

May

THURSDAY 4

1911

that had any influence as she was a brave woman.

I was sorry to see my old playmates John, Andrew, and Nancy gone.

Father was to go to Traverse. Aunt Fanny wanted to keep me and Mother said I could decide myself.

Mother was a silent dignified woman. She seldom spoke to me and I quite stood in awe of her so although I felt I was making a strange choice I said I want to stay with Aunt Fanny.

So I let Father, Mother, and little brothers drive away without me.

It was the custom to have a minister and a layman at each station. This new

May

FRIDAY 5

1911

arrangement left Mr. Riggs and Uncle Jonas at Laquierte and Traverse. Father and Mr. Hopkins at Traverse. Mr. Hopkins and also his wife were related to Grandmother Gilliland Huggins. We called them Cousin Robert and Agness.

I lived with Uncle and Aunt that winter and had no school except a reading lesson now and then.

One of the best works the missionaries did was to take Indian or half breed children into the family and teach them. Father and Mother did their full share of this as also did Uncle and Aunt. I can count

May

SATURDAY 6

1911

fourteen such young people who at different times spent from a few months to years in our family. This winter Aunt had a lovely half breed girl Nancy McClure who had lost both parents. She was 14 years old I roomed in the attic with her and I must say she was a good modest girl. I learned no evil from her.

I think I first heard of Whiskey this winter.

One day some women came and said They have a keg of whiskey in camp and all the men are drinking.

Then said Aunt "the women will soon be here?"

Before dark they began

May

SUNDAY 7

1911

to come. The river was frozen over and there was snow on the ground.

They brought buffalo robes and spread them all over the living room floor.

Still more came. What shall be done Aunt had an inspiration. There is a ladder by which you can climb up the loft above the stable and pull the ladder after you burrow in the hay and be quite safe.

They gladly went.

In the middle of the night I was awakened by a great pounding on the door and heard a loud voice calling.

Do you see that? Good singing women (Aunt's name)

Is my wife here. I knew

May

MONDAY 8

1911

she was and that Aunt
could not tell a lie. What
would she say "Why is not
your wife at home"

No I cant find her I think
she is here. Have you seen
her. "Yes I saw her on the
road just before dark.
go home and see if she
is not there"

After day light all went
home. No doubt the whiskey
was all gone before midnight.

In the spring of 1848
Mother sent for me
She wanted her oldest
child at home, I was
that now as Amos had
been left in Ohio two
years before with Uncle
Amzi. He was like a
brother to his cousins

May

TUESDAY 9

1911

Harriet and Silas

This time I had no choice
but was very willing
to go. I was glad to meet
Father, Mother and little
brothers; but hardly looked
with favor on a little black
haired, brown boy who
seemed to belong.

He was about two years
old I believe he had no
parents, or relations that
cared for him. During a
drunken spree he had
fallen in the fire and
been badly burned.
No one wanted him and
Mother always pitiful to the
afflicted took him in.

I cannot say how many
months she cared for him
almost like a new born.

May

WEDNESDAY 10

1911

infant. He could only take a few steps and fall down.

His mind grew and we all began to really like the child. I never saw a more patient-amiable little fellow. He would do any chore in his power, and follow Father when plowing and say, Father when I am big you can rest-I will do all your plowing.

When he began to learn to read he made quite wonderful progress.

That year we had in the Mission a Miss Edwards. our children all loved to go to school to her. She said she never saw a child learn so fast-I think it was less than three years before he

May

THURSDAY 11

1911

began to decline. Mother did every thing in her power for him. I know she really loved little George.

We were all alone at that time. Mr. Hopkins being in Ohio. I heard Father and Mother saying when he came home they would adopt the child and have him baptized. I don't think it would have been really legal but they intended to give him a Christian education. There was no Indian wailing for him but silent tears were shed over the poor little waif. I never liked my Traverse home as I did Laquiparle. I longed for the brook where I used to wander. It was quite an occasion

May

FRIDAY 12

1911

when I went as far as the big stone that parted the stream. Such sweet-smelling flowers as grew on its bank. I longed to visit it again and often dreamed of it.

Then too there were few Indians came in, it seemed lonesome. Not a Christian Indian there. Very few who cared to ^{learn to} read.

Our schooling was very scrappy. Cousin Agness heard our lessons about two hours a day when there was not too much to do.

Indian girls came in during the winter and pieced scraps furnished by the Mission.

They had pillow ticks of buck skin and covered them with their sewings

May

SATURDAY 13

1911

Mother and Mrs. Hopkins held what they called female prayer meetings, at which we children were present. Mr. Hopkins had three children younger than I. At Lacquiparle the weekly female prayer meetings would sometimes comprise a doz or so. The Indian women taking an active part, praying in their own language.

Whiskey water was more treacle here too.

One day a number of women came running saying a half breed was after them with a big knife. They ran into the house for protection.

The man came in with swift-but-unsteady gait. Father and Mr. Hopkins

May

SUNDAY 14

1911

caught him as he came up and called for rope.

