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## O N E

**“  
I have always  
been satisfied  
with Nebraska  
”**

The bride arrived at Lincoln's Atwood House hotel by stagecoach, hungry and spattered with mud, on Friday, February 12, 1869. She had traveled with her new husband for nine days, ridden a midnight mail train from Chicago to Council Bluffs when misdirected baggage made them miss the express, and entered Nebraska by walking a mile and a half across the Missouri River to Plattsmouth guided by a seventeen-year-old boy on ice so thin the stages refused to cross. "It seemed to me a long way," she later wrote. "In many places the water stood in pools, and I would step aside only to be told peremptorily by my guide to 'get back in line.'" With nine others in their party, she had slept the previous night in the single upstairs room of a wayside house. The bride, in short, was an intrepid and determined woman, and with such adventures behind her she was only mildly surprised to find herself, later that evening, the only woman in a crowded dining room. The state legislature, she was told, was in session (the senate, in fact, had approved a bill establishing the University of Nebraska that very day). She had not eaten since the previ-

2 · *"I have always been satisfied with Nebraska"*

ous afternoon, and was "too hungry," she wrote, "to permit this fact to spoil a good dinner for me."<sup>1</sup>

Thus did Laura Biddlecome Pound, an educated twenty-seven-year-old New Yorker of distinguished Quaker background, come to Nebraska. She would stay for the rest of her life. Beginning in 1876 she would spend two years as a student at the fledgling university, "perfecting herself in the German language," among other studies.<sup>2</sup> Closer attention to her written account of the hard winter journey from Rochester only confirms the initial impression of fortitude and determination. In Plattsmouth, for example, the morning after her dangerous walk across the Missouri's ice, she is introduced to an attorney named Irving, who addresses her confidently, "Mrs. Pound, you won't like Nebraska." Determined to make herself clear, she replies in emphatic terms, "I have burned my bridges behind me," an interesting choice of image in a place then distinguished by the lack of any bridge at all. In the next sentence she notes that Irving returned to the East "when the grasshoppers came," while the Pounds, even in the hard times of the 1870s, "were still content to stay."<sup>3</sup>

When Mrs. Pound recalls the moment of her arrival in Nebraska (she got stuck in the "almost impassable" mud on the riverbank and had to be pulled out), her narrative displays both unruffled composure and a finely understated humor. Told that a group of men she had noticed seated on the bluff above the river were "waiting to see the ice break up," she allows that "this was not very comforting information, considering that my husband was still on the Iowa side" (he had waited with their belongings on a sandbar after the driver of the wagon they had hired in Glenwood refused to go further). After some hours of anxious waiting, wondering if she would be "left a widow on the west bank of the Missouri," Mrs. Pound was relieved to hear "the rumble of a wagon" and look out from the sitting room of the Platte Valley House to see "the rest of our party with my dignified husband perched on top of a trunk in the back of the wagon."<sup>4</sup>

The husband who shared this challenging journey with his dignity intact was Stephen Bosworth Pound, like his wife a Quaker and

a New Yorker. Eight years his wife's senior, he was born January 14, 1833, in Farmington, a small upstate town some twenty miles west of Phelps, the even smaller village where Laura Biddlecome was born on May 14, 1841. Both attended the academy in nearby Macedon, about ten miles north of Farmington, he from 1854 to 1855, she from 1856 to 1857. From there Laura went west, to Galesburg, Illinois, where in 1860–61 she studied ancient and modern languages at Lombard College, a Universalist institution that opened its doors in the 1850s, was a hotbed of abolitionist sentiment in the years leading up to the Civil War, and closed for good in 1930. Lombard was also unusual at the time for regularly admitting female and African American students. Plus there was a family connection: "Her uncle, Reverend Daniel Read Biddlecome, was the Universalist minister in Galesburg, and Lombard College itself was a denominational school of the Universalist church." Laura was a fine student, though she never completed her studies: "Her record there was remarkable, however, the faculty approving a plan for her to graduate after only one more year of residence. But the unsettled conditions due to the approaching Civil War caused her parents to think it unwise for her to return to Galesburg."<sup>5</sup>

