ROMEO CIRCUIT IN 1837
Towns and Homes mentioned in the Robert Ridgway Journal

LAPEER COUNTY

ADDISON Twp. - Jeff Teller

BRUCE

ARMADA

ARMS

Oakland

WASHINGTON

RAY

AVON

SHELBY

MACOMB

TROY

STERLING

CLINTON

WARREN

Oakland County

Macomb County

WAYNE COUNTY

LAKE

ST. CLAIR
In the fall of 1837, a young Methodist preacher named Robert Ridgway left his parents' home in Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio, bound for the Romeo Circuit in the wilds of Michigan. He was only 26 years old. Rev. Ridgway wrote in a small journal almost every day of that cold and rainy autumn. Much of the time he was ill, suffering from what appears to have been one bad cold after another — finally influenza and pneumonia. Ridgway never really recovered his health after these bouts. After adding to his journal in a trip across Arkansas and into the Choctaw Nation in 1841-42, he finally returned to Illinois, where he died in 1847 at the age of 36.

Ridgway's ordeals did not diminish his faith in his calling. His perseverance in spite of disappointments, uncomfortable lodgings and painful illness was typical of the man who brought Methodism to the frontier. Perhaps we Methodists today have lost some of this tenacity and devotion in the face of hardship. Perhaps Ridgway's example can serve as an inspiration to ministers and laypersons alike. Let this be his memorial.

The journal has been transcribed and edited for publication by Nancy Britton, a member of the First United Methodist Church in Batesville, Arkansas, who has the Ridgway journal in her possession. A copy of it also exists on microfilm at the Arkansas History Commission in Little Rock. Mrs. Britton is the author of several published church histories and serves on the boards of directors of the North Arkansas Conference Commission on Archives and History and the Arkansas United Methodist Historical Society, as well as being historian for her home church.

Annotations have been added by the Rev. Ronald A. Brugger, archivist for the Detroit Annual Conference, with offices at the Archives, Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan.

The first entry is dated September 25:
"Left my father's house in Mansfield for the Romeo circuit in Michigan. On leaving home my heart was considerably affected seeing the tears flowing from the eyes of my friends... It truly reminded me that I was a pilgrim and stranger on this earth." (1)

Even though the trunk containing all his belongings was lost en route to Sandusky, Ridgway continued on, confessing that:
"I felt something of the horrors, and thought this world was all a world of disappointment ... there were hundreds around me [but] I felt like one alone, for few appeared to, and I thought none really cared for me."

Ridgway took passage on the steamboat "Robert Fulton" for Detroit. They started out on Lake Erie about 4 o'clock, reached Put-In-Bay Island two hours later and stayed there until midnight.

"The lake was quite rough. We went in the troughs. I got sick, vomited a little, but it did not last long."

On Saturday, October 1, the passengers reached Toledo. Ridgway described the town as "a rough, ugly place," adding that "the people appear to be all Irish."

After unloading, they were off for Detroit by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The crossing was very rough, but the young preacher seemed to make the trip in better spirits. He was impressed with Detroit:

"[It] is a very large and handsome place and looks more city-like than I expected. There are large and splendid buildings."

Leaving Detroit he took the road to Mount Clemens. He found a level country and a good, dry road -- "very rough buildings, inhabited principally by French and Dutch." He stopped for the first night at the home of Solomon Porter, about ten miles out from Detroit. (2)

On Monday, the 3rd, Ridgway went on to Mount Clemens, arriving about 11 o'clock in the morning. He went directly to the home of Rev. A. B. Elliott, and Elliott accompanied him to his first appointment. (3) He does not say exactly where they went but indicates that Brother Elliott did the preaching. On the 4th he went on alone:

"I viewed the work that was before me with fear and trembling, felt my inadequacy to my task, for I find an enlightened and intelligent people. During my short travels and acquaintance with Br. Elliott I was glad I had not to travel with him, for he appeared bold and self-confident, boasted of his good preaching, and appeared light and trifling. He was entirely destitute of that seriousness that became a minister of the gospel of Christ."

Although he was young and inexperienced, Ridgway was serious, perhaps to a fault. He recorded that he had chided Rev. Elliott:

"During my ride with him I reproved him several times. He said he had a coat for which he paid 27 dollars. Said I 'Could you stand up in a pulpit with that coat on and say to a gaily-dressed lady, 'Sister, you must not wear so much finery, that it is wrong, that discipline forbids it?"' He said yes. Then said I, 'I think you would be like a man
who, when preaching in Ohio, said he would hem (?) close if he skinned his own knuckles. I think in so doing you would get yours hurt.' He blushed but said nothing."

Stopping over next with Father Rouse -- Father being a title awarded to devoted and respected laymen of advanced age -- Ridgway discovered that his mare had the heaves and was having trouble breathing. He had apparently bought the horse from an uncle and recorded his amazement that a relative would take advantage of him. "I began to think that my only friends were in my father's house."

By the 6th, the young preacher was staying with a Brother Blunt, about six miles farther on the circuit. Here he noted his reading of the book of Daniel:

"[It] suited me well, for I thought I was like a forsaken Daniel in a strange land among a strange people, but still, like him, [had] some friends even from home."

On the next day Ridgway traveled about two miles to the home of a Brother Davis, one mile north of Niles Corners, where he had his next appointment. (4) Here he met with a new disappointment:

"I rode to the house, hitched my mare to the fence, went in the house and talked with the girls, who asked me if I would have my horse put out. I said I would, went out, took off my portmanteau, ungirted the saddle and was just taking it off when the old man came from the barn. Said his wife was not well and would rather I go somewhere else, adding his house had been a place for the preachers to stop at the last year, and his wife did not like to have so many men about the house. From which, with some other expressions he used, I understood that he didn't want to be troubled with preachers this year . . . I went to Bro. Gregory's where I stayed till my appointment. Found there fine and kind people."

As he traveled on, Ridgway mentioned stopping off with a Brother Ferrin and a Brother Warren, the latter a local preacher. (5) Homesickness was beginning to be a problem -- on October 10 he wrote:

"I feel my inadequacy to my task and think if I was at home I would stay there. I don't like the weather, the nights are very cold, sometimes freezes ice in the road."

Moving on, he finally caught up with Rev. David Burns, a colleague who was the senior preacher on the circuit. "Our first meeting was a good one," he wrote. "He preached a fine sermon, we had a powerful class meeting, after which I returned with him to Bro. Smith's where we stayed the night."

About six miles further on, at a Brother Kingsbury's, the weather turned very cold.
"In the evening had a large and attentive congregation. The evening was cold, had a poor fire. I spoke longer than usual, became chilly, took a severe cold. Felt a pain in my breast and my throat was quite sore."

The Kingsbury house was poorly heated. The next morning he added that "as I sat by the fire one side would freeze while the other would burn."

Ill as he was, Ridgway rode about six miles on Saturday, the 15th, back to Brother Smith's. The next morning, feeling "quite sick," he preached at 10 o'clock, then rode seven more miles to preach again at 3 in the afternoon. By Monday he could scarcely get up. "Notwithstanding [the pain in my breast], though it ached continually and sometimes appeared as though a knife was running through me, I rode about eight miles to Bro. McGregor's. Here I felt discouraged, and thought I would not get round the circuit." (6)

Tuesday, October 18: "This morning my pain increased; when I sat down I could scarcely get up. I took some medicine and was advised to stay and not go to my appointment that day, but I did not like to disappoint the people. . . . I then rode about thirteen miles [to find a local preacher to take the appointment], but he could not go. I then went myself, about two miles, found a few persons present and tried to preach to them, though it was with great pain, but we had a good class. (7)

Feeling no better, Ridgway rode on to a Brother Teller's home, then on some six miles more to Brother Cooley's, where he preached the evening of the 19th. Next morning he went to a physician in Lapeer County who merely advised him to quit preaching. He rode on, five more miles. Stopping with a Father Miller, he took mayweed tea, bathed his feet in warm water, and went to bed.

Leaving the regular circuit route, he rode towards Romeo, where his appointment was to be on the following Sunday and where he hoped to find another doctor. He rode six miles, "came to the Class Leader's, he was threshing with a machine, had a number of hands." (8) The class leader advised him to skip the meeting, saying that there would probably be few there, so Ridgway rode on three more miles to Romeo. There he saw a doctor who gave him some medicine. He rode eleven miles further to Brother Cooley's where he stopped for the night and took a dose of the medicine. "[It] made me very sick. Vomited 2 or 3 times and went to bed without supper."

The next morning was Sunday and Ridgway was scheduled to preach in Romeo. He still felt weak and sick, but filled
the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church. The church was crowded and even the vestibule was full. (9) He noted: "We had a tolerably good time."

Riding immediately for an afternoon appointment three miles away, he recorded "a still better time" and a new member on probation.

Michigan was visited by strange weather that autumn of 1837. Ridgway's entry for October 24th reads:

"I still feel the pain in my breast. Today the sun shines clear, but the wind blows cold. The day is unpleasant. I have neglected to mention the weather particularly. There have been some severe thunder showers. The first was the 12th, when it thundered, lightened and rained hard, after which it was a few days extremely cold, then it was so very warm that persons would try to get into the shade. The 16th it rained again which was attended with thunder and lightening. The night of the 22nd it thundered hard before the showers, it was very warm, after it was cold."

Troubled by a bad cough and difficulty in sleeping, Ridgway yet rode on about ten miles in a cold rain to reach his next appointment. The rain soon turned to snow and continued all night the 25th, and he wrote:

"I am very hoarse, can hardly talk. Don't know how I can preach today." By evening the snow was ten inches deep.

On the 27th, Ridgway left for Utica, about eleven miles away. Traveling was difficult -- the snow "balled" on his mare's feet so she could hardly walk. His bad cold and sore throat became worse, but he arrived in time to preach on Sunday. He recorded a good congregation, good meeting and still better class. (10) Once again he left immediately after the service to ride through the cold to Rochester, about eight miles away, where he had a 3 o'clock appointment.

"The house was full and some outside. Being much affected with a hoarseness and soreness of throat, I was some embarrassed and did not get along so well as in the morning. . . . It is so cold and such sudden changes [in the weather] that there are a great many people that have colds. In almost every congregation I find some with the consumption, others with lung complaints and some with the auge."

Ridgway's condition seemed to worsen. After a six-mile ride through the cold and snow to a Brother Blount's, he noted:

"Here I feel very unwell. Sometimes cold and chilly, then feverish and very disagreeable. I feel more like going to bed than to preach, but souls are at stake and I know not
but on my efforts their salvation depends. My prayer is to
be resigned to the will of God. Though unwell and unfit, I
attended my appointment, at which I was much embarrassed and
afterward felt bad, for the devil took advantage of me, told
me I could not preach and had better quit it."

His next stop was Royal Oak, where he stayed with a
Brother Seaman. He had "an elegant class, though but a few
were helped of the Lord." (11) This success set his mind
more at ease, but his pain and fever persisted. And yet
another ordeal confronted him.

