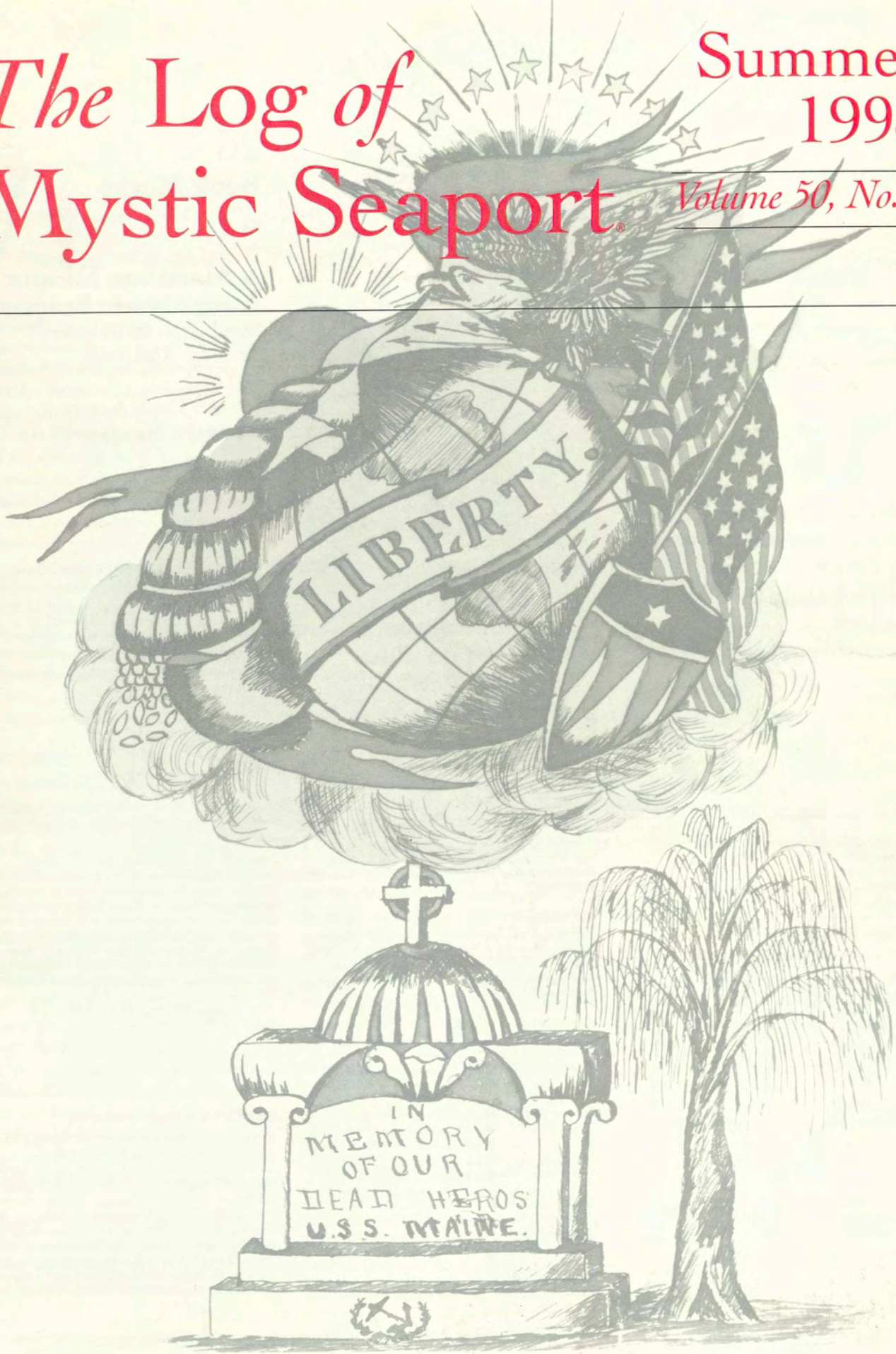
The Log *of* Mystic Seaport®

Summer 1998

Volume 50, No. 1



Contents

1
Sightings

2
1998 Gerald E. Morris Prize Article
The Scourge, the Rattle Snake, and the *True Blooded Yankee*
DONALD A. PETRIE

11
The Seamen's Protection Certificate as Proof of American Citizenship for Black Sailors
KELLY S. DRAKE



15
Images of the Spanish-American War
JENNIFER JOHNSON and MARIFRANCES TRIVELLI



23
Joshua Slocum: The First Solo Circumnavigator
(A Vignette from Mystic Seaport's newest book, America and the Sea: A Maritime History*)*
JOHN B. HATTENDORF

26
Book Marks

26
A Maritime Minute from Mystic Seaport
Stonington seal-hunters discover Antarctica

Inside Back Cover
Mystic Seaport Salutes!
Electa "Exy" Search Johnson

Back Cover: Mystic Seaport's new advertising campaign features stories of America and the Sea as told by our Museum interpreters. (Second in a series of four print ads running in *The New York Times* and other New York metro-area newspapers throughout the summer.)

Mystic Seaport Salutes Institutional Sponsor Mystic Color Lab

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On the cover: This tattoo design by C.H. Fellowes of Providence, Rhode Island, ca. 1900, commemorating the loss of the USS *Maine*, may have been worn by veterans of the Spanish-American War. The tombstone reads "IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAD HEROS U.S.S. MAINE" and the willow tree symbolizes mourning. The design above the tomb incorporates many patriotic themes, including the bald eagle, American flags, shield, and banner of liberty, all surrounding the globe, suggesting a positive view of American imperialism and the expansion of American values of liberty worldwide. (Mystic Seaport 83.52.3.95)

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Sightings

In late February, Mystic Seaport lost one of its great friends, Waldo Howland. Having served the Museum as a particularly interested and effective trustee for a quarter of a century, he died just a few weeks shy of his ninetieth birthday. In the introduction to a piece he prepared last summer, he wrote "the prevailing winds of my life have blown delightfully fair and I have enjoyed them all. I do not mean to suggest that the avocation (of boating) has been free of hard work and fixed determination, but I can avow with sincerity and satisfaction that priceless dividends have constantly come my way in the form of a wonderful wife and family and a most rewarding consistent association with the finest people and the best of boats." While his passing is an excruciating loss, it is reassuring to know that this extraordinary man, who was the very definition of "integrity," viewed his existence with simple clarity as a wonderful life devoted to wife, family, hard work, determination, fine people, and the best boats.

Many people know of Waldo through his longtime leadership of the Concordia Company and his association with the superb Concordia yawls. Anyone who knew him felt privileged to have him as an acquaintance or friend. This was also the case for Mystic Seaport, which benefited from his devotion of so much energy to the Museum during his later years. Waldo became involved at the time we were building our preservation shipyard and committing ourselves to a high level of quality in our watercraft care and programs. Waldo's intelligent, commonsense approach to the needs of our vessels resulted in practices that set a standard respected worldwide.

With the shipyard established, Waldo shifted his focus to the Museum's deteriorating wooden seawalls. He inspired the construction, in stone, of Chubb's Wharf as the permanent berth for the *Charles W. Morgan*, and this project inspired the decade-long effort to create granite seawalls along our entire waterfront. Covering more than two thousand lineal feet was daunting, but we followed Waldo's conviction that if you just set about the task and make steady progress the job will get done, and it did.

While sustaining his primary interest in Mystic Seaport's watercraft, he was concerned with the full range of our operations, from the G.W. Blunt White Library to finances, from publications to the Museum Stores and Galley. He asked penetrating questions and listened intently to the responses and comments of others. He was an enormous presence despite being of diminutive physical stature. Occasionally, at a meeting of the board of trustees he would speak from his chair, saying, "I would stand up to speak but I wouldn't be any taller." Despite the humor, everyone would pay close attention to what followed, understanding fully the thought and insight his comments represented.

The last Mystic Seaport project upon which Waldo Howland focused was the concept of creating a nationally significant Small Craft Center in the lighthouse area of the Museum grounds. The idea has great logic, and we have moved forward with some of Waldo's recommendations for this area and are studying others. He has left us all with another legacy as well: his autobiography, titled *A Life in Boats*. Mystic Seaport has published the first two volumes of this engaging work, and it is gratifying to know that he completed and we will publish the third volume, which covers the years of his involvement with the Museum.

Waldo and his late wife Katy were a remarkable pair who brightened the scene wherever they went. In their company you sensed a gentle, positive approach to life, which was reflected in all they did. They enriched Mystic Seaport and all our lives. It was a joy to know them.

J. Revell Carr

DIRECTOR

1998 Gerald E. Morris Prize Article

The *Scourge*, the *Rattle Snake*, and the *True Blooded Yankee*

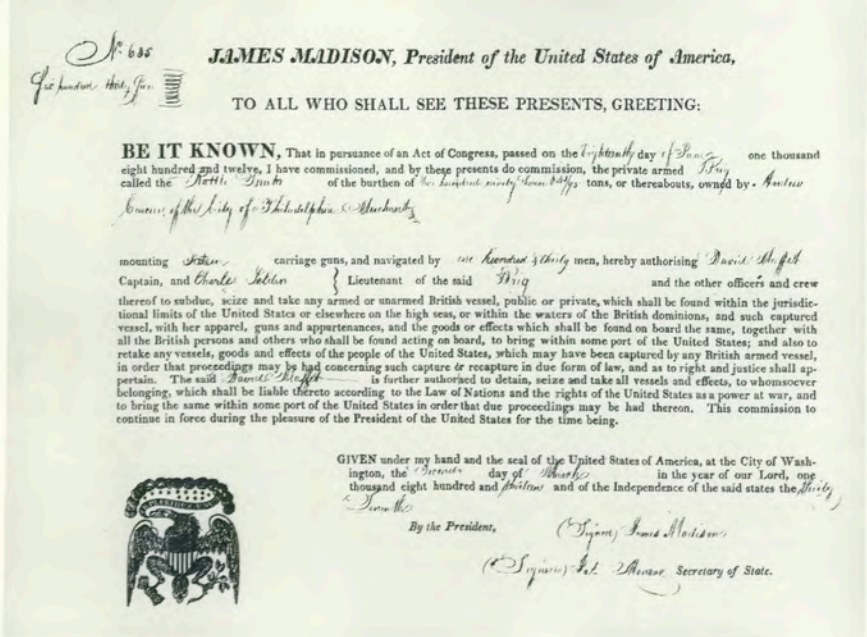
DONALD A. PETRIE

On 23 May 1813, the American privateer *Scourge* lay off the Battery in New York Harbor, armed, manned, and provisioned for a lengthy cruise against the commerce of Great Britain. Eleven months earlier the U.S. Congress had declared war against Britain after more than a decade of perceived abuses on the high seas. The impressment of seamen from American ships by Royal Navy vessels, the capture of American merchantmen engaged in neutral trade with both Britain and France during the Napoleonic Wars, the failure of the trade embargo of 1808 to resolved the issue of neutral trade, and unprovoked attacks on several U.S. Navy vessels had heightened American readiness for war, as had British efforts to hinder U.S. expansion in the west. With the declaration of war, numerous merchants sought to profit by outfitting private warships–privateers–to cruise against British commerce. Commissioned by President James Madison, these vessels were authorized by Congress to capture British vessels and bring them into port to be condemned by a prize court. Privateer owners and crews hoped to profit from the sale of captured vessels and cargo while at the same time assisting the U.S. war effort by disrupting British commerce.

The *Scourge* was one of at least 500 American privateers commissioned during the War of 1812. A large schooner of 248 tons, with fifteen carriage guns and a crew of 110 men, the *Scourge* was owned by two New York merchants, Peter N. Schenk and Fred Jenkins, and commanded by Samuel C. Nicoll of Stratford, Connecticut. Thirty-one years of age, Nicoll was a seaman of competence and experience, with an intimate knowledge of the waters surrounding New York. Since the age of 18 he had commanded coasting vessels of his father, General Mathias Nicoll, a Connecticut shipowner and member of a prominent family with holdings on both shores of Long Island Sound.[1]

The immediate problem facing the young captain was the tight British blockade of New York. There were two possible routes of departure: southward through the lower bay and across the bar at Sandy Hook, or eastward through Hell Gate and Long Island Sound. Each exit was guarded by a British 74-gun ship of the line with an escorting frigate.

Four miles north of Nicoll's anchorage, in Kips Bay, lay three U.S. warships with an objective identical to Nicoll's. They were the frigate *United States*, Commodore Stephen Decatur, the frigate *Macedonian*, Captain Jacob Jones, and the sloop-of-war *Hornet*, Captain James Biddle. Each would follow separate orders when they reached the open sea, but in the process of breaking-out they were acting as a temporary squadron under the command of Decatur. Stephen Decatur was an American hero. His capture of the Royal Navy frigate *Macedonian* during the previous October had brought



JAMES MADISON, President of the United States of America,

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

BE IT KNOWN, That in pursuance of an Act of Congress, passed on the [illegible] day of [illegible] one thousand eight hundred and twelve, I have commissioned, and by these presents do commission, the private armed [illegible] called the [illegible] of the burthen of [illegible] tons, or thereabouts, owned by [illegible]

mounting [illegible] carriage guns, and navigated by [illegible] men, hereby authorising [illegible] Captain, and [illegible] Lieutenant of the said [illegible] and the other officers and crew thereof to subdue, seize and take any armed or unarmed British vessel, public or private, which shall be found within the jurisdictional limits of the United States or elsewhere on the high seas, or within the waters of the British dominions, and such captured vessel, with her apparel, guns and appurtenances, and the goods or effects which shall be found on board the same, together with all the British persons and others who shall be found acting on board, to bring within some port of the United States; and also to retake any vessels, goods and effects of the people of the United States, which may have been captured by any British armed vessel, in order that proceedings may be had concerning such capture or recapture in due form of law, and as to right and justice shall appertain. The said [illegible] is further authorised to detain, seize and take all vessels and effects, to whomsoever belonging, which shall be liable thereto according to the Law of Nations and the rights of the United States as a power at war, and to bring the same within some port of the United States in order that due proceedings may be had thereon. This commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being.

GIVEN under my hand and the seal of the United States of America, at the City of Washington, the [illegible] day of [illegible] in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and [illegible] and of the Independence of the said states the [illegible]

By the President, [illegible]

[illegible] Secretary of State.

The privateer commission for the brig Rattle Snake, *dated 2 March 1813, authorized her to "subdue, seize and take any armed or unarmed British vessel, public or private." (HCA 32/1803 Part 1, Public Record Office, London)*

him fame in both the American and the British navies.

The *United States*, under Decatur's command, was one of the three extraordinary 44-gun frigates that were the surprise weapons of the War of 1812. They had demonstrated their ability to beat any British vessel that they could not escape and to escape from any warship that they could not beat. But that was in the open ocean. Running the blockade against a ship-of-the-line in tight waters was quite a different matter.

For more than a week, Decatur had kept his ships in the lower bay protected by the forts, but in sight of the patrolling enemy, hoping for stormy weather to drive the British ships off station. Frustrated, Decatur then decided to try the Long Island Sound route. And Samuel Nicoll decided to try it with him. On the afternoon of 23 May, he sailed up to Kips Bay and joined the naval squadron.

The four ships negotiated the treacherous Hell Gate passage without difficulty on the afternoon tide of Sunday, 24 May, but from then on everything went wrong. The *United States* ran aground and was simultaneously struck by lightning. During the following week, the squadron suffered adverse winds, impenetrable fog, the loss of three of their newly-rigged spars and two more groundings. As the squadron approached the eastern end of Long Island Sound, the normally dashing Decatur turned cautious. Faulty intelligence and misidentification led him to believe that his way was barred by a fleet of British warships. After reaching the Race, the eastward passage to the open sea, Decatur and his squadron turned back to New London, where British ships would blockade them for the duration of the war.[2]

By then, Samuel Nicoll had enough of U.S. naval caution. He kept on his eastward course, saw no British warships, and sailed off on his cruise. The date was 27 May 1813.[3]



Under the command of Commodore John Rodgers, the U.S. 44-gun frigate President *was on a similar mission to break up the British trade in naval stores from Russia. However, the frigate soon left the area, pursued by British warships, leaving the hunting off the North Cape to the privateers. In this 1802 watercolor, Ange-Joseph-Antoine Roux depicted the* President *at anchor with her topmasts partially housed and her course yards lowered. (Courtesy U.S. Navy/USS* Constitution *Museum, Boston)*

The *Scourge* traveled northeast, following the Gulf Stream and the North Atlantic Current, and passed northward of the Shetland Islands. On 29 June, ten miles from the Norwegian coast, she captured the British bark *Concord*, bound from London to Archangel in ballast, and sent her into Trondheim with a prize crew. She was the first prize taken by Samuel Nicoll but, as will be seen below, she was not the first American prize sent into Norway during the War of 1812. Four days later, the *Scourge* arrived at the fortified Norwegian commercial center of Hammerfest, 50 miles west of the North Cape. As the fort's commander, Lieutenant Westbye, called his men to battle stations, the *Scourge* anchored peacefully and sent a boat ashore to ask for water. Knowing no English, Westbye asked a visiting businessman to go on board and examine the ship's papers. The *Scourge* lay under the fort's guns for three days while her American crew took on water and visited the town. Nicoll was to discover that the friendly attitude of Hammerfest's officials would serve his mission well.[4]

Back at sea, on 14 July, the *Scourge* captured the British ship *Liberty*, in ballast from Liverpool to Archangel. This time Nicoll directed his prize crew to deliver the captured vessel to nearby Hammerfest, rather than to Trondheim, situated hundreds of miles to the south. His prize crew was, therefore, quickly restored to duty on board the schooner.[5]

An unusual incident then occurred. Samuel Nicoll's last memory of his native land had been watching Stephen Decatur's 44-gun frigate *United States* disappear over the horizon. At noon on 19 July, Nicoll saw before him a vessel that could be only the *United States* or one of her sister-ships, *Constitution* or *President*. Nicoll immediately fired two guns in recognition and hoisted the identifying signals of an American privateer. Fifteen minutes later, he fired a third gun and hoisted the American flag.

