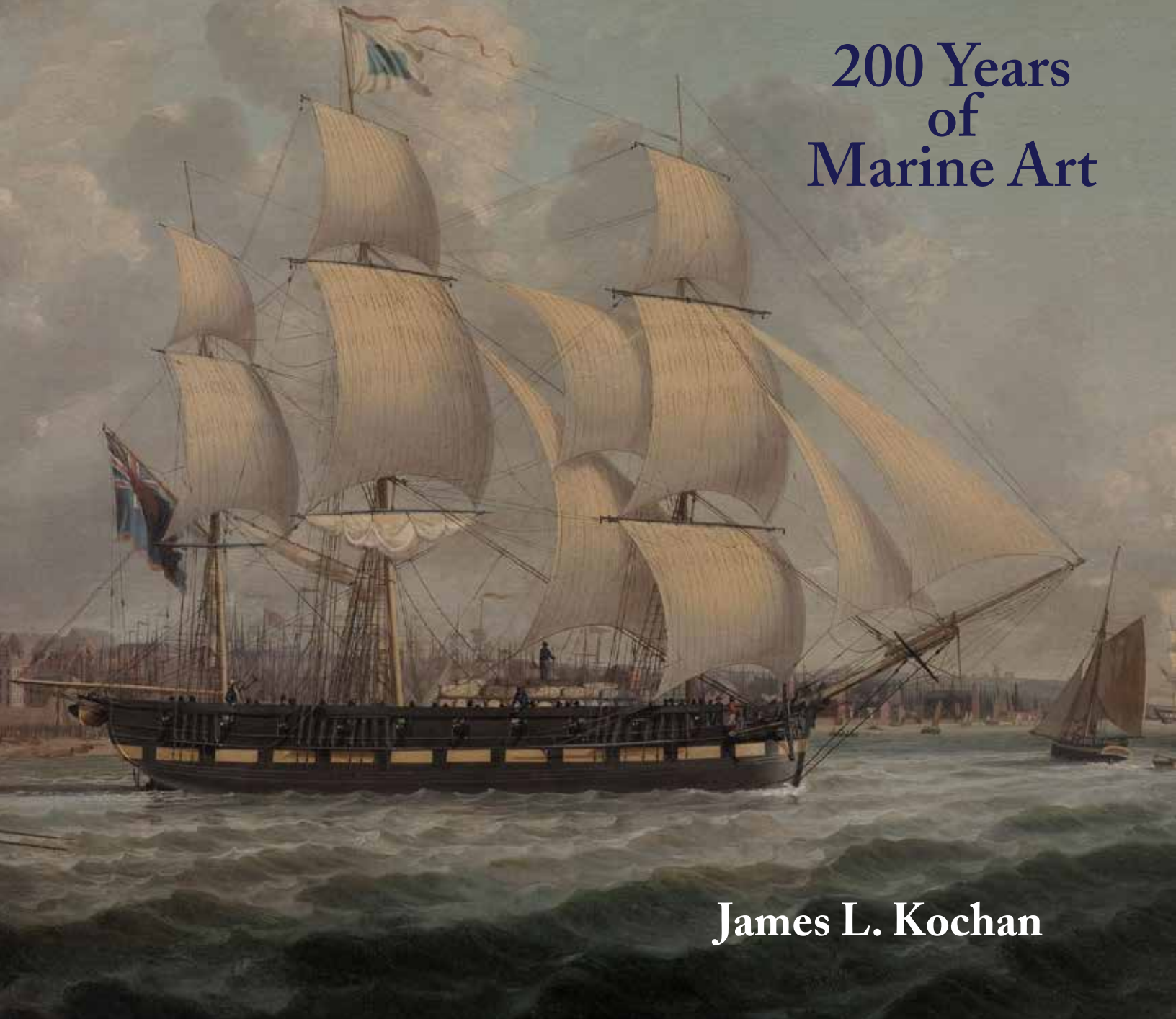


*Iron Men in Wooden Ships:*

200 Years  
of  
Marine Art



James L. Kochan



*Iron Men in Wooden Ships:*  
**200 Years of Marine Art**

*To all those who “went down to the sea in ships....”*

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Design: Kim Dolce

Photography: James W. Hamann and Gregory R. Staley

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Front cover: John Jenkinson, *A Private Armed Vessel Arriving at Liverpool* (detail)

Rear cover: Lieutenant Thomas Yates, *A Royal Barge Saluted by Men O' War* (detail)

# *Iron Men in Wooden Ships:* **200 Years of Marine Art**

## **Exhibition dates:**

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Arader Galleries  
1016 Madison Avenue, 2nd floor  
New York, NY 10016

**February 8 - March 31**

James Kochan Fine Art & Antiques  
218 North Market Street  
Frederick, MD 21701

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## Introduction

The year 2013 marks the 15th anniversary of *James L. Kochan Fine Art & Antiques* and we take great pride and pleasure in our record of accomplishment in assisting private and institutional clients in the building of important collections of American and British artifacts and works of art from the period 1700-1850. One of our areas of specialization has always been American and British marine art and it seemed most appropriate that our special anniversary, cataloged exhibition should be nautical in theme. Many of the artists represented herein, such as Birch, Briscoe, Dodd, McFarlane, and Fischer, were leading professional marine artists of their day and their names are familiar to most serious collectors of American and British ship and coastal views. Others were well-known in their time and place, but little remembered today, largely due to three factors: 1) a limited output in their short working lives and hence, the rare appearance of their works on the market today; 2) a paucity of readily-available information on the artist and his works, especially in the English language; or 3) a combination thereof. Thomas Yates and John Jenkinson certainly fall into the first category, while the French master painters Crepin and Morel-Fatio arguably fall into the second (at least with respect to American and British collectors and museums, for in France, examples of their works hang in all major collections of French 19th c. marine and realist art). To the third category belong both Sir Jahleel Brenton, a talented amateur whose watercolors were highly prized in his day by contemporary artists and engravers (as the basis upon which to create their own works for the British market) and James Pringle, who was probably the leading marine artist working in New York between 1830-1845, but about whose earlier life and output, we know but little (I would appreciate hearing from anyone who may have documentation relating to his life, or know of works by this artist, for an intended biography and catalog of his works). Hopefully, this exhibition will help bring them to the attention of a larger public, stimulate new research and hopefully, bring new examples of both their art and documentary record to light.

*James L. Kochan*

## 1 JOHN P. BENSON (1865-1947)

### *Maine Hills: The 'Eliza Mary' of Salem Off the Coast of Maine, c. 1929*

oil on canvas, 24 x 40 inches

signed on lower left: 'John P Benson'

John Prentiss Benson was born in Salem, Massachusetts, the third of six children born to George and Elizabeth Benton. His father was a well-heeled merchant and the children's upbringing included art classes, among other cultural and educational activities. When the second child, Frank, announced his decision to become an artist, he was encouraged by his parents, but when John also expressed interest in the same career, he was strongly urged to pursue another profession. He instead studied architecture in Paris at *Julien* and later at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*. Returning to the United States in 1889, he was hired by McKim, Mead & White in New York City, the leading firm in the country. After five years, Benson formed Benson & Brockway with a colleague, but later they both became independent, although still collaborating from time to time. Although architecture was how he learned a living, painting remained John's passion and he worked at the easel whenever he could find a free moment. Frank's career, in the meantime, flourished and he became one of the leading American Impressionists, one of "The Ten". On the occasion of John's 56th birthday in 1921, sent his younger brother a telegram stating "John, if you are going to paint--PAINT!". In 1922, John began folding his architectural business and took an extended holiday in England, where he rented a studio and painted. Sending seven or eight pieces back to Kennedy Galleries in New York, six immediately sold and Benson was now a professional artist for life. They purchased a home on the Piscataqua River in Kittery, Maine in 1925, where he setup a studio across the street. A lifelong sailor, Benson loved the sea, ships and the Maine coast and such was reflected in his magnificent maritime works. A prolific artist, he painted more than 500 works during his Maine period until his death in 1947 and exhibited in New York, Philadelphia and Boston, notably with the Guild of Boston Artists.

This short biography was largely compiled from the excellent material that can be found online on a website devoted to the artist, managed by his biographers and catalog compilers, Nickolas Baker and Margaret Betts: <http://www.johnpbenson.org>





## 2 THOMAS BIRCH (1779-1851)

### *Coastal View with Beached Boat and Figures*

oil on canvas, 17-1/4 x 24 inches

signed and dated on lower left: *Thos. Birch / 1838*

Thomas, son of portrait miniaturist and engraver William Russell Birch, was born in Warwickshire, England in 1779 and emigrated with his family to Philadelphia in 1794. He assisted his father in preparing the 29-plate, subscription series of landscape engravings, *Birch's Views of Philadelphia*, (published in 1799), the first major publication of this kind in the United States. He mostly painted portraits and profiles until c. 1806, when he began to focus more attention to landscape painting, including coastal and river views. The work of Claude-Joseph Vernet clearly had a profound influence on Birch's developing style, although the work of this great French artist of the previous century was probably known to Birch initially through engravings. He later had access to a few originals by Vernet and his followers brought to America by French emigres, many of whom settled in and around Philadelphia, including Joseph Bonaparte. Birch's early submissions to the Pennsylvania Academy exhibitions in 1811-12 are landscapes after or inspired by Vernet's idyllic coastal scenes and dramatic shipwrecks. As with portraitist John Wesley Jarvis, it was the War of 1812 that propelled Birch's career steadily upward. His most famous and commercially-successful efforts were his paintings of American naval victories during the war, which served to establish him as the preeminent marine artist in the United States at that time. Many of these paintings were also engraved and published as prints, which were then copied by numerous artists and craftsmen both in America and Europe.