Stephen Pound also had abolitionist ties in his background—the upstate New York farm of his great-grandfather Hugh Pound "was one of the important stages on the underground railroad for runaway slaves making their way to Canada."<sup>6</sup> From Macedon Academy he went east to Schenectady, where he graduated from Union College with honors in 1859 and also played on the school's baseball team.<sup>7</sup> He then came back to his home county to study law with Judge Lyman H. Sherwood in Lyons, just east of Macedon. He was admitted to the New York Bar in 1863 and worked in partnership with his mentor until Sherwood's death in 1866. At this point he made his move. Before the year was out he was in Wisconsin, where, according to a 1909 interview, "a glowing description of Nebraska" moved him westward again. He apparently went first to Omaha, where a "big lawyer named Poppleton" (Andrew J. Poppleton, in 1866 an unsuccessful candidate

for one of Nebraska's first U.S. Senate seats) advised him to try Nebraska City, further south along the Missouri River and then "a lively place and quite a trading point." Though impressed, Stephen did not stay long: "a great many people had their eyes turned toward Lancaster, later called Lincoln. Though the capital had not been located there at this time, it was confidently expected that it would be, and I decided to cast my fortune there."<sup>8</sup>

The "great many people" were right on in their guesses. Lancaster, then a mostly imaginary city, was selected as the new capital in two momentous steps filled with political maneuvering and financial chicanery so egregious that impeachment proceedings against the governor eventually resulted. Political alliances in Nebraska tended to divide along the Platte River, with north-of-the-Platte Omaha, the territorial capital, opposed by a host of south-of-the-Platte contenders. In the first step, a bill authorizing relocation of the capital was approved on June 14, 1867, despite a last-ditch move by an Omaha senator to turn south-of-the-Platte Democrats against the measure by changing the name from Capital City to Lincoln. In the second, the three commissioners charged with selecting the new capital met in the attic of W. T. Donovan's home in Lancaster on July 29, 1867, and voted unanimously (on their second ballot) to locate the capital there. Lancaster, then a tiny village less than a decade old with "six or seven houses" and a population of "about 30," was by these decisions renamed Lincoln and established as the capital of Nebraska.<sup>9</sup>

Lincoln's hopes for the future were pinned on the expectation of great wealth to come from development of the area's salt deposits. Governor David Butler addressed the inaugural legislative session in glowing terms just a month before the Pounds' arrival: "we have, within sight of this hall, a rich and apparently inexhaustible supply of pure and easily manufactured article. It will be directly and indirectly a source of wealth to the state whose great value no one can fully estimate."<sup>10</sup> As it happened, while the hopes based on capital relocation endured and eventually prevailed, those founded on the salt deposits were never realized, in the long run producing "noth-

ing but lawsuits, and the only tangible evidence remaining today is a saltwater swimming pool at the west edge of the city."<sup>11</sup> (Actually, the salt flats did leave at least one other lasting legacy—the Lincoln Saltdogs minor league baseball team plays today in the southern division of the Northern League.)

While these tumultuous deals went down, Stephen Pound was a brand-new resident seeking his fortune in the retail sector. For most of 1867 he operated "a small merchandizing shop in the front room of Jacob Dawson's double log cabin," though his neighbors apparently suspected his heart was not in it. "As a merchant," it was said, "he was noted for his application to his law studies."<sup>12</sup> (There is also a report, written much later by his younger daughter, Olivia, of one adventurous voyage westward to Fort Kearney as a "freighter." During this journey he innocently gave a ride to two soldiers who turned out to be deserters, was falsely accused of setting fire to haystacks at a farm where he stayed, and was freed only when a search party hunting the deserters arrived.)<sup>13</sup> In 1868 his legal studies paid off; the thirty-five-year-old New Yorker was admitted to the Nebraska Bar and went into practice with Seth Robinson, another Lincoln attorney. At the end of the year he went back east to claim his bride, having assured her that he would be bringing her to a place not entirely lacking cultural and intellectual attainments. In a letter of 1868, also cited in Olivia Pound's recollection, the suitor reports the formation of "a reading club, the first of the kind ever formed here, and of which I have the honor to be president."<sup>14</sup>

But despite these successes, as well as the optimism with which he apparently contemplated the future he would share with his new wife in Nebraska, one moment in Laura's account of their journey reveals that her husband, like attorney Irving in Plattsmouth, worried at least a little about her reaction to a place as raw and undeveloped as Lincoln. On the train, moving west across Iowa, he queries her about her expectations: "Have you any idea what sort of a place you are going to," he asks, and when she replies with a one-word affirmative, he asks her to show him, in the landscape out the win-

dow, "a place you think something like Lincoln." When she selects the small town of Tama, then a collection of "a few dingy shops with the regulation low, square fronts" (it is still there, still small, proud of a restored "Lincoln Highway" bridge on U.S. Highway 30), Stephen is impressed and relieved. "You have done pretty well," he replies cheerfully, "only it is better than Lincoln."<sup>15</sup>

