The Log *of* Mystic Seaport®

Spring
1999

Volume 50, No.4



Contents

85
Sightings

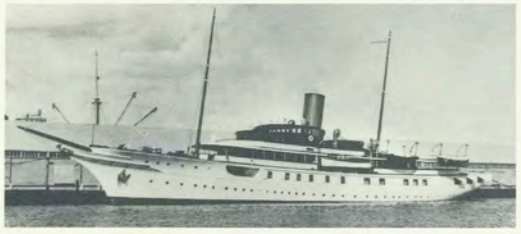
86
The African Squadron
The U.S. Navy and the Slave Trade, 1820-1862
CALVIN LANE



99
Collecting for America and the Sea
The "Slave Yacht" *Wanderer*
ELIZABETH KRENICKY

101
Coordinated Collections Information Access
A New Entrance to Mystic Seaport
JENNIFER EIFRIG

108
At Century's End, A Bounty of Big Yachts
JOSEPH GRIBBINS



110
Book Marks

112
Letters



112
A Maritime Minute from Mystic Seaport
Human disaster on the coastal highway

Inside Back Cover
Mystic Seaport Salutes!
Bettye Noyes and Mystic Seaport's Volunteers

The Log of Mystic Seaport
Spring 1999
Vol. 50, No. 4
Published quarterly for members
Circulation 24,460

President: J. Revell Carr
Vice President for Development: Christopher M. Cox
Director of Communications: Peter Glankoff
Associate Director of Development for Membership: Lisa Reed
Editor: Andrew W. German (andy@mysticseaport.org)
Editorial Assistant: Connie Stein
Editorial Board: Roger Hambidge, Jan Larson, Steve Lee, David Littlefield, Paul O'Pecko
Photography Staff: Mary Anne Stets, Claire White-Peterson, Judy Beisler, Peggy Tate Smith, Jennifer M. Stich
Design and Composition: Trish Sinsigalli LaPointe
Printing and Binding: The Racine Company, Danielson, Connecticut

On the cover: The American transatlantic liner *St. Louis* steams up New York Bay toward the Statue of Liberty in this striking photograph by James Burton. Launched at Philadelphia in 1894, the 554-foot *St. Louis* was the first modern American-built ocean liner. With a crew of 400, she was designed to carry 1,340 passengers, 800 of them in steerage. During twenty years of service she brought thousands of European immigrants to these shores, including a five-year-old English boy we know today as Bob Hope. (Negative B381, © Mystic Seaport, Rosenfeld Collection, Mystic, Connecticut)

OFFICERS OF MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM, INC.
William E. Cook, *Chairman of the Board;* J. Revell Carr, *President*; Alexandra T. Thorne, *Vice Chairman*; William C. Ridgway III, *Vice Chairman*; W. Frank Bohlen, *Vice Chairman*; Richard R. Vietor, *Treasurer*; Joseph C. Hoopes, Jr., *Secretary*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
James D. Bishop, Mark Blodgett, John R. Bockstoce, W. Frank Bohlen, Maynard E. Bray, J. Revell Carr, Percy Chubb III, Phyllis D. Collins, William E. Cook, Rose C. Dana, James F. English, Jr., A. Searle Field II, William D. Forster, L. Scott Frantz, John A. Gambling, Edith P. Gengras, James L. Giblin, Anthony P. Halsey, Joseph C. Hoopes, Jr., James B. Hurlock, Robert C. Kyle, Timothea S. Larr, Charles Mallory, Michael C. McMenemy, William W. Miner, Alfred T. Ogden II, Richard W. Pendleton, Jr., William Pinkney, Russell S. Reynolds, Jr., William C. Ridgway III, John E. Riegel, Charles A. Robertson, Rudolph J. Schaefer III, Michael B. Stubbs, Wade F.B. Thompson, Alexandra T. Thorne, Richard R. Vietor, Jonathan A. Wilson

CHAIRMEN EMERITI
Clifford D. Mallory, Jr., Alfred Ogden, Rudolph J. Schaefer III, Robert G. Stone, Jr.

TRUSTEES EMERITI
Thomas R. Adams, William L. Ames, Joseph H. Brustolon, Powell M. Cabot, Walter L. Cronkite, Briggs S. Cunningham, Robert A. Farrall, Lyttleton B.P. Gould, Jr., Daniel S. Gregory, James Harvie, Charles J. Irwin, David W.P. Jewitt, Waldo C.M. Johnston, Stanley Livingston, Jr., C.S. Lovelace, James M. Lyon, Clifford D. Mallory, Jr., William H. Moore, William L. Musser, Jr., Robert L. Newell, Alfred Ogden, Harris B. Parsons, Hugh M. Pierce, Gaddis Smith, Frank V. Snyder, Olin J. Stephens II, Robert G. Stone, Jr., Oscar S. Straus II, Edwin Thorne, Katharine L. Weymouth, William B. White

HONORARY TRUSTEE
Gov. John Rowland

© 1999 by Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc.

The Log of Mystic Seaport (ISSN 0024-5828) is published quarterly by Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 75 Greenmanville Avenue, P.O. Box 6000, Mystic, CT 06355-0990. Subscriptions are by membership only, beginning at $35.00.

Submissions of previously unpublished articles and illustrations concerning the American maritime experience are welcome. Editorial guidelines, and information on the annual Gerald E. Morris Prize Article Contest, are available from the Editor. *The Log of Mystic Seaport* is abstracted in *American History and Life* and *Historical Abstracts*.

Mystic Seaport Salutes Institutional Sponsor Mystic Color Lab

Sightings

Today, a dynamic museum must focus on educational programs, research resources, interpretive exhibitions, and the visitor experience. With this wide range of activities, it is easy to imagine that museum collections are less important than they once were. However, a close examination reveals that all of these programs and projects draw heavily on the collections. For dynamic Mystic Seaport, the collections remain at the core of the institution, and this issue of *The Log* illustrates this in a number of ways.

In a museum, there are three fundamental considerations with regard to the collections, whether they be books, manuscripts, objects, ships plans, images, or works of art. They are acquisition, care, and access.

Acquisition is the collection-building mission of a museum, and in Mystic Seaport's case we have been able to acquire virtually millions of items for the collections during the 70 years since our founding. Our founders envisioned a museum that would convey the broad story of America and the Sea, and the collections, particularly in the Library, enable us to do this. As we broaden our telling of the story in geographical range and through history to the present, additional acquisition is essential.

There are traditionally two sources of acquisition: donation and museum purchase. Mystic Seaport benefits greatly from the fact that many people think of this museum as the place to contribute their maritime collections. The great majority of the items we have acquired have been donated by generous individuals. It is critical, however, that the Museum be able to purchase items needed to enhance specific areas of its collection. In order to strengthen this aspect of our work, we have established and would welcome participation in a Friends of the Collection group. These friends, with particular interest in maritime collecting, can work with our curators, have special access to the collections, and help build this central aspect of our museum.

Once acquired, we begin the costly process of perpetual care of the items. This includes accessioning and cataloging, which is now inexorably linked to the electronic collections access effort described by Jennifer Eifrig in this issue. Another key element is to provide appropriate collections-care facilities for those aspects of the collections that are not on exhibition. The reserve collections are available for research, loans to other institutions, traveling exhibitions, and future Mystic Seaport exhibits. In order to provide state-of-the-art facilities for these collections, we are about to begin the last phase of the creation of our Maritime Research Center. This 40,000-square-foot facility will ensure that the proper conditions are available for the care of our treasured collections, which are now housed in various locations. Within this space, curatorial staff members, conservators, and researchers can work with the thousands of paintings and prints, ship models, navigational instruments, ship carvings and scrimshaw items, plus the more than 100,000 sheets of ships plans, one million photographic images, and one million feet of historic film footage. This incredible resource will benefit greatly from the new Maritime Research Center.

Of course, such a resource is only usable if it is accessible. For decades, access was only possible when objects were on exhibition, or by special request, which meant contacting the appropriate museum office where information was retrieved from databases, often in paper form. As you will read in this issue, global electronic access is being developed as part of the coordinated collections information access program. This truly innovative effort is an outgrowth of an initiative of a number of creative collections managers. Through their hard work and diligence, numerous obstacles have been overcome and the project is being widely recognized by colleagues as a model for other museums. Not only can it provide broad international access, but, as Mystic Seaport Vice President Chris Cox has suggested, it will be the "nervous system" for the Museum's Maritime Research Center.

For our real visitors, as distinct from our virtual visitors using our "electronic entrance," considerable access will become available during the year 2000 when we open the exhibition America and the Sea as the Museum's millennium project. Filling all three floors of our primary exhibition building, America and the Sea will, in a broad survey, heighten the awareness of the past, present, and future relationship of this country and the maritime world for millions of visitors.

As we strive to serve a broad public through creative exhibitions, programs, and projects, Mystic Seaport remains a museum drawing on its extraordinary collections to fulfill our educational mission. And more than ever it is a mission of participation, through support groups like the Friends of the Collection, and through enhanced individual access to the collections that tell the stories of America and the Sea.

J. Revell Carr
DIRECTOR

The African Squadron

The U.S. Navy and the Slave Trade, 1820-1862

CALVIN LANE

In April 1839, the Portuguese slave ship *Tecora* loaded 500 Africans at Lomboko on Africa's Gallinas River, slipped past British Royal Navy ships blockading the slave trade, and two months later disembarked its cargo of human misery at Havana, Cuba, 200 of the Africans having died en route. Among those captured, 49 Mende tribesmen and four children were then clandestinely shipped on the schooner *Amistad* to be transported east to Puerto Príncipe, where they would be put to work on sugar plantations. The rest is history, accurately recorded in Howard Jones's book *Mutiny on the Amistad* and less accurately, if powerfully, in Stephen Spielberg's film *Amistad*.



Despite international treaties prohibiting the slave trade, and in the face of patrols by the British, French, and U.S. navies, slaving remained profitable on the African coast through the middle of the nineteenth century. If they used the 1848 text book, Mitchell's School Geography, *American children saw this engraving of slaves being led to a rakish slaving schooner and learned that, in West Africa, "the slave-trade has been carried on by Europeans from this region to a greater extent than from any other part of Africa; and, notwithstanding the exertions made to suppress it, it still continues." (Courtesy Andrew German)*

By 1820, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain, and the United States had all outlawed the international slave trade. Why, then, did the trade persist until the middle of the nineteenth century? In part, at least, the answer can be attributed to the largely futile effort of the U.S. Navy from 1820 to 1862 to interdict slave traffic on the transatlantic "Middle Passage," and to forces within and without the federal government that hobbled the blockade.

Slavery and the slave trade had been an issue that concerned the framers of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, but they dealt with it by postponing restrictions on the trade. At the end of the 20-year interval specified in the Constitution, Congress passed the Slave Importation Act of 1807, which declared further importation of slaves into the United States to be illegal.

An even more stringent act passed by the British Parliament in the same year declared the slave trade illegal, despite the fact that between 1801 and 1807 more than 200,000 slaves had been carried by the highly profitable British slaving business. Passage of the act resulted from the long and untiring efforts of Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, and from the support of the Prime Minister, Lord Grenville, who stated that the trade was "contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound principle."[1]

From the start, the Congressional act proved unenforceable, for President Thomas Jefferson's opposition to naval shipbuilding denied the U.S. government any power to halt the slave trade. At the same time, rising cotton production in the South, and a huge increase in production of, and demand for, Cuban sugar and Brazilian coffee expanded the market for slave labor.

Nor were the U.S. and Great Britain ready to cooperate against the slave trade. The perennially shorthanded British Royal Navy's custom of indiscriminately seizing British or American sailors from U.S. merchant ships and impressing them into naval service defied the sovereignty of U.S. vessels at sea. Then, in the midst of the

Napoleonic Wars, Britain's 1806 Orders in Council barring neutral trade with France and her allies, except by payment of a tax at British ports, threatened U.S. maritime free trade. These matters came to a head in June 1807, when HMS *Leopard* removed several crew members from the USS *Chesapeake* after battering it into submission off the Virginia Capes. President Jefferson retaliated, or so he thought, with the Embargo Act of December 1807, forbidding U.S. ships to trade with any foreign nation. In practice, the yearlong ban only succeeded in crippling the nation's shipping trade, especially in New England.[2]

The *Chesapeake* affair precipitated a clamor for war with Britain, and the conflict began in 1812. Although President James Madison's rallying cry of "Free Trade and Rights of Sailors" seemed to favor the interests of coastal merchants, the war appealed more to frontier settlers looking covetously at fertile land in Ontario, and to Southern warhawks such as John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, who wanted to take over Florida from Spain, England's ally. Indeed, the conflict was bitterly opposed by the New England states, whose nearly devastated economy brought the region to the brink of secession by the time the war concluded at the end of 1814.

With this background, it was difficult for the United States to accept any form of search or seizure by British forces, even in the effort to halt the slave trade. Following the War of 1812, it was generally believed throughout the United States that British continuance of the right of search thinly disguised obstruction of legitimate trade with Africa and stood in the way of cooperation between United States and British African squadrons from 1820 to 1862.

As early as 1811, Britain sent warships to patrol the African coast to demonstrate its serious intent to live up to the 1807 Parliamentary act. Although sugar merchants, owners of cotton mills, Liverpool slavers, and politicians resisted the campaign to abolish the slave trade to the West Indies, the British public was solidly united in support of the act.[3]

In 1815 Britain used hard cash to persuade a reluctant Portugal to abolish the slave trade north of the equator, to establish with Britain a mixed commission at Sierra Leone to decide on the fate of captured or suspected slavers, and to permit the right of search north of the equator. In 1817, Britain paid Spain to agree to similar terms.

However, because neither treaty specified what boarding officers were to look for in searching a vessel suspected of being a slaver, British cruisers could not seize empty Portuguese or Spanish ships. When chased by a Royal Navy ship, captains of loaded Spanish or Portuguese slavers sometimes threw their human cargo overboard to avoid capture. Finally, in 1835, this horror was eliminated by the inclusion of an equipment clause to specify grounds for search. A vessel might be seized if it contained hatches with open gratings, spare planks, shackles, water casks in great number, boilers for cooking, and large quantities of rice and other food. Portugal stubbornly refused to agree to the terms until forced to do so in 1842. France agreed to the right of search without an equipment clause between 1833 and 1841, but terminated the agreement because of suspicion over Great Britain's motives.[4] Similar instructions were not issued to the U.S. Navy until 1849.

These treaties had an immediate effect on the nature of the trade. Heretofore, slavers might pick up captured Africans assembled gradually in barracoons at numerous points along a 3,000-mile stretch of the west coast of Africa from Gorée (Dakar) in the north to Benguela in the south. Now the slavers were forced to act more speedily—get in, load, and get out. According to Lieutenant Forbes of HMS *Bonetta*, "two hours suffice to place four hundred human beings on board." The changed situation also altered the blockading strategy of British Royal Navy ships, for officers preferred to earn the bounty for liberating slaves on board rather than to take an empty ship before it loaded.[5]

In 1819, with Congressional passage of the Slave Trade Act, President James Monroe was directed to use warships to suppress the trade and to establish Liberia as a haven for freed slaves next to Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa. The next year Congress passed an amendment declaring slave trading to be piracy punishable by death. The act was weakened by Senator James DeWolfe, a former slave trader from Rhode Island, who sponsored a measure forbidding the right of search. Even though this amendment was tainted by the DeWolfe family's unsavory reputation, the legacy of the War of 1812 meant that the U.S. could not accept an agreement containing the right of search by a foreign power. The weakness of the American movement to abolish slavery, and opposition of most Southern Congressmen to any legislation restricting slavery, also prevented the passage of such a measure. When asked by the British Foreign Minister in 1822 if he could think of anything more atrocious than the slave trade, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams retorted: "Yes. Admitting the right of search by foreign officers of our vessels upon the seas in time of peace; for that would be making slaves of ourselves."[6]

President Monroe, minister to England when the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair occurred, understood the role the U.S. Navy might play in defending commerce and in

limiting the slave trade. When the act became law, he ordered the navy "to seize all vessels navigated under our flag engaged in that trade."[7]

To that end, five navy vessels headed for Africa between January 1820 and August 1821, beginning with the frigate *Cyane*. She was followed by the brig *Hornet*, frigate *John Adams*, and schooners *Alligator* and *Shark*, both fast 200-ton Baltimore clipper types, 86 feet long, mounting 12 guns, with crews of 70, which were well suited for running down slave ships.

