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Death in the Lower St. John River Valley: The Diary of Alexander Machum, Jr., 1845-1849

INTRODUCTION

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CAMP GAGETOWN MILITARY BASE in the early 1950s displaced some 3,000 people, but by that time a number of settlements in the thin-soiled 11,000 hectare areas had already long been abandoned.¹ It was during the demolition process in the deserted hamlet of New Jerusalem that Captain Mervyn Thurgood of the 3rd Brigade, Black Watch, discovered a large quantity of old papers strewn about in the back room of what had once been a store. From among these papers he picked out a journal whose entries date from 17 September 1845 to 23 July 1849, with the addition of notations for 15 March 1850 and 9 February 1864. Thurgood's curiosity was sufficiently piqued for him to make a typescript copy of the volume and decipher a passage written in code, before sending the original to the University of New Brunswick History Department. That volume has since disappeared, but Thurgood, now a retired major, brought his copy to my attention while taking one of my history courses at Simon Fraser University. Long neglected and all-too-frequently destroyed because they were not produced by a literary, political or economic elite, such documents have great value for the writing of social history. A heavy dependence by Canadian historians of the preindustrial era on the analysis of routinely generated sources such as manuscript census reports has resulted in a focus on social structures and material life. These are certainly important topics in their own right, but a document such as the Machum diary can provide a direct insight into the values and beliefs of the "common man", albeit a reasonably well-educated man in this case.

Because only a fragment of the Machum diary was recovered, the identity of its author had to be traced from the entry of 18 January 1848, which states that he was married that day to Elizabeth F. Inch. The *Courier* of Saint John announced that on the same date Alexander Machum, Jr., from Petersville Parish, Queens County, was married to Elizabeth Frances Inch of the same place.² There are no census records available for Queens County prior to 1861, but the Machum family was enumerated in Petersville Parish that year. Alexander was 41 years of age by this time, and Elizabeth was 31, indicating that they were 28 and 18, respectively, at the time of their marriage. Their five children ranged in age from 12 to two in 1861, when the

1 "Gagetown, CFB", *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (Edmonton, 1985), p. 715.

2 *Courier* (Saint John), 10 February 1849. I am grateful to Linda Hansen of the New Brunswick Archives for information leading to this source.

Machum farm included 50 improved acres, with one horse, two oxen, three cows, 12 sheep and two pigs. The crops recorded were three tons of hay, 225 bushels of buckwheat, 80 bushels of oats and 180 bushels of potatoes. The farm was clearly operated at a subsistence level, being valued at only \$1,200, as compared with \$1,618 for the average family in the sub-district, but Machum was also listed as a grocer and there were two teenage servants in the household.³

According to Esther Clark Wright, the pioneer Machums and Inches were Scots-Irish who settled in New Jerusalem, inland from the riverside village of Hampstead.⁴ W.F. Ganong claims further that New Jerusalem was founded around 1821,⁵ and the 1861 census lists another Alexander Machum and a Nathaniel Inch — both 62 years of age — as Irish-born residents of the large lower St. John River Valley parish known as Petersville. Machum's Irish roots may have distinguished him from the descendants of the Loyalists who lived closer to the river, but he did share an affiliation with the Baptist Church claimed by nearly half the residents of Queens County in 1861.⁶ Machum also had ample opportunity to come into contact with the broader community, for during the years covered by his diary he taught school in several lower St. John River Valley localities. After residing in Belleisle, Kings County, from 1843 to 1846, Machum recorded moving to Jerusalem, "where I engaged to teach a school for 1 year" (11 June 1846). In November 1846 he listed himself as a resident of nearby Hampstead.