Then he hove to and received her boat.[6]

The stranger was the *President*, under the command of Commodore John Rodgers. The commodore and the privateer immediately discussed cooperation. The two men were on similar missions: the interdiction of summer trade between Britain and Russian ports on the White Sea.

Of course, the approach of the two vessels was quite different. The *Scourge* was limited to picking off the isolated merchantman or two, sailing alone. Rodgers was after much bigger game. He was laying a trap for a specific convoy expected to leave Archangel in the middle of July, under the escort of two Royal Navy brigs or sloops of war.[7]

The operation of the Royal Navy under sail required a continuous supply of naval stores: canvas, pitch, tar, cordage, and timber for masts and other spars. Masts, destroyed by weather or enemy action, required constant replacement. By 1813, Britain had denuded most of her usable forests. She had become dependent for masts on three principal sources: New England, then enemy territory; Latvia, an insecure source because the voyage home was threatened by the enmity of the Danes and the vacillating allegiance of the Swedes; and Archangel, the northern port of Britain's Russian ally. The Archangel route required a voyage around the North Cape during the short summer months when it was ice-free.

The safe arrival in Britain of a substantial mast convoy was a significant naval achievement. Its destruction would be an important strategic victory for Britain's enemies. For that sole purpose, John Rodgers took the *President* to the North Cape in July 1813. He had received intelligence reports of an anticipated fleet of "25 or 30 Sail" from Archangel.[8] Had he succeeded in destroying that fleet, his strategic feat would have deserved to rank with his friend Decatur's capture of HMS *Macedonian*.

The *President* could easily handle the escort ships, but to keep the merchantmen from scattering, the *Scourge* would make an admirable sheepdog. Would Captain Nicoll care to do business? Indeed, he would. The game was prize-taking and they could do much better together than alone. A strong commercial instinct was shown by both men during their long careers before, during, and after the War of 1812, and leaves no room for doubt that, when they sat together in the *President*'s great cabin on that July afternoon, they reached a detailed agreement on how the financial rewards of their venture would be shared.[9] Regrettably, for historians, no record has survived.

In any event, their new partnership did not last long. At 4:00 P.M. the next day, the *President* and *Scourge*, sailing in company near the North Cape, sighted two strange ships west southwest of them, and made sail to pursue them. By 7:00 P.M., Rodgers had approached close enough to identify the strangers, to his own satisfaction, as a British "line of Battle Ship and a Frigate."[10] What Samuel Nicoll thought is not recorded.

In fact, the vessel Rodgers identified as a "line of Battle Ship" was a British frigate, and not a very formidable frigate at that. HMS *Alexandria*, Captain Cathcart, had been built at Portsmouth in 1806, a time when good oak timbers were in short supply. She was therefore constructed of fir that waterlogged, slowed her down, and made her vulnerable to enemy fire. She was rated for only 32 guns. The supposed British "frigate" was, in fact, the former fireship *Spitfire*, armed chiefly with short-range carronades.[11]

Captain Cathcart of the *Alexandria* was equally in the dark about his foe, whom he erroneously identified as a French frigate. The situation was a comedy of errors. Had either commander known the identity of the enemy, the pursuit would have been reversed, since the combined power of the *Alexandria* and *Spitfire* could not have withstood the force of the *President*. As things went, however, the pursuit continued in a southerly direction for 90 hours and several hundred miles. For each commander, the conduct of his opponent, hour by hour, more deeply confirmed the erroneous identification of his foe. Mercifully, on the fourth day, they lost contact.[12]

The *Scourge*, however, was not a part of this maritime misadventure because, at 10:20 P.M. on 20 July, she approached the *President*, and Nicoll advised Commodore Rodgers that he wished to withdraw from their arrangement. Taking full advantage of his schooner rig, he sailed off to the northward on a windward course that none of the square-rigged naval vessels could follow.[13]

Once the warships were out of sight, Samuel Nicoll changed course and headed back toward the Norwegian coast. His dalliance with American 44-gun frigates and their myopic commodores was over. It was time to get down to the serious business for which he and his crew had come to Europe.

On 27 July, off the North Cape, the *Scourge* encountered the American privateer brig *Rattle Snake* of 297 tons, with 16 guns and a crew of 130 men. Owned by Andrew Curcier of Philadelphia, and commanded by Captain David Maffet of that city, the *Rattle Snake* had sailed to Bayonne, France, at the beginning of March. There she unloaded her cargo of cotton and sugar, refitted, augmented her crew and armaments, and sailed on 24 June 1813 to the North Cape.[14]

David Maffet was one of the outstanding American privateer captains of the War of 1812. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, he had obtained

command of the American privateer schooner *Atlas*. During a vigorous battle on 3 June 1812, he had simultaneously attacked and captured two British ships crossing the Atlantic from Surinam to London, and brought them both into American ports.[15]

On the day after their meeting, Samuel Nicoll and David Maffet sailed to Hammerfest, and there entered into an agreement to cruise together off the North Cape during the rest of the summer, and to divide the proceeds of prizes sent into Norwegian ports, one-third for the *Scourge* and two-thirds for the *Rattle Snake*.[16] This negotiated division may have reflected not only the larger size, crew, and armaments of the *Rattle Snake*, but also the greater experience that her captain brought to the joint enterprise.

By 1813, Norway had been a province of the Kingdom of Denmark for more than three centuries. The Norwegians and Laplanders in the northern regions of the country were principally engaged in agriculture and fishing. The major ports on the Atlantic coast were Trondheim, 600 miles south of the North Cape, and Bergen, located 400 miles still further south. In the east were Christiansand and Oslo on the Skagerrak shore adjoining Sweden. Everywhere, commerce and government were managed by Danes. Christian Frederick, the 27-year-old heir to the Danish throne, was viceroy under the Danish King Frederick VI.[17]

Like the Dutch, the alert and opportunistic Danes prospered during the eighteenth-century wars between Britain and various continental powers. The capture, sinking, and blockading of shipping between these warring parties enabled the neutral Danes to carry cargoes between their erstwhile competitors. Their fleets, naval and civilian, thrived, and their shipbuilding capacity and complement of mariners grew abundantly.

In theory, Danish policy was strict neutrality, but such a policy inevitably favored the weaker maritime power and penalized the stronger. During the Napoleonic Wars, that meant unavoidable conflict between Denmark/Norway and Great Britain.

Denmark's theoretical principles of neutrality varied pragmatically with the ebbing and flowing of Royal Navy power at sea.[18] The Danes pushed as hard as they dared until threatened with Royal Navy action and then retreated as little as they thought necessary. Twice, in 1780 and 1800, they joined leagues of armed neutrality with other northern powers to escort their cargo vessels with warships and prevent British inspection. In retaliation, in 1801 British naval forces attacked and defeated the Danish fleet at Copenhagen. An armistice permitted Denmark to recoup her maritime power, but Britain attacked again in 1807, this time carrying off the principal ships of the Danish naval fleet and forcing Denmark into the general war on the side of the French.

Thus deprived of most of her navy, Denmark/Norway turned to privateering in her war against Great Britain. For several years, a fleet of privateering vessels went to the North Cape in the summer under the protection of small units of the Danish/Norwegian Navy. At first they were successful and brought in a number of British merchantmen as prizes. Danish/Norwegian prize law, promulgated in regulations issued by King Frederick VI on 27 March 1810, generally adopted the principles of the maritime law of nations followed by other maritime countries, including both the United States and Great Britain. The law created prize courts in Trondheim, Bergen, Christiansand, and Oslo, and a High Court of Admiralty in Christiansand to hear appeals.[19]

The relations between Britain and Denmark, complex in times of peace, became still more complex in wartime. King Frederick VI and his Norwegian viceroy, Christian Frederick, were hopeful that Napoleon's ultimate victory would vindicate their policy, but in the meantime they did not want to pursue a vigorous war policy against Britain. Part of their motivation was a thoroughly humanitarian concern for their subjects in northern Norway who were suffering from famine as a result of the British blockade of coastal towns. The royal leaders hoped that restraint on their part would be rewarded by British magnanimity toward their starving subjects in the north.

The king and the viceroy took a number of steps to mollify the British. As early as 21 June 1812, Danish Consul General Pedersen in Washington wrote to the king, advising him of the outbreak of war between America and Britain, and urging that American privateers be granted access to Danish/Norwegian ports and prize courts for the adjudication and disposal of their prizes. The maritime law of nations permitted captors to utilize the prize courts of their co-belligerents if both parties were willing. Since the United States and Denmark were both at war with Britain, the Danish courts could have been utilized had the Danes consented. To avoid offending Britain, however, the king ignored the suggestion and neglected to reply to Pedersen for more than a year. In October 1812, the United States Consul General in Copenhagen repeated the request, but to no avail. Instead, Danish privateering was suspended and French privateers were denied access to Danish/Norwegian ports. Finally, Viceroy Christian Frederick sent an informal embassy to London to explore the possibilities of peace between the two nations, but all the Danish efforts failed to move the British government or to help the starving people of northern Norway.[20]

The situation became considerably more complicated on 20 March 1813, when the United States privateer brig *True Blooded Yankee* arrived in Bergen. Built in 1806 as the Royal Navy brig sloop *Challenger* of 16 guns, she was captured off the coast of Brittany by two French frigates on 12 March 1811. Thereafter, she was purchased by an American merchant living in Paris, Henry Preble, the younger brother of the late Commodore Edward Preble of the U.S. Navy. Henry Preble secured a privateer's commission for the vessel and selected his nephew, Thomas Oxnard, as captain. The *True Blooded Yankee* sailed from Brest on 1 March 1813. On 4 March in the Irish Sea, she captured the English merchant ship *Integrity* with 2,200 barrels of grain aboard. Aware of the acute shortage and high price of grain in Norway, Oxnard escorted his prize to Bergen.[21]

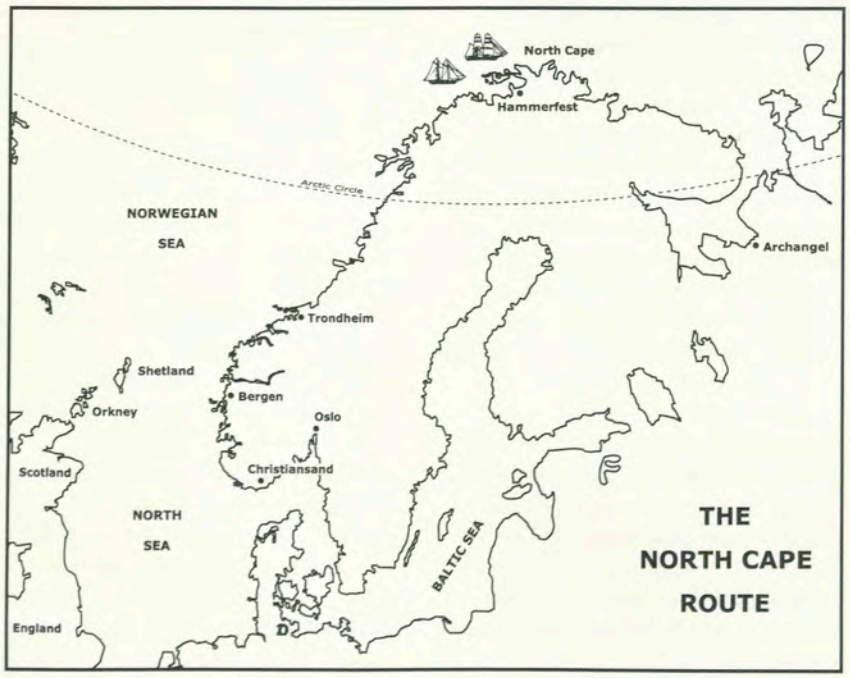
The *Integrity*'s cargo presented the Danish/Norwegian authorities with a delicate dilemma. On the one hand, they wished to avoid offending the British government; yet, on the other hand, Oxnard had grain, which their suffering people desperately needed, and he had it in large quantities. The king, therefore, directed that the grain should be purchased by the local government without benefit of a prize adjudication and distributed to the populace at cost. He ordered the privateer to sail within eight days, and ruled that any future American prizes carrying food should be treated in the same way. Thus, the king and the viceroy temporized in their hope for peace with the British whilst serving the humane needs of their subjects. The *True Blooded Yankee* quickly brought into Bergen another British vessel, the *Fame* of Belfast, carrying a mixed cargo including pork. Again, she was permitted to sell her cargo and leave.[22]

A primary principle of the prize law of nations was that captors must never disturb the cargo (or "break bulk" as it was called) without prior adjudication by a prize court. The law made an exception, however, in the case of emergency needs of the captors. The *Integrity* case is the first recorded instance in which bulk was lawfully broken, not to satisfy emergency needs of the captor, but of the government to whose port the prize was taken.

On 26 June 1813, Commodore John Rodgers in the *President* arrived in Bergen seeking water and provisions. Having learned of the succor brought by the *Integrity*'s cargo, Rodgers announced to his hosts that his intention was to capture British grain ships and send them into Norway. This prospect so enchanted Viceroy Christian Frederick that he ordered the *President* to be supplied with local pilots. In a letter to the Norwegian naval commander, the viceroy mentioned the possibility of having a couple of Norwegian naval brigs cooperate with the *President*, but the navy vetoed the plan as being raised too late in the year. And finally, Christian Frederick permitted Danish privateers from Bergen and Trondheim to resume cruising against the British Archangel traffic. But King Frederick VI still hoped for peace with the British. This was the ambivalent situation in Denmark/Norway when the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge* arrived off the North Cape to stir things up.[23]

Two days after their agreement to hunt together, Maffet and Nicoll took their first prize, the 119-ton brig *Jolly Batchelor*, carrying a cargo of tar from Archangel to Aberdeen. They captured 20 more British merchant ships in the next 24 days.[24]

The situation in which the two privateers found themselves was a predator's dream. By maintaining station off the North Cape, they were in a position to intercept all traffic passing between Russia and Britain. Hundreds of miles north of the Arctic Circle in August, they enjoyed continuous daylight so that no ship eluded them in the dark. The arrangements for shuttling their prizes into Hammerfest enabled them to recover their prize crews within hours and thereby maintain their full fighting



The Rattle Snake *and* Scourge *found their greatest success near Hammerfest and the North Cape of Norway, preying on British vessels en route between Archangel, Russia, and the British Isles.*

complements throughout the campaign.

Nor were prisoners a problem. Maffet and Nicoll moored two of the captured brigs, *Ruby* and *Brunswick*, in a bay, ten or twelve miles from Hammerfest, with sails, weapons, and longboats removed. There they served as receiving ships for prisoners. The captors promised the prisoners that at the end of the summer campaign they would release the two vessels to return to England as prisoner cartels. The prisoners could not escape and required no guards. Nicoll, Maffet, and the *Rattle Snake*'s doctor visited the prisoners and brought them provisions. They reported the prisoners to be in high spirits. When the prisoners complained that two of the men were brutalizing others on board, Maffet promptly arrested them and put them in irons on board the *Rattle Snake*. By the time they sailed, the *Ruby* and *Brunswick* carried 180 prisoners.[25]

The *Scourge* and *Rattle Snake* seized ships passing the North Cape in both directions. A majority of their prizes were en route to the White Sea, not returning from it. Some of them were in ballast, which was always disappointing, but those with cargo were likely to be carrying food, which would prove to be of great value in Trondheim.

