

**Erastus P. Williams' Diary – 1835**  
Transcribed by Paul G. Zeller

April

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 8 o'clock P.M.

After a resting spell of three weeks, I resume my pen to write what? nonsense; for three weeks past I have been unable to write a letter, memorandum, account, or any thing else. the reasons are 1<sup>st</sup> the want of a pen, 2<sup>nd</sup> ink, 3<sup>rd</sup> paper, 4<sup>th</sup> time, 5<sup>th</sup> disposition, and 6<sup>th</sup> so much puttering business and confusion on my mind that I could think of nothing else. We have been in our new (old) habitation 3 weeks tomorrow and have been washing, scouring, repairing, plastering, moving, puttering, doing chores, running in debt, doing errands, painting, having the hips [same as having the blues], swapping horses, breaking steers, skinning colts, etc., etc. etc. Yesterday I settled with Dutton, his account is \$15.85. Today I have been to meeting. Mr. Washburn preached from Gal 6:7, "Be not deceived." Rainy this afternoon. A thunder shower this evening. Had the pleasure soaking my hat and surtout, but never mind. if it drives off the hips or dumps and makes me good natured again, I shall not mind a small soaking. Last Sunday I went to East Bethel to hear Mr. Brown, a Baptist. T. H. [Truman Hopson] Safford and Louisa Parker were married Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> in Hartford by Mr. Hazen.

6<sup>th</sup> went to C. Dutton's and traded with him for his wagon, sleigh, harness and buffalo [robe] for which I am to pay him \$72.00.

7<sup>th</sup> finished cleaning the old house for the present. Have been to work on it for 3 weeks or more, and have just got it comfortable to live in. Now I must begin to look around on my farm and see what wants doing most in the first place. A little fire wood will be very acceptable and then *old fence* by the dozen and nothing to mend with.

8<sup>th</sup> drew wood; warm and pleasant.

9<sup>th</sup> C. and D. went home. I settled with Dea. Storrs. Went to father's, and then home.

11<sup>th</sup> drew stakes part of the day. Went to Bethel this afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Warm and pleasant, for the first time. My wife went to meeting with me. Mr. Southgate preached. His text was James 3:5. His sermon was good but what good it will do me unless I try to profit by it.

13<sup>th</sup> mended fence some, brought water some, run after the sheep and geese some, and did other chores some. Little but they take up time.

15<sup>th</sup> fast day. I went to father's instead of going to meeting as I ought. Ira met me at the river. Found the water very deep and hard boating. Very warm for a few days past, but cooler again now the ground is froze hard this morning.

17<sup>th</sup> very cold and blustering. The ground has been freezing all day in the shade. I mended fence part of the day, made a churn dash, run after the geese, tended the fire, etc.

19<sup>th</sup> very cold raw weather. I went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 11-15 verses. Miss Hinkley's funeral sermon was preached this afternoon. She died at Lowel factory. Mr. Gerry's death was also mentioned today. There has been no death in town since Dec., but two have left town lately and died *far from home*.

21<sup>st</sup> went to Truman's and got a pair of waggon wheels for a cart. Mr. Adam's pigs and other things were sold at auction this afternoon.

23<sup>rd</sup> Charlotte went to Norwich. Mr. Bacchus' [Backus'] barn was moved, and Mr. Perrin's housed raised. I have puttered a little. Work is out of the question with me.

25<sup>th</sup> cold and snowy. I mended fence part of the day. Went to Dea. [Deacon Jonathan] Kinney's after hay, to C. Dutton's to pay him for his wagon, etc. Mr. Brewer paid part of his note. Mr. Flinn [Flynn] took up his. Charlotte came home from Norwich and left her boy at Truman's.

26<sup>th</sup>, Sunday. I went to meeting and carried Aunt Sena and Louisa. Mr. W. preached from 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 17-29, "Is there not a cause?"

27<sup>th</sup> began to plough. Cold and windy.

## May 1835

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. Cold raw weather. Vegetation is very backward. Hay is scarce and grain is high. The ground is frozen too hard to drive the stakes in many places, and spring's work gets along slowly

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday went to meeting. Mr. Birchard [Jedediah Burchard] was there in the afternoon, but did not preach.

6<sup>th</sup> paid Charles Clapp 23 dollars for the stove. Bought 16 ½ lbs. of sole leather and half a side of upper leather of Fox. Mr. Birchard left town for the present. Isabel came to make me a visit The first time she was ever in my house – *my house*, and have I a house of my own? Yes, I am a slave to no one but myself now.

7<sup>th</sup> Mr. F Hunter died in a fit. He has been a notorious drinker for some time, has attended to no business for a number of years; he had been unwell a day or two, and sent for a doctor who was preparing to bleed him when he fell back and died instantly. This is the first death in town this year.

8<sup>th</sup> I went to Mr. Marshall's and got 4 bushels of oats. Finished ploughing for the present. Continues cold and raw.

10<sup>th</sup> Ira came here last night. Today he has gone to meeting with Desire and Forest. Mr. Hunter was buried today. Mr. W preached. Father rec'd a letter from Henriett. Cold and windy; but few have began to plant yet, grass does not grow much and almost every one is out of hay. I have, perhaps, enough to fodder in the morning, and all my manure to get out yet. But never mind, horses *can* live on oats.

11<sup>th</sup> Ira went to Middlesex. I began to get out manure.