While Birch is known to have painted ship portraits on commission, he eschewed such work as his reputation grew and instead, focused his efforts on landscape and marine views of a more dramatic or sublime nature, such as the ocean's ferocity as its waves beat against craggy, shoreline rocks during a winter storm, or the serenity of a snow-covered field in winter. Birch rarely ventured beyond the Delaware River and its cape for subject material, but New York harbor, Narragansett Bay and even Maine coastal scenes are known. Birch also painted European scenes and imaginary views--ones that borrowed elements from both American and European scenery, boats, and even costume. The latter appears to be the case with this fine coastal view, in which two mariners huddle in the cold air next to their beached boat, while a distant sailing ship passes a lighthouse of castle-like proportions, set on the rocky point of a mountainous headland.

Provenance: collection of Mr. & Mrs. Crawford C. Madeira; private collection.

Exhibited: Philadelphia Maritime Museum, 1966 Thomas Birch exhibition, catalog no. 27.

Published: William H. Gerdtz, *Thomas Birch Paintings and Drawings* (Philadelphia; Philadelphia Maritime Museum, 1966), p. 32.



### 3 JAHLEEL BRENTON (1770-1844)

#### *HMS Spartan Engaging a French Squadron in the Bay of Naples, May 3, 1810*

watercolor on paper, 15 1/4 x 21 3/4 inches  
signed 'J Brenton' in iron-gall ink on the reverse

Born in Newport, Rhode Island on 22 August 1770, the son and namesake of Jahleel Brenton, a Rhode Island-born Loyalist who was a career Royal Navy officer. Jahleel went to sea with his father in 1781 and at the close of the American War of Independence and afterwards, pursued studies abroad, which included attending a drawing school in France to refine his skills in drawing and watercolor painting, which was a lifelong avocation. Although Brenton followed his father's footsteps as a professional naval officer, his original, eyewitness drawings of Napoleonic naval battles were eagerly sought by London publishers and artists such as Thomas Whitcombe, who produced paintings and engravings from them for an avid market. The following two watercolor views are Brenton's original drawings done after he recuperated from a severe and debilitating wound received while in command of the frigate *HMS Spartan*, after fighting a two-hour battle against a French-Neapolitan flotilla in the Bay of Naples on May 3, 1810.

On May 1st, the British frigates *Spartan* and *Success* chased a French-Neapolitan squadron inside the mole at Naples, which included *Cérère*, *Fama*, and *Achille*. Captain Jahleel Brenton, senior captain and commander of the *Spartan*, assuming that the enemy would not come out to fight two British frigates, sent the *Success* to a prearranged rendezvous on the 2nd, which enticed the enemy to come out on the following day. This move did entice the squadron to come out the following morning, reinforced with the *Sparviero* and seven or eight gunboats, with 400 Swiss troops embarked aboard *Cérère* and *Fama* for boarding the British frigate. In the two-hour action that followed, the *Spartan* fought the entire line of battle ship-by-ship, badly damaging the *Fama*, which escaped capture by being taken into tow by the gunboats, but *Sparviero* was forced to strike. Captain Brenton directed the fight standing on the capstan and was hit on the hip by a piece of grapeshot and badly wounded. His first lieutenant, George Willes, who took over command, was wounded along with 20 others and 10 men killed. In the center of the watercolor, the *Spartan* is shown firing her port broadside into the Neapolitan ships. They are shown on the left, passing the frigate in succession, led by the *Cérère* and, followed by *Fama* and *Sparviero*. Beyond and to the right of the *Spartan*, the cutter *Achille* is shown firing into the frigate as she brings up the seven gunboats in the right background, with Naples in the far distance.

Provenance: by descent in the Brenton family until c. 1930; private collections thereafter to present.



#### 4 JAHLEEL BRENTON (1770-1844)

### *HMS Spartan Taking Possession of Her Prize, the Brig Sparviero, at the close of the action in the Bay of Naples, May 3, 1810 [detail]*

watercolor on paper, 15 1/4 x 30 1/4 inches

This, the second of Brenton's two drawings of the battle of May 3, 1810, shows *HMS Spartan* at its conclusion, undergoing repairs and securing her prize. In this hard-fought action, *HMS Spartan* severely disabled two frigates and a number of smaller vessels of the French-Neapolitan squadron, which retreated back to the port of Naples, leaving the British frigate in possession of the brig *Sparviero*, the armed yacht of Marshal Murat (also then King of Naples). Sailors are visible in the rigging, attending to damaged sails and shattered rigging. The vessel astern in the center, with the severed mainmast, is the captured *Sparviero*, now flying a British ensign. There is a ship's cutter or barge alongside the frigate, likely conveying prisoners from the prize brig, while the carpenter and his mates could be in the small boat alongside the latter, inspecting the hull for shot holes near the waterline and plugging such when found. In the background can be seen the ships and gunboats of the defeated Neapolitan squadron limping back to Naples.

These two watercolors were produced by Brenton as he recuperated from the critical wound received in that action, one that ended his active naval career but earned him a baronetcy. A seasoned mariner and an accomplished watercolorist, he employed a limited color palette for this scene, largely utilizing earthy tones of red and yellow pigments to achieve the sky, land and even the sea--all of which serve to emphasize the lack of definition between such features when actually viewed during the height of a hot, hazy and sunny Mediterranean afternoon. Indigo blue is applied sparingly, merely as a thin band to represent the shoreline in the distance. The slackness of the shot-ridden sails reveal that the light wind has again fallen, a factor which previously hampered Brenton's ability to fight his ship at times during the battle. Thomas Whitcombe, the noted marine artist, borrowed these drawings and from them produced a pair of large paintings which he exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1812 (and from which engravings were subsequently made and printed during the period). Both of the Whitcombe works are now in the collections of National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, but neither capture the feel of the original battle and aftermath quite as effectively as the original watercolors from which they were derived.

Provenance: by descent in the Brenton family until c. 1930; private collections thereafter to present.



## 5 FRANKLIN D. BRISCOE (1844-1903)

### *The Age of Sail and Steam*

oil on canvas, 28 x 50 inches

signed lower right: 'F. D. Briscoe'

Franklin D. Briscoe is best known for his masterful renderings of marine and historical works. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Briscoe moved with his family to Philadelphia in 1848 and in at the age of sixteen, began training with eminent marine artist Thomas Moran. He later traveled to Europe to continue his studies and by the age of 25, was considered a most proficient landscape and marine painter. Traveling by ship on numerous voyages that covered the globe, Briscoe found many marine subjects suitable for his brush. He returned to Philadelphia to establish a successful painting career and was highly regarded as a marine painter during his lifetime. A versatile artist, Briscoe's work also included portraiture and later, history paintings. During the 1880s, he received important commissions for Civil War battle scenes, one of which was a mural of the Battle of Gettysburg measuring 13 x 230 feet (in ten panels) that was exhibited throughout the country. Briscoe exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Brooklyn Art Association and his works are in the collections of the Butler Institute, the National Museum of American Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Independence Seaport Museum, and the Woodmere Museum, to name but a few. Although traveling frequently, Briscoe kept a home in Philadelphia throughout his life and died there in 1903.

A longer, more descriptive title for the masterful '*The Age of Sail and Steam*' might aptly be '*Changing Tacks: The Sailing Navy Departs as the New Steam Navy Arrives*', as it rather poignantly reflects on the fading glory and traditions of the Old Sailing Navy in the wake of its mid-19th century modernization. We see a sailing frigate (perhaps the *USS Constitution* or one of the others that so gallantly earned laurels during ship-to-ship battles during the War of 1812), on a starboard course that will eventually take her from the viewer's sight, while one of the new steam frigates or sloops of war crosses the horizon in the center background. The slow demise of sailing power with the adoption of steam engines (prior to, and during the Civil War) is also symbolized by the setting sun. Its reflective light serves to starkly profile the new vessel (spewing coal-dust smoke into the sky) as it crosses the wake of the old, yet trim, sailing warrior. The departure of one is mourned, while the arrival of another is recognized, if not celebrated. This understated, yet powerful work is very much in the style of Moran, Briscoe's first and most influential instructor. Although undated, it was likely painted during or immediately following the Civil War (if later, Briscoe would have more likely employed an ironclad ship under steam power alone as the new forerunner, rather than depict one of the hybrid warships built during the transition from sail to steam during the 1840s-1860s).





