

Mercy Nelson, born in Hartford, Wisconsin in 1850 moved to Omro, Wisconsin 1873 to rejoin her family who had moved there in 1871. She had taught school in Utica a small Wisconsin town and probably Jefferson another small city. From her school year days in Hartford she had met Luman A. Harper and as she begins her journal in 1874 it is clear he is writing to her from his new home in Benton Township, Butler County, Kansas – a pioneer area just opened for settlement.

Her diary takes us through her daily life, thoughts, friends, relatives and neighbors. She describes her unusual wedding day and then the trip to Kansas and as a married lady, her life there. While she ends her diary in 1875 we see a portrait of a new, hard life on the frontier despite being married to the doctor, farmer and postmaster.

Twenty years later Mercy Harper's daughter Flora Nelson begins her diary and we see the life of a 14 year old through high school days. In the unique eyes of mother-and daughter we see how life was on the farm near small towns in the era of 1874-1900.

LaRoux Gillespie is the author of 39 books and over 250 other publications. Today he is a local historian as well as a writer on manufacturing technology. This book joins several others of his on Butler County, Kansas.

ISBN 0-912017-23-6

The Diaries of Mercy and Flora Harper

Gillespie

The Diaries of Mercy and Flora Harper  
Indianola, Butler County, Kansas  
1874-1875/1894-1897



LaRoux K. Gillespie