

## Diary of William Owen, 10 Nov. 1824 – 20 Apr. 1825.

Ed. Joel W Hiatt, 1906. Notes by J Hatton Davidson, 2004

- 10 Nov. Robert Owen, Capt. McDonald and William Owen sail up Hudson from New York on "Hudson" steamboat.
- 11 Nov. Arrive Albany, carriage to Wiskeyana for Shaker settlement at Water-which. All happy and contented.
- 13 Nov. Sail down Hudson on "Keat" – very large double-decked steamboat to New Burg.
- 15 Nov. Cross Hudson to Watleswan spinning establishment – neat roving frame, two mules. Then Glanham woollen factory. Re-cross Hudson. By "Chancellor Livingston" to New York overnight.
- 16 Nov. Despatches to Mrs Owen and Robert Dale. Offers of estates.
- 17 Nov. To exhibition of woollens. Received letters from Hunter and Flower.
- 18 Nov. Steamboat "Bellona" to New Brunswick. Coach to Trenton.
- 19 Nov. 5 am Stage to steamer on Delaware to Philadelphia. Meet Hunter and Flower. Rapp will sell at New Year if R. Owen does not buy before.
- 21 Nov. R. Owen to Mme Fretageot. Impressions of a Quaker city. R.O. speaks at Franklin Institute.
- 23 Nov. By boat down Delaware to Newcastle and stage to Frenchtown where boarded fine steamboat to Baltimore.
- 25 Nov. Stage to Washington. Capitol by moonlight.
- 26 Nov. Scarcely a fitted-up street – houses a ¼ mile apart! Pennsylvania Av. – R.O. visits John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, and Crawford, Treasury Secretary. 1¼ mile wooden bridge over Potomac.
- 27 Nov. R.O. visits President [James Monroe] for ~ 1 hour. All meet "Council" of 9 or 10 Indians. R.O. wants all united – Indians to imitate whites. Hunter did not understand their language. Letter to Robert Dale.
- 28 Nov. Met first black slave – waiting on in Inn.
- 28-30 N. Drive to Cumberland.
  - 1 Dec. Stage to Washington, Pa.
  - 3 Dec. Mail to Pittsburg – smoky manufacturing town.
  - 4 Dec. Meet Mr [George] Rapp and three friends. To Economy, past steamboat "Wm. Penn", belonging to Rapp and Co. – awaiting engines. Several good frame houses finished. V. good Harmonie wine at supper. Mr. O. converses with Mr. R.
  - 5 Dec. Mr O. to Mr. R. on formation of character – R. agrees. R. had done as much at Harmonie "as he could both for himself and the neighbour-hood". Service – practical sermon from Mr. R. R. pleased with O.'s Plans. Carriage to Pittsburg.
  - 6 Dec. Steamboat – with high pressure steam engine of 70 - 80 hp. Cautiously down-river at 9 - 10 knots. Steam escapes filling vessel.
  - 7 Dec. Headache. Passed "Congress" aground. Two groundings. Mrs Drake breastfeeds.
  - 8 Dec. [Musing:] Mankind – if philosophers – never happy.
  - 9 Dec. Cincinnati – v. desirable residence.
  - 10 Dec. Louisville. Scotch mist. Dr Chase: Mr O.'s Plan feasible for effecting emancipation [of slaves].
  - 11-12 D. Louisville – of low morality? Thermometer 61°.
  - 13 Dec. To Shippingport for sternwheeler "Favorite". Refuel – 1 cord of timber lasts 1 hour. Load includes 47 slaves going down to be sold.
  - 14 Dec. High jinks burning down hollow tree.
  - 15 Dec. Evansville at noon. Night at Mount Vernon.
  - 16 Dec. Wagon to New Harmony [*sic?*] – steep little hills. Rolling land, soil becomes drier, sandier and lighter. Beech and ironwood to white (etc.) oak. First view of N.H. a mile away, on extensive bottom, cleared to undulating hills with vineyards. Fred. Rapp called after dinner. Keel boats and flat boats for N.H. produce. Description of town. Cotton mill with power looms, woollen mill with nap cutter. These two plus flour mill driven by steam engine (made by themselves). Orchards by labyrinth.
  - 17 Dec. View churches – new one unfinished. Greenhouse for oranges and lemons. Granary – flour, rye, corn. Distillery in SE quarter – two dogs work treadmill. Tame elk. Mr O. suggests improvements. Working of cotton [gin?] mill – powered by oxen on incline plane. Geo. Flower arrives.
  - 18 Dec. Cellars under Church and Rapp's house full of wine and cider. Grist mill 1 mile off on [river] Cut-off, with sandstone quarry nearby.

