

The Whiskey Strake

Of all the preserved warships in the world, two in particular stand out in their importance to model shipwrights: HMS *Victory*, and USF *Constitution*. No other ships so embody the spirit of their times or the pride of their nations. If Lord Nelson or Isaac Hull were to walk the decks of their former commands, they would undoubtedly feel right at home, but they would also notice many differences. In this issue of Warships to Workboats, we begin a series detailing some of the changes the *Constitution* has seen in her long life.

We also offer you an issue stuffed with tips to improve your modeling, from keeping your masts aligned to the tricky task of setting deck clamps. In addition we offer our usual complement of book reviews, Bits and Pieces, and equipment information to help your shipmodeling life.

As we head into our second year of publication, I want to take this opportunity once again to thank all of our contributors who have taken the time to share their knowledge and experience with our community. This magazine is in existence because of these modelers who have so generously given of themselves.

That said, it stands to reason that our continued existence depends on your contributions. Sit down, get your words and wisdom on paper (or electrons) send them to nebk@together.net, and join those who have been immortalized in print.

-The Editor

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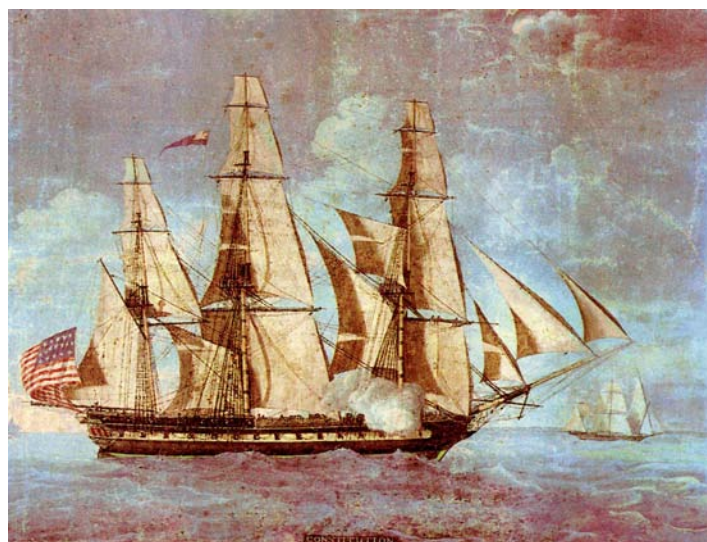


Fig. 3 Cornè Constitution. 1803

The Evolution of U.S.F. *CONSTITUTION*:

The Changing Face of an American Icon

-By James Krauzlis

If you have ever had the good fortune to see the U.S.F. *Constitution* as she reposes in her majestic splendor at the Navy Yard in Charlestown, Massachusetts, it may not have occurred to you that what you saw might not be how she looked when she was first launched on October 21, 1797. Every ship changes a bit over her career, but how many people really appreciate how much “Old Ironsides” has changed? Over the years I have accumulated a number of plans, paintings and photographs which reveal an evolution of this American icon through a broad spectrum of looks which may not be familiar to many. I was quite surprised to discover how much she changed even over the relatively short period of time between her launching in 1797 and the beginning of the War of 1812!

Realistically this short article cannot attempt to address in any great detail the nuances of her many changes, but I will try to touch upon what I feel are highlights of her evolution.

We begin this journey with the original concept of the “Super Frigate,” the brain child of Joshua Humphreys, a well established ship designer and builder from Philadelphia during the later part of the 1700s. The earliest documentary evidence I have found for the concept of this class of frigate is in Humphreys' original plans for a proposed frigate which he named *Terrible* (see Figure 1).

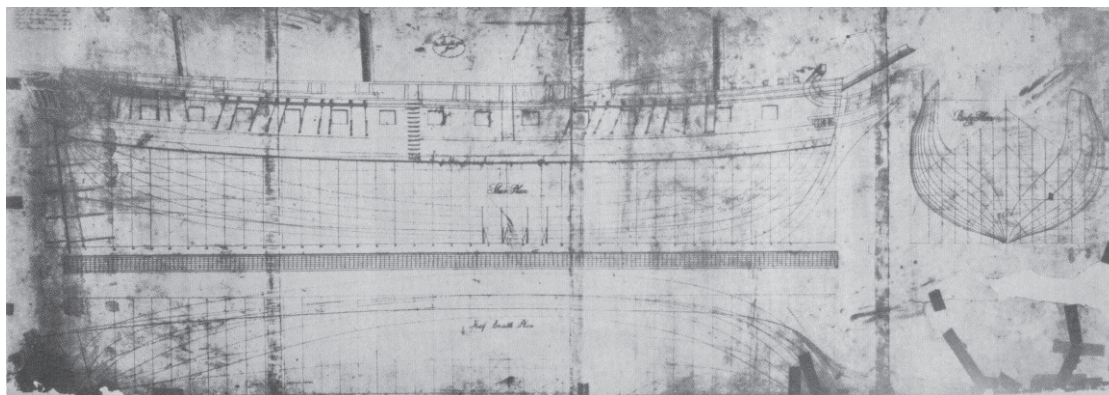


Fig. 1 Terrible, designed by Joshua Humphreys

Humphreys' concept for the 44 gun frigate, one of which eventually became the *Constitution*, was based upon his well reasoned thoughts on the operational requirements for the first vessels to be built for the fledgling U.S. Navy: a vessel large enough to successfully engage a similar class of warship, yet with a high enough freeboard to hold its own against the larger warships in rougher seas, and quick enough to elude larger ships in fairer weather.