The newlyweds, then, had grounds for optimism that February evening as they enjoyed their dinner surrounded by legislators in the crowded dining room of the Atwood House. They had come through their difficult midwinter journey safely, and by virtue of their education and by Stephen's occupation they were members of the new capital's elite on the day they stepped down from the stagecoach. (Their safe journey was itself no small achievement. Fifteen years earlier, the Nebraska Territory's first governor, South Carolinian Francis Burt, had died after just two days in office following the rigors of a similar trip.) Less than a year after that day, the couple had established themselves in their first Lincoln residence (located to the south of the original County Courthouse at what was then the edge of town) and the new husband had been elected judge of the Probate Court of Lancaster County. Stephen Pound, just a year after his admission to the bar, was Judge Pound, a title that would be joined to his name for the rest of his life.

Higher offices and two changes of domicile followed. After occupying a second home at 1542 P Street, the Pounds moved in 1892 to 1632 L Street. From these quarters Judge Pound's career was a steady ascent. He was founder and first president of the Lancaster County Bar Association, a Nebraska state senator for the 1872–73 term, and a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1875. A solid Republican who would have had no problem with the town's earlier name change, Judge Pound was three times elected (twice unopposed) to four-year terms as judge of Nebraska's Second Judicial District, serving from 1875 through 1887.

Laura Pound also rose quickly to prominence in the new community's affairs. She served a full decade (and a little more) on the board

of directors of the Lincoln Public Library. Her report "The Lincoln Public Library, 1875–1892" notes ten years of service by "Mrs. Richards and Mrs. Pound," who are also noted as "members of the present board." Laura was also a charter member of the City Improvement Society, the Nebraska Art Association (originally called the Hayden Art Club), and the Lincoln Women's Club, as well as an early member of the Nebraska State Historical Society. She was most prominent, however, in the Nebraska Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), where she was a charter member of the state's first local group, the Deborah Avery Chapter, and served four terms as state regent.

Bar associations, public libraries, a state art association, constitutional conventions—it is clear from such a list that Laura and her husband accomplished their climb in a world that was itself very much on the rise. They arrived near the beginning and grew up with the country. On the eve of statehood, in 1867, Nebraska claimed approximately 50,000 residents; just three years later, the 1870 U.S. census reported a population above 122,000. The new capital was at the very center of this boom. If Lincoln could boast only thirty residents and fewer than a dozen homes in 1867, a year later one of two local newspapers was reporting "by actual count 143 homes in Lincoln," and by 1870 the population had increased to 2,500.<sup>16</sup> The same year saw the Burlington Railroad arrive from Plattsmouth, and by 1872 the lines had continued west to Kearney and a connection with the Union Pacific. The new University of Nebraska opened its doors in January 1871, a faculty of five greeting a student body of ninety. Five years later, Laura Pound would enroll to perfect her German.

One of the new city's most prominent citizens, C. H. Gere, was a newspaperman whose pioneering *Nebraska Commonwealth* began as a monthly, grew to a weekly, changed its name to the *Nebraska State Journal* in 1869, and became a morning daily in 1870 on the day the railroad arrived. Another early leader was James Sweet, a banker who gave his name to the Sweet "Block," a stone structure built in 1868 to house Sweet's State Bank of Nebraska and other businesses. Sweet

was a major player in the deals that brought the state capital to Lincoln—he nearly got caught in the scandals that brought down the state's first governor, Republican David Butler. Lincoln was from its first days a city of churches—so much so that one of its abundant self-congratulatory nicknames was “The Holy City”—others included “The Hartford of the West” (celebrating insurance companies), “The Athens of the West” (celebrating colleges), and “The Retail Capital of the Midlands” (celebrating commerce). Congregationalists and Methodists were the first to organize, but by 1870 Baptists, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Universalists were also holding services.