Machum's journal is not a diary in the commonly understood sense of the term, for it records no intimate thoughts, and only rarely an account of the day's occurrences. Judging from the length of the entries, the two most significant social events in Machum's life during this period were his examination for a first-class teacher's certificate at Fredericton in November 1848 and his attendance at the first "Loyal Orange Soiree" later the same month. The entry for his wedding day the following January gives only a few details about attendants, the weather and so on, before stating that the next day "we, with a company of about 35 persons assembled at my father's place where we remained till the 21st Sabbath — when we went to her father's". His wife is not mentioned again. Even if the diary is not the product of a particularly introspective mind, however, it does reveal a good deal about the lives and emotions of Machum and his community.

The most striking characteristic of this journal is its rather exclusive focus on mortality. Eighty-three deaths are noted, often in considerable detail, during the three-year period it covers, while 30 marriages and a single birth receive only cursory mention. Such a preoccupation would seem more than a little morbid in today's

3 Manuscript Census, New Brunswick, 1861, reel C. 1005, National Archives of Canada, Ottawa [NAC].

4 Esther Clark Wright, *The Saint John River* (Toronto, 1949), p. 97.

5 William F. Ganong, "A Monograph of the Origins of Settlements in the Province of New Brunswick", Royal Society of Canada, *Transactions*, Section II, Papers for 1904, p. 154.

6 In addition to the 47 per cent of Queens County residents who were Baptists in 1861, 21 per cent were Anglicans, 11 per cent were Roman Catholics, 11 per cent were Methodists, and 10 per cent were Presbyterians. No religious affiliation is given in the earlier enumerations. Canada, *Census Reports*, 1870-1, vol. 4.

society, but it was certainly not uncharacteristic of the 19th century. For example, Serge Gagnon has discovered a similar focus in the journals of several French-Canadian “*mémorialistes de village*” during this era.⁷ Presumably, this role was generally filled by men, for recent work on the diaries of Maritime women does not suggest a particular concern about deaths in the broader community.⁸

In his pioneering study on the subject, Philippe Ariès describes how the Western attitude towards death has evolved from a sentiment “half-way between passive resignation and mystical trust”, to the “romantic, rhetorical treatment” of the 19th century, and finally to the contemporary attempt to push it as far as possible from the collective consciousness.⁹ More recently, David Stannard has argued that the sense of passive resignation never existed in the United States. The Puritans held an obsessive fear of death because of their “acute awareness that man was both powerless to affect the matters of his salvation and morally crippled by his natural depravities”.¹⁰ As for the evangelical successors to the Puritans after the turn of the 19th century, James Farrell states that they tempered the traditional fear of death with “a greater belief in human agency”, but this belief in itself “created considerable anxiety over death”.¹¹ For most Americans the sentimentalized view of death did not triumph before the middle of the 19th century. In Farrell’s words, it then emerged as an individualistic response to what had been a visceral sentiment that “threatened the self-control crucial to schemes of capitalist accumulation and Christian self-fulfillment”.¹² David Marshall notes a similar transition in Upper Canada around mid-century, though he emphasizes the genuinely religious transformation from the traditional sense of fear and uncertainty to the “celebration of death as a passage to perfect happiness and fulfillment in a heavenly paradise”.¹³

Certainly, there is little that could be construed as cheerfully optimistic in Alexander Machum’s journal. But neither does it reflect the melancholy romanticism of the diary kept by Mark Twain’s Emmeline Grangerford (in *Huckleberry Finn*), who recorded deaths gleaned from newspaper reports. Machum too may have taken some of his more laconic entries from the press (which would explain why a few are not in strict chronological order), but he included many that do not appear in the Saint John *Courier*, and he missed a considerable number for his district that are

7 Serge Gagnon, *Mourir hier et aujourd’hui. De la mort chrétienne dans la campagne québécoise au XIXe siècle à la mort technisée dans la cité sans Dieu* (Québec, 1987), p. 9.

8 See Margaret Conrad, “Recording Angels: The Private Chronicles of Women from the Maritime Provinces of Canada, 1750-1950”, in Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, eds., *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women’s History*, II (Toronto, 1985), and Margaret Conrad, Toni Laidlaw and Donna Smyth, eds., *No Place Like Home: Diaries and Letters of Nova Scotia Women, 1771-1938* (Halifax, 1988).

