

Trent University Archives

Collins, Gammon fonds (Accession 13-008)

Following is a transcription of two diaries located in Box 2 Folder 9.  
The author of the diaries is Walter M.C. Roger (1839-1906).

Diary 1 covers the period 6 June 1853 to 27 August 1853.

Diary 2 covers the period 11 July 1857 to 24 January 1858.

Notes regarding the transcription:

repetitive references to dates omitted  
commas, colons, and semi-colons sometimes omitted or added to  
facilitate flow of text  
minor spelling anomalies have been maintained (example: 'severly'  
for 'severely')

DIARY 1

Diary by Walter Roger  
Peterborough  
1853 June 6th  
County Gram'ar School  
County Peterborough Canada West  
W.M.C. Roger  
1853

June 6, Monday

Got up at seven. It was a fine, but not bright, morning. I was rather late for school this morning as I had to go two messages into the town. I heard this morning that they had found the body of that Frenchman who was drowned about two weeks ago. I was told that his body was lying down on the wharf beside May's boat. It rained very heavily part of the forenoon, and most of the afternoon.

June 7, Tuesday

Got up at six. It was rather dull and cloudy when I got up, but after a little, the sun broke out and then things looked more cheerful. During play-hour, Mr. O'Grady, J. Dixon, John, and I went up to the Foundry to see a little steam engine that was there. This was Fair-day, and there were a great many people in town today. People were autioneering at almost every corner of the town. As I was standing beside the Post-office this evening, I saw four cribs pass, one after the other, in about fifteen minutes. It has been fine all today, with a strong breeze which made it rather cool.

June 8, Wednesday

Got up at seven. It was a very cool and a very clear morning, the sun shining not very brightly. During play-hour I went up to the dam. The place where the cribs go over was so crowded with timber that they could not pass; they had to open the boom to let it away. There is such a large jam of timber at the bridge now that the cribs cannot pass at all on one side, and on the other, they strike the shore. I saw sixteen or eighteen go down the river this afternoon. There was a sharp breeze and a bright sun during most of the day. It was very cool in the evening.

June 9, Thursday

Got up at half past six. It was a very pleasant and cool morning. During play hour I and several other boys went up to the dam; we followed a crib (which was coming down then) down the river; we saw it go over the two dams and down past the bridge. The crows are now very hard upon the late spring corn, peas, etc. Today our man shot two and stuck them up, one at each end of the cornfield in *terrorem ceteris* [Latin, meaning to threaten or alarm]. I hope that they will have the desired effect of frightening away the others.

June 10, Friday

This morning I awoke and got up at half past four, but when I found it was so early, I went to bed again and slept until nearly half past six. The morning was fine but not very bright. I heard that the steamer 'Forester' was grounded for about two hours this morning opposite her landing place. I heard that there was a case of the small pox in the middle of the town just now but I am not sure whether it be true or not. It was very warm during the day with, now and then, a cool breeze.

June 11, Saturday

It was a fine and bright morning. About half past nine a.m. I went to the school to meet Mr. O'Grady and the other boys there to go out sketching. We went up the other side of the river (past Mr. O'Grady's) and sketched Mr. Langton's mills. He got a very fine trilobite [fossil] in the quarry up there; Frank Taylor found it. Mr. O'Grady took his gun with him and shot several Blackbirds. We saw five cribs pass down the river this afternoon. It was very warm today, especially for walking. W. Roger, June 11th, Peterboro, 1853.

June 13, Monday

Got up a little after six. The morning was a very fine one, warm and pleasant. At play hour I saw a man come down the river into Hall's dam on a small timber stick paddling with his pike pole. He got off it on the boom. While we were in swimming, there was a large crib went over

the dam. Almost the whole place is very much troubled with the smell of the skunk which is very disagreeable. It was very warm and oppressive today but there was a cooling breeze for a short time towards evening. There is a good deal of sheet lightning this evening.

June 14, Tuesday

This morning was a very fine, warm, and pleasant one, the sun shining very brightly. The principal theme of conversation at present is the great riots at Quebec and Montreal and the almost miraculous escape of Father Gavazzi. I read an account of the Quebec riot in which, however, there was no loss of life. But I heard that at Montreal the troops were called out and ordered to fire and that about thirty persons were killed. I heard that Thomas McCauley (who used to be here) was amongst those severely [sic] wounded. It was as hot this forenoon as it was yesterday but a refreshing breeze in the afternoon made it cooler.

June 15, Wednesday

Got up at half past six. The morning was a very fine and warm one. About eight o'clock I heard a noise which sounded something like "Pokoko". I went to the garden to see what it was & I found it to be a bird. It was larger, a little, I think, than a robin but not so clumsily made, of a light brown color, it's wings and tail long. This has been just such another day as yesterday for heat; if there be any difference it has been warmer.

June 16, Thursday

Every thing looks bright this morning but not very fresh as there has been no rain at all lately. During play hour I and some of the other boys were catching gallinippers [large mosquitoes] below Hall's dam. I got a nip from one but I do not think that they bite so hard as some say they do. After school I went down to the lock to meet the 'Forester'. While I was waiting for her, Stevenson's little steamer came up; they had to open but one of the gates to let her pass.

June 17, Friday

This morning everything has a pleasant and fresh appearance from last night's rain which was very heavy. It was very acceptable and useful as there has been nothing but hot weather lately. I have found out since that I very far erred in stating that there were about thirty killed in the riot in Montreal as there were but about six or seven killed. Mr. O'Grady was not at school today, I believe, because he has a boil on his cheek. There was a cool breeze today and consequently it was not so warm as it was yesterday.

June 18, Saturday

It is fine and clear this morning and not too warm. Soon after breakfast John and I took the little carriage down to R. Waddle's to get it mended; it broke the second day it was used. I saw a crib go over Hall's dam today with only 3 men on it. This has been a very fine day neither too hot nor too cold. June 18th 1853, Peterboro, W Roger.

