

Diary of Anna Sophia Parkman, 1777-1778

Prof. Ross W. Beales, Jr.

Anna Sophia Parkman was born on October 18, 1755, the daughter of the Reverend Ebenezer Parkman and his second wife, Hannah (Breck) Parkman. She married Elijah Brigham on September 21, 1780, and died on November 26, 1783, seven months after the birth of her second child. The manuscript of the diary is apparently no longer extant; the following extracts appear in Harriette Merrifield Forbes, *The Hundredth Town: Glimpses of Life in Westborough, 1717-1817* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1889), 83-89.

Editorial note: The elisions (...) appear in Forbes's extracts. The year, month, and day of the week have been added for clarity. In transcribing Forbes's version of the diary, expanded editorial criteria have been used. Sentences begin with capital letters; for example, in the entry for November 22, p.m. has been changed to P.M. Superscript letters have been brought down to the line, with letters added; thus, Sam^l becomes Samuel, Bro^r, Brother. Abbreviations have been expanded, with Northboro' becoming Northborough, Southboro' becoming Southborough, and Marlboro becoming Marlborough. The ampersand becomes and. Some punctuation has been silently inserted where there was apparently none in the original document.

Readers may consult Forbes's transcription in the *Hundredth Town* at <https://books.google.com/books?id=EFPWhoVVn1IC&pg=PA125&dq=forbes+hundredth+town&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjM0ayN077gAhUlwikKHeDIAKYQuwUILTAA#v=onepage&q=forbes%20hundredth%20town&f=false>

1777 November 20 (Thursday). 'Tis Thanksgiving Day. I do not go to meeting. Dr. Stiles¹ preaches. I hear very finely indeed. Susa² poorly tarry at home with me. At evening I receive a letter from Sister Cushing³ which I am very glad of as I have received no letter from her since Brother Cushing was here. Also Doctor Hawes⁴ come to spend the evening with us.

1777 November 22 (Saturday). Dr. Stiles Set out his journey to Portsmouth this morning. Am making shirt for James Hicks⁵ -- write a letter to Sister Cushing and send by Stephen Maynard.⁶

¹Ezra Stiles (1727-1795), Yale College, 1746; minister of the First Congregational Church, Newport, RI, 1755-1776; Dighton, 1776-1777; Portsmouth, NH, 1777-1778; President of Yale College, 1778-1795; Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History* (6 vols.; New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1888-1912), 2:92-97. Stiles stopped in Westborough on his way from New Haven to Portsmouth. He preached the Thanksgiving sermon on Nov. 20; *Diary of Ebenezer Parkman*, Nov. 19-21, 1777 (hereafter cited as EP Diary)

²Anna Sophia's sister-in-law, Susanna (Brigham) Parkman (1754-1834), wife of her brother Breck.

³Anna Sophia's sister, Sarah (1743-1825), married the Rev. John Cushing of Ashburnham, Sept. 28, 1769.

⁴James Hawes (1739-1821), first physician in Westborough.

⁵James Hicks had come to live in the Parkman household at age 11 "till he shall be 14 Years old" (EP Diary, May 11, 1776). He stayed only until three weeks after his thirteenth birthday (*ibid.*, May 26, 1778). The elder Parkman learned from his son Breck that "Mrs. Hicks of Cambridge is not well pleased with what was done for

Do sundry things. P.M. Alter a cloke for Nabby Wood.⁷ Master Nathaniel Fosdic⁸ here on his way to Boston -- 'tis warm weather....

We wash. I do sundries in the Kitchen. Rev. Mr. Sherman⁹ of Connecticut here and dined and Lodged here. P.M. I sew on Jemmy's shirt. Breck¹⁰ is papering the old shop.

1777 November 26 (Wednesday). I do a variety of things. Father visits Mr. Stone¹¹ of Southborough. Mother at Capt. Maynard's¹² finds them sick with the measles. P.M. I iron. Crosby¹³ cleans the Garretts. Mrs. Brigham¹⁴ from Northborough here to see Susa. I drink Tea at the Shop.

1777 November 27 (Thursday). Crosby leaves us for good and all goes with John Harrington¹⁵ to Boston. I am Busy about many things. Mother visits Mrs. Baker¹⁶ and Carries home a Shirt I have been making for her and did agree with Mrs. Baker for 12 lbs. Flax. I spin Thread. Mrs. Lamson¹⁷ here and spend the evening....

James" (ibid., June 27, 1778). James was born May 7, 1765, son of John and Elizabeth Hicks; *Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston, 1914), Volume 1, *Births*, 349. A family connection led to the hiring of James Hicks: his father was the son of John and Rebecca (Champney) Hicks; Rebecca was the sister of Ebenezer Parkman's first wife, Mary (or Molly) Champney.

