MS0006

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, 2011
DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners’ Museum Library
Title: Elwin Eldredge Collection on John H. Morrison
Inclusive Dates: 1881-1921, 1958
Catalog number: MS0006
Physical Characteristics: 3 document cases of letters (correspondence), envelopes, articles, notes, drawings, 2 leaflets, photocopies, photograph, 1 copy print, and illustrations.
Language: English
Creators: Morrison, John H. (John Harrison), 1841-1917; Eldredge, Elwin Martin, 1893-1965

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
John Harrison Morrison (January 7, 1841-August 26, 1917) was born in New York City to parents John and Margaret Morrison. His father had been a successful merchant in New York City, working at a well-known firm that was later named A. T. Stewart & Company. The younger Morrison proved his intelligence by graduating high school at the early age of fourteen and then enrolling at the College of the City of New York a year later. Before completing his studies, Morrison became associated with a large shipbuilding firm and was quickly given the position of paymaster of the shipyard. Later he became the private secretary to Mr. Charles Copeland, who was at that time inspector of lighthouses and marine engines for the United States government. After twenty years at this occupation, Morrison began his own enterprise of manufacturing varnishes for carriage tops, rubber and rubber cloth in Norwood, New Jersey in the year 1869.

Morrison married Susan Hutchinson in Greenpoint, New York on September 26, 1865. The couple had four children: Thomas F., Edith, Florence Ethel, and Clifford Jerome. Morrison sold his factory and his business and retired in 1908 at the age of 67. He published three important works before his death in 1917 entitled, The History of American Steam Navigation, The History of New York Ship Yards, and Are There Equinoctial Storms? He was also a member of a few notable organizations such as the Navy League and the National Geographic Society.

Elwin M. Eldredge, the collector of this material, was born in 1893 in Brooklyn, NY. As a young man he worked for the Metropolitan Steamship Company, later joining the Army during World War I. After the war, he joined his father and brother in the printing business. He became acquainted with some of the older steamship historians of the 1920s, among them John Morrison, and eventually absorbed their collections into his. The Mariners’ Museum bought his entire collection in 1939 and accessioned the ocean steamship material immediately. Mr. Eldredge retained and added to his American steamboat materials until his death in 1965, at which point the steamboat collections, of which the Morrison papers were a part, came to the Museum.

SCOPE AND CONTENT
The bulk of this collection represents the research of John H. Morrison, an avid maritime historian and collector in New York and New Jersey. The research materials contributed

There are handwritten drafts for *New York Ship Yards* and *Are There Equinoctial Storms?* Of note is information on American Civil War ironclads, in particular the CSS *Virginia* (ex-U.S.S. *Merrimack*), on whose ram Morrison wrote extensively. His research draws on eyewitness testimony from *Virginia’s* designers Brooke and Porter, through Porter’s surviving son John W. H. Porter. He also corresponded with personnel who worked at Tredegar Iron Works, fabricators of *Virginia’s* iron.

The collection is organized into 3 series: Research Materials; Elwin Eldredge Correspondence; and Photographs. They are arranged by bulk.

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Accession Number**
CK 206

**Accession Date**
1964

**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**
Elwin Eldredge Collection on John H. Morrison, 1881-1921, 1958, MS0006, The Mariners’ Museum Library

**Other Finding Aids**
Full records and electronic reproductions of the original photographs in this collection can be found in the 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.
SERIES DESCRIPTION

The Research Materials are organized into 7 subseries: Armored War Vessels; Early Electric Lighting; Fire Protection for Steam Vessels; History of American Steam Navigation; Marine Barometers; New York Ship Yards; and Working Beam Engines. The subseries are arranged alphabetically by the title of the publication to which they contribute. These materials constitute the bulk of the collection and are comprised of Morrison’s notes, his correspondence with government and corporate officials and private individuals, a few drawings and illustrations, and either manuscript or published copies of his work.