At the end of this week Mr. O'Beirn allowed us to stop writing the Diaries and is going to set us to writing themes. W Roger.

After the Holidays

August 15, Monday

Got up at half past six. The school began last Thursday and I begin diary today on my own account. Nasty work going to school these days. O'B is so thundering cross especially about the Latin. Mr. O'Grady is not back yet and it is rumoured his missus has a baby. I had no swim today at all as John and I came home in Wallis' carriage this afternoon. W. Roger.

August 16, Tuesday

Got up a little after seven. It is a very fine morning. The men have begun to cut the oats. They are done with the Barley and nearly so with the wheat- spring. Mrs. and Annie Gordon have been here upwards of a month and says she intends staying while the McLeods are here. Martha & Lill Hall and Bella Jeffery are here this evening. I have been neglecting my Diary lately and I can only take a few notes of the past week.

August 18, Thursday

Jane and Maggie McLeod came to Peterboro this evening on board the 'Otonabee'. Johnny and I went to the Lox to meet them. As we were coming up, the boat ran against the shore upon which Johnnie ran to the side to look down when a gust of wind blew his hat onto the shore. He has no hopes of seeing it again.

August 22, Monday

Papa, Mama, Miss Jane Mc. and Jenney went to Norwood today. Mr. O'Grady came back to school today. And when I saw him I asked him how Mrs. O'Grady and the Baby were. He told me that it was not born yet. Mrs. & Anna Gordon left our house today saying that they were going away the next morning.

August 23, Tuesday

It is a very nice and cool day today. After school I went with Jim Hall to their house. He lent me 4 or 5 small drawing copies of heads. Jim came up home with me and when we were coming up we caught a number of crawfish which some of them here tried to eat but could not make much of them. Papa and his party returned from Norwood about ten or eleven this evening. By the by, a comet has been seen here every evening since Sunday, but I am shure [sic] that I saw it on Friday night when I was watching for Mr. Wallis' balloon after I came down from his place, where Jenney, Johnney, and I had been spending the evening with a number of other young folks. As the balloon was not put up until pretty late we did not stay to see it. W. Roger.

August 24, Wednesday

Got up about half past seven. Went to school at the usual time. I had not my Latin exercise so Mr. O'G. told me I must stay in and write it at play hour, but although he was there during that time he did not make me do it. During play hour I went up to the dam to see what like the dam was for fishing, when, to my infinite delight I found lying on a part of the dam, nothing less than a ---! copper!. There were two or three small showers of rain today. When I came home from school today, Jane, Bella, and Maggie were just going out to spend the remainder of the day at Mrs. Roach's. About seven o'clock I went down to the post office. Jenney came with me as far as the Hall's. When I was in the town I saw the girls but they preferred staying later to coming home then. I called at Mrs. Hall's, in coming home, for Jen and from that time until near nine we could see the comet nicely. It looked truly beautiful. The girls came home about half past ten. Jim Jeffrey had walked home with them.

August 25, Thursday

Got up about half past six. A very fine morning, cool. Johnny, Bella, & Maggie drove up to Mrs. Tulley's for butter this morning. This is drawing day today and Mr. O'G. brought me a picture to draw today and I have nearly finished the sketching of it. It is a horse with a side saddle on, a little boy holding it and two dogs beside him. About seven o'clock Bella, Maggie, and John went down to the town to the post. Papa and Jane and I then began to watch for the comet. I saw first. Papa did not see it till a few minnets [sic] after. When first seen it was about a quarter after seven. John and the girls saw it as they were coming home from the town. Shortly after they came home we had worship and when we went out after worship the tail was just disappearing. It was then half-past eight or not so much. Bella, Maggie, and Jenney had been down to town for about two hours after dinner. They went down to ask Isabella Dixon (Dr. Dixon's daughter from Kingston), the two little girls Benson, and Martha and Lill Hall up to tea. But as the former were going out to their aunts that evening the others were not asked and none of them came. W. Roger, August 25th.

August 26, Friday

Got up about six. A very fine morning, not too warm. Jane and Maggie McLeod went home this morning by the boat (Otonabee). Johnnie and Bella went down to the wharf in the wagon with them and saw them safe away. When John (the man) came home he did not take Jenney and Jessey from the wagon as he was going to take a grist to the mill after worship. So after worship he took out the seats and loaded up. As we were setting off to the school just when he was going we got on with him. When we had got down the hill and round the corner near Mrs. Wilson's we met a single wagon. We were going pretty fast at the time. Jessey shied suddenly to the side and made the wagon go over a very large stone on the road side. The wagon was nearly upset but at any rate the jolt threw Johnnie and me out. The wheel went over Johnnie's arm and hurt it a good deal but did not brake it. We were both bruised but not seriously injured. T'is well that we were not hurt worse. We went home again and did not go to school that day. As I was not so bad as Johnnie I drove Mama, Jenney and Rachel down to the town about 12 o'clock. We watched the comet this evening only for a few minutes. We saw it first about 25 minutes to seven. Mrs. and Maggie Denistown [Denistoun] called here this evening. I did not go to meeting this evening.

August 27, Saturday

Got up about half past six. Drove down to the town with Rachel in the buggy [sic] to put a letter in the post office for Papa. As the 'Otonabee' was just going off I drove down to see it go. It grounded for a few minutes opposite the wharf but it soon got away again. After I had got my breakfast J. and I took a walk up to Dixon's to ask Jim about drawing but as he... [diary incomplete]

## DIARY 2

Note: Although the author's name does not appear in the following diary, context and handwriting similar to Diary 1 suggest that the author is Walter M.C. Roger.

Note: At the tops of several pages in the following diary are words that briefly summarize the content of the page, i.e. "Old Jenny. Buggy [sic] confab". Although these words somewhat disrupt the natural flow of text, they are integral to the diary and appear in sections beginning with "Note at top of original page...".  
1857

July 11, Saturday

I got yesterday so imperfectly presented in my last entry that I must again take a little retrospect. Well, soon after breakfast the Sheriff's (Jarvis) architect called & made a superficial inspecting of the house.

