

Spring Family

# The Diaries of Dorthea Sophia Rector Spring Part 1

By Bobbi Schirado

*Diaries are special. This is even more true when they span a long period of time. Many individuals have written diaries for short periods of time, and then seem to either lose interest or lack the time to continue. Each of these personally written stories allows the reader to visualize the kind of life the person experienced, and the effects of geography, wars, weather, and other people's behavior on the author. Like a photograph, a diary snaps a picture of the moment and lets it live forever.*

*Collection 217, the Dora Spring Collection, located in the Grand Rapids Public Library Archives, is a very special and wonderful resource for Family Historians. It consists of diaries spanning the years 1867 through 1928. The diarist rarely missed a day and described life as it was lived. If your ancestor lived in or around Benton, Yates County, New York before 1879, or in the Cannon Township - Rockford area of Kent County, Michigan, from 1879 - 1928, you have an unparalleled view of life as it was by reading the diaries of Dorthea Sophia Rector Spring.*

Dorthea Sophia Rector was born 22 November 1852 in Yates County, New York. Her parents were Jeremiah Rector and Artemisa Shaw Rector. In 1879, she married Albert Spring and moved to Michigan. In 1867, when she was 14, she began writing in a diary. She continued writing for 62 years.

Each of the diaries covers one year. They are about three to four inches in width and five to six inches in height, and three-fourths to one inch thick. In general, there is about a one inch space for each day of the year for the writer to use. Some days have only a line or two, while other entries are longer and cover more than one day's allotted space.

Within the collection, there are also some photographs of family members, and 46 letters. There are twelve letters dated during 1874 and 1875 between Dora and her brother Miner in Michigan and several friends and other family members in Yates County, New York.

The majority of the letters are to or from Albert Spring. Dora calls him "Spring," and these letters illustrate how their relationship grows. In the letters between July and October 1878, they cement their commitment to one another.

The collection also includes a number of items of ephemera. Scraps of cloth, invoices, bills, lists of day-to-day needs, membership cards for various organizations, obituaries, etc. help researchers to gain a more clear and visual understanding of life at the end of the Nineteenth and the beginning of the Twentieth Centuries.

From the beginning, Dora lists the marriages and deaths of individuals living near her home. Until 1879, these vital statistics occur in New York. Following her marriage to Albert Spring, she continues this tradition after moving first to Cannon Township and then to the Village of Rockford in Kent County, Michigan.

Many of the earliest entries denote an individual by using only, "Mr. or Mrs." This is understandable as she is only a young teenager. Later, she is more specific and provides genealogists with a resource for vital statistics before the state of New York officially collected that information.

Like any source, the information must be evaluated, and used carefully. The next several pages list a transcription of the vital statistics of Yates County, New York as written by Dora Rector during the years from 1867 -1878. Subsequent issues of *Michigana*. will continue with those vital records Dora listed while living in Michigan.



# Vital Records as Reported by Dora

## 1867

Inside the front cover she lists her family"

Jerimiah Rector  
Artamissa Rector  
Dorothea Rector  
Miner Rector  
George Rector

In the back:

Rob Briggs married Gusta Best February 27

## 1868 (No notes)

## 1869

On the inside cover is written, "Dora S. Rector, Benton."

*Married:*

Caa L?F??inger amd Sara Liars, February 18  
Barred Boyd and Jermy Briggs, March 18  
Leaut. Becker and Mary Crysler, June 11  
Brad Crank and Adella Hatch, August 25  
James Carroll and Rhoda Weed, Setptember 14  
George Hobart and Add Davis, September 28  
Dan Loles? and Mary Wren/Wurn, Oct. 5  
James Smith and Sarah Bushnell, November 10  
Will Merafield and Josy Merchant, November 10  
Pratt Prichard and Gusty Loles, November 9  
Isac Lovejoy and Net Earley, October 17  
Henry Stape and Katy Hall, November 18  
Phil Kaler and Hellen Briggs, December 14  
Henry Ethery and Hal Gonng, December 16  
Bill Rector adn Ell Davis, March 12  
Mr. Spink and Julia Wheet, December 11  
Stephen Brigg and Mary Hart, December 21  
George Church and Dell Winans, December 22

*Deaths:*

Mrs. James Carroll, January 14  
Mary Palimalur, January 27  
Ben Joy, February 17  
Bill Exil, February 18  
Bill Hall, February 28  
George Carroll, March 18  
Mrs. Mc Gan, May 13  
Percila Briggs, June 16  
Mary Zeld, June 19  
Jo Church, July 16

Ben Andrus, August 29  
Cordelia Secor, October 5  
Dr. Potter, December 2  
1870

