

Westford Recollections

by June W. Kennedy

Emma M. Day's Diary--1871

As a conclusion to Emma M. Day's Diaries let us turn to the homely day to day accounts of the lifestyle she and her husband, Warren, encountered at their homestead located at the junction of Cold Spring and Graniteville Roads.

ALL IN A WEEK'S WORK

Mon., May 22, 1871 Fair. Mother got breakfast and done up the work. Warren churned. I washed, got done at noon. Had a heaping crowded basket full. Did up all the dishes. Got potatoes to boil for pigs and washed three sheaves (milk) made both beds and fixed up the room. Worked on Quincy's stockings, done and cut Ada out a pair.

Tues., May 23: I scum milk, washed all dishes and pans, fed chickens and swept and moved things in back chamber and did all but wash the floor. I helped get dinner, wiped dishes. Mother made soap. I got several pails of water. Mrs. Cummings called. Uncle Amos helped Warren plough and was here to dinner.

Wed., May 24: I helped do up the work. Warren and Mother went over to Uncle Amos's. I did my large ironing, fed pigs and gresed chickens 24 2 hens. Warren and Mother got home about six. I got Quincy's stockings done and cut Ada out a pair.

Thurs., May 25: I did not get up till breakfast was ready. I went to bed as soon as I got the children to bed. I never went to sleep till eleven and then did not sleep much till after two. I helped do up the work and mended two pair of stockings. Warren went to Lowell. I fed the hogs and pigs and sewed little. Mancy and Harriet and Mrs. Abbot and Sam Smith's wife called at the door. Mother went to prayer meeting.

Fri., May 26: Mother and I did up the work and then took out the things under the chamber stairs and washed it. I cleaned and washed lamp and lantern. Helped get dinner. Uncle Ell worked here today. Ann Snow called before I got the things back in closet. Daniel Hayden came after more potatoes. I finished a pair of stockings for Ada, washed the children's feet and legs and 3 pair of stockings. I cleaned out all the ashes I could get in house and carried out most two bushels to barn cellar.

Sat., May 27: Fair. I helped get breakfast, scum milk, washed pans, fed chickens, give the hog a lunch, sifted 25 lbs. of flour 4 times. Mixed hasfords powder with it, then sifted 31

lbs. We owe mother for 19 lbs. We made gingerbread and pies and cut potatoes. Picked over apples. Eldridge went home little after five and I went out and dropped corn so Warren could finish the piece below the well, wont I tired. Fed chickens and pigs a lunch, mended Q's apron, washed both children and mended till most eleven. And did I ache, and washed two pair of stockings.

ANOTHER WEEK'S WORK

Sun., Nov. 12, 1871: Fair. We all went to church. Ada staid to sabbath school. We went in the sleigh P.M. It went very nice. We came home at night by Mr. Cooledge. Had a nice ride. W. went down to Mr. Sherman's to offer to carry him out to ride but he was not able so he took wife. He went round and through town and home by here.

Mon., Nov. 13: Fair. My birthday. We did not get up quite as early but had to eat by lamp light. I had hash and made rye fritters. Got my carrots washed and grated and churned little scum milk, made two loaves of bread (rye), took out the butter, weighed the salt and W. worked it in for me. W. and the children went up in town and Uncle Porter's to carry his harness pan home. I had dinner all ready for them when they got home. Had liver. After we got the dishes done, W. and I worked and did up 10 lb. and 3/4 of butter. W. spat 7 of them first rate. Mrs. Cummings called.

Tues., Nov. 14: Cloudy and cold. I got my breakfast, scum milk and Warren carried most 14 qts. over to Graniteville. I washed, Warren helped me some after he got home. I did not get cleaned up before noon but swept all through and washed round stove and swill barrel, blacked my stove little, made white bread and liked to bake it all on the top of the stove. Had biscuits for dinner. Uncle Amos and Lizzie called. Knit little and mended Warren's Kentucky Jane pants lots.

Wed., Nov. 15 Very rainy indeed. I had beans and hash for breakfast, scum my milk, washed pans and large dishes and Ada did the rest. I did my ironing, got done before noon. I finished a pair of drawers for W and mended a pair for Q. Made bread again today and knit little. Warren went up in town, carried some milk. Ada has sewed lots today.

Thurs., Nov. 16: Dull and warisome. I made Ada's trimming skirt longer and tucked it and stitched on Quincy's waist.

Fri., Nov. 17: Fair. I did up my work, brushed all the shelves in buttery and put all



EMMA AND WARREN DAY as they appeared in the "middle years" of their married life - back when long skirts, beards and boots were in vogue! (Photo: Courtesy of First Parish Church United of Westford)

things back. Put up W's milk for him to peddle over to Graniteville and when he got back I thought we all might go to Lowell so I fixed up and got down there just before noon. Nancy had her dinner most ready. We stopped then took Quincy and went down, then went to see Dr. T for his eye. Got Mother's picture \$4.00 and

my hair, \$2.25. We did not get home till dark. W. got his new harness.

Sat., Nov. 18: Beautiful. I feel very tired. W. churned after we got home from Lowell and cut up pumpkin and stewed and had to churn twice and did not get to bed till half past eleven. Did my head ache and I felt so bad to

my stomach. W. worked in the salt this morn and washed and churn scum milk, made two loaves of brown bread, got beans ready to bake, made 8 pies, swept, filled lamps, done up my hair and put on my curls. W. went to an auction. W. killed a rooster and I dressed it.

And so much for the good 'ole days here in Westford!