I read yesterday for to day.

[Tuesday, May 29] Am sick to day—have done nothing but knit. -3

[Wednesday, May 30] And sick again to day. Got two letters from Abbie Kent and Sarah [Perkins] Am getting to be a great knitter. Has rained to day. -6

[Thursday, May 31] Have had more to write for the “Grand List” of Peacham Have worked considerable to day for me. Have been reading Hiawatha<sup>109</sup> aloud this evening, and so neglected my other Book. -9. Am pretty well now.

[Friday, June 1] Has rained finely to day Commenced a letter to Elsie but it is not yet finished Frank & Merritt [Hunt] rode up to night and we made

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arrangements for the “company letter.”<sup>110</sup> This is the worst week I have known this spring for—shame upon me—I’ve been ashamed to confess my Maker before men. Can God forgive me yet, after all the wickedness I have shown Him? “Yea, for He will abundantly pardon.”<sup>111</sup> What blessed consolation. -7

[Saturday, June 2] Went to the Hollow afoot to day—got some tired. It has been a very pleasant day, and we had a beautiful sunset to night. Crimson purple and blue, delicately blended Frank and Francis [Sargeant] rode over and I sent Elsie’s letter with the “partnership letter.” Such splendid moonlight. -10

[Sunday, June 3] Went to church to day. Mr. Boutelle preached from John 8.36—a very excellent discourse. Was very warm and we took a walk with cousin Joe [Sargeant]. How wickedly I have spent this holy day God knows—and I know that as soon as I search for Him with “the whole heart” He will forgive such—and help me to do better -10

[Monday, June 4] Went to the Hollow to day. Got my dress cut. Stopped to tea at Mr. Willey’s. Commenced another of “Grace Aguilar’s” stories to night<sup>112</sup> Dustan has gone away again. -10

[Tuesday, June 5] Have done a heap of house work to day—an abstruse science truly, but a field for great exertion. Mother had an “old folk’s party” to day. June training day.<sup>113</sup> -9 Daisy.<sup>114</sup>

[Wednesday, June 6] Went to the P O this morning and got a letter from Tavo. Dear good girl! Found my first clover to day and mean to preserve it until next year if I live! O! may my wish be realized—more than realized if I may be permitted. Aunt [Ruth Parker] went home to day. -7. Clover.

[Thursday, June 7] One month to day Miss [Laura] Tenney wrote me but her letter yet remains unanswered. Carried Em home to day and gave Alice a short ride. Ironed to day and got well tired out. It is raining now and I hope we may have a good rain. Got my dress done to day. -3

[Friday, June 8] “Cleaning house” is hard work as my aching limbs might amply testify. Has been much cooler to day than for several days past. Walked up to Mr. Way’s a few minutes completed my call. Got a locket of Will, and commenced my other stocking. Two important events in my life. I know it is wicked but -3.

[Saturday, June 9] Another week has passed and soon another Sabbath will dawn. But am I any nearer being a Christian than ever? Great God! I know I neglect Thee—know I am ungrateful and unthankful for all these blessed privileges but Thou wilt yet have mercy. O! it is terrible to delay by trusting in Thy mercy. Forgive it Lord for Christ sake. Mr. [Uriah] Miner died to day<sup>115</sup> -6

[Sunday, June 10] Attended church to day. Mr. B preached from 2 Chron. 16.9 and Canticles 6.10. Very good discourses they were. Had been terribly windy and rained some to day. Got some new question books for Sab[bath] School. “There is no peace on earth saith my God for the wicked” but “Incline your ear and hear” for “whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out” and “my yoke is easy and my burden is light”<sup>116</sup>

[Monday, June 11] Am just home from Mr. Hardy’s Made a call took a walk and then came home. Has been very pleasant but windy to day. Wrote to

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Miss Lee. Am having a nice sore finger for company.<sup>117</sup> Mr. Miner was buried to day. Did not go to the funeral— -3 Clover Red

[Tuesday, June 12] Had a short ride to night with the cavalier as usual.<sup>118</sup> Abbie [Hardy] came up to see me to day and had a pleasant visit with her. Finger does not ache quite so badly as this morning—but bad enough in all conscience -6

[Wednesday, June 13] Hot—Hotter—hottest has been the state of the weather to day. Listers have been here and 'twas so hot getting meals for them. My finger grows worse all the time. Sent letter to Miss Lee this morning -9

[Thursday, June 14] Nothing to write to night Got no letters now from any one. -12

[Friday, June 15] The handiwork of that mysterious God who “rides upon the storm And thunder when he please” has been most strikingly displayed this afternoon.<sup>119</sup> Thick, black clouds, the hollow muttering—then deep bellowing—the lurid flash succeeded by sheets of water descending from the heavens have all been seen & heard. Thanks to God we were uninjured though many others suffered. It has been a refreshing shower at least, and caused quite a freshet. -12

[Saturday, June 16] Just finished a long letter to Lyman in answer to one I received to night. It has rained somewhat considerable to day, and the men have all been busy fixing the roads and bridges devastated by yesterday's shower -9 To Ezra 7<sup>th</sup>

[Sunday, June 17] Attended church to day. Had to go around by Mr. [Ephraim] Clark's as the bridges are carried away.<sup>120</sup> Has rained some. Mr. Boutell preached from “The Word has made flesh and dwelt among us” but the text I have forgotten. This Sabbath has not been spent wisely or profitably but God forgive my sins— My daily prayer shall be “Lord be merciful to me a sinner” then “seek and ye shall find”<sup>121</sup> -5 To Nehemiah 6<sup>th</sup>

[Monday, June 18] Dustan appeared unto us again to night with Abbie [Hardy] My finger has been so sore I have not done much to day. Has been very pleasant cool and no rain— -8

[Tuesday, June 19] My earthly comfort has broken and my finger now is free from pain—for a wonder. It ached badly all day and I could not work much with it but am very tired any way. There was a thunder shower last night, but as I was sleeping soundly failed to disturb me. -11 “Do all things without murmurings and disputings.”<sup>122</sup>

[Wednesday, June 20] Another rainy day, a large share of the time. Have sewed some considerable for me, and a sore finger. The latter is much better. I never spent a day so wickedly—so desperately God of mercy take not the Spirit from me now though I have painfully grieved it when I need its influences the most of any time. Increase its power O God and help me to resist no longer -14

[Friday, June 22] Came up from Mr. Hardy's this morning just after breakfast. Staid there last night and so missed another page in my book Ironed some to day. Got a letter from Elsie. -20

[Saturday, June 23] Went to the Hollow to night on foot and got very tired Got a letter from Lyman again. It is very late and I must retire—

O Alice [written several lines down from the entry]

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[**Sunday, June 24**] Did not attend church to day. Was sacrament at Barnet at Goodwillie's church.<sup>123</sup> Isaac went down. Answered Lyman's letter. O, my God! I have read in Thy Word and my heart is just a little softened, moved by Thy great goodness. I beseech Thee to deepen that feeling. Make me more and more serious, and for dear Jesus' sake let this be a week of good to my soul Make me a humble child and follower of Thee, and pardon my many wicked sins for His sake. Amen. To Job 6<sup>th</sup>

[**Monday, June 25**] Another week in June is minus another day and Monday will soon be numbered among "the things that were." Took a short horse back ride down to Mr. Hardy's to night. Frank came over and brought a letter from Elsie. Sent Lyman's letter this morning

[**Tuesday, June 26**] "The night is cold and dark and dreary; It rains and the wind is never weary"<sup>124</sup> Took lessons in the culinary line to day to my satisfaction and disgust. Got a letter from Sarah P[erkins] to night

[**Wednesday, June 27**] Have not heard from the P[ost] O[ffice] to day. Wrote a long letter to Tavo and a note to Miss Mankin. Listers have been here to day. Wrote some to night for Father. Dustan came from Water St. to day Has a letter from John [Way]. Minnesota folks are well and prospering. Boutelle called a few moments

[**Thursday, June 28**] Kept house to day. Abbie [Hardy] came in to night and I went down to Uncle's [Sargeant] with her. Have written to Sarah Perkins to day. Wrote for Father some also

[**Friday, June 29**] I am writing with my feet in a pail of hot water. Ironed this forenoon and wrote for Father the rest of the day. Went up to Mr. Way's to night.

[**Saturday, June 30**] Sarah Perkins birth day. May many a happy day like this be granted her, with friends nice and devoted. Another month has gone—on hurrying wings It seems so short in time since June commenced. Has the month been improved? Conscience answers "No," my own tongue answers "No," and every thing else the same. God grant that July may be better spent. Frank & Elsie rode over—a short time only— E. is now at home on a visit

[**Sunday, July 1**] Must write at random to night. No candle. Went to church to day. Came home with a head ache -5 [entry in large letters since she had little light]

[**Monday, July 2**] Grievous sickness and hurt to be borne has kept me on the bed all day. Am somewhat relieved to night— -8

[**Tuesday, July 3**] In haste again. Preparations have been made for the "glorious fourth." Expect to go to Danville if well. -11 God be merciful to me a sinner.

[**Wednesday, July 4**] "Glorious fourth"—yet not as glorious to day as some Went to Danville, staid until after dinner, came to the Hollow, and went to the pond and around it Had just a decent time but hardly passable. Was a pleasant day—just right to ride. After all I have cheated myself of my reading. -14 [Albert] Clement and wife came down to day.<sup>125</sup>

[**Thursday, July 5**] Not a loud word has passed my lips to day—it has been impossible to utter one on account of a severe hoarseness. Whispered through the day—Abbie [Hardy] came up to night. Has rained to day. Do not read.