9 Philippe Ariès, *Western Attitudes toward Death*, trans. by Patricia M. Ranum, (Baltimore and London, 1974).

10 David E. Stannard, *The Puritan Way of Death: A Study in Religion, Culture, and Social Change* (New York, 1977), p. 88.

11 James J. Farrell, *Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830-1920* (Philadelphia, 1980), pp. 36, 39.

12 Farrell, *Inventing*, p. 216.

13 David B. Marshall, “‘Death Abolished’: Changing Attitudes Toward Death in Victorian Canada”, Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, 1990, p. 5.

recorded there. Furthermore, his list of deaths does not extend beyond the lower St. John River Valley and its tributaries, apart from two entries for nearby Sussex Vale. Of the 50 deaths whose locales are identified, nine occurred on the broad section near the mouth of the St. John River known as Long Reach (mostly from drowning), five at Belleisle further up the same arm, four at Nerepis, and the others at a variety of locales with names such as Bull-Moose Hill, Trott Settlement and Oaknabog. Fredericton is never mentioned, and Saint John only once.

Maris Vinovskis finds the continuing Puritan obsession with death somewhat anomalous given the improvement in life expectancy in America,¹⁴ but one of the most striking features of Machum's diary is how commonly people were struck down in the prime of life by accidents and illnesses that in our era of modern medicine and advanced transportation facilities would cause little concern.¹⁵ It is well known that children were particularly susceptible to infectious diseases, and of the 50 deaths for which causes are identified by Machum, 17 fall into this category.¹⁶ Eight resulted from scarlet fever, and Machum makes it clear that he is not including all such cases, a statement borne out by the *Courier's* obituary column. What is perhaps more surprising is that a total of 23 accidental deaths are recorded, including nine drownings and five cases of frostbite. Descriptions such as that of a man dying after a wagon ran over his leg (29 January 1846) or of a poorly clad boy freezing to death while returning from a mill with some flour (31 January 1849), graphically illustrate how uncertain life remained in this preindustrial era.

Concerning the latter tragic event, the Saint John *Courier* (10 February 1849) reported as follows:

His parents are of that class commonly supposed not to stand in need of charity; but nevertheless it is a class which this winter is silently suffering every thing short of actual starvation. They raised no potatoes last summer, and their buckwheat is already ground and eaten, and even if they possess a cow or two, they cannot be converted into bread, neither can bread be obtained on credit.

While Machum's account is more detailed, it fails to mention the socio-economic context, recounting instead the grisly details of the death. Thus the boy "was so stiff that Mr. B. could not carry him in his arms but had to carry him on shoulder like a billet of wood". Furthermore, while the newspaper account implied that public assistance should be more forthcoming, Machum characteristically concluded on a more pious note: "This circumstance ought to be enough to draw forth sympathy from the breast of every humane and rational being. And to teach them that they should never neglect to give some nourishment to travellers, if in their power". The fact that drunkenness caused a number of the accidental deaths, and that there were

14 Maris A. Vinovskis, "Angels' Heads and Weeping Willows: Death in Early America", *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, LXXXVI, 2 (1977), pp. 273-302.

15 Marshall makes a similar point in "Death Abolished", pp. 6-7.

16 Most of the 33 deaths for which no cause is given were of elderly people.

four murders in the area within this relatively short period of time, only fuelled the moralistic tone of Machum's entries.

The ever-present reality and unpredictable nature of death were frequent themes in the sermon literature of the early-to-mid-19th century.¹⁷ Thus, in his year-end sermon for 1847, the Reverend Robert Irvine of Saint John reminded his Presbyterian parishioners that 54 of their fellow members had died that year. If the same death rate were to continue, one-sixteenth of those sitting below him in the pews "must be in heaven or hell" within the next 12 months.¹⁸ The psychological impact of such an obsession is reflected in Machum's account of his apocalyptic dream on 8 August 1848:

I thought I saw fire, as an immediate forerunner [of the day of judgement] passing from East to West accompanied and followed by a great tempest...I felt considerably concerned and agitated about my own condition, and was earnestly engaged in appreciation that I might be received among those who would be eternally happy. — the air was very tempestuous and the clouds and the atmosphere were all in the greatest possible commotion and nature, to all appearance, was fast receding. Every object presented a scene of melancholy. But a voice declared that 5 years would pass "ere the final dissolution of things shall take place".

