

# Henry Park's Diary

Entries in the following excerpt from Henry W. Park's diary begin on December 1, 1858 and end on April 6, 1859. It is unknown whether there is more to the diary than reproduced here.

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Never put off until tomorrow what may be done today.

Wednesday, Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup> , 1858 – Weather cold but clear, poor sleighing. Cut wood for Marrow at Norcross's. Earned nearly 50 cents.	.50
Thursday – would read as above – Wm. Waite was with me.	.50
Friday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> – Cloudy – rest as above	.50
Saturday, 4 <sup>th</sup> – part of the time – snowed at night – Went to Carthage Mills, sold goods for Clark at auction.	
Sunday, 5 <sup>th</sup> – At home – snowed – Geo. Bates preached as usual.	
Monday, 6 <sup>th</sup> – Quite warm – Calvin Stanley worked for me chopping wood at Norcross's. Put up 3 ½ cords of wood.	1.47
Tuesday, 7 <sup>th</sup> – Quite cool. Rest as above – put up 2 ½ cords of wood.	1.05
Evening went to Carthage. Played for a dance at John Maxwell's where my brother boarded who was at that time teaching school on Storer Hill.	2.50
Wednesday, 8 <sup>th</sup> – Fair day. I was very sleepy, besides being troubled very much with a bile on my left leg. Very painful. –	
Thursday, 9 <sup>th</sup> – As above – boil very painful, could do no work.	
Friday, 10 <sup>th</sup> – As above – boil very painful. Could neither read or work.	
Saturday, 11 <sup>th</sup> – Fine day – Boil burst and run. Felt better. Did after chores. Shelled ½ bushel corn – sold five – read the papers.	.70
Sunday, 12 <sup>th</sup> – Very fine day – I was quite well – Commenced keeping this journal – Tom Mersereau was here – Read 1 <sup>st</sup> 158 pages in Frost's History of United States.	

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Do unto others as you would that they should do to you.

Monday, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> – Commenced snowing in the forenoon – rained a little in the course of the day. French and Tead were here from Boston. Ellen (my wife) had a lame shoulder. I read 20 pages in Kent's Commentaries Vol. 1 on Piracy.

Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> – Morning cloudy during forenoon, bright and very warm afternoon. It clouded up, sprinkled and was very misty and warm for season. Randall's colt ran and kicked his sleigh all into slivers. Worked with Calvin Stanley on White's land. Chopping wood. Read 20 pages in Kent's Commentaries Vol. 1 in Jurisprudence of U.S.A.

Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> – Morning raining, during day fair, rained at night again, very warm for the season. Brown worked same as day before with Stanley – Read 20 pages as above.

Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant – Worked – Employed in the same manner as on the sixth Monday, put up 2 ½ cords. Earned .94  
Concert and dance at the Morrill House, by Schrofle [?] and one of his students in music. Read as above – 20 pages.

Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> – Cloudy, snowed in the forenoon a very little. Quite cold at night. Employed as on yesterday. Put up 2 ¾ cords which finished my Morrow job of 20 cords. Which I cut for 42 cts per cord. Earned \$1.05. Read as above 8 pages.

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Early Birds catch the bugs. I was never an early bird.

Saturday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> – One of the prettiest days of the season, evening ditto, helped Gammon pack apples and got one subscriber for the Republic. Was a Court here. [Illegible] Earned \$.35. Read as above. 12 pages.

Sunday, Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> – Very cold but pleasant. E. G. Harlow and Rosella Stanley were married by Mr. Geo. Bates. Read 78 pages in the Life of Washington – author's name torn.

Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant – not very cool, worked with Calvin Stanley, for him (Stanley) in Leavitt's chopping.

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> – Read on Monday eve after I made my journal. 30 pages from Life of Washington. Read 24 pages. Stormy, snowed through the day from about 10 o'clock. Hailed in the evening a little, not depth of snow fell worth mentioning. Worked with Stanley chopping for C. H. Chase, until drove off by the snow. Earned .25. Albert was very hoarse and had a bad cold.

Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> – Very windy – snow flew amazingly, not very cold, worked as yesterday, earned .37. Albert a little better, but quite cross.

Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> – Morning very cold and windy. Finally grew and remained more still and mild. Read 10 pages in Kent's Commentaries. Did no work and benefit \_\_\_\_\_.

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Time is money.

Friday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant but cold. Calvin and myself commenced chopping wood for John Jackson. I broke an axe handle, had to come home and put in another. Earned. Felt tired and did not read anything except newspapers.

Saturday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant but cold, shelled some corn and sawed some wood, brought my wife a dress. Read 32 pages in Coopers History of North America, nothing took place of interest.

Sunday, Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>, 1858 – Very pleasant, cold in the morning but grew milder until night. I read 32 pages from Cooper's History of North America.