**6 UNKNOWN ARTIST, BRITISH SCHOOL**  
***A Royal Navy Officer Taking Leave of His Wife, c. 1774***  
oil on canvas, 27 x 36 inches

Being a seafaring nation, it is not too surprising that Great Britain's genre art during the 18th and 19th century included a popular, recurring dual-theme: "The Sailor's Departure" and "The Sailor's Return". Such scenes (when done in a sentimental manner) usually feature a handsome, young sailor taking leave of--or returning to the arms of his loving family, although 'Jack Tar' is perhaps depicted with equal or greater frequency in a more humorous vein, enjoying the company of common "cruisers" or prostitutes in the last hours ashore before an extended voyage or immediately upon his return.

By way of contrast, we find a Royal Navy officer taking leave of his wife or lady in this fine 'conversation piece'—a popular 18th century British informal group portrait that featured a couple or small group engaged in conversation or some other activity. In his left hand, he holds Admiralty orders for sea duty that are docketed "On His Majesty's Service/Portsmouth". His determined features and right hand pointing to his ship in the harbor below, demonstrate his readiness for an ensuing, arduous voyage in His Majesty's service, perhaps of some years' duration. His genteel spouse's sad expression and gentle hold on his shoulder, however, seem to silently plead that he stay with her at least a few moments longer. Unfortunately, their identities and that of the artist, clearly studio-trained and probably working in Portsmouth, are now unknown to us).

Provenance: J. Welles Henderson Collection until 2008

Published: J. Welles Henderson and Rodney P. Carlisle. *Jack Tar: A Sailor's Life, 1750-1910* (Suffolk, England: Antique Collector's Club, 1999), 43.



## 7 LOUIS-PHILLIPE CREPIN (1772-1851)

### *Study for the 'Battle of the Bayonnaise against the Ambuscade', c. 1800*

pastel, charcoal and watercolor on laid paper, 28 3/4 x 21 3/4 inches

At dawn on December 14, 1798, the French 24-gun corvette *Bayonnaise* encountered a 32-gun Royal Navy frigate cruising off Oléron. *HMS Ambuscade* was waiting to meet with *HMS Stag* to blockade the Gironde estuary and assumed the French ship was her expected consort, while the latter correctly identified the stranger as a superior British warship and fled, *Ambuscade* then giving chase. Around noon, *Ambuscade* had closed to cannon range and the action commenced. Within an hour, the British had gained the upper hand, damaging the hull and rigging of the corvette. As *Ambuscade* came off the stern of *Bayonnaise* in an attempt to rake her, one of the frigate's starboard 12-pounders exploded, killing or wounding 13 of her crew. *Bayonnaise* attempted to escape, taking advantage of the temporary confusion aboard *Ambuscade*, but the frigate gave chase again and caught up around 3 p.m. As the frigate was overtaking the corvette, sailing on a parallel course, *Bayonnaise* slacked her sails and turned hard to her port (left), ramming the Briton. The bowsprit of *Bayonnaise* brought down *Ambuscade's* mizzen, wounding many on her poop and entangling the two ships. Both ships fired final broadsides, *Bayonnaise* losing many men and her captain, his arm. However, the French cleared the deck of the frigate by well-aimed grapeshot and musketry from her fighting tops and, using the bowsprit as a bridge, boarded the larger ship. After a bloody, 30-minute melee, purser William Beaumont Murray, last British officer still standing, surrendered *Ambuscade*. The hard-fought battle left the corvette a leaking and rudderless, while *Ambuscade*, despite damage and the loss of her mizzenmast, was otherwise intact and towed *Bayonnaise* into Rochefort the following day. Casualties were high on both sides, with 15 killed and 39 wounded (including the ship's captain and lieutenants) aboard *Ambuscade* and 25 killed and 30 wounded on *Bayonnaise*, her captain and lieutenant among the latter.

The defeat of a British warship by an inferior French ship was a rare occurrence during the French Revolutionary War and this battle was celebrated with numerous painting commissions, the most famous being the large and magnificent work by Louis-Phillipe Crepin titled *Combat de la Bayonnaise contre l'Ambuscade, 1798* (now prominently displayed in a main gallery of the *Musée national de la Marine* in Paris). This pastel on paper is one of the artist's studies for that work, considered by many to be Crepin's finest piece. It is a conceptual drawing for the dramatic, central element in the painting: the boarding of the larger British frigate from the bow of the smaller French vessel. In the completed oil painting, the scene is very much as rendered here, although the artist has removed the British ensign that dominates the upper portion of the drawing. Crepin studied under Regnault, Hubert Robert and Joseph Vernet and his paintings are very much in the romantic style of these French masters. He painted in oils, but also worked in watercolor and gouache and was also an accomplished aquatint engraver. Specializing in marine and historical paintings, he also did genre scenes and enjoyed a successful career working in his native Paris. He is considered one of the greatest of the French marine painters and the first such artist to receive the honorary title and appointment, in 1830, as *Peintre de la Marine* to the French government.



## 8 ROBERT DODD (1748-1816)

### *The Wooden Walls of England: The Battle of Cuddalore, 1783*

oil on canvas, 33 x 57 inches

signed and dated lower left: 'R. Dodd 1797'

Robert Dodd is one of the two principal visual chroniclers of the naval side of the American War of Independence (the other being Dominic Serres), as well as the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflicts. He not only painted the sea battles and related events, but also engraved and published more than one hundred views (mostly in aquatint), many after his own original works. Dodd was one of the leading marine artists of his period and enjoyed much greater recognition than most of his peers, no doubt partly through his popular engravings. Little is known about his professional training, but he lived and worked in Wapping, London for most of his life. He exhibited (along with his younger brother, Ralph) at the Society of Artists in 1780 and, beginning in 1782 and continuing until 1809, at the Royal Academy. He produced fine and meticulously researched battle paintings and dockyard views, as well as ship portraits, although he is best known for the former. Dodd skillfully employed light and shadow to great advantage, not only to emphasize details of ship architecture, but to convey the drama of naval actions and storms at sea. His works from the 18th century, especially those from the American War, generally stand far and above most of his later work from the Napoleonic era, in which his skill (or perhaps interest) in both composition and palette seems to have diminished with age (although some exceptions are noted). The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich has the largest collection of Dodd paintings, but other examples may be seen at the Royal Navy Museum, the National Museum of the U.S. Navy, Harvard University Museums and the Mariners' Museum.

Between February 17, 1782, and September 3, 1782, the fleets of French Admiral Bailli de Suffren and British Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Hughes engaged in four major naval battles in the Indian Ocean between February and September 1782. Although hard fought, all of the actions were largely inconclusive and no ships were taken by opposing vessels. A fifth and final encounter between the fleets occurred the following year, after the Treaty of Paris had been signed but before word reached the two commanders. Hughes' fleet was supporting a British army in its siege of Cuddalore when Suffren arrived to relieve the beleaguered city. Hughes initially attempted to avoid battle and moved away from the city on June 13th, which allowed Suffren to embark more than 1200 troops to reinforce his crews for an impending, and hopefully conclusive, naval action. However, light and contrary winds hampered both fleets and it was not until June 20th that the two fleets were able to maneuver in battle lines. The action began at 4 pm and lasted until 7 and although every ship was engaged, no major damage was sustained. It was to be the last battle of the American War for Independence and once again, was fought to a draw (although Hughes was forced to withdraw to Madras for resupply). Dodd depicts the British line of battle (18 ships of the line) trading blows with the opposing French line as viewed from the unengaged side, where lighter-armed warships such as 32-gun frigate *HMS Juno* seen in the right foreground, flank the line in a supporting capacity. The fading daylight reflecting against the clouds of gunsmoke suggest that the battle is nearing its conclusion.





## 9 PETER DE WINT (1784-1849)

### *Busy Harbor Scene, c. 1828*

graphite on paper, 5 ¼ x 5 inches

Peter De Wint, one of the principal British landscape watercolorists of the 19th century, was born in Staffordshire, the son of a physician of Dutch extraction. Moving to London in 1802, he was apprenticed to John Raphael Smith, the mezzotint engraver and portrait painter. He was freed from his apprenticeship in 1806 and studied for a period under John Varley, whose work and that of Thomas Girtin had great influence on him. De Wint exhibited at the Royal Academy for the first time in 1807 and entered its schools two years later. He was elected a Member of the Old Watercolour Society in 1811, at which time he was already established as a drawing master. He became a member of the Society of Painters in Watercolours, exhibiting there, the Academy, and the British Institution for many years. Although he painted in oils, his favorite medium was watercolor, in which he excelled. The poet John Clare wrote of him: "For nothing would appear so valuable to me as one of those rough sketches, taken in the fields, that breathe the living freshness of open air and sunshine."

