



[William Crosfield Letters](#)

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Niagara Falls

Monday August 18th

My dear Mama,

I have just come in from a stroll in Canada and have felt satisfaction in looking at Niagara. The thing is so novel, and the situation so delicious that I hasten to set it down on paper before rushing out to "look at the moon" from the falls, when I expect again to be bewildered with new glories. Well I was sitting at I after crossing the suspension bridge & the sun was sinking behind light fleecy clouds which he tinged with exquisite golden hues whilst the rest of the sky was of a brilliant red colour. I never expected to see such sunsets as seem to abound under the American sky. Looking to my left I saw in the distance the whole extent of the falls the American and some portion of the Canadian fall was only seen imperfectly as I looked along them and could only see a mass of white foam; but that part of the horse shoe fall which was directly opposite was a

For the rest there is no word.

Light emerald green and show
like a jewel set in frosted silver, ~~the~~
on either side there arose a light and
vaporous cloud continuous but
ever changing till it was lost in
air, as I looked the word "beautiful"
came to my lips and I felt why I
enjoyed the view so much - it was
so small that I could comprehend
it all so long as I stayed at that
distance. But I have forgotten
moon who is already well up.
B. Bloudin's rope.

I have just been to Goat Island since writing
the above; it is eleven o'clock but I cannot
sleep, feel as if I must write or I shall
boil over. The sensation is most oppressive
met a young German just now and
he reminded me of Hedley Kears' impromptu
on looking at Niagara I had forgotten
them, but as he repeated what he could
remember I felt that it was the same
me. Last night I went out about eight
o'clock and wandered amongst the
on Goat Island in the darkness, till
arrived at the tower which stands
over looking the falls hanging again
on the edge of the cliff surrounded
every hand by rapids. I mounted to

top and standing on the gallery I
felt that I was alone, no noisy wheels
were there, no busy hum, as I stood
the foundations of the frail building
seemed to shake, I felt the boards on
which I stood shiver under my feet
as the torrent rushed into the chasm
below, taking the leap within a few
feet of me, and then I felt that I
was not alone the moon was just
then rising above the top of the trees
I felt myself drawn as it were towards
the maker and ruler of all this scene.

It was an overwhelming sight too great
to be enjoyed long and I was soon
joined by some Americans, who after
contemplating our Lord's perfect in
form and colour for a few moments,
drove out into eulogies of our little
Island; the subject would have been
pleasant at any other time or place
but here it was heavy and I was glad
to get away. I was soon in a crowd
attracted by the glorious moon and
became lowered a little from the heights
to which I had soared. Tonight I have
visited the spot and though
most of the time I had company it
was the German whom I mentioned

before, and he had felt and did
feel as I did. I had intended to keep
perfectly quiet about this district
till I come here again but as I had
before it is too much for me to suppress
it all alone and I write, as the best
means of communication that I
have got. I have felt all day as if
I should almost like to be a poet, but
if I had any poetry whatever in my
composition I should never have my
away from here, it would kill me.

The scene that I have tried to convey
you above, brought to my recollection
afterwards on other occasions when
two years ago we were all standing
in the drawing room and saw that
same moon ^{on another Sunday evening} how different was
the scene but how grand both were
since then. Well we took the train to
Cuncin for ever impressed upon my
memory; would that you could have
participated with me in this last.

The day following the ^{Quincy} ^{August} ^{Sunday} ^{the time when}
the above was written I simply kno
round and occupied myself very
pleasantly lying under the tree
listening to the water on all sides
of me. The earlier part of Wednesday

was spent in the same way as the pre-
ceding, but at four o'clock what will
you say to me? I went to see Blondie
on his tight rope. I must confess that
I felt thoroughly disgusted with myself
all Wednesday to think that I was
there to see a mountebank. However
as it turned out I was very glad of
the performance I send a newspaper
account wh I shall thank you to show
to Arthur (and hand the enclosure).
The following morning I went to the
cars and as I was waiting for the train
to come up I saw a figure at the end of
the platform which attracted me and
at the same moment Jeffrey Blackhall
recognised me. We have been in company
since then. Well we took the train to
Newiston near the shore of Lake Ontario
for us and by it we arrived at Toronto
in two hours. This town is not very
striking in appearance though it has
a fine college just building and
I felt as if I was getting near old
England for one of the first objects
that caught my eye on the dock