Monday, Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> – Quite pleasant and comfortable warm through the day. Towards night, the wind came up and it snowed a little. After making up my journal last night (Sunday) it snowed a little but cleaned up a 8 o'clock this morning. Worked as on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, earned .32. Bought Stanley off by paying him 75 cts. Made .19. Read as yesterday 36 pages.

Tuesday, Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> – Fair weather, somewhat windy and cool. Leavitt commenced work for me. Sawed wood at home and worked a little while for Barrows.

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Earn the bread before you eat it.

Wednesday, Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> – I yesterday earned .37 cts. which are to be added to this day's work. Cold but pleasant. Worked chopping for Chase, earned 87 cts. + .37 1.25

Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> – Coldest day of the season so far, bright and pleasant. Virgil Dillingham hauled wood for me from Leavitts. We hauled 2 cords to the Village. One I sold to I. N. Stanley for 1.25 and the other hauled home. Bought myself a new coat. Went to my brother's school (which had closed). Exhibition in the evening with one Davy and Chandler Abbot –t at the school house on Storers Hill in the town of Carthage.

Friday, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> – Fooled my time away at the stores and barrooms. Attended a ball at the Morrill House in the evening, had a good time. Went as a "dead head" by invitation from Mr. Stanley who kept the house.

Saturday, Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1859 – Pleasant and warm, felt very sleepy, worked in the afternoon for Orrison Gammon for which I received 25 cts.

Sunday, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> – Pleasant very comfortable day as to warmth in the first part of the day. Grew colder towards night. Read 36 pages in Our Countrymen.

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Honesty is the best policy.

Monday, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> – Worked sawing wood for Freeman Griffith for which I charged 87. I posted my books up to Jan 1<sup>st</sup> / 59. Closed account with old /58 and found that I had rec'd from him 178.00. Learned that the Morvallen Taylor house was burnt in Byron on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Tuesday, Jan 4<sup>th</sup> – Commenced snowing about 8 o'clock A.M. and snowed hard all day. The snow flew "hither and yon" as the saying is. Take the day through – it was the worst day of the winter. I worked with Wallace for Ephraim Marble sawing wood. Earned \$1.00

Wednesday, Jan 5<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and comfortable, worked for D. P. Stowell in the afternoon sawing wood. Forenoon loafed. Earned .75.

Thursday, Jan 6<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and comfortable. Forenoon I loafed the most of the time, afternoon chopped wood for John Jackson. There was trouble about the school. Kept by one Burns, he had a day or two before whipped Hiram Cox. I earned .50.

Friday, Jan 7<sup>th</sup> – Read 30 pages. Stormed nearly all day. First snowed, rained a little afterwards and was misty – rained in the evening. That was a ball, a popular Sovereignty ball, about which there was some excitement of being a party ball.

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Speak not too often.

Saturday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> – Cool but pleasant. I read the most of the day after looking after the friends of mine at the National House who attended the ball. I did no work on Friday (yesterday) but cleaned Stowell's office from a week's of gathering of dust and ashes. Regulated the books, etc., etc. Read some laws and the High Sheriff Colby was here, who informed me that he had appointed me Crier of the Supreme Judicial Court for this County for the next 2 years ensuing. I closed reading the Desert Home, a book by Wayne Ried of 410 pages.

Sunday, Jan 9<sup>th</sup> – Very cold but pleasant. Shine brightly at noon the warm sun. Shakespeare. Poet. I read as much as it would have been to read 10 pages in a law book, besides writing a large amount.

Monday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> 1859 – The coldest day of the season up to this time, yet it was pleasant. Edmunds thermometer stood 30, Barnard Marbles 33, C. T. Chase's 39 below zero. I spent the day attending court in Bolster's office. Case was O'Hara vs. Thornton – atts. Bolster and Rawson. [probably William W. Bolster and Sumner Sullivan Rawson]

Tuesday, Jan 11<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant but very cold thermometers standing as low as they are marked. The coldest day known for many years. People froze their ears by being out but a few minutes. William Mitchell's well froze over. I read 10 pages with much other matter.

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Catch the bear before you sell the skin.

Wednesday, Jan. 12, 1859 – Found a little snow on the ground this morning that fell late yesterday and last night. Cloudy nearly all day. The weather very much moderated and strong symptoms of rain. As yesterday spent my time in the stores, barrooms, and law offices. Read about 15 pages in Bouviers law dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> volume Kent, &c, &c. I also read 36 pages in History, Frosts U.S. A., &c. No events worth mentioning. 12 and 14 dollars per ton of hay freely offered. 1.00 for corn and forty cents for oats refused by traders here. Farmers hanging on to them like misers to a dollar.

