

**Guide to the Henry Eaton Coleman Papers, 1862
Catalog Number MS319**

The Library at The Mariners' Museum

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Library at The Mariners' Museum

Title: Henry Eaton Coleman Papers, 1862

Catalog number: MS319

Accession number:

Physical Characteristics: Two items

Language(s): English

Creator(s): Henry Eaton Coleman

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Battle of Hampton Roads on March 9 and 10, 1862, was observed on shore by thousands of civilians and soldiers. Henry Eaton Coleman, of the 12th North Carolina Infantry Regiment, stationed at Camp Arrington, witnessed the battle and wrote a detailed account of the engagement to his wife, Julia. In the six-page letter, Coleman describes both days of the Battle of Hampton Roads. He records the names and movements of Federal and Confederate vessels, the destruction of the USS *Congress* and the USS *Cumberland* by the CSS *Virginia*, and estimates the loss of life at about 1500 men. Also within the letter, Coleman recounts the battle of the USS *Monitor* and *Virginia* and describes both vessels. He includes simple sketches of both the *Virginia* and the *Monitor*. Within the collection is an unpublished manuscript, written by Coleman's son Richard Logan Coleman in 1910, titled "Sketch of Colonel Henry Eaton Coleman"

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession number

Accession date

2003

Restrictions

Collection is open to all researchers.

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Preferred Citation

Henry Eaton Coleman Papers, 1862: MS319

The Library at The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia

Note to Users

Due to the fragile and rare nature of the collection, researchers are requested to handle the materials with caution and in accordance with proscribed archival practices. When using these materials, please preserve the original order of the collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

The son of Charles Baskerville Coleman and Sarah Anne Eaton, Henry Eaton Coleman was born in Halifax County, Virginia on January 5, 1837. Coleman's mother died on the date of his birth and his father died when he was 12 years of age. From the age of 12, Coleman was raised by his uncle, John Coleman. He studied civil engineering at the Virginia Military Institute and the College of William and Mary. At the age of 21, Coleman purchased a 1500 acre farm in the counties of Mecklenburg, Virginia and Granville, North Carolina known as "Cedar Grove." In January 1858, Henry Coleman married Julia Logan.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Coleman joined the 12th North Carolina Infantry Regiment, as a captain in Company B. The regiment was raised and equipped by his uncle, Colonel Charles Eaton. The regiment was ordered to Sewell's Point, near Norfolk, Virginia, and it is here that Coleman witnessed the Battle of Hampton Roads. Coleman participated in a number of battles and skirmishes during the Civil War including: Gettysburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, the second battle of Manassas, and Spottsylvania, Virginia. At the battle near Spottsylvania, Coleman suffered a severe wound to the head.

In the fall of 1869, Coleman was hired as a civil engineer by the Norfolk and Great Western Railroad. Coleman also worked for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, the United States Coast Survey Department, Pittsylvania County surveyor, and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. William Coleman died on June 25, 1890 in Halifax County, Virginia.

FOLDER LISTING

Folder 1 Finding Aid

Folder 2 Background Information
Unpublished manuscript, "Sketch of Colonel Henry Eaton Coleman" written by his son Richard Logan Coleman in 1910. [MS319.01.02.01]

Folder 3 Correspondence 1862

March 10, 1862: Camp Arrington, Virginia
Six-page letter from Henry Eaton Coleman to his wife Julia Logan Coleman. Coleman describes both days of the Battle of Hampton Roads. He records the names and movements of Federal and Confederate vessels, the destruction of the USS *Congress* and the USS *Cumberland* by the CSS *Virginia*, and estimates the loss of life at about 1500 men. Coleman recounts the battle of the USS *Monitor* and *Virginia* and describes both vessels. He includes simple sketches of both the *Virginia* and the *Monitor*. [MS319.01.03.01]

MATERIALS REMOVED

None

SOURCES CONSULTED

Coleman, Richard Logan. "Sketch of Colonel Henry Eaton Coleman." [Unpublished Manuscript] 1910. (See folder 2)

SUBJECTS

12th North Carolina Infantry Regiment

Battle of Hampton Roads

Coleman, Henry Eaton

CSS Virginia (Ironclad ; 1862)

USS Monitor (Ironclad ; 1862)

[United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Personal narratives.](#)