**Scope and Content Notes**

There are 52 letters total in the collection spanning from 1862-1874. The bulk of the letters are written by Hiram most of which are to his father, mother Mary Sparks. However, there are a couple to another member of the Sparks family and a few other friends. Six are letters written to Hiram from his friends and the collection also includes 12 handwritten and printed reports on the construction of the gunboat Tacony. Hiram’s letters are very detailed (some of his letters are over a dozen pages), and he wrote to people very often even adding on to some letters after he originally finished writing them. Many of the letters still have their original envelopes with them.

During his Civil War service Hiram recounts rebel activity in North Carolina including the evacuation and burning of Washington, NC by the Union soldiers in April 1864 after Confederate forces attacked, however most of his letters are post war and he
goes into detail of his travels with the South Pacific Squadron on the South American coast. He gives accounts of life on the boats, the cities he visits (including Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the Falkland Islands; Valparaiso, Chile; and Montevideo, Uruguay), and observations on the culture, among other things the Russian Grand Duke Alexei arriving in Brazil with his fleet in 1872, the Patagonian Indians, and a Chilean Penal Settlement.

There is also a printed broadside with the services, including ship maintenance and supplies such as food, at Stanley Harbor in the Falkland Islands and a hand drawn floor plan of part of a ship with a manuscript note on the back.

**Series Description**

This collection is divided into three Series.

**Series 1**: Correspondence from Hiram, in chronological order

**Series 2**: Correspondence to Hiram, in chronological order

**Series 3**: Reports and Miscellaneous Papers, reports are in chronological order followed by the broadside and the hand drawn ship floor plan.

**Box 1**

1-1 Finding Aid and Biographical Information

**Series 1: Correspondence from Hiram**

1-2 August 23, 1862-July 21, 1866

- August 23, 1862, to his father
- 1863 Envelope-No letter, addressed to his father
- February 1864, to his father
- March 15, 1864, to his father
- March 25, 1864, to his mother
- May 1864, to his mother
- April 26, 1866, to his mother
- April 27, 1866, continuation of previous letter, to his mother
- June 25, 1866, to his mother
- July 21, 1866, to his mother

1-3 October 12, 1866-September 9, 1869

- October 12, 1866, to ? Charles
- October 12, 1866, to Le
- October 14, 1866, to Lee
- November 27, 1866, to his mother
- July (?) 12, 1867, to his father
- July 31, 1867, to his father
- February 13, 1868, to his mother
- April 3, 1868, to his father
- September 2, 1869, to Mary Sparks
- September 9, 1869, to Mary Sparks

1-4 September 16, 1869-October 25, 1870
- September 16, 1869, to his father
- September 17, 1869, to Mary Sparks
- September 20, 1869, to Mary Sparks
- September 20, 1869, continuation of previous letter, to Mary Sparks
- June 14, 1870, to his mother
- October 18, 1870, to Mary Sparks
- October 20, 1870, to Mary Sparks

1-5 March 6, 1871 - January 10, 1872
- March 6, 1871, to Mary Sparks
- March 16, 1871, to Mary Sparks
- April 11, 1871, to his mother
- April 26, 1871, to Mr. F. Collow, Esq
- November 2, 1871, to Mary Sparks
- November 5, 1871, to Mary Sparks
- November 12, 1871, to Mary Sparks
- January 10, 1872, to his mother

1-6 Jan 25, 1872 - February 26, 1872
- Jan 25, 1872, to Lizzy?
- Feb 13, 1872, to Lizzy?
- February 15, 1872, to his mother
- February 25, 1872, top Mary Sparks
- February 26, 1872, to Mary Sparks

1-7 March 3, 1872 - June 29, 1874
- March 3, 1872, to Mary Sparks
- March 31, 1872, to Lizzy?
- May 1, 1872, to his mother
- April 7, 1874, to his mother
- June 21, 1874, to Mary Sparks “Wifey”
- June 28, 1874, to Mary Sparks “Wifey”
- June 29, 1874, to Mary Sparks “Wifey”

**Series 2: Correspondence to Hiram**

1-8 Correspondence to Hiram, December 3, 1865 - June 5, 1872
- December 3, 1865, from C.E.? 
- December 13, 1868, from Frank J. Symmes
- March 13, 1869, from Frank J. Symmes
- March 14, 1869, from Frank J. Symmes
- March 14, 1869, from Frank J. Symmes (includes a sheet of notes)
- June 5, 1872, from Wesley O. Hileroy

**Series 3: Reports and Miscellaneous Papers**

1-9 Manuscript and Printed Tacony Reports, February 27, 1864 - May 13, 1865
1-10 Broadside handout and the hand drawn ship floor plan

_for more information about MS – 167: Hiram Parker Jr. Letters_