On 3 August, the *Scourge* was chased near the North Cape by a British 74-gun ship of the line. The schooner's speed and fore-and-aft rig enabled her to elude her pursuer.[26]

One day, Captain Maffet and his crew actually sighted the convoy that Rodgers was after. Maffet's log for 16 August 1814, reads in part, "At 11 a.m. discovered from the masthead a fleet of square-rigged vessels to windward, standing to the westward, at 11 past ditto. Made out 30 sail in number." The precision of Rodger's intelligence is impressive. But unlike the *President*, the *Rattle Snake* was no match for the convoy's escorts, and therefore she prudently hid behind a nearby island until the convoy had passed out of sight.[27]



This painting by British marine artist and former naval officer Thomas Buttersworth is believed to represent the brig Rattle Snake *(left) and schooner* Scourge *(center) engaged with a British ship. (Courtesy South Street Seaport Museum)*

By the end of August, Maffet and Nicoll decided that the game was up. They prepared their prizes for sea and assigned each a prize crew. The prisoner cartels were released and the remaining flotilla then set sail for Trondheim, where they arrived throughout the succeeding month.

Of the 21 prizes dispatched from Hammerfest, 20 of them arrived safely in Trondheim, but one, the *Pax*, proved to be unseaworthy and had to be abandoned. On 16 October, two longboats from the *Pax* arrived in port, each sailed by a single crewman and carrying a portion of her valuable cargo of sugar.[28]

When the first trickle of prizes began to arrive in Trondheim from the north, the local authorities were guided by the king's orders of the prior April, allowing cargoes of the *True Blooded Yankee* to be sold locally. They therefore permitted agents of the captors to sell the cargoes of four vessels at auction and without benefit of a prize court adjudication.[29] With each day another ship arrived and the authorities did not know how many more were to come. Nervous about the dimensions of the arriving fleet, the authorities stopped all further proceedings and awaited instructions from their superiors.

On 1 October 1813, John Murray Forbes, the American consul in Copenhagen, appealed to the king on behalf of the *Scourge* and *Rattle Snake* to permit formal adjudication of their prizes in the Danish/ Norwegian prize court at Trondheim. In this appeal, Forbes was supported by Danish Foreign Minister Rosenkrantz, and together they were successful. On 14 October 1813, King Frederick VI signed an order opening Norwegian prize courts to British prizes of American captors, as permitted by the prize law of nations between co-belligerents.[30]

Nineteen of the prizes from the North Cape were submitted to the

Trondheim Prize Court in January and February 1814. One was rejected on technical grounds, but the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge* were victorious in the remaining 18.

Meanwhile, on 14 January 1814, the British government forced Frederick VI to sign the Treaty of Kiel, agreeing to cede Norway to Sweden. But by then the judges and lawyers had their teeth in the prize cases and were not to be distracted by the fate of nations and empires. English lawyers arrived on the scene to appeal the 18 cases to the Norwegian High Court of Admiralty, where they were argued during the summer of 1814. On 26 November 1814, the effective date of the union with Sweden, the Norwegian High Court of Admiralty confirmed all 18 cases for the privateers and thereupon went out of business.[31]

At Trondheim, the *Rattle Snake* was refitted and the *Scourge* was converted from a schooner to a brig. The *Scourge* sailed again in October, but the North Cape trade had closed down for the winter and she found no prizes off the Scottish coast. On 22 November she returned to Trondheim to winter over.

The enlistment of a number of members of his crew having expired, Captain Nicoll turned over the prize ship *Liberty* to 40 of them to sail home. Damage at sea forced the *Liberty* to seek refuge at Stromness, in the Orkney Islands, and there they remained as prisoners of the British until the end of the war.[32]

On 27 November 1813, the *Rattle Snake* sailed for France and, en route, captured seven additional prizes, including the English ship *Anne Elizabeth*, which she sent into Trondheim. At the end of March she was in La Rochelle where Captain Maffet stayed at the Hotel des Ambassadeurs. There he was in the company of George Coggeshall and two other American privateer captains on 3 April 1814 when news reached them of the first capitulation of Napoleon and his exile to Elba. All of them escaped the active British blockade of the port. On 18 June the *Rattle Snake* sailed for America. She took two additional prizes off the coast of Spain, but on 26 June she was captured by the British frigate *Hyperion*.[33]

The *True Blooded Yankee* also continued privateering from French ports until she was captured by the Royal Navy and held at Gibraltar with her crew until the war's end.[34]

Both the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge* employed Trondheim banking agents to follow up on their Norwegian prizes, but Samuel Nicoll also made the sensible decision to remain in Norway with his purser to expedite the handling of their very substantial claims. Accordingly, on 10 March 1814, he turned command of the *Scourge* over to his senior lieutenant, Robert L. Perry, with instructions to sail for the United States. Captain Perry's voyage home was a triumph. En route he captured 10 more prizes, eluded the intense British blockade, and arrived safely at Chatham on Cape Cod on 29 June 1814. Thereafter, the *Scourge* returned to sea under a Captain Wooster and resumed privateering, but she did not reappear at the end of the war and was reported to have "run under" at sea with all hands.[35]

Of the 20 prizes sent into Trondheim by the *Scourge* and *Rattle Snake*, the cargoes of four were sold under the *True Blooded Yankee* rule, without adjudication; nine were sold to Trondheim shipping firms when prize court authorization was finally received; and a number of the others were retrieved by the owners of the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge* after the war, and sailed to the United States.[36]

Samuel Nicoll returned to Stratford, Connecticut, after the war, built a country mansion, and lived a respected and prosperous life. Later he built a townhouse that exists today as the office building of the Stratford Shakespeare Theater Company.[37]

David Maffet returned to Philadelphia but did not emulate Nicoll's prosperous life. In 1821 he was adjudged bankrupt. Nevertheless, he remained a respected figure and served as master warden of the port until his death in 1838.[38]

The *President* eluded the British blockade and reached Newport, Rhode Island, on 26 September 1813. Of his ambitious plan to wreak strategic havoc on Britain's naval supply line, Commodore Rodgers was able to report the burning of only a single brig carrying pitch and tar.[39] Norway remained a restive province of Sweden until it achieved independence in 1905.

How should historians appraise the achievements of the *Scourge*, *Rattle Snake*, and their crews? Fortunately, the U.S. Navy has supplied two splendid examples with which the privateers' voyages may be compared: the final cruises of the U.S. brig *Argus* and the sloop-of-war *Wasp*. The four vessels were of comparable size, armaments, tonnage, and crews. Such differences as existed, all favored the naval vessels.

At the time that the *Scourge* and *Rattle Snake* were raiding British merchant ships in waters north and east of the British Isles, the *Argus* was similarly engaged to the south and west. Her commanding officer, Lieutenant William Henry Allen, was under direct and express orders of Secretary of the Navy William Jones to annoy and destroy Britain's commerce, fisheries, and coasting trade, from the chops of the Channel to the Irish coast, into the Irish Sea, and along the northwest coast of England. This he did with vigor, courage, and panache, taking 20 prizes until, on the morning of 14

August, he encountered the royal Navy brig-sloop *Pelican*. In the ensuing battle, the *Argus* was captured and Allen was fatally wounded.[40]

In the following year, the navy ordered Master Commandant Johnston Blakely to cross the Atlantic and emulate Allen's mission in the new U.S. sloop-of-war *Wasp*. Again, the American commander and his crew discharged their duties energetically and bravely. Between 2 June and 21 September 1814, the *Wasp* captured or sank a total of 15 British ships in the chops of the Channel and along the coast of Europe. The *Wasp* then sailed off to southern waters, where she and her entire crew were lost at sea.[41]

All four of the young captains were men of whom all Americans could be proud, both then and now. But were the achievements of the privateers less noteworthy than those of the naval officers? The facts would not appear so. Each of the two privateers captured more British ships than either of the warships. In combination, the prizes of the privateers outnumbered those of the naval vessels by 43 to 35.[42] The privateers' interdiction of Britain's supply lines with her Russian ally was clearly of greater strategic significance than the miscellaneous cargoes seized or destroyed by the naval vessels.

The great nineteenth-century American historians of the War of 1812, Henry Adams, James Fenimore Cooper, Alfred Thayer Mahan, and Theodore Roosevelt, and their British counterparts Edward Pelham Brenton and William James, all extolled the heroic cruises of the *Argus* and *Wasp*. But they consistently overlooked or minimized the achievements of the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge*.[43] Samuel Nicoll, David Maffet, and the men whom they so effectively led, deserve a more prominent place in American maritime history than they have heretofore been accorded.

Notes

1. George Coggeshall, *History of the American Privateers* (New York: George Putnam, 1861), 220; George F. Emmons, *The Navy of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Gideon & Company, 1850), 192-93; application of Peter H. Schenck and Frederic Jenkins for privateer's commission for the schooner *Scourge*, 8 May 1813, Letters from collectors of customs relating to commissions of privateers, vol. 2, 354, Record Group 45, Entry 388, National Archives, Washington, D.C., hereafter cited as NA; Lewis Knapp, *Stratford and the Sea* (in preparation for publication by the Town Historian of Stratford, Connecticut), part II, chapter 3.

2. An engrossing and detailed account of the experiences of Decatur's squadron appears in W.M.P. Dunne, "The Inglorious First of June: Commodore Stephen Decatur on Long Island Sound," *Long Island Historical Journal* 2 (Spring 1990): 201-20. The late Dr. Dunne believed that a lack of local knowledge by the naval commanders played an important part in their failure. Decatur and Biddle were Philadelphians and Jones was from Delaware. They may not have known that Block Island, which they had to pass in leaving the Sound, was the principal watering place for that stretch of the American shore. Dunne believed that the masts rising behind the Island appeared to Decatur to evidence a lurking British fleet when, in fact, they were merely merchantmen taking water. Samuel Nicoll, who had spent his manhood in those waters, would have been under no such illusion. Theodore Roosevelt also described the Long Island Sound cruise in his *Naval War of 1812* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1882), 176. Inexplicably, Roosevelt identified the *Hornet* as "Wasp."

3. The master's mate of the *Hornet* left a bitter comment on the comparative behavior of the naval vessels and the *Scourge*. "We duly dallied for several days, in Long Island Sound instead of going immediately to sea as did the privateers," Journal of William Striddy, Misc. Vol. 157, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport.

4. Henry Berg, *Trondhjems Sjofart* [Trondheim Shipping] (Trondheim:Trondhjems Sjofartsmuseum, 1938), 361-62.

5. *Boston Gazette*, 2 June 1814.

6. Journal, USS *President*, 19 July 1813, Series 3B, Box 23, Rodgers Family Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, hereafter cited as *President* Journal.

7. Rodgers to Secretary of the Navy William Jones, 27 September 1813, William S. Dudley, ed., *The Naval War of 1812, A Documentary History* (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1992), 2:251-2.

8. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, 2:252.

9. Charles O. Paullin, *Commodore John Rodgers* (Cleveland, Ohio: Arthur H. Clarke, 1910), supplies much evidence of the intensity and precision of Rodgers's commercial dealings both in peace and war.

10. *President* Journal, 20 July 1813.

11. Completely conflicting interpretations of this encounter appear in Roosevelt, *Naval War of 1812*, 175-76, and William James, *Naval History of Great Britain* (London: Richard Bentley, 1837), 6:213-15. The author has had an advantage that those two great historians lacked: access to the logs of both commanders.

12. Captain's log, HMS *Alexandria*, 19, 23 July 1813, ADM 51/2099, and Captain's log, HMS *Spitfire*, 19 July 1813, ADM 2809, Public Record Office, Kew, United Kingdom, hereafter cited as PRO, Kew. Ten days before the encounter of the *President* and *Alexandria*, the Admiralty had issued an order to all Royal Navy stations forbidding single British frigates from challenging any of the American 44-gun frigates, Dudley, *The Naval War of 1812*, 2:183. But the news of that order would not yet have reached Cathcart returning from distant Spitzbergen.

13. *President* Journal, 20 July 1813.

14. Privateer Commission No. 635, 2 March 1813, HCA 32/1803 Part 1, 43589 PRO, London. Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*, 16 March-24 June 1813, HCA 32/1803 Part 1, PRO, London, hereafter cited as Captain's Log, *Rattle Snake*.

15. Edgar Stanton Maclay, *A History of American Privateers* (1899; reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1968). On page 261, Maclay incorrectly describes Maffet's subsequent surrender of the *Atlas* to a British squadron at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, on 12 July 1813. In fact, on that date Maffet was off the Shetland Islands in command of the *Rattle Snake*, Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*, 12 July 1813.

16. Berg, *Trondhjems Sjofart*, 362.

17. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1973 edition, s.v. "Norway."

18. Ole Feldback, "Privateers, Piracy and Prosperity: Danish Shipping in War and Peace, 1750-1807," in *Pirates and Privateers*, edited by David J. Starkey, E.S. van Eyck van Heslinga, and J.A. de Moor (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1997), 227-44, supplies a lucid account of the interplay between British and Danish policy and practice during the Napoleonic Wars.

19. Berg, *Trondhjems Sjofart*, 360. *Ordonnance sur la Course en Mer et sur les Prises, 28 Mars 1810 [Law of Privateering and Prizes, 28 March 1810]* (Copenhagen: John Frederic Schultz, 1810).

20. Joh. N. Tonnessen, *Kaperfart Og Skipsfart, 1807-14 [Privateering and Shipping, 1807-14]* (Oslo: J.W. Cappenlens Forlag, 1955), 433-47.

21. J.J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1969),

1:114; David J. Hepper, *British Warship Losses in the Age of Sail* (Rotherfield: Jean Boudriot Publications, 1994), 136; George Henry Preble, *Genealogical Sketch of the First Three Generations of Prebles in America* (Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1868), 268, 145. The *True Blooded Yankee*'s privateering commission, dated 19 December 1812, designates Nathan Haley as captain, but an endorsement by Jean Diot, American commercial agent at Morlaix, France, on 30 April 1813, confirms the substitution of Thomas Oxnard for Haley, HCA 32-1307, Bundle 1630, *True Blooded Yankee*, PRO, London.

22. Tonnessen, *Kaperfart Og Skipsfart*, 435.

23. *President* Journal, 27 June 1813; Tonnessen, *Kaperfart Og Skipsfart*, 436.

24. In addition to the three vessels named in the text, the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge* captured eighteen merchant brigs, a galliot, and a sloop. With slight differences in spelling, the list of captures are consistently reported from different original sources by: Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*; *Lloyd's List*, 24 September 1813, and the *Boston Gazette*, 2 June 1814.

25. Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*, 13 August 1813.

26. Ibid., 3 August 1813.

27. Ibid., 16 August 1813.

28. Ibid., 16 October 1813.

29. Tonnessen, *Kaperfart Og Skipsfart*, 438.

30. Ibid., 437.

31. Ibid., 444.

32. *Boston Gazette*, 2 June 1814.

33. Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*, 27 November 1813-29 January 1814; Coggeshall, *American Privateers*, 199; Captain William Pryce Cumby, commanding HMS *Hyperion*, to John Wilson Croker, Secretary of the Admiralty, 26 June 1814, ADM 1-1667, *Hyerion/Rattle Snake*, PRO, Kew. In accordance with the law of nations, the capture of the *Rattle Snake* was the subject of a prize adjudication in the High Court of Admiralty, London. The opinion of Sir William Scott, later Lord Stowell, in that case, dated 6 May 1815, will be found in *English Reports* (London: Stevens & Sons, 1923), 165:1406. The files of the case, readily available from the PRO, contain the full text of the Captain's log, *Rattle Snake*, cited herein, HCA 32/1803 Part 1, PRO, London.

34. The date of the capture of the *True Blooded Yankee* is given as September 1814 in Tonnessen, *Privateering and Shipping*, 448, but no authority is cited or has been found elsewhere. Because no prize case was adjudicated on the *True Blooded Yankee*, her log has not been found.

35. Interviews with Captain Perry and his officers, *Boston Gazette*, 2, 9 June 1814; Emmons, *The Navy of the United States*, 193. Presumably, her log was lost with the ship.

36. Berg, *Trondhjems Sjofart*, 363.

37. Knapp, *Stratford and the Sea*, Part II, chap. 3.

38. Thomas J. Wharton, ed., *Digest of Cases Adjudged in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Third Circuit and in the Courts of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Philip Nicklin, 1822), 70; Dumas Malone, ed., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), 6:195.

39. Dudley, *Naval War of 1812*, 2:253.

40. William Jones to William Henry Allen, 5 June 1813, confidential letters sent by the Secretary of the Navy, 1813, 29-31, RG 45, NA. An excellent and detailed account of the battle and all the years that led up to it appears in Ira Dye, *The Fatal Cruise of the* Argus (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1994).

41. A recent account of the cruise of the *Wasp* will be found in Bert Hubinger, "Little Wasp, Big Sting," *Naval History* (July-August 1994): 30.