"Leaving Brother Seaman's I rode about 14 miles to a
new appointment at Mr. Merrill's. Here I found the worst
road I had yet seen in Michigan. Some places they had laid
round logs in it which were so rough that a horse could
scarcely walk over them . . . I had to get off the mare and
walk through the mud."

When he arrived, tired, ill and muddy, he found few
present to hear him preach.

Other appointments were kept as Ridgway continued
around the circuit. Twice he preached in school houses
without heat, but he noted good congregations. At one
meeting a dramatic event occurred:

"A man arose in the congregation, said he wished to say
a few words. He said he was a backslider, that he had
sinned against God ... and was convinced he was on the way
to hell . . . if he did not there confess his sins. He then
talked very feelingly for some time. The people were all in
a flood of tears. He closed by asking us to pray for him."

After the meeting ended the man told Ridgway that he
had almost refused to come to the service. He had felt that
preachers were not worth going to hear, for the poorest were
always sent into Michigan.

On November 8th Ridgway met Larmon Chatfield, the
junior preacher on the Romeo Circuit the year before. He
thought Chatfield "too lively" for a Methodist preacher, but
added "I don't know but that I am too melancholy, for I feel
very solemn and but little like sport of any kind."

During the next week he rode nearly fifty miles,
visiting Utica and Washington and holding meetings in
several private homes. He noted his condition on the 14th:

"I feel quite sick and cold, chilly and then feverish.
I spent a restless night, my body pained in every part."

Two days later he encountered a new topography and felt
well enough to take a walk.

"There is, (about a quarter of a mile) from Brother
Cooley's, a hill or peak which is 175 feet above the stream
below it, the top of which is not over 30 ft. across. At a
distance it appears to come to a sharp point. It is
surrounded or covered with bushes till within about 50 feet
of the top, which is entirely bare, or nothing on it but
grass.

Having been most all round it and viewing its majestic
appearance arising far above the surrounding hills, and the
towering tops of the pines scarcely reaching half way, I had
a strong desire to stand upon its top and view the
surrounding country.

When the sun began to gild the eastern horizon, I
ascended its top and stood upon the eminence from whence the
surrounding scenery presented a view sublime. When I faced
the east, the sun shining clear and bright prevented my view
of the land. When I looked to the right, I could see farms
and houses spread o'er hill and valleys for miles. When I
looked to my left, I saw the far-spread forests and
plains, with here and there appearing a cottage in the
wilderness...

In this spot is truly a place for meditation. Here may
we enquire who formed this grand scenery, and answer, the
hand that formed it is divine and is seated high on the
throne of his glory." (12)

Ridgway’s next appointment was at Newburgh, now Almont,
which had been settled in 1828. He seems here to be
delirious with fever -- "my mind was scattered, my ideas
clear but words mixed up. I could hardly express myself."
He took some pine touchwood (?) and spent a night in much
drain. He wrote that in his sleep he heard a cry from the
north: "Come out and help us, we want preaching. Here
there is no preaching north at all by Methodists. There is
no other circuit in the north."

The next morning, on a six-mile ride to a Brother
Day’s, he found “the worst road I had yet travelled. Some
places the mud was belly deep.” The mare fell down,
throwing him on his back in the mud. He stopped at the next
hard ground and tried to clean the mud off his cloak and
portmanteau, but when he reached his appointment he was too
ill to preach.

On Sunday, November 19, he was back at the home of
Brother Cooley, and for the first time he reports staying in
bed all day.

"I feel worse, my right side is very sore, when I bear
on my ribs they are sore and feel bruised. My breast feels
worse."

No doubt he was suffering from pneumonia by this time.
He was forced to miss appointments at Romeo, North Branch
and Armada. (13) He must have been near death, for he
records:
"My flesh is falling away, my mind is calm and peaceful, but it appears entirely empty. I cannot keep it on a subject."

And yet he got up the next day and rode about five miles on a cloudy, rainy day. Arriving at the home of a Brother Noble, he spent the night. Perhaps there was a sympathetic wife there who prepared a home remedy for his illness. He took "some vinegar, butter and sugar, as hot as I could stand it," before going to bed.

Another snowstorm hit and he was glad to stay in for several days. He took some oil of hemlock one night, which was "said to be good for a pain in the breast." Finally, on the 24th, he started back to Utica. He was in great pain, adding that "this morning considerable blood came through me."

When he got to Utica he was finally able to see a doctor. The diagnosis was that his liver was affected, and medicine ("for which I paid $1") was prescribed. "I was to take a dose of pills in the evening, then rub my side with salve to make it sore, after which take one pill each night as I went to bed. He said in about six weeks I could preach again, it would perhaps take longer than that."

Since that advice meant an end to riding the circuit, Ridgway decided not to take the medicine until after the quarterly conference, then to go back home to Ohio and take it there.

The 26th was a Sunday, but he felt too ill to attend meeting. He decided to remain inside and devote the day to reading. "I got hold of Lorenzo Dow's journal which appeared applicable to my case. (14) I enjoyed my mind well, notwithstanding my illness. In the evening had unusual access in prayer in the family."

On Monday Ridgway was visited by "Brother Lester, a botanical doctor," who offered to treat him if he would accept it. Later in the century Lester would have been called a "homeopathic doctor," that is one who relied on remedies from plants.

"I told him I liked his medicine better than the apothecary doctor's and asked what he would give. He said first worming medicine, then [when] the system was prepared, would steam me. I told him I did not like that, but I would take his medicine. He said it was no use to take part and not all. He then run down other doctors and medicines. Said I was not bad, the symptoms [sic] were not bad, and I might be easily cured, but the other doctors would reduce me so that I could not be raised again. Said if he was sick he
would go without a doctor rather than risk himself in their hands, and so left me."

Having refused the services of the "botanical doctor," Ridgway left Brother Scott's in Utica and rode on to Brother Lerick's. He recorded feeling "more stupid, and with more pain." He spent the day reading, writing and meditating and felt "comfortable" in his mind.

The next morning, at daylight, he arose and prepared to leave.

"While buttoning on a collar, having both hands raised, a sharp pain shot through from my left side to my shoulder blade, and I have since had such continual pain that I can hardly get about."

Although it was still raining, he rode about six miles to Brother Blunt's -- "found the road very bad and disagreeable riding. . . I was quite sick, pain in every part. I want to get home. Losing my trunk and clothes, I have laid out all my money, now I am about 200 miles from home and have but seven cents." He would have to wait until the quarterly conference and hope to get some "quarterage."

The quarterly conference convened on Saturday, December 2nd. On the way to the first session, about 9 o'clock, it began to rain. It was a small meeting, about 20 or 25 persons, and the presiding elder did not appear. (15)

"Conference was small, prospect of meeting poor as it rained and was mud in every direction, most horse deep. There were but little quarterage brought in."

Sunday, December 3rd: "We had a small love feast, but it was a good one, after which Brother Warren preached and administered the Sacrament. During the day we had a good time, after which our meeting ended. The members enjoyed themselves well, but no persons joined the church."

On Monday morning, having stayed at Brother Gregory's the night before, Ridgway went with Rev. Burns to the home of a Brother Stout, one of the stewards, to get the quarterage. If the presiding elder had been there he would have received a percentage of the money collected. Fortunately for Ridgway, Presiding Elder Herr had not come.

"I received $5.00 for travelling expenses and 6 dollars quarterage. We returned to Bro. Blunt's and staid the night."

On the 6th he found a letter from home at the post office in Washington. He then "left Bro. Scott’s, went to Mr. Haskins' about 2 miles from Mt. Clemmens, riding about fourteen miles. The mud was deep and a thin scale of frost on the top, not enough to bear a horse. My mare would break through, sink above the knees, and sometimes could scarcely
get out. My health remains about the same, and in obedience to the requests of my friends, my design is to start home as soon as the roads will admit it.

Friday, the 8th, the ground was frozen hard enough to bear a horse, so he rode about twelve miles to Utica where he stayed with Brother Adams. He attended a Presbyterian prayer meeting that night — "a tolerably good time for so many dry prayers. Their reading, singing & exhortations were all sitting and very formal."

It turned so cold that night that Ridgway reported "the sawmill on the Clinton River at Utica is froze fast and cannot be started today. This morning it snowed very hard and now it is between a hail and rain, appears to grow colder."

Each day’s entry contains further descriptions of Ridgway’s pains and illness. These have not been included here; it is enough to remark that he was obviously a very sick man and there is no doubt that these sufferings weakened his constitution and contributed to the brevity of his life.

On Monday, December 11th, he was at last on his way home, although he did fill a few more preaching appointments along the way. "Leaving these people," he wrote, "was almost like leaving home to come to them. They wept as I took the parting hand."

Wednesday, 13th: "This morning I had pain and great distress in my breast. Rode about 6 miles to another apt., but I think I will not preach again, for from the exercise of last evening, I have been worse today than for some days. I could scarcely ride, [but] I am getting toward the south part of the circuit and am thus on my way home."

There had been a lot of snow, and he reports "quite good sledding. Sleds are running in every direction. It has snowed a little every day this week."

He headed on toward Detroit, although the weather continued cold and icy. "My mare was so smooth, I felt afraid to ride. Had to go ten miles before I came to a blacksmith shop where I got her shoes ruffled, then rode 10 miles more to Monroe which is a pleasant place, but the wind came down the river most cold enough to freeze me."

From Monroe he went eight miles toward Perrysburgh to a brick tavern called the Halfway House, being halfway from Detroit to Lower Sandusky. Here he put up for the night. That day also he "had the privilege of paying toll and wading the river to get to the bridge." The roads were still bad and his health a constant worry. He did, however,
find time to "enquire the price of things along the road -- dried apples from 80 to 83, flour from 10 to 12."

On Wednesday, December 20th, Ridgway rode from the Halfway House to Tremainsville, then to Miami. Along the way "I crossed a railroad, saw a smoke at a distance towards Toledo, and waited to see if it was not a car. It soon arrived and made as much noise as two or 3 steamboats. I could hardly hold my horse. There were six of them together." (16)

At Miami he could not cross the Maumee River -- it was frozen, but not hard enough to bear a horse. He crossed on foot with a James Coffinbury and stayed the night at his home. The next day he returned for his horse and ventured across. Back in Ohio, he at once found the day "pleasant and warm compared with the weather in Michigan." After lodging at Elder's Tavern, he rode 27 1/2 miles, passing through Lower Sandusky, "a tolerably pleasant place." Twenty miles more took him to Venice where the sledding was not as good, the road rough, and his horse fell, throwing him in the mud.

On December 25th, he wrote: "Today 3 months ago I felt very different and was traveling from home. Now I am going home pained and afflicted. Today I rode about 30 miles. The weather was pleasant, but I felt very unwell." He does not even mention that it was Christmas day.

