

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON

September 21, 1923.

Dear Mr. Hayden:

I have before me your letter of September 20, attaching copy of further letter to you from Mr. Boyce of Williams on the question of the powder magazine at the Grand Canyon National Park.

When I was in the Grand Canyon Park three or four years ago the magazine was located quite close to the Grand Canyon Village. I instructed the then superintendent to investigate possible locations on the South Rim quite a distance away from where people centered, and the result was that after considerable exploration the present site was decided upon and the explosives moved thereto. All this was before Colonel Crosby's advent to the Grand Canyon, and he himself has studied the situation recently.

Colonel Crosby is an experienced highway engineer, having formerly been State Highway Engineer of the State of Maryland, and understands explosives. It often happens that where laymen such as I, for instance, would think that explosives located at a certain place when ignited would tear a great deal of the surrounding country to pieces, in fact they have been so sheltered that any explosion that might occur wastes itself into the air. Mr. Boyce should recognize that the explosives would be so guarded and so arranged that any explosion would do no damage whatever. This is evidenced by the fact that skilled yeggmen can fill the cracks of safes with nitroglycerine, holding it in place with only laundry soap, and all the damage that will be done is within a space of only about five feet square.

It goes without saying that we are only too anxious to do everything humanly possible to protect and safeguard the lives of people within the park area, and while I personally am confident that the present location for the storage of this explosive is satisfactory, I am going to ask the superintendent to make a special trip out to the storage place and again verify, from his own knowledge of explosives, the fact that nothing further can be done to reduce any hazard or insure greater safety.

Sincerely yours,

Acting Director.

Hon. Carl Hayden,
House of Representatives, U.S.