Series 2: Elwin Eldredge Correspondence, 1915-1921.
Organized into a single folder and arranged by date. The Eldredge correspondence begins with notes between Eldredge and Morrison, and then continues between Eldredge and Morrison’s daughter, Florence E. Morrison after her father’s death. From the daughter’s letters, it seems evident that Eldredge is arranging to acquire her late father’s research materials.

Series 3: Photographs, 1910s.
The two photographs in this series are organized into a single folder. There is an original gelatin-silver portrait of Morrison taken probably after 1911 and a copy print of the same photograph.

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1  Research Materials
Folder 1  Finding aid
Folder 2  Background

SERIES 1.1  Armored War Vessels
Folder 3  Articles 1906
   Newspaper and journal clippings pertaining to contracts for steel hulls and to Civil War ironclad rams at Memphis
Folder 4  Correspondence: American Car and Foundry Co.
   Per Eads gunboats of the Civil War
Folder 5  Correspondence: American Iron and Steel Association
   Concerning Pittsburgh iron rolling during the Civil War
Folder 6  Correspondence: Atkins, V. B.
   Mayor of Selma, AL responding to Morrison’s query about iron rolling mills in the city during the Civil War
Folder 7  Correspondence: Braeburn Steel Co.
   Concerning Pittsburgh iron rolling mills during the Civil War
Folder 8  Correspondence: Brock, Thomas
Response to an inquiry about Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of the Navy, CSA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder 9</th>
<th>Correspondence: Brooke, John C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to an inquiry about the ram on CSS Virginia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Folder 10

Per 3 steamers converted to rams at Cincinnati, OH during the Civil War, thereafter referred to as the Mosquito Fleet

Folder 11

Writer responding to an inquiry from Morrison, directing attention to, among other writings, his True Story of the Monitor

Folder 12

Correspondence: Carnegie Library of Atlanta

Response to an inquiry about rolling mills in Atlanta during the Civil War

Folder 13

Correspondence: Carnegie Steel Co.

Letter to and response from Carnegie Steel about the manufacture of rolled iron for the Eads western gunboats

Folder 14

Correspondence: Continental Iron Works

Letter to Morrison signed by Warren E. Hill clarifying that the 1” iron for Monitor was rolled by the Abbot Iron Company of Canton, MD

Folder 15

Correspondence: Dept. of State, State of New Jersey

Reply to an inquiry from Morrison about the status of the Harvey Steel Company.

Folder 16

Correspondence: Dod, S. Bayard

Per the existence of a ram on the Stevens Floating Battery

Folder 17

Correspondence: Eastern Forge Co.

Reply to an inquiry about the Nashua Iron Co.

Folder 18

Correspondence: Edwin and Co.

Letter to and response from Edwin and Co. per the Moorhead and McClean – Soho Works during the Civil War. Pertains to rolled iron for Eads western gunboats

Folder 19

Correspondence: Ferguson, John W.

Response to an inquiry about the Paterson Iron Co.

Folder 20

Correspondence: Fusz, Paul A.

Concerning plates rolled for Eads western gunboats by the Laclede Rolling Mills in 1861

Folder 21

Correspondence: Grant, A. W.

Per a model of Commodore James Barron’s steam ram of 1827

Folder 22

Correspondence: Haralson, Jonathan

Response to a request about rolling mills in Selma, AL and whether they made plates for Confederate ironclads

Folder 23

Correspondence: Harrison, John W.

Reply to a query concerning the location of rolling mills used to make the plates for the Eads western gunboats

Folder 24

Correspondence: Hodges, W. R.

Concerning iron plates on Eads western gunboats

Folder 25

Correspondence: Howe, E. A.
Reply to inquiry about towns whose rolling mills produced iron plate for the Eads western gunboats of the Civil War

Folder 26
Correspondence: James Rees and Sons Company
Reply to inquiry about steamboats converted to rams for the Civil War

Folder 27
Correspondence: Johnston, J. V.
Regarding iron plating on Eads western gunboats and the disbanding of the western ironclad fleet at Cairo, IL

Folder 28
Correspondence: Jones & Laughlin Steel Co.
Per the iron plates rolled on government contract by the Soho Mills of Pittsburgh, PA

Folder 29
Correspondence: King, J. W.
Reply to an inquiry about the iron plates used in Eads western gunboats.

