

John H. Knapp  
Menomonie Wis  
1880

Transcribed by Robin Sweeny

January 1

I could not get an inside diary to fit my last years cover or a diary of any kind to suit me for year 1880 at the beginning of the year. So it runs along until in Feby when I get this book hence no entries for the month of Jany. The month of Jany. up to about the 28<sup>th</sup> was mild thawy Weather & many persons thought winter had broken but the last of Jany it turned colder – Snow fell & solid winter set in.

February 11

The month of Feby has been very cold up to date & good sleighing – hard roads & c. This morning mild again. Ther 38° & raining.

February 16

Soft weather.

February 17

Warm & pleasant – snow melting rapidly – ground nearly bear all around our mills & c on west side of the river.

February 18

This mornng Ther 4° below zero & altogether the day has been very cold with high cutting wind & most disagreeable day of the season. Mr. Marks returned from Rice Lake this forenoon.

February 19

Ther 12° below zero this mornng – No wind – the day bright & pleasant.

Friday, February 20

Mr. Cooper upholsterer from St. Paul commenced this afternoon to work over hair mat-ress for us. This is my mothers 88<sup>th</sup> birth day.

February 21

Mr. Cooper finished one mattress this eveg.

February 22

Rev. Hicks of Ham-mond preached in Cong Ch – mornng & eveg having exchg with our Pastor Rev. H. Ketcham who went to Hammond

February 23

Mild & thawing – Ther 20° at 7 A.M.

February 25

J.H. Douglas & wife & H.L. Stout & daughter Fannie arrived to day. A meeting of the K.S. & Co. was held at the Co's office at 4 oclk P.M.

February 27

Weather mild & some snow fell in the after-noon.

Saturday, February 28

All the members of the compy & their wives were at our house to dinner except Capt & Mrs. Tainter – Mrs. T was sick. Snow fell to depth of 3 or 4 inches.

Sunday, February 29

Five Sundays in Feby – a very unusual thing. In 40 years more there will be another Feby having 5 Sundays. Very cold. Ther about zero.

Monday, March 1

Cold 12° below zero. Very fine day.

March 3

Thawing fast – sleighing spoiled. Ther 42° at 7 A.M. & 48° at 2 P.M. Meetings of the K.S. & Co. Co. continue at Co. office.

March 5

Mr. Stout & daughter Fannie left for Du-Buque via St. Paul.

March 6

Mild – thawing & muddy but clear sunshine all day.

Sunday, March 7

Communion day in our church. Rev. Ketcham preached morning & eveg. This eveg. was his second sermon on the prodigal son.

March 8

J.H.Douglass & E. Marks started for Chicago to purchase spring goods for K.S. & Co. Cold day – Warmer towards eveg.

March 9

To day was a cold day Ther 8° - wind blowing eveg 10° Callie Doug lass & Vallie started for Chicago to day where they will join JHD & proceed to St. Louis. Vallie goes for a visit of two weeks. Rec'd 3 galls of Mrs. Hibbards alternative medicine & commenced taking it as per directions of A.S. John-ston Esq 187 Washington St. Chicago.

March 10

Ther 10° This mornng. Moderated about noon & commenced snowing.

March 14

Rev. Beardsly of River Falls preached at Cong Ch both morning & eveg. having Exchg with Mr. Ketcham. Weather cold & about 3 in snow fell so that we went to ch in our large sleigh.

March 15

Ther 11° below zero this mornng.

March 19

Herbie has been sick for several days but is much better this mornng. Tonsils swollen some fever & c but fever left him last night. Weather clear & mild – thawing fast. Gave 40\$ to Robt Widen ? agt for GMC association.

March 20

Clear mild weather – Herbie still improving.

March 27

Rained during the night & nearly all day to day steadily. The frost not being out of the ground the water has run into the streams – causing them to rise. The shingle Mill Wilson Creek is high - water up to floor timbers of the bridge across same.

Sunday March 28

The river is high & water running through the mill 6 in deep. The ice is not out of the pond & some fears are entertained that Damage may be done to the dam & bridge. The new R.R. bridge has only the stringer on the tressel work from the West side to middle pier & is in danger. Weather clear again.

Monday, March 29

Bright clear day & water receding. This is my 55<sup>th</sup> birth day & so the years go by “like a shadow and continueth not” We do not hear from Vallie – suppose she arrived in Chicago safely.

Wednesday, March 31

Johnny arrived home this morning about 4 oclk. He has grown considerably in the 3 months he has been in Beloit. This our maid in the kitchen Mary Katie Gebhardt birth day – she is 22 years old to day & Mary Janck our other girl who has been with us 8 or 9 years was 23 on 16<sup>th</sup> Feby. March has been an unpleasant month.

Thursday, April 1

We were disappointed because Vallie did not get home to day. Weather mild to fine. Effie & I went to Prayer meeting. I am drawing plan this evening for addition of Gardners rooms to our green-house building.

Friday, April 2

Friday, April 9

Johnnys 16<sup>th</sup> birth day.