[Friday, July 6] Must write a word any way though I dont feel much like it. Throat has been better to day. Went strawberrying to day for the first time this season do not read -20 God forgive me for thus grieving Thy Spirit—

[Saturday, July 7] Took a horseback ride to night— It has been very pleasant to day and I had a good ride. Have not had a letter all this week—for a long time. A whole week of July has passed and I am no nearer Thy Kingdom of Christ's Love, than even before. God, God of mercy, guide my feeble prayers to Thee, and watch over my steps that they may be for Thee -14

[Sunday, July 8] Have not attended church to day—staid at home and went berrying. Was it wrong my God? I have not kept this day holy unto Thee, my own conscience says thus, and Thou knowest it. I can only cry "God be merciful to me a sinner." I know I need mercy and that without it I should fall instantly. Help me to give up and leave all for Thee and make all necessary sacrifices to obtain Thy favor, willingly.

[Tuesday, July 10] Did not write any yesterday but spent the day in the usual manner. Took lessons in cookery of Mother to day—took a walk with some ladies before tea, and a long horse back ride with Abbie [Hardy]. Staid up at Mr Way's until 10 o'clock

[Thursday, July 12] I am getting sadly negligent as concerns writing in my companion. Sent a letter to Elsie this morning and got one from Sarah Perkins to night. Have ironed to day and went down to Mr. [Robert] Gilfillans' this eve.<sup>126</sup> Has been a very pleasant day and week thus far. Got a letter from Carrie Needham yesterday and a note inclosed from Tavo. Begun to take little pills again to night.

[Friday, July 13] Got a letter from Clara [Walbridge Rogers] to night. News rather more encouraging but still sad<sup>127</sup> Played backgammon with Ike to night Rained some to day

[Saturday, July 14] Went to the Hollow to night Have written to Lyman Tried to cook to day but couldn't. -3

[Sunday, July 15] Went to church to day. Mr. B preached two good sermons. The meeting was fully attended. The truth that "I love them that love Me, and they that seek Me early shall find me" has sounded in my ears all day.<sup>128</sup> In vain does Satan try to drive it from my thoughts. I will think and I know God causes it. I yet "hope in the Lord" though often I am "cast down and disgusted." Lord help [me] or I perish. And permit me to live this coming week for Thee as I will try, by God's blessing to live.

[Tuesday, July 17] Got a letter from Augusta [Gregory] to night. I was sick last eve and did not write or read my Bible—so I was wicked Have worked hard these two day—hard for me. Was a thunder shower last night -6 Got a new dress of a peddler

[Wednesday, July 18] Made hay caps to day.<sup>129</sup> Commenced a letter to Abbie Kent. Went down to see Vir [Sargeant] and Abbie [Hardy] to night.

[Thursday, July 19] Must write a line or so Wrote to Abbie [Kent] and Abbie [Hardy] came up to see me to night. Rained this morning. M[argaret] H[arvey] was married.<sup>130</sup>

[Friday, July 20] Lena's birthday. Wilt thou think of her once & kindly? Have I not? Memory has oft recalled that dear absent friend. O! that I might hear

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from her soon. Commenced a letter to day, but it is unfinished. Went away after berries but got nearly "used up." Has been very hot to day

**[Saturday, July 21]** Lyman came home to night News from the dear "old Sem[inary]" love from the girls, a bouquet from Sarah [Perkins] &c It made me very sad, but I try to feel all has been for the best. Unbelief often says "not so" and I can seldom still its voice; but I will try God help me. He will for He has said "I love them that love me and they that seek me early shall find me"

**[Sunday, July 22]** Went to church to day at the Academy. Dr. Thompson from Ct. preached an excellent discourse from 1 John 5..5. There was no afternoon service until 5 o'clock when Thompson spoke again from [blank] 8.32.<sup>131</sup> I attended closely as my unsteady mind would permit to the Truth. May God send his spirit and a blessed work of grace follow from those two sermons. Saw COT[hompson] and spoke with him.

**[Monday, July 23]** [C. O.] Thompson and Frank came over this morning—stopped a few minutes. So noble—handsome and pleasant! Just my idea of a man. Such an one as I could live love and pray for all my life. His lady must be a happy one. I may never see him again—but "I will never forget his precepts"<sup>132</sup>

**[Tuesday, July 24]** Our usual work for Tuesday came and was got through with— Nothing to write. A cold windy day Dustan sick. Have read "Shirley"<sup>133</sup> "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults" Got Lizzie's [Perkins] regards from Mrs. [Frances] K[nowlton]—by Lyman

**[Wednesday, July 25]** Went to see Abbie [Hardy] and Vir [Sargeant] with Lyman. Made a short call. Has been very pleasant but cool to day. Berries are getting ripe—saw some on the way Dustan has been sick to day.

**[Thursday, July 26]** Went to the Corner this morn and helped "cleanse the sanctuary" Got very tired and lame. Abbie [Hardy] & Sylvia [Sargeant] came up and A—stayed all night. -3

**[Friday, July 27]** Ironed to day. Been reading Shirley. Abbie [Hardy] was here all day -5

**[Sunday, July 29]** Another holy Sabbath has passed to swell the number so fastly increasing. An unimproved day my conscience says. I am almost a will-ing subject of Satan make hardly any objections to following him and thus fixing more surely my guilt Crimes of the blackest hue stain my life, my best action[s] are condemnatory but Lyman's prayer aided by Thy Spirit has taught me so little I will try to trust in God's mercy. Help me Father to live near and for Thee.

**[Monday, July 30]** Hard work as usual on washing day. Has been very pleasant all day. Mr & Mrs [Seymor?] came here after tea stayed a short time

**[Tuesday, July 31]** Sent a catalogue to [Leona?] to night. Had a fine shower to day. Is cool and beautiful now. Clear sweet moonlight bathes everything in a flood of mellow azure light So calm and refreshing Dustan went to Newport to day.

**[Wednesday, August 1]** Cousins Vir Sylvia & Belle called to night. -3

**[Thursday, August 2]** Went to see Abbie [Hardy] with Ella. Stayed a short time. Has been very pleasant Ironed to day and am pretty well tired out now -3

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[Friday, August 3] Went to the Corner this afternoon—and listened to Mr. Morgan the “children’s minister.”<sup>134</sup> He was uninteresting than otherwise would have been monoton[ous] had it not been that he preached the Truth. Was very warm in church Got a letter from Miss Lee—

[Sunday, August 5] Attended church. Mr. Cady preached excellently. Text Eph. 3..10–11 Afternoon Mr. B preached from Coll. 1..18–19.

[Monday, August 6] My affection for thee revives occasionally my own book. I am tired, bodily, and much more weary mentally, yet cannot complain. It is more than I deserve. O, my God! Is there yet mercy for me? Shame on thee Alice, thou knowest there is! Father, reveal Thy character to me by the Spirit, and may I trust and be forgiven. I will not say “all thy waves and billows are gone over me” though I am tempted to sometimes.<sup>135</sup> Make me more like Thee, Dear Savior, and give me strength to control my passions and resist temptations

[Tuesday, August 7] Have been “sick” to day. Abbie [Hardy] called in the same predicament. Mrs. Brown & Sanborn were here—

[Thursday, August 9] Went to the Hollow after my dresses to night. Is very warm to day.

[Friday, August 10] There is a thunder shower—a conflict of the elements—without, but a more desperate one within my breast God, who alone can help, settle that conflict aright.

[Saturday, August 11] Has rained to day. Sewed on my dresses until very late. –3

[Sunday, August 12] Attended church to day. Mr. Shaw preached from John 15..7. In afternoon from Rev. 3..20.<sup>136</sup> He is not an eloquent preacher, but lengthy and uninteresting. Saw Elsie and went down home with her at noon. Got my S[abbath] S[chool] lesson to night.

[Monday, August 13] “The day is cold and dark and dreary— It rains—and the wind is never weary”<sup>137</sup> Emphatically true. Wrote to Augusta [Gregory] to night

[Tuesday, August 14] Another rainy day. Have been very busy all day and sewed late. –3

[Wednesday, August 15] Went to St. Johnsbury to day for the first time. It was a muddy ride but otherwise pleasant. Heard Prof [S. W.] Boardman in the afternoon Miss [Caroline] Bickford and I stay at Mr. Hawes’. Went to the Menagerie this eve. Staid till 9 o’clock then came back and saw a torch light procession who serenaded J[ustin] S Morrill<sup>138</sup>

[Friday, August 17] Got a letter from Sarah Perkins to night

[Saturday, August 18] Wrote to Carrie Needham and Miss Lee to night.

