

INTRODUCTION
DIARY OF HANNAH SIMPSON - 1861

Hannah Simpson Spencer (born in 1838) was graduated from Alfred University in 1864 and was honored by the Kanisteo Valley chapter of the DAR with a "Women in American History" award in 2016 and inducted into the Steuben County (NY) Hall of Fame in 2017. The Alfred University Archives is fortunate to own one of Hannah's diaries, written while she was a student at the university. She used her diary as both record keeper and confidante, regaling it with daily minutiae and heartfelt emotions alike. Hannah's writing is an entertaining window into the life of a young college woman finding her way.

After first teaching in public schools, Hannah entered Alfred University at age twenty-three. Her obituary gives insight into Hannah's life after college as she joined other AU alumnae in forging a path into disciplines generally regarded as suitable only for men. "During her college course she broke in health and as the result of an extended course in sanatorium treatment, she became interested in the study of medicine. After a two year medical course and special courses at the eye and ear infirmary in New York City, lectures in surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, she was entitled to a license for the practice of medicine."

As was typical of women of her time, she married and raised a family of six children. Her obituary continued by saying "After her children were out of arms she opened a small sanatorium at her home [in Jasper, NY]. She was successful in the use of electricity, baths, rest and carefully regulated habits of living, which are more commonly practiced by the regular medical profession than they were at that time. Her health, however, never allowed her to develop a large practice and after a few years she was obliged to give up this line of work entirely. She was always interested in forward moral and religious movements. She was from girlhood an ardent abolitionist. For twenty-eight years she was the head of the Woman's Missionary society of the Canisteo River Baptist Association and for over twenty years she was the president of the Jasper Woman's Christian Temperance Union. When nearly seventy she organized a scout troop in Jasper and it was a success for quite a time." Hannah Simpson Spencer died in 1929.

HANNAH SIMPSON DIARY TRANSCRIPTION

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1861

At Alfred this morning found in my shoe a New Year present. – Small reticule. No school today. Listened at Chapel to a stirring speech by Prof. Maxson. This eve. attended Alleghanian's public session. Day not very profitable.

WEDNESDAY 2

Very tired and sleepy on account of sitting up until four o'clock this morning. Worked three hours in the office – attended prayer-meeting. Otherwise the day has not borne away a fair record.

THURSDAY 3

To-day I have not been thorough in my lessons. At night went to the Crandall's. Met Whiting. Sung. Sister, Frank & baby came to-night. This day has not fled unblemished. I am not decided as I should be.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1861

Did not attend classes, but just visited. At night having an excuse from Prof. Kenyon, called on Mr. Whiting to invite him to take a ride to Hornellsville next morning. He called in answering he would.

SATURDAY 5

Awakened about two by Frank, and about three we started for the cars. The moon was just rising and the whole scene was beautiful. We enjoyed the ride very much, but just as we reached the stations we saw the train leaving five minutes too late. Whiting went home and we came back.

SUNDAY 6

Arose late – Sister did not wish to go to Church so I staid at home. About three, we again started for Hornellsville with Sister. Left them there about 6 and came home. Had a nice ride. Whiting was gay and we almost partook of the ____ spirit.

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 1861

Not feeling very well. Poor lessons. But the day amounted to more than some its predecessors. Miss Brownell told to day that it was untrue that William was wooing Miss Maxson, but it did not affect. I think that I am fast growing sour. Father keep me in thy own way

TUESDAY 8

To-night I feel weary and very weak. Less strong than I supposed. My faith in what Miss. B. told me yesternoon is already gone – almost – gone, and still there is a trembling, delusive hope. When that is gone much of faith and sunlight will I fear die out of this weak, worthless heart.

WEDNESDAY 9

Fair lessons. Public exercises. Letter from Minnie. Call at Mr. Crandall's. Whiting there. Nice time. Call at Kate Taylor's. Mary Coon's. Mrs. Livermore's. 6 o'clock prayer-meeting. Rich poem "Golden Calf" by Rev. J. Pierpont. __ paid; __ __.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1861

Passable recitations. Attended the reading of another poem by Rev. Pierpont, Subject Slavery. After the gathering dispersed Sis and I went to Mr. C's. Whiting was there. He seems much like a brother. Came back and wrote to Minnie.

FRIDAY 11

Passed pleasantly. Spent the early part of the evening at Mr. Crandall's in company with Cousin Verna and Whiting. Verna played on the piano. The execution was very fine. Shall I ever do as well in any pursuit?

SATURDAY 12

To day I was vexed at Miss Lamson for being so untidy. Washed and did most of our room work. Attended Society. Have resolved never to engage to room with anyone again with whom I am not acquainted.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 1861

This has been a pretty good day, only I've yielded to the tempter. Lecture by Prof. Sayles in the morning. Good - Bible class, prayer meeting. A blessed one in the evening. I want to be more strictly honest with myself, the world & God.

MONDAY 14

This day has been more a success than most days of mine this term. But even this has been full of failures. To-night listened to Ralph Waldo Emerson. Theme the Classes of Men.

TUESDAY 15

This morn. helped Miss Brownell start for Troupsburg. Where of course she will see ----. To-night received a letter from Diana. How I do wish that I could see her. I could tell her what now is wrapped in its shroud and laid away. But tis better to leave alone.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1861

Day full of blessings. Attended Prayer meeting. Night Sister sick. Miss Kenyon very kind. Gave Sis an alcohol sweat. Think that it will do her good. O God is so good. Help me to love Thee more. To night received a note from Annie.

THURSDAY 17

Sister not well enough to go out. She seems quite wearied out. I found it extremely difficult to fix my attention on lessons.