42. In calculating the number of vessels captured by each of the naval vessels and the privateers, the author has attributed half of the prizes taken at the North Cape to each privateer, giving the following totals: *Argus* –20; *Wasp*–15; *Rattle Snake*–21.5; *Scourge*–21.5. The *Rattle Snake*'s captor, Captain William Pryce Cumby, commanding officer of HMS *Hyperion*, took a somewhat more generous attitude toward his prize, attributing all of the Norwegian captures to the *Rattle Snake*. "I feel all the more gratified in having made this capture," he wrote to his commanding officer, "as *Rattlesnake* [sic] has proved a formidable annoyance to British commerce, being said to have taken thirty-five prizes since she left America," Cumby to Admiral Lord Viscount Keith, 26 June 1814, ADM-1-1667 *Hyerion/Rattle Snake*, PRO, Kew. The full list of captures includes: captures by *Rattle Snake* between France and North Cape, ship *Laguna* and packet *Lapwing*; captures by *Scourge* and *Rattle Snake* off North Cape, brig *Ann Elizabeth*, brig *Betsey*, brig *Brittania*, brig *Brothers*, brig *Brunswick*, brig *Burton*, bark *Concord*, brig *Diligence*, brig *Economy*, sloop *Fame*, brig *Friends Adventure*, brig *Harford*, brig *Hope*, brig *Jolly Batchelor*, brig *Latona*, ship *Liberty*, brig *Nottingham*, brig *Pax*, galliot *Perseverance*, brig *Prosperous*, brig *Ruby*, brig *Thetis*, brig *Westmoreland*; captures by *Rattle Snake* between France and U.S., schooner *Adston*, ship *Batchellor*, brig *Dover*, schooner *Equity*, schooner *Liberty*, transport *Mary*, cutter *Wasp*, brig *Zephyr*, captures by *Scourge* between Norway and U.S., schooner *Brilliant*, bark *Brothers*, ship *Caledonia*, brig *Success*, brig *Thetis*, ship *Symmetry*, brig *Union*, ship *Winchester*, unnamed brig, unnamed schooner.

43. Among the great historians listed in the text, only Mahan and Adams mentioned the *Rattle Snake* and *Scourge*; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812* (1903; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 2:223. His remarks, however, were limited to the dismissive comment that the privateers could not have intercepted the convoy that Rodgers was after, because they caught their prizes one by one and a day at a time. Mahan described his source of information, *Niles Weekly Register*, 18 June 1814, as an "abstract of the log of *Scourge*." It was, in fact, merely a verbatim reprint of the earlier *Boston Gazette* interviews of 2 and 9 June 1814, cited above. Adams's remarks are limited to a single sentence;Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America during the Administration of James Madison* (New York: Library of America, 1986), 849.

Acknowledgments

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After an early apprenticeship at sea, Donald A. Petrie attended the University of Chicago, where he received an undergraduate degree in 1942 and a law degree in 1947. He practiced law for eight years, and then spent ten years as a corporate executive. In 1966 he joined the international investment banking firm of Lazard Frères & Company, LLC, of which he is presently a limited managing director. Seven years ago he began to study the doctrine and practice of maritime prize-taking, by both naval vessels and privateers, during the last century of sail. His resulting essays have been published in *The American Neptune*, 1993-95. His book on the subject, *The Prize Game*, will be published in 1999 by the Naval Institute Press. Mr. Petrie and his wife, Mary Stewart Petrie, live in Wainscott, Long Island, where they race catboats every summer weekend.

Sponsored by the Fellows of the G.W. Blunt White Library, the Gerald E. Morris Prize Article Contest is intended to foster original research and writing in American maritime subjects. The submission deadline is 1 March. For further information contact Library Director Paul O'Pecko or *Log* Editor Andrew German.

The Seaman's Protection Certificate as Proof of American Citizenship for Black Sailors

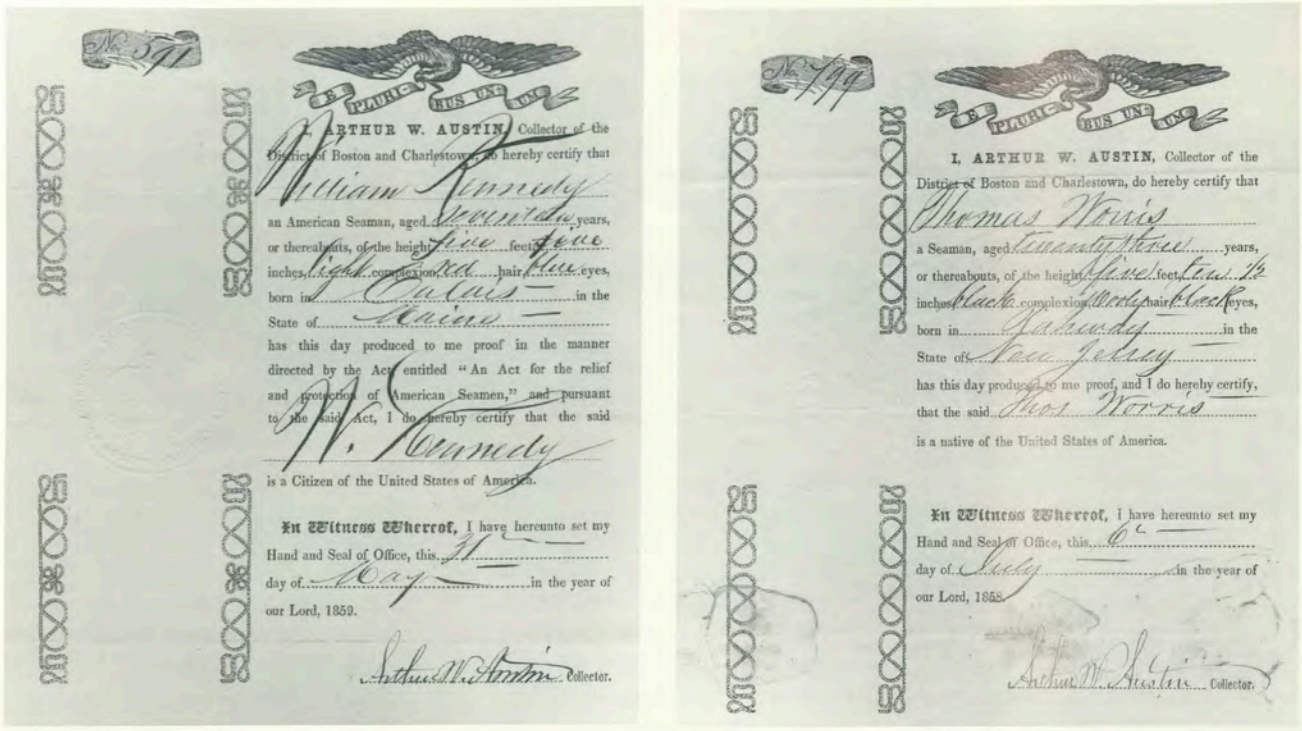
KELLY S. DRAKE

Until the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution extended the privileges of citizenship to black Americans in 1868, the legal status of African Americans fluctuated widely. Brought to the continent as slaves, yet increasingly freed from the legal bonds of slavery, especially in the Northern states after the American Revolution, blacks did not fit the model of the American citizen. Distorting physical and cultural differences, most whites believed blacks were inferior in intelligence and could not restrain their emotions enough to be productive citizens. Therefore, like American Indians, African Americans were generally excluded from the basic rights of citizenship. Although blacks were permitted to own property in most Northern states, and were provided with basic education in many, their right to vote was increasingly limited. Connecticut law began to limit black voting in 1814, Rhode Island curtailed it in 1822, and New York began to restrict it at the same time. By 1830, only six Northern states permitted black voters. At the same time, poor white laborers–many of them immigrants–who would later be disparaged as "mudsills," began to compete successfully with blacks for work. In the process, they intensified racist attitudes to protect their interests, even as national arguments over slavery and federal legislation to restrain fugitive slaves increased the negative perception of blacks. On the federal level, the Supreme Court and the attorneys general normally ruled that the Constitution did not recognize black citizenship. As a result, by the time of the Civil War, African Americans were more limited in rights and respect than they had been at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[1]

Throughout these unstable years, however, one group of blacks retained an inadvertent claim on citizenship. Like their white counterparts, black sailors applied for and received federally issued documents certifying them to be "Citizens of the United States of America." Known as Seaman's Protection Certificates, these documents served not only as official passports, but also as legal evidence of black citizenship and as a source of pride and recognition from the country in which they sought inclusion.

In the first years of the new nation, sailors might apply to their local notary public to obtain a certificate to prove their identity at sea. Then on 28 May 1796, Congress passed An Act for the Relief and Protection of American Seamen. The law was enacted in response to the impressment of suspected British subjects among seamen on American ships by British Royal Navy vessels. Under British law, a subject could not renounce his citizenship, so a British-born man on an American ship was considered British even if he had not lived in the British Isles for decades. To alleviate any question of the nationality of American seamen, the law created Seaman's Protection Certificates to be issued by port collectors as federal citizenship documents. Under this act, a sailor who wished to be certified as American could provide proof of citizenship and pay a modest 25-cent fee to be registered and obtain an official Seaman's Protection Certificate. The blank forms printed for each customs district varied only slightly from state to state. The certificates contained spaces for entering the sailor's name, place of birth, and physical description, including identifying marks such as scars or tattoos. As specified by the act, the collector certified: "[name of applicant] has this day produced to me proof in a manner directed by an Act, entitled "An Act for the relief and protection of American Seamen," and pursuant to said Act, I do hereby certify that said [name of applicant] is a Citizen of the United States of America."[2]

Although Great Britain did not renounce its right to seize British subjects from American ships for service in the Royal Navy, the practice ceased in 1815. With the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, Britain no longer required more sailors than the British Isles could provide. Nevertheless, American sailors continued to apply for Seaman's Protection Certificates, believing they conveyed the protection of the U.S. government even in foreign ports, where the U.S. consul might provide medical or legal assistance.



No. 591

E PLURIBUS UNUM

I, ARTHUR W. AUSTIN, Collector of the District of Boston and Charlestown, do hereby certify that William Kennedy an American Seaman, aged Twenty-six years, or thereabouts, of the height five feet four inches, light complexion, red hair, blue eyes, born in Ireland in the State of Maine has this day produced to me proof in the manner directed by the Act entitled "An Act for the relief and protection of American Seamen," and pursuant to the said Act, I do hereby certify that the said W. Kennedy is a Citizen of the United States of America.

In Witness Wherrof, I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal of Office, this 21 day of May in the year of our Lord, 1859.

Arthur W. Austin Collector.

No. 194

E PLURIBUS UNUM

I, ARTHUR W. AUSTIN, Collector of the District of Boston and Charlestown, do hereby certify that Thomas Morris a Seaman, aged Twenty three years, or thereabouts, of the height five feet, five 1/2 inches black complexion, woolly hair, black eyes, born in Galloway in the State of New Jersey has this day produced to me proof, and I do hereby certify, that the said Thos Morris is a native of the United States of America.

In Witness Wherrof, I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal of Office, this 6th day of July in the year of our Lord, 1858.

Arthur W. Austin Collector.

The black American's declining status in the years prior to the Fourteenth Amendment is reflected in these seemingly identical documents. The certificate on the left is an actual Seaman's Protection Certificate, declaring that white sailor William Kennedy is a "Citizen of the United States." The certificate issued to black sailor Thomas Morris in 1858 represents changes in accordance with the Dred Scott *decision. The term "Citizen" has been replaced with the word "native," and there is no reference to the 1796 Act for the Relief and Protection of American Seamen. Prior to the* Dred Scott *decision black seamen in the port of Boston were issued official protections like the one on the left. (Coll. 255, box I/1, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)*

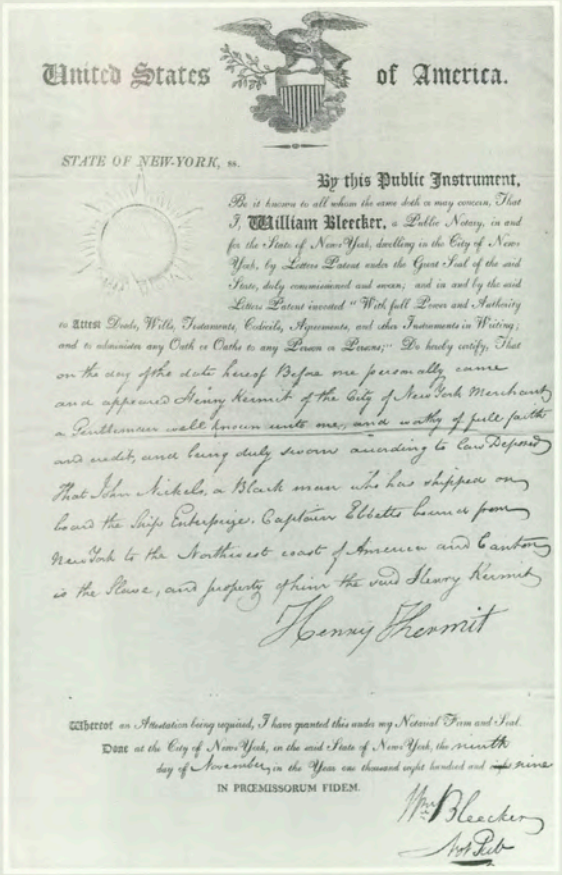
The certificates remained in use until 1940, when the continuous discharge book was created as the sailor's identification document.[3]

At least through the 1830s, seafaring offered black men economic opportunity, a sense of equality on shipboard, and connections with a wider world. Research among crew lists and registers of Seaman's Protection Certificates issued indicates that between 10 and 20 percent of American sailors before the Civil War were black, with the percentage declining after the 1840s. From 1796 until black citizenship was confirmed in 1868, many thousands of Seaman's Protection Certificates were issued to free black sailors. Before the War of 1812 they were important in preventing the impressment of American black sailors. After the war they became increasingly important for black sailors in ships trading to Southern ports. To prevent slave rebellions, the authorities in Southern ports tried to restrict contact between black sailors and slaves. A number of Southern states followed the lead of South Carolina, which in 1822 enacted Negro Seamen Acts to imprison black sailors while their ships were in port. If there were a question of a black sailor's identity he might be sold into slavery under suspicion of being a runaway slave, so a Seaman's Protection Certificate offered some security for free black sailors in the slave states. Indeed, the runaway slave later named Frederick Douglass escaped from Baltimore disguised as a sailor and carrying a borrowed Seaman's Protection Certificate to prove to authorities that he was a freeman. The certificates were often mentioned in legal proceedings regarding the rights of free blacks, and abolitionists often referred to Seaman's Protection Certificates when arguing for black rights. In the Prudence Crandall case in Connecticut, defense attorney William Ellsworth noted the issuance of Seaman's Protection Certificates as legal precedence for black citizenship: "The act of May 28, 1796, for the relief and protection of American seamen, declares that any 'citizen' sailor can obtain from the customs house officer a certificate of his citizenship; men of color have often done this."[4]

The Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision of 1857 eliminated any remaining hope for federal recognition of black citizenship before the Civil War. Believing in the inferiority of blacks, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney argued that African Americans "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Specifically, he ruled that "free blacks are not included, and were not intended to be included; under the word 'citizens' in the Constitution and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens

Alternative Seamen's Identification Papers

To identify themselves at sea and in foreign ports, American sailors have always required documents certifying them as inhabitants of the United States. The most common is the Seaman's Protection Certificate, but the manuscripts collection at Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library includes several alternative identification papers for black seamen. One, issued to Caesar Shaw of New London, Connecticut, on 30 December 1795, as he prepared to depart for the West Indies aboard the sloop *Betsey*, represents the type of notorized identification document sailors might obtain before the 1796 Act for the Relief and Protection of American Seamen. Also issued prior to the passage of the protection act were simple hand-written certificates, usually signed by a local or state official who certified that the described seaman was born in the United States. Some seamen were slaves, and therefore ineligible for federal protection of any kind. They might be issued identification papers to protect their owner's property rights, such as the "Public Instrument" notorized at New York in 1809, which certifies that John Nickels, a black sailor on the China-trade vessel *Enterprise*, is the slave of New York merchant Henry Kermit. A "Public Instrument" issued by a notary public in the slave-state port of Galveston, Texas, in 1856 is notable in that it certifies that black seaman Jonathan Miller of New York "is a freeman and a citizen of the United States of America, and entitled to be respected accordingly in person and property, at all times and places, both by land and by sea, in the due prosecution of his lawful concerns." Such a notorized document is the type of proof of citizenship that was required to obtain a federal Seaman's Protection Certificate.



United States of America.

STATE OF NEW-YORK, ss.

By this Public Instrument.