Second in command of the *Cyane* was 24-year-old Lieutenant Matthew C. Perry, who would become commander of the African Squadron in 1843. Perry's family had been associated with the founders of the American Colonization Society, a movement established in 1816 to resettle freed slaves in Africa. Perry requested duty on the *Cyane*, whose primary mission was to escort the brig *Elizabeth*, which was carrying the first group of settlers to the area of Liberia. The *Cyane* continued on to intercept slavers, on 10 April 1820 bagging nine vessels suspected of slaving. At least six were from Baltimore, Charleston, and New York, but they had changed both names and colors to Spanish at sea. Writing to the secretary of the navy, the *Cyane*'s captain bitterly noted that, although the vessels were evidently owned by Americans, they were so completely covered by Spanish documentation that is was impossible to condemn them. He also estimated that "There are probably no less than three hundred vessels engaged in the slave trade."[8]

In September 1820 the *John Adams* and *Hornet* joined the *Cyane* and took four more slavers. The G.W. Blunt White Library at Mystic Seaport contains the manuscript journal of J.S. Cummings, who served on the *Adams*. The account is a dry, day-to-day record of patrol duty on the coast near Sierra Leone, but it clearly suggests the terrible conditions that hampered the squadron's activity. The *Cyane* parted company with the *Adams* on 19 October to return to the U.S. On 22 October the *Adams* was off the Pongas River, in present-day Guinea, where slavers loaded in the many hidden creeks and mangrove islands that offered sanctuary from the British cruisers. The *Adams* hoisted out the barge, and the ship's officers and midshipmen "left the ship in company with Capt. Nash of HBM brig *Snapper* in the boat for Rio Pongo," an instance of genuine cooperation between British and American warships. The next day, with the temperature hovering at 120 degrees on deck and 92 degrees below deck, "the American schooner *Exchange* anchored near us, a prize. . . . She is a slave trader from Baltimore via Havannah." The expedition returned from upriver the following day. "They left their schooners nearly ready for taking on slaves but all under Spanish colors." This fruitless chase foiled by flags of convenience had grim consequences for the crew of the *John Adams* anchored just off the mosquito-ridden shore. In his entry for 2 November, Cummings tersely recorded "10 down with a fever." By the middle of November, three of the crew had been buried at sea. On 21 November the ship sailed for duty in the Caribbean, having been on station for only three months.[9]

When he left the *Cyane*, Lieutenant Perry requested another tour of duty off Africa, mainly because of his interest in the American Colonization Society, and was appointed commander of the schooner *Shark* in July 1821. He left the United States with orders to convey the U.S. commissioner to Liberia. After landing the commissioner near the site of the Liberian capital of Monrovia, a healthy location suggested earlier by Perry when aboard the *Cyane*, he chased what proved to be a French slaver laden with 133 slaves who resembled, in the words of Midshipman William F. Lynch, "so many Egyptian mummies half-awakened into life." However, because she was French, Perry had to let the vessel proceed despite the entreaty of his officers to pay him for any court damages he might "sustain for illegal capture."[10] In November 1821, the *Shark* sailed for duty in the West Indies. This first limited effort by the U.S. Navy to stop the slave trade had yielded meager results: from May 1818 to November 1821 the squadron had taken 11 suspected slave ships and liberated 573 Africans.

For a brief period, from 1820 to 1824, an opportunity developed for closer cooperation between British and U.S. warships. In 1821 a committee of the House of Representatives reported that "a mutual right of search appears to be indispensable to the great object of abolition."[11] This action was not surprising, for the Missouri Compromise of 1821, which drew a firm line between slave and free states, resulted from slowly increasing Northern resistance to the spread of slavery. John Quincy Adams finally modified his views on the right of search, but the resultant Anglo-American treaty became so watered down by U.S. Senate amendments that the British would not agree to it and the opportunity passed.

To make matters worse, France and Spain protested so strongly over U.S. seizure of French and Spanish vessels suspected of being slavers that Adams had to repudiate "any intention to search French vessels in peacetime."[12] Withdrawn from the African coast in 1824, probably because of these interrelated conditions, the U.S. Navy did not again appear in force off Africa until 1843.

What followed in the next two

decades was readily predictable. Because of the illegality of the trade, slavers went to great lengths to hide the true ownership of their vessels. American-built ships from Portland, Maine, to Savannah, Georgia, operated in the trade and flew the American flag, knowing that for the most part such display would prevent British warships from stopping them. The determination of a vessel's identity often involved highly elaborate efforts at disguise. If a U.S. Navy vessel chased what seemed to be a slaver its ostensible "captain" would hoist the Spanish flag, substitute Spanish registration papers, and might even carry a Spanish crew hidden below decks. This stratagem would be exactly reversed if apprehended by a British man of war.

In the 1830s, a brisk trade was carried on between Baltimore and Havana in the sale of vessels built along the lines of the speedy and highly maneuverable Chesapeake Bay model "Baltimore clippers" used as privateers during the war of 1812. The clippers were publicly sold to Spanish or Portuguese slavers in Cuba who were willing to pay high prices for the rakish craft. It was almost impossible to convict Americans for selling the vessels because papers could never be found that the vessels were intended to be employed in the slave business.[13]

Nicholas Trist of Virginia, the American consul in Havana in the 1830s, made things easier for the fraudulent sale of American vessels by authenticating "the various papers required for secretly selling an American vessel and clearing it out on a slaving voyage in American guise." He claimed to be carrying out his consular duties, but after an investigation by the U.S. government he was dismissed from his post in 1841. Yet, under these conditions the trade flourished, with thousands of Africans sold into bondage each year to Brazil and Cuba, and with an estimated 1,000 per year smuggled into the United States during the 54 years from 1807 to the Civil War.[14]



Although their search of a suspected slaver might turn up a hold full of Africans packed like this, naval officers were empowered to seize an empty vessel if it were outfitted with large cooking pots, had more than the necessary food, water, and shackles on board, carried lumber likely to be used to build half-deck platforms for slaves in the hold, or had suspicious registration documents and logbook entries. If slaves were liberated by a Royal Navy vessel they were sent to Sierra Leone; slaves freed by a U.S. Navy vessel went to Liberia. (Illustrated London News, *20 June 1857*)

Commercial ties between legitimate maritime trade and the slave trade further complicated the problem. American merchant ships carried rum, tobacco, flour, and cloth to trade along the bulge of Africa for palm oil, gum copal, ivory, gold dust, and peanuts. Enoch Ware, trading agent aboard the Salem brig *Northumberland*, gloated over his arriving on the coast ahead of his competitors:

Now if no envious competitor presents himself the prospect could not be well better–that is if my Sierra Leone tobacco will suit for the slave trade. No! What am I to know for what purpose it is to be sold? I sell for produce or money. The use of it afterwards certainly am not accountable for. . . . scarcely a hundred pounds of Tobacco or Powder that is sold but what sooner or later is used for purchasing slaves though it may go through half a dozen hands first."[15]

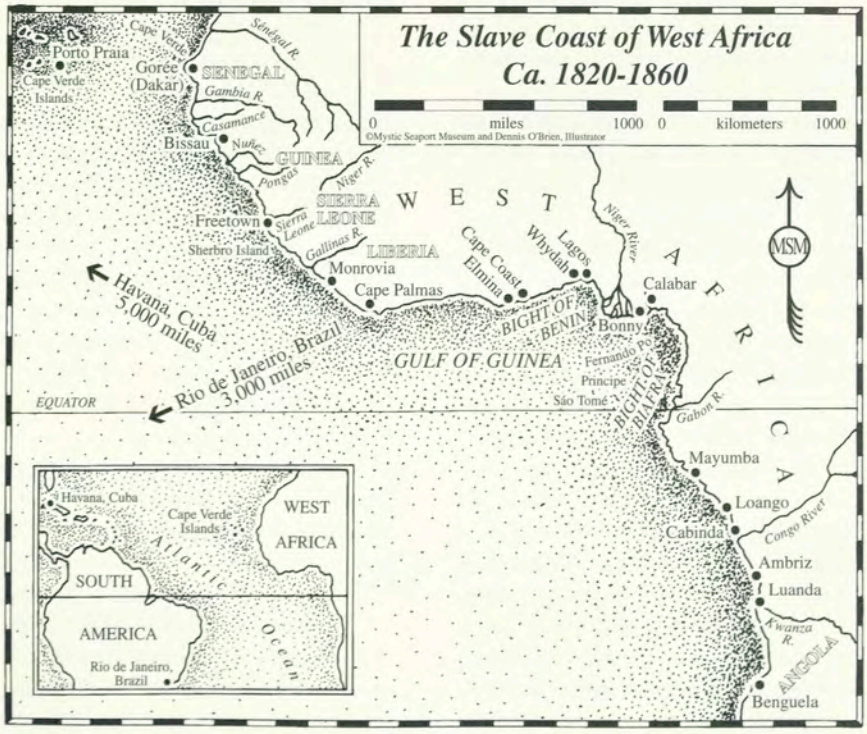
Britain was not exactly guiltless in halting the slave trade either, for on occasion her navy protected English merchant ships (called auxiliaries) carrying goods useful in the trade. Even more reprehensible was the practice, when slavery became illegal throughout the British Empire in 1833, of forcibly loading liberated Africans from slave ships onto British ships as "emigrant laborers" and transporting them to sugar plantations in the West Indies. Horatio Bridge, purser aboard the USS *Saratoga* in the 1840s, wrote that "English philanthropy cuts a very suspicious figure" in using released slaves as pawns in the struggle for economic dominance in the Indies. In opposing this view Lieutenant Forbes of HMS *Bonetta* held that emigration was voluntary, and that one of the emigrant ships featured a surgeon and a brass band. But he also

noted that a salaried agent received "a guinea a head for each emigrant!"[16]

Nevertheless, the Royal Navy increased its seizure of vessels believed to be operating in the slave trade and in the absence of the U.S. Navy stepped up its boarding of American merchant ships under the pretense of "right of visit," a watered-down version of "right of search" suggested by Lord Palmerston, the abrasive British foreign minister.

The American public did not make this nice semantic distinction, and was also angered by disputes with Great Britain over the boundaries between the U.S. and Canada in Maine and the Oregon Territory. The possibility of war appeared likely, and was not lessened when the British armed cruiser *Buzzard* sailed into New York Harbor in June 1839. (James Covey, a liberated slave who was soon to act as interpreter for the Mende captives during the *Amistad* trial in New Haven, was a crew member.) The *Buzzard* had crossed the Atlantic from Africa to escort, under guard, the American brig *Eagle* and schooner *Clara*, both suspected slavers. The British had little alternative, for there were no U.S. Navy ships patrolling the African coast to whom the vessels might have been surrendered. To further complicate the situation, the U.S. attorney general promptly released the *Eagle* and *Clara* on the grounds they were "Spanish owned."[17]

Tensions still ran high in 1840 when Lieutenant Paine, commander of the 97-foot U.S. Navy schooner *Grampus* was ordered to cruise against slavers off Africa. (In an ironic turn, the *Grampus* had been sent to New Haven in January of 1840 in an abortive plan of the Van Buren administration to spirit away the *Amistad* captives to certain execution or slavery in Cuba.) Paine and Commander Tucker of the Royal Navy agreed to undertake joint cruising and to turn over to each other the ships they seized, whether British or American. This eminently sensible agreement was unfortunately rejected by Congress. The Paine-Tucker arrangement formed the basis of one of the provisions of the 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty, which is remembered today for the friendly accord reached by Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton in settling the United States-Canada boundary dispute.



Article 8 of the treaty called for cooperative cruising between the two countries' African squadrons, each country to supply a squadron of 80 guns, and stipulated that no British ships were to search American shipping. The 80-gun requirement sounded formidable, but it would be ineffective unless the 80 guns were distributed among many patrolling vessels. Rather than a few heavily armed frigates or sloops of war, the duty required fast, shallow-draft ships mounting only one or two guns, for the slavers sacrificed everything to speed and rarely carried armament. But Perry's squadron—the frigate *Macedonian*, sloops-of-war *Saratoga* and *Decatur*, and 10-gun brig *Porpoise*, accompanied by a storeship—was typical of the first 15 years of the African Squadron.[18]

On 30 March 1843, Secretary of the Navy Abel Upshur sent explicit instructions to Perry: "You are charged with the protection of American Commerce. . . and with suppression of the Slave Trade, so far as the same may be carried on by American Citizens or under the American Flag." But, he added, "while the United States sincerely desire the suppression of the slave trade. . . they do not regard the success of their efforts as their paramount interest." He also suggested to President John Tyler that the presence of the African Squadron would help American traders obtain a share of the lucrative palm oil trade monopolized by the British and the French.[19]

As ordered, Perry established his base at Porto Praia on the island of São Tiago in the Cape Verde Islands, 300 miles west of Cape Verde, 1,500 miles from the Gulf of Guinea, and 2,500 miles from mouth of the Congo River. It provided some protection against

rough weather but was fever-ridden in the summer months. Located about 3,000 miles from New York, and frequently visited by whaleships, Porto Praia had an American consul, and supplies could be landed there without payment of custom duties. Perry would have preferred floating storehouses, but a miserly Congress never voted the funds to implement his request.

Cruising under sail was difficult. The winds were usually light and variable, blowing from west to southwest along the Guinea Coast. This factor, plus a current running from west to east as far as the Congo River, made Africa a lee shore and required a difficult beat back to Porto Praia. If Perry's ships were to keep to the schedule he set for them, they had to keep well out to sea on the return voyage, making it unlikely that they would cross the path of a slaver on the vast reaches of the Atlantic.[20]

As directed by Upshur, Perry energetically protected American commerce. In punishment for the murder of the crew of the American trading schooner *Mary Carver* by African natives, he burned several villages and killed the ringleaders. He also used the squadron to protect the Liberian settlement against hostile African neighbors.