All this is not to suggest that the state or its capital enjoyed smooth, uninterrupted progress from rude frontier to a flourishing and civilized society. The 1870s, especially the years in the decade's middle, were a difficult time for Nebraska, and for Lincoln. Some setbacks were national in scale. The financial panic of 1873 had roots in Europe but was triggered in the United States by the collapse of finance king Jay Cooke's investment empire. The New York Stock Exchange shut down for ten days, farm prices plummeted, banks failed, and foreclosures mounted. Back in Nebraska, the general depression was exacerbated by bad weather. The early and middle 1870s were years of sustained drought, made worse by devastating invasions of grasshoppers. A Lincoln-area report from July 1874 makes clear the biblical scope of the destruction: “The hoppers entered Lancaster County from the northwest. . . . In two hours they were four inches deep on the ground. They ate the onions out of the ground, beets, carrots, and everything. All that was left of the garden was the holes in the ground. . . . They did this job in about two hours.”<sup>17</sup> It was this period, presumably, that drove out Irving, the Plattsmouth attorney who had confidently predicted Laura's unhappiness in Nebraska.

Then, as if depression, drought, and grasshoppers were not enough, Lincoln was hit by damaging floods in 1873 and 1874 (two people died in the latter). The city was still reeling from the political and financial scandals of the capital location battles and the first leg-

islative sessions. The “public buildings at Lincoln,” according to one modern report, “stood out as stark monuments to the slipshod way” the new state’s affairs had been handled. “All had cost more to build than had been appropriated, and all were so poorly built that they began falling apart almost as soon as they were occupied.”<sup>18</sup> The machinations of an ill-defined “Lincoln ring” were suspected (not without reason) to be at heart of these failures. Attempts to remove the capital from Lincoln continued to plague the city and undermine investor confidence until the matter was finally laid to rest by the adoption of a new constitution in 1875. It all added up to hard times. In 1873 and 1874, Lincoln experienced its first declines in real estate valuations (this was a statewide pattern—property assessed at \$4.79 per acre in 1870 had fallen to \$2.86 per acre by the decade’s close).

Many of these tribulations, political and climatic, touched the Pound household. Laura, in particular, left vivid accounts of hard times in “The Athens of the West.” In September 1869, just seven months after her arrival and four years before the panic, she answered a letter from back east with news from Lincoln. Her tone is resolutely upbeat (“so far we have done well here”). The letter goes on to say that “two railroads” and “better times and more to eat at cheaper rates” are confidently anticipated for the following spring. “Nothing short of a good-sized fortune,” the new settler concludes, “would ever tempt me to come back East to live.”

But mixed in with all this good news are a few complaints, with rain getting top billing: “I think there has not been a week since the last of April that it has not rained a little at least and generally in torrents.” When rain combines with winds out of the south, the water floods under the door “so badly that I have to tear two sides of my carpet unnailed and turn it back.” In addition, prices are “exorbitantly high,” the house lacks even one “decent pen,” and the writer anticipates a “dull winter with nothing much to do.” But these are minor quibbles; the dominant tone remains decidedly optimistic. Laura in September is now a settled resident of the Lincoln she first saw in February, and the spirited determination of her responses to

her husband's queries on the train in Iowa and attorney Irving's predictions in Plattsmouth is still very much in evidence in her letter to the folks.<sup>19</sup>

Nearly a quarter century later, however, in January 1893, Laura took a very different view when she looked back at Lincoln's early years. The occasion was her address "The Lincoln Public Library, 1875–1892," read at a meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The city's library, she reports, "was organized towards the close of the darkest period in the history of Lincoln, the year 1875." An impressive catalog of disasters follows. In the first place, "the summers of 1873–74 had been dry, the crops were poor, and what the drouth and hail had spared, was taken by the grasshoppers." Then the winter came, with unusual cold, even for the Great Plains, "the thermometer during the months of January and February standing for many days at a time below zero."

A general assessment of this "darkest period" follows, closing the second paragraph of what must have opened as an unusually grim report of a public library's origins: "It was a time most painful to remember. There was the long and constant appeal for help, from the poor and suffering during the winter, and the gloomier prospects of the spring to come."<sup>20</sup> Even the prisoners at the new state penitentiary were tried beyond patience, rising up in January in a violent "mutiny" that ended with the fatal shooting of the rebellion's leader, an inmate named McWatters.<sup>21</sup> The contrast with the letter of 1869 could hardly be stronger. The letter subordinates present difficulties to anticipated future improvements; the report presents hard times aggravated by anticipated future worsenings. (Histories of Nebraska and neighboring states confirm Laura's portrait of Lincoln for the region as a whole. "At first," writes one, "public officials and newspapers, concerned with promoting settlement, minimized the seriousness of the situation. . . . But as reports of destitution began to pile up from all parts of the state, it became apparent that something had to be done." Stopping short of a legislative special session, Governor Robert W. Furnas turned instead to private elites, convening "a

number of well-known citizens" in the fall of 1874 "to find a means of dealing with the situation." The citizens responded by incorporating the Nebraska Relief and Aid Society to "collect money, provisions, clothing, seeds, and other supplies for distribution among the needy."<sup>22</sup> Delegations were also dispatched back east to more settled states in search of aid, where they sometimes found themselves competing with similar appeals on behalf of suffering Kansans and South Dakotans.)