Wood in this market a drug at one dollar and 50 cts. per cord. Potatoes worth from 42 cts to 50. Flour a good brand for 6.75 – 7.00. Molasses .42 cts. per gal for the best and down to 33. Tea good article, worth 58 cts. Sugars from 8 to 14 cts per lb. Fresh beef by the quarter 4 ½ and 5 1/2. Pork, salt per lb, 12 ½ cts. Round hog 7 to 8 ½. Rents here very high, not a vacant tenement to be found.

Daily mail from Bartletts Corner Bryant's Pond run to supply the wants of this people. 3 trips to each place on opposite days. Rev. Mr. Jordan preaches here regularly. Rev. George Bates one a fort-night. Rev. Mr. Gray the same.

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Half a loaf is better than no bread.

Thursday, Jan 13<sup>th</sup> – Snowed part of the day. Cloudy most of the time. I worked part of the day for E. Winter sawing wood. Played for a dance at night over to Cyrus Dunn's. I earned that night and day.  
3.66

Friday, Jan 14<sup>th</sup> – Weather same as day before. I loafed all day. Spent two dollars for sundry articles.

Saturday, Jan 15<sup>th</sup> – Weather same as yesterday which made four days all alike. The sun having hardly been visible for that time. I did no work. I read 86 pages in Lossings Lives of the Presidents. I spent nearly 3.00 dollars.

Sunday, Jan 16<sup>th</sup> – Morning cloudy, snowed a little; sun shone a little, wind blew and was a disagreeable day all around excepting the latter part of the afternoon. I read 114 pages of Frost's History U. S.

Monday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> – Commenced snowing in the morning. Snowed nearly all the forenoon and a little while in the afternoon. I worked sawing wood for Wm. Bolster nearly all day.

Tuesday, Jan 18<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant and fine. I attended a trial at Wm. W. Bolster's office. State of Maine vs. Cyrus H. Carleton, an action of larceny of money, by taking a letter from the office of a neighbor and losing it as he said. Not convicted.

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Dogs bark as they are bred.

Wednesday, Jan 19<sup>th</sup> 1859 – Forenoon cloudy also part of afternoon. Warm for the season. I sawed wood for Wm. W. Bolster in the forenoon. Helped Weeks pack apples in the afternoon and evening. There was a ball at the National House. There were something near 70 couples there, nearly half of them drunk. Earned .62.

Thursday, Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> – Very Pleasant, quite warm. I did but little work anywhere or much else. I paid Eustis and Stanley .62 cents on account. Bought 3.60.

Friday, Jan 21<sup>st</sup> 1859 – Commenced raining in the morning and has rained all day and is raining now (evening ½ past eight). I read newspapers and played checkers almost all the time through the day. I read in the evening 20 pages. History of U. S. by John Frost.

Saturday, Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> – Pleasant, fine and warm until night when it grew cooler and at nine o'clock was quite cool. I did no work. Humphrey Eustis, Charles Stanley and myself played something in the shape of music. In the evening we disbanded the Dixfield brass band by consent of parties. And made preliminary arrangement for the organization of another.

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A begun turn is half ended.

Sunday, Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> – Cold, but pleasant. I read in Kent's Commentaries 39 pages. I sold 11 copies of the Tribune Almanac. My wife made a great fuss because she could not go home to her mother's and shed some tears –

Mon, June 24<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant but cool, thermometer 15 below 0. I read as above 29 pages on marriage and divorce in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volume of Kent.

Tuesday, Jan 25 – Morning cloudy and cold. Last night went to a temperance lecture, delivered by one Mr. Colby of Rhode Island. I read 41 pages.

Wednesday, Jan 26<sup>th</sup> – Warm where the wind did not blow. I went with Mr. Wm. A. Pidgin over the eastern part of this town and we together obtained 13 subscribers for the Oxford Democrat of which he is publisher.

Thursday, Jan 27<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and warm. I went with Mr. Pidgin through a portion of Mexico. Obtained 3 subscribers in the forenoon and 3 in the afternoon.

Friday, Jan 28<sup>th</sup> – During the night it snowed. It snowed in the morning when I got up and snowed until night. I did no work but read a little. Played for a few, to dance, at night.

Saturday, Jan 29<sup>th</sup> – Morning, raining when I go up and continued raining until noon – afternoon cloudy. I read 31 pages.

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A bad workman quarrels with his tools.

Sunday, Jan 30<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and warm. I read 70 pages in Young's Political History of the United States.

Monday, Jan 31<sup>st</sup> – Warm and pleasant. I worked with Freeman Griffith sawing wood, did not labor too hard. I read 23 pages.

Tuesday, Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 1859 – Pleasant and comfortably warm. I sold for Huntress in Mexico his household goods at auction.

Wednesday, Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> – Pleasant and comfortably warm. I shelled 2 bushel of corn – which I bought of D. P. Stowell. No more work.