Be it known to all whom the same doth or may concern, That I, William Bleecker, a Public Notary, in and for the State of New-York, dwelling in the City of New-York, by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of the said State, duly commissioned and sworn; and in and by the said Letters Patent invested "With full Power and Authority to Attest Deeds, Wills, Testaments, Codicils, Agreements, and other Instruments in Writing; and to administer any Oath or Oaths to any Person or Persons;" Do hereby certify, That on the day of the date hereof Before me personally came and appeared Henry Kermit of the City of New-York Merchant, a Gentleman well known unto me, and worthy of full faith and credit, and being duly sworn according to Law Deposeth That John Nickels, a Black man who has shipped on board the Ship Enterprize, Captain Ebbetts bound from New-York to the Northwest coast of America and Canton is the Slave, and property of him the said Henry Kermit

Henry Kermit

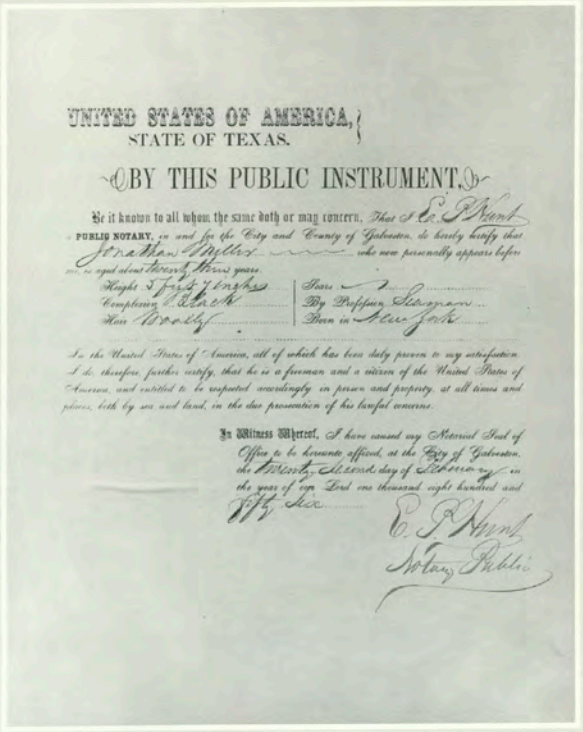
Whereof an Attestation being required, I have granted this under my Notarial Form and Seal. Done at the City of New-York, in the said State of New-York, the ninth day of November in the Year one thousand eight hundred and nine.

IN PRŒMISSORUM FIDEM.

Wm Bleecker

Not Pub

Although it was a statement of ownership, John Nickels's identification paper still provided him with protection from foreign powers while on board the ship Enterprise *during her voyage to the Northwest Coast and China. (Coll. 68, box 11/7, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)*



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
STATE OF TEXAS.

BY THIS PUBLIC INSTRUMENT.

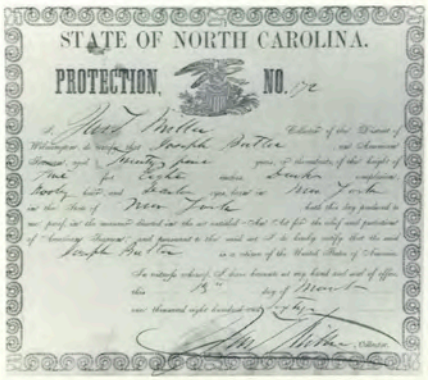
Be it known to all whom the same doth or may concern, That I E. P. Hunt PUBLIC NOTARY, in and for the City and County of Galveston, do hereby certify that Jonathan Miller who now personally appears before me, is aged about Thirty Nine years. Height 5 Feet 7 Inches. Stature Complexion Black. By Profession Seaman. Hair Woolly. Born in New York.

I, the United States of America, all of which has been duly proven to my satisfaction. I do therefore further certify, that he is a freeman and a citizen of the United States of America, and entitled to be respected accordingly in person and property, at all times and places, both by sea and land, in the due prosecution of his lawful concerns.

In Witness Whereof, I have caused my Notarial Seal of Office to be hereunto affixed, at the City of Galveston, the Thirty Second day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty six.

E. P. Hunt
Notary Public

When is an identification paper not a Seaman's Protection Certificate? This notorized Public Instrument declares that Jonathan Miller is a "citizen of the United States," but it was not issued by a customs collector and it does not contain the mandated phrase, "in the manner directed in the act entitled 'An Act for the relief and protection of American Seamen,'" so it is not a Seaman's Protection Certificate. (Coll 153, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport; Mary Anne Stets photo)


STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

PROTECTION. NO.

This Seaman's Protection Certificate, issued in 1860 by the customs collector of Wilmington, North Carolina, certifies the citizenship of African-American seaman Joseph Butler in apparent contradiction of the Supreme Court's Dred Scott *decision and the state's Negro Seamen Act. (Coll. 255, box 1/1, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport; Jennifer M. Stich photo)*

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of the United States."[5]

The following year, Secretary of State Lewis Cass reiterated that blacks could not be citizens, asserting that "A passport being a certificate of citizenship has never since the foundation of the Government been granted to persons of color." Clearly Cass was wrong. Customs collectors had been issuing Seaman's Protection Certificates to black seamen for more than 60 years, and these certificates contradicted federal legislation by claiming the bearer was a citizen. Federal officials had long recognized the paradox, but they had not moved to reconcile the ambiguity. In 1803 the House of Representatives had resolved "to enquire into the expediency of granting protection to such American seamen citizens of the United States, as are free persons of color," but refrained from taking further action.[6]

However, the *Dred Scott* decision apparently prompted at least one review of the language of protection certificates for black seamen. Among the Seaman's Protection Certificates in the G.W. Blunt White Library, three are slightly, but very significantly, different from earlier versions. These documents, issued to black sailors at Boston in 1858, 1860, and 1861, omit the phrase concerning proof of citizenship being produced "in the manner directed by the Act, entitled An Act for the relief and protection of American seamen." More importantly, on them the word "Citizen" has been replaced with "native." Clearly, the repercussions of the *Dred Scott* decision had reached the practical workings of the customs service, even in the abolitionist stronghold of Boston. Yet, no statutes were issued to change the Act for the relief and protection of American Seamen to exclude black sailors. Nor did all customs districts alter the wording on these certificates. In 1860 Joseph Butler, a "dark" man with "woolly" hair, received a protection certificate declaring him a citizen by the collector of the district of Wilmington, in the slave state of North Carolina. Nevertheless, the fact that some certificates were changed merely emphasizes the declining fortunes of black Americans in the days before the Civil War.[7]

These years between the American Revolution and the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment were a time of continuous dis-empowerment for black Americans. But these years were also a time of increasing native black population; a population that was loyal to the country in which it was born, and proud of that country despite the injustices imposed by it. As state and federal laws increasingly stripped African Americans of their ability to participate in the government, acquire an education, and even to find employment, few opportunities were provided to give the black Americans a sense of inclusion. The Seaman's Protection Certificate was one such opportunity. With his certificate in hand, a free black man, whose very citizenship was often denied, could point to a federally issued document as evidence to the contrary.

Notes

1. James O. and Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 166-71; John Hope Franklin. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 19), 139; Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 50.

2. Douglas L. Stein, *American Maritime Documents 1776-1860: Illustrated and Described* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1992), 145; Ira Dye, "The Philadelphia Seamen's Protection Certificate Applications," *Prologue* 18:1 (Spring 1986): 46-55. The certificates and applications now provide scholars with much data on nineteenth-century American sailors, see for example Simon P. Newman, "Reading the Bodies of Early American Seafarers," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55:1 (January 1998): 59-82, which analyzes evidence of tattooing as described in Philadelphia Seaman's Protection Certificate applications.

3. Ira Dye, "Seafarers of 1813–A Profile," *Prologue* 5:1 (Spring 1973): 13; Stein, *American Maritime Documents*, 145.

4. W. Jeffrey Bolster, *African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 235-37, 194-202; Negro Seamen Acts were passed in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, and North Carolina; Marifrances Trivelli, "'I Knew a Ship from Stem to Stern': The Maritime World of Frederick Douglass," *The Log of Mystic Seaport* 46:4 (Spring 1995): 98-108; Marvis Olive Welch, *Prudence Crandall: A Biography* (Manchester, Connecticut: Jason Publishers, 1983), 233; Dye, "Seafarers of 1813," 8. Black Seaman's Protection Certificates in the Manuscripts Collection at Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library include: Coll. 255, Isaiah Larabee Collection, 7 certificates; VFM 1749, George Harding, 1841; Coll. 238, William Goddard Papers, 2/11, John H. Roberts, 1841, 2/13, William Jones, 1844. Alternative identification papers include: HFM 206, Ceasar Shaw, 1795; Coll. 68, Kermit Family Papers, 11/7, John Nickels, 1809; Coll. 153, George W. Gates Papers, 2/3, Jonathan Miller, 1856; and VFM 980, "Seamen's Identification Card" John Brown, 1918, William Swan, 1918.

5. *Scott v Sanford*, 60 US 393 (1856).

6. Litwack, *North of Slavery*, 56, 32.

7. Coll. 255, Isaiah Larabee Collection, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport.

Kelly S. Drake works as the manuscripts associate in Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library.

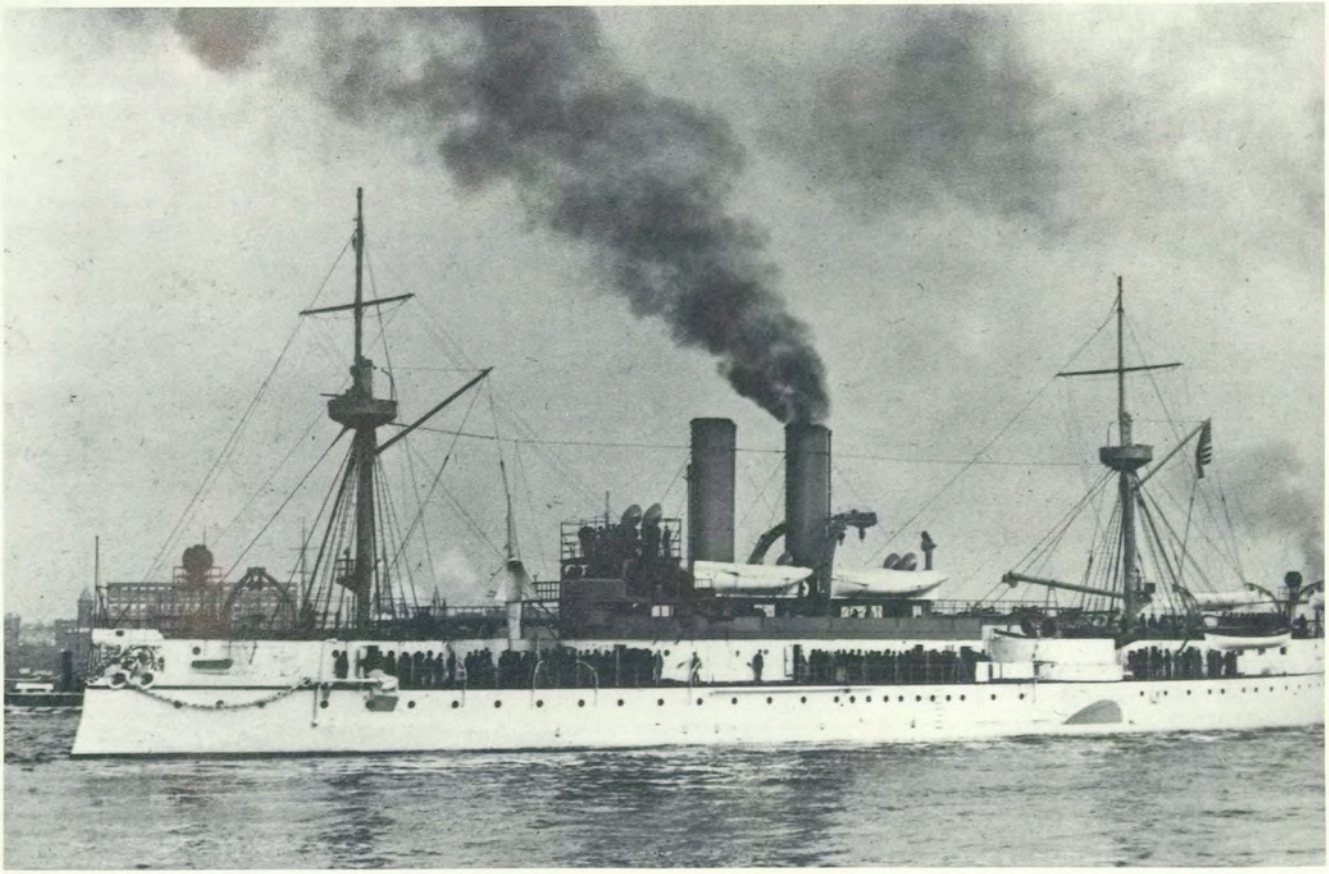
Images of the Spanish-American War

JENNIFER JOHNSON and MARIFRANCES TRIVELLI

One hundred years ago, a three-month war between the United States and Spain resulted in American occupation of Cuba, as well as the acquisition of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. For the United States, the success and popularity of this brief war was a prologue to the expansionist foreign policy that would shape American diplomacy well into the twentieth century. A sampling of photographs and artifacts from Mystic Seaport's collections illustrates some of the vessels involved in the conflict, as well as the popularity of commemorative items celebrating what John Hay, the U.S. ambassador to Great Britain, called a "Splendid little war."

The roots of the war began in Cuba, which had been an important trading partner of the U.S. since early in the nineteenth century. While numerous U.S. filibusterers had looked longingly at the island with hopes of

The second-class battleship Maine *was begun as an armored cruiser and launched from the New York Navy Yard in 1889. Commissioned as the second U.S. battleship in 1895, the 318-foot ship was armed with four 10-inch guns mounted in two turrets. To permit the guns to fire both fore and aft, the forward turret was offset to starboard and the aft turret was to port. With a crew of 374, the ship could steam at more than 17 knots. After outfitting, the USS* Maine *was assigned to the North Atlantic Squadron. In January 1898 the* Maine *was sent to Havana, Cuba, to protect American citizens in case of violence with the Spanish. Just after 9:00 on the quiet evening of 15 February, an explosion in the forward magazine tore apart the* Maine, *sending 260 Americans to their deaths. The explosion was immediately investigated and, though doubts remained, the cause was announced on 25 March as a Spanish mine. The press reacted both quickly and vehemently to the sinking of the* Maine, *with a heavily anti-Spanish bias, which had an enormous influence on public opinion within the United States. This lantern-slide view depicts the* Maine *underway, probably in New York Harbor. (Mystic Seaport 97.86.24)*





This navy blue wool sailor's cap with embroidered designs and lettering from the USS Maine *is presumed to represent the first battleship* Maine. *Although the U.S. Navy of the 1890s had entered the modern age with steel ships, large turreted guns, torpedoes, and complete reliance on steam power, sailors still slept in hammocks, ate in small group messes, and decorated their uniforms in individualistic style as they had since the birth of the U.S Navy a century earlier. (Mystic Seaport 39.1007; Claire White-Peterson photo)*

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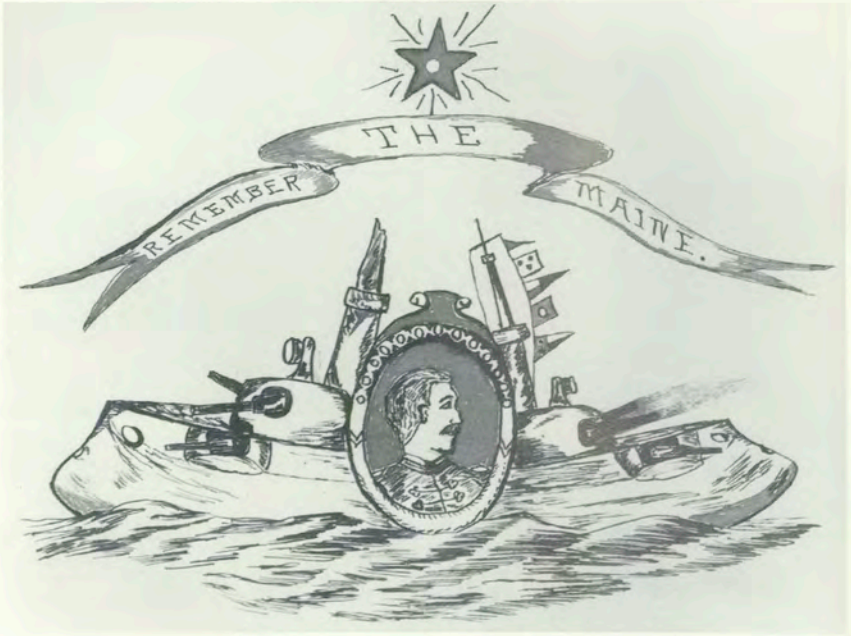
annexing it, American businessmen had invested in the island's economy and become dependent on Cuban-American trade. As in the 1860s and 1870s, Cuban natives began a rebellion against Spanish rule in 1895. American newspapers graphically reported starvation in Cuba and abuse at the hands of the Spanish army, arrousing public sentiment in favor of the Cuban revolutionaries. Equally alarming to the administration of President William McKinley was the disruption of the lucrative Cuban sugar trade.