FRIDAY 18

Sister I think really no better although she tries to be. This morning took her down to Mr. Crandall's. I went down to sleep with her.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1861

Came home this morning and went to work. After Chapel Verna came to ask me to go out for a ride. Mr. Benjamin was the driver. I sat on the seat between him and Whiting. Went to Almond. Had a fine time.

SUNDAY 20

Did not hear the first bell so we did not attend church. Came down to see Sister. Found her no better. Cousin Verna said that she would give me piano lessons. Gave Sophy a sweat. Staid at Mr. C's.

MONDAY 21

Sister no better. Wrote for someone to come after her. She came to our own room this morn.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1861

Began piano lessons to-day under Cousin Verna's instruction. Have permission from the faculty to do so. Sis no better. Mrs. Lamson & her son came.

WEDNESDAY 23

Sister very much the same. Received & accepted an invitation from Mr. Whiting to attend the ordination of Prof. Kenyon at Hartsville. We had a nice ride but the ordination was postponed. I have been a most uninteresting partner all day, but what of it?

THURSDAY 24

Sister no better. I am not doing much that is really elevating – am not thorough in what I do & seem almost devoid of real earnest thought. – Shall I ever arouse and again have high holy feelings?

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 1861

Sister no better, Cousins Henry and Jane came just at night. They spent most of the evening with us. It seems very little like the cousinly visits of olden time.

SATURDAY, 26

Verna came down for us to go out for a ride. Sister not strong enough. I went. Sat beside Whiting. The company were in fine spirits. Went to Almond, was invited to spend the evening with the rest at Verna's room. Went, but Bro. & Cousin Charlotte came and I came home.

SUNDAY 27

This morn Sister went home. Dearly loved one how can I spare her. Did not attend church. Not have read much – thought very much about W – thought some of writing to him but if the reports are true it is not best. Attended Bible class. At its close went home with Verna. Attended and enjoyed prayer meeting. Intend to accomplish more this week than I did last.

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 1861

Pleasant day! Full of blessings. I have accomplished more than during any day of late! I hope that I shall be decided and not yield the reins to sluggish inclinations. Have longed for soul communion with loved ones. Thy will not mine, O Lord.

TUESDAY 29

Passed with its own little experiences. Tonight listened to a lecture on the sufferings of the citizens of Kansas, by Maxwell Thorp of LeCompton. God is indeed very kind to me.

WEDNESDAY 30

Attended public exercise in composition. Spent the evening at Mary Coon's in company with Martha and Sarah Sanders. Have not done as much as I should to-day. When or am I never to become systematical.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1861

Received a letter from the loved ones at home telling me that Sister was not much worse for her ride. Evening attended a lecture by Fred Douglass. Theme, Life Picture. It was fine. Whiting went with Mrs. C. & I from Chapel. I was very rude & trifling.

SATURDAY 2

Cleaned the paint in our room & washed & baked. Thought very much about loved absent ones. If I could only make myself come just where I should be, close to Jesus' feet, these heartaches would be gone. Jesus help!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1861

Dreamy day! Attended Bible Class in the morn. Church at 3 P.M. P.M. in the evening, but the time was lived in the past & I became O so wild. Will I ever be strong? O this heart throbbing at the mere thought of a name and of one too who loves another.

MONDAY 4

Sweet day. Only too full of wild imaginings. Attended the funeral of a pair of little twin brothers. It was one of the most touchingly beautiful sights that I ever looked upon. So lovely and pure. Their little lives begun together now sleeping side by side in the satin coffin bed. God bless the sorrowing Mother.

TUESDAY 5

Attended the S.S. Convention. It was very interesting.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1861

Spent the evening at the church listening to Prof. Allen's essay on foreordination. It was fine but I was too tired to enjoy it.

THURSDAY 7

Went to practice music but Mrs. & Mr. Crandall insisted upon my going with them to Prof. Kenyon's ordination and I very willingly consented. I reach the Church at 11 P.M. and exercises began at ½ past. The Ordination was interesting.

FRIDAY 8

Felt very much as though there had been a tiresome holiday. School for me did not amount to much. Nor has it for the last week. Received letters from Sisters S.J. and Rebecca.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1861

Did a large washing & baked. Was very tired. Think sometimes that it does not pay for poor girls to try to develop their God-given powers of mind. But it does sometimes pay.

SUNDAY 10

Rose unrefreshed from my fitful slumber. With a pain in lungs & throat. Attended Church and Bible Class. But felt very much indisposed.

MONDAY 11

Arose later feeling no better than on the previous day. After the Chapel bell rang, Miss Godfrey came to tell me that Uncle Levi was at Nate Taylor's but was going soon. So I went down there. Uncle staid all day.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1861

The night was so dark and stormy that I remained sleeping with Miss Bartlett. Uncle started about 9 this A.M. We very much enjoyed our visit. He told me of the trouble between Ann & Charlie.

WEDNESDAY 13

Last night I was so bad that Mrs. Crandall persuaded me to stay there, so she doctored me. She was very kind. Mr. Crandall went up stairs to sleep so that I need not go into the cold. Some better to-day.

THURSDAY 14

Felt almost sick with my cold. Started for Chapel and slipped tearing my dress so that I had to come back. Spent the day fixing my gray gown. Received a present from Maxson Bros. of a neatly bound book, The _____.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1861

Cold no better. Sent a letter home. Engaged a room for next term at Mr. L. Maxson's. Talked with Whiting in Chapel about his letter from Minnie. To-night found at the Office a valentine mailed at Troupsburg. Can it be that rumor is all false?

