Notes on Charlotte Thorn Lewis’s Diary Entries for 1884

By Douglas Ewbank, Feb. 1, 2018

These notes provide a guide to the topics mentioned in the diaries. See the main website (<http://poweltonvillage.org/Lewis-Diaries/>) for a key to persons named in the diary.

January 2: “At [New Century] Club in afternoon to hear Mr. [?] McAllister on ‘primary education’”

January 7: “downtown & lunched with Anna at 3321 [Hamilton Avenue] – went over their new house [214 N. 34th St.] – they moved the 3d story furniture to-day.”

January 8: “… played Boaston [baccarat] in the evening.”

January 26: went “to get Anna a sewing machine….” & “Went with May and Lottie to the Thomas Concert.”

January 28: “… May went to Edward Longstreth’s after tea to hear some music.”

January 29: “I went after dinner to see Mrs. Hibbard explain & demonstrate to a class of kindergartens the plays & songs she has substituted for Frachil’s [?].”

January 30: “went with Mrs. Furness to Children’s Homeopathic Hospital 43 & Oregon Avenue.”

February 4: “At the Home… At Wilson’s lecture on Palestine in the evening”

February 6: “At [New Century] Club in afternoon to hear Miss Faldie on Chinese Folklore.”

February 9: “At the Kitchen Garden at U. T. Home until six.”

February 12: “played Boaston [baccarat]”

February 13: “took Annie Wagner to Penn Homeopathic Hospital for Children…. : Two-year the Orpheus singers at a meeting for Penn Museum of Art…. [Annie] & Theodore moved yesterday into their new house beside George and Anna’s”

February 19: May went to French class

February 23: Enoch “& the girls went to hear Mr. Cable read from his Dr. Series & other stories much pleased”

February 27: “May’s 30th birthday just half my age: she has gone to German class & to executive board of N. C. [New Century] Club.”

March 11: “Lottie was aide at the Women’s Christian Association Chowlatinas [?]”

March 13: at Commencement exercises of W. Med. [Woman’s Medical] college held at Association Hall – crowded. A neat address by Dr. Croasdall beautifully delivered.”

March 19: Mrs. Putnam, Enoch “and May and Lottie and Mr. Bradley went to see Irving and Miss Terry in ’Much Ado about Nothing,’ came home enthusiastic.”

March 22: Enoch, sister Lib “& I went to see Irving and Miss Terry in ‘Much Ado about Nothing’ Miss T. is charming – dressing & all accessories in excellent taste. Irving, conceives well – is [unreadable] taking but does not conceal the art. While Miss Terry seems born – not educated or trained in each part she assumed: she is a charming Beatrice and admirable Portia.”

March 24: “I went to Children’s Homeopathic Hospital after dinner”

March 27: “At Kitchen Garden exhibition at Bethany Church”

March 29: “May & I at sub primary school [kindergarten] meeting in morning: at N. N. Guild in evening.”

March 31: “all played Baston in the evening”

April 4: “At the Home in morning”

April 14: “E & May went to the funeral of Alice Sellers, Coleman’s & Helen’s youngest child – died of Gastroenteritis. I think never has been well.”

April 22: death of her sister, Mary S. Thorn (1815-1884) “we have feared this event for years and yet it comes as a sacred fearful surprise at last. If we could be unselfish we should rejoice that so perfect a spirit has cast off the impaired body & will see & speak clearly in the new realm, but we cannot be used to such a void – scarcely reconciled and wants to the separation.”

May 5: “at the dentist’s in the morning”

May 16: “I spent the morning at The [Union Temporary] Home [for children]”

May 20: “Amy & I went to Kitchen Garden at the Home in afternoon. Mr. Howell called in evening & showed us some fine Platinotypes taken by Geo. [George] Wood in Normandy.”

May 28: “Theo dropped in on his way to business and brought me old clothes for my poor – I am yearning for old clothes now…. I called yester afternoon on Anna Hallowell on Sub-Primary or Kindergarten business – found her a rare woman – spiritual & physical grace combine in her.”

May 30: “I was at the Home in the morning…. N. N. Guild.”

May 31: “At Ward Relief Services [?] In morning.”

June 2: “with Mary Coggins to hunt the house for the N. N. Guild…. Mr. McCollin & Mr. Addicks [?] Came home with Lottie from Lawn Tennis playing & took tea.”

June 4: left for trip to Natural Bridge of Virginia; the trip was described in entries for subsequent days

June 17: “I went to the Home”

June 20: “went to Miss Davis’s to hear Lottie sing – glad I had an interview with her, ideas of help for her pupil – she sings nicely – better there than at home.”

June 20: “May went to Club rooms”

June 30: “I went to U. T. Home after dinner to initiate Miss Mattes as teacher for the summer.”

July 8: started trip: train to New York and night boat up the Hudson: dined at Kenmore Hotel and visited the new statehouse under construction: “Hunt’s frescoes on ceiling – the stairway now finished is very fine – Senate chamber handsome – some fine carvings;” train to Trenton Falls.

July 17: left for Montréal; went to Windsor house; “shooting the rapids was quite pleasant – the scenery is often rather tame but the river is broad and grand”

July 18: went to “Grey nunnery” & “Notre Dame church”

July 20: following days visited sites along the St. Lawrence

July 24: reached Québec and took train to Montréal.

