

**Guide to the John Cary Letter, 1862
MS0334**

**The Mariners' Museum Library
at
Christopher Newport University**

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners' Museum Library

Title: John Cary Letter, 1862

Catalog number: MS0334

Physical Characteristics: One item

Language(s): English

Creator(s): John Cary

SCOPE AND CONTENT

John Cary gave his sister an eyewitness account of the Battle of Hampton Roads on March 9th and 10th, 1862, writing just two days after the ironclads *Virginia* and *Monitor* fought. He did not try to duplicate the details of the battle as given by the newspapers but offered instead what he saw and experienced and his opinions.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession number

CA23

Accession date

unknown

Restrictions

Open to all researchers.

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Preferred Citation

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Note to Users

Researchers are requested to handle the materials with caution and in accordance with prescribed archival practices. When using these materials, please preserve the original order of the collection.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL SKETCH

With just one letter from John Cary, there is too little information to identify him with accuracy. The Battle of Hampton Roads is well-documented.

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1

March 12, 1862: Norfolk

John Cary to his sister Eliza Cary in Richmond. Handwritten copy, 2-pages. Writes about the Battle of Hampton Roads which he witnessed from about 200 yards above the Sewells Point battery at the water's edge. He was one amongst "the thousands of troops that lined the shore," and whose "excitement when the *Cumberland* went down can better be imagined than described. Everyone yelled at the top their voices, some jumped, some threw their hats in the air, and one old fellow rolled over and over in the sand." He wrote "I saw [the *Virginia*] fire her first shot and then saw her pour broadside after broadside in the U.S. vessels and the land battery..." "I saw the *Cumberland* fall on her side then sink. I saw the *Congress* burning by moon light." He offers a brief description of the *Monitor*, referring to it as the Ericsson: "The Ericsson is small, carries only two guns, she stood up to the *Virginia* manfully and I don't think was hurt." He believed, however, that the *Virginia* was damaged more than the papers admitted.

MATERIALS REMOVED

No materials were removed from this collection

SOURCES CONSULTED

SUBJECTS

Hampton Roads, Battle of, Va., 1862

Virginia (Ironclad : 1862)

Monitor (Ironclad : 1862)

United States-History-Civil War, 1861-1865-Personal narratives