



[William Crosfield Letters](#)

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St. Paul Minnesota
Monday October 17. 1859

My dear Mama,

I have wrote to the con-
viction that hitherto I have told you
very little of my prospective plans, but
now I will say this - unless something
very eligible turns up when I get to
New Orleans I shall cut all extension
in that direction - call and see a
friend in Mobile at Savannah and
then come up to Washington and not
having seen the West Indies see you
all at home as much sooner. This
has been a growing conviction for
some time varying as my companions
change with pleasant people I have often
persuaded myself that a solitary travel
in a still more foreign land would be
bearable but generally the reverse has
been the case and the many ^{events} ~~events~~ ^{at home} ~~at home~~ have aided in a great degree
to the conclusion. At Chicago on Wednesday
I got very welcome letters from you all
with one from Aunt Eleanor please
thank her for me. I shall try to write to
Maggie when I have finished this and
I have little doubt of being able to do so
as a snow storm has just set in.

I must not go to cut the bottom off
my last letter, written from the Main the
Cave, where I said that on the whole my
impressions were those of disappointment
that is not the case as I shall proceed
to tell you I had made up my mind
that I must leave on Monday as I
was very anxious to see your letter

and the company leaving was very grand. They lofty arches of con-
pleasant for two gentlemen with a tall or English Cathedral
2 Boston ladies, whilst that stay upon strictly me as did this natural
was rather the reverse. On Monday being journeyed by Port's own
go. I must. The only means of descending; the "Lovers Leap" is a great
the short route of the cave was to go over a short distance beyond
Sunday which refused, and then we retraced our steps to
saw no hope of seeing it at all the main avenue and took another
But Mr Procter the owner of the cavern to Form's (Dome). The cave
very kindly volunteered to go wherever to end with a massive wall
me himself as there was no step rock in which there is a hole about
guide rather than that. Above three feet square and this reveals
not see it. So on Monday morning of nature's greatest beauties
when my friends started by the side do not know how even to begin
I went into the cave and should describe it. On looking through
never have you ever myself if you find a chamber 300 feet high
could possibly have formed and that is to say 150 feet above the
idea of the beauties for going up in which are equal distance
without seeing them. The party below in the centre there rises or
was one of the stoniest that have seen to rise a huge mass of rock
saw so that whilst staying with like a cone to the above and this by
them that Matt the black guide the action of water is fluted so as
all to myself. Stephen the guide form a screen of the most ex-
quisite is dead. For some distance of visit workmanship. On looking
the road lies over the same ground. I found that this does not
as the low route till we come close from the floor but hangs from
the "giants coffin" the chief object the roof for the end a much nearly
note are the Gothic Chapel a lofty 150 feet long has fallen and
of natural columns supported here it lies in a mighty mass
the ceiling and a cluster which at the bottom of the chamber. I have
been disappointed with the name might you estimate the weight of
the pulpit tho' it deserves one water which daily rolls over the
much better to give any idea of cliff at Mayan as my to form an
its merit. The effect of this idea of the weight of this rock sup-
the influence of a blue light is held by what power! The effect

was very much increased by my going round with Matt to the rock whence he shows his light. This is somewhat dangerous but with care and a good head it is well worth doing. I was the only one of the party who was asked to go round and felt flattered in proportion. From this little ledge one sees the hidden grandeur of the cave for the side opposite the window is worked so to speak, even more beautifully than the central scene. I made the remark that there was no power like water ^{on earth} "He said the guide 'on earth' but on man what like whiskey?" The light is indispensable in the cave for what reason I cannot say; for whilst it seems to illumine it certainly hides quite as much as it exhibits and receives by giving an unnatural depth to the blue portion of the view. Here I was not sorry to leave my companions and putting myself under the guidance of mine host to visit the star chamber where imagination had pictured a Lauppston a mass of large white stars on the roof of the cave. But no such thing the chamber is large and rocky rocks reaching almost to the top stretching arch wise across so as to leave

men by a small portion of plain stone in the centre. The delusion here is so great that I could imagine that I was looking at the open sky on a dark night - in about five minutes I could see a little sparkle on the blue ground work but should not call this the "star chamber" unless some one suggested it to me. My companion took my lamp and left me alone - do you know what darkness is? you say "yes" - you think so but are mistaken. I can well understand how people could go mad when lost in here as stories say. I never did feel what loneliness was before then - in the darkness the idea of the heavens (not stars) was infinitely increased. Then came the beauty - gradually the air footsteps approach hollow and dismal they sounded as they seemed well to recede at one time and then a slight light was seen on the wall this slowly advanced and lit up point after point. The darkness had been dreary now the light was indeed lively. After enjoying a long look at the wonder that surrounded us we went away

