

**DIARY OF HENRY SHELDON****1866**

January 1: The New Year opens very pleasantly, Weather very mild & pleasant, ground partly covered with snow, have had no good sleighing this winter so far. Christmas & New Year came as usual with their new things pleasing and generally of a more profitable kind than usual. My family are all well except myself have a bad cold sore eye and out generally, did not attend church yesterday from Indisposition. The past year has been an eventful one in the History of our Nation. The Long fierce & bloody war has ceased. Our President Lincoln assassinated his assassin Shot & accomplices hung in part, Jeff Davis in Prison awaiting his trial for Treason & if he is not hung Justice & the Blood of the slain will Cry to Heaven till our land is judged and Justice take her place on the throne.

Note: assassinated for assassinated.

2: Warm Mild & pleasant. Sent \$155. to Lawrence. Our family consists of Father Aldous self & wife George Julia Theodore Emma James Arthur T & James O. All well.

3: Still warm & pleasant no prospects of Snow tho Clouding up toward night. Our Pastor Rev. Mr. Daniels went to Adams Village to help Mr. Hobart in a Series of Meetings Monday, expects to return Friday or Saturday. May the good work of God prosper to the saving of Many souls.

4: Stormy today appearance of snow for some slipping.

5: Cloudy unpleasant & Stormy growing Cold. Congress Meets again today hope they will press the South to Justice & Union, Man & Blacks tho now it must be a hard place and as much as a ( ) Man's life is worth to stay there.

6: The Coldest Night & day of the season so far I am not able to do much tho My Eye & head & cold are getting better. Mrs. James Aldous came here from Port Leyden this P.M. train on a visit before going to Ill where they intend to Move in March.

Note: Ill abbreviation for Illinois.

7: Sunday & Cold Colder coldest. Very Comfortable in Church, did not attend the evening Meeting on acct of My Cold & cough.

8: Monday Cold but will moderate during the day some pleasant, not snow Enough for sleighing. George has gone to Canton today to see about learning the Miller business with Jewett.

9: Continues to grow Mild but no Snow yet. Mr. Aldous started for Macomb on a Peddling voyage.

10: Weather Milder business dull. People go with waggons & Sleighs, ground hardly covered with Snow.

11: Still Mild. My eyes improving but My Cold and Cough keep hold of me. Mr. Daniels went to the Burgh Monday to attend Sunday S. convention & Ministerial  $\frac{1}{4}$ ly Meeting.

12: Mild looks like snow. Not much News. Pd Allendorph \$28. for Myself & Mr. Aldous yesterday. Congress debating on reconstruction of the seceded States & Free Suffrage in District of Columbia.

13: Saturday. Mild this Morning and snowing some. George wrote me yesterday. Jewetts Mill was froze up & if I wished he would come home and stay till March. James Wife gone with Charles up to Willards where Chas Makes it his home. Money is tight and scarce which has a tendency to reduce prices tho Everything keeps up excessive high.

Sunday: A very cold day but pleasant. Attended Church 3 times and was with My class in the Sunday School. Martha A came back to our House today.

15: Monday. Mr. Aldous started off Peddling today. Thermometer 27 degrees below zero. Mr. La(Hu) comd drawing my wood am to pay \$3. for cord this year 4 ft. Sent \$10. to Amc. N. Co., N.Y.

Tuesday: Milder & Strong West wind all day and some snow but drifted. Wrote to George to Come home if he thought best and stay with Me in My business.

17: Am not getting any better, Must go to my Doctor. Geo. Parsons com. drawing wood to My House.

19: Weather bad for my cold but not good Sleighing tho the best we have had this season.

20: Today comfortable got Some medicine of Dr. Swan & go up to Doctor not knowing how long I shall stay, got Mr. Thayer to Stay in the store.

20: High Wind last night. Heavy Showers going north with Much Thunder & lightning considerable rain here but more north of us. Colder & Snowing before night but not enough to Make sleighing.

21: The Dr. Changed My medicine tonight gave me some for Catarrh cough, hard raise Considerable Much Head ache and bad feelings generally.

22: Sunday: Of Course did not go out, taking Catarrh Medicine all day without any perceptible benefit. Wife Julia & Theodore attended Church.

23: Com. taking Simonds Cough Balsam it May do as much good as any medicine. Weather Cold. Martha Aldous left for home this A.M.

24: Tuesday: Still taking medicine & waiting to get well.

25: Wednesday. Nothing new, am Still away from my Store doctoring. Ate Some Oysters for Supper. Recd a Large Photograph of Clark & Eliza for Which I am very thankful. Oysters Made Me sick & I am having a hard day of it to pay for Eating even a very few. Swan left me some more Medicine & sent up a Bottle full that is going to Cure Me.

