

St. Louis June 5 87.
 My dear mother
 Your letter of May 3rd was received. I can get a ticket from here to Las Vegas and return (Excursion ticket) for forty four dollars. \$44.⁰⁰
 It will be good for three months from the day I buy it, that is, if I get one on the 14th. I will have to be back here by the 14th of Sep. which is just the thing as school will begin on the fifteenth of Sept.

We had better leave Jacksonville on the morning of June 13th for St. Louis and then leave here at half past eight o'clock the same evening.
 The commencement exercises will be the only thing at the University this week, so I can go to Jacksonville on Tuesday or Wednesday.
 I went to hear an opera in open air at Urigo Cave with Joshua Leggat and two others of my class last night. I had not been to an opera before for six months. I got a good suit yesterday for a little less than \$20.⁰⁰ I saw Capt. Kelly at the opera last night but not to speak to him.
 Address your next letter to Jacksonville.
 Affectionately
 Your son
 B. H. Grierson Jr.

In the letter to the left and transcribed below, Harry Grierson explains his travel plans back to family after his first year at Washington University in St. Louis to his mother. By this time, Ben and Alice are residing in Santa Fe and Robert and George are on the ranch outside of Fort Davis. Harry would never get to use the return leg of his excursion ticket to return to the university. Ben's investments and expenses at the ranch would limit funds and Harry would stay on with his brothers.

A letter to Alice from her son Harry
 St. Louis June 5. 87.

My dear mother
 Your letter of May 31st was received. I can get a ticket from here to Las Vegas and return (Excursion ticket) for forty four dollars. \$44.⁰⁰
 It will be good for three months from the day I buy it, that is, if I get one on the 14th. I will have to be back home by the 14th of Sep. which is just the thing as school will begin on the fifteenth of Sept.
 We had better leave Jacksonville on the morning of June 18th for St. Louis and then leave here at half past eight o'clock the same evening.
 The commencement exercises will be the only thing at the University this week, so I can go to Jacksonville on Tuesday or Wednesday.
 I went to hear an opera in open air at Urigo Cave with Joshua Leggat and two others of my class last night. I had not been to an opera before for six months. I got a good suit yesterday for a little less than \$20.⁰⁰ I saw Capt. Kelly at the opera last night but not to speak to him.
 Address your next letter to Jacksonville.

Affectionately
 Your son
 B. H. Grierson Jr.



Benjamin Henry "Harry" Grierson, Jr.



Uhrig's Cave (#27) as it appears in *Pictorial St. Louis 1875*

Beneath St. Louis is a honeycomb of unexpected caverns and passages that early businessmen turned into an asset by employing these hidden caves into acres of inexpensive cool storage. It was the perfect setting for brewers, who used the natural caves for laagering rooms and storage. Brick vaults and flooring allowed the caves to be used for other commercial and entertainment purposes.
 Uhrig's Cave, that Harry visited, opened beneath Jefferson and Washington Sts, and was the most elaborate of the Caves of St. Louis. The original Uhrig's Cave was a storage and beer aging space for the Camp Springs Brewery. Located 40 feet underground, it was connected to the brewery through a series of other caves. At a cost \$100,000 a small railroad ran entirely within the cave system to transport beer from the brewery to the cave. The cave space was 170 feet long, with thick brick walls with arched ceilings to prevent water seepage. Business expanded, and by 1852, the Uhrig's held band concerts, picnics, and conducted tours through the cave. The theatre was the scene of the American premiere of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'H.M.S. Pinafore.'
 During the 1860s the cave property was sold to Chris Nunce. The Civil War put a hold to the tours, concerts, and picnics, and the cave became a favorite rendezvous for the militia and the Home Guards. It rebounded after the war, and by 1879, the cave once again regained its antebellum popularity and the little beer garden had become a true opera theatre.
 In 1884, the site sold to Thomas McNeary, a saloonkeeper. He and his brother ushered in the period of Uhrig's Cave's greatest glory. The first entertainment spot in St. Louis to use electric lights, Uhrig's Cave held an audience of three thousand and hosted some of the most popular entertainers of the day.
 The glory was short-lived, however. In 1888, the McNearys lost their liquor license and the cave was abandoned for a time. Regaining life briefly, from 1900 to 1908, the cave was the site of an enclosed theatre, a roller-skating rink, a bowling alley, and a mushroom farm. Eventually, the McNearys abandoned all attempts to keep Uhrig's Cave open. In 1908, the cave was destroyed, though the site retained its civic importance, when the St. Louis Coliseum was built over the it.