Many of his works are set in Lincolnshire and Wales, although he traveled overseas in 1828 to Normandy, where this sketch was made. It is a waterfront scene showing coastal boats, sailors and peasant women before the medieval, turreted gates of an unidentified Norman port city or town, with a castle and church with tower on the heights beyond. De Wint went abroad only one time in his life, visiting Normandy in 1828 and this sketch is from one of his sketchbooks during that tour. On the reverse of the sheet is a pencil sketch of a river view.

Provenance: from an album of 18th-19th c. British drawings, acquired in London in 1999.





**10 EDWARD DUNCAN, RA, RWS (1803-1882)**

***Studies of Coastal Boats, c. 1830***

watercolor on paper, 10 1/2 x 13 1/2 inches

Edward Duncan was a leading British marine painter and watercolorist who began his career as a copyist and engraver in the London studio of Robert Havell, where he learned aquatint engraving. He was not a seaman turned painter, nor did his early career involve painting ships and the sea. Duncan painted watercolor landscapes rather in the manner of William Havell, Robert's brother. It was only in 1826 that a project of engraving sea pieces after works by William John Huggins sparked his own interest in marine subjects. However, it was not Huggins's stiff and old-fashioned ship portraits that Duncan emulated, but rather Clarkson Stanfield's intensely dramatic sea-pieces (Stanfield was conceded to be the best marine painter of his day). Duncan, unlike Clarkson Stanfield, had little firsthand knowledge of ships and the sea and instead specialized in coastal scenes and coastal craft, which he sketched from life during his travels in Britain and on the Continent. This study of working boats is from an early Duncan sketchbook (c. 1830) and is a fine example of Duncan's technique of composition, using both pencil and color washes.



## **11 EDWARD DUNCAN, RA, RWS (1803-1882)**

### ***Harbor Scene, c. 1830***

watercolor and graphite on paper, 10 3/4 x 15 inches

Although he also worked in oil, Edward Duncan excelled in watercolor in which he “could achieve a freshness and immediacy that transcend[ed] formula and imitation” with a “subtlety and crispness in the handling.” He exhibited more than 40 works at the Royal Academy and Society of Artists and more than 500 watercolors at the shows of the Royal Watercolor Society and the Old and New Watercolor Societies during the course of his career. His works are represented in most important collections of British 19th century drawings, as well as in the leading maritime museums of Britain, Europe and the United States. This harbor view of an unidentified port city or town, likely English, but possibly Channel Islands or the Continent (considering that it is a Dutch or Lowlands-built coastal boat that is the central device in the drawing). It is another fine example of Duncan’s compositional work in pencil and color, although uncompleted and is from an early Duncan sketchbook (c. 1830). On the reverse of this drawing is a graphite and color wash sketch of a rocky stream in a wooded landscape, in which Duncan has penciled notes to guide coloration had he decided to complete this work or paint a finished watercolor from said sketch.





**12 JAMES GUY EVANS (1809-c. 1860)**  
***Steam Ship McKim, off Rio Grande with 500 Mississippi Volunteers***  
***August 1846, Built by Thomas Clyde 1844***

oil on canvas, 30 x 48 1/2 inches

signed on lower right: 'Evans'

James Guy Evans was a former U.S. Marine and self-taught painter active in New Orleans between 1844 and 1853. As a marine artist working in that city, he would have been very familiar with the steamship *John S. McKim*, which made regular trips between New Orleans and ports in Mexico and Texas, principally Galveston. The *John S. McKim* (her namesake an influential merchant of Baltimore, Maryland) was the first screw-driven steamship built for commercial use in the United States. Thomas Clyde, the famous Philadelphia shipbuilder, designed her in collaboration with the principal developer of the screw propeller, John Ericsson (later famous as the architect of the ironclad, *USS Monitor*). Evans was likely an eyewitness to the vessel's most famous mission of the Mexican War, which he depicts in this powerful painting.

Answering the President's 1846 call for volunteers for service in Mexico, 1000 men formed the cadre of the 1st Mississippi Regiment, to be commanded by Colonel Jefferson Davis. Davis, who resigned his seat in the U.S. Senate to take its command, was a West Point graduate (and who would later become the President of the Confederate States of America) and succeeded in getting his men armed with percussion arms, the new Model 1841 military rifle, rather than the flintlock, smoothbore muskets carried by most infantrymen in the army. Davis's men came to use this firearm so effectively in combat that it later became known as the '*Mississippi Rifle*'. In the heat of the summer, Davis and the Mississippi Volunteers sailed from New Orleans to join General Zachary Taylor's small army then on the Rio Grande. Evans' painting captures the *McKim* and its martial cargo at the mouth of the river. The ship is steaming at high speed into the wind, its decks crowded with the citizen-soldiers. The 1st Mississippi went on to fight valiantly at the battle of Monterey in September, 1846, but it was at the subsequent battle of Buena Vista in February 1847 that the unit garnered its most famous laurels. During that fight, the Americans were in danger of being overrun by superior Mexican forces, but Davis rallied his troops with the cry "Stand Fast, Mississippians" and the line held. The battle cry is perpetuated today as the official motto of the current-day descendant of that proud unit, the 155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi National Guard.

Evans' naive painting of this important voyage is rendered with the artist's customary, vigorous brushstrokes, bold color palate, and careful attention to nautical detail. The titled inscription upon a black band along the bottom of the picture, also typical of his work, was a longstanding motif employed by Mediterranean marines artists and to which Evans would have first been introduced during his prior naval service on that station in the 1830s. This painting of the *McKim* shows the ship in three views, another tradition of ship portraiture dating to the 17th century that still remained popular in some circles well into the mid-19th.

Provenance: by donation to the Seaman's Church Institute of New York, from whence deaccessioned and sold in 2012.





### 13 CARL JUSTUS HARMEN FEDELER (1799-1858)

#### *American Ship 'Athens' Passing Heligoland, 1857*

oil on canvas, 21 x 30 1/2 inches

signed and dated on lower right: 'C. I. Fedeler Bremerhaven' and '1857'

Carl Justus Harmen Fedeler, often called Carl Justus Fedeler, was born January 25, 1799 in Bremen, where he also died 59 years later on January 23, 1858. He was a painter of ship portraits, working in his native city and the nearby port of Bremerhaven. He is frequently confused with his son, Carl Justus Fedeler (who called himself Carl Fedeler), also a marine painter. However, the senior Fedeler signed as 'C.I. Fedeler', while son Carl Fedeler's works were usually signed 'C. Fedeler'. Very little is known about the early days of the artist, although he is said to have worked with a Hamburg painter for a time, but his development as an artist was largely self-taught. By 1830, he was back in Bremen and from 1832 until his death, city directories listed him as "a teacher of drawing, portrait and marine painter" and he exhibited at the Kunsthalle between 1833 and 1856.

While Fedeler initially painted portraits and landscapes, he soon began to specialize in ship portraits--a lucrative and popular genre in the bustling commercial and port cities of Bremen and Bremerhaven--attested by his signature on such works beginning in the mid-1830s. During this period, he perfected his skills in characterizing water with translucent surfaces, white capped-waves, and sea foam, often enlivened by sunny patches. He was influenced by Anthonie Braakman, a Dutch artist working in Bremen during 1841-1843, changing from Biedermeier School skies of warm light to dramatic cloudscapes in his later works. All of his ship portraits reflect an exacting knowledge of rigging and architecture, as well as sea movement, and Bremen and Bremerhaven scenes were a favored backdrop. However, his abilities were far above that of the usual ship portraitist and it was Fedeler to whom one would turn in Bremen, if seeking to commission a dramatic whaling scene or commemorate the launching of a new ship. He became a favorite with American merchants and ship captains that traded in the North Sea and examples of his work are found in the Peabody Essex and other museums in the United States, as well as in European institutions. This superb portrait, one of Fedeler's final works, is of the ship 'Athens' as she appeared during her 1857 voyage to Bremerhaven. She has just cleared Heligoland, located in the center of the German Bight, approximately 30 miles offshore from Bremerhaven on the Weser River. The 'Athens' was built in 1839 at Portsmouth, New Hampshire by George Raynes and operated out of that port for most of her working life.

Provenance: Estate of Jack Carver, Scarborough, Maine, former President of the Penobscot Marine Museum.