It is a poor spring indeed that presents "gloomier" prospects than winter, but the spring of 1875 did arrive with a double-barreled combination of climatic and political worries. It was, Mrs. Pound reported, "cold, backward [i.e., belated], and rainy, but not cold enough to destroy the young grasshoppers or retard their growth." The following summer was "probably the rainiest ever known in the annals of Nebraska . . . Salt Creek was out of its bounds the most of the summer, and once during the month of June, the high water reached nearly to the Metropolitan hotel." But Lincoln residents in 1875 feared other things at least as much as rain and lack of rain, hail and grasshoppers, and economic slumps. According to Mrs. Pound's report, citizens were also "looking ahead with gloom and foreboding at the approaching session of the legislature," for then "stalked forth the grim spectre of Capital Removal." On May 9, in particular, they anticipated "fresh troubles" in connection with "the meeting of the constitutional convention," since these deliberations, too, might very well involve the location of the capital. There were also worries about the new University of Nebraska. Led by an Omaha newspaper, critics were calling for "the closing of the State University for five years, in order to give the high schools of the state a better chance, and to save expenses."<sup>23</sup>

Mrs. Pound's listeners, in 1893, were no doubt properly impressed by this astonishing litany of disasters. As it turned out, however, the hard winter, "backward" spring, and rainy summer were attended before fall by several triumphs. The constitutional convention, adjourning on June 12 after almost exactly a month, at last put to rest

the "spectre" of Lincoln losing the capital. Under the new constitution, the capital could be relocated only by popular vote. The movement to shut down the university was also defeated. Even the Lincoln Public Library, whose prospects had looked so bleak in April when the reading room sponsored by "the ladies' library and reading room association" had been closed "on account of hard times," was by the end of the year "practically established." Mrs. Pound, in retrospect, was inclined to see the events of 1875 as "the turning point in the history of Lincoln." Credit, she said, was due to "to the untiring energy of the Lancaster delegation."<sup>24</sup> She did not say so, but Judge Pound was surely a part of that delegation, working to advance the interests of the community where "I decided to cast my fortune" nearly a decade earlier.

It is abundantly clear, then, that despite the hard years and the times "most painful to remember," the new state and the new couple were from the beginning a perfect fit. For his part, Judge Pound's 1909 interview in the *Nebraska State Journal*, just two years before his death, affirms his continuing satisfaction with his decision for Lancaster/Lincoln more than forty years earlier: "I decided to cast my fortune there. I have never been sorry, either."<sup>25</sup> For her part, Laura's wedding journey account, published more than half a century later, makes clear that the bride who "burned her bridges" in 1869 never changed her mind. She ends her reminiscence with a ringing endorsement: "I have always been satisfied with Nebraska. I liked the altitude, the dry climate, the blue skies, the sunny days and gorgeous sunsets, the strange, new flora and the song of the prairie lark."<sup>26</sup> Stephen and Laura Pound, then, helped construct and thereafter lived successfully and contentedly in the highest tier of Lincoln society, and their accomplishments often made both of them visible on a statewide stage. But in addition to all this they did something else that lifted their town and themselves to still wider notice, to national and even international fame: they had children.

And here is a place, less arbitrary than most, to begin the story of Louise Pound. She was by any measure an extraordinary woman. In

the academic world she was a pioneering scholar who made important contributions to at least three disciplines. In the world of sports she was an outstanding athlete who would have been at one point the nation's top-ranked woman tennis player had such listings been compiled at the time. She excelled at every sport she attempted, and she attempted them all. She was a passionate supporter, both as a player and as a coach, of high-level athletic competition for women; Title IX legislation, had she lived to see it, would have seemed to her the restoration on a national scale of a golden age for women's athletics at the University of Nebraska in which she played a central role. She fought (and lost, in the short term) her life's bitterest battle in support of women's athletics at the University of Nebraska. But such gender-based commitments extended far beyond the playing fields—Louise Pound was throughout her long career as a teacher and scholar a dedicated advocate of opportunities for women in general and more especially for their educational and professional advancement. No cause—and she was active in many—gained her greater loyalty.