The rest of this portion of the Ridgway journal is in a different ink and seems to have been added later. He noted that he had been gone from home for three months and had spent and lost about 100 dollars. For all his efforts on the circuit he had received traveling expenses and six dollars quarterage.
END NOTES

(1) Mansfield, Ohio, is located between Columbus and Cleveland, on the edge of the rolling hill country of the southeastern part of the state. Here the Michigan Annual Conference had been organized in September, 1836. It included two districts in southeastern Michigan and four districts across northern Ohio. The 1837 Annual Conference had been held in Detroit, and Robert Ridgway was appointed Junior Preacher on the Romeo Circuit, out of Detroit.

(2) The home of Solomon Porter, on the Gratiot Road about ten miles from Detroit, was evidently a frequent stopping place for Methodist itinerants. Presiding Elder James Gilruth, who served the Detroit District from 1832 to 1836, often stopped here. Gilruth's Journal is preserved in the General Commission Archives of the United Methodist Church in Madison, New Jersey.

(3) Mt. Clemens is still the county seat of Macomb County. It was one of the first inland towns in Michigan, settled in 1818. Macomb, Wayne and Monroe Counties are low and flat; in pioneer times, before the land was extensively cleared and drained, this area was very swampy. Roads were muddy most of the year and travel was difficult. Arthur B. Elliott was an early circuit rider who entered the Michigan Conference in 1832, but located seven years later, as did so many circuit riders, due to ill health or insufficient financial support.

(4) Niles Corners became the hamlet of Troy and is today lost in that city.

(5) Brother Perrin was Calvin Perrin of Troy. In June of 1832 a young Methodist preacher by the name of Luther Day Whitney came on horseback from western New York to Detroit. Learning of a Methodist camp meeting in progress at Plymouth, he went there. After the meeting he was invited to the home of "Calvin Perrin and his good wife, at whose home I stayed and rested several days. Never did a stranger find a more hearty welcome as a minister of Christ, or more true, tried, and strongly attached friends." When, in 1834, Whitney was sent to the Mt. Clemens Circuit, he made his home with Calvin Perrin in Troy. In January, 1835, he married the daughter Aroline Perrin, who proved a true and helpful minister's wife. The Perrin home was a stopping place for circuit riders for years. Elder Gilruth, cited above, often stopped there between 1832 and 1836.

Brother Warren was Abel Warren (1789-1863), an eminent local Methodist preacher, greatly beloved in the eastern border region of Oakland and across Macomb County. Born in
Hampton, New York, on the Vermont border, he was taken as a child to western New York. As a boy he fought in the War of 1812, was in the army on the Niagara frontier and fought in the battle of Queenstown Heights, where he was wounded and captured. Converted in 1817, he had religion of "the cheerful, happy type." He was a class leader, received his exhorters's license in 1821, and was licensed to preach at a Quarterly Meeting in Detroit in June, 1825 -- the first preacher licensed by the Methodists in Michigan. In 1834 he had settled just southwest of Washington on a farm in Shelby Township. He was called on to officiate at weddings and funerals all over the area, and often preached and conducted revivals on the circuit for many years.

(6) Suffering perhaps from influenza or pleurisy, Ridgway should have been staying in to rest and keep warm. Instead, as was usually the case with circuit riders, he kept going.

Brother McGregor was probably Duncan McGregor, who had briefly been a circuit rider himself. Recommended by the Mt. Clemens Circuit in the summer of 1833, he had been admitted to the Ohio Conference and appointed junior preacher on the Tecumseh Circuit. But, after some kind of trouble, he left the circuit the following January. Gilruth's Journal noted that McGregor had visited him in Ann Arbor and "I talked plainly of the error of his conduct to him, but all in vain. Poor hypochondric (sic) creature!! & felt grieved at this folly but could not prevent it." McGregor apparently had not been fitted for the arduous labors of the circuit and could sympathize with Ridgway's predicament.

(7) A Class was normally led by a Class Leader each week. Members witnessed as to how they were progressing in their Christian pilgrimage. The original idea was that the leader would give them helpful hints and necessary admonitions. Ridgway probably did not lead this class and did not have to put out the effort required for preaching. He witnessed that it was a "good class," and this was probably inspiring to him.

(8) Ridgway had moved north into Lapeer County. It is fascinating to learn that as early as the fall of 1837 he found a farmer threshing by machine in this area.

(9) Romeo is 32 miles north of Detroit, in northwestern Macomb County where the terrain is not so flat. It was settled in 1823, and the following year the first recorded church service was held there by a Methodist preacher, Elias Pattee, who organized a Class of six. Romeo became the center of a new circuit in 1836, with Arthur Elliott and Larmon Chatfield as the first preachers.

The Presbyterian Church had been built in 1833 and was shared with the Methodists until they built their own church house in 1840.
(10) A Methodist Class had been organized at Utica, also by Elias Pattee, in 1823, but the modern church only dates from 1858. Methodism had slow going in the area due to an exceptionally strong Congregational Church. The fact that there was a "good congregation" of Methodists there in 1837 is an important contribution to the history of Methodism in Michigan.

(11) This is another original contribution to Methodist history in Michigan. Tradition had the first Class organized at Royal Oak in 1838; Ridgway found "an elegant class" already established in 1837.

(12) The view from this high hill, the exact location of which is not established, was refreshing and breathtaking to Ridgway after his painful travels through the flat, swampy terrain that characterized most of Macomb County. The site seemed to mark the northern frontier of settlement in that area since he saw farms to the south, but only "the far-spread forests" to the north.

(13) Armada was ten miles east-northeast of Romeo. The North Branch of today is 29 miles north-northwest of Almont.

(14) Early Methodist preachers were expected to read four hours a day. John Wesley insisted they must cultivate a taste for reading. Ridgway here reads from the journal of Lorenzo Dow, an early and eccentric Methodist preacher and evangelist.

(15) The first Quarterly Meeting of the Romeo Circuit was held in Utica on Saturday and Sunday, December 2-3, 1837. The meeting began with a morning service at 9 a.m. There would have been an afternoon service, a business meeting called the quarterly meeting conference (later simply the Quarterly Conference), and a Saturday evening service or prayer meeting. Sunday morning was marked by a love feast, a special service at which the presiding elder usually preached and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper would be observed. Often there were baptisms at this time. The weekend might have concluded with a service on Sunday afternoon or evening. On the Monday morning following, the preachers met with the stewards to receive what "quarterage" there was available.

At this meeting, Presiding Elder William Herr of Detroit did not arrive. Leadership thus was taken by local preacher Able Warren who preached on Sunday morning and administered the sacraments. Senior circuit preacher David Burns probably also took an active part.

(16) This was a train of the Erie and Kalamazoo Railroad, which ran from Toledo to Adrian.
In the fall of 1837, a young Methodist preacher named Robert Ridgway left his parents' home in Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio, bound for the Romeo Circuit in the wilds of Michigan. He was only 26 years old. Rev. Ridgway wrote in a small journal almost every day of that cold and rainy autumn. Much of the time he was ill, suffering from what appears to have been one bad cold after another — finally influenza and pneumonia. Ridgway's health never really recovered from these bouts. After adding to his journal in a trip across Arkansas and into the Choctaw Nation, he finally returned to Illinois where he died in 1847 at the age of 36.

Ridgway's ordeals did not diminish his faith in his calling. His perseverance in spite of disappointments, uncomfortable lodgings and painful illness was typical of the men who brought Methodism to the frontier. Perhaps we Methodists today have lost some of this tenacity and devotion in the face of hardship. Perhaps Ridgway's example can serve as an inspiration to ministers and laypersons alike. Let this be his memorial.

The journal has been transcribed and edited for publication by Nancy Britton, a member of the First United Methodist Church in Batesville, Arkansas, who has the Ridgway journal in her possession. A copy of it also exists on microfilm at the Arkansas History Commission in Little Rock. Mrs. Britton is the author of several published church histories and serves on the boards of directors of the North Arkansas Conference Commission on Archives and History and the Arkansas United Methodist Historical Society, as well as being historian for her home church.

Annotations have been added by the Rev. Ronald A. Brunger, archivist for the Detroit Annual Conference, with offices at the Archives, Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan.

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The first entry is dated September 25:

"Left my father's house in Mansfield for the Romeo circuit in Michigan. On leaving home my heart was considerably affected seeing the tears flowing from the eyes of my friends . . . It truly reminded me that I was a pilgrim and stranger on this earth."
Even though the trunk containing all his belongings was lost en route to Sandusky, Ridgway continued on, confessing that:

"I felt something of the horrors, and thought this world was all a world of disappointment... there were hundreds around me [but] I felt like one alone, for few appeared to, and I thought none really, cared for me."

Ridgway took passage on the steamboat "Robert Fulton" for Detroit. They started out on Lake Erie about 4 o'clock, reached Put-In-Bay Island two hours later, and stayed there until midnight.

"The lake was quite rough. We went in the troughs. I got sick, vomited a little, but it did not last long."

On Saturday, October 1, the passengers reached Toledo. Ridgway described the town as "a rough, ugly place," adding that "the people appear to be all Irish."

After unloading, they were off for Detroit by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The crossing was very rough, but the young preacher seemed to make the trip in better spirits. He was impressed with Detroit:

"[It] is a very large and handsome place and looks more city-like than I expected. There are large and splendid buildings."

Leaving Detroit he took the road to Mount Clemens. He found a level country and a good, dry road -- "very rough buildings, inhabited principally by French and Dutch." He stopped for the first night at the home of Solomon Porter, about ten miles out from Detroit.2

On Monday, the 3rd, Ridgway went on to Mount Clemens, arriving about 11 o'clock in the morning. He went directly to the home of Rev. A. B. Elliott, and Elliott accompanied him to his first appointment.3 He does not say exactly where they went, but does indicate that Brother Elliott did the preaching. On the 4th he went on alone:

"I viewed the work that was before me with fear and trembling, felt my inadequacy to my task, for I find an enlightened and intelligent people. During my short travels and acquaintance with Br. Elliott I was glad I had not to travel with him, for he appeared bold and self-confident, boasted of his good preaching, and appeared light and trifling. He was entirely destitute of that seriousness that became a minister of the gospel of Christ."

Although he was young and inexperienced, Ridgway was serious, perhaps to a fault. He recorded that he had chided Rev. Elliott:

"During my ride with him I reproved him several times. He said he had a coat for which he paid 27 dollars. Said I 'Could you stand up in a pulpit with that coat on and say to
"Sister, you must not wear so much finery, that it is wrong, that discipline forbids it?" He said yes. Then said I, 'I think you would be like a man who, when preaching in Ohio, said he would hem if he skinned his own knuckles. I think in so doing you would get yours hurt.' He blushed but said nothing."

Stopping over next with Father Rouse, Ridgway discovered that his mare had the heaves and was having trouble breathing. He had apparently bought the horse from an uncle and recorded his amazement that a relative would take advantage of him. "I began to think that my only friends were in my father’s house."

By the 6th, the young preacher was staying with a Bro. Blunt, about six miles farther on the circuit. Here he noted his reading of the book of Daniel:

"[It] suited me well, for I thought I was like a forsaken Daniel in a strange land among a strange people, but still, like him, some friends even from home."