Sensitivity to dreams and visions was a characteristic of the early followers of the Allinite tradition. While he was instigating Nova Scotia's "Great Awakening" during the late 18th century, Henry Alline had taught that "the only certain evidence of conversion was a spirit which soared to the very gates of heaven".¹⁹ Machum declares that the impression his experience left upon his mind "was not obliterated for many days", yet he evidently wished to minimize its significance, for he simply referred to it as a dream, and he kept it from prying eyes by recording it in code.

Indeed, it is likely that Machum belonged to the majority Regular (Calvinist) Baptist Church rather than the province's evangelical Free Christian Baptists (Allinite), if only because of his profession as a teacher and his non-American heritage. A lack of the puritanical sensibility that characterized the Allinites is also reflected in the fact that Elizabeth Machum and the Machum children were recorded as Methodists in the 1861 census, and in Machum's membership in the Orange Lodge.²⁰ Finally, his journal entries lack the morbid moral introspection that characterizes the diary kept by his fellow Baptist, Eliza May Chipman of Nova Scotia.²¹ It would appear, then, that Machum's journal entries do not reflect the

17 Farrell, *Inventing*, pp. 39-40.

18 Marshall, "Death Abolished", pp. 7-8.

19 D.G. Bell, "The Allinite Tradition and the New Brunswick Free Christian Baptists, 1830-1875", in Robert S. Wilson, ed., *An Abiding Conviction: Maritime Baptists and Their World* (Hantsport, N.S., 1988), p. 59.

20 Membership in the Orange Lodge was proscribed by the Free Christian Baptists in 1849. Bell, "The Allinite Tradition", pp. 62, 64.

21 For excerpts, see Conrad et al., *No Place Like Home*, pp. 81-96.

obsessive mind of a fanatical sectarian or a social misfit, but rather a popular preoccupation with death that was no doubt fuelled by the millenarian enthusiasm then sweeping the northeastern portion of the continent.²²

While Canadian historians have recently begun to describe the popular resistance that developed in the face of the state's rapid expansion during the 1840s and early 1850s,²³ the picture of this tumultuous era will remain incomplete as long as the broader role of religious revivalism is not taken into account. Machum was clearly far more concerned with the afterlife than with politics, but his membership in the Orange Lodge and his approving references to the emerging temperance movement illustrate how religion could foster collective action.²⁴ Ironically, as the social reform movement became increasingly institutionalized, local community bonds would weaken. One symptom would be a more personalized view of death than that displayed in Machum's diary; another would be the abandonment and destruction of marginal communities such as New Jerusalem, with almost no attempt to preserve a record of their historical existence.

The 29 typed pages of the Machum transcript are too long and repetitive to reproduce here in full. The entries for 1847 alone are therefore excerpted in order to provide an impression of how one "common" man perceived life and death in preindustrial Maritime society. No alterations have been made in spelling or punctuation.

J.I. LITTLE

DOCUMENT

1847

Jan. 14. Died at her residence, Nerepis, Mrs. Liticia Mahood, aged 66 years after an illness of about 30 hours, she took her evening repast on the evening of the 12th as heartily as usual, and before retiring to rest she took a small lunch, and was retiring to bed complaining that her feet were cold, but just as she was in the act of stepping

