# Francis Squires Diary - Town of Volney

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**Francis W. Squires** was born on October 22, 1820 in Madison County to Pierce Squire and Eunice Warriner. Francis moved to North Volney, Oswego County, in April 1853 with his wife, Sarah R. Rice (born 1829), to start their own farm. Francis came from a farming family. Francis' father, Pierce Squires, was a farmer in Madison County as well as Lewis County and New Haven, Oswego County.

According the 1855 New York State Census, Francis and Sarah had two children, Clarence (2 years old) and Harriet (1 year old).

During his time in North Volney, Francis was a teacher, postmaster, and justice of the peace. He enlisted in Co. A, 184th N.Y. Vols. and served as clerk of the company during the Civil War.

Francis Squires kept a diary for many decades. The following entries are just a few examples of his diary and contains his record of what he found important to his daily life, as a farmer, public servant, and soldier. These diaries are part of the **Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.** 



Francis W. Squires 1820-1897

#### 1844 snow 8 in. Oct Nov 12 in. snow; 10th 24th

October 29th snow fell 4 inches to day. rained 2 or 3 hours A.M. & then snowed fast rest of day. took young cattle from River. cushed(?) cheese.

- 30 6 inches snow new. cloudy & cold for season, Father been on hill with (?) (?).
- 31 pleasant day. & snow melts a litle Father started for Rome with 4 (?( (?).

Nov 1st clear & pleasant & (?) (?). I have been on hill with S.D. Hubbard.

- 2 Father returned form Rome & W. with him. snow going off quite fast Mother staid to Alfreds last night & Lucinda & Joseph & I here alone.
- 3 continuous warm & thaws fast. rains at night. Dr. Adams (?) (?)
- 4 warm & snow almost off. Joseph left off work here, went to (?) at night
- 5 been to Election & voted for Henry Clay for President & Millard
- 6 Fillmore for Governor. 6 (?) cold & cloudy. Took Buggy to Syracuse to get (?)
- 7 froze ice 1/2 inch thick last night. drawed hog manure. cold A.M. & snow P.M.
- 8 Father been ploughing stalk ground I have been patching stable. snow off (?) (?)
- 9 I ploughed A.M & Father P.M. warm. I went on hill P.M.
- 10 W & Eveline Wolley. Lucinda & I visited to Atwoods last night. froze hard.
- 11 Father finished ploughing stalk ground, warm but cloudy. Lucinda went to Alfreds to work
- 12 warm & rains a little P.M. get buggy (?). warm for the season.
- 13 Father & W. Been to Lowville & bought cloth for coats, snow squalls today (?)

....melts as fast as it falls. 14in began feeding cows. W. & I been on hill & flats

- 14 got measured for coats. snow covered ground this morning but went off (?) (?)
- 15 chilly wind. carried apples down cellar. 11in (?) warm snow all off.
- 17 Father &I been to church. Barnes & Wightman changed. warm & cloudy.
- 18 Bullard married E. Bingham & Lucinda went to Thompsons, colder to day.
- 19 Froze 1 inch think last night, been chopping in swamp. I been on hill at night
- 20 cold & dry. F. Burke began chopping for us. been threshing oats. split rails
- 21 W. & I threshed 48 bundles wheat. (?) day & Father & Mother been to church.
- 22 warmer & cloudy. carried new wheat to mill. 23d did not freeze last night.
- 23 drawed wood from swamp. Oler Merrills & son been here. pleasant.
- 24 very clear last night at 9oclock but at at 7 o'clock this morning snow 10 inches ....deep. W. & I been on hill in cutter. & a terrible day it is. blustery.
- 25 River froze over last night above Beaver creek. Father drawed wood. cold day
- 26 a terrible blustering day & snow fast P.M. W. & I drawed wood from River
- 27 clear & cold. Father thresehed Barley & I cheesed. Father & Rachel been on hill to night
- 28 a little warmer, snows about all day. 2 inchs. 29th drawed 13 loads manure.
- 30 Merriam threshed Barley & finished 30th Father been to Lowville with load of wood pleasant

Dec. 1st colder to day. I been to Methodist church A.M. & Presbyterian P.M. snow .....fell about 2 inches last night. good sleighing. 2nd warm A.M. & cold P.M. drawed .....wood for Muriam 3rd killed 2 year old heifer at 622 lb a little warmer to day 1844