⁶Stephen Maynard, son of Stephen and Anna (Gott, Brigham) Maynard, b. Dec. 9, 1759; EP Diary, Dec. 9, 1759.

⁷Abigail, daughter of Solomon and Patience Woods, b. Sept. 11, 1753; *Vital Records of Westborough, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1903), 110 (hereafter cited as *WVR*), Nabby Woods worked for the Parkmans on several occasions; EP Diary, Jan. 18-19, Sept. 6, Dec. 28, 30, 1776; Jan. 4, Feb. 12, Sept. 4, 8, 1777.

⁸Probably Nathaniel Fadre Fosdick (1760-1819), Harvard 1779.

⁹Rev. Nathaniel Sherman (1724-1797), Princeton 1753. He served as minister of Bedford, 1756-1768, and Mt. Carmel, CT, 1768-1797.

¹⁰Anna Sophia's brother, Breck Parkman (1749-1825).

¹¹Rev. Nathan Stone (1708-1781), Harvard 1726.

¹²Capt. Stephen Maynard, father of Stephen (note 6).

¹³The reference to "Crosby" is to the widow Mary Crosby. The next day, Ebenezer Parkman noted in his diary: "Mrs. *Mary Crosby* (Widow) who has lived here for more than two years, now leaves us. Mr. *John Harrington* by the Direction of the select men of this Town, takes her into his Waggon, to transport her to *Boston*. May god graciously restrain her from Vice, convert her to Himself, and eternally Save her!"

¹⁴Susanna, wife of Levi Brigham and mother of Susanna Parkman, Breck's wife.

¹⁵John, son of John and Sarah Harrington, b. Feb. 28, 1743, in Waltham; *Vital Records of Waltham, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: New-England Historic Genealogical Society, 1904), 48. He married Mary Whitney of Westborough (int. Dec. 20, 1766); died Jan. 23, 1829; *WVR*, 166; 242.

¹⁶Persis (Brigham) Baker (1703-1780), widow of Edward Baker (1696-1763).

¹⁷Possibly Abigail, wife of Paul Lampson, whose son William was baptized, May 16, 1779; Westborough Church Records (Westborough Public Library), 180. Ebenezer Parkman also mentioned Mrs. Thomas Lamson ("comes to work on Elias's Cloths," EP Diary, Feb. 24, 1780).

1777 December 1 (Monday). We wash. Miss Eunice Jones¹⁸ here to make some cloth for James Hicks. Mrs. Brigham here. Breck went away to Hartford in the evening. I ironed at the shop. 'Tis *very cold* weather....

1777 December 5 (Friday). After Breakfast Mr. Bradshaw¹⁹ Presented me with a Book Containing Twenty of Dr. Eliot's Sermons,²⁰ for which I am very thankful.

1777 December 11 (Thursday)...My mother informs me that in my absence Brother Moore²¹ had been here and brought me a Black Satten Cloke that was my Sisters, also an under Petticoat and some of Sukey's²² knit Lace for a tucker....

1777 December 15 (Monday). I wash. 'Tis very cold weather. P.M. Master Samuel Brigham²³ here. Drink Tea and spend the evening here. Brought me a letter from Mr. Elijah Brigham²⁴ at Dartmouth college, occasioned by the Death of my Sister Hannah.²⁵ I spend the Evening Knitting upon a pair of Stocken for myself.

1777 December 24 (Wednesday). I knit at the Shop.... P.M. Breck returned from Boston. I drink tea at the shop with my Brother and Sister. Also Dr. Hawes there. Spend the evening at home knitting still on my own stockens....

1777 December 31 (Wednesday). I card Wool for Molly²⁶ to spin and knit some. Mother is knitting Gloves for Patty Miller²⁷ -- 'tis Extrem cold weather -- very good sleighing....

¹⁸Eunice, daughter of Abraham and Marcy (Gale) Jones, b. July 13, 1755; Mary Frances Peirce, comp., *Town of Weston. Births, Deaths and Marriages...* (Boston, 1901), 464.

¹⁹Benjamin Bradshaw (d. 1779) married Mary, daughter of Ebenezer, Jr., and Elizabeth Parkman, Aug. 7, 1774; *Vital Records of New Braintree, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: New-England Historic Genealogical Society, 1904), 71. Bradshaw also gave copies of Eliot's sermons to Anna Sophia's father; EP Diary. Aug. 13, Sept., 26, 1777).

