

Ebenezer Parkman's Entries on Christmas Day

1726 December 25 (Sunday). I preach'd upon Luk. 11.26 a. and p.m. Mrs. Holloway din'd with us.

1736 December 25 (Saturday). M [blank] Potter of Leicester (a Quaker) here. I delivered him the works of Mr. *William Dell* which I had borrowed some time since of Lieutenant Baker. And I lent him five Discourses by the Author of the snake in the Grass.

1738 December 25 (Monday). Moderate, pleasant, bright morning. Neighbour Oak came with a Team, neighbour Jacob Rice, Jonathan Maynard, John Oake and Lieutenant Holloways men came to get wood. Fitted up our Team to go with them but after 4 Turns our sled was crush'd down. It rain'd when they came to Dinner and the rain preval'd So as to prevent their going for any more.

1739 December 25 (Tuesday). My Wife had been not well in the Night -- continued ill at Times with Travail pains most of the Day, yet kept up, and din'd with us. I sent for Mrs. Clark of Shrewsbury but she was not at Home. I sent for Mrs. Forbush and she came. Sister Hicks also was sent for and her Husband with her again about 10 o'Clock at Night to get us more help. About 12 (although she had gone but about 5 Months) She was deliver'd of a tender, lifeless, Male Child, The Measure of which was 13 1/2 Inches long. Immature for Birth, Yet with all its part perfect. See Ps. 139 (Tate and Bradys Version) 10.13.15.16. But my wife through the great Goodness and Mercy of God in an hopeful State. N.B. Captain Goddard here.

1740 December 25 (Thursday). Cold. I rode to Deacon Newtons to see his Sick Children. Lieutenant Bakers, old Mr. Rice's, Neighbour Daniel Forbush. Din'd at Mr. Harringtons. Visit Neighbour Grows, Thurstons, John Pratts, James Faves, Grouts, Captain Fays. Cold Evening. Mr. Francis Whipple came to ask me to Joseph Greens Wedding, which I solemniz'd at Mr. Whipples and Supp'd there. Edward Whipple accompany'd me back.

1742 December 25 (Saturday). Was too well yesterday to hold it. To Day I was dull and feeble and could not study. Mr. J. Mead a.m. and Mr. Jenison and Mr. James Fay p.m.

1744 June 27 (Wednesday). Mr. Chamberlin from Leicester here. We had some disquietment about his delaying to pay Rogers's Debt which Should have been paid last February or rather (as it was due) last December 25, but I prevented much Contest and dismiss'd it for the present.

1744 December 25 (Tuesday). [No entry.]

1745 December 25 (Wednesday). Thomas Winchester Went to Boston with the Two Piggs on my Mare. I borrow'd Mr. Williams's Mare and rode (though not sent for, yet a bright Comfortable Day inviting and hearing that a number of Ministers were to be there) to Grafton Fast. I arriv'd just at 12 yet forenoon Prayer was not much more than half done. I sat in Mr. Prentice's Pew. Mr. Bliss and Mr. Hall were the Ministers that were come to Assist. Mr. Bliss

preach'd on Heb. 4.16. At noon at Mr. Prentice's. Mr. Hall pray'd p.m. and Mr. Bliss preach'd again. His Text Mat. 5.16. Stay'd to Supper. Mr. James Fay requested that Mr. Bliss might preach at his House tomorrow at 11 o'Clock. I did not sett myself against it, but permitted it, but did not give much Encouragement that I should be there myself, having divers Things before me that would be like to hinder me. At coming away had Some Talk with Mr. Prentice respecting his Disgust with me which arose (and as I conceive continues) from my Sermon at a Former Fast there, but he said that was all over with him. What he waited for was that I would come out -- boldly for the Cause of God and let him come freely into my Pulpit and then He Should be free to ask me into his. I told him it was necessary to regard my people (by this Time Mr. Bliss came to us) and I know well that my people would be greatly disgusted and I did not think it wise or prudent to give way to it. I ask'd Mr. Bliss to my House. N.B. Mr. Hall agreed to preach a Lecture to my Young People this Day fortnight. I call'd at Cornet Shermans and at Abraham Temple's. From Temple's Mr. Abner Newton was my Company to Westborough. Found my Tabernacle in Peace, and myself comfortable though it was a Cold Evening. To God be the Glory! and may [t]here be an abiding Influence of what I have heard!

