

ALEXANDER BICKERTON EDMISON (1839–1863)

1856–1858

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DIARY OF ALEXANDER BICKERTON EDMISON

Microfilmed by ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS AND ARCHIVES

September 1959

Alexander Bickerton Edmison was born on 17 January 1839 and died 13 July 1863. The diary which follows was apparently started by him about the middle of 1856, but the part which has been preserved covers only the period from the end of December 1856 to 16 November 1859. Although it was not by any means entered daily, it gives a fairly detailed account of his life as a school teacher, his efforts to improve his education, and his ambitions for the future.

The diary has been lent to the Archives for microfilming by Mr J. A. Edmison of Ottawa, who states that the writer "apparently achieved a very good local reputation. As a teacher before his early death, and was given a post of responsibility in Peterborough by Egerton Ryerson." (Letter of 7 August 1959 to Mr. Edwin C. Guillet).

This is the diary of Alexander Edmison, eldest son of Thomas H Edmison.

Sitting around the stove starving and I can't help it. Let them starve, they are not my children. I can stand the cold. What an abominable profession is school teaching. I hate it as I hate the devil. There is a good sized girl at school to day I think she would make me a pretty little-wife.

28 December {1856}

To day I engaged for a year to teach at my old Scholl house. Salary £75.

1st January 1857

It is now a few minutes past 12. I have been at the watch meeting and have Just got home. I spent last night with Mr Lyons. It was three Oclock before we fell asleep. Just 12 months ago I was sitting in Fishers Barroom. How quickly has the last 12 months, slipped away and with how little improvement. The first two months of the year I was at the Union School. The next two and a half I was at home working: the next 2 1/2 I was at the Normal School and the last five months I have been here. On the whole, I have spent the year poorly. Another year is now opened before me and it is my firm determination to spend it better than the past year. May God Almighty help me and enable me so to do.

8th January

This is my last day in this section. There are only 10 pupils present. It is intensely cold. The fire gives no heat.

9th January 1857 Friday, My father came up to Madills for me yesterday. When we got as far as Boyces, I jumped off, went in and staid all night. I got home to day at noon. I commence to teach on Monday. I am right glad that I am done with Section no 7. I have been there five months and taught faithfully and done my duty but yet not pleased the people. My name at present stands low as a teacher. I must exert myself to the utmost to raise it.

18th January "Sunday". On Friday night Mr Pritchard and I went out to his Mother's. We came home Yesterday morning. It was a terrible Journey. Yesterday was my 18th Birthday. I think I will remember it.

25th January "Sunday". I received my money from School Trustees of Section No 7. Yesterday After paying my board I have £30/15.

1st February "Sunday". I was in town last night and bought a watch for which I paid 15 dollars.

17th February "Tuesday". Last Wednesday I was at Peter Miller's wake and sat up till six in the morning. Last Friday night I was in town. James Dison {Dixon}, George Edmison and I did a curious thing. Last saturday night I was at the fortune tellers.

8th March Sunday. Last Tuesday, the board of Education sat. I appeared at the examination And took out a first class certificate

3rd of April 1857, Sunday. I was at the Division room in town last Tuesday night. Last night I was at the Fortune Tellers and took a young lady in with me. My thoughts to day have been centered on the fair object I took last night to the fortune teller's.

21st April. Yesterday I was at the funeral of the late. Mr Thomas Robinson. five years ago, I attended his school. It was with him I first commenced to learn.

27th Saturday night at the, {Band of..?}{rest of sentence is blanked out}

I have three months to put in where my engagement with this section is out, and, from the present state of my mind, I prophesy that I will make more improvement during that time, than I have for the past fourteen months, "the Intellectual," the form, which has haunted my imagination day and night for the past 21 months, now haunts me no more, I feel freed from the power which she exercised over my daily and nightly thoughts, I have made more improvement during the past three months, than I have in any other three months, since I left the Normal School, this may be assigned to the division,

12th September. I was at the division room last night, and took the most active part in the debate. The debate has been going on now for the last three nights, and is still to go on. Since its commencement I have made five addresses, speaking each time on an average more than ten minutes. All my reading and studying for the past five weeks has been on Napoleon and Wellington. This subject occupies all of my thoughts. I have not yet come to any definite conclusion what to do next year. It is a matter yet hidden in the obscurity of the future.

September the 17th. I was thinking today that it would be a good plan for me to teach on until I came of age, If I took {Remainder of page missing}

And read "the wife trials" out by which time it was one O clock. Yesterday morning I did nothing – Last night I read {Guide?} from beginning to end.

30th September. Time is flying on wings of wind ,1857 will soon number among past ages. I got home from the {soiree?}last night around 12. I then sat down and read the whole of "the King's own" {The King's Own by Captain Frederick Marryat 1830} by which time it was nearly 3 in the morning.

1st of October 1857, Thursday, has been a very dull, rainy, disagreeable day. Last evening I prepared part of a speech which I expect to make On Saturday night at the, "Band of Hope division". I have three months to put in before my engagement in this section is out and, from the present state of my mind, I prophecy that I will make more improvement during that time, than I have for the past fourteen months, "the Intellectual" the form, which has haunted my imagination day and night for the past 21 months, now haunts me no more, I feel freed from the power which she exercised over my daily and nightly thoughts. I have made more improvement during the past three months, than I have in any other three months since I left the Normal School, this may be assigned to the division,

2nd of October Yesterday was a day almost lost by me, The only thing I done was to finish the first volume of Lockharts' Napoleon, In the evening I went over to Uncle John's and talked with my cousins till bed time.

8th October Last Friday, about 4 PM Mr Lyon came to my place and staid with me. the next morning until nine o clock when he took his departure. He and I went to the division on Friday Night. It was a free night and the room was pretty full. During the night, I was called upon to make a speech. I did make a short one and received great praise for it. When I went to bed on Friday night, I felt conscious that by my speech I had done something towards lifting my name from obscurity. I also felt gratified by Mr Lyons bestowing upon me his company and Friendship which increased my respectability. On Saturday evening I went over to the division on the River road where I made a short speech. On Sunday James Dixon came up to see me, he and I went about all the afternoon viewing every distant object with his telescope. On Sunday evening I was in town. On Tuesday evening George Paul came to see me and staid all night. Yesterday I was very sick and went to bed at 7 and lay till 7 this morning. I have had no school today in consequence of my bad cold.

17th October, "Saturday at noon" I was at the division last night. I am not the least afraid now to speak in Public – The greater part of my spare time during the present week has been spent in " making and getting off a Temperance speech" Which I expect to give at the River road division this evening – I expect to spend tomorrow with Mr Pritchard – It is fifteen months to day since I was sailing down "the Maple Leaf" in, "On the blue waters of the lake Ontario", many and long and solemn and hopeful were my thoughts that day – twelve months ago to day I was toiling away in the north part of the Township. "Today I am toiling away here" "where shall I be in the next year at this time" – Three months from to day I will be 19 years of age, I hope to make a good deal of Improvement before that time, I'm almost sure that I will – I have taught ever day this week, but have not worked very hard, "having only had", but few scholars, – Whether "Excessive or moderate drinkers are the most Injurious to Society" is a subject for debate next friday night. I am appointed to take the side of the "Excessive drinking" and have George

Edmison and George Milburn to assist me. George Paul, Andrew Young and Thomas H. Milburn take the opposite side – If I was rich I would aim to get into Parliament, and be one of the leading men in the Country but however poor as I am I expect to get that high in my lifetime yet I saw Charles Manning this morning and was talking to him.