²⁰Andrew Eliot (1718-1778), *Twenty Sermons on the Following Subjects...* (Boston: John Boyle, 1774).

²¹Jonathan Moore (1768-1814), Harvard 1761, minister of Rochester, MA, married Susanna Parkman (1745-1772), Oct. 13, 1768.

²²After the death of Susanna (Parkman) Moore, Nov. 30, 1772, Jonathan Moore brought their eldest child, Susanna or Sukey (b. Aug. 29, 1769), to live with her grandparents, Ebenezer and Hannah Parkman. Sukey lived with the Parkmans until 1777, when Moore re-married. Sukey left the Parkmans on May 22, 1777 (EP Diary), so the reference to her "knit lace" probably referred to work she had done before May 22.

²³Samuel, son of Samuel and Ann (Gott) Brigham, b. Aug. 21, 1756, Dartmouth College, 1779; George T. Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College...* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1867), 25.

²⁴Son of Levi and Susanah [sic] Brigham, born Jan. 14, 1750; *WVR*, 25. He was a graduate of Dartmouth College, class of 1778; Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College*, 24.

²⁵Hannah Parkman (Feb. 9, 1758-Oct. 14, 1777). Her date of death is from her father's diary; it does not appear in the *WVR*.

²⁶"Molly Pratt came to spin, and is to live a while here" (EP Diary, Dec. 29, 1777). She may have been the same Molly Pratt who came to the Parkman home "to help us – washing etc." (ibid., Apr. 4, 1759). She later brought Parkman her relation "(of her own writing and) a very ample, Serious, Pathetick one" (ibid., Aug. 23, 1770). When she was admitted to the church, Sept. 9, 1770 (Westborough Church Records, [149]), she was described as Mary, daughter of Hezekiah. She was born June 17, 1742, daughter of Hezekiah and Rachel; *WVR*, 85.

²⁷Martha, daughter of Ebenezer and Hannah Miller, b. June 22, 1762; *WVR*, 75.

1778 January 20 (Tuesday). I spin. P.M. go to Singing School at evening. Mr. E.B. (Elijah Brigham) here and spend the evening. He is just come home from College.

1778 January 21 (Wednesday). I spin. Mr. B. goes away. P.M. go to school....

1778 January 25 (Sunday). I go to meeting at evening. Mr. B. here spend evening.

1778 January 30 (Friday). I sew in the forenoon -- p.m. go to school. Mr. E.B. at school came home with me and spend the evening here.

1778 January 31 (Saturday). I go to School all day. Mr. B goes away in the morning. I gave him my Singing Book to Pric some tunes into it, while I was gone to School.

1778 February 8 (Sunday). I go to meeting. Set in the gallery with the Singers. Mr. Badcock²⁸ and Mr. Bradshaw here after meeting and Sing in the Evening.

1778 February 9 (Monday). I am very poorly. Mollie washed. I go in the sleigh to School. At evening Mr. Bradshaw here to Lodge. I rec'd a letter from Mr. Brigham.

1778 February 11 (Wednesday). I spin. P.M. this day Mr. Badcock finish his school and we settled with him. My part of School expenses is 18/10.

1778 February 14 (Saturday). We scour our pewter.

1778 February 16 (Monday). ...Mr. B. here. Spent the evening. Gives an invitation to take a ride to Concord in company with Master Holland.²⁹ Mrs. Hancock³⁰ of Northborough.

1778 February 17 (Tuesday). Mr. B and Mr. Holland came in the morning with the sleigh. I go with them to Northborough, add Mrs. Hancock to the company. Then go on our way to Concord, dine at Loreing Tavern, arrive at Brother Samuel³¹ at Sun sett, find that brother and

²⁸Itinerant singing master Lemuel Badcock (1748-1835) started a singing school, Jan. 12, 1778; EP Diary. By Jan. 30, he had forty-six students, "34 Males – the rest Women and Girls"; *ibid.* The school ended on Feb. 11, 1778; but he convened another school, Mar. 19-Apr. 1. Badcock returned later in the year to start another singing school.

²⁹Abraham Holland (1751-1847), who was born in Shrewsbury, was a member of the Dartmouth College class of 1779; Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College*, 26.

³⁰Mrs. Hancock: no person by the name of Hancock appears in the Westborough or Northborough vital records. This may have been a mis-reading of Hamock, as Sarah Hamock of Northborough married Elijah Brigham (Anna Sophia's widower), Apr. 20, 1786; *Vital Records of Northborough, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1850* (Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1901), 94. She was listed as Mrs. Sally Hamock of Northborough in the intention; *WVR*, 164.

