

JOURNAL

*of Mamie Murphy Lang
August 4, 1898*



*Traveling with
Charles and Lea McNeal
in a Covered Wagon from
Sartoria, Nebraska
to
Jamestown, Colorado*

Mamie Murphy Lang, daughter of Ewell S. and Amanda Goss Murphy was born November 25, 1872 at New Hampton, Missouri and departed this life at her home at Litchfield on June 18, 1952 at the age of 79 years, 6 months and 23 days. She spent her childhood and young womanhood in Missouri, coming to Litchfield with her parents at the age of 15. She attended public school in the Litchfield Public School, taught twelve years in the rural schools near Litchfield and one summer term in Colorado. She was married to George W. Lang on September 2, 1901 in Lincoln. Three sons were born to them: Byrel Murphy, Litchfield; James Ewell, Perry, Oklahoma; Errol Frances, deceased. She became a member of the Christian Church at Weatherford, Texas in 1900, transferring her membership to the Litchfield Christian Church in 1908. She was a charter member and was one of those instrumental in it's organization. She was an active member of the Eastern Star and always took keen interest in civic affairs. She had a sense of responsibility, a competent mind and an active hand. Her life was one of loyal devotion to her Lord and His Church, and to her family. Likewise, she always took an active interest in benevolent work. The hospitality of her home was a monument of memory which will receive the commendation the Scripture places upon this grace.



Mamie Murphy Lang
1872 - 1952

Thursday Eve.

We started this afternoon in our covered wagon. We are having our first taste of camp life, it is delightful. We have camped on the Loup River, cooked our supper on our little sheet iron stove and found it to be just the thing for traveling.

August 5

We started again this morning and have driven all day, stopping for dinner and resting until half past one. I gathered some locust thorns, they were so large and so pretty. I think I have a large share of them in my hands. We then started on our afternoon drive and were lucky enough to reach a farm house just as a severe rain storm overtook us, and we were compelled to flee for shelter, they seem to be very nice hospitable people and made us welcome, and right glad we were to be indoors when a few minutes after the rain came in a perfect flood, and while I am writing this, I can look out at the door and see the water standing all over the ground. (omission) towns but Miller and Sumner. I do not know when I shall get to mail any letters probably not untill I get to Gothenburg a day and a half's drive from here. I wonder what the home folks are doing tonight. The two young men are playing the violins

it is the finest music I have ever heard. I cannot write for listening I will have to stop writing, the music just thrills me. I don't think I ever heard such music.

August 6

We have camped for the night. We started about 8 o'clock this morning, the roads were rather bad, but we have traveled something over 30 miles, we had only about seven miles of rough roads that brought us to the valley and the roads were fine, we could see the smoke of Lexington but we did not pass through, this is a beautiful country just as level as a floor and such nice groves, they have irrigating here, but I notice such a lack of nice yards when they could have such lovely ones. We passed through Cozad this afternoon and I mailed my letters. Cozad is a lovely little town such lovely buildings. I've found some of the loveliest flowers and pressed them. One of them I think is called the Spider plant the other was Blue Bells, we have camped for the night at Willow Island. It is just a small place with a store a few dwelling houses and a Catholic Church, everything looks so nice. I hope the church bell will ring before we leave here it will make it seem more like home.

August 7

Today has been a beautiful Sabbath so cool and pleasant. We intended to camp all day, but failed to find a nice shady place, we could find plenty of groves but no water near them. We passed through Gothenburg at eleven o'clock and heard a man and his wife having rather a (omission)

August 8

hurt her. I did not like to come out but all earthly pleasures will come to an end, so we dressed our feet climbed into the wagon and started. We reached a nice shady grove this afternoon and have camped, have fixed our supper washed the dishes and have the beds fixed. Shortly after we camped the Lady of the house came out, she was such a queer looking little mortal. I think she is a German and aside from that she acted so queer, it was with difficulty we could understand her. She looked so queer her chin stuck out so far and her eyes went back so far and she had such a peculiar little cackle when she laughed. She gave us most of her family history. She asked Lea if I was all the child she had. (this is the second time I have been taken for Lea's daughter) it's a joke on Lea. she said she had twenty children and all but three lived close by. The

Platte bridge is only a short distance from where we have camped. This is fine grazing country, great herds of cattle roam over the plains, there is a ranch about half a mile from us. I can hear the sheep bleating, it sounds so home like. North Platte is about a mile from us, it looks beautiful from here, everything is so quiet, even the accustomed hum of the mosquitoes is silent. There are two young ladies in one of the wagons, we took a walk up to the bridge and around. They are from Box Butte County and are going to Iowa. They have lived in Box Butte County for 12 years and have raised only one crop.

