

Orrin Stone - Oswego County Pioneer

©2017 OSWEGO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 135 EAST THIRD STREET OSWEGO, NY 13126

Orrin Stone: 1789-1876

Orrin Stone was an Oswego County pioneer. A son of Jehiel and Ruth Norton Stone of Guilford, Connecticut, he accompanied his parents and nine brothers and sisters to a site near Ovid, Seneca County, New York, then a part of the Military Tract. After a brief residence there the Stones in company with their neighbors, the William Burts, resettled in Scriba. Tradition relates that they reached Oswego via the Seneca-Oswego waterway, driving their livestock along the streams. They proceeded to Scriba Corners along a crude trace. The Stones occupied the land just east of the Corners, the Burts, a tract to the west. At the time of their arrival in 1803, Orrin was 14.

There was sufficient land for the numerous sons and daughters, and Orrin was preparing to move from the family cabin to one of his own when he made the initial entry in his diary. The date was January 1, 1814, he was aged 25. He was planning to take a wife; and there were almost endless details requiring his attention.

A perusal of the terse observations through a period of several years leaves many questions unanswered; yet a partial pattern of frontier life evolves. Hard labor was a routine.

In the winter months he was busy “chopping” to level the forest in preparation for fields and crops. In the course of a year he spent between 65-75 days chopping, logging and splitting, and additional days at woodworking, fence building, and hauling. In March and April chopping yielded to “sugaring”. Preparing troughs, tapping trees, sap gathering and boiling syrup absorbed most of his working hours for about three weeks. And before April yielded to May he turned to plowing, and later to planting and hoeing. The diary indicates some 30 to 40 days’ labor in plowing for wheat, corn, oats, potatoes, and garden vegetables. Uncounted hours were also consumed in the orchard in planting, grafting and tending. The harvesting of hay, wheat, potatoes, oats, and corn became the principal occupation from July through October.

In between times he “laid my chamber floor”, calked or “mudded” his cabin, mended fences, drove his hog or cow to be bred (sometimes over considerable distances), marketed his potatoes or ashes in Oswego, and borrowed his father’s oxen to carry his grain to the mill.

There was a respite from heavy toil on Sundays when there were occasional “meetings” in the school house at the Corners or in Hiel Stone’s barn. A local lay-preacher conducted the Baptist service. Recreation was found in “raisings” and “bees” and singing school. Stone occasionally went hunting and fishing, but took special delight in searching for bee trees in the woods.

He also belonged to local militia, and sometimes accepted the duty of conveying the “warning” to the members. In an emergency in 1814 attending the War of 1812 he accompanied the militia to Henderson Harbor. The only detailed incident in the record (a brief paragraph) relates the invasion of Oswego in May of 1814.

In later life Stone was a postmaster, storekeeper and farmer. He died in 1876, aged 88.

The Society is indebted to Mrs. George M. Penney, a descendent of the Jehiel Stone family, for the use of the Stone Diary.

Charles M. Snyder, Editor. Oswego County Historical Society , 1964 - 1965 Publication.

During the War of 1812:

Orrin’s father, Hiel Stone, was a major in the war of 1812.

Orrin and his brother both served in the war of 1812.

Diary of Orrin Stone

January 1st 1814

S 1: Choping on a job for George W Burt in Hannibal

--

M 3: Choping E. Stone half day. 1-34

T 4: Choping with E. Stone

W 5: Choping with E. Stone

Th 6: I was Choping Erastus

F 7: Choping with E. Stone

S 8: Choping on the job with E.S and then went home in the evening

S 9: Was at Fathers _?_

M 10: Father & Mother started on a visit to the genesee Thrashing wheat p.m.

T 11: Thrashing part of the day

W 12: Thrashing W AM E. Stone PM got ready and went to A.M. Butler's ball

Th 13: Finished thrashing wheat Erastus S part of day

F 14: _?_ Wheat and put it up _?_

January 1st 1814) 1
 S 1 Choping on a job for
 George W Burt in Hannibal
 M 3 Choping E. Stone half
 day 1-34
 T 4 Choping with E. Stone
 W 5 Choping with E. Stone
 Th 6 I was Choping Erastus
 F 7 Choping with E. Stone
 S 8 Choping on the job with E.S
 and then went home in
 the evening
 S 9 Was at Fathers
 M 10 Father & Mother started on
 a visit to the genesee
 Thrashing Wheat p.m.
 T 11 Thrashing part of the day
 W 12 Thrashing W AM E. Stone
 PM got ready and went
 to A.M. Butler's ball
 Th 13 Finished thrashing Wheat
 Erastus S part of day
 F 14 Thrashing Wheat and put
 it up

Diary of Orrin Stone

2) January the 15th A 1814
S 15 got home a load of
Cherry boards from
Taylors saw mill -
S. 16
M 17 Went with E. Stone to
G. W. Burts A.M. P.M.
Choping on the job
T. 18 Choping with E.S.
W 19 Choping with E.S.
Th 20 Choping with E.S.
F 21 Choping with E.S.
S 22 Choping with E.S.
S 23 Rode in sleigh with
G.W. Burt to Oswego
falls lower landing and
then come back a foot
M 24 Choping E.S.
T 25 Choping E.S.
W 26 A. M. Finished our job
P.M. Went home

2.) January the 15 of 1814

S 15: Got home a load of Cherry boards
from Taylors saw mill

S 16:

M 17: Went with E. Stone to G. W. Burts
A.M P.M. Choping on the _?_

T 18: Choping with E.S.