13<sup>th</sup> Grandmaam died this morning, aged 86.

14<sup>th</sup> went to grandmaam's funeral. Rained fast most of the time. Broke my plough this morning.

15<sup>th</sup> A cold storm of rain and snow. I went to Bethel and got two hoes made.

16<sup>th</sup> mended fence part of the day, spread manure some, visited some, and chored some. Mrs. Pierce was buried. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> funeral in town this week.

17<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Lamentations 2:8-9. Esq. Cleveland died. He has been troubled with a cancer above two years.

19<sup>th</sup> began to plant corn. Charlotte went home and mother came back with her this evening.

20<sup>th</sup> spread manure and planted corn.

23<sup>rd</sup> finished planting corn.. I went to Mr. Latham's and bought his military equipment for \$5.00 and pay him in pasturing cattle this summer.

24<sup>th</sup> Sunday warm and pleasant. Went to meeting, Mr. Curtis preached from the words "But for me to live is Christ, to die is gain." Mother went home this evening. I finished writing a letter that I began a month ago.

25<sup>th</sup> Went to Mr. Gay's after fire this morning. Yoked my pig, salted my colt, drove the neighbor's cattle out of mischief, planted potatoes, brought water to wash, etc. This I did in the forenoon, ploughed for Mr. Gay this afternoon.

26<sup>th</sup> Planted potatoes. Cousin Marilla came here this afternoon.

28<sup>th</sup> Mr. Gay helped me plough. At noon we left our plough an hour of two to fight fire; rainy this evening. Marilla took the stage for Montpelier this morning.

29<sup>th</sup> A heavy thundershower this afternoon. I went to Mr. Paige's and got a half a bushel of wheat, forded the river, found it high and rising fast.

30<sup>th</sup> Sowed my wheat and harrowed it in; went to C. Cleveland's and bought a bushel of Marrowfat pears and carried them home on my back, rather of a hard way to get a living, but better than no way. I have health and strength to do it. This month is almost past and I have not washed my sheep, finished planting, nor finished mending fence.

31<sup>st</sup> Sunday Warm and pleasant, wind southerly. I went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Acts 2:39 "For the promise is unto you and your children, and to them that are afar off even as many as the Lord shall call." Mr Colburn and Miss Hoit were published. Mr. Foster and Miss Adams were published last Sunday; but for what? Time will prove.

### June 1835

Monday June 1<sup>st</sup> 1835 Finished planting, sowed half a bushel of pease, washed sheep, fixed my sword hilt, etc.

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual training and inspection day. Yes, again I have had the honor, yes, I say, the *honor* of assisting to furnish the means for some half dozen young men to get intoxicated, young men that might be useful members of society would they but let strong drink alone. Am I blameless for furnishing drink, being a member of the temperance society, and knowing what use will be made of it? which is the most guilty, the man that drinks, or he that gives him drink? but how shall I break the ancient custom, or law, of treating the company on training days? Must the attempt be made, or must the custom stand, forever to disgrace our military system? Our training bill was not so high as usual, being a little short of ten dollars. Last year it was eighteen, but still, our bill for rum was more than half of the whole expense.

3<sup>rd</sup> Sheared sheep for Capt. [Amasa] Dutton.

4<sup>th</sup> Worked on the road. My tax this year is almost six dollars, *blessed be nothing*.

5<sup>th</sup> Mended fence on Dea. Kinney's line.

6<sup>th</sup> Sheared sheep, picked wool, filled a lye leach, chored, pattered, etc.

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday Clear and pleasant. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached two funerals in town today. Mr. Geo. Davis and Miss Eliza Morgan. Mr. D. was carried to Randolph to be buried. Miss M's funeral was attended at the meeting house. The last words she uttered were "O come Lord Jesus, come quickly," and Mr. W. took them for his text. Ira came down from Stockbridge.

8<sup>th</sup> Mended fence. Mr. Foster and Miss Adams and Mr. Waldo and Miss Green were married. Who next? None need be discouraged.

10<sup>th</sup> Went to father's visiting . This is the first time I have been any where visiting since we moved, and now I leave my work in a bad condition – fence down and weeds up.

13<sup>th</sup> Worked on the road. Weather very warm and uncomfortable, corn grows fast.

14<sup>th</sup> Sunday Cloudy and cool. A thunder shower last night. Went to meeting. Mr. W preached from Mat. 20:6 "Why stand ye here idle all the day" and who has a reasonable excuse for standing idle, for not working God's vineyard?

15<sup>th</sup> Hoed corn, pulled weeds in the garden, brought water for washing, mended fence. Cousins Wm. Silas and Marilla came here this evening from Montpelier.

16<sup>th</sup> Mr. Rust [probably Russ] dug out some foxes and I stood and looked on. Cousins went over the river this afternoon on their way to Winchendon, Mass. I hoed corn.

17<sup>th</sup> Went to Truman's and got 2 bushels of corn and carried to mill.

21<sup>st</sup> Sunday Went to meeting. Mr. W preached from Judges 5:23. he preached at our schoolhouse this evening.

22<sup>nd</sup> My mare got out this morning and ran off. I started after her and followed her 12 miles, and was fortunate enough to find her in a barnyard. I got home about 5 p. m.. Cold, tired, wet and hungry.

23<sup>rd</sup> Finished harrowing corn, set Mr. Gay and two boys to hoeing, and started for Norwich; got there at 5. Took supper and then went to Hanover.