With these duties, Perry's ships engaged in limited surveillance of the slave trade. During the two years he commanded the African Squadron only one suspected slaver was taken: the brigantine *Uncas* captured by the USS *Porpoise*, with no slaves aboard. Prior to the *Mary Carver* incident Perry wrote to Upshur on 5 September 1843, " I cannot hear of any American vessels being engaged in the slave trade nor do I believe that there has been one so engaged in years." Exasperated British captains sent him documented correspondence on slavers flying the American flag taken to



Matthew Calbraith Perry (1794-1858) of Rhode Island, who joined the U.S. Navy in 1809, is best known for leading the naval expedition that established relations with Japan in 1854. However, earlier in his naval career he spent several years on the west coast of Africa, as a lieutenant in the Cyane *and* Shark, *1820-21, and as first commander of the African Squadron, 1843-44. Although he was active in protecting American commerce with Africa and promoting the welfare of the American Colonization Society settlements in Liberia, Perry was not very successful at intercepting slave traders. This cast of a medal commemorating Perry, designed by F.N. Mitchell, was donated to Mystic Seaport by Perry's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Henry G. Bartol. (Mystic Seaport, 50.18)*

date, but Perry would have none of it. Lieutenant Bridge claimed that, because the death penalty specified by U.S. law was such a threat, all slavers would be careful to fly the flags of Portugal, Spain, or Brazil to escape capture, and that they would take pains to carry a double set of registration papers. He defended Perry as "a gentleman of the highest professional character, persevering, sagacious, and determined."[21]

J.Y. Mason, Upshur's successor, blandly papered over Perry's inactivity in his annual report to the president on 25 November 1844: "The operations of the squadron have, it is believed, exercised a favorable influence in preventing the slave trade. . . . [because of] the presence of our own naval forces, with authority to visit all vessels under the American flag, it is not probable that our citizens will engage in this disgraceful and perilous traffic, or our flag be used by others to any great extent."[22]

The African Squadron appeared to be an opportunity to end the horrors of the slave trade, but from its inception under Commodore Matthew Perry to its withdrawal in 1862, the treaty objective was compromised by successive secretaries of the navy who emphasized the prevention of "all violations of the rights and laws of fair trade"

rather than the prevention of slaving. Of the nine secretaries of the navy from 1842 to 1861, seven were Southerners, tacitly sympathetic to slavery; Connecticut-born Isaac Toucey was proslavery; and only George Bancroft was antislavery. In 1851 Secretary William Graham would even suggest that the squadron could be disbanded, leaving the Brazil Squadron and the Home Squadron to intercept slavers on the west side of the Atlantic.[23]

As compared with the British efforts on the African coast, the effectiveness of the U.S. Navy's African Squadron was limited. During its service, the African Squadron usually numbered between three and five vessels. When the squadron included the USS *Constitution*, or the former British frigates *Macedonian* and *Cyane*, which had been captured by the U.S. during the War of 1812, the Royal Navy could not help but notice the allusions to American naval success during that war. But the aging, poorly maintained vessels spent most of their time in the long passage to and from the slaving areas and were on station along the 3,000 miles of coast only a few weeks of the year. Commander W.F. Lynch warned Secretary Dobbin in 1853 that the U.S. would be "perhaps justly accused, of observing the letter and neglecting the spirit" of the treaty if small, fast steamships did not replace the sailing vessels in the African Squadron. However, the British used steamships in their patrolling ten years before the U.S. finally sent the steam sloop-of-war *San Jacinto* and the steam patrol craft *Sumpter* and *Mystic* to the African Squadron in 1859.[24]

Finally, in 1849 the secretary of the navy did issue explicit orders for the guidance of officers boarding suspected slave ships flying the American flag. They were to be on the lookout for the "presence of more Water Casks, Handcuffs and other articles than the crew required," for anyone throwing papers overboard, and for double sets of logbooks or vessel registration papers. They were to inspect consular certificates carefully, for it was known that consular seals were sometimes forged by embossing the document with the back of a half dollar. The boarding officer "must not be too harsh on suspicion of being a slaver but if the captain acts in an insolent manner to refuse compliance" he was to be put on board the cruiser. Acknowledging that foreign slavers used the American flag as a shield against British cruisers, Secretary Upshur warned that it should not be imagined that "the mere hoisting of [the American] flag shall give immunity to those who have no right to use it."[25]

Not all Southerners winked at the slave trade. In a curious anomaly, a few slaveholders—notably Henry A. Wise, U.S. minister to Brazil—were adamantly opposed to the trade. Wise wrote to the federal government on 18 February 1845, protesting the sale of American vessels to Portuguese slavers at Rio de Janeiro: "I beseech—I implore the President of the United States to take a stand on this subject. You have no conception of the bold effrontery and the flagrant outrages of the African slave trade. . . . every patriot in our land would blush for our country, did he know and see, as I do, how our own citizens sail and sell our flag to the uses and abuses of that accursed traffic."[26] On his own initiative, Wise had seized a ship, correctly surmising that it carried goods for use in the slave trade. The only reward for his bold action was to be reprimanded by the U.S. government.

From 1840 to 1849, Britain gradually closed off the slave trade at embarkation points. Royal Navy officers burned several barracoons, including those up the Gallinas River from which the *Amistad* captives had been shipped. They then negotiated subsidized treaties with native chiefs to force them out of the slave trade. This resulted in a southward shift of the trade from the bulge of Africa, north of the Niger River Delta, to the area of the Congo River mouth, 900 miles south of the Niger.[27]

Unhappily for U.S. naval officers, an incident in 1846 totally dampened their zeal for blockading. The USS *Boxer* seized the *Malaga*, laden with slaving goods under charter to a Brazilian slave trader, and sent it back to the United States. There, a New England judge ruled that it was no crime to sell supplies to slave traders and released the ship, which then went out on a genuine slaving voyage. Subsequently, the vessel's owners had the gall to sue the captain of the *Boxer* for more than $10,000 in damages. The laggard U.S. Navy Department finally got around to defending the *Boxer*'s captain, but no more ships were seized for three years until 1849, when a Pennsylvania judge overturned the earlier decision and rebuked the owners of the *Malaga*.[28]

In the early 1850s Lieutenant Andrew Hull Foote of Connecticut spent several years with the African Squadron. His book, *Africa and the American Flag*, which circulated widely in 1854, offered practical suggestions for improving the blockade and appealed to the humanitarian instincts of the American public. Foote called for enforcing the threat of execution for slaving, claiming it was contrary to "justice that the perpetrators of such crimes have been dismissed with impunity when captured." He also suggested that storeships for resupply would provide greater flexibility of operation, that more ships be stationed near the Congo, and that the sale of American vessels in Africa be banned. Foote vigorously affirmed "Every person interested in upholding the rights of humanity... will sympathize with the capture and deliverance of African slaves." Nevertheless, he like most officials



In his journal, Henry Eason sketched scenes from his experience with the U.S. Navy's African Squadron, 1858-60. This is St. Paul de Loando (now Loango), a fortified Portuguese settlement north of the Congo River. The U.S. Navy belatedly relocated the Squadron's supply base from the Cape Verde Islands to St. Paul de Loando in 1859, saving thousands of miles of travel between the patrol grounds and the resupply station. (Log 902, G.W.Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)

and naval officers from the president on down adhered to the decades old prejudice that "it is contrary to national honor and national interests that the right of search should be entrusted to the hands of any foreign authority."[29]

Foote's well-intended call for more efficient blockading went largely unheeded, except for the establishment of supply ships near the equator. Beyond that, the navy's efforts were hamstrung by the increasing polarization in the U.S. over slavery. In reaction to Northern abolitionist pressure, and after the Compromise of 1850 extended the slave territory in the west (while admitting California as a free state) and strengthened the fugitive slave laws, Southern Congressmen in 1854 tried to repeal the slave-trading prohibition of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. Prominent Southern planters made a similar call at a commercial convention at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1859. On the eve of the Civil War, 4,500,000 bales of cotton were produced in the South, attended by a sharp demand for more slaves needed to work the gang system of cotton growing. Efforts to extend slave-holding into Kansas, and the Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* Decision seemed to extend the power of slaveholders and increase tension over slavery in the nation.[30]

So it was not surprising that, in 1859, Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey sent instructions to William Inman, the new commander of the African Squadron, that protection of American commerce be given top priority, with the chasing of slavers of lesser importance. Inman construed Toucey's instructions as permission to ignore the search for slavers, and he proceeded on a leisurely cruise aboard the USS *Constellation* to Madeira, off North Africa. A few months later he received an urgent message from Toucey, probably at the instigation of President James Buchanan, directing him to "renew his exertions," a code term for "get cracking!" Indeed, the African Squadron had now been expanded to include six sailing sloops of war plus, at last, the powerful steam sloop-of-war *San Jacinto* and two small, fast, lightly armed steamers, the *Sumpter* and *Mystic*, which had originally been chartered by the navy for service off Paraguay. Toucey also ordered that the squadron's supply base be moved to St. Paul de Loando (Loango), which was close to the center of slaving activity at the Congo River.[31]

Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library contains an informal but highly valuable record of the final years of the African Squadron in the journal kept by Henry Eason, an enlisted man aboard the USS *Marion*.[32] This 20-year-old, 16-gun sloop of war with a crew of 150, commanded by Thomas Brent, served in Inman's squadron from 1858 to 1860. Eason had had a widely varied seafaring life, for he mentioned having sailed on the Great Lakes, rounded Cape Horn, and spent "four years in a hot climate" during six years at sea. In his journal Eason recorded shrewd insights into the problems and contradictions of blockading operations in the U. S. Navy and vivid pictures of life under sail in the 1850s.

On being ordered to Africa, the *Marion* left Norfolk, Virginia, on 6 April 1858 for Porto Praia. On 8 May the *Marion* left Porto Praia, stopping at Monrovia, Liberia, on 20 May to hire Krewmen. These members of a coastal tribe were skilled watermen who handled large canoes through the heavy surf along the harborless shores of

equatorial West Africa. They hired out to both U.S. Navy ships and slavers alike. "They do all the work in boats, the weather being too hot for white men," wrote Eason. Their names—"Tom Fryingpan, Jack Ropeyarn, Ben Bolt, Harry Bluff, Jack Two glass, Jack Half Dollar, Tom Stargazer"—suggest a condescending distancing of white mariners from the Krewmen, but the natives were proud of these names.[33]

After landing missionaries at Cape Palmas, the *Marion* arrived in the Bight of Benin, where coastal marshes harbored swarms of malarial mosquitoes. There she encountered the Royal Navy "steamer *Sharpshooter*. . . cruising for the same purpose as ourselves . . . . In the afternoon we saw another Steamer, but did not speak her. These waters are full of English steam gunboats, while we have only five vessells on the station. . . . The English having so many vessells here, capture 3 slavers to our 1. . . they have also the advantage over us, in being Steamers, while all ours are sailing vessells."

A few days later, the *Marion* again met the *Sharpshooter,* which had been chasing the schooner *Blue Lightning* of Baltimore, "but she always gave them the slip." The schooner's name and rig suggest that it may have been a Baltimore clipper, perhaps similar to the *Amistad* in design.

Other notorious slaving areas visited by the *Marion* on her first cruise included Whydah (Ouidah) and the Lagos River north of the Niger River Delta, and Loango, Cabinda, and the Congo River to the south. After 14 weeks on the African coast she made the four-week passage back to the Cape Verde Islands, where she arrived on 1 October.

The following, a detailed account of capturing the suspected slaver *Brothers* of Charleston, South Carolina, off Mayumba on 8 September 1858, is typical of Eason's power of observation:



On 8 September 1858, the sloop-of-war Marion *captured the suspected slaving brig* Brothers *of Charleston, South Carolina, as depicted by Henry Eason. The* Marion*'s crew was elated at the prospects of sharing prize money for the capture, but like all too many American-flag slavers, the* Brothers *was released by a U.S. court judge on the grounds of insufficient evidence. (Log 902, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)*

On Wednesday the 8th at about 10 o'clock in the forenoon, our lookout man reported a sail on the starboard bow. Twas a little cloudy & she was heading in for the land; we made her out to be a Brigantine. When she saw us, she changed her course, hauled up on a wind & tried to cross our bow. Making all sail, we chased him, under no colours; she tried hard to give us the slip, but at 11 o'clock we came up with her but she, showing no colours, we fired a shot a cross her bows, & in a twinkling of an eye, the Stars and Stripes were floating at her peak, no colours have ever been hoisted faster than these were. She had evidently been waiting for us to hoist our Ensign first, so that she might hoist false ones & thus blindfold us. She thought us to be an Englishman & hence her hoisting the American flag, as if we had been what she expected, we could not have searched her. We sent a boat aboard her with Lieut. Stone & then hoisted our colours, quickly showing her the mistake she had made, in supposing us to be an Englishman. Lieut. Stone, shortly returned from her, bringing with him a box of prime Havana Segars, as a present to our Captain, which present, that gentleman refused but immediately boarded her himself, taking with him, our Carpenter & Lieut. Stone. She was lying close to us & we could see everything that took place aboard of her. I saw a friend of mine, named Barnard Ford, with an axe in his hand, he had just broken open a large box, which was found to contain slave boilers for cooking rice in for the slaves. "This is the thing we want" he cried, & our old Captain's eyes looked as big as a thirty two pound shot. Barney then dropped the axe, I went to the wheel, looking as big as a Commodore on a ten years furlough. Her name was the Brothers of Charleston, she was two months from Havana, her skipper said she had a general cargo. She had 100 barrels of bread, 50 barrels of rice, 40 water casks, 2 coppers [large pots] for cooking, 15 sponges, 40 water pails, 650 wooden spoons, lumber for slave deck, medicines, plenty of good liquor & preserved meats, also 527 Spanish Doubloons. Her crew were 1 American, 2 Spaniards, 1 Portuguese & a sick man in the

Forecastle, we took the money aboard our ship, her Captain looking hard at us, when he saw us handling his gold. The day following we sent 1 Lieutenant, 1 Midshipman, 6 seamen, & 3 Marines, who were to take her to the U. S. as a prize. In the evening she got under weigh, we doing the same, she took the lead about three miles, but we came up to her, & gave her three cheers, which they returned. All on board of her looked happy excepting her own crew, who were "prisoners," but such are the fortunes of war.

Like all too many vessels seized by the African Squadron on suspicion of slaving, the *Brothers* was returned to her owners. Against all the incriminating evidence Eason described, Judge Magrath of Charleston dismissed the libel on the grounds that there was nothing in the cargo "which of itself leads to a conclusion of a criminal purpose or excludes the fact of such articles having been intended for a lawful purpose."[34]

On the *Marion*'s second cruise, the seizure of the New York bark *Orion* had an even more outrageous consequence than the taking of the *Brothers*. On 17 April 1859 British officers from HMS *Triton* informed the *Marion* that they had detained the *Orion* up the Congo River as a suspected slaver. Captain Brent searched the vessel and found "two sets of slave coppers [cooking pots], a large quantity of medicine & about 15000 feet of lumber," plus firearms and "large quantities of preserved meats." With a prize crew from the *Marion*, the *Orion* was sent to New York for trial. On arrival in June 1859, the vessel was held under bond. However, the bonding procedure allowed the owner to keep his vessel in service until the court acted. The owner promptly sold the *Orion* and she embarked on yet another slaving cruise![35]

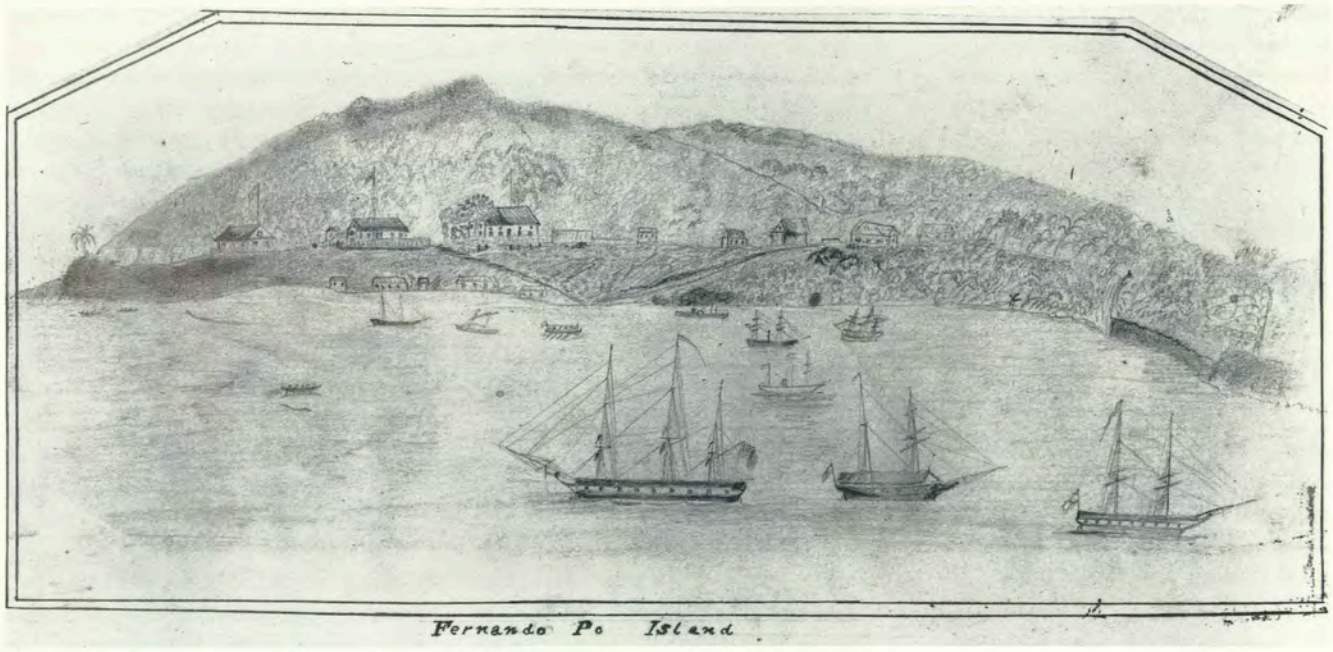
On 29 December 1859, while patrolling off the Congo, the *Marion* received news of the *Orion*'s release. In his journal, Eason bluntly indicted the American judicial system for failing to back the U.S. Navy in halting the slave trade in West Africa:

We heard that our Slavers we sent home had been acquited because the jury could not find substantial evidence to condemn them. The Orion came out on the coast as a trader the second time & the consequence was that the American Commodore detained her six days but could find nothing to condemn her & a short time after the English steamer Pluto captured her with 808 slaves on board & took her to St. Helena. This will make our people at home open their eyes at an american ship capturing slavers & sending them home for triall & get honorably acquited then come & load up with slaves three months after. The Orion had everything that is needed on board of slavers.