The plans drawn by Humphreys depict a flush decked frigate of significantly larger size for that rating when compared with contemporary warships. The spar deck had an open railing running from the transom to a point just adjacent to the fore mast, all the same height, forming the upper sill for her spar deck batteries. The forecastle is open, with knightheads, the overall impression providing a very attractive flowing sheer, complemented by head rails that seemed to flow from the spar deck, in what I consider a particularly aesthetically pleasing appearance. Provision is made for a figurehead, although none is depicted on the plans. Her hull shape is also remarkable, presenting a full bodied, wide breadth underwater profile, overall a very stable and sound platform for the heavy batteries Humphreys envisioned for this class of warship. It is difficult to discern from the draft the details of the intended ornamentation for the quarter galleries, but what can be seen is a classic, flowing design apparently intended to complement the flowing lines of the hull. Her hull is pierced with fifteen gunports along the gun deck, and what appears to be twelve gun positions along the spar deck bulwark, overall providing a potential battery of some fifty four guns: quite a load for a frigate!

I haven't been able to find any sail plan for the initial design, nor, for that matter, copies of her builder's plans (the ones actually used at Charlestown), but it would not be too far-fetched to consider the sail plan for the smaller 38 gun *Philadelphia* as a guide, if we increase the dimensions proportionately for the larger hull of *Constitution*. We could also refer to some of the standard texts of the day

to assist us in approximating the sail and rigging dimensions, with reference to early logbook entries and correspondence to help verify some of the actual spar and sail dimensions. For example, her early logbooks and journals mention the use of not only a spritsail but also a spritsail topsail, similar to the sail

plan of *Philadelphia*. Unfortunately, developing a proper sail and sparring plan for the conceptual or later “as launched” *Constitution* must rest upon educated assumptions using the prevailing practices as best can be determined from the available primary source documentation of other similar vessels and using the major spar dimensions for *Constitution* which are found in early correspondence and her early log book entries.

From this conceptual draught, approved by the War Department, William Doughty then prepared a number of copies under the direction of Humphreys, which are believed to have been the actual plans sent to each of the three shipyards building the 44-gun class of super frigates (in addition to *Constitution* built at Boston, U.S.F. *United States* was built in Philadelphia at the Humphreys yard and the U.S.F. *President* was built in New York). We are indeed fortunate that there is a CD, “Engineering Drawings,” produced by the Naval Historical Center Detachment,

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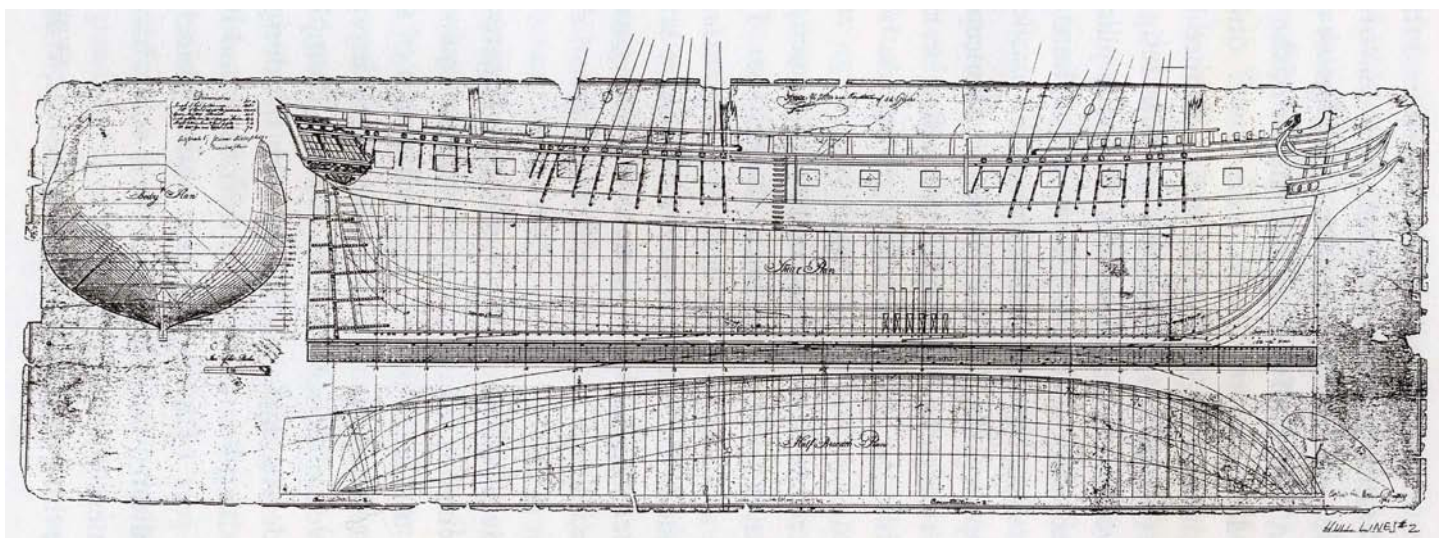


Fig. 2 Draught by William Doughty

Boston, which provides a gold mine of drawings, some of which are historical gems not easily found elsewhere. One of these is a tracing of Doughty's original plan, which is presented as Drawing No. 14925 (Fig. 2). Doughty's draughts also depict a flowing hull design almost identical to the Humphreys plans. We can now see the quarter gallery design in a better light, the aesthetically pleasing lines and a body plan that depicts a very broad and stable gun platform in keeping with Humphreys' initial design.

While it is probably impossible to guarantee that the shipwrights in Boston followed the Doughty plans in every single respect, there was an apparent edict by the War Department prohibiting deviations from the builder's plans, as well as a contemporary piece of correspondence from Humphreys that at least suggested the framing he saw was being fashioned "fair to the moulds"; nonetheless, we also know of some liberties taken by the builders of each of the three 44-gun frigates during construction, such as the roundhouse added to the *United States*. As to *Constitution*, however, we can also do a bit of double checking by comparing the Doughty plans to later "as built" draughts.