20th October “Tuesday evening at half past six”. Last Saturday Evening I was at the riverroad division and made a speech, from the division room I went up to Mr Boyces with Mr Pritchard wher I staid all night – On Sunday I heard dicky Bell preach. Yesterday I made no improvement. I have made no improvement to day. Although I intend to make some before I go to bed. To day I have had a great notion of turning out Phrenological lectures. It has been exceedingly cold today, there was also a good crust of snow to day for the first time. I fixed the Schoolhouse windows to day which made it a good deal warmer – I was a bad writer years ago and am a bad one yet, I shall never become a good one until I become less nervous – I have to go back to Mr Nethercuts on the evening of the 30th of this month, we are going to have a meeting that evening for the purpose of trying to get up a Temperance society in that Neighbourhood,

21st On the 17th of September last I made up my mind to read 18 volumes of history; more than a month has lapsed and I have only read one small volume one month ago today I commenced to read the history of Rome; but have not yet finished it for to fulfil this scheme I will commence to read De regur {De rigueur meaning by custom although the author may mean it as "with rigor"} in Order to fulfil this plan I pledge myself this day to spend two hours out of every twenty four in reading History. I have 19 scholars at School to day – I was at the class meeting last night, This week present, only, the class leader. Myself, and sister Jane, After the meeting was over, I went with. Isaac to his place and got Watson’s Institutes The debate on “Napoleon and Wellington” has done me more good than a “Months Schooling” it made me a better teacher, a better talker, a better speaker; and a man of more knowledge – For the past few weeks, I have thought very little about the “Intellectual”. It is strange what A Strange influence she had over me for a year and a half, night and day I used to think of her, I would at times have went miles to have spoken to her.

23rd October – “Friday” – I read half an hour in Herodotus yesterday noon, last night I went to town and got a new pair of pants. I also paid Josiah Thomson what I owed him. I now owe two heavy debts £{8?}.35 to Mr E Chase and 25 dollars to Mr. J. Robinson. I will have 262 dollars 50 cents coming to me for my years wages. I have 10 dollars due from James Babter and other ten from George Edmison and I have 3 dollars 22 ½ cents On hand, I think I can easily manage to put 200 dollars in the bank next year – I have not yet made any arrangements for next year but I have almost made-up my mind to stay where I am if I can get ~~and~~ an advance upon my wages. I think if I dont teach here, it would be a good plan to go west where something might turn out to my advantage. I am getting very nervous.

24th October “Saturday” I was at the division room last night, the debate on Excessive and Moderate drinkers came off, Mr Lyons and I were on the side of the Excessive drinkers. We gained the debate, – The next debate is to be whether War or Intemperance has been the most destructive to Mankind. I have to lead off on the side of war– I find that debates have an excellent effect on me They serve my intellect, they give me an easier and less embarrassed air in Public, they me a abler to sustain a part in conversation, in fact they are to me an Intellectual treat – Two months to day I was at

Hindon's and talked hard all day; When I look at the time elapsed since then I think it nothing; When I look at the ~~time~~ improvement made since then I think it nothing; When I think what I might have done since I think that I have lost two months of my life; and When I think that I am two months nearer life's close, I reflect with with sorrow yet with hope, that months may roll round untill the last comes and finds me unprepared as ever to meet a sin avenging God.

26th October "Monday morning" On Saturday evening I went over to Uncle John's and staid there all night. On Yesterday forenoon, Cousin Alek and I went over to Thomsons and staid there till after dinner. In the afternoon I went over to Livicks and borrowed the half of Dicks works – I am to night and the next three nights going to prepare a speech Which I expect to make on Friday night at Nethercuts Schoolhouse.

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at half past seven, which is my usual rising hour these times, Mr Pritchard came to my place last evening, after tea time. I went over with him as far as the town Hall, from there I went to town to see Mr Rutherford where I staid more than two hours. I got home and in to bed about half past eleven. I am perhaps on better terms with Mr Pritchard than any other young man in the world, I can place confidence in him, I can tell him things that I could tell no other person. Although I like Mr Nethercut I can't confide in him as I can Mr Pritchard. Mr Chase, although I respect him, there is something about him, "I don't know what" that I do not like. Mr Duart I have much love and esteem for and like to be in his company.

"Wednesday morning" It is a year today since the pairing bee was at Madills; I am a year older, but scarcely any better. I have not made up my mind what to do for 1858 but if the Trustees of this school offer me £85 per annum, I shall likely stay where I am. I am told by almost every person that I am Consumptive, that I will die of the consumption, but I don't believe it, I may perhaps have an {organization?} that might by abuse fall into a decline but by proper care I may in the course of a few years become a strong healthy man. There is a coat of snow three inches thick this morning. I had a great talk with Fred Sanderson last Saturday. I expect that John Liddel wont be well pleased because I didn't call on him when up that way. I think that I extended my reputation by being away last week. If the popularity of a teacher may be judged by the attendance I am the most popular teacher that ever taught in this School. 1858 is fast approaching and I am making very little improvement: how important a part of a man's lifetime is a year, and how easily it slips away; when it ends we are scarcely sensible of its existence, we think not that we are a long step nearer Eternity; that we are nearer Heaven or Hell, Happiness or misery, for innumerable ages.

5th November "Thursday Morning" It will be five years this night since I went up to the penitent bench in this schoolhouse, and I have made no religious improvement since that time. I am worse now than I was then, I have retrograded on the most vital subject that can engage the mind of man. When I think how the months and years are slipping over my head without any improvement on my part, I feel that I am wasting life; doing nothing; a mere drone the wide world; My mind pants for something great, for something more than common; I cannot bear the thought of living and dying like ordinary mortals. If I don't get to be celebrated, I shall die of Hunger and thirst. I would like to be rich, learned, respectable and influential, looked up to, Honoured and

respected by the people around me; I am amorous, I think I will get married as soon as I can assume to be able to bear the expense of new responsibilities; I have thought a little about the "intellectual" lately. I would like to see her and be in her company. I was at Uncle John's last night and staid there all night Sarah and Margaret have Just come from Detroit where Robert Fleming now lives and where Sarah had been at a visit of four months. I have spent the greater part of my life in a literary way. From seven to thirteen years of age. I went to School to old Mr {Burtons?}, after that I went a twelvemonth to the Union School in Peterboro at four different times; When I have taught other two months, I shall have taught two years and a half and earned altogether 470 dollars.

6th November – "Friday morning." I was at home last night and read the Crofton Boys through – When I was at the Normal School, I studied about two months. I found it very hard to begin to study; when I sit down to study my mind so much that I made very little progress: I think if I were going to School now I would have hard work to get into studying order; I am kind of a'fraid of going to school now I feel as if I would rather stay where I am and have fine times and little to do – I am well aware that as Teacher of the School I have not done my duty. I have wasted a great deal of time and often taught anything but faithfully. I have often cut short the lessons of the Scholars and thought about other things when I should have been thinking about my scholars – I have studied very little during the past six months, yet I have greatly increase my respectability and fame. The average attendance of this school is much greater than it was last year at this time; it is also much greater that it was in "Section No. 7" last year at this time, in fact everything here is encouraging.

7th November "Saturday" I was at the division room last night and enjoyed myself very well; I got the officers prevailed to go up to Nethercut's Schoolhouse and initiate the new division on Thursday evening next. I also suggested a plan for amusing the division by placing a box in the Ante Room for the deposition of letters which are to be read by a reader, this plan was adopted by the division, and I was appointed reader. This temperance affairs keep me from studying I would have been reading History for the past month had it not been for Preparing Temperance Speeches. I often think what a fool I was last spring for going to the fortune tellers. I paid a dollar to have my fortune told, I paid half a dollar to have a Young Ladies told, and I advanced a dollar to have my fortune written down which was never done as she slipped of {off?}so suddenly. It vexes me when I think that I permitted myself to be fooled by an old hag; I hope that this incident may prove as salutary a lesson to me as the buying of the whistle was to Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

8th November "Sunday at four Oclock" Last night after supper time I went up to McEwans where I staid all night until ten this morning; since I came home I have been lying around doing nothing. It has been rainy all day and rainy all last night. I am now getting rather anxious about what I am to do next year; but am yet as in the dark I may teach here, I may teach somewhere else, or I may teach myself.