## Francis Squires Diary October 29 to December 1, 1844

dilly wind, courses apple down sellow, 1/2 " rece Mariea E. Brigham & Lucenda ment to Hunger Colder to day page I wish this last might been chapping in swange I few on little it aught 20 ida & say. I Bruke began depping for in been the hing out, exlit rails Wel I thewhere he bundle about further of the the V mither been to elimber my clery, carried new what to mill 23 did not truy last wight. Is drawn awa from many, Ola Merrillo & son been been pleasent 24 Res, elect last night at gethet but at at goelock the moring once 10 in welch. It to ham on hill in Butter to a turble day it is blustering. 15 Aims frey our last night above Beaucreek, fathe drawn weed all day 6 a taxieble blustering day & snews fart MM. W. & I desend hera ferme Bire I day & cold, Jacter thusber Borly & Yebones. Father & Richal Son in billto will To little normer some short all day & inhere to the deares 13 lance manner Muriam thresher Backy & finisher 30 th I acte for to Saville with love of som es 1st when to day. I beaute matherist which smit bush trein para son kil what I wish last night good slighing. It never As I sole for severa seas fre Aussian. 3. hilles e pear de high at 624 a lette rouse a

#### 1852

- Oct. 11th clear & pleasant. Father & I been gathering apples & W. been making barrels. Mr. Griswold & J. G. Dunham here from Volney to sell farm. W. & wife went after carpet just at night & Father to Williams to see about getting money. 54. 58. 48
- cloudy & rains between 12 & 2 oclock. Father & I gathered apples till 10 oclock & then we stopped to talk about logging farm rest of A.M. went to Mexico P.M. & made bargain for farm by paying J. G. Dunham \$94 3/4 & \$150. old mortgage one year from this time & \$400. mortgage to Dunham which he sells to Mr. Stone of Mexico to be paid in 4 years from this date for 37 acres
- 13 cloudy & rains some A.M. Father & I husked corn in barn. A.M. gathered (?) apples P.M. 9 bushels. Cornelia here P.M. 45. 54. 40 W. been to work at shop. apples are very wormy this year.
- 14 partly clear & pleasant . Father been husking corn in barn & W. & I gathered apples; 24 bushels (?) 3 pecks (?) 3 pecks seek.no.further 1 bushel Harvey finished getting all except Rupets. I been to Gridleys with 23 1/2 bushels apples just at night
- partly cloudy with a strong N.W. wind. picked Russets last night & to day; about 3 barrels in all 1 1/2 of them being wormy. 46.43.42 turned out 10 sheep to (?); 7 of them lambs; taken 5 years ago. drawed a load of pumpkins from (?) A.M. no frost to kill vines yet but (?) some like it to night Sarah made 8 lbs quince preserves 1/2 apples & pareing apples to day.
- partly cloudy with a cold N.W. wind so that is cold digging potatoes with a coat on. finished digging potatoes at home below (?) yard to day & just in cellar; 17 bushels merinoes, 4 1/2 of pink-eyes, 4 of Foxites & 1 1/2 of early blues. drawed a load of pumpkins from Rices just at night. Our well fails & (?) brought note from Robinson today 37.46.43
- 17 cloudy & rains some between 10 & 2 oclock. Father W. & wife been to church & rest staid at home. a cold rain but don't rain much. 38.42.44 baby is sorrysome & acts like cutting teeth. he has a cold which is one reason.
- cloudy & a dar kay although not very thick clouds. finished digging potatoes in Rices & sold Charles Field 12 bushels. 46.58.58 Just 7 bushels in cellar & took 6 bushels out for Charles Field. got a cradle to Mr. Gee's to day for baby. cold nights lately.
- 19 cloudy & cold N.W. mind. Father & I drawed one load of pumpkins to Rices & one load home A.M. & 2 loads of corn home P.M. W. been coopering. I went on hill just at night to get horse shed. 46. 46.

