

**Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, July 17, 1807,
Dated July 7 or 17, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in
Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited
by Paul Leicester Ford.**

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR J. MSS. (HENRY DEARBORN.)

Washington, July, 07.

My Dear Sir, —I have this moment received certain information that the British vessels have retired from Hampton Road. Whether they will only join their companions in the bay, & remain there or go off, is yet to be seen. It gives me real pain to believe that circumstances still require your presence here. I have had a consultation this day with our colleagues on that subject, and we have all but one opinion on that point. Indeed, if I regarded yourself alone, I should deem it necessary to satisfy public opinion, that you should not be out of place at such a moment. The arrangements for the militia, now much called for, can be properly made only by yourself. Several other details are also at a stand. I shall therefore hope to see you in a very few days. An important question will be to be decided on the arrival of Decatur here, about this day se'night, whether, as the retirement of the British ships from Hampton Road enables us to get our 16 gun-boats together, we shall authorize them to use actual force against the British vessels. Present to Mrs. Dearborne, & accept yourself, my affectionate & respectful salutations.