1746 December 25 (Thursday). Mr. Child finish'd his work So late and it being very Cold he went not away till this Morning, which proves also a very Cold Day. My own common Exercises in my study without going out save to the yard to chop a little etc.

1747 December 25 (Friday). God grant that I and mine may be happy partakers this Day with all those who Sincerely celebrate the Nativity of Jesus Christ! We had Captain Maynards Team, to join with mine and draw down Wood from my Hill. Mr. Biglo, Noah and Daniel How, Rody Smith, Benjamin Whipple, Nathan Maynard, Silas Newton, Jonathan and Robert Cook, Jonas Bradish, Jonathan Bruce, Samuel Warrin, Josiah Walker, Samuel Bumpso (Indian) and Elijah Bellows came and Cutt Wood. Receiv'd a Letter by Mr. Barns from Brother Samuel Parkman informing that Dr. Parkman had a Son born on the 9th instant, and which they have call'd Elias. May God make him a great Blessing!

1748 December 25 (Sunday). Read Genesis 15. Gave some brief Expository Hints. Preach'd on Mat. 25 last Clause of 10.46. Mr. Upham, Mrs. Rogers and Mrs. Steward din'd. P.M. read Mat. 15 and my Exercise was an Exposition of the latter part of it. Mr. Upham here after meeting -- tarry'd to Supper and lodg'd here.

1749 August 17 (Thursday). Mr. Farrand had sent me word that if I could not dispose of my Horse better I might Send him up to Worcester and he would give me 90£ to be paid at December 25 and he would wait for me til 12 o'clock....

1749 December 25 (Monday). At the Funerall of Mr. Pratts Child -- carry'd Lucy, Billy and Sarah in the Slay. Lieutenant Bruce was here about the Stables which Several of them had join'd to raise at the Meeting House and had done it last Friday, on the Land which I am buying of Lieutenant Brigham of Southborough.

1750 December 25 (Tuesday). I hear that Several of my Neighbours, particularly Eliezer Rice

and his Wife are trapesing over to Hopkinton to keep Christmas there. Were any of them relationally and Sincerely Enquiring and Examining into the Grounds of the Controversie between the prelatists and the Dissenters it were a far different Case; but they manifest only a Spirit of unsteadiness. May God grant 'em a Sight and Sense of their Folly and Childishness! P.M. Mr. Martyn and Mr. Smith of Marlborough made us a Visit and tarried till Evening. My Son Thomas is gradually providing him Tools etc. for setting up his Trade. His prospering herein is a Matter that lyes much upon my Mind from Day to Day. May God afford us the wisdom which may be profitable to direct!

1751 December 25 (Wednesday). Stormy and Cold. Mr. Beeton here. He brought home various pieces of Work -- a shovel, in particular the wood of which Ebenezer had made. I went over to the other House (not having been there for a great While). Ebenezer (I conceive) going to Boston with my Young Horse, to Mr. Thomas Goldthwait -- but to my disappointment he is not going. Sir Forbush from the North Side, where he went not without Expectation that there was a Lecture appointed. The proposal was Lieutenant Holloways -- but Mr. Martyn forgot it.

1752 December 25 (Monday). I rode to Mr. Amsdens to Mr. Thaddeus Gale's son Jacob who lies Sick. N.B. Dr. Robinson of Marlborough there. Din'd with him at Mr. Amsdens Table. N.B. Instead of Resentments with Mr. Gale, who has been of a long Time represented by Mr. Grow as offended Mr. Gale came to me and thank'd me for my Visit etc. and then presented me with a double Toasting Iron requesting I would come again and See them. At Eve Deacons Forbush and Newton, Lieutenant Bruce and Mr. Phinehas Hardy (who with Deacon Newton made up a Majority of the Precinct Committee) met here at my Request publicly yesterday, to confer and give me their Thought, what would be best to be done with regard to the Contribution which Mr. David Goodenow had petitioned for. Mr. Grow was also here. They, upon the whole, could not advise to it by Virtue of that Petition, the reason they gave was, he did not appear humble, and blaming himself for his poverty, but the Contrary, and rather casting Blame where he ought not. And they Thought it left that I Should write to him.