Sunday, April 11

Monday, April 12

Tuesday, April 13

Wednesday, April 14

Will & Johnny left for Beloit this night 10 ½ oclck where they will spend the next few months at school I have been ailing very much with sick headache & neuralgia or toothache on my left lower jaw & back tooth.

Thursday, April 15

Felt better this afternoon & went down to the store.

Sunday, April 18

This morning early & until 10 ½ a.m. we had heavy fall of rain. The first warm rain to start the grass. We did not go out to church in the forenoon. Vallie taught Ed Herbie & Roll the Sunday S lesson at home. This eveg. Mr. Ketcham preached on same sub-ject as S.S. lesson the parable of the sower & the tares.

Thursday, April 29

The men finished digging cellar for Gardners house being added to Greenhouse. Cameron commenced middle of the afternoon to cut a hole through the wall for a door from the Greenhouse cellar into the cellar under Gardners room or addition.

Wednesday, May 19

Effie & I started for Rice Lake. Stopped over night at 22 mile ford & next day went through to Rice Lake.

Sunday May 23

Heard the Methodist Min ister Rev. McManus preach in Rice Lake this morning.

May 24

The Steamer Lady of the Lake towed the last boom down from North of Bear Creek to the dam at Rice Lake – I had inten-ded going to Long Lake to day but rain threat-ning I was prevented. Rained very little however & so almost lost one day.

May 22

†-started

Tuesday, May 25

Started this mornng with team & Brackloin Spring wagon to Long Lake where we arrived at 11 ½ A.M. Ed Dingley went with me as guide cook & c. Sent team & driver back this afternoon to Rice Lake while Ed Dingley took me in back canoe hired of Nekose (indian) up the right arm of Long Lake to explore & see the Lake. Caught 12 bass, pike & c. Hot Day.

Wednesday May 26

Hired Nekose & his canoe & Ed Dingley & the Indian paddled me up Long Lake about 12 miles. Saw considerable good pine timbered land. Saw one deer. Rained some & returned & went down Long Lake stream about 6 miles & camped Mosquitoes on the stream very bad. Turned colder at sun down.

Thursday, May 27

We left camp 7 A.M. & by chopping out some obstructions in Long Lake stream got out into Red Cedar Lake stream at 10 ½ A.M. & arrived in Rice Lake before dinner time. Paid Nekose 5\$ & allowed Ed Dingley 5\$ for the trip.

Friday, May 28

Effie & I started from Rice Lake 6 ½ A.M. & drove through to Menomonie by 8 P.M. stopping 1 ½ hours at Chetek & 1 ½ hours at 22 mile ford.

June 4

Heavy rain about noon

June 5

Heaviest rain in years washing out gullies roads. A torrent several feet deep poured down the ravine near our home. A considerable wash out at back of barn yard where it was filled with saw dust.

June 6

Rained all night last night heavily. Many bridges & culverts washed out. Communion day in our church. Morning service but few in attendance. Stephen G. Gould & his mother were received into the Ch on letter. Text Rev

June 7

Had 3 teams hauling slabs to fill up wash out back of cow yard this afternoon.

June 14

Heaviest flood of water we have ever known in the Red Cedar River since we live here.

June 15

First tomatoes of the season raised in our Greenhouse. The flood is subsiding. Congregational Con vention opened up in the Cong church.

June 24

From our garden we have had green peas cauliflower beets cu-cumbers earlier than heretofore. Celery is set out. It has been all transplanted once & some of it twice.

July 9

Hot weather Ther 93° sultry.

July 10

Hot

July 11

Rev. McDudley of Eau Claire preached in the Cong Ch morning & eveg. Text for AM John XII- 34v "Who is this son of man". In the eveg. he preached from Daniel VI – 10<sup>th</sup> verse. Rainy this forenoon & after-noon. Very few out this mornng. Cleared up for an hour or two this eveg. & about 42 persons atten-ded ch.

July 20

Went before the town board of services & explained to them about the assessment of our logs & c.

July 22

Herman completed the work on addition to Greenhouse for the garden er to live in. The RR Co are laying track across the creek & back of our store.

Thursday, August 5

Went over to St. Paul on the 10.27 AM train this being my first ride on the train on the stub RR running in to Menomonie.

Friday, August 6

Returned home this afternoon from St. Paul.

Monday, August 9

New girl that Vallie hired named Mary Lund commenced work at 2.50 per week.

Wednesday, August 11

Mary Junck quit work to day at noon.

Monday, August 16

Took Co. team & driver & my hunting wagon & started for Washburn Farm. Johnny & Eddie accompa nied me. Took 2 guns & 2 dogs "Kent" & Doc" both setters Gordon & Irish Found very few "chickens" on the way. Cool cloudy pleas ant weather.

August 17, Tuesday

Wm Sprague went with John & I after grouse while Eddie went out fishing for trout. We bagged only 14 grouse while Eddie came in with 17 fine trout. Sent some "Chickens" & all the trout home by Co. team. Hot weather.