August 9

We have stopped in North Platte and Charles has gone to get something and I will write a few lines, it is about 10 o'clock before we started this morning Lea and I went down to the Platte. It was perfectly dry, we picked up some stones from the bed of the river, and I found the most peculiar plant. I think it a species of cactus. I dug it up and put it in sand, am going to take it home with me. There is so much to look at I don't want to write. Charlie is going to get some fish hooks so we can go fishing. I will write more when we have camped for the night. We stayed in North Platte until almost noon then drove out North across the Platte (north Platte is between the forks of the Platte) and

camped but found on inquiry that we had gone to far North, so after eating our dinner we drove back and started West. We passed the Fair grounds, the buildings did not amount to much. The Womens Art Palace was quite pretty. Built of rough hewed stone, there was a stone statue of Buffalo Bill in the grounds. We passed on and soon came to Buffalo Bill's ranch (Ranch Farm it is called) I was just a little disappointed in it. His residence was built about a mile from the road. It was surrounded by large trees which completely hid it from view, so we could tell nothing about it, we could see (omission) to me who had never seen a mountain, and there was such a soft undescribable haze over everything. I think it must be "Indian Summer" We saw a snake by the roadside which I said in my haste was a rattle snake, but Charlie said not, and we left him coiled up, unmolested. We got out and examined a Prairie Dog town. The little fellows just barked and wagged their little tails, it was very amusing to watch them. I tried an experiment today at dinner which was interesting to me, feeding a grasshopper. It ate a large piece of onion. It was astonishing how it ate, the amount it could take in its mouth then it ate a piece of cracker, nibbling it like a person, they seemed to get more numerous as we proceeded. At last we came to a field that had been completely devastated by them it looked like a field of cane after it had been stripped not a blade was left. It looked dreadful, I could never have believed it had ?

not seen it. Crops do not look well at all, still the bluffs continued. I wanted to climb to the top of them but, they were too far away. It reminded me of the hymn written by Cardinal Newman (Frances Willard's favorite) "o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent still, Lead Thou, me on" I think this must be a healthy country, we met so many stout people this afternoon, one man was really so large that he took up the entire seat in the buggy. I never saw so large a man. We passed a large log schoolhouse. It had such a nice playground. On the schoolhouse in large black letters were the words. "No campers allowed in this schoolhouse", the next house was placarded "Pedlars positively forbidden to enter." We could find no nice camping place, but we met a man who told us Fremont's slough was not far off so we pulled for that. There were four wagons camped on the slough. It seemed to be just a branch of the Platte. (omission) barns which were nice and large. They must have at least a thousand acres fenced in, his tenants live near the road, on the fence were huge placards of he and his army of rough riders. He is to show on North Platte the third of September. I got out of the wagon and picked some alfalfa blossoms and seeds from off his ranch. I crept under the fence to get them and tore my dress, we did not drive far, camped at Hershey for the night and the mosquitoes are eating me up. There are nobs on my arms and face almost as large as eggs, if I don't get into the wagon soon they'll finish me. We strike the irrigation ditch every little while. We are

camping close to it tonight, that is, perhaps, the cause of the mosquitoes being so bad. We have passed some of the loouiest fields of alfalfa. It is so fragrant. We do not find such nice camping places now.

August 10

We did not any of us sleep much last night. We talked until midnight and I feel real sleepy tonight. The result of our late night was a late start this morning we have had our first sandy roads today. We passed through Sutherland, Dexter, Paxton and Korty and tonight I feel as if we were out of civilization. At Paxton one could look so far up the Platte and you could see nothing but sand, sand, sand. I could look at it and think of a mighty desert. I know we are having the most delightful weather. I lay in the wagon today looking out to the south where the hills were outlined against the blue sky and a fresh breeze blowing in upon me and felt as if there was nothing more I desired. Oh how I do enjoy this mode of travel. I mean to capture the first Gypsy I come in contact with so that I may always travel. We met a dashing cowboy this afternoon with his lariat rope and a wide sombrero, he looked the picture of an ideal western cowboy. We also passed several ranches but did not know the names. I have seen such beautiful flowers today, some that looked just like

small willows and had lovely pink bell shaped blossoms on, some cream star shaped flowers that both Lea and I raved over. Then Lea found a kind of moss which was so fragrant that after handling it your hands were scented with it. We have left the farming lands behind us, we came to one place where it looked as if there were hundreds of acres of sunflowers. I wonder if this is not the route Brigham Young took to Utah. I look over these hills and think what a change thirty years has made, when the savage whoop, and war cry of the Indians echoes over the hills and the buffalo roamed at will over the prairie but there have all been exterminated by the advancement of civilization. We have reached the hay flats just across the valley from us is a large tent and many horses where hay is being put up. It sounds cheerful to hear their hallooing and singing. I am sitting on the spring seat by the wagon. We have finished our supper, one can see so far across the flat it is a lovely picture. The sun is sinking behind the hills and my first day in Keith County is closing. Today we crossed the line between Lincoln and Keith. We were going to camp near a house tonight and Charlie had driven up and had gotten out and started to the house when a little old man came stalking out like a grim spectre. He looked so savage. I said now our time has come when Charlie asked if we could camp he said in gruff tones, "No cannot camp here", but he talked to Charlie and seemed to unbend after a little and told us where we could camp. (Later) I will write

a few lines more. Lea and Charlie are both asleep. I read Talmaga's visit to the Holy Land aloud until I grew hoarse and now I will write a few lines and retire. The coyotes are making the night hideous with their musical voices, it sounds as if there were great doves of them. It is not the most pleasant sound in the world. We saw some such peculiar hills today. There seemed to be a strata of rock running through them parallel with the horizon as far as the hills went you could discern that white line of rock. I wanted so much to go up there but Lea didn't care to go and I did not want to go alone. I did not get to explore them. The trains seem to run on the U.P. all night. It is now half past eleven as I did not sleep well last night think I had better retire.