22 See David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791-1850* (New York, 1966); D. Weale, "The Time is Come! Millenarianism in Colonial Prince Edward Island", *Acadiensis*, VII, 1 (Autumn 1977), pp. 35-48; Laurie Stanley, *The Well-Watered Garden: The Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860* (Sydney, 1983), pp. 134-8; Françoise Noël, *Competing for Souls: Missionary Activity and Settlement in the Eastern Townships, 1784-1851* (Sherbrooke, 1988), ch. 6; and Jan Noel, "God's Scots: Montreal Merchants of the Millenium", Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, 1984. The French Canadians also experienced a profound religious revival during the early 1840s. See, for example, L. Rousseau, "Les missions populaires de 1840-2: Acteurs principaux et conséquences", *Société Canadienne d'Histoire de l'Église Catholique, Sessions d'étude*, LIII (1986), pp. 7-21, and J. Noel, "Dry Patriotism: The Chiniquy Crusade", *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXI (1990), pp. 189-207.

23 See, for example, M.S. Cross, "The Laws are Like Cobwebs: Popular Resistance to Authority in Mid-Nineteenth Century British North America", in *Law in a Colonial Society: The Nova Scotia Experience*, edited by Peter Waite et al. (Toronto, 1984), and Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London, Ontario, 1988), part two.

24 See T.W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community* (Toronto, 1985), pp. 128, 144, 149-50.

up upon the bed, she gave a scream or two most hideous by which the family were much startled — this was about 9 or ten o'clock — she was in great pain which she said was in her head — she remained so for about half an hour and then appeared to fall into a lethargy in which she remained till between 2 and 3 o'clock on the morning of the 14 when she expired without scarcely a struggle — There was a physician brought shortly after she was taken who said it was a very violent fit of apoplexy & it was out of his power to restore her to health.

Jan. 16. Scalded to Death, youngest son of Mr. Geo. Dunn aged a little upwards of 1 year, by a pot of boiling water being upset about his body, he survived it only 7 hours — “Dangers stand thick thro’ all the ground To hurry mortals home.”

Jan. 17. James Johnson aged was frozen to death — he was at Mrs. Mahood’s funeral, and as he returned home, he called at some of the taverns and got liquor — he was found on the morning of the 18th a few rods from Merritt’s Bridge, with a bottle of liquor in his pocket. Sad is the dire effects of inebriety!

Jan. 17. A Mr. Hardenbrook was found frozen to death near Mrs. Jas. B. Lyon’s, Long Reach, he had been to St. John, and was returning home and most probably he got overcome with the fatigue and cold and sat down to rest, and fell asleep — He was not addicted to intemperance, it is said.

Jan. 24. Elder Cronkhite died at Mr. McOnchie’s, New Ireland, he was there about a fortnight and 3 days — his corpse was taken up the river St. John to where his friends are buried — he was aged 62 years — I have no doubt but he lived the life of the righteous, after he professed to have experienced the grace of God shed abroad in his heart, and that his end was peace.

February 1st. Wm. Brown aged 7 years died of scarlet fever — Many have been the youths that changed time for eternity by this disease this year.

Feb. 5th. Mrs. Anne Armstrong, aged 63 years, died, after a lingering illness of several months. She has left a kind husband and a large circle of relatives to mourn their loss.

13th. Mr. Richard Redston of Bull-Moose Hill died and on the 15th his wife died also — and consequently they were both interred in one grave — they left three children.

Feb. 24th. Died at his residence, Jerusalem, Mr. Joseph Hoyt age 88 years — He came to his Province along with the Loyalists of 1783 after having served the King 7 years — he had to encounter all the hardships of settling in the uncultivated forests of a new Colony. And now, has he come to his grave at a good old age, like a shock of corn fully ripe — And we would fain hope that he was a meet heir for that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away — As none

can be inheritors of it but those who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Buried at Oak Point. Rev. J. Bartholomew preached a sermon from John.

Feb. 26. Mr. James Mahood died, aged 73 years, he professed faith in the Lord Jesus and departed having a full assurance of a blessed immortality and eternal life beyond the tomb. He selected, as a subject for a discourse on the funeral occasion "Because man goeth to his long home and the mourners go about the streets." which was preached from by Rev. J. Bartholomew.