Next day, Ridgway traveled about two miles to the home of a Bro. Davis, one mile north of Niles Corners, where he had his next appointment. Here he met with a new disappointment:

"I rode to the house, hitched my mare to the fence, went in the house and talked with the girls who asked me if I would have my horse put out. I said I would, went out, took off my portmanteau, ungirthed the saddle and was just taking it off when the old man came from the barn. Said his wife was not well and would rather I go somewhere else, adding his house had been a place for the preachers to stop at the last year, and his wife did not like to have so many men about the house. From which, with some other expressions he used, I understood that he didn’t want to be troubled with preachers this year . . . I went to Bro. Gregory’s where I stayed till my appointment. Found there fine and kind people."

As he traveled on, Ridgway mentioned stopping off with a Bro. Perin and Bro. Warren, the latter a local preacher. Homesickness was beginning to be a problem -- on October 10 he wrote:

"I feel my inadequacy to my task and think if I was at home I would stay there. I don’t like the weather, the nights are very cold, sometimes freezes ice in the road."

Moving on, he finally caught up with Rev. David Burns, a colleague who was a regular preacher on the circuit. "Our first meeting was a good one," he wrote. "He preached a fine sermon, we had a powerful class meeting, after which I returned with him to Bro. Smith’s where we stayed the night."
About six miles further on, at a Bro. Kingsbury’s, the weather turned very cold.

"In the evening had a large and attentive congregation. The evening was cold, had a poor fire. I spoke longer than usual, became chilly, [and] took a severe cold. Felt a pain in my breast and my throat was quite sore."

The Kingsbury house was apparently quite poorly heated. The next morning he added that "as I sat by the fire one side would freeze while the other would burn."

Ill as he was, Ridgway rode about six miles on Saturday, the 15th, to a Bro. Smith’s. The next morning, feeling "quite sick," he preached at 10 o’clock, then rode seven more miles to preach again at 3 in the afternoon. By Monday he could scarcely get up. "Notwithstanding [the pain in my breast], though it ached continually and sometimes appeared as though a knife was running through me, I rode about eight miles to Bro. McGregor’s. Here I felt discouraged, and thought I would not get round the circuit." (6)

Tuesday, October 18: "This morning my pain increased; when I sat down I could scarcely get up. I took some medicine and was advised to stay and not go to my appointment that day, but I did not like to disappoint the people. . . . I then rode about thirteen miles [to find a local preacher to take the appointment], but he could not go. I then went myself, about two miles, found a few persons present and tried to preach to them, though it was with great pain, but we had a good class." (6)

Feeling no better, Ridgway then rode to a Bro. Teller’s home, then on some six miles to Bo. Cooley’s, where he preached the evening of the 19th. Next morning he went to a physician in Lapeer County who merely advised him to quit preaching. He rode on, five more miles. Stopping with a Father Miller, he took mayweed tea, bathed his feet in warm water, and went to bed.

Leaving the circuit, he rode towards Romeo, where his appointment was to be on the following Sunday and where he hoped to find another doctor. He rode six miles, "came to the Class Leader’s, he was threshing with a machine, had a number of hands." (8) The class leader advised him to skip the meeting, saying that there would probably be few there, so Ridgway rode on three more miles to Romeo. There he saw a doctor who gave him some medicine. He rode eleven miles further to the home of a Brother Cooley where he stopped for the night and took a dose of the medicine.

"[It] made me very sick. Vomited 2 or 3 times and went to bed without supper."
The next morning was Sunday and Ridgway was scheduled to preach in Romeo. He still felt weak and sick, but filled the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church. The church was crowded and even the vestibule was full. He noted: "We had a tolerably good time."

Riding immediately for an afternoon appointment three miles away, he recorded "a still better time" and a new member on probation.

Michigan was visited by strange weather that autumn of 1837. Ridgway's entry for October 24th reads:

"I still feel the pain in my breast. Today the sun shines clear, but the wind blows cold. The day is unpleasant. I have neglected to [mention] the weather particularly. There have been some severe thunder showers. The first was the 12th, when it thundered, lightened and rained hard, after which it was a few days extremely cold, then it was so very warm that persons would try to get into the shade. The 16th it rained again which was attended with thunder and lightening. The night of the 22nd it thundered hard before the showers, it was very warm, after it was cold."

Troubled by a bad cough and difficulty in sleeping, Ridgway yet rode on about ten miles in a cold rain to reach his next appointment. The rain soon turned to snow, snowed all night the 25th, and he wrote:

"I am very hoarse, can hardly talk. Don't know how I can preach today." By evening the snow was ten inches deep.

On the 27th, Ridgway left for Utica, about eleven miles away. Traveling was difficult -- the snow balled on his mare's feet so she could hardly walk. His bad cold and sore throat became worse. But he arrived in time to preach on Sunday. He recorded a good congregation, good meeting and still better class. Once again he left immediately after the service to ride through the cold to Rochester, about eight miles away, where he had a 3 o'clock appointment.

"The house was full and some outside. Being much affected with a hoarseness and soreness of throat, I was some embarrassed and did not get along so well as in the morning. . . . It is so cold and such sudden changes [in the weather] that there are a great many people that have colds. In almost every congregation I find some with the consumption, others with lung complaints and some with the ague."

Ridgway's condition seemed to worsen. After a six mile ride through the cold and snow to a Brother Blount's, he noted:

"Here I feel very unwell. Sometimes cold and chilly, then feverish and very disagreeable. I feel more like going to bed than to preach, but souls are at stake and I know not
but on mv efforts their salvation depends. My prayer is to be resigned to the will of God. Though unwell and unfit, I attended my appointment at which I was much embarrassed and afterward felt bad, for the devil took advantage of me, told me I could not preach and had better quit it."

His next stop was Royal Oak, where he stayed with a Brother Seaman. He had "an elegant class, though but a few we were helped of the Lord." This success set his mind more at ease, but his pain and fever persisted. And yet another ordeal confronted him.

"Leaving Brother Seaman's I rode about 14 miles to a new appointment at Mr. Merrill's. Here I found the worst road I had yet seen in Michigan. Some places they had laid round logs in it which were so rough that a horse could scarcely walk over them . . . I had to get off the mare and walk through the mud."

When he arrived, tired, ill and muddy, he found few present to hear him preach.

Other appointments were kept as Ridgway continued around the circuit. Twice he preached in school houses, without heat, but he noted good congregations. At one meeting a dramatic event occurred:

"A man arose in the congregation, said he wished to say a few words. He said he was a backslider, that he had sinned against God . . . and was convinced he was on the way to hell . . . if he did not there confess his sins. He then talked very feelingly for some time. The people were all in a flood of tears. He closed by asking us to pray for him."

After the meeting ended, the man told Ridgway that he had almost refused to come to the service. He had felt that preachers were not worth going to hear, for the poorest were always sent into Michigan.

On November 8th, Ridgway met Larmon Chatfield, the junior preacher on the Romeo Circuit the year before. He thought Chatfield "too lively" for a Methodist preacher, but added "I don't know but that I am too melancholy, for I feel very solemn and but little like sport of any kind."

During the next week, Ridgway rode nearly fifty miles, visiting Utica and Washington, as well as holding meetings in several private homes. He noted his condition on the 14th:

"I feel quite sick and cold, chilly and then feverish. I spent a restless night, my body pained in every part."

Two days later he encountered a new topography and felt well enough to take a walk.
There is, [about a quarter of a mile] from Brother Cooley's, a hill or peak which is 175 feet above the stream below it, the top of which is not over 30 ft. across. At a distance it appears to come to a sharp point. It is surrounded or covered with bushes till within about 50 feet of the top, which is entirely bare, or nothing on it but grass.

Having been most all round it and viewing its majestic appearance arising far above the surrounding hills, and the towering tops of the pines scarcely reaching half way, I had a strong desire to stand upon its top and view the surrounding country.

When the sun began to gild the eastern horizon, I ascended its top and stood upon the eminence from whence the surrounding scenery presented a view sublime. When I faced the east, the sun shining clear and bright prevented my view of the land. When I looked to the right, I could see farms and houses spread o'er hill and valleys for miles. When I looked to my left, I saw the far-spreading forests and plains, with here and there appearing a cottage in the wilderness...

In this spot is truly a place for meditation. Here may we enquire who formed this grand scenery. And answer, the hand that formed it is divine and is seated high on the throne of his glory."

Ridgway's next appointment was at Newburgh. He seems here to be delirious with fever -- "my mind was scattered, my ideas clear but words mixed up. I could hardly express myself." He took some pine touchwood (?) and spent a night in much pain. He wrote that in his sleep he heard a cry from the north: "Come out and help us, we want preaching. Here there is no preaching north at all by Methodists. There is no other circuit in the north."

The next morning, on a six-mile ride to Brother Day's, he found "the worst road I had yet travelled. Some places the mud was belly deep." The mare fell down, throwing him on his back in the mud. He stopped at the next hard ground and tried to clean the mud off his cloak and portmanteau, but when he reached his appointment, he was too ill to preach.

On Sunday, November 19, he was back at the home of Bro. Cooley and for the first time he reports staying in bed all day.

"I feel worse, my right side is very sore. When I bear on my ribs they are sore and feel bruised. My breast feels worse."

No doubt he was suffering from pneumonia by this time. He was forced to miss appointments at Romeo, North Branch and Armada. He must have been near death, for he records:
"My flesh is falling away, my mind is calm and peaceful, but it appears entirely empty. I cannot keep it on a subject."

And yet he got up the next day and rode about five miles on a cloudy, rainy day. Arriving at the home of a Brother Noble, he spent the night. Perhaps there was a sympathetic wife there who prepared a home remedy for his illness. He took "some vinegar, butter and sugar, as hot as I could stand it," before going to bed.

Another snowstorm hit and he was glad to stay in for several days. He took some oil of hemlock one night, which was "said to be good for a pain in the breast." Finally, on the 24th, he started back to Utica. He was in great pain, adding that "this morning considerable blood came through me."

When he got to Utica, he was finally able to see a doctor. The diagnosis was that his liver was affected, and medicine ("for which I paid $1") was prescribed. "I was to take a dose of pills in the evening, then rub my side with salve to make it sore, after which take one pill each night as I went to bed. He said in about six weeks I could preach again, it would perhaps take longer than that."

Since that advice meant an end to riding the circuit, Ridgway decided not to take the medicine until after the quarterly conference, then go home and take it there.
pill each night as I went to bed. He said in about six weeks I could preach again, it would perhaps take longer than that."

Since that advice meant an end to riding the circuit, Ridgway decided not to take the medicine until after the quarterly conference, then go home and take it there.

The 26th was a Sunday, but he felt too ill to attend meeting. He decided to remain inside and devote the day to reading.

"I got a hold of Lorenzo Dow's journal which appeared applicable to my case. I enjoyed my mind well, notwithstanding my illness. In the evening had unusual access in prayer in the family."

On Monday Ridgway was visited by Bro. Lester, a "botanical doctor," who offered to treat him if he would accept it.