On the Navy CD there is a set of plans of the vessel's lines said to be from Charlestown, July 1844, (drawing #11249), an un-numbered lines drawing dating to 1889, and the lines taken upon completion of the restoration work between 1929 and 1931 (drawing #24473). There is also a tracing of the original C.F. Waldo drawings from 1819 of the Spar Deck (#15154) and Orlop Deck (#14949), which are all useful in attempting to reconstruct her actual as-built hull lines. The original builder's draughts used in Boston, however, have apparently disappeared over time, some suggesting they were on board during her initial cruise with Captain Samuel Nicholson, never to be seen again.

In addition to the early draughts still available there are a number of contemporary paintings of *Constitution* which research has shown to be very accurate in their representation of her then current appearance. Although there is no painting of her "as launched" appearance, one painting of immense historical value is a gouache by Michel Corn , a painter of considerable skill and reputation, who was commissioned by Commodore Edward Preble, who took command on May 21, 1803, to preserve for prosperity *Constitution's* departure from Boston in late summer of 1803 on her way to do battle with the Barbary States (see page 1). This rendering, simply entitled "**Constitution**", was painted in 1804 and depicts her appearance as sketched by Corn  between July and early August 1803, and provides a very detailed profile view from which a wealth of information is available from a dedicated study. Remarkably, this priceless historical piece was discovered only in the 1970s in Navy holdings. It is currently on loan to the U.S.S. Constitution Museum in Charlestown, Massachusetts.

It is important to remember, when attempting to uncover the earliest appearance of *Constitution*, that a number of details of her hull, spars and rigging as seen by Corn  in 1803 represented changes that had taken place during the six years following her being launched on October 21, 1797. To reconstruct her earlier appearance, prior to those changes, we need to consult contemporary documentation still available today. This includes her early logbooks, journals kept by some of her earlier officers and contemporary writings, all of which provide clues to the original configuration and appearance.

Captain Samuel Nicholson was her first commander, from July 22, 1798, through June 4, 1799, followed by Captain Silas Talbot, who was in command from June 4, 1799, through September 21, 1801. Using the Corn 

1803 gouache as a visual starting point, we can try to work back, using those earlier records, and put together a fair representation of how *Constitution* looked “as launched,” or at the very least when she entered her first commission in July, 1798. Details such as the type of gun port lids, the planked-over spar deck bulwark, and others that are not shown in Doughty’s draughts must be gleaned from those contemporary records. This is where the real detective work begins: sifting through the numerous documents (most very difficult to read), to try to glean some relevant information as to what transpired when she was built, later fitted out, and during the course of her first two commissions. Obviously, to go through the various details revealed by such a search requires a far more extensive discussion that is beyond the limited purpose of this article. Suffice it to say, of the more obvious differences from the Doughty drafts is the planking over of the quarterdeck spar deck bulwarks at the request of Nicholson, with gun ports on the quarterdeck for her 14 12-pounders; the remainder of the spar deck was left “open” from the gangways forward to the bow, with gun ports for her spar deck battery of 16 18-pounders.

There is also a subsequent work by Cornè, entitled “**The Battle of Tripoli**” painted circa 1805. This painting provides another perspective that depicts a very ornate transom which is far more pleasing to the eye, in my opinion, than rather bland present-day transom arrangement. Interestingly, *Constitution* proudly displayed this impressive array of transom carvings, or at the very least comparably ornate variations, throughout most of her historically important periods, only to be lost when naval

policies dictated a more austere appearance during her later years.

The two paintings by Cornè provide a fairly good visual representation of her appearance as she was commissioned to do battle with the Barbary States. It also provides a color record of her appearance then, which is very valuable to the modeler, and fairly represents her “as launched” color scheme as well. We should keep in mind, however, some of the more important differences between her as-launched appearance and her later documented evolutions. We can see her broad yellow ochre gun stripe that has a distinctive semicircular terminus just below the catheads (which, by the way, are decorated rather simply with a diamond pattern, unlike the “lions head” carving that appears later in her career). We also can see her quarterdeck bulwarks, which had been planked over when she was launched, pierced with seven quarterdeck gun ports per side, and her hammock irons with netting running from the gangway forward to the forecastle (interestingly, the hammock netting and irons were installed at a uniform height with the top of the quarterdeck railing, preserving the pleasing lines of her original design). The gun ports, which had been in her waist when first commissioned, were apparently removed during this 1803 refit and the 16 18-pounders she was allocated for her first commission were returned.

The hull is painted or “blackened” with coal tar below the gun strakes and lamp black above the gun stripe, with two yellow ochre pin stripes. The distinctive and enormous figurehead of Hercules, which she later lost when she collided with *USF President* on September 12, 1804, is quite evident and in great contrast to her current billet head arrangement. It was described by her designer, the well known wood carver William Rush of Philadelphia, thusly: “As the *Constitution of the Empire* is the result of the Union of the States and united begets Strength it ought [sic] to be represented by a Herculean figure standing on the firm rock of Independence resting one hand on the fasces, which was bound by the Genius of America and the other hand presenting a scroll of paper, supposed to be the Constitution of America with proper appendages, the foundation of Legislation.” The painting by Cornè in 1804 (*Fig. 3*) reveals the figurehead was painted a rather unremarkable white, most likely using white lead paint, but using perspective analysis we see the figurehead is of a considerably larger size than the anticipated bow arrangement in her earlier plans.