10th November 1857 "Tuesday" I made no improvement of my mind yesterday, neither did any thing remarkable happen, nor did I do a good day's work – This morning is clear and cold I have observed Ice for the first time this fall – I read the first book of the Pope's Homer yesterday and liked it very well – One Sunday not long ago I read and Relished Byron's English bards and Scotch reviewers. On sunday last I read A chapter in Macaulay's History of England. I wish and have wished long that I was a good writer;

when I was at the Normal School, I thought writing a trivial thing. I thought I could learn to be an excellent writer in a few weeks, and so confident was I that I could, that I told John Ford and Ladue that I would be as good a writer as either of them in two months; sixteen months have rolled along since that time and I am but a miserable writer and I fear that I will never be a good one – I have always been proud of my knowledge of Euclid. I have many a time boasted of it, at the Normal School I was unsurpassed in that delightful study. At the time I left the normal School, I was getting tired of the close life I led there and had it not been for Joseph's death I would have rejoiced very much when I left. The short period of my life spent at Toronto was a stirring time for me. I very much regret that I did not keep a Journal when there. The Journal of it now would give me the greatest pleasure and at the same time much instruction.

12th November "Thursday" There is a thin coat of snow on the ground this morning. I was in town last night and spent six shillings and sevenpencehalf penny, for which some I brought home "the Parsonage" "Sidonia" "A story by Lamartine" "two works by Irving" "An Almanach for 1858" "A lock and key" "and half a pound of Cream Tartar" I also got last night a letter from Uncle Robert Bickerton, who is now in the State of Illinois, and who has been for the past four or five years in Kansas and Nebraska. The attendance of Scholars at school at present is very good – I saw Robinson Rutherford last evening and had a talk with him – Some of the members of our division are going to make a subscription of a quarter

21st November "Saturday" On Friday forenoon about half past ten I was surprised, A carriage drove up to the door, it was Livicks with Aunt Bickerton and cousin Robert George. They went up to Father's and staid there till after dinner and then went down to Aunt Jane's. After the School went out I went down to Aunt Jane's and brought Robert George home with me; After that I went up to the division where I had a pretty good time of it, there was a debate on "Intemperance and War" I was on the side of the Intemperance and was the means of gaining the debate for that side. After the debate it was agreed that this should be a free meeting two weeks from that time and that I and others should make speeches on the occasion. On Saturday I had no School, and was in town until after three O clock when I came home When I got as far as the schoolhouse I found two young Ladies cleaning it out I stopped with them until seven; I then went home and got my tea; Then Robert George and I went over to Uncle Johns and staid there till nine when we came home and went to bed – On Sunday morning, Robert George and I went over to Livicks where I staid till eight P.M. Aunt Bickerton, Mrs Betty Robinson and Uncle Johnny were there; I enjoyed myself pretty well; I had my likeness over with me Aunt Bickerton got hold of it and is going to keep it – For Monday last I cannot remember anything only that at night Aunt B came over to our place and staid all night. I was glad when I saw her coming into the house – On Tuesday, there was a coat of snow was on the ground all day. My Father was driving round in his cutter, Aunt B staid all night at our place – On Wednesday morning and be left our place When she left I promised to go down to Livicks on Sunday and see her. At night I am in town. I sent off a letter to Uncle Ralph – Thursday was a very disagreeable day. at night I in company with others, went up to Nethercuts' Schoolhouse and instructed the North Smith division, it was twelve O clock when I got home. Yesterday nothing remarkable happened. At night I was at the divisions; I made a short speech and read a letter that was in the letterbox there was not many there. It was let out at a few minutes past eight. I have not made the least improvement in the world during the past nine or ten days.

20th November Last sunday I was at Livicks, Aunt Bickerton was not there, she had gone away, there was two young gentlemen from Peterboro there who came this way home with me and gave me a ride – On Tuesday last at evening I was at the Class and prayer meeting. Yesterday I had no School as it was a holiday on account of the British Army in India. I was helping my Father to draw wood a great part of the day. At night, I was at the division and made a speech, there was a great many at the division as it was a free night. Mr Isaac Milburn made a speech and observed that while I was speaking he thought I looked like Sir Francis Hincks and that I might yet be as useful to the provinces as he has been

1st December 1857 “Tuesday Evening” have just come home from the class and prayer meeting, there were only five there. I had quite a talk with Isaac after it came out. On Sunday last at evening, I heard the Reverend Mr Poole’s friend, Mr William Ryerson preach. Yesterday evening I was in town and I heard speeches by Mr. Poole, Mr Ryerson and Mr Nelles, they were excellent, particularly those of Mr Nelles and Mr Ryerson. I was wishing today that I had the means of graduating at the University of Toronto, it would only take about two hundred pounds, what a pity that I couldn’t have it while so many useless strutting fellows have more than what they know to do with – I observe that the election by members of parliament comes off in the latter part of the month there will then be a great political fuss for the next three months it will be a good time for me to learn something about political affairs. It is wonderful that man who lives here but short time pays so little attention to the things of eternity. To this failing in man may be attributed the wickedness and barbarism of mankind – Last evening I missed a good opportunity of doing myself a good turn. I was at meeting, Thomas J. Milburn was there, he was walking, I was riding on horseback. I went riding past him and offered him not a bit of a ride. Now had I given him a ride he would be much more apt to do me a good turn than he is now.

3rd december “Thursday evening” I was at Mr. Robert’s and Mr Sanderson’s last night it was eleven O clock when I came home – I have almost decided today to go to Mcvicar’s Academy next year and study Latin and Greek – I have been up seeing Wm Milburn this evening and have just come home.

5th december “Saturday morning” Last evening I was at the division last night, after coming home. I read the lives of Murray and Leyden, two distinguish linguists – I am thinking these days what to do next year.; whether to stay where I am or go to Toronto, were I to consult my own inclination I would stay where I am and if I go to Toronto it will be because I think it is the best thing for the long run – Last Wednesday evening, Mr. Roberts told me of getting drunk being a shame to a teacher and that Mr Ward had actually been reduced to that low degradation. I was sorry when I heard it; sorry to think that young man like myself should be so reduced in the estimates of all decent people.

9th december, “Wednesday evening at nine.” It has been raining ever since I got up this morning. It is very disagreeable weather: There is no snow on the ground and the roads are almost impassable – Last Sunday I was at the Baptist Church in the forenoon and in the afternoon I was at Michael Sanderson’s and got wet in coming home – O Monday evening I was at Uncle Johns –Yesterday evening Misses Ruth and Tamer Milburn were at my place; George and Henry Edmison were also here – I am yet undetermined what to do next year; I shall have to make up my mind very soon, as I only have 13 days more to teach until my time is up.

15th december, "Tuesday morning," Betty Robinson and Mary Livick were at our place last Friday and Saturday – I was at the Band of Hope division last Saturday night and made a short speech. I was at Mr Livicks all Sunday and came home at 8 P.M. in the evening – There is to be a free meeting at the North Smith division shortly, I will be invited there to make a speech, I will attend. I must prepare a better speech than I have ever yet made. If I do so, I will attentively study how to conduct myself in order to raise my name much higher than it at present stands in that part of the township – I have not yet determined what to do next year, but I think if I were offered to go {?} year I would stay where I am. Last Friday I posted a letter for Uncle Robert Bickerton.

16th December "Wednesday Morning" I was in town last night and took my old pair of boots to Maddells to be {patched?} for which I have to pay three dollars and a half --I am entirely out of money at the present time and I am also in great need of it. George Edmison has ten dollars belonging to me; I must try to get it from him before Christmas. Mr Pritchard owes me 50 cents, and I owe Mr Chase eight dollars and thirty five cents. The election is now getting pretty hot. It lies between "Short" and "Congers", "lawyers" having no chance, I think it is likely that Short will be returned – I have the largest number of Scholars in attendance at School now that I ever heard of for this time of year. There was thirty nine here yesterday. I have only seven more days to teach and then my present engagement will be out the day before Christmas will be my last. After my present time is out and I received my pay and pay my debts, I will have 200 dollars to the better; this sum I must take care of as it is all that I have to {assist?} me in raising myself to eminence.