Hora ruit, Feathers from the Wings of Time, Sept. 4/57

Sherriff Jarvis required Mr. McVicarts leave one of the houses immediately so the school broke up in the beginning of the week, with an address from both Mr. M & Mr. D & an ill managed presentation from us - 3 books. The boys of [ ] left on Tuesday afternoon. Jenny came up to Mrs. Flemmings with Tilly. She staid nearly 3 weeks but I left on Thursday with Papa by the Kingston.

Meantime I loafed about Victoria Terrace or walked the streets with Jenny. I staid all night at Morgan's & went to McLeod's on Friday (July 17) where I stayed till Monday July 27. Bathed, fished, worked in [garden] & hay field, walked, etc. etc. Went one day to Grafton with Bessie. Came out in cars at 11 & walked out to Cordack & surprised them & got surprised myself at appearance of natives & things in general.

Johnny Gow sick most of the month of August & harvesting, etc. Great work with wheat, peas, etc.

August 4, Tuesday

Papa returned from Presbytery with Willie McMurrich who had come down from Toronto with Jenny (she remained in Cobourg with Morgans).

August 10, Monday

Willie & I went to Rice Lake with Theodore & Mr. Scriver his tutor in their new buggie [sic].

August 12 [13], Thursday

A cruise. We all went down in the "Lotus" to Harwood to see the young ladies coming up in the train. Wind high - eventful. Beware how you indulge in "playing the fool".

August 13 [14], Friday

Came home. Theodore drove us. Mr. John Hall dead. To be no tea party this year. Mamma is not well - taken with spitting blood, etc.

Busy with little employments working, driving, messaging & doing this & that for every one in every direction.

August 25, Tuesday

Got my first lesson in crayon drawing today from Mrs. Green. Don't know yet whether I will like it or not. A great deal of flirting & romping going on here just now amongst Lizzie, Katie, Willie, & the girls. I can hardly add & myself.

August 28, Friday

The Morgans & Willie went to Cobourg by the cars in the afternoon.

Note at top of original page: [Ho] for Fenelon Falls

September 5, Saturday

Evening – scene – Miss McLean's quondam bedroom – Jimmy sleeping & candle dimly burning. The Pengellies had invited me to accompany them to the Back Lakes this fall & as Papa & Mamma would not consent for fear of endangering my health, I resolved (one night) if possible to get a trip up at the time of the Fenelon Bazaar [sic] – per steamboat up through the lakes & with some difficulty got Papa's consent. Jim Hall at first promised to accompany me but upon his offering me a seat in the carriage to Metcalf with his sisters & uncle, I consented to go that way – starting at 5 in the morning. I had got everything ready, my little bundle (my shirt & waterproof cloak) & all. Nothing now remained but to ask Papa for money & how that was the question. I went to him

Note at top of original page: Disappointment \$!\$!\$!\$!\$!\$!\$!

& supposed I would not see him again in the morning & he coolly bade me Good bye – so I asked him point blanc & without getting a right answer went down stairs to my room (Miss McLean's quondam apartment). After a little while he came down intending as I subsequently learned to give me a dollar, but when I gave him to understand that it would take perhaps \$3 as the Halls were taking me only to Metcalf, he declared he could not afford such expenses for no useful purpose, & so there was no help for it & I must stay at home. Oh! That was a night that I think I shall not soon forget. I felt it the more from the thoughts which had been occupying my mind before. That very forenoon while out giving mamma her airing I had had a long talk with her about that puzzle of puzzles – “What I am to be”. The leading feature had been the study of law as a profession. I am every day growing more & more confirmed in the idea that – be what I will be (& to be something I wish). I must begin & be it pretty soon. I must remember that I have not yet succeeded in completely removing from my father's shouldiers [sic] all my own burden. The next morning (Wed. 2nd Sept) John woke me as promised in good time & down I walked through the mist & down to Halls & told them I could not go. John F.A. – [Ebro] & [IH] were standing on the steps when I went. I believe they had a very pleasant time of it.

Note at top of original page: Careless want of courtesy

Monday eve, September 14

Rose about 6 ½ - Cloudy then & continued so most of the day - rained very heavily about 10. At 12 I went to town to see the time of Mrs. (Mossom) Boyd's funeral - died in childbearing (4 p.m.). Had on waterproof cloak & was soaked with perspiration by the time I got back. Wishing to get Papa's forgotten (think) walking-stick & borrow a book from Hall (Summer time in the Country), I called at the bank & walked up with him. He is just as he used to be for tho' they were at dinner when we went in & he talked a little while to me in the D.R. he shewed his characteristic want of thoughtful courtesy by dismissing me & then as I was stepping from his inhospitable presence he added to his "Good bye" a "Stop & take dinner" which I heard as tho' I heard not.

Note at top of original page: Letter, Mamma, [Jimmy], The Prospect

Got a letter this afternoon from J Gordon (P.H.) which made a trip to Georgetown before me, calling at Toronto "en passant" before consenting to "try Peterborough". Mamma still keeps better - slowly mending. At 4, I gave her her regular airing - went to the "New Lot" in the buggy [sic] - Jimmy with us bothering me industriously to say "knife" that he may have an opportunity of laughing out his repartee "Go to bed & kiss your wife!" As we drove to the square drive in the clovery meadow at the "N.L.", through the two new gates at the road, dark slatey clouds with fleecy white ones beyond floated above the town which lay stretched out before us. A pleasing view. Black clouds rolled up from beyond the swamp threatening soon to punish our temerity in venturing out; but ere long

Note at top of original page: Old Jenny. Buggy [sic] confab

their thunder rumblings were echoed back as they retreated toward the S.E. As we thrice wended our rectangular course around the field, "Old Jenny" seemed to enjoy amazingly the mouthfuls of rich clover cropt [sic] from the verdant & purple plenty thro which she marched knee deep & mamma & I talked of her boarding school days & the friends of her youth, of our own family affairs - as the expediency of Papa's farming & keeping a man (John) at £50 a year and a boy (Johnny Gow) at more than the half, etc. of that egotistic enigma. - "What am I to be?" In returning I gave my place to Papa & Bessy whom we met in the "far fields" [ ]. Margaret has been away to see her widowed sister (Mrs. Miller) & her new baby.

