

**Guide to the Alexander Moor Letter, 1862 April 1
MS0392**

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

Contact Information:
The Mariners' Museum Library
100 Museum Drive
Newport News, VA 23606
Phone: (757) 591-7782
Fax: (757) 591-7310
Email: library@MarinersMuseum.org
URL: www.MarinersMuseum.org/library

Processed by Jay E. Moore, 2012

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners' Museum Library

Title: Alexander Moor Letter

Inclusive Dates: 1862 April 1

Catalog number: MS0392

Physical Characteristics: 1 letter (correspondence)

Language: English

Creator: Moor, Alexander (1835-1864); Moor, James C. (James Carson)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Alexander Moor was born February 1, 1835, the son of Thomas Moor Sr. (1800-1881) and Susannah Moor (d. 1846) of Indiana County, PA (the spelling 'Moor' is used in the letter. Records consulted for the creation of this sketch use the spelling 'Moore'). He had at least 1 sister, Polly, and 3 brothers: James Carson; William (1831-1905); and John H. (1834-1893).

Alexander enrolled in the Union Army at Indiana, PA on August 21, 1861. His enlistment papers state that he was 6 feet tall, with dark hair and brown eyes, and that his occupation was farming. On August 22, 1861, he was mustered in as a private in Company A of the 61st Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, which was recruited in and around Pittsburgh, PA and organized at Camp Copeland in August of 1861. According to the Roster for Company A, Moor was probably recruited in Indiana County. At the time of the letter in this collection, Moor's regiment was attached to the 1st Brigade, commanded by Brig. Gen. Lawrence Graham, of General Silas Casey's First Division of the 4th Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, commanded by General E.D. Keyes.

Alexander Moor was eventually discharged from the Union Army, but records indicate that he re-enlisted on February 14, 1864. The roster records that he was wounded at the attack on Fort Stevens outside of Washington, DC on July 12, 1864, along with 25 other men of the regiment. His foot was amputated as a result, and he died shortly after the battle. His body was sent home, and he was buried in Gilgal Cemetery near Marion Center, Indiana County, PA.

James Carson Moor, Alexander's brother who also signed the letter in this collection, was born 29 September 1828. He married Nancy Loudon in the early-1850s and by 1855, after the birth of their first child, they moved to Auburn in Crawford County, Ohio. They had 4 children by 1861: Sarah Ellen; Mary Jane; Thomas Jefferson; and William Alexander Moor. James Carson Moor may have been part of the Unassigned Pennsylvania Volunteers. No further information is available on his service. James Carson Moor died on March 17, 1864 and was also buried in Gilgal Cemetery.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Alexander and James C. Moor's letter to their brother is rich in detail about the writer's experiences in Graham's Brigade of the Army of the Potomac from March 10, 1862, to

April 1, 1862. Though the letter is simply addressed to “Brother,” the letter writer speaks in the third person about their brother William, leaving only John H. and an unsubstantiated brother Thomas A. as possible recipients.

The experiences the Moors write about in the letter are largely those referenced in the regimental history of the 61st Pennsylvania volunteers, to which only Alexander belongs. Alexander is therefore the presumptive author. Alexander writes, for example, of the abortive effort to find Confederate forces around Manassas, VA, and of his embarkation on the steamer *William Small* on March 26, 1862 at Alexandria, bound for Fort Monroe on the Virginia Peninsula. According to one company history, the “old, rotten steamer” was “so worthless and overloaded we had to so divide as to balance the vessel; the captain of it finally prohibited our moving around any, and cursed us when we tried to stretch our cramped limbs” (*History of Indiana County, Pennsylvania*). Moor’s comments about seeing the US Steam Battery *Monitor*, however, which he refers to at one point as “a curious looking animal,” are unique to him and not discussed in regimental histories. Moor’s description will be of interest to *Monitor* scholars.

The letter is organized into one folder.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession Number

Ms392

Accession Date

2007

Restrictions

The collection is open to all researchers.

Publication Rights

Copies of any materials may not be reproduced, published, or distributed in any form without the expressed permission of The Mariners’ Museum.

Preferred Citation

Alexander Moor Letter, 1862 April 1, MS0392, The Mariners’ Museum Library

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 prescribed archival practices. When using these materials, please preserve the original order of the collection.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Library houses another strikingly similar contemporary letter, the Union Soldier Letter Detailing Transport from Alexandria, VA to Fort Monroe, 1862 April 3, MS 0329, in which the writer also comments on seeing the ironclad *Monitor*.

A transcription of the letter is available for consultation in the Library and may be photocopied upon request.

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1 Correspondence, 1862
April 1, 1862: New Port News, South eastern Shores of Virginia

SOURCES CONSULTED

Lyttle, William M., and Forrest R. Holdcamper. *Merchant Steam Vessels of the United States, 1790-1868*. Rev. ed. C. Bradford Mitchell. Staten Island, NY: The Steamship Historical Society of America, Inc., 1975.

Gibson, Charles Dana, and E. Kay Gibson, comps. *Dictionary of Transports and Combatant Vessels Steam and Sail Employed by the Union Army, 1861-1868*. The Army's Navy Series. Camden, ME: Ensign Press, c1995.

"Life in Company "A", 61st Pennsylvania Volunteers - 61stPVI."
<http://www.61stpvi.org/index/pa61co-a> (accessed May 9, 2012).

"Roster of Company A, 61st Pennsylvania Volunteers - 61stPVI."
<http://www.61stpvi.org/index/pa61arst> (accessed May 8, 2012).

"61st Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers." <http://www.pa-roots.com/pacw/infantry/61st/61storg.html> (accessed May 8, 2012).

Dyer, Frederick H. *Regimental Histories*. Vol. 3 of *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*. A facsimile of the first edition with an introduction by Bell Irvin Wiley. New York: T. Yoseloff, 1959.

Fox, William F. *Regimental Losses in the American Civil War, 1861-1865*. 1898. Reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside Bookshop, 1985, p. 72-73.

SUBJECTS

William Small (Sidewheel steamer : 1851)

Monitor (Ironclad : 1862)

Peninsular Campaign, 1862

Moor, Alexander (1835-1864)

Transports-Virginia

United States. Army. Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, 61st (1861-1865)-History