[Sunday, August 19] Went to church to day. Mr. Cady preached from Luke 15..10. A very good discourse I feel it to be time in my own heart. Mr. B preached in the afternoon. –7

[Monday, August 20] Am tired enough any way Have worked real hard for me to day. Am practicing cookery now-a-days. Is a cold windy night. –7

[Tuesday, August 21] Washed to day. I worked quite hard, but am rested now, so I feel quite smart Is another rainy day and cold night –6

[Wednesday, August 22] Went to the Corner this morn and got some cavities in my teeth filled.<sup>139</sup> Has been very warm all day. Mother had company –9

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- [Thursday, August 23] Attended a party of Mr Way's to night. Had a pretty good time -3
- [Friday, August 24] Went to the Corner to night Made a few calls. Miss [Annette] Rogers & Mother came up from Newbury this morn.<sup>140</sup> Has been cold and damp but pleasant after all. -3
- [Saturday, August 25] Rainy all day nearly. Took a short ride with Abbie [Hardy]— Lodoskey [Spencer Watts] & Phebe [Spencer] got home from Ill. to night. Lyman went to the Depot.<sup>141</sup> -18
- [Sunday, August 26] Went to church to day Cannot remember Mr. B's texts. Came home with a head ache, and suffer intensely with it. -23
- [Monday, August 27] I am somewhat tired now, and the thought of rest seems pleasant. I cannot endure myself—I make so many resolutions, and keep none of them. Surely my iniquity is great. -26
- [Tuesday, August 28] Went berrying to day Had pretty good luck Vir [Sargeant] came up— Is beautiful moon light “perfectly splendid” -23
- [Wednesday, August 29] Went up to school this afternoon and to Mr. [Ebenazer] Spencer's after tea. Saw the girls. Came home by moonlight -26
- [Thursday, August 30] Phebe came down to night I went almost home with her -29
- [Friday, August 31] Rained some to day. Ironed this morning. Canvas is being held now at the Corner<sup>142</sup> -26 To Eccl. 1—
- [Saturday, September 1] It is one year ago to day since I reached Castleton How short! I trust I have not wholly lived in vain but have accomplished little good at the most I slept with C[arrie] M. Needham one year to night -18
- [Sunday, September 2] Was not at church to day Augustus came home to day. Is a very cold windy time. -15
- [Monday, September 3] Washed to day. Am quite tired of work, yet like it better than I expected -14
- [Tuesday, September 4] First day of school. Am at the Corner. There have been 41 scholars to day.<sup>143</sup> It is very warm J[ohn] M Martin was elected Representative—<sup>144</sup> -14
- [Wednesday, September 5] Nothing to write to day Went to school of course. No letters. -14
- [Thursday, September 6] School as usual. Nothing extra -17
- [Friday, September 7] Came home to night. Miss [Lucina] Albee, Lyman and I took a short ride this eve.<sup>145</sup> -20
- [Saturday, September 8] At home. Ironed this forenoon, and have been up in the woods black-berrying. Found them quite thick. Lodoskey came down this afternoon -23
- [Sunday, September 9] Went to church. Mr. B preached but je [French word meaning I] have forgotten the texts -20
- [Monday, September 10] Came out from home this morning. -23
- [Tuesday, September 11] Attended school as usual. -26
- [Wednesday, September 12] Has rained all day. Dustan came in this evening. Got a letter from Lena to night -29
- [Thursday, September 13] Cold as Iceland to day. I have contracted a severe cold some way. Called on Misses [Lucina] Albee & Blake. -30 I am getting behind pretty awfully

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[Friday, September 14] Took a short ride with Lyman and Miss Rogers to night.

[Saturday, September 15] Went home this morning Worked a little and played more –36 Dustan and Abbie [Hardy] came in the evening<sup>146</sup>

[Sunday, September 16] Did not attend church to day. I spent the day very unprofitably and wickedly I know. –22 To Isa. 44

[Monday, September 17] Came from home this morning. Has rained some –35

[Saturday, September 29] Alice, one thought for “little Abbie” to day my birthday<sup>147</sup>

[Monday, October 1] Snowed to day, most awful cold Warm in morning and cold in evening of Oct. 1, 1861<sup>148</sup>

[Saturday, October 6] Augustus came home to day. His birth day<sup>149</sup> Rainy again

[Sunday, October 7] Did not attend [church]

[Monday, October 8] Dustan’s wedding night<sup>150</sup>

[Monday, October 22] In Geometry—have the 5. Prop Book III.— Panorama eve at the Academy

[Thursday, October 25] Dustan’s birth day<sup>151</sup>

[Sunday, November 4] Went to church

[Tuesday, November 6] Election Day. “Abe” will get it. Abbie’s [Hardy Walbridge] birth day<sup>152</sup>

[Wednesday, November 7] Rainy. Rejoicing at St. Johnsbury. Light from a bonfire and noise of cannon<sup>153</sup>

[Saturday, November 10] Rained like suds all day Trimming school house in morning. Went to Water St. with Father

[Sunday, November 11] Did not attend church to day. Is rainy.

[Monday, November 12] 5 o’clock in morning Studying French. foggy & misty. Am not sleepy at all—

[Sunday, December 9] Attended church. Sermon in the morning from the text “Be not afraid, only believe.” Why am I not different and why do I not feel faith & trust, and perfect confidence in leaving all with my heavenly Father? Unbelief and doubting and neglect of prayers, together with a great dislike for certain of my fellow mortals. O God! With Thee is the power to change even this hard heart and soften it toward Thee. I wait thy pleasure O God.

[Tuesday, December 11] Got a letter from Lena. Precious girl—how much I love her. God bless you, ever Lena

[Monday, December 31] Permitted by a Father Life with its busy cares has permitted me once more to think. Another year gone on hurrying wings! It seems so short a time since I first got this book and commenced writing in it. Friends have departed “Some to the bridal and Some to the tomb” I thank God none of my own family have been called from me, but that in health and strength they all live. To Thee is the praise.

**Memoranda.** But how is it? Have I made any improvement in any thing this past year? In some things I doubt not I am improved but in that great respect which I had rather improve or would be improved, I am sadly going down hill, and conscious that I stand in a slippery place.<sup>154</sup> God, help me, forgive me and aid me for the Future.

**Memoranda.** Now, I confess my faults and short comings, but I do feel that I can come to my Savior with more confidence, and that I feel no less an interest than I did twelve months—one year ago. I am waiting for the dawning of 1861, and will commence by prayer if God lets me live, that I may lead a prayerful life trusting all and reposing peacefully in my Savior's arms where is safety alone. God bless me for Christ's sake—Amen

#### EPILOGUE

Alice labeled her diary “a constant companion,” but by the last months of the year, her entries became highly intermittent and terse. She made no account for the many blank pages, a sudden change from her role as faithful diarist for nine months. She seemed to have abandoned her Bible reading, or at least recording it. Even the wedding in October of her brother, Dustan, and close friend, Abbie Hardy, was noted briefly and without joy. Maybe Alice felt that Abbie had used her to get close to her brother, or maybe Alice felt slighted that Abbie had not included her in her confidence, especially as it became clear that a cause of the quick marriage was her pregnancy. Possibly, Abbie's marriage disappointed Alice, who thought they were like-minded supporters of education leading to independence, for Alice at Castleton thought that Abbie might join her there. Since Alice seemed to admire most highly those friends who headed off on their own to teach—Lena at Castleton and Elsie at the Peacham Academy—Abbie's decision to marry and follow the known duties of domesticity and motherhood may have caused Alice to question her own future goals. In any case, Alice never again was close to Abbie, even when Dustan went off to the Civil War and left Abbie and their daughter in Peacham.

Within four months of Alice's last entry, the Civil War began, changing life throughout the country and in the farm community of Peacham. Mothers, wives, sisters, and relatives of the many young men who went to war became busier than ever as they took on additional farm and family duties. For Alice, another big change occurred in 1862. Her mother and grandmother died nine weeks apart. Alice nursed them in their illnesses, and she took over the household work. She wrote to her niece that she became “boss and all hands in the housekeeping line.”<sup>155</sup> Domesticity limited her independence, but when her brother, Isaac, returned from war, she went off to Mount Holyoke Seminary in the fall of 1865. There, as she had found at Castleton Seminary and Peacham Academy, she favored social relations with her classmates over school lessons. She stayed only a year and then returned to the domestic routine at the Watts farm, intermittently teaching in the local district schools and at the Peacham Academy—at least fulfilling one of her

life's goals. Her questions about religion, which dominated her diary, also seemed settled as she joined the Peacham Congregational Church in 1866, at last committing herself to being a Christian.<sup>156</sup>

In November 1868, Alice married Charles A. Choate, the older brother of Elsie, her former classmate, and a boy she had known all her life. They moved to West Barnet to a farm mortgaged from his father. They struggled to make payments and accomplish all the work needed to make a living from the land. Over the next fourteen years, Alice gave birth to seven children, four living to adulthood. She grew weaker with each pregnancy and died at age thirty-seven in 1882, a month after the birth of a son they named Isaac.<sup>157</sup>

One of the more scholarly duties Alice performed as she aged was diary keeping, which she did with style, humor, and regularity. The 1860 diary appears to be her first, and nine others have been preserved by the family. As poor health and increased family responsibilities took over her schedule, she penned her last diary entry in 1878. Her husband, Charles, took over the task of recording the daily chores and the work of the hired hands on their farm. Alice's diaries, and also her letters to relatives in Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, and California fill in the picture of a Vermont farm girl learning to accept her lot in life during a time when women's education allowed some to become financially independent. Alice was not one of them. Education eventually made little difference in her daily life, but because of the skills education gave her, she left for future generations the diaries and letters that document this period of transition for women in America.

#### APPENDIX A

##### MEMBERS OF ALICE'S FAMILY MENTIONED IN THE 1860 DIARY

In this family of stepchildren and half-sisters and half-brothers, each referred to the other as simply "sister" or "brother." Each called Roxana "mother" and Lyman "father."