17th December "Thursday" I was at Uncle John's last night. The two Miss Davidson's and Miss Jane Milburn were there. I was so dull that I could not enjoy myself. I sometimes feel so dull in the company that I am a regular bore. I believe that I am too sensitive for which I prove as minus in company I am harassed afterward by very troublesome reflections. I believe that the reason that I am so dull in company is that I have only my large {regret?} of cautionness.

22nd december "Tuesday morning" Last Saturday evening Thomas Milburn and I went over to the "band of hope" division to see about getting by laws for the two divisions; Mr Pritchard was there; he came home with us; we got home about twelve; On Sunday forenoon Mr Pritchard and myself went over to Uncle John's, where we staid till (3 P.M.) George and I then went a part of the way home with Mr P; When we got as far as A. Scotts we left Mr P and staid there till nearly nine -- This is Fair day: There has been muddy roads for the past two or three weeks, but there is good sleighing this morning. If I have school tomorrow and the day after my time will be out. I still know Nothing of what I am going to do next year. I have made up my mind to hire again at £75 no more. I have been thinking lately that it would be a very good plan for me to study Phrenology and turn out lecturer;

24th december "Thursday morning" A stormy cold morning, the last day I teach in 1857. I have fulfilled my engagement and earned £75 since I left Madill's. I was in town on Tuesday night and staid to the division there. There was a debate there on the present election. Mr. Scott was on the side of Conger and Mr Rutherford on the side of Short. If I remain here next year, I shall take two of the better papers in the province in order to gain a knowledge of politics. After to day I shall have nothing to do for ten or twelve days. I must study pretty hard all the time.

27th december "Sunday evening" – Last thursday I finished my year teaching. After the school was out I went down to town along with Cousin George. There was a great many people and great excitement in Peterboro, the polls were just closed and it was pretty well understood that "short" was in. I saw Frank Sanderson in town. He offered me £75 per year to go back to Section No 7 and teach. I refused the offer at once. I spent over two shillings upon sweets and such like trumpery. Friday was christmas. In the morning I went down to the schoolhouse and swept it. I there and then learned that "Short" had been returned with majority of 319. I was astonished. I attribute it mainly to the influence of George Brown: in the Afternoon I went up to Thos J Milburn and from thence he and I went up to John J Milburns and made out the late Bills; I was then asked if I wanted to engage another year. I told them I would if they gave me £85 per year. After some hesitation, they concluded to do it if Scobell would;– Yesterday I was in town and was informed that Scobell did not exactly agree to my proposal for teaching. I am therefore yet as ignorant as ever of my fate for the ensuing year; There was a great fuss in town yesterday. Processions were marching through the town in honour of Shorts election. I saw Mr Chase in town. He and I traded watches, he giving me four dollars into the bargain; I came home with Uncle John and staid there till nearly ten O clock at night.

To day I have never been out of the house; I have read from beginning to end the "Old dominion", a tale of the origin, progress and termination of the love of a certain man named Conway, for a young lady named Bessy Davenport; I don't think it has done me much good, my head is so full of it, that I cannot do anything else; Next week at this time 1858 will have ushered himself into existence and 1857 will be numbered with the years that are past. O! that I could improve each moment as it flies, but, alas! I cannot; time is slipping away and I am getting no better; Would to God! that I could better improve my time and act more wisely:–

31st december. Last Monday I was at the temperance service in town. I was in town nearly all day. In the evening at a late hour I went with Thos E Fitzgerald to his place. – On Tuesday morning I went up to Mr. Boyces in the evening – Mr Pritchard and I went to Mrs Wallace's and Fairbairns. On Wednesday I was at Wm Nicholls nearly all day. To day At morning in Company with Mr P I came to town. I then went to Waddels and got two pair of boots, then came home. I am not yet engaged for the next year. I think the Trustees have behaved very curious in not coming to some kind of terms long before this time; I think it is likely if I dont engage here this week that I will go up to Toronto in the latter part of next week.

[1858 is written in the top left and right hand side of the page]

First day of January 1858, "Friday morning" I went away this morning at 10 A.M. and came home at. 9 P.M. When I went away, I went up to old Robins and paid my Fathers taxes. I then went over to Bapties and staid till James Baptie, Alice and Margaret Paul came when we all went sleighriding. In the evening I was at the division where I was elected and installed Recording Scribe.

8th January "Friday" I was hired to teach another year at the rate of 330 dollars a year on Wednesday evening – Last Saturday I was in town and saw Robert Kincaid whom I had not seen for a year and a half – Last Sunday I was at the Baptist Church in the morning and at John Pauls in the afternoon – Last Monday evening Thomas Milburn and I went to the tea party at Madills – On Tuesday evening I was at the Class meeting – Last evening I

was at the Temperance meeting and made a short speech at the commencement of it. I also presented the form of a petition for laying before the Township Council Which after some discussion was submitted and approved of. I have come to the conclusion to take the Globe and also the Leader for this year, my reason for so doing is that they are the two leading papers or organs of the two great political parties into which the country is dividing, and by reading them I get the opinions and views of all parties, and thus be able to form fast and reasonable opinions of my own.

17th January – On Sunday last I was at Christopher Quins along with Livicks people. On Monday last I commenced School again – On Thursday evening. I was back at Nethercuts Schoolhouse and made a speech – Yesterday I had School in the forenoon, and in the afternoon I was at town – I bought Shakespeare's works one day last week and have been reading one of his plays this forenoon. I am going to have a larger School this winter than I ever had before. I have received all my School money all except 26.25 – I have thought a good deal about the larger Intellectual during the past week more I am afraid than has been for my good.

21st day of January "Thursday" Last sunday I sat around home until after dinner, when I went over Uncle Johns. Wm Fowler and Jonathan Livick were there. After some chat George and I came over to our places hitched up horse and cutter then started off for Hindons reached that place at tea time and remained there until 10 P.M. On Tuesday evening I was at the class and Prayer meeting. After that went out I went down to the Good Templar Service which was not worth going to. Yesterday evening I was at the Baptist Missionary Meeting. It was not much there was no people speaking or singing.

25th January. 1858 "Monday" I had forty six pupils at school today – On Saturday last Mr Chase came over to see me – Last Saturday I got my first Leader. Last Saturday I got a letter from Uncle R Bickerton. Yesterday morning I went over to Livicks. When I got there they were just starting for Donnelys; they asked me to go with them; I went and have thus become acquainted with Miss Donnely's. A week ago today I lent Thomas Hutchinson forty five pounds, for which he has to give me forty six pounds on the 18th of April. On New Years Day, I had to {slay ride?} with the small Intellectual. I have not been in her company since, neither have I wished to be.

31st January "Sunday" I had no school yesterday and was in town. I brought home with me twelve Yankee arithmetics, ten of which I shall sell to the Scholars. I also bought Albot's {John S.C. Abbott} Life of Napoleon for which I paid for 4.50 cents. I also received yesterday my first "Globe" and my second "Leader". Last Wednesday evening I was at a party at the Mr. Stubbses It was five in the morning when I got home. I did not enjoy myself it at it. I was a mere blank, as I always am at such places. I have been at home all this forenoon and intend to be all this afternoon. I am trying to get up a speech for friday night. I anticipate great pleasure in this {perusal?} of the life of Napoleon.

7th February "Sunday" Last Monday evening I was at the Bible Society meeting in Peterboro where I heard Lachlin Taylor make one of the most brilliant speeches I have ever heard it was principally on Italy where he had been travelling he also made some brilliant remarks on Macaulay and other celebrated personages. On Tuesday evening I was at the class meeting and had quite a chat with Isaac. On Wednesday evening I was at Uncle John's where there was a spree which lasted till half past two in the morning.

Last night I was at John T Milburn's where there was quite a company – To day so far I have been reading the Globe and Albot's {John S.C. Abbott}Napoleon.