July 25: “went to ’Bon Secours’ Market and little old church, close by; tired of so much cheap tinsel; the market is unique – great varieties of vegetables & fruits displayed on the ground floor & sidewalk opposite – almost everything for sale – Friday of cheap baskets – on second floor nice meets are displayed unclean counters & hanging above. Dogs are asleep under little carts to which they are harnessed, to be used as burden or load carriers. I never saw such a variety & abundance for the table, and the fruits are perfectly ripe, & more sound than we get ripe fruits in Phila. there are now for sale red, white, & black currants, the real Antwerp Raspberry, find gooseberries, Whortle [?] berries, cherries, plums, rather poor peaches, watermelon & cantaloupes. Meats are good, & with a good cook the table of the Windsor leaves nothing to wish for.”

July 26: describes trip to Notre Dame de Lourdes and Catholic Cemetery. Visited with Dr. Kilmer Clarke of Huddersfield, England.

July 27: describes visit to the Jewish Church

July 28: “left at six in the afternoon for Ausable Chasum: by rail to Park Kent – there took stage for the 3 miles to Lake View House; arrived between nine & ten”

July 29: at Lake Champlain, Ausable Chasm, and took boat down some small rapids

July 30: “parted with Mr. Osborne of Institute of Technology Westport – he too goes to Lake George.”

August 2: “… Started at 8 on bucks boards for Adirondack Lodge… Somewhat rough ride through Keene Valley & dining at Edmund’s pond or Caseadeville [?], Arrived at our destination about 5 A.M., 27 miles from Elizabethtown – 4 miles from any habitation; found a pleasant house situated on a beautiful clear Lake….”

August 3: settle in at Lake George. During their stay, there is members of the family to numerous short excursions in the area.

August 16: “at the performance of the ‘Sleeping Car’ at the opening of the Forest Park Theater in the evening – play, curtain & all appointments very good. Music & dancing after…”

August 22: “a large party, including our girls, went to Lake Placid for a Lawn Tennis tournament.” There were lawn tennis competitions over the next several days between groups from around Lake George and Lake Placid.

September 21: “…. Finished ‘Antiquary’ & The Nation.”

September 25: “May & I went to Saratoga on 3 P.M. boat – found many Phila. friends at U. S. hotel – went to church in evening.”

September 26: “a very interesting session of the Unitarian Conference in the morning – heard Dr. Elliott, E. E. Hale, genl Armstrong, Rev. Mays & others….”

October 5: “… Various point sitting down at times to read Miss [Rosa Nouchette] Carey’s ‘not like other girls [: a novel]…’”

Plot: “Not Like Other Girls, by Rosa Nouchette Carey (1884), is an agreeable story of English country town society. Three pretty sisters, the belles of Oldfield, find themselves, through their mother’s unfortunate investments, suddenly penniless, and obliged to earn their own living. Instead of trying to find situations as incompetent governesses, which would break up the family and leave their mother in solitary lodgings, the Challoner girls decide to pocket their pride, and become—what they are admirably fitted for—dressmakers. In the neighboring watering-place of Hadleigh they begin their new life; making gowns for every one who comes, from the butcher’s wife to the rector’s daughters, and accepting their changed social position with sunny courage. Though they suffer some pangs of mortification, and some trials, they make and keep friends really worth the having; and the story hardly needs the *deus ex machina*, who appears in the shape of a rich Australian cousin, to make it end happily. The implied moral of the book is the foolishness of conventional standards of gentility; and the story is so entertaining that the reader accepts its dictum as an axiom.” (from: C.D. Warner, et al., comp. The Library of the World’s Best Literature. An Anthology in Thirty Volumes. 1917.

H. R. Keller. The Reader’s Digest of Books. <http://www.bartleby.com/library/readersdigest/1442.html>)

October 21: “At U. T. [Union Temporary] Home in morning.”

October 29: “Mary went to Baltimore to Woman’s Congress

October 30: ” “At U. T. [Union Temporary] Home in morning.”

Note: she frequently visited the Union Temporary Home. Not all references are noted here.

November 10: “At the Beulah Coates Kindergarten all morning…. Enoch read to us from [Francis] Parkman’s ‘Montcalm and Wolfe’”

Note from Wikipedia: “Montcalm and Wolfe (ISBN 0-306-80621-5) is the sixth volume in Francis Parkman's seven-volume history, France and England in North America, originally published in 1884. It tells the story of the French and Indian War. Its title refers to Louis-Joseph de Montcalm and James Wolfe, the commanding generals of the French and English forces respectively and to whom the book devotes particular attention. Parkman considered the book his masterpiece. ”

November 11: “… I dined at Marshall st & went to Public School 3d & Lombard with capital R. A. Peirce.”

November 22: “Whist Club met here.”

December 1: “E., The girls, Sally Longstreth, and I went to a concert by the Misses Mawson”

Note: this was a concert by Miss Ida N. Mawson and Miss Charlotte M. Mawson. Others who performed included John F. Rhodes, Anthony Stankowich, Paul Kirschner and Frederick Maxson. (*Inquirer*, November 29).

December 5: “at Mr. Macalises’s [?] Lecture on kindergarten.”

December 6: “E. & Lottie went last evening to see Geo. [George] Wood’s photographs.”

December 8: “May & Lottie at the [Theodore] Thomas [symphony] concert.” (See *Inquirer* December 9)

December 10: “with E. & The girls at Irving’s very fine presentation of Hamlet with Miss [Ellen] Terry charmingly rendering Ophelia.”

December 14: “at Club Tea – Miss Schofield there – quite an animated discussion on the education of the Negro.”

December 17: “E., May & I saw Irving as Malvolio & Miss Terry as Viola was charming as ever.”

December 26: “I went downtown to get toys for Miss Bell & her children at Beaufort Mission. Pack them in the evening.”

December 28: “Wrote Miss Bell of the box of toys, candies, books & tree decorations on the way to Beaufort and to Ann Lewis of their box”