

## MV Diaries – William Butler and George Willoughby

Typed by Linda Hampson from the Dukes County Intelligencer

### William Butler Diary

*1966 Vol. 8.2 page 23. Martha's Vineyard in 1792 – A Diary. William Butler.*

Notes by Huntington. 30 wigwams at Sengekontacket – Majors Cove. Small settlement at Lagoon Pond.

Feb. 8 Very hard weather for sheep, being a great deal of snow on the ground – employ'd by looking after cattle, sheep &c. [Wm. Butler – like father – tanner by trade – also farmer, sheep raiser, teacher. Talks about being on the West Side or East Side (of Lagoon Pond)].

March 14 Employ'd mending fences.

March 15 Rode to New Town.

March 16 Came down from Chilmark.... brought down from Bassets 36 ½ lb flax being the sixthpart of what came off 2 acres ground.

March 17 Employ'd opening Farm Pond Crick – set it a running

March 20 Employ'd getting withs on the Plains [probably for weir or eel pots].

[1792 many Martha's Vineyard people moving to Maine – New Vineyard – due to population explosion and the lack of good land].

March 24... cutting posts.

March 27 Employ'd mending fences.

*1967 Vol. 8.4 Wm. Butler Diary continued*

April 4 Employ'd shutting in the meadow. It is now as forward in respect to grass and weather as the first day of May in a Common Spring.

April 5 This day Peter Norton carried away a half a load Sedge Hay – gave 20 shillings for same.

April 6 Employ'd plowing at home.

April 9 Employ'd plowing at home – sold 400 wt. hay. Ansall Norton bought 500 English hay of E. Butler.

April 21 Up at Squibnocket yarding sheep type \_\_\_\_.

***George Haskell Willoughby Diaries 1880-83 Lived on Chappy.***

1-7-1880 Put board under hen roost to catch droppings. All must be saved; cleaned out poultry house got one bbl of nice dressing.

2-2-1880 went down to Data's swamp and cut wood at halves clams, eels, scallops; goats, sheep ducks

3-4-1880 Got one load of swamp wood.

3-15-1880 Saw a live seal off Cape Pogue.

3-22-1880 Helped Uncle Isaiah burn the side hill next the burning ground.

4-1-1880 Saw the first porpoise I ever saw – had meat & liver for supper fair eating. 20 cod, 5 skate, muskrat. Sugar Beets, potatoes, peas, beans, radish, squash, corn.

4-28-1880 Helped Isaiah Belain cart one load of Ooze from between the Necks. "We burnt off N Neck and were so unfortunate as to burn Granville Dunham's boat and boathouse."

5-1-1880 Got liquid manure from G Huxford – said I could have 4 bbl.

5-5-1880 Went to Cape Pogue to work for E Worth – set fence.

5-7-1880 Finished fence.

5-10-1880 Had to foot it home so foggy. [from Pogue?].

5-15-1880 Went down to the house place and spaded over a piece of bushy land.

5-17-1880 Went into woods for my summer's wood. I shall have to go once more to get enough.

5-22-1880 Went to the common and got a load of wood. Caught 20 Bluefish, took to town and sent off to New Bedford iced the fish.

5-31-1880 Went to gut caught 10 Bluefish. Bees. Various people help plow, harrow. Caught sharks.

7-28-1880 Went coaling. Got 138 strap tubs full. Cut hay.

7-31-1880 Went to common & got wood cut last spring.

8-13-1880 Went to town to see Geo. Cleaveland about some scrub land. His son will show it tomorrow.

8-24-1880 Cut part of my meadow.

8-27-1880 Arose early and went to Christian Town. See Mr. Saunders about donkey. In going up I passed through that wonderfull scrubland. The most part of the undergrowth is about 2 ft high. The land appears good and there isn't very much trouble to clear it in my opinion. The land is very level and I could see 2 or 3 miles in all directions and then I couldn't see out of this wilderness of scrub oaks.

9-1-1880 Fished cutting meadow and poled the hay.

9-18-1880 Went after pine needles, got 1 bag.

9-24-1880 Ground 2 axes and cut a road through the first swamp.

9-29-1880 Brought a load of dry cow dung to burn.

10-27-1880 Went down with team for my coal – about 2100 of it One load.

10-28-1880 Got another load of seaweed. Put dirt on the seaweed around the house to keep from blowing away.

11-4-1880 Brought 3 loads seaweed – one for pig pen, 2 to bank house.

11-6-1880 Going to put a pair of bars between 2 sheep pastures so I can get some stone out of the further pasture to finish my pig-pen wall.

11-9-1880 Got 6 loads of stone with Jennie out at Isaiah's farther sheep pasture to build a side wall to the pig pen.

11-10-1880 Worked a while making wall to set hen pen on. Smashed both thumbs. Seaweed to make pig pen warm & tight.

11-16-1880 Saw Chas. Duham in town. He has asked me fair and square to take his farm. I accepted.

11-17-1880 Went to town to get some corn ground but mill is out of order.

11-18-1880 Brought 2 ½ loads manure from hen house.

12-3-1880 Went to town landing and cut some wood.

12-20-1880 2 bags pine needles – put litter in pig pen. Found a munk fish – cooked for the hens.

1-1-1881 I have succeeded in living within my income the past year. Have a chance to carry on a 500 ac. farm on shares – haven't decided. Cape Pogue frozen.

1-17-1881 Went to see folk clearing Mr. Enis wood lot for stumps & wood.

1-24-1881 Went after sumac to tan the kidd skin.

2-18-1881 Went to woods for wood. Went to landing for wood – numerous times.

3-29-1881 Scrubbed the edge of the swamp; burned off edge of swamp.

4-1-1881 Pulled barberry bushes. Burned whole piece fire got away from us but plowed around to control.

4-14-1881 Got a load of roots for fuel.

4-26-1881 Went to common to cut wood.

4-29-1881 Put in potatoes. Put ashes over them.

5-3-1881 Common to cut wood.

5-4-1881 Used shark compost in hogshead as dressing.

5-20-1881 Worked day to pay off cord of wood.

5-24-1881 Night soil on tomatoes too strong.

6-7-1881 Common for wood.

8-7-1881 Got 8 qts huckleberries. Cutting sage on meadow.

Nov 29-30, 1881 Teaming sea-weed all day.

12-27-1881 Carted 2 loads seaweed from the Dyke.

1-1-1882 Lived within means and saved 32.79 net. Owe various livestock. Long accounting. Various wood cutting.

4-1-1882 Our wood is gone and we are burning whatever we can lay our hands on.

4-18-1882 Went to town with Cara & Fred... When we got home we found Ria in bed with a new born Son. She had been alone since noon. [Wife Ria = Maria.]

4-19-1882 Spent forenoon picking part of the stones off this half acre.

“Swim the animals across the ferry”

May 23, 1882 – off on a boat.

1-1-1883 Rumney, NH.

2-1-1885 Back on Chappy.

2-3-1885 Eel Pond frozen.

2-16-1885 Some of worst weather ever seen.