Note at top of original page: Items - Drawing

September 15, Tuesday

Mr. & Mrs. Stewart of Otonabee called here this forenoon with some Bazaar [sic] affairs. Only thing (while I think of it) Miss Fergison won't give the folks the pattern for braiding the "Turkish cushion." Drove mamma for her airing today to "Clover Sqr" [Square] at 1.

At 3, I walked to town playing "the agreeable" to Martha so far. Bo't [bought] a lot of things at Murphey White's. At Mrs. Greens, I finished my crayon piece & brought it home with glass bo't [sic] at Kingan's. Papa says it is the nicest of the kind he ever saw. From home (at 6) hurried over to Swanston's & got 3 loaves of bread for 1/3. Mrs. Davis was here to tea & walked down with me. Called for Bella at Halls. John talked to Papa (coming home) about a travel & thinks he'll go.

Note at top of original page: Scribdigable [sic] events

October 21, Saturday

Davy reading "Old Daniels" tales. A snowy Sat. afternoon. "Tempers fugit"? "Hora ruit"! etc. etc. "Scrib diginable". Little Lake regatta.

Events – Painting & Drawing with Miss Besset & Mrs. Green.

Occupation of T. Hall & Method. School room & church.

Arrival of Mrs. Blain & visits to Monaghan.

Parsonage of Bella, Martha, etc. etc.

Visit of Mr. D. Tully & con. tea drinking.

Bazaar bees – Mrs. R's & the stolen kiss.

Spend evening with Tor'o Bank agents.

My new watch.

Violent toothache – protracted – fearful Forceps.

I join the church in Sacred Communion.

Mama's illness.

Accidental discovery of postponement of school opening.

Preparation.

Departure Oct. 30 Frid. afternoon.

Jim Hall goes to University – an occasional scholar.

Note at top of original page: Journey to this place

[Note: no date given]

After much preparation, protracted till almost the moment of departure. Davy & I accompanied by Jno. Gow & Papa with the wagon & buggie [sic] proceeded to the P&C R.R. station & thence with "The C. & C. of Infidelity" (Nelson) for mental companion & a drunk "Wild Irish man" (& Davie) for my bodily we rolled off along our iron bound course to Cobourg. It was duly reached in 3 hours & having carted our two trunks & persons to G.T. R.R. station for [ ] we walked to Mc McLeods & had tea, a nights rest & breakfast under their hospitable roof.

Duncan's going to College there. A union P.M. that even. [evening] in town for India. Left next morn at 7 & got to Toronto at 11 & spent the rest of the day & Sabbath at

Note at top of original page: Journey jottings, Reflections

the McMurrich's. Visited the Bunyan Tableaux [published 1856]. At Knox's church on Sunday. It is now nicely painted. Got up early & left on Monday morn. at 8:15. The McM's are hospitable without being kind or attentive. Rev. Robt Dick of the "Gospel Tribune", agent for the Can. Coll. Inst., was in the same train but not car. We started from the Bay St. station. J.H. came to see me off. On the Sat. I got from his Mamma at Mr. Flemmings the writing of "Hen. K. White & Campbell" bound in red gilt.

October 22, Sunday

Sabbath even'g 22nd Oct. '57

Hitherto I have, in these diary form notes & jottings, confined myself almost exclusively to the bare narrative & that of secular things, but now that I am removed from the peculiar restraints which I have always felt in connection with this little business at home, it would be a source of very

Note at top of original page: Philosopher's Stone

great pleasure to me, could I but make it my bosom friend & to it whisper those varied thoughts & emotions which so often occupy my mind. I remember long ago since a little boy at the old gram. [grammar] school, & still the same thing clings to me, having ever longed anxiously & continued a search among my companions continually, seeking for a friend to my heart & bosom - this has ever been the Philosopher's Stone of my very youth. But none of my old companions or newer ones - new scholars I always look to with eager hope which a few days generally dissipated. None I saw ever furnished it. Not Jim Dixon, Dick Benson, Jim Hall, nor even John nor yet Alfred Perrin, and finally at Toronto neither McLaughlan nor Duncan would do. And now am I convinced that this philosopher's stone is about as dif-

Note at top of original page: Reflections, Weather

-ficult to find as that famed in scientific love, or at any rate it is a "sara avis in tessa [terra]" (Latin reference to "a thing so utterly unknown in those times"). Perchance had I been permitted to find one I would not have so soon been brought to accept the long pressed offer of a friend that sticketh closer than a brother - the great & glorious benefactor of fallen man, the elder brother of all God's love.

October 24, Tuesday

Evening. Davy in bed now has been falling fast for about a week now & the ground is thickly cover'd. On Sat. even' [evening] David & I had a regular winter tramp or rather wade down to the village in hopes of getting a letter but did not. It however arrived on Monday yest [yesterday] & was very welcome indeed. The reading of it was detained till dusk & candle light, by the sitting of a

Note at top of original page: Home letters

special court upon one of the numerous feats performed by Master Jo Bugg, viz: the infusion of ink into the crown of Master Dougal McGill's cap. At the conclusion of this affair David came up. As I was only waiting for him we proceeded at once to examine the grateful package. There were 3 letters for each of us, 3 dear letters from home! From Rachel, Bella, & Mama & Papa. Oh how could I describe the scene of the reading of these heart melting home letters, many a tear I shed over Papas long letter. Oh! such letters would that I could print it in letters of gold upon my memory. So full of the kind earnest language of the loving Christian parent. I have

Note at top of original page: Home letters, Delhi is taken!

time to make but one or two little extracts. He says "Seek in secret communion with him (Christ) not to give over until your heart has been warmed into love & endearing confidence" – "Your dear mother & I never forget you at the throne of grace & I feel as if your having chosen Christ as your portion gave you a greatly increased claim on our prayers & regards. Yet I feel jealous of you with a godly jealousy", etc. etc. God grant that I have chosen Christ for [ ]. Oh what a blessing are pious parents. Dear Mamma is keeping well as also the little folks all. Papa asks many questions about my self, studies, prospects, which I am hardly prepared to answer. I can not expect for some little time to get on right well.