## 14 ANTON OTTO FISCHER (1882-1962)

### *Yacht Under Full Sail*

oil on canvas, 29 x 21 inches

signed and dated on lower right, 'Anton Otto Fischer' and '1935'

Born in poverty in Regensburg, Germany and orphaned at an early age, Fischer ran away at the age of 15 and came to America as a deckhand on the *Gwynndr Castle*, which experience he later recounted and illustrated in his own book *Focs'le Days: A story of My Youth* (1947). He went on to sail in American boats for three years, until taking on work as a model and handyman for A. B. Frost, the noted sporting artist in 1905, leaving 14 months later with inspiration to become an artist. He went to Paris in October 1906 and studied for two years with Jean Paul Laurens at the *Academie Julien*, returning to New York in 1910. Fischer began specializing in popular human interest illustration for many of the major magazines, selling his first illustration to *Harpers Weekly* that same year. He illustrated the magazine adventure stories of Jack London until the author's death in 1916 and went on to become one of the most successful commercial artists working on commission for the *Saturday Evening Post* (creating more than 1000 illustrations for the magazine over a 48-year span). Admiring the work of Howard Pyle, he moved to Wilmington in 1912 and opened a studio, while studying under the master illustrator. It was there that he met his future wife, fellow art student Mary Ellen Sigsbee. They moved back to New York and lived in various locations, eventually moving to the Catskill town of Woodstock in the late 1930s, where he lived until his death in 1962. During World War II, he was made the *artist laureate* of the U.S. Coast Guard with a commission as lieutenant commander.



## 15 ANTON OTTO FISCHER (1882-1962)

### *Fishing on the Grand Banks*

oil on canvas, 26 x 32 inches

dated and signed on lower left: '1938' / 'Anton Otto Fischer'

Extremely prolific, Fischer produced an immense variety of subjects with uncanny accuracy. He illustrated such popular serial stories of the Depression era as Kyne's *Cappy Ricks*, Gilpatrick's *Glencannon*, as well as serials by Kenneth Roberts, and Nordhoff and Hall. His most famous character illustrations were for the *Tug-boat Annie* series, but his personal favorite was *Glencannon*. But he was best known for his marine works of the sea and the vessels that plied her. However, it was the men who crewed such ships and boats with whom he held such a close affinity and his realistic, yet sympathetic portrayals of their lives and adventures were unrivalled among his peers. Reproductions of Fischer's oil paintings graced the covers and pages of many best-selling adventure novels and salty tales, including *The Cruise of the Cachalot: Round the World After Sperm Whales*, *The Mutineers*, *The Dark Frigate* and editions of classics, such as *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *Treasure Island* and *Moby Dick*.





## 16 UNKNOWN FRENCH ARTIST, AFTER GUDIN

### *The Burning of the East Indiaman 'Kent', c. 1830*

pastel on paper, 25 x 34 inches

with inscription '*L'Incendie du Kent/d'apres Guidin*' on a label attached to the reverse

The saving of the passengers aboard the burning East Indiaman *Kent* was one of the most dramatic sea rescues recorded during the entire Age of Sail. The *Kent*, 1,332 tons, was built at the East India Company's yard at Blackwall in 1820 and had already completed three voyages to India when she was chartered to transport the 31st Regiment of Foot and its dependents for service in the East. Leaving the Downs on 19 February 1825, the *Kent* made good progress until March 1st, when during a severe gale in the Bay of Biscay, a lighted lamp was accidentally dropped in the main hold and set spirits from a stove cask ablaze. As the fire spread, there seemed but little hope of escape and as if by a miracle, the brig *Cambria* hove into view (enroute to Vera Cruz with 36 Cornish tin miners aboard). Although to their great discredit, most of the *Kent's* own sailors initially refused to make a return trip to the burning vessel to recover more passengers, all but 82 persons were rescued from the blazing ship by the two ships' crews. The small, 200-ton brig, crammed with 553 survivors (including 48 women and 52 children) returned to Falmouth, England, where it was received amid great accolades. Several artists produced works commemorating this disaster at sea and the resulting rescue, including Thomas Buttersworth, William Daniel, Thomas Luny and Jean Antoine Théodore de Gudin. Gudin (1802-1880), one of France's greatest marine artists of the period, painted his version within two years of the event and this work (from which this 19th century pastel is derived) now hangs in the *Musée national de la Marine* in Paris. In the original Gudin painting, the *Kent* is depicted heeling over to starboard, but it is reversed to larboard in this striking pastel drawing by an unknown artist of the French School.

Provenance: Christie's Maritime Sale, London, 9 May 1996 (lot 435); private collection.





## 17 JOSHUA GOSSELIN OF GUERNSEY (1739-1813)

### *Dutch Fisherfolk with Their Catch*

ink and grey watercolor wash on laid paper, 10 7/8 x 18 1/8 inches

Gosselin was a man of many parts, abilities, and wide-ranging interests. He served as Greffier of the Royal Court, held rank as a colonel in the Guernsey militia, and was a noted antiquarian and pioneer naturalist. Many examples of his plant collection survive and his shells are published in his work, *Tesacea Sarniensis*. Gosselin corresponded with like-minded gentlemen in England, such as Sir Joseph Banks of the Royal Society and Sir J.E. Smith, founder of the Linnean Society. He drew and painted wherever his travels took him: Essex, Kent, Hertfordshire, South Wales, Sussex, Jersey, Italy, France and the Lowlands, not to mention his native soil, Guernsey. He certainly knew Paul Sandby and may have gone on sketching trips with the artist and his circle, but whether this relationship involved any formal instruction is unknown. The bulk of his lifetime output remained in family hands until 1998, when sold-off by descendants at auction in London (Phillips), whence acquired. This coastal view of fisherman and their peasant families carrying their catch ashore from a beached, Dutch-built boat may have been drawn by Gosselin on the island of Guernsey itself or on one of his many frequent excursions to continental Europe. His sons enjoyed successful careers as Royal Navy and British Army officers, realizing the rank of admiral and general, respectively.

Provenance: the Gosselin family of Guernsey until 1998.





**18 ATTRIBUTED TO GEORGE HATHORN (1803-1869)**

***HMS Orestes cutting away her foremast in a gale off Barcelona***

watercolor on paper, 13 x 20 1/2 inches

*HMS Orestes* was an 18-gun, ship-rigged, sloop of war launched in 1824. During the Carlist War of 1831-32 (Portuguese Civil War), she was the flagship of Captain William Nugent Glascock, Royal Navy, who had charge of a small British naval squadron station on the River Douro to look after British national interests, as well as to protect British persons and property in that war-torn country. It depicts the crew of the wave- and wind-battered sloop cutting down her foremast to prevent her being blown from her moorings and cast up against the docks of Barcelona or into another vessel. This drastic measure allowed the warship and her crew to safely ride out the hurricane without any further undue damage or loss. This well-rendered drawing, found in a 19th century scrapbook relating to the naval career of Vice Admiral George Hathorn, RN, then serving as a lieutenant in Glascock's command. Drawing was a course of instruction at the Royal Naval College and many talented amateur watercolorists (some who later became professional artists, such as Yates and Strickland) could be found in naval ship wardrooms.

Provenance: George Hathorn and by descent in the Hathorn family; J. Welles Henderson Collection to 2008; private collection to present.

Published: J. Welles Henderson and Rodney P. Carlisle. *Jack Tar: A Sailor's Life, 1750-1910* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Antique Collector's Club, 1999), 231.



## **19 JULIUS CAESAR IBBETSON (1759-1817)**

### ***A Scene on board the Vestal frigate, 1788***

watercolor on laid paper, 6 5/8 x 9 5/8 inches

mounted on contemporary cartridge paper, 8 x 10 3/4 inches

title inscribed in artist's hand below the drawing in iron-gall ink

Just as he was establishing himself as professional artist in London, Ibbetson was unexpectedly appointed official draughtsman to the first official British embassy to China, headed by Colonel Charles Cathcart, son of Lord Cathcart. Departing Spithead on 21 December 1787, the expedition was cut short by the untimely death of Cathcart on 10 June 1788, who was buried on Java. The mission was abandoned in light of this tragic event and Ibbetson and the other members returned to England aboard *HMS Vestal*, the frigate on which they had originally embarked. However, the voyage sparked the artist's lifelong fascination with the hard, but free-spirited life of the common sailor. The world of "Jack Tar" continued as a subject of Ibbetson's pencil and brushes and his most well-known and celebrated works, such as "Jack in His Glory", portray mariners with good humor and empathy.

However, only the ship's logbooks, Ibbetson's personal diary, and approximately a dozen watercolors done by the artist during the voyage survive today to chronicle the 1787-88 mission, of which just a handful depict life aboard ship (this drawing being one of these rarities). In it, Ibbetson depicts the opening round of a "milling match" in the forecastle of *HMS Vestal*. Milling was an form of bare-fisted boxing popular among British sailors in the 18th and early 19th century and this is the earliest extant view of such a match. The two would-be combatants face-off against each other, both straddling a sea chest. Once the match begins, they must deliver and receive any blows without recourse to backing off--each sailor prevented from doing so by having a "second" behind him, his knee placed firmly against his back. Such matches only ending when a knock-out or knock-down punch is delivered.