"I told him I liked his medicine better than the apothecary doctor's and asked what he would give. He said first worming medicine, then [when] the system was prepared, would steam me. I told him I did not like that, but I would take his medicine. He said it was no use to take part and not all. He then run down other doctors and medicines. Said I was not bad, the symptoms [sic] were not bad, and I might be easily cured, but the other doctors would reduce me so that I could not be raised again. Said if he was sick he would go without a doctor rather than risk himself in their hands, and so left me."
Having refused the services of the "botanical doctor," Ridgway left Brother Scott's in Utica and rode on to Brother Lerick's. He recorded feeling "more stupid, and with more pain." He spent the day reading, writing and meditating and felt "comfortable" in his mind.

The next morning, at daylight, he arose and prepared to leave. "While buttoning on a collar, having both hands raised, a sharp pain shot through from my left side to my shoulder blade, and I have since had such continual pain that I can hardly get about."

Although it was still raining, he rode about six miles to Brother Blunt's -- "found the road very bad and disagreeable riding... I was quite sick, pain in every part. I want to get home, losing my trunk and clothes, I have laid out all my money, now I am about 200 miles from home and have but seven cents." He would have to wait until the quarterly conference and hope to get some "quarterage."

The quarterly conference convened on Saturday, December 2nd. On the way to the first session, about 9 o'clock, it began to rain. It was a small meeting, about 20 or 25 persons, and the [presiding] elder did not appear. (15)

"Conference was small, prospect of meeting poor as it rained and was mud in every direction, most horse deep. There were but little quarterage brought in."

Sunday, December 3rd: "We had a small love feast, but it was a good one, after which Brother Warren preached and administered the Sacrament. During the day we had a good time, after which our meeting ended. The members enjoyed themselves well, but no persons joined the church."

On Monday morning, having stayed at Bro. Gregory's the night before, Ridgway went with a Bro. Burns to Bro. Stout's, one of the Stewards, to get the quarterage. "I received $5.00 for travelling expenses and 6 dollars quarterage. We returned to Bro. Blunt's and staid the night."

On the 6th, he found a letter from home at the post office in Washington. He then "left Bro. Scott's, went to Mr. Haskins' about 2 miles from Mt. Clemmens, riding about 14 miles. The mud was deep and a thin scale of frost on the top, not enough to bear a horse. My mare would break through, sink above the knees, and sometimes could scarcely get out. My health remains about the same, and in obedience to the requests of my friends, my design is to start home as soon as the roads will admit it.

Friday, the 8th, the ground was frozen hard enough to
stayed with Brother Adams. He attended a Presbyterian prayer meeting that night -- "a tolerably good time for so many dry prayers. Their reading, singing & exhortations were all sitting and very formal."

It turned so cold that night that Ridgway reported "the sawmill on the Clinton River at Utica is froze fast and cannot be started today. This morning it snowed very hard and now it is between a hail and rain, appears to grow colder."

Each day's entry contains further descriptions of Ridgway’s pains and illness. These have not been included here: it is enough to remark that he was obviously a very sick man and there is no doubt that these sufferings contributed to the brevity of his life.

On Monday, December 11th, he was at last on his way home, although he did fill a few more preaching appointments along his way. "Leaving these people," he wrote, "was almost like leaving home to come to them. They wept as I took the parting hand."

Wednesday, 13th: "This morning I had pain and great distress in my breast. Rode about 6 miles to another appt., but I think I will not preach again, for from the exercise of last evening, I have been worse to day than for some days. I could scarcely ride, [but] I am getting toward the south part of the circuit and am thus on my way home."

There had been a lot of snow, and he reports "quite good sledding. Sleds are running in every direction. It has snowed a little every day this week."

He headed on toward Detroit, although the weather continued cold and icy. "My mare was so smooth, I felt afraid to ride. Had to go ten miles before I came to a blacksmith shop where I got her shoes ruffled, then rode 10 miles more to Monroe which is a pleasant place, but the wind came down the river most cold enough to freeze me."

From Monroe he went eight miles toward Perrysburgh to a brick tavern called the Halfway House, being halfway from Detroit to Lower Sandusky. Here he put up for the night. That day also he "had the privilege of paying toll and wading the river to get to the bridge." The roads were still bad and his health a constant worry. He did, however, find time to "enquire the price of things along the road -- dried apples from 80 to 83, flour from 10 to 12."

On Wednesday, December 20th, Ridgway rode from the Halfway House to Tremainsville, then to Miami. Along the way "I crossed a railroad, saw a smoke at a distance towards
arrived and made as much noise as two or 3 steamboats. I could hardly hold my horse. There were six of them together." (16)

At Miami he could not cross the river -- it was frozen, but not hard enough to bear a horse. He crossed on foot with a James Coffinbury and stayed the night at his home. The next day he returned for his horse and ventured across. Back in Ohio he already found the day "pleasant and warm compared with the weather in Michigan." After lodging at Elder's Tavern, he rode 27 1/2 miles, passing through Lower Sandusky, "a tolerably pleasant place." Twenty miles more took him to Venice where the sledding was not as good, the road rough, and his horse fell, throwing him in the mud.

On December 25th, he wrote: "Today 3 months ago I felt very different and was traveling from home. Now I am going home pained and afflicted. Today I rode about 30 miles. The weather was pleasant, but I felt very unwell." He does not even mention that it was Christmas day.

The rest of this portion of the Ridgway journal is in a different ink and seems to have been added later. He noted that he had been gone from home for three months and had spent and lost about 100 dollars. For all his efforts on the circuit he had received traveling expenses and six dollars quarterage.
Sept. 25th. Left my father's house in Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio for Romeo circuit in Michigan. On leaving home my heart was considerably affected seeing the tears flowing from the eyes of my friends and while travelling the first day it truly reminded me that I was a pilgrim and stranger on the earth.

Tuesday 26th. My reflections were less solemn, but in the evening trouble began to arise. When I reached Sandusky City my trunk (which had been sent by stage) had not arrived though the stage had come. I then went to Cold Creek where I staid till the stage returned.

Wednesday and Thursday 28 & 29. While waiting my thoughts were various. When the stage returned it came again without my trunk. I then found my trouble increasing for I did not like to go home, neither did I like to lose it. I felt something of the horrors, and thought this world was all a world of disappointment. Though there were hundreds around me I felt like one alone for few appeared to, and I thought none really, cared for me.

Friday 30th. After writing a letter home, thought I would go on without my trunk so I left Sandusky and went to Huron where I soon got a passage on the steamboat Robt. Fulton for Detroit. Started about 4 o'clock and was soon out in the lake. About 6 reached Put-in-Bay Island where we staid till about 12 at night. The lake was quite rough.
We went in the troughs. I got sick, vomited a little but it did not last long.

Saturday Oct. 1st. About 8 o'clock this morning we reached Toledo it is a rough ugly place. the people appear to be all Irish. After unloading considerable here we again sailed for Detroit where we arrived about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The lake was very rough but our course was favourable for we went with the wind. Detroit is a very large and handsome place and looks more city like than I expected to find it. There are in it large and splendid buildings. Leaving Detroit I took the road to Mount Clemmens, found a very level country but good. dry road, very rough buildings, inhabited principally by French and Dutch. Having received a letter of introduction in Detroit to Solomon Porter I arrived at his house in the evening which was about 10 miles from Detroit, where I staid till Monday.

Sunday Oct 2nd. S. Porter informed the people there would be meeting that day a considerable congregation gathered at 10 o'clock when I gave out an appt. for 2 in the afternoon when the house was crowded this day I felt better than I had some days before.

Monday 3rd. Left Bro. Porters, went to Mount Clemmens about 10 miles where I arrived about 11 o'clock, went to A. B. Eliott's, preacher in this place. Took dinner with him after which he went with me to my place of destination and staid with me this night on the circuit.
Tuesday 4th. We went to some of my appt. though I did not preach at any of them this day I made about 15 miles & came to Father Rouses where the first place that I staid alone on the circuit after Br. Eliott left me. I viewed the work that was before me with fear and trembling, felt my inadequacy to my task for I find an enlightened and intelligent people. During my short travels and acquaintance with Br. Eliott I was glad I had not to travel with him for he appeared to bold and self confident, boasted of his good preaching and appeared light and trifling. He was entirely destitute of that seriousness that became a minister of the gospel of Christ.

During my ride with him I reproved him several times, in (?) of his cloathes he said he had a coat for which he paid 27 dollars. Said I "could you stand up in a pulpit with coat on and say to a gayly dressed lady, sister you must not wear so much finery, that it is wrong, that discipline forbids it." He said yes. Then said I, I think you would be like a man who when preaching in Ohio said he would Hem(?) close if he skinned his own knuckles. I think in so doing you would get yours hurt. He blushed but said nothing.

Wednesday 5th. I spent at father Rouses, nothing particular happened this day, it was all spent in reading and meditation. I then thought of home and felt most homesick.

The mare that I had traded for at Cold Creek has the
heaves, some people say it cannot be cured, some say it can. I don’t know whether. She has a great difficulty in breathing and when I think of my trade that my uncle would take the advantage of me, I began to think that my only friends were in my father’s house.

The people on the circuit that I am acquainted with are wealthy and are able and willing to help and assist me if I should need it. So far I have been used well by them, perhaps better than I deserve.

Thursday 5th. I left father Rouses and went to Bro. Blunts about 6 miles where I staid till Saturday; this day I had a variety of feelings, sometimes I felt well at others very bad, much discouraged. Here I thought if I was at home I should stay there and not went out to preach for such a boy as I could do nothing.

Fridy 7th. I spent in reading the history of Daniel which suited me well, for I thought I was like a forsaken Daniel in a strange land among a strange people, but still like him some friends even from home.

Saturday 8th. My reflections were similar to the day before I still read the life of Daniel. About 2 or 3 o’clock I left Bro. Blounts, went to Bro. Davises, about 2 miles, one mile north of Nileses(?) Corners with the intention of staying there till my appt. next day. I rode[40] the house, hitched my mare to the fence, went in the house and talked with the girls who asked me if I would have my horse put out, I said I would, went out, took off my
portmanteau, ungirthed the saddle, was just taking it off when the old man came from the barn and said his wife was not well and would rather I would go somewhere else, adding his house had been a place for the preachers to stop at the last year, and his wife did not like to have so many men about the house. From which with some other expressions he used, I understood that he didn’t want to be troubled with preachers this year. I thanked him for his kind information lest I should have been considered an intruder by myself not being perfectly welcome. I then girthed my saddle, put on my portmanteau, mounted my mare and was soon on my way off. I went to Bro. Gregorys where I staid till my appt. found there fine and kind people.

Sunday 9th. I went to my appt. at 10 o’clock, found a small congregation which was the first time I tried to preach on the circuit. The house was cold I did not preach much. I then rode about 6 miles south, preached again at 2 o’clock where I had a large congregation. I felt well preached without much trouble after which I had a number of invitations to go and stay with the people. I went about 2 miles and staid with Bro. Perin where I found first rate accommodation.

