

ISCHUA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE GREAT MACHIAS WINTER OF 1858-59

Mr. Urban Prescott wrote of a winter some 50 years ago. It jogged our memory back to the winter of 1858-59. According to our father's diary there were 110 days when it did not thaw in the shade.

Father started for his sap bush the first day of April with a load of buckets. He got his horses down, threw off his buckets, turned his sleigh around by hand, (he was a powerful man) hitched his horses and went home. On the 10th he took his buckets and tapped the trees and it kept warm and came right off summer but little sugar was made.

Our mail was carried between Yorkshire and Machias with one horse and cutter, the horse going in the same track both ways.

My brother and I drew all the wood we burned for a while on a hand sled, about 30 or 40 rods. We knew where the piles were in the woods. The snow was about a foot deep over the cords. We drew it on the crust over the fences.

The father of the late S.J. Carver, who lived where we now reside, wintered a cow on the land now owned by O.M. Pixley, south of our house. It came about this way: the water pipe froze at the barn and he drove his cows to the creek at Pixley's farm. The snow path kept getting higher and higher until one of the cows got off the path and she could not be got back on. Horses could not be got there to draw her to the barn, so they shoveled a hole in the snow, covered it with poles, blankets and snow and fed and watered her there until she thawed out in the spring.

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