Mar 3rd Died in Jerusalem, James, Son of Mr. James Brown, aged 8 years, of scarlet fever.

Mar 4. Died in Hamptead, Mrs. Sterritt, an elderly woman, was buried at Oak Point.

Mar. 4 Died, Hugh Wallis's child aged 1 month — never was real well.

Mar. 5 Died, Mr. Harrison's Infant son —

Mar. 6. Died in Jerusalem, Joseph Jordan aged 19 years he was taken with the scarlet fever only a few days ago — he was not considered dangerously ill and this evening he wished to get up and sit by the fire, they got him out of the bed. he walked to the chair, sat down and just expired in two or three minutes "Our days are but as a shadow".

Mar. 9. Went out to Long Island and received the R. A. P. along with J. T. French, J^{no} Inch, G. Todd, and H. Cameron and J^{no} Moore.

Mar. 28 Samuel Jordan (a young man) died after an illness of only two days. The disease was Scarlet fever and rash — "The Son of man Cometh at an hour that we think not."

Ap. 30 This is a very late spring. The snow is quite deep yet. There are some of the knolls in the clearings that are bare — hay is pretty scarce with many.

May 15 Mary A. Moore was brought to her father's from Mr. Connor's house — she is very ill and is not expected to recover — she is very happy and resigned in her mind, having a hope full of immortality — trusting alone on the merits of the Friend of penitent sinners.

May 30 She still continues so only weaker — Stephen, Hannah, and William have the scarlet fever very ill. Mary Ann continued to get worse until June 12 with at 6 o'clock A. M. she departed this life in full assurance of a blessed and glorious immortality beyond the grave, she was aged 16 years. 11 mos.

July 7 Married at Long Reach, Robert Douglas to Matilda Bulyea, daughter of old Mrs. James Bulyea.

July 8 At the residence of her father Sarah Ann Harrison was married by Rev. Abner Mersereau to Leveritt John Smith both of the Parish of Hampstead Queens County.

Aug. 1 Died at his residence on Friday last, John Appleby, aged 83 yrs. he had received two paralytick strokes — the last of which he got about a month ago — Rev. J. Bartholomew attended his funeral and gave the attendants a very pathetic and affecting exhortation — He was buried on Bricker's Hill August 1st 1847.

Aug. 6. Died in Jerusalem this evening at 6 o'clock Rev. James Trimble's Father aged 71 years. He emigrated from Ireland last season, and lived only a year after his arrival in this Province. He was a very exemplary, inoffensive, and devout person. His bodily sufferings, which lasted 17 days, were very severe, the principal cause of such excruciating pains as he endured was the obstruction of the urine which caused a distension of the bladder, this together with other diseases, put an end to mortal life. In the first of his illness his faith wavered and sometimes he almost doubted his being a child of God, but as he drew nearer his last his faith was stronger, and hope brighter so that he was enabled to rejoice that his Redeemer liveth, that his warfare was nearly accomplished, yet having nothing to trust in but the merits of a Crucified Savior — No doubt that his end was pure.

Aug. 8 He was buried at Riecker's hill. Rev. Joseph Bartholomew preached his funeral sermon at the Methodist Chapel from Rev. 16:13 It was a very wet day, yet there were a great many attended.

Aug. 22 Died in Cloves Settlement Second daughter of Hugh Wilson, aged 3 or 4 years, she was buried in Mr. Jas. Brown's burying-ground on the 24th. (this day is showry).

Aug. 20. The potato-disease has again appeared in some places it is very bad if they are killed by the rust now, there will be very light crops as the potatoes are late, there is quite a change of air, it being quite cool, which may possibly stop the disease. In many places the wheat is also struck with the rust — the weevil is also destroying it some places.