Monday 10th. In the morning I left Bro. Perin went toward the north part of the circuit to hunt up Bro. Burns. I rode about 17 or 18 (miles) to Bro. Warrens, a local preacher, in order to enquire for him. While here I feel my inadequacy to my task and think if I was at home I would
stay there. I don't like the weather, the nights are very cold, sometimes freezes ice on the road. The days are warm and the sun shines hot.

Tuesday 11th. This morning I left Bro. Warrens, went to Bro. Burns (?) appointment about 5 miles where I got to see him. Our first meeting was a good one, he preached a fine sermon, we had a powerful class meeting after which I returned with him to Br. Smiths, near Bro. Warrens, where we staid during the night.

Wednesday 12th. went to Bro. Kingsburys about 6 miles where I had an appointment on Friday evening while here the weather became cold. I enjoyed myself pretty well. Spent my time in reading.

Friday 14th. I enjoyed myself well while reading, felt the presence of the Lord with me. In the evening had a large and attentive congregation. The evening was cold, had a poor fire. I spoke longer than usual, became chilly, took a severe cold. felt a pain in my breast and my throat was quite sore.

Saturday 15th. This morning the ground was froze hard, the air was cold. I felt quite unwell as I sat by the fire one side would freeze while the other would burn. I then went to Bro. Smiths about 6 miles. Still remained unwell.

Sunday 16th. This morning I am quite sick, feel very unable to fill my appt. to day at 10 o'clock I felt better, preached there, then rode 7 miles to preach again at 3
o'clock, after was very unwell.

Monday 17th. This morning I could scarcely get up, having such a pain in my breast but notwithstanding my pain though it ached continually and sometimes appeared as though a knife was running through me, I rode about 8 miles to Bro. McGregor's. I here felt discouraged and thought I would not get round the circuit.

Tuesday 18th. This morning my pain increased when I sat down I could scarcely get up. I took some medicine and was advised by them to stay and not go to my appt. that day, but I did not like to disappoint the people and thought I would go to a local preacher on the circuit and see if he would fill my appt. for me. I then rode about 13 miles, got to his house but he had business to attend to and could not go. I then went to it myself, about 2 miles, found a few persons present and tried to preach to them though it was with great pain, but we had a good class. That night I staid at Bro. Tellers (?) where I had preached. I took some medicine there but it done me no good. I still enjoyed myself pretty well, but I think I will have to leave the circuit.

Wednesday 19th. This day I felt about the same, rode 6 miles to Br. Cooleys where I preached in the evening to a good congregation.

Thursday 20th. Being still unwell I went to a physician in Lapeen (?) County on my way to my next appt. to see if I could some medicine that would help me, but he
said he could do me no good unless I would quit preaching. I then went on toward my next appt. I rode about 1 mile further, making my ride this day 5 miles. I then got to Father Millers where I staid & did not get to my appt. at all. I took mayweed tea, bathed my feet in warm water, went to bed.

Friday 21st. Still feeling unwell I think I shall not get to my appt. today but that I had better go to Romeo where my appt. will be on Sunday and see the Doctors if I can get some medicine to help me for if I cannot I must soon quit preaching. I did not get to my appt. this day.

Saturday 22nd. Left Father Millers and thought I would go to my apt. today, rode 6 miles, came to the Class leader's, he was threshing with a machine, had a number of hands said he could not go to meeting & thought there would be but few there and that if I was sick I had better not stay. I then rode 3 miles to Romeo, went to doctors, got some medicine, went 11 miles further to Bro. Cooley's that evening I took some of medicine which made me very sick, vomited 2 or 3 times and went to bed without supper.

Sunday 22nd. This morning I got up late, felt extremely bad, weak and sick. After breakfast I felt some better, but still unable to preach but I tried to fill my appt. in Romeo where I preached in the Presbyterian church which was crowded and the vestibule was also full. We had a tolerably good time. I then rode 3 miles & preached at 3 o'clock where we had a still better time. After meeting
one offered herself as a member on probation, wherever I go I find good and kind friends but my health is still declining.

Monday 23rd. This morning I feel very sore in the breast I have a continual pain but I left Br. Smiths where I staid all night & went about 3 miles to Br. Adams, where my apt. was on Tuesday evening while here I spent my time in reading & reflection.

Tuesday 24th. I still feel the pain in my breast today the sun shines clear, but the wind blows cold. the day is unpleasant. I have neglected to notice the weather particularly. There have been some severe thunder showers. The first was the 12th of [Nov.] when it thundered lightened & rained hard, after which it was a few days extremely cold, then it was so very warm that persons would try to get into the shade. The 16th it rained again which was attended with thunder and lightning. The night of the 22nd it thundered hard before the showers it was very warm, after it was cold.

When my aptt came Tuesday evening, I preached to a few men with some difficulty for my mind was not collected and though I had selected a subject, yet after I had sung and prayed I took another but had good liberty. I was troubled with a cough in the night I rested poorly.

Wednesday 25th. Left Bro. Adams, rode about 10 miles to Bro. Stitt where my aptt. was next day, this morning was very cold and rained till noon, after which was colder. In
the evening it began to snow and snowed all night. My cold increased rapidly.

Thursday 26th. This morning it still snows, the ground is all white, it is very cold. I am very hoarse, can hardly talk, don’t know how I can preach today. It snowed all day and nobody came to meeting. In the evening the snow was about 10 inches deep.

Friday 27th. The clouds were all gone, the sun rose clear, shone bright. The trees loaded with snow looked gloomy, the air is quite sharp and cold. This day I left Bro. Stitts (?) went to Utica about 11 miles, it was travelling. The snow balled so on the mares feet that she could scarcely walk. By night the snow was all gone in the road, but in the fields and woods it is not. I feel no better but think my health is declining. My cold seems to affect my head.

Saturday 28th. I remained in Utica, I feel no better but if any different I think worse. My throat is sore and appears to be all rough.

Sunday 29th. I preached in Utica at 10 o’clock to a good congregation, had a very good meeting and still better class, after which I rode to Rochester about 8 miles and preached at 3 o’clock. The house was full and some outside being much affected with a hoarseness and soreness of the throat, I was some embarrassed, did not get along so well as in the morning. After meeting we held class which was good though there were but few members, after which I went
to Bro. Adams, where I staid that night. I have not been round the circuit, but I begin to like it better than at first, but on acct. of my health am much discouraged. It is so cold and such sudden changes that there are a great many people that have colds, in almost every congregation I find some with the consumption, others with lung complaints and some with the ague.

Monday 30th. This morning I have considerable headache, my breast is very sore. The weather is cold where the sun does not shine there is yet some snow. Leaving Bro. Adams for my next appt. I rode 6 miles to Bro. Blounts. I feel here very unwell. Sometimes cold and chilly, then feverish and very disagreeable.

Tuesday 31st. I left Br. Blounts and went to Bro. Sherwoods, about 2 miles. Here my appt. is this evening at present I feel unfit to preach. My mind is wandering, I can scarcely keep it on a subject, being cold & chilly and feverish. I feel more like going to bed than to preach, but souls are at stake and I know not but on my efforts their salvation depends, my prayer is to be resigned to the will of God. Though unwell and unfit, I attended my appt. at which I was much embarrassed and afterward felt bad for the devil took the advantage of me, told me I could not preach and had better quit it.

Wednesday, Nov. 1st. I left Bro. Sherwoods, rode about 6 1/2 miles to father Rouse's where I had been when I first came on the circuit. Here I expected to preach but
my appt. had not been given out. So after dinner I went to Royal Oak, about 3 miles, where my appt. was next day. there I staid with Bro. Seaman. my health remains about the same, the days are warm, the nights are cold and freezes hard. the air is cold, there is still places in the shade some snow.

Thursday, 2nd. this day my appt. was at 3 o clock at which time I preached to a small company. had an elegant class, though but a few we were helped of the Lord.

Friday, 3rd. This morning I have more pain than yesterday, but my mind feels better at peace and heavenly (care?) pervades. the weather is about as before. leaving Bro. Seaman's I rode about 14 miles to a new appt. at Mr. Merril's, here I found the worst road I had yet seen in Michigan. Some places they had laid round logs in it which were so rough that a horse could scarcely walk over them, but with some trouble I got there (for I had to get off the mare and walk and had been through the mud) and found a few to whom I preached.

Saturday, 4th. having to go back on the road I came about 24 (or 2 1/2?) miles. I dreaded the bad road so that I went around 8 miles to get there and found some of this as bad as the other and about as much as I would had the other way. My health remains about the same with the exception that my appetite is not so good as it has been. this day I have no appt. but tomorrow I have 3 and know not whether I can fill any of them or not. Sometimes I enjoy
myself well and sometimes not at all but am much discouraged.

Sunday, 5th. Though unwell I left Bro. Sherwood's for my appt., went to Niles', found nobody there. It rained hard and I got very wet, being no fire in the school house I went on to father Downer's where I had been invited to stop when I came this way. When I came in the old man was shaving, by whom I was rather abruptly addressed when I wished I had passed on. I told I thought there be no meeting. Why, said he roughly, I guess there will; I told him there was no body there and it was time meeting was commenced by my watch. Said he, your watch is too fast, I told him it was right by other peoples clocks and I thought was about right. Said I, the appt. was at 10 and now it is 1/2 past 10. this he denied and said I was wrong, that I was mistaken. Then said I when I was here before I gave out Bro. Burns at 10 and expected mine the same, the old man turned round astonished and said, why this is Bro. Ridgway. Made a no. (?) of apologies for his roughness, then asked me to take off my cloak for I had kept it on thinking I might have to go again. Put my mare in the stable and was well entertained. After dinner I went to my next appt. about 6 miles, had a good congregation but the weather was cold and no fire. We were uncomfortable, still had a good meeting. I then rode 4 miles to my next appt. where I preached to 12 or 15 persons, had more than usual liberty, the power of the Almighty was with us. after
meeting a man arose in the congregation, said he wished to say a few words. He said he was a backslider, that he had sinned against God and that he was there convinced he was on the way to hell, that he felt as though it was the last privilege he would ever (have) and that he would soon be damned if he did not there confess his sins. He then talked very feelingly some time, the people were all in a flood of tears. He closed by asking us to pray for him. After meeting I was told he was invited to attend the meeting that evening, he said the preachers were not worth going to hear for the poorest were allways sent into Michigan. He was then asked if he had heard them, he said he had not, then said Father Rouse, come to night and hear them. He did so and was blessed.

Monday, 6th. Left Rouse's, rode 13 miles to Utica, went to Bro. Adams, was still afflicted but enjoyed myself pretty well.

Tuesday, 7th. Staid at Bro. Adams, expected a letter from home but got none, began to feel forgotten of my friends. I began to feel the horrors, sick and away from home. I spent my time in reading and meditation.

Wednesday, 8th. Rode about 5 miles to get to Bro. Lerick's. there I saw Bro. Chatfield who had travelled this circuit last year. I thought he was too lively for a methodist preacher, but I dont know but that I am rather melancholy, for I feel very solemn and but little like sport of any kind. though he appears very light and
trifling in his actions, yet I believe he is a good man, though I have not heard him preach. This day my enjoyment was not as other times, feeling so different from the company.