Folder 30
Correspondence: Lorain Steel Co.
Reply to correspondence from Morrison asking about the rolling mills at Portsmouth, OH and Pittsburgh, PA regarding iron plates for ironclads. US Steam Battery *Monitor* is mentioned.

Folder 31
Correspondence: Louisiana Historical Association
Regarding the Confederate ram *Manassas*

Folder 32
Correspondence: Meacom, George
Response to a request for information on the tug boat *Enoch Train*

Folder 33
Correspondence: Moorhead, W. J.
Provides information on rolled and forged plate provided to the Army and Navy during and after the Civil War

Folder 34
Correspondence: Murphy, Anthony
Regarding iron and armor produced in Alabama during the Civil War

Folder 35
Correspondence: Murray, C.B.
Response from the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce regarding Ohio side-wheel steamers strengthened to serve as rams during the Civil War

Folder 36
Correspondence: National Enameling and Stamping Co.
Refers Morrison to Paul Fusz (see folder 20) on the subject of rolled iron for Eads western gunboats by Laclede Rolling Mills

Folder 37
Correspondence: New York Navy Yard
Response to Morrison’s inquiry regarding the existence of rams on double-enders built at the New York yard in 1863

Folder 38
Correspondence: Nixon, Charles P.
Response to an inquiry to the US Senate regarding the publishers of various Congressional publications

Folder 39
Correspondence: Phoenix Iron Co.
Regarding iron plates made for the Eads western gunboats and for the Steven Floating Battery

Folder 40
Correspondence: Porter, John W. H.
Long letters in reply to Morrison’s inquiry about CSS *Virginia*’s ram and Brooke’s involvement in designing the ship

Folder 41
Correspondence: Portsmouth Steel Co.
Regarding iron rolled at the Gaylord Mill in Portsmouth, OH for Civil War gunboats
Folder 42 Correspondence: Ramsay, H. Ashton
Ramsay, who was chief engineer on CSS Virginia, responds to Morrison’s request for information on her ram.

Folder 43 Correspondence: Reading Iron Co.
Reply to a request for information on iron produced at the Scott Foundry and Steam Forge

Folder 44 Correspondence: Rees, George H.
Response to an inquiry about strengthening the stem of USS Sacassus

Folder 45 Correspondence: Schwab, J. C.
Reply to Morrison’s request for a complete history of the iron and steel industry in the South during the Civil War

Folder 46 Correspondence: Smithsonian Institution
Regarding a publication by Charles Ellet on steam rams that the Institution did not publish

Folder 47 Correspondence: Stevens Family
Information on the Stevens Battery

Folder 48 Correspondence: Tredegar Iron Works
Refers to various rams, including those for CSS Virginia, made by Tredegar

Folder 49 Correspondence: United Fruit Co.
Information from a crew member James Brown on the conversion of the tug Enoch Train to the ironclad Manassas, with a narrative of the attack on the Union blockading squadron at Head of Passes on Oct. 12, 1861

Folder 50 Correspondence: U.S. Consulate-General to France
Regarding the construction of the French ironclad Gloire

Folder 51 Correspondence: U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor
Responses to requests for information about steamers that were eventually converted by Charles Ellet into rams

Folder 52 Correspondence: U.S. Department of the Interior
Reply to a request for a bibliography of the Confederate States of America’s Navy

Folder 53 Correspondence: U.S. Government Printing Office
Provides information on government publications of reports from committees on Warships and Ordnance

Folder 54 Correspondence: U.S. Navy Department
 Replies to requests for information on early steam rams by Lt. Samuel Barron and on rams allegedly put on double-enders

Folder 55 Correspondence: U.S. Patent Office
Request for a copy of the patent to Thomas Gregg of Connellsville, PA for a ball-proof steamer and typescript of said patent

Folder 56 Correspondence: U.S. War Department
Responses to requests for information on iron plates for Eads western gunboats in the Civil War, on shot trials against iron targets and on the Stevens Floating Battery