18th February "Thursday" I have just finished my days teaching. Last Thursday evening I was at a Soiree in the Back end of the township. I was on the platform but was not called upon to make a speech. I was almost froze, both in going and coming. Last Friday night I was at the division room and was scolded for not making a speech on the previous free night. On Saturday night I was with Mr Pritchard at Wm Tully's. On Sunday night I was at home. On Monday evening I was at the Band of hope division. I came home with the Stotharts {Stothards}and staid with them all night. On Tuesday evening I was at the prayer meeting – Yesterday evening I was at Livicks. I have read the globe and Leader very attentively since I got them, I cannot say which of them I like best. Uncle Robert talks about coming to Canada in the spring. I hope he may, above all men I would like to see him. I have now taught 31 days in the present year, I wish my time was up.

21st February "Sunday morning" Mr Moffat, Brother of the celebrated lecturer of that name was with me all last friday night, he and I were at the Division. There was a debate there on the Mains Law. {Mains Law, established in 1858 in Canada, refers to a legal principal concerning the rights of individuals in relation to property and land ownership. It emphasized the importance of clear title and ownership rights in property disputes} I took a part in it – On Friday evening I was in town and posted a letter for Uncle Robert – I think I shall commence the study of Latin in a short time, I shall get Henry Edmison to assist me – I was last night thinking seriously of becoming a phrenologist, I think there is plenty of room in Canada for a good practical scientific phrenologist.

2nd March "Tuesday morning" This is fair day and I have no school in consequence – On the evening of the 22nd of February I read Othello. I enjoyed myself while reading it, it is the first of Shakespeare's pieces I have read. On the evening of the 23rd of February I was at Livicks., there was a small party there. I enjoyed myself at it – On this evening of the 24th of February I was at John Livicks wedding. On Sunday last I was at Uncle John's all day. Charles Boyce and JohnnyNicholls were there – Last evening was at home but read nothing but the Globe.

4th March 1858 – "Thursday evening" I have been reading to night in order to prepare for a debate on Navigations and Printing and a speech for a missionary meeting on Tuesday evening next. I find that there is no kind of knowledge more useful than a correct knowledge of history. In almost every debate and discussion it is useful or necessary and in some it is of most essential and absolute use. No train of thought can be indulged in without reference more or less to historical facts. To the statesman and the politician, history is of the highest importance. To writers and public speakers it is as useful as tools to a carpenter or a farm to a farmer. In fact in whatever way we view History, we find it a most excellent study alike important and useful to every man who make the least pretentions to Literature or respectability.

18th March "Thursday evening" The snow has entirely disappeared during the past four or five days and the roads are very bad. There has therefore been very few scholars at school this week. I felt gratified to day when I considered that the money I lent to Hutchison two months ago to day had already made me 43/4d. It is a grand thing to have money making money. During the past three nights I have sat up until 11 P.M. preparing a speech for to deliver on Saturday night at the division. I have it composed

already it fills three pages of foolscap. I was away from home every night last week, one night it was five in the morning when I went to bed, another it was three and another it was one; such was the efforts I made last week to pass away time and enjoy myself – I have been at more sprees and parties since last new Year's Day than I have in all my previous life, & enjoyed myself best at Simpsons and worst at Stubbs. I cannot enjoy myself at such places unless I am one of the heroes the company – I am Tired of School teaching and would like to abandon this business, yet I dont know what I would like to be at.

22nd March "Monday evening" On Saturday last I had a long talk with Mr Duart; I also received a visit from Mr Salt who called at the School house and staid with me about half an hour. In the evening Mr Pritchard came to see me. I was very glad to see him and he and I went to the temperance together; there was quite a number of people there made a speech which I think was the best I have ever made. Yesterday morning (Charles) Mr Pritchard and myself went over to Uncle Johns. My Grandmother was there, I had not seen her for three years, she knew me she said by my long nose: Mary Anne Paul was also there, we staid there till 3 P.M. we had a very lively time we didn't spend the day very much like a Sunday. After I left there I went up to John T Milburns. Thomas was going down to Peterboro in the buggy,. I went with him and staid in town and heard Mr Scott preach and got home at 9 in the evening. The division has now lasted a year and is still in good working order. It has been the means of doing me a great deal of good, it has made me study and think and read and more than that it has excited me to action. I have become a better speaker and a better talker since its commencement and in fact what little improvement I have made during the past year may be ascribed to it – I do not know what business or occupation I may follow in after life neither do I know what station in society I should fill, but I know I shall be possessed of some knowledge. My minds grasps after more I must know more: While there are such vast oceans of truth to explore in every direction I can never be at rest. Oh! that I had the means that some have I would read in classic fields of a Homer a Herodotus and a Virgil.

24th March "Wednesday" I have no school to day in consequence of a meeting at the School house about the construction of leading gravelled roads in the county of Peterboro – I have Just been down to the woods where my father and my brother are engaged in making sugar; while coming up I wondered why such vast flocks of pigeons were continually flying to wards the northwest –Last evening I read Robertsons History of the colonies of New England and Virginia I was also at the class and prayer meeting and also attended Miss {P?} Milburn home.

30th March – "Tuesday at ten PM" I have been up at McEwans to night and have just returned. I had quite a talk with George Paul; Mr Scoble and Mr. Scott the Trustees were at school about an hour to day. I got to-day the temperance activities for the past three months. I bought them from George Simpsons. I bought the paper from him for the year. I have been for the past few days thinking of getting some person to teach in my place And going up to the Normal School. I feel an anxious desire to learn and see more both of things and the world – I now take 4 papers, the Globe,. the Leader, the Review and the temperance advocate. I find that the perusal of them does me a great deal of good; and I believe that were I to read them more attentively, they would do me a vast deal of good.

31st March. with the exception of a few days at the commencement, the weather has been remarkably fine this month. The snow has completely disappeared and the roads are now good for walking. I had no fire in the School to day. Three months have now rolled away since the commencement of 1858 and how little improvement I have made; when I think how time is passing on I feel that I am doing nothing, that I am wasting time and talent.

2nd April "Good Friday" have had no school to day and consequently have been doing little or nothing. Last evening George Paul and I were at the North Smith division where we had a glorious time debating about Education and Law.

7th April "Wednesday" I was at the meeting of the Cadets of Temperance this evening: the little fellows were debating about War and Intemperance: it was very amusing – On Sunday last I was at Livicks, the old man was very sick. James McKibbon was there. I left before dark and caught up to Mr Pritchard and the Stotharts {Stothards} who were on their way home, as it looked very like rain, I went into Stotharts {Stothards} where I was obliged to remain all night, in consequence of the rain; the dark night and the muddy roads. On Monday evening I went from School to Livicks, from Livicks to Peterboro from Peterboro to George Lees and from there to home – I long after and feel anxious for improvement; if I desire to be conspicuous among men for anything it is for mental strength and excellence "knowledge is power" it is a power which nothing else can give or all the gold of Australia can purchase.

13th April "Tuesday evening at nine" I have just come home from the class meeting. it is a dark, rainy night – Last friday evening I was at the division where I had to debate against "Morrison" and "A Young" on the question "whether has the art of printing or navigation done most for civilization," When I was on my road home I made-up my mind to study Logic, accordingly, I have commenced to Study Whately on that study and have already looked over the Analytical outline – Last Saturday evening I went with Mr Duart up to his place and staid there all night and the next day till 2 PM when I left his place and came down to Moores, where I remained till six O clock. I thus had an opportunity of observing more particularly than ever I had done Mr Duart and Miss Moore. Miss Moore is I think an amiable, intelligent and lovely girl: Mr Duart is a man who thinks a good deal; he is a constant reader, he is very careful of his money and means, if I am not mistaken, he will yet be a man of great note.

17th April "Saturday" I have had no school today. Last evening I was at Uncle John. Margaret Baptie was there; during the last few days I have been thinking about becoming a lawyer, I believe I would like the profession, but I believe I would rather be a farmer than any profession. It is necessary that I should make up my mind with respect to my future employment; It would prevent me from wasting my energies and turn all my powers into one direction which would ensure success.