Thursday, 9th. Still at Bro. Lerick's, feel quite unwell but enjoy my mind better than yesterday.

Friday, 10th. Went about 6 miles to Bro. Burns' appt. to get to see him. I feel more unwell than I have for sometime. Bro. Burns did not come at the hour, so I had to preach for him. I then felt worse, saw him in the evening.

Saturday, 11th. went with him to Utica where I received a letter from home. It rained and I had to stay there all night.

Sunday, 12th. Went to Washington, was very unwell. preached at 10 oclock having rode 8 miles. After meeting got something to eat at Bro. Warren's, rode 6 miles farther, preached at Saclock(), staid that night at Bro. Davises, felt quite unwell.

Monday, 13th. I went back to Washington, 6 miles, staid that day and night. have felt still worse, the labour of the sabbath being considerable.

Tuesday, 14th. Rode about 14 miles to Bro. Tellers, preached to a small company, had a good little meeting, but I feel quite sick and cold, chilly and then feverish. here I spent a restless night, my body pained in every part.

Wednesday, 15th. As unwell as I felt, I rode about 5 miles to Bro. Cooley's where I preached in the evening to a
good congregation. felt unwell, but humbled. had a
midling good meeting, enjoyed myself very well.

Thursday, 16th. This morning I feel very sore, my
breast feels all bruised and feel weak and feeble but still
curiosity led me to walk a small distance. There is 1/4
(? of a mile from Bro. Cooley's a hill or peak which is 175
ft above the stream below it, the top of which is but
small, not over 30 ft. across it, at a distance it appears
to come to a sharp point. It is surrounded or covered with
bushes till within about 50 feet of the top which is
to come entirely bare for nothing on it but grass. having been most
all round it and viewing its majestic appearance arising
far above the surrounding hills, and the towering tops of
the pines scarcely reaching half way, I had strong desires
to stand upon its top and view the surrounding country.
When the sun began to gild the eastern horizon I ascended
its top and stood upon the eminence from whence the
surrounding scenery presented a view both ? and sublime.
I could there see plains, some places covered with bushes,
others entirely bare. the ground considerably broken
arising in hills, then falling away to valleys. When I
turned to and stood facing the east, the sun shining clear
and bright prevented my view of the land. when I looked to
the right I could see farms and houses spread oer hill and
valleys for miles. When I looked to my left I saw the far
spreading forests and plains with here and there appearing
a cottage in the wilderness. When I stood facing the west
and looked before me I saw hills and valleys to a vast distance beyond which I saw the large and stately pines towering above them all, which (while the surrounding forest was stripped of its leaves) were clothed in green and looked as though summer was there, when I looked to the right I saw about the same, though the green forest was some higher. When I looked to the left I there saw hills, valleys, forests, plains, farms and houses as far as my eyes could see, but having but little time I was not satisfied with gazing when I had to leave it. In this spot is truly a place for meditation. Here may we enquire who formed this grand scenery. and answer, the hand that formed it is divine and is seated high on the throne of his glory.

After leaving the eminence rode about 8 miles to Newburgh where I preached in the evening to but a few. I was very unwell, before meeting was out was quite sick and lightheaded, could scarcely stand up. after meeting one person joined on probation. our meeting was good though my mind was scattering my ideas were clear, but my words all mixed up, and could hardly express myself. I spent a night of much pain. I took some pine touchwood (?) which made me very sick at the stomach. While here the cry from the north was come out and help us, we want preaching, here there is no preaching north at all by Methodists as there is no other circuit north. this invitation to come out and preach to them, when considering my present state of health not being able to preach at the regular appt., makes me
feel unpleasant knowing there is so much to do and not being able to work. I think now I will leave the circuit and at least quit preaching.

Friday 17th. This morning I felt worse than the day before for my pain increases, but I left Bro. Alverson's and rode 6 miles to Bro. Day's, a short distance from where my appt. was this evening. this day I found the worst road I had yet travelled. Some places the mud was belly deep. One place my mare fell down, the first place I touched was the broad of my back right in the mud, when I got up I saw my portmantaus on the other side of the mare in the mud too, then I did not know what to do, however I got again on hard ground, tied the mare, took off my cloak, spread it on some logs, got a chip and went to scraping off mud. When I got the worst off I went on again looking really fine. I was truly glad when that day's ride was over, but when there I was not able to preach for my pain increases and I am growing weaker.

Saturday 18th. This morning I feel very unwell and it rains some. I will not go to my appt. today but think I will go to Romeo where my appt. is tomorrow. The weather has been very disagreeable, we have had several snow squalls. I think I strained my right arm a little yesterday when I fell, for it feels a little sore now. It slacked raining and I left Bro. Day's for Romeo about 6 miles where I went to Bro. Norris's. Staid till after dinner, felt very unwell. while there it rained
considerable. when it slacked again I went to Bro. S. Cooley's, about 2 miles from Romeo where I felt very unwell, my pain increasing. after supper felt great distress in my stomach and considerable pain in my right side.

Sunday 19th. I feel worse, my pain increases, my right side is very sore when I bear on my ribs they are sore and feel bruised, my breast feeling worse I am not able to stand my appt. today in Romeo, neither will I go to Northbranch, nor Armeda. I now see work to do and not able to do it, my body is racked with pain and congregations are disappointed. Oh that I had known better how my health would have been, I would at home. I still think I will quit preaching. This day I have laid in bed for the first (time?), all my powers, both mental and physical, are completely prostrated. I am very weak, can scarcely get about, have no energy either of body or mind, the weather is now quite warm for the time of year.

Monday 20th. This morning I feel weaker, I am gradually wearing away, my appetite fails me some, my flesh is falling away, my mind is calm and peaceful, but it appears entirely empty. I cannot keep it on a subject so as to have any Ideas about it. leaving Bro. Cooley's I went to Bro. Stitt's about 4 miles, got my mare fed and my dinner, after which I went a mile further to Bro. Hayden's. I still feel miserable, I am so very weak. It is cloudy weather, quite warm and showery.
Tuesday 21st. This morning is warm and rainy.

Last night there was quite a hard thunder shower, it thundered and lightened hard. I feel weak & still have much pain. I feel as though my preaching was about over, and my journey on earth was short, my mind is some clearer. I have more access (success?) in prayer. after dinner I went to Bro. Noble's, a few rods distant, where I staid all night. have more pain than before for pressing on my left side it felt so sore that I thought there might be a gathering inside. After taking some vinegar, butter, and sugar as hot as I could drink it, I went to bed and rested about as usual.

Wednesday 22nd. This morning the weather is quite different from yesterday. It rained hard and steady all night, now it is cold and snows some. feel bad, a kind of stopping in my breast with an increase of pain. my mind is some clearer, I enjoy myself tolerably well. It snowed all day and grew very cold. Is disagreeable out, my health is no better.

Thursday 25th. The ground is now covered with snow, the top is some froze, the wind blows from the north and is cold. My health is about as usual, a little on the decline. the weather being so bad I have been kept from getting to Utica or to a doctor. I have though taken some oil of hemlock which is said to be good for a pain in the breast. I started for Utica and got as far as Bro. Stitt's, the road was so bad I stopped all night. It is
squally, cold and disagreeable, my health is some better, or my breast is easier.

Friday 24th. The weather is very cold, last night froze hard. it still freezes though it is clear. my breast feels worse. I have not such severe pain as I have had but there is more distress about it, this morning considerable blood came through me. I left Bro. Stitt’s, went to Bro. Smith’s about 6 miles. Got my dinner, then went to Utica in the afternoon. it snowed steady till night and froze hard, I feel worse than I have yet, my pain increases fast. this evening I feel great distress in my breast. I feel myself rather a trouble to strangers and think if I don’t get better before our quarterly meeting I’ll go home for I can’t preach and it’s no use to stay here.

Saturday 25th. Last night was the coldest night we have had yet, the ground is hard enough to bear a wagon this morning. Severe pains pass through my breast from side to side and I feel about as I did yesterday. I went to see a doctor today who told me my liver was effected and that I must take medicine. I got some from him for which I paid $1.00, was to take a dose of pills this evening. then rub my side (with) salve to make it sore, after which take some pills one each night as I went to bed. He said in about six weeks I could preach again & it would perhaps take longer than that. the prospect was I would not preach any more this winter, so I concluded I would not take the medicine but that I would wait till after the quarterly
meeting, then I would go home and take it there. In the evening I felt worse, my pain increases.

Sunday 26th. This morning I feel still worse, my disease increases, becomes more seated. I am weak and sick, though in Utica unable to go to meeting today. The weather is still cold and disagreeable to me though others don't seem to mind it. In the daytime the sun shines, in the nights it is extremely cold and freezes very hard. The day I spent in the bible and other books. I got hold of Lorenzo Dow's journal which appeared applicable to my case. I enjoyed my mind well, notwithstanding my illness. In the evening had unusual access in prayer in the family. Went to bed early feeling in body some worse, having some fever.

Monday 27th. I got up before day, made a fire & set by it for during the night I had much pain and was restless. This morning Bro. Lester came, a botanical Doctor, and said he would offer me some assistance if I would accept of it. I told him I liked his medicine better than the apothecary doctor's, and asked what he would give. He said first worming medicine, then the system was prepared, would steam me. I told him I did not like that, but I would take his medicine, when he said it was no use to take part and not all, he then run down other doctors and medicines and said I was not bad, the symptoms were not bad and I might be easily cured with his medicine, but the other doctors would reduce me so that I could not be raised again, and said if he was sick he would go
without a doctor rather than risk himself in their hands, and so left me, I thought rather dissatisfied. I then left Bro. Scott's where I staid in Utica, and went to Bro. Lerick's. Felt some better while riding, but in the evening was chilly and feverish. went to bed late and rested tolerably well.

Tuesday 28th. This morning is cold and rainy. I don't feel as well as yesterday, more stupid and some more pain. About the middle of the day I felt some better. at night worse again, the day was spent in reading, writing and in meditation and my mind was comfortable.

Wednesday 29th. Last night was one of much pain though I went to bed late I got up early, and made a fire and set by it. after daylight, while buttoning on a collar, having both hands raised, a sharp pain shot through from my left side to my shoulder blade and I have since had such continual pain that I can hardly get about, this morning is quite warm, the frost is about all out of the ground and it is very muddy. It rained nearly all night. though unwell I left Bro. Lerick's, went about 6 miles to Bro. Blunts. found the road very bad and disagreeable riding, it did not hurt me so much to ride as I thought it would. but in the afternoon I was quite sick, pained in every part, my feelings in reference to my present condition were various. I want to get home, loosing my trunk and cloths I have laid out all my money, now I am about 200 miles from home and have but seven cents.
consequently must wait till our quarterly meeting and see if I get any quarterage. If I don’t I scarcely know what I shall do, I shall then think they do not want me and will be the more determined to go home. In the evening I felt still worse, went to bed about 7 o’clock, rolled from one side to the other till I fell asleep. So great was my pain, the weather is still warm and pleasant.