Wm. N. Stockford, aged 16 or 17 years, was drowned, while coming from Long Island to the Main-Land, out of a scow in which they were conveying oxen across, there was one Mr. Crawford propelling the scow and Mr. N. S. as he was passing from one end of the scow to the other was crowded over the side thereof by the oxen — they did not find him till the next day — about 20 hours after he was drowned.

Aug 24. A man (name unknown) who was in the horrors occasioned by inebriety, jumped overboard from one of Whitney's Steamers which ply between Fredericton and St. John. he left a wife and family in St. John to lament his untimely death.

Aug. 22 John Tully, Tailor, lost one of his children by dysentery, and on Sept. 1st he lost another by the same complaint.

Sept. 1 J. and R. Hutchinson and John Inch Jr. visited Geo. Darragh's Lodge — There were considerable many in attendance.

Aug. 12. John Daly was married, by Rev. J. Bartholomew, to Ann McKinney, both of the Parish of Petersville Q.Co. — A few days after his marriage a girl named Gray attested, before Robt. Golding Esq. to a case of illegitimacy against him — this will be the fourth illegitimate against him by the same libertine.

Sept. 7. Married at Petersville, A. C. by the Rev. J. Bartholomew, eldest daughter of Mr. Thos. Megan, to Mr. Parker from the Kennebecasis River, Kings County — (A very fine pleasant day)

Sept. 3. I went to No. 4 along with C. & W. Inch — there were 3 made Orangemen and one admitted on his certificate.

Sept. 14. John Tully, tailor, had a third child buried who died of dysentery. This is 3 children he has lost in less than a month. And he lost one last winter.

Sept. 7. The following account of London I transcribe from a letter of Mr. Thomas Simpson's dated Aug. 4, 1865 [sic], he took the same from one of the London Journals. London, in length is nearly 8 miles, in breadth 3 miles, and its circumference 26 miles. It contains 8,000 streets, lanes and alleys including Courts &c — 65 different Squares — 246 Churches and Chapels — 207 meeting Houses for Dissenters 43 Chapels for foreigners — and 6 synagogues for Jews — making 502 places of public worship — The number of inhabitants during the sitting of parliament is estimated at 1,250,000 — In this vast city there are upwards of 4,000 seminaries for Education — 10 Institutes for promoting the Arts and Sciences — 122 Asylums for the indigent 17 for the sick and lame — 113 dispensaries — 704 charitable Institutions — 58 Courts of Justice — 7,400 professional men — Connected with the various departments of the Law — There are 13,300 vessels and ships trading to the River Thames in the course of a year — 40,000 wagons going and returning to the Metropolis in the same period, including their repeated voyages — the amount of Exports and Imports to and from the River Thames is estimated at £ 66,811,922 Sterling, annually — and the property floating in this vast City every year is £170,000,000 Sterling — these circumstances may be sufficient to convince us of the amazing extent and importance of the Capital of the British Empire — Plymouth is a very large sea-port town — a Corporation sends 2 Members to Parliament — contains 40,000 inhabitants, has a strong Garrison or Citadel — lies S.W. from London 220 miles, has 5 churches — 10 chapels for different Dissenters. Stonehouse is a large parish adjoining to Plymouth well built with fine Houses — it contains the finest buildings in England, namely, the Royal Marine Barracks, the Royal Naval hospital for sick and wounded seamen and Marines. The Royal Victualling Office for our navy ships, &c, which is the admiration of all Travellers — from Stonehouse you cross over a bridge where an arm of the Sea runs through which takes you into Devonport, and the dock-yard, which stands upon 72 acres of

ground, where all the Men-of-War ships are Built and repaired — St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, also attracts the notice of travellers — The length of the church from East to West is 500 feet, breadth of the body of the Church is 110 feet — height from the pavement in the Street to the top of the Crop over the dome 404 feet, and inside the Church to the roof 356 feet high — This vast pile covers upwards of two acres of ground — The Bell in the tower weighs 11,474 pounds — when tolled will be heard 20 miles distant — the dial of the clock is 57 feet in circumference — nearly 20 feet in diameter — the Minute hand being 8 feet long —