*Married:*

James Taylor and Hatty Hunt, January 5  
Peleg Briggs and Mary Sands, January 19  
Jo Hamm and Whip Newlyn, January 4  
Frank Feagles and Net Race, February 15  
??mde and Nack and Mrs. K Rich, Februrary 13  
James Robinson and Addy Johnson, March 15  
Rob Briggs and Jo Simons, April 20  
Jim Pechms and Janet Hopkins, April 6  
Mr. Tears and Mary Collins, June 15  
Seth Briggs and Mrs. Anderson, November 22

*Deaths:*

Hadley Brown, January 20  
James Jennings, February 6  
Mr. Coleman, March 14  
Mrs. Gordon, March 19  
Emma Scamk, March 18  
Hannah Rector, March 23  
Rily Briggs, March 17  
Mrs. Larnport, April 12  
Emory Finger, April 28  
Esther Girl, September 30  
Mr. Brown, October 2  
Miss Grand, October 2  
Christin Crank, October 7  
John Ham, December 4  
Mr. Dornes, Novemb er 22  
Charles Honse, December 11

1871

*Marriages:*

Jacob Lovejoy and Cedelia Godfrey, January 12  
Emra Moon and Sarah Williams, February 2  
Mr. Clalman and Kati Laars, Februrary 14  
Mr. Dinehart and Agnes Slocum, August 20  
Wes Bulser and Sal Best, November 15  
Mr. Glands and Mrs. Mathus, December 21

*Deaths:*

Wilson Bagerelins, January 14  
Nora Emberwood, January 20  
Mrs. Hamond, Gebruary 9  
Mrs. Coats, February 10  
Kiltia Owens, March 7  
Sarah Rector, April 17  
Mr. Kirkham, August 23  
Mr. Clark, August 23  
Mrs. Suten, August 23  
Mrs. Secor, August 15  
Mrs. Henderson, August 14

Josh Belnap, October 22  
Mrs. St. John, October 27  
Josy Mc Calssime, October 27  
Mr. Hopkins, March 22  
Mc Alpines Baby, August 25  
Mr. Jewel, September 1  
Spierde, September 4  
Sam Chisam, September 23  
Mr. Barden, no date  
Mr. Srurbrong, no date  
Mr. Barrell, no date

1872

Marriages:

Miss Sherman and Mr. Wyman, January 24  
Miss Demond and Mr. Armstrong, January 24  
Mrs. Harriet Clark and Albert Rector, May 23  
Mary House and Myron Randall, June 16  
Albert Finger and Hannah Tears, June 16  
Bill Hart and Caroline Rector, July 8  
Ezra Mathews and Clara Davis, July 9  
Vaughn Briggs and Delia Harding, August 25  
George Wells and Bertha Ham, October 6  
Charley Shaw and Melissa Porter, October 12  
Frank Smith and Miss Hopkins, November 24  
Frank Clark and Mary Vaneoy, November 25  
Granger Gage and Em Edmond, November 26  
Tom Davis and Sate Best, November 27  
Frank Coe and Eva Mariner, December 25  
Hank Hoem and Mary Wingard, December  
Dell Wheat and Lincy Soles, December

Deaths:

Bill Potts, January 4  
Mr. Wyand, January 5  
Mr. Conley, January 8  
Mrs. Crane, February 2  
Stephe Davis, February 17  
Mrs. Crosier, February 10  
Mrs. Farmer, February 23  
John Hall, March 1  
Mrs. Wily, March 30  
Henry Sair, April 1  
Willy Cotter, April 5  
John Underwood, May 7  
Mr. Baker, May 22  
Alice Dickinson, May 24  
Coon Rector, June 16  
Mr. Lambert, June 27  
Granny Finger, May 10  
Mrs. Conley, July 16  
Wordan Wheeler, July 23  
Mrs. Daniel Tears, August 9  
Carry's baby, August 12  
Lecta Torrmann, August 16  
Mrs. Tom Wells, September ?

Whimiple, Waxman, September 3  
Mrs. Malory, October 7  
Jeany Waters, November 20  
Mrs. Beers, November 25

1973

Marriages:

Ione Peckens, and Mr. Loekwood, October 21  
Mary Wheeler and Ed Baker, November 6  
Ruba Finger and Orison Potter, July 4  
Miss Pruner and Byron Reed, October 2  
Mrs. Agard and N. N. Beers, November 12  
Hannah Rector and Mr. Barker, October 14  
Clarisa Warner and Sid Landlow, November 12 or 13  
Emma Hulbert and Elder Malory, December 9  
Mary Loyd and Ben Arlold, December 16

Deaths:

Mrs. Warner, February 11  
Mrs. Potts, April 7  
Mrs. Groves, April 13  
Mr. Gands/Gunds, May 22 or 23  
Little Danish Girl, June 15  
Garrett Cronk, October 5  
Mr. Sprague, October 9  
Baltis Wheeler, October 21  
Mrs. Wright, October 26  
Armstrong boy, December 10  
Mr. Morgan, December 3  
Lezza Tayton, December 22

1874

Married:

Philetus Wright and Lizzie Spink, January 15  
Will Davis and Alice Baird, January 29  
George Ingraham and Em Underwood, March 25  
Will Hopkins and Ann Tears, August 7  
Mate Boles and Willis Gillet, September 24  
Emma Thomas and John Watkins, September 20  
Madison Rector and Lewey Finger, July 4

Deaths:

Mary Ann Carroll, January 7  
Ralf Taylor, January 16  
Alberts baby, February 22  
Mary Hoose/House, February 27  
George Shepherd, February 27  
Alva Taylor, February 28  
Betsey Cory, April 3  
James Peckins, April 10  
Mrs. Youngs, April 3  
Mrs. Cady, August 20,  
Ned Carroll, November 3  
Davis baby, November 14  
Smith baby, November 20  
Zacariah Scott, December 19

1875

Marriages:

Smith Lovejoy and Kate Willsby, January or February  
Criss Beregrluner and Jan Knap, March 11  
George Haight and Addie Stamp, December 21  
Andrew Bain and Vina Andrews, December 22  
Mary Bromely and Will Rector, January 3  
Sarah House and George Tompson, January 9?  
Libbie Rector and Dore Ban (Bain?), February 10  
Emma Armstrong and Frank Crozier, August 5  
John Haines and Lizzie Robbins, March 1  
Seward Briggs and Jane Carroll, December 29

Deaths:

Lizzie Haines, September 30  
Mrs. Crozier, July 29  
Mrs. Z. Gardener, October 10  
Harriet Simons (No Date)  
Mrs. Bain (No Date)  
Mrs. Tears, February 7  
Lilly Spring, February 9  
Mr. Lame, December 17

1876

Marriages:

Lilly Edmonds and John Gardner, January 11  
Anna Carroll and Myron Bennett, February 1  
Emma Carroll and Lloyd Sample, February 1  
Oda Bennett and M. C. Leary, February 1  
Clara St. John and Frank Reed, July 19  
Miss Blood and Will Jennings, December 20  
George Romane and Molly Finger, November 2

Deaths:

Emma Wells, January 13  
Mrs. Townsend, January 20  
Mrs. John L. Lewis, January 23  
John Hoose, February 20  
Mrs. Bennett, February 17  
Mr. Reed, April 22  
Mrs. Ridsen, April 22  
Frank Tears, March 30  
Mr. Sutton, May 15  
John Stamp, June 24  
William Simons, October 13  
John Trusdell, October 20,  
William Rector, June 25  
Mrs. J. Wright, December 13

1877

Married:

Annie Newell and Sam Finger, January 17  
John Leneas and Mary Jacobus, February 12  
John Lawrence and Libbie Lamport, October 17  
Gars Stryker and Hannah Sanderson, August 11

John Boyd and Annie Spring, October 24

Will Percell and Libbie Tears, November 15

Emmett Havens and Georganna Towner, November 8

Henry Turner and Grace Carroll, December 19

Sam Wheeler and Jane Halstead, December 6

Frank Pinneo and Mary Stryker, December 31

Charles Burton and Louisa Ball, December 17

Henry Semans and Chairt Cronk, October 3

Deaths:

Ida Vanorden, January 23  
Zacariah Coons, March 2  
Mrs. Sam Wheeler, March 24  
Esther Hoose, March 15  
John Mc Evoy, April 12  
Mrs. Crane, May 13  
Rose Finger, June 13  
Emma Gage, October 31  
Jacob Watson, November 12  
John Moxcey, December 27  
Cester Chisom, February 2

1878

Married:

Elizabeth Jones and Charles Boots, January 1  
Elizabeth Race and Uatton/Watton, January 30  
Fred Benedict and Tilla Grmard, January 9  
George Ham and Add Newlin, January 12  
Jerome Rector and Lorinda Smith, March 31  
Sarah Miller and Dave Sirson, October 23  
Sarah James and Byron Briggs, August  
Frankie Scofield and Russell Chapman, November 27  
Mary Jones and Lewis Smith, December 15

Deaths:

Grandmother Shaw, January 25  
Garett Marten, March 27  
Andrew Mc Alpine, January 17  
Sally Finger, May 9  
Euha Crozier, April 30  
Will Manby, August 11  
Carl Goodma, August 22  
Mrs. Geo Deen, June 10  
James Parson, June 10  
Vina Bain, September 18  
Sarah Mc Can, October 28  
Blicker Miles, October 18  
George Spencer, October 19  
Peter Oliver, October 16  
Jane Willis, March 24