November 27, Friday

Friday Nov. 27th 1857 was appointed a day of fasting & humiliation by the Gov. General – Sir E. Head [Sir Edmund Walker Head] on account of the troubles in India. And for that reason no classes were held in the Institute – our first holiday. The students however were invited to come & some of them did. And at 9 or so they were assembled in Classroom "B" where Mr. McVicar conducted a service of about an hour or perhaps two hours. After stating the doubt some had as to the propriety of attending implicitly to the Gov. Genl's proclamations, he presented very clearly our duty a member of the family of the British nation, of engaging such duties

Note at top of original page: A fact day for the Indian war, Mr. McVicar

as belonged to a day so set apart. He then gave the general views of fasting & his view of it viz: – that it meant partially an abstinence from food along with certain special religious exercises. All this was intersperced [sic] & wound up with sincere pointed practical observations & home [trusts]. Just the same there as he always, plain, earnest & pointed, pressing home his truths in a straitforward [sic] fearless faithful manner, sometimes even going to individuals present, adressing [sic] them by name – as “Oh Master Bond, death may be as near you as soldier in India, have you treasure enough readily to meet his demands?!” again “Oh Mr. Boulton, are you really going to sell eternity for a feather? Think of it –

Note at top of original page: General letters

eternity for a feather – Oh Mr. Boulton! I would not do it.” As he stood there in an earnest attitude before us one of Douglass’ old remarks came back to my mind – he said in his offhand jocular way, “I believe Mr. Malcolm & the Apostle Paul are the two best men that ever lived!” During the rest of the day I studied a little & wrote letters home, rather a note along with two to go to the old country, one to Uncle William, the other to Rob’t J.B. Simpson from whom I received my first letter a few days before I left home. The latter I wrote in the afternoon & forenoon too, the former a week or two ago. Young Simpson tells me that he is leaving Marischal College & is next

Note at top of original page: Letter to a young soldier R. Simpson, L. Taylor

month to pass the examination for cadets to the Hon E. India Com. & in January he is to sail for India. As he recommended a soldier’s life to me as a capital one I after a little consideration made up my mind & told him plainly that I had enlisted in the army of the cross & entreated him do the same, for all who do not are the enemies to the glorious cause & our leader, our prince is sure to be victorious. May God bless the sentence to the good of his soul – may it have the blessing of a word in season.

In the evening I went to a Bible Society meeting in the Methodist Church & there heard Lachlan Taylor – “the lion of the [ ]” as old Mr. Phillips said. He described in glowing language what he had seen in Britain & the Continent last summer & told us a great deal that was interesting about Rome & the rest of Italy. He’ll next go to Jerusalem.

Note at top of original page: Davie

December 6, Sunday

Wishing David to learn the S. chatechism [sic], I have been giving him

some five or ten questions each Sabbath & so I set him to them immediately after breakfast & began myself to read Nelson's C. & C. of Infidelity. I was enjoying it much & had just read of some interesting cases of change of mind & feeling resulting from earnest prayer & fasting & humiliation, etc. when David, who seldom tries to do anything heartily, asked me to hear him as he thought he knew the questions. But I found him so ignorant of their meaning & inattentive when I tried to teach him that I set him at them again – aloud. Suddenly he broke off saying that he had a headache & thought he had better go & ly down. At first I refused but upon second thought I told him to go. Often have I felt

Note at top of original page: Prayer, A sermon for the times

vexed & perplexed at his strange conduct & often have I prayed for wisdom from on high to do by him what is right & now I went on my knees & prayed my heavenly father to influence his mind by the Holy Spirit & to help his infermities [sic] & assist him where ever he needed it. I prayed earnestly & with tears & oh I hope it is not sinful presumption to suppose that God heard my prayers, for while still upon my knees, Davey came out from where he had gone to enjoy a sleep & taking up the Catechism in a few minutes said correctly the two questions I had been vainly endeavouring to teach him for nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour. I could not help feeling the circumstance at the time & going to the Bed room thanked God for the great privilege of prayer & for his continued goodness & mercy. Heard Mr. Unsworth today upon the woes of the times – The late Rus'n [Russian] war, the Ind'n [Indian] Revolt, intemperance & the present Panic – Mat.18.7.

December 7, Monday

English history is one of the subjects I teach – twice a week at 2, Monday & Wednesday. In it there are big lads, young men & young women. Today I noticed, not for the first time, Mr. Finch amusing himself with the girl before him by some little tricks. Mr. Millard also took part in it. I resolved to speak to them of it & so after tea I got them to my room here & did so warning them I w'd tell Mr. McVicar if it were continued. Neither said a word but Mr. Millard, who in leaving the room said something about "for his part, etc." I felt it very unpleasant & my vice was not as firm as I could have wished. Yet I hope I did my duty & God will ever enable me to do so.

