

1786

April 20 - June 11.



Frisberger's account of his journey
in Box 152 Fol 2

Journal of Dav: Zeisberger, John
Heckewelder & Will^m Edwards with
Indian Cong^{rs} from River Huron to Gajahaya.
Error: 1786 ~~1785.~~

Apr. 20th. After having loaded our Canoes, we
fell down the River, & encamped near the Mouth
of it at Mr Taskers Early next Morning we
set sail with a fair Wind for Gross Point but
the Wind changing in the afternoon to the
East & blowing very fresh, we were oblig^d to
encamp, & remain there untill Sunday ye
23^d, from whence we sailed with Ease into
Detroit at 10 o'clock in the Morning, & were
received by our good friends & benefactors,
Rich^d Cornwell, Master Shipbuilder of these
Lakes, his Wife & Sister fr^m N York & W^m Cooks
Relations to the same. These friends found
us Lodging, & gave Liberty to our Indians to
encamp in the Ship yard, the most suitable
place for them. I (John) visited Mr Askin,
& we must all dine with him, He also had
his Sloop, the Michilimackine ready for us, &
I apply'd for the Sloop Beaver, the former not
being able to take one half of us with our Baggage
on board - My request was granted & the Sloop
is fitted out. I spoke with ye Major, who
is Commandant of this place, & he promised,

that everything should be made easy and agreeable to us - In the mean time we settle all our affairs & pay our Debts. Mr Askin was very kind to us & our Indians & told his Baker, that whatever quantity of tickets for bread are brought to him signed by me to deliver such ticket quantity of bread, & I am to be as free in his house as if I belonged to y^e family. He declared our Indians an honest people in all quarters of the Town, & every body was sorry, that we were going to leave them. The Major met me in y^e Street took me into Mr Askins house & again assured me, that he would do all he could for us, promised us protection in the Indian Country, gave our Indians 2 bbls of flour & 1 bbl of pork & had a pass ready for us. On the 24th & 28th we put part of our things on board, after having enjoyed the particular favours & kindness of Mr Askin, & taken leave of particular friends, the former went with us to y^e wharf, wishing us a safe & comfortable Voyage & we went on board. We soon after got under way, but in falling down y^e River, we had the misfortune to run aground by fighting Island, which took us an hour & $\frac{1}{2}$ before we got clear again. We passed Gross Isle, & anchor'd in 14 fathom Water at the middle of Bobling, opposite to Mr Hazel's house. The Mackinaw, who had sailed with one third part before us, lay at

Anchor about a mile below, & most of our Indians went to sleep on shore. Capt. Underston & I went on shore to see Mr Hazel, who had desired me at Detroit to call on him on my passage, and baptize his Child, which request I granted him in the morning following. Immediately after all being on board again, we set sail for the Islands & the Wind blowing pretty fresh we almost all fell sick, which emptied our Stomachs pretty well. We sailed between the Eastern & Middle Sisters, & anchor'd at 2 o'clock in the afternoon in 5 fathom Water in Put-in Bay, having lay'd 40 miles back since morning. Some of us went on shore, shot Ducks & went on board again at night. Next morning Sunday ye 30th, the Wind not being fair, we again went on shore. The Vessels ran further to the Eastward in the Bay, but between 9 & 10 o'clock at night the Wind setting in very severe from ye East they fell back to their former Station. May 1st we went on Shore all Day, marked and cut ~~our~~ Names with ye day & year of our Lord on Trees, & in the evening we had our first Meeting & slept on shore, the Vessels lying at about $\frac{3}{4}$ Miles off. The 3^d Capt. Underston at my Request drew a rough Map of this Lake, & put the names of most material places thereto. I had likewise recognized the Island, in which a number of Rattlesnakes had bin killed within these