We can also see the vermilion inner surfaces of the gun deck ports, although no gun port lids are depicted. The records suggest she used fitted gun ports, not hinged, along her gun deck gunports. These were secured in place by



Fig. 4. *The Battle of Tripoli*

with iron slide bolts and removed when she cleared for action. The first mention of half port lids that I have come across appears in the logbook entries for August 26, 1803, when mention is first made of fashioning iron work for securing “half ports” over the guns, referring to the use of dead bolts, not hinges. Cornè’s 1804 painting depicts 15 guns along the gun deck gunports, but only 7 guns per side on the quarter deck battery. The contemporary documents suggest the gangways between the main mast and the fore mast were originally not planked over like the quarterdeck bulwarks, being covered with painted canvas. As launched, in addition to the 30 24 pounders on her gun deck, she was armed with a battery of 16 18-pounders and 14 12-pounders on the spar deck. At the time of Cornè’s first painting, 1804 (actually, showing her as she looked in 1803), he showed her as having only the 14 12-pounders on her spar deck, and he depicts the waist area as open with hammock irons and netting. She later borrowed 6 24-pounders from the King of Two Sicilies after arriving at the Mediterranean, which Preble mounted in the waist, three per side, at which time the bulwarks were planked over to accommodate the additional battery. These additional spar deck guns are partially discernable in Cornè’s “Battle of Tripoli” painting, Figure 4.

As to the sparring and rigging arrangement, we see the spritsail yard (the elimination of her topsail spritsail yard having already taken place during the first commission) and her single martingale or dolphin striker. Her masts were painted yellow ochre up to the royals with tarred woodings on the lower masts. By this time the original pole masts had been replaced with made masts for greater strength. The bowsprit is painted yellow ochre up to the point where the jibboom attaches, the remainder being tarred, as well as tarred woodings. The jibboom and flying jibboom appear to be naturally finished, and project out for a considerable distance, providing her trademark large head sail arrangement. Her gaff and boom are attached directly to the mizzen mast (no spencer mast yet being used), and are also coal-tarred. Her fighting tops, crosstrees, trucks and doublings are also apparently painted with lamp black or coal-tarred. Her quarter galleries are shown to have a vermilion interior trim and exhibit quite impressive ornamentation, particularly when compared with her present subdued appearance.

As to her overall appearance, some of the other highlights that can be discerned are a difference in her hull profile, showing her main wales were lower than originally planned, and a slightly lower quarter gallery structure; a cutwater having a lower and sharper profile with an “adam’s apple” and an apparent difference in the position of her masts when compared to the Doughty draughts of 1794.

We also see her hull was actually pierced with only 15 gun ports on the gun deck level, on each side, there being no bridle ports present during this early period. What is of further interest is the indication of tie bolts which are visible as rectangular plates uniformly spaced fore to aft just below the main wales. These tie bolts were apparently later buried under her hull planking during refit. They don’t reappear until an 1854 photo which shows her in drydock with her hull planking removed. There is also evidence that she was launched with a taffrail on the transom with a poop lantern, although no description of the lantern has yet been found.

Her first copper plating was only up to the height of her light waterline marks, which was about thirteen feet up from the keel. The log books of this early period (July 17, 1799) comment that her “proper trim” was 23’ aft, 21’ 6” forward. It appears that when she was re-coppered at the beginning of her second commission in 1803, this height was increased from 13 to 19 feet forward and 21 feet aft.

From the later Cornè “Tripoli” painting of 1805 (Fig. 4) we have a better perspective of the ornate decorations of her transom, again in stark contrast to her current appearance. He depicts a pleasing array of yellow ochre carved rope trim and bunting, an eagle with upturned wings supporting a laurel wreath, flanked by Nereid figurines, with Liberty and Justice at the Corner posts with attendants and complementary scroll work and cupids. She also had eight lights (windows) with garlands carved between, vermilion shades and carved lacing. Quite an impressive display of fine carving, which nicely complements her quarter galleries.

As far as I can tell, we don’t have the benefit of such a detailed visual record of her contemporary appearance again until later in 1812 when she is again the subject of paintings by Cornè, as well as being preserved for history in the model made by Hull’s crew in 1812 after the victory against the Guerriere. But, more on that later!

To Be Continued....

-James Krauzlis, Copiague, NY, USA



Placing Deck Clamps

-By Gary Bishop

Here is an idea that maybe you can use when it comes time to put in the deck clamps. Of course you may already know this.

First you need to have three places marked inside your frames. The first one needs to be at the stem, where the top of the deck clamp goes, the second one would be at the midship frame or the “dead-flat” of the ship, and the third would be at the stern with the top of the deck transom. Now those three marks need to be very accurate as you already know. OK, make up some pieces of wood, long enough to go the full length of the hull and as wide and as thick as your deck clamp is. Pin them in those three places, one per side. Now make up some thin pieces of wood that will go between your frames and will stick out an inch on each side, at the widest point, and stick one between, say, every third frame (less if you like, this is up to you really). Set them down on top of the clamps for the whole length of the hull.