- 19 Dec. Church – F Rapp sermon from Isaiah re. millennium. Evening concert: 12 singers, piano, 2 violins, 2 flutes, bass.
- 20 Dec. Ferry across Wabash to large island, cross Fox River (a branch) to Mr Flower's Park House on edge of prairie.
- 22 Dec. Walk to Albion and Mr Pickering. Mr Flower's cotton gin. No comfort – dirty clothes.
- 23 Dec. Deer hunt with dogs – runs, but none caught.
- 24 Dec. Warrington's school at Albion. Heat oppressive! Musical party at Flower's plus Mr O.
- 25 Dec. Not a cloud in sky. Prairie fire - no wind. Owen riding in woods, dining on cold meat and Harmony wine, enjoying life v. much. Capabilities of Harmony please him increasingly. Thermometer rises usually to 96 or 98 – average 80 to 90.
- 26 Dec. Outdoor meeting – about 200 people to hear Mr O. for 2½ hours. All seemed pleased. (Still at Flower's).
- 27 Dec. Gradations of houses:– 1) Log with clay, no windows, wooden chimney, clapboard roof. 2) Smooth log and clay, glass windows, stone chimney, shingle roof. 3) Frame, weather-boarded, good windows, brick chimney, shingle roof. 4) Stone/brick, good windows, doors and chimneys. No. 2 most common. With hogs, no snakes. Almost all have [verandas]. Site of camp meeting. "G. Flower put on the boy's (Scotch) dress, and his sister the girl's. Much admired, but boy's dress considered too void of shame." Much game to shoot.
- 28 Dec. Rapp and O. converse much. Rapp's crops:– wheat average 25 bushels/ acre, rye 25, corn 75 in last 3 years. (In 1822, wheat 30 – one field 36.) Illinois wheat averages 15. Rapp gets ¼th of cotton ginned. Miss Rapp: about 18, pretty, good-humoured, ignorant.
- 29 Dec. O. inclined to purchase – including farm stock and 7,000 acres in Indiana and Illinois. Rapp returns to Harmony.
- 30 Dec. O. calls meeting re. improving lot of Albion inhabitants, esp. if he bought Harmony.
- 31 Dec. Back to Harmony. Spoke Rapp in evening. Land clearing at \$6 / acre.
- 1 Jan. Visited sheep pens – about 800 v. fine merinos, 15% to go to Economy. Climb hill by Cut-off, 250 feet high. O. decides on purchase.
- 2 Jan. Sorting details of purchase – taxes payable:- state 1 cent/acre, county ¼.
- 3 Jan. O. and R. sign each a paper with particulars of sale of Harmony.

Trip in keel boat – 6 rowers.

- 4 Jan. Continue 65 miles down river to R. Ohio. Night at Shawneetown.
- 5 Jan. By "Indiana" steamboat 2 miles up Wabash. Singing.
- 6 Jan. Wrote Robert Dale re. purchase of Harmony & proceedings & intentions.
- 7 Jan. Meet Rapp at Mt. Vernon. Back to Harmony.
- 8/9 Jan. Capt. McD. & W. compose systematic advertising: reception of families.
- 10 Jan. Visited cow-houses etc. Each family has its own milk-cows – ~1 cow to 3 people. State land division: 6 mile grid N-S and E-W into 36 sq. mile townships, subdivided into 1 sq. mile & quarters of 160 acres @ \$1.25 [/acre?] from state.
- 11 Jan. Visit engine house – engine v. well attended to, in good order.
- 13 Jan. We (two) rode to Albion. Mrs Washington teaching girls to make frocks.
- 14 Jan. Ennui.
- 15 Jan. Rode back to Harmony.
- 16 Jan. Dull – so little to interest mind.
- 17 Jan. To mill on Cut-off and cross dam to island. 2 wheat stones, 1 corn – needs "pretty water".
- 18 Jan. Oil mill – grinding linseed, then pressing it.
- 19 Jan. Weaving shops, tanner's shop, tannery, tallow chandlers and hatters. Visited Rapp and Dr Muller (schoolmaster).
- 20 Jan. We (two) rode to Springfield and Mr Schnee.
- 21 Jan. Back to Harmony. Chandler - 1,000 candles per day. Rope-maker – 6,000 lb / summer.
- 22 Jan. SW cow houses, smithy – 6 forges, brick kilns – where is furnace?
- 23 Jan. Spoke Muller re. education.
- 23/4 J. Beautiful days. Uninhabited log cabins in bad shape. Brewery – 500 gallons beer / 2 days. Distillery – 36 gallons / day. Carpentering few weeks to cut wood for log house.
- 25 Jan. Island capable of excellent pasturage.
- 26 Jan. Astronomised with Dr Muller and Miss Rapp – 3 of Jupiter's moons and 2 belts.
- 27 Jan. Measuring town.
- 28 Jan. Pottery, carpenter's shop & cooperage – 9 coopers, 2-3 barrels/ day/ cooper. Tin man self-taught.