Sunday: A very pleasant Comfortable day. Julia & Theodore Emma attended church. Wife Communion P.M. Mr. Fowler & Miss Barnes were Baptised today in the river. Have been very comfortable today hope to get well and attend to my business again but hope to be reconciled to him who is to wise to err & to good to be unkind.

Monday: A Cold Cloudy day. Dont feel as well today, dont know as the seat of my disease is yet reached, much of it is in my head.

30: Tuesday. Did not go to the store as I anticipated today not feeling well enough but hope I am on the mend. Fair Sleighing and good (wea).

Wednesday: Went to the Store today having been laid up 2 weeks tomorrow. We often think we have no time to spare or Means for benevolent Objects and yet perhaps to correct us we are laid up & not only loose our time but pay others for attending partially to our affairs and pay a good round Doctor bill. All this may be to Correct us & teach us how frail we are.

February 1: We receive the melancholy intelligence this M of the Death of Mr. Ezekiel Bullard caused by a tree falling on him which he had just cut down doubtless causing instant death. He was 73 years old an old settler here, left a large but grown up family but died without a good hope in Christ. Settled with Lawrence, sent him some money by Mail.

2: Friday. Went to the store again today. Day Colder, dont feel any worse, dont think Dr. Swan attends to me as he ought, have a bad head from catarrh or some other Cause, bad Stomach & Cough which dont seem to improve much.

Saturday: A Cool but pleasant, have looked over with Burts & Co. Settled found due me \$10.71. Looked over with B. Kellmer & Taitt found due them 12.45. Have had No Medicine today, Swan either to lazy or to Much to attend to.

Note: Burts is actually Burtis. The company name of Burtis Co. was still on a building housing a furniture store on Main Street of Gouverneur in 2011.

4: Sunday. Took a dose of Pills today & then some Rheubarb just enough to Make Me sick all day. Julia & Theodore went to Ch AM Wife PM all Met at the Presn House to hear an Agt from the Freedmans Commission.

5: Felt to bad & sick to go to store today, have spent an uneasy and uncomfortable day. Wife Melted snow & washed today. Mercury this AM 15 below zero. Julia & Lucinday gone to Lucias today.

6: Very cold but I went to the store tho I dont feel as well as I did last week, head bad cough bad, I am weak.

7: At Store today, drew off some acct's tho with difficulty. Continue to take Medicine tho I do not see the direct benefit of it. The Friends of Rev. Mr. Daniels gave him a Donation yesterday PM & Evening at the Parsonage PM & at Van Burens Hall in the Evening an Oyster Supper, have not heard the result.

8: Cold North wind good sleighing. At Store again today tho hard up. Wife both her a Fur Cape Muff & Cuffs for \$20.00 rather than have a clothes Wringer at half the price. Wrote to Charles (son) today. Settled with a few (Fise) at Oswego at Cape Vincent and in every quarter Congress is trying to be just with the Blacks. The President and Many others are trying to prevent the Negro from enjoying the privileges of the whites. The Curse of God must rest upon us as a Nation till our rulers & people come up to the Declaration of Independence.

Note: The word "son" is in parentheses in the diary entry.

April 6: Well it is Now Apl since writing anything before. I have been just able to get down to the store & keep my little business Slightly moveing. Constant cough, Catarrh bad, and sick all over, have been employing Doctors or taking some Patent Medicine to No good purpose up to now and dont know what to do Next. George Came home to stay & with his help I have got along without hiring as I had to while sick at home. Find it very close & hard times to provision clothe school My family from my limited income and the present high prices Flour 5.00 pr hundred, corn 8/ pr bushel, Butter 50 to 60 cts pr lb, Potatoes 6/ pr bushel, Sugar from 15 to 15 c, Wood 3½ ft for 4 ft pr cord \$3. to 3.50, and so on. I hope by the blessing of God to raise My corn & potatoes this Coming Season, have got about all the building or repairing done for the present so I am in hopes to not get more in debt.

The snow is mostly gone yesterday and day before more warm & Summer, today Colder, have taken an invoice of My Goods in Store 1<sup>st</sup> Apl amount to \$2430, \$2430, & furniture & fixtures about \$300 More. My head feels so bad 8½ o'clock PM I must shut up & go home trusting the Lord Will grant Me a good nights rest & that I may feel better tomorrow. I am an unprofitable servant at the best but I still hope in Christ & he is My help.