Thursday, Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> – Snowed all day. The wind blew some part of the time. I sent to A. J. Williamson one dollar and fifty cents for the New York weekly. Loafed.

Friday, Feb 4<sup>th</sup> 1859 – Pleasant and comfortably warm. I did no work of any consequence.

Saturday, Feb 5<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant and warm. I thrashed and winnowed beans. I read any amount of newspaper matter and \_\_\_ pages of \_\_\_\_.

Sunday, Feb 6 1859 – Morning cloudy, part of the day pleasant. I read the papers and \_\_\_\_ pages from \_\_\_\_\_. Wrote some on the political questions of the day.

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A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Monday, Feb 7<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and warm. I sawed wood for Eustis and Stanley.

Tuesday, Feb 8<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and warm. Virgin, Chapman and others were here. Rose and Chapman had a suite at law, regarding note. I rec'd book from Lloyd (DeSoto's life) read in it 73 p.

Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> – Rained nearly all day, was raining at 9 o'clock P.M. I read pages (DeSoto's). Did no work, as for many days previous.

Thursday, Feb 10<sup>th</sup> – Warm and pleasant through the day, at night windy and cold.

Friday, Feb 11<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and cool. I sawed some wood for Eustis and Stanley.

Saturday, Feb 12<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and cool. I helped Albert Hines handle ash timber part of the day. And sawed wood part of the time. Read.

Sunday, Feb 13<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and cool. This is the anniversary of my commencing keeping house, having commenced one year before. I found by adding to together the costs for expenses that the whole was \$170.85. I read \_\_ pages. "Life of DeSoto." Elder Bates preached here. I did not attend meeting. I have not attended meeting but once or twice for nearly two years.

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A bit is often better given than eaten.

Monday, Feb 14<sup>th</sup> 1859 – Pleasant and comfortably warm. I finished sawing Eustis and Stanley's wood.

Tuesday, Feb 15<sup>th</sup> – Most of the day stormy. I went with Henry Trask to Weld.

Wednesday, Feb 16<sup>th</sup> – I sawed wood for Wm. W. Bolster in the forenoon. Last night my cousin Henrietta Perry of Brunswick came here. Tuesday was pleasant and very warm – for the season. Tuesday morning Joseph Barden started for Californian and Orvil Huntress for Kansas.

Thursday, Feb 17<sup>th</sup> – This and yesterday were the days on which they had a horse trot at Canton Point. Weather fine. Worked part of the day for Bolster.

Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> – Snowed nearly all day. I sawed a little wood for Freeman and Griffiths.

Saturday, Feb 19<sup>th</sup> – Horse trot at Peru. I went over with Sam White. Fine and warm.

Sunday, Feb 20<sup>th</sup> – Rained a little quite warm. I read 30 pages. Wrote a number of letters besides newspaper reading.

Monday, Feb 21<sup>st</sup> – Cold, windy and squally. Marshall White hauled wood with me from Leavitts.

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A burden which one chooses is not felt.

Tuesday, Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> – Quite windy and cool, but pleasant. I worked for Nelson Rose hauling wood from the tannery building. Read yesterday 78 pages.

Wednesday, Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> – Pleasant and warm. I worked for Bolster part of the forenoon. Afternoon for A. W. Griffith.

Thursday, Feb 24<sup>th</sup> – Morning snowy, afternoon quite pleasant but windy. Worked for Amos Griffith.

Friday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup> – Cool but pleasant. I played for a dance at Mexico Corner at night. In the forenoon Nelson Rose and I went on to the Mann Hill Farm. I talked of taking it on shares.

Saturday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup> – Stormy and snowed a large part of the day. I went to Mexico Corner with Ripley after a horse blanket. I left the night before.

Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant and warm. Bates preached here. I read a good amount of paper.

Monday, Feb 28<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant but cold. I sawed wood for Wm. W. Bolster and Griffith.

Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> – Pleasant, cold. Squally &c. I went with Calvin Rose up to Ayers and drove home alone.

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A clear conscience fears no accuser.

Wednesday, 2 March 1859 – Last night the ladies of the Universalist Society had their antiquarian supper. Pleasant but cool. Had the headache.

Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Cool but quite pleasant until late in the afternoon when it clouded up and in the evening commenced snowing. I sawed wood for Wm. W. Bolster.

Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> – Morning, snowing – snowed all afternoon. I sawed wood for Freeman Griffith.

Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> – Snowed a damp snow nearly all day. Stephen Griffith and wife and Lovina Childs spent the afternoon and evening at my house. John Jackson and wife entered into an arrangement for divorce.

Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup> – I attended church all day. Mr. Nichols from Boston preached – evening ditto.

Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup> – very pleasant until evening when it snowed. Went to town meeting with Tyler Kidder, there remained with him until four o'clock PM when we started for Paris where we arrived at 8 o'clock.

Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> – Snowing and windy, assumed the duties of Crier at the Courts, having previously been appointed to that position by Joseph Colby, Sheriff for the County of Oxford.

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A contented mind is a continual feast.

Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> – One trial went to the jury. Records vs. Farrar on a note left for collection. Verdict for defendant 20.40. Walton vs. Andrews – Seth Lampson, atty.

Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant – At Paris, case at trial – one of malpractice – broken arm. Bicknell vs. Russell. Walton vs. Andrews. Howard & McClelland, referred after the evidence had been given to Doctors Brown & Bates – verdict amounted to the same as \_\_\_\_ of neither party. [probably Joseph Howard, Jr.]

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant until evening then cloudy. At Paris, Samuel P. Benson vs. Ephraim Lowe. O'Donnell & Howard & Walton & Howard. Continued on Report next Wait vs. Reed. Bolster and Walton and Winter. Evidence given and then referred to Washburn. Next Kilgore vs. Swift. Harmon & Gibson, Walton. After the testimony was given referred to the Court. Next Brown vs. Swift. Disposed of as above. Verdict for plaintiff. [probably Joseph Howard, Jr., Charles W. Walton, Wm. W. Bolster, Elisha Winter]

Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> – Rainy at Paris. In trial. Inhabitants of Porter vs. Bondsmen of the town – Collector. Carried up on report. Called the new docket. Next, Frye vs C. S. Chase. Gibson & Bolster. Verdict by the \_\_\_\_.

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A drowning man will catch at a straw.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> cont. – Court for the plaintiff. Next case of replevin – Cole vs. McDonald. Ayers & Wedgewood and Harmon. Case went to jury. Adjourned until 10 o'clock Monday.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant. Attended church in the forenoon and heard Mr. Ventris, Free will Baptist. After at the Court house and heard Rev. Mr. Snow. Universalist.

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> – Received the verdict in the last case. For plaintiff. Next case of stabbing. Fox vs. Weeks. County Att. & Jameson. Convicted, sentence 60 days in County jail. Next Redd vs. Mitchell. County Att. & Bolster. Verdict guilty. Fine 10 dollars of cost. Next action of Grover Rawson vs. Snell. Rawson & Gibson carried up on report. Weather pleasant and warm.

Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> – Rained nearly all day. First case. Reed vs. Jackson. Howard and Rawson and Walton & Bolster. Jury \_\_\_\_\_. Next Fuller vs. Clark. Trespass. Howard & Ludden & Walton. Heard the testimony and then adjourned. [probably Levi Ludden]

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Cloudy and Windy. Howard and Walton made their pleas and the case went to the jury. Verdict not guilty. Next Bethel Road case. Harmon & Gibson. Frye & Howard. Carried upon report. Gilbert vs. Grover. Andrews & Rawson. After hearing evidence agreed to [probably William Frye, George W. Andrews]

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Adversity flattereth no man.

Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> [cont.] – enter neither party. Next admitted on motion of Wm. K. Kimball. W. Bryant to practice in all the Courts of the State. Next case of trespass. James W. Barker vs. Albert D. White. Harmon & Andrews. Defaulted after the evidence had been given in.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant and warm until afternoon when it was cloudy. The forenoon spent in showing papers and hearing evidence with regard to South Paris Manufacturing Co. Carried up on report. The Court announced the death of Timothy Ludden to have taken place yesterday morning (Wednesday). Next an action of Grover Turner vs. Beals. Harlow & Walton. Verdict for plaintiff 8.10. Next Nevers vs. Nevers. Harlow & Hastings. Walton & Haskell. Verdict for defendant. [probably Elbridge Gerry Harlow, David R. Hastings]

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> – Cloudy in the morning. Court came in at ½ past 8 o'clock. Reviewed the docket and adjourned at 10 o'clock at ½ past 10. I started for home on foot, commenced raining soon after and rained all day. I walked all the way home (a distance of 20 miles) except about 3 ½ miles ride picked up on the road. I arrived at home at 6 o'clock, very tired and wet.

Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> – at home with my wife and boy. Rained a little during the day but most of the time it was pleasant.

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A fault confessed is half redeemed.

Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> of March – Rather cloudy, quite windy and cool. Rev. Mr. Nichols preached here in the Universalist meeting house. Their protracted meeting having continued for the past three weeks. All the lawyers wives (Mrs. Winters, Stowell, and Bolster being three) except Mrs. Randall have gone forward for prayers. Some comments have been made and quite an interest manifested in the cause of religion by the people generally connected with the Methodist and Congregational Church. Wife and I went to meeting in the afternoon and evening.

Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> – Pleasant and warm – worked at home sawing wood. Made and signed the papers with Nelson Rose about the farm.

Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> – Very pleasant, sawed wood at home and for Wm. W. Bolster. Commenced snowing at night.

Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> – Snowed a little during the greater part of the day. I sawed wood at home in the forenoon and went to Peru after Rose's oxen in the afternoon. Crossed the river at Aldens, the ice being very weak.

Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> – Morning very pleasant. Towards night it commenced snowing a very wet snow. Forenoon sawed wood at home. Afternoon fixed the yoke for the oxen Rose bought to put on the Mann farm.

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A fool can easily make money; it requires a wise man to keep it.

Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> – Snowed all day. Evening (9 o'clock all starlight. I sawed wood for mother part of the day. Ann and Margaret Foster spent the afternoon and evening at my home.

Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> – Part of the day pleasant, sometimes cloudy, rained at night. I and C. Rose started with oxen for the Mann farm and broke the road from D. B. Austin's down to the brook – lost our courage and left for home.

Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> – Quite warm and pleasant. I read considerable. Smoked a good deal &t.

Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> – Very pleasant. Sawed wood at home.

Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> – Rained very hard nearly all day and in the evening harder then and at any time during the day. Charles Stanley left for Lowell. I sawed wood. Split wood &c at home. Hauled one load of wood to Burnham. The ice had become very soft and rotten in the River.

Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> – Pleasant all day. A little cooler than for the few days previous. Finished splitting and hauling Burnhams, the wood he bought of me. Helped make soap, went up and got 5 hens of Deborah Brook and 6 of Cyrus Newton for which I paid \$2.75. The ice broke up and went out of the river so that they put in boats at the Huntress ferry. Loaded goods to go on to Mann Hill.

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A fool and his money are soon parted.

Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> – Pleasant and windy. I hauled a load of goods as far as D. B. Austin's. I put them in the school house near there. I looked over the road and found it impossible to get up the hill to the house.

Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 1859 – One of the most windy days I ever saw. I puttered around getting ready to move.

Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Pleasant but windy and cool. I packed my goods (household furniture) loaded them and started for Mann Hill about 10 o'clock AM. Got Stowell with his oxen to help me over the bare ground up to the Huntress ferry, hauled my load with hard pulling up to the top of the due [?] way hill (so called) left it there and went up and got John Babcock's steers. Drove them back and put them on and hauled my load up to the hill beyond Babcock's barn, when his steers swung around and broke my sled tongue. Babcock let me have his sled and helped me reload and haul my load up the Mason Wilson Hill with my own oxen. I then hauled my load up to the road that leads to Sewall Ayers. There I was met by Ayers with 2 yoke of steers and by Whitman with 2 yoke more, they having been sent to my aid by Nelson Rose who had gone ahead with my wife up as far as Ayers. By dint of hard labor and perseverance we after

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A friend in need is a friend indeed.

much trouble arrived at Mann Hill house. Ayers stopped and helped me unload. Set up the stove, &c. I built up a fire and then with Ayers went down to his house where with my wife and child I took supper. After supper I took the boy in my arms and started for the pinnacle, Ellen bringing up the rear. Before we arrived there we were both quite tired. We finally got there, looked over the house, dried our feet, built a bed on the floor and retired.

Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> - First day on Mann Hill. Stormy and blew. Early in the morning before Ayers was up, I was down to the foot of his pasture with oxen and sled after a few goods and a box of hens which we left yesterday. Got them loaded and hauled them up without any trouble. Ate the first meal, set up a bed and helped clean house nearly all day except while I went about 11 o'clock with the oxen and sled down to the foot of the hill towards D. B. Austin's. Found that I could not get through with the teams and got D. B. Austin to help bring up to the sled some goods which we needed that I had left in the school house there. Had good luck and safely got back to the house, washed floors, &c, &c, &c.

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A good layer up is a good layer down.

Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> – Part of the day was pleasant, part snowed, at night the wind blew a tempest. I went to Dixfield, got Ayers boy William to go with me, took oxen down as far as Babcock's with his sled and hauled back. Rose's from Babcock's went on foot. Took dinner at mother's, bought a good many articles of food, &c, &c. The boy drove up Rose's speckled cow. Rose took his horse and brought me up to Babcock's where I put my things on his sled, put on the oxen and came home where I arrived about 4 o'clock.

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Very windy and cool. Went with the oxen down to the school house, put on the things I had there, borrowed an inch auger of Austin and started for the pinnacle, got \_\_\_\_\_ and took part of my load and came right along. Tapped 16 trees and many other things. James Richards and Ayers were both at my house during the day.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> – Got up at 5 o'clock, sawed some wood, tapped 6 trees. Shoveled manure out of part of the lean to into the outer part near the door. Got nearly 2 quarts of maple syrup.