Folder 57 Correspondence: Virginia Historical Society
Identifies the current and president of the Tredegar Iron Works and his father, company president during the Civil War

Folder 58  
Correspondence: W., E. P.  
Letter from Morrison and response pertaining to the plates for Dunderberg and Roanoke during the Civil War

Folder 59  
Correspondence: Walker, J. E.  
Regarding Ellet rams

Folder 60  
Correspondence: Wayne Iron and Steel Works  
Pertaining to forged and rolled iron plate made during the Civil War and those vessels to which they may have been affixed

Folder 61  
Correspondence: Whitney, Charles W.  
Replies to inquiries about iron plates for Keokuk and Monitor

Folder 62  
Correspondence: Youngblood, Wilson  
Response to inquiries about the Enoch Train and Southern rolling mills

Folder 63  
Correspondence: Unidentified correspondents  
Regarding Brierfield, AL mines and rolling mills in the South during the Civil War

Folder 64  
Drawings  
Sketches of various rams for Virginia, New Ironsides, Dunderberg, Redd'Italia, Roanoke, Magenta, etc.

BOX 2  
Research Materials

Folder 1  
Notes: Confederate ironclads

Folder 2  
Notes: Development

Folder 3  
Notes: Harvey Process

Folder 4  
Notes: Ironclad batteries

Folder 5  
Notes: Iron targets

Folder 6  
Notes: New Ironsides (Ironclad steamer: 1862)

Folder 7  
Notes: Ordnance

Folder 8  
Notes: Rams

Folder 9  
Notes: Rolling mills

Folder 10  
Notes: Steel plating

Folder 11  
Notes: Stevens Iron Clad Battery

Folder 12  
Notes: U.S. armored vessels

Folder 13  
Notes: U.S. Government

Folder 14  
Notes: CSS Virginia (USS Merrimack)

Folder 15  
Notes: CSS Virginia (USS Merrimack) ram

SERIES 1.2 Early Electric Lighting

Folder 16  
Publication  
Maritime Exchange Bulletin Vol. 4, No. 1 (May 1916), in which is published Morrison’s “Early electric Lighting on American Steamers.”

SERIES 1.3 Fire Protection for Steam Vessels

Folder 17  
Publication

**SERIES 1.4 History of American Steam Navigation**

**Folder 18** Advertisement
Announcement of the 1958 edition of Morrison’s *History of American Steam Navigation*

**Folder 19** Correspondence: Ball, T. R. (et al.)
On the subject of steam fog signals

**Folder 20** Correspondence: Daboll, Eva E.
Regarding her father’s invention, Daboll’s Fog Trumpet

**Folder 21** Correspondence: Damon Safe and Iron Works Co.
Response to an inquiry about the fog whistle at Cape Elizabeth

**Folder 22** Correspondence: Humphrey, John H.
Regarding the fog whistle at Cape Elizabeth

**Folder 23** Correspondence: Portland Co.
On the subject of 18” whistles made by the company in years past

**Folder 24** Correspondence: U.S. Treasury Dept.
Generally pertaining to steam whistles and specifically to the fog signal installed at the Beavertail Light Station

**Folder 25** Correspondence: Unidentified correspondent
Regarding his painting of the iron-hulled *Bangor* (1844)

**Folder 26** Notes: Whistles

**Folder 27** Publications
“Extract from Notice to Mariners No. 45,” published by the Hydrographer’s Office (Washington, DC: Nov. 8, 1902) on fog signals and lights

**SERIES 1.5 Marine Barometers**

**Folder 28** Correspondence: Baltimore Chamber of Commerce
Regarding the voyage of the bark *W. H. D. C. Wright* from Baltimore to Rio de Janeiro

**Folder 29** Correspondence: Bradstreet, M. F.
Response to Morrison’s query for his father, George A. Dearborn, about his memories of the kinds of barometers used in the 1840s and 1850s

**Folder 30** Correspondence: Camdage, R. G. F.
In reply to Morrison’s inquiry about the use of marine barometers on American ships in the 1840s