SATURDAY 16

Not very well. Sewed on my dress. Mr. Whiting called & spent the evening. The hours passed very pleasantly. He is a fine fellow. I wish that I could be more interesting, Sensible, –

SUNDAY 17

There was a deep light snow so Prof. Kenyon excused me from Church. Read Miss Gilbert's Career & part of Aurora Leigh. O if I would only arouse and strengthen the powers sleeping within!

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1861

Nothing of particular importance has occurred. My cold is better, but my head is not yet clear.

TUESDAY 19

Not much accomplished. Tomorrow I must come upon the stage before a large audience & as yet I have made no preparation! I wish that I could be more systematic, more energetic.

WEDNESDAY 20

This morn. Prof. Allen spoke to us about keeping the regulations. Not because they were rules of this school but Life rules. Read on the stage. My piece was only an apology, and I almost broke down.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1861

This day has not borne away a very pleasant record. I am so impatient. Thought today I could see a slight improvement in my music.

SATURDAY 23

Began my Latin verb. Mr. Whiting spent the evening here. His company is agreeable, for he is the gentleman far more than I am the lady.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1861

Missed hearing the bell so was cheated of hearing Prof. Allen. It was a serious disappointment. Attended Bible Class and Prayer meeting.

MONDAY 25

Beautiful day.

TUESDAY 26

I feel so weary. If it is wrong I cannot but be glad that school closes in one week more. If permitted to be here next term I do hope that I shall accomplish more than I have this.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1861

Fine day. Spring seems to be fast approaching. I do not seem to be working to any purpose. Wish that I could arouse the lion within. S. Allen and Mr. Bowman expelled.

THURSDAY 28

Public lecture in the laboratory-Electricity, walked down with Whiting. He said that Mr. Prentice was coming as well as himself next term. Called on Mrs. Whitford and Mrs. Stone.

FRIDAY 1

Today finished reciting for the term. After tea Verna and Sophy called and we went walking. Were joined by Chloe & Amelia. Went down to the creek, were training of altering the water. Gents ____ and ____ had a pitcher bottle with _____ stones to water.

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1861

Wrote my verb plan. Was very tired. Willie Maxson called. At 5 I called at Sophy's room. Took tea then we walked strolled back along the creek. Verna & Sophy came after twilight and we were excused by Prof. K. and visited every literary event. Enjoyed it much.

SUNDAY 3

Went to Church. Listened to Rev. Wardner. Attended Bible Class & Prayer meeting – enjoyed it much. After ½ past I wrote to Diana.

MONDAY 4

Was examined in Latin & Chemistry. By invitation went to stay with Sophy. Found Buffrum and Whiting. Never more felt like turning. Nothing new...____ ____...

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1861

Staid at Sophy's until Chapel. Was examined in Mental Philosophy, a success. Received an invitation to eat oysters, did not accept. Attended Musical Rehearsal in the evening. Fine. Cousin Henry came & we visited.

WEDNESDAY 6

Packed for home. Left Alfred ½ past 10 in company with Verna, Henry, Whiting & others. The rest said goodbye & went east. I waited for the Western mail, H. Maxson on the cars. Mr. and Mrs. Griffin glad to see me.

THURSDAY 7

Had a real good visit and took the stage at two with the Genesee girls. We jolted along reaching Gen. at eight. Pa here but too late to go home so we stay at the hotel. tired-tired!

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1861

Started for home. Breakfasted with Libby Wright. Called at Uncle's Nils, John and Cameron's houses. Saw Grandma. Reached home before night. Everyone seemed glad to have me there again. God is very good.

SATURDAY 9

In the morning Adelmarr came down to visit us. Corwin called. Enjoyed the day very much.

SUNDAY 10

Spent the day at home.

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 1861

Corwin came and took me up to Mr. Simar's. Just before dark Cousins John & Charlotte & Sis Sarah came after me. Corwin went back with us and we had a pleasant evening.

TUESDAY 12

~~Sarah Sherwood came she helped me sew~~ Washed with the new compound. A success.

WEDNESDAY 13

Sarah Sherwood came. She helped me sew.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1861

Aunt Hannah & Cousin Charlotte came down on foot. We had a nice visit.

FRIDAY 15

Mrs.

WEDNESDAY 27

Awoke feeling very weary. but not sick. Worked all day. Mrs. E.P. Crandall called. In the evening we called on Miss Kenyon, Prof. Kenyon, at Prof. Allen's (Mira was there. She hurt me) & Miss Lamson's & Mrs. Whitford's.

THURSDAY 28

Attended Chapel. The warm greetings did my heart good. Whiting seems very cool. We went into classes. At even called at Mr. Coon's. Mary not at home. Met S. Sanders.

FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 1861

Went to Chapel and subscribed to the pledge. Shall need grace to help me keep it sacred. Entered classes. Messrs. Hill and Whiting called during the eve recess. W. said that Mr. Prentice left his compliments for me, but simply this is bitter food. Guide, O Lord!

SATURDAY 30

Sewed until time for Society. Diana did all of the work. Attended Society. On the way home called at Mr. Ira Crandall's. Mr. C. offered me a scholarship. God always provides. I ought to love Him more ardently.

SUNDAY 31

Beautiful day. Prof. Kenyon preached to us, the best discourse I ever heard him deliver. The organization of the Bible class was completed. Mr. Grove was our leader and I certainly could not pick a better.

MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1861

Went to classes. Recommenced classes in Music. Received my order from Mr. Crandall. Think that if I am not careful of each moment I shall fail to accomplish all that I have undertaken.

TUESDAY 2

Studied and recited. Baked bread. Settled my tuition. Practiced my full time on the piano and grew weary ere the shadows fell.