*A Scene on board the Vestal frigate*

**20 JOHN JENKINSON (1790-1821)**  
***A Private Armed Vessel Arriving at Liverpool***  
oil on canvas, 34 x 52 inches

The 18th century saw Liverpool's rise to prominence as a trading center, moving beyond the coastal and Irish trade to compete in trade with the Americas, not only in Caribbean sugar and Chesapeake tobacco, but also the African slave trade. By 1800, Liverpool was the largest slave trading port in the world and in the 19th century, the port grew even more important due to industrialization, dock development, the new canal and railway network, as well as the growth of the cotton and emigrant trade with the United States. By the 1840s, Liverpool handled more export tonnage than London, most of it carried in American, rather than British hulls. Its growth in prominence and wealth was paralleled by a burgeoning artistic community, one that included some of the finest marine artists working in England.

During the first quarter of the 19th century, perhaps the two finest painters of ship portraits in Liverpool were John Jenkinson and Robert Salmon. Jenkinson's exquisitely rendered snapshots of shipping in the Mersey and along Liverpool's docks celebrated the city's prosperity and activity (as did that of Salmon, whose work closely resembled Jenkinson's and with which it is frequently confused). Jenkinson joined the Liverpool Academy and exhibited regularly there between 1810 and 1814 and was listed as a painter in city directories from 1815 until his untimely death in 1821. Jenkinson's works are highly admired by collectors both in Britain and America today, but are rarely encountered due to his short working life. Only three examples hang in Liverpool's own Merseyside Maritime Museum today, while another example is in the collections of the Peabody-Essex Museum in Salem, an American city with strong trading links to Liverpool.

This painting is a quintessential Jenkinson work, a combination ship portrait and landscape view of the city from waterside. Astern of the ship can be seen the new spire of St. Nicholas, which had collapsed in 1810 and rebuilt by 1815. At first glance, the ship appears to be a Royal Navy sloop of war; however, the lack of a commissioning pennant on the mainmast, plus a cargo on deck would instead suggest that she is a merchantman. Yet her heavy armament (18-20 guns) for such a small ship suggests instead that she is most likely that curious hybrid of the period often simply called a "private armed vessel", essentially a privateer operating in a dual capacity as trading vessel. The blue ensign, usually flown only by Royal Navy ships, is "defaced" with a red margin along the bottom of the fly--a feature observed on only two other paintings, both Liverpool ship portraits by Jenkinson and each depicting a similar, heavily-armed vessel. A. S. Davidson, noted Liverpool marine art expert, has suggested that this unusual blue ensign may have served in recognition of the ship's quasi-naval role, or perhaps denoted some special service such as escort duty for some Irish Sea convoy in wartime (further supporting the 1815 dating, a year during which ongoing conflict with both the United States and France finally concluded).



## 21 DUNCAN MCFARLANE (1818-1865)

### *The American Ship 'Ellen Hood', 1855*

watercolor with gouache highlights, 18 1/2 x 27 inches

Scottish-born Duncan McFarlane was a Liverpool artist working in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the nineteenth century who, like Samuel Walters, developed a strong clientele among the American merchant marine doing business with that English port. A significant proportion of known works by McFarlane are of New England-built, -owned and -captained ships, leading a number of marine art historians and collectors to erroneously conclude that he migrated to Boston by mid-century. In fact, McFarlane continued working in Liverpool throughout his career. His paintings show exceptional quality and many of his unsigned examples have been attributed to Samuel Walters or Joseph Heard, whose style they closely resemble. They are characterized by bright skies, bluish-green waters with white-capped waves, carefully delineated details of ship architecture and rigging, and a greater ratio of vessels to overall picture area. A recurring, “trademark” feature in most of his works is the placement of hovering seabirds (usually gulls) in the foreground, sometimes along with floats or driftwood. Noted marine art historian A. S. Davidson considers him a “true artisan” that numbered among the best of the talented Liverpool school of marine artists. His works rarely appear on the market and are highly desired by collectors today.

This fine portrait of the ship *Ellen Hood* of Portland (built by Robert Pennell, Jr. of Brunswick, Maine) exhibits all of the features for which McFarlane’s works are so often admired, as noted above. Unlike most of McFarlane’s paintings, which are rendered in oil on canvas, this work is executed in watercolor on paper, with gouache highlights. It is one of only three watercolor portraits by him and the only one that is signed. All three watercolors are of American vessels and A. S. Davidson knows of no such portraits on paper in British collections (personal communication with author, 20 December 2012). It depicts the *Ellen Hood* clearing Point Lynas on the southeast tip of Anglesy; the castellated structure on the headland is the lighthouse (the light itself housed in the lower, seaward part of the building). The work was commissioned to commemorate the ship’s first transatlantic voyage in 1855, in which she carried a cargo of cotton from Apalachicola, Florida to Liverpool. The converging pilot schooner is the *Criterion* (denoted by her hull color and the no. 10 on her sail). Besides the ship’s name rendered in yellow on her stern quarter, the *Ellen Hood* can also be identified by the Marryat Code three-flag hoist. She would return to Liverpool again, clearing Savannah on 23 November 1866 as “the first cotton ship of the season” and carrying more than 3000 bales valued at \$515,554.09. A Savannah correspondent stated that she was “one of the fastest that ever left this port, and came here from New York in the short space of three days.” Over the next 15 years, the *Ellen Hood* made numerous trading voyages to Europe, South America, India and Japan. In her final voyage of 1869, she was caught in a typhoon and seriously damaged, eventually being towed to Yokohama for repairs in late October and there condemned in January 1870.





## 22 JOHN B. MOLL (1909-1999)

### *Skipjack Schooner under Sail*

watercolor on paper, 15 x 11 1/2 inches

signed on lower right: *John Moll*

John B. Moll was born and raised in Reading, Pennsylvania, where a high school interest in art led to further studies at the School of Industrial Art in Philadelphia following graduation. He transferred to the Wilmington Academy of Art, where he studied painting under Brandywine School stalwarts Gayle Hoskins, Frank Schoonover, and N.C. Wyeth, all former students of Howard Pyle. A schoolmate later recalled that Moll modeled for artists for extra funds, allowing him to escape to the Eastern Shore in his free moments to draw fishing shacks, wharves and boats. During the Great Depression, he worked for the Delaware Federal Writers Project of the WPA, preparing drawings and paintings illustrating Delaware and its history for publications such as *Delaware: A Guide to the First State*, and prepared watercolors for *The Index of American Design*.

In 1946, Moll moved with his wife from Middletown, Delaware to Oxford, Maryland, where he spent the rest of his life working as a freelance artist. Although he is most famous for his marine art of the Chesapeake Bay, including detailed renderings of skipjacks and wooden canoes, he also did landscapes and book illustration work, as well as murals for various banks, restaurants, clubs and public building on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He worked in oil, watercolor, pastel, pencil and stone lithography, sometimes producing limited edition prints of his own original works. Major exhibits of Moll's work have been mounted by the Historical Society of Talbot County, the Chesapeake Maritime Museum, and the Oxford Museum, all in Maryland. His works are represented in the collections of the above institutions, as well as the National Gallery of Art, the National Museum of American Art, the Biggs Museum of American Art, and the Maryland Historical Society.

Provenance: purchased from the artist in 1976 at Oxford, Maryland by the late Colonel and Mrs. Walter W. Plummer of Frederick, Maryland.



## 23 ANTOINE LEON MOREL-FATIO (1810-1871)

### *Marine Studies from Marseilles and Bordeaux, 1850s* (10 drawings)

graphite and graphite with watercolor on paper, various sizes  
some examples inscribed and dated by the artist

Antoine Léon Morel-Fatio, who became one of the leading French marine painters of the 19th century, was born into a French family of minor nobility in Rouen. He attended *Lycée Louis-le-Grand* before being expelled in 1824 for making practical jokes and other infractions, finishing his studies at the *collège Bourbon*. In 1827, he went to sea for the first time in a British merchant ship to learn navigation and other skills of the mariner. Upon his return, he joined the family banking business but soon left the profession and traveled extensively in Europe and the Orient, studying painting. In 1830, he was with the French fleet during the expedition against Algiers, from which he produced a corpus of drawings and paintings that earned him some success at the Salon in 1833. In 1836, Louis-Philippe commissioned him to do a painting illustrating the capture of Algiers for the museum in Versailles, followed by other important commissions. He was the official artist with the French fleet in its expedition against the Levant in 1839 and in 1840, the painting *'The Return of Napoleon's Ashes to France'* brought him great notice. Morel-Fatio was made assistant curator of the naval collections of the Louvre (the future Musée national de la Marine), rising to chief curator in 1852. He was awarded the Legion of Honor in 1846 and named *Peintre de la Marine* in 1853, in recognition of his accomplishments as a marine artist and for his public service. He died in Paris on March 2, 1871 from a heart attack, said to have been brought on by viewing Prussian troops force their way into the Louvre.

This small collection of ten drawings, consisting of vessel and sailor studies, were probably taken from a sketchbook that the artist kept during the 1850s, as one drawing is dated *'Marseilles 1850'*, while another is dated *'Bordeaux 1854'* and all are done on the same paper, eight pencil sketches in graphite, while two are rendered in watercolor and graphite.