few Days. Otherwise it is a most pleasant place,
well timbered, & in some places overgrown
with wild Gooseberry bushes. We all slept this
night on board. The 11th & 13th we were Day &
Night on Shore, but the Vessels were oblig'd to
change their Station further round the Islands
on Account of a very heavy N. W. Gale, consequently
we moved to that part of the Island, which lay
next to the Vessels, impatiently waiting for & expecting
a fair Wind, but were oblig'd to continue on y^e Island
till y^e 16th inst. The Captain of the Beaver felt
great uneasiness at seeing us so long in our Voyage,
but assured me, it was not his fault. He acknowledg'd
that he might have ventur'd with some of these Winds
for Gajanaya, if his Vessel loaded only with
Ballast &c. but he could not run a risk with
his present Cargoe, it being too valuable. I desired
him, not to be uneasy on our Acc't, as we left it
entirely to him to do as he thought best, indeed
both Capt^{ns} behaved surprisingly well to us, & took
great Delight in serving us & our Indians, and
especially the Needy. Since our Arrival here
they had catch'd daily a number of fish generally
from 70 to 80 a day, & on this Day they got 115,
of which they gave our Indians always a full
Share, which in the way of provision was a
great help, & as there were plenty of wild Onions,
potatoes & other eatable herbs on the Islands,

our Indians did pretty well. The fish, called
Black bass, are of an excellent quality, & certainly
equal to the Rock; they commonly weigh from 2-11 lb
a piece, & are to be had at these Islands from early
in the Spring till late in the Fall. This Evening
we were order'd in board, as there appeared a
likeliness of a fair Wind, but the old N.E. Wind
got in afresh, & that so severe, that we were oblig'd
to fall back again the morning to our former Station.
We then landed, & took possession again of our
Bark Cabins. At the Request of the Capt, I
first took Breakfast with him, & afterwards visit-
ed Captain Hatterie on board the Mackinaw.
It being Sunday, we had a Meeting towards Noon
& slept all night on Shore. The 8th & 9th all
day E & E.N.E. Winds, I reconitered the Island
more particular, & judg'd it to contain about
2500 Acres of Land. I observed a very remark-
able small Lake at a neck of the Island, which
is so neatly inclosed by banks from the Lake of
the East & that of the N.W. Side, that tho' the
Surf beats over it to so great a height it does
not overflow the bank so as to mix with this
Lake, & yet the bank is hardly 30 feet broad.
We aliding on Shore all Night some Raccoons
were catch'd with ~~our~~ traps. The 9th we were
again on Shore day and Night & the Captⁿ
of the Beaver dined with me. About 100

Bass were caught this afternoon by the Captains.
Wednesday of 10th agreeable to Capt. Underston's
invitation I dined with him & returned the compliment
with a Dish of Tea in the Evening on Shore.
At 2 o'clock in the Morning of the 11th the heavy
Weather we had had these 2 days past was
cleared away through Thunder & Lightning, &
the Wind appearing fair at day break, the Capt^s
sent for us to come on board immediately; but by
that time the Boat had made one Trip, there
was such an excessive Storm, that it was
impossible for any more of us to get on board
at this part of the Island, for which Reason
both Capt^s were busy in getting in Anchors, to
run round the point under the Lee; but the
Wind being right on Shore, & the Surf beating
almost to the top of the Beach, the Beaver
slept her Cable, got clear of the point & anchored
on the East Side about half a Mile distant from
Shore. We immediately repaired to that side,
fixed our Tents & built Bark Cabins in like
manner, as we had done on the West Side.
On the 12th the Capt^s being desirous of an mail
bance for the Vessels Use, it was made & launched,
an attempt was ^{also} made to get the Anchors
but the Boat could not weather the Swells.
This day the Captⁿ of the Mackinac caught
85 Bass under the Lee of the Island.

Saturday the 13th Captⁿ Understone sent for me to stay on board, while he would make an attempt to regain his Anchor, which he also luckily brought off, the Swells then running very high. The 14th we observed Clouds of Pigeons flying from the Southward to the Northward. We all were invited to a Dish of Tea in the Afternoon on Board the Beaver. D Leisberger, Edwards & Shetosh attended; & I took care of the Camp. In the Night the felicity Sloop, Captⁿ Ford arrived from Detroit & anchored in Put in Bay. 2 young Foxes were caught & made presents of to the Captⁿs. On the 15th we had contrary Winds again all Day, & in the afternoon it blew very severe. The Felicity ran across into Hopes Cove for Shelter. The 16th we had Rain with high Winds, which changed at 10 o'clock at night to the Westward. The felicity towed out of the Cove, & ran up close by the East part of the Island. She had a fair Wind for Niagara, Pussenger & a Chipeway Indian in chains on board. At 1 o'clock orders came to be in readiness to embark, the Wind turning more to the Southward. Fowls & pigs were put on board, first every thing got ready, & in great hopes of getting off at night, when suddenly at 9 o'clock a strong Breeze from the East set in, & the Vessels fell back to the West end of the Island again.