August 11

I think I did not sleep at all last night. The coyotes and the fleas gave me no peace. I would take insect powder and silence the fleas and get into a doze when there would come a sound as if all the wild animals in creation had been turned loose. We saw the work hands macademizing the R.R. this morning. It was quite an interesting spectacle. They had taken the gravel out of the Platte and were putting it on the roads. There were about thirty of them. It looked so picturesque. They had boarding cars with them. We saw a large rattle

snake lying by the roadside this morning, which excited us greatly. But when we went back to where it lay it had crawled into a hole, we have had a great deal of sand today which made it very difficult to travel with any speed. It was so pleasant this morning but it grew so oppressively hot toward noon. We drove by such steep rocky bluffs. I got out and climbed to the top of two. They were as nearly as I could judge over a hundred feet high. I looked at them and thought that centuries ago where our feet now trod the waves must have dashed and surged against the rocky coast line. What a mystery is nature, one could well make a life study of it and then know (comparatively speaking) nothing about it, how incomprehensible it is, it keeps secrets that would make all the world wonder could we but know them. About half way up I stood under a wide shelving rock, that jutted out some six or eight feet over and beyond my head. I peered into a crevice that expended so far back I could see no end to it. Nothing but impenetrable darkness, where the light penetrated birds had built their nests. I saw nothing of the birds, though I tried to find them for I was anxious to know what species of bird they were. They must have belonged to the platform builders as their nests were made of coarse sticks laid upon the rocks. I did not dare reach into the nests for fear of snakes and I could not see into them. I climbed to the top of one then crossed from that over to a still loftier one, and from there one could gaze over all the surrounding country.

It was simply grand below me as I looked over. I could see ledges of rock large as an ordinary house that times ruthless hand had gradually undermined and worn away. Then by force of gravity and its own weight had broken away and gone tumbling and rolling down the bluff untill caught firmly on some other ledge and suspended between earth and sky it had lain perhaps for ages as far away as the eye could reach one could see the yellow glistening sand of the Platte bordered on each side by green luxuriant vegetation. As I stood on this towering man of rock and thought how easily the smallest of these great rocks could crush me I thought how small and insignificant the human race is compared with this great handiwork of God's. Yet it was all created for the pleasure and gratification of mankind. When one thinks of the many good things God gave us even the beautiful scenery for the gratification of our love for the beautiful and the return we make for these many blessings. So much ingratitude murmurings and complainings I wonder that his heart is not filled with sorrow that he ever created so ungrateful a people. Perhaps I have wandered from my subject but as it is written for my own pleasure and not open to criticism I care not if it be not excellent in connected thought. Lea went with me but did not tarry so long as I, and I was brought from ideality to reality by her calling to me that I must not stay longer. I started on my downward ascent stepping from rock to rock and stumbling and slipping. I stood on a flat rock entirely covered over

with moss and thought how long it had probably lain there and was fast losing consciousness as to where I was. (omission) little frame house; when we arose this morning and looked out over the valley with the sun rising gilding everything and making it look so like a picture we felt as if we could live there forever but the scene has changed tonight it is so lonely looking. before Charlie closed the wagon I looked and through the darkness afar off there glimmered a tiny light like a star. I wondered what poor lonely home sick creature lived there. It looked to me as if it might be clear out of the world, but it may be a paradise to some one. The people that live where we are stopping tonight seem to be such a nice family. They came out and visited with us. She says she is so lonely that it does her good to see some one. They have four children, three boys and one girl. They have been to Colorado but do not seem to be very pleased with the country, but I believe it will help Lea. I think the travel has benefitted her already. Charlie looks like a different man. I do not see that it has changed me in any way, only that I suppose I look like a darky. I have no mirror and cannot see myself and I think that it is a good thing. Charlie was out after the horses tonight when he hollowed for Lea to bring him the axe. There was a rattlesnake out there, we both raced out there, but I raced back much more quickly than I went. It was a very large one. Its head was lifted up and it kept up a continual rattle that I could hear plainly from the wagon where I stood

and jumped up and down in perfect ecstasy of fright. Charlie threw the axe at it twice without hitting it and I expected it to jump at him. Finally he succeeded in killing it and it had eight rattles, ugh! it makes me shudder to think of it. Charles and Lea have long been asleep. I have just looked at my watch and it is only a few minutes untill twelve and when the hand has reached 12 it will perhaps have ended our last night in Nebraska for a few weeks, and the next time I take up this book to write it will be in Colorado. Well I will retire, it seems to me I require so much less sleep than when I was at home. Charlie killed a prairie dog today, shot it, poor little creatures. I hate to see them killed. We crossed the river at Brule and now south of the river.