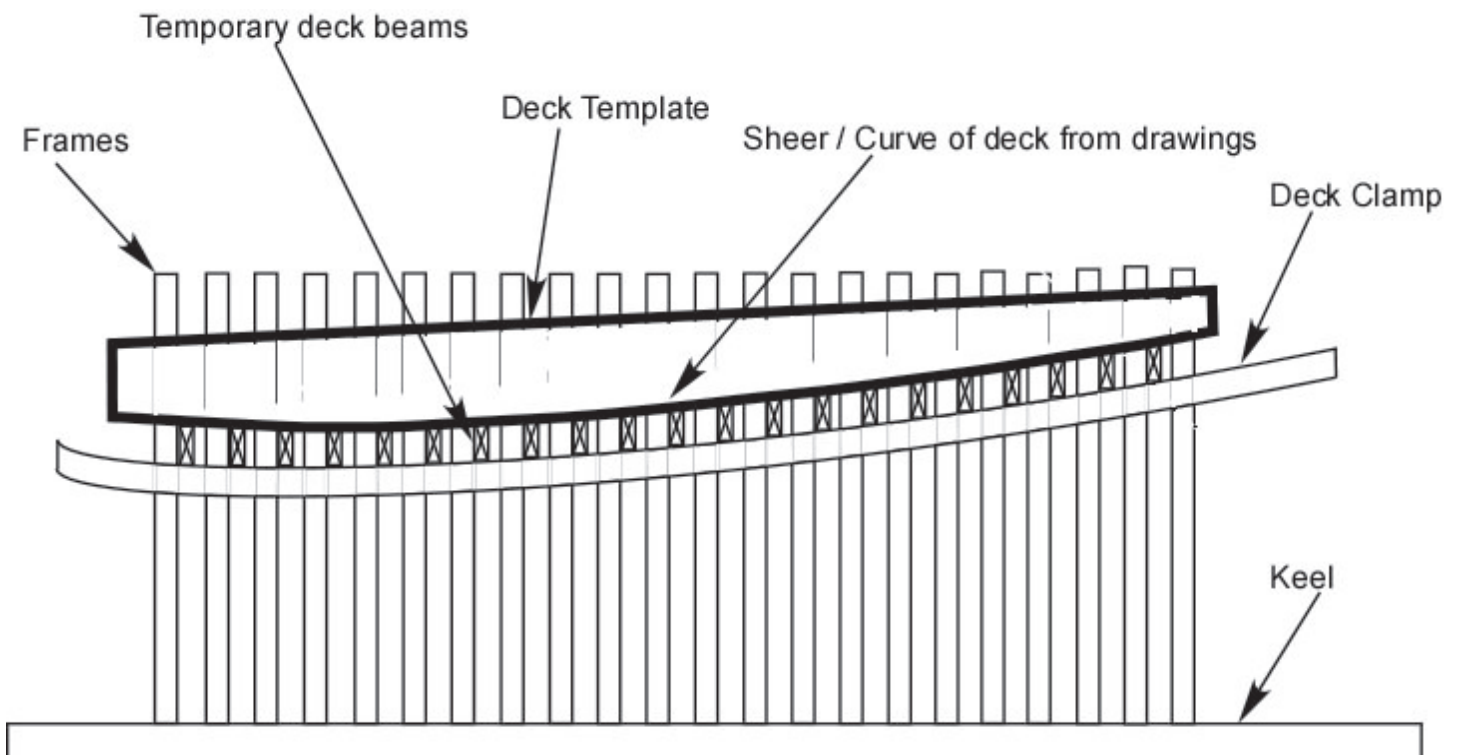
After this, make up a template of the curve of the deck from the stem to the stern, with marks to align the template with frame one or the midship frame, from the plans. Set that down on top of the thin pieces of wood, one on each side, and now you can adjust the clamps up or

down to get them in just the right place on the inside of the hull. Just make sure that you keep them in contact with those three places, such as by tying them in place. You can do this for every clamp from the orlop to the poop deck.

Now don't throw away the templates, because you still have another operation that they can be used for. When you draw up the template, mark the location of the deck beams on it. Glue the tracing to say, thin aircraft plywood. Once you get to the point of installing the deck beams you set this template down on top of the beams and it allows you to get the height of them just right so you have one nice curve from stern to stem. You have to install at least the first beam forward, the last beam aft and the midship beam. The template will act like a teeter-totter. If you have a beam too high, it will rock until the beam is lowered to its right height, and the template sits on top of all the beams. It will also show when a beam is too low and you would be able to see light between the template and the beam, or be able to push a paper shim between the two.

This is how I install my beams and deck clamps and would not do it any other way. Just something to think about.

-Gary Bishop, Owensboro, KY, USA



View of the deck clamp positioning system seen from inside the hull. Drawing by Bill Short

Repeat after me our

Twelve Spiling Steps:

I. Glue up the keelbone and bulkheads from the kit. Make sure that they are square and true and your heart will follow also. Fill each and every void in the eggcrate below the lowest gundeck with balsa blocks. Make sure they overhang each bulkhead all over, and damn the expense, lest you be damned.

II. Take thy spokeshave, thy razor knife, thy sandpaper, and thine other implements and decrease the excess from the balsa blocks by removal. Quick should you be until you are close to the end, then slow is your watchword.

III. Make thereby a hull, equal and symmetrical from side to side, accurate according to the plan lines, and smooth, with curves flowing gently; solid too, as your faith in yourself.

IV. Find you a latex enamel paint of a light and pleasing color. Daub the solid hull all over, as Moses' mother did the basket of reeds in which he was lain. Recoat several times with thy paint, until the shell on the hull is as hard as was Pharaoh's heart.

V. Divine and locate the lowest line of the lowest wale on the plans. Draw it thus on the solid hull of your making. Be exact and careful, as will be St. Peter at the hour of our judgment.

VI. Divine, locate and draw similarly on the painted hull the lines, vertical in space, corresponding to each station line as taken from the plans. To cradle or mount the hull upstanding may be helpful, as it would be in resisting temptation.

VII. Determine the desired maximum width of your hull planks and mark divisions of such size on the station line at the center of the hull, adjusting as needed at the garboard strake. Mark on each station line, save the foremost near the stem and the one or two hindmost before the sternpost, a similar number of divisions, but of diminishing size. Fight the urge to exceed the maximum width, as you would fight the Devil himself.

VIII. Connect the marks from station line to station

line, marking out the edges of the plank strakes. Your lines, when viewed from right ahead or right astern should be gently curving, with no abrupt humps or hollows. A flexible wooden batten will ease your journey and smooth your brow.

IX. Continue the lines forward and aft in a pleasing fashion. Where two planks at the bow diminish to half the maximum width, draw there a drop plank to take the place of the two. Where planks at the stern widen to more than the maximum width, draw in a stealer, and there will be two planks where once there was one.

X. Inspect your work from all sides and angles, then erase, adjust and redraw until you are happy with your efforts. Preserve your happiness by inking in the lines with an indelible pen, as you would preserve the joy of a child's smile.

XI. Transfer the size, dimension and shape of each plank or strake to wood by laying translucent tape down flat on the hull and drawing thereon the plank edges that appear through the tape. Remove the tape and lay it flat and without bend or kink on your desired planing, matching edges as much as possible. Cut, carve and sand the plank to shape, then make a mirror image plank for the opposite side. Mount them to the hull in their appointed places.

