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Title: Journal of William Shunk (Copy)

Date: April 18-24, 1846

Location: I-Purchase-1965-14

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Willie left Centre on the evening of Wednesday
the 15th of April 1846. he reached Chambersburg some evening in the
Car, and proceeded immediately in the Stage to Pittsburg where he
arrived about noon of Friday the 17th, that evening he went
on board the Steam boat Colorado which proceeded to Beaver
where she lay during the night, Next morning ^{April 18th} when she reached
Willsville, Willie left her and walked back to a point a
few miles above Beaver on the Ohio River where he commenced
his journal and spent the night in a hollow bottomwood tree -
Next day Sunday he walked to Manchester where he spent
the night in a stable - Monday the 20th he passed through
the City of Allegheny early in the Morning and walked
that day to Thomas Wibley a mile or two east of Greensburg
where he was kindly entertained, and slept in a bed a
comfort which he enjoyed only that one night day but
absent - Tuesday the 21st he walked to Snytown where he
slept in a barn. Next day ~~Thursday~~ Wednesday the 22nd
he walked from Snytown to Bedford, when he was in
sight of the latter place he continued his journal. He slept
that night in a barn in Bedford. Thursday the 23rd and
Friday the 24th he walked from Bedford to Chambersburg
Towards evening on the 23rd he continued his journal, and
on the 24th when he was 11 miles west of Chambersburg
he concluded his journal. He reached Chambersburg on the morning
of the 24th and took the Car, that night which brought
him home on Saturday Morning the 25th of April

The following is a copy of his journal

Saturday evening April 18 1846 in a hollow bottomwood tree
a short distance above Beaver on the Banks of the river Ohio
I walked from Willsville here 21 miles to
day and will try, if I live, to go to Pittsburg tomorrow. I am
afraid my poor mother will not live, if I cannot see her soon
I am indeed a most outrageous sinner. But as God showeth
Mercy and forgiveness all iniquities I offer up my prayers
to Him, with the sincere hope that he may pardon my offenses

My name is William F Shunk, and I am son of Francis
R Shunk Governor of Pennsylvania. I write this so that if
any thing may happen me I shall be known alive or dead
I am taken by an old hollow buttonwood, in which I must
sleep to night, as I have not a cent to my name, and have
just got through my supper of two ginger cakes, the only
morsel I have had to day.

Wednesday April 2nd Near Beaford.

I am just in sight of Beaford, The Sun
is down, and I am just waiting for dark to go down into
some stable for the night. On Saturday I had nothing
but a few ginger cakes in the evening, and I slept that night
in an old buttonwood tree on the bank of the Ohio. The next
day, Sunday, I had nothing at all to eat, except a few
gingers full of crumbs I scraped out of the bottom of my
pocket. On Monday I found better and succeeded in
getting a slice of bread for each meal. This was high
living for me - I slept that night between two feather
beds, got along very well - On Tuesday I had nothing to eat
all day except a slice of bread for supper. I slept in a barn
this evening. To day I have had nothing, but is blowing up
cold and I must hunt forays.

Thursday 19 miles back of Beaford.

I slept last night in an old barn, without
much more than an armful of hay - I have had nothing to
eat since the day before yesterday and it is now noon, I
have come from Beaford (19 miles) since morning. I
have thought of going the whole distance to Chambersburg,
but find that I cannot, as the country is hilly, the Sun
is very hot and my feet are sore.

I am afraid my dear father and mother
will not forgive me - Indeed I sincerely deserve it. I have
been walking all day along the creek in which my mother
played when a girl, and I could have cried at every
turn it made. Indeed I am writing this with hay in my
eyes. I am as perfect an instance of a prodigal son as

ever lived. I feel as if it would be a blessing to work in my
fathers Service - If he only forgives me - I have suffered for many
hours, that seemed ages to me an agony of soul. I might easily
jump into the Stage at any time and soon be home, but I am
afraid, indeed almost certain, my father will deem me unpardonable
as it is. To be sure at some time I may have broken down
under the Circumstances in which I am now placed, but I feel as
though it were the just punishment of God Almighty for my
Wickedness, and disobedience of his commands

Friday April 24. 16 miles from Chambury.

I am within eleven miles ~~from~~ of
Chambury and expect to get there by evening. We have had
a couple of Showers to day, and though I might have been
dressed, and as ^{it} looked very threatening, with the wind strong
from the east. I prayed that the Lords Will should be done
not mine.

Although this expedition I know has stained my
Character in Mansbury and with my dear parents. I feel that it
has done me more good than harm. I do not wish to make
any excuse for my fault but confess it is one for which I never
ought to be forgiven in this world. But. In the first place
this trip has taught me, to put my trust in God, and to
rely upon him for aid and pardon for all my transgressions,
and yet, by praying and being a better boy, obedient to my
parents and my heavenly father - to have more confidence
in my own powers.

In the second place It has taught me to give
up all my foolish ideas about the Sea and a Sailors life,
Not only for the sake of pleasing my poor mother, but as I
have found that I am capable of being, and liable to be, led
away.

In the third place it has (this sentence not finished)
Lea is a noble fellow, I would be ungrateful if I did
not cling to him, and do any thing for him hereafter, as he
has treated me as a brother should, and as a father would

Amid all my troubles, feeling as if I was under the curse
of God and my father, I feel as if I would endure ten times
as much before I would go back to Dickinson College. I feel
as if this will be the only way of pleasing my father, but must
sacrifice every thing to escape it. I feel and know the
importance of education, but also know that I can teach myself
as much as I would have learned at Dickinson this session.
I can study equal to any one for the first three months
at any place, when all is strange and I am fighting
for reputation - But when the tricks, and ushanty, and
liberties and students become familiar, my good standing
is gone.