24<sup>th</sup> Warm and pleasant, the ground dry, vegetation backwards, grass thin and corn small and half eat up by worms. I carried Aunt Barker <Abiah Hopson Barker> and girls to Royalton. Mr. Birchard began his meeting. Oh, that it may be blessed to many a poor sinner.

25<sup>th</sup> Went to meeting. Mr. B. preached.

26<sup>th</sup> My birthday. 26 years of my life have past [passed] in sin and folly, and still God has dealt in mercy with me, and though I have rebel'd against him all my life, he bears me up from hell. May mercy melt my soul.

28<sup>th</sup> Sunday Mr. B. preached to a crowded house, every pew and aisle were filled and some computed five hundred around the house that could not get in.

## July 1835

July 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday I have been to meeting most of the time since the meeting began, and have felt probably as all other sinners have, that I am under the curse of God. Today I tried to hoe potatoes, but my feeling would not let me work much. This afternoon I felt resolved I would trust God at all events. That I would serve him as faithfully as I have served satan. My feelings were eased, and I worked with a light heart the rest of the day, and now while thousands are celebrating the day as the birthday of their civil liberty, may

I in after life look back to this day as to the commencement of my freedom from the bonds of sin and death. As the day when first I felt that Christ is *my* Saviour in every deed. But without God's help what can I do.

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Awoke this morning with a light heart. Went to meeting and before night dark clouds were on my mind. Lord how long shall I be left to grapple with my heart in darkness. Sin is its own tormentor. "He that believes shall be saved." Last Sunday Aunt Flinn was buried, last Thursday Mr. A. Kibbee's child was buried. On Friday Mrs. [Sarah] Trescott was buried. Three funerals in one week. Death is amongst us and who shall be called next? Perhaps I- a solemn thought-and am I prepared? Have I done all my work? Is my heart cleansed? Oh, no! And what is worse, I feel but very little anxiety about my situation. Lord wilt thou open my eyes.

10<sup>th</sup> Friday The most important day in my life thus far probably. What have I done? This day Charlotte and I, with about 50 others, were taken into the church, baptized and partook of the Lord's supper for the first time. What have we done? Solemnly covenanted and pledged ourselves to the Lord for time and eternity, *a solemn obligation!* To pledge ourselves for life is no *small* thing, but what is the few years of our life when compared to eternity. What is eternity? Even the angels in heaven cannot answer, and why should we try? We shall soon be in eternity and if we do our duty and trust in our saviour – happy, *happy* shall we be. Lord, give us thy holy Spirit to guide us in the path of duty, and keep us humble may we live near thee in faith and prayer. May we feel that thou art ever present with us. may we do our every duty with cheerfulness, and sincerity, and may we receive a full pardon for our many sins. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and saviour and thine be the glory now and forever. Amen.

11<sup>th</sup> Went to meeting this afternoon Mr. B.'s text was Ephesians 6:10 and onward, he directed his discourse principally to young converts pointing out the path of duty to them, and first of all humility and activity, no lazy, proud christians for him.

30<sup>th</sup> This month is almost gone and I am so much nearer eternity. Am I so much prepared. I often fear that I am not making one step toward holiness and why I thus? Does God command me to doubt? Does he take pleasure in my disbelieving his word, his oath? Lord help thou mine unbelief. The last day of the month and have I kept up with the month? I have got in but one load of hay and other work drags in the same proportion. My health has not been good for some time past, and work that I neglected to attend meeting added to sickness in our family and the common business of the season has placed me a good deal behind my work. Wednesday I went a visiting at P. Davis'. Saturday went to father's. Yesterday went to the village to an enquiry meeting, but few in. I think I was paid for going. A pleasant shower this morning but it has stopt raining now and I must go to my work.

### **August 1835**

August 1<sup>st</sup> Mowed part of the day. I have got in but one load of hay yet, but if I am prospered this week.

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Cool and pleasant. A beautiful day to go to meeting. How many will go and get a blessing but for me, I am detained at home. If my heart is right and I am in the path of duty God will meet me here as soon as any where, and where is my heart? Am I doing every duty so far as is made plain to me? Do I practice self denial, humility, faith, love and charity? Oh! My *back sliding heart!* Lord wilt thou enable me to prostrate myself at the foot of the cross and there confess my sins, and plead for grace, and mercy through the merits of Him who died that I might live? May I trust in him alone for salvation? This evening I went to see Mr. Fletcher. Found him sick, weak and distressed, he thinks he once enjoyed religion, if he did, he is now in a cold back slidden state. He has been rather inclined to intemperance for a number of years past.

9<sup>th</sup> Saturday Me. Ellis, an agent of the Education Society, preached from Luke 12<sup>th</sup> beginning at the 25<sup>th</sup> verse. Charlotte went to the Dr.s this morning, her health is poor, but I hope she will be better soon, but that, God only knows. Oh, that I could say from my heart that I am willing to trust him for life or death and every thing else. Oh that my faith might be strengthened. Went to a conference meeting this evening. News reached town today of the death of Rodolphus Skinner. He died in Ohio with the apoplexy. Yesterday Mr. Hopson of Norwich was thrown off a bridge and hurt him very bad. This morning he was struck with the palsey. Last Tuesday Denison Smith of Barre was buried. He died of the consumption. Death is all around us and why am I spared.