Note at top of original page: Lost keys

December 9, Wednesday

I have this afternoon heard another remark or two connected with what happened last night, which I must now take notice of. Well, immediately after tea, Mr. McVicar assembled the boys – boarders of course – in his class room, where after some remarks about letters, he

made known the fact that the keys of the main door at the back were gone & some of the young men had them in their possession & use thereby endangering the insurance of the house – 4000 pounds!! Mr. M. after trying in vain to [entice] a voluntary confession, he said he now was compelled to mention names, accordingly turning to Wm. Bugg

Note at top of original page: hardened cases, Toronto boys

put the question to him. He at once flatly denied any knowledge of the keys, speaking then & subsequently in some hot indolent tones. At one time asserted voluntarily that if another had them & he knew it, he would not lower himself so much as to tell. He appears altogether to be a hardened wretch. Robinson stuck up for him & like him flatly denied in every direction. None of the other boys asked knew anything about it either, but that the key was gone. For some time past Wm. Bugg & Thos. Robinson have been great cronies & have gone out at night without permission & come in with pass keys at all hours up to 3 in the morn. After taking notes of the statements made

Note at top of original page: hard cases

& made some remarks upon the circumstances, from which by the by it seems that the Insurance £4000 is risked by the absence of the keys. Bugg said when first addressed that Mr. McV alluded to an affair which happened a few nights ago when Bugg & Robinson after tea set off to attend a party at Goodwillie's – about a mile or two off. They say they did not intend coming back that night. Robinson said they meant to sleep in the stables. Be that as it may Mr. McV. detected their absence & with Mr. Dick set off & brought the gentlemen back from the midst of the dance & frequently have they been known to come in late at night from 10 ½ to 3 in the morning.

Note at top of original page: more vice & hard case-ism in the school

December 20, Saturday

Last evening (Friday) the boarders were agin [sic] assembled & reproved & lectured for going to the tavern & drinking (About 20 had done it). Mr. McV. said he thought there was hardly a man in Canada who could not deny having had some friend or relation near or distant murdered by drunkenness. When I left home Papa was reading to Mamma Guthrie's "City its sins & sorrows" where a similar remark occurs & I heard them remark to each other that they, over all their wide circle of old country relatives, could not remember one who had finished in this way. God grant that their children may be able to say likewise long after they are dead & gone. Mr. Connell tells me that B. & R. amongst other matters of blaggard [sic] boast have declared they will seduce 2 of the servant girls yet – !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Note at top of original page: Literary matter, Finale of key business

This morning (Sat.), at last, arrived the letters we have been looking anxiously for, for some time past. D. got one from Johnny, so did I, also from Papa & Mamma. Oh those dear kind letters; they are not going to send the letter I wrote to R. Simpson for fear it might from its unintentional strain make a wrong impression. Oh the blessing of good parents. All are well at home. An election is to come off 2 days after the bazaar – candidates to be Conger, Short & Sawers. I wrote tonight to J. Hall & Mr. McMurrich & posted the letters in the new box at Mr. McV.'s room door. Henry takes them to the office.

The end of the matter regarding the hard cases was thus – The senate hardly knowing what was best to be

Note at top of original page: Within 1 point of expulsion

done at length decided on expulsion. The culprit black guard was summoned to the presence of the worthy Mr. Malcolm, the presence of Mrs. McVicar & Mrs. Dick was for reasons best known to the triumvirate, added. But when the chaps were summed up, a last chance I suppose, given for repentance & reformation – and, marvelous to relate accepted with humility (apparent). The insolvent hard-case of the crowded classroom was now (when alone) glad to draw in his horns. Before this, Mr. M. had several private interviews, but as he keeps such pretty much to himself I never heard what passed.

Note at top of original page: Monetary matters; at Toronto

Things went on much as usual during the middle of December. Having the charge of supplying the stationary, etc. (purchased by Mr. Connell), I got in nearly all owed me by the day scholars & some from the boarders. I sell them at such a profit as will somewhat remunerate me.

December 22, Tuesday

Went at 8 p.m. to Town Hall & heard the introductory lecture of the Mc[ ] Inst. house by Mr. Unsworth.

December 23, Thursday [Wednesday]

D. had slight headache. School closed last night & morning I received an answer from Willie McM's letter – come immediately. In consequence we left by this evening's train with Clarke (musick [sic] master) & Vale & Finch (students) & reached Toronto soon after 7.

Note at top of original page: visit to McMurrichs

Same evening we went down & saw the display of Christmas meal in the St. Laurence market – the crowd was great & somewhat roudyish. Gas put out. Young man got his back whacked well by female vendor of crockery

ware: Christmas dinner for 500 poor distributed at the "[Pantech netheka]".

December 25 & 26

Read, played shimmie [sic] & skated, walked the streets, etc.

December 27

Heard McGaing in Knox's & Mr. Ellerby in Zion C. in evening. Saw Mr. Vale, also Miss Vale, etc.

December 28 & 29

Read, played chess & walked the st's [streets]. Mr. & Miss McMurrich ill. Old man [reserved] & all of them not warm with hospitality. At 4 p.m. left city by evening train. Got here at 5.25. All right. House empty - [long a atica vacue]. [Prowns] in at Toronto. Short (same party) at Peterboro.

Note at top of original page: Birth day

December 30 & 31

Davy & I rooming together. Busy with one thing & another. Colouring Christmas pictorials for the little boys at home, etc. etc. Forgot my birthday till reminded by a chance remark of Mr. McV's as we rose from dinner. My 18th year is completed today. Davie's head ached this afternoon.

1858

Note at top of original page: letters contents, presumption not to say impudence

January 1

(I am now writing at 12 tonight & will need to leave this days events to be recorded tomorrow). Especially as I feel very weary in my back, etc. & have an ulcerated sore throat.

Well (next day). This day (Jan. 1st) I received letters from home. Mama, Bella, etc. & to Dave. They had been at Brice McMurrich & Co's. Contained acc'ts of Bazaar, [Concert] for new church - near \$1000 raised. Mamma ment'n'd [mentioned] that Papa had just written to Mr. McV. about me, my studies, etc. Was busied all day writing letters, history ready. In the even'g Mr. C. came in for some paper & sat a while. When I told him that last night Mr. Dick had come & carried off ten quires (1/2 ream) at wholesale price for company use he insisted on giving me the half dollar profit I should have

Note at top of original page: a questionable teacher, bodily infirmity

got by retailing it. He mentioned that Mr. McV. had got a letter about the teaching & between us we discussed it pretty freely. (Mr. Dick's he thought). That was all he knew of it. He then proceeded to pump from me whether I was the author of it or not - of course I denied it. It struck me however that Mr. McV. might have referred to Papa's - that remains for me to find out, which I hope I can thro' McConnel as said it was to be bro't up at their (Company) next meeting. I am glad I requested of Papa in my letter to give me an idea of the contents of his letter. But time & patience will explain all. My throat still very sore but I have said nothing to anyone about it & do not mean to unles [sic] it gets too bad, which I hope may not be the case. Posted a letter to Mama & another to Mr. McMurrich on the cars. New Year's dinner. Turkey & p'm [plum] pudding.