28th April I have been working in Colenso's Algebra this evening, I done a question that puzzled Mr Armiston when I was at the Normal School. I have been thinking for the past few days of becoming a lawyer, and indeed I have come to the conclusion to speak to Mr. Burnham about it – I am not attending to my School these days, as I ought; my mind is always so much taken up with other things that I cant do my duty as a Teacher.

7th May "Friday" I am reading a good deal this week, but I am not reading as I ought to do. I read a little of this and a little of the other thing but it amounts to little and does me no

good. I sometimes read Macauley . I admire his style. I wish I could imitate it in the fullest manner. I should study Logic In a short time if I were to pay much attention to it. It is four weeks this evening since I commenced to study it but I have spent very little time as it and consequently have made very little progress. I have been thinking lately of becoming a lawyer, it is time that I was making a choice of some profession, I am in the twentieth year of my age and am getting no younger -- I have been up at the Baptist church for the past three Sundays, where I have heard Mr. Roberts preach three very good sermons -- I have been pretty much at home for the past few weeks. I am always doing something, but I do not employ my time so well As I might, I lay in bed till seven in the morning and thus waste much valuable time.

10th May "Monday" I was at Church in town yesterday forenoon; in the afternoon I was at Morrison's and at night I was at home -- I have never felt time pass over so quick as I have this spring -- I was awhile at Wm H Moores on saturday evening. I have a very large school at present and am attending to them better than I have done for some time -- I like intelligent company, for that reason alone I would wish to reside in a City or Town.

13th May "Thursday" I have been away from home less this last two or three weeks than I have for the present year. I had been reading a good deal lately. Yesterday I commenced to read Waylands political economy, Goldsmiths history of Greece and De Lolmes British Constitution. Last evening I worked an hour on Conlensos Algebra. This morning, before school went in, I read the history of Rome down to the expulsion of Tarquin I.

20th May "Thursday" Last Saturday morning in company with John Ray I went over to his place, and after dinner he and I went up to see Mr Chase, where we staid until dusk; we then came back to Ray's where I remained all night -- Sunday forenoon was spent with Mr Chase, he recommend's me to study for some of the professions, he thinks I would be successful as a lawyer -- This week I have not done much at my regular studies in consequence of trying to trisect a triangle which I have been trying to do all this week but all in vain -- On Monday evening I was reading the life and times of George IV. It is rather and interesting book and contains many remarks about Fox, Pitt, and Burke. The author is evidently a tory, he favours Pitt and frowns on Fox -- Last evening after the School went out I spent two hours in reading the Globe, there was in it several speeches which had been delivered at the Annual meeting of the Bible Society and which I think I shall preserve for reference in future. There was also an account of the introduction of the bill for "incorporating the loyal orange associations" which bill, I am very glad to learn received the six months hoist. { The hoist amendment originated in British practise during the 18th c as a method of postponing the resumption of consideration of a bill. It is usually three or six months.-- I still bear in mind a predilection for the law.

24th May 1858 "Monday" I have no School to day in consequence of it being the Queen's Birthday, this will be a great day throughout Canada and the whole British Empire, the day is to be celebrated in Peterboro; there is a great temperance soiree today. I once had an intention of going but resolved to stay at home and read and study. I have been reading De lolme's constitution nearly all day -- I was at home nearly all yesterday reading the "Leader" and "Globe", it is rather a strange way of expending the Sunday. It is better though than running about the country after Tom, Dick, and Harry, and acquiring the reputation of a rake -- I wish I could get a good education; my greatest ambition is to have a cultivated mind, this is the highest object of my ambition. The love of learning

with me is not a pursuit which I follow for the sake of future wealth, honour or power, it is a pursuit which I follow for the sake of learning itself, for its intrinsic value. I will learn as long; never cease to learn, as long as I live. What is it that makes one part of mankind so much superior to the other part? What is it that makes some nations "civilised" enlightened and happier than other nations? It is learning. It is education. It is intellectual superiority.

28th May "Friday night" I have finished reading De'olme this morning; but I think I shall read a part of it over again as I have not read it very attentively -- I have read a good deal this week, more than I have for a long time past -- I am going to the division to night, there has to be a debate about the British and American constitutions, I know nothing about the American government and am therefore not prepared for the debate -- I am still in the notion of studying law, whether I will or not, I cannot determine, but time will. -- I was in town on Tuesday evening and heard Davison the temperance lecturer -- On Wednesday evening I had a dream, I thought I saw two or three boys who were my scholars lying dead; they seemed as if they had been torn to pieces; when I saw them thus I felt very sorry indeed, And so great was my agony that I cried out "it might be a dream" "it must be a dream" and with this I waked and was very glad that it was not reality -- I also had a dream that night I was at Ray's, I thought I was back at Madill's teaching and was very popular and much applauded by the people, with these two exceptions I have not dreamed any for a year.

1st June "Tuesday Evening" I had school this forenoon but went to town this afternoon as it was the "Fair day" -- I bought Blackstones's commentaries to day; the price of them was six dollars. I had been at the class and prayer meeting this evening -- On Saturday evening last, after the school went out, I went to town, where I met Uncle John's people and went home with them: there was two Miss Mather's from Port Hope there: I took quite a fancy to one of them and staid there all night and all the next day and for her sake was very near going out to Port Hope on Monday. --

4th June "Friday Morning" -- It is wet and rainy this morning. It has been wet and raining for the past two or three weeks :so much so that my school has been very small lately -- I have not studied very much this week in consequence of being away all Sunday at J. Edmison's, at Simpsons on Monday night, at the prayer meeting on Tuesday night and Isaac Livick at my place on Wednesday night -- I have almost made up my mind to stay here no longer than this year:when then next winter shall come I shall enter a new scene of action -- I have reason to believe that I have the organ of amativeness very large. I believe that I also have the organs of "Individuality," "Eventuality," "Comparison," "Cautionness," "Secretiveness," and 'Acquisitiveness' very large -- I have had the tooth ache very bad during the past eight or nine days -- I had a dull head ache on Sunday last -- I have kept this Journal for nearly two years and now feel some of the benefits of it. I have reason to thank Walter Rogers at whose advice I commenced it.

7th June - "Monday morning" I was at home in the forenoon yesterday, And in the afternoon I was at Livicks. I came home from Livicks with Uncle John's -- I finished reading the History of Rome last week and De'lome the week before, And I shall go at The History of Greece this week -- I have not felt very strong for the past two or three weeks. I would like very much to take a journey somewhere, if I had plenty money I would go up to Toronto and stay there a week, and listen to the debates in Parliament -- I have almost made up my mind to study Law. I know if I do I will have many difficulties

to encounter, but I believe that it is not altogether improbable that I might become a good Lawyer. However I have not resolved irrevocably, to become a Lawyer, but have left room to think differently for some time. George Edmison is also talking about studying the Law. I shall be a little astonished if he ever does. I think he is mentally too lazy to do so. I wish I were divested of the organ of amativeness for three or four years, and indeed I wouldn't care if I were divested of it for life for I find it interferes with, and hinders my progress in every good work.

9th June "Wednesday morning" Last evening after the school went out I went down the fields and sat down on some rails and commenced to read Grecian history. I had read about an hour when Mr Pritchard came along, I then stopped reading and talked to him until very late in the night. Our talk was more instructive than usual. I recollect that when in company with young Schoolmaster the talk is generally of a light foolish character. Now I think this is very wrong and has a very bad tendency for we are all inclined to lose or waste our time in trivial pursuits; and this inclination is sure to be strengthened by instructive conversation.

10th "Thursday" -- It is very wet and rainy today: I have only 8 scholars in consequence -- Last night I read over one hundred pages in Grecian History -- I read a part of the life of Sir Fowel Burton this morning, he was a man of immense stature, great energy and determination, he was married at the age of 21 and died at the age of 59 -- I also read last night the lives of Epaminondas and Agesilaus but read them so rapidly that I remember very little of them even now.