10<sup>th</sup> Finished haying on the meadow.

11<sup>th</sup> Mr. Gay and I worked for Mr. Billings reaping and cradling.

12<sup>th</sup> Went to Truman's after Aunt Sena this morning. Isabel came here this evening. Very warm and dry. Streams very low.

14<sup>th</sup> Went to Bethel and settled with Hitchcock and Cummings, and left my plough to be mended. On my way home I stopt at Mr. Parkhurst's and paid Sarah Wilson. Went to E. Bethel this evening and bought trimmings for a coat. Rainy.

15<sup>th</sup> Reap rye part of the day. Drawed in hay for Mr. Gay this afternoon.

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday Very rainy this morning. I Isabel and I went to meeting. Mr. W's text was Mathew 10:40. His discourse was, 1<sup>st</sup> to show how Christ ought to be received, and 2<sup>nd</sup> how he is received. An interesting subject, and one that I wanted to listen to, but drowsiness would not let me all of it. Is drowsiness in meeting on a warm summer day a sin? Why am I more sleepy when listening to a sermon than when I am contriving to get money? If I felt as much engaged in preparing to live in Heaven as I do to get money [to] live here, should I feel so? If a thousand dollars were at stake would I sleep?

22<sup>nd</sup> Mr. Elisha Pierce was buried. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> death in town since May. Mr. Ephraim Peake of East Randolph was buried. He died by poison given to him in his food by his step mother. Two others of the family were very sick, but it is hoped they will

recover. Shame, conscience! Where art thou fled? When God withdraws the influence of his holy spirit and we are left to ourselves we not only lose all sense of obligation to our God, ourselves and our fellow beings, but are ready to take their lives or commit any outrage that the devil may tell us to do.

23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Mr. W preached from Genesis. How much of the sermon that I have heard today can I remember? I dare not tell.

24<sup>th</sup> Miss Parker came here today to spend a few weeks. I went to Truman's and drove a cow. Have finished haying after so long a time.

25<sup>th</sup> Cloudy. I have thrashed India wheat.

26<sup>th</sup> Cleaned up the buckwheat and threshed 2 bushels of rye. 12 bushels of India wheat.

27<sup>th</sup> Warm and pleasant. Oh my God what a sinner I have been today. It certainly would be just to condemn me entirely. Oh my God dont forsake me utterly nor leave me to myself. I am undone unless thou shouldst appear in my behalf. Do not let the enemy of souls destroy me, but do let me be thine. I think that I can say in conscience shame on my own wicked heart. Holy Dove wont you lead me today to the Lamb of God. Do give me grace to rise above that sin that doth so cruelly beset me.

28<sup>th</sup> Rainy and cloudy today. Oh my Dear Redeemer thou hast been pleased to bring me to see the light of this morning and bourne me up from hell. Holy Dove wont you condescend to look down and guide me now when I turn my eyes within. all is wild and will thou be pleased to help me to look away from myself and place my feet on that most sure rock which is higher than I. Shouldst thou be strict to man's iniquity who can stand.

August 30-1835 Cool and pleasant today. Vegetation looks rather prosperous. Our Heavenly Father is so kind in bestowing so much mercies upon us in feeding and supplying us with every necessary of life. How truly thankful ought we to be to him and then to think that he provided away for us to come to him. It ought to call on all our powers within to praise redeeming love. Oh Holy Dove wilt thou condescend to make me truly thankful for all thy mercies. Do give me grace to withstand every temptation of the devil and flee to the foot of the cross. Oh how delightful the place must be.

31<sup>st</sup> This month is gone. Where? to years beyond the flood, and how prospers my concerns both spiritual and temporal? My work still lags behind. Have not done harvesting yet. Finished cutting oats this morning but back I went to mill with some new rye and India wheat and brought my plough home as badly broke as when I carried it away. Saturday went to Tunbridge Spring with Charlotte and yesterday I staid at home and what did I do? Did I make one step toward Heaven? Oh! That I could confidently say yes, but sin is so prominent in every thing I do, that I often doubt my own sincerity. I know that Christ is able and willing to save me if I will trust him and not try to save myself. Lord wilt thou help me to believe thy word - to myself at the feet of sovereign mercy and give up my wicked rebellious heart and take thee at thy word and be at peace.

Oh! Give me grace to say from my heart thy will be done. Keep me humble and forbid that pride should reign, triumphant in my heart.

### September 1835

September 1 Freeman's meeting day. Mr. Kibbey's child was buried. Mr. Whiting preached the sermon his text was "prepare to meet thy God." His remarks were appropriate and touching. It was to me the best sermon he ever delivered. Oh that I might profit by it. That I might realize that the death of this child, the occasion of his remarks is sent as a warning to *me* to be also ready. That time is short. That I must soon die, ready or not.

2<sup>nd</sup> Went to Tunbridge with Charlotte.

6<sup>th</sup> Went to Tunbridge Spring and spent the Sabbath there.

8<sup>th</sup> Went home this morning in the rain, a heavy thunder shower attended with a strong wind last night. Mr. Davis came up this morning and brought the news of Betsey Joiner's death. [Betsey Joiner, daughter of Alvin Joiner, died September 6, 1835] She died in Norwich, had been teaching school there, was taken sick and died before her friends got there. She was brought home to day. The funeral tomorrow. She lived and (we hope and believe) died a Christian. "blessed are the dead which die in the lord."