The patrolling officers developed an intuitive sense of a vessel's guilt or innocence, but sometimes they could not find enough incriminating evidence to warrant seizure. An example was the case of the Mystic-built bark *Asa Fish*, which the *Marion* encountered off the Congo River.[36] "It falling a calm we sent a boat aboard of her. The Officer in charge of the boat overhauled her papers and then returned again telling our Captain that looked suspicious, being for the Congo river and belonging to the same owners as the *Orion*." Captain Brent himself then examined "her papers and cargo, but

---

The island of Fernando Po (now Bioko), located in the Bight of Biafra 20 miles off the African coast, was claimed by Spain, but the British Royal Navy maintained a coaling and supply station at Port Clarance on the north coast. (Log 902, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)





France established a settlement near the mouth of the Gabon River in 1843 and in 1849 founded Libreville to resettle liberated slaves. When the Marion *called here, Henry Eason remarked sarcastically that the legal French shipment of African "apprentices" to the West Indies looked much like slaving to him. (Log 902, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)*

not finding sufficient evidence to condemn her as a slaver. . . allowed her to proceed on her journey."

Captain Brent's suspicions of the ship were not entirely unfounded. After the trade to Brazil was halted in the mid-1850s, the trade centered on Cuba and ownership of slavers shifted to a cartel of Portuguese and American entrepreneurs in New York. With a decline in maritime trade following the economic Panic of 1857, they were able to acquire many conventional merchant vessels, like the *Erie* or *Orion*. Some New England whaleships, with their large holds, and with tryworks that could be converted to cooking rice, were quietly purchased for the trade as well.[37]

The immense profits made by successful slavers help explain why the trade persisted, despite the risks, right up to the Civil War. The secretary of the navy suggested that the only way to end the trade was for Britain to pressure Spain to live up to its agreement to abolish the trade to Cuba, or—more provocatively—for the U.S. to annex Cuba.[38] Eason documented the profits of the trade while cruising off Loango on 29 March 1859. "There is a large barracoon here, owned by a Frenchman, in which were about 600 young negroes, of both sexes, who were to be sold for slaves, to any vessell who chose to come for them. They can be bought for about $40 per head, in trade & they will fetch from nine to twelve hundred in Cuba."

If enslaved Africans considered themselves fortunate in being freed by a British or French warship hovering off the African coast, their future prospects were nearly as bleak as being sold into slavery. Like Lieutenant Bridge 15 years earlier, Eason condemned the long-standing practice of forcibly loading freed slaves onto warships bound for the West Indies, where they would serve as plantation laborers or as soldiers. "There is a French ship here, taking in 1500 negroes. . . to transport to the West Indies for apprentices," he wrote at Gabon in March 1859. "A nice way of slaving, the French have."

Throughout his journal, Eason interspersed his reflections on the shortcomings of the blockade with vivid sketches of daily life on a man of war. Gunnery practice and sailhandling were regular parts of the routine, and Eason laconically mentioned a shipmate who fell from aloft but landed safely in the hammock nettings on the *Marion*'s rail. Like a whaleship, the *Marion*'s main deck was often "full of pigs, fowls, goats and in fact anything that can be eaten." And apparently the food was no better that that on a whaler: "Our bread was alive with worms and small bugs," complained Eason. "I heard someone say they saw a bag of bread walking up the fore royal back stay but I cannot vouch for its veracity."

Malaria and other fever-inducing diseases were the most dreaded afflictions aboard ships sailing along the coast of equatorial Africa. No one knew that mosquitoes from the coastal swamps transmitted disease, so ships' surgeons could only treat the symptoms. Eason recorded his own plight near the Congo River on 16 March 1860: "This afternoon five of our men were taken sick with the fever. I felt very bad all day and the next morning I went to the Doctor. I had a burning fever every night and sometimes was blind. The Doctor gave me a large quantity of Calomel and some pills."

Under such conditions, the normal two-year assignment to the African Squadron was an ordeal. It is no wonder that, having attempted to enforce the blockade to the best of their ability under trying circumstances, the crew cheered when the *Marion* received orders on 10 August 1860 to leave the African Squadron and sail for Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

As the *Marion* departed, the African Squadron entered its most productive period. On 8 August 1860 the steam sloops-of-war *San Jacinto* and *Mohican* took the ship *Erie* with 897 slaves stowed below deck and the brig *Storm King* with 619. The 1,483 survivors were delivered to Liberia, and the ships and crews were sent to New York for trial. A month later the

Constellation seized the *Cora* with 705 slaves, and the steamer *Mystic* proved her utility by capturing two slavers that year. Commodore Inman reported to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles in 1861 that he had seized eleven ships and freed 2,793 slaves, "greater in number and effect, than by the whole of the Squadrons that have preceded me." Captain Gordon of the *Erie* would be hung in 1862, the only American citizen to be executed under provisions of the 1820 Piracy Act.[39]

Despite Inman's belatedly valiant effort, soon after the Civil War started the U.S. African Squadron was ordered home to help blockade Southern ports. Before departure, the *Constellation* captured the brig *Triton* in the Congo River on 20 May 1861, perhaps the navy's last slave-ship capture on the West African coast. In the emergency, President Lincoln's Secretary of State, William Seward, negotiated a secret treaty with the British to assume the nation's share of the African blockade, including the long-denied right of search of American-flag vessels by British warships. For Hugh Thomas, a British historian, this was as if "Holy Writ had been denied." Quickly adopted by Congressional vote, the treaty was never made public.[40]

Because the slave trade was a secret operation, historians can only approximate the number of vessels involved, the number captured, the mortality rate, and the number of slaves freed in the nineteenth century. During the entire nineteenth century, about 7,750 slaving voyages were attempted, and 1,635—or 21 percent—of the vessels were seized. Aboard the 79 percent of slave ships that evaded capture, the toll of African captives was horrible. A survey of 17 vessels that carried Africans to Cuba and Brazil between 1844 and 1860 suggests that 1,879 of the 10,744 captives died, for a mortality rate of 17 percent. Although the U.S. was not a principal destination for illegal slaving voyages, the last landing of slaves in the nation may have been those delivered by the schooner *Wanderer*, which evaded the African Squadron in 1858. The Confederate States of America also prohibited the slave trade, so there were no known landings during the Civil War. The last verified landing of slaves in Cuba was in January 1870, when 900 Africans were delivered.[41]

How successful were naval efforts? Estimates suggest that 2,000,000 Africans were enslaved between 1800 and 1870, and 200,000, or 10 percent of them, were freed through the efforts of naval patrols. Of the 200,000 liberated Africans, the Royal Navy's West African Squadron accounted for approximately 160,000. From 1843 to 1857, the U.S. Navy took only 19 slavers, six of which were actually condemned, while the Royal Navy seized 600 vessels, 562 of which were condemned.[42]

Summed up, several factors contributed to the U.S. Navy's inability to stem the flow of slave traffic from Africa to the Americas between 1820 and 1862. These included the Navy Department's emphasis on protecting commerce rather than apprehending slavers, the consequent inadequacy of the naval force assigned to the African Squadron, apathetic support for the effort in Congress, Southern opposition in the 1850s to continuance of the blockade, and the great profits that could be made by slavers throughout the period.

All of these factors were significant, but the weight of evidence strongly suggests that primary emphasis should be on two more fundamental issues. First, the U.S. government's unbending refusal to accept the right of search of American-flag vessels by British Royal Navy officers—a legacy of the first decade of the century that was strongly backed by the chauvinistic American public—made the American flag a shield for slave traders throughout the period. Without fear of interdiction by British cruisers, and with slight chance of encountering a vessel from the U.S. Navy's small African Squadron, slavers commonly adopted the American flag. An agreement with Great Britain in 1842, or in any year before 1862, would have increased the capture of slavers and suppressed the trade far more rapidly.

Second, the blindly legalistic judicial process, in both Southern and Northern courts, more often than not resulted in release of suspected slavers captured by the African Squadron, even in the face of compelling evidence. With the spirit of free trade and personal property rights espoused so strongly, slavers faced little chance of conviction in U.S. courts. Consequently, the trade continued with the tacit support of the American people. Had these conditions been reversed by the mid-1830s, the grim saga of the *Amistad* might never have unfolded.

Notes

1. Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 547, 554.

2. See Benjamin W. Labaree, et al, *America and the Sea: A Maritime History* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport, 1998), or any comprehensive text on American history, such as Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 375.

3. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 583; Robert Vogel, *Without Consent or Contract* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), 20-32.

4. W.E.F. Ward, *The Royal Navy and the Slavers* (New York: Schoken Books, 1970), 121; see also Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade* (London: Frank Cass & Company, 1968), 45-47.

5. Lieutenant Forbes, *Six Months Service in the African Blockade* (London: Richard Bentley, 1849), 94; George E. Brooks, Jr., *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters and African Middlemen* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1970), 113.

6. Brooks, *Yankee Traders*, 108; Alan R. Booth, "The United States African Squadron, 1843-1861," *Boston University Papers in African History*, vol. 1, Jeffrey Butler, ed. (Boston: Boston University Press, 1964), 81.

7. Kenneth J. Hagan, *This People's Navy: The Making of American Seapower* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 93-94.

8. Booth, "The United States African Squadron," 83.

9. J.L. Cummings, Journal, U.S. frigate *John Adams*, 1820-22, Log 10, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport; Brooks, *Yankee Traders*, 200.

10. William F. Lynch, *Naval Life; or Observations Afloat and on Shore* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1851), quoted in Samuel Eliot Morison, *"Old Bruin," Commodore Matthew C. Perry, 1794-1858* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 74.

11. Hugh G. Soulsby, *The Right of Search and the Slave Trade in Anglo-American Relations, 1814-1862* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1933), 20.

12. Ibid., 23.

13. Warren S. Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 30-32; see also Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 642.

14. Howard, *American Slavers*, 33; Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 74-75.

15. *New England Merchants in Africa: A History Through Documents, 1802 to 1865*, Norman R. Bennett and George E. Brooks, Jr., eds. (Boston: Boston University Press, 1963), 319; see also Horatio Bridge, *Journal of an African Cruiser*, Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed. (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1853), 112.

16. Howard, *American Slavers*, 4-8; Bridge, *Journal of an African Cruiser*, 551; Forbes, *Six Months Service*, 26.

17. Howard, *American Slavers*, 25.

18. J.C. Furnas, "Patrolling the Middle Passage," *American Heritage* 9 (October 1958): 7.

19. William A. Graham, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 29 November 1851* (Washington, D.C., 1852), 4-5.

20. Booth, "The United States African Squadron," 89-90.

21. Ward, *Royal Navy and the Slavers*, 46-47.

22. Donald R. Wright, "Matthew Perry and the African Squadron," *America Spreads Her Sails: U.S. Seapower in the Nineteenth Century* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1973), 93. In *"Old Bruin,"* his highly readable biography of Perry, Samuel Eliot Morison insists that "both the administration and Perry were sincere in their efforts to suppress this abominable practice" (page 168), but he offers little evidence to support his contention. In *The Slave Trade*, Hugh Thomas remarks, "Perry's enthusiasm for putting down the slave trade was modest" (page 727). Perhaps contemporary historians have made too much of the fact that Perry's brother Raymond married the daughter of James DeWolfe in 1814 and that the Perry clan was on cordial terms with their Bristol, Rhode Island, relatives. In *Chronicles of the Frigate Macedonian* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 224, James Tertius DeKay proposes that Perry "was a creature of his times. He saw what he wished to see, and overlooked those things he found disagreeable."

23. J.Y. Mason, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 25 November 1844* (Washington, D.C., 1845), 514. The figures listed by Mason and his successors are not always accurate. All ships in the squadron were usually listed, whether on station or coming or going between the U.S. and Africa.

24. Howard, *American Slavers*, 280; William F. Lynch, "Report of Commander W.F. Lynch, in relation to his mission to the coast of Africa," Appendix B to J.C. Dobbin, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, December 1853* (Washington, D.C., 1854), 388-89; see also Pegram Harrison, "A Blind Eye Toward the Slave Trade," *Naval History* (September/October 1996): 43-46.

25. "General Orders, USS *Portsmouth*, Flag Ship of Commodore F.H. Gregory, Commander U.S. Naval Forces West Coast of Africa," 1849, Misc. Vol. 397, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport.

26. Quoted in L.F. Hill, *Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Brazil* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1932), 127-28.

27. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 689-705.

28. Howard, *American Slavers*, 102-07.

29. Andrew Hull Foote, *Africa and the American Flag* (1854: reprint, Folkestone and London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1970), 258 and ff., 300, 387. Foote commanded the brig *Perry* in the African Squadron in 1850-51. Born at New Haven, Connecticut, in 1806, he had entered the navy in 1822 and would serve in the West Indian, African, and Asian Squadrons before commanding the Union gunboat flotilla on the western rivers early in the Civil War. Wounded at Fort Donelson, Tennessee, he was promoted to rear admiral, but died in June 1863 before taking command of the Union fleet off Charleston.

30. Morison, *Oxford History of the American People*, 573; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 102-03.

31. Booth, "The United States African Squadron," 108; Hagan, *This People's Navy*, 154-55; see also Isaac Toucey, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 2 December 1859* (Washington, D.C., 1860), 1138-39.

32. Henry Eason, Journal, U.S. sloop-of-war *Marion*, 1858-60, Log 902, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport.

33. According to William F. Lynch, "They seldom speak English well, and they understand it but imperfectly. They are very fond of adopting what man-of-war sailors call 'pursers' names,' such as 'pipe of tobacco,' 'bottle of beer,' 'tin pot,' 'pea soup,' 'half dollar,' 'after breakfast,' etc." Appendix B, J.C. Dobbin, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, December 1853*, 369.

34. Howard, *American Slavers*, 96-97.

35. Ibid., 174.

36. William N. Peterson, *Mystic Built: Ships and Shipyards of the Mystic River, Connecticut, 1784-1919* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1989), 165.

37. Kevin Reilly, "Slavers in Disguise: American Whaling and the African Slave Trade, 1852-1862," *American Neptune* 53:3 (Summer 1993): 177-89.

38. Isaac Toucey, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1 December 1860* (Washington, D.C., 1861), 8-9.

39. Booth, "The United States African Squadron," 110; James A. Rawley, "Captain Nathaniel Gordon, The Only American Executed for Violating the Slave Trade Laws," *Civil War History* 39:3 (September 1993): 216-24.

40. Gideon Welles, *Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 2 December 1861* (Washington, D.C., 1862), 5, 21.

41. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 784; Howard, *American Slavers*, Appendix D.

42. Varying interpretations for the failure of the U.S. Navy's African Squadron to establish a successful blockade of the slave trade may be read in Booth, "The United States African Squadron," and in John Davis, "How and Why the United States African Squadron Failed to Suppress the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade," typescript, 1990, RF 532, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport.