## 24 JAMES FULTON PRINGLE (1788-1847)

### *American Privateer Schooner*

oil on canvas, 18 x 24 inches

In 1800, James Pringle exhibited his first work at the Royal Academy: 'View of a seventy four on the stocks, and the launch of a frigate' (probably observed by the artist at the Deptford Yard, as he was then residing on Kent Street in Deptford). Little is known about his life or artistic output over the next ten years, although Pringle apparently traveled to the United States sometime prior to the War of 1812 in the capacity of a sailor, possibly settling there. In 1811, the American merchant ship in which he was serving was stopped at sea by a Royal Navy frigate and Pringle, being English-born, was pressed into service. Pringle subsequently exhibited four additional marine works at the Royal Academy between 1812 and 1818, with Sydenham (his place of birth) listed as his address, although it is likely that he was still in Royal Navy service during part of this period). He seems to have been a wandering spirit and traveled extensively until 1828 (probably as a working mariner for at least part of this time span), when he arrived in New York and resumed active work as a marine painter, exhibiting frequently at the National Academy of Design between 1832 and 1844, as well as the Apollo Association and the Brooklyn Institute. He later relocated from Manhattan to Brooklyn (1835) and lived and worked there until his death on April 1, 1847. Pringle later added a middle name, *Fulton*, apparently derived from his home address of Fulton Street, to distinguish himself from another James Pringle then living in Brooklyn (who was mentally imbalanced and died shortly after being institutionalized).

Possibly self-taught, Pringle specialized in marine paintings, landscapes, and occasionally, portraiture. Pringle's well-populated views of the early New York waterfront are an admixture of landscape and genre works, carefully delineated, yet charming in their naivety. In his day, Pringle was well-known and considered one of the best of the marine painters then working in the United States, but has unfortunately been too long overlooked in the historiography of American marine painting. This portrait of an unidentified American schooner under sail, off a mountainous coastline with three vessels anchored in the distance, may relate to the War of 1812. From her lines and her sharply raked masts, she appears to be a Baltimore-built clipper (although gaff-rigged, rather than a topsail schooner like *Chasseur*-- perhaps the most famous of the Baltimore privateers), a fast vessel ideally suited to such a role; the cannon visible in the open gunports, as well as the lack of any mercantile flag at her mainmast, would suggest that she is involved in such a warlike pursuit.

Provenance: Quester Gallery (label on reverse backing panel, in which the painting is titled "*American Schooner Under Sail off Shore*"); private collection until 2012.





## 25 XANTHUS SMITH (1839-1929)

### *American Clipper Ship in Full Sail*

oil on canvas, 14 x 22 inches

signed on lower left: '*Xanthus Smith*'

The son of landscape artist and theater scenery painter Russell Smith and artist Mary (née Wilson) Smith, marine painter Xanthus Smith was born in Philadelphia where he would spend the majority of his life as an artist. He toured Europe in 1851-52 with his parents and sister Mary Russell Smith (who later enjoyed a successful career as a landscape artist), studying and drawing inspiration from the great works of art viewed during their travels. Upon his return, he began to paint seriously and continue his art studies, as well as studying chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1856, he exhibited his first piece (a landscape) at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where he would continue to exhibit until 1887. Xanthus always had an interest in the sea and ships and some of his earliest works were coastal scenes and drawings of ships. However, it was his Civil War experience that would establish him as one of the leading American marine artists. In 1862, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was appointed captain's clerk aboard the *USS Wabash*, flagship of Rear Admiral Samuel F. du Pont's South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. His artistic abilities soon caught the admiral's attention and he received commissions from du Pont and numerous other officers in the squadron, including both personal and ship's portraits. Due to illness, Xanthus resigned his post in 1864 and returned home to recuperate and resume his artistic career.

Combining his naval experience during the war with his innate abilities, he became the foremost artist of Civil War naval scenes and received numerous important commissions, so much so that the majority of his output between the war and the late 1880s revolved around subjects relating to that conflict. He first visited Mount Desert Island, Maine in 1877 and returned there many times, later purchasing a property on Casco Bay. Maine provided inspiration for other marine works, including coastal views, shipwrecks and studies of the sailing ships at sea, such as this majestic clipper ship, in the waning days of the Age of Sail. Xanthus Smith enjoyed a long and successful career, living well into the era of American Modernism, but remained a dedicated Realist through his entire career, although from c. 1900 onwards, he focused his interest away from marine and landscape subjects instead to portraiture and figure studies. His works are found in the collections of most major American art and maritime museums.





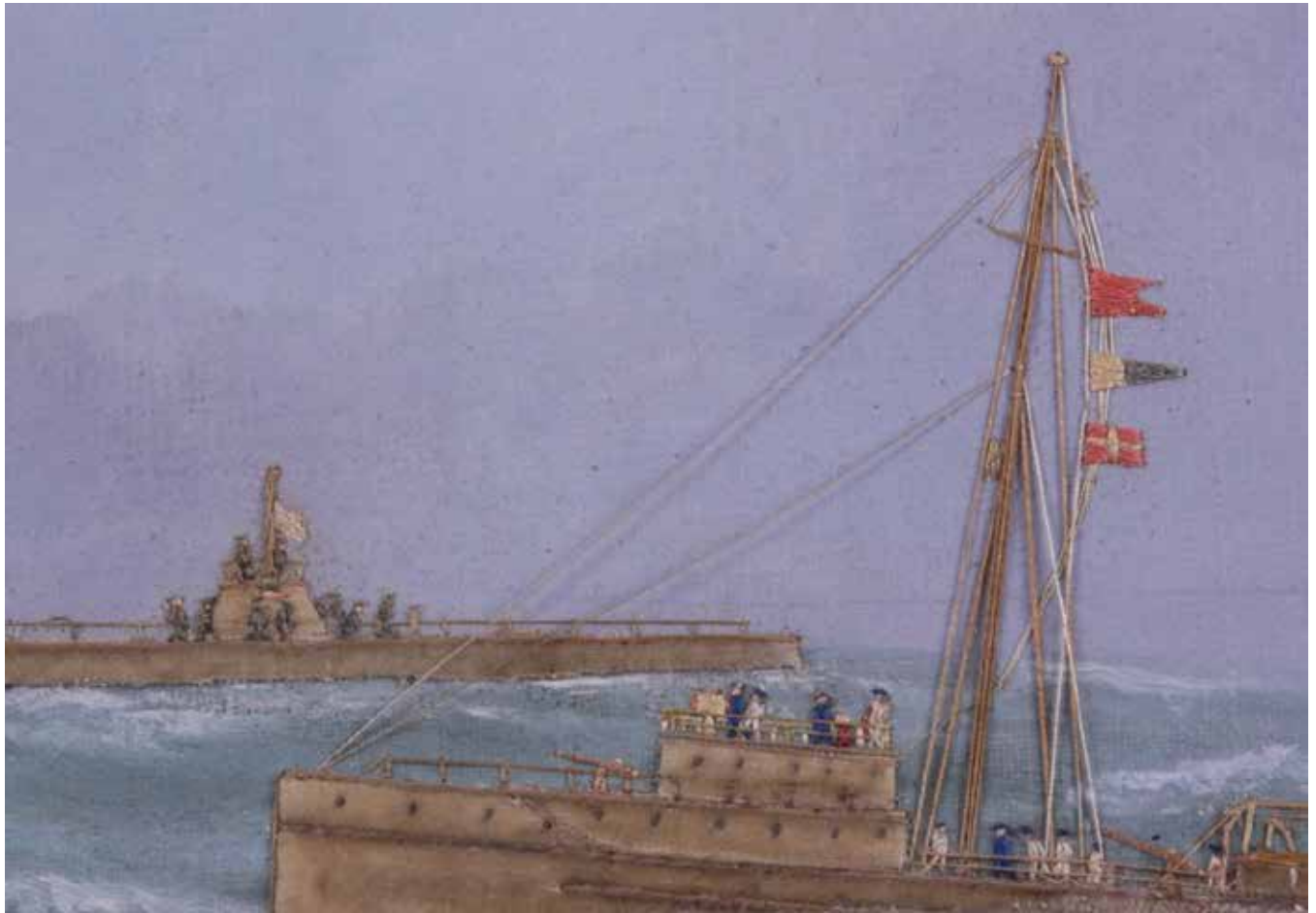
## 26 THOMAS H. WILLIS (1850-1925)

### *A German U-Boat Surrendering to a United States Destroyer, c. 1918*

silk embroidery floss and velvet, upon oil-painted canvas, 10 1/2 x 17 1/2 inches  
signed on lower right with initialed cipher: 'T/W'

The charming and unusual ship portraits of Thomas Willis can be categorized as marine art, folk art and needlework. Most references cite his birthplace as Connecticut, although one source lists it as Denmark (with a variant of his name as "Willes") and it may be that Willis was raised in that state, but originally came from Scandinavia. Willis worked in New York City for a manufacturer of embroidery thread, which may have inspired his choice of medium. It was while living there that he became known for his unique, mixed media portraits of both sailing ships, steamers and yachts: the vessels rendered in velvet or satin and detailed with silk embroidery floss. He advertised himself as the "inventor and sole maker of silk ware pictures" and soon developed a strong cadre of clients from among the membership of the New York Yacht Club, as well as officers of the United States Navy and the merchant marine. He is said to have collaborated from time to time with fellow New York marine artist Antonio Jacobsen, the latter painting the seascape backgrounds in some of his works. Willis' creations are extremely well rendered in skillful needlework, the ship architecture and rigging correctly and well-defined. His works are frequently, though not always, signed with a cipher consisting of the initial 'T' superimposed upon a larger letter 'W' (as in this instance), giving the impression of a stylized anchor; they are usually mounted in oak frames under glass when in their original state. This unusual work by Willis, rather than being the usual ship portrait, portrays instead an event of the First World War: a U.S. Navy destroyer accepting the surrender of a German U-Boat. The submarine's crew is seen raising a white flag above its conning tower, upon which is emblazoned the red/white/black flash of the Imperial German Navy. Five U-Boats capitulated to U.S. forces following the signing of the Armistice on November 1, 1918.