WEDNESDAY 3

Went through with the accustomed routine, of school life. At six p.m. attended prayer meeting at the Laboratory. Today surprised and wounded Diana with Whittings likeness, was very sorry.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1861

Studied, recited and practiced. In the evening we washed did not get through until about ten o'clock. Were very tired.

FRIDAY 5

Arose at 5 still feeling weary, day passed as usual. Eve recess we sugared off molasses given us by Mrs. Potter. Misses Copp and Deming called. D & I spent the evening in learning more of each other. Help O Lord to feel thy will be done.

SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 1861

Listened to a blessed sermon by Prof. Ford. Attended Bible C. Interesting. D. & I then visited the Silent City. Returned in the Blessed Holy Sabbath evening twilight just in time for Prayer meeting which was truly blest with the Spirit's presence.

MONDAY 8

Not feeling very energetic. Took the first preparatory to a lesson in Church music. Met with Com. On Progr. – for Annivers- at M.E. Coon's home. Adj.[adjourned] to meet tomorrow eve.

TUESDAY 9

Went to Mr. Coon's again. We partly made out the programme & adj. [adjourned]

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1861

Evening attended prayer meeting.

THURSDAY 11

Evening Mr. Whiting called but I left him & Dinah while I went to sit again with Com. Presume that neither of we three were sorry for the coincidence.

FRIDAY 12

Evening recess Diana & I went after flowers, found a respectable number.

SATURDAY APRIL 13, 1861

Baked – Sewed, wrote a Eulogy for Soc. Read it in the evening.

SUNDAY 14

Prof. Kenyon preached. Did not enjoy the day very well.

MONDAY 15

Studied recited, practiced & washed. Washed in a room once occupied by Mr. Prentice. Everything seems to make me think of him. Why should I think

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1861

Was an uncomfortable day – snowing – blowing and generally unpleasant,

WEDNESDAY 17

The snow was so deep & drifted that we did not go out to classes. Wrote our fables for composition division.

THURSDAY 18

Went to division. In the morning had a long talk with Whiting about a fusion session of the Athenaeum & Orophilian Societies for anniversary.

SATURDAY 20

Miss Chaplin called on Soc. business. Mr. Whiting called to talk about the fusion. Evening our Com. met a similar one from the Oros. We decided to fuse and made out the programme.

SUNDAY 21

The news came that the Capital was about to be attacked by Southern forces.

[pages for Monday, April 22 through Saturday, May 4 are blank]

SUNDAY 5 (MAY 1861)

J.W. Whiting's birthday. Was very tired but went to Church. Eld. Hull preached. Chum & I went for a walk. Sat by the brookside for a long while holding Dina's head & reading to her.

MONDAY 6

Stormy. Worked at a great disadvantage from being so weary with the trip of Sat. Met with the Anniversary Com. Whiting was informed of the exchange with Diana. Seemed surprised. Came to our room. She spent the eve. with Chum and I went away.

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1861

Studied, recited, practiced. Met with committees for the Literary Soc.'s to arrange for Anniversary. Heard that Uncle Levi was already in the army.

WEDNESDAY 8

Studied, practiced, recited. Mr. Whiting received a letter from Minnie enclosing one for me. He let me read the whole.

THURSDAY 9

Miss Hubbard came. I rece'd a letter from W. Opened & read it in Elocution class. Diana cautioned me about concealing my feelings. Misses Kenyon, Graves, Taylor and Jacobs called. D & I went walking. J.W. & D.C. came back. I spent the eve with them.

Tuesday 21 (May, 1861)

Studied – recited - practiced. Mr. Hill called. Very pleasant chat. Received a letter from Willy Prentice. He asks me to open my whole heart to him. Does not love me but wishes to know if I blame him.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 1861

Beautiful day. Commenced to answer W's letter. Sat by the brook in the moonlight, and then decided to do as he had asked me. Wrote till late.

THURSDAY 23

Staid from Chapel and classes that I might finish the letter. I did tell him all. Perhaps I ought not. Twas a painful task. Eve D. & I called at three places. Received a letter from Sarah & Mia.

FRIDAY 24

No school. Students gentlemen & ladies worked on the University grounds. Was very tired. The girls got supper for the boys. Did not help. Whiting & Hill spent the evening at our room.

SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1861

Last night dreamed of William. Do nearly every night now, joy to be known only dreaming. Met with Com. Whiting called this morn. Tonight went for a ride with Mr. Rogers, Verna and Diana. Today there has been in my heart a wild throbbing. O, so weak!

SUNDAY 26,

Attended Chapel, Bible Class, & Prayer meeting.

MONDAY 27

Received a letter from W. telling me that not all unsought. My soul went out. It gave me much joy, only the fear that I did not understand. Whiting called. I left them and spent an hour by the brook.

WEDNESDAY 29

Mailed a letter to W. asking if I rightly understood his last.

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1861

Received a letter from W. assuring me that I had not loved unsought, although his life would be alone. It brought me much joy. He spoke of our dropping the correspondence. Twas so sadning.

SATURDAY 1

We did up the work then went up on the hill to write. Wrote a piece but it will not do. Just as I was thinking of the closing sentence I saw Mr. Hill. He had been writing not more than two rods away. He came and we sat & talked for a long time.

SUNDAY 2

Went to church. Mr. Burdick preached. Wrote to Mr. ----- . Went to Bible class. It rained so that we did not attend Prayer meeting.

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 1861

Beautiful day. Heard of a battle in Virginia, North triumphant. Have not accomplished much and I am very weary. Sent a letter to W. I do so long to meet him once more. Shall I ever be noble!

TUESDAY 4

Recited in Latin, practiced one hour. Mrs. Crandall spoke about going to Whiting's home. Com. at one p.m. on Anniv. sentiments. Class went over on the railroad geologizing. Walked home. Messrs Pingley and Palmiter brought our baskets. Very tired.