XII. Continue thus, from the garboard up and the wale down, and finishing with a shutter plank in the middle, until the entire hull is sheathed in wood, as tight as a miser's purse and as sound as the ark of Noah. Thus will you grasp the principles and mysteries of spiling, and the glory of the Lord will be upon you.

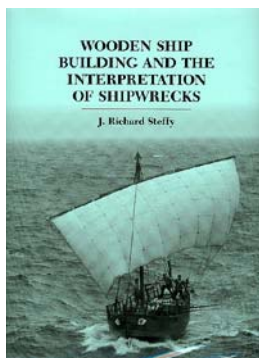
Hoping that I didn't sound too much like Yoda, I am,

A fellow sinner,

Dan Pariser, Brooklyn, NY, USA



Book Reviews



Wooden Ship Building and the Interpretation of Shipwrecks

by J. Richard Steffy

Texas A&M University Press, 1994
313 pp, numerous illustrations and scale drawings, illustrated glossary, bibliography
ISBN 0-89096-552-8

The current upwelling in interest, research and scholarship of underwater archaeology can be traced directly to Dr. George Bass and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology that he co-founded. His work on the Serçe Limani vessel, the Kyrenia ship, the Yassi Ada vessels and others not only produced a wealth of information on early shipbuilding methods, but fired the popular imagination as these underwater time capsules were opened and their contents displayed.

Here, his colleague at Texas A&M, J. Richard Steffy, gives us an overview of the field as it has advanced to the mid-1990s. The slope of the knowledge curve is clearly evident when compared to earlier works, such as Peter Throckmorton's *The Sea Remembers* (1987) or George Bass' landmark work, *A History of Seafaring Based on Underwater Archaeology* (1972). Certainly not all shipwrecks that have been excavated and studied are here, and the book gives short shrift to ships past 1700, which are all lumped together as "The Eighteenth Century and Beyond." However, for those who want to understand the development of shipbuilding techniques and methods through the ages, this is an invaluable resource.

The book first introduces the reader to the fundamentals of ship design, the terminology of shipbuilding and the mechanical problems of cargo capacity, speed through the water, drift, hogging, etc. that had to be overcome by each new generation of shipwrights. The final section is devoted to the principles and methodology of modern underwater archaeology - the proper way to undertake research, recording, reconstruction and interpretation of the fragments of wood, metal and ceramics that lie buried under the sands and mud of time.

The largest section of the book, and the most interesting to model shipwrights and historians of naval architecture, is the center, entitled "A Brief History of Shipbuilding Technology." Here Dr. Steffy has compiled a chronology of the development of large watercraft through the ages. From the ancient world through the Bronze Age and Medieval period to the Age of Global Seafaring, he

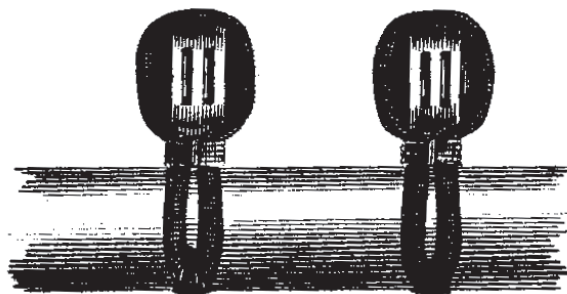
presents examples of every major type of seagoing ship. Here are not only the Mediterranean ships uncovered by Dr. Bass, but the Viking ships studied by Witsen and Crumlin-Pedersen, Hanseatic cogs and carracks, Spanish and Portuguese caravels and naos from the Age of Discovery, and much, much more. Nor is this information presented in dry, academic prose. Steffy's writing is clear and concise, and any difficult concepts are well explained.

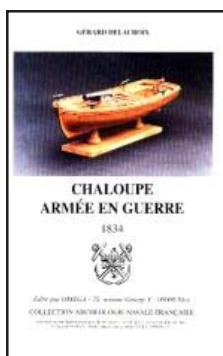
For me, the book would be more than worth the price even if there were no text. There are hundreds of precise archeological drawings and photographs of shipwreck remains, placed alongside reconstructions of the ships in models and scale drawings of construction details and ship plans. Many are compiled from archeological studies published elsewhere, such as the Dammen and Crumlin-Pedersen drawings of the Viking ships, and a few have to be modified by more recent research, such as the studies of the *Vasa* and the American Great Lakes warships, *Eagle* and *Jefferson*. But overall, this is a treasure of a book that no serious student of the history of shipbuilding can do without.

To add to its value, there is an illustrated glossary. Here are not only text definitions of unusual shipbuilding terms such as beetle, crone, fish plate and wart (they are: a large mallet used to drive treenails; the mast step in a Viking ship; a metal plate used to join two timbers; and the mounting block for a Viking rudder), but also dozens of drawings that clarify the differences between obscure details, the bearding line and rabbet line, for example. Finally, there is a generous bibliography keyed to each chapter in the book, for those who want to delve more deeply into a particular subject.

As befits its large size and broad scope, this is not an inexpensive book. Originally marketed at about \$80, it can occasionally be found at \$40 to \$50 in specialty bookshops or used book stores. However, if you want to understand the developments that led to the *Victory* or *Constitution* that you are building, this book is well worth the price. Three and a half stars out of four.

-Dan Pariser, Secretary, New York Shipcraft Guild, NY, USA





42 ft LONGBOAT ARMED FOR WAR, 1834

by Gerard Delacroix
English Translation by David H. Roberts

ISBN 2-903179-31-X

Published by A.N.C.R.E., Nice, France

Available in North America through Pier Books, Inc,

This monograph is available in both French and English so when considering purchasing it make sure that it is in your language of preference. A.N.C.R.E. is the same publisher that has produced all of the outstanding Jean Boudroit monographs that are well known by readers of Marine Archeological publications. The same care has been taken to provide this publication with the excellent drawings and photography found in earlier ship monographs.