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Mother      | Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts (1802–1862)         |
| Father      | Lyman Watts (1801–1875), Roxana's 2nd husband    |
| Grandmother | Olive Lamb Brown (ca.1769–1862), Roxana's mother |
| Siblings    | Martha Walbridge Gregory (1822–1846)             |
|             | Chastina Walbridge Rix (1824–1857)               |
|             | Sarah Walbridge Way (1827–1909)                  |
|             | Clara Walbridge Rogers (1830–1917)               |
|             | Lyman S. Watts (1832–1872)                       |
|             | Dustan S. Walbridge (1832–1864)                  |
|             | Charles Watts (1835–1875)                        |
|             | D. Augustus Walbridge (1835–1881)                |

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|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Siblings ( <i>cont.</i> ) | Isaac (Ike) N. Watts (1842–1881)<br>Alice Watts (1845–1882)<br>Ella Watts (1847–1915)  |
| Nieces                    | Augusta Gregory (1843–1903)<br>Martha Way (1850–1877)  |
| Nephew                    | Julian Walbridge Rix (1850–1903)   |
| Uncles                    | Thomas Parker<br>Elijah Sargeant (1805–1875)<br>Asa Sargeant (1807–1889)   |
| Aunt                      | Ruth Watts Parker (1806–1873)  |
| Cousins                   | Joseph (Joe) Sargeant (1833–1910)<br>Mary Jane (Jennie) Sargeant (1835–1920)<br>Elvira (Vir) Sargeant (1837–1865)<br>William Watts (1839–1900)<br>Sylvia Sargeant (1840–1916)<br>Francis Sargeant (1841–1927)<br>Arabella (Belle) Sargeant (1843–1941)<br>Lyman Brown<br>Willard (Will) Brown (died ca. 1880)<br>Albert Clement<br>Elizabeth (Lib) Goodwin |

Source: Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995).

## APPENDIX B

### CASTLETON SEMINARY CLASSMATES AND TEACHERS MENTIONED IN 1860 DIARY

Lucinda S. Albee, East Hardwick [2]  
Carrie Adams  
Octavia (Tavo, OG) G. Baker  
Lucy Blake  
Rev. Willard Child, President [1,2]  
Lena E. Ehle, Bennington [1]  
Mary A. Hawthorn, Salem, N.Y. [1]  
Rev. Hervey O. Higley, Corporation [1,2]  
Annie Hoxie  
Abbie W. Kent, Enosburgh [1]  
Miss Emma A. Lee, Instructor, Oil Painting, Water Colors, Drawings,  
etc. [1,2]  
Mrs. Frances L. Knowlton, Associate Principal; Instructor, English  
Literature, Rhetoric, etc. [1,2]

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Mr. Stephen Knowlton, Principal; Instructor of Philosophy [1,2]  
 Mr. George A. Mietzke, Instructor of Instrumental and Vocal Music [1]  
 Carrie M. Needham, Whiting [1]  
 Dr. Joseph Perkins, Medical College [1,2]  
 Elizabeth Perkins, Castleton [1]  
 Sarah F. Perkins, Castleton [2]  
 Carlos S. Sherman, Corporation [1]  
 Elizabeth (Lib) Staples, Danby Corners [2]  
 Mr. Lyman S. Watts, Instructor of Classics and Higher  
 Mathematics [1]  
 Mr. John K. Williams, Instructor of Classics and Higher  
 Mathematics [2]

Sources: [1] *Catalogue of the Corporation, Officers and Students of Castleton Seminary for the Year ending July 20, 1859* (Rutland: Geo. A. Tuttle & Co., 1859) and [2] *Catalogue . . . for the Year ending July 17, 1861*. No catalogue has been found for 1859–60.

APPENDIX C  
 PEACHAM ACADEMY CLASSMATES  
 AND TEACHERS MENTIONED IN 1860 DIARY

Lucina S. Albee, East Hardwick [3]  
 Clark Bovee, Danville [3]  
 Laura Chamberlain (1843–1924), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Elsie A. Choate (1842–1926), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Margaret Clark (died 1881), Peacham [3]  
 Marietta Clark (1844–1906), Peacham [1,3]  
 Ellen Cowles (1843–1871), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Jane (Jennie) E. Cowles (1841–1916), Ryegate [1,2,3]  
 Frank Gould (1841–1920), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Hattie E. Guy (1842–1892), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Abbie Hardy (1842–1917), Peacham [1]  
 Roney Harvey, Groton [3]  
 William Harvey, Groton [3]  
 Merritt S. Hunt (1842–1920), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Mary H. Ladd, Peacham [2,3]  
 Charles J. Lynds, Peacham [2,3]  
 William H. Lynds, Peacham [2,3]  
 Augusta J. Martin (1842–1921), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Alice D. Packer, Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Miss Lucy A. Perry, Preceptress [2]  
 Annette L. Rodgers, Newbury [3]  
 Arabelle (Belle) B. Sargeant (1843–1941), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Elvira (Vir) C. Sargeant (1837–1865), Peacham [1]

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Francis E. Sargeant (1841–1927), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Sylvia J. Sargeant (1840–1916), Peacham [1]  
 Miss Laura Tenney, Preceptress [1]  
 Mr. C. O. Thompson (1836–1885), Principal [1,2]  
 Ella L. Watts (1847–1815) [3]  
 Isaac (Ike) N. Watts (1842–1881) [1,2,3]  
 Mr. Lyman S. Watts (1832–1872), Principal [3]  
 Lizzie S. Way (1845–1874), Peacham [1,2,3]  
 Oscar L. Whitelaw, Ryegate [2,3]

Sources: [1] *Sixty-Second Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Caledonia County Academy, Peacham VT., for the Academic Year 1858–9* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth Press, 1858); [2] *Sixty-Third Annual Catalog . . . 1859–60* (1859); [3] *Sixty-Fourth Annual Catalog . . . 1860–61* (1860).

#### NOTES

In preparing this diary for publication, the editor is grateful to Karen Sanborn, Castleton State Library, and historian W. Boyd Barrick for photocopies of Castleton Seminary catalogues and identification of faculty and students. Thanks also to those who read the diary and made suggestions: Elsie Freeman Finch, William M. Ferraro, Allen F. Davis, Marilyn S. Blackwell, Deborah Duncan Hudson, and the late Mary C. Morrison. David E. L. Brown, retired Congregational minister and historian, helped identify religious passages and scripture, and Jean Pauline translated the French entries. Most vital dates for Peacham names are uncredited from Jennie Chamberlain Watts and Elsie A. Choate, *People of Peacham* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1965).

<sup>1</sup>For a more complete story of the family, see Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995). School teaching had become the way for women with scholarly accomplishments to earn wages outside the family. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1977), 32–33. By 1861, seventy-five percent of Vermont teachers were women, and most were “young, unmarried daughters of respectable farmers.” Margaret K. Nelson, “Vermont Female Schoolteachers in the Nineteenth Century,” *Vermont History* 49 (Winter 1981): 9, 16, 26.

<sup>2</sup>When Alice's older sister, Chastina, wrote to relatives in Wisconsin, she bragged that Alice at three and a half years old “spells everything she hears & sees almost, and is a real little rogue.” Chastina Walbridge, Peacham, to her brother-in-law, Hubbell Seth Gregory, Janesville, Wis., 6 August 1847, Walbridge-Gregory Family Papers, California Historical Society. Hereafter cited as Walbridge-Gregory Papers.

<sup>3</sup>Peacham Grand List, 1860, Town Office. Lyman Watts was one of thirty-eight property owners with real estate valued more than \$2,000, and one of thirty-four residents with personal property more than \$1,000. He had no mortgage on his farm. Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 9.

<sup>4</sup>Roxana Walbridge Watts, Peacham, to Sarah Walbridge Way, Northfield, Minn., 13 October 1859, Private Collection. For background on Castleton Seminary, founded in 1787, whose purpose became the preparation of teachers, see *Report of the Proceedings Commemorating the One-Hundredth Anniversary of the Establishment of a Chartered School, Known at Different Periods as The Rutland County Grammar School, Castleton Seminary and State Normal School in Castleton, Vermont, 1787–1887* (Rutland: The Tuttle Company, 1888). In 1961 it became one of the Vermont State Colleges. Robert F. Forest, “The Development of Castleton State College, 1959–1979,” *Vermont History* 50 (Fall 1982): 197. Alice's mother represented the farm women of her generation who valued education for their girls but needed their labor to maintain the household. In addition, older women had lived a life of female sacrifice and expected their daughters to do likewise.

<sup>5</sup>Roxana Walbridge Watts, Peacham, to Clara Walbridge Rogers, San Francisco, 30 December 1857, Private Collection.

<sup>6</sup>Alice Watts, Castleton, to Augusta Gregory, unidentified place in Wisconsin, 5 December 1859, Walbridge-Gregory Papers.

<sup>7</sup>Lyman S. Watts, Castleton, to Sarah Walbridge Way, Northfield, Minn., 31 March 1860, Private Collection.

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<sup>8</sup>*Daily Miniature Diary for 1860* (New York: Published Annually for the Trade). The volume is slightly smaller than 2½" × 4" with a black leather cover. In Alice's handwriting on the binding page: "Miss Alice Watts pour votre frere aime. Castleton Sem No 40. Third Hall. Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1860." The diary is preserved in a private collection.

<sup>9</sup>Lyman S. Watts, Diary, 21 January and 15 February 1857, Private Collection.

<sup>10</sup>This schedule may have been common practice, as a New York schoolgirl calculated in 1853 that if she read three chapters a day, she could complete the Bible in one year. *Diary of Caroline Cowles Richards, 1851-1872* (Canandaigua, N.Y.: Privately printed by Caroline Richards Clarke, 1908), 14.

<sup>11</sup>E-mail, 3 December 2007, David E. L. Brown to editor on subject of Congregational conversion. Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), xix-xxi, points to the nineteenth-century emphasis on spiritual rather than physical concerns like their looks. At this time the important character improvements were "attention to self-control, service to others, and belief in God." Historian Randolph A. Roth noted that during the great revival, including in Peacham in 1831, the devout attended "weekly prayer meetings, special youth societies and Sunday schools, protracted meetings . . . and camp meetings . . . to win souls and improve morals." Although the fever roused by evangelicals subsided through the years, it lingered as some young people continued to struggle for worthiness through Christianity. Lyman S. Watts fit into this category and his insistence that Alice follow this path is seen in her diary. Roth, *The Democratic Dilemma: Religion, Reform, and the Social Order in the Connecticut River Valley of Vermont, 1791-1850* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 189, 201-03, and his article, "Can Faith Change the World? Religion and Society in Vermont's Age of Reform," *Vermont History* 69 (Winter 2001): 7-18.