19<sup>th</sup> Training [day]. Met at Mr. Fox's. Elected two serjeants and three corporals. Dragged out the day most miserably. Mr. Davis finished laying pumplogs last Wednesday. The water runs well. That afternoon I worked for Mr. Gage. Thursday I did little but chores. Killed a sheep, drew a load of potatoes for Mr. Gage. Friday stoned the spring. Henrietta came up in the afternoon and staid all night. Ira came in the afternoon. How sweet to meet with friends whom we have not seen for a long time. But sweeter far to meet with Jesus our Saviuor, king, our friend, our all. Safely through another week. God has brought us on our way. Has spared us to this time and what is the return that we have made? Cold ingratitude. Lord wilt thou for Christ's sake help us to overcome our unbelief and every beseting sin. Help us to sing praises and thanksgiving to thee even when we are afar off in the darkness and totally disbelieving thy promises and thy threats. Thou wast pleased to call after us and stop us in our mad career. Pointed out our sin and danger, and also the way of escape through the all atoning blood of thy dear son. Oh, help us to lay hold of offered salvation. Forbid that we should longer slight the offers of grace. May this be the time when satan's bonds shall be broken entirely and my captive soul go free. Help me to be truly humbled in view of past offences. Give me grace to do every duty thou hast required of me and may I truly loath sin and be freed from it. May I be thy child in truth and sincerity. Wilt thou for Christ's sake hear and answer and forgive, and finally save me to praise thee in heaven with all thy ransomed saints through a never ending eternity. Amen

20<sup>th</sup> Sunday Cold and rainy. I staid at home and how have I spent the day? If I sing or pray or read sin is mixed with all I do. Ye who love the Lord indeed tell me is it so with you. Lord help me to love thee, help my unbelief.

22<sup>nd</sup> Went to father's. He and mother were gone visiting so we *children* visited together. Adeline came home, and aunt Mary came with her.

23<sup>rd</sup> Cut and bound corn.

24<sup>th</sup> Puttered and chored about. Drewed muck some. My day's work, the whole of it, will not amount to much. Began to pear apples last night. Made a rack this morning. Cool and pleasant.

25<sup>th</sup> Began to dig potatoes. Dug 23 bushels. "Great cry and little wool" <much ado about nothing>

26<sup>th</sup> This week is past and where am I? I am yet alive and well, enjoying the blessings of life. This morning I heard of the death of Isaac Hatch one of our old neighbors. He died in Lockport. Worse news that that has reached us today. One of our neighbors has returned to the sin of *drunkenness*. The dog has returned to his vomit. Forest went to Norwich. I can hardly tell what I have been doing.

27<sup>th</sup> Mr. W. preached from Jeremiah 17:9 and Nehemiah 2:17. He preached at Capt. Dutton's this evening. I attended the meeting and have I got any good by it - have I made and progress toward heaven and holiness? Oh, that I could confidently say yes.

29<sup>th</sup> Picked at Mr. Gay's part of the day. I puttered and did what?

30<sup>th</sup> Cut and drewed corn.

### October 1835

Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup> 1835 Finished cutting and binding corn; cool for the season. Snow on the hills, but no frost to do much damage yet. Corn leaves in some places are as green as ever.

3<sup>rd</sup> Picked apples part of the day. Uncle Silas called here on his way home. Went to E. Bethel just at night and thus closes the week. A miserable week to me and why? Oh, that I could realize why - if I am born again why do such angry wicked rebellious and tormenting thoughts arise? Is it to try me, or am I still in the gall of bitterness? Almighty God Thou knowest, and wilt thou show me.

10<sup>th</sup> This week is gone - where? The place where all must go. Am I better prepared than I was a week ago? If not, to what profit have I lived? I still feel my heart is hard, wicked, and deceitful, just ready all hope to resign, but to who else must I apply - where can help be found but in him who has the words of eternal life? What have I done this

week? I can hardly tell. Monday dug potatoes near Wights. Tuesday rainy. Husked corn and gathered butternuts. Sold 7 ½ bushels to Mr. Wight. Finished gathering butternuts and apples at Mr. Gay's. Went to the village for Bradstreet in the evening. Thursday husked corn, fixed the garret floor, etc. Friday and today dug potatoes. Very hard frost yesterday and this morning. Ground froze some. Cool but weather. This closes the week. My worldly concerns are penned down and where are the concerns of my soul?

11<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Cold and windy. I have spent another Sabbath at home and how have I spent it? Oh, that I could say, as I ought, but sin is so conspicuous in all I do, that I often fear that I am a base hypocrite, that I am deceiving myself and friends and trying to deceive God, horrible thought! Lord save me from myself. Save me from all the temptations of the adversary. Went to a conference at Capt. Dutton's this evening. Did I do my duty there.

12<sup>th</sup> Dug potatoes. A hard frost this morning.

13<sup>th</sup> Worked for Dea. Kinney digging potatoes. Indian summer commenced today.

14<sup>th</sup> Finished digging potatoes. Raised 120 bushels. Drewed a load of pumpkins for Mr. Wight and a load of slabs for myself.

15<sup>th</sup> Drewed a load of corn for Mr. Anderson this evening. Husked corn for Smith. Mr. Fox paid me 25 dollars.