WEDNESDAY 5

Attended classes and prayer meeting. Messrs. Hill and Whiting called. Miss N. Satterbee came to ask us to take tea with her tomorrow night. Day has amounted to but very little.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1861

Studied, recited, practiced, wrote a very little. At tea time Dina and I went to Miss Satterlee's. There was quite a company. I wearied of the small talk and actions. Tea was nice. Came home at 11. Boys left at twelve. Very tired.

FRIDAY 7

Washed in the afternoon in Mrs. Maxson's room. Did a large washing. Mrs. Crandall says that my purple lawn will do to wear on the stage. I wish that it would if it is old.

SATURDAY 8

Baked & ironed. Whiting was here the afternoon at work on theme paper. I got tea. It was simple but neat. Tried to get time to write some on my piece, but there was so much work. Bitter feelings will rise toward Whiting. Head ache.

SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 1861

Listened to another Rev. Burdick. A few of us staid after service to sing. After Bible class Diana and I went walking around by the sulphur spring to the old burial place. We gathered flowers and came back to prayer meeting.

MONDAY 10

Felt more interested in work. Whiting called with Anni. Com. [Anniversary Committee] At its close I went to meet the Com. on Sentiments. Took tea with Mrs. Crandall. Made a long call. Came back W. still here. Did not leave until the 9 o'clock bell.

TUESDAY 11

No school. Work on the grounds. Session of Soc. immediately after Chapel. Were soon invited to meet the Oros. Went – won the day. Eve party at Brick, Tableaux, Prof. Ford my principal attendant for the eve. Mr. Hill escort home. Boys left at half past 12. Pleasant evening

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1861

Little energy. Late hours bad for students. Old Mr. Nye presented me with his miniature. There is very much said about Whiting and I. People must be asleep. I feel that I am not using my powers to the extent that I should. Went to prayer meeting.

THURSDAY 13

Went upon the hill to write. Accomplished very little. Whiting came to write. Sent out a letter for Ira.

FRIDAY 14

Last night had a sweet serenade. N.W. and Mr. and Mrs. C. It was some like my first b'quet. Prof. Allen called at noon. O, he did us both so much good. Went to Verna's room to see Ira. Old Mr. Nye again offered me that dress and I took it. Think it no wrong.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1861

Very severe headache! Could write but little on my piece. Wrote to Nellie and Minnie. Vira went to the store with me. Bought a dress for the stage. W. here nearly all day until 11 at night.

SUNDAY 16

Prof. Allen spoke to us. Attended Bible class. Wrote to Emma King. Began a letter to William. Attended prayer meeting.

MONDAY 17

Finished and mailed the letter I had commenced. Busy preparing for examination.

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1861

Work as usual. Recitations for the term closed.

WEDNESDAY 19

Examinations began. Dina and I free for the whole day. Sewed the larger part of the time.

THURSDAY 20

Examined in Botany and Geology. Passed fairly. At six went to the church to rehearse. Prof. Allen met us. Miss Kenyon let me go home with S. Sanders.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 1861

Arose early & wrote a letter home telling them I thought best to stay part of vacation. Then wrote on my apos. [apostrophe] Never before worked so hard writing. At night walked home.

SATURDAY 22

Very busy, baked, sewed, & c. [cooked?] & c. [cleaned?] At evening went to the Brick to see their flag raised. Grew very tired so Whiting & I came home. Dina & Hill soon came. Boys staid very late.

SUNDAY 23

Listened to Eld. Wardner. Attended Bible class. Mr. N. B. Maxson called. While he was here the boys came with strawberries for us. Attended prayer meeting.

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1861

Attended Chapel for the last time. Session called at the Church directly after chapel. Staid to read my piece to Prof. Allen. Met Dina and Whiting on the walk. John [Whiting] urged us to go to his room. Went. He presented each with a book. Gold foil Dina's Tuppens Philosophy. Evening attended the session of the Literary & Alleganians. Some fine things. Rec'd a letter from William.

TUESDAY 25

Read my piece before Prof. Allen who said that it was first rate. Worked busily as possible. Was ready for Session in time. Did better on the stage than I had hoped. Had the attention of the audience. Cheers at the close. After Session Mira came and said I had done nobly, that my piece was one of the finest of our session. It did do me good. When I was on the way to lecture met Pa. He went with me. Chopin has a power that he knows how to wield.

WEDNESDAY 26

In serious trouble about going home. Pa had taken so much trouble and they were expecting me. But Pa thought it was best for us to stay. On the morn D. & I had our likeness taken for Whiting. At Chapel met R. Deams. Noble man ---- & Emma were there. The soldier boys received their diplomas with the rest of graduating class. Went with W. to see his sister and say good-bye.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1861

Last night Mr. Hill staid with me until the small hours. Very pleasant but I did wish him away. I was so sleepy and his society was just Cousin Ira came for us to go to Mr. Crandall's for breakfast. Went. Enjoyed it very much. Mr. Hill called before leaving town. He brought us each a book. Mine was Pollock's Course of Time, bade him good-bye.

FRIDAY 28

Wrote to William. Sent prog's. Mille Scull came & we went out Botanizing. Day passed very pleasantly. Commenced staying at Mr. Crandall's while they were gone to Genesee.

SATURDAY 29

Busy with work & flowers.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 1861

Had to oversee the work so it was no Sabbath. Did not seem like one. Mr. & Mrs. C. returned.

MONDAY 1

Prof. Allen came for us & we spent the greater part of the day at his home with flowers. Analyzed 20. Dark forebodings will protrude themselves tonight when I think of the meeting for which my soul has panted. Father help me to trust!