This journal was written with a pencil on the
blank part of a letter he had in his pocket from Leipsic.

Wells's Journal
April 1846.

I had sent this to hang
the name in

Nov. 9 1846.

Willie left Carlisle on the evening of Wednesday the 15th of April 1846. he reached Chambersburg same evening in the cars, and proceeded immediately in the stage to Pittsburg where he arrived about noon on Sunday the 17th, that evening he went on board the steam boat Colorado which proceeded to Beaver where she lay during the night, next morning April 18th when she reached Wellsville, Willie left her and walked back to a point a few miles above Beaver on the Ohio River where he commenced his journal and spent the night in a hollow buttonwood tree – next day Sunday he walked to Manchester where he spent the night in a stable – Monday the 20th he hurried through the city of Allegheny early in the morning and walked that day to Thomas Wibley a mile or two east of Greenburg where he was kindly entertained, and slept in a bed a comfort which he enjoyed only that one night [during?] his absence – Tuesday the 21. he walked to [Stoystown?] where he slept in a barn next day. ~~Thursday~~ the Wednesday the 22nd he walked from [Stoystown?] to Bedford, when he was in sight of the latter place he continued his journal. He slept that night in a barn in Bedford. Thursday the 23rd and Friday the 24th he walked from Bedford to Chambersburg. Now on the [evening?] on the 23rd he continued his journal, and on the 24th when he was 11 miles west of Chambersburg he concluded his journal. He reached Chambersburg on the [day?] of the 24th and took the car that night which brought him home on Saturday morning the 25th of April.

The following is a copy of his journal

Saturday evening April 18th 1846 in a hollow buttonwood tree a short distance above Beaver on the Banks of the river Ohio.

I walked from Wellsville here 21 miles today and will try, if I live, to go to Pittsburg tomorrow. I am afraid my poor mother will not live, if I cannot see her soon I am indeed a most outrageous xxxx. But as god showeth mercy and forgiveth all iniquities I offer up my prayers to Him, with the Sincere hope that he may pardon my offence.

[page break]

My name is William F. Shunk, and I am son of Francis R. Shunk Governor of Pennsylvania. I write this so that if anything may happen me I shall be known alive or dead I am seated by an old hollow buttonwood, in which I must sleep tonight, as I have not a cent to my name, and have just got through my supper of two ginger cakes, the only morsel I have had today.

Wednesday April 22nd near Bedford,

I am just in sight of Bedford, the sun is down, and I am just waiting for dark to go down into some stable for the night. On Saturday I had nothing but a few ginger cakes in the evening, and I slept that night in an old buttonwood tree on the bank of the Ohio. The next day Sunday I had nothing at all to eat except a few fingers full of crumbs I scraped out of the bottom of my pocket. On Monday I fared better and succeeded in getting a slice of bread for each meal. This was high living for me – I slept that night between two feather beds, got along very well –

on Tuesday I had nothing to eat all day except a slice of bread for supper – I slept in a barn that evening. Today I have nothing, but is blowing up cold and I must hunt lodgings.

Thursday 19 miles East of Bedford

I slept last night in an old barn, without much more than an armful of hay – I have had nothing to eat since the day before yesterday and it is now noon. I have come from Bedford (19 miles) since morning – I have thought about going the whole distance to Chambersburg, but find that I cannot as the country is hilly, the sun is very hot and my feet are sore.

I am afraid my dear father and mother will not forgive me – indeed I sincerely deserve it. I have been walking all day along the creek in which my mother played when a girl, and I could have cried at every turn it made – indeed I am writing this with tears in my eyes. I am as perfect an instance of a prodigal son as

[page break]

ever lived. I feel as if it would be a blessing to work in my father's service – if he only forgives me – I have suffered for many hours, that seemed ages to me, an agony of soul. I might easily jump into the stage at any time and soon be home, but I am afraid, indeed almost certain, my father will deem me unpardonable as it is. To be sure at some time I may have broken down under the circumstances in which I am now placed, but I fell as though it was the just punishment of God almighty for my Wickedness, and disobedience of his commands.

Friday April 24th. 11 miles from Chambersburg.

I am within eleven miles of Chambersburg and expect to get there by evening. We have had a couple of showers today, and though I might have been drenched, and as it looked very threatening, with the wind strong from the east. I prayed that the Lords will should be done not mine.

Although this expectation I know has stained my character in [Nansbury?] and with my dear parents. I feel that it had done me more good than harm. I do not wish to make any excuse for my fault but confess it is one for which I never ought to be forgiven in this world. But in the first place this trip has taught me to put my trust in God, and to rely upon him for aid and pardon for all my transgressions and get by praying and being a better boy, obedient to my parents and my heavenly father – to have more confidence in my own powers.

In the second place it has taught me to give up all my foolish ideas about the sea and a sailor's life, not only for the sake of pleasing my poor mother, but as I have found that I am capable of being, and liable to be, led astray.

In the third place it has (this sentence not [illegible])

[Lou?] is a noble fellow, I would be ungrateful if I did not [cling?] to him, and do anything for him hereafter, as he has treated me as a brother should, and as a father would.

[page break]

Amid all my troubles, feeling as if I was under the curse of god and my father, I feel as if I would endure ten times as much before I would go back to Dickinson College. I feel as if this will be the only way of pleasing my father, but must sacrifice everything to escape it. I feel and know the importance of education, but also know that I can teach myself as much as I would have learned at Dickinson this session. I can study equal to any one for the first three months at any place, when all is strange and I am fighting for reputation – But when the tricks, and [illegible], and liberties and Students become familiar, my good standing is gone.

This journal was written with a pencil on the blank part of a letter he had in his pocket from [Carlisle?].

Willies Journal

April 1846

I have sent this to Nancy. She returned it

[illegible] July 9, 1846