Wednesday, August 18

John, Eddie & I went trout fishing this forenoon & caught about 35 good ones. In the afternoon about 4 oclk Johnny & I started out & going a short distance above the Washburn Farm bagged 6 grouse. Very warm day.

Thursday, August 19

Sprague John & I went south & crossed S fork hay river & hunted for Chickens. Day very hot & poor time to hunt. Bagged 14 & got back to the farm about 9 P.M.

Friday, August 20

We went to Pr farm. Hunted about there in the afternoon. Saw only 5 grouse & got none.

Saturday, August 21

We went after dinner to George's Pond 5 miles below Pr farm & caught a few pickerel.

Sunday, August 22

Spent the day quietly at Prairie Farm.

Monday, August 23

We drove to Chetek by Sioux Creek route. Shot about 6 grouse & 2 pigeons on the way. Rained in the afternoon & before we reached Chetek.

Tuesday, August 24

Drove out to Stone quarry with Charly Moore. Went to Rice Lake in the afternoon. About halfway saw two deer shot one of them a 4 prong buck. These were the first wild deer John & Eddie ever saw. Cold & windy

Wednesday, August 25

Returned to Chetek this afternoon via sum ? - We got 6 grouse & two pigeons on way down.

August 26

Drove home to day. Rained lightly nearly half the time. Arrived home 7 ½ P.M.

September 6

Vallie & I went to Dunn ville this afternoon. Cold north wind blowing.

Tuesday, September 7

Vallie & I returned home this forenoon via Downsville. Cold North wind. The men of Misters Goddard & Spalding have commenced to excavate for the found ation of Elevator for our company.

October 4

Started to Alexandria Minnesota this forenoon on a duck hunt. Billy Wilson went with me. Left St. Paul for Alexandria @ 7 PM.

October 5

Arrived in Alexandria 2.35 A.M. Hired team after breakfast & went out 2 ½ miles to Lake Cowdry Billy shot 2 Ducks – got one. Went back to the Hotel after dinner. I put a fresh dressing on my face & with it some French Chalk which afterwards found to be poisonous. We went to Evans-ville about midnight.

Saturday, October 30

This is first time I have been to the store & office in over 3 weeks. Have been laid up on account of the poisonous substance I put on my face on 5<sup>th</sup> inst supposing it to be French chalk Old Joe Burton was buried to day.

Sunday, October 31

This is the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Vallie & my wedding day. We were married 25 years ago on a Thursday at 10 A.M. in Reading Pa. AJ Messenger died this morning at 8 A.M. Weather exceedingly fine & has been all the month except 3 or 4 days.

November 2

AJ Messengers funeral took place at his home at 9 ½ A.M. This is the day for Presidential election. I am hoping that JA Garfield will be elected.

Thursday, November 25

A cold day 25 to 30° below zero. We had a good Thanksgiving Dinner. Mrs. Allen & her mother were the only persons not members of our family that were with us to dinner. Henry & Jesse Eddie Herbie, Rolla, Mother Vallie & I were all Effie Will & Johnny all three away from home.

November 30

November has been the coldest in years. It commenced getting cold on 15<sup>th</sup> & has kept it up pretty well. We have a little snow but not enough for good sleighing. Pork comes ? rap idly 4 ½ & 5¢ cash in the price.

December 9

The weather has been steadily cold for the past week. The Ther ranged several days from zero to 17° below. This mornig it stood at 17° below 0 at 7 A.M.

December 10

Weather moderated some about 10 AM & the result was a pleasant day. It is the first day it has thawed in the strong sunlight even on the south side of the house in over a week.

December 14

Weather has continued mild since the 10<sup>th</sup> & some light snows.

December 15

Pleasant & mild weather. Ther has ranged from 17° to 38° for past 5 days.

December 24

Mild weather has continued since the 10<sup>th</sup> inst. Some snow so that sleighing is fair now. Preparations for Christmas seem to be the only exciting matter now. Will John & Effie are all at home having coming along home at different times during past week or ten days. 1<sup>st</sup> Will 2<sup>nd</sup> John & 3<sup>rd</sup> Effie. Cloudy weather for two weeks.

Saturday, December 25

Had fine day & nice time generally. Presents numerous. Vallie rec'd writing desk, Schiller & c. All rec'd nice books. Dr. Jno. Lyman came over from Eau Claire to spend the day with us.

Sunday, December 26

Mild this forenoon & about dark it turned cold – snowed.

December 27

Very cold this mornng. Ther 24°. Remained cold all day. Ther did not rise to more than 15° below zero all day.

December 28

This mornng 29° below by our Ther & 30° at store – cold all day.

December 29

Ther 16° below zero at 7 A.M. Blustery in the after-noon.

December 31

Somewhat milder but grew colder at 6 P.M. The year closes with a feeling that God has been very kind & merciful to us all & we have had blessings far beyond our desserts. Our children are all at home & Grand-ma though feeble is still about. 1880 has been a good year.