TUESDAY 2

Spent the day at Prof. Allen's. Took dinner there. Mira seemed more cordial. Analyzed 12 flowers. Time is very profitably used. Took tea with Mrs. Potter. Very tired.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 1861

Day at Prof. Allen's. Very busy with flowers.

THURSDAY 4

Helped fix off Prof. for Elmira. Did not do so very much at Botany. Mira talked to me of William. Can it be that he is to her more than friend?

FRIDAY 5

Milly went home. We ~~went after show~~ We were tired enough to rest.

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1861

Mr. & Mrs. Maxson gone so we washed and cleaned windows. Were very tired.

SUNDAY 7

Sweet day. We enjoyed it. Read and talked. Just before sunset we went out to eat strawberries. Dina went home while I staid to enjoy the sweet twilight.

MONDAY 8

Baked & ironed. Were very tired. Mr. Andrews called at evening. So did Mr. Potter. Prof. Sayles came and found them both. Married men are more respectable at home evenings.

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1861

Attended Chapel listened to another Rev. Burdick. Staid to sing. Went to Bible class, at its close Diana & I went to the Sulphur Spring and to the old graveyard. Gathered flowers. Back to prayer meeting.

WEDNESDAY 10

Blissful day. W. and J. came. I trembled very much when we met. but dear boy, he seemed so nearly as I would have chosen had the choice been mine. Never before so many little acts.

THURSDAY 11

Could not sleep for thinking. William called early to go and set type for his circulars. Went. Set it alone. Felt very sad most of the day. D. and I went out riding. W. and I came home. We had a long talk about ourselves. He assured me that Mira was no more to him than a friend. Dearest friend of mine! I thank thee, Father.

FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1861

Will. Came early for me to and finish the type. Part of it was set wrong. Looked very well struck off. Mira, W. and J. were here for dinner. I was hostess. When I came down from the office found Diving's Sketch Book on the table for me from William. After dinner W. staid while the rest went below. He said that I should have his miniature, than which but one earthly wish would be more precious. W. went home with Mira staid until almost time to go home. He came back and staid with me just a little while. I could not control myself enough to say much of that which was struggling for utterance. Twas a joy to sit near him for a few precious moments but he goes knowing very little of what is sapping my life. Would that I was strong. We are still to correspond. I am afraid that I gave little pleasure but I could not beat back the sadness. I am thankful to have looked on his face and listened to his dear voice once more. Is it my last?

SATURDAY 13

Sad! Sad day. Went to church at evening. Attended Mira's party with Mr. Jurford. Did not enjoy it much.

SUNDAY 14

Dreary date. No heart for anything. All seems drear & low. I am sensible of too little aim in my actions, but just drift along. I know that this will never seem the true womanhood for which I desire to strive. Have all day been listless brooding over past & future. Read a little, but not with a soul.

MONDAY, JULY 15, 1861

Practiced. Called on M. Coon. Bade Mr. Andrews good-bye. Mrs. Sweet gave me her rarest flowers. We went strawberrying. I felt more the folly of frittering away my life for a mere man who seems to hold as deep or even deeper feelings for others, or one at least. I'll never do it time and eternity are too choice. Believe that I have not been very well treated by -----.

TUESDAY 16

Served for Mrs. Crandall at night. Went to visit S. Saunders. From the hill top we saw a most glorious cloud scene. Got a slight wetting and I lost my roll of work. Found a hearty welcome.

WEDNESDAY 17

Helped Sarah make cheese then we roamed over woods and swamp. Found new specimens. (Botanical). Called at Mr. Barber's to look at shells. Harrison gave us his. Beautiful! Mr. S. & Sarah brought us home.

THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1861

Bought cloth to replace what I lost & made it into Florry's duster. Went to Mr. C's. to stay so as to help them off next morn. They both seemed to wish that there was room for me too. So did I!

FRIDAY 19

Had them started before six. Took us a long while to set things in order. We went to visit Hattie Smith in the afternoon. Enjoyed it very much. On our way home found Mr. Hill's miniature. Prized it more than I had expected. Mr. Hussey called.

SATURDAY 20

Tended flowers, practiced. Jimmy called. Patched gloves. Just before evening Mr. Groves came. Enjoyed the call. Like him better and better. His nature is fine. Should like to read with him.

SUNDAY, JULY 21, 1861

Last night had a fine serenade by __?__. Fine day! We read a while then went away to the wood. I rambled thinking of the past with its bright gleams the gray present & the shadowy future. Mira called. I enjoyed an earnest talk with her.

[pages for Monday, July 22 through Saturday, July 27 are blank]

SUNDAY 28 (JULY, 1861)

Not feeling at all well. Read some at evening. Myra called. Read me some of William's letter. Shewed me his miniature. I am sure that she loves him truly & think it not strange that he too should feel a no less deep regard for her. She has a wealth of heart – an affectionate genial talented nature, just as holy a one as he must like – need. Father: help me to be strong & meek! Oh! give me wisdom – strength.

[pages for Monday, July 29 through Saturday, August 24 are blank]

SUNDAY 25 (AUGUST, 1861)

Rather tired. Pa started for home. Thought would go back to the dear ones and bring the ____ but I arranged the room. Went to Bible class & prayer meeting. Very good. Received a letter from William. One like the friend I used to know & one from Emma King.

MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 1861

Partly regulated the room. Paid some old bills. Entered school. Sent a letter to Sister Reba. Attended Soc. Election. Read a few lines in Caesar.

TUESDAY 27

Studied a little. Entered classes with Caesar, C, Alg. B. Mental Philosophy. Fixed up my old hoop skirt – just as good as new. Weary -- weary.