14: The past week have not been much better than usual tho we have had a pleasant week. Wednesday self & wife went to Mr. C. Browns but did not do Me Much good as I took Some cold, still much cough & a bad head, has taken me all the week to get over it. The Civil rights bill passed the House Monday over the Presidents veto having passed the Senate last week. Considered a great triumph for Liberty Justice & equal rights. The Lord sustain Congress and give our Senators Wisdom and a heart to do right and we shall yet have a Land of Liberty in spite of President Johnson (who has turned Traitor to principle & Justice) & the copperheads of the north & Southern traitors. They are all taken aback completely Nonplussed and are mum. George went off yesterday, heard he had gone to Canton, he must be more steady or I must look for someone else to attend to My business in My enfeebled state of health. Times are very dull & Money tight. Martha Emma & Arthur have been to C Conants Sugaring today. Our Pastor Mr. Daniels goes to Watertown tonight, Exchanges with the Watertown Bapt Minister tomorrow.

Note: The phrase that follows "President Johnson" is in parentheses in the diary entry.

19: Dont find my health much improved, just able to be about. Mr. Garrison Cloud Serving for us today. Weather very Mild and appearances of an Early Spring.

20: Day warm & pleasant as May. Marian Sheldon Came here on the 5 PM train last night on a Short visit to us and the grace of her dear husband our much beloved and lamented Brother. Congress apparently stands firm to the principle of Justice determined if possible that the president nor Traitors nor both Combined with Copperheads of the north shall defeat the dear bought liberties of the Blacks & Union men at the South and tho Johnson may liberate Jeff Davis and his Co. conspirators and Treason loving rebels, yet they shall not be released from the Control of the Genl. Government and have a chance to Make laws still more odious and oppressive than under the old System of Property in Man, they with Seward and the president are pulling all the wires they can to accomplish that end. Our trust is in God and the justness of the Cause of liberty & humanities. May there be sufficient virtue in the people to save the nation.

28: The weather has been cold & Rainy & very warm and so on. Marian Came here last Thursday night and left last Monday noon. I am not much improved in health, very hard up last of last week and all this week, dont see as I am likely to get well soon. Can do no work, hardly get to the Store, trust I shall recover for My family needs My labor to live on. My Expenses have exceeded My income as bad and rong as that is but I must change My hand.

May 1: Cold raw weather, spring coming slow.

9: Clinton Parsons worked for Me ½ day yesterday Hauling Manure 6 Loads from Mother Aldous. George started for Michigan this Morning, came from Canton in February as I supposed to stay at home and help me in business, My health being so poor it was impossible for Me to do alone, I promised him 10 dollars pr mo this year, More another and an interest in the business when he could manage it.

April 9: Rained last night. George gone to Michigan, cost me about \$40. to fit him out tho he has been with Me about 2 months. Cool but the cold reluctantly yielding to the returning suns mild rays. C Parsons Ploughing for me.

The Great Political question and agitation is how shall the rebel states be reconstructed. The President Claims they are reconstructed according to his plan and under his directions & Congress ought to admit loyal representatives tho they have been (puney or princy) rebels. Congress says their State Governments & laws are not loyal, their representatives are not entitled to seats and they must wait till the peace & liberty of the Country Can be secured and the people of the south show works meet for repentance. May He who has guided the National through the rebellion & preserved us guide our rulers and legislators in the Path of Liberty & Justice.

Note: The date of the above entry is given as April 9, but it appears that it is similar to the entry of May 9 and that Henry Sheldon wrote the above entry on May 9. Puncg or punicy might possibly be a different spelling than suggested in parentheses, and an abbreviation for punished.

May: The Month of April is past, weather rather cold & wet. Congress at work to secure the Country from cession & copperhead rule. We dont know what will become of the President, he is in harmony & union with his reconstructed rebels any (My policy) must be swallowed.

Note: "My policy" is in parentheses in the diary entry.

May 8: George started this Morning for Michigan, could not be contented to remain with & help Me. Neither he nor Charles have been any help to me, soon as they Could earn anything thought they needed it for themselves. Had they like dutiful children given Me their Services till 21 years old and attended school Winters, they would have been better prepared for the business of life & I perhaps Might have had means to pay my way with & help them to start in business but as it is we have none of us Much of this worlds good and I fear not a very good hope for the world to come.

28: Have had another Cold wet Month, weather must warm up or crops will be a failure. My health has been so poor that I have not been able to do my gardening or fix-up round My house as I should wish to see things about a home. Must let it all go, trusting for life and health to do it another season.

31: We are now having some Fenian excitement along the Canada border, they have made a raid across from Buffalo & taken Fort Erie.

