

St Louis March 13. 1829
My dear Parents
I arrived here three days since, and was much disappointed at not finding letters from home. I hope you are all well, and that my disappointment has arisen from the great irregularity of the mails in these parts, and not from the neglect of or forgetfulness of my friends. I had a most tedious passage from Louisville Ky. the trip is generally made in five days, we were 32. This was owing to the cold weather which has continued with a severity heretofore unknown in this latitude. We were froze up in the Ohio at one place 25 days. When I look back on my journey I am almost terrified into superstitious misgivings. I left home in a storm, I left Boston in a storm, and Washington in a storm, and have met with uncomfortable impediments at almost every stage of my progress. But thank heaven I have experienced no serious injury, and am now at that distant corner of our union, toward which I long ago turned my eye as a place of my future residence. As I look down upon the map of my country, and see the wide distance that divides me from my home and all the friends of my youth, I confess I am filled with very melancholly feelings. I look out upon the country around me, but I see not my own N. England hills. A multitude are around me, but they are strangers. Such thoughts are permitted to form companions for solitary hours but perhaps they should not be expressed, for as a general thing I have found the world construe all sensibility into weakness.

St. Louis stands on a high rugged ridge rising quite abruptly from the river, and contains from 5 to 7 thousand inhabitants. Many of the buildings are old French houses, a story and a half high with a piazza on two or three sides. The streets are narrow and very dirty tho for the most part roughly paved. The site of the town is on the whole pleasant, for it overlooks the broad river

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Maine Historical Society
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Date: March 13, 1829
Description: G.W. Pierce from St. Louis

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and the opposite shore, which is all covered with farm houses. The American population surpasses the French, and is rapidly increasing. Back of the city, for the first time in my life I saw a prairie. It is an immense wide field without any trees or bushes, and at a distance looks like cultivated land from which the crops have been recently taken.

Those gentlemen to whom I brought letters have treated me with great politeness and seemed willing to give me all the information in their power. I know the most respectable among the lawyers and am have endeavoured to learn what I could of the professional prospects in this part of the country. From all I can learn I think they are not so favourable as in New England. The fees are not so high, and the practice not half so liberal. The labour of the profession here is not so much of an intellectual labour as among us. The first of the bar here, I understand, resort to expedients, that I know would be considered dishonourable with us. Indeed no fortune could tempt me to take up my residence for life in this state. The population is so motley, and disagreeable in its character, it presents such a disgusting contrast to the sober and intelligent people of New England, that a native of the latter must undergo half a century of moral and intellectual degradation before he would become assimilated to the ~~poor~~ people around him. Almost every body here will swear, fight, and drink whiskey. You see them carrying big knives & pistols about their persons, and hear them talk of deadly encounters, as mere matters of sport. For my own part, I cannot consent to live in such a country, and have made up my mind to return home, and settle in my own state. I am glad, however that I have taken this journey, for it has given me many new and interesting views of my country and its people.

I feel no mortification at the thoughts of returning, tho I

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well remember I left home with the intention of settling here; for I know there are many will welcome me back. More than all my dear Parents do I think of your wishes and your love for me. I shall soon be again by your side, and under your eye; there I hope to grow into respectability and influence. I know I shall be able to entertain you often with what I have seen and heard since I left you, and hope to convince you that neither my time nor my money has been mispent. I shall leave here in about 9 or 10 days, and ascend the Ohio to Pittsburgh - thence to Erie and Niagara Falls - then down the canal to Albany and across the country, thro Mass. home. I shall probably be with you by the first of may.

Give my love to all the family

I am your affectionate Son
Geo W. Pierce

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