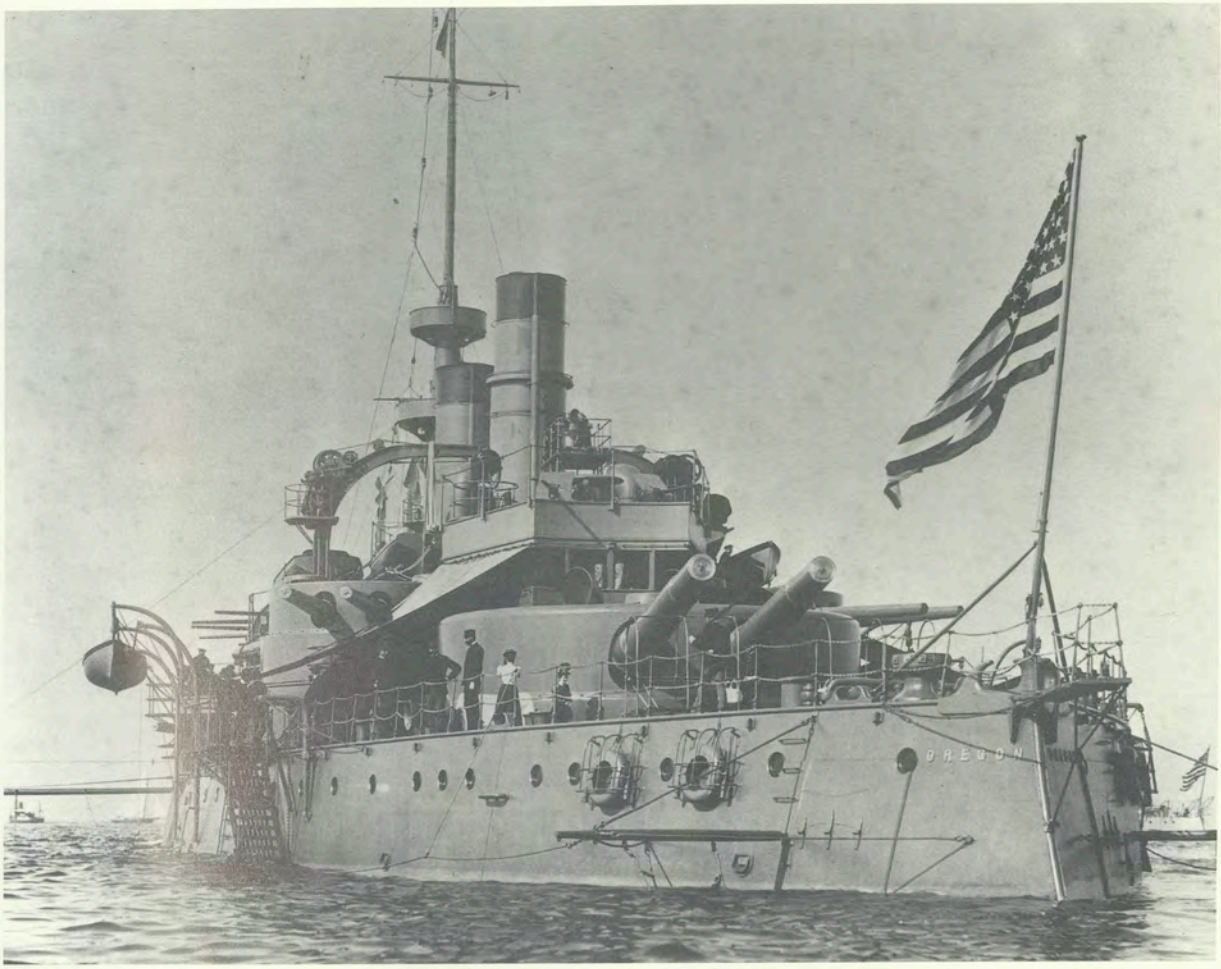
In early 1898, McKinley dispatched the second-class battleship *Maine* to Havana to serve as a warning to Spain and a symbol of American interests in Cuba. On the night of 15 February an explosion of undetermined origin sank the *Maine*, causing the deaths of more than 250 American sailors. The public outcry for revenge and Spanish intransigence on the Cuban situation, combined with what the McKinley administration saw as an opportunity to obtain Spanish holdings such as the Philippines, prompted the United States to demand Cuban independence on 19 April and establish a naval blockade of Cuba on 22 April. This provocative act led to a Spanish declaration of war on 24 April and a U.S.counter-declaration the next day, to date from 21 April.

On paper the Spanish Navy was a formidable force, and the U.S. Navy approached the war with caution. But in fact, the U.S. fleet, with its new steel ships, was far faster and more reliable in operation, and outgunned the Spanish almost two-to-one. The first American victory occurred a week after the declaration of war, when Admiral George Dewey's Asiatic Squadron easily defeated the Spanish fleet halfway around the world at Manila Bay. After blockading the Spanish naval squadron at Santiago, Cuba, while U.S. Army forces, including Colonel Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders, attacked the Spanish position on land, the U.S. North Atlantic Squadron destroyed the Spanish vessels as they attempted to escape on 3 July. The navy established a permanent base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and helped capture the Spanish island of Puerto Rico during late July and early August.

On 12 August U.S. and Spanish representatives signed a peace protocol and an armistice was declared. The next day, before news of the armistice arrived, the Spanish surrendered Manila, giving the U.S. control of the Philippines. With the signing of the peace treaty on 10 December 1898, Spain agreed to independence for Cuba and ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the U.S. as reparations for the war. U.S.

C.H. Fellowes was a Providence, Rhode Island, tattoo artist at the turn of the century. His hand-drawn images reflect patrons' desires for patriotic wearable art, in this case commemorating the Americans lost in the sinking of the Maine. *The silhouetted portrait at the center may be Richard Wainwright, who was executive officer of the* Maine *at the time of the sinking. Or the portrait may have been filled in with likenesses of specific men. After the sinking of the* Maine, *American public opinion verged on hysteria, and many were outspokenly dissatisfied with President William McKinley's apparent slowness in seeking revenge against Spain. Sensationalist journalism was universally anti-Spain, and though McKinley may have ignored much of this "yellow reporting," it influenced most Americans views about the Spanish and the war. (Mystic Seaport 83.52.3.19)*





With the threat of war with Spain looming, the U.S. Navy scrambled to add ships to the fleet, and reassigned others to cover expected areas of conflict. The most dramatic example of these movements was the battleship Oregon*'s 14,700-mile dash from San Francisco to Florida via the Straits of Magellan at an average speed of nearly 12 knots. The 350-foot battleship* Oregon *was launched at the Union Iron Works in San Francisco in 1893 and joined the Pacific fleet. On 12 March 1898 the* Oregon *began her remarkable 66-day odyssey to join the Atlantic fleet, during which she was almost wrecked during a gale in the Straits of Magellan. The* Oregon*'s trip around South America provided irrefutable evidence of the need for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama to permit the navy's Atlantic and Pacific fleets to act in concert. Upon arrival at Jupiter Inlet, Florida, on 24 May Captain Charles Clark reported her ready for battle, and she joined the blockade off Havana and then figured prominently in the Battle of Santiago on 3 July. By October 1898, after a triumphal parade and refit in New York, the* Oregon *had returned to the Pacific to participate in the war in the Philippines. Though soon made obsolete by new generations of battleships, the* Oregon *remained in service through World War I, was a museum for a time in the 1920s, and was finally scrapped in 1956. This stern view of the* Oregon*, with her 13-inch guns, was taken by J.S. Johnston about the time of the naval parade in New York, 20 August 1898. (Mystic Seaport 58.1175)*

forces would occupy Cuba until 1902, and independent Cuba would remain under strong U.S. diplomatic and economic influence until 1961. The McKinley administration originally had no strategic aims for the Philippines. However, concern that the islands were not ready for independence and would likely be partitioned by Japan and Germany led the U.S. to pay Spain $20 million for the Philippines and to retain them as a U.S. commercial and military base in Asia until they were prepared for independence. During the war the U.S. Congress also annexed Hawaii, site of a U.S. Navy base, to counter Japanese expansion in the Pacific.

For advocates of Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory of the strategic significance of seapower, the Spanish-American War was a textbook case. Just 379 Americans lost their lives in the Spanish-American War, 260 of them in the sinking of the *Maine*. The new, heavily armed U.S. fleet had deployed on both sides of the world against what was believed to be a strong European power and used blockade and direct engagement to defeat the Spanish Navy completely. Through purchase and charter the U.S. had also mobilized a transport and supply fleet to carry U.S. troops and equipment to both Cuba and the Philippines for decisive action ashore. Although there were unfortunate consequences, such as the bloody Philippine insurrection, this brief war helped give the U.S. a global perspective and began its entry into the twentieth century.



The protected cruiser Olympia, *launched by the Union Iron Works at San Francisco in 1892, became flagship of the Asiatic Squadron in 1895. The term protected meant that she did not have side armor, but did have an arched steel deck, 1.5 inches thick, above her magazines for protection. The 340-foot ship carried more than 400 men to operate her guns and torpedo tubes, and to serve the triple-expansion steam engine that could drive her at more than 21 knots. Commodore George Dewey joined the ship in January of 1898 and in late February was ordered to concentrate the squadron at Hong Kong and be prepared to attack the Spanish fleet at Manila in case of war. The Spanish Admiral Patricio Montojo y Pasaron controlled the Philippines, but on 1 May 1898 the seven American vessels of the Asiatic Squadron attacked the Spanish stronghold. On the bridge of the* Olympia *Dewey turned to Captain Charles Gridley and uttered these famous words: "You may fire when you are ready, Gridley." The U.S. squadron steamed through Manila Bay on a figure eight course, firing on the eleven defending Spanish ships. After two hours the U.S. ships hauled off to check their ammunition and give the crews breakfast, then returned to finish the battle. The* Olympia *played a major role in the battle, which ended with the sinking of all eleven Spanish ships without the loss of any American lives. In this post-war image, taken near Staten Island in New York Bay at the time of the 29 September 1899 Dewey Day celebration, some of the* Olympia*'s 428 crew members and officers are gathered along the deck near the ship's main battery of 5-inch guns. Although soon outmoded, the* Olympia *had a long naval career, bringing back the unknown soldier from France after World War I before being reclassified a naval relic in 1951. Today she is maintained as a naval shrine by Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia. Gelatin glass negative by G. Gennert. (Mystic Seaport 59.1372.9)*



This commemorative silk scarf shows a portrait bust of Rear Admiral George Dewey in military dress. Dewey (1837-1917), an 1858 graduate of the Naval Academy, fought in the American Civil War, but he is best remembered for his role as commander of the Asiatic Squadron in the Spanish-American War. He was instrumental in the American victory over Admiral Montojo's Spanish fleet at Manila Bay on 1 May 1898. Seven American vessels captured the port of Manila without losing any American lives, and Dewey was promoted to rear admiral ten days later. Framed with a red, white, and blue border, the scarf features an eagle with banner reading "OUR GEORGE. HE'S ALL RIGHT." The crossed flags at the bottom read "Rear Admiral George Dewey, U.S.N./ THE HERO OF THE MANILA FIGHT." Soon after the war, Congress reinstated the rank of Admiral of the Navy specifically for Dewey. (Mystic Seaport 55.135; Claire White-Peterson photo)



This spoon manufactured by the Crown Silverplate Company also commemorates Dewey and his flagship, the protected cruiser Olympia. *Both the scarf and the spoon speak volumes about American attitudes toward the Spanish-American War. What better way to express your patriotism than by wearing a silk scarf or using a teaspoon celebrating naval hero George Dewey? Both objects sold to a public eager to show their support of American efforts, just as many Americans applied bumper stickers reading "SUPPORT OUR TROOPS" during the Gulf War in 1991. (Mystic Seaport 98.35; Jennifer M. Stich photo)*

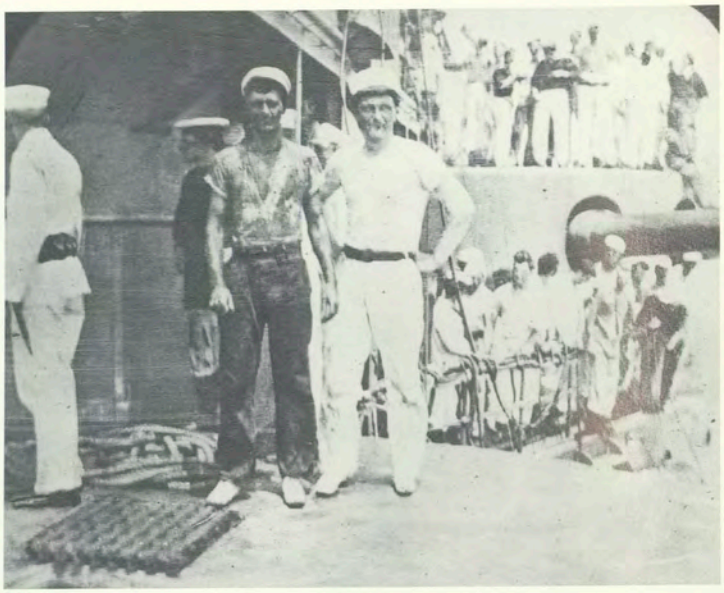


With the Spanish fleet blockaded in the harbor of Santiago on the southeast coast of Cuba, Admiral Sampson sought a way to immobilize that force. Assistant Naval Constructor Richmond P. Hobson (1870-1937), an 1889 graduate of the Naval Academy, was assigned the duty of sinking the American collier Merrimac *to block the entrance to Santiago Harbor and trap the Spanish fleet within. With explosives rigged to the outside of her hull, and still loaded with coal, the* Merrimac *was guaranteed to sink like a stone when the crew set off the charges. Men throughout the fleet vied for the seven volunteer positions in the* Merrimac*'s crew, hoping for glory despite the high probability of death. In order to navigate, Hobson chose the moonlit night of 3 June to make his approach. But before reaching the narrow mouth of the harbor the ship was hit with fire from the Spanish forts, disabling her steering gear. Without rudder control Hobson could not position the ship properly, and it sank outside of the channel. The Spanish forts continued to fire, but with the ship between them they struck one another as the* Merrimac *went down. Hobson and his crew floated among the wreckage until daylight, when they surrendered to none other than the Spanish Admiral Cervera, who was searching the wreckage in a steam launch. The American prisoners were treated well, and eventually exchanged. Though the mission was a failure, Hobson and his crew were considered heroes and Hobson was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Stereograph by Strohmeyer & Wyman, 1898. (Mystic Seaport 98.19.1)*



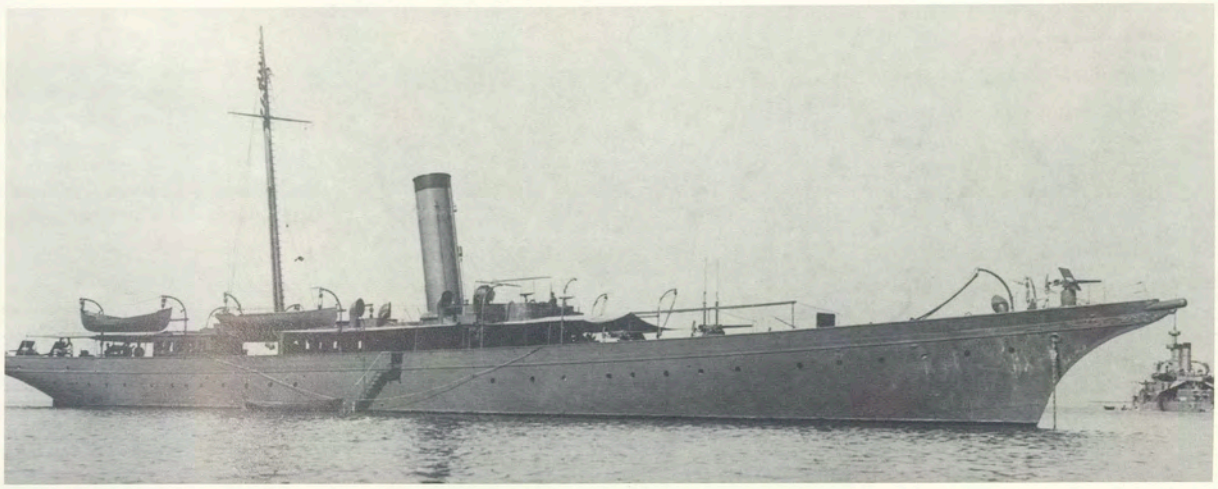
The "Dynamite Cruiser" USS Vesuvius *was a unique vessel in the U.S. Navy. Launched at Philadelphia in 1888 by the Cramp yard, this 252-foot experimental ship was designed to fire projectiles containing a desensitized blasting agent including nitrocellulose–"guncotton." To propel these volatile high-explosive shells the guns used compressed air rather than the usual gun powder. The three 15-inch "dynamite guns" were rigidly mounted at an angle in the foredeck (the barrels are visible above the break in the deck). In order to aim the weapons, the ship itself had to be pointed in the direction of intended fire. Adjustment for range was accomplished by controlling the amount of compressed air admitted into the firing chamber. Aside from the crude means of aiming the main battery, the effectiveness of this ship as a fighting platform was hindered by the guns' short range (200 yards to 1-1/2 miles, or less than half that of conventional naval gunnery), and the fact that she carried no more than 30 "dynamite" projectiles aboard. On 13 June 1898 the* Vesuvius *conducted a brief night-time bombardment of Spanish shore positions at Santiago, Cuba. Because the guns produced no flash, and merely "coughed" when firing, the shells exploded ashore without warning and caused widespread panic among the residents of Santiago. Despite this limited success, the* Vesuvius *was converted to a torpedo-testing vessel in 1904, and was finally scrapped in 1922. Lantern slide. (Mystic Seaport 97.86.11)*