#### Francis Squires Diary October 11 to 19, 1852

clear & pleasant. Faction & I have gastering applied W have making barrels. Omr. friendle of J. J. Du to merk as Mer. applies are very morning this grav. wattr clear & pleasant. Pather been husking + I gather as plo; 24 busheb gruning specks gilled suk no further I brishel Harry Simsker yester except Rupeto. I bem fridly ait 23 & hold of the 15 parts dondy with a strong of W. sind. picked Prisset last # to day; about 3 barrels in all the of them being no ed out 10 sheep to Cheen; 7 of them lambs; taken . gears ago, drawed a load of fumphins from him Am. . no frost to kill vine get but arts some like it to . Acrah made & lbs. openier preserves 1/2 applie & pareing applies to 16 harty cloudy with a so cold N.W. wind so that is cold digging . potation with a coat on. Jimised disping potations at home below harm gard to day of put in cellar ; 17 bushels Merinow, 4 to of printereges, 4 of Paritie & 12 of early blues craned a lyand humphino from Rices just at night Our well fails the trought no I clouds & sains some between 10 \$2 orlest Fathe W. & out how to . church & rest staid at heme, a cold rain but don't rein baby is sorryume of asto like cutting truth. he has a cold is one reason cloudy of a dark day although not very thick dends, finished disging potatoes in hier, & sold Charles Hield 12 bushels. I bushels in aller & took & bushels out for & houles Frild get a readle to Me, Su's to day her baly, cold nights lately. doug & cold Naw mind. Frather + I drawed one load of Jamiples to Rices + one lead bem som. I & loads by cum home P.M. IN been we pering. I must in hill just at night to feet been at

1864	
Oct 1st	Cloudy & rains quite steady p.m. & muddy marched
	to near Harrisonburg 25 miles & arrived there at 10
	oclock & well drilled out I walked all the way. Barns
	were on fire for the last 15 miles.
2	clear & warm. Sheridan is fighting the Rebels & we
	hear the guns distinctly. I was sick P.M. We had
	Sunday inspection. Some of the us had mutten.
3	Started back to day at 11 1/2 oclock & marched 18
	miles to just past New Market, quite a village
4	Started at 7 A.M & (?) Mr. Jackson and Edenburg to
	Woodstock 23 miles. Rains P.M. & evening. I
	rode part of the way. The boys are tired out & did
	not get supper. I had something (?)
5	Pleasant day. Came to Newtown 23 miles & stopped
	early. I rode P.M. & fell from a wagon at night &
	nearly killed myself. Met another train A.M. going
	with supplies, & some or our boys.
6	Came to Winchester this morning at 9.45 8 miles.
	making 72 from Harrisonburg or near it. We
	encamped until near dark & then marched to Camp
	Sheridan. I am very, very lame.
7	A pleasant day. Struck tents this morning and fooled
	around until 2.20 P.M. when we finally started for
	Martinsburg. We had 3 orders first; one to return to
	Harrisonburg, one to go to Hayes Ferry & the others
	to do guard duty at Winchester.
8	Came to Martinsburg last night at 12.45 oclock, 22
	miles distant. I walked all the way as lame as I was.
	Very cold, with a (?) wind & Soldiers can scarcely
	keep comfortable. John & Jack & I lay in wood shed
	last night but was too cold & (?).
9	(?) cold with a high wind. I slept in a house last
	night, on the floor. Soldiers suffer with the cold,
	we are obliged to build fires south of the walls.

Francis Squires Diary October 1 to 9, 1864

Cloudy to sains quite steady Part mudaly marded to meer Harrisonbuy 25 miles & aniver + 10 octobe to well deilled out I walked all to may. Brown were on fire for the last 15 miles. clear & warm. Sheeidan is fighting the nobels & Dec hear the game distinctly. I was sink 1,000. We had Dunday inspection. Dome of had mutten Start of back to day at 11/12 orlink of Marched 18 miles to year past New Market; quite a billage Started at y Am, & perped Mr. Jackson and (Edenburg to Woodstoth 23 miles, Rains Rome evening. I rade part of the way. The Mays ame Vised our & did not get supper. I had something some Pleasant day, Eleme to Newton 23 mile of staffed early. I rode for, & fell frem a bragon at night to nearly Millow ampself. Met another Irain An. young with Dupplies, & some of our buys. Came to Minchester this merning at 9,45 8 miles, Making 72 from Hassisendry, or measit, We encamped until mear death to then marched to Boomy Shouldan. I am way, very Lame, of pleasant day. Atturks tents this merning and Judest around until 2,20 P. ano, When we findly Started for martinsburg, We had 8 orders firsty · One to return to It amsenting, one to go to bloge . Merry & the other to do quard duty as minchestro. Ceeme to martinsburg last night at 12, 45 orlide 22 Mistant. I ovalked all the way us lame no . I was bery cold nists a searling wind & Saldies . can seawly keep conferatto, John & Jach 30 . May in a wood shed last night but was two cold to day. centrineces cald with a high sind I slept in a house Lust night, in the floor. Doldies suffer with the cold, In one abligues to brille fires Don B of the walls, .