Last, but far from least, she was for all her long life a Nebraskan at home in Lincoln, casting her lot with her community and state every bit as wholeheartedly as her parents had before her. Like her elder brother, she could have gone elsewhere, to more prestigious academic posts (she did accept such appointments, but only for summer terms). Her choice, wholly conscious and fiercely affirmative, was for Nebraska. Nebraska had raised her and bestowed upon her the best it had to offer in the way of material advantages and educational opportunities. She remained grateful to the end of her days, and she worked diligently over a long professional lifetime to return the gift, to chronicle the state's history and more especially its traditional culture in scores of written studies and hundreds of lectures.

Louise Pound was not, however, her parents' first child. That was her brother, Roscoe, born in 1870, himself destined for a career very nearly as remarkable as hers. (Some would say more remarkable, and two of his champions have already written biographies.)

Louise came second, born on June 30, 1872, followed by her sister, Olivia, in 1874. With the arrival of her children, Laura Pound, already a woman of marked independence and resolution, came fully into her own. In retrospect it seems obvious that she was a homegrown pedagogical genius, a sort of Great Plains Maria Montessori, a woman whose own wide learning, combined with public school teaching experience in New York and in Nebraska, provided her not only with strikingly innovative instructional notions of her own but also with the confidence to implement them even in the face of community disapproval. Her first decision was to educate her children at home. The public schools of Lincoln she judged "too stereotyped"; she and her husband would be better pedagogues.<sup>27</sup> To this end, unruffled by neighborhood criticism, Mrs. Pound ordered a large blackboard and had it attached to the wall in her living room.

Her method could not have been more straightforward. Her bedrock principle, from which all good results followed, was to root education in inquiry. The student's innate curiosity, which the instructor was at pains to enlarge and systematize, initiated the adventure of learning. This process could therefore begin at an early age, presumably with the child's first queries. "I believe," she told an interviewer in 1922, "in beginning the training and teaching as soon as they are born, and their inquiries should be answered intelligently; if a parent does not know the correct answer let him [or her, as it was most often in the Pound academy] find out what it is."<sup>28</sup> In the same interview, Mrs. Pound uses Roscoe as an instance of her method in action (despite her obvious commitment to equal educational opportunities for women, and despite the reasonable guess that her branding of the Lincoln public schools as "too stereotyped" referred to a too-limited sense of appropriate educational and occupational goals for women, she invariably uses him as her example): "every child should have a fad. My boy's fad was collecting bugs and butterflies. He began by bringing into the house a cocoon which he just pulled from a tree, and stuck it up to await hatching time. It turned out to be a beautiful Cocropea moth."<sup>29</sup>

This, then, is the beginning. The child's initiative produces a piece of the natural world and a question about it. The well-prepared teacher swings into action—that's a great question, she says, asked before by other inquiring minds. There are answers, and what's more, these answers exist within an organized investigative system. The child is thus introduced to nomenclature, to taxonomy, even to epistemology: that's called a cocoon, that's called a *Cocropea* moth. And the boy at play is thus hooked, launched into learning. In this instance, young Roscoe finds himself, without ever leaving his living room, taken over the threshold of Natural Science Hall, freed to explore in the entomological and botanical wings. As Mrs. Pound related it: "From studying insects he must study what they fed upon and must study botany to find out: so this took on a new interest for him and he learned it without knowing exactly how or when." From such beginnings, she concludes, the captivated and encouraged mind, trained to systematic inquiry, takes its increasingly independent way: "in the college later, he covered all the work which Dr. Bessey gave."<sup>30</sup>

For Roscoe's sister Louise, one early "fad" was apparently stamp collecting. Her earliest surviving letter, written to a cousin in the summer of 1881, when she had just turned nine, opens with thanks for the gift of several stamps ("three of them I did not have") and goes on to a proud, carefully classified and quantified account of her collecting: "My album now contains 192 stamps. 49 are U.S. 39 are U.S. Rev. One Confederate and 103 foreign. I have only been collecting 3 months, but have some very old and rare stamps." The letter concludes with a description, similarly detailed, of her friend "Lute" Bumstead's coin collection.<sup>31</sup> Like her brother's interest in entomology and botany, Louise's attraction to collecting and arranging, which would lead in her case to significant gatherings of everything from folk songs to dialect, got an early start in the Pound home. Louise was also playing the piano at an early age (did her mother teach her this as well?). Although her brother did not play, he was very fond of listening to his sister: "Almost every evening before the Pound