and soon reached the daylight. But more frequent objects were
now bright even a dull day too the endless fogs (endless indeed
after a few hours under ground for they are the rathorse species)
show little many of us think of getting at Woodlands and
the blessing of the light. You must join my Yankee friends with
not suppose that I have been able whom the time passed pleasant
to mention all the objects which enough, one of them more
must catch the eye of every traveller particularly the elder of the ladies
to the cave. The guide seems to have very intelligent woman who
a great knowledge of the geology and her opinion of her own and
characteristics of the different rock. It is not withstanding many
on one part there was a substantial and discussions with one
small and rough on the other. I saw a Christian man Mr. (Peda) Goucher (who
rough that it was like lay in his hands. I must find him out and
your name on a carding machine. He? I must find him out and
"Oh here's quartz" cries a lady who all be well. Well this lady has
thinks she has made a discovery for many winters in the
"More points than quartz" is the south and gave me much information.
guide's only correction of her opinion. The evening was lovely
ignorance. My explorations the moon not far from full
were ended by eleven o'clock in the evening an additional charm
for noon so that I had ample time to the forest which it by no
time to walk 12 miles and journey was needed. Found a crowd
the cars at 3 o'clock for Louisville of racing men at the hotel, and
the road lay almost solely through did not think that they were so
woods and found much low a set as they would be with
amusement in listening to us - at any rate they were not so
the sound of my own voice striking more like the people
it lost itself far away from generally perhaps. There were
my back. I should almost have some celebrated characters there
enjoyed following it till I that (D. Gross pointed out to me
found myself lost. Now a number of deer and such like, a
again I started a flock of quail, much showing a very
free and easy state of society. At

is now considerably out of the line to me^gs yes me. Thank
the way to go to the cave by way of papa and the stockholders for
of Matamoras so I was unable to go with him. I will over the road till the last
see the Crittentons. On Thursday of '59. Left nine o'clock
morning before leaving I walked over, over, over over level land
to visit a very remarkable it was like going over a narrow
artesian - medicinal - well a patch of land between two seas.
a paper mill in the city - and of grass not water but you
then went alone to the west. I shall hear more anon.
route lay north to Indianapolis. When I had breakfasted at the
almost entirely thro' woods. The Richmond House (Dear Richmond
to know what a forest prime you remember the ship) Hallied
is now which I did not before. out to find Staines, poor fellow
Iapolis there is a very large city when he recognised me he was
depot used by six different lines nearly wild. After the first of his
of rail this and a distant view friends that he has seen since
of the Insane Asylum was all at once and almost everyone
that time would allow me to we met had to be introduced and
see in this city before I took the call had to be made at every
here I went to see now might other store to see one of his friends.
fell upon us but I could see at the British Consulate that the
that both Highlanders and Treasurers of seeing the outside
Staines are situated in a row of a file of houses and an invitation
level country. At one o'clock to read this the official was not at
in the morning. Found my name. Charles James Bloomfield
not quite at home but at his father's ^{now} now a soap boiler
rate on familiar ground - ^{in his nephew} was also from home. They say
at Matamoras joined the line that Staines knows more than
Central Railroad. Now don't be Chicago than half the men
to laugh when I tell you that who were born there - he has the most
company owning the above ridiculous faculty for making
has to use their own technical terms that I've seen in any
expression" extended the courtesan. In the afternoon he took

me to call on a family from much to our mutual satisfaction
the old country. Thoroughbred blackguard Stewarts of New York
English 25 years out the head and both been badly received
of the house is a nursery man and it was pleasant to both of
an old friend of the friend of us to persuade ourselves that
the Botanic, very much interested there was ^{nothing} to see and we ought
in most things. In the evening to see it. Went to see a capital
he took me to the Church in a institution near the Central Depot
(their weekday service) And of a pair of buildings containing
that to see the site of the terrible business they can get through
fire that occurred here a short is extraordinary. Each building
time ago. In every street one or will contain 300,000 bushels of
more calls had to be made. No wheat. Chicago is a wonderful
morning was wet and I did not place when you consider the
think to do much but one of age of the place - it contains
friends took me and presented 20,000 inhabs and the oldest
me to the Board of Trade their born man is only 22 years old -
'Change held in a small room notwithstanding this it contains
where they do a large business many very magnificent blocks
in grain. There are other great and many are still going up
took me to the Central Railroad in spite of the check everything
offices and introduced me to got in the panic from which it
clerk right in the President's is not yet recovered. On Friday
from the Traffic Manager to morning. Left the city to reach
ditto I got anote to the Chicago Saint Paul on Saturday at mid-
Sugar Refinery, and let me night as they told me. My road
note it in large letters there they through Northern Illinois
was well received. Chicago where the land is much better
a great place and no mistake cultivated than on the branch
Knew one of the young men of the Central road - but this is an old

established road that is to say
has been working six years and
it has of course improved the
country. At Deer Lick Hook
boat did find that she was
going to keep her engagements
but there was no help as there
no place to stop so went on. The
river is the finest piece of nature
that I ever saw or ever expect to
see. Oh how much would I like
to have some of you out here
share my raptures with me.
is such cold work to talk to one
of these western men perhaps
a Pike's Peak or Californian
looks first at the hills & then at
wondering what you can see
it to admire. The men are in
just now. Oh dear another has
gone. I have several things to do
and no room I wish to send
my great loves to all my friends
within a circuit of some miles
of the Custom House. I am so
that you will be at the trouble of
writing to Kings Cove (Suppose)
has been unable to get into the
houses here - I hope he is already
much better and will not work
till quite able. Yours very
affectionately M. W. Field Jr