<sup>12</sup>Nancy Taft, Diary, 4 June-10 August 1838, Vermont Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup>Jane H. Hunter, "Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family: Diaries and Girlhood in Late-Victorian America," *American Quarterly* 44 (March 1992): 51, 63.

<sup>14</sup>Ernest L. Bogart, *Peacham, the Story of a Vermont Hill Town* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1948), 223.

<sup>15</sup>*Caledonian*, St. Johnsbury, Vt., 17 August 1860.

<sup>16</sup>Bogart, *Peacham*, 321.

<sup>17</sup>One of these letters was written 2 January 1860, Alice Watts to her brother, Augustus Walbridge, Lyndon Center, Private Collection. "It is bitter cold weather here now, enough to freeze one if he only steps out. Isn't it fun to get up in the morning, room cold as all out doors, with not a stick of wood to start a fire, dress, and go down four long flights of stairs to route up Pat? Then you ought to hear the curses, threatenings, which we are assailed with, for coming so early! That's an exact description of the way we have to do more than half the mornings." For a biography of Augustus, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 135-142.

<sup>18</sup>Appendix B lists Castleton Seminary students, faculty, and administration. Unfortunately, no catalogue was located for the year Alice attended, 1859-60. Further information comes from W. Boyd Barrick, "Vermont's First College: A Chronicle of the First One Hundred Years of Castleton State College, 1787-1887," typescript, 1988, Special Collections, Middlebury College.

<sup>19</sup>Her mother once bragged about Alice's math ability. Letter, 30 December 1857, Roxana Walbridge Watts. "Mr Barnard the preceptor visited our school last Saturday her teacher sent her up to the Blackboard to work out a sum in Greeleafs Algebra and one in Arithmetic. She done them out and Mr B complemented her very highly for it."

<sup>20</sup>Mrs. Frances L. Knowlton was one of the ten instructors listed in the *Castleton Seminary Catalogue, 1858-59*, teaching English Literature and Rhetoric. Her husband, Stephen Knowlton, was principal. Barrick, "Vermont's First College," 108.

<sup>21</sup>The quote was a version of Psalms 119:105, "a light to my path." Lena E. Ehle, listed in the senior class in 1858-59 catalog, returned in the fall of 1859 to take Ornamentals, which included music, painting, French, and other extra subjects. Letter, 5 December 1859, Alice Watts.

<sup>22</sup>Lena's birthday present to Alice showed how well her roommate knew her, having heard Alice repeatedly call herself "wicked," as seen in this diary more than a dozen times. These presents were taken lightly, as intended. Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 177.

<sup>23</sup>Castleton often hired recent Middlebury graduates, Barrick, "Vermont's First College," 17-18, but neither Moulton nor Sherman is listed in Middlebury catalogs. Carlos S. Sherman is listed as part of the Corporation in *Castleton Seminary Catalogue, 1858-59*.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, "The whole school read daily, by divisions, in the Bible, in connection with the morning worship in the Chapel. There is also a Bible exercise of one hour every Sabbath morning, which all the students are required to attend." By 1860, this Bible exercise may have been moved to Sunday evening.

<sup>25</sup>The first quote is from Job 1:1; the second, Hebrews 12:6.

<sup>26</sup>John K. Williams (1835-1918), an 1860 Middlebury College graduate, probably replaced Lyman S. Watts on the Castleton faculty, as Lyman left to become principal of the Peacham Academy

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in the fall of 1860. *Middlebury College Catalogue*, 23, 157. Williams became a Congregational minister and served as pastor of the Peacham Congregational Church, 1889–1909. Bogart, *Peacham*, 473. John M. Comstock, *The Congregational Churches of Vermont and their Ministry, 1762–1942* (St. Johnsbury: The Cowles Press, 1942), 231.

<sup>27</sup>Mr. Charles may be Charles Choate (1838–1902) of Peacham, who was teaching in Haverhill, N.H. and sent several letters once Alice returned to Peacham. This is the only mention of him in the diary.

<sup>28</sup>Clara Walbridge Rogers moved to San Francisco in 1853 and married Russell Rogers in 1856. The family regularly sent letters to her, mainly written by Alice. For a biography of Clara, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 79–95.

<sup>29</sup>Alice is probably referring to Octavia G. Baker, who is not listed in the *Castleton Seminary Catalogue, 1858–59*. Alice exchanged letters for years with Tavo Baker.

<sup>30</sup>Rev. Willard Child (1796–1877) preached at Castleton, 1855–1864. Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 50, 172.

<sup>31</sup>For emotional attachments among Victorian young women, especially in boarding school settings, see Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood*, 160, 176–177; Carol Lasser, "'Let Us Be Sisters Forever': The Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendships," *Signs* 14 (Autumn 1988): 158–181; Martha Tomhave Blauvelt, *The Work of the Heart: Young Women and Emotion, 1780–1830* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 610, 220; Catherine E. Kelly, *In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 70. Since the publication of Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 1 (Autumn 1975): 1–29, historians have charted the social relationships of women, ranging widely from friendship to lesbian themes for students, teachers, mill workers, sisters-in-law, and others.

<sup>32</sup>This family letter has not been located. Olive Lamb Brown had lived with her daughter's family since 1844, when her husband died. Lib, whom the family referred to as a cousin, was the adopted daughter of Thomas and Ruth Watts Parker of Danville, although she seemed to have kept her birth name, Elizabeth L. Goodwin. She often helped at the Watts farm; no wages were ever listed. Notes by Elsie A. Choate (1880–1959) in Watts folder, Genealogy Files, Peacham Historical Association. On 25 December 1866, Goodwin married John Bishop, Jr. of St. Johnsbury. *Caledonian*, 4 January 1867.

<sup>33</sup>Lena Ehle was traveling to a teaching position in Georgia. Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 178. Another young woman from a Vermont family traveling to the South in this period was Caroline Seabury, who referred to herself as a "Yankee teacher." Suzanne L. Bunkers, editor, *The Diary of Caroline Seabury, 1854–1863* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991).

<sup>34</sup>The 31st algebra is an advanced mathematical formula that scholars proceeded to by solving simpler arithmetical rules. Vermont schools used "Greenleaf's Arithmetics and Algebra" textbooks published by Benjamin Greenleaf, as listed in the *Peacham Academy Catalogue, 1858–59*.

<sup>35</sup>Augusta Gregory was the daughter of Alice's oldest sister, Martha Walbridge Gregory, who had died in 1846, shortly after Alice was born. Augusta and her father lived in Wisconsin. Since the girls were close in age, they wrote often to each other, which Alice's mother encouraged. Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 35–38.

<sup>36</sup>Alice was a frequent visitor to Sarah and Elizabeth Perkins's home in Castleton. Their father, Dr. Joseph Perkins, was connected with the medical college at Castleton.

<sup>37</sup>Letter, 2 January 1860, Alice Watts wrote that she had hoped to receive a book of Mrs. Hemans's poems for Christmas. Felicia Dorothea Hemans (1793–1835) was a popular English poet of the nineteenth century whose poems on the beauty of nature must have appealed to Alice. The editor thanks the staff of the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum for preserving copies of nineteenth-century poetry, novels, and magazines, including *The Poetical Works of Mrs. Felicia Hemans*, New Edition (Philadelphia: Grigg and Elliot, 1845).

<sup>38</sup>Rev. Hervey O. Higley (1839–1912) was listed in Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 192.

<sup>39</sup>Annie Hoxie, a student at Castleton Seminary, became ill and left in the fall term 1859. Annie Hoxie, unidentified place, to Alice Watts, 27 December 1859, Private Collection.

<sup>40</sup>Home was her father's farm in Peacham, Vermont, where she was born and had always lived. Although she does not note it, her brother, Lyman S. Watts, traveled with her. They took the railroad from Rutland to Barnet with a change in Bellows Falls. They would have been met at the Barnet depot and carried by horse and buggy the seven miles to the Watts farm.

<sup>41</sup>Alice referred to the one-room schoolhouse on East Hill, located across the road west of her father's farm. In 1860 Peacham had twelve school districts with 350 scholars enrolled. Harold M. Long, "Early Schools of Peacham," a paper read at the Peacham Historical Association meeting, 29 August 1971, transcript in Association's collections, 5. Spelling schools were a popular community entertainment as well as educational exercise, as scholars competed until there was a winner, the best speller at the event.

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<sup>42</sup>*North Star*, Danville, Vt., 4 February 1860, reported the death by pulmonary consumption in Cabot on January 26 of Charles C. Brown, age 38 years. He was a relative of Alice's mother, and Lyman Watts served as a commissioner of the estate.

<sup>43</sup>Singing schools in the Peacham area were conducted in 1860 on the do-re-mi-fa-sol principle and were popular among young adults in addition to improving church choirs in the area. James A. Keene, *Music and Education in Vermont 1700–1900* (Macomb, Ill.: Glenbridge Publishing Ltd., 1987), 10–35, and Bogart, *Peacham*, 450.

<sup>44</sup>By slipping in the name "John," Alice must have been referring to the abolitionist, John Brown (born 1800), who was hanged 2 December 1859. Although Alice was not in Peacham at the time of the execution, she would have heard that "when the news was received in Peacham of the death of John Brown, [Leonard] Johnson tolled the bell in the Congregational Church for an hour." Bogart, *Peacham*, 220. Except for noting that the minister spoke of slavery in his sermon on February 26, this was the only time Alice referred to slavery in her diary.