Note at top of original page: Papa's letters, affairs between myself & the company

January 2

boarders are arriving - two new ones, one a Mr. Grant, yesterday. Had a conversation with Mr. McV. this afternoon concerning teaching, study, professions, choices, prospects, etc. etc. Papa's letter was mentioned & from what Mr. M. says he just seems anxious to know the real state of affairs in regard to me, my teaching, studying, etc. etc. He said nothing to justify any [guessing]. Vide supra. He desired me to "think over the (teaching) matter" & be ready to state my intentions or wishes to a Com. [company] meeting. And so I am doing. I think I shall as I ment'nd [mentioned] to him either strike for a decrease of teaching time with the same remuneration (board & schooling) or the same am't of time with increased remuneration.

Note at top of original page: A good New Year sermon; difficulty

January 3

Today I heard Mr. Unsworth preach upon Mat 25.21 - the King's welcome to the "good & faithful servant" in connection with the parable of the talent. I thought it came very "apropos" to my conversation yest'day with Mr. M. & seemingly (in a measure) in support of his arguments. That still important puzzle which has so long troubled me - "What am I to be"? is still unanswered & coming closer & closer upon me & ere long must be decided. I think I would like to be a minister yet I fear I have not in my heart the earnest & anxious wish to serve Christ in that way, that I ought to have & still my throat & voice trouble me & perhaps I am only too ready to look upon this as an excuse for looking

Note at top of original page: of the choice of a calling

else where than the ministry. Oh I feel it a hard matter, between so many so very many considerations to decide. I fear I must give up hoping for an altogether satisfactory decision – or nearly so. I have prayed & shall do so again that God in his own good time & way would choose for me, would show me what He would have me to do & His Spirit would incline me to do his will & take pleasure in it is this night my earnest prayer. Amen.

Note at top of original page: Nocturnal visit; Pedagogical affairs

January 13, Wednesday

(Morning). I must try & do more at my diary especially as I am not writing any themes at present. Affairs between myself & the Faculty are pretty much "staus-quo". Had a little conversation with Mr. Connell one morning in G.T.R.R. [Grand Trunk Rail Road] station as he was just starting for Toronto. The letter about teaching was Papa's, the teaching mine. One Monday morn. (I think) (on which we were washed out of bed by the rain from the leaking room), Mr. VcV took me to his study where I had some conversation with him. They had had a meeting & offer me half my board & tuition for 7 hours a week of teaching. I felt & still feel some what disappointed but I begin to think "it must be so." I promised to give answer shortly, hoping

Note at top of original page: P.A. [pedagogical affairs] cont. [continued]; Home parcel & letters; Babylon; D.H.

to receive home letters in which there might be something; they have not yet come & Hope suggests that surely this forenoon may bring the wished for epistles. Meantime Mr. McV (he's the best of the three) has taken the Universal Hist. [a course] off my hands, to give me more time for the German which I am about commencing, having sent to Toronto for the required folios.

(11 a.m.) While at the spelling class Henry informed me that there was at the RR [Rail Road] station a parcel for me – 25 cts. to pay & I'm just waiting for Davy (being a junior) to accompany me there – I guess its from home, that Jim Hall has just bro't [brought] it to Toronto & sent it on by Express. Subsequent – Just so. Fruit cake, ginger cakes, biscuits, sweets, taffy, etc. etc.

January 16, Thursday

David has headache in the afternoon. Panorama, rather magic lantern view of Babylon exhibited in [ ] – lecturer L. Davis. Got a home letter, quite silent about my teaching.

Note at top of original page: Hard-case-ism cont'd; "A row."

January 18

At the bell-ring I went down as usual this morning to Classroom (A). Mr. Dick was absent (hoo-oo-oo etc. there come a freight train) at Toronto. Mr. Connell sat alone at the desk when I entered. He seemed waiting for Mr. McVicar so I went up & asked him if Mr. M. might not possibly have missed hearing the bell. He said "No" & explained that some filthy, immoral statements had been chronicled in one of the outhouses concerning Messers Wm. Bugg & T. Robinson & Mr. M was making some little inquiries before bringing the matter up publicly. Presently he entered followed by Messers Millard, Sollis, & [Horten] to whom I think he had been speaking. He spoke for ten or fifteen minutes

Note at top of original page: Human depravity Modus investigandi

of the matter. The nature of his remarks may be seen from one sample: regarding the character of the act he said that "Satan himself would blush to have his name signed to it." The young ladies were dismissed to their own room & the school announced closed till matter should be investigated & the culprit discovered if possible. The accomplishment of this was left to the scholars themselves as all were equally guilty till the guilt was brought home to the perpetrators. I left the room with the teachers but upon second thoughts returned after the lapse of perhaps an hour. I found them scattered over the room here & there a knot in capital

Note at top of original page: Jusjurandum versus Declaratio.

consultation. Their secretary (for they had resolved themselves into a committee of investigation) Mr. Churchill was just carrying to Mr. Grant, their chairman a paper to sign - requesting permission of the faculty to call in a magistrate to swear them all, hoping that the guilty parties would this be discovered. Some did not like the movement, yet consented. Finding that nothing but talking had been done, without investigation, I proposed - rather moved that a declaration of knowledge or ignorance of this matter should be taken from each student - upon honour. This was carried & also a committee appointed to question the declarants & having

Note at top of original page: Proceedings of the Committee (1858)

made their own declaration took their seats & the examination proceeded. The school-roll was called in requisition & by its aid declarations followed each other in quick succession, delayed only by the examinations of the Cross-Question Committee. The statements & answers of all were narrowly watched & compared. Some inconsistencies showed themselves especially in the statements of Mr. S.J. Mercer & although we had him confronted on the platform by Robinson, Buggs & Custead (all cronies) & the cross questioning & answers then brought home the suspicion very strongly that Mr. S.J. knew more of the matter

than he wanted to tell.