#### 48, 52, 50

	48. 52. 50
April 30th	clear & pleasant. I have been down to C. Coes A.M. & to
	McDougalls & Davis P.M. I made out mortgage for James
	McDougall yo Davis. John & Willie drawed two loads Pine
	lumber from vermillion Cyrus Coe carries the mail. Roads are
	good I made out search warrant & (?) Warrant for (?) (?);
	average temp at 7 A.M 44, lunch 32, night 42 Snow 4 inches
May 1st	clear & pleasant. We have all been to the Sunday School & had
	a long time of it. I have a time with my head P.M. & evening
44.6	50 62
2	clear & warm. Willie been to Oswego with a load of hemlock
	wood to sell at \$4.00 for cord 44.60.63
3	clear to warmer. I went to Fulton yesterday on boat & met with
	(?) (?) & staid at Lewis Porters last night & came home today
	noon & rode with Nelson's teams from (?) Willie. been to
	Oswego again with wood. 54.70.69I made out (?) of mortgage
	for Timothy Peatt yesterday & deed for George (?) Beardly
	P.M today
4	clear & dry. Getting quite dusty. 60. 64. 62 John drawing
	lumber from Vermillion and Willie worked out in woods. Tree
	tops begin to look quite green. A fine time for farmers to do
	spring work. (?) help Willie some.
5	clear & warm again. I came to Volney center yesterday P.M.
	with W.H. Bowen & staid at Porter Keyes last night. Made out
	F. D. Johnston resignation A.M. & took dinner at Keyes & then
	went to Fulton P.M. 55.60.62
6	clear & hot. I came to Lamsons on cars last night & then back
	on (?) car to South Granby & then to C. Fullers. I staid to C.
	Fullers last night & came to Johns A.M & staid to dinner (?) (?)
	A. B. $(?)(?)(?)$ to tea. I then came to Geo. & Fullers to night
	making me a very busy day. 53. 66. 60

### Francis Squires Diary April 30 to May 6, 1870

30 th clear & pleasant. I have been down to 6. Cas Am. 6 to Me Dougall & Davis Pom. Emade out mortgage for fames me bougall to Dano. John & millie drawed two loads Pine lumber greno Bermillion Cymo Cac carries to Mail. Roads au goods I made int Dearch Warrant & Mariant for 5. Newtwent. average terrip at 2 sens, 44%, Sighet 12 & June 4 miles my 100 clear to pleasant the have all bear to the Sunday School to hack a long time of it so to 60 I have a time with my head P. no. becoming clear to warm, Willie bew to Omego with a load of hemlish woods belle at \$4,00 jes. con 3 clear to warmer. I went to Million gisting) on faat & met with Exerso commissioners to Marce to Lewis Partus Last night & camelane to day moon to rado with Nelsons Steams from Holl Willie been to Oprego again with wood, 54, 70,69 I made on I release of mertage fur Imathy Pratts Hestuday to Devot for Jeorge E. Be andly Amo, to day, clear to dry. Getting quito desty. 60,64,62 John drawing lumber from bermillian and Willio. Markeds out in woods. Isee tops bigin to look quito green. A fine time fix Farmus to do springs work, Sim. help willie, Dome, clear & warm again. I came to bolong centre ofestuday Pow. with M.H. Bowen & Staid To Pertro Regio Last night. Made out fit John the resignation Ano. 3 to the dinte of 55.60.62 clear & hat I came to Lamsons in carolast oright to this back on homes car to donth granty to How to C. Inthes I stain to C. Inthe last right & come to Johns Am. to staid to dinner to thanks A. B. Julla Bro. & to trace I there came to ges. t. Julies to nightmaking one a very larry days