<sup>45</sup>None of Lena Ehle's letters have been located, although she and Alice remained life-long friends.

<sup>46</sup>Alice kept close track of her Bible reading. At the end of each diary entry, she marked the number of chapters she was behind. She rarely seemed to be ahead.

<sup>47</sup>Asaph Boutelle (1804–1866), pastor at the Peacham Congregational Church, 1851–1865, was only the third minister there since its founding in 1794. Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 101, 166. D. Packer (died 1875) served as pastor at the Peacham Methodist Church, 1859–1861, 1864. Bogart, *Peacham*, 473–474.

<sup>48</sup>When in Peacham, Lyman S. Watts taught Sabbath School, and he occasionally conducted the meeting in the Congregational Church. He had not yet attended the Andover Theological Seminary. For a biography of Lyman, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 145–157.

<sup>49</sup>Jacob Way (1804–1890) and his family lived on East Hill near the Watts farm, and the children became close friends, especially Alice and Lizzie.

<sup>50</sup>Peacham Hollow, later called East Peacham, was the name of the valley between Peacham Corner and East Hill where Asa Sargeant and his family lived. Asa was a brother to Lyman Watts's first wife, Esther Sargeant (1803–1836), and his children were considered cousins by the Watts and Walbridge children.

<sup>51</sup>Peddlers rode from house to house selling wares. Alice purchased material to be made into a dress.

<sup>52</sup>Julian Walbridge Rix, born in Peacham, moved in 1853 at age two years old to San Francisco with his mother, Chastina Walbridge Rix. After her death in 1857, he returned to Peacham to be raised by his grandmother and to receive a good New England education. For a biography of Chastina, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 63–78; for Julian, 98–114.

<sup>53</sup>The German was probably a peddler.

<sup>54</sup>When Barnett friends at Harvey's Lake were not at home, Alice and Lyman visited their neighbor, Leonard Varnum (1838–1917), on East Hill. Daphne C. Quimby, "People of Peacham Addendum," June 1971, Peacham Historical Association.

<sup>55</sup>Elijah Sargeant, another brother to Lyman Watts's first wife, lived with his family on East Hill. His children were considered cousins to the Watts and Walbridge children. All had been school mates in the East Part district school.

<sup>56</sup>Dustan Walbridge had gone to the California gold mines in 1851 and returned to Vermont in 1857 with no gain. Since then he had worked at his wheelwright trade in Minnesota and around Vermont, including Brattleboro and Lyndon. When he was at Water Street, later called South Peacham, he worked for Harris Lynds, who was a blacksmith and carriage maker. *Caledonian*, 13 January 1860, ran an ad for this shop, which continued throughout the year. Alice was noting that this was the first time she had seen Dustan since returning from Castleton. For a biography of Dustan, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 122–134.

<sup>57</sup>Roughly the sum of seventy dollars, which Alice figured for her expenses for the spring and summer quarter, included, according to the *Castleton Seminary Catalogue, 1858–59*: \$7 for tuition, \$54 for board, \$2.50 for lights, \$1.75 for fuel for spring quarter, plus transportation to and from Peacham. Alice did not take into account additional clothes or incidental expenses, which her parents would have noted. Seventy dollars in 1860 would be worth almost \$1,869 in 2008 according to [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com). The misery Alice alluded to probably was her continual struggle with religious commitment.

<sup>58</sup>*Caledonian*, 6 January 1860, listed John Morse as county commissioner in charge of liquor licenses. As Lyman S. Watts was probably involved in the Young Men's Temperance Society, which nominated candidates for the office of commissioner, he may have been meeting with Morse on this issue.

<sup>59</sup>Bogart, *Peacham*, 378, listed two Peacham dressmakers named Brownell, Caroline and Carrie, possibly the same person.

<sup>60</sup>Weeks Magic Compound was advertised in *Caledonian*, 13 January 1860: “A sure and sovereign remedy for Coughs, Colds, Croup, Asthma, Hooping-Cough, Sore throat, Bronchitis, Hoarseness, Influence fever and Ague. . . . Manufactured and Sold Wholesale and Retail by E. B. Magoon & Co., St. Johnsbury.”

<sup>61</sup>This is an indication that Alice was to enroll in the spring term of the Peacham Academy, where the students who did not live nearby boarded with families at Peacham Corner. Alice and her cousin, Arabella Sargeant, were to share a room.

<sup>62</sup>According to the *Peacham Academy Catalogue, 1859–60*, board was “in private families for \$2.00 per week, including rooms, lights, fuel and washing.” Bogart, *Peacham*, 397. Alice needed accommodations for sleeping from Monday through Thursday, as she returned home for the weekend. She did her own washing and probably took her food with her for the days she was away from home.

<sup>63</sup>Abbie Hardy, a close friend to Alice, lived at the Corner with her parents. Family letters indicate that earlier Dustan Walbridge had been courting Abbie. Isaac N. Watts, Peacham, to Alice Watts, Castleton, 17 September 1859, Private Collection. By mid-November, Dustan announced that he and Abbie had “the most perfect understanding between us now . . . That we will be good friends, and nothing more.” Dustan Walbridge, Peacham, to Alice Watts, Castleton, 13 November 1859, Private Collection.

<sup>64</sup>For a history of the school officially named the Caledonia County Grammar School, see Lorna Field Quimby, *Peacham Academy 1795–1971* (Peacham, Vt.: Peacham Academy Alumni Association, 2005).

<sup>65</sup>*Corrine; or, Italy*, by Madame de Staël, birth name Anne Louise Germaine Necker (1766–1817), was published in 1807. Alice attempted to read the original French but when she purchased a copy, she bought an English translation. This romantic tale of love and loss and female independence appealed to her. She misspelled the title throughout her diary.

<sup>66</sup>Alice took the “Common English” course including arithmetic, grammar, geography, book-keeping, physiology, reading and spelling, with tuition listed at \$3 a term. Additional fees were charged for Greek or Latin, Music, French, Painting, and Penmanship. *Peacham Academy Catalogue, 1859–60*.

<sup>67</sup>William Watts, the son of Thomas Watts, the brother of Alice’s father, and his wife, Mary Ann Burbank Watts of Irasburg, had married 8 December 1859. The editor thanks Stephen Bloom for the charts of descendants of the Bailey and Watts families.

<sup>68</sup>During the mid-nineteenth century, pastors often gave a “preparatory lecture” during the week before communion service to help church members prepare their hearts and minds appropriately for communion. E-mail, 16 June 2008, David E. L. Brown to editor. These lectures, usually Bible instruction, were sometimes offered during the week for those who found it hard to get to the meetinghouse on the Sabbath. T. D. S. Bassett, *The Gods of the Hills: Piety and Society in Nineteenth-Century Vermont* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 2000), 175.

<sup>69</sup>“Sketches of Life” was first published in *Harper’s Magazine*, November 1850, without an author identification; later attributed to Timothy Shay Arthur (1809–1885), American editor and reformer.

<sup>70</sup>John M. Martin (1804–1877) was one of the six merchants at Peacham Corner. *Walton’s Vermont Register, 1860*. He was the father of Alice’s classmate, Augusta.

<sup>71</sup>A sack was a loose garment worn by women. Margaret and Marietta Clark, classmates of Alice, were friends from East Hill.

<sup>72</sup>Congress was the name given to the Peacham Academy’s Friday afternoon exhibitions, sometimes called lyceums. Bogart, *Peacham*, 402.

<sup>73</sup>Hemans, *Poetical Works*, 467. “No More,” an eight-verse poem of “farewell” and “dying,” ended with, “To learn in joy; to struggle, to despair—No more!” and included a mournful expression of another author Alice admired, Madame de Staël, who wrote, “Jamais, jamais, je ne serai aime comme j’amie,” [*sic*] translated by Hemans to read, “Through long, long years to seek, to strive, to yearn For human love—and never quench that thirst.”

<sup>74</sup>Bogart, *Peacham*, 400, reported that the Peacham Academy put out the first school paper, “The North Room Echo,” with Isaac N. Watts as editor and Emma J. Paul and Alice M. Watts as editresses, listing no date. On 23 March, Alice wrote that she was appointed one of the “Editresses,” dating the school paper as 1860.

<sup>75</sup>Hattie Guy, a classmate of Alice’s, lived at Peacham Corner with her family.

<sup>76</sup>Alice referred to the Academy’s preceptress, Miss Lucy A. Perry, as “my mother.”

<sup>77</sup>“Sugaring off” meant drawing the molten sugar from the evaporator, or more likely a pan, and placing it in wooden pails to harden. Vermonters often celebrated the season with a party of friends. Bogart, *Peacham*, 452.

<sup>78</sup>Eunice H. Martin (born 1838), an older sister of Alice’s classmate, Augusta Martin, was married to Norman W. Bingham of Irasburg. *Caledonian*, 30 March 1860.

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<sup>79</sup>Milton B. Blanchard (1836–1860), an East Hill neighbor, went to California during the gold rush and was unsuccessful, unlike his brothers, Palmer and Phineas, who each made a “pile.” Milton returned to Peacham in 1859 in poor health. For a description of the Peacham boys and men who went gold digging, see Lynn A. Bonfield, “Ho for California! Caledonia County Gold Miners,” *Vermont History* 74 (Winter/Spring 2006): 5–47. A one-line obituary for Milton appeared in the local newspaper, *Caledonian*, 30 March 1860, and gave his age as twenty-four and his father as Capt. Simon Blanchard. Engraved on his stone in the Peacham Cemetery are the words: “Cheerful and happy in life Peaceful and calm in death.”

