

Did the Reality Match the Expectations for Kansas Homesteaders?

RS#05: Kansas Farmers: Evidence (Group 5)

Directions: Analyze the historical sources and complete the chart and questions found on the Kansas Farmers: Document Analysis Worksheet. Be specific and detailed in your answers.

The author of this journal is Susan Dimond. She was a school teacher who settled in Kansas with her husband. She wrote the journal to document her hardships while in Kansas. The two entries, from January 1875, describe a difficult year for Kansas settlers due to the grasshopper plague in 1874 and the harsh winter weather.

Susan Dimond Journal

MEMORANDA. 1875
Sunday eve Jan 3.
It has been very cold all day. This has been our Anniversary. Mr & Mrs Desmott & their children were here to dinner. we had roast Antelope fried Buffalo Meat & Potatoes, sugarcorn, warm Biscuits & butter & Molasses Cookies. not very much of a dinner but pretty good for Kansas. wish every one had as good. I have taught school three weeks and expect to commence again in the morning & hope it will be warmer. Christmas & New Years came on Thursday

MEMORANDA.

& you know that is always
the teachers day so I took
them & had duty days to
do house-work generally
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Christmas & New Years are
over I think the children
will learn better. I rec^d
a paper from Jennie
stating what they are
doing & then for the Kansas
sufferers. I long to have
summer come or spring
at least for we are
having considerable
snow which keeps the
cattle from pasturing
and a good many are
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MEMORANDA.

for ours but if the
neighbors cattle are like
to starve, will have to
divide with them, when
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Will took this diary to
town yesterday to mail it
but forgot it. so I will
fill some of the blank
paper. I rec^d the other
one you sent, and
have commenced to write

in it. & am much oblig^d
if it is quite a tax
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I should miss one.

MEMORANDA. 316

Jan. 12. 1875:

I will now write a little more, last Friday was the worst-day I have ever seen in Kansas I started for school and got-^{1/2} way + stopped to warm, + Will went on and built- a fire at the school-house for fear some of the children might come + expect to find a fire + nearly freeze but- no one came + we went- back home, we have ^{had} steady cold weather for two weeks and to day has been a very cold blustering day. Through the middle of the day it was dangerous for a person

MEMORANDA.

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good bed & bed clothes

MEMORANDA.

to keep us warm and that is about all any one can have. A cold is still coming in slowly. some shoes & old clothes & some Provisions. we all hope to have good crops another year but if we do not do not know what we will do then "go west I suppose" Jennie said you had to move in the spring. let us know where you expect to go I wish this was a good enough country to advise people to come to. but at present I advise all to keep away. we expect to try living here another year & if we

MEMORANDA.

can not make a
living we shall surely
have to leave. don't
worry about us. as long
as we keep well we
will get along some way.
as my book is about
full I will close &
hope you will have
a good time reading
it through this year
while I am writing an
other. if you know
how I give them to refer
to I don't believe you
would want me to
send them.
Ever yours
Luc

Susan Dimond Journal Transcribed

1875

Sunday Eve Jan 3

It has been very cold all day. This has been our anniversary. Mr & Mrs Demott & their children were here to dinner, we had roast Antelope fried Buffalo Meat & Potatoes succotash warm Biscuit & butter & Molasses cookies. not very much of a dinner but pretty good for Kansas wish every one had as good. I have taught school three weeks and expect to commence again in the morning & hope it will be warmer. Christmas and New Years came on Thursday and you know that is always the teachers day so I took them and had two days to do house-work generally in and now that Christmas and New Years are over I think the children will learn better. I rec'd a paper from Jennie stating what they are doing there for the Kansas sufferers. I long to have summer come or Spring at least, for we are having considerable snow which keeps the cattle from pasturing and a good many are out & nearly out of fuel now. We have a plenty for ours but if the neighbors cattle are like to starve, will have to divide with them, when if there was no snow they could get their living on the Prairie.

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We have had steady cold weather for two weeks and to day has been a very cold blustering day. Through the middle of the day it was dangerous for a person to get far from the house it was almost equal to Old Chautauqua it was so cold the children had to keep close to the stove most all day. I am getting along nicely with my school and will be glad when it is warmer weather so the children can keep their seats better. it hardly seems like school where they have to be huddled up around the stove so. we are getting along as well as the generality of people I guess have enough to eat & wear & a warm house good bed & bed clothes to keep us warm and that is about all any one can have. Aid is still coming in slowly some shoes old clothes & some Provisions. we all hope to have good crops another year & if we do not do not know what we will do then ?go west I suppose?

Jennie said you had to move in the spring. Let us know where you expect to go I wish this was a good enough country to advise people to come to but at present I advise all to keep away. we expect to try living here another year & if we can not make a living we shall surely have to leave. don't worry about us as long as we keep well we will get along some way, as my book is about full I will close & hope you will have a good time reading it through this year while I am writing another. if you know how I miss them to refer too I don't believe you would want me to send them
Ever Yours Sue