Both women ran for their clothes line and he was securely tied. We were living both families in a double log house. A few ft. away a frame house was in process of construction and here they carried the drunk man. Mother sent quilt and pillow that he might be comfortable.

The night was warm.

Some time in the night Mr. Hopkins ran past my window calling the man was loose. Father jumped up. I heard the man say I will get my gun and kill you all. Father was a pretty good sprinter

May

MONDAY 15

1911

and they caught and took him back. In the morning he was quite ashamed.

Mother sent him a good breakfast and no doubt. Father gave him a temperance lecture and let him go. I believe about this time

Mother's Sister Harriet came out and stayed about a year, spending part of the time at the Lacquiparle Mission. She was very much afraid of the water especially in a frail canoe.

In going to Lacquiparle they found the Chippewas very high having overflowed its banks and rubbing through the trees.

No way to get over except-

May

TUESDAY 16

1911

a small canoe. I really don't know how the team got over. Aunt Harriet lay flat in the bottom of the boat. Mr. Riggs and Uncle Jonas took long ropes and tried to pull her across. Possibly Uncle swam with the rope. Although he was lame he was a very good swimmer. The boat capsized in mid stream throwing Aunt into the raging water. Uncle rescued her and brought her to land where they soon made a fire for it was pretty cold weather. While Aunt was at our house she taught the Mission children

May

WEDNESDAY 17

1911

In the spring of 1848 the Hopkins family who had been spending the winter in Ohio, ^{returned} and with them the three exiles. Amos, Jane, and Eliza. It was a great event. We heard of their approach and went down to the landing. The water was low and the river very crooked. We waited some time before round a bend they came. On a flat boat poling it along with long poles that reached bottom. My interest was mostly in Eliza the nearest my own age. She put her arm through mine and we were acquainted at once. Amos was very quiet. Jane was

May

THURSDAY 18

1911

~~Have~~ ~~was~~ quite enthusiastic
she caught up the little
ones and seemed very
happy to be at home.

Frances Gilliland
named for her Grandmother
would be two years old the
following August. Rufus
was four.

Brother Amos had a
violin. The first I remember
I remember to have seen
I thought his playing very
fine. In a few days some
one came down from Saquip-
-ale Uncle Jones for one to
take supplies home.

I begged to go home with
him. Mother said so
soon after your sisters
have come but I thought
I would have the time

May

FRIDAY 19

1911

to see them later. Cord
I went. Uncle Jones had
a covered wagon and Amos
who went a one horse buggy
he wanted me to ride
with him and I did most
of the time although Uncle
often suggested I would
get sunburned, and oh I
did. I think in June and
very warm. The young folks
got very sleepy I took a nap.
Then Amos said my turn
you drive while I sleep.
No doubt the spirit was
willing but the first I knew
Amos said, "Marry, see where
you are!" I raised my head
and saw we were on the
side of a steep hill among
trees and brush. The wonder
is we were not overturned.

May

SATURDAY 20

1911

We carefully climbed the hill and saw the covered wagon in the distance.

The prairie was so gay with flowers and tall grass waving in the breeze, about two ft. high. I used to wonder why people sowed timothy and clover when all outdoors was covered with hay.

When we reached the Chippaway river we found it over its banks too deep to ford and spent nearly all day trying to get boats. There was another party waiting. Among them a lively young Scotchman Duncan Kennedy. He came to our camp and at last boats were procured

May

SUNDAY 21

1911

from some quarters and we all got safely ^{over} and reached the Mission before night. Alas! for all my dreams. Every thing was changed.

The log houses gone, even the adobe church. A little higher up the hill two neat frame houses stood and near where the old church was a frame building with a bell suspended above it. Mr. Riggs house was but a few ft. from Uncle and he had two girls near my age. We often went for water together down the long hill and some times played together but I never felt very chummy with them.

Isabella & Martha

May

MONDAY 22

1911

Uncle and Aunt did their full share keeping Indian or french children. This summer they had Joe Latour, about ten I think, and Lydia an Indian girl about the same.

I loved Lydia, she was named for Mother and was a very sweet gentle girl. Before I came home her people took her away and I shed many tears, and longed for years to see her again. I could not find the location of the old house and brother Amos showed it to me. I stood sadly and gazed at the hole in the ground, he told me was the old cellar. It was all green up with

May

TUESDAY 23

1911

nettles. It seemed longer since I had lived there, than 20 years does now, and it was just three years.

Again I went to church and heard the Indians sing and pray many of them knew me and called me Taterowin (Gray wind - woman) Uncle and Aunt had two children Laure and Albert. Samuel the oldest died when about a year old. Albert was a baby sitting up and I spent considerable time with him. Why did not the Misses have a well? They went some distance to the spring. Now that they had moved up on the hill it was quite a hardship to bring

May

WEDNESDAY 24

1911

water up a steep hill, so steep Uncle had made steps in two places, one place had six steps, the other three. The canyon was dark, both sides over hung with trees the narrow path. I seldom went alone always all a tremble with fear.

