

Transcription of a Letter from Seaman Michael Clear to his wife Sarah, Feb. 1813

Dear Wife

Feby 18. 1813 Boston

I take this Opportunity of Writing to You hoping [sic] that these few Lines will find you in Good health as they Leave me at Preasant [sic]. this [sic] is to Inform you of our Arrivil in Boston after a 4 Months Cruize We have had the fortune of Displayin [sic] our Courage more in the Defance [sic] of our Country as I most ondouted must Call it for all that is Dear to me in the World Which is You is an Inhabitint [sic] of the same. Dear Wife I Received Your Letter last October and sent You an Answer but we Sald the Day following. we [sic] have bin [sic] a Cruizing on the Cost of Brazil when on the 29 of Decr. fell in with the British Frigate Java Mounting 48 Guns & upwards of 500 Men when after a Bloody Ingagement [sic] of 2 hours & 40 Minutes we Completely Dismasted her & kild [sic] & Wounded upwards of 150 of her Crew & the loss which we Sustained was trifling to her for we lost but [missing] Men kil'd [sic] & 5 Died of there [sic] Wounds Several lost there [sic] legs & harms [sic] & Otherways Wounded but after all we were obligd [sic] to Destroy her for the Distance being so Great & she being so totaly [sic] Disbasted [sic] we were Obliged to Send her in search of the Guerriere which was by Blowing her up. we [sic] landed the Prisoners at St. Salvadore off [f] Which Port we had the Action But thanks be to the Almighty for my Deliverance and I hope throu [sic] the Blessing of the Same that after a Short time I shall have the Pleasure of seeing You [obscured] Small Respite from the horrors [sic] of War for I aver by all that is Dear to me in this World that it is Shoking [sic] to Behold the Massakree [sic] which this Cruel War has Occasioned and Peticulery [sic] on Board this Ship. We had [obscured] Brothers kild [sic] in this last Action I should Write more but the Ship at Preasant is in Such Confusion that it is Imposibel [sic] to Write Dear Wife be sure & Write by Return of Post. & I Shall be Better Able to tell by that time what we are agoing [sic] to Do. for at Preasant [sic] we are all hury [sic] & Confusion. Excuse haste

So I Conclude but Remain Your Loveing [sic] Husband till Death Michael Clear. direct for me on board the U S Frigate Constitution Comodore [sic] Banbridge [sic] Boston. Mr. Mayou [sic] our Old Shipmate Thomas Maria that Came home from Liverpool with us in the Laura is a Messmate of mine [missing] sends is [sic] best Respects to you & hopes that you will remember him to Mr. Wm. Sarah [sic].

From Sailing Master Michael Clear to Gunner Asa Curtis, Philadelphia, PA, 25 November 1825:

Philadelphia November 25th 1825

I do hereby certify that Mr. Asa Curtis was shipmates [sic] with me on board the U S Frigate Constitution during the last war at the captor [sic] of the British Frigates Guerriere and Java and during the hottest [sic] of the fight with the Java he decended [sic] the ForetopGallant stay to rebend the flying Jib Halyards which had been shotaway [sic] and that I believe by that act of his greatly tended by keeping head sail on the ship in captureing [sic] the enemy

Very Respectfully

To
Mr Asa Curtis Sailing Master U S Navy
Gunner U S Navy
Philadelphia

The Captain's Clerk
1989, TGM