



**University of Guelph  
Department of History**

**MA Thesis Defence**

**Student:** Madison Hendricks

**Date:** Monday, 19 December 2022

**Time:** 11:00am - 1:00pm

**Place:** Archival & Special Collections Reading Room - [Seminar Room](#) (McLaughlin Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) – **reservation required\*** - contact: Dr. Catharine Wilson at [cawilson@uoguelph.ca](mailto:cawilson@uoguelph.ca)

**From “Stray Thoughts, Wild Dreams, and Fancy Sketches” to a  
“Condensed, Comparative Record”: Roseltha Wolverton Goble’s  
Changing Relationship to Diary-Writing, 1857-1918**

**Abstract**

Roseltha Wolverton Goble (1835-1918), a farm woman in Oxford County, was a devoted diarist. In her diary collection, she preserved a detailed record of her life over six decades. Her eight diaries, written between 1857 and 1919, offer valuable insights into the evolution of her diary-writing practices. While analyses of rural women have primarily focused on how rural women conveyed identity through their actions, this study concerns itself with Roseltha’s interiority, examining how her relationship to her journals informed her evolving sense of self. By adjusting her writing habits to complement the changing rhythms and responsibilities incumbent on her as a rural farm woman, Roseltha integrated diary-writing into the fabric of her life as a young, adult, and mature woman. Through this approach, Roseltha struck a delicate balance between sense and sensibility, modifying her diaries’ format, tone, and style to continually re-establish journaling as an essential practice in her life amidst changing circumstances.

**Advisor:**

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