

WILLIAM SAVAGE,
IOWA PIONEER, DIARIST, AND PAINTER OF BIRDS

(This is the diary of a naturalist and farmer who settled in the northeastern part of Van Buren County, Iowa, in 1855. Earlier installments appeared in the ANNALS of October, 1933, and January, 1934.)

[Continued from the January, 1934, number]

March 1, 1861. Sewing on said coat. Every indication of spring—prairie chickens blowing, woodcocks and wild geese and chewinks heard and seen.

2nd. To trap, and sewing on said coat. Heard frogs. Saw one duck on creek.

3rd. Sunday. To creek. Got said traps out and went to Carter bottom and home. H. and E. Steward here. L. Wells came and he and I went to creek and got traps and set them.

4th. Sewing on said coat.

5th. Sewing on same, and on pants.

6th. The same.

7th. Sewing, and chopped a load of wood.

8th. Mack and I hauled one load of wood, and I sewed. Thomas Siveter here. Finished said coat and pants.

9th. Thomas and I went to Salem with them and I came back at night. Thomas Savage here.

10th. Sunday. Thomas and I went to creek and to creek bottom and home. Then I went to creek east.

11th. Got potatoes out of cellar and sorted them, and took a few kidney [beans] to Sneath's and got some gooseberry bushes. Kill one possum. Anna &c. stayed at Wells's.

12th. Set out bushes and went to Wells's. Got spare ribs &c. Cut wood and haul and husk fodder. Then T. Savage and I went to Uncle William's. I shot two ducks, the first this spring. Stayed all night.

13th. Then went to Salem. Seven doz. eggs, 5 pr. dozen. Traded it out. Went to Dr. Siveter's and stayed all night.

14th. Went back to Uncle William's and from there home.

15th. Chopped wood in Dr.'s timber. Mack hauled one load, I one. Saw pigeon, the first.

16th. Mend Anna's shoe. Went to creek and set two d. f. [dead fall] traps, and home. Old cow had a calf, Fannie. I built a pen for it and made a pair bar posts. Ground froze so hard I could not set them.

17th. Sunday. We all went to Job Davis'.

18th. Prepared to kill hogs and went to get Job to help me. He not at home, then cut out a pair pants for Dr. Siveter and sewed some. Job came and we killed my two hogs. One weighed 151 and one 184.

19th. Cut up said hogs and Uncle William came here with his team

and took Anna and boys home with him. I went as far as John Coburn's with him.

20th. To trap, and sewing on said pants.

21st. On said pants. Samuel Siveter married Rachel Smith. Mack and I went to Wells's and fanned two sacks of wheat. Then hauled one load of wood and went to mill and got my meal and called the day even.

22nd. Grubbed some. Mack and I hauled one load of wood. I mended a shoe for A. Bennett, then commenced making a mat.

23rd. Finished said mat and made another. Grubbed some.

24th. Sunday. Mack Davis and I went with his team to Uncle William's. We brought Anna and the boys home. David Siveter here.

25th. Went part way home with David, then grubbed.

26th. Trap. Caught a mink. Then I went up on the prairie to William C. Morris' and he paid me \$4.10.

27th. Cut out David Siveter's pants. P. M., grub.

28th. Sewing on said pants.

29th. To trap. Brought my steel trap home, then finished said pants and mended my gray ones, and carry fodder.

30th. Intended to go to Salem, but had a stiff neck and did not. Sore throat and went to bed.

31st. Sunday. Sick in bed all day.

April 1, 1861. Monday. Some better. Throat very sore.

2nd. Some better. Kate had heifer calf, Jude. Sewed straps on my boots and grafted some small apple trees.

3rd. Went to Wells's and got some turpentine to put on Kate's head. Shot a meadow lark coming home. Not quite so well. Knit some on dip net splice.

4th. Went to Sigler's mill to try to get some flour. Did not get any, then finished my dip net. Thomas Siveter here. He and I went to creek fishing. Caught a good mess.

5th. T. and I went to Carter bottom. I shot 1 duck and 1 pigeon, then went to mill and caught a mess of fish, 1 pike 26 inches long.

6th. Shell 2 sacks of corn. Rainy day. Sewing on pair of pants T. Siveter brought here.