<sup>80</sup>Alice marked an X in her diary on the first day of her menstrual period. Some months she wrote that she was “sick” when she started her period; see January 6, February 5, March 9, etc. Janice Delaney, Mary Jane Lupton, and Emily Toth, *The Curse: A Cultural History of Menstruation*, rev. ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 116, pointed out that nineteenth-century women used euphemisms such as “sickness” to indicate menses. Others used cryptic marks, such as X. Brumberg, *The Body Project*, xxvii.

<sup>81</sup>*Caledonian*, 30 March 1860, announced the showing of Bullard’s Panorama of New York City. “This painting always attracts crowds wherever it is exhibited.” The Peacham viewing for this panorama was at the Methodist Church, often called the “chapel” by local residents.

<sup>82</sup>See endnote 74. Apparently the scholars read their papers rather than handwriting them, as they did later for the school newspaper.

<sup>83</sup>*Caledonian*, 9 March 1860, reported that Lyman Watts was elected an auditor for Peacham, but as the functions he carried out were described in the diary, it is obvious that he was a town lister, not auditor. He called on Alice to serve as his scribe as he dictated the value of real estate, animals, bank savings, stock owned, and personal property of each resident. This annual evaluation led to the town’s grand list, a public document in Vermont available in the town office.

<sup>84</sup>William Cowper’s “The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk” (1792), first lines: “I am monarch of all I survey, My right there is none to dispute; From the center, all round to the sea, I’m lord of the fowl and brute.” These words inspired other nineteenth-century young women; see Caroline Cowles Richards (1842–1913), who quoted them in her diary, May 1858, upstate New York. Richards, *Diary*, 97.

<sup>85</sup>This is the first indication from Alice that her brother, Isaac, attended the Academy with her. In the Watts family, the boys did not board at the Corner but walked the two-mile trip to school every morning after completing chores and returned home in the afternoon to do chores. Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana’s Children*, 180.

<sup>86</sup>Good Friday before Easter is Fast Day, when adults refrained from eating. Vermont Governor Hiland Hall proclaimed April 6 as “a day of public Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer. Let us on that day, abstaining from all unnecessary labor and amusement, assemble in our respective houses of worship, and with hearts filled with gratitude, give thanks to the Almighty for the manifold blessings that in His mercy, He has seen fit to shower on us.” *Caledonian*, 16 March 1860.

<sup>87</sup>This popular hymn was written in 1841 by Sarah Flower Adams (1805–1848), English poet and hymn writer.

<sup>88</sup>Will and Lyman were cousins from the Brown family of Alice’s mother.

<sup>89</sup>Dr. Crosby was probably Dr. Thomas Russell Crosby (1816–1872), Dartmouth class of 1841, who was a “close observer of nature,” especially birds, according to his obituary in his class folder in the Rauner Special Collections Library of Dartmouth College. The editor is grateful to Sarah Hartwell, reference librarian, Dartmouth College, for help in identifying Dartmouth students.

<sup>90</sup>Charles O. Thompson served as principal of the Peacham Academy, 1858–60 and again 1862–64. Bogart, *Peacham*, 473. He was a Dartmouth graduate who later became principal of the polytechnic school at Worcester, Mass. *Caledonian*, 26 March and 2 April 1885, obituary called him “a brilliant and cultivated man.” They read the recent issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, a popular magazine published by Ticknor & Fields of Boston and edited by James Russell Lowell (1819–1911). The *Caledonian*, 17 February 1860, reported that this issue contained many “good stories,” “interesting articles,” and “articles of a scientific nature.”

<sup>91</sup>Ezra C. Chamberlain (1799–1877), a prominent man in Peacham, was a deacon in the Congregational Church. His daughter, Laura, was Alice’s classmate. The family lived at Peacham Corner in the house known as the Governor Mattocks House. Jutta R. Scott, *Historic Homes of Peacham* (Peacham Historical Association, 2007), 42.

<sup>92</sup>Elsie Choate and Frank Gould were cousins and both were good friends to Alice.

<sup>93</sup>Eliza Walker Lynds (1825–1909) and her husband, Harris Lynds (1821–1900), a blacksmith, lived at Water Street, later called South Peacham. Their sons, William and Charles, were Alice’s classmates. Alice was probably collecting donations for a gift to give Miss Lucy Perry, who was leaving the Academy.

<sup>94</sup>Alice’s cousin, Mary Jane (Jennie) Sargeant, married Phineas Blanchard (1834–1886) at the home of her parents, where most marriages at this time took place as a communal celebration.

Vicki Howard, *Brides, Inc.: American Weddings and the Business of Tradition* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 1–2, 13. Alice and other wedding guests stayed with the newlyweds until they boarded the train at Barnet going to their new home in Illinois. It was common practice at the time for relatives and friends to stay with the newly married couple into the evening of the wedding day. Ellen K. Rothman, *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 81.

<sup>95</sup> Alice attended the Missionary Convention in Peacham, May 1–2; *Caledonian*, 27 April 1860.

<sup>96</sup> Devil's Hill, situated in the southwest part of Peacham, is a local viewing spot for seeing to the south and west, Groton and Orange County, and to the east, Peacham and Barnet. *Caledonian*, 11 October 1867, reported that in June 1860 a group of local ministers pronounced a name change to "Mount Carmel." The same month a group of folks from Peacham with the Peacham Band strolled up the hill, had a good time, and left calling it "Eagle Mountain." None of these names stuck; it remains "Devil's Hill." Bogart, *Peacham*, 450, dated the Peacham Band as being first organized in the 1880s.

<sup>97</sup> Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts was fifty-eight on this day.

<sup>98</sup> Only those who had publicly accepted Christ were admitted to the Table for Communion.

<sup>99</sup> Simon Blanchard's farm was on East Hill and his children were friendly with the Walbridge/Watts family. Phineas V. Blanchard, who married Alice's cousin earlier this month, was the ninth child born to Simon and Betsey Spencer Blanchard; Milton Blanchard, who died earlier in the year, was their tenth child out of a total of eleven.

<sup>100</sup> Will Brown, son of Simon Brown, a brother of Alice's mother, was a follower of phrenology, the study of the conformation of the skull as indicative of mental faculties and character.

<sup>101</sup> Quote from Hebrews 12:25.

<sup>102</sup> The visiting minister was Moses Bradford (1799–1878) from Barnet. Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 167.

<sup>103</sup> Alice's brother, Augustus Walbridge, was working in Lyndon at his wheelwright trade fulfilling an order for one hundred sleighs. Augustus Walbridge, Lyndon, to John S. Way, Northfield, Minn., 28 April 1860, Private Collection.

<sup>104</sup> A "quilting" in New England meant a gathering of women to help quilt together the three layers making up the quilt. The label "quilting bee" was not adopted in New England until later in the nineteenth century. Lynn A. Bonfield, "Four Generations of Quilters in One Nineteenth-Century Rural New England Family," in Lynne Z. Bassett, editor, *What's New England about New England Quilts?: Proceedings of a Symposium at Old Sturbridge Village, June 13, 1998* (Old Sturbridge Village, 1999), 39.

<sup>105</sup> Horace Wellington (1815–1899) was a minister from St. Johnsbury. Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 229.

<sup>106</sup> Alice's friend and classmate, Elsie A. Choate, left Peacham to teach school, probably in Ryegate. She taught in several neighboring towns during the next few years. Jane E. Cowles, Ryegate, to Alice Watts, Peacham, 19 July 1862, Private Collection.

<sup>107</sup> The family may have been varnishing the floors, resulting in fumes, causing Alice's headache.

<sup>108</sup> Knitting was one of the skills most young women learned. For Alice, this became useful during the Civil War when she tried to knit two hours a day, making "footings" for the Union soldiers. Alice Watts, Peacham, to her niece, Augusta Gregory Mills, unidentified place, 6 January 1864, Walbridge-Gregory Papers.

<sup>109</sup> *The Song of Hiawatha*, written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882), was published in 1855. On May 9, Alice wrote in her diary of reading Longfellow.

<sup>110</sup> Classmates Frank Gould and Merritt S. Hunt came to visit Alice, probably to discuss writing a joint-letter to their friend, Elsie Choate, who had taken a teaching job away from Peacham.

<sup>111</sup> Quote from Isaiah 55:7.

<sup>112</sup> Grace Aguilar (1816–1847), an English writer, was well known for two novels, *Home Influence; A Tale for Mothers and Daughters* (1847), and its sequel, *The Mother's Recompense* (1850). Both books had been published in two volumes each as part of "Collection of British Authors" by Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1859. Aguilar wrote in the preface to the first novel that "her sole aim . . . has been to incite a train of serious and loving thoughts towards God and man, especially towards those with whom He has linked us in the precious ties of parent and child, brother and sister, master and public."

<sup>113</sup> June Training Day began in Vermont around the War of 1812 as a day for men of military age to train in martial skills, although it had become mainly a day of frolic and fun. Bogart, *Peacham*, 214–215, 248–250.

<sup>114</sup> Alice probably wrote the word "Daisy" to indicate seeing the first daisy of the season.

<sup>115</sup> Uriah W. Miner died at age fifty-two when a roof fell as he was taking down a building. He had served as Peacham auditor and superintendent of common schools. *Caledonian*, 9 March and 15 June 1860.

<sup>116</sup> Quotes from Isaiah 48:22, Psalms 78:1, John 6:37, and Matthew 12:30.

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<sup>117</sup>The sore finger was probably caused by steady sewing on her dress, a common annoyance for women who spent long hours pushing the needle through thick material.