The 18th in hopes of a fair Wind, we all embarked again, but in vain. We slept on board, but went on Shore again in the morning of the 19th, which continued so that Day. The Captⁿ was all Night on Deck observing the Wind, at 3 o'clock called me up hoisted Sail with the Wind at Southwest just as he wished to have it & sailed 30 miles in very hard Rains. The Wind changed again at 9 o'clock to the Eastward, & there was no other Choice, but to run straight back again to the Island, where we arriv'd at 1 o'clock in the Afternoon almost all sick. We got immediately on Shore & refresh'd ourselves. Sunday 21st the same Wind with pretty cold Rains. All remained on Shore in the day time & some at Night. The Captain informed me of his intention of running across into Hopes Cove early next Morning, there being no prospect at present of a better change of Wind. On the 23^d the Captⁿ sent me Word early in the Morning for all to come on board immediately. Our people being encamped on the East End, it took some time to get ready; however about 9 o'clock we hoisted Sail, ran across & dropped down into the Cove. We encamped at the point, some went a hunting & killed a good many Pigeons. Rattlesnakes were also found plenty. The 24th I breakfasted with Capt Underston

I consulted with him, what to do on acct of our scarcity
of provisions. I divided my pork with him & his
people & supplied him with sugar &c. The weather the
same as yesterday. The 25th my little child, which
had been taken ill a few days ago, grew so bad, that
little hopes remained of its recovery. Rains from NE
the whole day made it very disagreeable for us in every
respect, some fish were however caught, & pigeons shot.
Friday of 26th the same as yesterday. A very large Elk
horn was found on the Island, denoting, that they were
here in former times. On the 27th The Captⁿ again
order'd all to be in readiness; towards the afternoon the
Wind changed to the Southward, but shifts again to
the Eastward in the afternoon, & hopes again vanish'd.
In the morning of y^e 28th we saw a sail running into
Port-in-Bay. Capt. Underston supposed it to be in search
of our vessels, sent off his boat to meet them, & they
arriv'd at 4 o'clock, & found it to be Mr Astin's Barge
sent out after us, to see what is become of the vessels,
they being out so long. He sent me 6 Bu of Corn, 200 lb
of flour & some Lard to be divided among the hungry
Indians, expecting it could not be otherwise, also offer'd
he send a Boat load of Provisions, if we stood in need of
it but the Beaver Sloop should return immediately to
Detroit the proprietors of her being impatiently waiting
for her at Michilimackinac. The other Sloop was to
make two trips with us to Gajaharip. I was much
harrass'd by the People of y^e Barge & Captⁿ of the Beaver

to write my Letters, their instructions charging them to return immediately, after knowing, what is become of the Vessels. I thanked Mr. Askin a 1000 times for his kindness, for indeed, he has done more for us & our Indians than was ever done before by any single person I ever acquainted him of our Result. That Capt. Gutterie should land us (except a few to take care of the Baggage) at Sandusky River, as soon as the Wind permits it being so much the night, & last of all to carry the Baggage to Gayakaya, & begged his approbation to my proposal. The Barge returned after 3rd hours stay, & both Vessels were immediately clear'd, the one to return, & the other to take the half of us on Board for Sandusky, whenever the Wind changed favourably. The Provisions sent me I divided between our hungry Indians. The Wind blew very fresh from the Eastward all day long, but veer'd a little towards Morning. The Beaver bound out of the Cove on the 29th before break of Day & sailed with an easterly Wind for Detroit, & at 4 was quite out of sight. A great number of Fishes called Rock Bass were catch'd to day by our Indians the same as was done since our arrival at the Cove. In the Evening D. Leisberg with upwards of 50 of our Indians went on board the Mackinac for Sandusky, but the Wind not proving favourable, they were obliged to lie at anchor all night at the West point of this Island however on the following Day they were seen working her across to Rocky point,