7th. Sunday. Thomas went home. Rain. L. Wells here.

8th. Sewing on Thomas' pants. P. M., fishing, caught some.

9th. Finished said pants, P. M., split 22 rails for self in big branch.

10th. Fishing. P. M., split 24 rails in Dr.'s woods.

11th. Split 10 rails and chop some wood, then carry fodder and husk it, and chop stove wood.

12th. Went to Salem. Took 3 mats. (1 mink skin and 1 possum skin, left them at Frank Woodruff's for Joe Frazier, received \$1.00 for them) and Thomas' pants, received 75 cts. Bought 2½ yds. calico and 6 yds. ticking (20 cts.). Sold 7½ doz. eggs. Left \$5.00 for Woodruff to send to bank to see if good, then went to Dr. Siveter's and stayed all night. War began in U. S. between North and South.

13th. Sewing some for Dr. and went to Uncle William's and stayed all night.

14th. Sunday. Came home. Bally been missing since Friday and old Peggy sick.

15th. Mrs. Brothers died. I hunted for Bally, could not find him. Came home and cut out 2 pairs pants for David Siveter.

16th. Cut out a vest for Sol Gill, 25 cts., then grub some and sewed on said pants.

17th. Fix lye leech, and grub, and commence making garden. Plant 13 rows of potatoes and 1 double row of peas, and 3 of dwarf peas. Job Davis said Bally was at his house.

18th. Went to Job's and drove Bally home, then grub.

19th. Sewing on Dr. Siveter's pants.

20th. Finish said pants and went to school to a meeting. It adjourned. Old Peggy died.

21st. Sunday. Buried said hog and we all went to Carter Island and caught a mess of fish.

22nd. I went to Salem with said pants and eggs and butter and home at night.

23rd. Rain and sewed some on Mack Davis' shirt. P. M., grubbed and went fishing.

24th. Grubbed.

25th. Went part way to Gill's after his cattle. Baily had them. Then grub.

26th. Grub, and sew some on Mack's red shirt.

27th. Finished said shirt, and got Gill's cattle and hauled up my corn fodder and plowed a piece of garden.

28th. Sunday. L. Wells here. He and I went to creek fishing, and Sneath and wife here.

29th. Went to Gill's shop with plow, then grub.

30th. Grub and went to Wells's.

May 1, 1861. Grub.

2nd. Fix one of my boots, and grub.

3rd. Burn brush.

4th. Burn brush and grub.

5th. Sunday. A. M., rain, P. M., L. Wells here. He and I went to Carter Island and caught a mess of fish and a woodchuck.

6th. Chopping of roots off poles, &c. Rainy.

7th. Grubbing.

8th. Went to Hillsboro and took 3½ lbs. butter. P. M., grub.

9th. Stuck peas and grub and burn brush.

10th. Went to Gill's. He was fixing my plow, then at 10 o'clock he commenced plowing my old ground.

11th. Had his cattle and Bub. He and I plowed.

12th. Sunday. Went to Uncle William's and back at night.

13th. Bub and I plowed.