Sept. 19 John Worden's wife, aged 26 years, died this morning at 6 o'clock after ten days' suffering of the most excruciating kind — On the 9th she was delivered of a daughter, doctor Boris being there. An on the 12th of another, stillborn, the doctor, it is said, did not know the nature of her suffering. On the evening of the 8th when her husband left to call some neighbors in, she saw an apparition resembling a woman dressed in the same manner she then was, viz. having her night-clothes on. As soon as she perfectly saw it, it vanished — her earnest petition during her illness was that her life might be spared. She left an infant and a child about 18 months of age.

Sept. 25th This was training Day at Nerepis, Geo. Armstrong's. The day passed off pretty quietly. There was some horse-racing at Mr. Thos. Graham's and some ebriety also.

Sept. 13. There was a trial of a case between Robt. Smith, plaintiff, and Noah Webb, defendant, before Joseph Perkin's, Esq. about Noah Webb running his sled against Robt. Smith's, so the indictment was irregular or unlawful driving. The case went against Robt. Smith, and cost him about 6 or 7 dollars. He then, a few days subsequent entered a suit against the S^d N. Webb for illegal driving and damages before Robert Golding Esq. which was tried on Sept. 28th when Noah Webb lost the case and had about 12 or 14 dollars cost and damages to pay.

Oct. 14. Died at her residence, Jerusalem, Elizabeth, Consort of Mr. Wm. Harrison. She was confined about 3 months previous and born him a son, but she caught cold some short time afterwards, from which she never recovered. Her limbs being very much swollen, and infact her whole frame became swollen exceedingly, she last left her husband with two small children. It was about 5 o'clock P.M. when her spirit took its flight from its clay tenement to meet the Judge of all the earth —

Nov. 23. Jeremiah Speight married to Catharine Smith, both of Petersville, by Rev. J. Bartholomew.

Dec. 1. Mr. Robert Douglas (Mountain) died, aged 76 years. He was an universalist in his belief — he was buried on the 4th at Oak Point. Mr. Trimble preached his funeral sermon.

Dec. 8. Mr. Benjamin Clark, aged 42 years, departed this life, leaving a wife and 7 children, together with a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

About 3 weeks ago he had a daughter, aged 15 or 16, who died of the same disease that he died of viz — *typhus fever* — he was confined about 10 wks. he was a very pious and exemplary man. And the God whom he served while in health did not forsake neither in sickness nor in the valley of the Shadow of death. For when on the brink of Jordan he could rejoice by faith in Christ that he was going to be forever with his heavenly *Master* — he died about 10 o'clock P.M. and on the morning of the same day he requested one of his spiritual brethren to read the last Chapter of James's epistle and pray with him — he did so — and he expressed what great comfort there was in that Chapter — and then he took his final farewell of his wife and children — commending them all to the Lord, and the word of his grace, telling his partner that they were parted only for a very short season — the parting of him and her, it is said was very affecting — Lord enable us all to live the life of the righteous. That we may die in the Lord. And they that sleep in the Lord will God bring with him —

Dec. 10. Andrew Dunn (Orangeman) died in Portland St. John N.B. after a short but severe illness of 12 days. — he has left a wife and two small children to lament their irreparable loss — he was about 25 years of age, and a very healthy, robust man — the youth, the middle-aged, and the aged are alike liable to *death*. “Because death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Dec. 13. There was a temperance meeting in the Methodist Chapel, at which there were the Rev. A. Mercereau, the Rev. J. Flinn, the Rev. J. Trimble and quite a large company of laity — there was a good deal said in favour of *total abstinence* and much to the purpose — George Jones rose and opposed the advocates of *total abstinence*, but was ably rebutted by the Rev. J. Flinn — the pledge was then read & 32 persons voluntarily signed the pledge to totally abstain from all intoxicating drinks except for sacramental and medicinal purposes.

22nd — There was another temperance meeting when 12 joined the pledge.