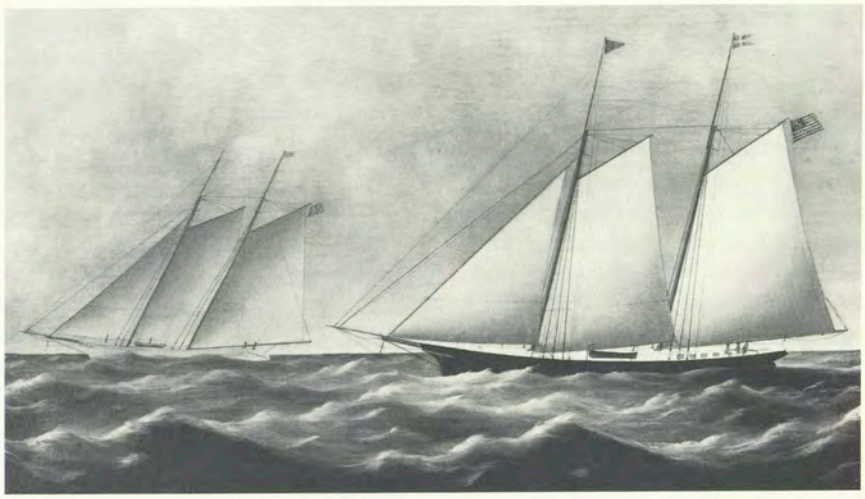
A U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, Calvin Lane is professor emeritus of English at the University of Hartford and a member of Mystic Seaport's interpretive staff.

Collecting for America and the Sea

The "Slave Yacht" *Wanderer*

ELIZABETH KRENICKY

Mystic Seaport has recently acquired material from a vessel that represents the great contrasts of pre-Civil War America. Built as a yacht, she was part of the increasing uses of the sea for recreation among urban and propertied individuals. Yet, her use as a slave ship reflects the endurance of the terrible institution of slavery and the sectional conflict that nearly tore the United States apart 140 years ago.



The sleek 104-foot schooner yacht Wanderer *was painted under sail with her New York Yacht Club burgee flying, possibly by Brooklyn artists Joseph B. Smith and his son William, ca. 1857. (Mystic Seaport, 97.129.1A; Claire White-Peterson photo)*

Built by Joseph Rowland at Setauket, Long Island, New York, the schooner *Wanderer* was launched as a pleasure craft in June 1857. The 104-foot vessel was designed by Thomas B. Hawkins of Port Jefferson, a well-respected member of the New York Yacht Club. Hawkins was sailing master for the vessel's owner, club member John D. Johnson, who had a residence in Islip, New York, but actually owned a sugar plantation in Louisiana. Johnson had commissioned the largest, fastest yacht in the club's fleet. Since she was almost 100 tons larger than the next-largest schooner, with a far greater sail area and a top speed near 20 knots, she did not participate in New York Yacht Club races, but she did make the club's August 1857 cruise to Glen Cove, New Haven, Newport, and New Bedford.

That winter, the *Wanderer* headed south with both Johnson and Hawkins on board. At Charleston, South Carolina, and Brunswick, Georgia, she stopped to race, defeating the local yachts. She called at New Orleans before returning to Port Jefferson in the spring of 1858.

By this time she had a new owner, William Corrie of New Orleans, who was elected to the New York Yacht Club on Johnson's recommendation. Corrie reportedly purchased the vessel for half her value, but he boasted that he had bought her for $5,000 more than her $25,000 cost. Corrie had the *Wanderer* fitted with large galvanized iron water tanks that could hold far more fresh water than a normal yachting cruise would require.

The people of Port Jefferson were immediately suspicious, and it did not take long for officials to become suspicious too. Was she actually being prepared for a slaving voyage? Although slave labor powered the agricultural economy of the Southern states, which fueled the Northern textile and shipping industries through the increasing cultivation of cotton, the importation of African slaves into the U.S. had been forbidden by federal law since 1808. Even so, small numbers of African slaves were smuggled in, and an unscrupulous captain or owner could make a fortune risking such a voyage.

As soon as the vessel slipped out of the harbor, she was seized and retained for investigation. Officers came on board to search, and they left full of good food and wine.

Captain Corrie had decorated the *Wanderer*'s interior with fine furniture and books. The officers were fed from elegant platters and seated in rosewood chairs. Corrie joked with them about the possibility of such a well-appointed vessel being a slaver, and the officers laughed, claiming the vessel was clearly too small and too finely decorated for slaving, despite her large water tanks and Corrie's suspicious looking companions.

Released, the *Wanderer* sailed south to Charleston. An interested party in Corrie's activities, if not their actual director, was merchant Charles A. Lamar of Savannah, a strong proponent of the slave trade, who owned several vessels suspected of slaving. Leaving Charleston in the summer of 1858, Corrie claimed he and his friends were headed for Trinidad and the island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic. She never reached St. Helena; instead, Corrie brought the *Wanderer* into the Congo River. Corrie entertained suspicious Royal Navy officers on board, and left the river without slaves, but in October he returned to the coast south of the Congo, evaded U.S. and British patrols, and loaded nearly 500 Africans. Outrunning the USS *Vincennes*, the fast schooner departed the African coast. During her six-week run across the Atlantic, as many as 70 Africans died in the tight confines of her sleek hull before she arrived off Jekyll Island, Georgia. By the time word reached the authorities in Savannah, she had off-loaded 409 Africans, and most of them had been sold far inland.

The *Wanderer* was seized and taken to Savannah. When the New York Yacht Club heard that the yacht had made her nefarious voyage under the club burgee the members voted unanimously to remove the vessel's name from the club list and to expel Corrie, "primarily for his deliberate violation of the laws of the United States, but more especially from his being engaged in a traffic repugnant to humanity and to the moral sense of the members of this Association." Embarrassed by the *Wanderer*'s voyage, President James Buchanan ordered improvements in the U.S. Navy's African Squadron to crack down on American-flag slavers.



The Wanderer*'s designer and sailing master, Thomas B. Hawkins, is believed to have used this elaborate folding deck chair while on board. (Mystic Seaport, 97.129.14; Claire White-Peterson photo)*

Purchased in March 1859 by Charles Lamar, who had been implicated in the sale of some of the African captives, the *Wanderer* was taken to Cuba. Back at Savannah in October 1859, she was ostensibly stolen by a Captain Martin, who promised to pay for the vessel, then departed abruptly for the Azores and informed his crew they were embarked on a slaving voyage. Near the Azores, the mate left Martin in a boat and took the *Wanderer* to Boston.

In 1860 the *Wanderer* was sold in Cuba. In 1861, while lying at Key West, she was captured by the U.S. Navy. Until the end of the Civil War she served as a navy water and patrol boat. Decommissioned after the war, the schooner was purchased for the fruit trade, where her great speed helped her deliver lemons, oranges, and other fruit to market before they spoiled. The end of this notable, notorious vessel came in January 1871, when she stranded on the eastern tip of Cuba.

Donated by descendants of Commodore Thomas B. Hawkins, the *Wanderer* artifacts include an oil painting, a half model, and a folding deck chair used by Hawkins, with finely carved dog's head arm ends. The collection also contains a handsome ceramic fish platter inscribed with the schooner's name. These acquisitions help us contemplate the many lives of the schooner *Wanderer*: elegant, fast yacht; deceitful, cruel slave-carrier; Civil War naval vessel; and speedy vessel of commerce. But even as we look at the handsome evidence of her origins, we cannot forget her terrible notoriety as one of the last successful American slave ships. Her history reflects the many sides of the relationship between America and the sea, and Mystic Seaport's ongoing effort to illustrate all elements of this complex past.

Sources

John Parkinson, Jr., *The New York Yacht Club, From Its Founding Through 1973*, 2 vols. (New York: New York Yacht Club, 1975).

Winfield M. Thompson, "Historic American Yachts: The Slave Yacht *Wanderer*," *The Rudder* 15:2 (February 1904).

Gordon Welles and William Proios, *Port Jefferson: Story of a Village* (Port Jefferson, New York: Historical Society of Greater Port Jefferson, 1977).

Tom Henderson Wells, *The Slave Ship Wanderer* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1967).

Elizabeth Krenicky works as a cataloger in Mystic Seaport's Curatorial Department. She is a recent graduate of Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

Coordinated Collections Information Access

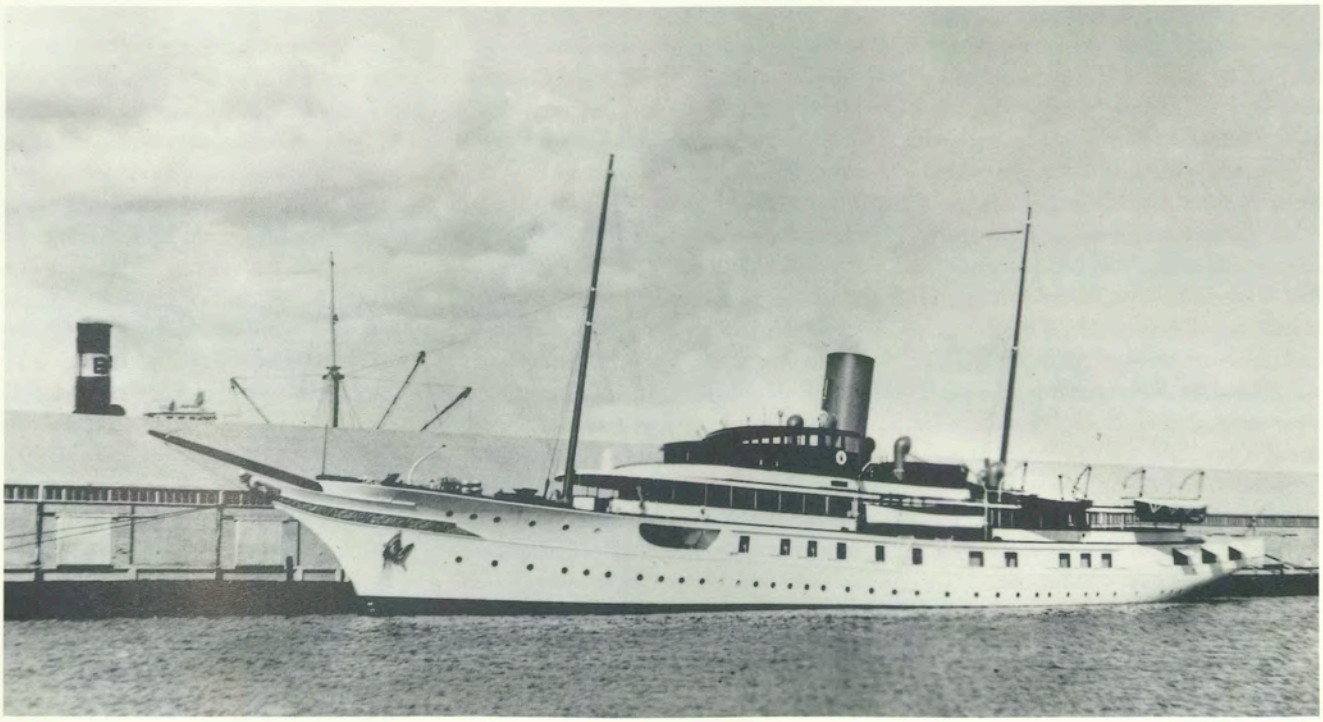
A New Entrance to Mystic Seaport

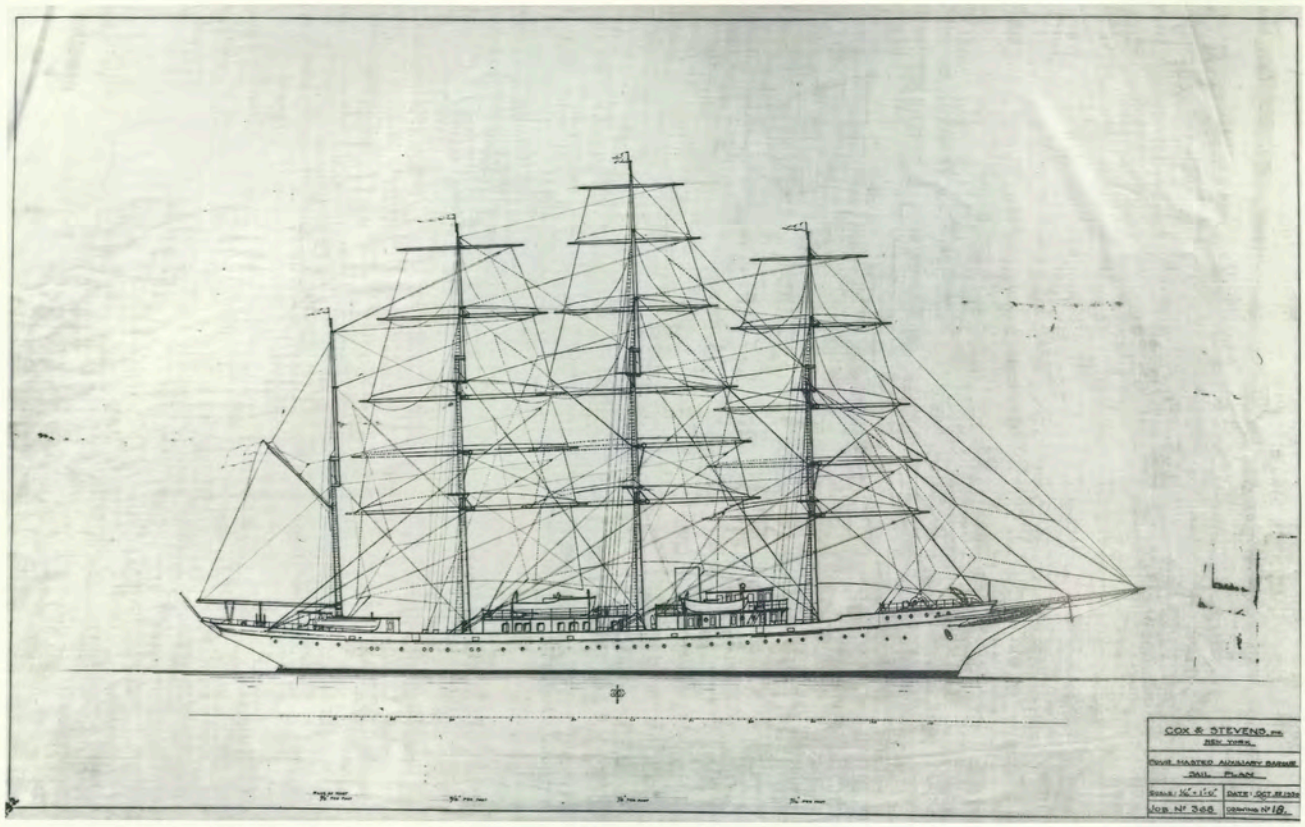
JENNIFER EIFRIG

As a museum, Mystic Seaport's purpose is to create understanding—to educate. We believe that the objects and stories from America's maritime past illustrate for children and adults both the commonalities and conflicts of the American experience. The tools that people made, the boats they built, the clothes they wore, the houses they lived in, the ships they sailed, the artwork they created, the journals they kept, and the books they wrote, are all sources of fascinating information about who we are as a people and a culture.

As a member of Mystic Seaport, you probably already know that the Museum staff are eager to answer your questions. Perhaps you have chatted about fishing methods with an interpreter aboard the *L.A. Dunton*, or asked questions about the "super models" currently exhibited in the R.J. Schaefer Building, or the heirloom vegetables in the Buckingham-Hall House's garden. Maybe you have asked the staff in the G.W. Blunt White Library for information about the ship that brought your ancestors to this country. But did you know that Mystic Seaport responds to 22,000 requests for information *each year*? That's more than 60 requests received every day, and does not include informal questions directed toward exhibit interpreters. In many cases, people want to know something that relates to one or more of the objects in the Museum's collections.