August 12

We have spent our first half day in Colorado. I hope I may not spend many such days. I have been so sick since dinner but feel better now. I don't think I ever felt so sick. We have driven through such desolate country from about 8 o'clock untill twelve and we drove through sand, cactus and prairie dog towns. There must have been 8 miles where the roads on either side were lined with prairie dog mounds. I don't see what dogs live on unless they eat cactus and what made it look more desolate before reaching it we passed through

a section where they irrigated and there were such lovely lanes the roads were graded up quite high and everything looked so thrifty. I think we could have missed the arid region had we not gotten off the road. I did not think we would ever reach civilization again. But at noon we came to a ranch where we camped and ate our dinner. After that I was so sick I did not realize when the change came. In the morning we saw two eagles one small and one very large one. About 4 o'clock we reached Julesburg where we again crossed the river. We drove six miles farther and as it was beginning to look as if we were to have a heavy shower we stopped at a farm house. We have had our supper and Lea and I are going into the house to sleep.

August 13

I am so tired tonight that I do not feel much like writing. The people we stayed with last night were the finest folks. We talked untill twelve o'clock. The lady was well educated. They had only one child, a little girl named Eva. She was such a nice little thing. He said teachers got from \$35 to \$50 and had only about twelve pupils, sometimes less. I slept so soundly after going to bed did not awaken at all untill morning. They had a cat I wanted so badly but the little girl did not want to give it away. I wanted to take it home with me. I liked the country so well there. They irrigate.

We all felt as if we would like to stay there. We saw such vast herds of cattle today and large ranches. We had a fine camping place at noon although there was no shade, but on the north side of the road were great high masses of rock. I could scarcely wait until I had finished my dinner so eager was I to explore them. They were such peculiar rocks black and red all overgrown with moss so that when one was away from them they looked to be a pale green. I climbed to the top of them and followed the ridge around. It was a beautiful sight, mass upon mass of rock as far as the eye could reach. To me who had never seen such rocks they were awe inspiring. Down below two huge boulders had fallen, one was such an immense rock, that I would not venture to give an estimate of its size. It was very irregular in form and surface, looking very much like a huge fallen tree with the branches cut off. I could not but think that one time it must have been a tree that succeeding ages had reduced to a state of petrification. I sat down on the jutting rocks and looked down on those rocks and wondered and surmised as to the probable formation of this great ridge or bluff of rocks. I wondered if Indians had not at some time hidden behind them or (omission) I found underneath a hollow boulder a little rocky cave or grotto, but I did not stay in it long for fear of snakes. Since noon we have passed Sedgewick, Red Lion and Crook, at Crook I received a letter from Ma also one from Jennie. I was so glad to get them. How I would love to see the home

folks tonight. It had been raining all day but has almost ceased at present. It seems so strange how cool the nights and mornings are here and how exceedingly warm it is through the middle of the day. In the morning when we start out we are only comfortable wearing our heavy wraps but about noon we are glad to shed them.

August 14 _____

We hitched up this morning and thought we would drive untill we found a nice place then we would stop. The place where we stayed last night was a sheep ranch. We saw them taking the sheep out to pasture. It was a pretty sight. We drove passed such a nice large ranch. A man was lariatting horses. We had oysters for dinner today but some way we did not enjoy them so very much. I took my shoes off and dabbled in the water this afternoon. I forgot to say we camped on Cedar Creek and laid over today. It is endeavor time now and they are all going. It makes me feel a little lonely to think of it. (Later) We had another traveler take supper with us tonight. He has come from Fort Collins, Colo. I must retire as it is almost midnight. Next Sunday I hope to be at Effies.

August 15

We started out quite early this morning. It was very cool. We passed a place where the cattails grew as high as my head. I wanted some so badly but could not bring them with me. We passed a swampy place, and near by standing close to a fence we saw something. At first sight I took it to be a bag of something hanging on the fence but I saw it move its head and knew it must be some kind of bird. Charlie got out his gun and before I hardly knew it he had fired and Lea said "He has killed it" and I cried. "Poor thing little did it realize what was coming as it stood turning its head from side to side looking at us." I haven't quit feeling sad over it yet. It was a beautiful bird but very peculiar looking. It had such a long neck and long bill. In fact it was almost all neck and bill. Its legs were a pale green and its body a beautiful golden brown. Farther on we saw another eagle sitting on a post, who flapped his wings and flew slowly away as we approached. We passed through Sterling this morning and camped about four miles from Atwood. We saw men stacking hay with a huge fork. It was quite an interesting sight to me. I think I have never before seen hay stacks standing as closely as shocks usually stand. We crossed the bridge at Merino this afternoon and drove through sand for some distance. We could not travel with any speed, and the prairies were covered with cactus and sage brush. Sage brush is a beautiful