W 19: Choping with E.S.

Th 20: Choping with E.S.

F 21: Choping with E.S.

S 22: Choping with E.S.

S 23: Rode in sleigh with G.W. Burt to
Oswego falls lower landing and then
came back a foot

M 24: Choping E.S.

T 25: Choping with E.S.

W 26: A. M Finished our Job

Th 27: P.M. Went home

Diary of Orrin Stone

January ^{the} 27 1814. (3)
 Th 27 Had Fathers horses and
 sleigh to ~~draw~~ draw
 a load of boards from Osw
 F 28 Went with Anson Stone af-
 ter wolves but could not catch
 any laid my chamber floor
 S 29 Drawed a load of boards with
 the oxen from the river p.
 S 30 ~~Went to~~
 M 31 Drawed two load of boards
 with the horses from river
 February the 1 - 1814
 T 1 drawed boards from Oswego
 W 2 Hubbard Church drawed wood
 for me part of the A.M. with
 their oxen
 Th 3 with a ~~g~~ sleigh & horses
 F 4
 S 5 Went to Brayton's mill P.P. went to Oswego D bought
 3 white plate 60
 S 6 Went to ~~?~~
 M 7 Took a clock to pieces and cleaned it.
 T 8 Makeing a cupboard
 W 9 Ditto
 Th 10 Went to Oswego with team
 got part of a load of boards and
 two small ~~b~~ bailed

January the 27 of 1814 3

Th 27: Had Fathers horses and sleigh to draw a load of boards from Osw

F 28: Went with Anson Stone after wolves but could not catch any, laid my chamber floor

S 29 Drawed a load of boards with the oxen from the river
?

M 31: Drawed two load of boards with the horses from river
February the 1 -- 1814

T 1: drawed board from Oswego

W 2: Hubbard Church drawed wood for me part of the A.M
with their oxen

Th 3 with a ~~g~~ sleigh & horses

F 4

S 5: Went to Brayton's mill P.P. went to Oswego D bought
3 white plate 60

S 6: Went to ~~?~~

M 7: Took a clock to pieces and cleaned it.

T 8: Makeing a cupboard

W 9: Ditto

Th 10: Went to Oswego with team got part of a load of
boards and two small ~~b~~ bailed

Diary of Orrin Stone

4 February the 11 1814
F 11 A.M. helped Mr. Lorenus
fan wheat with a fanning mill
P.M. verry stormy & windy
S 12 Finished my Shelves &c &c
S 13 ~~Went~~ to ~~work~~ &c
M 14
S 15 Making Oars &c
W 16 This evening waited on
a girl to Mr Buels to see
Mr Town perform his ^{tricks}
Th 17 P.M. Went into the woods
and found two bee Trees
F 18 I was runing about ^{and} not doing much of any thing
S 19 Shaving Oars chopped wood
S 20 Went to Mr J. Worden to
meeting ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~father~~
M 21 Went out with Father to look
for a Bee tree found none
P.M. moved my Chest to my
houst and some other things

4 February the 11 1814

F 11: A.M. helped Mr. Lorenus fan wheat with a fanning mill P.M. verry stormy & windy

S 12: Finished my Shelves _?_

S 13: _?_

M 14

T 15: Making Oars _?_

W 16: This evening waited on a girl to Mr Buels to see Mr Town perform his _?_

Th 17: P.M. Went into the woods and found two bee trees

F 18: I was runing about and not doing much of any thing

S 19: Shaving oars chopped wood

S 20: Went to Mr J. Worden to meeting _?_

M 21: Went out with Father to look for a Bee tree found none P.M. moved my Chest to my house and some other things

Diary of Orrin Stone

February the 22 1814 5

T 22: Bought 86 lbs pork of Father P.M. to work with E. S making oars

W 23: Cut down an ash tree for sap troves blocked off thirty one

Th 24: Went to collect an execution of Holden Corp a rainy day

F 25: Went to Oswego with J. Garner took my 5 ? kettle to ?

S 26: Choped out 20 sap troves

S 27: Went to Mr. Wordens to Mr. Baldwin Meeting

M 28: Choped some snowy day

March the 1 1814

T 1: Attended Town Meeting at Fathers

W 2: Went to Mexico to ?

Th 3: Come from Mexico home Snowed all day from S.W.