Right: *This lantern slide image may have been taken soon after the Battle of Santiago on 3 July 1898. With mounting pressure from the U.S. Army's land campaign, six outnumbered and outgunned Spanish ships tried to break through the American blockade of Santiago Harbor. Fifteen miles west of Santiago, the cruiser* Vizcaya *was driven ashore by the relentless American battleship* Oregon *and the armored cruiser* Brooklyn. *The Spanish lost six ships and five others burned, and hundreds of men died, while the Americans lost only one man. In the aftermath, Americans from the naval salvage and inspection team examine the wrecked* Vizcaya*'s deck turret and fallen mast with its fighting top. (Mystic Seaport 97.86.40)*



On 1 June 1898 the USS Oregon *arrived off Santiago, Cuba, to join the American blockade. On 3 July the Spanish squadron tried to run the American blockade. The* Oregon*'s 13-inch guns, which fired 1,100-pound shells nicknamed "railroad trains," helped destroy the* Oquendo *and* Vizcaya. *Then the* Oregon *and the armored cruiser* Brooklyn, *the two fastest ships of the North Atlantic Squadron, chased down the fleeing Spanish ship* Cristobal Colon, *firing a shot over her bow. The Spanish ship was run ashore. These sailors atop the* Oregon*'s forward 13-inch turret and around the port 8-inch turret may be watching the aftermath of this battle. This lantern slide is part of a group of slides titled "The Voyage of the* Oregon, *" which includes several images of American sailors on board the* Oregon *during the war. (Mystic Seaport 97.86.23)*

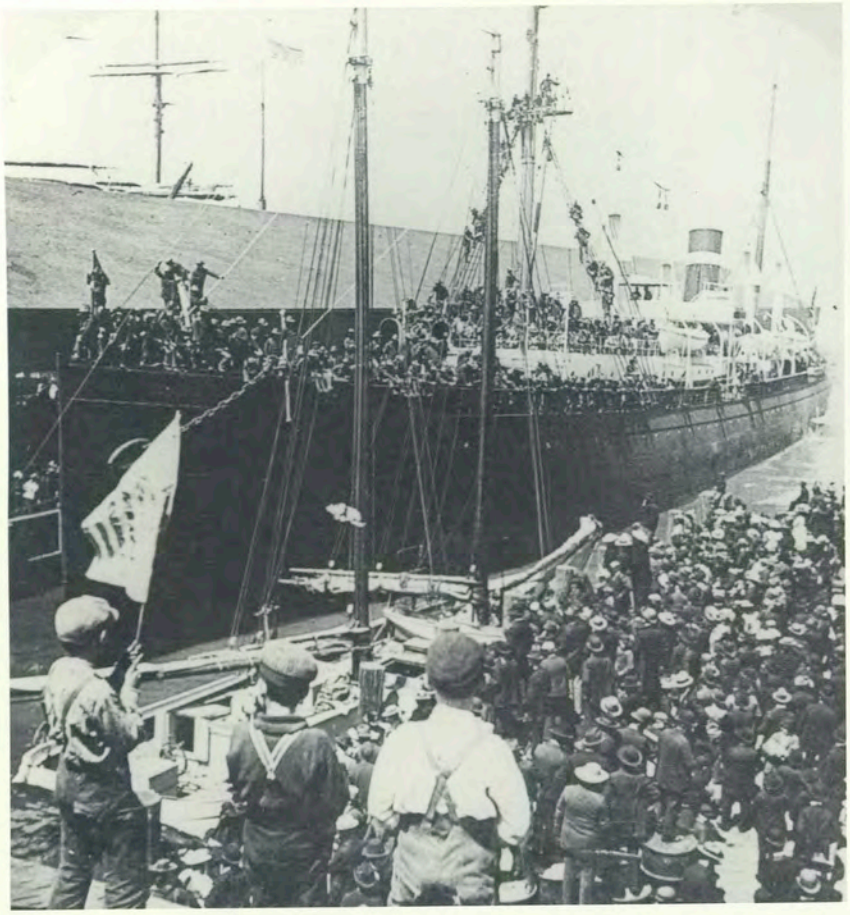




The sleek lines of the U.S. Naval Auxiliary Force vessel Gloucester *hint at her former years as J.P. Morgan's private yacht* Corsair. *After her launch by Neafie & Levy of Philadelphia in 1891, Morgan used the 240-foot* Corsair *for seven years before selling her to the U.S. Navy, which renamed the vessel* Gloucester *and added rapid-fire guns. The ship fought at the Battle of Santiago in company with the smaller converted yacht* Vixen *and was instrumental in sinking the Spanish torpedo boat* Pluton *and driving the torpedo boat* Furor *ashore during a running fight at 17 knots. Several weeks later, on 25 July 1898, the* Gloucester *entered and captured the port of Guanica, Puerto Rico. She also participated in the capture of the port of Ponce, Puerto Rico, and in concert with the USS* Wasp *took the port of Arroyo. Lieutenant Commander Richard Wainwright, who was executive officer of USS* Maine *at the time of her loss, commanded the* Gloucester *and was hailed as a hero. After the war the* Gloucester *served in a number of capacities, including three years as a school ship at Annapolis. Reactivated in 1917, she conducted harbor patrols in New York until her final decommissioning in 1919. In this photograph by J.S. Johnston, the* Gloucester *lies at anchor in New York Bay, ca. 20 August 1898. (Mystic Seaport 58.1172)*



Although the guns protruding from her side ports identify the USS Prairie *as a U.S. Navy vessel, her commercial origins are still apparent. Until April 1898 this was the Morgan Line steamship* El Sol, *a regular freight carrier on the run between New York and New Orleans. Launched at Philadelphia by Cramp in 1890, the 404-foot iron ship was built for the Southern Pacific Railroad, which controlled the Morgan Line as the sea link in its service between New York and California. Several of the* El Sol*'s mates in the Morgan Line were built under provisions of the 1891 Congressional legislation authorizing U.S. Mail contracts to encourage construction of first-class American steamships that could be converted to commerce raiders in wartime. Like them, the slightly older* El Sol *was purchased by the navy early in April 1898 as war appeared imminent. Outfitted with guns, she served off Cuba during the war. For several years after the war she was assigned to train naval militia (the equivalent of the modern reserves) and later served as a training ship for naval enlistees. After conversion to a destroyer tender in 1917 the* Prairie *served through World War I before being decommissioned and eliminated from the navy in 1922. G. Gennert photographed the USS* Prairie *at New York, probably in September 1899. (Mystic Seaport 59.1372.23)*



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This 1898 stereograph view records the celebratory send-off in San Francisco for the 345-foot troop transport Pennsylvania. *Built at the William Cramp & Sons shipyard in Philadelphia and launched in 1873, the* Pennsylvania *worked for many years as a transatlantic passenger ship until chartered by the U.S. Army as one of 14 steamships to transport troops across the Pacific during the Spanish-American War. Departing New York in April, she reached San Francisco in June. As part of the fourth expedition to the Philippines, she departed San Francisco on 19 July, reached Honolulu nine days later, and delivered the troops to Manila on 24 August, eleven days after the Spanish defenders surrendered the city and twelve days after the U.S. and Spain signed a peace protocol. Although they missed fighting the Spanish, some of the 1,300 volunteers on board the* Pennsylvania *may have become engaged in the bloody, two-year Philippine insurrection, which broke out in February 1899 as Filipinos rebelled against American occupation. The* Pennsylvania *remained under charter to the U.S. Army until June 1901. After later service on the Northwest Coast she was purchased by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in 1909 and finally burned on the Chilean coast during wartime service in 1918. Stereograph by the Keystone View Company. (Mystic Seaport 97.80.1)*



Continuing doubts about the cause of the USS Maine*'s 1898 explosion, which ignited the Spanish-American War, coupled with mounting pressure from American veterans groups wanting an appropriate burial for the men lost, led to the 1911 investigation and salvage of the* Maine. *This photograph shows the stern of the barnacle-encrusted ship in Havana Harbor, 13 years after the explosion. As depicted, a cofferdam was built around the wreck and the seawater was pumped out to facilitate salvage. Though there had been an investigation into the cause of the explosion immediately after the sinking, there was a second official investigation during the salvage in 1911, which again determined that an external blast, probably from a mine, caused the explosion. This second investigation determined that the explosion occurred in a different location than originally thought, and a later review of the evidence, by Admiral Hyman Rickover, suggested that the cause of the explosion was spontaneous combustion in a coal bunker igniting an ammunition magazine. The refloated* Maine *was sunk with full military honors in the Gulf of Mexico on 12 March 1912. (Mystic Seaport 54.1195)*

Joshua Slocum:
The First Solo Circumnavigator

JOHN B. HATTENDORF

(A Vignette from *America and the Sea: A Maritime History*, by Benjamin W. Labaree, William M. Fowler, Jr., Edward W. Sloan, John B. Hattendorf, Jeffrey J. Safford, and Andrew W. German)

Americans have long been fascinated by the solitary struggles of a sailor alone in a small boat on the open sea. Perhaps the attraction is in the idea of an independent man struggling with primordial elements, or maybe it is a romantic notion of adventure on the high seas. In either case, for the past century the round-the-world exploits of Joshua Slocum have epitomized the solo voyager. Yet, Slocum was not the first American to sail a long distance alone. Among other Americans of his time, Alfred Johnson had taken a dory from Gloucester to Liverpool to celebrate the centennial of American independence. Later, in 1882-83, Bernard Gilboy sailed from San Francisco to Australia in an 18-foot boat.

The son of a Methodist deacon and a lighthouse-keeper's daughter, Slocum was born in 1844 and raised in Nova Scotia, where both sides of his family had been seafarers. Shipping out as a cook on a fishing vessel at the age of 16, he later sailed widely under the British flag in the grain and cargo trades. By the age of 18, he had



Joshua Slocum sails his former oyster sloop Spray *off the coast of Australia in 1896, during his single-handed voyage around the world. (Mystic Seaport 46.606)*



Percy E. Budlong photographed Captain Slocum (1844-1909) with a pair of young admirers on board the Spray, *at Washington, D.C., in 1907. (Mystic Seaport 74.1029.2)*

passed the Board of Trade examination and qualified as second mate.

Attracted by the booming coastal trade at San Francisco in the mid-1860s, he became an American citizen there. Shortly, thereafter, he traveled north to work in the salmon fishery on the Columbia River and hunt furs in British Columbia. During this period, he sold a design for an improved boat for gillnet fishing.

In 1869, Slocum returned to sea, this time under the American flag in the coastal trade between San Francisco and Seattle. Getting his first command, the bark *Washington*, he brought her as one of the first American vessels to enter Cook Inlet in Alaska after the departure of the Russians. During a salmon fishing expedition, the ship dragged anchor and was lost, but he saved his cargo of fish. Getting a new command from the same owners, he sailed the barkentine *Constitution* from San Francisco to Hawaii and to Mexican ports. His wife, whom he had married in Australia in 1871, often accompanied him on voyages until her death in 1885. Their eldest son Victor was born on board *Constitution*. In 1874-76, Slocum commanded the *Benjamin Aymar*. When her owners decided to sell her in the Philippines, Slocum and his little family were stranded there. Slocum organized workmen on the shore of Subic Bay to build an 80-ton steamship for a naval architect. In payment for his services, the architect gave Slocum a 90-ton schooner, *Pato*, which Slocum first used to carry lumber, then refitted for a successful salmon fishing expedition in the Sea of Okhotsk, bringing his cargo across the Pacific to sell profitably in Victoria, British Columbia.

Briefly coming ashore, he took up a long-standing interest in writing to serve for a time as correspondent for the *San Francisco Bee*. Back at sea in 1878, he commanded the *Amethyst*, then the full-

rigged ship *Northern Light*, and finally the bark *Aquidneck*. In the last ship, he, his second wife, and two children were wrecked on a sandbar at Antonia, near Rio de Janeiro, in 1887. Penniless and stranded once again, Slocum built a 35-foot open boat–or canoe, as he preferred to call it–that combined his recollections of a Cape Ann dory, the lines of an elegant Japanese sampan, and the rig of a Chinese sampan. His wife made the sails, and his son was the carpenter, ropemaker, and "general roustabout." Christened on 13 May 1888, the anniversary of the emancipation of Brazil's slaves, Slocum named her *Liberdade*.

In this open boat, Slocum with his wife and two children sailed 5,510 miles in an epic journey from Paranaguá, Brazil, to Cape Roman, South Carolina. In 1890, he privately published his first book, the dramatic account of the *Voyage of the Liberdade*.

After a number of unsuccessful business ventures, Slocum returned briefly to his wife's family in Massachusetts, from whence his own Nova Scotia family had emigrated as Loyalists more than a century before. There, he acquired the beached hull of an old oyster sloop at Fairhaven, across the harbor from New Bedford. Slocum completely rebuilt the 34-foot, nine-inch vessel named *Spray* at a cost of $553.62.

After sailing her for a year and trying to eke out a living as a fisherman around Boston, Slocum decided to sail his stout little vessel on the first solo circumnavigation of the globe. Closely watched by the press and reported by every passing vessel, Slocum left Boston on 24 April 1895, sailed to Nova Scotia, and then crossed the Atlantic to Gibraltar, intending to pass through the Suez Canal. At Gibraltar, British naval officers warned Slocum of pirates in the Red Sea. He recrossed the Atlantic to Brazil in 40 days and coasted south to the Straits of Magellan. Encountering very heavy weather there, he struggled for two months to get through the 350-mile long strait. There, Slocum saw the roughest seas he had ever seen in, what he later called, "the greatest sea adventure of my life."

Sailing westward, he reached the Marquesas in 45 days. When Slocum called at Samoa, Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson presented him with some of her late husband's books, including several volumes of sailing directions. Sailing on to Australia, he remained there for nine months, earning a good income by lecturing and charging admission to see the *Spray*. From Australia, he continued his journey, crossing the Indian Ocean to South Africa, where he remained to lecture for another three months at Durban and Cape Town.

From South Africa, Slocum sailed northward, calling at both Saint Helena and Ascension Islands. Off the coast of Brazil, he encountered the U.S. battleship *Oregon* as she rushed past on her famous passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic in the tense days preceding the Spanish-American War. Sighting her off the mouth of the Amazon River, Slocum could read the signal flags *Oregon* flew: C-T-B above a Spanish flag, meaning "Are there enemy Spanish warships near?" Unaware that war had broken out, Slocum made his famous reply: "Let us keep together for mutual protection." Too far away to read his signal flags, the battleship made no reply as she sped on toward the West Indies.

Slocum completed his 46,000-mile circumnavigation on 27 June 1898 when he entered the harbor at Newport, Rhode Island. The following year, he began to publish his account of the voyage in *Century Magazine*, and the entire story was published as *Sailing Alone Around the World* in 1900. Slocum's tale was enormously popular, earning him enough money from royalties to buy a house and settle on Martha's Vineyard. He continued to publish articles in *Century Magazine*, *McClure's*, and other popular journals while maintaining and sailing the *Spray* in local waters for the next few years. Sailing alone, he took the *Spray* on trips to the West Indies in the winters of 1905, 1907, and 1908. On 19 November 1909, Joshua Slocum departed Martha's Vineyard in the *Spray* for his winter holiday. He and the *Spray* were never seen again.

A remarkable figure, Slocum simultaneously represented the last generation of American sailing-ship captains and the first generation of American small-boat sailors. Entirely self taught, he became a popular writer whose work is still widely read a century later.

America and the Sea: A Maritime History is the largest, most expansive book ever published by Mystic Seaport. In its 700 pages this colorful volume offers a comprehensive narrative history of this nation's commercial, naval, and recreational activities at sea and on the connecting rivers and lakes. The book includes 350 illustrations–many drawn from Mystic Seaport's collections, numerous vignettes like this one, and a variety of short essays that emphasize the social history of American seafaring. Available at the beginning of the summer, *America and the Sea* is priced at $50.00. Watch for your special Mystic Seaport member's discount offer.