silvery looking plant. I should like to take one home with me. I found some flower seed this afternoon of those blossoming willows. We did not travel so very long until we came to the ditch again. There the appearance of the country under went a change. We began to see fields of corn, grain and alfalfa and the country was quite thickly settled. One thing Lea and I have talked about since getting into Colorado is extreme cleanliness and neatness of the people. The women all look so neat and their houses so clean. The lane we passed through late this afternoon and are still in is beautiful. Along one side runs the irrigation ditch and such luxuriant vegetation on either side and the road is graded up and so many houses on either side. It looks like a street of a city. We will reach Fort Logan tomorrow and will soon reach the mountains.

August 16

(omission) little town so many new buildings going up. Everybody seemed to be busy, a spirit of activity prevailed over everything. It is a beautiful little town, such lovely dwellings, such beautiful lawns, but the business part of town seems to be much inferior in comparison with the dwellings. We have driven out north of town to the Platte. In the morning we will cross. It looks some like rain tonight the thunder is quite heavy. Well I don't feel like writing longer.

August 17

Today has been another pleasant day. We started at half past six, crossed the bridge and traveled through some of the most barren country. Nothing to be seen but cactus, sage brush and prairie dogs, until we came to the irrigation ditches, which was just before noon. About 11 o'clock I think. We have been meeting with some queer people on the road but today capped the climax. It was such a joke on me that I will have to write it. Just before noon we came to a place, there was a man wandering around as if he were lost. Charlie asked him if we could get a jug of water. He told Charlie, he had better go to the next house as there was no water there fit to drink, but he came out to the wagon and commenced talking to Charlie. I had the side curtain up (I was lying back in the wagon, Charlie and Lea were in the seat). Inspecting his farm somehow I knew by various signs he was an old bachelor. He looked so forlorn, kind of lost like, as if he had no one to take care of him and when I looked at his improvements, I knew no woman ever bossed them. The barn was only a few yards from the house. He wanted to sell his farm. He was telling what he owned. Finally, after looking back at me he said to Charlie, "Who have you got back there, somebody sick?" I said, "No, just somebody lazy." He said, "Well I'm lazy too, you'd better just drop her out here. I'm all alone." Charlie and Lea just laughed and I had to say

something so I said "O, they can't spare me. I have to cook for them." Charlie drove on laughing as hard as he could. He said my eyes were as big as saucers. I had been telling them every man we would see coming that that was my fate in the shape of a ranchman. Lea said "Now that was your fate. You can't blame us." (omission) Indiana where my wife's folks live. After talking to them I felt as if I wanted to stay in Colo. She told us we could soon see the mountains. There were so many white flowers blooming in the sand that it looked as if snow had fallen. We have had some sandy roads toady and we saw the largest snake lying by the road. As we came up to it, it crawled off among the rocks. We thought it must have been more than eight feet long. We were near some great large rocks but I didn't get out of the wagon to examine them as I usually do every new thing. The snake frightened me so. We camped for dinner by some very nice people that were traveling. though only for a short distance I believe. The gentleman was quite jovial. He told Lea she had better keep me tied to her apron strings. She was telling him about my bachelor. We have been trying to reach Platteville for the last two or three days but it seems as if it gets farther off instead of getting closer. This morning early we asked the distance and it was fifty-five miles. A few hours later it was twenty-five, the next time it was twenty-eight etc. But we expected to reach Platteville by noon tomorrow if there be any Platteville. Just before noon today Lea sighted the

mountains. I, at first sight thought they were clouds but after looking sometime I could see the outlines and I was, figuratively speaking, almost beside myself. As they grew plainer, I grew frantic. Lea just laughed and laughed and said she never did see anyone with as little sense as I had but thought it was just the other way she had never seen anyone with so much.

August 19

I will write a few lines this morning. The lantern went out while I was writing so I had to retire. I did not sleep well. I don't know what was the matter. Probably I was thinking too much about the mountains. As I write, my eyes will constantly wander toward the mts. I haven't the language to describe them. Were I a Demosthenes a Cicero or even an Irving I might do justice to them but as I am nothing but a Murphy and a poor one at that, I can't describe them. But their grandeur is appalling. As I look at them, the sun is shining or seems to be on the top of them and there is a line or mass that is dark blue. Then as they grow higher they seem to have a golden glow over them. Oh, they are grand. I write one word then stop to gaze. Off to the south can be nothing conceivable that is grander than the mts. I don't think I shall ever want to leave Colo. I feel as if I wanted to sit and gaze at them forever. Last evening I looked at them until

twilight effaced the last dim outline from view and my eyes feel sore this morning. It was so hard on the eyes looking toward the sun. Yesterday we passed through Kersey and have camped by the bridge just outside Evans. Charlie is coming with the horses so I must stop.