	1896
July 31st	Rain last night. Nice & pleasant today. 63.80.
.13	I have been to Oswego on noon train & back on 7 (?) Geo A.
	Schilling gave me a nice thermometer. I bought tea & 2 samples,
	Snuff .30 & (?) (?) .50 mean temp at 7 A.M. 66 (?) 6' Rainfall
	5.97
Aug 1st	Clear A.M & clouds (?) towards night, 60. 82. Maria been up to camp
	ground all day (?) was here P.M. & (?) the sofa to the cottage. Maria
_	came home at 6 P.M. walked both ways.
2	Nearly clear & a nice day but cool 65. 75. May Shannon here a little
	while just at night. Harriet & Lucretta here just at night & Emily &
2	Mattie
3	Cloudy A.M & then partly clears off 65. 80. Maria took clothes off (?) & (?) & washed We shut the chickens in the barn tonight. 27.
4	Clear and hot day. Terribly hot. 70 86. Maria has ironed nearly all
4	day. I have been writing some & trying to keep cool.
5	Clear and hot. The hottest yet. 75. 91. Lloyd Webster very sick. (?) (?)
	last night & today 3 times. Maria shulled peas & I been writing in Old
	letter book W.B. Searles here awile p.m. Geo. Daggett & Mae Adams
	married.
6	Nearly clear A.M A small shower at 12-15 76. 87, Thunder showers
	p.m. North Volney picnic at (?) Beach I went up to Webseters & back
	between 81/2 & 101/2 A.M.
7	Nearly clear & a hot day. 74, 87, Louisa Purratt & Clara (?) came at
	101/2 & went at 3 p.m.
.20	Mattie Stiles here to dinner. Harriet came last night. They have all
	gone to Emily's this afternoon.
8	Nearly clear and a very nice day 70.85. Harriet & Mattie here to
	dinner & Emily added at tea Miss Purratt & Mrs. (?) & boy started for
	Oswego at 6 o'clock
9	Nearly clear again & another hot day 74, 86, 80 Willard over awhile
	this afternoon. Rain last night. Harriet went to Emily's just at night
	and back.
10	Partly clear p.m. cloudy a.m. 74, 87. Mrs. Cheaver came at 4-23
	p.m. Another hot day. Mattie Stiles here p.m. Emily here awhile this
	evening.

## Francis Squires Diary July 31 to August 10, 1896

1896 200
1 6 31 Kan last night Nice (1)
July 31 have been to Osseys on room Juins back on I delh
13 foot behilling grow me a rise Thermometer
men Semp of 2 Bon. 66:6. Snuff 30 & after trade 50 2
mean Lemp at & Bon. 66:6. Bring 30 & other trade 50 2
1 st Geen Am scloud . The
Jug 1 6 Cecu Am scloudery toward mile 60.82,
Maria came home at & Por malker bath warps
Maria Took clothes of geap tfut out & washed We shout the chickens in the barm to night, 2%.
4 Blear and a hat day, Suribly hat, 70,86, 50
I receive to the poretry some of treme to be a
3 come fial. The passist that 35 th
order win with, Wase docher last on the star or
The former from & Store Bretains on Old Lettle hand
The N. Jenses price article from geo Dages H Johns Artan Manie
o freary creas from A small phoweres 12-15 16. 81
in inder shorous Mr. North Bolory Fix nia of Somety Breach
o went up to Wabsters & book between 8/2 & 10/2 Bus
I was well tired out theat up when I came back.
7 Nearly clearla hat day 74, 87,
10 m st 12 Clara Hind care at 10 % down at 8 M.
Matter Stales have to cinone, Harriet came last night,
I they have all some to Emily this afternion,
& Nearly clear one a very nice day 70.85,
More V At the here to dinner & Emily and at New
Wise Kuratt 10 ms. Firms 1- bog startes for Cowgo at 6 orla
I Nearly cless again 4 another hot day 74,86, 80
Willard over ashile this afternoon Rain last night.
10 Part and to Emile just at night and bank
Mrs PA. Clear for clerky ben, 74,8%.
mattle Stelles here rom. Emily here salies this soins

## **Questions for Discussion and Further Research**

Use Francis Squires' diary entries to answer the following:

- 1. What were some of Francis Squires' daily activities?
- 2. What types of crops was grown on his farm?
- 3. What types of animals were on his farm?
- 4. Research the military unit, Co. A, 184th N.Y. Vols. and compare that information to Francis Squires' entries while he served in that unit.
- 5. On a map, locate the places Francis Squires mentions his unit marched to while serving in the Civil War. What type of terrain exists in these locations? How is his Civil War diary entry differ from the others? How old was Francis Squires when he served in the Civil War? What was the average age of a soldier in the Civil War?
- 6. Research typical monthly weather conditions for the places he mentions in his diary entries and compare to his records of temperatures and weather conditions.
- 7. In your opinion, use the diary entries to determine what was important to Francis Squires. Explain.
- 8. What are you surprised about with his diary entries? What does it contain? What does it leave out?

