



Detroit. Sept. 27th 1846.

My Dear Father

We have at length arrived safely, and in good health at this old French city. The journey does not appear as long, nor many of the "sights," as wonderful on looking back to them now, as they did in anticipation.

I will not now attempt to give you a very full account of our adventures and marvels by sea & land, reserving the detail for the fireside at home, which, notwithstanding all loud declarations to the contrary at one time, I think I shall not long be separated from. Having written to you while at Albany, my narrative had better commence with our departure from that place which was on the day following our arrival, by the afternoon train of cars for the West. We visited the State-House, City Hall, Geological Collection &c. however, while there. We stopped in Schenectady about an half hour, but not long enough to see George Main.[?] His letter I dropped in the post office. This was Tuesday. We reached Syracuse at half past 11. P. M. After spending the night there and looking at the Salt-works in the morning we again resumed our journey. As Charles shew a decided disinclination to so doing we did not stop at Geneva, nor indeed at any other place till we arrived at Rochester, at a little past 2 in the afternoon. We dined there, looked at the falls, delivered a eulogy on the Lamented Sam Patch, over his grave, admired the Canal Aqueduct, &c. and finally, in the evening took the steamboat for Niagara Falls via the Genesee river – and Lake Ontario.

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Maine Historical Society
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Date: Sept. 27, 1846
Description: Josiah Pierce on trip from Albany to Detroit

The boat did not really go farther than Lewiston, and we ^{were} transported from there to the falls in railroad cars, drawn by horses, arriving at the world renowned cataract, by the seasonable hour of half-past 6 in the morning.

That day we worked hard: visiting all the important spots, going under the falls in oilskin dresses, crossing to the Canada shore, and of course paying well for every time we turned round. Charles remarked that they did not appear as sublime to him as the Great Falls in Hiram, and I think my own feelings were of somewhat a similar nature. We hardly remained long enough to be adequately impressed with their grandeur, but the impression that was made can never be effaced.

We were "en route" again for Buffalo in the afternoon where we passed the night - And the next forenoon at half past 10, we were on board the steamer Cleveland bound for Detroit. This was Friday, you perceive.

At about 6 P. M. we reached the town of Erie, where we were obliged to remain all night, nolens volens, for just as our boat was on the point of putting out, a gale arose which made it full as prudent to remain.

The boat left the harbor the next morning at 6 1/2 but did not get out until ~~9~~ nine, as two hours were spent in trying to get a steamboat off, which had been run aground on the preceding night. After getting aground ourselves and with much difficulty getting clear, and, in the bargain, breaking one of the stoutest cables, and dragging the anchor some way, the captain concluded we had amusement enough and our voyage was again commenced with a fair day but a rough sea before us. Just after supper we reached Cleveland: and as the boat stopped there nearly two hours for the purpose of lading and unlading freight, C & myself took a

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Stroll about the town, which proved very agreeable. It is a fine place. To conclude we arrived at Detroit at 10 o'clock this forenoon, somewhat way-worn, but with good appetites, a sure indication of health, I think. We shall depart for Orion tomorrow morning.

Sunday eve. I have just returned from a call on Mrs. Dow. She is well, appeared glad to see me. Her husband is now "up on the lakes". The old lady is not in very good health. I attended the service at the Catholic Cathedral, this afternoon - and a most elaborate mummery it was. Detroit appears low, homely, and muddy. The streets are not paved, the houses are principally built of wood, and only one or two stories in height, and the inhabitants are truly a mongrel set. Yankees, French, German, Spanish, &c ad infinitum are beautifully blended in a Babel-like confusion - There are no public squares and very few trees, but these are mostly locusts, and look very well. The Western Steamboats present quite a contrast to those of New England. Their cabins are on the upper deck, and they make much more display, always having half a dozen or more flags flying when they sail in or out of port. The passengers are different too. They are quite free, and very easy to become acquainted with. Well, we are here at last - and feel as if we were through with quite an undertaking. Being somewhat tired, I will write no more at present. Expect another letter in about a week. Much love to all.

Your affectionate Son Josiah.

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