The 272-foot steam yacht Viking, *designed by Theodore Wells and launched by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company in 1929, was photographed during her tour of the Pacific islands in 1937. The Coordinated Collections Information Access Project will allow users to link this photograph from the* Viking *photo album to library and other related objects and information at the Museum. (Mystic Seaport, 88.37.1.1)*





Ships plans, such as this one of the magnificent steam yacht Sea Cloud, *designed by Cox & Stevens in 1930, will be accessible through Mystic Seaport's planned "new electronic entrance." (Cox & Stevens Collection, Ships Plans Division, Mystic Seaport; Claire White-Peterson photo)*

Mystic Seaport collects vessels, objects, skills, and stories in order to fulfill its mission "to create a broad, public understanding of the relationship of America and the sea." The items are chosen on the basis of their quality, rarity, and historic significance, or *context.* This latter quality enables Mystic Seaport to use a particular object to address such questions as: "What are the economic factors behind the rise and decline of the whaling industry?" (compare whale oil lamps to kerosene lamps). "My great-grandfather was a fisherman in Gloucester; can you tell me about the boats and equipment he might have used?" (look at the *L.A. Dunton* and her gear, as well as photos of early-twentieth-century fishermen). By using examples of real objects made and used by real human beings, we aim to reach all kinds of people, including families with young children, ethnically diverse audiences, adults, and senior citizens, and to help them make personal connections with the stories of America and the Sea.

The objects that relate to these stories are as varied as the stories themselves. As a result, Mystic Seaport is unusual within the museum community, because we hold so many different types of objects. Currently, the Museum has over two million items in its collections, including 500 watercraft (the largest collection of its kind in the world), more than 5,600 works of art, 1,100,000 historic photographs, over 1,000,000 feet of film, 70,000 imprints, 9,000 maps and charts, more than 800 sound archives recordings, nearly 1,000,000 manuscripts, and 100,000 sheets of ships plans and other architectural drawings. Each one of these items has a unique and important story to tell. This is why museums collect and care for historic items, a role they share with libraries. Yet while libraries—especially public libraries—are seen as information resources that emphasize self-directed learning, many people do not consider that museums fulfill the same role.

The trouble, of course, is that a museum's collections storerooms are not like the familiar shelves in the public library, because of the fragility of the items and the ways in which they must be stored. (In fact, many libraries that hold rare and valuable items do not have "open stacks" either.) The focus is on the preservation of the objects, not on the people who might be interested in them. Exhibits, which are designed for people, can show only a small fraction of the items a museum holds. And while the serious scholar or museum professional has enough knowledge and training to get "behind the scenes" and really utilize museum collections, the general public may find it difficult to access the collections held in trust for them. They are comfortable

with the familiar resources at the library, but simply do not know how to "use" museums.

Museums all over the country, then, are facing two major challenges: how to provide for the safe storage and care of their collections; and how to make these same collections accessible to museum audiences. Mystic Seaport is wrestling with these issues, plus the additional challenge of balancing family-oriented programming with serious scholarship. Ideally, it should be possible for both the scholar and the general-interest visitor to use Mystic Seaport's collections in the way one uses a library: as a broad-based information resource that is friendly, simple to use, information-rich, and offers knowledgeable professionals to assist when needed.

As you can imagine, keeping track of 2,000,000 items is a real challenge. The people who do this are called *curators, collections managers,* and *librarians*. At Mystic Seaport, about 25 different departments or divisions are responsible for the collections. This is because different types of objects have different needs and standards, in terms of physical storage (temperature, humidity, light levels, containers, etc.) and information management. Since they have to limit physical access to the collections, the Museum's curators, collections managers, and librarians create *intellectual access* through a practice called *cataloging*. More than simply keeping track of what comes in (a process of record-keeping called *accessioning*), cataloging involves creating access points by recording information such as a physical description, who made the item or wrote the book, where it came from, how it is related to other items, people, places, events, and more. These catalogs (or *finding aids*) may be similar to each other, as in the case of the imprints catalog (books and other published materials) and the archives catalogs (manuscripts, sound recordings, maps and charts, and ships plans), or they may be quite different, as is the case with the three-dimensional objects (watercraft, artifacts, art). In all cases, differences exist in the access points–the specific ways and places in which data is recorded, in order to retrieve it at some future date. In the old days, this meant having multiple card catalogs; today, it means we have multiple computer databases as well other electronic and manual finding aids. "Ten years ago, we could only find items using names; today we can find by dates, subjects, and other locators," explains Rodi York, Museum Registrar.

This system, while expansive, becomes cumbersome when you are looking for *all* the materials related to a particular subject. For example, you might be interested in learning what Mystic Seaport holds relating to the steam yacht *Viking*. To learn that we have photographs, a miniature figurehead, a photo album relating to the 1937 cruise, a private signal, other memorabilia, a book published in 1929, and several sheets of ships plans, it is now necessary to consult three different catalogs in order to locate all of the *Viking* items; there is no single point of access. Staff in the Photo Archive, G.W. Blunt White Library, Art & Objects Collections, and Ships Plans Division are prepared to help, but what if you live in Seattle, or it's 10:30 at night? Or, what if you don't really know what you're looking for—you just want to explore?

Back in 1993, a group of Mystic Seaport staff began meeting to discuss how we service those 22,000 requests for information, and how we could provide the public with better access to information about the collections held in trust for them. The staff group, known as the Collections Access Committee or "CollComm" for short, began considering ways in which technology such as *relational databases*—and emerging *Internet protocols*—could be used to offer "one-stop collections information shopping." They held a day-long retreat in November 1994 and emerged with a mission: to create a new, electronic entrance to Mystic Seaport, through which people can come to learn about the objects and stories of America and the Sea, at any hour, from any distance, with staff help, or on their own. Users should be able to ask simple or complex questions, and receive answers in the form most useful to them: standard catalog records, or digital text, audio, still and moving images—all with ready access to advice on how to proceed. "We didn't want to replace the human expert; we wanted to open up ways to serve more people on the first level of information," says Mary Anne Stets, Curator of Photography.

This was an ambitious undertaking, and consultation with our sister institutions revealed that Mystic Seaport was among the first to attempt it. In order to formulate a plan, the group first needed to get a clearer picture of current and future demands for intellectual access. They studied the numbers and kinds of people who use our collections for research, and the purposes for which they use them. They also looked at the established and emerging standards for information storage and retrieval in the museum and library communities, and evaluated different options for computerizing the Library catalog, and moving the Art & Objects Collections electronic catalogs to a new system that would be more compatible with electronic cataloging standards and still easy to use. They surveyed the various finding aids and other access tools available to the staff and public, and identified all of the information resources within the Museum that might be of interest to the researcher. At the same time, the Museum's

Information Services Department began experimenting with networked digital multimedia software—more commonly known as "Internet tools"—that were emerging as a promising way to deliver large amounts of information from distributed sources.

The research and planning process took more than a year to complete. "Our goal was always to facilitate public access to the collections. As we discussed this issue, certain things kept cropping up. We were empowered by management to address the whole range of issues that would make us a better museum," says Mary Anne Stets. "One of the most important things we have accomplished is to break down barriers among departments and collecting areas. We had an opportunity to step out of our job boxes and see what other people are doing and why. It has brought us all together much more closely."

Throughout the planning process, the Collections Access Committee made a conscious effort not to consider whether Mystic Seaport could support the project financially. "We wanted to come up with really creative ideas, without limitations. So we told ourselves that we couldn't use time or money as an excuse. We had to come up with the plan first, then we'd figure out how to pay for it," explains Guy Hermann, Director of Museum Information Services. "We decided to trust that the funds were out there to support a really great idea."

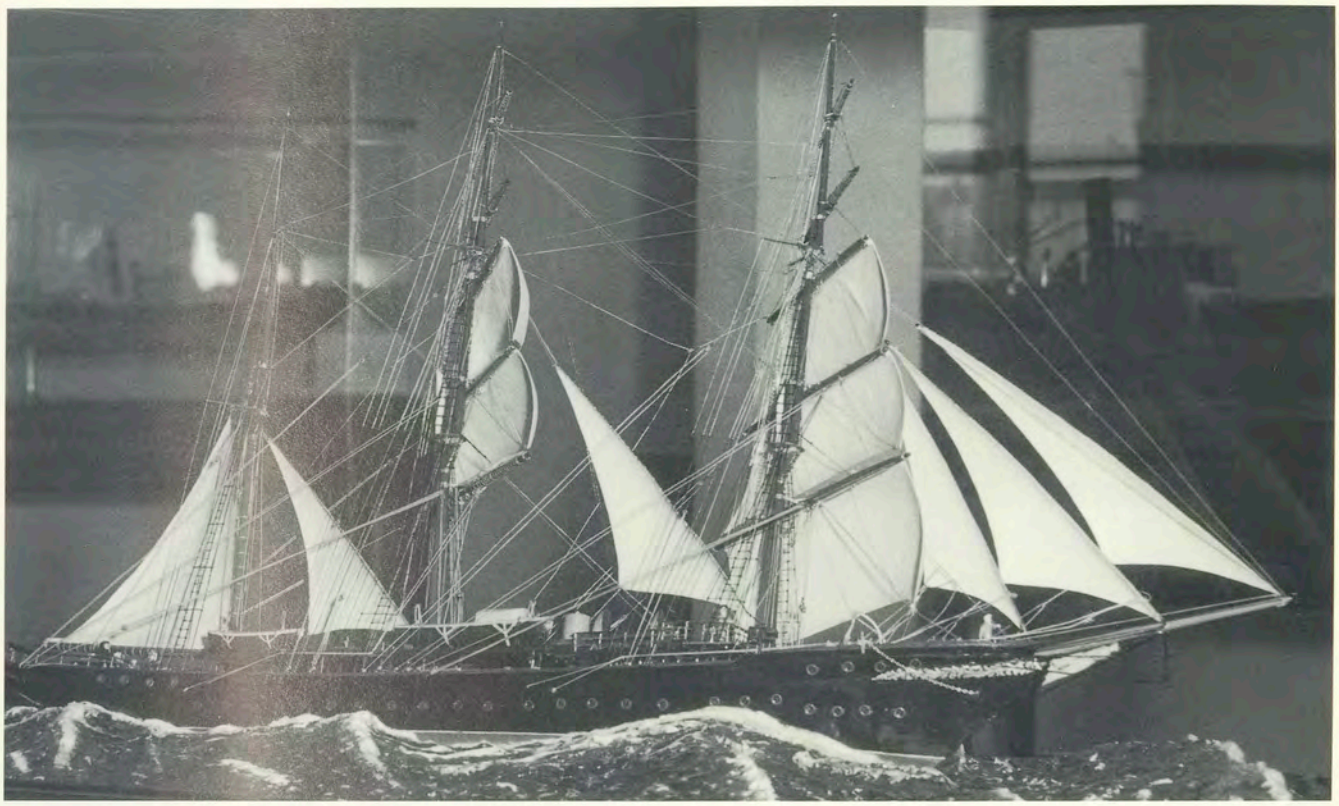
To make sure that the project would be effectively represented when the time came for fundraising, Mystic Seaport's Development Department joined the process early in the planning stages. A development officer (the author) was assigned to participate in the weekly meetings of the Collections Access Committee as an active member of the planning team. Again, this reinforced the sense of common purpose among the staff, and in the process brought the Development Department closer to the rest of the Museum. "It was clear to me that electronic access to the collections for people anywhere, at any age and condition, was critical to Mystic Seaport's future," recalls Christopher Cox, Vice President for Development and Communications. "There was never any question that we *weren't* going to do this. So the fund-raising staff were committed from the beginning, which meant that we went through the same learning process as the curatorial staff. In turn, we were fully acquainted with the intricacies of the project, and were prepared go out and represent it to potential funders."

The Collections Access Committee learned from all its research and planning that Mystic Seaport's "new electronic entrance" has to be simple enough for the young student or general interest user, yet powerful enough for the scholar or museum professional. It must allow the researcher to search selectively, or *everything* simultaneously. It must use technology that the Museum's Information Services department can support. It has to offer complex, Boolean-style queries ("fishing AND Georges Bank"), along with general keyword searches ("sea kayak"). It has to allow users to begin searching by asking simply *who, what, where,* and *when.* Most important, it has to be as friendly, fun, and informative as Mystic Seaport itself, at the same time that it supports museum and library standards for collections management.

In some cases these requirements compete with each other in both obvious and more subtle ways. For example, collections catalogs are designed to be maintained by librarians and museum professionals—they are not exactly "fun," nor are they necessarily intuitive. They are also limited in their language flexibility: according to well-established cataloging conventions, a book has its author; a boat has its builder; and a painting has its artist. Since it is not possible to interchange these terms, there needs to be a way to *coordinate* them, such that "maker," "author," "builder," and "artist" are equated to mean the same thing ("who created this item"), in the instances in which the researcher is searching multiple collections. This kind of coordination is potentially very complex, yet must appear invisible to the end user.

The final plan that the group came up with is called the *Coordinated Collections Information Access Project*, and as far as we know it is unique in the museum community. While the goal of providing electronic access to collections is not unusual, our plan to achieve it certainly is. The most exciting part of the Coordinated Collections Information Access Project is that it satisfies these competing demands in a way that could potentially serve as a new information access model for Mystic Seaport's sister institutions.

Here's how it works: Mystic Seaport will link two commercial collections management software packages (one for the object collections, and one for the library and archival collections) under a custom-designed *user interface* that provides a single point of access from the researcher's perspective, but in fact searches both systems and other digital files simultaneously for data that has been coordinated by library and curatorial staff, using *standardized language* and *subject headings*, in order to make simultaneous retrieval possible. This interface will be built using Worldwide-Web technology, thus enabling users from anywhere in the world to access Mystic Seaport's intellectual resources. Web tools have the additional advantages of being rel-



Early Mystic Seaport Trustee Arthur Curtiss James owned several sail and steam yachts named Aloha. *In the Museum's collections they are represented by numerous manuscripts, photographs, and objects—including this model of* Aloha II*—which will be linked by the Museum's information access project. (Mystic Seaport, 65.27)*

atively inexpensive and simple to implement and support; they are not limited to a particular kind of computer or operating system, and are designed to deliver images and sound, as well as text. The interface will serve as the "new electronic entrance to Mystic Seaport," allowing "visitors" to explore the Museum's resources at their own pace and in their own way, be they experienced scholars, or schoolchildren, or someone simply interested in finding out more about America and the Sea. It will offer suggestions on how to proceed, and will allow users to view the results of other, similar searches.

The Collections Access Committee put its plan to the test by creating several searchable databases that allowed the user to look for information by data type, thematic content, or keyword. While these prototype tools did not yield actual catalog data, but rather rudimentary pointers to the persons, collections, or files that might be of interest to the researcher, they were sophisticated enough to demonstrate at the Smithsonian Institution's conference, "Museums for the New Millennium," in September 1996. Mystic Seaport was one of only 12 institutions worldwide to be invited to participate in the conference's Technology Showcase, where our ideas and prototypes were well-received. We were told by museum professionals from around the world, including representatives from the Computer Museum, Holocaust Museum, Canadian Heritage Information Network, National Gallery, and of course the Smithsonian, that, "No one else is doing anything like this; only Mystic Seaport is talking about this level of interconnectivity and public outreach."

"When we saw the reaction to our prototype at the Smithsonian, we knew we had a winner," remembers J. Revell Carr, Mystic Seaport's President and Director. "It gave us a lot of confidence as we began to think about where we were going to get the funding to make the project happen."

The first critical steps of the Coordinated Collections Information Access Project were to replace the old, proprietary object collections management software, and to convert the library card catalog to digital format. Knowing it was essential to convert the library's data to electronic format as soon as possible, Librarian Paul O'Pecko sought the support of the Fellows of the G.W. Blunt White Library, a group of Museum members and supporters with a special interest in the Library. They raised $35,000 to convert the imprints records to machine-readable (MARC) format and to purchase needed hardware and software while planning was still underway for the larger project. Meanwhile,



When the Museum's Coordinated Collections Information Access Project permits wide-ranging searches of the collections, a request for images of life at sea might call up this photo of the cook in the galley of the steam yacht Viking *during her 1937 Pacific voyage. (Mystic Seaport, 88.37.1.198)*

the Collections Access Committee evaluated many different commercial software systems for both library and objects collections management. In the end, they selected Voyager by Endeavor Systems, Inc., for the library, and MultiMimsy by Willoughby Associates for the objects. Both systems share the same advantages: they are established products offered by vendors with many years' experience; they use open-architecture standards, which means they are not hardware dependent (Mac or PC or other); they are based on Oracle, the industry leader in database management products; and most importantly, they support the Internet tools Mystic Seaport was already using successfully, making the task of coordinating them under a Worldwide-Web-based interface possible.