In addition to a comprehensive 39 page booklet Mr. Delacroix has provided six pages of plans and drawings of the Longboat at 1:36 scale, which if followed by a ship modeler will produce a model measuring 14" loa x 3-3/4" beam x approximately 2-1/2" in depth. It is a creditable, historically accurate, replica of a longboat that measured 42' 8" overall

The model is constructed using the plank on frame method, built upside down over a "bread and butter" shaped plug/mould.

The booklet contains ample color photographs of the longboat in various stages of construction, and at 1:36 scale is large enough to permit the modeler to engage in lots of detailing.

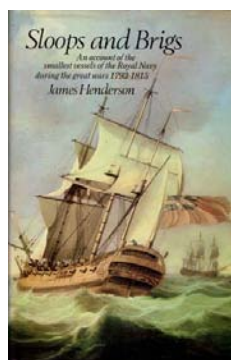
I was particularly impressed by the author's clear and concise coverage of all phases of the step-by-step building of the longboat, including the construction of the canon with its carriage and swivel guns. He has even provided the modeler with information on how to construct a basic wood lathe with which to turn the canon and swivel gun barrels .

While I don't believe that the building of the model is something a beginning modeler might want to attempt, it should be well within the abilities of person who has had some experience building wooden ship models. In addition, the booklet is filled with building advice, hints and tips that could easily be applied to the building of any other shipmodel.

I have always viewed the building of a ship's longboat as one of the last, not too pleasant, chores that remained before the completion of a ship model. But, as the author himself explains, "The building of a ship's boat is often perceived as simply one more necessary step towards

completing the construction of a more prestigious vessel, However, in this instance the fitting of the gun and the choice of a large scale both contribute to raising the value of such a model." After reading the monograph, and seeing the results of his efforts, I totally agree with the author. I think that this publication would be a worthy addition to any ship modeler's personal library.

-John Weliver, Ft Myers, FL USA



Sloops and Brigs

by James Henderson

Published by Granada Publishing/
Adlard Coles Limited

London, 1972

ISBN 0 229 98644 7

I recently came across this book, subtitled *An account of the smallest vessels of the Royal Navy during the great wars 1793-1815*, on a second-hand

bookseller's list. This slim volume (190 pages) was originally published in 1972, and is a lively account of some of the more notable small ship actions that occurred during the Napoleonic Wars.

While the title might lead one to believe that this work was an all-inclusive one, this is not the case. However, the examples of action cited are lively, well researched and well written. The author's sense of humor (or should that be humour, as he is English?) comes through at times. "Tables are rather dreary, especially for those who compile them..."

The opening chapter is a good primer of types of rig, including full-page plates of brig-sloops, *chasse-marées*, xebecs, cutters and bomb ketches, etc. The next chapter gives an excellent overview of the manning of these small vessels and perils of life at sea. The remaining eighteen chapters follow the course of various small-ship actions that occurred during the period covered, and some of the personalities involved. There are several half-tone reproductions of contemporary etchings and paintings, useful tables in the back of the book, (the author's aforementioned view notwithstanding!) and a good index. In summary, I recommend this book to anyone interested in this period of naval history.

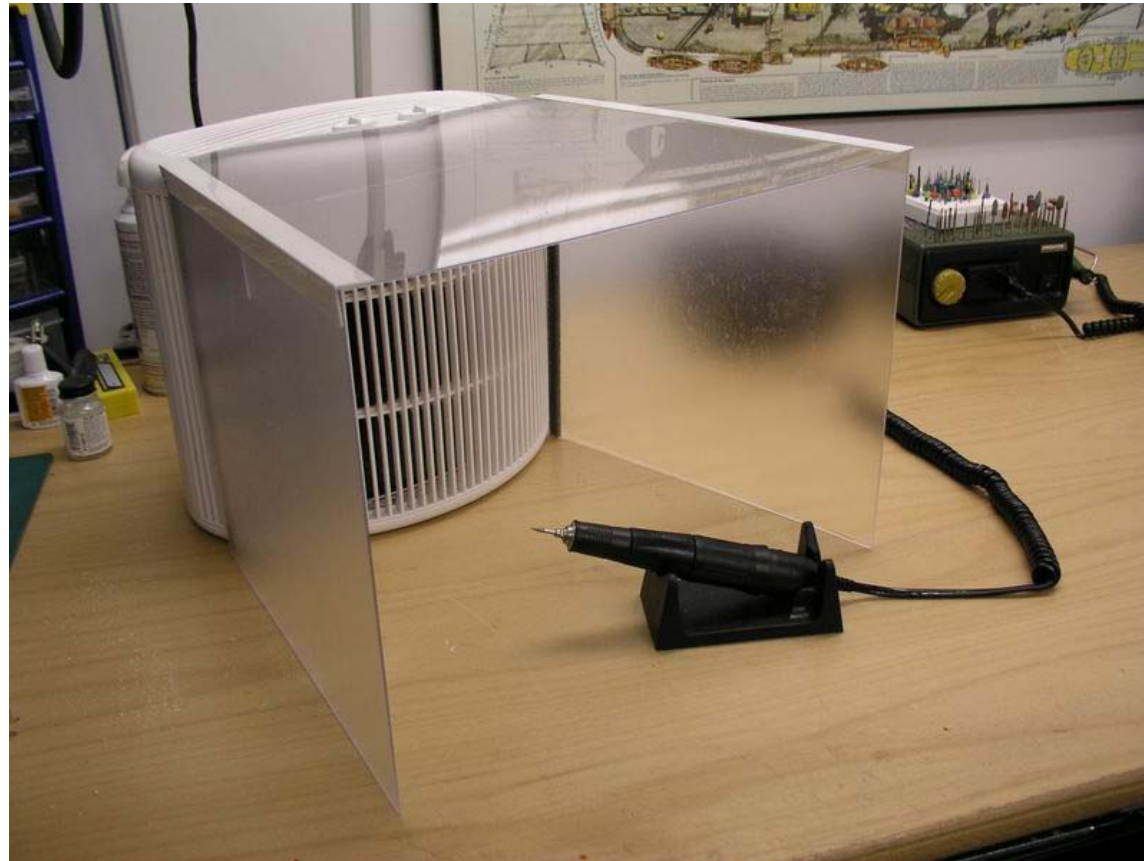
James Henderson, CBE, apparently also wrote a companion volume, *The Frigates: an account of the lesser warships of the wars from 1793 to 1815*. This might also be worth looking out for.