## 27 LIEUTENANT THOMAS YATES (1760-1796)

### *Royal Navy Frigates and a Cutter in a Stiff Breeze off Dover*

watercolor, ink and graphite on paper, 16 1/2 x 24 inches

Thomas Yates passed for a lieutenant in the Royal Navy in 1782 and a number of engravings after original drawings by him were published during the 1780s and 90s, although it is unclear when he gave up the sea for a career as a professional marine artist. He specialized in battle paintings and marine views of fine quality, exhibiting nine works at the Royal Academy between 1788 and 1794. A talented artist, his career was on the rise when his life was cut short on August 29, 1796. Yates and his wife shared a house in London with a Miss Jones, ownership of said home (which had belonged to his great uncle, the comedian Richard Yates) being in dispute. After dinner, Yates took a stroll in the garden and Miss Jones locked him out. As Yates attempted reentry via a kitchen window, he was shot and killed by a Mr. Sellers, called in by Miss Jones to protect her. At the subsequent trial, the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter; Sellers was fined one shilling and imprisoned for six months. Works by Yates are extremely rare, due to his short working life.



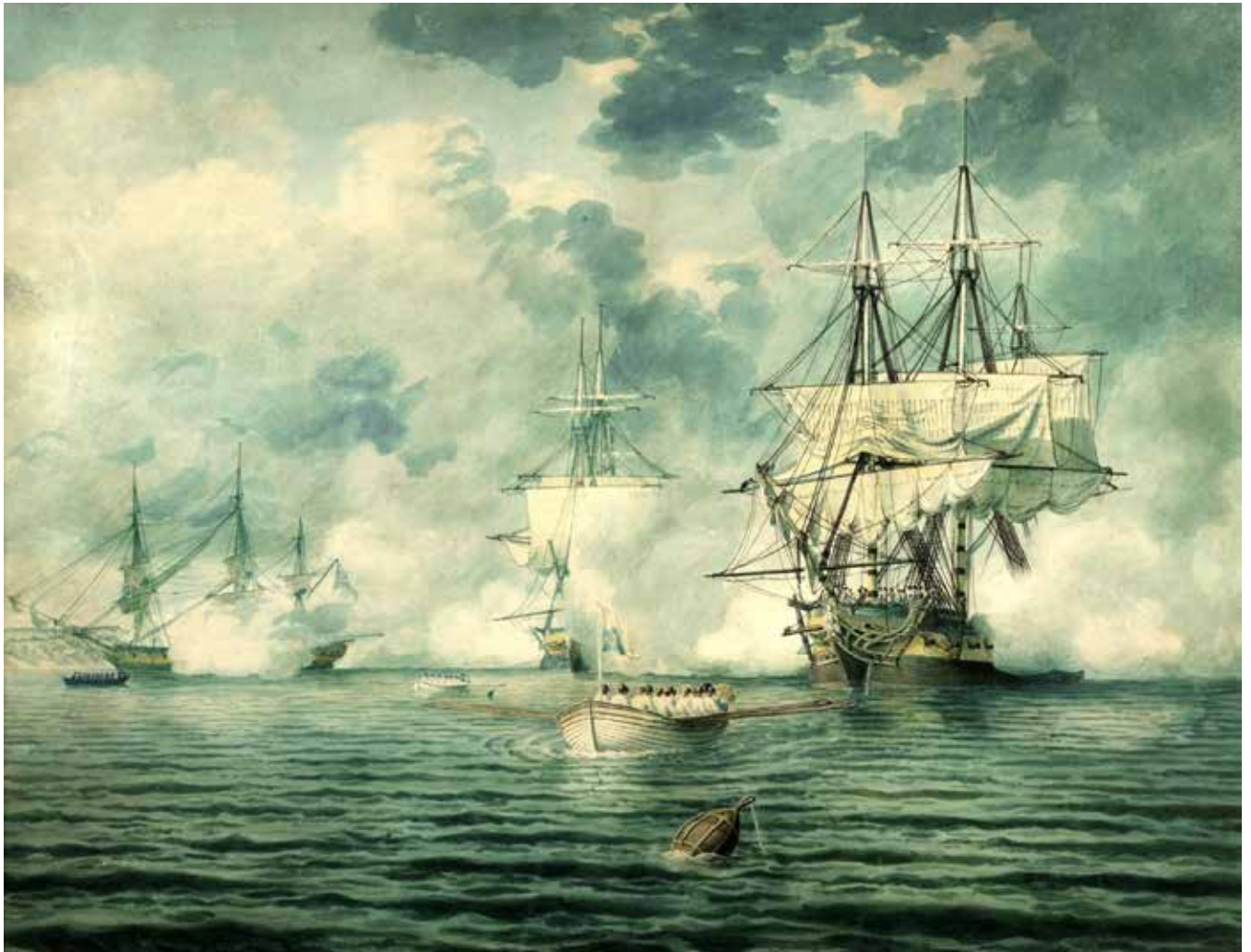
**28 LIEUTENANT THOMAS YATES (1760-1796)**

***A Royal Barge Saluted by Men O'War, c. 1790***

watercolor, ink and graphite on paper, 16 1/4 x 21 1/2 inches

inscribed 'Yates' on reverse in graphite

This superb watercolor view, equal in quality to the best of those by rivals Dominic Serres and Nathaniel Pocock, was exhibited by Lieutenant Thomas Yates at the Royal Academy in 1790. It depicts the ships of a Royal Navy squadron saluting a barge conveying one or more members of the Royal Family ashore, as denoted by the royal standard mounted in the stern of the boat. Unfortunately, the identity of the Royal personage(s) cannot be discerned, the features of which are hidden beneath an umbrella that provides protection from the strong midday sun.





## *James L. Kochan*

Prior to founding *James L. Kochan Fine Art & Antiques* in 1998, Kochan was director of museum collections at Mount Vernon, during which he organized the blockbuster travelling exhibition, *George Washington Revealed: Treasures from Mount Vernon*. He spent nearly two decades as a museum director and curator, principally with the U.S. Army Museum System and the National Park Service (including seven years as supervisory curator at Morristown National Historical Park). He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards for his curatorial and historical work, including the Anne S. K. Brown Military Fellowship at Brown University, the Award of Merit from the American Assoc. for State and Local History, a Museum Fellowship from the British Council, and is a Fellow of the Company of Military Historians.

Kochan is the author or co-author of eight books, including the recently-published reference work, *Insignia of Independence: Military Buttons, Accoutrement Plates and Gorgets of the American Revolution*, and more than 100 published articles or research reports on various facets of early American history, art, and material culture. He is considered a leading expert on American and British military and marine artwork and material culture, 1700-1850. In addition to his career in the fine art and antiques trade, he continues to serve as a consultant to various museums and historic sites. Kochan also works with the film/media industry. Past projects have included working as primary historical advisor to A&E Television's *The American Revolution* (1994) and other PBS and History Channel productions; participating as an expert appraiser for *The Antiques Roadshow*, and serving as the principal historical consultant and technical advisor for costume, props and set dressing on Peter Weir's film adaptation of the Patrick O'Brien novels, *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*.





## *Institutional Clients*

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
Fort Ligonier Foundation  
Fort Ticonderoga  
Historic Deerfield  
Historic New Orleans Collection  
Library of Congress  
Minnesota Historical Society  
National Army Museum (London)  
National Museum of American History  
National Park Service  
National Society of the Cincinnati  
Pennsylvania Museum & Historical Commission  
Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Canada  
Tennessee State Museum  
Scottish War Museum (Edinburgh)  
Washington County Museum of Art  
William L. Clements Library, U. of MI  
U. S. Army Heritage Center and Museum, Carlisle  
U.S. Military Academy Museum, West Point

**Notes:**





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