1754 December 25 (Wednesday). Joseph Bowman came from Boston having done Several Errands for us, and call'd me up between 2 and 3 in the Morning. After Day exceeding Rainy.

1755 December 25 (Thursday). The Frost has got very much into the House: But the wind not so high abroad. Blessed be God for my preservation and many Comforts -- and I would praise Him. My Heart is in some Measure tender -- I hope choosing and yielding to Him. Had some serious Thoughts on the Day, as kept by many in Commemoration of our Lords Nativity. And I desire to be one with all of them that are one with Christ, and who avoid the Superstitions and Excesses of this Day, and Serve the Lord in sincerity. May I and mine have part in the glorious Logos who was made Flesh and dwelt among us! At Eve Dr. Joshua Smith here -- receiv'd the News Paper in which have a frightfull Account of the terrible Earthquake at Cadiz and Seville; but especially Lisbon, St. Woes and Agazira. O may we learn Righteousness! fear God and give Glory to Him: and in peculiar since we are so mercifully Spar'd!

1756 December 25 (Saturday). [No entry.]

1757 December 25 (Sunday). Thawy and rainy. Read 1 *Chron.* 22. Preached on 2 Cor. 10.4. At noon received two Letters from Boston: one from my Brother *Samuel*, the other from my Kinsman *Winter* of the extreme illness of my Eldest Brother of a Pleurisy, dated the 21. They were very shocking. P.M. I desired public prayers. Read Luk. 11 from v. 27. Preached on Eccl. 5.1, latter part, using chiefly a sermon from thence which carryed on the Scheme of the sermons of the 11th but with many additions especially of Application. Stopped the Church to read them Mrs. *Judith Bellows* Paper of the 3d instant, and left it to their Consideration. Craved leave to read to my Brethren some passages of the Letters received to Day and entreated their sympathy. After meeting borrowed Cornet *Brighams* Horse to go to Boston, and he left him for Me. And now O that I might my Self be properly affected with this great Affliction! And might be suitably prepared for the holy and Sovereign Will of God!

1758 December 25 (Monday). Bright and Cold but not So cold as it was. Mr. Morse comes with two Teams with Rails from his place. One of the Teams but 3 Cattle. Miss Betty makes Breck a Jacket. She lodges here.

1759 December 25 (Tuesday). Deacon Tainter, according to his kind offer came with his Sleigh or Whirrey with two Horses, to wait on me and my Daughter Sarah to Marlborough. But he had the Frenchman Le Blanc, with him to carry him to Marlborough likewise. We all dined, though late, at Mr. *Smiths* -- and thence rode to Mrs. *Woods* (Nanny), to Mrs. *Speakmans*, but no body at home. We went to Mr. Henry Barns's. *Sarah* delivers Mrs. Barns 8£ old Tenor for a Green Grogam Gown for her Mother. Mr. Barns is gone to Boston. Master Wheeler and Mrs. Speakman, old Mrs. Arbuthnot and Mrs. Instant were there. I borrowed Dr. Moss's sermons Vol. 1 of Mrs. Speakman: and of Mr. Smith the London Magazine from Oct. 1758 to April last. N.B. Neither Le Blanc, who went to Marlborough to trade, nor Mrs. Barns who trades with him and many other Customers who come to her shop, keep the Feast of the Nativity as they ought (in my judgment) to do, considering their profession.

1760 December 25 (Thursday). Went over to Mr. Parker. Payed him 22£ for the Sheep and 6/ Interest. Payed him also for 2 Gallons of Sperma Ceti Oyl, which came to a Dollar; and for a Tin Lamp, which was 1/4 of a Dollar. To make him quiet in tending my Creatures I gave him gratis my part of the Sheep Pasture which he had wanted to hire of me for his sheep. And promised to take my Sheep over to the New place. N.B. My Daughters, Sarah and Suse were last night, much affected and made faint, by reason of a pot of Coals in their Bed Room.

1764 December 25 (Tuesday). Mr. *Moore* returns to Oxford; and Master to his School. Lydia David goes home. I visit Joseph Joslin -- and Dr. Hawes. N.B. This morning I sent my Watch by Mr. Seth Morse to Mr. Gawen Brown at Boston, to be cleaned. Samuel Brigham came again to boarding.