-David Antscherl, Kitchener, ON, Canada

Affordable Dust Control

By Morey Benton

When setting up my new workshop after its major renovation, dust control was very much on my mind. I did set up a vacuum system for attaching to the various cutting and sanding tools, but needed to deal with the fine dust as well.



The commercially available units like the Razair run into the several hundreds of dollars. I felt that these types of units were a bit of overkill for me, since my shop is quite small and is used only for ship modeling. The amount of fine dust I create isn't that great, so I thought that the best compromise would be a home type air purifier. The unit I bought contains a HEPA Type filter, only cost about \$100.00 CDN, and I felt further justified to make the purchase since it could pull double duty and help my son Josh with his seasonal allergies.

It works really well, but during my rotary tool carving sessions, I still noticed that the dust was irritating my nose. I found that I had to work very close to the unit in order to eliminate the need for me to wear a mask. I hate wearing filter masks, as I find them very claustrophobic, and besides, my glasses fog up, too!

In order to make the unit more effective, I borrowed the idea from the Big Boy units (thanks Bob) and made a hood to focus and direct the airflow. For about 10 bucks worth of acrylic, foam tape, and plastic 90 degree corner molding purchased at Home Depot, it was done in an hour.

The straight cuts in the acrylic were easy, the only slightly tricky part was that I had to cut a notch in the top of the hood to clear the switches on the unit. I used the off-cuts to make internal braces to strengthen the hood, and it is surprisingly rigid. Here is a photo of the finished assembly.

Now I can carve away without wearing a mask, and the unit is extremely effective. I also use it over my Preac in conjunction with the vacuum, and it seems to completely eliminate dust spread. The pre-filter needs to be cleaned from time to time, and by tapping it onto a hard surface the actual HEPA filter can have most of the dust shaken out of it. I think it will last a

long time before it needs to be replaced.

-Morey Benton, Oakville, ON, Canada

Once again, we would like to thank Worldnet Communications for their generous hosting of Warships to Workboats and the Modelshipwrights and Warrior web sites.

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Bits & Pieces

Ever have a great idea for a modeling tool? Ever create a subassembly that you're justifiably proud of? Well, here's your chance for fame. Send us a paragraph and a picture or two, and we'll post them here. Everyone has an "Aha!" moment from time to time, and this column will highlight several of them in each issue. Send your **Bits & Pieces** to Neb Kehoe at nebk@together.net.

Mast Alignment Fixture

Phil Kroll

A simple but effective fixture is made by fastening two sticks with a small nut and bolt, screw or pin forming an X. The ends are placed on the deck against the bulwarks. Align the mast with the fastening and it will be a perfect 90 degrees to the deck. Drill additional holes for the fastener to accommodate variable heights. The pictures are self-explanatory.

This can also be used to check your mast when tensioning rigging to assure the mast stays in alignment.



Quick and Easy Rope Coils

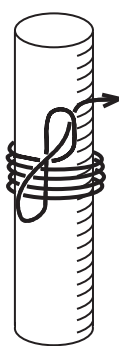
Tom Babbin



Step one: take a dowel of an appropriate diameter, lay a line lengthwise, and then loop the line over the vertical piece of line.



Step two: wind the line around the dowel, going over the vertical line, enough times to get a realistic rope coil.



Step three: snug the coils, then run the loose end of your vertical line through the bight made in step one. Pull that line tight, and slip the coil off the dowel.

Once the coil is off the dowel, it can usually be pressed into a realistic hanging shape with your fingers. For very tight coils, you can dip the coil in white glue diluted 50:50, and hang a weight from the bottom or shape it by hand when the glue begins to dry. I've found that this method will allow me to make any size coil, including very tiny ones.



USS Constitution Model Shipwrights Guild

25th Anniversary Model Show Gold Medal Winners, Boston, MA, February and March, 2004

Photos by Dick Remillard, Billerica, MA, USA

The USS Constitution Model Shipwright Guild meets monthly at the Boston Naval Shipyard in Charlestown, overlooking the USS *Constitution*. This year they celebrated their 25th anniversary of model shows in cooperation with the Constitution Museum. In addition to their regular show and model judging, they also sponsored a competition called "Best of the Best" where past winners were invited to enter and compete with their prize-winning models.

Prizes were awarded in three categories: Apprentice, for modelers who had never won previously, Journeyman, for one-time winners, and Master, for multiple previous wins.

These categories were also applied to the Best of the Best, with models entered in the categories in which they had won previously.



Spritsail Skiff
Matt McGrath, Apprentice



Hancock, John A. Mahoney, Jr.
Best of the Best, Apprentice



Pound Net Scow & Oyster Skiff
Rob Napier, Master



Great Republic
Frank N. Clements
Journeyman



Tina Gal
Chesapeake Bay Skipjack
George J. Willis, Jr
Best of the Best, Master



Dutch Two-Decker
W. Kelley Hannan
Best of the Best, Journeyman

For more information about the Model Shipwright Guild, visit constitution-modelshipwrights.org