# The Diaries of Dorthea Sophia Rector Spring

## Part 2

*By Bobbi Schiado*

*Diaries are special. This is even more true when they span a long period of time. Many individuals have written diaries for short periods of time, and then seem to either lose interest or lack the time to continue. Each of these personally written stories allows the reader to visualize the kind of life the person experienced, and the effects of geography, wars, weather, and other people's behavior on the author. Like a photograph, a diary snaps a picture of the moment and lets it live forever.*

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*From 1880 -1885, Dora continued to list marriages and deaths in the back of her diaries. She and Spring lived in Cannon Township, Kent County, Michigan. Vital records from Yates County, New York, were presented in the August/September issue of Michigana. The vital records she listed and that are transcribed below using Dora's spelling, may be those of one of your ancestors.*

**1879**

### **Marriages**

John Meris and Pearlee Felt - January 1  
John Ornsis and Nelly Bradley - January 1  
George French and Della Spring - December 10  
Henry Kitchen and Mariah Willis - December 11  
Morton Weller to Eliza Kitson - February 15  
Fred Carolle to Lucind Davis - February  
Frank Saunders to Saracense Holden - November 15  
Frank Henry to Martha Bailey - November 25  
Charley Cornell to Abby - April  
Charly Fort to Ione Swick - May  
Charley Haines and Alice Thorfret - April 2  
Charley Mills and Lizza Peak - December 3

### **Deaths**

Mrs. Mike Carl - January 7  
William Taylor - January 22  
Aunt Betsey Carroll - March  
Mercy Briggs - May 15

**1880**

### **Marriages**

Jack Grey to Lessa Evens - January 1  
Fred Provin to Leona Blodgett - March 8  
Mr. Moffit and Mrs. Willett - March 21  
Mr. Harrington and Ida Shaw - March 28  
Ella Hunting and Mr. Egelston - July 3  
George Tuttl and Em Rinehart - July 5

**1881**

### **Marriages**

Mr. Ferry and Mrs. Judson - March  
Frank Fisher and Hat Haines - August 14  
Frank Leacy and Minne Thomas - July 4  
Dave Young and Elly Church - July 4  
Mr. Nerbnt and Mrs. Thomas - July 4  
Mart Schench and Anna Whitney - December 14  
George Hartwell and Anna Armstrong - October 25  
Frank Fisher and Hat Hanes - August 15



Deaths

Willis Henry - March 13  
Milton Hines - September 2  
Fulkerson baby - August 28  
Edmund Perry - September 16  
Zell Ambal - September 21  
President Garfield - September 19

1882

Marriages

James Thomas and Mrs. Cromer - April 2  
(66 years and her 4th husband)  
Charles Judson and Clara Armstrong - April 13  
Willis Spring and Frane Marsh - March 5  
Lue Carvan and Sarah Haines - September 10  
Howard Chamberlan and Retta Judson - April 29

Deaths

Mrs. Chamberlain - March 13  
Mr. Chapman - March 25  
Mr. Deck - April 10  
Mr. Wellbrook - April 9  
Mr. Salsberry - April 8  
Alice Haines - May 23  
Wm. Young - September 13  
Alfaretta Briggs - September 26

1883

Marriages

Willis Young and Flora Jones - March 19

Deaths

Ella Eggleston - March 3  
Mother Spring - March 13  
Charley Haines - March 17  
Mrs. Sid Willis - March 22  
Mrs. Bush - March 27  
Mrs. Ackley - March 29

In 1884, Dora and Albert Spring had a daughter they named Katherine. Dora writes, "Baby Kate born September 16 in the afternoon, half past 3."

No where in any of the entries for 1884 does Dora mention she is pregnant. Only the above note indicates she gave birth. Katherine is the only child they will have.

No other vital records are mentioned in the back of the diaries for 1884 or 1885. Apparently, Kate took up much more of Dora's time.

To be Continued in the February / March 2006 issue of *Michigan*.

Rockwell Letters, Ontintued from Page 148

We got our pay this morning, fifty-Six dollars. I will send forty in this letter and it may reach you in safety. We may go into a fight soon and I dont feel safe to carry it in my pocket. I may be wounded and fall into the hands of the enemy and loose it. You do with it as you see fit but I think I would keep it till after the sale of that land and see how that comes out.

I shall rite again soon, so good by for this time from your af-fectionate Husband in the service of our Country to his dear Family in Michigan

Wm H Rockwell

I will send twenty Dollars this time for I am afraid it will be lost and more tomorrow. Captain Dutcher is going to Washington in a few days but I think is as safe to send it by letter. I will try 20 in this and maybe I will send the rest by express. Write often and I will do the best I can. Give my love to all

Wm H Rockwell