Note at top of original page: Affairs in statu-quo

At this state of affairs 12 o'clock arrived & the assembly dispersed. Several of us retired to Mr. McVicar's "Sanctum" & gave full report of the results – not only verbal but written for our Secretary made use of his phonographic skill with effect. At 4, for there were no classes in the afternoon, the Faculty had nearly completed their individual investigations, but having nothing decided to communicate they merely announced that their decision would be deferred till tomorrow morning. The classes would then be resumed.

Speaking privately with Mr. McV.

Note at top of original page: Severe measures True friends.

I would only say that he had not found the culprit but had learned things which he believed must result in the expulsion of at least one student – rather blackguard.

The next morning a little before school time Mr. Grant & Mr. Milton came in as they said on an important mission. They were the bearers of a petition to the Faculty to deal leniently with Bugg & Robinson one whom they understood was about to come some severe treatment. It was conditional – they had expressed penitence & promised reform. I signed it. Speaking with Mr. Connell a moment before school he said they had written to Mr. Bugg announcing their intention of visiting

Note at top of original page: Expulsion Petition

William with expulsion. Robinson was to be punished in some other way. They had not found out the author of the outhouse literature but had learned a great deal more about Bugg & all the old statements had been confirmed. The statement, it appears, made in the said inscription about his being affected with a certain disease incident to whoremongers – oh! What a picture of depravity does his character furnish. What I before mentioned about the girls was true & earnest not joke, but about the girls attending the school not the servants. Indeed his avowed object in going to the Goodwillie's that night was to accomplish his diabolical purpose. Worst of all was the influence he had on some

Note at top of original page: Picture of depravity Final (1858)

of the boarders as they themselves confessed. S.J. Mercer said that he even felt resolved to follow this example & advice in sinful pursuits. At the opening the Student's petition was presented & the Faculty retired to take it into consideration leaving me at the desk. In about 10 minutes they returned & announced their acceptance of it, chiefly

on account of their respect to the opinions of the petitioners. Bugg was then called up to the desk & addressed by Mr. Dick & by Mr McV. & by questions made to declare to the whole school his penitence or rather assurances of reformation. How fallen how fallen! How humiliated a position after his pride in swaggering & wickedness.

Note at top of original page: Hypocrisy Cause and [Effect]]

Robinson followed Bugg in his declarations of penitence & desire to reform. This hypocrisy & deceit of his [ ] was exposed by Mr. McVicar for when he came first he gave himself in as a member of the Methodist Church tho' his connection with them had been suspended. All along his conduct in this & other respects had been deceitful.

Friday Jan. 23rd [22nd]

My coming out in the way I did on Monday has I think been followed by some general results among the students not undesirable. Perhaps the tenor of this is represented in this example. First I should

Note at top of original page: [Cause and] Effect Waterloo 1858

remark that this afternoon I came out in a new class – Declamation taking Byron's "Waterloo" for my "debut". Was "ruffed" considerably. Both this & previously mentioned circumstances may have induced the invitation I received shortly after tea per Messers Kelly & Sollis to become a member of their debating club, following it up with a remark of Mr. K. that they would feel honoured by my doing so. I declined, at the same time getting permission to attend as visitor. I would like to attend it as I believe I might get much good I would not get elsewhere but time – scarce commodity will not permit.

Note at top of original page: Rockdale Lime Works

Saturday Jan. 23 1858

The quarter it appears ends about this time & Bugg is leaving. Well I dare say it is a blessing to the Institute tho' not to himself. Had a long walk this afternoon up the R.R. track to "Rockdale" or as some call it – Stonehouse. I met Mr. Bentley (Louis) just as approaching the spot. He returned at my request & with Davy we inspected the place. Some might call it a village. The Rockdale lime works are situated on the west side of the rocky hill & contain one or two extensive kilns on each side of the Railway to which they are connected by

Note at top of original page: Patent-medicine-peddler student

switches for the benefit of their own cars which run up sufficiently below the kiln (at its side) to be filled with great ease by an

aperture in the top. This is the first time I have ever seen rocks & I am delighted with it. They are not the blue limestone but great grey masses piled with a fine picturesque appearance. Oh how the summer would enhance the charms of such a place. The R.R. track passes through a deep artificial cut. It must have cost great labour & expense, being through about 50 feet of perpendicular rock on each side. Had a great talk with Mr. B. on our return walk. He is from Pickering. For the two last summers has been peddling patent medicines for his uncle & is going back to it [this summer] – likes it. Heard of this Institute [ ] to spend the winter here & study

Note at top of original page: Disappointment Surprise

Sabbath Jan. 24th 1858

A few minutes after breakfast Mr. Grant came in & asked me if I would go to Norval to hear Mr. Alexander (the stated pastor). I consulted & about half after nine the four of us started to gather. I walked with Mr. Neil & Mr. Grant with Mr. Bentley. I was not a little astonished & disappointed to learn by the [ ] that this was Mr. A's sacrament Sunday. I had been wishing to enjoy the privilege of communication at the first opportunity. Norval I found a nice village. The morning was beautiful. To my astonishment & pleasure I may add who should enter with Mr. Alexander but Mr. Andrews. He preached the action sermon. 'Twas like old times. He recognized me & I think directed Mr. A's attention to me. I did not speak to him. I think Mr. A. must be an amiable as well a [diary incomplete].