August 20

I didn't get to write last night the mosquitoes were so bad we couldn't let the lantern burn. Yesterday morning we passed through Evans. There seemed to be very little there except saloons and billiard halls. One big brick salon had our stars and stripes floating over it. I felt as if I must get out and take it down. I felt as if the flag were being disgraced. We passed through Evans crossed the river. One thing has been very noticeable since we have been traveling in Colo. The precociousness of the children. We never see one so small but they can tell the way anywhere and the distance. We passed through some of the finest country yesterday and the day before. We saw four steam threshers at once all at work. It looked as if it were hard work for the men to lift the bundles of grain. It looks as if we were only a mile from the mts. This morning when we are about twenty-five. I could sit and gaze at them for hours. The shifting lights and shadows give them a different appearance each moment. One can see so many different

colors. Charlie is ready to go so I must stop writing. We have camped for the night, so I will write a few lines. This forenoon we drove to Longmont where the physician, Dr. Stradley examined Lea's lungs. He tested them with a stethoscope, and pronounced her so much better than we had dared to hope. He seemed to think there was no irritation and told her she need take no more medicine but take plenty of exercise. I think he is a fine physician and he seemed so jolly. He is a very entertaining talker. He and his brother gave treatment for the whiskey habit. He says they have been very successful. There are several taking it now. One man that was taking the treatment was in the office when we went in. The woman seemed so happy they both looked quite young. Longmont is a beautiful town of perhaps four thousand inhabitants. It is the prettiest town we have seen. Such lovely dwellings and the business houses were fine. The streets were wide and so clean and every one seemed to be busy. I don't think I have ever seen a place I would rather live. But the Dr. and Eldors was most to high for Lea at present so I will go up there a few days next week. Oh, the glorious mts. Everything I have ever seen in my life seemed so narrow and little when compared with them. We are camping in the foothills tonight, the sides are covered with pine and cedar. We camped so late that I did not get to look around much. We came through the most beautiful country today. It seemed an earthly paradise. I saw a crane today for the first time in my life. I

was just wild over the rocks we have passed this afternoon. Some such odd shaped most peculiar rocks in one place. There were high rocky mounds and they seemed to have turned over the strata instead of running from side to side ran perpendicularly. There was a line of the mounds. We found the most beautiful flower today. It looked something like *Salvia* only more delicate. But it had such an offensive smell that I did not care for any seed. It is raining slightly tonight and the air is so pure that it is a delight to breathe it. I don't seem as if I could go back to stuffy Nebr. I am so deeply in love with this country. I can scarcely wait until I get into the mts. We are going to Springdale. It is about a mile from Jamestown. Tonight is Sat. night. I wonder what all the home folks are doing and tomorrow I will get to go to church. The thunder sounds quite close. I did not sleep well last night so I will retire early.

August 21

Oh! the mountains. I am silenced, no one can describe them as they are, not even Irving's description does justice to them. I can't write. I can do nothing but gaze at them. I cannot keep my mind on my writing. I have just finished a letter to home but my other letters must wait. I never knew anything could be as grand as this mountain scenery. As I look toward the South and

West I can see peak after peak rising up. Each one seemingly a little higher than the other before it, and near us is the mountain stream rushing and dashing over its rocky bed. The sighing of the wind through the pines and the fragrant odor it brings from them fills me with a feeling that is undescrivable. Dreams cannot picture a world so fair as this, at least my dreams never pictured anything so undescrivablely beautiful. Now I hear the tinkle of numerous cowbells coming closer and as I look up the mountain side I see the cows winding their way down the narrow mountain path. It gives a finish to the picture. The clouds are growing dark and the thunder as it reverberates through these hills reminds me of Rip Van Winkle's Hollanders playing at ninepins. I have thought of that story so often since I came in sight of the mountains. The air is so delightfully pure I feel as if I could live here forever. If I can collect my thoughts enough I will describe our journey today. We were in such a hurry this morning as we thought we could easily reach Springdale by noon. We were in ignorance as to what a mt. road was before we came to the mts. We saw such picturesque little log cabins. It seemed to me as if they would be a paradise. They had so much fruit and such beautiful trees around them. We hardly realized when we commenced ascending the mts. When we turned a bend in the road and such a sight met on our eyes as really caused me to gasp for breath. I never had any idea that there could be anything so grand, a perpendicular wall of rock towered

up above us hundreds of feet great jutting boulders that looked as if they were ready to topple over. Out of the fissures of rock grew great pines. It was so grand it is useless for me to describe it but it filled me with awe untill I was speechless though not for long then as we traveled farther the scenery grew grander and more undescribable. On the one side was the rocky wall and on the other the mountain streams came dashing and foaming down the mountain side over its rocky bed with a noise that at times almost deafened us. I wanted to get out and wade so badly but we could not find a place where we would dare stop as there was only room for one wagon and should we have met any one it would have caused quite a collision. Lea and I got out to walk. I was like a crazy person. Lea said she thought I must be losing what little sense I had. I raced after squirrels, the loveliest flowers. One wild rose growing on a rocky ledge. It was so fragrant. While I was racing around climbing rocks and shouting thinking myself secure from observation, I looked around and there were three loads of people behind us. I presume they thought I was from the backwood but I didn't care. After a time we came to a place where we could drive out to one side and I went down to the stream it was perfectly delightful great rocks with the water flowing over them foaming and dashing like some great fall. The entire bed of the stream was rocks so I stripped my feet. Numerous buggies passed me but I would draw my feet up under me and never look around.