WEDNESDAY 28

Met with classes. They are all very interesting. Eve. began a letter to W.R. To day Mrs. M. baked for me. I took care of the pickles.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 1861

Settled my tuition. Prof. Maxson told me to get an order for Scholarship. Went to Mr. West's after my shoes. Not fixed. Very tired & sleepy. Wrote to Dina.

FRIDAY 30

More successful in fixing my mind on my work. Decided to study logic. Bought a book of logic. Paid for shoe fixing. Have two shillings left.

SATURDAY 31

Spent the day doing housework. Attended Society in the evening.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1861

The last bell for Church rang just as I put on my bonnet so I staid at home. Mr. Thorp resigned and I was appointed teacher. Am afraid of an unprofitable looking over of recitations.

MONDAY 2

Passed nicely. I can now when not too tired fix my attention better than I could last term. Called on Mrs. Crandall. Found her sick. Staid a while. Called at Mrs. Baker's. She invited me to use her piano.

[pages for Tuesday, September 3 through Saturday, October 12 are blank]

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1861

Attended Chapel, Bible Class & Prayer meeting. Wrote some to my precious MaMa. I find constantly that I am very far from attaining life's great end.

MONDAY 14

Received a visit from Mrs. Livermore. Call from Ollie. Miss Wardner helped me in Alg. Received a letter from Uncle L. first rate & one from W.R. O so good.

TUESDAY 15

NOT very energetic. Received a letter from Sarah and a line from Ma. Went walking with Miss Irons. Studied in her room a while. Then went to Miss Wardner for help.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1861

Weary. Wrote to Mr. Burlingame with reference to engaging a school. Do not study with much zest.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1861 (written on Wednesday, Sept. 4 page)

Received letter from home. Corwin & Cousin Ann. Ann wrote to know if I would go into Camp. Sat up and wrote to Uncle L., Cousin Ann and William.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1861 (written on Thursday, Sept. 5 page)

Last night slept very little from being so much excited. Sent word to Uncle that if I had ready means I would not hesitate to give myself with my Brothers. I truly desire to be guided in this by He who knoweth all things.

[pages for Thursday, October 17 through Tuesday, December 31 are blank]

MEMORANDA

Jan.	9 th	Received a letter from Minnie
"	15 th	" a letter from Diana
"	16 th	" a note from A. Hubbard
"	21 st	" a monied letter from M. King
"	24 th	" a letter from home
Feb	8 th	Received a letter from S.J. & 1 from R.
"	"	" " from Dinah
"	16 th	" a Valentine. Beautiful!
"	25 th	" a letter from Sarah
"	29 th	" " "
"	"	" " Uncle Levi

MEMORANDA

of letters rec'd during Fall term.

Aug.	25	received letter from W.R. Prentice
"	"	" " Emma King
Sept.	6	letter from Minnie Reynolds
Sept.	8	" " W. R. Prentice
"	25	" " Uncle L. H. Kinney
"	28	" " W. R. Prentice
"	13	" " D. A. Cook
"	29	" " Nellie Ensign
"	6	" " " "
From Home, Received L.		
Oct.	12	Letter from S. E. Hill
Oct.	14	Received letters from Uncle Levi & W. R. Prentice
"	15	Sister Sarah
Oct.	25	Letters from Cousin Ann, Corwin, & Mia
Oct.	28	" " Mr. Burlingam
"	"	" " W. R. Prentice
"	31	" " Uncle L. H. Kinney
"	"	" " Wm. R. Prentice

MEMORANDA

Alfred Centre, Feb. 19th/61

Friend and classmates,

Our acquaintance though short has been pleasant to me, for I believe our friendship is founded on the love of Christ, as in him we are one, and may we thus remain.

S. E. Benjamin

CASH ACCOUNT. – JANUARY.

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Paid</u>
5 For repairing watch		\$1.25
8 5 sticks of braid, 2 pr. Of shoestrings		.40
9 Sister and I heard Pierpont's poem The Golden Calf		.50
10 Pierpont's Poem on Slavery		.30
14 Ralph Waldo Emerson		.50
16 Alcohol for sweating		.05
18 Bottle of Sassa-parilla for Sarah		1.00
21 Of Mr. King	6.00	
23 Pr. Gloves		.56
25 Crackers and rice		.21
26 Rec'd of Bro.	4.00	
29 To relieve Kansas		1.00

CASH ACCOUNT. – FEBRUARY.

22 2 sheets flat cap		.06
Bottle of ink		.05
27 Paper and envelopes		.29

CASH ACCOUNT. – MARCH.

5	For fixing brooch	.25
7	Fare to Friendship	.95
8	Saltpeter and Borax	.37
11	Stage to Ceres	.75

CASH ACCOUNT. – JUNE.

	From Pa on account	7.00
	From Mr. Crowley on note	5.00
	Charles Simpson on use of cow	1.00
		PAID OUT THE WHOLE

CASH ACCOUNT. – AUGUST.

24.	On Crowley's note by Mr. Learaber	10.00
	Borrowed of Pa	10.00
.50	For fixing watch	
26.	From Uncle Darins in provision on use of cow, on acc't	3.00
26.	Tenner, Crandall and C's	5.05
	Mrs. Crandall, use of piano	2.00
	Mr. Maxson book rent	2.45
	Prof. Kenyon acc't	2.00
	For postage stamps	.25
	For Caesar's Commentaries	1.00
	For broom	.25
	Mr. Potter for milk last term	2.00
29.	Spicer and Bur. on acc't	.38
	For Hickok's Men Phil.	1.25
	For White glue	.05

	On tuition, Incidentals, some repairing	1.82
30.	Logic	1.25

CASH ACCOUNT. – OCTOBER.