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was a policeman in uniform - not on leaving Kingston we entered
a nondescript with a small badge the St Lawrence and the Thousand
hid under the collar of his coat as if it were a band. The first view is certainly
he was ashamed of his colours - surely prepossessing for though the
as you see here - no not here forgot - boulders on either side lie low there
like those in "the States". Found that is always a beautiful scattering
Grey & (Captain Stuart's location) is of ^{islands} rocks in most instances hardly
long way to the north beyond Raile above the level of the water on which
Plants so I was obliged reluctantly to grow, though there seems no nourish
give up the idea of seeing our Wharfedale, this whose foliage is of all
face and name I have always been shades of green. Occasionally one
so familiar with. We left Toronto as comes into sight higher than the
five o'clock coasting along the north shore and in these cases an untamed
shore of the lake, again that to locate stratum of rock by no means
it, as there were only staterooms and detracts from the loveliness of the
for the ladies, and ladies parties, scene. Even after passing "the
a blessing ladies are as a gentleman's hands" par excellence they continue
said of himself being unable also to be heard there to add variety to
a room "Well I suppose it serves in the scene. Towards 2 in the afternoon
right I ought not to have left home to the first rapid, nothing
without my wife". At five next morning striking only like an ordinary
we were at Kingston a town or city or passing through the swell
very like Toronto except that close to a larger vessel's wake. In about
down by the harbour there is a large house we came upon some more
gray building with a dome of lead it struck me as very curious,
in the centre, this sits off the view from the water in shore seemed
very much. Almost immediately rang back at a higher level

than the centre of the stream, where the current is strong, much like the Rhine under the winds of the Bois Roin at Basle. At last just over the point where the glowing at six o'clock we came to the black, fatigued sun had gone down there rapids which certainly are rather hung dull gray clouds and on the exciting, for here only I saw the upper edge of these was a brilliant just covered with water, at times border of what we used to call lake. not even covered, it was pleasant. By this time I was getting fidgetty to feel the steamer give a lurch as for being tired of the boat. I began to having just made a dive she was remembering that letters would be wound in the rough and ships are waiting for me in Quebec and what side of another rock and the post would be the news? good or bad? is renewed. In another hour we were why good as a matter of course - but steaming under one of the spans still it may be bad I could not get of the Victoria Bridge in the ground of the ugly idea. As ill luck of the view was the city of Montreal would have it just as we got up to built almost if not entirely of granite the wharf the boat for Quebec moved stone which gives a very clean approach, and so Blackaller could not go apace to a place, behind this rose before 4 the following afternoon. He the tall double tower of Notre Dame had kindly intended to go straight much clearer and lighter in shape and get my letters on Saturday, than their names at Paris. As it was I must wait till 10 o'clock till formed a dark background on Sunday.

to this picture for the sun had just set as we came under the bridge. I have just been luxuriating in this was one of the grandest and longest letters from home - oh what

Sunday afternoon

a blessing it is to have a home best view of the city and neigh-
and friends to write when our bour hood, and whose painted
is away, it must be dull indeed window is a beautiful piece of
to travel where the post is unknown workmanship, we then walked
Many many thanks to you for some considerable distance out
your kind communications of the town and found ourselves
please thank Maggie for her two at last at the great bridge, which
I am afraid that I cannot keep when completed will be the long-
the debtor & creditor a/c properly est in the world. It is composed
balanced unless you will kindly of 23 tubes and will sometime
take these journal letters as comm carry the Grand Trunk P.R. across
properly I shall try to throw in as the St. Lawrence. At four o'clock
occasional one here and there as we set out for Quebec by cars, the
I go along. Fear you will think route is inland via Richmond,
that I shall miss your next letter and as the River is very fine between
at Clifton Ho, when you get to Quebec and Montreal, it seemed
but as the mail as supposed was a pity to leave it but the only
only bring it today I intended to other conveyance is a steamer
go back for one day, so I went which only runs at night so
first to the American side where this saved 6 hours we found it
almost all the various wonders preferable. We passed through many
lie, and then try to embrace the French looking villages, one out
whole at one view on my second way, with their Roman Catholic
visit. But I must get on with my grave yards studded all over
history yesterday we spent in with crosses. But these we soon
Montreal visiting the Cathedral left behind us as we left the
from whose towers one gets the river and approached the country

opened by the P. Road. At ten
o'clock we arrived at the village
opposite Quebec just as the
Hungarian steamed up from
Liverpool. All our passengers
went to the only bearable hotel
(Russell's) and by half past twelve
I was in bed in one of the private
sitting rooms with two roommates.
One a Southerner of whom I shall
better perhaps say very little
at present. The Congregational
chapel is just opposite the hotel
and I waited till I saw some one
that I knew arrive in her gig
and then followed her in, to
her no small astonishment
I can assure you. I think that
I am giving you a blessing
this time at any rate, to make
up for the delay of three days
which you have perhaps noticed
being the difference between the
Canadian and the American.
I give my love to everyone and
many thanks to those who ask
after your very affectionate son
H. Grosfield