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Typed on October 12, 2003 by Peter R. Stowell

This document is a typed transcription of a copy of diary excerpt of Henry W. Park, hand transcribed by Teresa Picard, charter member of the Rumford Historical Society, no date. Errors are due to illegible text.

[This newspaper article first appeared in the Boston Daily Globe, Sunday, July 20, 1890 and was copied and typed by Richard J. Muzzrole, from microfilm in the Boston Public Library, March 1989. It was obtained from the Internet by Peter R. Stowell on October 10, 2003.]

### **Mayor Park of Mexico Corner**

Etched by a Globe Man

Only a schoolhouse, post office, saw-mill, grocery store, blacksmith's shop and a half dozen houses has Mexico Corner down in Maine, yet it has a mayor.

Mexico Corner is in Oxford County, and it's the chief center of a region that is but a howling wilderness. In appearance Mexico Corner is not unlike any other place of its size, but the characteristics of the people are indeed unique. Because a mayor seems to them to be a necessity, it does not imply that they are an ungovernable people and need a ruler. On the contrary, they are peace-loving and law-abiding citizens and their loyalty to one another is remarkable.

Yes, they have a mayor; Henry W. Park is his name. Mr. Park has served the longest term of any other mayor in the United States, it being over 25 years since he took the office. Mr. Park was not elected as mayors are generally, for Mexico Corner is not known in the statutes as a city. Mr. Park did not suffer the many annoyances and trials of a hotly contested election-lucky man as have all other mayors, but he had an easy time of it while winning the honor.

One cold winter's night over 25 years ago, the entire population of Mexico Corner assembled in Mr. Park's store to await the arrival of the stage bearing the mails. After they had made themselves comfortable by seating themselves on the counter and cracker barrels, one of the leading citizens called Mr. Park to the front and, in a neat little speech, informed him that after due consideration and a good deal of "thinkin on't they had decided not only to recognize him as postmaster, chairman of the selectmen and school committee, justice of the peace, town treasurer, constable, pound keeper, town clerk, tax collector and general provider for Mexico Corner, but they had such a high opinion of his executive abilities that they wished him to accept the additional office of mayor.

Ever since that night Mr. Parks has been known as "Mayor Park," and he bids fair to be mayor so long as he lives, as there are no signs of an aspiring candidate making his appearance.

Mexico Corner is the same today that it was 25 years ago. Mr. Park's administration has been a creditable one, and it is not his fault that the place is not now in reality a duly incorporated city and the capital of the State. Owing to the limited natural resources of the town no new industries have yet sprung up, and the population has not made any visible increase. All the residents of the town are "tillers of the soil" and everybody looks to Mayor Park to perform all marriage ceremonies, collect taxes, pay the town's debts, make all necessary arrests. In fact the mayor has to play the part of Pooh Bah to its utmost limit. He does it well, and enjoys it.

A few days ago I found Mayor Park in his field near his house seated upon a stump calmly whittling a stick and silently making calculations for his summer stock of general merchandise.

After extending to me a hearty greeting, he said, "Come up to dig good, I suppose? There's a lot of it up hear, no question about it. They've got to take their hats off to this wilderness yet.

"Why here is our blacksmith next door who is so enthusiastic over this gold discovery that he announces he will shoe anybody's horse gratis for the gold he gets out of the horse's hoofs, and he makes a good living, too."

"Yes," the Mayor said afterwards in reply to repeated personal questions, "my life has been a checkered one, and perhaps in a measure extraordinary. A full account would embrace the telling of many exploits. I do not care for great notoriety, but of course I am not absolutely unwilling to be come known outside of this hamlet. I was born in Dixfield, Me. My father was Isaac, son of Nathan and Sally (Ward) Park.

"The death of my father caused me to return to Maine and in 1859 I came here to Mexico, where I have since lived.

"Here I have been in trade nearly 30 years. I am now serving my 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year as town treasurer, and have held all the offices in our town. I have also represented this district in the Legislation.

"During the rebellion I was in the ordnance office at Washington. From my majority I have been a red hot Republican and have often thought I would just sit down and knock the false theories of The Globe into smithereens, but as I had little spare time and fearing I might possibly bite more than I could comfortable chew concluded to let the Globe continue benighted-unlearned as to the true faith.

“For many years I have been a regular correspondent for newspapers and magazines and I have a deep love for literary work. My business would not allow me to dabble with that much, however, therefore I could not lift myself from obscurity and place myself on the cap of fame’s dizzy heights.

“I have peddled piles of goods and kept out of want. I have an extensive acquaintance among the Masonic and Odd Fellow fraternities. I have a large family; my eldest son is a successful lawyer in Portland. My only brother, Rev. George M. Park of Presque Isle, Me., keeps up the Christian reputation of our race.