**Folder 31** Correspondence: Large, Charles E.
Regarding the manufacture of marine barometers by his father, Joseph J. Large

**Folder 32** Correspondence: Phillips, S. F.
Pertaining to the outfitting of sailing ships and steamers with mercurial or aneroid barometers

**Folder 33** Correspondence: U.S. Navy
From the librarian, saying that the report Morrison is looking for pertaining to a proposed uniform system of meteorological observations is missing from the library

Folder 34  Manuscript  
Draft of Morrison’s publication on marine barometers

Folder 35  Manuscript  
Another draft of Morrison’s publication titled “Development of the Marine Barometer in American Waters”

Folder 36  Notes

SERIES 1.6  New York Ship Yards

Folder 37  Clippings  
Article on the death of Edward Moynihan and on an error in fact made by Morrison

Folder 38  Correspondence: Bolles, Charles  
Regarding the purchase of a picture of a sailing ship

Folder 39  Correspondence: C&T Perry  
Response to Morrison’s inquiry about a Mr. Horton, lawyer in Brooklyn

Folder 40  Correspondence: The Collins Company  
Statement from the company that they do not know when they began making adzes, axes, etc for shipbuilding industry

Folder 41  Correspondence: Collyer, William L.  
Regarding the ships built by his father and his uncle Thomas Collyer

Folder 42  Correspondence: The Essex Institute  
Statement that the ship models Morrison is looking for is not at the Institute

Folder 43  Correspondence: Jenks, Charlotte Collyer  
Regarding family members who owned or worked at shipyards in New York State

Folder 44  Correspondence: Jenks, Elisha F.  
Letter giving details of paintings of ships that he owns or owned in the past

Folder 45  Correspondence: Library of Congress  
Notes that no register of ships built in New York City appears in the collection of papers from the New York Custom House, and suggests that Morrison check the newspaper archives listed

Folder 46  Correspondence: Maryland Historical Society  
Statement that the Empress of China was the first American vessel to visit China and took the first Consul Shaw

Folder 47  Correspondence: Meneely & Co.  
Regarding Morrison’s inquiry on customers who may have purchased ship’s bells from them, as well as details of bell construction

Folder 48  Correspondence: Moynihan, A. W. (Abraham W.)  
Invitation to Morrison to view his scrap book regarding the Wrenn shipyard and the Mechanics Bell that used to hang there

Folder 49  Correspondence: Newbury Park Marine Society
Letter from and response to Morrison on a ship model question

BOX 3  Research Materials; Elwin Eldredge Correspondence; Photographs

Folder 1  Correspondence: New York Academy of Medicine
States that the Academy has letters Morrison would be interested in looking at

Folder 2  Correspondence: Ogden, David B.
Morrison has the wrong David Ogden

Folder 3  Correspondence: Poillon, J. O.
Concerning square-rigged vessels built by C&R Poillon

Folder 4  Correspondence: Quigg, William
Concerning the Mechanics Bell

Folder 5  Correspondence: State of New York, Office of the Secretary of State
Indicating that no certificate of incorporation can be found for the N.Y. Society of Journeymen Shipwrights

Folder 6  Correspondence: U.S. Consulate-General to Germany
Response to Morrison’s inquiry about the sale of the Sovereign of the Seas

Folder 7  Correspondence: U.S. Customs Service, Port of Boston
Per the ship Sovereign of the Seas

Folder 8  Correspondence: U.S. Department of Commerce and Labor
Regarding ships registered at the Port of New York

Folder 9  Correspondence: U.S. Navy Department
Refers to letters by Lieut. Matthew Fontaine Maury regarding the fast times made by American clipper ships

Folder 10 Correspondence: U.S. War Department
Response to Morrison’s request for a public report on the accident of the transport Ingalls while in the Robins Dry Dock in Brooklyn

Folder 11 Correspondence: Webb’s Academy and Home for Shipbuilders
States that no mention is made in his books of balance dry docks made by Webb