³¹Anna Sophia's brother, Samuel Parkman (1751-1824), married Sarah Shaw, Feb. 11, 1773.

sister is gone to Newbury. Mr. and Mrs. H. goes to Bilrickca. Mr. B. visit Mr. Kellogg.³² I visit Dr. Minot's lady.³³ Spend p.m. with Samuel. With Mr. B and evening.

1778 February 20 (Friday). We sett out on our way to Northborough, Breck being Joined to our Company. We dine at Sawing Tavern at Marlborough, drink coffee at Briggs, arrive at Westborough at 7 o'clock, find Miss Patty Fish³⁴ here. Mr. B. goes away to Capt. Edmund Brigham's³⁵ with the sleigh, does not spend the evening here. I am much fatigued....

1778 February 26 (Thursday). Susa and I comb flax all day. 'Tis very rainy dull weather.

1778 April 23 (Thursday). I am bucking yarn for Elias'³⁶ shirts.

1778 April 24 (Friday). Bucking yet.

1778 April 27 (Monday). Wash. P.M. go to Northborough to get Elias' shirts wove, to the hospital³⁷ to see Winslow Brigham,³⁸ Billy Spring³⁹ and several others that have the small Pox.⁴⁰ Stop at Coll. Brigham's. Mr. Brigham was my company home. Spend the evening in company.

1778 April 29 (Wednesday). I spin thread to make me a pair of gloves....

1778 May 31 (Sunday). I spend the forenoon mending worsted mitts.⁴¹

1778 June 19 (Friday). I help Sister Cushing get her quilt to the frame....

1778 June 24 (Wednesday). Sister Cushing and I set out in a chaise for Boston. Breck is our company. 'Tis a nightly eclipse of the sun.⁴² We dine at Reeves Tavern in Sudbury -- ride from there to Cambridge, and then to Boston. Arrived at Brother Samuel 6 o'clock....

³²Possibly David Kellogg (1755-1843), Dartmouth College, 1775, of whom Parkman wrote, "Mr. David Kellogg, preacher at Framingham dined here, but I was obliged to leave him to Mr. Brigham, who was his acquaintance" (Nov. 21, 1780). Kellogg was ordained at Framingham, Jan. 10, 1781. Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College*, 18.

³³Mary Minot (bapt. 1732-1801), wife of Timothy Minot (1726-1804), Harvard 1747. Mary Minot was the daughter of John Martyn (1706-1767), Harvard 1724, who had served as Northborough's minister, 1746-1767.

³⁴Patty (or Martha) Fish (1752-1816), daughter of Rev. Elisha and Hannah Fish of Upton, mar. Nathaniel Paige of Hardwick, Sept. 4, 1783; Lucius R. Paige, *History of Hardwick, Massachusetts. With a Genealogical Register* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1883), 437. Paige mistakenly identified Martha Fish as a sister of Rev. Elisha Fish.

³⁵Edmund, son of Edmund and Sarah Brigham, b. Oct. 19, 1758; *WVR*, 25.

³⁶Anna Sophia's brother, Elias (1761-1828), was a student at Harvard College (Class of 1780).

³⁷This was a hospital for those who had been inoculated. "Mr. *Tainter's House* is improved as an Hospital, and a Number of young men are inoculated to day"; EP Diary, Apr. 2, 1777.

³⁸Winslow, son of Levi and Susanna Brigham, b. June 18, 1756; *WVR*, 28.

³⁹"Bill Spring is innoculated by Doctor Curtis and returns home to remain 'till he begins to be ill"; Breck Parkman, Diary, Apr. 18, 1778 (Parkman Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society). Breck Parkman also visited Spring at the hospital; *ibid.*, May 2, 1778. Breck had been inoculated in 1776; EP Diary; Sept. 12, Oct. 5, 1776.

⁴⁰Anna Sophia, with her sister Hannah, was inoculated, Apr. 3, 1777 (EP Diary).

⁴¹Is this date correct? Would Anna Sophia have worked on the Sabbath?

1778 June 27 (Saturday). We ride up to Coll. Howe⁴³ of Marlborough. Breakfast. Arrive home about noon.

1778 July 6 (Monday). I sew. P.M. Mr. Maynard tarrys all night. I spend an hour in company with him.

⁴²On the solar eclipse, see Samuel Williams, "An observation of a solar eclipse, June 24, 1778, at Bradford," *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences: To the End of the Year M,DCC,LXXXIII* (Boston, Adams and Nourse, 1785), 83-84. Williams (1743-1817), Harvard 1761, who became the Hollis Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy in 1780, helped organize the American Academy.

⁴³Cyprian Howe.