Book Marks

Wearing a stylized ship on his head, former sailor Joseph Johnson might have appeared to us to be merely a quaint, inconsequential street character in 1815 London. But in him W. Jeffrey Bolster sees a proud black former mariner using the traditions of his African culture to display evidence of his life and skill. For too long we have viewed the slave trade "Middle Passage" as the characteristic relationship between African Americans and the sea. Now, in a thoroughly documented, engagingly written volume, we can see more accurately that the sea was central to the empowerment as well as the enslavement of Africans in the Atlantic world. Based on his doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins University, Bolster's *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997. 310 pages, $27.00) addresses the role of black mariners with a clear thesis richly documented with details drawn from primary sources and informed by Bolster's own years at sea under sail. Having made the same landfalls and experienced the vagaries of wind and sea, Bolster is better prepared than most historians to comprehend the nuances of a particular way of life that both empowered and circumscribed black men.

Bolster's thesis is three-fold. First, seafaring gave black mariners access to a larger Atlantic world, making them agents in an unwritten effort to maintain links to a larger culture from which they or their antecedents had been torn by slavery. Second, by 1800 seafaring gave black mariners an unusual equality with whites in the realm of the sea, based upon merit rather than racial characteristics. Even slave mariners could obtain a large degree of autonomy, including on occasion the command of a small coastal trader or pilot boat. Third, using both anecdotal and statistical evidence, Bolster makes a clear case that the situation for black mariners

A Maritime Minute from Mystic Seaport

Stonington seal-hunters discover Antarctica

17 November 1820.

Nearly 8,000 miles from her home port of Stonington, Connecticut, the 47-foot sloop *Hero* cruises icy waters.

Her business is killing seals for their pelts, and to find them her 21-year-old captain, Nathaniel B. Palmer, has ventured into unknown waters. At the rail is Peter Harvey, a black sailor ten years older than his captain, one of many African-American mariners who serve with little recognition.

The four-man crew keeps watch as they approach a high cliff edging a frozen strait. Noting their position, Palmer sets a course away from land. They haven't found seals, but Palmer and his crew have discovered something much larger: the continent of Antarctica.

Peter Harvey will leave little trace of his life, but his captain, Nathaniel Palmer, is credited with discovering Antarctica, a portion of which is known as Palmer Land.

declined sharply after 1840, discouraging many African Americans from going to sea, and segregating those who remained at sea in menial positions. With changes in maritime hiring practices, competition from immigrant laborers, and legal restrictions against black mariners in Southern ports, many forms of seafaring had virtually excluded blacks by the Civil War.

This magnificent example of historical analysis with heart and social perspective should be read by anyone interested in the legacy of American seafaring and in the ongoing discussion of race in America.

William H. Bunting's *A Day's Work: A Sample of Historic Maine Photographs, 1860-1920, Part 1* (Gardiner, Maine: Tillbury House, 1997. 379 pages, $55.00 cloth, $35.00 paper), published in association with Maine Preservation, is a most welcome arrival. Bill Bunting is the master of interpreting period photographs. His seminal works, *Portrait of a Port (1970)* and *Steamers, Schooners, Cutters, and Sloops* (1974) demonstrated how a researcher can return the spirit of life to a photograph, but for more than 20 years other obligations have kept him from completing his next project. At last he's back with the first of a two-volume work that presents photographic evidence of Maine's maritime, agricultural, and transportation history between the Civil War and World War I. With touches of dry humor and a tireless ability to convey technical details in an engaging style, Bunting displays his enthusiasm for oxen, techniques of plowing, railroad construction and operation, Maine coasting schooners, fishing, coastal steamboats, logging, granite cutting, and a hundred other economic activities. Having combed period newspapers and other documentary sources, he provides the context and answers questions we hadn't even thought of as we scan these fascinating glimpses of work and travel a century ago. Turn the page and views of the Down-Easter *A.G Ropes* and her master, Dave Rivers, encourage Bunting to discourse on Rivers's career and on shipboard discipline, and to quote Rivers's own comments on his attitudes toward sailors. A few pages later river drivers break up a jam of spruce logs on the Wassataquoik River, and not much farther along a farmer loads an ox cart with kelp for fertilizer, leading to a discussion of mussel mud as a miraculous restorative for tired fields. And then there is Captain William Cottle's scow *Yankee Notion*, "Home on the Ocean," which this disabled former mariner used to pursue his trade as a cobbler among the islands of Maine. Ultimately, this and so many of the 225 photos Bunting brings to our attention serve as visual testimony to the links that have for so long bound Maine, and the rest of America, to the sea.

Andrew W. German, Editor of *The Log*

Thomas N. Layton's *The Voyage of the* Frolic*: New England Merchants and the Opium Trade* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997. 227 pages, $24.95) is an engaging study whose title barely hints at the multifaceted story of this opium clipper wrecked off the California coast in July 1850. The author, professor of archaeology at San Jose State University, first became aware of the *Frolic* in the summer of 1983. During an excavation at Three Chop Village, a native Mitom Pomo site in Mendocino County, California, Layton's students uncovered shards of Chinese pottery buried within Pomo house depressions. As he sought to discover the origin of these shards, Layton soon learned that they were remnants of the *Frolic*'s final cargo. This realization led the author on a research journey lasting several years, linking his archaeological findings to Native Americans, the nineteenth-century opium trade, gold-rush San Francisco, and modern-day recreational divers.

Unfortunately, the prologue reads like a historical novel, as Layton creates a fictitious character, Keetana, to introduce readers to Pomo culture and describe how the Pomos salvaged, used, and traded cargo from the *Frolic*'s wreck. The chapters that follow, however, present the factual results of Layton's research and place the *Frolic* in a maritime context within nineteenth-century trade. The author draws from his exhaustive search into the papers of Augustine Heard & Company, (the Boston firm that owned the *Frolic*), and the family papers of her captain, Edward Faucon. Drawing upon his skills as an archaeologist, Layton pieces together the complete picture of the *Frolic*'s career, from her launch at Baltimore in 1844 as a sleek, fast-sailing Chesapeake-model brig, through her Bombay-to-Canton runs with illicit opium for the China trade, to her passage carrying goods from China to San Francisco during the gold rush. Complementing the text are detailed sketches by Samuel F. Manning, from construction details to conceptual renderings of the *Frolic*'s final voyage and the appropriation of her cargo by the Native-American residents of the northern California coast.

While Layton is obviously fascinated by the numerous cultural linkages that make the *Frolic*'s story so rich, he sometimes leads the reader on a tangential trek through maritime history. Providing details of the *Frolic*'s construction at the Gardner Brothers shipyard in Baltimore, Layton informs readers that the shipyard had once employed a young slave later known as Frederick Douglass. Although he acknowledges that Douglass had

escaped from Maryland six years before the *Frolic*'s launch, Layton treats his readers to a lengthy biographical sketch and photo illustration of Douglass. Author and onetime sailor Richard Henry Dana, Jr., receives similar treatment. Since Captain Edward Horatio Faucon of the *Frolic* commanded the *Alert* when Dana served aboard, as described in *Two Years Before the Mast*, Layton provides detailed information on Dana's life and career as well as recounting the success of the book. This information, while interesting, could have been relegated to the endnotes.

The final portion of *Voyage of the* Frolic brings the story to the present. The epilogue—Who Owns the Past?— details Layton's relationships with recreational divers and various museum personnel in his attempt to gather and study all available artifacts from the *Frolic* wreck. As the first to reach the *Frolic*, the divers had valuable information as to the arrangement and condition of the artifacts. Layton recounts his attempts to balance his appreciation of the divers' claim to the *Frolic*'s story with his own frustration at their destruction of clues contained in the wreck site. Layton also describes the initial hesitancy of museums to become involved with the project, since museums as well as the State of California considered the artifacts to be "stolen antiquity." Layton's diplomacy paid off when he was able to feature the *Frolic* artifacts together with oral histories of the divers in a successful exhibition at the Grace Hudson Museum in Ukiah, California.

The Voyage of the Frolic is a worthwhile study, illustrating how different disciplines can complement one another to deliver a vivid picture. As Layton explains, the story of the *Frolic* is "a story of connections," linking nineteenth-century Boston merchants, Middle Atlantic shipbuilders, Asian traders, gold-rush consumers, Native-Americans, and modern amateur and professional archaeologists. For the *Frolic*'s owners, her voyages ended on the rocky coast of northern California almost 150 years ago. Thomas Layton has enabled the *Frolic* to undertake a new voyage, which clearly illustrates the role of the sea in breaking boundaries of culture and geography and providing fascinating stories told through many voices.

Marifrances Trivelli, Cataloger, Curatorial Department

On Saturday, 6 February 1808, a Nantucket sea captain in search of seals for the Chinese market made a surprising discovery. He had happened upon Pitcairn Island and the survivors of the party that had mutinied aboard His Majesty's Ship *Bounty* nearly twenty years earlier. Walter Hayes's *The Captain from Nantucket and the Mutiny on the* Bounty (Ann Arbor: William L. Clements Library, 1996. 144 pages, $150 special signed edition of 500 with slipcase; $125 limited edition of 1,000) recounts this continuation of the *Bounty* saga.

This handsome little book relays the tale of Mayhew Folger's voyage and hardships aboard the Nantucket brig *Topaz* and his eventual return to the United States with a fascinating story that answered a host of questions regarding Fletcher Christian and his infamous cohorts. The *Topaz*'s voyage is an interesting story in its own right, but the *Bounty* connection makes it a special treat to read, considering the popular accounts surrounding Bligh, Christian, and the *Bounty*, and the fact that the story usually ends before we find out the fates of the surviving crew.

Walter Hayes did some skillful detective work in uncovering the entire story scattered among various depositories of primary documents. A manuscript letter in the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan laid out the basics of the story. The author of the letter was Samuel Coates, a Philadelphia merchant who had the good sense to transcribe Folger's story as it was told to him by the captain. Other supporting documents, including the log of the *Topaz*, Folger letters, and genealogies were located on Nantucket, and the author made good use of British sources, especially those from the Public Record Office. Many of the manuscripts appear as photographic facsimiles at the end of the book. This is a nice touch. There is an occasional inconsistency in facts between the text and the captions for the lovely illustrations (many from the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England), but these are annoying only to the stream of reading rather than of any real consequence. This is a fine example of some of the real nuggets of gold still buried in the great manuscript collections dealing with maritime matters. The prohibitive cost, however, will probably limit purchases to collectors and special libraries.

Paul J. O'Pecko, Library Director

Mystic Seaport Salutes!

Electa "Exy" Search Johnson

The brochure introducing "Electa Search Johnson: Traveler, Lecturer–In A New Series of Lectures" describes Mrs. Johnson as "a most pleasing speaker. Little, charming in appearance, she tells of places and adventures in a way that delights audiences."

Born and reared in Rochester, New York, Electa Search went to Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, graduating in 1929 after only three years. In the years after college, she served on the staff of a large city newspaper, studied in Paris, and traveled extensively in Europe. Returning from one of these trips on a sailing ship, she met Irving McClure Johnson, a young mariner whose early career had taken him from crewing on private yachts to a memorable1929 voyage around Cape Horn in the 345-foot bark *Peking*.

Following their marriage in 1933, Irving and Exy Johnson began an unparalleled life of adventure and discovery. For 43 years, on a succession of three vessels named *Yankee* (Irving was born on the fourth of July), Irving and Exy circumnavigated the globe seven times, cruised Europe's waterways, and when Yankee was in U.S. waters hosted more than 2,200 Mariner Girl Scout participants in one of the country's earliest sail-training programs, and the forerunner of Mystic Seaport's *Joseph Conrad* program.

The highlights of these voyages are the stuff of legends: discovering five previously uncharted south sea islands, raising the HMS *Bounty* anchor off Pitcairn Island, sailing the Nile above Aswan–the last foreign vessel to do so before the dam



was completed. They took along their two small sons and hand-picked amateur crews of young men and women who were offered the experience of a lifetime: a chance to navigate the world's oceans with only compass, leadline, and sextant, and the opportunity to face the challenges of life at sea head-on. The Johnsons had the good fortune of sailing around the world at a time when maritime laws did not restrict where a vessel could go.

Beside good fortune, the Johnsons also had the foresight to document all their voyages. In addition to ships' logs, countless photographs, and thousands of feet of film, Exy herself kept meticulous notes on everything, from provisioning the vessels and planning the menus, to teaching and coaching the crews and describing their surroundings and their experiences. This voluminous archive of material has provided the inspiration for a number of books, countless newspaper and magazine articles, and the lecture series.

Following Irving's death in 1991, Exy presented much of this unique and priceless collection to Mystic Seaport. Besides the Johnsons' own material, the collection now includes a number of personal logs, films, photographs, and memorabilia kept by the many crew members. While their perspectives differed, their attitudes were universal in the way the experience changed their lives: "we were given life-long inspiration by Irving and Exy."

In 1995, the Irving M. Johnson Archive Fund was created at Mystic Seaport. The goal is to record and dub personal reminiscences of *Yankee* alumni, preserve Captain Johnson's lecture films on archival videotape, and eventually make the footage publicly accessible in the form of broadcast-quality tapes. This effort to reach the many individuals who sailed with Irving and Exy, their family and friends, has rekindled the affection and esteem in which the Johnsons are held. Exy will be the guest of honor at a reunion that will take place at Mystic Seaport early in October 1998, bringing together all those whose lives were touched by the *Yankee* experience. They are coming from all over the country to pay tribute to this "truly wonderful woman."

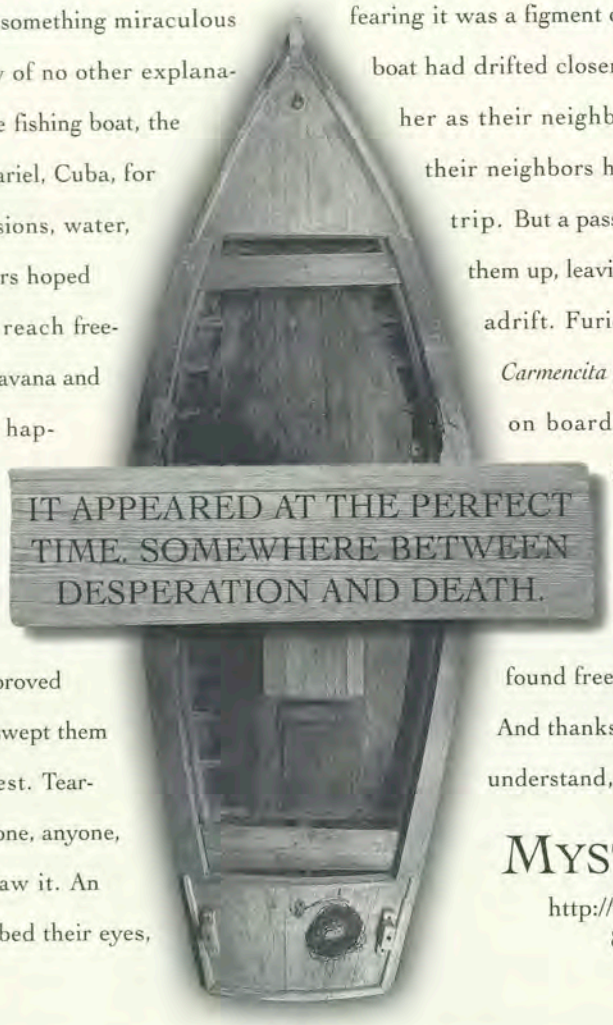
Mrs. Johnson's appetite for adventure has never paled, and in1996 she took a cruise to Hawaii with her 14-year-old granddaughter. There is scarcely a spot on this earth that Exy hasn't seen. Indeed, Exy once said that if all the miles she had sailed were put end to end, they would reach "around the moon and back." Perhaps the only comparison to the Johnsons' voyages of discovery today might be space travel. Shall we reserve a seat on the next shuttle for Exy Johnson? Mystic Seaport is truly honored to salute this extraordinary lady, her life, and her legacy.

(Judy Beisler photo)



THE STORY OF THE *ANALUISA* AS TOLD BY BETTYE NOYES.

"In August 1994, something miraculous occurred. We know of no other explanation for it. A simple fishing boat, the *Carmencita*, set sail from Mariel, Cuba, for Key West. It carried provisions, water, and what its four passengers hoped would be enough fuel to reach freedom. But halfway between Havana and Key West, the unthinkable happened. Their engine failed. Surrounded by choppy, unforgiving waters, the four began paddling. But their efforts proved futile, for the Gulf Stream swept them farther away from Key West. Tearfully, they prayed for someone, anyone, to save them. Then they saw it. An abandoned boat. They rubbed their eyes, fearing it was a figment of their imaginations. But the boat had drifted closer - so close, they recognized her as their neighbors' boat. Only days before, their neighbors had attempted the same trip. But a passing cruise liner had picked them up, leaving their boat, the *Analuisa*, adrift. Furiously, the four in the lifeless *Carmencita* paddled toward her. Once on board, they discovered a working engine and enough fuel to reach Key West. Like their neighbors and scores of immigrants before them, they found freedom. Thanks to the *Analuisa*. And thanks to events we'll never truly understand, nor forget."



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