I could step from rock to rock and the water would be above my ankles. I was afraid to venture far out in the stream it was so rapid. I climbed up on a rock that stood in the water that must have been twenty feet high. I walked over the rocks until my feet grew sore. I picked some pretty stones from the bed of the stream. Lea and Charlie came down and told me that unless I came on they would leave me. Just as I was picking up my shoes and stocking, a load of young people came along. I sat down behind a log until they had gone by. Then we started on, the roads were quite steep in places, but generally it was a gradual ascent. But as we ascended we found the roads very narrow with barely enough room for one wagon, except at certain distances there would be places graded out so that with extreme difficulty two teams could pass. In certain places along the road if a wheel had gone off one side it would have precipitated one to death as it must have been two or three hundred feet to the bottom. But there was little danger except in passing other teams. We met several but happened to meet them at the right places. There were so many bends in the road that one could never tell when they would meet one. Lea was so frightened that she walked almost all the way up the mt. I gathered some spruce gum. I had heard Ma tell so much about it and found the flavor delightful. We camped for dinner on the side of the mt. There was a house barn etc. built of slabs. It was a fine camping place being right by the stream that we had been following all the

way up. It is, I believe called the James river. All the mt. streams are soft water rain or snow water and so cool and nice. We had just stopped when such a neat nice looking little woman came to ask if we had seen anything of a cow. She was crying. We told her we had seen none. She said her husband had left her the week before and a man was coming to buy her cow and now she had strayed off. She was crying so we could hardly understand her. I could not keep the tears back while she was talking. Sometimes I don't know what kind of a heart a man can have to leave a woman in such circumstances. After we had our dinner we started on. The scenery grew wilder and the canyon deeper. We were as high then as we had to go and the road wound through a rocky canyon. I had read of the cool canyons but never conceived the full grandeur of them before. Looking out of the wagon I could not see the top of the rocks. Lea was in an ecstasy of fear. She imagined every minute one of those great rocks would come tumbling down. It seemed to me that I was so filled with awe at the grandeur of the mts. that I lost all fear of everything. I felt as if nothing could frighten me, though usually I am such a coward. Then we came to Springdale which is a mile and a half from Jamestown, where there are mineral springs. The canyon was so deep that we could find no place to turn out to camp. Every foot of level land had a little cottage on it, and we could get no house so we decided to come to Jamestown. So here we are permanently

located if a house can be obtained. I saw several places where they had tunneled in prospecting for gold. We also passed a smelting mill. We have been camped but a short time and Charlie had gone for feed for the horses when it commenced to rain. A gentleman came running out made us go in the house and he took care of the horses. They seemed to be very nice people. There were quite a number of young men there. The rain did not last long, it seems so strange the clouds come up so quickly but after it rains there seems to be no dampness. This is a grand country. It seems to me there is nothing more to be desired but I do not think Lea is so favorably impressed with the country. All that bothers me I shall have to leave so soon. They say the altitude here is 7,000 ft. Strange I never thought to get so high up in the world as that. I am sitting out in the spring seat out side the wagon while writing this and oh the beauty of these hills. I never saw such trees as grow here. Tomorrow I mean to roam all over these grand old mts. There seems to be another shower coming. There is such vivid lightening. It looks so pretty zigzagging over the mountain tops. Lea and Charlie have gone inside the wagon and it is getting so dark I can scarcely see the lines and drops of rain are beginning to fall. While it is so dark I cannot see the lines to write. At home endeavor is just begun and the sun has not yet set. I know the days must be very short surrounded as we are on all sides by these high peaks. I feel tonight as if I were a long ways from home. In

a mining town in the far west. The dark has at least driven me inside and I can hardly wait for sunrise on these peaks. Charlie and Lea have gone to sleep, and outside the thunder is rolling and the rain pattering gently on the roof. I have the back of the wagon open so that I can breathe the pure air and inhale the fragrance of the pines. I do not feel so lonely in the mts. as I did in the valleys. Some way I feel that the mts. are my home. I intend to blow the light out and then sit and listen to the sighing of the wind through the pines. I love to hear it. I feel as if every moment I spend in sleep is wasted here as two weeks are so short. Night draws her sable curtains o'er this scene of beauty and closes my first day on the Rocky mts. Two couples came by here tonight out walking. I thought of Jeannie and I and others but oh I hope we do not act so soft as they did. I just had to sit and laugh. (omission) some spruce gum and started down again. It was not so tiresome climbing up as going down. My knees were so weak when I came down I could hardly stand. The rocks hurt my feet so. The lady living in the house near us came over today. She is so nice and has such a sweet little girl. We got an early dinner did up our dishes and were just getting ready to go up town when her brother in law came over. I think he is an old bachelor. He sat and talked for about an hour. I think he is very nice. When he had gone away we went up town and I got me a pair of spring heeled shoes so I could climb the mts. We saw some quite pretty