“I – well, I am not so good as I ought to be.”

“How about your being mayor of this place for such a long time?”

“Oh, well, “he said laughingly,“ I have to answer to the titles of mayor, professor, elder, esquire, deacon, brother, governor, and several others. I am one as much as another in the eyes of our people, I suppose.”

One of the mayor’s many stories is about an old farmer known as “Uncle Gammon.” Mr. Park had sold him several barrels of flower on a few days time, which was often quite extended, so that one day when he was a little cross, and Uncle Gammon wanted to purchase another barrel on the same terms, he said: “Now, Mr. Park, if you will sell me this ’ere barrel of flower I will pay you in a few days.” Mr. Park replied that he had sold him several barrels on those terms, and had been compelled to wait a long time for the pay, and that now he should like to know what he called a few days.

The store was full. Neither was “mealy mouthed” in their conversation, and their peculiar style of talk drew every one’s attention. Finally the roaring climax came when Uncle Gammon defined a few days in this way:

“Waal, Mr. Park, a man’s lifetime is a few days, and full of trouble.”

The mayor instantly remarked, “Uncle Gammon, you can have the flower.”

[The following biography of Mr. Henry W. Park was taken from the *Biographical Review, Leading Citizens of Franklin and Oxford Counties, Maine*, published in 1897 by the Biographical Review Publishing Company of Boston. – Peter Russell Stowell]

HENRY W. PARK, a prosperous merchant in the village of Mexico, Oxford County, Me., is widely and favorably known in these parts, having long been prominent, not only as a successful business man, but as a political leader in the Republican ranks and as one of the town officers. He was born in Dixfield, the town adjoining Mexico on the east, on March 13, 1834, son of Isaac and Emeline (Smith) Park.

Isaac Park was born at the residence of his parents, near the corner of Franklin Street, Boston, Mass. After attending school in that city until he was fourteen years of age, he went to Newton, Mass., to learn the trade of carpenter. Going with his employer soon after to Paris, Me., he there remained until the completion of his apprenticeship, when he removed to Dixfield, to work at his trade. He served as Captain of the old State militia, and officiated for nearly twenty years as Sheriff, being subsequently a member of the legislature. In politics he attained honor and distinction in the ranks of the democratic party. Captain Park was a public-spirited citizen and a man of liberal views, being in religion a Universalist. His busy career

was ended by death at the age of fifty-seven. His wife, Emeline, who shared his cheerful religious faith, was a daughter of John Smith of Readfield, Kennebec County, Me. She died at the home of her son, Henry W. Park on January 28, 1878, at the age of seventy-two years.

Henry W. Park was the eldest of the children born to his parents. He spent early life at home, attending the common school and later the high school in the village until the age of fifteen, and during the next three years being employed in his father's general merchandise store in Carthage, Franklin County, Me. When he was eighteen he went to Boston, there serving four years as salesman in a clothing house. After his father died he returned to Dixfield, and he worked at the carpenter's trade till 1859, when he came to Mexico, and rented a farm. The following year he moved to Mexico Corner, where he now resides. In March, 1861, Park purchased the store that he now owns, continuing in trade until the early part of 1864, when he sold out and went to Washington, D.C., where he served as clerk in Ordnance Department until the close of war. Returning to Mexico in July, 1865, he bought back his old store at the corner, revived his trade, which is now (1896) in flourishing condition.

In politics Mr. Park is a decided Republican, ever alive to party interests. His standing in the estimation of his fellow-citizens is shown by his frequent election to important offices. He has served as Crier of the Courts four years, Selectman of Mexico three years, Town Treasurer twenty-five consecutive years, and in 1875 he was Representative to the State legislature. He has been for twenty-one years a member of Blazing Star Lodge, No. 30, A. F. & A. M., of Rumford Falls; and he is a charter member of Tuscan Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, of Dixfield, which he named at the time of its organization. Besides being a store-keeper, Mr. Park is an active temperance worker and an able correspondent of the local papers. It is hardly needful to add that he has an extensive acquaintance and a large circle of excellent friends.

Mr. Park has been three times married. His first wife, Ellen R. Phelps, of Dixfield, with whom he was united in June, 1857, died in August, 1862, leaving two children – Albert Dexter, who is now Register of Probate for Oxford County; and Henrietta, who married John E. Richards, and resides here. His second wife, formerly Miss Ellen C. Reed, of this place, whom he wedded on July 3, 1865, died in January, 1875, leaving one son, Ellery C., who became a lawyer in Bethel, Me. The maiden name of his present wife, to whom he was married in August, 1875, was Emma L. Gleason. Four children have been born to them, namely: Helena O. and Lucy E., both of whom are teachers; and Henry W., Jr., and Eva Grace, who are still at home. Mrs. Park is a native of Mexico, Me.