when they landed, & the Vessel returned again
Sheboosh, who saw them safe landed brought us
a Message from the Captain to repair to the West
end of the Islands by break of Day, if the Wind should
be anyways favourable, but the Captⁿ finding it impract-
icable to carry us across that Day, returned with great
difficulty on Wednesday the 31st into the Cove, however
June 1st the Wind not blowing near so fresh as the Day
before, we embarked at 7 o'clock in the Morning, went
under sail, & landed at 10 on the Main Shore below
Rucky Point, when the Vessel return'd again for the
Cove, with which Sheboosh was to go to Hajahajpa.
A Sail, which we had seen at Daybreak at a very
great distance to the Westward, we now plainly observed
to be one of the largest Kings Vessels, working upon
a tack for to get into Put in Bay. We also saw ^{the}
Mackinaw at about 4 miles distance hoist her Colours,
the Kings Vessel came in one of her tacks, within 2
Miles of the Shore opposite us, and afterwards bore
to the tack of the Mackinaw. Three of our Indian
Boatmen ventur'd this Morning across from the
Island in a large Bark Canoe, & arrived safe before
the Wind began to blow so hard. We all encamped
on a high Ground, almost opposite to a small Island,
which lies about 100 yards from the main Shore,
The Water not being past 2 foot deep between this
Island and the Shore, the Fish lay almost as
close upon one another as if they were shut up in

a pond, the Indians full soon in the space of a few
minutes upwards of 100. They were a very ~~very~~
excellent Fish in size of a Mackerell & look much
like a shad, only that they have blackish streaks
along their backs. In the afternoon we had a
heavy gust the Wind blowing from the Southward,
but as soon as it had pass'd over, the old E Wind
set in afresh. Friday 4th 2^o some of the Indian
families went of for Gajahaya by Land, but I
with the remainder waited here for a fair wind
or calm, so as to go with Bark Canoes along the shore.
Early in the morning of the 3^d we were much
rejoiced by Bohua's safe return from the Island
in a little Bark canoe, who was not ready when
we went under sail, & durst not venture over on
account of the rough sea. He informed us: that
the Vessel above mentioned was a frigate belonging
to the King from Detroit for Niagara. That Capt.
Gutterie had been to see him in Put in Bay, that Capt.
Comodore Grant (Mr. Atkins Uncle) was on board, & that
Mr. Atkins had desired the Comodore to tell us: that he
would not let us starve, but us be where we would
on the Lakes, if he could but find it out. Capt. Mc Gee
with Chiefs of different Nations & their Interpreters
were on board for Canada. In the morning we set out with our
Bark Canoes for Sandusky & Gajahaya, in Number 17.
In the evening of the foregoing Day the Wind had ceased
to blow, & we were in good hopes of making a good

Stretch this Day, but by the time we had been 2^{1/2} hours
off, the East Wind got in afresh, & the surf ran imme-
diately so high, that we were obliged & glad to run up
a Creek, at the back of which was a narrow long Lake,
where we lay secure from the wind, & seeing it im-
possible to go on further this Day, resolved to make a
large Bark Canoe in the Room of Joshua's small one.
In the mean time the Women & Children went in search
of Turtle Eggs, & brought in a great many. My little Child
had been a good deal better since the Day before yesterday,
but now she was seized with the Ague. Sunday the
11th being the Day of Pentecost, & about 11 in the morning
the bark Canoe was finished, launched & we got
under way. It being pretty moderate, we went
afterwards across a long point to the East Shore of
Sandusky Bay, but then the Wind setting in pretty
fresh again, we went into the little Lake up a long
point, about 11 miles, then took our Canoe across a
narrow beach, from whence we went on, and arrived
at Petquating (commonly called the Black water)
at 5 in the afternoon, where we met D. Leisberger
& all those which had gone by Land from Rocky point.
The thousands & millions of fish we had to pass
through at times, must not be forgotten; they were
so thick upon one another, even to the surface of
the water, that our Canoes were obliged to part them.
We being curious to know what kind of fish they
were, dropped a hook with a little Scarlet earth