Thursday, 30th. Although I spent a restless and comfortless night, I rose late this morning, my breast severely pained. The weather is dull & cloudy, has the appearance of rain, I feel weak and trembly and not much like traveling and still less like preaching. In the after part of the day it rained and in the evening there was considerable thunder & lightning with heavier rain. My disease appears to increase and my strength fails and I am gradually wearing away: today I ate but 2 meals (the same yesterday) and they were small, the day was spent in reading, writing and meditating.

Friday, Dec. 1st. I think my pain is not as great as it has been, but I am some weaker. The weather is still rainy, but is getting colder. The roads are getting very bad all most impossible to get along. In the afternoon I felt much worse, went to bed and laid 2 or 3 hours, after which I felt some better.

Saturday, 2nd. This morning is clear and looks as though we would have a fine time for meeting which commences today about 9 o’clock. Clouds were gathering and
indicated rain. On our way to meeting it commenced, had a small congregation, about 20 or 25 persons. The elder did not come. Conference was small, prospect of meeting poor as it rained and was mud in every direction, most horse deep. In the evening there was a small prayer meeting to which I did not get, it rained and stormed dreadfully. There were but little quarterage brought in.

Sunday, 3rd. We had a small love feast but it was a good one, after which Bro. Warren preached and administered the Sacrament. During the day we had a good time, after which our meeting ended. The members enjoyed themselves well, but no persons joined the church. My health remains about the same.

Monday, 4th. This [day] my health is some better, having staid at Bro. Gregory's all night. I went with Bro. Burns to Bro. Stout's, one of the Stewards, to get the quarterage. I received $5.00 for travelling expenses and 6 dollars quarterage, after which we went to Bro Blunt's and staid all night.

Tuesday, 5th. We left Br. Blount's and went to Br. Lerick's, after we had our dinner, Bro. Burns went to Washington and I went to Utica to Bro. Scotts. Today the weather is beautiful, looks like spring. My health is about the same, but the nights are cold and freeze hard, the roads are bad, not hard enough to bear a horse. Staid at Br. Scotts all night, my health was about as usual.

Wednesday, 6th. Went to the post office, got a letter
from home, then left Br. Scotts, went to Mr. Haskins about 2 miles from Mt. Clemmens, riding about 14 miles. The mud was deep and a thin scale of frost on the top, not enough to bear a horse. My mare would break through, sink above the knees and sometimes could scarcely get out. My health remains about the same, and in obedience to the requests of my friends my design is to start home as soon as the roads will admit.

Thursday, 7th. This morning is cold, last night froze hard. Now the sun shines clear, but the air is sharp, I don't feel much pain, but an uneasiness or distress in my breast. I left Mr. Haskins, rode 2 miles to Mt. Clemens, went to Br. Elliott's where I staid all night. Here I went to prayer meeting, the first I have been at in Michigan, after the meeting I had more pain. The night is very cold.

Friday, 8th. This morning the ground is froze hard enough to bear a horse, except in the woods. After writing a letter to [T. or P.] Walker I rode to Utica about 12 miles. I feel some the worse of my ride. I feel cold and chilly and some uncomfortable. The weather looks as though we would have snow, it kept growing colder till night and froze very hard, here I staid at Br. Adams, went to a presbyterian prayer meeting, where was a tolerably good time for so many dry prayers, their reading, singing, & exhortations were all setting and very formal.

Saturday, 9th. Last night I rested poorly, turning from one side to the other and my breast pained
considerably, it was the coldest night we have had yet, so
cold that the sawmill on the Clinton river at Utica is
froze fast and cannot be started today. This morning it
has snowed very hard and now it is between a hail and rain,
but appears to grow colder. When I go out I can scarcely
stand the cold, my breast feels as usual, no particular
change. Sometimes it is a little better, at others a
little worse. The day was made up of snowing and raining
and sometimes mixed with hail. The day was spent in
reading, talking and walking about.

Sunday, 10th, is very cold and squally. The roads are
hard and getting good, I think I shall soon risk them and
go home. Today I went to hear Bro. Burns preach, after he
was through I closed the meeting which caused more pain
than I have felt for some days. I have now a pain in my
back, breast, right side, and a soreness across my bowels.
I enjoy myself tolerably well, but the least exercise
prostrates me entirely and appears to throw the whole
system out of order.

Monday, 11th. I left Utica & started toward home.
Rod 2 miles and stopped at Br. Lerick's then about 6 more
to Br. Blount's where I again met Br. Burns. I agreed to
fill 3 of his appts., bid him farewell and we parted. He
left me and [went?] to his other appts. the day was very
cold, the coldest riding I have had yet. The wind and snow
blew in my face for it snowed by spells all day. I felt
considerable pain, sharp stitches in the right side,
occasioned by my sabbath exercise. Leaving the people was almost like leaving home to go to them, they wept as I took the parting hand.

Tuesday, 12th. Last night I had not much pain but some distress in the breast. This morning is not so cold as it was yesterday. I rode 2 miles to Br. Sherwood’s with the intention of filling one of Br. Burns appts., which I attempted and it caused me much pain though we had a good meeting. I had tolerably good liberty.

Wednesday, 13th. This morning I had some pain and great distress in my breast. I rode about 6 miles to another appt. But I think I will not preach again, for from the exercise of last evening I have been worse to day than I have been for some days. My pain and distress was so great that I could scarcely ride. I am getting toward the south part of the circuit and am thus on my way home.

Thursday, 14th. To day I feel as usual, my cold increases. Today I made a pair of over shoes which [took] all day as busy as I could be for I am so weak I can not do much and my breast still sore. The weather is cold, it is quite good sledding. Sleds are running in every direction and have been for about 3 or 4 days and has snowed a little every day this week.

Friday, 15th. I went to pay a visit to a man who had spoke in meeting here some weeks ago with [whom] I had a pleasant conversation. he says he will join the church the first opportunity he has and I think will make a fine
zealous member. I have today a very bad cold. My head is all stopped up, my throat is considerably sore. Today I have had a heavy pain in my right side with a heavy distressed feeling in my breast. It has snowed some today and is very cold. At night I returned to father [rauze’s? illegible.] (N*: The writing changes from pen to pencil here and is very faint.) Where I had been 2 or 3 days in the ___? It commenced snowing in the morning it was stormy & disagreeable.

Saturday, 16th. Though it snowed and stormed, I started for Detroit. After I had [gone] some 2 or 3 miles it quit all night. The day was cold and disagreeable, the roads all icy so that the mare slipped so that it was dangerous. My health is about as usual.

Tuesday, 19th. I started this morning tolerably early and found the road worse than yesterday, more icy. My mare was so small—(or) smooth?) I felt afraid to ride. I had to go 10 miles before I came to a blacksmith shop where I got her shoes ruffed, then I rode 10 miles more to Monroe which is a pleasant place but the wind came down the river most cold enough to freeze me. From Monroe I went 8 miles toward Perrysburgh to the brick tavern called the Halfway house, being halfway from Detroit to Lower Sandusky. Here I put up for the night a little before night. Today I had the privilege (spelled prighbige) of paying toll and wading the river to get to the bridge. Here I found the most dangerous looking road I have seen for some time. The day
has been cold, sometimes snowed a little. My health has
been a little worse than common, more pain and a kind of
sickness at the stomach. I have enquired the price of
things along the road: Dried apples from 80 to 83, flour
from 10 to 12, other things as other places.

Wednesday, 20th. Left the Halfway house and went to
Perrysburgh, after riding 10 miles I got my mare fed at
Tremainsville, in going from there to Perrysburgh or Miammi
I crossed a railroad, saw a smoke at a distance towards
Toledo and waited to see if it was not a car. it soon
arrived and made as much noise as two or 3 steamboats. I
could hardly hold my horse. There were six of them
together. I then came on to Miami and could not cross the
river for it was froze & not hard enough to bear a horse.
here I found James Coffinbury and went with him across on
foot. Stayed all night with him.

Thursday, 21st. I ventured across the river with my
horse as many had crossed today and after visiting a number
of families in Perrysburg talking with them and praying
with some, I left town, rode 8 miles ____ where I staid all
night. My health is as usual, the weather cold, the roads
bad.

Friday, 22nd. Today has been pleasant and warm
compared with the weather in Michigan. the snow is most
gone in the roads. Leaving Elder’s tavern I rode 27 1/2
miles, passed through Lower Sandusky a tolerably pleasant
place. the road today was better than common. the swamp
was froze hard with the exceptions of some holes. My health is poor, I feel some pain and considerable distress in the breast.

Saturday, 23rd. This morning has been cool, a very sharp air. Last night I rested poorly having much pain in my breast. Today has been one of pain and uneasiness in the breast and now while I write I feel uncomfortable. Today I rode about 20 miles to Venice. The sledding is not as good here as it has been west and north. The road here is rough, my mare fell down and threwed me in the mud, or on the hard lumps which were thawed some so as to dirty me.

Sunday, 24th. I spent in Venice but was very unwell, scarcely able to get about. I enjoy my mind tolerably well. I feel somewhat uncomfortably situated even among relations, I feel as though I was a trouble to them.

Monday, 25th. I feel bad this morning, could I feel more at home I would stay today here. My breast is pained in every part, my back is sore and my head aches considerably. Today 3 months ago I felt very different from the present and was travelling from home. Now am going home pained and afflicted. Today I rode about 30 miles. The weather was pleasant, I felt very unwell, a very severe pain and distress in the breast. (NB: He makes no note of it being Christmas.)

Tuesday, 26th. I rode 30 miles, the weather was pleasant, the roads good. My health is poor, riding tires me considerably.
(NB: Here the writing resumes in pen and seems to have been added later.)

I then arrived at home having been from home 3 months. My travels have been short and unprofitable to myself and circuit as they were soon without a preacher, and I had spent and lost about 100 dollars, on the circuit I received my travelling expenses & 6 dollars quarterage which just carried me home. After I got home nothing particular happened, the state of my health varied considerably, sometimes tolerably well, at others quite sick. When feeling tolerably well I have tried to preach while having the charge of a protracted meeting at Keith’s school house. After preaching I invited mourners forward, saw a woman somewhat affected, went to her and asked her to go forward. She said she would if I would persuade her sister to go with her who sat by her side. I asked if she would not go, she in a scornful manner said, "can you forgive sins," and as if convicted by her own words hung her head while I talked seriously to her, her brother then came to me and in an impudent manner asked me the same question saying if I could not forgive sins that he did not want me to persuade his sisters to go there, but if I could then they might go. I then told him this power was not in man but God was able and unless he confessed his sins to him he would be punished forever. I put my arm around his neck when he trembled and sat down. It was then getting late and I closed the meeting. It was continued 2 days longer, but
there was no visible good done. At other meetings I have seen persons crying for mercy, sinners converted and saints happy and rejoicing.

Here ends the Michigan portion of Ridgway's journal.