Folder 12 Correspondence: Wilcox, T. D.
Letters from and about T. D. Wilcox who was a steamboat captain on Lake Ithaca

Folder 13 Manuscripts
Manuscript page number 5, 6, 8, and 19 of a draft section of History of New York Ship Yards

Folder 14 Maps
Street maps showing the locations of shipyards in New York and Brooklyn

Folder 15 Notes (File 1 of 20)
Folder 16 Notes (File 2 of 20)
Folder 17 Notes (File 3 of 20)
Folder 18 Notes (File 4 of 20)
Folder 19 Notes (File 5 of 20)
Folder 20 Notes (File 6 of 20)
Folder 21  Notes (File 7 of 20)
Folder 22  Notes (File 8 of 20)
Folder 23  Notes (File 9 of 20)
Folder 24  Notes (File 10 of 20)
Folder 25  Notes (File 11 of 20)
Folder 26  Notes (File 12 of 20)
Folder 27  Notes (File 13 of 20)
Folder 28  Notes (File 14 of 20)
Folder 29  Notes (File 15 of 20)
Folder 30  Notes (File 16 of 20)
Folder 31  Notes (File 17 of 20)
Folder 32  Notes (File 18 of 20)
Folder 33  Notes (File 19 of 20)
Folder 34  Notes (File 20 of 20)
Folder 35  Notes: Charles Browne
Folder 36  Notes: Sailings (File 1 of 3)
Folder 37  Notes: Sailings (File 2 of 3)
Folder 38  Notes: Sailings (File 3 of 3)
Folder 39  Notes: Thomas Powell Steamboat Accident

SERIES 1.7  Working Beam Engines
Folder 40  Clippings
Articles on working beam engines and forced draft engines
Folder 41  Correspondence:  I. P. Morris Company, Port Richmond Iron Works
Pertaining to the first marine engines made by them and the dimensions of
the vessel into which they went
Folder 42  Correspondence:  Neafie and Levy Ship and Engine Building Co.
Regarding several steamers with beam engines made by Neafie
Folder 43  Correspondence:  Phelps, W. A.
Per the two engines put into the steamer Ontario
Folder 44  Correspondence:  Philadelphia Department of Public Works
Regarding three working beam engines made for the Water Works in 1800
and 1815
Folder 45  Correspondence:  Reeder, Charles
Concerning marine working beam engines made in Baltimore in the first
half of the 19th century
Folder 46  Correspondence:  Sewell, George
Information on the working beam engine on the Dewitt Clinton and the
Philadelphia
Folder 47  Correspondence:  State of New Jersey, Dept. of State
Response to Morrison’s inquiry, stating that they can find no record of the
incorporation of the New York and New Brunswick Steamboat Company
Folder 48  Correspondence:  W&A Fletcher Company
On Robert L. Stevens designs of working beam engines, and a request to
Morrison from Svenson Taylor to use Morrison’s research for a talk.
Letter includes a drawing
Folder 49  Correspondence: Ward, L. B.
Regarding working beam engines constructed by Daniel Dod, and information regarding his son who may have his papers

Folder 50  Drawings
Drawings of several types of working beams, lifting rods and poppet valves for working beam engines

Folder 51  Notes

SERIES 2  Elwin Eldredge Correspondence
Folder 52  Correspondence: Elwin Eldredge
Letters between Eldredge and Morrison, and then between Eldredge and Morrison’s daughter, Florence Ethel

SERIES 3  Photographs
Folder 53  Photographs
One original gelatin silver studio portrait and one copy print of John Morrison

SOURCES CONSULTED
-----. “Fire Protection for Steam Vessels and Government Regulation.” Scientific American Supplement vol. 63:

SUBJECTS
Armored vessels-Design and construction
Steamboats- United States-History
Steamboats-Fires and fire prevention
United States. Navy-History
Shipbuilding-Materials
Barometers
Shipbuilding industry-Law and legislation
Shipyards-New York
Battering rams
Shipbuilding industry-Accidents
Steam-engines-Design and construction
Fog-signals-United States
Virginia (Ironclad : 1862)