to it, which they instantly took. Late in the evening
Thomas with his family arrived, and we were ^{now} all together.
We concluded in the evening to send a Messenger
off to Gajabaja, to inform those Gentlemen, Traders
from Fort Pitt, concerned with Mr Atkin, that the
Vessel they were waiting for, was detained at the
Islands by contrary Winds, informing them likewise
of our coming, wishing also that those of our Indians,
who had set off from Detroit with the horses for Gajabaja,
might know where we were, much more so, since a Report
was spread, that we were cast away & drown'd. For
that purpose Samuel (an Indian) went off on the 5th
with whom we sent our letters, and we likewise set
out in our Bark Canoes. At 11 o'clock we rested at a creek,
where the Rocks begin, and saw with astonishment the
Hocks of Stature on the Rocky Banks of this Shore.
We encamped at a Creek, & were at night almost
eaten up by the Mosquitoes. We also found the head
of a Man, supposing it to be a Chippewa dashed against
the Rocks in a Storm. In the morning of the 6th we
set out again. In the morning of the 7th we set
out again, since the Wind, that sprung up at Night,
had abated. At noon we stop'd by a large River,
until D Feistinger & those by Land came up, & then
concluded to rest that afternoon. Our Camp was
formed on a most pleasant high Bank on the
Edge of the Lake, & the wind having changed to
S.W., we soon saw the Mackinaw Sloop sailing

towards Gajahaya, at a distance of about 11 miles, & they likewise saw us encamped on the Banks. In the evening Samuel returned from Gajahaya, without meeting either White People or Indians there. The 7th early in the morning we set off again & had at times the Rocky Banks for miles together to pass by, but there being no wind at all, we were out of danger & encamped that afternoon at a large River on the Rocky Bank about 110 feet high & steep. This Day we were so fatigued by heat, hunger & weariness that we could hardly stand on our legs, when we got on shore. In the Night the Musquitoes preyed upon us, till at last a storm took them chiefly off. In this storm we were oblig'd to fly from our quarters, the trees bending down in such a manner, that we thought they would be torn up by the roots. The Lake had a dismal appearance, the Surf beating up to a great height. Here we concluded in the evening to leave our Bark canoes, & go by Land; but as the wind had abated & changed in our favour, we set out early in the morning. After we had sailed about half a mile the wind began to blow very fresh, but still in our favour. We pass'd that most dread full Rocky Bank, against which such a number of Col: Broadbent's men were dashed to pieces, together with their Boats and all they had. This stretch of Rocks is full 6, others say 8 miles in length 110 or 50 feet in depth &

stand near perpendicular. It seems indeed dreadful to pass by underneath, however we arrived safe at the end, at which I with my Wife & Child went on shore & walked the other five miles to the Mouth of Gajahaya, it being a low sandy Ground; & indeed, we were all sensible, that had we remained in the Canoe, she would have been cover'd & sunk by the Breakers on the Bar at the Mouth of the River. We arrived there at 6 in the morning. The Captain of the Sloop, Edwards & Shebosh could not describe enough the danger, they were in, in getting into the River, & the former declared, he should never be catched here again with a Vessel. He told me: that after sounding, finding the shallowness of Water, & seeing the high Seas, and other difficulties, he was determin'd to sail back again with the people & Cargo on board, for, had the least wind sprung up, while out in the Lake, and unloading, the Vessel, which was too far into the Shore to get out again, would have been ~~immediately~~ ^{inevitably} dashed to pieces against the Shore & all lost. I thanked the Captain for the care he had taken of us & our Baggage, ever since we first embarked, & promised him assistance in getting out again. Towards Evening D Feisberg & the Indians arrived likewise by Land, and we encamped about half a mile up the River. Friday, the 9th we fetched our

Baggage from the Lake Shore, where it had been
landed. The Wind blowing from the off Shore
made a horrid prospect. The Captⁿ was much
concerned, whether he would ever be able to get
the Vessel out again. Saturday the 10th we set
to making Canoes. Thomas who was not able
to reach this River with his Bark Canoe, arrived
here by Land. Sunday the 11th early in
the morning it being pretty calm, we assisted
Capt Buttner in getting the Vessel out and saw
him soon after out of Danger.