buildings. I believe I should like to live here. We came back and I took another stroll up the mt. and gathered some spruce gum to send home. We have had our supper and washed the dishes. My bachelor over across the way is washing the dishes for his sister in law and she is out playing croquet. That is the man I have been looking for twenty five years he will never escape my clutches. He is coming over this way so I will quit writing and smile on him real sweetly. A man that would wash dishes and let his sister play croquet is worth having. Well my bachelor is gone. He stayed quite a long time, until it was quite dark and they came and called him. He is very smart and real nice looking. All I object to is his tan shoes. He dressed in the very height of fashion. He did not say so but I think from his sister's talk he lives in Denver. Lea says she knows I am here for good now. They have some of the finest horses here. On some of the freight wagons they have four horses. Several passed us where we camped for dinner yesterday. One wagon had six horses and the man had a long whip which he kept constantly cracking over their heads. It looked just like pictures I have seen of the vehicles on the mt. roads here they have four or six horses and sometimes where they have only two. The horses have bells on them so they can be heard at a distance to avoid a collision. We saw a funeral procession pass today. A little child had died. Well I am so tired I think I will stop writing for now.

August 25

I did not write any yesterday (the 24th) I was so deathly sick with the headache. I don't think I was ever so sick in my life. The pain seemed in the front top and back of my head and even seemed in my ears. Lea and I were all over the mts. and I guess the trip was too much for me. The sun is quite hot there when you get out from under the shade trees. We saw some Quaking Asps, they are a beautiful tree, and the mts. abound in lovely trees and beautiful flowers. My bachelor was over yesterday morning and we talked Temperance, Woman Suffrage and Politics. I don't just exactly agree with him in everything but old bach's as a rule are cranks. All the women here ride astride it looks so strange to me being unaccustomed to the sight. Some have divided skirts and some do not. I presume they ride that way all these mt. roads. Today Charlie went to help some people over the mt. and Lea and I are alone. One of our neighbors had found a bee tree and brought us some honey. It was splendid. I have felt so weak today I haven't ventured to climb any mts. Mrs. DeBoyce was over to see us this morning. She is a very interesting talker. I served a little today for a change. Today is the day of the great wedding. I suppose it will be a grand affair. When this day has closed there will be no Ella Kisting but Ella Duncan. The prettiest little squirrels play around here. There are two kinds and there are so many Blue jays. I am

too sleepy to write any tonight and I have lost my pen. My Bach was over again today, it seems as if that were all I had written for the last few days.

August 26

We went to the top of a mt. today (drove up) we were 8,000 feet when we reached the top it was very pleasing Lea thought it too cold but it was just right for me. Just across from that mt. were the mts. covered with snow. They looked so pretty but it seemed rather odd to see great banks of snow in Aug. They looked as if we might step across but it must have been 10 or 15 miles. I took my hook and line to go fishing but the woods and rocks looked so dangerous. I didn't fish long. Right near the creek were those huge boulders reaching to the top of them. I climbed up several hundred ft. and gave out. I was so high that Lea and Chas. looked like little children but it was a fine view from there. I gathered some fern we found great many raspberries. The babbling brooks with green mossy banks which the poets rave about are found in the mts. I could be down on the green moss and watch the water for hours but it was terrible getting up there such roads I never saw. I am very tired tonight Lea and I walked most all the way down.

August 27

It is getting dark. So dark I can scarcely see the lines so I will either have to light the lantern or quit writing. I haven't much to write tonight. I took a stroll over to the cemetery today. It is a desolate looking place. The weeds grow tall and rank there are quite a number of graves but only about a dozen tombstones. I looked at the graves and wondered as to the history of the people buried there. One grave in particular I noticed. It seemed to tell a sad story. It was a young married woman. I don't remember her last name. Her first name was Jennie, just 25 yrs. old, just my age. Buried in 1877. 21 yrs. ago. Right by her side lay her little 3 yr. old boy who had been buried a year later. I thought of how sad a home that had been and wondered what had caused her death and what had been the fate of the father and husband. That must have been where this man was young and he must have been a miner. The tombstones were lovely but one could tell the graves had been neglected for years. On one stone it said, "Asleep in the everlasting hills." I am sitting on the ground writing this. Lea and Charlie have gone to bed. I feel just a little lonely tonight. It is Sat. night and tomorrow I am going to try to go to church.
(omission)