

(Private)

51-A

Cape Palmas, Oct 1, 1847

Dr. James Hall,

Dear Sir:

I have just closed a letter to the Board full of sad accidents & losses as far as they are concerned, but not being certain, whether the Cavalry was insured or not, I was afraid to put down all the items I have picked up from individuals of the crew & intelligent Gorraway natives. All agree that she was loaded so much by the head, & that her cargo was not properly stowed. She left Gorraway with all her sails up which caused her to careen so much that even the natives were afraid she would capsize. In this manner, she passed Forttown & Rock Town and arrived nearly in the harbor, when the regular helmsman was relieved by one unacquainted with the wheel. This relief was merely for him to get his dinner. The mate, who was forward, preparing the anchor chain before she arrived in the harbor, ordered the 1.2 mms. tacks to luff, but he not understanding the wheel I suppose, made the contrary movement, & the vessel capsized. The master Oliver was in the cabin, bringing up his trade accounts. Why he was not on deck seems strange, as there was no hurry about them.

I never saw the necessity for a wheel for so small a vessel, but as Boston made it without consulting me, I did not oppose his rigging it as much as I ought. I spoke to John Seway against it, but as he said small vessels sometimes had them I gave up. Oliver was formerly, master of the old Lactobe, and commanded ^{her} when she was gone some 3 or 4 months to Leeward in quite a leaky state. I never expected to see her again but he managed to bring her safely home: since then, he has ~~been~~ a voyage to the States with Capt Burke and acted as mate. Burke gave him a good recommendation as seaman, his knowledge of the Coast & steady character caused me to give him the preference.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received

A. Letter Books

10. 1847--1848--1849

1847