

Sailor's (Wife's) Story
Sarah Clear

Is the sea or the enemy the greater danger?

My name is Sarah, wife of seaman Michael Clear. Mike was a seaman when we wed, so he was often away, and I knew the ocean might take him from me. However, he is now in the Navy, on *Constitution*, and fears for his safety torment me both in my dreams and in my waking hours. For besides the dangers of drowning (he cannot swim) he also faces an enemy intent on killing him.



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Sarah Clear

My Michael writes to me

I have at last received some news of my beloved husband, but now I almost regret longing for a letter. Though he says he is safe, and tells what he is doing, his words give me little comfort, for they are full of the violence of war. He writes of his "brothers killed" and "the ship all tore to pieces", and signs it "your affectionate husband 'till death'" ... which makes me fear that his death draws ever nearer.

February 18, 1813 Boston

Dear Sarah,
...thanks be to the Almighty for my Deliverance and I hope throu the Blessing of the same that after a short time I shall have the Pleasure of seeing You, a small Respite from the horrors of War for I aver [swear] by all that is Dear to me in this World that it is Shoking to Behold the Massakree which this Cruel War has occasioned and Perticulery on Board this ship. ...I should Write more but the ship at Present is in such confusion that it is Imposibel to Write...

Your loving Husband till Death,
Michael Clear

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**We were united
once more**

God was kind to us in the War, and delivered my beloved Michael unharmed. He returned to me in May 1814 not just as a seaman, but as a hero. For he fought in the battles against *Guerrierre* and *Java*, which brought great glory to our nation, his ship and its crew. We were apart more than 20 months, and I pray that war never separates us again.



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