1765 December 25 (Wednesday). I preached a Lecture to Young Men from 1 King 13.12, latter part. N.B. It was from p. 14 of the sermon on that Text, to the End, though with many omissions, because of the Pain with which I was exercised in time of delivering. N.B. The Young

Man that Sat the Tune sat *New Colchester*. At Eve Master Cushing goes to Capt. Maynards to attend upon another Singing School there, besides what he has on Monday Evening at Mrs. Johnsons. Dr. *Throop* came here -- lodges with us.

1766 December 25 (Thursday). Went up into the Street on various Occasions. Reckoned with Mr. Silas Hill. Was at Mr. Zebulun Rice's, his son Adam being there from Stafford. Thomas *Arnold* carries to Mrs. Barrett of Hopkinton Vol. 1 and brings *Chrysal* Vol. 2 which I even hate to read, as they contain Such Depths of Satan; and fill me with deep sorrow for the monstrous Degeneracy of the Age. I am about my preparations. John at School from Day to Day.

1767 December 25 (Friday). Mr. Isaac Morse of the Gore (by Worcester) brought me divers Letters -- one from Samuel exculpating himself in part and in part relating and owning somewhat that occurred of late at Cambridge, but seems very sorrowful etc. May God forgive him and guard him for the future! He brings me Dr. Chauncys Remarks on the Bishops of Landaff and Gloucester. Also the Volume of Magazines for the Year 1765 bound by Mr. McAlpine.

1768 December 25 (Sunday). Still omitt Reading publickly. Preached again on 2 Cor. 5.5, but carried on the Design begun from Heb. 2.15. P.M. Preached on Joh. 1.41, repeating part of my Discourse on that Text. Began at page 11, but with some Introduction concerning *Christ's-Mass*. Forasmuch as, though we don't keep the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord yet we would not be behindhand in paying our highest Regards to the Great and Glorious Redeemer. O that I might be able, with true Spiritual Joy and Gladness, to declare, I have found the *Messiah*, which ["*is the Christ.*"] Might also many Others! It presses my mind and Heart.

1769 December 25 (Monday). Visit Mrs. *Green*, wife of Mr. Joseph Green junr. She is much lower; but appears to have admirable Tokens -- behaves very agreeably. I dine at Mr. *Greens*. Prayed there. The poor, languishing Woman behaved with great Propriety. Rode down to Mr. *Bradishes*, but his Mother expired some while before I got there. She was 81 last May. Received a Line by a Messenger from Father *Loring* that his Consort is dead, and that he would have me attend her Funeral, which is appointed to be next Thursday. Gave Temple a promisory Note for 56£ old Tenor to be Paid Apr. 15 next.

1770 December 25 (Tuesday). *Elisha Forbes* brings a Quarter of Beef. Weighed 86. [*Marginal notation: This Beef came on the 26.*] P.M. I rode to *Southborough*. Paid Capt. *Ward* £8.19.6 old Tenor in full. Mr. *Stone* and his wife were gone to Marlborough. I followed them there, to their son *Rice's*. N.B. I had never seen them since the marriage till now. Mr. Luke Drury was my Company from Southborough. They are preparing for a new session of Grafton-Council. In returning I called to see Mr. William *Brighams* new Wife, and Mr. *Andrews* Children, ill of the Canker. May God be praised for my Preservation when my Horse threw me down.

1771 December 25 (Wednesday). Sorrowful Message by Mr. Thaddeus Warren from Mr. Joseph Bond that their Child, of 5 Months, dyed Suddenly about one this morning by the Mothers Side. It was in usual Health this last night. I went there, and prayed with them.