24<sup>th</sup> Time waits for no man. This week is now closing and what have I been doing? I almost fear to look back, but the time will come when my conduct will be reviewed not only by me and by angels, but by God himself. Oh wretched day to me. Why does so much sin dwell within? Heavenly Dove be pleased to look down in pity upon a poor sinful wretch to-day. Oh, guide me to the Bleeding Lamb of God and may I there fix my heart. Do give me strength to feel entirely grateful to thee for all thy past mercies to me and trust thee for the rest. Is not that Beloved Lamb able to take all my sins away? Oh yes precious Lamb thou didst die on the cross for us poor wretched sinners and wilt thou be kind and take all sin away and do take unbelief from my heart and if I cannot look back now, how shall I be able to stand in that eventful day and face my eternal Judge! A solemn thought Almighty Savior! Through thy blood alone I hope to meet my judge in peace. Oh, that I might have faith in thy name to repent of, and forsake every sin, to believe in thee, as my only saviour. Oh, wilt thou condescend to dwell with me unworthy as I am. Wilt thou, Oh God, take the load of my heart guide me in the path of duty. Reveal to me for what purpose I am placed here. Show me my duty and help me to do it for thou knowest my weakness and folly. Thou knowest I can do nothing without thee. In mercy and for Jesus sake guide me through this sinful world and at last save me in heaven to praise the great triune God forever. Amen.

Today I have been husking corn in the barn. Find it hurting very bad. Friday went to father's after apples. Went to Mr. Pinney's in the evening. Thursday husked corn for Mr. Gay. Wednesday dug potatoes for Smith. Monday went to mill. Sunday 18

went to meeting. Mr. Ingraham for the V.D.M.S. <Vermont Domestic Missionary Society> preached. Saturday 17 thrashed. Charlotte went to father's.

25<sup>th</sup> Sunday a hard frost this morning. Warm and pleasant now the sun is up. Isabel, Henrietta, Desire and Forrest have gone to meeting and I stay at home. How have I spent the day? Most miserably, and why? Does any one wish or try to make me unhappy? Does God require misery of me? Has he not said "trust in God and be at peace?" Did not Christ die to save me from misery? Is not the path of happiness the way of duty and the road to heaven? Do I have crosses, cares, and perplexities than others? Then why am I unhappy? One word will tell – Sin! Sin carries its own sting and punishment with it. "When *I would do good* evil is present with me." An agent of the Colonization Society preached this afternoon.

26<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Worked in the cider mill.

28<sup>th</sup> Dug potatoes for Mr. Smith.

29<sup>th</sup> Finished digging Mr. Smith's potatoes. Mr. Paige and wife came here this afternoon. A heavy shower, more rain than we have had for a number of weeks before. Warm and dry most of the month past.

31<sup>st</sup> Cooler after the rain.. I have been to the saw mill after planks, ploughed a little, drew some wood, shoveled dirt some, chored some, pattered and fretted some, and now I am here scratching down what? Vanity. Whilst I am writing here am I doing my duty? Is my time well employed? It is the duty of every Christian to review his past conduct and often and how can he do it better than by spending ½ an hour Saturday evening in recording even the trifling events of the past week and yet in recording, how careful to skip the most important part. How many times have I suffered my temper to rise? How often have I fretted, and not only made myself miserable, but those around me also? Have I not studied the gratification of my own will, more than the peace and comfort of my family? Retrospection gives me pain. If I cannot review my own conduct, how shall I stand before my final judge? Thanks to him who is able to save; not in my own strength but through faith in him in who died for me. Lord increase my faith and purge my heart from sin

## November 1835

Sunday Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> The ground is froze hard this morning. Cool and pleasant. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Isaiah 14:24 – his discourse was on the foreknowledge of God. He explained his subject to the satisfaction most, if not, all. Communion this afternoon. Mr. Harvey and wife, Mr. Bliss, Mrs. L. P. Safford and Clarissa Williams united with the church to day. Miss Susan B. Green and another lady dismissed and took letters of recommend; Mrs. Annis B. Clogston was excommunicated for heresy. How much better than a heretic am I? This day is filled with blessed privileges, and how have I improved them? *If I sing or pray or read sin is mixed with all I do.* Yet I think it has

been a profitable day to me. If I have enjoyed but little, I have gained some good instruction.

7<sup>th</sup> This week is past, and what have I done worth recording? Alas, nothing but sin, and why is it so? Why am I continually giving up to my evil passions, and the suggestions of the adversary. Why am I so *prone to leave the God I love*? Oh that my *heart was sealed for the courts above*; then would I be at rest. Monday began to frame a *small building*. Tuesday carried Henriett home and bought a sheep of uncle D. Williams for 3.50. Wednesday went to Hanover. Thursday to Norwich. Friday to Royalton. Home today. I have been banking up to the house. A flock of wild geese went over today. "Cold winter's a coming sweet sinner's awa" and the work I planned to do is not half done.

9<sup>th</sup> Ploughed the garden; warm and pleasant.

10<sup>th</sup> Worked for P. Davis plowing, drawing wood, manure, etc.

14<sup>th</sup> The ground is frozen and has been 2 or 3 days. Rainy some, and snow squalls plenty. Last Thursday uncle David brought my sheep and took 5 pigs. I have been a barnyard fence a few days past finished it today. Went home with Aunt Sena this evening; thus goes the week and what am I profited by it? Have I spent the week as I ought? Alas, how much time runs to waste every week? How prone to leave my soul's concerns untouched and busy myself with vain and trifling things.