11th June 1858 "Friday Morning." This morning is cold and raw, I have put a fire on in the Schoolhouse -- Last night I read five hours at Grecian history and finished it -- I think yesterday was the rainiest day within the reach of my memory, it rained from the time I got up in the morning until three O clock in the afternoon without intermission. When I went home from the School the road was flooded and streams flowed in every direction.

14th June "Monday morning" -- I was at meeting yesterday and heard James Ivison preach. I think he is as good a speaker as most of the preachers, but I believe that he will never be a very great man. I have begun to read Macaulay's History of England. I intend to read it all aloud, it will thus add to my stock of information and it will also make my voice stronger. I have not studied very much for the last two or three days as I have had a very bad cold. I find it impossible to study when I am unwell and I sometimes find it very hard when I am well.

18th June "Tuesday Morning" I read twenty pages in French history this morning and four pages of Macauley's last night. James Ivison has to be married today. John, and Alexander, Cousin's are there. I have almost made up my mind to study Law. I think that by diligence and perseverance I will make a good Lawyer.

16th June "Wednesday Morning" I read little or nothing last night or this morning. I was at the prayer meeting last night, after it went out Isaac asked me to go out to Monaghan with him Sunday after next. I told him that I wouldn't -- I have a very large school at present. I sometimes have forty-five. I think I have fulfilled my duty to my School more faithfully during the past five months than ever I did.

18th June "Friday morning" the weather has been remarkably fine for the past four or five days -- I commenced to read Blackstone's commentaries last night, I commenced at

nine O'clock and read till eleven, I thus read the first section of the introduction in two hours -- I read some French history this morning, I am making bad progress in studying French history, I have studied very little for the past six days -- It is a year to day since the temperance Soiree, that was a great day in this part of this country, twelve months have rolled round since that time and I am still driving away in this old School house, where shall I be twelve months from this time? What shall I be doing? What changes shall take place before the time in my fate, my fortune or my pursuits? What changes shall take place around me before that time? What new person will I have become acquainted with, and what old acquaintance shall have disappeared forever? These are things hidden in the future. These are things which the proudest intellect can no more tell, than the most ignorant barbarian.

21st June "Monday Morning" I had no school on Saturday last and staid at home all day and did nothing at all, in the evening I went up to the lake in Company with several others, for the purpose of having a 'swim'. Yesterday morning I made-up my mind to stay at home all day and read and study, but was prevented from doing so by Charl's Boyce & Wm Nicholls coming.

22nd June "Tuesday morning" I went over to Livicks last night after the school hours were over and did not get home till nine O'clock, I consequently did not read or study any yesterday except three pages of Macaulay in the morning -- On the ninth of April I commenced to study Logic, but have made very poor progress as I have not looked at it for a month -- My engagement will be half out this week, I wish it was out altogether. I have had three good swims this summer already -- I have read the Histories of Greece and Rome this spring and intend to read them through again before long -- I have a large School at present and am paying considerable attention to it, I think I will make more improvement in this my twentieth year than I have made in previous year.

24th June "Thursday morning" it is most extremely hot this morning, the weather for the past six or seven days has been very warm -- I have not learned very much this week. I believe Harry Edmison is coming to my school next week, if he does I shall be obliged to study Colenso pretty hard and will thus make a wonderful improvement in Algebra. I was in town on Tuesday night and ordered a new vest which will cost me four dollars. I sold Abbot's Napoleon to Charles Boyce for four dollars and a half which he paid last Sunday.

30th June "Wednesday morning" On the 12th of May I made-up my mind to study at "De'olme," "Logic," "the history of Greece, Rome, France by Pinnock," "Macaulay". "Algebra," and "Political Economy" until to day. I have since that time read De'olme: and the histories of Greece, Rome, and France, studied some Algebra, some Logic and very little Political Economy. I have also been reading a good deal in Macaulay but have not finished him -- I was at the division last Friday night and was elected Outside Sentinel -- I was at Peterboro last Saturday night and bought Colenso's Stinsons Euclid, but did not go to the circus. I was at the Baptist Church last Sunday and also at John Paul's -- I was at the prayer and class meeting last night -- My time was half out last Friday night and my half year is out today, I wish my year was out -- The weather has been extremely warm during the past two weeks all last week it was insufferably warm in the School.

7th July "Wednesday morning" Last Saturday I wrote an essay on truth and after getting it wrote I went to town, I there met Mr. Chase with whom I went home and staid with him until Sunday night. On Monday I had no School and went to the funeral of John Stothart

{Stothard}-- I have lately got acquainted with a dentist in town whose name is McDowel{McDowell}, he is a pretty good scholar and a very nice young man --I still dream of studying the law and I think it is likely that I will do so.

10th July, "Saturday evening" - I have made very little improvement since the commencement of the month, I think I made more improvement last month than I have done any month for a long time -- I have been away from home the last eight nights; I was at the division two nights, two nights I was seeing about the Soiree that has to be at the lake on the 19th; two night I was away by seeing Mr Chase; two nights I was away by being at Livicks and at the prayer meeting --My mind is still bent on studying the law and I am determined to do all that I can to make a man of myself.--

14th July "Wednesday Morning" I was picking strawberries on Sunday forenoon and in the afternoon I was at Uncle John's where I was obliged to stay all night in consequence of rain -- Monday was a rainy day, it rained all day, there were only six scholars at School - Yesterday I had new scholar at school, his name is Peter Sinclair, at night after School went out, I was over at Uncle John's where four of us got a making stump speeches. I made two, one about Cromwell and one on "Education".

"Wednesday Evening" I had no School this afternoon and I was obliged to go to town where I got £36.10 from the County treasurer. I bought a pair of Shoulder braces this afternoon for two dollars.

17th day of July 1858. "Saturday morning" It is two years to day since I left Toronto -- two years since I was sailing down lake Ontario in the Maple Leaf -- two years since my brother Joseph Henry was buried. I remember that day as long, and as well as, anything that ever happened. That day was to me a day of serious and solemn thought. It was a high and holy day. A day consecrated to lofty enabling thought. My hopes for improvement that day were ardent and sincere but my progress has not been equal to my expectations.

22nd July 1858 "Thursday morning" -- Last Saturday evening, after helping my father with two loads of hay, I went to town, and heard D'arcy McGee made a speech on the historical connection between Scotland and Ireland. I liked his speech and learned a good deal from it -- On Sunday last, I went to Fowlers along with my cousins. It was a day wasted and worse than wasted, for I spent it in sin and folly -- The last three or four nights and mornings; I have been mowing with my father. My hands are all blistered as a consequence -- Samuel Ford came to see me yesterday for the purpose of borrowing some money from me. I lent him fourteen dollars. I was glad to have the opportunity of doing him a good turn. He is going west to Hamilton to look for a school. I hope he may succeed in getting one.

29th July 1858 "Thursday morning." There was a great deal of rain last night, but the weather has been remarkably fine for the past two or three weeks, and has been favourable for making hay. I helped my father with his hay every morning and night last week and we got it all in safe. Hay has been poor this year, and the yield not equal to previous years. -- Last Friday night at the division, I promised to give a lecture on Physiognomy tomorrow night; but I am afraid I will make a very poor job of it -- I was in town last saturday and bought Rollin's Ancient History for which I gave six shillings. The work is in eight volumes and the maps in them alone are worth more than I gave for them. Mr Pritchard offered me two dollarsfor them, which is four shillings more than I

gave for them -- Mr Pritchard and I traded watches on Tuesday morning, I am to give him eight dollars into the bargain, I think I do not lose anything by this bargain -- My School is quite small now; and I do not attend to my business very well -- I have not studied any lately neither have I read very much -- Last Sunday I was at the Baptist Church in the forenoon; and at the Methodist Chapel at Bridgenorth in the afternoon and at Uncle John's in the evening.

2nd day of August, "Monday morning," On Friday evening last. I spoke half an hour on Physiognomy at the division. Yesterday morning I was at the Baptist Church and heard Mr. {Gilmour?} In town on Monday evening and had James and Heslop with me. I took them to the Phrenologist and had their heads examined. He said that they both had very fine heads -- On Sunday last I was at Livicks nearly all day.