June 4: The Fs have been defeated & driven from Canada opposite Buffalo, some killed some captured & some taken by United States forces. Genls Mead & Sweeny passed here yesterday on their way to Ogdensburgh, one to direct the Fenian invasion of Canada, the other to oppose it.

9: Saturday. Rained Most all the week some days hard, have been more unwell than usual the past week, have concluded I must have someone to help Me and engaged Harvey Jenne for 6 Months at \$10 pr mo. & board. Mr. Fill has been cutting a ditch on the line between Me & Spencer today, My garden and leveling My lot nearby. The Fenians have been gathering on the Canada line from Ogdensburgh to & in Vermont preparatory to an advance on Canada with apparent success till a few days past our Government has Ordered & arrested most of their leaders and are now giving the Men Transportation to their homes so undoubtedly this is the closing up of the Irish Liberty and the Fenian invasion or taking of Canada which they would undoubtedly have accomplished had our Government observed the same Neutrality the English did during the rebellion. The Cause of humanity & Christianity is Moving forward and Many are breaking away from the thralldom of Sin & death and Joyfully accepting eternal life & yet Christians are not half awake to the Work.

10: Rev. J. N. Webb 18 yeas ago our pastor and Now at Madrid preached for us today, theme AM the Saviours Suffering for our sins PM.

11: Took a Severe cold yesterday, am about Sick today, day pleasant but cold. Harvey Jenne commenced work for Me today to work till 1<sup>st</sup> next January at \$10. pr Mo. Board & Washing, is to tend store & assist to do any chores or work about Store, House & Garden.

July 2: My days have been lengthened to 52 years this being My 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday. What a Marvel that so useless a creature should have his life prolonged to this age and why I should have lived 52 years to so little a purpose. I can not tell how much good a man ought to have done in the length of time but I see no Marks of usefulness in my past but Bless God My Hope does not depend upon My good Works. Christ is My Hope, My All for salvation. I think the way to Heaven brightening and the ties of earth and its Joys lessening. My soul longs for a closer walk with God. I have no satisfactory evidence that My children are the children of God but My prayer is and will be while I have breath that they may be and that right soon for why should they give their best days of service to the Devil when the dear saviour has done so much for them.

The past Month has been a poor month for Me, have suffered much from a variety of pains mostly head & stomach & lungs, have a cough still that wears me much & at times I feel as tho my end was not distant. My choice would be to arrange my affairs in a better shape for my family before I go hence to be here no more. This I can do but slow only by selling out My store & Goods & lot down the river which I could not do to so good an advantage as to keep them, Should my health be restored & I could continue in business. I will ask and watch the indications & directions of providence and I shall not be disappointed in that which is for the best.

My 5 children by my present wife are at home and well, the 3 older by my 1<sup>st</sup> & early companion are all gone from home, Calista in Edwards, Charles & George in Michigan.

3: I am still unable to work, just be about & Much pain at that. Have just added a Hen House to My Barn at an expense of about \$60., hardly think it will pay but cant keep hens in a barn. My Garden promises about middling. Bapt. Soc. Meeting today, 2 Trustees Elected, report shows the financial matters in a healthy condition, are comparatively out of debt, pay \$850 Salary to Pastor.

4: Celebrations of the 4<sup>th</sup> all around us but the Boys only celebrated here with fire crackers and a bonfire in the Evening. I am not feeling well, have the Rheumatism in My back today. Several hard Showers here today.

6: Went to see Dr. Minnick today, shall try him on, see if he can do me any good, looked Me over, gave me 4 doses in 1 of their chalk & other stuff to take tonight with orders to take 2 large table spoons full of oil in the Morning to begin with, then he is going to begin doctoring me.

October 1: Time has moved us on through the months of July & September and we are still alive with no very perceptible difference. The months have been noted for constant wet weather and the amount of Hay & Grain damaged & destroyed. Weather mostly cold. The St. Lawrence Baptist Association was held here the 1<sup>st</sup> Week in September, considered as pleasant a season or Meeting as ever held. Weather good. The Town Fair held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week on their New Grounds also a success.

26: Yesterday went to C Conants self & Wife had got a Horse & Buggy to go to L.H. Morris but My health is so poor I durst not go so we went to C. Conants. I was chilly all day & went to bed, the next day I stayed in the House & drank Ginger Tea & kept off the chill. The next morning self & wife started for Elder Babcocks & Dea. A. Smiths at Manlius, Onondaga Co. had a good visit, stayed 10 days & got home safe.

Note: Manlius was a village in Onondaga County, New York.

November: Tho we had bad stormy weather every day from home, Stopd taking Dr. Minnicks Medicine and improved in health & appetite all the time.

6: Home to Election the Most exciting election ever held.