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday The ground thaws a little, wind southerly, damp and raw. I went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from John 5:29 "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life ." His discourse was very interesting, and edifying. His object was to prove that every one that is ever converted, born again, or is called of God, will finally be saved - and I am born again? Have I passed from death unto life? Am I prepared to meet my God? If I love, why am I thus, why this cold, this lifeless frame. My heart is continually rising up in rebellion against God and everything that is good and I am prone to give myself up to lightness and vanity. To give up reason to passion and instead of humility my heart is filled with pride. When I would do good evil is present with me. If I am a Christian, why do I not feel more love and faith toward God, more zeal in his cause. Almighty God thou alone art able to give me right feelings. Wilt thou for Christ's sake send down the quickening influence of thy holy Spirit into my cold and lifeless heart. Oh quicken me in the path of duty, help me to believe in thee and forbid that I should be left to deceive myself with false hopes. Oh give me grace to examine myself faithfully and see what ground I have for hopes of pardon, and Oh forbid that I should trust in anything but the blood of Christ to cleanse my sin polluted soul from sin. Help me to lay down the weapon of my rebellion and throw myself unconditionally on thy mercy. Help me to love thee. Help me to praise thee. Help me to do my every duty here on earth and finally save me in heaven to praise Redeeming love through a never ending eternity, for Christ's sake.

16<sup>th</sup> Warm and cloudy. Went to father's and carried his pigs and got a load of clapboards, shingles, apple trees, current bushes, snowball trees, cherry trees and walnut, etc., etc. Luther Fish died this morning in Randolph.

17<sup>th</sup> Town and freeman meeting. I went down this afternoon. Set out apple trees, current bushes, etc.

19<sup>th</sup> Worked for Mr. Wight fixing his mill yard.

20<sup>th</sup> Ploughed part of the day. Rain this afternoon.

21<sup>st</sup> Cooler and pleasant. Finished plowing the wheat stubble.

22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Cold and blustery. Mr. W. preached in the forenoon. In the afternoon an agent of the foreign Missionary Society.

23<sup>rd</sup> Snowed fast most of the day. I made a water trough.

24<sup>th</sup> Went to father's in a sleigh. The snow is deep enough to make good sleighing.

26<sup>th</sup> Went to Truman's this evening. Crossed the river on the ice, a thing I never did before in Nov. Stopt at Mr. Parkhurst's and got a rooster. Cold and pleasant.

27<sup>th</sup> Went to mill this morning. The mill was froze up. Last night was the coldest I ever knew at this season.

28<sup>th</sup> Built a shed or hovel by the barn. Mr. Fox and Truman came up this afternoon and I went up on the hill with them. Went to the village with T. [Truman] this evening. Mr. E. Davis deeded his farm to J. Bosworth. Thus closes the week, and where and how is the interest of my soul? Alas, I fear to tell, and almost to think, how careless I live. Why is it so?

29<sup>th</sup> Sunday Clear, cold and windy. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from the words "Whose end is destruction." Phil. 3:19. He was trying to disprove the doctrine of universal salvation. Why is it necessary to spend so much time to prove what the bible makes so plain? Is it because we are so willing to believe a lie, or because we are so unwilling to believe what God has spoken?

30<sup>th</sup> Killed a cow for beef. Cold and windy.

## **December 1835**

Tuesday, December 1, 1835 Went to Truman's with a qr. of beef this morning. Mother came home with me. This commences the month just as all others do. Time keeps a steady unvarying course whilst man is continually changing. Today he purposes to do this and thus, tomorrow, but when tomorrow comes, he is not prepared or some other

scheme presents itself to his mind and he, ever fond of novelty, follows it saying I will persevere in this, but tomorrow comes again, and with it some new ideal good and man is ready to shift and follow it in turn. This is the case with me. Poor wicked, fickle minded me. Oh when shall I learn wisdom and follow it?

2<sup>nd</sup> Very cold and blustering. I cut an elm log for sled raves and carried to the mill.

3<sup>rd</sup> thanksgiving day. Is my heart prepared to thank our bountiful father for the blessings of health, peace and plenty, that our land, and especially my own house. How often have I complained of my hard lot? How oft has hatred, pride, rebellion and every other sin won in my heart? Even whilst peace, health and plenty have crowned our board my wicked heart has rebelled against God. I say *peace*, how little peace I know. The way of the transgressor is hard, I find it so and I sometimes find the path of duty to be the path of peace and always of safety. Almighty God teach thou me. Incline my heart to know wisdom. Lead me to the rock of Salvation, and help me to praise thee through Christ our Saviour, God, and King

5<sup>th</sup> Finished threshing and cleaning wheat. Ira and Dana called here this evening. Cold and blustering. The snow is about 8 inches deep. The week is closed and I will stop, and may the fear of God be before me always.

7<sup>th</sup> Worked for C. Davis butchering hogs. Very cold and blustering. I froze my little finger this morning.

8<sup>th</sup> Mr. Gay and I killed our hogs. Mr. Washburn and wife came here this evening.

9<sup>th</sup> Worked in the house cutting and salting meat, trying fat etc. Cold and stormy. Our pump water stopt last Monday.

10<sup>th</sup> Hopson brought a letter from Norwich. I went to father's this evening, very cold.