F 4: To work about home

S 5: To work about home

February the 22 1814 5
T 22 Bought 86 lbs pork of Father
P.M. to work with E. S making
W 23 Cut down an ash tree for sap
troves blocked off thirty one
Th 24 Went to collect an execution
of Holden Corp a rainy day
F 25 Went to Oswego with J. Garner
took my 5 ? kettle to ?
S 26 Choped out 20 sap troves
S 27 Went to Mr. Wordens to
Mr. Baldwin Meeting
M 28 Choped some snowy day
March the 1 1814
T 1 Attended Town Meeting
at Fathers
W 2 Went into Mexico to
Th 3 Come from Mexico home
Snowed all day from S.W.
F 4 To work about home
S 5 To work about home
S 6 Brought my hog from

Diary of Orrin Stone

6 Scriba March the 7 1814

M 7: Made 15 sap troves

T 8: Fixing to make shugar

W 9: Had Fathers horses and sleigh and drew a load of cherry boards from Taylors mill

Th 10: to Work here and there

F 11: Went to Oswego _?_

S 12: to work about home

S 13: Went to Mexico _?_

M 14: come from Mexico home and drew some fire wood

T 15: AM to work PM went ot Fathers to an extra town Meeting _?_

W 16: To work in the house

Th 17: Went and cut off a black ash not for a _?_ or two

F 18: Tapt part of my shugar bush sap ran verry well

S 19: Taped a few more _?_ Boiling sap ran verry well

S 20: Hired Hubbard Church to boil sap and I went to _?_

6 Scriba March the 7 1814
M 7 Made 15 sap troves &
T 8 Fixing to make shugare
W 9 Had Fathers horses and sleigh
and drewed a load of cherry
boards from Taylors mill
Th 10 To Work here and there
F 11 Went to Oswego
S 12 To work about home
S 13 Went to Mexico
M 14 Come from Mexico home
and drewed some fire wood
T 15 At M to work PM went
to Fathers to an extra town
Meeting
W 16 To work in the house
Th 17 Went and cut off a black ash
not for a hole or two
F 18 Taped part of my shugard
bush sap ran verry well
S 19 Taped a few more
Boiling sap ran verry well
S 20 Hired Hubbard Church to
boil sap and I went to

Diary of Orrin Stone

Scriba March the 21 1814 7

M 21: boiling sap

T 22: Went to Oswego with Father and Mother on the sleigh

W 23: Made 25 lb shugar

Th 24: Choping fire wood Wm. Burt

W 25: AM Choping for Wm Burt PM shugared off some
?

Th 26: Went to F.S. Morgans carried some shugared at
18 pence per lb

F 27: Rode out in a sleigh to Solomon Everts and I was
Married to Mss Sally Everts, Orrin Stone Married by
David Easton Esq.

M 28: AM Came home from Mr. Everts home PM to
work in the shugar bush

T 29: Hubbar Church and my self Shugared off some
surrep _?_ 27 lbs of sugar of which I _?_

W 30: Went to Esq Croker and Oswego falls Bought a
set of knives and forks and some crockery of which I
have bill

Th 31: Boiling sap

F: Scriba April the 1 1814

F 1: to work making shugar

S 2: to work

Scriba March 21 1814 7
M 21 boiling sap
T 22 Went to Oswego with Father
and Mother in the sleigh
W 23 Made 25 lb. shugar & c
Th 24 Choping fire wood Wm. Burt
F 25 AM Choping for Wm Burt
S 26 PM shugared off some surrep
Went to F.S. Morgans carried
some shugared off some surrep
21 lb. ^{3/4} of shugar at 18 pence per lb
S 27 Rode out in a sleigh to Solomon
Everts and I was Married to
Mss Sally Everts, Orrin Stone
Married by David Easton Esq
M 28 AM Came home from Mr. Everts
home PM to work in the shugar
bush
T 29 Hubbar Church and my self
shugared off some surrep made
27 lbs of sugar of which I had half
W 30 Went to Esq Croker and Oswego falls
Bought a set of knives and forks and
some crockery of which I have bill
Th 31 Boiling Sap &c
F Scriba April the 1 1814
F 1 to work making shugar
S 2 to work

Questions for further research and discussion:

1. Use an old map to locate Scriba and the location of Orrin Stone's home. Research if needed to pin point the homestead.
2. Use this map to locate Oswego lower falls, downtown Oswego. What roads might have been used in the 1800's? What is the distance between Orrin's home and these locations?
3. What does thrashing wheat entail? Remember it's 1800's.
4. What did a sleigh look like in upstate New York in the 1810's?
5. Orrin mentions a couple of mills in his diary. Research these mills and share with others what you were able to discover about these mills.
6. What would the sugar made from the tree sap be used for in the 1800's? How valuable might it have been at this time?
7. When did he get married? Research his wife's family and share information with others on what you discovered.