24th August "Tuesday" -- After having two weeks of a vacation I commenced to teach yesterday; during my vacation I was working on the farm and when I read any it was in Macauley -- Last night after the school went out I went home and prepared the first ten of the 150 anecdotes that I have to learn before new Year's; after that I went over to Stotharts and from there to the Band of Hope division room and from there to Mr Chases and from there back home, I went for a phrenological bust, which Mr Chase had, I suppose the distance there and back again is fourteen miles, It was one O clock in the morning when I got home.

26th August, "Thursday morning." I commenced to learn Latin, last night, at a quarter before eleven O clock. I have at last resolved to study that language. I only wish that I had commenced it some three or four years ago. Although I am advanced in years, I must not spend my time murmuring and repenting, but go right manfully to work and I shall be successful.

30th day of August 1858 -- Monday morning -- I commenced to study Latin last Wednesday night at a quarter to eleven and studied about ten minutes, on thursday night I studied pretty hard at it, on Friday I didnt do much of it, on Saturday I did still less, but yesterday I studied at it six or seven hours, altogether I have studied at it about twelve hours and I am master of the nouns and I am going to commence at the adjectives to night.--

31st of August "Tuesday"-- I got up this morning at the dawn of day and studied Latin about two hours and a half, I wish I could rise at five O clock every morning all the year round, I may yet succeed in forming this habit and when I have done so, I will have made one sure step towards fame.--

2nd September Thursday Morning -- I got up this morning at half past four, and learnt the Ordinals, the distributives, and adverbs derived from the cardinals in Latin. If I stick as sedulously at the Latin for four months as I have done the past few days I will be reading in Caesar. I will however be content if I succeed in mastering the grammar before New Years.

7th September "Tuesday Morning" I have studied nothing since last Friday Morning-- I was in Peterboro last Saturday and had a long talk with the Dentist -- I was at a spree at Stinsons last night.

8th September -- Wednesday morning -- I let the school out at three O clock yesterday afternoon and went down to the fair where I saw Mr. Pritchard who told me that his

mother had died during his vacation-- I spent threepence at the fair yesterday -- Mr. Sinclair wanted to introduce me to Mr. McArthur yesterday but I wold'nt {wouldn't} let him -- I was yesterday introduced to McEwen, the teacher, in Stubbs School Section -- I think I will learn more during the next three or four months, than I have ever before done in the same period of time, not even excepting the time that I was at the Normal School -- I think it is quite likely that I will be in Toronto next winter, if I am I shall go pretty often to hear the speeches in parliament, and gain as much instruction from them as I can -- I am still bent on studying the Law and if nothing very remarkable happens it is altogether likely I will.

11th September – Saturday morning – I have been studying Latin this week, but have not done so well at it as I done last week, I have got through the Academics in a sort of way and I have translated five exercises -- I still been a reading aloud a little of Macaulay every day, I am now at the 106th page of the second volume, I am not learning as much from it as I would if I were paying my whole attention to it -- I may say that I have determined not to teach next year, but I think I would have no objection to teach a part of the year.

15th September – Wednesday evening -- During the last two days I have been thinking of graduating at the University of Toronto, I think I could be able to matriculate next september, if I could I might be Bachelor of Arts before I am twenty five years of age, my only difficulty in pursuing such a course would be to raise sufficient money, but with the money that I could raise increased by two Scholarships would be sufficient -- I studied Latin two hours and a half last night and one hour and a half this morning.

23rd September Thursday evening -- I have studied no Latin or anything else since Monday morning -- On Tuesday I was at the Excursion trip to Fenelon falls I dont think I shall ever forget that excursion, we were sailing twelve hours, there was over two hundred there, I walked around the boat all day and kept the company of no particular person, I talked to half the people in the boat, I was as usual backward among the girls, I saw the fight at night, and in {?} I saw more and heard more there I find convenient to write about at the present time.

26th September "Sunday" – I have been at home all day, I have been reading and studying stories a part of the day, I have also been reading Macauley about an hour

out of Dick's works, before I came away in the morning Aunt Livick asked me if I could lend them a hundred dollars, I neither gave her a promise nor refusal but I think I will have to give a refusal when it comes to a push -- On Saturday last I had no School, in the afternoon I went to town where there was a great meeting which had been called to disapprove of the course taken by the Governor General with regard to the late Brown Dorion administration, It was a rough meeting and I enjoyed myself at it remarkably well, when the meeting came to a close I voted in favour of the Governor General. --On Sunday I was at Mr. Dewarts and had a great talk with him which turned mainly on politics -- For about a week I have learned nothing, I am getting tired of the Latin, the novelty of the thing has disappeared and I now must force myself to study it -- I sleep till seven in the morning, this habit is the greatest enemy to my intellectual progress, if I want to get along I should get up at four or five in the morning

23rd October "Saturday morning"-- I was at the division last night and came home as soon as it was over, because an old man named Fury was at my place. Mr. Fury was a

good classical Scholar. He pretended to be able to read character from the face. He told me that nature had done a good deal for me. He said that I was the cleverest young man he had seen for a long time that I was in fact as great a genius as he had ever seen. When I was at the division he told my father that I would rise to eminence in the in ten years.

27th October "Wednesday morning" -- Last Saturday night I was in town. I bought a copy of Sallust for which I have to pay seventy five cents. I also renewed Hutchinsons note which now falls due on the 19th of December and amounts to one hundred and ninety five dollars.-- On Sunday I was at home all day -- On Monday evening I went over to see Pritchard -- Yesterday evening John Bickerton was at my place --Last Saturday night the effigies of Mrs Moore and Mrs. McEwan were hung. Mrs McEwen blames me for it but I am innocent. -- I have done nothing at Latin for the past two weeks. I must go at it to night if nothing happens --

3rd November Wednesday -- I had no school last saturday. I was in Peterboro in the afternoon and got a letter from Robert Bickerton. I got a ride home with Thomas H Milburn -- On Sunday last I was at Uncle Paul's. My cousins Sarah, George, and the Miss Hindon were there -- I have studied none for the past three or four weeks -- Next year I shall have nothing to do but improve my mind. Next year will tell what I will be in this world. It will tell whether I am to be great or insignificant.--

10th November "Wednesday morning" -- There is a thin coat of snow on the ground this morning -- Pritchard was at my place last night. He and I went over to Uncle Johns -- I am going to a wedding this evening, consequently I will not be able to learn anything.--

11th November "Thursday" It froze so hard last night that the people have not been able to plough today -- I was at Alexander Edmison's wedding last night. I got home about three this morning and when I went to bed it was so cold that I could not sleep consequently I had very little sleep last night. I have thought sometimes during the past few days that I might do worse than teach school next year. What brought me to that opinion is the fact, that if I teach next year and I take care of my money I will have somewhere in the neighborhood of eight hundred dollars, a sum which would enable me to give myself a splendid education.

[scribble at top of page] Mrs Clayton Sanderson R.R.1. Peterborough. (Mina Emison)

16th November "Tuesday morning" -- Last Saturday I was at home helping my father to kill his pigs. In the afternoon I was at Peterboro --On Sunday last I was at home all day -- -Last night when I was working at the division Henry Edmison came for me to go over to their place to see Sarah as she was going to be married to day and start in the afternoon train for Saint Mary's where her husband lives and owns a store. It was about ten O clock when I went over with Harry. The name of Sarah's husband is Mr. Theodore Hutton. He is a little man about the size of Mr. Chase and if I judge rightly he is very like that friend of mine. Jane was not over with me last night as she was not very well. George and I had a terrible talk with Henry about Lawyers. We shut him up so completely that he could not say a word in his defense -- I have not studied any for four or five weeks. I never got any further in the Latin since the night I was over at Livicks --On Sunday night, I was looking back on my career for the past four years, and when I did so I felt that if I had the same time to live over again that I would try to make a better use of my time.

For more information on Alexander Bickerton Edmison, check out the “Meet the Diarists” section under “Discover” on our website: ruraldiaries.uoguelph.ca