In December 1996 the Collections Access Committee learned that Mystic Seaport's application to the Gladys Brooks Foundation for $100,000 to purchase Voyager and computerize the library's catalog was successful! This was the moment we had all been waiting for. "Somehow getting that first grant made it seem real—from then on I knew that it was a question of *when;* not whether, we would succeed," says Leah Prescott, Collections Information Technology Coordinator.

With that first grant in hand, others began to follow. An anonymous donor pledged $75,000 to purchase the initial licenses of MultiMimsy and necessary computer equipment in February 1997, and in March 1997 the Charles E. Culpeper Foundation contributed $200,000 toward the second phase of the project, which is to design the Web interface that will open Mystic Seaport to "one-stop collections information shopping." And in May 1998 the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations made a grant of $125,000 to continue interface design and development, while another anonymous donor gave $12,000 to purchase computer hardware. To date, more than $525,000 in private funding has been directed toward the Coordinated Collections Information Project.

At the time this article was written, the Collections Access Committee was hard at work preparing to move existing objects collections data into MultiMimsy. The Library's catalog records have already been migrated, and are available on the Worldwide Web at **www.schooner.mysticseaport.org**. A prototype of the interface that will connect the library and object collections catalogs is expected by the end of this year. Mystic Seaport continues to seek funding to digitize collections, and integrate these with their related catalog data.

How will you, as a member of Mystic Seaport, benefit from the Coordinated Collections Information Access Project? For one thing, you and millions of people worldwide will have an opportunity to see the full range of items that the Museum collects. For example, at any given time only about 10 percent of the Watercraft Collection is on public display: that's about 50 of the more than 500 boats. Only a tiny fraction of the 1,100,000 historic photographs is exhibited. The Sound Archive recordings are essentially only available through a special appointment at the G.W. Blunt White Library. Imagine how exciting it will be to browse through these collections in virtual space, either via a computer on the Museum grounds, or from your own home, in the way that particularly suits your interests and abilities. You will be able to hear the actual voice of someone

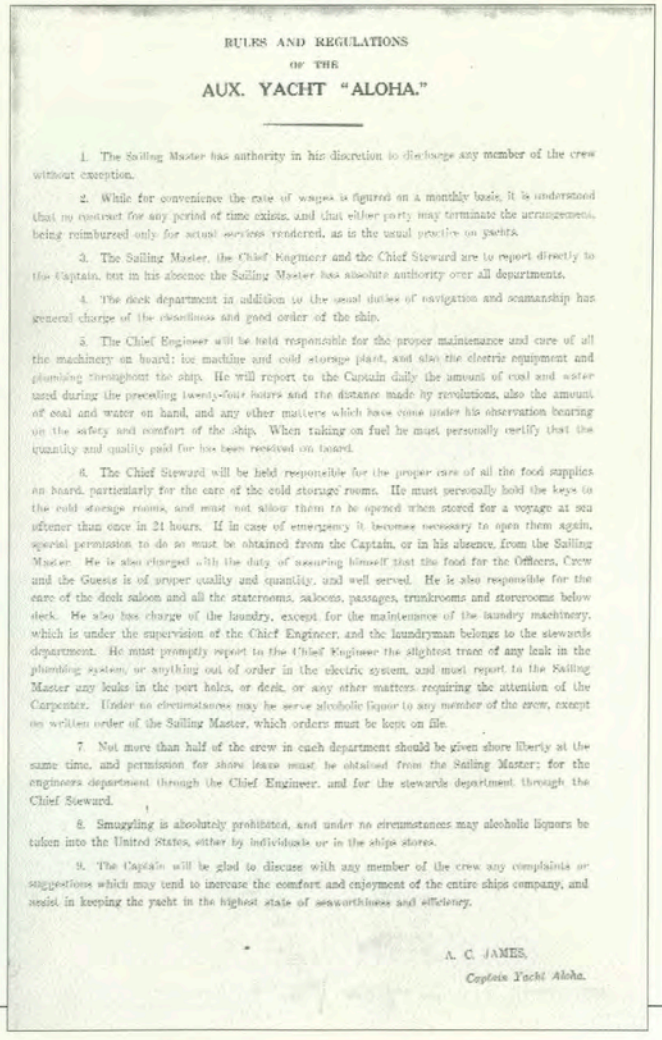


This half-rater-class sloop was carried aboard the 1907 steam yacht Pantooset, *which is also represented by library items at the Museum. Both kinds of material will be accessible in one electronic information search. (Mystic Seaport, 55.1201, Louis S. Martel photo)*

who has since passed on, speaking about his or her maritime experience. Having listened to a Museum roleplayer talk about the Long Island Sound oyster industry, your fifth-grade student will be able to see what kinds of tools were used in different time periods, and download a list of suggested reading. You will be able to request a list of the rowing shells in the Watercraft Collection, compare their dimensions, construction methods, and dates, and send e-mail to the Curator of Small Craft. You will be able to ask if Mystic Seaport holds any images of the ship that brought your ancestors to this country, and many, many other questions that may have occurred to you following your visit to the Museum grounds. You will also benefit from new exhibitions, publications, and educational programs created because the Museum staff will have better access to collections-related information.

The Coordinated Collections Information Access Project is the first step in opening the American Maritime Education and Research Center to the public. While the Center's physical facility is being constructed in the former Rossie Velvet Mill on the Museum grounds, it will already be open for business in "virtual space," 24 hours a day. In many ways, opening the "new electronic entrance to Mystic Seaport" is as significant as opening the Museum's first public gallery was in 1931. Back then, the idea of dedicating a museum to telling the stories of America's relationship with the sea seemed risky, but the staff and friends who made it happen were convinced that the risk was worth it. The Collections Access Committee followed in that same tradition when they began their task, and it seems likely that their effort will continue to meet with equal success.

Jennifer Eifrig is the Museum's Associate Director of Development for Information Management. She gratuated from Bates College with a degree in English and holds an M.A. from Wesleyan University in Liberal Studies in Arts.



RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
AUX. YACHT "ALOHA."

1. The Sailing Master has authority in his discretion to discharge any member of the crew without exception.

2. While for convenience the rate of wages is figured on a monthly basis, it is understood that no contract for any period of time exists, and that either party may terminate the arrangement, being reimbursed only for actual services rendered, as is the usual practice on yachts.

3. The Sailing Master, the Chief Engineer and the Chief Steward are to report directly to the Captain, but in his absence the Sailing Master has absolute authority over all departments.

4. The deck department in addition to the usual duties of navigation and seamanship has general charge of the cleanliness and good order of the ship.

5. The Chief Engineer will be held responsible for the proper maintenance and care of all the machinery on board; ice machine and cold storage plant, and also the electric equipment and plumbing throughout the ship. He will report to the Captain daily the amount of coal and water used during the preceding twenty-four hours and the distance made by revolutions, also the amount of coal and water on hand, and any other matters which have come under his observation bearing on the safety and comfort of the ship. When taking on fuel he must personally certify that the quantity and quality paid for has been received on board.

6. The Chief Steward will be held responsible for the proper care of all the food supplies on board, particularly for the care of the cold storage rooms. He must personally hold the keys to the cold storage rooms, and must not allow them to be opened when stored for a voyage at sea oftener than once in 24 hours. If in case of emergency it becomes necessary to open them again, special permission to do so must be obtained from the Captain, or in his absence, from the Sailing Master. He is also charged with the duty of assuring himself that the food for the Officers, Crew and the Guests is of proper quality and quantity, and well served. He is also responsible for the care of the deck saloon and all the staterooms, saloons, passages, trunkrooms and storerooms below deck. He also has charge of the laundry, except for the maintenance of the laundry machinery, which is under the supervision of the Chief Engineer, and the laundryman belongs to the stewards department. He must promptly report to the Chief Engineer the slightest trace of any leak in the plumbing system, or anything out of order in the electric system, and must report to the Sailing Master any leaks in the port holes, or deck, or any other matters requiring the attention of the Carpenter. Under no circumstances may he serve alcoholic liquor to any member of the crew, except on written order of the Sailing Master, which orders must be kept on file.

7. Not more than half of the crew in each department should be given shore liberty at the same time, and permission for shore leave must be obtained from the Sailing Master; for the engineers department through the Chief Engineer, and for the stewards department through the Chief Steward.

8. Smuggling is absolutely prohibited, and under no circumstances may alcoholic liquors be taken into the United States, either by individuals or in the ships stores.

9. The Captain will be glad to discuss with any member of the crew any complaints or suggestions which may tend to increase the comfort and enjoyment of the entire ships company, and assist in keeping the yacht in the highest state of seaworthiness and efficiency.

A. C. JAMES,
Captain Yacht Aloha.

Arthur Curtiss James's "Rules and Regulations of the Aux. Yacht 'Aloha'", in the Museum's manuscripts collection, will be linked to other types of Aloha *material through the information access project. (VFM 920, G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport)*

At Century's End, A Bounty of Big Yachts

JOSEPH GRIBBINS

When the New York Yacht Club published its *Yearbook* for 1900, the yachts listed by the members consisted of 161 vessels larger than 100 feet out of a total of 381, and more steam yachts than sailing yachts by a small margin—189 to 174. This was only one admittedly eminent club's roster of large yachts; but there were other clubs, here and elsewhere in the world, and many other impressive vessels devoted to private recreation and public display of wealth.

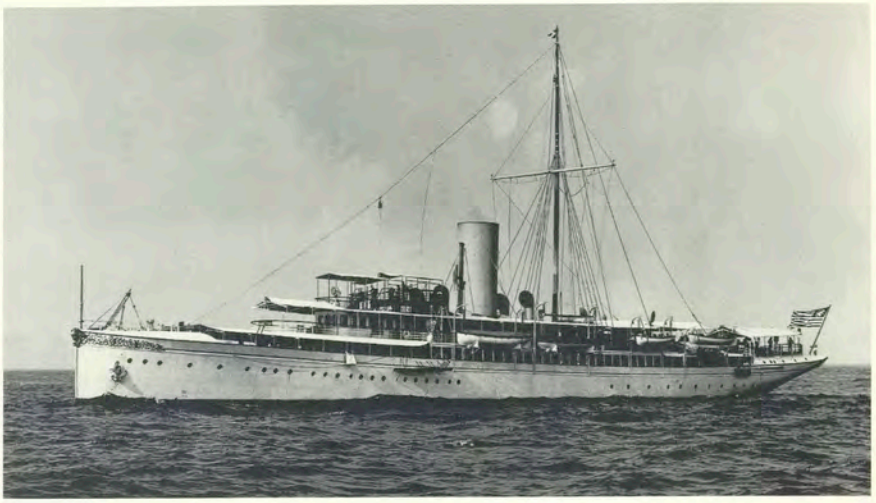
A count of yachts over 100 feet, sail and steam, in *Lloyd's Register of American Yachts* for 1900 amounts to 269. A count of yachts over 100 feet in the rest of the world's *Lloyd's Register of Yachts* totals 337. At the turn of the twentieth century there were something over 600 yachts, power and sail, in sizes larger than 100 feet on the waters of the world, most of them vehicles of appropriate luxury and presence, all of them built to express the status and wherewithal of their owners.

The largest yacht in the world in 1900 was the King of England's 430-foot *Victoria and Albert*, launched in 1899 as the third Royal Yacht of that name, and 130 feet larger than her predecessor. The largest American yacht in 1900 was William K. Vanderbilt's 332-foot *Valiant*, built by Laird Brothers in England in 1893.

Heading up New York's East River, the Forbes Magazine family's 151-foot motor yacht, The Highlander, *represents the "big yachts" of the late twentieth century. Designed for Malcolm Forbes by Frits de Voogt and Jon Bannenberg, and launched by deVries Scheepsbouw, BV, at Aalsmeer, Netherlands, in 1985, the steel-hulled vessel is powered by two 1,060-horsepower engines. Note the helicopter on the uppermost deck. (© Allan Weitz)*



The beginning of the twentieth century was a time when "Big Class" racing was underway in England, when the greatest of U.S. yachts gathered at Newport for New York Yacht Club cruises. It was a time when New York industrialist Charles R. Flint commuted to work in a 132-foot steam flyer called *Arrow*, the fastest boat in the world when her speed was measured at 45 miles per hour in 1902. That was the year W.K. Vanderbilt imported a 153-foot commuter yacht from England powered by three of the new Parsons steam turbine engines. It was a time when Wall Street speculator Howard Gould's 272-foot steam- and sail-powered bark *Niagara* took owner and guests cruising in baronial opulence that included marble fireplaces, stained-glass decklights, and a large ship's library in carved-oak cabinets. And it was a time when Commodore Elias Cornelius Benedict of Wall Street and the Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club logged 240,000 miles aboard several steam yachts called *Oneida*, including a voyage to the Amazon.



America's most opulent yacht at the turn of the century was newspaperman James Gordon Bennett's 314-foot Lysistrata, *designed by G.L. Watson and launched in 1900 by William Denny & Son at Dumbarton, Scotland. Her two triple-expansion steam engines could drive her at 19 knots, and she carried a crew of 100, plus a cow to provide fresh milk. Bennett entertained lavishly on board, and his guests and employees never knew when this grand yacht might head for Europe on Bennett's whim. James Burton photographed* Lysistrata *ca. 1900. (Negative B290, © Mystic Seaport, Rosenfeld Collection, Mystic, Connecticut)*

We may think of these grand yachts, great expenditures, and larger-than-life characters as legends from the yachting past—which they certainly are. Yet today's yachts, owners, and exploits are already surpassing the size, luxury, and possibilities of Gilded Age and Edwardian yachting. Large yachts—private vessels that represent superlative size, luxury, technical sophistication, ego gratification, and ambition of every kind—are back at the end of the twentieth century, and in numbers greater than ever before. Journalists close to today's bounty of big yachts estimate that there are 2,200 to 2,500 yachts over 100 feet in length in the world in 1999. The proliferation of what are now called megayachts is a phenomon of the past 20 years, a consequence of new technology, old yachting tradition, a long boom period in most of the world's economies, the postwar generation of entrepreneurs enjoying their money and feeling their oats, newer tycoons deciding that yachting has more to offer than golf, and other factors hard to analyze.

There are some differences between the megayachting of 1900 and the same activity today, but more similarities than disparities. The largest yacht in the world today is the 482-foot *Prince Abdul Aziz*, owned by King Fahd, the Saudi monarch. This is 50 feet longer than the largest yacht of 1900, but still a vehicle fit for a king. Owners of today's megayachts have backgrounds and business involvements similar to their counterparts in 1900. They are bankers, stock speculators, oil and gas entrepreneurs, buyers and consolidators of companies, large-scale contractors, and industrialists. There are some differences: the railroad plutocrats have been replaced by media moguls, for example.

The steam yachts of the century's beginning and the megayachts of century's end will be part of the subject matter of Mystic Seaport's 1999 Yachting History Symposium, scheduled for 26 and 27 March 1999, and devoted to the theme of "Twentieth-Century Yachting—Restrospective and Celebration." Further information on the symposium may be requested by telephone at 860.572.5384; by fax at 860.572.5344; or by e-mail to lisah@mysticseaport.org.

Formerly editor of *Nautical Quarterly*, Joseph Gribbins is Mystic Seaport's Director of Publications.

Book Marks

Geoffrey M. Footner, *Tidewater Triumph: The Development and Worldwide Success of the Chesapeake Bay Pilot Schooner* (Mystic: Mystic Seaport, 1998), 306 pages, notes, appendices, illustrations, index, $39.95.