- 29 Jan. Wrote mother.
- 31 Jan. Stocking weaver: 4 pairs/ weaver/ day (coarse, 1½ fine).
- 1 Feb. Dr Muller having printed notice for us – correcting the press.
- 3 Feb. Letter from Robert of 17 Oct.
- 4 Feb. Rode to Princeton (28 Miles).
- 5/6 Feb. To Vincennes (Mr Hay).
- 7 Feb. Largish town, dwindling population. Wrote Mr. O. with notice.
- 8 Feb. To Mr J. McIntosh, Scot, 40 years in U.S.
- 9 Feb. Capt. McD. and I slept together. Found the right Mr McIntosh, with black mistress & 3 children. Staid in room.
- 10 Feb. Rain. Stuck with Mr. I.
- 11 Feb. Rode to Mt. Carmel, to Princeton Road, eventually Harmony, v. tired.
- 12 Feb. Conversed with Mr G. Rapp, account of Owen's voyage and meeting at Pittsburg.
- 13 Feb. Letter from Mr O.
- 14 Feb. Carpenter's Shop.
- 15 Feb. Bought horse for \$60. Gave geography lesson to some of Muller's pupils.
- 16 Feb. Ordered saddle & bridle. Learnt German.
- 17 Feb. Harmonists' anniversary of society – united 20 years.
- 18-20 F. Received map from Rapp & coloured it. Inspecting all houses.
- 21 Feb. Two wolves seen.
- 22 Feb. On horseback for Albion and country dances.
- 23 Feb. Spoke Stewart re. prices at Natches. Female slave sold for \$400 – field slaves much less.
- 24 Feb. Return Harmony.
- 25-6 F. Writing "police report". Continue examining houses.
- 27 Feb. Harmonians' day out – band, Rapp reading account of Moravians on hill.
- 28 Feb. Houses continued.
- 1/2 M. On "police report". Continue houses. Capt. McD. unwell.
- 3 Mar. Pruning vines.
- 4 Mar. "Phoenix" steamboat being loaded with Harmony stuff. N.B. Germans: men kiss men only, women don't.
- 5/6 M. Continue houses. "Police Report".
- 9 Mar. Rode with Geo. Rapp 4 hours.
- 10 Mar. Brass foundry & vineyard. 3 applicants for community (half dozen previous).
- 11 Mar. Bought horse \$50. Dyehouse and granaries.
- 12 Mar. Cotton mills.
- 13 Mar. Spring appearing. Plowing for oats last week. Wheat stalk 15" long. Peach in blossom. Frogs & butterflies.
- 14 Mar. Digging & sowing tavern garden – v. hot work.
- 15 Mar. Long talk with Mr Rapp.
- 16/7 M. Tour of Island – only a v. small part under water. Grass for young cattle. "Wm. Penn" arrives – fine boat.
- 18 Mar. Steamboat sails with ~ 50 Harmonians.
- 19 Mar. Misses Wright arrived. Miss W. v. learned & fine woman, manners free & unusual, but pleasing & graceful. Improves on acquaintance.
- 20 Mar. Musical meeting in Church. Supper Rapps, more music.
- 21 Mar. Misses W. set out for Albion. Horse bargain cancelled.
- 22/3 M. So much peach blossom. "Enjoyment of a reformer is much more in contemplation than in reality." "One receives little pleasure from associating with [people] whom one thinks less intelligent & less correct in views of human nature." "Should not be disposed to promote formation of a society: doubt whether happiness of present generation will be increased." "Some months ago, anticipations of happiness were v. flattering." No letter yet from father since he left Louisville. Hear 2 public meetings at Washington were v. well attended by all the first people.
- 25 Mar. G. Flower from Albion, says Miss W. v. interested in system.
- 26/7 M. "Wm. Penn" arrives in 35 hours from Louisville.
- 28 Mar. "Wm. Penn" sets out with ~130 Harmonians.
- 29/30 M. Rapp: "Marriage not forbidden amongst them, but expect Christ to appear soon, must be prepared to meet him in a fit state – no sensual pleasures."
- 1 Apr. Good Friday, v. holy for Harmony.

3 Apr. My father at Cincinnati a few days ago.  
5/6 Apr. Sheep shearing – 25 young women, ~11 sheep/ day.  
7/8 Apr. Visit new settlers (2 families?).  
9 Apr. Steamboat “Ploughboy” arrives.  
10 Apr. Store inventory.  
13 Apr. 1 pm: Father arrives by wagon, v. well. Notices of meeting this day week.  
15-17 A. Store continued.  
18-20 A. Many arrive from Albion etc.

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