Some Indian girls had reported that near where a barrel had been sunk for convenience

they saw a horrible creature, half man half beast. Although I knew better I thought about it.

One day when water was needed Aunt asked me to go. I was ashamed to say I was afraid. so

May

THURSDAY 25

1911

took the little pail and went. Just when passing one of the most spooky turns, a young Indian man sprang in front of me holding a war club over me and giving what I supposed might be a war whoop. Of course I screamed and ran, reaching home pale and breathless.

Before I reached home I thought who it was Pa man I had often seen.

Next day he came to the house. And Aunt said, "Why did you frighten the child?" He said, "Just to hear her scream, and grinned at me. I felt ashamed and yet hardly forgave him. He was

May

FRIDAY 26

1911

afterward wounded by the Chippewags and before dying gave his little girl to Aunt Jane who seemed to love her as though she were her own. In September Mr and Mrs. Hopkins came up, and I went home with them to Traverse just as I was getting into the wagon, Aunt called out - Remember you are eleven years old tomorrow.

The trip was pleasant but quite uneventful. One day while out walking we came to a patch of blue fringed Gentians I had never seen them before and thought them the prettiest flower yet. They grew in a rather moist meadow place but

May

SATURDAY 27

1911

not a swamp.

I was glad to get home. Had more than once dreamed of black eyed little Frankie. Golden haired dark grey eyed Eliza seemed no older than myself and we went into the same classes.

She told me afterward she thought me a funny little girl I talked so like grown folks.

Soon after this Mr. Joseph Laframboise brought his little daughter Julia and asked to have her taken into the family and taught. The Missionaries had generally been quite shy of the traders but once in going past Mother had been sick and they stopped at his house for

May

SUNDAY 28

1911

The night Mr. L. was much pleased and did all he could for them. He was the son of a French officer and a half breed woman who had been educated in a convent. I believe French was his native language. He was now engaged in trade with the Sioux and spoke three languages fluently.

Julia's Mother was the daughter of the noble chief Sleepy eyes and when grown had somewhat the bearing of a chieftan. She would be noticed any where. She lived with us more than five years and with letters and visits we kept in touch with her all her 28 beautiful years. I loved her like a sister.

May

MONDAY 29

1911

Soon after came a Mrs. and Mrs. Angee (Angel) both were half Indian. She was the daughter of an Englishman Col. Dickson. They brought two girls whom they wished the Mission to take Victoria and Harriet. Father and Mother took Victoria and Mr. Hopkins Harriet. Victoria was a real good girl but her witty tongue sometimes stung me.

That was a merry winter. We were a family of 13 for Mr. Laframboise had brought his son Alexis, also a nice pleasant boy. We all went to school to Cousin Agness as we called her. All but Armas. He had been in a high school and I suppose was ready for collage.

May

TUESDAY 30

1911

Great changes came the next year 1851. In March Harriet Cardelia Huggins was born. We all thought her the prettiest baby ever was.

In June Commissioners from the Government came from Washington to make a treaty to buy a large strip of the Indians Land.

They set up a tent city and Indians from all the bands far and near came to the council. Mr. Riggs came for interpreter also several others who understood the language. I believe they had a warm time. Some did not to sell and at last did so under great pressure.

There were about 2000 Indians camped near the big stone

May

WEDNESDAY 31

1911

we called it on the hill some rods from the Mission houses. Now there is a tablet on its side to commemorate the site of the treaty. That year was very high water and several steam boats came as far as Traverse and even farther. On Sunday Mr. Riggs preached to the white folks under the big booths made for the council. Beavers were killed and calicos distributed to make a good feeling.

Although I had heard the scalp dance and sacred dance and the horrible gourd rattling and cries over the sick the presence of so many heathen made me sometimes a little timid. The rains were so long and

June

THURSDAY 1

1911

The Indians concluded to kill the thunder bird

They erected a rude image of a bird and with wild hawks danced around firing it full of holes until it fell shattered to the ground

One day they had a begging dance. This was by the Northern bands. You could tell the northern bands by their dress and sometimes by their features. The moccasins were a different pattern.

They wore more buckskin and less cloth.

The dancers were all men. Three good looking girls sat near on the ground to receive the gifts. They each the men had whatever they thought could make the

June

FRIDAY 2

1911

most-noise. One man a frying pan another a string of bells. They chanted a rude kind of tune as they danced, every now and then running around the tent. When some one in the tent brought out presents of calico blankets or wild rice they all ran in double quick to another tent. They used to dance around the mission houses but as they gained nothing they quit. One day a band of young men begging on horse back firing off guns came through the yard. I ran as others did into the house. These ^{were} wild northern bands and their yells were truly blood curdling. A few days before the 4th



From the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society: Alexander G. Huggins and Family Papers.

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society, and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.

www.mnhs.org