<sup>118</sup>Her cavalier was probably classmate Frank Gould, who traveled around Peacham on horseback.

<sup>119</sup>Alice misquotes Isaac Watts's words in his hymn "Marching to Zion." The fourth verse: "The god that rules on high, And thunders when He please, Who rides upon the stormy sky, Who rides upon the stormy sky, And manages the seas, And manages the seas." www.cyberhymnal.org

<sup>120</sup>With the direct route to Peacham Corner impassable, Alice would have reached the four corners in the Hollow, now called East Peacham, and turned left past the Clark farm, riding almost to West Barnet before turning north to the Corner.

<sup>121</sup>Quotes from John 1:14, Luke 18:13, and Matthew 7:27.

<sup>122</sup>Quote from Philipians 2:14.

<sup>123</sup>The Presbyterian church in Barnet was often referred to as the Goodwillie church, as two generations of Goodwillie men preached there: David (1749–1830), and after 1826, his son, Thomas (1800–1867). Wells, *Barnet*, 454–458. The sacrament or Holy Communion took place rarely, usually twice a year.

<sup>124</sup>Verse from Longfellow's "The Rainy Day." Alice substituted in the first line the word "night" for "day."

<sup>125</sup>The visitors were Albert Clement, the son of Sarah Brown Clement, sister of Alice's mother, and his wife. They must have traveled from Dunham, Lower Canada, where the Clement family lived.

<sup>126</sup>Robert Gilfillan (1798–1891) purchased the farm west of the Watts's farm from Thaddeus Stevens, whose mother, Sarah Morrill Stevens, lived there from 1821 until her death in 1854. Peacham Land Records, Town Office.

<sup>127</sup>Although the family has preserved many of the letters written from San Francisco by Clara Walbridge Rogers, this one has not been located. From other letters written at the time, it is clear that Clara and her husband were struggling financially in California.

<sup>128</sup>First quote from Proverbs 8:17. Other quotes are Alice's prayers.

<sup>129</sup>A haycap, known especially in New England, was a covering for a haystack made by pieces of common sheeting, according to Frederic G. Cassidy and Joan Houston Hall, *Dictionary of American Regional English*, Vol. II, D–H (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 928.

<sup>130</sup>Margaret W. Harvey (1831–1870) married Charles C. Heaton of Thetford. *Caledonian*, 27 July 1860.

<sup>131</sup>Dr. William Thompson of East Windsor Hill, Connecticut, the father of former Academy principal, Charles O. Thompson, preached at the Peacham Congregational Church.

<sup>132</sup>C. O. Thompson returned in 1862 to serve a second time as Peacham Academy principal. Quimby, *Peacham Academy*, 52. Alice's entry ends with modified quote from Psalms 119:141.

<sup>133</sup>The novel, *Shirley*, by English author, Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855), was published in 1849.

<sup>134</sup>*Caledonian*, 27 July 1860, reported that Rev. S. Morgan would conduct a Sabbath School meeting at Peacham on August 3rd with a plea to send contributions to the Vermont Domestic Missionary Society. His full name was Stillman Morgan (1800–1880). Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 206.

<sup>135</sup>Quote from Psalms 42:7.

<sup>136</sup>The minister was probably John B. Shaw (1798–1865) of Fair Haven. Comstock, *Congregational Churches of Vermont*, 219.

<sup>137</sup>See endnote 124. This time Alice quoted the Longfellow poem correctly.

<sup>138</sup>Alice went to St. Johnsbury, the county seat about twenty miles from the farm, for the first time since she returned from Castleton in January. She and Caroline E. Bickford (1832–1903) attended a meeting of the Vermont Teachers' Association and heard Professor S. W. Boardman of Middlebury College speak on the "Dignity and Importance of Teacher's Work." By chance the Van Amburg menagerie was in town, which gave Alice an opportunity to see an elephant and other animals. In the evening she witnessed the "Torchlight Procession" and serenade honoring Justin S. Morrill (1810–1898), Vermont representative to the U.S. Congress, who came to speak to the teachers. *Caledonian*, 17 and 24 August 1860. In addition to supporting education, Morrill's attempts to pass legislation to increase tariff rates on wool pleased local farmers.

<sup>139</sup>I. D. Kilbourne maintained a dental office in St. Johnsbury and provided his services to the surrounding towns, traveling to Peacham when needed. Kenneth E. Neiman, "The Story of Dentistry in Caledonia County, Vermont," 1981, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Manuscript Box 2. The editor thanks Shara McCaffrey for directing her to these manuscript boxes.

<sup>140</sup>Annette Rodgers was the sister of Clara Walbridge's husband, Russell Rogers (he changed the spelling of his name), in San Francisco. Roxana Walbridge Watts, Peacham, to Sarah Walbridge Way, Northfield, Minn., 12 September 1860, Private Collection. Roxana told her daughter that

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Russell's mother, Lydia Rodgers Bolton, and sister "visited here this summer." Annette Rodgers, a Peacham Academy student, was awarded a premium at the Caledonia County Agricultural Fair in St. Johnsbury for "Best oil painting." *Caledonian*, 5 October 1860.

<sup>141</sup> Sisters Lodoska and Phebe Spencer, raised on the farm northwest of the Watts farm, were visiting family. In 1858, Lodoska (1835–1918) married Alice's brother, Charles, and moved with him to Monticello, Illinois. Phebe (1841–1942) joined them to help with their first child, William, born in 1859. Letter, 12 September 1860, Roxana Walbridge Watts. Lyman met them at the depot in Barret. For a biography of Charles, see Bonfield and Morrison, *Roxana's Children*, 52–60.

<sup>142</sup> At mid-nineteenth century, some Congregational churches began the practice of "Every Member Canvass" to encourage church members to pledge whatever their means permitted for the support of the church. The canvass was often held in August, when farmers might know how much cash they might expect to have on hand during the year, although some pledges might have been livestock, produce, or wood, the latter often part of the payment Peacham pastors received. Canvassing church members was a departure from allowing the rich and powerful to pay the bills and benefit from their conspicuous beneficence. E-mail, 16 June 2008, David E. L. Brown to editor. Asaph Boutelle received a unanimous call from the church and began his duties on 19 January 1851 at an annual salary of \$500. It was probably during his tenure that the canvass began. By July 1856, the system of annual subscribers was in place, when forty-three subscribers pledged "the same sums which they had hitherto paid annually for the support of preaching." In 1860 the Congregational Church had 252 members. Bogart, *Peacham*, 181, 433.

<sup>143</sup> Letter, 12 September 1860, Roxana Walbridge Watts reported that her son, Lyman S. Watts, was principal of the Peacham Academy in the fall, and her youngest children, Isaac, Alice, and Ella, attended. The girls boarded at Peacham Corner school nights while Isaac walked to and from school daily. "We pay \$1 per week for each of the girls or at least for 5 days in a week and I have to do the washing for them all Isaac goes from home."

<sup>144</sup> Peacham's representative to the state legislature in 1858–59 was Lyman Watts. Bogart, *Peacham*, 466. In this election, *Caledonian*, 7 September 1860, reported: "In Peacham the regular Representative nominee of the caucus was elected by the skin of his teeth, there being a split in the party, and the democracy going for the bolter." It is unclear what caused the split, but merchant John M. Martin was elected.

<sup>145</sup> Lucina S. Albee was enrolled in the Peacham Academy, and she may have been asking Lyman and Alice about transferring to Castleton Seminary, which she did.

<sup>146</sup> This may have been when Alice finally realized that her close friend, Abbie Hardy, and her brother, Dustan Walbridge, were seriously courting.

<sup>147</sup> As the handwriting is not Alice's, this note may have been placed in the diary by Abbie Kent, Castleton classmate, before Alice left the seminary.

<sup>148</sup> Alice must have added this 1861 weather report when she looked at her diary a year later.

<sup>149</sup> Alice's brother, Augustus Walbridge, a wheelwright, was twenty-five on this day. He came home after months of making sleighs in Lyndon.

<sup>150</sup> Alice gave no information about the celebration or even if she attended the wedding. Comparing this entry to the one describing the May 1st wedding of her cousin, Jennie Sargeant, it is obvious that Alice found no cause for celebration of Dustan and Abbie's wedding. *Caledonian*, 12 October 1860, reported they were married by Rev. Asaph Boutelle.

<sup>151</sup> Alice's brother, Dustan Walbridge, was twenty-eight on this day.

<sup>152</sup> Dustan's wife, Abbie Hardy Walbridge, was eighteen on this day.

<sup>153</sup> *Caledonian*, 9 November 1860, bore the headline, "The Glorious Result," and proclaimed that "the nation has given its verdict, let the people rejoice." In the following issue, 16 November, the newspaper reported that the "republicans of Danville Green manifested their enthusiasm and joy over the election of Lincoln, by firing one hundred guns, the ringing of bells, and a jollification generally." This was probably the gunfire Alice heard.

<sup>154</sup> "Slippery place" is from Psalm 73:18.

<sup>155</sup> Alice Watts, Peacham, to Augusta Gregory Mills, unidentified place, 30 November 1862, Walbridge-Gregory Papers.

<sup>156</sup> *Manual of the Congregational Church, in Peacham, Vermont* (Jericho, Vt.: Roscoe Publishing House, 1890), 22. According to the Records of Congregational Church, 1866, Book #6 in the Peacham Historical Association, Alice Watts joined 2 September 1866, "Profession of faith."

<sup>157</sup> *Caledonian*, 29 September 1882. Her obituary listed the deaths since 1870 of her father, four brothers, two sisters-in-law, and three children.