

**Guide to the Civil War Sailor Tintype, circa 1862-1865
MS0431**

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

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners' Museum Library
Title: Civil War Sailor Tintype
Inclusive Dates: circa 1862-1865
Catalog number: MS0431
Physical Characteristics: 1 tintype (print) in 1 Union case
Language: English

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection consists of a single tintype photograph, housed in a decorative Union case.

The photograph itself is a sixth-plate portrait of a Civil War Union sailor, waist-up. The sailor, an enlisted man, is unidentified.

The brown Thermoplastic Union case, manufactured in 1862, features an embossed rendering of an ironclad in combat under the walls of a fort, presumably meant to represent Fort Monroe, Virginia. This so-called "U.S.S. *Monitor* at the Fort" design is both scarce and among the most desirable of Civil War patriotic cases. The ironclad is clearly *Monitor*, as no other ironclad featured square smoke and blower stacks. The case was manufactured by Littlefield, Parson and Company. The label inside case reads "Littlefield, Parson & Co. Manufacturers of Daguerreotype Cases. L.P. & Co. are the sole Manufacturers of Union Cases, with their Embarking Riveted Hinge. Patented October 14, 1856 and April 21, 1857." There is a slight crack in the case cover in the lower section running from the outside edge into the ironclad image.

The photograph is stored in its case within a sink mat.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession Number
MS0431

Accession Date
2008

Restrictions
The collection is open to all researchers.

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Other Finding Aids

A full record and electronic reproductions of the original photograph and Union case in this collection can be found in Museum's photograph database.

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

Two other Thermoplastic Union cases with the “*Monitor* at the Fort” design can be found in the *Monitor* Collection Associated Records, MS0390, Series 13, Jerry Lee Harlowe Collection. The Associated Records are on deposit in the Library from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary.

Four other photographs or photographic collections may also be of interest to patrons: “Acting Master James R. Wheeler, USN” (PP2828), who was a gunner aboard USS *Kearsarge*, the ship that sank the Confederate raider *Alabama* off Cherbourg, France; “Portrait of a Sailor” (PP2590); “Sailor from USS *Congress*” (MS0412); and the many tintypes of officers and crew of the *Monitor* found in the John L. Worden Papers (MS0016).

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1 Photograph in Union case

SOURCES CONSULTED

Newhall, Beaumont. *The Daguerreotype in America*. [New York?]: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1961.

Krainik, Clifford, Michele Krainik, and Carl Walvoord. *Union Cases: A Collector’s Guide to the Art of America’s First Plastics*. Grantsburg, WI: Centennial Photo Service, 1988.

SUBJECTS

United States-History-Civil War, 1961-1865-Photographs

United States. Navy-Biography-Portraits