11<sup>th</sup> Isabel went home with me this morning. I went to Norwich this afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> Packed up and loaded Aunt Barker's goods and started for home a little after noon. Got home without quite freezing about 8.

13<sup>th</sup> Sunday Clear cold and pleasant. Isabel and I went to meeting part of the day. Mr. W. was on a very interesting subject "Comfort the feeble minded" was his text. I suppose I lost a good deal by not being there in the morning. I am rightly punished for indulging in lying in bed this morning. Sin brings its own punishment and duty its own reward.

14<sup>th</sup> I went to Bethel this morning. Father and Henriett arrive this morning, father to help me make a sled and Henriett to sew with Isabel. A severe snow squall this evening. Mr. Gage and I went to the village, and a severe time of it we had too, but what is one snowstorm in comparison with the eternal storm of God's wrath reserved for the finally impenitent? *eternal hell!* What a sound! Almighty God send down thy holy spirit to

lead me to a just and realizing sense of that awful word! Help me to close in with the offers of grace and salvation made through the atoning blood of Christ. Help me to love thee. Oh for Christ's sake do all that for me which thou seest I and get glory to thy great name.

15<sup>th</sup> Clear, cold and still this morning. Aunt Barker's girls began to go to school. I worked on the sled some, chored some, pattered some, scolded some and made work for repentance some.

16<sup>th</sup> The coldest day I ever knew. Snowed a little all day, a strong northwest wind which kept the snow flying thick, fast and cold. I have done little but tend fires and do chores. Probably as cold as the celebrated cold Friday or the cold Christmas.

17<sup>th</sup> Isabel finished her work and I carried her home this afternoon. Very cold this evening.

19<sup>th</sup> A little more moderate. I finished my sled. I commenced it last week. Cold weather and chores (I don't mean laziness) have hindered me. I finished it time enough to draw two loads of wood. Whilst my work lags so, how fares it with my soul? Oh that I could sensibly realize my lost situation. My dependence on God, my coldness, my unbelief, the goodness, patience forbearance and long suffering of my Creator. Is it possible for a Christian to be so cold, so indifferent, so wicked? When I look within I tremble to think I am so careless, so indifferent.

20<sup>th</sup> Sunday Aunt Barker and her children went to meeting. I staid at home and how have I spent the day? Oh that the force of that question might ring on my conscience till I would spend the Sabbath as I ought – in meditation, prayer and praise till I could “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” but sin is so deep rooted in me and the gratification of self and passion so long indulged, that it is like parting with life to break off. If ever I am saved it will be by grace alone.

25<sup>th</sup> Warm and pleasant. I went to uncle D's and to father's old house this evening. Have been drawing wood most of the time this week.

26<sup>th</sup> I have done but little today but give way to bad feelings and ill humor. How long shall I be the slave of ill humor, sin, madness and misery? Oh that I could seize on the wings of faith and leave my ill humor and my wicked self behind. Why is it that I will suffer every trifle to give me pain and uneasiness? Why do I not try more to subdue my passions. Does it please my Savior to have me give up to bad feelings, or trust him, believing that he will do what best for us, and go forward cheerfully in the discharge of every and leave the event with him. Father of mercies! Send down thy holy spirit to warm this cold heart. To lead me into all truth. To help me to love thee. To help me to trust in and accept the salvation prepared for a sinful world. Oh help my unbelief.

27<sup>th</sup> Sunday Our thaw is over for the present. Went to meeting. Mr. W. preached from Romans 8:13 and Mr. Tracy, Romans 8:28. Good sermons, but what good will they do

the careless wretch that will not listen to the truth. What good will they do me? When I look within I see nothing but sin. No room left for the holy Spirit. When I try to pray my mind is wandering over the wide earth. When I try to think of God and truth, vanity and folly will intrude. When I think I will keep my passions under, a trifle overthrows all my boasted resolutions. I get vexed at nothing. Would it be so if I had experienced a change of heart? Alas how much better am I than the next hardened sinner on earth. Almighty father send salvation and peer into this wretched heart. Help me to humble myself before thee. Help me to love and serve thee. Help me to take hold of the sweet promises thou hast made to us through the blood of thy son our saviour, God and friend.

31<sup>st</sup> Drawd wood. This year is now closing and what cause have I for boundless gratitude to our heavenly father for his mercies to me this year. He has given me health, peace and plenty, or rather all the peace I have lived for. He has preserved my life whilst many around me have been cut down. He has called many from the paths of sin and death, to peace, truth and life. I humbly hope that I am of that happy number who have passed from death unto life and yet, when I look back on my life since I made a profession of my religion, what do I see? Alas! Nothing but sin and folly. How little evidence have I that I am a christian? How much oftener do I yield to my evil passions, than to the will of God! My heart sickens at the thought, anguish and despair fill my aching heart. Is it possible for a christian [to] have such feelings? Will God suffer any one that believes in him, or rather, can a believer be so wicked, be so often blinded by passion, be so faithless and wretched. "Whom God loveth him *he chasteneth*" Does he love me? Do I love him? "If ye *love me keep my commandments*" Do I? Alas! How often do I transgress. How often does pride, anger and resentment, reign within? Shall I spend the coming year as I have this? Father of mercies, help me to spend this coming year in thy service. Help me to govern my unruly self. Help me to love thee, and serve and believe thee as I ought. Oh, give me patience and humility. Give me thy holy spirit to lead me, for Christ's sake.