- 14th. A. M., hauled poles and roots off new piece. P. M., plowing.
- 15th. Gill had his oxen and I grubbed some, and cut out coat and pants for William Davis. Caught a mess of fish.
- 16th. Had the oxen and plowed.
- 17th. Finished plowing my ground, old and new. At 3 o'clock went to Gills. Stopped and mended my harrow and I harrowed my new piece.
- 18th. A. M., help Job Davis plant corn. P. M., fishing with seine and dip net. I caught a pike in dip net, 6½ lbs. S. Gill came and took his pig, \$4.00, to pay for [work of] his oxen.
- 19th. Sunday. L. and R. Wells and Job Davis and I fishing with seine. Caught one large catfish and dipped some. Rain very hard.
- 20th. Shelled corn and cut coat and pants for G. C. Stephens, 50 cts., chd., and coat for J. Dohert, 30 [cts.], 10 [cts.] chd.
- 21st. Finished my wammus, then J. Mack Davis and I marked off part of my ground with his colts.
- 22nd. Mack and [I] finished said ground a little after noon, then I commenced planting my corn.
- 23rd. Walter and I planting corn.
- 24th. A. M., planting at home. P. M., help Mack Davis plant corn.
- 25th. William Weaver, Sr., died. Went to Job E. Davis' and got 100 cabbage plants, dug ground and set them out, then plant sorgo, water-melons and cucumbers. David Siveter came here and we went fishing some.
- 26th. Sunday. Hoe garden, and D[avid] and I fishing P. M., stayed home. D. went home.
- 27th. Finished planting my corn, watermelons and mam. pumpkins.
- 28th. Went to Hillsboro, sold 7½ lbs. butter, 8 cts. Borrowed Simon's sheep shears and sheared four of my sheep. Rainy. Fishing.
- 29th. Sheared other four sheep and took shears home and went to Well's. Planted my potatoes and stick some peas.
- 30th. Mend my boot and Anna's shoe, and cut out a pair of pants for Mack Davis. Anna went to Sneath's on a visit.
- 31st. Made said pants, 75 cts. Locusts appear. Spade some garden.
- June 1, 1861. Sprout stumps in field, stick peas, and spade garden for tomatoes. R. Wells came here and we went fishing. Rainy.
- 2nd. Sunday. Fishing, swimming and pick strawberries.
- 3rd. Went to Wells's helped him sprout potatoes. He gave me 1½ bushels. Then I sewed on my tick pants.
- 4th. Finished said pants, then cut a hoop pole and found a small cowbell. Hoop washtub and went to creek and got a sack full of butter nut bark. Went to mill and got a sack of meal.
- 5th. Help Job Davis plant corn.
- 6th. Work for Sol Gill clearing.
- 7th. & 8th., work on road. Received letter from John Wetsell.
- 9th. Sunday. Went to Uncle William's and back in evening. Service berry Sunday and strawberries ripe.

10th. Went to Hillsboro, took 4½ lbs. butter, 6 cts. Fixed boot. Bees swarmed. Hived them, and then grubbed.

11th. Grubbed. Locusts innumerable—have done no mischief yet.

12th, also 13th, grubbed. I discover said locusts suck the sap of trees, also bore holes in them this shape [shape of an inverted "V"], and lay their eggs in them.

14th. Plow corn for Job Davis.

15th. A. M., plowing for Job. P. M., to Hillsboro mustering. Thomas Savage came here.

16th. Sunday. Sneath and wife here, then T. and I went fishing.

17th. Grubbed and we went fishing.

18th. Made pole fence by cow yard, and swim.

19th. Went to Gill's shop and got my shovel plow, a wrench and a small clevice fixed. I helped Gill put the tires on two wheels. He charged me 20 cts. Baled. P. M., picked wool and T. and I went to Wells's.

20th. Had Mack Davis horse and plowed corn, Tom went home.

21st. Plow corn.

22nd. Finished plowing corn one way at 10 A. M. Dug out hole and spring. Coming from said spring saw Job Davis' house was burnt nearly to the ground. I went there and stayed till eve.

23rd. Sunday. L. Wells, Newton Stanley and I went service berrying and swimming then home.

24th. Shell corn and take it to mill. Grub some in buckwheat ground.

25th. Had Mack's horses and plowed corn. Rain in evening.

26th. Plowing corn.

27th. Rain. Shell corn and go to mill and cover my buckwheat with hoe.

28th. Hoed sorgo and Mack and I went to mill.

29th. Went to Widow Weaver's sale. P. M., finished plowing my corn.

30th. Sunday. L. and R. Wells, James Stanley and I went to creek east, fish and swim.

July 1, 1861. Helped Job Davis cut his rye.

2nd. The same. at two bushels per day for pay.

3rd. Went on prairie and mowed grass for William C. Morris.

July 4th, 1861. L. Wells and I went to Hillsboro celebration. Quite a large crowd of people there, three companies drilling.

5th, also the 6th. harvesting for William and George Morris.

7th. Sunday. Went to mill pond and swimming, then shot and portrayed a bird—yellow breasted chat.

8th. Harvesting fall wheat for William Morris.

9th. A. M., mow grass for W. M. P. M., in George's fall wheat, and the 10th the same.

11th. Came home and hoed my sorgo.

[To be continued]

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