Geoffrey Footner of Baltimore brilliantly chronicles the long and little-known story of why and how an inconspicuous pilot boat, designed to meet local needs in about 1730, gradually developed into a national and international type and may be considered to be the foremost contribution of Maryland and Virginia to ship design. Accurately describing Chesapeake Bay's changing economic conditions, specifically the beginning of the rise of grain production, he points out that for the first time there was a growing need for vessels that were smaller, faster, and more maneuverable than the great square-rigged ships that carried the Chesapeake's principal export to Britain and which were convoyed in time of war by the Royal Navy. Just at this time the schooner made its appearance in the bay, and it proved to be the ideal solution for the unconvoyed trade to the West Indies, and subsequently to the Mediterranean. The latter trade put a premium on fast-sailing fore-and-aft-rigged vessels in which speed and maneuverability were more valued than cargo capacity. Hence, Chesapeake shipowners and merchants fastened their attention upon the schooner-rigged pilot boat. And from this starting point it developed into the Chesapeake schooners of Revolutionary days and the later Baltimore schooners that proved of critical effectiveness during the War of 1812 (to which aficionados after 1830 gave the nickname "Baltimore Clippers").

To make a long story short (which is the function of historiography), the little schooner-rigged pilot boat of colonial days became an internationally-known American vessel type used for the coastal and fruit trades, as an oyster boat, and for slaving and smuggling. The type was adopted by the U.S., British, French, and Swedish navies and, after the schooner-yacht *America* won the celebrated cup in 1851, became one of the prized types for rich gentlemen's fast-sailing yachts everywhere.

This story is meticulously documented and admirably illustrated. Geoffrey Footner emerges as today's colossus of Chesapeake Bay maritime historians, and Mystic Seaport deserves congratulations for recognizing the importance of the manuscript.

Arthur Pierce Middleton
Retired Director of Colonial Williamsburg and author of *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* and *Annapolis on the Chesapeake*

David W. Shaw, *Daring the Sea: The True Story of the First Men to Row Across the Atlantic Ocean* (Secaucus, New Jersey: Birch Lane Press, Carol Publishing Group, 1998), 224 pages, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, $19.95.

Daring the Sea is the story of George Harbo and Frank Samuelsen, two Norwegian immigrants who, in 1896, succeeded in rowing from New York City to La Havre, France. Their story has attained near-mythic proportions in the last 100 years and the theme—men against nature—is once again on the bestseller list with the likes of *The Perfect Storm, Into Thin Air,* and *Into The Wild. Daring the Sea,* however, is different: against all odds, the principals survived their ordeal.

Harbo and Samuelsen left Manhattan on 6 June 1896 and arrived in La Havre two months later, on 7 August. In between, the pair were almost run down by steamships, exhausted, starved, and nearly drowned when a monstrous wave capsized their 18-foot boat, the *Fox*, in mid-ocean. They managed to persevere, hoping that their daring feat would bring them opportunities for fame and wealth on the lecture circuit.

Unfortunately, this success never quite materialized for the men. In both the United States and Europe, the public at large failed to embrace them despite their remarkable achievement. While the voyage was a defining moment in both men's lives, the story has become obscured by legend and supposition.

Shaw does an extraordinary job at dispelling the rumors and legends surrounding the trip, most notably the $10,000 prize allegedly offered for a successful crossing. This is the result of his access to descendants, to George Harbo's personal log, and to a later history dictated by Harbo himself. He promises in the preface not to introduce anything that was not found in the log or other documentable sources.

There, he fails. While true to his word by not introducing speculation and deduction, he has no

reservations about fleshing out the story with overly dramatic prose. "The sailors," writes Shaw, describing Samuelsen's early deepwater career, "lived cramped together in the forecastle, with only a hammock and a duffel bag. They climbed the ratlines and inched their way out on footropes hung beneath the yardarms to shorten sail in ice storms that froze the canvas to sheets of rock hard enough to tear skin and break bones as it flogged in the grip of a gale. They lived hard and often died hard [sic]" (p. 16). Such conjecture only slows down a remarkable adventure story. In addition, his command of nineteenth-century square-rig and other technical details is lacking. He uses the term "yardarm" and "yard" interchangeably throughout the book, to the great annoyance of even the armchair maritime historian.

Also troubling is the absolute absence of any mention of the "Ballad of Harbo and Samuelsen," written by Jerry Bryant. Bryant's composition, while certainly fueling the stuff of legend, is how many people first heard and then became excited about this event. It at least warrants mention in the preface, where Shaw discusses the legends that have become intertwined with the true story.

Perhaps most disturbing, though, is the end of the book. Shaw dwells on the tragedy of later events in both men's lives, culminating with their deaths. The Atlantic crossing gave Harbo and Samuelsen immortality. Shaw could have easily ended the book on a more uplifting note had he simply written a concluding chapter or epilogue. He could have discussed the legend and ultimate success of Harbo and Samuelsen: that after death they have achieved the fame that eluded them in life. Instead, he ends the book at a funeral.

While the facts are all there, Shaw's style makes the relatively short book a long read. The story itself is enough to keep the book interesting, but the author relies too much on awkward clichés. Had the style been more engaging, *Daring the Sea* might have taken its place beside *The Perfect Storm* as a counterpoint, with humans, for once, prevailing amidst the forces of nature.

The story deserves to be told, and Shaw's book is the first major work on the subject. Those hungering for more information about Harbo and Samuelsen will tear through *Daring the Sea*, but most will agree that the story and the times are rich enough to warrant further research.

Glenn Grasso
Williams College-Mystic Seaport
Maritime Studies Program

Eric Paul Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door; the Good Neighbor Policy and the Trujillo Regime in the Dominican Republic, 1930-1945* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1998), 337 pages, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $17.95 paper.

A recent general-interest newsletter published some letters children had written to God. One wrote asking who drew the lines around countries. This is an amusing, yet interesting, question. How many of us have really taken the time to ponder the events and the people that have shaped the world in which we we live? Even the world that is as close at hand as the Caribbean? This is a job that historians, sociologists, political scientists, and a few others perform to help those of us that are less scholastically minded. Eric Roorda has provided us a look into the life, government, and policies of Rafael Trujillo and the effects that Trujillo and others had on the geographic and political lines in the Caribbean region in the twentieth century.

Hispaniola, as Columbus called it, is home to both the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and has long played a part, directly or indirectly, in international politics. Its crucial location as an access point to the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico and the countries surrounding them has played a critical part in diplomatic relations among European nations trying to gain a foothold in the new world for centuries. The United States would later enter the game through "gunboat" and other forms of diplomacy to gain influence in the Caribbean and to protect American interests and territory both in Latin America and on our own shores.

Dr. Roorda examines the complex dealings of various American administrations with an entrenched dictator in our backyard, a dictator whose brutal actions were overlooked in many instances because of the Dominican Republic's strategic importance to United States security. While it cannot be termed a maritime history, *The Dictator Next Door* is written by an individual who is well versed in maritime history (he was formerly the Stone Fellow in the Williams College-Mystic Seaport Maritime Studies Program), adding a sensitivity to the subject that other scholars might not address, and sheds light on the naval and mercantile dealings within the United States' "local" sphere of influence.

Dr. Roorda writes with ease and clarity and does a splendid job in sharing his knowledge of a complicated and important subject.

Paul O'Pecko
Director, G.W. Blunt
White Library

Letters

Corrections to Mystic Seaport's 1997-1998 Annual Report

Mystic Seaport makes every effort to ensure that the information printed in its Annual Report is accurate. However, errors do sometimes occur, and we are grateful when they are pointed out to us. To those donors whose names were incorrectly listed, we offer profound apologies. The following corrections are noted:

Afterguard - Gifts of $10,000+
Mr. and Mrs. Russell S. Reynolds, Jr.

***Brilliant* Crew - Gifts of $100+**
Mrs. Jane B. Durborow

You really threw me with the youthful picture at the top of the article on Donald Treworgy in the recent *Log* (Mystic Seaport Salutes!, Autumn 1998). Then I noticed the photo credit which dated the picture as 1958.

I met him in the early 1970s on one of our trips to the Seaport. We had attended the Planetarium show and I stopped for a few minutes afterwards to speak with him as I had just started teaching celestial navigation for the Power Squadron. It was a brief but interesting discussion about presenting the subject to people with varying backgrounds in math.

We still try to get to Mystic once each year, unfortunately no longer by boat. Walking around the deserted area after closing while a boating visitor was one of my favorite enjoyments there. Thanks again for the Museum and the *Log*.

Very truly yours,
Edgard A. Schwab
Northport, New York

As a long time member (45 years) of the Seaport, I don't catch you out very often, but page 50 of volume 50 (Autumn 1998, "On Board the *Flying Clipper*: Images from the Rosenfeld Collection," lower photo) the object over the wheel is not the autopilot or "Iron Mike" but part of the telemotor system—the rod coming down from the overhead is from the wheel on the flying bridge (the object referred to is a hydraulic oil tank). The "Iron Mike" is under the gyro repeater and when hand steering from there a smaller wheel is used, the top two spokes of which can be seen.

The object in the background may actually be a radio direction finder as the radar was usually on a pedistal and faced the other way with a hood over it. I sailed on SS *African Star* in the early 1960s—a similar ship.

Missed member's day this year . . . but my connection with Mystic Seaport goes way back!!

Norman Cubberly
Grafton, Virginia

Thank you for your *Log*—we enjoy reading it—the stories and history are fascinating!

John and Marilyn Greenbush
Spring Valley, California

A Maritime Minute from Mystic Seaport

Human disaster on the coastal highway

11 February 1907.

A frigid winter gale sweeps Block Island Sound on the busy coastal route between New York and Boston.

Almost 150 passengers sleep as the steamboat *Larchmont* makes the overnight run to New York.

Bound east with coal for Boston on an intersecting course, the schooner *Harry P. Knowlton*, slams into the *Larchmont*, then drifts free toward the Rhode Island shore.

Water floods the *Larchmont*'s engine room and the lights go out as dazed passengers rush on deck.

The *Larchmont* sinks in just 12 minutes, leaving nearly 200 men, women, and children to cling to her boats, rafts, and wreckage in the frigid darkness.

Bodies begin washing ashore at daylight on Block Island, and in the end just 17 survive the icy ordeal, one of the worst human disasters on southern New England's great watery highway.



Mystic Seaport Salutes!

BETTYE NOYES AND MYSTIC SEAPORT'S VOLUNTEERS

Ever since its founding 70 years ago, Mystic Seaport has relied on a strong corps of volunteers who perform countless tasks in diverse capacities, from helping hand to skilled specialist. Numbering approximately 600 individuals, volunteers annually provide well over 40,000 hours of work in virtually every department of the Museum. Volunteers are considered an extension of the professional staff, bringing to their positions a wide variety of ability and experience.

To say that Mystic Seaport could not function without this cadre of dedicated workers would be an understatement of the highest order. One cannot thank these people enough for their enormous commitment of time and talent. Once a year, Mystic Seaport honors its volunteers at a formal celebration, presenting awards for the longest time served and the highest number of hours worked. This year, for the first time, a new form of recognition was introduced: The William C. Noyes Volunteer of the Year Award.

Inspired by Museum Interpretation staff member Bettye Noyes, in memory of her husband Bill, The Volunteer of the Year Award was established in 1998 to honor a Museum volunteer who best personifies Bill Noyes's example and the "true spirit" of a Mystic Seaport volunteer. Bill, who was known for his friendly manner, his willingness to work, and his firm belief in the Golden Rule, gave freely of his time wherever he was needed the most. Between 1983 and 1997, he volunteered close to 6,000 hours, working in Interpretation, Public Affairs, the Mystic Maritime Gallery, doing surveys, helping the Mail Team, and offering his services to any and all.

Surely that same spirit was embodied in the recipient of the 1998 Volunteer of the Year Award. Harry "Bud" Northup was selected in recognition of his dedication to Mystic Seaport and in reflection of the spiritual values personified by Bill Noyes.

Bud was honored for his work "beyond the call of duty," "his quiet, helpful and friendly nature," for "giving unselfishly to the Museum wherever he saw a need," and for "touching the lives of visitors and staff alike." He could be found tending gardens, chopping wood, carrying coal, or sweeping parking lots, but he always had time to share his wonderful stories, punctuated by infectious laughter and Yankee humor.

The Award is represented by a permanent plaque listing the name of each recipient that hangs in the office of the Manager of Volunteers. Each recipient also receives a deck prism with a small brass plate bearing the individual's name and the year the award was presented as a personal memento.

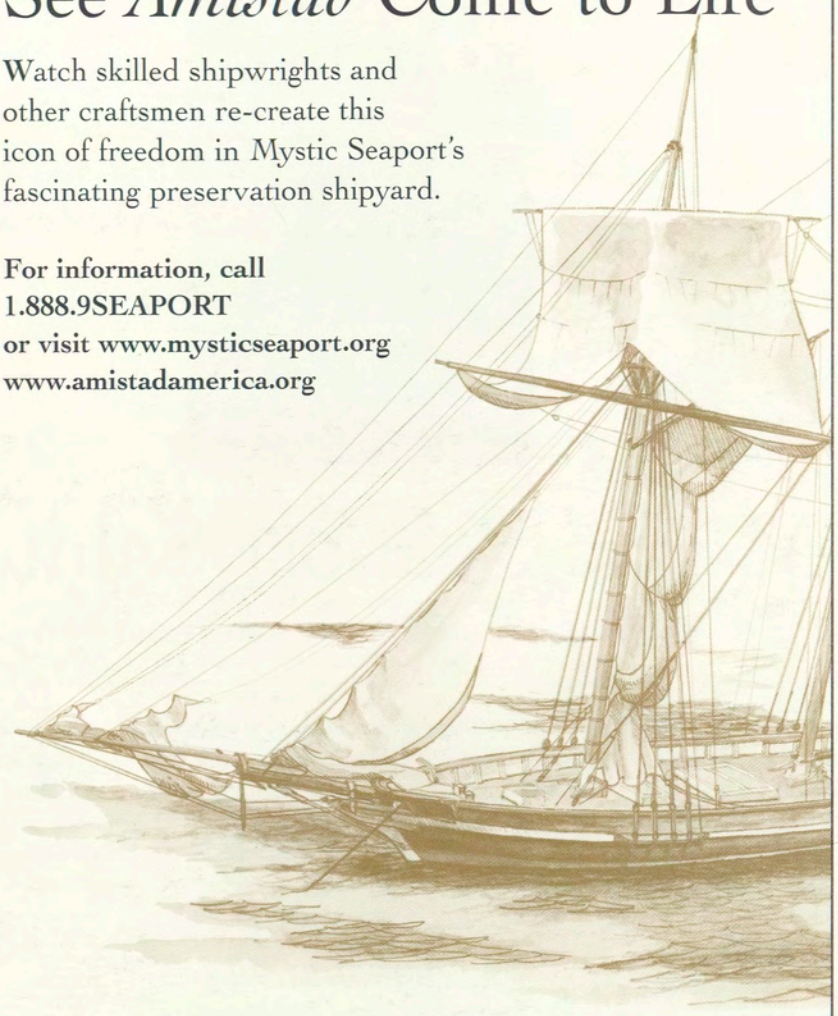
The plaques are made possible through funds donated in Bill Noyes's memory by his family and friends. Mystic Seaport is grateful to Bettye for providing the inspiration for this meaningful award, and for each year helping to recognize an individual whose dedication honors Bill's legacy and furthers the Museum's mission.

(Judy Beisler photo)

See *Amistad* Come to Life

Watch skilled shipwrights and other craftsmen re-create this icon of freedom in Mystic Seaport's fascinating preservation shipyard.

For information, call
1.888.9SEAPORT
or visit www.mysticseaport.org
www.amistadamerica.org



MYSTIC SEAPORT®

THE MUSEUM OF AMERICA AND THE SEA™

The Log *of* Mystic Seaport®

75 Greenmanville Avenue
PO Box 6000
Mystic, Connecticut 06355-0990
Dated Material
Do not hold

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mystic
Seaport, Inc.