1772 December 25 (Friday). Looked for *Reuben* a.m. but in vain. Miss Lucy Parker has been at work here several Days, making Cloths for *Elias*, out of Cast off Garments of *Sam's*. But she is now making him a Pair of Breeches of a Deer skin which I buy of *Breck*. P.M. *Reuben* came from his Mothers, and otherwhere. But was now determined to break off and go way. Was willing to give all he had done -- asked me nothing -- I was welcome, because of the Dammage he was Sensible he Should do me by going away. My pleading, urging, expostulating, offers to him, pitying, representing the Injustice, breach of promise, unhandsomeness, unsteddiness, disgrace -- the unfitness of leaving me at the Close of the week, and entreating that he would but tarry till the beginning of the week -- nothing wrought upon him -- nor my enquiring of him whether any thing was amiss or wanting, with me or mine -- whether he was dissatisfied with the Terms? It, all of it, produced any thing to hinder his going: he had no fault to complain of, only of himself and was resolved upon it, and bid me farewell. Thus childishly Stubborn and invincibly Sett, *Reuben left me*. This Evening *Breck* goes for me to Daniel Hardy on this Affair, to See whether he will consider my Disappointment and come. N.B. Received a large Letter from Mr. *Ebenezer Rice* of *Annapolis*, dated Nov. 23, last.

1773 December 25 (Saturday). I desire to give most hearty praise and Thanks to God for the Birth of Jesus Christ, the Great and only Saviour, though I don't know that this was the Day: nor do we publickly Solemnize it as Such. Wrote to Mr. *Cornelius Waters* of *Dartmouth* College, in Answer to his concerning *Cagnawaga* and the *Rices*. Committ it to the Care of Mr. *Ebenezer Waters* of *Sutton*.

1774 December 25 (Sunday). A.M. on Ps. 89.47. P.M. on Joh. 5.40. Cousen *Davis*, and Miss Molly Badcock dined here. N.B. at noon I spoke with Mr. *Daniel Forbes* about the Church Meeting -- and the difficulty attending my conferring with the Church to day, by reason of the weather (it being rainy etc.). He answered me that there was no hurry. I replied, that then the Signers could not blame me for still deferring it. He answered again, "O, no." I asked him to come to see me. He said he *would*. Mrs. *Sarah Forbush* grows worse.

1775 December 25 (Monday). Read *Eleazer Mathers* (of *Northampton*) Word to the Present and Succeeding Generations in New England from 1 King 8.57. Read also old Mr. *Richard Mathers* Life and the accounts of Several others of the Antient Ministers in Dr. *Cotton Mathers* Magnalia.

1776 December 25 (Wednesday). Exceedingly Cold morning. Write to Mr. *Quincy*, but can't send. Miss Eliz. Harrington, Daughter of Lt. Samuel, here to be examined, and gave satisfaction. At night Mr. George Smith of Northborough Supped, but did not lodge etc.

1777 December 25 (Thursday). I went up to Deacon *Woods*, Capt. [Fishers?] and Mr. [illegible or torn] at the first visit the Wife of Mr. [illegible] at [the?] [illegible] received *John Woods* map of *Connecticut* at the last viz. Mr. Newtons I visited the Wife of Mr. *Graves* [illegible or torn] At Eve came my Son *Forbes* from *Cape Ann* lodged here

1778 December 25 (Friday). It remains exceeding cold. They breakfast here. I write by Fisk to Mr. Benjamin Bradshaw, who I hear is worse. Fisk sets out for Brookfield. Mr. Nathan Maynard brings a piece of Camblet, 14 yards from Mr. Benjamin Howell of Worcester, for which Mr. Maynard delivered to him from me 20 dollars. Mr. Hannaniah Parker, late Constable, is here and pays me what Money was behind in the Wood rate, which was about £6.12. For which I gave him a receipt in full; only it is to be remembered that Messrs. Joseph Grout, Jos. Green and Benjamin Brigham have not brought theirs. At night Patty Forbush goes home.

1779 December 25 (Saturday). I rode up to Shrewsbury -- to Mr. Nathan Goddard's who has persuaded me to take this cold ride. Went to Mr. Sumner's who was gone with design to preach tomorrow at Hubbard's Town. I lodged at Mr. Sumner's.

1780 December 25 (Monday). In morning Family Exercise read Luke 1.25 to the End and Ch. 2, divers parts, which peculiarly respect the Nativity of our B. L. and give *Thanks* therefor. Breck and his Family dined with us. O that we might uprightly and most gratefully join with all true Christians, and with all our Souls magnifie the Lord, rejoicing forever in God our Saviour!

1781 December 25 (Tuesday). I desire to hold Communion with all those who sincerely celebrate the *Nativity* of our most Blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus* Christ. Finished Dr. *Owen's* Meditations and Discourse on *Glory* of Christ.