	On use of cow by Charles Simpson, per Pa	3.00
	For stamps, envelopes, pencil	.50
23.	From Pa on Charles' use of cow in full	1.00

HANNA SIMPSON DIARY: RELATED INFORMATION

William Reed Prentice - Referred to as "William" (Jan. 7 entry), "W"

Public School Principal, Elmira (AU Decennial Register)

Married LaMyra Maxson, AU Grad 1863 (sister of Abigail Allen)

Alfred University Archives Autograph Books' misc. entries:

To: W.D. Baldwin, 1863:

"Your Friend and well wisher, W.R. Prentice

Jasper, Steuben Co, "North Hall" W. Terrace 1861 & 2

To: Milton S. Babcock, approx. 1862:

"Friend Milton, I have just come into your room to wash. May others leave your presence purer than they entered it. Truly, W.R. Prentice Jasper, N.Y."

John W. Whiting Jr.

Alfred University Archives Autograph Books' entries:

-- Written to Wm. R. (Reiley) Potter, Alfred University student, Oct. 4th, 1858:

"Friend Riley, (*Riley is spelled Reiley in other entries)

Were it all of life to live: we would wish thee great length of days, much of worldly pleasure, and worldly gain: but since life is fraught with greater interests, that thy days be useful, thy life holy, and thy dying hour tranquil, is the sincere wish of thy Friend. J. W. Whiting, Jr. Howard, Nov. 8, 1858"

-- Written to W.D. Baldwin, Addison, New York:

"J.W. Whiting Jr. Howard, N.Y. July 2, 1862"

Sisters:

Sarah J. Simpson (Taylor) AU 59-60 matriculate

Mary Charlotte Simpson, AU 1871 Grad

Sophy (Jan. 20) "Sister"

(see MEMORANDUM for Feb 19, 1861 quote by S.E. [Simpson] Benjamin)

Rebecca (possible pet name, "Reba")

Miss Lamson (most likely referring to Abigail S. Lamson, 1856 matriculate)

S. Saunders – Sarah, from Alfred, New York; 1863 AU Graduate

Mira[Myra] ("she hurt me") LeMira (LaMyra)Adelia Maxson (Prentice, married name)1863 Alumni List

Rev. John Pierpont – "Golden Calf" and Slavery Poems (Jan 9 & 10 entries)

Ralph Waldo Emerson - "The Classes of Men" Lecture (Jan. 14 entry)

Maxwell Thorp of LeCompton, Kansas - "Sufferings of the citizens of Kansas" Lecture (Jan. 29 entry)

Frederick Douglass – "Life Picture" Lecture (Jan.31 entry)

AU Literary Societies: Alleg(h)anian Lyceum (Men's)

Athenaeum (Athenaeon) Lyceum (Women's)

Orophilian Lyceum (Men's)

Hannah's 1864 Commencement Address title: "Sacrifice"

Salt peter & Borax – 'new compound' to wash with – a success! (March 12 entry)

Aurora Leigh, by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1856) is an eponymous epic novel/poem. The poem is written in blank verse and encompasses nine books. (Feb. 17 entry)

Miss Gilbert's Career, book by Josiah Gilbert Holland 1860. (Feb. 17 entry)

The Course of Time, book by Robert Pollok, gift June 27, 1861

Wikipedia: *The Course of Time* is a ten-book poem in blank verse, first published in 1827. It was the last published and most famous work of Scottish poet Robert Pollok. The first edition of the poem sold 12,000 copies, and by its fourth edition it had sold 78,000 copies and become well known even in North America.

Tupper's Philosophy, gift book June 25, 1861 gold foil

Wikipedia: Tupper survives if at all as a second-rate, puffed up poet whose success was only possible in a literary market where "philistines" might be able to approve of his platitudes. However, he also survives as a worthy target for a better poet: Sir William Schwenk Gilbert in his *Bab Ballads*. In the poem *Ferdinando and Elvira, or, The Gentle Pieman*, Gilbert is describing how two lovers are trying to find out who has been putting mottos into "paper crackers" (a sort of 19th Century "fortune cookie"). Gilbert builds up to the following lines, eventually coming up with a spoof of Tupper's own style from *Proverbial Philosophy*:

"Tell me, Henry Wadsworth, Alfred, Poet Close, or Mister Tupper,
Do you write the bonbon mottoes my Elvira pulls at supper?"
"But Henry Wadsworth smiled, and said he had not had that honour;
And Alfred, too disclaimed the words that told so much upon her."
"Mister Martin Tupper, Poet Close, I beg of you inform us";
But my question seemed to throw them both into a rage enormous."
"Mister Close expressed a wish that he could only get anight to me.
And Mr. Martin Tupper sent the following reply to me:--"
"A fool is bent upon a twig, but wise men dread a bandit."
Which I think must have been clever, for I didn't understand it."

Alfred Academy and University Catalogs, Volume containing misc. years from 1843-1873:
1861 Graduates & Undergraduates lists with the students in the year the diary was written
1864 " " " " " Hannah graduated

The Alfred Student Alumni Notes:

February, 1878: '64. Hannah A. Simpson *Spencer* is residing in Jasper, N.Y.

May, 1878: '54. J.W. Whiting is Principal of the Canaseraga Union School.

Prof. W.R. Prentice has been taking a short vacation, and has again assumed charge of his classes. Mr. E.A. Higgins filled his place during his absence.

Alfred Sun:

Jan. 25, 1905 - Death of Mrs. Jennie Prentice, (second) wife of Capt. William R. Prentice

Feb. 1, 1905 - Capt. W.R. Prentice will make home with son, Frank M. Prentice, Hornellsville